

## Our Trustees

Trustees are selected for their expertise and experience of operating in senior executive roles in businesses or institutions and whose credentials and inclinations are compatible with the Trust's objectives. The Trust's overarching aim is "to advance the application of engineering and technology to achieve sustainable agricultural, food and biological systems, for the benefit of the environment and mankind".

Trustees are chosen to represent the wide range of interests from across agriculture and related sectors, including farming, machinery manufacturers, academia, research and consultancy. Together, the Board members help to ensure appropriate advice and decisions are made regarding applications to support research projects and other requests for sponsorship and awards, as well as sound financial management and effective governance.

Trustees also act as mentors, using their own experience to provide technical and practical guidance to individuals and teams sponsored by the Trust, and often working at the cutting edge of research and development. These are based at a wide range of Universities around the UK and may include research being undertaken outside UK.

## Current Trustees

The following brief biographies of our current Trustees are based on extracts from our regular '*Meet A Trustee*' article, published in recent editions of IAgRE's journal *Landwards* (<https://www.dbt.org.uk/news>):

### Mr Nick August (Chair)



Nick has been Chair of Trustees since 2018 having joined the Board in 2015 and becoming Deputy Chair in 2016. Although representing farming (Nick grew up on his 400ha family farm in the Cotswolds, which he now owns and manages, along with a contracting business), he also has extensive interests and involvement in promoting agricultural technology. Nick is passionate about the land, soil health and carbon sequester, and has embraced conservation agriculture for more than a decade.

He was a pioneer in the use of Precision Farming by converting to Controlled Traffic Farming in 2008. Nick has promoted this technology around the world, including workshops on precision farming and carbon sequester in Brussels and he was a keynote speaker at the European Conference on Precision Agriculture in 2017. He is a guest lecturer at UCL and RAU and also a member of the 'PrecisionStory' team, based at San Jose in California, promoting the benefits to businesses of the 'Internet of Things' and 'Big Data'.

### Dr Mark Moore (FIAGR)



Mark joined the Board in 2013 and is now Vice Chair, bringing valuable industry, business and international perspectives, having worked for AGCO (and originally, Massey Ferguson) for over 3 decades. He was involved in early research on precision farming through his PhD in Agricultural & BioSystems Engineering at Cranfield in 1998, building on his degree in Agricultural Technology & Management (from Silsoe College, 1990).

Now AGCO's Business Process & Agricultural Development Manager, Mark has worked extensively throughout Africa and the Middle East; his various roles have taken him to many other parts of the world too, including North & South America, Eastern Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. He has worked in marketing, led on technical training (throughout the world), product development and research - developing advanced technology as well as sustainable systems, working with innovative farmers, external companies and research institutions on a global basis, funded by industry and government.

### **Richard Robinson (HonFIAgrE)**



Richard joined the Board in 2018, bringing extensive experience in design, development and manufacturing. He is an entrepreneur in the true sense of the word and was Managing Director of Autoguide Equipment. In his 'youth', he worked with New Holland (in baler development,) and ended up as a Senior Test Engineer before moving on to Watveare Overseas as Service Manager, and in engineering design and development.

Richard was IAgRE President from 2008 to 2010 and was awarded the title of Honorary Fellow in 2011, for his long service to the Institution and recognising his outstanding contribution to the agricultural engineering industry "for making interesting and unique products"! He has also been involved with IAgRE's Young Engineer's Competition for many years - as an organiser, sponsor and judge - and immediately took on the role of mentor for our (A-level) scholars sponsored through the Arkwright Scheme.

### **Clive Blacker (FIAgrE)**



A Trustee since 2019, Clive is well-known as an advocate of precision farming. He was an early convert, instrumental in his family farm adopting the technology in 1998 and he has continued to promote the benefits and explore the boundaries of what new technology can offer – not least through his involvement with the 'Hands Free Hectare' project at Harper Adams University.

Clive received a Nuffield Farming Scholarship to study precision farming in America and Australia in 2004 and through his own company *Precision Decisions* and now working for *Map of Ag*, Clive is keen to see what can be achieved with data to unlock the real potential of machines and crops.

Through his role as the Department of International Trade's 'UK Precision Farming Specialist', he has supported UK businesses developing technologies and solutions to manage crops more profitably, and has also encouraged international investment into the UK. He is a Fellow of both IAgRE and the Council of the UK's Royal Agricultural Societies.

### **John Baines**



John is a recent addition to the Board, having joined in 2020. His long and distinguished career in the dairy industry began in 1978 as an ADAS Advisor, rising to become the National Milking Technology Specialist in 1992. He moved to the private sector in 1997, as Product Manager and later Technical Director of Fullwood (and its Dutch sister company, Fusion Electronics BV), when he was responsible for development, support and maintenance of automation, process control and dairy herd management hardware/software systems, including fully automated milking systems.

Now an independent consultant advising leading companies on milking installations, dairy building layout and design, John is Chair and Technical Adviser to the Milking Equipment Association and was responsible for content and quality of the AEA/MEA's '*ParlourSafe*' Technician Accreditation Scheme. He has also been

a member of BSI and ISO Committees for Milking Machines and Cleaning of Milking Installations and has written numerous technical papers and publications. John extensive experience in novel R&D, knowledge transfer and training in the livestock sector fits well with the Trust's aims.



**Rebecca Geraghty** joined the Board in November 2021 and brings a broad understanding of the industry as well as knowledge of the fast developing field of data capture and analysis, critical to enable environmental, technical and financial data to drive development and transformation within businesses.

Rebecca joined Agrimetrics' Executive Management Team as Chief Commercial Officer in 2021. Agrimetrics is one of four centres for agricultural innovation, founded with an initial investment from Innovate UK, along with partners NIAB, SRUC, Rothamsted and The University of Reading.

Prior to that she spent 20 years at the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), formerly the Home-Grown Cereals Authority (HGCA). As the AHDB's Chief Technical Officer she led their research and knowledge exchange teams and technical products and services across the six agri-food sectors. She was previously AHDB's Sector Director for Cereals and Oilseeds.

In her current role, Rebecca is responsible for ensuring Agrimetrics products are "customer-centric and value-creating". Their goal "to help create a more sustainable and resilient agri-food sector, powered by data by enabling next-generation solutions as quickly and affordably as possible", also aligns with the Trust's. She lives on a small beef farm, which helps give her a practical and economic perspective too.



**Professor Simon Pearson** also joined the Board in November 2021. He is well known as the Director of the Lincoln Institute for Agri-food Technology (LIAT), which sits within the College of Science at the University of Lincoln. He is the son of a South Lincolnshire farmer and, prior to joining Lincoln, he was the CEO of a large UK farming company. He also previously worked for Marks and Spencer plc in a technical role, and as a scientist at the University of Reading.

Simon's academic role involves developing and running cross-disciplinary research projects, with a large focus on the use and deployment of agri-food robotic systems, including robotic crop harvesting and food processing systems, use of autonomous and electric vehicles in the agri-food sector, and the application of actuators within agri-food robotic systems.

His diverse research interests extend to applications of AI, machine learning and robotics in agriculture, the role and development of digital technologies in the agri-food system and whole system approaches to

sustainable farm production. All these sit squarely within the Trust's broad scope, so Simon's perspectives will be invaluable.

#### **Mr Jonathan Bomford**



Jonathan represents the Bomford Family on the Board. As a Chartered Accountant, he spent 24 years with a major international company, working in a number of roles in the Middle East and East Africa. He has been a partner working with a number of international clients in various sectors, including healthcare, oil, banking and construction. Since 'retiring' in 2000, he was appointed Official Mentor to clients of the Prince's Trust, providing Business Advice and Services. Jonathan's primary role on the Board is to monitor the Trust's investments and governance.



#### **Prof Jane Rickson HonFIAgrE CEnv**

Jane has over 35 years' experience of research, consultancy and teaching in soil and water engineering, specialising in soil degradation processes and sustainable land management. Her work has focused on better understanding of soil functions and their role in the delivery of ecosystems goods and services, including agricultural production, biodiversity, water regulation and carbon storage.

Her work is directed at Research Councils, industry, farmers and policy makers, but she is also involved in training and teaching at Cranfield University on Masters courses in Land Reclamation and Restoration, Agricultural and Environmental Engineering, and Soil Management, as well as bespoke short courses on soil erosion and conservation.

Jane is an Honorary Fellow of the IAgRE and was President from 2018 to 2020. She is also a Chartered Environmentalist, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a member of the Institute of Professional Soil Scientists.



#### **Julia Lucas BA ACA**

Julia is a Chartered Accountant and has worked in various executive and non-executive roles - from independent UK SMEs to subsidiaries of multi-billion dollar global operations, as well as charities. Her personal mission is to enable organisations to perform at their best, deliver for their stakeholders and create an environment which encourages colleagues to fulfil their potential.

Julia brings expertise in governance, risk management, investment strategy, training and mentoring. Not least, she is the daughter of the Douglas Bomford Trust's founder and Emeritus Trustee, John Fox. Her life-long acquaintance with the Bomford family, familiarity and passion for the work of the Trust also make Julia a very welcome and useful addition to the Board.

#### **Dr Paul Miller (FREng CEng CEnv HonFIAgrE)**



Paul was appointed as Emeritus Trustee in November 2023, having served as Technical Secretary to the Trust from 2010 to 2017, and subsequently joined the Board of Trustees. Renowned worldwide for his work on agricultural pesticide application since 1984, he led Silsoe Research Institute (SRI) Chemical Application Group's research on spray drift, nozzle performance, dose control and patch spraying and went on to become SRI's Director of Technology. When SRI closed in 2006, Paul set up Silsoe Spray Application Unit (SSAU), continuing their research and consultancy as part of

Paul has been a visiting Professor at Cranfield University and the University of Lincoln, and is the author of many refereed and (international) conference papers. He received the EurAgEng 'Award of Merit for Scientific Understanding' in 2016, for his "major international contribution to the advancement of scientific understanding in engineering and related science for the benefit of agriculture, environment, industry and the rural sector in Europe", as a "leading agricultural engineer and expert in all aspects of crop spraying and fertiliser application". Reflecting this, Paul was also elected as a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in 2016, in recognition of his "outstanding and continuing contributions to the profession," and being "one of UK's finest engineers".

Paul has been involved with IAgrE since his student days, serving on the Executive Committee and Council and as President (2006-08).

### **John V Fox (HonFIAgrE)**



John became Emeritus Trustee on his retirement from the Board of Trustees. He is an Honorary Fellow of IAgrE having served on Council for many years and became President. Douglas Bomford (then President of IAgrE himself) invited John to work with him in 1957 and during his long career with Bomford & Evershed (later to become Bomford Turner Ltd), John served as Technical and Production Manager, Managing Director and Chairman (from 1982-91). John was instrumental in setting up the Trust in 1972 and a member of the Board since 1977, originally representing the Company and

After John retired as Company Chairman in 1991 he continued to work as an Agricultural Engineering Consultant for another 25 years or so, advising a wide range of clients in agriculture, manufacturing and the legal profession, including acting as an Expert Witness. Like Douglas Bomford, he is also dedicated to the industry and a strong advocate of education and training. As an innovator with a keen understanding of commercial reality and having developed many market leading-machines, John was well-placed to assess projects. He was given the unique status of Emeritus Trustee when he formally 'retired' from the Board in 2011, and although over 90 he is still keeping an eye on the Trust and providing sound advice!