

# Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment

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January 2024

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## **Professor Jim Dunwell – Chair**

**University of Reading**

**Expertise: plant biotechnology**

Jim Dunwell is Emeritus Professor of Plant Biotechnology in the School of Agriculture, Policy, and Development at the University of Reading. He has expertise in plant cell biology and molecular biology, and the production and utilisation of transgenic crops. His present research interests include studies of plant gene expression and the evolution of plant proteins. Jim was reappointed as Chair on 2 March 2023 and this appointment will end on 1 March 2027.

## **Dr Kathy Bamford**

**Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust**

**Expertise: medical microbiology and human infection**

Kathy Bamford is a consultant medical microbiologist. Initially trained in Belfast she spent 8 years as academic clinician at Queen's Belfast and the Royal Hospitals with a sabbatical year in the mucosal immunology dept. of University of Texas medical branch at Galveston. She then moved to the Hammersmith Hospital and Imperial college and Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust with a 3-year term as Head of Specialty for Infection and 2 years as Deputy Director of Infection prevention and control. Kathy spent a year at The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS trust and is now a consultant medical microbiologist at The Royal Cornwall Hospital, Truro.

Her expertise is in the aetiology, diagnosis, and management of human infection with clinical and research interests in antibiotic resistance and stewardship, the immunopathology of infection, as well as the control prevention and management of infection. She is a Fellow of The Royal College of Pathologists. Kathy was reappointed to ACRE on 8 March 2023 and this term runs until 7 March 2026.

## **Professor Huw D Jones**

**Aberystwyth University**

**Expertise: Plant molecular genetics; Biotechnology, Risk assessment**

Huw D Jones is Professor of Translational Genomics for Plant Breeding at IBERS / DLS Aberystwyth University. His research applies biotechnology approaches to study functional genomics in plants with a current focus on gene editing. He also has interests in plant tissue culture, chloroplast transformation, RNAi and in validating promoters for targeting expression to pre-defined tissues. As a university academic he collaborates widely and has published over 110 research papers, books and other articles in plant molecular genetics and biotechnology.

In addition to his research and teaching interests he has expertise in risk assessment and food safety. He is a member of the FSA, Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and

Processes, the Aberystwyth University GM safety committee and served on the GMO panel of European Food Safety Authority from 2009-2018, the last two years as vice-chair. He has also co-authored over 150 scientific risk assessment opinions and guidance documents for EFSA.

Professor Jones has an BSc (Ecology) Loughborough University, MSc (Biotechnology) and a PhD (Molecular Biology and Intracellular Signalling) from Bristol University. He worked at Long Ashton Research Station from 1992 to 1998 and Rothamsted Research from 1998 to 2016.

## **Dr Huw E Jones**

### **Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)**

**Expertise: genetics and genomics applied to livestock production; research, development and commercialisation applied to agriculture**

Huw E Jones is the Head of Industry Impact and Partnerships at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). Huw has over 25 years of experience in research, development, and commercialisation across the agriculture sector, with particular specialism in genetics and genomics applied to livestock production. He has a PhD in genetics from the University of Edinburgh/SRUC and has previously worked in a range of roles across academic research, industry, and intermediate public funded organisations, including as Head of Agriculture for the Knowledge Transfer Network, and Chief Technology Office for Roslin Technologies.

He has published several papers on livestock genetics and genomics in scientific journals and has played a leading role in three large EU Framework Program funded R&D projects applied to genetics and genomics across a range of livestock species. Huw was a Board member of the EU-Farm Animal Breeding Technology Platform (FABRE-TP) for seven years. He is also a member of the UK Expert Committee on Genetics applied to Livestock and Equines (UKGLE).

## **Professor Peter Lund**

### **University of Birmingham**

**Expertise: molecular biology, genomics, systems biology, synthetic biology**

Peter Lund is Emeritus Professor of Molecular Microbiology at the University of Birmingham. Before his retirement he worked in the School of Biosciences and Institute of Microbiology and Infection. His research was in the area of bacterial stress responses, using methods from biophysics to large scale post-genomic data analysis to understand the ways in which organisms perceive and respond to stress. His work was funded by a variety of sources including BBSRC, the Leverhulme Trust, COST, and the Darwin Trust of Edinburgh. Particular areas of interest were bacterial responses to low pH, responses of pathogens to stresses in the human gut, the mechanisms and roles of molecular chaperones, and the evolution and engineering of stress resistance. He continues to publish papers in these areas, but no longer receives any research funding.

Before his appointment at Birmingham, he did research in agricultural biotechnology in the USA, working on introducing traits such as fungal resistance and frost protection into plants. He has a long-standing interest in the application of molecular biology methods in agriculture and food. He was a member of the Food Ethics Council from 1999 to 2008\* and of the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP from 2001 to 2007). He is currently a member of the HSE's Safety Advisory Committee on Genetic Modification, and is a co-opted *ex officio* member of ACNFP. Peter was first appointed to ACRE on 1 October 2014 and this term runs until 30 September 2024.

## **Professor Andrew Millar**

**University of Edinburgh**

**Expertise: plant molecular genetics, research data management and science policy**

Andrew Millar has a background in plant molecular genetics and is currently the Chair of Systems Biology at the School of Biological Sciences, University of Edinburgh. His main research has studied how plant cells build their 24-hour clock, how the clock is adjusted and how it affects plant growth. His research group used genetic techniques including mutation and transgenesis, along with mathematical modelling, to understand the dynamic regulation of the plant clockwork. He started this programme at the Rockefeller University, New York, and moved to the Universities of Virginia (USA) and Warwick (UK), spanning thirty years to his current position. His group currently works on data management, helping biologists to adopt the FAIR principles for sharing research data. Andrew previously served as the Chief Scientific Advisor for the Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture to the Scottish Government, and serves on the Council of UKRI-BBSRC until 2024.

## **Professor Ben Raymond**

**University of Exeter**

**Expertise: microbiology and entomology**

Ben Raymond Professor of Ecology and Evolution at the University of Exeter. His research specialises in the evolution and ecology of microbes and biocontrol agents with a focus on the evolution of resistance to biopesticides and antibiotics. He is an expert on the biology and ecology of the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis*, the organism that is the main source of the key active ingredients for genetically modified insect resistant crops. Following a PhD in Evolutionary Biology and Entomology at the University of York Ben moved to the Centre of Ecology and Hydrology, Oxford to work on insect pathogens before working at Imperial College and taking up a NERC fellowship at Oxford. He has been a Lecturer and Senior Lecturer posts at Royal Holloway and Imperial College.

He is member of Royal Entomological Society, the Microbiology Society, and the Society for Invertebrate Pathology. Ben has received research funding from Bayer Crop Science in

the past as well as a BBSRC industrial partnership award with Corteva Agriscience and PhD funding from the Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board, all these projects are exploring ways of increasing the killing power of insect pathogens via artificial selection in the laboratory. Other current research interests include exploring the biology of *B. thuringiensis* and identifying bacteriophage that can be used in antibiotic resistance management and a collaboration with social scientists that is exploring risk assessment frameworks for gene drive technologies in mosquitoes (funded by the British Academy). Ben was reappointed to ACRE in on 8 March 2023 and this term runs until 7 March 2026.

## **Dr Andrew Wilcox**

**Agriculture and Environment Department, Harper Adams University**

**Expertise: sustainable agriculture and agricultural ecology**

Andy Wilcox is head of the Agriculture and Environment Department at Harper Adams University. He originally trained as a plant ecologist and over the last 30 years has developed expertise in both sustainable agriculture and also the application of new technologies within agricultural systems. In his current role at Harper Adams University, he is responsible for directing curriculum content and delivery with specific reference to sustainable agriculture and land use. He also facilitates the Department's research and knowledge transfer within this area. Andy's personal research interests include the conservation of farmland biodiversity and the application of agri-tech and precision farming within sustainable land use systems. Andy was reappointed to ACRE on 8 March 2023 and this term runs until 7 March 2026.

## **ACRE members' interests**

ACRE members are required to declare their interests to identify areas that might conflict with the business of the Committee. ACRE has open and transparent working practices to deal with the infrequent conflicts of interest that do arise. Members' interests are outlined below. They include things such as involvement in companies, partnerships, trusts or other bodies of which the member is the paid employee, partner, or proprietor; directorships of companies; membership of local authorities, health authorities and trusts, training and enterprise councils, and the Magistrate's bench; and where they might be affected by the work and advice of the body.

### **Professor Jim Dunwell**

Commercial interests:

- Syngenta – pension

Non-commercial interests:

- University of Reading (USS) – pension

- University of the West Indies – external examiner

Partner's interests:

- None

## **Dr Kathy Bamford**

Commercial interests:

- Pfizer, Pharmacia, Wyeth, Gilead, Baxter, Bayer, Astellas – advisory boards, expert panel, review
- Pharmacia, Baxter – research funding (investigator lead)

Non-commercial interests:

- Royal Cornwall Hospitals Trust – Employee
- Royal College of Pathologists – examiner, member of national quality assurance advisory panels for microbiology
- UK-CRC, Wrexham GI Society, HHTRC – research funding
- Society for general microbiology – member, representative on national quality assurance advisory panels for microbiology
- Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust – employee
- Imperial College – visiting Professor
- NIHR HTA – panel member

Partner's interests:

- None

## **Professor Huw D Jones**

Commercial interests:

- None

Non-commercial interests:

- Employment; Aberystwyth University
- Member; Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes, and PGT sub-committee FSA

- Member of the BBSRC-Institutes Policy Forum
- Horizon / UKRI; funding for research
- Fellow of the Royal Society of Biology
- External PhD viva examiner for various UK and overseas Universities: receiving a small honorarium and expenses
- Small payments for academic book royalties and editing
- Member of the EPSO Plants for the Future, Gene editing working group
- Member of the Plants for the Future, European Technology Platform
- Editorial Board member: aBIOTECH journal, GM Crops and Food journal

Partner's interests:

- None

## **Dr Huw E Jones**

Commercial interests:

- Employed as Head of Industry Impact and Partnerships, SRUC
- Non-Executive Director of Mi:RNA

Non-commercial interests:

- Member of the British Society of Animal Science
- Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute

Partner's interests:

- None

## **Professor Peter Lund**

Commercial interests:

- None

Non-commercial interests:

- None

Partner's interests:

- None

## **Professor Andrew Millar**

Commercial interests:

- Unpaid scientific adviser to UK startup company LeafyColl Ltd

Non-commercial interests:

- University of Edinburgh – employee
- Funding for research – UKRI-BBSRC; UKRI-MRC; Wellcome Trust
- Member of UKRI-BBSRC Council (until April 2024)
- Fellow of the Royal Society and Royal Society of Edinburgh

Partner's interests:

- Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh

## **Professor Ben Raymond**

Commercial interests:

Raymond, B. Crickmore, N. Biopesticides (2019). International PCT patent number WO 2019/030529A1

Non-commercial interests:

- Oxitec – Co-investigator in prior BBSRC LINK grant
- BBSRC Industrial Partnership with Corteva Agriscience (a division of DowDuPont) – funding for research
- UKRI – peer review college member
- Bayer Crop Science – funding for research
- Koppert Biological Systems – research collaboration (in kind support only)

Partner's interests:

- None



## **Dr Andrew Willcox**

Commercial interests:

- None

Non-commercial interests:

- Harper Adams University – employee

Partner's interests:

- None