

Trustee's Profile

The Morley Agricultural Foundation is run by a Board of Trustees, appointed by an Advisory Council. Morley News catches up with TMAF Trustee John Wallace and asks about his background and association with the charity.

What's your role at TMAF?

I was originally on the Executive Committee of the Morley Research Centre and have been a director of The Morley Agricultural Foundation since its inception in 2003. I have special responsibility for the farm and work closely with our farm manager David Jones on cropping, sales, machinery purchases and other farm related matters.

Do you come from a farming background?

I've been a farmer for my entire working life based at Coney Weston in Suffolk. As well as farming I've had a number of other roles including chairman of Suffolk NFU, chairman of the now defunct MAFF Minister's

Regional Panel as well as spending 16 years as a member of St. Edmundsbury Borough Council.

I'm a director of Wallace Daniels Ltd, a joint farming venture formed in 2008. Alongside my co-director, Andrew Daniels, we farm over 1,200 ha (3,000 acres) with eight different landlords plus an 850 sow outdoor pig unit. Our cropping for 2013 includes winter wheat, spring barley, oilseed rape, sugar beet and parsley.

Why did you get involved with Morley?

I'm a great believer in making use of independent research in agriculture which is what TMAF stands for. I think that the improvements to the quantity

and quality of our food supplies that modern technologies have delivered have been dismissed far too readily and want to be part of the process of reversing that trend and promoting those successes. Farmers and agri-science researchers face an enormous challenge to sustainably increase future production.

**Are you passionate about food and farming?
Do you think you could contribute to TMAF?
If you are interested in becoming an Advisory Council Member please contact David Pask by email (david.pask@tmaf.co.uk) or phone 01953 859630.**

Come meet with us

If you are looking for a modern meeting room for your business or organisation TMAF's Morley Business Centre could be the answer.

Our meeting room can accommodate up to 50 people with plenty of parking and a stunning rural location. Hire includes chairs and tables, in a layout to suit your needs, and presentation equipment. Recent users include British Beet Research Organisation, Harper Adams University, Soil and Water Management Centre, Agrovista and Morley Primary School.

Opened in Christmas 2008 the Centre includes office space for TMAF and Morley Farms, as well as NIAB TAG regional staff and trials team. Its environmental credentials compare favourably to Morley Research Centre's original offices in The Old Rectory along the road. The Centre is well insulated with underfloor heating run by a ground source heat pump. And be prepared for no light switches; the lights come on automatically when they detect movement in the room.

To hire the Morley Business Centre meeting room contact David Pask (david.pask@tmaf.co.uk)



THE
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www.tmaf.co.uk

College challenge for Morley Farms

Running a commercial farm at an agricultural college is a challenge few farm businesses would relish; balancing a teaching resource alongside the practical day-to-day farm requirements. But TMAF's Morley Farms has been successfully doing just that for the past 12 years at Easton College Farm near Norwich.

Due to economies of scale Morley Farms, using its own machinery, is able to profitably contract-farm the arable land far more efficiently than the college could. But the farm gets pulled in many directions by the teaching departments.

"While the farmers want to cut the hedges and grow crops the gamekeepers want to keep pheasants and let hedges grow. Livestock students want stubble turnips, maize and Lucerne; arable students want wheat, barley and

oilseed rape. The arboriculturist wants to cut every tree down, the conservationist wants to plant more," explains TMAF farm manager David Jones.

"We also have to accommodate the equine students exercising their horses, sports students irrigating the sports field, and small animal-care students walking dogs everywhere whilst the bursar has his eye on a new house-building project."

Unsurprisingly with so many competing enterprises the farm is not commercially viable, but is the ideal opportunity for students to become familiar with many of its tasks and management practices. This can mean farming can be a bit stop-start as students come out to the field to see what is happening. Field operations may stop for 10 minutes or so whilst the lecturer and farm-staff explain why and what is happening. David also goes to the



Easton College machinery demo yard

college every month as a visiting lecturer.

In 2012 Easton College merged with Suffolk's Otley College to form Easton and Otley College. A similar relationship is developing with a local farmer near Otley who can offer insight to up-to-date farm practices and management.

www.easton-college.ac.uk
www.otleycollege.ac.uk

Talking about food and farming

Confident communication skills are vital to the careers of today's promising young agriculturists. The John Forrest Memorial Award recognises this need and provides free training to eight students each year, supported by The Felix Cobbold Trust and The Morley Agricultural Foundation.

The course takes place over three days each January and includes topics such as dealing with the press, interview techniques, photography, powerpoint skills, and film-making. Run by Green Shoots Productions it is hosted by NIAB in Cambridge.

The course participants this year were Scott Hayles, Tom Blanchard, Greg Colebrook, Stephanie Abbott, Joshua Murphy, Phoebe Wingate, James Forrest, and Charles Bracey, so keep an eye out for these names again over the next few years.



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THE
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Registered charity
no: 1097174



Opening the farmgate on a Sunday

David Jones, farm manager at TMAF's Morley Farms, is East Anglia's new regional co-ordinator for the successful national *Open Farm Sunday* event. His role is to support LEAF's efforts across the region, providing support materials, tips and information to farmers on how to make their farm event a great success.

The new position takes up about five days a year meeting new people and promoting the event. But David also sees it as a great opportunity for promote TMAF throughout Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.

"We hosted a farmer training event in Essex in February and have another one at Morley in April with up to 20 new participants coming along. We cover topics such as advertising and promoting the event including dealing with nobody turning up or a more common concern of what to do if too many turn up," explains David.

He also provides journalists with leads to help maximise event press coverage. LEAF's efforts in co-ordinating all these farms opening on the same day means everyone gets swept along with the media coverage and promotion.

But David's favourite role is encouraging new ideas for activities and exhibits to help get the food and farming message across and tell the story without the jargon. "And of course there is the very important health and safety aspect, covering how to make the day as enjoyable and safe as possible for the visitors," he says.



Open Farm Sunday

Over 350 farms of every shape, size and type from across the country will open their gates to the public on Open Farm Sunday 9th June 2013. The aim is to show how food is grown and how our countryside is cared for. Considered the farming industry's annual open day it is co-ordinated by LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming).

For more information go to www.farmsunday.org

Joining The Morley Agricultural Foundation

If you are interested in supporting our work and wish to become a *Friend of The Morley Agricultural Foundation* please contact TMAF Secretary David Pask by email (david.pask@tmaf.co.uk) or phone 01953 859630.

There are no costs involved and TMAF is actively seeking new supporters who are part of the agricultural industry and are genuinely interested in the Foundation's work.

Developing novel farming systems for the future

TMAF and the JC Mann Trust are funding innovative research into developing new approaches to our traditional farming systems to cope with the challenges of food security and climate change.

The New Farming Systems study is being carried out by the crop research organisation NIAB TAG under its National Agronomy Centre (NAC) platform. This is an open initiative that makes NAC findings widely available to all UK farmers. NIAB TAG's project manager Ron Stobart explains that the requirement for sustainable, resilient and productive farming systems has never been more important, but in the future inputs will become increasingly restricted, energy more expensive and climate ever more variable.

"Our TMAF-funded research is taking a fresh look at how we use rotations and inputs in our current farming practices, and evaluating a range of novel approaches to farming systems. Our findings should better enable farmers to make informed decisions regarding their rotations and the further development of their own farming systems in response to our changing climate and markets and the need for ever more resilient approaches."

The study began in 2007 and is based on a series of large-scale, replicated long-term field experiments examining fertility building, soil amendments and cultivations systems. Results have so far highlighted benefits to soil structure and rotational margins when growing cover crops as well as



Viewing the range of research plots at the NAC Open Day



NIAB TAG's Project Manager Ron Stobart

soil fertility and yield benefits from the use of soil amendments. Research looking at cultivation and rotation systems is also demonstrating differences between them over time suggesting performance changes in the systems in the longer term.

For more information on the New Farming Systems study contact Ron Stobart at NIAB TAG Morley on 01953 713200.



National Agronomy Centre

OPEN DAY

Morley Farms
Thursday 20 June
11.00am - 5.00pm

A range of indoor exhibits, field based demonstrations and seminars outlining the latest yield, soil and environmental research for arable farmers across East Anglia, including wheat and oilseed rape variety and fungicide trials.

Hosted by NIAB TAG in association with a range of independent research organisations and other industry experts, the NAC platform is supported by The Morley Agricultural Foundation.

Free and open to all, booking essential, register online at www.niab.com or phone 01223 342495.