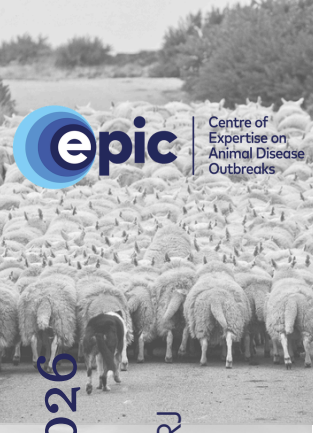


EPIC IV Conference: 15th and 16th September 2026

1599 at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, 232-242 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5RJ

Speaker profiles:

Prof. Maggie Mort

Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Lancaster University

Voices of Experience: the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease Disaster

A former journalist and the first in my family to go to university, I have a longstanding interest in citizen engagement in science and technology, most recently in disaster studies and social/material vulnerability. These interests are reflected in my recent publications, 'Displacement: critical insights from flood affected children', and 'From Victims to Actors'. I have worked predominently with ethnographic and participative methodologies, most recently in relation to disaster, risk and emergency management. I coordinated the EU Horizon2020 project, CUIDAR: Cultures of Disaster Resilience among children and young people across Europe. This work follows directly from our ESRC Urgency research: the first in depth exploration of children's experiences of flooding in the UK. It also follows our ethnography of the 2001 Foot and Mouth Disease disaster in Cumbria. Working in the field of Science and Technology Studies I have researched citizen, patient and workers' experience of technological change in healthcare such as the development of telemedicine and telecare, and what counts as innovation in health science and technology.

Prof. Christine Middlemiss

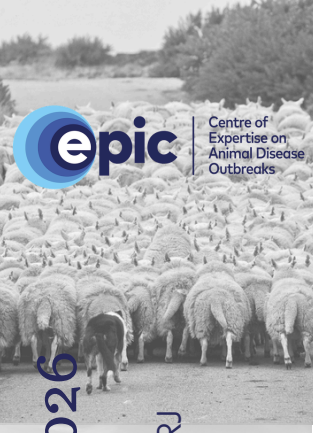
UK Chief Veterinary Officer

From 2001 to today: how the outbreak shaped today's preparedness and response systems (title TBC)

Christine Middlemiss is the UK's Chief Veterinary Officer. She was appointed on 1 March 2018 having been working as the CVO in New South Wales, Australia since July 2016 where she led major improvements to biosecurity across many farming sectors. This work included implementation of new outcome focused, risk based biosecurity legislation; online animal certification processes; improving evidence and risk based disease control approaches.

Prior to moving to Australia, Christine led Defra's Animal Traceability and Public Health policy team, and also previously surveillance including detection and response to new and emerging diseases such as Schmallenberg and Porcine Epidemic Diarrhoea. She is an experienced veterinarian.

Before joining the UK government services in 2008, Christine worked in private practice with specific interest in research, meat processing and livestock genetics for a number of years in Scotland and the north of England prior to joining the Animal Health Agency (now part of Animal and Plant Health Agency) as a Divisional Veterinary Manager in Scotland. She has been appointed as a Visiting Professor of Practice at Harper Adams University. Christine comes from a farming family in the Borders of Scotland, with a background in beef cattle and sheep.



EPIC IV Conference: 15th and 16th September 2026

1599 at the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons, 232-242 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5RJ

Speaker profiles:

Prof. Mark Woolhouse

Usher Institute, The University of Edinburgh

The next 25 years: how the events of 2001 changed the relationship between science and policy in the UK

Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology, University of Edinburgh Mark Woolhouse is Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the University of Edinburgh. He studied biology and ecology at the Universities of Oxford and York and Queen's in Canada, then held Research Fellowships at the University of Zimbabwe, Imperial College London and Oxford, before moving to Edinburgh in 1997. His research interests concern the population dynamics of pathogens, especially those associated with antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and emerging infectious diseases, applying ecological and evolutionary approaches to combat threats to both human and animal health. He is an expert on the epidemiology and transmission of AMR between livestock and humans, advocating a One Health approach to reducing the burden of resistance. He has written a number of high-profile articles on global policy on AMR. He advises both national and international agencies (including DEFRA, FSA, WHO, US Institute of Medicine) and was awarded an OBE in 2002. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and of the Academy of Medical Sciences. He is also a member of the Scientific Pandemic Influenza Group on Modelling (SPI-M) and Scottish Covid-19 Advisory Group.

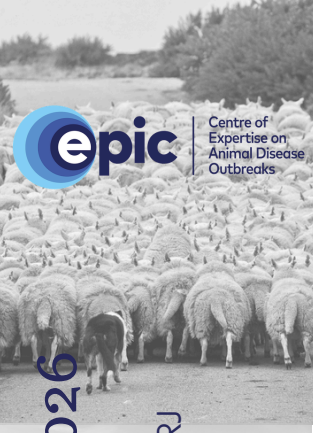
Dr Sibylle Mohr

School of Biodiversity, One Health & Veterinary Medicine, University of Glasgow

Revisiting Standstills and FMD Risk in Scotland, 25 years on

I am an EPIC Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow, School of Biodiversity, One Health and Veterinary Medicine. Within EPIC, my focus is on the dynamics, impacts and control of the UK's major livestock and zoonotic disease risks as well as established endemic diseases such as sheep scab. I am a future lead in, 'Early Warning Systems for Zoonotic and Animal Disease Threats', where we develop tools for early warning systems and investigate new technologies for the detection and control of emerging disease threats. My other main areas of research in EPIC are (1) simulation modelling to inform current animal health policies in Scotland (I am part of the Scottish Government's ' Markets Working Group'), (2) provide disease outbreak response such as veterinary risk assessment in the ongoing avian influenza outbreak, and (3) data responsibilities for the EPIC database servers in Glasgow and the EPIC data pipeline.

Though I have been working in (veterinary) epidemiology for a number of years now, my background is in computer science (MSc.) and cognitive psychology (PhD.), with a focus on network dynamics. Before I started to work in EPIC (January 2014), I used to work as a researcher at the Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology, University of Glasgow, where I also completed my PhD in 2013.



EPIC IV Conference: 15th and 16th September 2026

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Speaker profiles:

Dr Julie Stirling

School of Veterinary Medicine, SRUC

EPIC's data repository - progress, opportunities and challenges

I am a research fellow based at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) in Inverness. My research background is in molecular virology, bioinformatics and cell biology. Currently my research focus is on using data science methodology to analyse large data sets. Recent projects have included the characterisation of the Scottish sheep slaughter population and the use of Scottish sheep movements to inform sheep scab control activities.

My role in EPIC is as data manager, leading EPICs dedicated data team. Timely access to current, well-curated data sets from a range of data providers is critical to EPIC's roles in support of SG policy. The data team perform a wide range of activities from building and maintaining the infrastructure for the EPIC data repository, developing tools for data analysis and processing and sourcing data from a variety of governmental and industry partners.

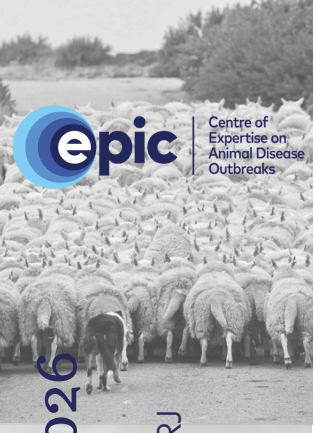
Dr Davide Pagnossin

Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Systems,
The University of Edinburgh

Evidence, uncertainty, and urgency: Veterinary Risk Assessment for policy support

I am a veterinary epidemiologist committed to translating scientific knowledge into practical solutions to mitigate the societal impact of animal infectious diseases. As a Knowledge Broker for EPIC, I provide epidemiological evidence to support Scottish government in preparing for and responding to exotic animal disease outbreaks. My responsibilities include conducting veterinary risk assessments and fostering communication and knowledge exchange among EPIC researchers, Scottish government policymakers, and other stakeholders.

I graduated from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Padua in 2016. Following a year of clinical work, I pursued a PhD in Infectious Diseases at the University of Glasgow. My doctoral research focused on using whole genome sequence analysis to understand the spread of pathogenic streptococci in both humans and animals in Scotland. Upon completing my doctorate, I transitioned into a postdoctoral role with the University of Glasgow, conducting research in Scotland and Tanzania. In my postdoctoral position, I gained experience in various aspects of veterinary epidemiology and wildlife conservation, including fieldwork, quantitative data analysis, bioinformatic analysis, and the application of molecular epidemiology techniques.



EPIC IV Conference: 15th and 16th September 2026

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Speaker profiles:

Dr Grant Henderson

Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland

Quantifying Live Epidemics using Bayesian Inference

I joined BioSS and the EPIC project in February 2025 as a researcher in inference and learning for complex stochastic systems. Stochastic, or random, systems are widespread in nature. One application case is in describing the temporal and spatial evolution of epidemics in a variety of populations. I work closely with EPIC colleagues developing and testing tools for application to animal disease outbreaks. We particularly focus on performing Bayesian Inference upon (typically) limited datasets describing key outbreak observations, a technique that enables us to infer the model parameters of the outbreak. Knowledge of these parameters is critical – it opens the potential to predict future epidemic behaviour during outbreaks, and to assess the potential efficacy of implementing disease control measures.

Before joining BioSS, I was based at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. After attaining a BSc with First Class Honours in Physics (awarded 2019), I joined the Structured Light (FOAM) group for postgraduate studies theoretically and numerically investigating light-ultracold matter interactions (awarded PhD 2023), and additionally received Strathclyde's 2023 EPSRC Doctoral Prize which funded my postdoctoral research until joining BioSS.

Prof. Iain McKendrick

Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland

Modellers and modelling: findings from the ELUCIDATE project

As co-director of EPIC, I am responsible for Quantitative Innovation and Operations. I specialise in animal health and welfare and coordinate the work of EPIC's quantitative scientists, while also supporting activities that promote information sharing and collaboration across different partner organizations. Aside from EPIC's corporate governance, I worked with the Scottish Environment, Food, and Agriculture Research Institutes, as well as participated in work on other projects and centres funded by the Scottish Government's Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services Division. Within EPIC, I lead Challenge 6 which focuses on data management.

In addition to my work with EPIC, I am progressing with a long-term project to promote a better interpretation of veterinary anthelmintic test results using a comprehensive, statistically coherent framework. These ideas have been adopted as part of new guidelines to be issued by the World Association for the Advancement of Veterinary Parasitology. These guidelines will be aimed at the interpretation of test data when seeking to identify anthelmintic resistance.

Speaker profiles:

Prof. Glenn Marion

Biomathematics and Statistics Scotland

Quantifying Live Epidemics using Bayesian Inference

With colleagues and collaborators in BioSS and beyond I aim to show and extend the power of mathematical modelling to impact on societal challenges through real world application and development of improved methods.

Complex systems: Modelling interacting processes enables understanding of emergent properties critical to addressing the 'law' of unintended consequences. This work aims to create tools and insights for better management, for example how culling and surveillance for wildlife disease control can fail.

Statistical inference for process models uses field or operational data to, estimate quantities too costly to measure directly, make predictions, and test scientific hypotheses. This work has led to development of methods for model choice, model assessment and faster mixing in data augmentation Markov Chain Monte Carlo for Markov and semi-Markov processes. This research improved inference for: phylodynamics; spatial disease risk in small or ongoing epidemics; host genetic effects from epidemic data, and; demography and disease dynamics from capture mark recapture data. Ongoimg work is creating software applications; improving particle filtering, and creating novel epidemic inference methods for when the population at risk unknown.

Dr Tarek Soliman

School of Natural and Social Sciences, SRUC

Assessing the economic impact of a hypothetical FMD outbreak on Scottish beef & dairy sectors: Insights from farm-level and sector-wide models

I'm an applied economist at the Scottish Rural College (SRUC) and EPIC. I am also a fellow of the Scottish Environment, Food and Agriculture Research Institutes (SEFARI).

In my research, I have applied my knowledge of economic theory and analysis to problems surrounding natural resource management, environmental protection, and agricultural production. My research interests include biosecurity, climate change mitigation, sustainable land use planning, agricultural productivity and efficiency, and water quality management.

I hold a PhD degree from Wageningen University, the Netherlands. I have developed economic simulation models that assess the effects of proposed interventions to inform policy development. I have worked extensively with government and non-government stakeholders in the UK, EU, Southeast Asia, and New Zealand.

Speaker profiles:

Dr Shailesh Shrestha

School of Natural and Social Sciences, SRUC

Assessing the economic impact of a hypothetical FMD outbreak on Scottish beef & dairy sectors: Insights from farm-level and sector-wide models

Shailesh is is an agricultural policy analyst at SRUC. His research interest lies in impact assessment of changes that directly and indirectly affect agricultural farms such as changes in policies, market and climate. He is also keen on looking at the farm's responses to such changes, and specialises in farm level modelling and farm system analysis.

Dr Claire Hardy

Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences, The James Hutton Institute

Hard to reach, but with a voice to be heard: Positive Engagement with livestock keepers around emerging disease

Dr Claire Hardy is an interdisciplinary scientist specialising in social research, looking at learning and change and the use of virtual tools for stakeholder engagement. Her work focuses on developing virtual tools to enhance learning and stakeholder engagement. The tools consist of the Hutton DigiEnvironments, including the DigiForest, DigiFarm and DigiCroft, simulated platforms depicting generic environments hosting omni-direction videos of innovations. The technology is being explored to enhance scenario planning discussion, visualising models for woodland expansion projects. Additional tools that are being created and developed include virtual tours, using virtual reality technology of specific landscapes and environments, to allow virtual interactions and capture user feedback, further developing end user experience and stakeholder feedback.

Speaker profiles:

Dr Don King

The Pirbright Institute

Future threats and tools for FMD (title tbc)

Dr Donald King is Head of the Vesicular Disease Reference Laboratory Group and leads the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) World Reference Laboratory for foot-and-mouth disease (WRLFMD). He has a background in veterinary virology and immunology (University of Leeds, University of California, Davis, USA), and has research interests in understanding the processes that drive the evolution of positive-stranded genome viruses such as foot-and-mouth disease virus (FMDV). From a practical perspective, work within the group also develops and applies new technologies for the detection and characterisation of important livestock disease agents such as FMDV. These methods underpin the routine diagnostic work of the FMD Reference Laboratory at The Pirbright Institute and are also used to monitor the global patterns of disease, and to recognise new emerging viral lineages that pose threats to the UK and Europe.

Don is an Associate Editor for the Journal of Virological Methods and participates in European collaborative research projects that aim to develop new diagnostic tools (Rapidia-Field), and to use next-generation sequencing approaches for molecular epidemiology. Don is the OIE expert for foot-and-mouth disease and swine vesicular disease.

Dr Jasmina Panovska-Griffiths

The Queen's College, Oxford University

Future directions in tools and methods (title TBC)

I am a Lecturer in Probability and Statistics at The Queen's College, Oxford University and an Associate Professor in Mathematics for Public Health Policy Support at the Pandemic Sciences Institute at the University of Oxford.
I was at Queen's during my undergraduate and graduate studies in Mathematics at Oxford University between 1996 and 2005. I completed my DPhil in computational mathematics in 2005. Following academic posts at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and at UCL, in June 2021 I moved back to Oxford, to take up a Lecturer post at Queen's Pathogen Dynamics Group.

I now lead my own Mathematical Modelling for Public Health Policy Support group spread across the Pandemic Science Institute, University of Oxford and the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA). My group comprises modellers and data-scientists and DPhil students. I am a Fellow of The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications, The Royal Statistical Society and The Royal Society for Public Health, and I am on the advisory body of The Academy for Mathematical Sciences. I am also actively involved in promoting mathematics and statistics as well as other STEM subjects across schools in the UK.

Additional panel session profiles:

Alix Ritchie

Director, Framstrong

Alix lives and works on the family farm in Perthshire and has developed an understanding of agriculture, education and skills development through working with SAYFC, RHET and most recently QMS as Health & Education Manager. Passionate about rural life, Alix strives to support farmers and crofters to improve their wellbeing.

Through my Nuffield Farming Scholarship, I'm exploring social wellbeing in agriculture, a topic I believe is fundamental to the future of our industry. I'm passionate about supporting the people behind the produce and creating space for conversations around wellbeing, connection, and community. My aim is to share stories and practical approaches that can help build a more connected and resilient agricultural workforce.