

## Thank you from the President

If I had to describe this past year, I would say it has been one of determination to get on with the things that matter to us. We had a record-breaking County Honey Show with 300 entries, which demonstrated the willingness of members to be supportive to a long established event that informs the public of our skills. The Show Secretary, Michael Webb, and the committee are to be applauded for the many hours of work both on the day, and behind the scenes. The fabulous volunteers worked ceaselessly. A lovely comment came from a new beekeeper who said she had enjoyed every minute of it all. She had learned a lot and met some wonderful people (we will make sure she volunteers this year).



Another great landmark event was of course the Conference. Staunchly taken on and run on behalf of the County by Epping Forest Division. The first conference after a two year break due to Covid restrictions. The venue was Copped Hall. We had a day of interesting and very knowledgeable speakers interspersed by lunch, and it being Remembrance Sunday, the 2 minutes silence at 11.00. A huge thankyou to Epping Forest for all their hard work and for making everyone welcome.

This year, on behalf of the County, the conference will be organised by Southend Division. The venue will be in Shenfield on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2023. The theme is '*Beekeeping in a Changing Climate*'. (Title subject to change). County conferences are really not to be missed and the organising division will be working tirelessly to give you an enjoyable day.

The County President traditionally sits in at the CEC meetings and one of the issues that has arisen over the years is the difficulty in filling posts. I am not sure if I give comfort or despair when I say this is not a recent problem. I can't pretend to know the answer, however, from my own experiences in various roles both Divisional and County I have learned more about beekeeping than I would have from being a non-participant. There are always people willing to give guidance when you lack a bit of knowledge and need advice. The idea of taking on a role is, I promise you, worse than it actually is and you can often shadow someone before dipping your toe in the water.

The whole of the EBKA CEC and the Governance sub-committee work very hard to resolve issues that impact upon us as members. Jane Ridler, as Chair of the CEC, presides and guides the meetings with great skill. The role requires multivarious skills usually acquired from being proactive on various committees both internal and external. Thank you, Jane for your tenacity and hard work. Thank you also to the Trustees, CEC members and officers of all Divisions, and our members, without whom we would not be able to function as a charity.

Thank you. last but certainly not least, to Vanessa Wilkinson, who as General Secretary works extremely efficiently keeping it all together.

Jean Smye HCLM  
EBKA President