

## **Training and Education Report**

During 2022/23, two beginners courses were organised and run for a total of twenty four people. Feedback was good overall, but as ever there were good points made which are useful for future courses. Where possible, mentors were provided for new beekeepers when requested, but it proved difficult to satisfy all the demands. It would be very helpful if more members could volunteer to mentor new beekeepers. New beekeepers were able to obtain nucs through the association.

Some practical sessions were arranged and were appreciated by the new beekeepers.

For 2024, Kate Atchley has taken on the role of lead trainer with John stepping back this year.

### **John Wilkinson.**

The 2024 course is a single course of up to 28 participants. Since mid-2023 preparation for this year's Beginners Beekeeping Course has been underway.

First we sought more members for our tutors team which now includes Mark Barnett, Julie McDiarmid, Anne McClelland, Heather Taylor and Lindsay Craig. Each brings some fresh and valuable experience to the course which is being reviewed and updated as I write.

The course is now full, with the largest group yet taught by BBA in a year signed up: 28 eager would-be beekeepers. A waiting list for next year's course has been opened for those interested.

Although the course material still includes a hefty handout of more than 55 pages, and slides to support each session, we will be placing greater emphasis on the basics of beekeeping. To help us do this, Learning Objectives have been added throughout, a quiz will be offered between sessions and we will hold breakout groups for questions and discussion, with tutors alongside.

Apiary visits are being arranged for the Spring, after which we hope to provide experienced mentors for those who wish to take on bees this year.

Meanwhile none of this would have been possible without the able support of Secretary Fiona Hawke, Treasurer John Dow and (then) Membership Secretary Martin Stainer, all of whom played their part in signing up participants. Very many thanks.

I look forward to meeting our 2024 "beeks" (jargon for beginner beekeepers!) on 4 February and wish you all much delight in bees for many years to come.

**Kate Atchley Lead Tutor**