

**Mr. Mayor, Presidents, Past Presidents, Fellows, Guests, Ladies and gentleman,**

Thank you for accepting me as your 36<sup>th</sup> National President. Firstly can I thank Clive and his family for a great evening and to everyone involved in the organisation. I would also like to thank Alun and Ellen from the Admin team who have turned things around.

My theme for my time ahead is TOGETHER STRONGER, it worked for Wales in the Euro Championships, why not for the BIFD?.

The BIFD has had some rocky times in the past but let's put that to one side, work together and make the BIFD the leaders in education, being there for our members. We are unique, as our members are individuals and not companies, your commitment is important.

I would like at this point to offer my hand of friendship to all our kindred associations and maybe we could join together in the future for the good of our profession.

During my year I will try to visit every region. I will be at the end of a phone/email if you have concerns, at the end of the day it's our organisation so let's pull together.

I would like to thank my family, special friends and staff some who are unable to be here tonight for their continued support through the year ahead, I would also like to wish my youngest son Joseph a happy 8<sup>th</sup> birthday for yesterday, would you all join me in singing happy birthday to Joseph.

As you all know on this day in 1605 Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament! So to put a different twist on the well-known poem....

Remember remember the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, education, training and commitment. I see no reason why these values of the BIFD should ever be forgotten.

My Conference weekend will be held on the 20-22<sup>nd</sup> October 2017 in Maidstone at the Mercure Hotel also known as the Great Danes Hotel.

### **My chosen charity will be "Holding On Letting Go"**

Holding On Letting Go is a charity which supports bereaved children, young people, (6-16) and their families and carers in Kent and Medway who have experienced the death of an important person in their lives.

Children, young people, parents and carers are offered support at our bereavement weekend programmes which are held throughout the year and are non-residential.