# May 2015 Newsletter

By the time you read this column I will have served as a member of NHDC in the Knebworth Ward for (nearly) a whole year. It has been an eventful one for matters that concern the District Council: a number of planning applications for major brownfield developments, two solar farm applications, the introduction of Knebworth's first Controlled Parking Zone and the planned move of the GP Surgery.

Of course the biggest issue of all is the ongoing, and 'emerging' Local Plan, which will continue emerging for a considerable time before it is adopted. The current timetable envisages that this will happen in April 2017, two years' from now, but the probability that this timetable will slip must be significant, in the light of the rate of progress so far.

I have done my best to represent the interests of all the residents of the ward so far, and will continue to do so over the course of the next civic year. I hope that my considerably increased experience of being a District councillor will enable me to be no less effective than over the previous twelve months, and hopefully a little bit more effective.

A large number of you have taken the opportunity to contact me, via telephone, email and letter and I can assure you that I read every communication personally, even if occasionally I may not have time to send an individual response. There are, inevitably, many problems that are not amenable to any easy solutions. A considerable part of my postbag is connected to issues around road safety and parking. To this end I am working towards re-starting the Knebworth Parking Initiative Group in the coming year, a forum in which representatives from Knebworwth village can have a dialogue with representatives of NHDC.

As many residents of Knebworth pointed out during the consultation on the Local Plan, it is important that jobs are created locally if we are to avoid having a community in which there is a good balance of local employment and London commuters. NHDC is aware of the importance of local economic activity and is looking for feedback on its Draft Economic Development Strategy – ‘Productive North Herts’. This policy aims to address issues related to growing new and existing businesses across the District. The feedback from the consultation will form a final strategy and action plan to help the economy grow and generate employment opportunities locally. A draft Economic Development Strategy has been published and feedback is encouraged via the Consultations area of the NHDC website, or by post to Economic Development, North Hertfordshire District Council, PO Box 480, Sale, M33 0DE.