# May 2015 Newsletter

By the time you read this, the election to find a member to replace Alan Bardett, my fellow member for the ward will have taken place, and we will all know the identity of his successor. I would like to offer my great thanks to Alan for showing me the ropes and giving me extremely good advice when I was a new councillor only two years ago. Alan continues to be active in the village but will now be able to enjoy a well-earned break from attending regular meetings at the District County Offices in Letchworth. After serving for over fourteen years he deserves it.

Last May I wrote about developments with the Local Plan. The process of producing this proceeds apace, although the record number of responses to the Preferred Options consultation last year has meant that the Planning Policy Officers have had to work some late nights, I'm sure. The volume of responses has resulted in some new, improved, software being installed on the website to present the responses.

As part of the Consultation, a number of new sites have been put forward for review by the officers. They are in the process of being evaluated against exactly the same criteria that were used to select the sites that were included in the Preferred Options consultation. In Knebworth itself, three additional sites have been put forward for consideration for inclusion in the Local Plan. All are currently in the Green Belt, so this is, essentially, a suggestion that they be taken out of the Green Belt. On the document titled "NHDC Local Plan - New Sites 2015" these sites are numbered 334, 335 and 336. They are Cnebba's Field, Old Knebworth, the land to the rear of Redwoods in Deards End Lane, and land east of Old Knebworth lane. The three sites comprise 79 potential dwellings in all, but *only* if the sites are found to have met the criteria for inclusion. No decision on this have yet been made.

I am regularly asked about the status of the new GP surgery. As I understand it, a planning application is due to be made this month, assuming that the new arrangements for the Library are confirmed by HCC in a cabinet meeting scheduled for 28th April. I understand the impatience that people feel about this, but I must emphasise that NHDC is not in any way responsible for any delays.

I will be attending the Annual Parish Meeting on the 4th May. Please see the article from the Parish Council for more details.

***References***

<http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-emerging-policy/draft-local-plan-2011-2031/local-plan-preferred> (click on the text which reads "[New sites 2015 (additional sites submitted since 2013)](http://www.north-herts.gov.uk/sites/northherts-cms/files/Composite%20document%202.pdf)")