**Little Birch Parish council**

Ward member report, January 2016

**Happy New Year!**

It has been a privilege to be your councillor for the last six months and I look forward to working with you again during 2016.

**Neighbourhood development plan**

I wrote in my November 2015 report that ‘Not having a neighbourhood development plan means losing influence over where the housing growth in your area will take place.’ This appears to be coming true with a highly contentious planning application in Aconbury. This application has generated considerable interest both in support of and against the proposal and I have therefore exercised my power to call the case to committee. It will therefore fall to the planning committee of Herefordshire Council to make the final decision in this case.

I would once again urge the Little Birch parish council to move forward with any plans to commence a Neighbourhood development plan. Help is available from Herefordshire Council in the form of grants and also advice and there are now several parishes almost at the stage of adoption. Getting an NDP to the stage of adoption takes many months of work and consultation with the local community.

Several residents have spoken to me about possible planning applications in Little Birch and I believe it is for the people of the parish to decide where new properties should be built. Little Birch is a beautiful and special place and deserves to have the protection of an NDP. Any protection afforded however only comes into force on adoption and this will take time.

**Local transport plan 2016 - 2031**

Herefordshire’s new Local Transport Plan covering the period 2016-2031 is currently in draft form undergoing consultation. The Local Transport Plan sets out the council's strategy for supporting economic growth, improving health and wellbeing and reducing the environmental impacts of transport.

We are seeking your feedback from a questionnaire which will help to prioritise Herefordshire Council's objectives and spending priorities over the next 15 years. This survey will conclude on 29 January 2016 and we would urge you to take part by using the link below:

**https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LTP-Consultation**