



R. A. D. I. O.

RESIDENTS AGAINST DEVELOPMENT IN OTFORD

NEWSLETTER – APRIL 2006

Dear Resident,

As you are aware, the Otford Village Fete will be held on May 29th, so please support the cause. Also, come and see us at the RADIO stall where, you will have the opportunity (via a raffle) to win the **first prize** of a **FAMILY TICKET** (4 people), to see one of the latest blockbuster movies !

In recognition of their efforts, RADIO Distributors who have worked hard delivering various Newsletters and correspondence on our behalf, will enjoy a private Summer BBQ in June.

YOU too can enjoy such benefits in the future, by simply joining this voluntary band of residents ! RADIO can be contacted thus:

Mike Steeden (Membership Sec)	Tel. home	01959 523174
	Tel. mobile	07884 267570

Keith Stockman (Chairman)	Tel. home	01959 523475
	Tel. mobile	07798 767770

OR contact us all at : radio@otford.net

RADIO is forging a relationship with the Otford Society as an important part of our potential. For those who have read the Otford Society April '06 Newsletter, you will see Chairman Ken Gunderson's heartening comments, supporting our initiatives. We thank the Otford Society very much for the recognition.

RADIO has been working 'behind the scenes' lately, in an attempt to keep up with the ever changing and evolving planning Policies set by central Government and indeed, Local Plans drawn up by our very own SDC.

We are currently pressing for the Otford 'Village Design Statement' (VDS) to be completed and hope to have input into the final document. The 'VDS' is a detailed document created by villagers/residents to provide a platform and guide to future planning and development within the village – as envisaged by the local community. Many villages already have, or are in the throes of, developing their own design statements and this is seen very much as the way forward, if we are to stand any chance of protecting our own interests!! Without this, we are far more open to outside influences and SDC less empowered to support us. As we have said many times before – 'THIS IS YOUR VILLAGE' and we therefore welcome any input/ideas on this very important subject.





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An article in the Daily Telegraph (28.01.06) regarding 'garden grab' as it is known, referred to the Private Members Bill, 'Protection of Private Gardens' (Housing Development)', submitted to Parliament by Greg Clark MP (Con. Tunbridge Wells) on this matter. 'Garden grab' is the term used for the current trend of abusing the government designation of all residential gardens being 'brownfield' or 'previously developed' land, regardless of location – even in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Green Belt ! This loophole is seen by developers as a golden opportunity to demolish an existing dwelling and greatly expand development on the site. An absolutely perfect example of this recently is, of course, Laing Homes attempt to develop the Well Road site in Otford.

We have contacted Mr. Clark to offer our support and assistance for his Bill, which will have its second reading in the House in May. In addition, we have recently met with our local MP, Michael Fallon, regarding changes in Government planning policy which may assist our efforts and to seek his support for Mr. Clark's proposed legislation. Mr. Fallon is an enthusiastic supporter and advises that the Bill has extensive cross-party backing.

The other practice we are opposed to, and which is a plague here in our beautiful village, is the 'sub-division' of large gardens to squeeze in additional houses. This is slowly destroying the open nature of our village. Unfortunately, under current planning legislation, this is very difficult to oppose. Nevertheless, this will not stop us trying.

Whilst it must be emphasized that RADIO is principally opposed to inappropriate major development, we nevertheless consider the merits of all significant planning applications that may affect the village. The RADIO committee have discussed and, in certain cases, acted upon the following recent planning issues, following requests from you, the residents:

- Holly House, Shoreham Road.
- The Chicken Farm, Shorehill Lane.
- Frog Farm, Pilgrims Way West.
- Twitton Lane, telephone mast.
- West Kent Cold Store, Dunton Green.

Only if we consider an application inappropriate, after consultation with the local populace, would we make representation. We urge residents to do the same – PEOPLE POWER !!

You are strongly encouraged to join RADIO and to contact us if you feel we can help.

