

Conclusions



▲ A sundial in the village High Street. Villages take time to evolve naturally, and it is essential that new developments are not allowed to be pushed through against the wishes of the community.

The Otford Village Design Statement has been prepared with considerable care to set out the views expressed by the residents of Otford Parish. It seeks:

- to provide a clear statement to the local Planning Authority, developers, planners and residents about how strongly this community feels about the values it places on the integrity and character of the village and its local environment;
- to be positive in its observations but to indicate potential areas of major concern in order to provide future guidance to planners, developers and residents;
- to provide support for the maintenance of the heritage of Otford and of this part of Kent for future generations.

By promoting local distinctiveness and high quality design it appeals to the Planning Authority and potential developers to recognise the inherent distinctiveness of a small rural community such as Otford.

Otford's major priorities are as follows:

- the protection of the integrity of its rural and village identity. The residents of Otford are concerned that the existing green spaces within the village and those between Otford and other communities should be maintained and not eroded by development;
- maintaining its close, natural integration with the surrounding countryside of the Darent Valley and the Vale of Holmesdale;
- ensuring that all development is appropriate and integrates with surrounding property;
- protecting its individual and historic village identity;
- ensuring that any future development respects typical local design materials, features and colouration and incorporates items of the local vernacular style;
- preventing the introduction of inappropriate urban-style, pattern-book or town-house property designs;

- ensuring that all new development allows for the importance of safe pedestrian movement within the village envelope, with a consequent reduction in car transport;
- protecting our green environment, an integral part of our rural heritage.

This Village Design Statement and the Design Principles within it represent the voice of the community. The residents of the parish of Otford trust and expect that the views expressed in this statement will be respected by all whose actions would have an impact upon their village and their lives.

The Otford VDS Design Team, January 2008

▼ Passing on our heritage to the next generation. A detail from the Otford Millennium Mosaic, designed by Oliver Budd.

