



# PAST TO PRESENT

**Skinner's of Tunbridge Wells recently helped to redesign a period property with historical interest in Horsmonden. We spoke to them about the process**

**THE PROPERTY**

A beautiful Grade II Listed property dating back to the 15th Century formerly used as an old Clothmaster's Hall and was once the property of John Austen, a forebear of the famous novelist Jane Austen. He died in 1620. It was during this time that the Kentish 'Broad Cloth' industry reached its peak. The property is a fascinating combination of Tudor, Queen Anne and Georgian styles. Henry VIII owned two cloth mills here, and subsequently the Austen's made cloth for Queen Elizabeth I who visited it in 1573.

**THE BRIEF FROM THE OWNERS**

The owners wanted to take things slowly, working through the house room by room to make sure that the decisions made would stand the test of time and changing fashion. The brief was to remain sympathetic to

the history of the property whilst injecting a more contemporary look with the careful use of colours and textures. The drawing room (featured) which is predominately used by our clients when entertaining needed to be elegant, refined, welcoming and exude an air of calm and tranquility.

**DESCRIBE THE PROCESS**

Communication is essential throughout a design process. Part of our job is to understand our client's lifestyle and interpret their vision and understand what the space will be used for. Consequently each room created and designed by Skinner's of Tunbridge Wells reflects this. The areas finished thus far all have a very definite look and feel to enhance our client's needs and requirements. Although the owners enlisted our help, they had clear ideas of their own likes and dislikes

and were very involved in the decision making from the start to finish.

**WERE THEIR IDEAS EASY TO CREATE?**

Our clients are a pleasure to work with although they have very different tastes to each other which meant that reaching decisions could occasionally take a little longer than usual. However, it is of paramount importance to us that everyone is pleased with the end result as they have to live in the house not us!

**WHAT'S NEXT?**

The next stage of the project will be the master en suite and dressing room although, due to the house being a listed property, planning permission will be required which can occasionally be a somewhat lengthy procedure. We are already collating ideas and along with the clients have a clear vision of how the space will work.

