

**BLAKE EDUCATIONAL TRUST**  
**Report for the Annual Meeting of St Mary's Cogges for year 31/12/2009**

**History** – Started by the Will of William Blake dated 16/04/1693 to pay for the education of poor children in Cogges and Newland. Modernised by a Trust Deed dated 8/02/1860 plus some subsequent documents and included some other non educational charities. At one time the Trust had 3 schools in the area. In 1874 the then Vicar at Cogges gave the Trust what had been the tithe barn to be used as a school plus some land, the other buildings were closed and the Blake school consolidated onto one site. The old school is now the Cogges Church Centre. In 1880 a house was built at the front for the school mistress this was subsequently extended in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the past the old school has had at times over a 100 pupils. The non educational charities mentioned in the 1860 Trust Deed were transferred into the Cogges Welfare Trust in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. What is marvellous about William Blake's legacy is that it provided an education for the poor children of this parish for over 150 years until the state took over in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

When the new school was opened in 1982, the old school had to be sold to provide the governors/Trust's contribution. Once this happened the new school site would subsequently be transferred to a Trust – this has not happened yet. The old school was purchased by St Mary's Cogges PCC in 1995 and made into the Church Centre. Under Education legislation in Church of England Voluntary Aided Schools, a Church Trust owns the site and the local authority the building. This is why only the old school was sold to help fund the new school building and the Trust was left with the School House plus some other land.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century** – For some years I have been trying to sort this situation out. The Blake Educational Trust owns the school house but the title documents were missing and the 1860 Trust Deed is out of date with modernisation overdue. Initially the Trust was advised to draw up a new Trust Deed, its only asset would be the school house, get this approved and registered with the Charity Commission. Once this was completed the title to the school house could be registered and we could then ask the Diocese for advice on creating a new Trust into which the site of the new school could be transferred.

Eventually, after several years involving research and correspondence with the Charity Commission a modern Trust Deed was approved in early 2009. I then asked the solicitor to register the title of the school house and about transferring the site of new school to a new Trust. The solicitor then discovered a copy of the 1874 conveyance which shed new light on the whole situation. We were able to establish exactly what land in addition to the tithe barn that the vicar had transferred to the Trust in 1874 and this meant that the Trust had to be modernised as an Educational Trust in accordance with legislation under various Education Acts.

**Current situation** – The 2009 Trust Deed is invalid and a new Trust Deed has been executed by the Trustees and is currently with the Charity Commission for sealing. Once sealed, this Trust Deed will come into effect and the Trust will be able to have the title to its property assets registered. The assets of the Trust will be the school house plus the adjoining car park and the new school site. Under the Trust's objects

any surplus income the Trust generates is to be used for the benefit of the school. The school house needs to be modernised and refurbished, the ground floor will be used as an office by the Church and the first floor converted into a residential flat, both will be let on a commercial basis as required by Charity law. The Trustees will have to borrow some £30,000 to pay for improvements but the Trust is likely to have some surplus income when this project is completed. The Trustees will be the Vicar, a Churchwarden, 2 members of the PCC and 3 independents. Also at least 2 of the Trustees must be Governors of the Blake School.

**David Eaton**  
**Trustee of the Blake Educational Trust**  
**1 February 2010**