

CET Mission Statement

The purposes of the Cotesbach Educational Trust as set out in the Memorandum & Articles are:

- To promote for the benefit of the public the preservation, protection and improvement of an eighteenth century, Grade II listed schoolhouse and two adjacent buildings in the grounds of the Cotesbach Estate by creating an educational resource centre.
- To advance the education of the public, and young people in particular, in the subjects of the environment, heritage and the arts and the many areas which link these three subjects, especially where such education promotes knowledge, skills and understanding needed for a non-oil dependent, sustainable future, that is, demonstrating how to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

There has been a headline statement which draws on this:

“Reconnecting with place and land to develop skills for the future”.

And in the most recent Business Plan, there was a mission statement as follows:

Restoration of the historic fabric of the buildings, and the programmes delivered within them, will enable the CET to play an integral role in preserving, raising awareness and educating people about the local heritage (environmental and social as well as built), honour the past whilst becoming a flagship for sustainable change, and make a difference to the future of the environment and people who live in it.

CET is about to undergo a radical change in its operations as it becomes a volunteer led organization. This arises principally because of the failure of the original business models to generate sufficient revenue to support professional staff. At the same time governance arrangements are under review and in particular the relationship with the Cotesbach Family Trust (CFT) needs to be recalibrated and formalized.

The resources which are available to, and controlled by, CET Trustees will be limited in the near future to the three buildings, the archive and the good will and time of the volunteers. For this reason, a greater focus of the mission is required and it must identify those activities which CET can reasonably expect to deliver.

Following extended discussion, Trustees have agreed to retain the original headline statement:

“Reconnecting with place and land to develop skills for the future”.

To give some focus to this:

‘Connecting the present and inspiring the future. Bringing a uniquely documented family archive alive for all through education and creative activities’.

The proposed 'mission descriptors' are:

1. The Marriott archive is the key connector to the heritage of Cotesbach and the central resource from which activities will flow. The preservation of the archive and surrounding buildings for public access remains a central priority.
2. Activities should be educational and also inspirational, imparting to participants a real sense of their heritage and history, whilst stimulating the imagination.
3. The core topics for the future will be family, local and social history told through the stories of real people in a real location.
4. The archive is a unique resource for the understanding of a far reaching family history; the trust will seek to make it widely available including through academic partnerships and online resources.
5. The arts, craft skills, story-telling and other creative activities will all play a part, alongside more traditional history studies, with the aim of engaging interest across the educational spectrum.

The Marriott Family Archive

The collection consists of deeds, legal and estate papers of Cotesbach and related estates, 15th – 20th centuries (including a few from around the time of the Enclosures Riot of 1607) and the Marriott family papers 17th – 20th centuries. Of particular note are the papers relating to the Marriott family's public involvement with Anglicanism that includes over a thousand sermons and religious writings dating back to the late 17th century. There is also a considerable collection of personal correspondence, diaries and writing, which provide fascinating material for the study of the practice of everyday life in rural society in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The original agenda, which included environmental change, sustainability and a non-oil dependent future remains valid and is an important aim for the Cotesbach Estate as a whole but CET does not have the resources to pursue these programmes at its own hand. Therefore, CET will look to CFT to take the lead in the environmental area and will be pleased to engage in joint projects when feasible. The new governance arrangement recommends a joint Project Group where both Trusts can develop and deliver ideas.

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