

Proposal of a solution to problems in the Blake's Cottage campaign

The campaign to acquire William Blake's Cottage in Felpham was born with the noble intent of preserving one of the houses where Blake lived and created for future generations and, if possible, linking it in the future to the House in South Molton Street, making of both houses an axis of creativity, imagination and freedom that would also further the understanding and celebration of Blake.

There were high principles and ideals in the campaign's foundation and public formulation. The Cottage would become a centre for creation, a sanctuary for artists and thinkers, and part of it might become a House of Refuge for persecuted writers.

I started working with Tim Heath on this project since the end of 2013 and since 2011 have actively urged him to involve the Blake Society in the efforts for preservation of both houses, have offered my help, suggested events pointed in that direction and gave support when SMS was in danger last year. The campaign for the Cottage as such was started by Tim, Henry Eliot and myself early in 2014. Around the end of June Henry had to withdraw and Tim and I remained in charge of the whole of the campaign – coordinating some efforts with The Big Blake Project in West Sussex. At the end of July 2014 Paige Morgan was invited to the project presumably because of her organisational skills and her knowledge of crowdfunding campaigns.

Since she came into the campaign, on a date that coincided with Tim's six-week retreat in Birmingham, work for the campaign was procrastinated. On Tim's return at the beginning of September it became clear that they were working behind my back, withholding information from me and that my role in the campaign was being handed over to Paige. The aggressions and bullying I have received in the process have been serious and have caused me severe distress. During their colluding to cut me off the project much confusion has been created. From around the past two weeks to this day, I do not know anything at all of what is going on with the campaign, despite my major contribution to its conception and development – the campaign would simply not have reached the point at which it was before my expulsion of it without my input. All my attempts at getting information or sort out our problems have been ignored by Tim.

The high principles and ideals with which the campaign started have been betrayed and what is most urgent now is to restore the campaign's integrity, avert further damage both to the project and the reputation of the Blake Society, and most important of all, **make sure that the good will and support of so many people on a national and international level are not further betrayed.**

My proposal therefore is:

I. I leave the campaign because

- i. I have in fact been forced out of it.
- ii. The high ideals and principles that were the motivation behind my work and my substantial contribution to the formulation of the

whole of the campaign have been betrayed and therefore Blake's Cottage campaign is no longer the one I helped create and sustain.

- iii. Tim has demonstrated that he does not respect my work nor appreciates its value.

II. Paige Morgan leaves the campaign and gives up any intention to belong to the Cottage's Board of Trustees, because

- i. Her questionable probity, as she betrayed the trust deposited on her when she belatedly joined the campaign by working in secrecy with Tim Heath and colluding in his forcing me out of the campaign through withholding essential information from me, making essential decisions behind my back, and breach of work agreements. The present problems in the campaign are directly linked to Paige's involvement in it.
- ii. She's not the right person to represent the campaign or be its spokesperson because of the unethical behaviour mentioned above, that is the exact opposite of the strong ethical principles with which it was created.
- iii. She's not the right person to represent the campaign or be its spokesperson because she was not part of the team who conceived and created the campaign, and though she had studied the functioning of crowdfunding campaigns she had never shown any discernible interest in the Cottage or campaign that the Committee or initial team working on it knew of, did not express any wish to join it when Tim first invited anyone in the Committee who might want to do so, and demonstrated to be wholly unfamiliar with the project, its aims, purpose and the work done so far, and to have no substantial understanding of what we wanted to do when she joined the campaign. Her participation should have been limited to the technical and organisational skills due to which she was presumably invited.
- iv. Her work for the campaign before she started colluding in my expulsion of it was of very little significance and showed her lack of understanding of the project; I did most of her work for her regarding the webpage and even so she procrastinated her supposed duties for around a month, when she seemed to disappear from the campaign altogether. This showed that she did not have the capability, or interest, to engage opportunely in a campaign of such import.
- v. Her lack of reliability for major projects such as this is exemplified by the irregularities around the Blake Society's *Journal*, which to the day when I write this document has never been seen in the four years since she has been its editor. The explanations to the BS and its Committee of its delay and time of appearance have been inconsistent for years. As Secretary I have been aware of complaints of members because of lack of information and about submissions, and have experienced myself the unusual handling of it when I made a submission in 2009. There have been other minor cases in which Paige has attempted to hinder my work for the

- Society, which shows a lack of probity unsuitable for team-work.
- vi. Paige should not be part of the Cottage's Board of Trustees for all the above reasons. Her presence would carry the poisoning of the work atmosphere in the Blake Society to which my resignation is due into a far bigger institution, with far bigger responsibilities. The Board of Trustees for the Cottage would have to make major decisions, including those regarding the artists invited as guests; Paige has proved to be willing to work dishonestly and in secrecy and therefore her presence in the Board of Trustees would be contrary to the nobility of purposes of the project.

III. We look for someone reliable, of high moral standards and neutral to step in to help Tim continue the campaign because, though Tim has shown too lack of probity regarding the campaign and is without a doubt the main responsible for what has happened,

- i. there is no doubt that he's the project's main driving force, and that he has devoted decades of his life to promote Blake's legacy with otherwise exemplary commitment and generosity.
- ii. The campaign would clearly collapse without him and by now there is too much at stake if that happens in terms of money and support given, and the reputation of the Blake Society and other people involved.
- iii. Not only the campaign is too big to be handled by a single person—after what he has done, there is need that someone monitors Tim's handling of the campaign as he has shown himself capable of lack of integrity or, at the very least, extreme misjudgement.

IV. I write to my contacts, thank them, say I'm leaving the campaign and refer them to Tim and the new person working in it.

V. If Tim does not agree to this, I will write to all my contacts thanking them and telling them I am leaving the campaign because I believe it is not honouring now the noble principles with which it was created.

Those people endorsing the campaign with their name may deserve, and demand, a fuller explanation as their names are already there.

Adriana Díaz Enciso

1 October 2014