

**QUESTION TO BE ASKED OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC  
SERVICES COMMITTEE ON TUESDAY 11th MAY 2004,  
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT**

**Question**

Following the recent relocation of the Environment Services and Water Resources units to the Howard Davis Farm, Trinity, would the President inform members how the restrictions applying to the 1927 Deed of Gift by Mr. Davis regarding the use of those premises, if applicable, were overcome?

**Answer**

Following the transfer of services, a rationalisation has taken place enabling the delivery of improved services and a more efficient utilisation of existing resources. All environmental and countryside functions are now located within the main building at Howard Davis Farm, which was previously occupied by the former Department of Agriculture, increasing the occupancy of the building and reducing overheads.

These organizational changes recognise the farmer as a steward of the countryside and agriculture's strategic value for the Island's community. The benefit of recognising bio-diversity, landscape, heritage and sustainability are realised by the bringing together of the Agriculture and Fisheries functions with those of the Environment Department's countryside management, ecology and water resources teams of the Environment and Public Services Committee.

Agricultural practices have of course, undergone many changes since the gift of Fields 562 and 827 from the late T.B Davis to the States on 17th December 1927. Agriculture is now undergoing a further transition, with a broader focus on the countryside as a whole, but importantly maintaining an expert capacity to advise and assist the agricultural industry.

The Assembly will recall from the reply given to the Deputy's previous question on 21st October 2003, that the previous Committee sought the advice of H.M. Solicitor General on the organisational changes and requested efforts be made to trace the descendants of the late T. B Davis to enquire whether they saw any objection to them. If the Committee does become aware of any issues, it undertakes to advise the Assembly at the earliest opportunity.

The rationalisation has also identified some redundancy and inefficiency in the use of land and other buildings of the former Agriculture Department. I have asked the Director of Property Services to undertake a comprehensive review of the use of all land and the remaining buildings in the Howard Davis Farm estate, including those occupied by other States Departments. A number of organisations have put forward individual proposals for certain buildings and/or areas of land, but before these can be considered an overall plan is required. This plan is in the course of preparation and will address the long-term future use of the complex.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the nature of operations at the Howard Davis Farm have evolved over the years, in line with changes in the industry. The estate is an important asset for the Island and States. For that reason, I fully intend to bring forward for this Assembly's approval, the comprehensive plan for the estate when it is completed.