

BULLETIN 30 - MARCH 2014

Public Meeting followed by AGM - Saturday 15th March - Villa Marina

- doors open at 09.30 for a 10.00 start.

Our main focus in the first part of the morning will be on our ever changing **air services** with presentations covering:

- Changes effective from end March 2014
- TravelWatch advice following the above changes
- Possible further steps to encourage safeguarding air routes .

We will also have the usual updates on **Ferry Services** and **Wind farms** (see item below). What we may be able to say about **bus services** remains unclear as the outcome of the Employment Tribunal hearings is still awaited, and details of a consultation on changes to Concessionary fares may not be known until after the 1st April Government changes are implemented.

We will also be offering - as an experiment - the opportunity for a couple of speakers from the floor to have **2/3 minutes on a passenger travel topic of their own choice**. Anyone wishing to introduce a topic is asked to contact Chairman Brendan O'Friel brendanofriel@manx.net as soon as possible with their topic so that we can see how many people would like to take part, and let you know in advance that there is likely to be time to take your topic at this meeting.

At past meetings we have invited voluntary contributions of £1.50 for **refreshments** but this has not produced sufficient to cover costs and your committee feel that funding refreshments is not a proper use of our limited funds. We shall therefore be selling Coffee/Tea and Biscuits for £1.50 during the interval only - please pay before helping yourselves!

We would welcome your support both at our Public Meeting and the Annual General Meeting - at which only members can vote. Please note that this year the AGM will be at the end of the Public Meeting.

Annual General Meeting

Notice of the AGM is given at the end of this Bulletin. We would welcome some new blood onto our committee and are pleased to advise you that Mike Bathgate has agreed to stand for election. If anyone else is interested in standing please contact us ahead of the meeting. Under our current constitution committee members are elected for 12 months at each AGM. Only members of TWIOM are eligible for election - but there is still time to join before the AGM. Our Secretary Steven Bevan will be standing down from that role and we shall be proposing Professor Roger Carey as his replacement. Treasurer Paul Moncaster is also relinquishing that role but he and Steven will be standing for re-election as committee members. Mike Bathgate will be nominated as our new Treasurer.

Recent Developments

The changes in **air services** for the coming summer have continued to be a major concern. We are pleased to note the restoration back to 3 flights each weekday of BA Cityflyer's service to London City and Citywing's move to provide a Glasgow service again. We still foresee a shortage of London capacity at weekends. Links Air's new summer service to Doncaster/Sheffield comes as something of a surprise, as the company are already operating from the Island under contract to Citywing. We have now produced a summary of the services which are likely to operate and this includes suggestions of alternative routings to places where direct services have been lost. Copies will be available at the meeting or via the front page of our website www.travelwatch-isleofman.org

It is unclear whether **Ellan Vannin Line's** determination to set up a rival service to the **Steam Packet** will progress further now that their plans have evolved to appear incompatible with the provisions of the User Agreement. This has raised public interest in the User Agreement at a time when it is coming up for possible renegotiation. Following the presentation on that topic at our last Public Meeting we have sent a briefing paper to the IOM Government - and their reaction is awaited.

The **Wind Farm** issues continue to progress slowly. The UK Planning Inspectorate is holding an "Open-Floor" Meeting at the Villa Marina at 1400 on Tuesday 18 March 2014 as part of its consideration of the plans for the Walney Extension Wind Farm. We believe this may be the first time such a meeting has been held outside UK - but it does indicate their willingness to listen to Manx views.

Our **On-Line Holiday Guide** has been revised for 2014 and all our **TravelTips** (previously Passenger Information Sheets) updated. Both publications are available on our website www.travelwatch-isleofman.org

More information on all these issues will of course be available at the meeting.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

The 7th Annual General Meeting of TravelWatch - ISLE OF MAN will be held at approx 12.30 pm on Saturday 15th March 2013 at the Villa Marina, Douglas for the purpose of transacting the following business:

1. To receive a report on TravelWatch's work during the year
2. To Receive a Financial Report
3. To appoint an independent examiner
4. To elect Officers and Committee.

Nominations for Officers and Committee may be made in advance to the Secretary or can be made at the meeting.

Steven Bevan - steven@kb.co.im

Secretary