

# REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF HOUSE OF KEYS (QUESTIONS)

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Douglas, Tuesday, 14th May 2002  
at 10.05 a.m.

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Present:

The Speaker (the Hon J A Brown) (Castletown); Mr D M Anderson (Glenfaba); Hon A R Bell and Mr L I Singer (Ramsey); Mr R E Quine OBE (Ayre); Mr J D Q Cannan (Michael); Mrs H Hannan (Peel); Hon S C Rodan (Garff); Mr P Karran and Hon R K Corkill (Onchan); Mr G M Quayle (Middle); Messrs J R Houghton and R W Henderson (Douglas North); Hon D C Cretney and Mr A C Duggan (Douglas South); Hon R P Braidwood and Mrs B J Cannell (Douglas East); Hon A F Downie and Hon J P Shimmin (Douglas West); Mr D J Gelling (Malew and Santon); Hon J Rimington and Mr Q B Gill (Rushen); with Mr M Cornwell-Kelly, Secretary of the House.

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## Questions for Oral Answer

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| 1. Housing – Sites for Development (Mr Quine) | KQ 174 |
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## **Heathrow Air Route – Restoration – Question by Mr Singer**

Question 1. The hon. member for Ramsey (Mr Singer) to ask the Chief Minister:

*What progress have you made in attempting to restore the Isle of Man/Heathrow air route?*

**The Speaker:** I call on the hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer.

**Mr Singer:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

**The Speaker:** I call on the hon. member for Onchan, Mr Corkill, the Chief Minister.

**Mr Corkill:** Mr Speaker, the question appears to be based on a false premise. It presumes that we are attempting to restore the former BA Isle of Man/Heathrow service, but nothing in our discussions with British Airways has indicated that restoration is an option. The circumstances at Heathrow are such at present that securing a replacement service from Heathrow to the Isle of Man is unlikely. However, circumstances may change and we would be keen to see a new Heathrow service if that were at all possible. In the meantime we continue to work with the existing carriers to try to ensure a sufficient network of services from the Island to various parts of the United Kingdom for the benefit of the travelling public.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer.

**Mr Singer:** I thank the Chief Minister for his answer. Is the Chief Minister from his answer therefore satisfied with the present position as far as the Island's air services to London are concerned and is he accepting the BA decision to abandon the Heathrow slots merely as a justified business decision even though the loss of that route is detrimental to the Island's business community and the £75 Gatwick flight is not a suitable alternative to many?

**The Speaker:** Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** I think it is well known, Mr Speaker, that we are concerned at the loss of the Heathrow route, particularly for business on the Island. I would also say that the more we flag it up and the more we talk about it, the more damaging it might be. We have to work with the operators and limit the damage that has occurred. Certainly there is some positive feedback as well as negativity about the decision, so I am loath to accept what has happened, but I think most hon. members will appreciate that the decision in all of this is a policy issue at the Heathrow end of things, not at this end, and therefore we have reluctantly had to accept the reality of life.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

**Mr Karran:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, would the Chief Minister not agree that this issue raised on this order paper is just another example of his administration's doormat mentality as far as looking after the interests of the people of the Isle of Man first instead of just doing what it is told by big business on this Island?

**The Speaker:** Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** I look forward to the hon. member's solution to the problem, Mr Speaker.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer.

**Mr Singer:** Is the Chief Minister aware of a joint Channel Islands delegation that is meeting with the Department of Transport, local government and the regions attended by Gwyneth Dunwoody, the Chair of the House of Commons Transport Select Committee, to try and persuade the UK Government that a number of take-off slots should be ring-fenced and available to and from the Channel Islands?

**The Speaker:** Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** Mr Speaker, I think we should be clear that this situation has not come as a bolt out of the blue, it is a position that the Island has been dealing with for many years. The Heathrow slot has been under threat for a long time. Yes, I am aware of the Jersey and Guernsey delegation; I am also aware of Guernsey's legal battle, remembering that Jersey and Guernsey, of course, lost their Heathrow slots some years ago now and they are still battling. My information is that if the Isle of Man were to mount a legal challenge on the BA decision, then the best that we could hope for is that those particular slots that we have lost would go back into the pool. The likelihood of them being reallocated to the Isle of Man, having gone into the pool, would be negligible, because the Heathrow policy is to secure slots for long-haul flights and Ronaldsway is not a long-haul destination from Heathrow. So yes, I am aware of the activity of the other islands; I am also aware that the Minister for Transport, Mr Shimmin, is in fact going down to London shortly to investigate the whole situation on a legal basis as well. So to be accused of doormat mentality. I find insulting. We are looking for solutions, but I think we should be honest with ourselves and realise that it is not likely to change.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer.

**Mr Singer:** Can I make it clear to the Chief Minister that certainly I did not associate myself with that particular comment. But in recalling that the House of Commons Transport Select Committee has

previously supported slot access to Heathrow for outlying communities of the British Isles, does the Chief Minister not consider that a similar approach from the Isle of Man, as from the Channel Islands, and seeking the support of the Lord Chancellor in this matter is a better idea than sitting back and accepting the British Airways decision as final? And does he not also accept that such a meeting would be seeking access to slots, not necessarily for the use of BA but possibly for the use of another carrier?

**The Speaker:** Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** I think there is a delicate balance to be struck here, Mr Speaker, because we do have to work with British Airways in terms of the network of services that they provide to the Island, and in fact there is a marketing initiative to make the most of what we have, so it is very important that we do work alongside the carrier that provides most of our services and not be seen to be particularly hostile to them.

With regard to the parliamentary grouping at Westminster which is supporting, as they would call it, the regions - although I do not describe the Isle of Man as a region in that respect, but from a routes point of view I can see how the operators would regard the Isle of Man as a region - I think their comments have been publicised in the past, but in fact what has happened, particularly at Heathrow, is that all the regional slots over a period of time, whether it be Inverness, Jersey, Guernsey or the Isle of Man, have all shrunk in that period of time. These are commercial decisions that are being taken and they are also policy decisions at Heathrow Airport. I would propose to enact anything almost in the Isle of Man scenario if we thought we could exert some control over the situation but, as I have said, we have to live with the situation to an extent but that does not mean that we are not trying to still find ways to improve the situation.

Now, the hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer, has raised the issue of lobbying and representation through this parliamentary group at Westminster, and that is certainly something that the Minister for Transport and myself can look at and see whether there is any way forward to perhaps join forces with Jersey and Guernsey in this particular area. I have no problem in looking at the situation but I do not want to give members false hope in this situation, because I think, if you look at the situation in the Channel Islands, it has been going on for some years and they have not got their slot back.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

**Mr Karran:** Thank you - I have caught your eye, Vainstyr Loayreyder. Would the Chief Minister not agree that this hon. member has put suggestions up in the past when he was number two in the previous administration and, if he wants to delegate his responsibility away from giving it to big business to the other hon. member for Onchan as far as his duties as Chief Minister, I am happy to do so? Will he not

agree that the situation is that it is because of the reactive stance of his administration that we always seem to find out that we end up being second best? When are we going to see a proactive instead of a reactive administration within this hon. House?

**The Speaker:** Before I call on the Chief Minister, let me make it absolutely clear to the hon. member: it is a matter for me when I call members and if I call members. Hon. Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** I reiterate, Mr Speaker. I am happy to hear solutions from any member, including the hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

**Mr Karran:** Well, you have had them in the past.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Ramsey, Mr Singer.

**Mr Singer:** Can I thank the Chief Minister for saying that he will, with the hon. Minister for Transport, look into the lobbying. It certainly means that we are not sitting back, we are making every attempt, and I thank him for that. But can I ask him why he should make the comment that we should not be hostile to British Airways as far as their routes are concerned when, I think most members would agree, the way that they have treated us in removing our routes and the problem that has come up with the Dublin route since then is being hostile to the business on this Island?

**The Speaker:** Chief Minister to reply.

**Mr Corkill:** What I said, Mr Speaker, was that there is a balance to be struck and I certainly want to see a proactive, co-operative working relationship with British Airways on all of the routes. It is in the Island's interests to encourage the number of seats available travelling to and from the Island for a number of purposes, whether it be financial services, tourism or for the services of our indigenous population, so there are a number of reasons why we should work closely with British Airways, and certainly there are not least, the employment opportunities that that company provides on the Island. Therefore we do need a working relationship with them, but nonetheless we can do as the hon. member has suggested, which is to lobby through the right processes to see if we can have some change of policy at Heathrow Airport. Can I say that it is not just a British Airways decision; the Heathrow slot was always at risk by the previous company. When it was known as Manx Airlines there was always the threat of the Heathrow slot having gone. So this is not a new situation that has been necessarily just brought about by British Airways.

## Manx National Heritage – Sources of Funding – Question by Mrs Hannan

Question 2. The hon. member for Peel (Mrs Hannan) to ask a Keys member for the Manx Museum and National Trust:

*For each of the past five years, what amount of funding is provided for the operation of Manx National Heritage by:*

(1) *Government; and*

(2) *private:*

(a) *business;*

(b) *trustees; and*

(c) *friends?*

**The Speaker:** I call on the hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

**Mrs Hannan:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, I beg leave to ask the question standing in my name.

**The Speaker:** I call on the hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill, member for the Manx Museum and National Trust.

**Mr Gill:** Thank you, Vainstyr Loayreyder. This question lends itself to an answer in list form. I would ask the hon. member for Peel for her agreement to circulate copies of the relevant lists, which I feel will offer the easiest method of appreciating the answer.

**The Speaker:** Carry on, hon. member.

**Mr Gill:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. For each of the past five years the gross amount of funding provided by government is as published in the budget approved by Tynwald for each of the years in question, with the exception of the additional contribution towards the purchase of Rushen Abbey by government in 1998-1999 and additional Cregneash property purchases in 1999-2000.

For the government category listed in this question, I will provide the figures for the actual expenditure incurred utilising government funding in the operation of Manx National Heritage, as the Manx Museum and National Trust is popularly known.

With regard to the categories listed under the heading 'private' in the question, it should be noted that for all the years in question most of private business donations have primarily been made through the Friends of Manx National Heritage, which funding has then been made available to Manx National Heritage with additional charitable support from the Friends of Manx National Heritage charitable funds. The public appeal to assist with the Rushen Abbey development is one example of this.

In addition, Manx National Heritage have benefited in recent years from a number of private business 'in kind' support programmes involving large numbers of

staff undertaking work programmes at MNH sites over several days. This kind of invaluable support has not been costed as part of the answer to the question.

Other elements of business financial support are contained within the figures I will provide in relation to the earned income of MNH for each of the last five years. This includes, for example, funding provided for the private hire in commercial use of various MNH sites. As you can see for the years 1997-1998 through to 2001-2002, the relevant figures are listed and they are under the headings: 'Government Capital Funding'; 'Government Net Revenue Funding'; 'Earned Income'; 'Trustees of MNH Charitable Funds Contribution' and the 'Friends of MNH Charitable Funds Contributed'.

Finally, hon. members, I am sure you would have noted, in the figures I have provided in the answer to this question, the tremendous contribution made by the Friends of Manx National Heritage. The significance of their financial contribution is clear, but this does not reveal the extent of all the other areas of activity and support which the Friends contribute to the work of MNH. As one of, if not, the largest subscription groups in the Island, this represents, together with the visits of over 350,000 people a year to MNH sites, a significant vote of community support for the work that MNH undertakes throughout the Island.

I would conclude by reminding hon. members that if they are not currently enrolled in the Friends of MNH but would like to offer their support, I can ensure that application forms are circulated without delay. (*Laughter*)

*The details of funding as circulated to members are set out in Table 1 (KQ 175) below.*

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

**Mrs Hannan:** Could I thank the representative on the Manx Museum and National Trust for his response, but could I ask him why he considers it is almost impossible for Manx National Heritage - Manx Museum and National Trust - to recognise the part that government plays in funding? Could I ask him why it is so difficult for the Manx Museum and National Trust to recognise the very important part that government plays in funding the Manx Museum and National Trust, or 'MNH', as they prefer to be called now? The mover has, would he not accept, made great play of the part that the Friends and the Trustees of the Manx Museum and National Trust have played, but would he not also accept that over the last 20 years funding from government has increased by some 560 per cent and, the 20 years prior to that, it increased by 280 per cent? So would he not accept that the commitment from government to the Manx Museum and National Trust is over that supplied to other areas of support by government?

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill.

**Mr Gill:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, I am not in a position to compare funding for Manx National Heritage with any other part of government, but certainly I would accept the figure of 560 per cent increase in real terms over the period she describes and I would reiterate that Manx National Heritage is no different to any other part of government in that they are liable to the submission and budgetary provisions of all other departments. Certainly as a Keys representative, and I am sure the other trustees would firmly support me and the staff of National Heritage would support me in saying that they are extremely appreciative of Tynwald's support over the past years.

**Members:** Hear, hear.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Onchan, Mr Karran.

**Mr Karran:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, would the member not agree it is a great shame that we ended up spending £200,000 more for the purchase of Rushen Abbey with the government's lack of support to my motion the purchase of Rushen Abbey and also it would have brought the ownership of the car park into that unit -?

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, if I can just state the question is quite specific: it does not go into specific issues of items of purchase by MNH or the government, and I would ask you to restrict your question, if you could, in line with the question on the order paper without broadening it out too far, please.

**Mr Karran:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, in reply to the circular that we have just received, we have got here in 1998-1999 that the government's capital funding for Rushen Abbey is £495,081. If you do not want me to ask that question, that is fair enough with me -

**The Speaker:** Hon. member, please, it is not a matter whether I want you to ask the question, the point is you are not asking a question, you are making a statement about your views against the determination that was made. Now, if you have a specific question, you have the right, and I will ensure you use that right and protect that right for you to ask a question.

**Mr Karran:** Vainstyr Loayreyder, it was a matter of the issue of the raising of the extra £200,000 that it cost for not taking the action when this hon. member asked them to do it.

The second supplementary that I would like to ask the hon. member is, would the member not agree that the issue of trying to blur the issue as far as the National Trust or Manx National Heritage is concerned, I think, is a bit rich when you see government departments talking about private sector initiatives when there was no private sector initiative as we had with the recent situation over the purchase of the Nunnery? Would the hon. member for the trust not agree that the situation is that it is wrong to try and single out Manx National Heritage when some of our

government departments are a lot less inaccurate in their statements over their funding?

**The Speaker:** Can I just make it clear to the hon. member who is responding to the question, and to the member who has asked a question which has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with Manx National Heritage but is in relation to the Nunnery, that therefore the member who is answering the question is not in a position to respond to that question. Hon. member Mr Gill.

**Mr Gill:** Yes, thank you, Vainstyr Loayreyder.

**Mr Karran:** Sorry, that is not right.

**Mr Gill:** In regard to the first point that the questioner raises about Rushen Abbey, that predates my time on the trust so I am sorry, I am not in a position to give a definitive account of that. I note his contention that there is an excess figure paid for that; I do not know the basis of that contention but I will undertake to raise that with the Director of Manx National Heritage and to circulate a response to him.

On the second issue, far from blurring the issue as he suggests, I hope that in the form that I have circulated the answer I was trying to add clarity to it and I am at a loss to see how much clearer I could be both in the written answer I circulated and the subsequent answer. And certainly as you say, Vainstyr Loayreyder, the purchase of the Nunnery is nothing to do with Manx National Heritage and it is not a matter I would choose to comment on.

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Peel, Mrs Hannan.

**Mrs Hannan:** Thank you, Vainstyr Loayreyder. Could I ask the representative of the Keys on the Manx National Heritage where the earned income comes from? In this document we see that earned income is quite steady over the years, it is round about £600,000 give or take a few thousand pounds. Could I ask him where that income comes from, what has been invested or where that sum arises from?

**The Speaker:** Hon. member for Rushen, Mr Gill.

**Mr Gill:** Thank you, Vainstyr Loayreyder. I am not in a position to give a detailed breakdown of those figures, but certainly I will cause them to be circulated to the hon. member and to any other members who would wish for that information.

**The Speaker:** Right, hon. members, that concludes the questions for oral answer.

I would just advise hon. members for information - and I quote from standing order 45(3) - that 'If the answer is lengthy, the person questioned may circulate a written answer to be received by members of the House at least 24 hours before the sitting of the House at which the question will be asked.' That, of course,

does then enable supplementary questions to be asked and it would in a way enable what the hon. member has done this morning to be done in a slightly different way.

Hon. members, we now move on to item 2 which is Questions for Written Answer, and they will be circulated in compliance with standing orders.

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**Housing – Sites for Development –  
Question by Mr Quine for Written  
Answer**

Question 1. The hon. member for Ayre (Mr Quine) to ask the Chief Minister:

*What are the locations of the 40-plus sites being considered for housing development (if unable to be site-specific, in which local authority areas are they located)? In respect of each site, what is the:*

- (1) *acreage;*
- (2) *estimated unit capacity; and*
- (3) *which are presently zoned for housing development?*

**Answer**

The Department of Local Government and the Environment is actively carrying out initial design or feasibility studies on 57 parcels of land. The studies are identifying where the first-time buyer and public sector rented homes might be provided over the next five years and beyond.

The land is in some cases already owned by the government or local authorities but in other cases by developers and private individuals.

Acreage is difficult to assess but the department is able to estimate what the unit capacity might be for first-time buyer and public sector rented homes.

Developers are also in the process of providing information on their planned production of first-time buyer and more expensive homes over the next five years. They are also providing estimates of the amount of homes they could build each year if land is made available.

At this stage it is not envisaged that the government will have to purchase all the parcels of land that have been identified. Partnership between Government and the private sector is being promoted to encourage developers to produce a larger number of lower priced housing on their own land. The response from developers has, to date, been encouraging but actual results will be closely monitored.

Not all the land is zoned for housing and the department will therefore be bringing a small number of sites brought forward for planning permission in

accordance with the resolution passed by Tynwald in January 2002.

For commercial reasons the department does not wish to identify individual sites at this stage. The attached list does, however, indicate how many sites are being considered in each local authority area, whether they are zoned for residential purposes or not, and the approximate number of affordable homes that might be provided.

Hon. members should also note that supporting the production of first-time buyer and public sector rented homes has substantial budget implications for the government. The number of properties included on this list is therefore not only dependent on obtaining planning approvals but on government being able to provide funding in the relevant years. Some of this funding is already identified in the government and local authority capital programmes and some will be allocated from the £20m housing fund. Additional funding would, however, have to be allocated in the latter half of the five-year programme and in the years beyond if this number of affordable homes is to be delivered and sustained.

[See KQ 176,177 (Tables 2 and 3) for answer]

**Table 1****In 1997-98**

	£
Government capital funding was	681,831
Government net revenue funding provided was	2,899,021
Earned income was valued at	617,728
The Trustees of MNH's charitable funds contributed	5,000
The Friends of MNH's charitable funds contributed	2,405

**In 1998-99**

	£
Government capital funding was (plus additional government contribution for purchase of Rushen Abbey @ £768,530)	495,081
Government net revenue funding provided was	3,268,853
Earned income was valued at	622,681
The Trustees of MNH's charitable funds contributed	195,684
The Friends of MNH's charitable funds contributed	161,643

**In 1999-2000**

	£
Government capital funding was	1,001,825
Government net revenue funding provided was	3,514,205
Earned income was value at	582,338
The Trustees of MNH's charitable funds contributed	66,056
The Friends of MNH's charitable funds contributed	102,467

**In 2000-01**

	£
Government capital funding was	512,359
Government net revenue funding provided was	3,855,361
Earned income was valued at	619,185
The Trustees of MNH's charitable funds contributed	9,350
The Friends of MNH's charitable funds contributed	49,570

**In 2001-02**

	£
Government capital funding was	563,777
Government net revenue funding provided was	3,992,424
Earned income was value at	627,834
The Trustees of MNH's charitable funds contributed	50,000
The Friends of MNH's charitable funds contributed	34,510

**Table 2**

<b>POTENTIAL SITES FOR AFFORDABLE HOMES</b>						
<b>L.A.</b>	<b>Zoned</b>			<b>Not zoned</b>		
	No. Sites	FTB	Rent	No. Sites	FTB	Rent
Bride	-	-	-	2	16	4
Andreas	-	-	-	2	48	-
Jurby	1	40	-	-	-	-
Lezayre	1	-	3	-	-	-
Ballaugh	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ramsey	9	162	40	-	-	-
Maughold	-	-	-	1	8	4
Lonan	-	-	-	-	-	-
Laxey	-	-	-	-	-	-
Michael	1	20	-	-	-	-
Braddan	4	100	10	1	50	30
Onchan	4	32	33	-	-	-
Douglas	9	75	168	3	125	20
Marown	-	-	-	1	20	-
German	-	-	-	3	6	23
Peel	4	85	4	1	-	20
Patrick	2	30	-	-	-	-
Malew	1	40	40	1	6	-
Santon	-	-	-	-	-	-
Rushen	-	-	-	1	12	-
Arbory	-	-	-	-	-	-
Port Erin	1	15	-	-	-	-
Port St Mary	1	-	8	-	-	-
Castletown	3	90	30	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>101</b>

**Note: Figures exclude schemes currently on site or programmed to start before April 2003**

**(FTB = 261 and Public Rented = 316 see attached schedule).**

Table 3

**DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
CURRENT HOUSING PROJECTS**

Schemes on site or programmed to start in 2002-03	Public Sector Rent	First-Time Buyers
Springfield/Harcroft, Douglas		55
Cronk Grianagh Phase II	9	33
Leodest Road, Andreas	20	14
Archallagan, Foxdale	2	35
Jurby (inclusive plots for sale)	3	13
Crossag Farm		40
Westmoreland Road, Urban Regeneration Area Phase I (HA)	18	
Colby (Maddrell) Land	8	6
Glen Road, Laxey		3
Church Close, Lonan		14
Bemahague, Onchan	32	
Peel		12
Kirk Michael		14
Mill Street/Malew Street Phase III	4	
Lower Pulrose Phase I	40	
Lower Pulrose II	56	
Lower Pulrose III	44	
Ramsey Triangle	18	
29-35 Clagh Vane, Ballasalla (Replacement Housing)	8	
Queens Street/Lord Street, Douglas	15	
Snugborough Phase II	13	
Infill Plot, Ballakilly, Port Erin	2	
Cronk Grianagh Phase III (HA)	20	
Rifle Club Site, Andreas		2
Creggan Aashen, Glen Maye		6
5 & 6 Waverley Road, Ramsey	4	
Willaston Douglas		14
Total	316	261

In addition, over 40 sites are being considered for development either through direct purchase or in partnership with developers.