

## Freedom and Whisky Go Together

Written by PAG

Thursday, 17 February 2011 23:39

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### “Freedom and Whisky Go Together”\*



**7:30pm, Wednesday 23rd February 2011  
Claremont Hotel, Douglas**

[Ralfys presentation](#) □ □ □ □ [Julians presentation](#)

Freedom of Information (Fol) has always been a priority for PAG. We believe that this year's General Election will be strongly influenced by use of the internet with more candidates having websites. Similarly the local media will feature video interviews with candidates.

The public too is realising what a powerful force social networking can be in political action.

Despite promising a Freedom of Information Act, our government still holds back the legislation. We wish to nudge Fol to the top of the IoM political agenda. Obtaining and imparting accurate information is a vital part of the modern political process.

Our two speakers have a wealth of experience in persuasive tactics to influence opinion and we can learn from them. It will be a lively and entertaining evening.

**Julian Todd** creator and co-founder of [TheyWorkForYou.com](http://TheyWorkForYou.com) , an influential website which keeps tabs on the U K's parliaments and assemblies. He is an active FOI campaigner who last year shared a platform with Julian Assange of WikiLeaks. He will explain how the public can use the internet to influence government and effect change.

**Ralfy Mitchell** is someone who, from his own front room in Maughold, with a video camera, a [website](#)

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and endearing personality has built up a worldwide following for his independent eccentric video reviews of whisky. He describes his site ralfy.com as “substance over style!”.

\*The event title is derived from a Robert Burns inscription: “Freedom and Whisky Gang Thegither, Tak Off Yer Dram” (Freedom and Whisky Go Together, Drink Your Whisky).

### Julian Todd

Based in Liverpool, FoI activist, Julian Todd is the creator and and co-founder of the TheyWorkForYou.com website, a project which automatically analyses raw Hansards to track how members vote in the UK Parliament. Initially risking prosecution for re-using the raw data which was protected by Crown copyright, the site was later successful in getting permission to use it. He extended the concept to the political transcripts of the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations with UNdemocracy.com (in 2007). He developed ScraperWiki.com to try to address the issue of getting unstructured public data into a reusable structured format. ScraperWiki is tipped to become the largest crowd sourced data warehouse in the world used by the media, universities, academics and commercial organisations. Julian is a key driver in the WhatDoTheyKnow.com freedom of information requests "clearing house". The Ministry of Justice recently acknowledged that over 10 percent of all requests each quarter are now logged and tracked with the website. Julian also writes science fiction short stories.

### Ralfy Mitchell

Moving from Glasgow to the IoM two years ago, it is from his home in deepest Maughold that he communicates with the rest of the world on the internet. He has built up a huge loyal following via his amusing and quirky video blogs about his passion for whisky. A natural communicator, Ralfy only video-blogs about the products of small distilleries. He passionately believes that the isle of Man could get its message across to the rest of the world via a simple active web-linked approach, without spending big money on fancy websites.