



Suffering an injustice is one of the most damaging human experiences. It gnaws at your emotions and of those near to you.

Think then how the Horan family must feel, after more than five years in the judicial system and no compensation on the horizon.

Here's what Jim Horan wrote on Facebook:

Five and a half years ago my house was totally demolished by Manx Gas. I didn't have mains gas at all and the forensic inspectors proved without a doubt it was mains gas that demolished my house. Manx Gas have spent five and a half years refusing to accept responsibility! Is this justice?

They took the case to UK to prevent local companies passing information apparently but due to Manx Law, when the case was registered with the Manx Court after 3 years, all the details had to be covered again I.E. I had to see the same consultants over my injuries again.

Were they attempting to use up my legal fees? I can see no other reason for this delay! They have succeeded! Manx Gas the amount we are asking for the permanent injury you have caused, the trauma and the loss of goods is peanuts to you! You should be ashamed!!

But it's a well known fact that going to court in IOM is an expensive business. This was highlighted in a letter lawyer Peter Willers wrote to the IOM Examiner (02.10.13):

..... Manx advocates always have had 'a lucrative legal market' because they have a monopoly protected by Manx law, the only profession whose local work qualification is protected by law - doctors, dentists, accountants, opticians chemists et al - their work qualification is the

same as in the UK/EC and they have to compete in an open market place. Manx advocates do not. They have never been subject to the cold wind of competition.

An English barrister has to obtain a licence to appear in the Isle of Man High Court and licences are granted by Manx deemsters for civil cases as rarely as you are likely to find hens' teeth. Seemingly, the availability of 'over 200 advocates' is the reason given. However, only a fraction of those advocates actually do court work and so, in reality, Manx litigants have little choice.

As important, however, is the cost - as Mr Gough says, you can get English barristers for around £100 per hour, here Manx advocates demand and get anything between £200 and £500 per hour - they can do so because they are guaranteed free from competition - both by Manx law and by the Manx deemsters. It is 2013 and yet Manx litigants continue to be held for ransom by the Establishment - will it ever change or should I get the next 'boat in the morning'?

The system can be frustratingly slow. Think how the family of Michael Joseph Davidson must feel. It's over 18 months since the 26 year old was found dead in Jurby Prison. The Inquest was opened and then adjourned for the IoM police to investigate. This took 15 months, until the end June 2013. The inquest still hasn't been resumed!

Inconsistency demoralises the public.

Our police respond to drug offending with some vehemence, but this is not necessarily always so. As a retired detective inspector found out after he discovered about 60 cannabis plants being cultivated in a disused quarry in Maughold - he said "It looked like a jungle". A man detained in connection with the find received only a caution after being arrested by the police. The decision not to prosecute was taken on advice from the Attorney General's Chambers.

The public deserves to have absolute confidence in our system of justice. It needs to be affordable, consistent and timely.