



15<sup>th</sup> March 2020

## OFFICIAL STATEMENT

British Titanic Society Convention 2020 – Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)



Dear Members & Delegates,

We are now living in the most fluid of times and our situation is changing almost by the minute. Yesterday saw the cancellation of cruises and flights on an unprecedented scale; all designed to limit the spread of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

Even as I type this, the UK Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, has confirmed that action is planned in the coming weeks to isolate the elderly above 70 years of age.

The officers of the British Titanic Society firstly, and most importantly, consider the safety & welfare of our members as a top priority.

Some of our delegates for this year's BTS Convention, which is to be held in Cobh, Ireland, from 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> April, have asked us for an update, considering the continued spread of the Coronavirus disease. So it is time to make a decision on both the viability & practicality of continuing with the event.

The committee have listened to many opinions over the last few days and liaised closely with the Commodore Hotel management, who have been incredibly supportive throughout.

So what are our options?

### 1) Continue with the Cobh 2020 Convention

This will undoubtedly be a scaled-down event, with uncertainty at this stage over the museums being open and if our planned tours can take place.

To date, we have received only five confirmed cancellations, but this is dependent upon the US changing their current policy on allowing flights to/from the UK & Ireland. Also, on the ever-changing situation in the EU countries and current 'Lockdowns' being lifted.

The information we are receiving from Cobh is that the museums and visitor centres will be closed until Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> March, by which time it is hoped that the situation will improve dramatically. However, there is no guarantee at this stage that they will re-open on that date. Neither can we guarantee our planned boat trip to Roches Point, the Titanic Walking Trail or musicians playing at our Gala Dinner.

### 2) Postpone the Convention

The Commodore Hotel have offered to postpone the event to a future date to suit us. The most likely scenario would be to move the Convention to April 2021.

Those who have paid a deposit or in full are able to use these funds to pay for the future event.

Should you wish to receive a refund, you must contact the hotel directly.

The Convention is just 18 days away, so we must make a decision **NOW!!**

We are asking each of you individually what your preference is?

**PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS E MAIL IMMEDIATELY**, so your opinion can be taken into consideration.

In the meantime, we extend our very best wishes to you all and STAY SAFE!

David Scott-Beddard  
Honorary Secretary  
British Titanic Society