

Consultation on the proposed Change to the schedule for The 2023 TT Races

Conducted - July 2022



Isle of Man
Government

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1. Aim

This consultation, issued by the Department for Enterprise, invites further views on the proposed changes to the established road closure schedule for TT2023.

2. How to respond

The deadline for responses is 23:59 on 19 August 2022.

Responses must be made via the Isle of Man Government Consultation Hub or in writing and sent by email to iomttraces@gov.im or via post to:

TT and Motorsport Team
Department for Enterprise
St Georges Court
Upper Church Street, Douglas
Isle of Man, IM1 1EX

When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

In addition, responses must indicate if you are a resident or business on the TT Course along with your address, this information will be used to allocate responses correctly. Your address may be added under the 'Other Comments' section of the consultation if you are completing online.

3. Freedom of Information

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2015 (FOIA).

If you want information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this, it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information, we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department. The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and, in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A copy of the Act is available here:

https://legislation.gov.im/cms/images/LEGISLATION/PRINCIPAL/2018/2018-0010/DataProtectionAct2018_1.pdf

4. Data Protection

The Department for Enterprise (DfE) is carrying out this consultation to decide on changes to the proposed road closures for TT 2023 and beyond.

This consultation and the processing of personal data that it entails is necessary for the exercise of our functions as a government department. If your answers contain any information that allows you to be identified, DfE will, under data protection law, be the controller for this information.

As part of this consultation, we are asking for your name and address. This is in case we need to ask you follow-up questions about any of your responses and to determine the relevance of your response to the proposed road closures. You do not have to give us this personal information. If you do provide it, we will use it only for the purpose of asking follow-up questions and determining the impact of the proposed road closure changes.

DfE's privacy policy has more information about your rights in relation to your personal data; how to complain, and how to contact the Data Protection Officer. You can access this here:

<https://www.iomdfenterprise.im/policy/privacy-policy>

Your information will be kept securely and destroyed within 1 month after the consultation has been completed.

5. Consultation

Background

The TT schedule has developed, often organically, for more than 100 years. From two races in 1907, the TT schedule has featured as many as 12 races during the 1980's. Historic race titles have come and gone, whilst the blue riband Senior TT has previously been held on a Monday and a Wednesday, with the Bank Holiday becoming Senior Race Day during the 1980's. Market forces both locally and industry based, have influenced the TT scheduling throughout its existence, and that remains the case today.

Current situation

The Department for Enterprise initially carried out detailed consumer research in the fourth quarter of 2019. This wide-ranging research invited feedback on all aspects of the fan's experience of the TT Races but the majority of comments came around travel and accommodation, highlighting **significant issues with the availability and cost of travel and accommodation during the TT Race fortnight.**

The research carried out revealed that the existing TT schedule, the Island's travel capacity, the Island's accommodation infrastructure, costs factored against current economic climate and the changing habits of our customers are no longer compatible and **no longer meets the needs of the event's customers.**

Following this initial research, further specific research around the travel and accommodation sector was carried out with race fans.

This identified that:

- Demand was greater than current capacity
- There is a growing trend for short breaks, particularly for newer or younger race fans
- Potential visitors are looking to visit for a long weekend
- Organising travel and accommodation is a logistical challenge for race fans
- That 57% of race fans were unable to travel on their preferred day
- 20% of people have cancelled trips to the Isle of Man because of these issues
- 66% of TT customers would stay longer on the Isle of Man if they could

The current, 2022, TT Race Schedule does not accommodate this change in visitor trends, with only one weekend of racing, which is **at capacity** in terms of Travel and Accommodation.

Analysis of inbound and outbound carrier data, and research with local accommodation providers, reveals that:

- Half of all TT visitors have left the Island by the Wednesday of race week - the halfway point in the race schedule
- Two-thirds of visitors have left before the Senior TT takes place on the Friday, missing out on the TT's 'blue riband' event.
- The majority of TT stakeholders (accommodation providers in particular) view the final weekend as a 'missed opportunity'.
- The Steam Packet Company has advised that they have plenty of inbound capacity from the Thursday of race week
- Hoteliers have confirmed that they have capacity during the final weekend.

The Island's capacity is limited to around 28,000 visitors at any one time, which represents the peak attendance in the single, middle, weekend of the current schedule. This number puts **great pressure on the Island's resources and infrastructure**.

In addition to the consumer research, following the cancellation of the 2020 and 2021 TT, in June 2021, the Department for Enterprise (DfE) carried out the most comprehensive body of intelligence relating to the TT ever put together.

Market analysis and stakeholder focus groups were carried out, including Isle of Man Government Departments, Travel and Accommodation providers, Race Officials, Teams, Riders and event contractors.

The new schedule

The Department has identified that in order to deal with the issues highlighted in the research, a new TT schedule was required to unlock the event's full potential, maximising the return on the public purse investment needed to deliver the event and ensure the event's **long term sustainability and viability**.

The proposed new schedule has been developed to complement the Island's travel and infrastructure capacity and capability. The rationale is as follows:

The new schedule will give more visiting race fans the opportunity to come to the Isle of Man and experience the TT races by lifting the shoulder periods of the historic peak by providing attractive racing blocks in two-day chunks. This will in turn benefit the local economy, particularly our hospitality industry as well as the Island's retailers, which is the single biggest reason that the Department promotes the racing.

In summary

- Filling accommodation capacity towards the end of the racing programme is the primary driver for the revised schedule format.
- The proposed new schedule condenses the races held during the working week.
- It will relieve some of the pressure on accommodation by offering more choice and options for arrivals and departures.
- Fans would, for the first time, have the choice between two weekends that offer three TT races for a 3-night stay (including a headline Superbike class Race).
- A stronger mid-week offering (with four different classes over two days) will allow fans to build better value 6 or 7-night trips.
- Utilising the late UK May Bank Holiday, this new schedule allows more early bird packages to be created offering greater value for money whilst also creating activity to drive local spend (TT Qualifying and TT Fan Park starts/opens).

- Under the existing schedule format that ran in 2022, the first qualifying session was held on a Sunday, with roads closed from 1pm on Sunday afternoon. Qualifying is now due to begin on a Monday in 2023, negating the requirement for a Sunday qualifying road closure.
- Therefore, qualifying and racing would only take place on one Sunday, rather than one fixed Sunday and one contingency, as is currently the case. The new Sunday race day schedule would only ever allow roads closed from lunchtime onwards, to take into account morning worship, which is what has historically happened with both fixed and contingency Sunday racing including the 2022 schedule.
- This schedule gives fans extra choices. Some visitors value time away from the track and they can still choose to do that, especially as many of the Island's towns are largely unaffected by road closures.
- While the proposed new race schedule extends the race programme into a second weekend, and from four to six days, the actual fixed duration of the schedule remains the same as 2022 – ie 13 days. It is worth noting that the 2018 TT actually spanned 14 days, starting on a Saturday.
- Steam Packet will have an additional ferry available for 2023, which will increase the daily inbound and outbound capacity by up to 3000 people.

With the Senior Race moving to a Saturday as part of this proposal, the final Saturday would become Senior Race Day, but the expectation is that the Bank Holiday itself remains as is, with racing still scheduled to take place, and would become known as 'TT Bank Holiday'.

Moving forward this proposal also requires the start date of TT to be determined by the late May Bank Holiday rather than the first Sunday in June. This offers the opportunity **for greater clarity around future event dates** and allows fans to engage in longer-term travel and accommodation planning

In addition, from a racing point of view:

- Teams and riders are not required to be on the Island any longer than previous event timetables, something that was stipulated in the stakeholder feedback.
- Opening the schedule with the Supersport class will allow riders to get up to race pace on a more manageable machine
- The Supertwin class (now two races) will further provide the right environment to nurture up-and-coming talent.
- The opening qualifying session can better include the Superbike class (avoiding any weekend clashes with BSB or other series).
- The later finish combined with the local bank holiday will drive additional spend over a second weekend (visitors and locals).
- One of the key aspects of the new schedule, which was introduced in 2022, is shorter race days, reducing the demands placed on volunteers, officials including marshals, teams and competitors.

Why we are consulting

The DfE recognise that road closures for racing may impact on the day-to-day activities of Island residents. Feedback to this consultation will allow us to consider those impacts alongside the proposed schedule.

The Department for Enterprise initially invited public feedback in June 2021 via the Government portal for the proposed new 2023 schedule, which received a limited response. The Department is now inviting further feedback from members of the public via this consultation.

Once the results of this consultation have been reviewed, the Department for Infrastructure will post a public notice of the proposed road closure schedule, with the opportunity for local residents to provide final comment on the schedule before it is formally ratified.

It is the Department's intention that this new schedule will be approved for the benefit of visiting fans, many of whom are now starting to book their travel already.

6. Proposals

The proposed road closure schedule for the TT Races in 2023 is as follows:

| DATE | EVENT | ROAD CLOSURE TIMES |
|------------------------------|------------|---|
| Late May Bank Holiday Monday | Qualifying | 10.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Tuesday | | 18.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Wednesday | Qualifying | 18.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Thursday | Qualifying | 18.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Friday | Qualifying | 12.30 to no later than 16.30 |
| Friday (Contingency) | Qualifying | 18.00 to no later than 21.30+ |
| Saturday | Racing | 10.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Sunday | Racing | 12.30 to no later than 18.30 |
| Monday (Contingency) | Racing | 12.30 to no later than 17.00+ |
| Tuesday | Racing | 10.00 to no later than 17.00 18.00 to no later than 21.30+ |
| Wednesday | Racing | 10.00 to no later than 17.00 18.00 to no later than 21.30+ |
| Thursday (Contingency) | Racing | 12.30 to no later than 17.00+ |
| | | 18.00 to no later than 21.30+ |
| Friday | Racing | 10.00 to no later than 21.30 |
| Saturday | Racing | 10.00 to no later than 21.30 |

- Above times apply to the whole TT Course. Times displayed are the earliest and latest times that roads would be permitted to close, if approved.
- The A18 Mountain Road may be required to close earlier and opened later to manage any traffic management system in place.
- + In the event of insufficient qualifying sessions during the week, or if additional time is required during the race schedule, these sessions have been identified as contingency options if required

The proposed Race Schedule for 2023 is:

The provisional schedule is:

| DATE | QUALIFYING / RACE |
|--|---|
| Mon 29 th May (UK Bank Holiday) | Afternoon & evening qualifying |
| Tue 30 th May | Evening qualifying |
| Wed 31 st May | Evening qualifying |
| Thurs 1 st June | Evening qualifying |
| Fri 2 nd June | Afternoon qualifying |
| Sat 3 rd June | Supersport TT Race 1 Sidecar TT Race 1 |
| Sun 4 th June | Superbike TT Race |
| Mon 5 th June | REST DAY (Contingency) |
| Tue 6 th June | Superstock TT Race 1 Supertwin TT Race 1 |
| Wed 7 th June | Supersport TT Race 2 Sidecar TT Race 2 |
| Thurs 8 th June | REST DAY (Contingency) |
| Fri 9 th June | Superstock TT Race 2 Supertwin TT Race 2 |
| Sat 10 th June | Senior TT Race |

7. Next steps

Following this consultation exercise, the comments, views or ideas provided will be considered by the Department in conjunction with the Department of Infrastructure, along with other relevant Departments, and will be used to direct the actual closure times contained within any racing authorisation issued.

