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Ben Yalow

Dear Ben,

The committee has been forced to cancel Convoy, and will be returning the money for all attending, supporting, junior and infant and cuddly toy memberships of the convention. We feel that you, who showed your support for Convoy by joining, are owed an explanation for this decision as well as just money. Please excuse this being a "form letter"; it's a bit of a busy time just now, and we want to refund your money by December.

At the time of the bid, and during the months after it, some fans expressed concerns about security at the Adelphi, and we promised to address those concerns. In order to do this we asked the Adelphi for various assurances, which they gave us. In July 2006 a story appeared in a local Liverpool newspaper which seemed to indicate that none of our concerns were being met; we went to the Adelphi and talked with the manager, and established that in fact and contrary to the story in the paper, their security staff had not been got rid of, new secure storage had already been bought and installed, a survey of the building for new CCTV was taking place ten days after our visit, and plans to install new locks on every bedroom door were already in hand. Unfortunately this last work was not actually to be done until later this year but the manager had been given a date in October for the work to start, and we agreed that we would inspect the locks in situ at the beginning of November.

Quite reasonably, she required something from us in return for their jumping through hoops for us, and we said that we would be in a position at the time of that November visit to give her a guarantee that Convoy would fill every bedroom in the hotel over Easter 2007. In the absence of that assurance in November, she would not be able to undertake to reserve all the bedrooms for us, but would expect to release them to members of the public from a month before the convention.

By the middle of October not enough people had joined Convoy for us to be able to feel confident that we would fill the Adelphi. We were coming to the conclusion that we would almost certainly have to cancel Convoy, but still hoped to be able to get a lot of members in the run-up to Christmas, particularly since we expected to be able to tell everyone loud and clear at the beginning of November about the new locks and CCTV and so on. Unfortunately the work on the locks was put back until December 9th by the chain's management.

Since we could not tell Convoy's potential members that we were entirely satisfied with the new security arrangements when we had not actually seen the new locks and tested them, and so would not be able to hope for a significant rise in membership, we could not guarantee that Convoy would fill all the bedrooms at the Adelphi. We decided that many people would consider that having the general public booked in over Easter *would* be an unacceptable security risk, as well as making the convention a less relaxed and pleasant event, and very reluctantly told the Adelphi that we would not be able to run Convoy there. We had already failed to find any other hotel prepared to offer us sole occupancy over Easter 2007, and felt that given the strong expressions of anxiety about security we'd already heard, we could not run Convoy in any site that was potentially unsecurable because of the presence of the general public.

We are extremely sorry to have let down those people – you – who supported Convoy and did want to go to the Adelphi, but in the circumstances it simply couldn't be done.

Chris

Sorry

Chris Bell pp the Convoy Committee