I was in Skye last week with some friends taking part in a Scottish Gaelic TV quiz in the studio there. There were teams competing from across Scotland. I cannot tell you too much about the programme or who won: for it will be broadcast some time in the spring. However I can tell you a bit about the Gaelic television channel.

It was encouraging to see how skilled and professional the people are who make these programmes, and the television gives opportunities for careers and work experience to young Gaelic speakers, as well as those interested in working in the media in general. Above all it lets young people see that Gaelic is vibrant and useful and that it is worth their while speaking it and being proud of it at a time when the language is severely endangered in its traditional heartlands.

BBC Alba was established in 2008 on satellite, and since last year it has been available in Scotland via Freeview. Manx people can receive it by satellite or on the iPlayer, and it is not difficult to listen to if you have Manx. Most programmes have subtitles in English. It broadcasts every day between about 5pm and midnight. £15m are spent on it each year, and though that is not very much in comparison with English channels, or even channels in other minority languages such as S4C in Wales,
they manage to make high-quality programmes on a wide range topics, and many non-Gaelic speakers watch them too.

Maybe there should be a TV channel for the Isle of Man? I don’t mean a Gaelic channel—though I would hope there would be Manx Gaelic content on it—but a channel devoted to Manx affairs: we deserve much more attention than we receive from the broadcasters across who lump us in with ‘north west’.