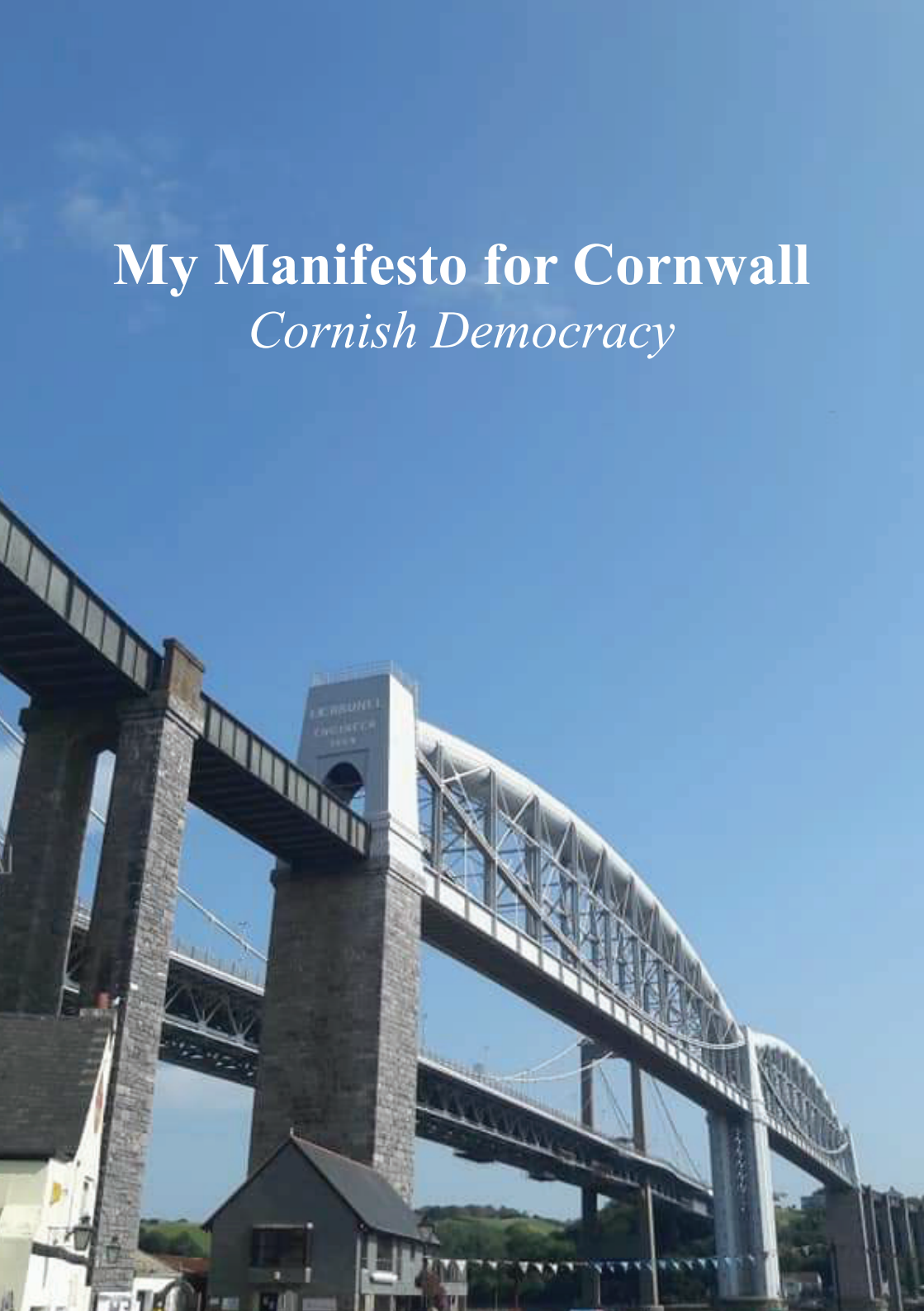
My Manifesto for Cornwall

Cornish Democracy



My Manifesto for Cornwall

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University *of* Exeter
Institute of
Cornish Studies

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Introduction

Policy formulation tends to be seen as the preserve of the political parties at Westminster. The 2024 general election in the United Kingdom was no exception with a succession of manifestos launched during the course of the campaign covering issues like immigration control, relations with the European Union, and macroeconomic stability. But the old phrase 'All politics is local' is arguably still relevant today. Paul O'Brien of APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) concluded that 'many of the most pressing policy issues are best resolved at a local government level. Whether its public health, housing, climate change, or promoting economic growth, politicians … are realising that you can't solve hugely complex issues by central diktat from hundreds of miles away. In order to understand the varying local circumstances, where these problems play out, you really need to have boots on the ground'.[1]

Although politics might therefore be of everyday significance to voters at the micro level, it is less evident how a specific place like Cornwall can avoid being marginalised by an electoral process essentially conducted at the centre. Manifestos are a good example. Westminster parties operating in Scotland and Wales have traditionally produced their own versions of statewide manifestos reflecting an obvious need 'to diversify their regional campaign strategies and messages' as a result of serious competition from

[1] (www.apse. org.uk/apse/index.cfm/blog/all-politics-is-local/). The phrase 'All Politics is Local' was associated with Tip O'Neill, a former Speaker of the House of Representatives in the USA.

territorial parties like SNP and Plaid Cymru.[2] But that is not the case in Cornwall, which lacks official classification as a nation in its own right, with only individual candidates making occasional reference to local issues in their leaflets at the constituency level. The invisibility of Cornwall as a distinct political entity in its own right was further reinforced through a survey conducted by Mebyon Kernow of the various statewide manifestos during the course of the 2024 election campaign. They concluded that there was a tendency for the Westminster political parties to not even mention the word 'Cornwall', let alone put forward specific proposals for its future.[3]

In these circumstances the Cornish Democracy Unit decided to make a practical contribution to the 2024 election campaign by offering voters the opportunity to put forward their own priorities for the next five years.[4] Entitled 'My Manifesto for Cornwall' (or 'Ow Derivadow Rag Kernow' in the Cornish language), the aim of the project was to identify local concerns, along with possible solutions, that could then be presented to MPs and other

[2] E. Fabre and E. Martinez-Herrera, 'Statewide parties and regional party competition: An analysis of party manifestos in the United Kingdom' in W.Swenden and B. Maddens (ed.), *Territorial Party Politics in Western Europe,* Palgrave, 2009, pp. 229-248.

[3] For example, see 'Manifesto watch: The Conservative Party', 11 June 2024. www.mebyonkernow.org/news/manifesto-watch-the-conservative-party/

[4] Cornish Democracy is based at the Institute of Cornish Studies with the aim of promoting a greater knowledge and understanding of territorial and multi-level governance. It seeks to bring together researchers, policymakers and members of the public with the aim of enhancing civil society so that individuals and communities can make informed decisions about the future. See Garry Tregidga (editor), *Cornish Democracy: Studies of Governance and Identity,* Institute of Cornish Studies, 2023.

decision makers. This initiative was intended as a way of enhancing the democratic process in Cornwall by encouraging debate over future policy at the grassroots level rather than restricting the role of the voter to the conventional task of merely casting a vote for a particular party or candidate.

My Manifesto for Cornwall should be seen as the first stage in a citizen engagement programme. Practical limitations in regards to timing, ethics and financial resources as a result of the unexpected announcement of the election meant that wider consultation through polling surveys and fieldwork research was not possible. It was decided instead to use the Institute's existing networks to invite individuals to participate in the project. Additional coverage came as a result of a University of Exeter press release and an article that featured on *Cornwall Live*.[5] The ideas discussed by the contributors can now provide the basis for further research and dissemination over the next few years. It is envisaged that there will also be ongoing consultation with voters and communities in Cornwall at future elections.

The book brings together contributors from many different backgrounds. This includes academia, business, culture, environment, farming, heritage, local government and trade unions. Organisations represented range from Cornwall-wide bodies like Black Voices Cornwall and Cornish Poverty Forum to a local environmental group based at Luxulyan. There are also manifestos from people of different ages and areas of Cornwall. Subjects covered range from the

[5] O.Vergnault, 'Create your own manifesto and shape the future of Cornwall', *Cornwall Live,* 21 June 2024. www.cornwalllive.com /news/cornwall-news/create-your-manifesto-shape-future-9350050

need to promote greater communal cohesion and respect amongst different ethnic groups to tackling the growing evidence of climate change at the micro level. Ideas for strengthening the region's economic base are put forward including a circular economy, primary transport integration and greater use of digital technology. Housing features prominently in many of the contributions with growing concern over the large number of second homes often contrasted with the relative lack of affordable properties for local families. Many of the contributions also focus on the need for a real devolution of power to Cornwall. Only by obtaining a greater sense of constitutional parity with the other Celtic nations can Cornish issues start to be properly addressed. *My Manifesto for Cornwall* seeks to open up these various subjects for further debate so that a genuine sense of Cornish Democracy can flourish in the years ahead.

Garry Tregidga is Co-Director of the Institute of Cornish Studies

Marcus Alleyne

Cornwall, renowned for its scenic landscapes and rich cultural heritage, is also home to a growing number of ethnically diverse communities. To foster an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive, we must prioritise the following key areas:

Equal Access to Opportunities
Employment and Education: Ensuring that ethnically diverse individuals have equal access to employment opportunities and career advancement is crucial. This includes implementing anti-discrimination policies, promoting diverse hiring practices, and offering mentorship programmes. Schools and colleges must also adopt inclusive curricula that reflect the histories and contributions of diverse communities.

Training and Development: Providing tailored training programmes and workshops to enhance skills and employability is vital. Local businesses and educational institutions should collaborate to create internships and apprenticeships that are accessible to all, promoting a more equitable job market.

Community Integration & Representation
Cultural Awareness**:** Fostering a culture of understanding and respect is essential. Initiatives such as cultural festivals, workshops, and public talks can help raise

awareness and celebrate the rich diversity within Cornwall.

Representation in Decision-Making: Ensuring that ethnically diverse individuals have a voice in local governance and community organisations is vital. This can be achieved by encouraging participation in local elections and supporting leadership programmes aimed at empowering underrepresented groups.

Healthcare and Wellbeing

Accessible Healthcare: Healthcare services must be inclusive and sensitive to the needs of ethnically diverse communities. This includes providing language support, culturally competent care, and addressing specific health disparities that may affect these groups.

Mental Health Support**:** Promoting mental health awareness and providing accessible support services is crucial. Culturally sensitive counselling services and community-based mental health programmes can help address the unique challenges faced by ethnically diverse individuals.

Safe and Inclusive Spaces

Opposing Racism & Discrimination: Creating a zero-tolerance policy towards racism and discrimination is paramount. This involves strengthening hate crime legislation, providing support for victims, and conducting public awareness campaigns.

Inclusive Public Spaces: Ensuring that public spaces such as parks, community centres, and recreational facilities are welcoming and accessible to all. This includes addressing any barriers that may prevent ethnically diverse individuals from fully participating in community life.

Conclusion

By prioritising these areas, we can create a more inclusive and equitable Cornwall where everyone, regardless of their ethnic background, can thrive and contribute to the vibrant tapestry of our community. This manifesto serves as a call to action for all stakeholders to work together towards a brighter, more inclusive future.

Marcus Alleyne is CEO of Black Voices Cornwall and leader of the Rock Choir Cornwall from Roche

Gavin Barker

Cornwall Climate Charter
This is a guiding set of principles that we ask Cornwall Council, town and parish councils and MPs from all parties to sign up to. Climate change and the biodiversity emergency are the greatest challenges we face and will profoundly reshape the economy and future health and wellbeing of all those living in Cornwall.

Given the scale and urgency of these twin challenges, we have no time to lose. We therefore call on our elected MPs and councillors from all parties to come together and commit to the following governing principles in all the work that they do.

Principles of the charter:

Restore and grow the natural environment for wellbeing, biodiversity and food resilience
Ensure that all policies take into account the impact on future generations. A strong and diverse natural environment is both our strongest defence against climate change and the foundation of a functioning economy.

Work with key partners to build a more resilient local economy that caters for the needs of all and respects environmental limits
Economic and social justice must be at the heart of a green economy as must the need to preserve and protect our natural environment

Ensure all investment decisions are aligned with the net zero target
This includes Cornwall Council £2.4 billion pension funds which must move beyond divestment from fossil fuel companies and include strategic engagement with all companies within their pension portfolio on the basis of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions

Include the meaningful direct involvement of local residents
There must be a shift from consultation (where people have limited power) to codesign (where power is shared). Seek out the groups targeted by a particular policy and involve them in the design; listen to lived experience; embed citizens panels and citizens assemblies as part of the decision making process

Strengthen community health and resilience
Work with communities to foster new forms of self-help enterprise, mutual aid and neighbourhood democracy in order to better prepare for a changing climate and the environmental risks involved

Devolve real power to Cornwall
Urge our MPs and councillors to advocate greater autonomy for Cornwall specifically, the rights, powers and resources to equip Cornwall to accelerate the transition to a net zero carbon economy

This charter should be seen as a living document
1. To that end we urge elected councillors and MPs to give an account of their actions at an annual open public meeting, setting out how they have aligned their work with the governing principles outlined above.

2. The public meeting would be open to all and be combined with a family friendly ‘climate roadshow’ which brings together schools, faith organisations, business, the Universities, VCSE sector, the farming community and community groups, each with their own tables and stalls advertising what they do and how their work aligns with the principles laid out above.

3. Themed breakout rooms would offer workshops, a children’s creche as well as discussion topics which allow members of the public to engage their MP and councillor on more specific issues.

Gavin Barker is a trustee of the Cornish Poverty Forum

Kevin Bennetts

The Case for 'Social Capitalism' in the establishment of a Circular Economy in Cornwall

While both systems have merits both socialism and capitalism are deeply flawed by the eternal conflicts created by human greed and intransigence.

For example, and whilst desirable, the nationalisation of utilities has been shown not to work in strictly practical terms, and neither has privatisation where foreign interests taken precedence: which is utter madness.

Corporatism is ruthless in placing a far higher priority on shareholder value ahead of public (customer) benefits, so successful corporations can become monopolistic and operate against customer interests.

This suggests a strong case for the creation of circular economies where profits generated by local SME's stay largely within the local economy rather than being transferred to corporate money mills located elsewhere, to the serious economic detriment of peripheral economies like Cornwall.

While some see mutuality as unfashionable, it has a potentially important role to play in managing formerly privatised assets: in preference to re-nationalisation with all the potential inefficiencies this implies

This in conjunction with a vigorous profitable small business sector within a circular economy and closed loop economy could markedly increase local prosperity.

This could constitute a unique system of mutual ownership of utilities and public transport organisations geared towards customer benefits, operating within a symbiotic relationship, and in

parallel with free enterprise SMEs. This may be best described as Social Capitalism, or the best of both worlds.

In conclusion, in order to survive and prosper, there is an imperative to create profits which need not be excessive but are nevertheless vital to maintain continual investment. Meanwhile, charges to customer-owners may be kept as low as possible, who would then be able to actually afford the prices being charged.

Kevin Bennetts is a retired businessman from Gwennap

Claire Briault

A Green Manifesto for Cornwall
In a Climate & Ecological Emergency, administration reliant on outdated economic models will have no effect in controlling global heating. Corruption and the pursuit of wealth at the highest level of governments will herald the end of the human race.

Priority for a Functional Global Climate Alliance
Local democracy must work within a national framework and decision making at all levels must be made more responsive and faster. Cornwall has an active People's Assembly ready to go. Cornwall Council need to embed this as soon as the new MPs are sworn in, to create a flexible democracy with true transparency and visible accountability.

People's Assemblies must run parallel to conventional regional and parliamentary democracy to hold the influence of wealth and undemocratic influence in check in the following areas:

- Social Justice and Human Rights, Animal Rights
- Respect and Care of the Natural Environment across the Globe
- Dialogue between nations to eliminate war and weapons of mass destruction, without which no solutions can be applied
- Immediate international co-operation between large actors to address the threat to human existence from Artificial Intelligence

The governments of individual countries including the United Kingdom can only succeed in realising net zero emissions and carbon capture technology if the

above tenets are achieved imperatively and with humility.

These are some of the areas that require urgent change:

Growth

A new circular concept, where commodities and intellectual property are valued and recycled and shared equally to fulfill the needs of people and Nature.[6]

Agriculture

Care of the soil and forest and ocean ecosystems must underpin food production. Divide Council farms into smaller horticultural units. Reassess Cornwall Council owned farms, regarding food security and restoration of the natural environment. Eliminate toxic chemicals and fertilisers used on farms and by local councils under CC auspices to protect water purity.

Transport

Urgent initiatives to divert road building funds to improve public transport and restore all recently cut stops to Clay Area rail stations on the Par-Newquay line.

Improve recharging availability for those who are unable to use public transport and improve disability access and fare subsidy to all public transport.

Renewable Energy

Tighten restrictions on new build developments to allow only renewables in new housing stocks or commercial developments

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[6] See Kate Raworth, *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st Century Economist,* Random House, 2017

Building and Housing
Limit permission for greenfield sites to stimulate use of brownfield sites. Convert Spaceport building into dwellings and give regular statements on Spaceport debt to taxpayers.

Claire Briault is a Community Scientist from the Clay area of Cornwall

Jake Bristow

Housing

Second homes should be taken out of the open market. Existing second homes will be compulsory purchased after a fair property valuation (if the owners refuse then they will be given a 48 hour notice to quit the property or face forced eviction. Properties should be turned into flats where locals can afford to live and also some should be used to house the poor to try and cut down on the homeless problem.

A Cornish Housing Company to be set up and all other house selling companies will be curtailed so that housing in Cornwall will be given to locals and workers firstly before anyone else.

Education

A stringent new curriculum would be created along similar lines as Wales where Cornish culture, history, and language will be at the forefront of the curriculum along with other core and non core subjects. All subjects must show somewhere a link to Cornwall such as Cornish music, Cornish history, Cornish food-catering, Cornish literature and poems.

All MATs (Multi Academy Trusts) will be abolished and all the schools placed under the control of an education authority run from inside of Cornwall. University education should be free for students from Cornwall in Cornwall.

Infrastructure

A new hospital should be built in the North of Cornwall and another smaller hospital to be built closer to Land's End. All doctors and nurses who have received their training in Cornwall must spend 5 years being fully qualified doctors and nurses in

Cornwall before they can leave to go abroad if that is what they wish, the same with teachers. All police, fire fighters and paramedics administered from inside of Cornwall for Cornwall (no more Devon and Cornwall Police).

De-privatise GWR and other private public transport companies and manage through a local transport committee with buses and trains becoming more integrated instead of long waits at train stations for connecting trains or buses. All electricity, gas and water will be public and no longer private. Cornish Lithium and other products will be mined/developed by Cornish companies and rights sold.

A toll point will be erected on this side of the Tamar to charge people coming down on holiday and at other major entry points as well, specific identification stickers (or something along these lines) to be given to locals so they can enter without being stopped.

St Pirans day to be a public holiday for the whole of Cornwall.

Jake Bristow is a young graduate of the University of Exeter from Stenalees

Jo Buchanan

As a critical heritage specialist living in Cornwall, my overall aim is to locate and advance solutions-oriented, collaborative initiatives that look to amplify place-based knowledge in service of local solutions to global problems.

My research is guided by community priorities and is located where place-based and minority peoples' heritages intersect with dynamics of socio-cultural matters (climate change, decolonisation and economic development). By adopting the paradigm of 'heritage from below' my research on community uses of heritage is focused on methods that promote democratisation and decision-making processes for a more transparent and inclusive Cornwall that celebrates plurality.

With on-going concerns over democratisation, I would like to see broader recognition of minorities in the UK, including the Cornish minority. Within heritage research, policy and practice there remains a lack of recognition. The Cornish minority are not given the same support as other national minorities in the UK. They do not have visibility on the UK Census, and in the forthcoming UK implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention they have limited recognition of their cultural traditions. Other UK national minorities will have official sub-inventories that will feed into the UK wide inventory. The latter will offer increased visibility and viability of their ICH. The proposed implementation of the Convention illustrates on-going issues that face the Cornish minority and their heritage – one that connects to the politics of recognition.

There is a general lack of recognition (and a misrecognition) in the wider cultural heritage sector.

For example, the National Lottery Heritage Fund does not recognise the Cornish language as an option in applications. I would like to see increased recognition (and hence support) for Cornish minority cultural heritage, and an overall celebration of cultural diversity in the UK featured in any manifesto. For example policies that focus on maintaining, and improving access to local assets. There should be committed support for museums and libraries across Cornwall, protected arts and heritage funding and continued support for higher education in the arts and humanities so we have a future pipeline of diverse people within Cornwall's heritage and culture sector.

Jo Buchanan is an independent heritage specialist and a member of ICOMOS-UK from Tideford Cross

Michael Bunney

Kernow's most critical issues are housing, wages and jobs, and protecting our environment. These challenges would all be addressed by the creation of a Cornish Assembly with proper devolution of key powers, to unleash local energy and develop local bespoke solutions. An assembly would also address the growing disillusionment with Westminster-based politics and facilitate the enhancement of Cornish culture, heritage and distinctiveness in every area of policy. The following are policies I would support:

Housing
The building of 10 council houses in every parish. This would be a local solution to the housing crisis and allow rural communities to stay alive. This could be a requirement of every parish with delegated powers on siting and design

A ban should be introduced on all new second homes and limits on holiday rentals, to preserve housing stock for local people. Council tax should also be tripled on all second homes and business rate relief removed from holiday lets, with all funds raised ring fenced for Cornish council housing and infrastructure, such as local schools and highways.

Wages and Jobs
Kernow could adopt a living wage policy as a Duchy-wide policy, with all public employers required to pay this and private enterprises encouraged to, with celebration of businesses that do.

Environmental Policy
Every policy introduced by a Cornish Assembly should be audited against environmental and climate emergency policies.

Michael Bunney is Cornwall Councillor for St Mewan, Grampound, St Ewe and Pentewan Valley

Andrew Climo

Making Up for Lost Time

Twenty years ago we presented an important document to the Government in the form of *Devolution for One and All.* This outlined some of our thinking on what devolved government might look like, how a legislature might be organised, and what powers it should have. Since then, further work has been carried out, and a refresh of this cornerstone document is due to be published soon. But not withstanding, now is very much the time to also think about some quick wins.

So, in this short piece, I have focused on some important initial steps that could be taken, independently of the detailed design of a new government and legislature. Steps that provide some of the foundations for a more substantial settlement, some important bespoke measures that relate to Cornish 'national' identity.

The administrative justification for this 'bespoke-ness'is the accession of the UK to the Council of Europe treaties as they relate to Cornwall: The Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2002, and Framework Convention on National Minorities in 2014. The first involves the recognition of the Cornish language and the commitment to protect, support and promote it, and the second similarly involves the treatment of the Cornish national minority. But to move beyond treaty declarations, to legislation, regulation and implementation requires administrative machinery. This implies that a new, small, unit needs to be established, and doing so would parallel the formation of the Welsh Office back in the 1960s.

Setting up a diminutive Cornwall Office also provides a scaffold upon which those institutions

needed to achieve full national devolution may be built. It also provides the mechanism to transfer powers and resources, where this is required.

With this lego-block approach to institution building in mind, some low-resource, practical, and achievable steps come to mind. These would either be well within the capability of a fledgling Cornwall Office, or part of the process to establish it:

1) Obtaining agreement for a dedicated Minister for Cornwall, and the creation of a small 'Cornwall Office'. This is a crucial requirement for Cornwall, since it provides a home for the design of legislation and regulation, such as a Cornish Language Act, Cornish Heritage Act or Cornwall Act to establish an elected parliament. Creating a ministerial role provides an opportunity to develop junior ministers who may then move on to a larger brief. Logically a Minister for Cornwall fits within the Deputy Prime Minister's wider brief, and that of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Additionally, it provides a welcome enhanced status for Cornwall as a territorial unit.

2) Obtaining government commitment to act on the Framework Convention for National Minorities regarding the Cornish and set a timeline for setting up a team to create an action plan. This could be done within the first months of the new government and requires only a ministerial statement.

3) Obtaining a binding commitment for Part 3 Recognition for the Cornish language under the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This is long overdue (20 years) but could be progressed

quickly. Again, only a ministerial statement and timeline is needed to initiate work.

4) Determining the possible pathways for Cornwall to progress devolution on all heritage matters, such as private bills or Orders in Council to transfer powers to Cornwall Council. The goal would be to transfer Historic England's powers and the management responsibility for sites currently run by English Heritage to a new Cornish body. This could be achieved within the first term of the new government, and conveniently goes some way to discharging the Government's Council of Europe responsibilities and dealing with outstanding CofE actions.

5) Developing an agreement for the delegation of powers to Cornwall Council to implement the provisions of Part 3 of the Regional or Minority Languages Charter, crucially, relating to a Cornish language requirement in schools and subsequent regulation of standards. By way of example, this may be done through Privy Council Orders in Council, a private bill or some other method rather than Westminster legislation, if deemed too great a demand on parliamentary time.

6) Developing, deploying and monitoring primary school tuition, with the goal of offering basicCornish skills to children at Key Stages 1 & 2. Cornwall has some, if not all, the resources required to achieve this, so implementation is unlikely to be difficult or lengthy. This should be followed by secondary schools offering the Cornish language with parity alongside other modern languages at Key Stages 3 |& 4. This may take a little longer but should be well within the capabilities of Cornwall Council to

administer, given the previous role of county councils as local education authorities (LEAs).

7) In partnership with central government, develop and agree a road map for devolution in matters relating to social housing. This is a crucial issue in Cornwall and relates also to issues of holidats lets, second homes, and the house price vs. income disparity. This could involve the creation of a new, single, Cornwall-wide social housing agency, accountable to the Cornish electorate through a Cornish Parliament. Optionally, this could be followed by a transfer of existing social housing stock to the new body. The necessary skills and knowledge exist within Cornwall to achieve this. However, there are legal and financial implications if the ownership of housing stock is to be transferred to the new agency. The management of social housing is a function familiar to local councils previously, and for which there can be no reasonable objection.

8) Obtain agreement to devolve operational responsibility for all road, rail, river and inshore transport, including regulation for rail, water taxis, inshore ferries, and transport integration. This is a logical and obvious extension to Cornwall's bus system transformation, known as 'Karyans rag Kernow' or Transport for Cornwall. Exemplars exist for equivalent transport planning and oversight elsewhere, such as the Passenger Transport Executives (PTES), which were established under the Transport Act 1968, and again there can be no serious objection to creating such a structure in Cornwall and extending it to cover other modes of transport.

9) Develop a master plan to fund and deliver larger-scale transport infrastructure improvements. An example of this would be a long-term plan to address the challenges of poor connectivity for North Cornwall to points westward, and to Truro specifically. This issue notably affects the towns of Bude, Launceston, Camelford, Wadebridge, and Padstow. Master planning is a desk-top exercise and is easily facilitated, even if future funding mechanisms are uncertain.

10) Develop a cost-benefit justification for emergency department and critical care provision in both West and North Cornwall. Crucially, most parts of England have a ratio of around 250,000 to 300,000 people per large District General Hospital (DGH). In Cornwall's case it is 570,000 to one. Furthermore, being a long thin peninsula comprising remote coastal areas, numerous rivers, and estuaries results in lengthy transit times to Treliske or involving transfers to Plymouth. Once again, solution modelling is a desk-top exercise, which would assess feasibility for building new DGHs, and identify alternative options.

Cornwall's next steps are as much about *doing* devolution as talking about it, and there is a very great deal to be done. It's time to talk turkey.

Andrew Climo is a management consultant from Sancreed

Merv Davey

The received wisdom is that tourism provides 30% of employment in Cornwall but only contributes 12% to the GDP, the difference being reflected by the relatively low wages within the industry. A manifesto for Cornwall needs an economic strategy to bring these figures closer together. Statistical information of this type is usually readily available on the internet, and I expected to verify and probably modify these figures with a quick search online. What I found instead was that information about the economic impact of tourism in Cornwall was of dubious provenance and entirely provided by agencies with a vested interest in the industry.

In July 1972 John Pardoe MP for North Cornwall instigated a debate in the House of Commons on the links between high investment in tourism, low wages, and unemployment in certain areas. In 1988 Andrew George, Bernard Deacon and Ronald Perry published *Cornwall at the Crossroads* showing Cornwall's choice of futures as a living community verses a playground for the wealthy. Since then, tourism seems to have escaped any socio-economic scrutiny.

With a longer season and increasing profile of Cornish cultural heritage, tourism has improved its image since the 1970s and 80s but questions remain. Does the funding provided by Westminster for Health, and infrastructure such as highways reflect the temporary, but tenfold increase in population in Cornwall due to tourism? What benefits the local economy more, apartment developments and Premier Inns or small local businesses and individual entrepreneurs? Are planners empowered to privilege local entrepreneurship committed to Cornish products

over UK wide organisations and multinational developers? Much more could be added to this list.

Then there is the broader issue of why we are so besotted with tourism in Cornwall. For example, fashioning the Eden Project out of industrial waste land was an amazing piece of creative technology. But instead of spearheading a revolution in sustainable (and climate change proof) market gardening, it focused on tourism and a massive brown footprint.

Tourism in Cornwall needs an independent audit and Cornwall Council needs the powers to implement recommendations which are likely to be draconian!

Merv Davey is a former Grand Bard of Gorseth Kernow from Withiel

Bernard Deacon

We need first to identify the big issues that people in Cornwall face, and these are a) The housing crisis, b) Saturation tourism and c) Centralisation and colonialism.

For housing we need policies such as:

i) An end to developer-led planning geared solely towards profit-maximisation and its replacement by democratic local planning that puts an end to the destruction of our countryside to accommodate population growth.

ii) Supply-side action (e.g. subsidising the return of social housing, a two-tier housing market and the regulation of estate agents).

iii) A rapid reduction of the number of second and holiday homes and their return to the local housing stock (through punitive taxation and changes in planning law).

For saturation tourism we need action such as:

i) A tourist tax.

ii) Initiatives to reduce the size of the catering sector and ensure it operates in the interests of the local economy.

iii) Taking any and every opportunity to combat the image of Cornwall as merely a leisure periphery.

For centralisation and colonialism we should:

i) Demand a Cornish Assembly with at least the powers of the Welsh Senedd, elected by PR, as an interim measure.

ii) Abolish Cornwall Council and seek to re-establish genuine local government.

iii) Work towards a longer-term path to Cornish independence.

Of course, there are a few other minor issues that don't just apply to Cornwall but that need urgent action while currently being completely ignored by most of the English parties. For example, how do we transition from capitalism which, accelerated by neoliberalism, is well on its way to destroying life on this planet, to degrowth and a more sustainable economy.

Bernard Deacon is a retired university lecturer from Redruth

Ben Dobson

Economy

The Cornish economy is heavily dependent on seasonal, low paid and low skilled tourism. Previous funding programmes have established benefits that include; super-fast broadband, and a modern higher education campus. Progress has been made to exploit these assets through "green technologies" but, in the face of competition from Wales, Ireland and France it is unclear how Cornwall will achieve significant economic expansion.

Electronic gaming is an area of rapid global growth. Cornwall's digital network and success in tertiary creative education provide the building-blocks to exploit this high value business sector. Exeter has demonstrated that a "hub" of excellence; the Met Office, can catalyse economic growth. Attracting a major digital gaming company to Cornwall would be transformative.

Housing

Housing construction in Cornwall has been higher than most of the UK. This has been necessary, in part, to accommodate people retiring to Cornwall. However, much of this has been converted into holiday letting properties. There have been numerous, but ineffective, attempts to curtail the loss of permanent housing and Cornwall continues to need affordable housing that is affordable for residents within a low pay economy.

A three-tier approach is suggested. First, a form of Council Housing with investment from the Local Authority. Second, to encourage economic growth to stimulate higher earnings. Third, a drive to discourage short-term letting. A tax, payable when a property is

unoccupied, could provide such a discouragement. Smart meters can provide independent evidence of occupation.

Primary Transport Integration
The three principal means of transport; air, rail and road, should be integrated through the development of a central hub. Indians Queens is a potential hub, linking the A30 with both the rail network and Newquay airport via “park, fly and ride”. Investment is already in place to improve the rail connectivity between Newquay and Falmouth. A fast transport system should also be built between the hub and the airport.

Ben Dobson is a former Business Development Director from Crantock

Paul Dyer

Cornwall is in deep trouble and there are four major issues which need to be tackled and resolved before the population will see any improvement to their quality of life:

1) Housing
We have a housing crisis in Cornwall because house prices are so high and average wages are so low! The situation has dramatically increased since Covid.

Cornwall Council can be seen as the main instigator of the housing crisis as they continue to build thousands of houses but all of these are too expensive for most local people to afford. This has led to a vast increase in population which exacerbates the situation.

2) NHS
The NHS in Cornwall is broken, which is a direct result of our housing crisis and the vast increase in population. The root cause can be attributed to Cornwall Council who have granted far too many housing projects without insisting on developers put money into local infrastructure.

3) Water and Sewage
Very little money is ever invested in improvements to our outdated infrastructure. The resultant sewage problems have been blamed on South West Water, and rightly so, but Cornwall Council contributes to this, when it does not insist developers put money towards infrastructure.

4) The Cost of Living

Cornwall has become a very expensive place to live! In many places there is little or no public transport so car ownership is an essential, but the cost of this increases rapidly year on year. Cornwall Council can mitigate this by not increasing car parking charges and not reducing the number of parking spaces in town centres.

My conclusion is that Cornwall Council can be seen as responsible for most of the major problems facing Cornwall today. The Council is officer led because the cabinet politics of the elected membership fails to enable any controls of the officers to be effective. We need a more effective local governance. At the moment, Cornwall Council answers to no one. The senior officers are vastly overpaid and not qualified to run a bath, let alone one of the biggest companies within Cornwall.

I want our MPs to stick together rather than try and point score off each other and take Cornwall Council to task. Once we have some form of control back then we can talk about self governance.

Paul Dyer is a farmer and the founder of Cornwall 4 Change

Simon Eckersall

Cornwall's Vision - A Manifesto for Sustainable Growth and Community Well-being

4-Year Parliamentary Term: 2024-2028
Introduction: Our mission for Cornwall is clear: to create a thriving, happy, and sustainable community without increasing the tax burden on our residents. By implementing innovative social initiatives and holding corporations to account, we will enhance the quality of life across all six of the former districts: Caradon, Carrick, Kerrier, North Cornwall, Restormel, and Penwith.

Enhancing Social Society Initiatives
Community Well-being: Launch mental health and wellness programmes accessible to all residents, including free counselling services and community fitness initiatives.

Education and Skills Development: Invest in vocational training and adult education programmes to increase employment opportunities and foster economic growth.

Public Transportation Improvements: Enhance the public transport network to reduce travel time and costs, connecting remote areas more effectively.

Corporate Accountability
Environmental Fines: Implement fines for companies that pollute our environment, particularly targeting those dumping sewage into the sea. Funds raised will be reinvested into environmental protection and restoration projects.

Bad Behaviour Tax: Introduce a ‘Bad Behaviour Tax’ on water companies failing to meet environmental standards, incentivising better corporate practices.

Promoting Remote Working
Remote Working Hubs: Develop remote working hubs in scenic locations to attract digital nomads and support local economies.

High-Speed Internet Access: Ensure high-speed internet access across Cornwall, particularly in rural areas, to facilitate remote working and attract technology startups.

Green Energy and Technology Startups
Startup Incubators: Establish incubators and co-working spaces for green energy and technology startups, providing mentorship, funding, and resources.

Renewable Energy Incentives: Offer tax incentives and grants to startups focusing on renewable energy solutions.

Community Engagement and Transparency
Residents' Councils: Establish councils in each district to ensure community voices are heard in local government decisions.

Transparency in Governance: Maintain open channels of communication about where and how funds are being used, ensuring accountability.

8-Year Vision: 2024-2032
Introduction: Building on the foundations laid in the first term, our long-term vision aims to achieve measurable improvements in quality of life and economic stability. Our residents will feel the benefits of living in Cornwall, not just people visiting.

Economic Empowerment
Residents' Sales Tax Reduction: Implement a reduced sales tax for residents to boost local spending and improve cost of living.

Support for Local Businesses: Provide grants and low-interest loans to local businesses to stimulate growth and job creation.

Sustainable Development
Green Energy Initiatives: Invest in renewable energy projects to reduce carbon footprint and create sustainable jobs.

Affordable Housing Projects: Develop affordable housing to ensure all residents have access to quality living conditions.

Group Funding Initiatives
Industrial Town Revitalization: Encourage group funding initiatives in larger industrial centres and towns such as St Austell (27,400), Camborne (21,600), Penzance & Newlyn (21,200), Saltash (16,600), Redruth (15,600), Bodmin (15,300), Helston (11,900), Bude (9,900), Hayle (9,500), and Liskeard (9,500), focusing on enhancing economic opportunities and local infrastructure.

Measurable Improvements
Happiness Index: Conduct annual surveys to measure residents' happiness and well-being, aiming for at least an 80% satisfaction rate by the end of the 8 years.

Economic Indicators: Track improvements in employment rates, median income, and cost of living metrics to ensure residents are demonstrably better off.

Conclusion: Cornwall's future is bright. By focusing on community well-being, corporate accountability, and sustainable growth, we will create a region where residents thrive, feel valued, and are proud to call home. Together, we will make Cornwall a model of prosperity and happiness.

Simon Eckersall is an IT Specialist working in London originally from Redruth

Nik Elvy

Housing

High housing costs push people into poverty due to the mismatch with local wages. The high costs of housing drive people out of Cornwall or forces them into precarious living arrangements or even homelessness. More and better-quality social housing is needed.

Better protections for tenants are needed so that landlords must care for properties with a cap on rental prices so that landlords cannot hike prices up. Action must be taken to barriers that prevent access to affordable, safe housing. There should be limits on second homes and buying for holiday lets. This will make more housing available, particularly at the affordable end, encouraging people to live in and contribute to their community all year round. Any new housing built must have sufficient green space designed into it via gardens and public areas for health and leisure with good quality play provision.

Transport

We need better transport infrastructure generally so that people who live in rural areas can have greater autonomy without needing to own a car. The creation of safe pathways and cycleways between dwellings, towns and villages. I live in an area where I could easily walk to the nearest town, but there is no safe pedestrian route, and although a bus passes by regularly, it has no safe space to stop. So I have no choice but to use a car to walk the dog or buy milk. It takes a dedicated person to choose to use a train when travelling by car is at least half the price and the travel time. Cheaper train services, more regular services and better connections could encourage people to use public transport more.

Water Pollution
One of the treasures of Cornwall is its beaches and natural spaces. But there has been a recent rise in the incidents of pollution that has made waterways, beaches and the sea unsafe to be in. I work in a woodland next to a river that has suffered regular pollution incidents and had a significant fish kill that has impacted the biodiversity of the area that has still not recovered two years later. I have witnessed children unwittingly playing in polluted water on beaches. Water pollution control measures are central to my manifesto.

Parks and open spaces
Make Space for Girls is an organisation that supports better consideration of areas designed with girls and women in mind in green and open spaces where people live. It highlights that many facilities provided by local councils, designed for young people are in fact dominated by boys and young men and that girls and women do not utilise areas such as skate parks, MUGA's or bike tracks but value different types of provision such as social seating, good lighting and swings not just for young children. A staggering 90% use by boys and young men of the most common provision in parks and open spaces means that girls and women feel intimidated and often unsafe in public green spaces closest to where they live. Designing local open spaces with other groups in mind also diversifies who will and can use the space more generally.

Poverty

High levels of rural poverty impacts education, physical, mental and social health for many in Cornwall. The stigma of poverty can be more damaging than just an obvious lack of resources. Much of the support for those who are struggling on low incomes is provided by community-based organisations who also do not have sufficient resources, and are often in burn out. I would like to see better wages for their employees, lower rents and stronger, central services staffed by local people who understand local needs to fully support those who are struggling. Schools should have recognised limits on what they can request from parents in terms of uniform and kit costs. Health, well-being and educational outcomes could be improved with the introduction of universal free school meals and subsidised trips and clubs that are open to all. A reintroduction of stable youth services could support young people to feel confident and able to build better futures for themselves

Nik Elvy is the founder of the Curious School of the Wild CIC

Sue Fairweather

Housing
a) A total ban on new second homes and a £1000 tax per month for existing properties not rented out. Airbnb to be allowed only for single rooms, not whole properties.

b) New housing to be genuinely affordable and marketed only to residents of Cornwall.

c) Rent controls aligned with average wage in Cornwall.

Planning
a) Total control of planning by local communities with no appeals to Bristol to be rubber stamped.

b) No approval for new holiday properties.

c) Planning decisions to be made on the basis of need and benefit to the community.

Environment
a) South West Water to be nationalised, with current executives to face potential criminal charges for pollution.

b) Refusal to allow badger culling.

c) Total commitment to net zero 2030, with the Climate Commission overseeing all areas having an impact on climate issues.

d) All new properties to have solar panels.

e) A total ban on fake grass and fines for destruction of gardens with concrete, paving or tarmac. This is justified by their damaging effect on biodiversity and increased flooding risk.

Economy
a) Commercial properties left empty for more than one year to be rented out at favourable rents for new businesses, with owners given the option of putting back into use themselves if they object or pay a fine.

b) Stimulation of green initiatives and non-tourist business with favourable rate tariffs.

c) Tourist tax to offset the pollution, litter and excessive water usage during the main holiday season.

Employment
a) £15 minimum wage for all workers.

b) A total ban on zero hours contracts.

c) Investment in new green technology skills, with free training.

c) Maximum executive salary of £100,000 for all businesses.

Democracy and governance
a) A Cornish Assembly, elected by proportional representation, to be responsible for all day-to-day governance of Cornwall. The existing Cornwall Council staff would provide administrative support.

b) The Assembly to have a veto on national legislation, which would either adversely affect Cornwall or have no demonstrable benefit.

Sue Fairweather is a former teacher from St Austell

Jesse Foot

Pubonan Warbarth = All Together – Manifesto For Cornwall 2025-30

Dydh da, good day. My manifesto for Cornwall and beyond encompasses the ideas that everyone is welcome, every individual has eternal value, all are deserving of respect, compassion, love and the opportunity to reach one's full potential with the help of an interdependent community who appreciate one another.

All together, we can move forward to deliver positive action and real solutions driven not by profit margins but by the intrinsic value of simply being a human being. This is no easy task given the current state of affairs but I am cautiously optimistic and hopeful our six new MPs and first ever Labour MP for SE Cornwall will work hard for the people of Kernow and the United Kingdom.

Listed below are five broad areas for our MPs to consider:

Health & Well Being

Protect and Improve the NHS, reduce waiting lists, increase access to NHS Dentists in Cornwall. Focus on Improving Mental Health and Well-Being for Young People. Green therapy, psylocibin therapy, talk therapy and more must be properly funded and readily available without delay for those in need. Cornwall needs a better deal from Westminster in regard to Adult Social Care. One and all should have guaranteed, safe and healthy housing where tenants do not live in fear of eviction.

Education
Ensuring our teachers are paid what they are worth and that all our schools have proper funding, resources and flexibility to ensure we produce the next generation of adults who are life-long learners, care more about other people, the world around them and leave feeling encouraged by education not disheartened. Ensure further, higher education, apprenticeships and other opportunities are available

Environment
Cornwall's rich natural environment is one of our biggest assets. Our MPs must not only seek to protect, and sustain what we have but also to enhance and regenerate our local environment. An approach to planning that truly gives the environmental impact of developments a higher value than any other consideration would be a good place to start.

Economy
A fair deal for Cornish fisherman and farmers where they feel valued and their work is rewarded appropriately. A tourism industry that sees opportunities throughout the year not just the high season. Transport links need improvement. The A38 needs a new bypass between Carkeel and Trerulefoot, the Tamar Toll must be reduced or funded completely by central Government, and a plan for a new Tamar crossing for the future created. Cornish culture should be celebrated, supported and promoted further including theatre, Cornish language, music, and the arts. Cornwall has been a leader in implementing green energy but our housing stock is anything but green. Funding to retrofit and make more resilient Cornish housing stock using green energies should be a priority as well as investing in our tech industry. I

would like to see Cornwall act as a pilot location for the decriminalization, legalisation and regulation of cannabis to create jobs, increase tax revenue and reduce the harm created by current policies. The war on drugs has been lost, drugs have won and we need a different approach that does not criminalise a large sector of the community. Ensure all who work in Cornwall are paid a fair living wage.

Devolution
More local devolution of decisions in regard to tax, planning and social care. I would like to see the proper recognition of the Cornish Minority Status coming from our MPs and Westminster. I would also like to see Cornwall recognised as the Celtic nation that it is and given equal status to the other nations within the UK. All together. Meur Ras!

Jesse Dylan Isaac Foot is a constituent in South East Cornwall

Julie Fox

As a Town Councillor my main manifesto priority would be a Cornish Parliament. A Cornish Parliament would allow the peoples of Cornwall to have a stronger voice and it would allow Cornwall to have standalone legislation thus giving us more power to make decisions that are in our best interests and act as a conduit for effective self-government.

My next priority would be the housing crisis. I have a long track record of campaigning on planning and housing in the Duchy. The Local Plan here in Cornwall is doing absolutely nothing to house local people on a low wage The wrong type of housing is being built, which is unaffordable for Cornish people on low wages or zero hours contracts. A sustained plan is needed in Cornwall for building social housing that meets the needs of local people living here and truly affordable housing

Another issue that I hear about time and time again from constituents is the state of the roads. This links to fairer funding for Cornwall as we have been historically underfunded by Central Government. This leaves essential services struggling and our infrastructure is now creaking at the seams. We need a fairer funding deal from Central Government, and this can be achieved through a Cornish Parliament and a block grant.

The cost of living has had a real and devastating impact here in Cornwall. We are a low wage economy and yet we have the very highest bills. Rent increases have been phenomenal here in the Duchy. On top of that we do not have enough available houses for people to rent, even if they could afford the amount of rent that is being charged. For those wanting to get on the property ladder, but are low waged, they cannot

afford the average price of a house which is £299,000 (March 2024). A large proportion of the jobs in the hospitality and tourist industries are zero-hour contracts. There needs to be a combination of making corporations pay their tax dues, fairer wages, ending zero hour contracts and placing health and well-being at the centre of policy making.

Julie Fox is a St Austell Town councillor

Peter Guest

Local Authority Funding
Pressures are growing on Local Authorities. Funding has decreased dramatically in real terms, yet the costs of delivering services have increased. All statutory services are under strain, particularly Adult Social Care and Children's Services, and this means that non statutory, yet still important services are being cut. Cornwall Council has been lobbying the previous Government for increased and fairer funding. Will the new MPs commit to fighting for a fairer deal for the local authority and if successful, where will the money come from?

Housing
It would seem that targets set by and imposed by Westminster are the way ahead, but whether or not top-down set figures are indeed the most efficient way to tackle the housing crisis, there are three particular areas that must be addressed:

1) Infrastructure
Too often in larger developments, the provision of education, health care, highways provision and even the local retail offer [to name but a few] are afterthoughts, often with bland assurances that these will be addressed once the housing has been built. These assurances are often delayed or even slip with seemingly no consideration given to the strain put on existing and often inadequate provision.

2) Affordable Housing
A frank discussion is needed on the definition of affordable housing. The current stated figure is one of 80% of true market value. This is totally unrealistic

for the majority of our residents. Do our new MPs not agree that a new definition of 'genuinely affordable' should be used during the planning application stage? I have not included the lack of social housing in this submission, but it is an issue that seriously needs attention in its own right.

3) Resources
One often overlooked fact that impacts on new build delivery in Cornwall is resource. Geographically, we lie at the end of a very long supply chain. Both materials and labour are in short supply, and this can lead to delays in proposed developments. Another factor is the supply of land, and how to make best use of brownfield sites, where the costs of bringing them up to an acceptable level can be daunting. How do our new MPs propose to square this circle?

A Stronger Voice for Cornwall
One idea mooted by the new Government is that of a South West Regional Authority. Cornwall secured the second best funding deal on a per capita basis under the Shared Prosperity Fund. But should a Bristol-centric S.W.R.A. come to pass, how likely is it that we will secure either extra funding or local devolution?

Peter Guest is Cornwall Councillor for Roche & Bugle

Terry Harry

I was very honoured to be asked to give my opinion for *My Manifesto for Cornwall.* None of my thoughts are at all politically based. My opinions are based on decades of working for the press, starting a successful Cornish magazine, plus a current free Cornish website, which was started during the Covid pandemic.

Cornwall is unique and could be much improved if there could be greater unity between organisations, associations, clubs and other societies. Many are supported financially by their members, which is amazing considering Cornwall is one of the poorest areas in Europe. Some organisations also benefit from having charitable status.

One of the main problems I see is too many cliques that do not wish to share our precious history and *"wave the Cornish Flag"*. But knowledge should not only be shared in newsletters or group meetings in a local pub or village hall. It needs to be shared to a much wider audience, such as schools run by the education department of Cornwall Council. Many schools are taking this into consideration and are struggling to get assistance.

Some groups seem to look after their own members. They need to expand and share, especially to our young people as mentioned above.

Personally I have tried to give some of these groups free publicity over the years and received nothing, because the PR staff or others were too busy. If greater sharing could be allowed to happen then it could improve and strengthen Cornwall's place and importance not only in the World, but most importantly in our homeland.

There needs to be a centralised body that accumulates and shares as much knowledge as possible. Plus, share when they are asked by anyone that can "*spread the word*" this I have tried to do for many years.

To finish I think we need UNITY before it is too late to undo any damage done by keeping the knowledge within groups.

Sadly I have been in some local meetings where members of various organisations butt heads with other groups. PLEASE STOP and join forces.

Terry Harry is the founder of Cornwall Yesteryear from St Day

Ros Hayward

A firm commitment to ensuring all of Cornwall is climate change neutral by 2030. This must underpin every decision made, which must be made transparently and demonstrate that the effect on the environment has been properly considered. My suggestions to achieve this include:

1. Energy - A commitment to 100% renewable energy for Cornwall by 2030. This would be achieved by:

a) Removing restrictions on new on-shore wind turbines and supporting the provision of new off-shore wind farm.
b) Requiring all new buildings, both residential and non-residential, to be fitted with solar panels as a condition of obtaining planning approval.
c) Introducing a scheme to incentivize small businesses and local communities to set up their own power generation schemes.
d) Upgrading the National Grid so that excess power generated in Cornwall can be fed into the grid to power the rest of the UK and provide income to Cornwall.

2. Protection of the Environment and Nature, these measures to be introduced immediately:

a) A clear and workable system to incentivize farmers and landowners to manage their land in the best interest of nature
b) All new developments to demonstrate biodiversity net gain and developers not able to offset losses elsewhere.

c) Protection for all green spaces, incentives introduced for regeneration and rewilding schemes.
d) Incentives for natural flood defence schemes including the re-introduction of beavers where suitable sites are identified.
e) An end to the use of glyphosate herbicide by all local authorities and parish councils.
f) A complete ban on the discharge of raw sewage into rivers and the sea. This will require substantial investment by the water companies and consideration should be given to bringing them back into public ownership.
g) Improvement of recycling facilities to broaden the range of materials able to be recycled and the ease of recycling them.

3. Adapting to climate change so that Cornwall becomes a place where both people and nature can thrive:

a) Help to be given to communities to prepare for and be resilient to the effects of climate change
b) Climate education to be included in the curriculum for all schools

Ros Hayward is Chair of LEGGS (Luxulyan Environment Green Glebe Space)

Jacqui Heard

Sense of Place
Greater recognition for Cornwall and its language. There needs to be formal recognition that Cornwall is and always has been distinct from England and the position of the border between them. Work to further Ethnic Minority status already recognised by UK government and improve on it.

Cornish National Assembly
The creation of a Cornish National Assembly to provide appropriate government in parity with the other Celtic nations of the UK. Exploration of the process of rejoining the EU as a separate body within the UK. Restriction of building planning processes and responsibility placed entirely within Cornwall.

Environment
Improvements in water quality and re-nationalisation of water companies. Strengthening of environmental protection and increased biodiversity. Stronger protections for SSSI sites in Cornwall.

Food and Agriculture
Improvement of food standards through encouragement and funding of sustainable agriculture and organic produce in particular. Protections for farmers against harmful supermarket practices.

Media and Broadcasting
Support for creative media and broadcasting relevant to Cornish cultural values and activities, especially in use of the Cornish language.

Education
Replace Ofsted with a Cornish body, which would also function to support tuition of a Cornish National Curriculum throughout primary and secondary education. Ensure that green space and sports fields associated with schools are protected from building development other than for educational purposes and provide support for the formation of youth and other sports groups to use those facilities outside of school time.

Economy and Housing
Properly address issues of homelessness through re-stocking of 'public' housing and re-definition of 'affordable' housing to match incomes in Cornwall. Restrict the sale of housing to people working and paying taxes primarily in Cornwall. Take action to reduce economic inequality, with particular focus on child poverty.

NHS and Social Care
Redefine the boundaries of healthcare responsibility so that they are coterminous with the Cornish national boundary, with provision for cross-boundary healthcare where appropriate. Increase funding for health care provision by the NHS, and particular focus on causes and treatments of mental health issues.

Jacqui Heard is a Cornish language teacher from Stratton

Stephen Horscroft

In the last 25 years there has been much talk about genuine Cornish devolution but disappointment in terms of what has been achieved: from the Cornish Constitutional Convention helping to defeat those campaigning for an elected 'regional' assembly covering the peninsula from Bristol to Land's End, to the (we were told) 'inevitability' of a Cornish Assembly when local government was reformed to the Unitary, through to the baby steps of devolution deals under various Cornwall Council administration.

Devolution is the key to so much else but it is nowhere near a silver bullet unless accompanied by electoral reform, tax retention and tax varying powers. Cornwall suffers from a regressive taxation system where households pay Council Tax irrespective of ability to pay, and whilst Cornwall Council retains business rates it has no ability to vary it depending on the needs of those businesses. Despite Cornish tourism generating additional VAT and fuel duty receipts, it cannot retain this revenue, although it must pick up the costs arising from visitor driven tourism.

Whether one calls Cornwall Council a local authority or a fledgling assembly, more public involvement is needed, such as providing the power of recall. This might require councillors or assembly members to report back and communicate with the public between elections as to what they are achieving compared with what they said they would do.

Cornwall Council needs to implement significant change if it is to achieve sustainable finances. The twin issues in Cornwall of an older demographic and high levels of chronic sickness is driving higher needs for social care, which surely should be integrated into the NHS, but this may not be enough. Nationally,

there is a proposal for a Royal Commission on this issue of integrated health and social care. But in the meantime higher costs impacts local productivity, constrains investment, and downstream further pressures the Council's income whilst its costs are rising. The result is that the Council has had to look at selling its assets without having a strategy.

The strategy of creating 'revolving funds' and managing assets tightly may both be critical to achieving a sustainable financial future for Cornwall Council, but this is linked to Cornwall's overall economic position. For example, Cornwall's renewable energy assets may present an opportunity for onward reinvestment in infrastructure, such as a 24-hour integrated public transport, free at the point of use, which would raise productivity, with the side-benefit of reducing car use. However, the role of private transport remains an essential driver of the Cornish economy, and using it should not involve neither being shamed nor blamed.

But providing cheap and locally sourced energy could go some way to tackling cost of living issues in Cornwall. If Cornwall Council had sufficient control over the planning system and could site these energy plants appropriately for national and local benefit, but without taking out assets for biodiversity or food and communities could benefit directly, then both the economy and the Council's receipts would benefit.

Agri-food innovation and landscape management are separate but linked areas where Cornwall has untapped growth potential, and Cornwall can be at the forefront of food production and processing. The evolution of these sectors into both higher value and high employment is feasible. However, administrative redesign is needed to achieve this if the natural environment is also to be protected. This would

involve, for example, creating a new body ‘Natural Cornwall’ by devolving the relevant Natural England resources, providing it with a suitably modified brief, regulatory powers, and funding to create a truly integrated function that balances the needs of productive farming and biodiversity.

I suggest that ‘NIMBYism’ arises because of the distance and complexity of the planning system from communities, and the belief that the public has no control or influence over change. If they perceive it does not benefit them then the result is resistance. It follows that placing the public in control through a devolved and truly accountable planning system is the answer.

So far as a devolved assembly is concerned, tax retention, raising, varying and tax should apply to business rates, stamp duty, fuel duty, and VAT. This would allow money to be injected into Cornwall’s coffers. It will also allow a Cornish administration to shift the burden away from regressive to more equitable forms. This is important in Cornwall where householder and many business incomes are low.

The new Labour Government is fiscally constrained but prominent figures such as the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Greater Manchester both recognise the value of involving local stakeholders in determining tax policy. The value of this approach is that local integrated taxation may be aligned to both service delivery needs, and economic drivers for each region.

Given that in the last 25 years neither GVA per capita growth nor the supply of housing to locals has responded to measures intended to stimulate them, and that poverty and homelessness have worsened, fresh approaches are needed. It is not enough for Cornwall to be carried by the rest of the UK; It must

make a positive contribution to the overall economic picture of UK Plc. To do so, a significant policy shift is needed.

Stephen Horscroft is a small businessman from Truro

Abi Hutchinson

Health

We want to see a decrease in disparities of treatment of people of colour throughout our health systems. For example, Black women are five times more likely to die in childbirth than White women.

We would like there to be more health care professionals throughout all levels of roles with emphasis on senior management, director level, change making roles and wellbeing services, including therapists of colour.

We would like better education of staff relating to how certain rashes or diseases show up differently on darker skin, rather than just using white skin as the reference point.

We would like to ensure that treatments are being given to people from the Windrush generation that may be caught up in the scandal. They are British citizens with the right to the NHS.

Education

Decolonise the current curriculum, ensuring we are not continuing to whitewash the content and include more diverse content, for example role models, moments in history, and contributions to Britain from global majority communities.

We should highlight the diversity that has been in Cornwall for hundreds of years, and educate staff on how to tackle racism and discrimination appropriately.

Police

We want to see a visible and significant decrease in disproportionality of the numbers of black people and people of colour being subjected to *stop and search* and the use of force. Black people are currently 12

times more likely to be stopped and searched than a White person, in the Devon and Cornwall Police area.

We want to see better bias and anti-racism training to all police staff, a greater representation of minorities throughout the force, and steps taken to ensure there are a diverse range of officers at every level.

Conclusion

We want Cornwall to be an actively anti-racist region by 2035: this is Black Voices Cornwall's overall aim, and we want everyone to join our mission in making this possible.

We very much want to communicate the need for better treatment and services for people from global majority communities living in Cornwall.

Black Voices Cornwall offers Anti-Racism Training to any organisation, workshops in schools with victims and/or perpetrators and curriculum packs on Black Cornish History for Primary Schools. Please get in touch with education@blackvoicescornwall.org for more information.

Abi Hutchinson is the Co-Founder and the Arts, Culture and Events Lead for Black Voices Cornwall

Kathryn Layte

Action needs to be taken in Cornwall to address the problem of holiday homes. This could come in the form of a register or council edict so there are not too many in one area. At present the large number of holiday homes is discouraging working people from finding properties to rent.

Airbnb also needs to be regulated. I used to work for a small hotel locally as a bookkeeper, and the rules they had adhere to were very severe. In contrast, airbnb properties do not have to do this, and there are people who are buying houses to make the entire property an airbnb. We should encourage people, possibly via the taxation system, to sell their house as a family/personal home and not a holiday home.

I would like to see the House of Lords replaced by a smaller elected Senate with the introduction of Proportional Representation. Additionally, the abolition of Sirs and Dames, whilst keeping honours such as OBE, CBE and MBE but using different names and discontinuing the title 'British Empire'. Salaries for MPs should be raised to £150,000 and £200,000 for Ministers, whilst second jobs would be banned. I would like to see expenses eliminated except perhaps for travel expenses according to mileage, and food and drink at normal prices.

Water should be nationalised at the lowest possible rate, because the current water companies have loaded themselves with debt.

Council tax should be raised according to values from estate agents, and HMRC should be tasked with shifting efforts from people on the dole to chasing down tax avoidance, eliminating tax havens, and making companies earning revenue in the UK pay tax

rather than profit made here. Why does the Duke of Westminster pay no inheritance tax?

Kathryn Layte works for the heritage sector in Cornwall

Nigel Nethersole

I have always been concerned with Cornwall's integrity and the need to keep Cornwall as a whole, a complete political unit. I know this was not what Mebyon Kernow proposed at the last reorganisation of local government in 2009, but at least Cornwall was granted a single Unitary Authority and remained a political unit. It could have been divided into 2 or 3 unitary authorities (proposed in the 1990s), which would have destroyed Cornwall altogether as a political unit after perhaps 1300 years. Of course I want more powers devolved to our unitary authority, but at least there is still a Cornwall to govern.

The River Tamar has never completely been the border with England. A Bill promoted by the then Cornwall County Council in the 1920s to make the Tamar the boundary failed to gain support in the House of Lords and was withdrawn. Various anomalies on the border have been sorted out, but making the Tamar the definitive boundary seems a lost cause. However, we need to avoid any future attempts at cross-border constituencies in Westminster elections.

We must have a Cornwall of which its inhabitants are proud. Presently we do not have the power to produce such a Cornwall, so devolved powers are essential so that Cornwall is at least on a par with what pertains in Wales at present. I have taken note of Mebyon Kernow's publication *Towards a Cornish Parliament* (no date of publication!!) and am pleased to see that MK states that it does not seek independence, but a Cornish Parliament within the United Kingdom. So many people think that MK seeks independence and do not bother to discover what MK really wants for Cornwall.

The new houses being built at present in Cornwall are certainly not being built to satisfy any local demand. Cornwall is, more and more, becoming a very popular place to live and developers seem to have little difficulty in selling Cornish properties largely advertised in London and outside Cornwall. We need housing that locals can afford and surely a Cornish Parliament would help to resolve this.

With regard to my last point, I would like to promote a plea for the use of the word 'Cornish'. So many of our organisations are the 'Cornwall this' or the 'Cornwall that'. I plead with any organisation using the word Cornwall to change the word to Cornish. We have our adjective. English counties do not have such, except Kent. We should use our adjective on every occasion. We would then have a 'Cornish Centre' in Redruth, not a 'Cornwall Centre'. Why are we so reluctant to use it?

Nigel Nethersole is a retired Civil Servant (Ministry of Justice) from Redruth

Will Orchard

My priorities

Covid was a truly awful time for everyone, and it was particularly trying for those on low incomes and zero hours contracts, as furlough payments only entitled workers to 80% of their monthly wages. Not only were workers shortchanged in their pay-packets, through no fault of their own, they also had to fund the interest element of bounce back loans issued to private enterprises for the first year of these loans.

On top of this, workers also experienced, and will continue to experience, an increase in council rates in order to fund the grants which were issued to landlords and holiday homeowners to prop up their 'businesses'. These businesses are nothing but private investments, generating passive income, often nearly twice the average monthly mortgage repayment, with little capital input from the landlords.

In my own neighbourhood, neither of the two private rental tenants either side of my house experienced a rental reduction during the pandemic. Despite the grants provided due to the two landlords, no capital investment was made by the landlord. One only has recently had double glazing installed to the front elevation only, and neither has central heating fitted leading both to use expensive electric heaters or a single open fire to heat each home.

These grants were wrong in principle, and we should be disincentivising investments in second homes. One would hope that a meaningful disincentivisation, through taxation, would result in a property surplus, because of landlords selling up. This surplus should then reduce property values, allowing working people to own their own home and not pay,

on average, twice the value of a monthly mortgage payment in rent.

In Cornwall, where incomes are significantly lower than the national average, this should be a priority of all Cornish MPs.

First, not second, homes.

Will Orchard is an accountant from Helston

Richard Pearce

Britain's problems of housing, health and economy are acutely felt in Cornwall, but we need appropriate local measures to deal with them here. This calls for a philosophical and ideological awakening, through an educational process for children, parents and communities, a new localism. A Cornish curriculum in schools could start this fresh valuing on what we value as Cornish. This will take longer than the five-year election cycle.

In Cornwall the housing crisis is probably the most evident problem, in which private enterprise has failed and must inevitably fail. Housing the rich and commercial properties are more profitable activities, so no cheap rental housing is built. Inward migration, like outward migration, within UK is a national right, but only where services permit.

Housing is our most evident crisis. Other regions have other crises, but 40 years of progressive centralisation have pushed local problems, priorities and powers down the government agenda. A resurgence of sensitive responsible localism is a necessary foundation for a fairer Britain.

Decisions in England are made in the cities, but rural communities can be trusted to know local needs better than Westminster. Regional governments have shown how they can respond to local needs. Westminster has allocated powers to 'mayors' in major cities. Granted, one would not ask Cornwall Council to set the national budget, just to decide how it should be spent.

Let us look more closely at control over housing. Cornwall Council says it would build houses for cheap rent if it had builders, but they are busy building houses which will never be homes. Holiday

homes, whether for one family or for renting, should be seen as a non-essential privilege and not a right. 'The Market' does not even accept housing as a right. How can we tolerate this? This is one example of philosophical changes which any new government could promote for the future of the whole country. But it needs to begin with a national vision growing out of an honest national debate across our many internal borders, town or country, north or south, ancestral Cornish or Cornish by choice.

Richard Pearce is the co-founder of the Cross-Culture Committee of the European Council of International Schools from Treburrick

Andrew Pill

I often wonder what Cornwall actually wants to be: a democratic republic perhaps ? A Duchy? If so, with a duke who is son of the King of England? That, to me, is an issue as the one thing that the Cornish do not want to be is English in any way. British, maybe even European but not English. What of the revenues from the Duchy of Cornwall? As traditional industries such as mining, fishing and agriculture give more and more ground to the great god tourism, can the Cornish not lay claim to the indigenous revenue streams that can be harvested from within? Can the new Cornwall seek out business partnerships within Europe? We have much to offer and the will to succeed. A good place to start looking at a new Cornwall is to ask the big question of "What is the new Cornwall to be?"

I would favour a republican Cornwall with a parliament of, perhaps, eighteen representatives, three from each of the six council areas of Caradon, Carrick, Kerrier, North Cornwall, Restormel and Penwith and a President elected separately, all elected by the citizens of Cornwall only, thus excluding second-home owners except whose primary residence is also in Cornwall. Each would be politically independent and voted for on a simple majority, thus dismissing tactical voting and party whips in the name of democracy.

This parliament would be recognised as having governance over the republic as do the assemblies at Stormont, Cardiff and Edinburgh. While there might be ‘federal’(perhaps EU?) laws that apply to the whole of the UK, the Cornubian parliament might reject, cherry-pick, or alter them for use in Cornwall. Such an assembly should recognise and facilitate the teaching of Kernewek (Cornish)

alongside Sawsnek (English). If the Cornubian parliament decides, via a referendum, that Cornwall wishes to be in Europe, it should seek to do so without Act of Parliament from Westminster.

One thing is for sure: the Cornish are hardy folk who stoutly resist change. This is Cornwall's blessing and also its curse. Rejoicing in heritage is undoubtedly a strength but at what cost, especially to the young Cornish. A failure to act now to protect and propagate the identity, idioms, economies and infrastructure of Cornwall will allow her inevitable dissipation into a retirement area for the affluent incomer. This very idea should evoke fury within every true-blood Cornishman, who, arguably even more urgently than in 1497, shall know the reason why!

Andrew Pill is a bus driver from St Austell

Stephen Richardson

If I were asked, I would have to say that my foremost political goal would be to achieve the ambition that Cornwall be governed by a Cornish National Parliament. One might ask "Why is this such a compelling idea? Is such a goal both important and reasonable?"

Well, it is important because Cornwall is being mismanaged by Westminster. Cornwall is 'habitually' found to be in the least successful section of most economic metrics compared with the South West and other parts of the UK. Is this because Cornwall is basically just a basket case that has no hope of ever being better? Or is it because Cornwall is basically misunderstood by those who take their direction and philosophy from London based gurus? Gurus who base their expertise on a couple of weeks holiday in their luxury holiday home.

Cornwall has so much going for it. We have farming, fishing, minerals, myriad niche micro food businesses and that's before you get to the potential for renewable energy and, of course, tourism. The problem is these things are not benefitting Cornwall, but they are benefitting corporations and organisations outside of Cornwall, resulting in seasonal minimum wage jobs, whilst laundering profits 'up country'.

But having a parliament, elected by the people of Cornwall, and comprising the residents of Cornwall with a full-time stake in Cornwall's success would mean much greater expertise, local knowledge and experience than people 300 miles away in Westminster could ever have.

And it's not just the business economics that could be addressed by a Cornish Parliament. A

Parliament would be able to take control of the planning system and ensure that development works for the residents of Cornwall and not just business interests or property speculators. This, in itself, would be a massive boon.

That is why it is important. A productive, happy and thriving Cornwall is obviously better for the people of Cornwall and better for the UK as a whole.

But is it reasonable? Cornwall is one of the historic nations of Britain along with Scotland and Wales. It deserves the same respect and recognition as Scotland and Wales. If you do not understand why Cornwall is a nation then simply study history and note all of the times that historians and international commentators have spoken of Cornwall as a nation. Cornwall's nationhood is indisputably a historical fact. Then ask why the Cornish people have been recognised by the UK government as being a national minority. How can this be explained any other way?

The simple truth is that the Cornish are recognised as having a national identity and Cornwall has all of the other trappings of nationhood such as a distinct national language, culture and territory. The case for Cornish nationhood is not simply reasonable it is incontrovertible

Stephen Richardson is a small businessman from Camborne

Ian Saltern

Housing
Action is needed to address a housing crisis in Cornwall which impacts heavily upon the Cornish national minority and in many cases has seen Cornish people having to leave Cornwall to seek housing. The answer does not solely lie in building more houses since the housing stock does exist. A more progressive approach exercised through planning and development powers is needed which restricts the use of existing houses in areas of acute shortage. In short, the problem is not (just) a lack of housing but an unjust appropriation of existing primary housing and their conversion to 'second homes'.

Culture
Statutory powers and funding for heritage, arts and sport must be devolved to Cornwall Council. The Cornish remain the only national minority within the UK without a level of autonomy in these areas. Consequently, the distinct national identity of the Cornish is too often overlooked, and their culture often misrepresented as 'English'. The social and economic benefits that would arise from devolution in these areas would contribute to the revitalisation of the wider UK. An exemplar of this is the burgeoning Cornish music and film sector.

Infrastructure
Access to services in large swathes of Cornwall, particularly in the east, remains woeful. Journey times to and from hospital for cancer treatment for those living in North Cornwall can total four hours. Likewise, access to further education and training for many is severely limited. Connectivity by public

transport within Cornwall is inadequate, and travelling the length and breadth of Cornwall by bus is practically impossible. The reinstatement of train lines to areas such as Bude in the north of Cornwall is long overdue.

Education

Education should be devolved to Cornwall Council as it is in Wales and Scotland, allowing for the development of a curriculum from Early Years through to 18 which reflects and explores the distinct culture, language, history and geography of Cornwall. Devolution would allow for the shaping of a curriculum which better prepares students for Cornwall's unique employment environment, and address skills needs in the marine, agriculture, media, mineral extraction, renewables and space exploration sectors.

Ian Saltern is a Local Council Officer from North Cornwall

Lynn Simms

My hope for Cornwall over the next five years is that our Government works to build a society where everyone has a good standard of living. Investment must allow for the provision of well-constructed housing, access to schools, health and social care and well-paid employment for every branch of our community.

My priority to this aim is to solve our housing crisis which has been exacerbated by the building of many houses, very few of which are affordable for locals. This means that while the population of Cornwall is growing, having a place to live is becoming almost impossible for the people who work in our public services and industries. Many more houses should be built for affordable sale and rent in the places that need them. Financial or tax incentives could be offered to landlords who rent for residential rather than holiday lets.

This is not to say that newcomers and visitors are unwelcome. It is important that we gain inspiration, cultural influence and business benefits from other parts of the UK and beyond to build a thriving community. To support this growing community, we need to ensure that investment is made to rebuild our public services.

Employment in Cornwall is also a significant issue, with many people being obliged to take seasonal and low paid work. The care sector is an important part of our economy because retirees often move here, but once again pay is basic. We also lose many young graduates because there are few career opportunities here. Efforts need to be made to improve the working conditions and pay for our workers and to encourage the creation of green energy

employment and increase investment in new technology industries.

Finally, Cornwall has its history and language, music, artists, writers, community arts groups, well-being hubs, youth clubs and many other community groups. This inspires a sense of belonging, pride and confidence in its people. I believe this is a crucial springboard, which, along with the aforementioned changes, can create a more equal society in Cornwall.

Lynn Simms is an artist from Polkerris

Lamorna Spry

Health
Since Cornwall only has one main hospital and bed blocking is a serious issue I would like to see significant new investment in the local community hospitals to enable more patients who are recuperating to be transferred out of Treliske.

Transport
Unless you are travelling East to West through the central corridor of Cornwall, transport is a real issue. For example, it is very difficult to go from Looe to Newquay by rail and bus without numerous changes and sometimes lengthy waits between changes. I would like to see a comprehensive transport review that would include direct links between the most populated areas of Cornwall either by train or bus. I think this would be particularly helpful to young people who may not be able to afford to run a car but need to work away from their home.

Care in the Community
I would like to see more investment flow towards charities who often provide support services to local communities, for example, wellbeing centres. Presently, some communities receive better support than others and it can be particularly difficult to access services in villages where transport is poor. Once again, a more coordinated approach is needed.

Lamorna Spry is a former local authority head of IT and e-government from Newquay

Sarah Tresidder

My Top Goals for Cornwall

1) Achieving a proper devolution as afforded Wales and Scotland is an absolute must.

2) All planning and development should be decided within Cornwall.

a) Stricter rules to place persons and building contractors in a position of responsibility for putting right all works done not passed by Cornwall Planning Department. In other words, if no planning permission, no build, no disturbance of landscape.

b) Enforce all Enforcement Orders in place.

3) Place all holiday accommodation on a register.

a) Impose a cap on holiday homes allowed within each community.

b) Those letting out rooms within their own residence or an annex or extension to their primary residential property, such as using AirBnB or similar should be registered separately. They contribute to the local economy, particularly if they support local suppliers/businesses, they also encourage a more holistic approach to tourism.

c) Ideally no absentee landlord should be in possession of more than one property for letting purposes, but this may not be practicable. So all holiday lets should be taxed three times the normal

community rate if owned by a non-Cornwall resident.

d) Place a cap on how many properties an owner can acquire, including owners and directors of multiple holiday companies.

4) Abolish Section 21 No Fault Evictions.

a) Protect local tenancies.

b) Place a cap on rent in the private sector.

c) Lower taxes on permanent accommodation.

5) Amend regulations on retail premises.

a) Halt development of new supermarkets.

b) Require supermarkets to place covered parking facilities with solar panels upon them. All to be fed into a Cornish National Grid.

c) Cut rates for local small high street businesses not geared towards tourism

6) Address housing issues.

a) Halt all property development now, until sufficient social housing has been supplied.

b) List all empty homes, enforce compulsory purchase, in order to place into rental accommodation for local families, enabling families to remain within their own community and social network.

7) Set up a Cornish National Power Storage Grid.

8) Remove payments to Cross Tamar at Saltash for all local residents, including businesses. Since it is part of the A38 there should be no toll.

9) Ensure Cornwall is no longer referred to as a County.

Sarah Tresidder is a member of Kernow AUOB from Breage

Kathy Wallis

Kernow, Cornwall, call it what you will, but do not call it a County. We are a Duchy and rightly proud of it being so.

We are internationally recognised as somewhere with a distinct heritage, traditions and language. We may well be part of the UK but, like Wales, Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man, we have our own recognised language, and our own culture. Although the UK government agreed to allocate money to the preservation of these, it seems to have conveniently forgotten us.

Until, that is, it wants to flaunt us on the world stage as a top International Venue, when, as it did for G7, it rides into town, pushes all we stand for to one side, ignores the needs of the people who call this home, and rides out a week later leaving us to foot the bill and pick up the pieces.

But it leaves our young people unable to find a home of their own, it leaves families on the streets because it is more profitable to have an Airbnb for a few summer months than to provide year round homes for the Cornish.

We will soon have a dual carriageway which goes the length of the Duchy, a quicker way for the tourists who make up less than 12% of our total income, to get to their holiday destinations. But take a look at the state of our rolling stock on the railways. HS2! Ha, more like the 20th century than now. The PM came down on an overnight sleeper to Penzance, full of praise for our railways here .. and left by helicopter.

Take a walk along our harbours and look long and hard at the fishing boats tied up against the harbour wall .. and then ask how many stay tied up for most of

their lives because now we do not have the EU markets because of Brexit. What happened to those promises? Broken yet again. How many small companies have gone to the wall because of broken promises? Too many to recount.

Turn inland and marvel at our history, the major inventions that came out of our industrial past, the Master engineers, the man engine, the Davy lamp, the first steam engine. The winding engines used to sing but are they singing now? Young men stand on street corners not waiting to walk down to the pit but to aimlessly wander the streets looking for jobs that aren't there. An NHS that can't cope because in the summer our hospital has more tourists with injuries in it than locals. We have to come second again. An NHS dentist!! That's a joke.

This is rural poverty. This is the reality of living in Cornwall. This is what years and years of neglect by central government has done to our beloved land. Its now time to listen, to look and to try to understand. Understand that the money we had from the EU, from Objective One began to make a difference but it was meant to have been matched but someone in government forgot about that side of it, just as they conveniently forget about us until they want a holiday or a conference venue, forget we are real people and this is our home.

We may be gentle and easy going as a nation but we are about to roar. We have had enough and the time has come for you to act. And shall Trelawny live ….

Kathy Wallis is a former president of the NASUWT (2014-18) from Rillaton

Peter Wills

To formulate and implement policies appropriate for Cornwall requires the establishment of a democratic, accountable assembly with significant powers.

Housing
Introduce planning rules to restrict the use of properties for second homes and holiday lets and control the type of housing built. Establish an agency to buy back second homes and holiday lets for local use. Provide affordable/social housing, and introduce a ‘Cornish weighting' to put residents and people moving to Cornwall on an equal basis in terms of resources.

Transport
We need to move away from tried, tested and out of date policies. Cornwall should aim to be an exemplar of a rural region with a sustainable transport policy. We need to cut car use, which would reduce greenhouse gas emissions and noise pollution. To achieve this requires investment in a comprehensive, well-funded bus network, reduce activities that , generate traffic, and promote a ‘do I really need to make this trip’ mentality. Flying should be a no-no.

Land Use
Land is an important resource – for food production, environmental services and community well-being, yet we lack a joined up policy framework. There is a bewildering array of designations, one effect of which is to regard large areas of land, many of which are considered of high importance to the local community, as being of ‘lower value’ despite having an intrinsic value.

The Landscape Character Type (LCT) designations would act as the basic unit for policy. Within this, categories such as SSSI, nature reserve, wildlife sites and ancient woodland would nestle. As a consequence of recognising the importance of all landscapes, designations such as Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Areas of Great Landscape Value, would be deemed superfluous.

Policy would be tailored to suit each LCT type with appropriate funding and support. Agricultural support would focus on sustainability and maintaining smaller units.

Peter Wills is an environmental land manager from Carnarthen Moor

My Manifesto for Cornwall is a citizen engagement initiative of the Cornish Democracy Unit based at the Institute of Cornish Studies. Voters from across Cornwall were given the opportunity during the course of the 2024 general election to put forward their own priorities for the next five years.

The aim was to identify local concerns, along with possible solutions, which could be presented to Cornwall's elected representatives and then used as the basis for further research and dissemination..This publication has been edited by Garry Tregidga and Andrew Climo with additional support from Nigel Nethersole.

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