

# Cornish Nation

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**Cornwall needs a Parliament  
– not a weak “county deal”**



## Devolution aspects of White Paper are weak and confusing

The UK Government's "Levelling Up" White Paper was published on 2nd February 2022 and it contains a pledge to "give every part of England that wants it" a "devolution deal with more regional powers and simplified, long-term funding." But in terms of what the Conservatives are calling their "devolution revolution," it is all very confusing.

The associated press release claimed that it represents the "biggest shift of power from Whitehall to local leaders in modern times" offering "London-style" powers and a mayor.

It should be noted that the role of London Mayor is associated with a London Assembly, sitting above local councils. The Mayor also has control over the Metropolitan Police.

The White Paper does list Cornwall as one of nine areas which have been invited to "start formal negotiations" for a "county deal." But such so-called "devolution" arrangements are extremely limited in scope and appear to be accommodations with local council structures. There is no offer of a Cornish Assembly or Parliament, or a Cornish Police Force.

The document includes a "devolution framework," which clearly shows that ministers want to see these deals linked to an "elected mayor" or governor, while deals without such individuals in charge would be even weaker.

In addition, the White Paper refers to "trailblazer deeper devolution deals" for the "Mayoral Combined Authorities" in Greater Manchester and the West Midlands. This suggests that these urban areas will be offered greater powers, but the detail is lacking.

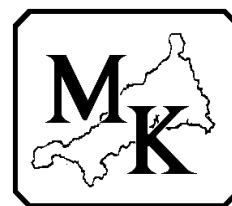
Trying to understand the Government's approach to the UK's political geography is also impossible. Yes, the White Paper mentions Cornwall in relation to a "county deal" but, in the section on employment and productivity, it references "every area of the UK" with each of these areas "containing a globally competitive city." This is presumably a reference to government regions such as the "South West" one that stretches as far as Bristol!

The document also mentions the "Great South West" project, through which some interested parties wish to link Cornwall with the three English counties of Devon, Dorset and Somerset. And the White Paper includes Government plans to give more powers to partnerships led by unelected nominees from private sector businesses.

It is a total mess, and we can have no confidence that MPs will deliver meaningful devolution to Cornwall.

From MK's perspective, Cornwall desperately needs a new democratic settlement and that means the Celtic-style devolution that exists in both Scotland and Wales.

Surely now is the time for one and all in Cornwall to come together to build a campaign for the formal government recognition of Cornwall as one of the historic nations of the United Kingdom, represented by our own Parliament.



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### Cornish Nation 87

*Cornish Nation* is a magazine which is distributed free to all members of Mebyon Kernow.

Membership of MK costs only £15.00 a year (£8.00 unwaged or £20.00 for a family).

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# A Parliament for Cornwall

Cornish Nation *reports back on Mebyon Kernow's 2021 National Conference, which has backed devolution parity with Scotland and Wales*

MK members should be proud that they have been at the forefront of the campaign for meaningful devolution to Cornwall since the 1950s, pushing for the creation of a National Assembly.

In recent years, the Party has obviously linked this campaign to what has been achieved in Wales and Scotland, with the creation of the National Assembly of Wales and the Scottish Parliament. Campaigners have also seen how the devolution settlements have been improved with, for example, the National Assembly of Wales securing additional powers to become the Welsh Parliament / Senedd Cymru.

Members of Mebyon Kernow gathered via Zoom video-conferencing on 27th November 2021, and backed a recommendation from the National Executive that MK's policy position on self-government should be strengthened, and made more explicit to include a specific demand for a Senedh Kernow / Cornish Parliament.

In considering this potential shift in emphasis, it was noted that the policy document *Towards a National Assembly of Cornwall*, makes it clear we want to achieve the powers won for Scotland through the Scotland Act 1998. Members further felt that the term "Assembly" has been blurred to some degree through calls for Citizens' Assemblies, while other political groups continue to undermine the distinction between calls for a Cornish Assembly and tweaks to local government. It was deemed especially important for Cornwall to seek parity with Scotland and Wales.

Party members had previously been asked their views on this question in a 2021 survey of members and the change was supported by 84% of those members who responded.

An updated version of MK's policy document on self-government for Cornwall will be published later this year.





# More powers for Cornwall

Cornish Nation *reviews the work done by Mebyon Kernow members and others to campaign for devolution since 1997*

A new book titled *Cornish Democracy: Studies in Governance and Identity* will be published later this year. Edited by Dr Garry Tregidga, it will contain articles from a range of contributors including Dr Tregidga himself, John Ault, Andrew Climo, Cllr Julie Fox, Dr Richard Harris, Professor Philip Payton, former MP Dan Rogerson, Mark Trevethan, Dr Joanie Willett and Professor Malcolm Williams. There will also be a contribution from MK leader Cllr Dick Cole which reviews the “devolution” debate from 1997 to the present day. Included below are some edited extracts from Cllr Cole’s article.

The 1997 General Election was a watershed moment for the governance of three of the four Celtic parts of the United Kingdom. The Labour Party’s landslide victory led directly to detailed proposals for a Scottish Parliament and a Welsh Assembly, and referendums on 11th and 18th September 1997. The Government of Wales Act 1998 and the Scotland Act 1998 were subsequently passed, with the first elections to the new institutions taking place on 6th May 1999. The first elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly meanwhile took place on 25th June 1998, after the Good Friday Agreement had been brokered through multi-party talks and endorsed by two referendums on the island of Ireland.

It was a different story in Cornwall and optimism that Tony Blair’s Government might be persuaded to deliver greater home rule for Cornwall proved extremely short-lived. An early warning of what was to come centred around the creation of regional development agencies. Prior to the election, members of Cornwall County Council had voted by 71 to one to support the creation of a separate development agency for Cornwall. But ignoring Cornwall’s territoriality, Labour instead created an RDA which covered an area that stretched from the Isles of Scilly to Swindon, arguing that “Cornwall’s interests will be best served by a powerful, single Regional Development Agency for the South West.”

Mebyon Kernow launched the Declaration for a Cornish Assembly campaign on 4th March 2000 with the promotional photographs taken outside the Church Hall in Troon, where the Falmouth and Camborne Constituency Party was holding its annual St Piran’s Day Fete.



Mebyon Kernow claimed that “thousands and thousands of people throughout Cornwall will wish to add their names to this campaign – from all walks of life and from all our communities.” But this did indeed come to pass thanks to the energy and dedication of Paddy McDonough who coordinated teams of volunteers to collect signatures, weekend after weekend. Within just four months of the launch, 4,000 people had signed.



Running in tandem with the declaration campaign was the launch and growth of the Cornish Constitutional Convention. The catalyst for the new body was the impending

launch of a South West Constitutional Convention.

Not wishing to be seen to be at a disadvantage to other regionalist projects, independent councillor Bert Biscoe, Stephen Horscroft and I took the lead to launch the concept of a Constitutional Convention for Cornwall at a meeting at New County Hall in Truro on 7th July 2000, which united around a statement that declared the people of Cornwall “will be best served in their future governance by a Cornish regional assembly.”



The declaration campaign continued to gain significant momentum and, by early September, had secured the support of over 10,000 people, while the symbolic 20,000th signature belonged to Dean Shipton, the captain of the Cornwall rugby team, which had won the 1999 “county” championship.

The next target for campaigners was to secure the support of 5% of the Cornish electorate, which was deliberately to mimic Labour’s approach to local government reforms. The Labour Government had stated that if a petition of 5% of the electorate was collected, it would allow a referendum on proposals to restructure local government in a particular area.

Campaigners considered they would have won the “moral argument” and “it would be reprehensible” for Labour not to reconsider its approach to regional government and to back demands for a Cornish Assembly if such a 5% threshold was achieved. This took just a matter of weeks and, by St Piran’s Day 2001, the total number of signed declarations had exceeded 30,000.



By the summer of 2001, more than 50,000 declarations had been collected. This was equivalent to ten per cent of the Cornish electorate and the decision was taken that this would be an appropriate time to cease the collection of signatures.

It had been well documented that a White Paper on regional government was expected in 2002 and, on 12th December 2001, a delegation visited Downing Street and a list of declaration supporters was presented to a representative of the Prime Minister.



It was a significant moment for the campaign and the delegation set out three challenges to central government. These were to acknowledge the “very great level of support within Cornwall for a Cornish Assembly,” to recognise this in the upcoming White Paper, and to bring forward “concrete proposals for an Assembly, which could be put to the people of Cornwall in an official referendum.”

The following year, the Cornish Constitutional Convention set out its plans for a Cornish Assembly with the publication of *Devolution for One and All*, which called for the setting up of a Cornish Assembly with powers equal to those of the Welsh Assembly. Key arguments put forward by the Convention built upon earlier research papers from 2001 which argued that Cornwall was losing £59 million per year as a result of administration activities being based east of the Tamar, and that Cornwall would have had an extra £101 million per annum if it had been treated

similarly to Wales and Scotland through the Barnett Formula.

A delegation from the Convention met with the Minister of State for Local and Regional Government, Nick Raynsford, when he visited Cornwall on 4th February 2002.



The Government’s White Paper, *Your Region, Your Choice; Revitalising the English Regions*, was published in May 2002 and it was met with brutal disappointment. The document failed to make a single mention of the case for devolution to Cornwall and studiously ignored the fact that over 50,000 people had signed individual declarations calling for a Cornish Assembly. It instead proposed directly elected, regional assemblies for the existing standard Government Office regions. In the preface, the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, claimed the White Paper was about choice: “No region will be forced to have an elected assembly. But where there is public support for one, we believe that people should be given the chance to demonstrate this in a referendum.”

But for Cornwall, such words were a nonsense. There was no choice. There was just one option – a 25-35 seat assembly for the “South West,” with extremely limited powers, that lumped Cornwall in with the English counties of Devon, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Bristol.

Mebyon Kernow produced a strong rebuttal to the content of the White Paper, while the Constitutional Convention produced a detailed response to the document and, along with

other Cornish groups, sponsored well-supported postcard and letter writing campaigns.



Cornwall’s local government network was also solid, with Cornwall County Council, four of Cornwall’s six district councils and numerous town and parish councils backing the campaign for a Cornish Assembly and / or a referendum.

In spite of this, the Government refused to move away from its White Paper proposals, with the Minister Nick Raynsford continuing to emphasise their commitment to the “existing boundaries used by the Government Offices,” which were to form the basis of the Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Act 2003.

While the Government was not listening to Cornish representations, its own regionalist project came to a halt on 4th November 2004, when the referendum for a regional assembly in North East England was lost.

A response to a subsequent freedom of information request from MK’s Phil Rendle contained two briefings for the Minister titled “Campaign for a Cornish Assembly ... lines to take” from this time. The second one dating to September 2002 included a particularly condescending but telling paragraph about the Labour Government’s future plans: “Although the campaign for a Cornish Assembly grabs the headlines, there is a growing but less audible groundswell of informed opinion in favour of a unitary council for Cornwall (currently two tier) ... in Cornwall, people identify with the county and their village or market town rather than current district council boundaries. The supporters of a unitary Cornwall could see it nestling happily within a South West Regional Assembly.”



Many supporters of a Cornish Assembly were encouraged by the results of the 2005 General Election, which took place on the same day as the poll for Cornwall County Council. The Lib Dems did extremely well, winning all five of Cornwall's parliamentary constituencies and taking control of the County Council with 48 of the 82 seats. Having stood on a manifesto which declared "It's time for a Cornish Assembly," it was widely considered that the Liberal Democrats had a wonderful opportunity to unite the people of Cornwall behind the push for greater self-government.

The leadership of the County Council soon after published a list of priorities that included a pledge to, within the first year of their new administration, "establish agreed detailed plans for a Cornish Assembly ... report agreed by MPs and if possible district councils."

But it was to be a false dawn. The administration failed to act on its manifesto commitment and, in October 2006, when the Labour Party launched a Local Government White Paper which included measures to allow councils to seek unitary status, Lib Dems on the County Council immediately jettisoned their commitment to a Cornish Assembly and began to prepare a bid for the centralisation of local government in Cornwall.

On 23rd January 2007, members of the County Council voted to submit a bid for Cornwall to be governed by a single principal council. At the time of this first vote, the language was distinctly about local government reform, with Liberal Democrat council leader David Whalley arguing that the "change was necessary to address public confusion over the role of different councils and the costs of duplication and overlap."

It was a very dispiriting time as the Lib Dems then proceeded to conflate and confuse changes to local government with the campaign for a Cornish Assembly. Colin Breed MP, speaking on the BBC's Politics Programme on 29th October 2006 said he didn't just want a unitary authority but "unitary-plus." When prompted he made the ridiculous statement that such a new body would be "akin to a Cornish Assembly."

They continued to make such arguments even after a visit to Cornwall by David Prout, the Director for Local Democracy at the Department of Communities and Local Government. He addressed a meeting at New

County Hall in Truro on 9th March 2007 and when asked whether a unitary council would be able to draw down additional powers from regional and central government, he said that "a unitary authority will be a unitary authority" and it would be up to those involved with the bid to identify advantages from the restructuring. Pointedly, he stated there were "no goodies" on offer.

The vote at Cornwall County Council to proceed with the unitary bid took place on 19th June 2007. The result was 32 votes to 28, while there was one abstention and 21 members were absent from the vote. The bid was therefore only supported by 39% of elected members and 25% of councillors were not even present at the meeting to cast a vote.

Mebyon Kernow continued to argue against the merger of the seven councils. It belatedly received a response to an e-petition posted on the Downing Street website by one of MK's members on Penzance Town Council, Richard Clark, which called on central government to "reject Cornwall County Council's bid for unitary status" and to instead "introduce legislation for a Cornish Assembly." The response reinforced MK's view that unitarisation was not a step towards a Cornish Assembly, but rather a barrier. It stated: "The Government's view on the idea of a separate assembly for Cornwall is well known and remains unchanged. It is not easy to see advantage in an 'assembly' that would duplicate an existing unit of local government over a coterminous area."

The creation of the unitary authority certainly took the momentum out of the campaign for an Assembly, while the austerity measures imposed by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat Coalition following the 2008 financial crash became the principal focus of elected politicians in Cornwall. Any discussions about devolution to Cornwall at this time became about extremely limited accommodations between local government and the centre, or public sector partnerships – rather than full democratic control over public services.

A Public Sector Group was established in 2009, "comprising all the Chief Executives of the major public sector organisations" in Cornwall and, the following year, an unelected Local Enterprise Partnership was created. Such was the paucity of ambition that it was deemed a victory that the LEP would operate on the geographical basis of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Soon after, in 2012 Conservative-led Cornwall Council made an unsuccessful bid to the UK Government to participate in its "Whole Place Community Budget Pilot Programme." The focus of the bid document was very much on local government and argued that Cornwall had a dynamic public sector, which was anchored and underpinned by a "single principal council."

Mebyon Kernow nonetheless launched the *Towards a National Assembly of Cornwall* consultation document in Truro on 5th March 2014, which proposed a legislative body with the powers of the Scottish Parliament.







The prospect of the decentralisation of political powers to “English regions” also re-emerged quite strongly in 2014, following the no vote in the Scottish Independence referendum. Subsequent government proposals for England focused on city deals, combined authorities and metropolitan mayors,” with the first agreement being for the Greater Manchester Combined Authority in November 2014.

It was within this shift in context that Liberal Democrat / Independent Cornwall Council produced *The Case for Cornwall*, which sought more powers for itself as a “confident and resourceful council.” Very much drafted from a local government perspective, it was geared to be acceptable to the Coalition Government, and covered topics such as transport, health and social care, green energy, housing and “local control” over structural funding from the European Union.

On 16th July 2015, central government announced its *Cornwall Devolution Deal*, which had been agreed with the leadership of the unitary authority.

It allowed very limited new responsibilities to the unitary authority, while giving other duties to the unelected Local Enterprise Partnership. The headline announcements were that (i) Cornwall Council would have the ability to franchise bus services, (ii) Cornwall Council would work with local health organisations on a plan for integrating health and social care services, (iii) Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly would be given Intermediate Body status to allow some limited control over EU funding, and (iv) the Local Enterprise Partnership would be given “more say on boosting local skills levels” and the ability to “integrate national and local business support services.”

There continued to be pressure from government circles to ignore Cornwall as a political and economic unit, and to submerge it into South West entities. On 21st October 2016, a South West Growth Summit was held at the University of Exeter, which led to a South West Growth Charter.

The Charter was delivered to 10 Downing Street on 22nd November 2016, with four of Cornwall’s six Conservative MPs in attendance. It was considered at an adjournment debate on the same day. This led to the creation of the Great South West organisation, which described itself as “the ‘powerhouse’ brand to promote the Local Enterprise Partnership areas of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Heart of the South West and Dorset.”

While the leadership of Cornwall Council appeared to be fully engaged with the promotion of the Great South West, a New Frontiers document was produced by the authority.

Split into three distinct sections, it sought (i) support for the preparation for Brexit, (ii) support for an industrial strategy in emerging industries and promoted a (iii) series of what were described as “devolution asks.”

In terms of the so-called “devolution asks,” it was noticeable that the document sought full membership of the British and Irish Council, but most asks were limited small-scale accommodations between local and central government or simple funding requests. For example, the planning ask was not about seeking Cornish control of the planning system, but financial support “to accelerate the planned delivery” of housing and a “new model” that would allow Cornwall Council to allocate “new sites for garden villages.”

At the local elections in May 2021, the Conservative Party secured overall control of Cornwall Council, though the approach to “devolution” changed very little. It is promoting a local government “county deal,” which will be covered in more detail in the next edition of *Cornish Nation*.

It does however remain to be seen whether the wider political class in Cornwall will have the courage to seek to go beyond the unambitious constraints of the present debate as configured by the UK Government and demand powers similar to those enjoyed by the other Celtic parts of the United Kingdom.

### Photographs:

Cllr Loveday Jenkin at the launch of the Declaration for a Cornish Assembly (2000); Paddy McDonough collecting signatures on the streets of Falmouth (2000); the launch of the Cornish Constitutional Convention (2000); Kathryn Bryant and Cllr Dick Cole with the 50,000 at 10 Downing Street (2001); Andrew Climo, Cllr Dick Cole and Cllr Bert Biscoe with Nick Raynsford (2002); Verity Gondall and the postcard campaign for a Cornish Assembly (2002); SNP MSP Kenneth Gibson at the 2011 MK Conference marking the 10th anniversary of the 50,000; Stephen Richardson and Cllr Andrew Long at the launch of *Towards a National Assembly of Cornwall* (2014); and the officials and politicians signing the 2015 “devolution deal.”





# Speaking out

Cornish Nation *reprints two of Cllr Dick Cole's recent columns from the Cornish Guardian newspaper about the National Trust and housing, plus "levelling up"*



**On one of my walks during the Christmas and New Year break, I found myself in a cove in West Cornwall. It included a farm complex, which was fenced off and clearly no longer being used for agricultural purposes.**

It was a National Trust property and there was a notice which stated the most recent farm tenancy had ended in October 2018. It added the Trust had a "great opportunity" to manage the farmland "with nature as a priority."

I understand that the larger modern farm buildings are to be removed and the Trust is investigating ideas for how the older traditional farm buildings could be used to "improve the visitor welcome" to the local area. The farmhouse has already been turned into a holiday let, with the promotional blurb for the Listed house specifying that income raised will "help support important conservation work."

I would not question the Trust's commitment to sustainable farming and the protection of historic landscapes and biodiversity enhancements. But it fills me with sadness to see the loss of another historic holding, where generations have farmed the land. I am very much of the view that organisations seeking to safeguard the countryside, also need to protect the fabric of the human communities that occupy the same space. It is therefore counter-productive and

damaging every time a permanent home is lost to become a "second home" or holiday let.

I comprehend why this happens – it is a financial decision! I had a look at the National Trust's portfolio of holiday properties and the former farmhouse would cost between £1,999 and £3,299 to book it out for a week's holiday.

The Trust's website lists over 500 holiday cottages across Cornwall, England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Of these, 108 are in Cornwall, which seems to be a very high share of the overall number (at over 20%).

On its website, the National Trust also notes that it owns around 5,000 houses / cottages and aims to be a "professional and fair landlord" that provides "warm, comfortable homes at a fair market rent for people in more than 40 villages." Its "overall objectives for housing" include seeking to further its work in local areas "through the selection of tenants with suitable skills" and to help "meet identified social housing needs" where it is a significant housing provider.

It seems that the National Trust's approach to housing in Cornwall is dissimilar to what it does in other parts of the UK. I have written to the Trust to find out and I will report back when I know more. (5th January 2022)

**The Government claims that it has a "defining mission" to "level up" by "tackling the regional and local inequalities that unfairly hold back" so many parts of the UK.**

The long-awaited devolution White Paper – re-engineered as a "levelling up" policy document – is massively disappointing. *The Guardian* newspaper described the document as "anaemic and inadequate," the *Economist* magazine said it "falls short" and "fails to devolve enough power and money," while the *Independent* news website called it a "plan that's big on problems – but not on how to fix them."

A prominent member of the Scottish National Party has meanwhile branded it as "underwhelming" and a "damp squib," adding that the UK needs "policies of substance" rather than "glib soundbites and photo

opportunities for ministers in hard hats and hi-viz vests."

Launching the White Paper in the House of Commons, Michael Gove started by outlining the need to "tackle and reverse the inequality that is limiting so many horizons," while closing the "gap between much of the South-East and the rest of the country in productivity, in health outcomes, in wages, in school results and in job opportunities ..."

He somewhat ridiculously went on to add that "this is not about slowing down London or the South-East ... but rather about turbo-charging the potential of every part of the UK." But how do you level up without properly addressing the dominance of the over-heating South-East?

One of the key criticisms of the White Paper is that there is little "new money." I agree with Faisal Islam, the BBC's economics editor. He has noted that where "levelling up" has actually been a success, as in "post-unification Germany," there have been "massive fiscal transfers from rich regions to poor ones" and "entrenched patterns of economic geography" cannot really be changed "without footing a very significant bill." The White Paper doesn't come close!

The document largely lists projects and funding that have already been announced, though it is admittedly good to see the Government reaffirm its pledge to "match EU Structural Fund receipts" in future funding for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly." The principal new announcement for Cornwall is an Education Investment Area.

Worryingly for Cornwall, Michael Gove's parliamentary speech was very political and geared towards the protection of new "red wall" seats in the north of England. He name-checked Bishop Auckland, Bury, Derbyshire, Durham, Manchester, Stoke-on-Trent and Warrington, and spoke about "20 new urban regeneration projects, starting in Wolverhampton and Sheffield, and spreading across the Midlands and the North."

Cornwall needs so much more out of these levelling up proposals. (9th February 2022)

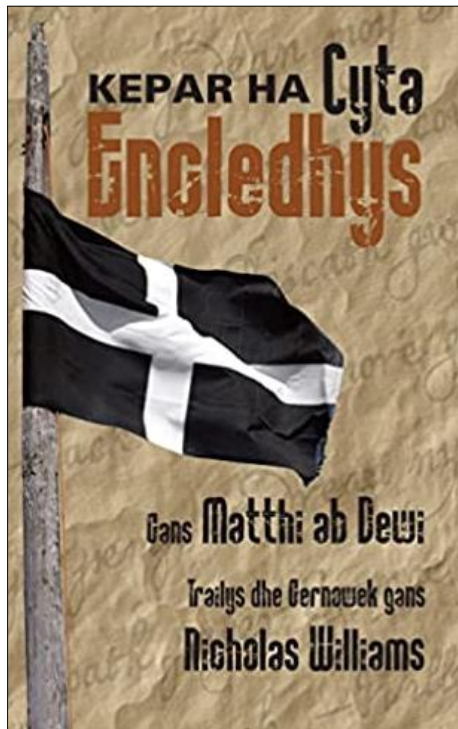


# Kepar ha Cyta Encledhys

*Matthi ab Dewi a skrif adro y gynsa romans, dyls yn versyons yn Kernewek ha Sowsnek*

Traweythyow, tacklow a hwer heb ty dhe'ga thewlel. Ny dewlis vy bythkweyth skrif a novel. Henna a hwarveu dre happ.

Unn jydh yth esen vy ow skrifa nebes tybyansow neb re beu y'm brys dres blydhynow, nesa pols hag yth esa deg folen skrifys genev. Wosa seythen, an deg folen na a devis bys dhe japtra.



Skrifa *Like a Buried City* nys o kudyn. Byttegyns, dyllo an lyver na o pur gales dres eghen! My a wrug y gowlwul 2017, byttegyns ny gevis vy dyllor rag peder bledhen hwath.

My a venegas dhe Nicholas Williams my dhe skrifa lyver ow tuchya istori a Gernewek y'n etekves kansvledhen. Nena, wosa redya an dornskrif, ev a gynigas y dhylo dre weres y gothman Michael Everson. Dres henna, Williams a brofyas treylya an lyver dien dhe Gernewek heb my dh'y wovyn anodho.

Ytho, pyth yw testen an novel ma? My a vynnas ri dhe'n redyor, heb wodhvos meur a'gan taves, neb blas krev a vos trigys yn kemeneth yn 1768 gans le ha le a Gernewegoryon a-derdro.

My a vynnas diskwedhes neb teylu gans hwans sawya Kernewek orth an prys na ... hag

y'n prys arnowydh keffrys.

An hwedhel a sew an teylu Pengilley neb o trigys ogas dhe Vorvedh yn Pennwydh. Wosa droglamm balweyth, Jacka Pengilley a vynnas gasa an bal hag assaya gwaynya y wober dre frank-londya.

Ev a skrifas dydhlyver y'n keth termyn – henna a wra kesunya y heneth dhe'n teylu y'n bys a-lemmyn.

An novel yw leun a aventur, droglammow, morladrynsi, Bretonyon, pri ha govenek a'n termyn a vynn dos. Yma kolmow dhe'n hwedhel a gelli tавosow yn powyow erel gans fleghes herdhys dhe gewsel Sowsnek ha kentrovogyon ow kormesi dhe'n teylu.

Mar mynnowgh redya an gwershon Sowsnek, yma hwath meur a Gernewek ynno. Meur a'n pyth yw leverys gans an teylu yw skrifys yn Kernewek a'n oos. Na fors mar na wodhowgh y gonvedhes drefen my dhe styrya pub tra y'n tekst. Lies person aral y'n novel a gews yn rannnyeth a Gernow. My a gavas gweres Neil Kennedy dh'y wul.

Y hyllir prena an lyver ma dhe [www.cornish-language.org](http://www.cornish-language.org) po der [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

Lyvrow erel a dal dhywgh redya yn eur ma: *Saffron Bun Chapel* gans Alan M Kent ha *Fightback* gans Orlando Kimber.

Matthi ab Dewi yw askorror Radyo an Gernewegva hag *An Mis* ynwedh. Kavadow yw an gonisyow der [www.anradyo.com](http://www.anradyo.com).

Sometimes, things happen without you planning them. I never planned to write a novel. That happened by mistake.

One day I was writing down some ideas which had been in my mind for years, the next moment, I had written ten pages. After a week, those ten pages grew to being a chapter.

It wasn't a problem writing *Like a Buried City*. However, publishing it was incredibly difficult! I completed it in 2017, however, I did not find a publisher for another four years.

I mentioned to Nicholas Williams how I had written a book about Cornish in the 18th century. Then, after reading the manuscript, he suggested publishing it with help from Michael Everson. Moreover, Williams offered to translate the whole book into Cornish without me asking him so to do.

So, what is the novel about then? I wanted to give the reader (without any great knowledge of the language) a strong taste of living in a community in 1768 with fewer and fewer Cornish speakers around.

I wanted to show a family which desired to save the language at that time ... and also in the modern age too.

The plot follows the Pengilley family living near Morvah in Penwith. After a mining accident, Jacka Pengilley wants to leave the mine and try to earn his living by free-trading.

He writes a diary at the same time – and this unites his generation of the family with that of the modern day.

The novel is full of adventure, disasters, piracy, Bretons, clay and hope for the future. There are links to the stories of other countries losing their languages with children forced to speak English and neighbours bullying the family.

If you want to read the English version, there is still much Cornish in it. Don't worry though if you don't understand Cornish for I have explained everything within the text. Many other people in the novel speak in Cornish dialect. This was achieved with the aid of Neil Kennedy.

You can buy the book from [www.cornish-language.org](http://www.cornish-language.org) or on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

Other books you ought to read at the moment include: *Saffron Bun Chapel* by Alan M Kent and *Fightback* by Orlando Kimber.

Matthi ab Dewi is the producer of Cornish language radio service Radyo an Gernewegva and the monthly online TV show called *An Mis* (The Month). These services can be found on [www.anradyo.com](http://www.anradyo.com).

# Cornish news and views

## Solidarity with Ukraine

The unprovoked and barbaric invasion of Ukraine by Russian state forces on 24th February 2022 has been rightly denounced across the globe.



Mebyon Kernow – the Party for Cornwall has also condemned the monstrous attack, while expressing solidarity with the people of Ukraine and praising the many Cornish households who have attended vigils and supported efforts to get humanitarian aid to the innocent victims of Vladimir Putin's shameful aggression.

## New admin team

Mebyon Kernow is pleased to be able to confirm that Sheila Vanloo from St Austell and Deborah Hinton from Gorran Haven will make up the new team dealing with membership and related administration matters. Already working hard to help improve the internal workings of Mebyon Kernow, Sheila and Deborah are pictured below hosting a stall at the recent Gorsedh Kernow ceremony.



## New councillors

Mebyon Kernow also has three new parish councillors. Dr Garry Tregidga, who came second in the Roche and Bugle division in the 2021 unitary elections, has been co-opted onto Treverbyn Parish Council and will serve alongside Cornwall Councillor Matt Luke. Dr Tregidga, who is the co-director of the Institute of Cornish Studies, is well-known in his home area, where he is involved with a host of local organisations including the Rescorla Centre and Bugle Methodist Church.



Craig Truscott has meanwhile been co-opted onto Par and Tywardreath Parish Council. Another long-standing member of MK, he stood for Restormel Borough Council in a by-election back in 2001. He is a member of the MK National Executive, along with his partner Maria. Craig works for the NHS as a specialist biological therapy nurse.



Sandra Heyward, a former independent Cornwall Councillor from St Austell, has also joined Mebyon Kernow. She served on Restormel Borough Council between 2003 and 2007, and then the unitary authority between 2013 and 2021.



Sandra was also a member of St Austell Town Council for over a decade and served as the town's mayor in 2011-2012. She is presently a member of St Mewan Parish Council and is already working with Michael Bunney, the Cornwall Councillor for the local area.

## Clarity on funding

Following the UK Government's announcement of financial support for 477 projects as part of a £200 million Community Renewal Fund, Mebyon Kernow has challenged Cornish MPs to confirm when Cornwall will get its fair share of investment from Whitehall.

MK's leadership team issued a statement, which said: "The Government claims that the Community Renewal Fund (CRF) is part of a 'plan to level up our regions and create a more united country' and 'support local areas to pilot imaginative new approaches and programmes that unleash their potential, instil pride, and prepare them to take full advantage of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) when it launches in 2022.'"

"In his Autumn budget statement, the Chancellor guaranteed that Cornwall would receive investment from the upcoming SPF at least equivalent to 'the size of EU funds' that would have been received if the UK had not left the EU. But the announcement of the UK CRF shows that Cornwall is getting so much less than the other poor parts of the UK.



"Figures show that Wales, for example, will get £46 million, but Cornwall will only receive £1.06 million. The people of Cornwall have a right to know what is going on, and when and how the UK Government will meet its stated obligations to Cornwall." (3rd November 2021)

## No to Tory budget

The Conservative administration on Cornwall Council has voted through its budget for the next 12 months (2022-2023), as well as a medium-term financial strategy for the next four years. The budget will lead to cuts of over £50 million, more than 400 job losses and a maximum increase in council tax – something the Tories opposed in 2021. The vote was 48 votes to 30.



The Mebyon Kernow / Green Party Group, comprising MK's five councillors and the one Green Party representative, voted against the budget and called on the Conservative administration, Tory MPs and Conservative Government to deliver fair funding for local government in Cornwall.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Cllr Dick Cole said: "A recent press release states that the administration is 'proud' of this budget. Such a statement is caveated by claims that they inherited a 'very difficult financial situation' from the previous administration. The Mebyon Kernow / Green Party Group strongly rejects this narrative. There is a different reality.

"Local government in Cornwall is in a parlous state because it is greatly underfunded. It has suffered a decade of savage cuts – from governments of the same colour as the new administration. And it is disturbing that local government continues to not be a priority for

central government, which is failing in its duty to repair the damage caused by the funding choices during the so-called austerity years.

"The Autumn budget from Westminster contained a large number of spending increases – all underpinned by tax increases. But not enough of this resource is coming to local government. The uplift in financial support for local authorities is low and one group representing local councils rightly described the latest increase in funding as a 'drop in the ocean ... compared to the cuts since 2010' and that it wouldn't even cover inflationary pressures.

"This political reality is one founded on choices from the UK Government – and this means that Cornwall is missing out and local government in Cornwall is missing out. That needs to change.

"When the Conservatives won last year's election, the leader said that it was the 'start of a new, big adventure for Cornwall.' And the present political reality is that Cornwall's unitary authority has a Conservative majority, all six MPs in Cornwall are Conservative, as is the UK Government.

"So there is a massive obligation and responsibility on the Conservatives – both this present administration and members of parliament – to use their political muscle to deliver for the people of Cornwall.

"But that is not happening. What have we been talking about in recent weeks? Redundancies, the downsizing of this unitary authority, the ditching of council offices, the pressure on social care, the potential closure of leisure centres, a plan to jettison outdoor centres and massive reductions in the localism service.

"This is all bad news and would be preventable if local government was properly funded." (22nd February 2022)

We would like to thank the following for following for photographs used in this magazine: Chris Bowden, Cllr Dick Cole, Cornwall Council, Matthi ab Dewi, Cllr Dr Garry Tregidga, Cllr Craig Truscott, the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Parliament and Paul Williams.

## In memoriam

### Carole Mann

It is with sadness that we have heard of the death of Carole Mann from Redruth, who passed away peacefully on Sunday 17th October 2021 at the age of 75.



Carole was well-known businesswomen, who ran the Carole Mann Bridal House & Design Studio and related businesses in Redruth for many years. A former resident of Perranzabuloe, she was an active and hard-working member of that community. She served as the secretary of a local improvements committee in the parish and helped out with the Lowender Peran Inter-Celtic festival. Carole also assisted with girl guides in the area and was the District Commissioner for seven years.

An extremely passionate Cornish-woman, she served on Mebyon Kernow's National Executive in the early 2000s and was a policy spokesperson. In 2005, she was Mebyon Kernow's candidate in the Perranporth division for the Cornwall County Council elections and polled a very creditable 388 votes.

A keen rugby supporter, she also served on the committee of the Trelawny's Army Rugby Supporters Club and was treasurer for a considerable time.

Carole's husband Davis predeceased her and, at this sad time, our thoughts are with her daughter Karren and her two grandsons, Callum and Charlie.



**CORNWALL  
STANDS WITH  
UKRAINE**

**Cornwall needs a Parliament  
– not a weak “county deal”**