

Cornish Nation

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**A tribute to
Loveday Carlyon**

What now?

In the last edition of *Cornish Nation*, we reported that Steve Webb, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, had ruled out the threat of a Devonwall Mayoral Strategic Authority being imposed on Cornwall.

The Minister stated that the UK Government “is minded, on an exceptional basis, to work” with Cornwall Council “to explore designating the council as a Single Foundation Strategic Authority (FSA),” which he said would be dependent on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill receiving Royal Assent.

MK obviously welcomed the news that the threat of cross-Tamar regional structures had been reduced, while noting that FSA status for the unitary authority is not devolution at all and nothing like the Celtic-style democratic settlement that MK is campaigning for.

At that time, there were reports that Cornwall’s MPs would be meeting with Ministers to “flesh out the details of the deal” and, presumably, get clarification on – to quote the Minister – how more powers and functions “could be unlocked” and how Cornwall could set off on a “journey to deeper and wider devolution.” It remains extremely concerning that ministers have had little or nothing to say publicly about this over the last three months or so.

On 18th March, Cornwall Council’s Cabinet voted to, in principle, accept the offer of a Cornwall-only FSA. It is noteworthy that the report presented to councillors confirmed that “FSA functions are currently limited” but added this “represents the floor, not the ceiling” of the Government’s ambition.

While this is wishful thinking, the Council’s approach is linked to the obligation introduced by the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 to produce Spatial Development Strategies (SDS). Councillors remain fearful that a cross-Tamar SDS could still be imposed on Cornwall and designating Cornwall Council as a FSA would be consistent with the associated request for a Cornwall-only SDS.

The House of Lords has commenced their report stage scrutiny of the English Devolution Bill and a number of amendments were tabled to prevent Cornwall being forced into a combined authority with areas to the east of the Tamar. We understand parliamentary protocol states that in order to prevent the Bill becoming a hybrid one – no, we don’t understand what this means – Cornwall cannot be mentioned by name in the actual wording of the legislation.

Instead, among the amendments was a proposal that a “local authority of a local government area” can only be included in a combined authority if it does not have “specific responsibility for and stewardship of the rights of its population under the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.”

There was a cursory debate on 24th March, the Minister, Lord Wilson, mentioned ongoing discussions and none of the amendments were even taken to a vote.

It is really questionable how Cornwall will achieve meaningful devolution through these present machinations and it really does emphasise that MK and others must keep campaigning for a bespoke Devolution Bill that is not linked to the present legislation.



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Cornish Nation 99

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BBC Charter Review

Mebyon Kernow has demanded public service media for Cornwall and more broadcasting in the Cornish language

The Party for Cornwall has formally responded to the BBC Royal Charter Review and written to the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The letter to Lisa Nandy was as follows:

The BBC Royal Charter Review

On 24th April 2014, the UK Government announced that the Cornish would be recognised as a national minority through the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The official government press release stated that "the decision to recognise the unique identity of the Cornish, now affords them the same status ... as the UK's other Celtic people, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish."

This was a landmark moment for our nation. The Framework Convention is a significant international treaty and sets out numerous obligations. These include support for language and culture, education and the media, the greater visibility of national minorities in public life, the protection of historic territories, and so much more.

We remain disappointed, however, at the speed at which the United Kingdom Government and other public bodies are meeting their obligations to the Cornish and the Cornish language.

This is especially so in terms of broadcasting and we hope that the renewal of the BBC Royal Charter represents an opportunity to ensure a better deal on public sector broadcasting for Cornwall and the Cornish, similar to the provision enjoyed in the other Celtic parts of the UK.

BBC Royal Charter and Cornish

When the present BBC Royal Charter was agreed in 2016, it included a commitment to the "regional and minority languages of the United Kingdom," but we were extremely disappointed the document included a definition of such languages as "Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Irish and Ulster Scots." The Cornish language was explicitly excluded.

We note that the Media Act, finalised in 2024, included a commitment to a "sufficient quantity of audiovisual content that is in, or mainly in, a recognised regional or minority language," and Cornish was included in its list of languages. Likewise, we were extremely pleased when, in December 2025, the UK Government agreed that Cornish would be covered by Part III of the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

In the supporting paperwork for the Review, there are multiple references to regional and minority languages. We welcome that its objectives include, for example, "exploring funding options for ... minority language broadcasting" and respecting the "diversity of all communities across the UK ... including those in the nations and regions and through minority language broadcasting." But we remain extremely disappointed that the Cornish language was not mentioned once.

That said, we acknowledge that in a response to a Cornish MP in the House of Commons on 15th January 2026, you stated that: "The Government are very committed to protecting and supporting our minority languages, which are a vital part of the cultural fabric of our country. When we launched the charter review, it was intended to give space to consider how the BBC can best support minority language broadcasting, including Cornish ..."

It is our sincere hope that, as the Secretary of State, you will ensure the new BBC Royal Charter will include meaningful commitments to the broadcasting of the Cornish language.

Public sector broadcasting for Cornwall

Article nine of the Framework Convention states that "persons belonging to a national minority" should not be "discriminated against in their access to the media" and that signatories to the document "shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism."

Linked to this, we would point out that Cornwall is the only Celtic nation within the United Kingdom without its own dedicated media service. In terms of television news coverage, Cornwall is lost within a BBC SW construct, while BBC Radio Cornwall is a "local" station in an increasingly weak position in the face of ongoing cuts.

In 2019, Cornwall Council commissioned Denzil Monk and Mandy Berry to produce a report making the case for Cornish public service media – *cas rag media gonis poblek Kernewek* in Cornish.

We would ask that the Secretary of State and everyone involved with the BBC Royal Charter Review consider and act positively on the content of this report, which can be viewed at: <https://www.screencornwall.com/cornish-language>

It is our view that if the UK Government is going to meet its obligation to treat the Cornish the "same" as the "UK's other Celtic people, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish," it needs to ensure broadcasting provision for Cornwall similar to S4C in Wales or BBC ALBA in Scotland.

And it is our sincere hope that, as the Secretary of State, you will ensure the new BBC Royal Charter will include Cornish public service media provision that reflects the articles of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

Cornwall is a nation of the United Kingdom

As noted previously, the paperwork for the Review states that the BBC is committed to the "diversity of all communities across the UK ... including those in the nations and regions ..." Cornwall with its own identity, culture and language is one of the historic nations of the UK and this should be properly reflected in the new Royal Charter and the outputs of the BBC.

It is our sincere hope that, as the Secretary of State, you will ensure that Cornish nationhood is recognised in the new BBC Royal Charter.

Loveday Carlyon

Cornish Nation pays tribute to Mebyon Kernow's eighth leader, who headed up the Party between 1986 and 1989

Loveday Carlyon, who died on 2nd December 2025 at the age of 77, was one of Mebyon Kernow's most important activists during the later 1980s.



She was born Kathleen Loveday Hoare in 1948 at Redruth Hospital. Her father, Francis, was a policeman while her mother, Kathleen, had been the first in the family to go to university and worked in education. Loveday's first home was close to the hamlet of Rinsey, near Porthleven, though the family moved to Trispen and later to Torpoint, because of her father's postings.

An intelligent child, she did well at St Erme Primary School, before securing a place at Saltash Grammar School, and it was while in the sixth form at Saltash that Loveday met Geoff Moore, a student in the year below. He went on to become her first husband. The family recalls that the early courtship was not easy as "both sets of parents were strict and Loveday's father was the local copper." Geoff lived in Millbrook on the other side of the estuary and visits to each other often involved transport with a canoe.

Loveday decided to follow in her mother's footsteps and become a teacher. She undertook her training at Rolle College in Exmouth and then obtained her first teaching post at a school in Torquay. Geoff was working in the same town and they set up their first home together, after they were married at St James' Church in Torpoint in April 1970. A short period later, they bought their first house in Brixham and Loveday took on a teaching role at Marlborough Primary School in Devonport. A change of job for Geoff and a desire to be back in Cornwall led them to their next home in

North Road, Torpoint. Loveday's first daughter Kerenza was born in June 1976, followed by Tamsyn in April 1979.

Loveday and Geoff separated in the early 1980s, which happened around the same time as her own parents' divorce. It was a tricky time for all and Loveday decided to adopt a family name, Carlyon, as her surname. A note in one of her diaries stated that it belonged to a relative who hadn't been married or had children, so she figured that no one was likely to be offended by her taking the name.

This was also when she began to really develop her interest and involvement in the Cornish language and cultural revival. Her good schoolfriend, Maureen Fuller, was part of this movement, eventually becoming Grand Bard of Gorsedh Kernow, and Loveday soon met Julyan Holmes. The family recalls that "for a girl of five-foot-two who had always loved to dance," it was wonderful to see her "with this devoted, yet by his own admission, two-left-footed beanpole of six-foot-five" and that the couple will be remembered as a "sweet sight at ceilidhs and country dancing events."

Loveday and her daughters moved to Liskeard to live with Julyan in the house above his art and picture framing shop in West Street, and the two were married on New Year's Eve 1984 at the local Register Office.

Loveday had always been proud of her grandfather's association with the early Labour Party. She had a strong sense of social justice and had a desire to make things better for people, and it was perhaps inevitable that her engagement with the Cornish movement would also have a political dimension. Her strong conviction that the best interests of Cornwall were not being served well by London politicians led her to join Mebyon Kernow. When Pedyr Prior became MK Chair in 1985, she took on the role of vice-chair, stepping up to become Chair in the following year. She led the organisation for the next three years. Loveday was a formidable and outspoken campaigner, who ably fronted numerous campaigns and made repeated political interventions.

She fought particularly hard to protect Cornwall's territorial integrity. In the first year of her leadership, she led opposition to plans from the SDP / Liberal Alliance for a joint Cornwall and Plymouth development agency, accusing them of a "sellout" and trying to create "Tamarside by the back door." In 1988, she also helped MK members force a public inquiry in support of a Cornwall-only constituency in the European Parliament, with nearly one thousand signatures collected in less than a week.



A key priority for Loveday was maintaining the long-established MK tradition of promoting public debates that other political parties in Cornwall were loathe to have. This included criticism of mass tourism and she argued that too many people were willing to destroy Cornwall's unique environment in search of "candy floss money." She even called out a Labour politician who described Cornwall as a "playground" for industrial workers from the Midlands, adding that we had no intention of being "living exhibits in a great Cornish theme park." And following the 1987 General Election, she hit out at the "pig-headed resistance of the Labour Party to proportional representation and to its inability to co-operate to mount an effective opposition to Thatcherism ..." and led an initiative calling on all non-Conservative parties to unite through an anti-Tory electoral strategy.

A strong opponent to the right-wing policies of 1980s Conservatism, she had a very public disagreement with A L Rowse. The historian described the-then Prime Minister as a "remarkable woman." This did not go down well with Loveday, who publicly said so – generating considerable publicity for MK.

Mebyon Kernow was contesting fewer elections in the late 1980s, though Julyan was one of three Cornwall County Council candidates in 1989 and Colin Lawry stood in the European elections that same year, with Mebyon Kernow's approach also encouraging party activists to channel their efforts into pressure groups and targeted cross-party campaigns. Loveday herself was prominent in opposition to the over-development of Cornwall and served as secretary of Cornish Alternatives to the Structure Plan, which was formed in 1987.

Loveday served on Liskeard Town Council and played a key role in a successful campaign in support of the Cornish language. The Department of Transport had instructed that Cornish had to be removed from the "welcome" signs on the outskirts of Liskeard, but she built a powerful local coalition to fight the move. This forced the Government to back down and acknowledge the legitimate use of Cornish on signage, making it possible for other towns to use the language as well.

*Loveday with Colin Lawry and
Pedyr Prior (1989)*



Loveday stepped back from her leadership role within MK at the end of 1989 and pursued further studies. She achieved a Masters in Special Needs Education, which enabled her to gain a position as a peripatetic special needs teacher, working with children in a range of schools across East Cornwall. In 1992 Loveday and Julyan moved to St Keyne, and she went back to mainstream teaching in a primary school in St Germans.

The family worked hard to ensure they could have regular breaks in West Cornwall and summer holidays were almost always spent in Brittany. Loveday spoke French and, ever the keen learner, she gained a degree in French through the Open University.

In 1997, Julyan suffered a severe head injury. Loveday retired early to care for him. Rehabilitation was long and difficult, but after much work they were able to resume their trips to Brittany and to meet up with friends for walks and trips to the countryside. Loveday also joined St Keyne Parish Council. She served as chair for a period and was very proud of her achievement in securing a piece of land where the youngsters of the village could play.

Loveday was delighted when her grandchildren were born. Tai, Olivia, Isla and Merryn have certainly inherited their grandmother's love of music, singing and drama, her sense of fairness and justice, her keen ability to hold thoughtful, lively conversation, and her love of what is special about Cornwall.

In more recent years, Loveday's health deteriorated and, in a switch of roles, Julyan became her carer, but following his death in August 2024 (see *Cornish Nation* no 95 for his obituary), she was supported by live-in carers for the final months of her life.

Loveday cared about people and everything Cornish. She was determined and dedicated in all that she did, whether it was her teaching, or her voluntary, civic or political commitments. At this time, our thoughts are with Kerenza and Tamsyn, and their families, who should be extremely proud of everything that Loveday achieved.

Rebels at St Keverne

The annual commemoration of An Gof and Flamank at St Keverne has been an important part of the Cornish calendar for some sixty years

As we celebrate MK's 75th anniversary year, we should note the Party's role in the annual event at St Keverne, which remembers the Cornish host of 1497 that rebelled against the English state. They marched to London to protest against increased taxation to fund a war against Scotland before they were defeated in a bloody battle on the fields of Blackheath. The commemoration takes place on 27th June each year – the date that the leaders of the revolt, Michael Joseph An Gof and Thomas Flamank, were executed at Tyburn.

A plaque in the village was unveiled by MK on 22nd October 1966. The event included a church service, after which Robert Dunstone introduced the Chairman of Cornwall County Council, Kimberley Foster, for the main address. The Grand Bard Gunwyn (George Pawley White, a founder-member of Mebyon Kernow and its very first treasurer) then read out the inscription and also said a prayer in Cornish for Cornwall and all Cornish people around the world, while music was provided by St Keverne Brass Band.

Pictured to the right are a series of images from the 1975 ceremony, which was filmed by the BBC and broadcast on "Pebble Mill at One."

The key speech was given by Mebyon Kernow Chairman Richard Jenkin, who told the gathering: "So what should we now learn from Michael Joseph's story? Well, we are not going to invade England and besiege London, but we must keep our Cornish identity and we must win away from London the power to make our own decisions for ourselves.

"We must fight by all possible democratic means to get a democratic Cornish Parliament for Cornish affairs.

"Michael Joseph fought and died for Cornwall, and he was proud to boast that his people would not forget him. He was sure that the Cornish Nation would remain and remember. We shall not disappear and we shall not be dispossessed of our Cornish heritage."



Gonisogeth hag yeth

Kowlwriansow eseli MK owth avoncy a pub rann a honanieth Kernewek re beu marthys yn hwir

Mar a-varr avel mis Gortheren 1951 Gwaryoryon Gernewek, bagas kevrennek gans MK, a berformyas an gwari merkyl Bewnans Meryasek dhe Blen Pyran, hag yth oberas eseli a-varr heb powes rag herdha yn-rag an diblanseth Kernow ha'y gonisogeth.

Hemm a ystynna dhyworth askorra gwara kepar ha lyvrow dedhyow ha towellow diwleuv, skoodha hengovow kepar ha donsya hag omdowl Kernewek, bys y'n avoncyans a arwodhyow diblans kepar ha'n baner Kernewek. Dampnys avel "baner MK" nans yw 50-60 bledhen, neyjs gothus yw lemmyn baner Synt Pyran gans onan hag oll.

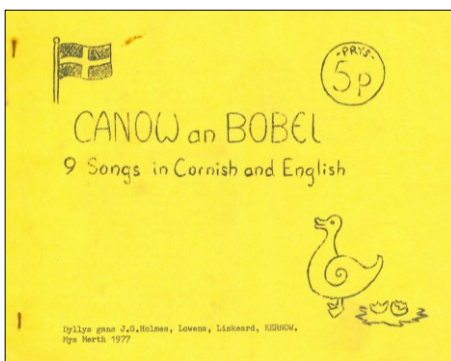
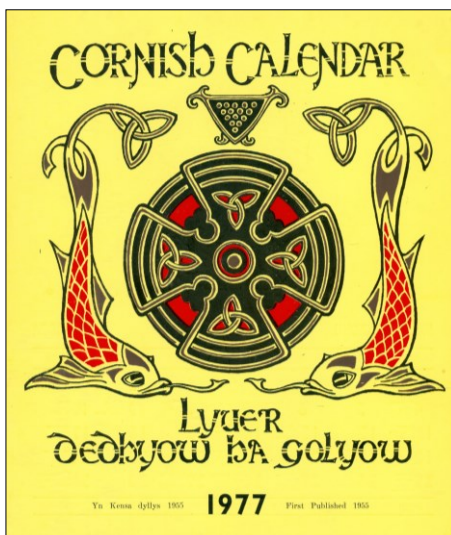
Eseli MK re beu bew keffrys yn kammneves a gowethasow gonisogethek. Moy es kans re beu enorys gans Gorsedh Kernow. An brassa rann a Verdh Veur re beu gweythresydhyon MK.

Mebyon Kernow a restras ynwedh an kynsa keskerdh Synt Pyran yn Truru yn 1979, ostya an lowender An Gwary Myr yn Lannyst dre lies bledhen, hag eseli MK a gemeras ynwedh rannow bras y'n Keskerdh Kernow dhe verkya an 500ves penn-bloodh a'n sordyans 1497.

Eseli Mebyon Kernow re beu kevrennys bew gans avoncyans an yeth Kernewek. Aga ober re varyas dhyworth dyski an yeth dhe'n askorrans a lyvrow, lyvrow-termyn ha snodow, bardhonieth hag ilow.

Yn-mysk kevrowhow meur aga bri yma Talek, neb a dhellos lyther-nowodhow *An Lef Kernewek* dhyworth an bledhynnyow 1950 dhe 1983 ha restra skol yeth gans y wreg Bertha, ha Graham Sandercock neb yw pennskriker an lyther-nowodhow misyek *An Gannas* rag moy es 25 bledhen. Esel men Mebyon Kernow Richard Jenkin a askorras *Delyow Derow* yntra 1988-1996, hag eseli MK erel re beu kevrennys gans niver bras a vagasow divers an yeth.

Gweythresyon ha konseloryon MK re beu omvyskys gans lies sewena rag an yeth, synsys ynna avonsyans a arwodhyow diwyethek, Polici Taves Kernewek rag Konsel Kernow hag aswonvos sodhogel der an Chartour Europek rag Yethow Ranndiryel ha Minoryta.



The achievements of MK members in advancing all aspects of Cornish identity have been truly remarkable. As early as July 1951 Gwaryoryon Gernewek, a group affiliated to

MK, performed the miracle play Bewnans Meryasek at Perran Round, and early members worked tirelessly to promote the distinctiveness of Cornwall and its culture.

This ranged from producing merchandise such as Cornish calendars and serviettes, and supporting traditions such as Cornish dancing and wrestling, to the promotion of distinct symbols such as the Cornish flag. Condemned as "MK's flag" only 50-60 years ago, the banner of St Piran is now proudly flown by one and all.

MK members have been active in a wide range of cultural organisations. Over one hundred have been honoured by the Gorsedh Kernow and the majority of Grand Bards have also been MK activists.

Mebyon Kernow organised the first St Piran's Day march in Truro in 1979 and hosted the An Gwary Myr festival in St Just for a number of years, while MK members also played influential roles in the Keskerdh Kernow march to mark the 500th anniversary of the 1497 uprising.

Mebyon Kernow members have been involved with the promotion of the Cornish language. Their work has varied from the teaching of the language to the production of books, magazines and tapes, poetry and music.

Significant contributions include those of Talek, who published *An Lef Kernewek* (The Cornish Voice) from the 1950s to 1983, and ran a language school with his wife Bertha, and Graham Sandercock who has edited the monthly newsletter *An Gannas* (The Ambassador) for over 25 years. Mebyon Kernow stalwart Richard Jenkin produced *Delyow Derow* (Oak Leaves) between 1988 and 1996, while other MK members have been involved with a large and varied number of language organisations.

MK activists and councillors have been involved with many successes for the language, which have included the promotion of bilingual signage, a Cornish language policy for Cornwall Council and recognition through the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages.

Cornish news and views



Coverage of MK's 75th anniversary year on BBC Spotlight

Anniversary EDM

The 75th anniversary of the founding of Mebyon Kernow was marked in the House of Commons through an Early Day Motion put forward by Plaid Cymru MPs. The motion tabled by Liz Saville Roberts, Ann Davies, Ben Lake and Llinos Medi stated: "That this House celebrates 75 years of Mebyon Kernow, the Cornish political party campaigning to win greater self-government for Cornwall through their own legislative Parliament; notes that the historic nation of Cornwall, with its own distinct identity, language and heritage, has the same right to self-determination as the other constituent parts of the UK, such as Scotland and Wales; highlights that Mebyon Kernow is a progressive party striving to build a confident and outward-looking Cornwall that has the power to take decisions for itself; commends the party for launching the Declaration for a Cornish Assembly in 2000, which was supported by over 50,000 people, and for reaching across the political divide to seek more powers for Cornwall; and congratulates party members and activists for seven-and-a-half decades of campaigning on behalf of Cornish society and for Cornwall's culture, identity, economy and environment." (6th January 2026)

Storm Goretti

Cornwall has been hit by numerous storms this winter, with the worst one being Storm Goretti on 8th and 9th January 2026. Countless trees were blown down, hundreds and hundreds of properties were damaged and thousands left without power and / or water. The clear-up has also been problematic, with central

government refusing Cornwall Council's request for Bellwin funding (an emergency financial assistance scheme which reimburses local authorities for uninsurable costs incurred responding to major disasters like storms).

The leader of the unitary authority told a recent meeting: "Negotiations are still ongoing. We have about £5 million in costs that we believe should be reimbursed. The Government thinks differently." Interviewed by *The Guardian*, Cllr Loveday Jenkin, told journalists that Goretti had exposed weaknesses in Cornwall's infrastructure, with the newspaper itself noting that "the loss of power, water and the continuing communications issues have made many Cornish people question whether the rest of the UK cares enough about the far-west of Britain, when it is not holidaying or visiting second homes there."

Cllr Jenkin added: "Cornwall should have more devolved resilience money. People want to treat Cornwall as a holiday playground. They need to recognise that there are people on the ground who have to manage it, but don't have the money." (23rd January 2026).

Census consultation

MK has responded to two consultations about the content of the 2031 census. It has called for Cornish tick-boxes in the ethnicity, nationality and language sections of the document, while also challenging the Office of National Statistics to go further and ensure that data about the Cornish is always collected by governmental and public sector bodies.

The representation noted that census questionnaires have historically been slightly different in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; and MK requested that Cornish nationality is referenced in all census documents across the United Kingdom. But it was also suggested that a bespoke questionnaire for the 2031 Census be used in Cornwall.

It further pointed out that the lack of a tick-box for Cornish nationality means that the data collected is incomplete. It cannot properly be used for meaningful comparisons with other national minority groups when the data has been collected using different methodologies – the data for the national minorities (Northern Irish, Scottish and Welsh) that had tick-boxes

can be deemed to be largely complete, while the data for the Cornish must be viewed as extremely partial.

There is much evidence – including housing surveys, parish assessments and community network health profiles – that show Cornish people are likely to face high levels of deprivation and poor outcomes across a range of sectors including health, housing and education. The document concluded: "A Cornish nationality tick-box is needed to ensure appropriate information is collected about the Cornish national group to inform public bodies about their socio-economic and other needs." (4th February 2026)

European housing concerns

Members of Kernow Rydh took part in a European Free Alliance Youth winter school in Ljouwert, Friesland, alongside delegates from Brittany, Scotland and Wales, plus Alsace-Lorraine, Aosta Valley, Catalonia, Schleswig-Holstein and Valencia, as guests of the Frisian National Party. In addition to networking between the youth groups, a key focus of the event was to workshop housing policy.



Amongst topics discussed were the gentrification of housing in Friesland and other nations and regions, and how housing inequality is adversely impacting on minority languages, plus ecological issues relating to the production of natural gas and the need for greater public ownership or meaningful community benefits from such mining industries, something that Mebyon Kernow wants emulated in Cornwall with regard to critical minerals. (20th February 2026)

No fair funding

MK councillors have hit out at the ongoing underfunding of local government. Party leader Cllr Dick Cole told supporters that “Westminster Governments change, but disrespect for local government continues.” He added: “We feel particularly let down by ministers continuing with the dodgy concept of spending power. They claim that councils are getting significantly more funding, but the reality is that most of this extra money is coming from council tax payers, with Government Ministers instructing local authorities to increase council tax by 5%.

“This is so wrong and the fair funding review has not delivered for Cornwall. MPs are prioritising other areas – often urban areas – and Cornwall is also not getting anything like what our Celtic cousins in Scotland and Wales are securing.”

Party Development Officer, Michael Bunney has meanwhile condemned a range of funding announcements from the UK Government, which have completely ignored communities to the west of the Tamar. “Cornwall will not be getting a single penny from the Recovery Grant funding stream and it has just been announced that another 40 neighbourhoods will be getting funding of up to £20 million each (over 10 years), but not one of these locations is in Cornwall.”

He added: “This is shameful and we are also missing out on the structural funding that previously came via the EU. Prior to Brexit, Cornwall received around £100 million a year and there was near universal condemnation of the Conservatives for short-changing us by only allowing ‘replacement’ funding of around £40 million per annum.

“But now, we are doing even worse. Labour has announced a Kernow Industrial Fund, but that is only worth £30 million over two years. Cornwall needs fair funding. Cornwall deserves so much better.” (24th February 2026)

Council demands tick-box

Politicians on Cornwall’s unitary authority came together on St Piran’s Day to send a letter to central government demanding tick-boxes for Cornish nationality and proficiency in the Cornish language on the next census due in 2031.



Three new parish councillors for the Party for Cornwall

Mebyon Kernow is pleased to be able to report that it has three new parish councillors. Talan Blamey (left), a sitting member of St Goran Parish Council, has joined MK, while two other members have been co-opted. Joe Hunt (middle) has joined Carn Brea Parish Council, while Jamie Sweet (right) is now a member of Pentewan Valley Parish Council.

In addition to Cllr Dick Cole, the letter was signed by Council Leader Leigh Frost (Liberal Democrat), deputy leader Adam Paynter (Independent), Paul Ashton (Reform UK), Drew Creek (Green), Connor Donnithorne (Conservative), Kate Ewert (Labour) and Rowland O’Connor (Cornish Independent Non-aligned).

It was sent to Darren Jones MP, the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, who has responsibility for the United Kingdom Statistics Authority. (5th March 2026)

A bank holiday for St Piran

MK members were very much to the fore of celebrations to mark St Piran’s Day in towns and villages across Cornwall.



MK’s Cllr Loveday Jenkin has meanwhile called for Cornwall to have a “national holiday.” In a challenge to the leadership of Cornwall Council, she told a meeting of Full Council: “We have our national day, St Piran’s Day ... why can’t we as a council declare it as a national holiday for the council and council workers to be able to celebrate St Piran’s Day and perhaps others would follow us?” (5th March 2026)

Dates for diaries

All members and supporters are invited to an event to celebrate 75 years of Mebyon Kernow – the Party for Cornwall. It will be held at the Buttermarket in Station Road, Redruth, on Friday 12th June (from 6.30). There will be no charge for entry and there will be entertainment from a number of performers. Food will also be available. It would be good to see lots of people at this celebration. Look out on social media for further information.

The date for Mebyon Kernow’s National Conference has also been set. It will be held on 24th October 2026. More details to follow in the near-future.

We would like to thank Michael Bunney, Cllr Dick Cole, Joy Dunkerley, Cllr Joe Hunt, Kerenza Moore, Tamsyn Moore and Oscar Peters for photographs used in this magazine.

Chris Dunkerley

Cornish Nation remembers a proud Cornish-Australian, who was a bard of Gorsedh Kernow and a strong supporter of Mebyon Kernow

Many people with Cornish heritage from around the globe are supporters of MK and one of our most consistent and passionate backers from the diaspora has been Christopher Dunkerley, who died on 10th February 2026 at the age of 75.

Born in Eastwood, New South Wales, in 1950, Chris was educated at state schools, before joining the Australian Public Service – the federal civil service – as an eighteen-year-old. He served in sections dealing with roads, agriculture and public works, mostly in contract management and tendering, while at the same time studying in various tertiary colleges, securing a University Diploma in Security Studies. He retired in 2009 and was awarded the Premier's 40-year Service Medal.

Chris married Joy Denham in 1980 and they had three children together, Lowenna, Owen and Kerensa, before they also became proud grandparents to Penny and Poppy.

Chris was well-known as a community worker and had a very varied range of interests. He supported his local church and served the Epping Civic Trust as Vice-President for over thirty years and was also politically active. He stood six times in state elections in New South Wales for the Australia Party and its successor the Australian Democrats, which were progressive parties that believed in a participatory democracy and had strong environmental policies.

He was also a keen football supporter and was involved with the Central Coast Mariners, who were founded in 2004. He was one of the founding members of the Marinators, the club's original supporters group, and he regularly contributed articles, match reports, and editorials to a variety of media sources. He also co-founded the "Back of the Net" fans website. The CC Mariners have described Chris as a "true football fan in every sense" and the crowd at a recent game remembered him with a minutes applause (see right).

Chris was particularly proud of his Cornish roots, which came through his mother's side of the family, and he had historic links to many places in Cornwall including Camborne, Crowan, St Erth and Wendron.



In 1977 and 1981, he visited Moonta in South Australia, where a large number of Cornish miners had settled, and this led to Chris dedicating so much time over the next 40-plus years to the promotion of Cornish identity. He joined Cornish Associations in both South Australia and New South Wales, quickly becoming part of the committee in NSW and taking on roles such as the newsletter editor and secretary.

He also attended the first meeting of the Celtic Council of Australia in 1982 and served as a representative on this body for over three decades. For his work, the Council awarded him a Duine Urramach (Scottish Gaelic for "noble or honoured person") and Cyfaill y Celtiad (Welsh for "friend of the Celts").



He was a Cornish speaker and became a bard of Gorsedh Kernow through examination in the language. Chris was barded by proxy in 1988 at Poldhu and he took the name Kevrenor meaning "builder of links," and the first bardic ceremony he participated in took place at Richman's Plant in the Moonta Mines in 1989.

In addition to his work with Cornish Associations in Australia, and events such as the Australian Celtic Festival in Glen Innes, he was a life member of MK and ran a number of websites which promoted all aspects of Cornish life, including politics and the need for self-government for Cornwall.

In 2008, Gorsedh Kernow awarded him their Ambassador's Trophy, Weryson an Gannas, and the following year he won the Pewis Map Trevethan (Paul Smales Award) for an "outstanding contribution to Cornwall by someone not resident in Cornwall."

The citation for this award rightly stated that he was an "inspiration throughout the diaspora" and he collected this latter award in person at the bardic ceremony which was held at Longstone Park in Saltash that year.

Chris was a great friend to Cornwall and our thoughts are with Joy and his family at this sad time.

Book reviews

Some books of interest to MK members include autobiographies from Nicola Sturgeon and Dafydd Iwan, and a biography of Dafydd Elis-Thomas

Nicola Sturgeon, the first female and longest-serving First Minister of Scotland, who has served in the Scottish Parliament since 1999, has written an autobiography titled **Frankly**, which has been variously described as “candid” and “insightful.” She served as First Minister in an era marked by Brexit, Covid and five different UK prime ministers, and she previously oversaw the Yes campaign in the independence referendum of 2014.

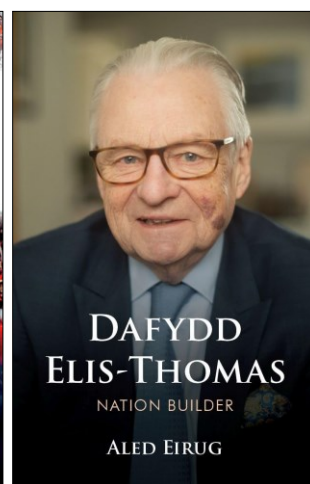
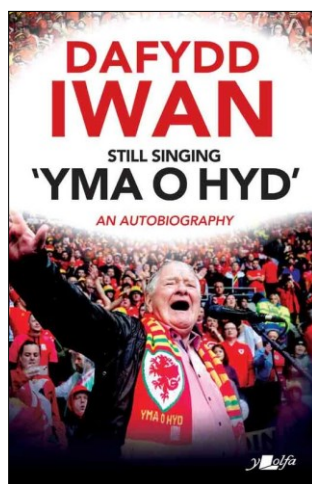
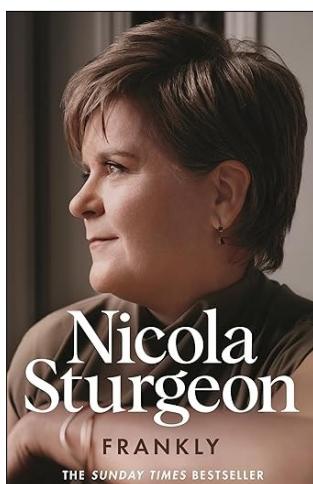
In this deeply personal memoir, Sturgeon recounts her journey from working-class Ayrshire to the steps of Bute House. Revealing the person behind the politician, she explores the schism between her private and public personas: one painfully shy and self-critical, the other a consummate public performer. And yet, she pulls no punches, candidly recounting her interactions with figures including Theresa May, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, and Alex Salmond – her mentor and, ultimately, a staunch adversary.

Full of the verve and wit that made Sturgeon one of the most high-profile politicians in the UK, this is a unique blend of personal insight and captivating vignettes. Infused throughout with a love of Scotland and its people, it discusses Sturgeon’s mistakes, her battles, and her triumphs with great honesty.

Alan Johnson, the former British Home Secretary, has commented: “Nicola Sturgeon is the council house kid who became one of Europe’s most successful politicians. Here she tells her remarkable story with great skill and unflinching honesty.”

Frankly is published by Pan Macmillan and is a significant 480-page document [£28].

Dafydd Iwan is one of the biggest names in Welsh-language music and pro-Wales activism. He has been in the public eye as a performer since the 1960s and he was one of the founders of Sain Records, the prominent Welsh music label. His most well-known song Yma o Hyd was released in 1982, which he said was to “raise the spirits, to remind people we still speak Welsh against all odds ... to show we are still here.”



The song has become a popular anthem and has been adopted by supporters of the Wales Football Team. His autobiography is titled **Still Singing “Yma O Hyd,”** and the Nation.Cymru website has described its publication as “timely” as the “defiant spirit of the song seems to be necessary in the country that has taken it firmly to heart,” adding that “Dafydd Iwan is a Welsh icon ... synonymous with everything that is positive about Wales at the moment.”

A long-standing political activist with the pressure group Cymdeithas yr Iaith, he participated in direct action in the late 1960s and 1970s, and he spent time in prison for his refusal to pay fines for defacing English-language road signs. A prominent member of Plaid Cymru, he has contested a number of elections, serving as a member of Gwynedd Council in the 2000s. He also served as President of Plaid Cymru between 2003 and 2010, during which time he visited Cornwall to speak at a Mebyon Kernow Conference.

Still Singing “Yma O Hyd” (140 pages) is published by Y Lolfa [£9.99].

Dafydd Elis-Thomas – Nation Builder by Alex Eurig explores the life of one of Plaid Cymru’s most well-known activists in this new approved biography (see *Cornish Nation* no 96 for his obituary), following his political career through his early activism to his election to

Westminster as a Plaid Cymru MP in 1974, his elevation to the House of Lords, his election to the National Assembly for Wales where he became its first Presiding Officer and later served as a minister in the Welsh Government.

In his review, Martin Shipton, associate editor of Nation.Cymru, wrote: “For anyone wanting to understand this most enigmatic and apparently contradictory of politicians, Aled Eirug is the perfect guide. His biography of Dafydd Elis-Thomas brings us closer to a man whose diverse influences helped him create a rich form of Welsh internationalism that renders the frequently uttered jibe ‘narrow separatist’ laughably inadequate. In a political era that veers between technocratic tedium and apocalyptic anxiety, Elis-Thomas was never boring. Nor is this book.’

Dafydd Elis-Thomas – Nation Builder (376 pages) is published by the University of Wales Press [£25].

[Images on back page:](#)

Mebyon Kernow election motorcade for the 1970 General Election in the Falmouth-Camborne constituency

Celebrating 75 years of Mebyon Kernow

