



**Cornish
Constitutional
Convention**
SENEHDH KERNOW

Cornish Constitutional Convention

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Dear Convention Member,

The year has been a very busy one. Not least due to the Scottish referendum which, as well as being interesting, has generated much interest in Cornwall and in devolution across communities in the UK and beyond. We have captured some of the most relevant articles on our website – www.cornishassembly.org.

Following the Scottish Referendum the status quo cannot continue. The Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats have all talked of their support for devolution during the current referendum campaign, and again at their recent party conferences.

In Cornwall, we had the government announce its intention to include the Cornish as a national minority under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The timetable has slipped, but we are keeping up pressure on government to ensure they submit their proposal to the Council of Europe before the next General Election. The announcement has had a positive effect; on Cornish culture for example, Maga – the Cornish language partnership – have sustained increased interest with website hits remaining significantly higher than before our recognition.

As the Convention, we have been involved in interviews with all forms of media. Our Twitter account – @cornishassembly – has passed over a thousand followers.

Within Cornwall we have noticed increased support from Cornwall Council for devolution. For example, in the recent call for evidence on fiscal devolution to cities and city regions Cornwall Council responded

“With a recognised brand and clear devolution aspirations Cornwall (and if it wishes the Isles of Scilly) should have the opportunity to aspire to greater autonomy: this is not just an issue for cities.” Is Cornwall Council’s position yet strong enough? We

would be grateful if you would contact your local Cornwall Councillor to let them know their electors are thinking about, and supportive of, a Cornish Assembly.

We have had a mixed response from political parties locally and this has been echoed by our MPs. Again, letting your MP know your views is important, especially now as they are thinking about securing votes at the General Election.

There is a growing consensus around devolution for Cornwall, from residents to academics, from politicians to business people. We need to build upon this and ensure that Cornwall speaks with one voice – just as we did recently in seeking and securing greater control than UK government was proposing over our European funding with the #standupforcornwall campaign.

In terms of what the Cornish Constitutional Convention is proposing for Cornwall it is important to place our suggestions into the UK context. Referring to the previous settlements for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, UK Government guidance (www.gov.uk/guidance-on-devolution) states

19.1. The 3 devolution settlements vary, and further information is available in the detailed guidance on the settlements. The following things are not devolved, and HM government remains responsible for them:

- *the constitution*
- *international relations and defence*
- *national security*
- *nationality and immigration*
- *nuclear energy*
- *broadcasting*
- *the UK tax system*
- *employment and social security (except Northern Ireland)*

19.2. The devolution settlements are complex and are all different. That said, broadly speaking, the following things are devolved in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- *health and social care*
- *education and training*
- *local government and housing*
- *agriculture, forestry and fisheries*
- *the environment and planning*
- *tourism, sport and heritage*
- *economic development and internal transport*

The Cornish Constitutional Convention believes that these areas make a sensible starting point for our devolution. We are talking of empowering, enabling and enhancing:

- Empowering regions to make those decisions best suited to a local emphasis
- Enabling regions to tailor public services and infrastructure to our needs
- Enhancing the quality of our lives and of the contribution we can make to the whole, whether that be Cornwall, the UK, Europe or the world community

We believe that the amalgamation and democratisation of public services will provide a better, more efficient service for residents.

Devolution should not stop at the Cornwall level. As the logic flows for devolution to regions it also makes sense to devolve to the communities within them. The Cornish Constitutional Convention wants to see decision making at the closest possible level to residents. It would seem sensible to utilise the existing Parish and Town councils in this regard.

Please join us on Saturday 15th November with Dr Joanie Willett to discuss the topic 'Towards a more federal Britain: Making a Cornish Assembly happen?' followed by our AGM. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Over the coming year, please give your active support for devolution. Let your friends and family know why you support the creation of a Cornish Assembly. Take opportunities to speak on the radio and write letters to newspapers in support of a Cornish Assembly. Make sure your Cornwall Councillor and MP know how you feel.

We need to ensure the words of those supporting devolution now are translated into actions. We need to seek commitments and make sure that Westminster delivers. We need Cornwall to speak with one voice to Government to ensure a successful future for everyone.

With best wishes,

Julian

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