

NEW FRONTIERS

CORNISH CULTURE AND HERITAGE



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Context

Cornwall is a geographically distinctive area, surrounded on three sides by the sea, with a historic revived language of its own and a distinctive cultural landscape. This cultural distinctiveness, represented in the heritage of our landscape, built environment, community and artistic traditions is central to our economy. It underpins tourism, and is a key driver that attracts other business to the location.

Not only is Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly already a defined functional economic area, its very identity and heritage is constitutionally recognised. In 2002 the Cornish language was included in the Council of Europe's Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. Under the terms of the Charter, the Government is committed to 'base its policies, legislation and practice' on a list of nine objectives and principles which, for example, express recognition of Cornish as an expression of cultural wealth and support resolute action to promote the language.

More recently, in 2014 the Cornish people were acknowledged by the UK Government as a national minority under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. Recognition under the Framework Convention ensures that the Cornish are afforded the same protections as the Welsh, Scottish and the Irish, which requires Government departments and public bodies to consider the rights of the Cornish when formulating national and local policy.

Cornwall calls on the Government to fulfil the terms of the language Charter and the Framework Convention to ensure Cornwall's unique culture and heritage is not only protected, but is enhanced and celebrated.

Unlocking barriers

The rationale for change

The constitutional recognition of the Cornish language and people, in 2002 and 2014 respectively, together with a post Brexit economic imperative, requires a 'step change' in how the unique identity, culture, language and traditions of the Cornish people are nurtured to provide cultural and economic benefit to Cornwall and the UK through new policy and financial commitments.

Strong foundations for this 'step change' are already in place; heritage and culture are at the heart of our economic strategy and our joint investment national partners, specifically the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England, have demonstrated very significant uplifts to the wider economy. Research has shown that heritage and culture destinations are an important part of most tourist visits, with between 30% and 60% of visitors planning to visit a historic site, garden or harbour during their stay in Cornwall.

Empowering Cornwall as set out in New Frontiers will capitalise on those strong and successful foundations and maximise the opportunity of the Cornish culture and heritage – including cultural tourism - to act as a gateway to Cornwall's prosperity and make an increased contribution to the UK economy.

FULFILLING THE OBLIGATIONS OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR NATIONAL MINORITIES

Our ask

Principally, for the Government to deliver on all the recommendations set out by the Council of Europe's Advisory Committee in its Fourth Opinion for the UK on the FCNM released in March 2017, and endorsed as recently as February this year by the Council of Europe's Council of Ministers. The key recommendations that Cornwall asks the Government to implement/support are as follows:

- Including a Cornish 'tick-box' in the 'identity' section of the 2021 Census in view of the Cornish being recognised as a national minority. 14% of the population living in Cornwall self-identified as Cornish in the 2011 Census, which, considering there was no tick box option and they had to write in 'Cornish' under the 'other' option, is significant. The 'Welsh' example demonstrates that this would be significantly higher if a 'tick box' option was provided. In the 2001 Census there was no 'tick box' option for 'Welsh'. As a result 14.4% of Welsh residents self-identified as 'Welsh' using the 'other' option. Following the inclusion of 'Welsh' as a tick box option in the 2011 Census, there was a significant increase to 66.6% in the percentage of residents expressing their national identity as Welsh. Evidence strongly suggests that the Cornish case is very similar to the Welsh case. This would give public bodies at a national and local level greater accuracy and confidence in 'Cornish' proofing policies, for example, including identifying and overcoming community cohesion issues.
- Commit to extending the £50k pa Cornish Culture Fund (in place since April 2017) for a further two years (2019/20 – 2020/21) to continue support initiatives that fulfil the provisions of the Framework Convention.

Our offer

Delivering on these two 'asks' would provide a clear and tangible statement to the Council of Europe that, irrespective of Brexit, the Government remains committed to working with European partners and honouring the obligations set out in the Framework Convention signed by the UK in 1995.

Benefits

Inclusion of a Cornish national identity 'tick-box' will enable the ONS to fulfil its vision for the 2021 Census in providing the right information (at a state and local level) to plan and deliver services – which is arguably even more important in 2021 to ensure that, as the Brexit transition period ends, Cornwall continues to go forward. A replication of the percentage uplift achieved with the addition of the Welsh 'tick-box' would give greater certainty to planning Cornwall's future and ensure that 'inclusive growth' – as the Government desires – was truly benefitting all, including the indigenous population.



ENABLING THE CORNISH LANGUAGE TO FLOURISH

Context

The Cornish language is one of the UK's indigenous languages and the UK has given official recognition to the language in two ways:

- Under the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in 2002, with obligations to provide support to Cornish as one of the recognised minority languages of the UK.
- Under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in 2014. This recognises the Cornish as a national minority, with several obligations relating to protection of the Cornish language and support for its use.

At present, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is officially responsible for reporting on implementation of both these international agreements with regard to Cornish. However, Cornwall Council carries out language planning and coordinates language projects in Cornwall.

The other British indigenous languages all have devolved authorities responsible for language planning, reporting on implementation of the Charter, and coordination of language work. Additionally, at the British-Irish Council, Cornish is officially represented by MHCLG with Cornwall Council only having observer status.

The Council of Europe's Fifth Cycle Report in 2018 on implementation of the Framework Convention in the UK made a number of recommendations with regard to Cornish, and devolution of language planning could address some of these recommendations:

Unlocking barriers

The rationale for change

Minority languages require long term strategic planning to flourish. Without this they decline and sometimes disappear. With professional language planning and investment they can play an important role in promoting multilingualism, in supporting economic growth and in engendering a strong sense of place amongst local communities.

The Cornish language requires long term investment to fulfil its potential as one of the family of indigenous languages of the UK. Whilst Cornwall continues to face tough economic challenges, Cornwall Council and its partners are increasingly committed to using our distinctive environment and culture to provide a competitive advantage, as both a destination management tool and as a brand differentiator for products and services.

Significant progress has been made to date and public awareness and support for the language have changed beyond recognition (a recent survey found 75% of visitors to Cornwall were aware of the language and 67% thought it was an important part of what makes Cornwall a unique and special part of the UK), but investment in capacity and powers are required if we are to see its social and economic impact increased to levels achieved elsewhere in the UK.

An independent review of language planning for Cornish was carried out in 2014/15 which led to the publication of the Cornish Language Strategy 2015-25, setting out priorities for the next decade and the part the language can play in Cornwall and the UK. At the same time, a new commissioning delivery model was introduced aimed at professionalising the language sector and developing capacity.

The existing Cornwall Devolution Deal (Kevambos Digresennans Kernow) includes culture and heritage; as they play a significant part of what makes Cornwall a unique place;

“The Government recognizes Cornwall's rich and unique heritage, including its historic revived language and passionate communities, and that this cultural distinctiveness is an important factor in Cornwall's local economy. It underpins tourism

and is a key driver that attracts other business to the location.”

The draft first Devolution Deal for Cornwall in 2015 also included a five year language funding commitment, but this was removed from the final deal. Instead, the Government provided a £100k Cornish Culture Fund over two years, which Cornwall Council has used to progress work on implementing the obligations of the Framework Convention. The language programme is entirely funded by Cornwall Council.

Our ask

To devolve responsibility for language planning to Cornwall Council

A clear duty to protect and support the Cornish language would help clarify responsibilities at the local level, while also bringing Cornish language planning into line with other British languages and devolved authorities (whereby each devolved authority is responsible for language coordination within the authority area and reports to Government on the implementation of the Charter and the Framework). This would reflect the reality that all Cornish language planning is already carried out within Cornwall.

Devolution of language planning for Cornish should be accompanied by clear enabling guidance that Cornish language may in bilingual road signs and as part of the school curriculum. This would enable community resources to focus on use of the language, rather than making the case for use of the language with each new project. Greater clarity on official use of the language would provide reassurance to partners who would like to use the language but are unsure of its status.

Access to media is crucial to the development of the use of the language, and support for a Cornish media platform with a remit specifically requiring some programming in Cornish would enable commissioning of content, provide greater opportunities for use of the language, and provide greater support for learning the language. (This is covered in more detail in Creative Industries).

The Government recognizes Cornwall's rich and unique heritage

To support the development of capacity for the Cornish language

The increased visibility and use of Cornish language has been a significant achievement over the past few decades, but increased use by businesses, creative industries and organisations is putting strain on the small community of (largely volunteer) language speakers. As a small language, basic services such as teaching and translation services require teaching materials, dictionaries, technology, etc. Cornish is acknowledged internationally as a success story of community-led language revitalisation, but investment in core infrastructure is required if the demands of business, education, culture, etc. are to be met. Due to the small scale of the language and the specialist nature of the work, it is not usually possible for Cornish language projects to meet the requirements of mainstream funding, and base funding is required to develop the core infrastructure, eg translator training, teacher development, software development.

To extend membership of the British-Irish Council to Cornwall Council

Cornish is the only language not represented by its own devolved administration at the British Irish Council (BIC), so membership for Cornwall Council would address this anomaly. It would not set a precedent, as there is no other indigenous language in the British Isles without representation.

Cornwall Council is currently a member of the Network for the Protection of Linguistic Diversity (NPLD), an EU body, but following Brexit, this network may no longer be available to Cornish and so Cornwall will be reliant on the BIC network for language planning advice. Cornish is in a similar state to the Manx language and probably stronger than the Channel Island languages, all of which are full members of the BIC and provide very valuable advice and experience for Cornwall to learn from.

The work of the BIC's Creative Industries working group is closely related to the IML group, with part of the group's work supporting a network of programmers in indigenous languages. Cornwall is already a member of the Celtic Media Fest and also being a member of the BIC group would extend the network, opportunities and support for film making in Cornwall.

Our offer

Devolved powers for language planning would provide a clear statement of support for a post-Brexit Britain at ease with a range of cultural identities and promote inclusiveness within the community in Cornwall at a time of great change.

Devolved powers and funding for language planning would place responsibility for language matters with Cornwall Council. Cornwall Council would then be accountable for the success or otherwise of implementing many of the obligations under the Charter and Framework, and this would provide a sounder base for medium to long term planning, which partners in the business and higher education sector require before investing in the language programme.

Inclusive growth: Culture and language are proven drivers of aspiration in deprived communities and Cornwall Council has a track record of heritage led regeneration (Kresen Kernow, Heartlands) and engagement (Man Engine). We plan to target language investments, using the geographical hubs set out in our strategy, to drive skills development in deprived communities which have a poor record of skills attainment. Elements of Cornish language in skills programmes can encourage hard to reach groups in Cornwall to boost skills and provide pathways to employment, as has been successfully done in Wales and Brittany in teaching, IT and creative industries.

There are increasing opportunities to link the language programme to digital services, with either direct language applications or to test/demonstrate language localisation for products. There are already some such projects using Cornish under development. Similarly, Cornish language TV and film can develop local skills and experience in programming for different language markets, with content then going on to be sold to other markets, as S4C and BBC Alba have done.

CREATING BBC KERNOW

Context

Cornwall has a diverse and energetic cultural sector which is full of talent, but there are few opportunities to give voice to this talent and develop careers. Cornwall is a popular location for film and TV crews to film stories set in Cornwall, but there are few opportunities for programmes and film made by, and from the viewpoint of, people in Cornwall.

Cornish is the only UK indigenous language without its own TV platform and although the BBC professes to support diversity and regional voices, the only current BBC output in Cornish is a 5 minute weekly news bulletin.

We believe that Cornwall's language and culture should have the equal status with the other indigenous languages and cultures of Britain, and that there should be an online TV platform equivalent to BBC Alba on the BBC iPlayer.

Appropriate commissioning and editorial processes should be established within the remit of the BBC to develop and grow Cornish language and cultural programming.

Unlocking Barriers

Rationale for Change

Every culture should have their own voice represented in the world's media, particularly in public service broadcasting. In 2003 the Cornish language (Kernewek) received official recognition under the European Charter for the Protection of Regional or Minority Languages. In 2014 the Cornish were granted protected national minority status under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. This means the Cornish have the same recognition as the Welsh, Scots and Irish.

However, the Council of Europe has criticised the lack of media access for the Cornish. This blocks cultural expression, affects wider perceptions of Cornish culture and inhibits aspiration and opportunity for Cornish people themselves.

The Welsh and the Scottish have shown how development of their own television programming has nurtured talent, developed skills and work opportunities and developed positive, outward looking cultural expression, with both having generated content that has been sold internationally. These are opportunities that would otherwise not have come about.

Our ask

An online TV platform for Cornish programming. We envisage a model similar to BBC Three whereby content is only available online, so that there is no need to service 24 hour programming and content can be developed according to capacity and resources.

At its core, BBC Kernow would have a remit to include Cornish language only and bilingual content which would give the channel a distinctive character and meet obligations of the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and the Framework Convention.

However, its remit and values would be much wider, providing an opportunity to explore what culture in Cornwall means, rather than coming up with one limiting definition. It would also be an opportunity for Cornish film makers to tell their own stories in new innovative ways. It should reflect, but not be limited to Cornwall. It should include, but not be dominated by local news. Rather it should be an exciting, innovative, cultural space.

We believe that the BBC, as the public service broadcaster with a duty to provide for Britain's regions and cultures, should provide this platform, and it is only right that the channel should in turn meet the BBC's editorial standards. This will ensure a quality threshold, and drive professional standards in the industry.

Our offer

Cornwall Council, the CloSLEP, Falmouth University, the Cornish Constitutional Convention and the Cornish Gorsedh will commission research to look at models for a digital service, drawing on the experience of MG Alba, S4C, TG4, RTE, Maori Tv and others, to set out values, corporate structure, governance structure, funding, editorial policy, and potential content. BBC and Channel 4 will be encouraged to take part in this research stage to explore options for establishing a Cornish digital platform.

The BBC Kernow concept is a radical opportunity to break out of the traditional metropolitan model of production and commissioning. We will use the opportunities created by new technology and the local talent and cultural distinctiveness that we have in Cornwall to create a rural TV production centre for the 21st Century.

The Creative Industries and Digital Technologies section of our Rural Industrial Strategy will put in place many of the elements that will enable this to happen, namely:

- 5G technology and 100% coverage of superfast broadband
- A 'harbour' for the screen industries – hothousing top talent from Falmouth University's School of Film and TV
- a Creative Industries Enterprise Zone
- a Creative Industries Cluster Programme

BBC Kernow would create a flagship project to showcase talent and output from these elements. Falmouth University already has up to 200 students a year with film-related degrees, many of whom need work experience to start their career.

Cornwall has a burgeoning cultural sector with innovative theatre groups, musicians, story tellers and film makers. The platform could create a space for distinctive programming and provide additional work opportunities for those who work in this sector.

A clear core Cornish cultural remit will give a clear and distinct identity to the channel, and as for BBC Alba, this need not translate into small audiences. We know that programmes set in Cornwall have wider appeal, in terms of scenery and history to those who have visited for holiday, and in terms of culture to the Cornish diaspora around the world.

Benefits

The online platform would provide media access for Cornish language and culture, in a way that allows a plurality of voices to explore what this means and new opportunities for using the language.

The channel would also create a platform to showcase the infrastructure and skills available in Cornwall to produce film and media. This would complement efforts by the Government to encourage television commissioning and production outside of London. With the right editorial standards and resourcing, we would aim to produce content that contributes to national broadcasting as other regions are now able to do.



PIONEERING APPROACHES TO HERITAGE MANAGEMENT

Context

Cornwall has the highest concentration of historic assets in the UK and has made a major contribution to innovation in heritage management over the last 30 years, with notable mainstream UK wide bodies national policies originally developed in Cornwall.

The 2015 Cornwall Devolution Deal committed Cornwall Council and Historic England to jointly produce a study of the cultural distinctiveness of Cornwall's historic environment as a 'stepping stone' to realising the more extensive ambitions set out in the Case for Cornwall. As the cultural distinctiveness study nears completion, we want to re-engage with the Government on a series of additional 'asks' that will ensure Cornwall remains the trailblazer of heritage management innovation and the blueprint for others to follow.

Unlocking Barriers

Rationale for Change

Our heritage is of concern to many of Cornwall's residents and many who are defined under the Framework Convention of National Minorities. Developing a confident culture in Cornwall felt by its people, is important aspect of the delivery of 'inclusive growth', a foundation for this can be made through the careful and positive management of the assets and stories of our past. What is particularly notable is the passionate expression of dissatisfaction through a variety of channels when this is not done effectively.

Our ask

Regulating in partnership

Cornwall Council is interested to explore with Historic England the potential for 'regulating in partnership'. Where an exploration could be made of the conditions needed for future devolution of regulatory activities and to work side by side over the coming years to develop the methods and practises for this to be done effectively and to improve outcomes.

Asset management

Cornwall Council would like to have the opportunity to discuss with Government the conditions necessary for heritage assets currently managed by national bodies to be increasingly influenced and managed locally. We would be interested to understand the criteria with which an independent body would need to fulfil for consideration in future commissioning processes.

Cultural distinctiveness

A challenge and opportunity is to make the links between cultural distinctiveness of our tangible heritage assets with our intangible culture. Many of our cultural traditions are located in or make reference to communities' spaces, the land and sea but are held in intangible practises such as music, art, poetry and theatre. We would like to advance our work on Cultural Distinctiveness by undertaking a study of intangible culture in Cornwall with support from Historic England and The Arts Council; evolving the methods used for assessing cultural distinctiveness for our places and assets to apply to intangible cultural practises.

We would also like to explore how the community groups who dedicate their time to keeping our cultural practises alive can be recognised, valued and supported to access funding so that their importance to our culture and economy can be sustained and grown.

Our offer

We would like to offer a constructive atmosphere for dialogue about these important issues that are of concern nationally and locally as Cornwall and the UK seek to define their economic and social structures post Brexit. The Ertach Kernow Board, provides a space for exploratory conversations, the cultural distinctiveness study a new lens through which to consider management approaches' and some significant projects across Cornwall which provide examples of good practise that could be amplified with supportive policy and regulatory conditions.

Benefits

As the only location with a Devolution Deal concerning heritage we hope that this discussion would be of interest to colleagues as heritage management in the 21st century develops.



GROWING CULTURAL DISTINCTIVENESS

Context

Our Devolution Deal has resulted in the production of the Cultural Distinctiveness Study for Cornwall, which includes a definition of how the rich tapestry of distinct settlements makes up what we know Cornwall to be and many visitors come to experience each year.

Unlocking Barriers

Rationale for Change

High quality development in Cornwall is essential for our USP to be maintained. Thus it is critical that the ability for us to ensure new settlements, developments; extensions, remodelling or retrofitting of our built spaces are sufficiently respectful and enhance our local and cultural distinctness. By setting out clear methods and standards for our professional community engaged in development to follow we can assure our wider community that the development needed will enhance the distinctiveness of Cornwall rather than detract from it, and in doing will de-risk some sections of the investment and planning process.

We have an up-to-date Local Plan with a strong commitment to quality of design and heritage and are committed to maintaining and implementing a strong plan-led approach. We want new development which maintains and importantly enhances the 'cultural distinctiveness' of our places. Equally the recognition of the role of old and new places in creating the lived experience of Cornwall, through the sense of place and ongoing cultural traditions and practises are essential for Cornwall to thrive in the 21st Century.

Our ask

We request a discussion with MHCLG as policy makers and the associated activities of the Planning Inspectorate to discuss how we can work together to ensure the quality of new development is given significant weight in the planning process and particularly at appeal.

Our offer

The partnership work undertaken between Cornwall Council and Historic England on Cultural Distinctiveness has resulted in a new approach to the consideration and consequent management of places with rich heritage such as Cornwall. Our place-making approach which is engaging our communities closely provides the local mechanisms to take the method from theory into practise, we need our efforts to be met and matched at a national level.

Benefits

Both Cornwall's and ultimately the UK's USP could be enhanced through the delivery of high quality development and best practise management of our heritage – a UK global economic asset. Ensuring that new settlements and development are meeting clear locally defined quality standards will reduce the negotiation and thus cost required in the planning process and produce contemporary new settlements, which communities in the future will proudly recognise as 'Cornish'.