

Bewnans Kernow

(The Partnership of 65 Cornish Cultural Organisations)

Response to Planning Future Cornwall, Cornwall Local Plan

Strategic Policies 2010-2013 Pre-Submission Document

Cornwall is known to be a special place, and it is special for many reasons. However, it is unique for one key reason, and this is because it is the traditional homeland of the indigenous Cornish people. As a result of this Cornwall has many advantages not shared by the English counties, including a highly developed identity, strong community cohesion, a powerfully distinctive culture, additional economic drivers, international contacts and a rich and unique history.

The Cornish do not exist as an identifiable and coherent group anywhere else in the world and now form a very large minority in Cornwall, having previously been a majority. None of the English counties have a similar situation with regard to an indigenous minority. Consequently, Cornwall has a unique demographic environment which entails a special care and responsibility for maintaining the homeland and the future of this ethnic group in a sustainable fashion.

Cornwall Council is currently, and for the first time, at a point where it can incorporate the Cornish into a major strategic plan.

- In terms of policy, the Corporate Equality and Diversity Framework (2010) underpins Cornwall Council's sensitivity to 'the unique heritage and culture of Cornwall and to those people in our Community who describe their origin as Cornish'. The implementation of this policy is currently being worked on by the Equality and Diversity Lead Officer.
- At the same time, Cornwall Council's Assistant Head of Strategy, Localism and Communications is developing a staged approach in progressing a clearly defined strategy for the Cornish. Stage 1 is the process of identifying and cataloguing what the Council is currently doing in terms of promoting Cornish identity, distinctiveness and culture as a baseline for subsequent developments.
- The Member Champion for Equalities is keen to see this area advanced swiftly and endorses the Bewnans Kernow recommendations contained in this paper.
- The Chairman of the Planning Policy Advisory Committee is similarly fully supportive and is content the following recommendations accord with the remit of the Local Plan.

It is recommended that Cornwall Council in seeking to secure a sustainable future for the Cornish as well as in providing measures to mitigate against the aspects of the Local Plan which will adversely impact the Cornish as a people includes within the Local Plan:

Policy

Proposals should be sensitive to the impact on those people in our Community who describe their origin as Cornish, and on Cornish culture. New development proposals must show best solution in maintaining Cornwall's current ethno-demographic balance, in retaining a sustained and sustainable population of people who describe themselves as having Cornish identity/origin, in supporting the development of Cornish culture and in protecting Cornish heritage.

This may be a stand alone Policy or may be included in eg Policy 12, Policy 24 or Policy 17 (and additionally referenced in Policy 2).

The Cornish and the Local Plan

Government and Cornwall

- The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills in expressing satisfaction that Cornwall now operates much more efficiently as a unit gives an indication that Government is unlikely to object if further consolidation is effected through greater recognition and protection by Cornwall Council for the Cornish.
- The other indigenous groups within Britain (Scots, Welsh, Manx, Channel Islanders, the Irish in Northern Ireland) all live within the jurisdictions of devolved governments. This being said, the Cornish are not less 'valid' than the other groups and Cornwall Council must provide, through its Local Plan process, for a sustainable future for the Cornish and not plan to alter the balance of the population by reducing the percentage of residents in Cornwall who are Cornish in a way that would discriminate against, and disadvantage the Cornish as a people.

In-Migration and its Impact on the Cornish

- As a result of high in-migration, the Cornish are now a minority group within Cornwall, having previously been in the majority until the 1990s.
- The 1951 Census showed the proportion of Cornish-born in the population was around 75 per cent.
- Net in-migration to Cornwall began in the early 1960s.
- 1982/83 - the last relevant, properly conducted survey (Perry et al) in seven wards found 57 per cent were Cornish born and 43 per cent in-migrants.
- Cornwall's population has grown by over 197,000 over the last 50 years (1961-2011). 'All of this rise is explained by movement to Cornwall from other regions of the UK and two thirds of migrants come to Cornwall from south east England.' ('Population change in Cornwall since 1801' Dr Bernard Deacon).
- The 1983 survey implies a fall from around 70-75 per cent at the time of the 1951 Census to 55-60 per cent. As net in-migration did not begin until the early 1960s this had occurred in little more than 20 years, a drop of around 15 percentage points at a time when the population rose by 22 per cent. This in turn might suggest that for every one per cent rise in the population the proportion of native Cornish falls by around 0.7 per cent. Using this as a base we could calculate the proportion of native Cornish in the population in 2012 to have fallen by maybe another 17 per cent, to be as low as 40 per cent. ('The land's end: The Great Sale of Cornwall' Dr Bernard Deacon)
- In-migration to Cornwall since 1960 has had a strongly adverse influence on the ability of the indigenous Cornish people to maintain a sustained and sustainable population.
- Further in-migration to Cornwall in commensurate or increased numbers, in comparison to the last 50 years, will increasingly marginalise the Cornish within Cornwall including in political, social, cultural and economic spheres and limit the ability of the indigenous population to influence these spheres.
- The Cornwall Council Local Plan which plans for a minimum of 42,250 new houses will

facilitate in-migration, and will accommodate people moving into Cornwall. It is estimated that the equivalent of 80% of the 42,250 new houses will be taken by those moving to Cornwall from outside.

Equalities and the Cornish

The Cornish are supported by an established legislative and policy framework.

- Under the Equality Act 2010, the Cornish, as a traditional, indigenous British minority and a distinct ethnic group, have the protected characteristic of "Race", specifically because of their 'ethnic and national origins'.
- The Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities is recognised by Cornwall Council as an instrument which applies to the Cornish and endorsed by Cornwall County Council's leadership in 2007 and re-affirmed in 2011. Article 16 of the Framework Convention states that 'All parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities'.
- Cornwall Council Corporate Equality and Diversity Framework was endorsed and adopted by the Cornwall Council Cabinet in April 2010. It states:
 - In developing the framework and the approach, it is essential that the Council is sensitive to the unique heritage and culture of Cornwall and to those people in our Community who describe their origin as Cornish. In practice this will include:
 - Supporting the continued use and promotion of the Cornish Language
 - Ensuring that we include Cornish in any monitoring and analysis of our population
 - Making sure we actively support and develop Cornish heritage and culture
 - Being sensitive to the impact of the above in any strategies, policies, functions and services we develop and implement.

Please refer to the Bewnans Kernow Preliminary Report on the Cornwall Council Core Strategy Preferred Approach Equality Impact Assessment for additional details:
<http://cornwallinformation.co.uk/BKreport.pdf>

Academic Analysis: Dr Bernard Deacon

'The difficulties of inducting a new population into awareness and respect for the unique heritage of the place they have chosen to reside in will become ever more difficult if Cornwall becomes less distinctively 'Cornish'. Both less Cornish in terms of the environment around us; supermarkets, housing estates and industrial units tend to look the same whether they're in Cornwall, Canterbury or Caithness. And less 'Cornish' in terms of its society. The decline in the proportion of native Cornish has to be halted and reversed – and within the next generation if we are to have any chance of retaining a Cornwall that is still in some way recognisably Cornish. If we allow the Cornish to become an interesting historical relic, a minority group consigned to the museum shelves and the local histories, then we wittingly or unwittingly throw away our link to two thousand years of the past and give up a critical weapon in the struggle to obtain the right to make our own decisions about what sort of Cornwall we want here – in Cornwall.'

Political Analysis: Councillor Bert Biscoe

'Cornwall has experienced a very high level of inward migration in the past generation. This has caused many tensions, not least a very strong sense of dispossession amongst Cornish people, not of property (which they have sold and bought as much as anyone) but of context, of places, of quietness, of innocence, or inherited lore, artefacts and customs which are dismissed, removed or derided by people and institutions who choose to not inform themselves or to consider indigenous feelings or reactions before taking actions – this can be as simple as demanding provision of a street-light to removing trees and rook colonies, to denying resources to traditional feasts and happenings, to imposing cosmopolitan dismissal of philosophy, ethics and customs by force majeure – 'there's more of us than of you'.

For the Cornish indigenous minority experiencing population increase, the experience of absorption, challenge, dispossession, experience of different social behaviours and assumptions are all challenging and affect confidence, self esteem and socio-economic performance - this is a key factor for which careful and effective strategies have never been considered and are in urgent need of being so.'

The Local Plan

Bewnans Kernow would like to see Cornwall Council determine, through its Local Plan, a more clearly articulated direction for Cornwall until 2030, to take a much firmer position in defending the interests of Cornwall against Government legislation that is not appropriate for Cornwall, to provide for stronger protection for Cornwall's traditional, undeveloped environment and to have a much greater focus on job creation as the driver behind this Plan.

However, it is the quantity of new houses that Bewnans Kernow is most concerned about and we urge Cornwall Council to reduce the number of houses planned and to make the case to the Secretary of State to this effect. Population increase through in-migration will, on past evidence, have a negative impact on the ability of Cornwall's indigenous Cornish population to flourish as a sustained and sustainable population. There is a strong likelihood in-migration to Cornwall will increasingly marginalise the Cornish within Cornwall and will limit the ability of Cornwall's indigenous population to influence political, social, cultural and economic spheres. Concurrently, Bewnans Kernow is gravely concerned that Cornish culture which is developing confidently as a source of distinctiveness, of community cohesion and as an economic driver will meet increasing challenge through lack of awareness or respect and will lose the momentum it has today.

Bewnans Kernow recommends and strongly requests Cornwall Council include the Policy as shown above, and repeated below, within the Local Plan to embed the Council's current and planned policies and work regarding the Cornish more evidently within the Local Plan and to more safely secure a future for the indigenous Cornish:

Policy

Proposals should be sensitive to the impact on those people in our Community who describe their origin as Cornish, and on Cornish culture. New development proposals must show best solution in maintaining Cornwall's current ethno-demographic balance, in retaining a sustained and sustainable population of people who describe themselves as having Cornish identity/origin, in supporting the development of Cornish culture and in protecting Cornish heritage.