

2022

Voices within Poverty Event

Challenge Poverty Week, Cornwall

'You Still Can't Eat the View' Conference

October 2022



*A Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum Project
with End Hunger Cornwall*





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Introduction

Introduction from Andrew Howell, End Hunger Cornwall

One hundred and eighty years ago, Cornwall was the richest place on planet Earth. We were the centre of industry with our mining and engineering and yet, the vast majority of our residents were poor. A few rich investors and landowners owned everything but the working man was very largely in poverty, although it looked a little different back then. Perhaps the generational gap is too much of a comparison now, but even then the poor had a roof over their heads and food in their belly's. There was a degree of dignity in their lives. Moreso, it was the wealthy landowners and business owners that often made sure that the basic needs were met.



Fast forward to the modern times.

We are constantly told how great our nation is. We hosted the G7 conference last year and Cornwall was showcased to the world. Turn on a TV any night of the week and without fail you will be met with beautiful and amazing Cornwall being portrayed in all of its romantic and visual glory and yet, that is so far from the reality for a rapidly growing percentage of our population.

Three years ago we hosted a conference in Camborne entitled 'You can't eat the view'. It was a great day where solution based discussion led to informed debate and more of a realisation to the rest of the Country that Cornwall wasn't quite being portrayed in its 'actual' light...

Fast forward three years with all of the hideous effects of the pandemic, national and international energy profiteering, greed in the money markets and our beautiful, amazing Cornwall has a heartbeat that now pumps to the rhythm, not of beam engines or mining drills, but of foodbanks, homelessness, in-work poverty, hungry families and all of the knock on effects that these awful daily realities bring.

Challenge Poverty Week 2022 has enabled us to highlight our issues on the national stage. It has provided a platform for people in power and decision makers to talk with people living the reality of modern day poverty. Our opening conference 'Voices within Poverty' led to Challenge Poverty Week, which all fed into our nationally significant conference 'You still can't eat the view'.

This report is a fantastic document which, although it outlines our many problems, also does what Cornwall does best in offering a great snapshot of our community; a realisation of all of the amazing people doing great things every day to help and, most importantly, some challenges and solution based ideas from which to continue this debate in a pragmatic, positive and persistent way.

It is an honour to continue championing Cornwall on the national stage and I thank each and every one of you for all that you do in helping us to Challenge Poverty - giving people the chance to have the dignity, agency and power that they so deserve once again.



'You still can't eat the view'



Challenge Poverty Week 2022 and Poverty Hearing 1997

When will we ever learn?

Andrew Yates, Chair of Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum, writes:

As Winter 2022 approaches many people across Cornwall are filled with anxiety as they see the sharp rises in the daily costs of living with the increases in food prices and the impact of the raising of the energy cap. This results in:

- More demands for the services of our Foodbanks and local Community Larders.
- Horror stories of Travelodges being the only available emergency accommodation for families evicted under Section 21 orders
- Debt Advice agencies so over stretched they do not have the capacity to help all in need.

The 2022 Challenge Poverty Week in October celebrated the amazing work that is going on across Cornwall in supporting those who are struggling, as well as trying to understand the reasons for this poverty and so co-create solutions. Sadly this is not a new situation for Cornwall. In 1997 a group of people from wide backgrounds became very concerned about the severe poverty in Cornwall then and especially that so much of it was hidden. They held a Poverty Hearing to draw attention to the crisis as they saw it unfolding in their time. This 25th Anniversary is not a cause for celebration. We cannot celebrate the fact that so many people in Cornwall are forced to choose between eating or heating. But we can give thanks for the huge amount of community work that the 1997 Hearing inspired and the vast of amount of money that has been given to support community projects.

1997 Poverty Hearing

In a bid to raise more awareness of this issue a Poverty Hearing was held at St Austell College. One of the key people in the organising group was Allan Chesney and this is how he described the event.

"The fundamental design of the Poverty Hearing provided a platform for those within the community who were struggling with poverty and deprivation to give a detailed account of how poverty was having an effect on their lives and the lives of their families. The event itself attracted some 500 people from a wide variety of life, ranging from individuals struggling on low income, students, pensions, TUC representatives, Local and County Councillors, business leaders, clergy and charity workers.

A debt of gratitude is owed to the dozen people who stood up in front of over 200 people to tell their story, many of whom had never done anything similar to this in their lives. There was a single parent mum who had a severely handicapped son living on benefits; an unemployed young man who was finding it difficult to find work in the county of his birth and was being hounded by the DSS to 'get a non-existent job'; a pensioner finding it difficult to make ends meet and a lady whose business had closed down and because she had been self employed was denied any form of benefit. They provided delegates with a meaningful description of what it was like to be living a life of poverty in the county of Cornwall."

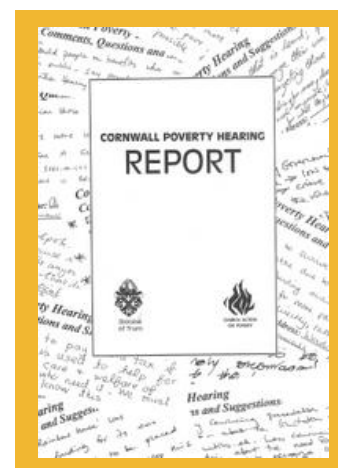
Comments by those attending included ...***'What I have heard today has made this one of the most moving days of my life. It's obvious that our exchequer system is failing so many and something needs to be done to rectify it.'***

And ...***'what people in these circumstances needed was a "hand up, not a hand out". People needed to be given every opportunity to help themselves'***

The response was phenomenal. Almost all delegates responded positively and in general the conclusion was that two main things had to be provided.

The first being, "That people in Cornwall needed an independent voice to continue expressing their concerns relating to poverty and deprivation within the county."

The second thing that was needed was "access to independent funding that would give individuals and community groups the opportunity to help themselves."



As a result two new organisations were established for Cornwall that would reflect the wishes of those attending the Poverty Hearing. The first was **'The Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum'** (CIPF) and the second was **'The Cornwall Independent Trust Fund'** (CITF).



Challenge Poverty Week 2022 and Poverty Hearing 1997

1997 Poverty Hearing (continued)

The CIPF continued to hold Poverty Hearings and to be the voice of those who faced social exclusion. More recently it has held a Citizens Panel on Housing Issues; produced a wider ranging document A Fair and Just Future for Cornwall and A Community Manifesto. As well as promoting Challenge Poverty Week in October along with its original partner Church Action on Poverty.

In 2003 the CITF changed became the Cornwall Community Foundation with Allan Chesney as its first Chief Executive.

Bishop Graham James chaired the 1997 Poverty Hearing and this is his reflection

Two things stand out for me from that event. The first was how our main contributors took their chance and showed an astonishing capacity for effective public speaking. One of them said what hard work it was to be poor and unemployed. She said something like, "You spend a massive amount of time trying both to get a job and not to spend money, and it's harder work than going to a job. It's really hard work." That struck home.

Secondly, there was a good deal of graciousness in the final brief responses from the "bosses" and I think they'd never experienced anything like it.

Housing Issue

One of those who attended spoke about the vulnerability of housing. The speaker was having to leave tied accommodation and they were very anxious about the isolation and lack of social contact that was going to impact on them from having to move home. This situation is being repeated in 2022. One of the speakers at the 'Voices Within Poverty' event told how she was evicted under Section 21 provision and housed in emergency temporary accommodation. The children can suddenly find themselves over 15 miles away from their school and their parents having much further to travel to their place of work with increased costs for travel.

Church Involvement

Another also recalls how involved the church was at both organising the event and in being central to the way that the momentum from the hearing was carried forward. She hopes that 25 years on that the church remains a key innovator of such transformational work.

The following few words give an idea of what I hope came across on the day. "The feel good factor continues to elude West Cornwall. We still see redundancy, repossession and debt on a far too frequent basis. Negative equity benefit cuts and low wages all contribute, but the overriding necessity is still - jobs for the people!"

Citizens Advice Bureau - Kerrier

John Ede chairs the Liskeard and Looe Foodbank

John's memory of the 1997 event was of a drama presentation. One of the actors had very large hands and used these in the performance to highlight Cornish industries such as fishing ...mining ... farming which provided so much employment across Cornwall but which were now under great threat. A situation summed up very well in the song written by Roger Bryant 'inspired' by graffiti written on South Crofty mine

Well Cornish lads are fishermen,
And Cornish lads are miners too,
But when the fish and tin are gone,
What are the Cornish boys to do?

Tamas Haydu the Chief Executive of Cornwall Community Foundation writes

In 1999 a group of supporters set up the Cornwall Independent Trust, after identifying the need to give those struggling in the community a voice and to establish an independent source of funding for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. In 2003 the Fund became the Cornwall Community Foundation (CCF) continuing this work to address disadvantage and build strong, resilient communities. CCF has awarded £15m to the community over the last 19 years, over 6000 local projects have benefited in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Unfortunately, the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated existing issues of rural isolation, poverty and lack of services and opportunities. Our communities need more help than ever and the CCF continue to support grassroots, volunteer-led community projects and charities who are making a positive impact in their area, helping to overcome these challenges of disadvantage, exclusion and poverty for all ages. The CCF has the expertise and local knowledge to help donors support the local causes and charities they care about, enabling them to make an impact through their giving.

www.cornwallcommunityfoundation.com

Why are there more people living in Poverty in the UK in the 1990's than there were in the late 1970's? Why has this scenario taken place amid a context of huge increases in income and wealth for some sections of society whilst others have got an ever decreasing slice of the cake? We must demand a social as well as an economic account of what is happening in our country. A poverty hearing is a good place to start. **Church Action on Poverty**



Voices within Poverty Event - October 4th 2022

The purpose of the event was to demonstrate why political, business and social realms must collaborate to address the causes of poverty in Cornwall.



The Cornish Context

Earlier this year Simon Fann from Truro Foodbank was interviewed about low income impact in Cornwall by the national research 'think-tank' Autonomy. The published report on whether Universal Basic Income could work in Cornwall is called "A Basic Income for Cornwall" and can be downloaded here:

<https://autonomy.work/portfolio/basic-income-cornwall/>

Here are some key findings from that report:

Cornwall is the second poorest region in Northern Europe and has high rates of child, fuel, food and housing poverty compared to the national average. According to official government figures, 17 of Cornwall's districts rank among the UK's 10% most deprived in the country.

Fuel Poverty:

There are also significant disparities when looking at the cost of heating between Cornwall and the rest of the UK. The cost of heating an average Cornish home is estimated to be about 20% higher than average homes in the rest of England. As such, Cornwall is one of the most severely affected regions with over 29,123 homes or 11.5% of all households living in fuel poverty.

Child Poverty:

A child in the UK is considered to be living in poverty if they live in a household whose income is 60% below the average income in a given year. Child poverty rates in Cornwall are an area of concern with regions including North Cornwall and St Ives recording 37% and 34% respectively. These rates are significantly higher than the UK average of 28.3%. Therefore, a significantly higher proportion of children in Cornwall face disadvantages in health, cognitive development and education than the rest of the UK.

Food Insecurity:

13% of the average Cornish household weekly budget is spent on food, a figure which is also expected to rise. Food insecurity is also evidenced in children, with 36% of children in Cornwall having food sourced from a foodbank during the pandemic. As such, food banks are extremely important charities in Cornwall, with local dependency on food banks increasing annually.

Income Inequality:

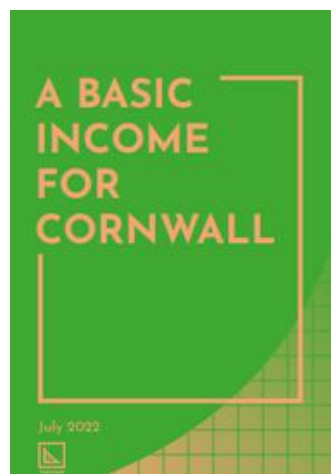
Cornwall workers receive £11.85 an hour compared to £15.17 for the national average. As a result, 13% of Cornish residents were income deprived in 2019. In the most deprived neighbourhood, 43.5% of people are estimated to be income deprived.

Housing Inequality:

In 2019, Cornwall had the highest number of people impacted by homelessness, however, simultaneously, increasing numbers of wealthy families were buying holiday homes or moving down to Cornwall increasing house prices by 10%, causing a housing crisis in Cornwall.

Transportation:

Many individuals living in rural areas of Cornwall face poor public transport options and expensive bus and rail tickets, which increases the cost of living and makes it harder to access other opportunities. A prevalent issue within Cornwall is the high levels of isolation, with 47% of Cornwall's residents living in settlements of fewer than 3000 people. Rural isolation comes from not having access to a car and being reliant on public transport, with only 82.7% of Cornish homes having access to a private vehicle."



Autonomy's conclusions included:

- A basic income at the level of a living wage could cut child poverty in Cornwall by 92% and substantially reduce inequality
- An introductory basic income at a relatively low cost could still almost halve poverty in Cornwall.
- A basic income would help Cornish residents pay rent without having to work longer hours, preventing issues like child care from worsening whilst also alleviating other social issues like mental health and homelessness.

Voices within Poverty Event - October 4th 2022

Some key quotes from Voices within Poverty speakers:

Event opening by **Mayor of Truro, Steven Webb:**

"When I moved to Truro, 9 years old, with my sister and mum. We were homeless and given a room in a refuge. At that point we had very little, and remember eating out of saucepan the 3 of us cold rice pudding. I never realised the dire situation, to a 9 year old it was exciting and felt like camping. My mum, something substantially different. It's interesting to replay the story from different voices, as we don't all experience the same situation from the same perspective."

Cllrs Michael Bunney & Karen Glasson



How Cornwall Councillors can assist constituents concerned about income or poverty:



David Monciardini

David is from University of Exeter Business School introduced the Cornwall Food Policy Pact (CFPP). It is aimed at scoping a county-wide collective commitment, engaging public authorities, business organisations, the third sector and academic institutions to co-design integrated regional food policies into measurable and long-term progress toward sustainable food systems. Earlier in 2022 his team had undertaken a review using interviews and archival research national and international best practices including the work in Milan whose citywide food recovery policy that redirected surplus food to charities and food banks won an Earthshot prize. In 2023 the plan is to establish the CFPP engaging local stakeholders in Cornwall to develop a comprehensive set of recommended actions and indicators to monitor progress.

Dawn Rudgewick-Brown

As someone who has always worked hard Dawn Rudgewick-Brown never thought she would need to use a foodbank. When desperation forced her to turn to Truro Foodbank she was brave enough to speak about the impact of poverty, forced eviction and temporary accommodation on her and her children. Now she positively channels her experience into a Facebook group that seeks to provide information to other people facing the same circumstances. Dawn feels this information, and the impacts of not knowing it, should be more easily available. Hence she set up the Housing Crisis Support Group on Facebook. Since the CPW events Dawn reports that 40 people joined in just two days, asking what to do. She says at least 80% of the people who have joined her group are from Cornwall but the group is open to anyone in England to join.

Callum Horscroft & Mia Todorovic



Callum Horscroft

Callum was one of the young speakers on the day. Now in his early twenties Callum has volunteered in the stores at Truro Foodbank for four years. This experience has made him passionate about the need for young voices to be heard: "There needs to be a generational shift. Young people could feel disillusionment and apathy because of things like Tuition Fees, Climate Change, Minimum Wage for young people, Affordable Housing etc.. It is important we are involved in the solutions because poverty is not a choice."

Mia Todorovic

Mia is a Human Science undergraduate going into her second year at the University of Exeter. She's been working as a researcher for Truro Foodbank, looking into the indices of deprivation in Cornwall. She did not have a lot of experience with Non-Governmental Organisations but is grateful for the opportunity to become more aware on what is happening today not just in Cornwall but globally.

Voices within Poverty Event - October 4th 2022

One of the key issues raised at the event was the need to raise incomes



Malcolm Williams of The Institute of Cornish Studies' Social and Economic Research Unit

said "Low wages are also a serious issue. A full time worker in Cornwall and Isles of Scilly earns 84% of the national average weekly salary."

(Photo left Michael Bunny also spoke)

Patrick Langmaid, owner of Mother Ivey's Holiday Park (the first holiday in the UK to commit to being a 'real living wage employer'), supported the views quoted from **The Ethical Capitalist** by **Julian Richer**:

"If people are locked into poverty, and see opportunities concentrated in the hands of a small elite, the very real danger is that they will give up. Social inequality is bad for capitalism. For businesses to thrive we need people to be in secure jobs and decent homes, able to spend confidently. They should not be condemned to the low wage economy such as the one we have in the UK where foodbanks have become ever more necessary....."

Edward Chapman from the Federation of Small Businesses commended the Good Business Charter and encouraged businesses, charities and community groups to sign up:



Five of the 10 GBC commitments are about fair treatment of staff, including:

- Pay the Real Living Wage
- Fairer hours and contracts
- Employee wellbeing
- Transparency about tax

"The cost of living crisis summit" was held in September and a number of recommendations were taken forward to the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Leadership Board including:

Immediate 2022

- Income maximisation by improving communications and access to unclaimed pension credit and other benefit entitlements because customers either do not know about them or find them too hard to access.
- Income maximisation by addressing inappropriate deductions and reductions from Universal Credit.
- Promote and use contract and commissioning levers to increase the number of businesses with accreditation for Good Work Schemes e.g. Good Business Charter, Bcorp

Short term 2022-2025

Run basic income pilot across Cornwall. Not reducing benefits when earned income increases.

Medium term 2022-2025 and beyond

Test and trial the Real Living wage across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly



Voices within Poverty Event - October 4th 2022

Outcomes - "What one positive action can you take after today to help address a local poverty issue?"

Forty three commitments were made in response to the event:

1. Accredited Living Wage
2. Develop our mutual aid into a better organised system.
3. Find out for myself exactly what is available. Make a list of contacts and services available for quick response.
4. Promote income maximisation at our foodbank.
5. Check whether we are signed up to the LWF and if not make sure we sign up.
6. Contact local MP to raise awareness of our foodbank and the people we serve.
7. Continue to talk to foodbanks in Cornwall around how to engage with people coming to their doors in developing some of the upstream solutions to poverty in Cornwall.
8. Listen to the voices of lived experience.
9. Support with connecting and encourage collaboration.
10. To check my staff are utilising councillors and continuing to do so.
11. Gather more information about local foodbanks.
12. Spread the Good Business Charter/Real Living Wage benefits at networking events.
13. Cornwall Christmas Giving catalogue – make donation and telling people about it.
14. Look at the Community Manifesto and assess one that could be done.
15. Revisit and press real Living Wage in Cornwall and crucially the GBC.
16. Collate more info on support in the Redruth area.
17. Create more opportunities to offer support within the community.
18. Encourage local cafes to promote pay it forward.
19. Share information via social channels that can offer support such as 'good to go'.
20. Find out if our Town Council is signed up to the GBC?
21. Research further the CIPF and crisis fund.
22. Write to MPs and councillors and encourage others to do so via SM (social media?)
23. Investigate joining University of Exeter on writing a food policy.
24. Real Living Wage – press my CEO to address this.
25. Contact our local councillors and find out how they can help people in our community (contact Community Link Officer).
26. Ask if councillors can become more involved in the issues people are facing.
27. Ask them to create a one stop shop online/outreach/drop ins, so that people know where and how to access help.
28. Community Manifesto – something that I will look at for our foodbank area.
29. Contact my local councillor re Food Policy.
30. Access and read the Manifesto put forward by the CIPF.
31. I think I'm going to email my MP and point him to the stuff Patrick Langmaid was talking about.
32. Get connected.
33. Work at pack of contacts for clients.
34. Access the website for Cornish Giving Catalogue – read and contribute and share with others to support local communities.
35. Contact local councillors to ensure our participants are aware of how they can be contacted for support.
36. Contact the local council regarding support available.
37. Encourage local businesses to sign GBC.
38. Challenging anger into productivity.
39. To listen and understand individual's needs and do what I can to support their needs
40. Start volunteering and convince others to do so.
41. Engage further with the local councillors to be involved in local issues discussed by VCSE.
42. Promote Christmas Giving Catalogue.
43. Bring the churches in Truro together to agree to challenge poverty.

Stop Press

Comment from Simon Fann, Manager, Truro Foodbank: "When I started at Truro Foodbank we gave out 33 tonnes of food a year, feeding 2400 people. In 2022 we gave out 75 tonnes of food (approx 45,000 meals) to nearly 5,000 people. That is the rate of increase. That is why Challenge Poverty Week awareness is so essential and why change needs to happen through action. That is why the "one positive thing" is so crucial.

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes

The Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum in partnership with End Hunger Corner and with support from Church Action on Poverty, organised and promoted Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall 2022.

We asked organisations and projects working to address poverty to invite local leaders to come and visit them to highlight the excellent work they do but also to give insights into the reasons why so many people within our communities are in poverty.

The leaders were Councillors, Church leaders, M.P.'s and decision makers from statutory and voluntary organisations. This awareness raising is vital so that we can all work together to solve the problem of poverty.

Through our support from Church Action on Poverty we are able to give Cornwall a voice at the centre of the national debate.

Thirty four projects and organisations participated in this year's Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall. Thanks to all who took part in making a positive change and challenging poverty.

Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Lighthouse Community Centre

Clare Bevan and David Wood (above) from the Lighthouse Community Centre are pictured with Cllr Simon Cassidy Mayor of Liskeard and Cornwall Councillor Nick Craker. The Centre provides many activities and clubs as well as tackling poverty through supporting some of the most vulnerable with their Food Club, Winter Support Café, Community Drop-In days, Children's Holiday lunch Club, One to One Support and Health & Wellbeing groups"



Remake: Cornwall Community Larder Archdeacon Kelly Betteridge.

Inspiring morning with Remake: Cornwall Community Larder. Thanks to all of the fabulous volunteers for the excellent work you do offering support and keeping food out of landfill.

Bugle Library of Things

Louise Wood took the opportunity to visit Bugle Internet of Things today to find out about what that little shop with the green sign, that she's driven past so many times actually does. The answer is the little shop does a lot! It doesn't take long to realise it's a place full of warmth, you can pull up a chair and have a chat whilst at the same time accessing the community larder and other items. Jo clearly has a tenacity for problem solving and doing the best she can for anyone who needs some help. I was really grateful for all the people who shared their stories with me, it's really valuable to me to understand better the impacts of the current cost of living increases are having on people. I left reflecting that a little here is going a long way, and that we need to find ways to support grass roots organisations keep going because they are stacked full of inspirational people doing the best they can for their communities.



Derek Thomas MP

'The pressure on household finances is stark which is why I invited a number of local organisations engaged in offering support, advice and fair to Saturday's Cost of Living Fair which I co-hosted with Transformation Cornwall and Discovery Church. This immediate help is vital as is the need to create a fair society where people can feel confident and hopeful for the future which is something I feel personally committed to.'

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes.
Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Cornwall Community Foundation Grants Committee

Last year Cornwall Community Foundation (CFF) distributed £2,421,868 to 660 community projects all across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Our Cost of Living Crisis Fund grants to charities and community organisations who are facing increased demand due to the rising household costs, and continue to provide a vital lifeline to communities and individuals across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Cornwall has 17 council wards in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England and many people are facing a perfect storm of financial challenges. The effects are being felt in every corner of life and taking a toll on people's mental and physical health, personal and social development, educational attainment, relationships and family stability. The CCF is committed to helping our frontline organisations who help people in need.



Farm Cornwall

Farm Cornwall (above) offers supports in the form of sound, practical realistic and confidential advice to members of the agricultural community who are in financial difficulty. Financial and Debt Advice ; Help with Grant Funding ; Crisis Support ; Training ; Planning for the Future. Edward Richardson the Farm Business Adviser and Rural Outreach Worker can be contacted at 01736 367589 07776 667825 mail@farmcornwall.co.uk www.farmcornwall.co.uk

Transformation Cornwall

Supporting Faith Based Social Action projects across Cornwall. At the moment they are promoting the **Warm Spaces programme** and the **Donate the Rebate Campaign** in association with Cornwall Community Foundation. Also the Worrying About Money Leaflet, in association with IFAN, packed with financial advice and support and contact details of many support organisations. Anne Redelinghuys, Operations Director, can be contacted on 07492915531

Email anne@transformation-cornwall.org.uk
Web site www.transformation-cornwall.org.uk



Lizzie from Whole Again Communities (WAC)

WAC's motto is **Community Led, Community Fed** and offers opportunities to make great food, Learn new skills, Meet new people & Have fun! There is an Organic Garden , Cookery Workshops and a Repair Café. Lizzie can be contacted on 01736 369772 or email admin@wholeagaincommunities.co.uk



Discovery Church, Penzance

This winter Discovery Church on Morrab Road Penzance will be opening its doors to provide a warm space for anyone who is finding the cost of heating their own home difficult. It will be free to come along and enjoy the warm space.

Tea Coffee and cold drinks will be provided and a micro-wave if people want to heat up food. More information at info@discoverychurch.org.uk

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes. Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Rachel (above) from Community Energy Plus (CEP)
 CEP are Cornwall's energy advice charity and help householders in Cornwall stay warm and healthy in their homes. They offer useful information and resources to help you make the right choices for you and your home on Heating, Energy Advice, Insulation and Renewable Energy Freephone 0800 9541956 Email advice@cep.org.uk Web site www.cep.org.uk

Citizens Advice Cornwall

Citizens Advice Cornwall is an independent charity and member of the national Citizens Advice Service. The organisation exists to offer free, independent and confidential advice to everyone to help solve their lives - from consumer issues to problems at work and from benefit applications to debt relief and homelessness - they are here to help everyone regardless of race, class, religion, politics or sexual identity. Working with a team of more than a hundred dedicated, passionate and highly trained staff and volunteers, Citizens Advice has nine offices across the county and outreach centres. They are also in various Job Centres and Cornwall Council Family Hubs.



GOFA - Good Old Furniture Available

GOFA is a not-for-profit charity that recycles unwanted household/garage items and distributes them into the wider community within West Cornwall. This reduces items going to landfill which in turn, help the environment. Increasingly GOFA is providing range of donated household items at affordable prices to vulnerable people in the community, including those on low income. Contacts 01736 369847 www.gofa.org.uk Ellis Square, Voundervour Lane, Penzance, TR18 4UH.



Penzance Churches Together Foodbank

The Mayor of Penzance and Jaqui from Penzance Churches Together Foodbank. The Foodbank provides a box of food containing enough food for 7 days (3 meals a day), for people in financial crisis. People can access this service on production of a voucher which has been issued by agencies such as social services, G.Ps, health workers, schools, YMCA, CAB and Job Centre Plus. Telephone 07950 159841 Website: <https://churchestogetherinpenzance.co.uk/project/food-bank/>

Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) and Housing and Homeless Alliance

The CVSF support a Housing and Homelessness Alliance that brings together a range of VCSE organisations. The cost-of-living crisis and shortage of affordable housing that leads to people being at risk and actually being homeless, are core regular topics the group collaborate around. They aim to improve services to the residents of Cornwall at risk of homelessness and the issues that lead to them being exposed to that situation with a trauma informed approach.

Truro Foodbank

Simon Fann, Truro Foodbank Manager is a leading voice in challenging poverty, coordinating conferences and events championing a decent level of income for all.

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes.
Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Penzance Churches Together Breakfast Project

Penzance Churches Breakfast project offers a cooked breakfast to rough sleepers and those who are vulnerably housed at the Breadline Centre. Project Co/ordinator Ivor and a rota of volunteers can sometimes serve 16 people in a morning session. Just as important is the opportunity they offer to their visitors is an introduction to the St Petroc's staff and the Health for Homeless team.

The Chaos Group

Councillor Linda Taylor, leader of Cornwall Council met with The Chaos Group earlier in the week. There was great discussion about the importance of involving the voluntary sector in discussions around the ongoing cost of living issues.



Cllr Linda Taylor with Zion MacCarthy and CEO Babs Rounsvell of Chaos. "It was a privilege to visit Chaos, to meet some of the inspiring people involved and see first-hand the incredible work they do"



Cornwall Children, Young People and Families Alliance (above)

The Children, Young People & Families Alliance brings together a broad range of small and large groups, charities and organisations working in Cornwall to support young people, children & their families. Alliance members work across the sector delivering services including youth work, mental health services, arts, music, sport, care leaver support, early years help, young parents and traveller families, to mention a few. As well as providing a network and platform for Voluntary, Community or Civil Society Enterprise (VCSE) colleagues to come together, the alliance provides a point of contact and communication between the VCSE and colleagues in the statutory and public sectors. For more information contact: Sonya O'Hea, VCSE Engagement Officer, Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum sonya.ohea@cornwallvsf.org
Tel: 07501 533 043 www.cornwallvsf.org/



Cornwall Community Foundation (above)

Cllr Linda Taylor meeting Tamas from Cornwall Community Foundation and Andrew Howell from End Hunger Cornwall. "It is vital that organisations across Cornwall continue to work together, sharing knowledge, experience and resource, to help people through the winter and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis."

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes. Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Citizens Advice Cornwall, Penzance

The Citizens Advice Cornwall Penzance team with Councillor Jim McKenna (Cornwall Council). The team had the opportunity to discuss the latest situation with Jim and highlight the major trends and challenges people in the area are facing. Wailim Wong, Communications Officer, Citizens Advice Cornwall, 07711-786688



The Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum (CVSF) Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change (CN4C)

The CVSF team met at Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change at The Elms Redruth. CN4C are doing amazing work from The Elms in Redruth and The Bank in St Austell to provide a safe, warm space for people to visit and talk to someone who will listen about cost-of-living related issues and signpost people to an extensive range of support on offer.



No One Goes Hungry in Probus

The No One Goes Hungry volunteers were pleased to be able to meet Cllr Taylor and to show her our community larder and explain how we are working with local businesses, voluntary organisations and the Truro foodbank to support those in our rural area experiencing food poverty.



Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum (CIPF)

Paul Green of the CIPF in good conversation with Cllr Jane Kirkham who attended the launch of the Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue. The Catalogue supports 20 charities working hard to support those in poverty across Cornwall every year.



BF Adventure

BF Adventure supports Challenge Poverty Week and we see first hand the struggles that Cornwall's families and young people are facing.

Fairwinds - The Gershie Project

The launch of 'Fairwinds' in Falmouth last night (formerly Huddle). Great people doing great things with the incredibly supportive Cllr Jayne Kirkam in attendance.



Glynn Roberts is part of the team at Gershie based at Fairwinds in Falmouth who offer welcome drinks and soup to those needing sustenance and company. On hand are people ready to listen as people affected by poverty often value someone to share their story with. With special thanks to Stones the Bakers for donation of wonderful bread.

Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall, October 2022

Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes. Organisations and projects participating in the week:



Newquay Community Orchard

Newquay Councillor Liz Wright visited Newquay Community Orchard today and chatted with staff and volunteers about the great work they do as a community hub, providing valuable knowledge around horticulture and sustainable, healthy food production.



Helston - Mustard Seed

David Williams, Development Manager of Mustard Seed in Helston, in receipt of two backpack beds from Revd Andrew Yates, (Chair of Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum) commented, "These will be very useful, with the increase in fuel and housing costs as well as the cut to Universal Credit uplift we are expecting to see more homeless people approaching us for support. The beds could turn out to be life savers."



St Petros

St Petros CEO Henry Meacock and Chair of the Board Margie Ricardo. Challenge Poverty Week is a chance to reflect and advocate for change in a system that is putting people under unrelenting pressure.

Truro Homeless Action Group

Bert Biscoe, Town Councillor and one of the Deputy Lieutenants of Cornwall, visited Truro Homeless Action Group's morning breakfast club for the homeless and vulnerable as part of Challenge Poverty Week. Bert came to look at the service that's provided for clients, at a church hall in Truro, every day of the year. Clients are able to have a full cooked English breakfast every morning served to them by a number of volunteers. They can also have a Christmas Day and Boxing Day lunch. Additionally, clothes, toiletries and other practical useful items are also available.

Homestart Kernow.

This week our Pondhu group have been involved in the End Hunger Cornwall Challenge Poverty Week. They met up with the amazing Sandra Heyward from the Gover Community Larder and were joined by James Mustoe the St Austell Bay's Councillor.



Coastline Housing

Coastline Housing have been supporting Challenge Poverty Week this week pictured here at Heartlands Cornwall, in the heart of one of Europe's most deprived areas. Coastline continue to build communities around affordable social housing whilst helping residents with a number of support programmes.



'You still can't eat the view' Conference - October 21st 2022

The individuals and voluntary sector organisations have come together to tell their stories to take positive action.

There were many stories of poverty in Cornwall, where people faced the terrible choice between To Eat or To Heat, as well as stories regarding homelessness, including street homeless, and child poverty.

Also presented at the conference were a range of stories using poetry and song, as well as many presentations from organisations and projects helping people deal with the cost of living crisis and the housing crisis. Cornwall Council, Universities and businesses also presented a range of initiatives to help address the issue of poverty. Below are the edited versions of our main speaker's presentations:



Bishop Hugh Nelson

Bishop Hugh is Bishop of St Germans in the Diocese of Truro. He knows that healthy local communities, in which everyone has a place and a voice, are crucial to a good society and wants to see the church at the heart of that work.

Bishop Hugh is involved with St Petrocs who have recently used a photographic exhibition to raise awareness about street homeless and also with Transformation Cornwall who are collecting some or all of the £400 government rebates from people who may wish to help others. This is being administered through the Cornwall Community Foundation.

Bishop Hugh was moved by the stories that he had heard and also thanked all those who are undertaking such wonderful work. The challenge is that most people are being profoundly affected, including many voluntary sector organisations.

Some advice for difficult times is that there are others (to help) and not just yourself and that we also need strong foundations to work from.

Simon Fann

Simon has been the Manager at Truro Foodbank since July 2019. The number of people fed, and therefore the amount of food distributed, at Truro Foodbank has nearly doubled since then. Simon believes it is not enough to be able to give out more and more food; all organisations in Cornwall (business, political and social) need to commit to make inroads into the mass of reasons causing poverty. All organisations need to collaborate on actions. This is why we have Good Business Charter accreditation and support initiatives like the Cornwall Food Policy Pact.

Simon Fann (continued)

Simon has also been responsible for putting together an event on the 4th of October titled Voices within Poverty and has also been involved in both the Challenge Poverty Week 2021 and 2022, and has made recommendation to move towards positive change. Some information from the Voices within Poverty event has been included in this report.

Simon also stated that we all need to take a positive action to help address poverty.

Edward Chapman

Edward trained as a Chartered Accountant and specialised in the audit of Trade Unions and Charities. Then he joined the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB). More recently he became one of the Area Leaders for Cornwall, and elected position representing members in the county. Edward has a passion for creating a fairer and more equal world.



Edward has recently undertaken some research that shows that four out of five people today who are in poverty, will remain in poverty in ten years time. We need a system change that helps people move out of poverty and often small businesses can make some of the changes that are needed. Such as; providing the real living wage, caring about people's wellbeing and proving flexible working and other positive actions.

'You still can't eat the view' Conference - October 21st 2022

Speaker presentations (continued)

Andrew Yates

Andrew Yates is the Chair of Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum (CIPF) which was formed 25 years ago following the first Poverty Hearing to be held in Cornwall. It tries to act as a voice for those with the lived experience of poverty and social exclusion because it believes that through their experience they are the best people in a position to develop solutions. CIPF also tries to bring about change by producing reports. Most recently this has included a Citizens Panel on Housing and Homelessness, You Can't Eat the View, A Community Manifesto for Cornwall, Challenge Poverty week 2021 and A Fair and Just Future for Cornwall. All available at www.cornwallindependentpovertyforum.com

Do look out for the 2022 CIPF Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue which supports 20 charities and the Cornish foodbanks who are in even greater need of your backing this year.

The CIPF and End Hunger Cornwall have worked in partnership to deliver this conference and also the Challenge Poverty Week 2022. Andrew, as part of the introduction to the conference, would like us all to focus on four things; To lament on what is happening, To celebrate the excellent work that is being done, To recommit by raising awareness and start new actions for change and To Partner with others to work together.

Gemma Athanasius-Coleman

Gemma is a poverty activist, a mum, and a carer, with lived experience of poverty. Gemma is also a trustee for Church Action on poverty and is involved in finding solutions in the local community to solve some of issues around poverty and disadvantaged.



Story telling is powerful, it connects people, and it enables issues to be heard and collect data, raises awareness and provides a platform to inform others. Poverty feels like worry, takes away motivation and joy and removes dignity and happiness.

Poverty encompasses many complex issues, but food is key to survival and people are having to turn to foodbanks for help, with numbers doubling within the past six months.

Loic Rich

Loic Rich is a Cornwall Councillor and Truro City Councillor, representing Truro Tregolls Ward. He leads the Independent group of Cornwall Councillors. Loic is concerned about the lack of housing and the current housing crisis. At present nearly a thousand families are living in temporary housing, such as Premier Inns and B and B's, many often presenting issues with access to schools and work. We need to campaign for council housing but we have to be realistic and we also have to campaign for a system that allows the building of council houses. Also a Cornish Assembly could enable Cornwall to make its own rules and decisions

Loic has established and is also the secretary to Truro Community Land Trust, and is involved with a range of community-led projects in Truro. Community Land Trusts enables communities to develop and provide truly affordable housing.

Hetty Ninnis

Hetty has worked at Newquay Community Orchard for the last 4 and a half years, as community horticulturalist and now Sustainable Landscapes Manager. She's passionate about growing good food and enabling people to grow good food. She is a firm believer that if we can use agricultural knowledge in the right way, we can feed everyone for all and save the planet! She says "I am positive that we can create sustainable local food systems that can enrich the land and provide food for all. I am proud to be a part of Newquay Orchard, a grass roots organisation that is empowering and enabling people to learn and take charge of their health and well being, by building community, working together, learning how to live a more sustainable life and re- connecting with nature. Newquay Orchard works with many volunteers, who may have previously struggled and offer a number of social programmes, to address issues of well being and gaining experience and confidence to help improve CVs".

Newquay Orchards also grow for the wider community and also are Involved in Supported Community Agriculture (CSA)

What is CSA (Community Supported Agriculture):





'You still can't eat the view' Conference - October 21st 2022

Speaker presentations (continued)

Matt Sharp

Matt Sharp is a Public Health Practitioner at Cornwall Council whose portfolio topics include food insecurity and alleviating financial hardship. He is passionate about collaborative working to reduce health inequalities with a focus on improving young people's health and wellbeing.

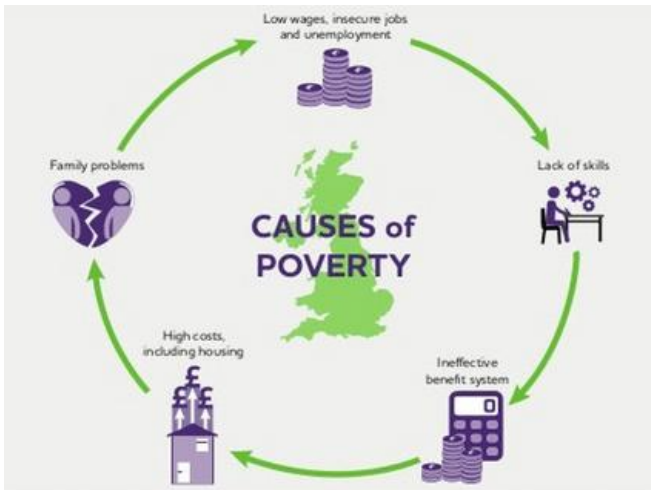
Matt has been involved in establishing the Cornwall Food Alliance that has enabled people to come together to try and arrive at solutions to the cost of living crisis. Collaboration can help with positive change and individual's stories can also have a powerful impact.

Cornwall's cost of living crisis and housing crisis are worse than the national average, as is food poverty and food insecurity. Cornwall faces inequality with those in poverty having little chance to increase their incomes, whilst having higher costs to pay. There are also serious impacts on physical and mental health as well as issues of social isolation. Matt has also been involved in securing and distributing the Household Support Grant, to help those suffering poverty.

The impact of the Cost of Living Crisis:

"I'm on my own with 2 children at primary school. I have what I thought was a good job in a bank. I tried to claim Universal Credit but my wages take me just above the limit. Now with bills going up I'm really struggling. Many days I pretend I'm on a diet as I don't have money for enough food, and I've no idea how I'm going to cope through the winter. I've been managing juggling credit cards. My debts are scary and I can't keep on going much longer"

www.cornwall.gov.uk



The Joseph Rountree Foundation

Malcolm Williams

Professor Malcolm Williams leads the Social and Economic Research Unit (SERU), in the Institute of Cornish Studies, at Penryn Campus, Exeter University.



Malcolm is involved in Social Research and whilst action for change is needed, evidence on poverty and social disadvantage, is essential. At present there is a focus on pockets of poverty and its effects and this will provide knowledge and power to lead to positive change. Malcolm is looking to work with partners and projects.

Since April 2022 he has also established networks to look at the state of Cornwall and projects and organisations that have managed to help people in poverty.

Two key areas of work are Housing and Inequality and work has started on looking at the cost of housing crisis.

Paul Green

Paul works for the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum (CIPF) that has always sought to help those who find themselves in need and to provide project development support to organisations who aim to provide aid to those in need. For over 25 years the CIPF has developed and managed a variety of projects including the Backpack Beds Project which provide a temporary, weatherproof shelter for those sleeping rough helping to improve their health, safety, self-esteem and well being, and also the Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue Project. In 2007 the CIPF helped established the DISC project in Camborne that over several years provided food and support for many homeless and disadvantaged people. Also CIPF provides financial support to individuals who are in most need, through the Crisis Fund.

CIPF working with End Hunger Cornwall have promoted Challenge Poverty Week 2022, to enable local projects to invite local leaders and M.P.'s to visit their projects and gain an insight into the work they do and also into the reasons so many people are suffering from poverty.

Also the CIPF raise awareness of poverty issues, and try and influence positive change, through Poverty Meetings, Poverty Hearings and with meetings with our M.P.'s and with other statutory and partner organisations

'You still can't eat the View' Conference - October 21st 2022

Building Dignity, Agency and Power Together by Niall Cooper,
Director, Church Action on Poverty

Niall has been Director of Church Action on Poverty since 1997, and has been responsible for piloting a number of new approaches to anti-poverty work in the UK, drawing on international development experience, as well as running high profile campaigns on food poverty, debt and asylum-related issues



Church Action on Poverty's vision is that the UK can and must be transformed into a country where everyone can live a full life, free from poverty. Poverty robs people of dignity, agency, of power over their own lives. We believe our vision – an end to poverty in the UK – can become a reality.

Our goal over the next 5-10 years is to contribute to building a social movement with people and communities struggling against poverty, to reclaim dignity, agency and power.

Firstly, a few words on our current context: The denial of dignity, agency and power

Covid-19 has both brought into much sharper focus pre-existing inequalities. Cost of living catastrophe.

"What is poverty? Poverty is a battle of invisibility, a lack of resources, exclusion, powerlessness... being blamed for society's problems"

Churches and communities are not immune from these attitudes.

Poverty rob people of their dignity, agency or power over their lives.

Transformational possibilities of people coming together.

Dignity

United Nations, poverty is not just about economic deprivation but an affront to human dignity.
Challenge Poverty Week: Dignity for all in practice.

Agency

To be truly human means not only being invested with dignity, but also with agency. People who live in, and struggle against poverty on a daily basis have far greater insight into what needs to change and some of the best ideas for doing so.

Power

More references to power in the Bible than to prayer.

Martin Luther King's words:

"The ability to achieve a purpose... It is the strength required to bring about social, political, and economic change."

Transforming unjust structures requires us to be willing to speak truth to power and to enable people who are themselves struggling against poverty to speak truth to power for themselves.

What does this mean in terms of what we do?

- UK free from poverty as a long-term goal.
- Only something that a broad social movement can aspire to achieve.
- Nothing about us without us is for us
- Central to Church Action on Poverty's mission over the next 5-10 years.
- Start at local level: Building a network of local partners and activists

Poverty Truth Commissions

Nothing About Us Without Us is For Us.

What all these approaches have in common, is that they are creating space for people to come together, to be part of the forging solutions, to affirming their dignity, agency.

Together we can build a social movement with people struggling against poverty to reclaim dignity, agency and power.

Together we can transform the unjust structures of society.

Together we can end poverty in the UK.

Poem on Poverty read by Niall Cooper

Poverty is many things

Poverty is not entertainment, it's not noble or romantic.

Poverty is. heavy.

It's heavy hearts and heavy legs.

It's sore skin and hollow eyes.

It's upset and downhearted.

It's hunger. Malnourishment. It's always thinking about the next meal.

Poverty is bailiffs, it's food banks, it's queues and lists, it's never being told what you're entitled to but always being told.



'You still can't eat the view' Conference - October 21st 2022

Poem on Poverty (cont'd) read by Niall Cooper and An Ordinary Man song by Will Keating

Poverty is being shown up then put down.
It's missed payments and mistrust.
It's always answering questions but never answering the door.

Poverty is hiding in plain view. It's hiding.

Poverty is high bills and low pay.
It's higher costs and lower self-esteem.
It's invisible scars and visible pain.

Poverty is living nextdoor, it's living on your nerves, it's not living, it's... barely surviving.

Poverty is everywhere. With... nowhere to turn
It's a gut-wrenching silence, screaming.

Poverty is depressing, demotivating and dehumanising.
It's degradation, desperation and despair.

Poverty is feeling... worthless, it's feeling anxious, it's feeling excluded, it's feeling rejected, it's feeling ashamed, it's feeling trapped, it's feeling angry, it's feeling frustrated, poverty is... exhausting. It's not feeling anything. It's... numb.

Poverty is... crushing. Empty. Lonely.

Poverty is cold. It's damp. It's ill health. Bad housing.
Sadness, fear and human misery.

Poverty is ignored and abandoned. It's sanctioned and sectioned. It's late payments and early deaths.

Poverty is not something that happens to. "others"

Poverty is our old people, our young people, our sick people, our disabled people, our mentally ill people, our homeless people.

Poverty is people seeking asylum, it's people who are refugees, people who are migrants. Poverty is over-worked, under-paid everyday people.

Poverty is people. It's children. Babies. Not... "them". Us.

"**Poverty** is the worst form of violence." (Mahatma Ghandi)

Poverty is growing in our country. In 2016 through to 2022.

Poverty is many things, but it is not acceptable.

Tony Walsh |
Longfella | www.longfella.co.uk | tony@longfella.co.uk |
@LongfellaPoet

Will is a singer and songwriter, telling stories of Cornwall's rich history and heritage. He took part in the 'Feed Cornwall' charity single as well as a concert to highlight child poverty. Will writes:

"I was asked to perform a song at the 'You can't eat the view' Conference held in Truro. I was keen to reflect Cornwall's food poverty crisis and during the process of adaptation, one of my daughters received a text from her friend, telling her that her father had just taken his own life. This hit a raw nerve with me as my foster son committed suicide at the age of 19. The lyrics I adapted, therefore, also reflect a man struggling with his mental health and mention the rising male suicide rate."

An Ordinary Man

I'm an ordinary man, nothing special nothing splann
I've had to work for everything I own
I never asked for a lot, I was happy with what I got
Enough to keep my family and my home

They tell me every day that things arn't going their way
And still they are asking me to take a bow
But at the end of day when I look down at my pay
I can't afford to feed my family now
Can't afford to feed my family now!

Now I've never missed a day or dodged my tax in any way
For twenty years I've worked the best I could
But now I'm under threat it seems so easy to forget
Loyalty through the bad times and through good

Do they really care, that we've got no food to share
While they can live the life that they can choose
They still smoke their big cigars and drive their brand new cars,
Can still afford to take their families on a cruise,
They never lose

It seems to me such a cruel irony
They are richer now then they ever were before
And now my monies spent, I can't afford the rent
There's one law for the rich, and one for the poor

Every day I've tried, to salvage some of my pride
But the system just seems to beat me down
Now the nights are drawing in, and the kids are looking thin
Sometimes I feel I'd be better off underground
Better off underground

And so condemned I stand, an ordinary man
Like thousands beside me on their knees
I watch my darling wife trying to make the best of life
And God knows what the kids must think of me

Now we are faced with this human waste
Men dying each day taking their own lives
For as long as I live, I never will forgive
They've stripped me of my dignity and pride
You stripped me bare, You stripped me bare
You stripped me bare

'You still can't eat the view' Conference - October 21st 2022

Extracts from the C.P.R. Triptych by Gray Lightfoot

**"Well Cornish lads are fishermen and Cornish lads are miners too
But when the fish and tin are gone what are Cornish boys to do?"**

*(Graffiti written after closure of South Crofty mine, Pool,
from the song Cornish Lads, Roger Bryant 1994)*

Gray, a passionate Cornishman writes poetry about the beauty of Cornwall but also about the poverty and injustice and the issues of second home ownership and deserted villages.



C.P.R. Camborne, Pool and Redruth
C.P.R. Cornwall's Poorest Region

Speeding down the A30
St Ives set in your sat-nav
Ignore the heartlands
Aim for the periphery
Here lies old prosperity...
A long barrow with an inert wheel
Marks the Cornwall left behind
Cradle of innovation, ignition
The spark for industrial revolution
The money made in boardrooms
Would eventually trickle down
Dripping...dripping...dripping
Down the shafts, into the pockets
Of the miners who earned their tribute
At the cost of their health and lives.

C.P.R. Camborne, Pool, Redruth
C.P.R. Cornwall Portrayed Realistically

Long gutted of its finest minds
Its life-force forced away
The wheals now at a standstill
Winding gear wound down
Now home to discounted mattresses
And cross-trainers not cross-adherents
Glimmer towns, rusted, shuttered up
What are Cornish boys and girls to do?
What is left for their children;
And their children's children?
This century leaves them bereft
Sporadic and seasonal jobs
'jobs for life' has a different meaning
When it's just work that keeps you alive
"Just be grateful you have a job"
Servitude, serving the ungrateful rich
And despised for being just who you are.
You might not work the Great Flat Lode
But you'll make a great flat white.

C.P.R. Cornwall's Potential Regeneration needs
C.P.R. Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation.

Arrest the arrhythmia of broken hearts.
Arrest the irregular stuttering pulse.
This land needs some belief, some hope.
Significant investment in housing;

Homes for the people already here,
Who maybe would like a first home.
Today, affordable means 'build'em cheap',
Poor quality homes that rise too quickly
For their own good and stand swaying
"Houses for people whose career options
And financial outgoings don't allow
Them to save enough for a deposit",
Doesn't have the same ring, does it?
Perhaps we need to see them as heroes
Maybe we need another war - how about
The Cornish Rent Book Rebellion?
Shall we march upon this new London
With our idle pitchforks, picks and nets?
A protest from the savage reservation
Or just believe in a reality-based Cornwall
An Iceland with so many more people
Powered by wind and geo-thermic rocks.
A green and ascendant land but
No longer reliant on the blue screen backdrop.
The burgeoning of independent original ideas
Rather than charity shops, pawnbrokers
And C.P.R....that's Cell Phone Repair?
Communicate like Porthcurno and Goonhilly;
Purpose the high-speed internet and space tech
So that our children don't need to leave.
Let them be brilliant in their homeland
And still surf the ocean at the weekend.
Make them proud of their Cornish heritage
Anchored here, no longer the forced diaspora.
Kresen Kernow...free to centre on Cornwall,
Embrace the language, history and culture.
A national minority, respected, resurrected
And ready to rebuild itself. Country not county.
For so long Celeb Cornwall has been obsessed
With how she looks, her beauty only coast deep,
Tweeting her selfies, counting her 'likes' on Insta,
A superficial media star, who's made up
That everyone just loves her so much.
Maybe it's time to make her ugly again.
Scarification, retrograde cosmetic surgery
Let's open up the earth...work Cornish metal
Bring on the lithium, the tin and the copper
Utilise our hot rocks until we've got the will
To power real life and proper jobs.

More reflective and challenging poems from
www.graylightfoot.co.uk

Deserted Village Cornwall 2020

'You Can't Eat the View' Conference, October 2019

Looking back at the issues of Food Poverty and Food Insecurity in 2019

End Hunger Cornwall was officially launched at a conference held at Camborne Church called 'You Can't Eat The View' which highlighted the Impact of Food Poverty and Food Insecurity in Cornwall.

The Challenge and the Good News

The speakers included Niall Cooper from End Hunger UK who began with the thought provoking statistic that 8 million households in the UK were experiencing some level of Food Insecurity (and that was in 2019!). However food poverty in the UK is not fundamentally an issue of the shortage of food, but a shortage of income and this was clearly documented in the report by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Food Poverty.

Niall pointed out two pieces of good news. Firstly the thousands of local faith and community groups that have stepped up to the plate in response to this need. This highlights the immense power of local groups to act for the common good but on the other hand it highlights the inability (or unwillingness) of the state to ensure the basic necessities of life.

Secondly, the UK Government in signing up to the UN Sustainable Development Goals has already committed to achieving zero hunger in the UK by 2030. But to deliver on this goal will require Government to develop a clear roadmap, coordinating the efforts of multiple Government departments, local councils, faith and community groups and many others.

We were also joined for the day by Derek Thomas, the MP for West Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and at the time of the conference he was a member of the Parliamentary Select Committee's on Work and Pensions, Health & Social Care and Environmental Audit. Following conversation between Niall and Derek over lunch, Derek agreed to raise the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals issue once again within Committee and hopefully at Cabinet.

Working Together can make such a difference

One of the key elements of the Conference was a series of workshops in which the attendees were put into small groups and presented with real life stories and the challenge of what their organisation would be able to do in such scenarios. This activity produced some very valuable learning about what is offered by the different community groups AND also reminded us all that so much more can be achieved when we work in partnership.



Taking End Hunger Forward – Concluding comments from the Conference Report

Going forward from this conference End Hunger Cornwall will be working closely with End Hunger UK to make sure that no-one should go to bed hungry and that the fundamental 'right to food' is established. We will maintain a strong presence at the top levels of government and with local representatives alike. We will also work closely with local agencies on the ground, gathering that all important factual data in order to strengthen our case. Most importantly however, we will continue to give the problem of food poverty and insecurity in Cornwall a strong voice at regional and national events and commit ourselves to:

- Continue to gather information and data from local foodbanks and agencies.
- Maintain the lobby campaign with our Cornwall MP's and other policy makers
- Repeat the conference in 2021

Special Thanks for Brian Honey-Morgan's team who showed the potential in using Food Waste by producing the most wonderful lunch from surplus food 'donated' by local supermarkets.

Summary

From Andrew Yates, Chair, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum

This year's Challenge Poverty Week saw even more activity than the previous year as many attempts were made across Cornwall to raise awareness of both the growing need impacting on so many and also of the inspiring responses being made by individuals and community groups to support those facing the challenges from the increase in poverty.

Our activities began early in October with a Voices Within Poverty event held at Hightown Church. Presentations were made by those with direct experience of poverty including the emotional story of a woman who was evicted from her rented property and the knock on effects for her and her children from suddenly finding themselves in emergency accommodation. Also from the front line we heard from Councillors who spoke of their growing case work and the value of their advocacy work on behalf of those struggling with the system. Among the more powerful contributions were those who spoke of the need to increase people's income and one very effective tool being the payment of the Real Living Wage and the campaign for this to be more widely adopted.

In the Challenge Poverty Week itself there were many postings on the End Hunger Cornwall sites highlighting the creative and compassionate ways that people are helping those struggling with the cost of living rises – both in practical and emotional ways. This report includes a wide selection of examples of these responses across the spectrum and is a testimony to the generosity of so many with their time and talents and finance.

Challenge Poverty Week ended with another event You Still Can't Eat the View which also showcased the work that is going on to address the stigma and sense of exclusion that comes with living in poverty. We were especially grateful to have as one of our guests and contributors Niall Cooper – the CEO OF Church Action on Poverty – who was able to put our situation in a wider national context. One of the features of this event were elements from the creative arts. We heard poetry from Gray Lightfoot that struck many people with a particular poignancy – and you can read some of the verses in this report. And the singer Will Keating dedicated one of his songs to the father of one his daughters best friends as his funeral was being held on that day following on from his taking his own life. This prompted a time of silence to be kept by all those who had gathered to think of that family and others we knew personally to be in difficulties.

2022 also marked the 25th Anniversary of the first Poverty Hearing to be held in Cornwall. Not an anniversary to be celebrated as in many ways it seems that little has changed. But an opportunity to reflect on what can be achieved when people come together and genuinely listen to one another and then commit to working together for a more fair and just society for all.

A message from Andrew Howell of End Hunger Cornwall

All of us want to live lives with dignity. But this winter, the soaring cost of living will deny that dignity to many people in Cornwall. People will be **forced to choose** between heating and eating; to skip meals so their children can eat, to go cold and hungry in one of the world's richest countries. Come together to uphold people's dignity and speak out for a just solution to the cost of living crisis.

Organisations/individuals who attended 'You still can't eat the view Conference' - October 21st 2022

St Petrocs
Cornwall Council
Tempo Timecredits
Church Action on Poverty
Truro Foodbank
School for Social Entrepreneurs
Cornwall Rural Community Charity
CIPF
Cornwall Community Foundation
Citizens Advice Cornwall
Inclusion Cornwall

Transformation Cornwall
Curious School of the Wild
Poet, Gray Lightfoot
Federation of School Businesses
Kea Church
Pirate FM
Cornwall Councillors
Fairwinds
End Hunger Cornwall
Freelance Photojournalist
Diocese of Truro

Newquay Orchard
The Dockyard Collective CIC
Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum
Coastline Housing
Cornwall Council
Active Cornwall
Chacewater Parish Council
Chaos TV
Singer Song Writer, Will Keating
All Saints Hightown Church, Truro



Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum's main focus of work is around addressing poverty by raising awareness, project development and influencing positive change.

If you would like more information about us and the work we do, please visit our website:

www.cornwallindependentpovertyforum.com

'Tackling social exclusion in Cornwall'

(Charity No 1183177)

In association with

