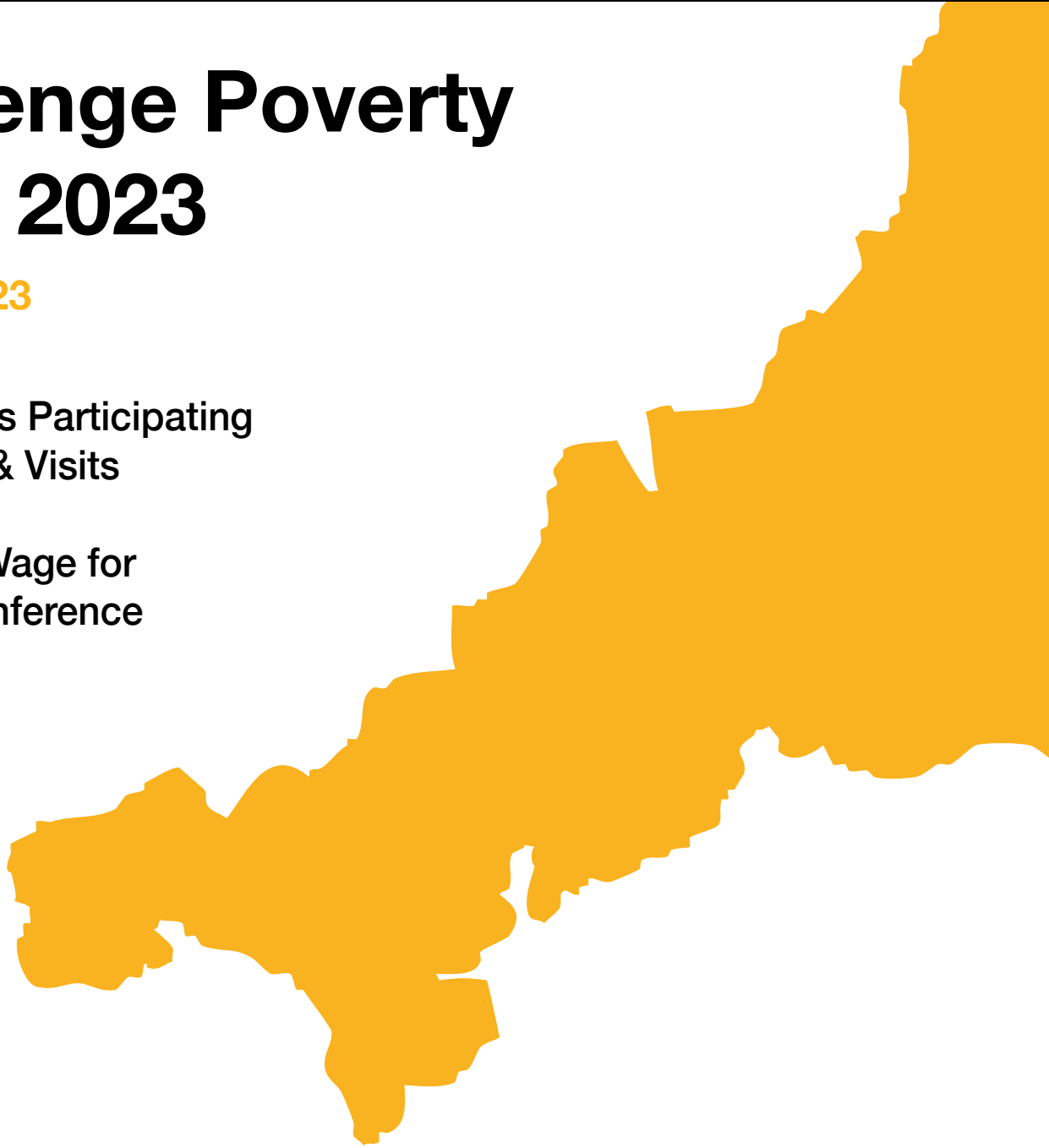


Challenge Poverty Week 2023

October 2023

Organisations Participating
in the Week & Visits

Real Living Wage for
Cornwall Conference



A Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum Project produced in
partnership with Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Introduction from Andrew Yates, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum | |
| Introduction from Emma Rowse, Cornwall VSF | |
| Real Living Wage for Cornwall Conference | 2 |
| Welcome | |
| Andrew Yates, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum | |
| Lived Experiences: Poetry from Valued Inclusive Voice Achievement (VIVA) | |
| Lived Experiences by Simon Fann Truro Food Bank Manager | |
| A Real Living Wage for Cornwall By Simon Fann | |
| Sophie Hosking, Cornwall Council | |
| A Message about Challenge Poverty Week 2023, from Sophie Hosking | |
| Jessie Leigh, Cornwall Chamber of Commerce | |
| Lived Experiences: Interactive Activity By Andrew Yates | |
| Talking Heads: Real Living Wage Organisations | |
| Zoe Nixon Newquay Food Bank | |
| Edward Chapman Federation of Small Businesses | |
| Patrick Langmaid Mother Ivey's Bay Holiday Park | |
| Jayne Kirkham Cornwall Councillor | |
| Panel Discussion | |
| Lived Experiences: Poem on Poverty By Church Action on Poverty | |
| Lets End Poverty By Niall Cooper, Director, Church Action on Poverty | |
| Conference Exhibitors | |
| Impact of Conference | |
| Organisations Participating in the Week & Visits | 13 |
| Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes | |
| Organisations and Projects participating in the Week and Visits | |
| Summary | 23 |
| From Andrew Yates Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum | |
| From Simon Fann Truro Food Bank | |
| Dignity for All By Niall Cooper, Church Action on Poverty | |
| Going Forward | 24 |
| A Community Manifesto for Cornwall 2024 By Andrew Yates and Paul Green, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum | |
| Real Living Wage for Cornwall By Simon Fann | |
| Homelessness by Loic Rich, Cornwall Council | |
| Challenging Poverty by Paul Green, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum | |
| A Message from Kate Kennally, CEO of Cornwall Council | |
| Special thanks | |

Andrew Yates Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum

For the third year in a row Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum CIPF took the initiative to mark Challenge Poverty Week in a significant way across Cornwall.

CIPF is especially grateful to the many organisations and community groups that supported the week and raised awareness of the tremendous amount of need that sadly still exists across the County as well as showcasing the huge amount of support that is offered by so many to those who have been and remain impacted by the cost of living crisis that has hit so many.

Yet again CPW had two main focuses.

Firstly, forty community groups showed their commitment to Challenging Poverty by taking a photo of their workers and volunteers with a CPW 2023 Banner. Many of these groups invited local leaders .. Councillors.... Council Directors... Officers from Public Health and other key organisations... to come to visit their projects. This offered an opportunity to show case the important services they provide but equally importantly these encounters demonstrated the needs and the daily challenges that are driving so many people to seek for help and assistance. Do look at this report for the selection of images that celebrate the groups Challenging Poverty in 2023 from Breakfasts for the Homeless to Citizens Advice teams and many other groups in between.

Secondly with key partners – Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum and Truro and Newquay Foodbanks we held a conference at St Michael's Church in Newquay, and it was heartening to see over 100 people there.



Emma Rowse Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum

We are in the midst of a profound cost of living crisis with huge implications for some of the most disadvantaged people in our society. Our colleagues from across food distribution networks share the increasing number of people in Cornwall facing the bleak choice between heating and eating over winter. This should not be necessary in a country as wealthy as the UK.

At our collaborative event, we heard the brave stories of CN4C's VIVA group; reminding us of the real experience of poverty: being unable to make money last, buying 'essential' line products, not exploring Cornwall's beauty because of the costs of transport. Please take the time to read and absorb their words. Hold in your mind that these are our neighbours, our communities, right here in the most beautiful county.

Cornwall VSF has signed up to be a Real Living Wage employer because it's the right thing to do; to pay people fairly for the contribution they make. Paying the Real Living Wage provides dignity and financial sustainability for our staff and their families, and we hope more of our sector will join us in committing to and pushing for fairer wages in Cornwall. It's also about supporting people to achieve their aspirations and live the life that they want to live, without having to compromise on the cost of living.

Our community sector in Cornwall does an incredible job of supporting our people and communities and with a dedicated workforce of over 9,600 across the Duchy, we feel real change needs to happen at source. Tackling health inequality must involve a commitment to paying our staff the real living wage and Cornwall VSF are proud to announce we have joined a growing list of organisations to achieve Real Living Wage accreditation.

We recognise our role within the sector, to be the change we want to see in the world. It is really challenging for lots of our VCSE organisations because they are really small micro-businesses, and we recognise that. However, this campaign is about enthusing people getting them on board with a commitment to go on that journey together. Cornwall VSF is here to support our VCSE colleagues to be the difference.



Welcome

The Revd Chris McQuillen Wright welcomed everyone to St Michaels Church in Newquay. Chris attended the first Poverty Hearing in 1997 looking at concerns relating to poverty and deprivation within Cornwall. We still need to come together to work towards ending poverty in Cornwall and continue to help those who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

Andrew Yates Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum

Andrew Yates is the Chair of the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum, formed in 1997 and this year is the third year that the CIPF have worked with Church Action against Poverty to deliver Challenge Poverty Week in Cornwall, as part of a national initiative.

We have entered into partnerships with Newquay and Truro Food Banks as well as Cornwall Council and the Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum to deliver the Real Living Wage Conference and also engage with over 40 organisations to arrange visits to demonstrate the fantastic work that they are doing and why it is needed.

We also give a voice to lived experiences and these will be included in our 2023 Challenge Poverty Week Report. There were many stories of poverty in Cornwall, where people face the terrible choice between eating and heating, as well as stories regarding homelessness, including street homeless and child poverty.

Lived Experiences: Poetry from Valued Inclusive Voice Achievement (VIVA)

A range of monologues and poems relating to the issues that the members of the group face.

Voices for those with lived experiences of poverty and social exclusion are often the best people to help develop solutions and raise awareness of the issues that they face. By challenging poverty, it gives people the chance to have dignity and power, that they so deserve.

Poems on Poverty:

*"Please Sir, Can I have more?
Do you know I think we're going backwards in time right now?
It's like the days of Oliver Twist again.
People are using food banks more than ever before.
People in employment, settled jobs, nurses and people like that.
All going to food banks because they can't afford to eat.
Clothes banks, loan sharks, crisis loans to cover the ever-increasing debt.
Cost of living has gone up and up
Inflation taking up the basics
But not bringing up our wages.
Those in power say to write a list, plan ahead,
buy in bulk, buy reduced range.
We've been doing that for decades.
If we can.
I mean, I can't buy in bulk; I've got no storage.
I buy day to day, me.
Going down the store at the end of the day
Buying reduced and nearly gone off to feed my family."*

VIVA is supported by Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change (CN4C)



*"We're all in this together?
I don't think so.
We don't need advice,
we need money.
We ask for money, not advice."*



*"Loan sharks, crisis loans to
cover the ever-increasing debt"*

Scan the QR Code to watch the full presentation by VIVA Co-design group.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYwabLPokqw>

Lived Experiences by Simon Fann Truro Food Bank Manager

Simon is from Truro Food Bank and is working towards establishing A Real Living Wage Place for Cornwall.

He demonstrated using four jars and a bag with six stones that showed how people often did not have sufficient money to cover all essential costs and ended up needing support from the foodbank. Rising debt was cited as an issue, faced by many, as was the issue of people using loan sharks, where crisis loans are used to cover an ever-increasing debt.

Having the Real Living Wage would help people to meet their essential costs including food and reduce the demand for food parcels from Food Banks.



Simon Fann from Truro Foodbank uses a powerful allegory to highlight the difference a Real Living Wage can make.

Scan the QR code to watch Simon's full presentation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtSHcrtoJEA>

A Real Living Wage for Cornwall By Simon Fann

At Truro Foodbank we help people that find themselves in food crisis for many reasons. Since the start of 2023, the cost of living crisis has increasingly affected employed people, especially those on the lowest wages and those whose pay is not secure (e.g. imposed zero hours contracts or subject to short notice cancellations.)

Low pay often combines with high housing and energy costs, or health implications, which is why we now find more customers coming to us with multiple and complex situations.

There are so many issues that need attention, it can be overwhelming. So we sought to identify one issue to address: low pay in Cornwall. CitizensUK estimated that 25,000 in Cornwall were not paid the former Living Wage Foundation (LWF) recommended rate of £10.90 per hour. This recommended figure increased to £12 per hour from October 2023; which means the 25,000 has likely increased. The aspiration for the real Living Wage Place proposal for Cornwall is that more employers would consider the benefits to the company, the individual staff and the Cornish economy if they signed up to the LWF and committed to paying staff and all contractors in a supply chain the real living wage. If one quarter of those 25,000 people had been uplifted to the real living wage from October 2021 to 2022 CitizensUK estimate an extra £11.2 million would have been added to Cornwall's GVA. More importantly it would have enabled many people to have more self-determination over their circumstances and not have to rely on Foodbanks.

This is the change we hope paying the real living wage can bring: better self-determination for people on low pay, less reliance on charitable organisations, retention of an experienced workforce that therefore supplies a better service and more growth for the economy of Cornwall.

Some cities around the UK have become Living Wage Places. No area has yet sought to do that as a county. Hence we are grateful that the real living wage was the theme for this year's Challenge Poverty Week event at St Michael's Church in Newquay.



Sophie Hosking Cornwall Council

Sophie is the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods at Cornwall Council.

Sophie is responsible for a number of services including street homelessness and Family temporary homeless, Drug and Alcohol and Domestic Abuse.

A number of staff and Councillors have visited a range of community projects as part of the Challenge Poverty Week. The response is one of hope, seeing so many committed volunteers doing fantastic work to help those that are in poverty and struggling with the cost-of living crisis. However there also concern that the levels of need are getting worse. Over 800 households are housed in temporary and emergency accommodation, some without adequate cooking facilities.

Cornwall Council made the decision in 2018 to pay all employees the Real Living Wage and in 2019 extended this to all of our suppliers and contractors. The value of our contracts is a little under £5 billion, so this action has a significant impact on a large number of people.

The Real Living Wage has led to the following benefits:

- More competitive, improved recruitment and staff returning
- Stability of supply
- Productivity and motivation.

Cornwall Council will be committed to supporting The Real Living Wage for Cornwall Campaign



A Message about Challenge Poverty Week 2023 from Sophie Hosking

Challenge Poverty Week 2023 saw many organisations and individuals from across Cornwall coming together over a programme of events and activities to continue the campaign to influence positive change to address poverty in Cornwall.

A key focus of this year's events was to highlight the importance of the Real Living Wage. Alarming, we are seeing increasing numbers of "in-work" households requiring support with day-to-day living requirements. Committing to paying the Real Living Wage is a tangible and effective measure that employers throughout the Duchy can take to help address poverty.

At this year's Challenge Poverty Week event we heard from a wide variety of speakers of the benefits of paying the Real Living Wage, not only for the positive impact on employees but also the advantage that this brings to their business.

Cornwall Council has been a Real Living Wage employer since 2018, and in 2019 extended this to all new and renewed contracts and suppliers. The Council has gained from this in terms of our ability to attract and retain staff; the stability and sustainability of our contracts; our brand and reputation; and the productivity and motivation of our staff. And of course, it is simply the right thing to do.

In the run up to the Challenge Poverty Week, Councillors, senior leaders and colleagues from Cornwall Council were privileged to be invited to visit foodbanks across Cornwall.

Collaboration and generosity are at the heart of everything they are doing, but the fact that we are relying on foodbanks to support the everyday needs of increasing numbers of people is at the heart of why Challenge Poverty Week is so important.

"I found my visit to Newquay Foodbank to be both a humbling and a heartening experience, demonstrating communities working at their very best to alleviate hardship."

Jessie Leigh Cornwall Chamber of Commerce

Jessie thanked VIVA from CN4C for their presentation and their commitment to speaking the truth, to help regain dignity and power.

Jessie is a Board Director for Cornwall Chamber of Commerce who inspire and connect all business and offer an independent voice for local, regional and national action. Jessie also has a shared vision for obtaining fair pay (and adopted the Real Living Wage in 2020) and will be working with the Action Group to achieve the Real Living Wage for Cornwall. At present the Real Living Wage is paid by between 27% and 39% of employers in Cornwall. Women and young people are often paid less, and therefore are further disadvantaged.

The cost-of-living crisis is affecting many people, and they often suffer from mental health issues as well as not having enough money to pay for food. Over 50% of people visiting our Food Banks are in work. People on low incomes often support local businesses.



For Businesses having the Real Living Wage has the following benefits:

- Improved moral, commercial, improved recruitment and retention and reduced sickness levels and also improved productivity. Employees have improved moral and motivation.
- When employees have a fairer wage, they have more capacity to support their children to thrive.

Jessie will be involved with the Action Group and will endorse the efforts of the group to work towards achieving a successful campaign for the Real Living Wage for Cornwall.

Lived Experience: Interactive Activity by Andrew Yates

Andrew introduced two Real Stories from those visiting Truro Food Bank:

We asked our audience to decide how they would support people in these scenarios. The range of support in the sector is a positive.

Miss A

'Miss A arrives at a Foodbank for the first time not knowing how any processes work or what advice might be available. Her circumstances are: late 30s, finally managed to get herself out of an abusive relationship after 17 years, two teenage children, two new hips, waiting on a knee operation, worked ever since leaving college, now can only work three days a week for an admin employer who pays minimum wage, being housed by a friend on a temporary basis.'

Mr B

'Mr B comes to foodbank saying he works for a business in the tourist industry. He is 20 years old and been told he cannot stay in the family home anymore. He is currently living in a tent or sofa surfing on occasional nights. When he applied for the job he was told it would be on a zero hours contract, a matter over which he had no choice, and it would "achieve the minimum wage". He expected four 7 hour shifts last week. He turned up to the first one to be told "I don't know what you're doing here, there's no work for you today". He was paid for four hours last week, has nothing to eat, nothing to cook with and is emotionally exhausted.'

Real Living Wage for Cornwall Conference

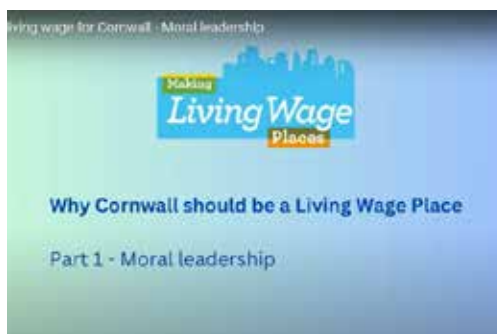
Interactive Activity [Continued]:

The Audience was asked to discuss in small groups and Feedback with some ideas to help address the various issues raised:

- Obtain up to date information from JCP
- Establish other support; mental health and homeless support
- Signposting and a multi-agency approach
- More advocacy and advice
- Identify route to Counselling Services
- More Networking for organisations and partnership working
- More than just Food - other support services linked to Foodbanks and other Food projects, such as community fridges and healthy eating advice.

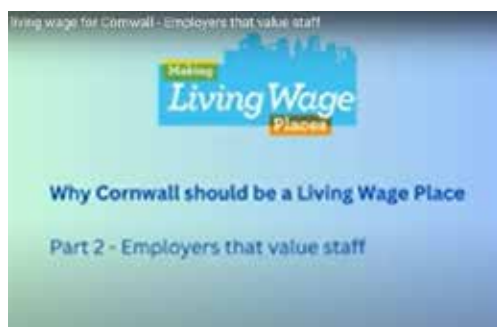
Talking Heads Real Living Wage Organisations

Videos featuring three main benefits - Moral benefits, Being Valued and Employer benefits:



In this video, we speak to employers in Cornwall about their commitment to paying the Living Wage as 'Moral Leadership'.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GOW6DTN0IIE>



In this video, we speak to employers in Cornwall about their commitment to paying the Living Wage to value their staff.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcmDoiM9GcQ>



In this video, we speak to employers in Cornwall about their commitment to paying the Living Wage to uplift the employee.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wmKcLZAqiJQ>

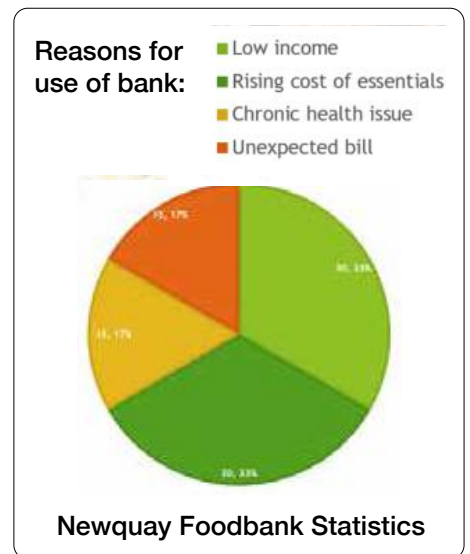
Zoe Nixon Newquay Food Bank

Zoe has identified five main issues that visitors to Newquay Food Bank have:

- Housing - High Rents and mortgages
- Seasonal Work
- Low Wages
- Mental Health
- Street Homeless

Zoe has established a Newquay Hub where a number of organisations, voluntary and statutory, come together to work together to support and help their clients, to move towards a more positive future.

There are 90 volunteers working with clients often with a range of issues.



Edward Chapman Federation of Small Businesses

Edward is involved with the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and talked about the Good Business Charter that helps businesses perform better in an ethical way and more understanding of diversity and inclusion. The approach covered in the diagram, will help end low wage culture.

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.



Patrick Langmaid Mother Ivey's Bay Holiday Park

Patrick, after reading an article in the Guardian, became the first company in the hospitality industry, to become a Real Living Wage employer in 2015.

In the following nine years, the company has realised many benefits: easier to recruit and retain staff, Improves the guests experience and has led to more productivity and more profit, as well as acting more socially responsibly

The Real Living Wage Campaign will need to raise awareness of the benefits of becoming a Real Living Wage company, as well as clearly showing the difference to the government's National Minimum Wage

Patrick 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...."

Jayne Kirkham Cornwall Councillor

Jayne is a Cornwall Councillor covering the Falmouth area. Jayne often works with St Petrocs and The Salvation Army as well as a Food Project at Princess Pavilions. For a number of years, she has been involved with local homeless network, initially the Falmouth Homeless Action Group and more recently the Safer Falmouth Initiative.

There are a number of other food related projects Jayne supports, including food growing and cooking projects. There are currently over 800 families in Cornwall living in temporary accommodation, such as premier inns and Travelodge's and these do not provide food, so community projects that do deliver food to these families, are providing a really important service.

Cornwall Council are a Real Living Wage employer, paying the Real Living Wage to all staff as well as those covered by contracts and other companies. Cornwall Council also have an Ethical Care Charter to support those working in the Care Industry.

The National Minimum Wage was introduced in 1999, but there are still issues about fair pay for younger people and also a range of difficulties with Zero Hours Contract.

Panel Discussion

A panel comprising Simon, Patrick, Sophie and Emma, answered a number of questions, including:

How could a Real Living Wage Impact on Cornwall?

Answers and Comments on the next page >

> Answers and Comments:

- For small organisations looking to move towards obtaining the Real Living Wage, to help work towards this, get advice with other similar organisation's that have achieved this and also ask for advice with the Living Wage Foundation
- Many voluntary and community sector organisations need to secure sustainable contracts and would ask funders in the public service. Some have short term funding and need longer term funder to enable longer term contracts
- The Cornwall VSF offer practical help and tools to support smaller organisations
- To establish good working relationships and form strong networks
- For the Action Group work, to ensure that the Action Plan meets the requirements of all members, such as Cornwall Council.
- Often, many people find getting into work a challenge, so employers could be encouraged to offer more inclusive opportunities, especially to help the most disadvantaged.
- Flexible policies for work often are really helpful and may help address issues such as childcare and limited public transport
- European Funding has been limited, so other funding sources need to be secured
- It is really useful to have a mixture of skills in teams, and also to include volunteers
- Help and Support can be sought from Citizens Advice to help people return to work and other organisations can also help with confidence and support as well as address a range of other issues.
- Newquay Food Bank have a team of 90 volunteers, with a range of skills and experiences. All gaining positive experiences.
- Stories of people addressing help and getting work, can be shared to help encourage other, with a positive message.

Lived Experience: Poem on poverty by Church Action on Poverty

Church Action on Poverty held a series of workshops looking at issues of poverty. They asked for those attending to make a short statement about 'What is Poverty'. The outcomes were then used to compile a Poem on Poverty, undertaken by Tony Walsh

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.

Poverty is being shown up and 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 next door, 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

Lets End Poverty By Niall Cooper, Director, Church Action on Poverty

Church Action on Poverty have organised the Challenge Poverty Week for England and Wales since 2021 and are again pleased to support the CIPF in their Challenge Poverty Week work in Cornwall and also to see that CIPF are working with people's stories and experiences to help achieve this purpose.



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. Poverty robs people of their dignity, agency or power over their lives, poverty is not just about economic deprivation but an affront to human dignity. Challenge Poverty Week focusses on Dignity for All in practice. 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. Together we can transform the unjust structures of society. Together we can end poverty in the UK.

Let's End Poverty is a growing movement, joined by individuals and communities who share the same vision of a UK without poverty. There doesn't have to be poverty in the UK. But over many years, our society has been built in a way that traps people in hardship and keeps them there.

An overwhelming majority of people think the UK's rich-poor gap is too high. Earlier this year, 88% of respondents in a YouGov poll said more should be done to tackle poverty in the UK. That's almost nine in every ten people, a remarkable level of consensus, at a time when public opinion is divided on so many other issues.

In the run up to the next UK General Election, a key aim of the movement is to make ending poverty a priority by increasing pressure on political leaders. We need them to step up, take responsibility and take action on poverty and everything that locks people in it.

Church Action on Poverty is one of the many partner organisations that are supporting the Let's End Poverty movement along with the Methodist Church, the Poverty Truth network, the Trussell Trust and many more.

On the 14th of October, there were Let's End Poverty assemblies across the country to build the movement towards ending poverty in the UK. By connecting with others in a regional gathering or online to show that taking action to end poverty matters to the community. There was a total of ten events, including nine in-person gatherings and an online meeting

Niall Cooper from Church Action on Poverty states "I too want to live in a UK in which no one has to go to bed hungry and everyone has access to good food. But beyond that, I want everyone in the UK to have the opportunities that many of us take for granted - to enjoy life in all its fullness. To achieve this we must end the scourge of poverty in what is still one of the wealthiest nations on the planet."

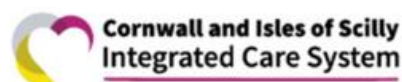
The Let's End Poverty assemblies were just the beginning of the growing movement. In the run up to the general elections, we are inviting more local people and organisations to get involved, to demonstrate to our political leaders that tackling poverty is important to the communities they seek to represent, and it should therefore be one of their key priorities too.

Conference Exhibitors

- **Supportmatch Homeshare** - Matching people in need of companionship and live-in support with someone in need of affordable accommodation.
- **Healthy Cornwall** - Offering FREE NHS Health Checks to residents between the ages of 40-74.
- **Cornwall Community Foundation** - Connecting people who want to help Cornish communities, with grassroots projects that need funding.
- **Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change** - Transforming disadvantaged neighbourhoods by providing life opportunities and advocating for long term change.
- **Gleaning Cornwall** - A team of volunteers, salvaging tonnes of produce from farms and growers to distribute to communities in need.
- **Transformation Cornwall** - Strengthening faith based social action in Cornwall.
- **Citizens Advice Cornwall** - A local charity supporting our communities with free, independent, confidential & impartial advice.
- **Inclusion Cornwall** - A partnership across public private voluntary enterprise and community sectors.
- **Newquay Foodbank**
Supplying food parcels to people in Newquay and the surrounding villages.
- **Newquay Orchard** - A rural escape built by the community, for the community. A space where people can grow together, learn sustainably, and play in nature.
- **Newquay Hypnotherapy** - Changing lives through science. Co-founder of Cornwall Festival of wellness.
- **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly ICB** - The integrated care board for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- **Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum**
- **Ocean Housing**
- **Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum**
- **Time Credits**
- **The Store House Newquay**
- **Healthwatch Cornwall**
- **Sustainable Food Cornwall**



Healthy
Cornwall



Impact of Conference

The event was attended by over 100 people from all sectors and received coverage on BBC Spotlight and in local newspapers.

Activity throughout the week saw visits from various members of Cornwall Council's cabinet and senior leadership team, and several prospective parliamentary candidates visit their local food banks. This included chatting to people using food banks and understanding the lived experience of people facing the sharper end of the current cost of crisis situation. Details of the visits are later in the report, along with some quotes from those visiting food banks.

Impact: Cornwall Council being involved meant that the visits they coordinated drove thousands of page views to raise the profile of the campaign.

Media Impact: Cornwall VSF secured new pieces to further raise the profile of the campaign to support a Real Living Wage in Cornwall.

Pledges: A few organisations pledged to speak to their staff or employer about implementing a Real Living Wage. Glen Carnes signed up during the week.

“Sadly the work of the Food Bank is absolutely vital to the local communities here. Providing a lifeline for so many people who find themselves in circumstances nobody wants to be in. On the plus side the joy, the enthusiasm and incredible commitment of the wonderful volunteers and staff at Newquay Food Bank has been absolutely uplifting”

- Sophie Hosking visiting Newquay Food Bank



Highlighting the issues of poverty and making positive changes

The Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum in partnership with Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum and with support from Church Action on Poverty, organised and promoted Challenge Poverty Week Cornwall 2023. 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. Forty 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 and Visits

All Saints Community Centre

All Saints Community Centre, Tuckingmill provides grass root support for all vulnerable people within the community, including crisis support, counselling, mental health first aid and suicide prevention support, advocacy and a community larder.

The centre endeavours to provide recreational, social, cultural, educational and training opportunities, promote social justice and social inclusion to make the community stronger and a happier and healthier and safer place to live. We work with at risk individuals, whether from abuse, being street homeless, or at risk of self harm. We are running many new projects, groups, activities and services in response to increased need and have recently employed counsellor and sessional workers.

Backpack Beds Project

Backpack Beds provide shelter that can help improve the lives of people who face the prospect of rough sleeping on the streets of Cornwall.

Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum (CIPF) has distributed over 200 Backpack Beds, in conjunction with key partners who provide support for the homeless in the county.

Backpack Beds are durable, waterproof and cost effective and immediately improves the dignity, health, sleep, warmth, comfort and safety of people sleeping on our streets.

Each Backpack Bed costs £100 so all donations are very welcome. >



Backpack Beds are not the permanent solution to preventing or relieving homelessness: but Backpack Beds do offer a simple short-term solution to help vulnerable people take the first steps away from rough sleeping.

Boscence Farm Community

Boscence Farm Community provides residential rehabilitation and clinical detoxification for people with severe drug or alcohol dependency.

Established in 1995 in West Cornwall and set in 18 acres of tranquil wood and farm land, the old farmhouse serves as a rehabilitation unit. There are 15 bedrooms and residents move there after they've completed the detox treatment, to start their longer-term journey of recovery. The clinical detox unit provides assessment, stabilisation and detoxification for anyone aged 18 to 65.

There are 24 staff at Boscence Farm and 26 volunteers, all of whom help give a realistic opportunity to recover, to escape the revolving door of addiction, to become part of the community with the ability to connect and contribute in a strong and positive way.

Boundless Trust

Boundless Trust runs weekly youth clubs and holiday activities from our dedicated youth centre in Looe.

We aim to provide a safe space where young people can get support, have fun and learn new skills. The young people are given opportunity to experience a range of activities promoting fitness and wellbeing.

During the holidays children and young people are provided with a delicious nutritious meal where many who are reliant on Free School Meals during term time would otherwise miss out. >

Organisations Participating in the Week & Visits

> We are also working with other community partners to provide a skatepark in Looe. We are grateful for your support and help in providing this vital service in Looe.



Breadline in Penzance

Neil and Faye work at the Breadline Resource Centre in Penzance offering support, help and advice to those that find themselves sleeping on the streets. In winter there is spaces booked at a local hotel to help the homeless, Issues covered include housing, benefits and mental health support.



Camborne Pool and Redruth Food Bank and The Chaos Group

Councillor Barbara Ellenbroek, Portfolio Holder for Children and Families, visited both The CHAOS Group's food project and Transformation Camborne Pool and Redruth (CPR) Food Bank in Camborne. See Churches Together in Cornwall infoHub (ctcinfohub.org)

CPR Food Bank continues to provide food parcels to those families and individuals that have low incomes and cannot afford basic groceries. The Food Bank also provides for children during school holidays, baby food and baby provisions, washing products, fuel vouchers and pet food.

The Chaos Group (Community Helping All of Society) are involved in discussion with the wider voluntary sector to help address the issues of the cost of living issues, including distributing food to those in most need and preventing food being wasted. Chaos are involved in delivering some incredible work, including a community project.

CHAOS work with a wide range of vulnerable people who are facing various life obstacles and span a range of industries from hospitality, health and beauty to agriculture and care. CHAOS deliver employability skills, engage and support disabled people, as well as disadvantaged people to provide experiences and opportunities to help them find their feet.

Whether the issue is mental health, addiction, disability or homelessness, CHAOS is passionate about empowering and improving the lives of others in Cornwall.



Citizens Advice Cornwall

Rachel Wigglesworth, Director of Public Health for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Cornwall Council - Visited Citizens Advice Cornwall to meet Jon Berg CEO and the Liskeard Advice Team.

Rachel said "What I'm seeing and hearing is that there's more and more people who come to Citizens Advice who are a national treasure really in terms of supporting people in their times of need. They really help to ensure that people have enough income to address some of the real difficult issues that people are facing whether that's housing or debt. They do a huge amount here. So I'm delighted to have come here and see the work that is really challenging poverty in Cornwall with Citizens Advice Cornwall."



Coastline Housing

Coastline Housing have been supporting Challenge Poverty Week 2023. They continue to build communities around affordable social housing whilst helping residents with a number of support programmes.

They have also been involved in the Talking Heads video.



Cornwall Community Foundation

The Cornwall Community Foundation (CCF) aims to improve the lives of others in Cornwall, those who are isolated, disadvantaged and vulnerable.

As a foundation, we have 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.

We identify issues of importance for our donors and facilitate investment to grassroots, front line, volunteer led organisations on their behalf, making a real difference to people's lives across Cornwall.

Tamas Haydu supports a large number of community projects with advice and funding. The CCF continues to support grassroots, voluntary led community projects and charities, to help overcome the challenges of disadvantage, exclusion and poverty for all ages, especially during this cost of living crisis.



Cornwall Prayer Shawls

Wanting to do something to help reach out to the lonely, socially excluded and the homeless and inspired by the Prayer Shawl Ministry in America, Jackie Holden and a small team of knitters started Cornwall Prayer Shawls. Before beginning each shawl, prayers and blessings are imbued into the yarn. The prayers continue throughout the knitting of the shawl and upon completion, a final blessing is offered, before the shawl is given to someone in need.

Some shawls are intended for specific recipients, identified by Jackie. Other shawls are made to help people in need, including those who find themselves homeless in Cornwall. The hope being that all feel unconditional embrace of God's love.

Cornwall Refuge Trust

Cornwall Refuge Trust provides a safe supportive environment for men, women and children who have escaped domestic abuse. They offer support and advice, empowering survivors of domestic abuse for a safer and happier future.

The charity was founded in 1979 by women from local churches who sought to provide a temporary place of safety for women and children fleeing domestic abuse.

The trust has developed over the years and now provides refuge accommodation for up to six women and their children and also supports male victims of domestic abuse, providing refuge accommodation for up to five men and their children.

Cornwall Refuge Trust also provides a 24-hour domestic abuse helpline (01872 225629) and a domestic abuse counselling service (the Waves Project).

The individuals and families who come into refuge are likely to have fled their home with short notice and therefore often arrive with little more than they are wearing.

Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum

The team from the Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum have been the main partners in the work of Challenge Poverty Week 2023. A big thank you to Cornwall VSF for all the organisational and practical support in making the Conference such a powerful event in raising awareness, as well as their help in arranging some of the visits to the organisations participating in the week. Also, with help in preparing the Report.



Diocese of Truro

The staff at Church House have put together the 2023 Cornish Christmas Giving Catalogue. The catalogue features 15 Food Banks and 20 Community Projects and organisations, to ask for donations to their work helping and supporting the most disadvantaged, the homeless and those suffering poverty.



DISC Newquay

DISC (Drop in & Share Centre) Newquay works closely with agencies, organisations and concerned individual in the Newquay area to help vulnerable people who are either homeless or in danger of becoming homeless.

DISC offers food and clothing for immediate needs, plus longer term support, advice and signposting services, helping those in need to engage productively with the agencies who can help them move forward in life.

DISC is a Christian charity made up of volunteers from various churches in Newquay who have the heart and passion to serve the community, helping those who are disadvantaged, homeless and in need.

The donations we receive will go towards providing things like hot food, tents and sleeping bags.



Falmouth and Penryn welcome Refugee Families

Falmouth and Penryn Welcome Refugee Families was established to deliver the Government's Community Sponsorship scheme which aims to resettle refugee families displaced by the Syrian war.

We provide support and resources to enable refugee families to resettle in the Falmouth and Penryn area, including but not limited to language teaching, befriending and social support.

It costs a minimum of £10,000 to help resettle a family. All donations welcome and these will go towards:

- a rent top up for housing;
- paying for interpreters;
- providing English lessons;
- helping to give the family everything they need to become independent, integrated members of our community.

Food Troops

Food Troops provides food education and surplus food parcels for families in and around Redruth.

Our educational food-focused workshops encourage healthy eating within the family, increasing a range of fruit and veg in our diets and bring the community together through good food and sharing of skills and experiences.

We operate from our community kitchen and garden in Redruth where we distribute surplus food otherwise destined for landfill and grow our own range of organic fruit and vegetables to be used in our workshops and cooked up into nutritious meals for people in need.



Glen Carne

Glen Carne provide housing for previously homeless men. They have 35 individual rooms and offer a range help; including benefits advice, counselling, and various activities including art workshops gardening and a gym.

Matt Gavan CEO and the Glen Carne staff team. They registered as a Living Wage Employer.



Growing Links

Growing Links operate the Streetfood Project in Penzance, providing a nutritious meal every evening to people in need, who are often some of the most vulnerable in our communities, particularly those that are suffering from mental illness or are homeless.

This volunteer led service was created to support Penzance's homeless and/or vulnerably housed, as well as families and individuals suffering from poverty. It is not unusual to serve 40 guests a night.

SFP volunteers cook hearty and nutritious food nightly and use the meal service to engage with members of our community who often feel marginalized by their circumstances. Over dinner and a friendly chat, we offer support and advice by linking people up to other agencies in the local community.

SFP, together with volunteers from our Food Store facility, also put together weekly shopping bags of store cupboard essentials for families and individuals in need.

This year Andrew George, Cornwall Councillor, visited the project and was amazed at the work that the team and volunteers were delivering for those in most need.

Donations to Growing Links CIC will ensure we are able to continue to provide these vital services to our community's most vulnerable people.



Harbour Housing

Harbour Housing provides accommodation, advice and support to those experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness across Cornwall. The charity has eight properties and also runs an outreach service to prevent those vulnerably housed in the community from losing their accommodation.

Specialising in harm reduction, Harbour supports people who have complex needs which may prevent them from accessing services elsewhere. They are assisted to develop their independence and eventually move on into their own homes. Harbour's programme of support and activities is varied and includes counselling sessions, art classes, volunteering on its small holding, excursions and educational courses, helping people to find value in their lives and in themselves, and develop their strengths. >



Harbour Housing

Hidden Help

Hidden Help's primary purpose is to help transfer unused and/ or unwanted household goods from those that have them, to those who need them.

The items could be small electricals, white goods, furniture including beds and much more. The Hidden Help team collect the items, store them in a warehouse then deliver them to those individuals and households in need.

Your generous support has enabled Hidden Help to deliver furniture and household goods to those in need, thereby avoiding them going into landfill. Judy Backus, Founder of Hidden Help says: "I am busier than ever in these difficult times, but now have a volunteer with a larger van who helps with deliveries and collections, enabling families to begin again with hope."



Home-start Kernow

Home-Start Kernow offers free, confidential support, friendship and practical help to parents of children under five in Cornwall who are going through a difficult time.

Being a parent, whatever your situation, can be very difficult, especially when children are young. Many parents feel exhausted and overwhelmed by the stresses of family life, particularly if they have little support from family and friends when they need it most. >

> For some parents it's a particular struggle because they are also having to cope with issues such as post-natal depression, their or their child's illness or disability, isolation or multiple births.

That's when parents need support. That's when Home-Start Kernow can help. Support is offered through homevisiting and groups via a network of trained volunteers, all under the supervision of a small staff team.

Liskeard Food Bank

There is much hidden rural poverty in Liskeard and the surrounding areas and the food bank provides food for those in most need. Work is provided in school to help children with recipes for food and cooking and films shown help with meals from the food box. Also food boxes are designed to be what people need, and therefore reduce food waste. The volunteers are involved in the Pathfinder project, which enable them to gain knowledge and experience, to help others.

Also, there is help given with benefit claims and also advice given on what benefits people are entitled to and help given in applying for them.



Newquay Food Bank

Sophie Hosking from Cornwall Council's Neighbourhoods directorate, visited Newquay Foodbank and their wonderful and dedicated volunteers to find out more about what they do. The visit even ended with a hug.

Sophie Hosking "Sadly the work of the Food Bank here is absolutely vital to the local communities here. Providing a lifeline for so many people who find themselves in circumstances nobody wants to be in. On the plus side the joy the enthusiasm and incredible commitment of the wonderful volunteers and staff at Newquay Food Bank has been absolutely uplifting."

Zoe Nixon, Newquay Food Bank Manager "We know that families and households if they can achieve the living wage that would alleviate a lot of pressure and resolve food insecurity for those families." >



Newquay Food Bank

Newquay Orchard

Newquay Orchard work with many volunteers on a number of social programme and enables people to grow good food to assist their health and wellbeing, as well as proving food for the wider community.

Newquay Orchard is a beautiful sevenacre community space for people and for nature. Designed to provide environmental education, employability training and community events; it is an urban greenspace welcome to everyone. Since planting the first apple tree in 2015 Newquay Orchard has worked with over 850 volunteers to build this community hub. It has become a place where people with different backgrounds, experiences, passions and skills can work together outdoors.

Newquay has high levels of social deprivation, poor mental health and physical health. People in the town have also been greatly affected by lack of housing and the Covid-19 pandemic. Demand for the support we offer through our volunteering and training has grown significantly as we have shown Newquay Orchard can help people improve their mental health, regain their confidence, learn new skills and get back to work.

No One goes hungry in Probus

No One Goes Hungry – Probus and Surrounding Area supports people in the mostly rural area between Truro and St Austell.

We operate a community larder four times a week where anyone can drop in to access free food - a mixture of store cupboard essentials, fresh fruit and veg, supermarket surplus and baby supplies. We are also supported with fresh food from a number of local businesses who donate food to the project.

At Christmas we provide hampers containing everything for a fresh Christmas Dinner for those who request one or are nominated to receive one.

We are currently supporting around 150-200 people per week and since the cost of living crisis has hit our numbers are increasing week on week. We work with a local catering company to provide high quality nutritious meals for children during the school holidays.

Ocean Housing

Ocean Housing provide social housing in Cornwall. They have support workers to help with a range of issues, including debt and often signpost to other organisations such as Inclusion Cornwall and We Are With You.



Penzance Churches Together Breakfast Project

A hot meal and drink, safe space and a friendly face at the start of the day can make all the difference to our rough sleepers here in Cornwall. The project is based at Breadline which is the St Petros Centre in Penzance.



Pot Noodle Ministry Falmouth

Steve and Elsie are on The Moor every Thursday evening in Falmouth. They offer a hot pot noodle meal to anyone who is vulnerable and in need. Snuggles the dog plays a key part in the team as the welcomer!



Salvation Army Falmouth

The Salvation Army in Falmouth provides a Support and Drop-in Centre, every Monday and Thursday for those that need help including the homeless. Food and hot drinks are provided with advice on a range of issues including benefits and houses.



Pot Noodle Ministry Newquay Café



Providing hot food and hot drinks for those in need, in Newquay. Also advice and clothing, tents and a listening ear to those affected by poverty who often value someone to share their story with.

Ro Dama

Ro Dama Farm CIC is delivering heritage workshops, weekly gardening drop in sessions, a safe space for nature healing, as well as offering larger community events free at the point of delivery. Set in a nine acre site of rewilded post industrial land our social enterprise offers bespoke solutions to many of society's current problems and dilemmas. Food sovereignty, mindfulness, greater awareness of the natural world, permaculture, social inclusion, skillshare and a revival of heritage skills are all combined in a beautiful safe space.



Support-match Homeshare Service

Offers 10-15 Hours of Support For Householders

Initially Supportmatch works closely with the Householder to identify their day-to-day needs and in turn matches them with a suitable Homesharer with the required skills to form a successful and mutually beneficial living arrangement. Our extensive lists of Homesharers are carefully selected, subject to a very thorough vetting process.

Samaritans Truro

In today's increasingly stressful and hectic world, more and more people are looking to Samaritans as a means of helping them cope with day-to-day issues, crises and disasters.

Run entirely by volunteers and funded from donations and fund raising, Samaritans of Cornwall at Truro is the only branch of this organisation based solely in the Duchy. Last year, volunteers in the branch responded to 52,000 calls for help. We are available via phone, email, text, SMS and face-to-face.

Whatever the caller wants to discuss, Samaritans offer a confidential, nonjudgmental space to explore what is going on. It costs £50,000 a year to run the Truro branch. We rely entirely on donations to maintain our services.



St Petrocs Society

St Petrocs acts as the last line of defence against someone having to sleep outside.

Where people find themselves pushed into homelessness, we act quickly to use our outreach and resettlement services to secure appropriate accommodation.

Our residential services offer accommodation with support to provide a foundation for individuals to build on, towards independent living. We work with the relevant agencies to ensure permanent housing solutions are found and adequate support is provided.

We will ensure that people get access to the support which is their basic human right.



The Gershie Project

The Gershie Project in Falmouth aims to help people who are lonely, socially excluded, rurally isolated and people whose lack of interaction with others is negatively impacting upon their lives.

The project, which is named after one of the founders of the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum, a lady who lived to help others, aims to provide a safe, welcoming space where these people can come together, chat and interact.

The project is staffed by volunteers who provide a welcome, support and signposting for agency services. Where the project needs support is help towards the costs of providing a safe and welcoming place.

Glynn also provides an Outreach service for those that a sleeping rough, providing food and advice and also have distributed a number of Backpack Beds, Tents and donated clothing.

Transformation Cornwall

Strengthening faith based social action in Cornwall.



Treverbyn Hall Community

The demand for food is growing so we try and provide food to single and families, especially during this time of cost of living increases. The project is run by volunteers from our local community offers advice and signposting on a range of issues, including benefits and housing.



Truro Foodbank

Jayne visited the Truro Food Bank to see the amazing work that they undertake providing boxes of food for people in financial crisis. They also have staff from Citizens Advice to help those visiting in need of advice and help. Due to the cost of living crisis, the demand for food parcels has doubled over the past six months, so it is essential to continue to help those in most need.



Ruth Gripper is standing to become an M.P. for the Truro and Falmouth seat, at the next election. Ruth visited Truro Food Bank to meet the team, including their outreach workers, volunteers, and Simon Fann. >



> **Christopher Wells**, Cornwall Councillor attended the Truro Food Bank to understand the issues that those visiting the food bank, face. Christopher was very impressed by the work being done, especially by the large numbers of volunteers, helping people in need of food.



Kate Kennally, CEO of Cornwall Council visits Truro Food Bank to meet Simon Fann, Manager, and understand the issues faced by residents.

Kate said “The cost of living crisis has highlighted that there are many people in Cornwall that are struggling with the day to day cost of living. Nobody in our country should be hungry, and the work that Truro Food Bank does ensures that no child, no adult who is in real food crisis needs to go hungry. That’s fundamental to making sure that people can put their lives back together with the help and support of other organisations. Our Food Banks do vital work to help make sure that everybody in Cornwall feels able to call it their home.”



Truro Homeless Action Group

Truro Homeless Action Group (THAG) provides a warm welcome, food and shelter and a regular and safe place for the homeless and vulnerably housed to meet. Around 30 volunteers regularly give two hours a week to provide free cooked breakfasts, seven days a week, 365 days a year. On Christmas Day a turkey lunch is served and a late brunch on Boxing Day.

This year’s donations will help provide food for the increasing costs of providing the full English breakfasts and Christmas Day and Boxing Day meals. As well as food, THAG also provides toiletries, flasks, razors, thermals in winter, along with socks, gloves, hats, scarves, and underwear.

THAG was first formed over 25 years ago after the night shelter in St George’s Road was closed. THAG is based at the Church Hall of St John the Evangelist in Strangways Terrace, Truro.

THAG is always happy to welcome new volunteers. Email thag@trurotogether.co.uk

Truro Nourish Hub

Truro Nourish Hub (TNH), based at Truro Cathedral, is a new initiative set up to support our local community by enabling people to cook healthy, sustainable and low cost meals.

It aims to create a facility that is accessible to anyone and offer a food provision which not only shares hot healthy meals but provides a safe place for people to meet and engage with their community. It is also a great opportunity for people to connect with each other and for the TNH to signpost them to other organisations that could assist them if required.



Wadebridge Food Bank & Storehouse

Councillor Carol Mould, Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods, visited Bodmin, Camelford, Padstow and Wadebridge Foodbank & Storehouse at their Wadebridge location Wadebridge Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis.



From Andrew Yates 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.

The theme for our conference this year was to raise the profile of the real Living Wage Place campaign for Cornwall. Quite simply ... if everyone in Cornwall was to be paid the Real Living Wage this would immediately reduce the need for many of the emergency services and long-term support that the Voluntary and Community Sector are running.

The conference also included a number of stories from those struggling with poverty and disadvantage by their own lived experiences. We began with a moving set of poems delivered by VIVA who are a community group of residents from Redruth who openly and personally shared their lived experience of poverty – and you can read some of their moving creative writing in the report that follows. Simon Fann, Manager of Truro Foodbank used a powerful visual aid of stones and glass jars to highlight the difference the Real Living Wage. There was encouragement from businessmen such as Patrick Langmaid, owner of Mother Ivey's Holidays and Edward Chapman from the Federation of Small Business who are both staunch advocates of the benefits of paying the Real Living Wage. In the report you can also read the endorsement given by Sophie Hosking of Cornwall Council and Jessie Leigh from Cornwall Chamber of Commerce.

From Simon Fann Truro Food Bank

Any event organiser probably approaches the day with a mixture of hope and trepidation. Hope that the event will go off as planned; trepidation that the message might not be received as intended. Even though the subject we deal with is poverty there was so much hope in evidence at St Michael's Church: the hope that comes from listening to and involving the voice of lived experience, the hope that was evident in the strong support for the real living wage from business representatives and Cornwall Council.

Any trepidation that the message might not be transmitted was clearly misfounded: the message was clear and true – we need to investigate proposals that will alleviate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis, especially for people on the lowest pay.

This event, this report and the visits to key bodies all endorse the campaign for employers across Cornwall to pay the real living wage. This will not solve everything (there will still be a housing crisis) but it will uplift many people into a place of self-determination and more dignified wellbeing. And that must be an outcome worth pursuing.



Dignity for All By Nail Cooper, Church Action on Poverty



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.

A Community Manifesto for Cornwall 2024 By Andrew Yates and Paul Green *Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum*

For the Cornwall Council elections in 2021 Cornwall Poverty Forum helped to co-ordinate a Community Manifesto which was sent to every elected Cornwall Councillor. The Manifesto had proposals from individuals and community groups across Cornwall on how Cornwall could become a fairer and more just place for all who live here. The suggestions were grouped under 8 themed headings. A Community Manifesto for Cornwall – Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum.

As we enter this General Election year CIPF is looking to renew the Manifesto for eventually submitting it to those who will be elected as our Members of Parliament and so guide them in fulfilling their responsibilities on behalf of the people of Cornwall.

CIPF will welcome any proposals so be grateful for any encouragement that can be given to individuals and community groups to submit specific proposals under one or more of the themes below. We are also looking for people who might want to be part of a small team that would co-ordinate each of the themes. Principle tasks would be to seek out proposals for inclusion in that theme and arrange the suggestions into an order for presentation.

So I am writing to ask if you would be willing to be part of one of these small teams and/or to submit proposal(s) we could include in the 2024 Manifesto.

The eight themes are:

- **Theme 1** – Health and Well-being
- **Theme 2** – End Food Poverty
- **Theme 3** – Housing and Homelessness
- **Theme 4** – A Sustainable Economy
- **Theme 5** – Strong Distinctive Communities
- **Theme 6** – A Benefit System that Works
- **Theme 7** – Flourishing Communities for All
- **Theme 8** – Public Services for All

If you are interested or want more information or have the name of someone to suggest being involved please contact me on andrewy@cornwallindependentpovertyforum.com

Real Living Wage for Cornwall By Simon Fann

The next step to move towards a Real Living Wage for Cornwall is for an action group to be accredited by the Living Wage Foundation and that group to plan to encourage businesses of all type and size to commit to paying the real living wage.

We all need to take positive action to help address poverty. In 2024 we will need to continue to work with the Living Wage Foundation and our Cornwall Partners to raise awareness of the benefits of having a Real Living Wage place in Cornwall.

Homelessness by Loic Rich, Cornwall Councillor

Loic is a Cornwall Councillor and a Truro City Councillor and a Trustee of the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum and hopes that 2024 brings improvements to the housing crisis situation in Cornwall, with many living in temporary accommodation, such as Premier Inns and B and B's many often presenting issues with access to school and work and many sleeping on the streets. The housing situation affects people in many ways, including health and wellbeing and relationship breakdowns. >

Homelessness by Loic Rich, Cornwall Councillor [Continued]

> We need to campaign for council housing, but we have to be realistic, and we also have to campaign for a system that allow the building of council houses. We also have to work in partnership with other social housing providers in Cornwall.

Also, establishing a Cornish Assembly could enable Cornwall to make its own rules, policies and decisions, that would help address the lack of housing in Cornwall.

Loic has established and is also Secretary to the Truro Community Land Trust, that enables communities to develop and provide truly affordable housing, for local people.

Challenging Poverty by Paul Green, Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum

The Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum (CIPF) will continue to help those that find themselves in need and also provide project development support to projects and organisations who aim to provide help to those in need. Also, CIPF provides financial support to individuals who are in most need, through the Crisis Fund.

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

Cornwall's cost of living and housing and homelessness crisis are worse than the national average, as is food poverty and levels of low incomes. People living in poverty have little chance to increase their incomes whilst often having to pay out higher costs. Poverty also has serious impacts on physical and mental health as well as issues of social isolation due to poor transport options

Challenge Poverty Week 2023 has been delivered in partnership with the Cornwall VSF and is part of a National Initiative by Church Action on Poverty and has a focus on Dignity for All and Lived Experiences. For those with lived experiences of poverty and social exclusion are often the best people in a position to develop solutions. Challenge Poverty Week celebrates the excellent work that is being done by a range of voluntary and community sector organisations, in helping those struggling with poverty. Projects and Organisations invite local leaders and M.P.'s to visit their work to gain an insight into the work they do and also into the reasons so many people are suffering from poverty. There is also a commitment to work to uphold people's dignity and speak out for a just and fair solution to the ongoing cost of living crisis.

A Message from Kate Kennally, CEO of Cornwall Council

The cost of living crisis has highlighted that there are many people in Cornwall that are struggling with the day to day cost of living. Nobody in our country should be hungry, and the work that Truro Food Bank does ensures that no child, no adult who is in real food crisis needs to go hungry. That's fundamental to making sure that people can put their lives back together with the help and support of other organisations. Our Food Banks do vital work to help make sure that everybody in Cornwall feels able to call it their home.

Special thanks

Special thanks go to Justin, Laura and Ellen from Cornwall Voluntary Sector Forum for their work with the Real Living Wage for Cornwall Conference, Organisations Participating in the Week and Visits and the preparation of the Challenge Poverty Week 2023 Report.

Many thanks also to Cornwall Council as a significant supporter of both the conference and the week with a number of senior leader and elected member visits, as well as being represented and endorsed in the final report.

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:

<https://cornwallindependentpovertyforum.com>

'Tackling social inclusion in Cornwall'

Charity No 1183177

