



Penwith Pact

Putting local people and communities in the driving seat

To the prospective parliamentary candidate for the...[name of political party]... in the parliamentary constituency of ...[St Ives and Penzance]

We as your local constituents have come together to put forward a set of key pledges we ask you to make. These are divided into three parts: Code of Conduct, Power to local people and communities, and electoral reform.

Part one: Code of Conduct

Too often our MPs are outposts of Westminster in Cornwall rather than the voice of Cornwall at Westminster - here to sell a party line rather than genuinely to listen to local concerns. We wish to come to a new agreement with you to develop a stronger, more accountable relationship to the constituency you serve. If elected as our MP, will you commit to the following pledges?

1. My first responsibility is to my constituents and my country, not to my party nor Westminster based interest groups; to those who voted for me and those who did not. I am here to serve all my constituents.
2. I will hold an open public meeting in my constituency every year and report back to my constituents on the progress I have made in fulfilling the policy pledges to which I have agreed in Parts two and three of this document as well as any other policy commitments I have made at election time. A record of the meeting will be posted on the internet for all to see.
3. I will regularly seek out the views of local civil society organisations who work for the benefit of the community, especially those who work with the most marginalised communities, in order to ensure that all voices are heard.
4. I will seek to work constructively with other MPs within and outside my party to bring about real devolution of power to the people I serve, as set out in Parts two and three.

Part Two: Power to local people and communities giving them a real say over services that matter to them

Brexit was about 'taking back control', a slogan that answered to a pervading sense of powerlessness felt by many. But given Cornwall's circumstances both 'leavers' and 'remainers' arguably have more to gain by taking back control from Westminster than from the EU.

A restored national sovereignty is meaningless if Westminster continues to dictate terms and conditions on issues that rightfully belong at the local level. National sovereignty must be

complemented by local sovereignty, with central and local government working as equal partners. Decisions should be made with our agreement, not imposed from above.

A new Devolution and Localism Bill must:

- **Place local government on an independent constitutional footing**, with its own rights and powers on issues from planning, the environment, housing and healthcare to local schools, employment and training, transport, free from the constant interference of Whitehall.
- **Secure proper funding for local government** including social care provision. An agreed formula must also include the redistribution of funds between richer and poorer regions such as Cornwall.
- **Promote community empowerment**. Real power for local government must come with full accountability to the communities they serve. Consultation must come with a real decision-making role by local people in shaping the services that matter to them. Social enterprises, local businesses, BIDs, environmental groups, residents' associations, youth, voluntary and charitable organisations all have a role to play.

Part three Electoral reform

The EU Referendum showed that when people know that their vote counts, they will come out and vote in large numbers. We urgently need electoral reform. Our present First-Past-The-Post wastes millions of votes and awards disproportionate power to governing parties based on a minority of votes. This is true for both Conservative and Labour governments over the last 30 years and at the last election the Conservatives gained less than half the total vote in Cornwall but all six constituency seats.

We demand electoral reform so that elections are run on the principle of Proportional Representation at both local and national level in order to ensure that seats match votes and no vote is wasted.

A Copy of this Compact signed by me as your MP, shall be put on my website for all to see