

Dear Town and Parish Councillors,

We are writing to provide an update on the development of Cornwall's new Destination Organisation, and to ask town and parish councils to consider providing financial support to help sustain this work through 2026.

As you know, the previous organisation, Visit Cornwall CIC, entered voluntary liquidation in late 2025. Since then, Cornwall Council and industry partners have worked together to stabilise activity, maintain key channels, and begin shaping a future model for a new, sustainable destination organisation.

Through a combination of private sector contributions and Cornwall Council support, funding has been secured to maintain core activity through to the end of June. I have recently been appointed as Project Lead to take this work forward.

This has ensured continuity, but further support is now needed to maintain momentum and deliver the next phase.

Why this matters

A strong DMO plays a vital role in ensuring that Cornwall remains competitive, visible, and responsibly managed as a destination. It provides coordinated marketing, strategic planning, destination branding, research, visitor data, emergency support (think of the recent storms), and advocacy at regional and national levels. Without a unified body representing Cornwall's interests, our towns and villages risk losing visibility in an increasingly competitive marketplace, and businesses continue to suffer from rising taxes, costs and constant policy changes.

We are not solely about attracting more visitors. It is about attracting the right visitors, at the right times of year, and encouraging behaviour that benefits communities while protecting Cornwall's unique natural and cultural heritage. At the start of this exercise, the steering group focused on key pillars they felt were vital to the new body. With this, a properly funded DMO can:

- Promote year-round tourism to reduce seasonal pressures and create stable employment
- Support sustainable travel initiatives and responsible visitor messaging
- Help manage footfall in sensitive areas
- Strengthen local events and cultural programmes
- Secure external funding and partnerships
- Provide data and insight to support local planning decisions

The role of Town and Parish Councils

Town and parish councils are on the front line of both the benefits and the pressures associated with tourism. You maintain public spaces, manage toilets and car parks, support community facilities, and respond directly to residents' concerns. Financially contributing to the new DMO shows a future commitment that councils would be investing in a partnership with the visitor economy and working with us to create strategic frameworks that help balance economic benefit with community wellbeing.

Public investment, even at a modest level, strengthens the DMO's ability to leverage additional funding and provides reassurance that the organisation is working in the best

interests of communities, not solely commercial operators. We are hoping this is something you can consider for any unallocated funds from 2025/26.

For your residents, a well-managed visitor economy means:

- Stronger local employment opportunities
- Thriving town centres
- Improved infrastructure supported by visitor spend
- Greater cultural vibrancy
- Increased funding opportunities for community projects, town and village events

Without proper coordination and investment, tourism does not disappear, it simply becomes fragmented and unmanaged. The cost of unmanaged tourism can be far greater than the cost of strategic oversight.

What funding will support

We are now seeking contributions to help sustain activity through the remainder of 2026, ensuring there is continuity while the new organisation is established.

Funding will directly support:

- Ongoing project leadership to progress governance, funding models and the establishment of the new organisation
- Continued sector engagement and coordination
- Maintenance and management of Visit Cornwall's digital and communication channels (including website and social platforms)
- Delivery of core marketing and messaging to ensure Cornwall remains visible and competitive as a destination

The ask

We are asking town and parish councils to consider contributing £500 + VAT (or more where possible) as an investment in Cornwall's visitor economy.

All funds will be administered by Cornwall Council as the accountable body and will be ringfenced solely for this work. Full transparency on expenditure will be provided.

Looking ahead

This is a critical transition period. Momentum has been maintained, but continued support is essential to ensure progress is not lost and that a new, effective destination organisation can be established.

If you would like to discuss this further, or explore how your council can support, please do get in touch.

Thank you for your continued commitment to Cornwall.

Kind regards,

David Rodda – Truro City Council (on behalf of Town and Parish Councils)

Andy Jasper – Eden Project

Euan Rodger – Visit Isles of Scilly

Katie Warren – Cornwall Self-Catering Collective (CSC)

Keith Southwell – Cornwall Association of Tourist Attractions (CATA)

Laura Plum – St Austell Brewery

Linda Winstanley – Tourist Information Centres/Area Associations

Patrick Langmaid – British Homes & Holiday Parks Association (BH&HPA)

Ruth Huxley – Great Cornish Food

Veryan Palmer – Cornwall Hospitality Collective

Will Ashworth – Cornwall Large Hotels Group

Tim Fryer – Project Lead

On behalf of the Visit Economy Development Group