

In view of the amount of work put in by CKFM to establish the viability of a new commercial radio station for CORNWALL and CORNISH interests, I feel very strongly that a radio profile based on general west country interests would NOT serve the interest of the LOCAL community. A Cornish station would be able to reflect the needs of a mainly agrarian community which has traditionally been isolated from mainland influence, and which depends to a large extent on tourism. Certainly the South Hams has areas of natural beauty, but the appeal is at a different level; the tourist industry has been developed to a much greater degree in the Dorset - Devon area. What Cornwall needs is the opportunity to develop its own tourist profile; to maintain its peculiar identity without over-commercialisation.

Any station based in Plymouth or North Devon could not possibly support this. Their primary objective is to make money, and they would naturally give as much time as possible to their local (Devon) sponsors. Why should they dedicate resources to supporting Cornish interests to the detriment of their own businesses?

There is also a significant difference in the demography of Devon and Cornwall. Cornwall is the poorest county in the UK according to some sources. Whether this is true or not is open to debate, but the fact remains that the major allocations of grant funds and improvement initiatives go to other parts of "the west country". In the absence of direct funding at an adequate level Cornwall must "go it alone", and to this end a broadcasting station concerned with local interests and information is a "must".

The Managing Director of CKFM has had an enormous amount of experience in local radio, and I cannot see that any purpose would be served by relaying existing programmes from a station maybe 120 miles distant to a Cornish audience.

The only option is to grant a broadcast licence to a station dedicated to Cornish interests, run by someone who knows the business.

Can we therefore look forward to getting CKFM on air without further delay? I should add that my organisation is totally independent of CKFM, but we are represented on various community projects.

John Bengé
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