



The Future Of...Work

The Panel

Chair



Harry Pitts – Institute of Cornish Studies, University of Exeter

A proud Cornishman, Harry is Director of Business Engagement & Innovation for Humanities & Social Sciences at the University of Exeter's Cornwall Campus in his hometown of Penryn. His academic research and writing explores the politics and economics of fairer work futures in local and global context. As part of the Institute of Cornish Studies Social & Economic Research Unit, Harry leads a programme of research and business support focused on "Good Work" in Cornwall as part of two Shared Prosperity Fund projects, Evolve Futures and Entrepreneurial Futures. He is also involved in the 'Fairer' strand of the Cornwall & Isles of Scilly Civic Universities Agreement. Harry is a Fellow of the Institute for the Future of Work, a Co-Investigator of the Economic & Social Research Council Centre for Sociodigital Futures, Secretary of the British Universities Industrial Relations Association, and an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at University of Bristol Business School.

Speakers



Charli Styles – Future Skills Institute, Truro & Penwith College

Charli Styles has worked for Truro and Penwith College since 2016; overseeing the College's Adult Learning, Apprenticeships, Business Partnerships and Externally-Funded Projects. An experienced bid-writer, Charli has secured c.£30 million of investment across funding streams, including the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, European Social Fund, Office for Students HE Capital Grants, MHCLG Getting Building Fund and Department for Education Local Skills Improvement Fund, Skills Bootcamps and Strategic Development Fund, and managed the consequent delivery of capital works, capacity building, curriculum development, employability, re-training and youth work projects. Prior to her time at Truro and Penwith College, Charli worked in partnership co-ordination and widening participation for the Combined Universities in Cornwall partnership and has also worked in management, research and information, advice and guidance roles in Careers, Welfare to Work and Employability within both the private and voluntary and community sectors. Cornish born and bred, Charli studied History at the University of Warwick before returning to the county to start her professional career and raise her family.



Jessie Leigh – Cornwall Chamber of Commerce

Jessie is a passionate champion of good work, a goal which has deep personal resonance after growing up in Cornwall during the 1980s with first-hand experience of how economic recession impacts people's lives and livelihoods. Jessie returned home to Cornwall in 2017 after leading a series of major public service reforms over a decade of senior leadership in Whitehall - transforming the funding system for local councils to keep the business rates they collect as an incentive for growth; overhauling support for 'Generation Rent' including establishing an £11bn Government guarantees and loans to kickstart commercial investment in private rented homes; and delivering the 2015 manifesto commitment to support working parents of 3 and 4 year olds with 30 hours free childcare. As Cornwall Council's Director of Strategy and Engagement to 2022, Jessie championed a culture of listening and working with residents and partners, securing major improvements in public trust and satisfaction scores; and led delivery of the first non-mayoral devolution deal. Jessie is an active contributor to regional economic development as a Director of Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, and to community development as Chair of Cornwall Neighbourhoods for Change.



Joanie Willett – Institute of Cornish Studies, University of Exeter

Joanie Willett is Associate Professor in Politics in the department of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Exeter, Cornwall. Joanie is co-director of the Institute of Cornish Studies, where she contributes decades of research into society and economy in Cornwall. Joanie's work looks at economic development and identities in rural areas and she draws on learnings from across the UK, mainland Europe, and the US. Over recent years she has been particularly interested in how local people find work in their localities. This was the subject of her recent book, *Affective Assemblages and Local Economies* in which she examined how people in Cornwall, and South West Virginia (USA) understood their local economies. A proud Cornishwoman, the research that the Institute of Cornish Studies is doing around work, skills, and housing feels deeply personal to Joanie who is fascinated how living in Cornwall can be the best life for some people, and desperate hardship for others. There are many structures and processes that maintain these inequalities, which Joanie (together with Lucie Akerman) are exploring in their part of this Shared Prosperity Funded project.



Phil Johnston – Celtic Sea Power

Phil is currently working on strategic development of floating offshore wind in the Celtic Sea. As part of the Cornwall FLOW Accelerator programme (ERDF-funded), Phil is focusing on development of a sustainable regional industry and a workforce for FLOW that is rooted in the region. Phil originally graduated in

environmental sciences before an early career in marine ecology research. He then spent several years at sea as an offshore environmental consultant, primarily on oil and gas exploration surveys but also on offshore wind developments and navy frigates. Phil then moved onshore to manage ocean monitoring programmes before switching to business development. His experience here involved commercialising one of the UK's first uncrewed surface vessels (USVs) from early testing through to market readiness.



Simon Fann, Truro Food Bank

As Truro Foodbank Manager since summer 2019, Simon has operational and strategic responsibilities for the provision of emergency food in mid-Cornwall whilst addressing reasons why people need to use foodbanks. A member of the Cornwall Independent Poverty Forum and Cornwall Food Access Alliance, Simon is also chair of the Cornwall Living Wage Place steering group. This group is a public and private sector partnership working towards Cornwall being accredited by the Living Wage Foundation as a place where employers are urged to pay the real Living Wage and to not impose adverse working conditions which force those on the lowest pay into reliance on charitable aid.



This event is funded by the Entrepreneurial Futures project, a £5.6m investment in research, development and innovation (RD&I) activity for businesses based in Cornwall & Isles of Scilly led by the University of Exeter. This project is funded by the UK Government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Cornwall Council has been chosen by Government as a Lead Authority for the fund and is responsible for monitoring the progress of projects funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.