

“Feed Cornwall” – Cornish musicians and entertainers record special song and video to help support struggling local families

In 1984 a group of musicians released a song which has since sold over two million copies across the world and raised more than £150m to help feed starving people. 36 years later it is Cornwall’s turn – with a host of well-known local musicians and entertainers joining together to record a special Cornish version of the original Feed the World (Do They Know it’s Christmas) charity single to help increase awareness of the problems caused by food poverty in the county and raise money to support struggling local families.

Recorded at the CUBE recording studio in Perranporth in just eight hours by the ‘CHAOS Collective’, including local singers Mollie Hocking, Bailey Tomkinson and Will Keating, entertainer Johnny Cowling, Don Gardner from the Camborne, Pool and Redruth Foodbank, Josh Curnow, Susie Mac, Matthew Thompson, Rev Andrew Yates and radio presenter Tiffany Truscott, together with staff from the CHAOS Group and local band The Stowes who provided the backing track, the **“Feed Cornwall”** song and accompanying video, is available to watch at www.chaosgroupcornwall.co.uk/feed-cornwall .

Everyone watching the video is invited to make a donation if they can afford to towards the project at <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/feed-cornwall>. All the money raised is being ring fenced to support food banks and other projects to tackle food poverty in Cornwall.

Donations are being managed by the Cornwall Community Foundation who will work alongside local organisations, including the Cornwall Food Access Alliance, Transformation Cornwall and the CHAOS Group, to ensure funding is targeted at helping vulnerable people.

The idea of creating a Cornish version of the iconic Band Aid song came from the food team at the Truro based CHAOS Group, just two weeks ago.

As well as delivering a wide range of community focused services across Cornwall, the organisation plays an active role in the redistribution of supermarket surplus to people in food insecurity.

Babs and a colleague were carrying trays of produce into their building at St Clement ready to put into food boxes when they heard the original song playing on the CHAOS Radio station.

“We were singing along to the chorus when we thought we should do our own version to raise money to feed more people in Cornwall over Christmas” said Babs.

Staff at the CHAOS Group were already very aware of the issues created by food poverty in Cornwall, with the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic leading many more people to seek support from food banks. During the past few months CHAOS staff, working with a range of partners and volunteers, have provided support to many hundreds of local families.

Last month a new community partnership scheme set up as response to Covid with members of the Threemilestone and Gloweth Community Volunteer Group helped to ensure that 500 local children and families had food to eat during half term.

At CHAOS good ideas move very quickly. Excited by the potential of making their own version of the song, Babs called in key members of her team, including Nathan Hunkin, Head of Digital at CHAOS, to discuss how to turn the *“crazy idea “* into reality.

Following a few hours of frantic phone calls and emails, music producer Gareth Young had volunteered the use of the CUBE studio to record the track, and a number of local singers and musicians had pledged their support.

“It was truly crazy “ said Nathan. “Just as with the original Band Aid singles, everyone we spoke to wanted to help.

“Food poverty is a huge issue across Cornwall, impacting on many areas of people’s lives. One of the unexpected results of the pandemic has been to bring local communities back together and it has been amazing to see people who had not previously known their neighbours now looking out for each other. “

With the cast confirmed, the enthusiastic group of volunteers spent Sunday, 30 November at the CUBE recording studio.

“I am very proud that the CUBE is supporting this fantastic project “ said Gareth Young. “I was delighted to be able to offer our help when Babs explained what she wanted to do. I would encourage everyone in Cornwall to watch the video and make a donation to help local people who are in need”.

“It all happened very quickly as we were recording with 10 days of singing the chorus! “ added Babs. “There was an incredible atmosphere at the CUBE studio when the recording, and we are all very proud of the final result”.

As well as singing on the track, Cornish entertainer Johnny Cowling was delighted to be asked to act as the compere for the recording.

“It’s been a very tricky year, both emotionally and financially, for many people “he said. “To be asked to be part of this project, which is going to help out our very own here in Cornwall, was a privilege”.

As with the original Feed the World event, it was decided to record a video to accompany the launch of the song to give members of the public the opportunity to see behind the scenes of the production. Filmed and edited by the CHAOS Digital team, the film will be available to view on the Chaos Group website following the official launch.

“It seems incredible to have produced this song and video in such a short period of time “ said Babs. “We could not have done it without the fantastic support from Gareth and the singers and musicians who gave up their time to help and I would like to thank everyone who has taken part”.

“Every penny of the money we receive from people watching the song and video and donating to the project will be ring fenced to help people in Cornwall. This will include providing food boxes for people in immediate need, as well as supporting other more long term food related projects.

Since the introduction of the first lockdown in March CHAOS has provided food aid to hundreds of families across Cornwall through its Food2Share scheme. At the height of lockdown the scheme was providing food boxes to up to 750 families a week.

One of the key principles of the Food2Share scheme is to encourage people to help others while helping themselves. This has seen people coming to CHAOS in need of food support who can drive

being encouraged to collect a box for themselves and then deliver boxes to others on their way home.

“We know that lots of people were already struggling to cope before Covid 19 and the impact of the pandemic has led to many other families seeking help “ said Babs “ We want to build on the Food2Share principle and help people to escape the poverty cycle by helping themselves and others.

“By working in partnership with other organisations we can use money raised by the song and video to tackle a wider range of social issues and make a real difference to the lives of many more people. “

The CHAOS Group is a key member of the Cornwall Food Access Alliance which has links with a wide range of Cornish organisations and community projects working to alleviate food poverty.

Chaired by Rev Andrew Yates, the alliance, whose vision is *“Of Cornwall as a place where no one goes hungry”* is delighted to be supporting the “Feed Cornwall” project.

“The CFAA is a recently formed network with the Voluntary Sector Forum bringing together the larger infrastructure organisations and the smaller grass roots groups that are doing much in their local neighbourhoods helping those in difficulties “ said Rev Yates.

“It is only by working together that our vision of Cornwall as a place where no one goes hungry can be achieved. This recording is a great example of this vital co-operation”.

Another enthusiastic supporter of the project is Councillor Sally Hawken, Cornwall Council’s Portfolio Holder for Children, Well Being & Public Health.

“Some families in Cornwall have been struggling for a while, add to this a global pandemic and the impact is quite profound. “ she said. **“This is a great example though of how the community spirit of Cornwall can bring everyone together and to support those that need it most, during these difficult times.”**

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