

Unit 2: Topic 5c The UK’s Evolving Human Landscape—Devon/Cornwall case study

What are the challenges and opportunities of rural change?

The challenges of availability and affordability of housing, decline in primary employment, provision of healthcare and education and how they affect quality of life (IMD) for some rural groups. New income and economic opportunities are created by rural diversification and tourism projects may have environmental impacts.

Affordable housing

Property prices are rising in rural areas because they are attractive places for different groups of people. Older people who want to retire to the countryside are attracted by the peaceful, slower pace of life in a pleasant environment. People who work in urban areas also want to live in the countryside and commute to work. Properties are larger with outdoor space suitable for young families in a pleasant, safer rural environment. These two groups buying homes push up prices beyond the reach of local people so the challenge is to provide affordable housing for locals in rural areas



Services

Bus services in rural areas have declined as have schools, doctors surgeries and shops. 35% of rural villages had no food shop, 76% no doctors and 85% had no chemist. Schools are expensive to run but villages campaign that schools are at the centre of a community. Services for teenagers are also lacking with long distances needing to be travelled for their education, entertainment and recreation and as such many complain about their quality of life.



Transport

On average 65% of households in Britain have regular use of a car and is higher in rural areas. Increased car ownership reduces the need for bus services so fares increase and frequency is reduced resulting in fewer passengers in a vicious circle.



How do we measure the quality of life using the IMD?

The IMD covers seven main types of deprivation which are weighted based on the governments levels of importance:

- 1. income deprivation (23%)
- 2. employment deprivation (23%)
- 3. health deprivation and disability (13%)
- 4. Education, skills and training (13%)
- 5. barriers to housing and services (9%)
- 6. crime (9%)
- 7. living environment (9%)

What is rural diversification?

Many farmers are finding it hard to make a living from traditional food production alone so develop methods of income generation from their farm whilst still farming or by transforming their farms into a range of completely different businesses for example:

Products	Outlets	Tourism	Leisure	Development	Energy
Organic crops	PYO Farm	B&B Caravan	Shooting Off road	Barn conversions	Wind turbines
Different animals	shop Farmers market	camp site café	driving Paint-balling	Industrial units	solar farms



What are the advantages and disadvantages of rural diversification?

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Accommodation	Relatively cheap, substantial income	Village loses character, housing affordability
Leisure	Income, secure income, local employment	Footpath erosion, traffic congestion, crowding, cars parked on verges

What are the challenges and opportunities of rural change in Cornwall?

What is Cornwall like?

540 000 people live in Cornwall with 4 million tourists visiting it each year. It has a 700km coastline with sandy beaches. It has one of the UK’s fastest growing populations.

What are the issues in Cornwall?

Length of county – 140km from one end to another. Transport is very slow – no motorway and trains take 2 hours.

No large population centres – largest only has 23 000 people. No knowledge economy to raise incomes so Cornwall has the UK’s lowest weekly wage (£340 compared to £660 in London). Much employment is seasonal, part-time & low wage

What are Healthcare and services like in Cornwall?

West Cornwall is one of the UK’s most deprived areas. It has a high percentage of elderly people, few services and lowest average wage.

Only 38% of villages have a doctor’s surgery & most are only open once a week. 70% of villages have buses but they only run 3 -4 times a day

Main hospital in Truro but for many people it is over 30 miles away – difference between life & death

Young people have to travel 30 miles for 6th form education/ training & travel costs are high

What are the Index of Multiple Deprivation measures in Cornwall?

Income – Low
Employment – medium
Health & disability – low
Education, skills & training – low
Housing & services – very high
Crime – very low
Living environment – very high

What Primary industry exists in Cornwall?

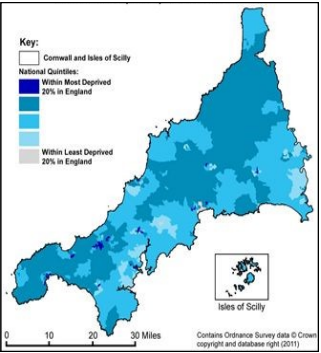
Decline of primary economy had left the county with few permanent, full-time jobs
Farming – number of cattle farms has fallen by 60% since 2000 due to falling milk prices
Fishing – stocks in decline due to overfishing by UK/ EU fishing boats

China clay quarrying – one employed 10 000 people in 1960s but TNCs have moved overseas for cheaper clay
Tin mining – collapse of tin prices has meant closure of Cornwall’s last tin mine in 1998

What was the Biggest IT move in history?

In 2003, the Metrological Office (responsible for the weather) moved 1200 people from its’ office in London to the Exeter in East Devon. It meant new jobs for the rural region as not all staff moved. The local council estimates that the move has brought an extra £74million annually to East Devon through the multiplier effect. This is due to: Money spent moving house e.g. grants towards moving costs
Regular weekly spending e.g. shopping, leisure, supermarkets
Why choose East Devon?

Land rental is much cheaper £9 per sq ft (£90 per sq ft in London)
Daily flights from Exeter Airport to London, UK & Europe
Good train links & road links (M5)



What problems were created by the movement of people?

Population change – in 2015, 5000 migrants moved there from other parts of the UK. It is also sunny and accessible. Part of the increase is due to retirement migration and some is family migrants. Pressure on housing – 2/3 of Devon is classed as an area of natural beauty (AONB) which makes planning permission hard to get which pushes up house prices. Average incomes are 10% below natural average but housing is only 3% cheaper here so more affordable housing is needed. Pressure on leisure and recreation – many attractions are located close by – Jurassic Coastline (Swanage!) and Dartmoor national park. 15 million-day trips are made every year. This puts pressure on the roads and environmentally sensitive areas.

How has farming changed in Cornwall? Diversification

With farm incomes falling, farmers make an income in alternative ways. This is called diversification whereby they do a wider range of activities to enable a farm to survive:

Farm shops (e.g. Trevillyn)– 3 families developed a farm shop using a £200 000 grant from the UK/EU government. Shops sell meat and vegetables which has created 12 full-time jobs and 8 part-time jobs. They have increased from £30 000 income per year to £700 000 per year. Every £10 spent in farm shops becomes worth £23 in the local economy through the multiplier effect.

Tourist accommodation – barn conversions and camp sites can give farms additional money. A few farms have also invested in log cabins, health spas (e.g. Merlin Farm Cottages) and swimming pools. While this has increased tourism, it has led to a reduction in nesting places for birds such as swallows and owls

What are some of the opportunities in rural areas? What are their costs and benefits?

Project	Benefits	Costs
Eden Project— tourist attraction in Cornwall	Visitors spending on accommodation and meals generated £1 billion to the Cornish economy. It employed 700 people and generated 3000 jobs elsewhere	Sustainability aims have fallen short. It promotes use of cycle paths and reduce entry costs to anyone who comes by transport but 97% of visitors arrive by car. Visitor numbers are also falling.
Diversification—Farm shops Example Lobb’s Farm Shop	It has created 12 full time jobs and 8 part time jobs. The turn over is now £700,000 per year. The shop also educates people about sustainable farming. Local businesses that are supported creates the multiplier effect.	If more farms take this route of diversification, it could mean less farmers focus on farming food for the UK, threatening our food security.
Diversification—Tourist Accommodation	They have invested in leisure complexes such as spas, cabins, play areas and swimming pools could attract families.	Increasing number of barn conversions lead to less habitats for nesting birds such as owls and swallows.