

Rural challenges

Rural areas that are a long way from urban centres face a number of challenges, especially with employment, housing and access to services.

Case study

Cornwall

Cornwall is the most south-westerly county in England and is very popular as a tourist destination. However, life in Cornwall can be difficult.

Employment

Traditional sources of primary employment in Cornwall have declined.

- **Farming:** due to supermarkets cutting the price for milk, many dairy farmers have sold their business to larger companies and there are now 60 per cent fewer dairy farms in Cornwall.
- **Fishing:** EU fishing quotas and overfishing have meant a shortage of fish stocks, causing many fishermen in Cornwall to struggle to make a living.
- **China clay quarrying:** due to competition from cheaper china clay from abroad, many quarries have closed and jobs have been lost.

Most jobs in Cornwall are now in tourism. However, these jobs are low-paid and seasonal. Wages in Cornwall are the lowest in the country (about £320 per week compared to a UK average of £400 per week).

It is hard to attract new businesses to Cornwall for two main reasons:

- 1 **Accessibility** – Cornwall has no motorways and one main railway line. This means it takes a long time to get to Cornwall and even longer to travel across the whole county.
- 2 **Lack of large settlements** – there are no big towns in Cornwall, meaning no large population centres with potential employees. Many young people leave Cornwall in search of jobs elsewhere, to find more opportunities.



Figure 14 Map of Cornwall (roads and main towns)