



Observatory PASCAL

Place Management, Social Capital and Learning Regions

PURE Regional Profile

DEVON & CORNWALL, UNITED KINGDOM

Appendix 1

Region:

Devon and Cornwall, England

Principal PURE contact:

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Name of main collaborating region:

Devon and Cornwall

Lead members of the Regional Co-coordinating Group are:

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*Suggested members of your Regional Co-ordinating Group (RCG) (between 3 and 5 Persons):
Name, organisation and email:*

Professor Julian Beer, Director of Research and Enterprise and Pro Vice-Chancellor

Suggested Peer Reviewer from region:

'Identity' of Region (eg. governmental admin. region; special development zone; informal 'working reality' region, etc)

The project area is the Peninsula of Devon and Cornwall, two neighbouring counties in the South West of England with a combined population of 1,664,500 people. Both counties have a rural element and a strong maritime heritage. Whilst Cornwall shares a county boundary with Devon, Devon also shares a border with Somerset and Dorset to the east. The Peninsula area embraces numerous heritage sites, national parks and some of the nation's finest tourist sites.

For the purposes of this project we are focusing on the Counties of Devon and Cornwall which share significant common features and have similar challenges and ambitions. There is also a degree of synergy in terms of desired benefits from the PURE PASCAL project and much of the cutting edge research, knowledge transfer and economic activity is across the Peninsula.

In terms of administration, Cornwall has a single unitary authority whilst Devon consists of 8 local government districts and 2 separately administered Unitary Authorities. Both Devon and Cornwall are actively engaged with the South West Regional Development Authority (SWRDA) and the Government Office of the South West (GOSW).

REGIONAL PORTRAIT

(Please list key issues of interest and relevance to PURE)

(i) Approx. population and any key features: (e.g. new migrant numbers)

The combined population of the Peninsula is 1.66 million of which 1,135,000 are in Devon and 529,500 in Cornwall. There is significant contrast in terms of population density: whilst Cornwall is the second largest county in England, it has 224,000 households and the lowest population density. Although there has been a 5.5% increase in population in Cornish towns between 2002 and 2007, just under a third of the (30%) of the population live in the 6 largest towns and just over half (54%) of the county's total population live in the 20 main towns. Towns in the county tend to be smaller than the rest of the South West region. All 20 of Cornwall's towns have a higher percentage of their population of retirement age (higher than national average).

Devon's population has been growing faster than the national average and is projected to further increase in the next decade. The county has a high (and growing) proportion of people above pension age which implies a longer term drop in economically active persons.

Some key statistics are as follows:

- There are 20,635 VAT registered businesses (2008) in Cornwall and 32,620 in Devon (of which 14% are in Plymouth).
- 9.1% of Devon's working population have no formal qualifications compared to 11.2% in Cornwall. Both are above the regional average (9%).
- The Working age benefit claimant rates for both Devon (12%) and Cornwall (15%) are also above the regional average (13.2%).
- In terms of gross average annual pay, Cornwall (£21,522) is lower than Devon (22,815) and both are lower than the regional average (£24,531).

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There is likely to be a need for more house building given major shortages of affordable homes (which particularly affects local first time buyers in Cornwall) and the projected increase in population for Devon.

(ii) Other essential geographical features:

Devon and Cornwall have a large coastline with associated tourism and fishing. There is also a significant farming and rural economy as well as major Heritage Coastal sites and Dartmoor and Exmoor national parks. The contrast between dense urban locations (Plymouth, Exeter) and small rural towns is substantial in terms of transport, access to services, amenities, education and employment opportunities. In urban locations, the transport issues are less about accessibility and frequency of services and more to do with congestion and pollution. This is typified by major congestion on popular tourist routes in summer time.

Preserving areas of scientific interest and outstanding natural beauty requires a balance between protecting the environment and ecology as well as recognising the need and economic benefits derived from tourism. The region is home of the international tourist attraction, the Eden project, which aims to promote sustainability and environmental impacts. Examples of how this is being implanted include the programme of educational projects with schools, the exploration of new low carbon technologies, research projects, climate related events/conferences and training sessions and public events (e.g. the first ever 'Green car Show'). The Eden Project also runs an annual Climate Revolution conference (for KS 3 children) and climate education workshops throughout the year.

The other main consequence of the 'rurality' is the distance and peripherality from the rest of England – the time taken to access and these locations which is crucial to local businesses in terms of accessing markets.

(iii) Economy, industries and employment features:

The Peninsula economy has a mix of rural, tourist/seasonal jobs, significant public sector employment (Plymouth City Council being the largest employer) and a substantial quantity of small and medium sized enterprises. There has been a gradual decline in traditional sources of employment (fishing, Royal Navy and dockyards) which used to play a major role in terms of employment in the local economy. At the same time, innovation and the 'knowledge economy' are key features in the Peninsula. Projects to promote new ideas and innovation such as the University of Plymouth's 'Formation Zone' and Tamar Science park, both of which represent a practical, successful interface between Higher Education and entrepreneurial, knowledge driven business. The University of Plymouth also won the contract for innovation centres in Cornwall.

There are some economic differences across the Peninsula: whilst many of the smaller coastal towns depend heavily on tourism, Plymouth (the largest city in Devon) has a much a substantial manufacturing base. Similarly, Plymouth has low rates of self employment compared to Cornwall which highlights the importance of innovation in that county.

KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES CONFRONTING THE REGION

(i) Economic issues:

- Pockets of deprivation in some parts of Devon and Cornwall and below national average earnings.
- Some areas of high unemployment and traditional dependency on seasonal/tourist jobs and public sector employment in others – concerns that the recession and government spending cuts may have an adverse impact on parts of the region.

- **Skills gap:** some parts of Devon and Cornwall have a below national average rate of NVQ4 or higher qualified people.
- **Social enterprise is key unique selling point within the region:** approximately 12% of national social enterprises are in the region.
- **Some parts of the region have levels of businesses per head of population higher than the regional averages in both Devon and Cornwall (many of which are small and medium enterprises) and the rate of self-employment is higher than the regional average - substantially so in Cornwall which is indicative of its enterprise and entrepreneurial thinking whereas Plymouth has comparatively fewer businesses per head of population and lower rates of self employment.**
- **Exeter is relatively less peripheral and a stronger economic hub than elsewhere in the region.**

(ii) Social issues including health:

- **The Universities of Plymouth and Exeter have worked in partnership to create the Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry (which has become synonymous with successful collaboration) and provided many benefits: it has increased access to affordable dentistry in some of the most deprived parts of the region, attracted inward investment and provided excellence in terms of training for students who are placed in the dentistry/health sector for their placements as part of their training.**
- **There are also pockets of health inequality in parts of Devon and Cornwall.**
- **The region has an ageing population which may result in long term pressure on health care services.**

(iii) Environmental issues:

- **Increase in pollution in some areas has environmental and health impacts; rurality and transport links is an issue for specific parts of the region and for certain groups (e.g. those with out a car or on low incomes, those in smaller, isolated locations dependent upon public transport).**
- **Links between skills gaps in some areas (e.g. Plymouth) and subsequent need for significant commuting from outside areas to fill vacancies.**
- **The need to balance the need for tourism (and subsequent income/employment) with protection of the areas natural resources and designation as a Low Carbon Area.**
- **Cornwall and Devon are actively involved in innovative research to develop marine renewable energy and both the University of Plymouth and Exeter are strongly and demonstrably committed to sustainability.**

(iv) Cultural issues:

- **The HE sector has strong links with culture in the region: including the Peninsula Art Programme (within the University of Plymouth's Faculty of Arts) which is a hub for national and international festivals, exhibitions and culture (including films, talks, and the widest range of performing arts) and provides community access to the arts. Off campus there is also the Theatre Royal at the centre of the city. The University of Exeter also has a campus based theatre (supported by the University and partners) and strong links with the nationally renowned University departments of Drama and English.**
- **Devon and Cornwall has a strong rural and nautical heritage and there are numerous regattas, festivals and tourist attractions ranging from the Eden project and Minack Theatre in Cornwall to the annual National Fireworks Festival on Plymouth Hoe.**
- **The University of Plymouth is heavily involved with the 'Respect Festival' (a multi agency annual event promoting diversity and culture in Plymouth); the city also hosts the Barbican Blaze festival and Jazz Festival. Elsewhere, there is an annual 'Plymouth Summer Festival' and 'Exeter Summer Festival' (Comedy, Classical, Dance and Family), 'North Devon Festival', 'English Wine Week' and the Abbotskerswell Beer and Food Festival.**

- Cornwall is home to the Tate St Ives, Barbara Hepworth Museum, Newlyn Art Gallery and in Falmouth there are strong links between University College Falmouth and the local community and the Falmouth Art Gallery which is home to regular exhibitions. As well as art, there is the Du Maurier literature festival and the annual Cornwall Film Festival.

(v) *Other issues or dimensions:*
(e.g. political & administrative, civic and participation)

- **There is a strong civic spirit and social partnership ethos in the region and a good track record of success in terms of both business and community.**

UNIVERSITY AND OTHER HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (HEIs) PORTRAIT

(Please describe in a few words the HE system operating in the region, in terms of any important matters, the following):

(i) *Structure, legal and financial status of HE system*

- **The Higher Education system is currently funded by government grants and also is able to generate income from student fees, research activity and grants and in some cases collaboration and partnership with other sectors (e.g. the NHS, South West Regional Development Agency) for specific initiatives.**
- **The University of Plymouth and University of Exeter provide a range of degrees for students in various faculties and schools. Models to note in the region are UPC and CUC in Cornwall. UPC provides a network of high quality dispersed education to serve its communities, widen participation and to further economic development). This offers a valuable route into the University of Plymouth where students wish to continue their studies. CUC is a HE partnership providing opportunities in Cornwall for local people. There is also the Peninsular Partnership for the Rural Environment (supported by University of Plymouth and the University of Exeter) and University College Marjon in Plymouth.**

(ii) *Main priorities for the HEIs in the region*

Higher Education in the UK faces many challenges as it attempts to maintain its current strength and increase its contribution to the economic and social life of the country. Some of the challenges are immediate and arise from the economic downturn; others are longer-term and stem from changes in the HE market. Please note that this is explained in further detail on the next page under section (iii) and in the government's ("Higher Ambitions" strategy document).

In addition to concerns over the possibility of funding cuts and uncertainty over the level of undergraduate fees in 2010, HEFCE has identified several other equally significant challenges, including: the way in which institutions adapt to demographic decline in the number of 18 to 20 year-olds; increased competition for public funding; competition from sources other than the traditional UK higher education sector; uncertainty over the future development of the international student market; pressure to engage in academic partnerships with mutual recognition of qualifications; developments in digital and communications technologies; and political decision-making both at home and abroad.^[2]

For the sector as a whole, future viability is likely to depend on the scope for reducing costs, without compromising quality; on the degree of public funding support for teaching and research; on the degree and nature of market liberalisation; and on the extent and profitability of international recruitment. The sustainability of individual institutions will depend upon existing

^[2] "The future size and shape of the higher education sector in the UK: threats and opportunities", Universities UK, July 2008, pp50 - 51.

reputation and status; the proportion of activities (teaching, research, knowledge transfer) which are in buoyant; diversity of funding sources; and underlying assets.

As a result, more universities will need to focus on agility, speed, changing operating models, brand, mission and reputation and be more enterprising. They will particularly need to be clear about what they are really good at and work hard at being distinctive for that.

The following is a summary of the key regional HEI priorities:

- Both the University of Plymouth and the University of Exeter are strongly committed to sustainability and environmental responsible practice.
- There are also examples of strong collaboration between the two universities ranging from PCMD to the CUC Cornwall partnership. Both of these initiatives demonstrate a wider commitment to partnership for the benefit of the wider region in terms of health/dental care and provision of education in Cornwall.
- Both universities are also supportive Peninsular Partnership for the Rural Environment which has a strong link to rural education and the agriculture in the wider South West region.
- Both universities are also strongly committed to knowledge transfer and innovation, working actively with local and regional businesses and students.

(iii) *Relevant recent changes and developments in policy and/or practice*

- The government has outlined significant cuts (£.25billion) in the Higher Education budget for the coming year and is set to impose fines for universities which have recruited additional student numbers over and above government limits – there are concerns that this may lead to increased class sizes and a diminution of UK universities research and competitiveness and ability to drive innovation and enterprise in the knowledge economy¹
- The government recently published its Higher Education Framework (“Higher Ambitions”²) which calls for more competition between universities and gives greater priority to programmes meeting the need for high level skills. It also calls for business to be more engaged in the funding and design of programmes, sponsorship of students, and the creation more part-time, work-based and foundation degrees to make it easier for adults to go to university’s with routes from apprenticeships through to Foundation Degrees and other vocational programmes; finally, the proposals encourage sustaining UK world class research by focusing on excellence and concentrating research funding where needed to secure critical mass and impact – this will include more collaboration between universities on world class research, especially in high cost science.
- Also in terms of the wider, national context, two reviews are currently underway to examine the level of student fees and a review of Post Graduate Research students – this review will look at the benefits of post graduate study to the UK economy, the UK’s research competitiveness in the global market, the key needs of business and employers and participation rates (including who undertakes postgraduate study) and potential barriers to postgraduate education. The review is due to conclude in the Spring of 2010.

(iv) *Ways of organising and managing within the HEIs*

This is a key area of interest to the University of Plymouth. UoP, working in collaboration with Teesside University, has recently been awarded funding from HEFCE specifically to explore the new market space that the enterprise agenda is creating for the HE sector, and to explore and further develop the business models needed for its successful exploitation. The project is being run through University of Plymouth’s Socio-economic Research & Intelligence Observatory and

¹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2009/grant1011/letter.htm>

² <http://www.bis.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/publications/Higher-Ambitions.pdf>



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will examine both the approaches taken by other HEIs, and the key challenges inherent in creating such business models, including: developing leadership capacity, enabling staff to understand, shape and embrace change; influencing the unengaged; responding to and influencing demand; and, engaging for social and economic benefits.

HEIs in REGION

1. **University of Plymouth**
University of Exeter
2. **Marjon University College**
3. **University College Falmouth**
4. **Combined Universities in Cornwall**