

# Understand Devon & Cornwall

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Get up to speed on the hot local topics: food miles, second homes, mining matters and the future of tourism.

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From ancient stones to modern architecture, the southwest packs an astonishing amount of history into a tiny space.

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Renowned as a gourmet hot spot and celebrity-chef-packed zone, the southwest also leads the way in sustainable cuisine.

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West Cornwall has been a hotbed of artistic creativity since the early 19th century.

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Coast and countryside, cities and surf: the varied landscape of Devon and Cornwall is a sight to behold.

# Devon & Cornwall Today

From the thorny topics of tourism and holiday homes to the future of southwest food, here's a quick overview of some of the most important issues facing Devon and Cornwall over the next few years.

## Best Books

**Jamaica Inn** (Daphne du Maurier; 1936) Classic thriller on Bodmin Moor.

**The Levelling Sea** (Philip Marsden; 2011) Covers Falmouth's maritime history.

**And Then There Were None** (Agatha Christie; 1939) Mystery on Burgh Island.

**Vanishing Cornwall** (Daphne du Maurier; 1967) Lyrical history of Cornwall.

## Best Films

**War Horse** (2011) Spielberg filmed key scenes on Dartmoor.

**Alice in Wonderland** (2010) Cornwall's Antony House doubled as Wonderland in Tim Burton's version.

**Summer in February** (2013) Account of the Lamorna School of artists.

**When The Whales Came** (1989) Dreamy children's tale set on Scilly.

## Resources

**Cornwall Beaches** ([www.cornwall-beaches.co.uk](http://www.cornwall-beaches.co.uk)) Online guide to the county's sands.

**Love the Flavour** ([www.lovetheflavour.co.uk](http://www.lovetheflavour.co.uk)) Devon's best food and drink.

**Cornwall and Devon Wildlife Trusts** ([www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk) & [www.devonwildlifetrust.org](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org)) Great resource for wildlife enthusiasts.

## The Second Home Issue

If there's one issue that still divides opinion in the southwest more than any other, it's the thorny question of second homes. According to the 2011 census, Cornwall now tops the league when it comes to holiday properties (more than 23,000 at the last count), with Devon only a short way behind.

While arguments rumble on about the economic benefit of these homes-away-from-home, there can be little doubt that the region's enduring popularity has contributed to rapidly rocketing house prices – especially in picturesque places such as Salcombe, St Mawes, Perranporth, Padstow and Fowey, which all now figure in the top 10 list of the most expensive places to buy property in the UK.

Across the region, the average house price is now more than £200,000, almost 10 times the average wage of around £22,000 – leaving many locals, and especially the region's young people, struggling to get onto the housing ladder.

It's a difficult problem to solve: the region's popularity with urban escapees and cash-rich retirees, coupled with limited space for house-building, inevitably means that house prices look set to continue rising in the coming years.

## Grockles & Emmets

A century ago it was farming and fishing, but tourism is now by far and away the region's top-grossing industry. Recent figures indicate that tourism adds more than £9 billion to the region's coffers, and it's estimated that around one in five jobs now depend on the tourism industry in some form or other. The region's residents have a mixed relationship with the summer influx of grockles and emmets (as the locals either side of the Devon-Cornwall border refer to them): traffic jams,