



Rethinking mission Reimagining church





**Rural Communities:
Understanding change,
decline, whilst
embracing future hope**





CHANGE

**Over the last 20 years
what do you see as the
biggest changes that
have taken place in
rural England?**



From indigenous locals to ‘incomers’

2011 - 9.1 million people in rural areas

2019 - 9.8 million people in rural areas

Ageing population

30% of people in rural areas over 65

17% of people in urban areas over 65

Average age rural areas 44.9

Average age urban areas





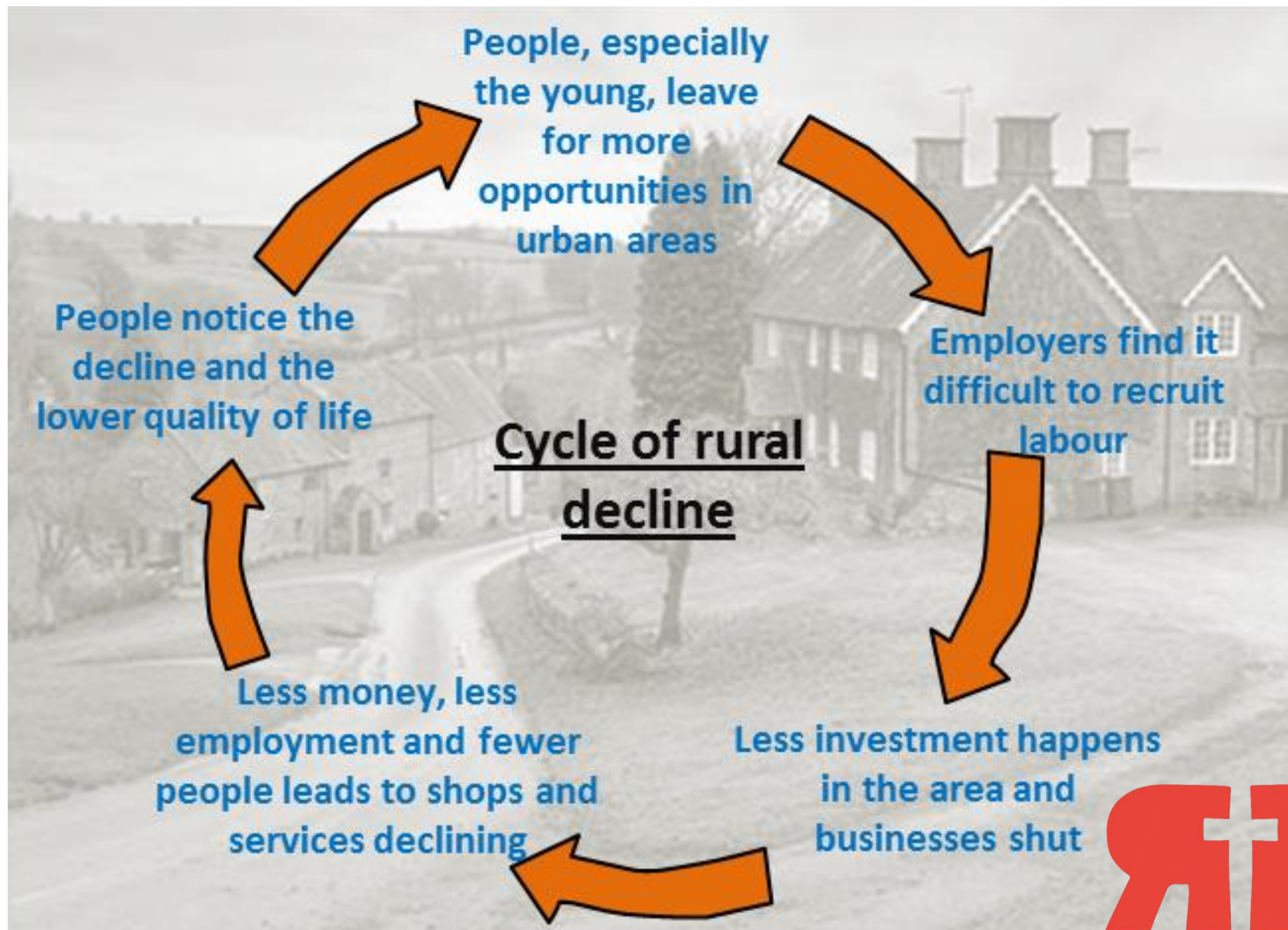
**From somewhere
to work to
somewhere to live**





**From employment
to lifestyle**







**From farm
workers cottages
to holiday lets -
tourism**





A challenge to the church?

65% of farms are now diversifying away from traditional agriculture



Impact on the rural church





CHANGE

**Over the last 20 years
what do you see as the
biggest changes that
have taken place in
your own rural church
context?**



- **A loss of confidence**
- **From Church in the valley to church on the hillside**
- **Seasonal / holiday population changes**
- **Maintenance mentality not mission mentality**





Embracing Future Hope...





**Where do you see seeds
of hope for the future?**





- Asking the right questions
- The importance of listening
- Re discovering the prophetic
- Avoiding the numbers game
- Releasing the laity
- Embracing the Mixed Ecology
- Working across denominations
- Geography not denomination



**Rural Communities:
Understanding change,
decline, whilst
embracing future hope**





I pray that God, the source of *hope*, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident *hope* through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

