# Residents of Castle Combe fight back against invasive drone tourism



In the idyllic surroundings of Castle Combe, often celebrated as one of the UK's most beautiful villages, tensions are rising among residents. The tranquil hamlet in Wiltshire, known for its historic charm and stunning scenery, is grappling with the disruptive impacts of an influx of tourists, particularly those using drones to capture aerial views of its picturesque streets and homes. Residents report feeling increasingly invaded in their own personal spaces as they contend with what has been described as an "invasive" tourist culture.

With a population of approximately 400, Castle Combe is not only popular for its scenic walking routes but has also been featured in major films like Steven Spielberg's *War Horse*. The surge in visitors, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, has led residents, including former district councillor Nick Botterill, to express frustration at the diminishing quality of community life. He points out that the once peaceful village has become a target for hordes of tourists equipped with drones, provoking complaints about privacy and safety. Botterill contends that drones pose not just a nuisance but a genuine security risk in light of reports of increased local burglaries.

Castle Combe Parish Council is responding to these concerns by erecting signs throughout the village discouraging drone usage. Locals have taken matters into their own hands by placing "no drone" signs in their windows, hoping to dissuade tourists from overlooking their privacy. Yet, despite these measures, the issue persists. Frederick Peter Winup, chairman of the Parish Council, lamented the disruptive nature of drones, recalling a disturbing incident where police were called to address someone filming children in a garden. Such events illustrate a growing unease in a community that prided itself on its tranquillity.

As drone tourism burgeons, the plight of resident Georgina Kingshott aptly encapsulates the community's broader challenge. A post-doctoral scientist who relocated from London seeking peace and quiet, Kingshott describes her current experience as "terrible." She comments on the massive influx of tourists and their intrusive behaviours, which she likens to a beach-like atmosphere during warmer months, and the overwhelming presence of Airbnbs converting homes into transient lodgings. Her sentiments reflect a widespread concern that the cultural fabric of Castle Combe is being eroded as holiday homes proliferate, making it increasingly difficult for full-time residents to thrive.

The situation raises significant questions about the sustainability of Castle Combe's charm in the face of relentless tourism. With local businesses reportedly failing to reap the benefits of this surge, many residents feel that fleeting visitors are more of a hindrance than a boon to the village’s economy. Botterill notes, "They're simply making a nuisance of themselves because they spend an hour and then buzz off," further drawing attention to the temporary nature of many tourists' engagements with the village.

While the current landscape in Castle Combe is one of conflict between locals and transient visitors, the complexities of balancing tourism and community integrity necessitate greater dialogue and potentially regulatory actions. There remains a pressing need to mitigate the impacts of such a surge, ensuring that Castle Combe can retain its essence as a beautiful and peaceful village, rather than becoming a mere backdrop for tourists' memories.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14760739/Drone-wars-England-prettiest-village-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/castle-combe-tourists-furious-villagers-b2369526.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14760739/Drone-wars-England-prettiest-village-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/23629643.castle-combe-residents-fume-airbnb-drones-invasion/), [[5]](https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1787473/UK-most-beautiful-village-castle-Combe-Wiltshire-airbnb-drones)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.wiltshirelive.co.uk/news/wiltshire-news/beautiful-wiltshire-village-locals-fed-8570390), [[6]](https://metro.co.uk/2023/07/03/castle-combe-villagers-angry-after-being-invaded-by-drones-and-airbnbs-19054760/)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14760739/Drone-wars-England-prettiest-village-police.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/23629643.castle-combe-residents-fume-airbnb-drones-invasion/> - Residents of Castle Combe, Wiltshire, have expressed concerns over the increasing number of tourists using drones over their homes and the rise of Airbnbs. The picturesque village, known for its scenic beauty and historic streets, has seen a decline in full-time residents, with many properties being converted into holiday homes. Locals like Georgina Kingshott and Anna Roberts have highlighted the intrusion of drone usage and the changing community dynamics due to the influx of tourists and second homes. The community is grappling with maintaining its traditional character amidst these challenges.
3. <https://www.wiltshirelive.co.uk/news/wiltshire-news/beautiful-wiltshire-village-locals-fed-8570390> - Castle Combe, often hailed as one of the UK's most beautiful villages, is facing challenges from increasing tourism. Residents report privacy invasions due to tourists flying drones over their properties and the transformation of homes into Airbnbs, leading to a decline in full-time residents. Locals like Georgina Kingshott and Anna Roberts have voiced concerns about the changing community dynamics and the loss of the village's traditional character. The influx of tourists has raised questions about the sustainability of the village's charm and the well-being of its residents.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/castle-combe-tourists-furious-villagers-b2369526.html> - Castle Combe, a picturesque village in Wiltshire, is experiencing tensions between residents and tourists. Locals have reported privacy invasions due to tourists flying drones over their homes and the proliferation of Airbnbs, leading to a decrease in full-time residents. Georgina Kingshott and Anna Roberts have highlighted the challenges posed by the influx of visitors and the transformation of the community. The village, known for its scenic beauty and historic streets, is grappling with maintaining its traditional character amidst these changes.
5. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1787473/UK-most-beautiful-village-castle-Combe-Wiltshire-airbnb-drones> - Castle Combe, located in the Cotswolds, Wiltshire, has earned the title of 'one of the most stunning destinations in the UK' in numerous rankings and surveys. This picturesque village boasts idyllic walking paths and charming historic streets that seem untouched by the passage of time. It has become a popular tourist spot and has even served as a filming location for blockbuster movies like Stephen Spielberg's War Horse. Unsurprisingly, every year, thousands of tourists flock to this beloved destination, but their presence has left the village's residents feeling frustrated and encroached upon.
6. <https://metro.co.uk/2023/07/03/castle-combe-villagers-angry-after-being-invaded-by-drones-and-airbnbs-19054760/> - Castle Combe, a picturesque village in Wiltshire, is facing challenges due to increasing tourism. Residents have reported privacy invasions from tourists flying drones over their homes and the rise of Airbnbs, leading to a decline in full-time residents. Locals like Georgina Kingshott and Anna Roberts have expressed concerns about the changing community dynamics and the loss of the village's traditional character. The influx of tourists has raised questions about the sustainability of the village's charm and the well-being of its residents.
7. <https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/news/cheltenham-news/cotswolds-village-battling-drones-tourists-8570359> - Castle Combe, a picturesque village in Wiltshire, is grappling with the challenges posed by increasing tourism. Residents have reported privacy invasions due to tourists flying drones over their homes and the proliferation of Airbnbs, leading to a decline in full-time residents. Locals like Georgina Kingshott and Anna Roberts have highlighted the changing community dynamics and the loss of the village's traditional character. The village, known for its scenic beauty and historic streets, is facing questions about the sustainability of its charm amidst these changes.