# Residents of Castle Combe battle surge in drone flights invading privacy and peace



Enraged residents of Castle Combe, often heralded as the UK's most beautiful village, are grappling with an unexpected nuisance: the proliferation of drones operated by tourists seeking to capture aerial views of the picturesque countryside. Nestled in Wiltshire, the quaint village is not only known for its scenic charm but also for being a celebrity filming location, attracting thousands of visitors annually. However, this influx of drone-flying tourists has sparked significant unrest among the local population, who claim their privacy and peace are increasingly under siege.

Residents report that the tranquillity of their community is shattered as drones hover over homes and public spaces, taking advantage of the village's stunning landscapes. The issue has escalated markedly since the pandemic, as more people have taken to capturing their experiences through aerial photography. Former district councillor Nick Botterill has voiced his concerns, noting the risks posed by low-flying drones in busy areas. "It's got to the stage where it's no longer just the odd thing," he commented. Many locals agree that while the intention may be innocent, the reality feels invasive and disrespectful of their private lives.

In response to these grievances, Castle Combe Parish Council has implemented signage throughout the village to deter drone usage. However, despite these measures, the complaints continue to mount. Frederick Peter Winup, the council chairman, highlighted the community's heightened concerns over safety, recounting incidents where drones have disrupted daily life and even prompted police intervention. In one alarming case, footage reportedly captured children at play in their gardens, necessitating police action. Winup's assertions reflect a growing sentiment among residents that the pleasures of rural living are overshadowed by disruptive tourism activities.

The increasing number of holiday homes and Airbnbs in the village has also contributed to feelings of disenfranchisement among locals. Many long-term residents have watched as their community becomes “hollowed out” due to rising property prices and the influx of transient visitors. Georgina Kingshott, a post-doctoral scientist who moved to Castle Combe for a quieter life, reflects on this bittersweet transformation, stating that the charm she sought has been eclipsed by the unchecked wave of tourism. “In the hotter months, people pitch up like it is the beach,” she lamented, expressing frustration with the constant presence of tourists, especially those flying drones.

Local authorities are now caught in a delicate balancing act, tasked with managing the charms of tourism while safeguarding the integrity of village life. Recent efforts by Wiltshire Council include measures to enhance visitor management, like traffic control systems and social media campaigns advising visitors during peak times. Yet, the overarching issue remains: how to ensure that tourism does not render Castle Combe unrecognisable as a place of residence. Botterill argues that first-time visitors often do not understand the implications of their actions, mistaking the village for a theme park rather than a living community.

As residents grow increasingly vocal about their desire for an idyllic lifestyle, the call for stricter regulations surrounding drone usage looms larger. The Civil Aviation Authority stipulates laws governing drone flight; however, locals feel that enforcement is lacking. Perhaps this mirrors a broader theme across many beloved tourist destinations in the UK—demanding that visitors respect the unique landscapes and communities they wish to explore.

Ultimately, the voices from Castle Combe serve as a poignant reminder of the oft-unseen consequences of over-tourism. While the village's natural beauty will continue to attract visitors, it remains crucial for both tourists and authorities to instil a sense of mutual respect and understanding that preserves the integrity of local life.

## 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), [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/drone-tourism-castle-combe-b2102613.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), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/06/04/castle-combe-residents-fear-drones-privacy-threat/), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-60997792)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.cotswoldjournal.co.uk/news/19293342.drone-usage-castle-combe-invites-frequent-resident-complaints/), [[6]](https://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/19319712.drones-castle-combe-privacy-concerns-residents/), [[7]](https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/drones-castle-combe-tourism-privacy-5289756)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/drone-tourism-castle-combe-b2102613.html), [[5]](https://www.cotswoldjournal.co.uk/news/19293342.drone-usage-castle-combe-invites-frequent-resident-complaints/), [[6]](https://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/19319712.drones-castle-combe-privacy-concerns-residents/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/06/04/castle-combe-residents-fear-drones-privacy-threat/), [[4]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-60997792), [[6]](https://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/19319712.drones-castle-combe-privacy-concerns-residents/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[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.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-60997792), [[6]](https://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/19319712.drones-castle-combe-privacy-concerns-residents/)

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.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/drone-tourism-castle-combe-b2102613.html> - Castle Combe, known as the UK’s prettiest village, is experiencing growing unrest among residents due to an influx of tourists using drones. Locals report a breach of privacy as drones hover over homes and public spaces. The parish council has taken steps by putting up signs to warn visitors against drone usage, which has reportedly become more frequent since the pandemic. Residents express that while drone photography can be intended as harmless fun, it poses safety risks and is increasingly invasive, urging better regulation and respect for their community.
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/06/04/castle-combe-residents-fear-drones-privacy-threat/> - In Castle Combe, Wiltshire, residents are voicing concerns over privacy infringements caused by recreational drones flown by tourists. The picturesque village, often termed the most beautiful in England, has implemented signage from the local council to deter drone use. Former councillors and locals argue that this issue has intensified following the pandemic, prompting calls for adherence to flying regulations set by the Civil Aviation Authority while addressing concerns over the impact of tourism on the tranquillity of the community.
4. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-60997792> - Castle Combe has become a focal point for debates on tourism’s impact, with rising tensions around drone activity among visitors. Residents complain that the use of drones intrudes on their privacy and safety, leading to complaints and police involvement. This idyllic village, known for its scenic beauty and historical significance, is feeling the pressure of increased tourism, with calls from locals for a crackdown on drones to protect their living environment. The local council has responded with measures aimed at managing tourist behaviour.
5. <https://www.cotswoldjournal.co.uk/news/19293342.drone-usage-castle-combe-invites-frequent-resident-complaints/> - Residents of Castle Combe, a charming and picturesque Cotswolds village, are increasingly frustrated by drone activity from tourists. Drones are believed to violate personal privacy, disturbing the peace of this small community. Local authorities are warning tourists through signage, highlighting the rules established by the Civil Aviation Authority to mitigate risks. Community leaders are seeking solutions as they balance inviting visitors while maintaining the integrity and safety of their village environment amidst growing concerns of over-tourism.
6. <https://www.wiltshiretimes.co.uk/news/19319712.drones-castle-combe-privacy-concerns-residents/> - Castle Combe’s residents report escalating issues due to drone usage by tourists infringing upon their privacy. Villagers have called for stronger regulations, as complaints mount regarding safety concerns and disruptive visits. The increase in second homes and Airbnbs contributes to the community feeling 'hollowed out'. Former councillors have emphasised the need for visitors to respect local living standards and adhere to aviation guidelines. The village council has placed signs urging adherence to these rules to ensure the peaceful enjoyment of their historical and scenic surroundings.
7. <https://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/drones-castle-combe-tourism-privacy-5289756> - In response to mounting complaints, residents of Castle Combe are confronting the challenges posed by drone tourism. The village, famed for its picturesque scenery, is witnessing an influx of visitors using drones, which residents claim compromises their privacy and safety. Local authorities have put up signage attempting to educate tourists about appropriate drone usage as complaints regarding disturbance have surged. Villagers highlight the strain tourism puts on their community dynamics, prompting discussions around sustainable visitation practices to preserve the village’s charm.