



The village of Corfe, dominated by the castle.

Villages in The UK

Many people who visit The UK stop in London or the other big cities and don't have the time to visit the beautiful little villages in the countryside or along the coast. It's true that they're not as famous as other places and maybe there's not quite so much to do, but it's in these quiet little villages that you'll find the true heart of Britain, often untouched by time and technology.

Origins

In the Middle Ages, churches were the central part of most communities, and villages usually grew around them. Near the church there was also usually a manor house, a large villa or castle where the lord lived. He owned the land and everything in it, including the people who lived there. They were his servants, or serfs. The lord of the manor was supposed to protect the serfs if there was an attack but, in return for protection, they had to work the land for him. The Lord, in turn, provided the King with soldiers and taxes in a system known as the feudal system.



A modern addition in a medieval village.

Villages today

One of the great things about villages today is that you can still find many of its original medieval features like the farms, church and often also a manor house or castle. There are obviously some modern additions though, for example the local pub, and post office which are both focal points in village life. There's also sometimes a small food shop and often a coffee shop and gift shops for tourists.

More than a village

The word village is often used to describe areas in the countryside which have grown bigger over the centuries because of tourism or historic reasons. They are often full of visitors taking photos and admiring the views. Try to find the time to visit one the next time you're in England.

1 Comprehension check

Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 There was always a church in a medieval village. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 The manor house was where the people lived. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 A serf was a feudal servant. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 The lord of the manor attacked the people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Nowadays villages have lots of shops. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |