Leggi e ascolta.

Ghost Villages in the UK

There are ghost villages all over the world — places which have been abandoned for one reason or another, deserted and then forgotten. In the past, they were busy communities, but nobody lives there now. It’s a strange experience to visit them — you think about the people who lived there in the past. People leave their communities for different reasons, like natural disasters and wars, or because life there is very difficult. Here are three ‘ghost’ villages in the UK.

St Kilda, Scotland

St Kilda is a group of islands on the Atlantic coast of Scotland. The people of St Kilda were fishermen and farmers, and they lived on the islands for over 2,000 years. But life on St Kilda was very, very difficult. The winters were long and cold. In the 1600s, only about 180 people lived on the islands – most of them in the village of Hirta. There was no hospital and there weren’t many shops. To get to the Scottish mainland you had to cross the sea in a very small boat – and sometimes the waves were 10 metres high!

In the 1800s, a lot of young people decided to leave the islands. By 1913, the population of St Kilda was only about 80 people. Today, the village of Hirta is abandoned. A few scientists visit the islands, but nobody stays for very long!
Hallsands, England

**Hallsands in Devon is a very old village.** There has been a church there since 1506. A hundred years ago, Hallsands was a busy fishing community with a population of about 160 people. There was a beach in front of the village, and it protected the houses from stormy seas. But in the 1890s, a company started to take rocks from under the sea and slowly the beach at Hallsands began to slip into the sea. Finally, the beach disappeared completely.

**In January 1917, there was a very bad storm.** Enormous waves destroyed most of the village, but fortunately nobody died. The last resident left old Hallsands in 1960. Now there is a new village a few hundred metres from the sea, but you can still visit the old abandoned village. On a windy day, you can sit on the rocks and listen to the waves. You can close your eyes and imagine the old fishing village.
Machynys, Wales

The village of Machynys was on the south coast of Wales. It was built in the late 1800s for the workers in two local factories. Soon, other factories moved into the area, and Machynys became a big community of about 1,000 people. There were about 200 houses in the village, with shops and a school. It was a nice place to live because the families all worked in the area, so everyone was friends. But when the factories closed in the 1960s, there weren’t any jobs.

Slowly Machynys was abandoned and then the authorities demolished it around 1970. Now the site is home to the Machynys Peninsula Golf and Country Club. A lot of the old residents still live in the area, and they are still friends. Every year they have a big reunion party.