

FACTUAL

OPEN COUNTRY



Sat 6.10 - 6.35am
Thurs 1.30 - 2.00pm (rpt)

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Local people making their corner of rural Britain unique

This week

Saturday 13 September
Repeated Thursday 18
September

**Elinor Goodman
heads to the
Chilterns in search
of the good life**



Close to London yet cropped with the sheltering hills that gave it its name, The Chilterns offer glorious vistas which have attracted everyone from the A-list celebrities and politicians that weekend there to the red kites which have been reintroduced and now breed merrily in the beech woodlands. According to some surveys the area offers the best rural life in England, a pleasing vision of middle England with higher salaries, bigger houses, long life expectancy, good schools, low crime and even more sunshine than the rest of the country.

On this week's Open Country Elinor Goodman looks to find out if there's any more to this countryside paradise on the doorstep of London and with house prices averaging as high as £500,000 whether it offers a socially sustainable rural life or just a countryside retreat for high earners. The dangers of being home to so many commuters and the number of visitors to the area are also something **The Chilterns Society** are worried about. Chalk streams have long been endangered by man's abstraction and now the growing lack of livestock farming in the area and the need for infrastructure within the urban rural fringe may change the face of the landscape forever.