ITV Emmerdale's Sam Gannon dies suddenly aged 31 while travelling abroad

The actor was visiting family in California

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By **Zara Woodcock** & **Ramazani Mwamba** News reporter
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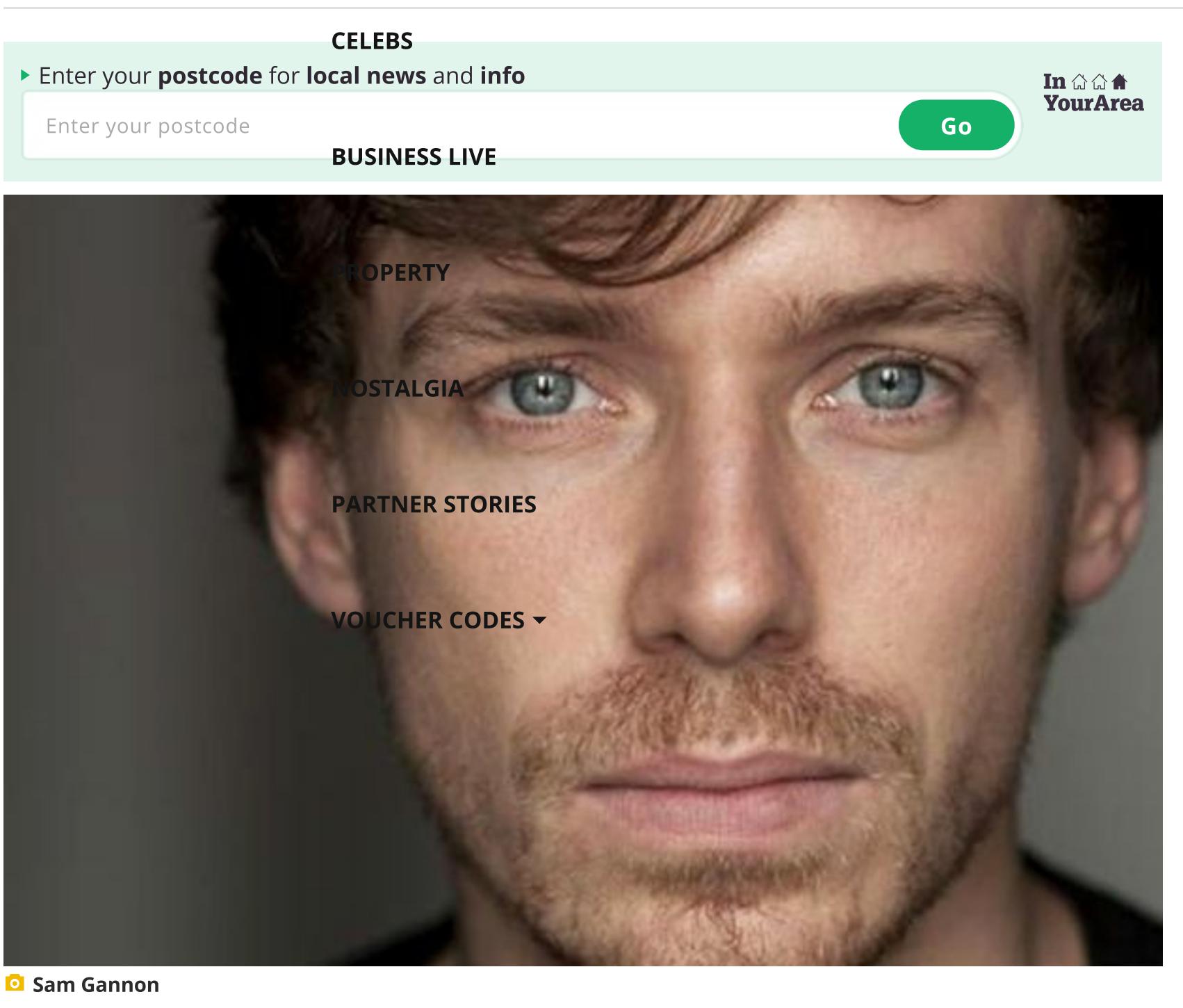

Sam Gannon

Emmerdale actor Sam Gannon has sadly died aged 31. Known for playing Kev in the long-running series, Sam was staying with family in California when he passed away.

Paying tribute to the 'unique character' his sister Amy Kelly said: "Sam was a whirlwind, a unique character to say the least. "He genuinely cared for others and was a very sensitive soul. It is clear from the tributes we have received that he touched the hearts of so many."

Close pal Lewis Matthews added: "Sam was a 'real life Duracell bunny' with a seemingly endless supply of energy and love. He delighted audiences with his charm, wit and his wonderful musical abilities."

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The actor's death is being investigated by police but is not being treated as suspicious. He had the role of horse-drawn carriage coachman Kev in Emmerdale back in 2019.

As reported in in the Mirror, Sam starred on the show alongside Emma Atkins - who plays Charity Dingle. His family started a JustGiving page to raise money to bring the actor's body back home to the UK.

"Due to the recent and sudden passing of Sam. All donations will be put towards the repatriation of his body from the US and his funeral," they wrote.

"We are putting the target as £17,000 as we do not yet know the actual cost. Sam was a true performer, and any extra money raised will be donated to a UK charity supporting youth theatre, a cause close to Sam's heart."

At the time of publishing, £6,200 of the £17,000 has been raised. Amy also plans on setting up a foundation in her brother's name for those who "need extra support".

People paid tribute to the actor on the donation page, with one friend saying: "The very best of men, always with a smile and a joke. Ready to help anyone, always kind and entertaining."

"I worked with Sam during our time at The York Dungeons and Duracell Bunny is the perfect way to describe him. Sending so much love to his family x," another added.

One person wrote: "Sending love and sympathy to Sam's family and friends. I never had the pleasure of meeting Sam, but my younger sister Wendy Patterson did."

"I directed Sam in a couple of projects. He was such a talented young actor and brought great joy to friends, and audiences alike. This a truly, sad loss. My thoughts are with his family. So sorry," someone added.

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