



# **5 ALIVE!**

**March 2026**

**News from  
Buckland Dinham, Chantry,  
Great Elm, Mells with Vobster and  
Whatley**

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## FROM THE EDITOR

In the last issue I said I hope spring would be on its way by March 1st as that is the day the Met Office designates as the beginning of that season. How I wish that comes true! Hasn't it been a miserable winter, and aren't we lucky not have had the flooding that has ruined so many lives and businesses in the south of the county. There was one sunny day (at least it started out sunny but later turned wet and miserable) in mid-February when I nipped across the road and took a photo of the hundreds of snowdrops in my neighbour's meadow that's on the cover of this issue of 5Alive. Many thanks Debbie!

Doing so cheered me up a lot, especially when I got back home, went into my own garden and saw the number of snowdrops, crocuses, daffodils and other flowers that were either poking their heads above ground or actually flowering. Fingers crossed the Met Office is right and it won't be long before I can go foraging for wild garlic to make into the pesto I love!!

You will read in Hazell's Jottings that she is in hospital. We all send her our very best wishes for a quick and thorough recovery from the fall she had and hope that the April issue of this magazine includes another instalment of her life in Whatley, as she too hopes. *Peter*

## JOTTINGS FROM A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

Hello! Here we are in March and here I am still in hospital. Having rescued my steroid pill from the dog by kneeling down, I knew I wouldn't get up again without help. By sheer fluke no-one found me

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**Deadline** for APRIL 2026 is MARCH 13<sup>th</sup>

but do check as it could change

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for 24 hours by which time I was Bemused Battered and Bruised and I'm just about coming conscious again a week later. The snowdrops in the churchyard have excelled themselves this year. I have not been able to see them with my own eyes but have seen photographs from good friends, who have brought them to me. Also, to my greatest joy I see that the few purple crocuses under the fringe of the conker tree have not only flowered, but miraculously multiplied, and there is a whole, great big pool of them. An even greater joy is that the tiny group of Lent lilies (wild daffodils) have also expanded, and from photographs it looks like a great big group. I'm not sure when Lent begins - I know Easter Sunday is April 5th so we are now moving into the quiet time of anticipation of 40 days of Lent. Without being able to see, (other than photographs of everything) I really cannot comment any more, but I do thank everyone for whatever they have done to look after and encourage everything to flourish, and I



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thank God for His invariable circle of the season of life, always holding us and the world in His hands.

One final word, which I thought I had covered last month... I have had over 90 birthday cards, none of which I have been able to open yet, but I look forward to looking at them with great joy and gratitude to everyone. Bless you all for your kind thoughts.

I do look forward to reading them when I am able.

God Bless you all, I will be there in April!

*Hazell*

## **ROUND AND ABOUT**

### **A retreat at Llangorse Lake in the Brecon Beacons**

This is set for two nights Monday May 18th – Wednesday May 20th, located at Llangasty Retreat House (LD3 8PX). This year we look at four great Christians from our younger days. Each day with sessions, spare time, prayer and a concluding eucharist. Accommodation is simple, comfortable, each with own room with basin and two en-suite available. We work out shared transport. The beauty and serenity of the experience stay for all the year ahead.

I need the viability of eight persons, with up to 20, and so ask for a deposit of any amount, to myself, by mid-April (say the 20th), to indicate intention of joining us. Full board is £240. 01985-300025. 33 LudlowCl, Warminster BA128BJ/ weymontmartin@gmail.com.

### **Bingo at Foxy's Den, Hapsford**

Every Wednesday. Doors open 6.30, eyes down 7.30 pm. Excellent cash prizes. Bar available.

## **BUCKLAND DINHAM**

### **CHURCH NEWS**

The services for St. Michael & All Angels for March as per rota and on notice board in church entrance. Please note Mothering Sunday March 15th.

As during Lent there will be no flowers in church and Peggy has decided that it's time for her to step down as our "coordinator" of the flower rota. Peggy has been arranging flowers in our church for very

many years, and we have been so grateful for all the lovely arrangements she has made. So, on behalf of all who have enjoyed seeing her work can I say a very big Thank You to Peggy.

Luckily, we still have two very talented ladies in Debbie and Ros but hopefully someone else would like to join them. If you just like putting some flowers in a vase that too would be welcome, so please do volunteer.

### COFFEE MORNING

The next coffee morning will be on March 21st when again we hope to see many of you, to enjoy the cakes, coffee or tea and a good happy time together. It really is a pleasure for us to see everyone enjoying themselves, but occasional offers of help would be appreciated.

### VILLAGE NEWS\*

The next **Buckland Buddies** meeting will be on March 3rd. No speaker this month, but please bring a photo of either yourself, or with siblings, as a young child, for us to see who we can recognize. While



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# Mells Group of Churches

March 2026

	1 <sup>st</sup> March	8 <sup>th</sup> March	15 <sup>th</sup> March Mothering Sunday	22 <sup>nd</sup> March	29 <sup>th</sup> March Palm Sunday	5 <sup>th</sup> April Easter Sunday
Chantry		11.00am  Matins  Hazel Tovey	11.00am  Holy Communion	11.00am  Matins  Val Rawlins		11.00am  Holy Communion  Barry Davies
Great Elm	10.00am Group Holy Communion Service Catherine Llewelyn- Evans		9.30am  Holy Communion Robin Isherwood	9.30am  Morning Prayer  Richard King		
Mells		9.30am  Holy Communion Martin Weymont				10.00am  Holy Communion Catherine Llewelyn- Evans
Whatley		9.30am  Matins  Hazel Tovey		09.30am  Holy Communion David Gatliffe		

**Mells** Every Wednesday at 09.30, Matins/Morning Prayer, in St. Andrew's, Mells

**Great Elm** Richard King will lead a prayer session in church Monday to Friday at 7.30am during Lent ending 3rd April (Good Friday)

## Hardington Vale Church Services March 2026

DATE	TIME	SERVICE
<b>Sunday 1 March</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of LENT	9.00 am 10.30 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Informal Breakfast <b>Rode</b> , Holy Communion <b>Laverton</b> , Holy Communion <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Meeting Place
<b>Tuesday 3 March</b>	9.00 am 11.00 am	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Ecumenical Holy Communion
<b>Wednesday 4 March</b>	8.30 am 5.00 pm 6.00 pm	<b>Hemington</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Informal Prayer <b>Tellisford</b> , Evening Prayer
<b>Thursday 5 March</b>	6.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Silent Prayer
<b>Sunday 8 March</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of LENT	9.00 am 10.30 am 11.00 am 11.00 am	<b>Rode</b> , Informal Breakfast <b>Norton St Philip</b> , Holy Communion <b>Laverton</b> , Matins <b>Buckland Dinham</b> , Iona/Taizé Service
<b>Tuesday 10 March</b>	9.00 am	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Morning Prayer
<b>Wednesday 11 March</b>	8.30 am 5.00 pm	<b>Hemington</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Informal Prayer
<b>Thursday 12 March</b>	6.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Silent Prayer
<b>Sunday 15 March</b> MOTHERING SUNDAY 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of LENT	9.00 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 11.00 am 11.00 am	<b>Farleigh Hungerford</b> , Morning worship <b>Norton St Philip</b> , informal worship <b>Rode</b> , Holy Communion <b>Laverton</b> , Matins <b>Buckland Dinham</b> , Holy Communion
<b>Tuesday 17 March</b>	9.00 am	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Morning Prayer
<b>Wednesday 18 March</b>	8.30 am 5.00 pm 6.00 pm	<b>Hemington</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Informal Prayer <b>Tellisford</b> , Evening Prayer
<b>Thursday 19 March</b>	6.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Silent Prayer
<b>Sunday 22 March</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of LENT	9.00 am 10.30 am 10.30 am 11.00 am 6.00 pm	<b>Rode</b> , Coffee & Contemplation <b>Norton St Philip</b> , Holy Communion <b>Tellisford</b> , Holy Communion <b>Laverton</b> , Matins <b>Buckland Dinham</b> , Iona/Taizé Service
<b>Tuesday 24 March</b>	9.00 am	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Morning Prayer
<b>Wednesday 25 March</b>	8.30 am 5.00 pm	<b>Hemington</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Informal Prayer
<b>Thursday 26 March</b>	6.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Silent Prayer
<b>Sunday 29 March</b> PALM SUNDAY	10.30 am 12.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Palm Procession <b>Norton St Philip</b> , United Holy Communion
<b>Monday 30 March</b>	9.00 pm 9.00 pm	<b>Rode Chapel</b> , Compline <b>Laverton</b> , Compline
<b>Tuesday 31 March</b>	9.00 am 9.00 pm 9.00 pm	<b>Norton St Philip</b> , Morning Prayer <b>Rode Chapel</b> , Compline <b>Laverton</b> , Compline

these meetings are for all ladies of the village, we occasionally will have a speaker that may be of interest to the gentlemen, we will keep you posted!

**Short Mat Bowls** meet on a Wednesday afternoon, 2.30 to 4.30.



**Craft Day Saturday March 28th.** These meetings too - photo on left shows crafting in action - are open to all, but it would be helpful if you will let Sandy Carter know if you are coming, as Alex very kindly puts out tables and chairs. Some people bring craft work, which they will offer to help others to learn,

some come just for coffee and a chat, so why not pop in and say hello. Meetings are from 10.00am to 2.00pm and cost just £5.00. Bring a packed lunch, coffee or tea provided.

**\*All the above meetings are in Buckland Dinham Village Hall.**

## **CHARITIES BENEFIT FROM BUCKS QUIZ**

Those who compete in the Bucks Quiz at the Bell will already know that the monthly event raised more than £1,000 for charity last year. The total, which was shared between Heal Somerset and Fair Frome, was raised from team members paying £2.00 to enter the quiz and from donations taken during the evening. Many thanks to Jon and Emma Evans and their family for organising the quizzes and to the Bell which hosts these fabulous evenings.

**Latest From the Website** [bucklanddinham.org](http://bucklanddinham.org)

NEW: we've added a new Frome page; a Donation page and a new Notice Board page.

**Events in March**

Mondays – Pilates for Cyclists – 6.00pm  
Tuesdays – Chair Yoga – 10.00am  
Wednesdays - Pilates - 9.30am  
3rd – Buckland Buddies - 7.30pm  
4th – PFA AGM – 7.00pm  
10th – Lunch Club – 12..00  
8th – Iona/Taize Service – 11.00am  
15th – Holy Communion – 11.00am  
18th – T,T&T meeting – 7.00pm  
19th – Parish Council Meeting – 7.00pm  
21st – Coffee Morning – 10.00am  
22nd – Iona/Taize Service – 6.00pm  
26th – Parish Council – 7.00pm  
April 27th – Annual Village Gathering  
See **[Bucklanddinham.org](http://Bucklanddinham.org)** for details

## **CHANTRY**

### **FRIENDS OF CHANTRY NEWS**

FOC AGM MARCH 10th in the church/community building 7:00pm.  
This is a social above all else. Look out for the newsletter confirming the details of the agenda but it's your opportunity to ask for what you would like to see happen in the community and find out where your money has been spent this last year. Do please continue to contribute as it takes a little of the fundraising pressure off a few of us and the needs of the church building alone are considerable. Thank you.  
Do consider giving.

Even if you are reading this and are not yet a Friend of Chantry, you can become one by going on to our webpages [Whatleyandchantry.co.uk](http://Whatleyandchantry.co.uk) and click on Friends of Chantry. Scroll to Join and Support and read the Regular Planned Donations where you will find the account number and sort code to start payments.  
THANK YOU again.

**Our Thirsty Third Thursdays** continue to add colour to our drab wet winter so do join us for the next one, March 19th.

**April 9th and 16th 7:00pm**

Simon Briston is a resident of Chantry has a knowledge and a passion about World War II he would love to share. The two evenings start with an open bar from 6:30pm ready for a 7:00pm presentation and viewing of the World at War DVD.

Both evenings will evoke reverent appreciation for those who either can still remember the war or have a family member they remember went to war, and for all of us who enjoy our lives today because of those who fought for us. Do join us and stay for a drink and chat after.

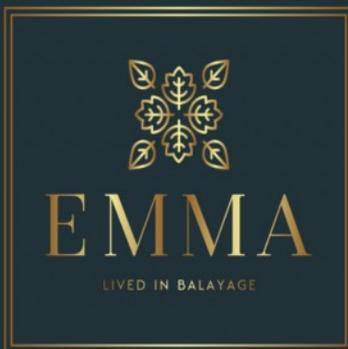
The first evening will be as follows..

**HOME FIRES:** (1940-1944). A time of gas masks, Winston Churchill, dig for Victory, evacuation, George Formby, the Land Army, ITMA, the Squander Bug and the Beveridge Report.

The second evening will be based on

**WOLFPACK:** (1939-1943) U-Boats and the Battle of the Atlantic. High Technology, underwater detection devices, a starving Britain as supply ships are targeted and allies hounded in packs.

Thank you to Simon in advance for all the time you are taking putting this together for us.



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## **GREAT ELM**

As part of Lenten preparation towards Easter, Richard King will be running prayer sessions Monday to Friday at 7.30am in church throughout March ending on Friday April 3rd.

March 1st We will be hosting the Benefice Holy Communion at 10am when we welcome all parishes to join for the weekly service. The service will be led by Revd. Catherine Llewellyn who will be coming from Bath.

March 15th - Mothering Sunday. The 9.30am monthly Communion service will be adapted to a family service with posies, and for those who wish to stay on afterwards this will be followed by the Communion.

### **FORWARD NOTICE OF EASTER EVENTS**

Richard King is planning an event to mark Good Friday April 3rd. More information will be available separately.



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April 4th – Decoration of the church 10.00am. Coffee and cake will be provided at 11.00am

April 5th – Easter Sunday 10.00am. Benefice Communion at Mells at 10.00am

Please note there will NOT be a service at Great Elm on Easter Sunday and we will be joining the congregation at Mells.

**April 5th - EGG ROLLING** from the top of Elm Lane at 11.30am

Last year we had so many entries there were two age categories. A wonderful turn out with many painted eggs and several very happy dogs who tidied the debris from the street afterwards. Sarah Bradshaw has kindly agreed to organise the event again.

## MELLS WITH VOBSTER

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Family and friends gathered at St Andrew's Church on Thursday November 27th to celebrate John's life and pray for the repose of his soul.

Born in Merstham, Surrey, John moved to Mellis during the war and then grew up living at Ammerdown. He took the blessings he found here with him wherever he went: a love of family, of nature, of art and literature; a gift for friendship and for learning; his gentleness and his sense of humour.

After studying at Summerfields, Eton and Christ Church, Oxford, he went into publishing. He continued writing, reviewing and editing books for the rest of his life, covering memoir, cultural and family history. The last book he worked on was his grandmother Katharine Asquith's WWI Nursing Diary, published just a few months before he died.

A keen traveller, he continued visiting new destinations, such as Tbilisi, Georgia and Lithuania well into his eighties, as well as returning to old favourites, making his last visit to Paris in May last year.



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He was perhaps most blessed in the love of his wife, Victoria, and in the children and grandchildren they gave life to.

### **MELLS OPEN GARDENS SUNDAY JUNE 14TH**

We are looking forward to less rain, more sunshine, and the opportunity to enjoy the huge variety of gardens in our beautiful village. This year the Manor gardens will again be open, so come along to see some old favourites and others open for the first time, for gardening inspiration. Refreshments will be available and all proceeds, as usual, will go towards supporting our much-valued community shop and cafe. Tickets will be available nearer the time online and in the shop.

### **MUSIC IN COUNTRY CHURCHES CONCERT IN MELLS ON SUNDAY JULY 19TH**

We are delighted to announce that St Andrew's, Mells and Music in Country Churches will be holding a concert on Sunday, July 19th at 6.30pm. The concert will be given by Tenebrae Associate Artists, [www.tenebrae-choir.com/](http://www.tenebrae-choir.com/) directed by Nigel Short, one of the UK's most distinguished conductors. Tenebrae is known in the UK and internationally as one of the most outstanding choirs of our time. The Associate Artists programme provides young professional singers with an opportunity to gain experience through active engagement with

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The programme is tbc, but will include an exciting selection of choral music, past and present, sacred and secular. Tickets will be available in early March.

Please put the date in your diary, tell people about the concert, and come along to support this concert which will raise funds for St Andrew's. It will be a great way to spend a summer evening! Music in Country Churches was set up as a charitable trust, to fill rural churches with inspiring music for the benefit of the local community, and to raise funds to assist with the costs of their repair and maintenance. To find out more about MICC, have a look at [musicincountrychurches.org.uk](http://musicincountrychurches.org.uk)

**MELLS PARISH COUNCIL** (Full minutes can be found at [mells-pc.gov.uk](http://mells-pc.gov.uk))

**Notes of Mells Parish Council held on Tuesday February 10th 2026**

**Open Air in Mells**  
**Good Friday Witness**  
**ALL WELCOME**  
Good Friday  
3 April 10am  
Opposite Mells village shop - near the Penny-Farthings

Readings and songs to mark the  
Crucifixion of Christ

If you wish to walk from Great Elm gather at  
grass triangle outside the Great Elm Village Hall  
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"Truly this was the Son of God!"

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## SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

**Somerset Council budget:** The council has been told that its application for a 11% increase in council tax has been refused and the maximum they can increase it by is 4.99%.

**Government Rates Somerset's Road Conditions Among the Best in the Country:** Somerset Council has been ranked among the top performing authorities in England for road condition and maintenance.

**Bus Service Improvements:** Somerset Council is considering a package of proposals to improve bus services across the county following confirmation of new government funding (£2.5 million) un-



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der the Bus Service Fund e.g. better integration with rail services, expansion of demand responsive transport, improved access to key destinations.

**Expanded Recycling Service for Communal Properties:** From March 2026, residents in flats and other communal properties will be able to recycle a wider range of materials. Households will receive a kitchen food waste caddy and liners, with the new service launching the week beginning March 30th 2026.

**Health Visitors to Offer Childhood Vaccinations at Home:** Somerset is taking part in a national NHS pilot allowing health visitors to deliver routine childhood vaccinations in family homes, helping children who face barriers to attending GP appointments. From this month, children will also be offered protection against chickenpox as part of the routine NHS vaccination schedule through the combined MMRV vaccine.

**Health and Wellbeing grants:**

These are available up to £1,000 for projects Parish Councils would like to support.

**MATTERS ARISING**

**Pavilion lease and future of recreation ground:** Christopher Pike detailed the recent works carried out at the recreation ground and explained the proposed lease agreement with the Estate going forwards. The PC agreed to support the Company with a set annual grant of £2,500 for the next 3 years to be reviewed at the end of the period. The Company will take on the rent for the ground which the PC previously paid. The new lease agreement should be in place by September 2026 and is currently in the hand of the solicitors.

**Whatley Quarry increase in noise:** The quarry now has two specific noise working groups. One for assessing the noise at the quarry and the other for the railway. The quarry continues to implement noise reduction measures wherever possible.

**Vobster defibrillator electricity supply:** The new owners have kindly agreed to continue to provide the electricity for the defibrillator.

## HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES:

**Speeding vehicles in Vobster:** Cllr West and Cllr Seviour are in the process of completing the application and will consult with Vobster residents.

## ITEMS TO REPORT

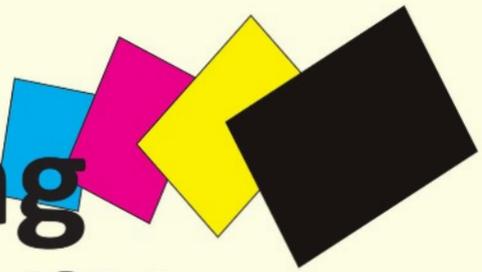
**Lock up:** Cllr Brady has received approval from the Estate to look into costs to improve the lock up. English Heritage may help with the funding.

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday March 10th 2026 at 7.15pm in the Barn.

*Joy Book, Clerk, Tel: 07704 584953, Email: clerk@mells-pc.gov.uk*

## WHATLEY

St. George's church cleaning rota (no flowers this month)  
March 7th J Uhrmacher; 14th P Witt; 21st; K Gay; 28th J Norris



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The PCC were sorry that ill health prevented Hazel from leading her regular second Sunday Matins in St. George and thank Barry Davies for kindly stepping in to take the service with very short notice. The PCC along with the rest of the village send get well wishes to Hazel for a speedy recovery.

Neighbourly love abounded at the March 14th coffee morning, with pretty hearts decorating the church and delicious, sweet things to enjoy. It's good to see old friends from far flung places, (well OK, not so far! Chilcompton and Midsomer Norton) coming back to see us and enjoy this easy way to catch up with neighbours. It's also good to see the children enjoying toys in the play area and generally having a bit of fun while the adults chat. New friends were there as well, including Annie Chant. She, Tom and the girls intend to be moving to Ponderosa in early April, but already Annie feels like a neighbour.

On Saturday March 28th it is hoped that as many people as possible will turn up with whatever garden implements they think will be useful to give our churchyard its annual spring clean. Refreshments will be available in church. All welcome!



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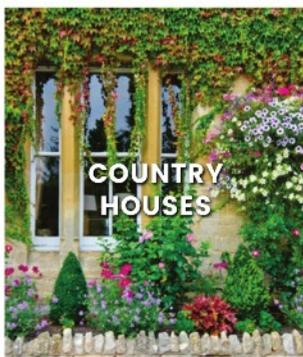
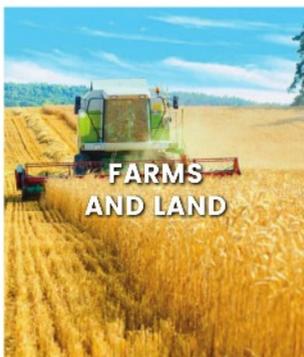
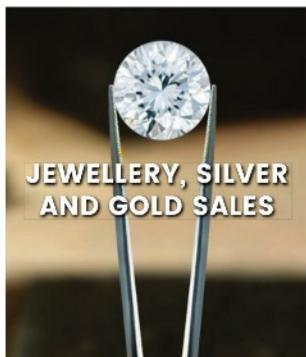
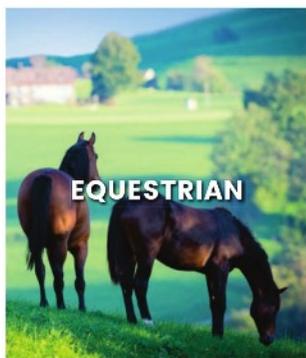
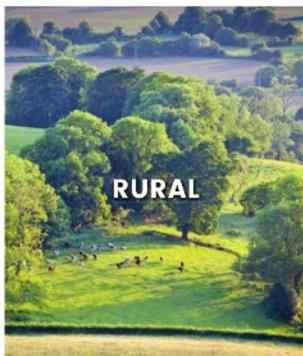
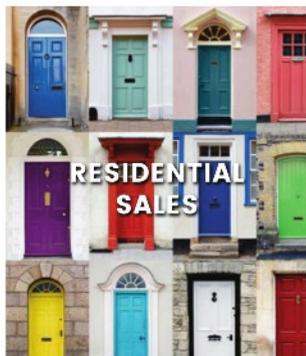
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