



5 ALIVE!

May 2026

**Make sure you follow
the countryside rules
when you're out
walking**

See page 3

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

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FROM THE EDITOR

IT'S ODD PUTTING this month's issue of 5Alive together without including any of Hazell's Jottings. I will miss her and I know that so many others will too. Do read the tribute that Val Rawlins gave at Hazell's funeral – it's on page 8.

More sad news – Mells Café is closed but not, everyone hopes, forever. Fingers crossed a whole new way of managing it can be put together before too long and we can all celebrate its re-opening. We'll keep you in the picture.

Now, just a reminder from me. Anyone interested in helping out with 5Alive's admin side? It doesn't take long, an hour or so a month. Let me know if you want to take it on.

Peter

ROUND AND ABOUT

FOLLOW THE COUNTRYSIDE ACT WHEN YOU'RE OUT FOR A WALK

I WOULD LIKE to say a big thank you to all of you who pass through my horses' field following the Countryside Code, you are appreciated.

Unfortunately, however, there have been a few incidents recently including a cut electric fence, a cut horse and trespassing which puts my horses, the land, wildlife and others at great risk. Therefore, I feel the need to stress the importance to all in observing the Countryside Code and Dogs Act to prevent any further harm and action.

The Countryside Code is a set of guidelines to ensure respect for everyone, to protect the environment, and to enjoy the

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Deadline for JUNE 2026 is MAY 15th

but do check as it could change

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outdoors: gov.uk/government/publications/the-countryside-code/the-countryside-code-advice-for-countryside-visitors.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025 amended on March 18th 2026 is to strengthen livestock protection in England and Wales by imposing unlimited fines and increased police powers to seize dogs involved in "worrying" (chasing, attacking, injuring) livestock including horses.

Conduct includes leaving 'property as found' (including electric fencing), to 'follow instructions from farmers/land managers' – please keep to all legal footpaths at all times of the year, especially when the field is 'resting'. Please do not feed the horses as this causes illness and undesirable behaviour and keep dogs on a lead because dogs are potential predators for horses. 'Climbing over boundaries can cause land damage and put horses at risk' and please 'bag it and bin' your dog poo because if ingested it is toxic.

This field is my horses' home 24/7 for six months of the year, their vital grazing, their 'safe, happy place'.



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Please observe the countryside code when you pass through this field (and every other field you may walk across) for your safety, the horses', your dogs', the land, the wildlife and others. Thank you.

Lucy Gundry, Hope Farm, Buckland Dinham

DOWNSIDE FESTIVAL 2026

BASED IN THE INSPIRING surroundings of Downside Abbey, a four-day music festival will be taking place in July this year. The festival opens on Thursday July 16th, with a musical 'fanfare' when the organist David Beddard will be joined by the Bristol Brass Consort for a rousing evening of celebratory music for organ and brass. One of the highlights of the festival – that will hopefully become a yearly event – will be a 'Come and Sing' evening (Friday July 17th) with the internationally acclaimed composer and conductor, Sir John Rutter.

The festival closes on Sunday July 19th with a concert by the young professional vocal consort, Tenebrae Associated Artists in St Andrew's Mells, which is being promoted jointly with 'Music in Country Churches.' Programme details and ticket information is available on the Downside Abbey website, (www.downsideabbey.co.uk) and in the June edition of 5Alive.

BUCKLAND DINHAM

The May Services at St. Michael & All Angels church will be as per rota. As I was away, and missed the service on Easter Sunday, I was very pleased to hear that the early morning service in the Village Hall garden took place, and that the service in the church was well attended. We are very lucky to have retired vicar Pauline taking Communion services and Jenny (our church warden) together with her husband Rob, and Jonny and Meg who take the second and fourth Sunday Services each month. Without their continued commitment it is unlikely that St. Michael's would still be open! So please do continue to support the Church which has been standing in Buckland Dinham for nearly 1,000 years.

COFFEE MORNING As usual this will be on the third Saturday, that is May 16th, and we look forward to seeing as many villagers and friends as possible. There will be, as always, a selection of homemade cakes and coffee or tea, for what is always a very happy village gathering. Offers of help are welcome.

VILLAGE NEWS

The Tuesday morning chair yoga is still enjoyed by the few ladies who do come, but it would be nice to see more people. Details are on WhatsApp for those who would like to give it a try.

The next Buckland Buddies' meeting is on Tuesday May 5th when our guest speaker Alex Carter will give a talk on his very varied career in many different countries. 7.15 for 7.30 in the Village Hall.

This meeting will also be open to any gentleman who would like to join us.

Jill Wright

Yesterday, writes Corinne King, we completed the final of the six walks to raise money to go towards the repairs to the Buckland Dinham church lychgate and 5Alive magazine. A fantastic total of £185.00 was raised. This has been equally divided between the two causes.

A beautiful walk through woodlands filled with bluebells, violets and primroses was enjoyed on our way to the Hardington Bampfylde church. This was enjoyed by all. Thanks to everyone who has joined us on our walks.



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Mells Group of Churches

May 2026

	3 rd May	10 th May	17 th May	24 th May	31 st May	7 th June
Chantry		11.00am Holy Communion Chris Hare	11.00am Holy Communion	11.00am Matins Val Rawlins		10.00am Group Holy Communion Barry Daviies
Great Elm			9.30am Holy Communion Robin Isherwood	9.30am Morning Prayer Richard King		
Mells		9.30am Holy Communion Martin Weymont				
Whatley	10.00am Group Holy Communion Barry Davies			09.30am Holy Communion David Gatcliffe		

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

Great Elm At 7.30am on Wednesdays Richard King leads a prayer session in church

Hardington Vale Church Services May 2026

DATE	TIME	SERVICE
Sunday 3 May	09.00 10.30 11.00 18.00	Norton St Philip , Informal Breakfast Rode , Holy Communion Laverton , Holy Communion Rode Chapel , Meeting Place
Tuesday 5 May	09.00 11.00	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer Rode Chapel , Ecumenical Holy Communion
Wednesday 6 May	08.30 17.00 18.00	Hemington , Morning Prayer Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer Tellisford , Evening Prayer
Thursday 7 May	18.00	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer
Sunday 10 May	09.00 10.30 11.00 11.00	Rode , Informal Breakfast Norton St Philip , Holy Communion Laverton , Matins Buckland Dinham , Iona/Taizé Service
Tuesday 12 May	09.00	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer
Wednesday 13 May	08.30 17.00	Hemington , Morning Prayer Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer
Thursday 14 May Ascension Day	08.00 18.00	Norton St Philip , Holy Communion Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer
Sunday 17 May	09.00 10.30 10.30 11.00 11.00	Farleigh Hungerford , Morning Worship Rode , Holy Communion Norton St Philip , Informal Worship Laverton , Matins Buckland Dinham , Holy Communion
Tuesday 19 May	09.00	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer
Wednesday 20 May	08.30 17.00 18.00	Hemington , Morning Prayer Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer Tellisford , Evening Prayer
Thursday 21 May	18.00	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer
Sunday 24 May Pentecost/Whit Sunday	09.00 10.30 10.30 11.00 18.00	Rode , Contemplation and Coffee Norton St Philip , Holy Communion Tellisford , Holy Communion Laverton , Matins Buckland Dinham , Iona/Taizé Service
Tuesday 26 May	09.00	Norton St Philip , Morning Prayer
Wednesday 27 May	08.30 17.00	Hemington , Morning Prayer Rode Chapel , Informal Prayer
Thursday 28 May	18.00	Norton St Philip , Silent Prayer
Sunday 31 May	10.30	Norton St Philip , United Holy Communion

Events in May	
Mondays – Pilates for Cyclists - 6pm	Tuesdays – Chair Yoga - 10am
Wednesdays - Pilates - 9.30am	Wednesdays – Short-mat Bowls - 2.30pm
1 st – Bingo – 8.30pm	5 th – Buckland Buddies - 7.30pm
7 th – Parish Council – 7pm	10 th – Iona/Taize Service – 11am
12 th – Lunch Club – 12noon	15 th – Live Music – 8.30pm
16 th – Coffee Morning - 10am	17 th – Holy Communion - 11am
24 th – Iona/Taize Service – 6pm	<i>June 28th – Strawberry Fayre</i>
See www.BucklandDinham.org for details	

CHANTRY

HAZEL(L) TOVEY FEBRUARY 8TH 1932 – MARCH 13TH 2026

At six years of age, Hazel started school at Tormead School in Guildford, where she made three good friends, Maureen, Pat and Joan. Although it was a boarding school, she was not a boarder. Her three friends used to ride their bikes to and from school, but Hazel’s father would not allow her to ride to school – he considered it too un-lady-like! However, he later relented slightly and told her she might push her bike to school and lean on it!

She left school at 18 and didn’t wish to go to university and became a Chartered Librarian at Cranleigh College. As a librarian she became very well read – she was highly intelligent though very modest.

Hazel came to live at The Grange in Chantry in the early 70’s with Mum, Dad, Uncle Ted and friend Majorie. Marjorie later bought a house in Coleford but sadly died of cancer within a year. When they first moved to The Grange, a very large house with a huge garden, they took in local police cadets for Bed and Breakfast. At that time, they had a rather naughty pet goat called Peggy!

When Hazel’s Dad sadly died, her mother advertised for a live-in carer for Uncle Ted (a stroke had left him with brain damage making him like a six-year-old child). Initially there were no takers then a man called Ron applied and got the job. When Uncle Ted died, Ron stayed on as an odd-job man and gardener.

Hazel had a job at Rode Bird Gardens which she greatly enjoyed but unfortunately her mother had a nasty fall and she had to leave her job and return home. She had her two beloved Cavalier King Charles Spaniels called Muff and Floss who had the run of the garden. When the Bird Gardens were forced to close, Hazel took on quite a few of the birds, including several parrots and a crow with a broken wing which she lovingly cared for. One of her parrots had a really amazing ability. So

many of us when visiting Hazel would hear her telephone ring which she seemed not to hear. When we told her her phone was ringing, she would say blithely, "Oh don't worry, it's only one of the pollies!"

Ron was a great support to Hazel, and they became very close which they diplomatically kept from her mother (somebody told me recently that she did know and approved). Following her mother's death, Hazel and Ron were married very quietly in Chantry church, hugely encouraged by the late Rev. Bertrum Hardy, another real character. My late husband attended as Church Warden – there were no guests.

Sadly, Ron died about three months after the wedding and Hazel sold The Grange. However, she kept the mews garage and moved temporarily to Frome while it was turned into a comfortable house for her and her beloved pets. She had Ron's workroom converted into a kitchen with an en-suite upstairs which she rented out for a while.

Hazel loved car-boot sales and each Saturday she and her friend Ann would go to the Frome and Standerwick sales. Later she had a stall at the Cheese and Grain in Frome where she made many friends. She ran a bed and breakfast for many years and went on to board birds and dogs. For some years she was a volunteer at Stourhead which she reached by driving her little Austin A30.

Hazel became a member of this church sometime after Ron died, eventually becoming a church warden. She carried out her duties with an inbuilt efficiency and very welcoming smile for any visitors to the church.

Unfortunately, in her closing years, she suffered greatly, having two major operations and being diagnosed with bilateral lung cancer which had spread throughout her body. She was given six months to live but being Hazel she lived for another 18 months, never complaining and latterly having a wonderful live-in carer named Ester. She had many visitors, always managing a smile and when asked if she was in pain, she would always say "no".

When it was obvious that Hazel's life here on earth was coming to a close, I put a small hand carved Cross from the Holy Land into her left hand. She closed her fingers around it and was still doing so when she died. Ester asked her again if she was in pain on March 13th this year, to be told "No, I am going home" and died peacefully.

She will be greatly missed by so many people. May she rest in peace and rise in Glory. RIP. Amen

From the tribute to Hazel read at her funeral by Val Rawlins.

Copies of Hazell's (double 'l' as that's how name appears on the cover) book, "Bird Shadows", which covers the important period in her life from the time she moved to The Grange in Chantry, through her brief marriage to her move into her beloved home in the former Grange stable block are available from Anne Williams. Her number is 01373 814600. Do get a copy – it's brilliant!

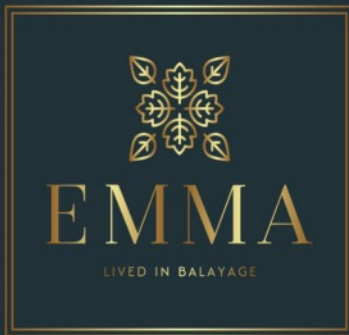
RIP MIKE COTTERILL

A small private family service was held in Chantry churchyard for the internment of Mike's ashes on April 2nd. The ashes were buried in with his first wife Sue who died 18 years ago, they were married in Chantry church and would have been married 60 years on that date. Our thoughts are with all the family at this time.

FRIENDS OF CHANTRY NEWS

Thursday May 7th

Night River presents DG Solaris with Grace Elizabeth Harvey. Don't miss this magically intimate acoustic concert which will take place in the beautiful Holy Trinity Church. DG Solaris, aka Danny Green, is an amazing songwriter and storyteller. He began hosting these hugely popular intimate Night River events at the HydeAway cocktail bar in Frome. Holy Trinity is a new venue which we hope will host more of these intimate concerts



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Sunday May 10th

Private, hosted walk along the beautiful Fordbury Water stretch of valley from Railford Mill. Peter and Greta Williamson will talk to us about the history of their home – Railford Mill – and the Fussell family who owned and ran it. The valley should be in its full glory, lined with wild garlic, bluebells, and the fresh green of early summer. We will end the walk back at the Mill where Greta and Peta will serve a cuppa and cake in the garden.

This is a visit to a private home, kindly donated by Peter and Greta to our community. We ask £5 per person (payable in cash on the day) as a donation to Friends of Chantry to support our ongoing projects. Spaces are limited so please email Ellie Swinhoe if you would like to come along – ellie_swinhoe@hotmail.com

The talk and walk will start at 14:30 (Sunday 10th May) at Railford Mill.



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GREAT ELM

A quiet Easter with no service at Great Elm church but the turnout for the Benefice Group service at Mells was astounding. Wonderful photos of the Egg Rolling at Elm Lane were posted on the Village WhatsApp. Thank you to Sarah Bradshaw for generously organising this event for another year.

Spring Churchyard Cleanup took place on April 18th with a team of enthusiastic workers.

Work continues on the renovations and painting of the guttering and should be completed in the next couple of months now that the weather is improving.

ANNUAL PARISH CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday May 12th 6.30pm. Village Hall. All Welcome.

We would welcome some new younger members to join the PCC. We have three meetings a year. If a role on the PCC sounds too much of a commitment there are other practical jobs to be done. I would love to hear from someone volunteering to polish the brass twice a year or occasionally wash the altar cloth.

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MELLS WITH VOBSTER

Two items to report this month, the first is to announce the Tithe Barn AGM is being held at the Barn at 7.00pm June 2nd. All are welcome.

The second item is some very sad news

Mells Village Shop Management Committee announced with huge regret that Mells Village Cafe would close its doors on Saturday April 18th. Under the current economic and fiscal climate, the previous business model was no longer viable. Sadly, we had to say goodbye to all our wonderful staff. The committee is very aware of how much the Cafe means to the community, and is taking steps to ensure its future, but under a different model.

Mells Village Shop and Post Office will of course remain open as normal, and there will be no changes to opening times.

The ever popular Mells Open Gardens will be held on Sunday June 14th, 11.00am to 5.00pm, and we are hoping for even more gardens to be open. We are selling tickets at £8 in advance from Mells shop or £10 on the day. Refreshments will be sold in the Tithe Barn and elsewhere in the village. As usual, all funds raised will go towards supporting our Community shop.



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We are always very grateful for any offers of help on the day, selling tickets or refreshments, so if you are able to offer an hour or more of your time, please do get in touch with Rosemary. rjworsdall@yahoo.co.uk

Fleur Kelly, March 21st 1950 – October 27th 2025

St. Andrew's Church was filled to capacity on Saturday April 11th 2026 with family and friends, who gathered to offer thanksgiving for the life of Fleur Kelly. The service was led by the Revd Doctor Martin Weymont and the Revd Canon John Kelly.

Fleur and her husband, Francis, lived at Claveys farm in Mellis for many years. Fleur was a skilled fresco painter who trained with experts in traditional lime mortar techniques.

Among her commissions, she reproduced in a church in Leyton, East London, together with Leo Stevenson, a segment of the Sistine Chapel depicting the creation of Adam, in fresco. Whilst living in Mellis she painted the mural for The Talbot Inn, depicting the cottages, landscapes and characters of Mellis. The family eventually moved to France, where, after a short illness last autumn, Fleur died. She was particularly afflicted by the sufferings of the people of Gaza, and donations were received in her memory for Medical Aid for Palestinians.

She will be sorely missed by her large family and many friends, and our thoughts and prayers will remain with them. May Fleur rest in peace and rise in Glory.

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NOTES OF MELLS PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY MARCH 10TH 2026 (FULL MINUTES CAN BE FOUND AT MELLS-PC.GOV.UK)

SOMERSET COUNCIL - COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

New phonenumber for residents struggling to afford the increasing cost of oil: The service allows residents in need of financial assistance to call a freephone number, 0808 278 7842, and request support from the Household Support team.

Crisis and Resilience Fund: The council will receive £21.5 million over a three-year period. The fund will provide immediate financial support for essentials such as food, energy and housing costs, alongside longer-term measures including debt advice, benefit checks and employment support.

Health & Wellbeing Fund: SALC is pleased to announce that we are now accepting applications to the health & wellbeing grant fund, part of a larger health and wellbeing project commissioned by Somerset Council Public health to enable parish and town councils to improve health and wellbeing in their communities. Small grants of up to £2,500 are available via an online application process. Larger grants of up to £35,000 are available but the process is more involved.

ASSERTION 10 - This now forms part of the annual audit. Clerk has sourced suitable documents to use as the basis of the IT and Email policy and GDPR policies and is currently seeking a suitable data map to use.

MATTERS ARISING

Defibrillator training: Only two people have come forward so far. Clerk to re-advertise.

White bridge railing: The contractor has quoted £60 for the work and will complete it once the weather is more settled.

HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH ISSUES: Speeding vehicles in Vobster: Cllr West is approaching residents to ask if they support the speed reduction.

PLANNING MATTERS: 2026/0384/FUL: Restoration or Quarry Cottages to a single residential dwelling (self-build) – Conduit Hill – No objections

ITEMS TO REPORT

Footpath by Alms House and grass cutting: The previous contractor is no longer able to provide this service. Clerk to approach another contractor who has done some work for the PC in the past.

Quarry Liaison meeting: One complaint had been received. A ceremony to name the new engine is taking place this weekend and Cllrs West and Seewooruttun will attend.

Public Space Protection Order: Cllr Seewooruttun had submitted an application. She has been asked to supply further information.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Tuesday May 12th 2026 at 7.00pm to include the Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting in the Barn. All very welcome to attend. Joy Book, Clerk. Tel: 07704 584953 Email: clerk@mells-pc.gov.ukewooruttun will attend.

WHATLEY

CLEANING AND FLOWERS:

May 2nd Lorna Thomas. 11th Judy Urchmacher 16th Pippa Witt
23rd Katy Gay. 30th Jenny Norris

The PCC warmly invite everyone in the parish to come to their Annual General Meeting at St George’s church; Monday May 3rd, 3.00pm.

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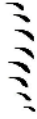
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RIP- We have lost two Chantry neighbours since our last magazine, the much-loved Hazel Tovey and the quiet, gentle man, Robert Lewis. Their ceremonies took place during April and are now at rest in their beloved Chantry. They will be woven into our different memories of village life, with thanks for their lives amongst us. They will be much missed.

Many of you will also remember the remarkable Hilary Daniel, who also died late March, aged 95. He was a big part of Whatley life between 1997 and 2020. Despite his busy 'retired' life in Frome, he served our villages with friendship, care and compassion, both as a lay preacher and quizmaster. However....he did not quite understand his own enormous intelligence when he set the questions for our early Whatley/Chantry



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quizzes. Peter Lugg still remembers his first question: "Who was Nelson's Flag Lieutenant at the Battle of the Nile?"

All are invited to a celebration of his life at Berkeley Church on May 4th, 4.00pm, followed by refreshments at Standerwick Market Hall.

The road closure worked well, didn't it? No problems at all.

FRIENDS OF WHATLEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES AT ST GEORGE'S CHURCH, WHATLEY

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Friday May 1st 6.00pm-11.00pm

GOOD NEWS! The Chants are finally moving permanently into Ponderosa after their extensive renovations. Welcome again, Annie, Tom, Elsie and Iris - we are so pleased to have you back in our village.

FRIENDS of WHATLEY monthly meeting ALL WELCOME

Tuesday May 12th 6.15pm -7.45pm



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CAKE and PLANT sale with Friends of Whatley and Friends of Chantry
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Saturday May 16th 10.00am – 4.00pm

Whatley contributions: In advance, please drop off any plants to Paul Gay
and cakes (with ingredients and allergens list attached) to Alice Kettle

Saturday May 16th May 6.00pm-11.00pm.

Hosted by Vince Tilman, a wonderful informal cabaret style evening of
contributions from local musicians. Free to come along and support these
wonderful performers. Please come and show your support, we would love a
good audience.

PLEASE COME AND SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDLY COMMUNITY HUB

If anyone needs a lift to any events,

contact FOW secretary Alice.kettle@gmail.com

WHATLEY COMMON GOOD TRUST

The Trust was established in 2002 for the benefit of the area and its residents
within the boundary of Whatley Parish. The current trustees are Nigel Brock,
Olly Goodden (Secretary), Stephanie Greshon (Treasurer), Martin Payne
(Chair), Sue Pollock.



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In the past year funding was provided toward a Pickleball set for use in the Parish Field. The Friends of Whatley received help with set up costs. A dismountable skittle alley has been used at monthly social evenings in the St George's church. The Trust helped with the cost of a light in the churchyard, needed due to extra use being made of the church as a community hub, especially in winter when days are shorter. Funding was also provided for a circular tree bench to fit around a sapling planted in Chantry in 2022. The trustees meet quarterly on the first Wednesday of January, April, July and October, dates and venues are published on the village website. The AGM is held at the start of the April meeting. Bid forms are available on the parish website or from Olly Goodden at ogoodden@yahoo.co.uk.

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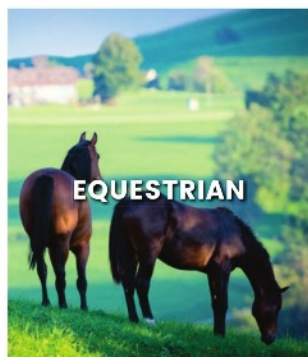
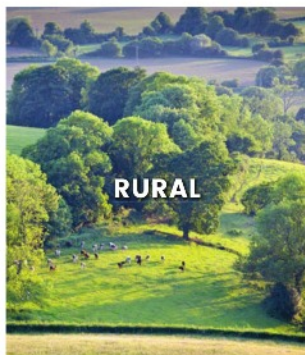
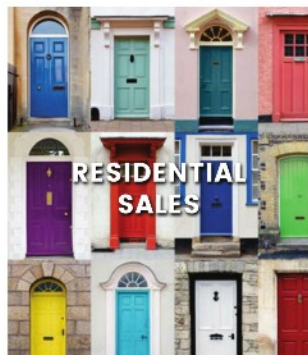
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