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Trefoil House
Review Score:



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Dukeminster Court is a modern home consisting of 75 fully furnished bedrooms all with en-suite shower facilities. The Home can accommodate residents with a wide range of needs, including those seeking residential and dementia care. Dukeminster Court features a Best Friends Café where residents can sit and chat with friends and family over tea, coffee and cakes. There is also a hair and beauty salon for residents to enjoy a spot of pampering.

Visit www.carehome.co.uk

Dukeminster Court
Review Score:



If you or a loved one are finding it difficult to make that important decision and would like some help or advice, please call or visit a home today.

Quantum Care manages homes and day centres across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex. For more information call 01707 393293 or email info@quantumcare.co.uk

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Cover Photo by EE_Gritsun © Shutterstock



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Foreword from the CEO

Welcome to this Spring and Summer edition of our **VOICE** magazine.



Well what a summer we have had. The world 6 months ago was a very different place to that we are experiencing now.

COVID-19 has had a worldwide impact and as you will all no doubt agree, it is not over yet. The summer was hot and humid and millions of people shielded or were in lockdown across the UK. Whether you agree with the steps the Government took and continue to take, we are still living with this virus.

I think most of us would say that we have seen nothing like this in our lifetime. It has indeed been like World War 3 but in a very different context.

As Summer wanes and we move into Autumn and Winter my message is to keep safe and well and maybe have a read of the special article on all things COVID inside this issue. Hopefully a few hints and tips to help you.

There are also features on Money, Keeping your Brain Healthy, and regulars such as Recipes, Charlie Chuckles and Dates for your Diary.

Stay safe and happy reading.

Karen

Karen Perry CEO, Age UK Bedfordshire



Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service
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Feeling Lonely? Feeling low or worried? These feelings are not just a normal part of ageing.

We all feel down from time to time, no matter our age. But when these feelings are persistent, talking to someone can be helpful. If you're feeling lonely, low, anxious or just not your usual self Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service can help. You can seek advice from your doctor or self-refer to Bedfordshire Wellbeing Service on: [01234 880 400](tel:01234880400) or visit our website: www.bedfordshirewellbeingservice.nhs.uk/get-started.



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voice

KEEP WELL and SAFE DURING WINTER

WHAT IS COVID-19 ?

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more serious diseases such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

The 2019 novel coronavirus is a new strain that has not been seen in humans until now and has caused viral pneumonia. It was first linked to Wuhan's South China Seafood City market which is a wholesale market for seafood and live animals in December 2019.

The virus has now spread to become a pandemic across most of the world.

The main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

There are other symptoms that you may experience but the above are the confirmed ones.

As this is a new virus work is continuing to update symptoms and information constantly.

Getting Out and About Safely

There are guidelines now for going out and about and protection for oneself or having visitors to one's home and protecting oneself and them:-

1. Stay 6 feet (2 metres) apart at all times – no hugging etc. with anyone who is not of your household.
2. Wear a face covering (mask or similar) when going into any shops or other buildings outside the home (we have a supply that we can sell at £2.50 each) these are cloth and can be re-used and laundered.
3. Try and avoid touching your face when out and about.
4. To protect oneself from infection it is wise to buy and carry anti bac wipes and/or gel in order to use it when out and about or shopping.
5. There is no substitute for hand washing (this must be with soap and water for at least 20 seconds) but in cases when out shopping gel or wipes can be used. Then wash hands on return home.
6. Many shops now have one way systems and special queues for checkouts so look out for this



7. Many shops are also only taking payment by debit or credit card, not cash therefore ensure you have a card with you that you can use to pay.
8. If taking a taxi or public transport you must again wear a mask or face covering and use anti bac gel when you get out of the vehicle.



All of the above will help to keep you safe and well through the Winter months with not only COVID-19 but the coughs and colds that obviously circulate in the cold weather.

For added protection do not forget to get your flu jab. Contact your GP to find out if you are eligible for a free flu jab or visit your local chemist and ask if they are doing them. You may have to pay.

Other Help we Can Give

We are again running our projects to help you check if you have all your financial entitlements.

Our home energy checks for insulation and supply and fitment of free draught excluders, timer switches, night lights, and much more is up and running.

For more information on either of the above just give us a call on **01234 360510** or email enquiries@ageukbedfordshire.org.uk

Keeping your Home Safe and Germ Free

The advice is to use bleach to wash down surfaces and any points that you touch. Bleach kills most germs and is therefore the best solution.

There are of course anti bac wipes and anti bac sprays that you can purchase and use around your home. These can be found in most supermarkets.

Again frequent hand washing prevents any spread.



Dates for Your Diary



- Sunday 25th October (2am)**
British Summer Time Ends -
Clocks go back one hour
- Saturday 31st October**
Halloween
- Sunday 1st November**
All Saints Day
- Thursday 5th November**
Bonfire Night - keep pets indoors!
- Sunday 8th November**
Remembrance Sunday
- Thursday 24th December**
Christmas Eve
- Friday 25th December**
Christmas Day
- Saturday 26th December**
Boxing Day
- Thursday 31st December**
New Years Eve
- Friday 1st January 2019**
New Years Day
- Sunday 14th February**
Valentine's Day
- Tuesday 16th February**
Shrove Tuesday
- Monday 1st March**
St David's Day
- Sunday 14th March**
Mothering Sunday
- Wednesday 17th March**
St Patrick's Day
- Sunday 28th March (1am)**
British Summer Time commences -
Clocks go forward one hour
- Thursday 1st April**
April Fools Day
- Thursday 1st April**
Maundy Thursday
- Friday 2nd April**
Good Friday
- Sunday 4th April**
Easter Sunday
- Monday 5th April**
Easter Monday

Winter

Minestrone in Minutes

Ingredients

- 1 Litre hot vegetable stock
- 400g tin chopped tomatoes
- 100g thin spaghetti, broken into short lengths

Photo by kaferina Kondratova © Shutterstock

- 350g frozen mixed vegetable
- 4 tbsp pesto
- drizzle of olive oil
- coarsely grated parmesan - style cheese, to serve

Method

● STEP 1

Bring the stock to the boil with the tomatoes, then add the spaghetti and cook for 6 mins or until done. A few minutes before the pasta is ready, add the vegetables and bring back to the boil. Simmer for 2 mins until everything is cooked.

● STEP 2

Serve in bowls drizzled with pesto and oil, sprinkled with parmesan.

Recipes 2020

Lemon Curd Pudding

Microwave

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 2 tablespoons caster sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 20g butter, melted, cooled
- 40g (1/4 cup) self-raising flour
- Lemon curd, to serve
- Whipped cream, to serve

Method

● STEP 1

Break the egg into a 375ml (1 1/2-cup) capacity mug. Add the sugar, milk and butter and whisk with a fork until combined.

● STEP 2

Add the flour and use the fork to whisk until just combined (do not over-whisk). Microwave for 1 1/2 minutes or until the cake rises and feels springy when pressed gently.

Top with the lemon curd and cream.



Photo by Lanav © Shutterstock

Boost your Income

can you make better use of your finances?



We should all be able to enjoy our retirement. But as we get older, it can sometimes get harder to make ends meet.

We've got some straight forward advice to help you make your money go further.

Get A Benefits Check

Don't assume you're not entitled to any benefits. Each year up to £3.5bn of benefits go unclaimed by older people. So, even if you think you're getting everything you are entitled to - it doesn't hurt to check. Benefits could help you to pay for care, bereavement, bills or to maintain your independence. Contact us on 01234 360510 and ask us to arrange for a benefits check Free of Charge.

Clear your debts

It's never too late to regain control and find your way back to a debt-free life. Credit Cards and overdrafts are two of the main offenders. You may be able to switch your credit cards to a 0% card and overdrafts are very costly these days.

There are also lots of organisations offering free debt management advice.

Trace lost money

You may have money stored away in lost bank accounts, pensions or premium bonds if you've changed your name or address several times.

Cut your household costs

Council Tax

Council Tax helps your local authority to pay for services like rubbish collection and road maintenance, and applies to all domestic properties. Regardless of your financial circumstances, you could be eligible for a reduction to the amount you pay or could even be exempt.

How can I get a discount on my Council Tax bill?

There are some circumstances where you may get a discount on your Council Tax. The amount of discount varies.

If you live alone

The full Council Tax is calculated assuming there are 2 or more people living in each home – if you live alone, you should apply to your local council for a discount. You could get a 25% discount, regardless of your financial circumstances.

If you live with someone under 18 or a student

Council Tax isn't calculated on anyone aged under 18, full-time students, student nurses and some apprentices or trainees.

If you're a carer

Carers who look after someone in the household for at least 35 hours a week and who meet additional criteria may be disregarded for Council Tax purposes. Contact your local authority for eligibility criteria.

This does not apply if the person receiving care is the partner of the carer, or if the carer's child is aged under 18.

If there are major changes to your home's value

You may be able to get your home moved to a lower Council Tax band if your home has decreased in value. For example, if you've made home adaptations for a disabled person, or if a motorway is built nearby. Contact your local office of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) if you think your home's Council Tax band should be changed



If you change the way you pay

Although the total year's amount will stay the same, you can request that your bill be split over 12 months (instead of 10 months) so that each month's bill is less. Alternatively, if you can afford to pay a year's worth in one lump sum, check if you can get a discount.

Apply for Council Tax Support

You may be eligible to claim Council Tax Support, sometimes called Council Tax Reduction, if you're on a low income or claiming certain benefits.

Contact your local authority to find out if you're eligible for any discounts and how you can apply.

Water Bills

- **If you don't have a water meter:** You will be charged a set amount for water and sewage services, regardless of how much water you actually use. This amount is based on your home's rateable value.

- **If you have a water meter:** You'll be charged for the actual units of water you use. All properties built since 1990 have a water meter installed.

How can I reduce my water bills?

Here are some simple things you can do to reduce your water usage and therefore the cost of your water bills:

- Fix dripping taps or leaks – they can waste the equivalent of half a bath a week.
- Take showers instead of baths – A short shower can use a third of the amount of water needed for a bath.
- Don't leave the tap running while brushing your teeth or shaving.
- Use a washing up bowl to do the dishes, rather than rinsing every plate and cup under the tap.
- Wash vegetables in a bowl rather than under running water.
- Use a watering can in the garden rather than a hosepipe.
- Fit a device in your toilet cistern to minimise the water used in flushing. It can save up to 3 litres

of water with every flush. Ask your water company if it supplies them free of charge.

Don't use your washing machine or dishwasher on half-load programmes. A full load uses less water than 2 half loads.

Energy Bills

There is much competition across energy suppliers and it is easy and quick to switch.

You can use USwitch online or give us a call and we may be able to help you.

Before you start, make sure you have the following information at the ready:

- the name of your current supplier and current tariff.
- how much you spent on electricity and gas in the past year. Look at past bills or ask your current supplier, otherwise work it out approximately
- how you currently pay, e.g. cheque or direct debit
- how you would like to pay in future
- your postcode

QUIZ For Your Brain

1. What is the collective name of a group of seventeen hundred islands between Canada and the USA which are popular summer resorts?
2. Whose summer villa is at Castel Gandolfo?
3. When is the Christian festival of Midsummer Day?
4. Where were the 1968 Summer Olympics held?
5. What is used as the filling of a summer pudding?
6. Which institution, introduced by Harold Wilson, consists of TV and radio lectures and summer schools?
7. In 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland', what was done all on a summer's day?
8. Elvis Presley was the King, Bruce Springsteen the Boss. What nickname was given to Donna Summer?
9. In which capital city in the Northern Hemisphere, the name of which is a local tribe, has almost 19 hours of daylight during the summer solstice?
10. Which actor, later to find fame in 'It Ain't Half Hot Mum', played the part of one of Cliff Richard's friends in the film 'Summer Holiday'?
11. Which brothers wrote the song summertime?
12. Esther Summerson is the heroine of which novel by Charles Dickens?
13. Which brothers wrote the song summertime?
14. Which hit song describes summer thus? Those days of soda and pretzels and beer?
15. The film Summersby starred Richard Gere and which actress?
16. As the owner of what sort of shops is Anne Summers renowned?
17. Who had a hit record in 1961 with Summertime Blues?
18. The tiny summer Isles are a few miles Northwest of which Scottish port?
19. How is the singer La Donna Gaynes better known?
20. Which group had a hit with the song In the summer time?

Answers on Page 16



Your local Hospice supporting the people of Bedford

We are an independent charity working with other organisations providing care and support for patients with life limiting illnesses in North and Mid Bedfordshire.

Bedford Daycare Hospice aims to provide individualised holistic care to patients suffering with a life limiting condition from the point of diagnosis through treatment to remission or palliative care.

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Bedford Daycare Hospice provides excellent quality specialist, palliative and end of life care, from the point of diagnosis. We aim to provide incredible hospice care in a unique day care only way. We do all we can to help and support our patients and their loved ones at the most difficult time of their lives. To find out how our staff and volunteers can help you or your loved one please see page xx or call 01234 352 015.

We are open Monday to Friday from 9.30am until 3.30pm

Please get in touch on T: 01234 352015 or E: info@bdc-hospice.org.uk or
find out more at: www.bedforddaycarehospice.org.uk
Find us at: Bedfordshire Hospices Care Ltd., 3 Linden Road, Bedford MK40 2DD



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Look after your Brain



The human brain has been described as the most complex object in the universe. It's responsible for everything you do, think, feel and say – the things that make you who you are and enable you to go about your daily activities.

What does your brain actually do?

Your brain has three main jobs.

1. Managing your unconscious or 'automatic' functions, such as heartbeat, breathing, digestion and control of body temperature.
2. Managing your conscious or 'motor' functions, such as movement, gesturing, balance, posture and speech.
3. Thinking, emotions, behaviour and senses (eg sight, sound and touch).

How normal cognitive ageing affects us

Our thinking skills change throughout our lives. It's a long period of gradual change, starting in youth and continuing into later life.

In this lifelong process, we experience a relatively small amount of decline in some of our thinking skills. This is known as '**normal cognitive ageing**'. It's experienced by most of us and doesn't usually affect our independence or quality of life.

Thinking skills that **are affected** by normal cognitive ageing

Short-term memory
Reasoning
Speed of processing of information

Thinking skills that **are not affected** by normal cognitive ageing

General vocabulary
Knowledge

On average in older age, we know more than younger people but are not as quick in figuring out problems or completing tasks.

Does everyone age the same?

Most of us experience 'normal cognitive ageing' but some of us have a different experience because of differences between us as individuals. Everyone's brain is both complex and unique so it's not surprising that the way our thinking skills age varies between us.

Research shows that, for some people, thinking skills improve as they grow older – they do better than the norm. Some other people experience more than the 'normal' decline, which, in some cases, may lead to more serious loss of thinking skills or dementia.

But this decline is not an inevitable part of ageing and research shows there are ways we can help protect our thinking skills as we age.

What affects our thinking skills as we age?

Scientists are very interested in why some people's thinking skills age better than others.

Genes

Genes are responsible for many things, including physical traits like eye and hair colour. They also influence thinking skills. Evidence tells us that genes account for nearly one quarter (24%) of the change in thinking skills across our lifetime. In other words, they're part of the story but not the full story.

Lifestyle and environmental factors

As genes account for one quarter of the change in thinking skills across our lives, three quarters of the change is down to other factors. Many of these are due to lifestyle choices we can control or change, meaning we can have an impact on how our thinking skills change as we age.

We all want to stay healthy and active in later life, so we're interested in keeping fit mentally as well as physically. Increasingly, we're learning what we can do to keep our thinking skills sharp as we age.

When it comes to keeping our minds sharp, some of the advice can be confusing or contradictory. From fish oils to physical activity, from B vitamins to brain training, open the newspaper and it's easy to find claims on what helps and what harms.

But which claims can we trust? What do we reliably know about what will help us stay sharp as we age?

What does the science say about protecting your thinking skills?

1. **We know that our thinking skills change very gradually throughout our lives.** Most of us lose a little of some of them and this doesn't usually affect independence or quality of life. But differences between us mean that some people's thinking skills improve

and it will look after you



over their lives, and some experience greater degrees of decline.

2. Research is looking at a wide range of factors that might be involved in healthy ageing of our thinking skills, or that increase the risk of more serious decline.

3. Many of these studies are on factors that we can influence ourselves. Evidence suggests, for example, that taking exercise and engaging in new activities are linked with better thinking skills in later life.

4. Some lifestyle choices increase the risk of more decline. This includes smoking. In addition, some health conditions are now known to be associated with more decline, including cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.

Why small changes can make a big difference

The evidence indicates that we can help ourselves to stay sharp as we grow older. It also tells us to take a range of steps because no one single factor is a 'magic bullet'.

Rather, each of the factors associated with healthy cognitive ageing has an effect and these effects are thought to add up to help protect our thinking skills as we age. And we need to avoid the harmful factors.

Overall, evidence so far bears out the saying 'healthy body, healthy mind'.

Based on the evidence so far, here are practical things that we can do to help stay sharp in later life.

1. Keep active

Get moving throughout the day and do physical exercises and activities that you enjoy – or try new ones. An active lifestyle and regular exercise are linked to healthier brains and sharper thinking skills in later life.

2. Don't smoke

If you smoke, it's best to stop. Smoking is linked with having a thinner cortex, the brain's outer layer that is crucial for thinking skills. When you stop smoking, some reversal of this damage may be possible, but this can be very slow so it's better to stop sooner rather than later.

3. Have regular check-ups

Have check-ups with your doctor to see if you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol or diabetes. These conditions are associated with higher risk of decline in thinking skills, particularly from middle-age.

4. Eat a healthy diet

Eat a diet high in fruit, vegetables, nuts, olive oil, beans and cereals; moderate in fish, dairy products and wine; and limited in red meat and poultry. This Mediterranean-style diet is linked to better brain health.

5. Maintain a healthy weight

Manage your weight through healthy eating and physical activity. Being overweight may be a risk factor for accelerated decline in thinking skills. A healthy weight is better for physical health too.

6. Take up a new activity

Take up activities or hobbies you haven't done before. New activities might help improve thinking skills in later life as they challenge us in new ways. If you do activities in a group, the increased social interaction may play a role too.

7. Look after your sleep

Aim for an average of seven to eight hours sleep a day as this amount is related to better brain and physical health in older age. Try to get most of it at night, with only short daytime naps.

8. Learn another language

Learn and practise a language new to you. Learning and using more than one language is linked with better thinking skills in later life. And it's never too late to start – if anything, the benefits of speaking multiple languages might increase with age.



To advertise in the next issue of this publication,
please contact

Laurence

Tel: 01536 334218

Email: laurence@lanceprint.co.uk

Below I have detailed some of the best and most colourful winter plants that will keep your garden or window boxes or planters going right through Autumn, Winter and start of Spring.

Of course there are the bulbs such as:-

Snowdrops
Crocus
Tulip
Daffodil
Narcissus
Hyacinth

These can all be planted in Autumn and they will give you a great spread in Spring.

Plants that will survive the winter and bring colour are:-

Winter Clematis

Winter clematis, *Clematis cirrhosa*, is a perennial climber with glossy, evergreen foliage. Flowers are usually a creamy colour, depending on the cultivar, and have a delicate citrus fragrance. As a group one clematis, they don't need pruning, though this can be done lightly, straight after flowering, to restrict their size.

Flowers: December to January

Winter Honeysuckle

Winter honeysuckle, *Lonicera fragrantissima*, bears fragrant, cream-white flowers on almost leafless branches, which are a magnet for winter-active bumblebees. These are sometimes followed by dull-red berries.

Flowers: December to February.

Christmas Rose

Christmas rose, *Helleborus niger*, is the first of the hellebores to flower, usually in January but occasionally as early as Christmas. It bears large, round, white flat-faced flowers above low-growing mounds of leathery, deep green foliage. It's perfect for growing at the

front of a partially shaded border.

Flowers: January to March

Cyclamen

Hardy cyclamen, *Cyclamen coum*, is a pretty hardy perennial, bearing delicate silver-lined dark green leaves and dainty blooms in shades of white, pink and red, from late winter to early spring. It's perfect for growing at the base of small shrubs and trees, and naturalising in grass.

Flowers: January to April

Winter Aconites

Winter aconites bear golden yellow buttercup-like flowers, surrounded by divided leafy bracts, from mid- to late-winter. Clumps quickly spread and make a dramatic yellow carpet just as the first snowdrops begin to bloom. It's perfect for planting beneath trees or naturalising in grass.

Flowers: February to March

Pansies and Violas

Pansies, *Viola x wittrockiana*, are low-growing, bushy perennials that are usually grown as annual bedding plants. They have large, striking flowers, larger than those of violas, and heart-shaped leaves. The colourful, often bicoloured flowers have darker,

Photo by Valeria Vechterova © Shutterstock

Winter Garden



Gardening Service

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face-like markings in the centre. Most cultivars flower in spring and summer but some have been bred to bloom in winter, offering a cheerful display of colour when little else is in flower..

Flowers: November to March

Daphne

Daphnes are colourful shrubs, usually blooming in late winter and early spring. They're fantastic for small gardens, with various types perfect for different situations, such as in window boxes, large containers,

mixed borders, areas of dry shade and gravel gardens. There are both evergreen and deciduous varieties. Most bear clusters of small flowers in shades of red or pink and sometimes white or green.

Flowers: February to March

Mahonia

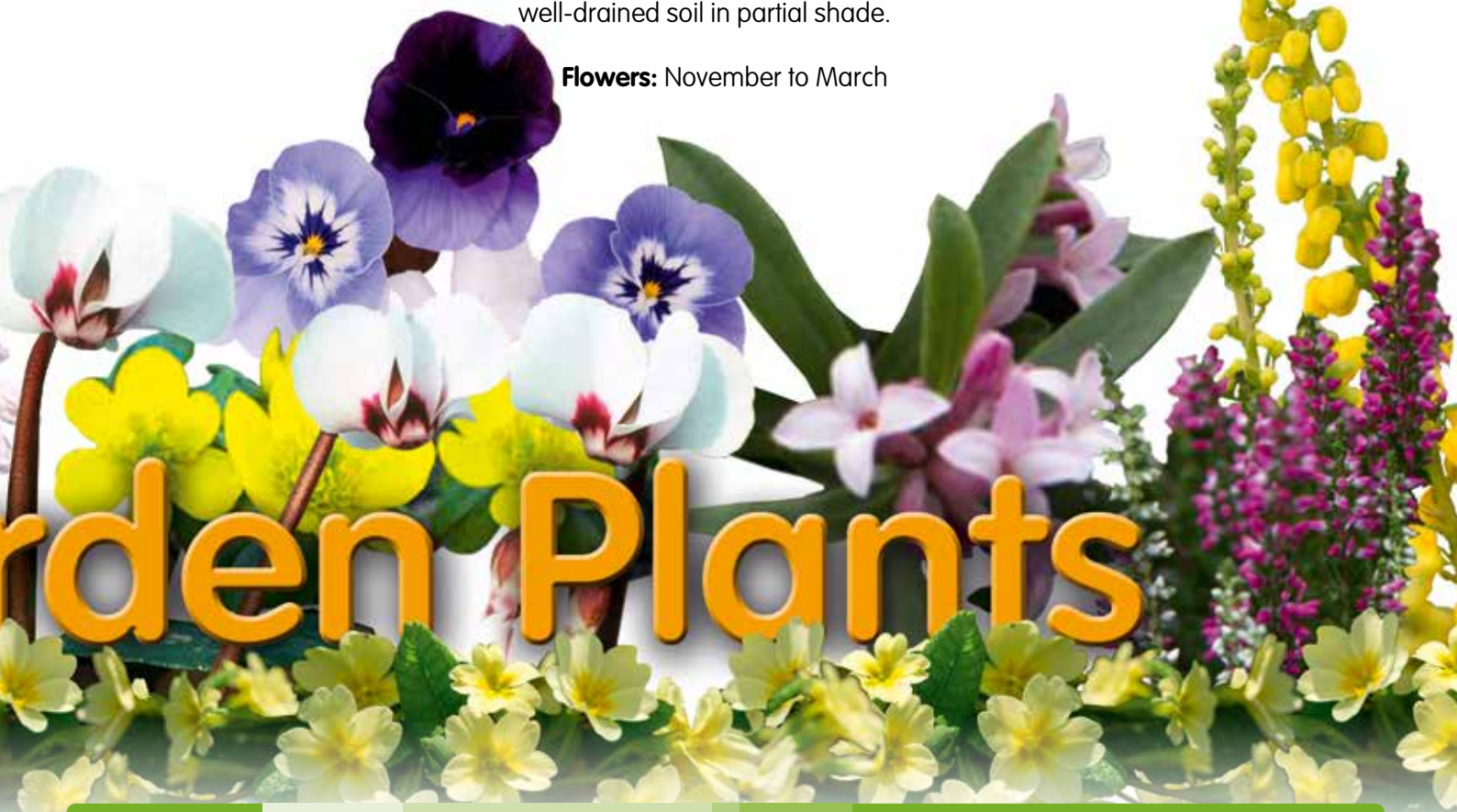
Popular with winter-active bumblebees, mahonias bear slender spikes of bright yellow flowers above evergreen rosettes of glossy dark green leaves. Grow in moist but well-drained soil in partial shade.

Flowers: November to March

Winter Heathers

Winter-flowering heathers are particularly useful for bringing colour to winter containers. Planted in the ground, heathers will gradually spread, inhibiting weeds as they go. Popular with bees.

Flowers: February to March





Charlie Chuckles

This is my step ladder. I never knew my real ladder.

**I told my girlfriend she drew her eyebrows too high.
She looked surprised.**

I bought some shoes from a drug dealer. I don't know what he laced them with, but I've been tripping all day.

My wife told me I had to stop acting like a flamingo. So I had to put my foot down.

What's orange and sounds like a parrot? A carrot

**What do you call a dog that does magic tricks?
A labracadabrador**

Wife says to her programmer husband, "Go to Tesco's and buy a loaf of bread. If they have eggs, buy a dozen."
Husband returns with 12 loaves of bread.

**I couldn't figure out why the cricket ball
kept getting bigger. Then it hit me.**

20. Mungo Jerry
19. Donna Summer
18. Ullapool
17. Eddie Cochran
16. Sex Shops
15. Jodie Foster
14. Lazy Hazy Crazy Days of Summer
13. John Travolta & Olivia Newton John
12. Black House
11. George & Ira Gershwin
10. Melvyn Hayes
9. Helsinki (Finland)
8. Queen of Disco
7. Queen of Hearts made some tarts
6. Open University
5. Soft fruit (such as raspberries)
4. Mexico
3. 24th June
2. The pope
1. Thousand islands

Quiz Answers

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- Charles de Lint

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MK42 7NR

Phone: Bedford
(01234) 845000

E-mail:
contact@bedsfire.com

Your Bedtime Checklist



Close inside
doors



Turn off and unplug
electrical appliances
not being used



Is the cooker
turned off



Are the heaters turned
off and fireguards if
needed are put up



Candles and cigarettes
all put out



Keep the door and
window keys where
you can find them



Make sure all exits are
clear



Phone by the bed with
an emergency number
to hand

Preventing Protecting Responding



Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service have 14 strategically positioned Fire Stations; five wholtime stations, one day crewing station and 8 retained stations.

An emergency communication centre, training centre and headquarters are located on the same site and there are other offices located in the north and south of the Service.



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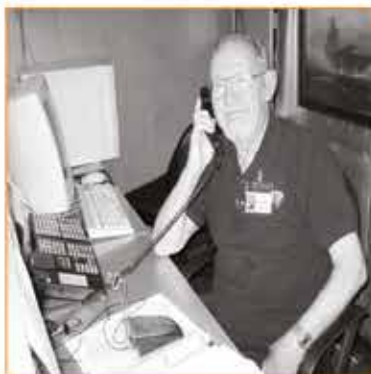
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