

**Three Villages Heritage Festival
Sunday 15th May – Sunday 22nd May 2016**

We would like to thank everyone who has offered practical help and suggestions for our event in May. As a result our Mini-Festival is now a fully grown Festival!

With permission to use the churches of Abbots Bickington, Bulkworthy and West Putford, the kind help of volunteers and a Councillor Community Grant (Torrige District Council) - all we need is for you to join us.

Look out for posters and flyers being distributed mid to late April. If you would like more information, please call Mavis on 01409 241049 or email Malcolm - malcolm.woodcock@me.com

Date	Bulkworthy	Abbots Bickington	West Putford
Sun 15 th May	Flower Festival Opening Service 6.30pm		
Mon 16 th May	Flower Festival 2-8pm		
Tues 17 th May	Flower Festival 2-8pm	Local Arts & Crafts 2-8pm wine & Cheese from 7pm	
Wed 18 th May		Local Arts & Crafts 2-8pm	
Thur 19 th May		Local Arts & Crafts 2-8pm	Local History Display/Cream Teas 2-8pm
Fri 20 th May			As above
Sat 21 st May			Local History Display/Cream Teas 2-6pm Spring Concert by the Hartland Chamber Orchestra 7.30pm
Sun 22 nd May			Local History Display 2-6pm with Songs of Praise, Prize Draw and Close of Festival at 6.30pm

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April -May 2016



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Putford Parish Council

Mrs L. Drake (Chair), Mrs M. Lewis, Mr A. Bewes (Vice), Mr M. Cornish, Mr P. Bond, Mrs G. Clark, Mr D. Pomeroy, Mr N. Moulder, Mr J. Wooldridge, Mr M. Thomas, Mrs P. Green, Mr J. Jessell.
Parish Clerk Sue Squire 01598 710526 or sue@suesquire.com

Tennis

The Woolsery Tennis Club will be opening for the 2016 Season from Monday 11th April until the end of September. Our regular Club Nights will be on Friday evenings from 6.30pm and all abilities are very welcome - we can even lend club rackets for anyone who wishes to try a game of tennis. Extra club Nights will be held on Monday and Wednesday evenings when league matches are not taking place - we will display a list of fixtures and dates to help with this.

We are pleased to say that we are again entering two ladies teams into the league: Woolsery A (Division 2): Capt. Den Baggott, Ali Moulder, Lesley Taylor, Jane Walter and Woolsery B (Division 3) Capt. Shirley Grills, Caroline Moore, Jacky Walter, Karen Robinson. We have also entered a team into the Knockout Cup. We wish you all lots of good luck for this year.

For any details regarding our Club, Membership fees and how to join, please contact our Secretary Jane Walter on 07969015348 or jane.walter@live.co.uk who will be pleased to hear from you.

Skittles

At the end of the season
Div 1 Rebels ended up mid table
Div 2 Roys Boys ended the season as Champions
Div 2 A Team ended up in second place
So next season all 3 teams will all be in Division 1

Putford Church Services

April 10th 11.30am Sung Eucharist
April 17th 11.30am Sung Eucharist
April 24th 6.30pm Evensong
May 1st No service
May 8th 11.30am Sung Eucharist
May 15th 11.30am Sung Eucharist
May 22nd 6.30pm Songs of Praise

May 1st - United Benefice Rogation Sunday Service in Sutcombe 11.30am (service outside, weather permitting), followed by lunch in the village hall. Tickets & info from Brenda Horn 01409 241754.

North Devon Hospice NIGHTWALK

Nightwalk 2016 will take place on Saturday 14th May, with a brand new theme! 'Let Yourself Glow' is something everyone can get involved with, whether you're simply bringing glowsticks, wearing neon lipstick or coming full on with a head-to-toe glowing outfit. We want to light up the darkness and blaze a trail of colour, with more than one thousand women walking together in support of North Devon Hospice.

In response to suggestions from Nightwalkers, we will be creating a magical atmosphere by condensing the number of routes, with all women walking together on the same stretch of the Tarka Trail between Barnstaple and Bideford. There will be a shorter route starting from Instow, so everyone will get to share the same electric experience and enjoy the live entertainment and other surprises.

As well as providing return transport to your starting point, we'll also be running buses back to Braunton and Torrington to make Nightwalk 2016 as accessible as possible for women across North Devon. More information from: 01271 347224 or Nightwalk@northdevonhospice.org.uk

Our warmest thanks as always to all contributors, sponsors and advertisers.

Last copy date for the next issue of the Putford Post is May 23rd.

Contacts Advertising:- Lorraine:- 01409 241005 Treasurer:- Rosemary 241409

Distribution:- Jackie 240321 or email Chris at putfordpost@btinternet.com

Printed by North Devon Print, Bideford.



WEST AND EAST PUTFORD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2016

The Chairman welcomed newly co-opted Councillor J Jessel. The Council is now up to full strength with 12 Members.

Apologies were received from Councillors P Bond and D Pomeroy.

Declarations of Interest. Councillor Jessel declared a Prejudicial Interest in Planning Application 1/1177/2015/FULM – 5 megawatt solar park and ancillary development on land at Bulkworthy. Councillors Mrs Lewis and Mrs Clark declared a Personal Interest in the Local Heritage Mini Festival.

The Minutes of 1/12/15 were approved and signed as a correct record.

Reports. PCSO Rowe advised there had been several crimes reported in rural areas and encouraged people to report so that the Police are aware. It was known that poaching was taking place in Putford. In other areas there had been criminal damage, burglary, dog out of control and causing injury and power tools stolen from sheds and garages. She encouraged people to ensure sheds and garages were locked. Details were given about Smartwater and Selecta DNA, products that can be used to mark property in ultra violet light. It will last 5 years and can be used on a range of items. Selecta DNA has micro dots with a unique 6 digit number code to the individual. PCSO Rowe was trying to recruit a co-ordinator for Farmwatch and a person present at the meeting volunteered. Details of staffing at the Police Station were given. There will be closures of some Police Stations and the nearest Police Station to present papers will be Barnstaple.

Councillors were pleased to note that the work at Venn Bridge had been done. The site visit by Councillor Bewes and County Councillor Julian to view a tarmacked entrance to a field did not take place as the County Councillor was not available.

Some Meeting dates were re-scheduled at Bradworthy Primary Academy so as not to fall during school holidays which had an impact on the key-holder. The May meeting will be on 17th, September meeting on 6th and October meeting on 18th.

Planning. Solar park on land at Bulkworthy. Councillors were given the opportunity of voicing their opinion. The Chairman closed the Meeting to enable the applicants to address the Meeting. Councillor Jessel declared a Prejudicial Interest, left the room and did not take part in the discussion, decision or voting thereon. Councillor Mrs Drake proposed to recommend approval. Seconded by Councillor Wooldridge. Vote: 5 in favour. 4 abstentions due to lack of information, not necessarily against the proposal. Carried to approve with the comment that Parish Councillors would strongly like to point out they were not happy about the lack of consultation within the area and would like this to be addressed in the future to make it more available to surrounding Parishes; proposed two bay oak frame garage at Mambury Manor, East Putford. It was resolved to recommend approval.

There was no planning correspondence to consider.

Finance. Balances were tabled and payments approved as follows: Clerk's salary for 2 months and expenses; HMRC PAYE; Devon Association of Local Councils for the new councillors course fee for Councillors Mrs Geen and M Thomas. It was noted that a VAT reclaim had been submitted to HMRC for the period 1/4/13 to 31/3/15 in the sum of £22.45 and the funds credited to the Current Account.

Correspondence. Nine items of correspondence had been received, some of which were noted. Councillors were keen to pursue possible sites for night landing operations of the Devon Air Ambulance; Councillors were in full agreement to support a Neighbourhood Area in Bradworthy; a response to the North Devon and Torridge District Council Local Plan was discussed which Councillors Jessel and Mrs Geen would draft for the Clerk to circulate to Councillors; the Local Heritage Mini Festival was discussed with Councillors Mrs Lewis and Mrs Clark declaring a Personal Interest. Councillors were in agreement for the Parish Council to handle a £200 grant from District Councillor Hicks' funding allocation and were also in agreement to submit a TAP (Town and Parish) Fund application for monies applicable to West and East Putford (£20 and £186 respectively) towards the Mini Festival; Riverfly Project. A Torridge District Councillor is hoping to set up a small network of volunteers to monitor the small streams and tributaries in the Torridge area. In particular is the River Walden and people are required to spare a little time to ensure that the water stays clean and unpolluted. There is a separate article about this elsewhere in the Putford Post. (cont)

(Parish Council continued) Compliance. Councillors reviewed and adopted the following: Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Emergency Advice, Equal Opportunities Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Complaints Procedure, Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme and adopted for the first time a General Risk Assessment, a new document for 2016 suggested by the internal auditor to replace the existing Financial Risk Assessment.

Councillor Mrs Geen asked Councillors if the need to make any representations relating to the safety of wind turbines located in the Parish following an article in the North Devon Journal reporting that one had fallen over near Bradworthy. A letter to be sent to the Health and Safety Executive asking for clarification regarding ageing, frequency of inspection and risk assessments. Councillor Mrs Geen advised she was willing to be the Parish Council representative on the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative Group.

Message in a bottle. The Clerk handed canisters to Councillors for use by emergency personnel and carers. Inside the canister was a form for people to list medication and give an alert to any condition suffered. It had been suggested that the canister was placed inside the 'fridge door to save people having to look for it and a label was provided for the inside of the front door so that those attending would be aware there was information in the property.

Councillor Moulder asked about the Road Warden scheme and was advised this was a DCC initiative. At the present time, it could not be progressed as the relevant insurance for Road Wardens had not been completed. In addition, DCC had offered training but no dates were given as names had to be submitted first of those interested in the training.

The next Meeting was on Tuesday, 26 April in Bradworthy Primary Academy at 7.30pm.

The Devon Air Ambulance Trust (DAAT) is working hard towards extending flying operations into the hours of darkness. Our target is to increase flying hours to midnight from autumn 2016, which means around an extra 8 hours of service each day during the darker winter months. Our vision is to eventually provide our service 24 hours a day and this is a huge step in realising that dream. This will bring a much needed operationally effective service - day and night - to communities throughout Devon.

What do we need to start night flying operations? The two key things we need are specialist equipment and safe landing sites. Thanks to the generous support of the people of Devon we will shortly be acquiring night vision goggles, spot lights etc needed for one of our helicopters to start flying at night. The team at DAAT are starting to work with communities to develop a network of Community Helipads across the county. These pre-surveyed floodlit helipads will ensure our paramedics can be brought into the heart of your community delivering an essential night-time service.

What is a Community Helipad? A Community Helipad could take many different shapes or forms – it could be a green, sports pitch or playing field, a school playground, open ground by a village hall or local field and it can be located on grass, tarmac or concrete.

We have developed a range of low-impact lighting solutions that would either work alongside existing lighting arrangements (e.g. street lighting or flood lighting for a sports area) or operate as a stand-alone solar powered system. These lighting options will be operated remotely meaning no one needs to be on hand when the air ambulance lands or takes-off.

Working with your community

Your community might have several different areas suitable for a Community Helipad and we will initially undertake an assessment of potential sites before advising on which location, and lighting array, would make the most suitable helipad. We will then work closely with your community to develop its own Community Helipad.

If you would like to find out more about developing a Community Helipad please contact the Community Helipad Development Officer, Toby Russell, on 01392 466666 or email t.russell@daat.org

EXMOOR STARTREK CHALLENGE 2016

This year's challenge took place on the night of 5th/6th March and our team, Marg Atkin, Carolyn Smith, Lisa Cornish, and Ali Moulder had been in training for the past year in preparation for this strenuous event. It was our 6th year of undertaking the challenge and our team name is The Pastillettes because we are all in need of a packet (sometimes two) of Rowntrees Pastilles when the going gets tough - normally at around 3 in the morning. Over this time, in aid of the North Devon Children's Hospice, we have raised several thousand pounds and walked hundreds of miles - along coastal paths, across Dartmoor and Exmoor, to Lizzies Larder, The Bell Parkham, The Coach & Horses Buckland Brewer, The Bradworthy Inn, as well as from Tamar Lakes to Bude across farmland in all types of weather from the most beautiful of days to absolutely horrid wind rain and sleet. The lunches and evening snacks along the way have more than kept us going - but more than that our sense of humour when "losing the plot" because we can't find our way out of the car park is fantastic and has kept us together enjoying our walking over a fair number of years now.

Sadly though, this year one of our members, Marg Atkin, was taken ill at the last minute with a nasty flu virus and was unable to take part - lots of thanks and admiration goes to Joanna Moulder who agreed, only the night before, to step in to enable us to still go ahead with a qualifying team of 4. The 18 mile route was as tough as we imagined with difficult clues, gruelling hills and thick gloopy mud from weeks of rain - the organisers even had to erect temporary bridges over streams because they had become so swollen with water. We were slipping and sliding and helping each other through boggy mud almost every step of the way. Joanna coped with all of this extremely well and we could not praise her enough for her good company, enthusiasm and fitness!!! - we think it might be a team of 5 next year!!!! Well done Joanna and many thanks.

We would also like to thank all of our very kind sponsors who are so generous year after year - we are so proud of the money we have raised so far and long may it continue..... thank you again.

STOP PRESS

2015 Dartmoor Autumn Challenge

We have just received confirmation that we were Runners Up in this event and we are being awarded a cheque for £ 150 as an additional benefit for the charity of our choice.

We will be receiving the cheque on the 23rd April at a presentation event and have asked if we could split this £100 for Devon Air Ambulance and £ 50 for the RNLI. We are so proud and would like to thank everyone who has supported us, from Ali Moulder, Joanna Moulder, Lisa Cornish, Carolyn Smith, and Marg Atkin.

Ali Moulder

Chilsworthy village hall Saturday, 16 April. WINE & WISDOM. Doors open at 7.00 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. prompt start. £6.00 per person includes light supper. Tables can be booked by calling Marilyn on 01409 259244 or Linda on 01409 254956. Don't worry if you can't make a table of 6, we will still be pleased to see you and fit you in.

"Pop-up Restaurant" at Woolsery Community Hall, one night only, Saturday 4th June from 7.30pm. 3 course a la carte meal plus entertainment, £20 per head. Book with Faith on 01237 451627

Recent Planning Applications and Determinations January 2016 to March 2016

Ref. No: 1/1314/2015/FUL Construction of two bay oak framed garage at Mambury Manor, East Putford, Holsworthy. Validated 13 January 2016. Status: Permitted.

Ref. No: 1/0061/2016 FUL Construction of two new build holiday units, new three-bay garage and conversion of former agricultural building to holiday unit at Glebe Farm Barn, West Putford, Holsworthy. Validated 07 March 2016. Status: Being considered.

John Light

Gardening (cont. Grey Lady) you will need to pot them up into larger pots straight away. The best compost to use is John Innes No3 and water when necessary, but let the soil get reasonably dry in between to avoid overly wet conditions. If you want more flowers, then feed your plants once a week with a weak solution of a potash-rich liquid fertiliser, such as Tomorite. Deadheading the spent flowers will also encourage more to form.

Hedychium densiflorum Ginger Lily; forming a slowly spreading clump of lustrous foliage, this compact ginger lily is one of the hardier forms. The slender spikes of fragrant, orange-red flowers appear early in the season and tend to open in one impressive flush. **Garden care:** Plant the rhizomes into pots using a good soil-based compost such as John Innes No2. The rhizome should be placed horizontally just below the surface of the soil with the small reddish coloured buds facing upwards. Water well and then grow on under glass until all risk of frost has passed. Alternatively, store the rhizomes in a cool, frost-free place (such as a garage, shed or unheated porch) until they can be planted straight out in the garden. Keep well-watered during the summer, but dry during winter. The rhizomes should be covered in the autumn with a deep, dry mulch, or brought inside and kept in a frost free spot until the spring when they can be planted outside again.

Lonicera periclymenum 'Serotina'; a classic cottage-garden climber with large, fragrant, tubular, creamy-white flowers, streaked dark-red purple, that give it a two-tone appearance. In hot summers, the flowers may be followed by small, bright red fruits. This deciduous honeysuckle flowers later than most varieties, and will keep on producing scent and flowers for several weeks in late summer and autumn. It looks lovely scrambling over a wall or fence or growing through a robust tree and it prefers light shade. **Garden care:** Cut back established plants after flowering, removing a third of the flowering shoots. Apply a generous 5-7cm (2-3in) mulch of well-rotted compost or manure around the base of the plant in early spring.

Lilium speciosum var. rubrum; In late summer and early autumn sprays of large, fragrant, deep carmine-pink flowers with purple-brown stems are produced. The flowers are usually pendant and similar to a turkscap lily, although larger. This lily needs moist, acid soil in partial shade to thrive, so is perfect for naturalising in woodlands. **Garden care:** Lilies can be planted at any time from early autumn, to mid-spring. Planting in autumn often helps them settle in and become better established before they start to put on their new spring growth, but spring planting is a better option if your soil is heavy and wet during winter. Choose a sunny spot, preferably where the plant receives a little light shade at its base, and plant each bulb 15-20cm deep in a well-drained soil, enriched with well-rotted organic matter or leaf mould. Space them between 15 - 30cm intervals and provide support before the flowers appear. Deadhead the faded blooms promptly and cut the dead stems back to ground level at the end of autumn.

Jobs to do in the garden

Dig in a 5cm (or more) layer of compost or well-rotted manure into your beds to prepare for the growing season. You can also work in a general purpose fertiliser such as pelleted chicken manure or fish, blood and bone. Apply a layer of mulch around your perennials, trees and shrubs before the hot weather arrives. Use organic matter such as well rotted manure. Feed trees, shrubs and hedges with a balanced, slow-release fertiliser by lightly forking it into the soil surface. Roses are greedy plants and will greatly benefit from feeding as they come into growth. Lift and divide perennial plants now to improve their vigour and create new plants for your garden. Divide Hostas before they come into leaf. Divide Primroses after they have finished flowering.

You can start to move evergreen shrubs and trees now provided the soil isn't frozen or waterlogged. Plant summer-flowering bulbs such as Lilies, Gladiolus and Ranunculus into beds, borders and containers. Continue to plant herbaceous perennials. Forced flower bulbs such as hyacinths and daffodils, which have now finished flowering, can be planted outdoors in garden borders. Hardwood cuttings taken last year may need planting or potting on now. If any of your garden plants will need supporting this year, put the supports in now so the plants grow up through them. Adding supports afterwards is difficult and may damage the plant. Tie in climbing and rambling roses to their supports. Honeysuckle and Clematis will now be putting on growth, tie in new stems to train the plant along its support. Check any tree ties to make sure the tie is not cutting into the trunk. Loosen any that are tight to allow the trunk room to expand. Prune your Penstemons now - cut all the old shoots back to the base provided there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves. If you haven't done so already, finish cutting back any dead foliage left on your perennials and ornamental grasses to make way for new growth. Prune Forsythia as soon as they have finished flowering, cutting back to strong young shoots. Trim winter-flowering heathers as the flowers disappear, to prevent the plants becoming leggy.

Richard Hart

How healthy are Putford's rivers?

The official answer is that they are 'moderate'. So what does that mean? Well, the Environment Agency (EA) is the government organisation responsible for looking after our rivers and every six years, following requirements for all EU countries, they publish information on the state of rivers, lakes, groundwater, estuaries and coasts. The latest information was published just before Christmas.

The Torridge is the main river that runs through the parish and the ecology and chemistry is regularly assessed. The classification of Moderate is one level down from the 'Good' target for all rivers (there are 5 levels – High, Good, Moderate, Poor and Bad) and this applies from its source to a point just below Newton St Petrock. From here the Torridge deteriorates to Poor until it gets to Meeth where it returns to Moderate again and continues on to the meet the sea at Bideford.

The main problem with the Torridge as it passes through Putford is the level of nutrients (phosphate) in the water. This is attributed to runoff from the land and is typical of many rural areas in the UK. Nutrients are a problem in urban areas as well, but the source is normally from sewage works. The problem with nutrients is that they can lead to excessive amounts of algal and plant growth which can then lead to the oxygen being sucked out of the water making it difficult to support aquatic life. However, a little unusually when nutrients are high, the ecology of the Torridge in the Putford stretch is pretty good and is classified as 'High', suggesting that the excessive nutrients are not having too much of an impact locally.

The problems affecting the lower section from Newton to Meeth are a little more varied and the sources a little less clear. Again nutrients are a problem, but so is excessive amounts of sediment which coats the bed of the river, destroying the habitat for the small invertebrates which are an essential part of the river ecology. The nutrients are again thought to come from land runoff, but could also have come from upstream. However, some of the nutrients may also be coming from sewage (probably from poorly maintained septic tanks, etc.).

These types of problems are common throughout the UK to lesser or greater extents and largely a result of the way we are all used to living. However, there are a range of initiatives in place to try to help reduce the problem. Catchment Sensitive Farming is one of these and attempts to raise awareness of diffuse water pollution from agriculture by giving free training and advice to farmers in priority areas in England. In addition, there is action that we can all take such as maintaining our septic tanks properly and ensuring that oil or chemicals do not enter the surface water drains.

The EA is also working with a wide range of organisations to help protect and improve water for the environment and wider society's use; this includes local authorities, water companies, farming representatives, Natural England, The Forestry Commission, environmental groups, angling clubs and recreational users.

There are not enough resources to monitor every tributary and ditch so if you want to know the quality of a nearby river or stream you can get an idea by collecting your own sample. If you disturb the river bed in front of a submerged net, lift a few stones and wash some submerged plants into a bucket you should get an idea of what is living in it (take care, particularly at the moment when river currents can be strong and the banks unstable). As a rule of thumb, if you only find a few worms and leeches, then the quality is probably pretty poor (and might be a habitat problem rather than water quality). If you get shrimps, snails, caddis flies and mayflies it's likely to be average to good. If you find stoneflies or swan mussels (unlikely!) it will be very good.

If you would like to get more involved with monitoring our rivers, the Riverfly scheme offers free training and you will be contributing information to support the work the EA is responsible for reporting. The next course will be held in Hatherleigh on Saturday 14th May. Contact Matt Edworthy, Biosphere Outreach Coordinator at matt.edworthy@devon.gov.uk 01271 388508

Myles Thomas

Devon Wildlife Trust, in partnership with Friends of the Earth and the Devon Womens Institute, has asked the county council to ban the use of neonicotinoid pesticides on council-owned land such as roadside verges. It has been shown that 95% of these chemicals end up in the wider environment, and although honey bees are the main victims it is now known that the chemicals have a significant effect on many other insects. This in turn leads to a decrease in birds, particularly insectivores such as swallows. More information is available from DWT on 01392 279244 or www.foe.co.uk who are organising a petition to lobby DCC.

Gardening

It has been a long wet winter and now we can start to see spring on the horizon, with longer and hopefully warmer days coming. So now it is the time to get out into the garden and start to catch up with all those jobs that did not get done over the winter and the ones that need to be done now. The main one is trying to keep up with the weeds as they are always the ones that will grow the quickest, so when we have some dry weather and a warm day sharpen your hoe and go around the garden.

With all of the lovely spring flowering plants coming in to their best, a lot of people forget about scent in the garden. By adding some plants that are scented in to your garden will add another dimension of pleasure, this is not just for the spring but can be achieved all year around. These plants can be all different sizes and be suitable for most aspects of the garden. Here are some of the best scented plants to grow.

Chimonanthus praecox, Winter Sweet; Small, sweetly scented, sulphur-yellow flowers, stained purple inside appear on bare branches throughout the winter months. This vigorous shrub will usually take a few years to start to flower, but they are well worth the wait and they will make a lovely specimen plant for a sunny, well-drained mixed or winter border. Try to plant it close to a house entrance or path where its scent can be appreciated, they can be grown as a wall shrub as a fan. Highly prized by floral arrangers, a stem of these unusual, bowl-shaped blooms makes a wonderfully fragrant indoor display. **Garden care:** Minimal pruning is required. Remove crossing, dead or diseased branches in late spring and apply a generous 5-7cm (2-3in) mulch of well-rotted garden compost or manure around the base of the plant.

Daphne bholua 'Jacqueline Postill'; this is one of my all-time favourite plants that produce clusters of small, sweetly scented, deep pink buds open in January and February and are followed by rounded, purple-black berries. This choice deciduous or semi-evergreen shrub thrives in a sunny, sheltered position, but can be grown in a semi-shaded position as long as it is sheltered. This plant is very hard to propagate and slow growing, so will not be one of the cheapest plants to buy, but well worth the patience and investment. Try it in a mixed or winter border or next to a path where its fragrance can be appreciated. Strongly upright in habit, it looks wonderful under-planted with a carpet of magenta or white *Cyclamen coum*. All parts of the plant are toxic if ingested. **Garden care:** Keep pruning to a minimum since the plant is very susceptible to die-back. Where necessary after flowering, lightly trim back to remove misplaced branches and maintain a compact habit.

Philadelphus 'Manteau d'Hermine' Mock Orange; In June and July, the arching shoots of this deciduous shrub are smothered in double, creamy-white flowers and mid-green leaves. On warm, summer evenings, the flowers delicate, orange-blossom fragrance floats on the breeze, filling the surrounding air. This compact, bushy, variety of the popular mock orange is perfect for a small garden or where border space is limited. An essential, low-maintenance shrub for a sunny mixed border, it can also cope with urban pollution and salt-laden air. **Garden care:** Mulch around the roots in spring with a deep layer of well-rotted garden compost or manure. Prune in late summer, immediately after flowering, removing one in four of the older stems to ground level.

Dianthus Gran's Favorite; One of the most popular varieties of pink, with flowers that look like raspberry ripple ice cream. 'Gran's Favourite' is a 'laced' variety, which means the scented flowers are made up of two colours - with a contrasting centre and edge to the petals. This one has ruffled white petals with a splotch of deep purple-red in the centre and edge. It is sturdy and compact, and is best planted towards the front of a perennial border or rock garden - or in a pot. **Garden care:** Incorporate lots of well-rotted manure or garden compost into the planting hole. Apply a balanced fertiliser in spring and deadhead to prolong flowering. Try taking cuttings in July and early August. Fill a small seed tray with coarse horticultural sand and water it well. Take the cuttings in the cool of the day, choosing non-flowering side shoots about two inches (5cm) in length. If there are flower buds, pick them off. Trim the cuttings below a node (where the leaf joint is) and remove or reduce any large leaves to lessen transpiration. Plunge them into the sand so that two-thirds of the cutting is submerged and place the tray in a cool, shady position for several weeks. Then pot up individually into compost, such as John Innes no 1. You can also leave your cuttings in situ until next spring, although they will need protection from frost.

Pelargonium 'Grey Lady Plymouth' Considered by many to be the best all-round scented pelargonium, this pretty cultivar has deeply divided, variegated foliage that has a strong, minty smell when bruised. The small, purple-veined, pale rose flowers seem to hover above the leaves on wiry upright stems for extended period from early summer. First introduced in 1807 and still popular today, if you could choose just one Pelargonium to take to a desert island, then this should be it. **Garden care:** if you do buy this plant, you