



**BEDFORDSHIRE
WI NEWS
APRIL 2024**



**Beginner's Crochet Course
with Nicola Furey
WI House**

MAY



**Tiptree
Jam
Factory and Cheap
Shop**

AUGUST



**South African
Wine Tasting &
Supper Evening
Westoning**

JULY

**Newmarket Races
Ladies Day
JULY**



**BCFWI Night at the Proms
Kings House, Bedford**

SEPTEMBER



**WI Spring
Bulb
Catalogue**

2024

**Fishers Gin
Distillery
Tour &
Tasting
OR a trip to
the seaside
only
Aldeburgh**

SEPTEMBER



**John Rutter
Christmas
Concert
Royal Albert
Hall
Matinee**

DECEMBER



**Shoe Sale &
Lunch**

AUTUMN

**Speaker
Auditions Day**

AUTUMN



**Crazy Bag Whist
Gravenhurst Village
Hall**

SEPTEMBER



Hello to you all and welcome to the April issue. We have more very busy weeks ahead and thought you'd appreciate a mention of some of the forthcoming events which were not confirmed in time for our February cover!

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



Bedfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes

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Opening Hours: Members are welcome to visit the office between 10.00 to 12.30 and 1.30 to 3pm Monday & Wednesday. Office is closed Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

Parking is available at Queen Street Car Park first 2 hours free.

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WI Duty Adviser for April 2024

SUE PESTELL

susan@purpleocean.co.uk

Please contact the duty adviser with WI related questions.

For anything urgent, please ring WI House on 01234 359538

FEDERATION FLUTTER
March 2024
No.120 Mandy Roper,
Bedford WI : £50

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Knit , Sew & Crafters, WI House, next dates: 01 May (call office for future dates) 10.30 to 2.30pm, no booking required £3 per person.

Monday 29 April Annual Meeting, Kings House MK42 9AZ with Guest Speaker Esme Young

Friday 10 May Shoe Sale & Lunch, Flitwick Cricket Club

Saturday 11 May Film Music Gala, Royal Albert Hall

Saturday 18 May Beginner's Crochet Workshop, WI House

Thursday 30 May Winterbourne House & Gardens

Big Green Week 08 -16 June

Sunday 09 June BCFWI Charity Walk, Priory Park, Bedford. To support: Carers in Bedfordshire, See P4

Tuesday 11 June Kurling, Brickhill Community Centre

Thursday 20 June, 'Makes' day at WI House, see back page

Friday 05 July Wine Tasting & Supper, Westoning VH

Thursday 11 July Ladies' Day Newmarket Races

Sat/Sun 20/21 July Bedford River Festival Stand

Friday 16 August Tiptree Farm & The Cheap Shop Essex

Monday 09 September Fishers Gin Tour - Aldeburgh

Tuesday 24 September Crazy Bag Whist, Gravenhurst

Saturday 28 September Proms Evening, Kings House.

Thursday 05 December John Rutter (Matinee) RAH

Planned—awaiting confirmation:

- * Visit To City London - Murray Craig Guide
- * Jigsaw evening
- * Shoe Sale & Lunch - Autumn
- * Meets & Entertains - Autumn
- * Speaker Audition Day - Autumn
- * Christmas Sing Along
- * Christmas Craft Fair
- * Blenheim at Christmas
- * Christmas Tree Festival, St. Paul's Church

EASTER TRIVIA QUIZ

1	What was the first Easter basket supposed to resemble?
2	What is the Easter egg supposed to symbolise?
3	Approximately how many chocolate Easter bunnies are produced each year?
4	From what does Easter get its name?
5	Where did the tradition of the Easter Bunny originate?
6	Which roast meat is traditionally associated with Easter?
7	According to tradition, hot cross buns are made without which ingredients?
8	Who was the jeweller famous for making ornate Easter eggs for the Russian royal family?
9	Where will you find the world's biggest Easter egg?
10	What do Australians use to symbolise Easter instead of a rabbit?

Chair's Chat



Hello Everyone,
 It is that time again Ladies, another note from your Chair! If I continue on the weather theme, March is coming in like a Lion, hailstones are beating on the window!! Lets hope it goes out like a lamb. Yes, as I write, it's St Davids Day and I do have daffodils, two vases full, but it has caused us to discuss the variety you can obtain of even in the lowly daffodil. One is full of what I would call the old-fashioned Daff which has opened fully, big, bright & blousy, the other is more of a trumpet shape and more contained!!!



Another lovely sign of spring: Not a lamb, but a Baby Goat!

This year we have a wide mixture of events coming up from crochet days at the house to horse racing in July together with a wine tasting evening. Proms in September a little earlier this year to fit with the National Proms happenings, and hope from last years response to this event, we will have a full house! In the autumn we have a London visit to include the Guild Hall and lunch in a London Pub! We have even included exercise this year in the form of the fundraising Walk around Priory Park! We hope there is something for all the different tastes of WI Members and Friends. The sub committees, your Board of Trustees and MAC, work hard to ensure a variety of events, some for learning and some just for enjoyment, and those above are not an exhaustive list - there are many other events, we even have a plan for January 2025!

At this point, I will mention the Teddies that keep appearing at WI House!! the response has again been incredible. See pics below. Once again ladies, you have done yourselves proud, the response from you all is first class when we ask for your support in endeavours like this! Can you imagine the smiley faces when they are given out in Ukraine. We shall be arranging collection over the next week or two.

Now is just about the last time you will be able to book Observer tickets for the Annual Council Meeting, with Esme Young as our speaker. There will of course be some business, but think I can say safely the main event will be Esme.

I look forward to seeing many familiar faces, even if I do not know all the names, at all of our events. As our WI year draws to a close, it has been busy, sometimes fraught with anxiety pre- event, but always fun and interesting! and maybe just a little tiring! However, thank you to my fellow Trustees for their support, and thank you to you, the members, as without you there would be no Federation.

Very Best Wishes to you all, **Elizabeth**

BCFWI Board of Trustees

HIGGINS and PANACEA MUSEUMS TOUR Thursday 29th February

Despite truly miserable weather, it turned out to be a most enjoyable event. 32 members from all over the county started the day at the Higgins Museum; were taken round in two groups by expert guides. We saw many displays outlining Bedford's importance in the world of industry & manufacturing. One highlight for many members was the display of Aragon Lace with lovely donated articles. The museum has so much of interest, it is well worth a separate visit.

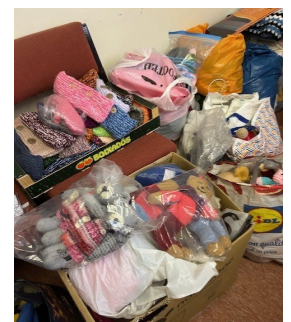
After a tasty lunch & welcome sit down in The Pantry we headed over the road to the Panacea Museum, with an equally warm welcome from their expert guides. The size of this hidden gem was amazing with various properties grouped together in lovely grounds. The history of the society is fascinating and the society holds much original material in the archives. After an excellent tour, we were able to visit their tea rooms for a welcome rest before departing.



Just a few of the hundreds of gorgeous Teddies received at WI House. Thank you to all contributors from all over the county. See also Sandy's entry in Around The County for their Teddies !



Amphill's Magnificent 74!



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

COUNTY QUIZ Monday 26 February. We were without Dot Wigg, our regular Queen of the Quiz, who was resting up after a cataract op, so Elizabeth Cochrane became Dot for the evening and did a splendid job! We had 35 teams taking part from all over the County. Much brain twizzling and concentration later, we were very pleased to announce that Maulden finished in the lead. Hearty congratulations go to all who took part; the top scoring teams were:

Maulden 158; Wootton 149; Clapham Belles 139; Flitwick 135; Houghton Conquest (B) 134; Wilstead 132; Westoning (B) 129; Ampthill 128; Bushmead 128

The 3 Counties Quiz final will be in Buckingham this year, on Thursday 25 June. Many thanks to Dot for preparing another fiendishly challenging quiz; to all the helpers; runners; markers and to our Federation Secretary who prepared all the team sheets and devised the electronic scoreboard which was manned stage left by Hazel. Thanks also go to the splendid refreshments team, always essential at such an event. We would also like to record our thanks to the Addison Centre team for all their help in setting up and taking down tables and chairs and for the use of their electronics.

Monday April 29th 2024 Annual Council Meeting 1.30pm – 4.00pm

Kings House, 245 Ampthill Road, Bedford MK42 9AZ

Our Guest Speaker will be Esme Young

Esme, of “Sewing Bee Fame” a hit series on BBC2, is Bedford Born and Bred. So, we hope that being in Bedford will mean as much to Esme as it does to us to have her to Speak at our ACM. The Coffee Shop will be available at Kings House, with doors to the meeting opening at 1.00pm. Observer places are still available to members at £12 each with Friends & Family more than welcome to attend at £14 each. As this meeting is at the end of the month it means you have another chance to purchase tickets! Get in touch with your WI now to take advantage of this extra chance! Car Parking is available and Free.

Friday May 10th 2024 Shoe Sale & Lunch Flitwick Cricket Club MK45 5AA



We are changing the format slightly on the process of the Shoe sale to accommodate those members who do not require Lunch. The sale will begin at 10.00am with Tea & Coffee as usual. Lunch will be served at 12 noon until 1.30pm. Between 1.30 & 3.00pm the Sale will be open to those members who would prefer not to have lunch but would like to attend the Sale. The Sale itself has changed a little, in that there is often a Jewellery table, and last time a rail of clothes to purchase was also on display. We see this event as an experiment to enable us to satisfy all our members. Tickets to include Lunch will cost £15, Friends and Family £16. Tickets for just the Shoe Sale alone will cost £7 per person to include Tea & Coffee.

Sunday 9th June 2024 Annual Walk for Fun & Charity 10.30 am at Priory Park Bedford MK41 9DJ

What had become an Annual Event for BCFWI is to be reinstated this year and in aid of “Carers in Bedfordshire” which is destined to be the Charity that we will focus on supporting this year.

Look out for the check-in stand in the WI Tent on the Green Space alongside the Cafeteria, facing the lake, and very near to the Car Park. Members must check in and out with officials on the day before setting off on the walk. Sponsorship and application forms are available via your WI Secretary.

Please Note that members can walk the Lake as many times as they wish dependent on their own ability. It is also a dog friendly area !!!



342 poppies were knitted by Kempston Central and Kempston Rural in response to a request from an Oxfordshire WI involved with the “Standing with Giants” Charity. They are for an installation going up at the British Normandy Memorial called “For Your Tomorrow” in April 24 to mid August 24 in memory of the D-Day 80 commemorations which will be open to the public. A big thank you to any other Institutes who picked up the request through your secretary’s monthly email The charity is www.standingwithgiants.co.uk



We have received an email from Cyber Protect & Prevent officer for Beds Police who offer presentations on Cyber Crime and Scams for business, schools, communities etc free of charge. If you are interested in having them come to speak at your WI please contact them directly.

Veridiana Granger, Cyber Protect & Prevent, Cyber Hub, Bedfordshire Police Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston, Bedfordshire, MK43 9AX

Veridiana.PonceMorelli-Granger
@beds.police.uk | www.beds.police.uk

Friday July 5th 2024 Wine tasting & Supper Event**Westoning Village Hall 7.00pm for 7.30pm**

Our Wine tasting has become an annual event, and it provides an opportunity to join family and friends in a convivial atmosphere enjoying a tasty supper with wine! The three - course menu, we match with the wines that Nigel sources for us. This year the wines are from South Africa. Cost per person is £27. Places can be booked via your WI or online at www.bedfordshirewis.org.uk



Great Big Green Week 8th to 16th June 2024

This year we are encouraging WIs to “ Swap Together For Good” the theme for this year’s event. There are many ways of achieving this by recycling; reusing; or repurposing a wide variety of goods. I remember Bedford WI a few years ago, swapped seeds and/or plants that members had left over from the inevitable glut when you grow your own. This year Maulden WI have held a successful Swishing event.



This leads me nicely into another project we envisage, and that is to make another Banner. You will recall, we made a Banner for our Centenary, and it has been suggested that we make another one with your help and on the theme of Climate Change. This will be made to be ready for next years Great Big Green Week. So, watch this space for more information on how Wis can get involved. Our Climate Ambassador will obviously be on hand to give us some advice.

<https://greatbiggreenweek.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/GBGW-2024-A-Z-of-ideas.pdf>

ART, SPORT & LEISURE**Rosemary Mitchell**

As you read your April WI News, Easter will be behind us and we are now looking forward to the summer. We have arranged two more outings, the first application form was in last month’s mailings, for the trip on **Thursday 11th July**, to **Newmarket Races for Ladies Day**, it is a chance to bring out our hats and posh frocks if you want to and perhaps our partners. For further info please visit the jockey club Newmarket : <https://www.thejockeyclub.co.uk/Newmarket>
Cost £58 per person, closing date: 18 April



The second outing, application forms in this month’s mailings, **Monday 9th September**, is a trip to **Fishers Gin Distillery in Aldeburgh Suffolk**. The tour is for 1hour 30 mins and includes a brief history of the distillery, a hands-on demonstration with botanicals, and then a tasting of Gin cocktails.

We have booked 2 tours, the first at **1pm** with the second at **3pm**. A maximum number for each tour is 18. There is plenty to do for the rest of the day as Aldeburgh itself is within walking distance of the distillery, which is located just above the beach. Shops and fish and chip eateries are close by. The Brundell Hotel is next door with a selection of lunches and afternoon teas. The remaining seats on the coach are being offered to those who would just like a trip to the seaside to feel sand in your toes and eat ice cream!

Cost £65.00 including distillery tour. Cost for coach only is £30.

Closing date for Monday 22nd July

We have the **Film Music Gala on 11th May at the Royal Albert Hall** to look forward to. What a treat! And not long now until our trip to **Winterbourne House & Gardens on 30th May**, confirmation letters have been sent to your secretary.

Unfortunately we are having difficulty finding a Hall for our **Jigsaw Evening** but watch this space — we are not giving up! For those of you who like a bit of fun and exercise there is the **Kurling at Brickhill Community Centre on 11th June**.



We now also have **Crazy Bag Whist at Gravenhurst Village Hall on 24 September**. And finally, we also have **John Rutter at the Albert Hall, on Thursday 05 December**, a matinee performance too!

We hope to see you somewhere at some of these events, in the meantime, have a good month,

Rosemary

RECIPE**BAKEWELL TART**

Requires: One 23cm pre-cooked pastry case in a loose bottom flan tin.

Ingredients for Frangipane Filling

180g butter, softened
180g caster sugar
3 eggs
180g ground almonds
1 tsp almond extract
200g jam
25g flaked almonds



Pic: Liz Potter

To make filling:

Beat together the butter and sugar. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, then stir in the ground almonds and almond extract. Spread the jam over the base of the pastry case. Spread the almond filling evenly on top, then sprinkle over the flaked almonds.

Bake for 35–40 mins until the frangipane filling is firm and golden brown on top. Allow to cool slightly and serve while just warm or cool completely in the tin.

Carefully remove from the tin and dust with icing sugar just before serving.

**If the frangipane is not quite firm, cover with foil and put back in the oven for a few minutes.

Beginners Crochet Course Saturday 18th May, WI House

We are pleased to welcome back Nicola for this beginners course; if you'd like to join us please let us know as soon as possible. For any other information please give us a call at the office.

**Tiptree Jam Factory and The Cheap Shop, Friday 16 August**

Also with your secretary is the information on the trip to the Tiptree Jam Factory and the Cheap Shop. You can look up both of these venues and see what's in store for the visit and the cost is just £36. Friends & family welcome.



PRESERVE OF GOOD TASTE . . . The Wilkin family have been farming at Tiptree, Essex, since 1757, and making quality preserves and spreads there since 1885. They grow a wide range of traditional English fruits and use them to make conserves, condiments, and other treats in our factory. <https://www.tiptree.com/>

THE CHEAP SHOP in Tiptree has been providing dressmaking, quilting and soft furnishing fabrics, knitting wools, patterns and haberdashery since 1968. Supplies for crafting, cake decorating and art materials are also available in this vast shop!

sales@thecheapshoptiptree.co.uk

**GARDENING for APRIL**

- ◇ Camelias benefit from an April top dressing of leaf mould, decayed manure or vegetable compost. If potting up Camelias, use 2 parts lime free loam, 1 part green waste compost and 1 part coarse sand or grit.
- ◇ Prune early flowering shrubs such as *Berberis*, *Forsythia*, *Spirea* immediately after flowering.
- ◇ Gently prune less hardy shrubs such as *Fuchsia*, *Hydrangea*, and *Ceanothus*.
- ◇ Sow hardy annuals in situ.
- ◇ Mulch beds and borders to help keep weeds at bay and to conserve moisture later on.
- ◇ Propagate dahlias by placing overwintered tubers in shallow boxes of moist compost in a warm place. appear.



Pic: Editor's own

Answers to Quiz on Page 2

1. A birds nest
2. Rebirth
3. 90 million
4. The pagan god Eostre
5. Among German Lutherans
6. Lamb
7. Dairy products
8. Faberge
9. Canada
10. Bilby (marsupial)

Entertainment at **Keysoe WI's** February meeting was provided by Alex Turner, who gamely stepped in at short notice when the booked speaker was unable to come. Alex had a long career with British Rail but after moving to Great Staughton he joined the Great Staughton amateur dramatics society & developed his interest in humorous monologues. He explained how humorous monologues were a feature of music halls, especially in the 1920s & 1930s. I can safely say that his rendition of Albert & the Lion (& its sequel); Benny Hill's infamous No 1 hit Ernie (the fastest milkman in the west) & a short monologue about a snake hissing in a pot had us in stitches!

Stumped for a speaker for **Roxton's** February meeting, President Mary Pike took along her new Air Fryer and gave a simple demo and tastings of some of the economical things that can be cooked in it. In spite of a terribly wet and windy evening nine visitors from outside of Roxton came along.



Clifton had a very informative afternoon with the East Anglian Air Ambulance this month. They are a community funded group who support our local area and are called out on average 2-3 times per day for cardiac arrests and have carried out 57,000 missions since their initiation in the year 2000. Andy and Dr Fiona explained the difference between a cardiac arrest (patient is not breathing) and a heart attack (patient is breathing and is in pain) and taught us a little bit of the biology of



the heart and explained how we could help in an emergency. We were then invited to participate in resuscitation techniques using the models provided and sing the relevant songs to support the rhythm. Some of us chose 'Nelly the Elephant' while others sang 'Staying Alive'. We were surprised and relieved to hear that breathing mouth to mouth is no longer expected. Helpfully, some of these resuscitation models were on a table so we could participate without worrying about getting up afterwards. Although the topic was serious we all had a lot of fun learning about how to cope in an emergency. After starting the session with only 2 of our members familiar with the location and use of our local defibrillators, we now hopefully have 43 members, making our village a safer place!

The speaker at **Great Barford WI's** February meeting was Sarah Broughton from Bedford Food Bank. Explaining that the Food Bank is part of a nationwide charity called the Trussell Trust, relying mainly on donations of non-perishable foods from local community groups like our own. Donations are taken to their warehouse, sorted and assembled into food packages by volunteers. Each package contains about three days' worth of nutritional balanced meals for a family together with toiletries, cleaning products and some chocolate! The parcels are then taken to 7 different distribution centres throughout the town. People are referred to the Food Bank by any one of about 220 front line case professionals such as health visitors, social workers, teachers or religious leaders. Last year over 24,500 people were helped by Bedford Food Bank of which over 8,500 were children. About 120 volunteers make all this possible doing different jobs ranging from driving the donated food to and from the warehouse, sorting the food, checking dates and packing up food parcels as well as distributing them. Sarah was an engaging and informative speaker who answered numerous questions from our members. She was delighted to leave with a car boot full of donations for this very worthy local cause.

Mike Long gave a very amusing talk at **Northill & Ickwell** about his experiences of being a TV licence inspector, with many anecdotes & descriptions of problems trying to talk to members of the public about their TV licences & how people tried to avoid paying! It proved a very good and interesting evening. He is also local to our WI which was great for Mike as he only had to walk to the village hall.

SCAMS was the subject of the talk at **Dunstable** given by Elaine Mountford from Central Bedfordshire's Community Safety Team. We were given a very informative book with drawings & text showing how to deal with the problems we had all either heard of or suffered from. We also had a questionnaire to complete and return to Chicksands. Elaine gave us lots of advice on how to manage passwords, when to put the receiver down on unwanted telephone calls, how to deal with getting tradesmen and much more.

At **Biggleswade** the speaker was Nick Cooke from Bletchley Park. His talk was very interesting and informative and was enjoyed by all the members.

At **Kempston Rural** our speaker was Steve Dimmer, talking about the life of Ronnie Barker, who was born on Garfield Street Bedford. He wrote many of his own sketches and had a good working relationship with Ronnie Corbett for many years. Steve showed several clips of his sketches.

Instead of our usual meeting at **Carlton and Chellington**, around 30 of our members enjoyed a two course meal provided by The Pavenham Kitchen. The hall was decorated with an Olympics theme – in honour of both the Olympics being held this Summer and the fact it's 100 years since the first Winter Olympics in 1924. Keeping with the Olympic theme, members were invited to bring a decorated hat, with the prize going to Carole Ryan for her decorated 'a synchronised swim' hat!



For **Leighton Buzzard WI** our Fantastic February started with our monthly meeting at which Kay Goddard delivered her talk entitled 'Patterned Path to Freedom'. This was not just a talk about quilt making but offered a fascinating insight into the history of quilts from their roots in Africa and the symbolism used to help guide slaves to freedom in Canada. Kay told this little-known amazing story of American history called 'The Underground Railroad' using many visual images and engendered much interest from our members. Later in the month at our 'Bee Creative' session we made use of old unwanted paperback books and honed our paper folding skills and turned them into hedgehogs. Our Reading Group took place afterwards and the book discussed this month was 'Lessons in Chemistry' by Bonnie Garmus which stimulated an interesting discussion, not only about the book itself, but also about some of the issues surrounding the topics raised in it.



So far in 2024, **Sandy WI** has enjoyed talks from Debbie Land - a volunteer at the Shuttleworth Collection, and Len Little - a retired police dog trainer and handler with the Hertfordshire Police. In January, Debbie entertained us with stories of pioneering women in aviation, who paved the way from balloons to jet engines, discarding their long skirts and corsets along the way. In February, as well as holding our AGM, Len explained how the sight, at ten years old, of a burglar being caught by a police dog and its handler in his local street kindled an ambition to be a police dog handler. He included lots of twists and turns in his career too numerous to go into in this short article, but absolutely riveting to hear. Our lovely members also donated a bumper number of knitted teddies for the Ukraine appeal.



We received an email from Listening Books but didn't have room for an advert this time, so here are the details: **Listening Books**, a charity which provides audiobooks to people who find that an illness, disability, learning difficulty or mental health condition affects their ability to read or hold a book, are currently offering FREE memberships to individuals located in Bedfordshire who would find our regular fees a barrier to joining. We have a collection of over 10,000 audiobooks, newspapers, and magazines, for a range of genres and age groups, everything from classics to thrillers, school texts to autobiographies! Members of the service can listen to our audiobooks either online via an app or our website. You can join our service at <https://www.listening-books.org.uk/> or by calling 020 7407 9417 to speak to our friendly team!

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY!! Scrapbook Challenge: It's April and the start of the WI year that your scrapbook will cover. Hopefully you have already started trying to identify the sort of items you plan to include to show what your members are getting up to over the coming twelve months.

TRAINING DAY, SATURDAY 15th JUNE, Barton le Clay Village Hall:

To support you in the tasks you undertake in your roles as officers in your WIs, we are holding a training event on Saturday 15th June, in Barton Village Hall, where there is ample parking. We hope as many WIs as possible will encourage their officers to attend.

RIVER FESTIVAL 20TH & 21ST JULY as mentioned last month, we are not decorating the

bandstand. But we are having a stand, and are decorating it with sunflowers and blue butterflies made by our members. We are asking members to make these items in any medium to be delivered to WI House by Thursday 29th June latest. So do get making . . . And we also have:

Sunflower & Butterfly Making Day on 20th June 10am-3pm at WI House

We thought it would be nice to have a social time to get together on Thursday 20th June where members are welcome to pop in and make sunflowers and butterflies. We will have plenty of yarn and copies of patterns available. All we ask is for you to bring along your knitting needles or crochet hooks or other crafting items. Tea and coffee will be provided for our thirsty crafters.

We are also looking for help on our stand! Information is with your secretary.