

Dark days ahead for those who

By Sarah Westcott

IF you find it hard to get out of bed these dark mornings you are certainly not alone.

For growing numbers of Britons are suffering from the winter blues, new figures have shown.

With the clocks going back an hour tomorrow an estimated seven per cent of people in the UK are now thought to suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

Experts say that the winter months can trigger mood disorders including seasonal depression, a lack of energy and constant tiredness.

A survey of 3,000 people by lamp therapy specialist Lumie also found that Britons eat more and exercise less during the winter months to help combat low moods.

Critical

Some 93 per cent of respondents said they tended to eat more comfort foods in winter compared to summer while 88 per cent also reported they tended to gain weight more in winter than summer.

And 72 per cent of respondents also reported they tended to be more productive at work during the summer.

Dr Victoria Revell, Chronobiologist at the University of Surrey, said: "Light is critical for our health and ensuring that we receive adequate light levels at the appropriate time of day will benefit our alertness, mood, sleep patterns and many aspects of our physiology."

"The lack of morning light in winter can result in the body clock drifting slightly which makes it diffi-



Riot of colour spreads over frost-free UK

MUCH of Britain is swathed in autumn colours with the Indian Summer generating a riot of golden and red leaves.

Gardeners across the land are enjoying bumper displays of colour due to a frost-free October.

The stunning kaleidoscope of autumn colours, right, is the result of a 20-year labour of love.

Retired GP Tony Newton and his wife Marie set to work on their somewhat barren suburban garden back in 1991.

Two decades later their plot in Walsall, West Midlands, is an award-winning harmony of yellows, russet and reds.

Tony, 62, said: "Frosts can kill off autumn colour. But this year we've been frost-free and to our surprise the colours are better than ever."

cult to wake up and get up at the required time for work or school.

"Using a light therapy product such as a Lumie Desklamp or a wake-up light will prevent this from happening to be ready for the day ahead."

The survey comes as MPs prepared to back plans for Britain's

clocks to go forward by one hour all year round. Ministers are set to support proposals that mean moving in line with Central European Time for a trial period of three years.

The changes would mean lighter winter evenings which supporters claim would cut road deaths, boost tourism and reduce energy use. The

Government said it would only go ahead with the reforms if it wins the backing of political leaders across the UK.

Any "clear opposition" would mean the plans were dropped.

Meanwhile, experts warned that motorists face driving thousands more miles in the dark this winter as

soaring numbers of cash-strapped councils save money by switching off street lights. "So extra care will be needed, especially in the coming days," said Halfords winter driving expert Mark Dolphin.

The clocks go back tomorrow at 2am when British Summer Time ends.

suffer the winter blues

Picture: ROD KIRKPATRICK/ESP



Curiosity is key to success

CURIOSITY is as much a key to success at school as hard work, a study found.

And, combined with conscientiousness, a hungry mind is as important as intelligence.

Brilliant minds can fail at school while those with a mediocre brain can pass exams with flying colours, said psychologist Sophie von Stumm, of the University of Edinburgh.

It was no surprise that data from 50,000 students showed hard work to be important for achievement, she said.

Writing in *Perspectives in Psychological Science*, she added: "Curiosity is a hunger for exploration.

"If you're intellectually curious, you'll go home, you'll read the books. If you're perceptually curious, you might go travelling.

"Both of these could help you do better in school."

Teachers should inspire curiosity and employers should take note, she said, because a curious mind could fare well.

She added: "It's easy to hire someone who has done the job before and knows the role but it's far more interesting to identify those with the greatest potential for development."

Now it's a riot of autumn colours thanks to their labour of love