

May - September 2026



the **ODDfELLOWS** SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

out & about

South Essex & Stepney Branch
With Branches in Hockley, Southend and Chelmsford



The Bull - Old pub next to Hockley Woods



Theatre



Crafts



Travel



Dining Out



Quizzes



History



Social



Friendship



Talks



Games



Coffee Morning/Afternoon Tea



*Mid Summer Supper Solstice -
Saturday 20 June.*

Welcome to this edition of our combined Events Diary and Newsletter

What a great spring we have had this year with sunshine and hot weather. But listen to the weatherman and please don't buy your summer bedding plants and plant them out just now as we are still getting ground frost due to Easter being so early.

The great news is for us and you we can now pay members direct to their bank account see a larger article about this in the booklet. Hope you all have a wonderful summer and are able to go to the holiday destinations that you want to with no diversions or changes.

**South Essex and Stepney
Committee of Management**

Contact Details

**Secretary Stepney and
South Essex Branch:**
Nicola O'Riordan Finley

Address: 43 Oak Walk, Hockley,
Essex SS5 5AR

Telephone: 07802 678255

Email:
nicola.oriordan@oddfellows.co.uk

Southend Social Organiser:
Rachel Voller

Telephone: 07548 368761

Email:
rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk

Venues and Contacts

Chelmsford - Hope Branch:

Address: 17 Cottage Place,
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Contact: Rachel Voller
on 07548 368761.

Hockley - Greensward Branch:

Address: Hockley and Hawkwell
Day Centre, in Car Park behind
the Library, Rochford District
Car Park Southend Road,
Hockley SS5 4PZ.

Contact: Nicola O'Riordan Finley
on 07802 678255.

Southend Branch:

Address: The Stables, Chalkwell
Park Drive, Leigh on Sea,
Essex SS9 1NR.

Contact: Rachel Voller
on 07548 368761.

May 2026

SUN 10 Greensward Sunday Lunch



Our one only Sunday lunch in May as we are not around to hold another one. Why not come along and join us? The menu is ham salad (lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, beetroot and coleslaw) with new potatoes. Dessert is lemon and blueberry sponge with custard. Book by Wednesday 6 May. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.



THURS 14 Southend Branch Monthly Lunch



Join us for a friendly, informal get together over lunch. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Transport available through lifts if required. 12.30pm to 3pm. Book by Monday 11 May. Venue to be confirmed at least two weeks before the date. Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser for Southend to request transport on 07548 368761.



WED 13 Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together



Our monthly lunch is a chance to meet at a local venue to enjoy great food and company. Lunch will be on the second Wednesday of each month at 12.30pm. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Lifts may be available from other members, please let Rachel know if you need help with transport. Lunch venue will be confirmed two weeks before each meeting. Confirming attendance by emailing rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk or calling Rachel on 07548 368761 or posting on the group WhatsApp is essential. Book by Friday 8 May



May 2026

WED
27

&

THURS
28

Beetle Drive



Chelmsford Hope: 2.15pm
Southend: 1.30pm



£3, cash on arrival



A fun beetle drive game afternoon. This classic simple game brings much enjoyment, a little light competition a chance to all mix and meet each other. Refreshments and great company. £3 entry, cash payable on arrival. New members always welcome.

Wednesday 27 - Chelmsford Hope, from 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Limited parking available on site. Nearest bus stop - Cathedral stop. Five minute walk from train station. Parking also available in Waterloo Lane Car Park CM1 1BD. Age Concern Centre Chelmsford (off Legg Street, rear of Cathedral), 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Thursday 28 - Southend, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Limited parking available on site and in Leigh Road Baptist Church Car Park along Chalkwell Park Drive. The Stables Community Centre is located at the rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church (Leigh Road/Chalkwell Park Drive). Lifts may be available from other members. The Stables Community Centre, Rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church, Chalkwell Park Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LX.

Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser to confirm attendance. Call or message on 07548 368761 or email rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk.

June

SUN
07

Greensward Sunday Lunch



1pm



Members £7
Guests £9



Are you on your own for Sunday lunch? Do you want to come to our lunch and meet up with your friends? Maybe come along and find new friends? The menu is meatballs and pasta with garlic bread followed by fresh fruit cocktail and cream. Book by Wednesday 3 June. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

June

WED
10

Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together

L 12.30pm

£ As per menu



Our monthly lunch is a chance to meet at a local venue to enjoy great food and company. Lunch will be on the second Wednesday of each month at 12.30pm. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Lifts may be available from other members, please let Rachel know if you need help with transport. Lunch venue will be confirmed two weeks before each meeting. Confirming attendance by emailing rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk or calling Rachel on 07548 368761 or posting on the group WhatsApp is essential. Book by Friday 5 June.

THURS
11

Southend Branch Monthly Lunch

L 12.30pm

£ As per menu



Join us for a friendly, informal get together over lunch. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Transport available through lifts if required. 12.30pm to 3pm. Book by Monday 8 June. Venue to be confirmed at least two weeks before the date. Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser for Southend to request transport on 07548 368761.



SAT
20

Mid Summer Supper Solstice

L 7pm

£ £30 per person



We are holding a three-course supper to celebrate Mid Summer Solstice. This is a fundraising event for the Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre and will be held in the centre, there are maximum of 56 seats available. Please bring your own drink as there is no licensed bar.



Grand raffle to be held, donations gladly received. Book by Monday 8 June. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

SOLD OUT

June

WED
24

&

THURS
25

Charity Afternoon Racing Meet!



Chelmsford Hope: 2.15pm
Southend: 1.30pm



£3 plus 50ps for your bets



This month we will be enjoying a fun afternoon of horse and pig racing. Real screen action – place your 50p bet and cheer to win! This meeting will raise funds for our chosen charity. Refreshments and great company. £3 entry, cash payable on arrival. New members always welcome.



Wednesday 24 - Chelmsford Hope, from 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Limited parking available on site. Nearest bus stop Cathedral stop. Five minute walk from train station. Parking also available in Waterloo Lane Car Park CM1 1BD. Age Concern Centre Chelmsford (off Legg Street, rear of Cathedral), 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Thursday 25 - Southend, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Limited parking available on site and in Leigh Road Baptist Church Car Park along Chalkwell Park Drive. The Stables Community Centre is located at the rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church (Leigh Road/Chalkwell Park Drive). Lifts may be available from other members. The Stables Community Centre, Rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church, Chalkwell Park Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LX.

Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser to confirm attendance. Call or message on 07548 368761 or email rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk.

SUN
28

Greensward Late Father's Day Sunday Lunch



1pm



Members £7
Guests £9



Due to us having a fundraiser the previous weekend we will be holding a late Father's Day lunch. The menu is home-made lasagne, garlic bread and side salad. Followed by a dessert of lemon meringue and fresh cream. Book by Monday 22 June. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

July

SUN 05 Greensward Sunday Lunch



Are you fed up with cooking Sunday lunch? Why not come along to our lunch for a change? The menu is breaded chicken steak with mash potatoes, green beans and broccoli. Dessert is Boston creme pie (vanilla sponge cake with creme anglaise and chocolate gauche). Book by Wednesday 1 July. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.



Booking and Cancellations

Please remember the importance of early booking for all events to avoid disappointment or cancellation due to lack of support. Please note that a place is not guaranteed at any event until full payment has been received where necessary. If you cancel on the day of a meal you will still have to pay.

WED 08 Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together



Our monthly lunch is a chance to meet at a local venue to enjoy great food and company.



Lunch will be on the second Wednesday of each month at 12.30pm. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Lifts may be available from other members, please let Rachel know if you need help with transport. Lunch venue will be confirmed two weeks before each meeting. Confirming attendance by emailing rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk or calling Rachel on 07548 368761 or posting on the group WhatsApp is essential. Book by Friday 3 July.

THURS 09 Southend Branch Monthly Lunch



Join us for a friendly, informal get together over lunch. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Transport available through lifts if required. 12.30pm to 3pm. Book by Monday 6 July. Venue to be confirmed at least two weeks before the date. Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser for Southend to request transport on 07548 368761.

July

SUN
19

Greensward Sunday Lunch



1pm



Members £7
Guests £9



Don't want to cook your Sunday lunch, then why not come to ours with your friends or just bring yourself and make new friends. The menu is salmon steak with hollandaise sauce, new potatoes, spring greens and peas. Dessert is fruit jelly with berries served with fresh cream and shortbread biscuit. Book by Wednesday 15 July. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

WED
22

&

THURS
23

Bingo, Bingo, Bingo!



Chelmsford Hope: 2.15pm
Southend: 1.30pm



£3, cash on arrival



A fun afternoon of traditional and more obscure games of bingo including music bingo. Lots of simple fun games with prizes. Refreshments and great company. £3 entry, cash payable on arrival. New members always welcome.



Wednesday 22 - Chelmsford Hope, from 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Limited parking available on site. Nearest bus stop Cathedral stop. Five minute walk from train station. Parking also available in Waterloo Lane Car Park CM1 1BD. Age Concern Centre Chelmsford (off Legg Street, rear of Cathedral), 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Thursday 23 - Southend Branch, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Limited parking available on site and in Leigh Road Baptist Church Car Park along Chalkwell Park Drive. The Stables Community Centre is located at the rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church (Leigh Road/Chalkwell Park Drive). Lifts may be available from other members. The Stables Community Centre, Rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church, Chalkwell Park Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LX.

Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser to confirm attendance. Call or message on 07548 368761 or email rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk.

August

SAT
01

Treasure Hunt Quiz Evening in aid of the Hockley Day Centre



7pm



£5 per person



A quiz with a twist, the aim is to find the treasure by using a map, but you have to answer the question by getting 75% of the answers in each round correct. If you do, you get a part of the treasure map, but if you don't, you are missing what might be the X marks the spot section. Cost: £5 per person, bring your own drink and snacks. Book by Monday 20 July. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.



WED
12

Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together



12.30pm



As per menu



Our monthly lunch is a chance to meet at a local venue to enjoy great food and company. Lunch will be on the second Wednesday of each month at 12.30pm. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Lifts may be available from other members, please let Rachel know if you need help with transport. Lunch venue will be confirmed two weeks before each meeting. Confirming attendance by emailing rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk or calling Rachel on 07548 368761 or posting on the group WhatsApp is essential. Book by Friday 7 August.

THURS
13

Southend Branch Monthly Lunch



12.30pm



As per menu



Join us for a friendly, informal get together over lunch. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Transport available through lifts if required. 12.30pm to 3pm. Book by Monday 10 August. Venue to be confirmed at least two weeks before the date. Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser for Southend to request transport on 07548 368761.



August

SAT 15 Summer Afternoon Tea Fundraiser

🕒 2.30pm 💷 Members £10
Guests £12 ☕



This year we will be holding our annual afternoon tea to raise funds for the Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre. The menu is summer fruit spitzer, traditional mixed filling sandwiches, scones, cream and jam followed by petit four cakes and tarts with tea or coffee. We will also be holding a grand raffle, all donations are welcomed. Book by Wednesday 12 August. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

WED 26 & THURS 27 The Big Quiz!

🕒 Chelmsford Hope: 2.15pm
Southend: 1.30pm 💷 £3, cash on arrival ❓

A fun afternoon testing your memory in the 'Big Quiz'. Music, film, tv, geography, history and general knowledge. Prizes for the brightest! Refreshments and great company. £3 entry, cash payable on arrival. New members always welcome.



Wednesday 26 - Chelmsford Hope, from 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Limited parking available on site. Nearest bus stop Cathedral stop. Five minute walk from train station. Parking also available in Waterloo Lane Car Park CM1 1BD. Age Concern Centre Chelmsford (off Legg Street, rear of Cathedral), 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Thursday 27 - Southend, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Limited parking available on site and in Leigh Road Baptist Church Car Park along Chalkwell Park Drive. The Stables Community Centre is located at the rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church (Leigh Road/Chalkwell Park Drive). Lifts may be available from other members. The Stables Community Centre, Rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church, Chalkwell Park Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LX.

Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser to confirm attendance. Call or message on 07548 368761 or email rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk.

September

ODDFELLOWS

FRIENDSHIP MONTH

1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



SUN
06 Greensward Sunday
Lunch



Are you on your own during Sunday lunch? Do you feel like you want to make new friends? Why not come along



and try our Sunday lunches menu. Sausage and mash with fresh green beans, carrots. Dessert is home-made apple pie and custard. We also accommodate dietary requirements. Book by Monday 17 August. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

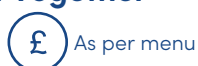
WED
09 Chelmsford Hope
Branch Friendship
Lunch Get Together



Come and join us this Friendship Month for our lunch at 12.30pm, this is a chance to meet at a local venue to enjoy great food and company. No charge to attend, pay for your own

meal and drinks. Lifts may be available from other members, please let Rachel know if you need help with transport. Book by Friday 4 September. Lunch venue will be confirmed two weeks before each meeting. Confirming attendance by emailing rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk or calling Rachel on 07548 368761 or posting on the group WhatsApp is essential.

THURS
10 Southend Branch
Friendship Lunch
Get Together



Join us for a Friendship Month informal get together over lunch. No charge to attend, pay for your own meal and drinks. Transport available through lifts if required. 12.30pm to 3pm. Book by Monday 7 September. Venue to be confirmed at least two weeks before the date. Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser for Southend to request transport on 07548 368761.



September

FRI
18

&

WED
23

Friendship Month Special Music and Memories - BBC Essex Speakers plus Music Bingo



Southend: 1.30pm
Chelmsford Hope: 2.15pm



£5, cash on arrival



Music and Memories: The Songs That Shaped Our Lives - Steve Scruton, alongside fellow BBC Essex presenter Ian Wyatt, talk about the songs that have been important to us over the years - first record ever bought, first song played on the radio etc and play a little extract of it. For the last 20 minutes or so, they will ask the audience to

choose songs that have been important to them, get the story from them and play a little bit of it to bring back the memories.



Friendship Month is all about introducing new people to the group so please invite some friends and neighbours who would enjoy all that Oddfellows has to offer. Refreshments, great cakes and company. Cost: £5 per person, cash payable on arrival. New members always welcome.

Friday 18 - Southend, from 1.30pm to 3.30pm

Please note date change - this is being held on Friday 18 September at The Stables, would normally be Thursday 24 September.

Limited parking available on site and in Leigh Road Baptist Church Car Park along Chalkwell Park Drive. The Stables Community Centre is located at the rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church (Leigh Road/Chalkwell Park Drive). Lifts may be available from other members. The Stables Community Centre, Rear of Leigh Road Baptist Church, Chalkwell Park Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1LX.

Wednesday 23 - Chelmsford Hope, from 2.15pm to 4.15pm

Limited parking available on site. Nearest bus stop Cathedral stop. Five minute walk from train station. Parking also available in Waterloo Lane Car Park CM1 1BD. Age Concern Centre Chelmsford (off Legg Street, rear of Cathedral), 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL.

Please contact Rachel, Social Organiser to confirm attendance. Call or message on 07548 368761 or email rachel.voller@oddfellows.co.uk.

September

SUN
27

Friendship Month Lunch



1pm



Members £7 (or half if you bring a friend), Guests £9



Why not come along for our Friendship Month Sunday lunch. Members will get a half price meal if they bring a friend along with them for a trial of our lunches. Menu: Chicken and ham pie with mashed potatoes, cabbage and carrots. Followed by a dessert of chocolate steam pudding with chocolate sauce. Cost: £7 for members or half price if you bring a friend with you for a trial. £9 for guests.



Book by Monday 14 September. Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre in Car Park behind Library, Rochford District Car Park, Southend Road, Hockley SS5 4PZ. Contact Nicola on 07802 678255.

Who can you invite
along to join in the
friendship and fun?

All welcome

Circle
September for
new friendships



To see what's on and find out
more about Friendship Month
visit www.friendshipmonth.com

ODDFELLOWS
FRIENDSHIP MONTH

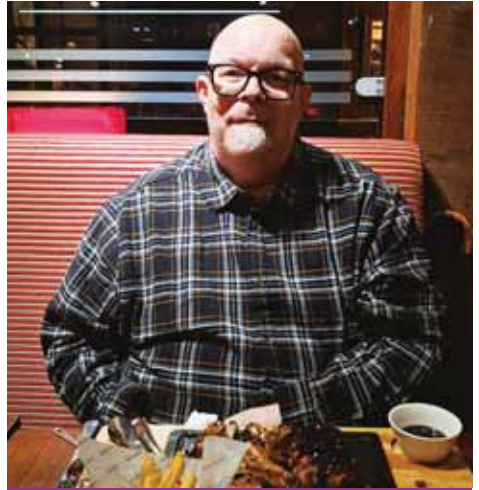
1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



Election for Chairman and Deputy Chairman

This year Tom Finley was elected as our Chairman (Provincial Grand Master) and Reg Wells is our Deputy Chairman (Deputy Provincial Grand Master).

Tom belongs to the Greensward Branch in Hockley while Reg is a member of the Southend Branch. Tom has served in this position before but this year Reg is in his first District Officers position. It is my plan to visit the Southend Lodge later in the year so we can do the ceremony of installation for both of them in front of Reg's home branch, which I hope you will all like to watch and possibly take part in. The day will we do this has to be arranged with Rachel and Reg.



Chairman Thomas Finley.

Out and About This Summer

As well as our regular meetings, we have some great day trips planned for summer 2026 including a nostalgic steam train trip on

the Epping Fryer with fish and chips! Maldon Barge trip, Bury St Edmunds market day and a likely trip to the seaside.

Dog's Tails (picture on page 28)

Merry our Strawberry blonde Cairn has, we have recently learned, found out how to get up on to the one and only kitchen chair we have in the kitchen, used for me when my sciatic is bad. She decided the tiger loaf looked interesting and took it off the side. Full of herself, she brought it into our sitting room to show the girls,

Ruth the Labrador and Mable our other Cairn what she had done. Only thing was, once she had snatched the treasure none of them know how to get into the bag, so they all just sat there looking at it. Happily, we rescued said loaf and have now moved the chair. Maybe she wanted it for our cat after all he is a Tigger.



Members get treated to a free Palm Sunday Easter lunch

We were able to join with the Hockley and Hawkwell day Centre along with Rochford District Council to pool our funds so that Oddfellows and Day centre clients got a roast lamb dinner followed by an Easter peach and chocolate gateaux.

The lunch was in the Hockley and Hawkwell Day Centre by doing this we could all afford to have a lamb dinner for our clients and

members, due to our increased buying power. We also managed to hold a raffle during the lunch for the Day Centre which raised just over £500 so well done to you all. Also a big thank you to volunteers and staff who helped set up the room, serving the lunch and actually helped Nicola cook the lunch. Our contribution was the dessert.

Picture above: *Volunteers in the kitchen preparing Easter lunch.*



Roast lamb dinner.



Setup of room for lunch.



Home-made peach and chocolate gateaux.

Benefit Payments

You will all be pleased to know after a difficult time setting the new banking systems up, we can now pay you all direct, when you claim for optical, dental and death benefits(if you are SADF member).

We can also take your membership fees by using the card payment portal but there does need to be a set of details to go with the payment. These are your full name on your bank account remember there are many common names, which is why I need your full name on the account. The sort code (a six figure number in three groups of two's) and account no (this is an eight figure number) as well as your six figure membership number.

If you send me a cheque I need to post them now to Harlow as this is where Lloyds night safe is I don't bank in any bank building as we don't have a Halifax or Lloyds near us.

When claiming from us you will still need to post the form or take a picture of it and send to me by email. We still need to have a paper trail to follow for the auditor.

Even though I am paying you direct I will still send you a receipt to sign and return to me and a blank form for next time.

Interested in volunteering?

Helping others is at the heart of being an Oddfellow and that's exactly what our wonderful volunteers do. There are lots of ways you can get involved as a volunteer, from one-off help to regular support.

You can help us by:

- Welcoming members, guests and speakers at events
- Helping prepare refreshments
- Being the volunteer host at external events
- Organising events as part of a social committee
- Joining the Committee of Management
- Becoming a Volunteer Welfare Visitor or befriender.



To find out more, contact Nicola by phone on **07282 678255** or email nicola.oriordan@oddfellows.co.uk

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www.oddfellows.co.uk

Going from strength to strength

Word is spreading about the fun and happy times our members are enjoying at our monthly meetings and lunches, with new members continuing to come along. Each group are enjoying their social time together with friendships forming and the groups bonding over activities, lunches and trips.

Over the last six months we have enjoyed a variety of fun activities at our meetings including:

Bonkers bingo, board games, table top treasure hunt, music quiz and memory and trivia challenge afternoons. Each event is created for the groups based around members interests, experiences and ability leading to fun and very entertaining sessions. Our Friendship month focused on finding out about each other, with

photos of our younger selves to guess who and shared stories, the cream tea was a real treat. We have also enjoyed a branch wide Christmas party at the Cliffs Pavilion with lunch and entertainment, Christmas at the Cathedral (a candlelit concert of Christmas movie music favourites) and group Christmas lunches. A great way to celebrate.

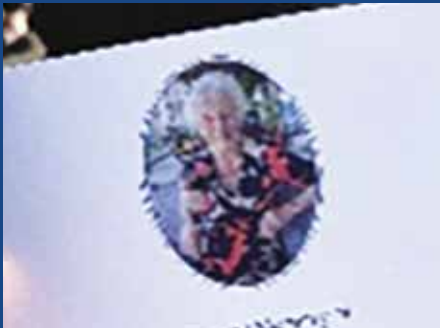
The next six months is packed again with unique and fun activities along with a special Friendship month event where we will enjoy a fantastic talk by 2 BBC Essex radio presenters, titled “Music and Memories”.

Lunches are also popular and a nice time to enjoy good food (mostly!) and time to get to know each other with good conversation and sharing of life experiences. Members have enjoyed choosing local venues to host the lunch events.

A Sad Farewell

It was with much sadness that we learnt of the loss of two of our Southend group members in January 2026. Jill Pope and Craig

Derry were popular members of the group and will be much missed. We send our love to their families.



Recent Events

After what has been another great six months, we are excited to see the groups continue to grow, build memories and support each other.

Southend Activity Meetings



Catchphrase fun.



Table Top Treasure Hunt.



Excited for the new edition of Out and About.



Cheesecake Tasting Heaven!.

Wonderful Southend Winners





Lunch gathering - Southend at The Castle Hadleigh, March 2026.

Chelmsford Activity Meeting



Fun Monthly Meetings.



Styling it out ladies!

Lunchtime Gatherings Chelmsford



Members for Members

Fundraising

At Southend, some of our members organised a raffle at Christmas, raising £120 for their chosen charity – Parkinsons Support, Westcliff. We will again be raising funds at our planned Race Afternoons in June. The Book Swap continues to be popular at our monthly meetings.

Social Committee/ Volunteers

The new social committee are providing much needed support with planning and delivering our activities. We have great support from member volunteers who all help with setting up and refreshments

at our meetings as well as welcoming new members.

Branch Committee

As current members are aware we are always looking for new members to join the Branch Committee, which is central to the delivery of the South Essex and Stepney services. Meetings are held quarterly and your input into Branch matters and finances will be helpful to secure the future of the branch and all its offerings. If you would like to join the committee, please contact Nicola O’Riordan Finley on 07802 678255 or email Nicola.oriordan@oddfellows.co.uk.

Facebook

As we grow and evolve we would like to remind all our members that we have our own dedicated Facebook page South Essex and Stepney. On this page Nicola and Rachel post the events again from the events diary but they will also post news “On the new adhoc events” that could not be included in the events dairy and newsletter but have since been arranged. We also are able to post cancellations or alterations to events.



WhatsApp

Rachel’s two groups have WhatsApp group chat so members can talk to each other and get information from Rachel. We are now launching a WhatsApp group for Hockley and Hawkwell. For the same reason, we have sent invites to members involved with Greensward and if you wish to join the group it is Hockley and Hawkwell Oddfellows.



Oddies autumn getaway to Llandudno

Join us as we take a trip to Llandudno, North Wales, on an Oddfellows-hosted group holiday with Alfa Travel.

Oddfellows members and guests will take in some breathtaking scenery during a four-night stay at the Hydro Hotel from Saturday 26 September to Wednesday 30 September 2026.

From £369 per person, half board, the price includes coach pick up and drop off from locations across the South East via Reading, or a self-arrival option.



Outstanding natural beauty

Two optional day trips are included in the price of the holiday.

On day two, you'll head by coach to the Isle of Anglesey, where the entire coastline has been designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. You'll call at the seaside town of Beaumaris with its mix of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian buildings.

On day four, the second day trip will head to Caernarfon, home to Wales' most famous castle and a UNESCO World

Heritage Site. Afterwards, you'll venture into the Snowdonia National Park, calling at Llanberis, situated at the foot of Mount Snowdon, and Porthmadog.

Relax in great company

We'll be organising some group drinks and times to dine together during the stay, and enjoying the hotel's evening entertainment, but your days will be largely free to plan as you please.

The hotel has a large entertainment suite with a dance floor and entertainment most evenings, and there are sun lounges and a games room with a snooker table.

You'll also find spectacular views over the bay or over the town to the Snowdonia mountain range from many of the hotel's bedrooms and from its Looking Glass Bar.

Interested in joining us?

This group holiday is open to any members and their guests and will be hosted by our Oddfellows Travel coordinator and South East Lancashire Branch member, Emma Gorst.

For any enquiries, and to find out how to book, get in touch with Emma by calling **0161 214 4634**, or email travel@oddfellows.co.uk.

Please read and understand Alfa Travel's terms and conditions before booking at www.alfaholidays.co.uk/booking-conditions.

Support with fundraising and donations

Donating to good causes is a cornerstone of Oddfellowship, and symbolises what it is all about – helping to improve lives through friendship and support.

It's a thread that runs right through every Branch of the Society. Whether it's members dropping some spare change into a collection at a coffee morning, or the HA Andrews Memorial Fund supporting cutting-edge medical research projects, it all adds up and contributes to that ethos.

Branch donations add up to huge 2025 total



Reading Oddfellows donated £4,300 to Camp Mohawk

Oddfellows branches and members are avid fundraisers. In 2025, more than £148,000 was handed over to a huge range of wonderful causes throughout the country.

Beneficiaries included schools, charities for people with special needs, animal sanctuaries, causes to improve health conditions, lifeboat and air ambulance

charities, and one branch provided the funds required to buy state-of-the-art medical equipment.

As well as handing over funds, many members bought and collected for foodbanks, including tinned goods and other long-life foods, toiletries and further everyday items.

To find out how you can get involved with Branch fundraising initiatives, speak to your Branch Secretary.

£10,000 raised for Hurricane Melissa relief efforts

The Oddfellows recently donated £10,000 to support the Jamaica Red Cross' Hurricane Melissa Emergency Appeal.

Thanks to the generosity of Oddfellows branches across the UK, and with additional support from central funds, the donation will help communities affected by the devastating storm rebuild their lives.

Hurricane Melissa, a Category 5 hurricane, made landfall in Jamaica on 28 October 2025. The strongest hurricane ever to strike the island, it caused catastrophic damage and impacted nearly 1.9 million people.

The funds have been sent to the Jamaica Red Cross, via the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), to support ongoing emergency relief and recovery efforts. This includes providing essential supplies, shelter, and longer-term assistance to those whose homes and livelihoods were affected.



Further information about the Jamaica Red Cross' Hurricane Melissa Emergency Appeal can be found at www.ifrc.org/emergency/jamaica-hurricane-melissa.

HA Andrews Memorial Fund recipient announced

In October 2025, representatives of the Oddfellows visited the impressive facilities at the Manchester Cancer Research Centre (MCRC) to present a cheque for £67,068 to Prevent Breast Cancer, courtesy of our HA Andrews Memorial Fund.

The money will fund an innovative breast cancer prevention research project for two years.

Carried out by University of Manchester PhD student Anthony Wilby and Dr Hannah Harrison, the project is aiming to discover alternative preventative breast cancer therapies for pre-menopausal women.

The HA Andrews Memorial Fund, which was set up in 1971 to back UK-based medical research projects and organisations, has donated over £1.1m

since its launch. Head to www.oddfellows.co.uk/ha-andrews to find out more about the Fund, including previous recipients.

The very best of Oddfellowship

Spokesperson for the Oddfellows, Pam Casey (pictured below at MCRC), said: "The work the Oddfellows does for charities and good causes always astounds me. It reflects the very best of Oddfellowship and it makes me incredibly proud.

"Donating to good causes, no matter how big or small, or how much we can contribute, can make a huge difference. Our efforts might well have saved a life, put some food on a young family's table, or simply have made someone's day a little brighter.

"Thank you to everyone who has helped in any way. You're all a huge credit to yourselves and the Society."



For more on how the Oddfellows raises money for good causes, visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/giving-back

Spring clean your finances for the new tax year

The start of the new tax year on Monday 6 April might sound like an event reserved for accountants, but at Unity Mutual, the Oddfellows' financial services brand, we believe it's a time everyone can make the most of.

Here are some simple ways to spring clean your finances and get on top of your money for the tax year ahead.

Make the most of your ISA

Every adult receives a fresh £20,000 ISA allowance at the beginning of each tax year, so if your savings are lying dormant, why not move them somewhere your interest is protected from tax?



For those comfortable with investment risk, the Unity Mutual Stocks and Shares Flexible ISA* offers potentially higher growth than traditional Cash ISAs (capital is at risk).

Guaranteed returns, less hassle

If you have a lump sum sitting idle or an investment coming to maturity, a Unity

Mutual Fixed Rate Bond* provides a predictable, low-effort option. Simply deposit your money for a set term to secure a guaranteed return.

Even better, Oddfellows members benefit from preferential rates on our 2, 3, and 5-year Bonds.

Make savings work harder

With many banks still offering low rates, a quick comparison is essential to ensure your money is working for you. Even moving savings to a higher-interest account with your current provider can significantly boost your balance over the year.

Find out more

Unity Mutual has over 200 years of experience managing Oddfellows members' funds, and our friendly team is on hand to help you navigate the year ahead. Visit www.unitymutual.co.uk to find out more.

**Terms and conditions apply to all products. With stocks and shares, your investment can go down as well as up meaning your capital is at risk.*

New tax year, new scams

Stay vigilant against common scams such as fake HMRC tax rebates or urgent payment requests for 'unpaid tax'. While these communications can look genuine, always verify them by going directly to the official government website.



Oddfellows Members: Do you need help?

None of us know what is around the corner...

Local Care and Welfare Support

To request contact from a Welfare Visitor and for local help and information about Branch benefits and benevolence contact Nicola on **07802 678255** or email nicola.oriordan@oddfellows.co.uk

Oddfellows Advice Line

Call 0800 0149 821*

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm

Email: oddfellows@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk



Run by Citizens Advice for Oddfellows members, you can access free, confidential, independent advice on welfare benefits, money and debt issues, consumer problems, housing, fuel bills, employment issues and many other issues.

*The Oddfellows cannot provide legal advice and accepts no liability whatsoever for advice provided by Citizens Advice, which is an independent advice agency. If you have any queries about the advice you have received or wish to make a complaint then you should contact Citizens Advice directly. Citizens Advice operate a formal complaints process.

Care and Welfare Helpline

Call 0800 0149 822

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday to Thursday, 9.30am - 4.30pm, Friday, 9.30am - 4pm

Email: care@oddfellows.co.uk

Run by the Oddfellows Care and Welfare Department, you can access information and guidance on issues such as accessing health and care services, supported housing, support for carers, and planning for later life. The helpline will try and identify any Oddfellows benefits or services in the community which may be of help to you.

**Visit our website page at www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care
for care and welfare information**

At a glance

May 2026

Sun 10	Greensward Sunday Lunch	1pm
Wed 13	Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Thurs 14	Southend Branch Monthly Lunch	12.30pm
Wed 27	Beetle Drive - Chelmsford Hope Branch	2.15pm
Thurs 28	Beetle Drive - Southend Branch	1.30pm

June

Sun 7	Greensward Sunday Lunch	1pm
Wed 10	Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Thurs 11	Southend Branch Monthly Lunch	12.30pm
Sat 20	Mid Summer Supper Solstice	7pm
Wed 24	Charity Afternoon Racing Meet! - Chelmsford Hope Branch	2.15pm
Thurs 25	Charity Afternoon Race Meet! - Southend Branch	1.30pm
Sun 28	Greensward Late Father's Day Sunday Lunch	1pm

July

Sun 5	Greensward Sunday Lunch	1pm
Wed 8	Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Thurs 9	Southend Branch Monthly Lunch	12.30pm
Sun 19	Greensward Sunday Lunch	1pm
Wed 22	Bingo, Bingo, Bingo! - Chelmsford Hope Branch	2.15pm
Thurs 23	Bingo, Bingo, Bingo! - Southend Branch	1.30pm

August

Sat 1	Treasure Hunt Quiz Evening in aid of the Hockley Day Centre	7pm
Wed 12	Chelmsford Hope Branch Monthly Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Thurs 13	Southend Branch Monthly Lunch	12.30pm
Sat 15	Summer Afternoon Tea Fundraiser	2.30pm
Wed 26	The Big Quiz! - Chelmsford Hope Branch	2.15pm
Thurs 27	The Big Quiz! - Southend Branch	1.30pm

At a glance

September - Friendship Month

Sun 6	Greensward Sunday Lunch	1pm
Wed 9	Chelmsford Hope Branch Friendship Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Thurs 10	Southend Branch Friendship Lunch Get Together	12.30pm
Fri 18	Friendship Month Special - Music and Memories - BBC Essex Speakers plus Music Bingo - Southend Branch	1.30pm
Wed 23	Friendship Month Special - Music and Memories - BBC Essex Speakers plus Music Bingo - Chelmsford Hope Branch	2.15pm
Sun 27	Friendship Month Lunch	1pm

Join the conversation @OddfellowsUK

Share your news, start a conversation or simply stay up-to-date! If you're on Facebook, make sure you've liked and followed our Oddfellows social media pages.

Find us at [f SouthEssexandStepneyOddfellows](#)

Branch Meetings and Contact

Hope Branch

Social meetings start at 2pm and are held once a month on a Tuesday. 17 Cottage Place, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1NL. Contact Rachel Voller on 07548 368761.

Greensward Branch

We do have the odd Saturday evening events and two Sunday lunches a month at the Old Fire Station, 58 Southend Road, Hockley, Essex. The occasional month has been moved as we are unable to secure all dates, please check diary before coming. Contact Nicola O'Riordan Finley on 07802 678255 for times and locations.

Southend Branch

Social meets are two Thursdays in a month, one at the Stables Community Centre, Chalkwell Park Drive Leigh on Sea Essex SS9 1XL, the second is going out in Essex. Contact Rachel Voller on 07548 368761.

Dog's Tails (see page 14 for story)



The Oddfellows is the trading name of The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Manchester Unity Friendly Society Limited, incorporated and registered in England and Wales No. 223F. Registered Office: Oddfellows House, 184-186 Deansgate, Manchester M3 3WB