

February - June 2026  
Issue 20



**O<sup>the</sup> ODDfellows** SINCE 1810  
*making friends, helping people*

# *out & about*

## **Pride of Woolwich**



*Woolwich, Beresford Square and Plumstead Road, c 1900*



Games



Travel



Coffee/Tea



Dining  
Out



Concerts



Talks



Social



Sports



Theatre



Film



Meetings



Online



*We hope you can join us for our social events!*

## Welcome to the latest edition of the Events Diary and Newsletter for Pride of Woolwich District

This Events Diary is a handy guide for you to keep so that you know what is happening in our area.

Remember to put the dates of interest in your personal diary. Alternatively, keep the Events Diary in a handy place - by the phone, fixed to the fridge or pinned to your notice board.

**Everyone is welcome at Oddfellows events. Even if you are not a member, we want to extend an invitation to you and your friends to attend any of our events that take your fancy – all are welcome and we like to think that we can guarantee you a good time.**

## Contact Details

**Secretary:** Nicola Budds  
**Address:** 75 Barnehurst Avenue,  
Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 6QD  
**Telephone:** 01322 348315  
**Email:**  
[nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk)

**Social Design and Invicta**  
**Secretary:** Diane Worsley  
**Address:** 17 Hollingbourne Avenue,  
Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 5EU.  
**Telephone:** 01322 441710

**Royal Standard and Royal Artillery**  
**Secretary:** Jean Payne  
**Address:** 58 Harold Avenue,  
Belvedere, Kent DA17 5NL.  
**Telephone:** 01322 436147

**Social Events:** Keith and Jo Orman  
**Telephone:** 0203 524 9208

# February 2026

**WED 18** Lunch at The Falcon, Harvester

**L** 12 noon

**£** As per menu



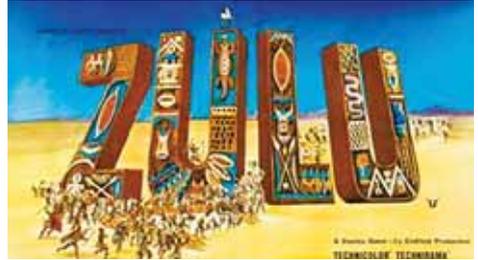
Please join us for a return visit to The Falcon Harvester. A lunch time menu is available at reasonable prices and you can always help yourself to the unlimited salad - the perfect way to load up on your five-a-day! The Falcon, Lingfield Crecent, Eltham SE9 2RN. Booking is essential, so please let Jo know on 0203 524 9208 by Tuesday 10 February if you would like to join us.



**WED 25** Speaker, Nick Gibson: Zulu and Rorkes Drift

**L** 2pm

**£** Free



A return visit from Historian Nick Gibson, an ex Royal Engineer. Nick will give an overview of the Anglo Zulu wars and a critique of the 1954 film starring Michael Caine and Stanley Baker. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the talk, free of charge. Drinks may also be purchased from the club bar. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Nicola on 01322 348315.

## REFER A FRIEND

# Share the love and make someone smile

To refer someone you know and make their day, either fill in the **Refer a Friend form** available from your Branch Secretary, or call Membership on **0800 028 1810**, or visit our Members' Area at [www.oddfellows.co.uk](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk)



\*Terms and conditions apply to the Refer a Friend offer. It cannot be used in conjunction with any other member offer. For full terms and conditions and for details of the rewards visit [www.oddfellows.co.uk/offers](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/offers).

Ref 1644

# March

WED  
18

## Lunch at Eltham Grill



12 noon



As per menu



Come and join us at the very popular Eltham Grill. There is an extensive menu with a large selection of fish and other dishes. Parking is available at Sainsburys, charges apply.



Eltham Grill, 2-3 Chequers Parade, London SE9 1DD. Booking is essential, so please let Jo know on 0203 524 9208 by Tuesday 10 March if you would like to join us.

WED  
25

## Speaker, Tony Harris: Secret London



2pm



Free



A return visit from Tony Harris, the very popular comedian and historical 'In Character' performer. Tony will be talking to us about 'Secret London' - things you never knew about the capital. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the talk, free of charge. Drinks may also be purchased from the club bar. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Nicola on 01322 348315.

# April

WED  
15

## Lunch at 151 Club



12 noon



As per menu



Come and join us at the 151 Club for a two course set lunch. Please let Jo know your meal choice by Tuesday 7 April at the latest. Please pay for your meal and drink at the bar on arrival. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Jo on 0203 524 9208.



WED  
29

## Quiz



2pm



Free



Come and join us for an afternoon quiz, everyone is welcome so please bring your friends. Teams will be arranged on the day. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available, free of charge. Drinks may also be purchased from the club bar. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Nicola on 01322 348315.

# May

## WED 20 Lunch at Ming of the Avenue

L 12 noon £ As per menu 



A return visit to Ming of the Avenue Cantonese restaurant. A two course lunch menu will be available. Bexleyheath train station is just a short walk away and parking is available locally, charges apply. Ming of the Avenue, 54 Avenue Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4EG. Booking is essential, so please let Jo know on 0203 524 9208 by Tuesday 12 May if you would like to join us.

## WED 27 Speaker, Tony Harris: The Origins of Language

L 2pm £ Free 

A return visit from Tony Harris, the very popular comedian and historical 'In Character' performer. Tony will talk to us about the origins of words and phrases. Everyone is welcome so please bring your friends. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the talk. Drinks may also be purchased from the club bar. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Nicola on 01322 348315.

# June

## WED 17 Lunch at The Falcon Harvester

L 12 noon £ As per menu 

Please join us for a return visit to The Falcon Harvester. A two course lunch menu is available and you can always help yourself to the unlimited salad. There is a free car park outside the restaurant, please register your car at the bar on arrival. The Falcon, Lingfield Crecent, Eltham SE9 2RN. Booking is essential, so please let Jo know on 0203 524 9208 by Tuesday 9 June if you would like to join us.

## WED 24 Speakers, Jane Cullen and Mandy Rawsthorne

L 2pm £ Free 

A return visit from Jane and Mandy. Jane is a Parkinson's Disease advocate who provides



support, raises awareness and offers education about the disease. Mandy will update us on her ongoing work with the abject poverty stricken people in the Sri Lankan jungle. Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available after the talk, free of charge. Drinks may also be purchased from the club bar. 151 Club, 151 Broadway, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 7EZ. Contact Nicola on 01322 348315.



## Sister Barbara Robinson

*Sister Barbara Robinson  
as Provincial Grand Master  
(Prov GM) in 1993.*

**Barbara has recently stepped down from the Committee having attended business meetings since 1986. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for the 39 years of time and dedication Barbara has kindly given to Pride of Woolwich Lodge.**

Barbara's presence at business meetings will be truly missed, however, we look forward to seeing her at our lunches and socials.

The Committee meet on the first Wednesday of each month at 2pm to discuss management investments, adherence to Rules and Procedures as well as membership needs and social programmes. If you would like to find out about becoming more involved as a member please contact Nicola or join us at a business meeting held at Danson Youth Centre, full details on page 15.

**Join the conversation @OddfellowsUK**

Find us at  **OddfellowsUK**

# Bring friendship to your front room



There are many reasons that might prevent you from being able to attend some of our events in person. A clash in the diary might mean something else takes priority, you might not be able to spare the cost this time, or perhaps you just want to stay close to home that day.

We want people to enjoy the benefits of friendship no matter what. That's why Branches all over the country host around 50 free online events each month, ranging from talks, arts and crafts and games, to exercise and meditation sessions. These online events are a great opportunity to catch up with familiar faces and meet new and interesting people from all corners of the country from the comfort of home. You might even discover a new favourite hobby.

## What's coming up online

We have lots of national online events that all our members can enjoy, the events below are just a flavour.

### **Tuesday 3 February, 7pm - 'Being Cheerful' with Nancy Radford**

Register in advance for this meeting at [www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/)  
Or use this link to register directly on Zoom:  
<https://tinyurl.com/BeingCheerfulOddfellows>

### **Tuesday 24 February, 7pm - 'Hedgehogs - In Need Of Your Help' and 'Getting Connected' with Stephen Powles**

Register in advance for this meeting at [www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/)  
Or use this link to register directly on Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/HedgehogsOddfellows>

### **Tuesday 17 March, 7pm - 'An Introduction to British Sign Language (BSL)'**

Register in advance for this meeting at [www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/)  
Or use this link to register directly on Zoom: <https://tinyurl.com/BSLOddfellows>

Anyone is able to attend an Oddfellows online event, no matter where they live so spread the word.

All our online events are hosted on Zoom. If you haven't tried Zoom video-conferencing before and would like help on how to use it, let us know. You can come to me, or email the Events team on [events@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:events@oddfellows.co.uk), with any questions and we'll help you get logged on and ready to join in.

To find out about all upcoming in-person and online events, including online events hosted by other branches, go to [www.oddfellows.co.uk/events](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/events) or ask me to send you a list by email.

**Nicola Budds**

# Make the most of your membership



## Your membership provides you with a great range of benefits...

### Standard £25 a year membership\* gives you access to...

- Local social events
- Care & Welfare Helpline
- Oddfellows Travel
- Oddfellows news by email
- Branch Care & Welfare Support
- Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line
- Money saving partner offers
- Benevolence Grants
- Emergency Financial Aid (Household)
- Convalescence & Carer Support (after 2 years' membership)
- Accidental Death Benefit
- Legal Aid Scheme
- Educational & Apprenticeship Awards
- 24/7 access to our historical online archive

### £35 a year membership\* provides you with additional benefits of...

- Optical benefit of up to £30 every second year of membership (after 1 year's membership)
- Dental benefit of up to £30 every membership year (after 1 year's membership)

For more information visit: [www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits).

\*Terms and conditions apply to all member benefits and services.

For full details, visit [www.oddfellows.co.uk/terms-conditions](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/terms-conditions), or call us on 0800 028 1810.



## Interested in volunteering?

We couldn't run all our events without our wonderful volunteers. 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 teas/coffees
- 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

### Want to deliver a new activity?

We encourage all our members to arrange events for other members and friends. If you'd like help to run a new event, like a book club, singing group, a one-off walk in the country or coffee morning, get in touch and we'll support you every step of the way.

**If you're interested in finding out more about helping us as a volunteer, contact Nicola by phone on 01322 348315, email at [nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk)**

“Supporting events as a volunteer makes me feel more committed to the Oddfellows and what I do. I enjoy meeting up with other members/friends, any outings that take place, the lunches and some of the talks are especially interesting”.

*Cynthia, volunteer*

# 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 **01322 348315** or email **nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk**

## Oddfellows Citizens 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care)  
for care and welfare information**

## Friendship: the constant that carries us forward A message from our CEO, Jane Nelson

**Another year has passed by so quickly at the Oddfellows, and it reminds me how fast life moves. However, in a hurried world, friendships really do slow the pace and bring us back to what truly matters.**

Life for each and every one of us feels richer in good company. Even between get-togethers, friendships keep us hopeful. They anchor us through life's ebb and flow – deepening our joy in good times and supporting us in challenging ones. True friends celebrate our successes, steady us when we falter, and offer a sense of belonging.

Life may change, but lasting friendship remains a constant that grounds us, making everything a little brighter. And whether near or far, genuine connections help us navigate life with resilience, laughter, and warmth.

Remember every friendship begins with a simple moment of connection, and we all have the power to create new ones or welcome others into our community who seek companionship. Please always stay open to new friendships in 2026 and nurture the ones you treasure.

If you're a member and see a new face at one of our social events, offer that warm welcome we're known for. A friendly chat, a check-in, or an introduction can ease first-visit nerves and help turn a new space into a familiar one. These small acts show that we want people with us for the long run.

Throughout 2026, let's hold on to what gives our Society its strength – the belief that shared friendship creates a place where people feel supported, valued, and at home.

Friendship is the bedrock of our Society. So together, let's continue building a welcoming community where every friendship can begin.

This will be my last turn of year message to you all as of course I retire in May. I want to thank each and every one of you for your support and friendship over the years and I wish you, your friends and your families a very happy and healthy 2026.

**Yours in friendship,**

**Jane Nelson, CEO, the Oddfellows**

## A warm welcome to Simon, our CEO Designate

In October 2025, the Society appointed Simon Gallimore as Chief Executive Officer Designate. He's currently working alongside Jane Nelson, our CEO, ahead of assuming full responsibilities in May 2026. Read more at: [www.oddfellows.co.uk/news/welcoming-our-new-ceo-designate](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/news/welcoming-our-new-ceo-designate)



# Talented trio win Educational Awards

**We're proud to announce our 2025 First Degree Course Educational Award winners: Melanie Healy (Humber Wolds Oddfellows), Will Stevenson (Pride of Woolwich Oddfellows) and Emma Corbin (Worcester Oddfellows).**

Each winner will receive a non-repayable bursary worth £900 per year for the duration of their studies, which can go towards anything from text books and vital equipment to helping out with rent, bills and other practical items.

## Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, said:

It fills me with pride each year when we announce the winners of the First Degree Course Educational Awards, and I'm sure that Melanie, Will and Emma will work hard and have a wonderful university experience.

University is an exciting time, but it can also be quite stressful. I hope this money will go some way to help reduce some of the financial pressures that are a reality of being a student.

## Melanie Healey, Humber Wolds Branch

In October 2025, Melanie began her Asian and Middle Eastern Studies course at the University of Cambridge. The four-year course will begin with learning Arabic language skills from scratch, building up her existing French language skills and looking at French Literature.



She says she is hoping to put the money towards travelling to French and Arabic-speaking countries for internships and exchanges to help sharpen these skills.

Melanie said: "I was delighted when I found out that I'd been chosen to receive the funding, and I would like to thank the Oddfellows for the grant."

Although unsure what her career plans are at this stage, Melanie says she "would definitely like to work in a role that allows me to use my language skills".

## Will Stevenson Pride of Woolwich Branch

Will started reading Geography at the University of Durham's Trevelyan College in Autumn 2025, where modules cover



topics such as climate change, physical geography, human geography, geographical research and geographies in crisis.

The money, he says, will go towards the social aspects that university life has to offer, such as the Durham University Big Band.

Will said: "Hearing I was a recipient of the award was incredibly exciting, and I am extremely thankful to the Oddfellows for the trust and generosity they have offered me."

Will also hasn't mapped out his career plans at this stage, but says that's one of the reasons the course appealed to him, given "the breadth of Geography and its wide application".

## Emma Corbin Worcester Branch

Unbeknownst to either, Emma and Will have ended up on the same Geography course at the University of Durham.



Emma plans to put the money towards learning materials and field trips.

"I felt extremely grateful and lucky when I was picked as one of the successful candidates from what would have been many amazing applications," she said. "I would like to say how thankful I am. It is a great opportunity to have an award like this available."

Emma too hasn't decided which direction she wants her career to take, but thinks her chosen course will provide her with a range of opportunities.

"It's an increasingly relevant subject, considering topics such as climate change and geopolitics," Emma added.

## More about our Educational Awards

Each year, our Fraternal Board chooses who will receive the Educational Awards funding, based on the applications received from members. To learn more about the awards, including the Apprenticeship Educational Award, eligibility and how to apply, visit [www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care/educational-awards](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits/care/educational-awards).

## 2026: Time to make a financial plan



a proud part of the Oddfellows

**The year might have only just started, but we all know how quickly the calendar can flip. One minute it's spring, and the next we're wondering where the mince pies have gone.**

Taking a little time now to think about your finances before the new tax year starts in April can make life feel calmer and more organised.

### Where to start?

A financial plan doesn't have to involve spreadsheets or complicated formulas. It can simply start with a few questions, like: 'What do I want to save for? Am I prepared for life's surprises? Could my money be working harder for me?'

For some Oddfellows members, the focus might be on simply enjoying life or planning for the future. Others may also be thinking about the younger people in their lives – children, grandchildren, or that teenager who changes career ambitions daily.

Small, regular contributions now could grow into something meaningful later.

### Start saving

Lucky for Oddfellows members, our financial services arm, Unity Mutual, is close at hand.

Unity Mutual is a regulated provider of ISAs and other savings and investment

products, which means they follow strict rules designed to protect our members.

Unity Mutual's Guaranteed Investment Bonds, including two, three and five year terms, offer fixed-rates for savers with a lump sum to invest, and Oddfellow members can benefit from preferential rates.

Alternatively, ISAs are a tax-efficient way to save or invest, whether you're building up funds to enjoy retirement or looking to help give your child a confident step into adulthood.

ISA Products available from Unity Mutual for Oddfellow members include a Lifetime ISA, a Flexible ISA and a Junior ISA, and you can also make the most of Guaranteed Investment Bonds and Tax-Exempt Savings Plans.

### Get in touch

And the good news? You don't have to figure it all out by yourself. Unity Mutual is happy to chat with you about your goals, big, small, or somewhere in between.

Our friendly staff can provide information on what is available to you. They'll talk through things in plain English, not financial jargon, so you can make decisions confidently and comfortably.

### Find out more

Visit [www.unitymutual.co.uk](http://www.unitymutual.co.uk) or call us for a chat on 0161 214 4650.

# Branch Meetings

**The Danson Centre, Brampton Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA7 4EZ**

All members are invited to attend our Branch Meetings where we share and discuss the business of the Branch, including our benevolence grants, finances, social planning, care and welfare development, publicity and volunteering opportunities.

This is a fine opportunity to get to know other members and committee members, as well as make new friends. Meetings are followed by refreshments and a chance to socialise. Our meetings are generally quite informal round the table discussions and we invite all members to come and find out more.

**Event Contact:** Nicola Budds **Telephone:** 01322 348315.

**Email:** nicola.budds@oddfellows.co.uk.

**Members only please.**

## First Wednesday of the month

**Wednesday 4 February, 2pm**

**Wednesday 6 May, 2pm**

**Wednesday 4 March, 2pm**

**Wednesday 3 June, 2pm**

(Annual Summoned Meeting)

**Wednesday 1 April, 2.30pm**

(please note the later time, the meeting will be in the Ashmore Hall)

## Traditional Terms

**Grand Master (GM):** Chairman

**Immediate Past Provincial Grand Master (IPPGM):**

**Provincial Grand Master (Prov GM):** District Chairman

Immediate Past District Chairman

**Provincial Deputy Grand Master (Prov DGM):**

**Past Provincial Grand Master (PPGM):** Past District Chairman

District Deputy Chairman

**Lodge:** Branch

# At a glance

Booking is now essential for all lunches, please contact Jo on 0203 524 9208 at least eight days before the lunch.

## February

<b>Wed 18</b>	Lunch at The Falcon, Harvester	12 noon
<b>Wed 25</b>	Speaker, Nick Gibson: Zulu and Rorkes Drift	2pm

## March

<b>Wed 18</b>	Lunch at Eltham Grill	12 noon
<b>Wed 25</b>	Speaker, Tony Harris: Secret London	2pm

## April

<b>Wed 15</b>	Lunch at 151 Club	12 noon
<b>Wed 29</b>	Quiz	2pm

## May

<b>Wed 20</b>	Lunch at Ming of the Avenue	12 noon
<b>Wed 27</b>	Speaker, Tony Harris: The Origins of Language	2pm

## June

<b>Wed 17</b>	Lunch at The Falcon Harvester	12 noon
<b>Wed 24</b>	Speakers, Jane Cullen and Mandy Rawsthorne	2pm

## A bit about us...

The Oddfellows is a friendly society with Branches across the UK. Through friendship and social events, we help our members get more enjoyment out of life, and offer care, advice and support in times of need. We welcome everyone of all ages. Find out more at [www.oddfellows.co.uk](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk) or call **0800 028 1810**.

## 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.

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