

July - September 2026
Summer Issue



THE **ODDFELLOWS** SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

out & about

Making friends across 5 Shires District



Dunstable, Bedfordshire



Travel



Social



Games



Dining Out



Music



Talks



Quizzes



Friendship



Walk



Meeting



Coffee Morning/
Afternoon Tea

www.oddfellows.co.uk



5 Shires



*Friendship Brunch at The Angels Vault Inn (Wetherspoons)
Wednesday 16 September*

Welcome to the Summer edition of your Out and About

Yay! The light nights have finally emerged and even I'm not wearing four layers to leave the house! We have had a busy quarter across the District and with another eventful few months coming.

The office has finally come together with the installation of the AV equipment to enable us to connect with you all across the District via Zoom.

We have added in 'Welcome' and 'Minor Degree Lodge' Nights into the program so if you would like to learn more about the Society and its traditions these nights are for you.

Please let myself or Sarah know if you wish to attend.

The District Lunch is all booked for Saturday 26 September 2026, 12.30pm for 1pm lunch at the Collingtree Golf Club, Northampton. Tickets start from £30, please contact the office for a menu and further details.

Our Provincial Deputy Grand Master (Deputy Chairman) Trish Dewar has emigrated back to her home country of... Scotland and has stepped down from the role. We wish Trish all the happiness in the world as she wanders along the coast each morning and spends time with her family. We will be appointing a Provincial Deputy Grand Master (Deputy Chairman) at the July half yearly meeting.

Who are the Oddfellows?

Currently, the 5 Shires District is Bedfordshire, Buckingham, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire. Each Branch has many social events as they can fit in. Through friendship and social events we help our members to get more enjoyment out of life. With the help of the Unity office in Manchester we offer care and support in times of need. We welcome every one of all ages – our youngest being toddlers and the eldest 100 years. To find out more please visit www.oddfellows.co.uk or call 0800 028 1810.

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Branch Contacts

5 Shires District

District Secretary: Emily Ellis

Postal Address: Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton MK43 9JB

Telephone: 07932 529205 **Email:** emily.ellis@oddfellows.co.uk

District Email: 5shiresdistrict@oddfellows.co.uk

Assistant District Secretary: Sarah Wetherell

Telephone: 07932 529205 **Email:** sarah.wetherell@oddfellows.co.uk

The District Branch meets every third Tuesday of the month at Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton, Beds, MK3 9JB

Albert Social Branch (Hitchin)

Social Organiser: Sam Johnson

Telephone: 07984 530287 **Email:** albertsocial@oddfellows.co.uk

Meets on the third Monday of the month.

Bedford Social Branch

Social Organiser: Samantha Henderson

Telephone: 07932 529207 **Email:** bedfordsocial@oddfellows.co.uk

Meets on the last Thursday of the month at Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton MK43 9JB.

Grenville Social Branch (Buckingham)

Social Organiser: Maria Kelly on 07932 529162 or Samantha Henderson

07932 529207 **Email:** grenvillesocial@oddfellows.co.uk

Meets on the last Tuesday of the month at Buckingham Library, Verney Close, Buckingham MK18 1JP.

Victoria Social Branch (Wellingborough)

Social Organiser: Maria Kelly

Telephone: 07932 529162 **Email:** victoriasocial@oddfellows.co.uk

Meets on the second Monday of the month at Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge, Finedon, Northants NN9 5LZ at 7.30pm

If you would like to attend any of the meetings or events at any Branch, or would like further information, please contact the District Secretary via phone, email or post at the contact details given above.

Note: Colour coding of branches is used – corresponds to articles later in the magazine: **Dark Blue** = District **Brown** = Bedford **Blue** = Grenville
Orange = Albert **Purple** = Victoria

Albert Branch Regular Events

Coffee Morning at Hitchin



10.30am



Free



Come and join friends and members of Albert Branch for coffee and cake in the lodge rooms.

Kettle will be on from 10.30am. Got kids/ grandchildren as it's the summer holidays?

No problem, bring them along and they can enjoy some board games and colouring. 8 Nuns Close, Hitchin SG5 1EP. Contact Sam on 07984 530287.

29 July

26 August

30 September

Seated Exercise Class



1.30pm



£4



Join friends and members of Albert Branch for an hour of seated exercise to music class - get fit and have fun! During the classes they will focus on muscle strength, improving or maintaining aerobic fitness and mobility while using varied equipment such as light weights and resistance bands. All the exercises can be adapted for different levels. Cost: £4 per session and payment can only be taken on arrival by contactless payment. Baldock Community Centre, Simpson Drive, Baldock SG7 6DH. Please let Sam know on 07984 530287 if you would like to come along.

16 July

10 September

July 2026

TUES

07

Albert Branch Social Lunch at Turquoise Kitchen



12 noon



Two course £12.95 plus drinks



All welcome to join us for a sociable lunch at Turquoise Kitchen (Turkish) in Letchworth. Two course lunch menu for £12.95 plus drinks as per menu. Free parking in Morrisons, which is a couple of minute walk away. Turquoise Kitchen, 1 Central Approach, Letchworth Garden City SG6 3DL. Please let Sam know on 07984 530287 if you'd like to join by Wednesday 1 July, so we can book a table.

July 2026

MON 20 Albert Branch Brunch at Granello Lounge



10.30am



As per menu



Join us for a sociable brunch at Granello Lounge, whether you fancy a full English or just a hot drink, you are more than welcome! Granello Lounge, 21 Brand Street, Hitchin SG5 1JE. Please let Sam know on 07984 530287 if you are coming, so she can get a table big enough.



August

TUES 04 Coffee Morning at Poplars Garden Centre



10.30am



As per menu



Please meet in the café for a hot drink, if the weather is nice we will be able to sit outside. Followed by a walk around their 'secret' nature reserve if you wish. All welcome and no need to book. Poplars Garden Centre, Harlington Road, Toddington, Dunstable LU5 6HE. Contact Sam on 07984 530287.

August

MON 17 Albert Branch Coffee in the Market Place/ Hitchin Beach



2.30pm



Free



We are hoping for good weather to be able to enjoy a coffee outside on the market square. Please meet by the post box on the corner of market square outside Starbucks. All welcome, including children/grandchildren as Hitchin Beach (giant sandpit) is back! A great event for our junior members. Market Place, Hitchin SG5 1DY. Please let Sam know on 07984 530287 if you are planning on coming along so she can keep an eye out for all.

September

WED 16 Friendship Brunch at The Angels Vault Inn (Wetherspoons)



11am



As per menu



Join us for brunch or a coffee and cake at Wetherspoons in Hitchin - we are hoping for good weather so we can sit in the garden! To celebrate Friendship Month, we are joined by friends and members of Bedford Branch and Victoria Branch. The Angel Vaults Inn - Wetherspoons, 5 Sun Street, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG5 1AE. Please let Sam on 07984 530287 or Samantha on 07932 529207 or Maria on 07932 529162 know you are coming, so we can get a big enough table on arrival. Hope to see you all there!

September

**FRIENDSHIP
MONTH
EVENT**
Invite a friend

**MON
21** **Albert Branch Friendship
Month Drop in Session**



12 noon



Free



You're all welcome to our Friendship Month Drop in. Come along any time between 12 noon to 2pm, to see what Albert Oddfellows has to offer. You will be able to: Meet our Social Organiser and ask any questions you may have. Pick up a goody bag including membership information and leaflets. See our lovely meeting rooms where some events/coffee mornings are held. Enter the Friendship Month competition and of course the kettle will be on to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee with cake and a natter. No need to book, just turn up! 8 Nuns Close, Hitchin SG5 1EP. Contact Sam on 07984 530287.

**FRI
25** **Albert Branch
'OPALS' Event**



10am



Free



A fantastic opportunity to attend an OPALS (Older persons activity, learning and safety) event with other members and friends. This event must be pre-booked with Sam by Friday 31 July. Representatives from a variety of agencies will give a short talk, providing advice and sharing the services they offer. Following the talks, there will be time to interact, before lunch is served. All attendees will be served refreshments and a free hot meal. In addition to the speakers, there will be an array of stalls, which offer further advice, where you can collect some safety related information and freebies. Hitchin Town Hall, Brand Street, Hitchin SG5 1JE. Please let Sam know on 07984 530287 if you'd like to attend, so she can reserve you a space.

**WED
30** **Albert Branch
Friendship Coffee
Morning with Guest
Speaker from the
Dogs Trust**



10.30am



Free



Come and join friends and members of Albert Branch for our Friendship Month coffee and cake in the lodge rooms. Kettle will be on from 10.30am. Everyone welcome. 8 Nuns Close, Hitchin SG5 1EP. Contact Sam on 07984 530287.

**FRIENDSHIP
MONTH
EVENT**
Join the fun

Bedford Branch

Regular Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning at the Peacocks Auction House



10.30am



Free



Come and join us for a brew, cake or brunch and enjoy the conversation and laughter, maybe make new friends! Peacocks, Eastcotts Park, Wallis Way, Bedford MK42 0PE. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.

1 July

5 August

30 September

July 2026

TUES
07

Join the Watoto Children's Choir live in 'Better Days'



7pm



Free



Get ready for an unforgettable evening with the Watoto Children's Choir as they present their powerful production, Better Days. Experience the joy and hope of children whose stories come alive through vibrant music, energetic dance and heartfelt testimonies. This uplifting performance celebrates faith, courage and the promise of brighter tomorrows. Don't miss this inspiring night that will move your heart and leave you full of hope. Meet outside the church at 6.30pm. Christ Church, 140 Dudley Street, Bedford MK40 3SX. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.



MON
13

Lunch at The Anchor Pub and Restaurant



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members for lunch at The Anchor Pub and Restaurant in Bedford. Enjoy great value dining with their seniors menu, available Monday to Friday until 5pm. Choose two courses for £7.95 or three courses for £8.95, perfect for a relaxed lunch. The Anchor Pub and Restaurant, 397 Goldington Road, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 0DS. Please let Samantha know on 07932 529207 by Monday 6 July if you are coming.



July 2026

THURS
23

A Talk by the Co-Op on 'Tax, Care and Toy Boys'



Join us for an engaging and accessible talk from the Co-Op on 'Tax, Care and Toy Boys'. A lively look at the serious subject of estate planning. This session will break down the essentials of wills, inheritance tax and planning for future care, helping you make informed decisions about your assets and loved ones. Whether you're just getting started or reviewing existing plans, this is a great opportunity to gain practical insights, ask questions and take control of your future with confidence. Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9JB. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.

MON
27

Dinner at Queens Head Inn, Milton Ernest



Join friends and members for dinner at the Queens Head Inn in Milton Ernest. From traditional fish and chips, steaks and speciality burgers, through to beef bourguignon and hunters chicken, there's always plenty to choose from in their restaurant. Book by Monday 20 July. Queens Head Inn, 2 Rushden Road, Milton Ernest, Bedfordshire MK44 1RU. Please let Samantha know on 07932 529207 if you are coming, so that a place can be reserved for you.

August

SUN
09

Shuttleworth's NRSA Hot Rod Supernationals



Shuttleworth's Old Warden Park plays host to their second major Hot Rod show of the year NSRA Hot Rod Supernationals 2026. The event is packed with activities, entertainment, trade stalls and live music! Sunday huge show 'n' shine car show for pre-1972 Hot Rods, Street Rods and customs. Book by Saturday 18 July. Shuttleworth, Hill Lane (entrance 2), Old Warden, Biggleswade SG18 9EJ. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.



August

TUES
11

Kathy Brown's Garden



10.30am



£11



Step into the enchanting world of Kathy Brown's Garden in Bedfordshire, a 4.5-acre haven of vibrant planting, creative garden rooms and seasonal beauty.

Inspired by art and lovingly designed, it's the perfect place to wander, relax and enjoy home-made treats in a truly unique setting. Book by Friday 24 July. Kathy Brown's Garden, The Manor House, Church Road, Stevington MK43 7QB. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.



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THURS
20

Plague, Pestilence and Fever! Talk by Local Historian Bob Ricketts



7.30pm



Free



Plague, pestilence and fever join local historian Bob Ricketts as he uncovers Bedford's unhealthy Victorian past, revealing how polluted water, overcrowding and deadly disease once plagued the town and how Bedford fought back. Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9JB. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.



MON
24

Lunch at The Green Man Pub and Restaurant, Lavendon



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members for lunch at The Green Man Pub and Restaurant in Lavendon. Lunch



shouldn't be sad sandwiches. Upgrade to their set-price menu: Choose one course (£7.95), two courses (£10.95), or three courses (£13.95). The Green Man Pub and Restaurant, High Street, Lavendon, Buckinghamshire MK46 4HA. Please let Samantha know on 07932 529207 by Monday 17 August if you are coming.

September

ODDFELLOWS

FRIENDSHIP MONTH

1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



SAT
05

Man of the World: Music of Peter Green



7.30pm



£18-£20



Celebrating the life and music of Peter Green, founder of the original Fleetwood



Mac. Guitarist Remi Harris will be joined by vocalist Dave Small, bassist Tom Moore and Shane Dixon on drums to perform music from throughout Peter Green's career. Including such classics as 'Man Of The World', 'Black Magic Woman', 'Need Your Love So Bad', 'Albatross and The Green Manalishi' (With The Two Prong Crown). Book by Saturday 18 July. The Place Theatre, Bradgate Road, Bedford MK40 3DE. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.

MON
14

Lunch at The Maypole Farm, Kempston



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members for lunch at The Maypole Farm in Kempston. Alongside the traditional pub menu there is the classic carvery from £7.49. The Maypole Farm, Fletcher Road, Kempston, Bedford MK42 7FY. Please let Samantha know on 07932 529207 or Sarah on 07932 529205 by Monday 7 September if you are coming.

THURS
24

Bedford Social Branch Evening



7.30pm



Free



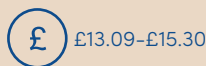
Enjoy a cuppa with cake and a chat with new friends. Kingston House, 106a Bedford Road, Wootton, Bedford MK43 9JB. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.

MON
07

Wrest Park Archaeological Tour



11am



£13.09-£15.30



Join the Wrest Park collections team in the Archaeological Collections Store and discover a treasure trove of unique and special objects spanning 2,000 years of England's history. Book by Saturday 29 August. Wrest Park, Silsoe, Bedfordshire MK45 4HR. Contact Samantha on 07932 529207.



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Grenville Branch

Regular Events

Social Afternoon at Buckingham Library



2pm



Free



Join members and friends of the Grenville Branch for an afternoon of friendship. Further details will be released as they are confirmed (check our Facebook page). Come and enjoy a cuppa and cake in good company. Buckingham Library, Verney Close, Buckingham MK18 1JP. Contact on Sam on 07932 529207.

28 July

25 August

29 September

Bring, Buy and Swap Jigsaw Fundraiser and Drop in Coffee Morning



10am



Free



Come and enjoy our monthly jigsaw fundraising event and have a cup of tea or coffee. We continue to raise funds for local charities and our Provincial Grand Master's (Chairman) charity. Jigsaws not your thing? You are still very welcome to pop in for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat. Buckingham Library, Verney Close, Buckingham MK18 1JP. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

7 July

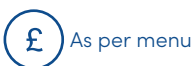
4 August

1 September

Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre



11am



As per menu



Join us at this independent garden centre on the third Wednesday of the month for a coffee, tea, cake and a catch up - even stay for lunch afterwards if you fancy it! Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre, Tingewick Road, Buckingham Mk18 4AE. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

15 July

19 August

16 September

July 2026

THURS 16 Grenville Branch Social Lunch



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members of the Grenville Branch for a spot lunch. Good food and fabulous company. The Old Thatched Inn, Main Street, Adstock, Bucks MK18 2JN. Let Em know on 07970 793978 if you can make it - need to book by Friday 10 July.



August

THURS 13 Grenville Branch Social Lunch



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members of the Grenville Branch for a spot lunch. Good food and fabulous company. The Crown Pub and Restaurant, Hillesden Road, Gawcott, Buckingham MK18 4JF. Let Em know on 07970 793978 if you can make it - need to book by Friday 7 August.



September

SAT 12 Friendship Month BBQ



2pm



Free



FRIENDSHIP MONTH EVENT

Join the fun

Come along and enjoy a BBQ on what we hope is a lovely day. Join members of the Grenville Branch and find out what Oddfellows is all about. Book by Saturday 5 September. The Centre at Verney, Verney Close, Buckingham Mk18 1JP. Contact Em on 07970 793978.

THURS 24 Grenville Branch Social Friendship Lunch



12 noon



As per menu



Join friends and members of the Grenville Branch for a spot lunch. Good food and fabulous company. The White Hart, Market Square, Buckingham MK18 1NL. Let Em know on 07970 793978 if you can make it - need to book by Friday 18 September.



Victoria Branch

Regular Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning at Sywell Aerodrome



Come along and enjoy a relaxed coffee morning with members and friends of Victoria Branch - perfect for a cuppa, a chat and maybe a slice of cake! The café serves a lovely selection of drinks, food and snacks. A great chance to catch up, unwind and enjoy good company - everyone welcome! Sywell Aerodrome, Hall farm, Northampton, Sywell NN6 0BN. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

Thursday 9 July

Wednesday 19 August

Thursday 24 September

July 2026

FRI 03 Lunch at the Pumphouse



We're heading out for a fun lunch at The Pumphouse and would love for you to join us! It'll be a great chance to have a catch-up, enjoy delicious food and spend some time together. We'd love to see you there. Book by Friday 26 June. The Pumphouse, Nene Court, The Embankment, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 1LD. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.



MON 13 Branch Night - Plant Pot Painting



Come along for a relaxed and creative Branch Night, where we'll be painting plant pots and enjoying great company. Get creative with plant pot painting. Tea or coffee available, delicious cake to enjoy. Whether you fancy trying something new or just want a fun, social evening, this is the perfect chance to unwind and have a laugh. Bring a friend or come on your own - everyone is welcome! Come and have fun. Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge, Finedon NN9 5LZ. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.



July 2026

MON 20 Armchair Fitness



7.30pm



£5



Join us for armchair yoga and fitness with Zack! We're excited to invite all members to a relaxing and energising armchair yoga and fitness session led by Zack from The Percentage Run Club.

This session is perfect for all abilities and focuses on gentle movement, stretching and improving overall wellbeing, all from the comfort of a chair.

Whether you're looking to stay active, improve flexibility, or simply unwind, this is a great opportunity to take some time for yourself in a supportive and friendly environment. Come along, bring a friend and enjoy a positive, feel-good session with us! We look forward to seeing you there! Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge, Finedon NN9 5LZ. Please contact Maria on 07932 529162 or email victriasocial@oddfellows.co.uk by Monday 13 July.

MON 27 Toy Story 5 in Cinema



1.45pm



Adult £9.50,
Over 60 £7.50,
Under 16 £7.50



We're off to the cinema for a fun-filled trip to see 'Toy Story 5' at the Castle Theatre this summer holidays! Get ready for laughs, adventure and all your favourite characters on the big screen - it's going to be a brilliant outing! If you'd like to join us, please let Maria know as soon as possible as tickets are expected to book up quickly! Don't miss out, we'd love for you to come along! Book by Monday 6 July. The Castle Theatre, 10 Castle Way, Wellingborough NN8 1XA. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.



August

FRI 07 Dinner at Overstone Manor



6.30pm



As per menu



Come and enjoy a lovely dinner out with friends and members of Victoria Branch, good food, good company and plenty of chat! Book by Friday 31 July. Overstone Manor, 18 Ecton Road, Sywell, Northants NN6 0BB. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

August

MON 10 Branch Night - Pig Racing



7.30pm



Free



The pigs have returned. Get ready for a night of laughter and friendly competition at our 'Pig Racing' Branch Night. Cheer on your racing pig. Lots of laughs guaranteed. Fun, light-hearted competition for everyone. Whether you're racing, spectating, or just there for the atmosphere, it's set to be a brilliant night. Bring your friends and come join the fun - you won't want to miss it! Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge, Finedon NN9 5LZ. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

TUES 11 Moana in Cinema



1.45pm



Adult £9.50,
Over 60 £7.50,
Under 16 £7.50



We're off to the cinema for a fun-filled trip to see 'Moana' at the Castle Theatre this summer holidays with some of our junior members. Get ready for laughs, adventure and all your favourite characters on the big screen - it's going to be a brilliant outing! If you'd like to join us, please let Maria know as soon as possible as tickets are expected to book up quickly! Don't miss out, we'd love for you to come along! Book by Tuesday 28 July. The Castle Theatre, 10 Castle Way, Wellingborough NN8 1XA. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

September

TUES 01 Pottery Painting



10am



£6-£32



Come join us for a fun and relaxing pottery painting session! Whether you're a total beginner or a seasoned artist, this is the perfect chance to get creative, unwind and enjoy some great company. Paint your own unique pottery. Fun for all ages and skill levels. Good vibes, laughter and creativity guaranteed.

Everyone is welcome, kids, families and friends, so come and join us for a fun, relaxed end-of-summer outing. Please let Maria know as soon as possible if you're coming, so the studio can be booked. Cost: £6 deposit plus cost of pottery on the day. £6 to £32 depending on what you choose to decorate. Book by Monday 24 August. Potz Ceramic Studio, Weston Favell Shopping Centre, Weston Favell, Northampton NN3 8JZ. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.

September

WED
09

Afternoon Tea at The Blitz Tea Room



12 noon



£20



We're excited to invite you to a lovely afternoon tea at the 1940s Blitz Tea Rooms. Enjoy a delicious spread of sandwiches, crisps, cakes and scones with jam, all served with plenty of tea or coffee. It's going to be a relaxed and fun afternoon with great food and great company, so come along and treat yourself! Book by Monday 31 August. The Blitz Tea Rooms, The Coach House, Sheep Street, Kettering NN16 0AY. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.



MON
14

Branch Night - Talk from Local PCSO



7.30pm



Free



Join us for an informative and friendly Branch Night featuring a talk from our local PCSO. Learn about community safety and local issues. Ask questions and get helpful advice. Connect with others in your community. It's a great opportunity to stay informed, share concerns and have a chat in a relaxed setting. Everyone is welcome - come along and be part of the conversation! Finedon Independent Wesleyan Chapel, Affleck Bridge, Finedon NN9 5LZ. Contact Maria on 07932 529162.



District Branch Night – Business Meetings

We have Zoom capabilities at the Lodge office! To join us for District Lodge Night if you can't make it in person to the meeting, use these details to join us:

Visit www.zoom.com - **Meeting ID:** 885 9332 6826 **Passcode:** 149190

This is the same each third Tuesday of each month, the virtual meeting room will open at 7.15pm ready for a 7.30pm start (don't forget your cuppa).

21 July

18 August

22 September

District News

Jackie Proctor has asked me to thank everyone who came to the annual church service in April which was very well attended and a lovely afternoon was had by all, with lots of visiting friends from neighbouring districts.



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 Em by phone on **07970 793978** or email emily.ellis@oddfellows.co.uk

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 **The Oddfellows** SINCE 1810
making friends. helping people
www.oddfellows.co.uk

Albert Branch News

Hi all! It's been great seeing so many of you over the last few months- we've enjoyed our usual coffee mornings, lunches and catch ups!

At our evening socials in April and June, we had great guest speakers from Age UK Beds and Silvertime Legal, who left many leaflets and info sheets- if anyone missed the talks and would like the information,

please let me know and I can either post them or bring them to an event.

I know the evening social is logistically tricky for many so for the upcoming months we are going to trial a Monday daytime instead. Same fun, just hopefully a more convenient time for many – so please do come along!

See you all soon, Sam



Bedford Branch News

The Wildlife Trust

We had a really interesting and enjoyable talk from Iain Webb from the Wildlife Trust, all about how we can encourage more wildlife into our gardens.

Iain shared lots of simple, practical ideas that anyone can try, no matter the size of their outdoor space. It was great to hear how even the smallest changes can make a big difference, whether it's planting a few wildlife-friendly flowers or creating a little space for nature to thrive.



Our members really enjoyed the talk and came away feeling inspired, with plenty of ideas to try out at home. A big thank you to Iain for such an engaging and thought-provoking visit.

Canine Partners

We had such a lovely time when Canine Partners came to visit us – it really was a highlight for everyone there. We were joined by two beautiful dogs who quickly won us all over with their friendly nature and wagging tails.

They were more than happy to show off their amazing skills, and it was incredible to see just how clever and well-trained they are. There were plenty of smiles (and a few laughs too!) as our members watched them in action and learned more about the wonderful work they do.



It was a really enjoyable and heartwarming visit, and we're so grateful to Canine Partners for coming along and sharing such a special experience with us.



Coffee Morning

Our recent coffee morning at Peacocks Auction House was a lovely way to start the day, with a great turnout and plenty of friendly conversation. It was wonderful to see a mix of familiar faces and we were especially pleased to welcome a new member.

Over coffee (and a few tempting treats!), there was lots of laughter, good chat, and the usual warm Oddfellows atmosphere



that makes these mornings so enjoyable. Thank you to everyone who came along, we're already looking forward to the next one!

Grenville Branch News

Pictured below are some of the events that were held in the last couple of months. We have lots of events planned for the coming

months including our annual BBQ in September at the Verney Centre where we hope to see as many of you as possible.



A few members met at The White Hart in Buckingham for lunch. There was a lot of giggling involved as you can see.



The members of the Branch honoured the retiring Trustees (Brother M McStraw and Brother T Harvey) and Sister S Moden with Lodge Merit Jewells. Brother Tim Harvey had managed to escape by the time the camera came out!

Victoria Branch News

Over the past few months, we've been keeping very busy enjoying good food and plenty of coffee together. We've had a couple of well attended meals and we're currently holding our coffee mornings at the Garden Deli in Wellingborough, which has been a lovely setting for catching up.

During the Easter holidays, we organised a bowling trip with some of our junior members. It was an eventful outing, but it was wonderful to see members of all ages



having fun together, followed by lunch afterwards. In April, we also held a very 'Choc-tastic' Branch night, where members decorated Easter eggs, an activity that brought lots of laughter and creativity. This was followed by a very competitive quiz.

We were also pleased to host our first joint lunch with Bedford Branch at the

Northampton Garden Centre. It was a great success, with everyone enjoying themselves, including several junior members who made the most of the soft play area.

We're already looking forward to our next joint lunch with Bedford Branch on Friday 17 July.



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 Em on **07970 793978** or email **emily.ellis@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



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**

EDCWA50223

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.

At a glance

Orange♦ = Albert, Brown● = Bedford,
Blue■ = Grenville and Purple★ = Victoria

July 2026

●	Wed 1	Coffee Morning at the Peacocks Auction House	10.30am
★	Fri 3	Lunch at the Pumphouse	12.30pm
■	Tues 7	Bring, Buy and Swap Jigsaw Fundraiser and Drop in Coffee Morning	10am
♦	Tues 7	Albert Branch Social Lunch at Turquoise Kitchen	12 noon
●	Tues 7	Join the Watoto Children's Choir live in 'Better Days'	7pm
★	Thurs 9	Coffee Morning at Sywell Aerodrome	10.30am
●	Mon 13	Lunch at The Anchor Pub and Restaurant	12 noon
★	Mon 13	Branch Night - Plant Pot Painting	7.30pm
■	Wed 15	Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre	11am
■	Thurs 16	Grenville Branch Social Lunch	12 noon
♦	Thurs 16	Albert Branch Seated Exercise Class	1.30pm
♦	Mon 20	Albert Branch Brunch at Granello Lounge	10.30am
★	Mon 20	Armchair Fitness	7.30pm
●	Thurs 23	A Talk by the Co-Op on 'Tax, Care and Toy Boys'	7.30pm
★	Mon 27	Toy Story 5 in Cinema	1.45pm
●	Mon 27	Dinner at Queens Head Inn, Milton Ernest	6.30pm
■	Tues 28	Grenville Branch Social Afternoon	2pm
♦	Wed 29	Albert Branch Coffee Morning	10.30am

August

■	Tues 4	Bring, Buy and Swap Jigsaw Fundraiser and Drop in Coffee Morning	10am
♦	Tues 4	Coffee Morning at Poplars Garden Centre	10.30am
●	Wed 5	Coffee Morning at the Peacocks Auction House	10.30am
★	Fri 7	Dinner at Overstone Manor	6.30pm
●	Sun 9	Shuttleworth's NRSA Hot Rod Supernationals	10am
★	Mon 10	Branch Night - Pig Racing	7.30pm
●	Tues 11	Kathy Brown's Garden	10.30am
★	Tues 11	Moana in Cinema	1.45pm
■	Thurs 13	Grenville Branch Social Lunch	12 noon
♦	Mon 17	Albert Branch Coffee in the Market Place/Hitchin Beach	2.30pm

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August

★	Wed 19	Coffee Morning at Sywell Aerodrome	10.30am
■	Wed 19	Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre	11am
●	Thurs 20	Plague, Pestilence and Fever! Talk by Local Historian Bob Ricketts	7.30pm
●	Mon 24	Lunch at The Green Man Pub and Restaurant, Lavendon	12 noon
■	Tues 25	Grenville Branch Social Afternoon	2pm
♦	Wed 26	Albert Branch Coffee Morning	10.30am

September - Friendship Month

■	Tues 1	Bring, Buy and Swap Jigsaw Fundraiser and Drop in Coffee Morning	10am
★	Tues 1	Pottery Painting	10am
●	Sat 5	Man of the World: Music of Peter Green	7.30pm
●	Mon 7	Wrest Park Archaeological Tour	11am
★	Wed 9	Afternoon Tea at The Blitz Tea Room	12 noon
♦	Thurs 10	Albert Branch Seated Exercise Class	1.30pm
■	Sat 12	Friendship Month BBQ	2pm
●	Mon 14	Lunch at The Maypole Farm, Kempston	12 noon
★	Mon 14	Branch Night - Talk from Local PCSO	7.30pm
♦	Wed 16	Friendship Brunch at The Angels Vault Inn (Wetherspoons)	11am
■	Wed 16	Buckingham Nurseries and Garden Centre	11am
♦	Mon 21	Albert Branch Friendship Month Drop in Session	12 noon
★	Thurs 24	Coffee Morning at Sywell Aerodrome	10.30am
■	Thurs 24	Grenville Branch Social Friendship Lunch	12 noon
●	Thurs 24	Bedford Social Branch Evening	7.30pm
♦	Fri 25	Albert Branch 'OPALS' Event	10am
■	Tues 29	Grenville Branch Social Afternoon	2pm
♦	Wed 30	Albert Branch Friendship Coffee Morning with Guest Speaker from the Dogs Trust	10.30am
●	Wed 30	Coffee Morning at the Peacocks Auction House	10.30am