



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

Summer - Winter 2025  
[www.oddfellows.co.uk](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk)

# The Birmingham District Newsletter and Events Diary

News and views from your local friendship group

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AMC 2025



New Year District  
Lunch in Kings Heath



Calling all people who live  
in and around Rubery...

## Welcome to the latest edition of the News and Views of Birmingham District

Now that the warmer weather appears to be here I would like to encourage you all to make the most of whatever opportunities you can to get out and about. We're hoping to be able to support members to arrange more socials through the WhatsApp groups.

I am pleased to hear that the Wednesbury members, a relatively new group have decided to start a WhatsApp group and I look forward to hearing about their plans for the remaining year. For anyone feeling unsure about technology but who could manage a mobile phone with some support, I encourage you to book onto the free IT support sessions offered by AbilityNet. These may only be available this year depending on funding, so please speak to your social organiser for more information.

As a member-led society, we'd love to hear from you. Our social organisers are part time and are best seen as facilitators of the events that members would like to experience and organise. This will be very much at the heart of how we will work together going forward.

On behalf of the District Committee of Management and your social organisers, we encourage you to make the most of your membership for the remaining year.

Yours in friendship  
**Liz Blackhurst**  
**District Secretary**

## Contact Details

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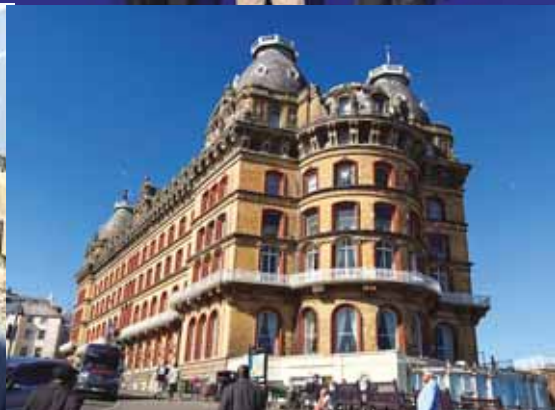
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**Facebook:** [oddfellowsbirmingham](https://www.facebook.com/oddfellowsbirmingham)  
and [oddfellowsBlackCountry](https://www.facebook.com/oddfellowsBlackCountry)

# AMC 2025

This year we were pleased to send three deputies to the Annual Movable conference, (AMC) which was held in Scarborough this May. Our Brothers Ken, Michael and James represented the District this year. In order to qualify as a deputy to be

able to attend the conference and vote, you need to have taken part in the relevant Oddfellows ceremonies or Lectures. Deputies are required to feedback their observations and thoughts on the Conference at the next Summoned meeting.



## Provincial Grand Master's Message

**Dear Sisters, Brothers and friends**

It is a great honour to have been installed as Grand Master of The Loyal City of Birmingham District Lodge in April, a District with Lodges and Social Groups that span from Wolverhampton and Dudley in the west, to Solihull in the east, Aldridge, Walsall and Mere Green in the north, to Bromsgrove in the south; not forgetting Birmingham, Kings Heath somewhere in the middle as well as Loyal Offas Dyke Lodge in South Wales. A District that is growing through many years of hard work by Liz Blackhurst our Provincial Secretary supported by her 'dream team' of social organisers and the District Committee.

I follow in the footsteps of Past Provincial Grand Masters of the City of Birmingham District Lodge, who continue to support the District on the Committee of Management and as Trustees. In a similar vein, I stand on the shoulders of my Oddfellows ancestors, John Adcroft Provincial Grand Master (1853) and others of more recent date, who lived their lives in friendship, love and truth whilst extolling the virtues of faith, hope and charity through the good and the bad times.

I represented the District at the AMC (Annual Movable Conference) in Scarborough in May, ably supported by James Daniel Past Provincial Grand Master (Past Chairman) and Michael Phillip. The AMC is a wonderful opportunity to network and share ideas with members of other Districts. I took



the opportunity to proffer suggestions regarding the future of Oddfellowship and the need to attract younger members. Likewise, I represent the District at the Midland Group Conference and serve as an Executive Officer, where I have been supported by Jafar Raza. I was previously a director of the Manchester Unity Credit Union. But it isn't all about the Provincial Grandmaster, it is about the mutual support given by those involved in the Committee of Management without whom the District couldn't function; which is why I must thank Frances and Joe for agreeing to join the Committee and to the Social Organisers who will be

attending the Committee to share their experiences and input their ideas. I am also humbled by those who volunteer their time generally and as welfare volunteers in particular, which I know is appreciated by all.

One theme at the AMC this year was concerning the future and this is a team effort, so ideas in the suggestion box please.

If I have a concern, it is the geographical stretch of our District and it is difficult to create an identity. We have four Lodges – British Queen Lodge, Countess of Warwick Lodge, Loyal Elsom and Morning Star Lodge and Loyal Offa's Dyke Lodge – we have ten social groups, thus three social groups can support each of the Lodges. Michael once said that the body is disconnected from the head, this got me thinking - traditionally, each Lodge would nominate a representative to the District Committee of Management thereby creating that conduit, we could reinstate that conduit. We are a mutual society, we are all members, there is no us and them, we are all sisters and brothers. Work schedule permitting (alas I'm not retired) I would like to tour the District during my year of office and gather your thoughts.

Traditionally Oddfellows Lodges have been ritual or ceremonial lodges, which was a way of communicating our values – it doesn't appeal to everyone and so there is a non-ceremonial mode of membership, but with the support of other Districts of the Midland Group Conference we will be able to offer the ceremonial traditions to those interested.

I thought that I would conclude by leaving you with something to ponder. So along with socialising, a cuppa and chat, charitable work and fun outings what might new members be attracted to? What will strengthen Oddfellowship into the future, continue our legacy making it something worth being part of in the twenty first century Birmingham District? Maybe philosophical wisdom, empowerment, authentic experiences or valuable life skills – to fill the void in internet, artificial intelligence and social media driven world, to find a place or a cause to give meaning and value to their life; somewhere where older and wiser heads might share and mentor to give life skills to the next generation, encouraging them to become confident, competent, and passionate leaders. Some who may wish to join are seeking to reveal the deeper mystery and wisdom that our symbols and degrees offer as a philosophical outlook on life, to think about the deeper meanings to Friendship, Love, and Truth. On some level, everyone wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves and make a contribution toward a larger legacy. Hopefully you will be able to attend the summer luncheon and/or the summoned meetings and we might explore the possibilities for the future of your District Lodge.

Yours fraternally

**Ken Blackhurst**  
**Provincial Grand Master**

# Meet Your New Black Country Social Organiser: Kerry Smith

## Hello everyone!

I'm absolutely delighted to be the new Social Organiser for the Black Country and have loved getting to know many of you already across our Aldridge, Dudley and Wednesbury meet-ups. I officially joined Oddfellows in February 2025, and it's been a brilliant way to reconnect with people face-to-face, something I really missed while working remotely.

I was born and bred in the Black Country, growing up in Bloxwich, Walsall, and later studying at the University of Wolverhampton. My career took me all over the world thanks to my work in international student recruitment, both here in the UK and later in Australia, where I lived for several years. I've travelled extensively, and while I still work for myself online as a bit of a digital nomad, I really craved a chance to be around people again, real chats, real connections, real community.

Joining Oddfellows has given me exactly that. It's a joy to be meeting such lovely members across the Black Country. Whether we're sharing a cuppa, playing



games, or having a laugh at a quiz, I'm loving every minute of it and look forward to meeting even more of you in the months ahead.

See you soon at the next social!

Warm wishes

## Do you have a story to share?

**We'd love to hear from you. Please send us your news, stories or poems. A photo always helps to tell the story too! Contact your social organiser or email details to: [elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk)**

# Meet Ali Read – Social Organiser

Hi all, I'm Ali Read and I'm delighted to introduce myself as the social events organiser for the Kings Heath, Mere Green and Solihull groups. I

started with Oddfellows in February and I have been made to feel truly welcomed and part of the groups. I have loved getting involved in all the coffee mornings so far and look forward to assisting you to plan and promote events that interest



you. I'm always open to suggestions of what we should get up to from our wonderful members.

Outside of working for Oddfellows I am married to Matt and we have 3 almost all grown up children, but they still keep me busy running around after them all. We have lived in Birmingham, for over 25 years and love the city but in my spare time you will usually find me up a mountain, paddle boarding on a lake, wild camping or exploring somewhere in the countryside!! I'm looking forward to sharing our future ideas and events together.



## Free digital skills training for over 65s

- Need help with your emails?
- Want to book a GP appointment online, or order from the online shop?
- Need to know how to stay safe from scams?

Visit [abilitynet.org.uk/BTDigitalSkills](https://abilitynet.org.uk/BTDigitalSkills) to book

Or call free 0800 048 7642



**DISCLAIMER:** Links to third-party sites do not constitute an endorsement by the Oddfellows and use of the advertised products and services is entirely at your risk. The Oddfellows does not accept any liability or responsibility for any third party material on other websites.

# 80th Anniversary of VE Day

As we celebrated the 80th anniversary of VE Day on 8 May 2025, let us remember those Oddfellows who gave their lives, so that we might enjoy the companionship of Oddfellows today.



*The memorial plaque for the Loyal Prince Albert Lodge no. 2349 was a lodge in Solihull, it is now in our District storage facility. (War Memorials Online c/o War Memorials Trust).*



*Bromsgrove District (War Memorials Online c/o War Memorials Trust).*

## Say *yes* to friendship in September

Make someone's day and invite them along to share the friendship fun.

**All welcome**

**ODDFELLOWS  
FRIENDSHIP MONTH**  
1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



To see what's on and find out more about Friendship Month visit [www.friendshipmonth.com](http://www.friendshipmonth.com)

# Notice Board

## Ways to renew your membership:

You can call head office to renew your membership and pay over the phone by card, call 0800 028 1810.

You can pay online direct to the District's Barclays account, please contact the office on 0121 707 5626 for further details.

You can make your cheque payable to City of Birmingham District Lodge and send to: 73 Bradbury Road, Solihull B92 8AF.

## Our Annual Summoned Autumn Meeting

All members are warmly invited to our Annual Summoned Autumn Meeting where our new Chairman, Ken Blackhurst will lead the meeting and oversee the decisions made about the running of the District. The date is Saturday 27 September at 11am at Toby Carvery, Hagley Road West, Quinton B32 1HP. Contact Liz to confirm your attendance on 0121 707 5626 or email [elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk).

## Next of kin details

**Following the recent passing of some of our members, which took a while to come to the attention of the District office, the District Committee deems it appropriate to collect next of kin information for members who are willing to be involved.**

This would consist of a contact name, phone number and email address of people who you would want us to contact if there was a concern such as no contact or response from you for over two weeks. In line with data protection this information would be deleted on cessation of Oddfellows membership. Please ask your social organiser who will have a form for you to complete and sign, or you may email the District office: [elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk)

## New Year District Lunch in Kings Heath

Thank you to all those who came out to support our Chairman Sister Monica Coke and welcome in the new year at The Billesley , Kings Heath. We were delighted to have members

from both the Kings Heath and Mere Green groups in attendance. It was lovely to see our old and new members come together.



# Oddfellows Holiday

A group of about seven members enjoyed a pleasant five day break on a Warner's holiday to Hayling Island in the county of Hampshire, on 5th May. Didn't manage to get any photos but the ducks also had a good time! On behalf of the District Committee a big thank you to Doreen Wallis, from the Solihull group for initiating this opportunity and bringing members together to enjoy this wonderful opportunity. We appreciate your efforts Doreen!



## A new name for our District – we need your help

As the District changes and grows, we need a new name that reflects the wider reaches where we aspire to set up our Oddfellows groups. Members have suggested Central England Oddfellows and West Midlands Oddfellows, (this one was rejected by the Fraternal Board). My suggestion

would be Birmingham, Bromsgrove and Black Country Oddfellows. Come along and vote for your preference at the Autumn Summoned meeting in September, or email your suggestion to [birmingham@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:birmingham@oddfellows.co.uk), or, [BlackCountry@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:BlackCountry@oddfellows.co.uk)

## Obituaries

We are sad to be informed of the passing of our following members:

**Patrick Gleeson** – fond member of the Kings Heath group

**Maureen Cochrane** – will be sadly missed by members of the Solihull group

**Diane Purnell** – kindly thought of member of the Harborne group

**Collin Phillips** – life member of Loyal Offas Dyke Branch

**May they rest in peace**

# Black Country Oddfellows meetings bring fun and friendship

**These last months have seen our Black Country groups make leaps forward with plenty of smiles and extra activities where members forge flourishing friendships.**

From catching up over a regular quarterly-ish Sunday lunch to attending a fashion show, our members have had plenty to choose from. We have relished a trip to Wombourne for an Indian meal, an afternoon at the panto at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre – and a recent return visit for an unforgettable celebration of Jamaican music, history and culture.

There have also been opportunities to go the cinema rather than attending solo and we are looking forward to all of these happy events continuing thanks to an influx of new members. We recently enjoyed our biggest Wolverhampton meeting yet and have a second group to the East of the city on the horizon.

Our more recently re-established groups at Aldridge and Wednesbury have picked up momentum thanks to our new SO Kerry, whom you can read all about in this

newsletter issue. Dudley also proves ever-popular with lovely members appreciating regular brainteasers and chances to shout 'Sticky Fingers.' It's always great to see our members dedicate their time to organising an activity and these recent weeks have seen Chris Loach and Tony Osbourne at our Wolverhampton group lead very impressive quizzes – a big thanks to both of them for some very entertaining initiatives.

As ever we are always open to feedback and ideas on what you, our members would welcome as part of your membership. Don't hesitate to share your ideas with us to help us help you.

## Linda Aitchison Social Organiser



*Wolverhampton enjoys Tony's music quiz.*



*Chris entertained us with some confectionary nostalgia!*



*New members Geoff and Yolanda join Sue as they sample a card game and our regular book swaps.*



*We're behind you! Our panto visit, January 2025.*



*Some of our Dudley members help spread the word.*



*A Wednesday meeting keeps us smiling.*



*All smiles with Sticky Fingers at Dudley.*

## Black Country Oddfellows meetings bring fun and friendship continued...



*Our new member Charlie on card calling duty.*



*An enjoyable evening out at a local restaurant.*

# Welcome to our Dream Team!

**After a challenging time of struggle for the District I beam from ear to ear when I look at how far we've come. Yes there have been casualties along the way, but the resilient amongst us stood firm, persevered and supported each other through uncertain times. Well done everybody! We now have four fabulous committed social organisers who are an asset to the District.**

Wayne, our longest standing social organiser, has a background as a legal executive, a passion for football and a dedication for this to enrich the lives of the young people he coaches. He has been able to utilise his people skills and grassroots community knowledge to develop and grow our Birmingham and Bromsgrove groups.

Linda joined us in July last year and has been instrumental in laying the ground work for our Black Country socials. With a wealth of media and marketing experience, Linda will be the strong arm of promotion in the Black Country, taking the lead to promote all four existing social groups. With her personable approach, armed with funny stories, Linda will develop the Wolverhampton area of our large District.

Relative newcomer Ali, has embraced the challenge of our Birmingham groups with quiet confidence and serenity. Her wealth of experience in organising a variety of social events in and around her local area and volunteering will hold her in excellent stead to facilitate the Birmingham



groups to evolve into self sustaining lodges once more.

Our newest member of the team is Kerry who joined us at the end of February this year. With infectious enthusiasm Kerry has given a much needed boost to the Black Country. Bringing her experience with volunteers, management and marketing, the strengths of the Black Country will be complimented and consolidated. We are excited for the future of this region as Kerry and Linda take the lead. There is an outstanding vacancy for a publicity and promotions events organiser for the Birmingham region which we hope will be filled later this year. Meanwhile Wayne and Ali continue to do a great job keeping the events going and bringing in new members.

So your Dream Team is here! They are all entrepreneurs, nurturing their own businesses in their own areas of professional expertise. I am sure you have all given them a big warm Oddfellows welcome!

***Picture above: Your social organisers are here to facilitate your activities.***

## Our Annual Summoned Spring Meeting

**On Saturday 5 April, members, social organisers and the District Committee of Management assembled at the Toby Carvery, Quinton for our Annual Summoned Spring meeting,**

We were pleased to welcome two new Committee members who were formally voted onto the District Committee, qualifying with two or more years of Oddfellows

membership- Sister Frances Bratt and Brother Joe Egan. We are thankful to have members who are able to give back to our friendly society and help with the running of our District. Our social organisers Brother Wayne and Sisters Kerry, Linda and Ali also took part in the Welcome, all receiving our special three-link chain badge and completing the first stage towards joining the District Committee of Management.



*Our social organisers now host social events across five areas of our District.*



*Kerry receives her three link chain badge, representing Friendship, Love and Truth.*



*At your service- your District Committee of Management.*



*Those taking part in the Welcome were required to stand.*



*The Dream Team – their first day of meeting face to face!*

## Calling all people who live in and around the Rubery area (B45) – The Oddfellows need you!

**Our new Cuppa and Chat social event started in January 2025 and has had fantastic numbers to date....BUT, there is always room to pull up another chair or two and welcome new people along.**



Whether it is members who attend another group looking to fill your social diary or a new face coming along for their first time, you will all receive a warm welcome.

Take part in our fun brainteaser quiz, get involved in some chit chat or just sit quietly in the background and observe whilst enjoying a complimentary hot or soft drink, it's up to you!

We meet at Morrisons Café, Rubery on the first Monday of each month and it would be great to have you come along. Check out the social listings in this newsletter for future dates.

For more details or to book you place, please contact Wayne on 07883 070322 or [wayne.homer@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:wayne.homer@oddfellows.co.uk).



# Our Competitions

## Black Country Anagram Quiz

How well do you know the names, phrases and famous faces of the Black Country? We have jumbled up some well-known places, phrases and people- can you unscramble them?

To get you started, here is one example: BOLDURY > OLDBURY. Now it's your turn. Have a go at these:

Question	Answer
1. ALLLAWS	
2. GLADRIDE	
3. UDDLEY	
4. AMY MAY	
5. ROMAN SPITHOAL	
6. WENDYRUBES	
7. DONDY REDHOL	
8. SEEDIN WISEL	
9. DIELOG	
10. RAJPES CATROT	

Here are the answers to the Summer Word Scramble competition. No winners to announce this time round, but we hope that the competitions in this edition will capture your interest.

## Summer Word Scramble Answers

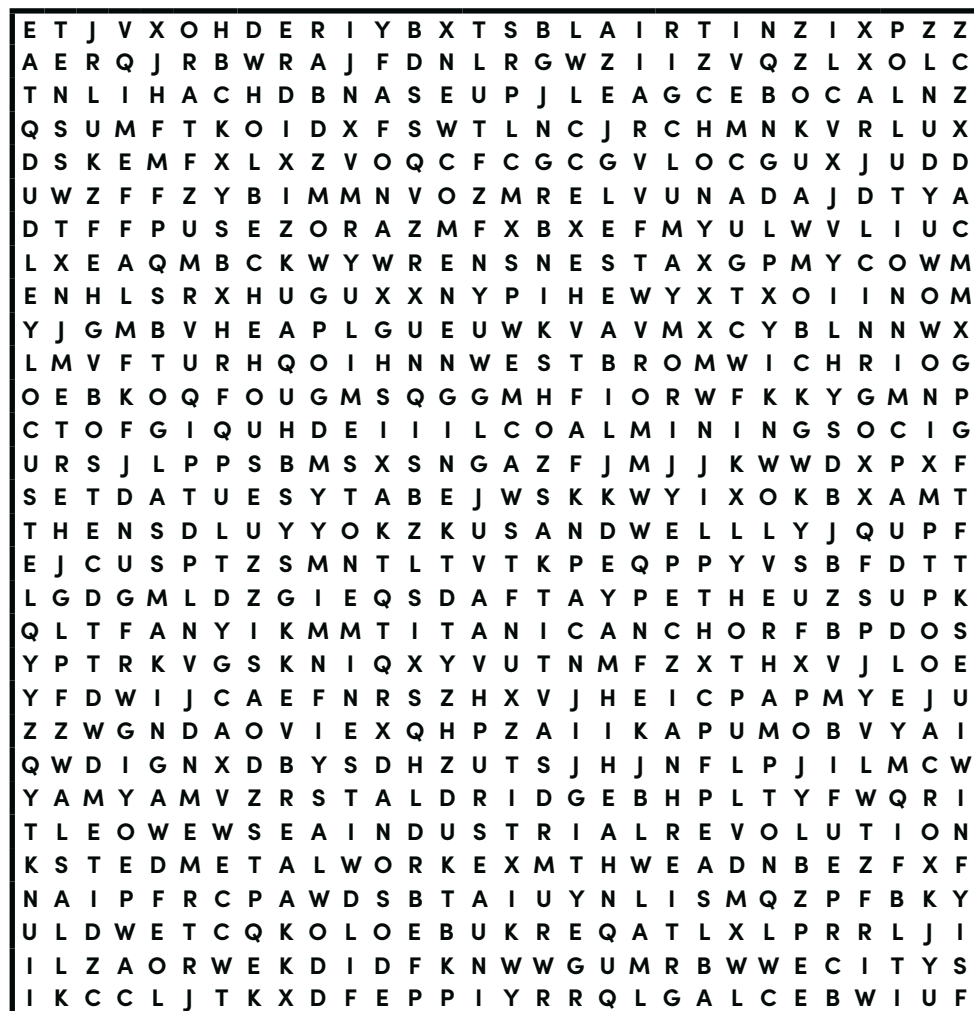
1. BEACH
2. SHORTS
3. WARM
4. ICE CREAM
5. SUNSHINE

6. CAMPING
7. VACATION
8. SWIMMING
9. SAND
10. TOWEL

Answers to the winter crossword and the summer word scramble in the winter/ summer 2025 newsletter are available at request: [elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:elizabeth.blackhurst@oddfellows.co.uk)

# All Things Black Country Wordsearch

The spotlight is on the Black Country this season and we invite you to tackle this word search with a chance to win a £10 voucher.



Aldridge  
Blairtin  
Bost  
Coal Mining  
Cobs  
Daft Aypeth

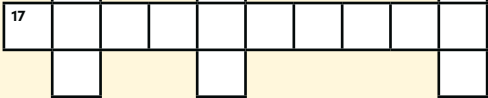
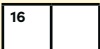
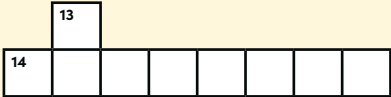
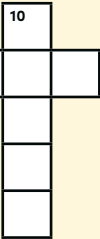
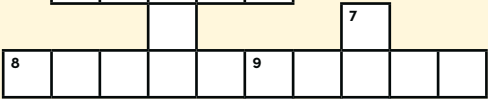
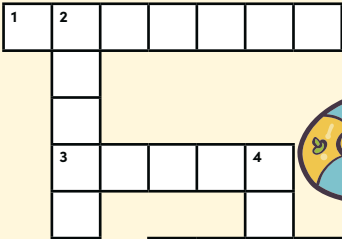
Dudley Locust  
Glass Making  
Holbeche House  
Industrial  
Revolution  
Limestone Mines

Metalwork  
Newcomen  
Engine  
Pollution  
Riffy  
Sandwell

Titanic Anchor  
Walsall Dudley  
West Bromwich  
Wolverhampton  
Wrens Nest  
Yam Yam

# Summer Crossword

Win £10 by completing this crossword and sending to our Birmingham office. (Address listed under our contact details.)



### Across

1. Ocean with picturesque islands
3. A type of summer Bananarama sang about
5. Popular summer tipple
6. Deadly creature as seen in Jaws
8. Shropshire town with annual summer folk music festival
11. Expert rider of waves
12. Newton John, Aussie songstress  
Hopelessly devoted to you
14. Longest day
16. Seaside walkway with attractions
17. Kids' beach structure

18. Lovely summer bake with jam and cream
19. King of the fairies

### Down

2. Cooper, School's Out hitmaker
4. Refreshing drink
7. Weather we crave
9. Summer fruit enjoyed with cream
10. Popular Pembrokeshire seaside town
13. Northwest resort with comedy icon connections
15. Holiday for Americans

### Terms and Conditions for Competitions

- The competition is not open to employees of Oddfellows or Committee members.
- The competition is open to all other Oddfellows members of the Birmingham District but limited to one entry per person, per competition.
- Scan and email your completed competition entry with your name and membership number to: [birmingham@oddfellows.co.uk](mailto:birmingham@oddfellows.co.uk), or return in the post to: Liz Blackhurst, 73 Bradbury Road, Solihull B92 8AF, or hand in to your Social Organiser.
- There is no age limit, however, if you are a Young Oddfellow please include your date of birth and parent's signature along with your answer.
- Competition deadline is 30 October 2025.
- The winner will be selected at random from fully completed and correct entries.
- The winner will receive £10, or a £10 voucher. No alternative prize available.
- The winner may be expected to have their photograph taken for press or promotional purposes and their name published in Oddfellows newsletters and Facebook.
- The decision of the Committee of Management for the District is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
- The name and county of the prize winner will be available by sending a self-addressed envelope to: Liz Blackhurst, 73 Bradbury Road, Solihull B92 8AF.
- The competition is open to residents of the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man only.
- Entry to the competition will be deemed to constitute acceptance of these terms and conditions.

The Promoter reserves the right to publish any photos entered into the competition. The decision of the Promoter on any matter relating to the rules shall be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

# All Our Socials

## Volunteer led groups



We are thankful that the spirit of helping out is becoming slowly embedded amongst our members. We have four fabulous social organisers in place and we will still require members to step in and help run the groups, supporting the social organisers to ensure the groups run smoothly, (there is a lot to do to keep everyone happy).

At times when our social organisers have family commitments or take a holiday break, we require members to step in to lead the groups. We will be happy to assist you in this and can give the Mere Green and Kings Heath groups as an example of how well this has worked in the past. Please contact your social organiser if you would consider helping out at a social so that we can add your name to a pool of potential helpers in times of need. Thank you so much for your support!

## Member led socials

The member for member spirit of mutuality continues to develop amongst you. The Mere Green members continue to meet at Dobies café and the famous Rummikub Club meets on Tuesdays.. Our Kings Heath members are keen

pub quizzers, enjoy lunch meet ups and occasional Sunday walks. The Wolverhampton diners continue to seek special meal discounts wherever they can. The Bromsgrove group are aiming for two canal boat trips this year. A big thank you to all those active members who have initiated and organised these additional events. By being willing to offer their time and suggestions, they have created opportunities for themselves and others to stay active and make the most of life's opportunities. What a wonderful example of mutuality!

## Our complimentary drinks



The Committee are aware that there are ongoing economic challenges. The Oddfellows membership fee has remained unchanged despite this and offers excellent value for money. The District has to manage its budget and will seek a way to manage the costs of the complimentary drinks, against the need to increase the membership fees.

We would ask members attending the socials to be mindful of the following to make life easier for our social organisers and group helpers:

The budget is for up to two complimentary drinks a month, just one drink at each group attended for members only. If you attend a third group that month then please inform the social organiser that you will purchase your own drink.

Visitors or non-members will receive just one complimentary drink at their first group visit. If they attend for a second time they must inform the social organiser that they will pay for their own drink. As we are a membership society, visitors or friends will be welcome to attend for up to three events, after which they will be expected to pay their membership fee.

We hope you understand that we need to manage our budget to allow this drinks offer to continue, so no Irish coffees please! The

non-alcoholic drinks, teas, coffees or hot chocolate should be small or regular, sparkling drinks draught rather than canned drinks. Your social organiser will be able to clarify any queries you may have, please just ask.

## December

The December Dudley and Wolverhampton socials are not listed as they will not run on their regular dates this festive month. Ask your social organisers for more information



## Our Birmingham and Bromsgrove Socials

### Rubery Cuppa and a Catch Up

**First Monday of the month, 10.30am to 12 noon**

Morrisons Café, Rubery, Birmingham B45 9AH

Contact Wayne on 07883 070322 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**7 July**  
**4 August**

**1 September**  
**6 October**

**3 November**  
**1 December**

### Harborne Games, Cuppa and Chat

**Second Monday of the Month, 11am to 12.30pm**

The Green Man, 2 High Street, Harborne B17 9NE

Contact Wayne on 07883 070322 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**14 July**  
**11 August**

**8 September**  
**13 October**

**10 November**  
**8 December**

## Our Birmingham and Bromsgrove Socials

### Bromsgrove Cuppa and Chat

**Third Monday of the month, 11am to 12.30pm**

Bromsgrove Golf Centre, Old Stratford Road,  
Bromsgrove B60 1LD

Contact Wayne on 07883 070322 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**21 July**

**18 August**

**15 September**

**20 October**

**17 November**

**15 December**

### Mere Green Cuppa and Chat

**Third Tuesday of the month, 11.15am to 12.45pm**

The Crown, Four Oaks, Walsall Road B74 4RA

Contact Alison on 07542 802430 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**15 July**

**19 August**

**16 September**

**21 October**

**18 November**

**16 December**

### Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat

**First Wednesday of the month, 11am to 12.30pm**

The Billesley, Brook Lane, Kings Heath B13 0AB

Contact Alison on 07542 802430 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**2 July**

**6 August**

**3 September**

**1 October**

**5 November**

**3 December**

### Solihull Cuppa and Chat

**Third Thursday of the month, 1pm to 2.30pm**

The Royal British Legion, 18 Union Road, Solihull B91 3DH

Contact Alison on 07542 802430 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**17 July**

**21 August**

**18 September**

**16 October**

**20 November**

**18 December**

## Our Black Country Socials

### Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat

**Second Tuesday of the month, 11am to 12.30pm**

Morrisons Café, Morrisons Wednesbury, 239 Holyhead Road, Wednesbury WS10 7BD

Contact Kerry on 07365 579287 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**8 July**

**12 August**

**9 September**

**14 October**

**11 November**

**9 December**

### Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and Chat

**Fourth Tuesday of the month, 11am to 12.30pm**

Toby Carvery, Burnt Tree Island, Tipton DY4 7UF

Contact Kerry on 07365 579287 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**22 July**

**26 August**

**23 September**

**28 October**

**25 November**

**Check meeting**

**date for December**

### Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat

**First Thursday of the month, 12.15pm to 1.45pm**

The Crown Pub, Anchor Road, Aldridge, Walsall WS9 8PT

Contact Kerry on 07365 579287 or Liz on 0121 707 5626 to book your place.

**3 July**

**7 August**

**4 September**

**2 October**

**6 November**

**4 December**

### Wolverhampton Cuppa and Chat

**Fourth Thursday of the month, 11.15am to 12.45pm**

Oddfellows Pub, Bridgnorth Road, Compton, Wolverhampton WV6 8AA

Contact Liz on 0121 707 5626 or Linda on 07312 101034 to book your place.

**24 July**

**28 August**

**25 September**

**23 October**

**27 November**

**Check meeting**

**date for December**

# Oddfellows Members: Do you need help?



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

## Local Care and Welfare Support

For local help and information about Branch benefits and benevolence contact  
Liz on **0121 707 5626** or email **elizabeth.blackhurst@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**

## Scarborough hosts the nation's Oddies



**For the 20th time in more than 200 years the Society's Annual Movable Conference (AMC) was held in beautiful Scarborough, hosted by Vale of York Oddfellows.**

Members representing their Branches converged on the seaside town from

all corners of the country to assess the previous 12 months and to decide on the direction of the next.

There was change at the top, as South London Oddfellows' John Mann replaced Vale of York Oddfellows' Barbara Needham as Grand Master.

As well as business, attendees enjoyed a range of social activities, including indulging in the delights of an Oddfellows Brass performance, the annual Roy Hamer Memorial Bowls Tournament, and a day trip to Whitby and Scarborough Fair.

## Final update from HA Andrews Memorial Fund recipients

**Nur Zainal, who's PhD at the University of Southampton has been supported by the HA Andrews Memorial Fund, and Professor of Cancer Biology Tim Fenton (pictured), addressed the Society's annual conference as three years of funding comes to an end.**

"My PhD – made possible by the generous support of the Oddfellows – has made some significant contributions to cancer research," said Nur. "My ultimate goal is to find ways to prevent or overcome drug resistance, and my model will let us run

the pre-clinical studies needed to move promising strategies toward the clinic."

Tim added: "Until recently, we did not understand enough about how our immune system recognises and responds to tumours, or about how tumours learn to switch off our immune responses to deploy cancer vaccines effectively. This is changing rapidly, and cancer vaccines hold great promise for kinder, more effective therapy, though significant challenges remain."



# Making a Difference Awards 2025

The Oddfellows is full of remarkable people, none more so than the six winners of this year's Making a Difference Awards. They have been nationally recognised for their selflessness and dedication to making their Branch and wider Society as good as they can be.

For more information about the Awards, including how to nominate someone for 2026, visit [www.oddfellows.co.uk/makingadifference](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/makingadifference).

## Jean Logan, Nene and Welland Oddfellows

Enriching Lives Socially

This award celebrates Jean's contributions to the running of the Branch's social events. She's key to coming up with new ideas, organising and hosting events, and making sure everyone has a good time.

"Socialising keeps your brain busy and keeps you active and keeps you younger.

You can sit on the sofa and watch telly all day long but I'm a doer. I'm always up and about."



On winning the award, Jean, from Bourne, Lincolnshire, says she had to read the letter twice, adding: "You've got so many branches all over the country and I end up as the overall winner. It was a nice surprise."

## Gordon and Kath Hinett, North Wales and Chester Oddfellows

Achieving Together

The married couple from Conwy, North Wales, have been recognised for their teamwork and commitment to improving the lives of members.



As a Welfare visitor, Gordon regularly assists members however they might need, be that giving lifts to appointments or events, or going to the shops for them. Kath takes the lead on organising social events such as trips to the cinema, the theatre or a day out somewhere.

Kath says they could've been knocked down with a feather when they learnt they'd won. Gordon added: "We don't do it to get rewarded. We do it because we love doing it."

## Chris Sargeant, Nene and Welland Oddfellows

*Working in the Spirit of Mutuality*

Chris, from Pinchbeck in Lincolnshire, has been highlighted for her passion and dedication for her Branch and the Society as a whole.



Having held almost every role possible locally and represented Nene and Welland Oddfellows on regional and national committees, Chris said: "Oddfellows gives to me as much as I give to it. You get to know people. I've friends all over the country through Oddfellowship. I love it, absolutely love it."

She added: "How proud was I that someone had thought I was worthy of this Award?"

## Ann Kight, Nottingham Trent Oddfellows

*Giving Something Back*

Nottingham-based Ann's selfless commitment to raising money for worthy causes, both in connection with her Branch and of her own accord, is why she has been singled out for praise.

"I've been doing it about 10 years, if not more," she said. "I reckon I've raised around £10,000."

"I've always had the motto of, 'if you go through life and behave and you help somebody on your way you've done your job'."



She added: "You do things because you do them, not for awards. To get an award is a bonus."

## Barry Bedford, Nene and Welland Oddfellows

*Giving a Helping Hand*

Barry, from Peterborough, has been recognised for his dedication to looking after his fellow members and being counted on when it matters, or in times of need. He's been known to give members lifts to and from events and the shops, and has assisted in all manner of DIY projects, including clearing driveways, repairing doors, decorating and gardening.



He said: "I am very proud of what they think I've achieved. It's the way I live my life and always have done and if that transforms into helping other people then I'm thankful."

# Incredible total raised for good causes



*Brownsea Oddfellows raised £1,608.50 for the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance.*

members. We know that money is tight for many people, but they still dig deep and have compassion for those in need.

“It’s what binds us as Oddfellows – caring for people’s welfare and looking out for the needs of others. This humanitarian spirit makes me feel incredibly proud to be part of the Society. Where we can help, we must.”

**Giving back to our communities has always mattered to us. Last year, our branches and members donated over £163,000 to good causes.**

Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, said: “Every year, when we work out the collaborative total, I’m astounded by the generosity of our Branches and their

**Find out more about how the Society gives back to its communities, including information about our support for the RNLI, Oddfellows Brass, our Orphan Gift Fund and HA Andrews Memorial Fund, at [www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/giving-back](http://www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/giving-back)**

## Welcoming Tees Mutual to the Oddfellows



**In February, we announced the completion, by transfer of engagements, of Tees Mutual.**

The acquisition was approved and agreed on by Tees Mutual's members and their Board. Both the Oddfellows and Tees Mutual share a similar ethos and complementary values. This is the Society's sixth acquisition since

2007 and follows the last transfer of engagements in 2021.

Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, said: “Tees Mutual has been providing life and savings products to the people of Teesside and South Durham for well over a century.

“We are both passionate about mutuality and are pleased to be able to provide Tees Mutual members with a secure future.”

# At a glance

Hang onto your newsletter so you can be aware of upcoming event dates.

## July 2025

<b>Wed 2</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 3</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 7</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Tues 8</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Mon 14</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 15</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 17</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm
<b>Mon 21</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 22</b>	Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 24</b>	Wolverhampton Cuppa, Games and Chat	11.15am

## August

<b>Mon 4</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Wed 6</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 7</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 11</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 12</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Mon 18</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 19</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 21</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm
<b>Tues 26</b>	Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 28</b>	Wolverhampton Cuppa, Games and Chat	11.15am

## September - Friendship Month

<b>Mon 1</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Wed 3</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 4</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 8</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 9</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Mon 15</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 16</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 18</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm
<b>Tues 23</b>	Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 25</b>	Wolverhampton Cuppa, Games and Chat	11.15am

# At a glance

## October

<b>Wed 1</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 2</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 6</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Mon 13</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 14</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 16</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm
<b>Mon 20</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 21</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 23</b>	Wolverhampton Cuppa, Games and Chat	11.15am
<b>Tues 28</b>	Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and a Chat	11am

## November

<b>Mon 3</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Wed 5</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 6</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 10</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 11</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Mon 17</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 18</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 20</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm
<b>Tues 25</b>	Dudley Quiz, Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 27</b>	Wolverhampton Cuppa, Games and Chat	11.15am

## December

<b>Mon 1</b>	Rubery Cuppa and Catch Up	10.30am
<b>Wed 3</b>	Kings Heath Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Thurs 4</b>	Aldridge Games, Cuppa and Chat	12.15pm
<b>Mon 8</b>	Harborne Games, Cuppa and Catch Up	11am
<b>Tues 9</b>	Wednesbury Cuppa and Chat	11am
<b>Mon 15</b>	Bromsgrove Cuppa and a Chat	11am
<b>Tues 16</b>	Mere Green Cuppa and Chat	11.15am
<b>Thurs 18</b>	Solihull Cuppa and Chat	1pm

**Please don't forget to book your place.**

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.  
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