

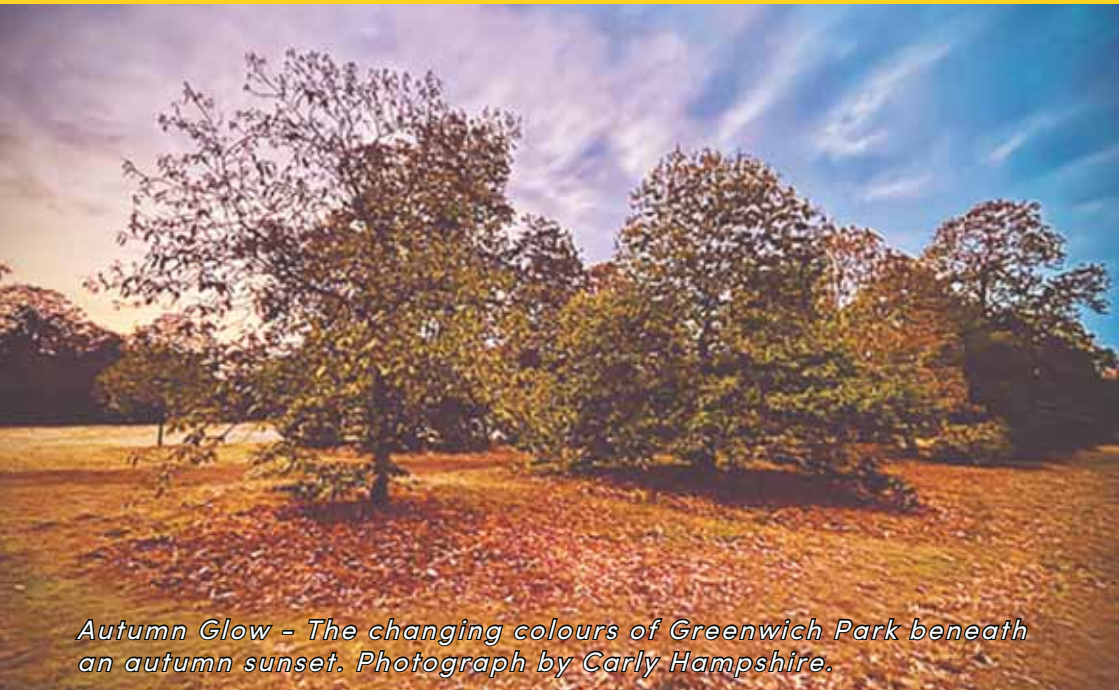
November 2026 - January 2027



O^{the}DDfeLLOWS SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

out & about

St Mary Cray and Dartford District



Autumn Glow - The changing colours of Greenwich Park beneath an autumn sunset. Photograph by Carly Hampshire.



Music



Art/Crafts



Tasting



Dining Out



Walks



Games



Day Trip



Online



Social



Talks



Coffee Morning/
Afternoon Tea



Quiz



Guide Dogs Talk - Thursday 12 November 2026

Welcome to the new edition of Out & About, incorporating Pathway, the Magazine of St Mary Cray and Dartford District

Inside you'll find local and national Oddfellows news, information about our events, and plenty of useful information about your membership – so do have a read and keep it somewhere handy.

We have lots of great events coming up and we'd love to see you at one soon. All our events are open to everyone, so feel free to bring a friend or family member along.

Branches across the country also host a wide range of free online events, giving you the chance to enjoy

friendship from the comfort of your own home. You can check out the latest online events on our website at www.oddfellows.co.uk/online-events/

Remember, you can always find details of Branch events, member benefits and the latest Oddfellows news on our website at www.oddfellows.co.uk.

Join the conversation @ OddfellowsUK

Find us at

f StMaryCrayDartfordOddfellows

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.



Contact Details

District Secretary:

Eliza Puddefoot

Telephone: 07391 986653

Email:

eliza.puddefoot@oddfellows.co.uk

Magazine Editor and District

Event Organiser: Carly Hampshire

Telephone: 07776 482515

Email:

carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk

You are invited
to send letters
contributions
and photos for
the magazines
by the deadline of
Thursday 31 December 2026



Learn, have fun, and stay in touch from home

We've online events for all to enjoy. Give one a try.



To see what's coming up visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/events

OEW/1024A6

November 2026

MON 02 Discover a Hidden Gem in Greenwich

L 10.30am

£ Free



Take a peaceful escape with a scenic walk through the beautiful Greenwich Park,



exploring its historic flower garden tucked away in the south east corner. Immerse yourself in elegant Edwin-style planting, vibrant seasonal blooms. After your stroll, unwind with a well-earned coffee at the charming new Ignatius Sancho Café, the perfect spot to relax, recharge and soak in the atmosphere. Book by Thursday 29 October 2026. Greenwich Park, Vanbrugh Gate SE10 8QY. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

TUES 03 Games Night

L 5pm

£ Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

WED 04 Walk and Talk Priory Gardens

L 11am

£ Free



Weather permitting we will meet for a bit of fresh air followed by a visit to one of the high streets café. Priory Gardens Orpington, Church Hill, Orpington BR6 0HH. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Photo by Maksim Goncharenok

WED 04 Branch Social Evening

L 7.30pm

£ Free



Come along to our monthly social evening, where you can enjoy a catch up with friends over a few drinks and a few games of pool if you wish. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Bonny on 07584 045254.

November 2026

THURS
05

Coffee and Chat



2pm



Free



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Monday 2 November 2026. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

FRI
06

Business Meeting



2pm



Free



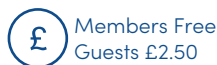
Join us for our monthly Branch business meeting followed by a catch up. Christ Lutheran Church Hall, 227 Poverest Road, Orpington BR5 1RD. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Sue on 01689 852868.

TUES
10

Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.



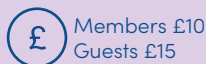
Image by Elizaveta Maximova from Pixabay

SAT
07

Elvis Presley Tribute by Scott Elvis



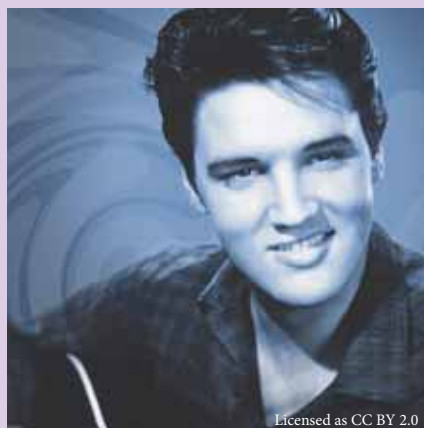
7.30pm



Members £10
Guests £15



Join us for an evening of entertainment with the king himself Scott Elvis. Elvis is back in the building. Tickets must be purchased in advance. Book by Friday 6 November 2026. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Bonny on 07584 045254.



Licensed as CC BY 2.0

November 2026

WED
11

Special Guest - Peter the Bee Man



2pm



Free



Peter Russel will be giving as a lovely demonstration of making natural hand cream and lip balm from beeswax. You can try your hand at making them yourself, although there is a small charge for supplies. Peter will also have lots of goodies to sell just in time for Christmas presents. Orpington Methodist Church, Hulbert Hall, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Photo by Eugenia Remark

WED
11

Good Intent



1.30pm



Free



Good Intent Branch has a short information meeting followed by a quiz or games with coffee or tea with a cake or three. British Legion Hall, Devon Road, South Darenth DA4 9AA. Contact Jane on 07791 942969.

THURS
12

Guide Dogs Talk



2pm



Free



Ever wondered how guide dogs are trained and how they help people who are blind or visually impaired? Join us for an interesting and inspiring talk about guide dogs! Book by Thursday 5 November 2026. Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Nottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Andy Luo on Unsplash

MON
16

Social Get Together and Christmas Card Making



2pm



Free



Come and join us for some fun and games whilst enjoying a lovely cup of tea or coffee. We will be making Christmas cards. Holy Trinity Church, North Room, Church Lane, Bromley Common, Bromley, Kent BR2 8LB. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Jill on 07364 179110.

November 2026

TUES 17 Cinema Club



A relaxed morning at the movies. Join us for a friendly and welcoming Cinema Club, where you can enjoy a great film in good company. Sit back, relax and enjoy a warm drink and a biscuit while watching a carefully selected film in a comfortable, social setting. What's included: For just £5.50, your ticket includes: Entry to the film, a hot drink (tea or coffee) and a biscuit. A relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Book by Thursday 12 November 2026. Castle Sidcup, Storyteller Building, 106 High Street, Sidcup DA14 6DS. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

TUES 17 Games Night



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

WED 18 Business Meeting



Join us for our monthly Branch business meeting followed by a catch up and maybe even a few games of pool. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Gill on 07840 546852 or Bonny on 07584 045254.

THURS 19 Coffee and Chat



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Monday 16 November 2026. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Nathan Dumblun on Unsplash

November 2026

FRI 20 Greek Mezze Grazing Platter - Live Zoom Demonstration



Join us for a fun 15-minute online demonstration, where we'll create a delicious Greek-inspired mezze grazing platter - perfect for sharing, entertaining or simply treating yourself! No ingredients? No problem! Just grab a cuppa and come along to watch, learn and get inspired. Want to make one along with us? You can order the ingredients too! Come along, have some fun and bring a little taste of Greece to your table! Book by Monday 16 November 2026. For the ingredient list and Zoom Meeting ID, please contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Image by Galina Afanasova from Pixabay

FRI 20 Social Get Together



Come along for a fun afternoon of games whilst enjoying a lovely cup of tea or coffee. Orpington Methodist Church, Hulbert Hall, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Sue on 01689 852868.

TUES 24 Christmas Shopping at Polhill Garden Centre



We will be meeting at Polhill Garden Centre to do a spot of Christmas shopping and have a look around the wonderful displays. Afterwards, for those who wish to come, we will be visiting the Toby Grill opposite for lunch. Book by Monday 2 November 2026. Polhill Garden Centre, London Road, Badgers Mount TN14 7AD. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Photo by freestocks on Unsplash

TUES 24 Games Night



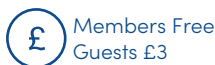
Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

November 2026

WED 25 The Inbetweeners



1.30pm



Members Free
Guests £3



You're invited to Flower of Kent Branch's next regular monthly social afternoon. The 'Inbetweeners' meet to play games, such as bingo, or Hoy, or a quiz, have a raffle, eat cakes, drink lots of tea or coffee and gossip. The 'Inbetweeners' start at 1.30pm and usually finish about 3.45pm. These occasions are organised by Caroline and John Shine, who will be pleased to see you there. Free car park.

Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Gill on 07840 546852 or Bonny on 07584 045254.

THURS 26 Stir Up Thursday



2pm



Free



Stir up some tasty festive ingredients in our Christmas pudding making event. Book by Monday 23 November 2026. Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Mottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Nik on Unsplash

THURS 26 Garden of England



8pm



Free



Social evening with a short meeting, letting the members know what is going on, then followed maybe a quiz or games with coffee or tea and usually a cake. Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Community Centre, Bexley, Kent DA5 3LH. Contact Jane on 07791 942969.

December

TUES 01 Cinema Club



1pm



£2



Come and join us at the Odean Orpington and see one of the latest films. The cost is £2 and includes a hot drink and a biscuit. Must be added to the WhatsApp group with Jill or email as we will book tickets the week before, once we know what the film is. Odean Cinema, Walnuts Shopping Centre BR6 0TW. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Photo by Jeremy Yap on Unsplash

December

TUES

01

Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

Photo by Ryan Quintal on Unsplash



THURS

03

Coffee and Chat



2pm



Free



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Tuesday 1 December 2026. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Maria Orlova

WED

02

Branch Social Evening



7.30pm



Free



Come along to our monthly social evening, where you can enjoy a catch up with friends over a few drinks and a few games of pool if you wish. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Bonny on 07584 045254.

FRI

04

Business Meeting



2pm



Free



Join us for our monthly Branch business meeting followed by a catch up. Christ Lutheran Church Hall, 227 Poverest Road, Orpington BR5 1RD. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Sue on 01689 852868.

December

MON 07 Lake Loop Walk at Danson Park

L 10.30am

£ Free



Take a refreshing stroll around the scenic Danson Park, where nature's beauty meets tranquillity. Enjoy a gentle walk along the Lake Loop, perfect for all fitness levels. Book by Thursday 3 December 2026. Danson Park, Welling DA6 8HL. Contact Carly on 07776 482515 for meeting point details.



© Copyright Stephen Craven

TUES 08 Games Night

L 5pm

£ Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

TUES 08 District Christmas Night Out!

L 6.30pm

£ £39



Get ready for an unforgettable festive evening at The Star, Sidcup Place! Join us for a three-course meal, festive vibes, great company, laughter and Christmas cheer! Good food. Great people. Christmas magic. Come ready to celebrate, make memories and have an amazing night! Book by Thursday 12 November 2026. The Star at Sidcup Place, Chislehurst Road, Sidcup DA14 6BS. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Johannes Plenio on Unsplash

WED 09 Good Intent

L 1.30pm

£ Free



Good Intent Branch has a short information meeting followed by a quiz or games with coffee or tea with a cake or three. British Legion Hall, Devon Road, South Darenth DA4 9AA. Contact Jane on 07791 942969.

December

WED
09

Special Talk - Dogs Trust

L 2pm

£ Free



Join us for an informative and engaging session with a speaker from The Dog Trust. Learn more about the important work they do to support dogs in need, including rescue, rehoming and responsible pet ownership. This is a great opportunity to hear real insights, ask questions and find out how you can help make a difference. Whether you're a dog lover or simply curious about their work, this promises to be an interesting and inspiring talk for all. Everyone is welcome - we hope to see you there! Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



FRI
11

Guess the Christmas Song!

L 10.30am

£ Free

Online



Think you know your Christmas classics? Think you can recognise a festive favourite from just a few seconds? Join us for a fun and festive Christmas Zoom challenge! 'Guess the Christmas Song'. Hear the intro and 'Name That Tune. Battle it out for festive glory! From timeless classics to cheesy Christmas hits, we'll be putting your festive music knowledge to the test! Grab a cuppa, put on your best Christmas jumper and get ready to sing, guess and compete! Will you be crowned our Christmas Song Champion? Come along, bring your festive spirit and let the Christmas music begin! Book by Monday 7 December 2026. Contact Carly on 07776 482515 to receive your Zoom Meeting ID login details.

THURS
10

Christmas Party Afternoon

L 2pm

£ Free



Time for some festive cheer at our 2026 Christmas party. Book by Tuesday 1 December 2026. Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Mottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by krakenimages on Unsplash

December

SUN
13

District Junior Party!



11am



Free



Calling all our Oddfellows junior members! Get ready for a morning packed with fun, games, prizes and party food! There'll be lots of exciting party games, fantastic prizes to be won, delicious party food and plenty of fun with your fellow junior members! And who knows, we may even have a very special surprise visitor - Santa himself! Booking is essential! Places are limited, so please make sure you book by Monday 30 November 2026 to avoid missing out. Come along, bring your smiles and get ready for a morning of Christmas fun! We can't wait to see you there! Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Nottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Image by Jill Wellington from Pixabay

MON
14

Christmas Lunch



12am



TBC



We will be advising of cost and booking in October. Two-courses lunch £19.95 or three-courses lunch for £22.95. £5 deposit payable by Saturday 31 October 2026. Chequers, 177 Southborough Lane, Orpington BR2 8AP. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.

TUES
15

Cinema Club



11am



£5.50



A relaxed morning at the movies. Join us for a friendly and welcoming Cinema Club, where you can enjoy a great film in good company. Sit back, relax

and enjoy a warm drink and a biscuit while watching a carefully selected film in a comfortable, social setting. What's included: For just £5.50, your ticket includes: Entry to the film, a hot drink (tea or coffee) and a biscuit. A relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Book by Thursday 10 December 2026. Castle Sidcup, Storyteller Building, 106 High Street, Sidcup DA14 6DS. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Meg Boulden on Unsplash

December

TUES
15

Games Night



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

WED
16

The Inbetweeners



You're invited to Flower of Kent Branch's next regular monthly social afternoon. The 'Inbetweeners' meet to play games, such as bingo, or Hoy, or a quiz, have a raffle, eat cakes, drink lots of tea or coffee and gossip. The 'Inbetweeners' start at 1.30pm and usually finish about 3.45pm. These occasions are organised by Caroline and John Shine, who will be pleased to see you there. Free car park. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Gill on 07840 546852 or Bonny on 07584 045254.

WED
16

Business Meeting and Christmas Social



Join us for our monthly Branch business meeting followed by our Christmas social, where we will enjoy a good catch up over a few nibbles. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Gill on 07840 546852 or Bonny on 07584 045254.

THURS
17

Coffee and Chat



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Tuesday 15 December 2026. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by Nathan Dumlao on Unsplash

December

FRI
18

Social Get Together/ Christmas Cake Decorating



2pm



Free



Come along for a fun afternoon of games whilst enjoying a lovely cup of tea or coffee. Decorate an individual Christmas cake to take home and enjoy. Book by



Friday 11 December 2026. Orpington Methodist Church, Hulbert Hall, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Jill on 07364 179110.

MON
21

Christmas Party



2pm



Free



Come and join us for some Christmas fun and games whilst enjoying a lovely cup of tea or coffee. Holy Trinity Church, North Room, Church Lane, Bromley Common, Bromley, Kent BR2 8LB. Contact Anna on 07704 271845 or Jill on 07364 179110.

Image by Irls,Helen,silvy from Pixabay



TUES
22

Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

Eric MClean Unsplash



TUES
29

Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

January 2027

TUES
05

Games Night



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

THURS
07

Play Your Cards Right Afternoon



Higher or Lower. Come along to the Play Your Cards Right event. Play your cards right and you will win some fun prizes. It will be 'Nice to see you, to see you nice!' Book by Monday 4 January 2027. Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Mottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

Photo by Vindhya Chandrasekharan



MON
11

Social Walk - Scadbury Park, Chislehurst



Fresh air, friendship and gentle exercise. Join us for a relaxed and friendly walk through the beautiful surroundings of Scadbury Park in the heart of Chislehurst. This sociable stroll is a great opportunity to enjoy nature, get some gentle exercise and spend time with fellow Oddfellows members, family and friends in a welcoming group. Book by Thursday 7 January 2027. Scadbury Park, Old Perry Street, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 6PT. Contact Carly on 07776 482515 for meeting point.



Scadbury Park Local Nature Reserve by Marathon, CC BY-SA 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons

January 2027

TUES 12 Cinema Club



11am



£5.50



A relaxed morning at the movies. Join us for a friendly and welcoming Cinema Club, where you can enjoy a great film in good company. Sit back, relax and enjoy a warm drink and a biscuit while watching a carefully selected film in a comfortable, social setting. What's included: For just £5.50, your ticket includes: Entry to the film, a hot drink (tea or coffee) and a biscuit. A relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Book by Thursday 7 January 2027. Castle Sidcup, Storyteller Building, 106 High Street, Sidcup DA14 6DS. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

TUES 12 Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

WED 13 Good Intent Social Meeting



1.30pm



Free



Good Intent Branch has a short information meeting followed by a quiz or games with coffee or tea with a cake or three. British Legion Hall, Devon Road, South Darenth DA4 9AA. Contact Jane on 07791 942969.

WED 13 Special Guest Speaker - Chelsea Pensioner



2pm



Free



We are very privileged to have one of the Chelsea Pensioners joining us for the afternoon.

A fascinating insight to his

fundraising and life at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Come along and enjoy the talk along with refreshments and good company. Orpington Methodist Church, Hulbert Hall, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



January 2027

THURS
14

Coffee and Chat



2pm



Free



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Tuesday 12 January 2027. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

SUN
17

Social Get Together and Board Game Afternoon



12am



Free



Come and join us for an afternoon of chat and board games. Enjoy refreshments and good company. Holy Trinity Church, Church Lane, Bromley Common, Bromley, Kent BR2 8LB. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.

TUES
19

Games Night



5pm



Members Free
Guests £2.50



Join us at our weekly games night held every Tuesday from 5pm to 10pm. Whether you are into pool, darts, dominoes or cards, there is a seat at the table for you. Complimentary tea, coffee and cakes provided or a licensed bar is also available for those who prefer something stronger. We look forward to welcoming you. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Mel on 07547 661662.

WED
20

The Inbetweeners



1.30pm



Members Free
Guests £3



You're invited to Flower of Kent Branch's next regular monthly social afternoon. The 'Inbetweeners' meet to play games, such as bingo, or Hoy, or a quiz, have a raffle, eat cakes, drink lots of tea or coffee and gossip. The 'Inbetweeners' start at 1.30pm and usually finish about 3.45pm. These occasions are organised by Caroline and John Shine, who will be pleased to see you there. Free car park. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Bonny on 07584 045254.

THURS
21

Winter Time Flower Arranging Afternoon



2pm



Free



Join us for a seasonal flower arranging afternoon. If flower arranging is not your thing, we will still have tea or coffee and the opportunity for you to have a chat with friends. Book by Monday 18 January 2027. Oddfellows Hall, 6a Beaconsfield Road, Nottingham SE9 4DJ. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.



Photo by michele henderson on Unsplash

January 2027

FRI

22

Trivia Around the World



10.30am



Free



Join our online Zoom quiz and explore the world through trivia. Who will be our ultimate globe trotter? Book by Monday 18 January 2027. Contact Carly on 07776 482515 to receive your Zoom Meeting ID login details.

WED

27

Singo Bingo



7.30pm



Members Free
Guests £3



Join us for a night of fun playing the musical game of Singo Bingo. Singo Bingo is a fun and exciting spin on the traditional game of bingo. Instead of listening for numbers, you are listening for the song titles from short clips of music played by DJ Mick. Oddfellows Hall, 118 Maidstone Road, Footscray, Kent DA14 5HS. Contact Bonny on 07584 045254.

THURS

28

Coffee and Chat



2pm



Free



Come along and enjoy a coffee, tea, cake and chat. Whether you come along on your own or with a friend you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome. Book by Tuesday 26 January 2027. Greys Tea and Coffee House, 34 High Street, Bexley DA5 1AH. Contact Carly on 07776 482515.

THURS

28

Garden of England Social Meeting



8pm



Free



Social evening with a short meeting, letting the members know what is going on, then followed maybe a quiz or games with coffee or tea and usually a cake. Hurst Community Centre, Hurst Community Centre, Bexley, Kent DA5 3LH. Contact Jane on 07791 942969.

FRI

29

Social Get Together and Craft Afternoon



2pm



Free



Join us for a fun afternoon of activities, good company and refreshments.

Orpington Methodist Church, Sevenoaks Road, Orpington, Kent BR6 9JH. Contact Jill on 07364 179110.



Forthcoming Event in April

SAT
10

Dinner Dance

6pm

£ TBC



Photo by Matheus Bertelli

Join us again for our annual dinner dance at the popular Boathouse venue in Danson Park. This dinner dance is in honour for the current Provincial Grand Master (Chairman), Darren Puddefoot. The evening starts with a lovely three-course meal and is followed by a raffle and a game of Tops or Tails! All proceedings going to charity. Entertainment by resident DJ Traviss, who keeps the dance floor going! Book by Sunday 28 February 2027. The Boathouse, Danson Park, Danson Road, Bexleyheath, Kent DA6 8HL. Contact Eliza on 07391 986653.

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 Carly by phone on
07776 482515 or email carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk

VA160423/v1



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

www.oddfellows.co.uk

Chairman's Address

Hasn't it been a lovely summer, there has been a variety of events held and lots of get togethers. I have seen many members enjoying walks round Danson Park and High Elms Country Park, the new Oddfellows cinema club and even an indoor sports day. The summer has been nicely rounded off by again a very successful Friendship Month held each September.

For Friendship Month each lodge put on different events, Mottingham Branch had welcomed guests to listen to the popular Jo McGetrick who spent the afternoon entertaining members with music and laughter, enjoying a sing along session with classic favourites.

Flower of Kent had a successful Afternoon Tea where members enjoyed a tasty selection of sandwiches and cakes while catching up with friends, this was followed by a cake auction where all the proceeds have kindly been donated to my charity, Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Pride of Kent had a craft and cream tea afternoon where members each made a jar lantern to take home. At a later date Pride of Kent members were pleased to welcome the Carers in Harmony Choir. All of these were put on as well as all of the usual events each branch holds regularly, so we must say a big well done and thank you to all the Secretaries,

Social Organisers and helpers who helped bring our members together for a pleasurable Friendship Month.

We have welcomed a new Social Organiser at the Pride of Kent Branch, Jill Carroll. Jill has been very active so far in arranging walks and many other events within her Branch, we look forward to seeing what else Jill brings to the Oddfellows. We must take a moment to also thank Sue Potts, Sue retired a number of years ago as secretary of the Pride of Kent Branch and took on the role as social organiser. Sue retired from being social organiser very recently and for the first time now in many years enjoys attending meetings and events more relaxed as a member although, I'm sure she is still there helping with making the tea!

I would like to finish by reminding the importance of the Committee of Management, if you read my last address and are interested in being involved then please reach out to the Prov CS, Eliza Puddefoot. I have found being a part of the Committee is highly rewarding and fulfilling and I hope to share that with more members.

Please take care and remember the Oddfellows motto, Friendship, Love & Truth.

Darren Puddefoot

The Winter Garden: What to Do in November, December and January

The Winter Garden: What to Do in November, December and January

There's still plenty to keep the keen gardener busy as the year draws to a close, says Carly Hampshire.

When the leaves have fallen, the days are getting shorter and there's a definite chill in the air, it's very easy to decide that the gardening year is over. The gloves go away, the lawnmower gets tucked into the shed and we start telling ourselves that we'll get back out there in spring. Of course, anyone who has ever owned a garden knows that it doesn't quite work like that.

There is always something that needs doing. But winter is also a wonderful opportunity to slow down and really look at your garden. Without all the colour and foliage of summer competing for attention, you start to notice the things that give a garden its character - the shape of a tree, the bark on an old trunk, the structure of shrubs, evergreen foliage and those brave little flowers that appear when everything else seems to have gone to sleep. There are also plenty of jobs to get stuck into. And, if you're anything like me, you'll probably start with one small job and somehow find yourself three hours later reorganising the shed.

November: Get ready for winter

November can be a surprisingly busy month in the garden. The soil is often still workable and, before the really cold weather arrives, there's plenty to be done. One of the obvious jobs is dealing with fallen leaves. Clear them from lawns, paths and patios, but don't feel you have to remove every single leaf from every corner of the garden. Fallen leaves are useful too, providing shelter for insects and other wildlife.

Collect the leaves from lawns and paths and add them to a leaf-mould pile or bin. It takes time, but eventually those leaves will break down into a lovely, crumbly soil conditioner - which is gardening's way of turning what looks like a huge autumnal mess into something useful.

November is also a great time to plant trees, shrubs, roses and many bare-root plants, provided the ground isn't frozen or waterlogged. With plants dormant for the winter, their roots have time to settle in before the growing season gets underway. And if those spring bulbs are still sitting in the shed, don't panic. November is still a perfectly good time to get many bulbs into the ground. Daffodils, crocuses, tulips and other spring favourites might look rather unimpressive now, but come spring they'll reward you with a welcome splash of colour. Assuming, of course, you remember where you planted them.

This is also a good excuse to sit down with a cup of tea and start thinking about

next year. Have a look through your seed packets, browse a few catalogues and make a note of what you'd like to grow. It's much easier to make sensible plans for spring when you're sitting indoors with a hot drink than it is when you're standing in the middle of the garden in sideways rain wondering why you thought growing 47 tomato plants was a good idea.

December: Slow down and enjoy the garden

December is usually a quieter month, but that doesn't mean there's nothing happening. This is when evergreen plants really earn their place. They provide structure and colour when many borders are looking rather bare, while trees and shrubs with interesting bark, colourful stems or unusual shapes can bring the garden to life. Dogwoods, for example, can look fantastic in winter with their brightly coloured stems, while evergreen shrubs continue to provide something to look at when the summer stars have disappeared.

And then there are the winter flowers. Plants such as winter honeysuckle, winter jasmine, viburnum and Christmas box can provide precious colour at a time when you might not expect to see much at all. Some will even give you a wonderful scent on a mild winter's day.

One of my favourite things to do in December is simply walk around the garden. Pick a mild day, grab a coffee and take your time. Look closely and you'll often find that the garden is far from dormant. Buds are already forming on many plants and, beneath the soil, bulbs are quietly getting ready for their

moment. Or, if you're anything like me, you'll notice a plant that needs moving, a fence panel that needs fixing and a pot that you're convinced would look better somewhere else. So much for the relaxing stroll.

The birds deserve some attention too. As natural food becomes harder to find, keeping feeders topped up and providing fresh water can make a real difference to garden wildlife. Just remember to keep feeders clean. The birds may not complain, but they have standards too.

December is also a good time to have a quick check around the garden. Look at fences, gates, pots, plant supports and garden structures. Winter winds have a habit of finding anything that's already a little loose. Fixing a wobbly fence panel or securing a plant before the next storm could save you a much bigger job later - and possibly save you from having to explain to the neighbours why part of your garden is now in theirs.

January: Look for the beauty in winter

January can be cold, wet and, let's be honest, occasionally rather miserable. But it can also be beautiful. There's something special about walking around the garden on a crisp January morning. Frost can transform even the simplest plants, catching on evergreen leaves and ornamental grasses, while the bare branches of trees create beautiful shapes against a pale winter sky.

And then, almost unnoticed at first, the first signs of spring begin to appear. Snowdrops and winter aconites can start to flower as January progresses, and seeing that first little splash of colour is always a

welcome reminder that winter won't last forever.

If snow or heavy frost is forecast, keep an eye on vulnerable plants. Snow looks wonderful, but a heavy covering can put a surprising amount of weight on branches. If necessary, gently remove heavy snow from shrubs and evergreens - but don't try to knock it off when branches are frozen and brittle. The plant has already had enough to deal with without you adding to the drama.

And don't forget about the wind. Strong winds can be just as damaging as frost, particularly for newly planted trees and shrubs. Check that stakes and ties are secure and that young plants aren't being rocked around in the soil.

January can also be a good time to get a few practical jobs done. If the ground isn't frozen or waterlogged, empty vegetable beds can be dug over and improved with well-rotted compost or manure. But there's no need to turn winter gardening into a military operation. If it's cold, wet and miserable outside, stay indoors. There will be another day. The plants aren't going anywhere. Well, hopefully not. A chance to look back - and plan ahead. Winter is also a great time to think about the year that's gone. What worked well? What didn't? Maybe a border needed more colour. Perhaps a shrub has outgrown its position. Or maybe you discovered a plant that performed brilliantly and deserves more space next year. Write it down while you can still remember. A simple gardening notebook can become surprisingly useful over the years. You'll soon have a record of what

you planted, what thrived and, perhaps most importantly, what you never want to plant again.

There are seeds to think about too. If you have a greenhouse, conservatory or a bright windowsill, some plants can be started early, particularly those that need a long growing season. A heated propagator can be useful, but don't feel you need every piece of gardening equipment going. It's very easy to convince yourself that you absolutely need the latest gadget when, in reality, a seed tray and a sunny windowsill might do the job perfectly well.

And that's really the key to winter gardening. There is no rush. The days may be slowly getting longer, but winter still has plenty of life left in it. Gardening isn't a race, and sometimes the best thing you can do is put on a warm coat, make yourself a cup of tea and simply have a wander around. Look at the shape of a tree. Notice the colour of a dogwood stem. Spot the first snowdrop pushing through the soil. Watch the birds making use of your feeders. And if it starts raining? Go back inside. There's always tomorrow.

The winter garden may be resting, but it certainly isn't asleep. Underneath the soil, on bare branches and in the first tiny buds of the year, the promise of another gardening season is already there. And before you know it, spring will be knocking on the door - along with a very long list of jobs you promised yourself you'd get done.

By Carly Hampshire

Things We Used to Do That Have Disappeared

A nostalgic look back at St Mary's Cray and Dartford

There was a time when life just seemed a bit slower. Before smartphones, online shopping, streaming and having pretty much anything delivered to your door, everyday life was very different.

For those of us who grew up around St Mary's Cray, Crayford, Dartford and the surrounding areas, there are so many things that were once completely normal that have now disappeared, or changed beyond recognition. Sometimes, all it takes is an old photograph to bring it all back.

When the high street was the place to shop. St Mary's Cray once had a much bigger collection of local shops. Historical records describe the High Street as having a long parade of shops, at one point even stretching further than Orpington High Street. There were independent shops where the person behind the counter knew you, and you knew exactly where to go when you needed something.

Old photographs and local history records show businesses such as William Kimber the greengrocer, the South Suburban Co-operative Store, Hardy's Café and Shop, and J. Cracknell, watchmaker and clockmaker. Shopping was often done on foot, visiting several different shops rather than doing one big weekly supermarket shop. And there was something else you got for free - a conversation.

The pubs that were part of village life.

Pubs were a big part of the local community too. St Mary's Cray's history includes the Mary Rose Hotel, parts of which date back to the 17th century, as well as the Old Star and the Anglesey Arms. The Old Star has since become flats, while the Anglesey Arms is now used as a pharmacy. There was also the Black Boy Hotel, which features in old photographs of St Mary's Cray High Street. For many people, the local pub wasn't just somewhere to go for a drink. It was where you met friends, caught up with neighbours, celebrated birthdays and, quite often, spent an evening having a game of darts or listening to some live music.

And what did things cost? This is probably one of the things that really brings home just how much things have changed. In 1970, historical figures put the average price of a pint of milk at around 5p, a large white loaf at around 9p, and a pint of beer at around 13p–15p, depending on the type and source. Another collection of 1970 prices gives a pint of beer as 2 shillings and 11 pence, a pint of milk as 1 shilling, and a large loaf as 1 shilling and 9 pence. Of course, this was before decimalisation in 1971, when there were 240 old pennies to the pound. It seems hard to imagine now, but you could go shopping with a handful of pennies and shillings in your pocket and come home with quite a lot.

A night at the pictures. Going to the cinema was a proper night out. Dartford once had several cinemas, including the State Cinema in Spital Street, which opened in 1935, as well as the earlier Gem cinema and music hall. Then there was the Hippodrome, which opened on

8 February 1929 with seating for around 900 people. It wasn't just a cinema either - it had a stage and dressing rooms. The building later became a bingo hall, before films returned for a period. It eventually closed in 2009. Going to "the pictures" was something you looked forward to. You chose your film, bought your ticket, probably got an ice cream and settled down in the dark. There was certainly no pressing a button and having thousands of films available instantly from the sofa.

The milkman, the paperboy and the telephone box. Some of the biggest changes are the ordinary things we hardly gave a second thought to at the time. The milkman arriving at the door was just part of everyday life. Glass bottles sat outside in their crates waiting to be brought in. The newspaper arrived on the doorstep too. And if you wanted to make a telephone call while you were out, you had to find a public telephone box. There were no mobiles in your pocket and no Google to look up someone's number. You actually had to remember telephone numbers.

When children just went outside. One of the biggest differences was probably how children spent their free time. After school, you went outside. You rode your bike, played football, built dens, played hide-and-seek and knocked on your friends' doors to see if they were coming out. There were no WhatsApp groups organising who was going to meet where. And if your mum wanted you home, she shouted your name from the front door. Somehow, you could hear her from halfway down the road.

Christmas was different too. Christmas shopping meant going into the shops and looking around, rather than ordering everything from your phone. Children

waited for the Christmas catalogue and spent hours going through it, circling all the toys they wanted.

There were fewer television channels, fewer gadgets and no streaming services, but you didn't really miss them because they didn't exist. Families made their own entertainment. A board game, a game of cards, a visit to relatives or a trip to the cinema could make an ordinary winter's day feel special.

What have we lost - and what have we gained? It's easy to look back and think everything was better, but it wasn't. Modern life has brought plenty of things that make life easier. We can speak to family instantly, order almost anything from home and watch whatever we want whenever we want. But some of the little things have disappeared along the way. The chat with the shopkeeper. The neighbour you bumped into while doing the shopping. The milk bottles sitting on the doorstep. The excitement of waiting for your photographs to be developed. The whole family sitting down to watch the same programme. And simply turning up at someone's front door and asking: "Are you coming out to play?"

Do you remember? What do you remember about St Mary's Cray, Crayford or Dartford? Maybe you remember an old shop, pub or cinema. Perhaps you remember what your first cinema ticket cost, where you bought your sweets, or how much your first loaf of bread cost. We'd love to hear your memories and see your old photographs.

By Carly Hampshire

Three Months of Friendship, Fun and Memories!

Over the past three months, our branches have been filled with friendship, laughter, fun and plenty of wonderful memories. And what better way to celebrate than by looking back at some of the fantastic activities we've enjoyed together? From a fabulous Strictly Come Dancing afternoon and relaxing yoga sessions, to a fun-filled quiz night, a refreshing morning walk and a lovely afternoon tea.

We've also been creative with friendship bracelet making, and enjoyed singing our hearts out together at our sing along!

September has been extra special as we celebrate Friendship Month - a time to celebrate the friendships, connections and shared moments that make our branches such wonderful places to be. So, sit back, enjoy the photos and take a look at just some of the wonderful moments we've shared over the last three months.

Here's to friendship, fun and many more memories to come.







Welcome to our new Quiz Page!

Fancy putting your general knowledge to the test? Have a go at our fun quiz below, followed by our Word Scramble challenge.

Think you've got what it takes? Send your answers back to **carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk** by 30th November. Whoever gets the most correct answers will win £20 worth of Amazon vouchers!

So, grab a cuppa, get thinking and see how many you can get right!

Good luck, and happy quizzing!

Autumn Word Scramble Quiz

1. NUTAMU
2. FEAL
3. EKRCAMBER
4. SEVAHRT
5. KPMIPNU
6. CORNA
7. NIRA
8. DWIN
9. ECOTBRO
10. REBMVEON

Autumn Quiz

1. Which animal is well known for collecting and burying nuts during autumn?
2. Why do many trees lose their leaves in autumn?
3. What is the name given to the full moon that traditionally occurs in September or October?
4. Which season comes after autumn in the UK?
5. What happens to the days in the UK as autumn progresses?
6. How many days are there in October?
7. What date is Halloween celebrated on?
8. What is remembered in the UK on 5 November?
9. What date is Remembrance Day?
10. November is the eleventh month of the year. What month comes immediately before it?

Terms and conditions apply

- To be eligible, your answers must be sent to us by Monday 30 November. Don't forget to include your name and age.
- Entries must be sent via email to carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk anytime before the closing date by midnight on Monday 30 November. One drawing per email is preferred.
- Entry to the competition is automatic on submission of the answers. We will not share your details with any other party and your data will not be used for any other purpose.
- Only one entry per person allowed. No cash alternative is available.
- The competition is open to residents of the UK, Channel Islands and Isle of Man only.
- The quiz competition is managed and fulfilled by St Mary Cray and Dartford (The Promoter). Employees and contractors (and their respective families) of The Promoter are not eligible to enter.
- The name and county of the winner will be printed in the next edition of the St Mary Cray and Dartford Out and About.
- The Promoter, on receipt of a stamped addressed envelope, will provide details of the winning entry, and has the right to publicly disclose the name of the winner.
- The decision of The Promoter on any matter relating to these rules shall be final and no correspondence will be entered into.

Join our Branch WhatsApp Community



**Stay connected with updates and event news through
our exclusive members-only WhatsApp Community!**

Why join?

- Important news to your mobile: it's a quick and simple way to stay alert to what's going on.
- No notification overload: only Branch staff will be creating posts which means less notifications.
- Privacy: your mobile number is only visible to group administrators or those already in your contacts.

Just to reassure you, the community group doesn't replace our regular member communications, you'll still receive those in the same way. You can always leave the WhatsApp Community group at any time if you feel it's not for you.

How to join: Just let us know at the Branch that you'd like to join, with your mobile number.

**Questions or ready to join? Contact Carly on 07776 482515
or email carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk**

Get the most out of your membership

As well as making friends and meeting new people, the Oddfellows offers a wide range of benefits to members.



From advice and financial aid through to travel opportunities, we provide a helping hand to make life a little easier. With your standard benefit membership, for £25 a year*, you have access to:

- Local social events
- Money saving partner offers
- Care and Welfare Helpline and local support
- Dedicated Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line
- Convalescence and Carer Support (after 2 years' membership)
- Benevolence Grants
- Member referral rewards scheme
- Access to group holidays and travel discounts
- Educational and Apprenticeship Awards
- 24/7 access to our historical online archive

If you're an extra benefit member, your £35 a year membership* enables access to additional benefits of:

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

Find out more about the benefits and support available

You'll find more information about member benefits in your member handbook. You can also call **0800 028 1810** 9am-5pm Mon to Thurs, 9am-4pm Fri, or visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits

To make sure you receive our monthly emails for updates on benefits and offers, just email us with your full name, postcode and membership number (if you know it): membership@oddfellows.co.uk

*Terms and conditions apply to all Oddfellows benefits, which are non-contractual and may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Financial benefits are awarded at the Society's discretion, not guaranteed, and claim applications may be declined. For full details, visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/member-tcs or call 0800 028 1810.



the Oddfellows SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

Meet Grand Master Debbie Jex



For Debbie Jex, the Oddfellows has been part of her life for more than 50 years. Recently elected as Grand Master, she remains characteristically modest about the honour.

“I know it’s a huge honour and I am immensely proud,” she says. “But half the time I’m just the District Secretary at Reading Oddfellows until somebody reminds me I’m the Grand Master.”

Debbie first joined the Society as a child when her parents became members. However, it was in 1993, when she became Lodge Secretary, that her deeper involvement began.

“That’s when I got pulled in,” she jokes.

Over the years, the Society has provided much more than a role. It has become a source of friendship, connection and lasting memories.

“It’s not just a job now, it’s a way of life. It’s a huge part of my social life, a huge part of my friendship group.”

Looking back, Debbie believes the relationships she has built through the Oddfellows have enriched her life.

“I’ve attended some lovely events and made friends with lots of lovely people all over the country. So it’s definitely enriched my life.”

As Grand Master, Debbie sees her role as representing and championing members.

“I’m there to champion our members and make sure we’re doing the best we can for them.”

She is also excited about meeting members across the country and helping more people discover the support and friendship the Society offers.

“I’d like more members to know what a wonderful caring and benevolent Society this is.”

After decades of service, Debbie’s message remains simple:

“The Oddfellows is there for you if you need it.”

Read the full interview on the Oddfellows’ website at:
www.oddfellows.co.uk/news

Friendship Month 2026: celebrating connection, community and companionship

Another Friendship Month has come to a close, with Oddfellows branches across the UK welcoming members, friends and guests to a wide range of free and low-cost taster events designed to bring people together and celebrate the value of friendship.

From coffee mornings and social lunches to walks, talks and special gatherings, September provided countless opportunities for people to reconnect with existing friends, make new connections and enjoy good company.

Keep friendships warm

This year's campaign focused on the importance of staying in touch as we move into the colder months, when opportunities to get together can sometimes reduce and feelings of isolation can become more common.

The campaign struck a chord with people across the country. Branches reported strong attendance at events and were especially pleased to welcome newcomers discovering the Oddfellows for the first time.

"A huge thank you"

Pam Casey, Secretary of the Order, said: "A huge thank you goes to every branch, volunteer, organiser, member and guest who helped make Friendship Month 2026 such a success.

ODDFELLOWS
FRIENDSHIP MONTH
1 - 30 SEPTEMBER



Concord Oddfellows celebrated Friendship Month in style at their popular coffee morning in Aldershot.

"Your enthusiasm and willingness to reach out to others demonstrated the positive difference that friendship can make in our communities."

Steph Hopes, Branch Secretary for Concord Oddfellows, said: "We welcomed several people who had never attended an Oddfellows event before. By the end of the morning, everyone was chatting as though they'd known each other for years. It was a fantastic atmosphere."



Handforth and Altrincham Oddfellows met up for a round of adventure golf.

Sharon Hulse-Cottle, Branch Secretary of Handforth and Altrincham Oddfellows, said: “Our members did a brilliant job of helping newcomers feel at ease. By the end of the event, there was a real buzz in the air. It was lovely to see new faces becoming part of the group.”

Expert support

Friendship Month also helped raise awareness of the wider benefits of friendship. During the campaign, expert anthropologist Dr Anna Machin supported the initiative by sharing insights into the importance of maintaining meaningful relationships and making time for regular face-to-face contact.

While Friendship Month may be over, the opportunities certainly aren't. With a busy

programme of events planned throughout autumn, winter and beyond, there are still plenty of ways to meet new people, try something different and strengthen existing connections.

You can always find details of upcoming local and online events at
www.oddfellows.co.uk/events



Birmingham Oddfellows shared positive messages of friendship at its events.

Important update to some membership benefits

As part of our regular review of the services and support we provide, three discretionary, non-contractual membership benefits were withdrawn on 16 September 2026.

The benefits affected are **Legal Aid Scheme, Accidental Death Benefit and Emergency Financial Aid.**

The change applies to new Standard, Extra Benefits and Young Oddfellows members joining from 16 September 2026, and to existing Standard, Extra Benefits and Young Oddfellows members when they renew their membership.

Existing members will continue to have access to these benefits until their renewal date.

Any claims, applications or cases already received and in progress will continue

to be considered and fulfilled in accordance with the relevant benefit terms and conditions.*

As with all member benefits, the Society regularly reviews its offering to ensure it remains relevant, appropriate and sustainable. While these three discretionary benefits have been withdrawn, no other membership benefits have been affected.

The Society remains committed to providing members with valuable support, friendship and opportunities to connect with others.

Members who have questions about how this change affects them or their membership can contact the Membership team on **0800 028 1810** for further information, or email **membership@oddfellows.co.uk**

Apprenticeship Educational Awards

If you're starting an apprenticeship, the Oddfellows' Apprenticeship Educational Awards could help with some of the costs along the way. Each year, up to three eligible members can apply to receive a non-repayable bursary of £250 per year for the duration of their apprenticeship.*

The award can be used towards expenses such as textbooks, equipment, rent, bills and other practical costs.

To apply, members must have at least five years of continuous Oddfellows membership (which can include Young Oddfellows membership) and be starting their first apprenticeship. This is a discretionary benefit and applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

To find out more or request an application form, contact your Branch Secretary as soon as possible. Applications must be submitted by 31 December each year.

*Terms and conditions apply to all Oddfellows benefits, which are non-contractual and may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Financial benefits are awarded at the Society's discretion, not guaranteed, and claim applications may be declined. For full details, call 0800 028 1810 or visit www.oddfellows.co.uk/member-tcs

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 Maria on **07946 063890** or email **maria.greenaway@oddfellows.co.uk**

Oddfellows Advice Line

Call 0800 0149 821*

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm

Email: oddfellows@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk



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

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

Care and Welfare Helpline

Call 0800 0149 822

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

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

Email: care@oddfellows.co.uk

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

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

EDCWA50223

Branch Contacts

District Secretary: Eliza Puddefoot

Telephone: 07391 986653

Email:

eliza.puddefoot@oddfellows.co.uk

Editor: Carly Hampshire

Telephone: 07776 482515

Email:

carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk

Pride of Kent Branch

Secretary: Anna Saunders

Telephone: 07704 271845

Email:

anna.saunders@oddfellows.co.uk

Pride of Kent Social Organiser:

Jill Carroll

Telephone: 073641 79110

Email: jill.carroll@oddfellows.co.uk

Star of Keston/ Lord Holmesdale Branch

Secretary: Anna Saunders

Contact details as above

Social Organiser: Jill Carroll

Contact details as above.

Good Intent Branch

Secretary: Jane Parkin

Telephone: 01322 663706

Email: jane.parkin@oddfellows.co.uk

Flower of Kent Branch

Secretary: Gill Mann

Telephone: 07840 546852

Email: gill.mann@oddfellows.co.uk

**Flower of Kent Social and
Development Officer:** Bonny Young

Telephone: 07584 045254

Email:

bonny.young@oddfellows.co.uk

Flower of Kent Hall Caretaker:

Mel Martelly

Garden of England Branch

Secretary: Jane Parkin

Telephone: 01322 663706

Email: jane.parkin@oddfellows.co.uk

Star of Mottingham Branch

Secretary: Clare Puddefoot

Telephone: 01322 665496

Email:

clare.puddefoot@oddfellows.co.uk

**Star of Mottingham Social and
Development Officer:**

Carly Hampshire

Telephone: 07776 482515

Email:

carly.hampshire@oddfellows.co.uk

At a glance

November 2026

Mon 2	Discover a Hidden Gem in Greenwich	10.30am
Tues 3	Games Night	5pm
Wed 4	Walk and Talk Priory Gardens	11am
Wed 4	Branch Social Evening	7.30pm
Thurs 5	Coffee and Chat	2pm
Fri 6	Business Meeting	2pm
Sat 7	Elvis Presley Tribute by Scott Elvis	7.30pm
Tues 10	Games Night	5pm
Wed 11	Good Intent	1.30pm
Wed 11	Special Guest - Peter the Bee Man	2pm
Thurs 12	Guide Dogs Talk	2pm
Mon 16	Social Get Together and Christmas Card Making	2pm
Tues 17	Cinema Club	11am
Tues 17	Games Night	5pm
Wed 18	Business Meeting	7.30pm
Thurs 19	Coffee and Chat	2pm
Fri 20	Greek Mezze Grazing Platter - Live Zoom Demonstration	10.30am
Fri 20	Social Get Together	2pm

November 2026

Tues 24	Christmas Shopping at Polhill Garden Centre	10.30am
Tues 24	Games Night	5pm
Wed 25	The Inbetweeners	1.30pm
Thurs 26	Stir Up Thursday	2pm
Thurs 26	Garden of England	8pm

December

Tues 1	Cinema Club	1pm
Tues 1	Games Night	5pm
Wed 2	Branch Social Evening	7.30pm
Thurs 3	Coffee and Chat	2pm
Fri 4	Business Meeting	2pm
Mon 7	Lake Loop Walk at Danson Park	10.30am
Tues 8	Games Night	5pm
Tues 8	District Christmas Night Out!	6.30pm
Wed 9	Good Intent	1.30pm
Wed 9	Special Talk - Dogs Trust	2pm
Thurs 10	Christmas Party Afternoon	2pm
Fri 11	Guess the Christmas Song!	10.30am
Sun 13	District Junior Party!	11am
Mon 14	Christmas Lunch	12 noon
Tues 15	Cinema Club	11am
Tues 15	Games Night	5pm

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

At a glance

December

Wed 16 The Inbetweeners 1.30pm

Wed 16 Business Meeting and Christmas Social 7.30pm

Thurs 17 Coffee and Chat 2pm

Fri 18 Social Get Together/
Christmas Cake Decorating 2pm

Mon 21 Christmas Party 2pm

Tues 22 Games Night 5pm

Tues 29 Games Night 5pm

January 2027

Tues 5 Games Night 5pm

Thurs 7 Play Your Cards Right Afternoon 2pm

Mon 11 Social Walk - Scadbury Park, Chislehurst 10am

Tues 12 Cinema Club 11am

Tues 12 Games Night 5pm

Wed 13 Good Intent Social Meeting 1.30pm

January 2027

Wed 13 Special Guest Speaker- Chelsea Pensioner 2pm

Thurs 14 Coffee and Chat 2pm

Sun 17 Social Get Together and Board Game Afternoon 12 noon

Tues 19 Games Night 5pm

Wed 20 The Inbetweeners 1.30pm

Thurs 21 Winter Time Flower Arranging Afternoon 2pm

Fri 22 Trivia Around the World 10.30am

Wed 27 Singo Bingo 7.30pm

Thurs 28 Coffee and Chat 2pm

Thurs 28 Garden of England Social Meeting 8pm

Fri 29 Social Get Together and Craft Afternoon 2pm

Forthcoming Event in April

Sat 10 Dinner Dance 6pm

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**

*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.

Ref 1644

