

March - August 2026
Spring/Summer Issue



Othe
ODDfELLOWS SINCE 1810
making friends, helping people

out & about

Erewash Valley Branch



Wollaton Hall, Gardens and Deer Park, Wollaton Road, Nottingham.
Photo by Photo by Jay Alexander on Unsplash



Music



Games



Online



Dining Out



Walks



Talks



Quiz



Meetings



Social



Coffee Morning/Afternoon Tea



Workshop Dine Out - Thursday 26 March

Welcome to the latest edition of your 'Out and About' Events Diary and Newsletter for the Erewash Valley Branch of the Oddfellows.

As a local Branch of a national membership organisation, we offer you a great opportunity to make new friends and enjoy a variety of activities. We also provide our members with a range of advice and support services when you need them.

We are basically a group of friends brought together through shared

interests in socialising and making friends and helping people! This issue features our upcoming events. From meals out, to trips out, we hope there is something to interest you. We have also included the handy listing month by month at a glance section at the end of the events diary. We hope you find it useful! Looking forward to seeing you at an event very soon!

For more details about becoming a member and the wide range of benefits available, please call our membership team on 0800 028 1810 or visit our website at www.oddfellows.co.uk.

A bit about us...

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

Regular Events

Coffee Morning

First Tuesday of the month



11am



As per menu



Enjoy a nice cup of coffee or tea and maybe a slice of cake while making new friends. Sir John Warren, Market Place, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 5QB. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

3 March

7 April

5 May

2 June

7 July

4 August



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

Secretary: Melanie Archer

For more information on any of the events or the Oddfellows, please make any enquires to Melanie: 9.30am - 4.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Address: 10 Kingsway Road, Hucknall, Nottinghamshire NG15 6BS

Telephone: 07514 608427

Email:

melanie.archer@oddfellows.co.uk

Games Afternoon

Fourth Friday of the month



1pm



Free



Fun for everyone no matter your age. Lots of assorted games including Rummikub. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Awsworth



Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

27 March

24 April

22 May

26 June

24 July

28 August

Join the conversation
@OddfellowsUK



ErewashOddfellows

March 2026

FRI 06 Guest Speaker



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Halfdan was 'Ere - Go East Young Man'. The vikings who were living in what is today Sweden went east, hopping from island to island and river to river looking for trade and other opportunities. They went through Finland, Poland, Russia and as far as Constantinople, where they negotiated favourable trading rights. Another viking success story. Zoom Meeting ID: 816 3241 7867. Passcode: 286723. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

Photo by Steinar Engeland on Unsplash

THURS 12 Lunch Out



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 5 March. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS 12 Ilkeston Dine Out



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 5 March. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

FRI 20 Speakers Corner



Professional guest speaker Sandy Leong presents 'From the Fury of the Vikings'. For 300 years the vikings took the northern world by storm. In search of land, slaves, gold and silver, brave warriors and explorers set sail from Scandinavia. The speed and daring of the vikings was legendary and Christian monks wrote with horror about violent raids on monasteries and towns. Come and find out about when the vikings came to England and what they got up to. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

Photo by Gunnar Ridderström on Unsplash



March 2026

MON 23 Jewellery Making and Crafting

 1.30pm  Members £1
Guests £2 



This workshop offers a fun and creative experience for individuals of all levels. Participants can learn new skills, create unique pieces and enjoy a relaxing, social environment. The workshops provide guidance, tools and materials to help beginners and experienced crafters alike. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Book by Monday 16 March. Awsworth Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS 26 Workop Dine Out

 1pm  As per menu 

Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 19 March. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Workop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

TUES 31 Meet and Greet

 2pm  As per menu 

A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 24 March. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

April

WED 01 Easter Lunch

 12 noon  As per menu 

Start the Easter weekend in style. Please note, menu may be subject to slight cost change or alteration. Book by Wednesday 25 March. Hole in the Wall, Main Road, Underwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 5GQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



April

FRI
03

Guest Speaker



11am



Free



Professional speaker Shelley Lozano presents 'Endangered Wildlife and Conservation'. In this beautifully illustrated talk, Shelley takes look at some of the world's most endangered wildlife, particularly big cats, along with conservation issues, and shares her wildlife photo's and video clips she has taken on her travels around the world. Shelley has studied big cats and feline behaviour and supports several conservation projects in the UK and overseas and is also a part of the UK team for the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF UK). This talk is ideal for anyone with an interest in wildlife and conservation. Focusing on endangered wildlife and conservation issues, she takes a look at the illegal pet trade, wildlife trafficking, human-wildlife conflict and animals used for entertainment and an insight into some of the work being done by many charities to help combat this as well as ways we can all help. Zoom Meeting ID: 899 6366 6711. Passcode: 542525. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS
09

Lunch Out



1pm



As per menu



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 2 April. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



THURS
09

Ilkeston Dine Out



7pm



As per menu



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 2 April. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

April

FRI
17

Speakers Corner



11am



Free



Professional speaker David Price presents 'Kicks and Frills: The Story of the French Cancan'. Did you know that the first cancan dancers were men! Or that the original dance was a ballroom dance and it was only much later that it became an all-women chorus-line stage dance? These and other curious facts are revealed in David's talk on the cancan, based on his book - Cancan! The cancan first appeared in 1830 and by the 1860s people were describing it as the 'French National Dance', but it's most associated with the 1890s, when Toulouse-Lautrec's famous models La Goulue and Jane Avril were dancing at the Moulin Rouge. Illustrated with film clips (with music) and contemporary photographs, cartoons and paintings. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS
23

Workshop Dine Out



1pm



As per menu



Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 16 April. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Workshop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

MON
27

Jewellery Making and Crafting



1.30pm



Members £1
Guests £2



This workshop offers a fun and creative experience for individuals of all levels. Participants can learn new skills, create unique pieces and enjoy a relaxing, social environment. The workshops provide guidance, tools and materials to help beginners and experienced crafters alike. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Book by Monday 20 April. Awsworth Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

TUES
28

Meet and Greet



2pm



As per menu



A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 21 April. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

May

FRI 01 Guest Speaker



Professional speaker Shelley Lozano presents 'The Golden Age of Hollywood'. Look back at some of the most famous Hollywood greats over three decades, from the 1930s to 1950s! This talk includes interesting information, titbits and photographs about some of the most famous stars and the films they made, such as Elizabeth Taylor, Cary Grant, Shirley Temple, Judy Garland, Ingrid Bergman, Charlie Chaplin and more. Zoom Meeting ID: 843 1085 9029. Passcode: 634960. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

Photo by DeAndre Bush on Unsplash

THURS 14 Lunch Out



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 7 May. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS 14 Ilkeston Dine Out



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 7 May. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

FRI 15 Speakers Corner



Professional speaker David Price presents 'Notorious Ladies of the Night: the 19th Century Parisian Courtesans'. In Second Empire Paris, the courtesans were regarded with more fascination than ladies of the aristocracy and they were often as rich and nearly always better dressed! Yet many were originally poor working-class girls who had caught the eye of rich gentlemen and so embarked on a career of pleasing men, being showered with gifts and money in return. They weren't only sought after for sex: many were highly intelligent and witty conversationalists, well versed in the arts, literature and politics much more so than most respectable women of their day. Illustrated with photographs, cartoons and paintings from the period. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

May

TUES 26 Meet and Greet



A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 12 May. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS 28 Workshop Dine Out



Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 21 May. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Worksoop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

June

THURS 11 Lunch Out



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 4 June. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



THURS 11 Ilkeston Dine Out



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 4 June. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

June

FRI 05 Guest Speaker



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Spilling the Beans - A History of Coffee'. In the 17th century, it was believed that coffee had medicinal properties; in the 1600s Pope Clement gave his permission for Catholics to drink it and the first coffee house opened in England. Our love affair with the coffee bean goes back several centuries, before becoming a popular drink on the high street. Zoom Meeting ID: 818 1913 4818. Passcode: 942011. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



June

Photo by Gioele Fazeri on Unsplash

FRI
19

Speakers Corner



11am



Free



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Bitter is the Wind Tonight'.

This is the first line of an old Irish poem hoping that the wind is too strong for a viking attack. It probably sums up the hopes of others living on the islands around the British coast.

However, it wasn't all about raiding, it was also about trading and settling. Dublin was founded as a viking centre for trade, Orkney, Shetland and the Isle of Man became desirable real estate for vikings. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

MON
22

Jewellery Making and Crafting



1.30pm



Members £1
Guests £2



This workshop offers a fun and creative experience for individuals of all levels. Participants can learn new skills, create unique pieces and enjoy a relaxing, social environment. The workshops provide guidance, tools and materials to help beginners and experienced crafters alike. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Book by Monday 15 June. Awsworth Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



THURS
25

Workshop Dine Out



1pm



As per menu



Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 18 June. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Worksop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

TUES
30

Meet and Greet



2pm



As per menu



A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 23 June. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

July

FRI
03

Guest Speaker



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Food of the Gods - History of Chocolate'. The Aztecs believed that cocoa seeds were a gift from the god of wisdom. The Spanish took the bean back to Spain in 1528 and kept its source a secret. By 1650 chocolate had arrived in England and the first chocolate house opened in 1657.

The Quakers were instrumental in making it popular, the Swiss refined it and now we can't seem to do without it! Melanie Archer is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Zoom Meeting ID: 834 7242 2384. Passcode: 769939. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

Photo by Rūta Celma on Unsplash



THURS
09

Lunch Out



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 2 July. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS
09

Ilkeston Dine Out



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 2 July. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

FRI
17

Speakers Corner



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Halfdan was 'Ere - Go East Young Man'. The vikings who were living in what is today Sweden went east, hopping from island to island and river to river looking for trade and other opportunities. They went through Finland, Poland, Russia and as far as Constantinople, where they negotiated favourable trading rights. Another viking success story. Free Tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



July

THURS 23 **Workshop Dine Out**



Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 16 July. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Workshop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

MON 27 **Jewellery Making and Crafting**



This workshop offers a fun and creative experience for individuals of all levels. Participants can learn new skills, create unique pieces and enjoy a relaxing, social environment. The workshops provide guidance, tools and materials to help beginners and experienced crafters alike. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Book by Monday 20 July. Awsworth Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



TUES 28 **Meet and Greet**



A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 21 July. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

August

FRI 07 **Guest Speaker**



Professional speaker Sandy Leong presents 'Beyond the Edge of the World'. There was an island



called Thule named by an ancient Greek who said it was six days sail north of Britain. This is referred to as early as 330BC. He was probably talking about northern Norway, but the name stuck until the vikings found the land and called it Iceland and made it a successful settlement for men wanting to better themselves. Zoom Meeting ID: 890 3637 2706. Passcode: 595957. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

August

THURS
13

Lunch Out



1pm



As per menu



Enjoy a pleasant afternoon of good food and great company. Book by Thursday 6 August. Talbot Inn, 151 Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4AE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

THURS
13

Ilkeston Dine Out



7pm



As per menu



Enjoyable food and great company. Book by Thursday 6 August. Rutland Cottage, Heanor Road, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TE. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

FRI
21

Speakers Corner



11am



Free



Professional speaker David Price presents 'The Truth behind Les Misérables'. The phenomenally successful musical Les Misérables is based on a novel by the French author Victor Hugo, who was actually living in political exile on Guernsey while he was writing. It's set in turbulent times in France, climaxing in the July Rebellion of 1832, which was brutally suppressed. But why did people rebel and what were they fighting for? And are the main characters in the novel and the musical Jean Valjean, Fantine, Cosette, Javert, Eponine and Marius accurate reflections of real-life people? With slides and musical extracts. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Eastwood Conservative Club, Church Street, Eastwood, Nottinghamshire NG16 3BP. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

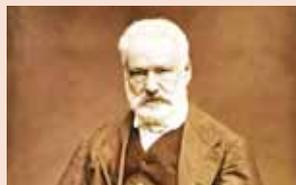


Photo by Étienne Carjat - Bibliothèque nationale de France, Public Domain

MON
24

Jewellery Making and Crafting



1.30pm



Members £1
Guests £2



This workshop offers a fun and creative experience for individuals of all levels. Participants can learn new skills, create unique pieces and enjoy a relaxing, social environment. The workshops provide guidance, tools and materials to help beginners and experienced crafters alike. Free tea, coffee and biscuits. Book by Monday 17 August. Awsworth Village Hall, 60 The Lane, Awsworth, Nottinghamshire NG16 2QQ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

August

TUES
25 Meet and Greet



2pm



As per menu



A relaxing afternoon of being social. Book by Tuesday 18 August. Ciao Bella, Cattle Market House, 15 Nottingham Road, Manfield, Nottingham NG18 1BJ. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.



THURS
27 Worksoop Dine Out



1pm



As per menu



Good food in good company. Book by Thursday 20 August. The Dukes Beefeater, View, High Grounds Road Ryton, Worksoop S80 3GN. Contact Melanie on 07514 608427.

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



Dine Around the World

As per menu

Arunothai

Friday 27 March, 6pm

Thai food is famous for its complex balance of sweet, salty, bitter and spicy flavours. Book by Friday 20 March. Arunothai, Unit 2 Farleys Lane, Hucknall, Nottingham NG15 6DY.

Gurkha Chulo

Friday 24 April, 6pm

Nepalese food is hearty, flavourful and diverse. Book by Friday 17 April. Gurkha Chulo, 240 Nottingham Road, Selston, Nottinghamshire NG16 6AD.

Golden Phoenix

Friday 29 May, 6pm

Chinese food focuses on fresh ingredients, balanced flavours and a variety of textures. Book by Friday 22 May. Golden Phoenix, Oxclose Lane, Arnold, Nottingham NG5 6FZ.

Olivers Pub & Kitchen

Friday 26 June, 6pm

Traditional pub grub. Book by Friday 19 June. Olivers Pub & Kitchen, 20 Nottingham Road, Eastwood, Nottingham NG16 3NQ.

Bella Italia

Friday 31 July, 6pm

Simple, fresh, high quality food. Book by Friday 24 July. Bella Italia, Unit 2, Mansfield Leisure Park, Park Lane, Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottingham NG18 1BU.

The Bay Leaf Luxury

Indian Restaurant

Friday 28 August, 6pm

One of the most diverse and flavourful cuisines in the world, characterised by its complex use of spices, herbs and regional variations. Book by Friday 21 August. The Bay Leaf Luxury Indian Restaurant, 39 Market Street, Heanor, Derbys DE75 7NR.

Contact Melanie on 07514 608427 for more information and to book.

Bring friendship to your front room



We understand that life can get busy – a diary clash, travel costs, or simply the need for a quiet day at home can all make attending events in person a challenge.

But no matter the reason, we believe everyone should be able to enjoy the warmth of friendship and community. That's why Branches across the country host around fifty free online events every month. From inspiring talks and creative arts and crafts sessions to fun games, gentle exercise and calming meditation – there's something for everyone.

These online gatherings are a wonderful way to reconnect with familiar faces and meet new friends from all over the UK – all from the comfort of your own home. Who knows? You might even discover a new passion along the way! What's coming up online. We have lots of national online events that all our members can enjoy, the events below are just a flavour.

Tuesday 17 March 2026, 7pm – An Introduction to British Sign Language (BSL) with Lindsey Barrell

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

Tuesday 24 March 2026, 7pm – 'Feel at home in your life' with evolutionary anthropologist, writer and broadcaster Dr Anna Machin

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

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

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

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

Yours Secretary Melanie Archer

Thousands raised for Hurricane Melissa relief efforts by Oddfellows branches

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

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

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

Essential supplies

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

Pam Casey, spokesperson for the Oddfellows, said: "When communities are devastated by disasters of this scale, the need for swift and compassionate support is critical. We are incredibly proud of our branches for coming together to raise these funds.

"Every contribution helps people to access shelter, food, and vital services as they begin the long process of rebuilding.



"Supporting this appeal reflects the very best of Oddfellowship – standing alongside others in times of greatest need."

The Oddfellows extends sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to the appeal and helped make this support possible.

Find out more

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

You can also learn more about how the Oddfellows raises money for good causes on our website at www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/giving-back

To find out how you can get involved with fundraising initiatives Oddfellows branches are conducting locally, speak to your Branch Secretary.

Talented trio win Educational Awards

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

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

Jane Nelson, CEO of the Oddfellows, said:

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

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

Melanie Healey, Humber Wolds Branch

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

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

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

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



Will Stevenson
Pride of Woolwich Branch

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



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

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

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

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

Emma Corbin
Worcester Branch

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



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

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

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

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

More about our Educational Awards

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

2026: Time to make a financial plan



a proud part of the Oddfellows

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

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

Where to start?

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

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

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

Start saving

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

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

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

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

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

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

Get in touch

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

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

Terms and conditions apply to all products.

Find out more

Visit www.unitymutual.co.uk or call us for a chat on 0161 214 4650.



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 Melanie on **07514 608427** (9.30am to 4.30pm) or email **melanie.archer@oddfellows.co.uk**.

Oddfellows Citizens Advice Line

Call 0800 0149 821*

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

Monday - Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm

Email: oddfellows@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk



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

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

Care and Welfare Helpline

Call 0800 0149 822

(free to callers from any landline or mobile number)

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

Email: care@oddfellows.co.uk

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

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

At a glance

March 2026

Tues 3	Coffee Morning	11am
Fri 6	Guest Speaker	11am
Thurs 12	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 12	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm
Fri 20	Speakers Corner	11am
Mon 23	Jewellery Making and Crafting	1.30pm
Thurs 26	Worksop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 27	Games Afternoon	1pm
Fri 27	Dine Around the World	6pm
Tues 31	Meet and Greet	2pm

April

Wed 1	Easter Lunch	12 noon
Fri 3	Guest Speaker	11am
Tues 7	Coffee Morning	11am
Thurs 9	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 9	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm
Fri 17	Speakers Corner	11am
Thurs 23	Worksop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 24	Games Afternoon	1pm
Fri 24	Dine Around the World	6pm
Mon 27	Jewellery Making and Crafting	1.30pm
Tues 28	Meet and Greet	2pm

May

Fri 1	Guest Speaker	11am
Tues 5	Coffee Morning	11am
Thurs 14	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 14	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm

At a glance

May

Fri 15	Speakers Corner	11am
Fri 22	Games Afternoon	1pm
Tues 26	Meet and Greet	2pm
Thurs 28	Workshop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 29	Dine Around the World	6pm

June

Tues 2	Coffee Morning	11am
Fri 5	Guest Speaker	11am
Thurs 11	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 11	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm
Fri 19	Speakers Corner	11am
Mon 22	Jewellery Making and Crafting	1.30pm
Thurs 25	Workshop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 26	Games Afternoon	1pm
Fri 26	Dine Around the World	6pm
Tues 30	Meet and Greet	2pm

July

Fri 3	Guest Speaker	11am
Tues 7	Coffee Morning	11am
Thurs 9	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 9	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm
Fri 17	Speakers Corner	11am
Thurs 23	Workshop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 24	Games Afternoon	1pm
Mon 27	Jewellery Making and Crafting	1.30pm
Tues 28	Meet and Greet	2pm
Fri 31	Dine Around the World	6pm

At a glance

August

Tues 4	Coffee Morning	11am
Fri 7	Guest Speaker	11am
Thurs 13	Lunch Out	1pm
Thurs 13	Ilkeston Dine Out	7pm
Fri 21	Speakers Corner	11am
Mon 24	Jewellery Making and Crafting	1.30pm
Tues 25	Meet and Greet	2pm
Thurs 27	Worksop Dine Out	1pm
Fri 28	Games Afternoon	1pm
Fri 28	Dine Around the World	6pm

Can you help by volunteering?

We couldn't run all our events without wonderful volunteers. We need help to make sure we can keep our events as fun as they can be for all our members. There's lots of ways you can pitch in to help us, from one-off help to regular support. You can commit an hour a month, or more if you've got the time!

Volunteering could include meeting and greeting newcomers to make sure they feel welcome, or arranging activities, like quizzes or presentations, which we can help you run and promote.



If you can help by volunteering or want to find out more, contact Melanie by phone on 07514 608427 or email melanie.archer@oddfellows.co.uk

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

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