

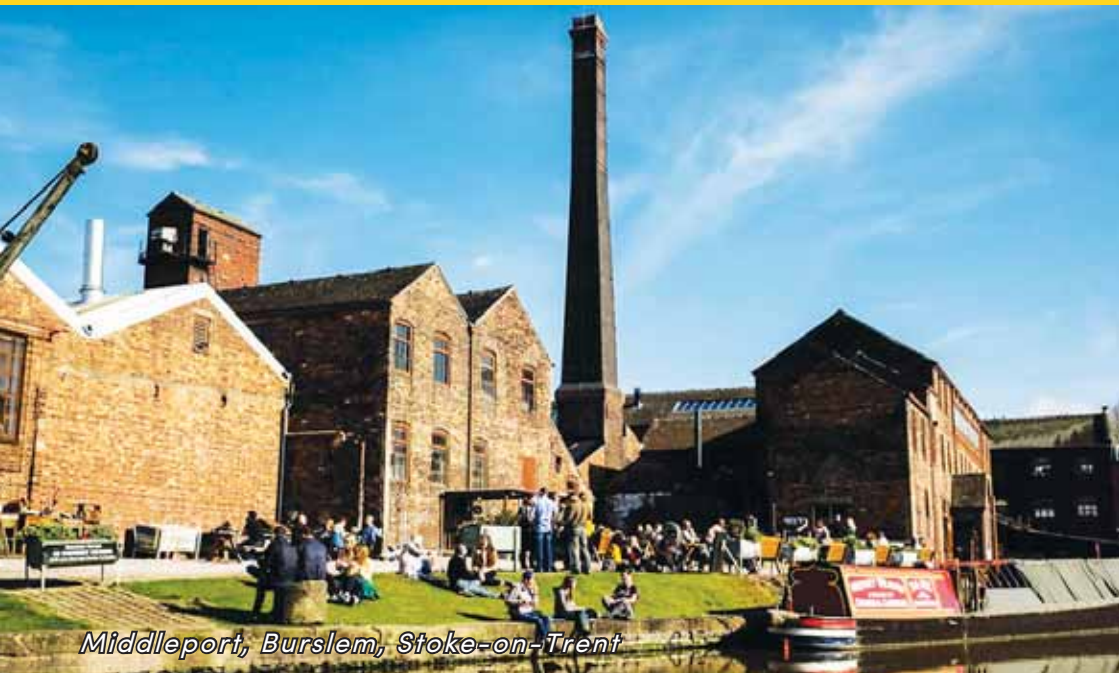
January - August 2025
Issue 16



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

out & about

Mid-Staffs District Branch



Middleport, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent



Travel and Trips



Walks



Talks



Social



Food with Friends



Coffee Morning



Games



We hope to see you at our social events!

Welcome to issue 16 of our newsletter Out and About

Happy New Year to you all!

We can't thank you enough for your support of all our social events and the fundraising for our Chairman's charity, the Midlands Air Ambulance, it really is appreciated.

Just before and during Friendship month we welcomed some new members who have commented on our warm and friendly atmosphere. This is due to all our lovely members being so friendly and approachable.

We've all had an enjoyable time together and look forward to many more in 2025!

At the back of the newsletter is the 'at a glance' list, where you will find all events planned until August, making it easy to pop the dates in your diary. If you are unable to attend face to face events we do also have FREE online events organised for you to join, why not give one a try?

We hope you enjoy this issue of our newsletter and look forward to seeing you at one of the many social events we have on offer throughout Staffordshire. Remember everyone is welcome, whether a member, friends or someone wanting to explore what Oddfellows is all about. Why not bring a friend along to the next event you are coming to.

We wish you good health and all our best wishes for 2025.

Tina and Christine



A bit about us...

The Oddfellows is a not-for-profit friendly society that's been around for over 200 years. Our aim is to bring people together through social events, as well as support our members through a range of benefits and services. For more information visit www.oddfellows.co.uk or call **0800 028 1810** to speak to one of our team.

Contact Details

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Greengate Street
Stafford ST16 2HP

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Office Open Hours: Tuesday,
Wednesday and Thursday.

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Facebook:

The Oddfellows - Mid Staffs District

To you, the members and anyone interested in joining, we would love to hear from you!

Do you have questions? Who are we? What do we do?

We have had some really lovely feedback from new members when they completed a survey offered by our Unity Office. Please see below;

"The Stafford Branch is very well run and a pleasure to attend all events and meetings."

"Just that I've found everyone very friendly and welcoming."

One of those members, Grace, who joined in the summer was the winner of the Three Month National Satisfactory Survey prize draw in October. Grace was delighted to receive a £10 gift card.

Dates For Your Diaries

Please note for some of the events you have to pre-book. There will be a date showing when you have to let us know by – please don't miss out as we will not be able to guarantee you a place!

Regular Event

Coffee Mornings at the Oddfellows Hall



10.30am - 11.30am



Coffee/Tea £1



Coffee mornings for members, friends and anyone interested in joining the Oddfellows. At our coffee mornings we let you know more about Oddfellows benefits and events over a nice cup of



tea and biscuits. We are so happy to see the numbers for our coffee mornings still increasing over the last six months, it is so encouraging to see so many new faces, with this in mind see page opposite too. If you have a friend or neighbour that might enjoy the company please bring them along and see what they think.

It is a relaxed atmosphere and very informal, everyone is welcome.
Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP.
Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

Further events are being added, see: www.oddfellows.co.uk/events.

Coffee Morning dates for your diary at the Oddfellows Hall

Wednesday 8 January

Wednesday 29 January

National Puzzle Day - we will have a few to play!

Thursday 13 February

World Radio Day - Celebrate with music and memories of favourite shows, maybe a quiz too!

Thursday 20 February

National Love Your Pet Day - Bring along photos of your pets to share.

Thursday 29 May

Tuesday 24 June

Wednesday 16 July

Out and About Coffee Morning dates in Staffordshire



Coffee and Cake! Coffee mornings for members, friends and anyone interested in joining the Oddfellows. At our coffee mornings we let you know more about Oddfellows benefits and events over a nice cup of tea. We are so happy to see the numbers for our coffee mornings still increasing over the last six months, it is so encouraging to see so many new faces.

With this in mind, you will see below that we have organised additional coffee mornings throughout our District. If you have a friend or neighbour that might enjoy the company please bring them along and see what they think. It is a relaxed atmosphere and very informal, everyone is welcome. Please book a week before by email midstaffs@oddfellows.co.uk.

Tuesday 14 January - 10.30am

Six Arches Restaurant, Trentham Garden Centre, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8AX

Wednesday 26 February - 10.30am

Chapel Coffee, Stafford Road, Cannock WS11 1UE

Thursday 3 April - 10.30am

Victoria Hotel, May Bank, Newcastle-upon-Tyne ST1 5PA

Thursday 3 July - 10.30am

Pillaton Farm Tea Room, B5012, Penkridge ST19 5RZ

Tuesday 22 July - 10.30am

Plume of Feathers, Barlaston ST12 9DH.

January 2025

THURS
23

National Pie Day



12.30pm



Members £4
Guests £5



Everyone is welcome to come and join us for a delicious lunch of pie, chips and peas followed by a game or two while your lunch goes down. You will have a choice of beef, chicken or vegetable pie. If you have any dietary needs please let us know when booking by Tuesday 14 January. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

February

TUES
04

Stoke Dine Around



12.30pm



As per
menu



Please come and join us at the Dick Turpin for our lunchtime get-together in the Stoke and Newcastle area, everyone is welcome whether you are a member or if you are just interested in finding out more about the Oddfellows. Book by Thursday 23 January. Dick Turpin, 1 Gallowtree Lane, Newcastle ST5 2QS. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

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

March

TUES
04

Pancake Delight



Members £4
Guests £5



We are back again with our delicious pancakes. We know you cannot resist those



gorgeous fillings dripping off those beautiful pancakes. That's why you should come and join us and for those new members, you have to give it a try! After lunch we will have a game of bingo. Book by Sunday 26 February. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

WED
12

Stoke Dine Around



As per menu



Please come and join us at the Harvesters



Poachers Cottage for our lunchtime get-together in the Stoke and Newcastle area, everyone is welcome whether you are a member or if you are just interested in finding out more about the Oddfellows. Book by Tuesday 4 March. Harvesters Poachers Cottage, Stone Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8AA. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

WED
19

Annual Summoned Meeting



Free



This is a business meeting for members only. You may think business meetings are boring and not for you, but it can be really interesting to see the business side of things and what we do behind the scenes. A complimentary lunch will be provided after the meeting too. Book by Wednesday 12 March. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

Booking and Cancellations

Please remember the importance of early booking for all events to avoid disappointment or cancellation due to lack of support. Booking can also be taken by email, see contact section at the front of the booklet.

March

WED
26

Pre-loved Item Sale and Coffee Morning



10am



Free



This is our chance to raise funds for the Chairman's chosen charity. If you would like to help in anyway whether this is bringing in any preloved items for our sale or if you like to help on the day, we would be very grateful, please get in touch. Maybe – bring a friend, neighbour

or family member and after you have bagged your bargain items, have a cuppa and find out what is going on at the Oddfellows.

People are surprised when we explain how much we have to offer in addition to our social events. It is also a good place to meet up and make new friends. As we have learnt over the last couple of years, the importance of socialising and friendship is very important for our wellbeing. No need to book just come along. Opening times 10am to 12.30pm. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

April

THURS
10

Lunch Out at The Bird in Hand



12.30pm



As per
menu



A local traditional pub in the heart of Stafford town centre, with crafted beer, real ales and excellent home cooked food – proper pub grub at reasonable prices.

Everyone is welcome to join us, just get in touch and we will let you know the menu choices which we will need to let The Bird in Hand know beforehand. Book by Wednesday 26 March. The Bird in Hand, 1 Victoria Square, Stafford ST16 2AQ. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

April

WED
23

St George's Day Celebration



12.30pm



Members £4
Guests £5



This social event was such fun last year we decided to do it all again. Like last year we are asking you to wear something 'Red and White', which will be the order of the day. There will be a prize for the winner and a red and white buffet, followed by a red and white game, come and join in the fun. Book by Thursday 10 April. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.



May

THURS
01

Stoke Dine Around



12.30pm



As per
menu



Please come and join us at the Toby Carvery at Festival Park for our lunchtime get-together in the Stoke and Newcastle area, everyone is welcome whether you are a member or if you are just interested in finding out more about the Oddfellows. Book by Wednesday 23 April. Toby Carvery Festival Park, National Festival Park, Marina Way, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 5PA. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.



THURS
08

80th Anniversary VE Day



12.30pm



Members £4, Guests £5



A street party theme, the flags will be flying to celebrate the Victory in Europe Day. The importance of this day in our history cannot be underestimated. Come and join us for a buffet, a fun afternoon and we can celebrate together, if you would like to dress in the theme please do so. Book by Wednesday 23 April. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.



June

WED

04

National Cheese Day



1.30pm



Members £4
Guests £5



Do you know your cheeses? Come and join us on Wednesday 4 June and see. There will be refreshments and



games to entertain you. Everyone is welcome whether you are a member or if you are just interested in finding out more about the Oddfellows. Book by Thursday 29 May. Oddfellows Hall, Greengate Street, Stafford ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

TUES

10

Stoke Dine Around



12.30pm



Members £5
Guests £10



Buffet and Bingo. Please come and join us at the the Cotton Mill for our



lunchtime get-together in the Stoke and Newcastle area, everyone is welcome whether you are a member or if you are just interested in finding out more about the Oddfellows. Book by Thursday 29 May. The Cotton Mill, Liverpool Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 2AF. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

WED

18

A Trip to Middleport Pottery and Cream Tea



9.45am



Members £6
Guests £11



Leaving Stafford at 9.45am, arrive 10.30am – Cream tea at 10.45am. We will meet in the Burgess Room to be served our cream tea before a Virtual Tour at 11.30am is delivered by a volunteer guide who will host the tour in real-time introducing you to the Middleport Pottery history and heritage, before guiding you on a filmic journey of the Burleigh factory.

It is important to note that the site is cobbled and uneven in parts but they have plenty of people using chairs and mobility walkers, so it is manageable, and they have lifts on site. Please inform us of any dietary requirements. Cost per member – £6 (as the tour will be subsidised by the District) Cost per Non-member – £11. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

July

WED
09

A Trip to Gentleshaw Wildlife Centre



11am



Members £3
Guests £5



We are visiting Gentleshaw Wildlife Centre, a registered charity, is a small sanctuary for exotic animals and birds of prey. It is home to over 30 different species of bird of prey, primate, reptile, invertebrates, raccoons, cats and many more. Gentleshaw bird of prey hospital was established in the late 80s, with the sanctuary opening at its base in Eccleshall in 1993.

They are a licensed zoo and work with many other organisations to help exotic animals in need. Afterwards, if you would like refreshments they are available next door at Fletchers. Book by Wednesday 18 June. Gentleshaw Wildlife Centre, Stone Road, Eccleshall, Stafford ST21 6JY. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

August

THURS
07

Preloved Items sale and Coffee Morning



10am



As per menu

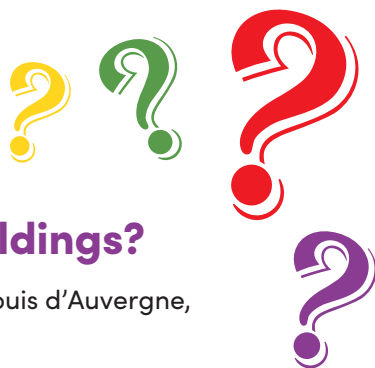


This is our chance to raise funds for the Chairman's chosen charity. If you would like to help in anyway whether this is bringing in any preloved items for our sale or if you like to help on the day, we would be very grateful, please get in touch. Maybe - Bring a friend, neighbour or family member and after you have bagged your bargain items, have a cuppa and find out what is going on at the Oddfellows.

People are surprised when we explain how much we have to offer in addition to our social events. It is also a good place to meet up and make new friends. As we have learnt over the last couple of years, the importance of socialising and friendship is very important for our wellbeing. No need to book just come along - opening times 10am - 12.30pm. Odd Fellows Hall, Greengate Street ST16 2HP. Contact Tina or Christine on 01785 258269.

Puzzle Corner

Answers at the bottom of page 20



Do you know these Famous Buildings?

1. Which building in Paris was erected in 1718 for Louis d'Auvergne, the Count of Evreux?
2. The tomb of the wife of Shah Jahan can be visited in the Indian city of Agra, how is it better known?
3. In which English county is Chatsworth House, home of the Duke of Devonshire?
4. Which famous building can be found at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue?
5. In which city were the twin towers of the World Trade Centre?
6. Which famous building was begun by Napoleon Bonaparte and completed in 1836?
7. In which US city is the Sears Tower, which when built in 1974, was the tallest in the world?
8. In which European city is the Parthenon?
9. Which famous building was purchased in 1761 by George III of England?
10. In which city would you find the world's tallest hotel, the Westin Stamford at 88 stories high?

Join the conversation @OddfellowsUK

f OddfellowsUK

✕ OddfellowsUK

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

Oddfellows Travel 2025

We have a great selection of escorted holidays for you to enjoy



South Devon Delights – Torquay Mon 31 March – Fri 4 April (4 nights)

With Alfa Travel and staying at The Metropole Hotel. Solo rooms from £295. Twin room based on 2 people sharing £295 per person. Half board. Coach pick up available from certain locations.

Oddfellows Summer Holiday – Warner's Cricket St. Thomas (Somerset) Mon 7 – Fri 11 July (4 nights)

Half board from £350 per person, based on 2 people sharing a double or twin room. A limited number of solo occupancy rooms are available at a reduced rate of £450.



Whales, Waterfalls and Geysers of Iceland Thurs 17 – Tues 29 July (12 nights)

Departing from Dover on Fred. Olsen's Borealis. From £1,799 per person, based on 2 people sharing a cabin. Full board.

Scarborough Weds 1 – Sun 5 October (4 nights)

With Alfa Travel and staying at the Cumberland Hotel. Solo rooms from £325. Twin rooms based on 2 people sharing £325 per person. Half board. Coach pick up available from certain locations.



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For Oddfellows Travel questions and bookings, please contact
Emma Gorst **0161 214 4634** or email travel@oddfellows.co.uk

Oddfellows Travel holidays are arranged through third party providers, please reference their terms and conditions before booking. Find out more at www.oddfellows.co.uk/travel

www.oddfellows.co.uk/travel

Past Events

Reporting back as promised on events that were not in the last issue.

Bric-a-Brac Sale - Wednesday 3 July

Fantastic support from our volunteer members today helping make our fundraiser a great success. Drum roll ... £260.76 raised for our charity - Midlands Air Ambulance.



Afternoon Tea on the steam train at Foxfield - Sunday 21 July

What a lovely Sunday treat for 24 members/friends at Foxfield Steam Railway. It was such a beautiful sunny day, the food was delicious and we were very well looked after by the staff who are all volunteers. Thanks to Tony Lewis for organising.



Norbury Wharf Canal Trip and Cream Tea - Wednesday 21 August

All aboard the Shropshire Star for cream tea was the order of this day. 33 of us chatted, ate, listened to the wonderful commentary and raised £48 with a raffle for our charity, Midlands Air Ambulance. It was such an enjoyable afternoon.



Coach Trip the Stratford - Wednesday 11 September

Unfortunately we had to cancel this trip due to lack of numbers and cost.

Finding Friendship Fair - Thursday 19 September

It was so wonderful to meet so many new faces who came along to see what Oddfellows is all about. We had representatives John Aitken, Head of Care and Welfare and Matthew Redmond, President of Unity Credit Union Ltd. There was a stall on membership and the benefits, with a photo board showing some of the social events we have put on in the past. The tea and coffee was flowing with the added biscuits of course. A few of our members also came along to show their support and help out while we chatted about the benefits of being a member and what it can bring to your life. We were also supported by our local Midlands Air Ambulance, Bill and Linda who were presented with a cheque for £2868.42 by Tony Lewis for fundraising 2023-2024. Thank you to all who came along and supported us.



Past Events

Half Yearly Summoned Meeting - Wednesday 25 September

Thank you to the District members, including two new members who attended the Half Yearly Summoned Meeting, where the business of the last six months was discussed and decisions made by the members. A light lunch was enjoyed following the meeting.

Fish and Chip Lunch - Wednesday 9 October

Fish and Chips enjoyed by 29 of us and we raised £78.50 for Midlands Air Ambulance. Our Fish and Chip quiz was won by Sue and fish photo quiz was won by Hazel – well done to everyone.



Springslade Lodge - Tuesday 29 October

We all enjoyed a lunch out at Springslade Lodge on Cannock Chase. Great food and great company, with another little raffle to raise more funds for Midlands Air Ambulance too.



Our Christmas Fair – Saturday 16 November

The Christmas fair was super busy and a real success, we raised £733.38. Thanks to all our members who volunteered to help on stalls, you were amazing. The Midland Air Ambulance also had a table selling their wares and raised a further £149.50.



Spread Eagle and Dobbies – Tuesday 26 November

What a lovely lunch we had with 25 members at The Spread Eagle pub at Gailey. The company and food was fantastic and the service was excellent, what more could you ask for? So we went next door to Dobbies for some retail therapy, what a wonderful afternoon.



The history of the Oddfellows

In 1810, following the relocation of The Grand United Order of Odd Fellows' Grand Lodge (HQ) from London to Sheffield, a group of dissatisfied members from Manchester met in the Ropemakers Pub, Chapel Street, Salford.

They established the breakaway society The Independent Order of Oddfellows Manchester Unity, which is us – the Oddfellows! Discover more about our fascinating history at www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/history



A Tribute to Thomas Ewart

It is with great sadness we have to inform you that Tom (*pictured left in photo*) passed away in September 2024 and will be greatly missed by his family and everyone at the Mid-Staffs Oddfellows.

Before Tom retired he played an active role within our District over many years as a Trustee, Provincial Grand Master (more than once), a member of the Management Committee and representing our District at the Midland Group Conference, where he became President, a very prestigious position in the Oddfellows.

Along with his wife Barbara who passed away in June 2023, they were both



dedicated fund raisers for the Midlands Air Ambulance and also the Cancer Scanner Appeal at the University Hospital of North Midlands, a few years ago (now known as the Royal Stoke University Hospital).

The Mid-Staffs District will always be very grateful for their commitment and we send our heartfelt condolences to their family.

District News

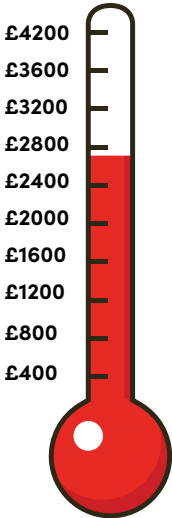
Mid-Staffs Rising Degrees

We are pleased to share that on Wednesday 6 November, Tina, our District Secretary took her Purple Degree and Anne, Trish, Bev and Steve stepped up another two Degrees taking their Scarlet and Gold. Congratulations to all.



Midlands Air Ambulance

As of Saturday 30 November, we have raised - £2657.43, many thanks to all our members for their contributions in helping to raise these funds. We have also had great results from one of our members Bev, selling donated items online – thank you to you all.



Nominate a fellow member for the Society's Making a Difference Awards

Do you know a special member who has gone above and beyond to help others, raise money for good causes or run your Branch?

We're encouraging members to put these special people forward for national recognition!

Speak to your Branch Secretary about how to nominate or find out more at www.oddfellows.co.uk/makingadifference

MAKING A
DIFFERENCE
Award

MAD160724

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, please Tina on 01785 258269 or Email tina.bayley@oddfellows.co.uk

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

www.oddfellows.co.uk

Puzzle Corner Answers (for page 12)

1. Elisee Palace
2. Taj Mahal
3. Derbyshire
4. The White House
5. New York
6. Arc de Triomphe
7. Chicago
8. Athens
9. Buckingham Palace
10. Singapore

Bring friendship to your front room



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

We want people to enjoy the benefits of friendship no matter what. That's why Branches all over the country host around 50 free online events each month, ranging from talks, arts and crafts and games, to exercise and meditation sessions.

These online events are a great opportunity to catch up with familiar faces and meet new and interesting people from all corners of the country from the comfort of home. You might even discover a new favourite hobby.

What's coming up online

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

Tuesday 21 January, 7pm - Eating Healthy on a Budget

Join us on Zoom, Meeting ID: 831 3197 2367. Passcode: 068189.

Friday 7 February, 2pm - The North Shields Fishermen's Heritage Project or Never Retire

Join us on Zoom, Meeting ID: 910 7968 6020. Passcode: 1810.

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 about 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.

Tina and Christine
Secretaries

Oddfellows Extra

– big brand offers and savings



From cinema tickets, holidays and new cars to grocery shopping, health spas and home insurance – Oddfellows Extra* can help you save on life's little extras or necessities.

Oddfellows Extra is an online collection of money-saving discounts and offers from many well-known brands and major retailers.

All Oddfellows Extra deals are open to Standard members and members with Extra Benefits from day one, for no extra charge.

Access Oddfellows Extra

If you're a member, sign in to the Member's Area and select 'Oddfellows Extra' from the member offers section. If you've not yet registered for the Member's Area, there are instructions on how to do so on our website: www.oddfellows.co.uk/login

OEA50723

*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits.
Visit the Oddfellows Extra website for details.



Oddfellows Extra is operated on behalf of Oddfellows by Parliament Hill Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for under register number 308448.

A brilliant Baltic experience

In late June, 17 Oddfellows from across the country met in Dover to board Fred. Olsen's Borealis and set sail to discover the delights of the Baltics.

Lots to see and do

During their 14 nights, the Oddies crew, made up of members from Ipswich, Norwich, Leeds, Worcester, Derby and Tunbridge Wells, visited seven different ports throughout the region, stopping off in Germany, Poland, Sweden, Estonia and Finland.

There was plenty on offer, with organised excursions and chances to explore independently at each stop-off.

On board there were interesting talks, crafts sessions and plenty of opportunities to simply find a quiet corner with a book.



Warnemünde, Germany

Ipswich Oddfellows member and host for the fortnight, Wendy Atkins, said:

"We experienced mostly fair weather but more importantly calm seas.

"In each of the ports we observed maritime traditions, stories of war-torn devastation, magnificent architecture and saw evidence of Russian aggression."

On-board Oddfellowship

Wendy added: "Our group sat together for dinner where we were able to share the experiences of the day and to learn more about Oddfellowship. New friendships were made!

"The Oddfellows party had two organised get-togethers – a welcome hot chocolate and coffee meeting as we sailed and a drinks party when members were able to get to know one another.

"In the evenings there was varied entertainment in the main theatre but also music in the bars to suit all tastes. Of course, there was plenty to eat and drink too!"



Dressed for dinner

Travel in good company

With Oddfellows Travel group holidays, you can travel in confidence and great company. All our group holidays are hosted by an Oddfellows member and we only work with experienced travel partners that we trust.

For more information about Oddfellows Travel and to read the full review go to www.oddfellows.co.uk/travel

Our biggest celebration of friendship yet!

The Oddfellows' CEO, Jane Nelson, has expressed her thanks to everyone involved in making 2024's Friendship Month a huge success:

"Once again I am so proud of each and every person at our brilliant Branches for all the efforts they have put into making this year's Friendship Month so wonderful.

"It's hard to believe that this is the 15th time we've claimed September as our month-long celebration of all the benefits

of friendship, but it's safe to say it's been our biggest yet, with over 300 taster events throughout the country – that's a huge amount of work!

"Coffee mornings, walks, talks, music events, meals, games, quizzes, day trips – whatever it might be, you've pulled out all the stops to let the nation know that we're here and ready to offer support, fun and friendship to all."



A day trip to Provender House with Canterbury Oddfellows



Mersey Oddfellows took a walk in Birkenhead



Brighton and Sussex Oddfellows enjoying a coffee morning



Bury St Edmunds Oddfellows getting crafty



Cakes galore at Halifax Oddfellows



Friendship and laughter at Ipswich Oddfellows



Humber Wolds Oddfellows' Teatime get-together

Our survey said...

Earlier this year, we asked a random sample of members about their experience of being an Oddfellow. Thank you to the near 1,500 who took the time to respond to our survey. We really value your thoughts and opinions as they help us to ensure we can continue to improve on what we do.

In terms of overall membership satisfaction, with 10 being 'completely satisfied' and one 'not at all satisfied', the average member gave a score of 8.6, which is wonderful to know. This score is better than the average of other organisations that carry out a similar survey, and is something the Society is very proud of.

Using the same scale, members indicated they were most satisfied with the friendliness and supportiveness of their Branch (8.9), the way their Branch communicates with them (8.9), and that their membership represents value for money (9). Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who indicated they were most satisfied with the friendliness and supportiveness of their Branch, and the face-to-face events on offer, were the most likely to recommend the Oddfellows to someone else.

People also told us why they joined, revealing that the most popular reasons were because friends or family suggested it (55.1%), to attend social events (45.1%) and to make friends (43.6%).

Our monthly meetings are always friendly. We always enjoy some sort of activity and have an uplifting afternoon.

Would be quite nice to be reminded of exactly what benefits are now given/provided. I've been a member for so many years that I have lost track.

I love all the events. My life would be empty and lonely without Oddfellows.

We were also pleased to receive feedback on how we can improve. One thing a number of members suggested we could change is their ability to claim for payment plans against their Dental and Optical Care Benefit. We're pleased to say that this is now possible.

It was also suggested that awareness of support, offers and benefits is quite low, with some members not understanding what they are entitled to.

To learn more about your membership entitlements, go to www.oddfellows.co.uk/benefits. Terms and conditions apply.

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 the Branch on **01785 258269**.

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

January 2025

Wed 8	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am
Tues 14	Coffee Morning Out and About in Staffordshire	10.30am
Thurs 23	National Pie Day	12.30pm
Wed 29	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am

February

Tues 4	Stoke Dine Around	12.30pm
Thurs 13	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am
Thurs 20	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am
Wed 26	Coffee Morning Out and About in Staffordshire	10.30am

March

Tues 4	Pancake Delight	1pm
Wed 12	Stoke Dine Around	12.30pm
Wed 19	Annual Summoned Meeting	11am
Wed 26	Pre-loved Item Sale and Coffee Morning	10am

April

Thurs 3	Coffee Morning Out and about in Staffordshire	10.30am
Thurs 10	Lunch Out at The Bird in Hand	12.30pm
Wed 23	St George's Day Celebration	12.30pm

May

Thurs 1	Stoke Dine Around	12.30pm
Thurs 8	80th Anniversary VE Day	12.30pm
Thurs 29	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am

June

Wed 4	National Cheese Day	1.30pm
Tues 10	Stoke Dine Around	12.30pm
Wed 18	A Trip to Middleport Pottery and Cream Tea	9.45am
Tues 24	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am

July

Thurs 3	Coffee Morning Out and about in Staffordshire	10.30am
Wed 9	A Trip to Gentleshaw Wildlife Centre	11am
Wed 16	Coffee Mornings at our Hall	10.30am

August

Wed 7	Pre-loved Item Sale and Coffee Morning	10am
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