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### *Oddfellows On The Park welcomes back Bruntwood Hall's last surviving resident*

Oddfellows On The Park, the brand new design hotel which launched in April this year, welcomed back a very important visitor to stay - the last resident of Bruntwood Hall from its time as a private home.

Brian Wolstenholme was the grandson of the last owners of the hall, John and Jenny Porritt who moved to the hall in 1898. Unfortunately for the Porritt family and their ancestors, they were forced to leave the Hall in 1944 when both John and Jenny had passed away and the death duties were too much for the children to pay.

Brian had been in touch with the management team who were handling the Hall's restoration, who invited him to come and stay. Liaison with Brian's wife Marjorie, led to the hotel team discovering the bedroom Brian had previously slept in. Due to the architect's 'minimal intervention' approach, many of the bedrooms and nearly all of the public spaces had not been changed in dimension and they were able to room Brian exactly in his old bedroom.

Brian said: 'It was an emotional experience, exploring the house again and sleeping in my old bedroom. It meant so much as I have many happy memories here from my childhood, with my granny and mother. I'm really pleased that the hall has been restored to its former glory and is now full of life again.'

Ideally located in the mature 120 acres of parkland of leafy Bruntwood Park, the hotel is the culmination of a fifteen-month careful restoration that has



transformed the beautiful Victorian mansion. The hotel is now home to The Galloping Major restaurant, headed up by Chef Ian Moss and The Stud Room bar. Flexible event spaces, the Parlor Bar and Parlor Rooms, are set on the park with direct access to the terrace and can cater for everything from small intimate dinners to meetings and weddings. Oddfellows On The Park also houses The Pigsty, a salon de beauté with two treatment rooms and a Rasul mud room.

Brian's memories of the hall include horse riding, shooting parties, playing billiards and freely wandering around the estate which now makes up the acres of public parkland. He was coached in how to behave at meal times and taught to respect the team of staff which included cooks, nurses, housemaids, kitchen maids and a chauffeur.

Paul Cookson, general manager of Oddfellows On The Park said: 'It was a privilege to spend time with Brian during his visit. He freely shared the memories of his childhood and described to us very eloquently how the Hall would have been lived in during The Porritt's residence.'

He added: 'Part of our restoration process included researching the history of the hall and we celebrate those stories through our interior design. Brian's story is integral to the history of the Hall and we can happily impart those stories to our guests who love hearing the stories of the Hall's yesteryear.'

Oddfellows On The Park is the sister hotel to Oddfellows, Chester ([www.oddfellowschester.com](http://www.oddfellowschester.com)). It is the only hotel in the UK outside of London to be welcomed into the global Design Hotels™ consortium, and sits alongside hotels

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like Soho Hotel in London and Gramercy Park Hotel in New York. Designed by Tim Groom Architects, with interiors by SpaceInvader, both Manchester based firms, guests will enjoy interesting design pieces throughout - like the bike chain chandelier that is inspired by the Bruntwood Park BMX track and lights up the grand staircase.

ENDS

Notes for Editors

[www.oddfellowsonthepark.com](http://www.oddfellowsonthepark.com)

- This is the second hotel for the burgeoning Oddfellows collection. Successful sister hotel, Oddfellows, Chester, which sits within a city Georgian townhouse, reported an 87% occupancy last year.
- Set within Bruntwood Park, within the glorious Victorian gothic mansion, Bruntwood Hall.
- The focus during the careful restoration of the hall has been directed towards preserving the original architectural features.
- Oddfellows On The Park is the ONLY hotel to be accepted by global consortium Design Hotels™ in the UK outside of London. Design Hotels™ have strict guidelines on which properties may join their carefully curated collection of hotels. Thoughtful design is key - as is cultural authenticity and genuine service.
- Interior design is fundamental to the Oddfellows ethos. Oddfellows On The Park's inspiration is derived from the building's Victorian gothic roots and history - with the Oddfellows signature design twist.
- 22 individually designed bedrooms, many of them in the original Victorian dimensions of the Hall.

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- Rooms range from the Bridle Suite set on three floors within the Hall's atmospheric tower to Playground Suites, Club Rooms and entry-level Park Rooms. Bedrooms enjoy views of Bruntwood Park's 120 acres of mature woodland.
- The Galloping Major restaurant sits within the Hall's original ballroom. It celebrates the nickname of the 'local legend' of the Major who was the second owner of the hall and who extended it to the grand mansion it is today. Bruntwood Park was run as a private equestrian stud and The Galloping Major was most often found astride a horse with his magnificent handlebar moustache!
- The Galloping Major will be headed up by chef Ian Moss, who joins the hotel from Ribble Valley Inns and Northcote. Ian has also previously worked under the tutelage of Marcus Wareing at Petrus and Brett Graham at The Ledbury. He promises an engaging menu that focuses on British ingredients and seasonality.
- The Stud Room Bar, Parlor Bar, Parlor Rooms and the terrace make up the other reception spaces on the ground floor. The Parlor Bar and Rooms can be used as public spaces but will also be able to host private events, meetings, dinners and weddings. Drinks, lunches, breakfast, afternoon tea, coffees, park bites and good cheer will all be served.
- The Pigsty is an Oddfellows first - a salon de beauté complete with mud room where guests can literally slap the detoxifying mud on each other. The Pigsty offers a sociable space where friends can meet, have their trotters polished, enjoy a facial or massage and catch up for a gossip, drinks and light nibbles.
- Bruntwood Hall was originally built in 1861 by an industrialist. He was inspired by a home in Scotland and the original ceilings in The Stud Room Bar are testimony to this with their thistle design.
- In 1892 the original building was extended to become the Hall as it stands today. The ballroom was an addition - which now holds the restaurant. Bruntwood Hall and the parkland around became a major equestrian stud farm.

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- Bruntwood Hall has had multiple uses - a Town Hall during the second world war as well as home to a film company and a fashion designer.
- Bruntwood Hall was used as a location for Sky series Bedlam featuring Will Young in 2012.
- Oddfellows On The Park will be the first time the Hall has been used for a hotel.
- Oddfellows On The Park takes less than 10 minutes in the car to Manchester Airport and is less than 10 miles into Manchester city centre.
- Rooms will start at £155.
- Oddfellows Hotels is operated by Oddfellows Management Company, owned by Jonathan Slater. Jonathan was the MD of The Chester Grosvenor for 30 years, where the restaurant 'Simon Radley at The Chester Grosvenor' held a Michelin star for 26 of those years. Jonathan Slater was also a founder director of Small Luxury Hotels of the World. He was on the board of the global consortium for 21 years, 9 of which were as chairman.
- Oddfellows On The Park will be managed by Paul Cookson. Cookson has worked with Jonathan Slater for over 11 years.
- Oddfellows On The Park will bring over 50 new jobs to the local area.

## *The Story of Oddfellows Hotels*

Oddfellows Hotels began its journey in Chester in 2011 when Jonathan Slater was approached by its owner to dramatically overhaul what was previously a member's club, bar and restaurant. He oversaw a multi-million-pound award winning redevelopment which involved the building of a new wing of 14 hotel bedrooms and the redevelopment of all the public spaces. This launched to great effect in 2012 and the business has flourished as one of the city's success stories.

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The success of Chester Oddfellows led to the obvious question.. what next? Jonathan Slater sought a new approach for a hotel collection. Rather than roll-out the Oddfellows winning formula across every provincial town in a cookie-cutter approach or run a group of thoroughly different hotels under an umbrella company, he wanted an approach with his hotels that brought joy by their very individuality. Loving the ethos of the Oddfellows brand, he was also determined to make sure each subsequent hotel underwent the same creative journey the Chester hotel had taken the team on. Research into the history of the building, the location, the previous inhabitants was done on a number of properties before Bruntwood Hall was decided on as a perfect fit for the Oddfellows family.

Set within the middle of a public park, where BMX and archery are available, turned any expectations of a traditional environment on its head. The Hall itself had a wealth of interesting past inhabitants and remarkable architectural features that lent itself to an Oddfellows property. The community of Cheadle also struck a chord with the team. Just outside Manchester, the inhabitants share a village-like community spirit. The high street is testament to this where independents take precedence over high street chains. The hotel embraces the local community. The restaurant and bar are as much theirs as the hotel guests. Walkers in the park can drop in for coffees, join park-based boot camps and attend hotel events.

## *Design quotes:*

Architect – Tim Groom

In the restoration of Bruntwood Hall, Tim Groom Architects employed a “minimal intervention” approach to create Oddfellows on the Park. “The



building is Gothic Revival and is in superb condition—it was always our intention to let the style show itself off”

Interior Designers - SpaceInvader

Associate Designer, SpaceInvader, Katie Edgar: “Our approach was to respect its character and beautiful features - to be inspired by them, enhance them and design a romantic scheme that celebrates the history of the building and its unique position. It is a fantastic example of Victorian Gothic Revival architecture and our treatment of the internal areas has been inspired by this - the colour palette which provides a commonality throughout the hotel includes dark greens and blacks which are lifted by luxurious gold and neutral tones. While many features in the hotel may seem odd at first glance, everything is odd for a reason and has a story behind it that relates back to the building, its varied occupants or uses over the years.”

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