North Rode Newsletter

April 2026

What's on in North Rode
To subscribe or unsubscribe to this newsletter mailing list,
Email: northrode@btinternet.com
Stories: huwwilliams200@gmail.com

Don't forget to turn your clocks forward on Sunday and start to enjoy the long evenings. Details of events on North Rode over the summer are starting to appear so please save the dates and come along to support your village. As always please do send in any details of celebrations, events or pictures you would like to share with your village.

Get Well Sarah-Jane

Commiserations to Sarah-Jane Hodgson, who is recovering from an injured shoulder after a skiing accident. Hope you recover soon.

With Sadness..

We are very saddened to hear that Arthur Gilman has passed away on 27th March 2026, just before his 100th Birthday. Our thoughts are with his family.

Cleaning Help Needed



Your Historic Grade II listed Church is in need of some help from villagers to keep it clean and tidy. If you are able to offer a few hours of your time each year to join our team, it would be much appreciated.

If cleaning brass is your thing, how about taking on one of the beautiful chandeliers, lit by candles on special services? We can get these taken down for you. Please email Lynn Petts at: *lynn.petts@btinternet.com*.

Buckle Up - North Rode Revival is Back!

The revival will be back this year on Saturday 13th June. It will be bigger and better with classic cars, flight experiences, live music, bar, food and fun. All proceeds from the day go towards the East Cheshire Hospice and North Rode Village causes. We are looking for villagers to come along and help out for an hour or two on the day on various stalls in return for free entry. Interested? Please message Mike Gilman at *mike@mikeanics.co.uk*



The Rector's Letter April 2026

During January/February, one of the things on my personal *"To Do List"* is to bring out of storage my petrol lawnmower and give it a service: change the oil, filter, perhaps the spark plug, sharpen the blade and fill it with fresh petrol. And then (offering up a short prayer!) pull the chord and usually the machine fires up, ready for Spring, Summer and Autumn.

Well, this year, all seemed to go well, having done all mentioned above. I pulled the chord and the mower came to life. However, after a couple of minutes the engine suddenly died. On investigation, I discovered that some creature, probably a mouse, had chewed through the rubber tube connecting the fuel tank and engine. So, I went and bought a new tube which solved the problem. A problem I had not anticipated!

While my lawnmower failure is an imperfect analogy with regard to what is currently going wrong around us, if we look back only to this New Year, did any of us anticipate that our world would be further upended by yet another senseless war, this time focussed on Iran, and potentially involving the whole of the Middle East? War is fundamentally unpredictable and innocent people always pay the highest price.

The great Benjamin Disraeli (one of Queen Victoria's favourite Prime Ministers) once said, *"What we anticipate seldom occurs: what we least expect is often what happens."* The name Disraeli may ring bells with some readers, but how about Kenneth Wolstenholme? Who? Well, Mr. Wolstenholme led the BBC TV commentary during the 1966 World Cup when England beat Germany 4-2, after extra time. He uttered the now famous phrase, *"They think it's all over!"*

The Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, the Scribes and the Pharisees all thought the same after Jesus died on the Cross on Good Friday. They really believed that the troublesome *"Jesus Movement"* was finished, Jesus would soon be forgotten, and nothing would change. How wrong they were.

May I wish you all a Happy Easter.

Colin

North Rode Services
April 2026

April 5th Good Friday	**11.30 am** Meditation on the Cross	Led by:	The Rector
April 5th Easter Day Flowers: Susan Bullock	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (CW)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	Revd Anne Freestone Shirley Tudor-Evans Yvonne Brown
April 12th Easter 2 Flowers: as last week	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Margaret Cann Alastair Kennedy
April 19th Easter 3	No service at North Rode	**Gawsworth**	**10 am** Holy Communion **6 pm** Evensong
April 26nd Easter 4 Flowers: Margaret Cann	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Louise Jackson Charles Baxter
May 3rd Easter 5 Flowers: as last week	**11.15 am** Holy Communion (CW)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	Revd Anne Freestone Lynn Petts Geoffrey Allen

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday 4th April 10.30am – 12noon



For children aged 3-11yrs

St. James the Great, Gawsworth, Church Hall

Children are welcome to bring some spring flowers, greenery, garden moss, stones etc. and help create an Easter Garden.

No charge – just bring a coin for the collection.

Further information from Rachel Wilson (01260 223201)

If anyone would like to receive Holy Communion at home, or while in hospital, please contact the Rector.

Rector: Revd Colin Wilson 01260 223201
Enquiries: Mrs Diane Lowe 01260 272576
Secretary: Mrs Diane Lowe 01260 272576
Treasurer: Mrs Lynn Petts 01260 222902
Newsletter: Huw Williams 077991717459

http://www.northrodechurch.org.uk

North Rode Parish Council Report

Cllr Huw Williams – Chairman North Rode Parish Council

North Rode Annual Parish Meeting – Thursday 7th May

The annual parish meeting will be held at 7pm at St Michaels Church in North Rode. We have been planning the evening to make it as informative and as enjoyable as possible All villagers are welcome to listen to presentations on Parish Council activities, updates from the Daintry Hall Project team and information about devolution in Cheshire and Warrington and what it could mean for you. We also want to hear feedback and ideas from you on any issues you think the parish council can help with. Cheese and Wine will be served and we anticipate the meeting will be approximately one hour long.



North Rode Well Dressing – Save the Date – 30th August!

We are planning to make this a date to remember and an annual fixture. Plans include Morris dancers during the afternoon at the opening, a village walk and a Barn Dance to celebrate into the evening. We will be forming an action team from interested villagers, to help make this all happen. Details to be revealed at the village meeting and over the coming months.

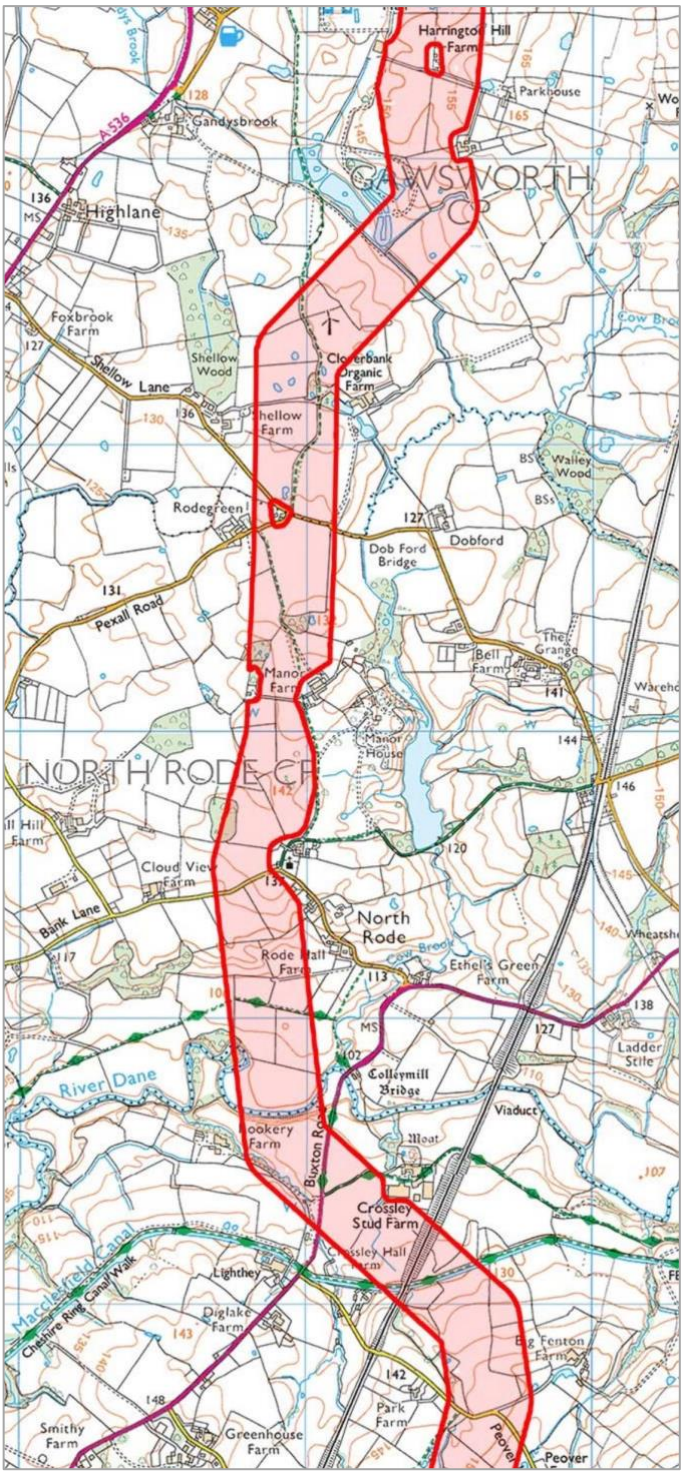
Recent Planning Applications

26/0512/PRIOR-6 Land Off Bank Lane, North Rode. Prior Approval for erection of general purpose building.
26/0706/VOC Bank Farm, Bank Lane, North Rode. Removal of Condition 1, time limiting condition on approval 24/2680C.

You can view applications online at: Cheshire East Planning Applications.

Peak Cluster Update

The parish council have submitted their response to the Planning Inspectorate and we are now monitoring what information is coming from Peak Cluster, Cheshire East Council and the Government. We note that some unitary councils along the route have called on the government to reject the Peak Cluster project, including Derbyshire County Council and Wirral Council. Cheshire East Council have as yet to make their position known. Again, we urge land owners affected to engage an independent surveyor, to act on their behalf when dealing with Peak Cluster, to represent your interests. Their fee's should be paid for by Peak Cluster. We have produced a detailed OS map of the proposed pipeline scoping boundary to the right. The actual route will fall somewhere within these boundaries, with a working width of approx. 30m



North Rode Daffodils in Bloom



Daffodils are everywhere around North Rode at this time of the year and there is no better display than at Ethels Green at the bottom of Church Lane. Their bright yellow petals in the sunshine trick you into thinking summer is here – until a hailstorm appears out of nowhere and the temperature drops again!

There are many common nicknames for the daffodil, including Daffadowndilly, Daffy, Lent Lily , Easter bells, and Trumpets. The flower represents spring, joy, and the Welsh national flower. It is relatively recently in the late 19th century that the daffodil has become associated with Wales – as opposed to the leek, which has been a national symbol since the 16th century. It certainly helps that St David's Day is on the 1st March, just when the daffodils are peaking. Welsh Prime Minister David Lloyd George is often credited with starting the association by wearing daffodils to the investiture of the Prince of Wales in 1911 at Caernarfon Castle.

Whilst the name daffodil is believed to come an old Dutch phrase 'affo dyle' meaning 'that which comes early', Narcissus is the formal botanical name, which comes from Greek mythology and the tragic tale of Echo and Narcissus. The mountain nymph Echo prevents the goddess Hera from catching out her errant husband Zeus in one of his many affairs. As punishment, the chatty nymph is cursed to only be able to repeat what others have said, never able to speak her own words. Shunned by her friends, Echo wanders the forest where she meets and falls desperately in love with the beautiful youth *Narcissus*. Unable to converse with him, she is cruelly and shamefully rejected. He in turn is punished by the gods to also suffer the sorrow of unrequited love when he falls equally helplessly in love with his own reflection in a pool. Unable to either be with or be apart from the object of his desire, he wastes away by the pool edge, ultimately turning into the beautiful flower.

Daffodils originated in the Mediterranean region, mainly around Spain, Portugal and Morocco and it is thought that Roman soldiers introduced them to Britain, believing the sap possessed healing powers – although we now know the sap can cause skin irritation.



Clumps of daffodil bulbs have been known to survive in the ground for well over a century, flowering consistently for decades. Whilst there are now many thousand cultivated varieties, Britain is home to just one native wild daffodil, *Narcissus pseudonarcissus,* commonly known as the Lent Lily. This bloom has pale creamy-white petals and a soft yellow trumpet, blooming from early spring.

William Wordsworth's poem '*I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud'* is a shameless ode to the wildflowers he and his sister Dorothy saw during a walk in the Lake District. Written in 1804, Wordsworth's daffodils were probably *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, one of the most pervasive wild species

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.
Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,

They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

Taken from *I Wandered Lonely As A Cloud* by William Wordsworth

North Rode WI Report

Secretary Pam Robinson writes

The March WI Meeting was opened by our President Diane Lowe who was back after having had a Knee Operation. Diane welcomed five Visitors from Eaton WI plus a Visitor and we sang Jerusalem to start the Meeting. Thanks were expressed to Pauline Croft for the table flowers, to Freda Butler and Mary Hobson for teas, to Pat Lovatt and Norma Knaggs for helpers cakes and to Diane Lowe for Savouries. The minutes of the last meeting were read by Secretary Pam Robinson and approved by the Members. The Spring Council Meeting is taking place on Monday 23rd March at Nunsmere Hall at 10.45am and two of our members are attending this event.

Diary Dates

- April 13th to April 17th - Quiz Heats. Monday to Friday Quiz heats are at various locations
- Thursday 23rd April - Visit to Stockport Hat Museum plus Afternoon Tea
- Thursday 23rd April - Our Annual Coffee Morning Gawsworth Methodist Church Hall. Donations of Cakes Raffle Prizes etc are very welcome
- Wednesday 6th May - Cloud Group Spring Meeting at New Life Church, 7.30 pm. North Rode WI are on Competition Duty
- Thursday 3rd June - NFWI Annual Meeting Zoom
- Tuesday & Wednesday 16th/17th June - The Royal Cheshire Show
- Wednesday 8th July - Literary Lunch, Hartford Golf Club at 12Noon. Speaker Jane Costello

An Invitation has been received from Gawsworth WI to a Clarins Demonstration on Tuesday 7th April at 7.30pm.

Treasurer Jackie Spooner gave out the 2026 WI Subs would be £54 but for this year we would be charging £50. The WI Member Registration Forms were given out by our Treasurer to be signed and returned in April with the WI Subscriptions.

Our Speaker for the afternoon was Rob Mason who was so entertaining and had our Members plus Visitors in laughter during his talk plus his Singing. He was the Speaker at the Cloud Group last year and was so good that we booked him to come to us. He had so many jokes about things your Mother used to say. It was very much old fashioned humour which we all could appreciate. Diane Lowe gave Rob a vote of thanks for a super afternoon with plenty of laughter.

The Competition for a Bowl of Dwarf Tulips was won by Hilary Trueman with Diane Lowe second place.

The next WI Meeting is on Tuesday April 14th 7.30pm when our Speaker will be Eddie Rush and his talk is on Bee Keeping. The Competition will be an Item with a Bee Decoration.

All Visitors will be welcome at Eaton Church and Community Hall at 2pm in the Winter Months and 7.30pm in the Summer Months.

Marton School

Dear Friends

It has been a wonderfully busy and successful half term at school.

Our Science Week was a fantastic highlight, with lots of exciting experiments and hands-on activities for the children to enjoy. It was wonderful to see their curiosity and enthusiasm as they explored different scientific ideas and discoveries. We are so lucky to have a wealth of experience amongst our parents and carers – many of whom led such inspiring activities for children too!

We are now looking forward to celebrating Red Nose Day. Our School Council have been busy planning a special activity for everyone. This year the theme is *"Funny Faces"*, and the children will be decorating biscuits with their own creative and amusing designs. We are sure there will be plenty of smiles and laughter throughout the day.

Our monthly Friday Tuck Shop continues to be a great success and is always something the children look forward to. Thank you to everyone who supports this.

Another huge success was the ever-popular Family Friends and Family PTA Bingo Night**,** which raised an amazing £1000 for the school**.** It was a fantastic evening with a wonderful community atmosphere, and we are extremely grateful to F & F and all the families who supported the event.

What a great way to end the term! After Easter, we are looking forward to the warmer weather and spending more time enjoying our beautiful school grounds.

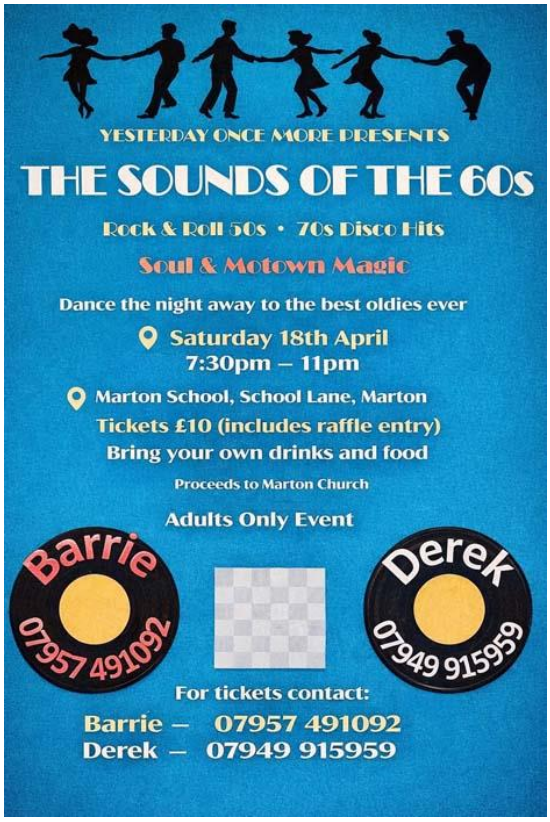
With best wishes,

Mrs Nevin Deakin, Headteacher

Fancy a Boogie?

Shake out those flairs, sequined outfits and platform shoes and get yourself down to Marton School on Saturday 18th April to dance the night away in support of Marton Church. Adults only from 7:30pm til 11pm.





North Rode Church Clock

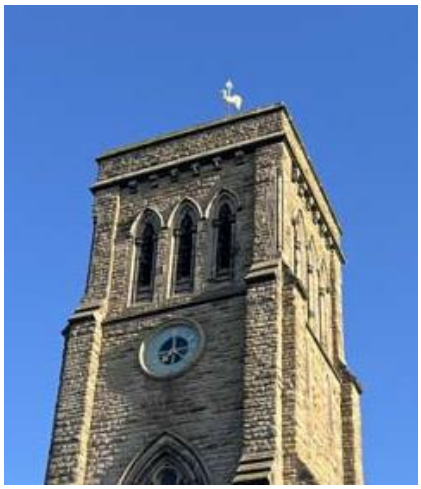
Huw Williams



The clock in North Rode St Michael's tower was installed in 1846 by **John Whitehurst & Son** of Derby. The single bell in the tower is originally from another church in Kirkham in Lancashire and was the 4th from a ring of bells. It was cast in 1714 by Abraham Rudhall, a well-known bell maker from Gloucester and has the inscription: *Robert Nickson. John Hull: Church wardens A (Bell) R 1714*. The winding mechanism and timekeeping was made automatic in recent years thanks to a generous anonymous donation, church funds and a grant from the parish council. This effectively moderates the pendulum swing and also automatically winds up weights that operate the pendulum, clock mechanism and bell, and saved a weekly perilous climb of the narrow steps in the tower by Norman Bebington in order to wind them up!

When I was recently called upon to restart the clock after a power outage, I noticed the name plaque on the clock and also a number of old engravings in the clock mechanism shed which intrigued me. Whilst researching about the clock a surprising connection with Congleton emerged.

John Whitehurst (I)



John Whitehurst the elder, came to Congleton in 1708 from Biddulph to set up his clockmaking business. He became a prominent citizen and was elected to various offices of Congleton Corporation, including Burleyman[1], Market Looker[2] , Commons Looker[3] and Inmate Looker[4]. The corporation also entrusted him with the care of the town's clocks. John Whitehurst's workshop, was believed to be extensive and situated between High Street and Market Place in Congleton, not only made high quality clocks, but also manufactured industrial machine parts. Town accounts also indicate that John Whitehurst amassed a considerable number of properties on high street, including the George Inn (now gone by probably on or near High Street) and was also either an inn keeper or brewer. Clearly a very busy entrepreneurial man! In 1754, at the age of 67, John transferred this burgage to John Sherratt of Buglawton, possibly to retire and pass the business on to his son James, who in that same year was given care of the market clock by the corporation.

At least three generations of the family worked in Congleton; John Whitehurst the Elder, his sons John and James, and James' son Egerton. It is believed that John the Elder may have signed his clocks, 'John Whithurst', as provincial clocks from the period he worked have been found to bear this name. John had eight children; the eldest being John, who was born in Congleton on 10th April 1713.



John Whitehurst (II)



Whitehurst workshops 24 Iron Gate,

After leaving school at 14 with only a slight education, John Whitehurst trained as a clock maker under his fathers apprenticeship until the age of 21 in 1734. Encouraged by his father to pursue further knowledge, John travelled to Dublin to inspect a clock of "curious construction" he had heard of, before continuing on to London to gain inspiration from other complex mechanisms. About 1736, John Whitehurst moved and settled in Derby and went on to become a famed clockmaker and scientist, making clocks, barometers, pyrometers (high temperature thermometers) and orreries (mechanical models of the solar system). He improved the design of turret clocks, which were installed at many stately homes, churches and industrial buildings in the country as they were renowned for their reliability. His premises at **24 Iron Gate**, Derby served as both his home and his workshop until 1764, when he expanded workshops and moved home to **27 Queen Street**, Derby, which he rebuilt with

a new frontage designed by the architect Joseph Pickford. It was at Queen Street that John Whitehurst hosted famous thinkers of the Lunar Society, of which he was a founder member, these included Benjamin Franklin and Josiah Wedgewood. Whitehurst was also a Fellow of the Royal Society and the American Philosophical Society. In 1775 he relocated to London on appointment as 'stamper of money weights' at the Royal Mint and passed away in 1788.



27 Queen St, Derby

After the passing of John Whitehurst in London , and until 1805, the clock making business was managed by his brother James and later his nephew, John Whitehurst (III). In 1793, the Queen Street building was leased to an artist, Joseph Wright of Derby and clock making operations were concentrated at the Iron G ate workshops. From 1805 to 1834 the business traded under Whitehurst & Son and it was during this era that John (III) took his son John (IV) into partnership and was notably invited to tender for Big Ben Clock at Westminster. Following the death of John (III) In 1834 the business continued under John (IV) and it was during this era that North Rode St Michaels turret clock was installed. On the death of John Whitehurst (IV) in 1855, the business was sold to William *Roskell of Liverpool* and eventually wound up in 1862.

Interestingly I am informed that one of the engineers that comes out from time to time to service the clock is called Mike Whitehurst, an indirect descendent of the original Whitehurst & Son clock makers.

It seems to have been a thing for engineers who came to clean or repair the clock at St Michaels, particularly in the early years, to inscribe their visit into the wooden shed surrounding the clock. I have detailed the legible ones below and note that name of W Roskil – possibly the company that bought the Whitehurst & Son business in 1855, nine years after the clock was installed.





Inscription Date	Inscription
1858	Cleaned May 7th 1858 by man from Derby, employed by Mr Roskil
1866	Cleaned March 12, 1866 by Mr Heath?
1872	Cleaned March 22 1872 by W Roskil
1879	Cleaned by George Wood of Wherington, May 1879
1886	Cleaned September 11th 1886 by Arthur Ford & J. Flowers for B Piduc
1886	Oct 2nd 1886, A Ford
1895	Cleaned & Dial serviced, May 21-24 1895 by AJ Ford, 67 Chestergate.
1898	Stripped Works, May 12, 1898, AJ Ford, 67 Chestergate.
1922	E mason, Sep 25/1922
1938	1938, New Striking Rope
1968	Cleaned by George Harris, Aug 28, 1968
1971	Les Clark was here, 26/1/71
1973	F.G. Stringer, 1st April 1973
1989	Treated for Woodworm by P Herod (P Cox), 1989
1991	Cleaned by B Parry for JB Joyce, 1991

1. *Burleyman* - sometimes called Bye-law-man, who acted as a local arbiter, mediating disputes between neighbours.
2. *Market Looker* - sometimes referred to as a *Leavelooker* or inspector, was a municipal official responsible for inspecting goods and regulating trade
3. *Commons Looker* - a local officer appointed by the manor court to oversee the sustainable use of common land and ensure that village bylaws were followed.
4. *Inmate Looker* - responsible for the welfare of the poor in the workhouse.