



# North Rode Newsletter

March 2026

*What's on in North Rode*  
To subscribe or unsubscribe to this  
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Email: [northrode@btinternet.com](mailto:northrode@btinternet.com)  
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According to the meteorological calendar, Spring in the UK begins on 1<sup>st</sup> March. The season is defined by longer, warmer days, and the blooming of nature. This certainly seems to be the case with snowdrops already in full bloom and Daffodils starting to appear. It even feels dare I say a little warmer. If you have any interesting stories, pictures, celebrations or events coming up, don't be shy and send them in to share with everyone.

## Happy Birthday Arthur!



This month marks a very special birthday for Arthur Gilman, who will be 100 years old on 28<sup>th</sup> March! Arthur and his wife Madge, lived and farmed in North Rode at Bramhall Hill Farm from 1969 until 1993, when they moved to West Heath, Congleton. Arthur was originally from Thorncliffe near Leek and was one of 12 siblings. When the family moved to Pye Ash farm in Bosley in 1937, 11 year old Arthur and his brother herded 25 cattle the 9 mile journey from farm to farm. That wouldn't be an easy task these days along our busy roads! Arthur was a key member of Bosley Tug of War Club and competed at the British Games in the 1950's. The Gilman family still farm at Pye Ash Farm, renowned for their sheep dogs.

## Cuppa for Cancer

By Winnie Bullock

To spread the word and promote the great work that The Christie do, Chairpersons of Cheshire Young Farmers, Winnie Bullock and John Manning held a Cuppa for Cancer coffee morning on World Cancer Day, on Wednesday 4th February at Eaton Village Hall.

We were overwhelmed by support, the village hall was packed full all day with neighbours, family, friends, past and present Cheshire YFC members. Thank you to Sue and Mark Bullock, Helen Boxford, George and Noreen Dutton, Grace Barber and everyone else who offered their support and services on the day. We couldn't have done it without you!

We're proud to announce we raised an unbelievable amount for The Christie, **£1315**. The Dairy Queen Team ran the amazing raffle, for their charities; The Little Princess Trust and Yellow Wellies. They raised a brilliant **£572!**

Thank you to everyone who came along for a chat, to drop off a donation or enjoyed a slice of cake!



## The Rector's Letter March 2026

People sometimes ask me why the date of Easter (unlike Christmas) varies from year to year? Long ago, in the year 325, leaders of the Church met at the Council of Nicea (in present day Turkey) and decided that Easter would be held on the first Sunday after the first Full Moon occurring on or after the vernal equinox, which means that Easter falls between March 22nd and April 25th. This year it is on April 5th, good news for our flower arrangers as there should still be plenty of daffodils around.

The date of Easter therefore sets the date for the forty days of Lent. Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days after his baptism, and so the season of Lent is used by Christians for the same reason. In the early church, the baptism of new Christians took place at Easter. They also had a practice of welcoming back on Maundy (Holy) Thursday, those who were baptised but had committed serious sins.

The astute amongst you will work out that there are more than forty days between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. The same Council that set the date for Easter also forbade fasting and other acts of penance on Sundays during Lent, therefore, Sundays are not counted.

As I mentioned in last month's Newsletter, there will be a half-hour service of Compline at St. James', Gawsworth, on Wednesday evenings at 7pm during Lent with a short address/reflection on some of the Parables of Jesus and all are welcome.

May I encourage you to take the season of Lent seriously. Whatever you decide to do or not do, I hope that it will be a useful season for you, as you think about your relationship with God, your commitment to his Church, and prepare for Easter.

Yours ever,

Colin

### North Rode Services March 2026

<b>March 1<sup>st</sup></b> Lent 2 No flowers	<b>11.15 am</b> Holy Communion (CW)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Lynn Petts Bronwen Bebington
<b>March 8<sup>th</sup></b> Lent 3 No flowers	<b>11.15 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Marilyn Ainslie Sharon Oldfield
<b>March 15<sup>th</sup></b> Mothering Sunday Posies: Sheila Kidd and Rose Brocklehurst	<b>11.15 am</b> Holy Communion (BCP)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	The Rector Peter Brocklehurst Diane Lowe
<b>March 22<sup>nd</sup></b> Lent 5 Passiontide	No service at North Rode	<b>Gawsworth</b>	<b>10 am</b> Holy Communion <b>4 pm</b> Evensong
<b>March 29<sup>th</sup></b> Palm Sunday	<b>10.00 am</b> Gawsworth Benefice Service Holy Communion	Led by:	The Rector
<b>April 3<sup>rd</sup></b> Good Friday	<b>11.30 am</b> Meditation on the Cross	Led by:	The Rector
<b>April 5<sup>th</sup></b> Easter Day Flowers: Susan Bullock	<b>11.15 am</b> Holy Communion (CW)	Led by: Sidesman: Reading:	Revd Anne Freestone Shirley Tudor-Evans Yvonne Brown

**Lent 2026**  
**St. James', Gawsworth**  
 ~ Wednesdays during Lent ~  
 25<sup>th</sup> February, 4<sup>th</sup> March, 11<sup>th</sup> March,  
 18<sup>th</sup> March, 25<sup>th</sup> March  
 7.00pm Compline & Address/Reflection  
 on the Parables of Jesus  
 All are welcome!

Maundy Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 7.00pm  
 "Music, Hymns & Readings for  
 Passiontide"

***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

The annual parish meeting will be held on **7<sup>th</sup> May 2026**. This is an informal village meeting open to everyone. Parish Council activities over the past year will be presented along with our plans for the future. A presentation will also be made by Daintry Hall Management Committee on progress with the new village pavilion and facilities. This is your opportunity to provide feedback and share your ideas for the future of our village. Cheese and Wine will be served and we anticipate the meeting will be approximately one hour long. Details and venue will be shared by newsletter, posters and leaflets closer to the time. The formal North Rode Parish Council AGM will follow and all are welcome to stay to listen to proceedings if they wish.

## North Rode Well Dressing – Save the Date!

Now that the Church Lane well has been repaired and refurbished, plans are underway for our first Well Dressing event on **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2026**. This will be a day to be enjoyed and remembered by all, with activities and entertainment. The well dressing will be preceded by workshops in the village to prepare the displays from Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> to Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> August and these will be open to anyone interested. Details will be announced over the coming months.



## Recent Planning Applications

**25/4684/CLPUD** Keepers Cottage, Manor Park Rd. Certificate of lawful development - for demolition of garage and erection of a masonry building with swimming pool, a three bay garage and a timber frame garden room.

**26/0512/PRIOR-6** Land Off Bank Lane, North Rode. Prior Approval for erection of general purpose building.

You can view applications online at: [Cheshire East Planning Applications](#).



## Peak Cluster Update

The parish council was requested by the Planning Inspectorate to inform them of information we think should be provided in the Environmental Statement, to be submitted by Peak Cluster in support of their application. This is in addition to concerns raised directly to Peak Cluster by the Parish Council. Our response is below:

- How will the River Dane will be crossed and disruption to wildlife minimised?
- How will narrow and busy lanes in North Rode be crossed to minimise disruption to road users, local residents, businesses and farms?
- How will access to working farmland bisected by the working width be provided for farmers?
- What building/farming restrictions will be in place alongside and above the pipeline?
- How will access to public footpaths be maintained across the working width?
- Concerns were expressed as regards the high potential of damage to field and road drains from the works. What checks will be done as regards putting drains back correctly?
- What is the estimated dates on which the work in North Rode will be progressed?
- What is the estimated time period for disruption to take place?
- How will the work be phased?
- What size of vehicles will use the narrow lanes – particularly in relation to Church Lane and Bank Lane which are single vehicle width at certain points and currently suffer severe congestion problems at times?
- Will service 'depots' be created within North Rode land?
- What recourse will be in place if the work is not done to the satisfaction of the land owners / or problems occur thereafter?
- Will trees be removed and then replaced?

We urge land owners affected to engage an independent surveyor, to act on their behalf (their fee's should be paid by Peak Cluster). In addition you can find information on the planning Inspectorate website and sign up for updates here: <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/EN0710001>

**Ever Wondered** .....what it looks like to peer down the overflow from the lake in The Park?



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## North Rode WI Report

Secretary Pam Robinson writes



The President Diane Lowe was absent from the WI Meeting as she had recently had a Knee Operation and Secretary Pam Robinson was away, so Treasurer Jackie Spooner conducted the Meeting - Many thanks Jackie.

A Get Well Card had been sent to Diane Lowe and apologies were given out from the members

Thanks were given for table flowers to Norma Knaggs, for teas to Mary Hobson and Carrie Barton, for cakes to Diane Lowe and Jackie Spooner and for the raffle to Pat Lovatt.

Cheshire News have a report about Frances Woollam, the Cheshire WI Chair from 2011 to 2016, who has recently passed away. Some of our members will remember Frances coming to one of our Special Birthday Celebrations. Frances was a very supportive WI Member with her pink hair!

### Dates for your Diary

- Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March - Spring Council Meeting at Nunsmere Hall. Details of this have been given out previously and few of our members are attending this meeting. Resolution Voting Forms were due back asap
- Thursday April 23<sup>rd</sup> - Stockport Hat Works and Afternoon Tea
- Thursday April 23<sup>rd</sup> - North Rode WI Coffee Morning at Gawsworth Methodist Church. Offers of Cakes Plants Raffle Prizes etc very welcome.

The Speaker for the afternoon was Jo Taylor who came to us last year. Her Talk was on Wellness and Mindfulness and was presented with music. Members were very relaxed during the afternoon and Jo gave a meditation session and also good tips regarding sleeping. Jackie gave a Vote of Thanks to Jo. The competition for a mindfulness quotation was won by Pauline Croft and the raffle was won by Norma Knaggs.

The next meeting is on Tuesday March 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm, when our Speaker will be Rob Mason. His talk will be on *Northern Humour* and the competition is a Bowl of Dwarf Tulips. Visitors from Eaton WI have been invited.

Visitors are made welcome on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the Month. Note: this is at 2pm in the winter months and 7.30pm in the summer months at Eaton Church and Community Hall

## March Letter

Dear Friends

Warm greetings from everyone at school as we move into the month of March. The spring term is already proving to be a busy and exciting one, and we are delighted to share a few highlights with you. We are so blessed to have such incredible school grounds and it's no secret how wonderful Marton is in the Spring!

Our Little Seeds Stay and Play sessions launch again this week after Christmas, with the first session taking place on 4th February. It will be wonderful to welcome families back into school and see our youngest children enjoying time to play, explore and learn together. We look forward to many more happy sessions over the coming months. We will meet again on these following dates:

- Wednesday 4th March
- Wednesday 6th May

As I write this our Year 4 children are currently having fun on their residential trip to Robinwood. This is always a memorable experience, filled with teamwork, challenges and fun, and we know it will create lasting memories for everyone involved.

We would like to say a huge thank you to our Friends and Family for the magnificent fundraising efforts last year. Thanks to their hard work and generosity, we are thrilled that a new AstroTurf area will be erected over the half-term holidays. This will make a fantastic addition to our outdoor provision, and we are all incredibly excited to see it completed.

Finally, we are immensely proud of one of our Teaching Assistants, Louise Forster, who has recently won an incredible award. Her dedication and commitment to our children truly deserve this recognition, and we are very much looking forward to celebrating her success at an awards evening at Tytherington Club.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support and encouragement. We look forward to sharing more news with you as the term continues.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Nevin Deakin'.

Mrs Nevin Deakin, Headteacher

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## Snowdrops – the “Fair Maids of February”

- Snowdrops can fully recover from freezing weather because their cells contain special proteins that act as a natural antifreeze
- It's a Greek name – ‘Galanthus’ translates as ‘milk flower’
- A naturally occurring substance within the plant, called galantamine, is used to help treat the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease, although the bulbs themselves are poisonous.
- Snowdrops were named after earrings not drops of snow.
- They are symbolic of spring, purity and religion.
- The snowdrop isn't a UK native. They became fashionable in the Victorian era and the first records of plants in the wild date from 1778.
- The best time to transplant snowdrops is when they are green and just after flowering.



# THE BRIDGES OF NORTH RODE

*Huw Williams*

For over 40 years as a civil engineer, I have been involved with the construction, inspection and monitoring of major infrastructure bridges throughout the world and in the UK and they still hold a fascination for me. It seems to me that North Rode is blessed with more than it's fair share of bridges, most of them historic and perhaps that is what subconsciously attracted me to this quiet rural village. It strikes me that most people, in their day to day life, probably drive over or under these bridges without much thought to what they are crossing or indeed the work gone into these structures. Hopefully this article will give some insight.

Over time, North Rode has witnessed first-hand the introduction of many new modes of transporting people and goods across the country, from the introduction of the Congleton to Buxton turnpike toll road in the late 1700s, the building of Macclesfield canal in the early 1800's and the introduction of the railway in the mid 1800's. All have passed through North Rode, and the River Dane and its tributaries, have required bridges of one type or another to cross them. The Buxton to Congleton Turnpike was the first major transport route to pass through North Rode. The bridge over the River Dane at Colley Mill is **Colley Mill Bridge**. It is a magnificent listed two arch stone structure, probably built in the late 1700's. It is quite narrow and has pedestrian embasures on each side over the central pier. After passing over the bridge from Congleton, turnpike users would have come to Colley Lane Tollgate at Ethels Green, no doubt grumbling about the exorbitant fees they would have to pay if carrying goods. Afterwards the turnpike continued on towards Buxton and Smithy Green (Bosley Crossroads).



*Colley Mill Bridge*

Travelling from Ethels Green to the Church, up Church Lane, necessitated crossing a small tributary called Cowbrook. **Cowbrook Bridge** is another listed structure and was built in 1809 (according to the stone set into the abutment). The bridge is a beautifully symmetrical stone arch spanning over 5m. I always think when I pass over this bridge that it was built four years after the battle of Trafalgar and six years before the battle of Waterloo!



*Cowbrook Bridge*

Further upstream from Cowbrook and North of the Lake, is **Dob Ford Bridge**, no doubt because there was previously a ford here. This structure doesn't share the elegance of previous bridges mentioned. It is a single arched bridge of brick and heavily repaired and braced, no doubt due to carrying traffic way above its design weight.



*Dob Ford Bridge*



*Macclesfield Canal Bridge 55*



*North Rode Viaduct*



*Buxton Road Crossing*



*North Rode Railway Station Bridge*

It amazes me that many (but not all) of these old bridges, that were built in the age of horse and cart, are still able to withstand the rigours of 44 tonne trucks passing over them with so little damage – a testament I think to the skill of bridge engineers of the past.

The Canal Age came to North Rode with the completion of the Macclesfield Canal in 1831. This of course meant a new bridge for the Buxton Rd turnpike to cross – at **Macclesfield Canal Bridge Number 55**. What a beautiful masonry bridge this is and typical of many built for this canal by Engineer Williams Crosley. It is a listed structure and built of ashlar gritstone with a horseshoe elliptical arch. However, Before the canal had a chance to get busy, in 1849 the Railway came to North Rode with great fanfare and the opening of North Rode Station. The railway required four bridges to be constructed in North Rode. Three bridges were on the North Staffordshire Railway Line to Stoke, crossing Bullgate Lane at the station, Buxton Road and the River Dane. The fourth bridge was constructed to carry Buxton Road over the Churnet Valley Branch Line. This was a massive undertaking and must have been enormously disruptive in this small village. **North Rode Viaduct** was built to cross the River Dane. It is an enormous structure, constructed using blue brick, with 20 arches, each of 50ft span. Just North of the viaduct is the **Buxton Road Crossing**, which in itself is an impressive and often overlooked structure you drive under without thinking. It is a very high three arched bridge, again built of blue brick, under which the turnpike was still in operation for another 33 years after it was built. The time of Turnpikes came to an end in the 1880's and the Congleton to Buxton Turnpike closed in 1882, after which care and maintenance of major roads passed to county councils. **North Rode Railway Station Bridge** that you now drive over is not the original. The station and the Churnet Valley line were closed in 1962, and prior to electrification of the railway in 1967, bridges had to be demolished and rebuilt to accommodate the extra headroom required for overhead cables. This included the North Rode Station Bridge, which like many railway bridges were originally arched. As you drive along Buxton Road from Bosley Traffic lights towards Congleton, between Station Road on the left and Ladderstile Farm, you might notice a slight rise in the road and stone parapets on either side. You are crossing the **Churnet Valley Railway Bridge** passing over the track bed of the disused line. The bridge below is a fine stone arched example of railway architecture of its period and in remarkably good condition.



*Churnet Valley Railway Bridge*