

Golant Heritage Group Chairman's Report for Parish Council AGM May 2026

Golant Heritage Group was formed by volunteers in 2013 to provide a community-based focus of interest in the history and heritage of Golant village and its surrounding area. Our aims are to:

- research and preserve the history of Golant and surrounding area.
- preserve, maintain and continue the Golant Village Archive in a variety of media formats.
- hold meetings and exhibitions for the benefit of members and the local community.

To a large extent we fulfil these aims through our regular meetings and the varied expertise of our members. Sue Reardon in particular has done a massive amount of research on the village as a settlement and recently delivered a fascinating talk on the long-lived hostilities between two large local landowning families, the Rashleighs and the Barratts. She has now come to a point in her research on the local farms where we can plan for an exhibition in the autumn, probably the last weekend in October. Alongside this will be the unveiling of a new embroidered wall hanging based on Golant and the Land which is currently being created under the leadership of Sue Strachan.

Ian and Fayre are our chief movers and shakers with regard to our archive and website. Ian keeps our website fresh and along with Sarah, keeps an eye on the U-turnround post on the green, whilst Fayre very much looks after our physical archive, ensuring all documents are up to date.

And at last we found someone to break the back of transcribing our audio recordings. Well done and thank you to Jeremy Lloyd-Evans! It now falls to me to make the final edit.

Our main aim has to be the preservation of Golant's heritage for future generations, and currently we have two specific areas of interest in our sights. The first being Golant's orchards. Our Apple events throughout last year had proved to be something of a success, and certainly the autumn Apple Day 2025 although perhaps quieter than we had hoped and hindered slightly by lousy weather, was really appreciated by those who came along and we feel this could be an annual autumn event, but maybe a bit earlier, in September, when there may still be some apples on the trees. However, our second Open Orchards event was something of a disappointment despite advertising far more widely. We have a wonderful diversity of orchards from long established old orchards, to young and flourishing, but whereas last year the blossom was very bold and impactful, this year was more steady and perhaps less of a showcase to draw people in. I would like to thank and acknowledge the efforts of our orchard owners who willingly prepared for the day and were ready to welcome visitors. Little Pinnock had a number of visitors, but the others had almost nobody. We will draw a line under this as an event.

The other village asset which is currently under scrutiny for us as a group is the Human Sundial on the green. Although it is only 26 years old, there are not that many in the country and it is registered with the British Sundial Society. Whilst the area was completely flat when first constructed as a village millennium project in 1999, it is now becoming very uneven and hard to keep it clear of the surrounding mounds of grass. It often goes unnoticed, with even some villagers being unaware that it is there! As a group we feel it is an important village feature worth preserving or restoring and are currently exploring ways that this might be achieved, in order to approach the Parish Council with some suggestions. There are a number of examples of human sundials set in different surfaces to be found on line. The question is what might be the best for our site. It may be that Golant Heritage Group could source a grant for the groundwork. We still have all the precise measurements, and so the actual relaying of the stones might make an enjoyable community project.

Meanwhile we continue to meet every second Tuesday at 2pm, here in the village hall which is a lovely space in which to gather and to be able to use as our base.

Penny Parsons