

## Cornwall Orchard Network Gathering Sunday 17 May 2026

The 2026 gathering was held at St Newlyn East community hall, with visit to Tresillian House orchard and walled garden. For the first time, we introduced a ticket price to help recover costs for refreshments and hall hire. A total of 46 tickets were sold and 36 actually attended, with a representative from every corner of Cornwall.

The morning started with the usual round robin to give everyone a chance to provide an update from their orchard site, project or organisation - thanks to Charlotte Barry for her kind and gentle time keeping.

Michelle Lawson listed **Cornwall Orchard Network's** activity from the past year:

- *Second visit to **Haye Cider Farm Orchard**, nr Lostiwthiel to survey invertebrates, fungi and other orchard related species of interest (June 2025)*
- *Visit to '**Plants for a Future**' near Lerryn (Aug 2025)*
- *Apple ID session at **Tregurra Orchard**, Truro, expertly led by Sally Pyner (Sept 2025)*
- *Talk by **Colin Hawke on the first Cornwall Orchard Project in the early 1990's** (Nov 2025)*

Michelle & Andrew Ormerod attended the most recent meeting of the UK Orchard Network, and it would be good to have a Cornwall representative at each UK meeting.

<https://www.orchardnetwork.org.uk/>

- *Europom 2026 an international fruit growing network taking place at RHS Rosemoor, Devon 3 and 4 October 2026. Cornwall Orchard Network will host a stall for any orchard groups, community orchards, organisations in the network. If you'd like to contribute any orchard flyers or help look after the stall for a short while then please let us know. Sally, Meike and Michelle are definitely going.*
- *Priority habitat definitions Natural England is updating priority habitat definitions including traditional orchard priority habitat.*
- *Good apples guidelines Standards for orchards being developed for orchards to sign up to. Almost complete.*
- *Apple varieties for the future Common desire for research so can plan for apples for the future. Agroforestry Research Trust is assessing a number of French varieties. Looking for those requiring low chill and lower sunlight hours than the continent. Ross-on-Wye has cider apple experiments ongoing. Comments that this is no easy task due to variability of climate change.*

**Sally Pyner, Kehelland Trust**, delivered a talk on apple juice production at Kehelland, which gave insight into machinery used, outputs and limitations (pasteurisation capacity outstrips demand and not being able to reuse bottles). Kehelland has all the juice making machinery and people are able to press their own apples outside of operational hours, contact Sally for more information.

**Meike Weiser, Forest for Cornwall**, delivered a brief overview of different agroforestry interventions and how nuts can be incorporated into these. She talked about cobnuts, sweet chestnut, and almonds, opportunities, limitations and main threats - grey squirrels

and deer. She noted the Red Squirrel Project Cornwall.

**Charles Hulbert-Powell** grows walnuts near Lostwithiel. He used to have a walnut grove in East Sussex and produced walnut oil. He shared his experience and knowledge about growing different walnut varieties. He is happy to provide advice and guidance to people wanting to grow walnuts as part of a business.

This was followed by a generous lunch of pasties, quiche and salad, thanks to Collin Hawke, and plenty of time allowed for networking and chats.

The afternoon visit to Tresillian House Estate was organised by Colin Hawke, as the gardens are not open to the public. The orchard was one of Colin's orchards planted in the early 1990s, in a quincunx pattern. Sadly one orchard had a hard top prune - almost pollard - and a whole section of trees has been removed, meaning valuable habitat has been lost. We were also treated to a visit into the walled garden, which houses some very mature cordons and fan trained apples along the walls.

Big thanks to the organising team who made this day possible and so enjoyable.

*If you have suggestions for a location for next year's gathering on the weekend of 9/10 May please get in touch with us.*