

RIPE AND CHALVINGTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
Update for the Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council
May 11th 2026

Introduction.

Ripe and Chalvington Community Association, known as RACCA, was established in 2023.

We are constituted as a Community Interest Company. As a CIC we pay tax on any surplus we make. Therefore we need to manage our cash flow carefully to keep tax to a minimum.

We are governed by a board of Directors. They are Paul Clarke, Mary Cleeve, Paul Griffiths (Chair), Margaret Hallowell, Nicholas Hamblin, Andy Melville, Paula Parsons (Treasurer) and myself, Debbie Turner (Company Secretary).

Our purpose is to carry on activities which benefit the people of the Parish; particularly to operate community open spaces and related recreational facilities, to provide a facility for the community to articulate matters of interest and to carry out environmental improvements. In practice this means RACCA can do pretty well anything legal that will benefit the residents of the parish, so if you have a good idea please get in touch.

Over the last year our focus has been on the development of the community field. We have been somewhat slowed down by the ecology findings required for planning permissions. When the ecologist surveyed the area, a badgers set was found. Although we don't believe it is being used by badgers we have been asked to provide a 30 meters exclusion zone around the badger set where no change will occur. We have accepted this recommendation and have changed the original design to accommodate this.

We also ran the Christmas Eve event. This event worked smoothly, received positive feedback and generated sufficient funding for the gifts and other costs, but was reliant on a small group of, in the main "older" volunteers.

We had a fundraising event last summer. Sadly because of the heat we had to cancel the dogs show element of this event.

This year, we will once again be focusing on the development of the community field. We will be working on the second phase. That is the area near to the road. This is going to be a community garden and a children's play area. The timetable that we are working to is to submit the planning application by the 20th May and then to hope to get our planning permissions by early September 2026. That will allow us to complete the work on the field during the Autumn of 2026 and the Spring of 2027.

Once in receipt of the planning permission we will hold a community meeting in the Autumn to update local residents to understand the plan and also for residents to influence how the work is achieved.

We are also planning to run a fund raising fete and fun dog show on Saturday September 26th. This will be to raise money for the Community Associations running costs and for the Christmas Eve event in December.

Conclusion.

One of the things that has become apparent during the course of 2025-2026 is that much of the work around the Community Association comes down to a very few people. We would very much like if there were many more people involved in the work of RACCA. This would reduce the workload on a very few people, enable us to get different perspectives from a wider range of people and for us all to play to our strengths.

Ideas about how to involve more people and for residents to be more involved would be very much welcomed. You can get in touch via any of the Directors or through our website.