

Donald Campbell's 'Bluebird'
passing through Reigate in the 1950's



Swans at Earlswood Lakes



WW1 troop movements in Reigate

The Civic Society
For Reigate & Redhill
www.reigatesociety.org.uk



QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
No 138
MARCH 2025

EVENTS IN REIGATE & REDHILL

1-23 May 2025

Reigate & Redhill Music & Drama Festival

<https://rrfestival.org>

15th-17th May 2025

Reigate Tunnel Beer Festival

<http://www.aleforaid.co.uk>

20th-22nd June 2025

Reigate Summer festival

<https://reigatesummerfestival.co.uk/>

11-13th July 2025

Reigate Pub in the Park

<https://www.pubintheparkuk.com/reigate>

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GATTON PARK OPEN DAYS **12.00-5.00 pm**

Many of these days feature activities for children but there is plenty of space to walk and enjoy the open spaces. Gatton Hall is open for the sale of refreshments.



2 March
6 April
4 May
1 June



<https://gattonpark.co.uk/visit/opening-times/>

REIGATE CAVES OPEN DAYS



Barons' Cave Main chamber by Laura Brown

10th May 2025

14th June 2025

12th July 2025

9th August 2025

13th September 2025

<https://reigatecaves.org.uk>



Reigate is well known for its 'caves' which riddle the town centre, although these are in fact largely old sand mines. The castle mound overlooking Reigate town centre is composed of soft sandstone and has been mined over several centuries. The castle has long gone but the mound and many of its excavations still remain.

RS CHAIR & REDHILL NOTES – PIPPA MARTIN

The Borough had a festive Christmas. Reigate Church Street closed to traffic on 30th November and sported many stalls, with food and drink. The Mayor and Mayoress welcomed the stars of Dorking Panto, several bands and switched on the Christmas lights. Our day was made even more special by a visit from the Deputy Mayor of Reigate's twin town, Eschweiler, and his wife. Their presence brought a wonderful sense of connection and community to the festivities.

Although Redhill had no outdoor tree the one in the Belfry was the tallest in Surrey. The platform built in the Belfry staged performances by dance groups and Christmas music. Andy Nash reported that all the bays were full over the season.

The market braved all weathers and special praise goes to Dylan Foster and his sister for their attractive and well stocked fruit and veg stall. Likewise Thomas and John who provided fine seasonal scarves hats and gloves. The children's carousel proved very popular and the many international food stalls provided tasty fare.

On 26th October at the town hall the Solum gross proposals to put skyscrapers in the Redhill station forecourt were rejected. These would have cut the Station off from the town. R & R Society submitted an objection based on info provided by the Guildhall London on planning for 21st century. The society suggested instead a state of the art steel and glass pedestrian bridge linking the station to the town.

On 4th December our president Nicholas Owen chaired a R&R Society meeting at a packed Carrington School to SAVE THE HARLEQUIN. Pippa Martin the Society chair spoke for several minutes after a moving video of performances at the theatre in 2022 and 2023. The meeting was then opened to the floor. A vote was taken unanimously to save the Harlequin.

The leader of the Council Richard Biggs pledged £10 million to the repair and improvement of the theatre.

On 3rd Jan your Chair Pippa Martin fell down a flight of stairs and is still undergoing rehabilitation.

Deputy Chair Christine Ingram has been deputising in Pippa's absence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Surrey County Council May 2025 elections have been postponed

The Government made an announcement on Wednesday 5 February 2025, confirming that Surrey will be in the first wave of local government reorganisation and Surrey County Council May 2025 elections will be postponed.

We expect that the earliest that elections for the new unitary authorities will take place is May 2026.

Following received from RBBC

We are writing to let you know that the Council is proposing to put in place an Article 4 direction to remove permitted development rights to convert ground floor commercial units in the borough's town and local centres to residential properties.

To find out more, please visit the Article 4 direction webpage:

<https://www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk/article4direction>

Anyone who wishes to make a representation on the proposal is invited to do so by 13 May 2025. Please share comments

by email to LDF@reigate-banstead.gov.uk or in writing to:

The Planning Policy Team

Reigate & Banstead Borough Council, Town Hall, Castlefield Road, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 0SH TEL: 01737 276178

SECRETARY'S NOTES – JANE ARTIS

Next Open Meetings to be held on Zoom or Face to Face as noted

17th March 2025 at 7.30 pm

Reigate Community Centre, 53 High St, Reigate RH2 9AE

Speaker and topic TBC

TREASURER'S REPORT at 28/02/2025 –ROBERT BOGIN

Net income ytd 2024-2025 is £612. Membership subs to date are £3082

Last full year was £2982

Balance sheet figure is very healthy

REGISTRAR'S REPORT – ROBERT BOGIN

Number of members stands at 371 comprising 100 single memberships, 122 family memberships, 20 corporate and 7 others. Thus a total of 249 memberships. New members joining in 2024-2025 to date is 25.

No of memberships unpaid for 2024-2025 is 22; reminders have been sent out

ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING GROUP – TIM LEE

The APC continues to meet to discuss and formulate responses to current planning applications as consultees to RBBC. Recently these have ranged from shopfront designs within conservation areas to an outline planning application for 107 new residential units.

We are also monitoring targets for the number of new residential units set by the government for the local authority to meet this year. There is also going to be a consultation carried out regarding the aim of RBBC to apply article 4 directives to permitted development applications to change retail units into residential units in order to protect high streets within the borough which the APC will hope to participate in. More information on Page 4

The Civic awards 2025

Any nominations for this year's award for projects completed recently or in the recent past that our members deem worthy of nomination are still very much welcomed from RSS members.

Projects can range from outstanding buildings to public sculptures, and we will draw up a short list from the nominations to be judged next year.

New chairperson required:

I am afraid I am still looking for someone to come forward to take over the role of Chair of the APC. The new Chair preferably needs to have experience working within the construction, design, planning or environmental areas and is passionate about protecting and future proofing the quality of the built and natural environment and heritage of the past for future generations.

Please reach out to me if you are interested in joining the committee and taking on the role of chairperson in due course

WEBSITE & FACEBOOK- BRUCE HEALEY

The history section has had a page added showing some images of Donald Campbell's Bluebird being transported through Reigate.

<https://www.facebook.com/p/The-Reigate-and-Redhill-Society-100064867353379/>



Recordings of all past talks can be found here

https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/meetings/meeting_notes.php



TRANSPORT GROUP – BRUCE HEALEY

Airports - Extra Runways:

The Government is backing a third runway at Heathrow and the development of a second runway at Gatwick. There is a long way to go before planning consent for either is formally given. The new runway at Heathrow would cross the M25 and the motorway will need to be sunk into a tunnel between junctions 14 and 15. The hope is to have the runway functional by 2035. Presumably the rail infrastructure in the area would also need enhancing. The Society continues to oppose the development at Gatwick

Rail:

The Pay-as-you-go contactless payment system will be extended to Reigate "sometime in 2025". While Redhill already benefits from this, Reigate has been left to catch up. While a date is not yet forthcoming, at least we have a commitment for roll-out this year.

GWR trains have stated that they are provisionally anticipating ordering new trains for the North Downs Line in 2027 with an in-service date of 2031. These are expected to be 4 or even 5 cars long and will use battery power to cover the gaps in the electrified third rail. The technology is successfully working on the West Ealing to Greenford branch. There are presently no plans to increase the service to 3 trains per hour although these options are being investigated, any such plans would strengthen the case for electrification of the whole line.

The present class 165 units will be life expired in 2035 and are starting to show their age in terms of reliability and corrosion. The North Downs Line has a small pool of these units and their slowly decreasing reliability is affecting the service.

The recent closure of the North Downs Line between Reigate and Guildford was for work on a bridge at Shalford and to replace some of the half barrier level crossings towards Guildford with full barriers.

Roads:

The work on the A3/M25 intersection grinds on with completion still expected this summer. RHS Wisley have been complaining about a fall in visitor numbers owing to the difficulty in reaching the gardens. The M25 will be closed between Junctions 10 and 11 from 7th to 10th March, as well as from 21st to 24th March. The project is running late and is not now expected to be complete until spring 2026.

Gatton Park Road is closed until late May SES Water to replace 800 metres of water main.

Buses:

Metrobus have introduced their low pollution single decker hydrogen buses on the route 100. They are planning to also use them on routes 430 and 435. Some double decker hydrogen buses are due for delivery and are expected to be used on routes 420, 460 and 480 although some single decker hydrogen buses have been seen on the 420.

The £2 cap on fare was increased to £3 on 1st January 2025.

Local Government Shake-up

Not really a subject to set the pulse racing, but one which could have a profound effect on how local services are delivered – social care for elderly and children, roads and highways, education, fire service, planning, leisure centres, community services and much more. The government is set to reorganise “two-tier” authorities like Surrey – where there is both a local borough council and a county council – and replace them by a single “unitary” council. And likely too with an elected mayor sitting above both (so still two tiers)!

The Minister, Jim McMahon, has announced that Surrey is in the first wave. To get things started he is cancelling the county council elections this coming May. Elections to the new unitary councils will be held a year later, in May 2026.

Current Situation

In truth, this is a process which has been going on for some time. The large cities have unitary councils, and outside the big conurbations, the “shire counties” have been gradually adopting this structure.

In Surrey, two consolidation schemes were promoted by the county council in the last 20 years. These did not get off the ground on a voluntary basis because the county was “outgunned” by the councillors in the 11 boroughs and districts.

This time it's different. It's now mandatory. The Labour government has little sympathy for the remaining counties – largely Conservative and Lib Dem controlled. It also has a mantra and mission for “growth” which it sees as driving all its policies, and sees unitary councils as the solution.

The Future

Much is unclear (and thinking will have moved on before this magazine is delivered to you). The Minister is expecting local politicians and councils to work together to make a single proposal to him. He doesn't want to decide between several options; he of course will make the final decision, possibly after some sort of consultation with the public.

The principles set out by government are:

- Both the county council and all the borough councils in Surrey are to be abolished. It is not a case that the county is taking over the boroughs.
- A minimum population size of 500,000 is expected for the new councils, which will combine the functions of both the existing county and borough councils for their area. There are about 1.2 million residents in Surrey so that would suggest two councils – an East Surrey and a West Surrey or perhaps a North and a South Surrey. A single authority for Surrey combining all functions seems to have been ruled out.

The boroughs collectively regard a three-way split as their preferred approach as it gives more natural communities with good-ish transport links within them. The East Surrey Council could be Reigate & Banstead plus Epsom & Ewell, Mole Valley, Tandridge; the West Surrey Council could be with Guildford, Waverley and Woking; and the North Surrey Council could be Spelthorne, Runnymede, Surrey Heath and Elmbridge. A recent wrinkle is the possibility of Crawley joining in the East Surrey arrangement because of Gatwick.

Local Government Shake-up (continued)

The Debt Problem

A huge issue to any reorganisation in Surrey is the massive amounts of debt taken on by some of the boroughs. Woking is bankrupt with borrowings of over £2.1 billion, spent on unwise speculative property acquisitions and poorly managed green energy investments. Woking can't even pay the interest on the debt, let alone repay the capital. Other councils have significant debts - Spelthorne has £1.1 million and Runnymede £600,000.

The Minister has said the new councils must absorb these debts – one taking on Woking and the other Spelthorne and Runnymede.

This is just unacceptable. Reigate & Banstead is the only borough in Surrey which is debt-free and has no borrowing whatsoever. Cllr Nick Harrison spoke at the county council meeting in the debate saying: "How can I possibly vote in favour of this? How can I justify to my residents in Nork and Tattenhams that they should take on the debts of these mismanaged authorities?"

We wait to see if the government will reconsider, and write off these unmanageable debts.

A Mayor for Surrey

Over and above the two or three unitary councils in Surrey there is likely to be an Elected Mayor. This would be different to the Ceremonial Mayors which each council with their gowns, chains and mace who are for a year the non-political "first citizen."

The new Elected Mayor voted in by the public would have a four-year term, like Sadiq Khan in London or Andy Burnham in Manchester. He/she will not oversee or direct the unitary councils. But the Mayor will have new powers and importantly money from government, backed up by council tax. He/she will need to devise a Local Growth Plan, and have powers in relation to transport, skills and employment, housing and strategic planning, economic development and regeneration, environment/ climate change, health and wellbeing, and public safety. It remains to be seen what democratic oversight and challenge will be in put in place; the London Mayor is scrutinised by the Great London Assembly. What will happen in Surrey?

Is this Devolution? The government thinks so, at least in terms of giving some of its powers to the mayors. But the new unitaries will cover huge areas and populations, so it looks like centralisation from that perspective. The public will find these bodies much harder to influence.

Will it save money and increase efficiency? Who knows. Undoubtedly there could be savings in combining functions of nearby boroughs, under a single boss, but deputies and assistants could spring up. The county functions of adult care, children's services, highways etc are being split up, so will arguably be less efficient. Savings from previous local government re-organisations have been elusive.

Will it solve the big issues in public services? No. There is nothing in this to tackle the main problems – the demographic pressure of the elderly population; the crisis in child mental health and special education needs; nor even in the repair of potholes.

ARTICLE BY Cllr Nick Harrison, Borough councillor for Tattenham Corner and Preston

GREEN SPACES GROUP (GSG) – HELEN NEVE

Actions since the last committee meeting:

Previously we reported that, following the refusal of the Solum planning application for the development of the area around Redhill railway station, the Green Spaces Group is suggesting a further collaborative approach on developing options on what we do want for Redhill, rather than what we don't want.

Our first meeting is programmed for 3rd March 2025; we will be planning the approach to this project, with particular reference to topics/scope, area, consultation programme and timetable. We will report back in due course.



Our live links are set out below. For updates, please follow and like GSG on

<https://www.facebook.com/GSGReigateSociety>



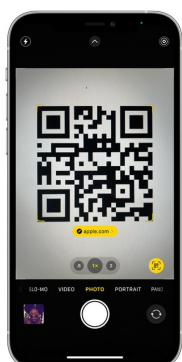
<https://twitter.com/GSGReigateSoc>



<https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/about/na.php>



<https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/Walks/>



HOW TO READ QR CODES

QR codes give you quick access to websites without having to enter or remember a web address. You can use the Camera app to scan a QR code. From the Home Screen, Control Centre or Lock Screen of your mobile phone or tablet, open the Camera App so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder. Your device will recognise the QR code and display a notification. Tap the notification to open the link associated with the QR code. If you require help with this, visit your local library.

EAST REDHILL RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (ERRA)

The East Redhill Residents' Association (ERRA) has been advocating for the East Redhill community for over 30 years. Founded in the 1990s, ERRA played a key role in blocking controversial planning proposals, including two attempts to build an incinerator at the Copyhold/Laporte/Fullers Earth site. The association covers an area from Cavendish Road to Cormongers Lane, and membership is open to all local residents.

In early 2023, ERRA was revived to address a new challenge: Solum Development's proposal for 255 flats on the Redhill station car park, including a 15-story tower. The development threatened to change the area's character, prompting residents to re-establish ERRA in 2024.

With input from original members, ERRA quickly mobilised, ensuring local voices were heard. In October 2024, Reigate and Banstead's planning committee refused the development, despite recommendations for approval from officers. This victory, supported by over 2,000 objections from residents, highlighted ERRA's strong advocacy.

Beyond planning issues, ERRA fosters community spirit, organising regular litter picks and working with local groups like the Surrey Wildlife Trust to enhance Redhill Brook's wildlife habitat. They are also hoping to improve pedestrian access in the tunnel under the railway near the Toby Carvery on Redstone Hill.

Looking ahead, ERRA remains committed to addressing both current and future challenges. By collaborating with local organisations, ERRA continues to be a vital force, working to preserve and enhance East Redhill for generations to come.

For more information:

Email: contact@erra.org.uk

[ERRA Facebook Page](#)



HIGH TREES ROAD SINK HOLE – Letter to the Society

We would like to bring the following to your attention and hope the Society will be able to support our endeavours to see High Trees Road, Reigate reopened to public traffic. High Trees Road, Reigate has been closed to traffic since a Sinkhole appeared in May 2024 and this closure is causing a large increase in traffic flow in surrounding roads. In particular, the closure means Ringley Park Avenue is the only vehicular access to Dunottar School and hence, at school times, the traffic is causing serious problems including a higher risk to pedestrians.

High Trees Road is an unadopted 'Private Road' and our research supports a strong case that there exists a longstanding public Right Of Way. However, the residents, who are responsible for its upkeep, appear reluctant to repair the Road let alone reopen it.

A group of local residents from the surrounding area are petitioning SCC to take action to reopen High Trees Road as well as putting forward a case for High Trees Road to be listed as a Public Right of Way. A Website has been created to explain our aims with links to the petition as well a SCC form to help create the Public Right of Way:

We hope the Society will be able to circulate details of our campaign to its members and support our petition in any way possible.

Yours sincerely
Jonathan Tanner

<https://www.openhtr.co.uk/>



Dear Harlequin Users

We are still in trouble with regards to securing the much promised £10m and also in terms of having no full -sized interim facility or community centre for the next 5 years.

The February 13th Full Council meeting was a devastating blow on many levels:

1.The Council leader refused to even consider our temporary 400+ seater theatre with function rooms venue option

2.We learned that the much publicised £10m is not secure – and the 2025/26 budget was approved without any of the £10m in the budget

3.There is a risk that all RBBC reserves (where the £10m is nominally held) will be frozen by Central Government, if the expected larger Unitary Authorities for Surrey are created, and so become unavailable for RBBC to spend - how soon is unknown.

We need the £10m secured now, so that it is held ready to be used; and so in response to the Council's lack of action an Open Letter will be sent to all RBBC Councillors signed by HSG, RRS and other concerned groups. More details will follow.

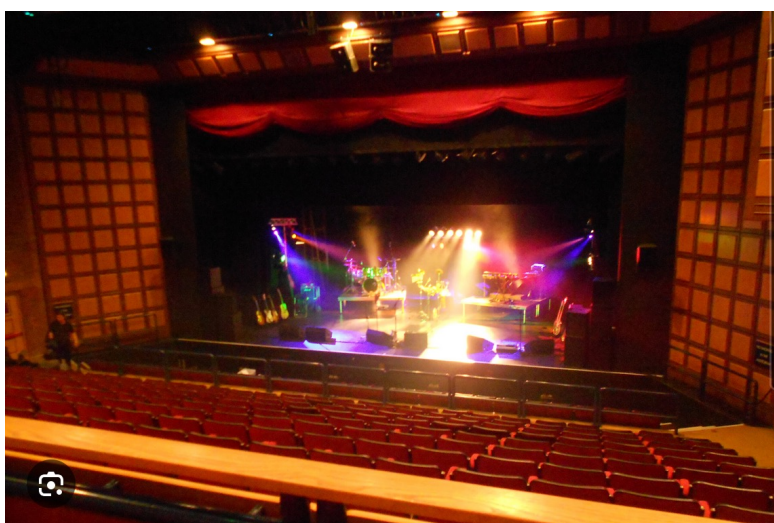
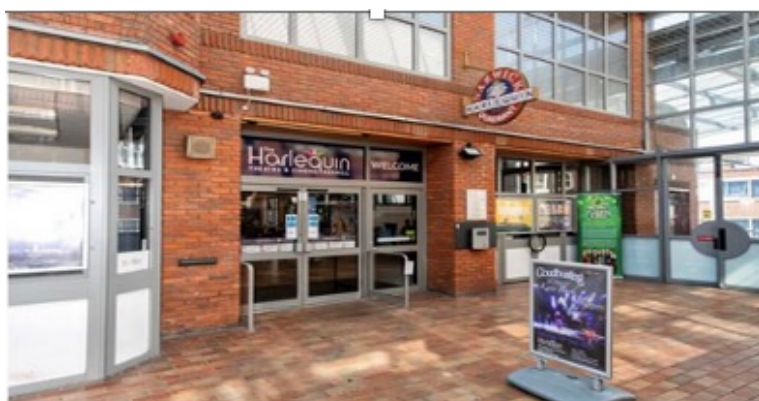


FACEBOOK
PAGE LINK



A group supporting the repair and reopening of The Harlequin Theatre in Redhill that aims to keep the public and group leaders who hire the theatre abreast of the latest news and supports the need for an interim solution for the arts in the borough.

Email: harlequin.reigateandbanstead@gmail.com



CORPORATE MEMBERS.

Adam's Gallery www.adamsgallery.co.uk 42a High Street, Reigate RH2 9AT Art gallery 01737-225677	Royal Albert & Alexandra School www.raa-school.co.uk Gatton Park, Reigate RH2 0TW 01737-649050 Boarding school for boys & girls aged 7 to 18
Crow Watkin www.crowwatkin.co.uk 14 Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7BE Independent estate agents, surveyors & valuers 01737-245886	Sawkings Architects Ltd www.sawkingsarchitects.com 1 The Quarry, Betchworth RH3 7BY 01737-845580 Chartered Architects
Dunottar School www.dunottar.surrey.sch.uk High Trees Road, Reigate RH2 7EL Independent co-educational school ages 11-18 01737-761945	Skin Architects www.skin-architects.co.uk Hope Lacy, 20 Ringley Avenue, Reigate RH2 7ET 01737-210457 Chartered Architects
Micklefield School www.micklefieldschool.co.uk 10 Somers Road, Reigate RH2 9DU 01737-242615 Independent prep school for boys & girls aged 2 1/2 to 11	Stentor Music Co. Ltd www.stentor-music.com Albert Road North, Reigate RH2 9EZ 01737-240226 Manufacturers and distributors of musical instruments
Rayners Commercial www.raynerscommercial.com 14a Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7BG 01737-222835 Chartered Surveyors and Commercial Property Agents	Stoneman Funeral Service www.stonemanfunerals.co.uk Doran Court, Reigate Road, Reigate RH1 6AZ 01737-763456 Funeral directors & memorial craftsmen
Reigate Architects www.reigatearchitects.co.uk 24 Holmesdale Road, Reigate RH2 0BQ 01737-243540 Architecture & sustainability	Unusual Expo www.unusualexpo.com Yorke Road, Reigate 07831-882527 Exhibition & Event Design
Reigate Grammar School www.reigategrammar.org Reigate Road, Reigate RH2 0QS 01737-222231 Grammar School	Touchstone Tonewoods www.touchstonetonewoods.co.uk Albert Road North, Reigate RH2 9EZ 01737-221064 Luthier supplies, parts, tools and tonewoods
Reigate Heath Golf Club www.reigateheathgc.com Reigate Heath RH2 8QR 01737-226793 Heathland golf course	TWM Solicitors www.twmsolicitors.com 40 West Street, Reigate RH2 9BT 01737-221212 Solicitors
Reigate Priory Cricket Club www.reigatepriorycc.co.uk Park Lane, Reigate RH2 8JX 01737-244477 Cricket club with senior & junior sections	White & Sons www.whiteandsons.co.uk 24 High Street, Reigate RH2 9AY 01737-222600 Independent estate agents, surveyors and valuers
Reigate Priory School www.reigate-priory.co.uk Bell Street, Reigate RH2 7RL 01737-245065 Junior school	Wray Common Nursing Home www.wray-common.co.uk Wray Common Road, Reigate RH2 0ND 01737-240563
Robinsons www.robinsonsmb.com 1 Bancroft Rd, Reigate RH2 7RP 01737-229200 Chartered Surveyors, Commercial Property Sales, Lettings Lettings, Valuation & Management	WS Planning & Architecture www.wsipa.co.uk 5 Pool House, Bancroft Road, Reigate RH2 7RP 01737-949872 Chartered Town Planners and Chartered Architects Full design and build service



THE AIMS OF THE REIGATE AND REDHILL SOCIETY

- To conserve and improve the historic environments of Reigate, Redhill, and the surrounding areas
- To object to poorly designed or unsuitable developments
- To encourage a high standard of planning and architecture
- To promote the improvement of infrastructure, local transport services, layout of roads and parking
- The retention and improvement of existing public open spaces and support for setting up new ones.
- Monitoring the maintenance of local green spaces.
- Granting Civic Awards to encourage good development and design throughout the Borough.
- To encourage civic pride in the community.



Individual Membership
£10 per annum

What are the benefits of membership?

- A season of free to all talks on a variety of topics
- A quarterly Newsletter updating members concerning ongoing issues in the Borough

JOIN NOW:



THE REIGATE &
REDHILL SOCIETY

EST 1952



How do I join and
what are the subscription amounts?

Single membership - £10.00 per annum
Family membership - £15.00 per annum
Corporate members - £30.00 per annum

For a membership application form, contact the registrar
Robert Bogin at reigatesociety@gmail.com
or telephone 07989-408834

Alternatively, you can scan the QR code
or complete the form online at
<https://www.reigatesociety.org.uk/contact/>



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