

U3A Beacon Management System

Group Leaders' User Guide (Cheltenham)

Version: 5 (9 July 2020)

1 Introduction

U3A Beacon is an on-line facility for managing U3A local associations. It handles the administrative tasks of membership enrolment, subscription and renewals. It also handles the finance records of the local U3A and provides facilities for managing groups. It was developed by U3A members¹ but is now maintained by an outside company who act under the direction of the Beacon Team.

All U3As are co-hosted on the same server, with comprehensive security arrangements to ensure that the data of each U3A is effectively isolated from that of all others. Moreover, the encryption key used to encrypt sensitive data fields is different for every U3A.

The system is accessed by an internet browser and can therefore be used on most computers, tablets and smartphones. Recommended browsers are Firefox and Chrome but other browsers are also generally compatible.

These instructions are for Group Leaders and explain how Group Leaders can use Beacon to manage their groups. They are tailored to Cheltenham U3A

2 Access

Beacon is located at:

<https://u3abeacon.org.uk>

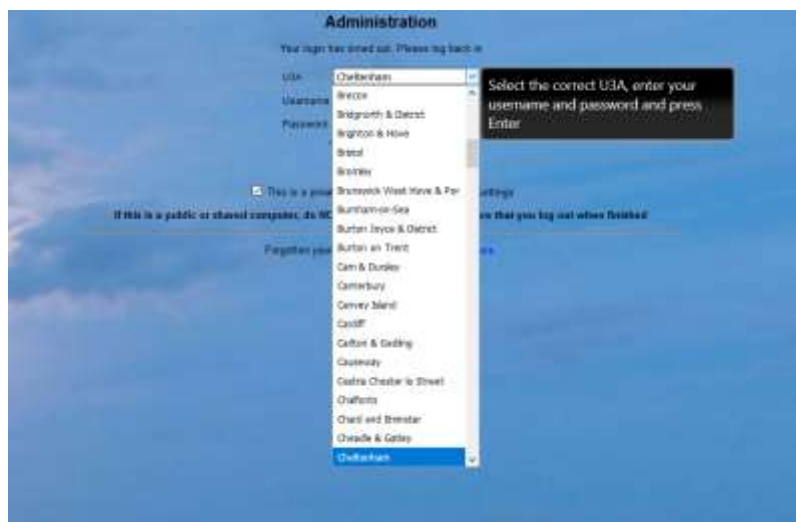
It is accessed by username and password, allocated by the Beacon Administrator for Cheltenham U3A. (beacon@cleltenhamu3a.org.uk)

¹ Cheltenham U3A member John Franklin played a major part in this U3A national initiative.

Upon launching the system, the following log-in screen is displayed.



Select Cheltenham as the U3A from the drop-down list. Then enter the username and password you have been given and press or click **Enter**. Usernames and passwords are case-sensitive. Make sure that you are not inadvertently in Caps Lock mode



You are allowed three attempts to log-in. If the third try fails, another log-in attempt will not be accepted for 15 minutes. You may avoid this delay by closing and reopening your browser. If you continue to be unable to log-in, seek the assistance of the Beacon Administrator who will confirm your username and may reset your password.

If this is your first login or if your password has been reset by a system administrator, the Password Change page is shown.

Enter a New Password and Confirm by entering it again. Abide by the guidance given as to the requirements for passwords. Then enter a personal question and answer. You may answer the default question or you may replace this with something else. Make sure that the Answer is something that you will remember (including the format) but which is unlikely to be known to anyone else.

Press **Submit** to commit your new password and the security question and answer.

Passwords should be typed, not pasted. Correct verification will not take place for pasted passwords.

If you are using a private computer, you are recommended to tick the checkbox below the **Enter** button in order to make the system easier to use by storing local settings. However, if you are using a public or shared computer, you must not tick this checkbox to avoid a possible security breach. In this case, always make sure that you log out when you have finished using the system.

Recovering a forgotten username or password

If you have forgotten your username or password, you may be able to recover it. Use the **Click here** link on the log-in page and complete the requested information. Then press **Submit**. If you are able to be identified, you will then be asked the answer to your personal question. Make sure that you type this in the same format as when it was originally set. If your answer is correct, you will be sent an e-mail with your username and a new temporary password, which will need to be changed at first log-in. If this procedure fails, seek the assistance of the Beacon Administrator who can supply the information to you.

3 Home page

After normal log-in, you will find yourself in the Group Leaders home page from where you can access the records for your group and carry out associated group management tasks.



System message may be shown here. They might not be relevant to Group Leaders

The selections available to Group Leaders are in the two columns **Groups** and **Misc**. Under **Groups** the choices are “Groups” (See 4), “Venues” (See 5), and “Calendar” (See 6).

Under **Misc** the choices are “Mail Delivery” (See 7) and “Personal Preferences” (See 8)

Some hints for using Beacon

Words in blue are links which when clicked usually take you to a different page. This will usually replace the current page. However, if you hold down the Ctrl key when clicking a link or when pressing a button, the new page will appear in a new tab

If you are unsure what a link or button does, hover the mouse over it and a tooltip will often give you an explanation. After a while tooltips close themselves. You can speed this up by clicking on an empty part of the page

Links appear at the top of all pages (except the home page) and at the bottom of longer pages. Clicking one of these links takes you to a different page

Pressing your browser's Back button may not always do what you expect. It is recommended not to use the Back button but to navigate using the page links.

4 Groups

Clicking on Groups opens a page with the list of groups. Below is part of the Cheltenham list.

Group Name	Frequency	Details	Location	Leader Name	Members
Larger Walks	Y	Once a month by arrangement		Tony Moran	1
Lunch Club	Y	1st Thu		Barbara Fox	2
Mah Jong	Y	2nd & 4th Wed 2pm		Mary Adams	2
Meet and Greet Team	Y	Usually the last Tuesday of the month at	St Matthews	Kate Shuter	10
Monday Writers	Y	2nd Mon 2 - 4		Wendy Ellis	3
Music Appreciation	Y	2nd Thu 2pm		Robert Thomas	2
Music Appreciation 2	Y	2nd Wed 10.15		Peter Young	1
Music Forum	Y	4th Wed 10 - 12		David Fisher	1
Music of the Music Halls	Y	1st and 3rd Thursday of the month		David Thomas	1
Music Theory Group	Y	3rd Fri 11-12.30 with coffee	Private Address	Celia Moon	1
Netschke	Y	3rd Wed		See Peace	2
Nineteenth Century Novels	Y	1st Fri 2.30		Leona Meyer	1
Old House - Old Kewards	Y	by arrangement	Cheltenham Library	Jean McAlister	11 12
Old Fort Lunch	Y	3rd Tue 12.30		Sally Durrill	1 12
Painting For Pleasure	Y	Alternate Tuesdays 2-4pm	Rathwell House	Rosamary Gault	1
Philosophy 1	Y	3rd Wed 10.30		Suzanne Retford	2 18
Philosophy 2	Y	1st Tue 10am		Andrea Stone	
Philosophy 3	Y	4th Thu 10.00 for 10.30		Tony Sharp	15
Photoshop Elements Computer	Y	3rd Thu 2.30 pm	Private Address	Alex Tandy	
Plans Quizzes	Y	2nd & 4th Wed 2pm		Jagjit Taylor	1
Poetry 2	Y	2nd Wed 10.30 - 12.00		Robert Cook	1
Poetry Appreciation	Y	2nd Fri 11.30		Jenny Palmer	1
Pop/Rock Band, Rehearsal, Practice	Y	2nd & 4th Mon 1.30		Tony Rodington	1
Psychology	Y	1st Wed 10.30-12.30	Private Address	Margaret Spillars	1
				Sherina Lankowski	3
				Alex Harvillan	1
				David Charles Gerritt	8
				See Watkinson	

Your group, a clickable link

By default, only active groups are shown. To show all groups, untick Show active only. There is also an option to select groups within a faculty but Cheltenham U3A does not use faculties and so the drop-down list is empty. As well as basic information about each group, the current number of members of the group and also the maximum number permitted if it has been entered and the number on a waiting list are shown if the Group Leader has implemented a waiting list.

If you are recognised as a Group Leader, your group(s) will be shown in blue as a clickable link. Clicking on this will open the group record.

The record comprises four sub-pages: Details (4.1), Schedule (4.2), Members (4.3) and Ledger (4.4). You can select between these on the row beneath the group record title. The active sub-page has its name in black.

4.1 Details Sub-Page

The screenshot shows a web interface for managing group records. The title is "Group Record for Irish Fiction". There are four tabs: "Details", "Schedule", "Members", and "Ledger". A red arrow points from a box labeled "Sub Pages" to the "Ledger" tab. The "Details" tab is active, showing a form with the following fields:

- Group: Irish Fiction
- Facility: [dropdown]
- Status: Active
- Max members: [input]
- Allow members to join on-line:
- Enable waiting list:
- Notify leader of changes:
- When: 2nd Wed 2.30
- Normal start time: 14:30
- End time: 16:30
- Contact: Joan McAllister
- Venue: [dropdown]
- Information: We read and discuss the fiction works of a wide range of mostly modern Irish authors.
- Notes: [text area]

At the bottom of the form, there is a "Save Record" button and a small text string: "Group record created 11 Nov 2016 20:07, last changed 3 Dec 2016 16:31".

This will already be filled in with the current information from the Cheltenham database record for the group. As Group Leader you can edit the information.

Your group will be shown as active. You can make it inactive though you should advise the Cheltenham Groups Coordinator (groups@cheltenhamu3a.org.uk) before changing the status of a group. You can enter a number for the maximum numbers of members if you want. Cheltenham U3A has not implemented the facility to allow members to join a group on line. If you tick the box to allow members to join on-line, they will not be able to. You can tick the box to enable a waiting list. The **Notify leader of changes** tick box is only relevant if you have ticked the box to allow members to join online.

You can enter a normal start time and a normal end time if you want. This may duplicate some of the information in the **When** box but it gets picked up when creating a schedule for the group.

You can select a venue from the dropdown list. If the meetings are in a private house, you can select "Private House" from the drop-down list. If you don't wish to publicise the venue, then leave this blank.

Contact can be a name, a telephone number or an email address.

Use the notes field if you want to. The information entered here is not made public.

If you make any changes, click the **Save Record** button.

4.2 Group Schedule Sub-Page

On this sub-page are shown future meetings or events of the group.

The screenshot displays the 'Group Record for Geology Of The Cotswolds' page. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Groups List', and 'Calendar'. Below this, there are tabs for 'Details', 'Schedule', 'Members', and 'Ledger'. The 'Group Schedule' section features a table with the following data:

Date & Time	Until	Venue	Topic	Enquiries	
Wed 13 Jan 2016 10:30	12:30	Library	Recent Bed at Huntsman Quarry	Judith Temple	edit delete
Wed 10 Feb 2016 10:30	12:30	Library		Judith Temple	edit delete
Wed 9 Mar 2016 10:30	12:30	Library		Judith Temple	edit delete

Below the table is an 'Add Events' form with the following fields and controls:

- First date and time: 04/01/2016 10:30
- Unit: [dropdown]
- End time: 12:30
- Venue: Library
- Topic: [text input]
- Details: [text area]
- Number of events: 1
- Frequency: 2 Weeks
- Exclude from public calendar: [checkbox]
- Not beyond: 31/3/2016
- Enquiries: Judith Temple

At the bottom of the form, there is a button labeled 'Add Events' and a note: 'To add a single event, set Number of Events to 1'.

To show extra detail about the meetings, tick **Show Detail** (if there is no additional detail, the display will not change).

In the **Add Events** panel, select the date and time for the first event. Then select the number and frequency of events in the controls to the right. One frequency option will be something like the second Wednesday of each month. So if you enter for example, 13 June 2018, the system will recognise this as the second Wednesday and offer you this as the frequency to select.

In the **Until** row, you may select either a fixed number of events to be created, or to create events repeatedly up to a selected end date.

The **End Time**, **Venue** and **Enquiries** get picked up automatically from the Group Details but they can be edited on an individual basis after the events have been created.

Complete the **Topic** panel and **Details** panel if you want.

Click **Add Events** to create the new events.

Exclude from public calendar box has no relevance for Cheltenham U3A as the calendar of events in Beacon is not made public.

To change an event, click edit at the row end for the required event in the Group Schedule. Make the changes required and press **Update**.

To remove an event, click delete at the row end for the required event in the Group Schedule.

At present there is no facility to change or remove several events at a time.

4.3 Group Members Sub-Page

This sub-page shows members of the group and provides a facility to add new members.



To add new members to the group you must ask them for their membership number and enter it in the panel **Add member by membership number**. When a member is added, their name is shown for confirmation. More than one member may be added at a time by membership number. Separate the numbers by commas. You will not be able to add a person whose membership has lapsed, even if they can provide a membership number.

Press **Add** to add the members.

The address and contact details are picked up and entered automatically from the database. The contact in the case of an emergency concerning the member is shown if they have provided one.

Members without email are shown by the icon of a letter with a red diagonal line through it.

When a new membership year starts in January, the names of members who have yet to pay their subscription will be shown in red and if the subscription is still outstanding at the end of February, their membership of Cheltenham U3A will lapse.

To remove members from the group, click "remove" at the end of the member's row in the list of Group Members.

If the Max members value has been reached, any additional members are placed on a waiting list with a 'waiting since' date. Later, you click Join group to make a waiting member an ordinary member of the group.

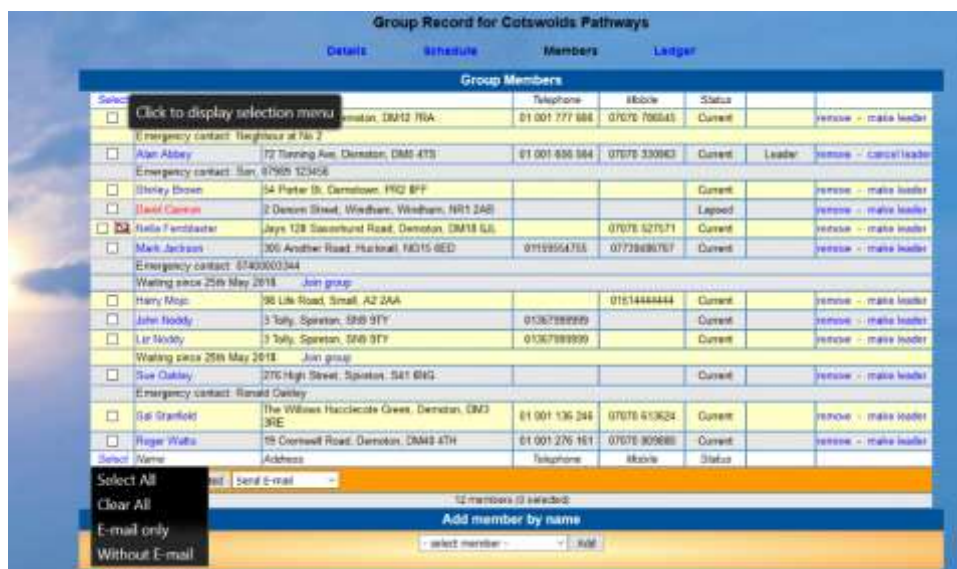
To add or designate a group leader, the group leader must first be added as a member of the group. Then click make leader in the list to assign the role of leader. More than one leader may be assigned to any group.

To demote a group leader, click cancel leader in the list row for the group leader. The person will remain a member of the group. Note that you should appoint another group leader before demoting yourself as you will not be able to make any changes if you are no longer the group leader. A new

group leader will need to obtain his or her username and password from the Cheltenham Beacon Administrator. As a courtesy, you should also advise the Groups Coordinator of the change in Group Leader.

Selecting and Performing Member Actions

You can select members individually by the checkboxes against their name. Alternatively clicking on Select at the top or bottom opens a sub-menu where you can Select All, Clear All, select those with email or those without email.



To send an e-mail to group members. Select “Send E-mail” in the drop-down list at the end of the list of members, then press “Do with selected”. An e-mail form will be displayed (see Appendix for more information on sending emails). Note that if you Select All, this will include waiting members.

It is also possible to download details of the group members in PDF or Excel form by selecting that option from the drop-down list. However, you should not normally need to do this as the information is held securely in Beacon. For data protection reasons you should only download member details when needed for some purpose such as when organising an outing and then the information should only be kept for as long as is necessary for that purpose. Any printouts of the downloaded data must be treated as confidential and kept secure.

4.4 Ledger Sub-Page

The Group Ledger is a basic facility to assist group leaders to account for monies paid and received. There is no connection between these ledgers and the main Treasurer's ledger but the Cheltenham U3A Treasurer is able to view the group ledgers.

On entry, all transactions are shown for the group between the selected dates (which defaults to the current financial year) together with the incremental current balance.



To add a new transaction, enter, in the Add transaction block, the Date, Payee and Detail (the reason for the transaction). Then the amount, In or Out. Press **Save** to commit.

To edit or remove a transaction, select edit or delete at the end of the row, amend the transaction as required and click the Update button

5 Venues

Clicking on Venues provides a list of established meeting venues used by Cheltenham U3A. These are the venues offered to you when setting up your own meeting schedule.

The figure below shows part of the list of Cheltenham venues at the time of writing

Name	Contact	Telephone	Accessible
Abbeyfields Community Centre			
Badgeworth Village Hall		01452 715034	
Bethesda Methodist Church			Y
Cafe Zest, Cavendish House			
Catenary Hall, Dean Close Junior			
Cheese Rollers Pub		01242 862072	
Cheltenham Croquet Club			
Cheltenham Leisure Centre		01242 526784	
Cheltenham Library		01242 532691	
Christchurch Parish Centre, Christchurch Road		01242 578163	
Community Resource Centre, Grove St		01242 692112	
Cricket Hall - see Cheltenham Leisure Centre			
Education Room, The Wilson		01242 387488	
Evenman		01242 572573	
Friends Meeting House, Warwick Place		01242 695121	
Highbury Church, Oxford Street		01242 520522	
Holy Agnes, London Road, Charlton Kings		01242 342570	
Honeybourne Gate	Jonathan Stacey	01242 233694	
Isbama House, Off Oxley Road		01242 254321	
Lewis Canal Lodge	Andrea Ward	01242 894186	
Litan Faithful House in Suffolk Square			
Neighbourhood Resource Centre		01242 235511	
New Terrain Sandford Park			
Oasis Community Centre, Hesters Way		01242 580022	
Oasis Centre, Cassini Drive			
Parmer House		01242 524632	
Phoenix, St Vincents		01242 511217	
Priestbury Church Hall		01242 511143	

Home - Venues List

Group Venue

Venue:	Cheltenham Leisure Centre		
Address:	Tommy Taylor Lane		
Postcode:	GL50 4RN	Map	<input type="checkbox"/> Private address <input type="checkbox"/> Accessible
Telephone:	01242 528764		
E-mail:		Send	
Website:	http://www.leisureatcheltenham.com/	...	
Contact:			
Notes:			

Clicking on a venue in the list will show you the venue record. A sample is given above. Not all the information about a venue may have been entered. The button next to the Postcode, may be used to view a map of the address if a postcode has been entered. "Accessible" means it is accessible by wheelchair users.

If you know of a venue that could be useful for the meetings of Cheltenham U3A groups please provide the details to the Groups Coordinator.

6 Calendar

The calendar is a chronological list of meetings and events. All group events are incorporated automatically into the calendar unless the Group Leader has opted to exclude it. In addition, the calendar will show general and open meetings.

The Beacon calendar was intended to be the basis of the calendar on the Cheltenham U3A website and also to form the source material for the calendar in the newsletter. However, as not many Group Leaders use Beacon and only some of those that do routinely add meetings and events, it is a long way from being suitable for those purposes. Below is a snapshot of the still very limited Cheltenham calendar at the time of writing.

Calendar

Show: all venue

From: 28/05/2018 To: 26/06/2018

Show Detail

Date & Time	U/M	Group	Venue	Topic	Enquiries
Wed 30 May 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 6 Jun 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 13 Jun 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 13 Jun 2018 14:30	16:30	Irish Fiction	Private Address	December Bride by Sam Hannah Bell	Joan McAllister
Sat 16 Jun 2018 09:45		Walks		Asthall Walk	01242 603576
Milford Walk approx 5 miles from Asthall via Swinbrook, 4 styles, one ascent. Visiting St. Mary's Church with Milford family graves and St. Oswald Church with ancient wall painting. Guided by Liz and Inga. phone by Thursday 14 June 01242 520168 for more info.					
Wed 20 Jun 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 27 Jun 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Sat 30 Jun 2018 10:00		Walks		Withington Walk	01242 603576
Walk Withington to Shipton Golf Course, 5 miles, linear but with a loop through Upcote Plantation wood. No stiles from memory. Phone David 01242 254666 by Tuesday 26th June to book and to order lunch.					
Wed 4 Jul 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Sat 7 Jul 2018 10:00		Walks		Nature in Art Walk	01242 603576
Wed 11 Jul 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 11 Jul 2018 14:30	16:30	Irish Fiction	Private Address	Midwinter Break by Bernard MacLaverty	Joan McAllister
Wed 18 Jul 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 25 Jul 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 1 Aug 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011
Wed 8 Aug 2018 09:00	11:00	Badminton	Cheltenham Leisure Centre - map		01242 511011

The calendar shows events between the displayed dates, which defaults to the next three months. You may change the dates by changing the From and To fields.

At the top of the calendar you can choose to **Show all** events between the displayed dates, or only those events that take place at a selected **venue**.

By ticking **Show detail**, you will also see additional detail for events where this is available.

For events belonging to your own group you may go directly to the event record (perhaps to edit it) by clicking the event's date/time in the list. You may go to the group record by clicking the group name. You may go to the venue record by clicking the venue name.

Where a venue's postcode is known, a **map** link will display a map of the location.

Click **Download PDF** at the bottom of the calendar to download a PDF of the displayed events.

7 E-Mail Delivery

The e-mail delivery selection, available under **Misc** allows you to monitor the delivery of e-mails you have sent. You can see if they have been delivered and sometimes see if they have been opened, though the latter depends on settings on the recipient's computer.

Particularly useful is the ability to see delivery failures which will usually be the result of an invalid e-mail address in the Cheltenham database. The error message returned is displayed in red and should be examined. You should investigate these failures and advise the member to update the email address with the Membership Secretary.

Mon 9 Apr 2018 14:33 Summer party on the Park - planning groups@cheltenhamu3a.org.uk			
...@btinternet.com	Despatched by Beacon		9 Apr 2018 14:33
...@sky.com	Despatched by Beacon		9 Apr 2018 14:33
...@gmail.com	Opened		10 Apr 2018 06:46
...@btinternet.com	Opened		9 Apr 2018 17:39
...@yahoo.co.uk	Delivered		9 Apr 2018 14:34
...@gmail.com	Opened		9 Apr 2018 22:49
...@gmail.com	Opened		11 Apr 2018 21:04
...@gmail.com	Opened		19 Apr 2018 07:43
...	Dropped	Invalid email address	9 Apr 2018 14:34
...@sky.com	Opened		14 Apr 2018 13:28
...@gmail.com	Opened		9 Apr 2018 19:43
...	Delivered		9 Apr 2018 14:34
...@aol.com	Opened		19 May 2018 10:57
...@com	Opened		24 Apr 2018 21:15
...@hotmail.com	Opened		26 Apr 2018 10:37
...@gmail.com	Delivered		9 Apr 2018 14:34
...@hotmail.com	Opened		10 Apr 2018 08:37
...@me.uk	Delivered		9 Apr 2018 14:34

Failed Delivery

Possible message statuses you will see are:

Despatched by Beacon

The message has been sent to the Beacon e-mail agent.

Processed

The message has been received by the Beacon e-mail agent but not yet forwarded on.

Dropped

The message has been rejected by the Beacon email agent. This is either because the email address was in an invalid format, or because a previous email to this address was Bounced or Reported as Spam. Such an email address is blocked by the Beacon email agent (It has been blacklisted), and can only be unblocked by the Cheltenham Beacon Administrator.

Delivered

The message has been accepted by the recipient's email provider, though it may have gone to the recipient's spam folder rather than their inbox. Note that some email providers may silently bin the email without delivering it to a spam folder if the software guesses it is probably spam. Hotmail is particularly fierce in this regard.

Deferred

The Beacon e-mail agent is unable to establish communication with the recipient's e-mail provider in order to forward the message on. The sending of Deferred messages is automatically retried at intervals over a day or more until repeated failures cause the message to be rejected.

Bounced

The message has been rejected by the recipient's email provider, usually because the address is incorrect, disabled or no longer valid. The error message returned is displayed in

red and should be examined. Invalid email addresses need to be removed from Beacon. The Cheltenham Beacon Administrator is automatically advised of the bounced email.

If a blacklisted email address is verified as being genuine, it can be removed from the blacklist by the Cheltenham Beacon Administrator.

Blocked

This is also called a “soft bounce” and indicates a temporary delivery problem

Opened

The message has been received by the recipient who has downloaded it onto his/her computer. It is likely, therefore, that they will have read it

Note that the method by which the Beacon mail agent detects this is by the automatic inclusion of a tiny image in the message. If the user has a setting where they don't view images in emails this Opened status will not be detected, even though the recipient has read the text of the message. Therefore, more recipients will have opened an email than is indicated by this status.

Clicked

A website link within the message has been clicked on by the recipient. The link clicked is indicated. In distinction to the above Opened status the Clicked status should always be true if the user has clicked on the link in your message.

Spam report

The message (or perhaps an attachment associated with it) has been rejected as spam. This is a serious situation that should be investigated immediately. An isolated spam report is not a disaster, but repeated spam reports will damage Beacon's reputation and could adversely affect all users.

If a blacklisted email address is verified as being genuine, it can be removed from the blacklist by the Cheltenham Beacon Administrator.

8 Personal Preferences

Personal Preferences (not shown) allows you to change your password and also your security question. You can also set the timeout period after which you be automatically logged off if the connection is not being used. The maximum time is 20 minutes.

The option regarding the sort order of drop-down lists has no relevance for Group Leaders as they do not access member drop-down lists.

Appendix – Sending Emails

When you select “Send E-mail” and click “Do with selected” on your members’ sub-page, the email screen will be displayed.



The **From** address is taken from your member record.

The list of recipient addressees is displayed under **To**. This is for information only, they cannot be changed here.

Tick **Tick to receive copy** to receive a copy of the message.

Enter a Subject for your message and then the message below.

You may customise your message by inserting into the subject or message text any of the # tokens shown on the right. When the message is sent, these tokens will be replaced by the corresponding information for the member to whom the message is being sent. If the #FAM token is selected for a member who does not have a Familiar Name recorded their #FORENAME is used.

If you wish to send one or more attachments with the message, press the button next to Attachments (the format will vary between browsers) and select each file in turn. The files will be listed under the button. To remove any file, click on the small x before the filename.

To include a website link in your message, put the cursor at the position where the link is to be and press the Link button in the editor: In the dialog that appears, enter the full URL (including the http or https prefix) and the Text to Display.



To avoid your email being suspected of being spam because of the way the Beacon mail agent encodes URLs, the text to display should be a meaningful description of the webpage you are linking to rather than a copy of the URL.

After you have finished composing the email press **Send** to send the message

All messages are sent to recipients individually. Therefore, no recipient can see who else the message is sent to.

You can vary the line spacing in the message by using hard or soft returns: A Hard Return (using Enter) gives a full line space before the next line of text. A Soft Return (using Shift+Enter) will put the following words on a separate line immediately below the preceding text.

When using Apple computers and some tablets, the Browse button is replaced by a text box containing a message such as “click in box” or “choose files”.

There is no practical limit to the number of attachments, but many email servers impose limits on the number or size of attachments that recipients can receive. It is wise, therefore, not to send more than a few attachments with any one message and to minimise attachment size.

If you are sending an email to a large number of people, say over 50, please accept that your email will be processed by spam filters in the same way as mass marketing emails. Therefore you should avoid or minimise sending attachments when sending an email to large lists of recipients.

It is recommended that attached files don't have long names or names that contain special characters such as brackets because these can sometimes cause delivery problems.

If the email browser is left open for a long time it may time out. Therefore, long emails are best composed outside of Beacon before copy and pasting into Beacon (or put the text into an attachment).

Sometimes when you send an email, you will be presented with a CAPTCHA screen. This is a security feature.