



Beacon FAQs for group coordinators

1. How to send an attachment?
2. Can I change the maximum number for my group?
3. How do I decide the maximum number?
4. How to accept someone from the Waiting List into my group?
5. What happens to waiting people if I change the maximum number?
6. What is the link between Beacon and u3a website?
7. Who changes Beacon if my group changes venue or dates?
8. How can I print a register for my group from Beacon?
9. Can a deputy access my Beacon group and do all the things I can do?
10. How does Beacon send messages to members not on email?
11. Did a member get the email I sent recently?
12. How to personalise emails from Beacon?
13. Where to find the user manual?
14. Caveat

1. How to send an attachment?

- On the Send E-mail screen click on “Browse...” by “Add Attachments” and just above the Subject box.
- Find the file you want to add
- Double click or click Open
- You can attach multiple files

2. Can I change the maximum number for my group?

Yes

3. How do I decide the maximum number?

Please think carefully and consider:

- We want to be loyal to existing members, and open to new u3a members, and open to those members wishing to try a different group.
- So we normally want to accept as large a number as possible without spoiling the group atmosphere.
- The group maximum should not normally be the room maximum, but the maximum number who are likely to turn up
- But consider asking [Groups Support](#) whether a larger room is available – we have arrangements with at least 8 rooms of different sizes in Shoreham and Southwick outside the 7 in the Shoreham Centre. If your group is still full consider a second group, either run by yourself or by someone else.
- Wouldn't it be great if all groups in our u3a were accessible to further members!

4. How to accept someone from the Waiting List into my group?

Click on “join group” on the right hand side by their name in the list of members. You can do this whether or not the maximum number is exceeded.

5. What happens to waiting people if I change the max number?

Nothing

They do not get automatically accepted into the group.

This is to enable you the group coordinator to decide who from the waiting list should be accepted into the group.

That would normally be in date order.

6. What is the link between Beacon and u3a website?

There is no link!

If we want to post the same information on both platforms we have to type it twice.

The key place for it to be right is the website as that is where it is seen by everybody.

7. Who changes Beacon if my group changes venue or dates?

Technically you can but please don't. Please ask [Groups Support](#). They will ensure that group details remain current in three places: not just Beacon but also the web site and a list kept by the membership secretary that goes to new u3a members.

8. How can I print a register for my group from Beacon?

- On the group members screen select the members you want as if about to send an email.
- Click on the box that says “send an e-mail”
- That lists two alternatives: Download Excel and Download PDF. Select PDF if you want it to print exactly as Beacon provides it, otherwise select Excel for a spreadsheet you can tailor.
- Then click Do with selected and it asks what info you want about each member apart from their name ... like membership number, email, phone. Choose your fields and click Download. The PDF or Excel file will appear in your browser's list of downloads.

9. Can a deputy access my Beacon group and do all the things I can do?

Absolutely yes. On Beacon each group can have multiple leaders. This is a good thing to do, spreading the load. Just make them a leader on Beacon and ask [Groups Support](#) to send them a userid and password. Anyone with a userid and password can access any group that has them as a leader, and perform all the tasks the main leader can.

10. How does Beacon send messages to members not on email?

It doesn't. You can either post them a printed copy of the email, or text them, or phone them, or ask one of your group to volunteer as a buddy, phoning them and emailing their reply to you.

11. Did a member get the email I sent recently?

On the Home Screen in the yellow panel click on E-mail delivery

12. How to personalise emails from Beacon?

On the Send E-mails screen there is a list of “tokens” – that is personal information like SURNAME down the right hand side - which can be inserted into your e-mail.

Let's say you wanted to start an email Hi Tom, (or whatever) ...

- Type Hi and leave the cursor flashing after the space
- On the right hand side click #FAM. That will appear in your email as Hi #FAM
- Complete the email adding other tokens if you wish, and send in the usual way.
- Then #FAM will be substituted with their familiar name if one is given on Beacon (eg Tom) or their forename if not (eg Thomas).

CAVEAT: Generally when sending to all members of a group it is better to say "Hi everyone", then they know it is going to everyone and is not personal to them.

13. Where to find the user manual?

On the Home Screen in the yellow panel click on Beacon User Guide.

14. Caveat: the information provided is correct as at 9 Feb 2024. The Beacon system is frequently updated and some of the functions may have changed. Look at the user guide by clicking the Help button on the system.

CJ 9 Feb 2024