

cu3a Best Practice for Group Convenors in using Beacon to communicate with group members.

This Best Practice document provides best practice for Chalfonts u3a Group (cu3a) Convenors on communicating with Group Members, using Beacon and Webmail, while protecting you and your group member's email data.

All convenors are encouraged to always use Beacon to send communications to their group or more than one member of their group, for the reasons outlined below. This method protects both you and your group member's data from exposure to others and from the risk of hacking.

Under GDPR Data Protection Rules we (cu3a) have a duty to protect our member's data and Beacon provides a secure way to do this. It contains the most up to date list of members, which is secure and password protected.

It holds the email addresses of all your Group members, which means you do not have to clutter up your personal email contact list with this information. Adding cu3a member's email addresses to your personal address book solely for the purpose of cu3a communication is not in line with data protection rules. There are reported instances where a Convenors personal computer has been hacked and spam emails have been sent to cu3a members whose details were held on that computer.

We are aware that some convenors of smaller groups do have the email addresses of their members stored on their personal computer and use this to communicate with their group members. To comply with Data Protection it is necessary for the convenor to have the permission of all their group members to share email addresses. This needs to be done in a formal way and the replies confirming permission, stored for future reference.

Beacon sends messages as blind copy so you only see the copy addressed to you, which protects the email data of other Group members, and finally Beacon protects your email address by sending your messages from a chalfontsu3a.org.uk address.

Any replies to Beacon emails will come to you via Webmail, an email service used by cu3a, as Beacon does not have the capability to receive emails. The cu3a Webmail has a mailbox for each of the Groups, and you will be given access to this for the group(s) you are a convenor for. Webmail can also be used to send emails and can be used to reply to emails received in the Webmail inbox. Webmail should only be used to reply to emails from an individual member, but if sending an email to more than one member from Webmail, they should be sent using Blind Copy (BCC) to protect the recipients email address. In general, emails to more than one member should be sent from Beacon.

Any convenor who is not using Beacon or Webmail currently and would like more information, should contact the cu3a Beacon administrator at beaconadmin@chalfontsu3a.org.uk