

## Data Protection – Practical Guidance for Group Leaders

As a Group Leader, you may need to hold or use some personal information about members of your group. This could include names, telephone numbers, email addresses or information needed to organise group activities.

**IMPORTANT!** Beacon allows group leaders to have access to the personal data of their group members via Beacon. Group organisers must ensure that they are compliant with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) in dealing with this data. The information should only be used to communicate with members about group activities and not for personal reasons unless permission is granted. **IMPORTANT!** Beacon allows group leaders to have access to the personal data of their group members via Beacon. Group organisers must ensure that they are compliant with GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) in dealing with this data. The information should only be used to communicate with members about group activities and not for personal reasons unless permission is granted. We all have a responsibility to keep this information safe and to use it appropriately.

### Using Beacon

The u3a Beacon online management system is designed to be fully compliant with UK data protection laws and GDPR.

Beacon securely stores member information in one central location. It allows authorised users and Group Leaders to access the information they need to manage their groups. (Limited Access)

Where possible, Group Leaders should use Beacon rather than creating or maintaining separate lists of members' personal information.

Using Beacon helps us to:

- Keep member information securely in one central system.
- Ensure that access to personal information is limited to authorised people.
- Reduce the need to store member information on personal devices or in separate spreadsheets.
- Handle group administration while protecting members' personal contact details.
- Keep information up to date through the central membership system.

### What does this mean in practice?

#### Only collect information you actually need

Please only ask members for information that is necessary to run your group or communicate with them. Avoid collecting unnecessary personal details.

#### Keep information secure

Any lists, spreadsheets, emails or other documents containing member information should be kept securely. If information is stored electronically, use a strong password and keep your devices protected.

#### Never share passwords

Passwords should be personal to you and must never be shared with another person.

#### Do not share member information outside u3a

Member contact details and other personal information must not be passed to people or organisations outside Melton Mowbray U3A unless the member has given appropriate consent or there is a specific, agreed reason for doing so.

### Be careful when sending emails

Think carefully about who can see members' email addresses. When emailing a number of members who do not need to see each other's addresses, use BCC rather than putting everyone's email address in the "To" or "CC" field.

### Check information is accurate

If a member tells you that their contact details have changed, pass any changes to the Membership Secretary so that Beacon can be updated.

### Don't keep information indefinitely

When you no longer need personal information for your group, it should be securely deleted or disposed of. Avoid keeping old membership lists or contact details "just in case".

### Report anything you're unsure about

If you accidentally send personal information to the wrong person, lose a device or document containing member information, or have any concerns about how information should be handled, please contact the Committee promptly. Do not try to deal with a potential data breach yourself without letting us know.

### A simple rule to remember

Before using or sharing personal information, ask yourself:

- Do I need this information?
- Do I have a legitimate reason to use it?
- Is it being kept securely?
- Would the member expect me to use or share it in this way?

If the answer to any of these questions is unclear, please ask the Committee for advice before proceeding.

The Committee is here to support Group Leaders. You are not expected to be a data-protection expert, but you are expected to take reasonable care of the information entrusted to you.

**Thank you for helping us protect our members' privacy and keep Melton Mowbray U3A's information safe.**