

## **Beacon Resilience Advice for u3a Bromley Group Leaders**

***Following the u3a Bromley Group Leader Lunch meetings in November last year, we undertook to check the resilience of the Beacon system against hacking so that we can all feel assurance that it protects our data. This is what the Beacon Team said:***

- “We in the Beacon Team and the Third Age Trust take resilience and security of the system very seriously. With over 660 u3as and over 320,000 members on the system you can understand why.
- Our processes include a regular Penetration test where a professional company is paid to check how secure the system is against hacking. If they find any possible weakness then this is addressed with the highest importance. One is being organised now.
- We also have a Kill Switch process where key people in the Trust can immediately kill the system to prevent any loss of data etc. This again is tested regularly. Also, our Help Desk monitors emails etc to look for any problems.
- We do get occasional reports of what are thought to be hacking giving rise to emails but on investigation they originate from a member of a u3a. Please note we do check and investigate these reports to be on the safe side.
- The system is run on a dual server set up with each server able to run the system alone. It is automatically backed up early each morning and a copy kept in a separate location.
- We also review the system to see if any area might be a possible weakness. Should we find something then again we address it quickly. To help we only send emails via Beacon as BCC to prevent circulation of members' emails.
- People who have access to Beacon are restricted to those who need it.
- Advice about the System Passwords for Beacon Admin is that these should be kept safely by Group Leaders and others with Admin responsibilities. Devices used to access Beacon should also have strong passwords and secure access i.e. adequate precaution against hacking.
- The Beacon Team review their passwords annually as a maximum. An individual can go into the System and use Personal Preferences (on the Beacon menu page) and change their password.”

Further questions can be referred onto the u3a Beacon Team.

u3a Bromley, February 2026