

User Guide for accessing the HW u3a Beacon Membership Portal and Renewing the Annual Membership and Paying Online

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Latest changes: Steve Frazer, updated full draft 07/07/25 to V1.1

Steve Frazer, minor updates and additions 03/06/26 to V1.2

Preface

The bulk of this document describes in detail how HW u3a members can register for access to their membership details in Beacon and how to renew their annual membership and pay the subscription online on the same or a later visit using a Credit or Debit card or Paypal account.

Those members who feel confident in using computers and in making payments online may use the Fast-track instructions that follow below. Other members or any who may have some concerns with the process should go to section 1 of this document for full details.

For training and support sessions, including, if necessary, use of the u3a's own laptop computers by members for the purposes of carrying out these membership renewal tasks and payments, please check the HW u3a website or contact the Membership Secretary either by email to hwmemsec@gmail.com or at one of the Monthly Members meetings for details.

Fast-track instructions

To renew your annual membership of HW u3a and pay the annual subscriptions online you must first have set up your Beacon membership account so it can be readily accessed using your email account and a password. You should then check that your membership details are correct and update them if necessary.

After this (and assuming the Renewals time window is open - usually from early July until end of August) please follow the instructions after clicking on the [Renew your Membership](#) option in Beacon. Please note the following:

- i) You may pay the subscription (the amount is automatically entered and displayed on the screen) by Credit or Debit card (which will typically have the Visa or Mastercard symbols displayed on them) or by using a Paypal account.
- ii) The processing of card payments is done by Paypal acting as an agent of these Credit/Debit companies. It is **not** necessary to have a Paypal account. However, during the process you will be temporarily transferred to a Paypal website to make the payment by whatever means. **BEFORE** doing this it is advisable to remove any Paypal 'cookies' from your device – please follow the instructions on the u3a webpage to do this.
- iii) When paying by Credit or Debit card directly, the Paypal screens may be arranged in such a way as to encourage you to open a Paypal account. Please

ignore these and click the fields typically marked as 'Pay with Debit or Credit card' or 'Checkout as Guest' or 'Pay now as Guest'.

iv) If you already have a Paypal account, you may select it as your payment method in which case Paypal will list the alternative methods of payment available from your account.

v) If your computing device (e.g. laptop, tablet or smartphone) has ever been used (even by somebody else) to previously access Paypal, including this HW u3a membership Joining or Renewing process, then this device is likely to have Paypal 'cookies' on it. In this case the Paypal payment screens will possibly display the email address of another user that accessed Paypal previously on this device. If this happens, please delete that email address and, if the Paypal screen insists on an email address (it will eventually send you a receipt by email) then enter your email address in the field.

vi) If you already have a Paypal account but are not intending to use it on this occasion, Paypal may recognise your email address when you enter it and again invite you to pay via that account. Please decline by clicking 'Continue as a guest'

vii) To get started please go to the HW u3a website Members page at

<https://hartleywintney.u3asite.uk/members/>

Some guidance notes are also available via this webpage if needed.

THANK YOU

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this document

This document describes how HW u3a members can:

a) register for a membership account (i.e. online access) to our HW u3a Membership database and set a password (if not already done) thereby allowing them to update their membership details. You will usually only ever need to do this once.

b) renew their annual membership and pay the annual subscription online using a Credit or Debit card (or a personal Paypal account) thereby relieving our Membership Secretary of the fairly onerous task of aligning around 500 payments with individual members records and sorting out the errors and omissions which can inevitably arise.

*Note: There will always be provision for those few members who, for whatever **good reason**, must or prefer to pay their Renewal subscriptions by BACS, cheque or cash. Please contact our Membership Secretary by email at hwmemsec@gmail.com or through a colleague or by contacting at one of the Monthly Members Meetings.*

1.2 What is Beacon and why do you need to access it?

When you join the Hartley Wintney u3a your membership details (e.g. date of joining; address and phone number(s); emergency contact; etc) are entered into our computerised membership database known as Beacon.

You can access and update some of these details online by registering as a HW u3a member through what is termed the Beacon Portal and by using your email account name as the identifier (even when this email account is shared with other members) and setting a password against it.

This in turn will allow you to login to your Beacon account to renew and pay for your annual subscriptions online using a Credit or Debit card (or by using a Paypal account if you have one and prefer to use it).

2 How do I login through the Beacon portal?

2.1 Registering a personal account with Beacon and setting up a password

Note:

1) You are strongly advised to use a device with a reasonably large screen e.g. a laptop or tablet but not your smartphone although you may need the latter to hand during processing.

2) If you have already registered an account with beacon and set a password, please now go to section 3 of this document titled:

3. Renewing your HW u3a Membership online

Otherwise:

To access Beacon you can do so through the Members page on the HW u3a website which is on the internet at address: <https://hartleywintney.u3asite.uk/members/>

If this webpage contains a notice similar to the following, then you can click on one of the blue links if you are confident to proceed with the more limited instructions there.

Beacon

If you've not already done so this year please visit the Beacon Portal and verify your membership details. If you haven't yet registered for Beacon access, click [here](#) which will explain how to do this. But if you have already registered, click [here](#).

If you've not already set a password you'll be prompted to create one. As a reminder passwords should be "strong" – typically at least eight characters long, contain a mixture of uppercase and lower case letters and at least one digit.

Else, please click the regular Beacon Portal link to get the screen below and read on.

u3a Beacon Hartley Wintney

[Return to Hartley Wintney u3a website](#)

Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal

Please enter your E-mail address

E-mail

If you have not created a password for your membership account,
use the Register link below to set one up.
[Register for a membership account](#)

If the Membership Secretary has updated your e-mail address use [Verify e-mail](#)
(you will also need to set your password)

Enquiries: hwmemsec@gmail.com or contact the Membership Secretary

When you do this for the first time you will need to set up a member account with Beacon using your email address (even if it's shared with others for emails) and create a password for your personal future access. On the screen, enter your email address and click where it says [Register for a membership account](#).

If you are not sure if you have already registered, don't worry – the system will recognise your details and tell you if you try to register again.

If you think you have registered before but cannot remember your password please click the 'Forgotten Password' box and the system will tell you that it has sent you an email (to the email address you just entered) and you should click on the link in that email (i.e. the web address similar to the one shown above) to reset the password.

Note: make sure you read the email on the same computer device (laptop, tablet, etc) as you are trying to login from i.e. don't try to login on a laptop while reading the

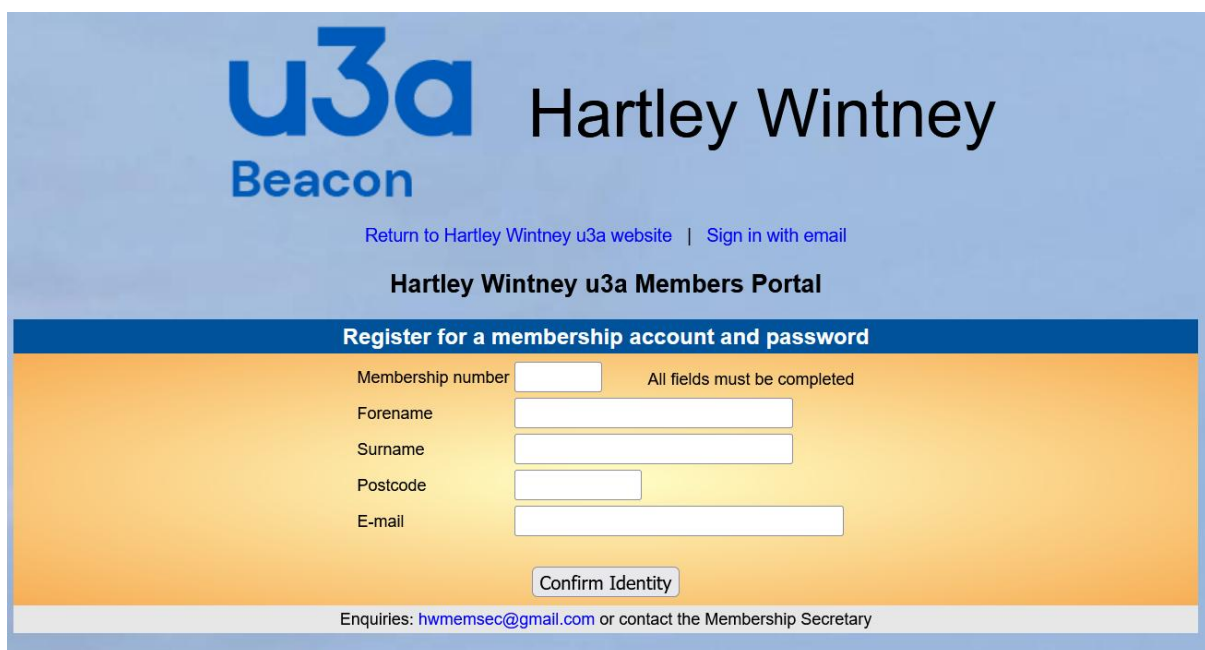
email on, say, your smartphone.

If you've changed your email address and told the Membership Secretary, click where it says [Verify email](#) and continue.

If you've changed your email address but not told the Membership Secretary, please contact the latter for help (see bottom of above screen) explaining the problem and giving your name, membership number, and previous and new email addresses.

2.2 Registering for a password

Having clicked 'Register for a membership account', the following screen should appear:



The screenshot shows the 'Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal' registration page. At the top, the 'u3a Beacon' logo is on the left and 'Hartley Wintney' is on the right. Below the logo, there are links: 'Return to Hartley Wintney u3a website' and 'Sign in with email'. The main heading is 'Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal'. Below this is a blue bar with the text 'Register for a membership account and password'. The form area has an orange-to-yellow gradient background. It contains five input fields: 'Membership number', 'Forename', 'Surname', 'Postcode', and 'E-mail'. A note 'All fields must be completed' is next to the first field. At the bottom of the form is a 'Confirm Identity' button. Below the form, a footer line says 'Enquiries: hwmemsec@gmail.com or contact the Membership Secretary'.

Please fill in your details and click the 'Confirm Identity' box to bring up the next screen shown below.

Note: The password and confirmation password will display as small black circles as below. To see what you have actually typed please click/re-click the 'eye'  symbols.

The screenshot shows the 'Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal' login page. At the top is the 'u3a Beacon' logo. Below it, the title 'Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal' is displayed. A blue banner at the top of the main content area reads 'You must choose a password to continue.' The background is orange. Text instructions state: 'In future you will only need to login with your email address and password. In order to proceed with login you must first choose a password. Passwords should comprise between 10 and 72 characters including at least one upper case, lower case and numeric character. Do not use common words. You may optionally consider using the following special characters: ! @ # \$ % ^ & *'. Below this, there is a label 'Set password for email address' followed by a yellow box containing 'your email'. There are two password input fields: 'Password' and 'Confirm Password', both with masked characters and an eye icon to toggle visibility. An 'Update Account' button is at the bottom. A footer note says: 'You will be sent an email from noreply@u3abeacon.org.uk with a link you need to use before you can sign in. The link only works for 1 hour. You can request a new email at any time by using Forgotten password on the Members Portal.'

When done, please make a record of the password (if you forget later the system can let you reset it next time it's needed) and click 'Update Account'.

You should now get the following on your screen (although note some devices may indicate this in different ways):

The screenshot shows a confirmation screen titled 'Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal sign up successful'. The background is blue. A pink box in the center contains the text: 'You have been sent an email from noreply@u3abeacon.org.uk with a link you need to use before you can sign in. The link only works for 1 hour. You can request a new email at any time by using Forgotten password link below or on the Members Portal.' Above the pink box is the text 'Members Portal' and below it is 'Forgotten password'.

Note: make sure you read the email on the same computer device (laptop, tablet, etc) as you are trying to login from i.e. don't try to login on a laptop while reading the email on, say, your smartphone.

Click the link in the email and this time you can login to Beacon using just your email and the Password you set eventually arriving at the following screen:

u3a Hartley Wintney
Beacon

[Logout and return to Hartley Wintney u3a website](#)

Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal

Good afternoon, **Your name**

Member number **Your number**

Your membership continues until 1st September 202X but may be renewed now for next year

Select an option

[Renew your membership](#)

[Update your personal details](#)

[E-mail Replacement Membership Card](#)

Enquiries: hwmemsec@gmail.com or contact the Membership Secretary

3 Renewing your HW u3a Membership online

3.1 The payment process

To renew your membership and pay your annual subscription online, payment is usually made with a Credit or Debit card (or through a Paypal account if you have one already and prefer to use this).

NOTE: YOU DO NOT NEED A PAYPAL ACCOUNT.

Your Credit or Debit card will usually be marked with the Visa or Mastercard logo indicating the company providing the Credit or Debit service. The processing of card payments is done by Paypal acting as an agent of these Credit/Debit companies. During the process you will be temporarily transferred to a Paypal website to make the payment. **BEFORE** doing this it is advisable to remove any Paypal 'cookies' from your device – please follow the instructions on the u3a webpage to do this.

Most members will have no problems when paying u3a subscriptions using a Credit or Debit card this way. However, some care is needed to navigate the screens to avoid inadvertently creating a Paypal account during the payment process.

If you are concerned about the screens being displayed (or, rather, the option fields being displayed on those screens) please take a look at section 4 of this document. Also you will always have the option to quit the process and return to our members website after which you can contact the Membership Secretary for advice on 'workarounds' if necessary.

3.2 Making the subscription payment

When you have:

- checked/updated your personal details in Beacon (or newly registered for a Beacon account and created a password)
- cleared any previous Paypal cookies if you intend to pay by Credit or Debit card
- are ready to Renew your annual Membership online (and the Renewal time window is open)

then please login to Beacon again (if not already logged in) from the Members page on the HW u3a website at <https://hartleywintney.u3asite.uk/members/> and you should see the following page.

Note: the [Renew your membership](#) option will only show when the Renewals time window is open (usually from early July until end of August):



u3a Beacon Hartley Wintney

[Logout and return to Hartley Wintney u3a website](#)

Hartley Wintney u3a Members Portal

Good afternoon, **Your name**

Member number **Your number**

Your membership continues until 1st September 2025 but may be renewed now for next year

Select an option

[Renew your membership](#)

[Update your personal details](#)

[E-mail Replacement Membership Card](#)

Enquiries: hwmemsec@gmail.com or contact the Membership Secretary

Please click on [Renew your membership](#) to bring up the following Gift Aid screen:



Hartley Wintney

[Return to Hartley Wintney u3a website](#) [Members Portal](#)

Hartley Wintney u3a Membership Renewal



**If you wish to change your class of membership, you cannot renew on-line.
Please contact the membership secretary**

Gift Aid

Your subscription can make each £1 of your subscription worth 25p more and at no cost to yourself. To qualify for Gift Aid you must pay income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount that Hartley Wintney u3a reclaims on your subscription and donations in a tax year.

☐ I am a UK tax payer and wish to Gift Aid this and all future subscriptions and donations that I make to Hartley Wintney u3a, unless I notify you otherwise. I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

☐ I do not wish to Gift Aid my subscriptions and donations.

Please notify us if you:

- want to cancel this declaration
- change your name or home address
- no longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains

If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Payment

Your membership class is Individual

Renewal fee is £ ████████

Amount to pay: £ ████████

Press the button below to make payment
You may pay by credit or debit card or use a PayPal account

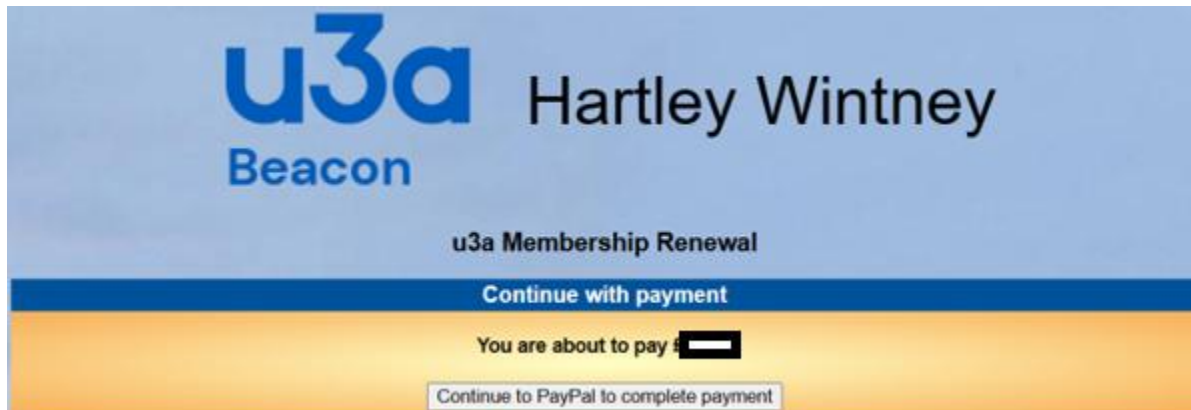
After payment, you should receive an e-mail from PayPal as a receipt and an e-mail from Hartley Wintney u3a to confirm renewal

Problems?: hwmemsec@gmail.com or contact the Membership Secretary

If you are not a UK tax payer, please click the tick box next to 'I do not wish to Gift Aid my subscriptions and donations'. Otherwise, and if you are happy to do so, we encourage you to click the tick box next to 'I am a UK tax payer.....' which will enable our u3a (a registered Charity) to collect up to the equivalent Income Tax from HMRC that you would otherwise have paid on the Renewal fee amount + tax.

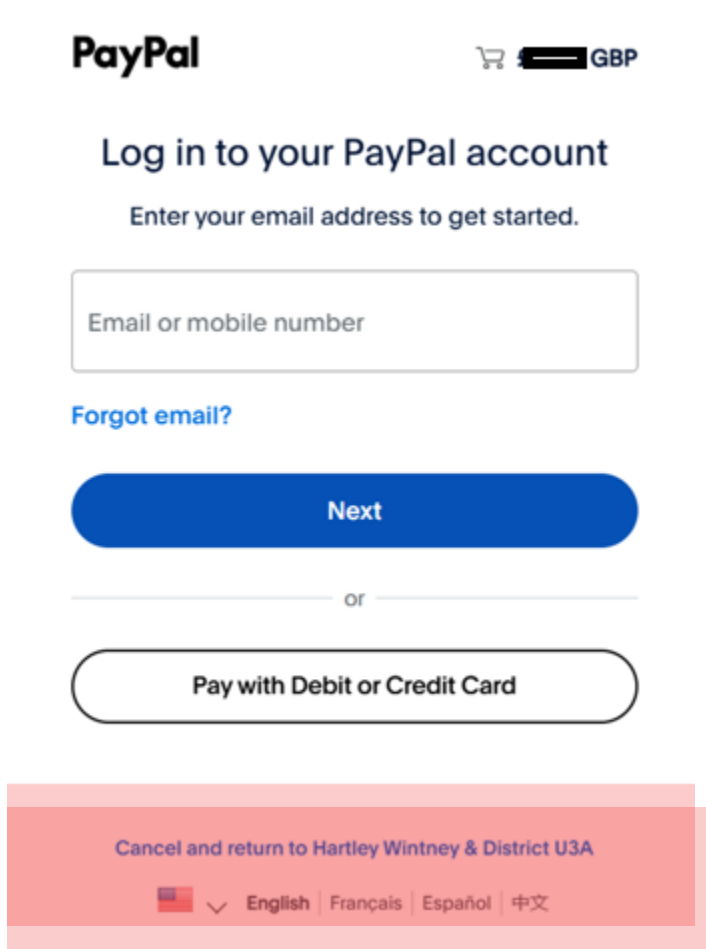
Note: the Renewal fee amount (shown as £17 above) is set automatically through the Beacon system according to the rate agreed by the membership for the upcoming year (£20 for 2026-2027).

Please click the 'Make Payment' box to bring up the following screen:



Now click the 'Continue to Paypal to complete the payment' box and the system will transfer over to the Paypal processing screens.

Note: the Paypal screens (shown on the left below) will **NOT** have any pink shading which has been added here only to show the areas of the screens you should avoid

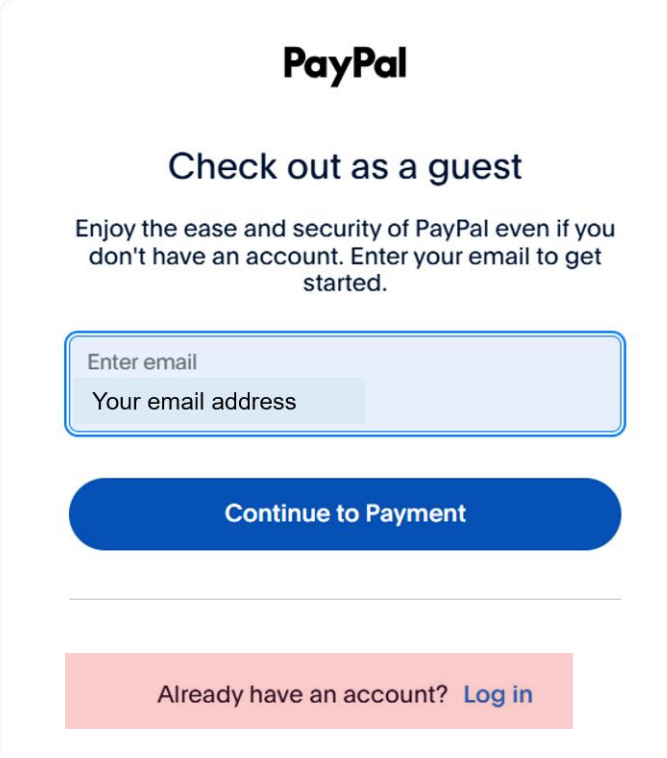


One exception to avoiding the 'pink shaded area' is that if there is any email address within the box marked '*Email or mobile number*' then please delete it.

Then click 'Pay with Debit or Credit Card' here:



The next 'Check out as a guest' screen should then appear as on the following page:



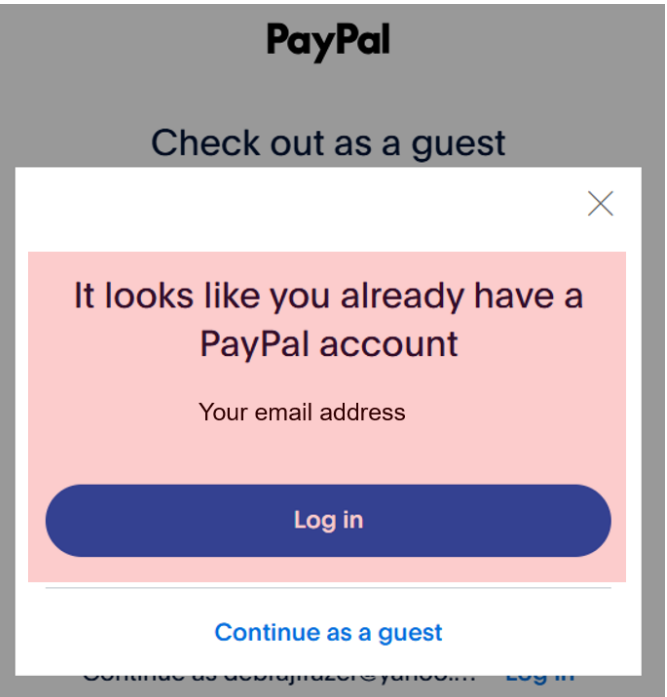
The image shows the PayPal 'Check out as a guest' screen. At the top is the PayPal logo. Below it is the heading 'Check out as a guest' and a subheading 'Enjoy the ease and security of PayPal even if you don't have an account. Enter your email to get started.' There is a text input field labeled 'Enter email' with the placeholder text 'Your email address'. Below the input field is a blue button labeled 'Continue to Payment'. At the bottom, there is a link that says 'Already have an account? Log in'.

On this Paypal screen (left) fill in the 'Enter email' box with your own email address only. This will be used to email you a payment receipt.



Then click 'Continue to Payment'





The image shows a PayPal account recognition overlay. It has a grey background with the PayPal logo at the top. The main heading is 'Check out as a guest'. Below it is a white box with a red border containing the text 'It looks like you already have a PayPal account' and 'Your email address'. There is a blue button labeled 'Log in' and a link at the bottom that says 'Continue as a guest'.

Note:

If Paypal recognises your email address as being a Paypal account name then you might see the screen overlaid with the '**It look like...**' message left. If so, please just click 'Continue as a guest'



The next screen is to input the card details and it will scroll up the screen as you complete it.

PayPal

Pay with debit or credit card

We don't share your financial details with the merchant.

Country/Region
United States

Email
Your email address

Phone type
Mobile

Phone number
+1



Card number

Expiration date

CVV

Billing address

First name

Last name

Town/City

County (optional)

Postcode

Save information & create your PayPal account

You acknowledge the [terms](#) of the service PayPal provides to the seller, and the [Privacy Statement](#). No PayPal account required.



PayPal is the safer, easier way to pay

No matter where you shop, we keep your financial information secure.

On this Paypal screen (left) please complete the billing details (including selecting the United Kingdom as the Country/Region, etc.)

AND ensure the white circle is on the left here



We'll pre-authorise up to £17.00 GBP on your card, then send you back to the seller to complete your purchase. If you don't complete it or the purchase amount changes, any pending pre-authorisations usually drop off within 1 working day.

Pay now as guest

Already got a PayPal account? [Log In](#)

[Cancel and return to merchant](#)



[Legal](#) [User Agreement](#) [Privacy](#) © 1999-2025

PayPal



You paid £[redacted] GBP to Hartley Wintney & District U3A

[Details](#)

Paid with:
Your card identifier [redacted]
This transaction will appear on your statement as PAYPAL
*HARTLEYWINT

Purchase details:
Receipt number: **Your receipt number**
We'll send confirmation
to: **Your email address**

Seller details:
Hartley Wintney & District U3A

[Return to Seller](#)

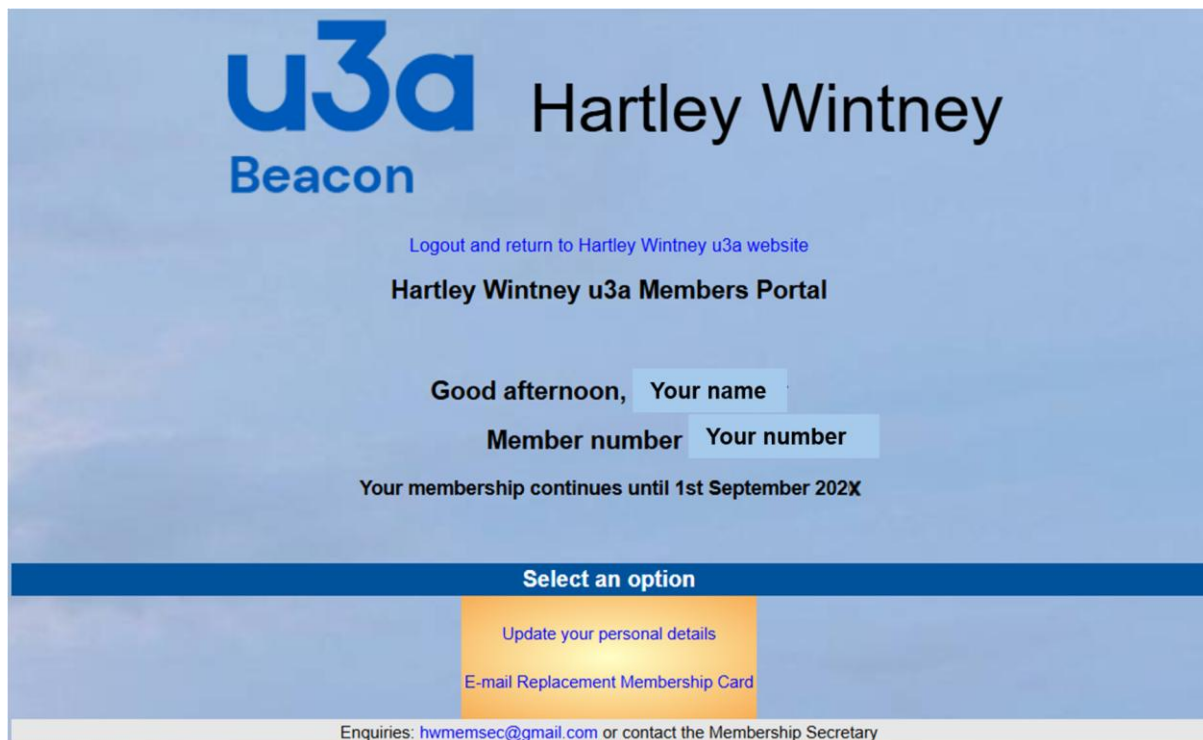
Click the 'Pay now as guest' to complete the payment



Finally you will see this PayPal *payment received* screen (left) and you should also receive a receipt from PayPal emailed to the address used in this process

Click 'Return to Seller' here to complete the payment and to return to Beacon as on the next screen





Please click [E-mail Replacement Membership Card](#) to get a new card with the new colour and dates and then click just below the heading where it says [Logout and return to Hartley Wintney u3a website](#).

You have now renewed your subscription to Hartley Wintney and District u3a for another year.

THANK YOU

4 What could possibly go wrong?... and what to do if it does

4.1 Registering a personal account with Beacon and setting up a password

4.1.1 Cannot login to Beacon Portal from the start

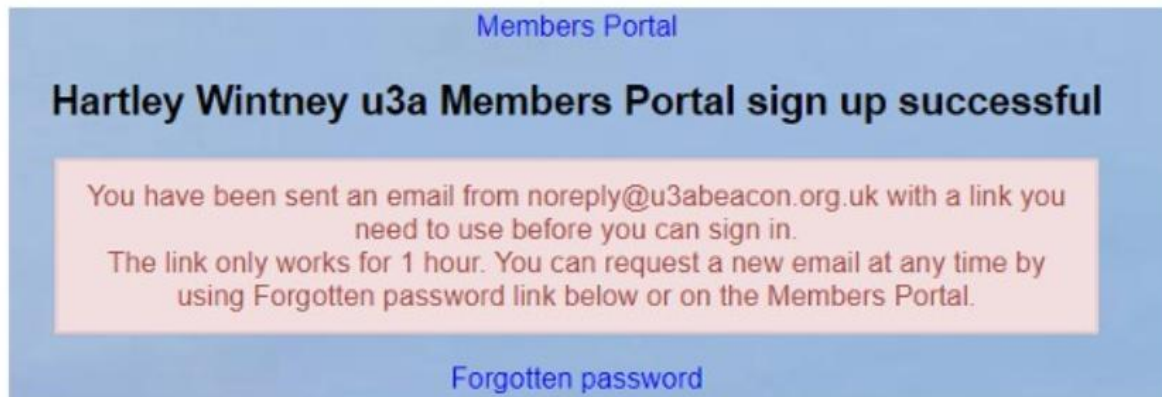
If you have problems accessing Beacon from the start – such as your email address is not being recognised when you first try to login to the Beacon portal to set up a password (see section 2.1 of this Guide) then please contact the Membership Secretary by email at hwmemsec@gmail.com or at one of the Monthly Members meetings explaining the problem and giving your name, membership number, email address and, if appropriate, any fairly recent previous email addresses you may have used before.

4.1.2 Read the email from Beacon on a different device to the one logged into Beacon and clicked the link in that email.

When you click the link in the email from Beacon (say after you clicked 'Forgotten Password') Beacon will open a page on the same device as you are reading the email. If that's inconvenient to continue with the processes (e.g. you inadvertently

clicked the link on your smartphone) then:

- i) click on [Logout and return to Hartley Wintney website](#) on this second device
- ii) close the browser (e.g. Chrome App) tab or the browser on this second device.
- iii) return to the initial device - still showing the screen below – and click on [Members Portal](#) to enable the login process but, this time, using your password.



4.2 Renewing your HW u3a Membership online

4.2.1 Different device displays

Depending which device you are using (e.g. MS Windows PC or laptop, Apple PC or laptop, Chromebook, Apple or Android or other tablet, or even a smartphone) some of the screens shown in the previous sections may display differently. This minor problem can usually be addressed by changing 1 or 2 of the settings or the size of the picture on, say, a tablet screen.

In the case of the few message screens e.g. the one at the end of section 4.1.2 above, this may appear differently but you will still get the email.

4.2.2 Different Paypal screens

Most users will hopefully sail through the Renewal process without incident. However, some members who already have a Paypal account or who use a computing device (e.g. a laptop or tablet) where any user (not necessarily you) has logged into a Paypal account at some point previously (thereby leaving some records behind known as cookies), may encounter the following.

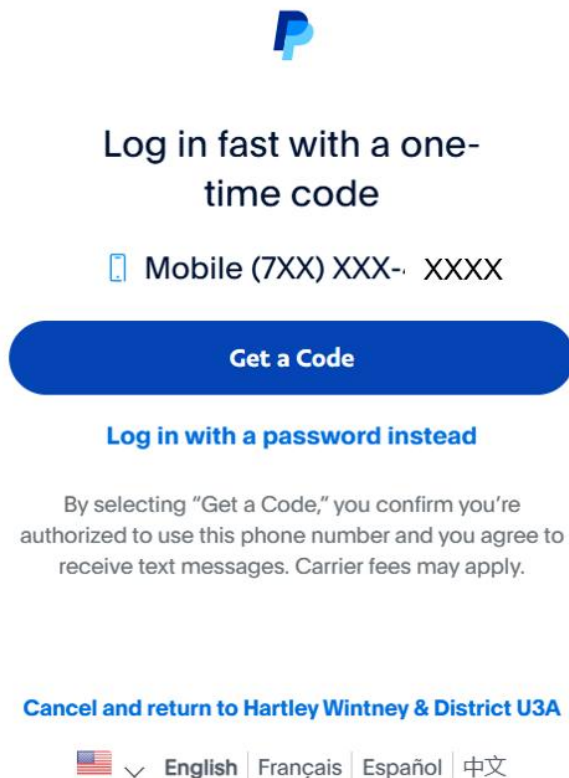
4.2.2.1 Screens where the email field is already populated

If you are shown a screen with another email address than yours already being displayed then please delete that email address and, if the Paypal screen insists on an email address (it will eventually send you a receipt by email) then enter your email address in the field. This should fix the matter in most cases.

4.2.2.2 Screens where Paypal offers to log you in to your existing Paypal account and pay from there.

If you already have a Paypal account but are not intending to use it on this occasion, Paypal may recognise your email address when you enter (it will eventually send you

a receipt by email) and invite you to login and pay via that account even after you have previously clicked to pay by card and 'Checkout as a Guest' e.g. see screen below. Your Paypal account will likely have several methods of payment such as by Credit Card, from the Paypal balance or by Bank withdrawal.



The image shows a PayPal login screen. At the top is the PayPal logo. Below it, the text reads "Log in fast with a one-time code". Underneath, there is a placeholder for a mobile number: "Mobile (7XX) XXX- XXXX". A large blue button labeled "Get a Code" is centered. Below the button, it says "Log in with a password instead". A small disclaimer states: "By selecting 'Get a Code,' you confirm you're authorized to use this phone number and you agree to receive text messages. Carrier fees may apply." At the bottom, there is a link: "Cancel and return to Hartley Wintney & District U3A". Below the link are language options: a flag icon, a dropdown arrow, "English", "Français", "Español", and "中文".

If you are happy to use one of these Paypal methods, please continue and login. If you then select Credit Card, the effect is almost as if you paid by card directly.

Else please click [Cancel and return to Hartley Wintney & District U3A](#) and email the Membership Secretary at hwmemsec@gmail.com explaining the problem and giving your name and membership number



4.2.2.3 Screens where no option for Credit or Debit card is offered

If you encounter a screen such as below where there is no option to pay by Credit or Debit Card, please follow the instructions in the panel on the right.

PayPal

🛒 £17.00 GBP

Log in to PayPal

Your eligible purchases are covered by PayPal's Buyer Protection programme. [See terms](#)

[Forgotten your password?](#)**Log In**

or

Create an account[Cancel and return to Hartley Wintney & District U3A](#)

This Paypal screen (left) offers no payment by Credit or Debit card or 'Continue as Guest'.

If it appears it will likely have an email address already in the first field and deleting it will make no difference.

The cause will be Paypal finding evidence of a previous (probably recent) use of a live Paypal account from this device.

Please click [Cancel and return to Hartley Wintney & District U3A](#) and email the Membership Secretary at hwmemsec@gmail.com explaining the problem and giving your name and membership number and, if displayed, the email address already occupying the first field.



A solution to this infrequent problem is either to delete the cookies from your device (via the browser) or to use a u3a laptop on this occasion where cookies have already been cleared.

We have produced a guide on how to clear cookies. Generally we strongly encourage ou to clear **only** Paypal cookies. The guide can be accessed [here](#)

4.2.2.4 Security (prove you are a person) checks

Somewhat randomly (e.g. you might already be logged in) Paypal displays a screen similar to below and ask you to click all the pictures containing a particular item. Sometimes the 'item' can appear as a very small part of the pictures displayed and it may test your patience to click all the correct images. Please look carefully and persevere – it will eventually accept you.

