BEACON HELP · GUIDE

Getting started

Signing in, roles, finding your way around and tablet mode



BEACON VERSION
2026.11

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FOR
Everyone who uses Beacon

ONLINE
help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk

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Screenshots show a fictional nursery group and people.

Contents

Getting started: signing in, roles, finding your way around and tablet mode. These steps match Beacon 2026.11; for another version, see help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk. Beacon runs at your organisation's own address.

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Reading the screenshots. The orange numbers 1 on a picture match the numbers in the step text, and an orange box marks the part of the screen a step is about. Every guide is also online, with search, at help.beacon.earlytree.co.uk.

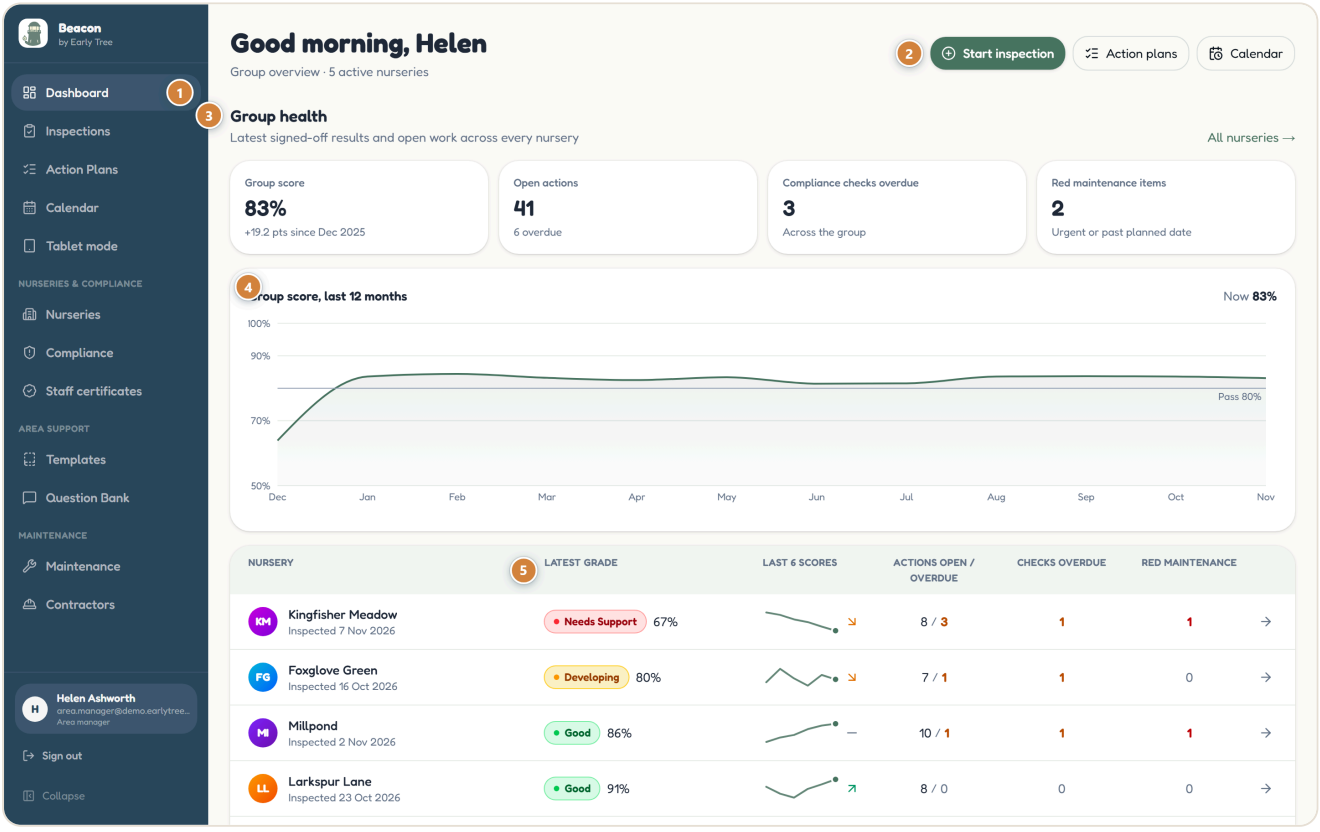
GETTING STARTED

Getting started with Beacon

Beacon is where your organisation's internal inspections, action plans and maintenance live. It replaces paper checklists and spreadsheets with one place that everyone works from, each person seeing what their role needs.

How Beacon fits together

1. **An area support lead or manager inspects a nursery**, room by room, on a laptop or an iPad in tablet mode: Pass, Fail or N/A for each checklist item, with photos, temperature readings and notes. See Inspections.
2. **The inspection is reviewed and signed off.** The reviewer writes the narrative, sets Ofsted-style grades and checks the action plan. Only an area support manager can sign off. See Review and sign-off.
3. **The nursery works through its action plan.** Each failed item becomes an action with an owner and a due date. The nursery moves it along and adds evidence; area support verifies it. See Action plans.
4. **Maintenance jobs are logged, triaged and done.** Anyone with maintenance access can report a job; the maintenance manager triages it, gets quotes, books contractors and signs the work off. See Maintenance.



The dashboard an area support manager sees after signing in.

Your Beacon address

Your organisation has its own Beacon, at its own web address, usually something like `yourgroup.beacon.earlytree.co.uk`. These guides say **your Beacon address** instead of giving a link. If you don't know it, ask your area support manager.

Read these first

If you want to…	Read
Sign in for the first time, or you're stuck on a waiting page	Signing in and out
Know what your role lets you see and do	Roles and what each can do
Understand the page you land on	The dashboard
Find things in the menu, on a computer or a phone	Finding your way around
Put Beacon on an iPad's home screen	Using Beacon on an iPad
Inspect room by room on an iPad, even without Wi-Fi	Tablet mode for inspections
Know how these guides work	How to use these guides

GETTING STARTED

Signing in and out

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME	YOU NEED
Everyone	**Your Beacon address** › **Sign in with Microsoft**	Under a minute	A Microsoft work account in your organisation

Purpose

Beacon uses your organisation's Microsoft work account, the one you use for email and Teams. There's no separate Beacon password to remember or reset. The first time you sign in, Beacon creates your account and waits for an administrator to give you a role and the nurseries you work with.

Before you start

- You know your Beacon address (for example `yourgroup.beacon.earlytree.co.uk`). Ask your area support manager if you don't.
- You have a Microsoft work account in your organisation (or in another organisation your Beacon has been set up to accept). Personal Microsoft accounts (Outlook.com, Hotmail) and guest accounts from other organisations can't sign in.
- Use an up-to-date browser: Safari on an iPad or iPhone, or Chrome or Edge on a computer.

Sign in

1. Go to your Beacon address. You'll see the Beacon sign-in page with **Sign in to continue**.
2. Select **Sign in with Microsoft**.
3. Microsoft asks you to pick an account. Choose your work account, or select **Use another account** and type your work email address. Beacon always asks you to pick, so you never end up signed in as someone else on a shared device.
4. Enter your password and complete any extra check your organisation uses, such as a code in the Microsoft Authenticator app.

What you should see

Beacon opens on your dashboard, with a greeting such as **Good morning** and your first name. The menu on the left shows the parts of Beacon your role can use.

The first time you sign in: Awaiting access approval

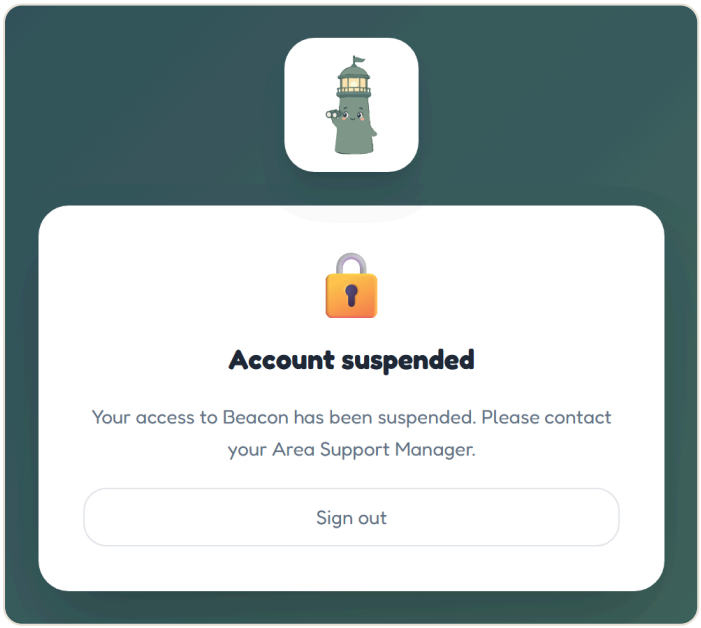
The first time you sign in, Beacon creates your account but doesn't let you in yet. You see **Awaiting access approval**, with your name, and a note that one of your Beacon administrators needs to approve you.

1. Your administrators see that you're waiting on their dashboard and on **Users & Roles** (and get an email, where your organisation has email switched on). To speed things up, tell them which nurseries and role you need.
2. When they've approved you, go to your Beacon address again and sign in. If you're still on the waiting page, refresh it.
3. If you want to leave the page, select **Sign out**.

> NOTE
>
> Your administrator may have set you up before your first sign-in (by importing you from Microsoft). Then you go straight in. The administrators Early Tree sets up for a new Beacon also go straight in.

If your account is suspended

If an administrator has suspended your account, you see **Account suspended**: "Your access to Beacon has been suspended. Please contact your Area Support Manager." Nothing you recorded is deleted. Only an administrator can reactivate you; select **Sign out** and contact them.



What a suspended account sees.

Sign out

1. At the bottom of the menu on the left, under your name, select **Sign out**. On a phone, open the menu with the button at the top right first.
2. Beacon signs you out and also signs you out of Microsoft in that browser, so the next person can't get in as you, then shows the sign-in page again.

Always sign out on a shared computer or iPad.

Common problems

"Access denied" or "Sign-in error".
Your account hasn't been given access to Beacon, or it belongs to an organisation your Beacon doesn't accept, or it's a guest account. Check you chose your own work account, then ask your area support manager to check you've been approved.

"Account not linked".
Your Microsoft account uses a different email address from the one your administrator set up in Beacon (for example .com rather than .co.uk). Ask them to correct your email address in Beacon.

"Sign-in callback error".
Something went wrong between Microsoft and Beacon, often when switching between two email addresses. Try signing in again. If it keeps happening, contact your area support manager.

"Account linked successfully — one more click and you're in."
Beacon has matched your Microsoft account to the account your administrator set up. Select **Sign in with Microsoft** once more.

I'm stuck on Awaiting access approval.
An administrator hasn't approved you yet. They can see you're waiting in Beacon; if it's urgent, contact them directly.

Beacon signed me in as someone else.
Someone else's Microsoft account was still signed in on that device. Select **Sign out**, then sign in again and choose your own account.

> TRYING THE BEACON DEMO
>
> The public demo at beacon.demo.earlytree.co.uk doesn't use Microsoft. Its sign-in page lists fictional people instead, so you can try each role. Everything there is made up and reset every night.

Related guides

- Roles and what each can do

- The dashboard
- Approving new users

GETTING STARTED

Roles and what each can do

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME
Everyone, Administrators	**Admin** › **Users & Roles**	5 minutes to read

Purpose

What you see in Beacon depends on three things your administrator sets for you:

1. **Your role**, such as Nursery Manager or Area Support Lead. It decides what you can do with inspections and action plans.
2. **Your scope**: **Group-wide** (every nursery) or **Specific nurseries**. You only ever see nurseries in your scope.
3. **Your maintenance access**: a separate level (none, read-only, contributor or manager) that decides what you can do in Maintenance, whatever your role.

Some people are also **administrators**, which lets them manage users and see the audit log. That's separate from their role too.

Before you start

- To see your own role, look under your name at the bottom of the menu. It shows your most senior role, for example **Area manager** or **Nursery manager**.
- Only an administrator can change roles, scope or maintenance access. See Changing someone's role or nurseries.

The roles

Role	Usually	What they can do
Area Support Manager (shown as Area manager)	Group-wide	Everything to do with inspections: plan and start them, conduct and review them, and **sign off** reports. Verifies, reassigns and reschedules actions, edits the checklist template and question bank, adds nurseries and manages contractors. Always has full maintenance access.
Area Support Lead	Group-wide	Plans, starts, conducts and reviews inspections, verifies, reassigns and reschedules actions, and edits the checklist template. Can't sign off: a lead sends the report to an area support manager for approval.
Nursery Manager	Their nursery	Sees their nursery's **signed-off** reports and action plan, and works on its actions: moving them to In progress, Blocked or Done, and adding evidence and comments. Can't verify, reassign or reschedule. Records compliance checks and manages staff certificates for their nursery.
Room Leader	Their nursery	Sees signed-off reports for their nursery, and works on the actions given to room leaders or to them by name (only those).
Kitchen Lead	Their nursery	Like a nursery manager for working on actions, usually the ones given to the kitchen.
Maintenance Manager	Group-wide	Runs maintenance: triage, contractors, quotes, scheduling and sign-off. Always has full maintenance access. Sees signed-off reports.
Read-Only Auditor	Group-wide	Looks at everything across the group, including inspections in progress and in review. Can't change anything: no status changes, comments or edits.

Who sees an inspection before it's signed off

Only area support managers and leads (who can work on it) and read-only auditors (who can only look) see an inspection while it's being carried out or reviewed. Everyone else sees it once it's signed off: the report, its grades and its action plan.

Signing off

Only an **Area Support Manager** can sign off a report. Nobody can sign off from outside Beacon, including through a connected AI app.

Group-wide or specific nurseries

When an administrator gives you a role, they choose its scope:

- **Group-wide**: every nursery in your organisation, including ones added later.
- **Specific nurseries**: only the nurseries they tick. You can have the same role at several nurseries.

Beacon doesn't yet support giving someone access to a single room: a room leader's access covers their whole nursery.

Maintenance access

Maintenance access is set on each role you hold, and you get the highest one you have.

Level	In the list it's shown as	What it allows
None	No maintenance access	No maintenance list.
Read-only	Read-only	See maintenance jobs, but not change them.
Contributor	Contributor	Log new jobs, comment and add quotes.
Manager	Manager (full access)	Everything: triage, merge, schedule, close, the reports, and **Contractors**.

Area support managers and maintenance managers always have **Manager** access, whatever is set. Recording compliance checks needs Contributor or Manager access, or the Nursery Manager role.

Administrators

An administrator (marked **Admin** in the users list) can approve and suspend users, give and remove roles, make other people administrators, see the audit log, manage connected AI apps for everyone, and edit the checklist template. Each Beacon starts with the administrators Early Tree sets up for your organisation; they then make others. See Administering Beacon.

What you should see

> Your menu matches your role. For example, a nursery manager sees **Dashboard**, **Inspections**, **Action Plans**, **Calendar**, **Tablet mode**, **Nurseries & compliance** (including Staff certificates) and **Maintenance**; an area support manager also sees **Area Support** (Templates and Question Bank) and **Contractors**; an administrator also sees **Admin**. See Finding your way around.

Common problems

I can't see a nursery I work at.
It isn't in your scope. Ask an administrator to add it to your role.

I can't see this month's inspection for my nursery.
It hasn't been signed off yet. Nursery managers, room leaders and maintenance managers see an inspection once it's signed off.

I can't change an action's due date or owner, or mark it Verified.
Those are decisions for area support (a lead or manager). Comment on the action to ask them.

I can't see Maintenance, or can't log a job.

Your maintenance access is None or Read-only. Ask an administrator.

Question Bank takes me back to the dashboard.

Area support leads see it in the menu, but only area support managers can open it at the moment. Ask an area support manager.

I'm an auditor and the buttons are missing.

That's expected: auditors can open everything but change nothing.

Related guides

- Signing in and out
- The dashboard
- Changing someone's role or nurseries
- Approving new users

GETTING STARTED

The dashboard

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME
Everyone	**Dashboard**	A glance each morning

Purpose

The dashboard is the first page you see after signing in. It shows what needs your attention today. There are two versions:

- **The group overview**, for area support managers, area support leads and read-only auditors: how every nursery is doing, and the group's inspections from planned visits through to signed-off reports.
- **The nursery view**, for nursery managers, room leaders, kitchen leads and maintenance managers: your nurseries' latest reports and the actions you need to work on.

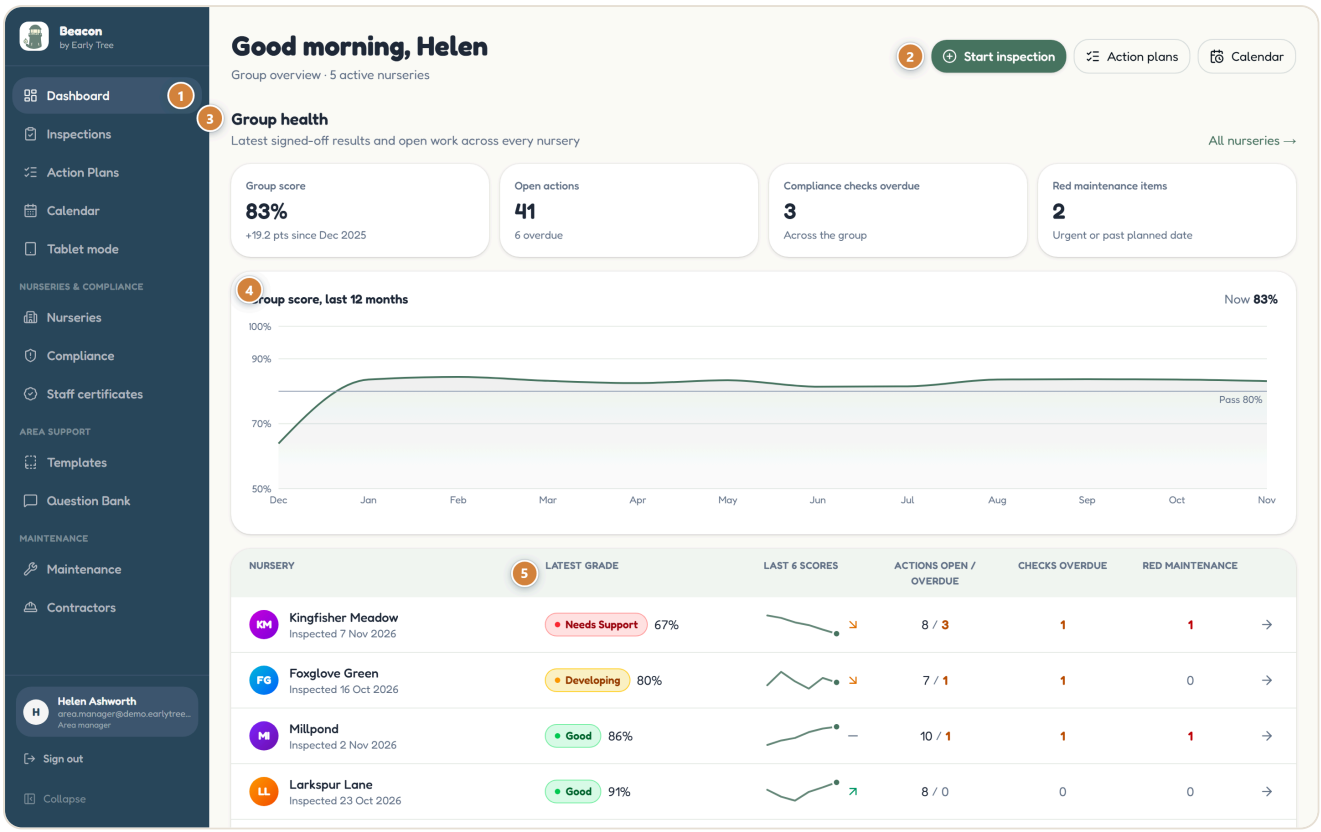
If you hold roles of both kinds (for example nursery manager at one nursery and auditor across the group), you get the group overview.

Before you start

- You're signed in. To come back to the dashboard from anywhere, select **Dashboard** at the top of the menu.

The group overview (area support and auditors)

1. **Dashboard** 1 in the menu brings you here from anywhere.
2. Select **Start inspection** 2 to start a visit (area support managers and leads only). **Action plans** and **Calendar** next to it open those pages.
3. **Group health** 3 leads with four figures: the **Group score** (the average of each nursery's latest signed-off report, and how it has moved), **Open actions** (and how many are overdue), **Compliance checks overdue** and **Red maintenance items** (urgent, or past their planned date). Select a figure to open the list behind it.
4. **Group score, last 12 months** 4 shows the trend against the 80% pass line.
5. The table 5 has one row per nursery, those needing most attention first: its **Latest grade** and score, a line of its **Last 6 scores** with an arrow for improving or declining, **Actions open / overdue**, **Checks overdue** and **Red maintenance**. Select a row to open the nursery. **All nurseries** opens the full list.



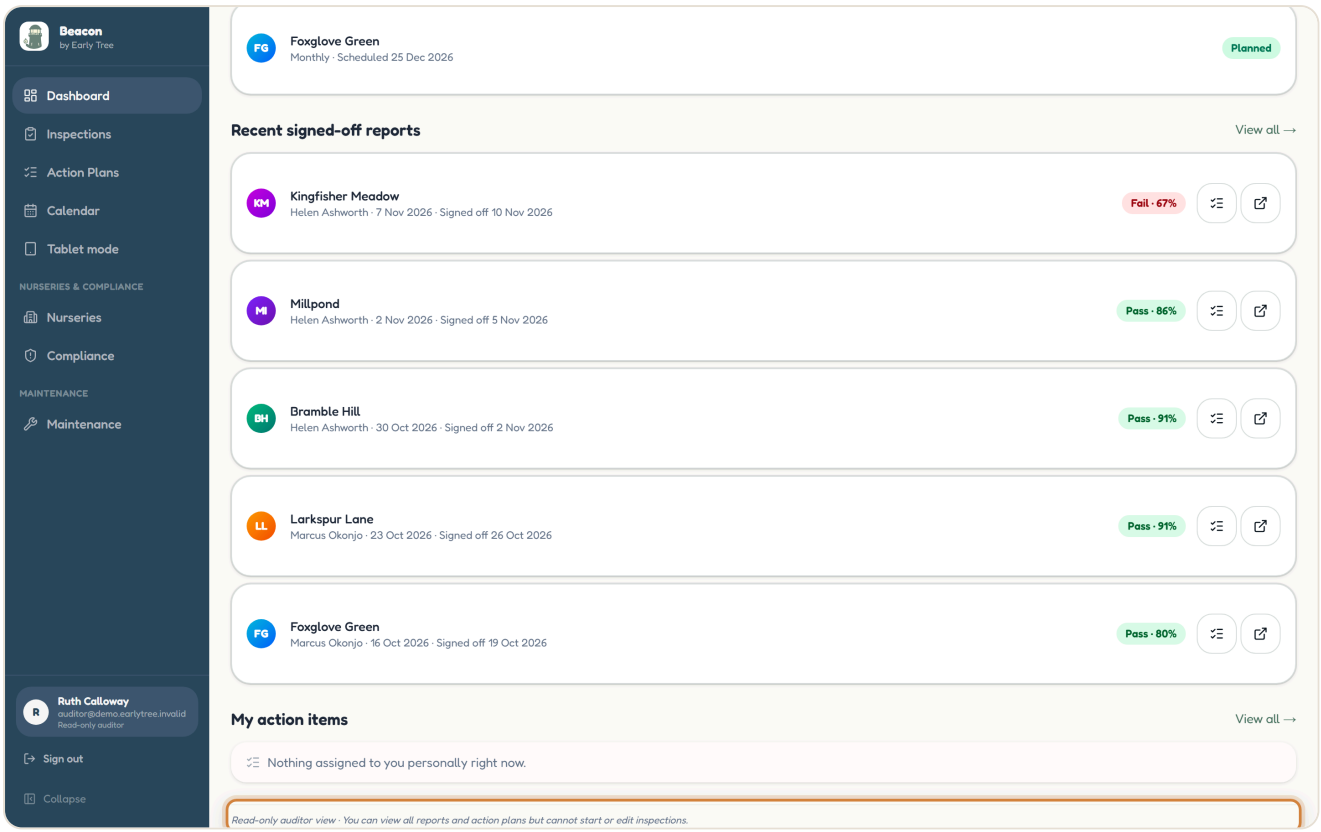
The group overview for an area support manager.

Further down the page are **Inspections in progress**, **In review** (each report's stage, such as **Under review** or **Rework required**), **Planned inspections** (with **Turn into a Full Inspection** to start one), **Recent signed-off reports** and **My action items** (actions assigned to you by name). If you have overdue actions of your own, a red banner at the top says how many, with **View my actions**.

On a signed-off report, the three small buttons download the report PDF, open the action plan and open the full report. Area support managers also see an archive button on inspections in progress, to tidy away a visit started by mistake.

For read-only auditors

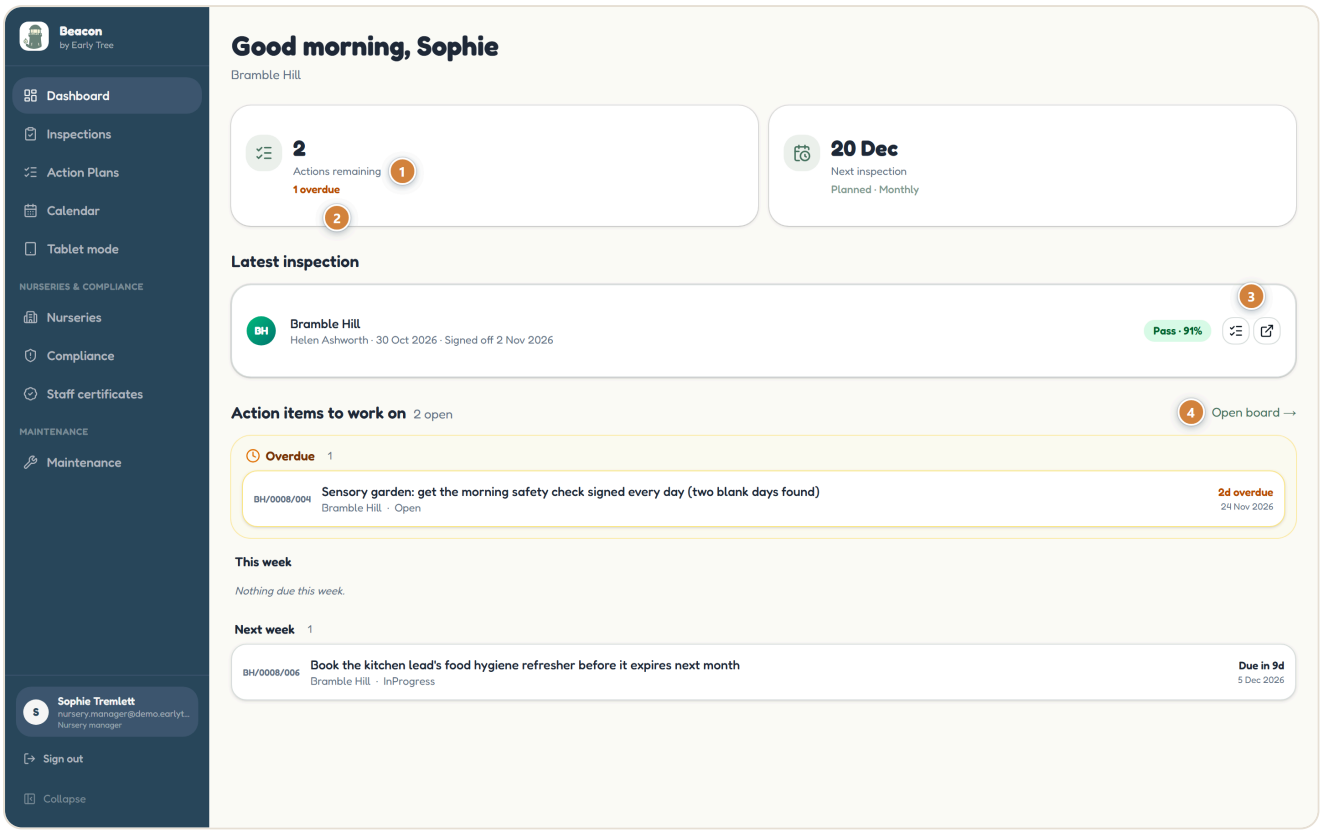
Auditors see the same overview without **Start inspection**, and can open any inspection, including ones still in progress or in review, to look at it. They can't change anything. A line at the bottom says **Read-only auditor view**.



The auditor's dashboard ends with a reminder that it's read-only.

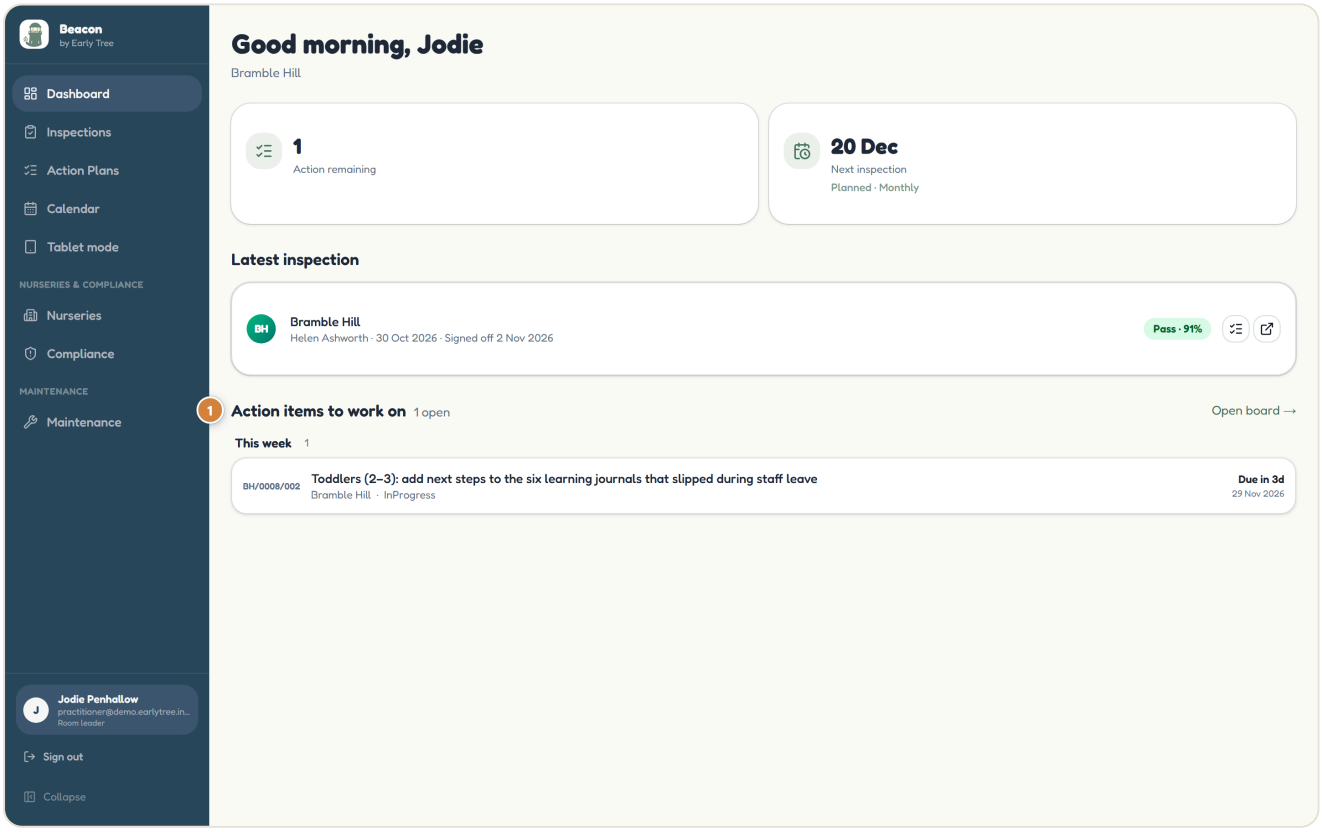
The nursery view (nursery managers and room leaders)

1. **Actions remaining** (1) counts the open actions for you or your role, with how many are overdue (2). If any are more than two weeks late, a red banner at the top also says how many. Mark them done, ask a reviewer to extend the deadline, or mark them blocked so the area team can help.
2. **Next inspection** shows the next planned visit.
3. **Latest inspection** shows your nursery's most recent signed-off report, its result and score. Use the buttons (3) to open the action plan or the full report, or to download the report PDF once it has been made.
4. **Action items to work on** lists your actions under **Overdue**, **This week**, **Next week** and **Later**. Select one to open it, or select **Open board** (4) to see the whole action plan board.



The nursery view for a nursery manager.

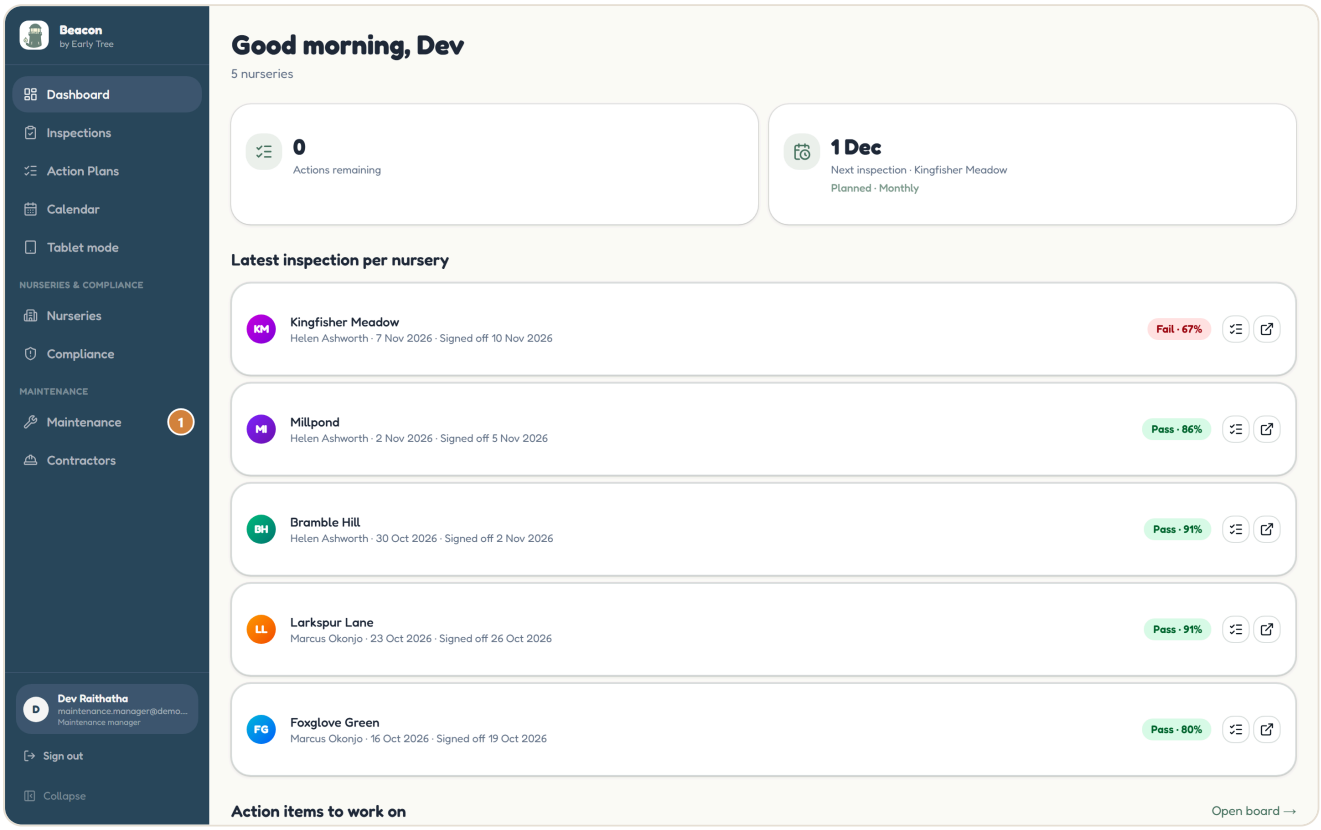
A room leader's dashboard is the same, listing only the actions for room leaders or for them by name.



A room leader sees only their own actions.

For maintenance managers

Maintenance managers get the nursery view across every nursery: the latest report for each and any actions given to their role. Their maintenance work is on the **Maintenance** page 1, not the dashboard. See Maintenance.



A maintenance manager's dashboard. Their jobs are under Maintenance.

What you should see

> Your dashboard greets you by first name (**Good morning**, **Good afternoon** or **Good evening**) and shows either **Group overview** with the number of active nurseries, or the name of your nursery.

Common problems

A nursery shows "Not inspected yet" or "Awaiting first report".
It has no signed-off report in Beacon yet, so it has no grade or score.

"No signed-off reports yet".
Your nursery hasn't had a report signed off in Beacon yet. Reports appear here once they're signed off.

My action isn't under My action items.
My action items only lists actions assigned to you by name. Actions given to your role (for example "Nursery Manager") are on the action plan board.

The figures look different from what a colleague sees.

Each person sees only the nurseries in their scope. See Roles and what each can do.

Red maintenance items says "No maintenance access".

Your role has no maintenance access, so Beacon doesn't count maintenance for you.

Related guides

- Finding your way around
- Roles and what each can do
- Action plans
- Inspections

GETTING STARTED

Finding your way around

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME
Everyone	**The menu on the left**	2 minutes

Purpose

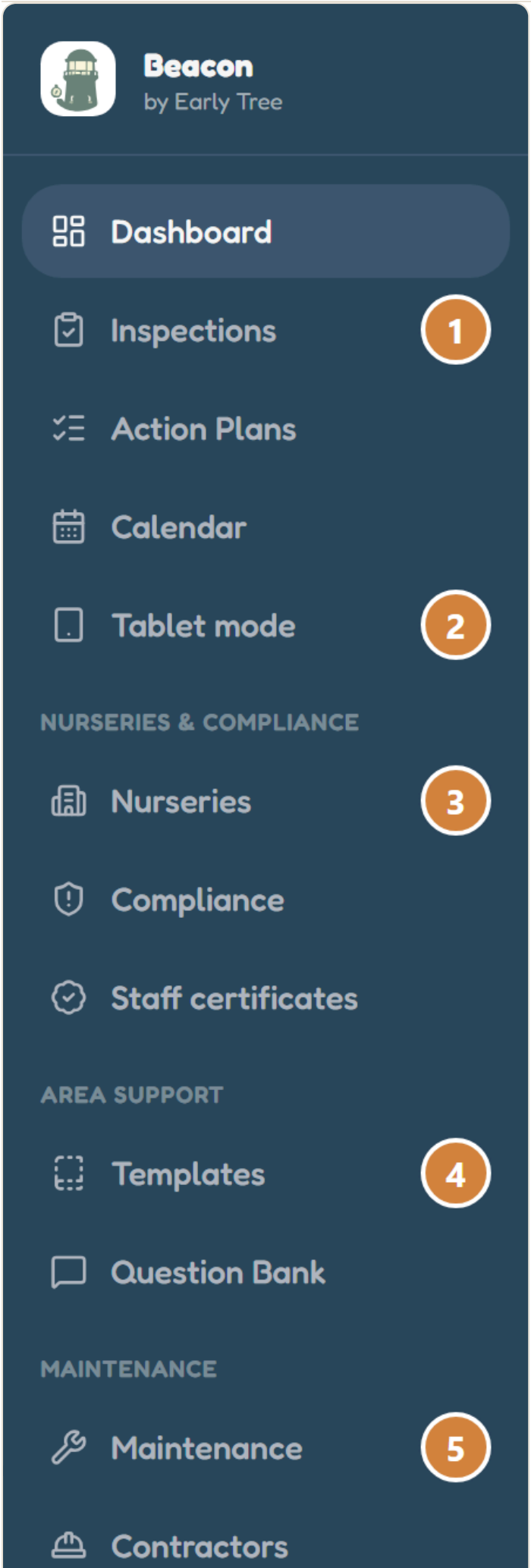
Everything in Beacon is reached from the menu down the left of the screen (on a phone, from the menu button at the top). The menu only shows what your role can use, so yours may be shorter than the one in the pictures. Every link you see opens a page you're allowed to use.

Before you start

- You're signed in. The pictures show an area support manager's menu.

Use the menu

1. The first group is for everyone: **Dashboard**, **Inspections** 1, **Action Plans**, **Calendar** and **Tablet mode** 2 (the room-by-room view for iPads). If Nina is switched on for your organisation, **Nina's desk** is here too.
2. **Nurseries & compliance** 3 holds **Nurseries**, **Compliance** and, for area support and nursery managers, **Staff certificates**.
3. **Area Support** 4 holds **Templates** (the inspection checklist) and **Question Bank** (questions for staff during a visit). Area support managers and leads see it.
4. **Maintenance** 5 holds the maintenance list. Anyone with full (Manager) maintenance access also sees **Contractors** here.
5. **Admin** appears for administrators only: **Users & Roles**, **MCP tokens** and **Audit Log**.
6. At the bottom are your name, email address and role (for example **Area manager**), **Sign out** 6, **Connected apps** (AI apps you've allowed to use Beacon for you; not on the demo) and **Collapse** 7.

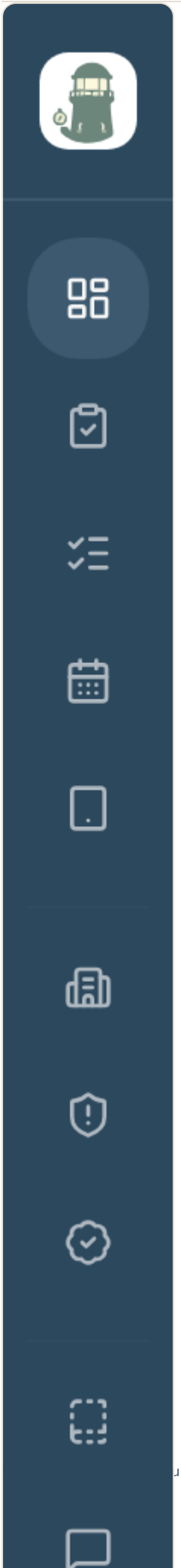

Beacon
by Early Tree
Dashboard
Inspections
1
Action Plans
Calendar
Tablet mode
2
NURSERIES & COMPLIANCE
Nurseries
3
Compliance
Staff certificates
AREA SUPPORT
Templates
4
Question Bank
MAINTENANCE
Maintenance
5
Contractors

The menu for an area support manager.

Collapse the menu to icons

To give the page more room, select **Collapse** at the bottom of the menu. The menu shrinks to icons; hold the pointer over an icon to see its name. Select the expand button (highlighted) to open it again. Beacon remembers your choice on that computer.

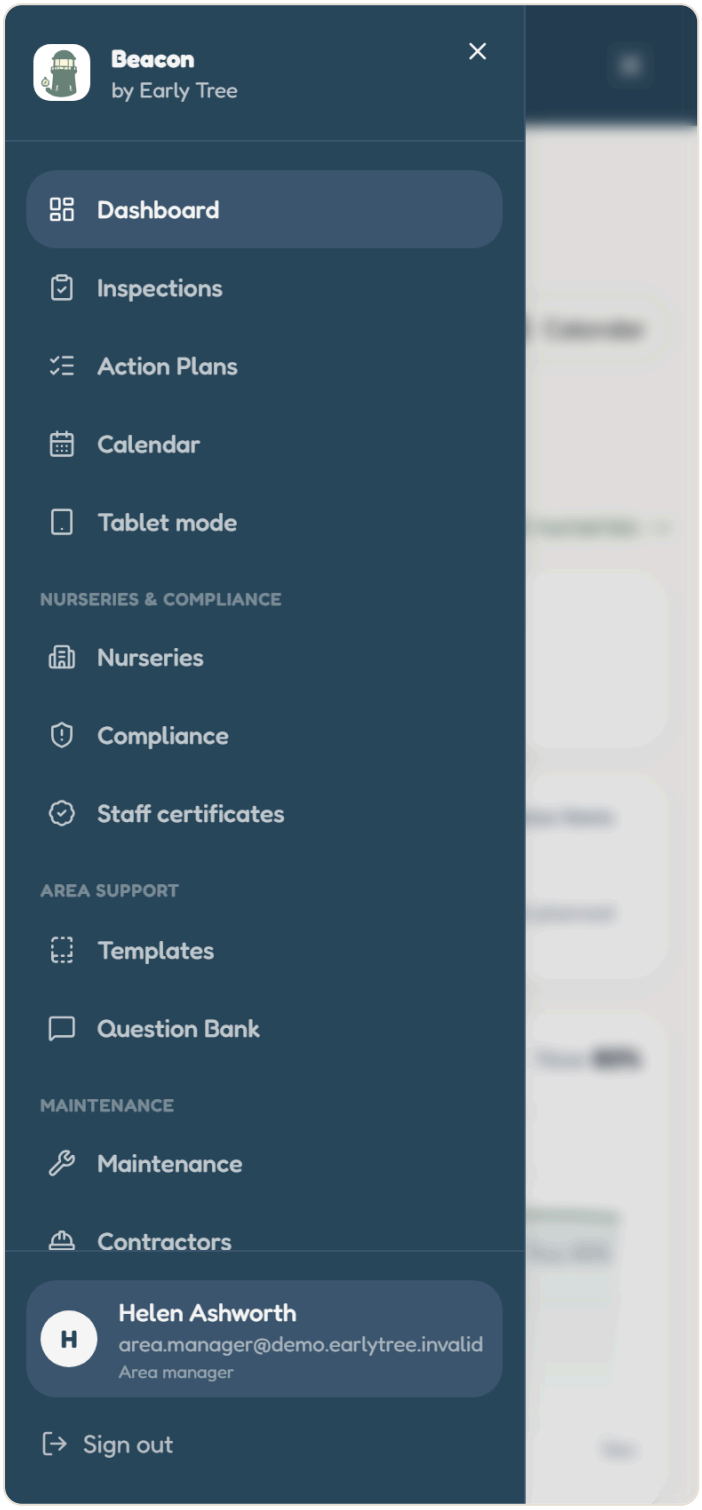
On smaller screens, such as an iPad, the menu starts as icons by itself so the page keeps its width. Select the expand button to see the names.



The collapsed menu. The highlighted button expands it again.

On a phone

On a phone the menu is hidden to save space. A dark bar across the top shows **Beacon** and a menu button. Tap the menu button to open the menu, and tap a page to go there; the menu closes by itself. It lists the same pages as on a computer.



The menu on a phone.

What you should see

> Selecting a menu item opens that page and highlights it in the menu. Your name and role stay at the bottom of the menu.

Common problems

A menu item I expected isn't there.
Your role doesn't include it. See Roles and what each can do, and ask an administrator if you need it.

Question Bank takes me back to the dashboard.
Area support leads see Question Bank in the menu, but only area support managers can open it at the moment. Ask an area support manager to make the change.

I can't see Nina's desk.
Nina is switched off for your organisation. See Nina.

Related guides

- The dashboard
- Tablet mode
- Using Beacon on an iPad
- Roles and what each can do

GETTING STARTED

Using Beacon on an iPad

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME	YOU NEED
Area support manager Area support lead Anyone using an iPad	**Safari** › **Share** › **Add to Home Screen**	2 minutes to set up	An iPad with Safari, and your Beacon address

Purpose

Most inspections are done walking round a nursery, so Beacon works on an iPad as well as on a computer. There's no app to download from the App Store: you add Beacon to the iPad's home screen from Safari, and it then opens full screen like an app, in either orientation, with its own lighthouse icon.

Before you start

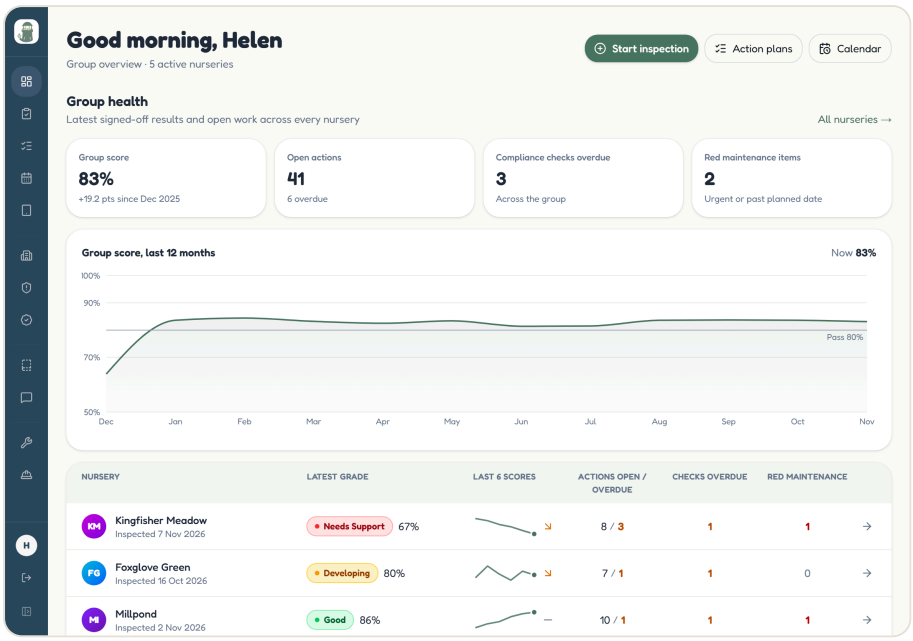
- The iPad is up to date and connected to Wi-Fi or mobile data.
- You know your Beacon address.
- You use **Safari**. Other browsers on an iPad can't add Beacon to the home screen in the same way.

Add Beacon to the home screen

1. Open **Safari** and go to your Beacon address. Sign in with your Microsoft work account (see Signing in and out).
2. Tap the **Share** button (a square with an arrow pointing up) in Safari's toolbar.
3. Scroll down and tap **Add to Home Screen**.
4. Leave the name as **Beacon** (or your organisation's name for it) and tap **Add**.
5. Close Safari and tap the new **Beacon** icon on the home screen.

What you should see

Beacon opens full screen, without Safari's address bar, and turns with the iPad. The menu down the left starts as a strip of icons, so pages keep their width; tap the expand button at its foot to see the names. The dashboard offers **On site with your iPad?** to switch to tablet mode.



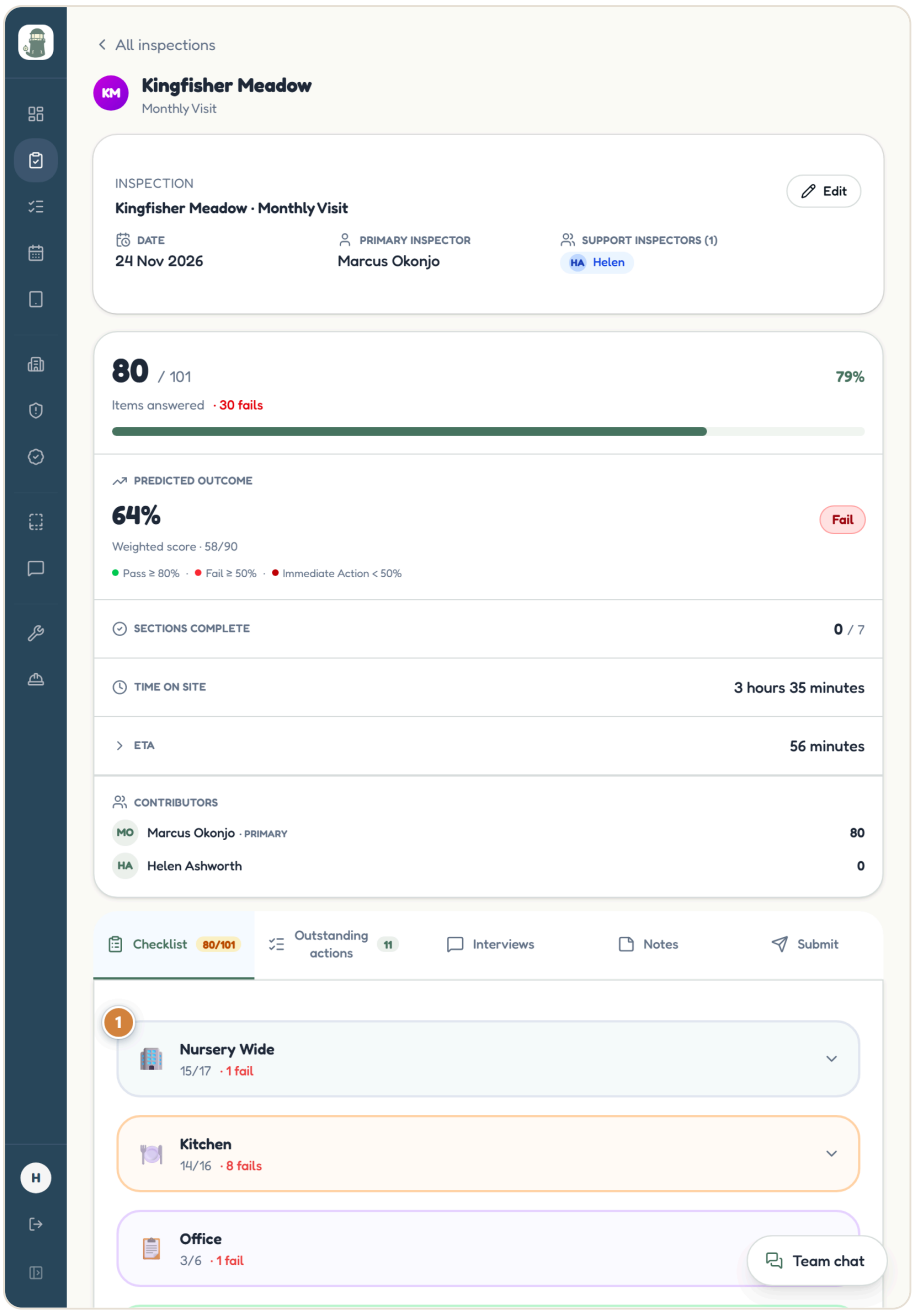
Beacon on an iPad in landscape.

INSPECTING ON AN IPAD? USE TABLET MODE

For a visit, select **Tablet mode** in the menu: it takes you room by room with large buttons, and keeps working without Wi-Fi, photos included. See Tablet mode for inspections.

The inspection page on an iPad

Outside tablet mode, the inspection page on an iPad shows the summary first (items answered, predicted outcome, time on site), then the tabs: **Checklist**, **Outstanding actions**, **Interviews**, **Notes** and **Submit**. Rooms are listed one under another; tap a room 1 to open its checklist.



An inspection in progress on an iPad, held upright.

- **Photos**: **Take photo** opens the camera inside Beacon, so you don't lose your place by switching to the Camera app. Allow camera access when Safari asks. Photos are made smaller before they upload, to save data.
- **Losing signal**: answers you give while offline are kept on the iPad and sent to Beacon when the connection comes back. Keep Beacon open until they've been sent, and don't reload the page while you're offline. Tablet mode also keeps photos taken offline. See Tablet mode for inspections.

Common problems

There's no Add to Home Screen option.
You're not in Safari, or you need to scroll further down the Share sheet. Open your Beacon address in Safari.

The home-screen Beacon asks me to sign in again.
The home-screen app keeps its own sign-in, separate from Safari. Sign in once inside it; it then stays signed in like the website does.

Take photo shows an error, or only lets me choose a file.
Safari wasn't allowed to use the camera. On the iPad, open **Settings › Safari › Camera** and choose **Ask** or **Allow**, then try again. Beacon falls back to the iPad's own camera screen when it can't use the camera inside the page.

Related guides

- Tablet mode for inspections
- Signing in and out
- Finding your way around
- Inspections

GETTING STARTED

Tablet mode for inspections

WHO IT'S FOR	WHERE TO FIND IT	TIME	YOU NEED
Area support manager Area support lead	**Tablet mode**	As long as the visit	Area Support Manager or Area Support Lead for the nursery, to start or carry out a visit

Purpose

Tablet mode is a full-screen, touch-first way to carry out an inspection on an iPad while you walk round a nursery. It takes you room by room, with large **Pass**, **Fail** and **N/A** buttons, a big **Take photo** button and a summary before you leave each room. Everything you record saves as you go, and keeps working without Wi-Fi.

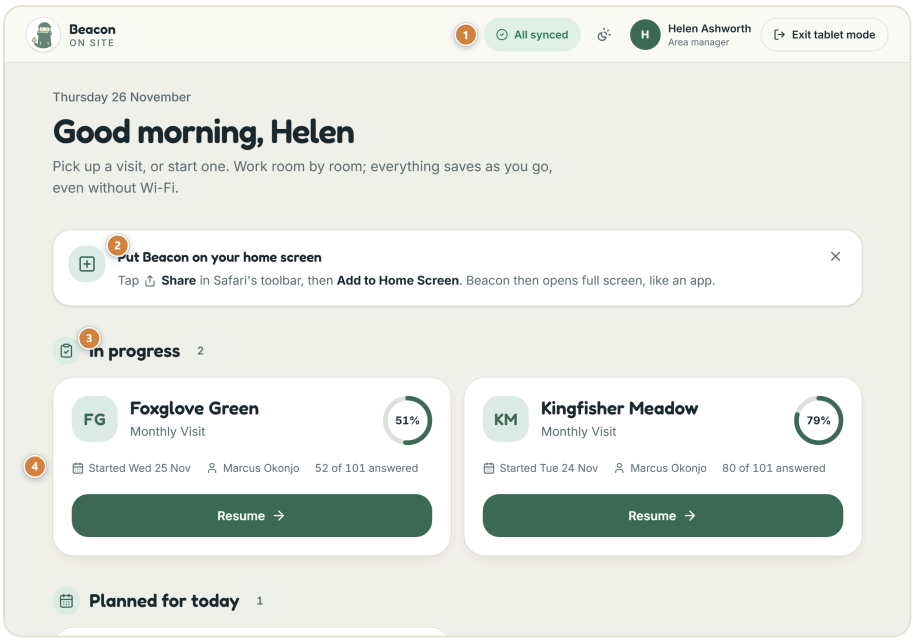
Tablet mode uses the same inspections as the rest of Beacon: you can start a visit in tablet mode and finish it on a computer, or the other way round.

Before you start

- Add Beacon to the iPad's home screen. See Using Beacon on an iPad.
- You're an area support manager or lead for the nursery. Other roles can open tablet mode, but see a read-only view with the note **Tablet mode is set up for running inspections**.
- Open the visit while you still have a connection, so the checklist is on the iPad before you lose signal.

Open tablet mode

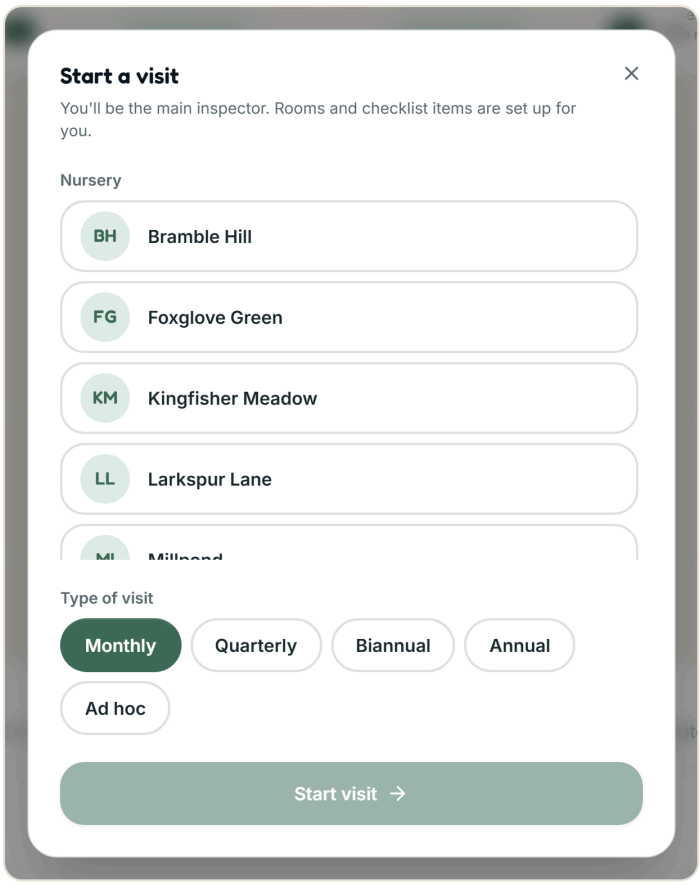
1. Select **Tablet mode** in the menu. If you opened Beacon from the iPad's home screen, the dashboard also offers **On site with your iPad?** with a button to switch; select **Not now** to hide it.
2. Tablet mode opens on its home screen. At the top, the pill 1 shows whether everything is saved.
3. In Safari, **Put Beacon on your home screen** 2 explains how to add Beacon to the home screen (**Share**, then **Add to Home Screen**). Tap the cross to dismiss it.
4. **In progress** 3 lists visits already started, each with a progress ring, who's inspecting and how many items are answered. **Planned for today** lists today's planned visits.



Tablet mode's home screen.

Start or resume a visit

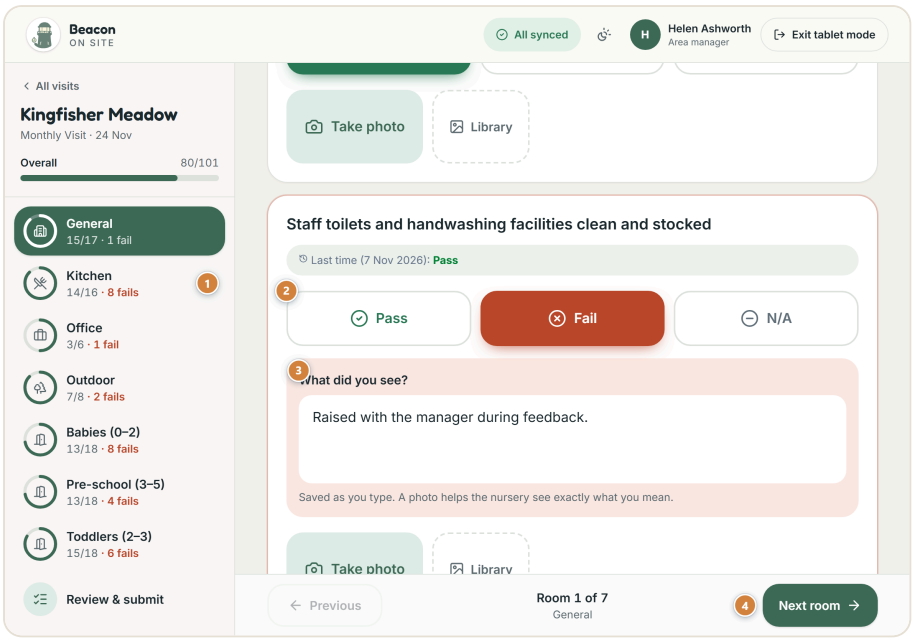
1. To pick up a visit, select **Resume** 4 on its card.
2. To start a planned visit, select **Start** on it.
3. To start one that isn't planned, select **Start another visit**. In **Start a visit**, choose the **Nursery** and the **Type of visit** (Monthly, Quarterly, Biannual, Annual or Ad hoc), then select **Start visit**. You'll be the main inspector, and the rooms and checklist items are set up for you.



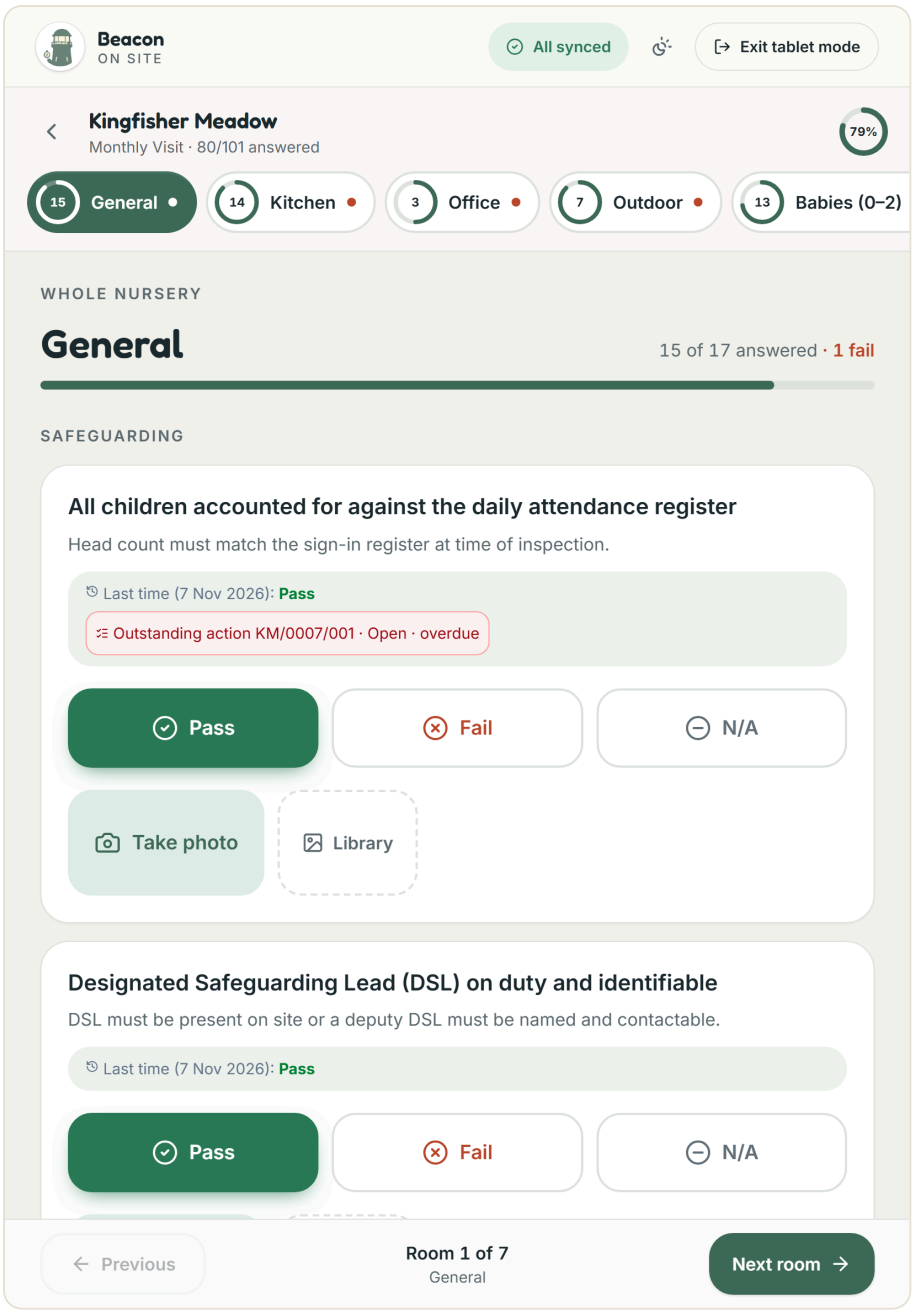
Starting a visit that isn't planned.

Work room by room

1. The rooms are listed down the left in landscape, or across the top in portrait. Each shows a progress ring and how many items have failed. Tap a room 1 to go to it. **Overall** shows progress for the whole visit.
2. For each item, tap **Pass**, **Fail** or **N/A** 2. Each item shows last visit's result (**Last time**) and any actions from earlier visits that are still open.
3. When you tap **Fail**, **What did you see?** 3 opens under the item. Describe what needs putting right: this becomes the action on the report. It's saved as you type.
4. For a temperature item, type the reading. The safe range is shown; a reading outside it is flagged, and the item is marked Fail ("Reading is outside the safe range, so this is marked Fail").
5. Use **Next room** 4 at the bottom ("Room 1 of 7") to move on, or **Previous** to go back.



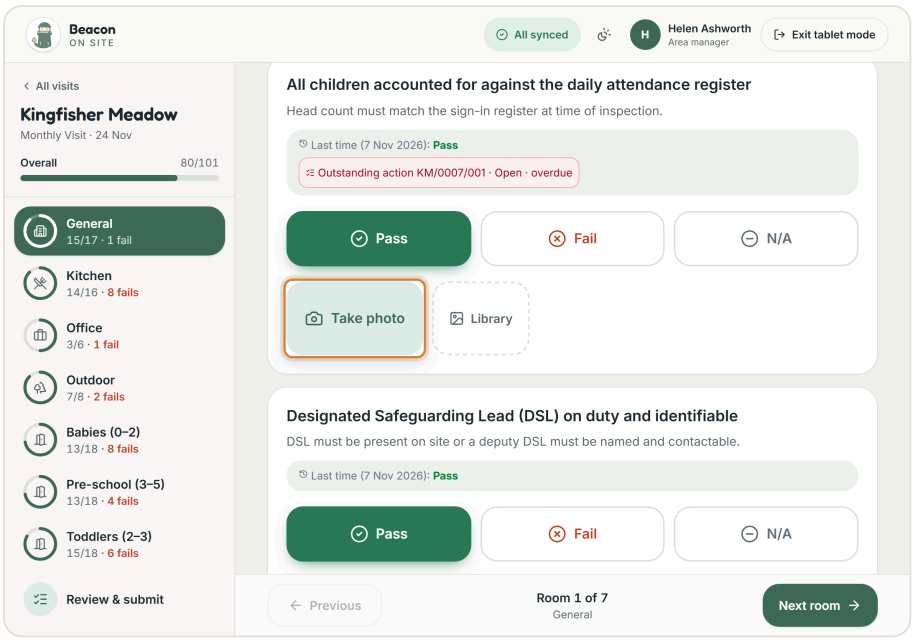
Working through a room, in landscape.



- In portrait, the rooms sit in a strip across the top.

Photos

Tap **Take photo** to add a photo to an item, or **Library** to choose one already on the iPad. Tap a photo to see it larger, or remove it. Allow camera access when Safari asks.

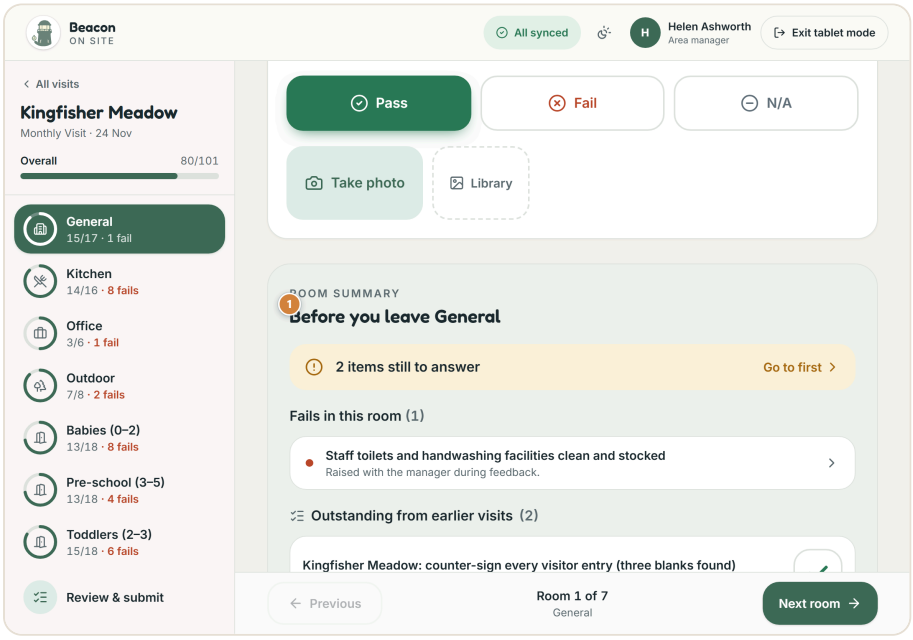


Adding a photo to an item.

Before you leave a room

At the end of each room, **Before you leave** and the room's name 1 starts the room summary:

- how many items are still to answer (**Go to first** takes you to the first), and the room's fails (tap one to go back to it);
- actions from earlier visits that are still open for this room. If one has been done, tap its tick to verify it on site; it shows **Verified on site**, with **Undo**. Only area support leads and managers verify;
- open maintenance for the room, and **Log maintenance** to report a new job.



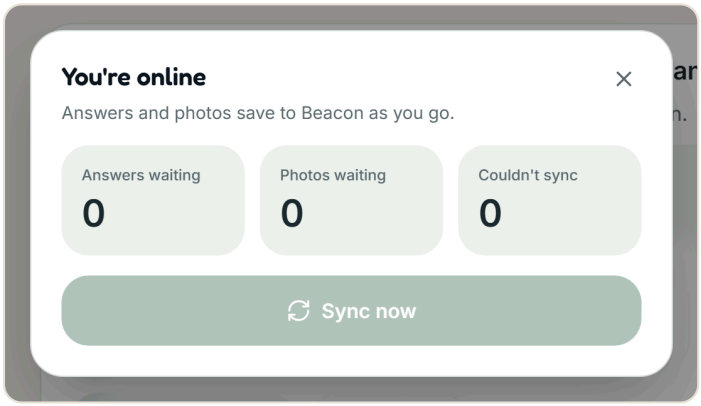
The room summary.

Working without Wi-Fi

The pill in the top bar shows how things stand:

The pill says	Meaning
All synced	Everything you've recorded is saved in Beacon.
N waiting to sync	Some answers or photos are still on the iPad, waiting to be sent.
Offline	No connection. Keep going: everything is kept safely on the iPad and syncs by itself when you reconnect.

Tap the pill to see what's waiting (**Answers waiting**, **Photos waiting**), and select **Sync now** to send it straight away. Photos taken offline show **Waiting to sync** until they've uploaded.

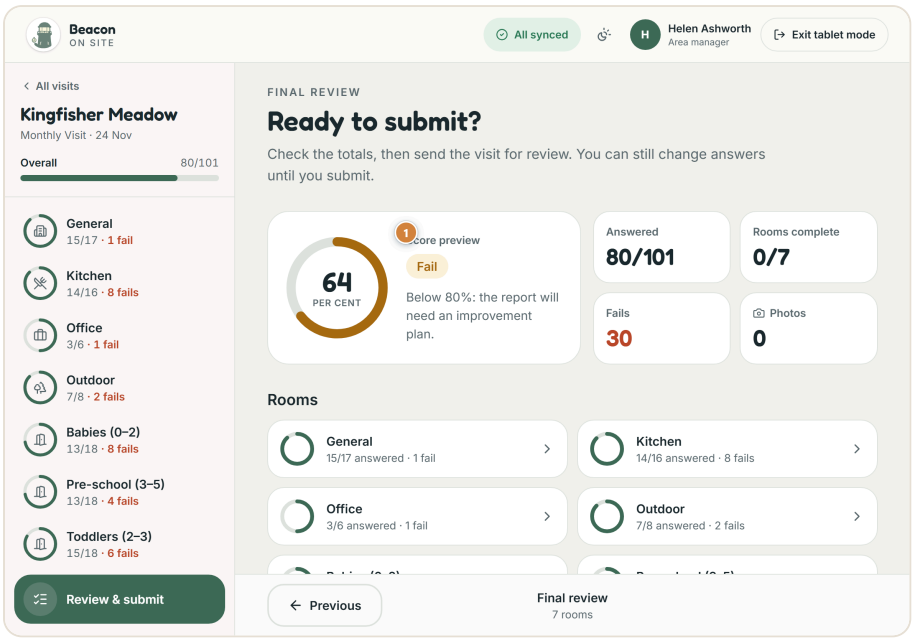


Tap the pill for the sync details.

Don't reload or close Beacon while you're offline. What you've already recorded is kept, but the page can't load again until you're back online.

Review and submit

1. After the last room, select **Review & submit**.
2. **Final review** shows a **Score preview** 1 with what it means (for example "On track: 80% or more of weighted items passed"), how many items are **Answered**, **Rooms complete**, **Fails** and **Photos**, and a card per room.
3. Check the totals. You can still go back and change answers.
4. Select **Submit for review** 2, then **Submit**. Once submitted, answers can't be changed here, and a draft report is created for the review.



Check the totals, then submit.

What you should see

> **Submitted for review**, with buttons to go back to the tablet home or open the review. The visit now appears under **In review** on the dashboard.

Light and dark

Tablet mode follows the iPad's light or dark setting. The theme button in the top bar switches between matching the iPad, light and dark. To leave tablet mode, select **Exit tablet mode**.

Common problems

There's no Start or Resume button.
Only area support managers and leads for that nursery can start or carry out a visit. Others see a read-only view.

"You're offline. Your work is safe on this iPad; submit once you're back online."
Submitting needs a connection. Wait until the pill shows All synced, then submit.

The pill says "Couldn't sync".
Something was refused when sending. Tap the pill and select Sync now. If it keeps failing, finish the visit on a computer and tell your area support manager.

"No items due for this visit".
No rooms or checklist items match this type of visit. Check the nursery's rooms and the template with your area support manager.

I need to record staff interviews or inspection notes.

Those aren't in tablet mode yet. Select Exit tablet mode and use the inspection page.

Related guides

- Using Beacon on an iPad
- Inspections
- Review and sign-off

GETTING STARTED

How to use these guides

Every guide follows the same pattern, so you always know where to look:

- **Who it's for** and **Where to find it**, at the top: the roles the guide is written for and the menu path in Beacon.
- **Purpose**: what the task is for and why it matters.
- **Before you start**: anything you need first, such as the right role or a nursery set up.
- **Numbered steps**, each with a picture of the screen.
- **What you should see** when you've finished.
- **Common problems** and what to do about them.
- **Related guides**.

Reading the screenshots

The orange numbers on a screenshot, like 1, match the numbers in the step text. An orange box marks the part of the screen a step is about. Every screenshot comes from the Beacon demo, which uses a fictional nursery group (Acorn Valley Nurseries) and fictional people, so the names you see won't be the ones in your Beacon.

Your Beacon address

Beacon is set up separately for each organisation, at its own web address, usually something like `yourgroup.beacon.earlytree.co.uk`. These guides say **your Beacon address** rather than giving one link. If you don't know yours, ask your area support manager, or look at the link in any email Beacon has sent you.

Which version am I reading?

The guides have a version for each Beacon release, such as **2026.11**. Choose a version from the menu at the top right of this site. If your screens don't match a guide, tell your area support manager: your organisation may be on a different release.

Printable guides

Every area is also a printable PDF with the same steps and pictures, for induction packs or a folder in the office. See PDF guides.