



LOST & FOUND PROPERTY POLICY

1. Introduction

1.1. The following policy and procedures have been designed to ensure the secure handling, storage and processing of lost & found property. The policy aims to ensure that lost property is held safely and reunited with the owner wherever possible and when not possible that the property is disposed of in a fair manner. Property is defined in terms of its classification and value and treated appropriately, as detailed in the guidelines and definitions below.

2. Definitions

2.1. Property is classified as follows:

2.1.1. **Lost property:** an item which the owner/keeper has lost without knowing where but wishes to recover it

2.1.2. **Mislaid property:** an item which the owner has inadvertently left in a location and wishes to recover it

2.1.3. **Found property:** an item not belonging to the finder that has either been lost or mislaid by the owner, or can be treated as abandoned property

2.1.4. **Abandoned property:** an item that the owner has (seemingly) abandoned and thereby may be deemed to have relinquished ownership of.

2.2. Property is assessed as follows:

2.2.1. **Returnable value items of personal identification** (identifiable) – credit cards, store cards, driving licences, identification cards, cheques, passports

2.2.2. **Returnable high value items** (identifiable/unidentifiable), - laptops, keys, mobile phones, cash and other items valued at over £100 (e.g. jewellery, cameras, etc.)

2.2.3. **Returnable low value items** (identifiable/unidentifiable) – cash (less than £100), scarves, hats, umbrellas, gloves, bags, flasks, footwear, old/worn clothing

2.2.4. **Non-returnable items** (identifiable/unidentifiable) - unlawful (e.g. drugs, ammunition, firearms) or dangerous items (e.g. poison, knives, etc)

3. Policy Guidelines

- 3.1. All found property, must be handed in to the Managers Office. The Manager on duty will record the property which is handed in, in the Lost Property Book.
- 3.2. All property recovered by staff will be retained in accordance with the abandoned property policy below.
- 3.3. All lost or mislaid property should be reported to the Manager on duty and/or to the Police – Manager should check the Lost Property Book to verify if the property has been handed in. If it has the Manager will seek identification from the claimant and make a note of this person's name and address in the Lost Property Book, and will hand over the items (unless they are **non-returnable items**).
- 3.4. notifying the Police of any **non-returnable items** immediately
- 3.5. notifying costumers of any identifiable **returnable value items of personal identification** and **returnable high value items/low value items** of property so that an e-mail or letter can be dispatched to the owner
 - 3.5.1. notifying the police of any **returnable value items of personal identification**
 - 3.5.2. ensuring that **returnable value items of personal identification** or **non-returnable items** are retained securely and safely until collected by the Police,
 - 3.5.3. **Returnable value items of personal identification** and **non-returnable** items shall not be retained on the premises for more than 7 days
- 3.6. Cash or items containing cash must have the cash sum verified by the manager on duty and a witness before an entry in the Lost Property Book/Abandoned Property Record is made which must be countersigned by both – the cash/item should then be placed in a sealed envelope, with the Lost Property Reference/Abandoned Property Record number written on it, in a locked safe.

4. Found property

- 4.1. Handling and recording found property is the responsibility of the Manager.
- 4.2. The abandoned property record will contain details of items recovered from costumers or staff. Record sheets must be retained for 12 months.
- 4.3. All found property should be handed in at the Managers Office where a Lost Property Book will be maintained to record full details.
- 4.4. **Returnable value items of personal identification** and **non-returnable items** shall be placed in a safe or appropriate secure container.
- 4.5. **Returnable high value items** and **returnable items of low value** shall be placed in a secure place.
- 4.6. An attempt will be made, by the Manager, to notify the owner of **identifiable returnable value items of personal identification** and **identifiable returnable high value/low value items** EITHER (i) by e-mail OR (ii) by letter (depending on an available address).
 - 4.6.1. If the owner does not respond within 7 days then the **returnable value items of personal identification** will be handed over to the Police to whom any subsequent claim will have to be made.
 - 4.6.2. If after 14 days since notification **returnable high value/low value items** remain unclaimed then the item will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charity.
- 4.7. **Non-returnable items** must be notified to the Police immediately
- 4.8. For **unidentifiable returnable high value items** or **unidentifiable returnable low value items** where there is an expiry date (e.g. theatre/concert tickets) the Manager will endeavour to send an e-mail to all costumers' advertising the found property without divulging details. If after 14 days since notification the items remain unclaimed, they will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charity.
- 4.9. **Unidentifiable returnable low value items** will be kept securely for at least 14 days. If not claimed within this time the items will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charity.
- 4.10. Each month the Manager will review all unclaimed found property.

4.11. Whenever items are donated to a charity, handed over to the Police or otherwise disposed of, the Lost Property Book or Abandoned Property Record must be annotated accordingly and should be signed by the Duty Manager; a receipt should be obtained from Charities, the Police, etc. for value items handed over to them and attached to the relevant record.

5. Abandoned property

5.1. Abandoned property is the responsibility of the Duty Manager.

5.2. Property seemingly left on purpose in common areas (and therefore potentially unidentifiable) may be removed to a safe & secure place or left in-situ with a notice affixed to indicate that if not claimed within 21 days it's ownership will be deemed to have been relinquished. Relinquished items will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies may be donated to a charity.

6. Re-claiming Property

6.1. Claims for lost/mislaid property should be made to the Manager on duty in the first instance.

6.2. Claims for abandoned property should be made to the Manager on duty in the first instance.

6.3. Claimant(s) must present valid photographic identification sign for all items claimed and record their full name and address. Under no circumstances should found property be released without verification of identity and a signature. For cash to be released the sealed envelope from a safe should be opened by the claimant and Manager and the contents confirmed.

6.4. Staff are not eligible to claim items unless the owner has provided written evidence of their wish to donate the item to the member of staff concerned.

7. Policy Measuring and Monitoring

7.1. The effectiveness of the policy will be measured through:

7.1.1. Costumers feedback

7.1.2. Audit procedures

8. Policy Review Cycle

8.1. Policy review: every [1] years

9. Impact Assessment

9.1. This policy has been impact assessed with regard to disability discrimination, equality and sustainability.

10. Supporting Documentation

10.1. Lost property book

10.2. Abandoned Property Record