



CHESTERFIELD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Lost Property Handling Policy

Policy statement

The following policy has been designed to ensure the secure handling, storage and processing of lost and found property in Chesterfield Borough Council's sites. The policy aims to ensure that lost property is held safely and reunited with the owner wherever possible. If this is not possible, the property is disposed of in an appropriate manner.

1. Policy scope

- 1.1. Lost property is defined as any item found that cannot readily be reunited with its owner. All avenues of identifying and reuniting 'lost goods' with their owners should be examined prior to items being forwarded for retention as lost property.
- 1.2. This policy applies to all Chesterfield Borough Council sites in relation to property of the wider public. The policy does not apply to lost and found property in residential or commercially let premises where the Council is the landlord.
- 1.3. This policy is in accordance with a procedure under Section 41 of the Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1982 whereby local authorities may, after giving appropriate notice, acquire ownership of or dispose of property which comes into its possession.

2. Lost property log

- 2.1 Each site should keep a lost property log for recording the following details:
 - Description of the item
 - Register number
 - Location where the item was lost/mislaid/found/abandoned
 - Date the item was lost/mislaid/found/deemed to be abandoned
 - Details of any notification issued (e.g. to Police, owner)
 - Location of item while being stored
 - Name and details of claimant
 - Signature of owner for receipt of goods
 - Note of whether the owner's identification was checked upon handover
 - Date the item was claimed or handed over to a Charity, the Police or otherwise disposed of.

3.0 Managing lost property

3.1 The following actions will be taken when a report of lost or found property is made:

- All items are recorded on the Lost Property Log
- All found items are kept in secure storage for a maximum of 3 months (see table below) or until claimed or passed onto the appropriate organisation if advised, for example, the police.
- Every possible attempt is made to identify the owner of the found property and make contact with that person in the interim
- Storage, notifications and disposal of specific items will be managed according to the table below.

<u>Storage, notification and disposal guidance</u>		
Type of item	Period of retention	Notification and method of disposal
Credit/Debit cards	1 week	<p>Phone the telephone number on the back of the card and state you have found a card and follow their advice.</p> <p>Do not contact the customer unless you know exactly who they are and have their direct contact details.</p> <p>Store the card in a secure location for a maximum of one week.</p> <p>Log the item on the lost property log with the name on the card, the first 6 digits of the card and the last 4 digits of the card.</p> <p>After a maximum of 1 week cut the card up into small pieces with scissors making it difficult to reconstruct the card information. Ensure that the secure code, signature, card number, magnetic strip and electronic chip are cut in various directions (to make it harder to piece together).</p>



		<p>Dispose of the cut card in normal waste bins (if possible divide the shards into several different waste bins).</p> <p>Update the lost property log.</p>
Passports and personal identification, keys, etc	3 months	<p>If possible, owner to be contacted and asked if they wish to claim the goods or how they would like the Council to dispose of them.</p> <p>If it is not possible to contact the owner, report to the relevant authority immediately (police, bank) and store in a secure location unless advised otherwise by police or the issuer.</p> <p>Unless the issuer requests us to return the item to them, if unclaimed after 3 month period, destroy and securely dispose of the item and update the Lost Property Log.</p>
Mobile telephones	3 months	<p>If possible, owner to be contacted and asked if they wish to claim the goods or how they would like the Council to dispose of them.</p> <p>If it is not possible to contact the owner, report to the police and store in a secure location unless advised otherwise by police.</p> <p>If unclaimed after the 3 month period, destroy the SIM card and donate phone to mobile recycling scheme and update the Lost Property Log.</p>
Items of potential or known value eg. purse, money or jewellery	3 months	<p>If possible, owner to be contacted and asked if they wish to claim the goods or how they would like the Council to dispose of them.</p> <p>If it is not possible to contact the owner, report to the police and store in secure location unless</p>



		<p>advised otherwise by police.</p> <p>If unclaimed in 3 months, donate to the Mayor's charity. For purses, handbags wallets etc. all personal information is destroyed and securely disposed of and the Lost Property Log is updated.</p>
Low value items eg. clothing, children's toys, single gloves.	1 month	<p>If possible, owner to be contacted and asked if they wish to claim the goods or how they would like the Council to dispose of them.</p> <p>If it is not possible to contact the owner, store in secure location. If unclaimed in 1 month, donate to Mayor's charity or dispose of in general waste and update the Lost Property Log.</p>
Medicine	1 month	<p>If possible, owner to be contacted and asked if they wish to claim the goods.</p> <p>Store securely for 1 month, unless perishable, and if unclaimed, give to a pharmacy to dispose of safely and update the Lost Property Log. If medication is perishable, take to pharmacy for safe disposal.</p>
Food, perishables and items where hygiene is a consideration.	1 day	<p>Where items are perishable or hygiene is a concern, items will be disposed of in general waste, unless claimed on the same day.</p>

- 3.2 If in doubt about what to do with an item, contact the local police for guidance (non-emergency number is 101).
- 3.3 Where disease / infection control is a concern, temporary alternative storage and disposal arrangements may be implemented.

4. Reclaiming lost property

- 4.1 Any person reclaiming property will be asked for information about the item. If appropriate, they must show their ID card or other photographic identification prior

to the item being returned. When an owner reclaims an item, the Lost Property Log should be updated and the claimant should sign the Lost Property Log to show they have received it.

- 4.2 Where disease / infection control is a concern, alternative temporary arrangements may be implemented to enable 'contactless' or socially distanced lost property collection.

5. Responsibility for lost property

- 5.1 The premises manager has overall responsibility for management of lost property, including the Lost Property Log within their area.
- 5.2 Each site should have a designated person for lost property queries (this does not need to be the premises manager).
- 5.3 Each site should ensure the Lost Property Handling Statement is visible to customers and visitors.
- 5.4 Each site should have a designated secure place to store lost property. Lost property should remain in this secure place until either claimed, or disposed of as described in the Storage, notification and disposal guidance table above.