

Customer Services' Lost Property Policy

This policy applies to all Customer Services' front-line locations, including One Stop Shops, Register Offices and Libraries.

Bath & North East Somerset Council has an obligation to retain lost items found within its properties for an agreed amount of time. This Policy sets out guidelines for the retention and disposal of lost property items.

Where an item identifies the owner, a member of staff will attempt to make contact. It is the responsibility of the owner, once contacted, to make arrangements to collect the item(s) at an agreed time.

For all other items, if no contact can be made, or the owner fails to collect once contact has been made and / or the owner is unknown, then items will be processed as follows:

For personal effects including, Passports, Purses, Wallets, Photographic ID – will be retained for a period of four weeks in a secure storage area. After four weeks from the date of the item being left, if contact with the owner has not been made the item (where possible) will be returned to the issuing organisation.

Unaccompanied notes and coins - will be retained for a period of four weeks. If the money is not claimed after this time it will be donated to a charitable organisation that is supported by Bath & North East Somerset Council.

For other lost items including Electronic devices, storage devices and personal possessions – will be retained for four weeks in a secure storage area.

Claiming Lost Property Items

Items will be returned to the owner or a third party if they can positively identify them, for example, if the item has been labelled, has a distinguishing feature or the owner is able to provide identification to confirm ownership.

In order to adhere to data protection, maintain customer confidentiality and to ensure the Council's network remains secure, the Council will not access the data contained on electronic devices in order to identify or trace the owner.

Disposal of Lost Property Items

The Council will ensure that lost items are disposed of appropriately after a four week period. Depending on the item the disposal methods will include:

Secure disposal of electronic and storage devices

Donations being made to charity, for example, money, items of clothing

Items sent for recycling and / or general waste if they cannot be donated and / or recycled

It is not the Customer Services policy to allow their staff and / or their families to keep any lost property that has not been claimed.