



Procedure Name:	Lost and Found Property Policy and Procedure
Procedure Number:	POL-OPS-005.1
Associated Documents:	PRO-HAS-003 Emergency Action and Evacuation Plan
Guiding Documents:	Torts (Interference with Goods) Act 1977 UK General Data Protection Regulation Data Protection Act 2018 Police (Property) Act 1897 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
Annexures:	None
Document Author:	Toni Mounsear-Wilson
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Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes a clear and consistent framework for the handling, storage, recording, retention, and disposal of lost and found property within CycloPark. It is designed to ensure that all items handed in are managed responsibly, that reasonable steps are taken to reunite property with its owner, and that the organisation meets its legal obligations under applicable legislation.

This policy applies to all staff and covers all areas of the Centre, including but not limited to the gym, cycling facilities, play park, skatepark, café, and any events delivered either directly by the organisation or by third parties operating on site. It applies to property found by staff, members, visitors, or contractors.

General Principles Responsibilities

All lost property handed to CycloPark will be treated with due care and attention and will act as an involuntary bailee of goods taking reasonable steps to safeguard items and facilitate their return to the rightful owner. However, the CycloPark does not accept liability for loss or damage to property beyond what is required under law.

Where items are found, staff must act promptly to secure them and record their details. Any bags or items that could present a security risk must be assessed in accordance with the HOT principles (Hidden, Obviously suspicious, Typical of the environment), as referenced in the Emergency Actions and Evacuation Plan. Where an item is deemed suspicious, staff must follow emergency procedures and not handle the item further.

Recording of Lost Property

All items handed in must be recorded in the appropriate lost property register for the relevant location. The record should include a description of the item, the date and time found, the location where it was found, and, where applicable, the details of the person who handed it in.

Where personal data is recorded, it must be processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. Personal information must be limited to what is necessary and stored securely.

For smaller items, a reference number corresponding to the entry in the register must be clearly marked on the item, either by attaching a label or placing the item in an appropriately labelled envelope.

Storage of Property

Lost property must be stored securely and in a manner appropriate to its nature and value.

Clothing and larger non-valuable items will be stored in a designated area behind reception. Smaller or high-value items, including but not limited to wallets, bank cards, keys, and jewellery, must be stored securely in the office safe with restricted access.

Staff must ensure that storage areas remain organised and that items can be easily cross-referenced with the lost property register.

Claims and Return of Property

Reasonable steps must be taken to verify ownership before releasing any item. Individuals claiming property should be asked to provide a clear description of the item and, where appropriate, identification or other proof of ownership.

A record of the return must be made in the lost property register, including the name of the claimant, the date of collection, and a signature confirming receipt.

Retention Periods

Lost property will be retained for a reasonable period to allow the owner to claim it. In line with operational principles:

- Clothing and similar low-value items will be retained for a period of one month.
- Higher-value items, including car keys, bank cards, wallets, and jewellery, will be retained for a period of two months.

These timeframes reflect a balance between providing adequate opportunity for recovery and the practical limitations of storage capacity.

Disposal of Unclaimed Property

Where items remain unclaimed after the relevant retention period, they will be disposed of in a responsible and lawful manner. Disposal decisions must be proportionate and, where necessary, escalated.

- Clothing and similar items will be donated to a clothing bank.
- Bank cards will be securely destroyed following notification to the issuing bank.
- Car keys will be disposed of through appropriate recycling channels.
- Jewellery will be assessed on a discretionary basis, with the decision on whether to transfer the item to the police or dispose of it resting with the Head of Venue Operations.
- Phones, tablets, watches, and other items of significant value will be handed to the police in accordance with best practice.

Where items are transferred to the police, this should generally occur promptly once it is clear that the item is of significant value and ownership cannot be readily established.

Perishable Items and Property Containing Food

Where lost property includes food items or other perishable contents, staff must prioritise hygiene, safety, and practicality in determining appropriate action.

If an item of lost property contains food that is clearly perishable, spoiled, leaking, or likely to deteriorate to the point of causing odour, contamination, or pest risk, the perishable contents must be removed and disposed of without delay. Disposal should be carried out in accordance with general waste management procedures and in line with good practice under food safety guidance issued by the Food Standards Agency.

Where it is safe and reasonable to do so, the non-perishable container or bag should be retained and recorded in the lost property register, with a note clearly stating that perishable contents have been removed and disposed of due to hygiene concerns.

However, where the condition of the item presents a health risk, including but not limited to rotting food, liquid leakage, mould, or strong odour, or where contamination cannot be safely contained, the entire item (including the bag or container) may be disposed of. This decision should be made pragmatically by staff on duty, taking into account the risk to staff, visitors, and the facility.

In such cases, a record must still be made in the lost property register, including a description of the item, the reason for disposal, and the date of disposal.

Staff must not open sealed containers or bags where doing so could present a risk. If there is any concern that an item may present a hazard beyond routine spoilage, including chemical, biological, or security concerns, staff must follow the organisation's emergency procedures, including application of the HOT principles where appropriate.

This approach aligns with general duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of staff and visitors.

Liability

Cyclopark accepts a duty of care in respect of lost property but does not accept liability for loss, theft, or damage to items beyond its legal obligations. Users of the facility are encouraged to take reasonable steps to safeguard their own belongings.

Publication of Policy

Although this policy is primarily intended for internal use, it is considered best practice to publish a summary of lost property procedures on Cyclopark's website or within public areas. This promotes transparency, manages user expectations, and may assist in the recovery of lost items. Any published version should be simplified and should not include sensitive operational or security details.

Placing the policy on the website - Purpose

Publishing a clear summary helps set expectations for members, visitors, and event participants. In a multi-use environment like Cyclopark, where transient footfall is high, people frequently misplace items. Providing accessible guidance on what happens next reduces uncertainty and unnecessary enquiries.

From a legal standpoint, this also supports Cyclopark's position by demonstrating taking reasonable steps to inform potential owners about how their property will be handled and the timeframe for reclaiming it.

Policy Summary for Website Use

Lost Property

If you have lost an item during your visit, please contact our team as soon as possible or speak to a member of staff at reception. All items handed in are recorded and stored securely for a limited period to allow owners the opportunity to reclaim them.

Lost property is typically held for up to one month for clothing and similar items, and up to two months for higher-value items such as wallets, bank cards, keys, and jewellery. After this time, unclaimed items will be disposed of responsibly. This may include donation, recycling, secure destruction, or transfer to the police where appropriate.

If you believe an item belongs to you, you will be asked to provide a description and, where appropriate, proof of ownership before it can be returned. A record of collection will be kept for audit purposes.

Please note that while we take reasonable care of all property handed in, items are left at the owner's risk.

Where personal details are provided to assist with the return of property, this information will be processed in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. For further information, please refer to our Privacy Policy.

For any enquiries relating to lost property, please contact us directly or visit reception during opening hours.

Review Details

Document Number	By Whom	Findings of Review	Next review due date
PRO-HAS-005.1	Toni Mounsear-Wilson	Creation of new document	10.04.2025