

# South Harford & Tuckswood Community Association

## Lost & Found Property Policy

### 1. Introduction

The following policy and procedures have been designed to ensure the secure handling, storage and processing of lost and 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:

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

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

Found property: an item not belonging to the finder that has either been lost or mislaid by the owner.

#### 2.2. Property is assessed as follows:

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

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

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

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

### 3. Policy Guidelines

**3.1.** All found property must be handed in to the Centre Manager's Office. The Centre Manager will record the details of the property in the electronic Lost Property File.

**3.2.** All property recovered will be retained in accordance with policy detailed below.

**3.3.** All lost or mislaid property should be reported to the Centre Manager. The Centre Manager will check the Lost Property File to verify if the property has been handed in. If it has, the Centre Manager will seek identification from the claimant, make a note of this person's name and address in the Lost Property File, and will return the items (unless they are non-returnable items).

**3.4.** The Centre Manager will notify the police of any non-returnable items immediately by calling 999.

**3.5** Cash, or items containing cash will have the cash sum recorded in the Lost Property file. Cash will be kept in a sealed envelope within the safe.

#### **4. Found property**

**4.1.** Handling and recording found property is the responsibility of the Centre Manager. All found property should be handed into the Manager's Office where an electronic Lost Property File will be maintained to record full details.

**4.2.** Record sheets within the Lost Property File will be retained for at least 12 months.

**4.3.** Returnable value items of personal identification and non-returnable items shall be placed in a safe or appropriate secure container.

**4.4.** Returnable high value items and returnable items of low value shall be placed in a secure place.

**4.5.** The Centre Manager will attempt to notify the owner of identifiable returnable value items of personal identification, and identifiable returnable high value/low value items, either by email or by phone, depending on the available contact details.

**4.5.1.** After 14 days since notification, if items remain unclaimed then they will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies will be donated to the Association.

**4.6.** Non-returnable items will be notified to the Police immediately by calling 999.

**4.7.** For unidentifiable returnable high value items, or unidentifiable returnable low value items where there is an expiry date (e.g. theatre/concert tickets), the Centre Manager will send an email to all users, notifying them of the found property without divulging details. If the items remain unclaimed after 14 days since notification, they will be handed over to a charity, placed in the general waste, or recycled. In the case of cash, unclaimed monies will be donated to the Association.

**4.8.** 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 the Association.

**4.9.** The Centre Manager will review all unclaimed found property on a monthly basis.

**4.10.** Whenever items are donated to a charity, handed over to the police or otherwise disposed of, the Lost Property File will be annotated accordingly by the Centre Manager. A receipt should be obtained from Charities for value items handed over to them.

**5. Re-claiming Property**

**5.1.** Claims for lost/mislaid property should be made to the Centre Manager in the first instance.

**5.2.** Claimants must present valid photographic identification and record their full name and address. Under no circumstances will found property be released without verification of identity. For cash to be released, the sealed envelope from within the safe should be opened by the claimant and Centre Manager and the contents confirmed.

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Date agreed: 17<sup>th</sup> June 2024

Signature (Chair): .....

Signature (Secretary): .....