ST MARY STOKE

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LOST PROPERTY POLICY

1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out how St Mary Stoke PCC handles property left behind by Hirers, their guests, or church groups following an event or letting, and the timescales for holding, storing and disposing of such items.

1.2 This document should be read alongside the Facilities Hire Agreement and the Hall Access Arrangements document.

2. Reporting and Logging Found Items

2.1 Any item found in the Hall, kitchen, or car park after a booking should be recorded in a Lost Property Log, noting the date found, a brief description of the item, and the booking/event it relates to where known.

2.2 Any item that appears to be of significant value (see section 5) should be logged and stored securely without delay, rather than placed on the hooks.

3. Stage One – On the Hooks

3.1 General items of lost property (e.g. clothing, bags, umbrellas, water bottles, children's toys) will be hung on the designated lost property hooks for a period of 2 weeks from the date they are found.

3.2 Keeping items on the hooks allows Hirers and regular users to easily see and reclaim their belongings the next time they visit the Hall.

3.3 Hirers who contact the Operations Manager (bookings@stmarystoke.co.uk) to enquire about a lost item should be directed to check the hooks first if within this 2-week window.

4. Stage Two – Lost Property Storage

4.1 After 2 weeks on the hooks, any unclaimed items will be moved into a labelled Lost Property box/storage area, where they will be kept for a further 4 weeks (6 weeks in total from the date found).

4.2 Items in storage remain available on request – Hirers should contact the Operations Manager to arrange collection.

5. Valuables and Sensitive Items

5.1 Items of higher value or sensitivity – including cash, jewellery, electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, headphones), keys, wallets/purses, ID documents, and bank/credit cards – will not be left on the hooks. These are logged and kept in a secure, locked location (e.g. the Parish Office) as soon as they are found.

5.2 Valuables will be held for a longer period of 3 months from the date found, to give the owner a reasonable opportunity to come forward.

5.3 If cash or valuables of significant worth remain unclaimed after 3 months, the Operations Manager will consider handing these to the local police as unclaimed property, in line with standard practice, rather than disposing of them.

5.4 Bank cards and ID documents that remain unclaimed after 3 months will be securely destroyed (e.g. shredded) rather than disposed of in general waste.

6. Perishable Items

6.1 Food and perishable items (including anything left in the fridge/freezer) will not be held as lost property. In line with the Facilities Hire Agreement, these will be disposed of promptly for hygiene reasons – normally at the end of the booking or the next time the kitchen is checked.

7. Disposal of Unclaimed Items

7.1 Once the relevant holding period has expired and an item remains unclaimed, it will be removed from the Lost Property Log and either:

- donated to a local charity shop or charitable collection, where in good, useable condition; or
- disposed of / recycled responsibly, where not fit for donation.

7.2 Valuables that are not handed to the police will similarly be donated or disposed of once the 3-month period has elapsed and reasonable attempts to trace the owner have been made.

7.3 The PCC accepts no liability for items lost, damaged, or not reclaimed within the timescales set out in this policy, in line with the general disclaimer in the Facilities Hire Agreement.

8. Summary of Timescales

Item type	Stage 1 (on hooks)	Stage 2 (storage)	Then
General items	2 weeks	4 weeks (6 weeks total)	Donate / dispose
Valuables (cash, electronics, jewellery, keys)	Not left on hooks – secured immediately	3 months (secure storage)	Police / donate / dispose
Bank cards & ID	Not left on hooks – secured immediately	3 months (secure storage)	Securely destroyed
Perishable / food items	N/A	N/A	Disposed of immediately

9. Review

9.1 This policy will be reviewed annually by the PCC, alongside the Facilities Hire Agreement.