

## Returning a dog safely

If you come across a lost or stray dog, the law requires that you always contact the local dog warden who will be a trained dog handler and is responsible for reuniting lost and stray dogs with their owners.

If a lost or stray dog is easily identifiable (e.g. is wearing a collar and tag that includes owner contact details) and you decide to initiate reuniting dog with owner, please follow the below steps. Remember that a lost or stray dog is likely to be nervous and may be unfamiliar with their surroundings.

- 1. When contacting the owner, consider an appropriate location to meet them. You may want to ask that they meet you to collect their dog in a public location.*
- 2. Don't give away any personal details to the owner if you're uncomfortable doing so. The important thing is that the owner knows where and when to collect their dog.*
- 3. If you have committed to reuniting the dog with owner at an agreed location but feel nervous about the handover, consider asking a friend to join you. Alternatively you could tell a friend or family member what you are doing, where you are going in advance and when you plan to get back.*
- 4. Take a mobile phone with you to the handover so that you can make contact with friends, family or dog warden if you need to.*
- 5. Trust your instincts; if something about the reunion doesn't feel right then it's best for both you and the dog that you contact the local dog warden, and so that they can take responsibility for the handover.*