

Adopting your Kiosk - Shropshire Council FAQ Guide

With the decline in use of public payphones, many telephone kiosks receive little or no use; therefore BT has begun a scheme of payphone removals. The 'Adopt a Kiosk' scheme was introduced in 2008 to allow local councils and charities to adopt and retain the kiosk for an alternate community use.

The below FAQ guide, compiled by Shropshire Council Historic Environment Team in liaison with the Commissioning Support Team and BT should answer some common queries.

Further information is available via the BT website:

<https://business.bt.com/public-sector/street-hubs/adopt-a-kiosk-scheme/>

Who can adopt a kiosk?

BT Kiosks can be adopted by any recognised local authority, parish/community/town council, Registered Charity, or Charitable Organisation registered with HM Revenue & Customs for recognition as a charity.

How do we apply to adopt a kiosk?

Applications can be submitted online at:

<https://business.bt.com/public-sector/street-hubs/adopt-a-kiosk-scheme/>

What do we need to consider before adopting a kiosk?

Upon completion of the adoption, the telephone within the kiosk will be removed. Therefore, prior to adoption the following points should be considered:

- The level of call usage is an important consideration, and should indicate whether the telephone kiosk is still providing an important service to the community. BT will be able to provide details on the level and type of calls prior to adoption.
- Whether the kiosk is in an isolated location, close to a known accident blackspot, or in an area of poor mobile phone signal are also important considerations.

It is recommended that consultation is held within the local community to gauge opinion on the proposed adoption and subsequent removal of the telephone.

How much does it cost?

Due to legal requirements, the adopting community is required to purchase the kiosk from BT for the sum of £1.

What happens to the telephone once the kiosk is adopted?

Once the application to adopt is accepted, BT will remove all payphone equipment from the kiosk, at which point BT will confirm that the adoption is completed and ownership has been transferred to the adopting council/charity.

Who is responsible for the kiosk once it is adopted?

Once the adoption is completed, the adopting council/charity is responsible for the BT kiosk, including its maintenance and public liability.

Who is responsible for insurance once the kiosk is adopted?

The council/ charity taking over ownership and responsibility for the BT kiosk should speak to their insurers to let them know they are taking on this liability. They will be taking on liabilities because they will need to ensure that people using the kiosk are safe.

Who is responsible for the health and safety of people using the kiosk once it is adopted?

The council/charity taking over the ownership and responsibility for the BT kiosk will need to do a risk assessment, which should highlight all the risks associated with use and maintenance of the kiosk, and put relevant actions in place. They would also need to ensure that they maintain a log of all inspections and work carried out on the kiosk because this would be needed to defend any claim they may get associated with the use of the kiosk.

The Health & Safety team at Shropshire Council normally advise on risk assessments and can be contacted either directly or through the Community Enablement Team.

What about the electric light and supply to the kiosk?

BT have advised that they will retain responsibility and costs for the power supply for a period of 5 years from the date of adoption, and at the time of writing have no plans to do otherwise. After 5 years the supply can either be disconnected or responsibility transferred to the adopting council/ charity. BT has confirmed that they retain responsibility for the underground cable up to the fuse box within the kiosk chamber. The wiring from the fuse box to the light socket, including light bulb, would be the responsibility of the adopting council/charity; although BT will ensure that all electrics are working upon handover.

What could the kiosk be used for?

Over 2,500 kiosks have been adopted around the UK and re-used in a number of innovative ways, including: local libraries/ book swaps, sales of local produce, tourist information points, art galleries, coffee shops, stores for community defibrillators- and even pubs!

What if the kiosk is listed?

A number of kiosks are grade II listed. Whilst this doesn't prevent the general maintenance and ongoing use of the kiosk, should works be planned over and above those outlined in the maintenance guidance note, or in association with a new use for the kiosk, please contact the Historic Environment Team to discuss further (contact details are included below).

Once the kiosk is adopted, can it be passed to a third party?

Once adopted, the adopting council/charity could pass the kiosk on to a third party. However consideration must be paid to the following:

- The kiosk cannot be passed to a third party whilst it remains on the public maintainable highway. The adopting council/charity are responsible for all liability until it is removed. Only publicly recognised bodies or charities can own kiosks on the public highway.
- To remove the kiosk, the power supply must be disconnected- An application must be made to BT for this work, for which there is a fee. Please contact BT for further details: payphones@bt.com

Once the kiosk is adopted, can it be removed?

Once the kiosk is adopted, the adopting council or charity could remove the kiosk and pass it to a third party (unless it is listed), however consideration must be paid to the above points.

How should the kiosk be maintained?

To ensure that the kiosk structure remains safe for users, and remains as an attractive part of the street scene, it is recommended that regular maintenance checks are carried out in accordance with the accompanying maintenance guidance.

Who can I contact for advice on maintenance, once the kiosk is adopted?

Guidance for kiosk maintenance is provided in the attached accompanying document. However, should further guidance be required please contact the Shropshire Council Historic Environment Team: historic.environment@shropshire.gov.uk

Who can I contact for advice about the location of public telephones?

Please contact the Historic Environment team or BT direct using the contact details below.

Important Contacts

Shropshire Council Historic Environment Team

historic.environment@shropshire.gov.uk

01743 258725

BT Payphones

payphones@bt.com

customer.serv.payphones@bt.com