



UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL 00:01 THURSDAY 19 OCTOBER 2017

‘SECRET STORAGE BEHAVIOUR’ – BRITS HOARDING SENTIMENTAL ITEMS AS WE CAN’T HELP BUT HANG ON TO OUR PAST

- More than a quarter of Brits (27%) are hoarding the equivalent of nine or more box loads of sentimental stuff in their homes
- One in 10 (11%) are hanging on to letters and cards from work colleagues
- One in five (19%) keep old concert wristbands and tickets
- Almost one in five (18%) Brits are keeping sentimental items hidden from their partner
- More than a quarter (28%) of those who keep items hidden from their partner admit to secretly keeping letters or cards given by an ex, with two in five (42%) intending to keep them forever

Despite the digitalisation of modern life, we are still hoarding sentimental stuff with 27% of Brits admitting to hoarding the equivalent of nine or more box loads of treasured items in their homes. This level of stockpiling is causing ‘secret storage behaviour’, with couples hiding sentimental objects from their partners.

We all have that one cupboard or drawer heaving with bits that we can’t bear to bin: research from Lloyds Bank Home Insurance as part of its *Favourite Things*¹ campaign shows that birthday cards (32%), love letters (30%), Valentine’s cards (27%), old baby clothes (23%), sporting tickets (23%) and old clothes (17%) top the list of items that are secretly stashed away. More than one in five (21%) admit to hoarding between five and eight boxes of such belongings and 27% hoard nine or more.

Unlikely keepsakes

Proving that there’s still a place for handwritten notes in the age of tech, one in 10 (11%) admit that they hang on to letters and cards from work colleagues for longer than two years, with the figure rising to 14% when the handwritten material is from friends. When it comes to letters or cards from a partner, half (50%) say they wouldn’t ever throw them away.

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And for anyone clinging on to summers past by still wearing a threadbare Glastonbury wristband, you are not alone – one in five Brits (19%) keep old concert wristbands or tickets as a lasting memento, and one in seven (15%) admit that they never throw away theatre or sports fixture tickets.

According to the research, almost half (46%) admit that they wouldn't throw away artwork from children and over a quarter (26%) say they would be most upset if their children's artwork was lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced.

Relationship rumbles

It seems the amount of stuff we hoard in our homes is a bone of contention for couples up and down the country, with one in seven (14%) admitting to having a tiff over the volume of prized possessions they cling on to. This is forcing 'secret storage behaviour', with almost one in five (18%) admitting that they intentionally keep certain items private or hidden from their other half, with nearly half (43%) being secretive for fear of arguments.

An inability to let go of past relationships is compounding the situation, with over a quarter (28%) of secretive respondents deliberately keeping and hiding letters or cards given by an ex. Four in 10 (39%) admit that their secret storing is because they don't want to upset their current partner, but that doesn't stop 17% planning to hang on to past relationship mementos forever.

Kelly Young, Director of Operations, Lloyds Bank General Insurance, said:

"Our customers tell us that more often than not, it is the loss of irreplaceable, sentimental items such as letters and photos that is the most painful when disaster strikes, and this is clearly played out in our research findings.

"Despite this, one in four (24%) of us still admit to not taking any steps to protecting personal belongings. This is staggering when you look at just how much we store within our homes.

"As one of the country's biggest home insurance providers, it is our role to help customers understand how to keep their homes as safe as possible, to find the right level of protection for their prized possessions, and understand the importance of having their belongings insured."

Mary-Ann Ochota, anthropologist and broadcaster, said:

"Despite living in a digital age, it's still those items that we can hold in our hands, like a child's drawing or a crumpled concert ticket that have a powerful pull to the past. Sentimental possessions can also be a way of expressing hidden aspects of our personalities and connecting us to the people we hold most dear. Like a tech-savvy teen listening to his Dad's vinyl collection or a modern fashionista wearing her grandmother's

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vintage jewellery. And it's no surprise that we're still keeping treasured tokens from past relationships like a love letter from an old flame, honouring previous chapters in our lives that have helped shape our character.

"In ancient times kings and queens would often be buried with their prized possessions as a symbol of their significance. Thousands of years later, we're still reluctant to let go of 'artefacts' from our past - they create stories of our lives for generations to come.

"People today migrate all over the world for work, study and family reasons. Modern travel means it's never been easier to hop on a plane and cross continents, and it's often those treasured things from home that help keep us grounded."

The picture across the UK

Precious possessions vary across the UK: 52% of Scottish respondents cite family heirlooms as one of the possessions they'd be most upset to lose, versus 44% across the UK. Londoners are more likely to treasure football programmes or tickets (15% say they would be most upset to lose these, versus 7% across the rest of the UK) and concert programmes or tickets (12% versus 6% in the UK). Those in Wales show greatest attachment to letters from loved ones with 40% saying they would be most upset to lose these, well above the UK total figure of 31%.

There are notable regional variations when it comes to home insurance too: Londoners are least likely to have home insurance, more than one in five (22%) saying they are not insured or are unsure if they have insurance. In contrast, just 9% in East Anglia are uninsured.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

Sentimental items people would be most upset about if they were lost, stolen, damaged or misplaced	Regions showing strong reaction
Old cards (birthday, Valentine's etc.) from loved ones	East Midlands (23%)
Children's artwork	East/East Anglia (40%)
Football programmes/tickets	London (15%)
Journal or diary	North East (17%)

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Jewellery given by a loved one	North West (43%)
Family heirloom	Scotland (52%)
Baby book	South East (29%)
Family war medals	South West (24%)
Concert programmes/tickets	Wales (8%)
Holiday souvenirs	West Midlands (16%)
Letters from a loved one	Yorkshire and the Humber (30%)

**NB this table includes a selection of sentimental items from a longer list as part of a survey of UK respondents*

Respondents who keep sentimental items private or hidden in their home from their other half – items hidden	
Photographs	41%
Birthday cards	32%
Love letters	30%
Letters or cards from exes	28%
Valentine's cards	27%
Sporting tickets	23%
Old baby clothes	23%
Old clothes	17%
Non-love letters	9%
Magazines	7%
Other	6%

¹Lloyds Bank is bringing to life the significance of our possessions and the role they play in our lives through a new campaign, *A Few of My Favourite Things*, which explores the stories our treasured items tell about us and about society as a whole through research, individual case studies, photography and a pop up exhibition.

Throughout our lives we collect different items, whether on purpose or by accident. Some items are insignificant, yet all tell a part of our own individual stories. Working with renowned photographer, Paula Zuccotti, eight individuals have been photographed surrounded by their favourite belongings in their homes. Taken together these objects paint a picture greater than their individual parts. By looking at the items people treasure the most, we gain an insight into who they are and where they came from.

These photographs and stories can be found at lloydsbank.com/favouritethings. We will also be running a series of social media campaigns to showcase these touching stories.

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About Lloyds Bank Home Insurance

Lloyds Bank Home Insurance, Home Insurance Premier and Home Solutions are all underwritten by Lloyds Bank General Insurance Limited. Lloyds Bank Home Solutions and Home Insurance Premier have a 5 Star Defaqto rating.

Methodology

Research consisted of 2,005 UK adults – conducted online in June 2017 by Atomik Research on behalf of Lloyds Bank

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