

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

### Subject: Vehicle Online Shopping Fraud

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**Message sent by**

Action Fraud (Action Fraud, Administrator, National)

Fraudsters have been advertising vehicles and machinery for sale on various selling platforms online. The victims, after communicating via email with the fraudster, will receive a bogus email which purports to be from an established escrow provider (a third party who will keep the payment until the buying and selling parties are both happy with the deal).

These emails are designed to persuade victims to pay upfront, via bank transfer, before visiting the seller to collect the goods. The emails also claim that the buyer (victim) has a cooling off period to reclaim the payment if they change their mind. This gives victims the false sense of security that their money is being looked after by this trustworthy third party, when in fact it is not and the money has gone straight to the fraudster.

**Protect yourself:**

- When making a large purchase such as a new car or machinery, always meet the seller face to face first and ask to see the goods before transferring any money.
- If you receive a suspicious email asking for payment, check for spelling, grammar, or any other errors, and check who sent the email. If in doubt, check feedback online by searching the associated phone numbers or email addresses of the seller.
- Contact the third party the fraudsters are purporting to be using to make the transaction. They should be able to confirm whether the email you have received is legitimate or not.
- False adverts often offer vehicles or machinery for sale well below market value to entice potential victims; always be cautious. If it looks too good to be true then it probably is.

If you have been affected by this, or any other type of fraud, report it to Action Fraud by visiting [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk), or by calling 0300 123 2040.