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Essex Police Fraud Alert System

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12th March 2021

CAR SELLERS BEWARE— THIS OIL TRICK COULD LOSE YOU THOUSANDS

Car sellers are warned to be on the lookout for a re-emerging scam that sees potential buyers try to knock thousands off a car's asking price—by tampering with it's engine.



The scam, which has been around for a number of years, sees criminals secretly pour oil into the coolant reservoir of the vehicle for sale, then request a large discount claiming it will require a new engine.

The scammers often arrive to view the car in pairs or threes and will try and distract the seller—one may ask to look at the engine whilst the other wants to see the spare tyre in the boot. When the car is taken for a test drive, the engine may smoke or make loud noises, which will prompt the scammers to ask for a cut-price deal.

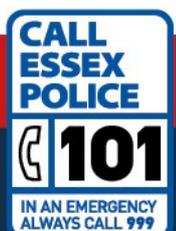
Recently, Essex Police has seen an increase in the number of reports of this scam, both within Essex and in surrounding counties. If selling a car, remember:

- **Stay with the buyers** - don't leave them alone with the car or allow yourself to be distracted at the rear of the vehicle whilst someone is looking at the engine
- **Be aware of suspicious behaviour** - scammers will often request an enormous discount due to the 'fault' with the vehicle
- **Be confident to refuse the sale** - if you are doubtful about how genuine the buyer is, or you believe that something suspicious is going on, don't hand over the keys!



If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud, please call **Essex Police** on 101
Report fraud or attempted fraud by contacting **Action Fraud** at actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040

Keep up to date with fraud and
do **even more** Online at essex.police.uk



TICKET SCAMS ON THE RISE FOLLOWING ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN ANNOUNCEMENT

Following the announcement that the UK will see a phased exit out of lockdown, the demand for tickets for summertime events has soared—along with the opportunities for scammers.

With the expectation that the UK will be 'open for summer' there has been a rush to make the most of it. Many people are looking to attend festivals and live events, but many are falling prey to the criminals looking to profit from this demand.



Essex Police have recently seen an increase in reporting where residents have purchased a ticket and been requested to pay via bank transfer or PayPal Friends and Family. When they arrive at the address to collect the tickets, the homeowner is unaware of the sale, or the tickets never arrive by post.

How to protect yourself from ticket fraud:

- **Buy from genuine ticket sellers** (i.e. box office/promoter/reputable ticket site) - whilst you may be able to pick up a 'bargain' via social media, there is no guarantee you will receive the tickets. It's much more expensive to have to pay twice!
- **Avoid bank transfers** - requests for bank transfers or via PayPal Friends and Family should be a red flag. Using these methods offers little protection should something go wrong.
- **Beware of unsolicited contact** - be suspicious of emails, texts or social media offers of unbelievably good ticket deals.

Remember - if it seems too good to be true, it probably is!



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