



## Fraud update from West Mercia Police - Economic Crime Unit - 01/02/2022"

---

### FACEBOOK MARKETING SCAMS

This week we are highlighting two current Scams relating to sellers and buyers using Facebook Marketplace

#### • Fraudulent Purchasers

The victim will list something for sale on Facebook Marketplace, typically a mobile phone or games console.

- The suspect will then make contact with the victim, enquiring about the item and will subsequently ask for that item to be sent by Special Delivery.
- The suspect will then offer to send the money via PayPal.
- The suspect will then send a fake email, claiming to be from PayPal, and requesting a Tracking Number before the money can go into the victim's account.

In reality, the suspect hasn't paid the victim for the item. As the victim has sent the Tracking Number, which can only be provided once they have sent the item, the victim is at a loss both for the item they have sent, and the money they should have received from the sale of that item.

You will never be asked for a Tracking Number from PayPal before the money can be credited into your account.

If this does happen, this is very likely to be a Scam and you should not send the item until you have received payment in full.

#### 2. Fraudulent Sellers

On Facebook Marketplace, the suspect will list something for sale such as DIY tools; a games console; a mobile phone.

- The victim then makes contact with the suspect, negotiates a price and sometimes personal information is obtained, such as the victim's address for where to send the item.
- The suspect will say they have numerous people looking at/interested in the item and asks for either a deposit or the full amount in order to "secure the item".
- The victim will pay via a bank transfer (and this offers no protection from fraud as there is no way to get the money back once the money has been sent)
- A couple of days may then pass, and the suspect will still have the item showing on the Facebook Marketplace.
- The victim will try and make contact to ask when the item will be sent, or why the item is still for sale after they have paid a deposit, and the suspect will either verbally abuse the victim or block the victim from making any further contact.
- The crux of this scam is that the suspect will list an item for sale on Facebook Marketplace with no intention of selling the item at all.

#### How to avoid this scam

- If you are buying from Facebook Marketplace, ensure you know exactly who you are dealing with.
- If you are unsure in any way, do not part with any of your money.
- If you do need to part with your money, pay by credit card if you can, or use a reputable site such as PayPal which will offer some form of protection when making a purchase.

#### **Take Five to Stop Fraud**

- **Stop:** Taking a moment to stop and think before parting with your money or information could keep you safe.
- **Challenge:** Could it be fake? It's okay to reject, refuse or ignore any requests. Only criminals will try to rush or panic you.
- **Protect:** If you think you've been a victim of fraud, contact your bank immediately and report it to Action Fraud online at [actionfraud.police.uk](https://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or by calling 0300 123 2040.

*For further information visit:*

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

<https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>