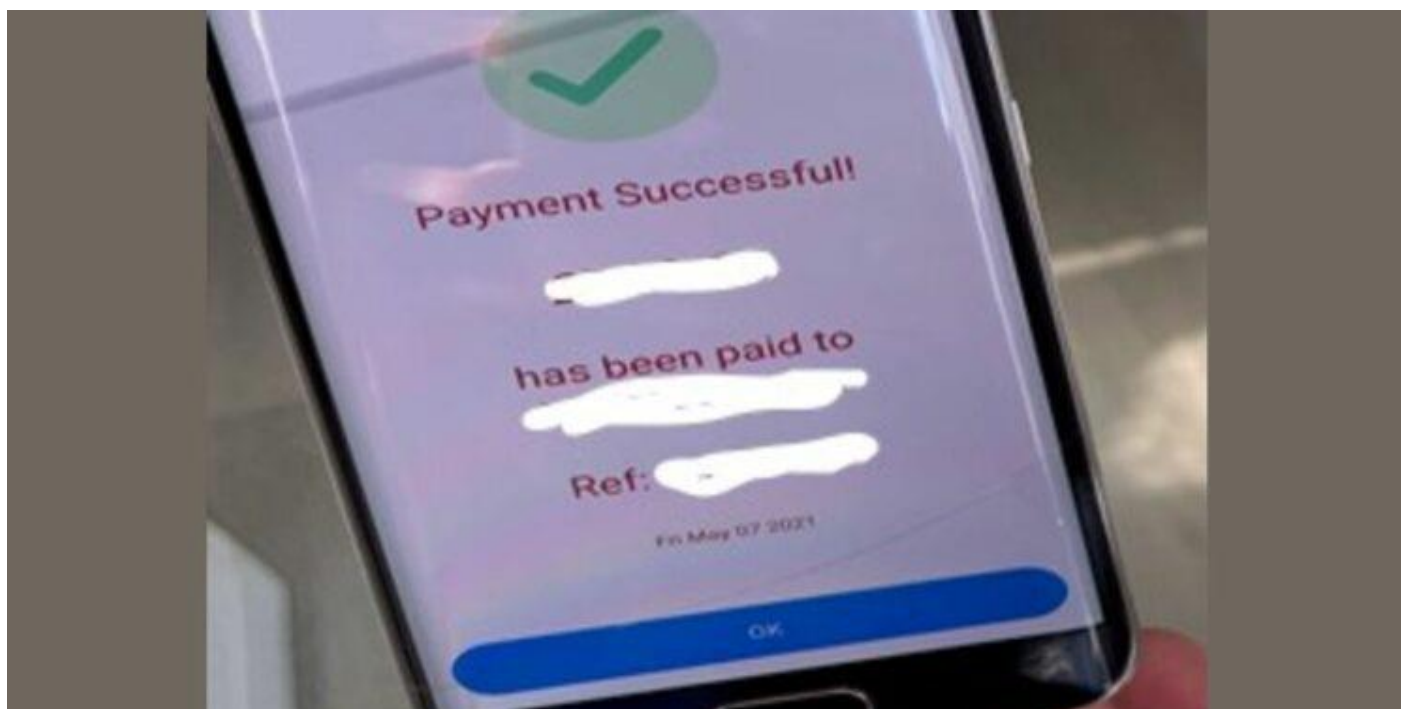


Online sellers asked to be wary of money transfer scam



One victim was presented with fake 'confirmation' of the transfer having been completed, but never received the cash.

Anyone selling items online is being warned of a scam which sees buyers pretending to have transferred money but making off without paying for the goods.

We are aware of several incidents in recent months where a seller has advertised something for sale and the buyer has agreed to pay for it when picking it up.

When the suspect(s) attend the address to collect the item, victims are then asked to put their details into a fake banking app on the buyer's phone. It will show the transfer is complete, as per the picture above, but when the victim checks their bank account, the money hasn't gone in. When the seller has queried it, the buyer has told them it may take a couple of hours for the money to go through, however no transfer ever happens.

The seller has then unsuccessfully tried to chase the buyer for payment via phone and online.

Incidents have recently reported to us in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

We'd advise when selling items online to follow these tips to make sure you do not lose out in a scam:

- Stay on the website when communicating with the buyer/seller
- Do your research on the buyer/seller to make sure they are genuine
- Use the recommended payment method, or you may not be refunded for any losses to fraud

- If the deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Also, if anything the seller or buyer says raises a red flag, it's probably best to go with your instincts and move on
- If you are selling online be wary of any emails stating funds have been sent. Login to your account via normal route (not via any link provided to you in an email) to check this. Be certain you have received the funds before handing over the item(s) you are selling

Anyone who has been a victim of such a scam, and not yet reported it, is urged to call **Action Fraud** on 0300 123 2040.