

## Warning: Increasing risk of fraud - please stay vigilant

Hunt & Coombs LLP want to make you aware that fraudsters are currently hacking into email chains between a house buyer or seller and their solicitors. The fraudster monitors the communications using malware that looks for key words like house purchase, deposit, buy and payment - and then they make their move.

They hack into the email account and contact the client, disguised as the solicitor's company they have been liaising with.

The fraudsters tell the client by email that the solicitor's bank account details have changed. The fraudsters give the details of the 'new' account for the deposit/purchase funds to be sent.

Unknowingly, the client transfers their money to the 'new' false account.

The false account is owned by the fraudster, leaving the client at a substantial financial loss. Unfortunately, in these circumstances, the funds cannot be recovered because they are authorised.

### **Advice on protecting yourself:**

- Don't feel pressured into changing any bank details. If you receive an email stating a change in the bank details, you should ring your solicitor on a previously used telephone number. Hunt & Coombs LLP will not email you to tell you that our bank details have changed.
- Check the email address carefully and if in doubt phone your solicitor to check the information is correct.
- Buyers and sellers should avoid using public Wi-Fi systems to check emails when house purchases are being made. Fraudsters can easily hack into vulnerable Wi-Fi systems.
- Avoid sharing social media posts about buying/selling your house. Fraudsters may get hold of this information and know the next step is a large financial transaction.



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For further information on our Residential Conveyancing Team and the services they provide please contact a member of the team on 01733 882800, or visit our website at [www.hcsolicitors.co.uk](http://www.hcsolicitors.co.uk).

*“The service was excellent!”*

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