

1 in 2 performance cars and hot hatches have been given a new identity

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Thrill seeking, status conscious motorists, personalise their car with a cherished number plate
www.hpcheck.com

From first cars to dream supercars, British motorists are eager to put their personal stamp on their car. Car owners are purchasing personalised number plates to reflect their name or nick name, life status - or simply hide the true age of the vehicle - and they aren't afraid to spend big bucks to get the desired digits. In fact, the priciest plate ever sold by the DVLA¹ was for the number plate '25 O', which sold for a whopping £518,000. The plate was purchased by a Ferrari dealer and is believed to be on a Ferrari 250SWB, once owned by Eric Clapton. However, vehicle provenance check expert, HPI, warns that cars with a plate transfer can often be hiding something sinister.

Analysis of HPI Checks conducted in 2014², has revealed that 1 in 5 cars checked have undergone a plate transfer. The top 5 types of cars which are most likely to have undergone a plate change are 'Performance Cars & Hot Hatches', which top the list with 56% followed by 'Roadsters & Cabriolets' at 42%. Coupes come in third at 41%. 4x4's and executive cars also make the list at 39% and 37% respectively. Whilst many of these plate changes have been made innocently to personalise a vehicle, it is only once a provenance check has been carried out that used car buyers can rest assured that they know the true identity of the vehicle.

Neil Hodson, Managing Director for HPI, explains "Whether it's HRH Queen Elizabeth II with her prestigious 'A 7' number plate, which was released in 1903 by London Council on a first come first served basis³, to the everyday British motorist wanting to make their mark, personalised plates continue to be in high demand.

"Whilst they can be a great gift or purchase to stand out from the crowd, it is really important that used car buyers recognise that personalised plates can be hiding more than they may think. For example, the vehicle may be a stolen car, which has had a legitimate number plate applied to conceal its stolen status. This is commonly known as car cloning. Buyers can find themselves out of pocket if they have mistakenly purchased a stolen car, as the police can remove the vehicle from their possession, resulting in them losing both the car and the cash they paid for it."

The HPI Check® offers a £30,000 Guarantee in the event of the information it provides being inaccurate - offering added financial peace of mind to used car buyers. Crucially, it is the only vehicle provenance check to include clone cover as standard within its Guarantee.

Neil Hodson concludes "The HPI Check will cross-reference the Vehicle Registration Mark (VRM) and the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), matching them against the vehicle's official history to see if it correlates. It also searches its own archives going as far back as 1990, to see if anything untoward happened to the vehicle under its previous plates. On average, every day, 41 vehicles that are checked with us are identified as being recorded as stolen⁴ by the police. This is not limited to high value performance cars either, so used car buyers should make the most of a HPI Check which can independently

determine the true identity of the car.”

END

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For further information visit www.hpichack.com or call 0845 300 8905

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Notes to Editors

1<http://www.autoexpress.co.uk/car-news/90617/personalised-number-plates-the-top-10-most-expensive-ever#>

2based on HPI checks conducted in 2014

3http://www.platemaster.com/facts_famous_number_plates.asp

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About HPI:

Originally established in 1938, HPI Limited is a primary source of vehicle information for the UK motor industry and motoring consumer which, since December 2008, has been owned by Solera Holdings, Inc. Solera Holdings, Inc. is an integrated group of leading automotive claims solutions companies. Founded in January 2005 by Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Tony Aquila, Solera has expanded its geographic reach and now serves more than 55,000 business customers in over 50 countries across six continents.

HPI encompasses both the HPI database of all UK road registered vehicle descriptions and histories, and the National Mileage Register (NMR) which holds in excess of 200 million mileage readings.

Together, HPI and NMR represent one of the UK's largest vehicle information sources, combining and interpreting data from government agencies, industry bodies, private organisations, the police and the general public. Registering with HPI helps companies to protect their financial interests in motor vehicles and a wide range of other mobile assets. HPI Checks give purchasers instant confirmation of whether vehicles are correctly described, known to be subject to outstanding finance or serious accident damage, or recorded as stolen or "clocked".

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(1) All prices include VAT and are correct as of 2nd January 2015

(2) Mileage Data is not covered by The HPI Guarantee

(3) The HPI Guarantee is subject to terms and conditions

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