

Scams

What is a scam?

It is a dishonest plan for making money and involves tricking people into paying money

A person that runs a scam is known as a scammer.

Scamming people is illegal.

Why do I need to know about scams?

Recently there have been lots of scams aimed at Ukraine guests. People have paid lots of money to scammers, and then found they have been tricked.

How to identify a scam

Here are some things you need to be aware of:

- They might ask you to pay lots of money upfront for a service
- They might ask you to pay using Paypal Friends and Family
- They often offer something that seems too good to be true
- They may prey on your insecurities or your need to find a host quickly
- They may want to know about your personal relationships e.g do you have a boyfriend?
- They may ask you to do something you are not happy with, in order to get a host
- They may put pressure on you to do things quickly, rather than giving you time to think about it.

How can I protect myself?

Some things you can do are:

- Do not give money to people you do not know or trust.
- Be aware of who you are talking to. Check out their photos and profiles online. Do they look real?
- Do not give out lots of personal information online, such as full name, date of birth, address, bank details.
- If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.
- The most important thing is that if something does not feel right, or you are not sure it is genuine, then do not pay any money.

Who can I speak to if I think something is a scam?

You can email screen shots of online conversations to the Suffolk County Council team at refugeesupport@suffolk.gov.uk Our team will be happy to check these for you.

How can I learn more about scams?

National trading Standards offer a 20-minute online course where you can learn about the different types of scams and how to spot and support a victim.

You can find the course here: <https://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk/training/friends-elearning>

You can also register to receive the Suffolk Trading Standards weekly email which highlights any scams targeting the area: <http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/JoinTheFight>



Are they genuine?

- Scammers pretend to be someone they are not.
- Scammers will usually use a fake photo for online profiles.
- Scammers may offer accommodation in return for you being in a relationship with them.
- Scammers often make lots of personal comments about your appearance, such as telling you how pretty you are.

- A genuine host will not ask personal details about relationships.
- A genuine host will be happy to wait for you to make a decision and will not pressure you to act quickly.
- A genuine host is not interested in your personal relationships and will not comment on your appearance.
- A genuine host will not ask you to send them money.



It's free to find a host

- You do not need to pay anyone to find you a host.
- If someone contacts you online offering to find you a host, or offering to be your host, you do not need to pay them.
- If someone asks you for money when offering to find you a host, it is most likely a scam.
- Do not send money to anyone who offers to find you a host, or offers to be your host.
- Use genuine host agencies that are recommended by the UK Government. You can find a list here:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/find-a-sponsor-using-recognised-providers-homes-for-ukraine>



Know who you are speaking to

- Do not give out personal details such as full name, date of birth, bank details, address.
- Double check a person's photo and profile. Does it look real? If it is on Facebook, how long ago did they join? Scammers often steal photos from other online profiles. The profile may only have been set up very recently.
- If you are unsure about a person then do a reverse image search on google for their profile photo.
- Be careful what information you give out if posting an online advert for a host.
- Ask them questions about themselves. Are you happy with the answers they give?
- A genuine person will be happy to wait for you to make a decision. They will not put pressure on you to act quickly.