

25th June 2021

THE SCAMMERS RENTING OUT OTHER PEOPLE'S HOMES

Rental fraud continues to be an issue across the country and can affect people of all ages. It occurs when would-be tenants are tricked into paying an upfront fee to rent a property.

In reality, the property does not exist, has already been rented out, or has been rented to multiple people at the same time. Criminals often use images of properties already for sale to create their fake listings.

The renter loses the upfront fee they have paid and is not able to rent the property they thought they had secured with the payment. Rental fraudsters often target students looking for university accommodation.



Protect yourself from rental fraud:

● Is the advertiser genuine?

Always use a reputable company where possible. Do not send money to anyone advertising rental properties online until you are certain the advertiser is genuine.

● Moving from abroad?

If you need to secure accommodation in the UK from overseas, seek the help of the employer or university you are coming to. Alternatively, get a friend, contact or relative to check the property exists and is available.

● Visit the property first

Do not pay any money until you or a reliable contact has visited the property with an agent or the landlord.

● Ask for documentation

Ask for copies of tenancy agreements and any safety certificates such as Gas Electricity or HMO Licence.

● Do not be pressured into transferring large sums of money

Transfer funds to a bank account having obtained the details by contacting the landlord or agent directly after the above steps have been followed. Be sceptical if you're asked to transfer any money via a money transfer service like Western Union.



If you or someone you know is vulnerable and has been a victim of fraud, please call **Essex Police** on 101
Report fraud or attempted fraud by contacting **Action Fraud** at actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040

Keep up to date with fraud and
do **even more** Online at essex.police.uk

