

Let's talk Cuckooing

Understanding Cuckooing

'Cuckooing' is a form of exploitation where criminals take over someone's home and use it to live in, store drugs, or carry out other illegal activities. They often gain access by building false friendships and manipulating or grooming people, sometimes referred to as mate crime. Criminals may also use threats, intimidation, or violence to control victims, leaving them feeling unsafe in their own home.

Who might it affect?

Criminals target vulnerable people who they believe they can exploit. This often includes elderly people, those with mental ill health, disabilities, substance dependency, financial difficulties, or anyone who is isolated and lacking support. Properties may be owned, rented or provided by the local authority.

Signs to look out for

The resident may become withdrawn, fearful, harder to contact, or rarely seen outside their home. The home may have frequent visitors, notice unfamiliar faces or suspect drug-related activity. Increased noise, litter, graffiti, and antisocial behaviour can also be warning signs.

You can **report anonymously** via the **Modern Slavery Helpline 8000 121 700** or via the **Crimestoppers** website.



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