

Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership (DSAP) Briefing – Home Invasion (Cuckooing)



Durham
Safeguarding Adults
Partnership



What is Home

Invasion – also known as Cuckooing?

Cuckooing occurs when people take over the home of a person who may be vulnerable and use it for criminal purposes and/or gain, for example, dealing drugs.

Resource



Find out more

Cuckooing is often linked to County Lines. This toolkit for professionals is a useful resource with practical advice about children and young people who may be subject to County Lines.

[View Toolkit](#)

Myth buster – county lines and home invasion (cuckooing) only affects children and young people.

No – it can also affect adults who are vulnerable or susceptible to grooming and criminal exploitation. [Find out more](#)

Cuckooing – Helpful Prompts and how to respond



Who – Anyone – Adults can often be targeted because of their needs, they may have a disability, they may have mental health or physical need or learning disability. They may be 'isolated' or 'lonely', be involved in sex work, or have drug and/or alcohol needs.

How - Often a drug dealer or a gang will befriend the adult creating a sense of 'trust' – which is false. The adult may be lonely, and a friendship may be what they need. Sometimes they may ask for the use of a room. But the situation will quickly change.

What: Victims are often forced into criminal activity, threatened with the loss of their home, or abused. That abuse can involve coercion and control, physical abuse, sexual exploitation, financial abuse and psychological abuse. This can lead to significant trauma.

Where – Cuckooing can happen anywhere, it's often linked to much wider criminal networks and [county lines](#) activity. This briefing should also be read in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Adults Board Modern Slavery Briefing.

Do – Look out for the signs; children and adults can be victims of cuckooing or county lines. Think about the child/ren or adult(s) in a property, are there frequent visits, is there a suspicion of drug use, is there a build up of litter, is there an increase in anti-social behaviour?

Partnership – we all have a responsibility to keep people safe; if you suspect 'cuckooing' is taking place you should report it. You can contact the police on 101 or report it anonymously to [CrimeStoppers](#) online or by calling 0800 555111.



SPOT THE POTENTIAL SIGNS OF A CUCKOOING VICTIM

Physical Appearance - Shows signs of physical or psychological abuse, look malnourished or unkempt, they may appear to be wearing expensive clothing, or appear anxious/agitated or appear withdrawn and neglected. Do they present with unexplained injuries?

Isolation – Have they stopped engaging with social networks or with support services?

Unusual financial activity – Have they paid off debts? This may be household debts such as rent arrears, did they pay in cash?

New associates – do they have new associates? People unfamiliar to you who are always at their home, do they appear fearful in their presence?

SPOT THE POTENTIAL SIGNS OF A HOME BEING USED

Unusual Traffic - Are more vehicles present? Are more people coming and going? Do cars arrive and leave after short periods?

Time- Is the activity at the property different in pattern, is more happening throughout the day and night at varying times?

Drug use- is there evidence of drug use at the property, open drug dealing and/or drug related litter.

Hidden from sight- have you stopped seeing the property resident as often?

Know it, identify it - the earlier it's known the sooner it will stop.

The Legal Stuff - Did you know????



Did you know? That the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 can support with stopping the issue? Landlords or property managers in certain circumstances can receive up to 14 years imprisonment or a substantial fine for allowing the use of drugs in their property.

Did you know? The property in certain circumstances may be seized or forfeited as well as prosecutions for money laundering.

Did you know? That the premises in certain circumstances may be 'closed down' and boarded up under the terms of a Premises Closure Order (Section 76 Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014).

Useful Websites to find out more:



[County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

[Durham Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

[Durham Constabulary](#)

Remember if you SEE IT, REPORT IT. If you are concerned that you, a child, or an adult may be a victim of cuckooing or county lines, TELL SOMEONE:

Emergencies 999 and 101 for non-urgent