

# Cuckooing - Spot the Signs

Professional criminals are targeting the homes of vulnerable people and using them for drug-dealing – a process known as “**cuckooing**”.

Dealers often entice the vulnerable person into allowing their home to be used for drug dealing by giving them free drugs or offering to pay for food or utilities.

These criminals are very selective about who they target as “cuckoo” victims and are often entrepreneurial. A lot of the time victims are lonely, isolated, or frequent drug users themselves.

“**Cuckooing**” means the criminals can operate from an unobtrusive property, making it an attractive option. They can then use the premises to deal and manufacture drugs in an environment that is not known to police, usually staying for just one day at a time. When the dealers use the victim’s property for criminal enterprises, the inhabitants become terrified of going to the police for fear of being suspected of involvement in drug dealing or being identified as a member of the group, which would result in their eviction from the property.

The victims of this type of exploitation could easily be your neighbours or other people you know. Just one phone call to the police or Crimestoppers could give the police and other agencies the ability to change someone’s life.

## Signs to look out for:

- Often takes place in a multi-occupancy or social housing property.
- An increase in the number of coming and goings from the property.
- Offenders will often have new vehicles outside the property or hire cars.
- Possible increase in anti-social behaviour in and around the property.
- The victim will often disengage from support services.
- New, unfamiliar persons visiting the property.

**If you’re concerned about drug-related crime where you live, call us on 101, or 999 in an emergency, to report any drug-related information or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.**



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