

## What to do if you know of someone that is being cuckooed?

We would like to support anyone that is a victim of cuckooing by working with partners to safeguard victims and identify the criminals.

It is extremely important that you keep us informed of any exploitation or criminality so that we can begin a multi-agency approach in tackling the issue.

If you know of someone who is a victim, there are a variety of ways you can get in contact with us:

- Inform a local Police Officer
- Attend your nearest Police Station
- Report online via the 'report it' page on the West Yorkshire Police website or speak to one of our colleagues via the online chat
- If you are a partner, through the Partnership Intelligence Portal
- Call 101
- Or, if you would like to remain anonymous please call:

**CrimeStoppers.**

**0800 555 111**

100% anonymous. Always.

## Further support

The first step for those who are a victim of cuckooing is to talk to someone, this could be you, a family/friend or a support worker. There are also other services that can offer support for cuckooing and other issues:

### For practical advice and support:

**Citizen's Advice Bureau –  
03444 111 444**

### To talk through any issues or concerns:

**Samaritans – 116 123 (free, 24/7) or  
email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)**

### Got a problem with drugs?

**Talk to someone who has been there:  
Narcotics Anonymous (NA) –  
<https://ukna.org/>  
for more information and location of  
meetings or call their helpline (10am –  
midnight) **0300 999 1212****

### PARTNERSHIP INTELLIGENCE PORTAL –

Are you an organisation/business that could help us understand the threat of serious and organised crime within our community?

Report information direct to the heart of West Yorkshire Police's Intelligence function.

**<https://www.westyorkshire.police.uk/partnership-intelligence-portal>**



# WHAT IS CUCKOOING?

## ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW AT RISK?

Office of the  
Police & Crime  
Commissioner  
West Yorkshire

Programme  
**PRECISION**  
Working together to  
tackle serious and organised  
crime in West Yorkshire



**WEST YORKSHIRE  
POLICE**

## What is Cuckooing?

Cuckooing is when a drug dealer or a gang takes over a vulnerable adult's address for criminal purposes, usually as a site to supply, store or produce drugs from. Gangs will exploit an individual's vulnerabilities in order to make a profit and avoid police detection.

Cuckooing is often seen as a part of County Lines criminality which involves drug gangs exploiting children and vulnerable adults.

## Who is targeted?

The following individuals are sometimes targeted for cuckooing:

- Those who suffer from drug and/or alcohol addiction
- Those who are struggling financially
- The elderly
- People with mental health issues
- Individuals with learning disabilities

## How does it start?

A gang member may begin by befriending the vulnerable adult - gangs will select members who are charming and manipulative in order for them to quickly build a rapport.

They will then offer the vulnerable adult something of interest to them, this could be a relationship, friendship, drugs and/or alcohol, money or clothing.

In exchange they may ask to 'borrow' a room, to store something or meet other 'friends' at the property. In some cases, the gang may make it clear that this is for criminal purposes, i.e. drug supply, or they may use an excuse as to why they want to use the property.

Gradually the 'benefits' will reduce and may eventually come to an end, and more and more people will come and go from the address.

The gang members may threaten the vulnerable adult verbally or physically if they try to put a stop to their criminal activity. They will also discourage family/friends and support workers from visiting the vulnerable adult's address.

## What are the risks of Cuckooing?

If drugs are found at the property it is likely the vulnerable adult, being a resident at the address, will be interviewed and/or arrested by the Police.

If an occupier allows gang members to use their property for drug supply, they may face a prison sentence and/or a fine.

**However**, if there is evidence to suggest that the adult is vulnerable and has been exploited by the gang, this will be considered when making charging decisions and safeguarding measures will be put in place.

Benefits could be lost and the housing provider may choose to evict the resident. Often, housing providers will begin by issuing a Closure Order on the address which can involve restricted access to others for up to six months. Usually an agreement of who can attend the address will be put in place between the housing provider and the resident. These are a positive measure and can be used to help the resident gain control over their home again.