

1

What is Cuckooing/Home Invasion

Cuckooing, also known as **forced home invasion**, is a form of criminal exploitation where offenders—often linked to drug networks—take over the home of a vulnerable person to use it for illegal activities. This includes drug dealing, storing weapons, human trafficking, and financial abuse.

It is closely linked to **county lines** activity and often overlaps with **child criminal exploitation (CCE)** and **modern slavery**.

2

Key Characteristics

- **Victims:** Often adults with mental health issues, substance misuse, learning disabilities, or those who are socially isolated or economically disadvantaged.
- **Perpetrators:** Typically gang members/drug dealers who may initially befriend the victim before using coercion, threats, or violence.
- **Tactics:**
 - Offering free drugs or gifts to gain trust.
 - **Creating a “debt”** that must be repaid through use of the property.
 - **Intimidation** or physical violence.
 - **Forcing victims** to stay confined to certain rooms or leave their own home.

3

Signs and Indicators

- Increased foot traffic or unfamiliar visitors at all hours.
- Anti-social behaviour, noise complaints, or property damage.
- The resident appearing anxious, withdrawn, or fearful.
- The resident disengaging from their family/friends/services/mismissing appointments.
- Reports of young people frequenting the property.
- Unusual deliveries or takeaway orders at odd hours

4

Local position

- **Hotspots:** Areas with high-density housing, supported accommodation, and known drug activity are particularly vulnerable.
- **Multi-occupancy buildings:** Flats and hostels are often targeted due to ease of access and anonymity.
- **Youth exploitation:** Older children are increasingly used to man drug lines or act as runners, often under coercion

7

Reporting concerns

- Call Greater Manchester Police on 101 or 999.
- [Programme Challenger](#)
- [CrimeStoppers](#) 0800 555 111
- [Modern Slavery Helpline](#) 08000 121 700
- Report safeguarding concerns to **Adult Social Care** via the [online portal](#) or call **0161 206 0604** (out of hours: 0161 794 8888).

Further Information:

- [SSAB Cuckooing guidance, including the approved pathway for reporting and managing concerns.](#)
- [Salford Connect Team, Action Against Exploitation](#)



6

Response Pathway

- Treat the adult with empathy and without judgment.
 - Clearly document concerns.
- Reporting**
- Raise a safeguarding concern.
 - Contact the police if there's immediate risk or crime.
 - Inform housing providers to monitor or support relocation.

Multi-Agency Action

- Trigger a S42 enquiry if care needs and risk are present.
- Use MARAC for high-risk abuse or exploitation cases.
- Apply disruption tactics: joint visits, tenancy action, intelligence sharing.

5

Professional Responsibilities

- **Share information** proportionately to help disrupt exploitation.
- **Access training** to spot and respond to signs of harm.
- **Work jointly** with police, housing, health, and voluntary services.
- **Cuckooing thrives on silence**—early action is key. Cuckooing is a **hidden harm** that thrives on silence and fear.
- Professionals play a vital role in **early identification, safeguarding, and disruption**.