

Cuckooing/Home Invasion – August 2025 - Plain Text Version

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- The resident appearing anxious, withdrawn, or fearful.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/missing 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

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**.

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.

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](#)

Contact details:

- [Salford Safeguarding Adults Board: SSAB@Salford.gov.uk](mailto:SSAB@Salford.gov.uk)

[Worried about an adult?](#) Report concerns via [the Adults' online portal](#) or call 0161 206 0604.

- [Worried about a child?](#) Report concerns [via the Children's online portal](#) or call the Bridge 0161 603 4500