



What is cuckooing?

Cuckooing is a practice where people take over a person's home and use the property to facilitate exploitation. It takes the name from cuckoo birds who take over the nest of other birds.


There are different types of cuckooing:

- using the property to deal, store or take drugs (most common)
- using the property to sex work
- taking over the property as a place to live
- taking over the property to financially abuse the resident

The Person:

- Lives alone/isolated/lonely/little social connection
- May have previously experienced abuse or exploitation
- May be described as vulnerable or chaotic
- May be known to mental health services
- Personal substance misuse (current or previous)
- Previous brain injury or impairment
- Has a family connection to substance use or drug dealing
- Has friends and/or associates who use substances or deal drugs

Signs of exploitation:

- They may tell you what is happening to them
 - Not remaining in the home
 - A decline in the state of the property
 - An increased use, new use or re-start in use of drugs
 - Not allowing entry to the home
 - Increase in self-harm
 - Scared or unwilling to talk about situation (especially about people in the property)
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You might notice:

- Missing medication, especially that which has a street value
- Benefits being paid to someone else
- Possessions/money/documents missing
- New people staying or visiting who may be hostile, secretive, aggressive or appear controlling
- A decline in the state of the property
- The person is harder to contact and may miss appointments
- General change in attitude
- Signs of neglect e.g. weight loss

Reports from the person or others:

- Possessions/money/documents/keys being given to, taken by or held by someone else
- Someone new at the property e.g. an informal carer
- Increase in visitors to the property
- Burglary or theft
- Damage to property
- Anti-social behaviour or noise complaints

What should I do?

To report concerns about a child:

Email: mash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk or telephone: 01344 352005 (8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday) or 01344 786543 (outside of office hours)

To report concerns about an adult:

Telephone: 01344 351500 (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday) or 01344 786543 (outside of office hours)

Or use our online form: bit.ly/BFCreportadultabuse

If you think someone is in immediate danger, please phone emergency services on 999. Do not put yourself or anyone else at risk.

If you wish to remain anonymous, please report to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or complete their on-line reporting form at <https://crimestoppers-uk.org/give-information/forms/give-information-anonymously>

