

# Strategic Partnership Boards

SAFETY SAFEGUARDING WELLBEING

## Spotlight on... Cuckooing

**Cuckooing is when criminals take over the home of a vulnerable person, and use it for criminal purposes such as dealing drugs.**

A criminal will often befriend a vulnerable person, as comfort levels rise more criminals are brought to the home, adding to the activity and taking over the property entirely.

### Who are the victims of cuckooing?

Victims are vulnerable individuals, often drug users but can include people who are...

- older
- suffering from mental or physical health problems
- learning disabled
- those involved in prostitution
- single parents
- living in poverty
- suffering from other forms of addiction, such as alcoholism

### Controlling the victim

Once residency is established drug dealers then have a discreet location out of sight of police from which to conduct their criminal activity.

An example of controlling activity could be pacifying victims using drugs. Once the high wears off and the victim wants the criminals to leave, intimidation levels can escalate to the use of threats and violence.

'They've already bought their way in, they've come in with a smile, they've said they're going to do you a favour, you bought the line. You know it's your fault, you know you've let them in, it's not like they've kicked the door in. They come in as friends, they're going to look after you, they're going to make life a bit better, you ain't going to wake up sick every morning. This is how they get in. They're your friends. And you know they're not but they have all the power.' - Victim of Cuckooing



## Spotting the Signs of Cuckooing



Increase of vehicles stopping at the property, often for short periods



Increase of anti-social behaviour around the property



Open drug dealing near the property



Not seeing the resident of the property as often



Increase of the number of people coming and going at various times of the day or night

### The Vulnerable Person ...

Has stopped engaging with support services

Is presenting with unexplained injuries

Has begun to misuse substances or this use has increased

Is appearing withdrawn and fearful of disclosing information for fear of 'betraying' the criminals, abuse or eviction

Is associating with new unidentified people who are often present at the home

### What to do if you are worried about someone who might be a victim of cuckooing?

- In an emergency called the police on **999**
- To speak to someone from the Adult's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub call: **020 8496 3000** or email [WalthamForestDirect@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:WalthamForestDirect@walthamforest.gov.uk)





**Please share this** with your colleagues, staff and networks and discuss in your team and management meetings.

If you want to join the email address for spotlights and other information please send your email to [Strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:Strategicpartnerships@walthamforest.gov.uk)



**How much do you know about working in a Think Family Way?**

[Click here](#) to complete our very short survey – less than 3 minutes!



## JUNE IS SAFE AND WELL MONTH – FREE Training

It's that time of year again! June is our safe and well month, we will be hosting a number of events where you can learn about a variety of topics to do with safeguarding, wellbeing and safety. Throughout May and June we will be sending out a weekly spotlight and updated calendar of events (... as there's more to come!)

To view our calendar of FREE events and book your place [click here](#)

### More FREE training:



#### Understanding Prevent

One day course for local authority and voluntary sector organisations. You will learn:

- How the Prevent Strategy aims to support vulnerable people
- Some of the ways people may be at risk of grooming, radicalisation and exploitation
- How to access local referral pathways

22 May 2019, 9.30am – 4.30pm at Queens Road Learning Centre, 97 Queens Road, Walthamstow, E17 8QR

For more information, call 0208 496 2974, visit [www.lbwfadultlearning.co.uk](http://www.lbwfadultlearning.co.uk) or email [adult.learning@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:adult.learning@walthamforest.gov.uk)

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