



Are you living next door to drug dealers? Ever heard of Cuckooing?

Reporting any suspicious drug-related behaviour may assist in making your neighbourhood a safer place as professional criminals are using vulnerable people's homes to manufacture and sell drugs.

Professional criminals are targeting the homes of vulnerable people to be used for drug dealing – a process known as “cuckooing”.

Dealers often approach the vulnerable person offering free drugs to use their home for dealing. These criminals are very selective about who they target as “cuckoo” victims and are often entrepreneurial. A lot of the time victims are lonely, isolated, frequently drug users themselves and are already known to the police.

“Cuckooing” means the criminals can operate from an unobtrusive property, which is out of sight, making it an attractive option. They can then use the premises to deal and manufacture drugs in an environment under the police radar, usually staying for just one day. When the criminals use the victim’s property for criminal enterprises, the inhabitants become terrified of going to the police for fear of being suspected of involvement in drug dealing or being identified as a member of the group, which would result in their eviction from the property.

Below are some important signs to look out for if you feel you are living within or near a property used to deal drugs, or if you are concerned about your property as a landlord or property manager.

We are asking that you stay aware and spot potential signs of drug dealers near you.

Signs to look out for:

- Usually takes place in a multi-occupancy or social housing property;
- An increase in the number of coming and goings;
- Offenders will often have new vehicles outside the property or hire cars;
- Possible increase in ASB activity in and around the property;
- Disengagement with support services;
- Professionals visiting may be aware of new unidentified persons in the property.

If you think you have spotted a drugs “cuckoo” then call us on 101 to report this.

Contact:

If you’re concerned about drug-related crime where you live, call police on 101 or report online at <https://www.essex.police.uk/do-it-online>. Only use 999 in an emergency situation. If you don’t want to speak to the police directly, you can call the anonymous Crimestoppers charity on 0800 555 111.

Important:

- Under the **Misuse of Drugs Act 1971**, landlords or property managers can receive up to 14 years imprisonment or a substantial fine for having drugs residing at their property;
- The property may be seized or forfeited as well as prosecuted for money laundering;
- Receive a Crack House Closure: **(Section.2(3) ASBA 2003)**.