

Cuckooing: Police Scotland Needs Your Help To Identify People at Risk From Drug Dealers

Police Scotland are launching a new initiative alongside Aberdeen City Council to identify persons who, through no fault of their own, fall victim to Organised Crime Groups as a result of cuckooing.

'Cuckooing' is a term used to describe someone having their home taken over by an Organised Crime Group for the purposes of using the premises, usually to deal or store drugs. The term 'cuckooing' is taken from the Cuckoo bird who invades the nests of other birds and utilises it for its own purposes. This activity is a blight on our communities and brings with it significant harm to many.

It is known that individuals involved in serious organised crime gangs from areas such as Liverpool, West Midlands and London travel to other parts of the country, including Aberdeen. These individuals will then take over the property to assist with their illegal operation, be it for storing or dealing drugs. This is often achieved through the use of threats and actual violence towards the occupants or their loved ones.

As a Private Landlord we are seeking your help to help identify where cuckooing is happening. Some signs that could indicate this are:

- Other people being in the house, especially non-locals.
- New associates and increased visitors throughout the day and night
- Increased or unusually high number of vehicles outside the property - including taxis or hire cars – registration numbers are always helpful
- Bags of clothing or extra bedding in people's homes
- Increase in antisocial behaviour – examples include a build-up of rubbish in communal areas, increased noise and evidence of drug misuse.
- Barricades within the address, and perhaps the presence of weapons.

If you have any information that you believe is linked to cuckooing or drug dealing in your area, or know someone who you have concerns may be a victim of cuckooing, you can contact Police directly on 101 or anonymously by calling CrimeStoppers on 0800 555 111. All information will be treated with the strictest confidence.