

# The cuckooing safeguarding process in West Yorkshire

If you suspect that an individual is being cuckooed, you will need to consider what you should do to support them. Below is a list of suggested actions. In all instances, you should alert your line manager and follow local safeguarding procedures.

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## Immediate Risk To Safety

- **Call 999** if there is an immediate risk to your client's safety, or a crime is happening now. Be ready to provide information about the address, victims, offenders, weapons, and vehicles
- It may be necessary to arrange **out-of-area emergency accommodation** for your client via Housing Options or a **Housing Association**

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## Intervention

- Ensure that your client's **basic needs** are met – e.g. that they have access to food, water, energy, healthcare and trusted others (such as family members)
- Refer your client to support services, including substance misuse treatment providers where appropriate
- Provide your client with Shelter's helpline for legal advice (0808 800 4444)
- Arrange for all **locks** to be changed at the property and for windows to be secured
- If available, offer your client a **personal safety device**, access to **Hollie Guard** and/or a new SIM card
- Arrange a **safety word** for your client to give to you/your colleagues if police need to attend immediately
- Encourage your client to change their **routine** and the **routes** that they take to reach locations
- If your client wishes to **relocate**, explore if they would prefer this to be a short-term or permanent measure, and encourage them to think carefully about the impact that displacement may have on their wellbeing
- If your client has been coerced into any service, criminality of sexual activity drugs, they may qualify as a victim of modern slavery and could be supported via the **National Referral Mechanism**. For advice call the 24/7 Modern Slavery Helpline (0800 0121 700).

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## Submit Intelligence

- Contact the Police on **101** or access **101 online**
- Submit information via the **Partnership Intelligence Portal** (your organisation can request an account **here**)
- To provide information anonymously, call Crimestoppers (0800 555 111) or submit a report **online**. Include the victim's name, address, your concerns, descriptions of the suspected perpetrators, and the date/time of any observations
- Remember to request that a cuckooing flag – **#OpCuckoo** – is added to the victim, address and perpetrator(s)
- Trust your instincts – if something does not feel right, report it

## 4

### Safeguarding Processes

- Raise a safeguarding alert with **Adult Social Care**
- If there are doubts about your client's **capacity**, request an assessment under the Mental Health Act
- If children or young people are living at the property, contact **Children's Social Care**. Consider sharing information with schools or youth workers as they may have additional intelligence

## 5

### Multi-Agency Working

- Ask to be present at all **multi-agency meetings**. Those in attendance should decide which professional is responsible for coordinating risk management, support and progress **updates**. This professional should be sufficiently senior to agree actions on behalf of the agency that they represent, and hold partner agencies to account for delivering **agreed actions** within **agreed timescales**
- Multi-agency responses should be **person-centred**. Your client should be consulted throughout the safeguarding process, and their views should be reflected in any actions taken as much as is practicable

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### Protection and Disruption

- Consider applying for a **Closure Order** or **Partial Closure Order** via the police or local authority
- At the cuckooed property, explore the possibility of **installing**:
  - Window alarms or window bars
  - Steel doors
  - A door spy hole, deadlock, door chain and anti-arson letterbox
  - A video doorbell
  - Smoke alarms and fire extinguishers
  - Temporary/mobile CCTV cameras around the perimeter of the property
  - Cocoon Watch
- Undertake regular **welfare checks** and request that professionals from other agencies meet with your client regularly
- Request that high-visibility Neighborhood Policing Teams regularly **patrol** the local area
- Consider distributing cuckooing awareness **leaflets** to surrounding properties and/or displaying cuckooing awareness **posters** in areas with high footfall
- Where appropriate, ensure that your client has access to **adult life skills** support and seek to build their **resilience**. In particular, it may be beneficial to talk to them about how to answer the door safely; healthy relationships; asking for assistance; overcoming loneliness; and assertiveness

