



Addiction | Diversion | Disruption | Enforcement | Recovery

CUCKOOING NEWSLETTER April 2026

South Area - Project ADDER:

- Inspector Andy CAMERON
- Sergeant Merv BUNDHOO
- PC Will HOLDEN



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Cuckooing Training

Volume 1, Issue 1

Newsletter Date Q1 2026

Welcome to the first ***Project ADDER Cuckooing Newsletter***. This resource provides a summary of the cuckooing training sessions held in **Bromley, Croydon and Sutton** in October and November 2025. 10x boroughs in total will have had the same training by the end of May 2026. More are planned!..

The sessions were designed to enhance partnership working and improve our collective response to cuckooing by protecting vulnerable residents and communities.



Over **200x Police officers and partners** attended one of the 3x south area training days

summary



Volume 1, Issue 1

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As stakeholders, we are now better positioned to utilise the **new Cuckooing legislation** currently progressing through Parliament, which will make cuckooing a specific **criminal offence**, carrying a potential sentence of up to **5 years' imprisonment**. There will also be an offence of making a young person conceal drugs. We all have existing safeguarding responsibilities under the Care Act 2014. **The following organisations attended.....**

Police teams
Local Authority
departments
Social services
15x Housing
Associations
NHS
COMAD
Change Grow
Live (CGL)
Cranstoun -
Inspire
Divert

MOPAC
LFB
LAS
DWP
Probation
Citizen's Advice
Dementia UK
SE London Mind
Age UK
Cognus
Mencap

CPFC: Palace for Life
Foundation
Be Inspired
HERE4YOUTH
Community Action Sutton
EA Jigsaw Care
Bromley + Croydon
Women's Aid
Alcoholic's Anonymous
Catch 22

CUCKOOING OVERVIEW

Cuckooing is named after the nest-stealing practice of wild cuckoos.

It is a form of criminal exploitation where vulnerable people are conned, coerced, controlled, or intimidated into sharing, providing or offering up their accommodation to people, who then use it to base their criminal activity

(adapted from Harding, 2020: 179).



“The average age of a cuckooed person in South area is 50 - 60 years old”

Such activity may include using the property:

- To deal, store or take drug in (This is the most common form)
- As a place to sleep
- To hide money, weapon's, valuables or other items
- For sex work
- Perpetrator's financially abuse the tenant.



TYPES OF CUCKOOING

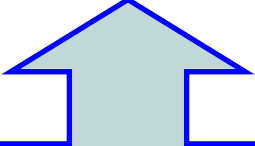
“Parasitic nest Invasion” - Out of borough dealers enter home using coercion, false pretences, force and violence.

“Local cuckooing” - Local drug users rather than out of borough or county lines exploiters.

“Quasi Cuckooing “ - Initial “willingness” to allow entry (offer of drugs/ money and company) When the occupant voices concerns or asks them to leave – violence and exploitation escalates.

“Coupling” - Based on sex and or relationship abuse. Can include Prostitution

Risk factors - self harm, suicide, repeat victim, mental health, depression, isolation, weapons, violence, synthetic opioids, financial loss....



“Around 60% of victims are male and 40% are female”
South area as a whole



CUCKOOING SIGNS



- Is there increased antisocial behaviour, including noise disturbances and littering?
- Are more people entering and leaving the property?
- Are more cars or bikes parked outside?
- Are there signs of drug use?

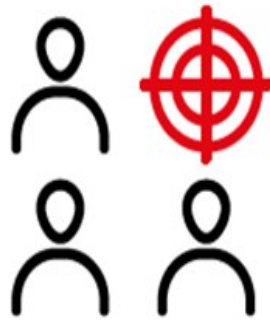


- You haven't seen the person who lives there recently or when you have, there's been an apparent decline in their mental health and general wellbeing.
- Is there damage to the property including:
 - Broken doors and windows
 - Blacked-out windows
 - New fences restricting access

There is no simple or single definition of what makes someone vulnerable to exploitation. Isolation often increase the risk and other factors may include..

- Lack of a stable home environment and support network
- Parental substance abuse - Adverse Childhood experience (ACE)
- Drug use, alcohol, gambling and other forms of addiction
- Known to Police as a victim, suspect or both
- Children with a history of social care proceedings
- Age - older adults (particularly those with frailty and dementia)
- Self neglect, loneliness and hoarding
- Mental health conditions and neurodivergence
- Homelessness
- Being a victim of domestic abuse
- A history of sex work and prostitution
- **None of the above, no apparently obvious reason**

The 7 Stages of Adult 'Cuckooing' Grooming



1. Select victim



2. Gain information



3. Build connection



4. Fill a need



5. Prime the target



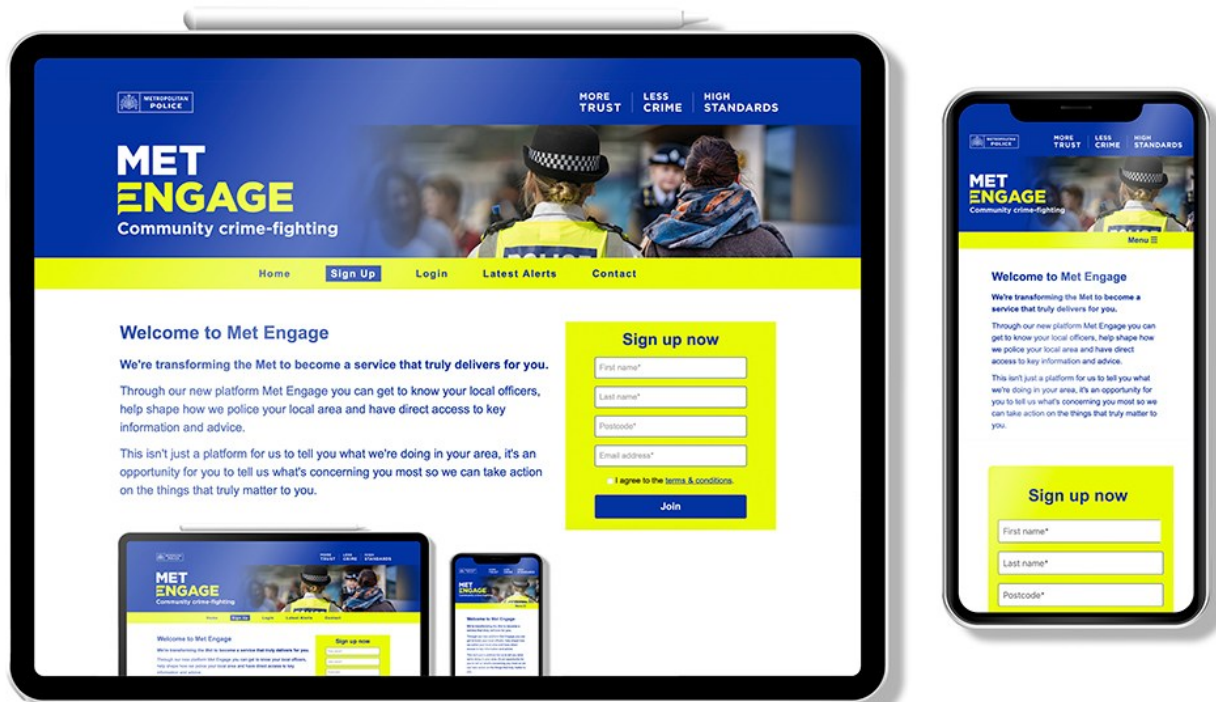
6. Instigate the home takeover



7. Maintain control

Bainbridge, L and Loughery, A. (2024).
Adapted from Sinnamon, G. (2017).
The Psychology of Adult Sexual Grooming:
Sinnamon's Seven-Stage Model of Adult
Sexual Grooming. In Petherick, W. &
Sinnamon, G. (eds). The Psychology
of Criminal and Antisocial
Behavior. Academic Press.

POLICE UPDATES



Your ADDER team remains available to deliver shorter **online** or in **person cuckooing training sessions**.

Recent sessions since Oct 2025 have included,

Bromley - GP training, Clarion Housing and Beckenham Ward panel meeting.

Croydon - Supported living Managers, BME forum, Croydon Alms houses, Council CSEB board, Resource Fair and SNB Chairs meeting.

Sutton - Social workers, Young Commissioners and Advocacy for All support group.

Please contact PC: William.holden@met.police.uk
If you would like to arrange a training input





POLICE DAYS OF ACTION (South area)

- 10x days of action since July 2025
- 100+ properties visited
- 10+ Arrests related to cuckooed properties (breaches of closures and other offences)
- **14x Adder funded, partial closure Orders**



DRUG AND ALCOHOL SUPPORT

Police work closely with the following drug support organisations who have various referral pathways and training resources you can access.

BROMLEY - [Drug & Alcohol Service - Bromley | Change Grow Live](#)

CROYDON - [Drug and Alcohol Service - Croydon | Change Grow Live](#)

SUTTON - [Cranstoun Inspire, Sutton | Cranstoun](#)

CRANSTOUN

Empowering People, Empowering Change

“Can be contacted and offer the follow training.

- Chemsex training
- Basic lifesaving skills (overdose focused)
- Naloxone Training
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness training
- Any tailored package of training can be put together depending on what the partner agency want. This could be substance specific, harm reduction based or broader awareness training.”

CRANSTOUN

Empowering People, Empowering Change

**Everyone deserves
help at their time
of need**

Our drug & alcohol
service, Inspire, in
Sutton is here to help
people stay safe & make
positive changes.

Contact us:

020 8773 9393

info-inspire@cranstoun.org.uk

Scan the QR Code:



cranstoun.org

Registered Charity No: 1061582

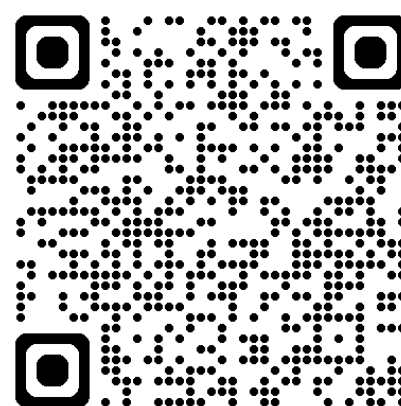




Change Grow Live

**BROMLEY
CROYDEN**

“Change Grow Live is a health and social care charity. We provide free and confidential treatment, support and information about drug and alcohol use, smoking, homelessness, justice and probation, and employment. We are here for you, judgement-free, whatever your circumstances.” *CGL website*



NALOXONE

Was mentioned in the scenario. For general awareness
“Naloxone is a rapid-acting medication, classified as an opioid antagonist, used to immediately reverse opioid overdoses (e.g., heroin, fentanyl, morphine) by restoring normal breathing. It works by blocking opioid receptors in the brain for 20 - 40 minutes, .. **requiring emergency services to be called as effects can wear off.**” (Google search CGL)

Naloxone is prescribed by drug support services and pharmacists. Drug support services deliver training to partners. Police in London are not currently authorised to carry or administer Naloxone.



LEGISLATION + RESOURCES



CUCKOOING LEGISLATION 2026

New offence of cuckooing and child criminal exploitation. [Crime and Policing Bill: child criminal exploitation, cuckooing \(home takeover\) and coerced internal concealment factsheet - GOV.UK](#)

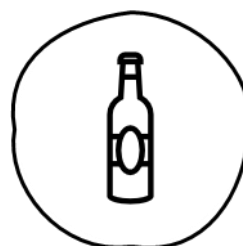
CARE ACT 2014 Partner Safeguarding responsibility

[Care Act factsheets - GOV.UK](#)

CLOSURE ORDERS – Anti social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

[Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014](#)

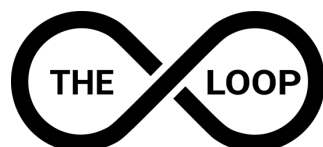
Project ADDER OVERVIEW - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/project-adder/about-project-adder>



For general information on drug trends access the following sites

[Honest information about drugs | FRANK](#)

[The Loop](#)



CONTACT POLICE RE: CUCKOOING



In an Emergency - Call 999

Create a welfare report for Local authority social services

Project Adder Cuckooing mailbox - report cuckooing in Bromley, Croydon and Sutton to be passed to SNT to investigate.

External: snmailbox-.projectADDERcuckooing@met.police.uk

To update Police on a range of general issues please sign up to

Met engage - [Stay informed with Met Engage | Metropolitan Police](#)

The next issue will cover...
gathering evidence and
closure orders.

