

# COUNTY LINES ADVICE FOR LANDLORDS



FIRST PRINCIPLE

[norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](https://norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple)  
[suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](https://suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple)



**NORFOLK**  
CONSTABULARY  
*Our Priority is You*



**SUFFOLK**  
CONSTABULARY

## Key Points to Consider

- Check on any tenants who you may feel are vulnerable
- Look out for the signs of 'Cuckooing'
- Choose your new Tenants carefully
- Look out for the obvious signs

**Drug dealers, often from major cities such as London, will move into new areas like Norfolk and Suffolk to sell their products.**

**The link from London to their new base in Norfolk and Suffolk is known as the 'county drug line'.**

**This mixture of exploitation and vulnerability is the key reason why we are working with our partners to get a grip on county lines and organised crime groups.**

## Cuckooing

Dealers take advantage of and exploit vulnerable housing tenants, taking over their home and using it as a base for their criminal operation. This is known as '**cuckooing**'.

These gangs are often violent and extremely intimidating. Not only do they exploit vulnerable people for their base, but they also target children and recruit them into their criminal network. We know of children not even in their teens yet who have been targeted by older dealers to start dealing drugs.

These organised crime groups can often have links to other forms of exploitation such as human trafficking, modern slavery and child sexual exploitation.

While the county lines model is associated with major cities, we now know of gangs in Norfolk and Suffolk that have adopted this tactic, going to areas such as Berkshire, Norfolk and Bedfordshire and establishing their own supply lines.

## How can you help?

As a landlord you can contribute by being additional eyes and ears across the county and help us respond to the threats faced by children and vulnerable people and protect them from exploitation.

We can't stress enough the contribution you can make to helping us deal with

this problem.

## Existing Tenancies

The signs of someone being cuckooed may not be obvious. It could be that you receive reports from neighbours that your tenant hasn't been seen for a long time, or you may get reports that there are more and more people coming and going than before.

If you visit your properties regularly look out for other signs.

It may be that you have tenants who have drug related problems. These people are particularly at risk as they may be offered free drugs in exchange for their premises.

You may be prevented from inspecting your property even with reasonable notice.

The property could have become very messy, or it may even be that there are lots more takeaway boxes around than you would expect.

If you are able to enter the property, look out for:

- Lots of phones, particularly the older, cheaper handsets
- Expensive luxury items i.e. clothes, trainers, jewellery
- Items associated with drug dealing, such as bags, cling film, rubber bands, digital scales, Vaseline and baby wipes.
- There may also be large sums of cash

It is also worth listening to the language used; Slang words such as:

*G-pack, traphouse, bando, nittys boodge*

All are part of a county lines dealer's vocabulary.

If you are suspicious, speak to neighbours and ask them if they have any concerns about your tenants.

### **Agreeing New Tenancies**

Be vigilant when agreeing new tenancies and keep an eye out for the following typical signs:

#### **County line drug gangs may:**

- Offer to pay rent for a long period (e.g. 6 months) upfront in cash
- Appear affluent but want to rent an inexpensive property
- Be unable to provide landlord or employment references
- Prefer to pay rent in cash without good justification

If you experience any of these signs, we want to know. It may be innocent but we still want to know.

### **Report It**

We would urge all landlords to report their suspicions to us.

You should be aware that if your premises are being used in connection with controlled drugs you could be committing an offence under section 8 of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 which states:

*A person commits an offence if, being the occupier or concerned in the management of any premises, he knowingly permits or suffers any of the following activities to take place on those premises, that is to say;*

- *producing or attempting to produce a controlled drug in contravention of Section 4(1) of this Act;*
- *supplying or attempting to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of section 4(1) of this Act, or offering to supply a controlled drug to another in contravention of section 4(1);*
- *preparing opium for smoking;*
- *smoking cannabis, cannabis resin or prepared opium.*

**You can visit our online reporting centre or call us on 101, quoting Operation Nola. Always call 999 in an emergency.**

However, if you would rather not report this information to police, then Crimestoppers can accept information anonymously. You can call them on 0800 555 111 or visit their website.

# First Principle: Related links

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## Ask the Police

Official Police Resource. The Ask the Police website provides you with information on a wide range of non-emergency policing matters.

[askthe.police.uk](http://askthe.police.uk)

## Secured by Design

Official UK Police initiative that combines the principles of 'designing out crime' with physical security.

[securedbydesign.com](http://securedbydesign.com)

## Sold Secure

Dedicated to reducing the risk of crime by assessment of security products.

<https://www.soldsecure.com/>

## Crimestoppers

An independent charity that gives people the power to speak up to stop crime 100% anonymously, by phone 0800 555 111 or online.

<https://crimestoppers-uk.org/>

## Victim Support

Covering the whole of Norfolk and Suffolk, a free, confidential support service specifically designed to help victims and witnesses of any crime.

Contact us on:

Phone: 0300 303 3706 (weekdays between 8am-5pm)

Email: [nsvictimcare@victimsupport.org.uk](mailto:nsvictimcare@victimsupport.org.uk)

Web: [www.nsvictimcare.org](http://www.nsvictimcare.org)

Socials: @nsvictimcare

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Call us on 101. Always dial 999 in an emergency

**To see the full range of information go to:**

[suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](http://suffolk.police.uk/firstprinciple) or

[norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple](http://norfolk.police.uk/firstprinciple)

Or alternatively use your mobile phone to scan this QR code.

