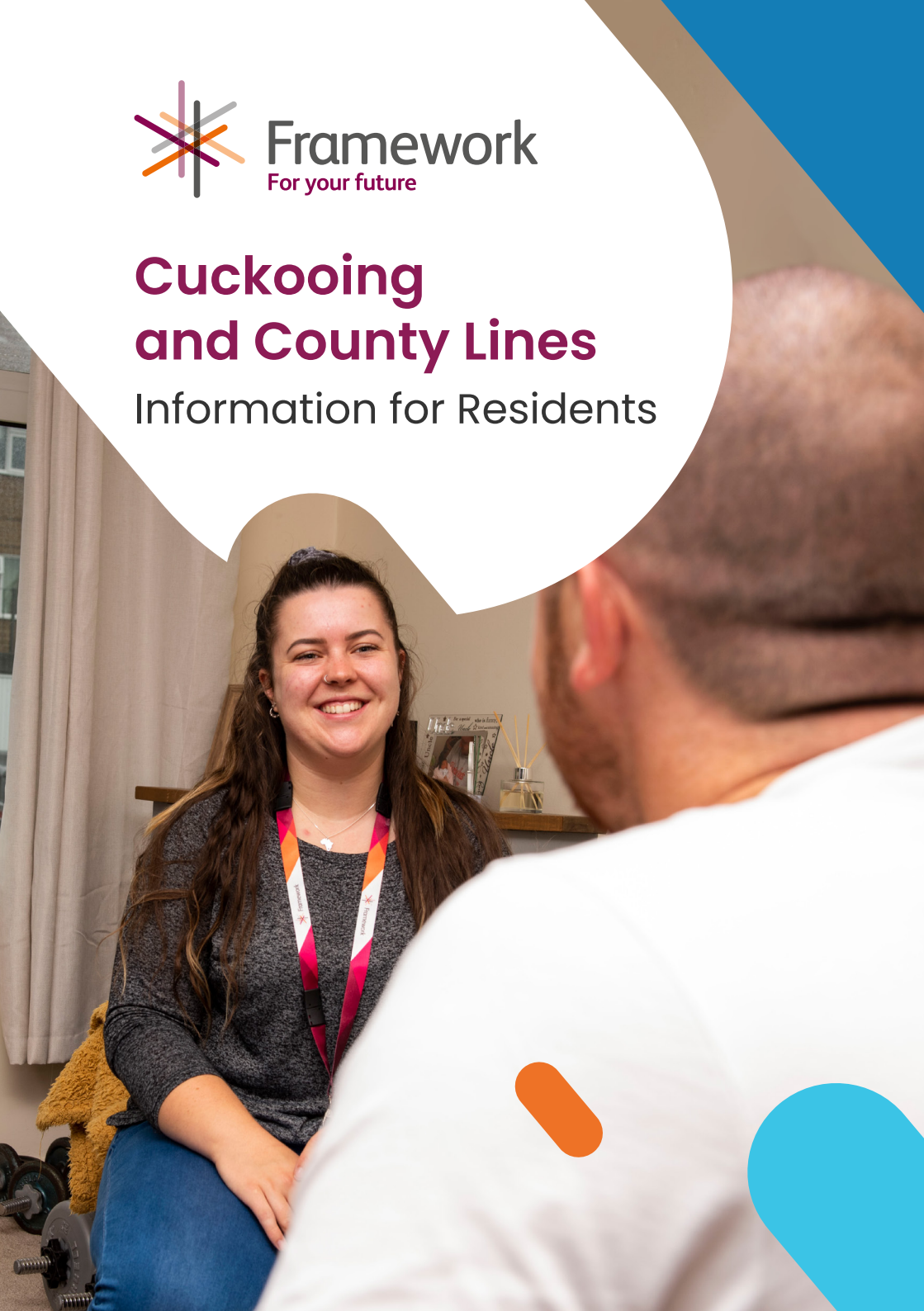




Framework
For your future

Cuckooing and County Lines

Information for Residents



What is cuckooing?

Tenancy cuckooing is when people take over, or 'cuckoo', a property.

Perpetrators often pose as carers to 'get their foot in the door' or take advantage of other support needs such as offering to pay for food or utilities. They may also offer to help keep you safe by staying in the property to be on hand while they practice activities that may present risk. They may also offer discounted or free substances if they can stay over, while using and dealing illegal substances.

You may feel this is fine and manageable until you want the perpetrator to leave, at which point they may become aggressive and force you out of your home.



What can you do to reduce the chances of cuckooing?

- **Know your needs and vulnerabilities:**
 - Loneliness
 - Not coping with emotions
 - Pattern of difficult or abusive relationships
 - Dependency on substances
 - Financial difficulties.
- **Find different ways to get needs met through services and positive relationships**
 - Build up social support in the local community
 - Get mental health or relationship advice and support
 - Get support for substance use (e.g. script, detox)
 - Get support from police or local police to protect you / your property.
- **If you use drugs, separate where you live from where you use / pick up drugs**
- **Assertiveness and boundaries to protect you and your property**
 - Don't tell people your address
 - Never give your keys to anyone
 - Don't let people you can't trust in your flat
 - Practice saying 'no' in an assertive way
 - Decide what you can do if it is already happening
 - Block numbers and blank the people if you see them in the street- do not engage with them!
- **Recognise that people are taking advantage of you and this could end up very badly for you if you don't do something.** You could lose your flat to them or end up getting hurt or going to prison if there's drugs involved!
- **Talk to staff and ask for help**
- **'Break the cycle':** you can say that you are going to move out and go away for a while so that they have to find somewhere else.

- **Think ahead to times when you are more likely to feel vulnerable**
 - What are your triggers that make you feel more vulnerable?
 - What you can do when feeling more vulnerable?
- **Tell them that professionals or police are watching the address (even if not true)**
- **People who have been through this all advise to get support as soon as you can!** It isn't grassing, it's about keeping you and your property safe from people who are exploiting you. Professionals you trust will not blame you and can support you to do this in the best way and reduce the risk to yourself and others.

Sources of support

Cuckooing is extremely common – if it happens to you, support workers will not judge you and will be there to support you. They will work with you to resolve this issue and will listen to what you want to happen.

Your safety is important and workers have a duty of care to protect you, so if they are worried for your safety they will let other services know so that they can do their best to keep you safe. They will let you know if this is going to happen so you can stay in control of what happens as much as possible.

Key numbers

Worker contact number _____

My housing officer _____


Maintenance number _____

Substance use worker (if applicable) _____

Mental health crisis line _____

Social Worker (if applicable) _____

Police 101, or 999 in emergency

A man with a short beard and a white t-shirt is seen from the side, looking out a large window. He is holding a mug with both hands. The background shows a blurred view of greenery outside. The image is decorated with several abstract shapes: a light blue shape in the top left, a purple shape in the top right, and an orange shape in the middle right. A large blue circle in the bottom left contains white text.

Your support worker and other professionals involved in your support can give you more information to help you identify warning signs, how you can respond to these and what action you can take to protect yourself and get the support you need. We call this a Cuckooing Safety Plan.



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