

**Inverclyde**

**Practitioner Guidance**

**Child Criminal Exploitation**

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**What is Child Criminal Exploitation**?

Criminal exploitation of children (under 18 years) is when an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive the child into criminal activity, for the financial or other advantage of the exploiter. CCE is not defined in law but practitioners should be alert to the possibility that some children who are victims of trafficking may be exploited by gangs and organised criminal networks. CCE can be associated with ‘countylines’, which refers to criminal exploitation by gangs which export illegal drugs into one or more areas (within the UK). Gangs may use dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of ‘deal line’. Such gangs are known to exploit children and vulnerable adults to move (and store) drugs and money and often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons. However CCE can also occur in the absence of these features.

Child Criminal exploitation takes a variety of forms, but always involves the exploitation of an individual to engage in criminal activity for the benefit of the exploiter. It often involves some form of exchange where a victim is asked or told to do something in exchange for something they want or need. It is irrelevant whether the person consents to any part of the relevant action. Therefore a person receiving

something in exchange for their involvement does not mean that they

are not a victim of exploitation.

Child Criminal exploitation usually involves an imbalance of power due to age, gender, cognitive ability, physical strength, status or access to money. Children and young people can be particularly vulnerable as targets of criminal exploitation, as exploiters assume that they are less likely to be detected in such activity and/or receive lesser penalties if caught. Exploiters employ a range of tactics, which they adapt to the individual they are seeking to exploit and may involve providing the

victim with something they want or need. This exploitation will often target emotional, physical, and material needs to entice individuals to engage in criminality to achieve the perceived 'gain'. Control may be exerted in a number of ways but can include violence or the threat of violence to force individuals to comply and engage. It is worth emphasising again that a person receiving something in exchange for

their involvement will not necessarily preclude them from being a victim of criminal exploitation. It is also worth highlighting that many over 18 will have been recruited into organised crime activity through exploitation prior to them turning 18, and the vulnerabilities that led them into initial involvement may still be prevalent. The vulnerability of older young people and young adults should therefore be noted.

Physical contact between victim and perpetrator may not be necessary, the use of increasingly sophisticated technologies offers an alternative means for exploitation to take place, creating physical distance, and at times reducing the need for physical contact. The National Crime Agency Intelligence Assessment (2017) highlights the increasing number of children and young adults becoming involved in technology-assisted crimes, who would not usually be at risk of involvement in more traditional forms of criminal behaviour.

In relation to children, the UNCRC Article 19 details

“1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of

physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent

treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while

in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who

has the care of the child”.

**The criminal exploitation of children must therefore be viewed as a cause of significant harm and trigger child protection processes in accordance with Part 3 of the National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021**

**What is human trafficking and why is this relevant when talking**

**about criminal exploitation?**

Human trafficking and exploitation is the commodification and abuse of people for gain. It is a gross abuse of human rights, happens globally and harms individuals and communities across the world, including in Scotland. Not all cases of human trafficking or exploitation are easy to understand or detect and often the crime may look like something else, such as people smuggling, dealing drugs or working illegally. Some forms of criminal exploitation may be relevant to an offence of human

trafficking. Criminal exploitation is not currently a criminal offence but is a

component part of the offence of human trafficking.

Under the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015,

trafficking involves a person taking a relevant action and doing so with a

view to another person being exploited. Relevant action means an action

which is ANY of the following:

a) The recruitment of another person;

b) The transportation or transfer of another person;

c) The harbouring or receiving of another person;

d) The exchange or transfer of control over another person; or

e) The arrangement or facilitation of any of the actions mentioned

in a) to d).

It is irrelevant whether the person consents to any part of the relevant action.

The second part of the offence relates to exploitation. The person

doing the relevant action must either be doing so with the intention of

exploiting the other person or, in the knowledge that the person is likely

to be exploited. Section 3 of the Act provides that the following four

types of exploitation are relevant for the purposes of the human

trafficking offence: a) Slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory

labour; b) Prostitution or sexual exploitation; c) Removal of organs; d)

Securing services and benefits. Exploitation must fall within the definition

outlined in section 3 of the Act for there to be a criminal offence in terms

of section 1 of the 2015 Act.

**There are some common misconceptions that for trafficking to exist international/domestic borders need to have been crossed. Movement of a victim is not required at all for trafficking to exist. The relevant action may be the recruitment of another person, or the exchange or transfer of control over another person**.

In addition to the offence of human trafficking, the Human

Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 contains a separate

offence of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. This is set

out in section 4 of the Act. A person commits an offence where they

know or ought to know that they are holding another person in slavery or

servitude. A person also commits an offence where the person knows or

ought to know that they are requiring another person to perform forced or compulsory labour.

Section 4 of the Act makes it clear that when deciding whether the

offence has been committed, then the personal circumstances of a

person which may make them more vulnerable (for example the person

being a child), are to be taken into account. It also provides that the fact

that a person consents to being treated in this way does not mean that

the offence has not been committed.

**Recognising and understanding the complexity and impact**

**of Child Criminal Exploitation**

Child Criminal Exploitation is often not obvious, and in many

circumstances, individuals may not be immediately identified as

exploited. Ongoing work is required to ensure the earliest identification of

exploited individuals that includes professionals working together to

share relevant information and intelligence. Furthermore, exploited

individuals may recruit others for the exploiters and/or may take on this

role themselves, thus individuals can present dual roles of both being

exploited and exploiting others. This can add complexity to law

enforcement agencies, welfare, and other services who are responding

to the many facets of criminally exploited individuals. Responses are

often further complicated when individuals do not view themselves as

being exploited. This can be particularly challenging where serious harm

or criminal behaviour has resulted.

Exploiters can adopt a range of roles in grooming others into criminal

exploitation such as an authority figure to look up to, a mentor, a

dominant and persistent figure or potentially a romantic interest. The

relational aspect of exploitation seeks to create a sense of loyalty, and brother/sisterhood to the exploiters by their grooming behaviour.

Children and young people may struggle to see the exploitative nature of

their relationship and feel that they have gained 'friends' or

'family' that care for them. Fear and shame may also be used and play

complex roles within these relationships. This may involve the loss of

these new relationships, status, power or connections as well as the

threat of physical or sexual violence to them or those they care about

and/or threats of exposing the individuals for activities they have already

engaged in to secure ongoing co-operation.

The relationship between the exploiter and the exploited can often

appear consensual, providing a challenge to professionals seeking to

identify the issue. Even in these circumstances, safeguarding responses

should be triggered. Victims of exploitation may not see themselves as exploited or admit to their exploitation.

For children under 18 different considerations apply, namely that if the

child has committed an offence and there is credible and reliable

information to support the fact that the child:

1. Is a victim of human trafficking or exploitation (as defined in the

2015 Act); and

2. The offending took place in the course of or as a consequence

of being the victim of human trafficking or exploitation, then there is a strong presumption against prosecution of that child for that offence. There is no need to consider whether the child was compelled in any way to commit the offence. Exploited individuals can also find themselves exploiting others at the same time they are being exploited and may be used to bring others into the network. These individuals must continue to be seen as victims, with justice and welfare services responding appropriately to this complex challenge regardless of their age

**What does Child Criminal Exploitation look like in practice?**

There are many different crimes that involve criminal exploitation. The

types of activity individuals may be exploited to participate in include, but

are not limited to, trafficking, county lines, sexual exploitation, forced labour, cuckooing, moving and storing drugs, money and weapons. It can also include involvement in acquisitive crimes such as shoplifting and other types of theft, pickpocketing, fraud, working in cannabis farms, and using violence to threaten others. Certain types of activity may be greater indicators of exploitation however, any indicator or concern must be investigated to ensure appropriate disruption action is taken both by law enforcement regarding those behind the exploitation

and by welfare agencies to reduce the opportunity for exploitation to

occur. Coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and

weapons are commonplace alongside criminal exploitation. **See appendix 2 for a glossary of terms commonly used.**

The term ‘on the cusp’ of involvement in serious organised crime is often

used but is a complex term to define. Decisions need to be made on a

case-by-case basis, based on the evidence available. Professionals need

to be curious and open minded as to what is going on for an individual

and why they may have engaged in the behaviour which has

brought them to their attention. Regardless of whether an individual is

harmed or causes harm, if they have been exploited to do so, then they

may also be a victim and the Lord Advocate’s instructions for non prosecution

of victims of human trafficking may apply.

It is critical that professionals are aware of the indicators of CCE and take appropriate action to support safeguarding of children, young people and

adults. The following examples illustrate the types of scenarios that could

indicate an individual is being exploited:

*• A 14-year-old has recently changed their peer group and now*

*spends time with older peers in the community. They have become more secretive around family and attend school with a new mobile*

*phone, trainers and a tracksuit saying they were presents from*

*friends. Any time the mobile phone rings they become agitated and*

*aggressive towards family members who might challenge them*

*about the change in behaviour*.

*• A 17-year-old living in homeless accommodation has been caught*

*in possession of class A drugs and large quantities of unexplained*

*money.*

*• A 21-year-old with substance use issues has people to stay in their*

*house and has claimed they are friends who give drugs in return for*

*free accommodation.*

*• A 16-year-old who appears to be in a relationship with a man who*

*is known in the area for drug dealing. The 16-year-old will sleep*

*with other men to "help" the boyfriend to pay off his drug debt and*

*has delivered packages of drugs to other areas in the city when he*

*has asked them to.*

*• A 19-year-old has opened a bank account for a friend who needs to*

*keep money aside. In return, they are given some cannabis for*

*which they do not need to pay. They have been threatened not to*

*tell anyone about the bank account and have heard what happens*

*to "grasses".*

*• A 13-year-old has been found in a different city after being asked*

*by a friend to get on a train to drop something off. They have done*

*this before in the local neighbourhood but not further afield. They*

*were told not to look in the bag, or to stop and speak to anyone on the way there. The individual did try to say no but were encouraged to do it as they had “done it before and were good at being discreet”. A mobile phone was provided so they could be contacted by the friend who would provide instructions on arrival.*

*• A 15-year-old is dealing drugs. They do not view themselves as*

*exploited as they are choosing to do it. They have been told that if*

*they do not continue to sell drugs for the dealer then their family will*

*come to harm.*

*• A 13-year-old has been breaking into houses. Their uncle tells them*

*the houses to break into and when. They break into the houses to*

*steal car keys to assist with theft of high value cars.*

*• A 12-year-old is charged with wilful fire raising. They told a teacher*

*they had been offered £20 by a local “crime lord”.*

*• A group of 14-year-olds are picked up individually for stealing high*

*value perfume from a shop. Professionals have raised question as*

*to whether they were coerced into stealing to order.*

*• A 16-year-old child from Vietnam with no family connections to the*

*area, is found in an abandoned building (bando) watering cannabis*

*plants. They have limited understanding of the location and those*

*that had asked them to stay there.*

*• A 15-year-old who has been encouraged to sign up to Snapchat’s*

*new Snap map feature, they are not aware this feature enables the*

*“groomer” to monitor their movements in real time.*

These examples illustrate some of the types of criminal exploitation that may exist. Where serious organised crime groups or organised networks are involved, they are constantly evolving and adapting in the pursuit of profit and power. This can be reflected in changes in how they target, coerce, force and manipulate as well as the

type of criminal activity they seek to engage people in. Therefore, it is important that we keep pace with an ever-changing landscape.

**Whom does Child Criminal Exploitation affect?**

Children and young people from any background can be criminally

exploited. Communities can also be targeted and be vulnerable to the

harms of organised crime.

Particular social groups might be targeted to avoid detection, e.g. some

perpetrators might target older, neglected children who they consider

less likely to be reported missing, children not in education or excluded,

care experienced young adults, individuals who are homeless,

individuals with learning disabilities or those with mental health and/or

substance use issues, individuals with their own tenancy that are

isolated and can be easily cuckooed. However, the grooming of affluent

children attending private schools, or of professionals has also been

reported. Criminal gangs may consider these groups as less likely to be

identified as engaging in criminal activity or have specific skills or

contacts they can utilise. Within national forums, agencies have also

reported increasing identification of involvement of girls and young

women, perpetrators may believe these groups are less likely to be

identified as being involved in criminality. All forms of exploitation

including financial and sexual should be considered if there is indication

of exploitation taking place. It should not be assumed that one form of

exploitation occurs in isolation.

For communities, organised crime groups are more likely to target areas

of social and economic deprivation where they can exploit levels of

poverty, marginalised and isolated individuals, cultivating environments

that benefit their functioning. Research commissioned by the Scottish

Government Community Experiences of Serious Organised Crime (2018)

highlights the critical role of supporting communities to become more

resilient to the harms of serious organised crime.

To better understand how an individual or community may be affected,

**contextual safeguarding** can be a useful approach to consider. Contextual Safeguarding is an approach which seeks to identify and respond to harm and abuse that individuals experience outwith their family environment. A traditional focus on the child and their family, which does not consider the relevance of wider relationships and the location of harm, may not be sufficient in managing presenting

behaviours or reducing contextual risks. This harm can be experienced in

communities, social clubs, schools, between peers and in online forums.

Identifying an individual’s personal strengths should also be considered

within this approach as a way of promoting resilience to exploitation. All

professionals working within a child protection context should follow the

GIRFEC framework and their local child protection procedures (Getting it

right for every child (GIRFEC) - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot)](http://www.gov.scot))).

Contextual Safeguarding should be seen as a complementary support to existing procedures.

**Who is perpetrating Child Criminal Exploitation?**

The Scottish Multi-Agency Strategic Threat Assessment (2022) indicates

that there are currently 97 active, also referred to as “mapped”, serious

organised crime groups operating in Scotland. This number will

frequently change depending on evolution of new groups as well as

successful disruption of existing groups.

Most of these groups are involved in the production, procurement, and

distribution of controlled drugs, with other activities involving county lines

and human trafficking. There are no areas of Scotland immune to the

impacts of serious organised crime with groups found in all areas of

Scotland.

Serious organised crime groups are typically hierarchical and model

themselves on business-like structures. Groups are generally made up of

individuals with differing skills and abilities, with varying degrees of

responsibility. Commonly, those higher up the hierarchy are less

detectable, providing a significant challenge in identifying and disrupting

those perpetrating harm.

Those criminally exploited are more likely to be detected by agencies,

specifically law enforcement, as they carry out lower level but higher risk

activity. Organised crime groups can create a base in their chosen area,

usually by taking over the homes of vulnerable adults. This is often

referred to as “cuckooing”. Those who have their homes cuckooed are

coerced or manipulated by threats, violence or debt bondage. They will

likely have regular contact with perpetrators and may also have friends and family threatened should they try to avoid engagement.

It is worth repeating that not all criminal exploitation is linked to serious

organised crime. Perpetrators can be individuals who exploit children or

adults within their families or communities. The identification of these

victims, and the response, should be the same.

**Identifying Child Criminal Exploitation**

Identifying criminal exploitation is the responsibility of all agencies and

professionals who have duties for the care and protection of children and

adults. Early and proactive identification can assist with preventing

criminalisation of victims and further exploitation. Communities offer a

wealth of knowledge and information that can support this process and

should be included when developing local responses to criminal

exploitation. Exploitation is often unrecognised or detected due to the

exploitative nature of the relationships which requires individuals to

conceal and hide their involvement from authorities.

The following examples can act as a guide for professionals in identifying

exploitation, see appendix 3 at page 34 for a list of indicators:

• Increased/unexplained material wealth

• Debt/financial difficulties /poverty

• Individuals travelling to different areas/locations that they would

not usually visit

• Changes to networks/peer groups who may be linked to criminality

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• Receiving increased numbers of texts/phone calls from unknown

callers

• Appearing agitated and nervous about answering calls/texts/going

out

• Persistently going missing or returning late

• Leaving the house at odd times of day or night that is out with

usual routine

• Substance misuse issues

• Increased offending with offences potentially linked to serious

organised crime

• Individual traits – seeking a sense of status, reputation, power,

acceptance

• Isolation and few positive relationships

• Serious violence

• Anti-social and/or pro-criminal attitudes

• Low self-esteem

• Low levels of empathy that are not developmentally expected

• Increased use of social media with different profiles

• Possession of 'burner' phones

• Experiencing threats, intimidation

• Associating in different areas/location/"going out of town"

• Deterioration in mental health

• Self-harm

• Criminal charges that suggest a level of sophistication in planning

or dealing that seem advanced for that individual

• More frequent contact with police

• Coming into contact with police when there has been no previous

involvement

• Family or family connections involved in organised crime.

**It is critical to understand that the presence of indicators does not**

**explicitly indicate exploitation is taking place and should be**

**understood within and across the wider context of each individual**

**and their relationships with their family, community and peers etc.**

In addition, it is not helpful to view these as a cumulative scorecard

where the more factors identified the higher the likelihood of criminal

exploitation taking place. The presence of one indicator may be

sufficient to suggest someone is being criminally exploited and could

also be a significant threat of harm to themselves or others as a result of

this. It is about ensuring criminal exploitation is a consideration that is

investigated, either evidenced or ruled out thus ensuring appropriate

legal safeguards are in place concerning rights, processes and

appropriate and proportionate care and protection actions taken.

**A shared responsibility – getting it right for everyone**

Safeguarding individuals at risk of exploitation is everyone's job.

Early identification and support for those at risk of criminal exploitation

are crucial. Local child protection guidance must be followed where there

is concern about criminal exploitation. All agencies have a responsibility

to ensure staff are aware of the signs of criminal exploitation and know

what to do when they have concerns.

**Reporting concerns**

Sharing relevant information is an essential part of protecting children

from harm. Practitioners and managers in statutory services and the

voluntary sector should all understand when and how they share

information. Practitioners must be supported and guided in working

within and applying the law through organisational procedures and

supervisory processes. Within agencies, data controllers and

information governance leads should ensure that the systems and

procedures for which they share accountability provide an effective

framework for lawful, fair and transparent information sharing. Interagency

information sharing principles are provided in Part 1 of the

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland 2021 and in the

GIRFEC information sharing practice guidance.

Where there is a child protection concern, relevant information should

be shared with police or social work without delay, provided it is necessary, proportionate and lawful to do so. The lawful basis for sharing information should be identified and recorded.

**Under 18 years** – Concerns about the possible harm to a child from

abuse, neglect or exploitation should always be shared with police or social work, without delay. The National Guidance states that: “**Child trafficking and exploitation is abuse**, and an immediate child protection response is required, and an inter-agency referral discussion (IRD) should be undertaken when there is reason to

believe a child may have been trafficked or exploited.”

Therefore, Child Protection procedures should be initiated via an IRD as

described in Part 3 of the Guidance, upon any report of exploitation

relating to a child under the age of 18 years.

**Over 18 years -** The definition of an adult at risk is an individual aged 16 or over, who isunable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or otherinterests, who is at risk of harm, and who is affected by a disability,mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, making them morevulnerable to harm than those who are not so affected. As otherlegislation and provisions exist which include age thresholds up to age 18years (and sometimes up to age 26 years or even beyond), supportunder these other provisions may be more appropriate for some young

persons. For example, where a young person under 18 is at risk of harm,

The National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021) is relevant

for reference, alongside local procedures for sharing information across

children’s and adult services. Practitioners should pay particular attention

to the needs and risks experienced by young people in transition from

youth to adulthood, who may be more vulnerable to harm than others.

**This means that situations may arise, particularly for 16- and 17-year-old young people, where engagement from services for both children and adults is appropriate.**

**Appendices**

**Appendix 1: The Legislation and policy context of Criminal Exploitation in Scotland**

There is a range of legislation and policy in Scotland which aims to

protect victims of criminal exploitation. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 is a key piece of legislation to consider when responding to those who have been criminally exploited. Instructions have been published by the Lord

Advocate, as required by section 8 of the 2015 Act. These instructions

cover any situation where a person is reported to the Crown Office and

Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) for a criminal offence where there is

credible and reliable information that exploitation or trafficking has led to the individual committing the offence. The instructions referred to in part

2 detail the circumstances in which there is a strong presumption against

prosecution for both children and adults.

Working alongside the Human Trafficking and Exploitation

(Scotland) Act 2015 is the Fourth Annual Progress Report 2020 – 2021

which was published in 2022, the intention is to publish the Fifth Annual

Progress Report in Spring/Summer 2023. The main action areas of the

strategy are:

1. Identifying and supporting victims to safety and recovery;

2. Identifying perpetrators and disrupting their activity; and

3**.** Addressing the conditions, both local and global, that foster

trafficking and exploitation.

On 7 March 2023, the UK Government introduced the Illegal Migration

Bill. Amongst other measures, the Bill seeks to prevent victims of trafficking who are deemed to have entered the UK ‘illegally’ from accessing the safety and support currently available, both in Scotland and the wider UK. **This guidance is therefore subject to change.**

The Scottish Government is committed to the incorporation of the United

Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to the maximum

extent possible into Scots Law. At every point of engagement with

children, a rights-respecting approach must be adopted. All articles of

the UNCRC are interconnected, have equal weighting and must be

upheld for all children regardless of their involvement in criminal

behaviour. Article 19 of the UNCRC says that States Parties shall take

all appropriate measures to protect children from exploitation and gives

children the right to support under Article 19 (2). Such protective

measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the

establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for

the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for

other forms of prevention. This includes identification, reporting, referral,

investigation, treatment and follow up of instances of child maltreatment

described, and, as appropriate for judicial involvement.

All responses must be informed by relevant legislation and guidance,

including:

• National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland (2021)

• Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007

• Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 – Code of

Practice

• Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015

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• The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 – A

Guide

• National Referral Mechanism Toolkit March 2021.pdf

(migrationscotland.org.uk)

• National referral mechanism guidance: adult (Northern Ireland and

Scotland) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

• Getting it right for every child (Updated 2022)

• Human Trafficking and Exploitation Guidance for Scottish Local

Authorities

**Appendix 2: Glossary of terms**

Bando – Abandoned building such as a house, pub or shop where drugs

are sold or manufactured.

Burner Phone - A “burner phone” is a cheap, prepaid mobile phone that

can be destroyed or discarded when no longer required, therefore they

are often used to evade detection by authorities.

Burner SIM - A “burner SIM” is a related term, and refers to a cheap,

prepaid SIM card that can be inserted into another phone. The SIM card

may be used for a limited period and not linked to a person’s true

identity.

Competent Authorities – The SCA and Immigration Enforcement

Competent Authority (IECA) sit within the Home Office and consider

cases of potential victims referred to the NRM. The Competent

Authorities operate a two-stage decision-making process to determine

whether an individual is a victim of modern slavery.

County Lines - The 2018 Home Office Serious Crime Strategy states the

NPCC definition of a County Line is a term used to describe gangs and

organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs into one

or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone

lines or other form of “deal line”.

Cuckooing – This is the act of taking over a person's home; often by

exploitation, force, coercion, intimidation, bribery, initial payment or

promise of payment or violence. Victims are often targeted due to

disability, ill health or substance use. The home then becomes a safe

house, providing accommodation, a place to deal drugs from and a

place to store weapons and drugs etc. This gives the Serious and

Organised Crime group a local base from which to operate, and bases

are disposable/quickly changeable.

Forced Labour – This is defined by the European Convention on Human

Rights. In summary it is where an individual is exploited for a

perpetrator’s gain via forced or compulsory labour, regardless of the

human cost to the victim. Common sectors where individuals are

exploited for labour include agriculture, seafood/ fishing industry, car

washes, restaurants/ takeaways, hospitality, construction, factories,

delivery drivers.

Human Trafficking - Human trafficking and exploitation is the

commodification and abuse of people for gain. It is a gross abuse of

human rights, happens globally and harms individuals and communities across the world, including in Scotland. Not all cases of human

trafficking or exploitation are easy to understand or detect and often the

crime may look like something else, such as people smuggling or

working illegally. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act

2015 sets out two criminal offences: human trafficking, and slavery,

servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

National Referral Mechanism (NRM) - The NRM is the UK-wide

framework through which potential victims of trafficking in the UK are

identified, so that they can be supported and protected. It is a particular

process to be followed when it is suspected that an adult or a child might

be a victim of trafficking. Only designated First Responders can make a

referral into the NRM.

Snapchat Snap map – This is a location-sharing feature on the social

media platform called Snapchat. It allows a person to easily meet up

with friends in real life, by sharing their current location, which then

appears to friends on a map and updates when Snapchat is open.

Trap house - A building used as a base from where drugs are sold and

sometimes manufactured. This may be cuckooed addresses or

abandoned buildings “bandos”.

Trapping - The act of selling drugs. Trapping can refer to the act of

moving drugs from one town to another or the act of selling drugs in one town

**Appendix 3 – Indicators**

About the individual…

• Distressed behaviour

• Secretive

• Tiredness

• Withdrawn

• Missing episodes

• Checking phone frequently

• More than one phone

• Physical injuries

• New items/money

• Travelling out with area

• New friends/associates

• Access to substances

In the community…

• Increased activity at addresses

• Accents that are not local

• Different vehicles

• Signs of drug dealing

• Anti-social behaviour

• Fighting

• Children travelling alone

• Cuckooing

• Increase/change in drug supply

• Frequent deliveries (takeaways/packages)

Cuckooing indicators might include:

• Increase in people visiting address, including unusual times and

vehicles

• Anti-social behaviour

• Usual occupant no longer at address, or is less visible

• Increase in substance use within or around the address

• Occupant appears anxious or distressed

• Barricades within the address (may take excessively long to open

the door or communicate through letter box)

• Bags of clothing or bedding around the property

• “Weapons” within the property

**Appendix 4 National Referral Mechanism**

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM), established in 2009, is the Global framework for identifying and referring potential victims of trafficking and ensuring that they receive the appropriate support in furtherance of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005). It is a process to identify and safeguard individuals who have been or where there is a suspicion of

them having been trafficked. There is a system of First Responder

Organisations who are authorised to refer potential victims into the NRM.

First Responder Organisations include Police Scotland, Local Authorities,

Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, Migrant Help, Barnardo’s,

Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) and certain parts of the

Home Office including UK Visas and Immigration, Border Force and

Immigration Enforcement.

The high-level role of First Responder Organisations includes:

• Identify potential victims of human trafficking and exploitation and

recognise the indicators of exploitation;

• Gather information to understand what has happened to them;

• Refer victims into the NRM; and

• Provide a point of contact for the Competent Authorities within the

Home Office to assist with the Reasonable Grounds and Conclusive Grounds decisions and to request a reconsideration.

First Responders complete a single online referral form that can be

accessed from any location in the UK and can be used in cases

involving both adults and children. As the purpose of sharing information

to the NRM is to safeguard victims of trafficking, children do not need to

consent to enter the NRM. It is however good practice to inform the

child, to explain the NRM process, and refer to child protection

procedures, unless doing so could place the child at risk.

Informed consent is required to be sought for those aged 18 years and over. If

consent is not given to refer the adult to the NRM, police should still be

contacted if there are any immediate risks or dangers. For adults at risk

of harm, chapter 3 of the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act

2007 Code of Practice provides information on consent and information

sharing.

The NRM Toolkit for First Responders in Scotland was developed to help

improve the formal identification of victims through the NRM in Scotland

and ensure that both frontline staff and potential victims are clear on the

process and potential outcomes of this pathway to identification and

protection. The toolkit is designed to promote a trauma-informed

approach to supporting adult and child survivors in Scotland.

NRMs ensure that all presumed or identified victims of trafficking within

the jurisdiction of a state have their rights respected regardless of their

background, nationality, activities they may have been involved in, or

their willingness to co-operate with law enforcement agencies. This

includes those who are trafficked domestically (within the borders of one

country) as well as transnationally (across international borders) and

online (cyber-trafficking within the borders of one country or across

international borders).