



GLASGOW CITY CENTRE 'NITE ZONE' PROJECT

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1. Introduction

Glasgow is one of the United Kingdom's most visited cities, welcoming over four million visitors per year. It has over 70 parks and open spaces including major visitor attractions like: -

- Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum;
- Pollok Park, which is home to the Burrell Collection;
- The Botanic Gardens.

The city also hosts many international events: -

- World Pipe Band Championships;
- The Great Scottish Run;
- The Glasgow International Jazz Festival;
- Celtic Connections.

This year the city will also host the UEFA Cup Final at Hampden in May and is a candidate city to host the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

As well as attracting many visitors, the City Centre has a vibrant night time economy welcoming many thousands of visitors yearly to sample its range of entertainment, food and drink. The city centre is geographically a small area within which is a choice of more than 500 pubs, bars, nightclubs, restaurants, theatres and casinos. The club scene attracts many young people to an alcohol rich environment with more than 70 nightclubs providing a combined capacity of more than 43,000. The local police believe that the clientele is predominantly aged between 18 and 25 years, exiting those clubs around 3 am, a large proportion being under the influence of alcohol and, in some case, controlled drugs.

Against such a backdrop there is a perceived public fear of alcohol fuelled crime and violence and a general increase in anti-social behaviour causing concern to the wider community. Existing data from Strathclyde Police indicate that a significant amount of crime and violence in the city centre is alcohol related.

Policing large numbers of people, the majority of whom are intoxicated, in the city centre brings unique problems with what is, in effect, a large football crowd, vying for limited transportation out of the city. The options for travel out of the city are severely restricted during the night with the closure of rail and subway services

and a significant reduction of bus services effectively leaving taxi travel as the only viable choice to people in the middle of the night.

Delays for transport home can lead to frustration, arguments and sometimes violence. Strathclyde Police adopts a hot-spot policing strategy at weekends to monitor and control the crowds exiting nightclubs with additional resources are drafted in to cope with the demand. Stewart Street police office with responsibility for managing the city centre is one of the busiest prisoner processing offices in Scotland, typically dealing with around 10,000 prisoners annually, the majority of whom (between 60% and 70%), at the time of arrest, are under the influence of alcohol or other intoxicants.

Traditionally, the majority of violent crime in the city centre tends to be spontaneous and in many cases there is a strong link to alcohol consumption. Statistical analysis indicates that a high number of crimes of spontaneous violence occur in areas, such as taxi ranks, outside night clubs and catering outlets where people congregate at the end of the night.

A successful evening and late night economy requires that there is provision made to ensure the safety and well being of the persons who frequent and reside within the city. Glasgow has long suffered from its portrayal as the "No Mean City" with violent incidents being exaggerated and crimes such as murder, which in most cases, occur in areas outwith the city centre being luridly publicised by the media. This in effect creates a perception of the city being unsafe and generates an increased fear of crime resulting in many potential visitors to the city going elsewhere.

For someone who has been trained and "ingrained" in the principles of accident investigation and traffic & transportation, this project was an opportunity to utilise my expertise and experience to help improve what is effectively a social problem. During my career, I have been involved in many multi-agency projects whose primary aim was to improve the road environment by accident reduction, education and enforcement, with experience and resources from mainly road safety professionals. This project is the first that I have been involved with that has involved partnership working within a multi-agency group, where the roads authority has used its resources to improve the built environment and improve the amenity of road users who are not necessarily at risk from other road users.

2. The 'NITE ZONE' Concept

On 6th April 2005 Glasgow City Council's Policy and Resources (Community Safety and Health) Sub-committee considered a report on the City Centre's evening economy and on the linkage between insufficient or inappropriate transport services and the potential for alcohol related crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour. As a result of this it was agreed to establish a short term working group to further identify and respond to these issues. The remit of the Evening Economy & Transport Working Group was to look at effective and

sustainable responses to ongoing transport issues linked to Glasgow's evening economy.

The Working Group consisted of representatives of the City Council, Strathclyde Police, the licensed trade and transport providers and demonstrates the best aspects of partnership working.

It was agreed to pilot a safe transport zone and the brand 'Nite Zone' was born with the following mission statement proposed :-

"The aim of the 'Nite Zone' pilot scheme is to create a safe and secure transport zone within Glasgow City Centre which will reduce crime, the fear of crime and enhance Glasgow's reputation for being a safe city through a partnership between public, private and voluntary sectors."

The 'Nite Zone' concept was established to address a number of key objectives including: -

1. To make pedestrian movement at night safer and simpler
2. To reduce the number of reported violent crimes, disorder and antisocial behaviour within the city centre at night
3. To reduce the perception of crime within the city centre at night
4. To make existing night time transport more convenient, safer and accessible
5. To enhance Glasgow City Centre's reputation as a safe city

A formal launch was agreed for 2 December 2005 to coincide with the increased patronage of the city centre by Christmas revellers.

The 'Nite Zone' working group undertook an analysis of the existing city centre night time environment and examined the following elements: -

- Policing and reported crime
- The demographic of the night time entertainment sector
- The existing transport options
- The streetscene

Policing and reported crime

Policing the City Centre brings unique problems in terms of resource issues ensuring that reported crimes and incidents are dealt with efficiently and effectively. The sheer volume of people in the city centre on weekend nights has resulted in the local police division operating a unique policing plan to ensure officers are deployed to potential hot spot locations. Additional police officers are drafted in from neighbouring sub divisions and specialist services to cope with the demand whilst extensive use is made of the public space CCTV cameras in the city to augment police resources. Table 2 demonstrates a sample analysis of incidents in February 2005 and highlights the impact on police resources at the Divisional Headquarters, Stewart Street police office.

TABLE 2

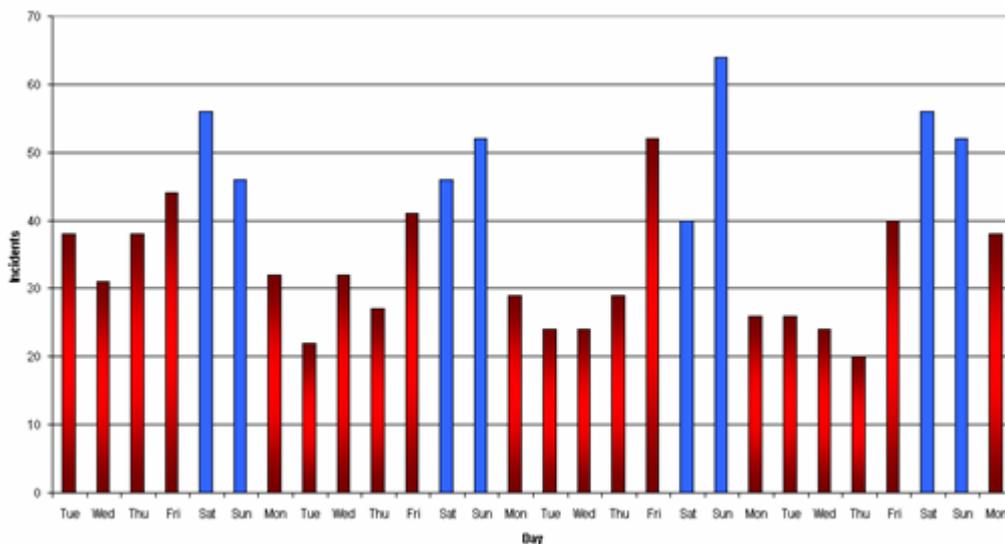


Table 3 shows the numbers of prisoners arrested where alcohol was a contributory factor.

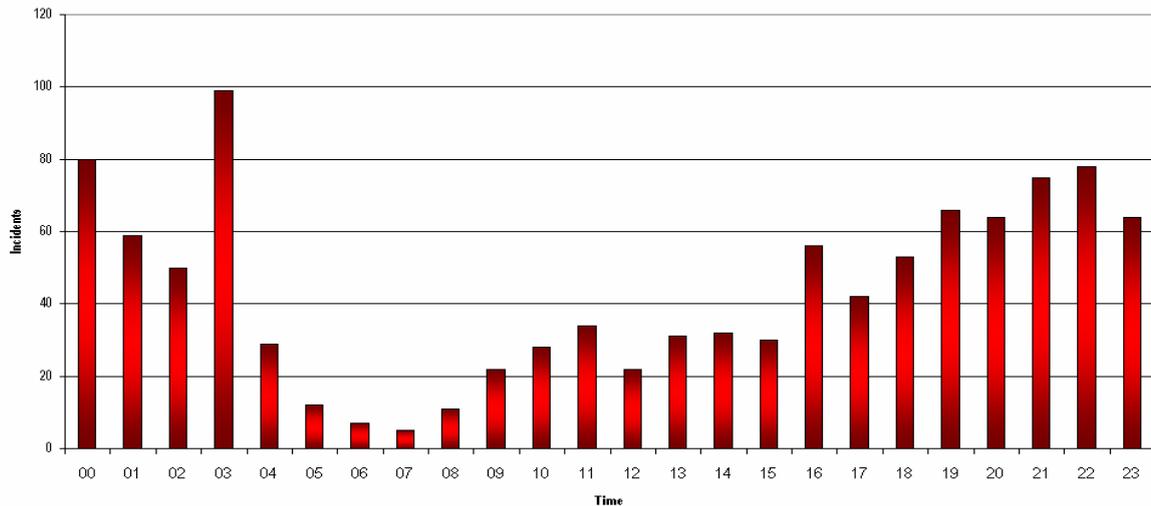
TABLE 3

Arrests – October 2004 to March 2005		
Total Number of Arrests	3867	
Prisoners (had been drinking)	1860	48.2%
Prisoners (drunk)	682	17.6%
Total Prisoners where alcohol involved	2542	65.8%

There is a clear correlation between the numbers of incidents the local police deal with and the numbers of persons exiting from licensed premises on weekend nights. Table 4 shows the numbers of reported incidents to police

during February 2005 by time of day. It is interesting to note that police resources are at their most busy between 0000 hours and 0100 hours (probable exodus from public houses) and between 0300 hours and 0400 hours (probable exodus from night clubs).

TABLE 4



Entertainment Sector

The City Centre's licensing sector has evolved significantly over the last 30 years changing from a predominantly “working man’s” pub scene to a vibrant entertainment industry with the development of pubs and nightclubs with ever increasing capacities. Table 1 identifies the number and type of licensed venues within the City Centre.

TABLE 1

Licence Type	Number
Entertainment	87
Hotel	36
Off Sales	62
Public House	241
Refreshment	30
Registered Club	7
Restaurant	63
Restricted Hotel	4
Total	530

Almost all public house licensed venues operate regular extensions to permitted hours typically closing at midnight while entertainment venues are permitted to

open until 3am resulting in increases in noise and nuisance at those times. As well as leading to policing issues, this presents a particular concern to the increasing number of residents within the city centre. There are now more than 70 entertainment venues operating as nightclubs in the city centre servicing a combined total of more than 43,000 people. The city centre also has 5 casinos turning out many more citizens into the streets between 4am and 6am at weekends. There are currently more than 100 food outlets licensed until 0500 hours at weekends to service persons exiting night clubs.

Transport Options

People intending to enjoy a night out in Glasgow City Centre are afforded a variety of transport options to come in to the city with excellent bus, train, subway, taxi and parking facilities for private transport. Transportation during the night to get people home, however, is less readily available with the closure of train services around midnight, the closure of the subway system around 11.30 pm and a significant reduction in bus services through the night.

Bus Travel

During the day Glasgow is serviced by approximately 20 bus companies with First Glasgow having the largest proportion of services operating a total of 118 bus routes in and out of the city. Almost all bus operators withdraw their services at night; however, First Group operates a number of night bus routes at weekends and Citylink operates a limited night service between Glasgow and Edinburgh at 1.30 am and 3.30 am at weekends.

Rail Travel

The City Centre has two major rail stations, Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street and the railway infrastructure is extensively used during early evening to bring revellers into the City Centre. With the exception of special events; however, there are no trains running after midnight and the stations close removing that element of travel from the choices open to night time users.

Subway Travel

The Glasgow Underground system operates between 6.30 am and 11.30 pm on Mondays to Saturdays and between 11 am and 6 pm on Sundays. It is estimated that around 6,000 persons travel into the city centre each evening.

Taxi Travel

There are currently 1428 black hackney taxi licences and more than 2,500 private hire taxis in operation to service the city of Glasgow. The majority of taxis operate during daytime hours servicing transport hubs and licensed ranks, however, due to a number of issues, there are significantly less taxis operating during the night. Current legislation prevents private hire cars from ranking in town nor are they allowed to pick-up from off the street. Legally such taxis may only respond to a phone request to the Private Hire Office. Private hire cars are also generally 20% cheaper than taxis and their availability at weekends, albeit restricted because they cannot pick up off the street, is considerably higher than the availability of hackneys.

Streetscene

The design and management of the city streets is predominantly focussed on the needs of road users during the day. Although there is considerably less traffic at night, there are areas, mainly adjacent to nightclubs, where there is still significant movement of traffic and pedestrians, many of whom are under the influence of alcohol. Traffic signal controlled junctions mostly operate on fixed night time plans with a pedestrian phase as part of the usual cycle. The network is also monitored by CCTV on a 24/7 basis and controlled from Glasgow's Centrally Integrated Traffic Control centre (CITRAC) in Elmbank Street. The system ensures that the traffic signal timings at individual junctions and along traffic routes are correctly synchronised for the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians and vehicles through the City. Any major faults detected at the sites are automatically reported to the centre to allow quick attendance and repair. Where network problems exist, then CITRAC can alter the traffic signal timings to improve flows on congested streets

The streetlighting levels were also assessed as good quality street lighting has a very positive effect on reducing crime and fear of crime by visitors/ residents. Recent advances in lamp technology have allowed 'white light' sources to be used in place of the traditional yellow/ orange high pressure sodium lamps.

Glasgow is also currently undertaking a lighting network renewal project that aims to replace all yellow/ orange high pressure sodium lamps with "white light" sources.

Surveys of stakeholders in Glasgow have revealed that the implementation of white lighting schemes:

- Gives better colour rendering (for public and Police identification)
- Makes a reduction in residents 'fear of crime'
- Encourages and aids mobility of pedestrians during the cover of darkness

- Improves the night time street scene and the overall quality of life of its residents
- Residents prefer the 'brighter' white light

The following photographs give an impression of the changes from yellow/orange high pressure sodium lamps with “white light” sources

Before



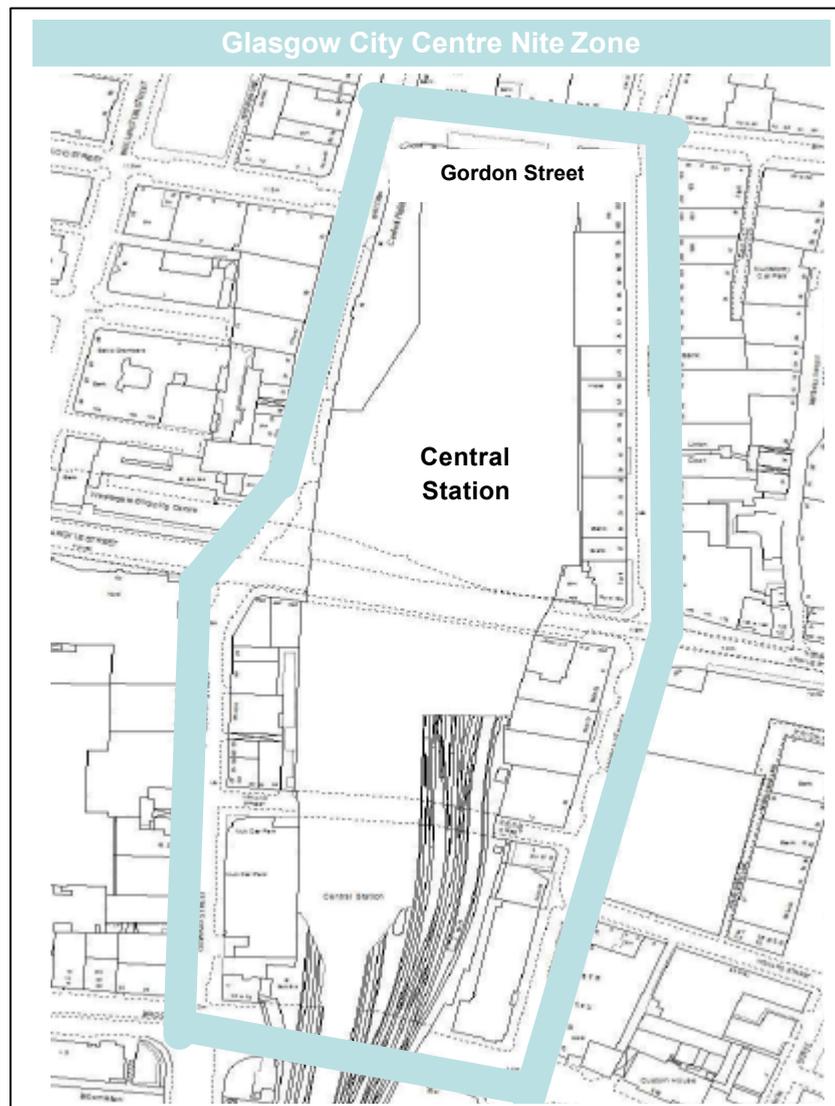
After



3. The Nite Zone Area

The second stage of the project development was to identify and enhance an area of the city centre, well used by the public at night, drawing together a number of community safety strands which collectively would be expected to facilitate the prompt and safe exit of users of the night time economy and contribute to a reduction in crime and the fear of crime in the area. Those elements included enhancing public street lighting, increasing the CCTV footprint, introducing public help points, working with partners to market existing night transport options, increase the number of authority figures in the streets and improve the area's environmental 'feel'.

After consultation with a range of partner organisations and, based on information received about the number of people in the area at night and incidents reported to the police, it was decided to site the initial 'Nite Zone' in the area around Glasgow Central Station



The area was selected for a number of reasons, notably it incorporates

- Two of the busiest night time taxi ranks in the city centre
- Bus stops for existing night time buses for all arterial routes out of the city
- Five strategically placed CCTV cameras giving good visibility of all main streets
- Seven nightclubs servicing a combined capacity of 5,500 persons
- Five licensed late night catering outlets operating until 4am or 5am
- Five 24-hour shops

4. Developing the 'NITE ZONE' Partnership

Funding was supplied by Glasgow City Council, Glasgow City Centre Alcohol Action Group and Strathclyde Police and a series of meetings were held with stakeholders in the public and private sectors to prepare a list of actions as follows

Street Lighting

- To replace yellow/ orange high pressure sodium lamps with "white light" sources
- To identify areas of poor lighting and arrange additional/ increased lighting accordingly
- To arrange additional spot lighting to cover all night taxi ranks and night bus stops

CCTV

- To ensure adequate public space CCTV coverage
- Introduce a mobile CCTV presence
- To identify areas of poor CCTV coverage and identify potential sources of funding to improve it
- To establish an electronic link between CITRAC Roads cameras and Streetwatch Glasgow to extend capability of viewing street scenes.
- To arrange for additional fixed CCTV cameras to monitor existing taxi ranks and night bus stops
- To improve signage for CCTV camera locations to raise public awareness of the existence and location of cameras

Public Help Points

- To install public help points linked to Streetwatch Glasgow at the night taxi ranks and bus stops

Transportation

- To work with all Night Clubs to offer patrons information on existing night time transportation options
- To identify best locations for night time bus stops
- To develop free phone telephone facilities within nightclubs to alleviate queuing at public taxi ranks.
- To increase the licensed capacity of night taxi ranks to better match supply and demand
- To alter existing traffic regulation orders to enable an increase in the number of taxis within the rank
- To amend traffic signal sequencing at key locations to facilitate traffic flow

Public Safety

- Provide dedicated Transport Marshalls to patrol existing night taxi ranks and bus stops
- To encourage all Pubs, Bars and Night Clubs to become involved in the 'Best Bar None' Award Scheme
- To develop waiting areas in night clubs for patrons offering fast food and soft drinks to phase the exit of large numbers of persons onto the streets.
- To develop an exit search policy with all Night Clubs to prevent patrons taking bottles and glasses out of licensed premises.
- To develop the role of door stewards to help marshal crowds outside nightclubs.
- To develop a night time radio network to facilitate communication between the licensed trade, police and transport providers

Other Issues

- To develop a multi-agency marketing strategy to maximise awareness of existing night time transport options
- To regenerate vacant/derelict buildings within the 'Safe Transport Zone' by the use of positive graphics of Glasgow City Centre.

- To identify areas of graffiti and fly posting and arrange removal accordingly
- To arrange for the design and installation of signage identifying and promoting the 'Nite Zone'
- To provide additional policing at hot spot locations

5. Project Evaluation

Following the first weeks of the implementation of the project an internal evaluation was carried out to measure the effectiveness of the concept. The evaluation was based on the initial objectives set for the project and a number of benefits became clear

Objective 1: Make pedestrian movement at night safer and simpler

Land Services completed the upgrade of yellow/ orange high pressure sodium lamp to 'white light' in Gordon Street, Union Street, Hope Street, Robertson Street and Broomielaw. This contributed to the following benefits: -

- More effective CCTV camera coverage with clearer images obtained on film leading to improved evidence collection
- Strong indications of improved public perceptions of safety
- An amendment of the traffic light sequence on Hope Street at Gordon Street, Gordon Street at West Nile Street and West Nile Street at St Vincent Street facilitated an increased supply of taxis and speed up the safe exit of people from the Gordon Street taxi rank

Objective 2: Reduce the number of reported violent crimes, disorder and antisocial behaviour within the city centre at night

The presence of high visibility resources including additional police officers and taxi/bus queue wardens contributed to a number of positive outcomes including

- A reduction in violent crime of 19.1%
- A reduction in serious assault of 4.4%, and
- A reduction in robbery of 21.5%

Objective 3: Reduce the perception of crime within the city centre at night

The installation of dedicated poles incorporating pan and tilt CCTV cameras and public help points in the area, the use of mobile CCTV and the presence of taxi wardens contributed to a number of positive outcomes including

- An increase of camera availability in the area of 80%

- An increase of monitored incidents at or near taxi and bus ranks of 17.6%
- An increase in the availability of help points of 200%

Objective 4: Make existing night time transport more convenient, safer and accessible

Full support was received from partner agencies to ensure existing transport options in the area were convenient, safe and accessible. Action in support of this objective included

- The presence of sufficient taxis during the Festive Period contributing to a reduction of waiting time in taxi queues from 1 hour to 15 minutes.
- The design and distribution of 100,000 leaflets giving public information on locations of night taxi ranks and contact telephone numbers
- The creation of night bus stops ensuring all bus services stop at designated places during the night.
- The provision of Bus Inspectors helping with queuing at night bus stops
- The Design and distribution of 20,000 bus timetables with information on locations and times of bus services.

Objective 5: Enhance Glasgow City Centre's reputation as a safe city

It is generally considered that all of the reported elements have contributed to Glasgow's reputation as a safe city, however, specific outcomes include

- A multi agency approach to media distribution resulted in considerable positive coverage about the project through local and national radio, television and newspapers.
- Environmental Services carried out a general clean up of the area prior to the launch of the pilot scheme to ensure that there was little or no graffiti, fly posting or litter and additional litter bins were placed at the night bus stops and taxi ranks.
- Signs were designed, incorporating a dedicated project logo, and put at all main junctions to raise public awareness of the project.

6. Extension of 'Nite Zone'

The 'Nite Zone' pilot has been a success and credit is due to the way that all the partners - Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Taxis, Strathclyde Partnership for transport, Strathclyde Police, First Group and the entertainment sector – have worked together to achieve a common goal.

As a result of the success in Gordon Street, the 'Nite Zone' has recently been extended to Sauchiehall Street, which has similar problems to those in Gordon Street. A parallel approach has been undertaken in that the streetlighting has been upgraded and traffic signal timings have been altered to enable a better through put of taxis using the taxi rank. A rationalisation of exiting bus stops has allowed the taxi rank to be extended and wardens are on hand to marshal and advise.

Investigations are also underway to establish a City Centre Medical project, similar to the Cardiff model, where health care professionals can deliver an immediate first aid service to 'walking wounded' within the city centre. The service can assess the patients, deal with minor injuries and therefore free-up the resources within ambulance service and the city accident and emergency units, particularly The Royal Infirmary.

Discussions are also underway with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport regarding extending the operating hours of the Underground.