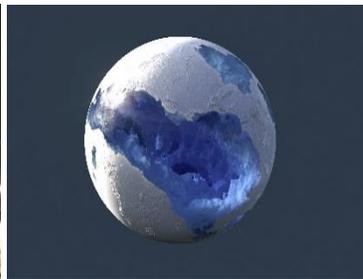


The City at Night

Director of Public Health Annual Report Bristol 2024





Acknowledgements

This has been a fascinating report to write, and I hope that you will enjoy reading it. There are many people to thank.

Firstly, a special acknowledgement to all those who keep our essential health, care, transport, and emergency services running through the night.

A big thank you to everyone working in our culture, leisure and retail industries, theatres, hotels, restaurants, and music venues who help put Bristol on the map as a global destination.

A further big thank you to all of those working round the clock in warehousing, the port, logistics, transportation, and the many roles which keep the wheels of the city turning.

And to colleagues at Bristol City Council, within licencing, safer communities, planning, economic development, and culture who all work so hard to make Bristol the best it can be and help the city to stay safe and healthy at night.

Finally, to the editors and contributors who have held the pen and brought it all together, thank you:

- Rob Hayward, Consultant in Public Health, Editor in Chief
- Lynn Stanley, Senior Public Health Specialist
- Carly Heath, Night Time Economy Advisor
- Jonathan Martin, Regulatory and City Events Manager

This year, in response to the financial challenges which the council is experiencing, the report is presented in a simple format without professional layout. I hope this does not detract from the message.

Foreword

‘City life doesn’t stop when the sun goes down... services continue to function...’

Andreina Seijas, 24-Hour Cities Network.

Our planet revolves around its axis. ‘Night’ follows ‘day’, in equal portions at the equator and in different cycles in the northern and southern hemispheres. Across the UK, 38 percent of the population is estimated to be active at night¹. While in Bristol, 41 percent of people are employed at night¹. The night has always held a mystery and fascination, but it is only relatively recently that ‘the night’ has featured explicitly in public policy. For the purposes of this report, we are using a broad definition of 6pm to 6am to describe the night.

Many people perform vitally important jobs at night. Shelves get stacked, food gets packed and prepared, vulnerable people are cared for, we are kept safe. People visit theatres, cinemas, sports venues, leisure centres, clubs, and shops. Friends, family, and communities come together.

During the COVID-19 pandemic I was invited to meet with night time industry representatives. Together with business and council colleagues we discussed the challenges the sector was facing through lockdown. It was a testament to the night time community that we did not see a single outbreak in - or connected to - the Bristol night time leisure industry over the three-year period that restrictions were in place. Despite considerable cost, night time businesses carefully assessed risk and supported the implementation of protective measures to keep their workers and clients safe. Customers and clients worked with them to do this. Mask wearing, testing, ventilation and innovative solutions utilising outdoor spaces were all carefully considered and adhered to.

This experience opened my eyes to the city at night and the needs of people who work or socialise during the night time hours. In this report I will explore the question “what are the implications for health and wellbeing at night?” I hope that you will enjoy this ‘Ode to the Night’ and that you will find it as interesting to read as I have found it to write.

Christina Gray — Director of Public Health for Bristol
September 2024

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Chapter 1: A picture of the night



39,000
work in health and social care at night

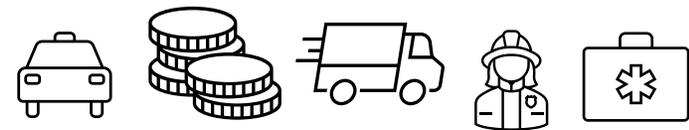
40,700
work in manufacturing, warehousing and freight transport at night

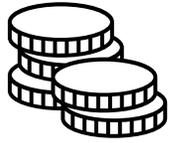
36,700
work in cultural and leisure sector at night

£74million plus generated through Bristol's night time economy

38%
of the population is active at night

1/3 of total spend occurs at night¹





Chapter 2: The Night Time Economy

‘Night time economic activities include creative industries, call centres, healthcare services, caregiving, airports and the distribution of goods and services.’

24-Hour Cities Network, 2023.

The Night Time Industries Association estimates that the UK night time economy contributes 5.1 percent of the country’s wealth as measured by Gross Domestic Product, and that the sector is continuing to grow¹.

Overall, consumer spend in the UK night time economy was worth £136.5 billion in 2022, of which £38.3 billion was in the night time cultural economy including venues with live music, DJs, cinema, theatre, and comedy events².

Across the UK, 19.2 million music tourists helped to generate £8 billion revenue and supported 62,000 full time jobs in 2023³. It has been reported that 42% of spending between 6pm and 6am was in the restaurant group¹.

Bristol’s night time leisure industry comprises around 1,176 licensed night-time premises, including restaurants, theatres, hotels, music venues, pubs, and open-air spaces. Several festivals take place in Bristol each year. These include the Bristol International Balloon Fiesta, Bristol Harbour Festival, and Love Saves the Day: all of which bring many visitors into the city.

In Bristol city centre (BS1, BS2, BS8), VISA spending alone between 6pm and 6am in 2023 was £74.5 million⁴. If other card companies and cash spending match this, the value of the night time economy in Bristol may exceed £200million a year.

Health and wealth are connected. People sharing in the wealth of a strong economy have better living conditions, and more financial security can mean lower chronic stress, and access to greater social opportunities⁵. At night, as in the day however, the benefits of wealth and health are not equally shared. As will be seen through the report, there are opportunities to improve health and reduce inequality for those who work at night.



Chapter 3: Night workers

41 percent of employment in Bristol is at night.

27 percent of all UK Employment is at night.

Bristol's thriving night time economy is reflected in the high number of people who work at night. The Office for National Statistics estimates Bristol has around 116,339 employees in night time industries¹. That's an incredible 41 percent of employment in Bristol: a figure which has risen from 37 percent in 2012. Bristol's night time workforce is growing.

The proportion of people working at night in Bristol is also considerably higher than the UK overall, which is estimated to be 27 percent of the UK workforce¹. This is reflective of the fact that Bristol is one of the UK's core cities with the 'pull factor' of being a large destination city and the presence of two regional hospitals.

The UK night time workforce is diverse: workers born outside of the UK make up 23 percent of all night time workers, compared to 17.8 percent of daytime workers. Of these night time workers, 56 percent are male, and 44 percent are female¹.

Major night time employers

The city hosts two regional acute hospital trusts employing approximately 25,000 staff between them^{6,7} and two world renowned universities with approximately 12,000 staff and 69,000 students^{8,9}.

Thirty-nine thousand (33.5 percent) of all night time workers in Bristol are employed in 24-hour health and personal social services industry¹.

Forty thousand seven hundred people (35 percent of all night time employment) work in jobs which support wider social and economic activities including manufacturing, processing, food industries, distribution, warehousing, storage, freight,

transport, and logistics¹. Bristol Port at Avonmouth operates on a 24/7 basis and employs around 600 people directly¹⁰, providing services which enable goods to be imported into and out of Bristol and the wider region.

The cultural and leisure sector employs people in hotels and restaurants, theatre, music venues, pubs, clubs, and festivals. Thirty-six thousand seven hundred people (31.5 percent of all night time employees) work in night time cultural and leisure activities and activities which support them¹.

Wages

Within this thriving economy, however, employees in night time industries are more likely to be on low pay than daytime workers. Fifteen percent of all night time industry workers and 38.5 percent of night time cultural and leisure workers are on low wages¹. This is compared to a national average of 10.5 percent of all employees reported as low paid¹¹.

For employees in 24-hour health and personal services industries, 5.4 percent are on low wages. Women are more likely to be in this group¹.

Night time employment is generally more unstable than day time work. Many contracts are less secure, part time, temporary or short term. Workers on zero hours contracts are twice as likely to work night shifts than other workers¹².

Age

Perhaps unsurprisingly, night time workers tend to be younger, with 40 percent being aged under 24 years old¹¹. In Bristol this would equate to 14,680 night time workers under 24 years old in the night time cultural and leisure sector alone. By contrast, 24-hour health and personal services employ fewer 16 to 24-year-olds than average, but substantially more 25 to 44-year-olds (UK)¹.

The age profile of those participating in leisure, music, and entertainment in Bristol at night - residents and visitors (measured by 'footfall' data) - suggests that these people are from a younger demographic compared to the UK overall. Park Street (Central Bristol) sensor data suggests that the 18 to 34 age group makes up 40 percent of the total compared to 28 percent in the UK, with the busiest time being Friday and Saturday night¹³.



Chapter 4: Sleep

“We ignore the circadian and sleep systems at our peril.”

**Professor Russell Foster, Head of Sleep and Circadian Neuroscience at Oxford University
Co-op & The Liminal Space, 2020.**

People who work at night can have a different experience of sleep to people who only work during the day. They can face many challenges with trying to get good sleep, which can have a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing. Severe sleep deprivation is more common among night workers and there are higher levels of both *absenteeism*¹⁴ (unscheduled absence from work duty) and *presenteeism*¹⁵ (where they are at work but have lower productivity) in night workers.

A study of a thousand British workers aged 18 to 65 years, including 215 who work at night, illustrates the different experiences between working in the day and the night¹⁶:

- Daily hours sleep: 5.8 hours for night workers; 6.4 hours for day workers
- Financially vulnerable: 46 percent of night workers; 30 percent of day workers
- Median age: 38 years for night workers; 43 years for day workers
- Black and Minority Ethnic workforce: 15 percent of night workers; 10 percent of day workers
- Gender: Male - 60 percent of night workers; 40 percent of day workers

Sleep loss is a risk factor for age-related chronic disorders, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and hypertension, as well as those with a weakened immune system and self-reported poor health. Shift work has been linked to physical and emotional stress, which can affect workers' cardiovascular risk and psychological wellbeing¹⁷. A lack of sleep or poor-quality sleep can have negative health and safety implications such as loss of judgement and mistakes leading to accidents¹⁸.



Chapter 5: Food

People who work at night may not have access to the same variety of nutritious food options available during the day. Shops are often closed at night and the canteens only open during the day. Night workers may be reliant on what they bring to work with them and may not have access to a fridge or a means of reheating food. Food surveys have shown that shift workers (those working outside of 7am to 7pm in their main job) eat less fruit and vegetables than those who did not work shifts¹⁹. Night workers may also not get guaranteed meal breaks, compared to many daytime workers; for example, working in a busy restaurant, music venue or hospital setting can lead to snacking and unhealthy food options. Irregular eating patterns have been linked to a higher risk of obesity and missing meals; eating quickly and distracted eating or grazing can lead to overeating²⁰.

Compared to day workers, shift workers are at a higher risk of many diet-related chronic conditions, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes. Meals eaten at night can trigger an exaggerated sugar and fat response compared with the same meal eaten during the day. In the long term, this increases the risk of serious health issues such as heart disease, stroke, and type 2 diabetes. Shift work that includes overnight shifts disrupts the body clock which in turn affects energy metabolism and can promote weight gain²¹.



Chapter 6: Smoking

Smoking remains one of the major harms to health and contributor to health inequalities²². People aged 25 to 34 have the highest proportion of current smokers by age group, as those in ‘routine and manual occupations’ do by employment sector²³.

Both younger adults, and routine and manual workers represent a high proportion of the night time workforce (see [chapter 3](#)), presenting an opportunity to ensure that those working at night have access to information and opportunities to quit smoking.

People working at night are essential to our 24/7 society, and the workforce is considerable. We must take the opportunity to create healthy environments and promote and protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of people who work at night, for example by encouraging access to healthy lifestyle opportunities and health programmes.

Many people working at night may be exposed to the second-hand smoke of others. A recent study estimated that at least one million UK workers are likely to be exposed to second-hand smoke at work. People who work inside others’ homes (such as care workers, home carers, nannies, and au pairs) are likely to experience the highest levels of exposure, but those in elementary administration and service occupations (which includes many night time workers such as bar staff, waiters, kitchen and catering assistants, cleaners, accommodation staff and security guards) are also likely to be exposed²⁴.

Exposure to second-hand smoke causes considerable harm to health, particularly to children and those with long-term conditions²⁵. The United States Environmental Protection Agency classifies second-hand smoke as a known human carcinogen (a substance capable of causing cancer) alongside asbestos, arsenic, benzene, and radon gas²⁶. It is worth noting that 85 percent of the population do not smoke²⁷ and therefore should be protected equally from second-hand smoke.

Reforms to smoking in public spaces implemented in 2007 have reduced the risk of exposure for many in the culture and leisure sector, however there are persisting passive smoking risks in open spaces which new legislation is seeking to tackle. The Khan Review²⁸ recommended prohibiting smoking on all premises where food or drink is served, to de-normalise smoking and protect young people from the harms of exposure to second-hand smoke²⁸.



Chapter 7: Alcohol and other substance use

Alcohol use and its impacts in Bristol at night

Bristol drinks more alcohol than any other area of the UK²⁹, and this impacts on the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities within the city³⁰. Across the population, the majority of alcohol consumption takes place in the evening and the night³¹.

In 2022 to 2023, there were 2,727 hospital stays in Bristol due to alcohol-related harm: a rate of hospital admissions that is significantly worse than the national average³². Alcohol-related hospital admissions occur more frequently during the evening and night, linked to social drinking habits where people consume alcohol during the later hours of the day, especially on weekends³³.

‘Bristol’s drug and alcohol strategy 2021 to 2025’ has “supporting community and changing culture” as one of its six priorities, with actions to promote alcohol-free spaces, tackle inequalities and stigma, and making support and treatment more accessible and joined-up³⁴.

Reducing harms from alcohol

Awareness about harmful drinking is complemented by a greater choice of alcohol-free drinks, and choosing to be alcohol-free is becoming more popular and widely understood. Bristol Sober Spaces is a project supported by city-wide partners to provide opportunities for people who don’t drink alcohol for cultural or religious reasons and for those who want to sample a sober night.

You can find out more about Bristol Sober Spaces on the [Bristol Drugs Project website](#).

Reducing harm from drugs

Bristol's Combatting Drugs Partnership is jointly chaired by the Bristol Police Commander and the Director of Public Health. This multi-agency partnership takes action to ensure access to treatment for alcohol and other drug addictions as well as supporting enforcement action on illegal drugs. The primary focus of the partnership is to reduce harms from drugs including alcohol and to promote health. The partnership has recently taken action to address particularly harmful substances circulating through global drug markets which have a high risk of fatality.

Many people who use drugs recreationally tend to do so in the evenings and on weekends, often in social settings like parties, clubs, or festivals³⁵. Those who are dependent on drugs may use them throughout the day to manage withdrawal symptoms and maintain their addiction³⁵. Timing of use may also depend on the drug itself: for example, stimulants like cocaine or ecstasy might be used more frequently at night, while opiates might be used more consistently throughout the day³⁶.

Sadly, Bristol has seen deaths of young people from harmful drug use at night. Work in the city has focussed on keeping people safe and raising awareness about harms. As part of this work Bristol has commissioned the 'The Loop' a free and confidential harm reduction service provided in the city centre. This service combines personalised health advice with drug testing. The aim is to reduce high risk drug-taking, reduce drug-related harm, and build a fuller picture of the illicit market in the local area.

Proactive drug testing over the weekend of 'Love Saves the Day' 2024 festival led to several warnings being given about dangerous drugs in circulation amongst festival goers. This 'safety first' approach to recreational drug use has potentially saved lives or prevented serious harm, for those who may otherwise have taken those drugs. Find out more about the active drug testing work on the [Bristol Drugs Project website](#).

Bristol Nights supports nightlife spaces with resources, including 'The Harm Reduction and the Night Time Economy Guide' which sets out a framework for embedding harm reduction into nightlife spaces and helping staff know what to do in emergencies, which aims to reduce the negative consequences caused by alcohol and other substances.

The guide and other resources can be found on the [Bristol Nights website](#).



Chapter 8: Gambling

With the arrival of online gambling, people can engage in this activity at any time.

People with online gambling problems are more likely to place bets between the hours of midnight and 4am³⁷. Furthermore, a lack of sleep or quality sleep makes people take bigger risks and poorly consider negative consequences.

This can become cyclical, where people at greatest risk of harm are most likely to stay up late, in turn becoming sleep deprived and therefore likely to gamble even more³⁸.

Problem gambling, also called compulsive gambling or gambling addiction, can affect mental health and relationships, and give rise to significant debt³⁹.

Problem gambling is characterised by spending more on gambling than you can afford, gambling when you should be doing something else, (e.g. working, spending time with family, or sleeping), feeling anxious or stressed about your gambling, using gambling to deal with problems or feelings, lying to family and friends about your gambling, borrowing, or stealing to fund your gambling.

National research has identified a link between gambling problems and suicide⁴⁰.

Bristol has relatively high numbers of problem gamblers, and therefore carries a significant risk with this population⁴¹.



Chapter 9: Mental health and wellbeing

“People who engage with arts and cultural activities are more likely to lead healthier lives, including eating healthily and staying physically active, irrespective of their social status and social capital.”

World Health Organisation, 2019.

Night time activities including dance, music, and theatre, are activities which can have positive impacts on people’s health and wellbeing by providing opportunities to socialise, connect and enjoy activities. These can boost their mood, reduce stress, and improve physical health. There are well evidenced associations between health and arts and culture activities. Adults aged 50 and over, who regularly participate in cultural activities like attending the theatre, cinema or galleries are at lower risk of loneliness, developing chronic pain and becoming prematurely frail⁴².

Engagement in art and music activities can provide protection to help regulate emotions and reduce stress⁴³ while participating in the arts can reduce loneliness⁴⁴ and lack of social support⁴⁵, which are both linked with mental ill health and premature mortality⁴². Stress is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease⁴⁶ and cancer⁴⁷.

However, night time workers who have engaged in Bristol’s ‘Thrive at Night’ programme report that working at night means that they can miss out on social and family events and celebrations as well as parents’ evenings, school shows, and holidays. This not only impacts on the people who work at night, but also on their families and friends, and can impact on relationships. Night shift workers are six times more likely than day workers to have a relationship end in divorce or separation⁴⁸.

A study into the mental health of UK workers during the COVID-19 pandemic found that psychological distress increased substantially in all UK workers during the COVID-19 pandemic across almost all industries, socioeconomic class, and occupational groups, with workers in the ‘hospitality’ sector amongst those most impacted⁴⁹. This is relevant to the night time economy since two-thirds of hospitality workers in the UK work at night⁵⁰.

The pandemic also brought to light the many inequities that workers face because of the specific industries in which they work and their job titles and tasks⁵¹.

A range of studies into the mental health of UK hospitality workers conducted prior to the pandemic found evidence of stress, and difficulties in seeking help:

- Many UK hospitality workers do not seek professional help for their mental health problems⁵²
- 44 percent of UK hospitality workers would not talk to anybody if they had a mental health problem⁵³
- 38 percent were afraid to tell their boss that the cause of their absence was work-related stress⁵⁴
- 90 percent of hospitality workers believe susceptibility to stress at work can harm career progression, and 40 percent think stress is due to the industry expectation to handle it by themselves⁵⁵
- If workers are unwilling to talk about mental illness, they are unlikely to get appropriate treatment⁵⁶

For those who regularly work at night, the long winter nights can result in depressed mood in a similar disorder to Seasonal Affective Disorder, caused by a lack of sunlight⁵⁷. Research into suicide by occupation shows that the highest rates of suicide tend to be among workers with the lowest level of skill including those who work in hospitality⁵⁸. There are also higher rates of suicide among publicans and managers of licensed premises⁵⁹. Prospective studies in France suggest that night work is associated with greater suicide risk in both men and women⁶⁰.

It is perhaps an irony that while participation in night-time activities tends to be positive for customers' mental health and wellbeing, it is less so for night time workers, and there is work to do to ensure that the benefits to mental health at night are more equally shared by those who work in it.

Thrive at Night provides mental health and wellbeing support to the Night Time Economy workforce in Bristol, through resources, training, peer support and trauma response support sessions.

Information and resources about Thrive at Night can be found on the [Bristol Nights website](#).



Chapter 10: Dance and sing the night away

The opportunity to spend time with friends or make new friends are major reasons for participation in nightlife.

In an increasingly digital world, real world connections and experiences can help people to feel a strong sense of unity and belonging⁶¹. Nightlife interactions provide people with a sense of belonging to a unique and meaningful community and feeling part of ‘something special’⁶².

Dance floors are places where communities come together. Clubs create communities, helping to maintain mental wellbeing and provide opportunities for social interaction and new friendships to form. They contribute to wellbeing through shared emotional experiences, dancing, bonding with others, bringing happiness, confidence, openness, and respect for others⁶³.

Clubs have played significant roles in the history of LGBTQI, Black⁶⁴ and Asian⁶⁵ communities in Britain and continue to provide safe spaces for these communities to gather and drive their sense of collective identity⁶⁶.

Dancing can support health and wellbeing on many levels. Dancing can be a fun and endorphin-releasing exercise⁶⁷. It’s found to have neurological benefits, improving attention span⁶⁸, cognition, memory⁶⁹ and problem solving. Dancing is recognised as staving off depression, reducing feelings of anger, helping individuals handle trauma and coping with anxiety⁷⁰.

Today, young people are drinking less and placing increased emphasis on fitness and wellbeing than previous generations. There are real benefits to wellbeing and esteem that clubs and dancing provide⁴².

Dancing is a sociable form of exercise and has been found to have psychological benefits for the elderly and individuals with Parkinson’s disease. It has been found to increase positive mood and alleviate feelings of fatigue⁷¹.

Music contributes to the economy of the city and is a part of many cultural activities in Bristol. Many people use music as a tool for improving mental and physical wellbeing, at all stages of their lives. Music can also provide many benefits to health and wellbeing⁷².



Chapter 11: Safety at night

Being out at night can present challenges and risks. These are not unique to Bristol and are faced by other cities across the UK.

According to data provided by Avon and Somerset Police for Bristol, for the three years 2020 to 2023⁷³:

- 3,332 assaults and public disorder incidents (day and night) in licensed premises and streets. 2,214 (66 percent) were between 6pm and 6am
- 4,344 sexual offences – 1,577 (36 percent) of which were between 6pm and 6am
- 617 drink spiking incidents – concentrated around the harbourside and city centre
- 3,942 alcohol related problems, in the city centre between 6pm and 6am

City-wide partners, including public, private and third sector organisations are committed to protecting our citizens and night time workforce, to make Bristol a safe and enjoyable place to be at night.

These partners work together to deliver several initiatives across the city.

11.1 Bristol Rules

Bristol Rules were developed with and for those who are out at night. The rules are a set of six principles to keep everyone safe:

1. **Out together home together** (Check in with your friends. If they look like they're struggling, it's time to act. Make sure you all get home safe, share your location, and look after one another.)
2. **Call it out** (Inappropriate behaviour, especially when it comes from your mates, needs to be called out. Be an active bystander; make sure your friends know what they're doing isn't OK.)

3. **Don't be a creep** (Put yourself in their shoes. They don't want you to tell them they're fit. If someone tells you they're not interested, they're not playing hard to get. And remember everyone's allowed to change their mind. Everyone should know that touching, grabbing, or groping someone without their consent is not okay, it's a criminal offence.)
4. **Respect everyone** (Our differences are what makes Bristol such a brilliant place. So regardless of how someone dresses, how they speak, what they look like, who they date or how they dance, leave them to it.)
5. **Keep away from the edge** (Don't be tempted to sit by the harbourside at night. Keep away from the edge and be extra careful near the water. Cold water shock makes getting out of the harbour even harder when you are intoxicated.)
6. **Take it easy** (Understanding the effects and risks of alcohol and other drugs is important. Read up; pace yourself; and remember it's OK to say no. The best nights are the ones you can remember.)

More information about Bristol Rules can be found on the [Bristol Nights website](#).

11.2 It's Not OK

Bristol Nights is providing training for night time economy businesses to try and put a stop to all kinds of harassment of women. A poster campaign throughout the city and night time venues is also encouraging Bristol citizens to 'call it out' and protect women in the city, as well as asking men to consider their behaviour towards women.

You can find out more about the campaign 'It's Not OK' on the [Bristol Nights website](#).

11.3 Women's Safety Charter

The rate of sexual offences in Bristol in 2022 to 2023 was 3.5 per 1,000 population, significantly higher than the national average of 3 per 1,000 population⁷⁴. Twenty-two percent of women have been sexually harassed or experienced unwanted sexual attention in the last year and 57 percent of young women aged 16 to 24⁷⁵. The Women's Safety Charter Toolkit aims to provide a framework for businesses to adopt a zero-tolerance approach towards all types of harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. The commitments outlined in the toolkit work towards improving safety after dark. In prioritising women's safety, there is an opportunity to create a plan for the safety of all communities who enjoy the city after dark.

You can read more about the Women's Safety Charter on the [Bristol Nights website](#).

11.4 Stop spiking

Spiking is the act of adding drugs, including alcohol, to people's drinks to try and influence their behaviour. A recent poll found that one in nine women and one in 17 men in the UK say they have been the victim of drink spiking, and one in three women and one in five men knew someone who had been a victim of drink spiking⁷⁶. Between 2016 and March 2021 there were 486 drink spiking incidents reported across the Avon and Somerset police area resulting in 27 arrests, and no perpetrators were taken to court for drink spiking⁷⁷. Whilst anyone could be vulnerable to being spiked, females and those aged 18 to 30 years are often targeted⁷⁶.

Since that analysis, Bristol has been a leader in developing tools to tackle spiking in the night time economy. The Stop Drink Spiking Procedure Guide is designed to help venue teams understand the physical and psychological threat posed by drink tampering, to spot suspicious activity and act when an incident may have occurred.

The guide can be found on the [Bristol Nights website](#), and you can also check out the [Drug and Alcohol Strategy for Bristol on the Bristol City Council website](#).

11.5 Thrive at Night

Thrive at Night provides mental health and wellbeing support to the Night Time Economy workforce in Bristol, through resources, training, peer support and trauma response support sessions, which can be found on the [Bristol Nights website](#).

11.6 Safeguarding training for taxi drivers

The council provides training for hackney carriage and private hire drivers to support their safety and that of their passengers. This training includes guidance for taxi drivers about child exploitation; women's safety, how to report child safeguarding concerns; where to find advice about adult protection; how to help someone having a mental health crisis; and conflict management. Go to the [Bristol City Council website](#) for more information on taxi safeguarding training.

11.7 Taxi cop

Bristol, along with South Gloucestershire Council jointly fund a ‘taxi cop’ whose focus is on public safety, ensuring drivers are conducting their work in accordance with licence conditions and their vehicles are safe. The officer also assists with traffic management at the many events that take place across the city and helps support drivers if they become victims of crime.

The [Avon and Somerset Police website](#) has more information about the taxi cop.

11.8 Purple Flag

Purple Flag is an international accreditation programme, that aims to help create safe and thriving locations at night for all users. Bristol is one of the original pioneers of Purple Flag, holding the accolade for 13 years and counting. The key to Bristol’s success is the partnership working which exists to make the Purple Flag area a good place to visit or live in. Over the years, the Purple Flag area in Bristol has been extended to be more inclusive and is the largest Purple Flag area in the country. Gaining, and retaining, the Purple Flag is confirmation that Bristol has a well-managed night time economy with each partner playing its part. The core standards of excellence by which the Purple Flag is measured are: wellbeing; movement and getting home safely; appeal – vibrancy and diversity; place – enjoyment during day and evening; after-hours policy in place.

You can find out more about the Purple Flag accreditation on the [Association of Town and City Management website](#).

Chapter 12: Designing the night

Over the past 15 years, cities across the world have recognised the significance of the night time economy and have been adopting a proactive approach to managing ‘the night’. Amsterdam appointed Mirik Milan as the world’s first ‘Night Mayor’ in 2012, and since that initiative more than 40 local governments and over 100 cities worldwide have established a night time office or advocacy role including Paris, New York, Sydney, Tokyo and more⁷⁸. The UK currently has several Night Time Economy Advisors, including Bristol, London, and Manchester, and 30 Night Time Economy ambassadors to help strengthen the night time economy⁷⁹.

Bristol City Council brings together city partners to collaborate on the needs of the city at night, through the Bristol Nights partnership. This involves multi-partner collaborations from Avon and Somerset Police, the universities, business improvement district, violence against women and girls groups, harm reduction specialists, and of course, the hundreds of businesses who operate at night, the creative sector, and the audiences.

The Purple Flag, an international accreditation programme, as described in [chapter 11](#), brings the city-wide partners together to deliver on the following core standards:

Wellbeing	Successful destinations are all safe and welcoming with all sectors playing their part in delivering high standards of customer care.
Movement	Getting home safely after an evening out is crucial, as is the ability to move around the centre with ease.
Appeal	Successful destinations offer a vibrant choice of leisure and entertainment for a diversity of ages, groups, lifestyles, and cultures.
Place	Successful areas are alive during the day, as well as in the evening. They contain a blend of overlapping activities that encourage people to mingle and enjoy the place. They reinforce the character and identity of the area as well as flair and imagination in urban design for the night.
The policy envelope	An after-hours policy that shows a clear strategy based on sound research, integrated public policy and a successful multi-sector partnership.

Chapter 13: Conclusions

With over 40 percent of Bristol employment being linked to the night time economy, it's importance cannot be ignored.

Those who work at night experience specific challenges regarding health opportunities and choices. They may be limited in healthy eating options, insufficient or poor-quality sleep, people may miss out on time with friends and family or social opportunities more broadly. Related to this, night or shift workers have demonstrably worse mental health and are exposed to physical health risks.

Of course, Bristol can be an exciting and vibrant place at night, contributing through culture and leisure to general wellbeing; and protecting health through medical, care, and emergency services.

However, those who work in the city at night may have fewer opportunities to enjoy the leisure activities that are available since they are doing their jobs. In addition, whilst younger age groups may make the most of what Bristol has to offer, younger people are also more likely to be employed on insecure contracts.

The night time economy in Bristol generates considerable revenue for businesses and drives the prosperity of the city, with annual spending likely to be upwards of £200 million. This is spread across a variety of different venues offering everything from rock to Shakespeare, and from Michelin star dining to street food.

In response, Bristol has become a national - if not, global - leader in understanding the importance of the night, taking bold action to address some of the risk and challenges by creating the Bristol Rules, piloting projects to address drink spiking and investing in initiatives to reduce harm from drugs including alcohol.

The scale and impact of the night time economy outlined in this report indicates the importance of creating safe, healthy environments and working conditions for those who work in and or otherwise inhabit the hours of darkness.

Chapter 14: Recommendations

Building on some excellent foundations, set out below are four priority themes and eight priority actions that this report recommends to the city and its partners to improve health and reduce inequality associated with the night.

Priority 1: Addressing physical and mental health risks and inequality for those working at night.

- Include night workers in Health Needs Assessments
- Use findings from the Health Needs Assessments to take action to improve health and address the health inequalities.

Priority 2: Ensuring good working conditions for those working at night.

- Employers and employer networks to consider issues raised in this report and to support the development of healthy work at night.
- Provide health and wellbeing training for night time workers and employers to protect and improve health.

Priority 3: Ensuring that the night time is safe for those who live and work after dark.

- Continue to develop and promote Bristol Rules and other initiatives in partnership with the night time workforce and customers; including wider preventing violence initiatives.
- Promote alcohol free zones and other drugs including alcohol harm reduction initiatives.

Priority 4: Develop an evidence-based approach to policy.

- Use the National Institute of Health and Care Research [Public Health Intervention Responsive Studies Teams](#) evaluation to take an evidence-based approach to policy and encourage further research in this area.
- Consider the night time workforce in wider strategies and policies.

Glossary of Terms

Night time economy (NTE) refers to activity that takes place between 6pm and 6am (ONS).

The Night-time Economy (NTE) is the broader night-time economy of activities and businesses that are driven by their night-time trade between 6pm and 6am. The Night-time Cultural Economy / NTCE is those parts of the NTE that are driven by cultural, artistic and event activity, and where alcohol, food etc., are secondary (Night Time Industries Association - NTIA).

Night time industry and industry groupings – Night time industries are industries in which an above average number of people work during the night (ONS). Including four night-time industry groupings - night-time cultural and leisure activities; activities which support night-time cultural and leisure activities; 24-hour health and personal social services; activities which support wider social and economic activities.

Night Life refers to ‘cultural and leisure’ social activities and entertainment options available in the evening or night (generally licensed trade), including pubs, and bars; nightclubs; concert, theatres, music and dance venues and restaurants.

Night time workers identified through the ONS Labour Force Survey and are people who "usually" work during the evening and/or during the night (irrespective of whether they also work during the day).

Low pay – defined by ONS as less than two-thirds of the median hourly pay.

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