



Safer Street 4: Violence Against Women and Girls and the Night-Time Economy in Telford and Wrekin

Research Report

**Prof. Elaine Arnull, Dr Mahuya Kanjilal and Dr Nazanin Khasteganan
January 2024**

Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Research team.....	3
Executive summary	4
Summary of Methods and Ethics	5
Introduction.....	8
Systematic Review.....	15
Policing Best Practices.....	22
Women and Girls in Wellington’s perception of the NTE in Telford	26
Next steps	44
References.....	47

Acknowledgments

This report represents the result of a collaborative research project undertaken in partnership with local authority officials, West Mercia Police, and engaged community participants. We extend our sincere gratitude to the following individuals and organisations for their invaluable contributions and support:

Jas Bedesha (Service Delivery Manager, Safer Stronger Communities, Telford and Wrekin Council)

Hannah Cooper (Service Manager, Purple Leaf)

Jodie Davis (Inspector, West Mercia Police)

Carl Philips (Commercial Manager, Neighbourhood & Enforcement Services, Telford & Wrekin Council)

We would also like to acknowledge the Night-Time economy task force officers, Emma Lister-Trowell, Haze Powell and Ross Williams, who supported us in conducting night-time participatory workshops and surveys. We express our gratitude to the owners of various venues for their cooperation in facilitating our workshops.

Last but not least, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the participants who generously shared their experiences and insights during the workshops. Your contributions were instrumental in shaping the outcomes of this research project.

This collaboration and support have been instrumental in the success of this project, we hope to grow these partnerships for making our communities safer and stronger.

Research team

Prof Elaine Arnull, Principal Investigator

Elaine is a Professor of Social Work and Associate Dean at the University of Wolverhampton and Professor Strategic for the Faculty of Education, Health and Wellbeing. She is Visiting Professor, Queensland University of Technology, Australia. Elaine is appointed to Social Work England's National Roundtable on Workforce and the Social Work Education and Training Advisory Forum and the Ministry of Justice, Advisory Panel on Probation Learning. In 2021 she led 32 international scholars and 5 senior professionals to present evidence at the United Nations 65th Commission on the Status of Women for the second time, having also done so at CSW63 in 2019. Chair (and previously Vice Chair) of the American Society of Criminology, Division of Women and Crime (2018-21). She was an academic Advisor to the Youth Justice Board, 2013-18. Elaine received the Global Scholar Award for the Institute for Research on Women, Rutgers University, USA, 2016. She has an established, international publication and research profile and is on the editorial board of *Feminist Criminology*. She has led numerous funded research projects and is passionate about ensuring the voice of communities and individuals with lived experience is represented and impacts policy and practice.

Dr Mahuya Kanjilal, Co-Investigator

Dr Mahuya Kanjilal is Postgraduate research tutor and senior lecturer in the School of Society and Community at the University of Wolverhampton. She primarily is a social researcher specialising in community participatory research with minority ethnic communities in the UK. She brings back the research examples in classrooms to teach research methods. Her research interests include social care issues related to ethnic minority communities, migration, domestic abuse, dementia, and community participation. She is an expert in using different research methods such as community action research, peer research, ethnography and mixed methods. She has delivered research for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and social service providers for the last decade. Mahuya has a growing international publication and research profile and also uses digital platforms to disseminate her research in accessible formats such as videos and documentary films for those who do not engage with academic research reports.

Dr Nazanin Khasteganan, Co-investigator

Dr Nazanin Khasteganan is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Society and Community at the University of Wolverhampton. She specialises in systematic reviews and rapid reviews and is well published in this area with a growing body of international research publications. Her work to date includes developing our understanding of sexual violence.

Executive Summary

How this study helps Telford and Wrekin

- The qualitative research that is Telford specific shows how the effects of exploitation and grooming have spread into the wider community in Telford and led to a sense for women and girls that there is ‘no safe space’.
- Taxis are not trusted as forms of transport and this should be addressed.
- Women and girls trust to themselves and one another more than paid public services to keep them safe.
- We consider it is possible to look at developing ways of enabling and supporting women and girls to do this in Telford and commission some new and specific interventions. We would welcome discussing possible pilot schemes and have made suggestions in the separate Executive Summary.
- We have, with the community members, created a more inclusive definition of the NTE which should be considered and could be adopted by T&W partners.

How this study contributes to what is known about addressing VAWG in the NTE

- Systematic review brings together all known published international research on effective interventions to address Violence Against Women and Girls in the Night-Time Economy.
- Identifies what are internationally considered best known practices.
- Highlights what options are for Telford building on the international research findings.
- Reviews best national and international policing practices
- Clear indication of what West Mercia police can do
- How other partners in Telford and Wrekin can support best policing practices.
- The further analysis and refinement of the population study gives a clearer indication of what people, especially women and girls are thinking about their safety in the area.

There is a separate, freestanding Executive Summary which summarises methods, ethics, key findings and includes recommendations.

Summary of Methods and Ethics

Methods: We adopted a mixed methods approach using a range of data collection tools to address the main objectives of this study. The enquiry was guided by interpretivist epistemology where we gathered information about the safety of women and girls in the community to get a wider perspective of women and girls safety in the night time economy (NTE).

A broad view of the NTE was adopted in order to maximise recording experiences of all women and girls using NTE and we discuss the construction of a more inclusive definition which we propose can be usefully employed within the region and beyond.

The research team adopted a mixed methods approach utilising: a systematic review; an empirical, qualitative enquiry; secondary data collection for identifying best policing practices and the examination of two Safety Matters surveys of pre (2021) and post (2023) Safer Street 4 project and these were analysed and linked with the participatory workshop findings to merge the results in a more meaningful way.

The methods employed are discussed in more detail in each specific area.

Ethics: This study received ethical approval from the Social Work and Social care Ethics Committee of the University of Wolverhampton. Ethical standards were maintained throughout the research process, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, maintaining confidentiality, and safeguarding their identities. Participation was entirely voluntary, with participants providing informed consent based on the information provided. Additionally, participants had the option to withdraw from the workshop without showing any reason. No personal data collected during the workshops and participants were identified as speaker or participant in the report.

Introduction

This research was funded as part of the Home Office Safer Streets 4 project and undertaken in liaison with and the support of Telford and Wrekin Council and West Mercia Police, both of whom we worked with closely and to whom we are grateful for their support. Safer Streets 4 funding is part of an ongoing Home Office series of projects launched in January 2020. The government report that to date, in all four rounds over 270 projects have been supported with the aim of impacting positively on the levels of neighbourhood crime, violence against women and girls and improving public perceptions of the police. In total, ‘police and crime commissioners and local authorities in England and Wales, the British Transport Police and eligible civil society organisations have received £120 million in total across 4 rounds of the fund.’ (Home Office 11 January 2023)

This research study used a mixed methods approach that included:

- a review of best policing practices when tackling violence against women and girls (VAWG) in the night-time economy (NTE)
- a review of a previous area wide VAWG survey, consultation on the construction of a follow-up survey and reporting of those findings alongside other research findings
- a systematic review of research evidence related to VAWG in the NTE
- workshops undertaken with women and girls living, working, studying or using Wellington
- structured observations undertaken with women and girls living, working, studying or using Wellington.

To undertake the qualitative research (workshops and structured observations) and define the discussion of NTE for this study we undertook a number of consultations with members of the community, attended a public meeting at a School and talked with partner organisations. Telford and Wrekin is ethnically diverse and includes urban, semi-urban and rural areas. Race and ethnicity were factors noted in the grooming and exploitation which took place in the area with many of those involved in the grooming and exploitation being South Asian men and the women and girls who were exploited and abused most frequently white, working-class women and girls. These elements have been exploited by the political far-right, seeking to ignite race based and racist responses. For all of these reasons we and those with whom we were collaborating considered it critical to involve community voices in shaping what women and girls living in Telford understood by the term the night-time economy (NTE). The aim was that we would shape a sense of the NTE as an inclusive term with which all women and girls in the region would be able to identify. Drawing on the discussions we adopted a broad view of VAWG in the NTE that sought to encapsulate all women and girls in the area regardless of age, social and financial wealth and capital, race and ethnicity. We discuss this in more detail later in the report.

The use of mixed methods has been recommended as an effective approach to studying NTE’s:

‘A mixed-methods approach may be adopted within a specific research project ...which combines patron and community surveys, informant interviews, on-site venue observations, and official records from the emergency services.’ (Philpota et al, 2019; 62):

Our study involves all these methods apart from official records from the emergency services, although moving forward we hope future work will include these methods. Additionally, Philpota et al (2019: 61) highlight the importance of ‘non-participatory observational approaches’ such as those included in this study and note they ‘...are surprisingly underutilized across the social sciences.’ We would like to acknowledge the considerable support we received from the Council’s NTE Team and from the police in enabling, facilitating and supporting these non-participatory observational approaches; we could not have achieved this without them. Our findings are reported in a final report, a systematic review and separate academic papers focus on different aspects of the findings.

Background

Working together as recommended in the IITCSE (2022) Telford and Wrekin Council and West Mercia Police have taken the opportunity to focus on violence against women and girls (VAWG) in Wellington in the NTE, to support this research and undertake the broader Safer Streets 4 project. Working collaboratively, the aim was to address fear that women and girls felt in the area about the NTE and introduce projects that would make them feel safer. Our role was to work with women and girls in the local community to get an in-depth sense of how feeling safe and unsafe manifested in women and girl's lives, in order to inform both this project and future work in the region.

This work is a priority for the Council and police and for the people of Telford and Wrekin, as people who live and work in the area are painfully and acutely aware that their region was the subject of a recent public inquiry related to the sexual exploitation and grooming of women and girls with long-term and generational impacts. The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Telford and Wrekin (IICTSE 2022) is extremely detailed and long; for example, the Executive Summary and recommendations extend to some 130 pages and the whole inquiry extends into four volumes. In essence however the report focusses on individual experiences of childhood sexual exploitation, how children and adults who raised concerns were not listened to, how and by whom children were blamed and held responsible for their behaviour, whilst the fact that they were being exploited, abused and raped by adult men went largely ignored and/or unexplored:

‘There can be no doubt on the evidence I have seen that the signs of CSE were apparent to anyone prepared to recognise them during this period. However, while some individuals plainly recognised the problem, the structures in place did not serve victims of CSE well.’
(IITCSE 2022: Point 71 Page 15)

The inquiry sought to address how and why the concerns that were routinely raised by families and children seeking help and advice, medical and other services were not responded to. It is also an attempt to hold key organisations to account and put in place structures which will mitigate against the recurrence of such failures. Thus whilst the inquiry and the events that led to it do not form a direct part of this research or project, there are very particular aspects about feeling safe and unsafe which have ‘spilled out’ beyond those who were immediately victimised. Events identified in the Inquiry (IITCSE, 2022) were related to organised, criminal activities frequently perpetrated through some taxi companies and taxi drivers, take-aways, and elements of the NTE; this led to grooming and exploitation by gangs and organised crime and it is those elements of the community and NTE that are frequently referred to by women and girls as those which make them feel unsafe and where trust is a particular matter for concern. As a result there remains work to do within this community as all of the groups we interviewed or observed said there were ‘no safe spaces’ and this points to the importance of the work being done as part of this and other projects to tackle those concerns.

VAWG is not centred on, or peculiar to, Telford and Wrekin however and is unfortunately a fact of life in almost all, if not all, societies, and regions in the world (UN Women). In the UK approximately two women are killed in their own homes by their husband, partner or male

family member every week and 89% of all women killed are killed by a man (BBC, 2022). On the streets and in public spaces violence against women includes rape, assault, name calling and harassment and is shown to be ubiquitous in women and girls' lives (BBC, 2022). Whilst VAWG has come to greater prominence in public debate (e.g. #metoo; Everyday Sexism Project) just 5% of rapes lead to prosecution and conviction in UK (Victims Commissioner 2022). VAWG is also mediated and frequently exacerbated by other structural and discriminatory factors, such as racism, sexuality, identity, disability and poverty (UN Women).

Night-time Economies and Women and Girls

Night-time economies (NTE) are most commonly taken to mean public spaces, or private spaces available to the public (such as bars, clubs, restaurants), at night or after dark. The Greater London Authority (2017) however says there is no standard definition of the NTE and Haleem et al (2021:338) referencing others, suggest they frequently encompass the 'provision of goods, services and experiences (Furedi 2016)' including 'pubs, restaurants, clubs, cinemas, theatres and cultural festivals/events (van Liempt et al. 2015).' The wording NTE therefore is frequently taken to suggest leisure, cultural and social events that take place in public spaces or private spaces made available to the public for those purposes. Wrapped up in the notion of what people hear when the words NTE are used however, is often a sense of it being a place where alcohol and other drugs (AOD) are also prevalent, and this is true of the many research studies which look at NTE that largely feature pubs, bars and clubs and streets and/or the areas in which they are situated. However, as the various definitions cited show, the NTE is somewhere that might include restaurants, libraries, cinemas, places of worship, places of work or education, people gathering together, sports halls and gyms all when used after dusk and before dawn.

The NTE and AOD are frequently studied together, and numerous international research reports show a direct relationship between the length of opening times of venues selling alcohol in the NTE and the number of violent incidents recorded by police or health providers, (see for example the systematic review by Stockwell and Chikritzhs, 2009). There is therefore the proliferation of the view that the NTE is a place for delinquent or problematic behaviour, where violence and abuse occur. Despite this, the substantial body of international research on the NTE has focussed less on gender and the impacts on women and girls or VAWG which makes this current research project particularly valuable. In order to move about after dusk and use the NTE women and girls employ strategies which seek to balance risk, enhance their own safety and enable their pursuit of leisure and pleasure-seeking (Arnull & Ryder 2019; Vera-Grey & Kelly 2018). This therefore creates a gendered, situated context of pleasure-seeking, leisureed-enjoyment and the exercise of personal freedom and it is vital to understand how women and girls' go about this to ensure a more equal access to public spaces, mobility and the pursuit of pleasure, leisure, and freedom. These concerns have informed government policy with initiatives such as 'Enough' (2022), with the Home Secretary, National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing (HMICFRS) recommending:

‘...action to make sure different agencies, including the police, health and education, are working together effectively to tackle violence against women and girls’ (HM Government Press Release 1 March 2022).

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, in a press release for the 'Enough' campaign in March 2022 said:

‘For too long, the responsibility of keeping safe has been placed on the shoulders of women and girls. This campaign says enough, and recognises it is on all of us to demand major societal change. Everyone has a stake in this.’

Proposing an Inclusive Definition of the Night-time Economy

Alcohol and other drug use (AOD) by women and girls was not included as a feature of this research because it is not integral to the NTE. However, we quickly found that because it is frequently portrayed this way it was an important part of the narrative backdrop to any study which takes place in this setting and wishes to engage a diverse group of women and girls. The impact is that some women and girls immediately feel excluded from the discussion and from the NTE because they assume it is linked with AOD, or problematic, or delinquent, behaviour. Equally, others seek to exclude themselves because of concerns that if they engage, they may be perceived by others as linked to AOD or behaviour which is not condoned by their family, friends or community. These were concerns raised directly and indirectly with us, by some women in Telford and Wrekin very early on in the research process. As a result, we conclude it is very important that we think about the perception of NTEs by women and girls and how they consider it would, or would not, be a suitable place for them to be, or how they engage with their families, communities or others constructs and boundaries for their engagement. We recognise that for many women and girls AOD plays no part in their lives, but they use and/or wish to use the NTE. It is for this reason and in consultation with key actors we discussed, constructed and drew on the broadest definition of the NTE possible in order to ensure a definition that is inclusive and open to all women and girls. A result of this study we have arrived at **a more inclusive definition of the NTE** which is applicable to Telford and Wrekin, but could also apply at a national and international level. It is a definition which takes account of gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, ability and age. It is a definition that we found when using it for this research spoke most to women and girls about their concerns about moving around dusk until dawn and their use of spaces and facilities during this time:

A NTE is real (not virtual), it is geographical and spatial, it takes place between dusk and dawn in a public space (or private space designated as public for that period/activity), may involve going to and from work, education, to the gym, swimming pool or other sports activity, mosque/church/synagogue/temple/faith centre, out for dinner, to the cinema, theatre, or library, to the pub or a club, simply gather with others, be at work or education, or just enjoy some time to do something pleasurable whilst at leisure.

Night-time Economies and What Works

The NTE literature is large and international. As noted above it is frequently not gendered and it is often focused on alcohol and other drug use and delinquent, criminal and violent behaviour in public spaces as the literature reviewed below will demonstrate. The literature is largely criminological, focussed on public policy or health related; the definitions of the NTE to date have rarely been inclusive. In this section we draw on a review completed of 22 articles identified as part of the systematic review of literature but rejected for not including a consideration of gender and the NTE. As a collection of literature regarding effective interventions in the NTE however, they are relevant in terms of the overall scope of this research and thus are reported on here to provide the background context.

In 2003 Maguire and Nettleton published good practice recommendations for the Home Office and there have been numerous studies since then. Commonly highlighted measures (see for example, Jones et al. 2010 systematic review) are:

- reduced time limits for alcohol sales
- reduced movement between venues selling alcohol after given periods
- control of alcohol sales
- training of staff – for example those who work behind bars or as door staff
- good lighting
- increased surveillance / policing / guardians
- better use of data re harms
- shared use of data between organisations to reduce harms
- cost-effectiveness of community based interventions which aim to avert harms

The control of the hours available for the drinking of alcohol has been much studied within the NTE and this includes a number of systematic reviews. The evidence appears overwhelming that limiting opening hours reduces assault/violence – particularly amongst men. A quasi-experimental study by Kypri et al (2010: 307) was consistent with other studies showing that restricted opening hours, alongside other measures, such as more well-trained staff, responsibilities being enforced around the sale of alcohol serving/consumption/support led to reduced assaults and violent incidents. They concluded that:

‘The principal finding is consistent with the primary hypothesis, i.e. the restriction in closing time appears to have produced a reduction in assault incidence against a backdrop of a stable trend in the control area...There does not appear to have been geographic displacement...’.

Because the studies on opening hours/availability of alcohol in the NTE almost never include gender or specify gendered effects we cannot draw conclusions about the impact on women, nor whether the restriction of opening hours has any impact on violence that extends beyond the NTE, for example domestic violence or violence within the home or family once people arrive home, for example; the value in the shared use of data which we will consider later could consider these effects. The one study on opening hours/availability of alcohol and violence in the NTE that did include gender, Duailibi et al (2007) in Brazil, found that closing bars at 11pm had a statistically significant effect on violence/murders but not on VAWG in NTE.

McGuire et al., (2021) undertook a systematic review whose key question was: ‘what strategies and interventions through policing, or in combination with other agencies, can reduce crime and increase public safety in the night-time economy (NTE)?’. Sadly, this systematic review never specifically talks about VAWG, but does include some important pieces of information regarding VAWG – namely that follow up work:

‘...proved to be particularly effective in reducing overall NTE incidents but also led to several more serious crimes (including rape) being solved and perpetrators brought to justice.’ (McGuire et al (2021: 55)

And:

‘As briefly mentioned earlier, for example, while there is evidence that the NTE is also a conduit for other types of criminality such as sex trafficking, no empirical studies were located that indicated how this could be addressed as part of NTE policing.’

Similarly, they highlight that a study from Australia (Navarro et al, 2013) found that a using a control method of research with two quasi-experimental sites using a coordinated programme involving police, local councils, local media and licensees, the research showed the work led to ‘...a statistically significant reduction of 64% in sexual assaults ...’ in one location and to a reduction ‘...of 19% in other assaults ...’ with a cost-benefit analysis showing ‘...the reduction in sexual assaults led to a saving of AU \$3.9 million during the study period and a benefit-cost ratio of 22:1’ (McGuire et al (2021: 47).

Stockwell and Chikritzhs (2009) systematic review also did not consider gender or VAWG but looked at a total of 49 unique studies which met their inclusion criteria of which only 14 included baseline and control measures and were peer-reviewed. Their findings concluded that extended opening hours of pubs and clubs may increase violence. In a review which looked rather at the restriction of trading hours, Atkinson et al. (2018) found that the late-night trading hours of licensed venues and off-licences were the key determinant of the rates of alcohol-related harms. The particular level of change was strongest for off-licences. This finding may be useful as the restriction in time is low – i.e. closing at 10pm rather than 11pm and thus before people leave other licensed premises such as pubs and clubs. In Glasgow Forsyth, (2008) found that swapping plastic drinking vessels for glass ones, particularly in entertainment and dance venues reduced the number of injuries suggesting the potential for a substantial increase in public safety.

Droste, Miller and Baker (2014) used a systematic review methodology to bring together data from eight different international research studies, seven of which were drawn from the UK. They found that data sharing around emergency room access and physical injury can be an effective violence reduction strategy and can show where harms occur which could allow for the targeting of responses and interventions. They acknowledged however, that increased surveillance, whether by people, technology-facilitated or data based, brings with it increased community concerns as it allows for the profiling of areas/communities and/or people if not anonymised and the value in such data often relies on it not being anonymised.

Hauritz et al. (1998:6) found that good community-based practices were effective for reducing violence/poor behaviour in the NTE. These included: ‘...the formation of a steering committee; the conduct of a community forum; the employment of a project officer; the formation of task groups ...; the conduct of a safety audit; and the development of a Code of Practice’. Using a different, quantitative research methodology but also in Australia, Doran et al’s (2021) study

focused principally on men but found that a cost benefit analysis of community based NTE evaluations showed they reduced or averted harms such as assault and sexual assault and could be measured using quantitative, cost-based methods. Quigg et al (2018) found that community-based education and training of door and bar staff and other key actors in the NTE led to a reduction in drinks being served to drunk participants; they also found that female staff were more likely to refuse to serve inebriated customers.

Street lighting forms a key action in many Safer Streets initiatives and of many of the NTE evaluations and research reports. In a 2008 systematic review Welsh and Farrington found that improved street lighting significantly reduced crime and did so more effectively in the UK than in the United States. The impact however was not to reduce night-time crime to the level of daytime crimes. They concluded that improved street lighting should be used to prevent crime in public areas and in an earlier systematic review concluded that in terms of surveillance and harm ‘...improved street lighting has few negative effects and clear benefits for law-abiding citizens.’ (Farrington and Welsh 2002: 340).

A number of studies consider guardianship and other forms of paid for, low level support or intervention in the NTE. It must be said that theoretically many criminologists raise some concern about this type of intervention (Johns et al 2019; van Steeden, 2018) which they consider replaces traditional policing models. Salmi, Groönroos, and Keskinen (2004:590) in Finland concluded that police visibility was always mentioned in discussions about safety and the NTE and argued that ‘...every policeman can step out of his (her) car every now and then and take a walk. No extra financial resources are needed, just the motivation to do so.’ The evaluation of paid, or informal, community-based support may be an area worthy of further consideration and study in Telford although most studies do not address the gendered nature of support, although their data often shows a gendered pattern of support take-up. For example, although their data shows that most respondents are female and often young women or students the studies do not comment on this in their conclusions. Given the nature of concerns which women and girls raise in Telford, we suggest community-based harm reduction measures in the NTE may be an important part of a wider package useful to the region. Thus, Johns et al’s (2019) considered the deployment of street pastors in Wales who offered street and faith-based support in the NTE and along with van Steeden (2018) concluded there was no absolute evidence to indicate effectiveness. However, the study showed that pastors offered support to ‘softer targets’, hence we conclude the preponderance of women helped, (although the authors do not comment on this) and therefore the pastors probably did offer some people a ‘safe’ space. The indication of Johns et al’s (2019) findings is therefore that guardians or street pastors may offer something in a package of overall harm reduction and support in the NTE.

The role of others as a protective factor in the NTE was also considered by Philpota et al (2019: 60) who found that bystanders were important to intervening in and de-escalating conflict in the NTE. Their review of a studies that included reviews of CCTV and video evidence showed that the role of groups in de-escalating conflict was important and contrary to commonly understood narratives and practices. They found over three quarters of all bystander actions were de-escalatory in nature with third-party active players largely seeking to regulate NTE fights with the likelihood of bystander victimization remaining fairly low and principally related to their group relationship with the defended victim. They suggested police and others responsible for conflict de-escalation should review their practices in the light of these findings:

‘...CCTV footage evidences that a notable amount of NTE violence is ‘policed’ by the public groups themselves Hence, police efforts to restore public order through the dispersion of groups may have an adverse effect, if these group processes of self-policing are unnecessarily disturbed ...’

Other studies such as Roberts (2022) about women and girls moving around after dark found the presence of others was important to female students’ sense of safety when moving about campuses and that it was particularly important to encourage footfall after dark ‘...so students, particularly women, feel safe to walk in areas when they are without their fellow students/friends.’ (Roberts 2022:21). The finding is relevant as Telford has two universities campuses within its area, both in reasonably remote, quite rural locations, but also more generally for the female population. Roberts also found that

‘Women students particularly adopted their own protective strategies, such as walking with someone so that they can use the campuses with some perceived sense of safety. Women students also adopted avoidance strategies, avoiding the campuses in the dark, thereby limiting their study-hours on-campus.’ (2022: 24 and 25).

For women and girls visibility (including good lighting and well-managed public spaces) and the presence of other people (particularly other women and girls) is strongly linked to their sense of safety and consistently noted in international research studies.

Systematic Review

Effective Interventions for Reducing and Preventing Violence Against Women and Girls in the Night-time Economy

Included in the research design was a systematic literature review with the aim of investigating effective interventions for reducing violence against women and girls in the night-time economy. The systematic literature review was conducted following the Cochrane guidelines. The eligibility criteria allowed for various study designs and considered interventions such as education, legal measures, law enforcement, training programs, and community initiatives. The researchers searched multiple databases, employed citation searching, and reviewed relevant websites without language or location restrictions.

The search strategy involved combining key concepts related to interventions, outcomes, and participants. The study selection process used the Covidence platform, with initial screening of titles and abstracts, followed by a detailed assessment of full-text articles against the eligibility criteria. A PRISMA flow diagram visually summarized the screening process.

Eligibility criteria for the study selection included participants of all genders aged 15 and older, any interventions aimed at reducing violence against women and girls in the night-time economy, with or without comparison or control conditions. Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method studies were considered.

Data extraction involved collecting information from each included study, including reference details, study focus, type/methodology, population/data sources, intervention descriptions, and reported outcomes. The quality of research was evaluated using the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool, with findings in the systematic review considering the risk of bias in individual studies. Due to limited quantitative evidence, the study synthesized findings narratively, drawing conclusions based on this synthesis. Out of 3,122 retrieved articles, 14 studies met the inclusion criteria after full-text screening, as illustrated in Figure 1 of the systematic review flow diagram:

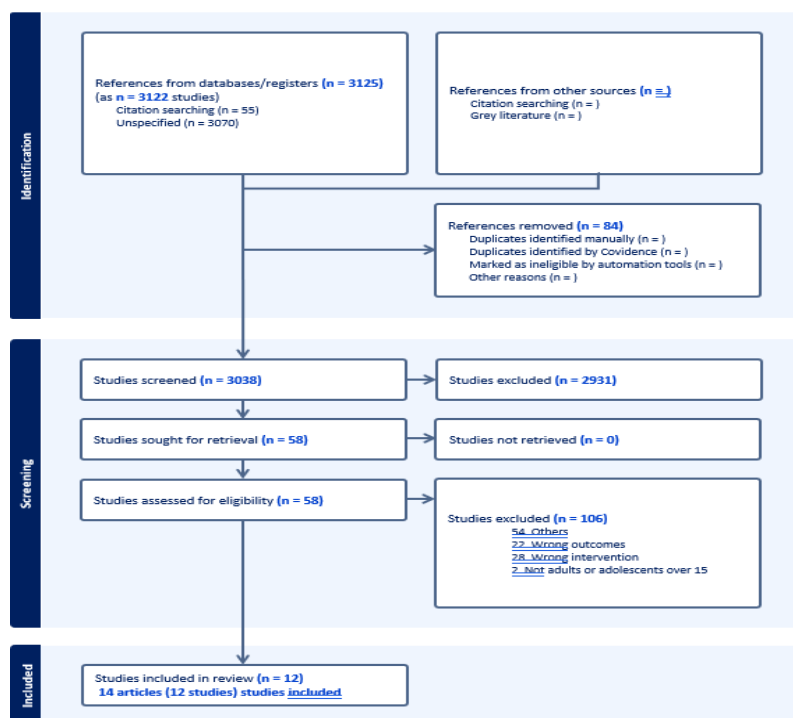


Figure. 1 Systematic review flow diagram: the PRISMA flow diagram for the systematic review detailing the database searches, the number of abstracts screened and the full texts retrieved

The findings identified that the most effective interventions:

- create a gender-aware environment in bars/clubs/venues enforced by staff
- include training and raise the awareness of licensees and other staff
- reduce factors contributing to harassment
- ensure aggression is reduced in venues by creating an environment in which male social identity issues and gendered dynamics are ‘dialled down’
- ensure the consistent removal of troublesome, male patrons
- ensure consistent enforcement of id at door policy to ensure banned patrons do not gain entry/re-entry
- reduce alcohol consumption within venues, e.g., not serving drunk patrons
- support available and accessible, particularly informal, ‘soft’ support
- enable women and girls own gendered actions and safety strategizing.

Creating a gender aware environment in which staff understand how the harassment of female patrons occurs and can be prevented, reducing the drunkenness, particularly of male patrons, removing male patrons who harass women and ensuring the enforcement of these policies (from door id policies, to not serving drunk patrons and not tolerating aggression and harassment) are all findings which repeatedly occur within the literature.

The literature also shows that internationally women and girls fears for their safety within the NTE limits their freedom and ability to use the NTE equally. Two of the studies showed how male perpetrators of sexual harassment and abuse are clearly able to identify the behaviours they individually and collectively used to victimise, harass, and assault women and girls. Women and girls, and some men, identified behaviours they individually and collectively used to try and minimise perpetrators opportunities for causing harm.

A Canadian study undertaken by Keane in 1998 sought to deepen our understanding of how women adapt their daily routines to minimise their fear of crime in specific environments. Their methods involved the use of secondary data analysis from a national survey of Canadian women. The study focused on women aged 18 and older and utilized two measures of fear: fear of walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark (indicative of fear in proximate environments) and fear of walking alone to a car in a parking garage (indicative of fear in more public domains). The intervention considered was the reduction of fear. The findings of the article suggest that fear likely constrains women's mobility within their surroundings, and if crime was addressed it is plausible it would afford women greater freedom and choices in their lifestyles, fostering increased independence and empowerment. This study is interesting and directly relevant to concerns in Telford. The methods could be replicated in Telford to understand more about the NTE restrictions on women.

Bharucha, & Khatri, (2018) in India undertook a mixed method study that included a structured questionnaire and in-depth Interviews/Reflections/Observations with 300 employed women, aged 18 to 38, in Mumbai. The study reported on the views of 227 women who identified six key themes, including perceptions of safety, feeling safe whilst using public transport, personal safety violations, and police interactions. 91% of women expressed frequent safety concerns outside their homes and nearly all women reported experiencing safety threats in the city. Factors that contributed to harassment were seen to include the patriarchal structures, inadequate police action, easy access to pornography, and women's own learnt tolerance towards male harassment and aggression. Recommendations for creating a safer public night-environment included creating gender-friendly environments, reducing male alcohol consumption in bars, improving lighting, improved public spaces, effective police support, and functional helplines.

A study aimed at understanding if and how harm minimisation messages are received was conducted in the USA in 2009 by Labrie, Migliuri, and Cail. Using a pilot randomized control trial approach, they allocated university students celebrating 21st birthdays to either receive an alcohol risk-reduction birthday card or to a no-card condition and followed up with post-birthday surveys to evaluate outcomes. A total of 81 students (28 males, 53 females) completed post-21st birthday surveys, and of these, 74 reported alcohol consumption during their 21st birthday celebrations and were included in the analysis. Those who received the birthday card, containing advice on safe drinking, exhibited a noteworthy reduction in the number of drinks consumed compared to those who did not receive the card (a 23.4% reduction for males and a 40.2% reduction for females). This reduction was also reflected in their blood alcohol levels. The study suggests therefore that harm minimisation measures may be effective (particularly with women) and especially if monitored and followed up. This may be relevant as part of package of harm-minimisation and public health measures related to the NTE.

Garius et al.'s (2020) study in the UK used a mixed-methods approach to measure the impact of the "Drinkaware Crew" initiative, including police crime data, observations and interviews, to evaluate its feasibility in a festival context. The study was inconclusive overall, but the findings indicated the importance of the Crew's approachability and triage service which added value to festivals, thus adding to the body of knowledge emerging around the importance of informal, or 'soft' support within the NTE.

In 2018, Zhou et al. conducted a quantitative cross-sectional survey in Australia with the aim of investigating the relationship between the use of safety strategies and incidents of violence

among patrons in night-time entertainment districts. The research was carried out in two regional Australian cities, within licensed venues located in the main entertainment precincts. A total of 3949 participants, predominantly male (54.4%) with a median age of 23, were interviewed during peak trading hours on Friday and Saturday nights. Participants were queried about their safety-related strategies, which were categorized into various types, including staying with friends and avoiding trouble. The study's findings revealed that employing multiple safety strategies was associated with a reduced likelihood of being involved in violent incidents, with observed differences in safety strategy use based on gender and location:

‘In line with previous research, our results indicate that female patrons were significantly more likely to report adopting one or more safety-related strategies when in the night-time environment. Overall, the majority of female participants reported that ‘always staying with friends’ was the most adopted strategy, with three-quarters of female patrons reporting using this behavioural strategy. (Zhou et al 20 : page 345).

They considered their findings in line with other studies suggested drinkers (particularly women) ‘typically rely on safety strategies that are social rather than personal in nature...’ with a ‘...culture of helping’ one another to create a safer night-time environment. They noted that in prior research they had found ‘...nightclub patrons were willing to intervene with their group in order to protect them against harmful consequences of drinking.’ Zhou et al.’s (2019) study underscores the significance of safety strategies used to mitigate alcohol-related harms, particularly violence, in the NTE.

Numerous international studies consider the NTE, harassment and sexual violence in those settings and their findings point in similar directions which could be implemented, and to a greater or lesser extent are already in existence, in Telford’s NTE. They are both therefore worthy of replicating in some detail and would be worth Telford and the police considering their NTE measures against the recommendations which have emerged.

One such study from Canada was undertaken by Graham et al. who reported in two papers, one in 2011 and one in 2013. The study in Canada examined bar room aggression in order to understand what motivates and drives it in this setting, to investigate if there were gender differences, assess motivation, the range of responses and their correlation with the severity of aggression. Their research methods included the review and analysis of 844 narrative descriptions of aggressive incidents observed in large late-night drinking venues. Trained coders assessed each motive for the 1,507 bar patrons involved in aggressive acts. The study found women were more likely to be motivated by compliance and grievance, the latter usually as the result of unwanted and persistent male harassment. They found men were principally motivated by social identity concerns which meant how they and their advances/harassment were perceived by themselves and others around them. The researchers described as ‘excitement’ male levels of self-perception and social identity and these potentially being heightened by the atmosphere in the venue, friends/other patrons and AOD. The research found that aggressive incidents that escalated were frequently motivated by social-identity concerns (male) or grievance (female), with identity-related, male motivation being strongly associated with more severe forms of aggression. The findings underscore the significance of developing strategies to prevent serious aggression, especially by addressing identity concerns and defusing grievances. Such strategies could encompass staff training, the setting of clear expectations and norms for behaviour, ‘dialling down’ hyper-masculinity in venues and the

implementation of effective crowd management techniques in bar settings. Graham et al. (2011:56) said:

‘Knowledge of motives for barroom aggression has implications for management and policy of drinking establishments, including structure of the physical and social environment as well as hiring, training and management of staff. From an environmental perspective, grievance-motivated aggression might be prevented by thoughtful design of the physical structure and location of activities, efficient and well-organised services and reasonable and respectful policies. Aggression related to compliance, fun/excitement and social identity might be prevented by strategies, such as establishing norms for acceptable behaviour, early intervention and by banning persistent trouble-makers ...’

In a qualitative study in Liverpool in the UK, Gunby et al. (2020) sought to understand sexual harassment, the strategies women employed to handle these unsought behaviours, and how these encounters influence gender dynamics in the NTE. Research methods included a publicity and prevention campaign aimed at educating individuals aged 18 to 24 about the legal implications of unwanted sexual touching in Liverpool's nightlife venues, focus groups with young men aged 18-24 who were students and used the NTE since the prevention campaign targeted them, and interviews with 31 female students all studying law at a specific university in Liverpool. The research successfully engaged male perpetrators of harassment, unwanted touching and sexual assault and female victims. It found women employed a range of strategies to navigate and cope with unwanted male attention, harassment, assault, and abuse which shed light on the roles of social norms, gender dynamics, and the need for supportive measures to address and prevent such harassment. Key findings identified the nature of unwanted attention, the role of men and male friends, solidarity among women, women reclaiming agency, and victims concerns about the absence of formal recourse mechanisms. Recommendations suggest publicity campaigns can be effective in raising awareness amongst perpetrators and victims and can empower victims, it flagged the importance of others as bystanders and the need for venues to be gender-aware and informed and to offer forms of support for women victimised by harassment, assault and abuse in the NTE.

Gómez, Avilés, and Benítez conducted a study in Spain in 2021, similarly, to investigate the factors related to sexual violence against young women in the country's night-time economy and establish whether there was, or was not, a relationship between sexual violence and the alcohol use of male perpetrators or female victims. The research was conducted using interviews with young people who frequented nightlife spaces. Study participants consisted of Spanish young people aged 16 to 22, with eleven females (42.30%) and fifteen males (57.70%) from various regions, including Granada, Seville, and Albacete. The majority had moderate alcohol use (80.8%), and some engaged in polydrug practices (23.1%). Their sexual orientation varied, with the majority identifying as heterosexual (76.9%). Nearly half of them had partners (45.83%), and they came from diverse family structures and urban/rural backgrounds. The study's results shed light on the origins of alcohol-facilitated sexual violence from the perspectives of both young women who were victims of the behaviour and young men who perpetrated the behaviours. Young women expressed concerns about the risk of sexual victimization, while young men described the tactics they used to perpetrate non-consensual sexual contact and abuse. For Gómez, Avilés, and Benítez (2021) the findings underscored the importance of incorporating a gendered perspective into legislation on sexual violence and abuse, particularly concerning sexual crimes where AOD was also a factor.

In 2013, in the USA, Kavanaugh study in the USA considered how young individuals navigated the risk of victimization, particularly physical and sexual assault, within Philadelphia's nightlife scenes as part of a broader investigation into the intersection of AOD, crime in electronic dance music (EDM) and hip-hop (HH) contexts. The research methods included 51 (26 men and 25 women) in-depth interviews and direct observations of 33 events in the NTE. The study's rigorous qualitative analysis makes a significant contribution to our understanding of risk management in the NTE and revealed how women and girls in these nightlife settings employed distinct risk reduction strategies influenced by gender-related factors. They found women monitoring their substance use, staying in groups, avoiding dangerous situations, altering the club environment, gauging the club atmosphere, and considering the DJ's influence, all with the aim of enhancing their personal safety. His research highlights both the pervasive normalisation of sexual harassment, abuse and violence and the ways in which women and girls have as a result sought to normalise their containment, control over and neutralisation of such behaviour.

Miller et al. in 2016 in Australia, undertook a study titled "Patron Banning in the Nightlife Entertainment Districts,". They sought to gain insights into the advantages of patron banning and its effectiveness in curbing alcohol-related harm. They undertook 36 interviews with a diverse array of participants, including law enforcement (street police and licensing inspectors; n = 3), licensees (n = 13), venue managers (n = 3), ambulance personnel (n = 1), closed-circuit television operators (n = 1), security personnel from venues (n = 9), and representatives from licensing authorities and local councils (n = 6). Interviewees widely supported patron banning as an effective means of diminishing alcohol-related harm, highlighting its merits such as enhanced venue safety, comprehensive risk management, and a deterrent against antisocial conduct. Although the processes for banning weren't always uniform, identification scanners were generally acknowledged as a crucial tool for enforcing patron bans. The study's findings emphasized the pivotal role of ID scanners in augmenting the accuracy and efficiency of identifying banned individuals. Notably, the study's focus on safety improvements highlighted that women, in particular, felt more secure in venues where patron banning was rigorously implemented.

Strong, large-scale evidential support for patron-banning or 'lockout' policies emerges from a very thorough study undertaken in Australia by Palk, Davey, and Freeman focused (2012). Their aim was to assess the effectiveness of a "lockout policy" as part of a broader police enforcement strategy aimed at reducing alcohol-related harm around late-night licensed premises in major drinking precincts. The study employed a mixed methods approach, combining before-and-after quantitative analysis and qualitative interviews. The before-and-after quantitative analysis involved operational police (n = 280) recording all incidents, both alcohol and non-alcohol-related, in and around late-night liquor trading premises, from two policing regions, Gold Coast (n = 12,801 incidents) and Brisbane City/Fortitude Valley (n = 9,117 incidents). Additionally, 20 qualitative interviews gathered the perspectives of key stakeholders, including police, security staff, and politicians to understand the policy's effects. The findings revealed a significant reduction in alcohol-related offenses in certain policing areas and for specific types of offenses, such as sex offenses and street disturbances, '...a reduction in alcohol-related sexual offences by 33 . 7%.' (Palk, Davey, and Freeman, 2012:483) and '...alcohol-related street disturbances and sexual offences experienced a decline by approximately 18% and 29%, respectively...' (Palk, Davey, and Freeman, 2012:484); no significant variation was observed in some other offense categories, like assault. Interestingly, interviews with licensees indicated a shift in perception, as most of them initially opposed the

lockout policy but came to recognise its benefits after its introduction. The study offers compelling evidence for the effectiveness of the lockout policy when integrated with police enforcement efforts, particularly in enhancing public safety and reducing sexual offending and VAWG in and around licensed premises and the NTE.

In 2019, Sanchez et al. conducted a study in Brazil with the goal of enhancing safety and reducing the risk of sexual aggression for nightclub patrons in São Paulo; they studied clubs that were used by straight and gay people and clubs with ‘darkrooms’ aimed at allowing sexual encounters. This mixed-methods research employed both observational and survey data collection methods in three stages: entrance interviews, exit interviews, and the collection of environmental data within the nightclubs. Observational data included observations of behaviours and interactions within the nightclub environment, encompassing factors like crowding, physical layout, reserved areas, and music styles. Survey data was gathered from 2422 patrons upon entering 31 different nightclubs and from 1822 patrons (1111 men; 711 women) as they exited the same venues. The study highlighted the need for security improvements in nightclubs, particularly focusing on environmental characteristics that could predict victimization. Key findings included the association of sexual aggression with environmental factors rather than individual-level factors or drug use, higher victimization rates in specific nightclub types and environmental conditions, greater vulnerability among younger patrons, and the absence of significant gender differences in the prevalence of sexual violence. They concluded that both men and women were at risk of being victims of sexual aggression from other men within the nightclub setting and said:

‘Our study highlights the occurrence of sexual aggression inside nightclubs and calls stakeholders’ attention to the need of local intervention on those high-risk venues. The risk of this type of violence depends more on the environment characteristics than on individual predictors, which suggests a requirement of control and security improvement where environmental characteristics are potential predictors of victimization.’ (Sanchez et al 2019:616).

Policing Best Practices

Evidence suggests there are several programme and practices adopted by police forces aimed to reduce violence against women and girls regionally, nationally and internationally that have proven to be successful. In many cases police forces collaborate with councils, charities and communities to implement interventions for reducing violence against women and girls.

International best practices:

The systematic review reported on above is dedicated to identifying best practices in reducing violence against women in the NTE. These studies do not always include best policing practices and so we have drawn out examples from different countries which also highlight successful intervention programmes. The majority of these programmes focused on environmental and situational factors which may contribute to violence indicating the importance of creating awareness about what individuals, communities, public night-time services and organisations can do to become responsive to these factors and take action to enhance positive outcomes and environments.

The Take Kare Safe Space (Australia) harm reduction programme was implemented to address alcohol related violence and disorder in Sydney, Australia between 2014 and 2019 (Doran et al, 2021). The programme included trained ambassadors who operated 10pm to 4am every Friday and Saturday nights and who successfully intervened with those experiencing high levels of intoxication and involved in conflict. The programme intervened in more than 3000 cases and considered it reduced the risk of harm by 20% in the NTE.

Also, in Australia the Community Safety Action projects aimed at enhancing community safety and fostering responsible nightlife management (Hauritz et al, 1998). These elements comprised:

1. **Channelling Local Funding:** Redirecting financial resources through local government channels to support the initiative.
2. **Establishing a Representative Steering Committee:** Creating a representative steering committee and community forum to ensure diverse perspectives were considered.
3. **Formation of Task Groups:** Forming task groups dedicated to addressing various aspects of public safety, venue management, and security and policing.
4. **Actions for Nightclub Managers:** Encouraging nightclub managers to adopt a Code of Practice governing the conduct of serving and security staff, advertising practices, alcohol consumption, and entertainment offerings.
5. **Regulation through Risk Assessments:** Implementing regulatory measures such as "risk assessments" and oversight by a community-based monitoring committee.

In addition to these prominent features, more subtle yet equally significant aspects of the implementation included:

1. **Image Rehabilitation:** Efforts to rehabilitate the image of nightclub managers and integrate them into the local business community.

2. **External Pressure:** Engaging managers experienced in reform processes from other cities to exert influence and apply pressure on local licensees.
3. **Strategic Hiring:** Employing a Project Officer with strong interpersonal skills and a female perspective to foster effective communication and cooperation.
4. **Balancing Political Agendas:** Skilfully managing the diverse and sometimes conflicting political agendas of participating agencies to maintain alignment with the initiative's goals

Alongside the community action projects, an integrated data-sharing system involved the emergency department, police, and ambulance services and this played a crucial role in evaluating seasonal fluctuations in violence rates and emergency department admissions, facilitating the implementation of precisely targeted interventions. The researchers concluded that data sharing helped to locate where harm occurred, the severity of it and establish key time periods (Droste, Miller and Baker, 2014). They noted, a substantial reduction in assault and injury due to data sharing system.

Finally, a meta study on the Prevention of Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Gloor and Meier, 2022) demonstrated good practices from six countries around the world. The examples showcased adoptable practices which although they did not focus specifically on violence against women in the NTE identified practices which impacted upon communities more broadly. The findings drawn across all the studies demonstrated the effectiveness of education, training, active community involvement and multiagency collaboration for reducing violence against women and girls in society. They showed that awareness raising around VAWG and countering the normalisation of harassment, abuse and VAWG contributed to a lowering of VAWG in all community environments. These international best practice examples can be adopted and implemented in Telford.

National best practices:

Policing strategies identified by the College of Policing, a professional body which covers England and Wales, sought to bring together evidence and consider the effectiveness of targeted interventions, principally hotspot policing and problem-oriented policing. The focused, targeted activities and interventions were planned according to data drawn from the reporting and recording of crime in a given area. Different police forces have used the strategies to understand the impact of targeted activities such as publicity campaigns, dedicated reporting routes and dedicated apps for reporting crime, incidents and fear in order to enhance their policing methods and effectiveness. The College of Policing also considered the impact of the physical environment with interventions such as improved street lighting, installation of CCTV and neighbourhood watch. They concluded activity to improve the external environment had a positive impact on street-based crime and violence and were therefore policing strategies which should be adopted working alongside others, such as local councils (College of Policing, 2022). They also noted that improved street lighting reduced the perception of fear and improved visibility.

Some strategies considered specifically proven to be useful for reducing violence in NTE are an increased police presence in specific licensed premises, citizen patrols, street pastors, trained staff in pubs, publicity campaigns and bar staff training. Project Vigilant is an initiative drawing on these sorts of methods and adopted by Thames Valley Police to prevent sexual violence in the NTE. This project involved trained frontline officers patrolling pub and night clubs during

‘high-risk nights’, they observed and identified predatory sexual behaviours followed by interventions with an intention of redirecting their policing focus from victim blaming to perpetrator focused preventions (Magill, 2023).

In Cardiff, the Cardiff Violence Prevention Programme established an ‘...information sharing partnership between health services, police, and local government in Cardiff, Wales’. Reported on by Florence, et al. in 2011 it aimed to alter policing and use a range of strategies to prevent violence utilising information collected from patients treated in emergency departments after injury sustained in violence. The researchers reported that the interventions led to a significant reduction in violent injury and were associated with an increase in police recording of minor assaults in Cardiff compared with similar cities in England and Wales (Florence et al, 2011).

Regional policing best practices:

Regional best practices include a range of responses, some of which have been developed in response to and alongside emerging findings from this study, these include a Bus and Discuss initiative aimed at increasing a police presence and visibility on public transport in the region. We were also referred to and considered educational interventions delivered by, Purple Leaf a preventative arm of the West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC), which aims to prevent sexual violence and harassment through education, training, assessment, and intervention with children and young people and professionals working in education, policing or across the NTE. Over the past two years Purple Leaf have worked in partnership with several police forces and local authorities on the government initiatives Safer Streets 3 and 4 and responses to their work by participants are shown below. Their work has involved providing specific education and training for children and young people (CYP), adults and professionals with the aim to prevent violence against women and girls (VAWG). They seek to support individuals to:

- Understand what constitutes sexual violence/harassment.
- Recognise and understand what is meant by “unwanted sexual behaviours”.
- Know how to intervene safely and be an active bystander.
- Know where to access help and support.

Purple Leaf aims to raise awareness about VAWG and recent work across England has included a 3-session educational programme for children and young people (CYP) in years 6, 9 and 12 around developing healthy relationships, consent and how to be an active bystander. This project has for example reached over 2700 pupils in schools over a twelve-month period and other educational programmes have for example been aimed at developing teacher’s awareness.

Feedback that they shared with us from CYP included:

“I’ve learnt which sexual behaviours are appropriate and inappropriate and if someone is inappropriate towards me, I know where to get help.”

“I have struggled with these lessons because of what happened to me, but it has made me realise it was not my fault.”

“I felt like everyone in the class actually understood how bad it is to sexually harass someone.”

In addition to the education programme in schools, training workshops were provided for staff working within the night-time economy (NTE) in a number of regions across the country with a range of staff working in the NTE. The aim of the interventions was to increase their knowledge around sexual violence and harassment and provide the skills to safely intervene if they observed unwanted sexual behaviour and understand avenues of support. The workshops were attended by over 90 night-time economy staff and feedback they shared with us from NTE staff includes:

“Really opened my eyes to situations which I might have deemed “normal” before.”

“Noted how complex the topic is.”

“How can I be less of a silent bystander and act more safely.”

“Be more attentive and aware of potential situations in our venue.”

‘I can recognise what predatory behaviours might look like.’

‘I am an active bystander and I know how to intervene safely.’

Women and Girls Perceptions of the NTE in Telford

This section brings together a range of data sources as part of the mixed methods adopted for this study. Researchers from the University of Wolverhampton collected views and experiences about safety in the NTE from 55 women and girls during a series of five workshops and a number of structured observations; the collected data were analysed thematically.

The workshops involved women who were either users of the NTE or those living or working in Telford. A semi structured guided discussion/questionnaire format with prompts to encourage conversation during the workshops. Women from diverse ages and backgrounds participated in the workshops, but we did not ask about or collect any demographic or personal data to ensure anonymity in this study. As well as workshops, we used structured observations for collecting data. Observations were undertaken while walking in the streets during the night-time, over three evening in pubs and around the night club, during a White Ribbon event and during two discussions in a school, one of which was of a school meeting with members of the community. Following this, one of the teachers at the local school asked if she could facilitate a discussion which would be observed by the researchers and she consulted with parents who consented to our observation. Additionally, we adapted the workshop questions to create a shorter sharper conversational style of inter-action for the night-club workshop due to the nature of the environment, i.e., noise levels, women coming out for short periods to cool down or smoke, etc.

In addition to the workshops and observations Telford and Wrekin Council conducted a scoping survey on VAWG in 2021 which received 746 responses from female participants. This survey aimed understanding how safe women and girls felt in specific locations at specific times within Telford and Wrekin. According to the recommendations Telford and Wrekin Council implemented a series of interventions in the borough. Following those measures, another 'Safety Matters' survey was conducted in 2023 to understand how safe women and girls feel in the borough now felt and what type of further measures they would like to see implemented. Due to the small numbers of respondents from a non-white British ethnic background, ethnicity was not used as a characteristic for cross tabulation in the survey report. Going forward, this is an area which the Council should address in forthcoming surveys, ensuring a better spread across all possible populations of women and girls in Telford.

Subsequently, working with Telford and Wrekin Council we merged pre (2021) and post (2023) population opinion survey findings with the participatory workshop findings to highlight the results in a way which might be more meaningful. Whilst different in range, style and scope the qualitative data drawn from workshops and observations and the surveys show similar patterns. The surveys for example were conducted more widely and attracted responses from different areas of the council, whereas the participatory workshops and observations were undertaken in the Wellington area, a part of Telford and Wrekin council. The findings show the workshops generated more detailed, in-depth information which are sufficiently supported by and inform the survey responses to suggest they are trustworthy and can be considered a reliable indicator of the experiences of many women and girls living in the area.

The perception of safety contributes to many issues in the Telford area as we discussed in the introduction and background. It is not possible to understand responses to the workshops, observations, or surveys without accepting the impact on Telford resulting from organised crime, exploitation and grooming. These events impacted some individuals in particular but has also led to a persistent perception that Telford is not a safe place for women and girls. Victims, schoolteachers, youth workers and members of the community reported abuse, but their concerns went unheard or were not acted on and this is a legacy which must be understood as the context in which women and girls responses are framed; it has also therefore also impacted trust between organizations. This shared sense of an understood narrative or backstory can be observed and the researchers who did not work in the area at the time the abuse and exploitation occurred, were struck in their observations and throughout the workshops with how frequently this theme would emerge directly or be obliquely referred to. The sense of risk is therefore subliminally understood or the abuse and exploitation is most frequently referred to indirectly through the use of metaphors which stand in for the underlying concerns: thus specific factors such as taxis, takeaways, night-clubs and the behaviour of men appeared to refer both to more widespread and international concerns about safety in these places, but also to reference what specifically occurred in Telford and was identified in the IITCSE (2022).

Below we will discuss in the detail the eight principal themes and their sub-themes which emerged from the data:

1) Perceptions of safety, 2) Forms of Fear and Threat, 3) Environment, 4) Impact of media, 5) Gender and appearance, 6) Reporting harassment, 7) Education, 8) Strategies for enhancing safety.

Perceptions of safety

The concept of safety and fear was nuanced and how safe or fearful women and girls felt was contributed to be a number of factors which we will discuss in some detail. Doing so is aimed at ensuring organisations understand how women and girls reach the conclusions they do about safety within their community.

Trust:

Women did not trust many establishments in the NTE such as restaurants and pubs to protect them. As we will see this view is formed by their experiences which included an incident which many women referred to. This was a recent rape incident in a local restaurant where the restaurant continued to serve food and did not close despite the very serious incident. Women used this as an example that highlighted why they did not trust organisations in the NTE economy cared about them or their safety. The incident and the response of organisations also identified their underlying concern and highlighted how women and girls are disrespected:

‘They didn’t close the restaurant event after that rape took place, kept serving food’

Similarly, when referring to a local night-club women felt that search strategies could not be relied on to make women safe in that environment:

'... they search you, they search your bags, they search your clothes and still they're things online where girls go in there, and she has, like, red marks ... And things were slipping their drinks.'

The VAWG surveys did not specifically ask about trust and as noted, because of the oblique way this is entered into conversations by respondents it is less likely to be picked up using that sort of research mechanism. Nonetheless, in a free text response in the VAWG survey (2023) highlighted the very specific sense of place:

'In general I feel that lack of respect, consideration and vulnerability in general across Telford/Wr(ekin)'

This is something which we propose the Council could consider when constructing the next survey. We suggest that they look for ways by which they might measure the issue of trust and how it might be understood via proxy measures. Thus, whether proxies for trust might be considered to be whether women and girls within the Telford area think authorities and key local organisations are doing enough to support them and can identify those ways.

In this sense the VAWG survey may shed some light, via the responses to levels of awareness about schemes and programmes that aim to support women and girls with regard to violence in the area. In the survey, 'Ask Angela' was the scheme or programme that respondents were most aware of. More than three quarters of respondents (78.5%) indicated that they were aware of the scheme compared to around one fifth who were aware of the 'Ask ANI' pharmacy scheme (19.5%) and the education programme designed to change the behaviour of boys and men (19.5%). We return to the latter later, as educational programmes did come out as a theme from the workshop findings. Nonetheless, in the survey, fewer than 1 in 3 respondents (31.9%) knew where to find support in the borough if they needed it. 31.4% indicated that they did not know where to find support and the largest proportion of respondents (36.7%) indicated that they were not sure. A greater proportion (40.7%) knew where to find support online if needed, however 27.0% did not know and 32.3% were not sure. Given the need for building trust in and with organisations by women and girls in Telford with organisations, we consider this could be a key area for future focus, raising awareness and understanding more in-depth what women and girls want and need from these programmes to support their needs.

Taxis:

All forms of transport and methods of getting home continue to be a concern for women living in the Telford area in general and by users of the NTE. Despite a number of interventions around the licensing and training of taxi drivers and companies by the local authority women remained concerned about the safety of taxis. The quotes below demonstrated their concerns and in particular using a taxi on one's own:

'I would rather walk home on my own than get in a taxi'

'There's no safe taxi driver here'.

'There is a big history with Taxis in Telford. I would never take a taxi alone'.

'Yeah, we, it's like 'Go cars' monopolise now, we've got no other options. We've got no other local companies we can go (to).'

'(I know) just one woman who would get a taxi but wouldn't do that now.'

'This would be my key thing is taxis.'

One mature participant said she never had any problems with taxi firms 15-20 years ago, as the taxi firms were small and the taxi drivers known to her, but the big taxi firm and anonymous taxi drivers meant that personal trust was lost:

'I think when it's a big taxi firm, like we've got now. It's more concerning for me because it's usually the driver is it's more anonymous, you don't know who's going to turn it. And I think that makes you worry..'

Concerns about taxi firms reflect the international literature and the anonymity of this form of transport. Linked to this are environmental and shared community memories about the CSE cases and the IITCSE (Chapter 4: 588). Communities, and women and girls in particular, are aware of this as evidenced by our participants who referred to the 'big history' with taxis. Similarly, both the VAWG survey (2021) and Safety matters survey (2023) identified taxis and taxi ranks as locations perceived as the second least safe in Telford. According to the recent survey, respondents aged 25-34 unsafe at taxi ranks during the day and night, with average scores significantly lower than the average for all respondents.

Internationally, we are aware travel to and from places at night impacts and thereby limits women and girls desire and ability to take part in the NTE and their sense of safety in general. Taxis are identified in the international literature as problematic by women and girls because they will be alone with an unknown man, in their car, with little ability to control the situation. Shared ride schemes with other women and girls, women taxi drivers, enhanced public transport with good safety, visibility and vigilance by other users are all means by which research shows these concerns can be addressed. We are aware that the council and others have done a considerable amount of work in this area regarding taxis, licensing, complaints etc and consider that it is important that women and girls understand the level and range of work and what it aims to achieve. A targeted communication plan may be of value in further disseminating what has been done, alongside a consideration with women and girls about what else might be helpful.

Previous experience:

The overwhelming majority of women and girls who we interviewed had some form of experience of harassment in the past. They described those experiences as including

'grabbing, grinding behind, cat calling, rubbing, unwanted comments such as 'pussy', and touching.'

Amongst the women and girls in the workshops and observations few said they themselves had not had experiences of violence or harassment and they all said they had known someone who had these negative or abusive experiences. The personally experienced and the vicarious experiences of violence and harassment caused fear for them all and led to concerns that they too might be similarly victimised. For the majority of women and girls who had been harassed and victimised, their experiences made them fearful of going out or coming back home. This fear impacted their behaviour in the NTE, but also made them limit their regular daily walk, going out for a jog or run, cycling, or meeting up with female friends or going out for a dinner with female friends:

'I've definitely felt uncomfortable in certain situations where like men are just kind of like grabbed onto you. Like. I mean, one incident I was at going to a football game and the (pub) ... it was very crowded. Some just random guy just grabbed onto my hand, started spinning me around so that I couldn't leave it, like quite impossible. Quite vulnerable...'

'And this man just like. Went like this on me like on my side, right on my side. He didn't say excuse me, just started rubbing my side, touching me. Just kind of went and did that. That's really, really common or like, yeah. And there was literally no reason for them to touch you at all. They can, and but they do. And it's, I don't know why. It's like they just feel entitled to be able to. Like I said, hand on the hips, hand on the back, hand on the shoulders. To just completely involuntary.'

'I myself, on a night out recently, absolutely experienced harassment from men and it does feel like you say no to one, and then they just keep coming...'

'Because of previous experiences, not feeling comfortable that it probably has put me off going out up here on my own as well.'

The Safety Matters survey (2023) confirmed these findings and responses showed the impact on the majority of women and girls who had experienced harassment, victimisation, violence or abuse. The survey found that during the day and at night, women and girls who had experienced VAWG had below average feelings of safety in their home, on the street where they live, and in the borough generally. They also had below average feelings of safety in pubs and clubs during the day and at night.

Lighting and Visibility:

Internationally, evening, night-time and early morning are the times women and girls are most likely to feel unsafe and crime and victimisation data shows women and girls perceptions and fears are well-founded and that this has a profound psychological impact on individuals as well as economic impact on communities (Nelson et al., 2001). Nelson et al (2001: 271) showed:

'Violent crime is at its highest level particularly between 23.00 and 03.00...'

In Telford fear about moving around between dusk and dawn was particularly pronounced with women and girls reporting feeling much less safe from 6pm in the evening until 6am the next morning (VAWG survey, 2023). The survey thereby offers further support for the idea of a utilising a broader and more inclusive definition of the NTE in Telford as discussed above:

a NTE therefore is real (not virtual), it is geographical and spatial, it takes place between dusk and dawn in a public space (or private space designated as public for that period/activity), may involve going to and from work, education, to the gym, swimming pool or other sports activity, mosque/church/synagogue/temple/faith centre, out for dinner, to the cinema, theatre, or library, to the pub or a club, simply gather with others, be at work or education, or just enjoy some time to do something pleasurable whilst at leisure.

This definition is more inclusive of the whole community, is accurate and reflects the clear survey findings that between the hours of 6pm – 12am women and girls feel most unsafe in Telford. This was particularly pronounced with the vast majority of respondents to the VAWG survey (2023) saying they felt unsafe (6-9pm = 74%; 9pm-12am = 82%). The more inclusive definition may also help to ensure a better response from all communities of women and girls in Telford to future survey calls.

Safety at night, as for the international literature, is strongly connected to dark places and a lack of visibility or good lighting, whereas well-lit areas gave a stronger sense of safety. In one of our workshops, women said they do not use some car parks because they are not well lit, and this meant they had to use different strategies of safety whilst walking to or from the sessions we held at night for example. Looking at specific locations, responses in the Safety Matters survey (2023) indicated that both during the day and at night, women and girls felt least safe where they were least visible, which included underpasses, areas with poor lighting, moving about in general after dark, places like car parks and public parks or greener spaces:

- Quiet, secluded or poorly lit locations (29.8%).
- Being out or out alone after dark (15.2%).
- The Silkin Way as a specific location (12.6%)
- Car parks (8.3%)
- The greatest absolute change between the daytime and at night was parks and open spaces, where the average score at night (3.2) was 2.6 points lower than during the day (5.8).

Feelings of safety amongst those aged 25-34 were generally lower than the average for all respondents, particularly when out in public spaces (public transport, railway stations, taxi ranks, bus stations, parks and open spaces, pubs and clubs, and underpasses). In the free text comments in the Safety Matters survey (2023) lighting was a key theme with almost half of respondents (49%) indicating that being in well-lit areas at night gave them the greatest sense of safety and more than half (55%) stating that better lighting would have helped them feel safer at times when they felt unsafe:

“Wellington train station needs to be lit up as well. If you were getting off that station and there's like people outside the pub, they often whistle people and try and make them their statement.”

This theme of the station or places of transit, dark or less visible spaces combined with male behaviour such as name-calling and other forms of harassment and a lack of physical surveillance in the form of staff at stations, security guards or police, were strongly linked to women's sense of a lack of safety. Ultimately safety is linked with safe places and according to our participants, there are no safe places in the researched area:

‘If you want to have a fun night and there are nowhere’

Forms of fear

What is fear

In the workshops we undertook women explained what their fearful of and what fear does to them. Firstly, they defined fear as something to do with place. This place may be dark, a restricted area such as an alleyway, or a lonely place where few people are around. They also clarified fear as a sense or feeling. This sense or feeling can be triggered by someone, especially a man, or men, coming too close and invading their personal space; this may happen in a well-lit, open area such as a crowded street. The fear formed through uneasiness to do with anticipation of an unwanted, unsought, or potentially violent encounter. Women participants agreed they always checked what was behind them. They termed this attitude as a 'conscious effort' made by women regardless of time of the day and location:

'Fear is something to do with darkness or something to do with place, like alleyways, or you think it's, just by your own. Areas where not a lot of people around.'

'It's also a sense of fear, isn't it? I've been like in the daytime they just like walking over Town Center from here and had somebody behind me and I've kind of like either changed my position or move over. So I do get the fear because you think. And if it's a female behind me, I am not bothered, if it's a bloke I feel uncomfortable specially when they are like getting towards your personal space.'

'Personally, if I'm walking alone, if I'm always checking, checking behind me, even if I don't hear or see anything, I'm it's always a conscious effort.'

'Doesn't matter where you are. Yeah, I feel, you just have to check.'

'I don't want to have to be that cautious. Yeah, from Wilkos car park to here and I feel nervous, Yeah, and I don't want to feel like that.'

Old(er) Men

Old(er) men was a term that came up in workshops and observations and this group were seen as much more likely to be problematic than young(er) men. This was an unexpected finding. Older men were seen as much more likely to make unwanted comments whether you were at work, walking along, getting public transport, out for a run or trying to be out by yourself quietly, with friends having dinner or a drink or in a nightclub. Their unwanted behaviour included 'cat calling', comments, grabbing at you, coming 'into your face' or 'invading your space'. They were associated with threat, their behaviour could be annoying and tiring – especially all the time at work, - but it could also be frightening:

'Yeah, I think it's the older men. They're normally the ones that are outside Spoons at whatever time of day and like...Doesn't matter where you go in, their home or pub whatever. If they're gonna say it they will say it.'

'I think especially comments you get from the old generation, if you're on a night out'

'I think males have this ego and they look to attract young. ...The old man...Especially here like. Like they're trying, like if you're dancing, for example, they're trying get in. ...And that's older men, not young men.'

These sorts of comments about unwanted, forced male attention and male ‘egos’ align with international research which has found that male social identity issues and forms of hyper masculinity are precursors to the harassment of women and girls, and in the NTE to be strongly associated with sexual victimisation and more severe forms of violence (Graham et al. 2011 and 2013; Gunby et al.,2020). Again the qualitative findings indicate that women and girls have a good understanding of their environment and the places that violence and harassment occur and those who might place them at risk.

In one workshop, participants also shared their fear of predatory men who they are aware of but frustrated that nothing is done about them.

‘And then, yeah, yeah, there’s a guy as well that comes around here that he’s been banned from, (unreadable...). He’s been stalking girls. Yeah, he’s still (in the community).’

‘I think Wellington and something like Telford is getting really bad really.’

‘Yeah, there’s not enough protectionism.’

Women reflected a lot on the difference between men they knew and those they did not know. In general men and boys who women and girls knew were perceived as ‘safer’ even where women knew that this was not proven by facts. Adult women were aware that men they knew were not necessarily ‘safer’ (although they might be more ‘predictable’) and had some understanding of the risks, but the younger women or girls we observed in discussion were not always aware of the risks that men who were known to them might pose, and this may be a point for educational programme to focus on regarding intimate partner violence and domestic abuse. Research has indicated the effectiveness of educational programmes and public health campaigns in raising awareness (Gunby et al., 2020) of sexual harassment and violence in the NTE, and thus given identified gaps in women and girls knowledge it might be useful to also include information about other forms of VAWG within these campaigns.

Grooming and exploitation:

Childhood Sexual Exploitation (CSE) incidents came up in all of the workshops. Even though no questions were related to CSE cases participants described what they had observed whilst out and about in nightclubs. They said the exploitation behaviour was obvious but went unchallenged in any way which accords to the finding of the IITCSE (2022). This sense of a lack of action and redress and the fear of grooming and exploitation had even pervaded down to much younger women who would not have been present at the time of such events:

‘A restaurant... like some sort of take away food. Yeah, it was something and it's next to the cake box. I think that's what it's called. Yeah. And that had a big impact on it. And so that's where the grooming happened.’

Political agitation associated with the CSE cases also contributed to the pervasive sense of fear and intimidation that was seen to have pervaded the whole community and especially impacted young women and girls. We asked no questions about this, but women in the workshops frequently alluded to the atmosphere that was created and that was summed up was by this comment:

'Tommy Robinson... My parents would not let me go up town at all that day.'

Alcohol and spiked drinks:

The majority of participants were aware of the potential for the negative impact of alcohol, especially regarding their own safety on a night out. Women who we interviewed while they were having dinner and a drink at the pub said that when alcohol is involved the line of decency can sometimes be crossed. Unwanted situations may even arise with men they know on a night out, such as colleagues after having 'few drinks':

'When we work, you know they (men colleagues) do not cross that line, right? Alcohol is involved in a night out, sometimes that line is blurred ...'

Similarly, those working in the NTE said that they get called at and harassed as women, especially when men are drunk, in groups, agitated, and in pubs or establishment that eject them because of making trouble inside:

'You can't reason with the drunk person. You can tell them time and time again, but they are not. It is not going to go through to them because they're drunk and that's most of the time I would say when we get called, that's night time, night time economy and someone's been asked if they have been ejected, but they're now causing issues outside'

We also engaged with female pub owners who talked about being vigilant of people who create trouble within their establishment. One pub owner stated that being a female she felt helped her to identify any signs of harassment and take immediate actions. Another pub owner emphasised that creating a safe environment for women:

'It does depend on the establishment, I think. In here we have some very strong beers and people can actually probably get quite tiddly, but it's not the right environment.'

The systematic review undertaken for this report has found that effective interventions to reduce violence against women and girls in the NTE show overwhelmingly that the internal environment in an establishment is critical to the safety of all customers, but is particularly critical in reducing the harassment, sexual assault and use of violence by male patrons against female patrons (Gunby et al., 2020; Sanchez et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2018; Miller et al., 2016; Graham et al. 2011 and 2013; Kavanaugh, 2013). This is therefore a critical area for Telford to address with all establishments and builds on work in the NTE which is ongoing. How this work is communicated to women and men living in Telford should also be considered as the body of research as a whole has indicated this is effective at reducing harms and increasing women's confidence in the NTE.

Men you know and men you don't know:

The reason women and girls gave for feeling safer with men and boys they knew in general was most often about being able to 'predict' how the man or boy might behave and the predictability (or not) of male behaviour was an important factor in how safe or unsafe women

and girls felt. Predictability was a common factor in why alcohol and lighting were important to women and girls feeling of safety; alcohol meant male behaviour became less predictable and lighting meant you could not see and so judge a situation as you would like to – you could be taken unaware. This was in some groups discussed at length:

“... know how they act, they know how they respond. They know it's like if I do this they're gonna react this way so I feel like that's why they might, because if a, if a boy he wasn't one a girl (knew...) They're gonna be quiet. They're not gonna say anything, or they're gonna get you know a few in the face ...’

Media

Media, including digital news media, print media and social media plays an important role in the feelings women say they have about their safety. Any incidents that are either officially or unofficially reported are shared in different forms of media and quickly and reach many people. In our workshops, all of the participants talked about a recent rape which never came into public news, but however everyone was aware through the social media and this event was confirmed as having occurred and being under investigation to the research team. The sense that events were occurring and going unreported in official news channels added to a sense that the authorities and the official media could not be trusted. This again tied into concerns about the CSE and the way this was/was not handled by the local media and national news. Women and girls were aware of the incidents that lead to the enquiry either via news of different forms of media and this contributed to their fears about the NTE in Telford. The comments from the workshop participants demonstrates how different forms of the media influence women and girl's sense of safety:

‘If you get the wrong case in the news, and they're rare, but you still hear them quite, quite frequently. So I think that very much influences women's ideas about moving around.’

‘I don't go out in Telford very often, so I couldn't say that it was the people in Telford that made me feel like that. More than yeah, just society and what you hear on the news.’

‘If you go on Facebook, there's so many stories about women and girls being locked and taxis and been threatened and that sort of stuff.’

‘Like, not I've not experienced in clubs and stuff, but I always see it on TikTok. That's the place where I see everything. So people say that the women are like the bouncers, like they don't care, but they just had to get on with it and apparently they can be like, bad as well.’

Some of the participants also argued that modern equipment such as mobile phones and easy access to social media made women more fearful and undermined and impacted their confidence:

‘But if you were to take social media completely out of that equation, you would not feel unsafe if you didn't know so and so was attacked 50 miles up the way from you, you wouldn't feel that unnecessarily, so social media and that readiness for information has a massive impact to that confidence you feel to know where you are and who you are because you feel you have to conform to what this tells you, yeah.’

'All modern equipment has made us feel more unsafe. At no point when I was growing up that I feel I needed to phone somebody and walk home. I would just walk home. But now I've got a phone I feel. I need to phone someone and walk home.'

The Safety Matters survey (2023) also found that respondents who had not experienced VAWG felt safest online, with average scores that were significantly higher than the average for all respondents, with 11.3% of respondents indicating that they felt very safe online, compared with just 2.1% who indicated that they felt very unsafe.

Gender and appearance:

There was a perception from some women that their appearance or outfit might make them prone to harassment or more, or less, safe. Work outfits were deemed by some to be 'safe' outfits and according to some of our respondents if women were going out in work outfits, there would be less chance of getting harassed:

'I am just dressed like this in my work outfits, that can make a difference'

Similar thoughts were expressed by some participants in the nightclub who believed that outfits might be a reason for harassment as they attracted some men:

'If we are wearing this kind of outfits, men will be tempted'

On the contrary, however other participants especially those who are professionals wearing a uniform, such as female police officers, could evidence how the uniform could make them the target of gendered forms of harassment in the NTE. They experienced unwanted comments from men whilst they were in their professional uniforms whilst responding to calls, particularly in pub and club settings and considered their gender played a specific role in attracting unwanted attention and comments:

*'They don't hold back, so that walking into a pub or a club or even uniform does draw quite a lot of unwanted male attention. I think it's a female officer more than a male'
'You do get cat called and you do get the is 'The stripper here' even when in uniform'*

Environment

Professional environment:

Women in work become a target for male 'banter' and although our research focussed in particular on VAWG in the NTE, this was something women and girls would regularly describe. Women in workshops described working in a store and how they were harassed by both male customers and male colleagues. The group of women who either all worked together or had worked together at some point in their careers, agreed that it was a thing you experienced daily:

'Some young lads coming in just from just being their new baby, smiling at me like, you know.'

'And if you laugh it off, is it because you really don't mind it as banter, or because you do mind it, but it's easier.'

'Ignore it sort of thing.'

'It's like the whole thing in school. There isn't, like the boy (who) pulls your hair (and they say, he) really likes you and it's literally (thought) that he thought that if he takes mick out of you, he likes you.'

'Yeah, there's one thing I can say (unreadable) banter. Like, give me a compliment. (Then...) Let's say like I'd say you want the receipt? (They will say) (if your) numbers on the back of it ... I think when the lines crossed....'

or

'Men you work with and they also do this 'banter' and they can push it too far and this may be in work or if you are out with work socializing with men too'

or

'I've experienced unwanted hand gestures on the back and hand gestures on the shoulders in both a professional environment and also a social environment, and so I think it happens everywhere, whether... the perpetrator means to be violating you in some way.'

Women and girls more in-depth responses and reflections in the workshops therefore highlighted the daily harassment that took place in the workplace. This is we suggest something worthy of further study and West Mercia police have instigated a campaign (Shop Safe) as a result of these research findings. Understanding the levels of harassment in the retail sector which women and girls experience is also worthy of further in-depth investigation within Telford (see for example work in another area by Nelson et al., 2001).

Safety at work is one of the few areas where the data gained from the workshops does not accord with the findings of the Safety Matters Survey (2023), where all respondents said they felt safe in their workplace during the day, although those who had previous experience of VAWG, reported they did not feel safe in the workplace at night. We suggest the variance in findings likely highlights what the international literature on VAWG describes as women and girls' 'normalisation' of harassment and sexual victimisation by men and boys, so that they are inclined to minimise its effects or not report its occurrence as they consider it so commonplace; however in discussion and on reflection with others they tease out the details of their experiences and reflect how commonly they experience harassment or abuse. It also shows the importance of different forms of seeking evidence from women and girls so as to fully understand the ways in which their daily lives, and their participation in work and the NTE, are circumscribed and curtailed by unwanted harassment and victimisation.

Social environment

Apart from the professional environment, women participants shared their experience of harassment in the social environment such as pubs and clubs and public transport. They also

emphasised that particular events were especially likely to trigger the harassment of women in the social environment. A consistent example was football matches on a Saturday, which also accords with the international research linking domestic violence and VAWG in the community to sporting events:

'if you go to somewhere that's quite lively on a Saturday afternoon, there's a football match on or you go to a nightclub...likely to feel like you're being harassed.'
'So yeah, I think it depends where you are and what time of day it is and who you're with.'
*'So that's a huge environmental impact. So, to say, do I feel I'm going to leave because I would get harassed? No. But if this was a Saturday night in the thick of it, you know when everyone's went out on the **** most a couple of hours, then, yeah, you'd you'd feel somewhat more intimidated, right?'*
'I don't think they actually sometimes acknowledge that it's it's not OK or it's inappropriate or anything.'

Women and girl's experiences accord strongly with the findings reported in the international literature with regard to the ways in which particular environments encourage or discourage the harassment of, or violence towards, them. Workshop participants frequently reflected on how men outside some pubs were intimidating and these experiences impacted adult women and were also shared by schoolgirls during the observed school discussion. Fear of harassment seriously impacts female use of public spaces, at day and at night. Fear arises in different ways, but a frequent example was the large number of men who gather outside the pub near to public transport and make unwanted comments:

'Yeah, people do spill out. Actually, out of the front. And yeah, go outside. When we were there, they used the beer tent outside as well, like outside the front. And the amount of people that were in there as well, it's just...'

Finding a safe place for night out for women is an important factor in the NTE and some of our participants were regular visitors of a particular pub because they felt safer there than in other places. They highlighted how it had a 'different culture' from nightclubs and made them safer to participate in the NTE.

'I think depends (on) where you're going, doesn't it?'
'I think this makes a difference. We going to a pub that has regulars as very different culture to somewhere where people are going out to a club.'
'I think that's relative to where you are. So, in this experience such as this as a sit-down sort of pub, you're less likely to get harassed'.

In the Safety Matters Survey (2023) younger respondents (aged 16-24 and 25-34) and those who had experienced VAWG felt the least safe in pubs and clubs during the day and at night, with average scores below the average for all respondents. Older respondents and those who had not experienced VAWG felt safer in pubs and clubs, but may also be less likely to use them, although this was not measured, or may use them on different evenings or during the day, for example the night-club was seen as particularly likely to be used by younger patrons.

Other environmental factors:

Perceptions of safety at night were reported to be significantly lower than in the daytime for all locations by women and girls in the workshops and the Safety Matters Survey (2023). In the survey the greatest absolute change in scores between the daytime and at night was for parks and open spaces reflecting the perceived and actual differences in these environments between daylight and night-time. In the Safety Matters survey (2023) just 27.2% of respondents felt very safe where they most spend their time and at home and in the workplace were the locations where women and girls felt safest both during the day and at night. The smallest absolute change in scores between day and night was for in the home, where the average score at night (8.6) was 0.3 points lower than during the day (8.9), but noticeably women and girls were reporting feeling less safe at night at home. This was further explained by women in the workshops who described feeling unsafe to walk the dog after dusk or at night where they lived. Examples included the sort of responses given in the survey, which was a fear of:

- Areas known for criminal activity and anti-social behaviour including assaults, drug taking and street drinking;
- Being around specific groups of people, with examples cited including groups of teenagers and males.

Environmental factors also impacted feelings of safety at night for respondents who had experienced VAWG. They felt least safe in the street where they live, at taxi ranks, at bus stations, park and open spaces, which in all is a remarkable number of locations and indicates in general they feel afraid.

Education

Role of education for the younger generation and the education gap for the older generation, particularly men, was highlighted by participants in the workshops. The education gap associated with the older generation was associated with PSHE or similar types education which had been introduced into the UK since 2000. Along with education awareness programmes, the lack of sex education and acceptable behaviours by men was also mentioned by matured participants in pub workshops:

‘I would say from a somebody more mature and what have you looking back when I was going out at my children’s ages, It was very common for that sort of more touching more areas or, you know, than and blatantly obvious. If you know What I mean?’

‘It what’s accepted back in the day, if you like, you know how times changed’

The expectation about accepted behaviours due to the PSHE education and other school programme was seen to have made a difference with the younger generation considered to be more aware and the observations that hence this had made a difference:

‘ ...there’s probably an education gap in the boys as well, and the men, so younger people who’ve been educated through the current school system. They’ve got one

expectation and what they've been told and then you've got the older generation that probably he who haven't had that education.'

Despite the council's efforts to provide specific training, general awareness of these programmes was not widely reported in the Safety Matters survey (2023) where the majority of respondents (80.5%) reported that they were not aware of the in-school college education programmes to change the behaviour of boys and men. Surprisingly, respondents aged 65+ were the most likely to be aware of the educational programme, with respondents aged 25-34 the least likely to say they were aware of them. We would therefore recommend two things: more dissemination of these educational training and awareness programmes, but also the opportunity for wider groups of men and boys to take part. The international literature supports the use of these programmes and their effectiveness at impacting perpetrators and victims and raising awareness; we also know that changing male behaviour within the NTE likely impacts on the likelihood that girls and women will be victimized in that setting.

Reporting harassment

In general women and girls did not expect much from reporting harassment and violent victimisation and that accords with the international picture and the extremely low national number of rapes that lead to conviction at just 5%. Women and girls also felt there was a lack of clarity from others about harassment and victimisation and worried what the likely response of others might be:

'I think it depends on the level, so there's got to be an interaction between people for that to happen. It's when that oversteps the mark and becomes something more'

'So what do you want the outcome to be is you should just get out safely and not have the other hassle and the easiest way to do that is just to remove yourself. Yeah, exactly. But then I don't think we would tolerate offences.'

'But it's interesting that we make the distinction, or the distinction was made when we were talking then of just harassment. That was the phrase use. And an assault like an assault is so much worse. It depends on the nature of each like and how the person feels about it.'

'It about your own behaviour when you're doing nothing, but you're thinking what will other people think about what I'm doing which I think is always that interesting dynamic'

Women and girl's concerns in Telford recognize the public confusion about responsibility for poor and abusive behaviour and how it can be addressed formally and informally. These concerns are however at odds with the international research on effective strategies to limit VAWG in the NTE which clearly shows that women and girl's own behavior is not a significant factor, but rather the important actions address male behaviour and highlight the importance of specific systemic steps being taken:

- address male attitudes through educational and public health awareness programmes

- address male behavior and the manifestation of social identity issues, including hyper masculinity, in social and public environments.
- address the environment in the place itself, for example through staff training and awareness programmes, venue design, enforcement of rules and regulations
- lower drunkenness, particularly male drunkenness, by not admitting or serving drunk patrons.
- increase bystander and informal and formal guardianship and /or 'soft' forms of support in the NTE and most frequently used by women and girls.
- support women and girls safety strategizing.
- enforce id checks at venues.
- enforce the banning of troublesome patrons at entry points to venues.
- increase formal and informal forms of surveillance through data sharing and mapping which improves crime clear-up rates for serious offences such as rape.
- improve and enhance public transport.
- improve and enhance the maintenance of public spaces.
- improve and enhance street lighting, which is effective in the UK at reducing crime and does not lead to displacement.

Strategies for enhancing safety

Strategies for enhancing their own safety was something that emerged directly from women and girls own descriptions of their behaviour to minimise harms in the NTE. Women and girls narratives about safety when moving around after dusk and before dawn focussed on themes of:

- Sticking Together
- Watching out for one another
- Avoidance: Pretending
- Avoidance: Leaving to avoid trouble
- Family

Sticking Together

This behaviour was described by women in all groups and explained effectively in one of the pub workshops by one in conversation, supporting and elaborating on the words of others:

Speaker 5 - "Feels frank here. We have like, an unwritten. Rule you don't leave no one alone that's anywhere. Not just. Well, that's anywhere. You always either go.

Speaker 2 - Or like if everyone's leaving, everyone's leaving. It's not your I wanna say no.

Speaker 5 - I think that if you're in a friendship, you don't let a girl walk home alone.

Speaker 2 - You remember.

Speaker 5 - It's just everyone stands by.

Speaker 9 - Yeah...

Another example included getting home:

‘Or we or we walk each other home or like I'll say here can go to my house... send me a picture of you opening your door or something. And she's, like, drunkenly trying to open the door...’ (Women in Pub: Group 1)

Watching out for one another

The issue of trust in organisations or officials to protect or support them, or the lack of it, was particularly evidenced by women and girls in relation to identifying how they would watch out for friends and other women and girls in public spaces and anticipate others doing the same for them. In a second workshop in a pub women commented that they would not use door or bar staff to deal with men who were harassing or victimising them, but would rather rely on one another:

Speaker 6

‘That, I mean we just back our, we back ourselves.’

Speaker 1

‘Yeah, right. Like, like, the instant just out there...’

The ‘instant out there’ that was being referred to, was that two of their group were outside smoking and being harassed by an older man at the time who had been removed from the pub for harassing women and being drunk. As he had not moved on, but remained outside causing a nuisance to their friends, some other women went out to deal with him as the two women were on their own and quite drunk.

Avoidance Techniques

Avoidance techniques were referred to by all women in the workshops and in observed discussions and they included a range of behaviours such as pretending to be on your phone to deflect attention, or as a protective mechanism to ensure someone you trusted knew you were concerned, or to make the perpetrator or potential perpetrator know you had alerted someone, to the need to contact someone to get rid of someone who was persistently bothering you and removing yourself from a place or situation if being harassed.

Pretending:

‘I think probably everyone here has had to pretend to be on their phone before, you know, like, if there's if the male, if there's a male behind me.’

Leaving to avoid trouble:

‘And yeah, it's best to get yourself out of the situation than stay in it.’

Family

Women and girls in Telford described relying on other women in their family for support in order to take part in the NTE. They described other women and giving them advice, looking out for them and particularly mothers as being able to be relied on to pick them up, principally

so that they did not need to rely on taxis, other forms of public transport or to walk home alone or wait on the street:

‘I would if I was going out. I would know my mum or a family member (would pick me up).

We found therefore that women and girls overwhelmingly described relying on other women and girls to protect them. They did not see door-staff, police officers or public bodies as willing or able to protect them and so created their own strategies to enhance their feelings of safety and to seek to ‘guarantee’ the probability of their own safety. The next most likely group to be called on or relied on is their own family and the role of family (most usually mums) is especially related to transporting women and girls to enhance their safety moving to or from sports or social events.

The role of women and girls seeking to provide their own security and for their own safety is under-explored in the literature as our systematic review has highlighted and it is an area which we argue in should be given greater consideration, although this type of behaviour is commonly adopted and described by women and girls worldwide. Currently criminologists voice concerns that women and girls might thereby be responsabilised for male behaviour and the behaviour is rarely reflected on positively although a small number of studies increasingly show it to be effective. We argue safety planning and strategizing gives women and girls some sense of control over their own safety, they are already doing this work though unrecognised and unrewarded. It aligns well with ‘soft support’, with active bystander work and pastoral and guardianship schemes. Potentially it offers a critical possibility for public bodies to consider how they can contribute, support, enhance and invest in women and girls’ ability to do protect themselves and one another.

Next steps/way forward

We propose future work in line with the empirical evidence in Telford and note the initiatives which have been already undertaken, often in response to the indicated findings of this research. We consider it is important for the region to ensure it draws on what we have also shown within the report has been found internationally to be effective. We consider future work could therefore usefully focus on:

1/ Continuing to address the internal environment in venues in the NTE to ensure harassment, sexual assault and use of violence by male patrons against female patrons is reduced by

- bringing together shared knowledge of work underway
- communicating to men and women living in Telford, that harms must be minimized and how this can be achieved – international research says this is effective at reducing harms and increasing women’s confidence in the NTE
- engaging women and men in Telford in designing and scoping future work
- recording, monitoring and evaluating work that is undertaken
- communicating the work undertaken and the results

NTE officers were critical in supporting this piece of research and another linked to it. However, women and girls in the community often do not know of the NTE officers or do not understand their role or how it differs for example from police officers. The council and others working together should invest in dissemination aimed at women and girls for them to better understand the work of the NTE officers and team and be able to in-put into the work they do. This might draw on social media, local campaigns, interviews in the local press, but also engaging with women and girls as they go out and about. The role of the NTE officers could also be considered along with street pastor schemes and how these work to support the work women and girls already do as this report describes, rather than seeking to replace or disrupt it.

2/ Ensuring effective awareness gender campaigns that address stereotypes and address being safe online.

- Work with women and girls to understand how best these might be disseminated
- Ensure women and girls in Telford from all communities are engaged in this process
- Evaluate if and how these campaigns are known to and by women and girls

The international research indicates these schemes are effective at changing the environment within the NTE venues and the council could work together with licensed and other premises to consider how best this can be achieved.

3/ Support women and girls own strategies for being safe.

- Working with women and girls to understand which strategies they employ
- Ensure women and girls from all communities in Telford are engaged in the process
- Direct funding to support these strategies
- Devise new strategies and approaches
- Evaluate if these new approaches are known to and by women and girls.

This for example could include pilot work that is currently being undertaken by the council and police to install CCTV in some taxis. Communicating this pilot, seeking the views of women and girls, understanding the impact (or not) on their safety and evaluating the impact of the scheme could be key priorities given the level of fear indicated. It is also important that taxi firms and drivers, along with other regional taxi licensing authorities, understand why this work is important and how it might impact VAWG in the NTE.

Work to address this area might also include other new initiatives such as 'Bus and Discuss' which aims to increase the visibility of police officers on public transport and address women and girls concerns about using transport. Ensuring public dissemination might impact feelings about safety and visibility when using public transport at night, but the scheme should also include some feedback mechanism to understand whether women and girls know about the scheme and to evaluate its perceived effectiveness, as well as to collect data about whether (or not) there is any change to incidents of violence or harassment where the scheme is in place; this should take into account that many incidents may currently go unreported or unrecorded.

4/ Share data across agencies

- Work with women and girls, communities and organisations to consider which data can / should be shared
- Address concerns about surveillance of individuals / communities

- Collect relevant data
- Use data to target hotspots for violence/ abuse
- Use data to follow up criminal activity and improve clear up and prosecution rates
- Use data to offer effective and targeted support to victims
- Evaluate if these approaches are effective and/ or known to and by women and girls.

Some work is ongoing within the region by the Domestic Abuse Localities Partnership (DALP) to work jointly to bring key information together. This is something which might usefully be considered regarding the NTE and this could be built using the international research literature reported here about where and how this was effective. Equally it might also be adopted into some of the policing initiatives around hotspot policing which are being adopted within the region; the inclusion of data around VAWG might be a useful way to both map and respond to this key issue within the NTE. An evaluation framework or mechanism for reviewing these initiatives and considering their effectiveness and impact should also be considered.

5/ Women who worked in the retail environment highlighted everyday harassment which impacted their well-being and sense of trust in authorities to deal with male behaviour. Although not linked to the NTE, this may be an area for future focus for the Council and police to consider joint work with retailers and women and girls working in this environment to understand more about what can be done and how it might be addressed. We understand the police as a result of the findings from this research have launched a Shop Safe scheme, although there is no current plan to evaluate this work we consider this could be usefully adopted to understand if, and how, the initiative might make a difference and impact victimisation.

We recognise that not all of these ideas or approaches could be utilised at one time and consultation may be a way to decide which ideas to follow up first, but the process of involving all communities, engaging women and girls in the work, understanding and communicating outcomes in ways will be valuable to rebuilding trust and a shared sense that women and girls are valuable to and valued by all who live in, work, police and administer Telford and Wrekin.

References

- Arnall, E. and Ryder, J. (2019) 'Because it's fun': English and American Girls' Counter-Hegemonic Stories of Alcohol and Marijuana Use. *Journal of Youth Studies* 22:10:1361-1377. DOI: 10.1080/13676261.2019.1579898
- Atkinson, J.-A., Prodan, A., Livingston, M., Knowles, D., O'Donnell, E., Room, R., Indig, D., Page, A., McDonnell, G., & Wiggers, J. (2018). Impacts of licensed premises trading hour policies on alcohol-related harms. *Addiction (Abingdon, England)*, 113(7), 1244–1251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14178>
- Bolier L, Voorham L, Monshouwer K, van Hasselt N, Bellis M. Alcohol and drug prevention in nightlife settings: a review of experimental studies. *Subst Use Misuse*. 2011;46(13):1569-91. doi: 10.3109/10826084.2011.606868. Epub 2011 Sep 21. PMID: 21936624.
- Bolier, L., Voorham, L., Monshouwer, K., van Hasselt, N., & Bellis, M. (2011). Alcohol and drug prevention in nightlife settings: a review of experimental studies. *Substance Use & Misuse*, 46(13), 1569–1591. <https://doi.org/10.3109/10826084.2011.606868>
- Boyd, K. A., Farrimond, H. R., & Ralph, N. (2018). The impact of breathalysers on violence and attitudes in the night-time economy. *European Journal of Criminology*, 15(5), 609–631. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370817749498>
- Byrnes, H., Miller, B., Bourdeau, B., Johnson, M. B., Buller, D. B., Berteletti, J., & Rogers, & Veronica A. (2019). Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Overuse Among Nightclub Patrons: A Randomized Trial of a Group-Based Mobile Intervention at Nightclubs. In *Stud. Alcohol Drugs* (Vol. 80).
- Ceccato, V., Gaudelet, N., & Graf, G. (2022). Crime and safety in transit environments: a systematic review of the English and the French literature, 1970–2020. *Public Transport*, 14(1), 105–153. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12469-021-00265-1>
- Dillon, R. (2005). Designing urban space for psychological comfort: the Kentish Town Road project. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 4(4), 10–19. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/17465729200500027>
- Doran, C. M., Wadds, P., Shakeshaft, A., & Tran, D. A. (2021). Impact and Return on Investment of the Take Kare Safe Space Program-A Harm Reduction Strategy Implemented in Sydney, Australia. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(22). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182212111>
- Doran, C. M., Wadds, P., Shakeshaft, A., & Tran, D. A. (2021). Impact and Return on Investment of the Take Kare Safe Space Program-A Harm Reduction Strategy Implemented in Sydney, Australia. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(22), 12111. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph182212111>
- Droste, N., Miller, P., & Baker, T. (2014). Review article: Emergency department data sharing to reduce alcohol-related violence: a systematic review of the feasibility and effectiveness of community-level interventions. *Emergency Medicine Australasia : EMA*, 26(4), 326–335. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1742-6723.12247>
- Droste, N., Miller, P., & Baker, T. (2014). Review article: Emergency department data sharing to reduce alcohol-related violence: a systematic review of the feasibility and effectiveness of community-level interventions. *Emergency medicine Australasia : EMA*, 26(4), 326–335. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1742-6723.12247>
- Duailibi, S., Ponicki, W., Grube, J., Pinsky, Iana, Laranjeira, R., & Raw, M. (n.d.). *The Effect of Restricting Opening Hours on Alcohol-Related Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH>
- Farrington, D. P., & Welsh, B. C. (2002). Improved street lighting and crime prevention. *Justice Quarterly*, 19(2), 313–342. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07418820200095261>

- Fileborn, B., Cama, E., & Young, A. (2022). Perceptions of Safety Among Taxi and Rideshare Service Patrons: Gender, Safekeeping And Responsibilisation. *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 11(4), 40–55. <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.2085>
- Florence, C., Shepherd, J., Brennan, I., & Simon, T. (2011). Effectiveness of anonymised information sharing and use in health service, police, and local government partnership for preventing violence related injury: experimental study and time series analysis. *BMJ (Clinical research ed.)*, 342, d3313. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.d3313>
- Forsyth, A. J. M. (2008). Banning glassware from nightclubs in Glasgow (Scotland): observed impacts, compliance and patron's views. *Alcohol and Alcoholism (Oxford, Oxfordshire)*, 43(1), 111–117. <https://doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/agm142>
- Graham, K. (2009). They fight because we let them! Applying a situational crime prevention model to barroom violence. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 28(2), 103–109. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3362.2008.00038.x>
- Graham, K., & Wells, S. (2003). “Somebody’s Gonna Get Their Head Kicked in Tonight!”: Aggression among Young Males in Bars - A Question of Values? *British Journal of Criminology*, 43(3), 546–566. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/43.3.546>
- Graham, K., Bernards, S., Osgood, D. W., & Wells, S. (2012). “Hotspots” for aggression in licensed drinking venues. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 31(4), 377–384. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3362.2011.00377.x>
- Graham, K., Bernards, S., Wells, S., Osgood, D. W., Abbey, A., Felson, R. B., & Saltz, R. F. (2011). Behavioural indicators of motives for barroom aggression: Implications for preventing bar violence. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 30(5), 554–563. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1465-3362.2010.00252.x>
- Haleem, M. S., Do Lee, W., Ellison, M., & Bannister, J. (2021). The ‘Exposed’ Population, Violent Crime in Public Space and the Night-time Economy in Manchester, UK. *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research*, 27(3), 335–352. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10610-020-09452-5>
- Hauritz, M., Homel, R., McIlwain, G., Burrows, T., & Townsley, M. (1998). Reducing Violence in Licensed Venues: Community Safety Action Projects. In *Reducing Violence in Licensed Venues: Community Safety Action Projects* (p.). <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=SM176546&site=ehost-live>
- Hobbs, D., Hadfield, P., Lister, S., & Winlow, S. (2017). Violence and Control in the Night-Time Economy. *European Journal of Crime, Criminal Law & Criminal Justice*, 25(1), 89–102. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=120752819&site=ehost-live>
- Home Office (11 January 2023) Safer Streets Fund is building confidence in the police. Accessed 29 September 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/safer-streets-fund-is-building-confidence-in-the-police>
- Independent Inquiry Telford Child Sexual Exploitation (2022) Volume three of Four. Available from <https://www.sath.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/IITCSEREPOR-T-VOLUMETHREE.pdf>.
- Johns, N., Green, A., Swann, R., & Sloan, L. (2019). Street Pastors in the Night-Time Economy: harmless do-gooders or a manifestation of a New Right agenda? *Safer Communities*, 18(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-05-2018-0015>
- Jones, L., Hughes, K., Atkinson, A. M., & Bellis, M. A. (2011). Reducing harm in drinking environments: A systematic review of effective approaches. *Health and Place*, 17(2), 508–518. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2010.12.006>

- Khasteganan K, Kanjilal M and Arnall E. (2023) Reducing violence against women and girls in the night-time economy: a rapid review of prevention interventions. PROSPERO 2022 CRD42022376126 Available from: https://www.crd.york.ac.uk/prospero/display_record.php?ID=CRD42022376126
- Kypri, K., Jones, C., McElduff, P., & Barker, D. (2011). Effects of restricting pub closing times on night-time assaults in an Australian city. *Addiction (Abingdon, England)*, *106*(2), 303–310. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1360-0443.2010.03125.x>
- Kypri, K., McElduff, P., & Miller, P. (2016). Night-time assaults in Newcastle 6-7 years after trading hour restrictions. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, *35*(2), E1–E2. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dar.12342>
- Levine, M., Lowe, R., Best, R., & Heim, D. (2012). “We police it ourselves”: Group processes in the escalation and regulation of violence in the night-time economy. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *42*(7), 924–932. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1905>
- Magill, C (2023) Thames Valley Police and Project Vigilant: Evaluation. Available from Thames Valley Police and Project Vigilant: Evaluation — The University of Brighton [Accessed: 31st August 2023]
- Maguire, Mike., & Great Britain. Home Office. Research, D. and S. Directorate. (2003). *Reducing alcohol-related violence and disorder : an evaluation of the “TASC” project*. Home Office.
- Marg Hauritz, Ross Homel, Gillian McIlwain, Tamara Burrows & Michael Townsle (1998) Reducing Violence in Licensed Venues: Community Safety Action Projects. Australian Institute of Criminology. Available from <http://www.aic.gov.au>. [Accessed: 16th September 2023]
- McGill E, Marks D, PePcrew M, et al (2022) Addressing alcohol-related harms in the local night-time economy: a qualitative process evaluation from a complex systems perspective. *BMJ Open* 2022. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2021-050913
- McGuire, J., Evans, E., & Kane, E. (2021). Policing the Night-Time Economy: A Systematic Review of Evidence-Based Practice. In *Evidence-Based Policing and Community Crime Prevention* (pp. 27–60). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76363-3_2
- Miller, P. G., Ferris, J., Coomber, K., Zahnow, R., Carah, N., Jiang, H., Kypri, K., Chikritzhs, T., Clough, A., Livingston, M., de Andrade, D., Room, R., Callinan, S., Curtis, A., Mayshak, R., Droste, N., Lloyd, B., Matthews, S., Taylor, N., ... Najman, J. (2017). Queensland Alcohol-related violence and Night Time Economy Monitoring project (QUANTEM): a study protocol. *BMC Public Health*, *17*(1), 789. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-017-4811-9>
- Moore, S. (2012). The UK Government’s positive contribution to harm reduction in the night time economy, but we still need a better informed approach. *Drugs: Education, Prevention & Policy*, *19*(5), 370–371. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=79961191&site=ehost-live>
- Moore, S. C., Alam, M. F., Heikkinen, M., Hood, K., Huang, C., Moore, L., Murphy, S., Playle, R., Shepherd, J., Shovelton, C., Sivarajasingam, V., & Williams, A. (2017). The effectiveness of an intervention to reduce alcohol-related violence in premises licensed for the sale and on-site consumption of alcohol: a randomized controlled trial: All-Wales licensed premises intervention. *Addiction (Abingdon, England)*, *112*(11), 1898–1906. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.13878>
- Moore, S. C., Brennan, I., & Murphy, S. (2011). Predicting and measuring premises-level harm in the night-time economy. *Alcohol and Alcoholism (Oxford, Oxfordshire)*, *46*(3), 357–363. <https://doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/agr011>

- Nelson, A. L., Bromley, R. D. F., & Thomas, C. J. (2001). Identifying micro-spatial and temporal patterns of violent crime and disorder in the British city centre. *Applied Geography*, 21(3), 249–274. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0143-6228\(01\)00008-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0143-6228(01)00008-X)
- Nicholls, E. (2017). ‘Dulling it down a bit’: managing visibility, sexualities and risk in the Night Time Economy in Newcastle, UK. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 24(2), 260–273. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2017.1298575>
- Nordfjærn, T., Bretteville-Jensen, A. L., Edland-Gryt, M., & Gripenberg, J. (2016). Risky substance use among young adults in the nightlife arena: An underused setting for risk-reducing interventions? *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 44(7), 638–645. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494816665775>
- Palmer, D., Warren, I., & Miller, P. (2014). ID scanners in the night-time economy: Social sorting or social order? *Trends & Issues in Crime & Criminal Justice*, 466, 1–9. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=94179227&site=ehost-live>
- Philpot, R., Liebst, L. S., Møller, K. K., Lindegaard, M. R., & Levine, M. (2019). Capturing violence in the night-time economy: A review of established and emerging methodologies. *Aggression & Violent Behavior*, 46, 56–65. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=136935005&site=ehost-live>
- Quigg, Z., Hughes, K., Butler, N., Ford, K., Canning, I., & Bellis, M. A. (2018). Drink Less Enjoy More: effects of a multi-component intervention on improving adherence to, and knowledge of, alcohol legislation in a UK nightlife setting. *Addiction*, 113(8), 1420–1429. <https://doi.org/10.1111/add.14223>
- Race, K. (2016). The Sexuality of the Night: Violence and Transformation. *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 28(1), 105–110. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=117763178&site=ehost-live>
- Roberts, N. (2022). The dark and desolate campus: what can be done to enhance students’ perceptions of safety on-campus? *Safer Communities*, 21(3), 157–170. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-01-2022-0006>
- Salmi, S., Gronroos, M., & Keskinen, E. (2004). The role of police visibility in fear of crime Finland. *Policing*, 27(4), 573–591. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/role-police-visibility-fear-crime-finland/docview/211298807/se-2?accountid=10286>
- Stockwell, T., & Chikritzhs, T. (2009). Do relaxed trading hours for bars and clubs mean more relaxed drinking? A review of international research on the impacts of changes to permitted hours of drinking. *Crime Prevention and Community Safety*, 11(3), 153–170. <https://doi.org/10.1057/cpcs.2009.11>
- Swann, R., Green, A., Johns, N., & Sloan, L. (2015). Street pastors as substitutes for trust in the context of plural policing. *Safer Communities*, 14(4), 168–182. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/SC-03-2015-0011>
- Talbot, D. (2006). The Licensing Act 2003 and the Problematization of the Night-time Economy: Planning, Licensing and Subcultural Closure in the UK. *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research*, 30(1), 159–171. <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=20588430&site=ehost-live>
- The Alcohol Related Violence: Crime Reduction Project Category Crime and Disorder Reduction.* (2002).

- Tierney, J. (2006). "We Want to be More European": The 2003 Licensing Act and Britain's Night-Time Economy. *Social Policy and Society*, 5(4), 453–460.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746406003162>
- Tucker, R., O'Brien, D.T., Ciomek, A. et al. (2021). Who 'Tweets' Where and When, and How Does it Help Understand Crime Rates at Places? Measuring the Presence of Tourists and Commuters in Ambient Populations. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 37, 333–359
- van Steden, R. (2018). Street Pastors: On security, care and faith in the British night-time economy. *European Journal of Criminology*, 15(4), 403–420.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1477370817747499>
- Weatherburn, D. (2016). What Does Research Tell Us about the Impact of Recent Liquor Licence Restrictions on Violence in New South Wales? *Current Issues in Criminal Justice*, 28(1), 97–103.
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=sih&AN=117763177&site=ehost-live>
- Welsh, D. B. C., & Farrington, D. D. P. (2008). Effects of Improved Street Lighting on Crime. *Campbell Systematic Review*, 4(1), 1–51. <https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2008.13>
- Williams, A., Moore, S. C., Shovelton, C., Moore, L., & Murphy, S. (2016). Process evaluation of an environmental health risk audit and action plan intervention to reduce alcohol related violence in licensed premises. *BMC Public Health*, 16, 455. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-016-3123-9>
- Zinkiewicz, L., Curtis, A., Meurer, H., & Miller, P. (2015). Demographic risk factors for alcohol-related aggression in and around licensed venues. *Alcohol and Alcoholism*, 51(2), 196–200.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/alcalc/aggv083>