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The Impact of the Licensing Act 2003 on Levels of Crime and Disorder: Key Findings of the Nottingham Case Study, prepared for the Home Office

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ANNEX: E

**KEY FINDINGS OF THE
NOTTINGHAM CASE STUDY**

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The implementation of the Licensing Act

The implementation of the Licensing Act in Nottingham has evidently *not* led to greatly extended licensing hours in the city. It seems that under the Act – and despite that cumulative impact policy that was applied to the city centre - most pubs and clubs were granted the capacity to open for one or two hours longer per night. However, premises tended to use these additional hours flexibly, and to open beyond their traditional closing times only when they were at their busiest – presumably on Friday and Saturday nights.

Other local developments associated with the Licensing Act, although to some extent pre-dating implementation of the Act, included the development of an increasingly multi-agency approach to the management of the night-time economy. There was also an increase in levels of enforcement, involving both the policing of public order through high-visibility patrols and associated measures, and more robust enforcement of licence conditions through multi-agency inspection visits.

Impact on crime and disorder

Police data

Police recorded crime data on violence against the person suggest that the Act did *not* have a positive impact on levels of alcohol-related violence. Overall levels of violence appear to have increased slightly across the city, when figures for a 12-month pre-implementation period are compared with average figures for a 24-month baseline period. There was a steeper increase in levels of violence on weekend nights – with this increase concentrated in the hours after midnight. Given that premises were most likely to stay open later on weekend nights, this suggests an association between later closing times and higher levels of violence.

Following implementation of the Act, violent incidents remained heavily concentrated in areas containing licensed premises – and indeed these concentrations increased slightly. Again pointing to a possible association between later opening and violence, the main hot-spots of violence were the same before and after implementation, but

after implementation persisted further into the early hours of the morning (while diminishing in intensity) in the two key drinking areas of Lace Market and Old Market Square. However, lack of data on the actual opening hours of premises prevents definitive conclusions being drawn on the relationship between opening hours and levels of violent offending.

In contrast to the figures on violent crime, police recorded crime figures on criminal damage show a decline in the post-implementation period. Given that criminal damage incidents were much less concentrated than violent incidents in areas containing licensed premises, a link between the Licensing Act and the decrease in criminal damage appears unlikely. Levels of calls to the police for disorder showed little change between the baseline and post-implementation periods.

Stakeholders' views

Representatives of late-night businesses who were interviewed for the evaluation voiced a range of views on whether the introduction of the Act had had a positive impact on levels of alcohol-related crime and disorder. However, a majority of the respondents perceived a positive impact. Various factors were cited as having contributed to a reduction in crime and disorder. These included staggered closing times having resulted in fewer people congregating on the streets; a more visible police presence; better management of premises by licensees; and less rushed and irresponsible drinking at the end of the night. However, it was also widely recognised that alcohol-related crime and disorder remained a significant problem, and some suggested that violence – and particularly serious violence – was increasing.

Residents' views

The Licensing Act did not appear to have made a big – positive or negative - impact on the behaviour and perceptions of Nottingham residents who were surveyed for the evaluation. For example, the number of respondents visiting the city centre was not significantly higher in the post-implementation period than in the baseline period; and there were no significant differences in the proportions of respondents who felt unsafe in the city centre in the evening, in the reasons they gave for feeling unsafe, and in the numbers who saw people being drunk and rowdy as a problem in the city centre.

However, there were some more positive indications. For example, significantly fewer post-implementation respondents felt that drunk and rowdy behaviour had become

more of a problem in the past 12 months, and significantly more (but only ten per cent) that it had become *less* of a problem. And only 29 per cent of post-implementation respondents thought that alcohol-related crime had increased since the introduction of the Act – significantly fewer than had thought it would increase when they were asked in the baseline period. (51 per cent of post-implementation respondents thought alcohol-related crime had stayed the same, seven per cent that it had decreased, and 13 per cent did not know.)

Diversification

Diversification was discussed in the post-implementation interviews with authority representatives. Although only limited change would be expected in 12 months, respondents noted that through the CI policy, efforts were being made to diversify the type of licensed premises operating in the city centre. This had resulted in more food-oriented venues opening, which had had a positive impact on the atmosphere of some NTE areas. It was hoped that other NTE areas would develop in the same way. However, it was acknowledged that it was ‘early days’ and that there was a need to further diversify the town centre and to integrate the different entertainment districts.

There was some evidence that efforts at diversification of the night-time economy were having an effect in the residents’ survey: in both the baseline and post-implementation periods, the most popular reason given for visiting the city centre in the evening was to go to pubs, bars or clubs, but significantly fewer people gave this as their main reason following the introduction of the Act.

Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned by the Home Office as part of a larger evaluation of the 2003 Licensing Act.

The research that contributed to this report involved many different organisation. The bulk of the empirical work in the site was mounted by the Applied Criminology Centre (ACC), University of Huddersfield: Dr. Rachel Armitage, Professor Alex Hirschfield, Leanne Monchuk, Dr Andrew Newton, Michelle Rogerson and Dr Aidan Wilcox and this is reflected in the authorship of this report. The ACC fieldworkers in Nottingham were Colette Nicholson and Amy Pearson. The role of the Institute for Criminal Policy Research was to draw this work together with that of other researchers, to create a synthesis report for the site. The original site report is available from the ACC.

We should acknowledge the contribution of others who were involved in the evaluation, notably the staff of BMRB especially Matthew Brown, Bruce Hayward and Matthew Sexton who managed the survey of residents in the five areas and to all the researchers at Cragg Ross Dawson, especially Tim Porter and Ben Toombs, who conducted the in-depth interviews in the case-study sites, and Home Office researchers who assembled a range of data both in the case study sites and nationally. We are grateful both to the research team at the Home Office who designed and oversaw the evaluation process: Alana Diamond, Catherine Nicol, Jonathan Smith, Corrine Charles, Beth Daws, Laura Brasnett, Sian Moley, Lucy Fletcher, Sharon Ross and Emily Diment.

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report sets out the key findings of research into the impact of the Licensing Act 2003 in Nottingham.

The Licensing Act 2003

The Licensing Act 2003, which came into effect on 24 November 2005, abolished set licensing hours in England and Wales. Opening hours of premises are now set locally by local authorities through the conditions of individual licenses. The aim of the legislation was to liberalise a rigid system whilst reducing the problems of rapid-drinking and disorder associated with a standard closing time. It was hoped that in the longer term, the Act would help bring about a drinking culture which attached less value to rapid-drinking and drunkenness as ends in themselves. The Act also sought to provide licensing authorities with new powers to deal with problematic premises and to encourage closer partnership between the range of authorities who tackle problems of alcohol-related crime and disorder.

The Act has been the subject of much controversy. Although the aim of the Act was specifically to address problems associated with late-night drinking, there was a great deal of political and media concern in the run-up to implementation about the impact that it would actually have. It was feared that premises would be open 24 hours a day, leading to heavier drinking and higher overall levels of consumption. There were worries both about the public health impact of the new licensing regime and its effects on crime and disorder.

Evaluation methodology

The Home Office role with respect to the Licensing Act relates largely to problems of alcohol-related crime and disorder. In 2005 the Department put into place a programme for evaluating the Act's impact on crime and disorder. The programme included British Crime Survey analysis, a survey of 30 police forces, and five detailed case studies – of which the Nottingham study is one.

All five case studies had a variety of components; these are described in Box 1.1.

Box 1.1: Components of research in Nottingham

1. Police recorded crime data

Collation and analysis of time-stamped police recorded crime data for the period December 2003 to December 2006 on:

- violence against the person
- criminal damage
- sexual assaults.

This work was conducted by the Applied Criminology Centre of the University of Huddersfield (ACC).

2. Calls to the police for disorder

Review, also by ACC, of calls to the police for disorder from April 2005 to November 2006.

3. Penalty notices for disorder

Collation of data on numbers of penalty notices for disorder (PNDs) issued in the period April 2004 to March 2007.

4. Health data

Collation and analysis of health data, also by ACC, for the period November 2003 to December 2006 (Friday and Saturday nights only) comprising:

- numbers of accident and emergency attendances
- numbers of ambulance call-outs
- assaults recorded by the ambulance service.

5. Residents' survey

A telephone survey of Nottingham residents conducted in two waves by the British Market Research Bureau (BMRB):

- Baseline survey conducted in February to June 2005 with a total of 649 respondents (including a separate boost sample of 149 people aged 18 to 30).
- Post-implementation survey conducted in February to May 2007 with a total of 754 respondents (including 171 in the boost sample).

6. Observation

25 visits to licensed premises undertaken by ACC in one baseline period (November 2005) and 20 in two post-implementation periods (January to March 2006 and January 2007).

7. Interviews with licensees, managers and staff of licensed premises

- 13 qualitative, semi-structured interviews conducted by ACC in January to March 2006 with 3 licensees, 4 managers, 4 members of bar staff and 2 door supervisors.
- 7 qualitative, semi-structured interviews conducted by ACC in January 2007 with 2 licensees, 4 managers, 1 members of bar staff.

8. Interviews with owners and licensees from late-night businesses

36 qualitative, semi-structured interviews with owners and licensees from a range of late-night businesses (pubs, clubs, restaurants, take-aways, an off-licence and a taxi company) in two phases:

- Baseline phase, October to November 2005 (15 interviews)
- Post-implementation phase, October 2006 to January 2007 (21 interviews).

These interviews were undertaken by Cragg, Ross and Dawson (CRD).

9. Interviews with authority representatives

15 qualitative, semi-structured interviews with representatives of the licensing authority and the 'responsible authorities' (police, fire service, and local authority planning, social services, environmental health, trading standards and health and safety departments), the licensing solicitor, the town centre manager, and a representative of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership. Interviews were conducted in two phases:

- Around the time of implementation of the Licensing Act, October to December 2005 (11 interviews)
- Post-implementation, November 2006 to February 2007 (4 interviews)

These interviews were undertaken by the Home Office.

The context of the Nottingham case study

The city of Nottingham has a population of 278,000. The city is a unitary authority, which is policed by a single police Basic Command Unit. It is estimated that approximately 10 per cent of the population are students, and that 14 per cent are aged 20-24, compared to an average 6.5 per cent in England (ONS mid-year estimates, 2004). Nottingham is a relatively deprived area: the 2004 Indices of Deprivation rank the city at seven out of 354 local authorities in England, where 1 is the most deprived area and 354 the least deprived.¹ Nottingham's night-time economy and some of the problems associated with the night-time economy are briefly described below.

¹ <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/NeighbourhoodProfileSearch.do?areald=276829>

Nottingham's night-time economy

As of March 2007, a total of 1,139 premises licences authorising the sale or supply of alcohol were in force across the Nottingham. Of these, 732 licenses authorised the sale of alcohol for consumption on the premises only, or for consumption both on and off the premises.² (See the discussion of 'current licensing statistics' in Chapter 4 for more details.)

Nottingham has a large and active night-economy. The key drinking areas are the Old Market Square and the Lace Market, both in the city centre (see Figure 1 for a map of the case study area). A large number of pubs, bars and clubs are located here, in a network of streets rather than on a single main 'drag'; there are also hotels, restaurants, retailers and some residential buildings (with more being built). Takeaways and taxi companies open late alongside licensed premises. The capacity of the city centre's licensed premises ranges from over 100 in the smaller premises to nearly 700 for the larger premises and 1500 for night clubs. It is estimated that within one mile of the Old Market square there are over 300 licensed premises, attracting approximately 50,000 persons in an evening. Young people visit the city centre from the surrounding area and from as far as 60 miles away.

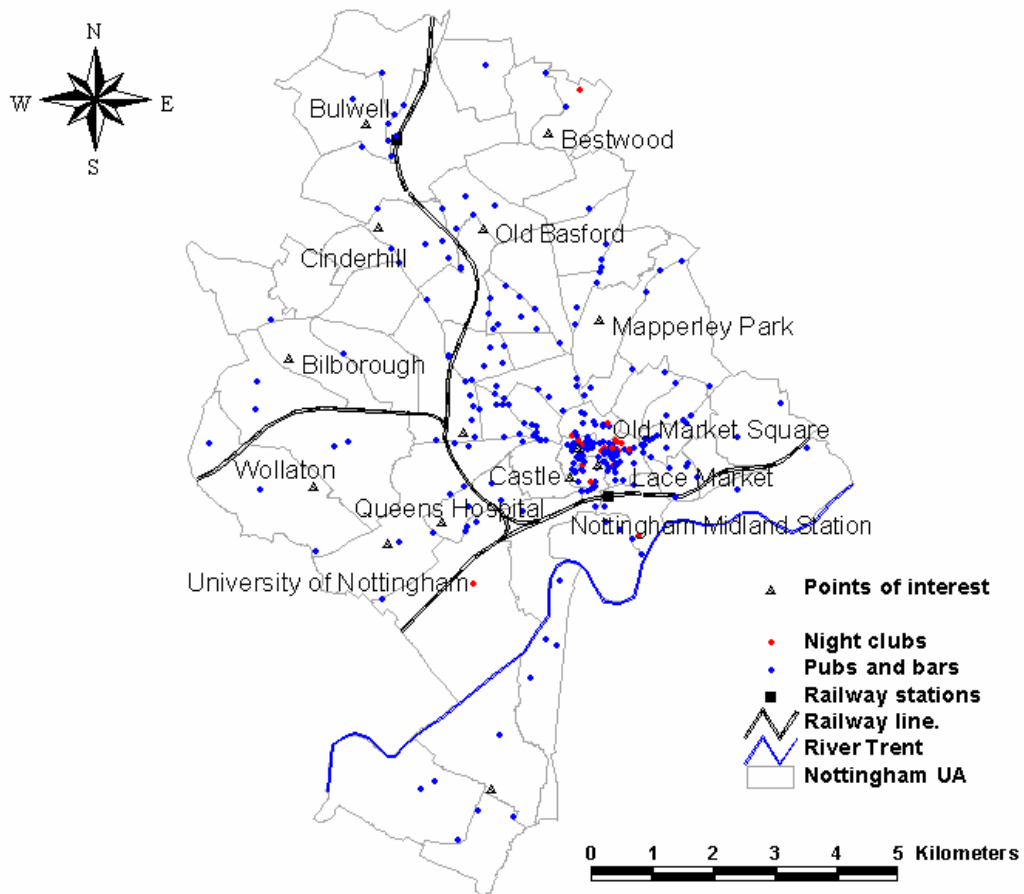
Old Market Square contains numerous large chain pubs. The majority of premises in this area offer drinks promotions, especially for spirits and bottled drinks (beer and alcopops). Most premises have fruit and/or games machines as well as pool tables. The target clientele for premises within Market Square are 18-35 year olds. However, whilst some premises were clearly aimed at a younger market, others seem to attract slightly older drinkers. Most premises in this area appear to attract those wanting cheap drinks as well as traditional ales. This area also attracts a large student clientele - many of the venues have regular student nights.

Lace Market contains many smaller, independent bars and clubs and has a lower concentration of licensed premises than Market Square. The premises in this area are bars rather than pubs and night clubs, and do not generally have fruit or game machines or pool tables. The drinks market in this area tends to be cocktails, wines

² Department for Culture, Media and Sport, www.dcms.gov.uk/reference_library/rands/statistics/alcohol_entertainment_licensing_statistic_s.htm

and lagers. The general target clientele in this area appears to be slightly older than that of Market Square (ages 21 to 45).³

Figure 1: case study area



Alcohol-related violence and disorder

Nottingham has a recent history of problems of alcohol-related violence and disorder, and indeed in the past few years has acquired a national reputation for serious violence

Like the other case study areas included in the Licensing Act evaluation, Nottingham city centre is a small, clearly defined area with a high density of licensed premises and other late-night businesses to which people come from some distance to spend a whole evening, often moving between venues. Non-drinkers and families are heavily outnumbered in these areas at peak times, partly because there is little of

³ Detail on premises in Market Square and Lace Market provided by ACC participant observation.

interest to them (the great majority of businesses are targeted exclusively or primarily at people for whom drinking is the main focus of the evening), and partly because the atmosphere which results from this emphasis is not attractive to them.

Business owners and managers in Nottingham who were interviewed by CRD in late 2005 acknowledged the existence of problems of alcohol-related violence and disorder in the city, and said that there had been little recent improvement. They said that trouble tended to primarily involve groups of younger people - mainly men but also increasingly women, typically in their 20s. Much of the trouble was said to take place on the streets, rather than inside venues. This was partly attributed to drunk people being refused entry to venues and creating disturbances at the door. Trouble was also said to occur at places nearby, where intoxicated people would queue at the end of the night, such as takeaways and taxi ranks and offices. Tensions between students and locals, and between different ethnic groups, were also cited as causes of violence and disorder.

The structure of the report

Following this introduction, there are five chapters to the report. Chapter 2 examines local measures to manage the night-time economy that are largely independent of the Licensing Act 2003. This is followed, in Chapter 3, by discussion of the development and content of local policy under the Licensing Act. Section 4 then looks at the implementation of local policy under the Act. Chapters 5 and 6 consider evidence for the Act's impact on crime and disorder in recorded crime figures (Chapter 5) and residents' and stakeholders' perceptions (Chapter 6).

2 TACKLING ALCOHOL-RELATED CRIME AND DISORDER

This report is primarily concerned with the implementation and repercussions of the Licensing Act 2003 in Nottingham. However, implementation of local policy under the Act occurs in a context partly shaped by other measures aimed at managing and addressing problems associated with the consumption of alcohol and the night-time economy. The scope of these other measures is briefly considered in this chapter.

Tackling alcohol-related crime and disorder: summary

Such measures undertaken recently in Nottingham include:

The introduction of the multi-agency 'Respect for Nottingham' campaign, including use of high-visibility police foot patrols in the city centre, the introduction of marshals at taxi ranks at night and enhanced enforcement of pub and club licensing conditions.

The creation of an Alcohol Designation Order for the city centre, making it an offence to consume alcohol from a container when asked not to do so by an authorised officer in any street within the designated area.

Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns (AMECs) and the Tackling Violent Crime Programme (TVCP), involving various elements of high-visibility, multi-agency enforcement, including increased use of penalty notices for disorder, test purchase operations at on- and off-licences, and the use of dispersal orders tackling anti-social behaviour.

Initiatives involving or undertaken by licensed premises themselves, such as the local Pubwatch scheme; an open-net radio system linking premises to each other and to the police; and premises' use of SIA-registered door staff and internal CCTV systems.

Multi-agency action

Over the past three to four years, widespread awareness among the statutory authorities – particularly the police and local authority - of problems of alcohol-related violence and disorder in Nottingham led to the development of proactive partnership initiatives aimed at improving management of the night-time economy.

In mid-2005, the 'Respect for Nottingham' campaign was introduced as a multi-agency approach involving the police, city council and other partners, for the purpose

of tackling crime and disorder 'from the most serious and violent crime to niggling nuisance behaviour that spoils the quality of life for the law-abiding majority of people in the city'.⁴ Although 'Respect for Nottingham' is not solely focussed on alcohol-related crime and disorder, one of its six key initiatives involves the use of high-visibility police foot patrols in Nottingham city centre both at night and during the day, to deter drink-fuelled disorder and provide reassurance. This initiative also encompasses the introduction of marshals at taxi ranks at night (a scheme that was successfully piloted during the Christmas period) and enhanced enforcement of pub and club licensing conditions.

Alongside the launch of 'Respect for Nottingham', new street drinking byelaws were introduced with an Alcohol Designation Order, which made it an offence to consume alcohol from a container when asked not to do so by an authorised officer (police officer or street warden) in any street within the designated area. The designated area covers the city centre, and hence the main drinking areas.

Enforcement

Licensing enforcement activity by the police in Nottingham – both before and after implementation of the Licensing Act 2003 - has tended focus on the premises associated with the greatest problems of crime and disorder. This activity includes carrying out test purchase operations (targeting sales to under-age drinkers), issuing warnings to licensees, and helping licensees to develop action plans for addressing specific issues, and conducting joint inspection visits with trading standards and environment health officers to check that licensees were complying with their licence conditions.

Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns (AMECs) and the Tackling Violent Crime Programme (TVCP) are Home Office-sponsored campaigns that have been implemented in targeted areas across England and Wales. These campaigns involve various elements of high-visibility, multi-agency enforcement, including increased use of penalty notices for disorder (see below), test purchase operations at on- and off-licences, the use of dispersal orders tackling anti-social behaviour, and accompanying publicity.

⁴http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/sitemap/services/policing_and_public_safety/wt_safe_in_nottingham.htm

AMECs were implemented in Nottingham from July to September 2004, January to February 2005, November 2005 to January 2006 and May to June 2006. An additional summer mini-AMEC operated between July and September 2005. As the second AMEC was undertaken around the time of implementation of the Licensing Act 2003, it is difficult to disentangle the initial impact of changes introduced under the Act from the possible impact of the AMEC.

Penalty notices for disorder (PNDs), which were introduced by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001, are a tool for tackling low level offending and anti-social behaviour. They are frequently used to target problems of drunken, rowdy behaviour. PNDs can be issued by the police and in a limited capacity by community support officers and other accredited persons. Figures on PNDs issued in Nottingham which were collated for the Licensing Act evaluation show that there has been a slow and steady overall increase in the numbers issued per month from mid-2004 to early 2007.

Measures involving licensed premises

Nottingham city centre operates a Pubwatch scheme, which involves quarterly meetings between licensees, police and council officials. All the bar and club managers interviewed by CRD in the baseline period were members of the scheme, and had a range of views on its value and efficacy. Views were also mixed on the quality of informal communication and cooperation between licensees outside the Pubwatch meetings.

Related to the Pubwatch scheme, most licensees have access to an open-net radio system which connects premises with each other as well as with the police. Licensees can use this system for general communication but also to warn each other about specific problematic groups and to call the police when serious problems arise. Some of the CRD interviewees criticised the system for being slow and unwieldy in emergencies because it is not run directly by the police: call-outs rely on the prioritisations and decisions of the council operators.

The CRD interviews indicate that bars and clubs opening after 11 pm tend to have door and security staff accredited by the Security Industry Authority (SIA) and it has been noted elsewhere that all door staff in Nottingham are SIA accredited. Door staff

at different venues often come from the same agency, and maintain good relations with one another. Venues also tend to have internal CCTV systems – some of which are sophisticated arrangements with numerous digital cameras and hard-disk recorders. Most also have their own systems of panic buttons with which to alert other members of staff in the event of trouble

Voluntary agreements between premises on pricing and promotions seem to have been reached in the past – with, for example, a minimum drink price having been imposed by ‘gentlemen’s agreement’. However, pressures of competition between businesses and the impact of standard company pricing in some chains can make it difficult to sustain such arrangements.

3 LOCAL POLICY UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

This chapter describes the development of local licensing policy under the Licensing Act 2003, and the content of that policy as set out in Nottingham's Statement of Licensing Policy.

Local policy under the Licensing Act: summary

The licensing authority (LA) sits within the local authority Environmental Services department. The responsible authorities (RAs), which must be consulted on all licence applications, are police, fire service, and local authority planning, social services, environmental health, trading standards and health and safety departments.

A multi-agency licensing steering group was established to agree details of how the Licensing Act would be implemented. However, some RAs have been uncertain about their roles under the Act.

In the run-up to implementation, the LA engaged with the licensing trade to discuss their responsibilities under the Act.

As required under the Licensing Act, Nottingham City Council published its 'Statement of Licensing Policy' (SLP) in 2005, which sets out how the LA will carry out the licensing functions defined by the Act.

Under Act, the LA may adopt a special policy to address the issue of the 'cumulative impact' of large numbers of licensed premises in particular areas. Nottingham's SLP specifies that, in line with this policy, the city centre has been designated a Saturation Zone. This introduces a rebuttable presumption that certain types of licence application for premises within the Saturation Zone will be refused.

The development of local policy

Within Nottingham City Council, the licensing authority (LA) sits within the local authority Environmental Services department. Section 5 of the Licensing Act 2003 imposes a statutory duty on licensing authorities to produce and keep under review a Statement of Licensing Policy. The purpose of the policy statement is to set out how the licensing authority intends to carry out its licensing functions and thereby promote the licensing objectives of:

- Prevention of crime and disorder;
- Public safety;
- Prevention of public nuisance;

- Protection of children from harm.

The Act specifies responsible authorities (RAs) who must be consulted for each licence application. The Nottingham RAs are the police, fire service, and local authority planning, social services, environmental health, trading standards and health and safety departments.

According to LA and RA respondents interviewed for the evaluation by the Home Office, preparation for implementation of the Licensing Act started in 2003, in accordance with the Government's white paper 'Time for Reform'. This gave rise to the formation of a multi-agency licensing steering group in 2004. The remit of the group was to agree the details of how the Act would be implemented in Nottingham, and to draft the Statement of Licensing Policy.

Despite this early commitment to multi-agency work on licensing and a "Memorandum of Understanding" relating to the role of the RAs, some have been uncertain about their role with respect to the Licensing Act. For example, the fire department respondent said in interview that the service's own legislation already covered the necessary issues, and the Act was merely a duplication of these powers. Representatives from both social services and the planning authority were unsure about why they had been made RAs, and how they were required to deal with licence applications. The planning authority respondent stated that it was 'inappropriate' for his agency to be named as an RA.

In the run-up to implementation of the Act, the Nottingham LA was proactive in engaging with the licensing trade regarding their responsibilities under the Act. For example, workshops were held with licensees from different types of businesses in order to make them aware of their roles and responsibilities under the Act. Additionally, the police liaised with licensees about what kinds of extensions and variations to licences would be acceptable.

The Statement of Licensing Policy

In essence, Nottingham's Statement of Licensing Policy details the process by which applications for new licences and for variations to existing licences will be dealt with.

Section 6 of the Statement looks at the impact of licensed activities, and notes that:

The characteristics of an area and the impact that the premises may have upon that area are a fundamental consideration in determining whether a licence should be granted and if so what conditions should be attached to it ... Consideration will primarily be given to the direct impact of the licensed activity on members of the public living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area concerned (para. 6.1).

With respect to the licensing objective of minimising crime and disorder, it is noted that issues to be addressed by licence applicants include:

- Use of CCTV both within and outside the premises
- Metal detection and search facilities
- Procedures for risk assessing promotions and events such as 'happy hours' and plans for minimising such risk
- Measures to prevent the use or supply of illegal drugs
- Employment of licensed door supervisors and other appropriately trained staff
- Participation in an appropriate Pub Watch Scheme or other such scheme aimed at achieving a safe, secure and social drinking environment, eg.g. adoption of a minimum pricing policy, participation in a good management scheme, etc
- The licensee providing a taxi call point, waiting and concierge service for taxi marshalling at the licensed premises.
- Use of measures aimed at ensuring patrons are more relaxed and quieter when leaving the licensed premises e.g. playing quieter music and promoting non-alcoholic drinks towards the end of the event, ensuring good lighting outside the premises, staggering the closing time with regard to nearby licensed premises, etc (para. 6.13).

Section 10 of the policy contains a brief 'general enforcement statement' which includes:

It is the intention of the [licensing] Authority to establish and maintain enforcement protocols with the local police and other relevant enforcement agencies. Such protocols will provide for the proportionate targeting of enforcement action in respect of licensed activities that require greater attention due to problems such as bad management and the operation of high-risk activities, and a corresponding lighter touch for well run, lower risk activities (para. 10.2).

Cumulative impact policy

Guidance issued under the Licensing Act states that the licensing authority may, in appropriate circumstances, adopt a special policy to address the issue of the 'cumulative impact' of large numbers of licensed premises in particular areas.

Nottingham's Statement of Licensing Policy specifies that, in line with this policy on cumulative impact, the city centre has been designated a Saturation Zone:

For several years, the Authority has been aware of views being publicly expressed that all or some parts of the City Centre may be suffering from Cumulative Impact. The City has also been the subject of media coverage on this topic and the issue was once again raised during the initial consultation on this Policy Statement. On the basis of this information the Authority made further inquiries and received further comments and evidence suggesting that it is both necessary and appropriate to include an approach to this issue in this Policy Statement (para. 6.21).

The cumulative impact policy introduces a rebuttable presumption that certain types of licence application (involving the sale or supply of alcohol) for premises within the Saturation Zone will be refused. The city centre Saturation Zone encompasses both Lace Market and Old Market Square, and it is estimated that the capacity of all types of premises within this general area totals over 100,000.

The Home Office interviews with LA and RA representatives reveal some concerns with how the cumulative impact policy was decided. The policy was agreed at a very late stage and therefore only applied to applications received *after* 6 August 2005. Some interviewees felt that the issue of a cumulative impact policy should have been considered earlier by the LA.

It also emerged from the Home Office interviews that during the consultation process, Nottinghamshire Police advised that the LA should not adopt a cumulative impact policy until the need for one arose in terms of specific licence applications. Although the police advised against the policy, they were asked to provide evidence for one in the form of hot-spot analysis of offences.

4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL POLICY UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

This chapter looks at how licensing policy has been implemented in Nottingham following the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003. Three aspects to implementation are considered here: first, the extent to which additional licensing hours have been applied for, granted and used; secondly, enforcement activity under the Act; thirdly, multi-agency working under the Act.

Implementation of local policy under the Licensing Act: summary

Of 261 premises on which data were available, 14 per cent applied for no additional licensing hours under the Act, 38 per cent applied for between one and eight additional hours per week, and 49 per cent applied for nine or more additional hours per week.

It appears that most pubs and clubs in Nottingham were granted the capacity to open for one or two hours longer per night, but these additional hours tended to be used only on relatively busy nights – likely to be Friday and Saturday nights.

Conditions were often attached to licences that were varied, aimed at improving security in and around premises.

The Licensing Act did not fundamentally alter the enforcement role of the statutory authorities, including the police. However, post-implementation business representatives noted a greater police presence were aware of more visible policing of the night-time economy, and more robust enforcement of licence conditions.

Among LA and RA representatives, perceptions of multi-agency working under the Act were generally positive. However, dealing with licence applications had imposed considerable demands on all the agencies involved, and the processes tended to be complex and somewhat cumbersome.

Applications for additional licensing hours

There are no comprehensive data on the numbers of additional licensing hours applied for by Nottingham premises under the Licensing Act. However, ACC acquired data on licence applications by a total of 261 premises. This was the number of premises for which address details and other minimum operational data were available via the Licensing Authority. Based on the assumption that, among these

premises, the pubs had previously closed at 11 p.m. and the clubs at 2 a.m., ACC calculated that:

- 14 per cent of the premises applied for no additional hours
- 38 per cent of the premises applied for between one and eight additional hours per week
- 49 per cent applied for nine or more additional hours per week.

The above figures are supported by a finding of the baseline interviews conducted by CRD with late-night businesses: most of these had applied for additional hours – typically one or two hours per night.

Responses to applications for additional hours

The extent to which additional hours *applied for* by licensed premises were *granted* by the licensing authority is difficult to determine from the available information. Licensees and premises managers interviewed by ACC gave the impression that they had not encountered any problems in obtaining the extended licences they had applied for, although it should be noted that ACC carried out only a few interviews and elsewhere a different view was given (see below). One respondent said: 'Licenses are being handed out like sweets.'

In contrast, post-implementation interviews conducted by the Home Office with licensing and responsible authority (LA and RA) representatives indicated that the Nottingham LA was 'robust' in its approach to granting extended opening hours. Generally (according to these respondents), for premises which were problematic in terms of crime and disorder, the police objected to any requested extensions of hours, although these objections were not always successful. For those premises that were not problematic, the general rule was that the police did not object to an additional two hours. A strict approach was also taken with new premises opening in the city centre (to which the cumulative impact policy had been applied in August), until the licensees could prove that they could manage their premises responsibly – for example:

They've put in for a new premises licence, asking for 4am and we said 'No, no, you're new to the city, we don't know you, we know this type of venue causes problems. So take the licence you've already got, operate it for a period of time without problems and then we'll look favourably on a relaxation'. (Police respondent)

The findings of the CRD interviews with business support the claim of a robust approach to additional hours applications. Generally, there seemed to have been a blanket objection from the police to extensions of more than an hour or so per night, and all those who wanted more than this had to go to appeal.

Use of additional hours by licensed premises

Just as there is no clear picture about the numbers of additional hours *granted*, data are also lacking on the numbers of additional hours *used*. Home Office interviewers were told by LA and RA representatives that, in the main, additional hours were only granted in the expectation that they would be used. The rationale for this was that it would be difficult for the police to know when and where to target their resources, if premises had very extended hours that were not regularly used. However, it was recognised by the Home Office respondents that, in practice, additional hours tended to be used flexibly by licensees. This was a finding also of the CRD interviews with businesses, from which it was concluded that many licensees appreciated the flexibility to open later or close earlier according to customer demand.

The ACC researchers visited a small number of premises (7)⁵ to establish, among other matters, their actual hours of business. All seven of these premises had applied for additional hours: four for nine or more hours per week, and three for between one and eight hours. On average, these premises used just 34 per cent of their additional hours (assuming all additional hours that had been applied for were granted) per week, and ranged from using no additional hours to six additional hours weekly.

In short, it appears that implementation of the Licensing Act led to most pubs and clubs in Nottingham being granted the capacity to open for one or two hours longer per night, but these additional hours tended to be used only on relatively busy nights – likely to be Friday and Saturday nights. At the time of the evaluation the extent to which the cumulative impact policy applied to the city centre had, in practice, an impact on the handling of licence applications is difficult to determine.

Imposition of licence conditions

According to post-implementation interviews conducted by the Home Office, where premises were granted a variation in their licence under the Licensing Act, the police

⁵ Four of the seven premises were, or had previously been, among the 15 Nottingham premises associated with the highest levels of violent offences.

ensured that conditions were attached to the licence that would help to prevent crime and disorder:

...People come to me for variation in the city centre and I'll say, 'Right, you want a variation, what do you want?' 'I want later hours.' 'OK, what's in it for the Police? ... You want me to deal with incidents later at night at your venue, I want to know what's in it for the Police. What are you going to do that's going to reassure me that I'm not going to get any more incidents?' (Police respondent)

Examples of conditions include the use of SIA-registered door staff, upgrading or updating CCTV systems, last-entry times, use of plastic glasses, measures to ensure that people leave quietly at the end of the night, and proof of age schemes. For premises with specific problems, conditions were added which related to these. Premises within the city centre were generally more heavily conditioned than those outside, as they were less problematic in terms of crime and disorder. Emphasis was placed on making sure that the conditions added to licenses were specific and enforceable. Conditions – for example, requirements for CCTV and door staff - were added not only to licences of pubs and clubs, but also to licences of some fast food restaurants and take-aways, as it was perceived by the authorities these venues were becoming more problematic in terms of crime and disorder.

Notwithstanding the tighter licence conditions that had apparently been introduced since the Act, post-implementation interviews conducted by CRD with business owners and licensees indicated that there were no major differences in the security measures adopted individual premises. However, there was a greater emphasis on formal training of bar staff, primarily with respect to identifying drunk customers (and refusing them entry or service); some CCTV systems had been updated; and there was wider use of SIA-accredited door staff.

Licensees, managers and staff interviewed by ACC in the post-implementation period reported that the management of their premises and their use of drinks promotions and live entertainment had not changed since the introduction of the Act. One respondent, however, said that he ensured that more door staff and management were on duty at weekends.

Enforcement under the Licensing Act

Among its other aims, implementation of the Licensing Act is intended to involve enhanced enforcement of licence conditions and, more generally, of public order. However, levels of enforcement were apparently being increased in Nottingham independently of the Act (see Chapter Two, above). For example, a police respondent reported to Home Office researchers, around the time of the Act's implementation, that the police had recently started working more closely with other responsible authorities, but that this was a product of local Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns rather than the Act. The police respondent foresaw little changes to the police enforcement role:

No, I don't see there's any reason why anything should change really, I mean at the end of the day we are driven by violence and disorder and not by the Licensing Act. The Licensing Act is a tool to help us reduce violence and disorder and offences within that - we would have used them before and carry on using them.

Among the LA and RA respondents interviewed at the time of implementation, the pollution control department of environmental health was the only service which anticipated a change to its role. This department was planning to undertake a strict enforcement campaign, in conjunction with the police, as soon as the Act became live. It was reported that the inspection visits would result in serious action if premises were found to be in breach of their licensing conditions. For those authorities which did not yet implement joint inspection visits planned, it was acknowledged that these would be a useful approach to enforcement.

Post-implementation interviews conducted with the police, LA, Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Town Centre Manager indicated that the Act may indeed have encouraged greater use of joint inspection visits. These visits (although not a new initiative – see Chapter Three, above) were being routinely carried out by the police, trading standards and environmental health officers. The inspections were intelligence-led as opposed to random so that the most problematic premises were targeted. A cited example of good practice was the use of 'mystery customer' visits to problematic premises, using plain clothes police officers. The police and trading standards officers were also reportedly active in carrying out test purchase operations (as they had been before the Act and as part of the local AMECs). For those premises which failed the test purchases, the licensees were brought to the

police station where they were told that if they failed another test their licence would be reviewed.

Responses of licensees to increased enforcement

From the interviews with businesses conducted by both ACC and CRD in the post-implementation period, it appears that there was a general awareness of an increased police presence in and around licensed premises since the introduction of the Act. According to respondents, this presence took the form both of more visible policing of problems of crime and disorder associated with the night-time economy, and more robust enforcement of licence conditions.

For example, among CRD respondents the issue of underage drinking came up more frequently than in pre-implementation interviews, and was the subject of much concern and debate. This appeared to be in response both to more active policing of underage drinking and to a more general sense of responsibility resulting from the introduction of personal licenses. The CRD respondents also indicated that their relationships with the LA and the police were mixed. Some said they were on good terms with the authorities, and a number remarked that the police had become more relaxed and friendly in their methods of preventing disorder. However, others alluded to an air of suspicion and their reluctance to engage too closely with the authorities. Overall, there was a sense that barriers which had existed between licensees and the authorities in 2005 had been breached in some cases, but had rarely broken down completely. One respondent commented:

This is the situation the Act has left in Nottingham. You still don't want to speak your mind entirely to the authorities because you are too concerned about any impact it may have on your business. Surely that can't be right. The police are there to serve the community and we want to make sure the city centres are safe. It is in nobody's interest for the centre not to be effectively managed.

Among ACC business respondents, the majority spoke highly of the police and stated that they saw them on a regular basis both formally (weekly or monthly) and informally (daily). Most said their contact with the police had increased since the introduction of the Act, and that the city centre definitely had a greater police presence. On the whole, respondents felt the increased police presence was helpful, although two said the police had a negative impact on their businesses because the

kinds of people who tended to frequent their premises felt uncomfortable with the increased police presence.

Partnership working under the Licensing Act

As applies also to enforcement activity, partnership working on the night-time economy (and its associated problems) received increasing emphasis in Nottingham independently of the introduction of the Licensing Act. But the Act further enhanced the role of partnership, for example with respect to the handling of licence applications and – as already discussed – joint enforcement visits to premises.

Respondents to the Home Office post-implementation interviews generally agreed that the Act had led to improved partnership working between the LA and RAs, although some RAs were more engaged with the process than others. One multi-agency approach to managing the night-time economy that directly resulted from the Act was the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) specifically focussed on licensed premises and the night-time economy. The aim of the bid was to 'create and promote a lively and attractive environment that allows a wide range of businesses to thrive by encouraging a mix of people to visit the area for its vibrant leisure and entertainment experience'. It was hoped that Pubwatch would have some say in how the funding generated by the BID would be spent.

If perceptions of multi-agency working under the Act were generally positive, it was also clear from the Home Office interviews – both those conducted around the time of implementation and the post-implementation interviews - that dealing with licence applications had imposed considerable demands on all the agencies involved. This was because of the large number of licensed premises in Nottingham, and the fact the majority of applications were received in the final two weeks of the transitional period:

...many applicants clearly left their application for conversion or variation later in the day, as happened across the country. And in that last two weeks we received about a good 95% of those 1,200 applications...And really people like the police, health and safety, all were saying that we're overwhelmed by the number of applications that came in because of the volume. (LA representative)

The processes involved in dealing with licence applications tended to be complex and somewhat cumbersome, thanks in part to the number of partners involved. Hence, for example, the respondent from food safety said that his department had

not received all of the applications, as applicants appeared to be confused about having to send their forms to all three subgroups of environmental health (food safety, noise pollution and health and safety). A social services representative also talked about 'something going wrong in terms of the system because we are not being copied in to all the applications'.

With respect to applications received, RAs varied in the numbers of representations they had made. For example at the time of the interviews, food safety reported making 300 objections; the police between 140 and 150 objections; and pollution control 26 objections. Some RAs (including social services, trading standards and planning) had not yet made any representations, which had not gone unnoticed by some of the more active RAs.

Current licensing statistics for Nottingham

At the time of writing (November 2007), the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has recently published a statistical bulletin on licences and licence applications from across England and Wales, including breakdowns by licensing authority. The data were collected by means of a survey of all licensing authorities.⁶

The Nottingham LA reported that as of 31 March 2007, a total of 1,139 premises licences – that is, licenses authorising the sale of alcohol, late-night refreshment or regulated entertainment, or any combination of these activities - were in force across the authority area. Of these, 1,030 authorised the sale or supply of alcohol for on and/or off-site consumption. Table 4.1 provides more details on Nottingham's premises licences.

In Nottingham, 26 premises had 24-hour licences in March 2007. Four of these were pubs or nightclubs; 8 were supermarkets or stores; 4 were hotel bars; and the remaining ten were classed as 'other'.

⁶ All the survey findings can be found at www.dcms.gov.uk/reference_library/rands/statistics/alcohol_entertainment_licensing_statistics.htm

Table 4.1: Premises licences in force in the Nottingham licensing authority area, as of 31 March 2007

Sale or supply of alcohol			Late-night refreshment	Any regulated entertainment	All premises licences*
On-sales only	Off-sales only	Both on- & off-sales			
127	298	605			
1,030			743	762	1,139*

* The sum of the different categories of licence is more than the total of premises licences because most licences authorise a combination of activities.

Over the first full financial year since implementation of the Licensing Act – from April 2006 to March 2007 - a total of 119 new premises licences were applied for in Nottingham. Seventy-two applications for new licences were granted, and one was refused (the sum of those granted and refused does not add up to the total number of applications, because some of the applications would have been dealt with after the reporting period). Over the same period, 90 applications were made to vary premises licences: that is, to change the terms of the licence, for example with respect to opening hours, licensable activities or licence conditions. Seventy-nine variation applications were granted and none was refused, although it should be noted that variations are not always granted in line with the original application but may have further conditions and/or amendments made.

5 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE LICENSING ACT ON CRIME AND DISORDER (1): POLICE AND HEALTH DATA

This chapter assesses the impact, if any, of the Licensing Act on levels of alcohol-related crime and disorder, as evidenced by police recorded crime data on violence against the person and criminal damage,⁷ and numbers of calls to the police for disorder. The data were analysed at different levels: macro (entire study area), meso (near to licensed premises) and micro (at or inside licensed premises). The spatial analysis, which made use of a Geographical Information System (GIS), was carried out in order to assess whether the Act had impacted on crime and disorder in specific locations – especially areas around licensed premises.⁸

In addition to police data, some health data were also collected for the evaluation and are briefly discussed in the final part of the chapter. All the data reviewed in this chapter were collated and analysed by ACC.

Police data on crime and disorder: summary

Analysis of police recorded crime data from before and after implementation of the Licensing Act produced the following findings:

The post-implementation period saw a small increase in incidents of violence against the person. The monthly average of 751 incidents in the baseline period rose to 771 in the post-implementation period – an increase of 3 per cent.

The number of incidents of weekend violence – Friday and Saturday nights only - increased by seven per cent in the post-implementation period (based on an average figure for the two baseline years). The increase in weekend violence was concentrated in the hours after midnight.

In the baseline period, 22 per cent of violent offences occurred in the 'cluster area' containing the highest concentration of licensed premises, and 18 per cent within 50m buffer zones around premises. These figures increased to 26 per cent and 22 per cent respectively after implementation.

The main hot-spots of violence were the same before and after implementation,

⁷ Sexual offences data were also collected for the evaluation, but it is difficult to draw conclusions from these about any potential impact of the Licensing Act because of the small numbers of incidents (around 45 per month in both the baseline and post-implementation periods).

⁸ GIS is a computerised system for the capture, storage, retrieval, analysis and visualisation of spatial data. It allows crime to be mapped over time and space, and to be cross referenced with multiple data sources, for example licensed premises and land use. See Technical Annex for more detail on methodology.

but after implementation the hot-spots persisted into the early hours of the morning (while diminishing in intensity) in two key drinking areas.

1,504 violent offences were recorded in or at licensed premises during the two-year baseline period. 15 premises (five per cent of the total) accounted for 40 per cent of these offences. In twelve months after implementation, 909 offences were recorded in or at premises; again the 'top 15' accounted for 40 per cent of them.

Criminal damage offences declined after implementation of the Act. There was an average monthly figure of 1,054 incidents in the baseline period compared to 934 post-implementation - a decline of 11 per cent.

Criminal damage was much less concentrated around licensed premises than violence. In both the baseline and post-implementation periods, eight per cent of offences occurred in the licensed premises 'cluster area', and seven per cent in the 50m buffer zones around licensed premises.

There was little change in number of calls to the police for disorder between baseline and post-implementation. The average monthly figure for the eight baseline months was 376, compared to 370 after implementation. Calls were somewhat concentrated near licensed premises: in the baseline period, 14 per cent of calls were made in the 'cluster area' and 12 per cent in the 50m buffer zones. After implementation, these figures decreased very marginally to 13 per cent and 11 per cent respectively.

There was a 23% drop in the number of A & E attendances between the first and second of the pre-implementation years: from 5,032 to 3,869. The number then rose to 4,102 in the post-implementation period – a rise of 6 per cent on the previous year.

The annual distribution of attendances was broadly similar in 2005 and 2006 – with, for example, attendances peaking in July and October. Temporal patterns were also fairly consistent, although there was a slight decrease in attendance between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. during the post-implementation period.

Levels of violence – macro analysis

Violence against the person is a diverse crime category which includes offences such as murder, wounding and common assault. Numbers of recorded offences of violence were analysed for a two-year pre-implementation period of December 2003 to November 2005, and a one-year post-implementation period of December 2005 to December 2006. It should be noted that changes to the recording of violence against

the person offences since April 2005, particularly in relation to less serious wounding and common assault, may influence the results of this analysis.⁹

Across Nottingham, levels of violence against the person were generally higher in the post-implementation period compared to the baseline period. In the baseline period, the average annual total was 9,006 – although the total in year 2 was substantially higher than in year 1. The total for the post-implementation period was 9,211 – lower than the previous year, but three per cent higher than the baseline average. These totals equate to an average monthly figure for the baseline period of 751, compared to 771 for the post-implementation period. For the first four months after implementation, the monthly average reduced compared to the baseline, but the trend was reversed in the remainder of the post-implementation period. Table 5.1 shows the monthly figures and the associated percentage changes.

Table 5.1 Violence against the person monthly crime counts in Nottingham (December 2003 to December 2006)

	Year				Post implementation percentage change (monthly average)
	2003	2004	2005	2006	
January		760	814	661	-16.0
February		661	749	652	-7.5
March		666	897	695	-11.1
April		659	830	740	-0.6
May		718	856	813	3.3
June		715	840	856	10.1
July		640	897	908	18.2
August		743	745	778	4.6
September		734	707	783	8.7
October		788	789	832	5.5
November		728	681	781	10.9
December	616	777	755	763	8.4

⁹ The baseline period is an average of the two year period 2004/2005.

Note: shaded months are post-implementation period.

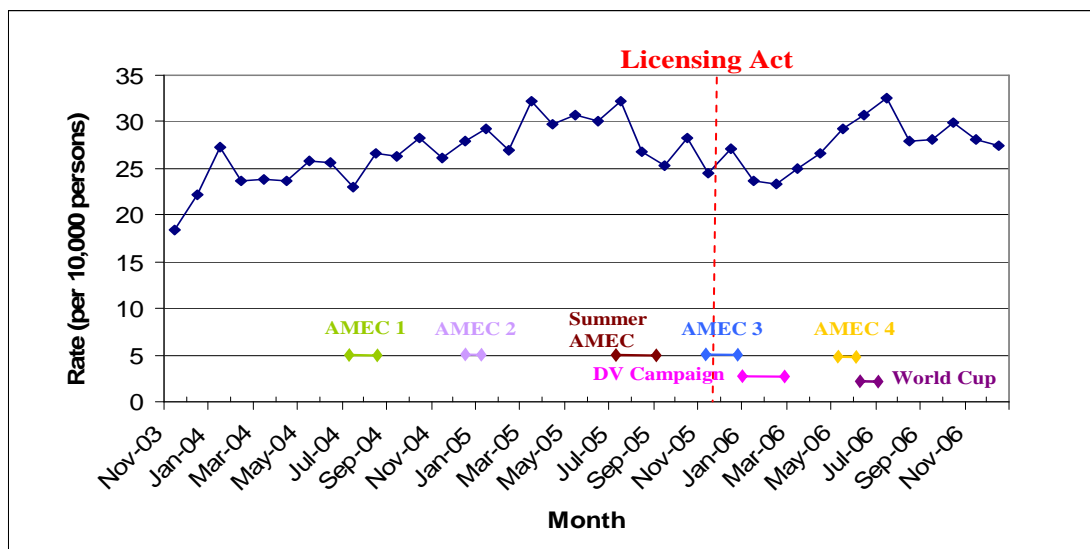
T-tests were run to determine whether there were any significant changes in levels of violent offences over the baseline and post-implementation periods. For the purpose of the tests, each year was subdivided into half-year periods to account for seasonal fluctuations, and weekly rather than monthly values were used. This analysis found that there was a significant increase in violent offences in the first six months of the

⁹ Hence, for example, national recorded crime figures show increases in levels of less serious wounding and common assault from 2004 to 2006, but the British Crime Survey shows a decline in these offences over the same period.

baseline period, but in the first six months of the post implementation period this change had reversed to a significant reduction.

Figure 5.1 presents the monthly rates of violence against the person in Nottingham (per 10,000 persons) across the baseline and post implementation periods plotted against the introduction of the Act and the timing of other relevant initiatives. The graph shows that several initiatives with the potential to impact on violence against the person were implemented in Nottingham.

Figure 5.1 Violence against the person crime rate in Nottingham UA and local initiatives (November 2003 to December 2006)



The graph shows that in the months prior to the introduction of the Act, violence against the person was declining. This trend continued in the months immediately following the Act but did not continue beyond March 2006 which saw the beginning of a steady increase in violence against the person. Five Alcohol Misuse Enforcement Campaigns (AMECs) were implemented between July to September 2004, January to February 2005, November 2005 to January 2006 and May to June 2006. An additional summer mini AMEC operated between July and September 2005. A small decrease in violence against the person corresponded with AMEC1 and the summer mini AMEC. However this was not repeated for the others. Offences peaked in July 2006, corresponding with the World Cup. A percentage decrease in the number of offences recorded was seen between January 2006 and March 2006. This was also when the 'Domestic Violence Enforcement Campaign' was in operation.

There was a 25% increase in the number of PNDs issued between the baseline and post implementation periods (836-1043). Plotted by month they show a steady overall increase in the numbers issued from mid-2004 to early 2007. However, there is no clear immediate increase from November 2005 when the Act was introduced.

Serious and less serious violent crime for the entire case study area

Violence against the person offences were examined at the macro, meso level and micro level. However, changes to the recording process of more serious violence against the person offences (for example 'threats to kill') since April 2005 may influence the results of this analysis. Additionally, lower level offences including other offences against the person (less serious violence) are likely to be influenced by police activity (e.g. the use of PNDs) more so than more serious violence. For this reason the average baseline and post implementation violence against the person offences were separated into more serious and other violence against the person offences.

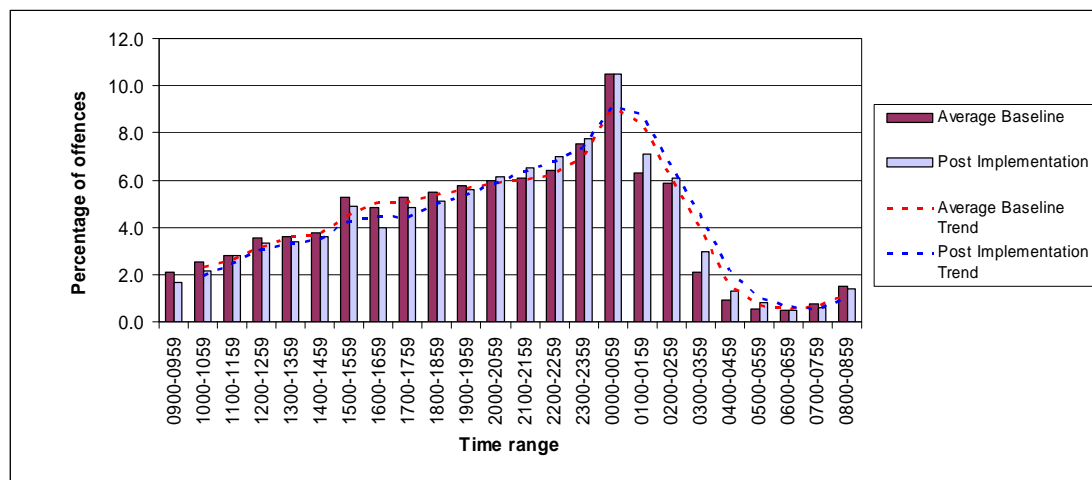
Figures for the most serious violence against the person offences, which include murder, attempted murder, manslaughter and wounding revealed a decline of 18 per cent from 233 offences per year in the baseline period (the average figure for the two baseline years) to 191 offences in the post-implementation year.¹⁰

Daily, weekly and annual distribution of violent offences

With respect to the daily distribution of offences across Nottingham, it is difficult to identify any definite changes to the peaks of violence post-implementation: in both the baseline and post-implementation periods, for example, the greatest proportion of offences was recorded between midnight and 1 a.m. Likewise, patterns in weekly distribution of violence - with offences increasing from Thursday to Saturday and decreasing Sunday to Wednesday - did not change significantly (Figure 5.2).

¹⁰ Because the numbers of serious violence offences are small, geographical analysis of these data was not undertaken.

Figure 5.2 Proportional changes to violence against the person offences by time of day in Nottingham UA (average baseline and post implementation periods)



Analysis of violence against the person figures for Friday and Saturday nights only reveal more significant changes between the baseline and post-implementation periods. The number of incidents of weekend violence increased by seven per cent in the post-implementation period (based on an average figure for the two baseline years). The weekend figures also show that the increase in violent incidents was concentrated in the hours after midnight. The weekend increases in violence are important in the context of the finding that pubs and clubs that were granted longer licensing hours were likely to use their additional hours on busy nights only – presumably, weekend nights (see Chapter Four).

Levels of violence – meso analysis

Meso-level analysis indicates that violent offences occur disproportionately in areas containing licensed premises. In the baseline period, around 22 per cent of all violent offences occurred within the ‘cluster area’ containing the highest concentration of licensed premises.¹¹ Eighteen per cent of violent offences occurred within 50 metre-radius buffer zones around pubs, clubs and bars. There was a small post-implementation increase - of approximately four per cent in both cases – in the

¹¹ The cluster area contained 46 per cent of premises, and the mean distance between nearest neighbour premises was 49 metres. The non-cluster area contained 54 per cent of premises and had a mean nearest neighbour distance of 302 metres. Thus premises were on average six times closer together in the cluster area.

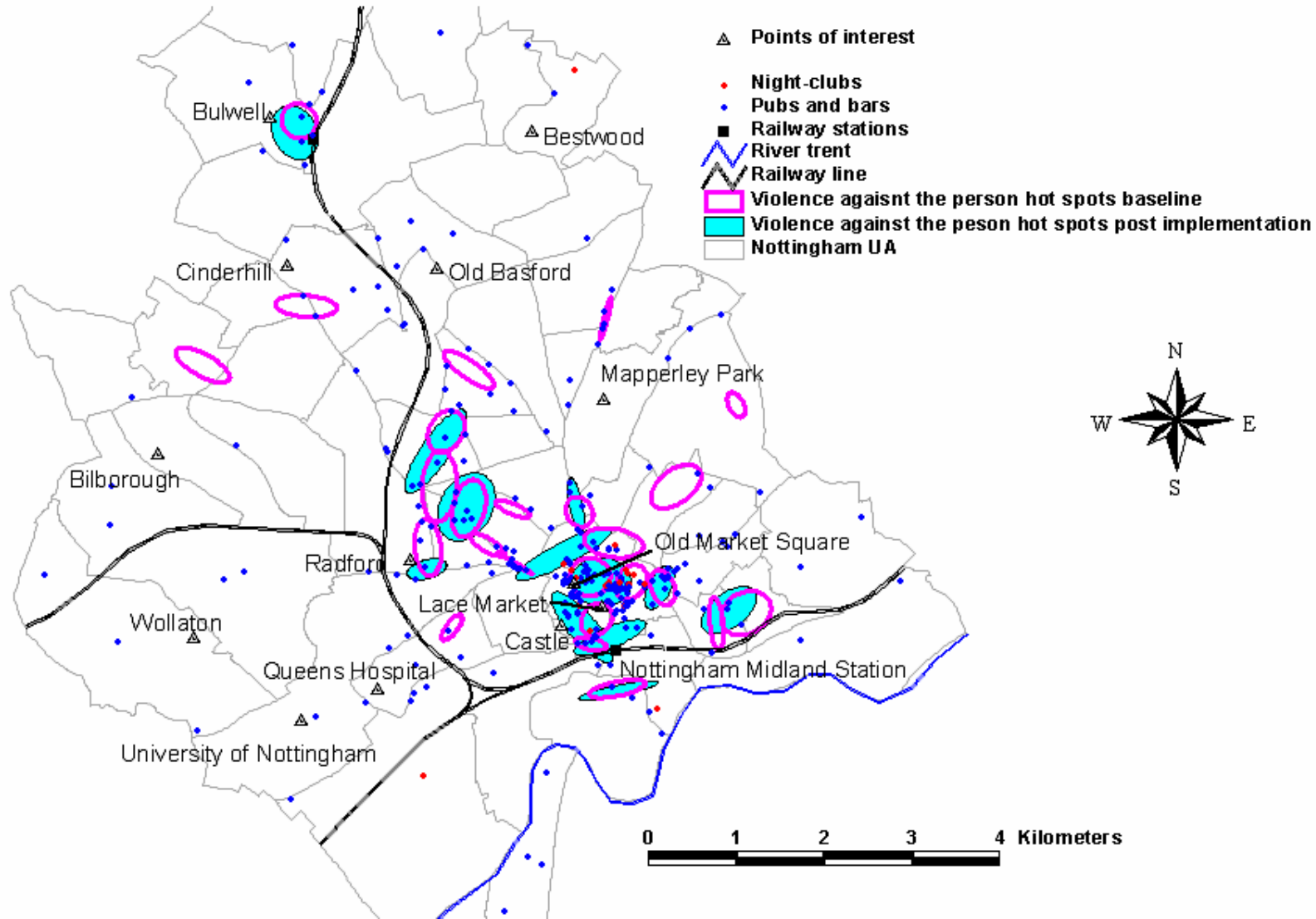
proportions of offences committed in the cluster area and 50-metre buffer zones. Hence, in the post-implementation period 26 per cent of offences occurred within the cluster area, and 22 per cent within the buffer zones.

Changes to the daily distribution of violent offences across Nottingham were very small (less than 1 percentage point). However, there was a tendency for changes to be more pronounced in the areas closest to licensed premises. The most notable spatio-temporal changes were a three per cent reduction in the proportion of violence against the person offences occurring in the cluster area between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m. This is followed by a three per cent increase in the proportion of crime occurring between 3 a.m. and 4 a.m. in the cluster area, and a four per cent increase in the proportion occurring within 50 metres of pubs, bars and clubs.

There was little change in the overall geographical distribution of offences, with the hot-spots of violence remaining broadly the same before and after implementation. The hot-spots are mapped in Figure 5.3, in which the purple ellipses represent the baseline hot spots and the blue ones the post implementation period. These hot-spots do not account for the timing of the offences, but consider the overall concentration of offending over the 12 month period. The map shows that in both the baseline and post implementation periods, violence against the person was concentrated around Nottingham city centre, where there are concentrations of licensed premises in these areas. Some baseline hot-spots are no longer apparent in the post-implementation period, suggesting that violence against the person has become more concentrated around the city centre and the areas of Radford and Bullwell.

The spatio-temporal distribution of violent offences remained broadly consistent in the baseline and post-implementation periods. Over both periods, violent offences build in intensity from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m., and are highly concentrated in city centre. The pattern of offences remains relatively stable between 1 a.m. and 3 a.m. From 3 a.m. to 5 a.m. there is a dramatic reduction in violence hot-spots, both in their extent and intensity. However, in the post implementation period the hot-spots around Lace Market and Old Market Square persist beyond 3 a.m., although they are less intense.

Figure 5.3 Violence against the person hot spots (NNHC) in Nottingham UA (average baseline and post implementation periods)



Levels of violence – micro analysis (at or inside licensed premises)

At the micro level, 1,504 violent offences were recorded in or at licensed premises during the two-year baseline period (the sum of two years' data). Fifteen premises - five per cent of the total - accounted for 40 per cent of all these offences. In the post-implementation period, 909 offences were recorded in or at premises, with the 'top 15' again accounting for around 40 per cent of all offences. Three of the 'top 15' premises changed between the pre- and post-implementation periods. The distribution of offences between all premises in the baseline and post-implementation period is presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3.

Table 5.2 Violence against the person offences recorded at Nottingham's 'top 15' premises – baseline period

<i>Venue</i>	<i>Number of offences*</i>	<i>Cumulative number of offences*</i>	<i>Percentage of offences**</i>	<i>Cumulative percentage of offences**</i>
A	115	115	8	8
B	62	177	4	12
C	50	227	3	15
D	47	274	3	18
E	46	320	3	21
F	38	358	3	24
G	33	391	2	26
H	33	424	2	28
I	33	457	2	30
J	28	485	2	32
K	25	510	2	34
L	24	534	2	36
M	22	556	2	37
N	21	577	1	38
O	20	597	1	40

*Sum of two years' data

**Percentage of all offences recorded in or at premises

Venues shaded in blue were in 'top fifteen' in both baseline and post-implementation periods.

Table 5.3 Violence against the person offences recorded at Nottingham’s ‘top 15 premises’ –post implementation period

Venue	Number of offences	Cumulative number of offences	Percentage of offences*	Cumulative percentage of offences*
E	62	62	7	7
A	58	120	6	13
I	35	155	4	17
B	35	190	4	21
H	29	219	3	24
C	27	246	3	27
L	23	269	3	30
F	23	292	3	32
M	16	308	2	34
K	15	323	2	36
D	14	337	2	37
P	14	351	2	39
Q	12	363	1	40
O	11	374	1	41
R	11	385	1	42

*Percentage of all offences recorded in or at premises
Venues shaded in blue were in ‘top fifteen’ in both baseline and post-implementation periods.

In Chapter Four of this report, the available data on numbers of additional licensing hours applied for under the Licensing Act are discussed. It is noted here that premises have tended to use any additional licensing hours flexibly: that is, they close at any time up to their ‘official’ closing time, depending on how busy they are. This, and the lack of comprehensive data on hours applied for and granted by the licensing authority, makes it difficult to identify any impact of additional licensing hours *used* on the levels of violence associated with premises.

However, based on the small number of visits to the premises by ACC researchers, levels of violent offences in or at seven premises (Table 5.4), and their actual opening hours, were examined in detail. Two of these premises were in the ‘top 15’ in both the baseline and post-implementation periods, two were in the ‘top 15’ in the baseline only, and three were not in the top 15 in either period. One of the premises used no additional hours, and accounted for seven per cent of all offences (that is, all offences associated with the seven premises) in the baseline, rising to eight per cent post-implementation. Five of the premises used between one to five hours; these accounted for 81 per cent of offences, falling to 75 per cent post implementation. One premises used six hours per week, and accounted for 13 per cent of offences in the baseline and 17 per cent post implementation. The small number of premises included this analysis precludes any general conclusions being drawn.

Table 5.4 Estimated additional hours used per week by premises visited by ACC fieldworkers and violence against the person offences

Additional hours (used)	Number of premises	Percentage of violence against the person	
		Average baseline	Post implementation
None	1	7	8
1 to 5	5	81	75
6 plus	1	13	17
Total	7	101	101

Criminal damage

Criminal damage includes crimes such as arson, damage and vandalism to buildings, vehicles and other property and threat or possession with intent to commit criminal damage. The criminal damage figures are analysed for the same pre- and post-implementation periods (December 2003 to November 2005, and December 2005 to December 2006) as the violence figures.

Macro level

Recorded criminal damage offences in Nottingham declined between the baseline and post-implementation periods by eleven per cent. This overall picture masks a steep increase between year 1 and year 2 of the baseline period, and an even steeper fall the following year. The annual baseline average was 12,642; this fell to 11,210 for the 12 months after implementation. These figures yield an average monthly figure for the baseline period of 1,054, compared to 934 for the post-implementation period. In each of the post-implementation months, the number of offences was lower than the average for the corresponding months of the baseline period. March saw the greatest decrease, with a 25 per cent reduction.

The daily distribution of criminal damage was similar in the baseline and post implementation periods. The number of criminal damage offences generally began to increase from 6 a.m., rising steadily until 5 p.m. at which point it stabilised until midnight when the number of offences recorded began to fall once more. However, the proportion of offences reported between 2 p.m. and 10 p.m. was *lower* and the proportion between midnight and 7 a.m. *higher* in the post-implementation period compared to the baseline average.

Meso level

Criminal damage appeared to be much less concentrated around licensed premises than violence against the person. In both the baseline and post-implementation periods, around eight per cent of criminal damage offences occurred in the licensed premises 'cluster area', and around seven per cent occurred within the 50 metre buffer zones around licensed premises.

Hot-spot analysis reveals that criminal damage was concentrated around Nottingham City Centre and in four other small areas – namely, the Radford, Bestwood, Bullwell and Cinderhill areas. Hot-spots in the post implementation period were consistent with those in the baseline period. Spatio-temporal analysis for the hours 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. also reveals very similar patterns in the baseline and post-implementation periods. Offences of criminal damage build up from 9 p.m. and are concentrated in the areas of Bullwell, the east of city centre and between Cinderhill and Bilborough. From 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. a hot-spot becomes more evident around the city centre but other concentrations persist. From 1 a.m. to 3 a.m. criminal damage becomes far more concentrated in the city centre and less apparent in the rest of the city. From 3 a.m., criminal damage begins to reduce, although in the post-implementation period small hot spots persist in the city centre (north of Old Market Square).

Calls for disorder

Calls for disorder include calls about incidents such as disturbances in public places, disturbances in licensed premises, drunkenness and noise nuisance. Data on calls are often used as an alternative to police recorded crime data, as they can be seen as a proxy measure of the public's perceptions of crime and the need for police assistance.

Because of changes made to the coding of calls, data were analysed only for an eight-month baseline period (April to November 2005) and eight-month post-implementation period (April 2006 to November 2006).

Macro level

Although there were monthly fluctuations, there was little change in the overall level of calls for disorder between the baseline and post-implementation periods. The average monthly figure for the eight baseline months was 376, compared to a post-implementation figure of 370. The number of calls remained fairly stable throughout

the months of the baseline, although there was a sharp reduction in November. In the post-implementation period, calls increased steadily from April to July before reducing over the remainder of the period.

The distribution of calls across times of the day changed little between the baseline and post-implementation periods, with numbers peaking between 8 p.m. and 9 p.m. However, the proportion of calls made between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. was *higher* and the proportion between 4 p.m. and 1 a.m. *lower* in the post-implementation period compared to the baseline. The weekly distribution of calls was very similar in both periods, with calls peaking on Friday and Saturday.

Meso levels

There was some concentration of calls for disorder around Nottingham's licensed premises: 14 per cent of baseline calls for disorder were made in the cluster area (high density of licensed premises), and 12 per cent within 50 metres of a licensed premise. However, the levels of concentration around premises were lower than for violence against the person. The calls for disorder do not appear to have become more concentrated around licensed premises following the introduction of the Act. In the post-implementation period, the proportions of calls within the cluster area and 50 metre buffer zones decreased very marginally to 13 per cent and 11 per cent respectively.

Health data

Ambulance and accident and emergency (A & E) data are regarded as potentially a rich source of data on violent crime. Serious incidents of violence may be reflected in these data, permitting comparison with recorded crime data in order to increase the robustness of the findings. However, as was true of the Nottingham case study, difficulties of collection and interpretation can limit the value of health data. Also, caution must be exercised when comparing A&E data with those for police recorded crime. This is because the geographical area covered by the A&E facility is not conterminous with the police wards - in Nottingham the A&E covers the Nottingham conurbation as well as the city - and there are likely to be different interpretations of what constitutes assault for police and A&E purposes.

Three health data-sets were analysed for this study: A & E attendances; ambulance service call-outs; and ambulance service reports of assaults (as a sub-set of all call-outs). All three sets of data were collected for a pre-implementation period of December 2003 to November 2005, and a post-implementation period of December 2005 to November 2006. Within these periods, data were collected only on attendances/call-outs on Friday and Saturday nights (10 pm to 5 am) involving patients aged 17 to 35. It was decided to limit data collection to these parameters on the grounds that this would provide a proxy measure of alcohol-related attendances.

Accident and emergency attendances

There was a large drop in the number of A & E attendances between the first and second of the pre-implementation years: from 5,032 to 3,869: a drop of 23 per cent. The number then rose to 4,102 in the post-implementation period – a rise of 6 per cent on the previous year.

The annual distribution of attendances was broadly similar in 2005 and 2006 – with, for example, attendances peaking in July and October. Temporal patterns were also fairly consistent, although there was a slight decrease in attendance between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. during the post-implementation period.

The relevance of Nottingham's A & E data to the assessment of levels of violent crime is limited, because of inadequacies in the recording of patients' reasons for attending hospital. The full data-set comprised 42,883 records covering all presentations to A & E units between November 2003 and December 2006. Of these, 34,522 had an entry in the 'cause of visit' text field as 'unspecified'.

Ambulance call-outs

The numbers of ambulance call-outs show a similar pattern to the A & E attendance data for 2003-2006. From the first to the second baseline year, call-outs fell from 1,218 to 892: a drop of 27 per cent. This was followed, in the post-implementation year, by an increase of 13 per cent to 1009.

The annual distribution also mirrors the A & E data, as would be expected – with peaks seen in April, July and October in all three years. Data on timings of ambulance call-outs show a broadly similar pattern over the three years, but some post-implementation increase in the proportion of call-outs in the early hours of morning – particularly between 3 and 5 a.m.

.Assaults recorded by ambulance service

Of the 3,819 ambulance call-out records examined for the 38-month pre- and post-implementation period, a sub-set of 810 (or 12 per cent) were recorded as assaults. This sub-set was analysed in more detail. However, as there were, on average, seven times the number of violent offences recorded by the police as there were assaults recorded by the ambulance service over the same period, the ambulance data need to be treated with caution.

The ambulance-recorded assaults increased by six per cent in the post-implementation year compared to the baseline period (taking an average figure for the two baseline years). Most of the increases in assaults occurred in the second half of 2006: the early months of 2006, with the exception of April, were characterised by reductions in the number of assaults, and increases were seen from July onwards.

In terms of annual distribution of ambulance-recorded assaults, there was some correspondence between the baseline and post implementation periods; the peaks and troughs coincided to a point (in February and in June, July, August and October) but not throughout the whole time period. Compared to the baseline period, the post-implementation period saw a somewhat higher concentration of assaults recorded in the very early hours of the morning. This temporal change is consistent with the finding from the police data of some increase in levels of violent offending in these hours – at least at weekends and in hot-spot areas.

6 ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE LICENSING ACT ON CRIME AND DISORDER (2): RESIDENTS' AND STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTIONS

This chapter examines residents' and stakeholders' perceptions of the impact of the Licensing Act – and particularly its impact on crime and disorder. Residents' views were obtained from BMRB's baseline and post-implementation survey. Stakeholders include the licensing authority and responsible authority respondents interviewed by the Home Office, and representatives of late-night businesses interviewed both by ACC and by CRD. (To avoid confusion, the ACC and CRD interview findings are discussed separately in this chapter.) Information on the residents' survey and the Home Office, ACC and CRD interviews is provided in Box 1.1 in Chapter 1.

Residents' and stakeholders' perceptions: summary

The main findings of a pre- and post-implementation survey of residents were:

The number of respondents visiting the city centre was not significantly higher in the post-implementation period than in the baseline period. In both periods, the most popular reason given for visiting the city centre in the evening was to go to pubs, bars or clubs, but significantly fewer gave this as their main reason following the introduction of the Act.

There was no significant difference in the proportions of respondents who felt unsafe in the city centre in the evening (28% post-implementation), or in the reasons given for feeling unsafe.

66 per cent of post-implementation respondents said that people being drunk and rowdy was a problem in the city centre; this was not significantly different to the baseline figure. However, compared to the baseline period, significantly fewer post-implementation respondents felt that drunk and rowdy behaviour had become *more* of a problem in the last 12 months (25% compared to 40%).

29 per cent of respondents thought that alcohol-related crime had increased since the introduction of the Act - significantly fewer than had thought it would increase when asked at baseline.

Among the LA and RA representatives interviewed post implementation, views were mixed on the impact of the Act on levels of crime and disorder. It was suggested that the patterns and distribution of offences had changed – with, for example, more problems arising in kebab houses rather than pubs and nightclubs, offences occurring later at night, and more under-age drinking and associated problems occurring outside the city centre.

Business representatives voiced a range of views but a majority perceived a positive impact on crime and disorder. Factors cited as contributing to this included: staggered closing times resulting in fewer people on the streets; more visible police presence; better management of premises by licensees; and less rushed and irresponsible drinking at closing time. However, it was also widely recognised that alcohol-related crime and disorder remained a significant problem in Nottingham.

Residents' perceptions

Both the baseline and the post-implementation survey covered the following broad topics:

- Frequency and patterns of the respondent's current usage of the night-time economy in the city centre;
- Experiences of alcohol-related disorder in the city centre and the respondent's own neighbourhood.

In addition, the baseline survey asked about the respondent's expectations and knowledge of the Licensing Act, whilst the follow-up survey asked about the respondent's perceptions of the impact of the Act

The major findings of the surveys, drawing out the key points of contrast between the baseline and post-implementation responses, are presented below.

City centre visiting

The relevance of city centre visiting to the potential impact of the Licensing Act is that it had been hoped the Act would contribute, over time, to the diversification of the night-time economy, and thereby encourage a wider range of people to visit city and town centres. It was also hoped that a decline in levels of alcohol-related violence and disorder would make city and town centres more attractive to people who would otherwise be deterred by fear of crime.

The results of the residents' survey suggest that the Licensing Act may not (yet) have had its desired effect of encouraging wider participation in the night-time economy. In the post-implementation survey, 69 per cent of respondents had visited Nottingham city centre at least once in the previous 12 months. Of these, 36 per cent said they visited once a week or more. These figures were not significantly different to those produced by the baseline survey. However, significantly fewer 16-30 year-olds

reported visiting Nottingham city centre at least once a week in the post-implementation survey (49% compared to 67% in the baseline survey). This difference was not found for other age groups.

The most popular reason given for visiting the city centre in the evening was to go to pubs, bars or clubs; but – indicating that there has been a degree of diversification in the night-time economy - significantly fewer people gave this as their main reason following the introduction of the Act (46% compared to 36% of those who had visited the city centre at least once over the past year). In particular, those aged 16 to 30 were significantly more likely to report going to restaurants and cafes (20%) as their main reason for visiting the city centre in the evening, compared to the baseline period (9%).

There is no evidence that people are staying out later in the city centre following the introduction of the Act: between the baseline and post implementation periods, there are no significant differences between the times that people usually leave the city centre on a Monday to Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. On a Sunday evening, significantly fewer people usually leave the city centre between midnight and 1am, although due to the small base numbers for Sunday, care needs to be taken when interpreting these results.

Table 6.1 shows the reasons why those respondents who did not visit the city centre regularly or at all (defined as less than once a month) did not visit more often. The table shows a considerable degree of consistency in the responses given in the baseline and post-implementation surveys – with, for example, ‘not interested’ being the most common answer in both.

In the post-implementation period, significantly fewer people reported that they would be more likely to use the city centre in the evening if there were fewer drunk people or more control of drunk people (3% compared to 8%); and significantly more (50% compared to 37%) said that *nothing* would encourage them to use the city centre more in the evening.

Table 6.1: Reasons for not visiting city centre more often

Reason	Percentage of respondents	
	Baseline	Post-implementation
Not interested	16	23
Better suited to young people/ I'm too old	13	12
I have children/ family/ other commitments	11	12
I worry about crime or being attacked	11	11
I go elsewhere	6	11
Too many drunk/ disorderly people	12	9
I don't usually go out at night	12	7
I don't usually go out at night	12	7
Not suited to people like me	6	6
Too expensive/ can't afford to go out	3	6
The area is unsafe/ violent	9	6
Too crowded, noisy or busy	7	6
Other	12	9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	325	383

Note: This was an open question with no prompting and responses were coded by the interviewer. Respondents could give more than one answer.

Feelings of safety and perceptions of drunken and anti-social behaviour

Of all post-implementation respondents who had visited Nottingham city centre in the evening in the previous 12 months (N=528), 28 per cent reported that they felt unsafe at some point, which is not significantly different to the results from the baseline survey. The top three reasons for feeling unsafe were the same in both surveys, with no significant differences in the proportions selecting each: there were a lot of drunk people (45% baseline, 44% post-implementation); there were gangs/groups hanging around (36% and 40%); and the area was too crowded and noisy (20% and 23%).

All respondents were asked if they thought that people being drunk and rowdy was a fairly or very big problem in the city centre. Sixty-six per cent of post-implementation respondents thought this was a problem; a figure that was not significantly different to the baseline figure. In both surveys, those aged over 65 were significantly more likely than those aged 16 to 30, and women were significantly more likely than men, to think that drunk and rowdy behaviour was a problem in the city centre.

All respondents were asked whether they thought drunk and rowdy behaviour had become more or less of a problem in Nottingham city centre in the previous 12 months. Compared to the baseline period, significantly fewer respondents in the post-implementation period felt that drunk and rowdy behaviour had become *more* of a problem in the previous 12 months (25% compared to 40%) and significantly more respondents felt that it had become *less* of a problem (10% compared to 3%).

Those who had visited Nottingham city centre at least once in the previous 12 months were asked what problems they had seen in the city centre; the responses are shown in Table 5.2. The only significant difference between the baseline and post-implementation periods were that fewer respondents reported seeing people being verbally abused, threatened or intimidated by drunks in Nottingham city centre in the post-implementation period (55% compared to 66%).

Table 6.2: Problems seen in Nottingham city centre by respondents who had visited at least once in the previous 12 months

Problem seen in town centre	Percentage of respondents	
	Baseline	Post-implementation
Fast food wrappers and other rubbish in the streets	93	89
Noise or disturbance caused by people who are drunk	84	82
Vomit or urine on pavements, in doorways or on the streets	85	80
Cans, bottles or broken glass in the streets	74	73
People being verbally abused, threatened or intimidated by drunks	66	55*
People being assaulted or injured by drunks or fighting between people who are drunk	52	44
Damage to property	28	29
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>450</i>	<i>532</i>

Note: All items were read out to respondents and they were asked to say 'yes' or 'no' for each item. Respondents could give more than one answer so percentages do not add up to 100.

**Significant difference*

Those respondents who did not live in Nottingham city centre (N = 471) were asked if they thought people being drunk was a problem in their neighbourhood. In the post-implementation survey, nine per cent said they thought people being drunk was a fairly or very big problem in their neighbourhood. This is not significantly different to the figure for the baseline period (12%).

Respondents were asked if they thought drunk and rowdy had become more or less of a problem in their neighbourhood in the previous 12 months. Twelve per cent of post-implementation respondents said they thought it had become more of a problem, 80 per cent thought it had stayed the same and 8 per cent thought it had got worse. These figures were not significantly different to those obtained in the baseline survey.

Views of the Licensing Act

All post-implementation respondents were asked if they thought alcohol-related crime and rowdy behaviour had increased or decreased following the introduction of the Licensing Act 2003. Twenty-nine per cent thought that alcohol-related crime had increased: significantly fewer than had thought it would increase following the introduction of the Act when they were asked in the baseline period. Fifty-one per cent of post-implementation respondents thought alcohol-related crime had stayed the same, seven per cent that it had decreased, and thirteen per cent did not know.

Twenty-eight per cent of respondents thought that rowdy behaviour had increased since the Act – again, significantly fewer than had thought it would increase when asked in the baseline period. Fifty-five thought rowdy behaviour had stayed the same, seven per cent that it had decreased and ten per cent did not know.

Post-implementation respondents were asked about the impact of the Act on their behaviour. Thirty-four per cent said they were now more likely to stay out later; and six per cent said they were more likely to visit the city centre in the evening, compared to 17 per cent who were less likely to visit. Ten per cent of respondents who had visited the city centre in the past year reported that the amount of alcohol that they consumed on a typical night out had increased a little or a lot; six per cent reported that it had decreased a little or a lot; and 84 per cent reported no change.

Ninety-one per cent of post-implementation respondents believed that some or a lot of pubs, bars or nightclubs in Nottingham were now open later in the evening. Fifty-nine per cent of respondents agreed that since the introduction of the Act, rapid drinking in the run-up to last order had decreased, compared to 31 per cent who disagreed. Similarly, 55 per cent agreed that the streets were now less crowded, whereas 29 per cent disagreed with this.

Perceptions of licensing and responsible authorities

In the small number (four) of post-implementation Home Office interviews with a representative from the LA, the police, the city centre manager and a representative from the CDRP, a mix of views were expressed about levels of crime and disorder in Nottingham following the introduction of the Act. Two interviewees thought that there had been reductions. In contrast, the police respondent reported that there had been

no change overall, because while there had been a decrease in offences resulting in bodily injuries, there was an increase in (recorded) minor public order offences.

Those interviewees who thought that crime and disorder had reduced in the previous 12 months did not think that this was due to Act. Instead, it was felt that more proactive policing and better management of licensed premises had contributed to the decline:

I think I would put my hand up and say quite honestly, I don't think the licensing regime has had any impact on that at all, I think very little...it think it's more from...the way our enforcement has improved here in Nottingham. (City Centre Manager)

Although the Act was not always perceived to have contributed to changes in levels of crime and disorder, it was thought to have been a factor in changes to the pattern of offences. For example, it was reported that since the Act was implemented, the 'top 15' premises for crime and disorder were not all pubs and nightclubs but also included a kebab house. This change was attributed to the work that the police had done and were continuing to do with licensees and the strict enforcement of the licensing conditions.

We hardly get any incidents inside premises these days. That's why they're moving to fast food venues and the street because we haven't got as much control. (Police respondent)

As premises were now closing later, it was reported that the timing of offences had also changed, with offences now occurring later at night (at around 4am). This reportedly led to problems with police resources. Additionally, it was reported that since the introduction of the Act, more offences were occurring outside the city centre in local 'district centres', including the conurbation of Nottingham. This was said to be a result of stricter proof-of-age policies and a stronger police presence in the city centre, leading to an increase in under-age drinking in other areas.

It was reported that the Act had had an impact on people's drinking behaviour. It was perceived that people were now drinking more at home, before going out at a later hour. It was also claimed that people were now drinking in local areas or district centres rather than coming into city centre, as more local premises were open later. As a result, the city centre night-time economy areas were said to be less busy than they used to be.

The RAs and stakeholders interviewed by the Home Office pointed to some success in diversification of the city centre night-time economy, arguing that implementation of the cumulative impact policy had resulted in more food-oriented premises opening. This was said to have a positive impact on the atmosphere of some night-time economy areas (for example, Chapel bar), and it was hoped that other areas would develop the same way. However, it was acknowledged that it was still ‘early days’ and that there was a need for further diversification of the town centre and to integrate the different entertainment districts:

That is something we really need to focus on, move away from the under 30s and male dominated and get it a bit more diverse, who comes into the city at night. Obviously people go to the theatre, but I don’t think they venture into Market Square, they probably stay well away from that area and we need to move away from that by making it a little bit safer, or the perception of safety anyway. (Representative of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership)

Perceptions of business owners, managers and staff

ACC respondents

Among the small number (22) of licensees, managers and staff of licensed premises who were interviewed by ACC in two post-implementation periods (two months and 12 months after implementation), views were mixed on the question of the Act’s impact on crime and disorder. Some said that levels of violence had remained the same; others that violence had increased; and others that the Act had helped to reduce levels of violence.

Among those respondents who talked about violence increasing or remaining at a high level, some talked about the growing use of weapons and the emergence of a culture of carrying weapons. Many made reference to the growing role of women in violent incidents – although this was said often to take the form of verbal rather than physical abuse, and instigation of rather than direct involvement in violence.

Respondents who spoke of a decline in violence since the introduction of the Licensing Act said that this was due to the staggering of closing times and the consequent reduction of people congregating in large numbers at the particular hours. Some also referred to an increased police presence, fewer queues for taxis, and more sensible drinking patterns. Among the respondents interviewed twelve months after implementation, a majority said that they felt the Act had been, in

general, a positive development. They argued that the Act had put pressure upon licensees to improve their standards of management; that it had encouraged people to drink more slowly and responsibly; and that it had made the licensing industry more professional. A majority also said that the extension of licensing hours had led to increased profits (although most of those interviewed just two months after implementation had said that their profits were *not* going up).

CRD respondents

Among small number (21) of late-night business representatives interviewed by CRD in the post-implementation period (October 2006 to January 2007), the general feeling was that the city centre was now experiencing slightly less alcohol-related trouble than before November 2005. A more staggered dispersal of drinkers in the evening and a higher police presence were the two widely cited reasons for this improvement:

I think it [the Act] has reduced incidences, the general consensus is that the other operators have had the same success as me. (night club respondent)

If it has changed in any way, it has got slightly better. There is a nightclub about 100 yards away and it used to finish at 2 o'clock and everybody came out at once and that was the same as all the other nightclubs. We don't have that anymore. We don't have the pub rush anymore at 11.20. For that reason alone it is better because it has spread it out more evenly. (taxi company respondent)

However, the majority of respondents felt that alcohol-related trouble remained a key problem in the city, and that although the Licensing Act was a step in the right direction, wider shifts in attitudes towards drinking would take much longer than a year. Indeed, some licensees argued that the Act's effects had been restricted because the city's bad reputation had caused the licensing authorities to limit opening hours:

What the Government intended and what their police forces are doing are two entirely separate things. They intended for staggered closing times because we would all operate at different times, and that is not the case. If the local police want to oppose everybody applying for anything past 2 or 3, then you are not going to get your staggered closing times. The police have managed to wipe out part of the Act themselves. (chain bar respondent)

Nevertheless, most licensees said the number of violent incidents attributable to alcohol in and around their premises had dropped during the year, even if general

levels of disorder had not; and none felt that alcohol-related violence and disorder had increased. Many involved in the night-time economy felt that other social problems had been growing, however. A number of respondents mentioned shootings and stabbings, often in licensed premises playing and associated with R&B and gangsta rap, and many noted a rising level of drug use in licensed premises (especially cocaine). These trends had not directly affected the issue of disorder in their own premises, but they made them wary.

Few licensees felt their businesses had benefited financially from the Act because any gains in trade had been off-set by increased staff and security costs. Some even said that they were taking less money than before, as customers were arriving later but leaving at the same time as they used to. Even if they had not benefited in terms of profit, however, many licensees appreciated the flexibility to open later or close earlier according to customer demand, and the more relaxed pace of drinking which made serving and controlling customers easier:

Many respondents felt that, on balance, the slight improvement in behaviour noted above was probably attributable to the Licensing Act. This is plausible, given that few individual or community measures for tackling alcohol-related crime and disorder had been introduced over this period. In short, the view was that greater flexibility in closing times had resulted in less pressured drinking at the end of the night, more gradual dispersal and movement between venues, and less competition for fast food and taxis.

In the first six months of having a late licence our recorded incidence with the police was zero, it was like we disappeared. The reason it happened was because it's so much easier to manage, you aren't telling 1,500 students at 2am that they have to leave. It's been a huge positive with the late licence. (nightclub respondent)

There certainly hasn't been an increase; if anything I would say you do see a minor decrease, because you don't have people rushing towards the 2.00 barrier... We keep a very close record, and you can see quite a few incidences [when we first opened], calming down during the time when we got our 4am licence. (nightclub respondent)