Newcastle at Night

Young People and Night Time Economy

February 2014

www.newcastle.nsw.gov.au
Newcastle Youth Council is a collaboration of young people who operate as an internal advisory body within The City of Newcastle. Newcastle Youth Council carries out numerous roles and work with an array of stakeholders in order to advocate on behalf of young people and provide consultation, empowerment and resources for young people within the Newcastle Community. Newcastle Youth Council address issues, organise events and raise awareness. Newcastle Youth Council acknowledges that young people are important and should be valued in society. Thus, Newcastle Youth Council seek to develop appropriate projects and resources to support and engage young people in the Newcastle community.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Newcastle’s Youth Council (NYC) developed this discussion paper to support The City of Newcastle (TCoN) Night Time Economy Discussion Paper (2013).

NYC carried out the research of over four hundred surveys of people aged 12 to 26. The analysis of results highlighted a general lack of safety felt by young people in Newcastle’s Central Business District (CBD). This paper makes a range of practical recommendations to improve young people’s sense of safety in the CBD, including use of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design initiatives (CPTED), review of transport options, community ownership of local events and consultation with young people regarding projects and programs influencing youth in our city. The development of this document recognises the important role that youth have in decision making within Newcastle’s Local Government Area (LGA).
NIGHT TIME ECONOMY

Night Time Economy consists of all activities that occur at night. This includes, but is not limited to dining, pubs and clubs, retail, sporting events, galleries, museums, exhibitions, nightclubs, take away food, theatre, live music and supermarkets.

In 2012, NYC collaborated with TCoN to develop a Night Time Economy Discussion Paper (NTEDP). The aim of the NTEDP was to gain a better understanding of the community’s vision in relation to what could be included within a future Night Time Economy Development Control Plan. TCoN adopted an Alcohol Management Plan in 2010 that aimed to reduce alcohol related harm and anti social behaviours within the Newcastle’s LGA. The NTEDP was a platform for the Newcastle community to express their experiences and attitudes to Newcastle at night.
NYC would like to share this research to educate the Newcastle community about what young people in Newcastle recognise as important issues that need to be addressed. NYC values the attitudes and opinions that the young people expressed within the research. As there are a significant amount of young people who use the CBD at night, NYC believe that the attitudes should be recognised and acknowledged.

This research offers an opportunity to improve the safety of young people in the CBD at night. It also provides an opportunity to apply prevention strategies and appropriate responses to community safety and in addition community engagement.

NYC believes that the data collected in the research demonstrates a strong reference to effectively and appropriately implement improvement.

The overwhelming results display that young people don’t feel safe in the CBD at night and urgently want to see improvement and to feel safe and comfortable during their night time experience.
INTENDED USE

The purpose of this report is to provide information to young people, services and organisations that are active in the Newcastle CBD. This information can be used to provide education, understanding and invites the opportunity to implement and develop change and diverse projects. The information gained from this research is a guide and reference point to improve understanding of youth safety in Newcastle’s CBD.
AIM OF RESEARCH

In 2012, NYC completed a research project in partnership with TCoN to unearth opinions and knowledge regarding how young people aged between 12-25 experience Newcastle’s CBD at night. In addition Newcastle Night Time Economy research project provided young people the opportunity to express what needs to be addressed within Newcastle’s CBD.

The aim was to gain knowledge and the ability to implement improvements in conjunction with the opinions and values of young people who utilise the CBD at night.
AIM OF RESEARCH cont.

The outcomes drawn out of the data exhibited overwhelming results of fear of safety relating to violence, alcohol related incidents in public spaces and licensed venues. The findings also revealed young people who utilise the CBD at night have a sense of uncertainty and fear as a result of there being a lack of lighting, lack of police presence and participants expressed their concerns regarding inefficient public transport within the CBD and surrounding suburbs.

These findings were shared equally between men and women surveyed. The data collected demonstrated a widespread trend that young people of Newcastle want to see improvement, opportunities to attend alternative venues and events, with a particular emphasis on non-alcohol related events and cultural activities.
The survey contained 8 questions, 5 closed questions and 3 open ended questions undertaken over a period of 3 months. The questions were slightly altered for the seventeen and under age category.

There were over 400 respondents to the survey from the age of 12 and above received via the online survey and in face to face interviews.

Note: The 17 and under age group isn’t applicable due to limited respondents and lack of strong data carried out in the research for the purposes of this research. Furthermore, the 26 and over age category were not applicable due to the purpose of this particular study. The following findings are drawn from young people between 18 and 25 only.
METHODOLOGY

The research was developed using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research practices conducted via an evidence-based approach. The research consisted of 8 questions that were altered slightly for the eighteen and under target group. The majority of the research was undertaken via survey and several interviews were carried out at numerous locations within Newcastle that are listed below.

- Pubs
- Clubs, including an U18 nightclub
- The University of Newcastle
- Online

There were over 400 respondents to this research forming valuable results that were filtered down to 8 key findings.

Note: Due to limited access to participants under the age of eighteen sufficient findings were unable to be produced within the research. These limitations meant that the findings and overall report primarily focussed on young people between the age of 18 and 25 who utilise the CBD at night.
CURRENT PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

There are currently several projects and initiatives occurring within TCoN and private organisations working towards revitalising the city, creating opportunities and encouraging community development.

• City Centre Revitalisation
• Newcastle Urban Renewal Strategy (2012)
• Newcastle 2030 Community Strategic Plan (2013)
• The City of Newcastle Placemaking Program
• Newcastle At Night
• City Evolutions
• Newcastle Now
• L!ve Sites
• Renew Newcastle
• Small bar liquor licensing
• Five After Five
1. What is your gender?

2. How old are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;17</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 21</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 - 25</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The 17 and under age group isn’t applicable due to limited respondents. For the purposes of this research 26 and over age group were not applicable. The following findings are drawn from young people between 18 and 25 only.
3. What do you currently use the CBD at night for?

(98 Answered)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eating Out</th>
<th>Live Music</th>
<th>Pubs</th>
<th>Nightclubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results have indicated that there are a significant amount of young people that use the CBD predominately for dining purposes. Eating out is the primary use of the CBD followed by accessing pubs and attending live music.

Despite common attitudes and ideals that young people use the CBD at night to attend night clubs, the findings show that attending night clubs wasn’t a primary use of the CBD.

4. How safe you feel in the CBD at night?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>Not Really</th>
<th>Partially</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Completely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results indicate that overall young people feel partially or mostly safe in the CBD at night, with only 9% of survey respondents feeling completely safe.

It’s evident in the data that young people as a majority haven’t identified to feeling completely safe or completely unsafe.
5. Can you tell us an instance when you have not felt safe?

“When I’ve had to walk home (Islington) because I couldn’t get a train, bus or taxi”

“Walking in my dark street at night walking on hunter street at about 5 pm in winter”

“Fights outside pubs, waiting for transport home”

“Walking home or waiting in taxi lines”

“Times walking when there aren’t people around. Also I find the most unsafe to be when everyone is kicked out at 3 or 3:30am and taxis are hard to get and there is no where else to go”
The findings have shown overwhelming trends regarding concerns for safety in association with lack of lighting, transportation and anti social behaviour.

“The only times I have felt unsafe in the CBD is after a long wait at taxi lines when some men begin to get aggressive because they can’t get home.”

“Walking home from a pub as there isn’t enough transport”

“I feel less safe in Hunter St Mall than I do around Darby St. or the other end of Hunter St, near the Lass O’ Gowrie”
6. What could in your opinion, are improvements in any of the following areas likely to contribute to a better night time experience? (87 Answered)

“More taxis, public transport”

“More small bars and venues”

“Better lighting and limiting dark alleys and obscure spaces”

“More public transport, more things to do and see at night, such as cultural events, buskers, alcohol free events”
The young people of Newcastle have indicated that improvements of transport, cultural events, more live music and lighting would contribute significantly to a better night time experience. Improvements for public transport were particularly prominent.
7. To what extent do you think the following stakeholders are responsible for creating an active and welcoming night-time CBD?

- Patrons
- Community
- Business Owners
- Security
According to the responses of the young people. The following categories in order of most responsibility to least have been identified as supportive stakeholders according to the knowledge and understanding of the young people who completed the survey.
8. If you could do anything to the CBD to make it a vibrant and appealing night-time destination, what would you do? (open ended)

“More live music”

“Pop up Bars using community spaces and empty buildings – a more appropriate response to liquor licensing”

“I would have more cultural festivals and close down streets. Make them appeal to families and older people”

“Lots of buses and taxis. Night markets, and ability to have a drink on the footpath of licensed venues”
“Lots of small boutique licensed cafes and small performing venues like Melbourne”

“Open new venues, renovate”

“More lighting and more live music venues”

“More community events. try to change the drinking culture”
There were 8 key trends found within the research followed by additional surprising trends.

Eight Key Trends:
1. Lack of Lighting.
2. Lack of Police Presence.
3. Lack of Public Transport.
4. Negative attitudes regarding the 1am lockout.
5. Feeling unsafe within Hunter St Mall.
6. Fear of walking alone or in small groups.
7. Feeling unsafe due to violent and anti social behaviour occurring on streets.
8. Overwhelming responses to alternative venues and night time public events.

Surprising trends:
1. People feeling unsafe was gender neutral.
2. TCoN were low in responsibility in regards to the creation of a positive night time economy compared to other key stakeholders.
RECOMMENDATIONS

NYC have developed suggestions in accordance to the overall findings that were drawn out from the research.

1. Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) implementation:
   • Addressing lighting issues and concerns for safety by:
   • Implementing artistic lighting designs and further place making projects to increase lighting and feelings of safety and accessibility to safe zones.

2. Look at what alternative transportation can be provided for free or at low cost

3. Community participation and ownership of community events

4. Consultation and involvement of young people in community planning, development of projects and initiatives that impact on young people who active in the CBD
The Night Time Economy research with a target age of 18-25 conducted by NYC found significant and valuable trends that were consistent throughout the entire research process and data collection. Overall, the results accumulated have shown that throughout the data young people who are active in the CBD at night don’t feel entirely safe. There were significant trends and links with transportation, lighting and anti-social behaviours. Furthermore, young people were able to identify what improvements they would like to see and what the improvements consist of. Young people have a desire to see changes in the CBD and identified that changes should be more alternative, including cultural activities, music, markets and small bars.
As a result of the data collection and analysis of the findings, NYC developed some recommendations and suggestions that coincide with the suggestions that the young people have identified as being valuable and effective for a safe night time experience.

The recommendations include:
1. Implementing alternative transportation options.
2. Implementing CPTED initiatives.
3. Community participation.
4. Consultation opportunities for young people.

NYC plan to undertake further study on transportation and the other key issues identified as primary concerns, impacting safety and experiences in the CBD at night.