The London of the North?

Youth cultures, urban change and nightlife in Leeds

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Contents

Tables

Preface

This report is based upon research undertaken as part of an Economic and Social Research Council funded research project, looking at night-life and youth culture in three English cities – Newcastle, Leeds and Bristol. Over the last few years it has become increasingly evident to us that significant transformations are occurring in these and other cities, especially during the evening and at night. The experience of 'going out' is rapidly changing and it is our intention to explore some of these changes. This book is an attempt to highlight these changes in the city of Leeds. It is based upon fieldwork undertaken between July 2000 and January 2001 which comprised focus groups with consumers of nightlife and one to one interviews with venue owners, police, licensing magistrates and local authority representatives.

Our intention is to examine change in two, interconnected, areas - city centres and the lives of young people. Both are contingent on the dramatic, if gradual changes which have occurred within British cities over the last few decades. Since the 1970s, they have been sidelined through the centralisation and suburbanisation of employment, depopulation, the domestication of leisure, national-local political wrangling and marginalisation by multi-national capital (Hudson and Williams, 1995; Pacione, 1997). The result has been widespread unemployment, physical and social decay, crime, homelessness and dereliction.

Over the last two decades attempts have been made to transform this predicament facing British cities and remodel them as places to live, work and be entertained. A whole host of city marketeers have been active in promoting a new identity and ‘cultural brand’ for cities. While each place has marketed itself slightly differently, British cities have borrowed both from the excesses of the North American model of casinos, multiplexes and malls and the continental European model associated with ‘café culture’ and socially inclusive city centre living. This move back to the city is part of a wider process of social and economic change within the UK. For example, the political project since the Thatcher years has eroded the established labourist city strongly connected to its manufacturing and industrial past in favour of private/corporate capital, knowledge-based activities, middle-class consumption and an entrepreneurial turn in urban governance aimed at attracting and satisfying the demands of highly mobile global capital (Jessop, 1997). Over the last two decades this ‘return to the centre’ (O’Connor and Wynne, 1995) has come of age with notable reinvention of cities and particularly their centres (Harvey, 1989a; Zukin, 1995), reinforced by a range of bodies and policy statements in the U.K. such as Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) of the 1980s, the Urban Task Force Report (1999), and the Government's Urban White Paper (DETR, 2000).

More specifically, this return to the centre involves a renewed emphasis on business service employment and the so-called dematerialised and knowledge-based economy, city centre living, and a greater

economic role for leisure, retail and consumption-based rather than production-based activities (Zukin, 1995; Hannigan, 1998). Further, it has become accepted parlance that the night-time economy, through bars, pubs, clubs and music venues, has an identifiable role to play in revamping the new urban economy. All metropolitan centres now point towards the vibrancy of their nightlife as a growing economic sector and a key indicator of a healthy economy and populous. In particular, many places have been keen to stress that they are '24 hour cities' (Bianchini, 1995; Heath and Stickland, 1997) where activity stretches beyond the conventional '5pm flight'.

While one might initially be quick to applaud the development of urban nightlife, especially as a tool for regeneration, our aim is to look beyond the hubbub of self-congratulation and civic boosterism to a number of crucial elements of city centre life which are being overlooked. In particular, promoters of urban nightlife often say very little about who owns the night-time economy - many new large, non-local corporate operators are dominating and transforming city centre landscapes and lifestyles while smaller, local, independent operators are being squeezed out. Most of Britain's core cities are pursuing a rather 'off-the-shelf' approach to developing the night-time economy through multiplexes, theme pubs and casinos. This begs the questions: why; in whose interest; and for whom, is the city being developed? Current trends suggest that most British cities are becoming ghettos for high value added entertainment and leisure pursuits at the expense of a diverse and locally embedded range of activities. National corporate operators are playing a disproportionate role in shaping night-time activity, as they can apply leverage on cash strapped urban authorities.

We are particularly concerned with the shifting identities and life-worlds of young people. 'Growing up' in many Western countries has been significantly extended, in response to dissatisfaction with, or exclusion from the labour market, increased participation in further and higher education, lower marriage rates and greater dependency on the family of origin. As a result, there is evidence of an period of extended adolescence, in which a range of youthful lifestyles and identities persist much longer. For many young people, opportunities for firm identity formation within traditional social relations are reduced, while consumption, leisure and popular culture, especially in city centres become more central elements in the formation of youth identity (Willis, 1990; Hollands, 1995). Young people are also seeking to redress the balance between work and play and are dissatisfied with low pay or jobs which offer little personal satisfaction. Importantly, as the population continues to age, young people will constitute a smaller proportion of the total population than in the past.

Visiting pubs, bars and clubs remains a core element of young people's lifestyles, but the experience of going out to these places has changed drastically over the last decade, largely through the advent of 'clubbing', dance music and late night hybrid bar-clubs. The role of drinking alcohol has changed significantly from a community based to a lifestyle based activity. A worrying tendency is that 18-24 year

olds are now the heaviest drinkers in the population.

It is important to stress that significant divides exist between, for example: unemployed young people or those dependent on welfare benefits; those in unstable work; university students and those in high level training; and young professionals in stable, well paid and mobile employment. While differences between these categories of young people are underpinned by a host of factors such as educational background, parental income, ethnicity and geographical location, we are interested in how they relate to nightlife consumption practices and the ways in which provision increasingly targets certain groups of young people and excludes others. There is a growing population exposed to unstable labour market conditions or welfare dependency, whose participation in city centre nightlife is often extremely curtailed. For a whole host of reasons such as price, geographical marginality, racism, or merely feelings of disenfranchisement, significant groups of young people are restricted to leisure in their homes and estates, or community pubs and social clubs.

At the same time, the number of university students has substantially increased in Britain since 1992. The bulk of this is made up of 'non-traditional' students, who are locally based, older and often living at home. This diversification of the student body has served to broaden its consumer and cultural activity away from the 'elitist' traditional student model, resulting in a blurring of student-local distinctions and a segmentation of the student body into various subcategories (Hollands, 1995; Chatterton, 1999). Nevertheless, traditional student identities and consumption patterns remain strong, and sizeable swathes of all British cities are devoted to meeting their educational, housing and entertainment needs. Students are offered a host of promotional nightlife discounts such as happy hours and cheap entry prices and in most large cities identifiable student pubs, bars and clubs, as well as students' unions, exist to cater for their exclusive needs.

Finally, many young people emerging from universities with professional qualifications are able to enter into a world of relatively stable employment and consumer lifestyles. In metropolitan centres such as Leeds, Manchester and Bristol which have benefited from the spoils of professional and business service decentralisation, entertainment and cultural provision for this youthful service class is plentiful. These young urban service workers, knowledge professionals and cultural intermediaries - the denizens of the re-imagined urban landscape (Lash and Urry, 1987; Featherstone, 1991) - are often heralded as the saviours of the city's new night-time and cultural economy. As well as accumulating economic capital, they seek symbolic capital and status through consumption, and hence are implicated in a virtuous cycle of growth. Numerous studies have examined these new class factions in urban contexts (Bourdieu, 1984; O'Connor and Wynne, 1998) and have suggested that they have stimulated an explosion of cultural goods and services and have increased the range of young adult identities and lifestyles.

Structure of the report

The report is structured around three main sections to develop an understanding of young people's use of nightlife spaces in Leeds. First, we look at the production of nightlife and highlight the role of large and expanding national and regional corporate nightlife operators and smaller independent operators. We examine various strategies such as mergers, concentration, branding and theming in producing nightlife spaces. Next, we examine the regulation and planning of nightlife through the role of the police, magistrates and the local state. Finally, we look at the consumption of nightlife spaces by exploring young adults' own 'lived experience' of Leeds. This section highlights some key issues which arise from our study. We conclude by presenting some future scenarios of the ways in which Leeds' nightlife could develop.

This document is based upon fieldwork undertaken in Leeds between September 2000 and August 2001, which comprised focus groups with consumers of nightlife and one to one interviews with venues/owners/managers, promoters and DJs, police, security firms, licensing magistrates, authority representatives and various other people involved in the nightlife industry. We hope that the research has adequately captured some of the 'voices' and experiences of all the different participants in the night-time economy, and that this document can begin the process of creating a dialogue and debate about the future direction of this important element of urban life.

A website with information about the wider project is located at: **www.ncl.ac.uk/youthnightlife**. Further copies of this report, a shorter 10 page summary and associated figures and maps can be downloaded from there.

Chapter 1. Understanding Leeds: growth and change in the 'corporate city'

> *People are saying that Leeds is the capital of the North. It is because of Harvey Nics has come up and big London bars and stuff, London bar names have come up to Leeds as well. (Pam, Leeds consumer)*

All urban centres in the U.K. have been subject to periods of economic and social restructuring over the last three decades, including deindustrialisation and social decline countered by efforts at regeneration and image-building. Essential to understanding the history of Leeds is its dramatic economic over the last two decades. Leeds' economic past has been mixed but generally buoyant. The declining textile and flax industries in the mid to late 19th century were replaced by the emergence of clothing, footwear and printing industries, which quickly adapted the old premises to suit their new requirements. The Chamber of Commerce boasted in 1902, in its annual report, that Leeds' success was maintained by the variety and diversity of its industries[1]. The 20th century however marked the decline of traditional manufacturing industries in the city and after the first world war, Leeds experienced high unemployment, with the share of the labour force employed by the largest industries in at the time - tailoring, engineering and textiles – falling dramatically. Yet, despite early losses in manufacturing, Leeds still remains the UK's fourth largest manufacturing centre. The city managed to prosper in the 50s, 60s and early 70s and unemployment was less than 1% in the boom years of 1955, 1961 and 1965. Over this period the growth in service industries (32,000) compensated somewhat for the loss of manufacturing jobs (37,000).

Between 1981 and 1998 over 52,000 jobs were created and the workforce grew by 17% - the highest rate of growth among Britain's 15 major cities (Brooke 2000). There are over 75 publicly quoted companies based in the Leeds area, and many others have their main management and operational headquarters there. Leeds is home to 6 of the top provincial law practices in the UK, almost 100 financial intermediaries, over 100 insurance companies, 270 insurance and financial advisors and many National and International Banks, building societies and other financial institutions. An impressive list of relocations, expansions and new enterprises confirm and sustain Leeds' rise: Halifax Direct, First Direct, Intermortage, GE Capital Services, Direct Line and Privilege Insurance have all invested in the city, in recent years. Leeds now has a reputation as a leading financial and legal centre and has become 'Britain's third financial centre after London and Edinburgh' (Brooke 2000).[2]

Leeds, then, has managed to weather the decline of manufacturing to become a vibrant regional capital based upon service employment growth and a role as a European tourist destination/business location. There is no doubt that Leeds is a growing a vibrant city: it is the second largest metropolitan district in the UK with a population of nearly 725,000 people. Unemployment is consistently below the national average

[1] A Centenary History of Leeds 1893 – 1993.

and the female economic activity rate is considerably higher than the national average. The number classed as unemployment in Leeds in 2000 was 11,003 males and 2,891 females.[3] The principal job generators are finance and business services (30% growth), health (19% growth), education (14% growth), while wholesale and construction also increased. Forecasts by the Leeds Development Agency and Leeds TEC suggest that employment will rise by a further 37,000 jobs and unfilled vacancies in jobcentres in Leeds have increased by 49% in 2001. Significantly, women will outnumber men in the workforce after 2002.[4] As one would imagine, industries expected to experience greatest growth are mainly in the service sector. Greatest decline is expected within clothing, textiles, leather, metal goods, construction and public administration sectors. Because jobs are relatively easy to come by, Leeds has a high level of graduate retention as one of our interviewees suggests here:

> *Everybody knows its easy to get a job in Leeds, that's why I stayed here. I've got friends as well, in Newcastle, who are coming to stay with me to find jobs. Anyone can get a job here (Pam, Leeds consumer).*

As we will discuss later, the 2 universities, their 45,000 students, and the further 20,000 full time students at 9 specialist colleges play a key role in Leeds economic and cultural fortunes.

More than many other old industrial cities, the city's marketers have been effective in giving the Leeds a make-over, much of which relies on the quality of its nightlife:

> *After years of being saddled with the image of flat caps and Tetley Bitter men, Renaissance Leeds has been largely modelled on continental 24-hour cities, but at the same time it is rediscovering its textile industry heritage…groups of chic revellers throng in the streets, Leeds is the only place to be (Simpson, 99)*[5].

Tourism plays a strong part in the city's economic fortunes, which is worth an estimated £502 million per year employing around 18,000 people. More importantly, Leeds is now considered by both the travel industry and the general public, as an attractive tourist destination, bolstered through events such as Euro '96 and development such as the Royal Armouries and the Victoria Quarter. Latest research by the Yorkshire Tourist Board revealed that 1,200,000 'staying' trips to Leeds accounts for an estimated 4 million visitor nights and £126 million in expenditure. The importance of the cultural industries can be measured, not only by the number of jobs and the value of its output, but also by the attraction and retaining of corporate investment and the number of visitors. The cultural economy of Leeds supports nearly 6,000 jobs with an annual output valued at almost £400 million:

> *Leeds brought the world the first moving pictures captured on film, and the first traffic lights. And now it has become a city that seems to have unlocked the secret that unless you want to*

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[2] Simon Brooke, 'Think Paris, Think Venice, Think Leeds!', *Livewire* (10/00).
[3] Leeds City Council, *Economic Bulletin*, April 2001
[4] Leeds City Council, *Economic Bulletin*, April 2001
[5] Dave Simpson, 'A Short Break in Leeds: the Inhabitants of the Formerly Industrial City Work Hard at Being Stylish and Having Fun', *The Independent*, 21 March 1999.

keep travelling for ever, you had better make home a place you are happy to come back to. (Emmett, 1998)

Leeds boasts significant cultural attractions including Opera North, the award-winning West Yorkshire Playhouse, the Northern Ballet Theatre and is host to a calendar of open air events. With true European flair, Leeds has a bustling café-bar culture and claims to have 'waved goodbye to post-industrial decline and welcomed, with open arms, *caffe-latte* society'.[6] Leeds' nightlife has become renowned on a national and European level. Over the last 10 years, the city centre has transformed itself away from a small number of pubs and bars many in need of refurbishment, to become one of the most lively, cosmopolitan and progress late night entertainment areas in the country.

There is, however, another side to this story of prosperity, especially in the areas surrounding the city centre. The Leeds economy handbook, 'The Index of Local Deprivation',[7] states that 12 of the 33 wards in Leeds are within the worst 10% of wards nationally. Of the 12 inner wards, 10 are in the 10% most deprived (the variables in this index were unemployment, children in low earning households, households lacking basic amenities, households with no car and educational participation at 17). In terms of income levels, according to 'The Gross Average Weekly Household Income Survey 1996-97' (School of Geography, Leeds University), all wards in the inner areas (with the exception of Headingly) have households with an average income below the average for the city. Eight wards (Burmantofts, City and Holbeck, Harehills, Hounslet, Kirkstall, Richmond Hill, Seacroft and University) all show a high dependency on income from benefits.

The segmented nature of the labour and entertainment market in Leeds has resulted in a 'two speed city', where groups, mainly in the outer areas, are relegated to either unemployment or low level positions in the labour market and are in general non-participants in the city's vibrant nightlife. The Leeds Economy Handbook 1999 states that the city council and its partners believe that the principal cause of inner city social problems is a direct result of the long term decline of local non-office jobs. In many respects the benefits of the local economy's success have bypassed local residents. What is clear, is that an increasingly polarised economy exists within Leeds. While the numerous initiatives and strategies of the city council boast the rhetoric of fighting social exclusion and poverty, the statistics show consistently that the majority of city residents are not receiving the full benefits of Leeds' burgeoning success. Because of this, perhaps the 'classic corporate approach' to city development needs to re-think its strategies if it wants to increase inclusivity and access for all residents (Houghton and Williams, 1995).

[6] Advertisement, 'The Third Industrial Revolution…It's All @ Leeds', *Livewire* (10/00).
[7] A combination of census results, Dept. of Environment index of local conditions and Dept of Environment transport and the regions.

2. Producing the night-time economy

Restructuring and concentration in the brewing, pub and night club sectors

Who makes the alcohol we drink and who owns the pubs we drink in have been subject to restructuring and concentration over the course of the 20th century. While in 1930 there were 559 brewery companies in the UK and by 1998 there were only 59 (BLRA, 1999). One company, Scottish-Courage, runs a near monopoly on domestic supply of beer while the last ten years has witnessed the rise of a small number of independent pub companies which now overwhelmingly dominate the ownership of pubs and bars.

How did this dramatic shift in ownership come about? The watershed events was the 1989 Monopolies and Mergers Commission report, which concluded that a complex monopoly existed in the brewing industry largely as a result of high levels of vertical integration in which brewers owned everything from production to point of sale (Mason and McNally, 1997). At this time, 88% of public houses were either managed by breweries or tied to them as tenanted houses (Ali, 1998). The 1989 Report led to the Supply of Beer Orders Act which aimed to break the monopoly ownership of the national brewers by restricting the 'tied house' system so that no brewer could own, lease or have any other interest in more than 2000 pubs, that at least one guest beer should be sold, and that loan tying should be abolished (Mason and McNally, 1997, p. 412). As a result, most large national brewers sold off large stocks of public houses to come within these limits or divested from brewing altogether to get around the limits on pub ownership imposed upon them. However, the Beer Orders Act was never fully implemented as breweries only had to release ties on half its pubs held over the 2000 limit and the loan ties were never abolished (ibid.).

Since then, there has been an acceleration of mergers, concentration and rationalisation within the brewing and pub industry. Whereas in 1989 there were 6 big national brewers in the UK (Grand Metropolitan, Bass, Allied, Whitbread, Scottish and Newcastle and Courage), by 2000, Scottish and Newcastle remains the only large national brewer. Together with the Belgian firm Interbrew (recent purchasers of Bass and Whitbread breweries), Carlsberg-Tetley and Guinness, these brewers control 81% of the beer sales in the UK and have come under heavy criticism for manipulating choice by offering fewer and fewer brands. However, the Trade and Industry Secretary has recently ordered Interbrew to sell off its interests in Bass Brewery due to concerns of its monopolistic position in the UK beer market.

The more significant by-product of this restructuring has been the emergence of a new breed of highly profitable pub companies, or ‘pubcos’, many of which were established by the brewers to avoid the restrictions of pub ownership set by the Beer Orders Act. Over the last decade, these pubcos have flourished as more and more pubs have been put on the market by former brewers. There are now around 70 such companies who own over 30 pubs or bars and scores of smaller independent pubcos are being established every month. While the number of pubs has stayed static at about 62,000 in the UK, the

number owned by brewers has fallen from 32,000 to 3,300 over the last ten years (accounting for 5.3% of the UK pub market). In contrast, Pubcos who owned 16,000 outlets in 1989 now own around 49,000 (accounting for nearly 80% of the market) (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Change in pub ownership in the UK, 1989-2000.

	1989	2000	2000
National Brewers			
Tenanted	22,000	2,724	1,000
Managed	10,000	7,336	2,300
Sub total	32,000	10,060*	3,300**
Regional Brewers			
Tenanted	9,000	5,939	5,939
Managed	3,000	3,498	3,498
Sub total	12,000	9,437	9,437
Independent Operator			
Single	16,000	18,098	18,098
Multi-site pubcos	-	24,196	30,956
Sub total	16,000	42,294	48,392
Total	**60,000**	**61,791**	**61,791**

* Bass, Scottish and Newcastle, Whitbread

** Scottish and Newcastle only

Source: The Publican Handbook, 2000.

Many of these pub companies have shown remarkable levels of growth such as Normura Principal Investment Group (a Japanese Investment Bank which owns many high street chains such as William Hill, Thresher and Victoria Wines) which now owns over 5,500 pubs and is the UKs largest pub operator (Table 2.2). Smaller companies such as JD Wetherspoons are making dramatic inroads into pub ownership, with the company reaching a turnover of £380m and hoping to boost its estate from 500 to 2000 pubs.

Table 2.2 Pub ownership in the UK

	Outlets	**Managed**	**Leased/Tenanted**
Punch/Wellington	5878	1060	4818
Nomura**	4839	28	4821
Whitbread PLC	3714	1990	1724
Bass	3046	3046	-

S & N*	3300	2330	1000
Enterprise Inns	2437	-	2437
Pubmaster Ltd	2050	-	2050
Wolv & Dudley*	1993	997	996
Greene King*	1730	630	1100
Alehouse Prop.	830	50	780
Total for top 10	**29,817 (48% of all pubs in the UK)**		

*Brewer

** This figure does not include the recent acquisition of 988 Bass pubs.

Punch includes Punch Taverns, Punch Retail, Inn Business, Vanguard, Wellington

Nomura includes Unique, Inntrepreneur, Phoenix, Inn Partnership, Wizard Inns

Source: The Publican, 2000

Pubcos, then, have reinvigorated high street pubs and bars into a rapidly growing sector which is worth an estimated £2.5B (Publican, 5/2/01, 17). City centre nightlife is also a significant employer. Nationally, there are 21,000 employed in brewing, 429,000 employed in pubs, bars and licensed clubs (excluding Hotels and Restaurants), and 80,000 holding self employed licensees. With another 300,000 employed indirectly as pub and brewing suppliers, it has been estimated that the sector employs 830,000 (BLRA, 2000). However, as the Low Pay Commission (1998) outlined, 40% of people employed in the hospitality sector are paid below the minimum wage, the highest of any sector in the economy. Pinning hopes on nightlife activity as a source of sustainable and meaningful employment growth, then, should be treated with extreme caution.

However, it is a highly volatile and unstable period for the pub and bar market with 6,500 or 10% of the country's pubs up for sale during the beginning of 2001 (Guardian, 18/1/01). Many of those up for sale are city centre, non-branded pubs owned by large brewers and former brewers such as Scottish and Newcastle, Whitbread and Bass. For example, Scottish and Newcastle, a long time leader has bowed to pressure from the City of London to reduce its pub estate, by selling 740 houses, switching a further 180 to leased operations and concentrating on core brands especially its suburban traditional style pub concepts such as Chef & Brewer, T&J Bernard and Barras. What is evident, then, is that many brewers who have now divested from brewing are also slowly divesting from pub ownership into higher profit areas such as pub restaurants, branded pubs, fitness centres and hotels. This on going restructuring has implications for the ways in which pubs and bars are operated. More specifically, there is a shifting balance between managed or tenanted/leased outlets.

Up until the massive changes in pub ownership in the 1990s, most traditional pubs owned by the brewers were operated as tenancies. However, the number of tenanted premises has fallen dramatically from nearly 45,000 to just under 10,000 between 1967 and 1998 while the number run as managed houses

has stayed around the 10,000 mark (BLRA, 1999). The recent growth of sup pubs, style bars and branded restaurants has shifted ownership in favour of managed rather than tenanted outlets which has challenged the financial viability of many individual tenants. There are signs that tenanted outlets may be enjoying a renaissance as they offer stable rental income and reduce overhead costs for pub operators as there is less need for area managers, head office staff, personnel and marketing departments. Moreover, operators are aware that tenancies can offer a differentiated product in contrast to the large glut of monotonous branded pubs and bars which fill Britain's high streets. In particular, Scottish and Newcastle Retail are now offering all new lets as franchises to allow operators to develop brands in a distinctive way. Two-thirds of pubs owned by the UKs top ten pub operators remain tenanted. However, scores of individual pub owners have been caught up in this restructuring and the recent sale frenzy. For example, Whitbread's sale of its 3,000 estate has caused anger as its tenants have not been allowed first refusal in the sale of their pubs. Instead, the company wants to sell off the estate in one block to generate a £1.1B profit for shareholders. Existing tenants are concerned that their new owners, likely to be one of the big pub companies, may erode their contracts as tenants.

Overall, then, the Beer Orders legislation largely had the opposite effect of reducing the monopoly in the sector as pub ownership by a small number of large brewers has now been replaced by monopoly ownership by a small number of pub companies. For example, the top 10 leading UK pub operators now account for nearly 50% of all pubs and bars, only two of which still have a connection with brewing. The Office of Fair Trading has announced a further review of the sector which has relaxed the 2000 limit on ownership, especially since the Beer Orders Act now only apply to S&N as the only large brewer-pub owner. In sum, the pub market is effectively controlled by one pub company, a handful of pub companies (backed by financial institutions) and a couple of regional brewers. They will have sufficient power to control everything from supply to distribution to sales returning the market to the oligopolistic status of the 1980s. Considering shareholders demand for growth, it is likely that the strong will get stronger with ownership by a smaller number of large pub companies eroding the viability of small operators.

Nightclubs are currently experiencing the same level of merger activity. The nightclub industry had sales of over £2 billion in 1997, and admitted around 185 million people through their doors (Mintel, 1998:15). Many nightclub operators are facing new challenges due to falling audiences and the blurring of the division between pubs and clubs. As a result, many small operators are going bust which is opening the way for the emergence of a small number of large operators such as the PoNaNa Group and Luminar Leisure the largest nightclub operator in the UK

Luminar Leisure

Luminar Leisure has grown through the £360m acquisition of Northern Leisure, recent buyers of Rank Leisure, one of the most established entertainment operators in the UK. Luminar now runs 250 late

night venues including brands such as Chicago Rock Cafe, Jumpin Jacks, Life and The Café Bars. It has become the largest nightclub operators in the UK through venues such as Ikon and Evolution, many of which date back to Rank Leisure. While many of these night clubs were traditionally associated with more city centre mainstream nightclubs, Luminar is investing heavily in refurbishing these venues. Luminar experienced exceptional growth in 2000 with pre-tax profits increasing by 207%.

Branding. To the rescue?

> *It is a tale often told that in '1875, an employee of Bass, the Burton upon Trent brewer, spent an uncomfortable New Year's eve camped outside the patent office in London. His task, in which he succeeded, was to register Bass's red triangle logo as the country's first trade mark. The brewery wanted to be sure of protecting the logo, not only because it was associated with its beers in Britain but also because it made the many casks it shipped abroad instantly recognisable and was used to mark out Bass pubs.' (Guardian) & Brand New (V&A museum)*

Branding is far from a new phenomena in any aspect of life in the 21st century and city night life is no exception. Branding has grown from its origins in alcoholic products to apply to whole retail outlets. Branding multiple outlets has been a central part of the expansion strategies of many pubcos. For example, 8% of all pubs in the UK (4,776 outlets) are now branded using one of 206 brands with the top 5 pub operators controlling 63% of branded pubs (The Publican, 2000). In particular, out of 3,300 outlets, Scottish & Newcastle claim that '50% of the estate is currently branded. This will rise to 70% by April 2002' (Scottish & Newcastle website. 2001).

Pub branding exploding during the 1990s through the emergence of Aussie, Irish and sports themed bars. Such theming came under heavily criticism from consumer groups and publicans alike due to its role in eroded the identity of the traditional British pub and its clientele (Everitt and Bowler, 1996). Those developing themed bars claimed that they were responding to changing consumer demand by catering for smaller niche markets. For example, Firkin and It's a Scream brands are associated with students, All Bar One, Bar 38 and Quo Vardis target office workers, while Bar Oz, Walkabout, OutBack Bar and SpringBok target sports groups. Moreover, smarter, more upmarket style and café-bars have emerged to attract the more lucrative, older age groups rather than a mass pub market. The net result has been to create new consumer identities in the night time economy.

All large operators are now organised around branded divisions rather than geographical areas. While the early brands are now tired, there is no end to new brand role out. Brands that have proved in one pub are rolled out nationally. Brand wars have become a common feature of city centres at night as operators vie to win the hearts and wallets of the same amount of consumers. For example, Bass's Goose theme has been launched to compete directly with Wetherspoons concept. The most recent turn in branding is the concentration on café bar brands such as Bar Censa (S&N), Tiger Tiger (Chorion) and Lloyds No 1 (Wetherspoons).

Larger national chains have taken the branding concept a step further and nightlife venues have generally been disconnected from their brewing legacies with the signature of a pub no longer referring to the brewer or the type of beer associated with that brewer, but free floating brands which aim at constructing a wider lifestyle experience rather than a narrow drinking experience. Freed from the chains of mundane production of beer, companies now have the time and extra cash to develop brand images. Venues now attempt to draw on wider synergies associated with the experience beyond merely the sale of food and drink but also through the ability to buy into a particular lifestyle experience, dress code and social mores. Hiding the reality of corporate ownership is also a way for operators to detract attention away from their market domination and to encourage consumers that they are making a discerning decision between real nightlife choices.

Moreover, developing a portfolio of brands, then, allows the company to develop a number of distinct identities, target a several audiences and operate at several venues in one location without creating competition. The attractiveness of branding as a strategy stems from its ability to foster a wider 'lifestyle' experience, to increase uniformity and hence reduce costs and overheads, to increase a feeling of consumer choice, safety, convenience and reliability. New pub and bar concepts, then, have often led the development of new types of licensing arrangements, new attitudes to dress codes and gender relations (Wilkinson, 1994), have encouraged a diversity of uses generally mixing eating and drinking and a 'chameleon' approach by appeal to different audiences throughout the day. New bar concepts are dedicated to the three Fs - family, food and females (Mintel, 2000). For many companies, then, branding has become the holy grail and the only way to earn the favour of City investors.

There is little doubt that the provision of city centre nightlife has changed dramatically over the last 20 years through a decline in the number of male dominated ale houses and working men's clubs of the 1970s and lager fuelled discos and pubs in the 1980s and 1990s and the development of a more diverse, cosmopolitan and European atmosphere into the 21st century. However, underneath this façade of cosmopolitanism and diversity, a drab uniformity is growing in every town and city centre through expanding pub and bar branded experience. Moreover, the widespread growth of branded licensed outlets has enabled large operators to gain cost advantages through using rational techniques of production such as bulk buying arrangements and create 'synergies' between products, both of which have eroded the profitability of small, independent operators. While there may appear to be a greater variety of provision, branding develops a largely non-local 'experience' which is eroding the many of the distinctive elements of nightlife in Britain's cities.

Current patterns of provision in Leeds' nightlife

> *I just think in Leeds it is a fine line between… dirty nasty places and really trendy dressy places. Like on a Friday and Saturday night, it is hard to find middle ground (Julie, young professional consumer)*

This section outlines the current state of provision in Leeds' nightlife. We highlight patterns of (1) ownership in terms of the balance between national operators, expanding local and regional operators and small single-site and/or independent operators, (2) levels of branding and (3) the styles of venues in the city centre.

Ownership in the night-time economy

Ownership of the night-time economy can be understood by reference to three types of operators. The first category ‘national operators’, comprises the brewers, former brewers and pubcos operating who now operate at a national level and include companies such as Scottish and Newcastle, Bass, Punch Taverns and SFI Group. It also includes what are termed ‘super regional’ operators which include former regional brewers who now own pub estates at a national scale. Such as Wolverhampton and Dudley and Greene King. The second category, ‘local/regional operators’ comprise firms which are established in a particular locality across multiple sites and relatively new operators who have are rapidly expanding in their local and regional catchments. The final category ‘independents’, refers to operators who generally exist at a single or split site and do not have any discernible corporate strategy such as plans for expansion, board of directors or company name.

Leeds has a dense network of licensed premises in its city centre which form a loose ring around the core central shopping centre, which is mainly devoid of licensed premises. The 1990s saw a dramatic increase in the number of licensed premises in the city centre (defined as the Milgarth Police area):

- Between 1994 and 2001, licensed premises increased from 215 to 330 - an increase of 53%.
- Between 1994 and 2001, special hours certificates (post 11pm) increased from 34 to 84 - up 155%.

Particularly large increases were seen after 1998 when the Licensing Justice's National 'Good Practice Guide' suggested changes in the granting of licenses. In May 2001 the city centre included 121 pubs and bars and 18 nightclubs. During the course of this study, five very large capacity clubs closed (Europa, Ritzy, Town & Country Club, Planet Earth and NATO) which had a combined capacity of 6,050. The Town & Country Club reopened as Creation, and Planet Earth as a beach themed bar, Bondi Beach Bar. There are currently 30 proposed licenses at Clarence Dock, 7 at Granary Wharf and 9 at Brewer's Wharf which are earmarked for mixed use developments including waterside bars, cafes and restaurants in association with large developers such as Allied Domecq and the Berkely Group. There are also 9 proposed licenses at the Light Development on the Headrow another mixed used development with hotels, leisure Facilities and bars, due to open November 2001.

The ownership of pubs has changed dramatically over the last 50 years (Figure 1 - also see web page). In 1950, ownership was dominated by Joshua Tetley & Son, a Leeds based Brewery who had 26 outlets in the city, one-quarter of the 109 public houses at the time. There were also a number of other regional

brewers owning 9 or more sites including John Smiths Tadcaster Brewery; Leeds & Wakefield Brewery; Samuel Smith Breweries, Tadcaster. In total, 85% of licensed houses in Leeds in the 1950s were owned by Leeds or Yorkshire based firms. Other large non-local owners included the Railway Executive in Liverpool, William Younger & Co of Edinburgh and Inde Cooper & Hallsop of London.

Fifty years on in 2001, the situation has changed dramatically. The most significant change in ownership concerns the decline of regional and national brewers and the rise in independently owned single site outlets which now account for 53 outlets or 43% of Leeds' licensed premises. Many of the former brewers have a presence in the city such as Whitbread and Scottish & Newcastle and Bass, but the city has seen a dramatic rise in national pub companies such as JD Wetherspoon.

As Figure 2 (also see web site) shows independent operators feature strongly in Leeds' night-time economy. Much of this has been new growth in newly converted premises. Unlike cities such as Newcastle, there are only a handful of large regional operators owning nightlife premises. There are a number of reasons for the historic decline of regional companies such as regional brewing companies selling outlets to large pubcos, and brewery loans to the managers and independent bar operators to buy their tenancies.

Map 1 (also see web site) highlights the distribution of ownership in city centre pubs, bars and night clubs. The Calls and Corn Exchange areas are dominated by single-site, independent operators whilst the station, university and Headrow and Greek Street areas are mainly owned by national operators. The city can be bisected in half with the majority of national operators being located to the west of Briggate towards the Universities and station areas and the independent bars primarily in the Calls area to the East of Briggate.

The independent sectors consist of mainly small, style bar venues which have been developed from non-traditional pub stock in the past 10 years, especially around the Calls, an area which was primarily run down and abandoned:

> *The whole area was fairly derelict. Not so much drugs around then because drugs weren't as prevalent, certainly a lot of prostitution. Very quiet in fact ironically enough, a complete backwater. An old industrial area in every sense. That was the City Council cleansing depot, to the left of that that cleared area was nasty old warehouses, I mean not brick built warehouses but asbestos look warehouses. Steel Stockholders on the corner and a guy who always used to burn the tyres on a Friday afternoon after the environmental health had gone home. That was the general tenor of the area so when of course we opened up here people really did think 'bloody crazy'. (Independent Bar Owner, The Calls)*

Cheap rents and a lack of interest from any other commercial sector meant that independent bar operators sometimes backed by brewery loans were able to come in and colonise this previously disused area:

> *in Call Lane just up the road from here, which you probably want to look at, when Arts opened up and then Oporto and Norman, I mean the reason they got away with it (was) because it was considered to be a backwater therefore the rents were cheap, the landlords*

were fairly desperate and wouldn't go for an institutional let like they would do in the city centre, and allowed independents to open up. (independent Bar Operator)

Branding in the night time economy

Leeds has a number of the leading brands in the city centre. These often have huge capacities, for example the Rat & Parrot, in the former college of music building has a capacity of 1380. Most of these large branded venues have been established in Leeds in the past 5 years, taking advantage of the availability of large empty buildings such as banking halls which were granted changes of use. The cost of refits of these large properties largely restricted their reuse to larger corporate operators. The following table shows that many of the UKs top pub brands are present in Leeds.

Table 2.1: Branding in Leeds

Top national Brands (nationally)	**No. in Leeds city centre**
Mr Qs (Punch 230)	0
Hogshead (Whitbread 160)	2
John Barras (S&N 120)	0
Yates's (Yates's 110)	2
O'Neills (Bass 107)	1
T&J Bernard (S&N 80)	0
Firkin (Punch 78)	2
It's a Scream (Bass 68)	1
Rat and Parrot (S&N 60)	1
All Bar One (Bass 51)	1
Chicago Rock Café (Luminar 37)	0

35 city centre pubs (26% of the total, are branded in Leeds. If we consider the non-independent sector, then 41% of city centre venues are branded. As Map 2 shows (see also web site), the branded establishments are large capacity venues around the universities capturing the student market with themed bars such as Walkabout and Springbok. Greek Street and South Parade also has several branded outlets which are predominantly aimed at the after-work, office market such as All Bar One and Casa. There are also a cluster of branded establishment near the station and along Boar lane which attracts the more 'townie' crowd. Several branded venues have emerged around the Corn Exchange such as Pitcher and Piano and Café Rouge aiming for the daytime café bar crowd and the more sophisticated evening market.

Venue styles in the night-time economy

Leeds' nightlife is segmented into certain styles of venues (figure 3 and map 3 - see also website). See Appendix 1 for an explanation of style categories. Traditional pubs still make up 36% of Leeds' total

licensed premises with these mainly located along Great George Street past the Merrion Centre. There is also a cluster of traditional pubs located between the station-Briggate- Headrow axis with many of these located in the historic yards between shopping streets. Together, café and style bars comprise nearly 40% of Leeds' licensed premises with the main clusters around the Greek Street - Park Lane area and in Calls and Corn Exchange area. Theme pubs make up 12% of the city's bars and are mainly to be found near the Universities, near the Grand Arcade and dotted around the rest of the city centre.

Alternative venues, are one of the smallest segments by type within city centre Leeds, accounting for 4% of venues which are scattered around the edges of the city in the Calls and the so-called North Quarter. Ale house, comprising 7% of venues, are clustered around the market area and can be considered a residual, historic, element within the city's nightlife. The key question to ask is how such places can survive in the post-industrial corporate city. A small number of Disco Bars, totalling less than 1% of city centre venues, characterised by only opening in the evening, loud music and vertical drinking space, exist in the city centre such as the Observatory. With many more bars having multi-use serving food and coffee during the day, but offering Djs and dancefloor space in the evening, such single use establishments are few and far between in the city centre.

The key characteristic of venues in Leeds is that they are multi-use and chameleon-like, and as a result difficult to classify. The Townhouse, near the Corn Exchange for example, is a large three level venue open from 8am for coffee and breakfast through to 2am where is has music and dancing. In many ways this signifies that many licensed premises are not simply pubs anymore but wider lifestyle venues. New monikers such as 'cantina & bar' or 'urban hang suite' are often used to identify them.

One of the distinctive elements of Leeds' nightlife is that many of the bars have loyal followings, often based upon musical and style policy. In many ways they are seen as 'locals':

> *There is a real Milos crowd like there is a real North Bar crowd. They are quite similar to the North Bar people in fact some of them used to be North Bar people and then they grown out and they moved to Milos because there is like DJ sort of funk. And friends of the DJ will come and it is the bar people are all friends with each other and it is a big scene.*

Nightclubs

Since the heady days of the dance music explosion of the early nineties, Leeds has gained well-deserved reputation as one of the UK's favourite clubbing destinations. Often described as the leading clubbing city outside of London, Leeds is best known as the home of pioneering club nights Back to Basics and Speed Queen. The City Council has played a role in promoting this aspect of Leeds' culture as it was the first to promote the city as a clubbing city and offer custom made clubbing breaks including Friday or Saturday night accommodation in a luxury city centre hotel with late checkout along with entry into a nightclub of choice

"The weekenders have been designed with all clubbers in mind. Whether you are a serious clubber, are organizing a hen or stag weekend or just out to enjoy the buzz of Leeds, we have the ideal package for everyone." (Leeds City Council Website, The Leeds Clubbing Weekender)

Historically Leeds has had a strong clubbing scene with the Music Factory starting in the early 90s and a pedigree of credible music nights such as Up Yer Ronson, I-Spy, Vague and Speed Queen.

In May 2001, there were 18 nightclubs in Leeds with a combined capacity of 15,642. There were 5 large capacity clubs closed and Leeds University Students Union was being extended so there were a further 8,000 nightclub spaces out of use. Leeds nightclub infrastructure, then is not huge compared to other cities. However, the predominance of late bars with dancefloor areas serving alcohol until 1am dramatically increases the post 11pm nightlife capacity and has lead to a blurring of boundaries between tradition 'nightclubs'. As a result, Leeds' strong late night bar culture which, for a variety of reasons such as price and convenience, has challenged its club culture:

I do not go out clubbing as much as used to because working and things. I think I have just gone off the whole scene quite a lot because I think bars and a lot of them are open quite late and you do not have to pay to get in. I am quite skint and nowadays I find it quite difficult to part with 10 quid to get in somewhere when I can go to I mean Oslos is …or Soul Kitchen often have a late license (Leeds Consumer)

So yeah if you have got bars which are good to be in which are going to be open late you would rather go to a bar with your friends and if it has got a little bit of a dancefloor it does play music yeah you can have a boogey in there rather than paying the money to go into a particular club rather than a late bar sort of thing. (Headingly Young Professional)

As early as 1997 Andy Pemberton, a writer at dance music magazine Mixmag was asking 'is club culture moving out of clubs' and citing Leeds as one of the cities leading the trend:

Club style bars print flyers, advertise DJs and offer a user-friendly version of club culture. No queues, no expensive door prices, no hassle. Does the explosion in bar trouble spell trouble for clubs?…. Back to Basic's Russell Pate is keenly aware of the trend. "There's been an explosion in the number of bars," he says. "Three bars are opening up within 40 yards of back to Basics. Other bars in Leeds like liquid, Café Mex and Mojo operate like clubs. They put on flyers and advertise DJs but they are bars.…..Clubbers are increasingly taking the bits they like about the clubbing experience, the music, the relaxed atmosphere and the up for it attitude and transplanting it to a more convivial location. So at the best clubs/bars you can talk to people, hear some top tunes and have a boogie all without having to queue, pay to get in to take large amounts of drugs. And after it shuts you can go to a club or a party or go home and feel you've had a night. Its post-clubbing culture. Easy.

Andy Pemberton, Mixmag March 1997.

A common opinion was that the dance and club scene in Leeds is less cutting edge than it has been in the past, much of which is due to the increase in bar culture:

I think Leeds has got less exciting for clubs generally and more exciting for bars. I mean Leeds used to be amazing for clubbing when I was coming home from university like it took

the shit out of Newcastle completely (…) There is nothing has really changed since I went travelling. Obviously they have changed venues have changed a little bit and music policy whatever but there is still Speed Queen (…) There is not really that many new clubs compared to the number of bars every week. (Leeds Clubber)

Today, many listings magazines find it hard to differentiate between a club and a hybrid bar/club. Leeds also a number of smaller capacity niche clubs (from 180-400 capacity) which play a more diverse range of music such as soul, funk, jazz. The Degree in Jazz at Leeds University plays some role in developing a diverse musical infrastructure in the city. There are only two club nights which promote themselves as 'gay' or 'gay friendly' – 'Speed Queen' at the Warehouse on a Saturday and Poptastic at the Cockpit on a Thursday. The larger club capacities are found amongst the established mainstream clubs, although these are now joined by new, out of town super-club developments such as Evolution.

Many clubs are are based around specific drinking circuits. For example, Majeskyks, Jumpin Jaks and Bondi Beach Club are feeders for the more mainstream, brand oriented Boar Lane area, while the smaller, niche music clubs like HiFi, Space, Think Tank and The Fruit Cupboard feed from the smaller, more individual bars in the Calls. The more music orientated DJ based, 'credible' nightclubs are often hidden away from the main drinking circuits. The Mint Club, for example, is tucked away down a small lane and The Warehouse is on the edge of town near the office quarter. This is often a deliberate policy to keep away those who just want to continue drinking:

What we want to do is stop trouble even getting in there. What helps us with that is the venue, we're in town but we're on the edge of it, we're not near the main strip of bars so we don't get people who are kicked out at 11 o'clock and think we want to continue drinking, lets go to a club. (Door Picker, Gay Night)

Clubwatch - the Night Club Association

Leeds Nightclub Association - which one of its principle aims at first was to try and put pressure on the magistrates and the council and the police to have a plan about licensing in the city. What we found out, which was I could not believe it when we found it out, is there is just not a plan. (Nightclub Manager)

Clubwatch', or the 'Night Club Association', is similar to the 'Pubwatch' scheme but is designed specifically for nightclubs. The Association makes a clear distinction between night clubs and section 77 license holders: *There is pressure from the police to extend it to late night bars as well but one of the reasons we formed the Association at the time, was to object to licenses of bars...we feel strongly that people who do not charge an admission price do not...join. (Venue Manager).* All nightclub operators in Leeds are members of the Association; they all pay a membership fee and have recently gained sponsorship for marketing.

The Association's main function is to try and encourage a plan for the nightclub sector:

So we felt strongly that the council, police and magistrates should have a plan and this was coming from the operators. And it is not, we have had accusations of cartel levelled against us in terms that we are trying to restrict competition. Not at all. None of us at the time we formed the association none of us were full, we were all trading reasonably well (…) We are not restricting trade, we are saying there is enough trade in the city for the moment lets stop for a while, review it and have a plan. But they did not want it, the magistrates came to one meeting and never came back. (Nightclub Manager)

The association also exists to submit block applications for occasional licenses. New Year's Eve was a good example of this. Many cities had licensing problems when this event fell on a Sunday, but the majority of venues in Leeds were granted occasional licenses and permission to remain open until late. Licensees, owners and managers meet regularly, on the first Tuesday of every month and are kept informed about new licenses being granted and bars getting extensions. Meetings usually include 3 or 4 presentations from various bodies within the city. The police also attend to discuss any problems that the night clubs may be having with individuals in the city, or indeed, individual operators that may be causing difficulties. The council are also involved on an irregular basis and the Association works closely with the Leeds Council Drug Squad, producing, displaying and distributing posters and leaflets.

The anxiety caused by increasing numbers of late licenses being granted seems to be a source of much tension in the Association, who feel unsupported by the council and the police alike:

When they [the police] introduced the retail crime initiative, which was again a radio link system, you know, they put a sergeant and 2 PCs full time on it and we have got nobody from the police full time at all, we are doing it ourselves again (…). You look at Leeds United, when they had 35,000 in the ground they had to have, I do not know, 100/150 police officers on duty. During the evening we have eight (Venue Manager).

The police also expressed some dissatisfaction with the situation: *We try and influence their thinking and strategy, but we find that they are commercially based. (Inspector)*. By and large, the Association is perceived as a success and is recognised for making a positive contribution to the city. The organisation is responsible for marketing the city regionally and nationally, through schemes like 'Club-First'; attempting to introduce night buses to get people from outside the city centre home; and to organise a radio link system.

Table 2.2: Nightclubs in Leeds, 2001

Night Clubs	**Owner**	**Capacity**
The Warehouse*	Po Na Na trading ltd	520
Think Tank*	Independent	300
Bassment	Regional (same as Bar Phono)	200

Majestyk and Jumpin jacks	Luminar leisure	3,310
Digby's	Modus Enterprises Ltd	300
Bar Phono	Regional (same as Bassment)	180
Club Heaven and Hell	Entrepreneurial leisure ltd	1,670
The Mint Club*	Independently owned	550
Hifi*	Independent	400
Space*	True Reason ltd	490
Teatro (members club)	Lee Chapman	400
Leeds Met Uni, Union Bar	Leeds Met	1,745
Leeds Uni	Union Society	1,141
Wardrobe*	Independently	836
Fruit Cupboard*	True Reason Ltd	400
Evolution	Punch Retail	2,000
Cockpit	Richard Todd	600
Casa Loco	Independent	600
		15,642
Closed/under construction		
Planet Earth (now Bondi Beach Bar)	Absolute leisure	850
66 Boar Lane (Nato)	Brook lesuire	500
Club Uropa	Luminar Lesuire	1,260
Town & Country Club (now Creation)	First Leisure	2,500
Ritzy's	Luminar leisure	1,440
Leeds Uni New Venue	Leeds Uni	1,000
		7,550

As the table above shows, the total nightclub capacity for Leeds is over 15,500, which is less compared to neighbouring cities such as Newcastle which has a capacity of 19,000. However, if those under refurbishment are added the total night club capacity is over 23,000. Further, if bars with a late license until 1 or 2am are added (25,000), then the late night capacity is raised to over 48,000. Given the youth population (16-24) of Leeds is around 98,000, the city has an adequate clubbing infrastructure.

In terms of ownership, smaller nightclubs are predominately owned by local/ regional operators, while the largr clubs are owned by national operators, with Luminar Leisure playing a particularly strong role.

Table 2.3: A week in Leeds' nightclubs. May 2001

Night Clubs	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Evolution	chart (student)	House (student)	Dance (student)	Chart (Student)	Garage	House	Closed
The Warehouse	Closed	closed	closed	Chart (Student)	Techno	House-gay friendly	closed
Think Tank	Closed	Techno	Metal Rock	Hip Hop	hip hop	Indie	closed
Bassment	Closed	closed	60s-90s	Chart	Chart	Chart	closed
Majestyk and Jumpin jacks	Chart	club classics	70s-80s	Chart Dance	70s-90s	Garage	closed
Digby's	Closed	closed	chart (student)	Chart	chart	chart	House
Bar Phono	Motown	closed	techno	house	Jungle	indie/alt	closed
Club Heaven and Hell	Chart	Chart1	chart (student)	70sdisco	chart/dance	70s - house	closed
The Mint Club	Closed	closed	closed	closed	house	house	closed
Hifi	funk, soul r&b	northern soul	motown	Funk, Soul	Funk Soul	Funk Soul	Jazz
Space	closed	funk	dance	Funk	House	House	Closed
Teatro	private Members	Private members	private members	private members	private members	private members	private members
Leeds Met Uni, Union Bar	bar only	bar only	70s/90s-students	bar only	indie/alt (students)	Chart-students	closed
Leeds Uni	bar only	bar only	bar only	bar only	bar only	bar only	closed
Wardrobe	bar only	bar only	bar only	jazz n blues	salsa	funk n Jazz	bar only
Fruit Cupboard	closed	Funk	hip hop	Funk	70s-80s	Rnb	
Cockpit	indie	indie	skate pop/metal	indie (gay)	indie/alt (students)	indie/alt	closed
casa loco	closed	closed	closed	closed	house		House

Live Music

Leeds has recently lost two of its mid-range major live music venues, The Town & Country Club and the Duchess of York. In the city centre, both universities play a significant role in offering mid size venues. As a Leeds University representative stated:

> *We also run gigs in the refrectory, the dining hall for 1800 people. This was the legendary Who gig in 1969. Its got a very long history, probaly the most famous gigs in Leeds but at the end of the day it's a dining hall, that's what it is. So we're building another 1000 capacity venue and another bar, currently, that's the noise you can hear in the background. That'll be comparable to the Met, our sister venue which is also 1000 capacity venue and tends to run a cominbation of gigs and bands, which is also our intention. The live scene its the Cockpit and the Met, they've got the live scene nailed and anything larger comes to us, cos remarkably our dining hall is the largest venue in Leeds.*

There are very few pubs in the city centre which offer live music. However, the Cockpit has developed a cutting edge reputation for indie gigs and club nights. One of the most prominent is Joseph's Well which is out of the city centre. The Town Hall plays host to occasional bands on tour, while Leeds' new Millennium Square hosts singers and live music events ranging from Classical and Opera to Mel C.

The lack of live music venues echoes a familiar debate in many parts of the country - did they die because there was no demand and they were uneconomic or where there other reasons for their decline? Many supporters of the live music scene suggest that the increase in large themed bars has lead to the demise of many live music venues:

> *The Town & Country club, which has been there for 10 years finally closed because of the new vein of theme bars which are popping up all over the city. Springbok, Walkabout, big super sports bars, whose budget for lighting & décor is as big as any club, we're talking in the millions here, it killed the T&C. (Leeds University Representative)*

The Town & Country has been transformed into a 'super nightclub' by First Leisure, to the dismay of one of its punters:

> *No Duchess, no T&C - what the hell is going on? How many more trendy bars and clubs do we need? If Leeds is to live up to the cosmopolitan label it seems to have given itself then there needs to be a whole lot more variety. Leeds has no arena, no big stadium gigs and is a city of mediocrity. Like others have said, there are no big name resident DJ's at the clubs like there are in Liverpool and Manchester, etc. Only up and coming bands play at the Met whereas all the big touring bands will play in Manchester, Newcastle, Glasgow and London. How can Leeds claim to an excellent nightlife when none of the main players want to come*

here? Don't believe the hype, they're just trying to tempt everyone to Leeds to rent out their extortionately priced flats, drink their over priced watered down lager, wear their over priced clothes, and for what? So you can call yourself cool! Bring back the live music scene! (Chat Board BBC Leeds Website)

In spite of such proclamations, Leeds has played host to large music festivals such as the Virgin V Festivals and the second leg of the Reading Rock Festival. It has also had several high profile collaborations with Radio One including Sound City, Live in Leeds, Music Live and the Love Parade 2000. The majority of these events have taken place outside the city centre in the large suburban parks such as Roundhay Park.

The role of the Students Unions

The two Universities' Students Unions play an important role in the city's nightlife, hosting the main mid size live bands on tour. However, being located in the middle of campus has proven one difficulty for the University Union:

We are buried in the middle of the campus, incarerated would be another good word, however, in our favour, although you've got to know its here, we're very close to Hyde park and Headingly. We are the first stop, obviously there is not passing trade, no-ones gonna walk past and go 'behind those buildings, there's probaly a top club going on' (Union Society Representative)

The Unions are still bound by the 'members and guests' policy, but can offer membership to students and locals for certain events. The two university unions play differnet but complementary roles::

Predominantly the Met's main student nights, with cheap booze & cheesy music, nothing too specialised. We on the other hand cater for a niche market, due to the size of our venue, we´ve done very well with specialist nights, goth nights, rock nights, hard techno nights tend to go down well here. When we come back we'll keep the smaller venue for that niche, but well also enter into the more mainstream, student club night.

Both the unions experience compeition from city centre establishments and as a result Leeds University Students Union has undergone a major refurbishment costing over £1M. However,to a certain extnt, student unions offer a safe, cheap, attractive product for most students:

But its classic student. Its not Chi-Chi in any way, it tends to be first years, its very safe, sensible price, they're not going to get conned at the bar, it's a completely safe environemnt on each of these nights, you know exactly what youyre getting (…) Its that vibe, and universities will always have that, we always have the chaepest drinks, and not mad one off

offers but across the baord & whatever your friends are drinking, you're not going to get lumbered with a 4 pound cocktail. (Student Union Representative)

3. Regulating the night time economy

Understanding Regulation

The word regulation often produces mixed feelings. For some people it signifies unnecessary restraint and lack of freedom while for others it is seen as necessary in order to curb negative behaviour, address social problems, or, through planning, to achieve certain goals. These tensions are particularly evident in debates about the night-time economy. Some feel that their freedom to go out and enjoy themselves is restrained by current licensing and public entertainment legislation, while others strongly argue that there is a real need to control nightlife activity to prevent social disorder. Hence while many have embraced the urban night-time economy as merely another tool for urban regeneration, others see in it the seeds of moral decline.

Evidence for both sides of the debate abound. Proponents of nightlife activity point to a revival of city centres, as a result of the growth of licensed premises. The total number of on-licensed premises in the UK in June 1998 was 111,6000 and there were another 5,000 new applications for on-licences in the following year. On licensed premises have increased by almost 30% in the last twenty years and today the pub and club industry has a turnover of around £22 billion pounds, equal to around 3% of the GDP of the UK (Hobbs et al, 2000). However, this increase in both numbers of places and late licenses has led to more public disorder in town centres. Fred Braugthon, chair of Police Federation commented recently that there was a 'sense of disorder and anarchy' in many city centres because of this change. This image has become commonplace in the media, leading to discussions about shutting down 'thug pubs' and curtailing drink-fuelled violence and vandalism (See 'Blair to Propose 48 Hour Shutdown for Rowdy Pubs in Summit on Lawlessness', *The Guardian*, 3.7.2000, 'Police Win Powers to Shut Down thug Bars', *The Observer* 2.7.2000, 'Colonising the Night', *The Guardian* 12.9.2000 and 'Straw to Target Drink-Related Crime', *The Guardian*, 18.7.2000).

There is a wide range of issues at stake behind these rather simple portrayals of nightlife activity. To fully understand the regulation of nightlife, it is necessary to consider a number of different dimensions - legal, technical, economic, social and cultural. Legal forms include legislation laid down to regulate nightlife activity. Technical forms include the use of CCTV and radio-nets to monitor behaviour. Economic

forms include pricing policies of drinks and door entry. Social and cultural regulations include more informal aspects such as dress codes, style and music, which are largely enforced through doorstaff.

There are also many different 'players' involved in the regulation of nightlife. Licensing magistrates, fire departments, local authorities and police play a primary role in laying down and implementing legislation. Increasingly, residents' groups have a strong role to play in regulation, mainly when conflicts arise between city livers and city revellers. The role of producers is often overlooked. They shape nightlife activity through door policies, style and design of venue and promotions all of which attract certain groups based on: economic/occupational status; musical preference; appearance; racial origin and sexual orientation.

Local authorities are increasingly involved in promoting city centres as investment locations, so that they increasingly find themselves aligned with, and in some cases led by, capital investors in the direction of development of the night-time economy. A growing number of public-private partnerships influence the development of cities also important organisations and 'cultural intermediaries' are involved in producing images or commentary on the night-time economy through listing magazines, advocacy groups and promoters. Strangely enough, the views of consumers themselves are often omitted, or only weakly considered, in regulating nightlife. The balance of power between these different interest groups varies across time and place resulting in more 'cohesive' or 'fragmentary/divided' regulatory regimes. For example, while in many places, there are close and meaningful relationships between the police, local authorities and local consumers; in other places there are conflicts and 'stand offs' between interest groups.

What is evident is that the regulation of nightlife activity is currently in the midst of a significant transition. In particular, the role of the local state has largely shifted from managing the city to encouraging and supporting entreprenuerialism. As a result, large industrial cities, which face problems of declining populations and tax bases, are increasingly aligning themselves with private capital, to develop urban nightlife. At the same time, city councils have to deal with some of the negative consequences of nightlife activity such as litter, noise and violence and balance the needs of local residents with those of developers and entrepreneurs. It is necessary to put the issue of the regulation of the night-time economy into some kind of historical and theoretical perspective before discussing the specific situation in Leeds.

A brief history of regulating nightlife activity

For several centuries, government has actively regulated the sale and distribution of alcohol. Parliament first became involved with the regulation of the sale of alcoholic drinks in the 13th century in response to

concerns about the purity and price of beer and issues of public order. Early taxes were imposed on beer. In 1729 very high duties were imposed on the retail of spirits, and justices were required to licence premises on which spirits were consumed. In 1828 an Act demanded two licenses - a justice's licence and an excise licence - for premises on which alcohol was consumed (Home Office, 2000: appendix, p 55). Several emergency statutes about sale and consumption during wartime were passed in 1914/15, including current legislation about opening and closing times and in 1921 the universal 'permitted hours' came into being (i.e. the number of hours a pub could be open, including breaks in the afternoon and different hours on Sunday). Restaurant, residential and combined restaurant and residential licences were introduced in 1961. The same Act introduced 'drinking up' time of ten minutes. The Licensing Act 1964 was a consolidating measure and is still the main statute (ibid, p.55).

Table 3.1 A brief history of licensing

1495	First statute enacted
1552	Licensing system created
1604 - 1623	Licensing conditions imposed
1700	Justices' licence introduced
1787	Closure of immoral premises
1828	Alehouse Act
1834	Beerhouse Act
1869	Wine and Beerhouse Act
1872 - 1904	Licensing Acts
1910	Licensing (Consolidation) Act
1953	Licensing Act
1964	**Licensing Act**
2000	White Paper on licensing reform

There is currently a plethora of licence types for liquor and different procedures, depending on the type of licence application. Many of these licences have esoteric and cumbersome requirements, for example in order to operate a night club, an individual first needs to acquire a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL) from the local authority and then an on-licence and a Special Hours Certificate - with conditions to

provide food, music and live entertainment. In 1983 the jurisdiction of justices to grant licences for music and dancing (or PEL) and similar entertainment in restaurants and hotels was abolished and replaced by a system under which district councils became licensing authorities.

In 1988 weekday hours were extended to permit 'all day opening'. Since 1994 a number of minor deregulatory measures have been introduced, including a special extension of hours for the Millennium. Otherwise, few fundamental changes have been made to the basic legal approach which has stood for almost two centuries. This, however, will change in the near future. Numerous working parties are being formed to implement a complete overhaul of the current system (table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Summary of Some of the Key Changes Advocated by The White Paper on Reform: *A Time for Change* (Home Office, 2000)

- A single integrated scheme for licensing premises which sell alcohol, provide public entertainment or provide refreshment at night.
- A new system of personal licences which allow holders to sell or serve alcohol for consumption on or off any premises possessing a premises licence (places providing public entertainment or refreshment at night which does not involve alcohol, would require a premises licence only).
- New measures to back-up restrictions on under age drinking including: a new offence of buying alcohol on behalf of a person under 18; a new offence of knowingly permitting a sale to a person under 18 years; test purchasing to be placed on a statutory footing; a new duty on people selling alcohol to satisfy themselves about a customers, age.
- Personal licences to be issued for ten years to those aged 18 or over without a relevant criminal record following a test of knowledge of licensing law and social responsibilities, with provision for endorsement or withdrawal of licences within that period: abolition of vague 'fit and proper' person test in respect of licences to sell alcohol.
- Premises licence to incorporate operating conditions (e.g. hours, noise, fire exits, capacity) limited to crime and disorder/public safety/nuisance factors, and set locally on a basis of the balance of operator's requirements/resident views/police and fire authority assessments.
- To minimise public disorder resulting from fixed closing times, flexible opening hours, with the potential for up to 24 hour opening 7 days a week, subject to consideration of the impact on local residents.

- Tough new powers for police to deal instantly with violent and disorderly behaviour by closing premises that rogue licence holders have allowed to become the focus of such behaviour.
- Children to be allowed access to any part of licensed premises at the personal licence holder's discretion; but licensing authorities to have the discretion to restrict (e.g.. by requiring adult supervision) or deny access for children to unsuitable venues.
- Personal and premises licences to be issued by local authorities
- An avenue of appeal for parties (including the police and local residents) to the Crown Court.
- Licences to be supported by a flexible range of sanctions (including temporary reduction in opening hours) instead of present single all or nothing sanction of loss of licence.
- New arrangements for non-profit making registered clubs supplying alcohol to their members which preserve their special status.

The fact that the night-time economy has been perhaps the slowest sector to respond to a loosening of regulation stems from its perceived peripheral status to the daytime economy and a historical suspicion of the night as a site of excess, vice and crime. As a result, not only has it been marginalized economically, it also has been subject to much legal, political and indeed moral regulation. Historically, the night-time drinking economy was characterised by monopoly ownership of beer production and distribution aimed at mass consumption by a relatively homogenous clientele whose activities were carefully regulated through the curtailment of opening hours to ensure that workers' leisure did not interfere with their productivity.

Part of the shift in regulation in the 1980s has been motivated by the emergence of a 'new entertainment economy' in cities (Hannigan, 1998) which entails forging new sets of relations between the state, capital and consumers. In particular, many U.K. cities began to reinvent themselves as places of consumption dependent on the development of a diverse and vibrant 'after dark' economy, and this involved grappling with outdated laws and curtailments. For example, the idea of the '24 hour city' was designed to break away from the industrial city with its emphasis on manufacturing production and its strict temporal and spatial ordering. Furthermore, the Beer Orders Acts in 1989 sought to limit the breweries stranglehold on controlling pubs and encourage diversification in the night time economy, which in turn fuelled demand for more flexible regulations, especially around licensing hours (see Home Office, 2000).

Yet, there have been problems with building a new regulatory environment. While the Beer Orders legislation was intended to break down monopoly and increase diversification, as discussed in chapter 2, it merely shifted control from the breweries to the large pub chains who have pioneered much more

aggressive approaches to marketing their nightlife brands as a lifestyle. Moreover many U.K. cities were stuck between regimes of production, and had neither the infrastructure nor the clientele to fuel a 24-hour cultural economy. Cities like Newcastle have found it difficult to create a more cosmopolitan image due to a lack of a critical mass of professional classes and the dominance of its highly gendered and masculine going-out culture (Hollands, 1995; Gofton, 1983). Moreover, its tightly controlled licensing approach has impeded the development of a more diverse night time economy, resulting in a 'fragmented' and internally divided system of regulation. In contrast, Leeds has pioneered innovative policy mechanisms to deregulate and develop the night time economy such as its 24 Hour City Initiative and has adopted a more liberal approach to regulating licensed venues. Much of this was achieved through the leadership role of the City Council (Trickett, 1994), especially through the Leeds Initiative and the City Centre Management Team (CCM), and a consensus between police, magistrates and the Urban Development Corporation.

In sum then, while these are dominant trends in the regulation of the night-time economy across England, there remain local variations. The balance of power between various parties involved with regulation is crucial toward understanding how particular cities have responded to either controlling or liberalising nightlife activity. Below we look at the views and relationships between various regulators in Leeds.

3. Regulating Nightlife in Leeds

The single most significant factor shaping the Leeds night-time economy was brought about by the Council led 24 hour City Initiative. City Centre Managers and the Council worked actively with the magistrates and police to generate a more relaxed attitude to the giving of late night licenses. An important part of the initiative was improvement in street lighting, installation of CCTV and the promotion of Leeds as a place to come to. This set in train a large number of changes and improvements, in the city centre, involving close co-operation with private enterprise and eventually produced the vibrant, thriving night-time economy that has attracted and impressed thousands of visitors to Leeds.

Magistrates: From Morals to the Marketplace

Historically the power to regulate the night-time economy through liquor licensing has rested with licensing magistrates, with input from police, fire service representatives and local authority officials. The sale of alcohol, the type, the Licensee, the place, the hours and the circumstances in which alcohol can be sold are governed by Justices of the Peace (voluntary magistrates) sitting either in Petty Sessions or as a Licensing Committee. They operate within the Licensing Act 1964 as amended by the Licensing Act 1988 and are advised by professional Justices Clerks.

The Leeds committee is composed of 15 magistrates (the maximum allowed by statute is 20 unless permission to increase that number is granted by the Secretary of State). There are 450 magistrates on the Leeds bench, 15 of whom are license magistrates. The licensing committee is one of the smallest committees within the Leeds bench. The committee sit, on average, once every two months for regular sessions and also have a number of adjourned sessions per month.

Despite their non-elected and non-representative status Magistrates wield considerable power to control the night time economy. They are dependent on police information about particular persons, areas and premises.

> *There is really no need for magistrates to visit the city centre. If there is a major disorder problem, we will quickly get to know about it from the police and the cases come through here, with people arrested. Any particular premises that are causing concern because they are breaching licensing law, the police should prosecute them and the magistrates will happily revoke the license. (Magistrate Representative)*

Liquor licenses are still granted to a named individual who is known to be a 'fit and proper person'. In practice this means that they have no record of serious crime. The magistrates also consider objections from the police, local authority, public etc., and are advised on the suitability of refurbished premises in relation to planning issues, health and safety. The general presumption is in favour of a liquor licence being granted unless objectors have substantial grounds for opposing them, so that new licences can continue to be granted 'ad infinitum'.

'On' licences can be granted with a variety of conditions. A common one used, for example, is that beer glasses must made from unshatterable glass. However, if the conditions are broken there only seems to be one sanction, the somewhat draconian power to revoke the complete licence, which effectively closes the premises. 'On' licences may have attached to them 'undertakings', which have been offered by potential licensees setting out what they will or will not do (e.g. to employ a door supervisor on Saturday nights etc.). Magistrates also grant special hours certificates thus controlling the number of premises with late licenses.

While there are five basic types of licence, there are at least 19 different types of liquor licence, order or certificate that can be granted.

Table 3.3 Main Types of Liquor and Public Entertainment Licenses

• On-licence (full)
• Restaurant Licence

- Residential Licence (hotels etc.)
- Extended Hours Order (restaurants providing entertainment)
- Special Residential & Restaurant Licence (combined)
- Special Hours Certificate (premises providing entertainment)
- Supper Hours Certificate (restaurants open until midnight)
- Order of Exemption (extensions to permitted hours for special occasions)
- General Order of Exemption (arrangements for markets etc.)
- Occasional Licence (fetes etc.)
- Occasional Permission (charity events)

Most applications are submitted in the form of provisional licenses and the potential developer or licensee submits plans to the magistrates, who base their decision on them. In this way, potential bar owners secure a provisional license before they secure a building. The magistrates generally visit the site of the proposed license and if licenses are granted, they visit again when the premises are ready to open, and declare the license final.

Magistrates, as a licensing committee, have jurisdiction over their decisional area only. For example, Morley Magistrates, who are elected to the commission of peace for West Yorkshire, can deal with most work in West Yorkshire but are restricted to the Morley area in the matter of licenses. This initially ensured that pubs were well known to the magistrates, who were dealing with a small area and few pubs. However, the recent explosion of city centre bars has led to many people feeling that magistrates are losing touch with developments:

> *Where they have got 50 or 60 pubs in their area, they will know them all very well and they will hear the gossip and hear what is going on, at the various hostelries. But again, Leeds, with the numbers involved, it is impossible. (Magistrate representative)*

Historically, magistrates have been guided by moral and social concerns connected with the 'odious and loathsome sin of drunkenness' (Justice Clerks Society, 1999, 29) when deciding whether a neighbourhood needed more pubs. With this in view, towards the end of the nineteenth century, a number of regulations came into force, which gave magistrates absolute power to refuse new licenses, where they felt that the needs of the locality were adequately met. This role of the licensing magistrates has recently come under scrutiny. The Justices' Clerks Society', together with The Licensing Magistrates' Association, have issued

a *Good Practice Guide* (1999), which set out a number of recommendations to standardise the work of licensing committees, which were interpreting national laws in different ways, in different areas:

> *Most of the hostelries in Newcastle close at 11pm. We have most of our city centre ones now [open until] 12 or 1 or 2 o'clock, which is the maximum we can grant a license to. I think there are about 80 licensed premises in the city centre that have late licenses, so that is a big difference between us and Newcastle City. (Magistrate Representative)*

Since the 1990s, there has been a growing determination that licensing committees should not refuse liquor licenses on the grounds that there is no need or demand for any more venues in a specific area:

> *At one time we could refuse it [the license] on the grounds of need i.e. there were enough hostelries but that has gone now. Basically we are leaving it to the trade. If an operator is wanting to spend x thousand pounds...before they even come before the committee to get planning permission and do the surveys etc. and if they are prepared to convert an existing building and spend a lot of money on it, and employ local people, and the premises are done to a high standard, and are policed properly it is very difficult for the magistrates now to refuse the licenses. (Magistrate representative)*

In particular, it was felt that licensing magistrates should not make decisions based on trade protection or attempts to reduce unfair competition. The Justices Clerk Society (1999) has however stated clearly that licensing magistrates should ensure that 'premises in the area do not become so numerous as to produce problems of noise and disorder or risk to public safety' and not 'the need to protect the interests of existing license holders, nor to restrict competition' (ibid., 77). Magistrates are no longer allowed to distort the operation of the free market however.

The only vestige of the historic legacy surrounding the potential danger to public peace inherent in the sale of alcohol is the insistence that it should only be sold by ‘fit and proper persons’ in specifically licensed premises. Increasingly, licensing issues revolve around balancing urban regeneration with anxieties about potential disorder and disruption to residents:

> *We can object to somebody applying for a late license only on the basis of either procedure i.e. they have not advertised correctly that they are applying for one [late license], or they have not submitted the right paperwork; or secondly, structurally, that their venue, their business, their building is not suitable for a section 77...The police cannot object, the council cannot object, and we cannot object as operators, on the grounds of need. (Venue Manager)*

The once all important role of the magistrates and their licensing committees has greatly diminished due to the proliferation of venues and the increasing attention paid to market forces. They still retain some power to refuse potential licensees who are not 'fit and proper persons', and some premises which present obvious hazards, but they are advised on these matters by the police and an increasing number of committees, made up of individuals who are involved in the night time economy. Since magistrates are

neither elected nor representative of any group in the city, their authority is being effectively downgraded to legal formalities.

The Police: Licensing and Policing

The police have a dual role in the night-time economy: advising magistrates on the suitability of applicants and applications for licenses and policing night life activity. There is, of course a strong connection between the two functions, as decisions about new premises will have an impact on everyday policing. Police are in a difficult position because their ability to object to the granting of new licenses solely on the grounds that there is no need for more venues in a given area is now under scrutiny. Therefore, drinking establishments have proliferated greatly:

> *The expansion, from a personal perspective, yes it's great for the city. From a police perspective, it does place more demands on ourselves and sometimes the perception that we're not doing enough. It's difficult to get that across to the public. We've only got enough jam to spread on the bread and there's more bread coming in. (Police Representative)*

Eight years ago Leeds had 10 nightclubs with late licenses. As a result, the nightclubs were oversubscribed and there was much violence stemming from large numbers of people inside a restricted space. Limited venues also led to groups of people milling about the streets, unable to gain entry to overcrowded clubs. People queued to get in and when they were turned out at 2am, they were all out in the street, looking for taxis - a recipe for violence. At that time, the big breweries and national licensed retail chains recognised the potential for growth in the market and as a result they bought or leased premises in the city and applied for licenses, or spent money on their existing premises to upgrade them to hybrid bar/cafés with late licenses. Now the load is spread between 80 odd premises and although there are many more people using the facilities (up to 80,000), there is very little disorder in the city.

The police initially had many reservations about the expansion, objecting to many earlier applications:

> *They did object to late licenses. Originally they took the view that nightclubs were the only premises - proper nightclubs - that could have a late license, and of course, to qualify for a late license, you have got to provide music and dancing and food. The premises had to have a kitchen and staff to man it. Nowadays you can buy pre-cooked meals and bung them in the microwave, so there is no need for premises to have a kitchen. (Magistrate representative)*

In the last few years, increased co-operation from magistrates and the local authority has gone a long way to reduce the expected increase in public disorder. Among the additional aids to policing the city centre are the licensing committee's requirements that CCTV be installed to a standard acceptable to the police,

with the bigger premises having cameras inside and outside, and that all door staff employed at the premises must be registered with the Leeds City Council Door Registration Scheme.

The number of arrests in the city centre has been fairly stable with an increase in terms of drug arrests and an increase in terms of assaults.

Table 3.4: Alcohol Related Arrests involving Violence, Drugs or Disorder. Leeds 1991-2000

Arrest	**1998/99**	**1999/00**	**200/01**
Drunk and disorderly	771	705	753
Public Order (4 and 5)	207	176	229
All assaults	556	710	761
Drug offences	580	520	386
Total	**2114**	**2111**	**2129**

Source: Performance Management Team. Milgarth Police Station. West Yorkshire Police.

In interpreting these figures, it is important to keep a number of points in mind. First, they represent actual arrests, rather than prosecutions or simply reported/unreported crime. While this may mean that these figures are actually an under-estimation of the problem, it also means that it is difficult to compare figures from year to year, as arrest rates depend on the focusing of police resources (i.e. a concentration on cracking down on drugs; more arrests due to the use of CCTV evidence), changes in people's tolerance of crime, leading to under or over-reporting or changes in how statistics are collected. Second, the increase of drug arrests may reflect a growing 'normalisation' of drug use by young adults over the 1990s (Parker et al, 1998). Additionally, we need to put these figures into context regarding the number of people congregating in the city centre on weekends and the actual number of serious offences/arrests in relation to the total.

Due to the increase in the number of licenses, there is a desire from the police to keep a personal level of contact with the pubs and bars. As one inspector commented: *"I do have a P.C. that knows all the licensees and does go and see them, and he is my eyes and ears on the ground."* The police ar keen on pursuing a multi agency approach to policing issues, which brings together the City Council Enforcement Office and licensees:

> *If a premises has higher than normal incidence of the police being called to them, disturbance calls, assaults, things like that, the Enforcement Officer brings it to our attention, and we've tried a number of approaches. One that we sort of tend to use now is a multi*

agency approach. I will tell the enforcement office that we're going to go and speak to the licensees. We'll give the licensee the opportunity to clean up his or her acts. (Inspector)

Further problems can arise, especially if the licensee applies for a PEL and, shortly after that, for a Special Hours certificate. In many cases this has caused friction between the traditional nightclubs and the new breed of bars, which trade during similar hours but do not charge an entrance fee. Further confusion often arises when a venue changes hands and alters beyond recognition after a licence has been granted Even if the licensees don't change, they are often driven by market forces to alter their approach. With the best will in the world, a venue may start out by offering a sedate environment for the over 25s, but soon be tempted into selling cheap drinks to students to avoid bankruptcy. There is some confusion about whose responsibility it is to deal with this, with the Licensing Office and Magistrates granting the license but the police enforcing it.

The ambition to create a 24-hour city is still strong in Leeds, in spite of legal limit of 2am on serving alcohol. Nevertheless, later forms of entertainment are emerging which have the support of the police:

It's a dynamic city. It's a forward-looking city. You know, we want to go with that from a police perspective, but of course it does have implications for us as a police service. I think we're about a twenty-hour city at the moment. We just need those few more hours, to push forward. What we are finding though is that the regular nightclubs, if I can refer to them as that...open at ten and provide entertainment and music until the early hours of the morning. They are now applying to extend their licences 'til six o'clock, where they don't sell alcohol, but people can drink 'til two, dance 'til six, chill out. That's the way the entertainment seems to be going now. (Inspector)

The police, then, are enthusiastic about the 24-hour city initiative, because their initial anxieties about the unmanageable volume of drunkenness and public disorder have not been realised, and they have introduced a number of complimentary policing methods:

They looked in horror initially at the numbers of licenses coming into the city centre and thinking 'we are going to have a major disorder problem', and it has not materialised. I think they realised that it spreads the load, and fair enough, they have not got the officers to police the premises, but with the CCTV and the door staff, they now have a good thing running between all of the premises...They [local landlords] meet with the police on a regular basis. I am told that that all helps to police the premises, and if there is any trouble, the police give them these bleep things so they can contact the police. (Magistrate Representative)

Historically, the police have been responsible for controlling drunkenness in the city as part of the duty to maintain law and order. They used to display a rather critical attitude to drinking and co-operated with magistrates in keeping the number of pubs small and licensing hours strictly adhered to. If necessary, they made use of the power to revoke the license, through the magistrates, in response to infringements of the rules. Initially, they expressed some anxieties and tried to oppose the rapid proliferation of late night,

bar/cafe drinking venues in the city centre because their resources seemed insufficient to police the area. However, professional door men, the CCTV and staggered opening hours have in fact discouraged violence and disorder, while the choice of venues has ensured that none of them become over-crowded. The smaller bar/cafe type of venue tends to encourage self-regulation by attracting a specific type of customer and ensuring that the door staff to client ratio is significantly higher than that of the super clubs. Police have now become enthusiastic about the 24 Hour City Initiative and have altered their previous stance to a tolerant and supportive attitude to managers and customers alike. They have also achieved a high standard of co-operation with the ever-increasing number and variety of representatives of private and professional people involved in the night time economy. Over all, the police have adapted well to the huge changes in Leeds' city centre and seem prepared to continue to adjust to future developments.

On the Door: Doorstaff and door pickers on the 'Front Line'

'Nice guys who can probably kill you with a biscuit' (Holden, 2001)

A door supervisor, otherwise known to the public as a 'bouncer', has been defined by the Home Office as 'a person employed on premises which have a music and dancing license (Public Entertainment License) in operation with authority from the owner or landlord, exclusively or mainly, to decide upon the suitability of customers to be allowed on those premises; and/or to maintain order on those premises' (Home Office, 1995). The organisation of door supervision takes several forms. Some venues employ staff on a purely personal and individual basis while others appoint door supervisor teams, which may operate at more than one venue. In some cases door supervision is provided by registered companies, which are likely to be larger than the teams, and may also be involved in non-entertainment security provision (Morris, 1998).

An important distinction amongst door supervisors is between those who are registered with a local authority run scheme and those who are not. Many local authorities, including Leeds, in England and Wales now administer schemes which require individuals who wish to work as door security staff to meet certain standards with regard to training, the wearing of identity cards and the submission of details of any criminal convictions. The employment of registered door staff is a condition of the granting of a Public Entertainment Licence by the issuing authority to venues such as nightclubs. Pub type premises, holding merely liquor licenses, are generally outside this scheme as local magistrates grant their licenses. In Leeds however, the majority of bars have obtained late licences, which require a PEL and therefore door supervisors. One exception to this is Soul Kitchen, which resisted the employment of door staff, opting

instead to fit CCTV, which (after much debate) the licensing authority considered to be an acceptable alternative.

Schemes were designed to improve the standards of persons engaged in regulating entrance to and maintaining order in licensed premises, and to facilitate a method by which they can be monitored. It also provides a framework for licensees, Police and the City Council to improve relationships, reduce crime, and ensure that the control of employees is not influenced by persons with criminal intent. The scheme has been implemented by attaching new conditions to all Public Entertainment Licences granted under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. In Leeds, a similar door registration training schedule exists to that in many other large cities, although this is not compulsory if the applicant has previously completed a training scheme elsewhere. The schedule takes the form of three 3 hour sessions dealing with: Licensing Laws, Assaults, Powers of Arrest, Drugs, Communication Skills, Racial and Sexual Discrimination (West Yorkshire Police), Fire Safety, Prevention (West Yorkshire Fire Service), and First Aid (West Yorkshire Metropolitan Ambulance Service).

Not all people we interviewed were happy with the system. One major complaint against the Door Registration Scheme would seem to be the ease with which a registration badge can be obtained. This view was expressed by doormen themselves:

> *The problem with these fucking things [gestures to doorman's badge] anyone can get them. You can be a dick-head. As long as you have not been in prison then you can be a dick-head...I mean that's basically it. They shouldn't give these [gestures badge] to just anyone (Leeds Doorman).*

The changing role of authority ‘on the door’ is an increasingly debated issue. The swapping of the 'might makes right' approach for management skills has repercussions for police, trainers and doorstaff alike. The 'old school' door, is quickly becoming a thing of the past, to be replaced by 16 hour courses on politeness and public safety. Understanding the customers' feelings, even though they may be drunk and obnoxious, has become an expected human right. Whilst this is, in many ways, a good thing and a long-overdue move away from when 'customer care used to mean casualty' (Holden 2001), accountability makes it difficult to distinguish between a personal style of assertiveness and aggressive behaviour or intimidation:

> *The problem with these [gestures to badge] if you don't like me, you get that [his number]. I've never had it but that's because I treat people like people. I listen to their problems even though, you know, it drags you down because you've got problems yourself - but I can't tell them that. Basically you're not allowed to fight anymore. Now the problem with that is that*

if you don't fight every so often, you'll get people coming up and saying you'll get anybody through the door and you don't need that (Doorman).

Whilst few doubt the necessity for door supervisors, the changing role of the job has created an unattractive environment to work in. Years of growing resentment towards authority figures has made the new 'accountable' doorman an easy target:

You have to question somebody who wants to do that job in the first place for 10 quid an hour because the general public nowadays do not care. In the old days they knew bouncers beat people up, 10, 15, 20 years ago. They cannot do that now, they know that they cannot do that nowadays and they will bate doormen for hours. They stand there for hours, arguing and swearing at them and calling them racist or doing whatever to try and wind them up. (Venue Manager)

Holden reports a similar account: 'They know you can't do nothing. "I fucked your mother, I fucked your sister..." It gets to you after a while. They'll spit in your face and you can't touch them' (Holden 2001). Aside from the social problems associated with doorstaff, a major bone of contention exists between the council and the police around the administration and monitoring of the Registration Scheme, and responsibility for the behaviour of doorstaff. The Registration Scheme is run, with police co-operation, through the council. Door supervisors are monitored by a licensing officer:

I will do checks. I will monitor it, I will enforce it, it is enforced through the licensee not with the doorstaff teams and groups. However we have had various problems with various door staff agencies in Leeds and I have actually had to drag them into the office and say: 'I am not putting up with what you are doing, sort it out now', and the relationship now has gone from, they thought they could get away with anything, to ensuring that all their doorstaff…do not have a criminal record. They were putting anybody on the doors and until then, there really was not a checking system for monitoring them, so that is combined in with the public entertainment license checks (Licensing Officer)

There is a growing frustration amongst the police who feel that they have only partial access to the Scheme*: 'At the moment we've got an eye on it but we don't own it. It's the council who run the scheme. It's their responsibility' (Police representative).* Difficulties also arise when the premises fall outside the remit of the council:

If we had a door staff complaint that did not have an entertainments license we do not have the powers to do an awful lot about it, whereas if it was an entertainments license venue, that is easy. (Licensing Officer)

It would seem, then, that the working relationship between the police and the council is based on the council administering the financial resources of the Scheme, whilst the police deal with any resultant problems. This is not ideal, but on the whole the working relationship between the Licensing Department

and the police in Leeds would seem to be improving. However, the main source of dissatisfaction from the police versus council point of view seems to hinge on notions of consultation, 'suitability' and vetting. The police favour a tighter, more accountable national system, but there are obstacles to implementing this.

Resources also have a key role to play with regard to the door supervisors' function. With tens of thousands of people using the city on an average weekend, the police freely admit, that they could not cope without what amounts to a private police force of bouncers in the city centre:

> *I would say, in Leeds generally, most doorstaff are pretty standard but they do run the city. Not run the city like a gang thing at all but we deal with the situations. We only call the police as the absolute last resort, we only call the police if the customer requests that we do i.e. someone has been assaulted either outside or inside and they requested police presence and we have managed to get hold of the culprit, then we will call the police (Venue Manager).*

One of the unintended side effects of nightlife are the increased possibilities of people suffering injuries, a situation which requires a private police force; full-time, trained first-aid workers and paramedics; and rest rooms for the intoxicated and injured. Some of the bigger venues do indeed provide many of these services:

> *I have got a big capacity here, about 3,500 people you know. I have got 4 full time first aid and one paramedic working here all the time and we treat all our customers, if people cut their feet or whatever, drink too much, we do not just throw them out, they are taken upstairs in places where they can sleep it off for a bit. We will get them a taxi home. We will do whatever but we treat anybody who gets injured. People know we have got first aid so they come here (Venue Manager)*

These impressive facilities are paid for, indirectly, by the customer. Whilst this situation seems ideal, problems will arise when consumers opt for cheaper, less well-resourced venues.

Currently door security in Leeds is mainly provided by door staff firms:

> *You could trace the firms back to the same person, like put out branches, so it is pretty much the same group of people who run the doors in Leeds. We have a few outside firms, a couple of people who have a couple of doors, and that is it but most of them are tied to 2 - 3 door staff firms. (Licensing Officer)*

Amazingly, Leeds appears to have had very little history of protection rackets, organised crime or drug trafficking amongst door staff teams. Bouncers remove drugs brought (sometimes in large quantities) onto the premises by customers. While this system seems to depend on the individual bouncer, there are disincentives not to comply, as one bouncer notes:

> *I do not deal in drugs. Basically if I was dealing drugs - well it'd be nowt to do with anyone anyway - but I don't, because the problem is, if you start dealing drugs people come looking for you, and you don't need that. It does go on but it's stepping on people's toes. (Dorr man)*

A possible reason for this, is the high profile role that managers take in training and recruiting door staff, in the belief that the image projected by the door team is a reflection of the management and of the club atmosphere as a whole:

> *The public's mentality changes when they walk into a night-club, which I find alarming, and it shows the damage that has been done over the years by doormen. Particularly we get people coming in very timidly with their mobile phone - 'can I make a phone call?' of course you can! Do what you like. 'Do you want me to go outside?' 'No you can go back downstairs in the cloakroom area where it is nice and quiet and make a call'. Or they stand and say 'Can I go to the bank and get some money?' 'Can I go out and pop back later?' Of course you can. 'Can I go and get some food? Course you can...Here we have got a different type of doorstaff (Venue Manager)*

In the end, competition between pubs and clubs in Leeds has become so great that the public simply will not tolerate being treated rudely by doorstaff. If bouncers are unwelcoming or intimidating, customers can easily move on somewhere else. Increasingly, door staff and managers are under pressure to attract customers and it is not uncommon in Leeds for doorstaff to invite people into a pub or club as they are passing. Seemingly, without exception, the bouncers in Leeds are friendly, chatty and pleasant. The role of the door supervisor is significantly changed by the variety and number of venues available, for the customer to choose from.

Remaining contentious issues concern admissions policies and dress codes. With respect to the first issue, the demeanour of groups continues to be a factor, especially when it may be evident that the group does not fit the style of the venues:

> *Big groups of drunken lads, well big groups of lads in general, we're a bit wary about. You can often tell who knows what the club's about and who's going down there to look at all the mincers. Groups of lads get my hackles up immediately, whether that's right or wrong, but experience tells me that a group of six lads who are a bit drunk are more likely to start trouble. What we want to do is stop trouble even getting in there (Bouncer, Gay Club)*

The whole idea of enforcing simple dress codes in Leeds however has shifted. Part of this is due to things like sports shoes becoming a fashion statement or life-style choice indicator, in addition to their practicality for clubbing. Police also encourage lighter footwear in clubs because, as they have pointed out, a heavy pair of shoes will do far more damage in a fight than a pair of trainers. In keeping with this, the trend in Leeds has swung away from insisting that everyone be dressed in shoes and shirts (with the

exception of some well established, traditional places) in favour of adopting a more people-centred screening process:

> *I think that is crap, it is outdated and is not needed and it is really more a people policy, rather than a dress policy. It is difficult making a judgement on somebody but you can more often than not tell a toerag from a non toerag, and you can turn them away. (Venue Manager).*

It continues to be important to ensure that doorstaff are making informed choices about who, and who not, to admit to a club. Increasingly they are using a more psychological approach to security:

> *On that door, I talk to people like they're a human being. I don't talk to them like they're fucking stupid. I don't talk to you like you're an idiot. I talk to you like you're a person. If you talk to them like an alien, they're gonna act like an alien. (Bouncer)*

'Older door' policies based just on clothing, are being replaced by more sophisticated style decisions through the introduction of 'Door Pickers' or 'Selectors'. The Selector is usually employed by the organisers or manager and has a much firmer idea of what sort of customers will suit the club. The ambience of a venue is carefully monitored vis a vis the type of person allowed entry, with regard to the social, ethnic and gender mix (Malbon 1999):

> *I'm not a bouncer, there's a difference. I'm a door picker, or a door whore, depending what you wanna call me. The bouncers, the night staff, are employed by Po Na Na and they're there to back us up. Often if I stand at the door and I see a group of boys walking to join the back of the queue and I watch them, and I say to the bouncers 'if they join the back of the queue, give them 2 or 3 minutes and get rid of them.' And they're very good; they've improved immeasurably since we've had a series of meetings with them to discuss how they are meant to act (Door Picker)*

The advent of door pickers has given rise to increased venue loyalty. Once a person is known at a particular club, it is much easier to gain entry. From a customer point of view, getting in and being known carries a high level of satisfaction and perceived ownership. Increasingly consumers are attracted to spaces where they feel they belong. Small venues on the outskirts of the city centre have an advantage in this respect:

> *What helps us with that is the venue, we're in town but we're on the edge of it, we're not near the main strip of bars so we don't get people who are kicked out at 11 o'clock and think: 'We want to continue drinking, lets go to a club'. We send all those people to Majestyk or that end of town, so we don't get a lot of trouble (Door Picker)*

A significant division is emerging between the small operators, who offer late licenses, and the nightclubs. The smaller capacities and intimate atmosphere of the independent bars ensure a much higher degree of self-regulation. This is reflected in the attitudes of the doorstaff and indeed, some venues do

not feel the need for bouncers at all. Those who do use bouncers, often choose to stick with the same individuals so that they become familiar with the customers and can do the job of door picker more easily. The larger clubs, for whom bouncers are essential, are also evolving.

The number and variety of venues for late-night entertainment, in Leeds' city centre, has attracted huge crowds into a comparatively small space, raising issues of safety and public order. As the night time economy is lucrative, it is in the interest of both the public and entrepreneurs to maintain a high standard of behaviour, both inside the premises and in the immediate vicinity. This has been achieved by an unparalleled increase in the number of door supervisors, sometimes assisted by pickers, who have tried to shed the image of the traditional bouncer who used intimidation and violence and to substitute for them a display of politically correct attitudes, politeness and reasonableness, in their dealings with customers. Registration with the local authority, which involves vetting by the police and minimum training in coping with problems and emergencies commonly encountered in their work, has tended to support this shift. Interpersonal skills are now becoming valued above just physical strength. Increasingly, a door supervisor with a degree in counselling seems preferable to one with a black belt in karate. Bouncers may still be able to 'kill you with a biscuit' (Holden, 2001), but these days in Leeds they're more likely to offer you a ginger nut, Alka-Seltzer and a sympathetic ear.

The Changing Role of the Local State and Night-life Culture

Local authorities in England have long had a role to play in the planning and development of cities. Traditionally, they have not been involved in the activities of local businesses or tried to inhibit or encourage private enterprise, unless firms breached planning regulations. Recently, their role of 'managing' the local state has been broadened to include 'promoting' urban regeneration in partnership with private capital. The shift to a more pro-active attitude to mainstream economic development now extends to the cultural, entertainment and night-time economies, including the sponsorship of dance events, gigs and outdoor performances.

Recently, the financial power of councils has been eroded by their declining financial position, in relation to central government funding, restrictions on raising local revenue (rate-capping), and various protocols for dealing with planning applications, which ensure they get value for money, whenever development opportunities involve the sale of council land. Within these general trends, not all councils have developed this role at the same rate or in exactly the same way.

For several decades, Leeds city centre was rundown. With the decline and decentralisation of manufacturing, factories and warehouses became derelict and the urban infrastructure deteriorated. Very few people used to live in the city centre and such most business and retail premises there closed around 5pm, so that the area became depopulated in the early evening and at night. Leisure, entertainment and nightlife became recognised as key vehicles for the regeneration of the city centre, and the city council took a lead in developing such ideas:

> *I would say it was the leader of the council at the time who was very keen on sort of raising Leeds' profile and making it a sort of European city and everything did not shut at 5 o'clock. Then you get people coming out, the traditional drinkers and it being quite violent and just all the things that people do not like about city centres at night. The idea was to try and encourage more of these independent bars, which we have done, particularly around The Exchange Court. (City Centre Manager)*

Leeds City Council has been successful in promoting the urban regeneration of the city centre, in which the 24 Hour City Initiative has played a part. In particular, the Council have encouraged private investment in the development of brownfield sites and the refurbishing of derelict property, especially large warehouses factories and banking halls, which can be converted into complexes with residential, retail, business and entertainment premises creating multi-use sites. The council are encouraging people to live in the centre by granting planning permission for new housing and the conversion of derelict properties into flats. The 5pm exodus has to some extent been reversed or extended by the opening of pubs, clubs, and cafe-bars, which remain open late into the night and attract wealthy clientele from outside the city.

Various schemes to attract large numbers of people into the city centre have been initiated. There are plans to lay on night buses to take people home to the outskirts of Leeds, from the city centre, and until the recent rail problems, a train service ran every Saturday night from London to Leeds, arriving at 8pm and returning at 3am. This journey featured a special fare that included free entry to several nightclubs in the city. Leeds still runs a scheme for weekend clubbing with cheap hotel accommodation (including brunch) and discounted entry to a club. These 'Clubbing Breaks' have proved popular with people from all parts of England, and particularly with people from Norway and Sweden. The City Centre Management team have recognised nightlife as a core part of the commercial success of the central area:

> *Well we like them [bars etc]. We like them to come and spend their money here. We have got a commercial remit. Basically we are trying to get people into the city centre to have a good time and get them through the doors. (City Centre Management Representative)*

This City Centre Management Unit (CCMU) is an attempt to regulate and co-ordinate development in Leeds. The CCMU is an amalgam of the City Centre Initiative, which was private sector led, with the City Centre Management team. Within this unit, a retailers group and a retail crime initiative also meet as separate groups. While the proliferation of venues with late licenses is the concern of the police and magistrates, for the CCMU, the burgeoning of the night time economy can not be sustained without improvements to the infrastructure and attention to safety and cleanliness:

> *The first one [priority] was the licensing side of things, but it was more at looking at the infrastructure within n the city centre and trying to make it safer. It was all the physical improvements. (City Centre Manager)*

The growth of nightlife has been an important source of financial stability for the council which has also encouraged further investment of private capital, changed the appearance and atmosphere of the city centre, provided many jobs in the service sector, and created a more buoyant evening culture. However, many people felt that outside the growth of nightlife, the city centre lacked some important aspects in the city centre:

> *I am not aware that there is anything particularly in terms of public facilities apart from just the normal cultural facilities, that we have got here. There is no public swimming pool anymore in Leeds, for example. It has closed and has been for years - Olympic sized pool. I do not think there is anything particularly for people who are 15/16. They like to come in at the weekends and hang out, and there are loads of them around on Saturdays, and to a lesser extend on Sundays. (City Centre Management team representative)*

The obvious advantages of the 24 Hour Initiative, then, must be balanced against its disadvantages. A drain on public resources, already stretched in many places, is likely to cause resentment from citizens who are excluded, by choice or necessity, from the nightlife but who contribute to the rates and taxes. They may have very different and equally legitimate needs which are neglected, or suffer the nuisance and inconvenience of noisy revelling around the clock. There is much that can be done by large nightlife operators, individually and through associations, to solve the problems which directly related to their profit-making activities such as drunkenness and disorder. It is vital that the city council and the police look at ways of making such groups more accountable in terms of the wider effects of the nightlife which they provide.

'Waking up the Neighbourhood?' Regulation and Residents

> *Leeds city council are encouraging people to move back into the city centre and as you are probably aware, there are a lot of premises being converted into flats. So those people, when they are in their flats, may start to object to premises next door being converted into a pub. (Magistrate Representative)*

Part of the urban regeneration process involves encouraging people to live in the City Centre. Initially one of the first housing units in the city centre was a student accommodation above some bars. Since this time, the market has grown dramatically and changed its client base. Out of 20 city centre planning applications lodged on the Leeds Civic Trusts website in May 2001, 17 of these were for the development of flats. Counting the number of individual flats proposed, a total of 1619 are currently in the planning application stage for the city centre.In terms of clientele, Leeds is hoping to attract a large number of affluent young professionals to live in the city and is developing a number of city centre living spaces. The CASPAR development (City Apartments for Single People at Affordable Rents) funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation is an attempt to broaden this process to those on middle incomes.

Clearly, this residential and nightlife growth in Leeds' city centre is storing up tensions between residents and revellers:

> *When it opened basically this building was owned by a housing association, where you do it on long lease, twenty-five years. In our agreement with the housing association it says it will never have a late bar downstairs, and the bar only had an eleven o'clock licence. They've gone bust and sold their lease to somebody else - the commercial part of the building. The new owner wants to put a nightclub in the basement and you get the problems that are associated with that. You get traffic noise, you get taxis coming late at night, people queuing, that sort of thing. Up until eleven o'clock people put up with it because you know, most people are awake anyway. If you've got an exam and you're trying to get to sleep at twelve o'clock at night, even with the best sound proofing in the world, you are going to hear something outside, and even if it's just like a low rumble from the basement downstairs, it's not really on. It comes to that cut off point at eleven o'clock onwards really. (Housing Projects Officer)*

Noise pollution at night, in particular, threatens much of the new living accommodation in the city centre. In the public's favour, it is worth noting, that one amendment of the Licensing Act 1988 now allows any person to apply for the revocation of a Justices' Licence at any transfer session throughout the year, rather than having to wait until the licence is up for renewal. On the other hand, revocation proceedings are not to be undertaken lightly, as costs can be awarded against an objector, if the revocation order is successfully challenged. Also, in the case of an application for a new licence, a member of the public can turn up at the hearing and object to it being granted there and then.

Several licensing oddities can often increase problems of noise and disturbance. In the case of music and dancing licensing, the exemption in Section 182 (1) of the Licensing Act 1964 was drafted before the effect of discos, dance music and electronic equipment was fully realised. In licensed premises, a Music and Dancing Licence is required by the Section, if there are more than two live musicians. Such licences come with many conditions, which are expensive. In effect then, putting on a classical violin trio needs a

licence, but a bar, pub or restaurant which uses a DJ and sound system needs none. So the limit of two tends to promote electronic music over live music without protecting the public from noise.

Many nightlife venues have had to scale down the level, and lateness, of their activities due to the building of residential developments on their doorstep. In particular, some hotel developments have forced city centre nightclubs to scale down their operations. In deference to the need for peace and quiet for the residents of the new hotel, one venue agreed to close down at 3 am.

Interesting enough considering the expanding scale of the city centre, there are no Residents Organisations within the city centre and no community involvement team. The need for this is partially met by infrequent and unrepresentative public perception surveys.

> *If you were to invite Joe Bloggs, from 3 Park Row or Park Square, or wherever he was living, he would not be a representative, so the way that we get input from residents and people working in the city centre, is that we do a public perception survey every 3 years, which is 3000 respondents. That includes residents of the city centre and residents of the city as a whole - people who use Leeds city centre and people who do not use it - to ask them what they think about the city centre: what they like, do not like about it, what improvements they would like to see. We consult with residents within particular areas, if we are going to do something like an improvement scheme, or if there is going to be an event which is going to cause disruption and this sort of thing, and that is about the extent of it really. (City Centre Manager)*

However, since the resident city centre population have largely grown up in tandem with the recent developments in nightlife, actual disputes have been fairly low. In many ways, the new residents in the city centre are a self-selected group, whose lifestyles may be more accepting to night-time activity:

> *If you move into the city centre, which you know is vibrant, you've got to really expect there's going to be a bit of noise and things like that. It's going to be bad and it's going to be busy all the time. (Inspector)*

In spite of the disadvantages of inner city living, it is becoming more popular. However, city centre housing seems to be in danger of pricing itself out of the property market. Yet there are limits to what people are prepared to pay. Several luxury housing developments have had to downgrade their scheme, with one development converted into student flats. For now, Leeds seems curiously bereft of the resident-reveller conflicts occurring in many other cities. However, several large proposed developments include both residential and nightlife components and so tension may not be far away:

> *In the city centre and just at the other side of the river by the Armouries, there is a development for about 7 or 800 flats, along with entertainment and restaurant facilities. I think 35 site licenses for liquor. Clarence Dock, where Tetley's used to have their museum, Tetley Brewery Wharf, that is another site. Both of these are just out of the city centre, but*

obviously impact on it, so our panel is still granting licenses...The police seem to be falling out with me on this...They [the venues] are all queuing up for the half past 12 and 2am licenses for music and dancing, so the police...will now be coming to us asking for a reduction in the numbers. (Licensing Officer)

One solution to dealing with resident-reveller conflict in Leeds has been to establish different types of entertainment facilities into a complex, a reasonable distance away from high-density housing. For example:

Evolution is a superb example of what we could do with more of. It is an entertainment complex: basically there are houses and it is high density housing across the road from it, but there is a big car park, and a busy road, before you get to the housing. And it is all in one place: cinema; bowling; eating; drinking... (Licensing Officer)

4. Consuming Leeds' nightlife

Changing contexts for young people

The initial section of this chapter presents a number of wider social trends and changes in consumption behaviour which are affecting the lives of young people and their night life activities. We will then go on to highlight how these general trends are modified in the specific context of Leeds.

First, the focus of this study, young people, is a rather nebulas term and needs clarification. The meaning of the term changes constantly and it is becoming clear that 'youth' increasingly refers to a period which extends beyond being an adolescent or teenager to a 'post-adolescent' or 'pre-family' stage. By this we are referring to well recognised delayed transitions into adulthood, marriage or full time work due to staying on in education and training, increased dependency on the parental household, erosion of income benefits or student grants and a changing labour market. This suspension of adult roles has meant that increasing numbers of young adults are remaining at home into their 20s and even early 30s, and ironically have more disposable income for consumer spending.

Second, a parallel trend is that over the last few decades there has been evidence of a growing dissatisfaction amongst groups of young people with the balance between work and play (Hollands, 1998), and in particular a reaction against the constraints of the work ethic (Kane, 2000; Wilkinson, 1995). Some young adults who are seeking to redress the balance between work and play, reject low-paid, low-skilled jobs while others have become dissatisfied with consumer and corporate culture. A process of infantilisation or 'arrested development' is connected with this; many young adults are adopting more childlike patterns of behaviour due to disaffection with adult values, a desire for protection in an increasing risk based society or escapism (McRobbie, 1993).

Third, the greying and ageing of the UK population has become a well established phenomenon. Young people will constitute a smaller proportion of the total population than in the past. As a result, many leisure and entertainment operators now see their financial future not so much with teenagers, but with ‘post adolescents’, family and even 'post-family’ leisure associated with empty-nesters and baby boomers because of their numerical dominance and assumed greater levels of disposable income. This older population will spend more of their leisure time on mixed-use, family venues, fitness centres, restaurants, in-home entertainment and holidays in the future.

Finally, many young people continue to face ingrained social and economic problems. In spite of opportunities opened up by ‘New Deals’ and the so-called dot-com revolution, the vast majority of young adults entered the millennium with, at best, low-paid, low-skilled temporary employment. In 1999, the unemployment rate for those aged 16-24 outside higher education was twice that for the rest of the working population (Brockes, 2000). In terms of young people's use of city centre nightlife, there is a continuing polarisation between highly mobile, 'cash-rich, time-poor' groups of young people who can access a variety of entertainment choices and those experiencing unemployment, unstable employment, low wages, high debt and restricted leisure opportunities (Ball et al, 2000). Nevertheless, while social groups ABC1s may have higher wage levels than those in social groups C2DE’s, the former may show a greater emphasis on saving or buy consumer goods while the latter are more willing to continue partying despite economic hardship and low wages.

Trends in nightlife consumption

Nightlife activity is a significant part of most young people's lives in Britain. With around two-thirds of city-centre populations aged between 15 to 44 (Mintel, 2000a:14), cities are reasserting themselves as leisure and entertainment hubs for young people. Visiting pubs and clubs is a core element of young people's lifestyles. Eighty percent visited pubs and clubs in 1999, an increase of 12% over the last 5 years (Mintel, 2000b:15). The 15-24 year old group is ten times more likely to be a frequent visitor to a club, with 52% going once a month or more (Mintel, 1998:22). While marital status is a major influence on clubbing, there is little significant overall difference between those working and those not working, a finding skewed perhaps by high levels of clubbing by students. While night club admissions continue to rise, the number of visitors has fallen from 17 m to 15.7m between 1998-9. In other words, while night clubbing is becoming less popular in general, it appears that there is a ‘hard core’ group of youngsters who are going out more frequently than before. The over-25 'rave generation', continue to visit clubs and

as a result 'clubbing will remain as popular as it is now, and more sophisticated night clubs will cater for die-hard party animals in their thirties' (Mintel, 2000b, 45).

Key to understanding such figures are the ways in which the experience of going out to night-clubs, bars and pubs has changed drastically over the last decade, largely through the advent of dance music. Firstly, night clubs have largely moved away from the stereotypes associated with violence and excessive drinking in the wake of the phenomenon of 'clubbing' which emerged from the 'one-nation' dance, rave, and to a certain extent drug cultures of the late 1980s and early 1990s. The club scene has now diversified, grown and fractured along the lines of a number of smaller consumer groups and musical styles which represent a growing sophistication and exactitude amongst clubbers who demand more customer service, better venues and more sophisticated sound/light equipment. Since the mid 1990s, the dance club scene has, to a certain extent, been commericalised and a distinction between underground and mainstream clubs has emerged (Collins, 1997; Thornton, 1995).

The experience of going to the pub has also been transformed, as the traditional experience based around dingy, male dominated ale houses has been eroded by the emergence of bar and cafe-bar culture which offer increased levels of customer service, mixed uses blending food with music and drinking a greater diversity of alcohol products, in environments which involve high levels of design, all of which would suggest that they have become more female friendly. Some pubs and bars have matured into pre-club venues - hybid half-club, half-pubs - which may have eroded the popularity of more traditional night clubs as a consumption destination. Reasons which account for this shift from club culture to bar culture are: the ability to offer DJ based music but with door prices considerably lower than night clubs; the disillusionment of entrepreneurs from the late 1980s and 1990s with the club scene and their move into the bar scene; the ability to achieve higher rates of return from bars with the introduction of later licenses; problems associated with traditional night-club culture such as drugs and violence; the fragmentation of consumer demand towards smaller scale and more specialised musical preferences; and finally, the emergence of new audiences seeking a more relaxed and quieter atmosphere in bars rather than clubs. There are significant regional variations to these overall consumption trends, with the highest number of frequent visitors to clubs clustered around the city-regions of Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and the lowest in the South (excluding London) (Mintel, 1998). In sum, the consumer experience of night clubs and pubs has changed dramatically over the last 20 years.

Consumption choices in live music in city centres has also changed dramatically over the last decade. Young adults in the 15-24 year old group make up 27% of all visits to pop and rock concerts (Mintel,

2000b: 11), yet with this age group declining in numbers, small scale live music in many city centres has disappeared. Other reasons for it's decline include the popularity of commercial chart music, the advent of large scale arena venues and the fact that live music is seen by many commercial operators as cutting into drinking space and profit margins. In other words, live music literally takes up space in the form of a band stage and a dance floor, thereby cutting down on vertical drinking space.

Motivations for night life activity are wide and complex. In many cases it is simply a desire for a good time or letting-go, meeting a partner or having casual sex. However, changes in the night club and pub/bar sectors mean that music, socialising, atmosphere and dancing are now amongst the main motivations for a night out (Hollands, 1995). More fragmented, experimental 'mix and match' behavioural patterns are evident in which different styles and types of venues are woven together to create a night-out. What is also evident, is the endurance of 'tribal' patterns of behaviour, in which groups of young people feel a strong sense of belonging to particular areas or particular groups of venues (Bennett, 2000). Yet, these are minority patterns and as we outline below, and in the issues section (chapter 5) city centres remain highly segmented and socially divided spaces when it comes to nightlife, highly structured around drinking circuits or areas each with their own set of codes, dress styles, language and tastes.

City centre night life continues to face challenges from home based activities, financial constraints, the increased cost of city centre entertainment and issues of safety, travel and access. The most popular leisure time activities for pre-family adults were visiting friends and relatives, listening to music or reading (Mintel, 2000b). Such trends are likely to increase as the population continues to age and out of town leisure such as video rentals and off-license trade continues to expand. Moreover, the growing standardisation and corporatisation of city centre leisure is encouraging many consumers to opt for more traditional pastimes or to create their own nightlife in the form of house parties or ‘free parties’. However, considering the continuing upward trend in investment and development in nightlife activity, for the foreseeable future young people, especially the more affluent and mobile ones, will be significant consumers of city centre entertainment.

Young people, drugs and alcohol

More than many other countries in Europe, the consumption of alcohol, and increasingly drugs, shapes young people's nightlife activities in Britain. The retail beer market is valued at £3B in the UK and more than 9m adults in this country drink at levels which endanger their long term health (G. Younge, ‘Booze nation, *The Guardian* 19/12/00, 2-3). Estimated alcohol consumption in the UK has increased from 5.07 litres in 1957 to 9.44 litres in 1998. Moreover, 36% of males and 25% of females aged 16-24 drank over

the selected weekly limit of alcohol (21 units for men, 14 units for women) in 1998-99 (General Household Survey, 1999). However, while alcohol consumption overall is not significantly higher in the UK than in many other EU countries, the crucial difference is that people often drink to get drunk rather than drink with food or as part as other social activities. Such problems are confounded by the current licensing laws which condense drinking into a few hours and promote binge drinking and aggressive behaviour. In terms of young people's drinking habits, in the 1930s 18-24 year olds were the lightest drinkers in the population. By the 1980s this situation had reversed (Institute for Alcohol Studies, 2000). Underage drinking is on the increase with 50% of 15 year olds reported to have drunk alcohol and under 18 year olds accounting for 7% of all drink related convictions (ibid).

The role of drinking alcohol then has changed in society. In the days of ale houses, drinking was associated with masculinity and the rituals and relationships of the workplace, a rite of passage into adulthood where the young 'learnt to drink' through controlled 'session drinking' led by an experienced drinker who knew their limit (Gofton, 1983). The changes which have been wrought on pubs over the last few decades through the advent of lagers, ciders, spirits and the presence of more women, has altered the role of drinking from a largely male ritual to broader lifestyle phenomena associated with fun, hedonism and courtship. Moreover, drinking in city centres has become more and more the preserve of the young, who in contrast to their more mature predecessors sometimes have problems handling their drink (Coffield and Gofton, 1994). In this context, concern has been raised over public disorder in urban centres, expressed through references to ‘yob cities’ which have become commonplace in the media, leading to discussions about shutting down ‘thug pubs’ and on the spot fines to curtail drink-fuelled violence and vandalism.

The transformation of drinking in a community based context to a profit driven lifestyle activity, continues apace. The nature of alcohol consumption has changed, with lager sales overtaking those of ales and stout for the first time in 1998 and now accounting for 66% of volume sales (Mintel, 2000b). Alcohol consumption has also become more women-friendly and geared towards designer drinks, especially through the growth in popularity of wine, spirits, bottled beers and alco-pops (Pattison, 2000). The explosion of alcohol products in the 1990s has also witnessed the emergence of the 'repertoire drinker' who consumes a variety of drinks over the course of the same night. Alcohol consumption is also increasingly becoming driven by brands with the top ten branded drinks accounting for 90% of pub sales. Moreover, beer sales are controlled by a smaller number of firms, with three brewers - Scottish and Newcastle, Interbrew (recent purchasers of Bass and Whitbread breweries) and Carlsberg-Tetley - now controlling the vast majority of the beer sales in the UK.

Alcohol consumption and pub attendance have been influenced by the growth of dance and drug culture. While pub attendance for all age groups actually fell by 20% between 1987-97, illegal drug taking has doubled to nearly 30%. The brewing industry is acutely aware of the threat to their core business from club culture and illegal drugs and the introduction of alcopops, energy drinks such as Red Bull aimed at clubbers and the development of new bar-club hybrids to regain ground lost from them, have been introduced. There is evidence, that some young people are turning their back on legal drugs such as alcohol consumption in pubs towards taking illegal drugs such as ecstasy in clubs (Henderson, 1997) or staying home to drink and smoke (Coffield and Gofton, 1994). Illegal drugs are now a common part of youth consumption. Amongst 16-29 year olds, 49% admitted to ever taking any drug with 42% ever taken cannabis, 20% amphetamines, 11% LSD, 10% ecstasy and 16% poppers (British Crime Survey, 1998).

Experiencing Leeds' nightlife

Mainstream Leeds

> *Tom. I used to go into town, walking along really sober, and just the streams of people going to Majestyk, the Observatory and Planet Earth - just like flocks of people, all of them in really short skirts.*

A dominant feature of parts of most British towns and cities every weekend evening is the drunken hedonism, which flows from pubs and clubs onto the streets. We have labelled this 'the mainstream' which is characterised by established gender roles and working cultures, pleasure seeking, hedonism and excessive drinking which can lead to outbursts of violence, liminal behaviours which transcend social roles set down in other aspects of life, relationships, courtship and casual sex. Rather than condemning such activity to the moral panics associated with recent discourses on 'yob culture' taking over British cities, it is important to understand the basis for such activity and its place within the broader social and economic change affecting young people (Hollands, 1995; Hollands, 2000).

Many young people who are out to have a hedonistic Friday and Saturday night, venture to the Boar Lane/City Square area of the town centre. Bordering the expensive and upmarket Legal Quarter and the ultra-trendy Corn Exchange, Boar Lane is home to Square on the Lane, Yates, The Observatory, The Bondi Beach Bar and Majestyks, and is extremely popular at weekends. Looking at the popularity of such places it seems that many still have a greater affiliation with the fun-pub atmosphere than bar-cafes. Possible reasons may include price, entertainment, or just ‘letting go’ which is less possible in more pretentious bar-cafes.

Majestyk: The mother of the mainstream

Majestyk, on the City Square, is Leeds' largest nightspot. The venue won the 'UK Club of the Year' award two years running. Set in the enormous dome of an old Rank cinema, this laser-lit superclub offers variants of house music all week, with smart dress codes at weekends. The club caters for a varied clientele: '*Friday and Saturday it's mainly regulars, more dance music. Wednesday, Thursday we get a lot of people from Jumpin Jaks, which are an older crowd…Tuesdays is mainly students. Saturdays is also a lot of visitors from outside Leeds, coach parties, hen nights, that sort of thing, visitors to the city.' (Bar Staff).* Majestyk can feel a bit like a cattle market at times, but is popular with local models, Leeds United footballers and the Emmerdale cast. For all the hype about becoming a 24-hour city, Leeds, it seems, is still, at heart, a northern city on the pull. As one person commented:

Majestyk: the great thing is persistence, it's like a meat market, it's like you can't walk through. You can be in there with a black polo neck and jeans, and you'll be wearing a chastity belt and they'll still have a go.

This atmosphere is not popular with everyone:

If you want cheesy and you want meat heads on a Saturday night, go down the City Square - The Observatory, Planet Earth, Majestyk, Jumpin Jaks - all meat heads. You get half and half in Majestyk, I've had some really good nights there, on New Years Eve, and it's a fantastic venue but it has got that cheesy side to it. City Square on a Saturday night is meat head territory I just stay away. (James)

The club is appreciated by the gay community, not, however, as somewhere to frequent, but as a holding station for the type of punter they would prefer to avoid:

Majestyks is nice, but it's like when you get on a farm, you get all the bulls in the field and you're across the fields, they attack you. It's like all the kids and all the sort of live lads and twats you don't want to see. They're all put in a pen for the night and when they're coming out at two o'clock, and you're still enjoying yourself, you come out at four thirty and they've all gone home. There's always a good side to all these things, there's the sort of people you don't want to see out there somewhere. Put them in a big place. A black hole in the middle of Leeds…I look more like a woman when I'm dressed up than some of the women. Well especially out there. They look like gorillas, I mean a bit more butch than the guys that come out of there. (Ralf – transvestite)

These large, conveyor belt clubs, in spite of their salubrious interiors, are designed for promotion, by the latest alcopop or breezer style drink, or by the music which has been thrust into the public domain by large marketing budgets. These places are felt by many to belong to a previous nightlife era:

So let's take a bus ride into Leeds shall we? We have Majestyks, Club Europa, Club Heaven and Hell. Yippee! I attempt to enter but am turned away by a Neanderthal doorman who doesn't understand the concept of man with long hair or a girl in trousers. For the fun I don a pair of white chinos (borrowed!) and obligatory Timberland sweater. Hey presto, they let me in. It's packed, as the mainstream clubs often are. If you can be bothered queuing for half an hour for an overpriced drink you'd probably be smart to purchase your entire evening's drinks in one go. Except there are those in the club who do this and then consume said amount in under five minutes. I turn to look for a seat, anxious not to smile at a lady in fear of the 'you lookin at my bird' line from someone only just further evolved than the doorstaff. There appears to be a lot of what I like to call scowling housey women, the type with the knee high boots, crop top and mini-skirt with matching brain cell accessory. (Ian)

Many groups referred to a distinctive type of consumer in the mainstream – the 'townie'. People had quite specific views on townies, seeing them as people who made a real effort when they went out at the weekend and were associated with drink fuelled, sexually charged environments with loud pumping 'cheesy' music. There is a specific dress code, involving making a conscious effort to conform to all door policies, such as wearing shoes.

The queue is full of large groups of boys in luminous Ben Sherman shirts and spiky hair and girls in tiny tops…There is a stage where those celebrating special occasions get up to show off and which, tonight, is occupied by a girl wearing a plastic sash reading 'the party starts here' and four of her friends in bikini tops and paste tiaras. Their happiness is representative of the mood of the place, and even the boys are dancing unselfconsciously to the mixture of house and disco music. A conga line takes off before they remember themselves and drop it, but the atmosphere is one of general abandon and festivity. (Brockes, 2000).

Despite the general relaxing of dress codes in pubs, smaller, independent clubs and even bar-cafes in Leeds, many mainstream, large venues actively maintain them:

I went out last Wednesday night to go and watch the football and Karen said oh lets go to Brannigans because they will have it on there. And I said they'll not let me in I am wearing trainers. And she said they will do, it is Wednesday night. "Sorry you cannot come in you are wearing trainers" and they were really not scruffy trainers, but they wouldn't let me in. But they're far more likely to have fights in there and stuff like that but it is just this thing that you cannot go in trainers to places like Brannigans. (Nigel)

This varies, however, from venue to venue. There is also an element of self-regulation when it comes to styles of dress and codes of behaviour.

I have walked into, I think it was Squares, when everybody inside was all tarted up and I was wearing trainers and looking a bit scruffy, and they didn't say anything. The doorman let me in, but I don't think they actually exclude people unless you're looking like your out of your face on drugs or something, or homeless. They probably wouldn't. It's just the way they make you feel once you're in there. The people who sort of sneer at you and you think I don't feel

comfortable here because I can't relax when everyone else is sort of preening and trying to pull essentially and I'm not. (Jackie)

The clubbing population of Leeds is dominated by young, single sex groups who outnumber mixed groups and couples. However, unlike some cities, the centre is spread out and is not defined by obvious drinking circuits:

Leeds is more spread out, there's more walking involved, you don't get the atmosphere because in Newcastle everyone knows the Bigg Market, you can fall in and out of 10 pubs, no problems, everyone does the same thing. The pubs will be busy and then empty until the next lot come in. In Leeds there's no real order to things, you just go from one to the other, walk half and an hour to the next pub but if its cold or raining its not the same. It detracts from the night out. (Martin)

This lack of circuit drinking does not, however, put off revellers completely.

Hen nights feather their nest in the corporate city

Leeds is currently promoting itself as the capital for hen party nights out. The raucous women are not welcome in some cities because of their outrageous antics, but the ruling does not apply here. Hotels, clubs and pubs welcome all-girl gatherings, which mean increased income for the city's multi-million pound tourism industry. Hen nights have been banned by 34 pubs and restaurants in Dublin's Temple Bar area after a tourism report showed the city was losing up to £57million a year because other tourists were being put off by bawdy drunkenness. In Leeds, however, the new £7m Creation night-club at Cookridge Street, formerly the Town and Country Club, welcomes 'girlie gatherings' and even allows unlimited group numbers into the plush night-club for free. A VIP area is cordoned off, while a hen night buffet is served before the dancing starts.

One of Leeds's classiest hotels, Malmaison at Sovereign Quay, welcomes hen nights and promotes its location in the centre of the city's bar and clubland. Brannigans, at Vicar Lane, also welcomes hen and stag night parties and offers a special buffet menu in its dining area. A spokeswoman said: *'You can be as wild as you want – within reason. People are up for anything here.*' (Bellamy, 2001). The city's Hilton Hotel, in conjunction with the Yorkshire Tourist Information Centre, currently runs weekend packages for clubbers – also suitable for hen and stag parties.

The *Absolute Leeds* website offers the following reviews of what it sees as mainstream venues:

Heaven and Hell

It's big, brash, some call it brazen. This club is a 3 floor monster that you either love or hate. With all manner of things on offer from cheesy chart to hard house, as well as regular promo nights, they're appealing to a wide audience so there should be something for everyone...right?

Evolution

Stuck out in the Kirkstall complex, Evolution is a far cry from a city centre club. Standing alone, with no fellow nightlife for company, if you're in this neck of the woods, this is the only place to go.

Atrium

If you want somewhere to carry on drinking when you've been booted out of the boozer, then this place is worth considering - but only if you want to take refuge from the cheesy chart tunes you'll find at other clubs.

Bondi Beach

Remember the best wedding you've ever been to when the tunes were so good they got everyone on the dance floor - even your grandma? Well, that's the kind of music currently pulling crowds in search of a good time to Leeds' newest late bar, the Australian themed Bondi Beach.

Jumpin Jaks

It's had a re-vamp. It cost a million quid. So, has the tack been removed along with the battered furnishings? Is it a worthy makeover?

Creation

Utter the word Creation and up pop religious images of Adam and Eve's arrival into the world. So pure, so innocent, so virginal... but make no mistake, there's not much Godly about this place.

Majestyk

If you're up for dancing, you're bound to find a night that suits here, cos this is a club that's got it all covered. Proving the theory that size matters it stands proud with three levels and three bars - don't go wandering off cos you don't stand a chance in hell of finding your mates again, though you'll find plenty of others ready to get friendly with you.

The Observatory

The beginnings of many a dubious night have evolved from the Observatory, where you're likely to leave with someone whose name you don't even know and probably end up being sick on their shoes.

Uropa

Versions of Uropa are scattered about the country and we all know what we're going to get with this club. A hugely popular Leeds choice, Club Uropa meets the needs of locals, students, and serious clubbers hunting down decent dance choons at Sundissential.

Clearly, then, the mainstream comprises a significant infrastructure in the city and is popular with a large group of people. Many people are attracted by smart and stylish venues, branded drinks, loud recorded music and the glamour of sharing the evening with local celebrities. They are prepared to pay for this and make 'going out' an important part of their lifestyle. Many are referred to as 'townies' by other clubbers and can be identified by their attitude to dress and behaviour. In this sense, many still share traditional ideas about social roles, courtship and gender relations and often regard the ‘weekend’ as a sacred time for letting go and self-indulgence, which is a reward for the time and effort spent in work during the week. Despite the apparent variety of venues, the entertainment offered in the mainstream consists of an opportunity to dress up, meet like-minded people and join a large crowd bent on getting drunk and strutting their stuff to 'cheesy choons'.

‘Putting on the ritz’? Style Leeds

The Calls is the area known as Leeds' most stylish due to the growth of a number of small, independent bars with outrageous décor (toast set in the toilet door for example!!!). Each has a slightly different feel but most have a quirky style, a relaxed atmosphere during the day, often serving food. They have an extensive range of spirits lined up on shelves behind the bar, obscure polish vodkas to Havana club rum, which their 'sophisticated' clientele will ask for by name. By night they are often crammed full of people, all looking casually smart with exclusive rather then high street designer wear. These places do not enforce a dress code and certainly do not insist on shoes as their clientele are often ‘stylishly scruffy’. However, door staff still look for certain styles:

> *whereas some places just have no trainers no entry but I think there is a dress code totally in certain places like an unconscious dress code even if you are not going to be stopped coming in places like Norman places like that. (James, Young Professional)*

In the evening a DJ is often playing live and people will stay here until 2am, often instead of paying to go to a nightclub. Further round by the Corn Exchange pavement cafes open up into the square in the summer and Leeds' self appointed stylish go and pose.

> *like The Corn Exchange is more trendier type place to go blokes wearing vests in summer and all this type of stuff and sarongs and all that. God yeah t shirts without sleeves loads of David Beckham look a likes - big flicks and cut off t-shirts with sarongs walking around. (James, Young Professional)*

Many of these new bars suffer from being the 'latest' trend, with people soon losing interest:.

> *but areas around the calls where the trendy bars are I think you get much more passing crowds because they go to the 'in' bar like Town House was 'in' 6 months ago now it is BRB or whatever it is called. (Alex, Young Professional)*

Teatro - too exclusive for its own good?

"We're going to create this sort of London vibe. It will be a destination place to come, even from as far afield as Manchester or Newcastle." Absolute Leeds June 2000.

Teatro was an exclusive private members club set up by Actress Leslie Ash and Footballer Lee Chapman. Located near exclusive hotel Malmaison it was their second venture into a private members club, after their original in Soho.

(they) hope to inject a shot of glamour and glitz into Leeds' burgeoning social scene, and provide a much needed haven in which local celebrities and high profile types can socialise and relax, away from snapping cameras and harassing fans. Absolute Leeds June 2000.

However a year down the line Theatro had not been the success it was envisioned. The celebrities had not joined and the 'exclusive set' in Leeds were not hanging out there. Some blamed the location that it evaded the point of an exclusive club because it was hidden away:

I *What are your thoughts on the private members clubs and things that are springing up in Leeds, Teatro, Leslie Ash's Club?*

R *(Laughter) They don't work, which is why it will be springing down again very soon. They're already closed it once. 'The place where the stars can go and not feel hassled.' They won't feel hassled because there's no bugger there. No, for a start where this particular club is, is in the worst place you can put it in the middle of an industrial estate. No one wants to go and be exclusive unless people know that they're being exclusive, what's the point. You want to be in a big place where YOU can't go but I can go. Putting it behind a bleeding building site, no one goes*

there anyway. Its exclusive cos of where it is! Stupid idea, members clubs work if you genuinely got a club to be a member of (Bar owner, Calls).

Teatro closed down in June 2001, shortly after Leeds United bought a 25% share it the club. It had attracted only 80 members into paying its £250 annual membership fee.

On the margins. Alternative Leeds

Although the city centre is known for young Goths and skaters hanging out outside the Corn Exchange and skaters practising in the revamped Millennium Square the City Centre has a few alternative club nights. There are occasional Goth nights at the Bassment Club and Students Union, Techno at the Warehouse, and Think Tank. These tend to be occasional hirings for niche music markets. There are regular Indie nights at the Cockpit and a long running weekly Indie night, Star at Leeds Met University. One striking feature of Leeds alternative scene has been its goth culture:

Cath but sister of mercy concert the other week and all the goths came out of the wood work goths drink in The Fenton near here. Goths go there still, goths go there to die.

Steve. Comparative they are almost extinct.

Cath I nearly got my black gear out.

Steve It just came out of retirement.

Cath I think there are a lot of people who still have a soft spot.

Steve And Bradford as well has still got quite a goth market.

Cath .... I do not know if that is still going and then specialist things like things that go on in the merrion centre, a breed apart because you have to go quite a long way, you have to be quite dedicated.

Leeds West Indian Centre

Many alternative club nights take place at the West Indian Centre, a community centre in Chapeltown a predominantly Afro-Carribean residential area on the edge of the city:

Try the West Indian Centre at the bottom of Chapeltown Road for underground music that the corporate club owners in the middle of Leeds are too scared to put on, cheap beer and cheap admission prices too. (The Knowhere Guide to Leeds)

A large number of the alternative Leeds night put on by students and former students from Dub to Techno are put on in Leeds West Indian Centre. Primarily a community centre for the West Indian population in

the area the centre provides cheap venue hire for the young promoters. Nights such as Sid Fox (Techno) Cabbage (Techno Trance) Irration Steppaz (Dub Reggae) play or have played there. The out of city centre location means just those who are into that type of music go and the door policy is more relaxed than the city centre:

it's sort of just on the edge of Chapeltown, with no strict police. There's never any trouble there. There's never any fights or anything like that there. It's a very very kind of chilled out atmosphere whereas if you're in town there can be a lot of alcohol and people get a bit rowdy. (Rachel, Club Promoter)

Many events there have liberal door policies with people spilling outside, reclining on the grass to chat. It is a much loved venue mainly because it is on the edge of the city, not in the city centre. Being a taxi ride away from the centre, or walking distance from some residential areas it is only those who deliberately make the effort to go there who attend.

It's great. It's become much more acceptable for students to go to that venue, but there are some people who just go to that venue and don't really like coming into town. It's a bit more underground. (Patrick , Alternative Clubber)

The few alternative nights which had residencies in the city centre were experiencing problems. Due to the desire of the city centre club owners to run their own Friday night residencies two techno nights in Leeds city centre have been ousted from their residencies at mainstream city centre venues: Sid Fox which lost its monthly Friday night residency at the Warehouse and Templehead, which was recently dropped from the Cockpit. One promoter also spoke of a third night, which had been dropped in favour of the venue itself repeating the same formula:

> *And there were a lot of people there who were doing it, but if anybody else could do it they could come to join them as well and it was an absolutely brilliant night and I think what's happened, we don't know the exact story, but they've been asked to leave. They're were getting really successful and they've been asked to stop and I think this is something that clubs should watch out for, they try and kick out nights that have got established. They think they can just sort of replace it with the same sort of music and that the people will still come, and it was just empty. We went the other night and it was just dead you know. The bar woman was furious. She was like throwing ice cubes into drinks and dumping around. (Rachel, Alternative Promoter)*

Sid Fox: From the edge to the Centre and back again

Sid Fox is one of Leeds success stories. Starting at the West Indian Centre it grew and grew by the use of a reasonably sophisticated promotion campaign. They made every effort to get the names in and the Sid Fox brand name was postered all over Leeds. (Patrick, alternative clubber)

Techno Night Sid Fox evolved from a group of students running House parties. They started at the West Indian Centre in Chapeltown but moved to the city centre when the Centre was closed for refurbishment. Sid Fox was one of the only Independent and Leeds based clubs to run a float and a huge after party at the Corn Exchange during the Leeds Love Parade. Sid Fox had a residency in the city centre firstly at the Warehouse, until they were asked to leave and now occasionally at the Mint Club. They are looking for a new mid size venue as a regular home but do not want to return to the West Indian Centre.

R *Keeping about a similar size venue, about 550 capacity, so we're looking at a couple of place in town, but we decided we're not going back to the West Indian Centre.*

I. Right.

R *It's too much work. It used to take very much organisation, a massive, massive space decorate, and now we've got to be much more professional. We've got some decor we can put up in five minutes. We all work now. It's much easier to have a proper club because they have everything. You don't have to worry about, because we were running the door, the security, everything.*

However some hard core purists say the move to the city centre has diluted the atmosphere.

The alternative clubbers view the mainstream large clubs with suspicion, being aware of not just the difference in music policy, but attitudes, people attending and producer motivation:

> *These conveyor belt clubs, lovely venues though some of them are, are designed for one thing and one thing only: 'Promotion'. Be it for the latest alcopop or breezer style drink or be it the music which has been thrust into the public domain by the amount of finance behind it as opposed to actual musical talent. I rush for a big name DJ, (in the alternative scene) not just for my love of the music but because of the atmosphere and the people I can expect at the club. I find the people on the underground scene to be generally more clued in with common sense to spare and most notably a great passion for what they do which is something of a rarity in modern culture.*

Millennium Square, who's it for?

The opening of Millennium Square has highlighted a conflict of the use of city centre space by alternative groups. Built by lottery money and opened in early 2001 the square is used for a number of council promoted events including concerts and an ice rink. The new open square with ledges and smooth ramps also made is desirable to skateboarders, who also discovered that being a new site, there were no bye laws to prevent them skating there. As one local skating web site stated:

So, obviously they don't want us to skate there, right? Yep, right, BUT the council overlooked the fact that in order to legally boot us off their new concrete slabs they'd need to get another bye-law to cover this new area. So the current deal is this - you can skate there, the security will get pissed off, but basically you can't get arrested unless the cops catch you mid-crooks on one of their blocks. Skating the steps seems to annoy the security too, but if you're sensible and choose quiet times (i.e. 9pm onwards) you'll probably get away with pretty much anything. (lsb.org.uk)

A further issue with Millennium Square is feeling that, as the square was built with lottery and council money that the events within it should be free, or not barricaded off with fences and security guards. The Millennium Square raises some difficult to answer questions concerning public 'access' to this lottery funded project. As one consumer commented:

*Why is it that this 'People's Square' gets shut off by barriers every time there's any kind of event or activity going on in the square? If this was the way that it was planned to be used, why didn't they build a fence around it as part of the design in the first place? Iron railings would look better than the tatty temporary barriers they keep putting up [keeping us in or out?] (…).Odd how things change once the consultation process stops and the building work starts! Hope the trees eventually arrive! (*Puzzled - West Yorkshire, BBC Leeds Website).

Many people on the alternative scene rarely venture into the city centre, often for reasons of price, but also because of issues of style. However, there have been several examples of community run alternative spaces being opened in the city centre, primarily at an abandoned church, located on University of Leeds property and on the edge of the city centre. A squatted community café had also been opened temporarily in Cookridge street in a property owned by Leeds College of Art, now on the edge of Millennium Square.

Aspire Autonomous Zone

The empty church owned by and on the edge of Leeds University campus was squatted twice, once in 1999 for a month of open drop in cafes, workshops and gigs and again in 2000. Called Aspire, the collective stated that their intentions were to create an alternative space within the city centre:

It is a place where people can go during the day or night and socialise away from the buy, buy, buy mentality that is present day capitalism. Once there you can do pretty much whatever you want to(within reason). You can sit and chat with a cup of fair trade tea or coffee, Bring your lunch to eat in comfortable surroundings or eat some of our vegan almost organic food. You can go to or put on a gig, read books

from our radical library, organise a meeting, juggle, paint, make a date to come back for a specific gig or workshop. Basically we've opened up the space if you want to use it then do so.' (A-spire.org.uk)

There is also an inherent criticism of the development of large corporate chain pubs in the area around the university, especially Leeds College of Music selling its site to Scottish & Newcastle to create one of the largest student pubs in the country, the Rat & Parrot.

I believe that if the university state that they need the building to start refurbishment for a valid project (i.e. just about anything, rather than sell it to some huge company to change it into ANOTHER chain pub) then we will vacate immediately. (A-spire.org.uk)

Many people felt that the dominant message from the City Council is that the city is a space for financial consumption. One city centre marketeer expressed such views to us:

> *I. Yeah the use of the city centre by young people.*
>
> *Interviwee. Well we like them we like them to come and spend their money here, we have got a commercial remit basically we are trying to get people into the city centre to have a good time and get them through the doors.*
>
> *I. Doors of shops?*
>
> *Interviewee. Yeah we want people to come to Leeds that is what we are all about.*
>
> *I. What about the other kind of non spending aspect you say quite a lot about public space?*
>
> *Interviewee. Well we would like them to stop skateboarding on Millennium Square and they are ruining everything and we have been a bit remiss because we have not got any byelaws in place yet to have them off there it is just their legal section have been inundated with work and they have not got round to doing it.*

Young people hanging out, in general, were seen as a threat to the commercial viability of the city centre. As one City Council employee stated: "*one time the police were concerned because outside the Exchange Quarter they saw loads of people were standing around and they want them all inside or they want them fenced off*".

This limited view of the city centre was echoed by the Leeds Civic Trust in relation to the lack of green spaces:

> *There are few green areas in Leeds city centre. City Square, Park Square and Queen's Square hardly fulfil the leisure aspirations of a green European city. Although adorned with baskets in summer and sparkling with lights in winter, there is a lack of trees to give year round relief. What is missing is an escape from hard surfaces in the shopping and business quarters, and particularly on the Waterfront. Opportunities to sit down and to watch the*

world go by, for free, are rare. Although there are welcome developments at Millennium Square and City Square, elsewhere the landscape of the city centre seems to have become disjointed in recent years with piecemeal additions. (Leeds Civic Trust, Website, may 2001)

Gay Leeds

Queer Leeds falls between two stools - the olde gaye pubbes of yore and the fake but more desirable chrome and blushed wood of the café bars. Queercompany.com

Leeds has a reputation of having a variety of gay pubs and clubs. Although there are only 4 which are openly 'gay' a lot in the stylish Calls area are known as either gay friendly or tolerant and liberal. The New Penny is a long established gay pub which, has been in operation for over 25 years, it does however represent the old school of gay venues. Unlike many gay venues that are modern and stylish, this venue could almost be classified as a 'gay ale house'. It has been long established in the city before the development of new bars in the Calls and was at one time on the periphery of the city centre. It is now on the edge of the stylish bar quarter.

The Leeds scene has changed dramatically since the New Penny opened its back room twenty five years ago for 'private parties'. In those more furtive times the flamboyance of Bar Fibre's glass front was unthinkable, and instead the pub protected its visitors with blacked out windows, a curtain to separate gays and straights and entry was through the back door only. (The Leeds Guide, Sept 2000)

However the New Penny is still on the drinking circuit for many gay punters as the remember it with affection as one of the first places that they went out in Leeds.

Derek Well we usually go to up to New Penny first because it's a gay pub that's been around for years.

Jim Was it the first gay pub round there.

Derek The Red Lion was second which is now dismal. Very boring, very few people go there.

Jim It's for the older people, the older crew.

Derek The older cruisers.

Jim I was going to say that. The old foggies that go around in forties clothes

Derek Which is weird for a gay pub.

Giles Yes, it's like an old mans pub isn't it?

Derek They haven't changed it. It was altered in 1992, 'extended' and it was oak beams and things like that and the new owners just never changed it. It just stayed like that. It's very weird, and the clientele are just stuffed like the pub is I think, in a time capsule.

Giles It seems strange because all the other big gay pubs are all very glamorous and quite cutting edge.

Derek Yes, nice and loud.

Jim It was the first pub I ever went into dressed up and nobody said anything to me. They just said 'where do you get your clothes from?' 'You look great in them'. Stuff like that. It was just one of those pubs I just thought oh yes I'll definitely carry on going here.

In many of the newer openly gay venues such as Fibre and Velvet, the door staff check that you know what sort of establishment it is before you are allowed to enter. Unlike Manchester, Leeds does not have an area with a self consciously gay image:

Velvet & Fibre, there isn't really a gay village, unlike Manchester which is where I'm from which is two streets of gay bars, here's is the strip by Call Lane where all the trendy bars are. They're not pushing themselves as gay bars, as such, but because it's the new and trendy area gay men love to go there. (Sarah, club promoter)

Historically many gay people remembered Leeds being unsafe at night:

But there used to be a point when you wouldn't come out on a Saturday night because there were gangs going round with baseball bats, chains, and they'd literally just pick a violent fight with anybody and now you can go out safely on a Friday, Saturday, Sunday night, any night you want. It's completely different. (Jim, Transvestite)

In contrast, many young gay consumers suggest that they now feel relaxed and safe in the Calls area:

Velvet or Fudge or Fibre and again which are gay friendly bars with a relaxed atmosphere and it's just like a safety bar and there's never any trouble there. There's never any fights that kick off or anything like that. (Susan)

Any fights that do occur we said to be 'amusing', often involving '*a couple of queens'*. However, hesitance is still expressed about walking though other areas in the city, which are not perceived to be as safe and liberal. One area of particular concern is the neighbouring City Square area:

Sarah It's quite strange because you've got this sort of cafe quarter down there, and you've got sort of Queen's Court and sort of New Penny, but then you've got this sort of ragland area round the Majestyk. And you've got this, yes Speed Queen is probably by itself out there, us and Soul Kitchen, but not many people will walk between to us though. They prefer to get a taxi and pay two or three quid.

Derek Rather than have them see all these people that, you know what I mean...

Giles Yes, the first time we came to SpeedQueen we came out and had to walk for a taxi all the way round.

Jim *My god. Yes.*

Derek *And the comments were like oh, flying.*

Jim *You get wolf whistles. They come up and you get wolf whistles.*

Derek *They're usually derogatory wolf whistles.*

Giles *I mean now we just ignore them.*

Jim *We did have some and you've ignored them, but I look more like a woman when I'm dressed up than some of the women.*

Another adjacent area that is avoided by the gay community is the market area, an area which has had problems overcoming its historic reputation as a lower cost, working class area.

Speed Queen: Creating a Safe Atmosphere for Girls, Gays and Guys.

We describe it as a gay friendly night, its not exclusively gay but 90% of our clientele are but what we are seeking to do is make it a very open and friendly environment for anyone who chooses to come along. (Fiona, club promoter)

Speed Queen is one of the longest established gay nights in Leeds. A glamorous, flamboyant atmosphere has been created by two promoters who were previously involved in I-spy and Vague.

Caz and Susie were looking at something that were breaking into the male orientated club world, it was gay friendly but aimed towards the girls more, we were always very protective & supportive of our female DJs, we have a lot of resident female DJs unlike other clubs. We are careful to have 1 or 2 on every week, guaranteed, and we're known for that, that's what Speed Queen's all about. (Fiona)

Its location away from the city centre at the Warehouse on the edge of the office quarter and strict door picking policy to eliminate potential trouble has allowed the club to create a safe atmosphere for everyone from flamboyant transvestites to single women:

What we want to do is stop trouble even getting in there. What helps us with that is the venue, we're in town but we're on the edge of it, we're not near the main strip of bars so we don't get people who are kicked out at 11 o'clock and think We want to continue drinking, lets go to a club.

It runs a membership scheme by invitation, which creates a loyal family atmosphere. Being run by women there is an extra focus on safety and one of the unique points about the club is that anyone can request for someone who is hassling them unnecessarily to be removed from the club.

Sarah *When so many women come to the club it is because they know that they're not going to get hassled.*

Lisa *because we've always promoted it to be a safe place,*

Sarah *as a member you have the right to remove anyone who you feel is detracting from the club, if someone is aggressive to me as a member or a straight guy gets a bit drunk there and he wont take no for an answer. Its not that he's trying his luck cos everyone does that its that he's bothering me and he'd be out like that. We are that is another female orientated thing, we are quite protective about girls getting harassed in there. We don't like it at all and if we see it, they get a warning and if they're physical with it, I've twisted arms behind backs myself and taken them towards a bouncer if I've seen them getting out of control.*

The whole aim is to create a safe, friendly atmosphere where people feel relaxed and comfortable. By nature of making it comfortable and tolerant it attracts both gay men and straight women:

Interviewer: *What sort of proportion of straight women do you have there, cos one of the best things we found was just how incredibly safe the atmosphere was*

Sarah *I'd say our core clientele were the gay men and gay women, we get a lot of straight women there cos they tend to come in with the gay men.*

One member of the group, even spoke about coming alone:

Then I would go on my own. If I had nothing else to do on a Saturday night and I felt like going somewhere I was quite happy to go down to the club on my own, queue up and know that I would meet or see 10 people that I knew that night, and I could just go round & talk to people and it was that environment that we want to create. That's non-threatening, safe and its fun, that's what the clubs all about. (Susan)

It is also known as a flamboyant place where people dress up and make an effort to attend:

Sarah *It's showing off as well, a lot of it to be honest.*

Jim *The suspense I suppose.*

All *Yes* (Chorus)

Jim *You know working yourself up to that night. Great, at weekends they often go out and really enjoy themselves.*

Sarah *No, it isn't the element of display about it all the time, for example with people from magazines. People from a magazine came in the other week and they said to me. It was really funny. He said to me 'we need about six shots you know of guys with their shirts off'. And he says 'it that going to be a problem'. Like SpeedQueen is a gay club. They're going to be fighting to get the shirts off for the magazine. I mean it's like that, I wouldn't say it was*

showing off. It is showing off but it's more like a performance, people putting on an act.

Jim *It's exhibitionism isn't it? But in a nice sort of way.*

Sarah *Like bunches of peacocks isn't it.*

Jim *Yes sometimes.*

Criticisms about Leeds Gay venues were the lack of choice after 11pm, with only two regular gay club nights, SpeedQueen at the Warehouse and Poptastic at the Cockpit. Gay venue Rockshots closed down and a second venue, Primos, never opened.

> *And that's the crux of the mattter, apart from the 300 lucky people who can cram into Queen's Court or those glamorous enough to get past Speedqueen's rigourous dress code, where can the gay crowds go after eleven at night? "I think there's an awful lot of potential' said Shout! Editor Mark Michalowsi "but we need more new clubs. That's what brings people into the city. If its just a case of going for drinks in bars, people don't tend to bother unless they live nearby." (Leeds Guide, September 2000.)*

A further criticism was the lack of locally owned a run gay venues in Leeds:

> *Although a boost to gay Leeds social life, bars like Metz and Velvet are merely exports of Manchester brands, with Queens Court keeping it corporate by being part of Bass Leisure. This is a shame because without stemming from the fabric of the Leeds Gay community, the recent growth of the village has been dependent on smart business experiments by outsiders. It has taken the arrival of independent bar fibre to galvinise the true sense of village. (Leeds Guide, Sept 2000).*

The suburbanisation of nightlife

> *I think people just go up there because they know it's pretty safe kind of lively area. Young, not a lot of trouble. They maybe don't live up that way but they'd go there first. (Independent Bar Owner)*

Over the course of the 1980s and 1990s, entertainment and leisure were suburbanised and domesticised through the growth of out-of-town entertainment destinations, video shops and off licenses. More recently, the rapid growth of nightlife activity has saturated many city centres and has led to a flight of entrepreneurs out of them in search of new profits, cheaper venues and less restrictive licensing. Suburban areas have benefited from this shift, with the growth of new nightlife concepts moving along major arterial routes leading to city centres. Such a shift has also been a response to the constraints of city centre consumption such as high costs, over crowding, violence and problems of late night travel. The most obvious examples of this type of development in Leeds are the Headingly and Hyde Park areas of the city.

They're not coming into town anymore. Leeds is as expensive now as any town centre. The Real Estate is going up to London prices; there are million pound pads in Leeds. And Leeds' City Centre is a bloody expensive place to drink. (Venue Manager).

This move away from the city centre was stressed by focus group members.

Expensive. Too many trendy bars in my experience, less comfortable places to sit. If you're going out to like one of these Indy clubs where you're dressed in jeans, on a Friday or a Saturday night, you feel out of place when somebody else is in a little bikini top and high heels and going to Normans all poshed up. If you're going out for drinks in tee shirts and baggy pants you're not going to…you know. (Headingly resident)

Before the significant expansion of student numbers in the 1980s, there was an even balance between rented and owner-occupied residential housing - not a perfect balance, particularly in the Hyde Park area - but sufficient, in general, to maintain these as areas of interest and vitality, attractive to students and long-term residents alike. This balance is now being seriously jeopardised by the increase in student numbers and the activities of landlords who have scant regard for the existing environment. Not only terraced houses, but also inter-war semi-detached houses have come under multiple-occupancy and their external appearance of unkempt and rubbish-filled gardens, shabby paint-work and tatty window drapes are indicative of worse conditions inside:

You see quite a lot in the press: there are residential associations who are upset largely by the problem that there are two thirds of absentee landlords. They rent to students and you get a lot in the local press about residents complaining about noise at 4 in the morning, spew on the streets, broken glass everywhere, there are a lot of complaints about that. A lot of the local businesses also complain, because come the summer, when the students go home, their business dies - they have got no business left. (Magistrate Representative)

Perhaps the most obvious examples of this progressive decline are the large Victorian villas (mostly listed Grade 2) in the Headingly Hill Conservation Area, on the east side of Headingly Lane. Many of these villas were formerly the property of LMU, which had inherited them from the polytechnic, but disposed of them to private companies. This decline has sparked heated debates:

Urgent action must be taken to tackle sub-standard housing in Headingly and Hyde Park, a leading local politician claimed this week. Liberal Democrat Councillor for Headingly David Morton has called for Leeds City Council to draw up a 'Strategy for Shared and Student Housing' within six months. (Belardinelli, 2001)[8]

One of the reasons why the University of Leeds and Leeds Metropolitan University are 'popular' with students lies in their locations, close to the City Centre on the one hand and, close to the established and largely safe residential areas of Hyde Park, Headingly, Far Headingly and West Park on the other – a

[8] Alex Belardinelli, 'Housing Action Calls', *Leeds Student*, 23 Feb 2001.

situation quite unlike that of Manchester or Liverpool, where campuses border on areas of dereliction and planning blight of 'the most depressing and threatening kind' (Hammond 2000).[9] However, this safety is being eroded.

> *Further down towards town like Hyde Park and all that, there is a definite tension between students and residents and you get loads of grief and quite a few people have been beaten up. Loads of kids walking past young people, that could have been students or might been working, giving it fuck the students. But that is just that particular area because it is a bit rough. But you can, sort of, in some respects see where they are coming from in the way that in the last sort of x amount of years, the amount of students coming to Leeds and the amount of people living in Headingly has become a problem. Obviously its the place to live because it is close by, so there are more people buying houses to let out to students, so the amount of students in Headingly has increased 10 fold in a number of years. You can sort of appreciate where they are coming from in some respects. You've got older people who've lived in Headingly since they were young and grown up here, when it was a more residential area, and now there are so many students coming in. It's like they are overrun by students all the time, which you can sort of appreciate, because Headingly is a nice area and there are nice houses there. (Resident)*

Headingly, situated in the LS6 region of Leeds, is an old village, which has been swallowed up by the city, but still maintains the village mentality. The atmosphere is still conservative. As a major area of Leeds for students, tension is inevitable, with residents consistently complaining about more students moving into the area.

> *Headingly, the students, everybody knows about that, and I don't actually like going there because of it, even though there are some normal looking pubs around that area. Headingly is very nice in the summer because there aren't any students. I don't know, I've been to the Oak when it's been sunny and hot and it's been summer holidays and it's still been packed out with the sort of students that have stayed over the summer, but there are less of them. (Headingly resident)*

The Oak and The Sky Rack, the two biggest pubs in the area, which feature in the Otley Run, enjoy a massive turnover each year, because of their size and the amount of people that frequent them. Headingly is now a predominantly student area. With more people coming to Leeds University, the situation is likely to become worse.

> *Headingly is the big area with the local objection. I have got a 2-day hearing listed for Friday of this week. Bass are wanting to open a new pub in Headingly and there is hell on...they are coming along with Harold Best their MP on Friday, with councillors to object to this application. Leeds city council in fact turned down planning permission for this development but it was granted on appeal by the Secretary of State. The councillors in that area are coming down to object with their MP and members of the public. I think they have*

[9] Chris Hammond, 'The Slums of Headingly', *Civic Trust Newsletter*, September 2000.

all banded together to employ a solicitor to represent them but we have listed it for 2 days. Headingly is the most vociferous area. It is the area where most of the students live. The Sky Rack, The Original Oak and the Headingly Taps are the 3 main hostelries in the Headingly area and they are very, very busy. The Sky Rack pub is Whitbread's best paying pub in the country. They doubled the size of the premises 2 years ago, because of concerns of drinking outside, and the committee had a lot of influence there. The residents are saying 'enough is enough'. They are fed up with vandalism and noise, damage and litter etc. Another hostelry is going to add to it. I do not know if another hostelry will result in more people wanting to come into the city, into that area or whether it will spread the existing load. Just 100 metres from the Sky Rack is a White Rose House. At the moment it's called the Original Oak. They are going to be very close. I do not know how it will go because the magistrates and the police are also objecting. The police never object to late licenses these days but they are objecting to this new license, so they are going to be objecting on the public order grounds. This may give the magistrates some ammunition to refuse it but they are going to have to provide some statistics and information. (Clerk to the Magistrates)

Increasingly graduates are remaining in the area, which may have repercussions on the cultural infrastructure: *'the fact that Leeds is populated by a large number of highly paid white collar workers has displaced a lot of Leeds residents'* (Student Union Representative).

I think you have a combination. You have the students who have studied here and graduated and stayed here, and who like that kind of music and that kind of life, and there's people like this guy I was talking about who I shared a house with, and he's local, but he's also a graduate and has a high flying job in some financial company. (Graduate 23)

Consequently, the profile of a 'typical' Headingly resident is changing.

And there is such a mix of people because you do get people who are just like, you can tell, they have probably slept in their clothes for the last 3 days but then you will get the people who have just made such an effort to go out on a Sunday night to the local pub and they are so dressed up, but it does not matter because everyone is up for a laugh, it is a good atmosphere I would say especially in The Sky Rack. It's a good atmosphere in there I think. The Oak is a bit different, because it is a bit more closed off, and there are little rooms to it and little parts to it so you do not get quite the general overall atmosphere to it. (Headingly resident)

These shifts are causing friction amongst the local residents, who feel themselves to be increasingly pushed out by the changes. Graduates who stay in the area seeking a residential atmosphere are also finding themselves disappointed and over-run.

I have been in The Arc a few times, but it's pretentious and showy and everyone is more bothered about what everyone else is doing rather than having a good time. Headingly Taps is fantastic - it's got nice beer. But the Taps is more local older people from Headingly who drink in there. Basically wherever you are in Headingly, it's completely overrun by students and all the locals will whinge about it. I can't remember the figures, I last read something like 10,000 people descend on Leeds, and the majority of those are around this area. Two thirds of the population is transient because they are students, and there is just no family

atmosphere at all. Bloody students. You feel really old when you are drinking in there. All the pubs in Headingly are always really busy and always full of young people, so it's students who rule predominantly. Woodies, which is at the far end of Headingly going towards Otley, I would say is an old person's bar if you live in Headingly. That's where you go and drink because they have got bitters on there. You get the old people going in there for the drinks all day, every day, right up till closing time and you get a few students going in there but the majority of the students will come down to The Oak and The Sky Rack because they are the two biggest pubs in Headingly. (Headingly resident)

Hyde Park, the area most affected by tensions and troubles, enjoys no better reputation:

They [the Hyde Park type] are yoga people, you know, like Fenham people. The Menston crowd. They're all like posh blonde birds who go round in puffa jackets in Po Na Na and things like that. They've got rich daddies and you can tell, because they usually have a Mochino bag or something, and they walk around with these silly handbags. It's very funny whenever you go into the Streets of Leeds, because you go in there and whatever night of the week you go in, you always get women dressed up to the nines. The Streets of Leeds is really near where we live, it is in Roundhay, so it is more of a suburbs pub but you get the same crowd as when you go to town on a weeknight. (Resident)

Graduates and locals, then, seem to be being pushed further and further out of town. They are unable to socialise in town because of the expense and are unwilling to stay in the immediate suburbs because of the students. Hyde Park and Headingly are now being designated as 'no-go student areas', in favour of further out regions such as Chappell Allerton and Kirkstall:

I go down to some of the pubs in Kirkstall quite a bit because I've got friends who live down there, and they're really just sort of standard sort of local pubs. You get a mix of the people who live there and they're just very sort of down to earth places with their quizzes on. (Graduate)

It would appear then, that if Leeds is to continue to retain graduates and creative entrepreneurs, something will have to be done to re-establish balance in many communities. Rigorous application of planning and listed building regulations, with possible updating, is needed. Not least, the expectations and responsibilities of landlords and students alike will have to change; the former must place more emphasis on the long-term security of their investments and their social responsibilities, and the latter pay more attention to well-kept and decent housing.

Student Leeds

'All of Headingly and Leeds 6 postcode, and then a little bit into the Leeds 4 postcode, is studentland' (Student Union Rep)

All British cities have experienced a rapid growth of in-migrant higher education students, who have imprinted a striking mark on the urban fabric over the last 10 years. Leeds is no exception. Students have

come to play an important role in the city, not just in terms of population, educational achievement, housing and income generation, but also in terms of stimulating and maintaining night life activity. There are over 60,000 students at the two universities in Leeds. However, student populations between the two universities vary considerably: LMU has more part-time and sub-degree students than Leeds University, and while 20% of students at Leeds University are postgraduates, the equivalent figure at Leeds is 15%. LMU also has a higher proportion of mature and local students. Two-thirds of students at LMU, for example, are over 21 years of age. 10% of students at Leeds University are from overseas while the figure for LMU is 5%.

What is clear, is that Leeds now contains a large and diverse student population, which has a striking impact upon city centre leisure provision. One way in which this is felt, is through their spending impact. Average student expenditure in Britain in 1995/96 was estimated at £5091 with one fifth, or £1187, spent on 'entertainment'. (Callender and Kempson, 1996). Based on 1995 figures, the 65,000 higher education students in Leeds have an annual spending power of over £330M and spend nearly £77M on entertainment alone. However, the replacement of grants by loans and the increasing incidence of student debt and part-time working, has brought new restraints on student night life. Yet, in spite of the problems of student debt, spending on night life has not been widely curtailed, due to the ease of access to cheap loans and the fact that a significant proportion of students, at Leeds University in particular, continue to have high disposable incomes, through family support:

> *people have realised that students have a vast amount of money. Get a student on a drink, on a cigarette, and you've got them for life. They don't mind going into debt for our products. (Student Union Representative)*

The distinguishing features of student life are its rhythms, routines and rituals (Chatterton, 1999). In particular, the leisure time of students is highly segregated and structured around particular times and places in the City Centre, such as the student pub, student digs, shared housing and student parties. On arriving in Leeds, most first years follow a set routine through the Leeds' night life, influenced by the marketing efforts of venues and promoters and advice gathered from Freshers' Week and other students.

> *It's a totally different dynamic in the week, because during the week it's only the students that keep it going, especially Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday... (Student 23)*

A typical trip through the student week would include:

Monday	**Heaven and Hell or Evolution**
Tuesday	**Majestyk**

Wednesday	**Heaven and Hell**
Thursday	**Evolution**
Friday	**Leeds Met Uni**
Saturday	**Leeds University Union**
Sunday	**Walkabout/Springbok/Rat and Parrot/Yates pubs**

A popular, and notorious tradition amongst Leeds students is a specific pub-crawl known as 'The Otley Run'.

The Otley Run

The Otley Run, so called for its Otley Rd route, epitomises why people hate students. It's the kind of legendary pub-crawl that will generate an endless number of anecdotes amongst you and your friends that will inevitably begin "we were so pissed that night…" Messy and trite as it may be, it not only remains the initiation rite of all Leeds students, but also doubles the fun of playing a board game. (The Student Guide 2000/2001).

The board game aspect stems from the attempt to visit all the stops before closing time. Starting at the Boddington Hall of Residence (or more usually at Woodies – 104 Otley Rd), in the upper reaches of Headingly, and finishing around the university, on the edge of town, it incorporates all the pubs along the way. There is some disagreement about the exact details of the Otley Run, but the most common route consists of: Woodies, The Three Horseshoes, O'Hagans New Inn, Headingly Taps, The Skyrack, The Original Oak, The Hyde Park, The Library and Firkin, The Packhorse, The Eldon, LUU Old Bar, The Fenton, Dry Dock, and the LMU 'Poly Bop'.

Otley Rd is currently the most rapidly developing area in Leeds. The Skyrack and The Original Oak have recently had major refurbishments and there are plans to develop White Rose House into a new themed café/bar. The two-storey accommodation has been acquired by the Headingly-based leisure company ATC (Associated Tower Cinemas), which already owns the Cottage and Lounge cinemas. It is also responsible for the recently created Arc café/bar extension to the Lounge cinema. The theme of this new facility may be heavily influenced by the TV series *Cheers*, as ATC plans to recreate the intimate ambience seen on the show. Chris Ure, chairman of Arc Inspirations said: "We intend to create a new café bar experience for Headingly" (*Absolute Leeds*). The plan is for a high quality, female friendly establishment.

Student Unions play a significant role in student nightlife as outlined earlier, but many large, city centre, mainstream clubs are challenging them for the student pound. First years prefer to opt for the security of the campus:

It tends to be first years, its very safe, sensible price, they're not going to get conned at the bar. It's a completely safe environment on each of the nights, you know exactly what you're getting…they're long-established: "Are you going to OTT? I'll see you there." It's the vibe. And universities will always have that, we always have the cheapest drink, and not mad one-off offers, but across the board. Whatever your friends are drinking, you're not going to get lumbered with a £4 cocktail. (Student Union Representative)

However, increasing numbers are choosing to socialise elsewhere and the students' unions in Leeds are facing increasing competition. Four large branded pubs, with a combined capacity of over 10,000 and late licences, are situated in an area of about 100 yards between the main town centre, LU and Leeds Met. These venues cater specifically for students, during the week, offering drinks promos and 'cheesy' tunes. The exception to this is the Friday night disco at Leeds Met, which plays Goth music and where the majority of customers are non-students. The union representatives claim that the relaxed security encourages ex-students and like-minded locals into the venue, although observation suggested that a large number of sixth formers and underage drinkers where amongst the crowd.

I: If you're no longer a student is it still quite easy to get in?

P: Yes.

T: You aren't supposed to.

P: No. You just sort of wander up. I think it's an open club for everybody at the moment.

I. So they still run it because it's the student union isn't it?

T: Yes, they still run it for the Easter break, but they don't run it for the summer.

There is a certain amount of mixing between 2nd, 3rd, 4th year students, post-grads and graduates, but the upper years tend to follow a different pattern of socialising to the 1st years: drinking tends to be based around the local pub or the Hyde Park Social Club and 'house-parties' largely replace clubbing nights.

Hyde Park Social Club

Situated on Ash Grove, Hyde Park Social Club offers cheap beer and snooker tables. Slightly out of town, in the heart of student land, the area borders a relatively dubious part of Leeds, which occasionally leads to tension. The obligatory quiz night is on Tuesdays and they also offer board games (collected from behind the bar) and occasional pool knockouts. You must be a member to get in and only students are able to qualify for membership. The club has pool tables down-stairs; snooker tables, wide screen TV and dozens of battered old sofas upstairs. The atmosphere of the place is one of a comfy, relaxed and safe environment – a cross between your mate's house and the student union. The bar staff (most of whom are also students) are friendly and make a point of getting to know people by name.

Due to the location of the Club in a residential area, they are no longer able to put on bands or live music and cannot obtain a late licence. The Club predominantly serves as a halfway house to second years, who miss the security of home but feel stifled by life in halls - an excellent place to feel at home.

One significant factor shaping Leeds student nightlife is the Jazz degree offered by the college of music. Just as the Agriculture degree offered by Newcastle University shapes and affects the type of student found in that city, the rarity of such courses means that a large number of Jazz musicians congregate in Leeds. This gives rise to a large number of Jazz venues, Jazz nights at established venues (e.g. The Wardrobe), Jazz clubs, impromptu jam sessions and house parties, as well as affecting tastes and styles adopted by Leeds students. The Hi-Fi is a small basement club (opened October 2000) that caters for live Jazz sessions and Motown nights, which largely took over from The Underground, when the Town and Country Club closed. Like the Hyde Park Social Club, it maintains a safe atmosphere and is, without doubt, one of Leeds' best kept secrets.

Students are seen by local operators as a valuable customer group:

> *I'd rather have students than the trash of the locals. Students can be arseholes, but they tend to come in, have a good night and go away again. You don't have the trouble, fights or drug problem with students that you do get with locals. (Venue Staff)*

They are not so welcome, however, as neighbours.

> *As soon as the house goes up for sale - landlord - bang - and some people have become very very rich buying up houses. And the prices have gone up and up. Landlord - bang - buys house, gets students in. Suddenly, it has grown and grown. It's gone further up towards Becky Park, and we are not just talking about the back to backs and the terraces, we are talking about the semis and things. And suddenly, people have got students next door, and people with young families being in that position, I can say, I wouldn't like it if I had students waking my daughter up at 3am. (Union Representative)*

Angry residents' groups in big university cities say they are being ruined by an influx of students.

> *Neighbours who party all night, streets littered with takeaway containers and trash, neglected, crumbling houses, rat-infested discarded mattresses in back gardens; university students are destroying our neighbourhoods in Birmingham, Leeds, Cardiff…(Collinson, 2001)*[10]

Bronwell Holden, spokeswoman for the Headingly Against Landlordism action group in Leeds, said: 'Landlords are like locusts. They buy up house after house, spend nothing on maintaining them and allow

[10] Patrick Collinson, 'Buy-to-let misery for students' neighbours', *The Guardian*, 05/05/01.

them to fall into severe neglect' (Collinson, 2001). Not everyone agrees, however, as revealed by the responses on BBC Leeds Online bulletin board, when it recently asked local residents for their views:

> *I am not a student. I live in Headingly and I think it is great so many students live in the area. There are loads of interesting pubs, restaurants, plus the cinema of course, which would all face terminal decline without the student population. Locals complaining about the students are being ridiculous! They make Headingly the most vibrant place to live, in Leeds. (BBC Leeds Online 2001)*

Houses in university areas are prime targets for burglars. According to insurer Endsliegh, around 40% of students living in houses take out insurance for their personal possessions. Insurance rates vary markedly across Britain, with Leeds students charged almost double the rate paid by those in Birmingham. Attacks on students are also a common occurrence, with papers carrying stories of multiple attacks.

> *A Fresher was mugged at knife point in Hyde Park…Although he was not injured, the incident comes just months after another student was attacked in the Hyde Park area …Only two weeks ago a mature student was terrorised in a series of attacks by a gang of youths in Burley…In November a finalist had her cheekbone broken by a gang who were trying to steal her mobile phone. In October a student was kicked to the ground and punched in just one of a series of attacks in the Woodhouse area…(Tiley, 2001)*[11]

There are mixed feelings about the relationship students have with locals in the city. Some students are less than positive about how they are accepted in Leeds. Local 'townies', who are out in the city centre at weekends, are generally perceived by many students to be territorial, forcing the students to retreat from their week-night haunts and stick to student-only areas at weekends. However, increasing graduate retention is causing shifts in the cultural infrastructure. Many local young people have also been moving back to the city and as a result, there is a growing blurring of students and locals amongst the young consumers in the city.

After Hours Leeds

> *Sso I just find it immensely frustrating that they very people that legislate against drugs are actually legislating for it because they have given me a 6am entertainments license (Nightclub Manger)*

Leeds has a reputation as a place where you can continue partying after the traditional nightclub closing times. It hosts a number of post-club or after hours clubs which re-open in venues after the licensed clubs close for clubbers to continue partying. They are primarily on a Saturday night and are unlicensed selling soft drinks, smoothies and coffee. In the Mixmag After Hours Guide in March 2001 the magazine

listed the entries in cities in the north. Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool and Bradford had one entry each, Leeds had four:

> ***Casa Loco***
>
> *This place has got to be one of the smiliest afterhours places in the UK, probably because of its tough, funky house and increasingly mixed/gay crowd. Locos moved to Bradford for a while, but it never had the same atmosphere and now its back in its rightful home. Their famous motto, people make places, says it all.*
>
> ***Glasshouse***
>
> *You will see every walk of life sharing the same bench at the Glasshouse. There's something for everyone, with bouncy hard house in room one, euphoric house and trance in room two and funky vocal house in room three and people travel from Manchester and even Scotland to join in the stoopidity. Glasshouse may be moving back to its original venue soon, and although it doesn't have a motto, it should be 'people who live in glasshouses shouldn't get stoned.*
>
> ***Kahuna***
>
> *Another Gay friendly, late night club in Leeds. Go Kahuna if you fancy house with a harder edge and chirpy, chatty crowd. The place is clean, colourful, relatively monger-free and if you get the munchies there is an excellent 24 hour sandwich bar, Kada's just around the corner. One word of warning, avoid the 55 year old men in leotards.*
>
> ***Soul Kitchen***
>
> *If you want to hire somewhere for the perfect after party, The Soul Kitchen has the perfect recipe. It specialises in funk dridven houes, has colourful murals on the wall and the drinks are included in the ticket price. Masters at Work, Back2Basics and SpeedQueen have all had after parties here, and as the cliché goes, the best parties are always in the kitchen.*
>
> **Mixmag, After Hours Guide, Part 2 The North, March 2001.**

Many people use these venues to extend their night out and 'carry on partying':

> *Interviewer People like go all through the night there don't they.*
>
> *Giles Yes you go straight from Speed Queen to Glasshouse to carry on with the party.*

In addition to these places, Kada's coffee house, located near the corn Exchange is a coffee shop open twenty four hours selling refreshments to clubbers not wanting to make it home. As the following conversation suggests, it has a distinctive, laid back, atmosphere:

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[11] Zenobia Tiley, 'Hyde Park Attacks Continue', *Leeds Student*, 26/02/01.

Cath I think where is nice after where you can smoke the street tobacco. Kada café, that's somewhere nice if you want to continue chatting after hours in the week because it is really minty gorgeous.

Darren On a weekend you can get some right idiots in there though I remember just like on a weekend it can be really cool but then sometimes you will sit down and it is just they will let anybody in as long as they are not too pissed.

Cath They seem still to be learning how to run a business they will not take money off you they will forget to take money off you.

Darren They seem more like community centres.

Cath Yeah cos I was getting a mint tea and I said can I have two cups and he looked really horrified for 2 people right trying to process not really used to customers here.

There has been a great deal of change amongst thee late night venues, and no doubt more change and flux will occur. There is an acceptance from most parts of the community that these places have a high percentage of drug use and are able to charge the high entrance fee because they will not be making money from the bar:

Interviewer The after hours ones there is no alcohol there. Is it do you reckon it is totally drug orientated?

Cath Yeah.

Darren Completely it is. I mean that is why they charge 10 quid to get in because that is the only way they are going to make any money really because having to charge 2 quid for a bottle of water it is like they can only make the money off the door. I mean there is a new one in Leeds which is quite cool now is Kahuna elemental that is very popular because in the summer it is a bit more dressed up. It is still quite fucked you still get quite a few body builders in there it was like funky house rather than hard house or trancy or stuff. Elemental Corn Exchange so that is the in place to go after hours in Leeds, it is one of the in places to go period, Kahuna.

Clearly, those able and willing to continue dancing until 8 or 10 am the next morning implies that this clientele come from the more drug and dance music oriented cultures than the mainstream, 'drink and pull' scene. Some venue managers feel that issuing such licences encourages drug use, however there is also a feeling that young people would take drugs anyway and this is just catering to demand:

if we ran a dance club that opens at 12 shuts at 10 in the morning you are obviously going to have more drugs in there than you will in here because people can drink in here. I do believe firmly that the public prefer to drink there is an element that will always take drugs but there is a vast majority would prefer to drink and if they are going to take drugs then they are going to have a spliff when they get home or they are going to do whatever they do. But big clubs you have just seen Home getting closed that operates deliberately out of hours dancing

people are going to have to do something they cannot just drink red bull all night what they are trying to do is get the same effect they get from drinking alcohol or a similar effect (Nightclub Manger)

The clientele is mixed and often perceived to be of people that aren't allowed in elsewhere. However all the respondents who had attended these after hours clubs reported that they enjoyed the atmosphere and lack of hassle from other punters although enjoyed the interaction with other clientele. Many admitted that they had taken drugs when attending and that the assumed that those around them had too:

Interviewer Do you ever go to any of these late night places sort of post club?

Cath I used to when I was a clubber I used to go out quite a lot I have been to Casa Loco which was mad, real mad fuckers, body builders, but it was fun really good fun.

Interviewer Even at post 2am.

Cath It was quiet at 2 starts to get busy about 4 and we just stayed till about 7 and it was really quite fun.

Interviewer And it is people who have been to clubs and want somewhere?

Cath I honestly do not know where they come from you have got veins standing out in their heads they are usually puke coloured. You will see it is just strange individuals who you probably do not see them in the day I doubt they are working.

Darren Casa loco is one of the things. With the body builders, is that they could not get in anywhere else because the bouncers would not let them in because they looked too much like they were going to create trouble and so that is one of the reasons that they went there. But then some people, apparently Glasshouse just reopened and that is like they were slagging off Glasshouse saying it is not like it was but that is kind of interesting I think you do get a real mix of people going.

Cath And then it is also not a post club but the kind of people that go to Casa Loco and the like ... are the kind of people that go to Sundissential. Is that still going?

Int. Oh yeah Sundissential.

Cath Because I used to really like that it is more hard house I do quite like that sort of thing the old school and it is a definitely different ...

Cath It is more kiddy but I quite like that like that kind of thing.

Int And that is Sunday afternoon?

Sundissential

Sundissential takes place on the non-traditional nightclub going time of Sunday afternoon with doors often opening at noon and running until midnight. For this reason it is primarily run at Bank Holiday

weekends. Starting in Birmingham it has regular homes in Bristol and Leeds and more occasional nights in Newcastle, Scotland and elsewhere round the country. It is often the culmination of a weekend of clubbing and has had a higher than average number of drug related incidents reported in the press.

Interviewer *So what sort of people go to Sundissential.*
David. *Nutters.*

Interviewer *Would they have been going all weekend*?

David *Yeah, Sundissential is a hardcore kind of clubbers place there is a whole range of folks in there they are you get a great atmosphere in there. There is nobody in Sundissential who is unfriendly but they are all very serious clubbers, they are not messing about. They are all cyber geeks or really really dressed up 32 year old guys wondering around with dummies in there mouths that kind of thing but it is really friendly and you do get a good vibe from it definitely.*

It attracts a mixed aged crowd but it is often perceived to be the younger end of the spectrum, the 'kiddy" crowd who go to extreme lengths to make elaborate costumes, often around a theme provided by the organisers. Their attire is similar to that of the Gatecrasher kids, brightly coloured and often incorporating children's icons such as toys or cartoon characters.

> *I'd say people that go to Sundissential are people that really really like drugs and they want to take drugs too, and that's the difference. But (our) clientele are a bit older and I'd say the average punter is about twenty three, I think in the recent weeks it might go up, and I would say the average punter (at our club) is about twenty six, twenty eight.* (Club Promoter)

In Leeds Sundissential takes place at Evolution, a huge, purpose built nightclub in the Kirkstall Retail Park, which is normally student orientated:

anybody who has never been to Sundissential should come to Evolution because it is great. You turn up to Sundissential dressed in red yellow and bizzare hair, and you are wondering around in this family complex on a Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock. And there are all these families coming out of the cinema and you are dressed ready to go for it and they are looking at you weird but it is great. (David, Headingly)

Residual Leeds - Scratters and Ale Houses

Interviewer *Are the locals being pushed out of the city centre?*

T *I hope so. (Bar Staff)*

Working class, local and community pubs, many of which hark back to an era of ritualised session drinkers outlined earlier, form a residual and endangered element of city centre nightlife. The city centre is peppered with such pubs, in spite of the growth of national branded pubs and style bars. The style of these pubs has been defined by this report as that of 'Ale House': very traditional, scarcely changed, original features, often in need of redecoration, often situated in run down areas, serving a loyal, regular clientele. Many of these places sit uneasily alongside the brash, new style bars and cafes, and a n the light of the gentrification of city centres, a question mark is places over their future. The prime examples of Ale Houses in Leeds are:

• Big Lil's	Branleys Yard, Headrow	Independent
• Bridge Inn	Bridge End	Independent
• General Elliot	Vicar Lane	Samuel Smith
• Hoagie's -Piano Bar	Eastgate/Mulgarth St.	Scottish and Newcastle
• Nags head	Vicar Lane	Musgrave and Sagar Ltd
• Spencers	Mill Hill	Punch Taverns
• The Duncan	22/26 Duncan St.	Samuel Smith
• The Old Royal Oak	Kirkgate	Scottish Courage
• Three Legs of Man	Headrow	Punch Taverns
• Whip Inn	Bowers Yard, Briggate	Punch Taverns

Interviewing people who frequented these bars proved difficult. Big Lil's, apart from having an area just inside the door where customers check in their weapons, had a very aggressive atmosphere and a fight broke out within minutes of our stepping inside. Hoagie's proved a similar experience, but with less sick on the carpet and pool tables instead of a weapons stash. The Three Legs of Man, the Old Royal Oak and the General Eliot made it unmistakably clear that we were not welcome and the bar staff and customers alike treated us with profound suspicion. The Whip, however, probably because of its location (next door to a Hogshead pub) was less aggressive than the others. People we spoke to reported similar opinions:

> *My own experience of being in there. It's a betting pub. It's parked in between two betting shops and as I remember it, there's one room that's dedicated to the racing channel and these old men stand in there the whole time watching the racing and running out to the betting shop and then running back in to watch the race. I went in to watch the football and there I was going 'they haven't got the football on yet'. Only racing here mate. Ok, so we went*

elsewhere. And the funniest moment was seeing this old man giving the ticket to his little boy of about fifteen saying there you are son go and put a bet on for your Dad, and let me watch the race. Very strange. (Nick)

Ale House customers are not renowned for being welcoming to strangers, or tolerant of minority groups:

They had come in from Bradford I think, or from Manchester, or something like that for someone's birthday party, and they were just looking for a pub, they didn't want to eat at all. They'd walked in there across the road and they got the coldest reception ever because they weren't local, they were the wrong colour. It's a local pub for local people and if you're not coming in for the races, then you can naff off. (Rupert)

Neither are they perceived as female friendly environments:

I haven't been there myself but that's the impression I get, and walking past it. It just looks like an old man's drinking pub, and if you don't belong in there you don't go in. (laughter) If you walk in there they just look at you as if to say: 'women don't go in bars. What do you think you're doing?' sort of thing. And if you order a pint, you would just be a freak. (Gina)

Certain clubs also follow this pattern and are considered 'no-go' by all but the regular clientele. It is interesting to note that it is the clientele, not the venue, that sets the tone for definition:

It depends on the clientele they already get. If clubs are known as being too rough I wouldn't go there, if it was too rough or full of scratters I wouldn't go there. There's not so many now but there used to be, Jumpin Jaks, the Observatory over the road, you stick to the floor when you walk in. (Mark)

'Scratters', like townies, are a widely recognised group:

Nasty, horrible creatures of society, who crawl out from under their stone on Thursday cos its dole day. They put on the same frock every week cos they don't wanna buy a new one until they get too fat. Mainly seen wearing the PVC skirts and boob tubes, which are too tight, sort of sagging and not nice. The over 40s, who still think that they are 18. (Mark)

In many ways, the increased venue capacity and competition has opened up the city centre to all groups, including this group:

Up until a couple of years ago they did stay in their local areas, go to their local pubs but because it's got cheaper in town cos there's a lot of competition, everybody's coming into town and that's where the trouble starts. (Tina)

Many people referred to 'scratters' through characteristics such as poverty, crassness and unemployment: *'I think half of them are spending their giros'* (Tina), although there is no evidence to suggest that this is truly the case. Like the townies, scratters are also seen to be pursuing hedonism, sex and violence but there appears to be a difference in degree. Cheapness, sexual encounters, alcoholism, violence and a different set of moral codes mark scratters out: *'the Observatory does cheap vodka slushes for 50p so*

everyone crawls out from under their stones and goes there' (Mark). Age would also seem to be a key issue, in a society obsessed with youth and beauty, scratters are seen as middle-aged and undignified, the very embodiment of failure.

Endless myths abound about the venues, and the people who frequent them, largely supported by no real first-hand experience:

> *It's difficult to comment if you don't go there yourself of course, because you don't know, you just guess because you walk past and you see through the window, and you think - I don't think this is my sort of place. (Rupert)*

Despite these negative images, the loss of such places would sever the links between city centres and traditional community based pubs and would represent a replacement of the 'local' with the consumption experience of the non-local, branded or style bar. Moreover, it would force out those consumption groups who do not want to, or cannot afford to engage with the boisterousness of the new corporate world of Leeds' glitzy style bars and café society.

4. Issues in the night-time economy

Independent Bars and Corporate Chains

A distinctive feature of Leeds' nightlife is the key role played by local entrepreneurs. This seems to have been pivotal in encouraging growth in the night time economy within the city. However, their success has also attracted the interest of national corporate chains who want a slice of the action (and profits) and are able to pay higher rents for properties.

> *I saw the writing on the wall a long time ago and sort of said you know the corporates are just going to kill it all because it was actually, suddenly there was somewhere to go that wasn't full of idiots, that was actually very comfortable, and a lot of people valued that. Of course it got trendified to hell, but what the heck, it didn't matter. Lots of people coming to Leeds for that club life, and then because of the late night licences there was more clubs around in the city, therefore it attracted more people. And on the back of this you have the heart of darkness which is the breweries. So of course then I walked on water as far as they were concerned so I was able to get access to them, and what horrified me was their influence on the way cities operate and that influence is still totally endemic. (Independent Bar Owner)*

Larger properties were becoming available in the core of the city through changes in building use and the closure of old traditional banks as they restructured around new call centres on the edge of the city. These grand, large buildings were attractive to the large corporates who could afford the capital outlay to buy or renovate these large, opulent premises. One independent bar owner pointed out, rather scathingly, that the

Europeanisation of British cities only extended as far as pavement cafes and that the corporate ownership structures was a significant block on a greater variety of nightlife provision.

The Leeds Café Bar Association was set up by some of the early independent pioneers to give a collective voice the concerns facing the independent bar owners:

> *So along with a friend of mine (…) we set up a cafe bar association on the idea something I'd learned long ago, if you try and do it as an individual, nothing. If you try and do it as an association or whatever, people take notice. (Independent Bar Owner)*

One main concern was that the magistrates and council were allowing unchecked development of large sites into bars by corporate companies.

The Pimp and Pusher comes to Leeds

The Pimp and Pusher was, almost, to be one of the city centre's new corporate mega theme bars!

"You know at one time we put in a planning application for the Town Hall to turn it into the biggest in Europe. I mean we submitted a mock press release. There was going to be myself (and two friends), we were going to stand on the steps of the Town Hall, dark suits and glasses and you know, 'Mega Leisure' you know. It was just a complete piss take. We were going to call it the Pimp and Pusher or something totally outrageous. You know the biggest bar and keep the organ as a feature and something that would upset everybody in business. They said of course the City Council will sell it to us because they'll sell anything won't they? I mean there was a bit of agit prop in the middle of all that, but actually deadly serious, and looking back on it we had some effect, but in essence we failed because the corporates have carried on rolling through"

From the perspective of the licensing officials and police, the advantage of increased competition is that bar owners constantly improve their premises and products and ensuring that the bars are cutting edge:

> *So it is now very much market forces and if an operator comes along and wants to compete with other operators, I mean it has been good to the extent that pubs in the city that were run down and real dives have had to spend money to bring them up to scratch. Because they could see their trade slipping away to the new premises so they have had to react by spending so it has been good in that regard to bring the premises up to scratch. (Liscensing Officer)*

Due to the fierce competition in the central area, each new bar in Leeds has to now have its unique selling point:

> *You cant just open 'another bar'. I don't know if you've been to X, but they've just opened and well apparently they are just really quiet. I mean you come and open another bar now,*

without any sort of extra identity, I think you would just be lost. You have to come up with something, because there are just loads of bars aren't there? (Independent Bar Owner)

Many consumers appeared to prefer smaller bars as they encourage individuality and have the friendly feel of a welcoming local:

Soul Kitchen is really nice because the manageress just talks to you straight away really friendly, even introduce you to people you get a feeling like she recognised you, remembered who you are. And I think that is really nice that quite personal feel (Leeds Clubber).

Many smaller places have a different atmosphere, and as one bar owner expressed, this can often equate to a safer environment which is self regulated:

go to any of the smaller places, more localised and a relationship between whoever it is who is running the place or managing the place or whatever, and it's audiences, clientele. You know the bigger the place the more of a problem there is. I mean if you've got a small bar that you know is going to be run individually and you get rid of the social problems associated with the anonymity of the larger places which are just about consumption. (Independent Bar Owner)

One bar owner went to the extent of opening a his own bar where *"me and my friends could drink"* due to the limitations being imposed on nightlife by larger branded pubs. This bar, Reliant, based in the newly dubbed 'North Quarter' was regarded as typifying this type of 'independent' environment:

they've just opened a new bar called Reliant (…) Yes, right out on the edge of the town. I'm sort of getting on for thirty now so I think it's kind of those few places which had kind of got a bit more chilled out people and good beer (Rachel, club promoter).

The Future of Ownership in Leeds

If you look around in cities you will find a handful of people involved in setting up bars and the rest of it is just the corporates. But then the corporates come straight in afterwards and if you're setting up a bar and struggling to make a living and somebody comes along and says well we'll give you half a million you take it and run. (Independent Bar Owner)

Some independent bar owners have taken the money and ran, but many remain to pursue their projects, often on the edge of town to escape the 'corporate feel' of the centre. One significant issue for the future concerns market saturation, especially in the light of several notable bar closures. In particular, it was noted that large corporate ventures are forced into closure if profit levels are not reached, which may subsequently open up opportunities for independents.

Many independents felt they have an advantage over the larger, and less responsive, corporates because they are directly in contact with their customers and can react swiftly to changes:

That is where the smaller bars have the advantage. They can keep changing easily, trying out different nights, putting on live music or just redecorating. The chains cant do that so they might loose out in the long run. (independent Bar Owner)

In many ways, increased competition is created a downward pressure on prices and in terms of style and content is encouraging a 'race to the bottom' and a lowering of standards:

What happens in a saturated market place obviously is it becomes incredibly competitive and normally in competitive market places that will result in discounting, you discount your product therefore you still have to maintain your margins so you cheapen your product so the quality gets worse and worse and worse so ultimately the public actually lose out because what they are actually buying is not as good a quality although it is cheaper it is not as good quality. As it may be could have been we are not selling shoes we are selling alcohol and whilst we are a commercial business and I am here to make a lot of money for the company that I work for I as a licensee also have a moral responsibility and a legal responsibility to control how we serve alcohol to the public. (Mainstream Venue Manger).

For the future, Leeds' nightlife will continue to walk a precarious balance between independent and corporate activity. Close attention, from the police, magistrates and council, is needed to ensure that corporate brands do not become too dominant and erode the strong reputation which Leeds has built up in terms of a vibrant and diverse independent bar scene. However, in many places such as the Calls which has experienced significant corporate investment, this may already be too late.

Licensing and Beyond

Clearly, there are several ways in which the regulation of licensing can develop. Those granting licenses are sensitive to the variety of licensing needs in the city centre and that one size does not fit all:

A lot of them [venues] got their licenses initially till 11 o'clock - a normal pub license - it was only when they had been up and running 2 or 3 years, that they come along for the late license. To be honest, most of them now have it [section 77] in the city centre, to give them all a level playing field...Some of them do not want 2 o'clock, some just want 12, some just 1, because they do not want to pay staff until that time. They find their own particular premises, their own type of operation. It does not mean that they want to go to the 2 o'clock or later. They just want another hour or an hour and a half drinking and that is sufficient for their purposes. They are all different. (Magistrate Representative)

Other suggestions have included staggered opening and 24 Hour opening, or closing at the discretion of management:

Staggered opening and closing - we have tried this in other cities actually, where someone had to shut at 1, 2, 3 and 4. People leave when the bars shut, so until they let us choose when we open, I mean we shut when we are ready. We shut the bar at 2 but if we are full and kicking we will carry on until 4. We shut when we think people have had enough and when we are not going to have a huge cloakroom queue. (Venue Manager)

Another proposed improvement would enable licensees to keep their license when they move to other venues, the so-called 'driving license scenario'. Simplification of the numerous licenses available may prove beneficial and the Government White Paper, has proposed a radical reform of licensing, with the power to grant licenses vested in a single institution, potentially the city council.

While it makes sense to have one co-ordinating body looking after all licensing, there will be increased costs to the local authority, in order to resource the extra workload they will be taking off the magistrates. Moreover, since local authorities already receive much criticism from members of the public, residents' associations and consumers for problems about licensed premises that they have little formal control over, the proposed changes may expose them to even more complaints. Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that some operators see the local authority as having a certain conflict of interests, especially when they own land or particular sites for which they are granting an entertainment or liquor license. A recent survey in *The Publican* trade magazine suggested that a majority of publicans did not favour the transfer of licensing power to the local authority, because of increased bureaucracy, and the danger that it will be used as a revenue generator.

The proposed council licensing panel will have an unenviable task. Leeds' magistrates deal with 50-100 applications at any one time, so the workload is considerable. Doubtless councils will have to appoint more staff, or even create a separate department to deal with this added responsibility. It is possible that a more continental approach, including the granting of more children's' licenses, and the development of more family-friendly venues, could change drinking habits. A pattern where people start to drink at 7.30 and must leave at 11.30 has been shown to encourage binge drinking. The preliminary moves to extend the hours of opening in Leeds have been successful:

> *People will go out later at nights to drink, instead of going out at 8 o'clock they will go out at 9, because there is only so much money to go around, but they stay on till midnight, 1 o'clock etc. whereas in Newcastle they probably start at 6, 7 o'clock with their drinking on an evening, people's habits change in that respect. Some people may go and have a meal before they go drinking. In Newcastle...at night, a lot of people go for meals afterwards, fish and chips and curries. (Magistrate Representative)*

The way forward into the future seems set to continue on the present course, until market forces retard or halt the growth of the night-time economy. Simplification of the process of granting new licenses, reviewing and up-grading existing ones and the inspection of premises, may operate more efficiently if delegated to the council, leaving police and magistrates to attend to other matters. However, this will greatly increase the council's workload and absorb more of their resources. The number and type of license may be simplified, allowing much flexibility, so that venues can adjust the provision of their

facilities quickly, in response to day-to-day demands. The needs of residents and businesses, which are not part of the night-time economy, must be kept firmly in mind and they will presumably express their opinions and grievances through various associations, as problems related to the 24 Hour City Initiative become more acute.

Leeds: late night and laid back

One of the key insignias of modern day Leeds has been the extension of activity well after the traditional '5pm flight'. The expansion of nightlife has also expanded opportunities for other retail activities:

> *Some will see the niche in the market and go for it. A chap who has got a little shop up the Headrow there, next door to him they are converting office accommodation to flats. He has applied, and got a provisional license for an off license, on the ground floor. He is going to open a 24 hour shop there, selling bread cooked on the premises and everything that people living in the city centre will want at night, because there is no place in the city that is open at the moment, once Morrisons and Sainsburys shut at 6 or 7 or 8. There is nowhere else for people to buy food...The people that live above him in the flats will come and use his facilities, and he will catch the trade from the pubs. People want sandwiches and soft drinks. (Clerk to the Magistrates)*

Leeds, then, more than many other old industrial cities, has extended activity well into the night. However, key parts of the late night infrastructure need addressing to ensure that there is a variety of activities late into the night and not just those associated with alcohol, dancing and drugs.

Growth in Leeds has largely benefited from cross sector support including the police, local authority, magistrates and existing businesses. Moreover, traditional regulators such as the licensing magistrates and the police have accepted the arguments for a greater amount and diversity of nightlife activity and have helped promote the liberalisation of regulatory mechanisms. Leeds, then, has taken a progressive and laid back approach to the development of the night time economy. For the future, those implementing regulatory laws should pay more attention to the type rather than just amount of new activity to ensure that a balance is struck between a range of activities rather then an alcohol monoculture driven by large non-local corporate developers.

Venice of the North in Little London?

To what extent does Leeds stand out from other neighbouring industrial cities. Has it really thrown off its old hard, smoke stack image and replaced it with a new chic culture? It is hard to deny that major changes in going out culture have not happened over the last 10 years in Leeds. The handful of rough pubs and clubs have been replaced by countless new style bars and larger branded corporate pubs. No doubt in response to these changes, the night time clientele have adapted their tastes and preferences and a host of

new younger and wealthy revellers have been attracted to Leeds from all over the region and the country. Leeds, then, feels very different on a night than 10 years ago, if only that tens of thousands more people use the city centre. However, the experience of Teatro tells us that Leeds is not a little London and the Quays area is not Soho. The rich and famous in Leeds often prefer something a bit more true to Yorkshire. Looking at the itinerary of some of the Leeds United players on their infamous drinking binge nights reveals that they prefer the much more traditional circuit of booze and birds taking in DV8 table dancing bar, the Observatory disco bar and Majestyk's night club.

Moreover, it is important to keep in mind that not everyone has been caught by the rising tide of Leeds' growing economy and cultural infrastructure. As one person commented to us: *"a rising tide lifts all boats, but if you haven't got a boat, you've had it"*. While some opportunities have opened up in terms of low paid service work in call centres and the hospitality industry, many of the people in the outlying estates and inner city areas have been left behind by much of the development in this 'corporate city'. In particular, the new breed of style bars simply out-prices ort out-classes many people from the city centre. In many ways, then, the city centre is becoming a ghetto for cash-rich groups, whether they be townies, students or young professionals. The City Council need to look hard at the types of provision available in the city centre outside simple alcohol consumption. In particular, the needs of under 18s, families, older people and those on low incomes are rarely catered for in the new glitzy world of branded café and style bars. These issues need urgent attention if comparisons with European cities are to have any substance.

Conclusions

We have pointed a to number of trends which continue to shape Leeds' nightlife such as an increased role for large corporate players in the leisure and entertainment sector, a continued drive towards branding and theming and the creation of new style and café type bars, bar-club hybrids and specialist dance clubs. At the same time, local authorities and city councils creating new 'place images', within which creative and cultural activity and the night-time economy become key indicators of marketing 'success'. Finally, cities are increasingly catering for their more affluent, in-migrant, middle-class professional 'knowledge' workers by creating leisure and night-time entertainment which meets their needs, rather than those of poorer and less mobile sections of the city's population.

Leeds exemplifies many of these trends and has transformed its urban cores into a busy business and cultural destination. This has been aided by a prosperous population catchment, a strong role as regional employment centre especially in terms of a business service 'complex', the established cosmopolitan

nature of its centre, the strategic leadership shown by the local state, and the significant growth in service sector professionals which has fuelled demand for entertainment and cultural goods and services, especially up-market and stylish nightlife venues. The recent 'good times' for the city centre, then, has stimulated the growth of corporate and branded entertainment based around a range of upmarket bars, clubs and restaurants, which in many cases has also created opportunities for the establishment and growth of a diverse independent sector, based around alternative spaces and opportunities for small scale cultural entrepreneurs and intermediaries.

Yet, this growth is not without its pitfalls and contradictions. It is important not to take such success stories at face value and recognise that many young people are disenfranchised from such prosperity and that the urban night time fabric is increasingly socially and geographically divided. Further, many independent entrepreneurs may face limited options in the light of growth of large corporate players. Many of these latter type continue to focus upon profit maximisation through beer sales which undermine attempts to create more tolerant and pluralistic nightlife spaces and continues to create problems of social disorder. Alcohol consumption is still often the raison d'être of a night out and issues of disorder, sexism, violence and drunkenness remain. Our analysis suggests that a solution to many of these problems does not rest with the development of large corporate-owned licensed themed venues, but more local coalitions of producers/consumers/cultural entrepreneurs. In many cases these alternative independent spaces are for the most part self-regulating, with many not even requiring door staff or policing resources. While the upgrading of the mainstream may eventually begin to sanitise and regulate nightlife behaviour through pricing ‘trouble’ out of the market, it will do so only at the expense of excluding the city's poorer residents. In this regard, a wealth of lessons can be drawn from continental Europe (Landry, 2000), one characteristic of which is a greater diversity of provision and more local and family-based patterns of ownership in urban entertainment infrastructures. Finally, the dominant audience for nightlife is increasingly mainstream, higher spending, consumption groups such as young professionals, aspiring ‘townies’ and university students. Other groups of young people are disenfranchised within the current range of nightlife provision on the basis of price, style, dress or demeanour such as ‘alternative’ cultures, groups of teenagers, or those with few resources.

Whether we are looking at Leeds, Glasgow or Manchester, there is a certain air of inevitability in the way in which urban nightlife will develop. However, there are a number of different choices and ways forward, each of which have different policy implications for nightlife entrepreneurs, the local council and consumers. First, Leeds could simply become 'Anywhereville UK' and continue to accommodate and embrace the global corporate world hoping that they can become its ‘flavour of the month’ with big

brands such as StarBucks, McDonalds or Gap. This very much appears to be the current trend. The city can get lost in its own hype and begin to substitute image for reality, advertising over people. In terms of nightlife, it can continue to bend over backwards trying to attract major pubcos ignoring regional and local operators. As such, smaller, locally owned nightlife spaces will continue to be squeezed and marginalised and the city will lose its uniqueness and distinctive flavour as it becomes more like many other cities.

Balancing the global, national and the local is probably a more likely scenario. This involves the city council working together with all interested parties in the night-time economy, and not allowing sectional interests and the profit motive to solely influence the types of nightlife growth. In such a context, there is a need for the local state to play a stronger role in the development of the night-time economy especially to strike a balance between commercial and local need, and the interests of corporate capital and users of the city, whoever they may be. Alternatively, the city council, other regulators and capital interests could be more radical in their orientation and could begin to actively promote local nightlife cultures, emphasising diversity, creatively and social cohesion. To encourage this model, mechanisms would need to be established to favour certain types of nightlife activity, encourage many more opportunities for local entrepreneurs and massage property markets in their favour. It would involve more support and training for budding young cultural entrepreneurs in the region and the provision of flexible and affordable premises for those interested in the creative industries, if possible, in the city centre.

Moreover, it would point to a significant change in cultural values and philosophies based around a more inclusive urban realm, encouraging the intermingling of different age groups and mixed night-time activities in which alcohol consumption, on its own, played a much smaller role. This approach would stimulate diversity, creativity, and involve young adults as active contributors to nightlife culture rather than just passive consumers. Which way the city ultimately chooses to go is up for grabs. But, Leeds will have to work extremely hard to promote creativity, diversity, safety and inclusiveness, in order to counter-balance the seductiveness of ‘corporate glam’.

Appendix 1. Definitions of styles

These definitions refer to only the pubs and bars in the city centre excluding other venues with full on licenses such as casinos, hotel bars and private clubs and were established by the authors as a way of categorising nightlife venues according to their overall atmosphere. The following descriptions were used:

Style Bar: One off, individual, décor obviously highly designed and stylised. By nature fairly new. Could be part of a large company which owns many pubs but a style bar would not be branded.

Café Bar: High levels of design, serves food & coffee, lots of seats/tables, range of clientele/atmospheres throughout day. Can be independent or part of a national operator.

Traditional Pub: Characterised wood tables, patterned carpets etc Can be either corporate or owner-run so includes branded traditional pubs.

Ale House: Very Traditional, scarcely changed, original features & loyal, regular clientele. Can be either brewery owned or independent. Often in need of redecoration. Often situated in run down areas.

Theme Pub/Bar: Main feature is that it follows an obvious style throughout, often with memorabilia, chalk boards, bar dress etc. Themed outlets include (1) multi-sited, national High Street Brands such as Sport, Nationalities (Australian, New Zealand, Irish) or student theme pubs or (2) single site concept bars.

Disco Bar: Vertical drinking, loud music, few seats, very busy Fri/Sat. Often closed during day and do not open till evening.

Alternative Pub: Defined by décor, but often due to music policy, clientele, attitude.

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