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Nightshift Glasgow:  
Glasgow City Centre  
Night Time Vision

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2026—30

# Nightshift Nightshift Nightshift Glasgow Glasgow

Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night Time Vision

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## Nightshift Glasgow: Glasgow City Centre Night Time Vision



“Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Vision outlines an ambitious plan to support our world-class Night-time businesses, music venues and cultural institutions, whilst building a safer, more environmentally sustainable, diverse and exciting night-time experience.”

# Preface

## 1. Why NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW?

**Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** is Glasgow's first cohesive 'after dark' approach to the city centre. It sets out how we can create the very best 6pm to 6am city centre for our 1.8 million Greater Glasgow residents, the city's 4.7m overnight staying guests (2024), and the 100m+ annual visits into the city centre for work, education and leisure. It outlines an ambitious plan to support our world-class night-time businesses, music venues and cultural institutions, whilst building a safer, more environmentally sustainable, diverse and exciting night-time experience.

**Nightshift Glasgow** has been developed by the Glasgow City Centre Task Force's Night-time Economy Subgroup – a collaboration between night-time businesses, cultural institutions, universities, Police Scotland, transport providers and Glasgow City Council.

**Nightshift Glasgow** sets out our ambitious night-time **VISION** and **PRINCIPLES**, gives us a **BASELINE** of how the city centre currently performs post-6pm and proposes **50 COMPREHENSIVE AREAS FOR ACTION**.



# Summary

## 2. Our Night-Time Vision & Principles

### Our NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW Vision

**“By 2030, Glasgow will shine as a global 24-hour city centre where night-time diversity, culture and innovation meet; connected by seamless transport and with vibrant and beautifully lit public spaces after dark.”**

### Our NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW Principles

1. **Safety & Cleanliness** – We will improve safety perceptions for residents, visitors and businesses making Glasgow even more welcoming after dark.
2. **Transport** – We will enhance post-6pm transport quantity, quality and accessibility, both to and from the city centre, as well as moving around it.
3. **Public Realm** – We will create a cohesive lighting, wayfinding and public realm experience to show off outstanding culture and hospitality and built heritage.
4. **Culture & Hospitality** – We will protect and promote our UNESCO recognised music scene alongside the city’s wider culture, arts, sports and hospitality offer.
5. **Leadership & Data** – We will drive a generational change in night-time leadership, enhance our partnerships, develop ‘night-friendly’ policies and build dedicated 6pm-6am datasets.

### 3. Our Areas For Night-Time Action

**Below is a selection of the 50 proposed 'areas for action'. The Night-time Economy Subgroup will refine these and prepare a detailed action plan for delivery commencing in 2026. This will address logistics, resources, lead organisation and partners, timescales and prioritisation.**

#### THEME 1: STRATEGY, POLICY & GOVERNANCE

- Establish permanent Glasgow Night-time Commission drawing on global best practice, supported by a NTE Officer.
- Ensure final Glasgow City Development Plan 2 is 24-hour development plan, fully integrating night-time culture into spatial planning.
- Review and build on recent licensing relaxations to further support cultural and live music venues.
- Ensure all city policies proactively tackle the risk of resident noise complaints and lobby the Scottish Government to eliminate the risks of 'permitted development' to our live music and hospitality sector.
- Bring forward a successful central Glasgow BID with meaningful night-time economy board representation.
- Apply for Purple Flag accreditation by end 2026 to benchmark against international excellence.
- Build a comprehensive Glasgow 24/7 Observatory to host performance data, research and impact measurements.
- Refer to the city as '24/7 Glasgow' in all relevant communications with clear visual language about world-class culture, music, nightlife.

## Summary

#### THEME 2: WELLBEING

- Better resource and support volunteer schemes (e.g. Street Pastors) with coordination across police, transport, door security, CCTV.
- Develop existing 'safe place' provision on Friday/Saturday nights to enhance reassurance and safety, particularly for women and girls.
- Introduce a NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW Portal providing a joined-up approach between stakeholders for staff training and intelligence sharing.
- Expand and embed Ask for Angela/Ask for Clive schemes across city with next-level bystander intervention training.
- Develop a Glasgow Women's Night Safety Charter with and for businesses and organisations operating at night.
- Evaluate impact of the enhanced night shift cleaning team and further invest in evening/night-time street cleansing if necessary.

#### THEME 3: MOVEMENT

- Commission a detailed study into taxi/private hire/ride-hailing market provision, availability and journey costs as part of wider Glasgow night-time transport study.
- Fully explore later Subway operation at weekends and until midnight Sundays – lobby the Scottish Government for pilot support.
- Undertake an independent assessment of night bus demand and explore models to support non-viable routes.
- Commission a wider independent study providing evaluation of city's 6pm-6am transport examining supply, patterns, pricing, safety, economic impact.
- Improve links between peripheral assets (SEC, SWG3, Barrowlands) and core city centre through safer routes and lighting.
- Turn the riverside into a night-time icon through investment in the public realm and lighting experience.
- Audit night-time car parking availability, quality, price, access, particularly for disabled users.
- Review LEZ impact on night-time economy businesses and staff.
- Consider commissioning an updated city-wide wayfinding approach integrating lighting, transport and the Avenues project.

# Summary

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## THEME 4: APPEAL

- Undertake a UNESCO Music City Ecosystem Audit mapping provision, identifying challenges, exploring opportunities and outlining grassroots venue support package.
  - Explore the feasibility of a Music City Officer to lead the protection and promotion of our UNESCO designation and support the grassroots music sector.
  - Examine the feasibility of a 'Glasgow People Make Night Market' to enhance retail/food offer – George Square is a potential location.
  - Undertake research into making the city more 'family friendly' with recommendations for interventions and pilot projects.
  - Develop regular 'lates' programme across cultural institutions, potentially with a one-off annual 'culture night'.
  - Better promote existing evening/night-time offer through our new destination marketing strategy with a significant evening/night delivery focus.
  - Support a comprehensive events series during less busy times targeting families and our diverse communities.
  - Create an Evening & Night-time Investment Prospectus to attract post-6pm investors, experiential leisure and street food operators.
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# Summary

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## THEME 5: PLACE

- Ensure George Square becomes a model world-class programmable civic space for day and night activation with a year-long launch programme.
  - Commission a cohesive City Centre Lighting Masterplan to support wayfinding, safety, placemaking and event hosting.
  - Animate 'dead' frontages with colourful shutters, murals and sound/light installations, drawing on Glasgow's incredible bank of artistic talent.
  - Ensure all new ground floor development is served by internal roller shutters only, to ensure 'private light' flows on to our streets.
  - Develop city centre-wide programme using sound and light to create laneways trail – turning problem spaces into assets and opportunities.
  - Maximise the opening of publicly-owned assets in evening for rental and events to bring in new audiences.
  - Develop a more proactive outdoor seating policy; driving increased outdoor drinking and dining.
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## 4. Making NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW Happen

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Glasgow now needs decisive action to match its bold ambitions. A new era of night-time leadership and partnership is essential to making this happen. Through targeted reforms in governance, cultural investment, safety, innovation and infrastructure, this Vision will catalyse Glasgow into a 24-hour city and turn us in to a global leader in using the night-time economy for economic, cultural and social good.



**Mike Grieve**  
Managing Director of The Sub Club,  
Chair of Glasgow Night-time Economy  
Subgroup and Chair of NTIA (Scotland)

“We must protect what we have worked so hard to grow whilst nurturing a renaissance in our nightlife”

# Foreword

Glasgow is rightly famous for its ‘night culture’: a unique cultural asset which is built on our outstanding nightlife and a world class music offer that spans every conceivable genre. The latter has seen us granted UNESCO world City of Music status. We are the only city in Scotland to be recognised as a City of Music, and the first of only three to be recognised in the UK, alongside Belfast and Liverpool. There are less than 70 Cities of Music worldwide. It is a huge honour, but one I believe the city has earned.

Yet, despite this exceptional live music offer, the world class electronic music and underground club scene, our diverse festivals, and the city’s incredible range of pubs, bars, restaurants and cultural spaces, Glasgow is at a pivotal moment in the evolution of its night culture. The threats to Glasgow ‘after dark’ right now are existential. These include the cost of getting to and from the City Centre at night; the rise of home entertainment; public perceptions of City Centre safety and the most challenging operating environment for night-time businesses in living memory.

We also need to think more deeply about what Glasgow City Centre should look and feel like in the evening and at night. Who is it for? How does it work for teenagers and older folks? Who is excluded and why; and what can we do about that?

**Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Vision** sets out these challenges but draws on city-wide engagement and best practice from around the world to offer potential solutions.

There can be no Glasgow night-time renaissance without better supporting infrastructure: post-6pm transport provision is not good enough; safety (and perceptions of safety) in the public realm must be improved; the protection of our cultural and music venues against unreasonable noise complaints is essential; and we need to celebrate Glasgow ‘after dark’ so that our compelling offer is better understood, whether you’re a local coming back every week or an international tourist considering Glasgow as a destination for the first time.

This is why we have developed **Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Vision**. We must protect what we have worked so hard to grow whilst nurturing a renaissance in our nightlife. The vision has the backing of the city’s key players – public and private – and sets out the path we need to follow over the next five years to put in place the right kind of environment to allow our legendary Glasgow night culture to flourish.

**Mike Grieve**  
Managing Director of The Sub Club,  
Chair of NTIA (Scotland) and Glasgow  
Night-time Economy Subgroup.

# 1 Introduction

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“Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision... is the city’s visionary approach to creating the kind of after dark Glasgow city centre we want for... our residents, the city’s overnight staying guests, and the 100m+ annual visits into the city centre for work, education and leisure.”

# 1 Introduction

## Why NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW?

This document is **Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision**. It is the city’s visionary approach to creating the kind of after dark Glasgow City Centre we want for our 1.8m Greater Glasgow residents, the city’s 4.7m overnight staying guests (2024) and the 100m+ annual visits into the city centre for work, education and leisure.

**Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** evaluates where we are now. However, it is also a living document that outlines our ambitious plan to support the city’s world-class night-time businesses, music venues and cultural institutions, whilst building a safer, more environmentally sustainable, diverse and exciting night-time city centre experience. Glasgow city centre is a ‘great night out’, but it is also fundamental to our collective cultural identity, social cohesion and economic wellbeing.

Crucial to the delivery of the **Nightshift Glasgow** is creating a new way of collaborating for the night. Whilst the City Council can lead, our night-time businesses and cultural institutions, our universities, Police Scotland and Glasgow’s transport providers – who are key to unlocking the future of our city after dark – must be equal partners.

Together, these partners have agreed to develop and deliver a detailed action plan, accompanied by a suite of after-dark projects and night-time friendly policy changes that will deliver the ‘high-level areas for action’ that are set out at the end of this Vision.

## What is in this Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision?

- Our headline **Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** and supporting **Night-time Principles**.
- The **research and engagement** that has guided the development of this Vision.
- The **evening and night-time issues** that research has revealed as priorities for action.
- Our bold evening and night-time **‘areas for action’** that are necessary to deliver the Vision.

# Introduction

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## **Why does Glasgow City Centre need a night-time vision?**

The Covid-19 pandemic brought many significant changes in people's behaviours. Glasgow has not been immune to these changes and the city's late-night economy has been significantly impacted and is still facing very significant and historically unique structural changes. Reasons for this include: changing patterns of behaviour, especially amongst younger people; the cost-of-living pressures; many people now working from home (with a specific impact on Friday evening socialising); and the huge uptake in in-home entertainment, such as streaming, gaming, social media as well as the convenience of 24/7 food and drink delivery. We need to think differently... after dark!

Historically, Glasgow's city centre night-time economy was focused on going out, drinking and dancing, alongside special occasion visits for live music, the theatre or a celebratory meal. For some this is still how they choose to use the city centre, but for a significant proportion of our increasingly diverse city, 'night culture' means something different.

To tempt residents out (and visitors in), the city centre must offer a **uniquely Glasgow experience**. Experience is key. The development of our amazing food scene, the choice of 'no and low' alcohol drinks, the rise in 'competitive socialising', as well as sport, fitness and wellness options, increasingly sit alongside our world-class live music, culture and festival offer. Whilst it is a challenging time for our night-time economy, in Glasgow we do have the building blocks for the night-time city centre of the future.

More people than ever across Scotland and in Glasgow are working shifts after 6pm. There are traditional night-time economy roles, such as jobs in pubs, bars and hotels, but there are increasing numbers of people employed in hospitals, operating public transport, cleaning offices, studying late or making 24hr deliveries. Glasgow must work for them too.

It is also vital that the city's night-time leaders work with the city council and Scottish Government to ensure that forthcoming city plans and policies (particularly around licensing and planning) and national legislation (such as Planning Advice Notes, Circulars and future iterations of SPF4) pass what we call the 'Night Test'. This means that, where possible, these policies actively prioritise the night-time economy's promotion and growth and the wellbeing of those who work in it and visit after dark.

As Scotland's foremost night-time city, we need to take a holistic view of what is possible after 6pm and ensure that we have the right public policies in place, a best in class 'public realm' experience (i.e. our streets, squares and greenspaces), transport provision that responds to user demand and strategic support for existing evening and night-time businesses. We need to do this in order to future-proof Glasgow city centre. Only with this can something new and (even more) exciting emerge.

It's time to plan our city centre **spatially and temporally**.  
It's time to create a **24hr Glasgow city centre**.

# Introduction

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## **Why focus on Glasgow City Centre?**

The city centre is a place for all Glaswegians to call their own and where most of our visitors stay. Whether you are young or old; whether you were born in the city or have chosen to live here; whatever your ethnicity; gender or sexuality... **the city centre should work for everyone... day and night.**

**The Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** focuses on the city centre for the following reasons:

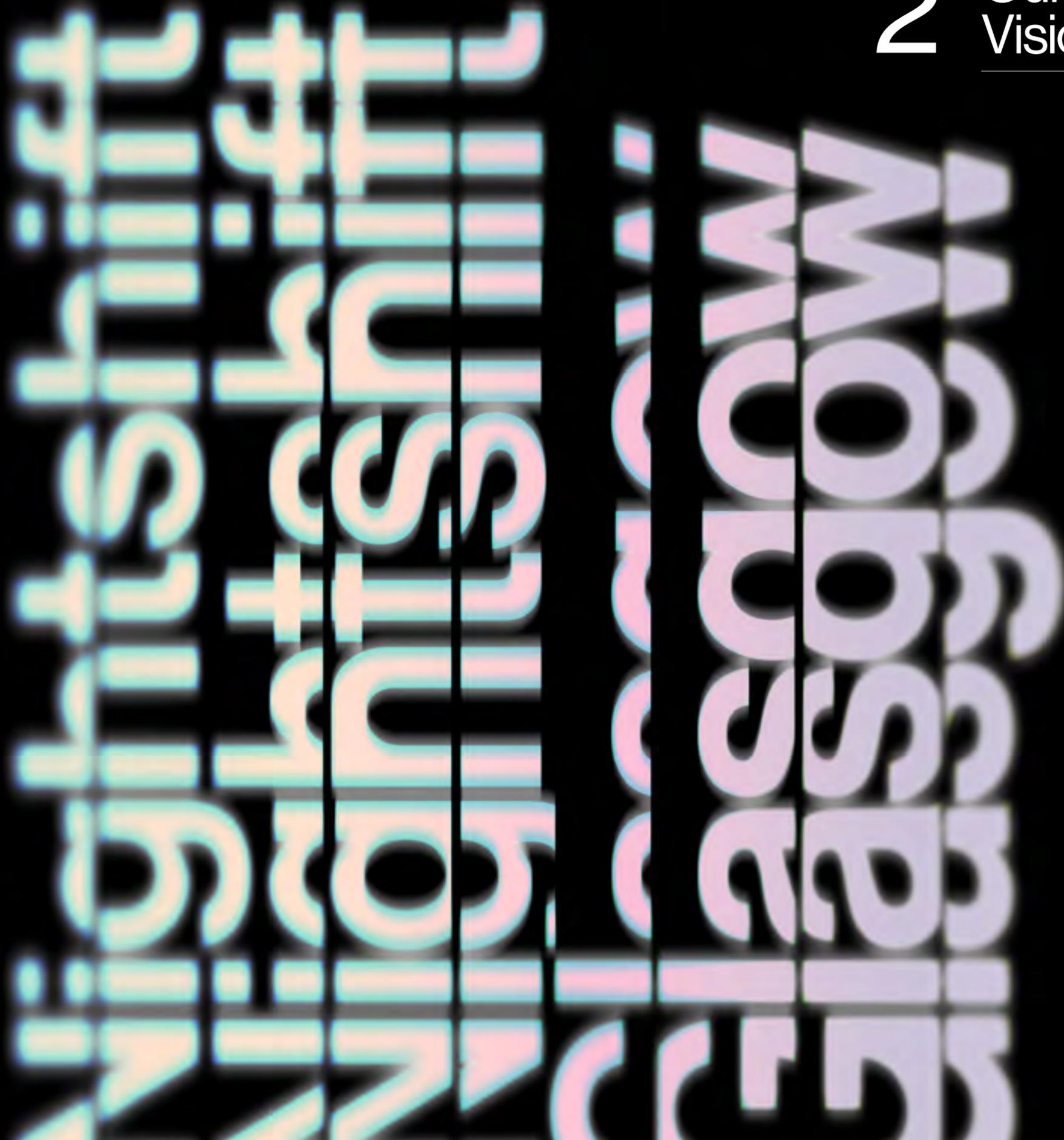
- It has the highest density of night-time activity in Scotland and is our economic and cultural engine (from indie businesses to the Scottish Events Campus).
- It already has a culture of later and more flexible licensing that can be built upon.
- It is the shop window (or perhaps we should say venue window) for Glasgow at night, as well as for the city's hinterland.
- It has a strong infrastructure of transport and accessibility already in place.
- It is a place that both residents *and* visitors identify with as a shared space that can offer something for everyone.
- It is an area with a growing residential population who need in-situ services 24/7.
- It has a critical mass of magnificent architecture, public realm and green spaces that provide opportunities for greater activation at night, e.g. for festivals, cultural events and free happenings.
- It is a place that can be developed sustainably based on the solid night-time assets and foundations that are already in place.

It is also important that we don't see the City Centre in isolation from its surrounding neighbourhoods. For example, there is an increasingly competitive evening offer in areas just outside the city centre, such as Finnieston, Byres Road, Shawlands, Strathbungo and Dennistoun. It is therefore vital that Glasgow city centre offers the kind of after dark experience that only a large-scale city centre can.

**NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW's** Vision, Principles and Action Plan are in alignment with **Night-time Industries Scotland Manifesto** [Northern Lights](#) and a host of Glasgow-wide strategies. These include: the priorities for a '*vibrant place with a growing economy*' in the *City Development Plan 2017*; pillars such as creating a '*magnetic experience*' in the *Glasgow City Centre Strategy 2024-30*; all five strategic priorities of the *Glasgow Tourism Strategy 2030* (particularly to '*enhance the experiences we offer*'); and the '*deliberate portfolio of events*' that forms a critical foundation of the *Glasgow Events Strategy*.  
**After all, night is when the most exciting things happen!**

## 2 Our Night-Time Vision & Principles

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“The Glasgow City Centre Task Force — Night-time Economy Subgroup was formed to identify the issues affecting the city centre after dark and to develop a cohesive evening and night-time vision and action plan.”

## 2 Our Night-Time Vision & Principles

### Context

The Glasgow City Centre Task Force – Night-time Economy Subgroup was formed to identify the issues affecting the city centre after dark and to develop a cohesive evening and night-time vision and action plan. Members of the group represent a wide range of organisations from the business, cultural and community sectors.

Working with independent night-time economy specialists, the group created an ambitious **Night-time Vision** and a set of **Night-time Principles** that will underpin our new ‘*approach to the night*’ in Glasgow. This was based on:

- Existing public surveys and data about Glasgow’s night-time economy
- New evidence gathered specifically for this strategy
- Global best practice in planning and managing cities at night.

**Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** seeks to guide our next steps (as set out in the forthcoming detailed *Glasgow City Centre Night-time Action Plan*) to create a better Glasgow city centre between 6pm and 6am. But the *Night-time Vision* also sets out a new commitment from all partners to value the evening and night on a par with the day.

### What is the Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision?

“By 2030, Glasgow will shine as a global 24-hour city centre where night-time diversity, culture and innovation meet; connected by seamless transport and with vibrant and beautifully lit public spaces after dark.”

## Our Night-Time Vision & Principles

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## Our Night-Time Vision & Principles

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### **The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Principles**

Underpinning this night-time vision, the members of the Glasgow City Centre Task Force's Night-time Economy Subgroup have committed to five principles that will guide the improvement of the city centre between 6pm and 6am to create a genuinely 24hr Glasgow. These principles are:

**1. Safety & cleanliness**

We will improve safety perceptions for residents, visitors and businesses making Glasgow (even more) welcoming after dark.

**2. Transport**

We will enhance post-6pm transport quantity, quality and accessibility, both to and from as well as around the city centre so that it is fitting of Glasgow's night-time ambitions.

**3. Public realm**

We will create a cohesive lighting, public realm and wayfinding experience, so that moving around Glasgow city centre at any time of night is more intuitive, feels safer and shows off the best of our city's outstanding built heritage.

**4. Culture & hospitality**

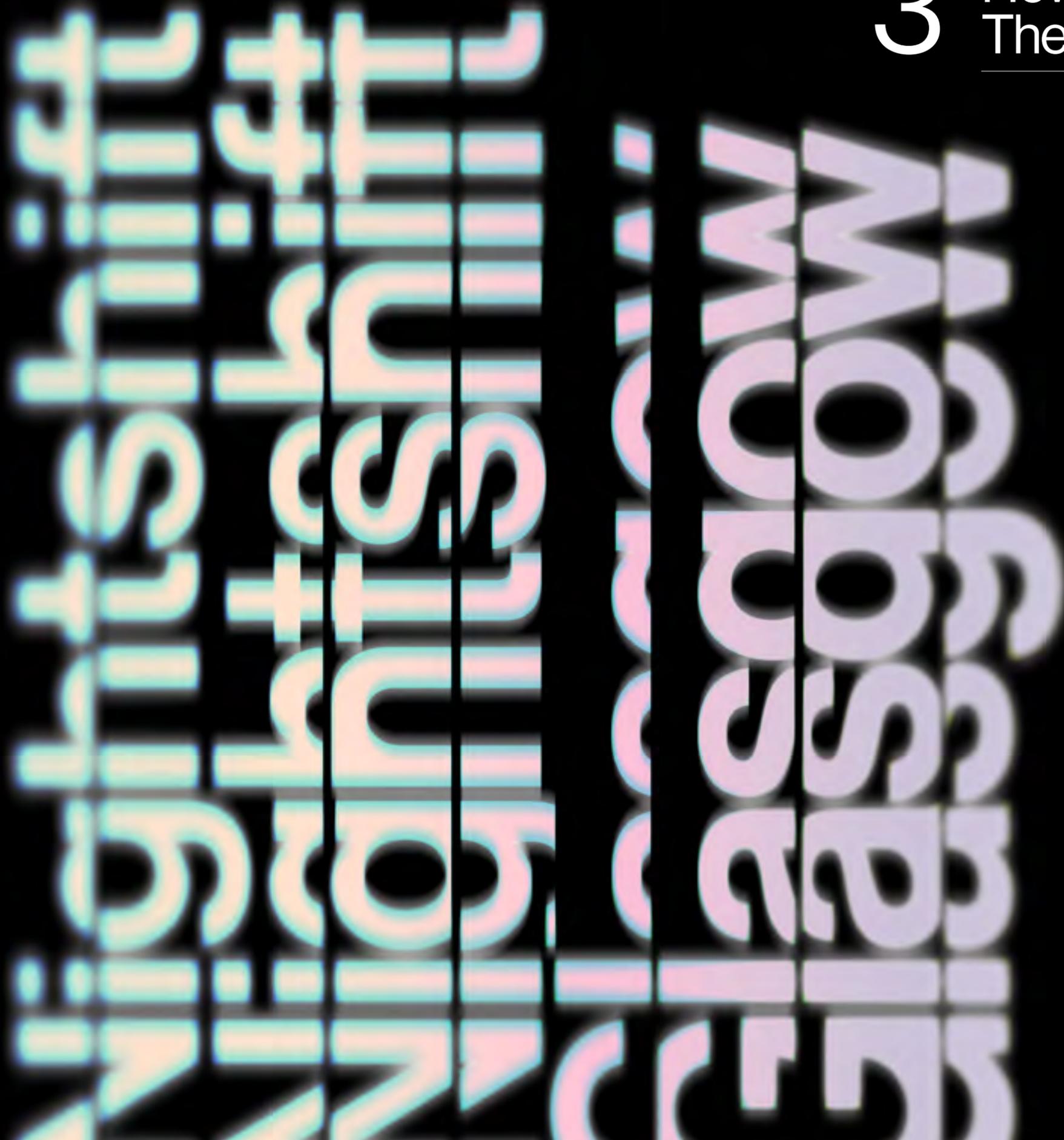
We will protect, promote and invest in our UNESCO recognised music scene alongside the city centre's wider culture, arts, sports and hospitality offer.

**5. Leadership & data**

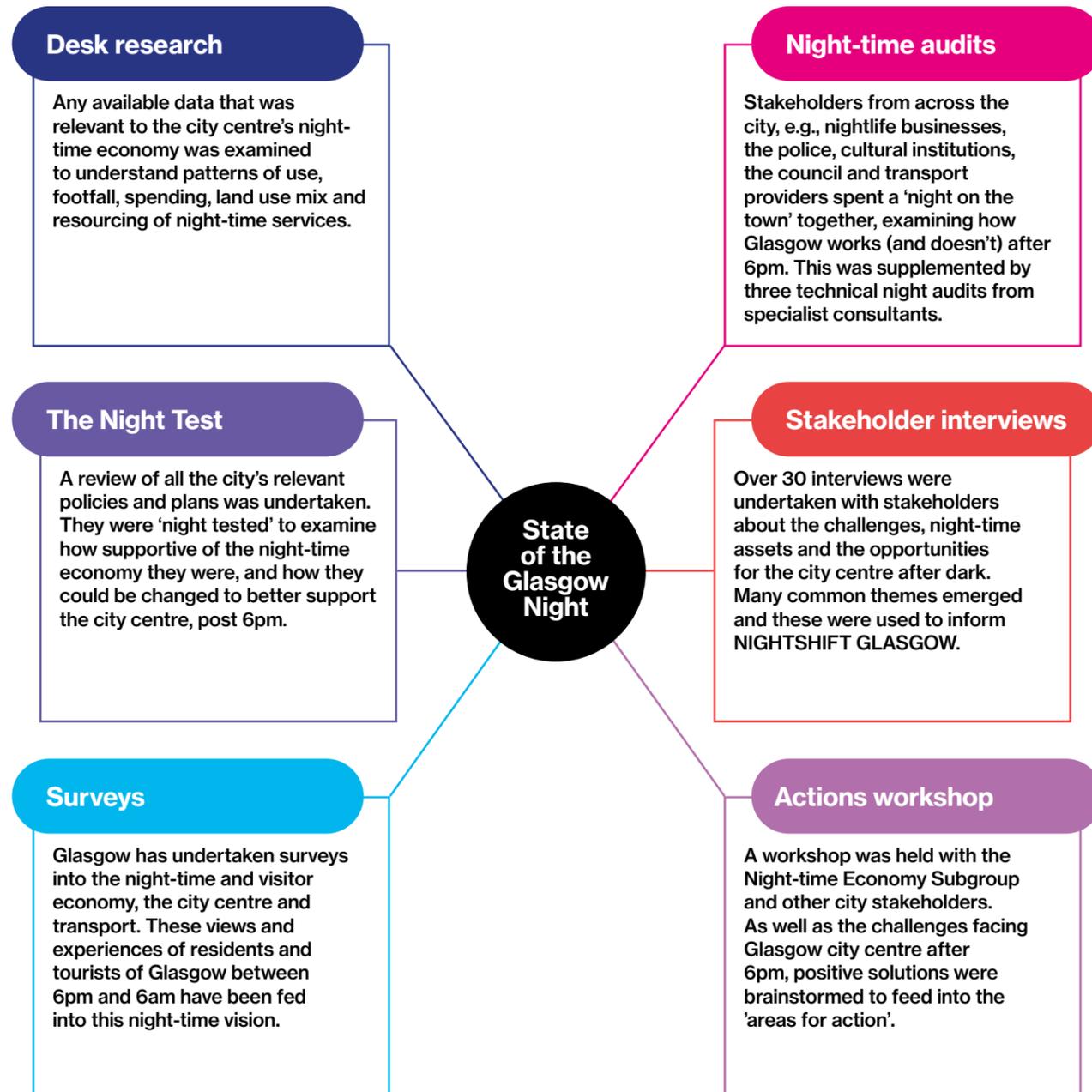
We will drive a generational change in night-time leadership, enhance our partnerships, develop 'night-friendly' policies and dedicated 6pm-6am datasets to benchmark and demonstrate our progress.

# 3 How We Created The Night-Time Vision

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## Approach



# 3 How We Created The Night-Time Vision

## Context

To create **NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW** the Glasgow Night-time Economy Subgroup worked with external night-time economy specialists to undertake an extensive research and engagement process to ensure this night-time vision was based on a wide range of views and up-to-date evidence.

**This night-time vision** was created through a mixed approach combining: stakeholder engagement, observational 'night audits' and secondary research. The aim was to build a detailed and collaborative understanding of Glasgow city centre's current night-time economy and after dark environment, grounded in both lived experience and data.

To ensure everything is joined up, the Night-time Economy Subgroup has also worked with the three other subgroups of the City Centre Task Force.

This engagement process is shown in the diagram opposite.

## Who was involved?

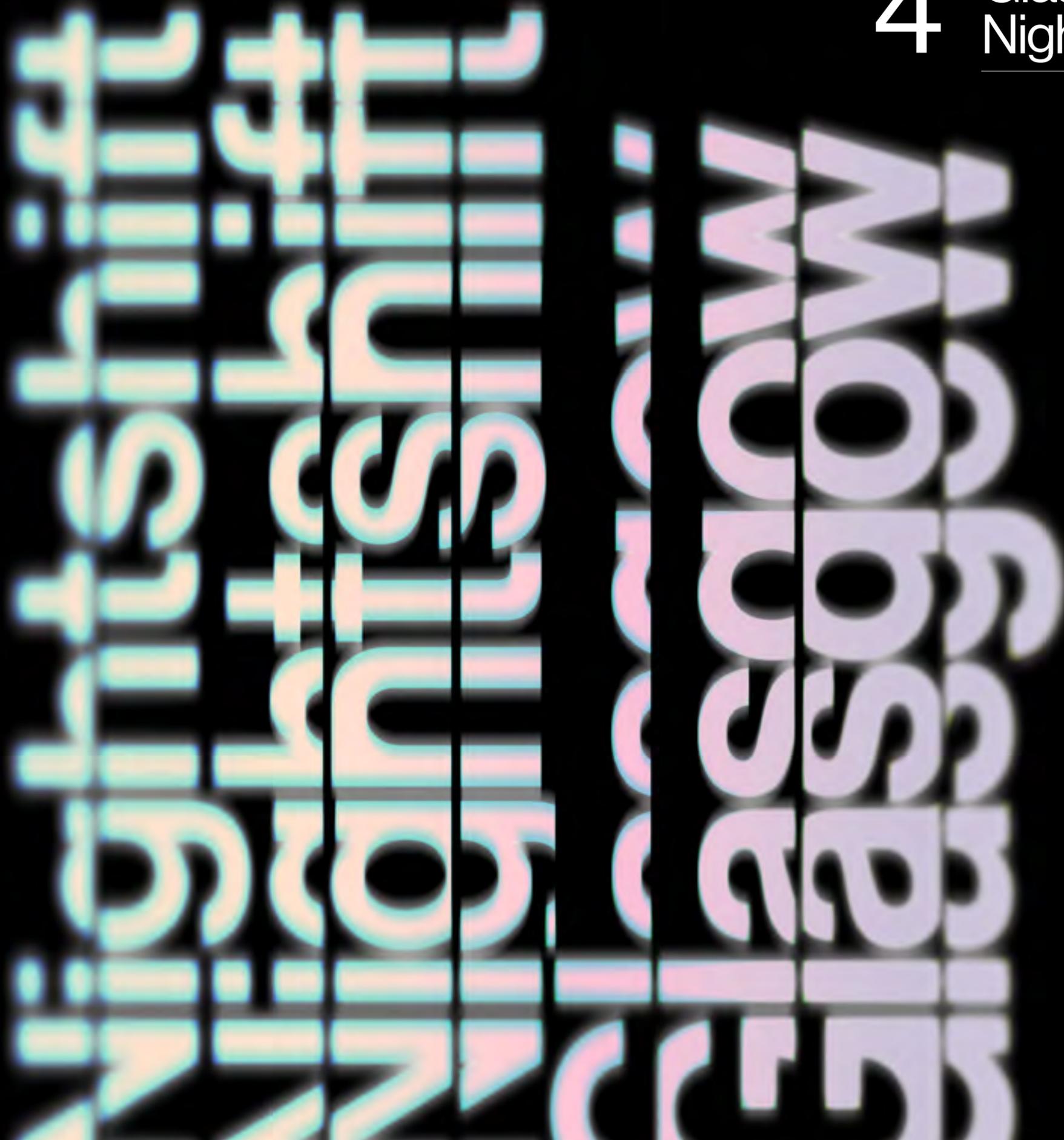
The stakeholders consulted as part of the production of this strategy included:

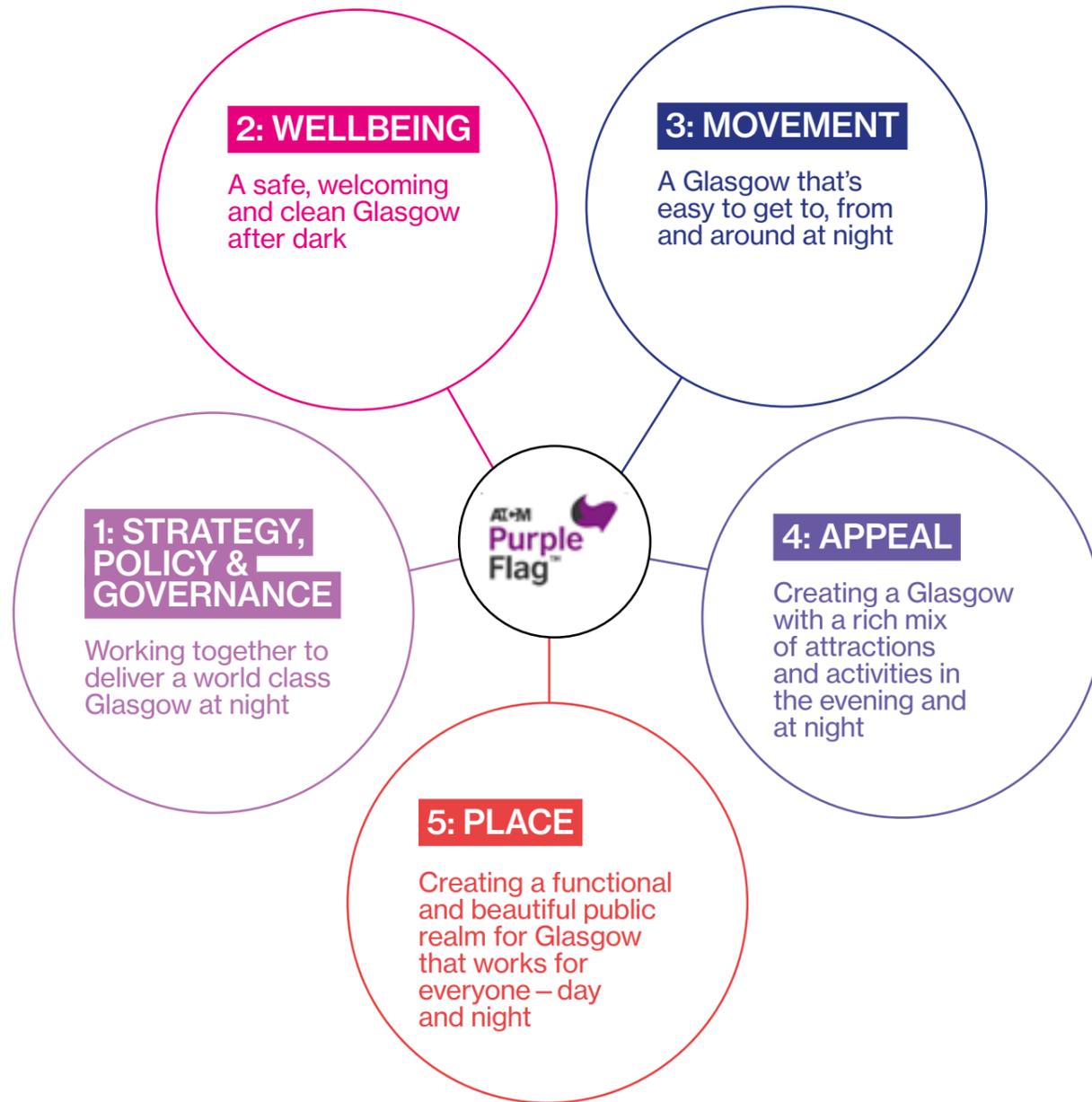
- Gig Buddies
- Glasgow Chamber of Commerce
- Glasgow City Centre Task Force Night-Time Economy Subgroup
- Glasgow City Council
- Glasgow Hoteliers Association
- Glasgow Life
- Music Venue Trust
- NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde
- Transport providers
- Police Scotland
- Local evening and night-time businesses (particular thanks go to SWG3, BLOC, The Sub Club, DF Concerts & Events, The Garage, Holdfast Events, PCL Presents and Nippon Kitchen)
- Licensing professionals (especially TLT and Hassard Licensing).

We would like to thank all those who gave their time and expertise in helping develop the NIGHTSHIFT GLASGOW. But this is just the beginning: targeted engagement with underheard groups, such as young people, ethnic minorities, nightworkers, those with disabilities and the LGBTQ+ community is a key 'Area for Action' in this night-time vision. If we make our City Centre welcoming, safer and inclusive for these groups, it will work for everyone... after dark.

# 4 Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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# 4 Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

## Context

To benchmark Glasgow's night-time economy, after dark experience and 6pm to 6am performance, we used the assessment framework from the international 'gold standard' accreditation scheme for planning and managing the evening and night-time economy – Purple Flag. We are grateful to the owners of [Purple Flag](#) – the Association of Town and City Management – for allowing us to adapt the scheme to Glasgow's unique needs.

Purple Flag is a comprehensive approach to analysing the performance of any evening and night-time destination or city centre. It comprises **five themes**, each of which has its own **six criteria**. Glasgow city centre was evaluated independently by outside experts against these **30 criteria**.

So how does Glasgow city centre rate against the Purple Flag criteria?



# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

## THEME 1: STRATEGY, POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Working together to deliver a world class  
Glasgow at night.

### Context

It is vital that any 24hr city has political, cultural and business leadership that is strongly supportive of the night, as well as exemplary partnership working and the right policies to enable after dark life and culture to flourish.

This theme is all about future proofing and aligning planning and licensing processes as closely as possible (including lobbying for national change), ensuring broad participation from a range of communities in setting the future direction for the night, and developing reliable 24hr data and intelligence. Data that is 'timestamped' (i.e. it has the exact date and time when something happened or was created) is essential so a city can baseline its current 'state of the night' and measure the impact of the actions it sets out in its night-time strategy.

Historically, Glasgow is a little behind some other large UK cities on several of these criteria. For example, the city can learn from the precedent set by [Bristol Nights](#), Manchester's [Night-Time Advisor and Blueprint](#) and [London's 24hr Team and Programme](#). Internationally, the leading location for night-time visioning, strategy and management is New South Wales and its [Office for the 24 Hour Economy](#). However, Glasgow is making up ground with the appointment of the **Glasgow City Centre Task Force – Night-time Economy Subgroup** and its widespread political support for a strategic approach to the night.

### Glasgow's night-time strategy, policy and governance –

#### key observations

1. Historically, the city's night-time economy has not benefited from a clear leadership and partnership mechanism. This is changing and there is significant enthusiasm amongst partners to work together to deliver a new and cohesive approach to planning and managing the night.
2. Glasgow – either through a **'night-time commission'** model, a **'city-wide office for the night'**, or an empowered coordinating role within the council, e.g. a **'night-time manager'**. Whilst all have their strengths and weaknesses, one or more of these would address the need for clear ownership of the night, help bring together existing partnerships and provide a single point of strategic direction and accountability.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

3. While partnership working exists in places, the lack of a unifying approach (that is now being addressed by the City Centre Task Force) was seen to limit impact, slow progress and leave good ideas stranded between departments and agencies.
4. Many stakeholders called for the city to embrace a more celebratory narrative around its night-time economy – shifting towards a message that champions our creativity, innovation and artistic excellence. This is now happening with the recently launched 'Get You In Town' destination marketing campaign.
5. Currently, not all city policies pass the 'night-test', i.e. where the night-time is as fully considered in planning and managing the city as the daytime hours. For example, there are opportunities around licensing restrictions, better implementation of highways and public realm schemes, night-time transportation and planning policy (and crucially its implementation, e.g. 'agent of change') to better protect existing cultural and hospitality venues and support new ones.



“There was broad support from stakeholders to establish a dedicated night-time leadership vehicle for Glasgow to address the specific needs of the city centre at night”

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“All city policies should pass the ‘night test’. For example, ensuring that planning protects existing music and hospitality venues from incoming residents’ noise complaints”

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

6. Night Time Industries Association (Scotland) along with Music Venue Trust (MVT) and the other Scottish trade bodies successfully lobbied the Scottish Government to increase Non Domestic Rates relief for hospitality and music venues from April 2026 to 40% rather than the 15% originally announced in the 2026 Scottish Budget Statement. Around 20% of MVT members in Scotland are however still excluded from this relief as it is limited to properties with a Rateable Value below £100k.  
  
(NB – rateable value limit is £100k not £110k – the £110k figure is a separate thing being the total maximum relief any single business entity can receive across multiple venues)
7. The city’s public and private partners are entrepreneurial, but given a framework that protects the night-time economy and creates a positive climate for investment, they could be even more experimental, take more risks and think even bigger ‘after dark’.
8. The historic absence of a Glasgow city centre Business Improvement District (BID) almost certainly impacted the growth of our night-time economy. Many BIDs in the UK (from Aberdeen Inspired to the Heart of London) have a strong role in supporting night-time businesses, both to enhance trade and to advocate with politicians for more after-dark investment. Glasgow’s new city centre BID – [Let’s Go Glasgow](#), which was formed in late 2025 – will not be a ‘silver bullet’, but it can play a vital role in supporting the city ‘after dark’. But to do so, it must fully recognise the value of our city centre between 6pm to 6am and deliver specific actions to support the night.
9. The engagement process for this vision highlighted the importance of developing new ways to engage young people (to understand what they want for their post-6pm city centre of the future. This also applies to older, disabled or LGBTQ+ people, for example, understanding better why they may not currently use the city centre at night). It is also vital to engage Glasgow’s many diverse communities - so we can understand if they feel the city centre works for them after 6pm. Engagement is addressed as a priority in this vision’s ‘areas for action’, via a suggested programme of targeted outreach.
10. More than ever, post-6pm culture and the ‘experience economy’ are critical to city centres. Both formal culture (e.g. theatre, performances, gigs, cinema etc.) and – just as importantly – informal culture, e.g. socialising at the pub, religious services or evening classes, are crucial to social cohesion and community wellbeing. [Glasgow’s Culture Strategy 2024-2030](#) is a major step forward here through its support for both formal and informal cultural expression in the city.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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11. There is a need to develop workforce skills in the hospitality, events and creative industries by working more closely with our colleges and universities. **A pilot led by Creative Scotland** will look at addressing workforce skills in theatre and the performing arts, but it is an area where Glasgow could lead the way in Scotland by developing its own training and skills programme. Existing examples include the DF Academy and education partnership initiative which connects the live music and events industry directly with further and higher education.
12. This could be allied to an expansion of the current Best Bar None Glasgow scheme. This could follow a similar model to the 'safeguarding+' type schemes of ['Safe & Sound'](#) in Ireland, or Bristol Nights and Hackney Nights – with a broader range of skills around safeguarding, environmental sustainability and enhancing the customer experience at night.
13. A strong case was made for modernising the city's licensing strategy. Stakeholders welcomed the recent changes but supported further flexibility and staggered closing times, a review of licensing criteria for outdoor and hybrid venues, and a shift away from policies that funnel everyone into a narrow late-night window.
14. Likewise, there is a strong feeling that licensing does not currently reflect the way venue *operational styles* have changed over the past decade – for example, there has been a rise in contemporary venues with a 'chameleon' nature, combining elements of a bar / cafe / gig space / club / events space / gallery, which require a flexible licensing approach. This was linked to safety, wellbeing, and better supporting a more diverse night-time economy.
15. Some stakeholders also highlight frustration with licensing and planning processes, which are seen as slow, inconsistent or overly complex. This disconnect contributes to a breakdown in trust between the city and some elements of the night-time sector, particularly among smaller operators, some of whom say they feel under-supported.
16. This is accompanied by proposals from some stakeholders to move towards an alcohol licensing philosophy and policy that balances the need to tackle alcohol misuse whilst supporting hospitality innovation and a broader range of uses in the evening and night-time economy.
17. It is also important at a national policy level that the current Scottish Government consideration of changes to *'permitted development'* – which is intended to simplify the planning process to boost homebuilding – does not jeopardise already struggling hospitality and live music venues by generating further residential noise complaints.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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18. Glasgow is planning a significant uplift in the number of city centre residents (from around 25,000 to 40,000 by 2035), albeit this is a long way behind the 100,000+ of Manchester city centre. The planning system, and the city's licensing board, recognise the 'agent of change' principle, but judicial reviews from longstanding licensed premises are sometimes still needed to protect venues against noise complaints from incoming residents.
19. It is therefore vital to get the planning and licensing approach right so that it protects existing cultural and live music provision as well as future culture investment. This will mean ensuring the *Glasgow City Development Plan 2* is a 24hr plan. As a UNESCO City of Music this could include a new section that summarises the city's music ecosystem, argues for the community value of cultural and live music venues, and then sets out how it will preserve and protect this important land use (e.g. as per the *London Plan*).
20. Cultural venues and independently funded organisations were seen to be under-represented in the strategy development process for the city centre; and some stakeholders felt the emerging *Glasgow City Development Plan 2* would benefit from more intentional inclusion of these less-heard voices in planning conversations.
21. Stakeholders suggest there is a need for Glasgow to benchmark itself against comparable cities – including Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh and Bristol – where recent investment, coordination and visibility of the night-time economy are perceived – by some – to be stronger. These cities were described as models Glasgow could learn from, rather than rivals. Glasgow is famous for its approach in the 1990s that pioneered the use of culture, nightlife and music to drive city pride, tourism and economic regeneration.
22. Finally, the city has an opportunity to reframe the night-time economy as a core part of its wider strategy for tourism, talent attraction and economic growth. Key functions such as community safety, regulation and enforcement will always be important, but the night-time economy could be positioned more explicitly as a civic and cultural priority – with cross-departmental buy-in, meaningful business and community engagement and a vision that reflects Glasgow's unique identity and future ambitions.

## THEME 2: WELLBEING

A safe, welcoming and clean Glasgow after dark.

### Context

The perception of safety is one of the most significant factors affecting whether people will use an evening and night-time economy. This is particularly true for more cautious or vulnerable groups. Safety and wellbeing is therefore the foundation on which everything else in **Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision** is built.

It's important to state that many people **do** feel safe when out and about in Glasgow city centre at night – it's no different in that respect to other big city night-time economies. However, feelings of safety are a significant challenge for some groups who may be more vulnerable to crime and harassment (e.g. women and girls, night workers, the LGBTQ+ community, and some of those with disabilities).

There are also some locations within our city centre that do not currently feel safe, no matter how well lit or well-maintained they are. This may be due to the way the public realm has been designed (i.e. our streets, squares, parks and transport hubs) or where there is a lack of natural surveillance due to a lack of footfall. Addressing these inconsistencies in a cohesive way will make movement around the city at night feel safer and more appealing.

### Glasgow's wellbeing and safety between 6pm and 6am –

#### key observations

1. Like many similar cities across the UK, Glasgow city centre can experience periods of demands on cleansing services which the resources available struggle to match. This is particularly true for the night-time period when key thoroughfares, such as Argyle Street, Trongate, Sauchiehall Street and Hope Street, are perceived as less presentable post-6pm than they are during the daytime.
2. More lighting does not always equal less crime and more safety. Natural surveillance is just as important, as is the right mix of land uses and activities. There are currently a number of 'dark spots' as well as 'dead spots'; these sit alongside overlit spaces. This means that users will experience different levels of feeling safe or unsafe when they move around the city centre at night (see Movement below). The ongoing Avenues public realm programme will address many of these issues, but a more granular study of this phenomenon is recommended to underpin further interventions.
3. There is a significant opportunity to use incoming urban design and public realm investment, such as George Square and the wider Avenues projects, to reduce after



“Glasgow has some world-class lighting, but ensuring these examples are joined together in a cohesive, citywide lighting masterplan that delivers a safe and reassuring visitor experience is key.”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

dark risks to users and promote 'natural surveillance' through more outside seating and better, albeit not necessarily more, lighting.

4. Despite some excellent work by individual agencies and venues, by comparison to some other cities Glasgow's 'capable guardianship' (i.e. police, street pastors and door security), does not appear as joined together as it might be. Positively, Police Scotland dedicate significant resources to policing the city centre at night and can often be observed on patrol (which is not always the case in some Scottish and wider UK cities). But schemes such as the city's NiteZones, taxi marshalls and street pastors, could be more comprehensively integrated into the primary night-time safety 'ecosystem' of door staff, CCTV and the police. This should include better recognition and sustainable funding for our excellent Street Pastors.
5. Schemes such as [Ask for Angela](#) (and [Ask for Clive](#)) are present in Glasgow's night-time economy, but do not operate consistently across all city centre venues. There is a need for a cohesive approach driven by the late night sector itself and with a significant budget for new employee and refresher training. Good examples of how this can be achieved are [London](#) and the [West Midlands'](#) Women's Night Safety Charters, as well as Hackney Nights and Bristol Nights.
6. Glasgow should be recognised for the considerable work it has done on harm reduction on substance misuse. It is an area the city should continue to push forward to further protect the city's night-time economy users. Recently the city centre's drug-checking pilot has received Home Office approval and operators such as SWG3, the Sub Club and DF Concerts & Events are already performing well-respected work on harm reduction in venues and festivals.
7. However, more consistent uptake of harm reduction measures for night-time venues would really benefit the city centre. These could include mandatory staff training, safe search/eviction policies (to prevent panic consumption), welfare provisions (free water, medics, patron monitoring), safety messaging (posters, screens) and charity partnerships. Existing exemplar resources that could be more widely disseminated include those of [BeSound](#), [The Loop](#) and [Scottish Drugs Forum's](#) own free training. The wider promotion of Naloxone training and kits for staff would further support the safety of patrons in the city's night-time economy.
8. Finally, there are ongoing concerns about event-related disruption in the city centre, particularly in relation to football celebrations. These are not organised events and were considered by the majority of stakeholders as exclusionary and intimidating. They appear to have significant negative impacts on city centre residents, businesses and transport, as well as visitor perceptions of safety. Those clubs whose fans are responsible for large events will need to work with partners such as the council, police and transport providers to develop a coordinated approach to mitigating harm and the negative public perceptions that can result.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“A visible Police Scotland presence provides reassurance in the city’s night-time economy but joining together all of Glasgow’s safety and wellbeing players is key to improving visitor safety after dark.”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

## THEME 3: MOVEMENT

A Glasgow that's easy to get to, from and around at night.

### Context

Despite increasing provision at night, even the largest European conurbations, such as London, Paris, Berlin, Madrid and Barcelona, would benefit from enhanced 6pm to 6am public transit. The tier of cities below these heavyweights, i.e. medium-large cities with between 1m to 3m population catchments are particularly poorly served by transport provision in the evening and at night. However, within this cohort, Glasgow feels like it is at a particularly challenging juncture, with the lack of reliable, safe and affordable night-time transport the most consistently raised concern amongst the city's stakeholders and in public surveys.

The absence of a functioning integrated transport system from around 11pm – and even earlier on Sunday evenings when the Subway closes, is a key deterrent to later stayers. City centre users have to ask themselves if it is worth the risk of not being able to get home after (or even during) a show, something recognised by venue owners who say audience members often have to leave before the end of the show. The alternative is that venues bring forward the show curfew which limits customer spend inside the venue. This also impacts the safety and convenience of staff getting home safely after working late, e.g. in theatres, bars and clubs.

Whilst the challenge is particularly severe at the weekend, it is a seven day a week issue in Glasgow and solving transport provision to and from the city centre is essential to the future success of its night-time economy.

### Glasgow's night-time movement and wayfinding

#### – key observations

1. Stakeholders and residents cite limited operating hours on the Subway, reduced night bus services, high taxi fares, and a lack of joined-up planning across transport modes as affecting their readiness to participate in the city centre at night. This was repeatedly identified as a barrier to audience travel, staff safety and economic activity, particularly for those living outside the city centre or who are working unsociable hours.
2. The city's regulated taxi fleet is available 24/7, wheelchair accessible and operators have invested significantly in the transition to electric vehicles. Combined with private hire operators they are an absolutely fundamental part of the night-time transit mix for those who can afford it. However, cost and availability of taxis and private hire vehicles remains the number one priority at night for many.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“Glasgow's Subway is key to movement around the City Centre, but its current operating hours don't align with the city's nightlife demands. Later hours will be trialled shortly”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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3. The current transit system appears to be a significant deterrent to going out and getting home safely and it is vital that these perceptions / realities are addressed if the city is to flourish after 6pm. The system must be driven by user demand. A recent Glasgow City Council consultation on taxi provision in the city has provided some useful initial insights into provision, however a wider independent study of all 6pm to 6am transport in the city is needed to provide objective evidence on this issue.
4. Until midnight there is robust bus provision across the city, and whilst night bus routes were relatively limited in Glasgow, there are now 15. This is to be welcomed. However, it is not clear if this is the right number of routes, destinations or pricing to support the night-time economy. This is something that the recommended independent Glasgow Night-time Transport Study should provide concrete answers to.
5. Many stakeholders, particularly those from the culture, hospitality and late-night sector, wanted to examine alternative models for the regulation of buses in the city, potentially along the lines of [Manchester's Bee Network](#). The Bee Network is new but has already provided more night bus routes, joined up ticketing (across transport modes) and a clearer fare structure. This model is also being considered by the West Midlands. However, this change would need a policy and legislative shift from the Scottish Government. Regardless of the model, it is vital that Glasgow has a seamless integrated, digitally powered public transport user experience, something that is vitally important to safety at night.
6. Buchanan Street Bus Station to the north of the city centre, although well lit, can feel intimidating at night (both internally and externally) and may benefit from further temporary interventions to address perceptions of safety. The proposed Buchanan Bus Station block masterplan by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) should ensure that any new bus station maximises night safety but also provides a refuge in inclement weather and for those vulnerable people seeking reassurance.
7. Glasgow and its bus providers are examining the feasibility of a 'night bus hub' model. This is innovative and exciting, and it could be a key part of the later night transport mix. It is important that any infrastructure that supports a hub model is 'designed for the night', effectively communicated to customers and businesses and effectively joined into the wider transit system.
8. The free travel provision for young people ensures that they can access the city centre. This has positives, e.g. building a relationship with the future adult users of the city centre at night, but young people can also be vulnerable and on occasion a small minority can be responsible for anti-social behaviour, e.g. around Four Corners. Working with young people to develop solutions to this, including a programme of free or affordable activities for young people in the city centre

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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“Glasgow’s night bus provision has improved in recent few years, but there is still room for the post-midnight transport mix to better respond to the demands of the city’s after dark users.”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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in the evening, is necessary. Galway's ['Youth Lates'](#) provides a space for younger people to connect and be creative, and most importantly, it's free.

8. Until some certainty comes from our recommended independent Glasgow Night-time Transport Study on what transit is needed from 6pm to 6am, there could be some quick wins around improved traffic sequencing, lighting, signage and pedestrian management that may address congestion in locations such as Gordon Street
9. Although the Subway is limited in scale, it remains a huge asset to Glasgow, but only if it serves your destination and you want to be home early (i.e. pre-midnight), as there is no significant service post-midnight. This is similar to the underground systems of Liverpool and Newcastle.

Currently the system is being modernised and a business case for extending the Subway at night is being examined by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT). This is important because there are other cities of a similar size to Greater Glasgow (population 1.8m) where underground rail (or a combination of underground rail, surface rail and light rail) run after midnight, particularly on weekends. This is in addition to often very significant night-bus networks; for example, Zurich runs around 25 night bus routes in addition to its S-Bahn night network. These include the greater urban areas of:

- **Cologne** (pop 0.96m, one rail line 24/7, two S-Bahn lines run 24hrs on Friday and Saturday)
- **Dresden** (pop 0.59m, most tram and bus lines 24/7 as part of 'GuteNachtLinie' with taxi service at subsidised bus prices, all interlinked at central transport hub)
- **Frankfurt** (pop. 0.65m, one S-Bahn line 24/7, 4 x 24hr lines on the U-Bahn at weekends)
- **Geneva** (pop. 1.1m, two sub-regional rail lines run 24/7)
- **Hamburg** (pop. 1.8m, both S-Bahn and U-Bahn run 24hr at weekends)
- **Munich** (pop. 1.6m, 6 lines on the U-Bahn run 24hrs at weekends as of 2025, most of the suburban train network runs all night at weekend alongside S-Bahn. 24hr provision continues during the week, but with reduced coverage and frequency)
- **Prague** (pop 1.3m - 24/7 30 minute tram service on 10 lines, increasing to every 20 mins at weekends)
- **Rotterdam** (pop. 1.0m, extended Friday and Saturday night partial service until 01.30hrs)
- **Vienna** (pop 2.0m - a 24hr service on 4 Metro lines, Friday and Saturday nights at 15-minute intervals)
- **Zurich** (pop, 1.5m, 17 S-Bahn suburban rail lines run 24hrs at weekends).

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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10. Despite the lack of a tram network, there is a significant surface rail network serving Greater Glasgow, but these train services also cease relatively early on most nights of the year – around midnight. For example, in Manchester trams run up until 1am on Friday and Saturday, and Edinburgh's operate into the early hours for the Edinburgh Festival in August and for Hogmanay. Scotrail does run a select train service to support events such as TRNSMT, but there are almost certainly train routes in Glasgow that could be operated later on weekends and to support more major events. An initial solution to this would be to ensure the recent forum that has brought together transport providers and night-time business to more closely match events to service provision is a permanent feature, is not a one off.
11. Whilst we want to rebalance our city from an over-reliance on car-based mobility to a greater use of public transport, walking and wheeling, this will take time. And, in the meantime, many people still want, and in some cases need, to drive. Vehicular access is particularly important to disabled users of the city centre. For those who may feel more vulnerable or who work at night, research would help understand if the car parking that is available in the city centre is 'fit for purpose', i.e. in terms of its quality, convenience, cost and security for evening and night-time users. This could also review the impact of parking charges on touring artists and venues, particularly those affected by road closures who may have to utilise alternative routes to access venues, and may therefore require to park in controlled parking zones or enter through bus gates. These issues could be covered by a module within the recommended Glasgow Night-time Transport Study.
12. Glasgow city centre has some areas of first-rate public realm (e.g. the streets and spaces around the Merchant City or the Gallery of Modern Art), but it is not yet joined up and there is a need for safer walking routes, particularly between the city centre's various quarters and standalone flagship venues, as well as onwards towards transport nodes and interchanges. The public realm improvements being delivered through the Avenues capital investment programme will go a long way towards creating a more cohesive visitor experience.
13. Glasgow city centre's gridiron layout is in many ways a strength that aids navigability, but the city centre's wayfinding, which was designed and implemented more than a decade ago, although setting new standards at the time, does not always work well in the hours of darkness, for example it is sometimes underlit or does not always reflect the night-time attractions and locations that have developed since.

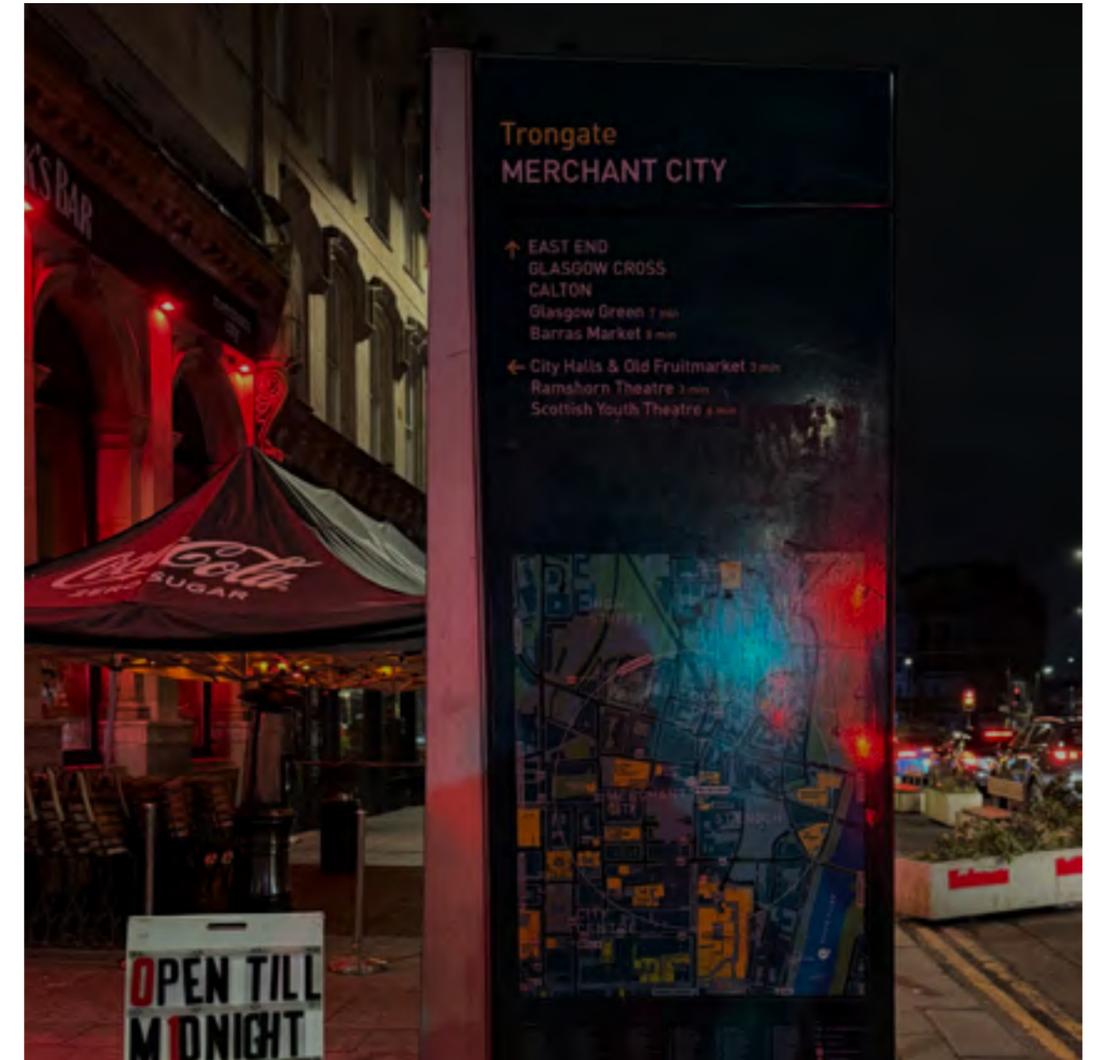
Research highlights the emergence over the past decade of a specific discipline of ['night-time design'](#) and ['after dark wayfinding'](#) (i.e. how people find their way around a city). This new approach includes everything from backlit and top-lit information panels, projected on-street light directions and intuitive public realm design that dovetails with mapping and navigation apps on visitors' phones whilst also providing real-time transport information provision and event information.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

These advances mean that it may be time to review the city centre wayfinding user experience, with a particular focus on how people find their way around at night. This is particularly important for women and disabled visitors.

14. Despite being a relatively short distance from the city centre, the link between the SEC / Scottish Event Campus (Hydro, SEC Centre and Armadillo) and the rest of the city centre remains challenging for pedestrians, particularly in the dark. It is often easier to go from the SEC to the West End for pre- and post-gig / event hospitality than to get into the city centre to continue a night out. This is due to a hostile traffic environment and complexity of route navigation. Creating better walking and wheeling routes between the SEC and the city centre (including via the riverside) is vital. This could be linked to increased public transport frequency on the Low Level Line when there are significant combined events at the SEC and the overall transport infrastructure struggles to cope. Plans proposed for hostile vehicle mitigation at the SEC, albeit understandable, should be carefully thought through in case it makes an already unsatisfactory situation worse.
15. There are perceived barriers to night-time city centre participation created by the Low Emission Zone (LEZ), particularly for performers and night-time workers using older vehicles and who will mostly be on lower wages. Whilst it is essential to eradicate the toxic impact on human health of vehicle emissions, there hasn't yet been an attempt to quantify the impact of the LEZ on these groups, so it's hard to know just how many people are being deterred from performing or taking up jobs in the night-time economy. Specific research could be undertaken into the LEZ's impact and, if evidence shows there are negatives, then tailored support for artists, night workers and businesses that are impacted after 6pm could be provided.
16. Sauchiehall Street has been frequently cited as an example of a key night-time destination that has been negatively impacted by construction and infrastructure works (albeit data on the scale of impact is not available, but could be – see Areas for Action). Agencies have acknowledged that schemes must be more efficiently implemented in future to minimise disruption, particularly to those businesses and cultural institutions that trade after 6pm and who might be affected differently to those operating during the daytime.

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“Wayfinding is often designed for the day and as a result, disappears into the night. Revisiting the mix between on-street assets and digital is vital to enhancing the visitor experience.”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

## THEME 4: APPEAL

Creating a Glasgow with a rich mix of attractions and activities in the evening and at night.

### Context

Glasgow City Centre has an enviable mix of world class evening and night-time attractions and regional-scale assets. From grass roots music venues (GMVs) such as King Tut's to mid-size venues with a global reputation like Barrowland and on to the OVO Hydro (one of the world's busiest arenas). From the Royal Concert Hall to Glasgow's diverse range of theatres, to electronic music spaces like the Sub Club, much of the City Centre's after dark 'anchor attractions' are already here. There are also more than 200+ pubs, bars and restaurants in the City Centre, as well as 'lates' at cultural institutions such as the Gallery of Modern Art.

However, many of these venues are under huge financial pressures due to falling consumer spending and rising business costs, such as rent, wages and utilities, which continue to outstrip inflation. Add in the city's post-6pm transport limitations and the competition from ever evolving in-home entertainment and the challenge to our 'after dark appeal' has never been greater.

Despite these significant challenges, better promotion and marketing of what is already happening combined with an active inward 'night-time investment programme' to target missing activities (e.g. more evening attractions for families) could help the city be 'more than the sum of its night-time parts'.

### Glasgow's night-time mix of attractions and activity –

#### key observations

1. Despite the challenges to the grass roots music venue sector across Scotland, Glasgow as [UNESCO Music City](#) is still a world class nightlife city, but the ecosystem is fragile and many of its components are 'running on fumes'. There is a need for support directly, e.g. in terms of funding (such as the industry voluntary stadium and arena ticket levy) and a long-term solution to Non- Domestic Rates valuations, as well as having a point of contact at the council for venues to sort out problems; and indirectly, e.g. better night-time transport. These priorities and solutions were strongly supported in the Glasgow responses to the [Music Fans Voice Survey](#).
2. First and foremost, Glasgow retains a strong cultural identity and reputation as a music city. The city's creative talent, grassroots venues and independent operators, as well as the larger venues, were consistently praised for their quality, credibility

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“Glasgow’s UNESCO-recognised music scene is diverse, from small grass roots music venues to the OVO Hydro. However, there remains the opportunity to better understand the city’s fragile ‘music ecosystem’, support it locally whilst promoting it globally.”

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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and contribution to the city centre's national and international appeal. This 'music ecosystem' was seen as a key strength, and one that could be better recognised and supported through policy and planning, e.g. a more consistent application of the 'agent of change' principle to prevent legal appeals by live music venues, proactive creation of music production, rehearsal and performance spaces in new large-scale city centre developments.

3. The people and places already shaping the evening and night-time economy are a major asset to the city. From small live music venues and cultural producers, through traditional and cutting-edge city centre restaurants and on to internationally recognised events and festival organisers, there is no shortage of expertise or ambition, only a need for clearer night-time leadership - from both the public and private sector – to champion this night-time vision whilst unblocking problems.
4. The spatial unevenness of the city centre's night-time offer was also seen as a structural weakness. While areas such as the West End and Finnieston were seen as vibrant and cohesive, the city centre is often seen as inactive in parts and disconnected, particularly outside of the main hospitality corridors. Some important cultural venues, like King Tut's Wah Wah Hut are geographically isolated within the wider night-time offer.
5. There was also concern about the cost of operating within the city (as there is across Scotland), including rising energy bills, staffing and the impact of business rates on venues already working to tight margins. Many stakeholders described the current rates system (despite the 2026 announcement on rates relief) as unsustainable for grassroots music venues and small hospitality operators. [Northern Lights](#), the NTIA's Manifesto for Scotland, flags this issue as something that the industry believes the Scottish Government should be addressing as a priority.
6. Recruiting and retaining staff remains a challenge for night-time businesses in Glasgow, as it is nationally. According to venues, this is due to a combination of macro-scale issues, such as the ability to meet wage expectations, employee perceptions of the night-time industries and, particularly acute within Glasgow, getting home at the end of the night due to the cost of taxis and public transport availability.
7. What urban planners call the 'twilight period' (5pm to 8pm) is a significant challenge in Glasgow city centre. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, since the Covid-19 pandemic, shops are not staying open later, albeit with some exceptions. This reinforces the city centre as a daytime place for families and as an evening destination for adults.
8. Some stakeholders perceive the city centre to be over-reliant on large operators and brands (both retail and night-time economy). This is allied to a belief that there has been a decline in distinctive independent businesses in the city centre and it is compared, unfavourably, by some stakeholders to Glasgow's more diverse and

# Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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“Essential to Glasgow’s broad appeal is ‘programming’ a city centre that functions for everyone from 6pm to 6am. This means families and office workers in the early evening, those visiting for food, theatre, cinema and concerts mid-evening and then live music and clubbing well into the early hours.”

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline



“Sauchiehall Street Culture & Heritage District has the highest concentration of cultural venues in Scotland. The project aims to make all venues in the district more visible to visitors and residents alike.”

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

evolving neighbourhood centres. Whilst no research currently exists to evidence this and benchmark Glasgow against its peers, both types of operator are important to a city of this scale. However, the importance of supporting the small independents as the drivers of our cutting edge night-time sector and our ‘cultural capital’ is what stakeholders can agree on.

9. There is a clear appetite for more non-alcohol-led options and evening and night-time activities that are family-friendly, more inclusive and neurodivergent-friendly (sensory appropriate), as well as reflective of a broader cross-section of the city’s residents and visitors. There is enthusiasm amongst stakeholders for initiatives that promote the visibility of accessible venues and offer standardised information on inclusion and access (building on [AccessAble](#)), but funding will be needed for many venues given the tight margins on which they are currently operating.
10. Sauchiehall Street has the densest concentration of culture and heritage institutions in Scotland. This has been formalised in the [Sauchiehall Street Culture and Heritage District](#). The project is working to make this fantastic asset more visible both to residents and visitors, as well as at a national level. There are other parts of the city centre that could benefit from this type of granular masterplanning approach, such as the Merchant City, the emerging Barras cluster and the artistic studios, galleries and niche retail and leisure around Trongate.
11. The city centre’s hotel offer has shown significant recent improvements, both in quality and supply, with seven new hotels opening in the city and the addition of 2,000 rooms since 2020. Although there are no significant new openings now in the pipeline, market analysts feel there is still room for the city’s hotel portfolio to grow. The current offer is strong on diversity, from budget to high end hotels, with the latter category in particular expanding over the past few years. This growth and diversity reflects the key visitor markets that Glasgow now attracts as a major event destination and where a strong night-time offer and experience is so important in complementing that main reason to visit, e.g. enjoying a city break, attending live music events and festivals, travelling for business and conferencing, or when visiting friends and relatives (VFR).

However, there is a suggestion from some quarters that capacity remains an issue, particularly when there are a number of simultaneous major events, particularly during peak season. There is also anecdotal evidence from the theatre sector that longer-stay accommodation, e.g. for those working on longer run productions, is hard to find, and workers visiting Glasgow who may need to stay out of the city centre are faced with high transport costs, which can negate the lower price of accommodation.

12. There is a significant opportunity for the city to use public spaces for temporary night-time events and creative after dark activities. This will be aided by the revitalised George Square, but should be built into the city’s public realm strategy and go further than George Square itself.

## THEME 5: PLACE

Creating a functional and beautiful public realm for Glasgow that works for everyone – day and night.

### Context

The way the urban fabric functions after dark is a testament to how serious a city is about its night-time experience. The urban fabric is the combination of the public and private realms.

The public realm is the city's streets, pavements and civil infrastructure (such as bridges, tunnels, street trees and wayfinding/signage), alongside its squares, parks and piazzas. Crucially, it is also the effectiveness of its lighting, from highways lighting to light art installations.

The private realm also has a significant role to play in creating a welcoming and inspiring experience. From the condition of buildings and their public presentation, to the 'private light' that is cast from shops and offices onto the streets, as well as building frontages, shutters, windows and signage. This quality of the private realm can be a huge asset or a significant detractor once the sun goes down.

The urban fabric of Glasgow city centre ranges from the architecturally magnificent and showstopping to the significantly underdeveloped. The key word here is 'consistency': a need was identified for a joined-up urban realm that works as well at night as it does during the day. Much is now happening to address this, with the implementation of the ambitious Avenues public realm programme, and there are some tremendous opportunities for quick wins based on lighting some of the city's world-class architectural heritage and working with the city's Built Heritage Commission.

## Glasgow's night-time place and public realm – key observations

1. Notwithstanding the magnificent George Square, which acts as the civic heart of the city and is currently undergoing redevelopment, Glasgow city centre's urban topology and gridded format means that it does not boast a comprehensive network of civic squares, piazzas and public spaces that can serve as socialising anchors in the evening. This in turn limits passive public activity after dark. This means that the city centre's streets themselves, alongside other assets, such as the riverside, must do a lot of heavy lifting. The Avenues programme is intended to revitalise key arterial routes throughout the city centre and will help address some of the issues highlighted.
2. An issue that was frequently raised during the research for this vision, was that many public spaces and buildings at night were missed opportunities for active placemaking and animation, with civic landmarks such as the Concert Hall and George Square the most often cited examples. It is therefore exciting that George Square in particular will function both as a formal public space and an event space.
3. Fortunately, there are superb examples of public lighting within the city centre that can guide how we light Glasgow over the next decade. A prime example is the catenary light canopy over Royal Exchange Square, which is a point of world class night-time difference.
4. Despite Glasgow's notoriously wet climate, outdoor drinking and dining has been one of the city centre's great success stories in recent years. Where outdoor seating is permitted, it is often oversubscribed when the weather is good. This is particularly the case in some of the city centre's most attractive settings, e.g. George Square.
5. Despite progress towards a Continental European-style cafe culture, there remains a significant opportunity for a further proactive expansion of the city's alfresco experience. This could mean supporting it within the new City Development Plan 2, ensuring new developments maximise alfresco potential, relaxing licensing conditions to create more family friendly outdoor spaces and, as some other cities have done, promote it directly to hospitality businesses who may not yet benefit from it.
6. To support alfresco life, the City Council has streamlined its Street Café Policy using feedback from businesses and residents gained during the relaxation of rules around Temporary Street Café (TSC) permits, an approach which supported the hospitality industry during the pandemic. The new policy attempts to make alfresco opportunities more attractive for businesses and the regulations clearer for all. Alongside this, the council has itself licensed specific streets for outside drinking and dining, meaning applicants only need to gain the TSC permit rather than planning permission in addition to the permit.

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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“Lighting is not just for safety, it drives the urban experience. There are huge opportunities to transform unlit or underlit streets, squares, buildings and infrastructure into night-time assets to match the best in Glasgow and the world.”

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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7. It is vital to ensure that our pavements stay free from obstructions that would impede blind, visually impaired and wheelchair-using visitors. This becomes even more important at dusk and after dark when those with visual impairments find navigating a cluttered public realm particularly difficult. During the pandemic, the minimum pavement clearway of 1.5m (an internationally recognised measure) was expanded to 2m to aid social distancing.

However, some stakeholders highlighted that the retention of the 2m clearance has restricted some businesses from offering outdoor seating. This can negatively impact both their viability and the city's public life. Moving back to a minimum of 1.5m clearance, and considering 11pm (rather than the current 10pm) TSC permits in certain areas - where it would not affect residential amenity, could play a part in the reinvigoration of the city centre after dark.

8. Inactive shopfronts in the city centre remain a significant issue, even within some of the city centre's key streets, with some buildings being left empty by their landlords and in a significant state of disrepair. This is sometimes compounded by clusters of roller shutters and underused spaces at ground floor, which also negatively impacts the user experience of the public realm, particularly after dark. This results in significant public safety implications due to an absence of 'private light' being cast out onto pavements, something which would provide reassurance to users.

The issue of both 'void' retail units and rollershutters is a challenging issue faced by town and city centres nationally. However, there are good examples of both 'meanwhile use' programmes (i.e. creating space for artists and niche retailers), and some areas have appointed meanwhile use officer positions to specifically address empty spaces in a strategic way. Glasgow has its Improvement Grant Fund which is just one fund that seeks to address this and it may be possible to re-orient this and other city funding streams towards night-time activation projects that proactively seek to re-use space for artistic and creative users who often work later into the evening. This approach could be allied to the compulsory purchase or re-possession of buildings that have been left empty by landlords for a given period of time, forcing them to invest in them to let or to sell. These processes are complex and expensive so unlikely to be widely used. However, there are key sites around the city centre which have been empty and / or derelict for many years and which have an outsize negative impact on the night-time experience, safety and urban vitality after dark and there may be a case for these powers being used in a small number of these cases.

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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9. The riverside is one of Glasgow's greatest potential assets but is currently significantly underutilised and the city centre effectively turns its back to the river. This paradox is recognised in the River Clyde 2050: [River Clyde Development Corridor Strategic Development Framework](#). At night this is compounded because the riverside is not well lit and does not yet provide the safe and compelling walking and cycling experience that really opens it up to travel, either between the city centre and the river itself, or between destinations such as the Scottish Event Campus (e.g. SEC, OVO Hydro) and the city centre.
10. The riverside is also a missed opportunity as a destination for hospitality events, pop-ups and festivals. There are numerous cities that have turned (or are turning) their riversides from the post-industrial problems into 'social infrastructure' that work at night as well as during the day. They range from the large, such as the reclamation of the Rive Gauche in Paris, London's Illuminated River project and BIG's New York Dryline flood prevention and 'social infrastructure' masterplan, to small historic cities such as Exeter and Norwich. The city centre's section of the Clyde riverside presents a huge opportunity to provide a space that everyone can enjoy – around the clock, but it will require significant investment, particularly after dark, in order to create a safe and irresistible destination. A review of the Clyde Development Framework to make it more 'after dark friendly' – as 'night-time' is currently little referenced in the document – could reveal new post-6pm opportunities.

## Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Baseline

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“The Clyde is one of Glasgow’s greatest assets. The city is trying to make it work harder for residents and visitors. Key to this is to enhancing safety and activating the river as a destination in and of itself after dark.

# 5 Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

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“The Areas for Night-time Action are the next steps in delivering Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision.”

## 5 Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

The Areas for Night-time Action are the next steps in delivering **Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow City Centre Night-time Vision**. The intention is not to provide an in-depth action plan at this stage, but to highlight priority themes and specific areas for action. The Glasgow City Centre Task Force's Night-time Economy Subgroup will then work with Glasgow's public and private stakeholders (including under-represented communities) to develop a detailed **Nightshift Glasgow – Night-time Action Plan**. This plan will:

- develop the detail of the actions
- prioritise the actions
- set out timeframes (see below)
- detail the desired 'outputs' and 'outcomes'
- identify funding sources and resources needed to make it happen
- outline who will lead and who will support
- undertake any detailed preparatory / feasibility work.

This detailed **Nightshift Glasgow – Night-Time Action Plan** should be completed by early 2026 and highlight activities and interventions that fit within the following categories.

- **Short-term quick wins (2026)** To build trust in the process and show that change is happening
- **Medium-term impact actions (2026-2028)** These are more significant interventions or those that require significant funding to be sourced
- **Long-term structural changes (2026-2030)** These can be explored now but will need to be delivered over the next five years (and possibly longer) due to their complexity and scale.

The **Areas for Action** are based on the city's previous research with residents and visitors, interviews with a wide range of city stakeholders, multiple overnight audits and ideas workshopping by the Night-time Economy Subgroup and invited stakeholders that took place in spring 2025.

There are 50 **Areas for Action**. They are structured around the five **Purple Flag** themes:

1. **Strategy**
2. **Wellbeing**
3. **Movement**
4. **Appeal**
5. **Place**

Finally, an evaluation process will also need building in order to measure our progress against the **Nightshift Glasgow – Night-Time Action Plan**. This should be developed by the proposed Glasgow Night-time Commission and managed and reported on by the recommended NTE Officer.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

## THEME 1: STRATEGY, POLICY & GOVERNANCE Working together to deliver a world class Glasgow at night.

These STRATEGY, POLICY & GOVERNANCE areas for after dark action demand a new era of leadership, cooperation and governance for the night. This is the foundation for long-term change towards Glasgow as a 24hr city.

1. Building on the Glasgow City Centre Task Force's Night-time Economy Subgroup, a permanent Glasgow Night-time Commission should be established and chaired by a respected and consensus-building individual who understands the night-time sector. It should draw on best global practice, such as the NSW 24hr Economy Office & Commissioner, Clubcommission Berlin, Amsterdam Nachtburgemeester and the Philadelphia Night-time Economy Director & Nighttime Economy Advisory Council to create a uniquely Glasgow solution.
2. The Glasgow Night-time Commission should be supported by a newly recruited non-political Glasgow NTE Officer, based on similar positions to those in Ireland's NTE Advisor Programme, Pittsburgh or Sydney. They should be focused on the delivery of the detailed **Nightshift Glasgow – Night-time Action Plan**.
3. Once established, the Glasgow Night-time Commission should lobby at city and national level for priority changes, not just for Glasgow, but as Scotland's leading night-time economy, for the rest of Scotland, e.g. working with the Scottish Government, lobbying MSPs and developing night-time strategy with the Scottish Cities Alliance. Key issues that affect all of Scotland's night-time economies (as set out in the Night-time Industries Association's recently published Northern Lights: A Manifesto For Scotland's Night Time Economy 2025) include: far reaching pro-NTE licensing and planning changes, better implementation of agent of change and resistance to any form of 'permitted development' that might further damage live music and hospitality venues, as well as seeking equitable business rates, securing investment in post-6pm public transport and unleashing taxi / private hire capacity.
4. The Glasgow Night-time Commission should establish a new mechanism that allows reciprocal engagement between itself and the city's wider night-time business community. This would also ensure that public partners (e.g. council, police, transport providers) receive immediate (next day) feedback on issues of concern from the night-time sector. This could be led by the proposed NTE Officer.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

5. There is a pressing need to establish a dedicated forum between the city's nightlife operators and Glasgow City Council's planning, environmental health and licensing departments. This would ensure that when city policy is developed (and regulatory and enforcement protocols established) the support and promotion of the night-time economy sector is 'baked in'. This area of action is also linked to lobbying the Scottish Government on issues of permitted development, agent of change / noise and licensing change.
6. The Glasgow Night-time Commission will need a wide representation of night-time stakeholders, including entrepreneurs and cultural producers, young people, cutting-edge artists, and our global majority and LGBTQ+ communities.
7. It is necessary and urgent that the final version of the Glasgow City Development Plan 2 is a 24-hour plan. This means integrating night-time culture into spatial planning, including public realm and new developments that are 'designed for the night', whilst ensuring the envisaged 15,000 new city centre residents can co-exist alongside both established and new night-time venues and activity hubs.
8. The Glasgow Night-time Commission should work with Glasgow City Council to review and then build on its recent licensing relaxations to further support cultural and live music venues to identify areas of even greater flexibility and proactive support for well run premises.
9. New South Wales's 'Vibrancy Laws' are the leading global exemplar for licensing modernisation and relaxation, with more than 30 changes to alcohol, entertainment and dining licences enacted over the past two years. Whilst the NSW State Government sets licensing legislation in the same way as the Scottish Government, there is room for Glasgow, as Scotland's leading night-time city, to lead the licensing conversation nationally with the Scottish Government.
10. It is imperative that the new city centre Glasgow BID (Let's Go Glasgow) is a champion of the night. Dublin is a similar sized city region and its main BID – Dublin Town – is Europe's largest BID and performs a significant amount of work post-6pm. Let's Go Glasgow should have meaningful board level representation from the city's night-time economy community and a plan of after dark actions.
11. Developing a Glasgow Licensing Charter (as seen in locations such as Camden), that sets out what is expected from venues that sign up to it (beyond legal compliance), could help raise standards while offering in return more flexible licensing conditions.

## Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

12. Driving forward the continued uptake of the Glasgow Best Bar None scheme across the city centre as it is already viewed as a success. This is something that could be supported via the new Let's Go Glasgow city centre BID.
13. The majority of large UK and Irish cities are now Purple Flag accredited (e.g., Liverpool, Belfast, Bristol, Dublin, Sheffield, Cardiff and Nottingham). Glasgow should apply for Purple Flag accreditation for the city centre (boundary to be decided) by the end of 2026 to benchmark Glasgow's current position against national and international night-time excellence. Being inside the global Purple Flag network will give Glasgow access to global best practice and knowledge sharing, as well as to raise the profile of Glasgow as a genuine and ambitious 24hr City.

Once accredited, Glasgow should consider an event similar to Dublin's [Dublin by Night Fest](#). This festival celebrates the city's night-time economy and its Purple Flag status. Taking place each November, it is growing year on year and is now a major event on the city's night-time calendar.

14. Glasgow has some excellent city centre performance data that can be analysed across the 24hr period. This makes it a leader in this area. Expanding this collection of data and building a more comprehensive Glasgow 24/7 Observatory. This could also host additional research, such as measuring the impact of investment in city centre activities on footfall and spend, transport use patterns around festivals and events, new transport routes and the impact of regeneration and public realm schemes on footfall and trade for night-time businesses.
15. Glasgow should ensure that in all relevant communications, city plans and destination marketing it refers to itself as '24/7 Glasgow'. The city should strongly promote the concept of 'Glasgow After Dark' with clear visual language about the city's world-class culture, music and nightlife, sport, education and heritage. This applies to both the domestic campaigns (e.g. 'Get You In Town') and broader international campaigns e.g. 'Visit Glasgow' (already underway).

## Our Areas For Night-Time Action!



“Working together to deliver a world class Glasgow at night.”

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

## THEME 2: WELLBEING

### A safe, welcoming and clean Glasgow after dark.

These WELLBEING areas for after dark action address safety and feelings of safety, build community confidence, address vulnerability (particularly for women and girls and other more vulnerable groups) and communicate how safe the city is to counter negative perceptions.

1. Better resourcing and support for volunteer schemes (such as Street Pastors) and coordination with the police, transport and door security and CCTV would enhance wellbeing and safety.
2. Allied to this, developing the 'safe place' provision on Friday and Saturday nights to enhance its role in the city centre would provide even greater night-time economy user reassurance, increased safety (particularly for women and girls) and would take further pressure off the police and ambulance services. Good models for this are Worcester, Chelmsford and Bristol.
3. Introducing a **Nightshift Glasgow Portal**. This online resource could be based on the work done by Hackney Nights and Bristol Nights which provide a holistic and joined-up approach between council, police, licensed venues and training providers to ensure staff working at night have fully accredited vulnerability training (see below) that is refreshed on an ongoing basis and that venues have a secure portal to share intelligence.
4. The **Nightshift Glasgow Portal** could utilise the NTIA's Safeguarding Nightlife Training that it has developed with Hub26. This equips venues, staff and industry professionals with essential training to create safer, more inclusive night-time spaces. NTIA Scotland has committed to adapting this Safeguarding Nightlife Training to address the specific challenges faced by Scotland's night-time economy. Glasgow would make a logical roll out location for the training.
5. Linked to the **Nightshift Glasgow Portal**, the city should expand and further embed the Ask for Angela / Ask for Clive schemes across the city (not just in the city centre), whilst introducing next level bystander intervention training for higher risk venues.
6. Develop a Glasgow Women's Night Safety Charter with businesses and organisations that operate at night (not just in the night-time economy). This could draw on the work already undertaken on the similar London and West Midlands schemes.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

7. Evaluate the impact of the recent doubling of the council's night shift cleaning team (from 40 to 80 operatives) and further enhance the existing evening and night-time street cleansing regime if necessary. Cleansing is key to changing (particularly older) resident and visitor perceptions about the city's attractiveness and safety after dark.
8. Glasgow should continue (and intensify) its positive work to reduce street homelessness at night through comprehensive outreach and integrated rough sleeping support. There needs to be an increased focus on tackling anti-social behaviour and aggressive begging from a small proportion of those on the street that can deter residents from a night out and negatively impacts visitor perceptions.



“These wellbeing areas for after dark action address safety and feelings of safety, build community confidence, address vulnerability... and communicate how safe the city is to counter negative perceptions.”

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

## THEME 3: MOVEMENT A Glasgow that's easy to get to, from and around at night.

These MOVEMENT areas for after dark action, particularly address night-time transport and improving the connectivity to Glasgow's suburbs and hinterland, which the city centre's night-time economy relies upon. In concert with the recommendations from the City Centre Task Force Transport Subgroup, these actions are key to revitalising Glasgow after dark.

1. Whilst there are competing arguments about the sufficiency of the taxi / private hire / ride-hailing market in Glasgow, it is clear that for many the current system does not serve the night-time economy as well as it should. This is a significant impediment for the success of the city centre at night and for the safety of vulnerable users and women in particular. A detailed study into levels of provision, ride availability at key times and journey cost should be undertaken and form part of wider 'Glasgow night-time transport study' proposed below. This should address the potentially prohibitive and thus socially exclusive cost of trips beyond the city boundaries as well as anecdotal accounts of 'price gouging'.
2. The later operation of the Subway at weekends and until midnight on Sunday night should be fully explored. The negative economic impact and safety implications of a service that does not currently operate later poses significant harm to the night-time economy and risks derailing Glasgow's ambitions. Once SPT's business case is ready, the next step will be to lobby the Scottish Government for support in running a pilot late-night operation alongside an impact evaluation.
3. Night bus provision has been improving but it is not known if it is now sufficient. A fully independent assessment of night bus demand should be undertaken and models explored to support routes that may not be financially viable (see 5 below).
4. ScotRail operates out of the city centre until around midnight and occasionally later to serve large events and festivals. But just one additional service to around 1am could service a large proportion of users (particularly the older more affluent demographic) who visit for theatre, cinema, live music and the food scene, but who do not want a very late night out when the options become a night bus or taxi. This should be tied with the review of Subway, bus and taxi provision in action 5 below. It should also explore how better integrated travel information can be provided to users in the city, particularly around events when there are unusually high levels of system loading.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

5. To resolve the complex issue of whether or not the current mix of taxi, private hire, bus, Subway and rail provision is fit to serve the city's night-time economy, a wider independent study that provides an independent evaluation of the city's 6pm to 6am transport should be commissioned.  
  
It should examine issues such as supply, temporal and spatial use patterns, pricing, safety and economic impact. It should provide rigorous baseline data and address the potential loss of footfall, spend and jobs that the city centre may be experiencing due to its current transport provision. This study should also evaluate the impact of the ride hailing app sector and examine whether lobbying the Scottish Government on a Manchester style Bee Network could have a significant impact on the success of Glasgow's night-time economy.
6. Improving links between peripheral assets (e.g. SEC, SWG3, Barrowlands) and the core city centre evening and night-time economy by introducing safer routes and lighting is key to both city centre viability and Glasgow's 'holistic 'night-time offer'. This should be a key part of the Glasgow City Development Plan 2 and its supporting city centre planning documents.
7. The walkway along the Clyde is a major but underutilised asset during the day, yet at night it can feel intimidating. Turning the riverside into a Glasgow 'night-time icon' will be a key measure of how the city is investing in its night-time public realm experience.
8. Car parking quantity currently appears to be adequate within the city centre, but it is not clear if it serves the night-time economy well. Glasgow should audit night-time car parking availability, quality, price and access (particularly for disabled residents and visitors). This should include identifying incentives for evening use. For example, Wolverhampton has just reduced evening and night-time tariffs to support its Night-time Economy Strategy, as well as investing in significant, joined-up car parking upgrades to make them safer, more convenient and spaces easier to find once inside.
9. A review of the LEZ's impact (positive, negative or neutral) on the city centre's night-time economy (visitors, businesses and staff) should take place at the same time as the car parking review, so that, if necessary, modifications can be made to support the city centre's viability and vibrancy after dark.
10. Reviewing if Glasgow needs of an updated city-wide wayfinding approach (physical and digital) could support the city's desire to boost its visitor economy. This could examine updated integration with lighting, transport and the Avenues project, as well as the new Glasgow City Development Plan 2. At present, the city is a series of 'nightlife nodes' with first-class attractions but which are often isolated and connected by intimidating routes with dark spaces in-between.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

## THEME 4: APPEAL

### Creating a Glasgow with a rich mix of attractions and activities in the evening and at night.

These APPEAL areas for after dark action are focused on protecting and enhancing Glasgow's world class cultural and hospitality sectors, which are so central to its social fabric, cultural heritage and after-dark future.

1. Undertake 'A UNESCO Music City Ecosystem Audit', that segments and maps current provision, identifies challenges and barriers, explores new venue and programming opportunities and outlines a 'grassroots music venue support package' with input from key partners such as the Music Venue Trust and Best Bar None Glasgow. This could improve all aspects of the Glasgow Music City experience, including venue accessibility, venue sound systems, music making and inclusion.  
  
This could also explore the feasibility of a temporary or permanent home to a music exhibition celebrating Glasgow's musical heritage, and propose a model along the lines of SXSW or The Great Escape festival to showcase the city's best talent and harness music as a key driver of the city's economic strategy, cultural identity and destination management plan.
2. Explore the feasibility of a Music City Officer who would lead on the promotion of the UNESCO designation, support grassroots performers, venues, promoters and educational outreach in order to build the next generation of talent.
3. Develop a new approach to protecting existing live music and cultural venues. (See Theme 1. Strategy, Policy & Governance above). This should particularly address the threat of noise complaints from new residents and should learn from the 'Vibrancy Reforms' introduced by the New South Wales Government to protect live music and culture.
4. Examine the feasibility of launching a 'Glasgow People Make' night market to enhance the city's existing retail and food offer and bring in new audiences. George Square could be a perfect location for this, subject to detailed feasibility.
5. Despite some first-class isolated examples, Glasgow does not currently excel as a family-friendly evening out in terms of cultural programming and investment in experiential leisure, restaurants and how safe it feels on the street. Undertake research into making the city more 'family friendly', with recommendations for interventions and pilot projects that will encourage this demographic to visit more.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

6. Developing a more consistent and regular 'lates' programme across the city centre's cultural institutions and potentially one-off 'culture night' with galleries and museums could attract more non-traditional evening audiences. This could be allied to a dedicated music exhibition showcasing the city's musical heritage and current exemplar musical and creative output.
7. Ensuring that the city better promotes its existing evening and night-time offer and improves the visibility of attractions and events through the new Glasgow destination marketing strategy and supporting social media and content is essential. This strategy should have a significant delivery focus on the evening and the night as separate times and on distinct audience segments (visitors / younger people / older generations / families) as they require very different evening and night-time experiences.
8. This can in turn support a more comprehensive series of events outside of summer and during less busy times of the year. Examples in Glasgow include the Mela (albeit this is typically in June), and outside of our city, there is London's Lunar New Year in February (the largest outside Asia) and Leicester's Diwali (the largest outside of India) in October. This again provides opportunities to attract families and the city's diverse community into the city centre.
9. The creation of an innovative Glasgow Evening & Night-time Investment Prospectus to attract post-6pm investors to the city centre. This should target experiential leisure concepts and street food operators and markets. Currently there are only two of these in Glasgow, whilst there are 11 in Greater Manchester, with six in Manchester city centre itself.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

## THEME 5: PLACE

### Creating a functional and beautiful public realm for Glasgow that works for everyone – day and night.

These PLACE areas for after dark action seek to turn the city into a ‘theatre for after dark play’ through creative and inclusive public realm design.

1. Whilst construction is now underway, George Square must be a model world class programmable civic space for both day and night-time activation. Once complete it could be launched with a full year-long programme of evening activities, festivals and events. This would be a rapid and highly visible win for this vision.
2. To unify the existing examples of great lighting, to address challenges with over-lighting and identify and redress those areas of underlighting which are forbidding or unsafe, the city should consider commissioning a cohesive City Centre Lighting Masterplan that provides a new vision for lighting, and which supports wayfinding, safety, active placemaking and event staging.
3. To address the city centre’s vacant units and hostile frontages, there is the opportunity to animate ‘dead’ frontages with colourful shutters, murals and sound / light installations. There is a huge pool of artistic talent within Glasgow to make this happen. A pilot area should be chosen. There are strong links between this and the city’s Graffiti strategy and its creation of ‘legal walls’.
4. This shift from external shutters should be reinforced by ensuring that all new ground floor retail, leisure and commercial office development are served by internal roller shutter only. Furthermore, an audit of existing planning consents should be undertaken to ensure that businesses are not using hostile external roller shutters in contravention of their planning consents.  
  
There is also an opportunity to import Cork’s [Leave a Light On](#) campaign, where businesses are paid to leave low energy lights on to support private light and safety at night.
5. There are a considerable number of laneways in the city that are currently dark, unsafe and often used as dumping grounds. There is an opportunity here to develop a city centre-wide programme using sound and light to create a laneways trail that turns problem into opportunity.
6. Maximising the opening of publicly-owned assets in the evening – as per New South Wales and City of Sydney Council – could be a quick win for the city. Many buildings lie empty in the evening and could be rented out or stage events that bring in new audiences.

# Our Areas For Night-Time Action!

7. The Glasgow Development Plan 2 should encourage weatherproof outdoor play and performance infrastructure (e.g. grid power, lighting, stage and seating provision) in new developments that can be licensed and programmed with cultural activity, as this is key to ensuring the city maximises its musical heritage and support the goal of being a net zero city by 2030.
8. To rectify the fragmented nature of outdoor dining in the city, Glasgow should consider developing an even more proactive outdoor seating policy that drives more outdoor drinking and dining rather than a policy that simply sets out the application processes and regulatory requirements.
9. Glasgow has long supported the principles of a ‘feminist city’, as declared formally in a motion in 2022. Glasgow has been working with women to raise awareness of and end Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and is now embedding ‘feminist urbanism’ in our placemaking through the city’s work with women and girls in the design of parks and our public realm, as well as in active travel projects. The emerging City Development Plan will make an overt commitment to these principles. Glasgow is also commissioning a Feminist Urbanism and Strategy Toolkit. These documents and the detailed action plan from Nightshift Glasgow, should dovetail to ensure that they maximise their impact in making the city safer for women and girls.

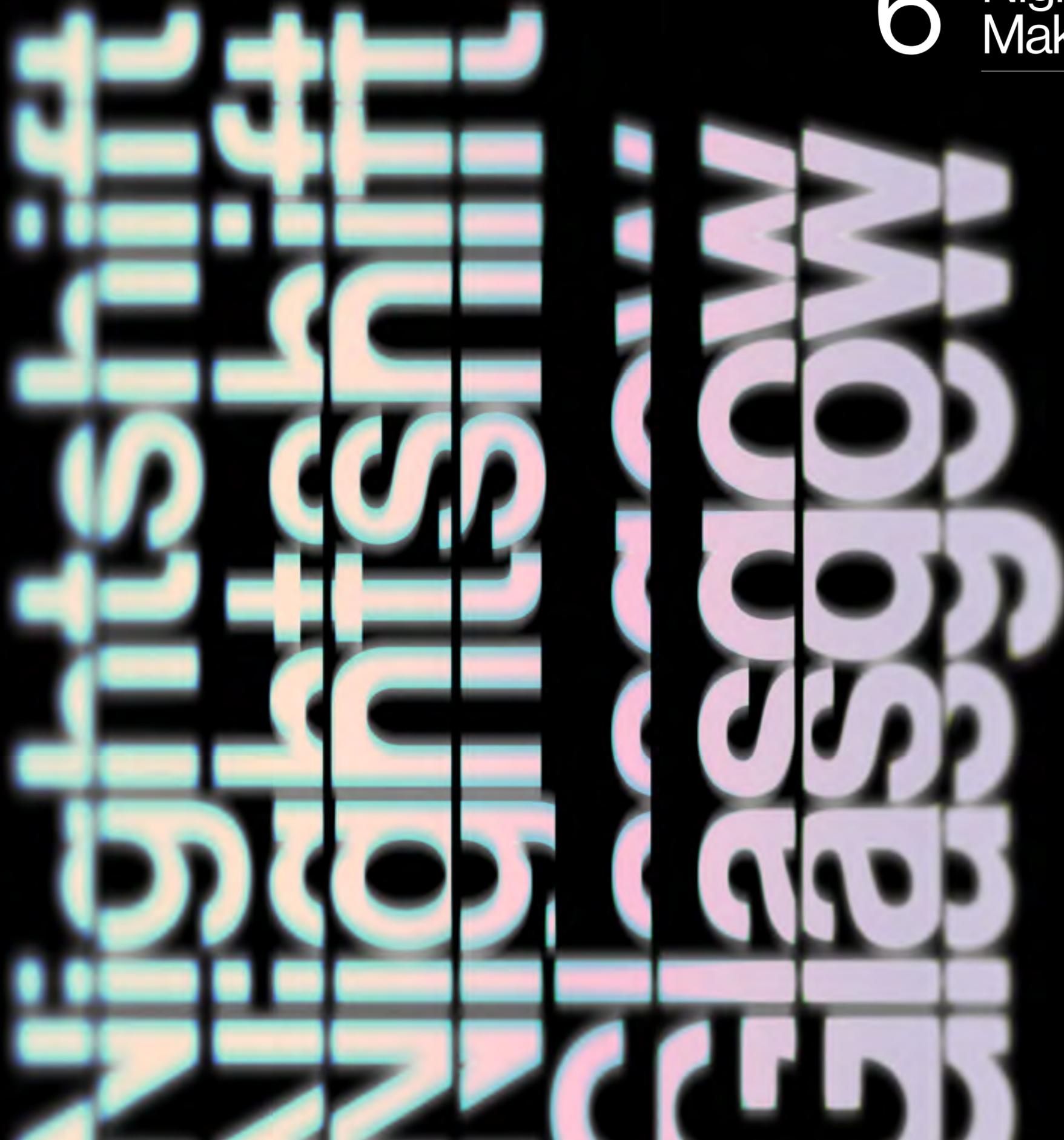
A useful exemplar is New South Wales’s Safer Cities Program and Toolkit that engages with women, girls and gender diverse people to understand their perspectives and co-design initiatives to improve perceptions of safety when walking to, through and within public spaces and transport hubs precincts at night.

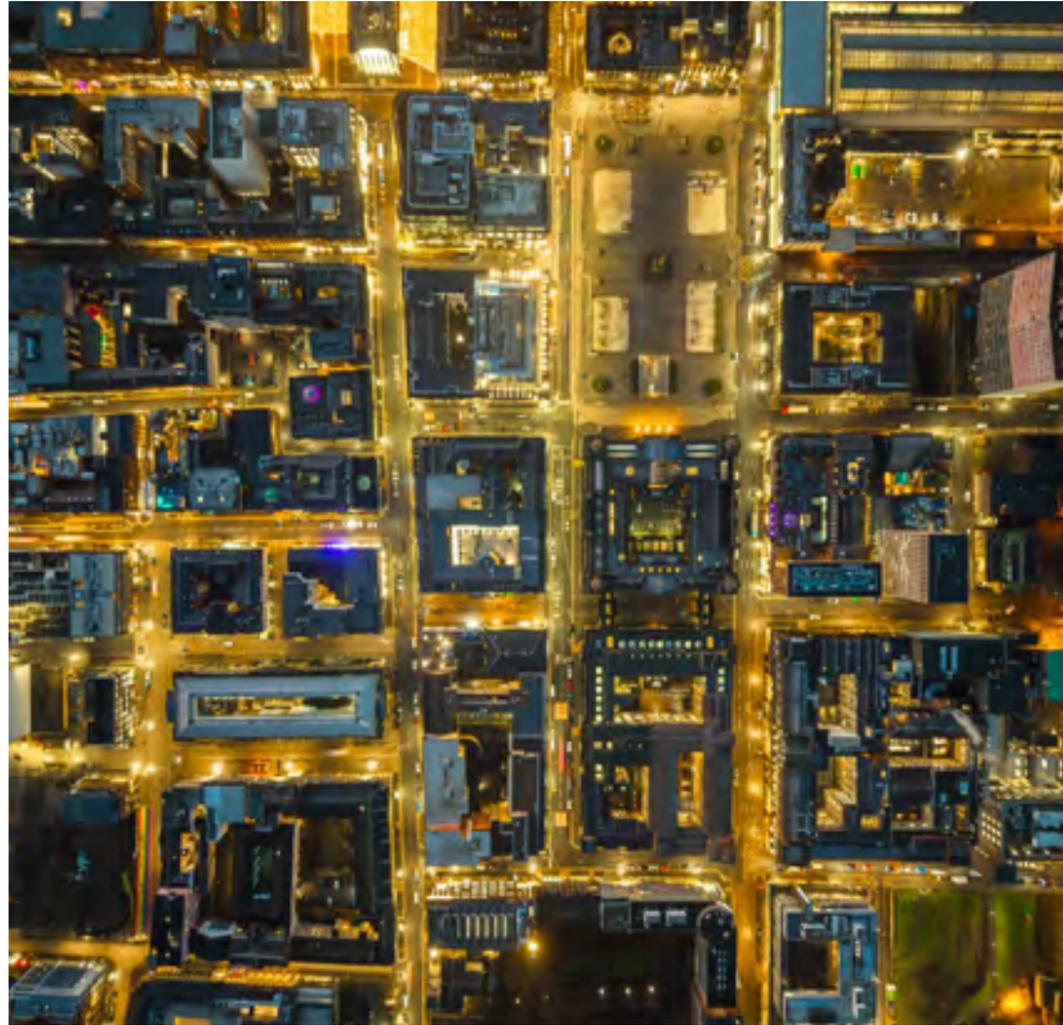


“These Place areas for after dark action seek to turn the city into a ‘theatre for after dark play’ through creative and inclusive public realm design.”

# 6 Nightshift Glasgow— Making It Happen

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“Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow Night-Time Vision will catalyse our city into a 24-hour city and mark it as a global leader in using the night-time for economic, cultural and social good.”

## 6 Nightshift Glasgow— Making It Happen

It's time to deliver Nightshift Glasgow:

The Glasgow City Centre Night-Time Vision.

In Glasgow we have set ourselves bold and challenging after dark ambitions and we need to match them with decisive action. A new era of night-time leadership, partnership and ambition is essential to create a more vibrant evening and night-time city centre.

Through targeted reforms in governance, cultural investment, safety, innovation and investment in infrastructure, **Nightshift Glasgow: The Glasgow Night-Time Vision** will catalyse our city into a 24-hour city and mark it as a global leader in using the night-time for economic, cultural and social good.

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Nightshift Glasgow:  
Glasgow City Centre  
Night Time Vision

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2026—30

## Appendix 2 – High Level Action Plan – Summary Table

Theme	Issue	Action Area
<b>1. Strategy, Policy &amp; Governance</b>	1. 1 Historic absence of leadership, and fragmented governance	Establish dedicated night-time leadership
	1. 2 Lack of unified approach to planning and licensing	Develop Glasgow Licensing Charter
	1. 3 Need for benchmarking and global best practice	Apply for Purple Flag Accreditation
	1. 4 Limited stakeholder engagement and diversity	Expand stakeholder representation
	1. 5 Lack of celebratory narrative for NTE	People Make Glasgow After Dark” campaign
	1. 6 Skills gap in hospitality and creative sectors	Develop NTE workforce training program
<b>2. Wellbeing</b>	2. 1 Safety concerns and vulnerability at night	Launch Glasgow Nights Safety Scheme
	2. 2 Inconsistent adoption of “Ask for Angela”	Expand “Ask for Angela” Scheme
	2. 3 Develop Glasgow Women’s Night Safety Charter	Co-create charter with women’s groups and businesses
	2. 4 Poor street cleanliness after dark	Enhance evening street cleansing regime
	2. 5 Homelessness and anti-social behaviour	Explore existing night outreach services towards enhancing etc.
<b>3. Movement</b>	3. 1 Limited late-night transport options	Seek extended Subway Operating Hours
	3. 2 Inadequate night bus coverage	Night Bus Service Review
	3. 3 Poor connectivity between SEC and city centre	Improve walking routes and lighting
	3. 4 Car parking safety and accessibility	Audit night-time parking provision
<b>4. Appeal</b>	4. 1 Lack of diverse night-time experiences	Launch Glasgow Night Market
	4. 2 Fragile grassroots music ecosystem	UNESCO Music Ecosystem Audit
	4. 3 Limited family-friendly evening offer	Develop family-oriented cultural programming
	4. 4 Decline in independent businesses	Support small venues and promoters
<b>5. Place</b>	5. 1 Poor lighting and placemaking after dark	Commission Lighting Masterplan
	5. 2 Underutilised riverside	Activate riverside for night-time events
	5. 3 Vacant shopfronts and hostile frontages	Animate dead frontages with art and lighting
	5. 4 Limited alfresco dining	Review outdoor seating policy