

Social Issues Scrutiny Panel – 16 July 2009

Review of the Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone (AEZ)

Report of the Head of Environment

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Purpose of the Report

To provide the Scrutiny Panel with the opportunity to comment on the conclusions arising from the recent review of the Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone (AEZ) in advance of a wider publication.

This report provides the Scrutiny Panel with an opportunity to satisfy itself that:

- The recommendations capture the views expressed throughout the report;
- There is still general support for the continuation of the current AEZ;
- Short/medium and long term actions have been identified.

Links to the Winchester District Community Strategy

At its meeting on 7 January 2009, the City Council agreed the Winchester District Sustainable Community Strategy for 2009-2014 and its own Corporate Business Plan for 2009/10.

The Community Strategy includes the priorities to achieve 'Safe and Strong Communities', 'Health and Wellbeing for residents' and for an 'Inclusive Society', which all fall under the remit of this Scrutiny Panel.

The Community Safety Partnership delivers on the priorities related to Safe & Strong Communities:

There are low levels of anti-social behaviour throughout the District by:

- *Reducing arson and incidents of criminal damage*
- *Reducing rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour*
- *Reducing re-offending rates in relation to priority and prolific offenders*

There are low levels of violent crime by:

- *Reducing assault*
- *Reducing repeat victims of domestic violence*

Roads are Safe in the District by:

- *Reducing serious and fatal road traffic collisions*

Executive Summary

Attached as Appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the Winchester AEZ review, for the Scrutiny Panel's consideration. The aim of the review was to assess the effectiveness of the current AEZ in combating alcohol related incidents. A Home

Office recommendation is that a review and evaluation is undertaken every two years as best practice.

Following on from the research undertaken in the review process and the responses received, it is considered that the continuation of AEZ is well supported. However there are a number of issues highlighted throughout the report that may need to be addressed in the future. The following points pick up the general issues raised:

- **Impact** - Evidence suggests that the AEZ has made a direct impact on the related street drinking issues;
- **Signage** –
 1. improvements need to be made with the current signage e.g. laminated signs should be upgraded/replaced with metal signage;
 2. Consideration should be given to making the message on the signs more positive e.g. change the name or remove the cross through the circle
- **Enforcement** - encourage more pro-active enforcement;
- **Environmental Issues** - address the environmental issues that are directly linked to the aftermath of drinking (the impact of litter);
- **Underage Drinking** - work with other partner agencies should be undertaken to address the concerns around underage drinking;
- **District wide zone?** - no evidence to support a district wide AEZ.

The Panel is reminded that the Community Safety Partnership will consider all of the recommendations made within the report in due course and will take the necessary actions, as they are practicable (taking into account the current financial constraints). None of the matters raised in the review would require changes to the existing order. If changes to the order were necessary, the Council's Licensing and Regulation Committee would deal with this, following a statutory consultation process.

Recommendation

That Social Issues Scrutiny Panel

1. Accept the information provided within the report as an update on the current Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone (AEZ).
2. Support the principle that the Community Safety Partnership will move forward the appropriate actions arising from the report.

Risk Management Issues

There are no direct risk management issues arising from this Report.

Background Documents

Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone – Review May 2009 (Appendix 1)
 LR114 – Alcohol Consumption Designation Order – Consultation Responses, 14 December 2004

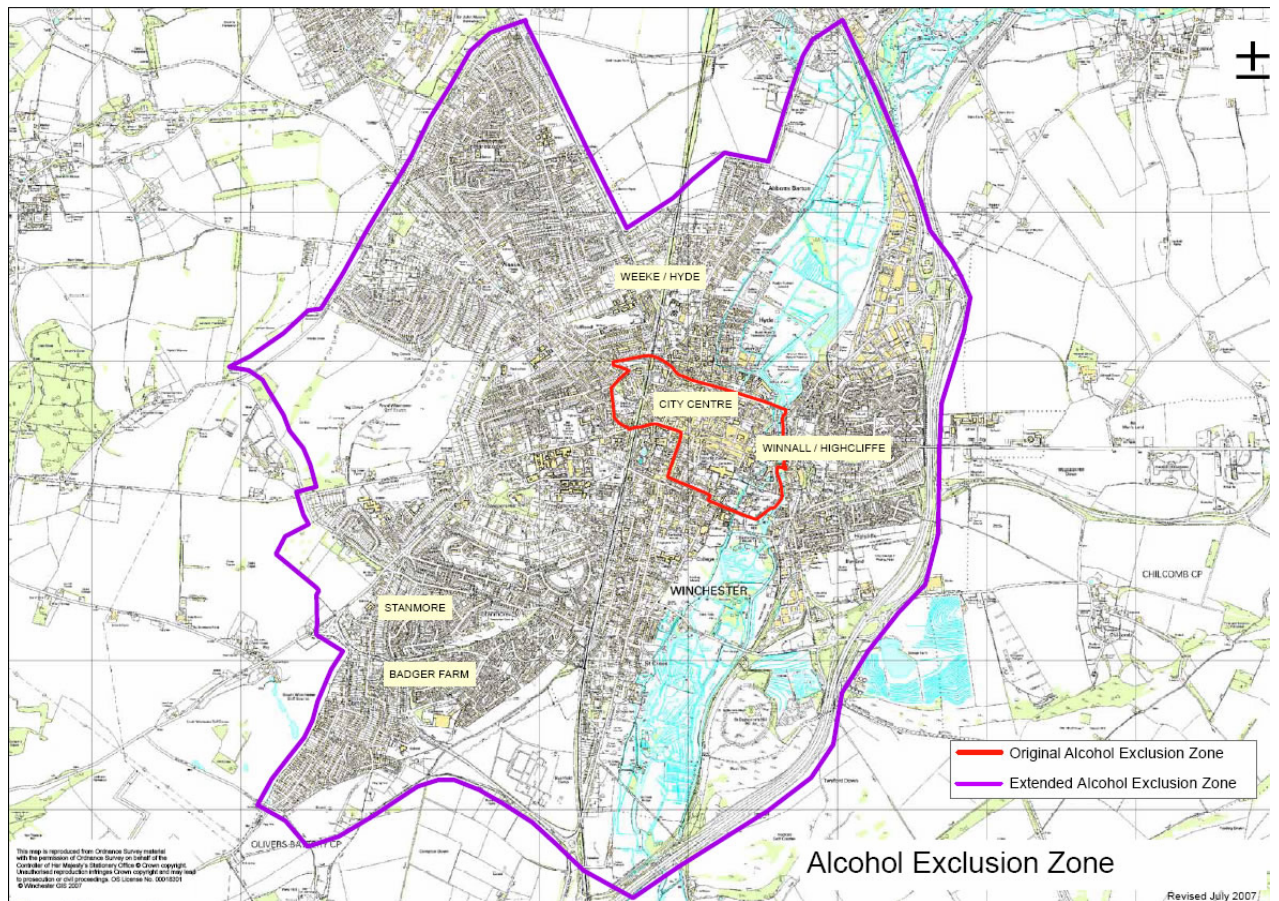
LR 211 - Extension of the Alcohol Consumption Designation Order, 1 March 2007.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone – Review May 2009.
(Also available in colour via www.winchester.gov.uk)

Winchester and District . . .
Working together
for a Safer Community

**Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone – Review
May 2009**



**By Lorraine Ireland
Winchester Community Safety Intelligence Researcher and Analyst**

Contents

Executive Summary

Key Findings	1
Recommendations	2
Conclusions	3

Full Report

Introduction	4
Methodology	4
Background Information	5
Geographical Spread	6
Police Statistical Information	7
Surveys	12
Interviews	17
Other Information	19
Environmental Audit	19
CSP Current Initiatives	19
Recommendations	20
Early Action	20
Medium/Long Term Discussion	21
Conclusion	21
Bibliography	22
Appendix 1 – Example Questionnaire	23

Executive Summary

The aim of this report is to review the Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone (AEZ), and to assess its effectiveness in combating alcohol related incidents. A review and evaluation is recommended every two years as good practice by the Home Office (HO)¹.

An AEZ was introduced in Winchester in July 2005 which aimed to stop anti-social drinking within the city centre and was extended in July 2007 in response to complaints of displacement to the outlining residential areas. The AEZ is directly associated to a power made available to the police under the Designated Public Place Order (DPPO). It does not make it a criminal offence to consume alcohol within a designated area. However it does provide the police with the extra power to tackle anti-social drinking in public and comes with the power of arrest under the Criminal Justice Police Act 2000. If an individual refuses to stop drinking alcohol when asked to do so by a police officer they can be subject to arrest.

The methodology used for this report was obtained from a range of sources; police data, surveys, one to one interviews and an environmental audit. The data collected focussed on the last three years of incidents for the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2008.

Key Findings

- Police data showed a decrease in all incidents during 2008 compared to 2007 of 16.4% (1791 from 2144), but an increase of 15.6% compared to 2006 a total of 1548.
- Incidents related to the AEZ decreased in 2008 by 10.7% recording 632, compared to 708 in 2007, but increased by 23.9% from the 2006 total of 510.
- The type of behaviour associated with the incidents reported within the AEZ, was drunken loutish behaviour with 159 incidents recorded, followed by intimidating/abusive behaviour. This more aggressive behaviour has decreased by 21.9% in 2008 compared to 2007.
- Hot spot locations showed that 66.6% were within the City Centre (WC01) and this was the only area to show an increase at 43.1% in 2008 (63 from 44). Three streets accounted for 20% of all incidents.
- Reductions during 2008 included locations previously reporting high levels of displacement issues in 2007; these include Hyde Gate, Swan Lane and King Alfred Place.
- Seasonal trends indicate that spring and summer recorded increases; this was influenced by sunnier weather.
- 43.9% of reports in 2008 occurred on Friday and Saturdays, with 45.8% of all incidents occurring during 2100-0159, which can be linked to the night time economy (NTE).
- A review of the overall reductions in 2008 identified that the AEZ has contributed towards reducing incidents reported during 2008; this may have been assisted by a particularly cold summer.

¹ http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/alcoholorders/DPPO_Report_web_090406.pdf

- From the 111 respondents that completed the AEZ survey, the majority were residents from post code SO23 area accounting for 49.5% (55).
- Over half of respondents supported the continuation of the AEZ at 66.4% (71). For respondents aged 10-19 a total of 91.7% (11) opposed or strongly opposed the AEZ.
- Types of behaviour causing concern were identified as underage drinking at 47.7% (53), followed closely by rubbish or litter lying around at 46.8% (52), thirdly drunken or rowdy in a public place at 39.6% (44). This links with the police data where the highest concern was drunken loutish behaviour, with noise and underage drinking also featuring. Despite the concern of respondents regarding rubbish or litter it did not feature highly within the police recording system.
- Over half believed the AEZ improved the quality of their life at 57.4% (62), and increased feelings of safety at night with 50.6% (46) feeling very much or slightly safer at night.
- Improvements were identified, these included: enforcing it more, increasing the presence of uniformed patrols. Increasing and improving communication including signage, the wording within the signs and more publicity re-iterating that Winchester has an AEZ.
- All persons interviewed (10) supported the continued use of the AEZ.
- Comments regarding the AEZ highlighted it was a useful tool to implement and it had reduced the amount of police time taken to deal with issues surrounding alcohol and ASB.
- Improvements identified in the interviews reflected those identified in the survey. Other issues raised included inconsistency regarding behaviour and what was deemed to be ASB, as some uniform officers are applying a blanket ban on alcohol within the zone.
- The interviews also identified that the added resource of outreach workers would assist in providing support to those in need by liaising with existing services and to assist in the signposting of individuals to the most relevant support agencies.
- The environmental audit (walkabout within the AEZ) identified that the original laminated signs had become faded and required replacement.

Recommendations

- In support of the community concerns, this report recommends a continuation of the current Alcohol Exclusion Zone.
- The Winchester CSP to provide the relevant data in relation to the contents of this report, in support of any service wishing to take forward a funding proposal aimed at the employment of an outreach support alcohol worker or to enable the provision of an alcohol outreach service for Winchester.
- Consider changing the name of the AEZ to something more descriptive e.g. Alcohol Control Zone or remove the cross through the bottles (this will have a cost implication that may outweigh the recommendation)
- Initiate a publicity campaign in relation to the launch of this report and any subsequent changes as they are agreed.
- Increase the presence of uniformed officers at key locations e.g. High Street, Cathedral Grounds, Railway and Bus station and Abbey Gardens.

- Work with collection services and local businesses to resolve the impact of litter; consider the possibility of providing collection points.
- Take this report through the relevant Council committees for their information.

Conclusions

- The evidence collected suggests that the AEZ has impacted on street drinking. For example in the past street drinking was conducted overtly, since the introduction of the AEZ drinking in public has become much more covert.
- It is considered that the DPPO is not being enforced as proactively as it was at its inception; this may be due to a lack of resources.
- Environmental issues linked directly to the aftermath of public drinking, such as litter and rubbish is considered to be a problem by survey respondents.
- Perceptions of underage drinking were identified within the survey as a fairly big problem of concern. However there are already other more relevant powers available to the police which can be used to address those concerns.
- Persons being drunk or rowdy recorded the most incidents in police data.
- There was not sufficient evidence within the data collected; to suggest that the Council should support the implementation of a district wide order at this stage.
- Unless legislation dictates otherwise, the next review of the AEZ should take place in 2011.

Full Report

Introduction

The aim of this report is to review the Winchester Alcohol Exclusion Zone (AEZ), and to assess its effectiveness in combating alcohol related street incidents. A review and evaluation is recommended every two years as good practice by the HO². It should be read in conjunction with the:

- Hampshire Constabulary problem profile dated August 2006
- The Trinity Centre report 'Street Drinking and the Alcohol Exclusion Zone in Winchester' dated May 2006

The AEZ does not make it a criminal offence to consume alcohol within a designated area. In accordance with the Criminal Justice Police Act 2001, a local authority can apply for a Designated Public Place Order (DPPO) to combat alcohol related nuisance. It provides the police with an extra power to stop those who are drinking in an anti-social manner in a public place. This means that if an individual refuses to stop drinking alcohol when asked to do so by a police officer, they have the power of arrest. These powers are not intended to disrupt peaceful activities, for example families having a picnic in a park with a glass of wine.³

The purpose of the AEZ is to discourage anti social behaviour linked to the consumption of alcohol and it is to be used explicitly for addressing nuisance or annoyance associated with the consumption of alcohol in a public place. The AEZ aims specifically to target any individual that is causing a nuisance or harassment to any other person within that vicinity.

Methodology

- Quantitative data within this report has been provided by Hampshire Constabulary Business Objects performance systems. The data collected focussed on the last three years of incidents for the period 1 January 2006 to 31 December 2008. The current period 2008, will be compared to 2007 (referred to as previous year) and 2006 (referred to as baseline year).
- Qualitative information has been provided in the form of a survey undertaken by the Community Safety Team on the AEZ to inform this report. The electronic survey was advertised on the Winchester City Council (WCC) website and through the local press inviting local participation. Letters were also distributed to some local residents, businesses and other community representatives, including partner agencies. The consultation was promoted as widely as practicable within the timeframe allowed.
- Interviews were undertaken with the Trinity Centre Manager, City Centre Manager, WCC Licensing Officer, WCC CCTV Manager, HCC Accredited

² http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/alcoholorders/DPPO_Report_web_090406.pdf

³ The Home Office guidance on Designated Public Place Order for local authorities in England and Wales

Community Safety Officers (ACSOs), the Winchester City Police Inspector and his relevant police beat area sergeants.

- Other documented correspondence received by the Winchester Community Safety Team including e mail, letters or recorded telephone complaints were also utilised within the report. These were used to quantify the type of complaints received as reported incidents in relation to the AEZ.
- An environmental audit was conducted to assess the current condition of the AEZ signage across the Winchester District. Taking into account that the AEZ signage was originally introduced in 2005 and later extended in 2007, a previous audit of the signage was conducted in early 2008. The actions identified as a result of that audit were held back in anticipation of this report and those results will be merged as part of the recommendations at the end of this report.
- The information within this report was collated by the WCC Community Safety Intelligence Researcher and Analyst.

Background Information

Street drinking and the associated behaviour often create concerns for safety, public health and the level of crime in a city. A knock on effect can be the perceived image of the city, street drinking can affect residents and visitors view of the city and can have a detrimental impact on its image. As a result of these concerns and to promote sensible drinking Winchester District Council introduced an AEZ on 8th July 2005. The AEZ initially covered Winchester City Centre only, but this was extended in July 2007 as a response to the number of complaints received from local residents about displacement to the outlining residential areas.

The AEZ has been in existence for 3 ½ years and a consultation review was deemed appropriate to assess its effectiveness. Addressing alcohol related nuisance in the City was listed as a priority in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) action plan whereby they aimed to create a safe and enjoyable evening economy. Problems related to people drinking to excess, so called 'binge-drinking' does occur nationally and this had also become an issue for the Winchester City Centre. It is important to note that there are many different reasons behind alcohol consumption, some of those can be linked to crime and disorder and it is important to show how those differences impact on individuals. These are:

- Health issues related to alcohol harm.
- Night time economy drinkers which can lead to abusive or violent behaviour. In 2008 Winchester reported 31.5% (488) of violence offences and 41.4% (123) of the domestic violence incidents were related to alcohol⁴.
- Crimes related to drinking, e.g. violence, criminal damage, sexual offences.
- Binge drinkers which can result in persons evicted or banned from entering licensed premises. Pub watch implements bans for most persistent offenders.

⁴ Winchester CSP Strategic Assessment 2008

- Underage drinkers. Nationally underage drinking seems to be rising and continues to be a significant problem.⁵
- Noisy or abusive behaviour in the street linked to alcohol misuse.
- Persistent street drinkers, an increase in begging was noted in 2008 and this showed a link to street drinkers⁶; however begging is not covered within this report.

The Healthy limits associated with alcohol are outlined by the National Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy. The recommended weekly limit for alcohol consumption in the UK is 21 units for men and 14 units for women. In Great Britain just over a third (31%) of men and one in five women (20%) drink more than the advised weekly limits. Some 8% of men and 2% of women drink more than the levels regarded as harmful, namely 50 and 35 units a week respectively. More than one in 25 adults are dependent on alcohol and the UK has one of the highest rates of binge drinking in Europe.⁷

In 2006-07 the estimated cost of alcohol related violent crime in Winchester to the health services was £3,240,123⁸. The HO cut funding in 2007/08 from the Safer and Stronger Communities fund by 14.06%, therefore the Partnership were unable to meet their priorities on the delivery of the LSA targets. Funding cuts directly impacted on the proposed appointment of an alcohol outreach worker, as recommended in a report commissioned by the CSP in 2006⁹. The outreach proposal did not come to fruition because the CSP had insufficient funds to move it forward.

National indicators measure the rate of Hospital Admissions per 100,000 for Alcohol Related Harm (NI39). In the baseline year Hampshire data clearly indicates significant numbers of patients coded with alcohol-related health problems at the start of their working and family lives and early adulthood, (16-24; 25-34) and mid-life (35-44 years). However chronic alcohol related conditions are most numerous where individuals are older and who have had sustained patterns of drinking. Winchester in comparison to 10 other district authorities scored well in age range 16-24 with 33.59% admissions but in age 75+ had one of the highest admissions rates at 19.9%.

Since the introduction of the Winchester AEZ, neighbouring boroughs have introduced alcohol exclusion zones or alcohol control zones, implemented through DPPO legislation contained in Section 13 of Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001. For example Fareham implemented a DPPO in June 2007 and Gosport in November 2007. There are currently 613 DPPO's in England and Wales where drinking is restricted.¹⁰

Geographical Spread

The area covered in the AEZ extends around the Winchester City. The original exclusion zone consisted of the City centre only which contains the prominent

⁵ Home office - Safer, Sensible, Social 2007

⁶ Winchester CSP Strategic Assessment 2008

⁷ <http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/facts/factsheets/alcohol-and-your-health>

⁸ Hampshire DAAT 10 point alcohol plan 2008-2011

⁹ Trinity Centre report on Street Drinking dated May 2006.

¹⁰ The Daily Telegraph dated 19 Aug 2008.

locations for retail and licensed premises. Due to increased reporting around the boundary of the AEZ this was extended to the area surrounding the city centre, as identified in the Map at the front of this report. Further research was undertaken in order to establish the number of alcohol related occurrences in the Winchester area covered by the AEZ. The police beat areas and WCC ward areas included in the AEZ are: Winchester City (WC01), Abbots Barton, Highcliffe and Winnall (WC02), Littleton, Harestock, (WC03) and Olivers Battery, Badger Farm (WC07) and these were extracted for this report. The AEZ impinges slightly into Compton and Otterbourne Ward (the area north of Badger Farm Road and the Hockley Link (WC08) and Sparsholt Ward (WC04), this information was not included within this report because of the difficulties of extracting very limited data.

Police Statistical Information

The police crime and incident types relevant to the AEZ were considered as: Public Order, Drunkenness, Inappropriate Gathering, Rowdy and Inconsiderate Behaviour and Street Drinking. All categories of drunkenness and street drinking were included. However due to the high number of rowdy and inconsiderate¹¹, public order and inappropriate gathering incidents, a key word search was conducted. Filtering for words relevant to the AEZ, these were: “drink”, “drunk”, “alcohol”, “beer can”, “confiscate”, “bottle”, “seizure” and “urinating”.

Public order, rowdy and inconsiderate and inappropriate gathering incidents were then checked manually for relevance to the AEZ. It is important to note that information provided on police systems is dependant upon the perception of the person reporting, the data recorder interpreting the correct category type and that the accuracy is commensurate with the standard of information held.

In the current year a total of 1791 incidents were reported a decrease of 16.4% compared to the previous year total of 2144, but an increase of 15.6% compared to the baseline year total 1548. These incidents were then filtered for those which related to the AEZ only; this includes all incidents of drunkenness, street drinking and key words for rowdy, public order and inappropriate gathering. Incidents recorded in the AEZ totalled 632 in the current year, a decrease of 10.7% from the previous year total of 708, and an increase of 23.9% from the baseline year of 510. AEZ incidents accounted for 35.2% of the overall total in the current year, compared to 33% in the previous year and 32.9% in the baseline year.

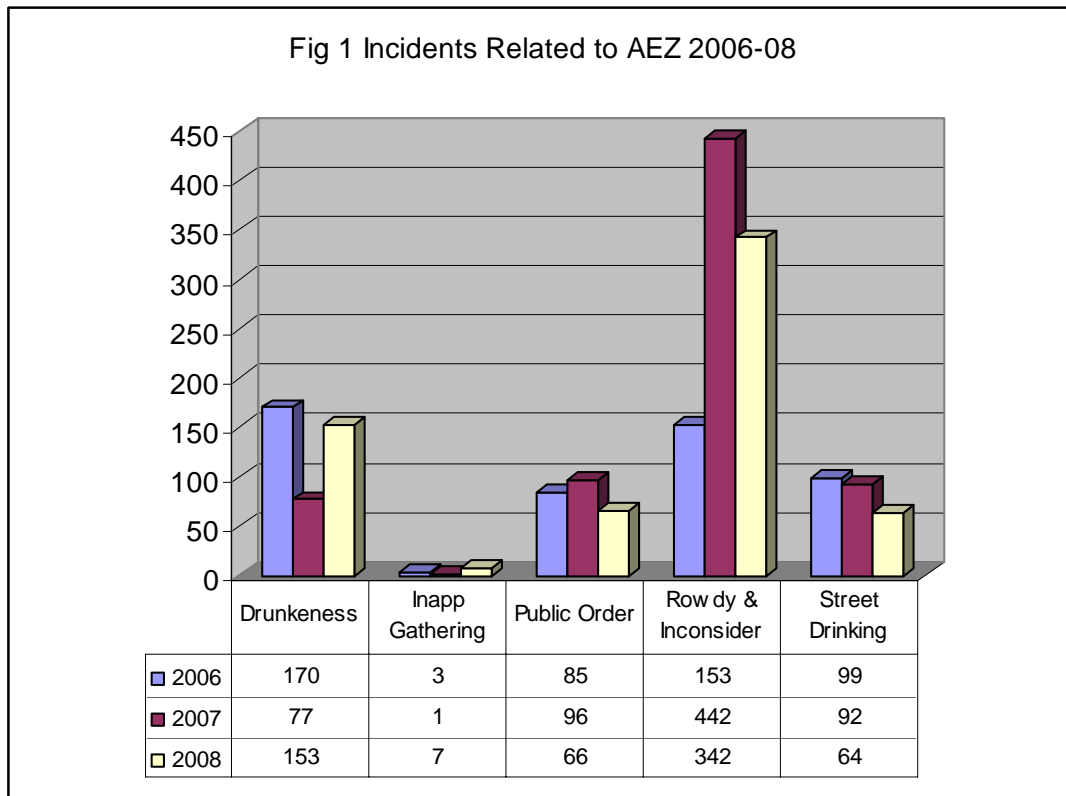
The total number of recorded incidents has fluctuated over the 3 year period, with the previous year recording peak levels, and the current year showing an increase of 15.6% compared to the baseline year. This trend is also reflected in all AEZ related incidents.

Fig 1 shows all occurrences linked to the AEZ using the key word search, for the 3 year collation period. Rowdy and Inconsiderate accounts for the highest proportion of reported incidents at 52.3% (937), due to the wide range of behaviour located

¹¹ Rowdy and Inconsiderate consists of behaviour related to youths hanging around on streets, underage drinking, items thrown, noise nuisance, abusive/intimidating behaviour, fighting.

within this category¹². In the current year rowdy and inconsiderate behaviour decreased by 22.6% (342 from 442) and there was a substantial increase from the baseline year of 123.5% a total of 153. Of note are the reductions in Street Drinking and Public Order showing year on year decreases of 30.4% (64 from 92) and 31.2% (66 from 96) respectively.

Figure 1



Drunkenness increased in the current year by 98.7% (153 from 77), however this may be due in part to a decrease in the previous year by 54.7% (77 from 170), and trends have returned to similar levels of the baseline year. The increase in the current year has been due to a rise within Winchester City (WC01) of 132.6% (114 from 49) and the City accounts for 74.5% of the overall total for incidents of drunkenness reported.

Due to the different types of behaviour associated with drunkenness the key words were researched and further analysis was undertaken. The type of offences reported identified 10 key themes, and these are categorised in figure 2 below. The most significant problem reported in the current year is drunken/loutish behaviour at 25.1% (159); this includes persons acting in a drunken manner, not aggressive and may include concerns for the person's safety. This was followed by intimidating behaviour with 23.5% (149), this includes more threatening behaviour such as verbal abuse, intimidating or aggressive behaviour. Comparisons with the previous year showed that this type of behaviour has reduced by 21.9%. Issues relating to noise featured

¹² Rowdy and Inconsiderate behaviours captures intimidating behaviour, youths hanging around on streets, abusive behaviour, persons having alcohol, underage drinking

third at 13.7% (87), followed by underage drinking which accounted for 12.5% (79), urinating in public is also an issue of concern at 7.2% (46). Members of the public reporting persons drinking within the AEZ area has remained fairly static from 26 in the current year, compared to 31 in the previous year.

Fig 2. Incident Type	2007	2008
Drunken/loutish behaviour	149	159
Intimidating/abusive/threatening behaviour	191	149
Noise (shouting, screaming obscenities)	72	87
Underage drinking	103	79
Urinating in public	69	46
AEZ (reports of drinking in zone)	31	26
Sleeping (sleeping rough, homeless)	18	26
Fighting	43	34
Litter including bottles, cans, glass	32	22
Issue S27 order	0	4
Total	708	632

In the current year nearly all categories of behaviour reduced as shown in Fig 2, slight increases occurred in drunken behaviour (10), noise related (15) and sleeping rough (8).

It is recognised nationally that individuals are vulnerable due to persistent alcohol use; this can be further impacted by homelessness and unemployment. Access to specialist alcohol services and relevant pathways are provided within the Winchester district, this includes housing providers, Spencer House and the Trinity Centre. The number of persistent street drinkers is often difficult to measure, because of the complex issues surrounding individual lifestyles. However the Trinity Centre has reported an increase in the number of clients accessing their services, some of whom may have alcohol related health issues.

If street drinking and other related behaviour such as begging persists, then other enforcement issues have been sought. A national study by Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) on street drinkers¹³, identified enforcement and coercive measures taken against anti-social individuals include: anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs); injunctions; arrests for begging or sleeping rough under the Vagrancy Act 1824; controlled drinking zones; dispersal orders; 'designing out' of street activities; and 'alternative giving schemes'. Winchester City Council has utilised some of these options including the implementation of the AEZ, a diverted giving scheme and the use of legal powers when appropriate e.g. 8 Injunction orders were gained against the most persistent offenders in 2008 and 2009 under Section 222 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Fig 3 highlights the most persistent hot spot locations associated with 13 incidents or more during the current year. The majority 66.6% (6) are located within the City

¹³ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/impact-enforcement-street-users-england>

Centre (WC01). The High Street, the Square and Jewry Street have consistently featured as the most reported locations throughout the three year reporting period and accounted for 20.5% (130) of all incidents in the current year. These locations have contributed to Winchester City (WC01) increases in the current year of 1.9% (318 from 312) and particularly the High Street increased by 43.1% (63 from 44). The increases in incidents in these locations are due to persons being refused entry or evicted from licensed premises.

All other area locations within the AEZ incidents have declined, in particular Abbots Barton (WC02) in the current year (119) compared to (177) in the previous year. Other reductions include Littleton (WCO3) (117 from 128) and Olivers Battery WC07 (78 from 90). There have been considerable reductions in locations reporting displacement issues since the extension of the AEZ in July 2007. These locations include Hyde Gate (2) in the current year compared to (10) in the previous year, Swan Lane (7 from 17) and King Alfred Place (3 from 7).

Figure 3

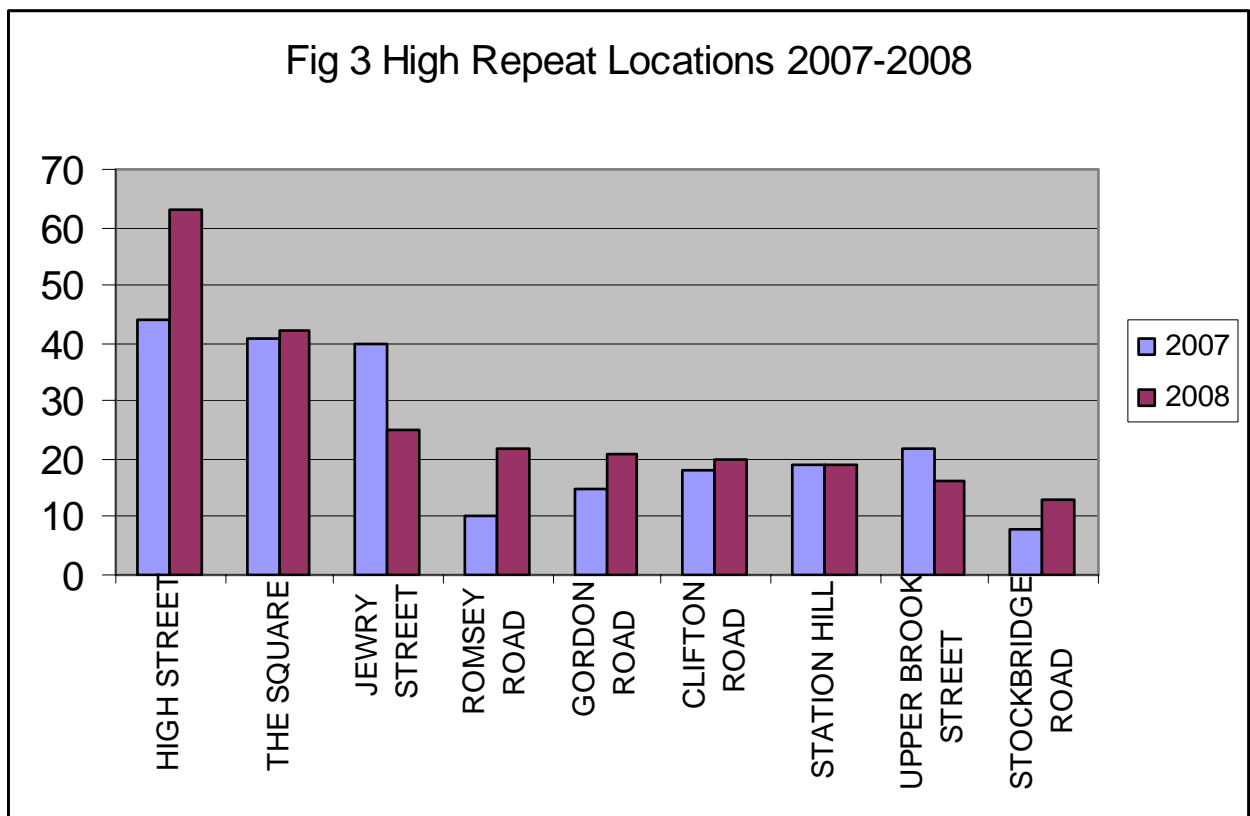
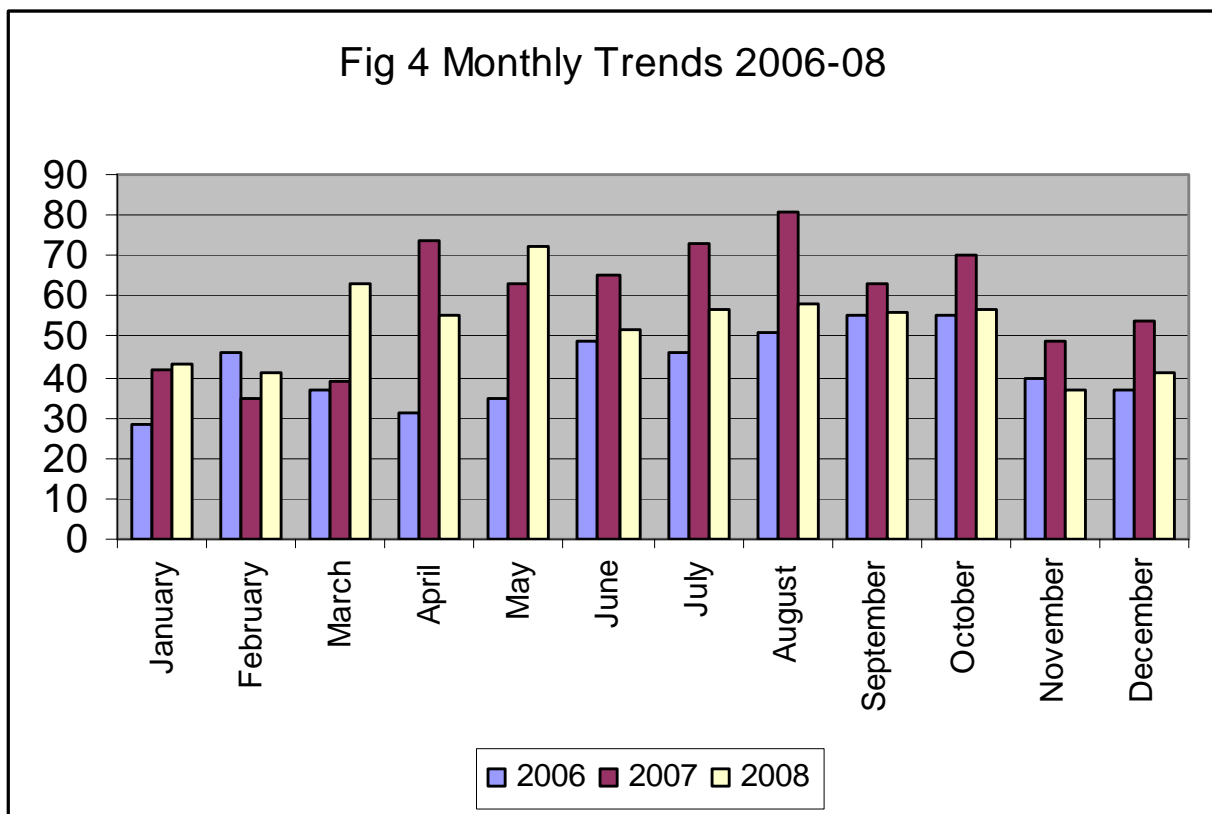


Fig 4 highlights the monthly reporting trends over the three year period and peak months have varied slightly throughout. Seasonal trends were also identified throughout, for example the summer periods in the baseline year and the previous year recorded higher levels of reported incidents and this could be attributed to by World Cup football in June 2006. Increases in reporting in July and August 2007 could be attributed to the extension of the AEZ and the change in legislation banning smoking in public places in particular licensed premises.

In the current year spring featured as a seasonal trend due to high volumes of reported incidents in the month of May, contributed to by particularly warm weather (sunnier weather increases the level of reporting). March 2008 increases were attributed to an early Easter, as bank holiday periods also increase levels of reporting. Nearly half of the reports 43.9% (278) occur on Fridays and Saturdays and 45.8% (290) were reported between the hours of 2100-0159 with a peak time of between 2300-2359 (78). This can be linked to the night time economy (NTE). A second peak was identified during the hours of 1200-1800 accounting for 27.6% (175) of reported incidents.

Figure 4



The total number of police reported incidents decreased in the current year, compared to the previous year by 16.4%. In the previous year the increases were affected by:

- The introduction of the Safer Neighbourhood Police Teams (SNPT) in April 2007 which led to changes in policing
- Increased confidence in reporting
- Extension of the AEZ in July 2007 due to the increased reporting in relation to displacement
- Legislation introduced in the form of a 'no smoking ban' in July 2007, this impacted on licensed premises
- Tackling underage drinking proactively to deal with rowdy associated drunkenness.

A review of the overall reductions in the current year identified that the AEZ has contributed towards reducing incidents reported during this year. This was also assisted by an increase in alcohol confiscations by the ACSOs who confiscated 173 containers of alcohol in the current year compared to 148 in the previous year. In relation to seasonal trends, the weather during the Summer 2008 was cooler which could have discouraged individuals from drinking in public places.

Offences related to alcohol abuse often has an impact on other crime and disorder issues e.g. violence and criminal damage. Nationally according to the British Crime Survey (BCS) 46% of all violence is alcohol related¹⁴. The breakdown of these offences in relation to the AEZ has not been considered, the Winchester CSP Strategic Assessment 2008 highlighted that alcohol was linked to 31.5% (488) of violent offences and 41.4% (123) of domestic violence offences¹⁵. For more details please refer to the Strategic Assessment document that is available on the Partnership website by using this link:

http://www.wdsp.co.uk/communitysafety/strategic_assessment/

Surveys

A survey containing 12 questions was placed on the Winchester CSP website and an article advertising that the consultation was available was passed to the local press for publication. See Appendix 1 for copy of the questionnaire. In addition a letter was sent to local residents, the business community and service providers who had previously contacted the Winchester CSP during the original consultation process in 2006/07.

In total 111 respondents completed the survey, with 131 only completing part of the questionnaire. It is likely that the response rate was affected by lack of advertising, as although circulated to the local press, it did not feature in the main local newspapers, and therefore the survey was reliant on individuals accessing the CSP website or via direct correspondence to individuals. Due to the low response rate initially experienced the deadline for this survey was extended by two weeks and the press release was resubmitted to the local press to encourage increased participation.

Table 1 provides a summary of the results from the survey. On some occasions people only completed certain questions, this explains why some questions have a higher response rate than others.

Demographic questions were purely voluntary but results show the majority of respondents were male at 55% (61), followed by 36.9% (41) female. Most respondents were in either the 60+ or 40-49 years age range with 17.4% (19), respectively, closely followed by 30-39 years at 16.5% (18), of note is the response rate of 11% (12) for persons 10-19 years. Analysis identified that the respondent's age may have impacted on their support for the AEZ. Respondents aged 10-19 years were the most strongly opposed or opposed at 91.6% (11) and did not support the AEZ.

¹⁴ HM Government - An Action Plan for Tackling Violence 2008-2011

¹⁵ Winchester CSP Strategic Assessment 2008

Respondents were asked to identify the area in which they reside by post code and the majority of respondents lived within the postcode region of SO23 accounting for 49.5% (55) of respondents, this was followed by SO22 with 24.3% (27). Both these post codes are within the AEZ.

Table 1

Table 1. Question	Responses
1. Are you aware of the AEZ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 89.3% (117) Yes, 10.7% (14) No
2. Which of the following applies to you in relation to the AEZ Zone (Please tick all that apply):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57.4% (62) Walk through • 50.9% (55) Socialise • 47.2% (51) Reside • 37% (40) Work • 1.9% (2) None apply
3. Do you agree or disagree that the introduction of the AEZ has helped to improve the quality of your life in the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39.8% (43) Agree • 21.3% (23) Disagree • 17.6% (19) Strongly agree • 15.7% (17) Strongly disagree • 5.6% (6) No opinion
4. Do you think that the AEZ has reduced the amount of crime and disorder?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36.4% (39) Only slightly • 29.9% (32) It has made no difference • 16.8% (18) A great deal • 16.8% (18) Do not know
5. In your opinion does the AEZ make you feel safer?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 55.6% (55) No Difference During the day, 42.9% (39) During the evening (after 5pm) • 29.3% (29) Slightly safer During the day, 37.4% (34) During the evening • 11.1% (11) Very much safer During the day, 13.2% (12) During the evening • 3.0% (3) Slightly less secure During the day, 6.6% (6) During the evening • 1.0% (1) Much less secure during the day, 0% (0) during the evening.
6. Of the following options, which do you think is the most appropriate for the future of the AEZ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 47.1% (49) Remain the same • 24% (25) Removed • 19.2% (20) Increased in size • 8.7% (9) Reduced in size • 1% (1) No opinion
7. Do you think the AEZ signage is adequate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68% (70) No • 18.4% (19) Yes • 13.6% (14) Don't know
8. Do you think anything could be improved with the AEZ, Please comment below?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Fig 4 below

<p>9. Do you support or oppose the use of the Winchester AEZ?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 37.4% (40) Strongly support • 29% (31) Support • 16.8% (18) Strongly Oppose • 15% (16) Oppose • 1.9% (2) No opinion
<p>10. The following issues have been reported as problems in the past, could you please indicate if they cause you any concerns?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Fig 5 below

The introductory question sought to assess if respondents were aware of the AEZ and confirmed that the majority at 89.3% (117) were aware. Question 2 sought to identify if respondents were residents, employees or socialised within the AEZ. The majority of respondents at 57.4% (62) walked through the AEZ ; this would include residents, employees and individuals that socialize in the area. Therefore the main reason was socializing at 50.9% (55).

Over half of respondents in Question 3 agreed that the AEZ had helped to improve the quality of their life in the area, 57.4% (62), but 37% (40) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Question 4 followed on from this question in attempting to identify whether the AEZ had reduced the amount of crime and disorder. The majority of respondents, 53.2% (57) believed the AEZ had either affected crime and disorder only slightly or a great deal, 29.9% (32) believed it made no difference, and 16.8% (18) of respondents did not know.

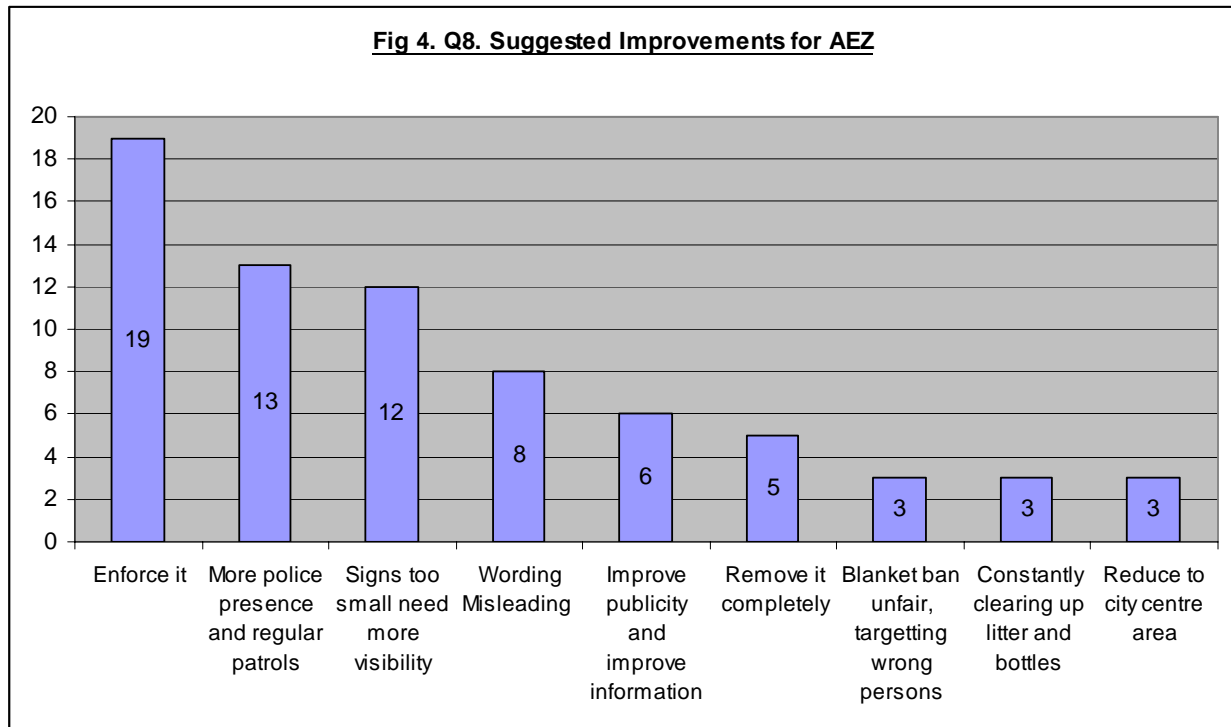
Although the majority of respondents in Question 5 stated that the AEZ had made no difference to feeling safer during the day with 55.6% (55), this increased with the feeling of safety at night and 50.6% (46) feeling very much or slightly safer at night with the AEZ in place. It should also be noted that the AEZ made very few respondents, 10.6% (10) feel less secure.

Question 6 sought the views on the size of the AEZ; nearly half of respondents at 47.1% (49) believed that the AEZ should remain the same size, which would indicate that the AEZ covers an area which is proportionate to demand. Although there were calls for its removal at 24% (25) and an increase in size at 19.2% (20).

One of the clearest outcomes from the questionnaire was in Question 7 regarding the AEZ signage, 68% (70) respondents stated that the signage was not adequate, with only 18.4% (19) believing signage was adequate.

Question 8 was an open question that provided an opportunity for people to give their views on the improvements for the AEZ. There were plenty of ideas on how the Winchester AEZ could be improved and Fig 4 highlights responses that recorded 3 or more of the same response. The most frequently occurring theme was to enforce it; this also links into the second highest response for more police presence and regular patrols.

Figure 4



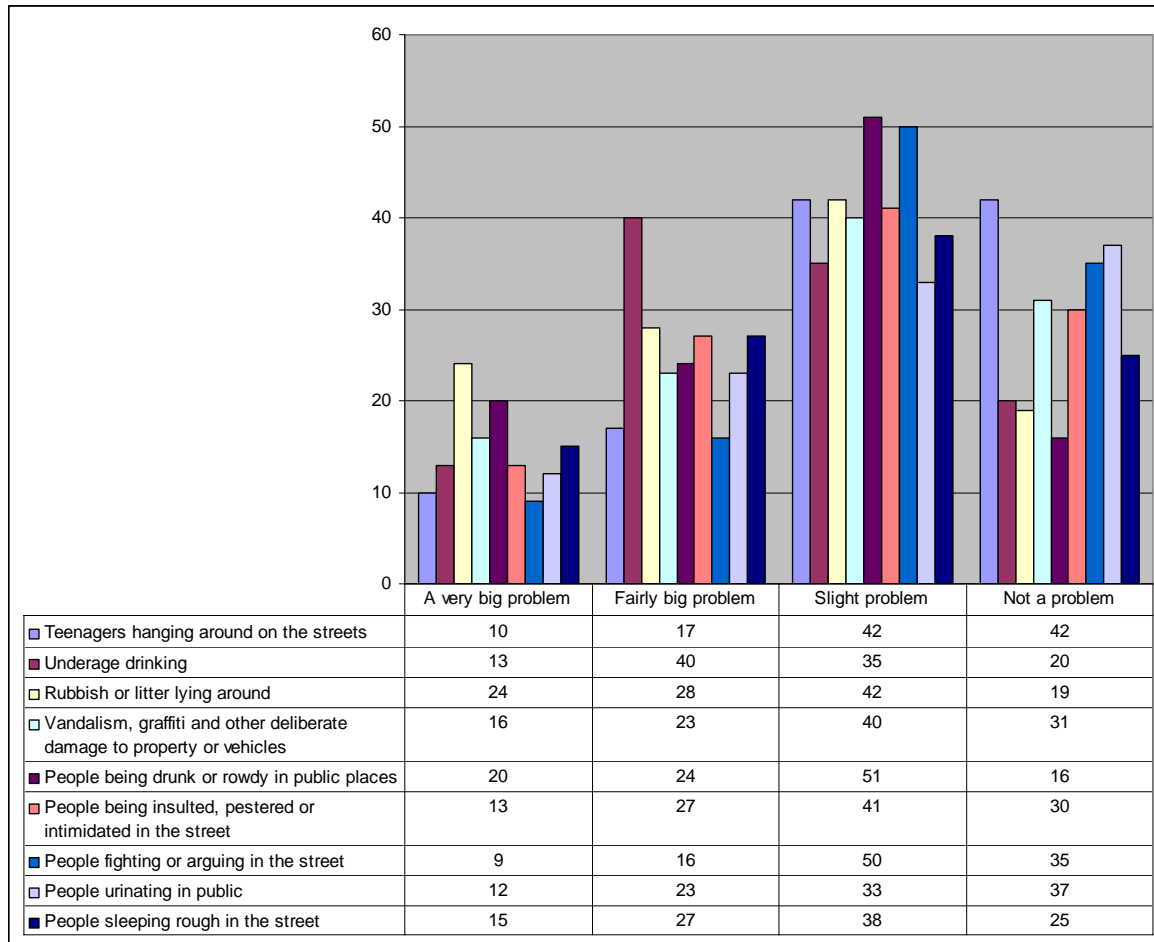
The AEZ signage also featured highly as shown in Fig 4, with a range of comments from the signs being too small and required to be more visible. Other concerns were related to the actual wording of the signage, believing it was misleading and the term AEZ gave the appearance that no alcohol was allowed in the zone under any circumstances. The communication issue raised also links with improving publicity and the information provided. The need for clearer communication on whom the current legislation is applicable to, links with the respondents who stated that the blanket ban was unfair and were targeting the wrong individuals.

Following on from the suggestions for future improvements to the AEZ, Question 10 related to the type of behaviour that was currently causing concern. The respondents were provided with a list of ASB types associated with alcohol and asked to identify if they were currently a problem. Fig 5 highlights that the majority of issues were seen as a slight problem (372) followed by not a problem at all (255). Analysis of those ASB types perceived as a very big or fairly big problem showed the highest concern was underage drinking at 47.7% (53), followed closely by rubbish or litter lying around with 46.8% (52) and drunk or rowdy in public place with 39.6% (44). This links with the police data where the greatest concern was drunken loutish behaviour, with noise and underage drinking featuring frequently. Despite the concern regarding rubbish or litter it did not feature highly within the police recording system. This may be due to the fact that it is recorded under a separate recording category not covered within the report. Rubbish or litter reported direct to WCC or alternatively the public may not report their concerns on litter consistently.

Underage drinking is a concern; nationally young people are drinking twice what they were in 1990 and the amount of alcohol consumed by adolescents aged 11-13 increased substantially during 1992-2006 in England, with a larger increase amongst

11-13 year old boys.¹⁶ However those taking part in the report made no reference to very young persons drinking within Winchester. It must also be noted that the AEZ is not in place to tackle underage drinking as relevant legislation is already in place to confiscate alcohol from persons under age who are in possession of or are seen drinking alcohol. Trading Standards on behalf of the Winchester CSP also undertakes regular test purchasing at licensed premises aimed at preventing the sale of alcohol to those persons age under 18 yrs.

Fig 5 Current Concerns



A high percentage of respondents at 66.4% (71) supported the use of the Winchester AEZ, see Table 1 Question 9. However there was some opposition around its implementation because 31.8% (34) opposed the AEZ. Further analysis was undertaken to identify if these responses were affected by respondents living within the SO23 area. 78.2% (43) within the SO23 area strongly supported or supported the use of the AEZ with 21.8% (12) strongly opposing or opposing. Respondents from the post code SO22 area were divided with 55.6% (15) supporting and 44.4% (12) opposing the zone.

¹⁶ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/drinking-in-the-uk>

Interviews

A total of 10 one to one interviews were conducted as part of the AEZ Review. Partners interviewed included:

- The Manager of the Trinity Centre (TC)
- The Business City Centre Manager (BCC)
- WCC Licensing Officer (WCC)
- HCC Accredited Community Safety Officer - area supervisor (ACSOs)
- WCC CCTV Manager (CCTV)
- Hampshire Constabulary City Police Inspector (Insp), Town Centre Beat Sgt (TC Sgt), Town Centre Police Officer (PC), Winnall area sgt (Winnall Sgt) and Police Licensing Officer (PLO)

The interview consisted of the 12 questions detailed in Appendix 1 and a few additional questions relevant to their individual employment roles. As expected all interviewees were aware of the AEZ (Q1) and predominantly worked and walked through the AEZ, or socialized, only one respondent lived within the AEZ zone (Q2). Nearly all of the persons interviewed agreed or strongly agreed that the AEZ had improved the quality of their life (Q3) and had reduced the amount of crime and disorder (Q4). A varied response for (Q5) was recorded with 60% (6) feeling safer during the day and evening and 40% (4) stating that it made no difference,

Nearly all persons interviewed (8) believed the AEZ should remain the same size (Q6) with (2) persons believing it should be extended. One respondent commented:

"It should remain it is a good tool to have in place".

All persons interviewed believed the AEZ signage was not adequate (Q7) and this was reflected in responses for the following question on improvements to the AEZ (Q8).

"Improve the signage review wording e.g. Alcohol restriction zone or DPPO as AEZ means you cannot drink in public. It is a grey area common sense is applied, change wording to Alcohol Restriction Zone"

"Signs could be bigger, more positive as introduced to improve the quality of life".

Other suggested improvements included in key comments were:

"The AEZ would be assisted by more CCTV e.g. particularly in the Abbey Mill. We also need more uniform presence including police officers, ACSOs and NW."

"It needs more uniform enforcement, we are aware and it is apparent from CCTV that persons grow bolder. If moved on two occasions they move out of the area. We see few foot patrols it requires police, ACSOs, PSCOs at key times, as if not challenged they get bigger and bolder".

"The AEZ could be advertised in the Tourist Office or tourist information so that tourists are aware prior to visiting Winchester."

The AEZ was supported by all partners interviewed with (8) strongly supporting the AEZ (Q9). From the list of concerns (Q10) the key issues were: people being insulted or pestered (9), followed by teenagers hanging around on streets (8), litter (8) and urinating in the street.(8)

The additional questions for partners interviewed included the impact of the AEZ and the positives and negatives around the AEZ, a summary of key comments are below:

“There is a lack of not just signs but backed up by a uniform presence”

“It is a useful tool for police, what is deemed ASB, street drinkers modify behaviour but it needs to be accompanied by better signposting to support services like Spencer House e.g. which could be achieved with an outreach worker”

“It reduces the fear of crime, and makes the area more attractive and leads to a reduction in crime”.

The interviews concluded with an opportunity for partners to make any other comments, from which the following are highlighted:

“The AEZ has made policing less time consuming and easier as can apply the AEZ law, and ask to leave the area.”

“Prior to the AEZ large numbers of street drinkers would be causing serious intimidation in the city centre, they were not concerned about their behaviour or its consequences. Since the AEZ Winchester is a cleaner and a more pleasant place”

“The AEZ is essential to preserve the quality of life for the residents and visitors to the city centre.”

“The AEZ is a good idea but it is not used effectively; it is okay when persons are having a picnic with a bottle of wine, but if acting in an ASB manner then drink should be disposed of.”

“People who visit the Trinity have advised that they are still drinking they just hide it. So it is perhaps moderating their drinking behaviour”.

“There are no agencies available. If someone is in drink we are not allowed to give advice. What is required is a professional who is prepared to attend the scene because otherwise people have no where to go if they are in drink and just crash out.”

“An alcohol outreach worker could give street drinkers and homeless people a point of contact, more alcohol services are required”.

“If there were more outreach workers they could support the police - police do their role but without a holistic clinic people end up drinking anywhere e.g.

drinking in the car park. A wet shelter is expensive but hardened drinkers need a place to go as they would rather be without a room than stop drinking. The night shelter is run by volunteers and they use a breathalyse limit as a means of entry, therefore if a person is drunk they can't access the night shelter".

Other Information

Since the extension of the AEZ in July 2007, very few complaints have been received by the Community Safety Team (CST). An e mail was received in 2008 regarding the condition of the AEZ signage within the area. A resident from King Alfred Place also stated in their letter dated April 2009.

"We have definitely seen at improvement locally or at the very least felt we had more force behind us if we needed to ring the police".

"The basic feeling around here is we hope the exclusion zone remains."

Perceptions of ASB are measured through the bi-annual new Place Survey and this includes the National Indicator (NI17) perception of Anti Social Behaviour. Results for the Place Survey results are due to be published in Summer 2009. In the CSP 2008 annual survey on crime and ASB, when asked what crime the Winchester CSP should place most emphasis on tackling, drink related offences with 30.9% featured second. For ASB issues the second highest response was people being drunk or rowdy in a public place (24.2%).

Environmental Audit

The Community Safety Manager and CSP analyst undertook an environmental audit of AEZ signs to assess their current condition and to ascertain if the position of signage was still relevant. The HO has recently issued guidelines (2008)¹⁷ which recommend that the use of diagonal lines through bottles or glasses on signs may suggest some sort of prohibition or ban on alcohol itself. Signs should not suggest that the consumption of alcohol is a criminal offence.

From the environmental audit undertaken it was recognised that the metal signage remained in good condition, however those that consisted of laminated signage had deteriorated. It is recommended that the laminated signs are replaced.

CSP Current initiatives

In addition to the AEZ, current initiatives are ongoing to combat alcohol nuisance and these have been incorporated within the CSP Strategic aims. Examples are listed below:

- The CSP adopted alcohol misuse as a priority for 2008-2011.
- Initiatives aimed at reducing the number of offences of violence, robbery and criminal damage reported to the police across the district.

¹⁷ Guidance on Designated Public Place Orders (DPPOs)

- To work in partnership with licensed premises to ensure that procedures are in place to deal with troublesome customers.
- To disrupt the sale of alcohol to under age drinkers and improve rehabilitation and education services.
- To improve the partnerships response to incidents of nuisance linked to alcohol misuse.
- To address some of the issues related to 'street drinking'.
- City Pride campaign launched in the current year by WCC. This campaign aims to improve the public perception of Winchester City Centre by addressing environmental cleanliness through direct reporting of problems, review of cleaning schedules and deep cleansing of identified grot spots, and the installation of street recycling bins.
- The CSP City Centre violence strategy group meets regularly to discuss and agree actions and allocate resources aimed at combating issues related to alcohol and violence within the town centre.
- Pubwatch whose membership consists of licensees meets regularly and continues to extend their membership, one of note is a local education establishment. Currently the Winchester Pubwatch has 23 persistent offenders banned from entering town centre premises.
- NHS Hampshire Brief Intervention Alcohol Service due to be launched in June 2009 aims to provide help and support to adults who are consuming excessive quantities of alcohol. The service is aimed at non dependent drinkers whose alcohol use has become hazardous or harmful to their health.

Recommendations

Using the information provided from police data, surveys, interviews and correspondence received, the CSP will now feedback to WCC the results of the review. Consideration will also be given to the suggested recommendations and those will be shared across the Winchester District Strategic Partnership (WDSP) Executive Board to open up the debate about who is best placed to move the long/medium goals forward e.g. Health and Well Being and Inclusive Society Groups.

The following list has been compiled as early actions that the CSP should consider as immediate improvements:

Early Action

- In support of the community concerns, this report recommends a continuation of the current Alcohol Exclusion Zone.
- Replace laminated signs with metal ones
- Initiate a publicity campaign in relation to this report and any subsequent changes.
- Increase the presence of uniformed officers which may assist in reducing reported incidents of drunken behaviour.
- Increase patrols in identified key locations e.g. Cathedral Grounds, Railway station, Bus station and Abbey Gardens.
- Work with educational establishments to address the public's perception of underage drinking as a problem.

Medium/Long Term Discussion

The medium/long term discussions will need to take place with a variety of partner agencies over the coming months. This is largely due to the fact that the CSP may not be the most appropriate partnership to move things forward i.e. the outreach proposal may be best placed as a discussion for the Winchester Inclusive Society Group or the Health and Wellbeing Group. The following is a list of recommendations that need to be discussed at greater length:

- To identify funding opportunities in order to take forward a proposal aimed at the employment of an outreach support alcohol worker; to enable the provision of an alcohol outreach service for Winchester for those entrenched in alcohol related issues.
- Consider changing the name of the AEZ to something more descriptive e.g. Alcohol Control Zone.
- Work with collection services and local business to resolve the impact of litter, consider the possibility of providing collection points
- Replace existing signage with new signs which do not have a cross through the bottles and include positive wording.

Conclusion

Following the research undertaken by the CSP Analyst and based on the consultation response, it has been identified that the AEZ is well supported by both public and partners. However there have been a number of issues highlighted throughout this report that may need to be addressed in the future and the following points pick up some of the general issues raised:

- Evidence suggests that the AEZ has impacted on street drinking, for example where as street drinking was conducted prior to the AEZ launch in an overt way, since its introduction drinking in public is done more covertly.
- An EVA identified that consideration be given to the replacement of AEZ signs.
- It is considered that the DPPO is not being enforced as proactively as in the earlier years; this may be due to lack of resources.
- Environmental issues which are directly linked to the aftermath of drinking were considered a problem.
- People's perception of underage drinking is of concern to respondents.
- The Fareham DPPO is District wide, which has led to anomaly within Whiteley where the area is covered by two councils, Fareham and Winchester. It has been suggested that the Winchester area of Whiteley should be considered as part of a district wide 'zone'. However there is currently no evidence to support the implementation of an AEZ in Whiteley or anywhere else in the district at this stage.

Unless legislation dictates otherwise, the next review of the AEZ should take place in 2011 which will review the progress of the recommendations made in this report.

Bibliography

Hampshire DAAT 10 point alcohol plan 2008-2011

HM Government. Safe, Sensible, Social the Next Steps in the National Alcohol Strategy 2007

HM Government - An Action Plan for Tackling Violence 2008-2011

<http://www.drinkaware.co.uk/facts/factsheets/alcohol-and-your-health>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/drinking-in-the-uk>

<http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/impact-enforcement-street-users-england>

The Daily Telegraph dated 19 Aug 2008.

The Home Office guidance on Designated Public Place Order for local authorities in England and Wales at

http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/alcoholorders/DPPO_Report_web_090406.pdf

Trinity Centre report on Street Drinking dated May 2006

Winchester CSP Strategic Assessment 2008 at

http://www.wdsp.co.uk/communitysafety/strategic_assessment/

Appendix 1
Example of Questionnaire

1. Are you aware of the Winchester AEZ? Yes/No

2. Which of the following applies to you in relation to the AEZ Zone (Please tick all that applies):

Resident Work Socialize Walk through None apply

3. Do you agree or disagree that the introduction of the AEZ has helped to improve the quality of your life in the area?

Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No opinion

4. Do you think that the AEZ has reduced the amount of crime and disorder?

A great deal Only slightly It has made no difference Do not Know

5. In your opinion does the AEZ make you feel safer?

Very much safer Slightly safer No difference Slightly less secure Much less secure

During the day

During the evening after 5pm

6. Of the following options, which do you think is the most appropriate for the future of the AEZ?

Removed Remain Reduced in size Increased in sized No opinion

7. Do you think the AEZ signage is adequate?

Yes No Don't Know

8. Do you think anything could be improved with the AEZ, Please comment below?

9. Do you support or oppose the use of the Winchester AEZ?

Strongly support Support Oppose Strongly oppose No opinion

10. The following issues have been reported as problems in the past, could you please indicate if they cause you any concerns? (Please tick all that apply)

A very big problem Fairly big problem Slight Problem Not a problem No opinion, N/A

a) Teenagers hanging around on the streets

b) Underage drinking

c) Rubbish or litter lying around

d) Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles

- e) People being drunk or rowdy in public places
- f) People being insulted, pestered or intimidated in the street
- g) People fighting or arguing in the street
- h) People urinating in public
- i) People sleeping rough in the Street

Demographic Questions The next few question are about yourself and completely voluntary, but will help us to provide a more detailed analysis of the survey. All responses will be anonymised.

11. What is your post code?

Enter first part of post code e.g (SO23)

Enter second part of post code

12. What is your age?

10-19 years 20-29 years 30-39 years 40-49 years 50-59 years over 60+ Prefer not to answer

13. What is your gender?

Male female Prefer not to answer

