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## News

### Older generation urged to reclaim the streets

DAVID POWLES  
26 February 2007 09:28

Older people are being urged to reclaim the city's streets after police pleaded with them not to be put off from heading into Norwich at night.

Speaking at a meeting of the Central Norwich Citizen's Forum, MP Charles Clarke and Norfolk police Chief Inspector Kevin Clarke appealed for the "more mature" members of the community to return to the city centre during the weekend nights.

Over the last few years increasing violence and anti-social behaviour has meant many people were too intimidated to go to the city centre.

However, the force revealed their campaign to reduce violence in Prince of Wales Road, once dubbed the most dangerous street in Norfolk, including the successful Operation Enterprise targeting drink-fuelled crime, has seen the number of violent incidents halve in just three years.

Speaking at the meeting, held at Mercy nightclub and attended by more than 50 people, Boris Chester, who lives in the city centre, said: "We seem to have given the city centre over to thugs and taken it away from local residents who don't feel they are safe to be out at this time of the night."

However, Chf Insp Clarke said the area had become safer, explaining that during 2006 there were just 74 cases of injury caused by violence on the streets in the city centre, compared to 141 in 2003.

He pledged although Operation Enterprise was officially over the work would continue and explained that a team of street pastors, due to patrol the streets late at night helping people in need later this year, would help matters further.

He said: "I have to say that in 2003, with a duty of care, we would not have allowed street pastors in Prince of Wales Road at night, but this is a testament to the work that has been done that they are prepared to give it a go.

"My appeal would be to not be afraid to come out at night and come and see them. Prince of Wales Road is yours as well, not just the younger generation."

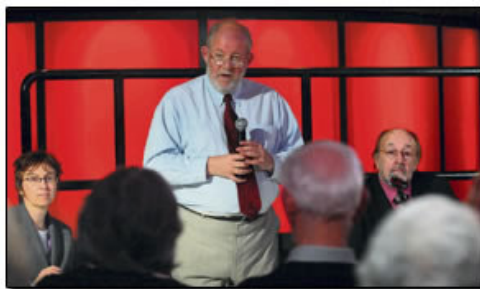
Norwich South MP Mr Clarke said: "We need to have a mix of different sections of the population in the city at night and not just the young people. When opportunities become available we need to have developments which ensure a mix of people in the city centre on a Friday and Saturday night."

The Evening News has been campaigning for the streets to be made safer as part of the Reclaim Our Communities campaign.

Do you feel safer in the city centre at night? Write to Evening News Letters, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE or email [eveningnewletters@archant.co.uk](mailto:eveningnewletters@archant.co.uk) or visit [www.eveningnews24.co.uk/forums](http://www.eveningnews24.co.uk/forums) to have your say.

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**Norwich South MP Charles Clarke addresses a meeting of Central Norwich Citizen's Forum at Mercy nightclub.**

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