



Taxi marshals to improve safety

Taxi marshals are to be used to manage queues as part of a three-month trial to improve safety for revellers after a night out in Bristol city centre.

The marshals will ensure only licenced Hackney cabs use the ranks, stop queue jumping, and discourage all forms of anti-social behaviour.

The scheme is the latest element of the Bristol Nightsafe programme which aims to cut violent crime on the centre.

Taxi driver leaders say they welcome any move to improve cabbies' safety.

The three marshals start work on 3 September and will be on duty at the Colston Avenue rank off The Centre from 2300 to 0300 BST every Friday and Saturday night.

A spokesman for Bristol City Council says the marshals - who will wear fluorescent jackets - will be on hand to meet, greet and assist people hoping to hail a cab.

'No powers of arrest'

They would stop passengers from using a cab where they are not in a fit state to travel and ensure passengers properly dispose of any bottles, glasses, cans and fast food before getting on board.

The marshals have no powers of arrest, but will be in close proximity to police officers in the police community contact vehicle nearby.

They can also call on the assistance of the new team of paramedics based next to the police control unit.

A new fixed camera, pointed directly at the head of the queue and able to produce images showing both the passenger and the licence plate of the taxi they take, is also due to be installed over the next few weeks.

It is hoped scheme will encourage more licensed Hackney carriage drivers to work in the centre at night.