

SUMMARY REPORT

In December 2014 all parish and town councils in Norfolk were sent, by post and email, a questionnaire regarding their attitudes to lighting and light pollution. Councils were given three months to respond and could return their completed questionnaire online through Survey Monkey, by email or by post. 182 councils responded, a response rate of approximately 33%, making these findings both statistically significant and a strong reflection of Norfolk parish and town council opinion.

PART 1. STREET LIGHTING

87 parish and town councils that responded reported that their parish has street lights.

WHY DOES YOUR COUNCIL CHOOSE TO HAVE STREET LIGHTS?

- No. 1 reason - For residents to see at night when walking (94% of lit parishes agreed)
 2 - Crime prevention / security (80%)
 3 - For motorists to see at night when driving (41%)

LAMPS	FITMENTS	TIMES
<p>Most common lamps in lit parishes...</p> <p>Low pressure sodium (59%) LED (38%) Tungsten (11%) Mercury Halide (7%) High Pressure Sodium (2%)</p> <p><i>(some parishes have a mixture)</i></p>	<p>Most common fitments or shields...</p> <p>Fully shielded (full cut off, flat glass fitments) (44%) Partially shielded (shallow bowl fitments) (38%) Unshielded (31%)</p> <p><i>(some parishes have a mixture)</i></p>	<p>Of the lit parishes..</p> <p>72% had lights that were on all night (dusk to dawn lights) 23% had lights that were on a timer (part-night lighting)</p> <p><i>(5% unsure)</i></p>

MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN REPLACING STREET LIGHTS

1. Cost 2. Reducing CO₂ from low energy lamps 3. Light Pollution
 (Note: 15% of lit parishes would consider removing street lights in the future)

Sample comments: *"Due to light pollution, (the) Parish Council has this year decided to replace any lamps that fail and are deemed obsolete by our lighting contractor with LED fittings."*

"A number of roads have part-night lighting. Would like to have more the same."

"Villagers canvassed - overwhelming support for removal of street lights."

"Our village has a large population of older residents who would feel at risk (personal safety and crime) if the village was unlit."

CPRE NORFOLK VIEW:

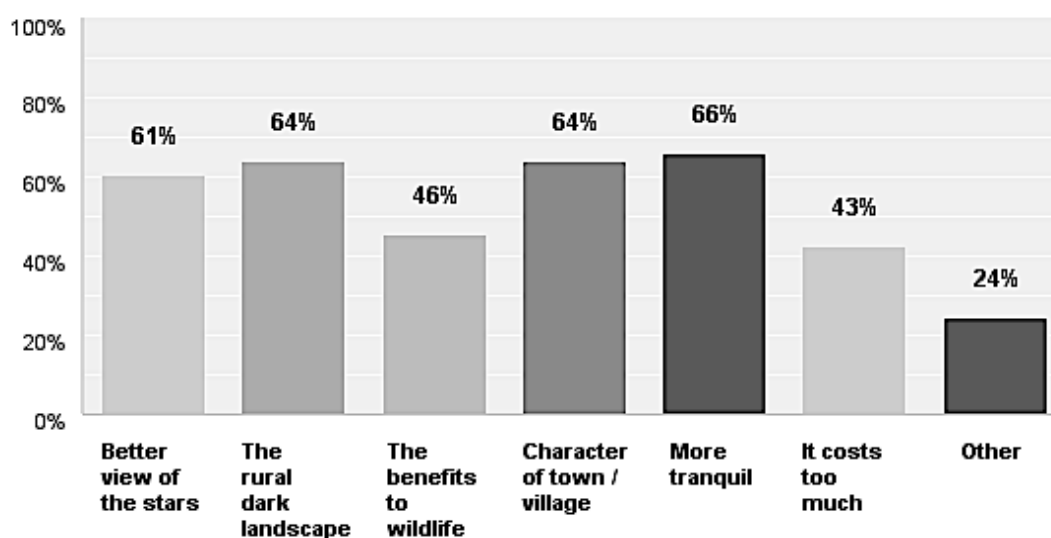
All parishes with street lights face decisions over when and how to renew street lighting contracts in the village. While cost is paramount we are still pleased to see light pollution and carbon emissions as significant other factors in the decision making, with some parishes making them the primary factor. The emergence of LED lighting (a relative newcomer to the street lighting industry) in Norfolk is also encouraging. This directional light source (when enclosed in full cut off flat glass fitments) minimises light pollution and is being used more commonly now by parishes and Norfolk County Council through their widespread PFI street lighting replacement scheme. The report also indicates that fully shielded lights are the most common form of street lighting (an improvement over results from previous years).

PART 2. UNLIT TOWNS / VILLAGES

95 parish and town councils that responded reported that they had no street lights.

WHY DOES YOUR COUNCIL CHOOSE NOT TO HAVE STREET LIGHTS?

(graph shows the % of unlit parishes that indicated these reasons)



WOULD YOU EVER CONSIDER INSTALLING STREET LIGHTS?

96% of unlit parishes would not consider installing street lights.

Sample comments:

"Past and present councillors have unanimously voted to keep street lights out of the parish."

"A survey for the parish plan indicated that people preferred not to have street lights and spoil the essential rural quality of life in the Village."

"Residents like it the way it is although more care has to be taken when walking at night - carrying a torch or wearing hi-vis jackets."

"Whenever this matter has been discussed at council meetings there has been an overwhelming level of objection to the idea of introducing street lighting to the village."

"We are preparing a neighbourhood plan in which we have identified the desire to keep the dark night sky."

CPRE NORFOLK VIEW:

CPRE Norfolk considers that unlit villages contribute greatly to the character of Norfolk. Protecting their unlit status is a key aim of our light pollution campaign and we are enormously encouraged that there are still significant numbers of parish and town councils that choose to remain without street lamps in Norfolk AND by the fact that almost all of the unlit parishes would not consider installing lighting. Councils clearly recognise that the choice not to have street lighting protects dark landscapes, dark skies, countryside character and tranquillity. Further, the number of unlit villages exceeded the number of lit parishes in this survey's results. This demonstrates the intrinsic value of the darkness to many Norfolk residents.

PART 3. OTHER LIGHTING

All parish and town councils that responded were asked about obtrusive lighting (security lighting, floodlighting, road lighting) in their area and their efforts to control it.

ARE THERE ANY OBTRUSIVE LIGHTS THAT CAN BE SEEN LOCALLY?

Note: 24 parish and town councils surveyed had directly taken action against landowners, property owners or businesses on local lighting issues (contacted business owner, enforcement, written to district council etc.)

WITHIN THE PARISH

42% of all parishes surveyed said there were obtrusive lights in the parish. Mentioned were:

temporary Christmas lights, floodlighting to football pitches/golf clubs, 24/7 industrial estate lighting, exterior lighting to manors/halls, security lighting to farm buildings, pubs, garages, schools and residential addresses...and more

IN THE LOCAL AREA

37% said there were obtrusive lights that could be seen from a distance. Mentioned were:

A-road and B-road highway lighting, lights from nearby towns, floodlighting from rugby ground/golf driving range, MOD camp lighting, offshore wind farms, lighting from industrial estates and local businesses, 24 hour garage illumination, roundabout lighting,...and more

MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY

41% of parish/town councils regularly make recommendations on lighting when considering planning applications. Of these, 70% said their voice was often or sometimes listened to by planning authorities.

REMEMBER: USE THE CPRE NORFOLK STANDARD LIGHT POLLUTION CLAUSE

(specific wording that can be attached to any planning application response to recommend good lighting)

55% of councils surveyed were aware of the clause, 24% already use it regularly in responding to planning applications and 85% of those who did not use said they would do so in the future.

Download from www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution

CPRE NORFOLK VIEW:

Security lighting, sports and church floodlighting, and lighting from industry, farms and other sources in the countryside can have a very negative impact on rural character. These lights are often visible over great distances at night and not only suburbanise their immediate location but also the surrounding area. A significant number of councils reported impacts on the enjoyment of their area from this kind of lighting, both from within and without the parish - a statistic of which planning and enforcement authorities should take note. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that some parishes are directly taking action against light polluters and reporting successes, and also that more parishes are making recommendations on lighting when considering planning applications than in previous surveys, with 70% reporting that at least sometimes their opinions are listened to by planners.

PART 4. CONCLUSIONS

All parish and town councils surveyed were asked their views on light pollution in Norfolk and whether they had any additional comments.

DO LEVELS OF LIGHT POLLUTION IN NORFOLK CONCERN YOU?

65% of parish and town councils surveyed said that light pollution in Norfolk concerned them.

Sample comments: "Norfolk is a rural county and should remain largely dark."

"Our famous 'big skies' could be blighted by excess lighting."

"Very invasive and often entirely unnecessary, including miles of street lighting and lights around roundabouts."

"Norfolk is a rural area with a lot of wildlife that can be affected by light levels"

"Light pollution everywhere, not only Norfolk."

"Norfolk is a largely rural county with relatively flat landscape and 'big sky'. We like to pride ourselves on the quality of the air and the clarity of the night sky."

"With much of the county still being rural/agricultural, light levels would appear not to be too high."

"The old sodium lamps are the main culprit, but as these are replaced it should improve."

Note: only 34% of parishes had heard of the Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy which seeks to protect rural dark landscapes from light pollution.

CPRE NORFOLK VIEW:

Our concerns over levels of light pollution in Norfolk are shared by a clear majority (65%) of councils surveyed. Left unchecked, levels of light pollution will continue to increase, compromising the beauty of the famous 'big skies' of Norfolk that many of the councils refer to in their responses. Although few were familiar with Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy, it is clear that many councils are aware that district planning authorities can place curfews on lighting and/or recommend types of lamp/fittings as a condition of planning approval. Indeed, we are heartened to learn that many parish and town councils use our Standard Light Pollution Clause regularly in their planning responses (see previous page) illustrating it is a proven and effective campaigning tool. Furthermore, 85% of those not using the Clause currently said they would use it in the future - a strong indicator that parish and town councils do have ongoing concerns regarding exterior lighting.

SURVEY METHOD: All parish and town councils in Norfolk were sent a copy of the questionnaire by post in December 2014. The Norfolk Association of Local Councils (NALC) also sent reminders to councils by email in December 2014 and February 2015. Councils were given three months to respond and could return the questionnaire online (Survey Monkey), by email or by post. Handwritten and email replies were entered manually online into Survey Monkey and analysis conducted. The full data report is available from www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution and blank copies of the original questionnaire are available upon request. We are not able to give copies of individual council responses due to data protection. This research is part of a series of campaign initiatives by CPRE Norfolk looking at the problem of light pollution and how it can be solved. It is funded by the Big Lottery Fund. This report last updated: April 2015.