

## Planning Guidance aimed at limiting light pollution

Policy guidance is improving both nationally, where the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises the importance of dark landscapes and acknowledges the need to limit the impact of light pollution, and locally because most district councils in Norfolk now have a policy in their Local Plans on light pollution.



*Light Pollution at Seething Industrial Estate (despite this being an area classified as a rural dark landscape near to Seething Observatory)*

A key document in Norfolk is Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy. This classifies over 90% of Norfolk (by area) as a Rural Dark Landscape deserving protection from light pollution.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act (2005) made intrusive lighting a Statutory Nuisance and gave power to individuals to complain about poor lighting which affects the enjoyment of their property.

CPRE Norfolk also has its own 'Standard Light Pollution Clause' that it inserts into every planning application response it makes. The clause asks that environmentally sensitive lighting be used as a condition of planning approval for a development. Many parish and town councils in Norfolk have adopted this approach and include our recommended clause when making responses.

**Encourage your parish council to include CPRE Norfolk's recommended Light Pollution Clause when responding to any planning application (download from [www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution](http://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution)).**

## Other benefits from reducing light pollution

### Reducing CO2 emissions and saving energy

A single 100w bulb burning during the hours of darkness for a year produces ¼ ton of carbon dioxide emissions. The less we light the more we reduce the production of greenhouse gases and conserve the earth's resources.

### Saving money on energy bills

By removing street lights, or by introducing part-night lighting and dimming measures, Councils and other lighting bodies can save millions of pounds every year. Similarly, householders will save money by removing unnecessary or excessive lighting or by investing in low energy lighting.

## To join our Campaign

We know from our surveys that a large number of residents wish to preserve the unlit nature of their villages and treasure the dark skies and landscapes of Norfolk. **Light pollution is a problem that can be solved and we all have a part to play in this solution.**

Please visit [www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution](http://www.cprenorfolk.org.uk/light-pollution) for further details of this campaign including links to specific local Planning Policies, case studies of best practice, lighting survey results, comments on the relevance of security lighting and copies of our Standard Light Pollution Clause for planning applications.

Our Light Pollution Campaign is co-ordinated by David Hook.

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*Photo credits: All photos by Steve Lansdell (Sky Photography) except Seething Airfield and A140/B1527 junction (Before) by Terry Stanford. Used with permission. Lamp pictures from catalogue. Front cover: The Milky Way above Morston Quay, Blakeney National Nature Reserve, Norfolk.*

# Reducing Light Pollution

Protecting Norfolk's dark skies and dark landscapes





## Norfolk's dark skies and dark landscapes

The skies of Norfolk are renowned for their beauty, not just during the day but also at night. Our county's dark skies and dark landscapes, which are among the least light-polluted in all of England, are important elements of Norfolk's rural character and deserve greater protection.

Unfortunately, the additional lighting associated with ever increasing levels of development, together with a proliferation of security lights, threaten extensive areas of countryside that are currently dark, tranquil and rural.

The good news is that light pollution is a problem that can be solved by adopting strong planning policies and taking individual action.

## What causes light pollution and why is it a problem?

Light pollution is caused by poorly designed or unnecessary light shining wastefully where it is not needed. It produces a number of problems:

- It obscures our view of the stars and planets and is a serious hindrance for astronomers. Only 9% of the UK population have a clear view of The Milky Way and while many Norfolk residents are currently included in this privileged minority increasing levels of light pollution will compromise this.
- It suburbanises the countryside. Darkness at night is one of the key features that defines the countryside and makes it so different from towns and cities. Sky glow and the glare from intrusive lights blur this important distinction.
- It can have a negative impact on the health of plants and animals, including humans.
- It can seriously annoy property owners directly affected by the glare from a neighbour's light. Often such lights are so bright that they can be seen by rural communities miles away.

*Reduced Light Pollution at A140/B1527 Junction  
(note: unshielded sodium lights in the left picture have been replaced with full cut off flat glass lights shown right)*



Before



After

## What CPRE Norfolk is doing

CPRE Norfolk actively campaigns to reduce light pollution in the Norfolk countryside. We work with planners, councils, architects, Norfolk Constabulary, the Highways Agency, lighting engineers, businesses and householders to ensure that they are aware of the problems caused by unnecessary, inappropriate and excessive lighting and, by applying our recommendations, know how to take steps to address these issues.

- **We have encouraged** parish councils, district councils and the county council to control excessive lighting by placing conditions on planning permissions.
- **We have worked** with individuals and parish councils to resolve light pollution disputes and concerns.
- **We have persuaded** recycling centres and a number of schools to follow our lighting recommendations.
- **We have supported** part night lighting\* and light dimming schemes and have influenced road lighting policy on Norfolk roads through our support for the Norfolk County Council's Environmental Lighting Zones Policy and nationally on trunk roads and motorways through liaison with the Highways Agency.
- **We have demonstrated**, with our views supported by Norfolk Constabulary, that increased lighting is not essential for security and crime prevention.

*\*Note: the introduction of part night lighting has not been accompanied by a rise in crime levels and in some places crime rates have fallen when the lights are off. There is a growing body of evidence critical of the view that lighting is beneficial in reducing crime.*

## How you can help

Light pollution is a problem that can be solved. Anyone who makes decisions on external lighting, whether as an individual, a parish council, a business or a local authority, should ensure that any external lighting scheme for which they are responsible minimises light pollution. The aim is to get the right amount of light of the right type in the right fitment into the right place at the right time. In many cases it is a matter of recognising that no lighting is required at all.

### When considering outdoor lighting we specifically recommend that:



Full Cut Off Flat Glass Lamp

*All outdoor lights are fully shielded (enclosed in 'full cut-off flat glass' fitments so that no glass is visible beneath the lamp's cover) and directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards).*

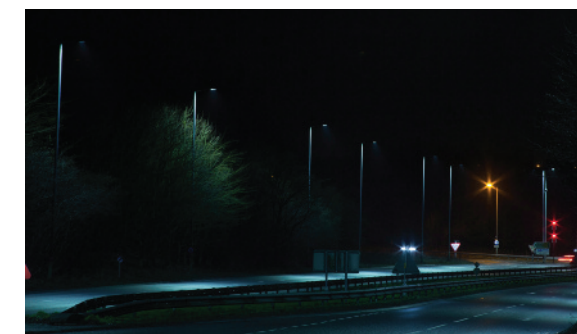
Outdoor lights are switched on only when needed (avoid 'dusk to dawn' lamps and use 'PIR' movement sensor lights or time switches instead).



LED Flat Glass Lamp

*White light low-energy lamps are used (LED or fluorescent). Avoid orange or pink sodium lights which have an urbanising effect and are less energy efficient.*

Outdoor lights are only installed if really needed (the best way to prevent light pollution is to avoid the use of any outdoor lights).



*LED Flat Glass lighting at Trowse bypass, Norwich (note: compare the downward pointing white LEDs with the single orange sodium lamp throwing light in all directions)*