



The countryside charity
Norfolk

CPRE Norfolk Position Statement **Light Pollution**

CPRE Norfolk actively campaigns to reduce light pollution in the Norfolk countryside.

Norfolk is one of England's most rural counties and its dark landscapes and dark skies are a defining part of its rural character, deserving protection. These special qualities are threatened by increasing levels of light pollution caused by poorly designed or unnecessary light shining wastefully where it is not needed.

Light pollution:

- Eliminates our view of the stars
- Urbanises 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
- Negatively impacts the health of plants and animals, including humans
- Annoys property owners directly affected by the glare from a neighbour's light
- Contributes to climate change by increasing greenhouse gas emissions

Light pollution is a problem that can be solved by adopting strong planning policies and taking individual action and we work with planners, councils, architects, Norfolk Constabulary, the Highways Agency, lighting engineers, businesses and householders to ensure they are aware of the problems caused by unnecessary, inappropriate and excessive lighting.

We have achieved a number of successes through our campaigning by:

- Encouraging parish councils, district councils and the county council to control excessive lighting by placing conditions on planning permissions
- Working with individuals and parish councils to resolve light pollution disputes and concerns
- Persuading recycling centres and a number of schools to follow our lighting recommendations
- Supporting part night lighting* and light dimming schemes and influencing 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
- Demonstrating, with our views supported by Norfolk Constabulary, that increased lighting is not essential for security and crime prevention.

Our [guidelines](#) provide useful information on how to reduce light pollution. They are intended to ensure that outdoor lighting is of the right type in the right fitment in the right place and only switched on when needed. Good practice is often a matter of recognising that no lighting is required at all. All outdoor lights should be fully shielded (enclosed in 'full cut-off flat glass' fitments with no glass visible beneath the lamp's cover) and directed downwards (mounted horizontally to the ground and not tilted upwards). 'Dusk to dawn' lamps should be avoided and 'PIR' movement sensor lights or time switches used instead. White LED low-energy lamps are highly directional, if used correctly, and are less urbanising in their impact than sodium lights which are less energy efficient and produce an orange or pink 'suburbanising' glare.

The importance of protecting rural dark landscapes is recognised in national (NPPF) and local policies but CPRE Norfolk would like to see a strengthening of policy in regard to light pollution.

*footnote: 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

April 2021