



Barcombe Parish Council Dark Skies Policy

Introduction & Context

Light pollution is the human-made alteration of outdoor light levels from those occurring naturally. Light pollution disrupts wildlife, impacts human health, wastes money and energy, contributes to climate change, and blocks our view of the universe.

Policies that promote dark skies are tied directly to climate change through the reduction of the consumption of energy by promoting efficient outdoor lighting technologies. These policies aim to control the types of outdoor lighting that may be installed both on domestic and business premises, and promote guidance about appropriate lighting levels and warranting conditions (whether lights may be installed in certain areas and/or operated during particular hours of day).

The Campaign for Rural England has found that just 2% of the country is able to enjoy truly dark skies, while over half of the population is severely impacted by light pollution.

In 2020, an All-Party Parliamentary Group set out the major causes of growing light pollution, which threaten dark skies in the UK and advocates a range of policy solutions to mitigate and remedy light pollution issues. As part of their recommendation, this group are challenging the existing National Planning Policy Framework legal to regulate light pollution.

Barcombe parish is a rural community with relatively dark skies. The parish has no street lighting and residents have consistently opposed the idea of street lighting.

Potential Light Pollution and Night Blight Issues

The policy recognises that artificial light can offer practical benefits to residents, however it also reflects that inappropriate artificial lighting can contribute to a range of problems, including:

- giving the village an urban feel;
- detracting from the appearance of the night sky;
- impacting human health;
- impacting the behaviour of wildlife.

The intention of the Barcombe Parish Council Dark Skies Policy is to avoid dispute by describing potential problems arising from the use of outside lighting and making recommendations as to how those issues may be avoided.

1. Obtrusive Light, which can cause a nuisance to others in the form of:
 - Sky glow- the brightening of the night sky.
 - Glare - the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a darker background.
 - Light Intrusion (“Trespass”) - the spilling of light beyond the boundary of the property or area being lit.
2. Overlighting is a major cause of obtrusive light. Many outside light fittings are very poorly designed, with less than half the light output going in a useful direction. For that reason, they often contain unnecessarily bright bulbs to achieve a result.

Relatively high-powered lights are rarely necessary in domestic situations and have a nuisance effect over considerable distances.

Rapid advances in modern lighting technology have also caused considerable confusion. It is easy to underestimate the light output of a modern bulb.

3. Security lighting can give people a greater sense of safety, and they should be entitled to use it, but not in a way that causes nuisance to others.

Excessive levels of illumination provide dark shadows for people, including those with criminal intent, to hide in or behind. Lighting that is shielded or angled down can actually improve rather than compromise security.

Dark Skies Policy

This policy encourages conservation and enhancement of the distinctive rural character of Barcombe. It seeks to prevent light pollution and protect the night-time views of the rural area, from within the parish and surrounding areas.

This policy ultimately aims to protect the dark skies of Barcombe; the rural darkness the night sky affords, which contribute to the tranquillity of the parish's nocturnal character.

Guidance for Residents

The impact of existing light installations can be reduced in the following ways:

- Light only the areas that need brightness, such as entrances and walkways. Illumination should not be directed outside of our properties, into the properties of others, along the highway or into the night sky.
- Use energy efficient bulbs, with a warm white tone and ~500 lumens.
- Shield lights and direct them downwards to concentrate and limit the spread.
- Only use lights when needed. Consider timers and sensors.
- Be considerate of neighbours by controlling lighting direction, extent, and timing.

In addition to guidance for residents, this policy seeks to influence developers, and the future development framework for Barcombe parish.

Planning Framework

All new development proposals should be appropriate to the dark skies status of the parish, limiting the impact of light pollution from artificial light on the intrinsically dark landscapes within the parish.

Any applications for new development that require a lighting scheme should show how the status of dark skies will be protected.

External lighting should only be considered in areas where it is absolutely necessary, such as entrances and walkways. Where lighting is required, minimum brightness levels, controlled by sensors and timers, should be used.

Residential development should be designed to minimise light pollution, both in external aspects and as a consequence of light leakage from the interior.

General street lighting will not be considered in any areas of Barcombe parish.

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Adapted with permission from Newick Parish Council's Dark Skies Policy.

Leaflet produced by DarkSky International: <https://darksky.org/>

Protecting the night sky starts with YOU!

- 1** Light only what you need



- 2** Use energy efficient bulbs and only as bright as you need



- 3** Shield lights and direct them down



- 4** Only use light when you need it



- 5** Choose warm white light bulbs



- 6** Join IDA!
We need your help to continue the fight against light pollution.

**DARK
SKY.
ORG**

Signed:

Date:

Chairman
Barcombe Parish Council