

Night Skies Consultation – Final Report October 2025

Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this document is to give a final report on the Night Skies community consultation, including both qualitative and quantitative data gathered from this, as well as suggestions and queries related to this proposal.

This will be a non-biased explanation of the consultation outcome, including arguments that were given for and against the proposal.

General Overview

This consultation was started on Monday 31st March 2025.

The consultation ended on Tuesday 30th September 2025 with 205 responses.

The target audience of this consultation was anyone in Long Stratton who may be affected by the changes in streetlighting.

Methods available to the public for giving their thoughts included picking up a paper copy from the office, council meetings, or the library, the digital form on the Night Skies page on our website, or having a digital copy of the form sent to them via email.

This was promoted on our website, Facebook (our page as well as multiple community groups), the Sextons Wheel, Long Stratton Newsletter and posters on our noticeboards.

Data Storing

All responses were recorded in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and saved in a Night Skies folder. This folder is accessible to most Council Officers.

Any responses collected from the digital form on the website were sent directly to the Office inbox, where they were then moved to a Night Skies folder. All responses were anonymous, and no personal details were collected.

The handling of paper copies was slightly different. The data from them was put onto the spreadsheet, and the paper copy then went to be shredded.

Data Analysis

We received 205 responses in total. We have a population of approximately 4000.

It was recommended to continue this consultation until Tuesday 30th September 2025, to give a total of 6 months for residents to respond. This was agreed by the Council and the consultation closed on this date at 23:59.

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Quantitative Data:

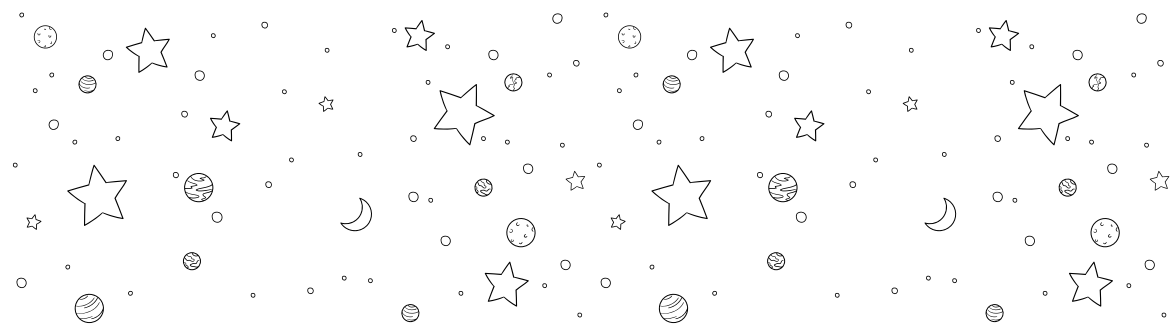
The majority of respondents were in favour of the Night Skies proposal, with **72%** voting “**Yes**” under “Do you think Night Skies is a Good Idea?”, **21%** voting “**No**”, **7%** voting “**Unsure**” and **<1%** voting “**No Opinion**”.

Respondents were asked how they found out about the Night Skies consultation.

“Facebook” was the main way people found out about the consultation, with **67%** of total responses coming from this source.

“Letter/Magazine” brought in **17%** of total responses, “Other” brought in **5%**, “Word of Mouth” brought in **4%**, “Website” brought in **4%** and “Council Meeting” brought in **3%**.

95% of responses were **digital**, and **5%** were **paper**.



Qualitative Data:

Respondents were asked if there was anything they liked or disliked about the proposal for Night Skies.

Respondents liked the potential for a reduction in cost, energy usage and light pollution, as well as the possibility to see the night sky more clearly and help save the planet and local wildlife. Respondents also liked that streetlights outside of residents’ houses would be off, potentially allowing people to sleep better at night.

Some respondents mentioned that it would improve safety for those with professions that rely on dark skies, as they would no longer need to travel out into fields at night.

Respondents disliked the risk of reduced safety for people, property and wildlife. This concern came not only from the possibility of harmful individuals being able to move around more freely in the dark undetected, increasing the risk of crime and antisocial behaviour, but also from the risk of vehicle drivers being unable to see clearly due to the lack of lighting. There were also specific concerns over those walking alone at night, those with visual impairment that rely on areas with streetlighting and increased risk of slips, trips and falls.

There were also concerns over how much it would cost to implement, and reduced image quality for properties with CCTV installed.

Respondents were asked if they had any suggestions for the Night Skies proposal:

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- Keep some lights on (lighting up one side, alternating streetlights, or leaving one of every third/fourth light on);
- Keep lights on in specific areas (public places, parks, footpaths, alleyways, crossings, high-risk areas for crime, residential areas);
- Keep lights on along the A140, Flowerpot Lane and Swan Lane;
- Extend the period of the lights being turned off;
- Reduce the period of the lights being turned off;
- Delay the lights turning off until 1 hour after the last venue in town shuts;
- Attend to individual complaints and shield/remove, remove lights from outside of houses;
- Shield, dim, hood or filter the streetlights, use downlights;
- Use sensor lighting with eco-friendly bulbs instead of turning them off;
- Carry the proposal out slowly, turn off the lights in sections, trial and review;
- Inform residents on the streets where lights will be turned off beforehand, put up reminder displays every few streetlights that let people know the lights will be out between the specific period;
- Rotate out which streetlights are off to work out what works best for each area;
- Remove the lights along the A140, or replace them with smaller streetlights;
- Turn off the industrial site lighting at night;
- Keep the lights on Friday and Saturday nights, turn them off the rest of the week;
- Combine the proposal with CCTV and infra-red lighting for high-risk areas, have an increased police presence;
- Keep the lighting on during winter months, only turn them off during April – September, change the period depending on the season;
- Ensure all new developments follow the same period and restrict properties to sensor lighting only;
- Turn off lights around housing estates;
- Ask businesses to turn off their lighting at night when the building is not being used;
- Ask people to consider light pollution caused by garden lights;
- Complete a risk assessment and turn off as many lights as possible;
- Ask for the advice of emergency services and other towns who have also done this.

Improvements for Future Consultations

This consultation got a lot of engagement within the community, but the responses were very low in comparison to the population of the town. In future consultations, we could improve the reach of the consultation by increasing the channels of communication.

For the Night Skies consultation, we promoted on Facebook, on our website, in council meetings and through newsletters. We also had paper copies available in the library, but we did not continuously check how many copies were available, and we did not promote this as much as we could have.

In future consultations, it would be beneficial to have, and promote, multiple points throughout the town where people could pick up a paper copy, fill it out and hand it back in. We could then pick these up on a regular basis, allowing more members of the community to have their say.

An alternative to this would be sending every household a paper copy of the consultation, or an information leaflet that links to an online version and informs them of the option to request a paper copy.