

# Night Skies Consultation – Report for Full Council 21<sup>st</sup> July 2025

## Purpose of this Document

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

## General Overview

This consultation was started on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

At the time of signing off the previous report, the consultation had 86 responses.

Now, at the time of signing off this report, the consultation has had **149 responses** – an increase of 63!

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

Methods available to the public for giving their thoughts include 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.

Previously we only had digital responses, but we have now had **10 paper responses**, showing there is a need.

This has so far been promoted on our website, Facebook (our page, both Mardles and the Long Stratton Community Noticeboard), the Sextons Wheel and posters on our noticeboards.

This has now been promoted in the latest edition of the Long Stratton Newsletter.

## Data Storing

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

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

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

## Data Analysis

At the current stage of the consultation, we have received **149 responses**. We have a population of approximately 4000. It was recommended to continue this consultation until Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025, to give a total of 6 months for residents to respond. This was agreed by the Council.

Responses are becoming more frequent now that awareness of this proposed project is increasing.

A period of 6 months allows all who would be affected to give their opinion on the project and any suggestions, as well as ask questions about it.

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## Quantitative Data:

So far, the majority of respondents are in **favour** of the Night Skies project, with **71%** voting “**Yes**” under “Do you think Night Skies is a Good Idea?”, **22%** voting “**No**” and **7%** voting “**Unsure**”.

**93% of the responses** so far have been **digital**, and **7%** have been **paper**.

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

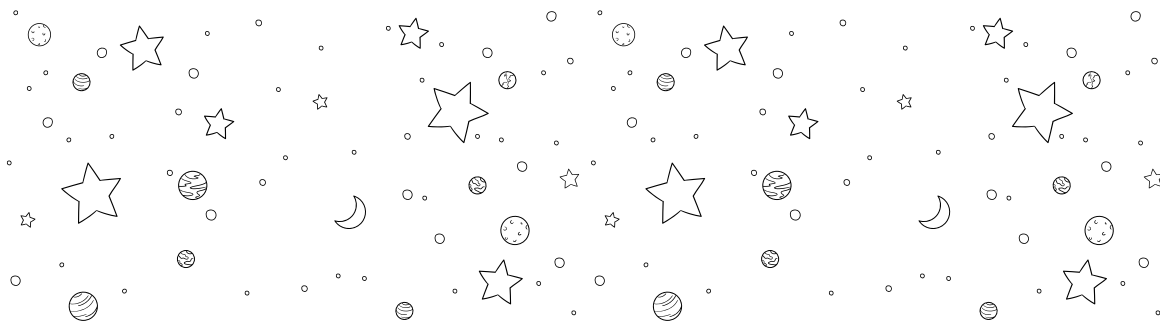
“**Facebook**” is the main way people have been finding out about the consultation, with **70%** of total responses coming from this source.

“**Letter/Magazine**” is still the second most common, with **16%** of total responses.

“**Word of Mouth**” makes up **5%** of total responses, “**Other**” makes up **4%**, “**Council Meeting**” makes up **3%** and “**Website**” makes up **2%** of total responses.

Respondents were also asked “Do you feel that this feedback form is a good way of getting community feedback for Night Skies?”

**86%** of respondents voted “**Yes**”, **11%** of respondents voted “**Unsure**”, and **3%** voted “**No**”.



## Qualitative Data:

Respondents were asked if there was anything they liked or disliked about the proposal for Night Skies. Likes or positives from the previous report included reduced cost and light pollution, less energy consumption, better sleep quality, a visible night sky and better conditions for wildlife.

Likes or positives since the previous report included the above, as well as the possibility of seeing the Milky Way again, improving safety for those in fields related to the night sky (not having to walk out into fields on their own), less light pollution for those in surrounding parishes and the consideration councillors are giving to both humans and the wildlife in the town.

Dislikes or concerns included safety of those walking alone at night, initial cost of modifying the streetlights, changes to council tax, possibility of increased crime and safety of wildlife on the roads when drivers are around.

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## Suggestions from the previous report included:

- Keeping some lights on in areas with a higher rate of crime, alleyways, near the library, crossings, etc;
- Turning the lights off earlier (and in contrast, turning them off later was also suggested);
- Add CCTV to deter possible crime;
- Replace current bulbs with dimmer ones;
- Turn off the lights in dense housing estates, keep them on elsewhere;
- Make a paper version of the consultation available (this has been done);
- Light up one side of the road instead of two;
- Ask people to also consider light pollution caused by an increase in garden lights;
- Keep the lights on during winter months;
- Move, remove or shield the streetlights at request from individuals;
- Use downlights instead;
- More promotions of Night Skies, discuss the value and benefits of the project;
- Turn off every other light and keep the rest on;
- Encourage those concerned about safety to use different alternatives;
- Use motion sensor lights that come on when needed;
- Get advice from emergency services and other towns that have carried out a similar project;
- Carry the project out slowly/in stages to get people used to the idea;
- Ensure new housing follows this system from the start.

## Suggestions since the previous report included:

- Turn off lights in commercial buildings at night if they are not in use;
- Put up reminder displays (e.g., “This light will be off between 00:00 and 05:00”);
- Turn the lights off at midnight when all local venues are shut, otherwise wait until 1 hour after the last venue closes;
- Complete a risk assessment and turn off as many lights as possible;
- Fit hoods and dimmers to all streetlights;

## Queries from the previous report:

- Will this lead to a reduction in Council Tax?
- Will this include Hempnall Roundabout?
- Will this include the A140?
- Can we tackle the lighting on The Mill (formerly Leeders Mill)?
- Can we install shields on streetlights that may be kept on?
- Can we leave some lights on?
- Will the lights be turned off over the whole town?
- Will the streetlights on the A140 be reduced once the bypass is built?
- Are there any proposals generally for the A140?
- Do we currently use the most cost-saving, energy-efficient bulbs?
- Can we remove the lights on the A140?

## Queries since the previous report:

- Can we dim or put filters on the lights in the event we cannot turn them off?

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## Next Steps

The next steps from the previous report were:

- Prepare a report for each Full Council meeting (ongoing);
- Prepare a detailed list of potential benefits and drawbacks of the project (outstanding);
- Put up more Night Skies posters around the town (outstanding);
- Promote Night Skies more frequently (ongoing);
- Create digital map of streetlights owned by LSTC (completed).

Current next steps:

- Prepare a detailed list of potential benefits and drawbacks of Night Skies;
- Put more Night Skies posters around the town;
- Continue creating reports for each Full Council meeting (next meeting: September);
- Continue promoting the Night Skies Community Consultation on Facebook.

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**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Author:** \_\_\_\_\_