

Street Lighting Report – May 2023

1. Background

The Parish Council has declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and has been considering its carbon footprint as part of the drive towards Net Zero.

The key area for the PC to address is street lighting and was already trialling LED street light options when the energy price increases arrived.

A proposal was presented to the PC to remove a number of street lights. This proposal was considered by the PC and put to the community for consultation as an on-line survey with paper copies available on request.

This proposal to switch off 22 lights and convert the rest to LED would result in an 85% reduction in carbon emissions from the street lights which equates to an annual carbon saving of about 1.3 tonnes of CO₂.

The electricity bill for the street lights will double in July, and although this is not as big an increase as the electricity supplier first thought, significant savings will be made by reducing the number of street lights not only in the energy bill but also in on-going annual maintenance costs. Converting all lights to LED would save the parish approximately £1,500 per annum on the energy and maintenance bills and reducing the number of lights by 22 would save a further £1,000 per annum.

The principle of changing all the operational street lights in Freshford to LED was supported by 95% of respondents to the survey.

The principle of switching off some lights was supported by 69% of respondents, of which 54% felt the proposal to switch off 22 lights was about the right number, 18% thought this was too few and 28% thought this was too many lights.

The PC met to consider the comments received in the survey and to review the selection criteria for each light, then walked round the village in the hours of darkness to check each light against this criteria. This led to a change in status of 9 lights in the proposal, the overall number of lights now proposed to switch off changing from 22 to 25.

Several comments were received asking for a trial period. It was suggested that a 12-month trial is undertaken to allow for all seasons to be covered. The PC supports this idea and are proposing to have 25 lights switched off for a 6 month trial period and convert the remaining 13 lights to LED as soon as the work can be undertaken, with further feedback from the community after the trial.

2. Selection Criteria

The initial criteria use for identifying the lights for removal was:

- Road junction
- Light spillage from houses
- The position of the next street light that was not a candidate for removal

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The comments received from the Community Consultation have been reviewed.

A number of points were raised in the comments with some regularity, which included:

- Safety
 - Crime
 - Visibility
 - Female safety
- Retention of light 22 – Pipehouse Lane by the A36
- Access to the station – Station Road
- Consider a trial period

These comments could be addressed by:

- Crime – national statistics show that most break-ins occur during the day, also reduced lighting reduces car crimes Much rural theft is from farms and outbuildings, which is not affected by street lights.
- Visibility – the use of torches would overcome personal visibility. Some people are against the use of torches, and some already have the need to use torches.
- Visibility - cars have headlights, and a torch is far more visible than ordinary clothing.
- Female safety is a difficult subject. There is no history of attacks on women in the community, or indeed of any personal attacks. Attacks have not started happen in other rural areas where lighting has been reduced or removed.
- Station Road – whilst residents could use torches, non-residents will be at a disadvantage.

Care needs to be taken with statistics as there are marked differences between urban and rural areas.

Taking the comments into account, this clarifies the selection criteria as:

- Keep lights by the junctions.
- Remove lights where there is residual lighting from housing and/or other street lights.
- Retain lights where there are Exceptional Hazards.
- Consideration of station access.

3. Street Lighting

On applying the reviewed selection criteria, which takes into consideration the comments made on the survey by Freshford villagers, to each street light this has slightly changed the status of the lights from the information provided with the survey.

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The changes are as follows:

FRESHFORD STREET LIGHTS			OFF or ON (Survey)	OFF or ON (Review)	Rationale for status change
	Light	Location			
PIPEHOUSE LANE	21	Pipehouse Lane - Outside Littlemead	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
UPPER PIPEHOUSE LANE	22	Junction A36, Pipehouse Lane	OFF	ON	By junction
UPPER PIPEHOUSE LANE	24	Opposite Rose Cottage, Old Chapel Upper Pipehouse	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
ROSEMARY LANE	27	Rosemary Lane, by Mount Pleasant	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
SHARPSTONE	30	Sharpstone - Stonecrop	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
SHARPSTONE	31	Sharpstone - Abbotsleigh Entrance	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
SHARPSTONE	32	Opposite Friars Gate Garage - April Cottage	ON	OFF	Not by junction or hazard
SHARPSTONE	33	Opposite Methodist Church - Sharpstone House	OFF	ON	By hazard - protruding stone wall
THE TYNING	36	War Memorial	OFF	ON	By junction

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4. Retained Lights

The following map contains the remaining lights, and BANES & CURO lights, and the school light 14A (behind 14).

