

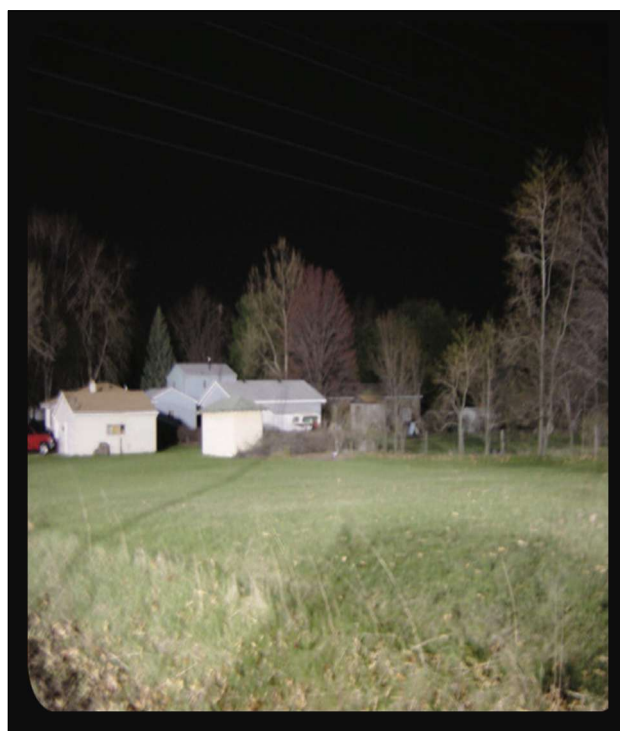
DARK VILLAGES

Traditionally Halstead Village has been a dark village with no streetlights and very little domestic outside lighting. Darkness at night is one of the key features that defines the countryside and villages, making them different from cities and towns. Halstead Parish Council is encouraging residents to consider their domestic lighting in the interests of our community and the environment.

CORE PRINCIPLES

1. Light Pollution

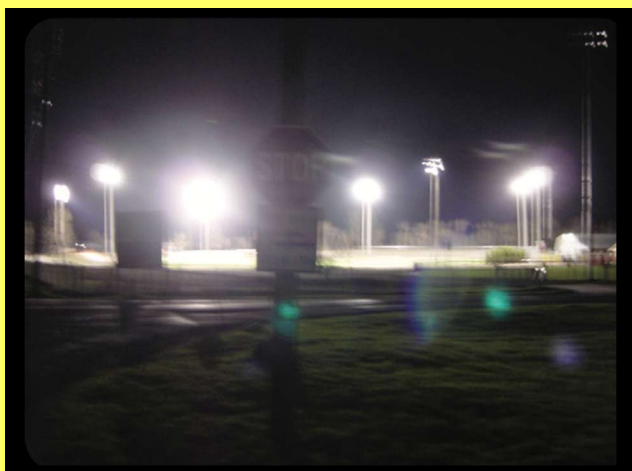
Sometimes called 'light intrusion' or 'light trespass' this involves light spilling beyond the property or area being lit. This pollution generally relates to windows and intrusion into private property, but it can also apply to natural habitats. Make sure any outdoor lights you may have installed don't shine into your neighbour's property or across the road. In the photo below could you sleep if your bedroom window faced this neighbour's light?



CORE PRINCIPLES

2. Glare

This is the uncomfortable brightness of a light source when viewed against a contrasting darker background. In less-dense rural areas, like our village, glare is more intense than in urban areas. It is particularly noticeable under domestic floodlights when walking after dark, blinding the way ahead, or when looking across village landscapes and local farmland.



HEALTH & WELLBEING

Circadian rhythm disruption.

Your circadian rhythm is the natural rhythm of your body that controls your sleep and wake cycles. It is directly connected to your 24-hour 'body clock', and primarily follows changes in light. Quality sleep is absolutely essential to your long-term mental and physical health.



Decreased melatonin production.

Melatonin is a hormone whose production is triggered by darkness, while blue light (esp. from lights and screens) suppresses it. It signals to the body that it is time to sleep by lowering body temperature, reducing alertness, and preparing the body for rest.

Night vision is impaired by glare, which creates visual discomfort, reduces visibility, and often creates a safety hazard for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

BUSTING THE POPULAR MYTHS

The reality is ...

Domestic floodlights may indicate potential targets.

Bright and misdirected light can be a security risk because it can cause glare and create shadows for concealment.

Driveway floodlighting can dazzle passers-by, contributing to accidents by blinding the way ahead.



BE SAFE AFTER DARK (pedestrians and cyclists)

Not all roads in our village have pavements, so be sure to take a sensible torch after dark to light your way and warn oncoming traffic, and wear something light-reflective.



WILDLIFE DISRUPTION



Light pollution causes disruption and even fragmentation of habitats for animals, birds, spiders, insects, and plants. It disrupts their natural rhythms, affecting respiration, feeding, resting, and activity.

We all know that the UK's flying insect populations have declined heavily over the last 20 years indicating a severe, long-term decline driven by habitat loss, intensive agriculture (pesticides/fertilizers), climate change, and light pollution. One-third of insects attracted to lights die, heavily impacting food chain.



SAVE MONEY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Light pollution wastes money and resources

Lighting levels that are higher than necessary and light that shines when and where it is not needed is wasteful.

Wasted energy from bad lighting design has significant economic and environmental consequences.



Save your money

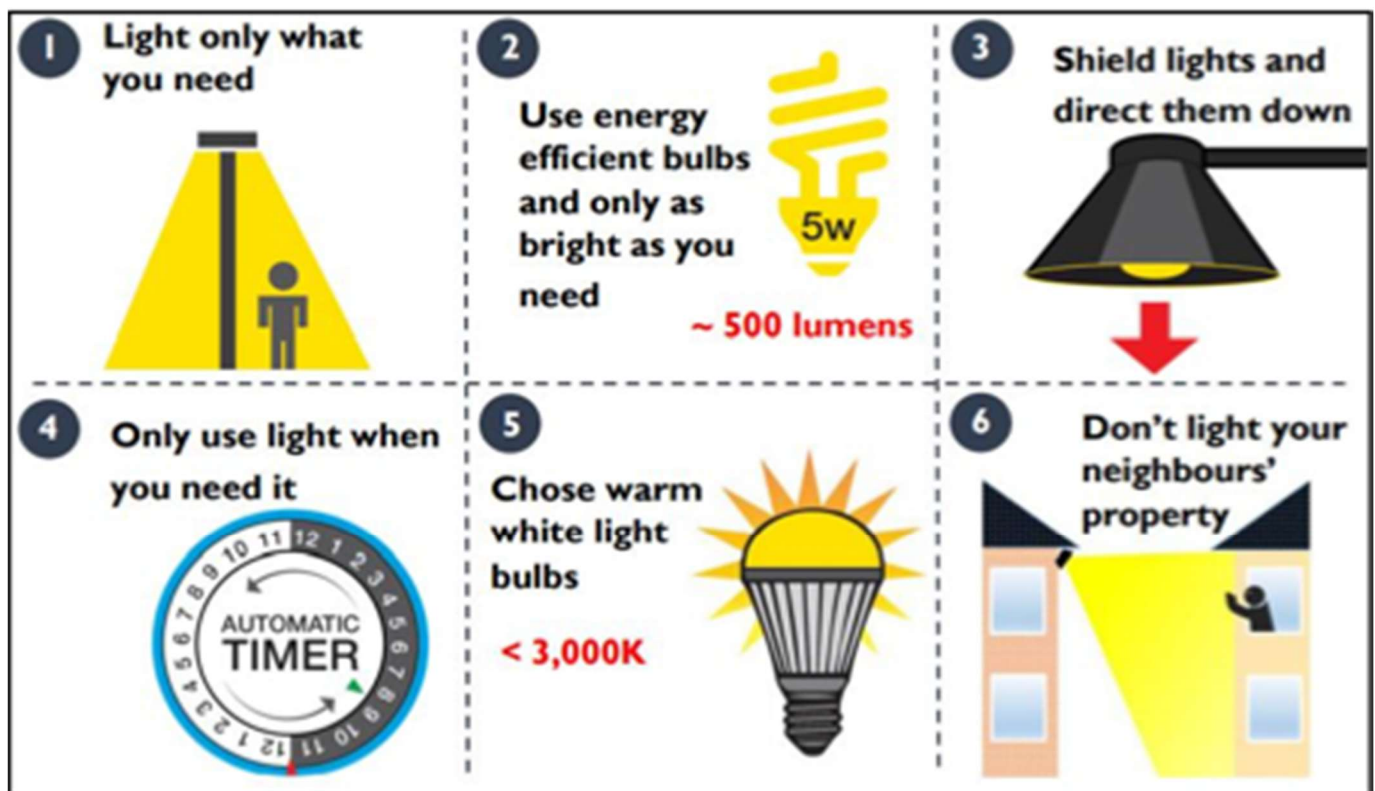
WHAT CAN WE ALL DO?

Maximise the efficiency of your home lighting.

Outdoor lighting should be fully shielded and directed downward where it is needed. Fully shielded fixtures can provide the same level of illumination on the ground as unshielded ones, but with less energy and cost, and lights shine down, not up.

Use warm-white bulbs (measured in Kelvins – less than 3,000K) to reduce the blue cool light that is more harmful to wildlife. LEDs and CFLs can help reduce energy use and protect the environment.

Dimmers, motion sensors and timers can help to reduce average illumination levels, save even more energy, and be considerate to your neighbours.



ENJOY OUR NIIGHT SKIES

Identifying constellations and planets

Observing shooting stars