



Campaign to Protect Rural England  
Standing up for your countryside

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Light pollution of Eastbourne, from Warren Hill

## MAPS OF ENGLAND'S LIGHT POLLUTION AND DARK SKIES

**The Campaign to Protect Rural England has published maps of Great Britain's light pollution and dark skies. Using data captured by a satellite at 1.30am throughout September 2015, the latest technology has been used to give an accurate picture of how much light is spilling up into the night sky and show where urgent action is needed.**

Detailed maps have been created for England showing districts, counties, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and, at a wider scale, National Character Areas. Besides these, there are high-level maps available for Scotland and Wales, so that we can now present the most accurate ever picture of Britain's light pollution and dark skies. The maps have been split into nine categories to show the range of light levels from darkest to brightest; the resolution of the maps is 400 x 400 metres.

A report *'Night Blight: Mapping England's light pollution and dark skies'* has been produced by CPRE, which summarises the results of the maps nationally and makes recommendations to Government, local authorities, Highways England and others with the aim of reducing light pollution.

### What do the maps show in [county/district/National Park/AONB/NCA]?

**East Lindsey District is the 27th darkest out of the 326 within England. It has a high percentage of dark skies with minimal light pollution – 73% of the skies above the district fall in the two darkest categories, compared with 55% of Lincolnshire.**

Yet there is prominent light pollution in the district from the coastal towns of Skegness, Chapel-St-Leonards and Mablethorpe, with the brightest locations in Skegness town centre and the Fantasy Island theme park. There is significant upward light spill from the many holiday parks that are dotted along the coastline. Only 0.3% of East Lindsey has severe upward light pollution, although this light spills into the countryside around these coastal towns, with 10% of the district in the three middle light categories; blurring the distinction between town and country. There are high levels of light pollution emanating from towns such as Spilsby, Louth and Horncastle, as well as the Tetney Oil and Theddlethorpe Gas Terminals. The satellite images show the light spilling up into the night sky when most people are asleep.

### What urgent action is needed by the [council/other audience]?

**East Lindsey District should develop a policy to control light pollution in its emerging Local Plan which will ensure that existing dark skies are protected, and that new developments do not increase local light pollution. This should be included in the consultation on preferred options which will begin in June 2016.**

The map of East Lindsay District councils light pollution and dark skies can also be used to inform decisions on local planning applications and identify individual facilities to approach to dim or turn off their lights when not needed or shield lights to reduce pollution.

Local MPs should be asked to lobby the Government to do more at a national level e.g. by sending a strong message to local authorities that they should be implementing the policy in the NPPF to reduce light pollution, and to encourage Highways England to reduce light pollution from the Strategic Road Network.

Links to local information or to <http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk>

Link details  
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# WHAT IS LIGHT POLLUTION?

**Light pollution is a generic term referring to artificial light which shines where it is neither wanted nor needed. In broad terms, there are three types of light pollution:**

- **skyglow** – the pink or orange glow we see for miles around towns and cities, spreading deep into the countryside, caused by a scattering of artificial light by airborne dust and water droplets
- **glare** – the uncomfortable brightness of a light source
- **light intrusion** – light spilling beyond the boundary of the property on which a light is located, sometimes shining through windows and curtains

There is increasing awareness of the impact that light pollution can have on wildlife, by interrupting natural rhythms such as migration, reproduction and feeding patterns. Man-made light is known to cause confusion to migrating birds, often with fatal outcomes, and many of us will have heard birds singing late into the night in trees lit by a streetlight.

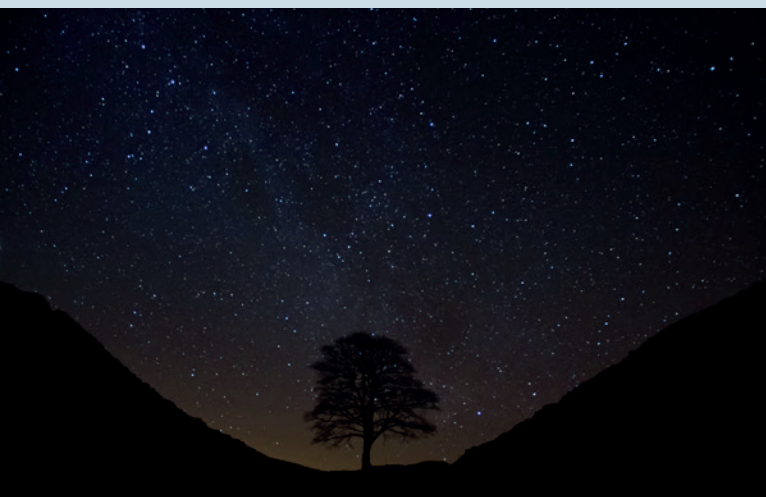
Light pollution can cause a great deal of distress to humans too, including disrupted sleep, and in some cases has driven people to move house to get away from light pollution. Recent studies suggest that exposure to light at night can disrupt the body's production of melatonin, a brain hormone best known for its daily role in resetting the body's biological clock.

## How could [xx] development impact on [xx]'s dark skies?

Darkness at night is one of the key characteristics of rural areas and it represents a major difference between what is rural and what is urban. Security lights, floodlights and streetlights all break into the darkness and create a veil of light across the night sky.

Light doesn't respect boundaries; it can spread for miles from the source and blurs the distinction between town and country. Light spilling up into the night sky is also a waste of energy and money – local councils were estimated to spend £613 million on street lighting in 2014-15 – and the lights can account for between 15-30% of a council's carbon emissions.

We're not saying there should be no artificial light at all, but it should be the right type of lighting and only used where and when it is needed.



Sycamore Gap on Hadrian's Wall, Northumberland

## Why does it matter?

Darkness at night or the presence of light pollution will influence the character of a landscape, whether urban or rural, and also affect people's experience of a landscape. There are 159 detailed National Character Areas (NCA) in England with detailed profiles created by Natural England. East Lindsey District is covered by the Lincolnshire Wolds and Marshes NCA<sup>1</sup> and notes that an environmental opportunity for the area is 'Retaining the open character of the landscape with its expansive views and big skies. Protecting areas with a strong sense of remoteness, wildness and tranquillity and dark skies.'

<sup>1</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6596660822016000?category=587130>



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