

Kington Langley Lighting Proposed Guidelines (for Discussion)

~~Fourth~~^{Third} draft – ~~14 May~~^{8 March} 2025
(includes some villager feedback)

With the growing availability of a wide range of LED lighting, remote control and battery technologies, it is getting ever easier to illuminate one's home and garden and surroundings. This could significantly alter the character of the village, as well as negatively impact the wellbeing of residents and wildlife. We need the villagers of Kington Langley to express their views on how much this concerns them and whether guidelines such as these are appropriate.

We propose a consultation period where this document is available on the parish council website, advertised in the parish magazine, and covered at the annual parish meeting in May 2025 with a view to finalising the document a month later.

The purpose of this document is to propose possible guidelines for lighting in the village, in public spaces, and building exteriors. We need to balance public safety, minimisation of light pollution, quality of life for residents, and the essentially rural nature of the village setting.

General principles:

- Aesthetics
 - lighting should complement the village's aesthetic, preserving the character and charm of the community, bearing in mind its rural setting and proximity to wildlife.
- Environmental responsibility
 - All lighting should be designed, installed and used to minimise light pollution. Poor lighting has negative effects on neighbours and nature.
- Safety & Security
 - Outdoor lighting is appropriate where required for safety and security of residents, ~~visitors and~~ businesses, schools etc
- Practicality
 - In a village with minimal street lighting, we need to consider safe and effective movement of delivery personnel and visitors during the darker hours
- Consider nature
 - We cherish the natural world around us and appreciate the disruption night-time lighting can cause

Light pollution can disturb residents, drivers, and pedestrians, and is proven harmful to wildlife:

- disorientation of insects (including death of moths drawn to light)
- disruption of feeding and hunting, migration patterns, and circadian rhythms
- alteration of breeding behaviours
- increased predation risks, etc.

Planning and Legislation

The National Planning Policy Framework 2019 makes little reference to lighting with regards to the control of obtrusive light, the only reference states¹:

- ...limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation

Wiltshire Council's planning policy states that developers proposing developments with significant external light that could impact residential properties or other sensitive receptors must submit a lighting impact assessment and mitigation measures in accordance with the guidance set out in Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP): Guidance for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light.

Installing external lighting in a conservation zone (like the centre of Kington Langley) may also require planning permission; one would need to check with Wiltshire Council planning policies.

Excessive lighting can be treated as a nuisance under Environment Health legislation, namely the UK Environmental Protection Act 1990. If a resident feels that lighting from a neighbour is excessive or intrusive, there is guidance for resolution on Wiltshire Council's website (search "light nuisance"). The first port of call is always to discuss with the neighbour to resolve the issue – these Guidelines may help in that discussion.

Street Lighting

Like many villages Kington Langley has minimal street lighting. There is a solitary street light outside the Hit or Miss, one at the entrance to Plough Corner and a few down that street.

It is believed that the general agreement of residents is that this remains the preferred state, so this document proposes no increase in street lighting.

Residential Lighting

Outdoor lighting for private residences must be designed, installed and managed to avoid creating excessive glare or light spill onto neighbouring properties, the Commons, verges and roads. (As stated above, planning permission may be required if in the conservation area.)

Security Lighting should be sensibly sited to avoid reaching beyond the boundaries of the property, and triggered only by movements within the property boundaries. Timed lights, triggered by sensors, is more effective than permanently lit security lighting.

Discreet, well placed lights can illuminate house signs and entrances just enough to assist delivery personnel and visitors.

Decorative lights (e.g., Christmas lights) should be temporary and turned off during non-holiday seasons to maximise their effect during the festive period. Please consider the impact of the display on drivers, pedestrians, neighbours and wildlife.

The question for Kington Langley residents, is whether guidelines that discourage external lighting of buildings, gardens, driveways, gateways and house-names is appropriate.

1 Institute of Lighting Professionals GN01/21 The Reduction of Obtrusive Light

Commercial Lighting

Lighting for commercial properties should focus on functionality and aesthetics but must also adhere to guidelines that prevent light spill into neighbouring residential areas.

Businesses are encouraged to use energy-efficient lighting solutions and to dim exterior lighting during non-business hours.

Wildlife is more impacted by cooler lighting (above 3000K) so where possible this should be avoided.

Curfew

A curfew would be overnight time period where tighter restrictions on lighting are applied. Kington Langley has no curfew, and it is not proposed.

Proposed Summary – Subject to Comments from Residents

We believe in preserving natural darkness is particularly valuable in maintaining the unique charm and ecological balance of our village. Kington Langley achieves a level of beauty through its setting, its buildings, and green spaces, not the prettiness of its sparkling lights.

This policy recommends we:

- Continue with minimum street lighting in the parish.
- For residents and businesses and other premises:
 - Think carefully whether every lit area needs to be lit. Shield the light, ensure it is focussed solely on the areas required to be lit, use warm lighting, and - where possible - reduce the light level.
 - Turn off lights when not required, especially overnight; utilise motion sensors and timers for security lighting; consider lighting your house name, entrance and driveway only when guests (or parcels) are expected.
 - ~~Think carefully whether every lit area needs to be lit. Where possible, reduce the light level, use warm lighting, and ensure it is focussed solely on the areas required to be lit.~~
- ~~Turn off lights when not required, especially overnight; consider external lighting only when guests (or parcels) are expected – employ motion sensors and timers.~~
- Use energy-efficient lighting technologies.
- **Proposal to villagers: avoid purely decorative lighting schemes, especially on drives, gateways and other areas visible from public areas**
 - *await resident's feedback before strengthening / weakening / removing this proposal*
- Consider wildlife movements in, near and over the property and the impact the lighting scheme (however discreet) may have, ~~however discreet~~.

<proposed policy ends>