

## **Binchester Residents Association**

November 29<sup>th</sup> 2018

Mr P Vasey,  
Strategic Highways  
Durham County Council  
County Hall  
Durham  
DL1 5UQ

### **Letter in support of petition from Binchester Residents Association calling for reinstatement of street lights on C96**

Dear Mr Vasey,

**Re: removal of street lights from C96 at Binchester**  
**Lights numbered 799 - 800 - 802 westbound**  
**813 - 814 - 815 - 816 - 817 eastbound**

Thank you for your email dated 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2018 which directed me to a number of links justifying the reduction in lighting by the Highways Department since 2012. Having read through some of those links I still have not seen any evidence that the needs of Binchester residents were considered at any point.

We were not made aware of the intention nor included in the consultation process. We are not covered by either a Parish nor a Town Council, were not consulted by the 'Road Safety Auditors' despite being those most directly affected and our elected representative was not informed.

Despite correspondence previously between the Residents Association and yourselves about lighting on another local stretch of road ( Church Street to Old Park Lodge Farm) no -one from your department has asked me to facilitate obtaining the views of Binchester residents about this more extensive proposal.

Neither were we invited to make suggestions as to alternative cost saving measures eg use of timer switches and/ or dimmers. We note that these have been implemented effectively by other Councils to reduce expenditure whilst minimising the negative effect on residents of loss of necessary illumination.

Consequently the removal of the lights on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> came out of the blue to the community here.

Therefore at a meeting of the Residents Association on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November it was agreed that we should ask for the reinstatement of the lighting forthwith and I enclose a petition to this effect signed by 130 resident adults representing 104 of the 124 households directly affected.

The rationale for our objection to the loss of lighting is as follows.

This road itself is very narrow and the narrow pavement is very close to the carriageway. I have corresponded several times about the anxiety this causes to pedestrians here in the past and have been informed by your department that although this is a C road it has been designated by DCC as a main thoroughfare in the County for traffic to cross the River Wear. Therefore you will know that the road is busy with cars and HGVs at most times of the day- all passing in close proximity to pedestrians.

We have very limited bus services along the C96 through the village to connect us with other bus routes. The village service starts at 9 and finishes at 5 pm. At all other times residents without cars, the elderly, young families, those at school and in work, have to walk between the village and the A688 to pursue their daily life – accessing GPs, shops, local towns etc.

Consequent on your removal of the lights, at this time of year they must walk the distance in the pitch dark in the mornings from 6am and the evenings from 4.30.

As a matter of urgency we ask therefore that the lights removed last week be reinstated forthwith and make the following suggested alternatives to help save money. .

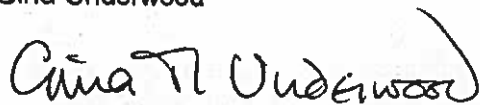
1 That the lights be on a timer and are switched off just after the time of the last bus to/from Bishop Auckland /Spennymoor along the A688 and switched on at 6 am. ( These times could be adjusted in the summer and or to accommodate bus timetables )

2 That the lights be slightly dimmer.

Failing this we ask that we have access to evidence of the consultations and their conclusions which have led to this decision so that we can contest them more vigorously.

Yours sincerely

Gina Underwood



Chair

Binchester Residents Association

cc Cllr Charlie Kay

Mr Ian Thompson DCC Corporate Director of Regeneration and Local Services

Mr John Reed DCC Head of Technical Services

Rt Hon Helen Goodman MP

PCSO Abnie Dixon