

Petition Table – Active Petitions

Appendix 2

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
<p>Petition 351</p> <p>Save the Street Lights for Brandon Lane</p> <p>Petition received 15.11.18</p> <p>No. of signatures – 38</p>	<p>John Reed Head of Technical Services</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to save the street lights on Brandon Lane.</p> <p>Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project</p> <p>The removal of street lighting is part of the ongoing Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project approved by the Council’s Cabinet on 12 December 2012. This “invest to save” project involves the removal of street lights which are not required by British Standards where it is safe to do so. The project is achieving significant savings in energy and maintenance costs that will help to meet the unprecedented reductions in central government funding. The project will also contribute to a reduction in the Council’s carbon emissions. The project originally planned 7,000 removals based on a high level desktop assessment. However, following more detailed analysis including risk assessments less than 3,000 street lights will be removed. This demonstrates the Council’s commitment to only removing street lights where it is safe to do so. An update was reported to the Council’s Cabinet on 21st October 2015.</p> <p>Street Lighting Policy</p> <p>The Street Lighting Policy which facilitates these removals, was approved by the Council’s Cabinet on 20th November 2013 following extensive public consultation. The Policy was reviewed in February 2016. The report states “Where there is existing street lighting that is not specifically required by the Street Lighting Policy then this will be removed where it is safe to do so, based on a risk assessment of road safety and the fear of crime and following consultation with local Elected Members, Town and Parish Councils where applicable”. No street lights will be removed in residential areas, roundabouts, major junctions or where there are proven road safety and crime issues under this policy. The policy aligns the provision of street lighting in County Durham with British Standards in line with most other Councils in</p>	<p>Petition CLOSED</p>

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		<p>the United Kingdom. The areas where street lighting has been removed comprises areas that are of low brightness, predominately open land with sporadic or few dwellings. As defined in the Council’s Street Lighting policy, on roads between villages and settlements in Environmental Zone E2 areas, lighting will only be provided where there is a known night-time road safety problem that cannot be controlled by other methods such as improvements to the carriageway delineation by reflective road studs, carriageway markings and improved signing.</p> <p>Road Safety Risk Assessment The Council has commissioned independent road safety auditors to carry out robust and detailed road safety risk assessments at each site where street lighting has been proposed for removal in accordance with the above policy. The risk assessment includes a detailed analysis of all Personal Injury Accidents (PIA’s) which have been recorded by Durham Constabulary covering a five year period. In addition, details of fatal road traffic collisions are analysed covering a ten year period. The risk assessment process includes visiting the site and walking the route allowing for a detailed assessment of the character of the road, its environment, the condition of the existing traffic signs and road markings. The risk assessment identifies any potential hazards to highway users and considers if these can be mitigated. The risk assessment also includes, where appropriate, the road safety auditor liaising with various teams within the Council in respect to observations relating to walking routes to schools, cycling and public rights of way. If the risk assessment identifies any significant road safety issues that cannot be mitigated then the Council does not proceed with the removal.</p> <p>At this particular location, mitigation works included:</p>	

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		<p>1. Removal of existing chevron sign; 2. Erection of new chevron sign on existing posts; 3. Removal of existing cyclists’ triangular warning sign; 4. Erection of new cyclists triangular warning sign on existing posts; and 5. Erection of new equestrians sign on existing post using a post extension</p> <p>A continuous footway exists within the site along the northern side of the highway, between Langley Moor and Brandon. There are no crossing points so this arrangement is considered to be safe; and there are many other similar footways in the County where street lighting is not provided.</p> <p>Crime Crime can occur at any time on any part of the highway network regardless of the provision of street lighting. I can confirm that there are no records of crime occurring on this short section of road where we are removing street lights. The latest research commissioned by the Department of Transport confirms that there is no strong evidence to support that street lighting reduces crime although it is acknowledged that street lighting has a role to play in reducing the fear of crime. This is supported by research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in partnership with University College London who has recently published their research on reduced street lighting and its impact on crime. The research found that overall there is no evidence of an association between reduced street lighting and increases in crime.</p> <p>Consultation Cabinet approved the Street Lighting Policy, which facilitates the removals, on 20 November 2013 following extensive public</p>	

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		<p>consultation including all Town and Parish Council within County Durham. The public consultations included public meetings and publicity to enable the public and Town and Parish Councils to put forward their views, and any objections received were considered during that consultation process. As part of the removal process we consulted with local Councillors and Parish Councillors on the risk assessment to ensure that it reflected all local factors.</p> <p>Service Level Agreement Due to unprecedented reductions in central government funding savings need to be made to balance budgets. Only street lights that are not required by British Standards are being removed where it is safe to do so. The only way to retain the street lights is if the Parish Council or another third party was able to fully fund them through a service level agreement. Unfortunately, the Parish Council declined the offer of a service level agreement. At this location the street lighting columns had reached the end of their useful life so required replacement if they were to be retained. Unfortunately, this increased the cost of the service level agreement and this may not have been affordable for the Parish Council. If third party funding can be found to fully fund the installation of street lights and the on-going maintenance, energy, maintenance and lifecycle costs then this could be facilitated in accordance with our Street Lighting Policy.</p>	
<p>Petition 352</p> <p>Enforce 40mph speed limit on A690, Brancepeth to Meadowfield</p> <p>E-Petition Petition received 16.11.18 No. of signatures – 71</p>	<p>John Reed Head of Technical Services</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to put speed limits in place along the A690 between Brancepeth and Meadowfield, ideally to provide electronic speed monitoring to notify that drivers are above the speed limit.</p> <p>e-Petition ran from 16.11.18 until 28.12.18 and closed with 71 signatures.</p> <p>Road Safety</p>	<p>Petition CLOSED</p>

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		<p>The Council receives more requests for road safety schemes than are able to fund from the limited road safety budgets. Therefore, schemes have to be prioritised where there are proven issues with serious and fatal personal injury accidents. Having checked the accident recording database shared with Durham Constabulary, there has been 3 recorded ‘personal injury’ accidents in the vicinity of the Scription Gill Road junction with A690, in the past four years, this being the standard search criteria. One of these accidents resulted from a vehicle losing control south west of the junction and colliding with another vehicle. Another accident occurred at the junction and the driver failed a roadside breath test. The most recent accident, which occurred in November 2018, was also attributed to one of the drivers involved being under the influence of alcohol. Additional causations in this accident were listed as failed to look properly, careless/reckless/in a hurry and inexperienced/unfamiliar with the type of vehicle. These accidents were attributable to driver error rather than traffic speed or the highway layout. Compared to many other locations, this represents a favourable accident record.</p> <p>Speed Limits</p> <p>The Council is required to follow Department for Transport legislation and guidance to ensure that speed limits are credible with the aim that they become self-evident and enforcing by virtue of their surroundings. During the review process various factors and criteria are considered and evaluated such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing vehicle speeds; • Nature of the road and its surroundings; • Local needs; • Existing highway infrastructure; • Development; • Highway signs; • Road markings and street lighting; • The various road users; 	

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The credibility of the speed limit; and • Accident history. <p>The section of A690 leaving the 'built up' area of Brandon through to the start of the village of Brancepeth has a derestricted speed limit due to the semi-rural nature of the road and the absence of direct frontage property development. In recent years assessments have been carried out of this section of road and the existing speed limit is considered both appropriate and credible.</p> <p>A variable message sign was introduced to warn traffic travelling towards Durham that the Scription Gill junction is approaching. This sign will activate if the approach speed of the driver exceeds a set threshold. There is also an alternative route for drivers at the Sawmills Lane junction which joins the A690 within the 30mph speed limit. It is appreciated that this is a slightly longer route but it provides an alternative to drivers where speeds are lower and visibility is greater.</p> <p>A speed limit which lacks credibility results in a significant proportion of motorists ignoring the limit and driving at even higher speeds, and can also lead to greater risk taking. The majority of drivers will travel at what they consider is a credible speed for their environment.</p> <p>While it is considered that the derestricted speed limit set for this location is appropriate a review of the site was undertaken on 9th January 2019. This joint meeting between Durham Constabulary and Durham County Council was to investigate what measures, if any, could be implemented.</p> <p>In summary, following the recent review, the speed limit is still considered appropriate and no changes are proposed, however</p>	

Petition Table – Active Petitions

Appendix 2

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		<p>a few minor routine maintenance items were noted during the visit and these will be addressed in accordance with our Highway Maintenance Plan.</p>	
<p>Petition 353</p> <p>Move Disabled Parking from Penny Gill, Spennymoor</p> <p>Petition received 20.11.18 No. of signatures – 367</p>	<p>Lee Mowbray Major Projects Team Leader</p>	<p>Petition received asking the Council to move the disabled parking bays from outside of the Penny Gill public house and relocate to outside of the Grand Electric Hall, Spennymoor.</p> <p>Parking is required to support a town’s economic vitality and therefore it needs to be suitable for the needs of all relevant users. Typically a range of restrictions such as loading bays, waiting restrictions, parking and blue badge bays will be introduced to ensure a town centre can function effectively and efficiently. Successful parking controls will look to secure a reasonable balance of all parking and often conflicting needs of both motorised and non-motorised vehicles.</p> <p>Cheapside currently contains a range of parking restrictions including blue badge parking, taxi bays and time limited parking. These bays are interspersed over the length of the street and the limited parking bays operate Monday – Saturday, 8am -6pm, with the other restricted bays operating 24 hours. The location and timings on these restricted bays have been implemented to adequately assist all users wishing to visit or shop in this area.</p> <p>All of the restrictions currently in place are contained on the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Spennymoor. Each restriction on public adopted highway will be included within a Traffic Regulation Order as this gives the Local Authority the power to undertake enforcement. There is a statutory legal process that the County Council must follow should any changes</p>	<p>Petition CLOSED</p>

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		<p>to the TRO be proposed. This process can be both costly and time consuming and as a result must be certain that the changes proposed are going to have a positive impact on the town centre as a whole. The request to relocate the blue badge bays to the 'future scheme' list and this amendment will be considered the next time a review of the Spennymoor TRO is undertaken.</p>	
<p>Petition 355</p> <p>Reinstatement of street lights on C96 Binchester</p> <p>Petition received 30.11.18</p> <p>No. of signatures – 130</p>	<p>John Reed Head of Technical Services</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to reinstate the street lights on the C96 Binchester.</p> <p>Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project</p> <p>That the street lighting removals are part of the ongoing Street Lighting Energy Reduction Project which was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 12 December 2012. This "invest to save" project involves the removal of street lights which are not required by British Standards where it is safe to do so. The project is achieving significant savings in energy and maintenance costs that will help to meet the unprecedented reductions in central government funding. The project will also contribute to a reduction in the Council's carbon emissions. The project originally planned 7,000 removals based on a high level desktop assessment. However, following more detailed analysis including risk assessments less than 3,000 street lights will be removed. This demonstrates the Council's commitment to only removing street lights where it is safe to do so. An update was provided to the Council's Cabinet on 21st October 2015.</p> <p>Street Lighting Policy</p> <p>The Street Lighting Policy which facilitates these removals, was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 20th November 2013 following extensive public consultation. The Policy was reviewed in February 2016. The report states "Where there is existing street lighting that is not specifically</p>	<p>Petition CLOSED</p>

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		<p>required by the Street Lighting Policy then this will be removed where it is safe to do so, based on a risk assessment of road safety and the fear of crime and following consultation with local Elected Members, Town and Parish Councils where applicable”.</p> <p>No street lights will be removed in residential areas, roundabouts, major junctions or where there are proven road safety and crime issues under this policy.</p> <p>The policy aligns the provision of street lighting in County Durham with British Standards in line with most other Councils in the United Kingdom. The areas where street lighting has been removed comprises areas that are of low brightness, predominately open land with sporadic or few dwellings. As defined in the Council’s Street Lighting policy, on roads between villages and settlements in Environmental Zone E2 areas, lighting will only be provided where there is a known night-time road safety problem that cannot be controlled by other methods such as improvements to the carriageway delineation by reflective road studs, carriageway markings and improved signing.</p> <p>Road Safety Risk Assessment</p> <p>The Council has commissioned independent road safety auditors to carry out robust and detailed road safety risk assessments at each site where street lighting has been proposed for removal in accordance with the above policy.</p> <p>The risk assessment includes a detailed analysis of all Personal Injury Accidents (PIA’s) which have been recorded by Durham Constabulary covering a five year period. In addition, details of fatal road traffic collisions are analysed covering a ten year period. The risk assessment process includes visiting the site and walking the route allowing for a detailed assessment of the character of the road, its environment, the condition of the existing traffic signs and road markings. The risk assessment</p>	

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		<p>identifies any potential hazards to highway users and considers if these can be mitigated. The risk assessment also includes, where appropriate, the road safety auditor liaising with various teams within the Council in respect to observations relating to walking routes to schools, cycling and public rights of way. If the risk assessment identifies any significant road safety issues that cannot be mitigated then the Council does not proceed with the removal. At these locations 5 street lights that were identified for removal have been retained following the risk assessment, demonstrating our commitment to remove street lights only where it is safe to do so.</p> <p>A continuous footway exists within the site along the south western side of the highway, between Binchester and the A688. There are no crossing points so this arrangement is considered to be safe; and there are many other similar footways in the County where street lighting is not provided.</p> <p>Crime Crime can occur at any time on any part of the highway network regardless of the provision of street lighting. The latest research commissioned by the Department of Transport confirms that there is no strong evidence to support that street lighting reduces crime although it is acknowledged that street lighting has a role to play in reducing the fear of crime. This is supported by research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in partnership with University College London who has recently published their research on reduced street lighting and its impact on crime. The research found that overall there is no evidence of an association between reduced street lighting and increases in crime.</p> <p>Consultation Cabinet approved the Street Lighting Policy, which facilitates the removals, on 20 November 2013.</p>	

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		<p>A countywide consultation exercise was carried out, supported by a comprehensive communications plan to raise awareness of the consultation to encourage the broadest possible response to the policy review. The exercise included inviting feedback from Area Action Partnerships, Town and Parish Councils, the Disability Partnership and 3 focus groups.</p> <p>The full range of communication mechanisms open to the Council were used to raise awareness of the consultation and encourage participation. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s website; • Emails to stakeholders and stakeholder groups including Town and Parish Councils; • Awareness raising through the Area Action Partnerships; • Media releases; • Durham County News; • Social media messages; and • Information in customer access points. <p>Any objections received were considered during the consultation process.</p> <p>As part of the removal process local Councillors were consulted on the risk assessment to ensure that it reflected all local factors.</p> <p>Service Level Agreement</p> <p>Unfortunately due to unprecedented reductions in central government funding savings had to be made to balance the budgets. Street lighting removals are not popular but only street lights that are not required by British Standards where it is safe to do so would be removed. The only way to retain the street lights is if a Parish Council or another third party was able to fully fund them through a service level agreement.</p> <p>If third party funding can be found to fully fund the installation of new street lights and the on-going maintenance, energy,</p>	

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Appendix 2

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		<p>maintenance and lifecycle costs then we will be pleased to facilitate in accordance with our Street Lighting Policy.</p>	
<p>Petition 357</p> <p>Reduce Nuisance Smoke at Spennymoor</p> <p>Petition received 23.1.19</p> <p>No. of signatures – 43</p>	<p>Michael Yeadon, Environment & Health Protection Manager or Neil Laws, Public Health and Housing Manager</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to significantly reduce the amount of nuisance smoke generated from Durham Road Allotments at Spennymoor.</p> <p>Allotments remain popular with many people deriving benefit from having one whether owned and managed by the County Council, Town or Parish Councils or privately run. Everyone has different rules for the allotment holders and different arrangements to ensure the rules are generally followed.</p> <p>Fundamentally the law does not prohibit burning of waste on non-commercial land or premises. However, if the smoke produced amounts to a statutory nuisance then an Abatement Notice can be issued against the person responsible requiring them to abate the nuisance. Where the source of the burning / smoke is a single site then investigation can be relatively straightforward, and the evidence will indicate if the smoke is or isn't sufficient to begin enforcement action. For those affected just because burning is taking place does not automatically mean that there is a statutory nuisance. The frequency, impact and duration of the smoke on the householders at their homes must be significant to justify enforcement action.</p> <p>Allotments by their nature are more complicated. There are many individual allotments and allotment holders. Burning may arise from the burning of garden waste in the open air or the use of stoves in greenhouses or sheds. Individually if one of these</p>	<p>Petition CLOSED</p>

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		<p>allotment holders has a fire it may not or would be unlikely in itself to be a statutory nuisance. But if several fires took place over the course of, for example, a week, then the cumulative effect on the affected properties may be significant. On top of that identifying the individuals would be extremely difficult. It could be argued that the owners / managers of the allotments may be responsible for the cumulative effect if their application of the rules, or the policing of them does not control the nuisance from the burning of waste. In these circumstances it may be possible to apply an Abatement Notice to them.</p> <p>In this case this issue has been discussed with Spennymoor Town Council. The Town Council have a rule restricting burning to the period September to March. Many organisations do not advertise or apply any restrictions and burning incidents can take place throughout the year. Having said that burning of allotment waste over the winter months will naturally lead to damp or wet materials being burned which is likely to lead to more smoke and slower combustion. It is for the Town Council to consider and decide whether any changes to their rules should be made that could bring about a reduction in burning or smoke issues to satisfy the affected residents. At the same time this would reduce the potential for smoke nuisance to be proved against the Town Council or any individual allotment holder.</p> <p>Based on this information there is little justification for any enforcement action at this time.</p> <p>On a wider and more general note, air quality or rather air pollution has been the subject of significant national debate recently. The government has within the last few weeks released information on its proposed air quality strategy. Much of the detail and any associated changes in legislation is still to emerge, but domestic sources of pollution have re-emerged as</p>	

Petition Table – Active Petitions

Appendix 2

Nature of Petition	Appropriate Service/Officer	Summary of Information	Status of Petition
		<p>an area of concern. Moreover, there are other routes to deal with green waste that do not include burning. Allotment owners and managers including the County Council could set an example in their rules or tenancy agreements that could encourage composting or green waste recycling by prohibiting any burning on allotments under their control. While this is not something that can be enforced by legislation at the moment there would be significant beneficial impacts for the residents close to allotments who currently suffer smoke problems from burning on allotments throughout the county.</p>	
<p>Petition 358</p> <p>Stop the Durham Relief Roads</p> <p>E-Petition Petition received 29.1.19 No. of signatures – 342</p> <p>Paper petition received 5.3.19 No. of signatures - 676</p>	<p>Mike Allum Spatial Policy Manager</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to abandon & stop immediately the Durham County Plan proposals for the Northern & Western Relief Roads that will destroy & effect forever the beautiful countryside & disturb wild life habitat at Kepier & Frankland Woods, Low Newton Nature Reserve & The River Browney Valley.</p> <p>Consultation process taking place until 8 March 2019 and final numbers would be passed to the service to consider as part of that consultation.</p>	<p>E-petition ran from 29.1.19 – 7.3.19 Paper petition handed to service on 5.3.19</p>
<p>Petition 359</p> <p>Complete Durham City Northern Bypass</p> <p>E-Petition Petition received 5.2.19 No. of signatures – 9</p>	<p>Mike Allum Spatial Policy Manager</p>	<p>Petition asking the Council to complete the Durham City Northern Bypass, as promised when local communities of Newton Hall, Framwellgate Moor, Pity Me and Brasside, approved plans for the development of the Arnison Centre / Rosemount scheme.</p> <p>Consultation process taking place until 8 March 2019 and final numbers would be passed to the service to consider as part of that consultation.</p>	<p>E-petition ran from 5.2.19 – 7.3.19</p>

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Appendix 2

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Petition 361 Resurfacing of roads in the Chester-le-Street area Petition received 27.2.19 No. of signatures – 45	John Reed Head of Technical Services	Petition asking the Council to resurface roads in the Chester-le-Street area:- Caxton Way, Hampton Court, Leander Avenue, Lombard Drive, Merlin Drive, Mitford Close, Napier Close and Sinclair Drive	Response requested by 22 March 2019