

CPCA and EALC Clerk and Councillor form held on 30th September – “Dark Skies”

Jack Ellerby, Cumbria Dark Skies project Officer gave a talk on Dark Skies which covered the following topics.

- The history of street lighting
- The increase in light pollution only 22% of England has dark skies left with Cumbria having some of the darkest skies in England.
- Why are dark skies important?
 - Tranquillity and Skyscape
 - Astronomy and Science
 - Cultural Value
 - Wildlife and people’s health
 - Recreation and tourism
- What is light pollution
 - Artificial light that is excessive and obtrusive
 - Wasted light that performs no function
 - Artificial light that goes where it is not supposed to
- 3 main types of light pollution
 - Skyglow -. the glow from large towns and cities
 - Glare – the glare from a light against a dark sky
 - Light intrusion – light spills from properties
- Impacts on wildlife
 - Migration
 - Circadian Rhythm
 - Habitat
 - Behaviour
- Impact on Human Beings
 - Sleep patterns
 - Illnesses caused by sleep deprivation
- Other impacts
 - £1bn energy wasted from inefficient lighting
 - Lighting represents 15 to 30% of local authority carbon emissions
 - Streetlights cost £616 million per year
 - 50% of Highway Authorities are switching off at night or changing to LED lighting
 - Research shows night lighting switch offs so not increase accidents or crime levels

- Explanation of the right of light, where it is needed and when it is needed
- Light design mitigating light pollution through
 - Dimmers, sensors and timers
 - Installation – positioning (downward) and shielding
 - Temperature – colour from light types (LED, low pressure sodium) – keeping below 3,000 Kelvins which is a warm colour rather than bright LED lights.
- Dark Sky reserve: Lake district and wider Cumbria
 - An area of outstanding dark sky provision possessing an exceptional or distinguished quality of starry nights that is specifically protected for its scientific, natural, educational, cultural and public enjoyment.
- Dark Skies count carried out annually
- The importance of sharing good practice and working with communities
- Promoting Dark Skies festival 21st to 23rd February 2021

The link to the presentation can be found below.