

Report of the Gower Society

Gower AONB Partnership Steering Group – 27 March 2017

LIGHT POLLUTION

For some considerable time the Society has been observing an increase in light pollution on the Gower AONB. This has been emphasised by the results of the excellent work that the City and County of Swansea have carried out on street light replacements over the last three years. These lights have, we understand, been specifically installed to prevent upward light pollution as well as saving running costs as they use less electricity.

The following examples of light pollution are quoted because they notably impinge upon the Dark Skies Zone (a National Designated Scheme) in the Gower AONB and do not appear to comply with the excellent CCS 'Lighting Guidance for Gower AONB' that came into force about 10 years ago. The examples are not conclusive and some are worse than others. They are examples, however, that appear to contradict the Dark Skies Designation and the Lighting Guide.

- 1) The new Swansea FC Training grounds at the University of Swansea Playing Fields at Fairwood. A great number of badly directed lights that are more intrusive than the adjacent Upland RC ground. On the Gower fringe.
- 2) The Kittle Egg Farm where external lighting is seen from many directions because it does not shine purely downwards and it is in an elevated position. Hardly necessary?
- 3) Contractors Yard at Pwll yr frog, Marsh Road at Crofty. A new 'barn' has extensive external lighting. Installed recently.
- 4) Opposite Crofty, the Golf Club Driving Range at Machynys, Llanelli. High intensity lighting pointing over to Gower across the estuary and shines directly over to the AONB. This is totally unacceptable and individuals who live opposite it complain about the lights shining into their homes. On most nights until about 10 pm.
- 5) Crickton Farm at Llanrhidian. External lighting polluting the skies and seen from Cefn Bryn and from the highway at Llanrhidian. The glow upwards has to be seen to appreciate the impact that this has!
- 6) Static Caravan Site at Greenways Oxwich. This is increased lighting 'by stealth' and whilst there are no individual lights of high strength the impact is due to sheer numbers and tree removal. Seen mainly from the A418 at Nicholston and Penmaen as well as Cefn Bryn.
- 7) Llanrhidian Park. A gradual increase of light pollution work at the club house (and Purple Badger enterprise) has increased outside lighting and removal of trees. Also increased lighting at the entrance.
- 8) The various other rugby grounds at Penclawdd, Scurlage, Upper Killay, Gowerton all add to the problem but have at present relatively limited use during the week. However the lights do direct out of the area and it may be possible to adjust downwards.

- 9) Garage signs at Knelston Filling Station. Contrary to Planning Appeal decision some 10 years ago. Reported as a formal complaint three months ago by the GS.
- 10) Scurlage Surgery and Pharmacy. Two large and high orange sodium lights that can be observed sideways on from every angle as well as perimeter lights around the structure. Needs attention for certain.

There is no question that there are many other examples within the AONB and it is generally caused by lack of appreciation of the impact and none compliance with the Lighting Guide. Pitton Cross Camp Site did an excellent corrective lighting scheme a couple of years ago and it made a significant beneficial impact on the night landscape and skies.

GRH 11/03/17