

PITSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Street Lighting Policy

1. Introduction

The following information relates to the Street Lighting Policy in Pitstone and aims to set out a code of practice which set a high standard for compliance, in recognizing our responsibilities.

Facts and figures shown were current at the time of signature.

The parish council owns and maintains **136** streetlights within Pitstone. These are located on 135 columns/pole (1 is twin bracket) within the residential roads. This policy relates to the maintenance and operation of these units.

The public are welcome to report any issues with these lights to, Laurie Eagling, the clerk for the parish council, and we will notify the appropriate authority.

2. Aims & Objectives

- Maintain the streetlights, in a safe condition, within the agreed budget.
- Anticipate budget changes in line with maintenance costs and replacement rates.
- Avoid the need to take out loans to complete work.
- Learn from experience and historical data.
- Keep in line with current legislation, legal requirements and best practice.
- Continually aim to reduce costs and power consumption, year on year, without a detrimental effect to illumination or safety.
- Replace lamp posts at the end of their life or when beneficial to overall aims.

3. Background – Legal Obligations & Limitations

3.1. Defining Responsibilities

Responsible Authority	Area of Responsibility
Highway Authority	Main roads in their area
Residents Associations	Private or un-adopted roads on which they live
Building Developers	Retain responsibility until the road is adopted by Buckinghamshire Council at the end of a building project
Parish Councils	Adopted side roads in their area where columns have been adopted by the parish

3.2. Highway Authority

Buckinghamshire Council own and maintain 34 lighting columns a number of illuminated bollards and other lit road signs along the Lower Icknield Way/Marsworth Road and in the area of Pitstone roundabout.

In 2022 they adopted the columns along Westfield Road and a number of the columns within phases I-III of Castlemead.

The Highways Act 1980 empowers a Highway Authority (in our case Buckinghamshire Council) to provide lighting for any highway or proposed highway for which they are, or will be, the Highway Authority.

The Highway Authority has a duty of care to the road user. However, this duty does not require the Highway Authority to keep the public lighting lit. It does require the authority to be able to demonstrate that they have systems in place to maintain the public lighting equipment in a safe condition, including the detection of dangerous equipment.

3.3. Residents Associations / Private Roads

Notting Hill Home Ownership Housing Trust has a single lamp post in Long Hedge which is the responsibility of the residents who live on this private road.

Other lighting within private roads is normally the responsibility of the homeowners and/or part of their maintenance contract obligations. The parish council has however resolved to adopt/maintain the streetlight columns within Cheynes Close following a lack of clarity around ownership.

3.4. Building Developers

The Parish Council has now adopted 19 of the columns within the Croudace development. The remaining columns and bollards will remain the responsibility of Croudace / their management company.

Taylor Wimpey is still responsible for streetlights within the phases IV & V of the Castlemead estate and those within the Pitstone Business Park. The parish council may be able to add LED columns within Phase V to the village inventory when the development is completed and the roads adopted by Buckinghamshire Council. We are currently working with Buckinghamshire Council, who have upgraded the TW columns within phases I-III to LED utilising funds provided by TW.

The Parish Council has also agreed to adopt the street lighting within the Bellway development off Vicarage Road upon completion and adoption of the highways by Buckinghamshire Council.

The Parish Council needs to work with BC and the developers to secure a successful handover of the streetlights by:

- ensuring that they all have a current electrical safety certificate dated at the time of handover.
- asking for energy efficient lanterns that comply with our current guidelines.
- calculating the additional cost to our budget from the addition of 180% more lamp posts to the inventory.
- working on a plan of action to reduce costs.
- carrying out an inspection of inventory to identify problems.

3.5. Parish Councils

Many Parish Councils have the power to provide lighting as local authorities, acting with the consent of the Highways Authority; these powers were conferred by the Public Health Act 1985 or the Parish Councils Act 1957.

3.6. Unmetered Electricity Supplies not covered by the Highway Authority

In order to obtain unmetered electricity supplies the Parish Council must enter into an *Unmetered Connection Agreement* with an energy supplier. An accurate detailed inventory of all its unmetered equipment must be provided, in accordance with the requirements of the Balancing and Settlement Code Procedure BSCP520 on an annual basis or whenever upgrades/changes are made.

Our inventory is submitted to UK Power Networks who issue our UMS (unmetered supply certificate) to our power supplier, currently Tomato.

4. Maintenance Strategy

Our public lighting system obviously requires regular inspection and maintenance to ensure that it is safe, operating correctly, continuing to provide the designated performance and to maximize its life. This maintenance is divided into three aspects:

4.1. Reactive

Where failures of equipment are recorded, and the equipment is repaired or replaced.

See the sections below for details of our regular patrols, or for details of how to report a lighting problem.

Our appointed contractor, Lamps & Tubes Illuminations Ltd, will respond to any faults reported by the Parish Council. Repairs are more cost effective if several can be undertaken in a batch, so there may be a short delay in any lighting column being reported whilst a survey of the rest of the village is undertaken to identify all current faults, so that we can keep the service cost as economic as possible. In some cases, spare parts or new lanterns/columns will need to be ordered, or additional work commissioned with UK Power Networks (relating to the physical supply of electricity) to make the column safe. Faults will be rectified as soon as possible.

4.2. Electrical Safety Certificates

The *Electricity at Work Regulations* state that “as may be necessary to prevent danger, all systems shall be maintained so as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable, such danger”. To demonstrate that an installation meets the necessary safety standards, electrical inspection and testing comparable to any other fixed equipment installation should be carried out at intervals of up to six years in accordance with the requirements of *BS 7671: Requirements of Electrical Installations*.

The parish council conducts a programme of full electrical testing and inspection on each column every five years. The tests were undertaken in 2024 and therefore fall due for renewal in 2029. This ensures that all units are safe, comply with the latest standards and helps to identify any potential long-term problems with the columns. The council provisions a set amount into the budget each year to accrue against total spend in the 5th year.

4.3. Structural Safety Inspection Reports

All our columns undergo periodic structural safety inspections to identify any structural faults caused by corrosion, stress or more generally wear and tear. We use this data to ensure all our columns are safe, determining how often a column needs to be scheduled for reinspection so that its replacement can be part of a planned programme of continual improvement. Structural tests were completed in 2022 and 2025 and are due for retest in 2027.

In 2025 we also commissioned more detailed structural tests for two columns (Crispin Field and Windsor Road) to house public access defibrillators.

There is no mechanical structural test for aluminium columns so these receive just a visual inspection by our contractors.

It is important that the parish council is made aware of any collisions with road vehicles or maintenance equipment as these may cause stress fractures not immediately apparent.

4.4. Monitoring the Operational Status

Volunteers (from the council & residents) patrol the streets at night every month to check the operational status of the street lighting within the village, and at an alternative time, conduct a patrol during the day, to check for lamps that are illuminated during the day. Reports are then submitted to our maintenance contractor, Buckinghamshire Council or the developer as appropriate.

If you would be willing to assist with monitoring streetlights by becoming a 'champion' for your street and letting us know when any issues arise, please advise the parish clerk.

4.5. Reporting a Fault

It is worth noting that your councillors and our volunteers all act in an unpaid voluntary capacity. Unfortunately, it is not practical for every light to be monitored on a more regular basis. We therefore ask that if you observe a failed light **PLEASE REPORT** it so that we can arrange for its repair.

For general reporting, please contact the clerk and provide details of:

- the lamp number if available (usually displayed on a sticker on the lamp post),
- the location (eg outside number 4 Albion Road) and
- brief description of the fault (eg lamp not on at night/lamp on during the day/etc)
- your contact details (name, address and telephone number).

If the clerk is unavailable, an answer-phone service will be in operation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternatively, you can report the fault via email.

For ease of reference, the contact details are:

phone: 01296 767261

email: parishclerk@pitstone.co.uk

or write: Pitstone Pavilion, Marsworth Road, Pitstone, LU7 9AP

Except in the event of an emergency, we may visit the site to observe the fault before progressing the report.

4.6. In the Event of an Emergency

In the event of an emergency, such as a column being knocked down due to a road traffic accident, please contact:

- UK Power Network's 24-hour emergency helpline on 08701 964274 quoting the above information,

- You should also notify Thames Valley Police, who may need to isolate the area on 999 or 101,
- and then notify the clerk to the parish council so that the incident can be properly tracked and recorded,
- In the event of a road traffic accident, please provide details of the vehicle(s) involved, to the clerk, as this will be required to institute procedures for the recovery of costs.

5. Requests for Changes to Street Lighting

The Parish Council sometimes receive, from parishioners, requests for additional streetlight columns, for their removal or for changes in the light intensity of individual columns. The parish council will consider all such requests, conduct further inquiries with all affected neighbouring properties and investigate alternative solutions where appropriate.

Please register any such inquiries with the clerk. Factors used in the decision-making process include safety considerations, cost benefit analysis and the consent of affected neighbours.

6. Performance Reporting

The Parish Council reviews the performance of our streetlight assets, and can compile the following statistics:

- Number of columns by type (Wooden telegraph poles **21**, Steel **39**, Aluminum **75**)
- Number of decommissioned wooden poles now the responsibility of PPC (**2**)
- Number of faults over a twelve-month period
- Annual expenditure for unmetered supply, maintenance, and renewal
- Costs associated with vandalism

7. Asset Management

We maintain a database of all the street lighting columns within our control. This is used to schedule routine maintenance, such as the electrical inspections, to plan for the replacement of obsolete lamps in line with our budget proposals for next year and to fulfil the requirements placed upon us under the Unmetered Connection Agreement with UK Power Networks (where a calculation is made on the Estimated Annual Consumption (EAC) based on the power consumption of the columns, covering the period they operate.

In achieving a high performance from our inventory of street lighting columns the parish council seeks advice from other parish councils, electrical contractors, energy suppliers or professional bodies able to advise on establishing 'best practice'.

7.1. Records Maintained

PPC undertake to:

- establish and maintain an up to date and accurate record of inventory as part of an asset management system.
- evaluate replacement policies to limit lamp failures to an acceptable level.
- operate a system for the reporting of faults by the public.

- monitor response times for repairs and maintenance tasks.
- Arrange for contractors to carry out Electrical Safety tests according to a fixed timetable establishing 5 years as the maximum interim period.
- arrange for contractors to perform structural inspections and testing, checking for the deterioration of the column, and abide by the retesting schedules identified within the resulting reports.
- Recognise the need to keep up to date with the regulations which operate in the industry and must continually form the heart of our lighting policy.
- Require residents with lamps outside their property to ensure the illumination is not diminished by tree branches or other foliage on their property or bushes allowed to grow around the service panel at the base of lamp posts.

7.2. Repair/replace plus efficient LED

Faulty lights are repaired unless we are advised by our contractor that repair is uneconomic. The Council supports the need to reduce light pollution and energy costs, and where the opportunity arises, may elect not to replace a lamp post. New columns erected should be of a high standard and a popular choice appropriate to the area. The council capitalised on new LED technology which offers improved levels of illumination at far lower energy costs and negligible maintenance costs over the life of the lantern. The program to replace our existing inventory with LED lanterns was completed in 2022. Any new lanterns & columns, will reflect this policy. The council currently utilises a 19W LED lantern, unless the specific location requires a brighter illumination.

7.3. Response Times

The table below outlines the industry standard response times outlined in the Electricity (Connection Standards of Performance) Regulations 2015 and the Quality of Service Guaranteed Standards.

NATURE OF ACTIVITY	RESPONSE TIME (working days)
Cyclic maintenance	7
Non-emergency faults	7
Emergency faults	1
Commissioning of a single unit of lighting equipment (a component of a light column)	10
Commissioning of a new light column	10
Decommissioning of a single unit of lighting equipment (a component of a light column)	10
Decommissioning of a new light column	10

7.4. Contract Terms with Suppliers

Contracts entered are usually on an 'annual rolling' basis, with full reviews every four years. We will review our current service levels from our energy supplier and contractor, to make sure that they remain competitive. We undertake to use only accredited contractors who are members of the Association of Street Lighting and Electrical Contractors. Paid consultants and designers, if used, should be members of the Institution of Lighting Engineers and ideally hold a Lighting Diploma.

8. Environmental Impact

Attempts will be made to limit the impact of our street lighting on the environment where possible and economically viable. This may include:

- moving to more energy efficient lighting.
- bulbs that offer more direction and less dissipation.
- use of part-night photocells (where the lamp is switched off between midnight and 5am) are now no longer supported.
- Other opportunities will be investigated as they arise.

The European Union's "Energy using Products" directive (EuP) defines the requirements for the environmentally sustainable design of many products including Street Lighting. As a result, inefficient products are to be phased out and replaced with energy saving alternatives.

8.1. Bats

Bats are amazing animals that are important to ecosystems in the UK and are protected under UK and European law such that it is illegal to damage, destroy or disturb bats or roosts. A roost is defined as any place that a wild bat uses for shelter or protection, and the roost is protected whether bats are present or not.

Artificial lighting near bat roosts, access points and foraging pathways can disturb bats, delay or prevent the bats' emergency and result in reduced foraging times and missing the peak time of insect abundance just after dusk. This is likely to be considered a breach of legislation, therefore the parish council must give due consideration to bat habitat when considering new, or increased, illumination.

8.2. Inventory by lamp type

LAMP TYPE	NUMBER
LED	135
PLT	1
Total	136*

* Lamp post number 15 in Yardley Avenue is a twin branch.

* 1 currently removed by Nicholas King Homes.

9. Street Lighting on Wooden Poles

In rural areas Distribution Network Operators for electrical supplies have replaced overhead cables by underground schemes. A pole to which street lighting is attached may remain in place and ownership may be transferred to the Parish Council.

9.1. Decommissioned wooden poles now the responsibility of Pitstone Parish Council

It is now the responsibility of the parish council to maintain the poles detailed below in a safe condition. They were inspected during 2023 and do not need to be inspected again until 2028.

Lamp No	House No	Street
2	23	Chequers Lane

1	1	Vicarage Road
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9.2. Commissioned wooden poles serving more than one utility provider

It has previously been possible to attach a lantern to a wooden pole or post belonging to an electrical supplier or BT. This practice is no longer permitted. The Government is reviewing the situation and may introduce legislation to require parish councils and other local authorities to retrospectively introduce independent lamp posts. There are currently **21** poles with shared services.

10. Methods of Communication with Residents

The Parish Council will use one, or a combination of, the following to inform and update parishioners using:

- the village website
- the parish council Facebook page
- the Pitstone Parish Post
- the annual assembly

11. Sources of Information

- Well-Managed Highway Infrastructure published by the UK Roads Liaison Group 2017
- Highways Act 1980
- Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1994
- Bat Conservation Trust guidance on Artificial Lighting and Wildlife
- Traffic Management Act 2004
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- UKRLG Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Guidance, Part B and Part C
- Managing Unmetered Energy Street Lighting Inventories (MUESL)
- The Electricity (Unmetered Supply) Regulations 2001
- Regulation 16 of Electricity at Work Regulations
- Electricity (Connection Standards of Performance) Regulations 2015
- Quality of Service Guaranteed Standards

12. Review

This Street Lighting Policy was adopted by Pitstone Parish Council on31/7/25.....

minute reference116/25.1..... and will be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

Signed on behalf of Pitstone Parish Council by:

D Nicholls

Chairman of the meeting