

Frequently Asked Questions

Proposed changes on how we light our streets

Why has the Council decided to change the way our streets are lit?

Every year the Council puts forward proposals to the Cabinet setting out how it intends to deliver a balanced budget. The Highways Department's contribution to these savings are to dim and trim our streetlights. Many councils are already doing this, as it helps to deliver both cost and carbon savings, whilst not adversely affecting the safety of citizens.

How many lighting assets does the council manage?

The Council manages circa 40,000 lit assets. This is the largest electricity consuming asset the Council owns.

Does the Highway Authority / Council have a legal duty to keep the public highway lit?

The Highways Act 1980 empowers a Highway Authority to provide lighting for any highway. Although the Council have a duty of care to the road user, this duty does not require the Highway Authority / Council to keep the public lighting lit.

Have other councils dimmed their streetlights?

Bolton Council lights all our streetlights at 100% of the lamp's capacity. Other councils have dimmed their streetlights and have continued to maintain safe illuminance levels, but at a lower level.

What difference will the proposal make to street lighting in Bolton?

If the proposal is implemented, Bolton's 37,000 streetlights will be dimmed by 30% between the hours of 9pm and dawn. This will mean they will operate at 70% of their current capacity. Bolton Council will ensure that safe illuminance levels are maintained.

Will all locations across Bolton be dimmed?

No, not all locations will be dimmed. Bolton Council have risk assessed all lights across the borough. As a result, certain Town Centre locations and areas with issues of community safety will remain lit at full illumination, with no dimming.

How will this impact people with disabilities, including those with visual impairments?

The proposal to reduce lighting levels by 30% has also been risk assessed and considerations for impacts on the vulnerable, sight / mobility impaired have all been accounted for.

What investment has been made in lighting schemes in Bolton?

Over the past 12 months we have undertaken work to replace all the street lighting heads on Victoria Square.

The Council has also secured £600k in additional funding to assist with the replacement and installation of new lighting across the Town Centre. This scheme will be implemented early/mid 2024.

There are also a number of regeneration projects across the Town Centre that will complete in 2024, which have new lighting schemes. These include Elizebeth park, the Moor Lane development and Blackhorse Street public realm programme.

How does dimming lighting support Bolton's climate change ambitions?

Dimming our lighting by 30% will enable the Council to reduce the electricity we use. We will also see a reduction in the carbon generated, supporting our commitments to be a carbon neutral town by 2030.