

Parc Cenedlaethol Arfordir Penfro
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park



Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan 2

**Planning for the Conservation and Enhancement of
Dark Skies in Wales: Good Practice Guidance**

**Supplementary Planning Guidance for lighting in the
Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**

Consultation October 2025

Adoption: February 2026

This item is also available in Welsh/ Mae'r eitem hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd

Purpose and scope of this document

1. Access to dark night skies and reducing light pollution has many benefits. Humans rely on the natural cycle of day and night to determine our sleep patterns and waking behaviour, whilst many species of wildlife need dark skies to enable efficient feeding and breeding. Light pollution caused by Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) can cause a change in behaviour in both humans and wildlife, as well as wasting money and carbon.
2. Lighting associated with development can have significant negative impacts on biodiversity and landscape. However, reducing light pollution is often very simple and cost effective and delivers many benefits for both humans and wildlife. Access to dark night skies can also benefit physical and mental health as well as making spaces safer and providing opportunities for people to see the stars unimpeded by light pollution.
3. The purpose of this Supplementary Planning Guidance is not to eliminate lighting in the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park. It is recognised that lighting is required to meet health and safety requirements and to provide a level of lighting to enable people to live, work and visit the National Park. However, inappropriate or poor lighting design has a detrimental impact on the night sky and damages the special qualities of the National Park. The SPG provides guidance to everyone involved with development proposals on legal responsibilities, obligations and the conservation and enhancement of dark skies during the development process. The document provides guidance to developers on designing and submitting lighting assessments and plans that are appropriate in the National Park landscape, and to planners on assessing lighting schemes. Planning conditions and obligations may be used to regulate light in planning permissions.

National Planning Policy

4. The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 introduced a framework for decision-making to achieve the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources, ensuring the resilience of ecosystems and their benefits. The Act also sets a legal target of at least an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.¹

¹ [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)

5. Future Wales – The National Plan 2040: Policy 9- Resilient Ecological Networks and Green Infrastructure states that planning authorities should identify areas which should be safeguarded and created as ecological networks for their importance for adaptation to climate change, for habitat protection, restoration or creation, to protect species or which provide ecosystems services, to ensure they are not unduly compromised by future development; and identify opportunities where existing and potential green infrastructure could be maximised as part of placemaking, requiring the use of nature-based solutions as a key mechanism for securing sustainable growth, ecological connectivity, social equality and well-being. ²

6. Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) Section 6.8 recognises that there is a need to balance the provision of lighting to enhance safety and security to help in the prevention of crime and to allow activities like sport and recreation to take place with the need to:
 - Protect the natural and historic environment including wildlife and features of the natural environment such as tranquillity;
 - Retain dark skies where appropriate;
 - Prevent glare and respect the amenity of neighbouring land uses; and
 - Reduce the carbon emissions associated with lighting.

Dark skies should be taken into account when preparing development plan strategies and policies and when considering individual development plan proposals.³

Local Development Plan Context

7. The Good Practice Guidance is adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance for the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and provides more detailed guidance on the way in which the Local Development Plan policies can be applied (in particular, Policy 8 Special Qualities, Policy 14 Conservation and enhancement of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, Policy 9 Light Pollution, Policy 10 Sites and Species of European Importance, Policy 11 Nationally Protected Sites and Species, Policy 29 Sustainable Design and Policy 30 Amenity).

8. Whilst only policies in the Development Plan have special status in deciding planning applications, (i.e. for the purpose of any determination under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the Plan

² [Update to Future Wales - The National Plan 2040](#)

³ [Planning Policy Wales - Edition 12](#)

unless material considerations indicate otherwise), Supplementary Planning Guidance may be taken into account as a material planning consideration.

9. National Park Partnership Plan 2025-2029: The National Park Authority maintains a list of special qualities, based on people's views and on formal landscape assessments. Conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the National Park is a strategic aim of planning policy in the National Park. The list of special qualities is periodically reviewed and in 2024 people were asked what they consider the special qualities to be. Dark Skies were identified with a recognition that large area of the National Park are relatively free of light pollution. The National Park has eight Dark Sky Discovery Sites which are accessible and afford good views of the night sky on cloudless, moonless nights. Policy L2 of the National Park Partnership Plan 2025-2029 seeks to protect and enhance dark night skies.