

Switching off street lights – midnight to dawn Questions and answers

Q: Why are street lights being switched off at all?

A: The Council's street lighting electricity bills rose sharply last year. We also have to make big financial savings because of a low financial settlement from the Welsh Assembly Government.

We will save £180,000 on energy bills in this financial year if we switch off street lights from midnight to dawn where we can.

Q: Will the switch off benefit the environment?

A: Yes. We will reduce our CO² emissions by 1,300 tonnes a year.

Q: What lights are being switched off?

A: 6,185 lights are being switched off from midnight to dawn. That is 46% of all the street lights in Blaenau Gwent. We have another 7,000 street lights that don't have modern remote switching technology – so we can't switch them off for part of the night.

Q: Why are lights in my street switched off at midnight but not others nearby?

A: The lights in your street can be switched off after midnight because they are fitted with the modern 'Mayflower' remote switching technology.

If lighting columns nearby are not fitted with 'Mayflower' we can't switch them off from midnight to dawn.

Q: What about traffic safety, pedestrian safety and anti social behaviour issues?

A: Street lights will remain on at all times at these locations:

- Town centres
- Principle road junctions and roundabouts
- Areas covered by CCTV

- Pedestrian crossings

Traffic accident data from the police has been used to identify potential risk areas for traffic accidents. We used this information to carry out risk assessments.

Q: What about anti social behaviour with persons congregating in dark areas and thieves using the lack of lighting to steal from property?

A: Gwent Police and Safer Blaenau Gwent – the community safety partnership - have been consulted. The street lights are staying on in areas where there is a high risk of anti social behaviour or criminal activity between midnight and dawn.

Q: Can I ask for the lights in my street to be turned back on?

A: Yes. The Council will consider your request for street lights to be switched back on between midnight and dawn.

We have set out our priorities for switch back on requests.

Priority 1: We will review straight away any request to see if there is a high risk based on traffic/pedestrian/personal injury data for that location.

Priority 2: If you are worried about anti social behaviour issues or crime perception issues your request will be reviewed by Safer Blaenau Gwent's Neighbourhood Management Tasking Group.

Priority 3: Other requests from you or your local councillor or representative will also be reviewed by Safer Blaenau Gwent's Neighbourhood Management Tasking Group.

If you leave your contact details, we will always try to get back to you with a response to your request as soon as we can.

Q: I am not happy with my lights being switched off - who do I speak to?

A: All enquiries and requests for street lights to be switched back on will be handled by Connect 2 Blaenau Gwent – the Council's contact centre – by calling 01495 311556.