

Guidance for dealing with stray and unwanted light from Street lights

1. Background

The majority of the Roads in Portsmouth have street lighting installed and it is a priority of Portsmouth City Council to maintain these lights in a good and safe condition. Since 2018 we have been upgrading all local authority street lighting on all residential, secondary and primary roads with LED (Light Emitting Diode). The benefits of LED, include improved white light, reduced stray light, energy savings of around 50% and lower maintenance costs.

The Council are aware that LED lights may initially appear to be brighter, particularly when compared to the orange or pink light of traditional older streetlights. From experience, residents do tend to become accustomed to the new lighting over a short period of time and are able to appreciate the improvement to the night-time environment.

In order to reduce the effect that new streetlights may have, the type and style of new lighting is carefully selected to ensure that it is suitable for the individual road or location. We have also fitted a Management Control System (CMS) that manages the levels of energy going to each streetlight so the lighting levels can be adjusted dependent on the area.

Following a successful pilot in 2019, adaptive lighting was rolled out throughout the city in summer 2020. This means that in most areas energy to lighting columns automatically reduces in the late evening till early morning. Whilst reduction in energy does not produce a reduction in visibility, some residents have noticed that the further reduction in energy also reduces glare.

Even with careful designing residents may experience unwanted light. If a resident feels that alterations to the lighting may be required, then this should be requested in writing. Our team will then work with the resident to understand what can be done to address the issue they are experiencing. Lighting Shields have been fitted to some columns as part of the LED upgrade that has taken place. There is now a charge for this service.

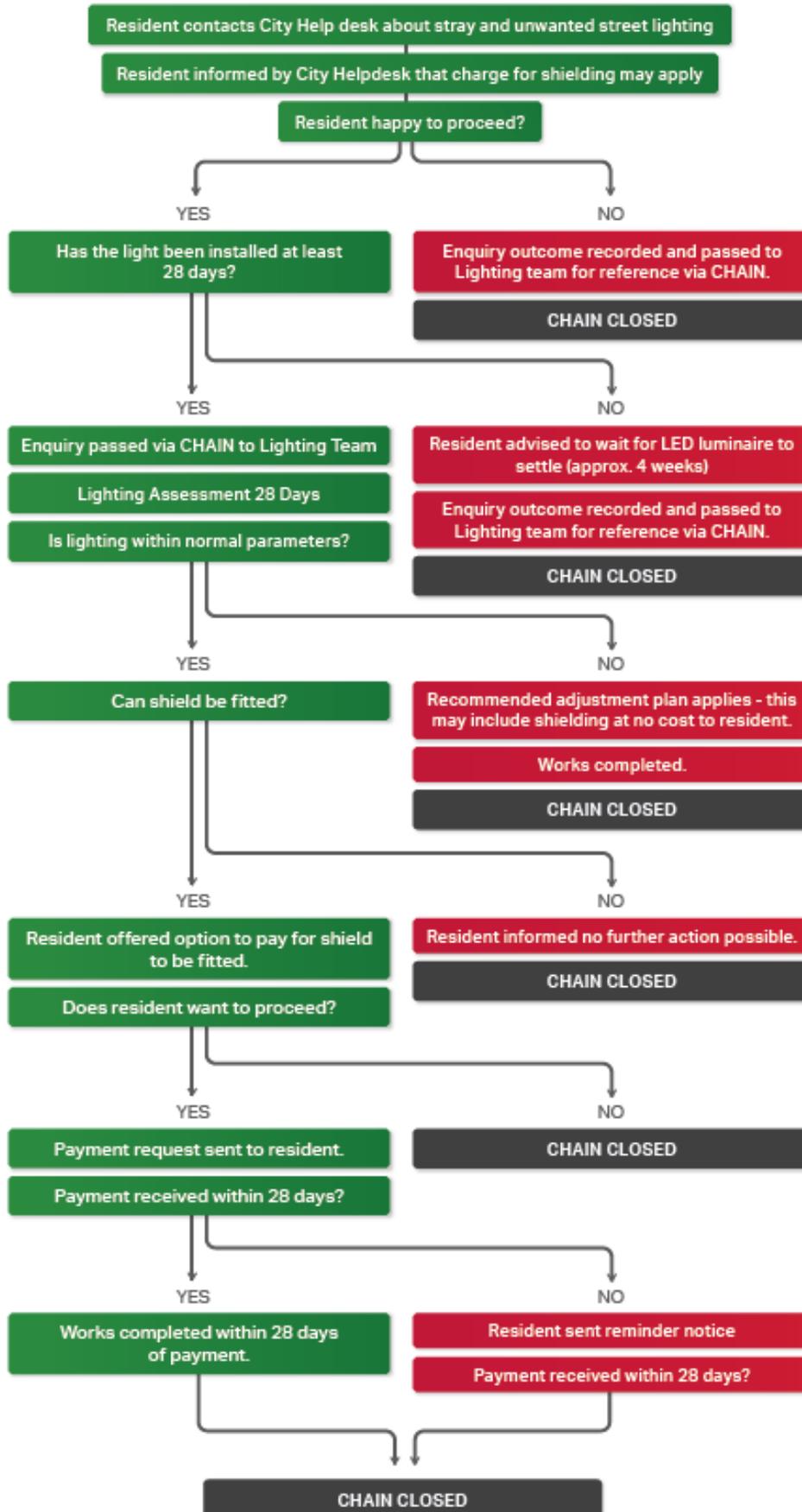
2. Purpose of this guide:

This guide provides a clear and consistent approach to managing enquiries from residents experiencing stray or unwanted streetlight.

3. Assessment

Requests should be submitted in writing to the city Helpdesk giving full details of the problem including the location, streetlight number and the part of the property that is affected. Portsmouth Council will then assess the location and concerns of the resident. The assessment will check that the light is within normal parameters for street lighting and to confirm that the lighting is fitted and working as intended.

The diagram shows the decision process the assessment will follow.



The assessment will include the following:

- The lantern is in the original intended position or orientation.
- The layout of the road straight, curve, at the end of a road or in a turning area.
- Orientation is the light opposite the property or is the lantern at an angle to the Highway.
- Distance, position, height and angle of the light in relation to the affected property.
- Time since lantern was installed, has the light been in position for a long period of time or has the light been recently replaced. In addition, for new lanterns:
 - The lantern has been installed as designed.
 - The correct wattage and type of lantern has been used.
 - Reasonable measures to prevent unwanted light undertaken by resident.

4. Timescales

Depending on the complexity of the situation, the assessment will usually take up to 28 days.

5. Outcome of Assessment

The Council will then inform the resident of the outcome of the assessment which will fall into one of two categories:

1. If the assessment determines that due to the unique nature of the location that adjustments may benefit the resident, then the recommended alterations will be detailed to the resident. Work will be undertaken at no cost to the resident.
2. The assessment determines the lighting is within normal parameters and adjustments are not required.

Where the assessment determines that the lighting is within normal parameters, but the resident has a personal preference for changes to be made, then a shield maybe permitted and purchased by the resident. The cost of this is £112.86 and must be met by the resident in advance of any works being undertaken.

It should be noted that it is not possible to shield all types of lanterns and shielding will not be fitted if it has a detrimental effect on the lighting of the public highway. Any shields fitted to streetlights will only be for the existing light and future replacement lights will not automatically be fitted with a shield, if a shield is required for a future replacement lantern, then a new application will need to be made.