

High Weald Joint Advisory Committee

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www.highweald.org

Working together to care for one of England's finest landscapes

8th December 2020

Dear

Debate on Government policy on dark skies

On Monday 14th December there will be a debate on 'Government policy on dark skies' in the House of Commons. As a Member of Parliament with part of your constituency within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and an interest in rural matters, your attendance at this debate and your support for policies combatting light pollution and protecting dark skies would be invaluable.

The High Weald has some of the darkest skies in the south-east of England. These unusually dark skies are considered worthy of conservation by the International Dark Sky Association (IDSA) yet light pollution from roads and domestic and commercial sites is rapidly increasing. Our dark skies may not be dark for much longer.

Light pollution has greatly increased in recent years and today less than 10% of the UK population can enjoy a view of our own galaxy, the Milky Way. This means more than 90% of this country's people are denied a sight of the night sky which was taken for granted for almost all of human history. Many residents of the High Weald consider dark skies to be an essential part of the natural beauty of the area and interest in 'dark sky tourism' is a small but growing trend, and a trend that local tourism businesses could target and benefit from.

As a Member of Parliament, you have a powerful role to play supporting policies that prevent the colossal waste of energy and

Anglesey
Arnside and Silverdale
Blackdown Hills
Cannock Chase
Chichester Harbour
Chilterns
Clwydian Range
Cornwall
Cotswolds
Gower
Cranbourne Chase and Dee Valley
West Wiltshire Downs
Dedham Vale
Dorset
East Devon
Forest of Bowland
Howardian Hills
High Weald
Isle of Wight
Isles of Scilly
Kent Downs
Lincolnshire Wolds
Llyn
Malvern Hills
Mendip Hills
Nidderdale
Norfolk Coast
North Devon
North Pennines
North Wessex Downs
Northumberland Coast
Quantock Hills
Shropshire Hills
Solway Coast
South Devon
Suffolk Coast and Heaths
Surrey Hills
Tamar Valley
Wye Valley

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money resulting from poor lighting and protect and reclaim the dark skies over the High Weald and those above our cities, towns, and countryside elsewhere in the country.

For more information on the dark skies of the High Weald AONB, please see here: [Dark skies \(highweald.org\)](https://www.highweald.org)

Yours sincerely,



Jason Lavender

Co-Director

High Weald AONB Unit

Advising on the management of a nationally important landscape

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c.c. High Weald Joint Advisory Committee – Councillors Mrs S Tidy, Mr P Bradbury, Mr M Balfour, Mrs L Steeds, Mr I Irvine, Mrs J Soyke, Mr M Dickins, Mr A Pickering, Mr P Dixon, Mr D Lettington, Mrs L Lockwood, Ms L Levane, Mr A Hogben, Mr J Vine-Hall, and Co-optees Mrs J Davison, Mrs L Newland (Natural England), Mr W White (National Farmers Union), Mr T Bamford (Country Land & Business Association), Mr C Harrison (Forestry Commission)