

Report to Cottenham Parish Council from Nigel Bolitho December 2007 – a pedant's report.

Street lights

Over the past month I have been surveying the street lamps in Cottenham with agreement from my CCC colleagues. Also over the past month EDF has been much more active mending dud street lights in the village. I would like to think I had an influence in encouraging this activity but I have also been encouraging residents to ring the street lamp hotline and complain.

The first survey I started at 6am on a Saturday morning. It proved to be unsuccessful because in the morning some street lights seem to go off much earlier than others. For example the street lights in Cossington Close appear to be the first to turn off and half an hour before those on Histon Road go off nearby. Also at some junctions there are two lights on one pole (eg a street light and a traffic sign light) and one may go off before the other. At the same time in the morning lights in a string of lights (notably along Histon Road) go off independently so it's too easy to imagine that there is a dud light when there is not one.

The second survey was interrupted by EDF and contractor Morrisons mending a number of duds. First time round it was on the Corbett Street/High Street junction that had been reported by a number of residents, as well as a long term dud half way down Telegraph Street on the left hand side. Second time round the dud lamp (36) at the crossing at 194 High Street opposite the hair dressers was fixed although groundwork has not been completed. The contractors may also have repaired a light on Brooklands Estate because it was dud two weeks ago and has come alive again. I was able to confirm, however, that major estates like Tenison Manor seem to have all lights shining.

The third survey was undertaken on a Sunday afternoon and was much more successful. I have divided lights into five categories-

Well lit

Obscured light (whether from vegetation or a dirty lamp or other reason)

Red dwarfs

Red flashers

Duds

It is also evident that whereas older areas of Cottenham have numbers on lamp posts and messages to ring the hotline about dud lamps, a lot of newer areas don't. In the case of

Brenda Gautry Way, the first few lamp posts going into the estate on the left hand side have numbers and the rest don't.

Problem lights at the moment are:-

1. Entrance to Broad Lane off Tenison Manor. Both the street light (1A) and the light on the Give Way sign are duds;
2. In the High Street the next lamp (37) to the repaired lamp (36) by the crossing at 194 has become a red flasher. It was okay before work started on 36 but is no good now;
3. Light 13 in Corbett Street close to Denmark Road is a Red Dwarf;
4. Two lights are not working in Brenda Gautry Way- neither have numbers. On the right hand side going half way up is a red dwarf while the second at the very end on the right hand side is a dud. It's next to a walkway;
5. No 1 at the entrance to Coolridge Gardens is a dud;
6. So is number 17A at the bus shelter almost opposite Cottenham Convenience Stores in the High Street and close the Green;
7. Cottenham Village College has three duds on white poles. Going into the grounds one dud is on a left hand pole leaning like a drunk, one is on the other side of the pond by parking spaces and the third is nearby and close to the garages;
8. Appletrees Mobile Home Park was particularly interesting. At the end one was a dud on the left hand side with a metal box attached and with two wires leading from it. Another was a red dwarf on the right hand side nearby.
9. There is also a dud in Orchard Close (number 4) on the far side of the grass area;
10. There is also a dud on the left hand side of the entrance to The Rowells with no number;
11. The first light (number 1) Pelham Way from Lambs Lane is a dud, so is number 12 at the end in Pelham Close;
12. There is also a red flasher by and on the same side as the allotments on Rampton Road;
13. There is another red flasher (number 10) near the bus shelter in Lambs Lane and on the same side of the road;
14. And last there is an obscured light (the glass is dirty) at the bottom right hand side of Harlstones Road. Its number is 25. The lamp to the left of it is bright but partly obscured by tree branches hanging over parking spaces.

I am passing on this information to the Street Lighting Department in Huntingdon. From an aesthetic point of view there are some very handsome lamps amongst the general run-of-the-mill street lamps in Cottenham (such as on the triangle end of the Green) and some unusual 1950s or so era lamps at the bottom of Pelham Way.