



## Cambridge City Council

To: Executive Councillor for Public Places  
Cllr Andrea Reiner

Report by: Director of Environment – Simon Payne

Scrutiny committee: ENVIRONMENT 8<sup>th</sup> October 2013

Wards affected: Market

### **PARKER'S PIECE LIGHTING PROJECT** Non-Key Decision

#### **1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides details of the proposed project to install additional lighting columns on the two diagonal footpaths across Parker's Piece.

The report explains the development of the project to date, including results of a consultation that took place earlier this year, which was responded to by over one thousand members of the public and has informed the lighting measures that are now being proposed.

#### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

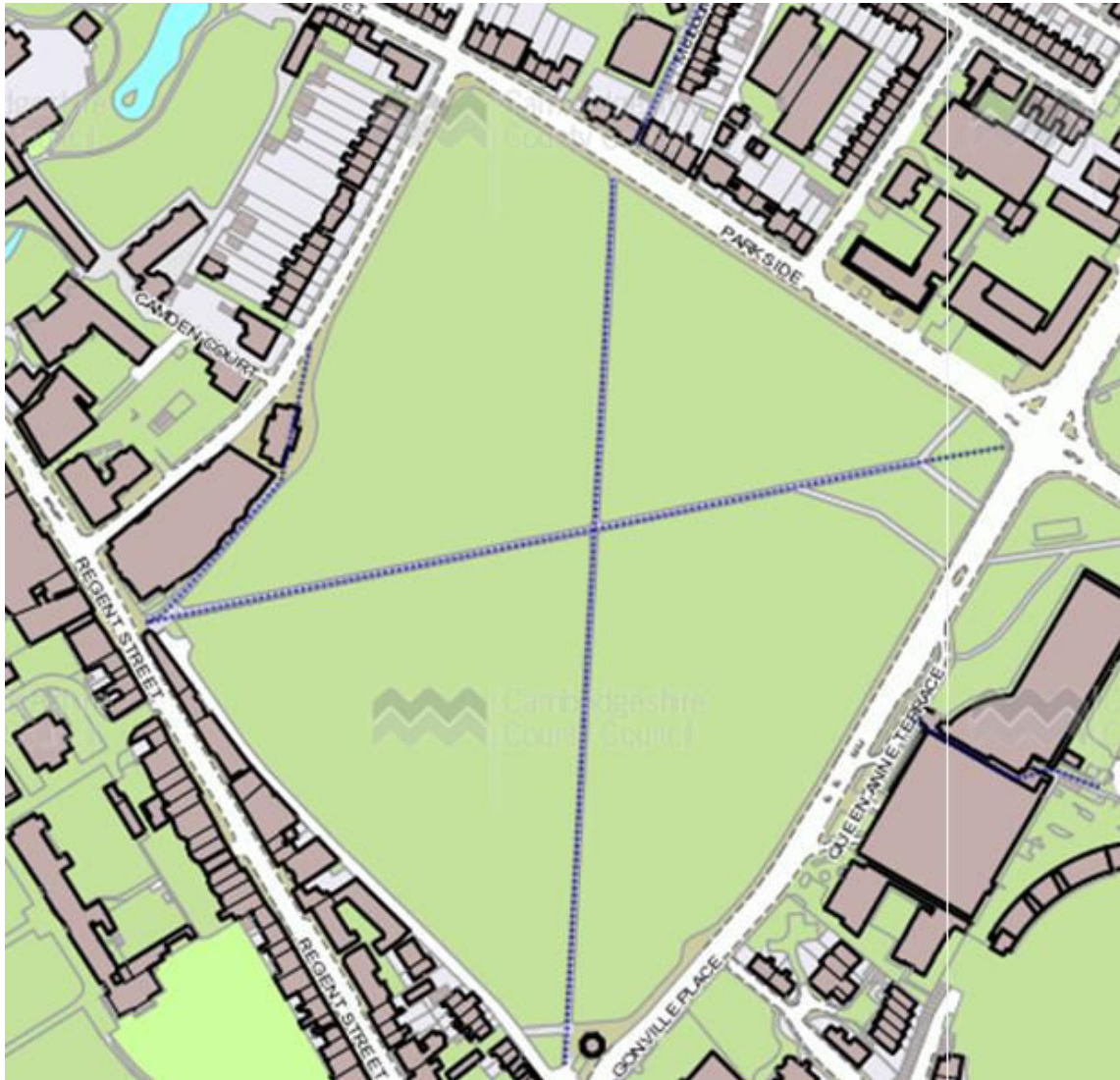
The Executive Councillor is recommended;

- 2.1** To authorise the procurement of specialist lighting design and construction services for the Parker's Piece Lighting Project, in accordance with the City Council Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.2** To agree to take the decision to approve the final project appraisal and implementation of the Parker's Piece Lighting project, out of the Environment Scrutiny Committee cycle, in consultation with the Chair and Spokes, subject to the final proposed project cost not exceeding £60,000.

### 3.0 The Project

This project proposes the installation of additional lighting columns along the two diagonal path sections that are adopted public highway across Parker's Piece.

#### Site Location Plan



*Image courtesy of Cambridgeshire County Council*

#### **Target Project Programme Dates:**

Consultation	11 October – 8 November
Commence Procurement	November 2013
Award of Contract	December 2013
Commence Construction	January 2014
Project Completion	February 2014

### 3.1 Anticipated Cost

Total Estimated Project Cost	£ 60,000
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Cost Funded from:

Funding:	Amount:	Details:
Reserves	£21,000.00	<i>Environmental Safety Fund (£16,000.00)</i> <i>Safer City Grant (£5,000.00)</i>
Repairs & Renewals	£0.00	
Developer Contributions	£39,000.00	<i>Public Realm Developer Contributions (£39,000.00)</i>
Climate Change Fund	£0.00	
Other	£0.00	

### 3.2 Procurement process

Procurement will be through a request for quotations from three specialist lighting contractors in accordance with a written specification. Quotations will be assessed by a skilled officer panel and selected in accordance with a clear evaluation scheme, based on demonstrated quality versus cost.

### 3.3 Background

3.3.1 Parker's Piece is described as follows in the Cambridge Landscape Character Assessment:

*“Parker's Piece is a large green space to the south east of the historic city core. It is well used as a recreation area. It has tree planting to its boundary, but none with the internal space, making it a unique space in Cambridge. There are two major paths bisecting it, with a Grade II Listed lamp column near the centre. Like New Square and Christ's Pieces it is closely mown.”*

3.3.2 The existing Grade II Listed lighting column is at the centre of the two main paths that cross the park diagonally and is known locally as Reality Checkpoint. The Listed Status text for this structure reads:

*“Lamp Standard. C.1860. Cast iron. Square-section plinth and base with inscription panels to each side. South-west side with access hatch. Top edges with waterleaf decoration. Base of shaft with 4 intertwined dolphins. Plain shaft of circular section carries 4 candelabra lamp holders by means of scrolled wrought-iron stays. Glazed mantle cages of inverted conical section.”*

3.3.3 Parker’s Piece was transferred to the corporation as pasture in perpetuity for the townsfolk in 1612, and has remained relatively unchanged throughout its history. This relative consistency has established a strong landscape character. This site is also within the conservation area and forms part of the city’s historic core.

3.3.4 Having said that, it has still had to evolve with the changing demands for its use, which history shows has taken time to agree by those responsible. Some of the changes include;

- Ground levelled for a cricket pitch (1831 and 1832).
- Surfaced footpath on all four sides of the common separated from the horses and cattle by an oak post and rail fence.
- Surface of PP levelled and drained into new sewer; single row of elms to be planted on three sides (proposed 1839).
- 30 lime trees planted on NE side of Parker’s Piece (1868).
- Iron fence to be installed around Parker’s Piece (Council decision 1878).
- Worn tracks over the grass formalised by limestone paths on Parker’s Piece (decision 1880).
- Paths on Parker’s Piece widened and drained (decision 1890).
- Electric lamp installed at centre of Parker’s Piece (Reality Checkpoint) (decision 1893).
- Hobbs Pavilion built on Parkers Piece. (1927)
- Paths widened at corners and lay-by created in Regents Terrace.
- Paths at NE corner of Parker's Piece modified. (2000)

- 3.3.5 It is also interesting to note that, at the time the grass tracks were proposed to be formalised by limestone paths in 1880, it was highlighted that they should be lit, which probably led to the installation of Reality Checkpoint ten years later.
- 3.3.6 Since then the city has continued to develop and the population of Cambridge is expected to increase extensively over the next 20 years, with the quality and accessibility of the historic core key to the attraction of the city, as a place to live and visit.
- 3.3.7 This projected increase in population will continue to put more pressure on the capacity of the city centre in supporting more residents and visitors.
- 3.3.8 Parker's Piece is a hugely valuable green space for Cambridge, highlighting the great value that high quality green spaces can bring to an urban environment and it now seems the time has once again come for more difficult decisions to be made over its further evolution, following the demands from those using it.

### **3.4 Project Aims & Objectives**

- 3.4.1 For many years the issue of additional lighting across Parker's Piece has been debated.
- 3.4.2 In 2003, the City Council set up a budget known as the Environmental Safety Fund, which aimed to help deal with issues of community safety, specifically in areas of recorded violent crime across the city, by funding improvements to public amenity lighting.
- 3.4.3 Parker's Piece was specifically mentioned as one of those problem areas, but proposals have taken many years to gain enough momentum, a general theme for any proposed changes to Parker's Piece over the past 400 years.
- 3.4.4 Community safety concerns are therefore not a new issue for Parker's Piece and it is clear that this project is dealing with a sensitive issue that has now reached a point where important decisions need to be made.

3.4.5 To partly inform these decisions, the Safer Neighbourhoods team from Cambridgeshire Police has provided a list of recorded incidents that occurred between the hours of 18:00 and 06:00 throughout 2012 for the Parker's Piece area. A detailed breakdown can be found in Appendix B of this report.

3.4.6 It was also made clear that there are also incidents that go unreported, although these are assumed to be of a less serious nature.

3.4.7 A total of 57 incidents were reported during 2012 including;

➤ Violence	15
➤ Theft	5
➤ Robbery	4
➤ Sex Offence	1

3.4.8 The majority of violence related incidents occurred between the hours of midnight and 04:00hrs. Rowdy/Nuisance incidents occurred predominantly between 21:00hrs and midnight. All recorded robbery incidents occurred after 21:00hrs.

3.4.9 With the majority of incidents taking place during the hours of darkness, targeting improvements to lighting is an obvious option in a bid to reduce these statistics.

### **3.5 Consultation to Date**

3.5.1 In March this year a public consultation was conducted to investigate whether additional lighting on Parker's Piece would be welcomed by residents and park users.

3.5.2 The consultation trialled different lighting types, asking respondents views on their perceived safety of the Piece and their opinion of the installed lighting.

3.5.3 The consultation was extensive and generated 1,039 valid responses over a period of four weeks.

3.5.4 A copy of the consultation report can be found in Appendix C of this report, but some of the key statistics were;

- The heaviest usage time of the Piece is the early evening
- After dark, three out of five people do not feel safe on the Piece.
- The trialled lighting improved the perception of safety significantly, especially for women, younger people and students; who all felt safer whilst the trial was operational.
- 76% of respondents welcome the idea of lighting Parker's Piece, with 17% thinking that it was a bad idea. 69% wanted to see the scheme extended (primarily young people, students and women).
- 62% of responses were from local residents.
- The most vulnerable groups including women, younger children and students were on the whole greatly in support of lighting, whilst older people were more resistant to the introduction of lighting.

Some criticisms of proposed lighting were as follows:

- That people who felt unsafe could walk around the park.
- That bollards would act as obstacles for cyclists and pedestrians.
- That any lighting would negatively detract from the character of the space.
- Increased levels of light pollution were not desirable.
- It was suggested by several respondents that further consideration should be given to the design of the lighting proposed.

### **3.6 Lighting Design Development**

- 3.6.1 Due to the strong level of public support for the introduction of improved lighting on Parker's Piece, officers carried out further design development work.
- 3.6.2 This included further research and procurement of advice from specialist lighting designers and manufacturers.
- 3.6.3 This gave officers an opportunity to look in more detail at the feasibility of the retracting bollards that were part of the original trial.
- 3.6.4 Whilst these could potentially resolve concerns over the imposition of the character of the space during daylight hours, it became apparent that there were significant operational and maintenance issues that made them an unfeasible option.
- 3.6.5 Both the retractable and fixed bollards were easy targets for vandalism with several of them made inoperable.
- 3.6.6 They also anecdotally created an eye level glare which reduced sightlines for pedestrians and cyclists. It is thought that they may pose a health and safety risk to cyclists and pedestrians, particularly during the period of time taken for the retractable bollards to rise out of the ground.
- 3.6.7 Due to the nature of the moving parts in the retractable bollards, there was also a high risk of failures and the need for considerable on-going and expensive maintenance.

### **3.7 Proposed Lighting Design**

- 3.7.1 It is generally accepted that the optimal method of providing amenity lighting, to any decent standard and with minimal impact, can only really be achieved through the installation of lighting columns.
- 3.7.2 The proposal that is recommended, which achieves the aspired level of lighting whilst having the least amount of impact on the character of the Piece, involves the installation of six new lighting columns.



- 3.7.3 The proposed lighting is intended to act as ‘beacon’ or ‘wayfinder’ lighting, providing pools of light thrown on to paths to interrupt the consistent expanse of darkness across the Piece.
- 3.7.4 The lighting columns are proposed to be 8 metres tall, which is a reasonable height for such a wide open space, and a proportionate scale for the location.
- 3.7.5 Shorter lighting than this would be at risk of looking out of scale and also significantly reduce the area of illumination. Taller lighting than this would then be higher than Reality Checkpoint, which officers would recommend is avoided.
- 3.7.6 The columns have been proposed at between 80m and 105m centres, to ensure central placement on the diagonal paths. No column will be placed within 80 metres of Reality Checkpoint.
- 3.7.7 The proposed lighting column design is shown in Figure 1.0 below, installed at a total of six locations on the Piece, as shown in Figure 2.0.



*Figure 1.0 Images of the proposed lighting column and lantern style.*

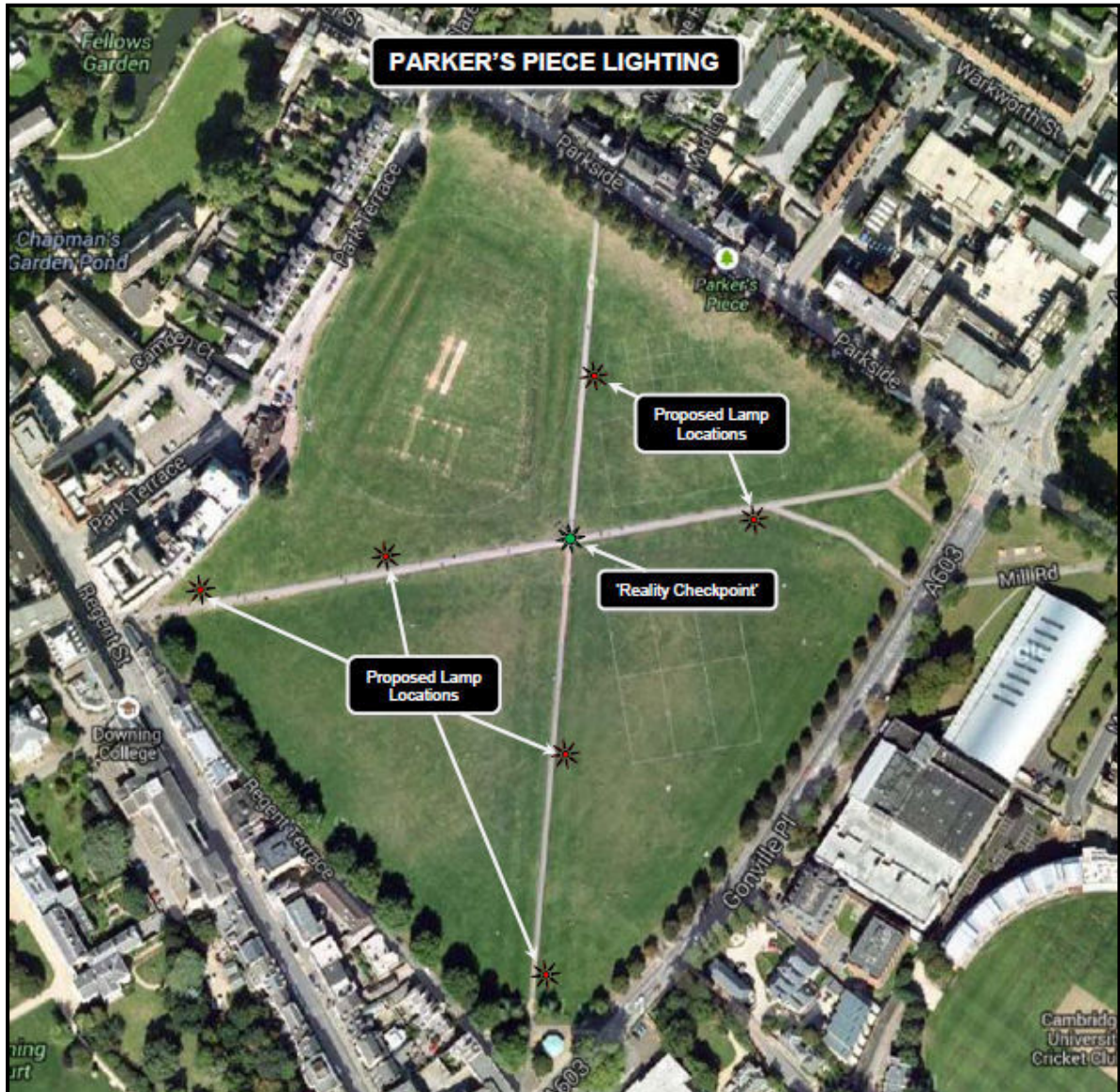


Figure 2.0 Proposed additional lighting column locations.

3.7.8 In order to visualise the impact of the columns within the Piece, photomontages have been created from two different viewpoints, including an aspect towards Regent Terrace (fig 3.0) and also towards the Catholic Church and Hills Road junction (fig 4.0).

3.7.9 The columns are proposed to be sited adjacent to the edge of the paths within the grass, so as not to interfere with the current pedestrian and cycle flows.



*Fig 3.0; Photomontage of a column looking towards Regent Terrace.*

3.7.10 These locations and columns have been selected for the following reasons;

- Being a column mounted light will allow for a wider, controlled area of light to be thrown on to the paths than smaller individual bollards, with none of the eye level glare.
- 8 metre columns will be more vandal resistant.
- The columns will not puncture the existing treeline and skyline.
- At the spacing indicated, these columns will act as 'beacons' or way finder lights, whilst still leaving some areas not as highly illuminated between them.
- At these spacing the columns will not give a regimented, consistent line of vertical structures across the site. This will also reduce the possibility of breaking a 'framed view'.



*Fig 4.0; Photomontage of a column looking towards the Catholic Church on Hills Road.*

- The lighting heads will be fitted with an optic/reflector system, designed to direct light toward the path, where it is needed, whilst minimising illumination of the green space through light spillage.
- The County Council, who are responsible for Reality Checkpoint, have plans to install improved luminaires into this central feature.
- The proposed lighting columns will use the same white light luminaire technology, which provides significant improvements to colour rendition.
- The columns reference but do not attempt to mimic 'Reality Checkpoint' and the Victorian character of the park.
- The Columns will not be taller than 'Reality Checkpoint', and are less ornate, thereby reducing the perception that they 'compete' with the listed structure.
- The columns will be painted a different colour (black) to reality checkpoint.
- By acting as wayfinder beacons, these columns will encourage the public to make use of the green space in the evenings and night time, rather than be deterred, thus increasing public access.
- The proposed lighting relates directly to existing footpaths and their historic layout.
- During the day time, the relatively low number of proposed columns into what is a large space will minimise the negative impact of new introductions onto the Piece.

3.7.11 The proposal introduces the minimum number of columns to provide the aspired lighting improvements, whilst being sensitive to the character, form and function of the Piece as a whole.

3.7.12 As such the columns will remove the current completely dark sections at the mid-point of each path, but will not consistently light the path from one side to the other.

3.7.13 Figure 5 below provides an illustration of the lighting levels that can be expected by the column locations proposed, which includes the optimal light output from reality checkpoint, following refurbishment work that is also planned.

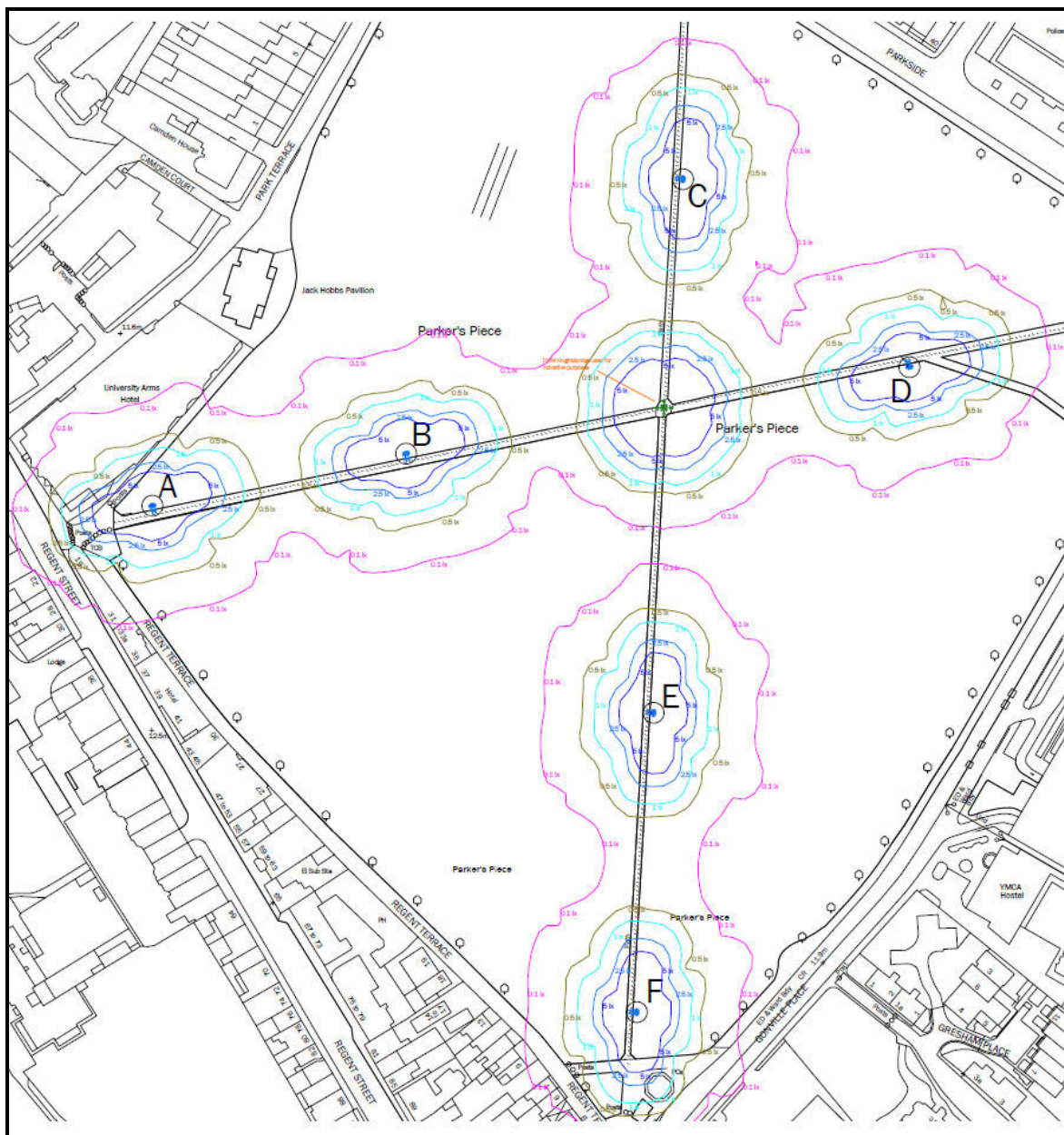


Fig 5. Lux Plot – showing the proposed lighting levels across Parker's Piece

### 3.8 Council Policies and Strategies

Given the sensitive landscape character and heritage value of the space, as well as its strategic importance and social value to Cambridge, a number of desk and field studies have been used to inform the process, including;

- Cambridge Local plan 2006
- Landscape Character assessment
- Parker's Piece Conservation Plan 2001
- Internal opinion from the urban design team, Asset team, City Centre team and Conservation team
- Extensive public consultation undertaken in 2013
- Discussion with lighting suppliers on different designs and their impact

### 3.9 Cambridge City Council vision statement.

The following statements from the vision are considered directly relevant to this project:

- A city whose citizens feel they can influence public decision making and are equally keen to pursue individual and community initiatives
- A city where people behave with consideration for others and where harm and nuisance are confronted wherever possible without constraining the lives of all
- A city which draws inspiration from its iconic historic centre and achieves a sense of place in all of its parts with generous urban open spaces and well- designed buildings

#### 4.0 Parker's Piece Conservation Plan 2001.

4.0.1 The Parker's Piece conservation plan is a well-considered and thorough document, outlining the history and significance of the Piece, as well as giving a clear set of guidance notes recommending how the heritage asset should be managed going forward.

4.0.2 The conservation plan highlights the character of the Piece and clearly aims to conserve the openness and lack of structures with the exception of reality checkpoint in the centre.

*"Retain the open character of the central area of Parker's Piece. Avoid introducing tree planting there, additional lighting, other structures or artefacts."* Section 5.1.2; Parker's Piece Conservation Plan 2001

4.0.3 Whilst the character of Parker's Piece is an extremely important factor in considering the visual impact of new lighting columns, this is a statement that has been made at a particular point in time and the Piece has and will continue to evolve.

4.0.4 No doubt past recommendations didn't agree with the paving of the diagonal paths or installing reality checkpoint, but those decisions now seem reasonable based on its usage in this day and age.

4.0.5 This is recognised in section 5.2.2 which states;

*"In order to keep the spaces relevant to public needs today, maintain a balance between the existing range of uses and be ready to consider new suggestions and demands without compromising the qualities and facilities valued currently."*

and

*The layout of Parker's Piece has resulted from a formalisation of tracks and uses established over time rather than from a single design. The results of this gradual evolution are fundamental to the character and flexibility of the space.*



4.0.5 It must also be highlighted that this plan is not an all-encompassing document, for example it has very little reference to night time usage.

4.0.6 It does however recognise the importance of safety concerns and the paths as a thoroughfare;

*“Ensure the open spaces and their toilet facilities feel safe places to visit by their design and high standard of maintenance.”*

*“At night, particularly in winter, the (Parkside) pool offers welcome illumination ahead to those crossing Parker’s Piece on their way home from work.”*

*“The designated cycle paths across Parker’s Piece enables people to avoid the busy junction between Gonville Place and Hills Road.*

*“As a reflection of the importance of these historic spaces, provide adequate resources for appropriate, high quality materials and designs for artefacts such as seats, paths and lights, and their future maintenance.”*

4.0.7 The Cambridge Historic Core Appraisal – June 2006 also recognises the importance of Parker’s Piece as a thoroughfare;

*“its paths are also an important part of the foot and cycle network connecting the city to housing areas throughout the year.”*

4.0.8 The consideration for additional lighting, based on the content of the Conservation Plan, should be based on the fact that Parker’s Piece should be allowed to evolve, as recognised in the plan. The Piece is not purely something to look at, but a functional part of the city’s life for residents and visitors.

4.0.9 This proposal still avoids significantly changing the unobstructed landscape or adversely conflicting with other uses of the space and minimises the introduction of additional artefacts.

### **3.8 Further Consultation & Approvals**

- 3.8.1 A city wide public consultation of these proposals will be carried out for four weeks from Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2013, to gain feedback on the project proposals.
- 3.8.2 The results of this consultation will then be made available on the City Council's website and a decision on whether to implement the project requested from the Executive Councillor for Public Places Councillor Andrea Reiner, in consultation with the Chair and Spokes of Environment Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.8.3 The erection of the lighting columns constitutes permitted development by virtue of Part 12, Class A, criteria B to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order) 1995 (as amended).
- 3.8.4 A planning application will therefore not be required in order to install the proposed columns on Parker's Piece, should final implementation approval be granted.

### **3.9 Summarise key risks associated with the project**

- 3.9.1 That the introduction of lighting will damage the character of this space, reducing it's perceived quality and value, through different groups in Cambridge.
- 3.9.2 That efficiency of new lighting will be compromised without continued partnership working with Cambridgeshire constabulary and other partners.
- 3.9.3 That the proposed lighting scheme cannot guarantee a decrease in future criminal behaviour on the Piece.
- 3.9.4 That the columns may be vandalised or damaged, resulting in additional financial implications.

### 3.10 Financial implications

- a. Appraisal prepared on the following price base: 2013/14
- b. There are no specific grant funding conditions.

### 3.11 Net revenue implications (costs or savings)

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Maintenance	£ 900	Energy Costs & Cleaning
R&R Contribution	£ 1,000	Annual contribution over 40 year design life
Developer Contributions		
Energy savings	( )	See below
Income / Savings	( )	
<b>Net Revenue effect</b>	<b>£ 1,900</b>	<b>Revenue Bid Required</b>

### 3.12 VAT implications

"The VAT incurred on this project will need to be incorporated within the Council's annual Partial Exemption (PE) calculation, of around £12,000. This VAT is known as 'exempt input tax' as the Council hires this venue for various VAT exempt supplies (e.g. the hiring of land). There is a risk to the Council, dependent on other capital schemes corporately, that it's 5% de minimis limit could be exceeded. An option to mitigate this risk would be to consider 'opting to tax' this site.

However, this option is not being considered at this stage, due to the above amount being relatively immaterial in VAT terms. This Council is therefore confident that the above amount can be contained within the above PE limit. Careful monitoring by the Accountant (VAT & Treasury) is being instigated and any divergence from the planned capital expenditure will be advised to the Director of Resources for appropriate action to be taken."

### 3.13 Energy and Fuel Savings

(a) Is this project listed in the Carbon Management Plan?	No
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### 3.14 Climate Change Impact

Positive Impact	No effect	Negative Impact
	Nil	

### 3.15 Staff required to deliver the project

Service	Skills	Total Hours
<i>Streets and Open Spaces, Project Delivery and Asset team</i>	<i>Consultation Procurement Contract administration Construction Supervision Project quality control</i>	<i>Approximately 150</i>

### 3.16 Dependency on other work or projects

The 'Cambridge Rules' Public Art Commission will need to take into account the proposed location of these columns through the design and locating of the artwork.

### **3.17 Appendices and Background Papers**

APPENDIX A - Capital Costs/Funding Profile

APPENDIX B - 2012 Reported Incidents for Parker's Piece Area

APPENDIX C - Lighting Trial Consultation Report

### **3.18 Inspection of papers**

Author's Name	Andrew Preston
Author's phone No.	01223 - 457271
Author's e-mail:	andrew.preston@cambridge.gov.uk
Date prepared:	18 <sup>th</sup> September 2013

**Capital Project Appraisal - Capital costs & funding - Profiling**

**Appendix A**

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Comments
	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>Capital Costs</b>						
Building contractor / works	54,000					
Purchase of vehicles, plant & equipment						
Professional / Consultants fees	6,000					Officer Time
Other capital expenditure:						
<b>Total Capital cost</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Capital Income / Funding</b>						
Government Grant						
Developer Contributions	39,000					Public Realm Developer Contributions
R&R funding						
Earmarked Funds						
Existing capital programme funding	21,000					Safer City Grant Environmental Safety Fund
Revenue contributions						
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Net Capital Bid</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	



# **APPENDIX B**

## 2012 Incidents Reported in the Parker's Piece Area





## Research in relation to crime types/incidents/ASB on and around Parkers Piece, Cambridge during the hours of darkness.

**Between 31/12/11 and 31/12/2012 – Reported between the hours of 18.00  
and 06.00.**

57 incidents reported to Police in the area of Parkers Piece, Cambridge

Incident Type	Number
Animals	1
Concern	5
Domestic	1
Fire	1
Noise Complaint	1
Property	2
Road Related	3
Robbery	4
Rowdy/Nuisance	5
Sex Off	1
Street Drinking	1
Susp Circs	7
Theft	5
Violence	15
Other	5

For the violence related incidents the majority of these occurred between the hours of midnight and 04.00hours.

Rowdy/Nuisance incidents occurred predominantly between hours of 21.00 and midnight.

The 4 robbery incidents all occurred after the time of 21.00hrs.

The incidents reported have predominantly occurred over the weekend.

Day of Week	No. of Incidents
Monday	5
Tuesday	3
Wednesday	6
Thursday	11
Friday	14
Saturday	10
Sunday	11



# **APPENDIX C**

## Lighting Trial Consultation Report

## Lighting Parker's Piece



*Image © copyright Cambridge 2000, used with permission*

**A report for Cambridge City Council  
by Phil Back Associates Ltd**

**March 2013**

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## Executive Summary

1. The lighting trial took place over four weeks in early 2013, and a linked consultation generated a total of 1,039 valid responses, which is a good level of response for this type of consultation. The response has been particularly strong from students (and hence from younger people) and care is needed in interpreting overall results because of distortions on response as a result.
2. Two thirds of respondents use the paths on Parker's Piece at least twice a week; over a third use these paths on most days. The heaviest usage is in the early evening, but the paths are well used at all times of day, and two thirds of those participating in the survey use the footpaths late at night. Most late-night users are students and younger people.
3. Parker's Piece holds few fears for its users in the daytime; four out of five users feel safe in daylight on the site. However, after dark this changes dramatically, with only a quarter feeling safe, and three out of five people feeling unsafe. A quarter of people feel unsafe crossing Parker's Piece after dark; perceptions of safety after dark are lowest among women and young people. Four out of five students (79%) feel safe during the day; but four out of five (76%) feel unsafe after dark.
4. The trial improved perceptions of safety significantly, and especially for the key groups of women, younger people, and students: all felt safer while the trial was operational, and over half of each group felt a lot safer.
5. Three quarters of respondents (76%) welcome the idea of lighting Parker's Piece, and a further 7% are okay with the idea, but with reservations. In contrast, just 8% overall think this is a bad idea, and a further 9% don't like it, making 17% in total who are opposed to the idea.
6. However, there are significant variations between different groups of respondents. The most vulnerable groups - women, young people, and students - all welcome the idea enthusiastically, but older people in particular are much more resistant to the introduction of lighting.
7. The main areas of objection are the effect on the look and feel of Parker's Piece, the creation of obstructions and hazards (especially for cyclists), and the view that vulnerable people have the option of walking around, rather than across, the space. The scheme used is criticised by objectors for its lack of aesthetic quality and its

failure to reflect the character of the space. Light pollution, and the value of unlit spaces in an urban context, also feature as objections.

8. Although there is strong support for the principle of the lighting scheme, the support for the design actually chosen is more equivocal, suggesting that the if the scheme is to be progressed, further thought should be given to design.
9. A retracting bollard went largely unnoticed, but attracts generally positive feedback nevertheless.
10. The effectiveness of the scheme gets a positive response, but with some qualification; women and young people tend to find the scheme more effective, as do students. Factors affecting effectiveness focus particularly on the height and brightness of the lights, which clearly have caused cyclists problems with dazzle and distance vision.
11. Asked to rate different aspects of a lighting scheme, vandal resilience emerges as the most important factor, ahead of energy efficiency and design. Issues such as value for money and light pollution emerge as less important overall. People with an interest in open spaces, though, are more concerned about all these issues than other interest groups are, especially students.
12. Two thirds of respondents (69%) want to see the scheme extended; these are primarily young people and students, and women are also more enthusiastic about extending the scheme. Older people however want to see either a different scheme, or no scheme at all.
13. In summary, the most vulnerable groups - women, young people, students - are all generally keen to see a scheme adopted and support the roll-out of a scheme following the trial; there is a case, though, for reconsidering the format and design of the scheme to accommodate different users more comfortably. Older people, non-students, and people with an interest in the character of open space in Cambridge, are much more equivocal, and much less enthusiastic, about this possibility. It is also likely that any proposal to introduce a scheme would face significant, and articulate objection, even though most of those most directly affected seem likely to support it..

## 1 Objectives and methodology

Parker's Piece is a large, flat open space close to the city centre in Cambridge, bordered by offices and commercial premises, and close to a residential area. The open space is crossed by several surfaced pathways and is a popular cut-through for both pedestrians and cyclists, avoiding both the noise and traffic on adjacent roads and also, when crossing from one corner to another, providing a short cut. The proximity to several colleges, and to Anglia Ruskin University, makes it a particularly popular route for students, but the space is widely used by a variety of people. It is also popular as a recreational space and is used for exercise and for other active pastimes, as well as for relaxing and sunbathing.

In early 2013, following reports of incidents occurring after dark, and especially late at night, to people crossing Parkers Piece, and after discussion with the Police, the City Council decided to trial a lighting scheme on one of the footpaths radiating from the centre of the open space. A set of lights was installed, together with noticeboards advertising the purpose of the scheme and inviting people to comment on the idea. The lighting scheme was left in place for around four weeks (interrupted by a vandal attack on the installation) from late January 2013 to early March 2013.

A QR Code was provided to give access to an online questionnaire for mobile phone users, and a website address was also provided for those preferring to use the Council's consultation pages on their website. In addition, a letter drop was made to local residents, again setting out the background to the trial and asking for their comments and feedback.

The response from the two methods is shown here:

**Table 1.1: Validated response**

Response method	Validated response
Website	996
Mobile QR Code	43
Total validated response	1,039

A total of 1,039 people provided valid feedback on the trial, though not everyone answered every question. This is a good level of response for an exercise of this nature and

demonstrates both the significant level of interest in the idea, and also the value of the feedback mechanisms provided. The number shown as the 'validated response' excludes a small number of responses that were left blank - perhaps because the respondent started to respond, but then decided to view the scheme before responding more fully - and some obvious duplicates, where it was apparent that a respondent had completed the survey more than once. Both these features are commonplace in an online survey and the effect of this is not material in context of the volume of responses actually received.

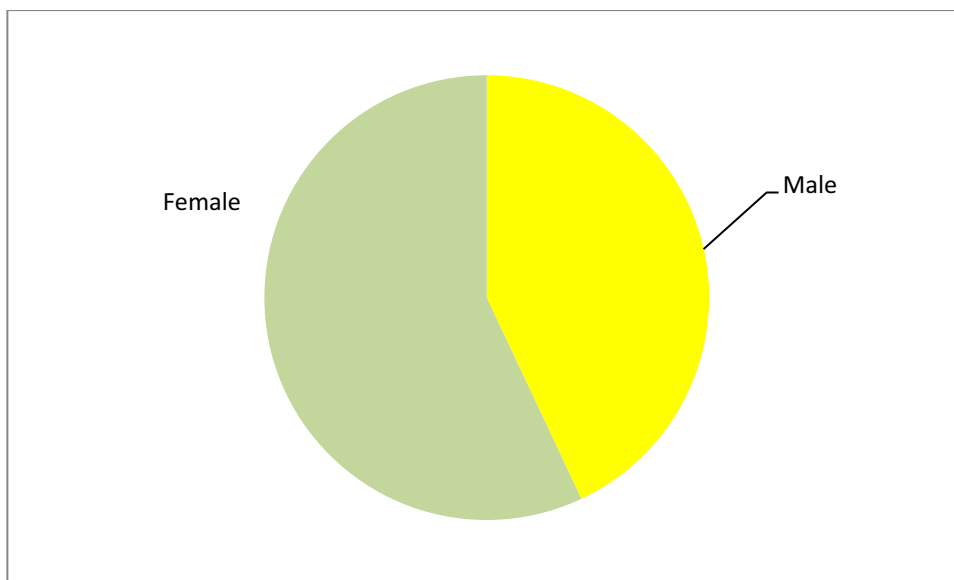
No weighting has been applied to the data, but our analysis is careful to identify different subgroups within the response to allow a clearer understanding of the range and nature of opinions expressed. The factors that might need to be taken into account in considering the overall result are discussed below.

## 2 Respondent profile

This section explores the demographic and other characteristics of respondents to this survey.

**Table 2.1: Gender of respondents**

Gender	Proportion of respondents
Male	43%
Female	57%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>901</i>

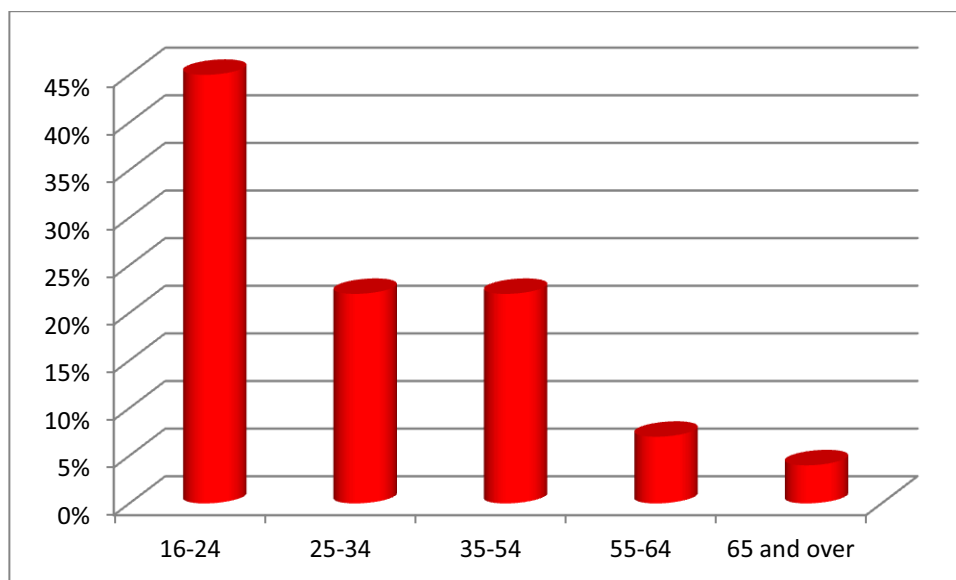


There is a slight predominance of women in the survey, though not an overwhelming one. It means we need to be careful to see whether the views of people of different genders are distinctive in any way. But although we could look at weighting the data to offset this imbalance, we also suspect it may reflect a greater level of concern or interest in safety on this open space on the part of women.



**Table 2.2: Age of respondents**

Age-group	Proportion of respondents
16-24	45%
25-34	22%
35-54	22%
55-64	7%
65 and over	4%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>904</i>

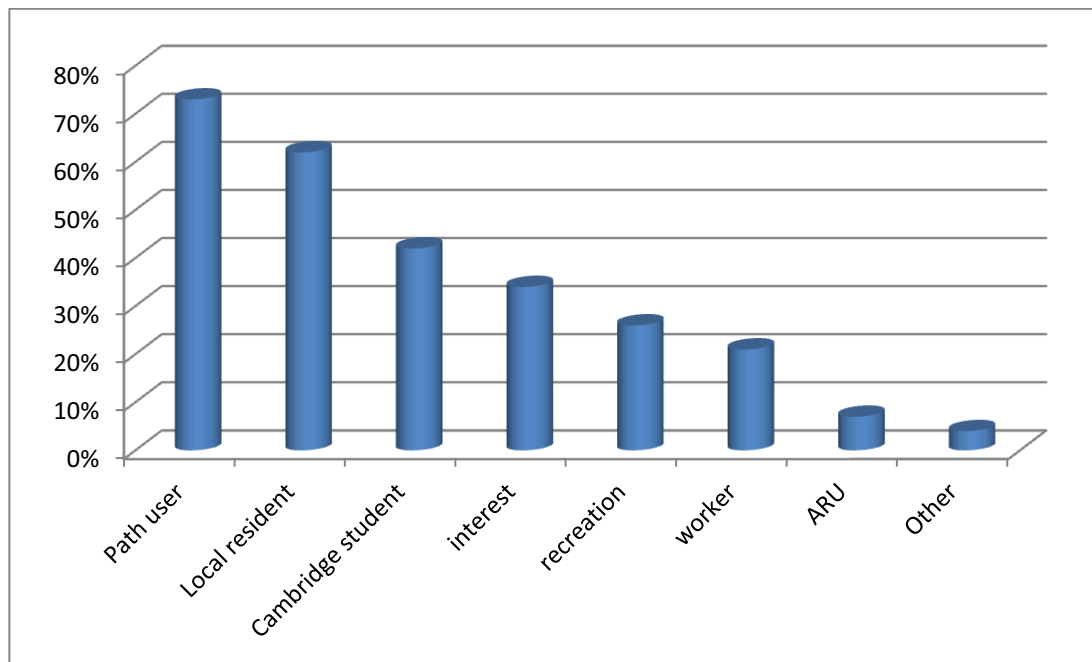


There is a significant imbalance here towards the younger age-groups. Relatively few older people have taken part in the survey, compared with their presence in the local population. Again, we need to be careful to ensure that the views of older people are not swamped by those of younger respondents. The imbalance may be due to the methodology used (though internet capability is higher among older residents than these results suggest), but it may also be linked to a reduced tendency to venture out after dark, or to use open spaces after dark, on the part of many older people.

Respondents were also asked to describe their status in relation to Parkers Piece; this enables us to distinguish between the views of different interest groups.

**Table 2.3: Type of respondent**

<b>Respondent type</b>	<b>Proportion of respondents</b>
Someone who uses the footpaths to cross Parker's Piece	73%
Local resident	62%
A student at Cambridge University	42%
Someone with an interest or concern about open spaces in Cambridge	34%
Someone who uses Parker's Piece for recreation or exercise	26%
Someone who works nearby	21%
A student at ARU	7%
Some other interest	4%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	1,035



In this instance, respondents could choose one or more options to indicate their interest in the space, so the totals add up to more than 100%.

By far the commonest reason for completing the survey was as someone who uses the footpaths in question: three quarters of those answering the survey claim to be footpath users. Three in five are local residents, and one in five works nearby, while around a third of those completing the survey have an interest in open spaces more generally.

Only a quarter of those responding actually use Parker's Piece for exercise or recreation, a proportion that is much lower than those using it as a through route to somewhere else, and also much lower than the proportion of local residents. This suggests that for many people this is a functional and amenity space rather than one fulfilling a wider role as a park or similar space; this does not diminish it in any way, but may give an insight into its main usage, perhaps particularly during the winter months.

Student presence in the sample is substantial and the space is clearly an important one to many students. Around half of those responding to the survey are students, with the vast majority of these - six out of every seven - being students at the University of Cambridge. The representation of ARU students is small, especially given the proximity of a major ARU building to Parker's Piece.

Clearly there are significant overlaps between many of these different interest groups; a large proportion of respondents ticked two or more areas of interest in this issue.

Most **local residents** also use the footpaths across the space (85% of residents do so), and almost half of local residents (44%) take a wider interest in open spaces in Cambridge generally. But only a third (33%) of those describing themselves as local residents use the space for exercise or relaxation. A quarter (27%) of local residents work nearby, and a third (34%) of those who live locally are also students.

**Footpath users** are primarily local residents: three quarters (72%) of those using the footpaths live locally. But a quarter (27%) of footpath users work in the vicinity of the space, and the paths are heavily used by students, with 43% of footpath users being at one of the two universities.

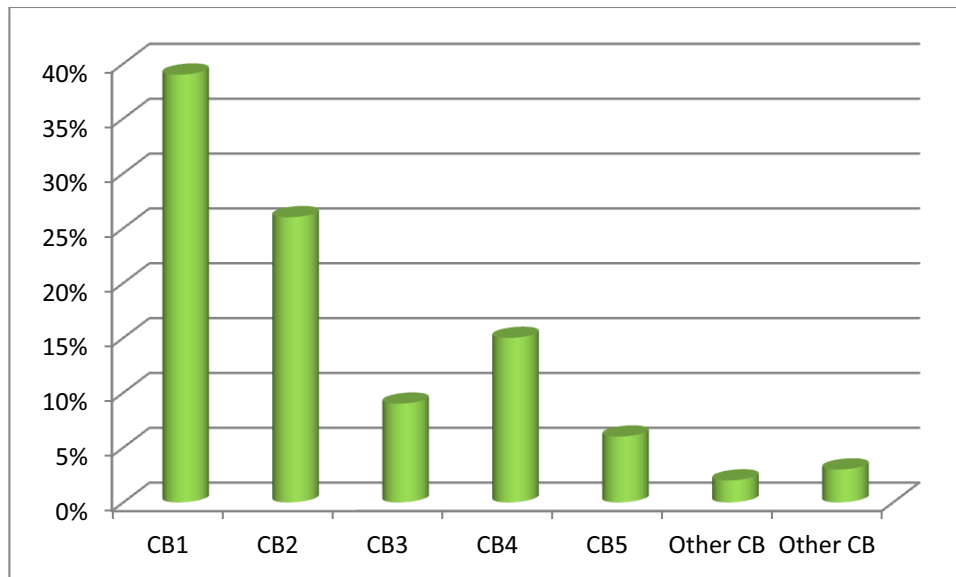
There is no overlap between the two groups of **students**. Four out of five (82%) of ARU students use the footpaths, and three out of five (61%) of Cambridge University students in the survey do so. Again, though, the space is largely functional, with only around a quarter to a third of students using the space for relaxation or exercise.

Most of those expressing a **wider interest in open spaces** are themselves users of Parker's Piece. Almost all (92%) use the footpaths, and a large proportion (80%) live locally. Two in five of this group use Parker's as a place for relaxation or exercise.

The survey also collects the postcode of respondents, and the distribution of those who provided a valid postcode is shown here:

**Table 2.4: Postcode (district only) of respondents**

Respondent location	Proportion of respondents
CB1	39%
CB2	26%
CB3	9%
CB4	15%
CB5	6%
Other CB postcodes	2%
Postcodes outside CB postal area	3%
<i>N(=100%)</i>	<i>861</i>

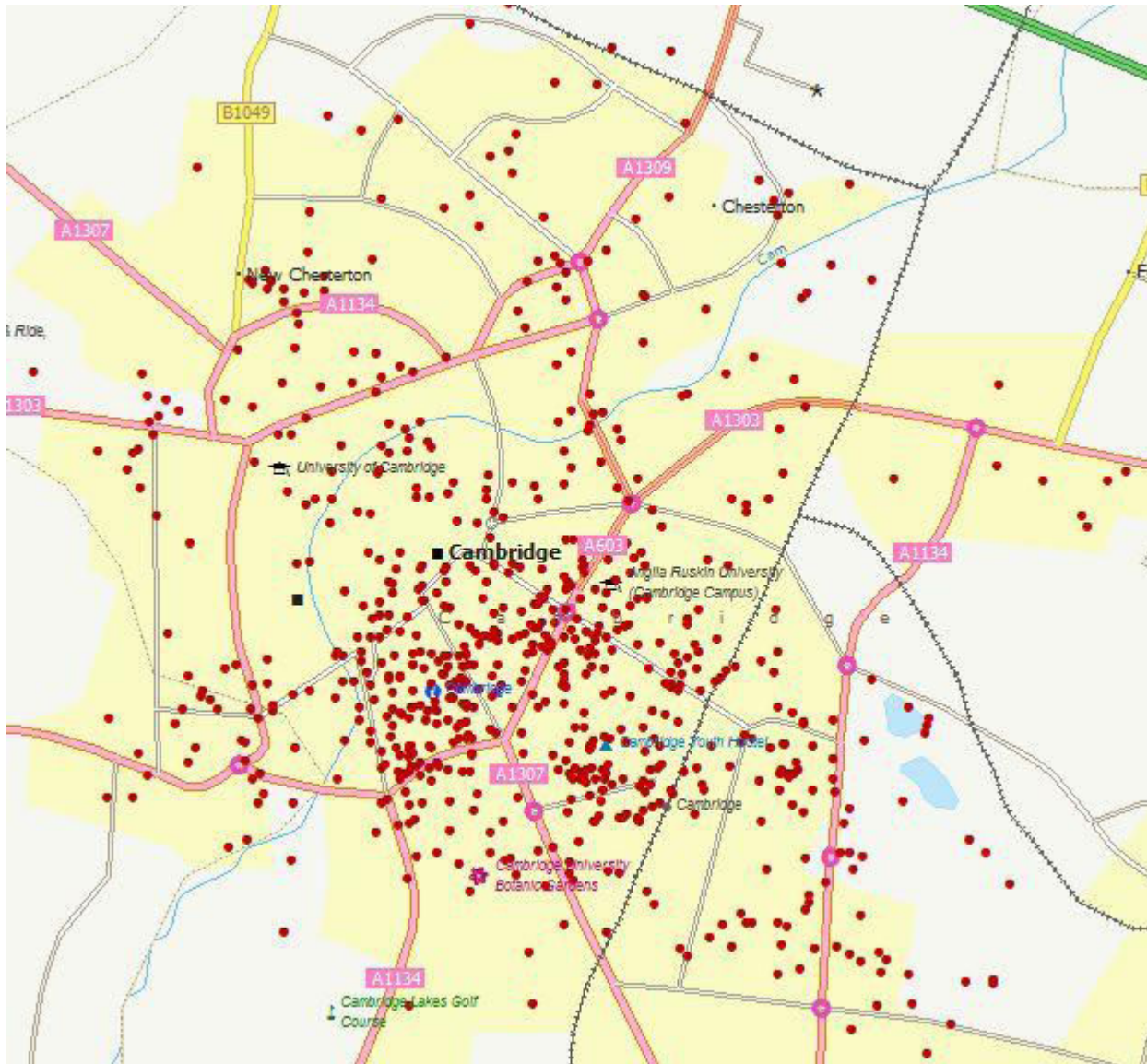


Over half the response comes from the CB1 and CB2 postal areas. Parker's Piece sits almost on the boundary between these two areas (the boundary is Regent Street/St Andrews Street) and the concentration of responses in these areas is appropriate for a local open space.

Areas CB3, CB4 and CB5 generate a further third of the response (30% in total). These are the areas respectively to the northeast, north and northwest of the City Centre, and residents in these areas are a little further away from Parker's Piece itself. A small number of responses come from further afield, mainly from the St Neots/Huntingdon area.

A number of people reply to postcode questions by providing only the outer portion of their postcode, imagining that this is sufficient to locate them. In Cambridge this is not the case: the CB1 postcode area covers a large area of land reaching out towards Haverhill. Those who provided a full valid postcode are plotted on this map:

**Map 2.1: Location of respondents**



Although response is scattered across Cambridge, there is a clear concentration in the area to the south and south-east of the City Centre, stretching as far southeast as the Railway station and largely corresponding to the streets closest to Parker's Piece.

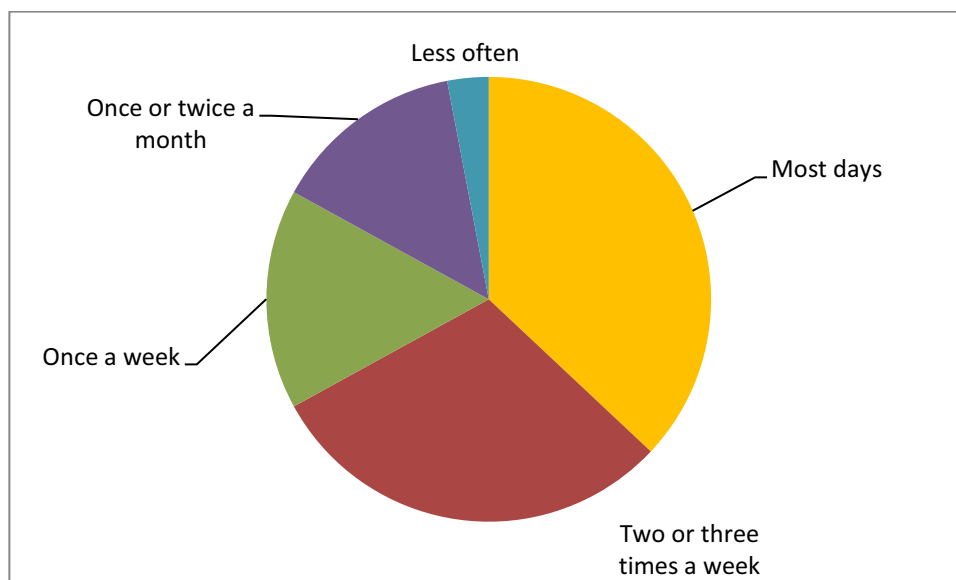
### 3 Results

#### *Frequency of use*

The table shows how often people use the footpaths on Parker's Piece.

**Table 3.1** *Frequency of use*

Frequency	Proportion of respondents
Most days	37%
Two or three times a week	30%
Once a week	16%
Once or twice a month	14%
Less often	3%
Never walked across Parker's Piece	0%
<i>N(=100%)</i>	<i>1,022</i>



Two thirds (67%) of respondents are frequent users of the footpaths, and more than half of the frequent users visit the footpaths on most days. About a third (30%) visit between one and four times a month, and very few people in this survey are occasional users. Nobody

at all says that they have never walked across the space. In total, 83% of those taking part in the survey use the footpaths at least once a week.

There is very little difference in the pattern of use of the footpaths according to the gender of the respondent; men and women make roughly equal use of the pathways. There are differences, though, according to the age of the respondent, with people in the 25-64 age range tending to use the footpaths more often than those who are younger (aged 16-24) or older (aged 65+). Having said that, even among the 16-24 year olds, where the frequency of use is lowest, well over half (57%) use the paths at least twice a week.

Looking at the different types of respondent, all the different interest groups are at least fairly frequent users of the space. The most frequent users are those who work in the vicinity, with 87% using the paths across the site at least twice a week, and those who use Parker's for recreation or exercise, where 83% visit at least twice a week. The lowest levels of visiting are from Cambridge University students, but even among this group 61% use the paths at least twice a week, with half of these using the paths on most days. ARU students, by contrast, are more likely to use the footpaths more often, and 80% use them at least twice a week, with a majority (52% of all ARU students taking part) using the paths on most days.

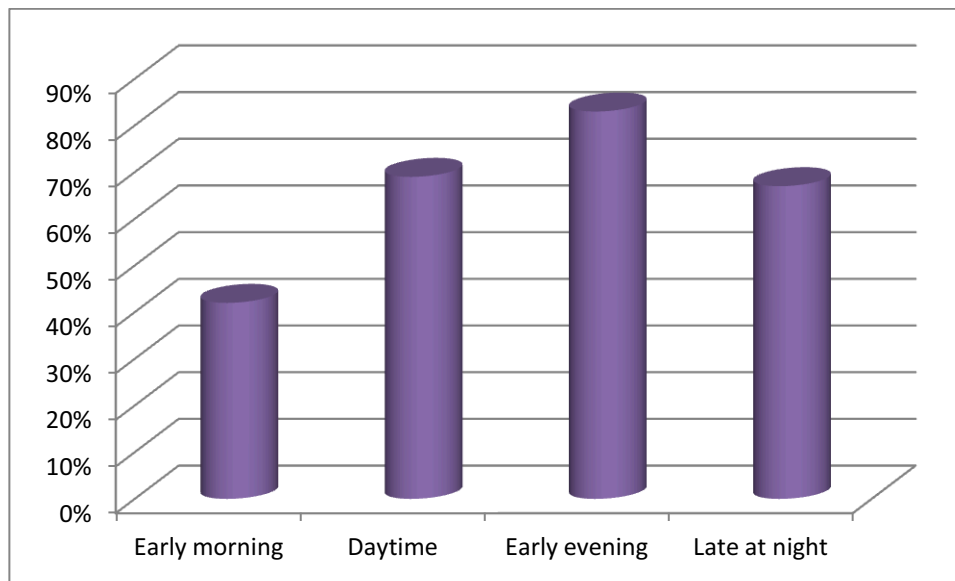
### ***Time of use***

This table shows the time of day when people use Parker's Piece:

**Table 3.2** *Time of use*

<b>Time of day</b>	<b>Proportion of respondents</b>
Early morning	42%
Daytime	69%
Early evening	83%
Late at night	67%
<i>N(=100%)</i>	<i>1,009</i>





The footpaths are used at all times of day and night, with the busiest footfall occurring in the early evening, which is when six out of seven people taking part in the survey use them. The lowest levels of use are in the early morning, when two in five respondents use the paths. Two thirds use the paths during the daytime, but a surprisingly high proportion, again around two thirds, use the paths late at night.

There are few differences between men and women during daylight, with both genders using the paths to a similar extent. Women are a little more likely to use the paths in the early evening, but a lot less likely to use them after dark - three quarters (74%) of men use the paths at night but just two thirds (64%) of women do so. Even so, there is relatively high female usage of the paths at night.

There are also variations by age. People between 25 and 55 are a lot more likely to use the paths in the early morning than either younger people or older people. During the working day, though, it is younger and older people who are the more likely users. At night, a high proportion of younger people (78% of 16-24s, and 73% of 25-34s) use the paths, but many fewer older people do so (just 45% of over 55s cross Parker's Piece after dark).

The most likely early morning users are people visiting for recreation and exercise purposes, and those who work in the locality. Students are the least likely users at this time, though two in five students (39%) use the paths in the early morning.

In the daytime, recreation and exercise users are again prominent, but so too are ARU students; the early evening shows very little variation between the groups with similar levels of use across all interest groups.

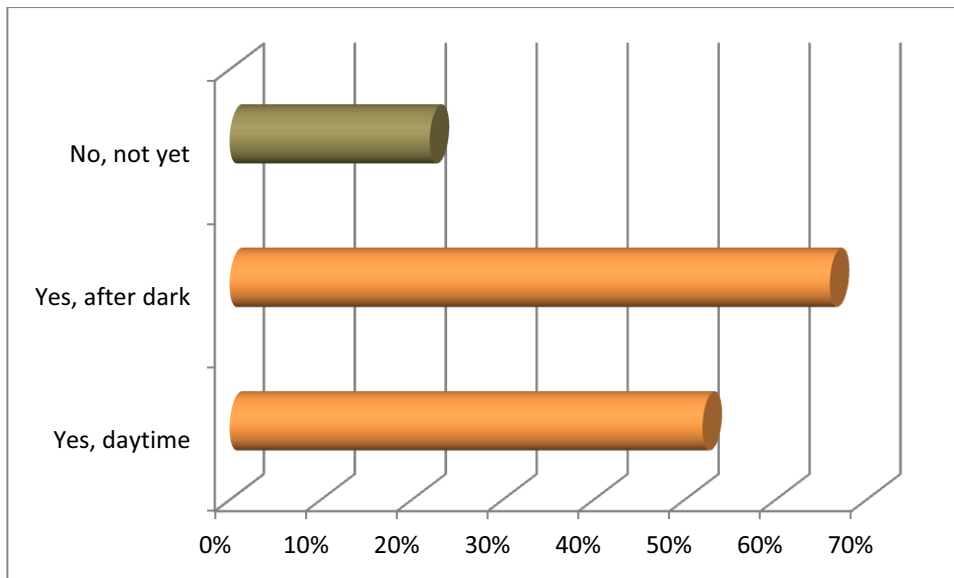
Late at night, the main users are students, three-quarters of whom use the paths at this time; usage is particularly high among ARU students at this time of night. The least likely users after dark are those who work locally, but even so two thirds (64%) say they use the footpaths late at night.

**Visiting the site**

The survey asked people whether they had yet visited Parker's Piece since the lighting trial began, with these results:

**Table 3.3 Visiting the site**

Visiting	Proportion of respondents
Yes, daytime	52%
Yes, after dark	66%
No, not yet	22%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>972</i>



At the time of completing the survey, one in five respondents had yet to visit Parker's Piece to see the installation. These people would therefore have been answering based on feedback from others, or on local media coverage of the trial. However, over three quarters of those completing the survey had done so, and in many cases had seen it both during the day and after dark.

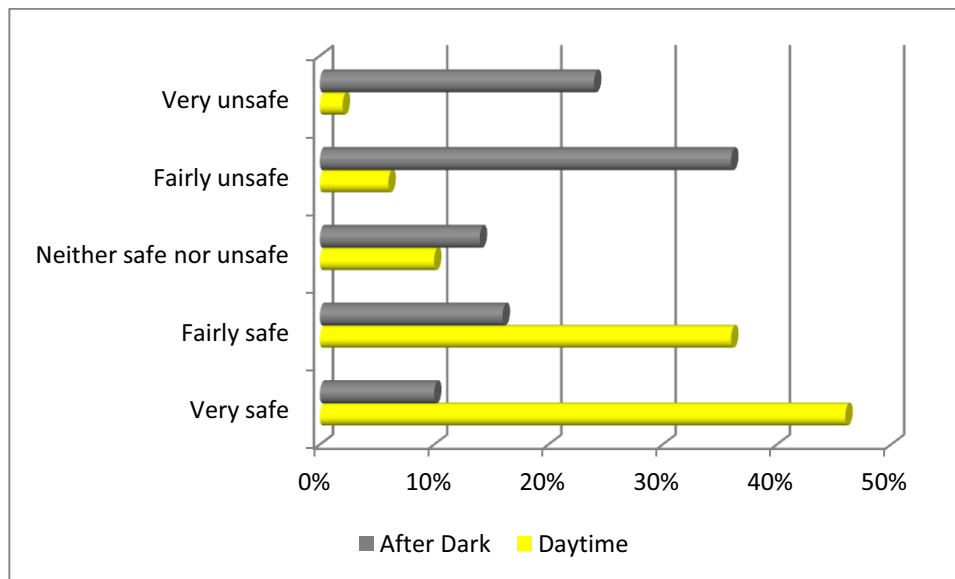
Men and women are equally unlikely to have seen the installation for themselves, but younger people aged 16-24 are a little more likely to be relying on feedback rather than personal observation. Cambridge University students are less likely to have seen for themselves (though three have visited for every one who has not), and one in five people expressing an interest in open space in Cambridge had yet to visit the trial at the time of completing the survey.

### ***Feelings of safety***

The survey asked people to indicate how safe they felt using Parker's Piece before the lighting trial was installed, and produced these results, separated into perceptions during the day and after dark.

**Table 3.4** *Feelings of safety (before lighting trial)*

Perception	Proportion of respondents	
	Daytime	After Dark
Very safe	46%	10%
Fairly safe	36%	16%
Neither safe nor unsafe	10%	14%
Fairly unsafe	6%	36%
Very unsafe	2%	24%
<i>N(=100%)</i>	995	982



In the daytime, Parker's Piece is not seen at all as a threatening place. Four out of five people feel at least fairly safe using the space, with the majority of these feeling very safe. Just one in thirteen people (8%) feel at all unsafe on this site during the day.

The perception changes significantly, though, after dark. Only a quarter of people feel safe after dark, and only one in ten feels very safe at this time. In contrast, three in five people (60%) feel unsafe, and a large proportion of these feel very unsafe after dark on Parker's Piece. Whilst it is normal to see reductions on perceptions of safety between daytime and night-time, a transformation of perception on this scale is remarkable.

In the daytime, men feel safer than women (this is a normal result in questions of this type) but although women feel less safe than men, they do not feel unsafe. After dark, though, there is a striking difference in perceptions. Two in five men feel safe (38%), but just 17% of women feel safe on Parker's Piece after dark. Two in five men feel unsafe (45%) but three quarters (74%) of women feel unsafe on Parker's Piece after dark.

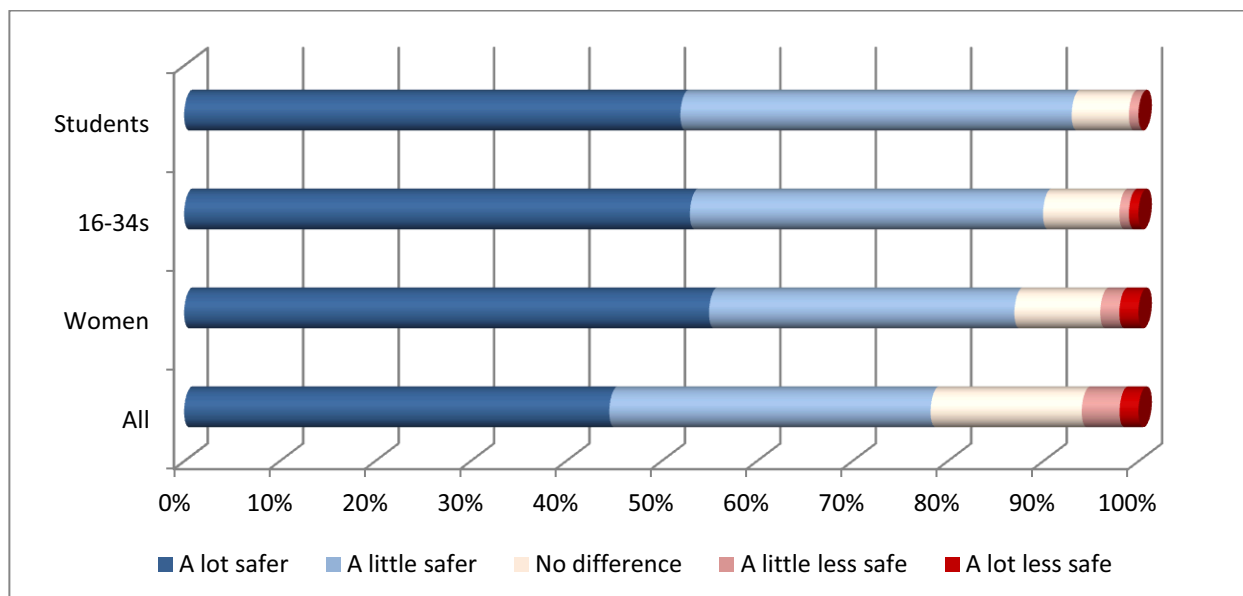
During the day, people of all ages feel safe on Parker's Piece; the lowest feeling of safety is among 16-24s, but even here three quarters (77%) feel safe. Over 80% of all other age-groups feel safe during the day on this site. After dark, it is the young who feel especially vulnerable - perhaps because it is they who use the site most at this time of day. Three in five (61%) of over 55s feels safe on Parker's Piece after dark, but this proportion falls to just 10% of 16-24 year olds, and 22% of 25-34 year olds, with three quarters of people in each of these age-groups feeling unsafe. A third (31%) of 16-24s, and a quarter (27%) of 25-24s, feel very unsafe on Parker's Piece after dark. Perceptions of safety are thus a much stronger issue for younger people in Cambridge than for their older counterparts.

It is not surprising, then, that students in particular feel unsafe after dark on Parker's Piece. Four out of five students (79%) feel safe during the day, but this proportion falls to just 11% after dark; conversely, the proportion who feel unsafe rises from 9% during the day to 76% after dark.

Asked about the effect of the lighting trial on feelings of safety, people respond in this way:

**Table 3.5 Feelings of safety after dark (after lighting trial)**

Perception	Proportion of respondents			
	All	Women	Young people aged 16-34	Students
A lot safer	45%	55%	53%	52%
A little safer	34%	32%	37%	41%
No difference	16%	9%	8%	6%
A little less safe	4%	2%	1%	1%
A lot less safe	2%	2%	1%	0%
<i>N</i> (=100%)	953	514	604	481



The vast majority of respondents (79% in total) say the lighting installation makes them feel at least a little safer than before the trial; more than half of these say it makes them feel a lot safer. Very few people think the paths are less safe after the lighting installation has been put in place.

Looking at the three groups of people already identified as feeling least safe before the trial period, all three show dramatic signs of improved safety perceptions.. Over half of the women in the sample feel a lot more safe after installation, as do over half of the young people and over half of the students. The proportions who feel safer to any degree are 87% of women, 90% of young people and 93% of students, suggesting that even a limited trial installation has had a dramatic impact on perceptions of safety.

The small number of people who say that the lighting made them feel less safe were asked why this is. There are three main areas of concern; the concerns are mainly, though not exclusively, expressed by people who cycle at night on the paths.

One is that the new lights have a potential to dazzle and to reduce night vision already gained from cycling in much less well lit areas. The new lights are bright, and the height they are placed at makes it difficult for cyclists to see clearly because the lights dazzle them. This is closely linked to a second observation, that it is difficult to distinguish between footpath lights and the lights of oncoming cycles, raising the risk of collision, while the bollards themselves make it difficult for cyclists to leave the path to avoid groups of pedestrians or other cyclists, again increasing the hazard either of a collision with another path user or of a collision with a bollard.

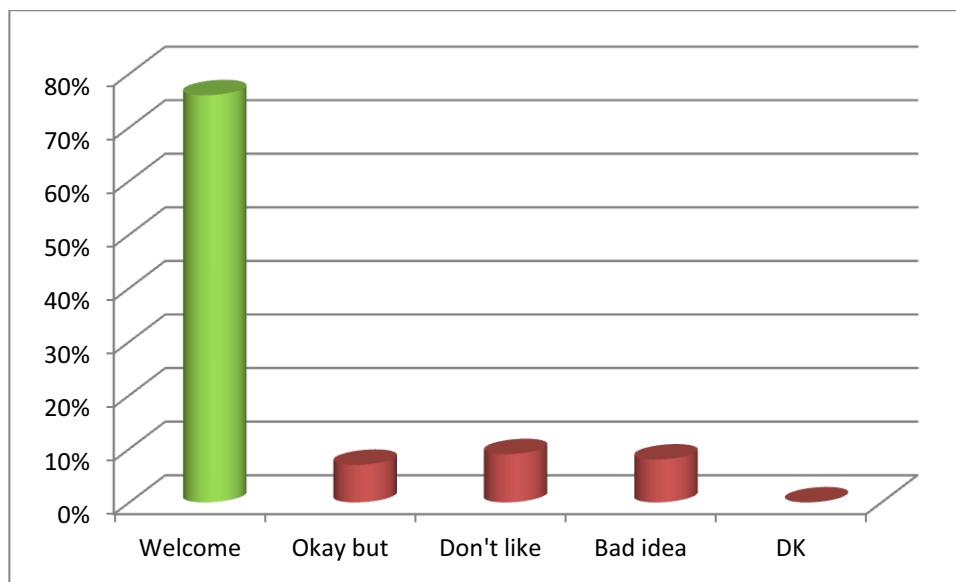
A third strand of comment draws attention to the fact that a well-lit path makes it easy for those in the darkness to see potential victims of crime, whilst themselves remaining much less visible to those whose night vision has been destroyed by the bright lights. A small number of people describe the increased feeling of safety as an illusion, a false sense of security conveyed by the lights which may actually attract more people into a space that is unsafe to be in.

**Opinion in principle**

This table shows people's views on the principle of lighting Parker's Piece:

**Table 3.6: Opinion in principle**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents
I welcome this	76%
I have some reservations, but am okay with it	7%
I can see why you've done it, but I don't like it	9%
I think it's a bad idea	8%
Don't know/no opinion either way	0%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	969



Overall, a substantial majority of respondents endorse the principle of lighting Parker's Piece, though this does not mean they necessarily agree with the specific approach taken to achieve this. A small number of people are still reasonably comfortable with the idea, in spite of reservations, giving an overall positive endorsement of 83%, the equivalent of five out of every six people responding.

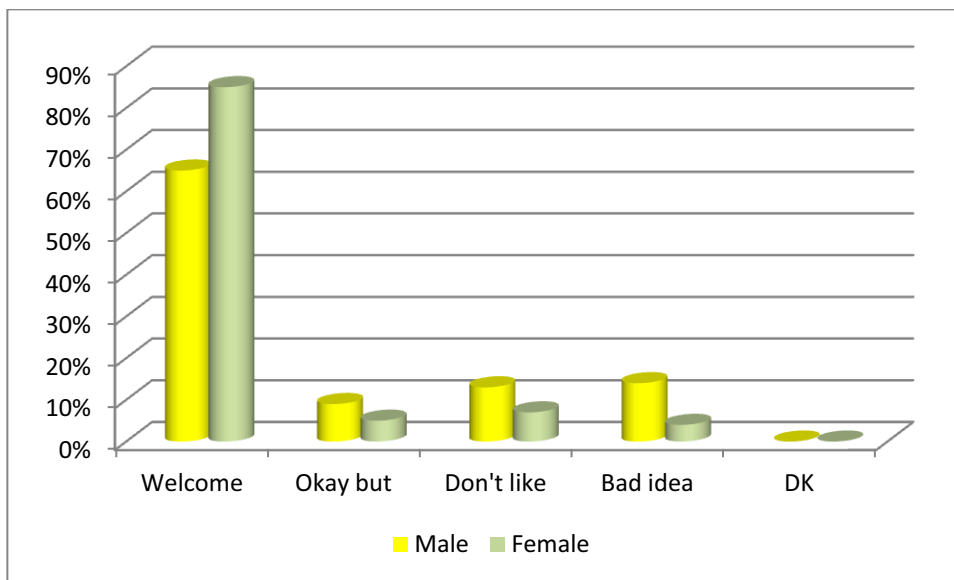
On the other side of the argument, 9% dislike it, even after giving some thought to the reasons for the decision to trial this scheme; and a further 8% just dislike it altogether,

making a minority of 17%, one in six of all respondents, who oppose the idea to some extent.

There are significant differences in opinion by gender, as this table shows:

**Table 3.7: Opinion by gender**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents	
	Male	Female
I welcome this	65%	85%
I have some reservations, but am okay with it	9%	5%
I can see why you've done it, but I don't like it	13%	7%
I think it's a bad idea	14%	4%
Don't know/no opinion either way	0%	0%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	383	518



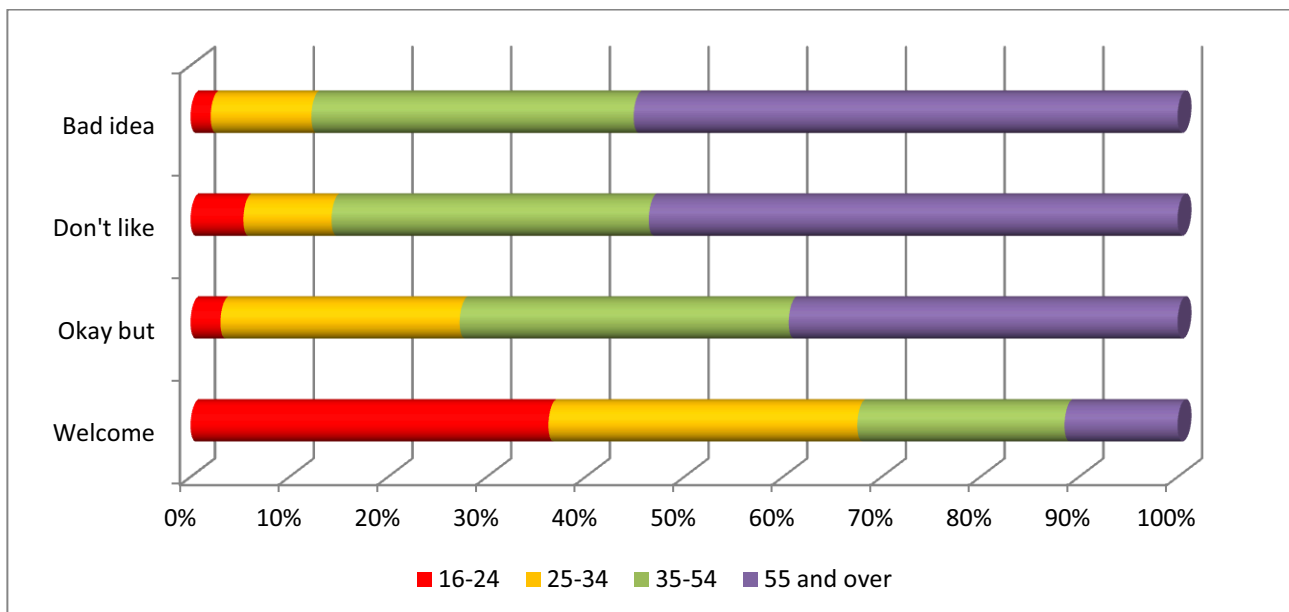
Women are much more strongly in favour than men, with 85% of women welcoming the idea against just 65% of men. The negative element in the overall result is largely male in origin, with one in seven men who think this is a bad idea, against just 4% of women. Having said that, there is a clear majority in both gender groups for the principle of lighting Parker's Piece.



There are also clear differences in opinion according to age, as can be seen here:

**Table 3.8: Opinion by age-group**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents			
	16-24	25-34	35-54	55 and over
Welcome	95%	82%	55%	30%
Okay with reservations	1%	8%	11%	13%
Can see why, but negative	3%	5%	18%	30%
Bad idea	1%	5%	16%	27%
Don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>405</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>202</i>	<i>95</i>



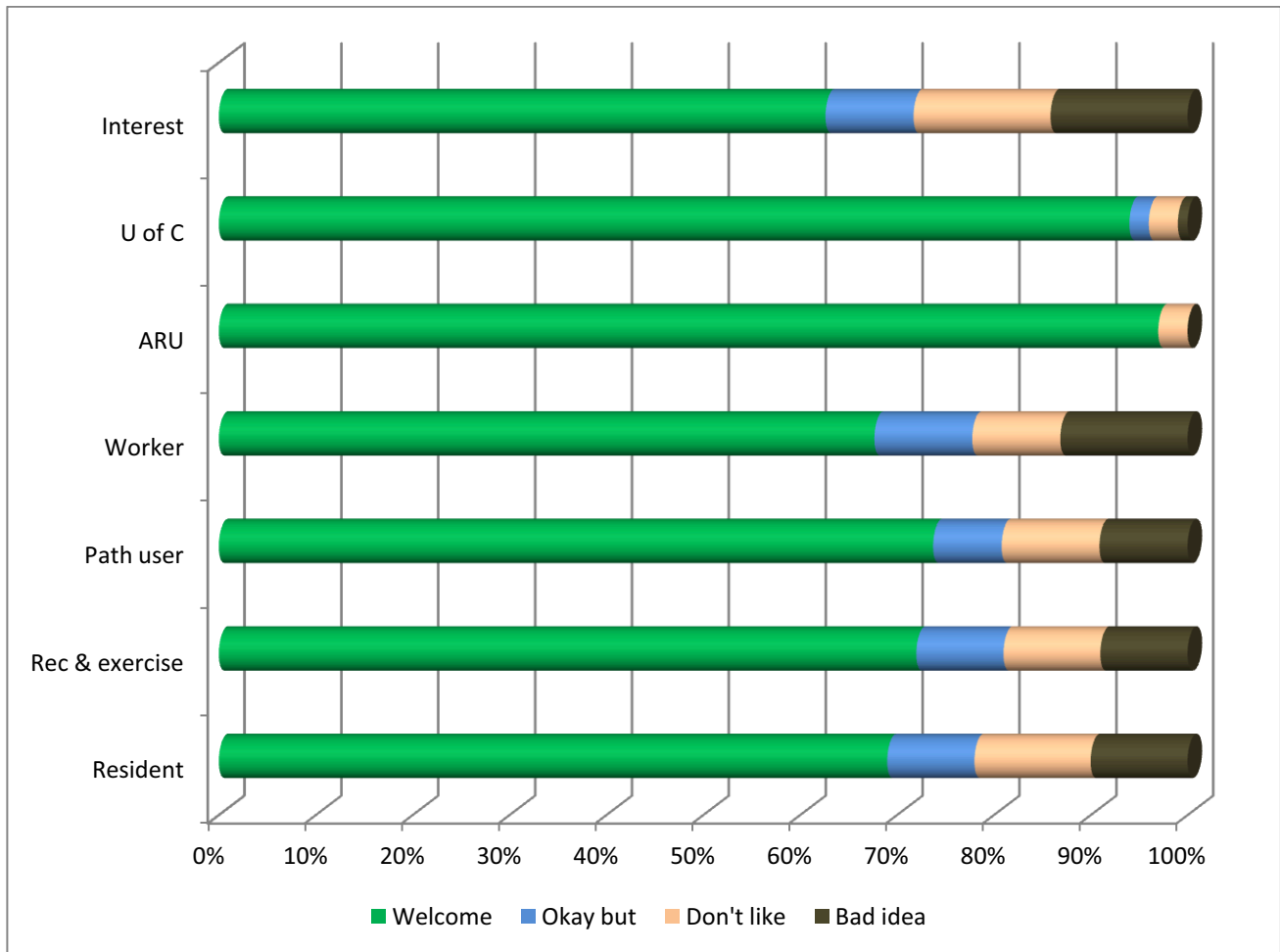
Enthusiasm for the idea falls as age increases. At the younger end of the age-range, there is almost universal welcome for the idea of lighting Parker's Piece, and this remains high among 25-34s as well, with a slight reduction of support. There is still a majority in favour of the idea among 35-54 year-olds, although in this age-group a third are negative about the idea, whilst among older people the majority view is actually on the negative side of the coin, with a quarter who think this is a bad idea augmented by a further 30% who dislike the concept, making 55% against.

Looking at whether people's views are influenced by having seen the trial, it is noticeable that those who have seen the installation after dark, when the lights are lit, tend to be a little more supportive than those who have visited during the day, though the difference is not statistically significant. Moreover, 79% of those who have yet to visit also welcome the principle of lighting Parker's Piece.

This table shows how opinion varies according to the nature of the respondent:

**Table 3.9: Opinion by type of respondent**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents						
	Resident	Rec & exercise	Path user	Worker	ARU	U of C	Interest
Welcome	69%	72%	73%	67%	96%	94%	62%
Okay with reservations	9%	9%	7%	10%	0%	2%	9%
Can see why, but negative	12%	10%	10%	9%	3%	3%	14%
Bad idea	10%	9%	9%	13%	0%	1%	14%
Don't know	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>606</i>	<i>255</i>	<i>714</i>	<i>203</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>408</i>	<i>332</i>



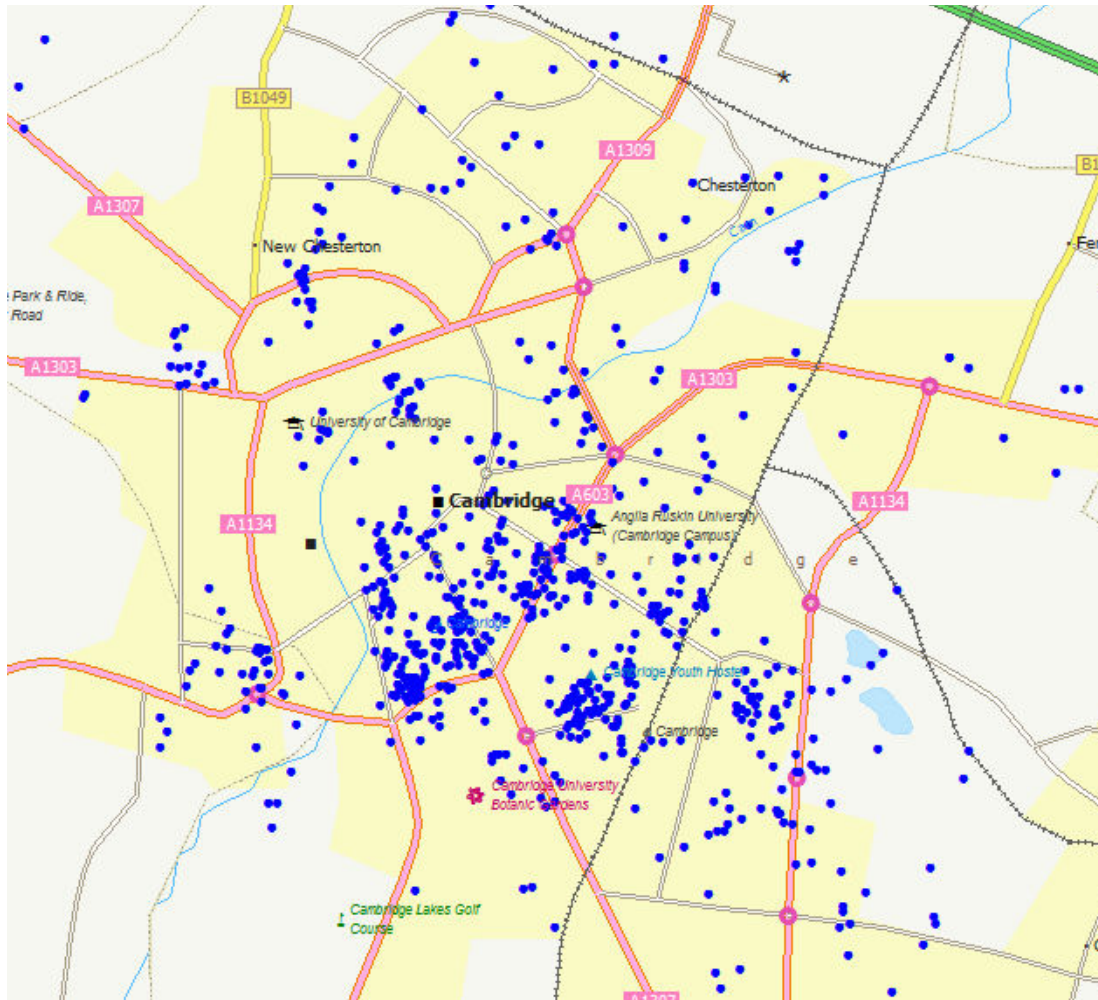
There is a majority in each of the seven groups in favour of the principle of lighting Parker's Piece, but the size of the majority does vary quite substantially. Among the two student groups, support is almost universal, but the views of other interest groups are a little more mixed.

Three quarters of path users, and a similar proportion of those who use the space for recreation and exercise, welcome the lighting idea, with just one in five against. Two thirds of local residents, and of those who work in the vicinity of Parker's Piece, are supportive, but again one in five of each of these groups opposes the idea.

The group that scores lowest on support for the idea is that with an interest in local open spaces; in this group opposition to the idea rises to over a quarter (28%), but the proportion who welcome the idea is still a majority of three-fifths of this group, with a little support from those who have reservations.

The map shows the distribution of those who welcome the idea, or who are okay but with reservations (only those with valid postcodes are shown):

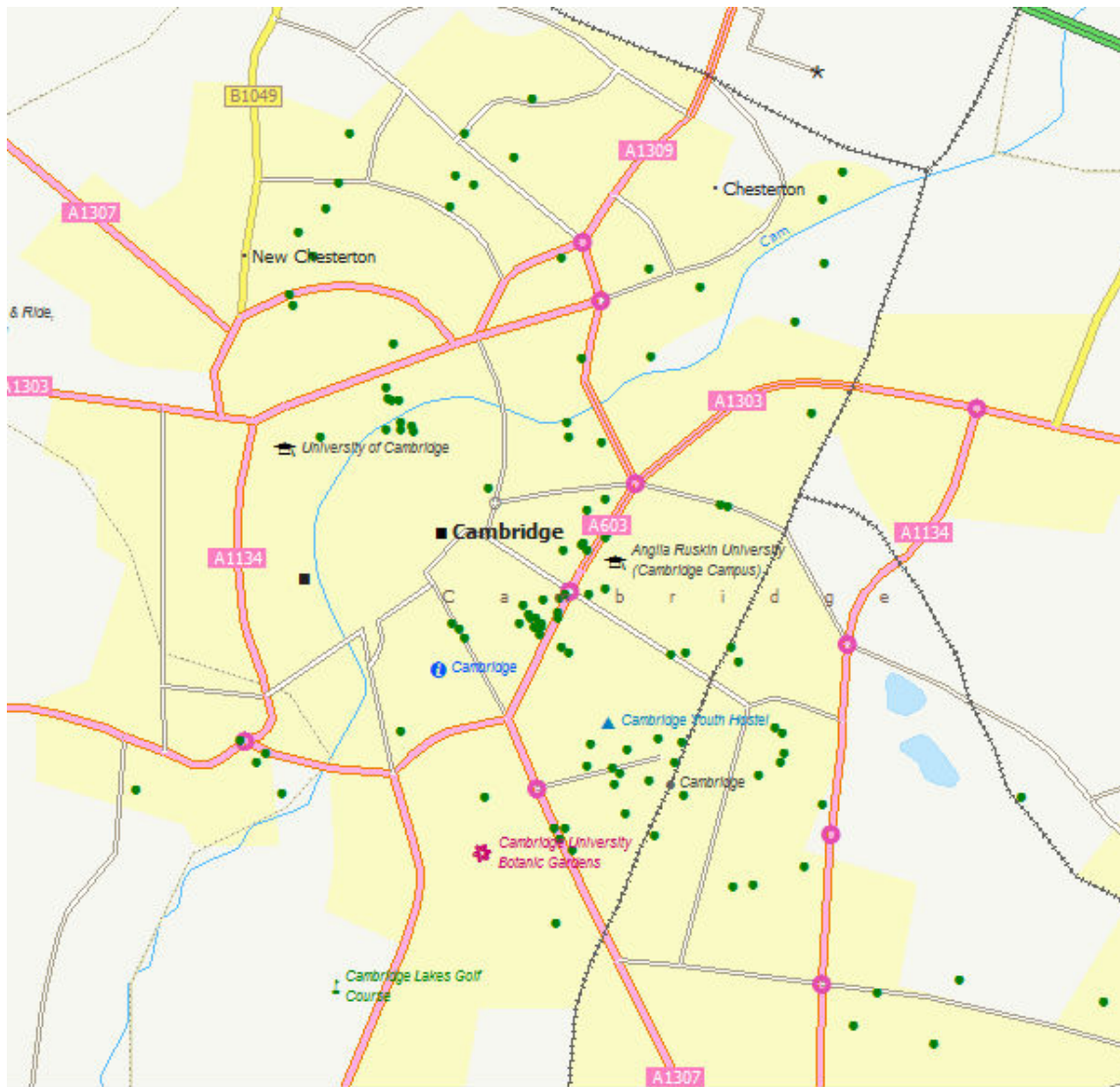
**Map 3.10 Distribution of positive responses**



There are concentrations of support for the principle to the south and southeast of the City Centre, in those parts of the city closest to Parker's Piece. There is also support across the rest of the city.

This map shows where opponents of the idea live (again, only those with valid postcodes are shown):

**Map 3.11 Distribution of negative responses**



Again, there is a concentration around the area of Parker's Piece, reflecting the overall distribution of the response at large, but the results are sparser (there are fewer negative responses overall) and more thinly scattered as a result.

Looking specifically at the responses from streets immediately surrounding Parker's Piece, we find that out of 24 responses giving a postcode, 17 are in favour of the idea in principle, and 7 against.

Those who gave a negative view of the principle of lighting Parker's Piece were invited to expand on that view, and many did so, sometimes at length. All the comments have been

read carefully, and the main points being made (several comments ranged across a number of issues) have been grouped into broad themes.

**Table 3.12: Reasons for negative view**

Comment	No. of comments
Effect on look and feel of Parker's Piece	48
Lights are ugly/badly chosen	48
People should choose a different route	34
Creates an obstruction/hazard	33
Urbanisation of open spaces	33
Gives false impression of safety	23
Ineffective	23
Potential for vandalism/damage	19
Increases light pollution	18
Dark spaces should be preserved	18
Waste of money/cost excessive	14
Reduces versatility/utility of site	13
Not needed	13
Energy waste/environmental impact	7
Conflicts with Conservation commitment	2
<i>N</i>	<i>159</i>

The most common issue with lighting this space is the effect the lights have on the **look and feel of the space** as it is. Objectors draw attention to the flat, open nature of the space as it stands, and are negative about the impact of the lights on visual appearance during the day as well as when the lights are in use after dark. People value the open space as a contrast to the urban area around it, and do not welcome the 'clutter' that street furniture brings into a historic open space with a distinctive character. Many see this as a creeping **urbanisation of the city's open spaces**. Two comments consider the installation against the backdrop of the City Council's existing commitment to this open space in its **Conservation Plan**.

Although the question asked about the principle of lighting Parker's Piece, several comments refer to the **nature of the installation** itself. For many, this is an additional issue to add to an already negative perception, but for some this is the essence of the problem: the lights are dazzling, or badly aligned for visual confidence (this seems to be a particular problem for cyclists) and the net effect is to reduce visibility and, they say, increase the risk of collision or impeded the objective of seeing what lies ahead more clearly. Cyclists largely take the view that their own lights are adequate for their needs when crossing this type of space at night. But many other comments ask not for the rejection of lighting, so much as for a better choice of lighting more suited to the needs of those intended to benefit.

There is also a substantial body of opinion that people who are nervous about crossing Parker's Piece after dark should simply **take the long way round** the edge, where there is adequate lighting, rather than expose themselves to perceived risk. In the case of Parker's Piece, this is not a major detour. Other comments on perceptions of safety suggest that the presence of lighting may actually give a **false impression of safety**, when in fact the risks are still present, or perhaps even amplified by the loss of night vision on a lit path. This also contributes to opinion that the lights are **ineffective** in addressing safety concerns.

The risk of **vandalism** is prominent in several comments, and the experience of a vandal attack on the lights during the trial reinforces the view that the lights are prone to damage, either deliberately or through accidental collision. Vandalism disfigures an area, but is also costly in terms of Council budgets. The lights are also seen as a **hazard to path users**, particularly cyclists, in that they may inhibit their ability to veer off the paths to avoid pedestrians or oncoming cyclists, or may be an obstacle to free progress; they are also seen as an obstruction, or a hazard, to those who use the green space for **sport or recreation**, while the placing of lighting bollards is seen as potentially dividing the space up into smaller open spaces and **reducing its versatility** or usability for some types of activity.

Several people make observations about **light pollution**, and the increase in pollution that would result from lighting the site; others (not always the same people) draw attention to the importance and **value of dark spaces** where the stars can be seen, especially in an urban context.

Cost is not a major component of objectors' comments, but **cost** and cost-effectiveness do arise; some people simply say that the installation is **unnecessary**, without always giving

reasons. The **energy and environmental costs** are also raised in a small number of comments.

Although the number of negative comments is relatively small compared to the endorsement given to the trial by this consultation, it is clear from many comments that there is a strength of feeling on this issue. The City Council should be aware of this in formulating any future lighting plan for Parker's Piece; any proposal will meet with strongly voiced and articulate opposition.

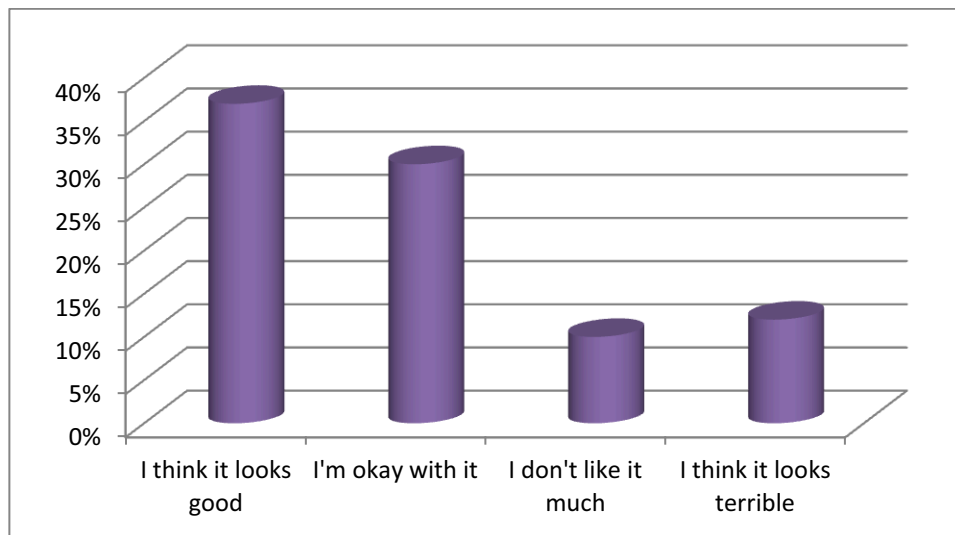
### ***Appearance***

This table shows how people responded on the question of the appearance of the installation:

***Table 3.13: Appearance***

<b>Appearance</b>	<b>Proportion of respondents</b>
I think it looks good	37%
I'm okay with it	30%
I don't like it much	10%
I think it looks terrible	12%
Don't know/no opinion either way	11%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	<i>950</i>





Just under two in five people think the appearance of the trial installation is good; a further 30% are reasonably comfortable with it, meaning that two thirds of respondents are broadly positive about the appearance. Whilst this is a positive result for appearance, the response seems more circumspect that might have been expected from the enthusiasm with which the idea itself is welcomed, suggesting that the design utilised might usefully be reconsidered in any future lighting plan.

A quarter of people are negative about the appearance of the scheme, and these are evenly divided between what might be interpreted as a moderately negative view and a strong one. One in nine people offer no opinion on design at all; a large proportion of these are people who have not visited the site since the installation took place.

Women are much more positive about appearance than men: 45% of women think it looks good, against just 29% of men, whilst 20% of men say it looks terrible, against just 6% of women. Support for appearance also reduces with increasing age, so the older a person is the less likely they are to think the installation looks good; the proportion who think it looks good is 45% of 16-24s, and 40% of 25-34s, but reduces to just 19% among over 55s. In contrast, the proportion who think the installation looks terrible is only 2% of 16-24s, and 9% of 25-34s, but rises to 44% of over 55s.

Looking at the views of different groups of people, the most positive views are those of ARU students, where 55% think it looks good, and a further 39% are okay with appearance; only 6% of ARU students express any negative opinion. Also supportive, but more circumspect, are Cambridge University students, of whom 43% like the appearance and 36% are okay with it; again, just 6% are negative.

Most other groups take broadly similar views, with 35%-40% saying the appearance looks good, and 25%-30% disagreeing to some extent. The exception is the group of people with an interest in open spaces; here the level of support is similar, as is the overall level of disagreement; the difference is the strength of disagreement, with one in five (21%) of this group thinking the installation looks terrible, a much higher proportion than in any other interest group.

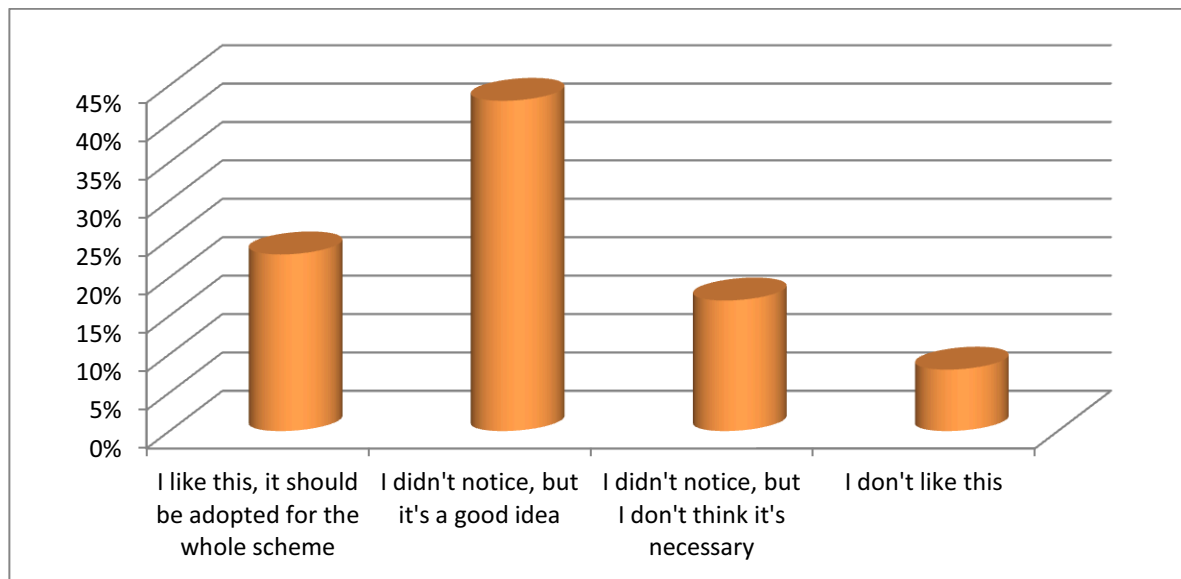
Interestingly, only half of those who welcome the principle of lighting Parker's Piece (48%) think the current installation looks good; a further third (35%) are okay with it, and few are negative, but one in eight (13%) are reserving judgement on appearance at this point. Opponents of the idea are also negative about appearance, and there is a stronger correlation between negative opinion on the principle and negative opinion on the appearance; three quarters (72%) of those who think lighting Parker's Piece is a bad idea also think this installation looks terrible, and there are few opponents of the idea who reserve judgment on appearance.

### ***Functionality***

One of the bollards in the installation was designed to retract when not in use, so as to reduce visual clutter on the space during the daytime. Respondents were asked to give a view on this as an idea, with these overall results:

**Table 3.14: Functionality**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>Proportion of respondents</b>
I like this, it should be adopted for the whole scheme	23%
I didn't notice, but it's a good idea	43%
I didn't notice, but I don't think it's necessary	17%
I don't like this	8%
Don't know/no opinion either way	9%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	950



Overall, a quarter of people both noticed this feature and give it a positive assessment, whilst 8% noticed it and react differently. Among those who noticed the feature, positives outweigh negatives by three to one overall. Two in five respondents didn't notice, but think it's a good idea, against one in six who didn't notice and don't think this feature is needed. Overall, the retracting light is supported by two in three respondents, and opposed by a quarter; a small number of respondents offer no view. This last group includes some who have yet to visit, but in this question non-visitors were more willing to express an opinion.

Men were a little more likely to notice the retracting bollard, but men and women are equally supportive of the idea. Younger people were also more aware of the feature, and the younger a person is the more likely they are to welcome this feature; dislike of the idea increases with age, rising from just 2% of 16-24s to 32% of over 55s.

As for the different groups of respondents, the position is similar to the results for overall appearance, with stronger endorsement from students (especially from ARU students) and stronger dislike of the idea from those with a wider interest in open spaces.

Those who express dislike for the appearance of the lights were asked to expand on their reasons, and many did so. Their reasons include several factors already identified under the broader principle of lighting open spaces, so again there are comments about light pollution, loss of amenity, visual intrusion and obstruction/hazard that do not need to be rehearsed.

Comments about appearance focus on whether the lights should be at ground level or at a greater height similar to street lamps, with no genuine consensus on this, and whether the

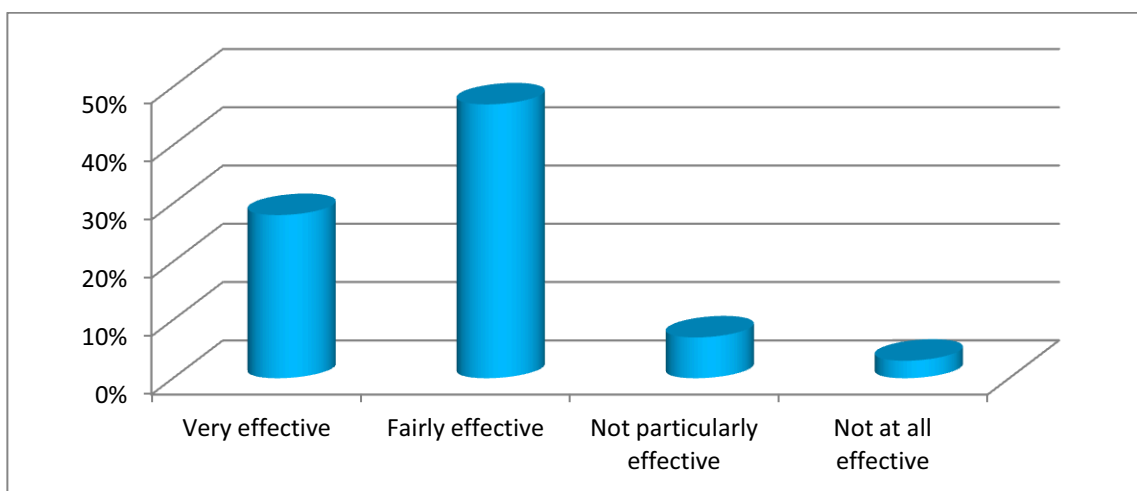
light distribution from the trial lights is adequate or ideal, with challenges on both the strength of light (too strong for some people) and the tone of the light (excessively bright for some people). Another important issue is that many people feel the design of the bollard lights in particular is out of keeping with a historic open space - some describe the design as 'tacky', while others consider them 'modern', but not in a positive sense; there is also a view that they are out of keeping with the Reality Checkpoint at the centre of the space. Although there are some favourable comments on the retractable column, there is also a certain lack of confidence in its resilience and reliability.

**Effectiveness**

Views on the effectiveness of the scheme in lighting the footpath are summarised below:

**Table 3.15 Effectiveness**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents
Very effective	28%
Fairly effective	47%
Not particularly effective	7%
Not at all effective	3%
Don't know/no opinion either way	15%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	933



Overall, a quarter of respondents think the scheme is very effective in lighting the footpath, and three quarters (75%) think it is at least fairly effective. It is surprising in the light of comments made in response to earlier questions that just 10% say it is ineffective, with 15% reserving their position on this question; a substantial proportion of the latter have either not visited, or not visited after dark, and cannot therefore answer this question.

Women find the scheme more effective than men; four out of five women (81%) find the scheme at least fairly effective, against 69% of men. Perceptions of effectiveness are higher among young people, but decline rapidly among over 55s; only 1% of 16-34s find the scheme not at all effective, but this rises to 16% of over 55s.

There is very little difference in perceptions of effectiveness according to the group of respondents, apart from a predictable higher level of enthusiasm from the student cohort, and especially from those studying at ARU, where the proportion who find the scheme very effective rises to 47%, with a further 44% ticking 'fairly effective'.

The reasons given for ineffectiveness are largely observations already provided elsewhere, such as glare and dazzle, the amount of light, and the way the units distribute light. Factors include the spacing between lights, which for some people causes 'pooling' of light interspersed with darker spaces, and the need to refocus the diffusion of the light away from people's eyes and on to the footpath more directly. The lights are, for some respondents at least, too easily confused with oncoming cycle lights.

## **Features**

Respondents were asked how important different aspects of a lighting scheme would be to them; the question also recognised that those who object in principle might not wish to answer a question of this nature.

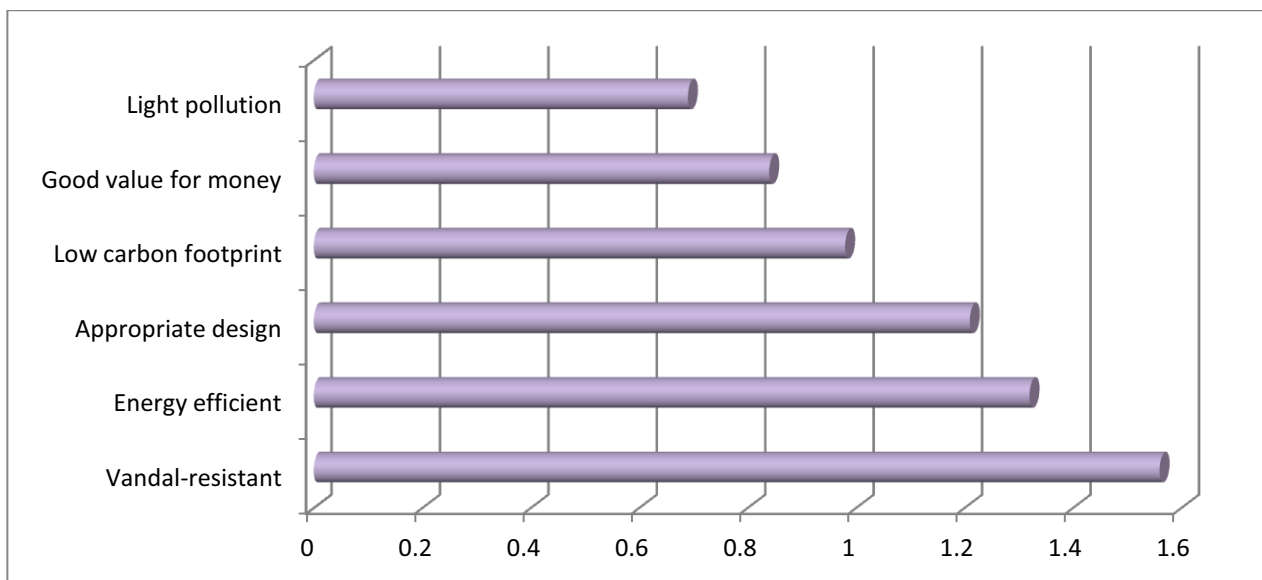
The answers people gave have been converted into mean scores<sup>1</sup>, to facilitate comparison between them, and are listed below:

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<sup>1</sup> Mean scores are calculated by applying a score value to each valid answer, and then averaging the final score for each element of the question. In this instance, a score of +2 or +1 has been applied to each 'very important' or 'fairly important' answer respectively, and a score of -1 or -2 to each 'not very important' or 'not at all important' answer respectively. 'neither' responses are scored as zero, and blanks are ignored completely. The resulting mean score indicates whether an answer is positive or negative, and also the strength of the answer, both in its own right and relative to other elements of the question.

**Table 3.16: Relative importance of features**

Feature	Mean score	No. of respondents
Vandal-resistant	1.56	808
Energy efficient	1.32	804
Appropriate design	1.21	810
Low carbon footprint	0.98	807
Good value for money	0.84	804
Light pollution	0.69	807



Overall, the most important of these six features on any potential installation is that it should be vandal-resistant - a result which may well have been influenced by the vandal attack on the trial installation early on in its life-cycle. Also scoring highly on the list of attributes are energy-efficiency and the appropriateness of design. These three attributes score above 1.00, indicating features that are more than just 'fairly important'.

The other three attributes all score positively, but at levels that are close to or below 'fairly important' on average. Interestingly, given its prominence in the feedback, light pollution is the least important of the six features offered to respondents, while value for money - an issue that is much less prominent in the feedback - is given a higher rating for importance overall. A low carbon footprint comes in at the 'fairly important' level.

There are differences in view according to the respondent's gender. Men attach higher importance to appropriateness of design, and to some extent to light pollution, while women score a low carbon footprint much more highly, and are also more concerned about energy efficiency.

Younger respondents are much less concerned about light pollution and appropriate design, and tend to attach lower importance to all these issues than their older counterparts. Older respondents are much more exercised about vandalism and light pollution; vandalism gets an average score of 1.89 from over 55s, indicating that most rate it as 'very important'. Over 55s tend to attach more importance, though, to all these features and all get strong positive scores for importance.

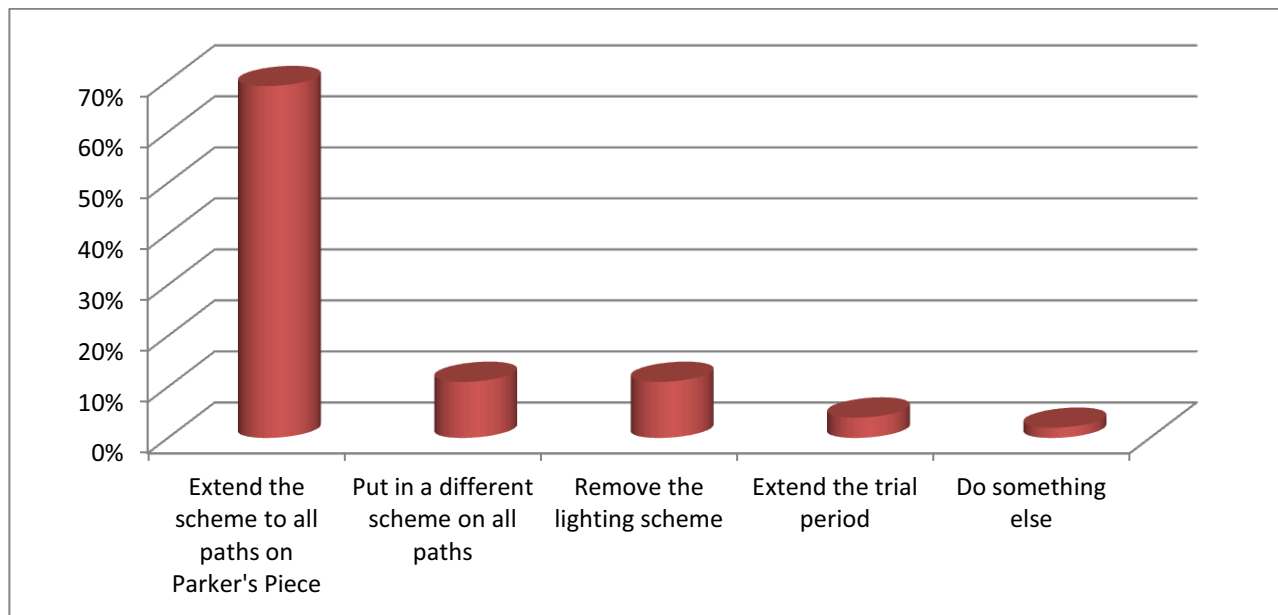
People with an interest in open spaces give generally higher scores than other interest groups, and are especially concerned about vandalism. Students are much less concerned about light pollution than those in other groups, whilst people who work in the vicinity of Parker's Piece give a greater importance to design, and also to vandal-resistance.

**Next step**

Asked how the Council should move forward from this trial, people respond as follows:

**Table 3.17 Next step**

Opinion	Proportion of respondents
Extend the scheme to all paths on Parker's Piece	69%
Put in a different scheme on all paths	11%
Remove the lighting scheme	11%
Extend the trial period	4%
Do something else	2%
<i>N (=100%)</i>	912



The majority view is that the lighting scheme should be extended to cover all the main paths on Parker's Piece; two thirds of respondents give this a green light. In contrast, only one in nine want to see a different scheme installed right across the space, while a similar proportion want to see the scheme removed altogether. There is little enthusiasm for extending the trial, or for any other alternative approach.

Women are much more enthusiastic about extending the scheme across the site; 78% of women, compared to 58% of men, want a rollout across the space. However, 20% of men want the scheme dropped altogether, in comparison with just 7% of women.

As might be expected from the results hitherto, younger people are much more likely to ask for the scheme to be extended: 86% of those aged 16-24 want the scheme rolled out across Parker's Piece, as do 74% of 25-34s, but this falls to just 26% of over 55s. Over 55s are nevertheless interested in a different scheme; a quarter of over 55s (26%) want to see a different scheme, but a slightly higher proportion (34%) of over 55s want the scheme removed altogether.

The main differences in perception according to interest group are also largely predictable: students are very keen to see the scheme extended to cover all the main paths in Parker's Piece, with little difference between ARU and the University of Cambridge on this point, whilst those with an interest in open spaces are more likely to seek a different scheme (16%), or to call for the idea to be dropped completely (20%); even so, a majority (57%) of those interested in open spaces want to see the scheme extended.



Those who do suggest alternative approaches tend to reiterate points already made, such as using softer tones of light, or different designs; they also suggest educating people not to cross dark spaces late at night, and designing a scheme in consultation with cyclists as well as pedestrians to arrive at a better solution.

## 4 Additional responses

In addition to the formal survey online, we received a small number of comments and observations directly, by-passing the normal response mechanism. In most cases, these offer comments that are already well-addressed in the discussion of the online results, and are not rehearsed here.

The Police were asked for an opinion on the trial. They comment that the trial was too short, and too limited in scope, for them to be able to assess its impact on safety, and that they have had no feedback that would suggest improved perceptions. However, they do suggest that, if the trial is to be extended or the scheme rolled out to cover more footpaths, the services of their Architectural Liaison Officers be sought to provide some further advice about design and choice of lighting type.

**Cambridge Past Present and Future** is a local charity with an active interest in planning and green spaces within the city. Whilst welcoming the idea of a trial, they record their objection to the scheme, citing several reasons for this view:

- the adverse impact on the character and nature of green spaces, which they describe as 'the urban countryside';
- possible adverse impact on safety, by making it harder to see people lurking in shadowed areas;
- the Conservation Plan (2001) recommends the avoidance of lighting, whilst the Cambridge Historic Core Appraisal notes the importance of Parker's Piece to the character of the historic central core of the city;
- safety issues for users playing sports;
- the need for design compatibility with Reality Checkpoint, especially as this is a listed structure.

Cambridge Past Present and Future suggests the use of tall lighting columns around the perimeter of the space, and stresses the need to use high-quality materials in any solution.

The full text of the CPPF representation is in the public domain and is therefore included as an appendix.

## Appendix 1: the questionnaire

### Parkers Piece

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#### Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our project on Parker's Piece.

As you may be aware, we've installed some lighting on one of the footpaths on Parker's Piece. The City Council is responding to some incidents that have occurred there, and - after consultation with Student Unions and Cambridgeshire Police - we've decided to test a small lighting scheme aimed at improving safety for people crossing the space after dark.

The small lighting scheme we've installed is a trial. If it's successful, and makes people feel safer, we will look to extend it to cover the main footpaths across Parker's Piece. If it isn't successful, though, the lighting will be re-used at Cherry Hinton Hall, where replacement lighting is needed on an access road.

At the moment, though, we want to see whether or not lighting has the desired effect, and also whether people welcome the idea or not.

This questionnaire has been designed to allow you to give your views on the trial scheme. What you tell us here will help us to decide whether or not we take this idea forward.

The survey is completely confidential. You can move through the questionnaire by clicking on the 'Next' button. It's quite a short survey, but if you need to you can use the 'Save and return' option to allow you to take a break without having to start again.

---

#### Interest

*Are you responding to this survey as..*

**Please tick all that apply**

- A local resident
  - Someone who uses Parker's Piece for recreation or exercise
  - Someone who uses the footpaths to cross Parker's Piece
  - Someone who works nearby
  - A student at ARU
  - A student at Cambridge University
  - Someone with an interest or concern about open spaces in Cambridge
  - Other (*please specify*)
-

## Frequency

*How often do you generally use the footpaths on Parker's Piece?*

- Most days
  - Two or three times a week
  - Once a week
  - Once or twice a month
  - Less often
  - Never walked across Parker's Piece
- 

## Timing

*And when you use the footpaths, is that*

**Please tick all that apply.**

- in the early morning
  - during the day
  - in the early evening
  - late at night
- 

## Daytime safety

*Thinking about the time before we installed the lighting, how safe did you feel when using the footpaths on Parker's Piece during the day?*

- Very safe
  - Fairly safe
  - Neither safe nor unsafe
  - Fairly unsafe
  - Very unsafe
-

### Safety after dark

*And, again thinking about the time before we installed the lighting, how safe did you feel when using the footpaths on Parker's Piece after dark?*

- Very safe
  - Fairly safe
  - Neither safe nor unsafe
  - Fairly unsafe
  - Very unsafe
- 

### Visited

*Have you visited Parker's Piece since we installed the trial lighting scheme?*

**Please tick all that apply.**

- Yes, during the day
  - Yes, after dark
  - No, not yet
- 

### Lighting in principle

*How do you feel about us putting lighting on Parker's Piece, in principle?*

- I welcome this
  - I have some reservations, but am okay with it
  - I can see why you've done it, but I don't like it
  - I think it's a bad idea
  - Don't know/no opinion either way
- 

### Why not liked?

You said you don't like us putting lighting on Parker's Piece. Can you say why that is?

---

### Safety after

***Now that the lighting has been installed, does this make you feel safer when using the paths after dark?***

- Yes, a lot safer
  - Yes, a little safer
  - Makes no difference to me
  - No, I feel a little less safe
  - No, I feel a lot less safe
- 

### Why not safer?

You said you don't feel safer, even after the lighting has been installed. Can you say why that is?

---

### Appearance

***And how do you feel about the appearance of the scheme we're trialling at the moment?***

- I think it looks good
  - I'm okay with it
  - I don't like it much
  - I think it looks terrible
  - Don't know/no opinion either way
- 

### Functionality

***One of the pathside lights retracts into the ground when it isn't needed. What did you think of this?***

- I like this, it should be adopted for the whole scheme
- I didn't notice this, but it's a good idea
- I didn't notice this, but I don't think it's necessary
- I don't like this
- Don't know/no opinion

**Why dislike appearance?**

You said you don't like the appearance of the scheme we're trialling. Can you say what it is that you dislike about it?

**Effectiveness**

*And how effective do you think the scheme is, in lighting the footpath?*

- Very effective
- Fairly effective
- Not particularly effective
- Not at all effective
- Don't know/no opinion either way

**Why not effective?**

You said you don't think the lighting scheme is effective. Can you say why you think that?

**Important features**

*How important are these features in choosing a lighting scheme for an open space?*

*If you've already said you object to lighting parks in principle, you may wish to skip this question.*

	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Fairly important</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Not very important</b>	<b>Not at all important</b>
Low carbon footprint	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy efficient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vandal-resistant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minimises light pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Appropriate design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Good value for money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

---

### Moving forward

#### *How would you want us to move forward from this trial?*

- Extend the current lighting scheme to cover the main paths on Parker's Piece
- Put in a different lighting scheme to cover the main paths on Parker's Piece
- Remove the lighting scheme altogether
- Keep the trial going for a longer period
- Do something else

What would you want us to do?

---

### About you

#### *Finally, a couple of questions about you. Are you...*

- Male
- Female

#### *And which of these age-groups do you belong to?*

- Under 16
- 16 - 24
- 25 -34
- 35 - 54
- 55 - 64
- 65 or over

What is your postcode? *We use this only to analyse the responses to this survey.*

---

### Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

We'll provide the results of the survey on the Council website once the survey period is over, and the analysis has been completed.



## Appendix 2: CPPF response

Cambridge Past, Present & Future  
Wandlebury Ring, Gog Magog Hills,  
Babraham, Cambridge CB22 3AE  
Phone 01223 - 243830  
[www.cambridgeppf.org](http://www.cambridgeppf.org)



Cambridge City Council  
Guildhall  
Cambridge  
CB2 3OJ  
FAO: Declan O'Hallaran

21 March 2013

Dear Declan,

### Parker's Piece - Lighting Trial Consultation

CambridgePPF would like to make the following comments based on discussions of our Planning Committee and our Heritage Working Group. We welcome the showcasing on site of a potential lighting solution, but we **object** to the proposed scheme for various reasons:

- Through increased lighting of the larger green spaces and commons within the city the overall nature of these green spaces will adversely change. They are our countryside within the city and tranquil areas for relaxation. We should wish to be convinced that a sufficient number of users perceive that there is a need for additional lighting considering there are well lit paths to the perimeter of the park.
- We are concerned also that better lighting of the path might actually lead to a decrease in safety, as it would make it more difficult to see people lurking off the path in the dark.
- The Piece is within the Central Conservation Area and is rich in heritage. The **Cambridge Historic Core Appraisal**<sup>1</sup> (Cambridge City Council - June 2006) observes that *'the space is very important to the character of the core area'*. The **Parker's Piece Conservation Plan – 2001**<sup>2</sup> (Cambridge City Council and the Cambridge Preservation Society) recommends to *'Retain the open character of the central area of Parker's Piece. Avoid introducing tree planting there, additional lighting, other structures or artifacts'*, and that a management plan be produced. In the absence of such integral planning the introduction of any new features is not supported by CambridgePPF.
- Local community groups and schools use the Piece to play active sport such as football, even at dusk. Any park furniture / lighting must be designed with great care so as not to compromise safety and we are not satisfied that this has been given sufficient consideration.
- The Grade 2 Listed Building 'Reality Check Point' lamp column is highly attractive and its value should be preserved and enhanced. If any further lighting is introduced it is essential to use high-quality materials, and a possibility might be the installation of additional tall lighting columns just to the edges of the park keeping the open nature of the space.

We should be happy to contribute to any further debate and should be grateful to be kept informed.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Carolin Göhler'.

Carolin Göhler                      Encl - none  
Cc - Historic Environment Team (Cambridge City Council)

**Cambridge Past, Present & Future** — a local charity with over 1,700 members working to keep Cambridge and its surroundings special by positively influencing planning developments, delivering environmental education and managing the green spaces and historic buildings in its care — **for the benefit of all.**

Registered Charity No. 204121. Non-profit making company limited by guarantee, registered in England No. 239835.

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/www.cambridge.gov.uk/files/docs/historic-core-appraisal-parkers-piece.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/sites/www.cambridge.gov.uk/files/docs/Parker's%20Piece%20Conservation%20Plan.pdf>