

STREET LIGHTING TRIAL SURVEY

Background

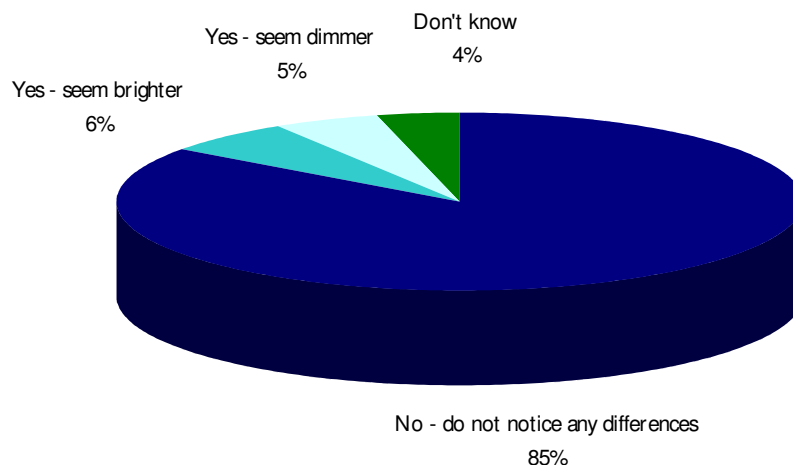
1. Beginning on 25 March 2008, the council undertook a six week street lighting trial. The trial involved the use of new technology enabling the council to remotely alter the level of street lights. The aim of the trial was to assess whether the cost and energy saving benefits of the system outweighed any concerns among residents over the impact of new lighting levels.
2. During the six week period, the council undertook 100 on-street interviews with residents in Museum Street. Five lights were involved in the trial and respondents were asked a series of questions about them. A shorter self completion survey about the same lights was also available at the Central Library. The trial was also in operation at Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride and an interactive group interview with talkabout panellists was undertaken during an evening in April.
3. The trial and the research was publicised in the local media. Overall, the following views were gathered:
 - 100 interviews with residents in Museum Street
 - 15 self completion questionnaire in the Central Library
 - 12 interviews at Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride with talkabout panellists
4. The findings give an overview of public opinion, but further research would be needed if the new technology were to be rolled out across the city.
5. All charts use percentaged data. Where responses do not total 100% this is due to computer rounding or multi-coded responses.

Section 1 – Museum Street Trial (on-street interviews and self completion surveys)

6. The Museum Street trial, from its junction with St. Leonard's Place to its junction with Lendal, included a total of 5 street lights. The street lights were altered in terms of light output as follows:
 - Lamp No.1 – normal output
 - Lamp No.2 – normal output

- Lamp No.3 – 25% less output
 - Lamp No.4 – normal output
 - Lamp No.5 – 50% less output
7. Having used the street before, interview respondents were asked whether they noticed a difference in the street lighting levels on Museum Street. Overall, 85% of respondents did not notice any differences, although 11% thought they looked different from usual: 6% thought they looked brighter and 5% thought they looked dimmer (Figure 1).
 8. Only two of the fifteen respondents who filled out the self completion survey noticed a difference in the street lights.

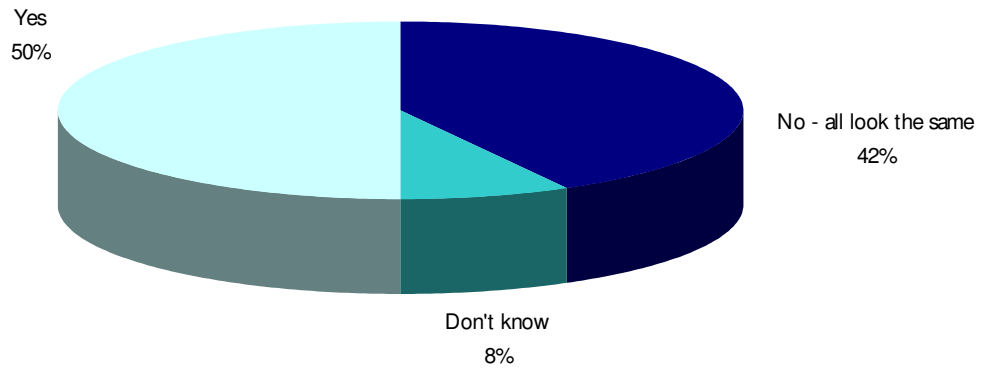
Figure 1 How far interview respondents noticed differences in the street lights



Base: 100 interview respondents

9. 50% of interview respondents who noticed a difference in the street lighting levels on Museum Street thought they all looked different strengths, whereas 42% though they all looked the same (Figure 2).

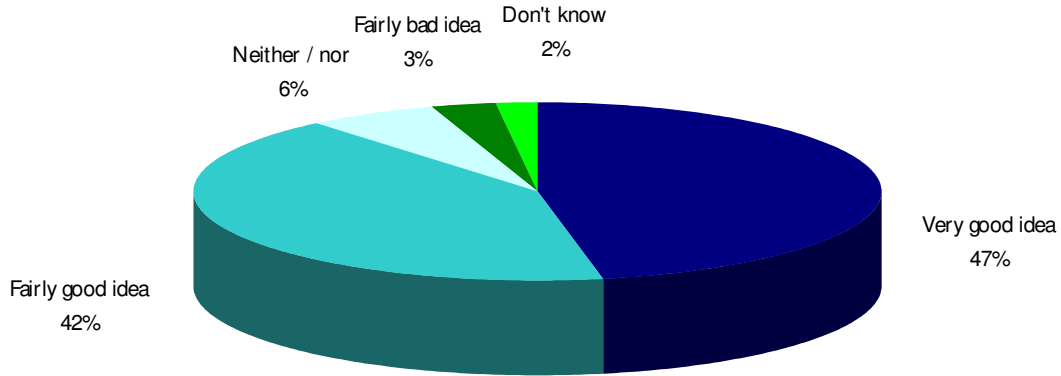
Figure 2 Do the street lights look different from one another?



Base: 100 interview respondents

10. There was no consensus among interview respondents (N=28) as to which some lamps looked different from others. Over half of those who thought the lamps were different than “usual” thought lamp 1 looked brighter (54%), 57% thought lamp 2 was brighter, 64% thought lamp 3, 65% thought lamp 4 and 4% thought lamp 5. In reality, none of the respondents were correct as none of the lamps were burning at a brighter level than “usual”.
11. When asked if any of the lamps were too bright or dim, 12% of interview respondents agreed they were. Four respondents thought lamps from 1, 2, 3 and 4 were too bright, whereas two respondents thought lamps 1, 2 and 4 were too dim.
12. Overall, 89% of interview respondents think it is a good idea to be able to set lighting levels to different settings: 47% think it is a very good idea and 42% think it is a fairly good idea. Only 3% think it is a bad idea (Figure 3).

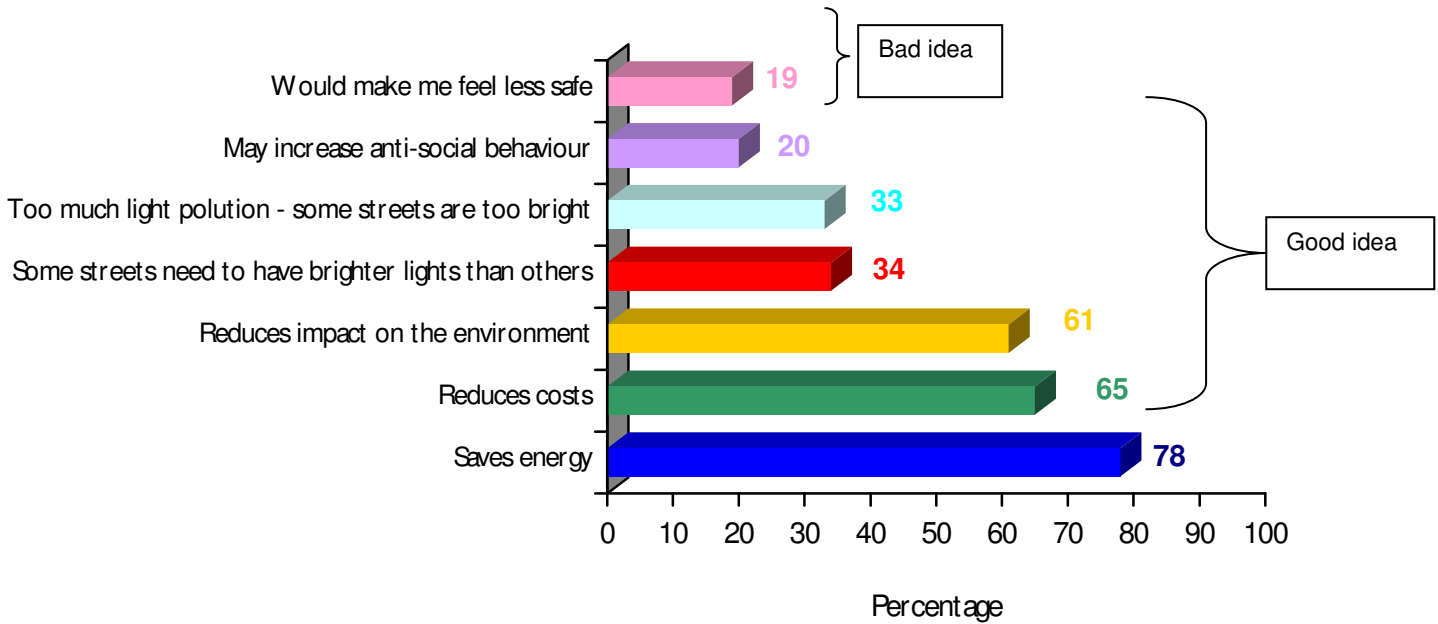
Figure 3 Opinion of setting lighting levels at different settings



Base: 100 interview respondents

13. Interview respondents who think altering lighting levels is a good idea think the new technology would help to save energy (78%), reduce costs (65%), reduce the impact upon the environment (61%), enable some street to have brighter lights than other (34%) and help to reduce light pollution in streets that are too bright already (33%).
14. Respondents who think the proposal is a bad idea are concerned about a potential increase in anti-social behaviour (20%) and feeling unsafe (19%) (Figure 4).
15. Thirteen of the fifteen respondents who filled out a self completion survey agree that altering street lighting levels is a good idea. Half of them feel this way as it saves energy.

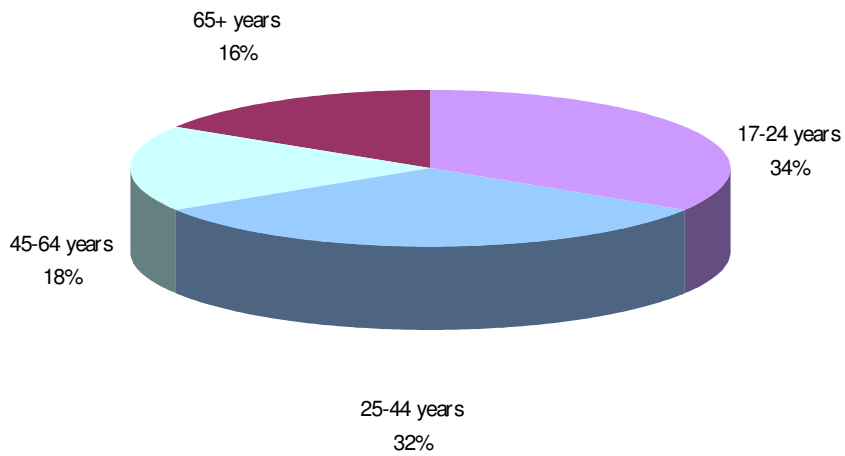
Figure 4 Why setting lighting levels to different levels is a good / bad idea



Base: 92 interview respondents

16. On the days of the research interviews, two fifths of respondents (43%) were walking along Museum Street to get to a pub, café, restaurant or cinema and a fifth (22%) were walking home from / to work. Eight per cent were waiting to catch a bus, 6% had been shopping and 5% were visiting the library. Others interview respondents were walking along Museum Street on the way to meet friends.
17. The interviews successfully gathered a range of respondents' views, including a third (34%) from younger ages groups (17-24 year olds) (Figure 5).

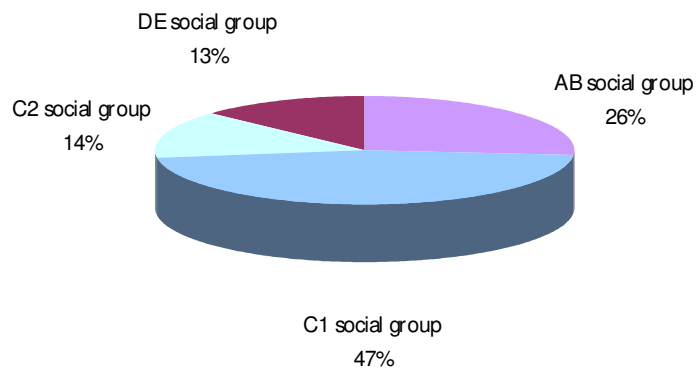
Figure 5 Age of respondents



Base: 100 interview respondents

18. Respondents came from a cross section of social groups, with 27% from the lower social groups, including 'blue collar workers', 'semi' skilled and 'unskilled' manual workers and those on the lowest levels of subsistence, including people on state pensions and state benefits (Figure 6).

Figure 6 SEG of respondents



Base: 100 interview respondents

Section 2 – Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride – interactive group interviews

19. Twelve talkabout panellists were invited to comment on the street lights at Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride during an evening in April. A total of 8 lights were included in the trial and they were altered in terms of light output as follows:
- 2 lamps (lamps 1 & 5) were operating as normal
 - 3 lamps (lamps 2, 3 & 4) were operating with 25% less light output
 - 3 lamps (lamps 6, 7 & 8) were operating with 50% less light output

Do the street lights look different from one another?

20. Overall, ten of the twelve talkabout respondents thought the lights at Rawcliffe Bar have different lighting levels from one another. There was no agreement among respondents over which ones looked brighter: two panellists thought lamp 1, three panellists thought lamp 2 looked brighter, one panellist thought lamp 4, three panellists thought lamp 5 and three panellists thought lamp 7 looked brighter. The respondents who highlighted lamps 1 and 5 as burning at brighter levels than the other lamps were correct.
21. Five of the twelve panellists were correct in thinking lamp 3 looked dimmer, as it was burning at 25% less than its usual burning level. However, no respondents recognised lamp 6 was running lower at 50% less than its usual burning capacity, and only one panellist correctly identified lamp 7 as burning at a lower level. Only two respondents correctly identifies lamp 8 as burning at a lower level.

Are the street lights too bright or too dim?

22. Seven out of twelve panellists were happy with the lighting levels of the lights, whereas five thought they were too bright or dim. Two panellists thought lamp 5 was too bright and lamps 1, 2, 4 and 8 were considered too bright by one person each.
23. Lamps 1, 4, 5 and 7 were considered too dim by one person each.
24. Overall, the lamps at Rawcliffe Bar Park & Ride were all burning at different levels and some were burning at their usual 100% strength. Although some panellists correctly identified some lamps as being brighter or dimmer, none of them were successful in identifying the lighting levels of **all** the lamps.

Opinion of setting lighting levels at different settings

25. All twelve panellists thought being able to set lighting levels at different settings is a good idea: seven think it is a very good idea and five respondents think it is a fairly good idea. The reasons for this are: it saves energy (11 panellists), it reduces costs (10 panellists), there is too much light pollution in some streets (10 panellists), it will reduce the impact on the environment (eight panellists) and car parks need to have brighter lights than other areas (5 panellists).

However, some respondents did comment that reduced lighting levels may increase anti-social behaviour (seven people) or would make them feel less safe (five panellists).

26. When asked if they would like to make any further comments, three panellists said that fewer streets lights are needed at the site and three panellists said that lighting levels need to fit the purpose of the area they are located in.

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