

**Jennifer Huygen
ADDRESS REDACTED
Stevenage SG2**

**Constitutional Services
Stevenage Borough Council
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29 November 2023

Dear Stevenage Borough Council,

Re: Fairlands Valley Park Lighting Petition

I am writing to submit my petition for wildlife friendly lighting in Fairlands Valley Park which has, to date, received 1,264 signatures.

The petition has the following request for action:

"Stevenage Borough Council to install eco-friendly, wildlife-conscious lighting along the [Fairlands Valley] park's main pathways and access points that are not lit yet, North to South including the showground area."

**The petition collected online signatures through the 38Degrees platform. The online page remains live and can be found here: BrighterPathsStevenage.org.uk
I have enclosed the full petition text alongside all collected signatures. A few signatures have been collected on paper for which I have enclosed a scan – this includes 19 highlighted signatures which could not be added online.**

As per Stevenage Borough Council's guidelines, we have surpassed the 1,000 signature mark to trigger a debate at a full Council meeting. My understanding is that the next meeting is on 20 December 2023 and I would therefore request this petition to be debated then.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours Faithfully,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Jennifer Huygen.

Jennifer Huygen

Brighter Paths, Safer Steps: Fairlands Valley Park Lighting Petition

To: Stevenage Borough Council

The cherished paths of Fairlands Valley Park are currently engulfed in darkness come nightfall, presenting safety concerns for park-goers and discouraging use after dusk. Fairlands Valley Park is a prominent part of our town connecting different neighbourhoods. This petition is about bringing together the diverse voices of all residents who use the park with one request to the Council.

I am petitioning the Stevenage Borough Council to install eco-friendly, wildlife-conscious lighting along the park's main pathways and access points that are not lit yet, North to South including the showground area. This action is vital to ensure that the park remains a safe, accessible, and enjoyable environment for all community members, irrespective of the time of day.

This is a citizen-led initiative supported by Stevenage Striders Running Club, Fairlands Valley Spartans running club, and Cycling UK.

Why is this important?

Imagine finishing your day's work and wanting to spend some peaceful 20 minutes in the park to unwind, only to be met with pitch-black pathways.

To a friend, I'd say this park is part of our community's heartbeat—it's where we connect with nature, unwind from our busy lives, and watch our children play. But half of the year, when the days are shorter, many of us are deprived of this vital community asset. By installing proper lighting, we're not just brightening pathways; we're connecting communities around Fairlands Valley Park, enhancing safety, and extending the park's welcome to every resident, every day. This isn't about luxury; it's about making sure that everyone can feel safe while using our public park.

Here is a quick overview of what lighting in Fairlands Valley Park can do for our community:

- **Accident Prevention:** Brighter paths mean no more slipping and tripping which makes our park safe to use for everyone. Especially for those with reduced mobility.
- **After Hours:** Our park doesn't close when the office does. Enjoy after-work relaxation.
- **Active Travel:** The park provides key routes for active travel, walking, cycling and wheeling avoiding busy roads.
- **Family Friendly:** Safer walks for kids after school and for evening activities.
- **Dog Walkers:** Evening strolls with your furry friends, stress-free.
- **Football Matches:** Walk back on well lit paths after an exciting match.
- **Enjoy Nature:** Experience the outdoors all year around. Not just on the weekend.
- **Community Care:** Lighting deters antisocial behaviour, keeping our park welcoming.
- **Feeling Safe:** No more looking over your shoulder or taking detours. Walk, run, and play without worry.
- **Sustainable:** Advocating for wildlife-friendly, energy-efficient solutions.

Stevenage Borough Council is currently looking into the issue of lighting in Fairlands Valley Park. I asked them a question at the Council meeting in October 2023 with the request to install lighting to make the park feel safer to use and they have started a review.

While the Council acknowledged my concerns, no commitments have been made. What I couldn't convey to the Council was that the lighting wouldn't just be for me but that many people would benefit from being able to see where they are going. Adding your name to this petition will help show the Council that there are many more people in Stevenage who would like lighting installed in Fairlands Valley Park.

According to Stevenage Borough Council's petition rules, if a petition has more than 1000 signatures, this triggers a full Council debate. I have started the request to the Council to install lighting in Fairlands Valley Park and will deliver this petition as part of their review to demonstrate the widespread community support for lighting.