



The Kaikōura Dark Sky Journey

Frequently Asked Questions

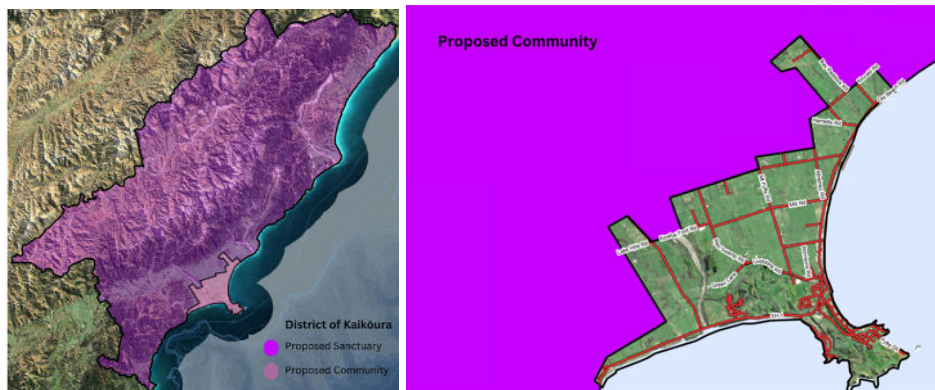
February 2024

The Kaikōura Dark Sky Trust is seeking world-wide accreditation for the District of Kaikōura to become an internationally reconsigned dark sky place.

What are the benefits to Kaikōura in becoming a Dark Sky Place?

- Help protect our unique night sky environment & ecological system, especially Hutton's shearwater
- Encourage enjoyment of our pristine night sky
- Improve the health and wellbeing of our community through reduction of light pollution
- Reduce energy costs
- Enhanced economic opportunities through astro-tourism.

Where would be included? 98% of the district would become a Dark Sky **Sanctuary** and the township of Kaikōura and some surrounding areas as a Dark Sky **Community**.



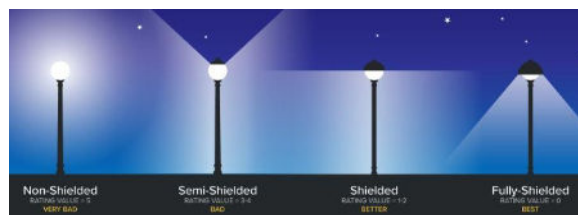
What is a Dark Sky Sanctuary? An area of land that has an exceptional quality of starry nights and a nocturnal environment that is protected for its scientific, natural, or educational value, its cultural heritage and/or public enjoyment. There are currently only 19 Dark Sky Sanctuaries in the world with two in New Zealand:- Aotea Great Barrier Island and Rakiura Stewart Island.

What is a Dark Sky Community? A town that has shown exceptional dedication to the preservation of the night sky through the implementation and enforcement of a quality outdoor lighting ordinance, dark sky education, and local support of dark skies.

Would accreditation place any limitations on our cultural rights & values? No. Accreditation would be awarded by the Dark Sky International body who are passionate about protecting and recognising dark sky places across the globe. Accreditation is seen as an award/stamp of approval and it has no governing or controlling rights. <https://darksky.org>.

Keen to find out more? Check out kaikouradarksky.nz

How can we protect the Kaikōura Dark Sky? The biggest risk for our skies is light pollution. To help better manage this going forward the Kaikōura Dark Sky Trust has applied to the Kaikōura District Council to change the District Plan for outdoor lighting. New rules would help to direct exterior lighting downward to where it is needed, not into the sky.



Will the proposed District Plan rules effect me? The rules would only affect new build lightings. Current lights do not need to be altered, although we *encourage* that when existing fixtures and bulbs are replaced, they meet the new standards.

What are the proposed District Plan rules managing exterior lighting?

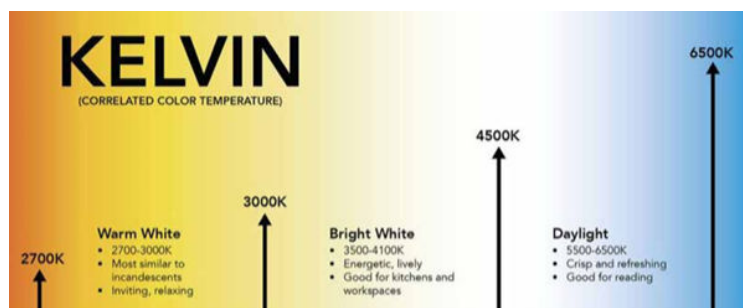
Full Shielding – Light fixtures that only point light down where you need it – not out and not up.

Warmer colour – Requiring the use of warm-coloured bulbs that are 2200 to a maximum of 3000 Kelvins.

Night time restriction – Limiting the use of the following lighting between the hours of 10 pm to 6 am.

- Searchlights (except in emergencies)
- Lighting for recreation activities
- Outside illumination for aesthetic purposes

What if our outdoor lights are on a motion sensor/timer? If your outside lights are on motion sensor/timer and turn off within 5 minutes your bulb can be higher than 3000 Kelvin, and the light will not be required to be fully shielded.



What is a Kelvin?

Kelvin is a measure of the light temperature (colour) which goes from amber (1000 K) to a very bright blueish-white (6500 K). 3000 K lights are on the warm end of the spectrum and create less light pollution. The preferred choice of light is 2200 K or 2700 K.

What if I want to be more responsible with my current lighting? Each of us can easily implement practical solutions to reduce light pollution by following the Dark Sky International’s 5 Principles for Outdoor Lighting. This will also save your energy costs over time.

Will our streets and public buildings become dark? No, the current Kaikōura street lights are already converted for Dark Sky accreditation. Most street lights are now warm white (2700 K). Later in 2024, there will hopefully be an upgrade to all State Highway 1 lights supported by Waka Kotahi with a combination of 2200 K and 2700 K fully shielded lights.



Image taken from the IDA website

Public spaces will continue to be lit, with the only changes relating to colour temperatures and downward pointing light shielding.

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