

DECARBONISING STREET LIGHTING PROGRAMME NEWSLETTER

March 2026



Moving from Investment to Impact

As we approach the end of the funded investment period on 31 March 2026, this feels like a natural moment to pause and reflect.

The capital phase of our Live Labs 2 Decarbonising Streetlighting project is drawing to a close. But we are not winding down. We are moving into the phase that matters most.

We are no longer just delivering infrastructure. We are building evidence. We are building confidence. We are laying the foundations for sector-wide change.

Our recent Joint Working Group session captured that transition. The discussion focused less on proving the concept and more on tightening governance, strengthening the evidence base and preparing for dissemination and roll out.

That shift speaks volumes about where we now stand as a partnership project.

Partner Test Sites – From Delivery to Proof

Across the partnership, final designs for national test sites are in place and progressing through formal Safety Risk Assessment and Road Safety Audit.

Lancashire's A584 at Freckleton gives us a rural 50mph dual carriageway context. Oxfordshire's sites at Tackley Turn and Stanton Harcourt Roundabout introduce high-speed rural carriageways and complex junction layouts. Derbyshire's Ripley Road

reflects a village 30mph environment. Aberdeenshire's Mintlaw scheme brings a mixed 30/40mph setting with a five-arm roundabout.

We selected these locations deliberately to stretch the typologies and strengthen the evidence base. We never wanted to run a narrow trial. From the outset we have been focused on building as wide a range of new typologies supported by a full, robust and transferable body of learning.

Our approach goes well beyond removing columns. SolarLite road studs, enhanced retro-reflective road markings, higher-class RA2 and R3B signage, and where appropriate low-level pedestrian lighting together reshape the visual environment of the road for all types of road users. We are redesigning responsibly and systematically for a more sustainable future. And it is not just sustainable - it is affordable and practical to implement now.

Thermal imaging cameras linked to the TrafXSAFE AI monitoring system are being deployed to capture baseline behavioural data before implementation. Over the coming year, that monitoring will provide clear pre- and post-performance insight. Those insights along with the East Riding sites will give us the most compelling evidence yet of the benefits for change.

We have already undertaken initial carbon and cost comparisons against traditional lighting replacement. We are now refining those figures through the Carbon Decision Tool, directly linking carbon reduction to asset lifecycle timing and value-for-money planning.

The ADEPT DfT investment closes at the end of March, other than a small amount for reporting and dissemination. However the evidence-building phase continues well beyond it.

Delivering in a Complex Environment

We are delivering this work in the real world creating a set of guidance to support any and all authorities to decarbonise their street lighting.

Street lighting teams are managing Councillor scrutiny, public expectation, energy volatility, ageing assets and expanding responsibilities such as EV charging. Lighting remains visible, political and closely associated with safety and cost. That context makes our collective approach even more important. By building the evidence together and documenting our decisions clearly, we strengthen every Authority's position.

We expect scrutiny to increase and follow each time we publish our results and insights. We welcome that attention as we are, through all the work you have been involved in, confident our work stands up.

It stands up more broadly and deeply than the scope of Live Labs 2. We have gone beyond decarbonisation.



Influencing Standards and Sector Practice

We continue engaging with the Institute of Lighting Professionals and Highway Electrical Association. We are working closely with them on Standards discussions, including new Standards for pedestrian street lighting and changing existing Standards. A Technical Working Group is being set up with ILP to review and update BS EN 13201 starting with producing new guidance

The technical documentation being finalised during this phase will underpin our dissemination work. Our ambition extends beyond completing a project. We are now working to influence how decarbonised lighting is understood and adopted across the sector. We are developing the plug and play approach to help all Authorities adopt it.

Preparing for Legacy -the latest from the working groups.

Each thematic group is now firmly focused on supporting dissemination and adoption. The **Carbon and Biodiversity group** is refining lifecycle modelling so that embodied carbon, operational savings and maintenance impacts are captured consistently across all sites. We are also strengthening our articulation of biodiversity and dark skies benefits to ensure the environmental case is comprehensive.



The **Legal group** is reinforcing clarity around statutory duties and defensibility. As we share findings more widely, Authorities must feel confident that decisions sit firmly within existing legal frameworks.

The **Risk group** has seen the focus shift from feasibility to adoption. We are now concentrating on clearly explaining mitigations, governance safeguards and performance data so that perceived risk reduces as evidence grows.

The **Technical group** continues to lead on design consistency, audit integrity and standards alignment. The evidence consolidated during this phase will form the backbone of our sector guidance.

The **Academic group** is working on the wider public safety of change. Ensuring we have robust evidence supporting the benefits of our decarbonised approach for the public covering crime and fear of crime. Night time public realm Violence against Women and Girls is a key social concern and we are proving that our approach at the very least does not increase the risk for anyone of anything.

The **Communications Group** is fully focused on dissemination. Through awards submissions across Decarbonising Transport Awards – where we are shortlisted for no less than 4 awards; Local Government Association Awards; Municipal Journal Awards, CIHT and ADEPT! The Awards give us visibility and credibility throughout the sector at different levels of local government and highways.

From Project to Sector Change

We never intended our Live Labs 2 to conclude on 31 March.

Over the coming year, we will consolidate monitoring data, refine carbon and cost modelling, prepare practical guidance and actively engage professional bodies and sector networks.

We are working to decarbonise street lighting widely and at pace across the highways sector.

The partner test sites mark the beginning of broader adoption, not the end of experimentation.

We close the investment phase with designs delivered, audits progressed, monitoring deployed and governance strengthened. More importantly, we move forward with a growing body of credible evidence and a partnership that has demonstrated resilience and leadership.

We are ready for the next chapter. Stay with us on the rest of the journey.

Thank you for the professionalism, challenge and commitment you continue to bring to this programme. We are keeping moving. We are keeping Decarbonising Street lighting live and showing the way.

Talking of keeping moving - more Awards Shortlisting ...

We are pushing our message of decarbonising streetlighting across Local Authorities. We have been shortlisted the MJ Awards in the AI Innovation in Local Government for our integrated approach to using AI in our evidence base building for the project and we received COMMENDED in the Delivering Better Outcomes award category.



We have also been shortlisted for 4 awards at the Decarbonising Transport Awards <https://www.decarbonisingtransportawards.uk/>

***** Stop Press! *****

Four for Four! LGC Awards, shortlisted in every category we submitted to:

- ✓ Net Zero
- ✓ Environmental Services
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Small Team of the Year

One more step to go on these, we will be presenting our Project to the judges in April – fingers crossed!



These awards give us not only validation but get our message out to all tiers of local government.

That's it for now!

The Decarbonising Streetlighting Communications Team.