

City of
Belmont

Evaluation Report

Winter Night Lights Initiative 2024



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1. Overview

Between 1 April and 30 September 2024, the City trialled turning the lights on at five sporting reserves across the City (Peet, Redcliffe, Forster, Miles and Centenary Parks). The trials aim was to encourage and support residents to continue being physically active during the cooler months of the year, where the sun sets earlier in the day. Lighting up reserves also served as strategy to address residents' requests for improved lighting to help mitigate their safety concerns.

As a trial, sporting floodlights were automatically turned on between the hours of 5:30pm and 8:00pm Monday to Friday. Activation initiatives also took place at the start of the trial to promote the initiative and provide an encouraging supportive environment to the general community and create habits to continue throughout the duration of the trial.

Following the trial and evaluation of the initiative took place and included:

- A survey of surrounding residents of the parks, and the wider community to provide their feedback on the initiative
- Movement data, a before and after heat mapping exercise to compare usage difference against the same period in the year prior
- Head count of usage at fixed time periods to determine approximate usage numbers via CCTV review.

2. Background

The City's endorsed Recreation Strategy 2022- 2025 and associated implementation plan guides the City's planning and provision of recreation related infrastructure, programs and services.

Developing and delivering low-cost neighbourhood recreation programs that provides links to ongoing participation opportunities is a key action in the strategy that supported the Winter Night Lights program.

3. Consultation Methodology

Phase one – Trial and activation promotion (inform only)

Promotion of the trial initiative and reserve activations commenced on 8 April 2024, and promoted in the following ways:

- Belmont Connect project page
- Website news item
- Social media
- BeNews
- Belmont Bulletin
- Direct email, phone and in-person engagement with sporting clubs and facility users
- Letter drop to inform surrounding residents.



Phase two – Community feedback

Community feedback was collected between 9 September to 31 October 2024 (7 weeks).

The opportunity to provide feedback was promoted via:

- The Belmont Connect project page
- Letter drop to inform surrounding residents
- On-site signage at involved sporting reserves
- PerthNow advertisement
- Website news item
- Social media (organic and paid)
- BeNews
- The Belmont Bulletin
- Direct email, phone and in-person engagement with sporting clubs and facility users.



Methods of engagement included:

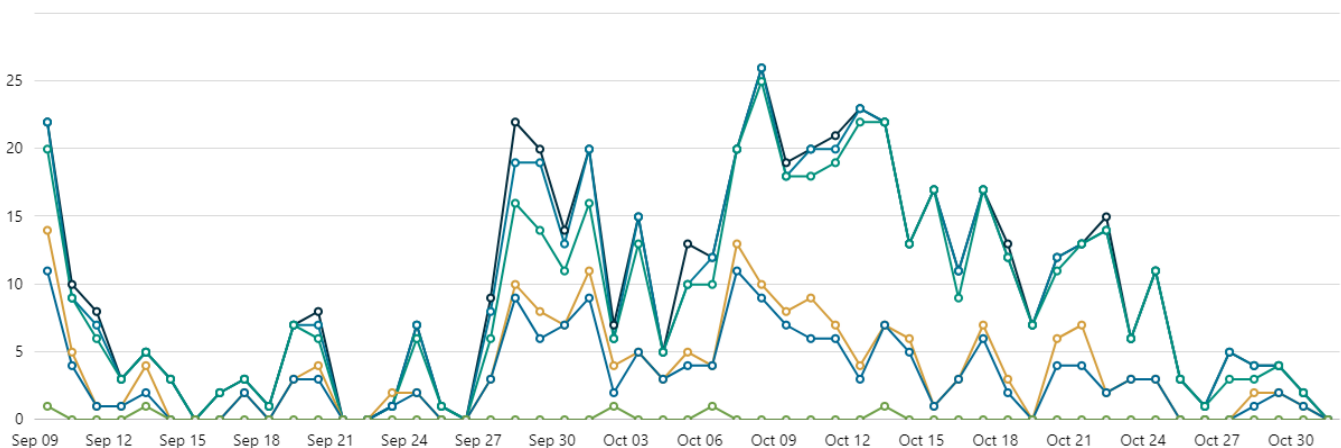
- Survey tool on Belmont Connect and hard copy form
- Mapping tool on Belmont Connect
- Feedback was also accepted via email or in writing.

4. Consultation Results

Belmont Connect Interaction

Interaction with the Belmont Connect project page is outlined below:

Full project timeframe	
Page views	770
Unique page visitors	619
Community feedback period only	
Belmont Connect page views	523
Unique page visitors	438

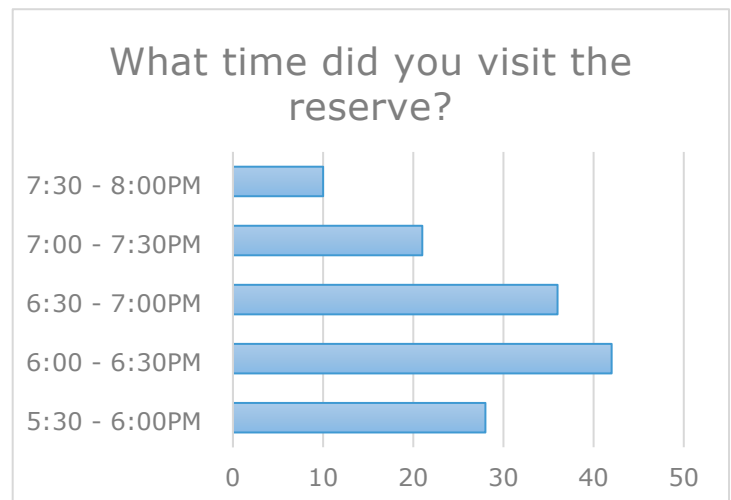
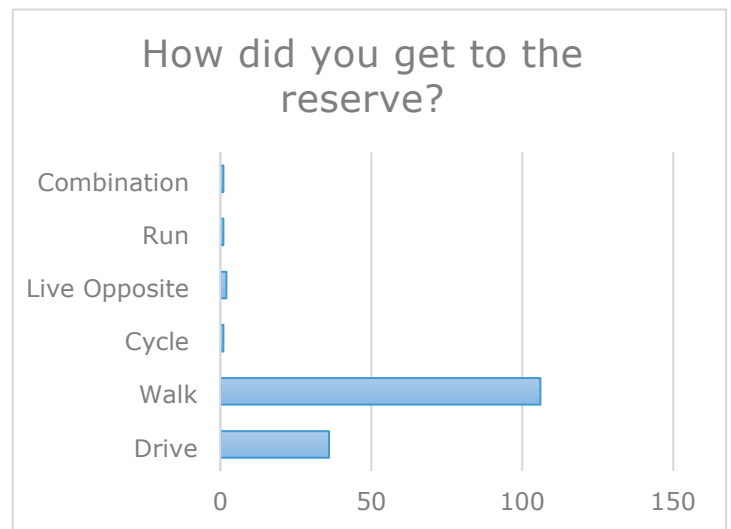
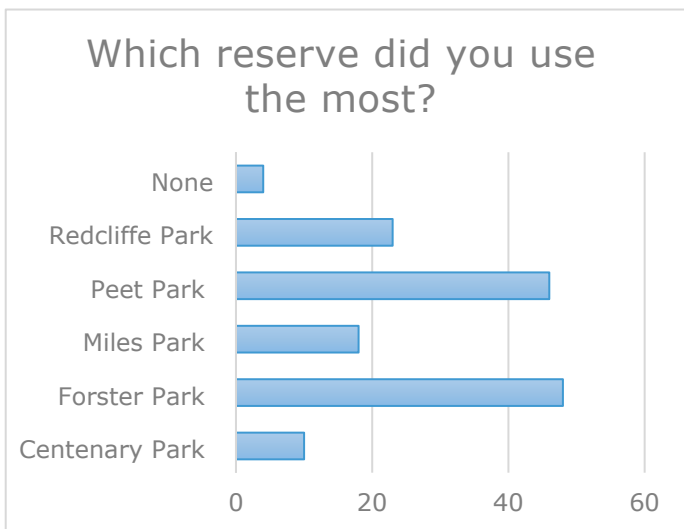


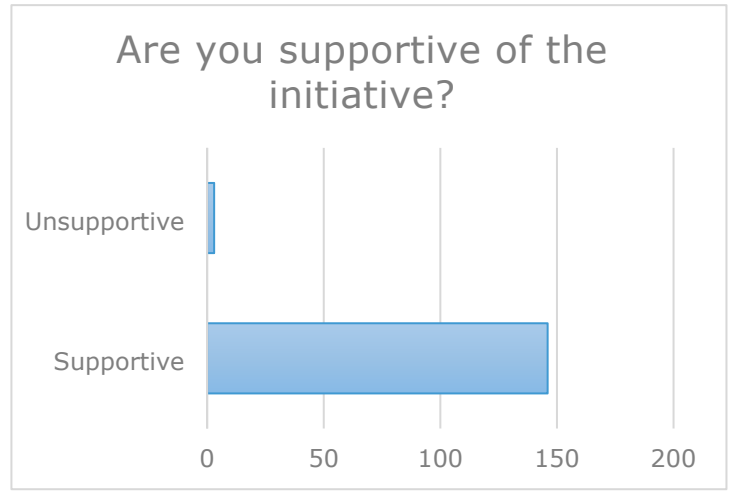
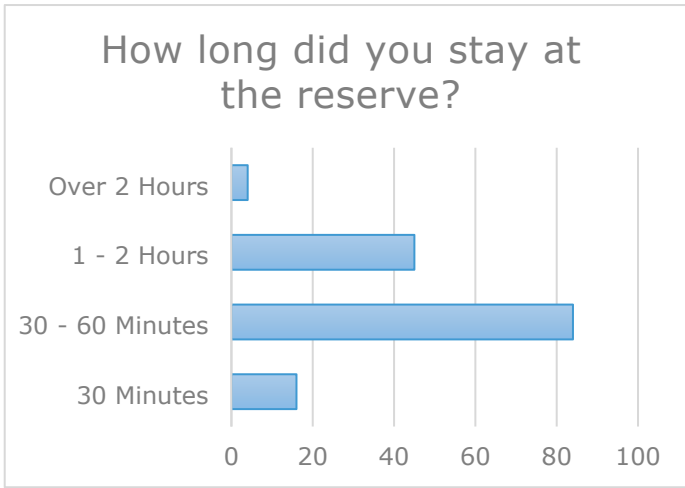
On-site signage and social media promotion referred the most page visitors to the Belmont Connect page (referrer traffic):

Referrer type and source	Referred traffic (page visits)
On-site signage QR code	234
Meta ad campaign (paid social media)	125
Facebook posts (organic)	112
Google search	77
Letter to residents QR code	25

Survey Findings

A total of 149 responses were received across the board. In summary, 97.98% of community members are supportive of the Winter Night Lights initiative. Most responders were within walking distance to their chosen reserve, with dog walking being the most popular activity between the hours of 6-6:30pm. Most respondents used the reserve between 30 – 60 minutes per visit. Further breakdown of data is shown below.





Survey Comments

Supportive

Respondents that were supportive of the trial continuing felt safer. Amongst the 131 comments received, 73 responses (56%) featured the words 'safe, safer, or safety'. Similarly, exercise/active were mentioned 23 times (18%) and dog (23%) 30 times.

Most respondents were appreciative of the initiative giving them a feeling of safety and a chance to walk their dog and/or exercise after work.

Unsupportive

Three (3) responders indicated they do not support the winter night lights initiative continuing in the future due to varying issues, including ratepayer money concerns, excess dog barking, and environmental (noise and light pollution) concerns.

A full list of all survey comments received is available to view in 'Appendix 1 Detailed Survey Comments'.

5. CCTV Review

CCTV was reviewed at three of the five reserves (Miles Park is not currently covered by CCTV and data was interrupted at Centenary Park). The footage allowed verification of the number of people utilising the reserve (outside of formal sport) as well as other observations. This provided context with the Movement Data heat map findings at Item 6 Movement Data.

Two weeks were selected, one during the peak of winter where the sun sets at its earliest of the year and the other towards the end of the trial to determine whether use of the reserves increased by the end of the trial.

Reserve	Mon 17 June	Tues 18 June	Wed 19 June	Thurs 20 June	Fri 21 June	Total	Daily Average
Forster Park	17	32	19	1	15	84	17
Peet Park	46	25	58	5	40	174	35
Redcliffe Park	30	32	20	22	25	129	26
Centenary Park	No CCTV data available						
Miles Park	No CCTV available on site.						

Thursday 20 June experienced heavy rainfall during the evening which is reflected in poor attendance on this date.

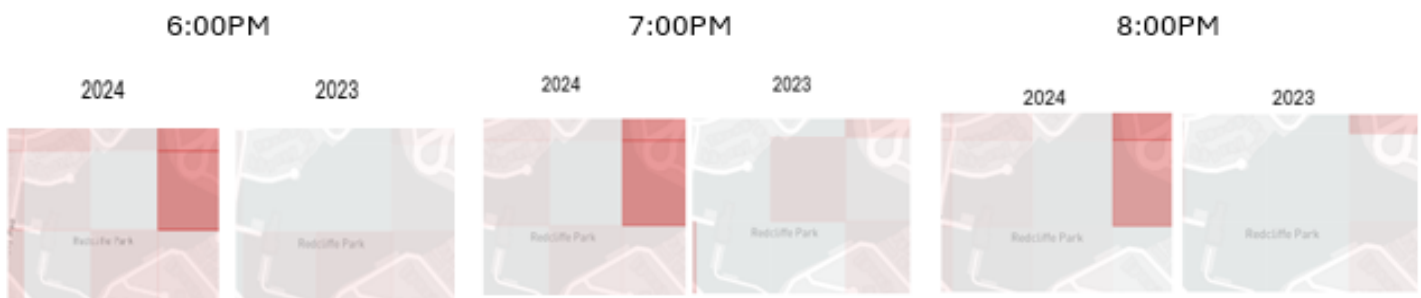
Reserve	Mon 26 Aug	Tues 27 Aug	Wed 28 Aug	Thurs 29 Aug	Fri 30 Aug	Total	Daily Average
Forster Park	26	55	52	51	Data Lost	184	46
Peet Park	31	56	54	26	61	228	46
Redcliffe Park	27	45	22	36	10	140	28
Centenary Park	4	49	35	23	22	133	26.6
Miles Park	No CCTV available on site.						

The CCTV data showed that Forster Park and Peet Park were the most popular reserves to visit which matches survey responses. This may be a result of better lighting output, compared to other reserves as well as the surrounding linked path supporting physical activity.

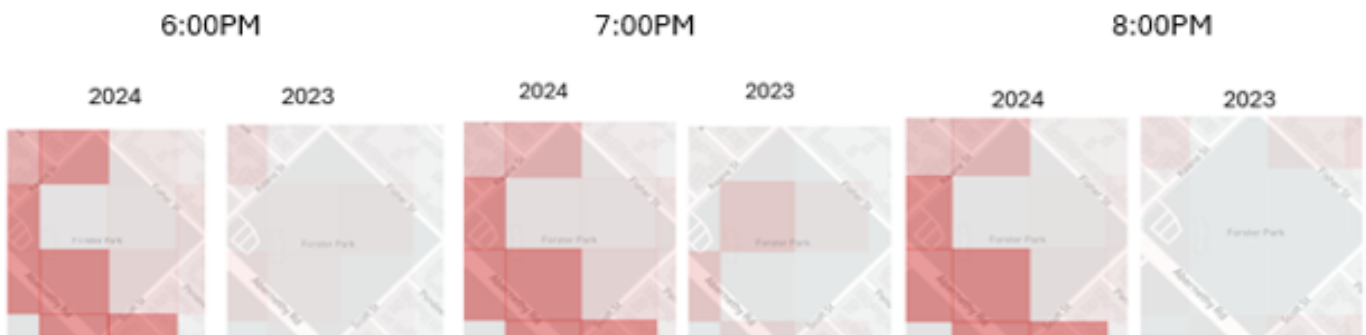
6. Movement Data

Active Xchange movement and heat mapping data allows for a direct comparison of movement on each reserve. Data featured below references August 2024 in comparison to August 2023 at hourly intervals of 6, 7, and 8pm. The heat maps show that the initiative of the program has made an impact on usage.

Redcliffe Park



Forster Park



Miles Park



Note: Heat mapping data could not be obtained for Peet and Centenary Park due to visibility errors in the Active Xchange program.

7. General Observations

Peet Park Manual Lighting Challenges

Majority of the sport lighting at the trial sites were automated, except for Peet Park which required to be switched on and off manually by the City's Community Watch service. On a number of occasions it was reported to the City that the lights had been switched off early as the switch off time conflicted with the Community Watch shift changeover. This made it challenging to have a 'switch off' consistent time. On a few occasions, the lights at Peet Park were switched off early due to a casual user being unaware of the trial and switching the lights off at the conclusion of their training sessions. After discussions with the user the issue was resolved.

Community Activations

The City also ran activations with DOSE Running and Gott Health at the beginning of the initiative focusing on different reserves. The purpose of these activations was to create awareness of the initiative and providing motivation and ideas for participants to continue in their physical activity endeavours. The programs were well received with:

- 162 overall registrations (note: 1 registration can represent an individual or a family including children).
- 62 registered for both programs.
- 47 registered specifically for Family Move 'n' Play
- 46 registered specifically for the Run Club program.

DOSE facilitated run club style programs each Tuesday evening at Miles Park during the month of May and Forster Park during the month of June.

Gott Health facilitated Family Move 'n's Play sessions which consisted of body weight animal movements and games that can be done with the whole family. They were available each Wednesday evening at Centenary Park in May and Peet Park during June.

Sporting Clubs

Due to some reserves having limited lighting infrastructure (Centenary Park, Peet Park and Miles Park), only a portion of the reserves were well a lit resulting in community members using the same space as the clubs during training times, however no negative impact or complaints were received or observed by sporting clubs. Miles Park reserve size and high use by sporting clubs, made casual use and Run Club challenging.

8. Financial Impact

The total in kind cost to the City was approximately \$5856.84.

This calculation was based off the City's electrical contractors determining the actual operating costs for each respective facility as summarised in the table below.

Variances are due to the number of towers and fitting types at each reserve.

Reserve Name	Daily operating cost	Total operating costs (108 days)
Centenary Park	\$3.55	\$383.40
Forster Park	\$30.10	\$3250.80
Miles Park	\$6.75	\$729.00
Peet Park	\$8.58	\$926.64
Redcliffe Park	\$5.25	\$567.00
	TOTAL	\$5856.84

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the Winter Night Lights trial had a direct positive impact on the community's physical activity levels. The initiative allowed residents to continue using their local reserve during the evening, whilst feeling safe. The community has also expressed strong support for the initiative.

It is recommended that the initiative continue annually with the following considerations:

- Winter Night Lights continues to operate between 1 May to 30 September from 5.30pm to 8pm.
- Miles Park is removed as a location due to the high usage of the reserve.
- Due to the demand of basketball courts, that Wilson Park multipurpose courts are included as a trial location for 2025.

Appendix 1 Detailed Survey Comments

Supportive Comments

Feedback
For safety and enjoyment. I really like walking with my partner after work to get exercise and fresh air.
Because the park is useable.
Being a direct household opposite one of these park I thought it was a great idea for the community to get together during those months where many of us do not go out as much
In winter around 5 pm, it will be dark and if council open the lights then it will easy for people who finished their job late. Also can do something at park for example kicking ball, exercise etc.
I get home late from work and it's too dark to walk my dog. I feel unsafe walking at night so it's amazing to have a place with lights on that's I can go during the winter months.
This has enabled me to be active after work by being able to get down to the park near home for some exercise.
Perfect for full time workers
I finish work relatively late, so having the lights on until later helped me feel more safe while doing my daily exercise in the evenings.
Make me feel safer in the park
It allowed me to walk my dog after work while also feeling safe. This reserve without light would feel too big and dark for me to feel comfortable to go after sunset without the lights. It also meant there were other people out and using the park for exercise and dog walking which made it feel much safer than if it was empty.
Great to have added visibility and feeling of safety in later hours of the day. Would be a great use for sporting clubs and training
Great to be able to walk the dogs safely during the dark months!
You can be outdoors for longer and feel safe. Great for people who work until 5pm or later.
Great way to be able to still use the park in winter months. As the sun does not stay up long enough
It was so convenient to ensure we were able to get out and exercise around my full time work hours. By the time I get home it is dark, and as a solo female I don't feel comfortable walking my dog alone in the dark. It is initiatives like this that allow my dog and I to stay active and safe.
It gets very dark and you can't see your dog is or where he poops
To make life style more happy
More community use and safety
I felt safer walking at night in the park with the lights on and there were more people using the park compared to before when no lights were on.
I liked the Dose Running course and I do sometimes run in the evenings on my own
Is an excellent park and encourages staying outdoors.
It makes it safer for people and they tend to stay out longer.
Got me out of the house more often. I was able to walk the dog and exercise after work
I feel much safer walking around our park. I wouldn't usually walk around with no lighting...thank you
Able to exercise outside after work safely, sun is setting by the time most get home from work, gives the option to be outside exercising for a change in winter and not in the gym everyday

The ensure safety when walking dogs and more mentally health.
Able to be out later and feel safe
Was able to use the park. When it's dark it is too hard to see the lights made it possible.
Not only good for physical activities for families but the lights on at night deters negative activity and behaviours in the park from occurring
Safer to exercise my dog during winter
Extra time to play with my kids
Great idea, it's much safer which lights on
I feel so much safer walking my dogs with the lights on. Dogs are also easier to see.
it's usually dark when I get home from work. Great for the community and dog walkers. Great initiative. Please continue for the future.
Feels safer and allows me to utilise the public spaces after dark. Great initiative!!
Great for dog walking with safety of lights
Safer for walking during evening/nights
It feels more inviting and safer with the lights on at night.
It helps us to maintain a healthy lifestyle and I think summer night light would be more important as it's too hot to stay inside the house often
This survey do not allow multiple answers. Being able to go to the park at night allowed me to exercise, socialise and keep active for me and my kids. Boost our health and wellbeing.
Provides more hours to undertake physical activity
I felt a lot safer being able to walk my doggo around the parks. My work makes it difficult to walk her during daylight hours, so this was perfect and much appreciated
Allowed us to extend our community engagement with others around. Gave us a feel of security to venture out during the night hours
Very helpful to not rush when I get home from work to walk the dog before the sun goes down
Make us feel safer
Yes but would like to add early morning lights
As a female that walks alone after work, and doesn't have a dog to protect her, I felt safe walking around the park that's close to home with the lights on. I wouldn't have gone for a walk if the park didn't have the lights on as I don't feel safe walking in the dark at night time.
Good to be able to do training after work
Great to exercise safely after work!
Gives the community so much more options.
It makes the much pleasant. The dogs have lights on there collars and we have torches, it is easier to keep a check on them especially picking up after them
Because it's great to be able to get out after work. It brings a good vibe to the area and promotes socialising beyond mobiles.
It is such a wonderful park and it gives me more time to be active
Much safer in a not so safe neighbourhood
it's so great to get outside after a long day working indoors and feel safe and see the ground!
Light at nights is helpful
Extra safety with visibility. Love the idea for sporting groups

Brilliant initiative. Gives people the opportunity to get out and use these facilities not just for dog walking, during what would be an otherwise dark night.
I love walking the dogs at night time and feel much safer with good lighting at these parks.
Because it's providing a sense of safety for the community, allows the community to spend more time being active and utilising the space for general activities.
Me and my friends loved the Community Running Coaching Program led by DOSE Running and we're keen to have it back as we really enjoyed the structured sessions. As the running boom is prominent this year, more people would be interested on joining these kind of program.
Socially safer
Great way to make the most of our wonderful parks. I thought it would be darker and colder and it wasn't that bad at all because we were in a group and moving.
They keep us active during cold nights. The best way stay fit and keep warm is by exercising on cold evening. Better than sitting on couch turning the heater on.
Safety
Felt much safer having the lights on, wouldn't have run there if the lights weren't on. I did wonder about any impacts on wildlife or birds - would be interested to know if this was a consideration.
Valuable exercise.
Makes it safer for the community. Encourages people to come out and use facilities more during winter.
I come home late from work. Having the 'lights on' is a wonderful idea because not only does it enable me to walk the dog but makes the park safer.
It was fantastic to feel safe after dark in the park.
As a senior working female, It enables me to walk after work, feeling safer whilst doing so. Winter mornings are often still dark when I need to leave for work. Doctors constantly advise office workers need to move more and I hate the gym peak hour rush.
Feels safer to walk with the lights on
As a woman, the park and surrounding areas feel a lot safer at night which allowed me to exercise more
Keep me active and my dog got a nice walk. I also felt less isolated from life.
Having it well lit made it feel safe (excluding trail bike riders). It often has several unusual people hanging around when it's dark so after multiple attempts after sunset, I just stopped using the park after dark. With the lights on it opened up the chance to use the parks again and kept most people with behaviours that make me question my safety, stay away (until the lights were off).
it's a nice way to have a walk and run after the work . With the lights on it's good to socialise with the local people around .
Definitely felt safer and more people and families were out enjoying the park
Being able to feel safer walking at night as a woman.
Area felt safer and I could stay out longer to exercise my dog.
Allows people to make more use of the day, felt safer.
You can stay at the park later and not have to worry about it being to dark
Great in the winter months being able to take our elderly dogs to the park for a dog friendly outing in the evening!
Safe and encouraging people to walk dog later
It's meant that I'm able to use the facilities when the sun has gone down. It also makes me feel safer while walking.
Feels safer

Its easier to find dog poo so there is not as much left around the park.
Because I get home for work later and it is safer to walk the dogs in a lit area
Able to exercise in safety
Safe
It helps keep the community safe by making a large park clearly visible given the reluctant attitude toward day light savings. Visibility from street lights is not sufficient given the parks size. It also allows both forms of football and other sports.
Increase physical activity
It helps us to walk for long and play with kids for more time
More visibility and safe for kids . Easy to watch your kids while playing. The best thing happen this winter was the lights were on.
Good for everyone
As a single female walking her dog it felt safer at the park with the lights on
I felt safe at the park with the lights on, and it encouraged me to visit the park.
Socialising and active during winter with the dog walking community
it's nice
We can enjoy the place after work and with light I feel safe.
We can stay at the park for longer soccer is really fun at night but the lights were never on so we could not play and had to leave
Because it makes it easier to see and there is less likely to be people with antisocial behaviour.
Because it gets dark early in winter and many people use the park in winter and feel safer with lights.
Increased community activity on winter evenings, greater sense of safety
Provides a well lit safe space for people to exercise outside of daylight hours in accordance with their work schedule.
With the lights on people can make use of the park at night for all the activities mentioned above and specially the kids for sports to keep them away from bad activities. This maximises the use of the park and makes it feel safe for the people who live around it.
Good opportunity for people to connect with others in the community all year round.
Feel safer and encourages activity
Because I wouldn't come if there is no light and my dog would miss out on off leash exercise and socialising
Saw families playing sport. Many dog walkers and runners. Sense of security with lights on.
It helps us bring the pets out. D also do some exercise
Safety and a reason to get out in the winter. It just makes sense for all light to be left in a little longer.
A LOT of people use the parks in the area
Decreases anti social behaviour
Feel safer
Nice to be able to still walk at night in winter when it's usually dark. Brings good social element to the neighbourhood. Like the lights and light up area. Adds to safety of the area
Longer hours of usability, safety.

It is nice to be able to take a walk after the sun has gone down. Lots of people were taking advantage of this so nice to see people out and about.
I like that no matter what time I went to the park I could see & it made me feel more safe.
Make use of park when most people get home from work
I enjoyed being able to take my dog out after sunset & not be afraid. Additionally it was great to be able play with him & not lose his ball in the dark.
Able to exercise after dinner.
Gives people the opportunity to do activities after work with lights on.
Improves security; without the lights I would have stayed at home. Even to put the bins out, I felt way more secure that the park was illuminated in front of my house.
It makes the park accessible as long as wildlife is not affected
it's nice to be able to get home from work and walk around the park under lights opposed to darkness. I felt much safer and secure and I hope to continue to do it under lights a bit later in the evening come summer.
Its great for families to socialise
Good initiative, however we were unable to make good use of this due to rain.

Unsupportive Comments

Feedback
The lights do not have adequate screening to prevent over spill into nearby homes. The lights attracted noisy and anti social behaviour to the park, instead of being quiet. there shires fit the lights with a Louvre baffle that only allows light to fall onto the actual playing. surface, not everywhere this side of the black stump.
Couse of winter unless there is training for soccer there is no one walking in the Park after 6 so it's a waste of rate payers money
Sick of hearing the dogs barking at night Very unfair to residents nearby

General Feedback Comments

Respondents were asked if they had additional feedback outside of their supporting comments regarding the initiative.

Feedback
Sometimes at Peet Park we found the e lights to be inconsistently on or off!! Often after early footy training the lights would be waited off or some nights they were not on
It definitely makes walking at the park more safe knowing there are local sporting clubs doing their trainings and that help is just a shout away if needed.
The lights that provide light for the netball courts at Wilson park were also helpful with improving the feeling of safety and people being out after dark during winter.
It would be great to have the lights on the whole path at Forster not just the middle. Thanks
Doggy bags often run out
Am happy and my hope you do this things. Thanks
Would be nice to have more night lights at Tomato Lake

I am really thankful to the Belmont Council for bringing people together in a much safer environment, seeing families, friends and their pets getting out and about. Having the lights on during winter is the best decision ever!
I hope the lighting continues
I wish they put permanent light poles around the walk path inside the Forster park just like they have done at Mills Park in Beckenham
Can you please consider including weekends. At Forster park can you please turn on light to cover zone near playground. It's still quite dark on far side.
This light trial is the answer to a question nobody asked for, its greenhouse gas emitting and reduces safety and amenity in the area around the parks. dark parks are good parks.
Fully supportive of lights at night to prevent criminal behaviour
Peet park needs lights down the Kooyong road side
Love this initiative. Thank you City of Belmont
Great bit having to rely in soccer training nights to utilise the lighting
Please keep it, and not only in winter, this would be great up to 10pm in summer
As a new resident to the area, I am so thankful for the beautifully kept parks that allow dog access. Not only is it great exercise for my doggo and I, but also socially lovely to be able to meet like minded people in my community.
Great initiative to have this, please continue it going forward. Thanks
Please do a trial of the lights in the mornings. Forster park is pitch black to run on the path during winter so a morning trial would be great for people who like to exercise early morning Thanks
I genuinely think this idea is one of the best. Looking forward to next year. Cool that you got Dose Running providing it.
Congratulations on how you look after the parks and verges with trees and all the borders of flowers much appreciated
Was great! And also great to see sports and teams using grounds at night
Extend to 10 pm
Thank you for running the Move n Play, my family really enjoyed it
Please make the lights on during winter permanent. It is very beneficial for the residents and also keep them safe.
I also used Middleton Park for running. The lights are often on there too, not sure if this was just good timing.
Would the council consider installing solar light options all year around?
Pert park as we all know is a great place to take our dog for a walk.
Please continue this, it made it so much easier to walk my dog after hours
A light is needed on the corner of Keane and Fisher Street. This is where the fitness equipment is located (exercise groups bring their own portable lantern to this area, which is quite astonishing). This area is generally not well lit.
The winter lights should be on for the weekends as wells as the weekdays
I love the initiative, but personally I don't think they need to be on as late. 7:30pm would be suffice in my opinion.
Lights need to stay on after football practice. There were some nights it was turn off as soon as practice was finished
Morning options. From 5.30am?
It's excellent I'm not sure why this is being discussed. It should be standard

Close with gate the new entry Scott street so the dogs can't run to the streets we have so many cars around. We have so many dogs here
Many locals were enthusiastic and were comfortable walking in the evening. We met Neighbours who we had not spoken to before. When the lights were turned off at night, several children in the playground were left to play in the dark. A light on the side of the football club shed near the cricket nets would be advantageous. There is a light on the end of the shed but it doesn't light up the majority of the playground. The playground is used very often at night. With summer coming it will probably be more so. Just a suggestion.
Selby park needed to be a part of this initiative. And have lights in general. It's a very popular dog park. Most people had to cut their walks shorter in the winter as it's very dark after the working day. In general there are often suspicious people about, lights are needed all year round.
I sent a message early in the football season to turn the lights on at Foster Park earlier than what they were. Belmont Council responded immediately and the very next week lights were on earlier than they had been. Thank you!
I live across the road from Peet Park and noticed that towards the end of the trial more people were using the park. Possibly because they had noticed the lights were on regularly.
Peet Park is one of the best in our opinion. The council do a great job in the upkeep. Have lived opposite for 35 years!
It's an amazing initiative; I felt more Secure to get my bins out at Night Time as the Park in front of my House was illuminated. Research has shown that street lightning improves security and reduces petty crimes so I would really appreciate it if this initiate could continue. To be honest, I feel that petty crime has increased in the vicinity in the last couples of years but since the park has been illuminated at nighttime if feels that there are less peoples hanging around letterboxes or houses for no reason in front of miles park at night time. It would be interesting to analyse whether Petty crimes have decreased around the illuminated parks during this initiatives
add Middleton
Please continue to do so during the Summer and Winter months
Same, rain was an issue. Noticing a lot of dog poo on this oval.
Keep them on!
Thanks.. this was great!
Keep it going please in every winter. No
No
Please keep it up!
Love the initiative. Great job thinking of it!
keep it up!
Love this initiative
I think the lights were a great initiative. Thank you for trialling this CoB!
Please keep doing it Thanks
Great idea - keep up the good work
I think the night lights are great and hope you keep them.