

'The ultimate balance' – lighting for the environment: Urbis Schröder launches Axia 3

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- New study finds only two per cent of the population experience dark skies at night
- Light pollution can have a detrimental effect on the wider environment and native wildlife
- Axia 3: protecting the environment while meeting lighting demands of UK towns and cities

LONDON: UK lighting specialist, Urbis Schröder (<https://www.schreder.com/>), announces the launch of Axia 3: a connected-ready luminaire that integrates a range of sensors to control lighting output based on a range of factors - ensuring roads and streets are never over-lit and helping to reduce the negative impact of light pollution.

STATE OF PLAY

Excessive light pollution is a major issue in many UK towns and cities. A recent star count study conducted by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) found more than half of participants are living in areas severely impacted by light spill and are unable to see more than ten stars in the sky. With the number of people in the UK experiencing truly dark skies falling by 50 per cent since 2014, Urbis Schröder has been working on new ways to minimise the impact of light pollution on the wider environment.

Exposure to excess light at night can also have a negative impact on the UK's native wildlife – altering the feeding and mating habits of creatures such as bats, moths, insects and birds of prey. While the UK requires an effective and energy-efficient nationwide lighting network to ensure homes, roads and businesses are safe and can operate during the night and darker winter months; this needs to be achieved without negatively impacting the wider environment.

REGULATION RESHUFFLE

The regulation of light pollution in some European countries is much stricter than in the UK. In January 2019, France implemented stringent new laws which limit the amount of light emitted into the sky to less than 1 per cent of any outdoor light fixture and specify times when outdoor lighting must be dimmed or extinguished completely – known as lighting curfews. Many lighting networks in Europe are also fully metered; meaning regions are charged for all the energy they use which encourages them to drive the maximum energy savings out of their luminaires.

In the UK the situation is more complex; with a lack of metered energy supplies, local councils are billed using codes which are specific to luminaires and their dimming profiles. While programmed-dimming schemes are taken into account, reactive dimming – whereby sensors are used to alter light levels based on real-time changes to pedestrian numbers, traffic congestion and the weather – is not. This means local authorities receive no real financial benefit from installing sensors into their local lighting networks which could improve both light pollution and long-term energy use. 70 per cent of local councils estimated to be currently operating rigid programmed-dimming schemes, with roads and streets illuminated even when nobody is using them.

A STEP FORWARD

Designed specifically for roads, urban streets and pedestrianised areas, the Axia 3 prioritises safety and well-being while enabling sensor-controlled dimming to minimise light pollution and maximise energy savings. Photocells embedded within the luminaire respond to the amount of natural light and enable local authorities and private organisations to automatically adjust output through the seasons so no excess light is wasted.

The combined design of the polycarbonate lens and protector of the Axia 3 means that when the lantern is installed at a zero-degree inclination, there is zero upward light spill – which is currently a major contributor to the lack of dark skies in Britain. This design is also more efficient than glass alternatives, again delivering higher efficiencies.

The Axia 3 also features the new ProFlex™ photometric engine to provide extensive light distributions tailored to UK environments; results in excellent efficiency using existing column spacing's. The design of the Axia 3 has been optimised to significantly reduce the environmental impact of its production and assembly – minimising the use of raw materials and making the lantern lighter and more robust to improve its carbon footprint.

As a connected ready luminaire, the Axia 3 is also future-proofed and can be upgraded to further benefit the environment as technologies continue to evolve. This can include the installation of additional sensors which could monitor air pollution or traffic congestion providing data for local authorities to further improve their local areas.

Gary Bennett, Managing Director at Urbis Schröder, commented: “Lighting plays a huge role in creating human-centric environments that people enjoy spending time in. However, with the UK government declaring a climate emergency, the lighting industry is working hard to combat major issues such as light pollution.”

“The recent wide-scale adoption of LED street lighting has helped drastically reduce carbon emissions across the UK’s lighting network but we want to use our technology to go further. The Axia 3 can and is being used to positively benefit both the environment and the local people who inhabit it. This is the first step to a more sustainable future on Britain’s streets.”

-ENDS-

About Urbis Schröder:

Urbis Schröder (<https://www.schreder.com/>) has been manufacturing and developing high-quality lighting products and technologies since 1977 and has grown to be one of the UK’s largest suppliers of street lighting and exterior decorative lighting equipment. Urbis Schröder works in partnership with customers, creating the perfect balance of efficiency, connectivity and performance to deliver stunning projects that go far beyond simple lighting.

Technical quality and aesthetic design are at the heart of the company's philosophy and coupled with its customer focussed work ethic, this has led Urbis Schröder to develop the most cost effective, energy efficient exterior lighting innovations on the market today.

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