

## CHICHESTER HARBOUR PROVIDES DARK SKY LOCATION FOR 'THE SKY AT NIGHT'



*BBC's longest running programme films at new Dark Sky location at Itchenor*

Chichester Harbour has provided the backdrop for an episode of the BBC's star gazing programme 'The Sky at Night'. Filmed at West Itchenor, one of the Harbour's new Dark Sky Discovery Sites, the programme was shot on a beautifully clear evening, providing an excellent vista of the landscape and skies. First broadcast in 1957, 'The Sky at Night' is one of the BBC's longest running TV series.

The Sky at Night team included local expert astronomer Pete Lawrence who is from Selsey and has been working with The Sky at Night for the past 14 years. The crew began filming at around 8.30pm, in time for sunset, and continued until 10.30pm. Although the main focus was on Jupiter, the BBC was also able to film the salt marshes and stunning views across the water.

Three new Dark Sky Discovery Sites were designated in Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in 2017. All sites were identified as excellent places for stargazing due to their impressive levels of darkness, lines of sight and good accessibility year round. The locations of the sites are north of the Lt. Col. John Q Davis footpath in West Itchenor, Maybush Copse in Chidham, and at Eames Farm on Thorney Island.

Richard Austin, AONB Manager, said, "It has been a real privilege to welcome 'The Sky at Night' team to Chichester Harbour and share with them one of our new Dark Skies sites. In fact the crew was so impressed by the landscape of the Harbour that they have asked to come back again to film another episode later in the year.

We hope that 'The Sky at Night' viewers will enjoy the beauty of the Harbour and the clarity of the stargazing available here when the programme is broadcast."

The Sky at Night in Chichester Harbour will be shown on BBC4 at 10pm on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June, or can be viewed via the BBC iPlayer.

In partnership with the South Downs Astronomical Society, the Conservancy is holding a number of stargazing events as part of its annual activities programme for 2018. More information about Dark Sky Discovery Sites is available at [www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk](http://www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk).

**-ENDS-**

***For further information or high res images please contact Maria Court, Chichester Harbour Conservancy***

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## **Notes to editors**

### **Chichester Harbour Conservancy**

Chichester Harbour Conservancy is the statutory authority for Chichester Harbour and, as a team, manages the Harbour and surrounding areas. The Conservancy focuses on recreation and leisure, conservation and landscape protection, making it a destination for visitors to enjoy. It also runs an annual programme of events and an Education Service for families and schools.

### **National and International Designations**

Chichester Harbour is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Conservancy and the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (NAAONB) work closely with the Government, landowners, environment organisations and local communities to ensure the Harbour is conserved and cared for. The intertidal areas across Chichester Harbour are also designated at national (Site of Special Scientific Interest), European (SPA, SAC) and international level (Ramsar site) in order to protect the diverse and fragile range of habitats.

[www.conservancy.co.uk](http://www.conservancy.co.uk)

### **Science and Technology Facilities Council**

The Science and Technology Facilities Council is keeping the UK at the forefront of international science and tackling some of the most significant challenges facing society such as meeting our future energy needs, monitoring and understanding climate change, and global security. The Council has a broad science portfolio and works with the academic and industrial communities to share its expertise in materials science, space and ground-based astronomy technologies, laser science, microelectronics, wafer scale manufacturing, particle and nuclear physics, alternative energy production, radio communications and radar. STFC operates or hosts world class experimental facilities including in the UK the ISIS pulsed neutron source, the Central Laser Facility, and LOFAR, and is also the majority shareholder in Diamond Light Source Ltd. STFC enables UK researchers to access leading international science facilities by funding membership of international bodies including European Laboratory for Particle Physics (CERN), the Institut Laue Langevin (ILL), European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) and the European Southern Observatory (ESO). STFC is one of seven publicly-funded research councils. It is an independent, non-departmental public body of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). <http://www.stfc.ac.uk/>

The Dark Sky Discovery Site logo can be downloaded at <http://www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk/dsd-site/>



The CPRE 'Night Blight' report can be downloaded from <https://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/resources>

Light pollution map of Chichester Harbour.

