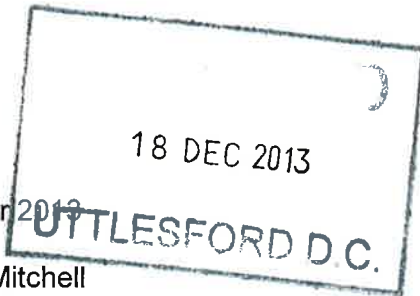


-Michael Lemy



December 2013

Mr John Mitchell  
Council Offices  
London Road  
Saffron Walden  
Essex CB11 4ER

Dear Mr Mitchell

### **Please support a ban on sky lanterns through Entertainment Licences**

The CLA is appealing for Local Authorities responsible for issuing Entertainment Licences to take action and prohibit the use of sky lanterns (also known as Chinese lanterns).

Sky lanterns are serious fire hazards, they also endanger the lives of grazing livestock as well as other wildlife, and create unnecessary litter. Those releasing lanterns have no idea of the hazard they pose, nor do they consider the implications of releasing a naked flame with absolutely no control over where it will land.

Lanterns that land in fields can get chopped up when farmers mow for silage or hay, resulting in fragments of wire in the forage. Cows, which naturally tend to chew things to check them out, get the wire trapped in their gut, resulting in an agonising, slow death for the animal.

The CLA has been made aware of many incidents involving these flying bonfires. These include:

- a burning lantern landing on the tent in which a 12-year-old boy was sleeping. Fortunately, it was seen and a serious incident was avoided;
- a lighted lantern falling into a crop of wheat in Essex – in this case, the incident occurred as the crop was being combined and it was extinguished;
- a fire starting in a conservation headland after one landed in a Norfolk drainage ditch; and
- reports of straw stack fires and close misses to thatched property.

Councillors from The Vale of White Horse District Council in Oxfordshire have already taken note of growing public opinion, and have added a condition to their Entertainment License policy so new licenses for a venue or event now prohibit sky lanterns. This has been backed up by a ban on Council-owned land.

Councillor Robert Sharp from the District Council told the CLA that adding the banning clause to their entertainment licences the process is then implemented automatically upon licence renewal at no additional cost – eventually the whole district will be covered.

The Royal Parks have a similar ban in place; they search for, and confiscate, sky lanterns brought in by those attending events on their property.

Nicola Currie, Director East  
CLA East – Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire,  
Lincolnshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire,  
Nottinghamshire, Suffolk

The Court, Lanwades Business Park,  
Kentford, Newmarket,  
Suffolk CB8 7PN

Tel: 01638 590429  
Fax: 01638 552206  
Email: east@cla.org.uk  
[www.cla.org.uk](http://www.cla.org.uk)

Many countries have already banned the use of sky lanterns, including Austria, Australia, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand, Spain Germany and parts of the USA.

The CLA fear that it is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident, which is why we are asking for your support and implement a ban in this way.

I hope the CLA can count on your support; if you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me at the CLA East office on 01638 590429.

Yours sincerely,

Nicola Currie  
CLA Eastern Regional Director

#### **ABOUT THE CLA:**

- CLA East covers the counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, and Suffolk.
- As a membership organisation, the CLA supports landowners by advising them on how best to protect and maximise their asset: the land. We are dedicated to supporting landowners and their businesses. Our success is measured by how effectively we do that. We have a team of experts in London and a regional structure able to give local support.
- We have been looking after the interests of our members, as well as promoting the positive aspects of land ownership, land management and rural business activities for the past 100 years. CLA members own or manage approximately half the rural land in England and Wales, and the resulting expertise puts us in a unique position to formulate policies and lobby effectively.