solareye®

CASE STUDY

Solareyes in Belgium

Province of East Flanders choose solar ground lighting to enhance network of cycle highways

Solareye helped the Province of East Flanders achieve their goal of providing safe and comfortable cycle tracks as an alternative to travelling via busy road networks. The project focused on two routes; a cycle highway in Kluisbergen and a cycle path in Ronse which crossed a European protected habitat area. Both routes form part of the network of cycle highways and therefore needed to meet safety standards of a cycle highway.

The cycle highway in Kluisbergen was a former railroad but became abandoned many years ago and has now been developed into a beautiful natural area. The cycle highway which follows the old railroad track is situated next to the natural area, in an open field. The provincial government wanted a lighting solution that would guide cyclists through bends and outline the path without impacting the local wildlife and biodiversity.

The cycle path in Ronse needed a lighting solution that was energy-efficient, low maintenance and above all else provided an output that was not harmful to the local biodiversity.

Both the cycle highway in Kluisbergen and the cycle path in Ronse needed to maintain their natural character so streetlights were not an option.

THE CHALLENGE

The provincial government recognised the need to guide cyclists on the path, but they didn't want a lighting scheme that would have a detrimental impact on the natural environment. Of particular concern was an area of the cycle path in Ronse where recordings indicated that a rare species of salamander (the fire salamander) were present and using the path at night during the breeding season.

The provincial government trailed a variety of lighting solutions but none were found to meet their requirements of an environmentally friendly product with low installation and running costs.

THE SOLUTION

The provincial government came across Solareye at Velo-City an international cycling exhibition and decided to trial their innovative solar ground lights.

Solareye provided four types of their Solareye80 ground lights in order for the provincial government to conduct a trial to determine which product best suited their needs. An additional benefit of the trial was that numbers of the rare salamanders could be monitored to ensure that the lights were not have a detrimental impact on their population.

At the site in Kluisbergen, the provincial government selected a 1.4km path to install Solareye80s along, after which they would gain feedback from users and stakeholders.

For the site in Ronse, the provincial government selected Solareye's conservation-friendly Bat Hat solar ground light, which was designed to reduce upward light spillage by over 95 per cent. In response to a dense tree canopy above the Ronse cycle path, the Solareyes for this area were also fitted with higher than normal capacity batteries.

In response to the Solareyes, Marjolein Hantson, Cycle Highway Project Leader at the Provincial Government said: "Solareye have provided us with an affordable lighting solution without compromising on quality. The new solar ground lights have enhanced people's feelings of safety and security at night, without any harm to the natural environment.

THE BENEFITS

When describing the installation process, Mieke Dries, Cycle Highway Engineer at the provincial government, said: “The installation was faster than anticipated and the cycle path remained accessible, yet safe, throughout the process.”

The province found Solareye80 to be extremely cost-effective when they added the savings they would make over the years of service. Installation of the lights was straightforward and with batteries charged directly by the sun, there is no need for any digging, trenching or wiring like other traditional lighting schemes. And of course, being off grid means the province has no ongoing energy usage or costs.

Whilst the benefits of low installation costs and maintenance savings were important to the provincial government, their main concern was the impact new lighting could have on the natural environment. However by choosing Solareyes Bat Hat product the province could reduce the upward light spillage and potential impact on landscapes and nature.

The advance in technology over recent years has meant that the LFP batteries within the Solareye80 ground light is anticipated to last at least 8 years, reducing the need to constantly replace and dispose of old lights. Solareye80 is therefore incredibly energy efficient, requiring a minimum amount of charge to produce a warm light capable of guiding the way, even on the darkest of paths.

> ***“We’re very proud of our new solar lights and believe the range of products offered by Solareye means that there’s a suitable product that can meet the needs and requirements of almost any situation. They’ve been very cost-effective.***
>
> ***The reactions to the new solar lights have been positive, so much so, that people are interested in installing them in other situations and applications.***
>
> ***Beautiful lights that make cycling in natural areas a new experience.”***

- Marjolein Hantson, Cycle Highway Project Leader, ***Provincial Government***

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

If you have an area that requires night time delineation or way marking, installation of the Solareye80 is:

- Simple to install and maintenance free
- Cost effective, thanks to low installation costs
- Certified waterproof (IP68) and vandal-proof/
- impact resistance (IK10)

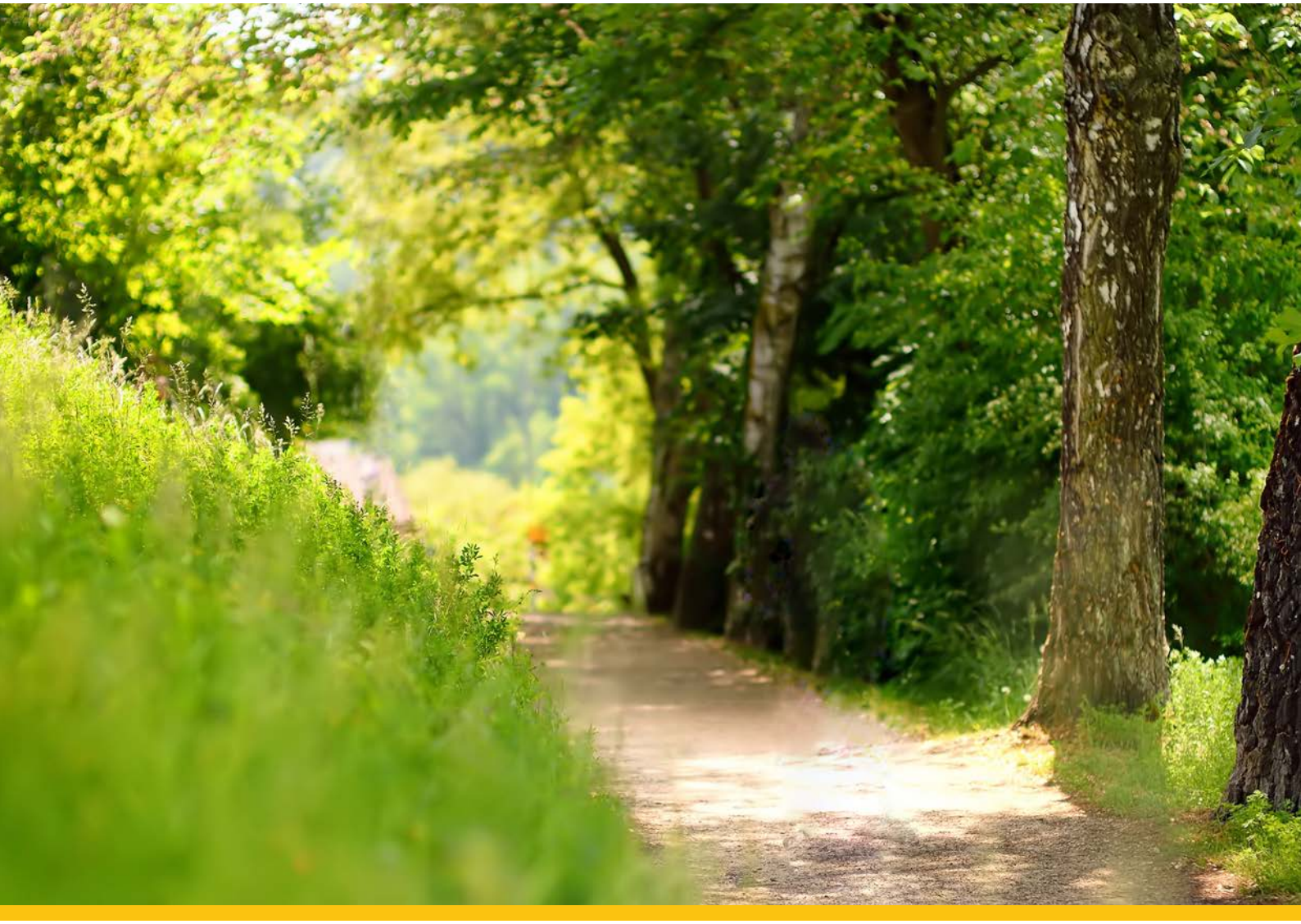
Want to discuss a project in more detail? Call us on **01275 872 079**, email **info@solar-eye.com** or visit **solar-eye.com**

ABOUT US

Solareye is a family-owned company and one of the UK's leading suppliers of high-quality outdoor solar lighting.

We have over 30 years in the traffic, cycle and pedestrian safety industries and a history of product design, sourcing and accreditation.

We're proud of what we do and how we do it; making roads, cycleways, pedestrian walkways, and public amenities safer for people to go about their daily business or enjoy the things they love.



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