Daylight Saving Time (DST) - more than just turning the clocks back

Save more than just daylight, let's think about using lighting to benefit wellbeing and minimise energy usage

It's that time of year when we can expect the unexpected. A happy dousing of autumn sun or an entire year of rain in one day; the needlessly early introduction of Christmas songs to our radios on the way to work; or more recently, the possibility of another lockdown.

Somewhere among these is the seasonal delight of an extra hour of slumber on a Sunday morning, as DST comes to an end.

Yesterday, the British population gained an hour's sleep as they turned their clocks back or, in the modern-day, their iPhones reset overnight. If only it was as easy to reset body clocks – maybe, with a little specialist lighting help, it is.

Chances are, if you do own a phone, you probably spend a large amount of time on it especially before bed. To the body, warm tones on the colour spectrum signal it's time to unwind and blue light acts as a wake function - essentially disrupting your natural circadian rhythm.

Effects of artificial lighting aren't derived solely from habits but also setting. Considering the time we inhabit artificially lit areas, it's imperative to explore the benefits a lighting specialist can deliver. An innovative and efficient solution is circadian lighting which mimics the colour spectrum to optimise wellbeing [1].

Utilised predominantly in workplaces to boost employee productivity, circadian lighting has proven valuable in education and healthcare settings too. Studies found patients with access to light (both natural and artificial) had the length of their stay in hospital reduced [2]. In primary schools, simulated daylight patterns correlated to children performing better with less spelling errors [3].

Circadian Lighting in Practice

Our lighting design team promote the use of circadian lighting, whatever the nature of your environment. Improve learning in educational establishments, increase staff productivity and reduce sickness leave, or just create a happier environment through the power of artificial lighting.

Our designers understand the needs of the built environment, providing technical solutions for lighting systems as well as the complex and intelligent control of them. We believe in creating spaces that can enhance our use of them, reducing the negative effects of modern life.

We deliver systems for various sectors, including adult acute mental health facilities like Torbay MHU, residential developments like Vaughan Road and mixed-use like CobBauge at University of Plymouth. As a key driver for SDS, wellbeing is prioritised in every scheme.

Sustainable Solutions

As a Net Carbon Neutral business providing sustainable services in operation and in-life, SDS offer smart, automatic solutions to traditional energy-intensive systems.

Circadian lighting is delivered without being detrimental to the environment; adaptive daylight controls reduce energy usage and negate the need for artificial light when it is not required. They are an affordable and simple solution to energy-saving.

Even during the winter months, daylight compensation can dramatically reduce internal energy demands when natural ambient light is sufficient. When it's not, artificial lighting is introduced gradually whilst not exceeding the required illuminance within the space. This provides ideal lighting conditions for internal environments, reducing energy, whilst maximising optimum working and living conditions accordingly.

If you would like to know more about how circadian lighting designs can benefit your building, contact:

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[1] Figueiro, M. Plitnick, G. Lok, B.A. Jones, G.E. Higgins, P. Hornick, T. Rea, M.S. (2014) Tailored lighting intervention improves measures of sleep, depression, and agitation in persons with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia living in long-term care facilities. Clinical interventions in aging, 9. 1527. [2] Beauchemin, K, Hays, P (1996) Sunny hospital rooms expedite recovery from severe and refractory depressions. Journal of Affective Disorders, 40: 49–51. [3] Shamsul, B. , Sia, C. , Ng, Y. , & Karmegan, K. (2013). Effects of Light's Colour Temperatures on Visual Comfort Level, Task Performances, and Alertness among Students. American Journal of Public Health Research, 1(7), 159-165.