



THAMES WATER'S PLAN



GARD'S ALTERNATIVES

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This website has been created using the best information available to GARD at the time of its compilation. The opinions expressed are based on GARD's perception of the issues involved and the stance taken by Thames Water.

THAMES WATER'S DRAFT PLAN FOR 2020-2080

BACKGROUND: Following the public inquiry held in 2010 into Thames Water's 2009 Water Resources Management Plan, the inspector found that the TW's proposals for a huge reservoir south-west of Abingdon were:

- not fit for purpose;
- not compliant (they had over estimated demand); and that
- some important alternatives to the proposed Abingdon reservoir (Upper Thames Reservoir UTR) south west of Abingdon had not been properly investigated, particularly the options involving water transfers from R Severn to R Thames to supply London's reservoirs.

As a result the inspector ruled out TW's proposed 100 million cubic meter reservoir.

Consequently, TW's plan was subsequently amended as a result of these findings. Even in their 2014 Plan they did not return to a concrete proposal.

THE CURRENT THAMES WATER PROPOSALS - dWRMP19

On 12th February 2018, Thames Water published their new **draft Water Resources Management Plan (dWRMP19)**. This is now open for public consultation, ending on 29th April 2018.

The plan covers detailed investment up to 2024, but then presents an outline **Preferred Plan** out to 2080 (new government guidelines support more long-term planning by Water Companies). In progressing to this, TW produced a 'Fine Screening Report' to propose a set of water supply options which would be investigated in detail to produce the final list of water sources. An executive summary of this Fine Screening Report (FSR) can be downloaded as a PDF file [by clicking this link](#). The FSR was put out to public consultation, which ended on 31st October 2016. GARD's detailed response can be downloaded as a PDF file here [by clicking this link](#).

TW's current draft plan predicts, by the end of the century, a London deficit of about 800 Million litres per day, which could only be met by **several** large schemes. They present many plan versions, but their Preferred Plan (ie. the one for which they would seek approval) is, in outline:

Leakage reduction and Household Efficiency are their first scheme choices (these go under a heading of **Demand Management**) – these are to be tackled for 2020-2030, but the targets are **way short of what is already achieved by other water companies**. TW say that these measures will only meet a fraction of the long term need (but we believe that it doesn't need to be such a small fraction! They should try harder!)

Following this their first big new resource will be the '**Teddington Direct River Abstraction (DRA)**', by 2030. This is an 'indirect re-use' water scheme, where treated London wastewater is diverted from its normal discharge into the Thames Estuary, and piped upstream to the Thames above Teddington Weir, from where it can be extracted to fill the London storage reservoirs. It is interesting that this scheme, rubbished by Thames Water at the Public Inquiry in 2010, was first put forward by GARD's consultants in 2008 - proof of GARD's influence in these matters.

After that, the next big scheme will be needed by mid 2040s, so a decision on the choice will be needed by about 2030. This new resource (90% justified by London's needs) would be the **Abingdon reservoir (150 Million cubic metres)**. In the various scoring schemes, Abingdon Reservoir appears as commissioned between 2043 (least cost) and 2047 (preferred programme) – as the reservoir takes over 15 years to approve, construct and fill, a decision is required between 2028 and 2032.

For subsequent London needs after 2060 (FINALLY!) a large Re-useplant at Beckton in London is constructed.

It is notable in the plan that the needs of Swindon and Oxford area (SWOX) could be met without the Abingdon reservoir.

Lastly, a '**bottom line**' appears in the plan (mainly hidden from the top-level documents). Beyond 2060, the preferred plan foresees that **Thames Water would sell 120 Million litres per day (40% of the Abingdon Reservoir's output) to other areas of the South-East (Affinity Water – Essex, and South-East Water – Kent)**. We thus see that the reservoir (and especially the mega-reservoir ruled out by the 2010 Public Inquiry) is **motivated by speculation on the possibility of Thames Water becoming the 'water sheikhs' of the South-East region!**

THE NEXT STEPS

Even though the reservoir is not an immediate threat to the local area and environment, and is not an immediate threat as a white elephant for which all Thames Water's customers will pay for via their bills for decades to come, **GARD believes it is extremely important to maintain opposition to the reservoir in this consultation and throughout this period up to Autumn 2018**. We have demonstrated that Thames Water's plans can be defeated by a combination of refuting their dubious technical arguments in favour of the reservoir, by pointing out the better alternatives, and by strong public pressure on decision makers and the media. We will maintain this, and ask you to help us in this fight.