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.

GARD'S ALTERNATIVES

GARD'S PRIORITIES FOR ADDRESSING FUTURE WATER SUPPLY PROBLEMS

GARD's believe that the 'new' resources needed to address the water shortages in the South-East (overwhelmingly a London problem) **should be secure, sustainable and resilient against the future population increases, climate change and possible prolonged drought.**

GARD's researches, undertaken with professional resources, show that there is enough water for London's increased population needs, even with climate change taken into account, from the following environmentally sustainable sources:

- bulk transfer of raw water from River Severn to the River Thames, (as a first stage this could be done without costly supporting infrastructure and would be the least costly option);
- increased water re-use in the London area;
- more water desalination plants in the Thames; and, very importantly
- reducing Thames Water's very poor leakage rate and reducing water consumption per household by increased water metering and education.

In fact it is important to emphasise that Thames Water's OWN ESTIMATES, as in their Fine Screening Report show that there is sufficient water from these sources to solve the future problems!

GARD believes strongly, after thorough professional investigation, that ***there is no need for an Abingdon reservoir of any size. Moreover, even a large reservoir would not be resilient against a prolonged drought, and would run out of water relatively quickly.***

GARD'S RESPONSE TO THAMES WATER'S FINE SCREENING REPORT DOCUMENT FOR dWRMP19

GARD has already responded in detail to Thames Water's Fine Screening Report for dWRMP19 options by pointing out serious errors and inconsistencies in their calculations. (The TW document can be downloaded as a PDF file **by clicking this link**).

Our response can be downloaded as a PDF files **by clicking this link** and **this link**. We have discussed our responses with the Environment Agency and the Council for Protection of Rural England (CPRE), and found common ground with both (CPRE in particular are very supportive of our standpoint). In spite of this, Thames Water essentially ignored the GARD comments which asked for changes.

Some key points which GARD urged on TW, ***and which were disregarded*** were:

- They **should not rule out** any of the potential re-use schemes at this point (TW have dropped one of the re-use schemes from their list of possibles, thus arbitrily reducing the potential combined yield of the schemes by around 30%).
- They **should not drop** the idea of an **unsupported water transfer** from the Severn to the Thames, as this would be an easy, cheap and early gain in water supplies and would greatly facilitate the later, fully-supported water transfers which they do currently retain in their options. It would also provide greater flexibility in coping with a long drought. Nevertheless, TW dropped this very low cost option.
- They **should not drop** any of the potential **proposals for increased direct abstraction** from the lower stretches of the River Lea near London. This is a potential source of half the yield of a massive Abingdon reservoir, and there are no justified reasons for its removal as an option at this stage.
- They **should drop any proposals** they have about a **phased reservoir** at the Abingdon site (essentially starting with a smaller reservoir – though still at least twice as large as Farmoor – and building up to a huge reservoir of over 120 Million Cubic metres). ***A phased reservoir, with its estimated 10-year plus construction period, would be even more destructive and disturbing of local amenity and environment than the 2009 proposal defeated by the Public Inquiry.***
- They **should have much more ambitious targets and proposals** for reducing leakage and reducing demand by higher penetration of water meters (which remain very poor by average Water Industry standards).
- They **should re-consider their analysis of the potential yield of the supported water transfers** from the Severn, as GARD's analysis shows that this source of water not only can yield more than TW's estimates, but is also very resilient to drought and climate change.
- They **should reconsider their analysis** which claims to show that the Abingdon reservoir would be resilient against droughts. GARD's analysis shows that it would not be resilient and would run out of water fairly quickly in the first Autumn of a long drought.

GARD believes that TW's hydrological analysis of the water yield from options is suspect. Their first version of the Fine Screening report had not been transparent about how they calculate yields, and only under pressure have they now published more detailed analyses of their calculations. An example of the rigour which GARD is able to bring to bear on these problems is shown in our response to Thames Water's draft Fine Screening Report on WRMP19 resource options (which can be downloaded as a PDF file **by clicking this link)**. The least TW should do would be to match this level of detail!

Although TW have made their shortlist for new water sources, they still have not publically declared their targets for leakage reduction and improved metering. This is in spite of the fact that TW's leakage performance is the worst of all the UK water companies **(click here to see the Consumer Council for Water's 2016 report)**. ***In fact, if TW brought their leak rate per property down to the level of the industry leaders (Anglian Water) they would save more than the amount which could be supplied from even the largest of the Abingdon Reservoir proposals***. Why should we accept a reservoir until this is done?

Now that TW have selected a shortlisted set of options including an Abingdon reservoir (UTR), it is clear that it is the option favoured by TW and promoted in biassed statements made by their summary reports and in public presentations. This is despite its very high cost, its environmental damage, the long construction time and its total dependence on abstraction from the over abstracted R Thames. **For these reasons, GARD will continue to criticise and monitor TW's plans as they progress, and will be critical in the ongoing dialogues with TW and its stakeholders.** GARD's consultant has closely matched TW's computer model for their existing and proposed water supply networks with his own independent model: we are thus in an excellent position to check and contest TW's statements.

GARD will also maintain dialogue with the Environment Agency and CPRE to provide a counter to erroneous information propagated by Thames Water, and to liaise with Local Authorities and brief Parish Councils and the local population via Village Newsletters. Our latest Parish Council briefing (December 2016) can be downloaded as a PDF file **by clicking this link** and the presentation we made at the public meeting in East Hanney on 12th June 2017, can be found by **clicking this link**.