



From Lord Berkeley  
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The Lord de Mauley,  
Minister of State  
DEFRA

11<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Dear Rupert,

### **Thames Tideway Tunnel - revised**

We have corresponded and debated this subject in the Lords on several occasions in the last year or so.

I do not think that there is any disagreement between us as to the criteria to be used in assessing whether the Thames Tideway Tunnel is needed or not. The criteria appear to be Dissolved Oxygen, Aesthetics and the Health of the recreationists. .

Whereas there has been reasonable agreement on the data used to determine compliance with Aesthetics and Health, there has, until recently, been a serious lack of data available to us on Dissolved Oxygen.

I am now pleased to say that Prof Binnie, who Chaired the original TTSSG, which recommended the Tunnel as the single solution to the CSO issue in 2005, has received new information from the Environment Agency (EA) on the levels of Dissolved Oxygen from some of the EA Automatic Quality Monitoring Stations (AQMS).

The EA have provided 7 years of records from the 3 main AQMS, i.e. Chiswick, Cadogan and Erith, which measure Dissolved Oxygen every 15 minutes. Analysis of these records shows that Chiswick and Cadogan AQMSs have met the Dissolved Oxygen standards since late 2009. With the Beckton and Crossness STW upgrades completed in early 2014, the Erith AQMS has also met all the Dissolved Oxygen standards.

Thus, now that the STW upgrades are complete, it would appear that storm discharges from the lower Tideway CSOs would not cause significant adverse impact on the ecological quality of the River.

The Environment Agency was able to state, after a year's monitoring of the post Mogden upgrade situation, that 'they are not aware of any instances when spills have caused significant adverse environmental impact on the river water quality'. Using this same timescale in respect of the lower Thames, it is now clear that the Tideway can now be regarded as satisfactory under the terms of the UWWTD.

This information, and other details of Health and Aesthetics, are set out in the latest Report from Prof Binnie: 'A Review of Tideway spills and their environmental impact.' dated 10th December 2014, attached.

Prof Binnie comments that 'Now the STW upgrades are operational, the conclusion is that the Tideway now meets the requirement for no significant adverse environmental impact from the CSOs and thus the UWWTD. The completion of the Lee tunnel in late 2015 and, if thought appropriate, the floating booms, will improve conditions further.'

Thus, there appears to be no reason at all to go ahead now with the Thames Tideway Tunnel in order to meet the requirements of the UWWTD, since the Thames already complies with that EU Directive.

Cancellation will save some 5 million Thames Water customers having to pay an extra £80 per annum for the foreseeable future.

The time to stop this waste of money is now!

I look forward to your comments,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Blair', with a long, sweeping underline.

Lord Berkeley