

# NEWS RELEASE



8 June 2010

**Campaigners call on Prime Minister to hold Thames Water to account for £1 billion cost of  
“unnneeded reservoir”**

*Heathrow sized reservoir planned next to Prime Minister’s constituency*

Campaigners have this week written to the Prime Minister urging him to hold Thames Water to account for a massive reservoir plan that will cost consumers £1 billion and cause massive environmental damage in his neighbouring constituency. The letter highlights evidence that the reservoir plan, being promoted by Thames Water, is unnecessary, and that more viable alternatives have been dismissed by Thames Water ahead of a public inquiry this month.

Consumers in the south-east would have to pick up the £1 billion bill for the reservoir, whilst less costly alternatives have been unjustifiably dismissed. The campaign against the proposals has cross-party backing and MPs will be briefed next week at an event in Parliament.

Commenting on the Thames Water proposals, Caroline Lucas MP, Green Party leader and MP for Brighton Pavillion, said,

“Thames Water’s proposals for this massive reservoir are costly, unnecessary and highly damaging to the environment. Having visited the site myself, I have seen the devastation this four square mile reservoir will cause in the Oxfordshire countryside. I look forward to using my new position in Parliament to support local campaigners, GARD, to defeat the proposals.”

Nick Thompson, Chairman of GARD said,

“It is very important MPs understand the scale and impact of what’s proposed. There is no need for the reservoir and there are other ways of securing new water supplies when needed which are not being properly considered. The billion pound cost of the proposed reservoir would be passed on to consumers, just when they can least afford it, at the same time that the profits are passed back to Thames Water’s parent company, Macquarie Bank in Australia.”

**ENDS**

For more information or to arrange an interview with Nick Thompson please contact Peter Jones on 07917 312 749.

About GARD:

1. An event will be hosted in Parliament on 9 June in order to brief parliamentarians on the proposals and the potential alternatives.

2. The Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD) is a campaign group opposed to Thames Water's plans to build a huge and unnecessary reservoir in the countryside, south west of Abingdon. Thames Water has ignored or dismissed more sustainable and viable long term alternatives. The campaign has the support of parliamentarians, district and county councillors from all parties, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) and local residents.
3. Local residents can sign up to our campaign via our website and make their voice heard. Campaign updates are available via Facebook, Twitter and the website. Go to [www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk](http://www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk)
4. A public inquiry on Thames Water's plan is due to start on 15 June this year and GARD will be challenging the plans at the inquiry. If Thames Water's plan is approved in the face of strong local opposition, work could start as early as 2016.

<b>Interview contact details</b>	
Brigadier Nick Thompson	Contact GARD on 07917 312 749