

NEWS RELEASE



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GARD CAMPAIGN GROWS AS INQUIRY HEARING APPROACHES

The Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD) is gathering support as prominent politicians in the General Election fight for Wantage and neighbouring Oxford West and Abingdon have backed the campaign. GARD has been delighted by the support it has received following the latest phase of its campaign to put a stop to Thames Water's proposal to build a four square mile reservoir in Abingdon.

In the last two weeks alone, over one hundred more local residents have signed up to the campaign. In addition, many local politicians have expressed support for the campaign after receiving detailed information prepared by GARD setting out the impacts of the proposed reservoir.

In alphabetical order, the local parliamentary candidates that have endorsed the campaign include:

Alan Armitage, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Wantage and Didcot
Nicola Blackwood, Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Oxford West and Abingdon
Chris Goodall, Green Parliamentary Candidate for Oxford West and Abingdon
Dr Evan Harris, Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Oxford West and Abingdon
Adam Twine, Green Parliamentary Candidate for Wantage and Didcot
Ed Vaizey, Conservative Parliamentary Candidate for Wantage and Didcot

In alphabetical order, the local councillors that have given their support to the campaign include:

Cllr Matthew Barber, Conservative Leader of the Opposition, Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Iain Brown, Conservative Councillor, Oxfordshire County Councillor
Cllr Andrew Crawford, Liberal Democrat Councillor, Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Anthony Hayward, Conservative Councillor, Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Charles Mathew, Conservative Councillor, Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Zoe Patrick, Liberal Democrat Councillor, Vale of White Horse District Council
Cllr Chris Wise, Liberal Democrat Councillor, Vale of White Horse District Council

Nick Thompson, Chairman of GARD, said:

“We have been working hard to highlight Thames Water's commercially motivated reservoir plan and we want to thank everyone for their support to date. In the run up to the inquiry due in mid-June, it is crucial that everyone is aware of the facts. Local people need to be aware that if Thames Water is allowed to build the reservoir, it will generate millions of pounds for its Macquarie shareholders at the cost of the quality of life of local residents and unnecessary

expense for all Thames Water consumers. Nine years of building work and disruption to produce an enormous, unnecessary reservoir will have an immeasurable negative impact on local towns and villages, particularly during construction. It might be possible to contend with this upheaval if there was an evidence base to prove the reservoir was needed, but there isn't. It's simply about profitability."

To join the campaign, go to www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk or find GARD on Facebook and Twitter.

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

About GARD:

1. The Group Against Reservoir Development (GARD) is a group of local residents campaigning against plans by Thames Water 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.
2. 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
3. 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.