

David Black
Chief Executive
Ofwat
11 Westferry Circus
London
E14 4HD

Dear David Black,

I am writing to you regarding Thames Water's proposed Teddington Direct River Abstraction scheme (TDRA) which as I understand it will require both a new treated sewage facility and new abstraction facility on the Teddington/Hampton stretch of the Thames.

I understand that Ofwat is due to announce its decision on the scheme in the next month or so. Before any decision is made, River Action urges you to strongly consider the damaging impacts of such plans. Time and time again, we have seen action taken by Thames Water that damages our rivers. Just last week, [testing from River Action](#) found high levels of E.coli in the River Thames days before the famous Oxbridge Boat Race in which rowers were sick. Based on data from Thames Water, we surmise that the pollution is being caused from Thames Water discharging sewage directly into the river and its tributaries.

There has been strong opposition from residents, campaigners, government bodies and local MPs to the TDRA. The views of those who will be most impacted must be taken into consideration. Concerns lie over the potential social, recreational, and environmental ramifications, particularly considering the three-year construction timeline and the considerable disruption and damage from tunnelling. It is surprising that the scheme was included in Thames Water's business plan despite its very clear environmental and social impacts, and the number of other potential solutions, not least fixing their water leakages rather than abstraction.

Our rivers cannot be treated in such a dispensable way, we must look to alternative solutions that do not run the risk of increasing sewage discharge, and running our rivers dry through over abstraction. As a start, we respectfully ask Ofwat and the Environment Agency to ensure Thames Water fulfils its obligations to operate by maintaining its existing water network which leaks approximately 600 million litres of drinking water each day.

River Action works closely with the local community and organisations operating along the Thames. As a public voice calling for our rivers to be saved, we strongly urge the regulators to reconsider the current proposals and look into better alternatives for the river and its users. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to understand why the public planning process has been side-stepped and why the Government believes this wasteful and unnecessary proposal is being considered.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Wallace', written over a horizontal line.

James Wallace – CEO, River Action