

## **GARD Key Points for responding to the Affinity Water Consultation (Single Page)**

Affinity's consultation is here: <https://stakeholder.affinitywater.co.uk/have-your-say.aspx>

- Several river and angling lobbies call for the reservoir to be built to reduce the need to abstract water from stressed chalk streams, but Affinity's own plan proposes a much faster way of achieving this using water from Anglian's existing Grafham reservoir.  
**Affinity Water should make clear to all stakeholders that chalk stream sustainability reductions can be achieved by 2025, without waiting until 2038 for the reservoir.**
- Affinity's 'Supply 2040' scheme allowing transfer of water from South to North of their Central Region, is welcome and should be brought forward to increase adaptability in responding to any increased demand, allow larger, quicker reductions in chalk stream abstractions and improve the ability to manage London supplies.
- The population forecasts used to calculate demand are unrealistically high and should take account of local authorities' actual historical build rates.
- Affinity's leakage rates are unacceptable. They are much higher than companies that serve similar areas and their plans for reductions are too low and too slow. At a minimum, reductions should meet or exceed Ofwat targets.
- Affinity is too slow to encourage water consumption reduction. Metering efforts are inadequate, and poor compared with other water companies. If Anglian Water can aim for 95%-meter penetration by 2030, why can't Affinity?
- About 70% of water supplied to Affinity is returned as treated effluent to the lower River Thames and Lea and used by Thames Water for supplying London. Affinity customers will be charged 100% of the cost of water supplied to them by Thames Water for a net 30% of water supplied. This is a very bad deal for Affinity customers.
- GARD has proposed ways for Affinity to increase its water supply and relieve chalk stream over-abstraction using a mix of Thames Water's surpluses and existing London supplies. This would be very efficient as most of it would be available, post treatment, for re-extraction downstream. It is also deliverable much sooner than Abingdon reservoir.
- Simple plan changes and ambitious leakage and water-use targets push back the need for a water source such as the reservoir until the 2050s or remove the need completely.
- The planned reservoir obstructs vital flood plain, including Flood Zone 3. Studies by Thames Water indicated that a reservoir this size would not leave enough space to create flood compensation zones. Why are Affinity even considering a scheme that will lead to increased flood risk for surrounding towns and villages?
- GARD studies show the reservoir may quickly empty and be slow to fill, leaving supplies vulnerable. Do Affinity actually understand the sustainability and environmental issues associated with this scheme? Affinity must conduct independent studies as due diligence.
- Affinity has made no effort to engage with local councils and communities.