

Sir/Madam,

I wish to register my objections to Affinity Water's revised draft Water Resources Management Plan, which is badly thought out, lacks ambition and is unfair to customers. Plans to tackle leakage are below the target set by the water regulator and Affinity should bring leakage down to the industry average by 2050. Similarly, targets to reduce individual consumption lag behind the best in the industry by a significant margin.

In terms of future demand, the population forecasts are unrealistic when compared to historical growth rates. This inflates anticipated demand, meaning that money that could be spent fixing leaks and better managing the existing supply is instead spent on expensive projects that may never be needed. This raises customers' bills and saddles future generations with unfair repayment costs. The future reservoir option at Abingdon is particularly badly thought out. Thames Water and Affinity have sought support for this by pushing the idea that it is needed to reduce abstraction rates from over-stressed chalk stream and rivers. Understandably, this has attracted much attention from the river protection and angling lobbies. Yet it is clear from this draft plan that Affinity expects to meet the need to reduce abstractions by using water from the existing Grafham reservoir and that this will be achieved by 2025, before the reservoir is even started.

Affinity's plan to purchase water from Thames Water is, in its current form, an incredibly bad deal for Affinity customers. I understand that for every 100 megalitres per day of water transferred, 70 or more will be returned to Thames Water since they deal with Affinity's waste water and sewage. Instead of paying for just 30 megalitres per day, customers will pay the full price for 100 and then pay a further bill to Thames Water to process the 70 megalitres per day they are getting for free as waste water. Similarly, water transferred from Grafham and the increased chalk stream flows, will largely end up available to Thames Water for free. This is not recognised in either the Affinity or Thames Water plans. Even using Affinity's own inflated figures, a source such as the reservoir is not needed until 2050. Recalculating demand and supply using sensible figures shows it is not needed in the 60-year horizon of this plan.

The Supply 2040 scheme is a good idea, but again badly implemented. Simply bringing this forward would open up a range of alternative supply options, including redistribution of surplus water available in some zones. This measure alone would mean a source the size of the Abingdon reservoir is not needed

Despite being co-proponents of the Abingdon reservoir, it is clear that Affinity knows little about it. They have made no attempt to engage with the local communities or councils and have no understanding of the environmental effects, the problems of building over a floodplain or even its potential lack of sustainability.

This plan should be completely rejected as being unfit for purpose.

Yours,