



By email

Name: Richard Aylard  
Email: [Richard.aylard@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:Richard.aylard@thameswater.co.uk)

1 July 2020

Dear Robert,

Thank you for your letter dated 4 May 2020 and please accept my apologies that it has taken me a little while to reply.

I note your comments that local people were not reassured by the presentation made by the Environment Agency at last year's Water Day and am also aware that the issue of turbidity in the River Windrush is again concerning local residents this year.

In response to your recommendation, we have commissioned the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (UKCEH) to undertake an investigation to seek to identify the extent and location, and hence potential sources, of the turbidity problems in the river. A longitudinal survey along the river and its major tributaries will be undertaken on four occasions, with at least two being completed before the next Water Day in October 2020. The intention is to cover a range of conditions, including a period of low flow, during or immediately after heavy rain and during a high turbidity episode, not all of which may be possible this summer if the appropriate conditions do not materialise. Initial sampling locations have been selected, although this may be refined after the initial surveys if particular causes or locations are identified.

Upon completion of the surveys UKCEH will provide all the survey data and a short report to us, which we will be pleased to share with you and local residents.

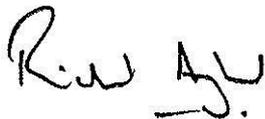
As an independent, not for profit, research institute I hope you agree that UKCEH are an appropriate independent body to undertake such a study.

You also mention storm discharges at times of high rainfall. In my last letter I noted our intention to progress our drainage strategy work in the Windrush catchment taking account of all that has been learnt in the winter of 19/20. You will be pleased to learn that on Monday 6 July we will be holding our first stakeholder technical workshop on the Windrush catchment to ensure that we can incorporate local data, knowledge and experience in developing that work. Generally, incapacity in a sewerage system is dealt with by one of three approaches; upsizing the network to convey more flow, storing the excess flow in tanks to be released when capacity becomes available or source control which entails reducing the volume of unwanted flow. The drainage strategy work will identify which solution, or combination of solutions, is appropriate for the Windrush catchment.

You also asked for details of the work planned in the next business plan period (2020-2025), including at Witney STW, in your constituency. My team are currently pulling these details together for you and I will provide these in advance of our meeting on 31 July. I can, however, now confirm that we will be expanding Witney STW during this period. The existing permit for the works requires it to treat a minimum of 240 litres per second, though in practice the operational team have been able to achieve better performance than that for extended periods. The extension to the works will deliver a minimum treatment capacity of 362 litres per second, so a 50% increase on the current permit. This will significantly reduce the use of the storm tanks and the number and duration of any discharges from the tanks to the river.

I hope this is helpful and if you have any questions in advance of our meeting do please let me know.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Aylard', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

**Richard Aylard CVO**  
**Sustainability Director**