

Written evidence submitted by C D Cutcliffe to The Water (Special Measures) Bill Committee (WSMB05).

Personal Written Evidence submitted by

I am a private citizen interested in safeguarding the environment. I support a number of environmental and nature conservation bodies and use rivers, sea and lakes for sailing and kayaking.

a. Executive Summary

- a. I support the measures you list: -
- b. Block bonuses for water company executives.
- c. Bring criminal charges against persistent law breakers individual and corporate.
- d. Impose fines for wrongdoing.
- e. Enable independent monitoring of every sewer overflow outlet.
- f. Wider work to strengthen regulation.

b. What has enabled the water industry to get away with Raw Sewage dumping historically.

- a. The old ten regional water authorities were under financial pressure from historic underinvestment and the need to comply with EU environmental legislation. The privatization led to the separation of the roles of regulation and provision of water and sewerage services. The privatization was a step too far and that the companies should have been more tightly regulated. The main cause was because of inadequate framing of the privatisation laws in 1989 and lack of proper enforcement by Defra, Ofwat and the EA etc. This is partly due to reduced and inadequate funding.

c. What is happening now.

- a. Water Sewage systems function badly mainly because of excess rainwater being mixed with sewage systems and inadequate construction of the infrastructure need to deal with the increases in population.
- b. So we need better separation of sewage and waste water systems both for new builds and correction where possible where historic rainwater and sewage systems were illegally joined.
- c. Directors and shareholders are not held fully accountable with penalties to keep them on track. Currently the penalties are small and are not an incentive for the water companies to comply with law.
- d. Data provided by Water Companies is usually inaccurate (in their favour) and inadequate. Fully funded comprehensive Third party monitoring will solve the problem of the inadequate and sometimes biased data we currently get so that the public and all water users get adequate warning of pollution events. It still does not record pollution incidents properly even where it has recently installed its own systems. See for example: - Southern Water reporting raw

sewage discharges vs the Surfers against Sewage system of reporting of raw sewage discharges. The SAS third party figures are much more accurate.

d. Additionally

- a. Stop companies paying out dividends when they do not invest properly in infrastructure.
- b. Nationalise companies when they cannot support themselves.
- c. Stop MP's close family relations working for private Water Companies.
- d. Separation of sewage and waste water systems both for new builds and where historic systems were illegally joined.
- e. Property developers need to pay more for the provision of waste water and sewage facilities.
- f. When the historic rainwater and sewage systems cannot be separated water companies need to store the excess raw sewage water for treatment to stop it entering rivers, lakes and seas.
- g. Ideally water companies need to invest in methods to filter out medicines, drugs and chemicals from sewage water.
- h. The public need to be persuaded to stop throwing sanitary and other waste into toilets.
- i. The public and businesses need to be persuaded to stop polluting waste water with oil, fat and other waste.
- j. As we know water companies cannot/do not remove all drugs and chemicals from sewage waste they should not be allowed to process sewage water into drinking water.
- k. Institute mandatory Public reporting of all test results especially where there is a risk to humans or wildlife

e. Reasons why the measures are needed

a. Damage to health and the environment by Raw Sewage discharges

- i. I believe the damage caused to wildlife, humans and the environment by illegal discharges of raw sewage needs to be stopped. They affect:-
- ii. Human food: -Shellfish (oysters and mussels etc.), fish and marine foods (e.g. Seaweeds etc.)
- iii. Human Health: - Chemicals, drugs and water borne diseases in human waste –pfas etc.
- iv. Nature: - Killing and infecting Invertebrates and fish
- v. The Environment:- Smells and sight
- vi. Leisure, holidays and the tourism industry suffers: - Chemicals and drugs, Human discards through toilets other than paper etc.
- vii. The trust of the public in the law of the land is being eroded where they can see non-accountable, often foreign owned, organisations using our money by paying out bonuses and dividends when the

profits should be invested in infrastructure. (They now have the temerity to ask the public to pay for the work they should have done before.)

b. The next 2 are not controlled by Water Companies but I believe need to be controlled more effectively.

- i. Leisure Boat sewage pollution
- ii. Agricultural run off

The Industry has proved it cannot and will not regulate itself because it would rather have profits for financial gain to directors and shareholders.

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