

Stop Sewage Discharges campaign victory



It was great to see my Liberal Democrat Parliamentary colleagues once again fighting to protect our countryside and wildlife against the Government's latest attempt to undermine and dismantle environmental safeguards and protections following our departure from the European Union.

Last Wednesday, Liberal Democrat MPs, led by Richard Foord and Sarah Olney, tabled amendments to the UK Infrastructure Bank Bill to prevent water companies from benefiting from taxpayer funded loans whilst at the same time paying their executives huge bonuses, giving shareholders generous dividends, and continuing to allow sewage discharges into rivers and coastal waters.



Having ignored water companies' failure to invest in infrastructure and allowed them to pump sewage into our rivers and lakes more than 775,000 times in the last two years, the Government finally accepted our amendment, meaning that the bank will now only be able to fund water companies if they produce a costed and timed plan for ending sewage discharges into rivers.

This came less than a week after Conservatives voted to allow water companies to continue dumping sewage into our rivers and seas for another 15 years. Our local MP voted in support of these new regulations, prompting Doctors for XR to stage a protest outside his office in Tarporely and erect a blue plaque at Winsford Flashes in front of representatives from groups who use the water for recreation.

Whilst the Government's acceptance of our amendment is welcome, there remains much to be done, including banning sewage discharges into swimming water and areas where protected wildlife live, and banning water company CEOs from rewarding themselves with bonuses whilst such environmental damage persists. The fight therefore continues and the Liberal Democrats will keep holding the Government and water companies to account.

From

Antoinette Sandbach