



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Catherine BEARDER MEP

Liberal Democrat Member of the European Parliament for the South East Region

Mr D Burbage
The Leader's Office
Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead
SL6 1RF

17th December 2014

Dear Mr Burbage,

Re: River Thames flood alleviation scheme

I am sure you were as pleased as I was to hear the Chancellor's Autumn Statement which provided £60 million towards funding for the River Thames Scheme. This will provide you with an excellent opportunity to complete this much needed scheme and one that I am sure you are doing all you can to achieve.

I am sure that just as much as me, you do not want local people living in fear every time storm clouds gather overhead. The RTS offers the long term solution to protecting 15,000 homes from Datchet to Teddington.

However, being from a local government background myself, I know the extreme financial burden facing you, but in my opinion this is a very generous deal from central government. I do realise the extra £60 million in the Autumn Statement means local authorities will have to find an estimated £51.4 million, but this is an amount much lower than initially estimated.

I have recently met constituents who have been through the most stressful period in their lives, having been forced out of their homes and, in the worst case, having to sell the land as a building plot.

These people feel deserted by local government and see the central government funding as a lifeline. I do urge you to grasp this opportunity now to ensure the project can continue to go ahead.

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The risk of flooding in this area is one of the most pressing problems facing your council, and further flooding will have a huge economic and social impact on the whole area. It is one that must therefore be addressed, I am urging you to see this central government funding in a positive light and to prioritise a funding timeline with the utmost urgency.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Catherine Bearder'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Catherine Bearder MEP