



**Environment, Food
and Rural Affairs
Committee**

Louise Beardmore
United Utilities
By email

22 May 2024

Dear Louise,

Windermere pollution incident

The Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee has responsibility for scrutinising the work of Defra, its agencies, and the organisations that both oversee. We take an ongoing interest in the operation and performance of the privatised water monopolies in England.

I am writing, accordingly, to highlight my Committee's serious concerns about recent reports that United Utilities released more than 10 million litres of untreated sewage into Lake Windermere over a period of 10 hours in February. It is our understanding that a telecommunications failure initially triggered the incident, but we are keen to investigate whether swift and appropriate action was taken by United Utilities to end the discharge and to inform the Environment Agency. We also wish to discuss the steps taken by your company to ensure a similar incident does not happen again.

Therefore, my Committee formally requests your attendance before it on 5 June. In the interim, the Committee requests your written account of the above matters by 31 May. My officials will make the necessary arrangements to facilitate your appearance in the coming weeks.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir Robert Goodwill MP
Chair, Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

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