

28 November 2017

Dr Alan Whitehead MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Dear Dr Whitehead,

Natura 2000 sites in Southampton

As you will be aware, a large part of the Southampton area's natural environment is protected under the European Union's Birds and Habitats Directives. This includes most of the shoreline of Southampton Water, the Hamble estuary and the River Itchen. In addition to being good for birds and other wildlife, this network of special places, including Weston Shore, provides Southampton residents with opportunities for recreation and supports our well-being.

One of the key benefits of EU membership has been the ability to work internationally to protect our environment. Leaving the EU puts the protection of these sites, including those close to Southampton, at risk.

We hope that the current levels of protection will not be reduced as the country leaves the EU. It was therefore with great concern that we read that the EU Withdrawal Bill has omitted two key factors in the UK's environmental protection: the precautionary principle and the polluter pays principle. As such we fear that Southampton's natural environment could be threatened by Brexit.

We urge you to consider this as the EU Withdrawal Bill proceeds through parliament and to draw this to the attention of the Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Gove MP, and the Shadow Environment Secretary, Sue Hayman MP. We must ensure that our natural environment is not put at risk by Brexit.

We have written similarly to Royston Smith MP.

Yours sincerely,



Eleanor Bell
Lib Dem Parliamentary Spokesperson for
Southampton Itchen



Thomas Gravatt
Lib Dem Parliamentary Spokesperson for
Southampton Test