

# **Fishing for Leave Threatens Another Flotilla if Establishment Continues to Prevaricate**

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A year ago the Fishing for Leave Flotilla proceeded up the Thames to the heart of our capital with a flotilla of 30 vessels.

To take our cry for a better future to the heart of government as the most prominent demonstration of the Brexit campaign – if the government does not start to deliver or backslides on Brexit we'll be back!

The vessels represented all sizes, sectors and all areas, making a tremendous effort and sacrifice and coming together as never before with dignity to answer their country's call when others shamefully would not. Some suggested it was the difference in the vote.

The SFF and NFFO that purport to represent the industry continued their ambivalence towards British withdrawal and hid behind the guise of 'neutrality' despite 90% of their members crying to escape the EU.

The sight of all types and sizes of vessels from all areas of the country proceeding through an icon of Britain at Tower Bridge made many hearts swell with pride and eyes fill with tears.

Had it not been for Fishing for Leave there would have been no voice for the most pro-Brexit industry. FFL has continued

unabated since, representing our industry vociferously in the corridors of power.

HOWEVER, we still have our grave concerns on the commitment of the political establishment to Brexit. The ridiculous and unnecessary election and its result has inflamed calls to remain and ignore the wishes of the British people and the rhetoric is still not being matched by results with continued prevarication on the way forward.

FFL have challenged and brought the issues below to the fore but so far, all we have had is words not action –

- The London Fisheries Convention 1964 – there is a manifesto commitment but the 2 years notice that should have been given to concur with Article 50 has still not been served and there is now a danger of an overlap of continued EU access to UK waters on withdrawal.
- The Great Repeal Bill proposes to adopt all EU law including the disastrous Common Fisheries Policy into UK law. If we are leaving the CFP, why run the risk of adopting it? Despite highlighting that adopting EU law would bind Britain to them under international treaty law the government ploughs ahead to a diplomatic disaster regardless.
- The deliberately ambiguous wording of the Conservative manifesto which means the UK would only “exercise sovereign control” waters only to 12 miles not the full 200 or midline limit.

Fishing will be one of the acid tests of the success of Brexit. FFL will continue to go forward and hope that the election leads to a fulfilment not a cop-out. Brexit and the will of the people cannot be backslid on post-election.

It is disconcerting the political establishment is now at fever pitch for “soft”/No Brexit. We are in perilous territory and after a discussion FFL are considering further

demonstrations to ensure the politicians fulfil the will of our industry and country.

We will take whatever action necessary. Should there be a backsliding, we'll be back up the Thames to bring London to a halt!