

Reservoir Group	May 2025 Holding	June 2025 Holding	July 2025 Holding	Change in June-July period	Minimum historical* July holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	99.90%	100.00%	89.70%	-10.3%	46.2% (2010)
Oxford & GU	85.00%	64.20%	41.50%	-22.7%	41.5% (2025)
GU South	67.90%	66.10%	63.10%	-3.0%	63.1% (2025)
GU North	86.40%	31.10%	21.80%	-9.3%	21.8% (2025)
Lancaster Canal	72.90%	78.30%	92.50%	14.2%	50.6% (2018)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	39.00%	40.90%	34.40%	-6.5%	27.9% (2022)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	40.20%	26.90%	17.00%	-9.9%	17% (2025)
Caldon Canal	57.60%	48.60%	38.80%	-9.8%	38.8% (2025)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	78.30%	70.50%	52.70%	-17.8%	13.9% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	92.10%	79.80%	62.40%	-17.4%	26% (2023)
Grantham Canal	91.80%	91.20%	90.40%	-0.8%	88.5% (2006)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	90.20%	83.90%	76.50%	-7.4%	26.8% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	85.70%	82.00%	70.80%	-11.2%	67.6% (2010)

* for the purposes of this analysis, historical holdings cover 1998-2025 reservoir holding data, inclusive.

General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, June was a month of two halves. The first half consisted of unsettled conditions across the UK, this was significantly contrasted with the second half, which experienced dry conditions due to heatwave conditions across England and Wales. It was the warmest June for England (2.5°C above long-term average) and the second warmest for the UK as a whole (both in series from 1890). Total UK rainfall was overall on average (103%), but there was a significant regional contrast. For the north west it was 165%, elsewhere rainfall was below average (80% for England) and large parts of central and eastern Britain recorded less than half the average.

During June, drought status was declared in Yorkshire and remained in place for north-west England, with many other regions remaining on alert. During July, East and West midlands have

more recently declared drought status. River flows reflected the rainfall patterns across the UK, North West UK remained elevated, but across central and eastern Britain river flows continued to recede and were exceptionally low at month-end.

Groundwater levels for June continued to decline and were mostly normal to below normal. Soil moisture levels recovered in north and west but drying persisted elsewhere. A third of COSMOS-UK sites recorded their lowest average June soil moisture levels (in records from 2013 or later).

The latest Hydrological Outlook indicates that below normal to low river flows and groundwater levels will persist across the eastern Britain. Although July has seen some summer rainfall, many areas have remained dry with heatwaves occurring throughout the month. This has resulted in the continued, and heightened risk of drought impacts through summer.

The Met Office rainfall anomaly graphs and maps can be viewed at:

<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-temperature-rainfall-and-sunshine-anomaly-graphs>

https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2025/6/2025_6_Rainfall_Anomaly_1991-2020.gif

The Trust's Water Resources

We are currently in the main period of the boating season, this means we are drawing down our reservoirs. The decreases in our reservoir group holdings can be attributed to the increased usage of our reservoir stocks as well as the especially dry weather conditions that have occurred over the past few months. Currently, five reservoir groups are at their lowest historical holding (data since 1998). The change in the June-July period reflects the regional contrast in rainfall conditions across the UK, the Lancaster reservoir holding group had the only increase of 14.2% due to the above average rainfall occurring in the far north-west. One of the reasons that reservoir holdings are low is that some reservoirs within a group have engineering works taking place that require the reservoir level to be maintained at less than full capacity (i.e. held down). Examples of this include Toddbrook Reservoir (Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canal group) which is still kept at -12m below Top Water Level following the spillway incident in summer 2019, and it will remain at this level until the £multi-million project to construct a new spillway is completed. Several of the reservoirs in the Leeds & Liverpool and Huddersfield Narrow Canal group are also being held down for investigation or engineering works. The Trusts Reservoir, Project Management and Water Management teams liaise closely to manage the implications of all of these works on water supplies for the canal network, given the potential impacts on boating customers.

As always, the Water Management Team will continue to monitor all reservoir holdings during the coming months and work closely with operational staff to ensure water resources are deployed efficiently. The prolonged dry weather in recent months is very notable in its severity at such an early point in the year and has led to the Trust reluctantly imposing restrictions and some canal closures to prolong the available resources. Boaters are advised to subscribe to email notifications of any waterway restrictions or closures at: [Notices and stoppages | Canal & River Trust](#)

Issued by:

Water Management Team, Canal & River Trust
23 July 2025

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 14th June unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in June and July.

Annex 1 – Canal & River Trust reservoir groups

Group name	Reservoirs within group
Kennet & Avon Canal	Crofton [<i>principally a spring-fed reservoir, and its yield is therefore greater than the storage volume indicates</i>]
Oxford & GU	Boddington, Wormleighton, Clattercote, Naseby, Sulby, Welford, Drayton & Daventry
GU South	Startopsend, Wilstone, Marsworth & Tringford
GU North	Saddington
Lancaster Canal	Killington
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	Rishton, Barrowford, Upper & Lower Foulridge, Slipper Hill, Whitemoor & Winterburn
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canal	Sutton, Bosley, Toddbrook & Combs
Caldon Canal	Rudyard, Stanley & Knypersley
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	Sparth, Slaithwaite & Diggle
Chesterfield Canal	Harthill & Pebley
Grantham Canal	Knipton & Denton
Birmingham Canal Navigations	Windmill Pool, Terry's Pool, Engine Pool, Cofton, Upper Bittell, Rotton Park & Chasewater
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	Belvide, Gailey Upper, Gailey Lower & Calf Heath