

Reservoir Group	November 2024 Holding	December 2024 Holding	January 2025 Holding	Change in December-January period	Minimum historical* January holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	99.90%	99.90%	99.90%	0.0%	59.8% (2013)
Oxford & GU	91.10%	99.40%	98.20%	-1.2%	31.9% (2012)
GU South	69.60%	74.60%	79.90%	5.3%	41.6% (2012)
GU North	99.90%	99.90%	99.90%	0.0%	26.1% (2012)
Lancaster Canal	93.10%	93.10%	96.00%	2.9%	96% (2025)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	42.80%	66.60%	83.80%	17.2%	75.3% (2004)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	35.70%	61.90%	70.60%	8.7%	42.9% (2022)
Caldon Canal	54.00%	72.90%	81.90%	9.0%	72.1% (2019)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	49.30%	62.80%	60.90%	-1.9%	21.2% (2014)
Chesterfield Canal	38.00%	55.10%	86.00%	30.9%	36.5% (2023)
Grantham Canal	92.60%	92.60%	91.80%	-0.8%	81.3% (2012)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	85.50%	92.40%	98.20%	5.8%	23.2% (2012)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	87.90%	93.80%	97.30%	3.5%	50.4% (2024)

\* for the purposes of this analysis, historical holdings cover 1998-2024 reservoir holding data, inclusive.

### General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, December was characterised by unsettled weather, this was due to the succession of weather fronts that delivered wind, rain and snow. During the month, there was storm 'Darragh', which is the fourth named storm of the 2024/2025 season. As a result of this, the total rainfall for the UK was above average (110%). Northern and central England saw above average rainfall while south Wales and south England experienced below average rainfall. December concluded a wetter-than-average year in some regions, with Severn Trent and Thames recording their fifth and third wettest years, respectively (in records from 1890). River flows reflected rainfall patterns, with most of the UK receiving normal to above average flow. The only exception was south-west England where some catchments recorded below normal flows.

Soil moisture levels across the UK continued to increase and by month-end they were generally within the normal range or wetter. Groundwater levels in major aquifers were also predominantly normal or above normal.

According to the latest hydrological outlook, the combination of saturated soils in many regions and the high groundwater levels will favour normal to above normal river flows in the north and west, this means that flood risk will remain elevated.

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/2024/12/2024\\_12\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1991-2020.gif](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2024/12/2024_12_Rainfall_Anomaly_1991-2020.gif)

### **The Trust's Water Resources**

As we enter the new year, we are still seeing increases in holdings across most reservoir groups. This is due to the above average rainfall experienced throughout the month as well as continuing to be in the refill stage. Some of our reservoir groups are still not showing larger holdings, this is due to a few reasons the primary reason 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. For the Chesterfield Reservoir group, Harthill Reservoir is refilling following a period of drawdown for construction of the new spillway. Several of the reservoirs in the Leeds & Liverpool and Huddersfield Narrow Canal group are 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.

Boaters are advised to subscribe to email notifications of any waterway restrictions or closures at: <http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/notices>.

#### **Issued by:**

Water Management Team, Canal & River Trust  
24 January 2025

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 13th January unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in December and January.

## 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