

Reservoir Group	September 2025 Holding	October 2025 Holding	November 2025 Holding	Change in October-November period	Minimum historical* November holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	86.40%	71.60%	74.50%	2.9%	30.5% (2009)
Oxford & GU	23.40%	24.40%	38.70%	14.3%	21.3% (2011)
GU South	49.90%	49.10%	48.50%	-0.6%	32.3% (2011)
GU North	24.80%	26.10%	41.30%	15.2%	13.2% (2003)
Lancaster Canal	86.60%	96.30%	98.20%	1.9%	61.8% (2009)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	37.50%	61.90%	80.10%	18.2%	17.6% (2003)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	10.80%	25.60%	46.40%	20.8%	24.1% (2003)
Caldon Canal	28.50%	36.80%	56.10%	19.3%	29.1% (2003)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	48.50%	50.90%	69.70%	18.8%	33.6% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	40.70%	35.50%	58.40%	22.9%	38% (2024)
Grantham Canal	88.80%	88.90%	93.00%	4.1%	73.2% (2014)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	66.10%	60.10%	68.80%	8.7%	15.1% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	56.60%	58.30%	63.80%	5.5%	50.3% (2023)

* 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, October was mixed month. There were periods of wet and windy conditions throughout the month, which resulted in UK rainfall being near average overall. However, there were significant regional contrasts with above average rainfall in far south-east of England and the rest of the UK being below average. No regions recorded notably high or low October rainfall totals. January-October rainfall was 82% of average for the UK. River flows remained below normal in eastern and southern England, elsewhere, it was generally normal.

Soils continued to wet across the country, and soil moisture deficits in northern and western areas were eliminated. Groundwater levels were below normal to exceptionally low across the east coast

and southern England. There was localised recharge in parts of the west coast of the UK, but elsewhere the levels continued to decline.

The Hydrological Outlook indicates normal to below normal flows in southern and eastern England over the next three months. Elsewhere, flows are likely to be normal to above normal. Despite a wetter start to November, if winter rainfall is overall below average, low flows will persist into 2026 which will further delay recover before the spring and summer, especially in south-east England.

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/2025/10/2025_10_Rainfall_Anomaly_1991-2020.gif

The Trust's Water Resources

We have now transitioned from the drawdown (usage) period of our reservoirs to the refill stage. We have already seen some recovery in most of our reservoir groups due to the slightly increased rainfall over October and early November. Despite the recent rainfall, some of our reservoir holdings are low this is because some reservoirs within a group are still having 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, hopefully in 2026. 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. The recent recovery for a number of our reservoir groups now means that for the most, levels are now no longer at their lowest position on record for this time of year. Whilst there has been continued improvement in the overall situation for the Trust's navigations, some reservoirs remain less responsive to recent rainfall. The lack of reservoir refill is not yet a cause of significant concern and many waterways have reopened to navigation. Canal demands are also typically very modest through winter period, and many parts of the network have a "stoppages" taking place, involving planned winter engineering works.

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 to maximise refill where possible. Given the changing situation, boaters are strongly 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
03 December 2025

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 17th November unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in October and November.

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	Startopend, 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