

Reservoir Group	April 2026 Holding	May 2026 Holding	June 2026 Holding	Change in May-June period	Minimum historical* June holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	100.00%	100.00%	98.80%	-1.2%	46.1% (2013)
Oxford & GU	96.10%	85.90%	77.40%	-8.5%	62.7% (2011)
GU South	80.60%	81.90%	81.00%	-0.9%	66.1% (2025)
GU North	94.90%	69.20%	53.10%	-16.1%	31.1% (2025)
Lancaster Canal	98.40%	83.30%	84.60%	1.3%	66% (2020)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	94.30%	76.90%	82.90%	6.0%	40.9% (2025)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	70.10%	61.20%	58.00%	-3.2%	26.9% (2025)
Caldon Canal	92.10%	81.30%	74.90%	-6.4%	48.6% (2025)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	46.60%	37.10%	43.90%	6.8%	20% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	97.10%	96.60%	94.20%	-2.4%	25.2% (2023)
Grantham Canal	99.90%	97.10%	99.60%	2.5%	91.2% (2025)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	79.20%	72.70%	69.60%	-3.1%	31.8% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	92.00%	85.80%	82.80%	-3.0%	73.7% (2011)

* for the purposes of this analysis, historical holdings cover 1998-2026 reservoir holding data, inclusive.

General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, May was showery and changeable through its first three weeks but was ultimately defined by an exceptional period of heat towards the latter half of the month. Overall, it was the 7th warmest May in the Central England Temperature series (from 1659). UK rainfall was 78% of average, with England recording 74% of average. Spring (Mar-May) rainfall was below average across most of the UK, with less than half the average across south-east England, and some localised patches less than a third of average. River flows were in the normal range to exceptionally low across most of the UK.

Ground water levels generally continued to decline with levels in the normal range to below. Soil moisture deficits were above average for almost all regions. Southern and Thames regions recorded the highest May SMDs in series from 1961. Average spring SMDs were the second highest

on record for Southern and Wessex regions after 2025. At month-end, soils at most COSMOS-UK sites in central and southern England were drier than normal to exceptionally dry.

The UK hydrological outlook for June indicates below normal river flows in central and southern England. The forecast for June indicates the chances of a wet or dry month are balanced. Over the next three months, the forecast indicates that near-average rainfall is most likely, although a wet three-month period is more probable than a dry one.

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/2026/5/2026_5_Rainfall_Anomaly_1991-2020.gif

The Trust's Water Resources

We are now a few months into the main boating season and have continued to see decreases across some of our reservoir group holdings due to the reduced rainfall and the increased demands on our network. Some of our reservoir group holdings are lower than normal, 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, later in 2026. A phased refill has commenced in recent weeks, and our engineers are monitoring the reservoir dam carefully as the water levels increase). 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 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 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
23 June 2026

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 15 June unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in April and May.

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