

Reservoir Group	May 2026 Holding	June 2026 Holding	July 2026 Holding	Change in June-July period	Minimum historical* July holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	100.00%	98.80%	83.40%	-15.4%	46.2% (2010)
Oxford & GU	85.90%	77.40%	55.80%	-21.6%	41.5% (2025)
GU South	81.90%	81.00%	72.30%	-8.7%	63.1% (2025)
GU North	69.20%	53.10%	25.80%	-27.3%	21.8% (2025)
Lancaster Canal	83.30%	84.60%	77.80%	-6.8%	50.6% (2018)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	76.90%	82.90%	65.60%	-17.3%	27.9% (2022)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	61.20%	58.00%	45.50%	-12.5%	17% (2025)
Caldon Canal	81.30%	74.90%	58.50%	-16.4%	38.8% (2025)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	37.10%	43.90%	21.00%	-22.9%	13.9% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	96.60%	94.20%	75.50%	-18.7%	26% (2023)
Grantham Canal	97.10%	99.60%	95.40%	-4.2%	88.5% (2006)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	72.70%	69.60%	60.90%	-8.7%	26.8% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	85.80%	82.80%	76.60%	-6.2%	67.6% (2010)

* 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, June was a month of two halves, with the first half experiencing unsettled and relatively cool conditions then transitioning into a hot dry period in the latter half of the month. Despite the rare red warnings for extreme heat issued on three consecutive days, rainfall was above average across the UK overall (117% of average). However, this came with significant regional contrasts, totals exceeded 170% of average across parts of north-west Britain and isolated areas of south-east England. In contrasts rainfall was below average across eastern Britain, with parts of eastern England and north Wales receiving less than 50% of average rainfall. For March to June, rainfall was below average across the UK (94% of average), with above average rainfall confined to north-west UK. River flows were above normal in north-west UK and south Wales but elsewhere were generally normal or below.

Groundwater levels continued their seasonal recession during June and were predominately in the normal range or below across major aquifers by month-end. Soils remained drier than average across much of England at month-end.

The UK hydrological outlook for July indicates normal river flows are likely across southern Wales, and central, southern and eastern England. In northwestern areas river flows are likely to be normal to above normal for Jul. Over the next three months, the forecasts indicate that near average rainfall remains most likely with the potential for large regional variations and an increased chance of a hot 3-month period.

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/2026/6/2026_6_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 Trust's 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
21 July 2026

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 13 July unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in May and June.

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