

## Reservoir Watch November 2021

| Reservoir Group                   | September 2021 holding | October 2021 holding | November 2021 holding | Change in October-November period | Minimum historical* November holding (Year) |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Kennet & Avon Canal               | 82.1%                  | 82.4%                | 80.1%                 | -2.3%                             | 38.5% (2011)                                |
| Oxford & GU                       | 54.7%**                | 50.8%                | 53.0%                 | 2.2%                              | 22.4% (2011)                                |
| GU South                          | 75.4%                  | 72.1%                | 68.5%                 | -3.6%                             | 31.9% (2011)                                |
| GU North                          | 43.6%                  | 53.1%                | 66.0%                 | 12.9%                             | 14.6% (2003)                                |
| Lancaster Canal                   | 59.0%                  | 72.5%                | 72.5%                 | 0.0%                              | 65.0%(2009)                                 |
| Leeds & Liverpool Canal           | 36.1%                  | 32.8%                | 54.6%                 | 21.8%                             | 18.3% (2003)                                |
| Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals | 34.0%                  | 42.8%                | 41.5%                 | -1.3%                             | 18.1% (2003)                                |
| Caldon Canal                      | 48.9%                  | 56.9%                | 87.2%                 | 30.3%                             | 28.9% (2003)                                |
| Huddersfield Narrow Canal         | 43.6%                  | 61.5%                | 99.8%                 | 38.3%                             | 21.0% (2013)                                |
| Chesterfield Canal                | 43.3%                  | 41.8%                | 47.9%                 | 6.1%                              | 31.7% (2013)                                |
| Grantham Canal                    | 81.3%                  | 80.3%                | 82.5%                 | 2.2%                              | 73.2% (2014)                                |
| Birmingham Canal Navigations      | 81.1%                  | 84.6%                | 90.0%                 | 5.4%                              | 14.6% (2011)                                |
| Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union  | 83.2%                  | 85.0%                | 96.1%                 | 11.1%                             | 52.1% (2001)                                |

\* for the purposes of this analysis, historical holdings cover 1998-2021 reservoir holding data, inclusive.

\*\*Some data from week ending Monday 6 September.

### General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, October was generally very typical for mid-Autumn with mild temperatures and unsettled conditions, however the final ten days of the month saw very heavy and persistent rainfall, notably across northwest Britain. This resulted in high monthly rainfall totals and attendant river flow responses, but the relatively dry antecedent conditions decreased the flow response, although there was still some localised flooding. As a result of this rain, river flows were significantly above average across western and southern England. Groundwater levels increased in many boreholes and reservoir stocks increased sharply from the exceptionally low September levels. Consequently, water resources were healthy entering November, with forecast suggesting a continuation of above normal groundwater levels and river flows.

The Met Office rainfall anomaly graphs and maps can be viewed at:  
[https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomalygraphs/2021/2021\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1981-2010.gif](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomalygraphs/2021/2021_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif)

[https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2021/10/2021\\_10\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1981-2010.gif](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2021/10/2021_10_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif)

## The Trust's Water Resources

With the main boating season over, six of the 13 reservoir groups have a holding above 80%, with three above 90%. This is fairly typical for the time of year as the reservoirs begin to recover from the increased demands on canals throughout the boating season.

Three of the five southern reservoir groups experienced increases in holding, most likely due to the heavy rainfall experienced towards the end of the month. The Grand Union North group experienced the greatest increase of 12.9%, followed by the Birmingham Canal Navigations group with an increase of 5.4%, bringing its holding up to 90.0%. The remaining two experienced marginal decreases of 2.3% and 3.6%.

The northern reservoir groups experienced the greatest increases in holding, with four of the groups now at above 80% holding and only one group seeing a decrease. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal group experienced the greatest increase of 38.3% bringing it up to 99.8% holding, followed by the Caldon Canal group and the Leeds & Liverpool Canal group, at 30.3% and 21.8%, respectively. This again reflects the wet conditions experienced across much of the country towards the end of October, allowing the reservoirs to begin to refill. Although Slaithwaite Reservoir (in the Huddersfield Narrow Canal group) is continuing to be held down, it has begun refilling for monitoring purposes. This may explain in part why this reservoir group has seen such a considerable increase in holding.

The Chesterfield Canal group remains at its lowest historical holding due to ongoing engineering works at Harthill, also affecting Pebley, which requires both reservoirs to be held down. 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 November 2021

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 15 November unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in September and October.

### 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   |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Huddersfield Narrow Canal</b>            | Sparth, Slaithwaite & Diggle  |
| <b>Chesterfield Canal</b>                   | Harthill & Pebley   |
| <b>Grantham Canal</b>                       | Knipton & Denton  |
| <b>Birmingham Canal Navigations</b>         | Windmill Pool, Terry's Pool, Engine Pool, Cofton, Upper Bittell, Rotton Park & Chasewater |
| <b>Staffs &amp; Worcs, Shropshire Union</b> | Belvide, Gailey Upper, Gailey Lower & Calf Heath  |