

## Reservoir Watch September 2021

Reservoir Group	July 2021 holding	August 2021 holding	September 2021 holding	Change in August-September period	Minimum historical* September holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	93.4%	81.8%	82.1%	0.3%	41.1% (1998)
Oxford & GU	80.6%	63.5%	54.7%***	-8.8%	32.5% (2011)
GU South	85.7%	77.4%	75.4%	-2.0%	48.9% (2011)
GU North	90.3%	69.5%	43.6%	-25.9%	25.1% (2011)
Lancaster Canal	89.2%	76.1%**	59.0%	-17.1%	44.1% (2018)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	64.3%	58.4%	36.1%	-22.3%	24.3% (2018)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	54.3%	39.9%	34.0%	-5.9%	29.9% (2018)
Caldon Canal	73.1%	60.2%	48.9%	-11.3%	39.7% (2005)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	61.3%	60.6%**	43.6%	-17.0%	17.9% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	62.6%	52.1%	43.3%	-8.8%	38.6% (2020)
Grantham Canal	91.6%	87.8%	81.3%	-6.5%	76.2% (2014)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	90.8%	86.2%	81.1%	-5.1%	17.4% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	88.6%	86.7%	83.2%	-3.5%	51.2% (2010)

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

\*\* Data from week ending Monday 9 August.

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

### General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, despite being dry overall August was a very cloudy, unsettled month. Much of the UK experienced below average rainfall of 75% of the long-term average, especially in parts of eastern and central England. In contrast, south-east England saw above average rainfall. As a result, soils in the south of England were wetter than average, yet drier than average elsewhere. River flows were generally below average across most of the UK but exceptionally so in Wales and northern and central England. Seasonal recession of groundwater levels continued, remaining in the normal range or above. Following quite a dry summer, reservoir stocks and river flows (especially in parts of the north and west) are notably or exceptionally low. Vigilance will therefore be required in managing water resources throughout the autumn months.

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/2021/8/2021\\_8\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1981-2010.gif](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2021/8/2021_8_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif)

## The Trust's Water Resources

With the main boating season now past its peak, only four of the 13 reservoir groups have a holding of above 80%, with none above 90%. This is very typical for the time of year due to the increased canal demands.

The drier conditions experienced across most of the UK throughout August are apparent in all reservoir groups; only one group in the south recorded an increase in holding of 0.3% (Kennet & Avon Canal group). In the south, the Grand Union North reservoir group recorded the greatest decrease in holding of 25.9%. This group consists solely of Saddington reservoir. The Oxford and Grand Union group saw a substantial decrease of 8.8% however this is due in part to continued works in the interest of safety being undertaken at Sulby reservoir, impacting on the neighbouring Welford reservoir, and causing both to be drawn down to facilitate the works.

Northern reservoirs saw greater decreases in holding, reflecting the drier weather experienced in much of the north of England as well as their supply being used to feed the canals. The Leeds and Liverpool Canal group saw the largest decrease of 22.3%, followed by the Huddersfield Narrow Canal group at 17.0%. 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  
22 September 2021

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

### 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

<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