



# Canal & River Trust

## Reservoir Watch August 2017

Reservoir group	June 2017 holding	July 2017 holding	Aug 2017 holding	Change in July - Aug Period	Minimum historical* Aug holding (Year)
<b>Kennet &amp; Avon Canal</b>	81.6%	82.6%	75.1%	-7.5%	43.4% (2002)
<b>Oxford &amp; GU</b>	80.8%	64.0%	57.1%	-6.9%	38.6% (2011)
<b>GU South</b>	89.6%	78.0%	72.7%	-5.3%	60.2% (2011)
<b>GU North</b>	80.1%	54.1%	41.5%	-12.6%	24.8% (2011)
<b>Lancaster Canal</b>	74.8%	57.6%	58.1%	+0.5%	58.1% (2017)
<b>Leeds &amp; Liverpool Canal</b>	71.2%	58.8%	72.1%	+13.3%	23.1% (2010)
<b>Peak Forest &amp; Macclesfield Canal</b>	84.3%	67.7%	74.3%	+6.6%	50.0% (2010)
<b>Caldon Canal</b>	76.2%	65.1%	65.4%	+0.3%	50.4% (2008)
<b>Huddersfield Narrow Canal</b>	88.5%	67.9%	61.8%	-6.1%	38.4% (2011)
<b>Chesterfield Canal</b>	90.9%	74.2%	78.0%	+3.8%	61.4% (2005)
<b>Grantham Canal</b>	99.9%	98.7%	95.0%	-3.7%	82.1% (2006)
<b>Birmingham Canal Navigations</b>	71.8%	63.0%	60.8%	-2.2%	22.0% (2011)
<b>Staffs &amp; Worcs, Shropshire Union</b>	93.2%	89.7%	88.6%	-1.1%	58.2% (2010)

\* for the purposes of this analysis, historical holdings cover 1998-2017 reservoir holding data, inclusive.

According to the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, July was an unsettled month and was very wet in some areas, particularly in southern England. A very warm spell with thunderstorms between 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> brought flash flooding across southern Britain, with widespread reports of transport disruption and some property damage. The second half of the month continued to be unsettled across the country, with heavy, persistent rainfalls and further flash flooding (e.g. in Gloucester on the 25<sup>th</sup>). Rainfall totals for July were above average (with 142% for the UK as a whole). Southern England and parts of northern England, Wales and the Midlands received substantially more: 170% of average. It was the second highest June-July rainfall for Scotland and the fifth highest for the UK as a whole in records dating back from 1910.

The summer (June-August) of 2017 has been very wet so far, adding to a cluster of wet June-July rainfall totals in the last decade (including 2007 and 2012, both significantly wetter than 2017; these three totals are in the top five in a record from 1910). After the period of prolonged dry weather that had taken place dating back to early autumn 2016, the wet spell has affected the national-scale hydrological situation, albeit much less dramatically than in 2012 when a spell of exceptionally heavy rainfall signalled the end to a two-year drought period.

July groundwater levels were notably low across much of the Chalk. While the July rainfall could have a delayed influence on late summer groundwater levels, it is increasingly likely that the autumn recharge season will begin from a below normal baseline in parts of the south, with potential implications for the longer-term water resources situation across many part of the country.

The Met Office rainfall anomaly graphs and maps can be viewed at:  
[http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomalygraphs/2017/2017\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1981-2010.gif](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomalygraphs/2017/2017_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif)  
[http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2017/7/2017\\_7\\_Rainfall\\_Anomaly\\_1981-2010.gif](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/pub/data/weather/uk/climate/anomacts/2017/7/2017_7_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif)

Due to the wet spell, most reservoir groups saw relatively small decreases in holdings for the time of year and some groups experienced a net refill over the period since the last report. There was a noticeable difference between the north and the south. The largest decreases in holding were across the southern groups with the GU North (-13%), GU South (-12%), Kennet & Avon (-8%) and the Oxford & GU (-7%). Most northern groups, for instance the Leeds & Liverpool Canal and the Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canal saw increases of +13% and +7% respectively.

After the prolonged dry weather only the Lancaster Canal group is currently at a historical low (as the table above shows) based on reservoir water level records going back nearly two decades but this is due to the planned drawdown of Killington Reservoir for engineering works.

The Trusts Water Management team continue to carefully monitor the usage of each reservoir and advise local operational staff on the optimum feed quantities to ensure efficient use of the water available and maximise use of back pumps (where they are installed) to recirculate water used by locks. Some localised overnight lock restrictions have been put in place to minimise the risk of water loss at key lock flights – details of these can be found on the Trusts website.

As always, boaters are encouraged to do their bit by using water resources wisely when navigating the Trusts waterways, taking care to share locks where possible, ensure lock paddles are properly closed after use and report any water problems to the nearest local Waterway office.

Boaters are advised to sign up for email notifications of any waterway restrictions or closures at:  
<http://canalrivertrust.org.uk/notices>

**Issued by:**

Water Management team, Canal & River Trust  
17 August 2017

Reservoir data presented is from week ending Monday 14 August unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in June and July.

**Annex 1 – Canal & River Trust reservoir groups**

Group name	Reservoirs within group
Kennet & Avon Canal	Crofton [ <i>this is a principally 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, Slipperhill, Whitemoor & Winterburn
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canal	Sutton, Bosley, Todd Brook & Combs
Caldon Canal	Rudyard, Stanley, Knypersley
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	Sparth, Slaithwaite, Diggle
Chesterfield Canal	Harthill and 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

