

Reservoir Watch January 2022

Reservoir Group	November 2021 holding	December 2021 holding	January 2022 holding	Change in December-January period	Minimum historical* January holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	80.1%	81.9%	88%	6.1%	63.2% (2012)
Oxford & GU	53.0%	71.8%	94.5%	22.7%	32.2% (2012)
GU South	68.5%	67.0%	76.4%	9.4%	41.6% (2012)
GU North	66.0%	89.7%	100.0%	10.3%	27.5% (2012)
Lancaster Canal	72.5%	72.5%	72.5%	0.0%	97.4% (2019)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	54.6%	70.0%	81.9%	11.9%	73.4% (2004)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	41.5%	48.4%	44.1%	-4.3%	44.1% (2022)
Caldon Canal	87.2%	81.4%	77.3%	-4.1%	72.6% (2019)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	99.8%	100.0%	74.0%	-26.0%	21.0% (2014)
Chesterfield Canal	47.9%	50.2%	59.3%	9.1%	53.7% (2021)
Grantham Canal	82.5%	93.5%	93.0%	-0.5%	81.3% (2012)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	90.0%	92.9%	97.3%	4.4%	23.4% (2012)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	96.1%	87.4%	87.8%	0.4%	53.9% (2002)

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

General Conditions

According to the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, the weather in December was 'typical' for the time of year. Rainfall in the UK was near average with drier conditions proceeding in parts of northern and southern England. As a result, river flows were within the normal range as well as borehole and reservoir stocks. The water resource situation remains healthy, and the latest outlook suggests normal rainfall and river flows in the coming 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/anomacts/2021/12/2021_12_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif

The Trust's Water Resources

As a result of the average rainfall across the UK, seven of the 13 reservoir groups have a holding above 80%, with three above 90%. This is typical for the time of year as the reservoirs begin to recover from the demands on canals throughout the previous boating season.

In the South, all the reservoir groups experienced an increase in holding, with the Oxford & GU experiencing the highest increase of 22.7%. This is most likely due to the increase in rainfall compared to the last two months (November-December). During this period rainfall rates within Southern England regions recorded around half the average. Excluding the GU South, all southern reservoir groups are now above 80% of their holding.

Four out of eight northern reservoir groups registered an increase in holding; the Leeds & Liverpool experienced the largest increase in holding of 11.9% followed by 9.1% in the Chesterfield canal and 0.4% in the Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union canal groups. The Lancaster Canal group (Killington reservoir) remained the same at 72.5%. Four northern sites recorded a decrease in holding. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal had the largest decrease in holding (-26%), this is partly due Slaitwaite being drawn down for a series of leak tests. The Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals is at its lowest historical holding due to ongoing engineering works at Bosley and Toddbrook reservoirs.

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
27 January 2022

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 17 January unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in October and November.

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
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	Sparth, Slaitwaite & 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