

Reservoir Watch July 2022

Reservoir Group	May 2022 Holding	June 2022 Holding	July 2022 Holding	Change in June - July period	Minimum historical* July holding (Year)
Kennet & Avon Canal	78.4%	77.2%	76.9%	-0.3%	55.3% (2011)
Oxford & GU	92.3%	87.7%	72.9%	-14.8%	55.9% (2011)
GU South	90.3%	82.8%	73.1%	-9.7%	73.1% (2022)
GU North	96.9%	85.6%	65.5%	-20.1%	34.2% (2011)
Lancaster Canal	93.3%	95.9%	91.4%	-4.5%	50.6% (2018)
Leeds & Liverpool Canal	64.8%	48.0%	27.2%	-20.8%	27.2% (2022)
Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals	39.6%	31.4%	26.3%	-5.1%	26.3% (2022)
Caldon Canal	79.9%	65.2%	49.6%	-15.6%	49.6% (2022)
Huddersfield Narrow Canal	53.1%	41.2%	30.9%	-10.3%	13.8% (2013)
Chesterfield Canal	60.5%	51.3%	37.7%	-13.6%	37.7% (2022)
Grantham Canal	93.1%	92.2%	90.5%	-1.7%	88.5% (2006)
Birmingham Canal Navigations	96.0%	92.7%	86.8%	-5.9%	27.0% (2011)
Staffs & Worcs, Shropshire Union	85.9%	85.0%	83.8%	-1.2%	67.6% (2010)

* 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, this June, the UK has recorded above average temperatures and below average rainfall. In total, the UK rainfall was 77% of the June average. Large deficits were recorded in eastern areas of the UK where in some areas, less than half of the June average rainfall was recorded. River flows were mainly in the normal or below normal range with notable low flows in the South and East. Groundwater levels have reduced in all aquifers reflecting the prolonged period of below average rainfall. Further, reservoir stocks have continued to fall with noteworthy minimums in Wales. The current outlook is favouring a continuation of below average rainfall, river flows and groundwater levels.

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/2022/6/2022_6_Rainfall_Anomaly_1981-2010.gif

The Trust's Water Resources

With the main boating season underway, four out of the 13 reservoir groups have a holding above 80%, with two above 90%.

In the south, all reservoir groups recorded a decrease in holding, the largest decrease was in the GU North (-20.1%) which is due to continued lack of rainfall and increased reservoir usage. Reductions are followed by The Oxford and GU (-14.8%), GU South (-9.7%), Birmingham canal navigation (-5.9%) and Kennet and Avon (-0.3%).

In the north, eight out of eight reservoir groups recorded a decrease in holding. The Leeds & Liverpool recorded the largest decrease in holding (-20.8%). Engineering works are ongoing at Barrowford reservoir, as such this reservoir is not available to balance resources to supply the Leeds & Liverpool West.

The Caldon Canal follows with -15.6%, this reduction is due to the Caldon Canal remaining as the only source to support the Trent & Mersey. The Chesterfield Canal has reduced by -13.6%, reservoir recovery has been limited as Pebley reservoir is currently held down and Harthill reservoir is being drawn down ahead of engineering works planned for later in 2022. The Huddersfield Narrow Canal has reduced by -10.3%, followed by the Peak Forest & Macclesfield Canals (-5.1%). The Peak Forest and Macclesfield is currently at its lowest historical holding (26.3%) and is closed until sufficient rainfall is received. This is due to below average rainfall and engineering works at Toddbrook reservoir which requires it to be held down. In addition, Bosley Reservoir has only 23.9% holding and has received very little recharge following the completion of the works during early March. Finally, Lancaster has reduced by -4.5% and the Grantham canal by -1.7%.

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
01 August 2022

Reservoir data presented is from the week ending Monday 18 July unless stated, along with data from the nearest comparable date in March and April.

Please note, the Jan-April data for the L&L reservoir group was slightly inaccurate due to a technical issue with updating the reporting.

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