

Monthly water situation report: Wessex Area

1 Summary - October 2025

Following the preceding wet September, October was a slightly drier month. An average of 88mm of rain, 88% of the long term average (LTA) fell across Wessex during October. Despite September, this has been the fifth driest 8 month period (March to October) since records began in 1871. During October, most rain fell during the latter half of the month. Soil moisture deficit (SMD) decreased through most of October apart from a brief interlude of rising SMD during the first half of the month. Monthly mean flows recorded across Wessex in October were largely normal or below normal. Daily mean flows in October peaked during the latter half of the month. Most groundwater sites reported notably or exceptionally low levels at the end of October. Overall reservoir levels for Wessex water were approximately 33% capacity at the end of October while for Bristol Water, levels were approximately 34% capacity.

1.1 Rainfall

An average of 88mm of rain fell across Wessex in October (88% of the LTA). Despite September being wet, this has been the fifth driest 8 month period (March to October) since records began in 1871. Most days in the first half of October were dry excluding between 2 and 3 October when 21mm fell across Wessex. The wettest day of the month was 19 October with an average of 19mm of rain across Wessex (21% of rain during October). In total 75% of the month's rain fell during the latter half of the month between 18 and 31 October. The highest relative rainfall was recorded in the Lower Hampshire Avon which received 116mm of rain (114% of the LTA). The lowest relative rainfall was recorded in the Brue which received 77mm (84% of the LTA). Overall, rainfall was normal in all hydrological areas of Wessex in October.

Over the past 3 months, all hydrological areas in Wessex have received normal rainfall except for the West Somerset Streams which received below normal rainfall. Over the past 6 months, most areas to the north of Wessex received below normal rainfall while most areas to the west of Wessex received notably low rainfall. Four areas to the south of Wessex have received normal rainfall over the past 6 months. Over the past 12 months, most hydrological areas to the south and west of Wessex received below normal rainfall while most areas to the north of Wessex received notably low rainfall.

1.2 Soil moisture

SMD in Wessex initially decreased in response to rain on 2 and 3 October. Following this SMD increased slightly until the middle of the month. From the middle of October, SMD decreased for the remainder of the month. Across most hydrological areas in Wessex, SMD was in the

range of 41mm to 70mm at the end of October. For all but three hydrological areas, SMD was between 6mm and 25mm greater than the LTA.

1.3 River flows

In October, most flow sites in Wessex recorded either normal or below normal monthly mean flows. The only exceptions were the Dorset Stour at Throop and Wylfe at South Newton which recorded notably and exceptionally low monthly mean flows respectively. Daily mean flows for most sites across Wessex peaked during the latter half of October in response to the rain from 19 October.

1.4 Groundwater levels

At the end of October, the majority of groundwater sites in Wessex reported either notably or exceptionally low groundwater levels. Chitterne Down (monitoring the Chalk) and Didmarton (monitoring the Inferior Oolite) were the only sites to report below normal groundwater levels at the end of October. Allington (monitoring the Great Oolite) was the only site to report normal groundwater levels. All sites which reported exceptionally low groundwater levels at the end of October were monitoring the Chalk aquifer. For the majority of sites in Wessex including all those monitoring the Chalk, groundwater levels continued to decrease throughout most of October. At faster responding sites such as Didmarton and Over Compton (monitoring the Bridport Sand), groundwater levels rose slightly towards the end of October.

1.5 Reservoir stocks

Both Wessex Water and Bristol Water reservoir levels slightly decreased during October. The combined levels at the end of the month for Wessex Water were approximately 33% capacity while for Bristol Water, combined levels were approximately 34% capacity. For Wessex Water, this is notably lower than this time last year while for Bristol Water, this is only slightly lower than last year.

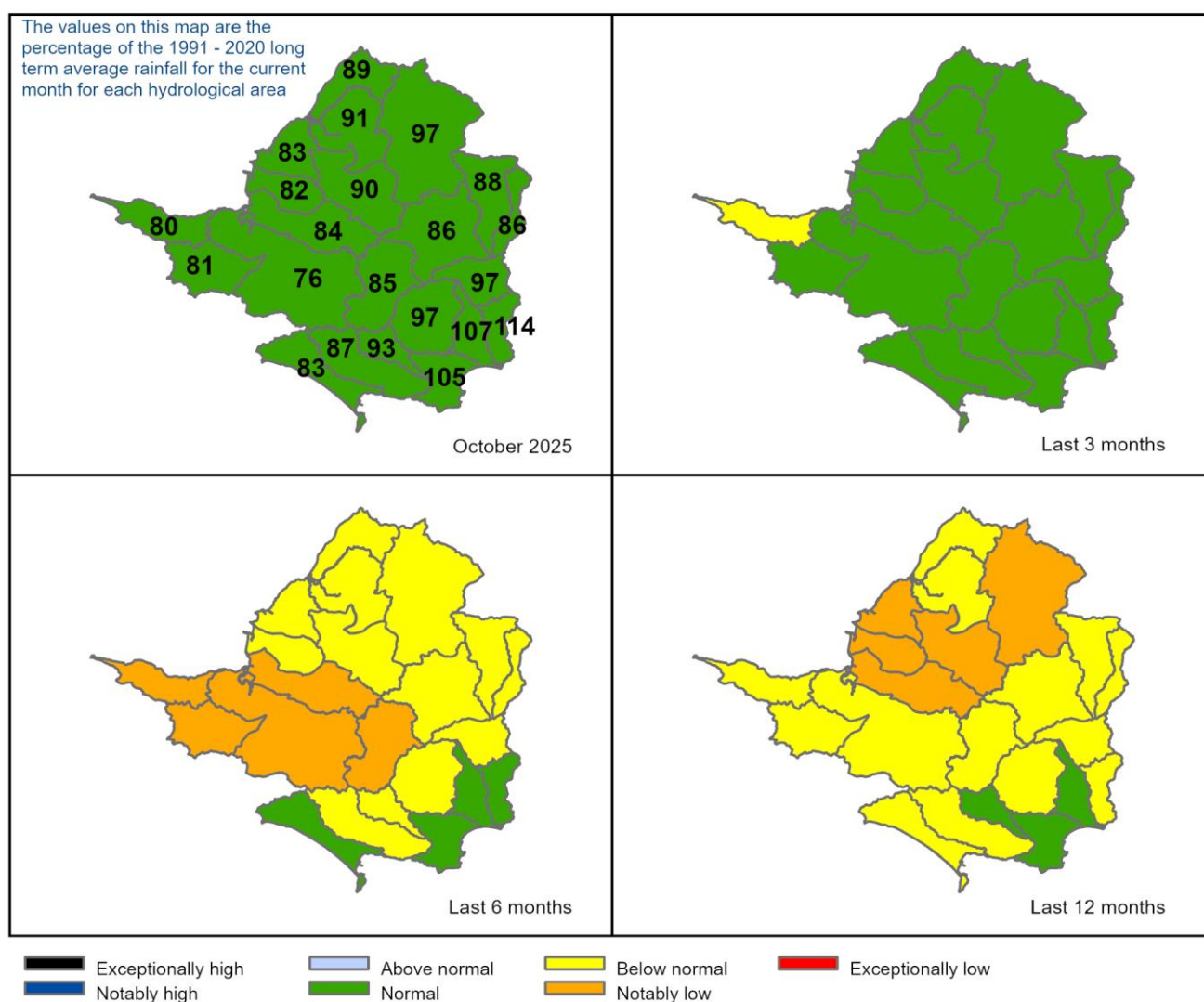
Author: Wessex Hydrology, Hydrology.Wessex@environment-agency.gov.uk

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2 Rainfall

2.1 Rainfall map

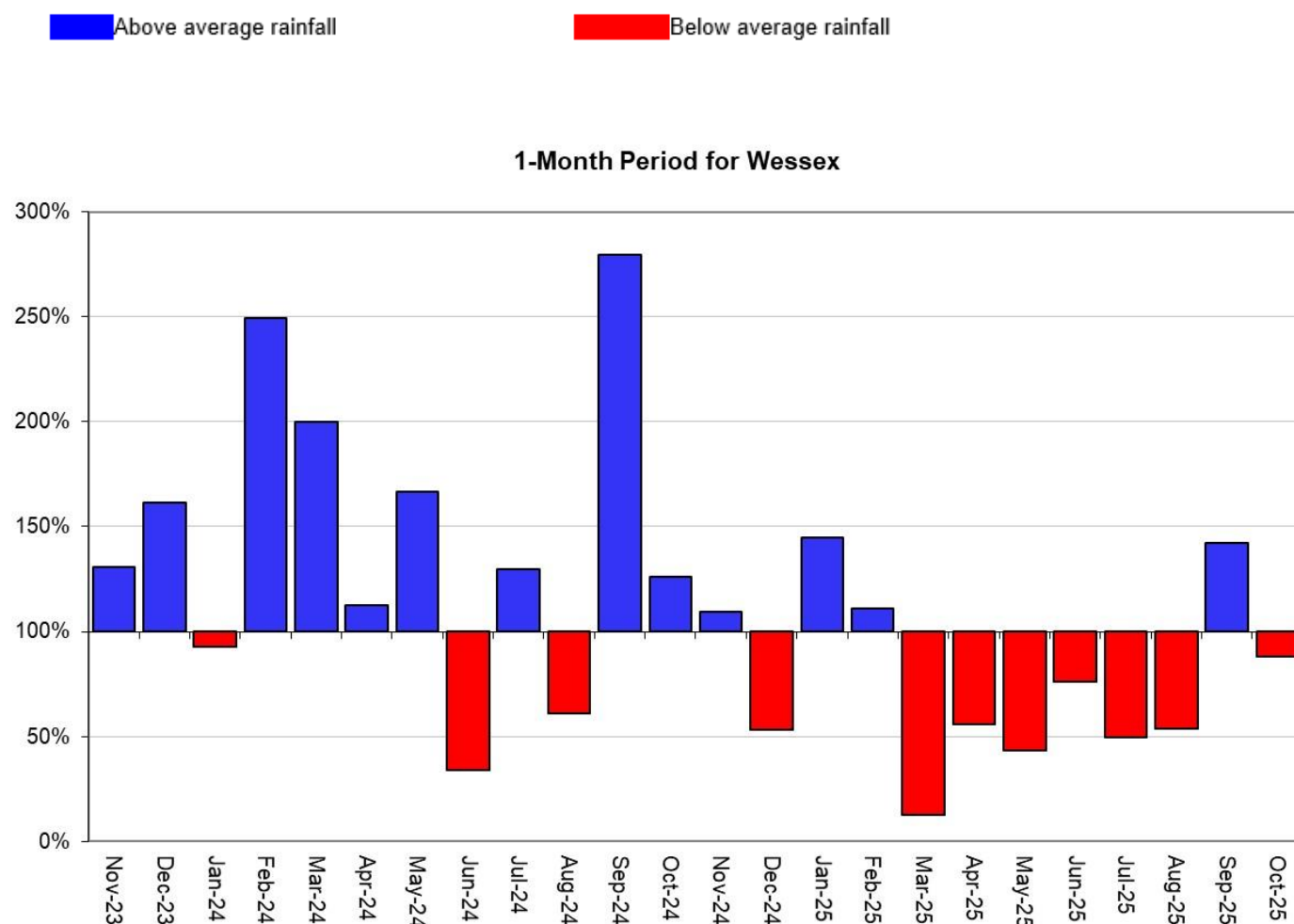
Figure 2.1: Total rainfall for hydrological areas for the current month (up to 31 October 2025), the last 3 months, the last 6 months, and the last 12 months, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic totals between 1991 and 2020. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



Rainfall data for October 2023 onwards, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2025). Rainfall data prior to October 2023, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2025).

2.2 Rainfall charts

Figure 2.2: Monthly rainfall totals for the past 24 months as a percentage of the 1991 to 2020 long term average for each region and for England.

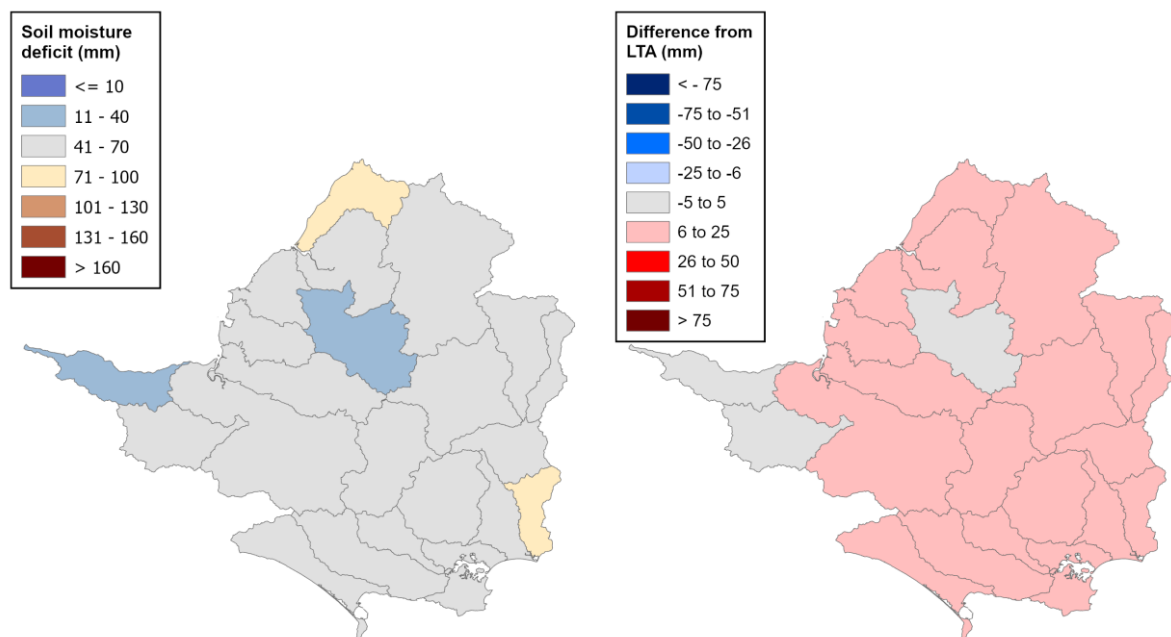


Rainfall data for October 2023 onwards, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, 100024198, 2025). Rainfall data prior to October 2023, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2025).

3 Soil moisture deficit

3.1 Soil moisture deficit map

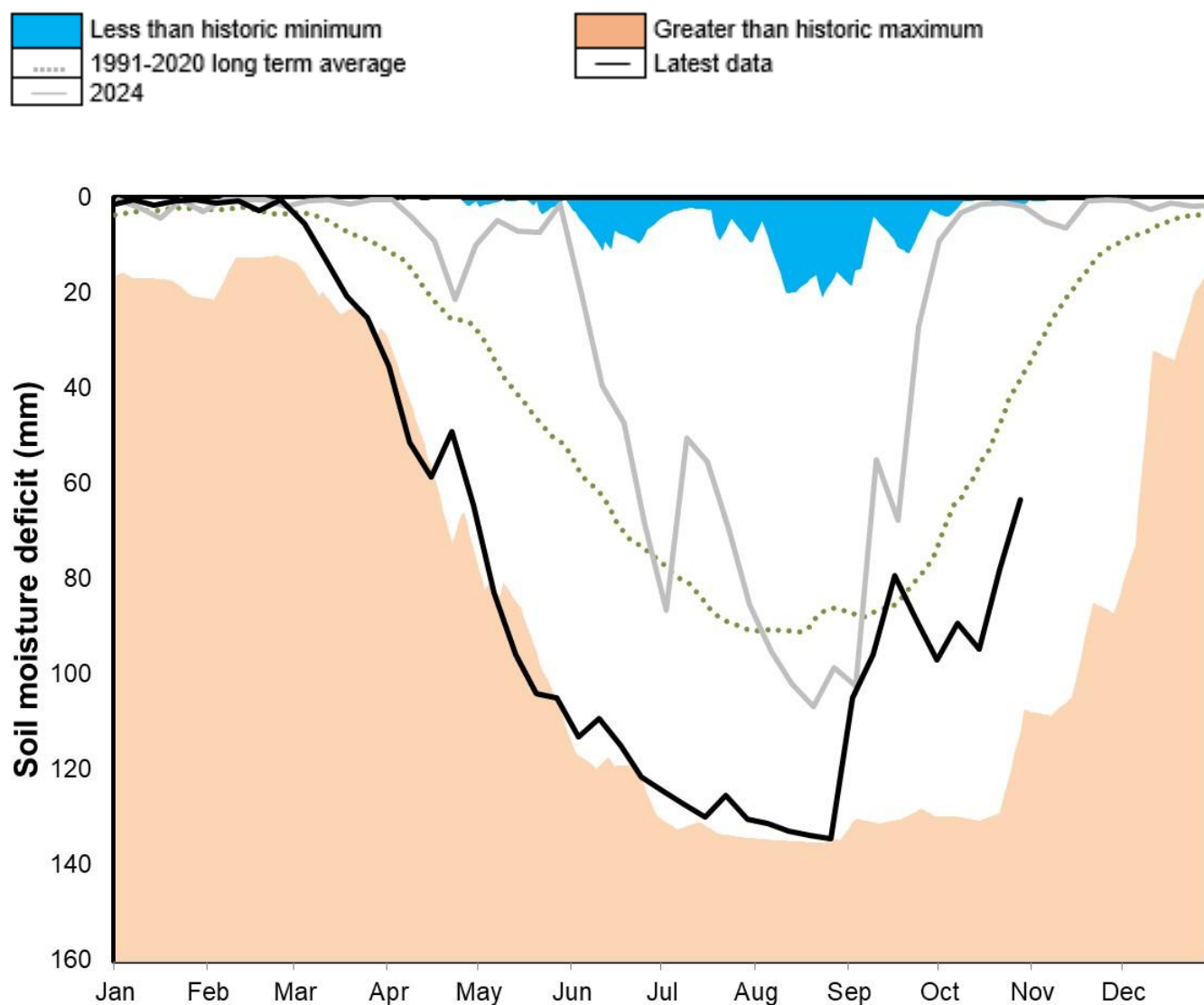
Figure 3.1: Soil moisture deficits for weeks ending 31 October 2025. Shows the difference (mm) of the actual soil moisture deficit from the 1991 to 2020 long term average soil moisture deficits. MORECS data for real land use.



(Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2025). All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2025.

3.2 Soil moisture deficit charts

Figure 3.2: Latest soil moisture deficit compared to previous year, maximum, minimum, and 1991 to 2020 long term average. Weekly MORECS data for real land use.



(Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2025). All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100024198, 2025

4 River flows

4.1 River flows map

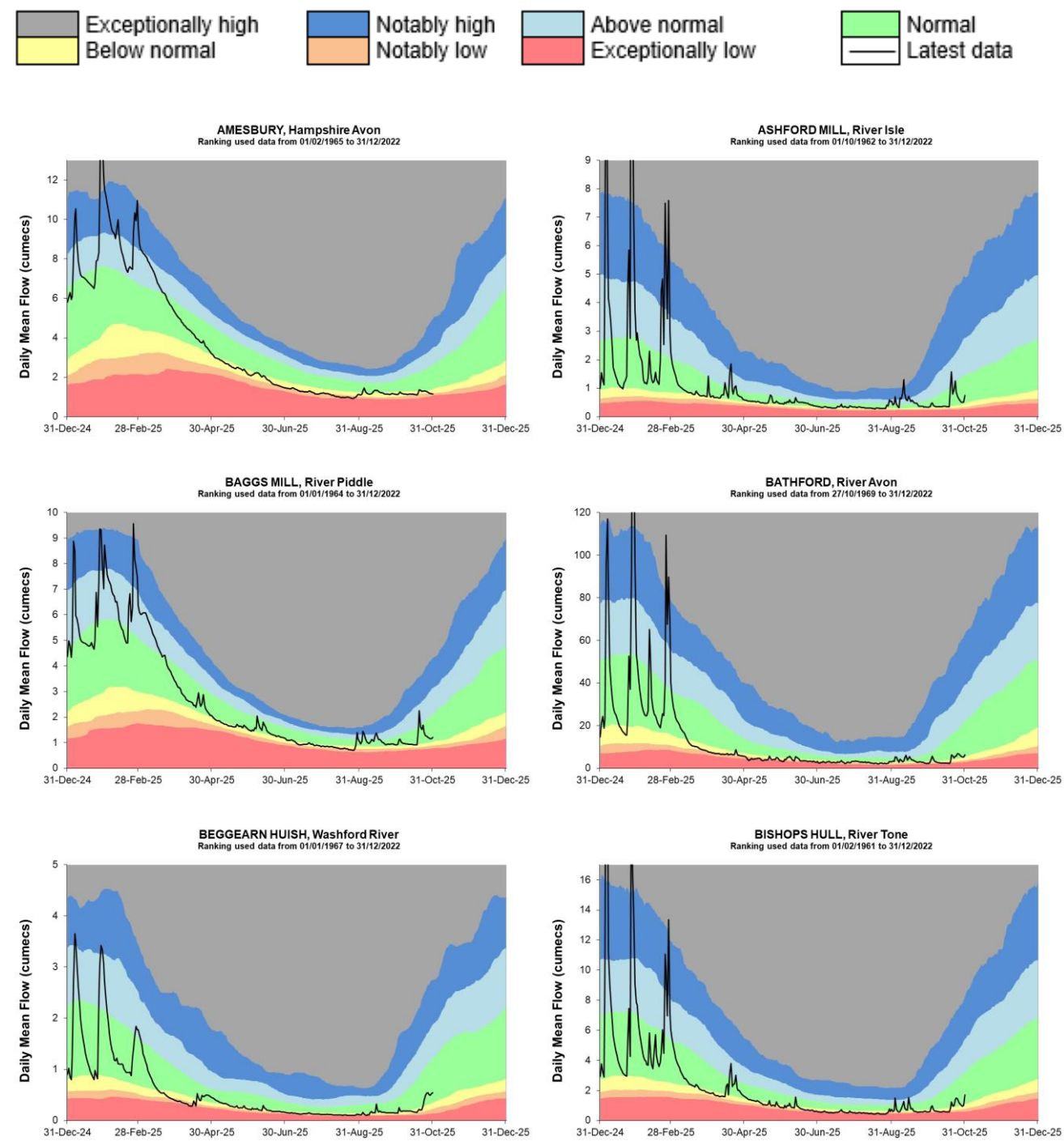
Figure 4.1: Monthly mean river flow for indicator sites for October 2025, expressed as a percentage of the respective long term average and classed relative to an analysis of historic October monthly means Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



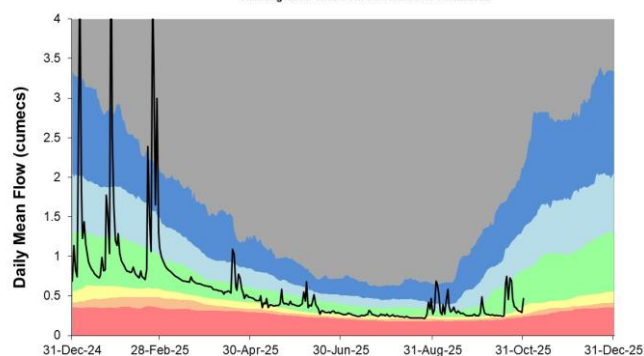
(Source: Environment Agency). Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2025. The Stour at Throop should be treated with caution and the Hampshire Avon at Knapp Mill is omitted due to data issues.

4.2 River flow charts

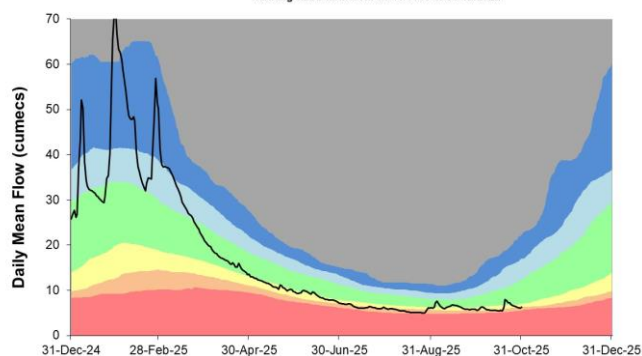
Figure 4.2: Daily mean river flow for index sites over the past year, compared to an analysis of historic daily mean flows.



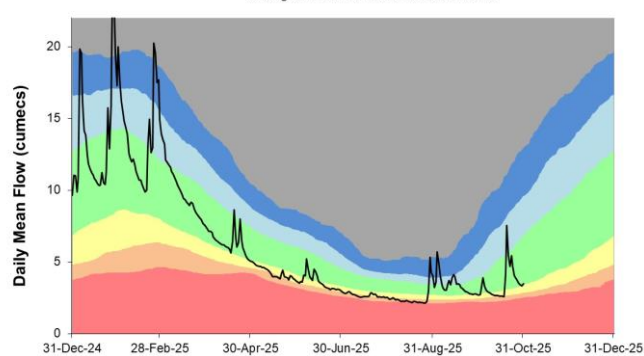
BRIDPORTEAST BRIDGE, River Asker
Ranking used data from 01/03/1996 to 31/12/2022



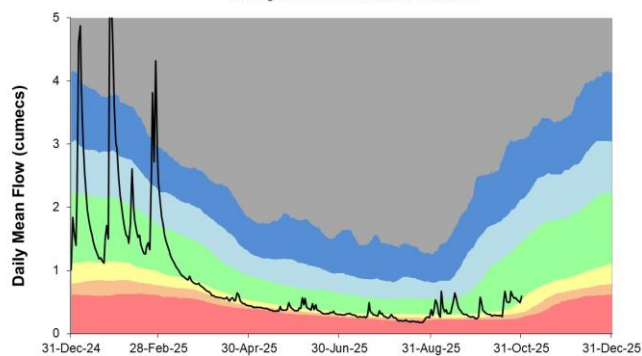
EAST MILLS COMBINED, Hampshire Avon
Ranking used data from 01/11/1965 to 31/12/2022



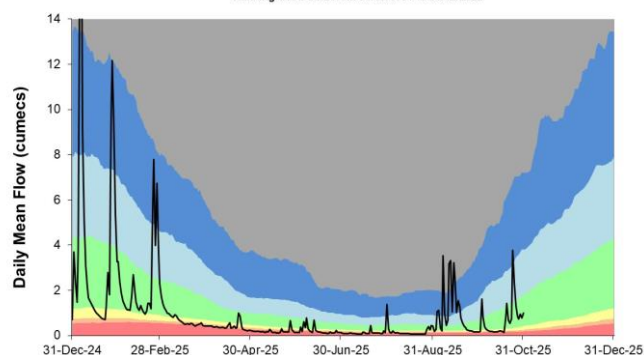
EAST STOKES COMBINED, Dorset Frome
Ranking used data from 01/10/1965 to 31/12/2022



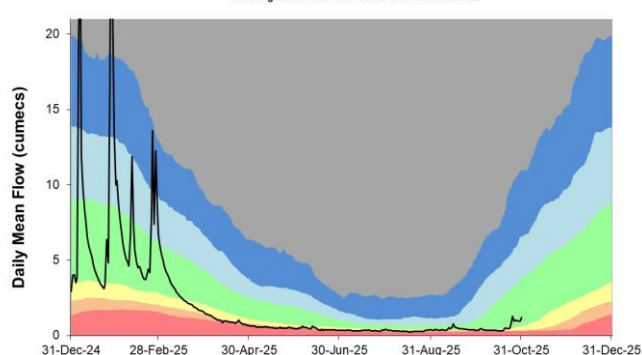
FENNY CASTLE, River Sheppey
Ranking used data from 01/01/1964 to 31/12/2022



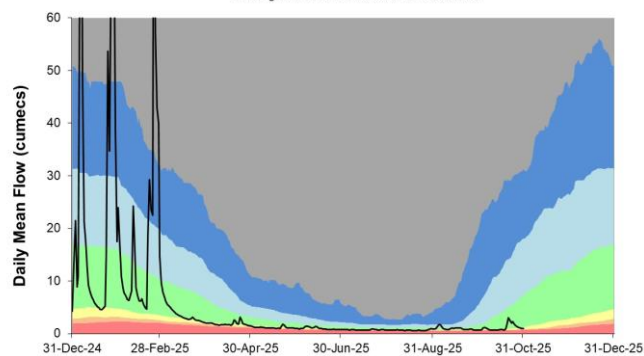
FRENCHAY, Bristol Frome
Ranking used data from 01/09/1961 to 31/12/2022



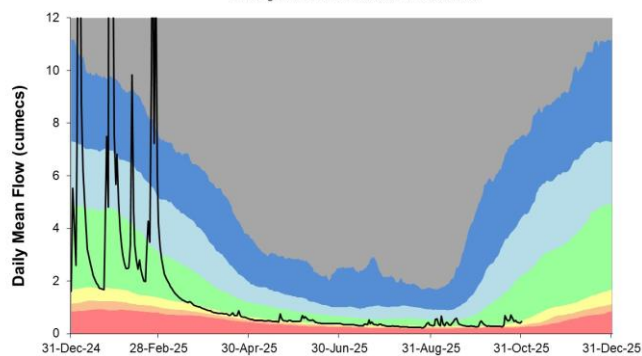
GREAT SOMERFORD, River Avon
Ranking used data from 16/12/1963 to 31/12/2022

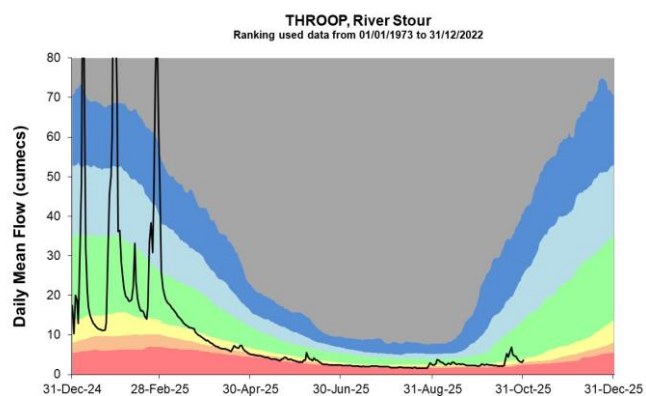
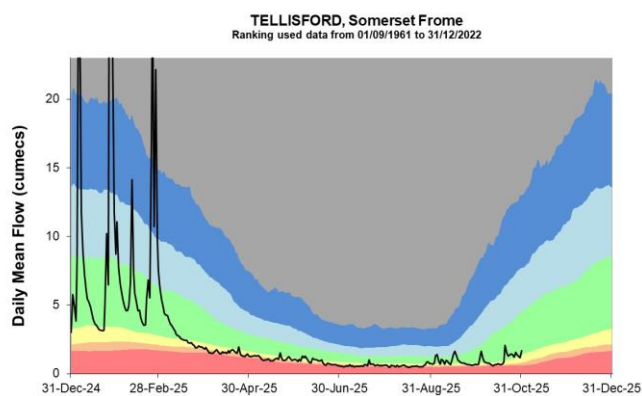
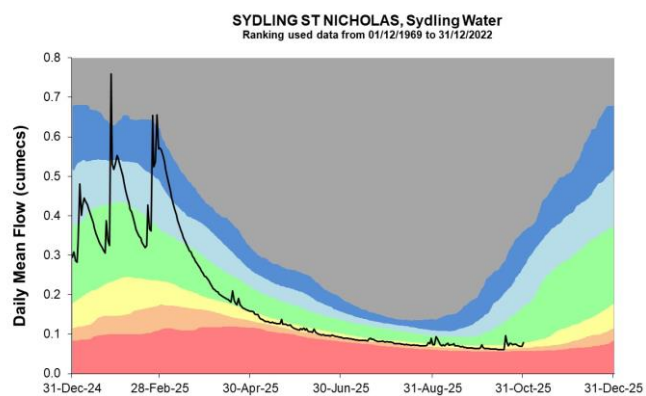
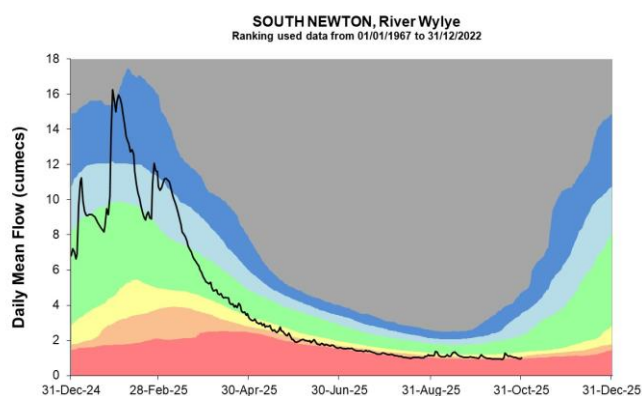
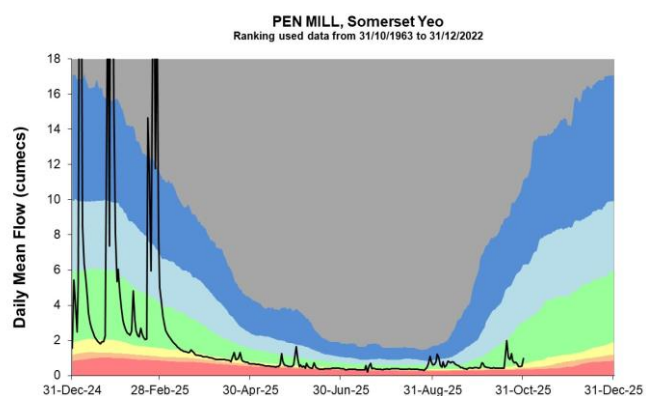


HAMMOON, River Stour
Ranking used data from 01/03/1968 to 31/12/2022



LOVINGTON, River Brue
Ranking used data from 01/10/1964 to 31/12/2022



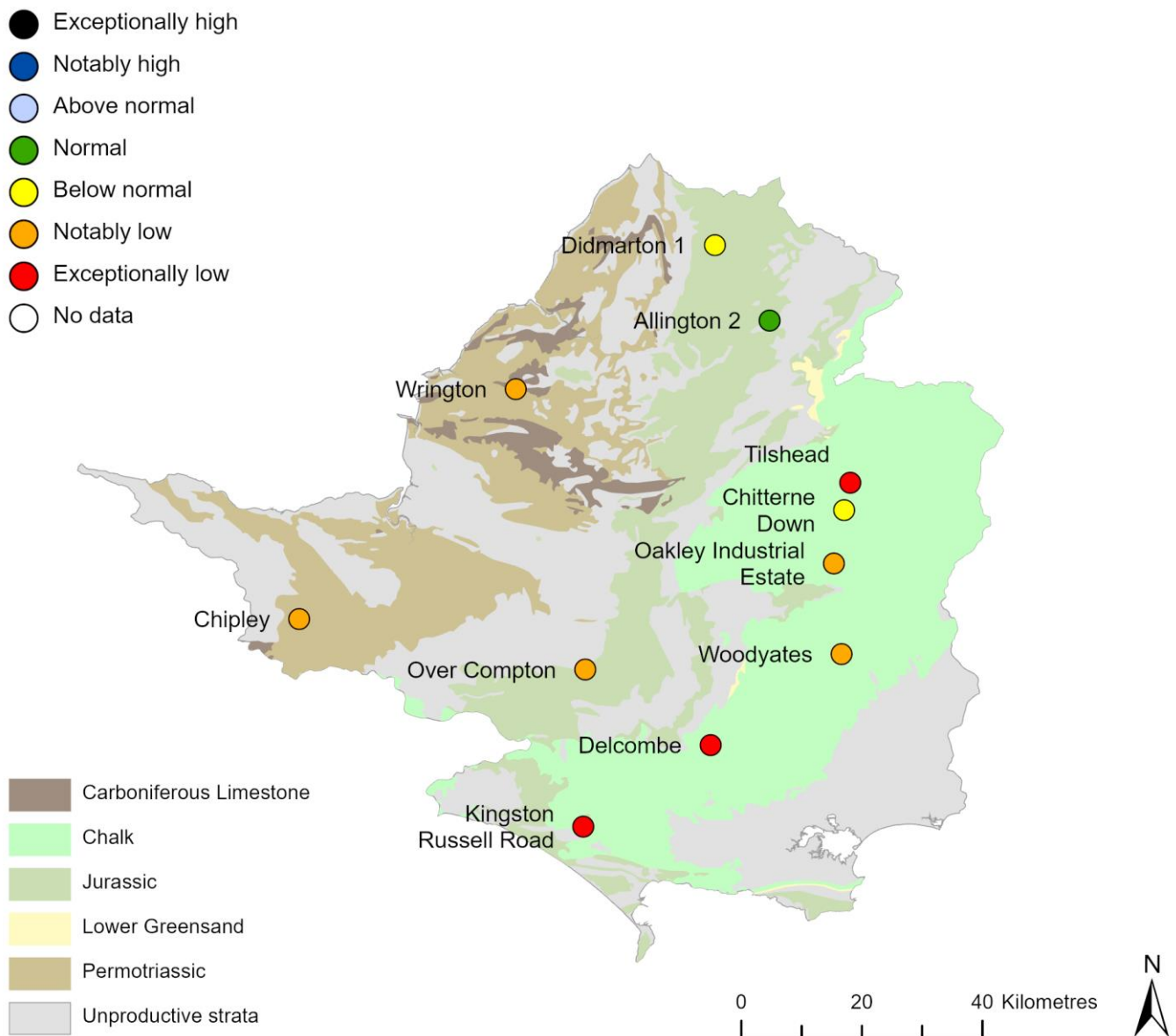


Source: Environment Agency, 2025. The Stour at Throop should be treated with caution and the Hampshire Avon at Knapp Mill is omitted due to data issues.

Groundwater levels

4.3 Groundwater levels map

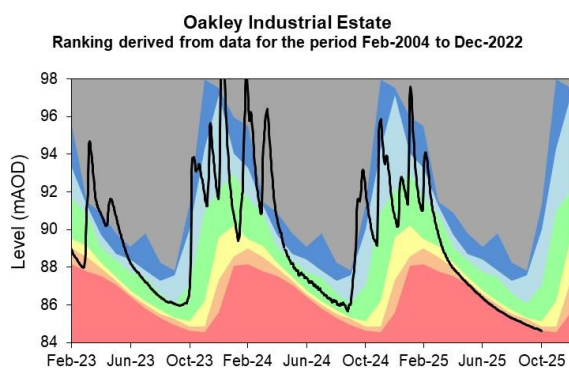
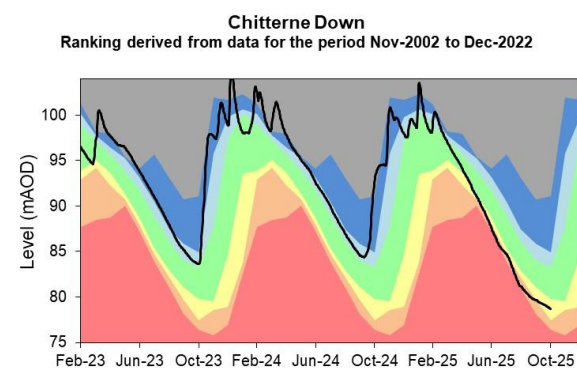
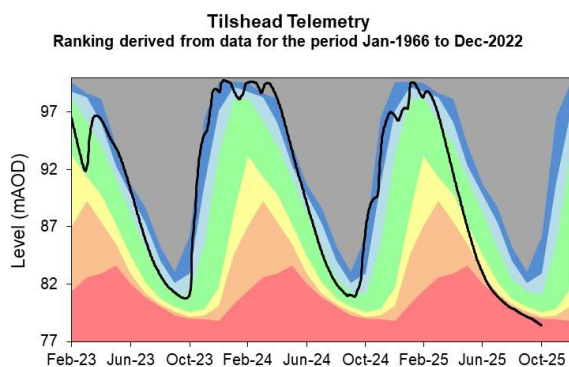
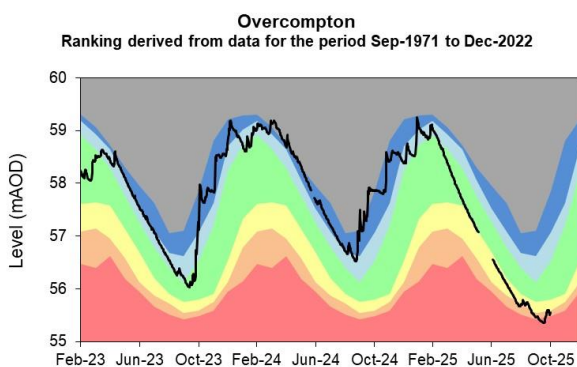
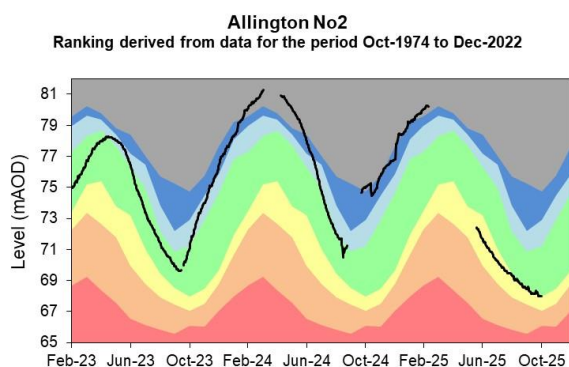
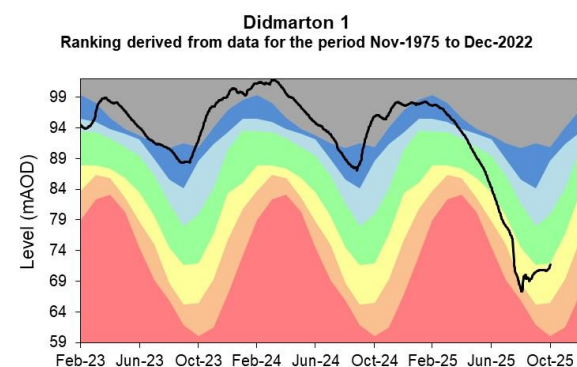
Figure 0.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of October 2025, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic October levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

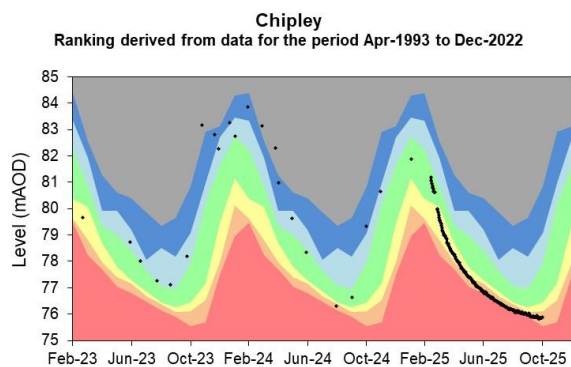
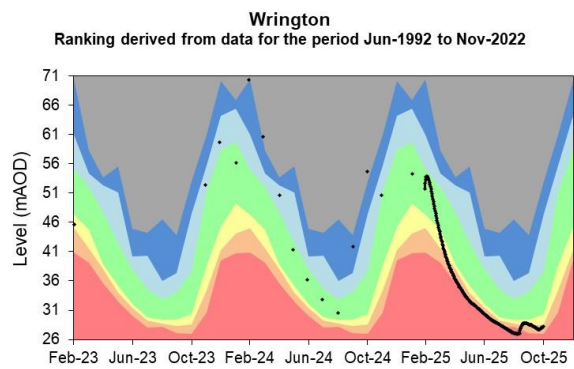
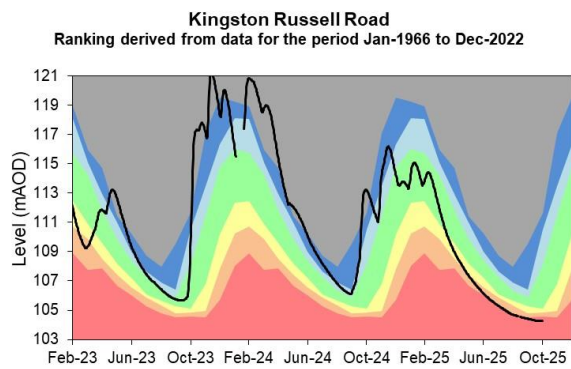
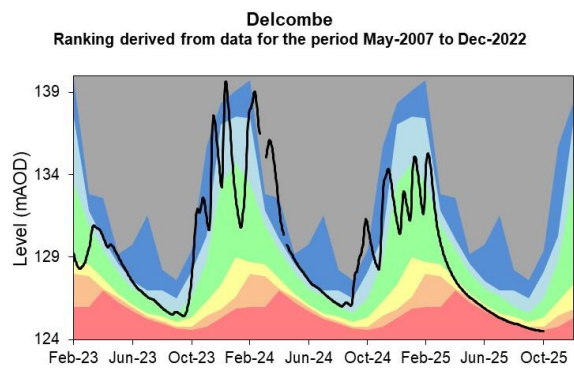
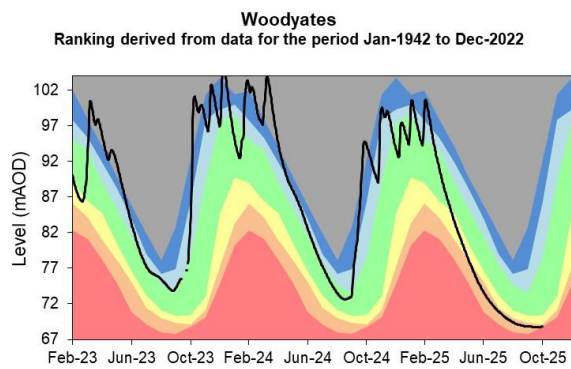


(Source: Environment Agency). Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS copyright NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2025.

4.4 Groundwater level charts

Figure 0.2: End of month groundwater levels at index groundwater level sites for major aquifers. 34 months compared to an analysis of historic end of month levels.

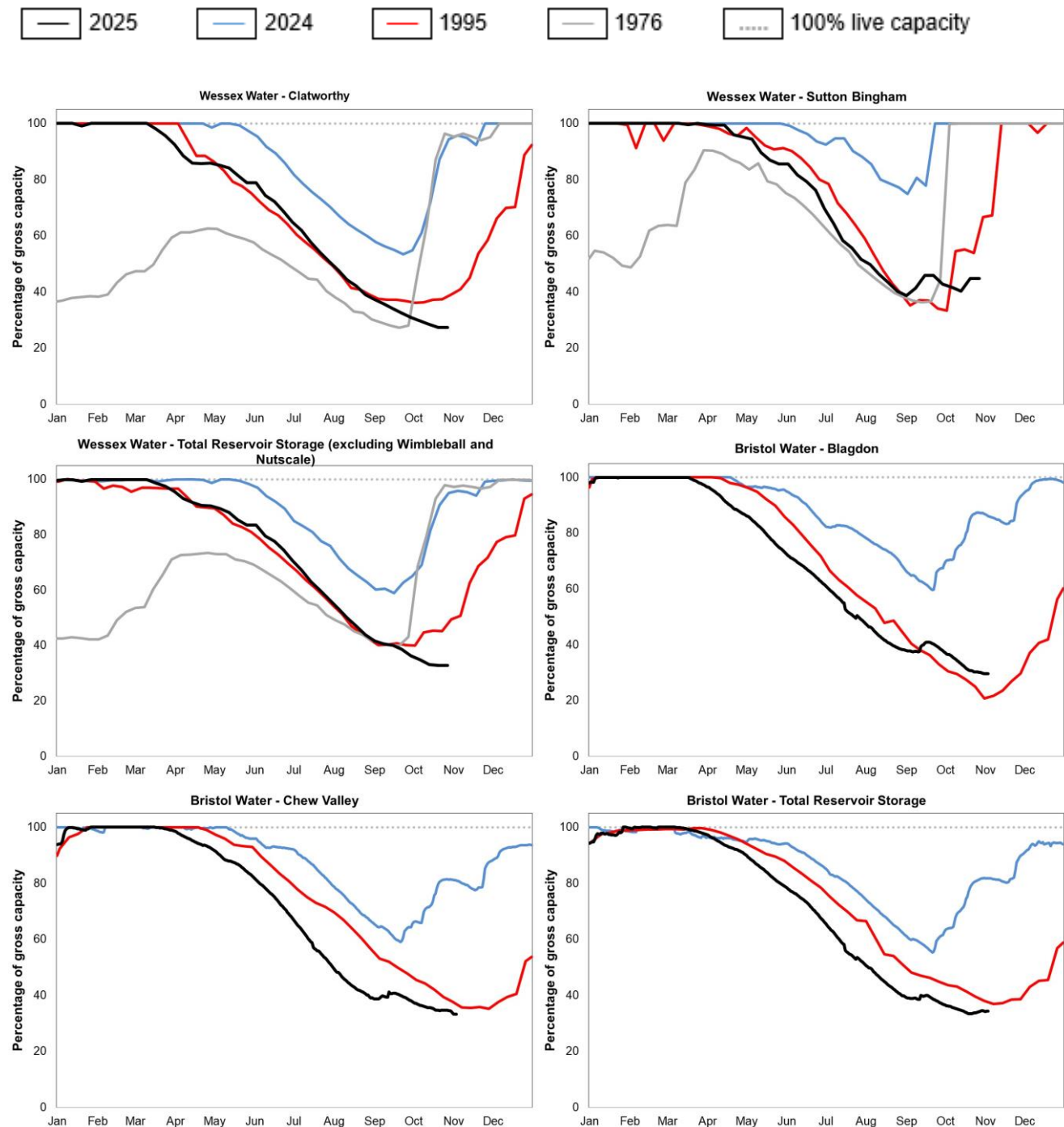




Source: Environment Agency, 2025.

5 Reservoir stocks

Figure 5.1: End of month regional reservoir stocks compared to the previous year, and if available, also a comparison to reservoir stocks in 1995 and 1976.



(Source: Wessex Water and Bristol Water).

6 Flood alerts and warnings

6.1 Flood alerts

Table 1: Fluvial, coastal and groundwater flood alerts issued during October

Area	Number of fluvial flood alerts in October	Number of coastal flood alerts in October	Number of groundwater flood alerts in October
North Wessex	0	3	0
South Wessex	0	1	1

6.2 Flood warnings

Table 2: Fluvial, coastal and groundwater flood warnings issued during October

Area	Number of fluvial flood warnings in October	Number of coastal flood warnings in October	Number of groundwater flood warnings in October
North Wessex	0	0	0
South Wessex	0	0	0

6.3 Severe flood warnings

Table 3: Fluvial, coastal and groundwater severe flood warnings issued during October

Area	Number of fluvial severe flood warnings in October	Number of coastal severe flood warnings in October	Number of groundwater severe flood warnings in October
North Wessex	0	0	0
South Wessex	0	0	0

7 Stream support

7.1 Sites providing stream support

Table 4: End of October status for stream support sites.

Catchment	River	Stream support site	Gauging station	End of October status
Bristol Avon	Chalfield Brook	South Wraxall	Great Chalfield (Wessex Water)	On
Bristol Avon	Chalfield Brook	Little Chalfield	Great Chalfield (Wessex Water)	On
Bristol Avon	Charlton Stream	Charlton	Crabb Mill	On
Bristol Avon	Gauze Brooke	Hullavington	Rodbourne	Off
Bristol Avon	Horscombe Stream	Tucking Mill	No Gauge	Off
Bristol Avon	Luckington Brook	Luckington	Fossway	Off
Bristol Avon	Rodbourne Brook	Lower Stanton St. Quinton	Startley	On
Bristol Avon	Semington Brook	Easterton	No Gauge	Off
Bristol Avon	Sherston Avon	Stanbridge	Fossway	Off
Bristol Avon	Tetbury Avon	Tetbury	Brokenborough	Off
Dorset Frome	South Winterbourne	Winterbourne Abbas	Winterbourne Steepleton	Off

Catchment	River	Stream support site	Gauging station	End of October status
Dorset Frome	Watergates Stream	Watergates	No Gauge	On
Piddle	Devil's Brook	Dewlish	Dewlish Woodsdown Cross	Off
Piddle	Piddle	Alton Mill	South House & Little Puddle	On
Piddle	Piddle	Morningwell	South House & Little Puddle	On
Piddle	Piddle	Briantspuddle	Briantspuddle	Off
Dorset Stour	Crichel Stream	Long Crichel	No Gauge	On
Dorset Stour	Gussage Stream	Gussage All Saints	Bowerswain	On
Dorset Stour	Allen	Wyke Down	All Hallows	On
Dorset Stour	Pimperne Stream	Pimperne	No Gauge	Off
Hampshire Avon	Bourne	Porton	Salisbury Bourne	On
Hampshire Avon	Chitterne Brook	Codford Road	Codford	On
Hampshire Avon	Wylfe	Brixton Deverill	Brixton Deverill & Heytesbury	On
Hampshire Avon	Wylfe	Kingston Deverill	Brixton Deverill & Heytesbury	On

8 Abstraction licences subject to restrict or cease

8.1 Abstraction licences subject to restrict or cease

Table 5: Number of licences at restrict or cease at the end of October.

Catchment	Number of licences at restrict at the end of October	Number of licences at cease at the end of October
Bristol Avon	0	0
Dorset	1	1
Hampshire Avon	4	3
Somerset	0	4

9 Glossary

9.1 Terminology

Aquifer

A geological formation able to store and transmit water.

Areal average rainfall

The estimated average depth of rainfall over a defined area. Expressed in depth of water (mm).

Artesian

The condition where the groundwater level is above ground surface but is prevented from rising to this level by an overlying continuous low permeability layer, such as clay.

Artesian borehole

Borehole where the level of groundwater is above the top of the borehole and groundwater flows out of the borehole when unsealed.

Cumecs

Cubic metres per second (m^3s^{-1}).

Effective rainfall

The rainfall available to percolate into the soil or produce river flow. Expressed in depth of water (mm).

Flood alert and flood warning

Three levels of warnings may be issued by the Environment Agency. Flood alerts indicate flooding is possible. Flood warnings indicate flooding is expected. Severe flood warnings indicate severe flooding.

Groundwater

The water found in an aquifer.

Long term average (LTA)

The arithmetic mean calculated from the historic record, usually based on the period 1991 to 2020. However, the period used may vary by parameter being reported on (see figure captions for details).

mAOD

Metres above ordnance datum (mean sea level at Newlyn Cornwall).

MORECS

Met Office Rainfall and Evaporation Calculation System. Met Office service providing real time calculation of evapotranspiration, soil moisture deficit and effective rainfall on a 40 by 40 km grid.

Naturalised flow

River flow with the impacts of artificial influences removed. Artificial influences may include abstractions, discharges, transfers, augmentation and impoundments.

NCIC

National Climate Information Centre. NCIC area monthly rainfall totals are derived using the Met Office 5 km gridded dataset, which uses rain gauge observations.

Recharge

The process of increasing the water stored in the saturated zone of an aquifer. Expressed in depth of water (mm).

Reservoir gross capacity

The total capacity of a reservoir.

Reservoir live capacity

The capacity of the reservoir that is normally usable for storage to meet established reservoir operating requirements. This excludes any capacity not available for use (for example, storage held back for emergency services, operating agreements or physical restrictions). May also be referred to as 'net' or 'deployable' capacity.

Soil moisture deficit (SMD)

The difference between the amount of water actually in the soil and the amount of water the soil can hold. Expressed in depth of water (mm).

9.2 Categories

Exceptionally high

Value likely to fall within this band 5% of the time.

Notably high

Value likely to fall within this band 8% of the time.

Above normal

Value likely to fall within this band 15% of the time.

Normal

Value likely to fall within this band 44% of the time.

Below normal

Value likely to fall within this band 15% of the time.

Notably low

Value likely to fall within this band 8% of the time.

Exceptionally low

Value likely to fall within this band 5% of the time.

9.3 Rainfall Areas Map

Figure 6.2 Rainfall catchments in Wessex.



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10 Appendices

10.1 Rainfall table

Hydrological area	Oct 2025 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Oct 2025 band	Aug 2025 to October cumulative band	May 2025 to October cumulative band	Nov 2024 to October cumulative band
Axe	82	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Notably low
Brue	84	Normal	Normal	Notably low	Notably low
Little Avon	89	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
Lower Bristol Avon And Bristol Frome	91	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
Lower Dorset Stour And River Crane	108	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
Lower Hampshire Avon	114	Normal	Normal	Normal	Below normal
Mendips And River Chew	90	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Notably low
Middle And Upper Bristol Avon	97	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Notably low
Middle Dorset Stour	97	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal

Hydrological area	Oct 2025 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Oct 2025 band	Aug 2025 to October cumulative band	May 2025 to October cumulative band	Nov 2024 to October cumulative band
Middle Hampshire Avon	97	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
Parrett	76	Normal	Normal	Notably low	Below normal
Poole Harbour And Purbeck	105	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal
River Bourne	86	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
River Frome	87	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
River Piddle	93	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Normal
Tone	81	Normal	Normal	Notably low	Below normal
Upper Dorset Stour	85	Normal	Normal	Notably low	Below normal
Upper Hampshire Avon	88	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
West Dorset Streams	83	Normal	Normal	Normal	Below normal
West Somerset Streams	80	Normal	Below normal	Notably low	Below normal

Hydrological area	Oct 2025 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Oct 2025 band	Aug 2025 to October cumulative band	May 2025 to October cumulative band	Nov 2024 to October cumulative band
Wylfe And Nadder	86	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Below normal
Yeo And Kenn	83	Normal	Normal	Below normal	Notably low

10.2 River flows table

Site name	River	Catchment	Oct 2025 band	Sep 2025 band
Amesbury	Upper Hampshire Avon	Hampshire Avon	Below normal	Below normal
Ashford Mill	Isle	Parrett	Normal	Normal
Baggs Mill	Piddle	Piddle	Normal	Normal
Bathford	Bristol Avon	Bristol Avon	Below normal	Normal
Beggearn Huish	Washford	Washford River	Below normal	Normal
Bishops Hull	Tone	Tone	Below normal	Normal
Bridport East Bridge	Asker	Asker	Normal	Normal
Fenny Castle	Sheppey	Brue	Below normal	Normal
East Mills Combined	Middle Hampshire Avon	Hampshire Avon	Below normal	Normal
East Stoke Combined	Dorset Frome	Dorset Frome	Normal	Normal
Frenchay	Bristol Frome	Bristol Frome	Normal	Above normal
Great Somerford	Bristol Avon	Bristol Avon	Normal	Normal
Hammoon	Middle Stour	Dorset Stour	Below normal	Normal

Site name	River	Catchment	Oct 2025 band	Sep 2025 band
Knapp Mill	Lower Hampshire Avon	Hampshire Avon	Data unavailable	Data unavailable
Lovington	Upper Brue	Brue	Below normal	Normal
Pen Mill	Yeo	Parrett	Normal	Normal
South Newton	River Wylfe	Hampshire Avon	Exceptionally low	Below normal
Sydling St Nicholas	Sydling Water	Dorset Frome	Below normal	Below normal
Tellisford	Somerset Frome	Bristol Avon	Below normal	Normal
Throop	Lower Stour	Dorset Stour	Notably low	Normal

10.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Oct 2025 band	End of Sep 2025 band
Allington No2	Upper Bristol Avon Great Oolite	Normal	Below normal
Chitterne Down	Upper Hampshire Avon Chalk	Below normal	Notably low
Delcombe	Dorset Frome And Piddle Chalk/upper Greensand	Exceptionally low	Notably low
Didmarton 1	Upper Bristol Avon Inferior Oolite	Below normal	Below normal
Kingston Russell Road	Dorset Frome Chalk	Exceptionally low	Exceptionally low
Overcompton	Somerset Yeo Bridport Sand	Notably low	Notably low
Tilshead	Upper Hampshire Avon Chalk	Exceptionally low	Exceptionally low
Woodyates	Dorset Stour Chalk	Notably low	Notably low
Oakley Industrial Estate	Upper Hampshire Avon Chalk	Notably low	Notably low
Chipley	Somerset Tone Otter Sandstone	Notably low	Notably low

Site name	Aquifer	End of Oct 2025 band	End of Sep 2025 band
Wrington	North Somerset Carboniferous Limestone	Notably low	Below normal