# Monthly water situation report: East Anglia

## 1 Summary - January 2026

East Anglia rainfall for January 2026 ranged from 129% to 198% of the long term average (LTA) for the month. The average soil moisture deficit (SMD) decreased by 14mm since December, all catchments ending January with deficits below 10mm. River flows increased significantly following the month's high rainfall, with above average flows found across much of the region. North-western catchments continue to display below normal flow having, receiving comparatively less rainfall. Groundwater levels have continued to increase at almost of sites, more than half are still below normal levels for the time of year. Public water supply reservoirs ended January 2026 with levels ranging from 59% to 91% of their full storage capacities.

### 1.1 Rainfall

January 2026 rainfall totals across East Anglia ranged from 129% to 198% of the long term average for the month. The East Suffolk and North Essex catchments received the highest total rainfalls, receiving 189% and 198% of their long term averages respectively. All catchments recorded above normal or higher rainfall for January. Over the past 3 months, all catchments have recorded above normal or higher rainfall with the exception of South Essex, recording normal levels though still above average at 106% of its LTA.

### 1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

The soil moisture deficit for East Anglia at the end of January 2026 was 4mm, which is normal for the time of year. All catchments had SMDs below 10mm, with half being 5mm above or below the LTA, and the other half instead being 6mm to 25mm below.

### 1.3 River flows

Following high rainfall in all catchments, the January 2026 month mean flows at most sites have increased significantly since December 2025, with most catchments reporting normal or higher flows, with the Colne being the only river recording notably high flows at 193% of the LTA. The northern rivers; Heacham, Burn and Nar, were instead below normal, having started the month particularly low and showing more gradual recovery compared to other river's flashy responses.

## 1.4 Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels have begun or continued to rise at all reporting sites with available data, with the exception of Therfield which continues to fall. Over half of the reporting stations have below normal or lower levels for the time of year, with the other half returning either normal or higher. Breckland and Bircham Newton in the central and northern areas are notably low while Fringford in the west was the only site with notably high levels for the time of year.

## 1.5 Reservoir stocks

All public water supply reservoirs have seen a net increase in storage in January 2026, with the exception of Ardleigh which only started increasing towards the end of the month. At the end of the month, levels ranged from 59% to 91% of the full storage capacity, and only Alton was above its normal operating curve.

## 1.6 Forward look

### 1.6.1 Probabilistic ensemble projections for river flows at key sites

River flow projections at all sites show a high probability of normal or higher flows for March 2026.

### 1.6.2 Probabilistic ensemble projections for groundwater levels in key aquifers

Groundwater projections for March 2026 have a high probability of normal levels or higher at most sites. Newmarket and Kenninghall instead have a higher probability of below normal levels by the End of March.

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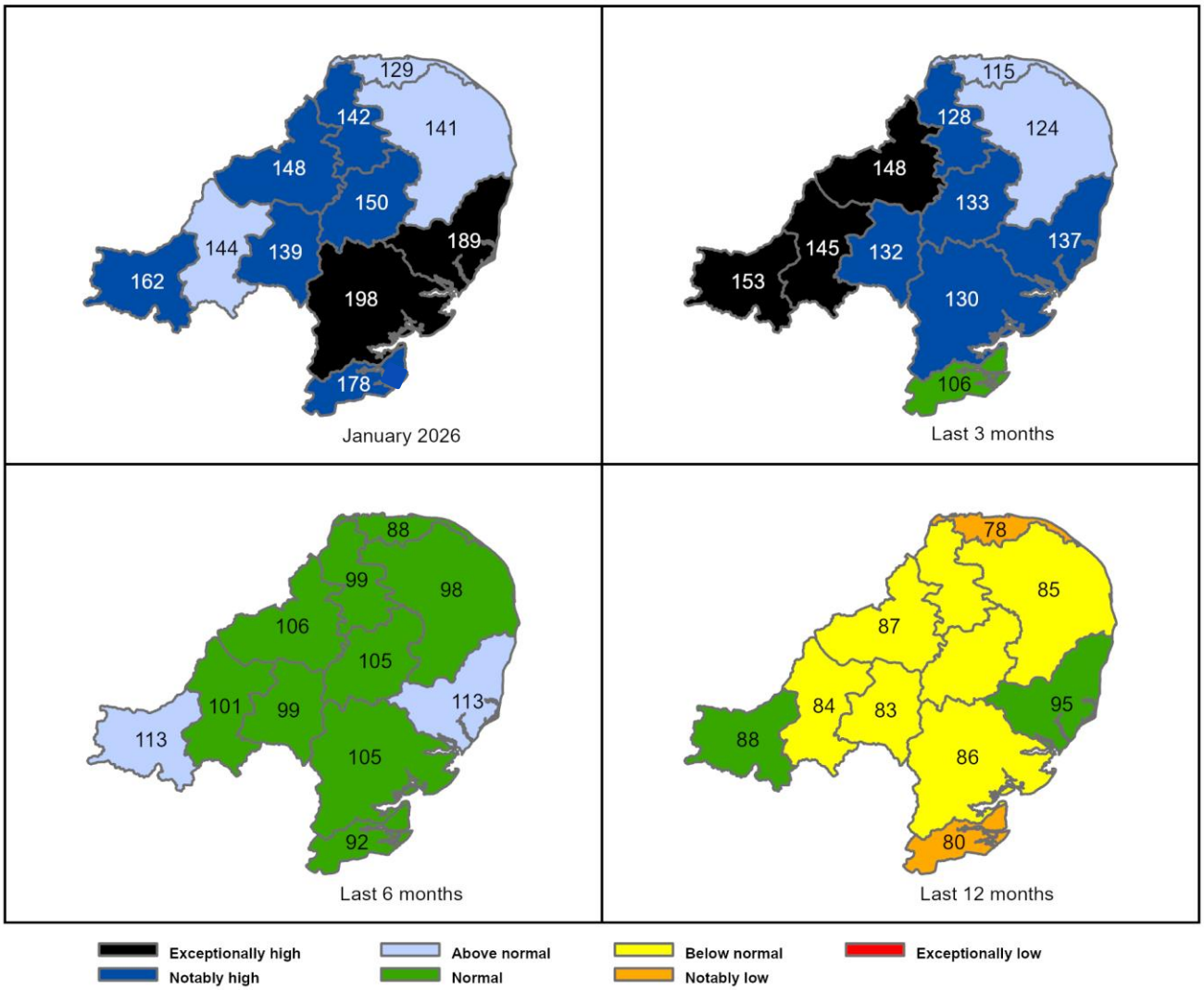
# 2 Rainfall

## 2.1 Rainfall map

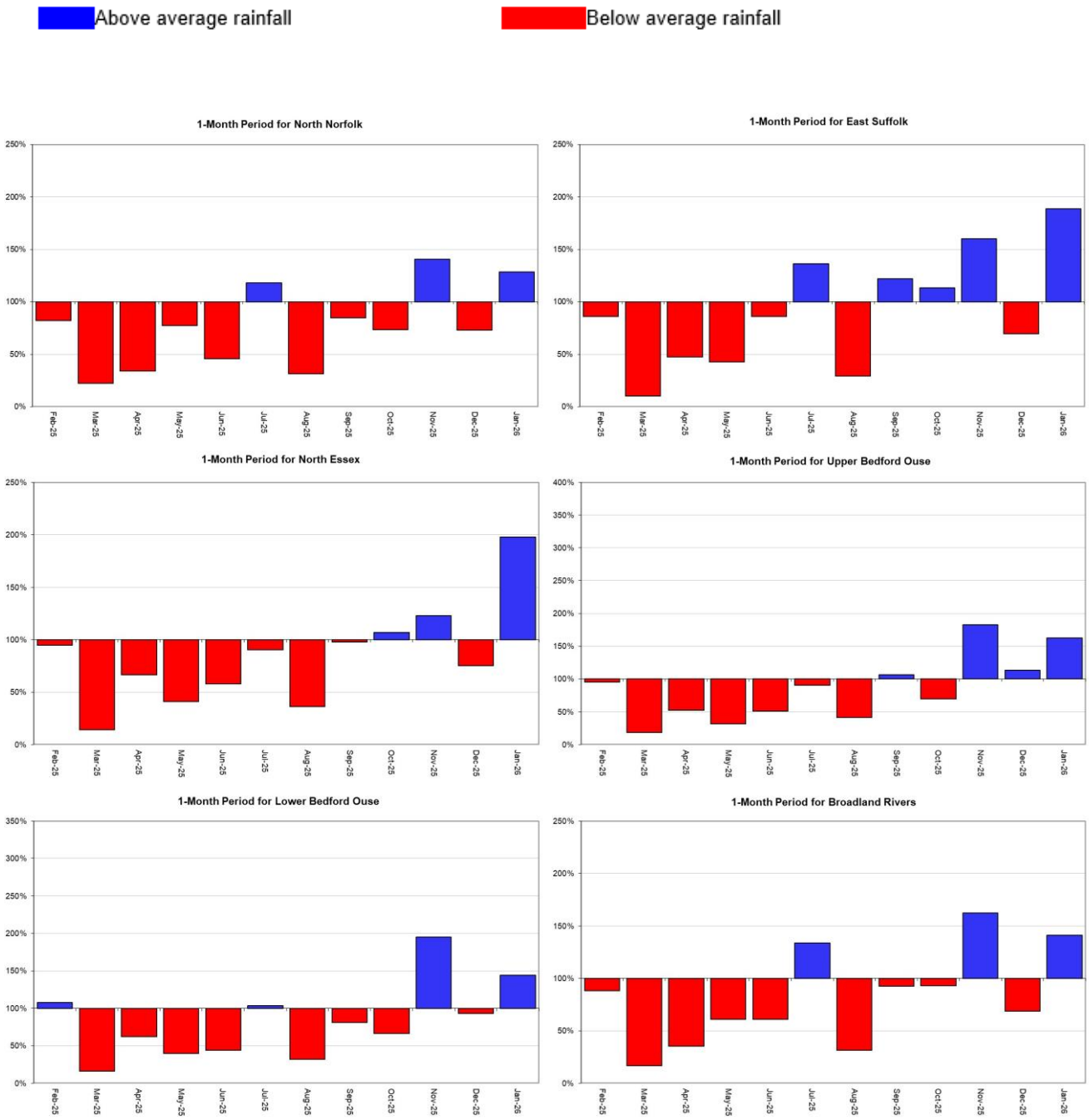
Figure 2.1: Total rainfall for hydrological areas across East Anglia, expressed as a percentage of long term average rainfall for the current month (up to 31 January 2026), the last 3 months, the last 6 months, and the last 12 months. Category classes are based on an analysis of respective historic totals. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

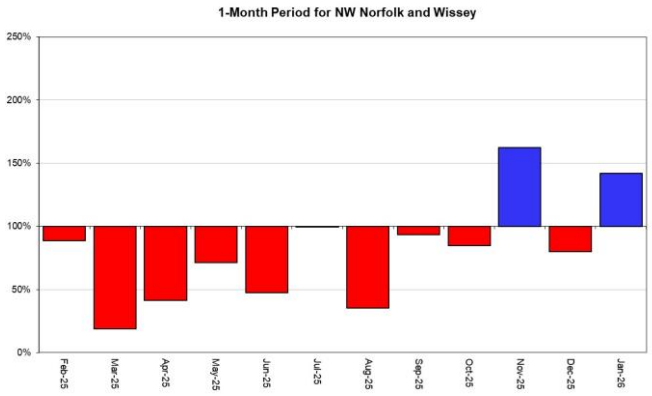


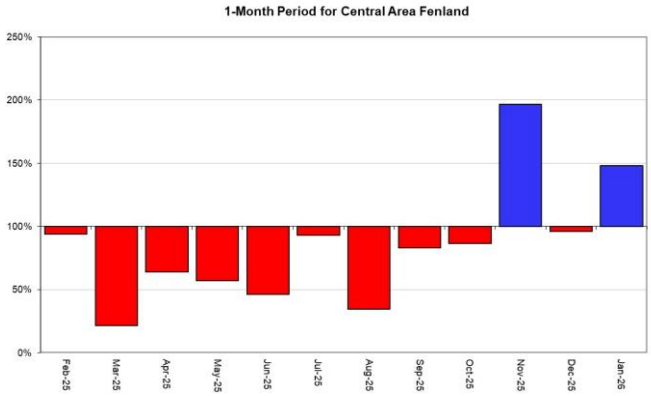

HadUK data based on the Met Office 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026). Provisional data based on Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100024198, 2026.

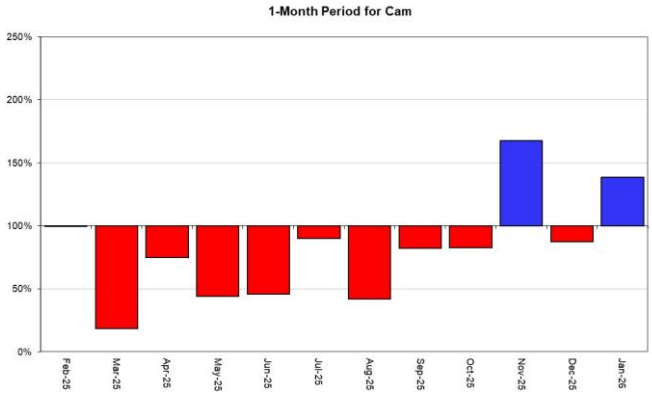
## 2.2 Rainfall charts

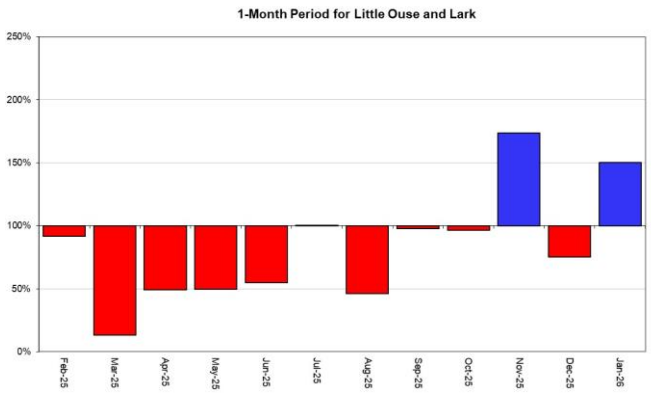
Figure 2.2: Monthly rainfall totals for the past 12 months as a percentage of the 1991 to 2020 long term average for each region and for England.

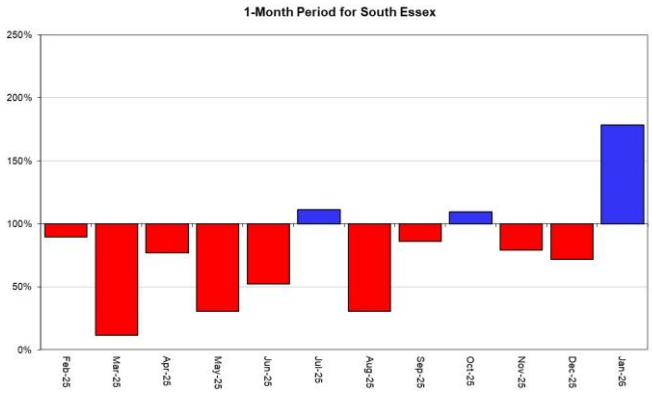




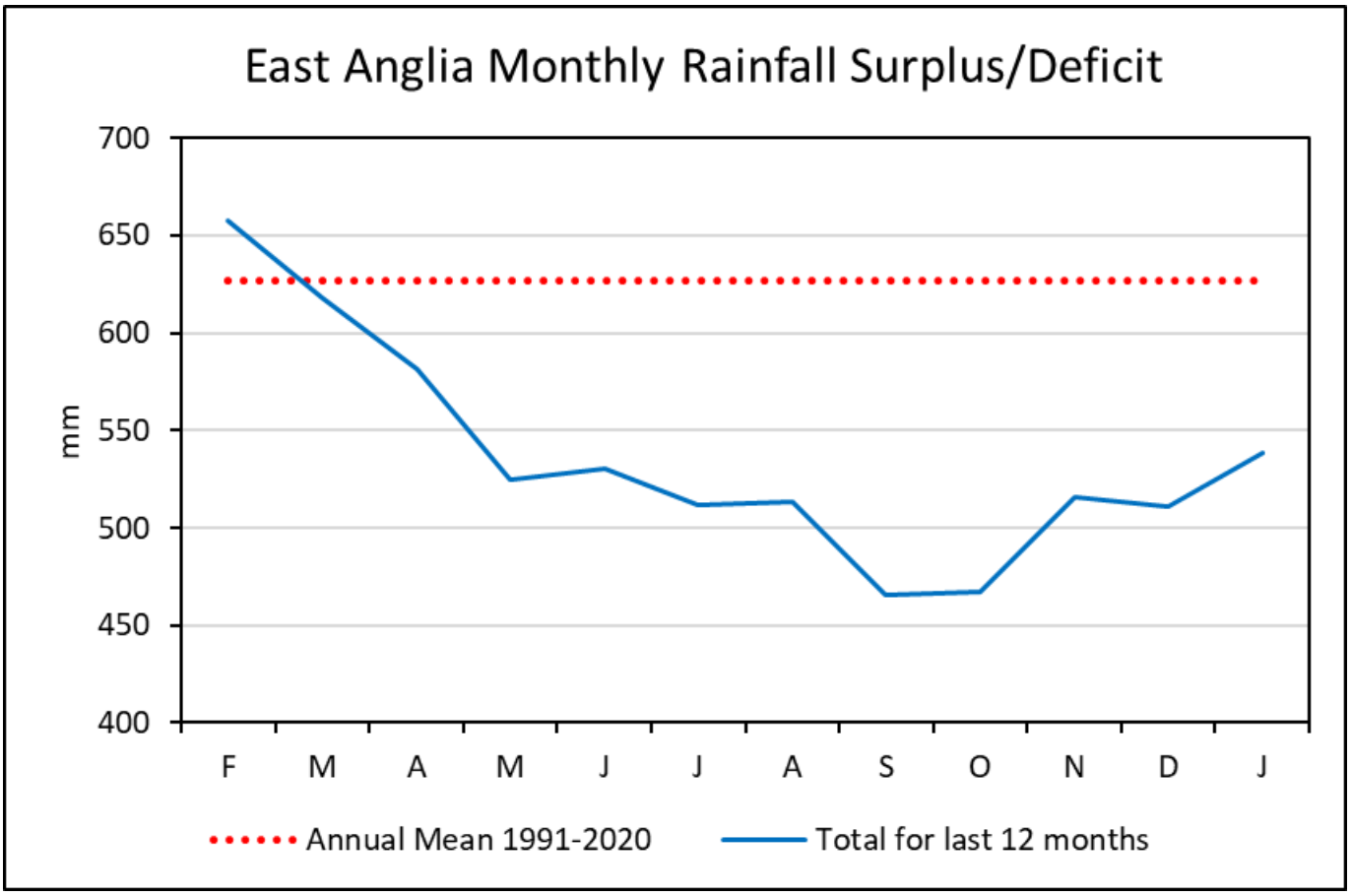




HadUK rainfall data. (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

## 2.3 Monthly rainfall surplus deficit chart




HadUK rainfall data. (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

# 3 Soil moisture deficit

## 3.1 Soil moisture deficit map

Figure 3.1: Soil moisture deficit values for 31 January 2026. Values based on the weekly MORECS data for real land use.

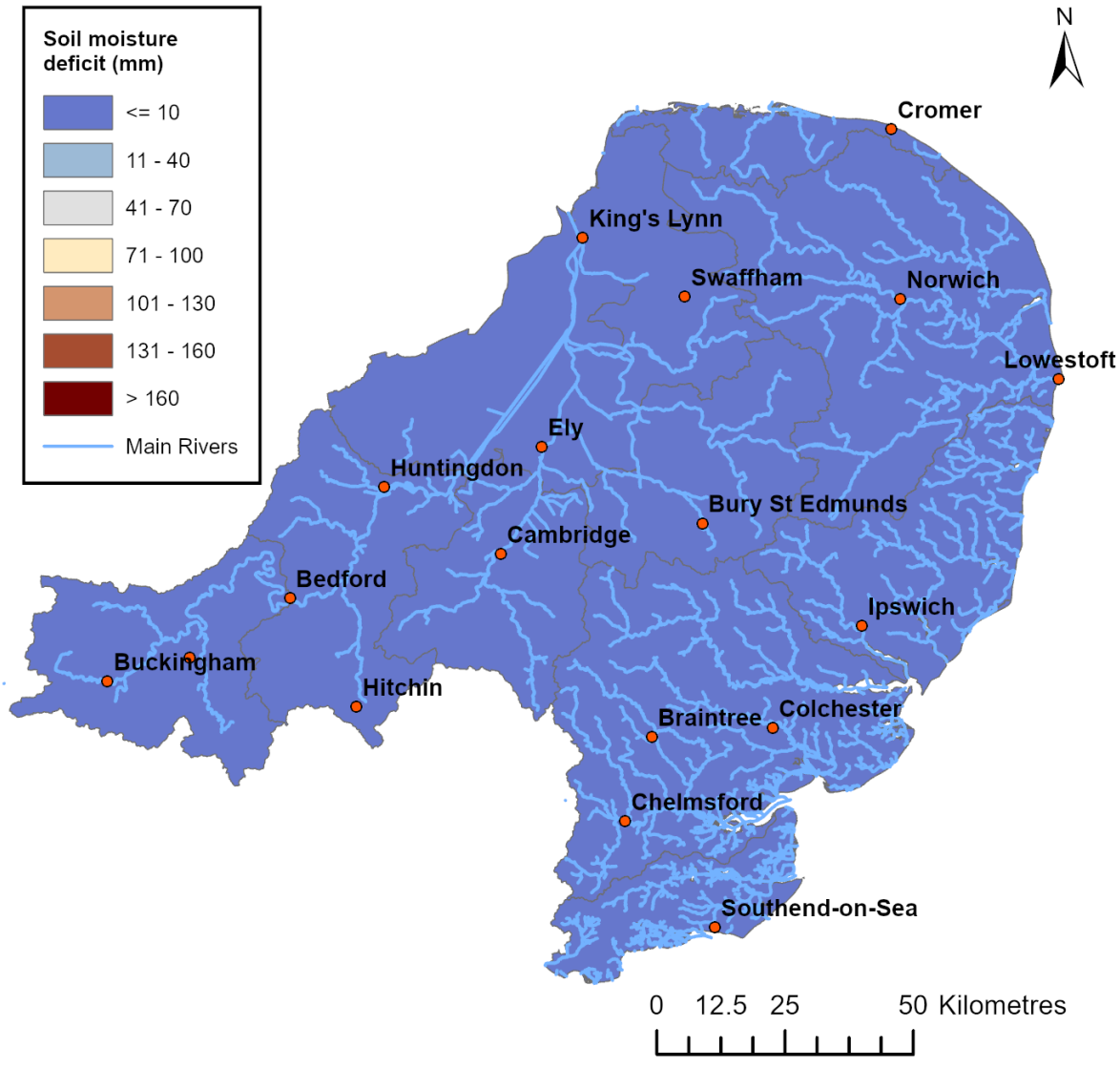
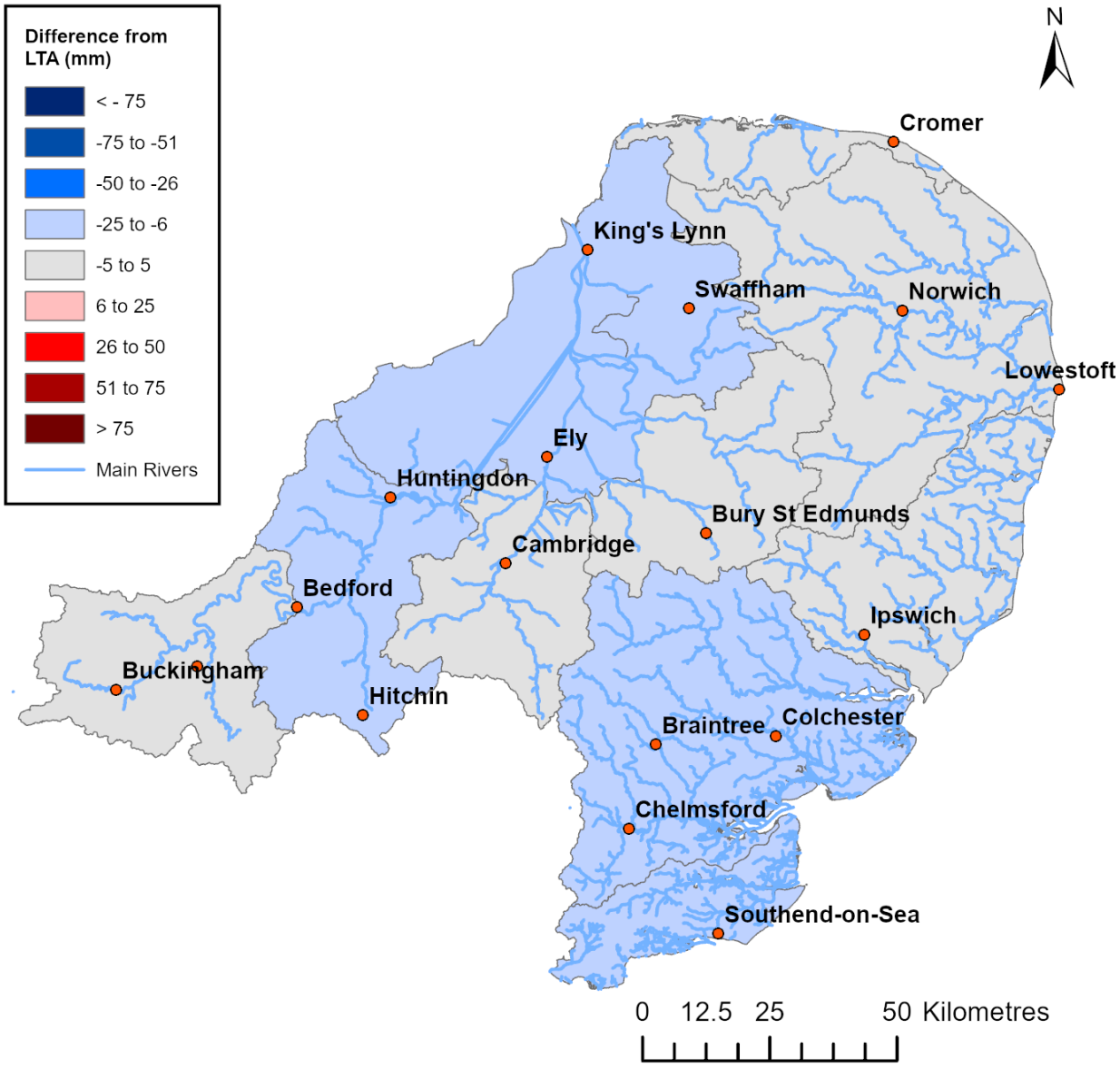
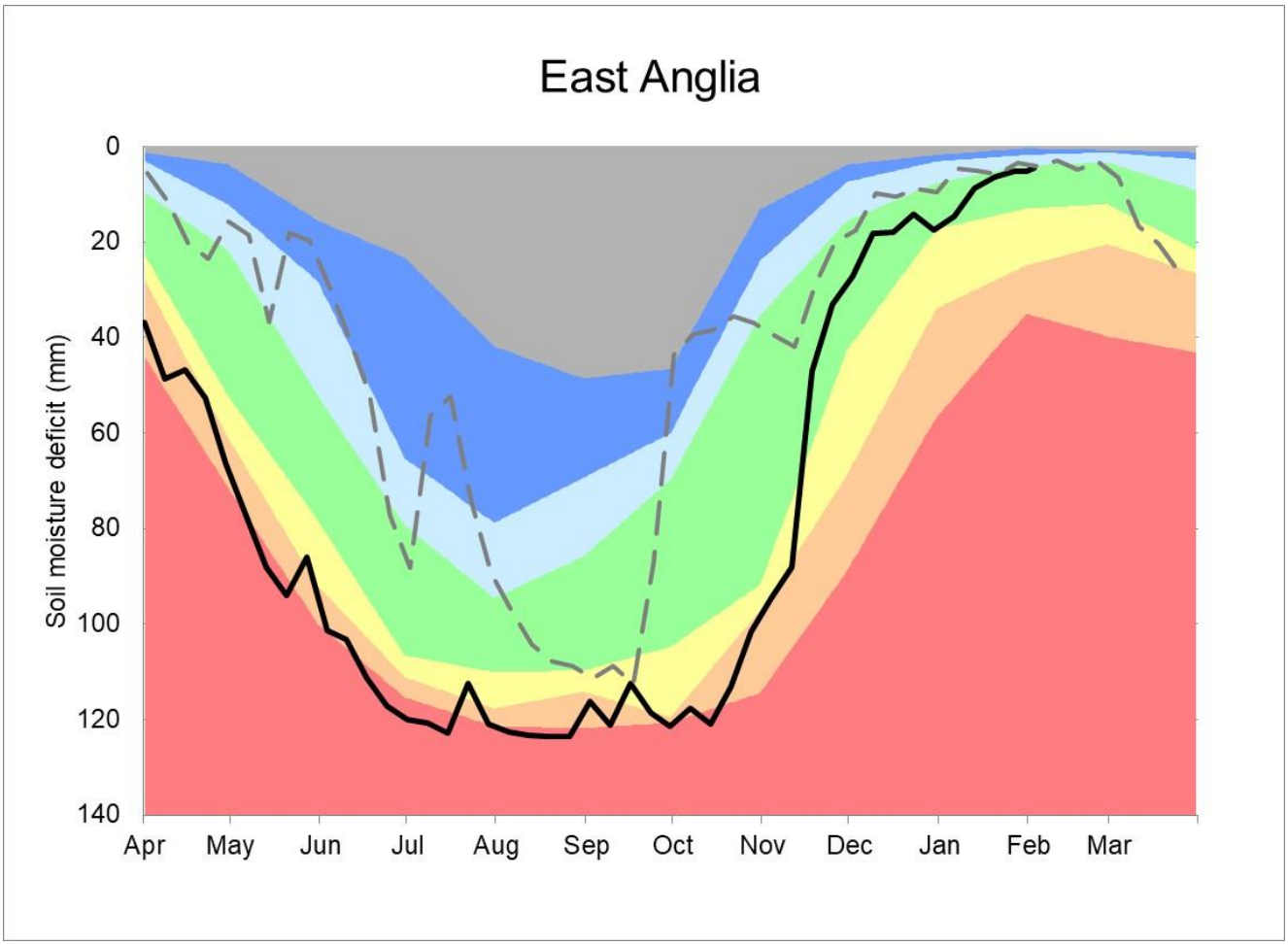


Figure 3.2: Difference between soil moisture deficit values for 31 January 2026 and the long term average soil moisture deficit values for the end of January. Values based on the weekly MORECS data for real land use.



## 3.2 Soil moisture deficit charts

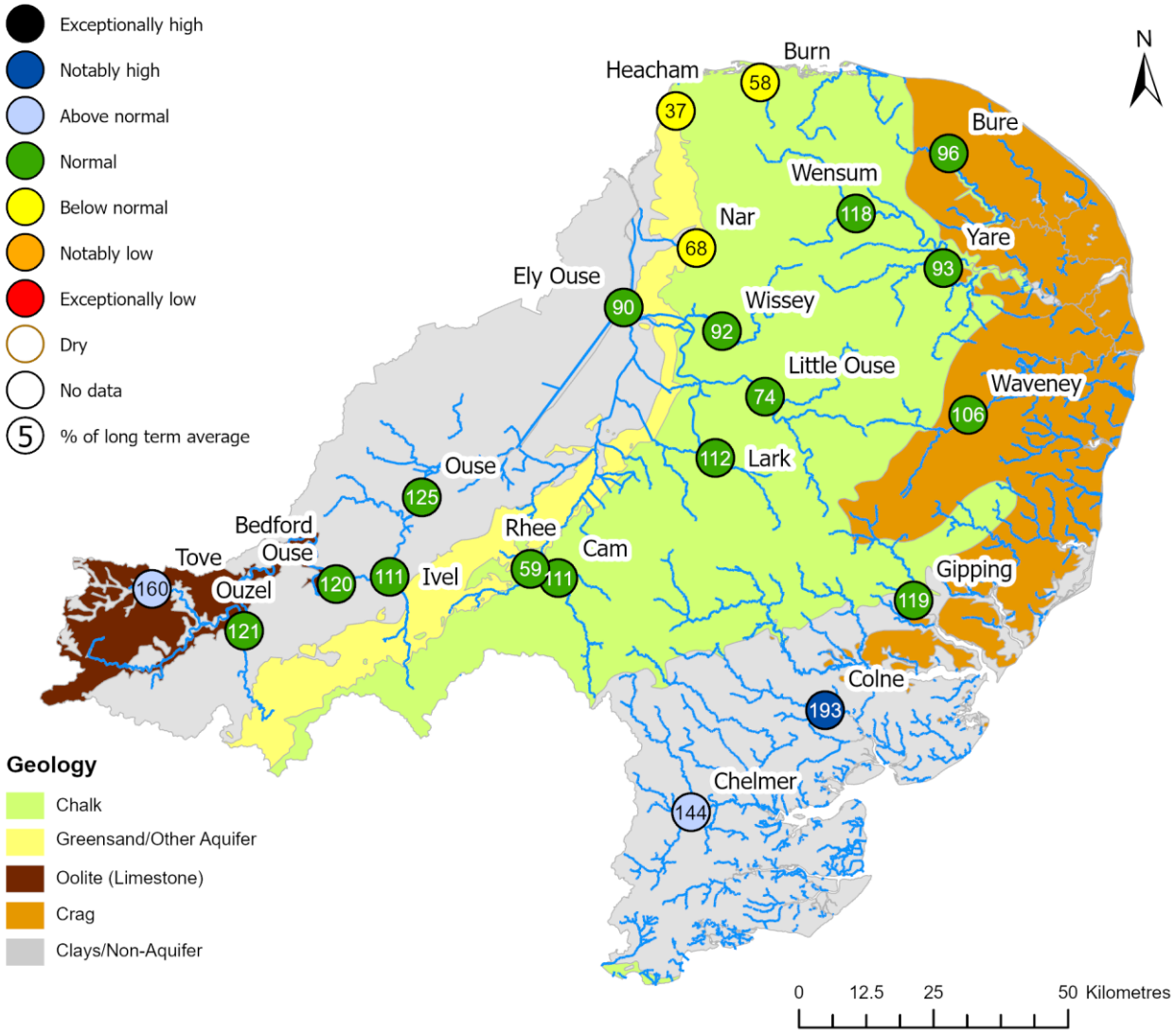
Figure 3.2: Latest soil moisture deficit compared to an analysis of historic 1991 to 2020 long term data set. Weekly MORECS data for real land use.



# 4 River flows

## 4.1 River flows map

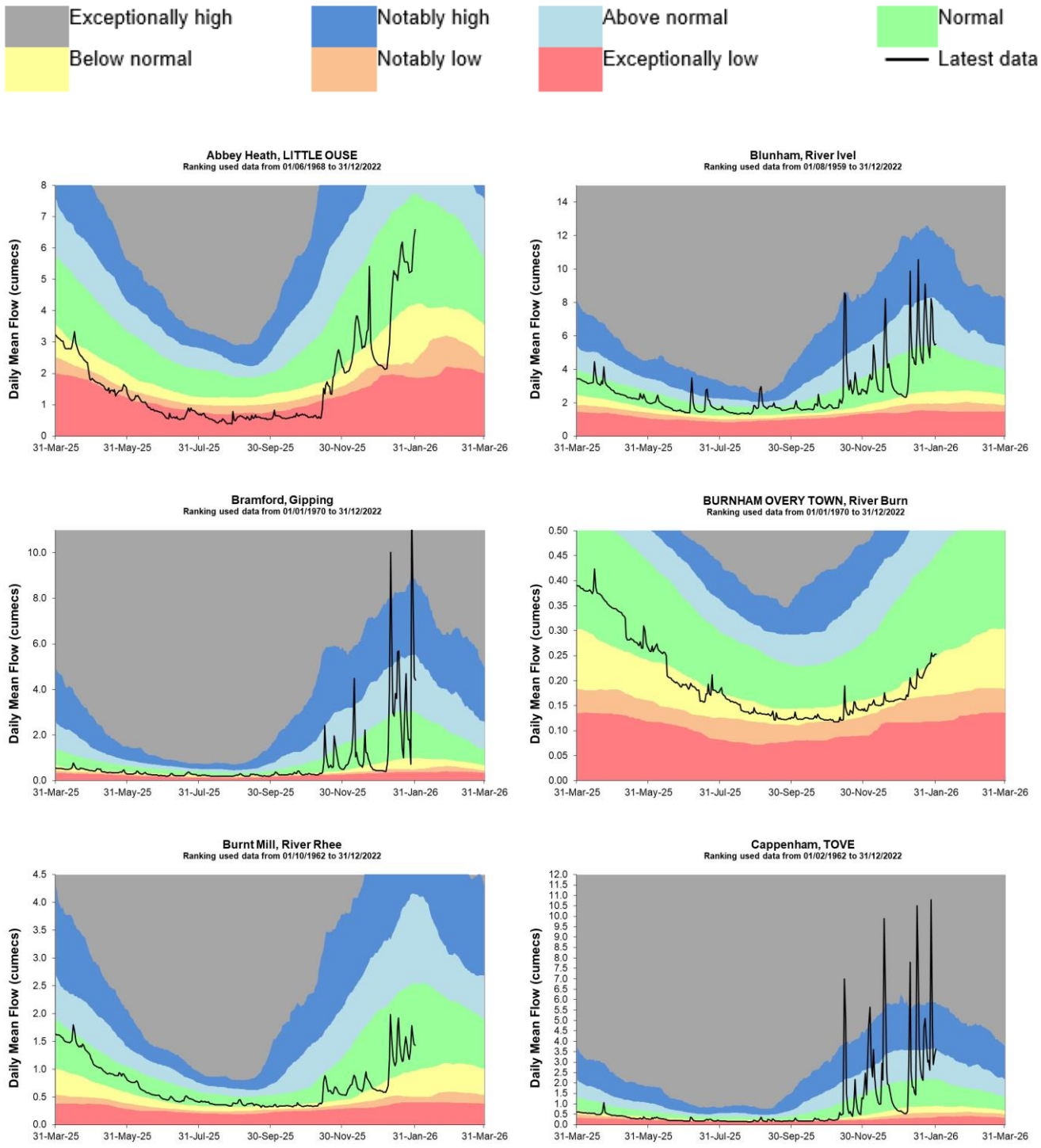
Figure 4.1: Monthly mean river flow for indicator sites for January 2026, expressed as a percentage of the respective long term average and classed relative to an analysis of historic January monthly means Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

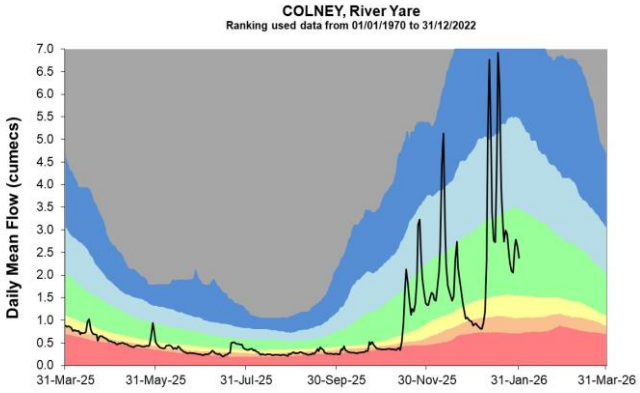


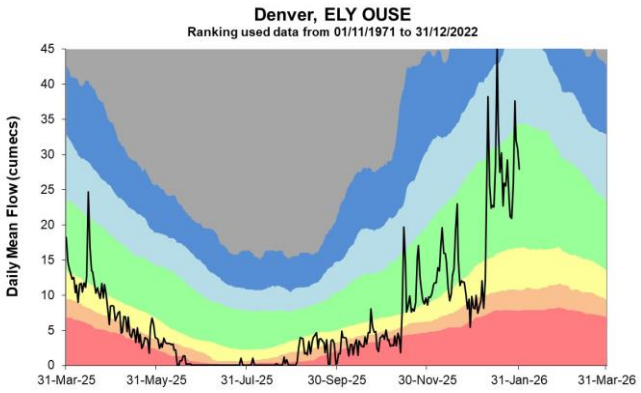

(Source: Environment Agency). Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS copyright NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100024198, 2026.

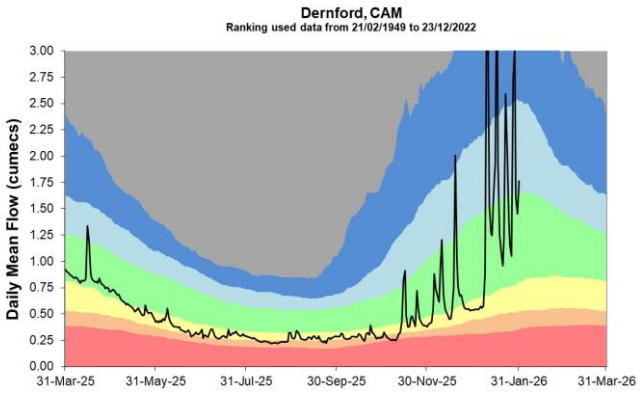
## 4.2 River flow charts

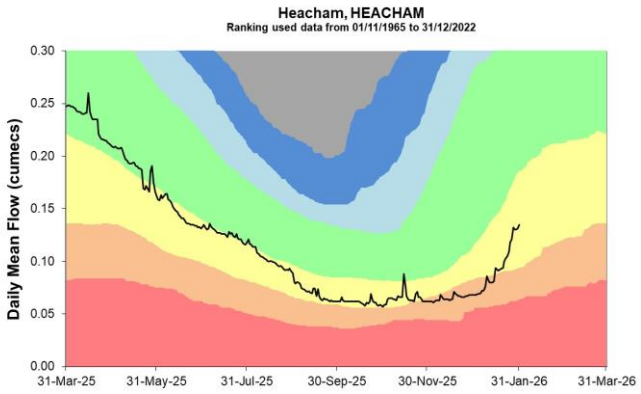
Figure 4.2: Daily mean river flow for index sites over the past year, compared to an analysis of historic daily mean flows, and long term maximum and minimum flows.

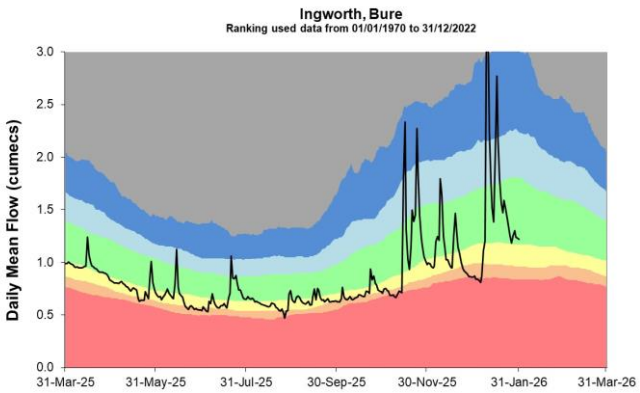


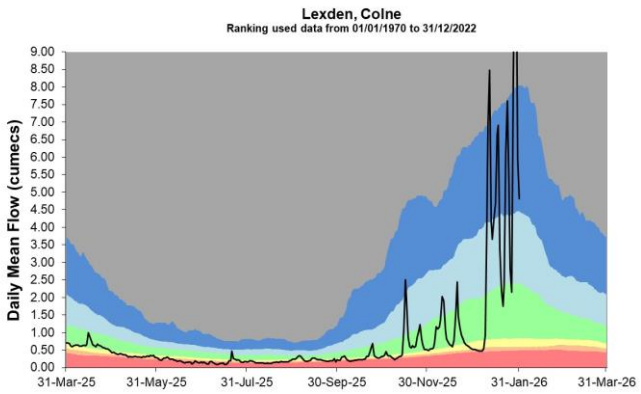

COLNEY, River Yare
Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
7.0
6.5
6.0
5.5
5.0
4.5
4.0
3.5
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

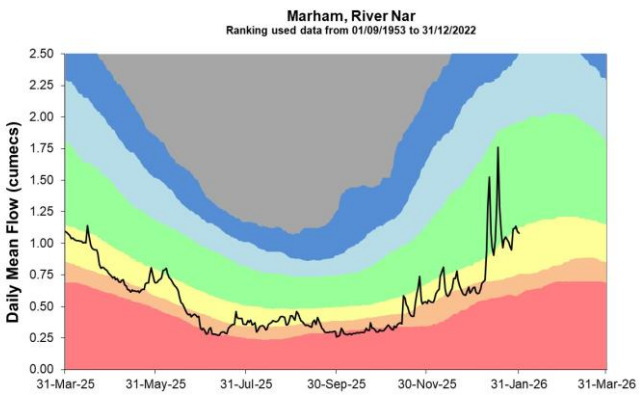

Denver, ELY OUSE
Ranking used data from 01/11/1971 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

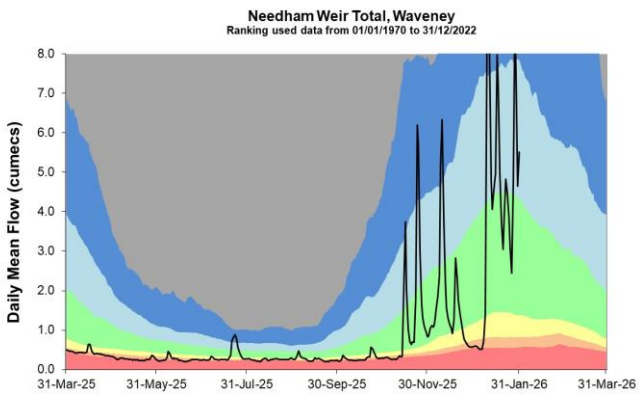

Dernford, CAM
Ranking used data from 21/02/1949 to 23/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
3.00
2.75
2.50
2.25
2.00
1.75
1.50
1.25
1.00
0.75
0.50
0.25
0.00
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

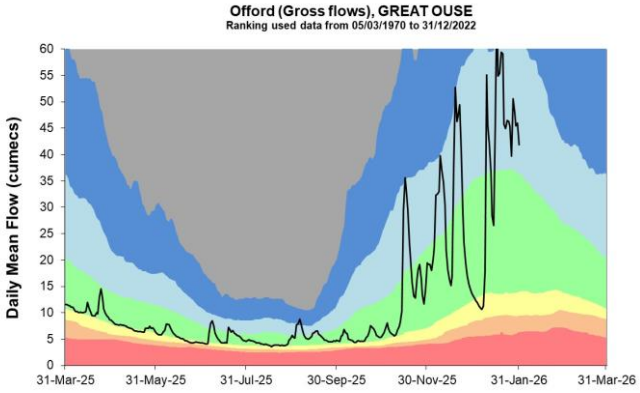

Heacham, HEACHAM
Ranking used data from 01/11/1965 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
0.30
0.25
0.20
0.15
0.10
0.05
0.00
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

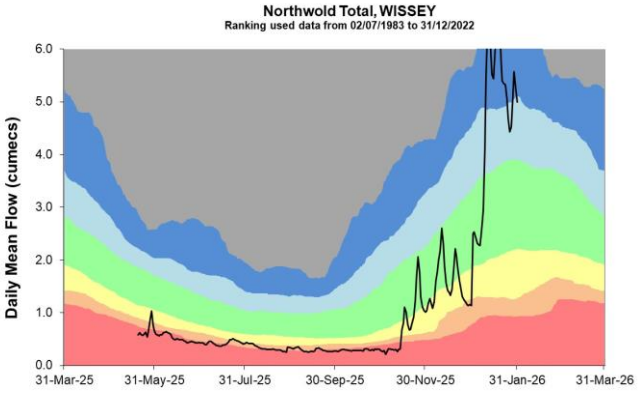

Ingworth, Bure
Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
3.0
2.5
2.0
1.5
1.0
0.5
0.0
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

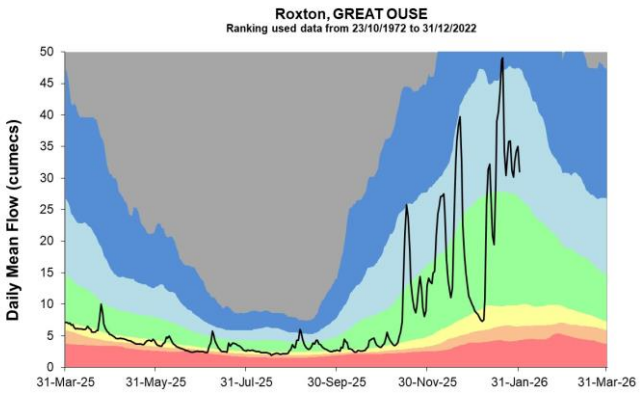

Lexden, Colne
Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
9.00
8.50
8.00
7.50
7.00
6.50
6.00
5.50
5.00
4.50
4.00
3.50
3.00
2.50
2.00
1.50
1.00
0.50
0.00
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

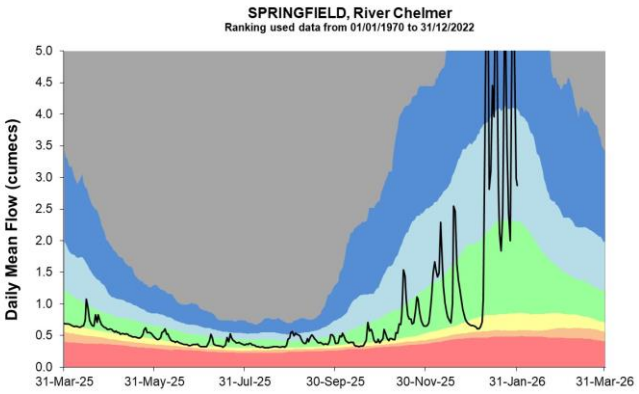

Marham, River Nar
Ranking used data from 01/09/1953 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
2.50
2.25
2.00
1.75
1.50
1.25
1.00
0.75
0.50
0.25
0.00
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

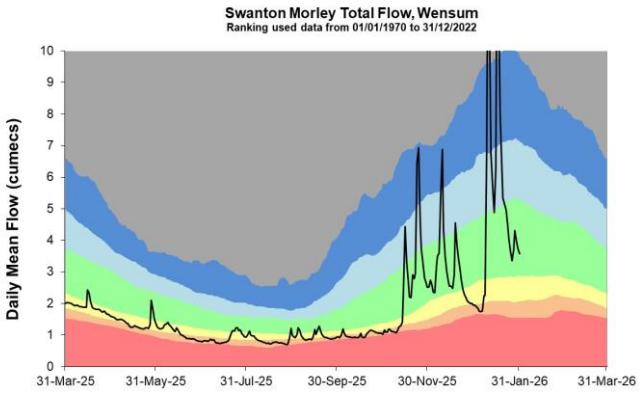

Needham Weir Total, Waveney
Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022
Daily Mean Flow (cumecs)
8.0
7.0
6.0
5.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
0.0
31-Mar-25
31-May-25
31-Jul-25
30-Sep-25
30-Nov-25
31-Jan-26
31-Mar-26

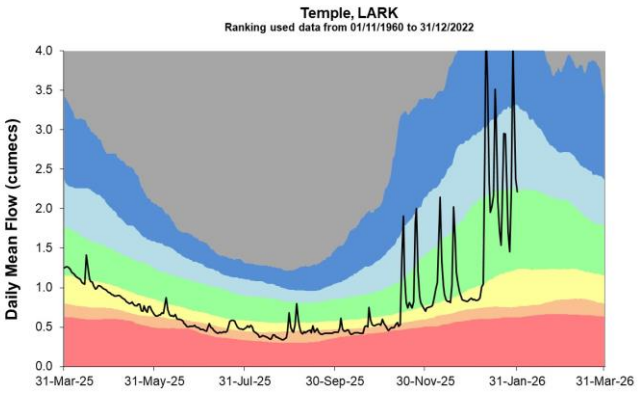


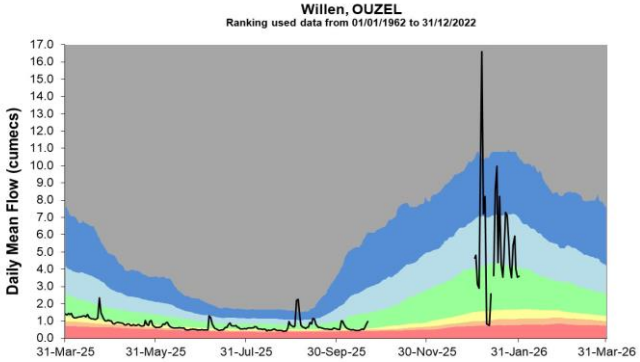



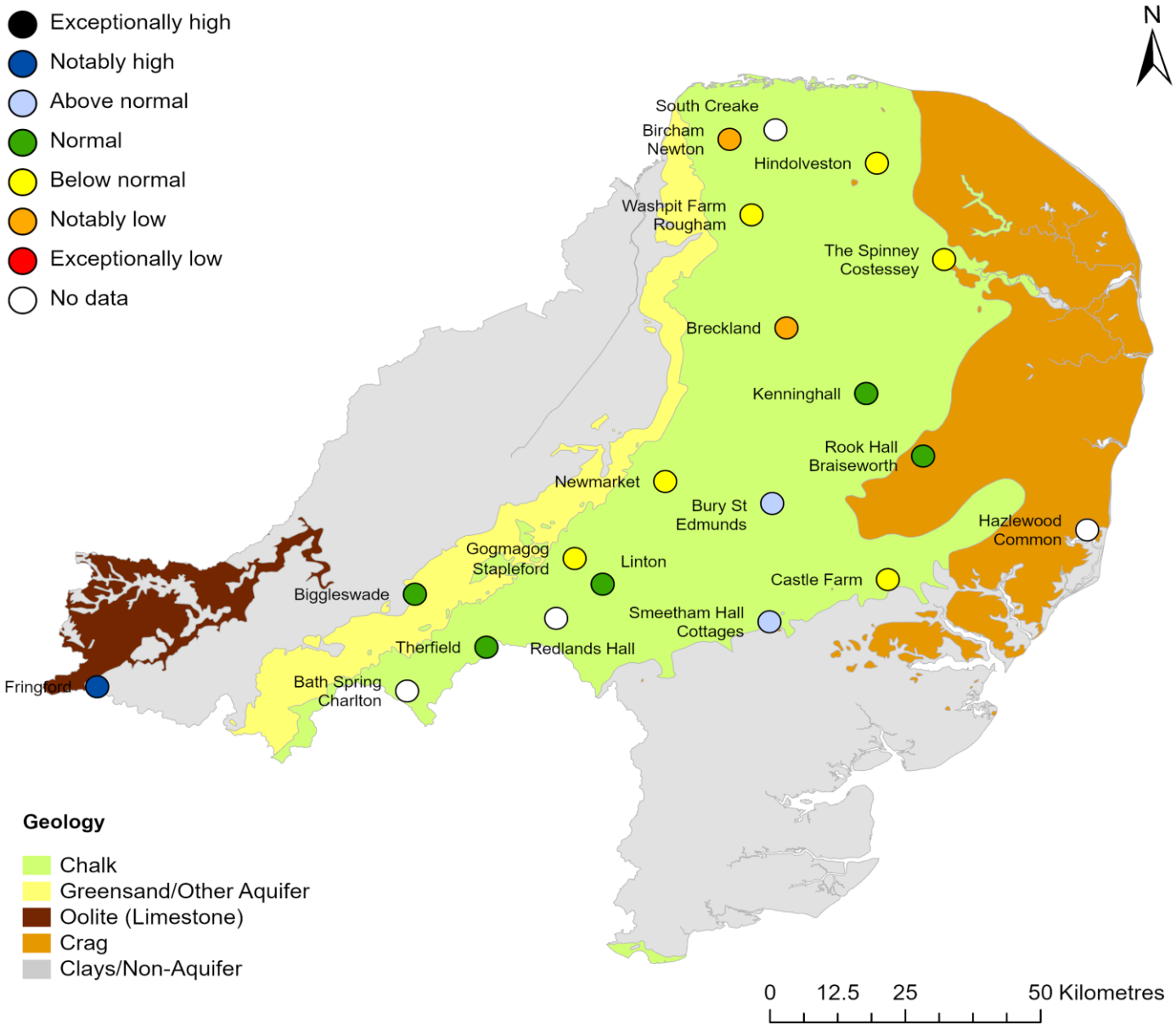




Source: Environment Agency.

# 5 Groundwater levels

## 5.1 Groundwater levels map

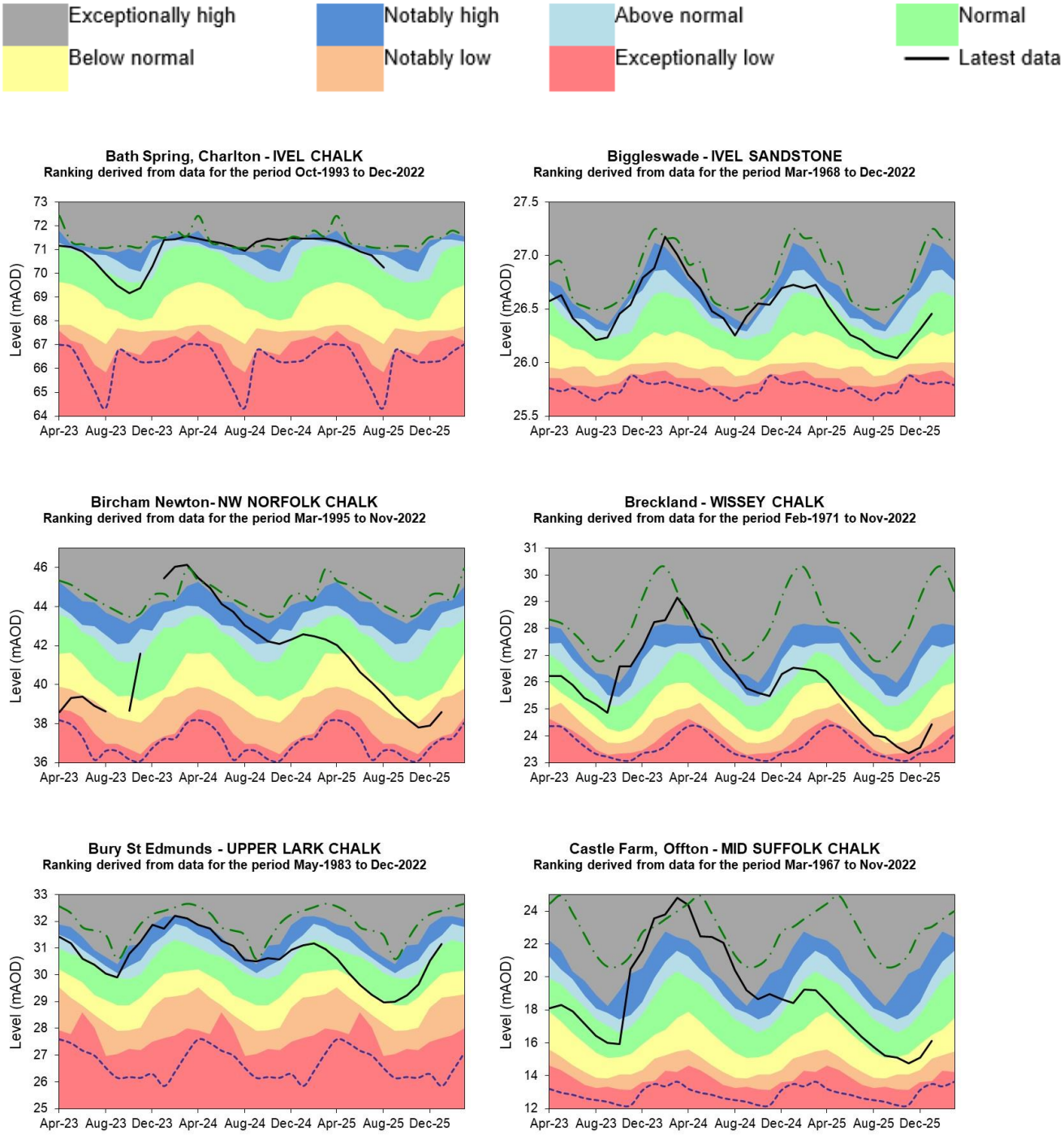
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of January 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic January levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



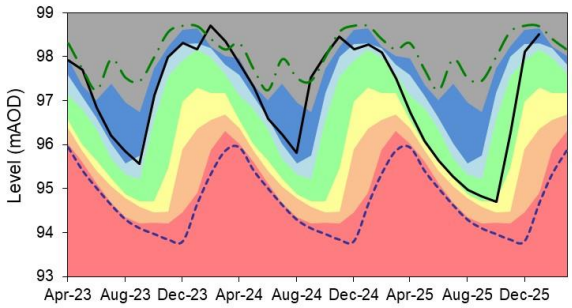

(Source: Environment Agency). Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS copyright NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100024198, 2026.

## 5.2 Groundwater level charts

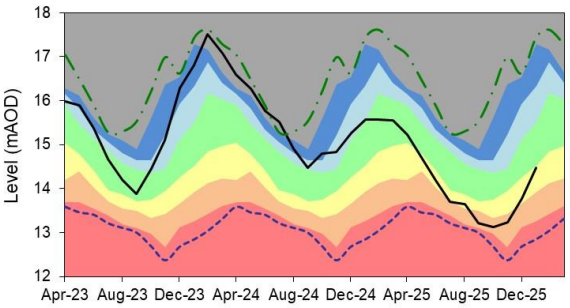
Figure 5.2: End of month groundwater levels at index groundwater level sites for major aquifers. 22 months compared to an analysis of historic end of month levels and long term maximum and minimum levels.



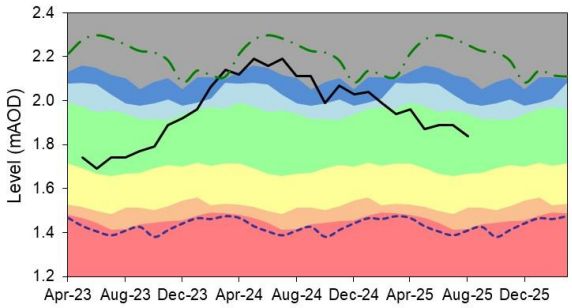
**Fringford - GREAT OOLITE**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Sep-1980 to Dec-2022**



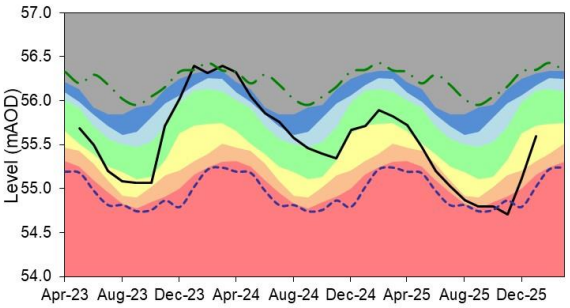

**Gog Magog, Stapleford - CAM CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1980 to Dec-2022**



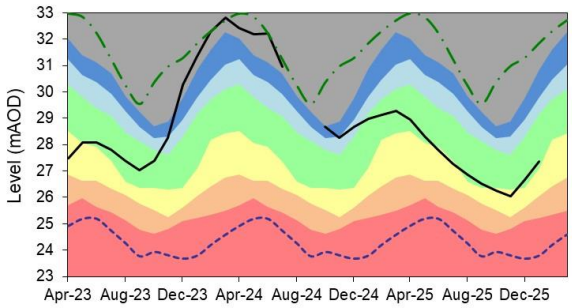

**Hazlewood Common - SUFFOLK CRAG**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Oct-1988 to Nov-2022**



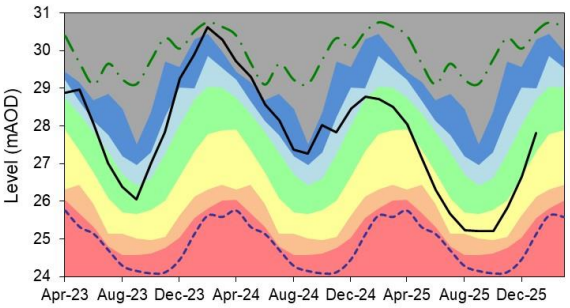

**Hindolveston - NORFOLK CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Sep-1984 to Nov-2022**



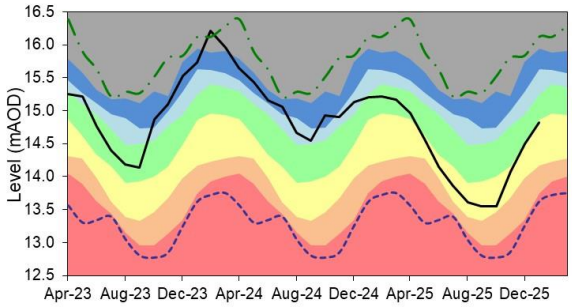

**Kenninghall - LITTLE OUSE CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Aug-1973 to Dec-2022**



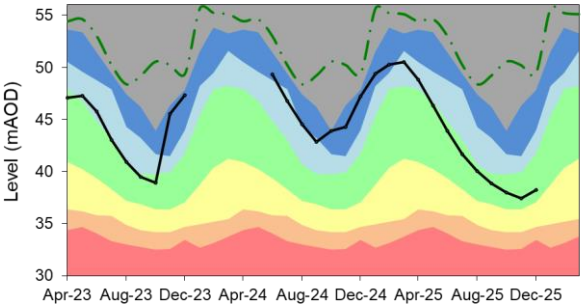

**Linton - CAM CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1980 to Dec-2022**

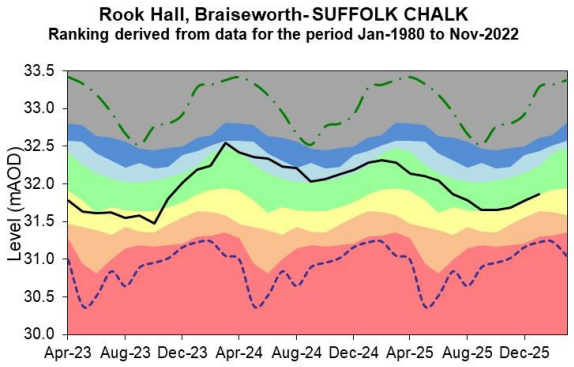


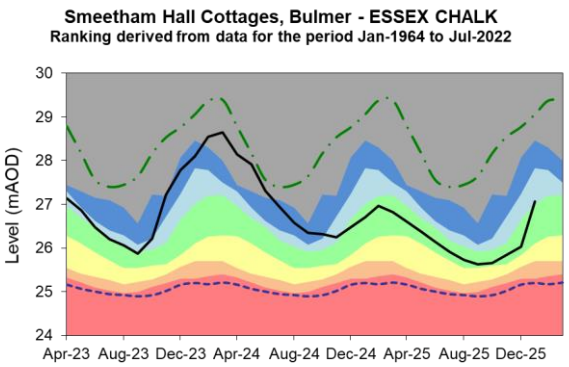

**Newmarket - SNAIL CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Feb-1983 to Dec-2022**

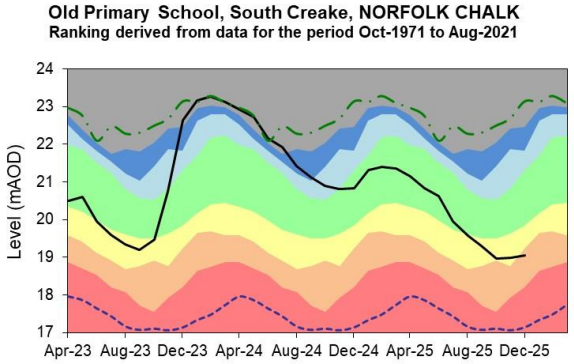


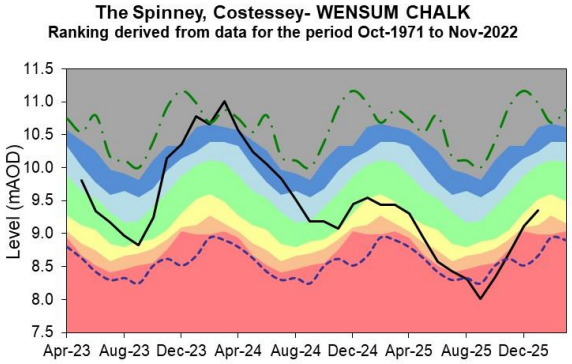

**Redlands Hall, Ickleton - CAM CHALK**
**Ranking derived from data for the period Aug-1963 to Dec-2022**

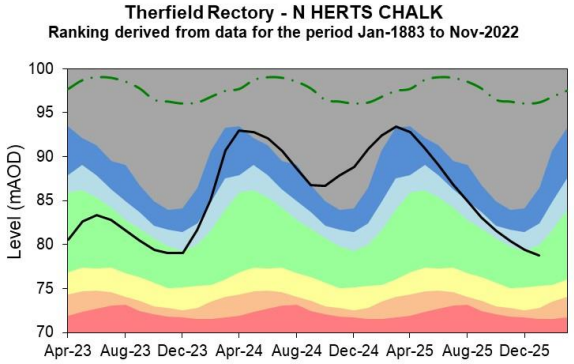


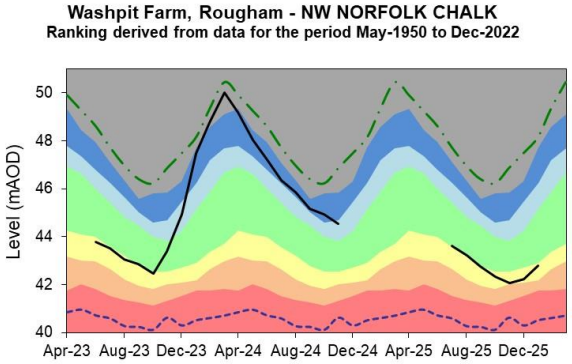


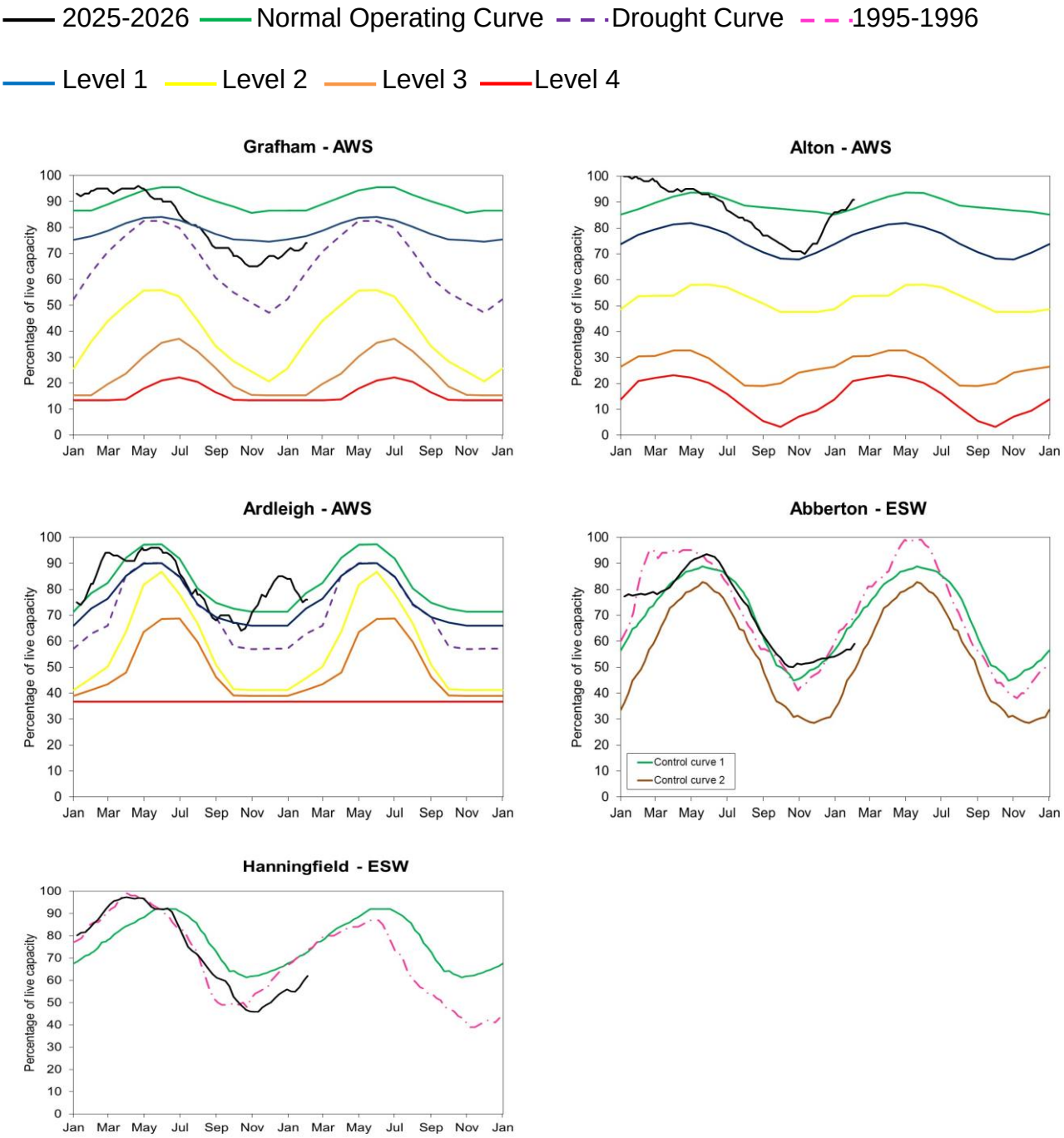




Source: Environment Agency, 2026.

# 6 Reservoir stocks

Figure 6.1: End of month regional reservoir stocks compared to the normal operating curve, drought curve and dry 1995-1996 stocks. Note: Historic records of individual reservoirs and reservoir groups making up the regional values vary in length.

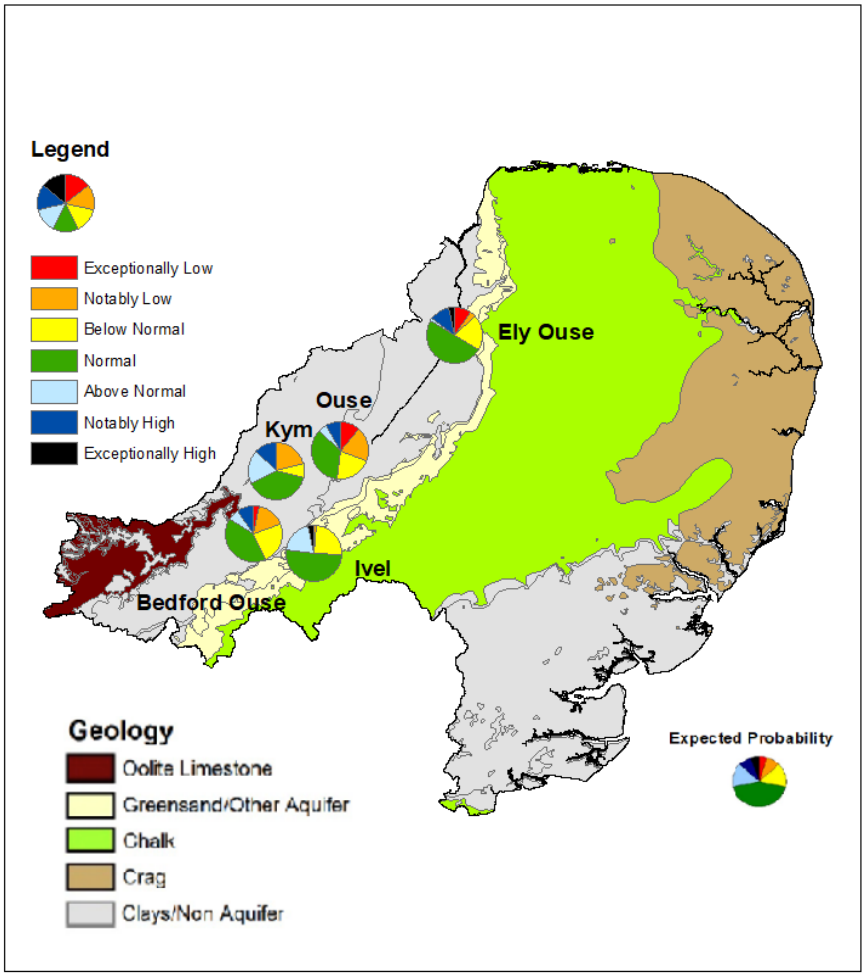



(Source: water companies. For more information on Anglian Water's reservoir level curves, please see Appendix 4 in their Drought Plan).

# 7 Forward look

## 7.1 Probabilistic ensemble projection of river flows at key sites in March 2026

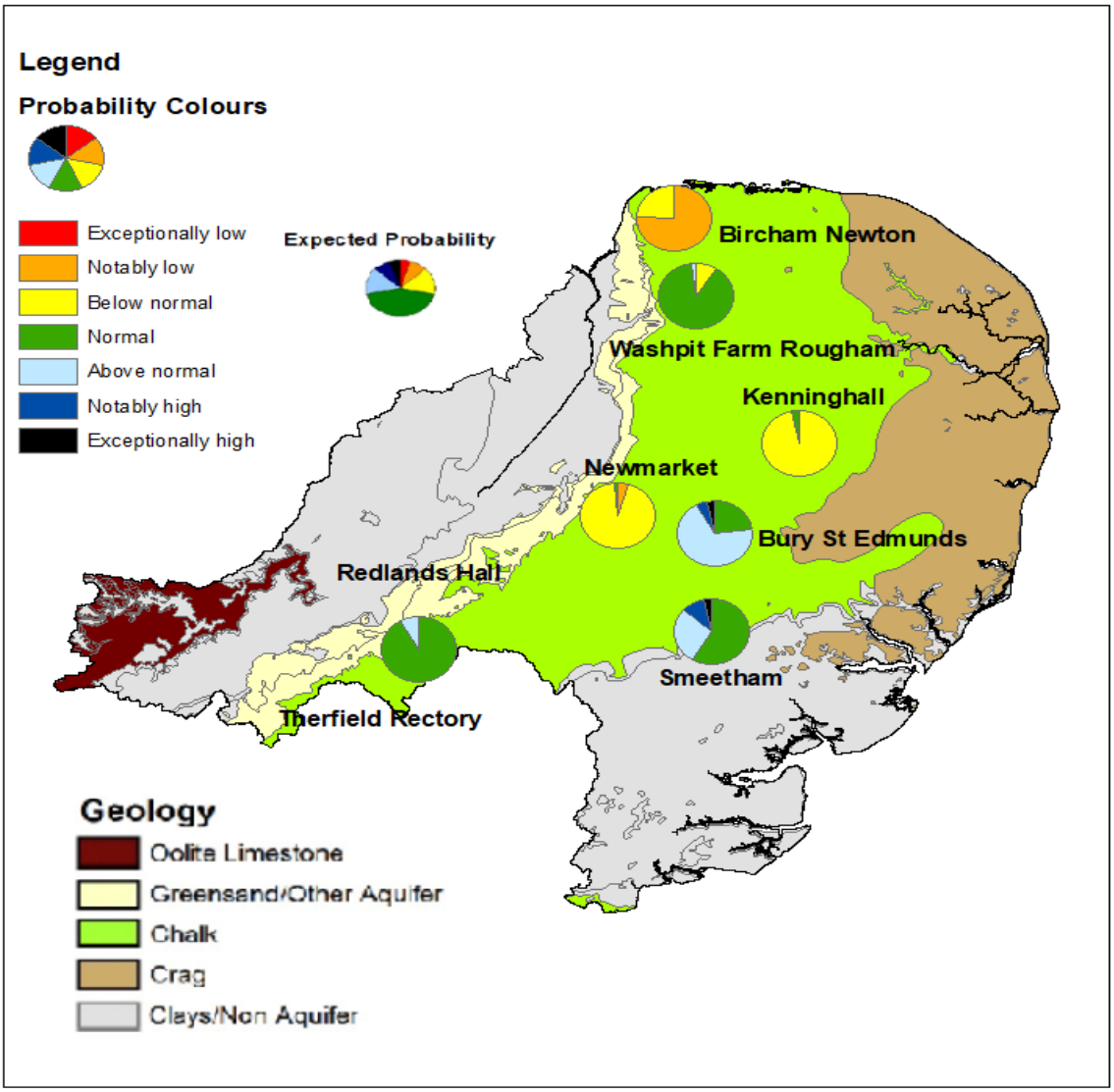
Table available in the appendices with detailed information. Exceptionally high or low levels are those which would typically occur 5% of the time within the historic record. Notably high or low levels are those which would typically occur 8% of the time. Above normal or below normal levels are those which would typically occur 15% of the time. Normal levels are those which would typically occur 44% of the time within the historic record.




Pie charts indicate probability, based on climatology, of the surface water flow at each site being, for example, exceptionally low for the time of year. (Source: Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Environment Agency) Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS © NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100026380, 2026.

## 7.2 Probabilistic ensemble projection of groundwater levels at key sites in March 2026

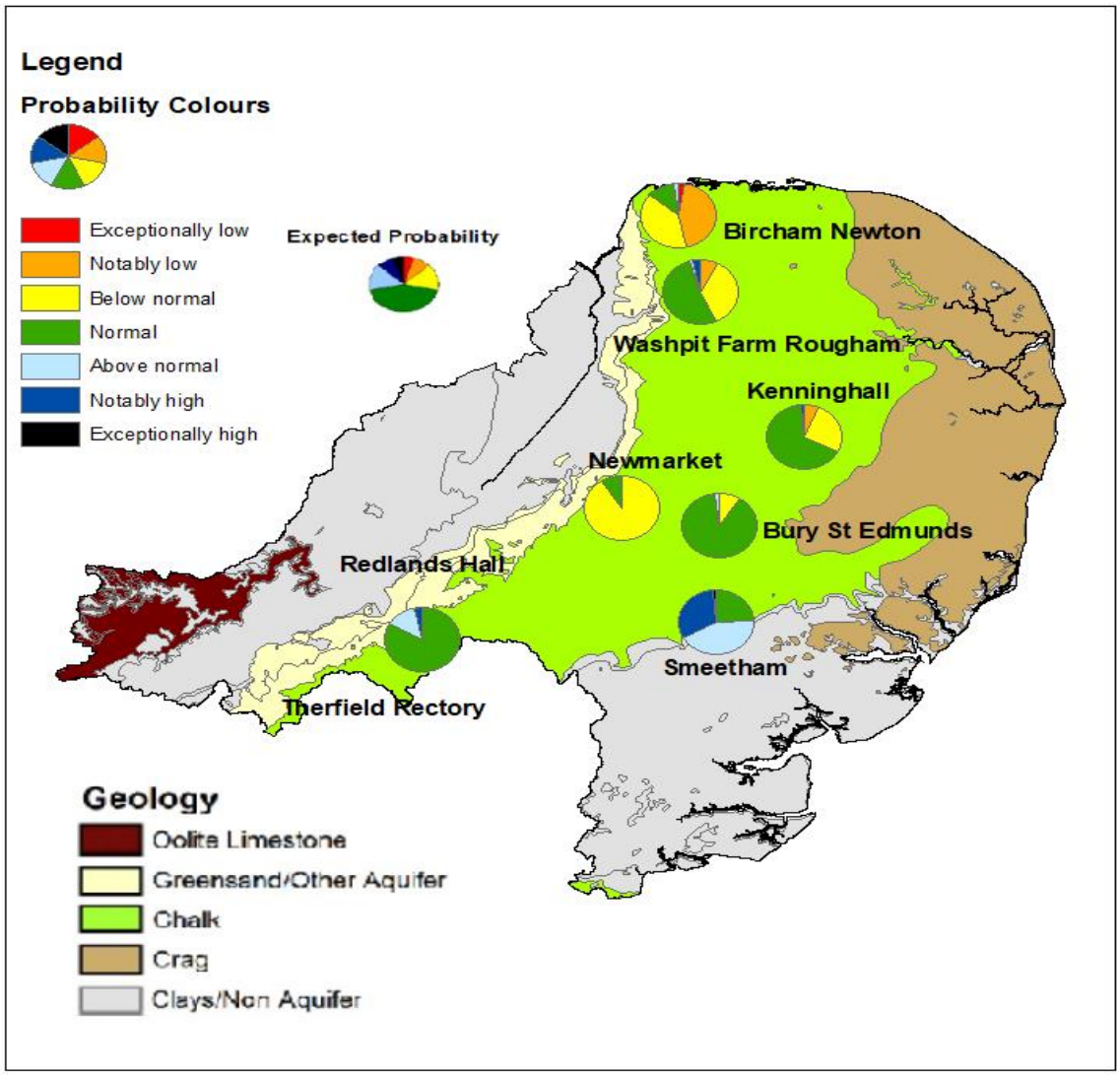
Table available in the appendices with detailed information. Exceptionally high or low levels are those which would typically occur 5% of the time within the historic record. Notably high or low levels are those which would typically occur 8% of the time. Above normal or below normal levels are those which would typically occur 15% of the time. Normal levels are those which would typically occur 44% of the time within the historic record.




Pie charts indicate probability, based on climatology, of the groundwater level at each site being, for example, exceptionally low for the time of year. (Source: Environment Agency)

## 7.3 Probabilistic ensemble projection of groundwater levels at key sites in September 2026

Table available in the appendices with detailed information. Exceptionally high or low levels are those which would typically occur 5% of the time within the historic record. Notably high or low levels are those which would typically occur 8% of the time. Above normal or below normal levels are those which would typically occur 15% of the time. Normal levels are those which would typically occur 44% of the time within the historic record.




Pie charts indicate probability, based on climatology, of the groundwater level at each site being, for example, exceptionally low for the time of year. (Source: Environment Agency)

# 8 Glossary

## 8.1 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).

## 8.2 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 Appendices

## 9.1 Rainfall table

| Hydrological area | Jan 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020 | Jan 2026 band | Nov 2025 to January cumulative band | Aug 2025 to January cumulative band | Feb 2025 to January cumulative band |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Broadland Rivers | 141 | Above Normal | Above normal | Normal | Below normal |
| Cam | 139 | Notably High | Notably high | Normal | Below normal |
| Central Area Fenland | 148 | Notably High | Exceptionally high | Normal | Below normal |
| East Suffolk | 189 | Exceptionally High | Notably high | Above normal | Normal |
| Little Ouse And Lark | 150 | Notably High | Notably high | Normal | Below normal |
| Lower Bedford Ouse | 144 | Above Normal | Exceptionally high | Normal | Below normal |
| North Essex | 198 | Exceptionally High | Notably high | Normal | Below normal |
| North Norfolk | 129 | Above Normal | Above normal | Normal | Notably low |
| Nw Norfolk And Wissey | 142 | Notably High | Notably high | Normal | Below normal |
| South Essex | 178 | Notably High | Normal | Normal | Notably low |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Upper Bedford Ouse | 162 | Notably High | Exceptionally high | Above normal | Normal |

## 9.2 River flows table

| Site name | River | Catchment | Jan 2026 band | Dec 2025 band |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Abbey Heath | Little Ouse | Little Ouse | Normal | Below normal |
| Blunham | Ivel | Ivel | Normal | Normal |
| Bramford | Gipping | Gipping | Exceptionally low | Below normal |
| Burnham Overy | Burn | Burn | Below normal | Below normal |
| Burnt Mill | Rhee | Rhee | Normal | Normal |
| Cappenham | Tove | Tove | Above normal | Above normal |
| Colney | Yare | Yare | Normal | Normal |
| Denver | Ely Ouse | Cutoff and Renew Channel | Normal | Below normal |
| Dernford | Cam | Cam | Normal | Below normal |
| Heacham | Heacham | Heacham | Below normal | Notably low |
| Ingworth | Bure | Bure | Normal | Below normal |
| Lexden | Colne | Colne Essex | Notably high | Normal |
| Marham | Nar | Nar | Below normal | Below normal |
| Needham Weir Total | Waveney (lower) | Waveney | Normal | Normal |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Northwold Total | Wissey | Wissey | Normal | Below normal |
| Offord (gross Flows) | Great Ouse | Ouse Beds | Normal | Normal |
| Roxton | Great Ouse | Ivel | Normal | Normal |
| Springfield | Chelmer | Chelmer Upper | Above normal | Normal |
| Swanton Morley Total | Wensum | Wensum | Normal | Normal |
| Temple | Lark | Lark | Normal | Normal |
| Willen | Ouzel | Ouzel | Normal | |

## 9.3 Groundwater table

| Site name | Aquifer | End of Jan 2026 band | End of Dec 2025 band |
|---|---|---|---|
| Biggleswade | Ivel Woburn Sands | Normal | Normal |
| Bircham Newton | North West Norfolk Chalk | Notably low | Notably low |
| Breckland | Wissey Chalk | Notably low | Notably low |
| Bury St Edmunds | Upper Lark Chalk | Above normal | Normal |
| Castle Farm, Offton | East Suffolk Chalk | Below normal | Below normal |
| Gog Magog, Stapleford | Cam Chalk | Below normal | Below normal |
| Hazlewood Common | East Suffolk Crag | | |
| Hindolveston | Norfolk Chalk | Below normal | Notably low |
| Kenninghall | Little Ouse Chalk | Normal | Normal |
| Linton | Cam Chalk | Normal | Normal |
| Newmarket | Snail Chalk | Below normal | Normal |
| Old Primary School, South Creake | North Norfolk Chalk | | Notably low |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Redlands Hall, Ickleton | Cam Chalk | Below Normal | Normal |
| Rook Hall, Braiseworth | East Suffolk Chalk | Normal | Normal |
| Smeetham Hall Cottages, Bulmer | North Essex Chalk | Above normal | Normal |
| The Spinney, Costessey | Wensum Chalk | Below normal | Below normal |
| Washpit Farm, Rougham | North West Norfolk Chalk | Below normal | Below normal |
| Therfield Rectory | Upper Lee Chalk | Normal | Above normal |
| Fringford P.s. | Upper Bedford Ouse Oolitic Limestone (great) | Notably high | Above normal |

## 9.4 Ensemble projections tables

### 9.4.1 Probabilistic ensemble projection of river flows at key sites in March 2026

Percentage of pie chart for each band

| Site | Bedford Ouse | Kym | Ivel | Ouse | Ely Ouse |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exceptionally low | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 |
| Notably low | 16 | 21 | 2 | 19 | 6 |
| Below normal | 24 | 8 | 24 | 24 | 19 |
| Normal | 40 | 39 | 52 | 37 | 50 |
| Above normal | 6 | 19 | 19 | 6 | 4 |
| Notably high | 10 | 13 | 0 | 13 | 6 |
| Exceptionally high | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 6 |

### 9.4.2 Probabilistic ensemble projection of river flows at key sites in June 2026

Percentage of pie chart for each band

| Site | Bedford Ouse | Kym | Ivel | Ouse | Ely Ouse |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exceptionally low | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Notably low | 19 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 22 |
| Below normal | 10 | 6 | 10 | 10 | 28 |
| Normal | 52 | 85 | 58 | 68 | 39 |
| Above normal | 15 | 6 | 26 | 18 | 6 |
| Notably high | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Exceptionally high | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |

### 9.4.3 Probabilistic ensemble projection of groundwater levels at key sites in March 2026

Percentage of pie chart for each band

| Site | Therfield Rectory | Newmarket | Washpit Farm | Bircham Newton | Kenninghall | Bury St Edmunds | Smeetham |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exceptionally low | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Notably low | 0.0 | 4.6 | 0.0 | 75.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Below normal | 0.0 | 93.8 | 9.2 | 24.6 | 96.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Normal | 91.8 | 1.5 | 89.2 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 23.1 | 58.5 |
| Above normal | 8.2 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 69.2 | 27.7 |
| Notably high | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.6 | 10.8 |
| Exceptionally high | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 3.1 |

### 9.4.4 Probabilistic ensemble projection of groundwater levels at key sites in September 2026

Percentage of pie chart for each band

| Site | Therfield Rectory | Newmarket | Washpit Farm | Bircham Newton | Kenninghall | Bury St Edmunds | Smeetham |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Exceptionally low | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Notably low | 0.0 | 0.0 | 7.7 | 43.1 | 6.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| Below normal | 0.0 | 90.8 | 35.4 | 40.0 | 26.2 | 9.2 | 0.0 |
| Normal | 83.6 | 9.2 | 52.3 | 12.3 | 66.2 | 89.2 | 24.6 |
| Above normal | 13.1 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 41.5 |
| Notably high | 3.3 | 0.0 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 32.3 |
| Exceptionally high | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.5 |