

Monthly water situation report: East Anglia

1 Summary - February 2026

East Anglia rainfall for February 2026 ranged from 129% to 204% of the long term average for the month. The soil moisture deficit for East Anglia at the end of February 2026 was 3.4mm with all catchment areas ending February 2026 with deficits below 10mm. River flows were greater than normal or normal for all sites except Heacham which recorded below normal flows. Groundwater levels have increased across all sites with most sites recording greater than or normal groundwater for this time of year. Only 3 sites across East Anglia show below normal groundwater levels for this time of year. Public water supply reservoirs ended February 2026 with levels ranging from 71% to 98% of their full storage capacities. Two reservoirs ended the month with levels above their respective normal operating curves, and 3 reservoirs ended the month with levels below their respective normal operating curves.

1.1 Rainfall

East Anglia received above average rainfall in February 2026. February 2026 rainfall totals across East Anglia ranged from 129% to 204% of the long term average (LTA) for the month. The average rainfall across East Anglia for February 2026 was 75mm, which is 176% of the historic LTA and is considered notably high for the time of year. The highest rainfall totals were recorded in the Upper and Lower Bedford Ouse, East Suffolk and North Essex, with these catchments all recording exceptionally high rainfall for the time of year. The cumulative rainfall totals over the past 3 and 6 months have been above average across all catchments. Over the past 12 months, rainfall totals have been classified as normal in all catchments except for North West Norfolk and Wissey, North Norfolk and South Essex.

1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

The soil moisture deficit (SMD) for East Anglia at the end of February 2026 was 3.4mm, which is normal for the time of year. All catchments have SMD values of 5mm or below. Central Area Fenland and North Norfolk have SMD values between 25mm and 6mm below the LTA for February 2026. The remaining 9 catchments in East Anglia have SMD values between 5mm above and 5mm below the LTA for February 2026. SMD has improved since January 2026 with 2 catchments North Essex and Lower Bedford Ouse moving from SMD values of 25mm to 6mm below the LTA into 5mm above and 5mm below the LTA.

1.3 River flows

Following above average rainfall across East Anglia, the February 2026 month mean flows at roughly half the monitoring sites have increased compared to January 2026. All sites have greater than normal or normal flows except Heacham which received below normal flows at

54% of the LTA. Five sites recorded exceptionally high month mean flows with LTAs ranging from 220% at the Ouse to 283% at the Colne.

1.4 Groundwater levels

Groundwater levels have continued to rise in all reporting sites, for which there is data available, for February 2026. Most sites are greater than or normal for this time of year with Smeetham Hall Cottages recording notably high for this time of year and Fringford recording exceptionally high for this time of year. Three reporting sites; Bircham Newton, Hindolveston and Breckland have below normal groundwater levels for this time of year.

1.5 Reservoir stocks

All public water supply reservoirs have seen a net increase in storage for February 2026. At the end of the month, levels ranged from 71% to 98% of the full storage capacity. Alton and Ardleigh reservoirs ended the month with levels above their respective normal operating curves. Grafham, Abberton and Hanningfield reservoirs ended the month with levels below their respective normal operating curves.

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. The Ouse at Roxton and Ely Ouse at Denver are the only sites with projections of flows below normal for March 2026. River flow projections for June 2026 show most sites with a high probability of normal or higher flows. The Ely Ouse at Denver shows a greater than 50% prediction that flows will be less than normal in June 2026.

1.6.2 Probabilistic ensemble projections for groundwater levels in key aquifers

Groundwater projections for March 2026 show a high probability of normal or higher levels at most sites. Bircham Newton and Newmarket have a higher probability that the groundwater levels will be below normal for March 2026. Bury St Edmunds and Smeetham are predicted to have greater than normal groundwater levels for March 2026. Groundwater projections for September 2026 show a high probability of normal or higher levels at most sites. Bircham Newton and Newmarket have a higher probability that the groundwater levels will be below normal for September 2026. Therfield Rectory and Smeetham are predicted to have greater than normal groundwater levels for September 2026.

Author: Hydrology Team, hydrology-ean-and-lna@environment-agency.gov.uk

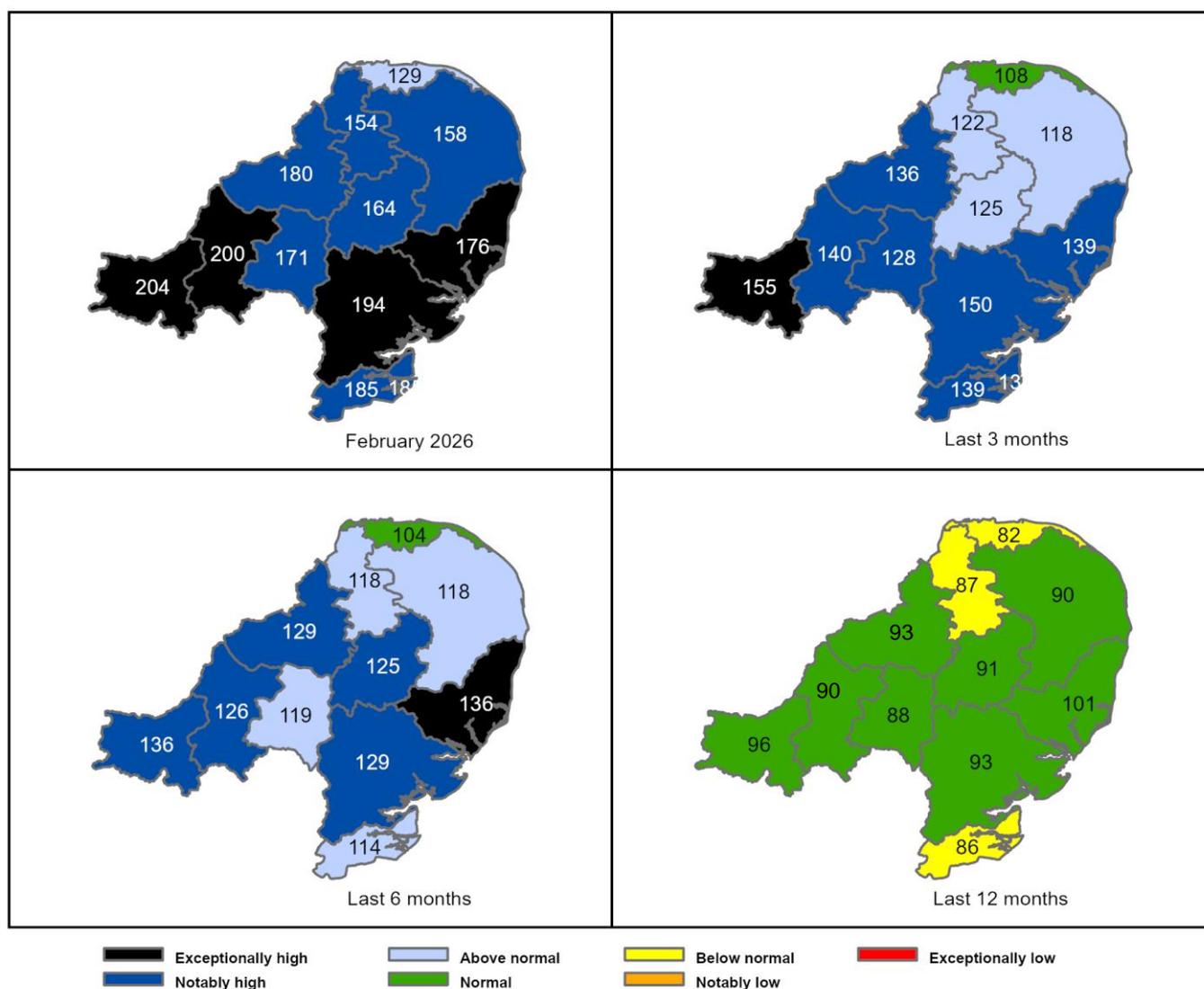
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Contact Details: 03708 506 506

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 28 February 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.



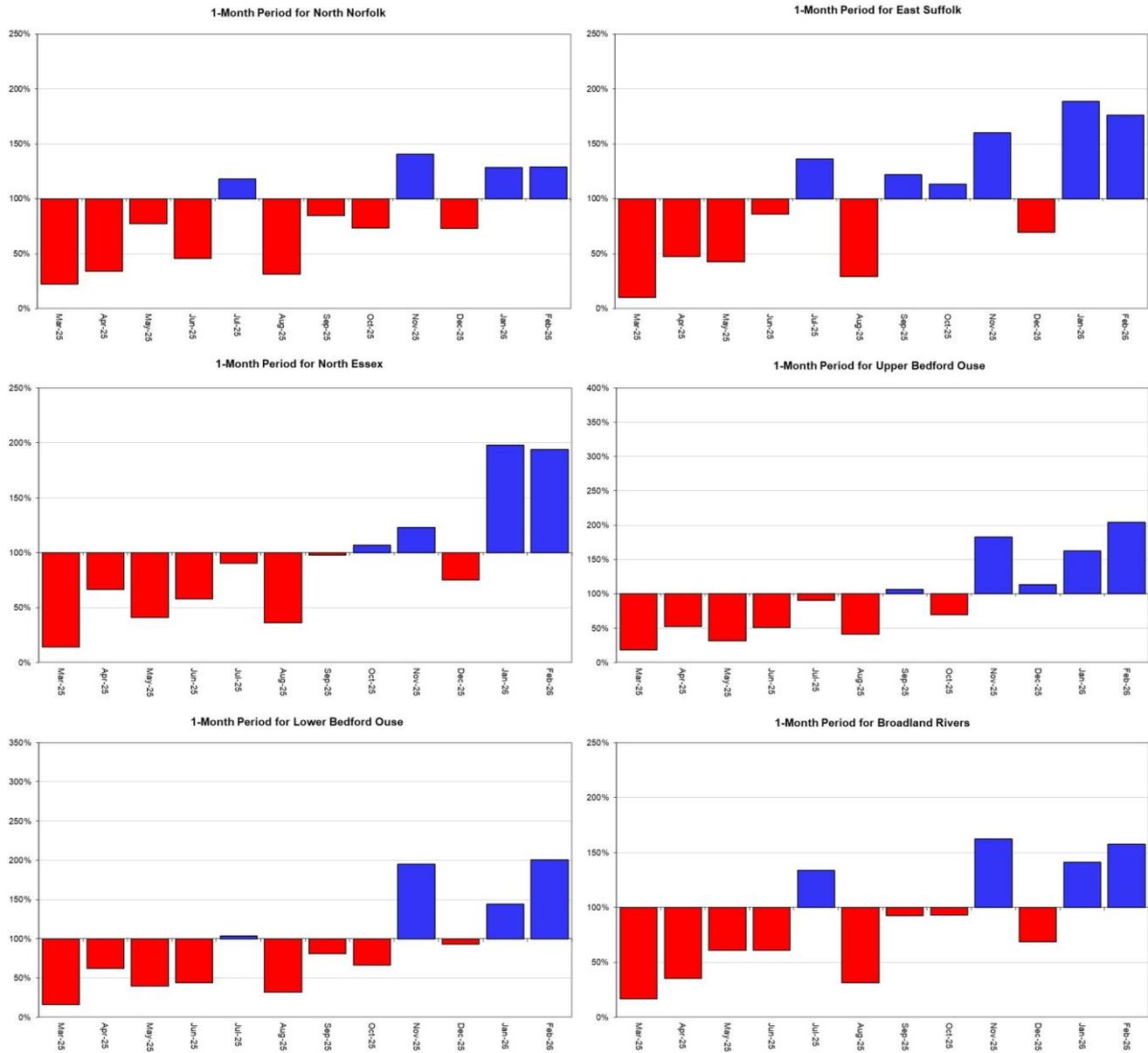
HadUK data based on the Met Office 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026). Provisional data based on Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. Crown copyright. All rights reserved.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

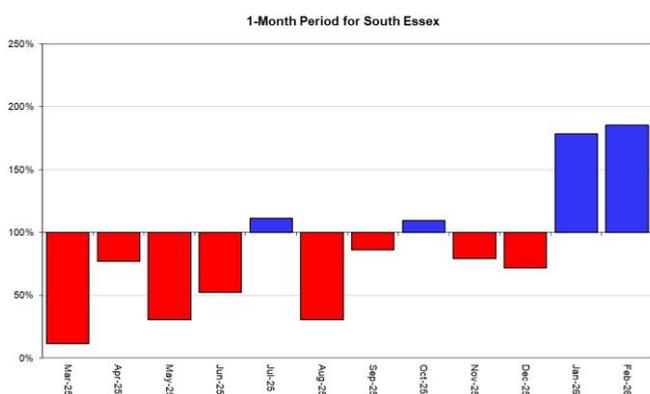
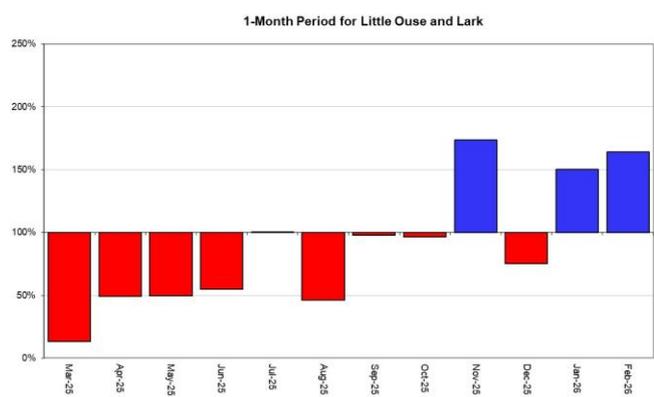
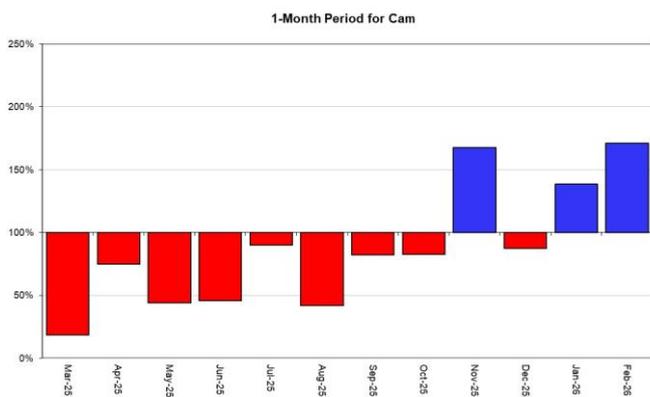
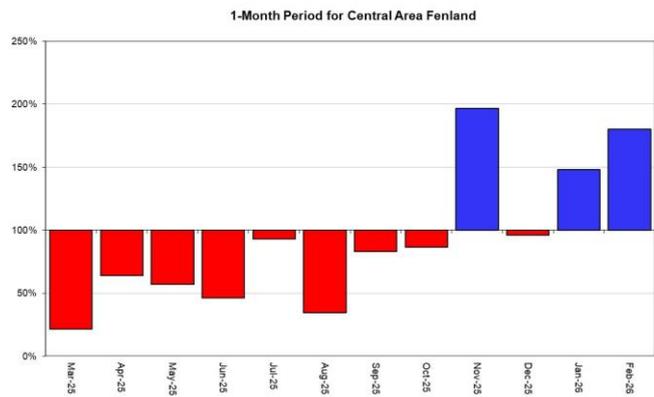
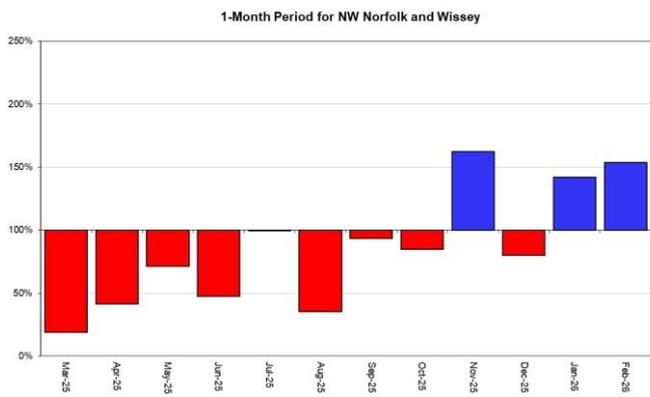
2.2 Rainfall charts

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.

■ Above average rainfall

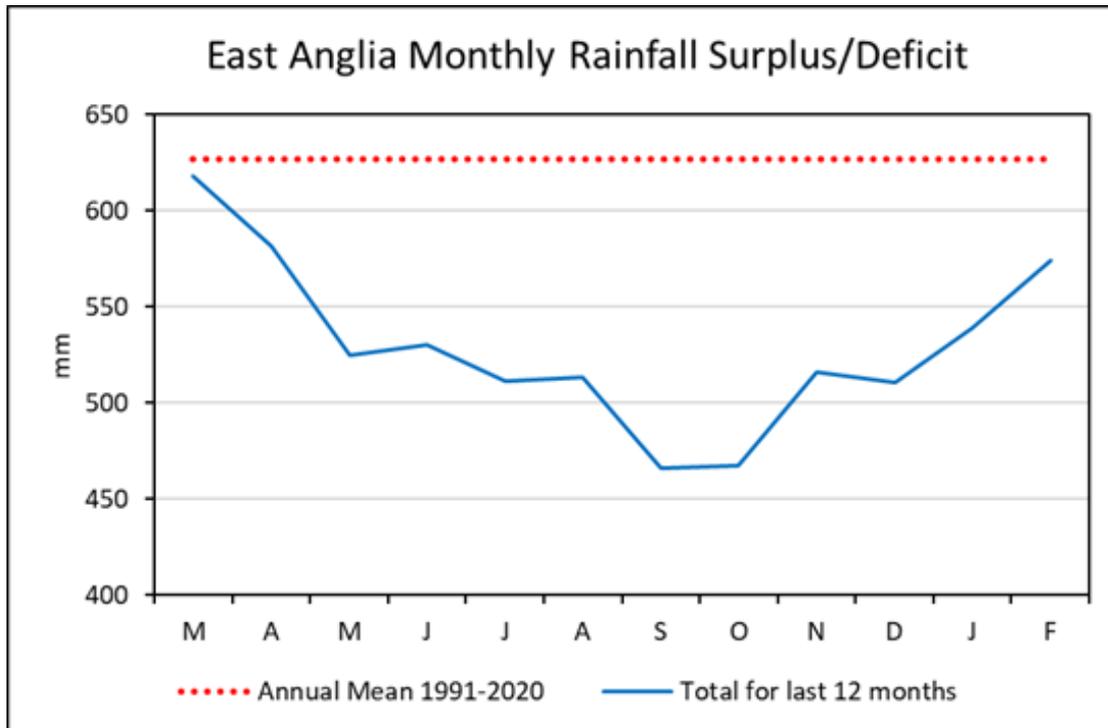
■ Below average rainfall





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 28 February 2026. Values based on the weekly MORECS data for real land use.

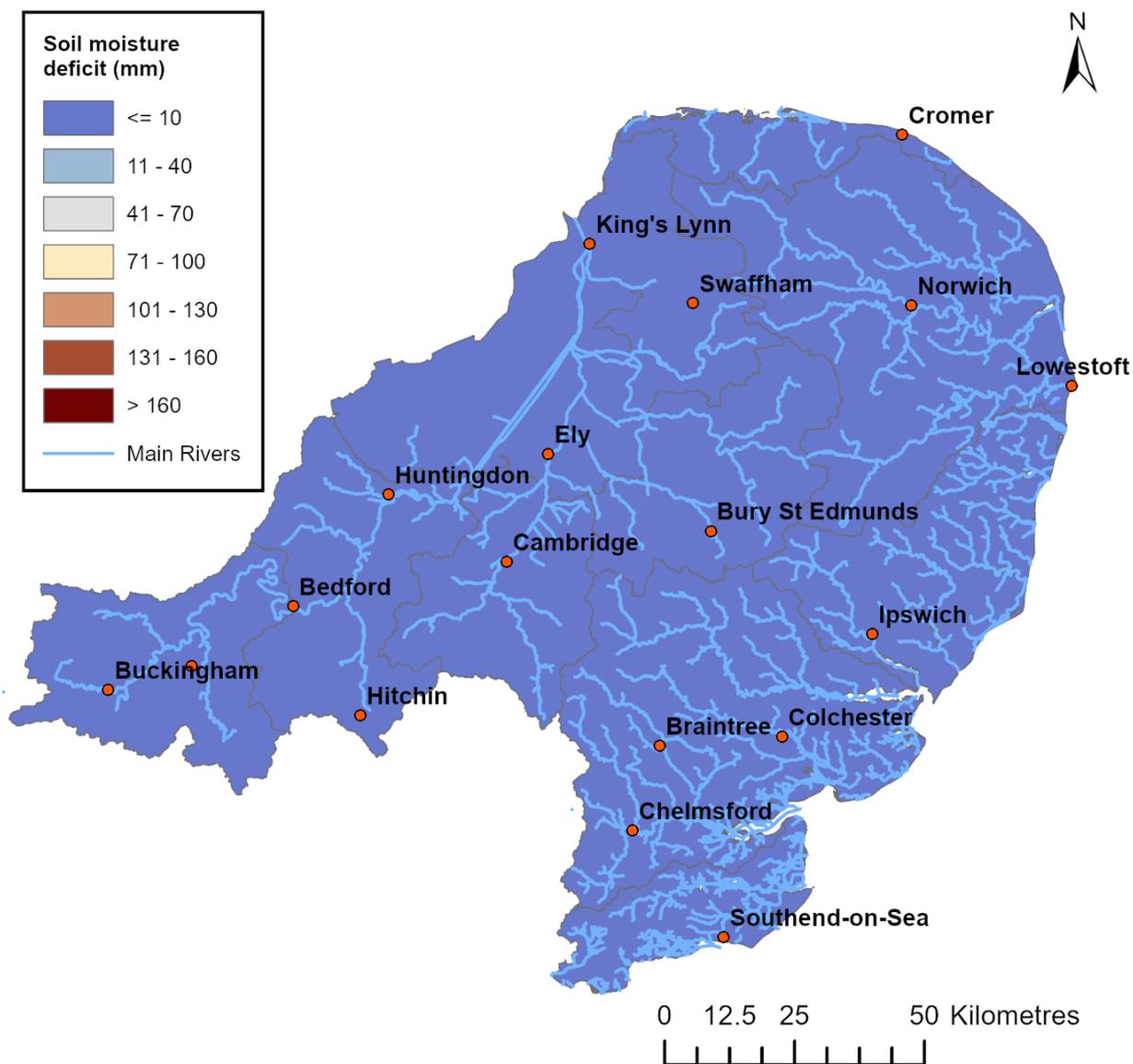
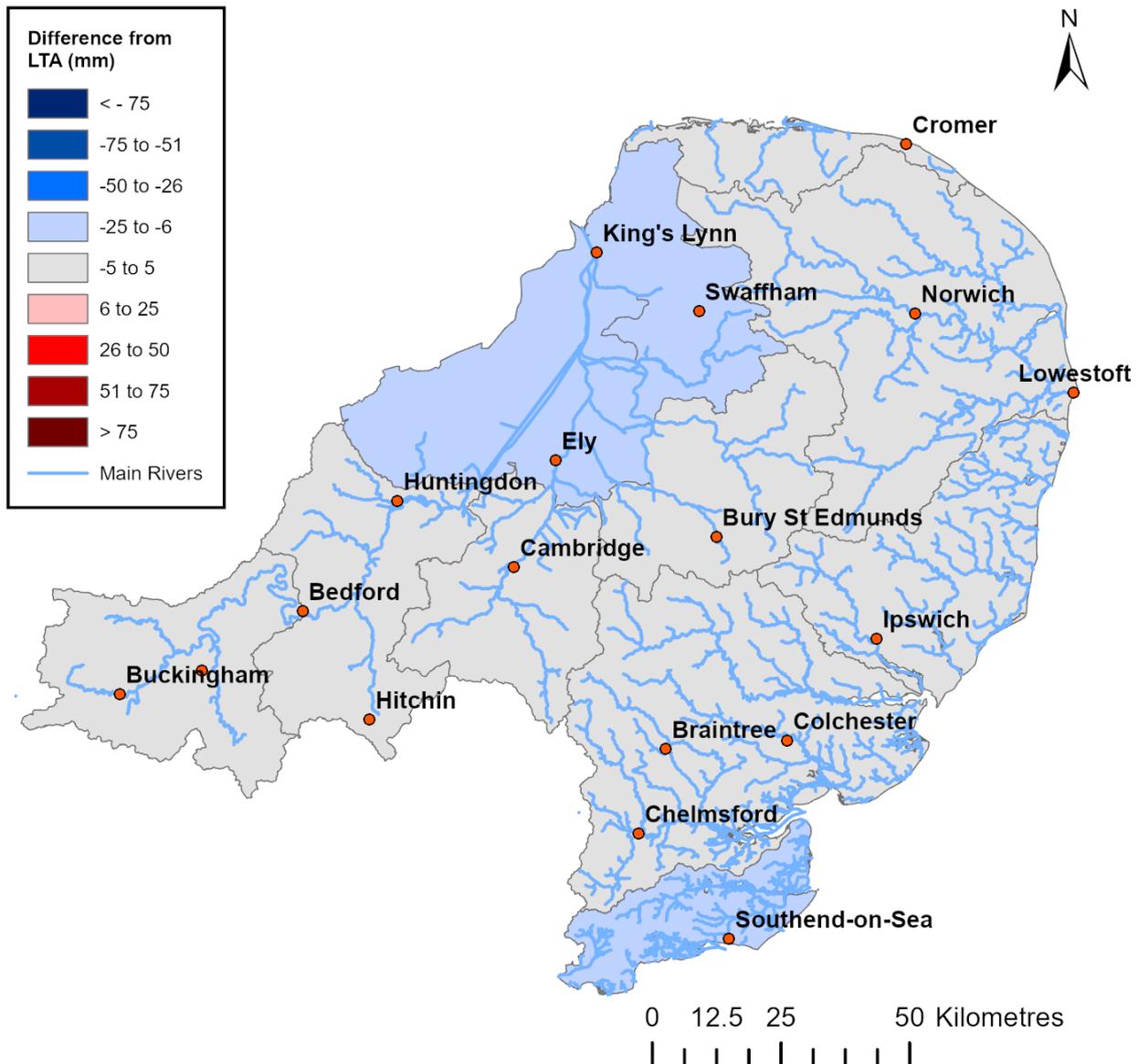


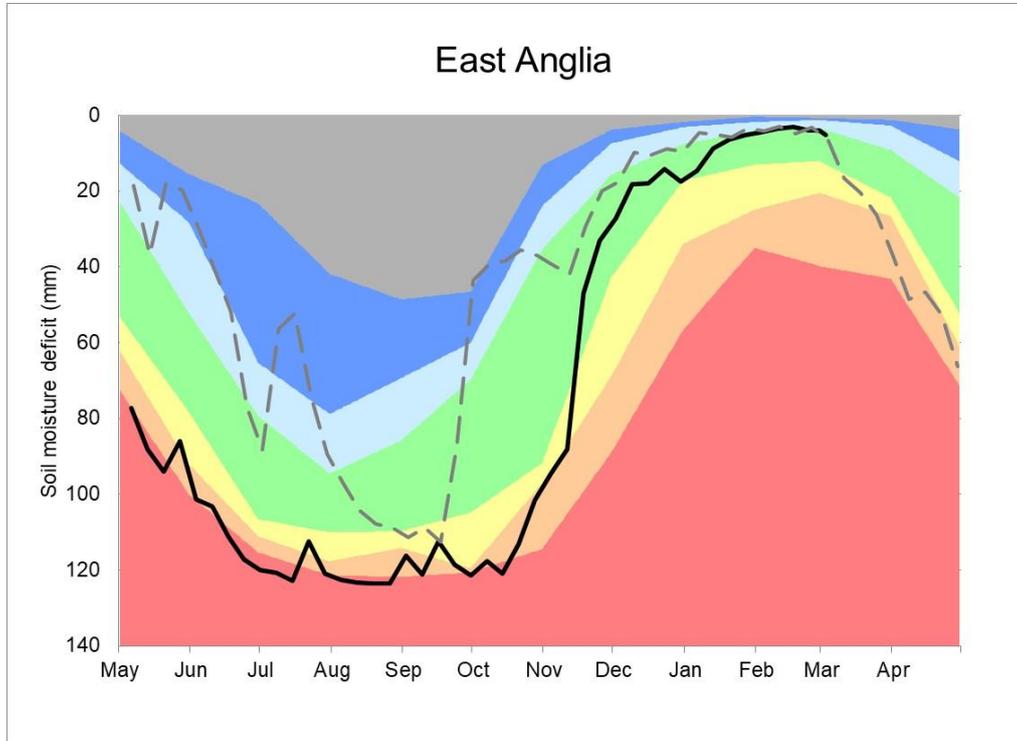
Figure 3.2: Difference between soil moisture deficit values for 28 February 2026 and the long term average soil moisture deficit values for the end of February. Values based on the weekly MORECS data for real land use.



(Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026). All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100024198, 2026.

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.

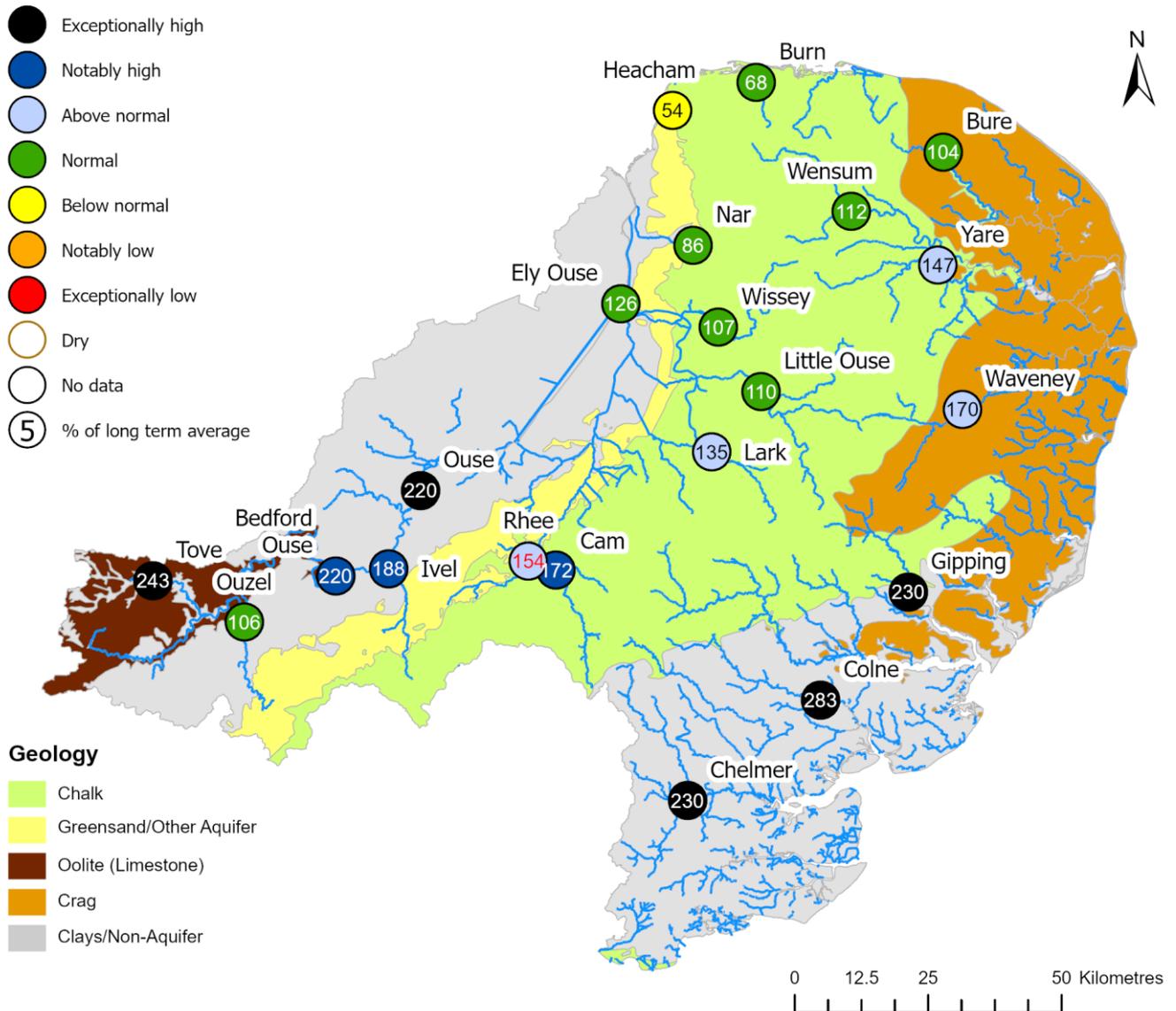


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4 River flows

4.1 River flows map

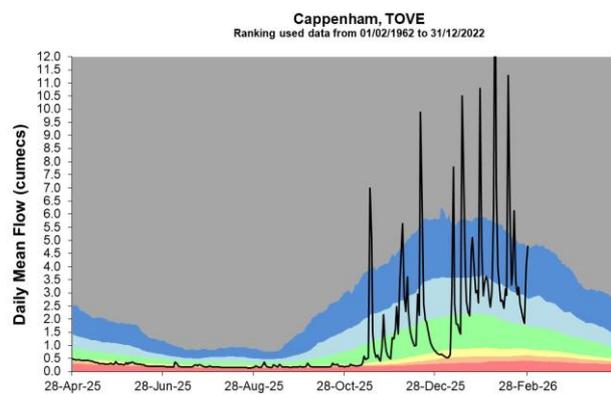
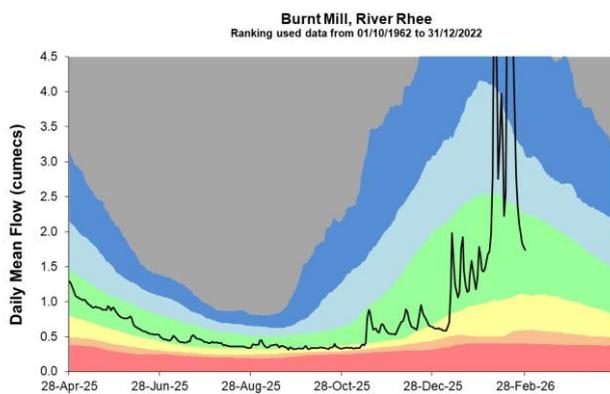
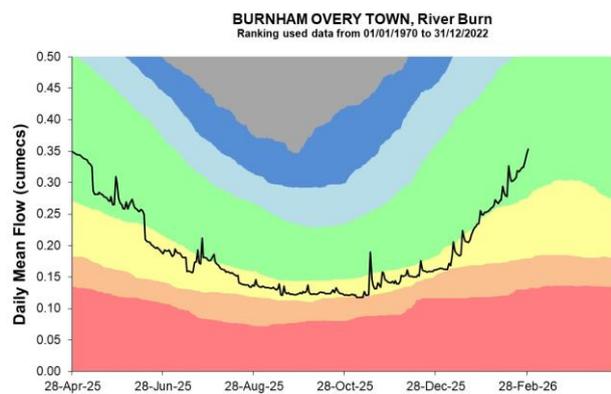
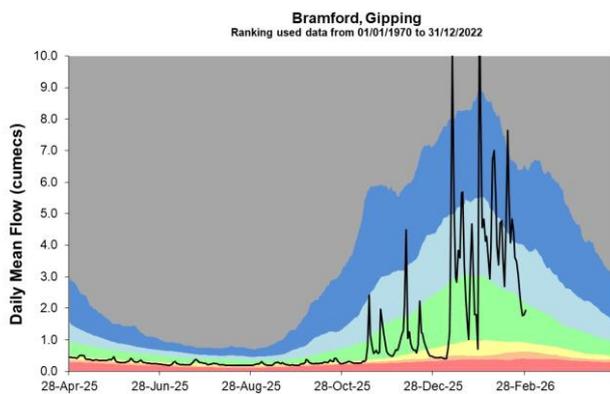
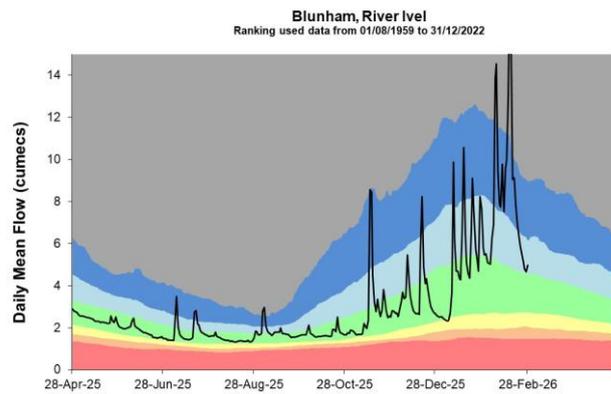
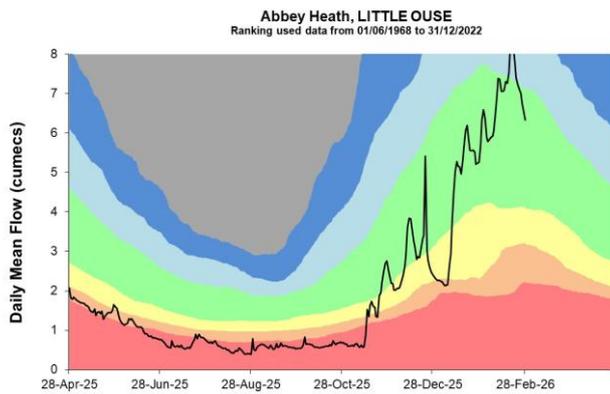
Figure 4.1: Monthly mean river flow for indicator sites for February 2026, expressed as a percentage of the respective long term average and classed relative to an analysis of historic February monthly means Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



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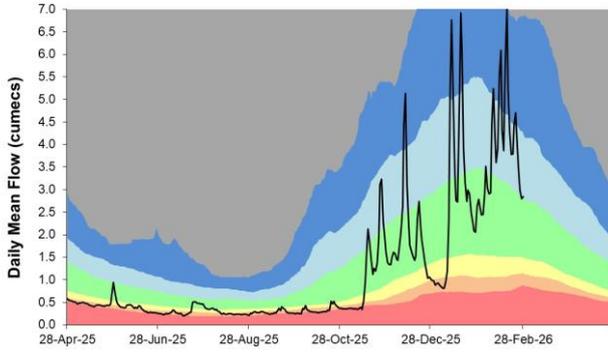
4.2 River flow charts

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.



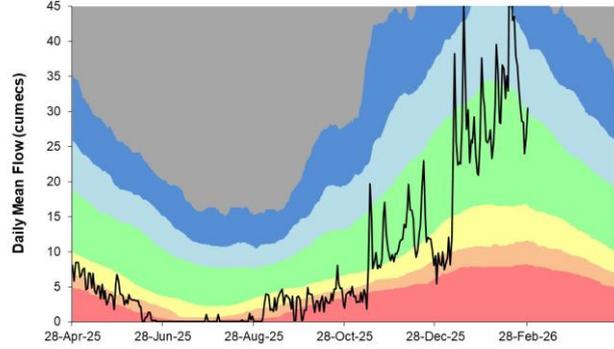
COLNEY, River Yare

Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022



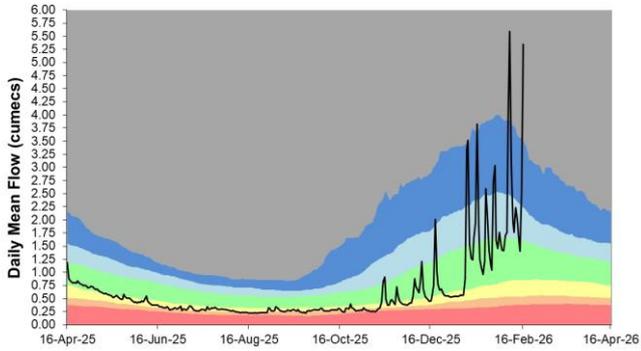
Denver, ELY OUSE

Ranking used data from 01/11/1971 to 31/12/2022



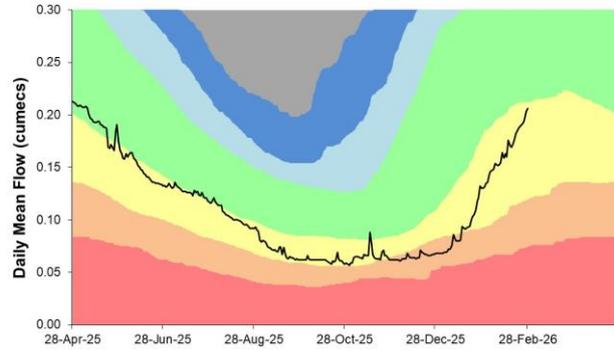
Dernford, CAM

Ranking used data from 21/02/1949 to 23/12/2022



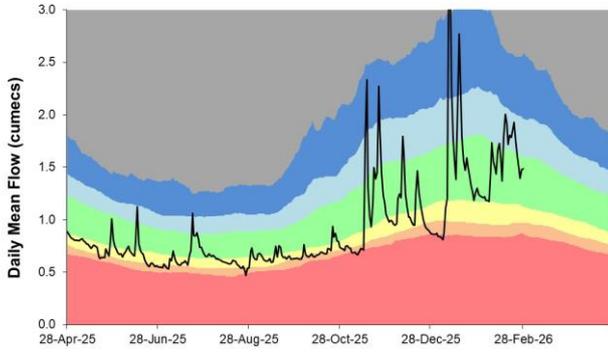
Heacham, HEACHAM

Ranking used data from 01/11/1965 to 31/12/2022



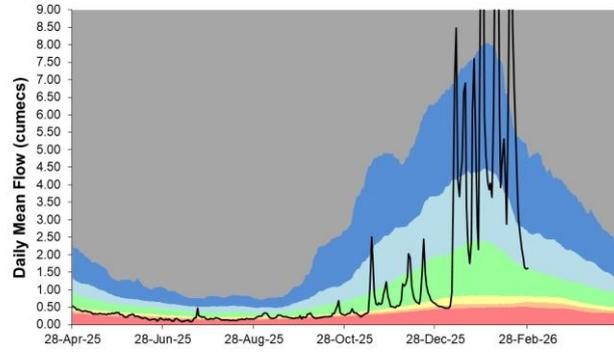
Ingworth, Bure

Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022



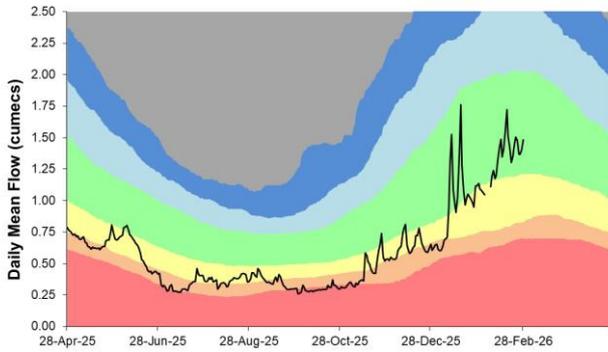
Lexden, Colne

Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022



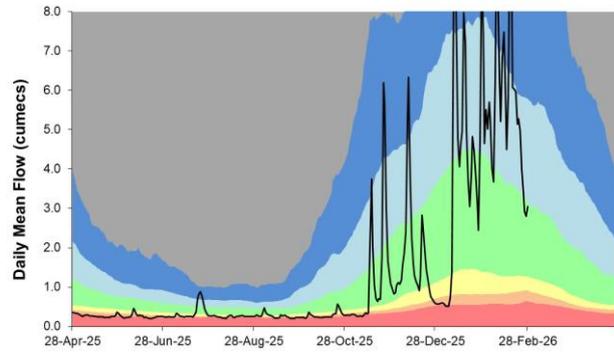
Marham, River Nar

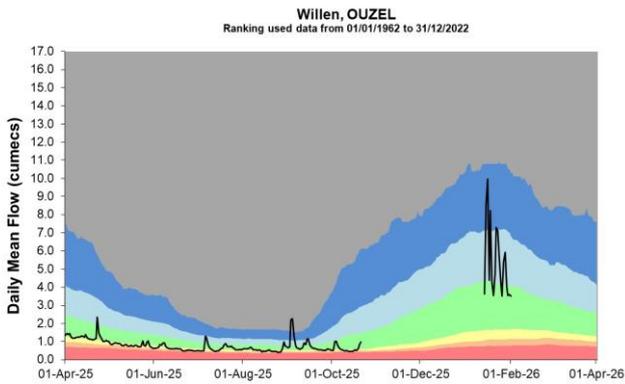
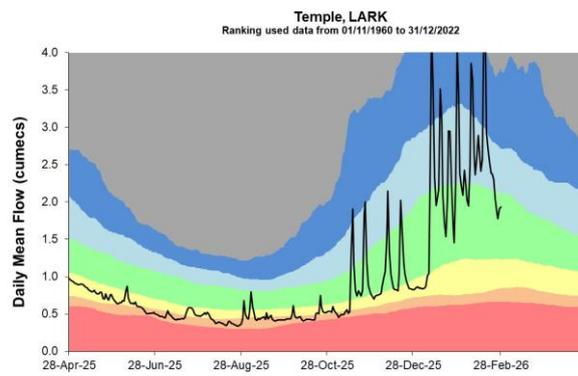
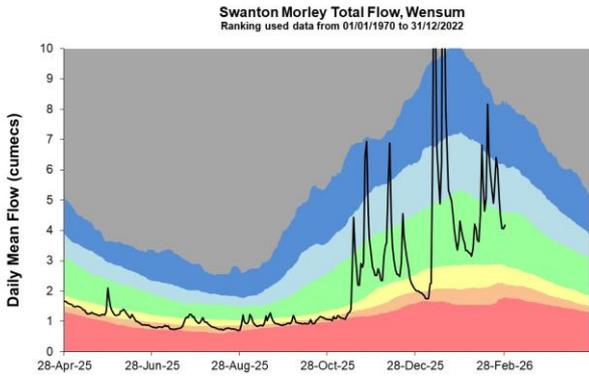
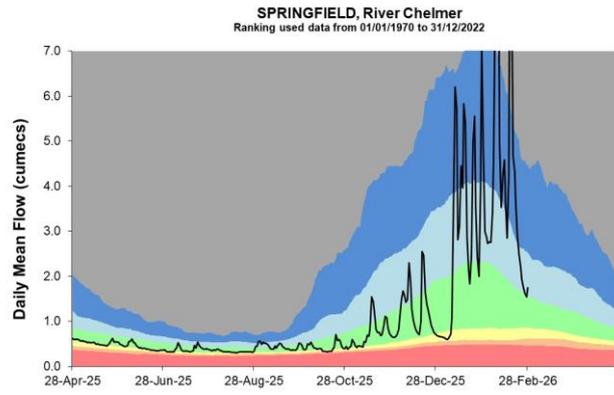
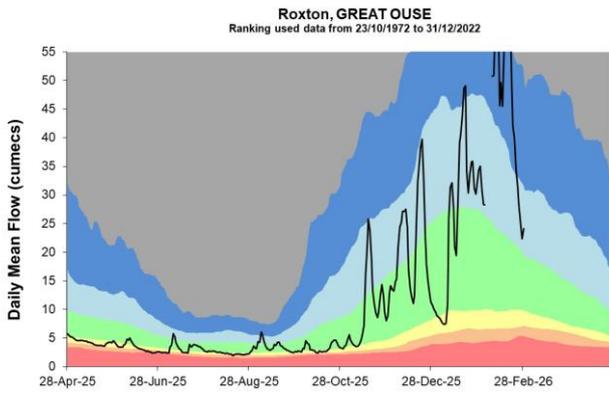
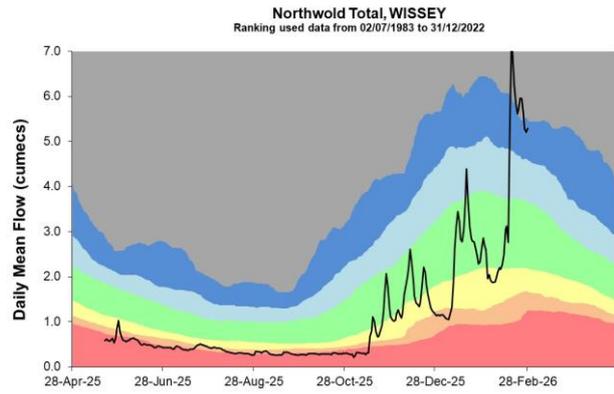
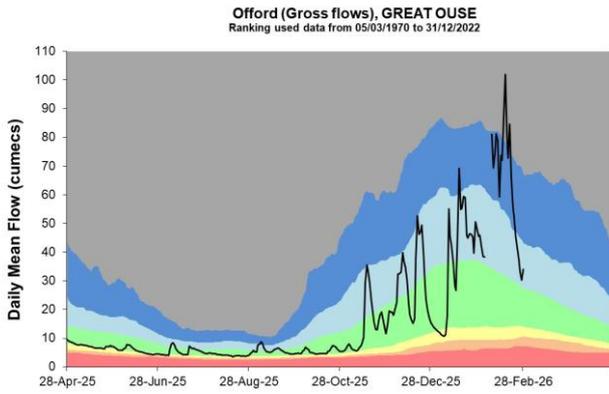
Ranking used data from 01/09/1953 to 31/12/2022



Needham Weir Total, Waveney

Ranking used data from 01/01/1970 to 31/12/2022



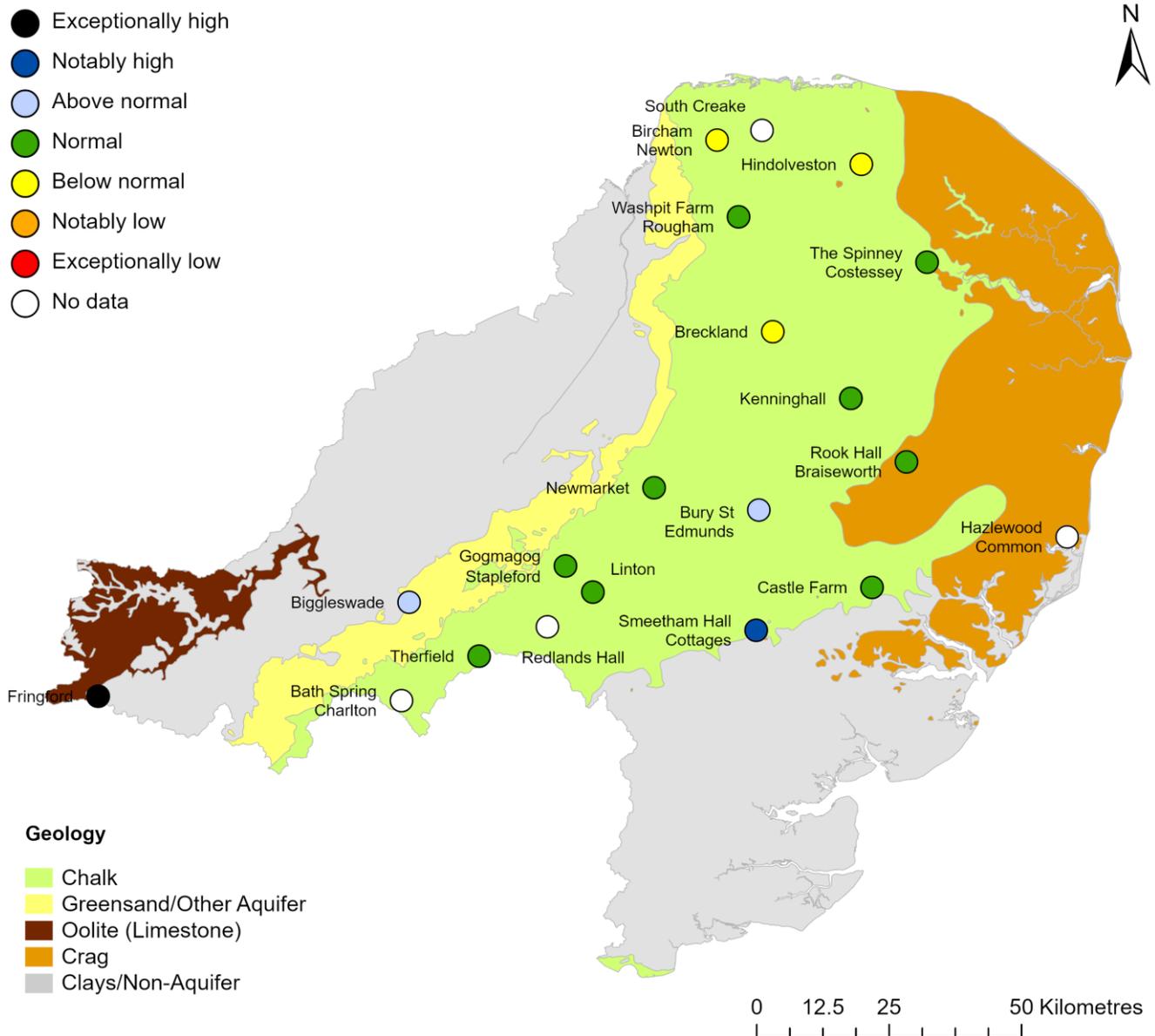


Source: Environment Agency.

5 Groundwater levels

5.1 Groundwater levels map

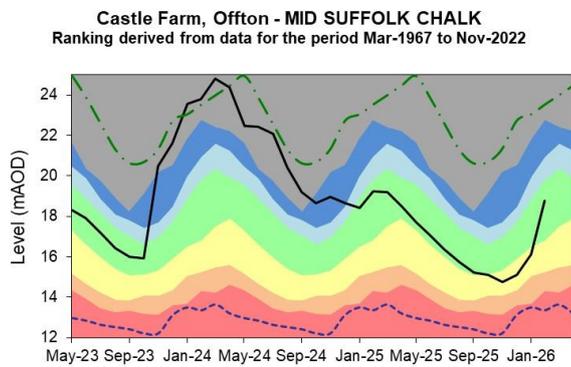
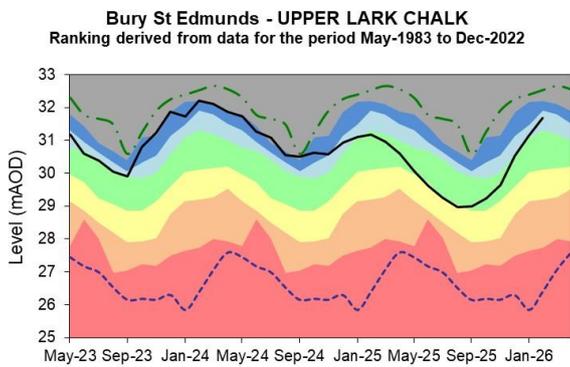
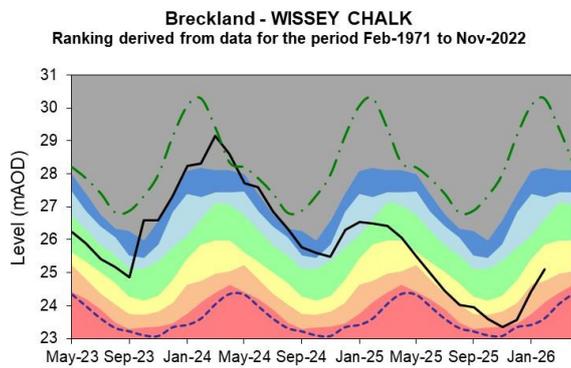
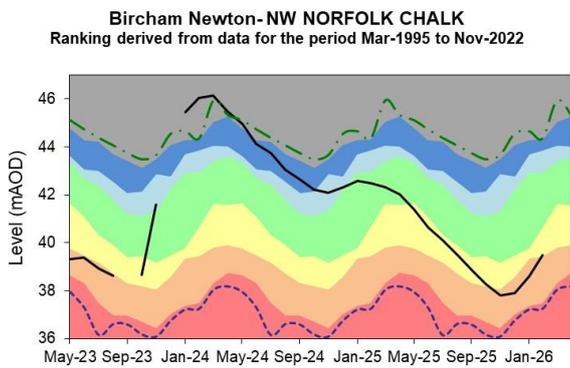
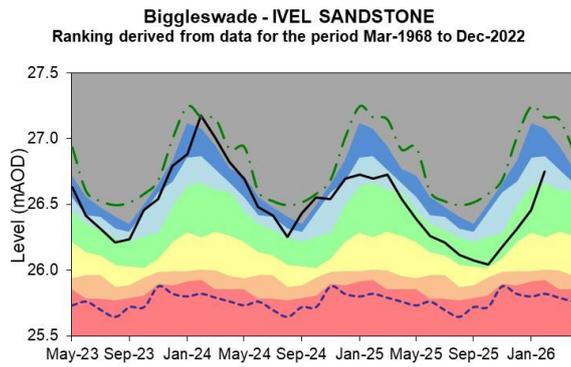
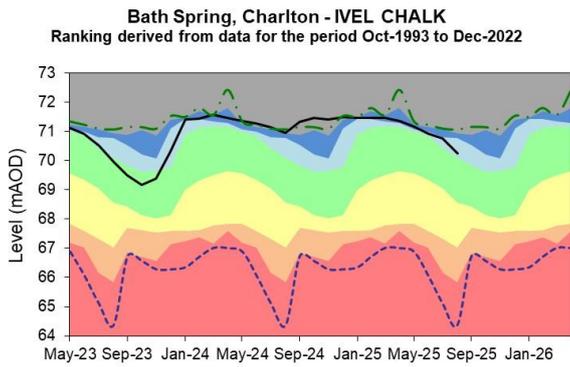
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of February 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic February levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



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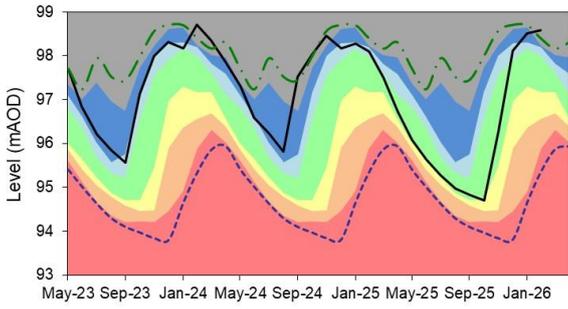
5.2 Groundwater level charts

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.



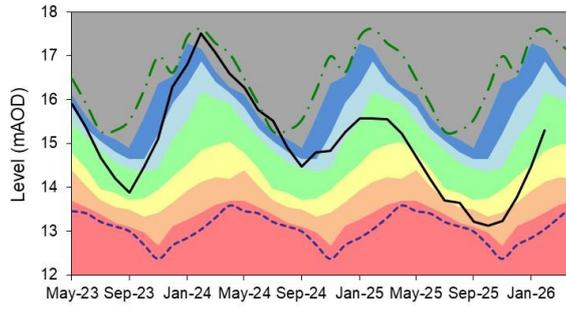
Fringford - GREAT OOLITE

Ranking derived from data for the period Sep-1980 to Dec-2022



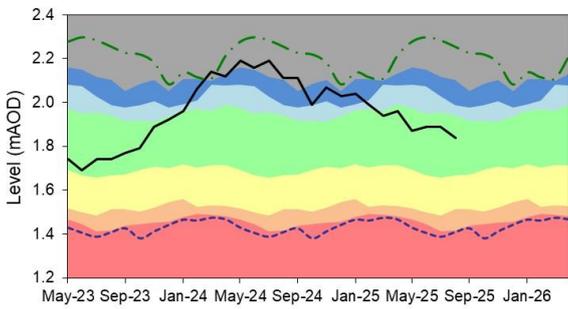
Gog Magog, Stapleford - CAM CHALK

Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1980 to Dec-2022



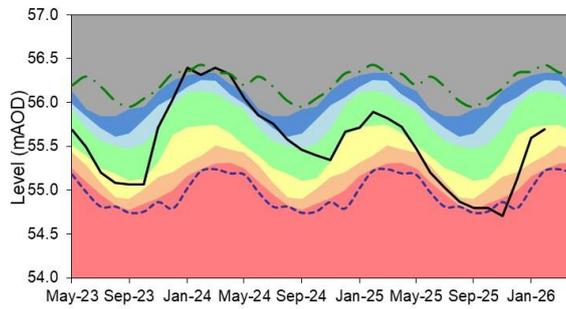
Hazlewood Common - SUFFOLK CRAG

Ranking derived from data for the period Oct-1988 to Nov-2022



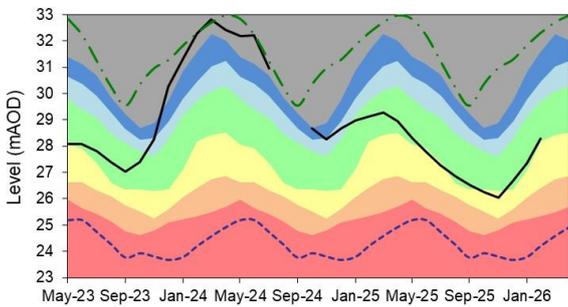
Hindolveston - NORFOLK CHALK

Ranking derived from data for the period Sep-1984 to Nov-2022



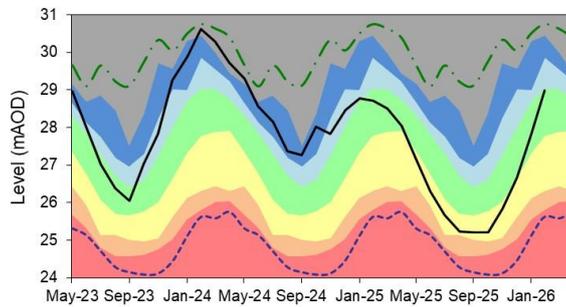
Kenninghall - LITTLE OUSE CHALK

Ranking derived from data for the period Aug-1973 to Dec-2022



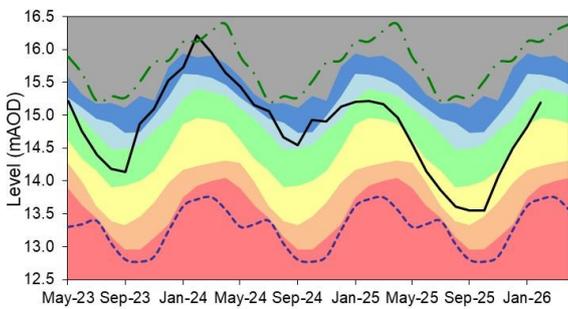
Linton - CAM CHALK

Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1980 to Dec-2022



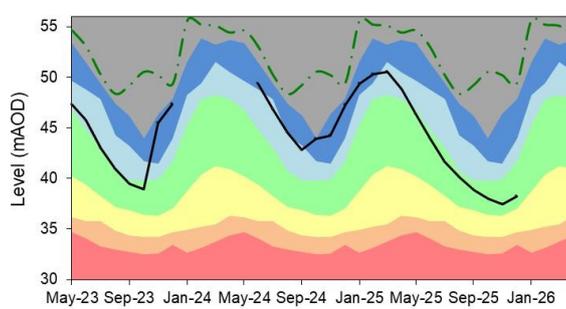
Newmarket - SNAIL CHALK

Ranking derived from data for the period Feb-1983 to Dec-2022

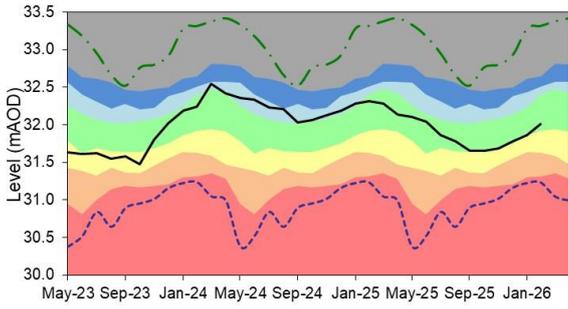


Redlands Hall, Ickleton - CAM CHALK

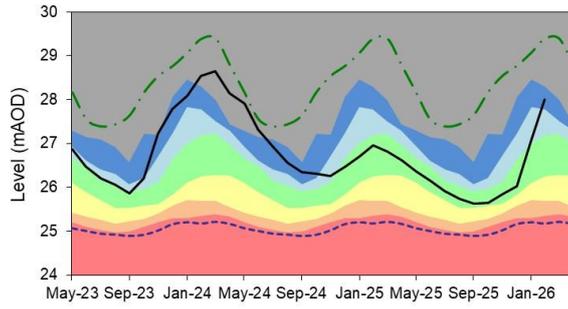
Ranking derived from data for the period Aug-1963 to Dec-2022



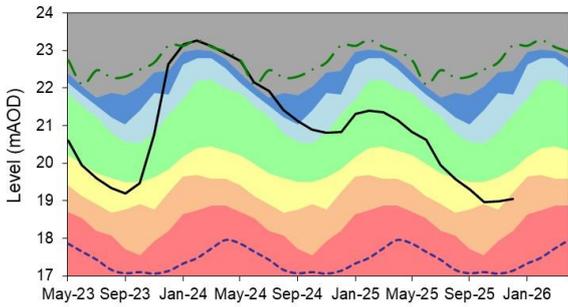
Rook Hall, Braiseworth- SUFFOLK CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1980 to Nov-2022



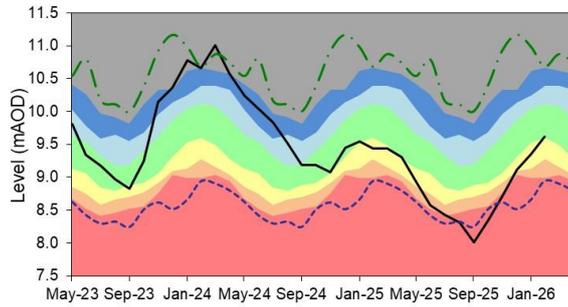
Smeetham Hall Cottages, Bulmer - ESSEX CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1964 to Jul-2022



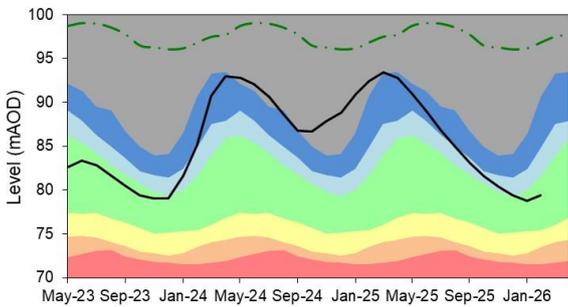
Old Primary School, South Creake, NORFOLK CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period Oct-1971 to Aug-2021



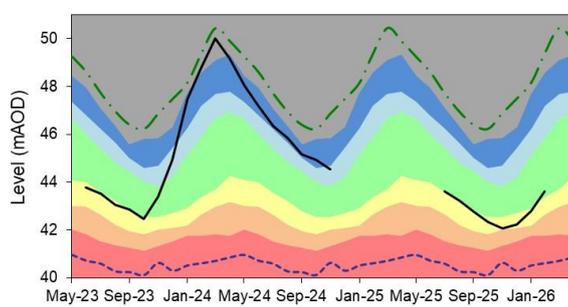
The Spinney, Costessey- WENSUM CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period Oct-1971 to Nov-2022



Therfield Rectory - N HERTS CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period Jan-1883 to Nov-2022



Washpit Farm, Rougham - NW NORFOLK CHALK
 Ranking derived from data for the period May-1950 to Dec-2022

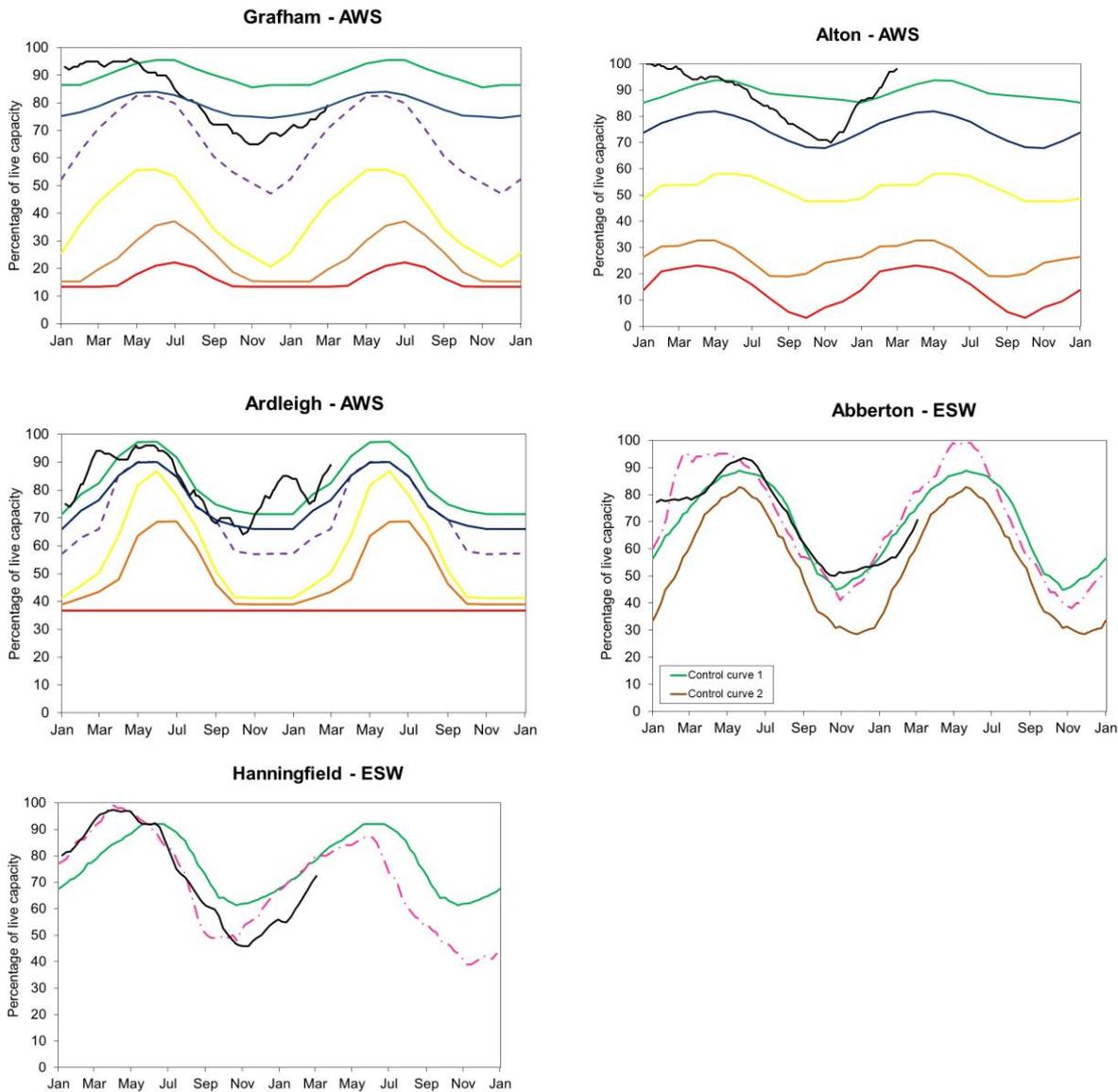


Source: Environment Agency, 2026.

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.

— 2024-2025 — Normal Operating Curve - - Drought Curve - - 1995-1996
 — Level 1 — Level 2 — Level 3 — Level 4

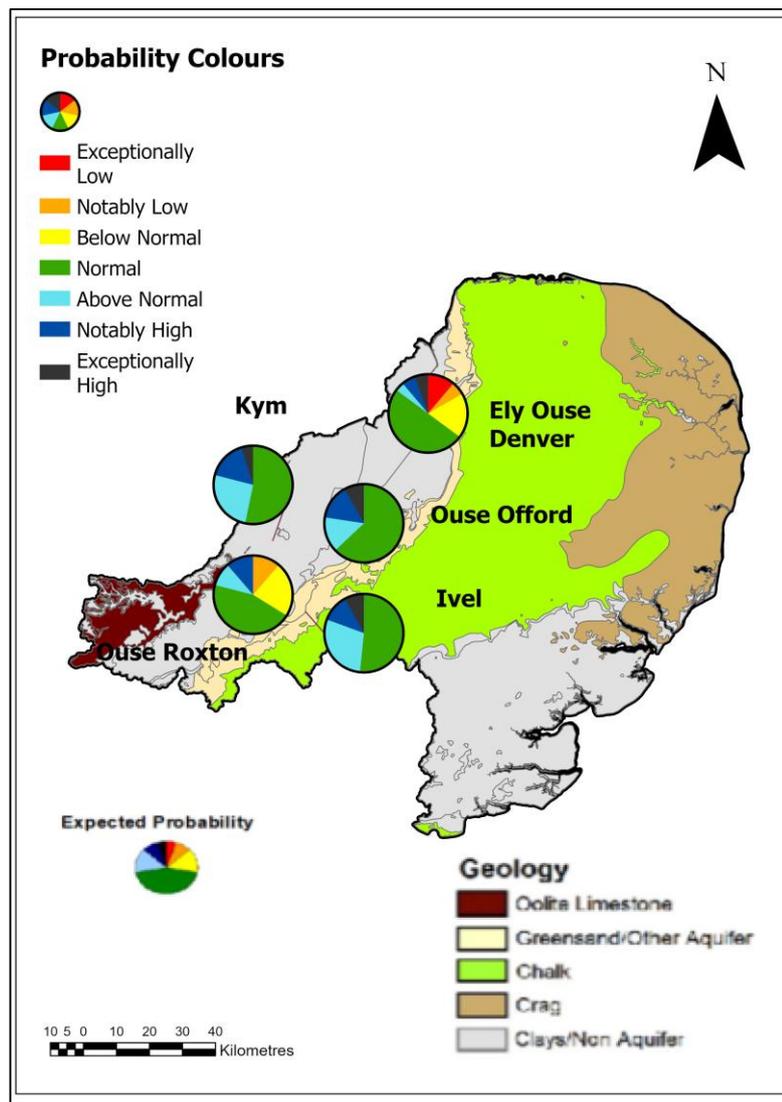


(Source: water companies. For more information on Anglian Water’s reservoir level curves, please see Appendix 4 in their [Drought Plan](#)).

7 Forward look

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

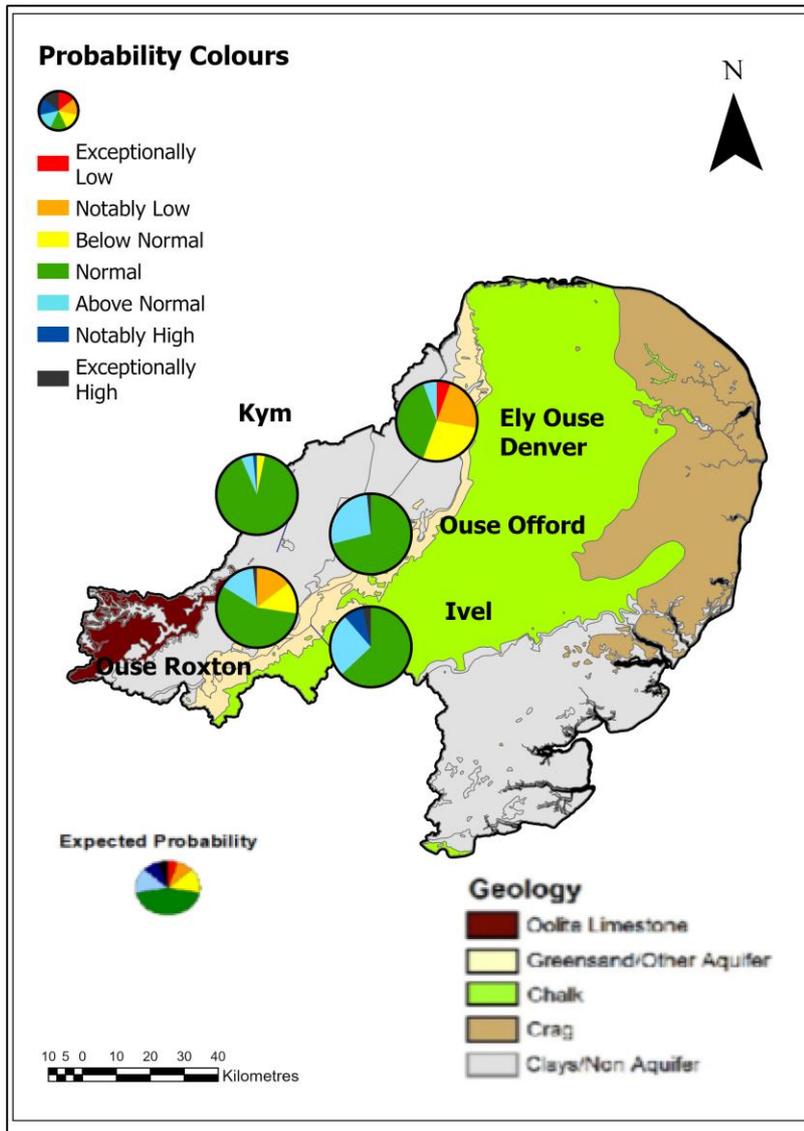
Table available in the appendices with detailed information. Exceptionally high or low levels are those which would typically occur 5% of the time within the historic record. Notably high or low levels are those which would typically occur 8% of the time. Above normal or below normal levels are those 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 river flows at key sites in June 2026

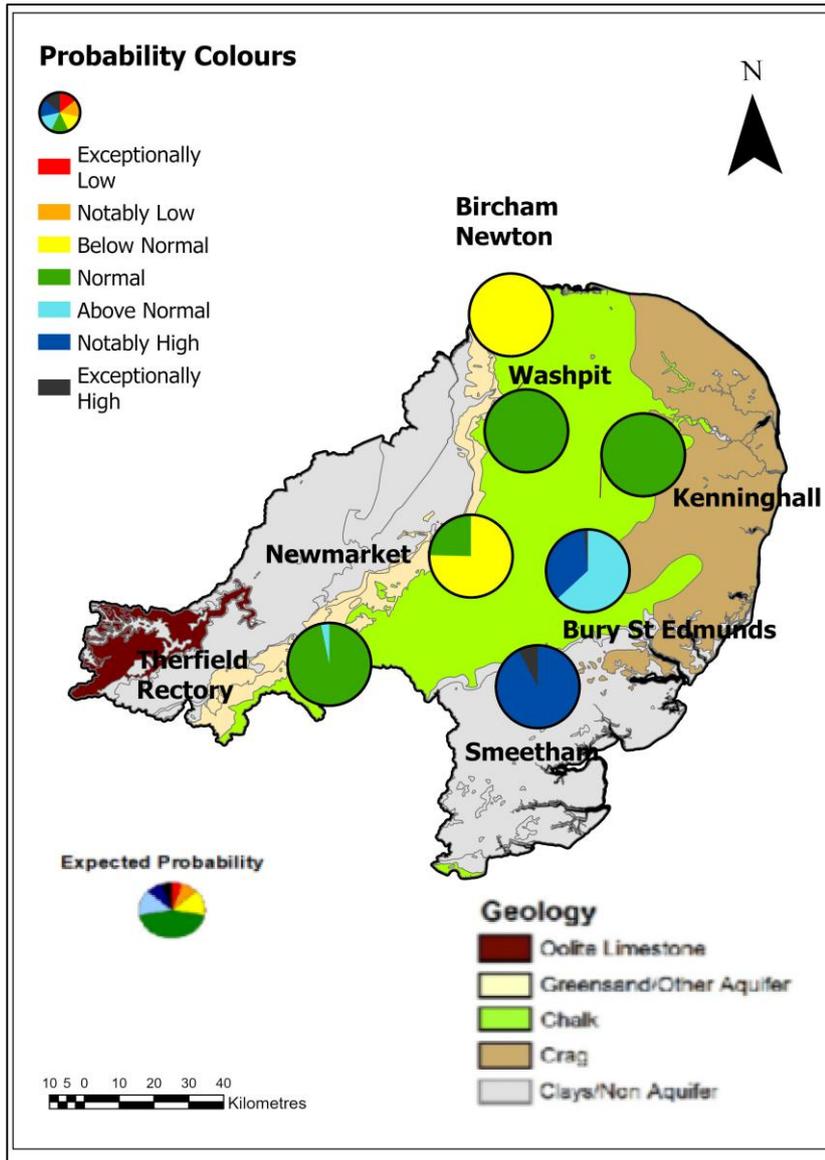
Table available in the appendices with detailed information. Exceptionally high or low levels are those which would typically occur 5% of the time within the historic record. Notably high or low levels are those which would typically occur 8% of the time. Above normal or below normal levels are those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

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

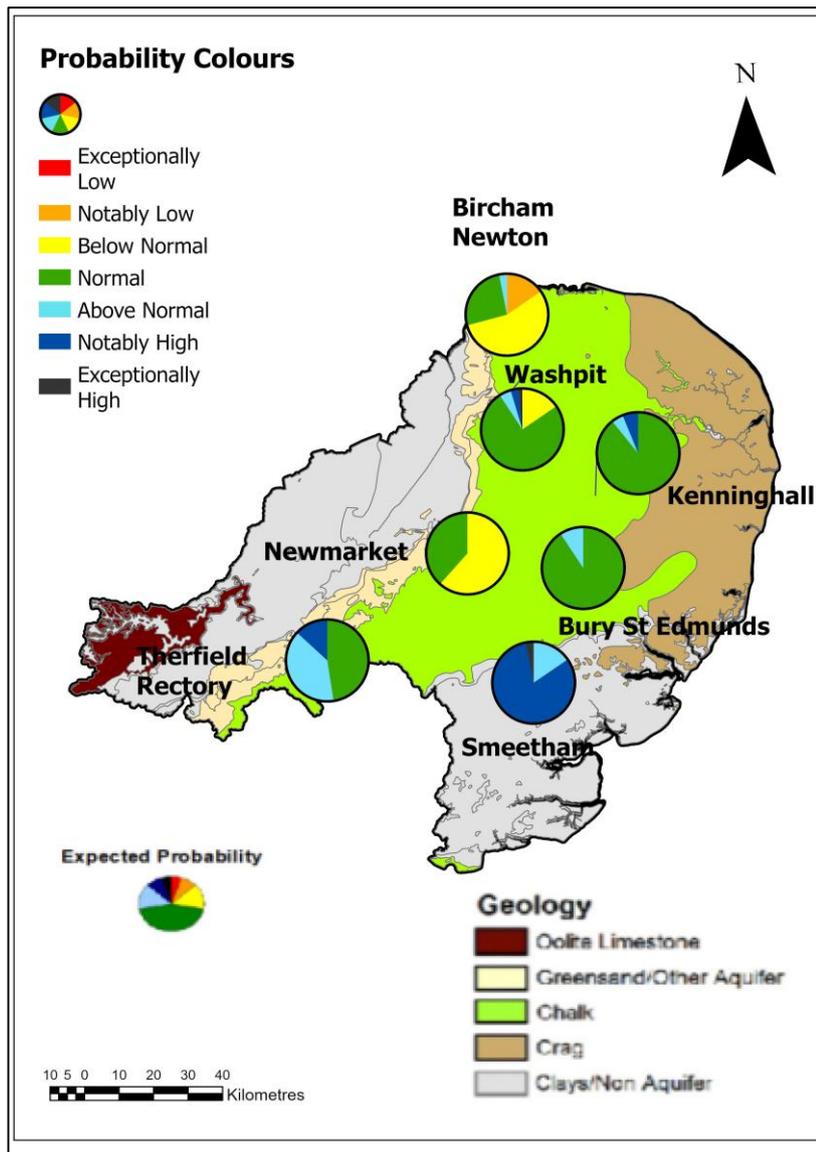
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Pie charts indicate probability, based on climatology, of the groundwater level at each site being, for example, exceptionally low for the time of year. (Source: Environment Agency) Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater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

7.4 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) Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS © NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, 100026380, 2026

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	Feb 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Feb 2026 band	Dec 2025 to February cumulative band	Sep 2025 to February cumulative band	Mar 2025 to February cumulative band
Broadland Rivers	158	Notably High	Above normal	Above normal	Normal
Cam	171	Notably High	Notably high	Above normal	Normal
Central Area Fenland	180	Notably High	Notably high	Notably high	Normal
East Suffolk	176	Exceptionally High	Notably high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Little Ouse And Lark	164	Notably High	Above normal	Notably high	Normal
Lower Bedford Ouse	200	Exceptionally High	Notably high	Notably high	Normal
North Essex	194	Exceptionally High	Notably high	Notably high	Normal
North Norfolk	129	Above Normal	Normal	Normal	Below normal
Nw Norfolk And Wissey	154	Notably High	Above normal	Above normal	Below normal
South Essex	185	Notably High	Notably high	Above normal	Below normal

Upper Bedford Ouse	205	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Notably high	Normal
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9.2 River flows table

Site name	River	Catchment	Feb 2026 band	Jan 2026 band
Abbey Heath	Little Ouse	Little Ouse	Normal	Normal
Blunham	Ivel	Ivel	Notably high	Normal
Bramford	Gipping	Gipping	Exceptionally high	Normal
Burnham Overy	Burn	Burn	Normal	Below normal
Burnt Mill	Rhee	Rhee	Above normal	Normal
Cappenham	Tove	Tove	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Colney	Yare	Yare	Above normal	Normal
Denver	Ely Ouse	Cutoff and Renew Channel	Normal	Normal
Dernford	Cam	Cam	Notably high	Normal
Heacham	Heacham	Heacham	Below normal	Below normal
Ingworth	Bure	Bure	Normal	Normal
Lexden	Colne	Colne Essex	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Marham	Nar	Nar	Normal	Below normal

Needham Weir Total	Waveney (lower)	Waveney	Above normal	Normal
Northwold Total	Wissey	Wissey	Normal	Normal
Offord (gross Flows)	Great Ouse	Ouse Beds	Exceptionally high	Normal
Roxton	Great Ouse	Ivel	Notably high	Normal
Springfield	Chelmer	Chelmer Upper	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Swanton Morley Total	Wensum	Wensum	Normal	Normal
Temple	Lark	Lark	Above normal	Normal
Willen	Ouzel	Ouzel	Normal	Normal

9.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Feb 2026 band	End of Jan 2026 band
Biggleswade	Ivel Woburn Sands	Above normal	Normal
Bircham Newton	North West Norfolk Chalk	Below normal	Notably low
Breckland	Wissey Chalk	Below normal	Notably low
Bury St Edmunds	Upper Lark Chalk	Above normal	Above normal
Castle Farm, Offton	East Suffolk Chalk	Normal	Below normal
Gog Magog, Stapleford	Cam Chalk	Normal	Below normal
Hazlewood Common	East Suffolk Crag	No Data	No Data
Hindolveston	Norfolk Chalk	Below normal	Below normal
Kenninghall	Little Ouse Chalk	Normal	Normal
Linton	Cam Chalk	Normal	Normal
Newmarket	Snail Chalk	Normal	Below normal
Old Primary School, South Creake	North Norfolk Chalk	No Data	No Data

Redlands Hall, Ickleton	Cam Chalk	No Data	No Data
Rook Hall, Braiseworth	East Suffolk Chalk	Normal	Normal
Smeetham Hall Cottages, Bulmer	North Essex Chalk	Notably high	Above normal
The Spinney, Costessey	Wensum Chalk	Normal	Below normal
Washpit Farm, Rougham	North West Norfolk Chalk	Normal	Below normal
Therfield Rectory	Upper Lee Chalk	Normal	Normal
Fringford P.s.	Upper Bedford Ouse Oolitic Limestone (great)	Exceptionally high	Notably high

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	0	0	0	0	11
Notably low	11	0	0	0	6
Below normal	23	0	0	0	19
Normal	45	53	52	63	50
Above normal	10	26	29	15	4
Notably high	11	16	11	15	6
Exceptionally high	0	5	8	8	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	0	0	0	0	6
Notably low	15	0	0	0	22
Below normal	13	3	0	0	28
Normal	56	90	63	71	39
Above normal	15	5	26	27	6
Notably high	0	2	8	0	0
Exceptionally high	2	0	3	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	Redlands Hall	Newmarket	Washpit Farm	Bircham Newton	Kenninghall	Bury St Edmunds	Smeetham
Exceptionally low	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Notably low	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Below normal	0.0	No Data	75.4	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Normal	96.7	No Data	24.6	100.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Above normal	3.3	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	63.1	0.0
Notably high	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.4	92.3
Exceptionally high	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.5	7.7

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	Redlands Hall	Newmarket	Washpit Farm	Bircham Newton	Kenninghall	Bury St Edmunds	Smeetham
Exceptionally low	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Notably low	0.0	No Data	0.0	0.0	15.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Below normal	0.0	No Data	61.5	15.4	55.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Normal	47.5	No Data	38.5	75.4	26.2	89.2	90.8	0.0
Above normal	39.3	No Data	0.0	4.6	3.1	4.6	9.2	15.4
Notably high	13.1	No Data	0.0	3.1	0.0	6.2	0.0	81.5
Exceptionally high	0.0	No Data	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1