

Monthly water situation report: Midlands

1 Summary - February 2026

Please see Section 7.3 for a map detailing the Midlands regional coverage of this report.

Rainfall - In February, the majority of Midlands catchments received exceptionally high rainfall totals relative to the long term average (LTA).

Soil moisture deficit - In February, the soil moisture deficit (SMD) across the Midlands remained lower than the LTA, meaning that soils are wetter than the LTA. Soils have remained saturated and are close to field capacity.

River flows - In February, all sites recorded above normal or higher monthly mean flows relative to the LTA. The vast majority of sites recorded exceptionally high monthly mean flows.

Groundwater levels - By the end of February, all sites recorded above normal or higher groundwater levels compared to the LTA.

Reservoir stocks - By the end of February, the majority of the Midlands reservoirs had above average storage compared to the LTA with 6 reservoirs full.

1.1 Rainfall

In February, the Midlands region as a whole recorded the fourth wettest February over the past 156 years. The majority of catchments, 8 in total, received exceptionally high rainfall totals compared to their February LTA. These were all over 200% of their LTA. The 4 remaining catchments, the Derwent, Dove, Welsh Mountains and Lower Wye, received notably high rainfall totals compared to their LTA.

Over the past 3 months, again the majority of catchments received exceptionally high rainfall totals compared to their 3-month LTA. The Tame catchment in particular had the wettest December to February period since records began in 1872. Only one catchment did not reach this category, which was the Welsh Mountains, instead recording above normal rainfall totals compared to its 3-month LTA.

Over the past 6 months, all 12 catchments received exceptionally high rainfall totals compared to their 6-month LTA. The Tame catchment again had the wettest September to February period since records began.

Over the past year, 5 catchments received above normal rainfall totals compared to the one-year LTA. These were the Lower Trent, Derwent, Dove, Tame and Welsh Mountains. The remaining 7 catchments recorded normal rainfall totals compared to their one-year LTA.

1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

SMD has remained the same in February since last month, remaining below 10mm across the Midlands. Soils have remained saturated and close to field capacity following the wet conditions this month. Soils in the majority of the Midlands catchments had SMD values as expected for the time of year. The exception was the Lower Trent catchment which had wetter than average soils for February.

1.3 River flows

In February, the majority of sites recorded exceptionally high monthly mean flows ranging from 188% to 314% of their LTA. Three sites recorded notably high monthly mean flows: Bewdley, Great Bridgeford and Redbrook. Two sites, Llanyblodwel and Whatstandwell, recorded above normal monthly mean flows.

Wedderburn Bridge has been showing unreliable data from September 2024 onwards; therefore data has been removed from this report.

1.4 Groundwater levels

By the end of February, 4 sites in the Midlands recorded notably high groundwater levels compared to their LTA. These were Weir Farm, Anthony's Cross, Four Crosses and Southards Lane. Ram Hall and St Mary's Church recorded exceptionally high groundwater levels compared to their LTA. The remaining 2 sites recorded above normal groundwater levels compared to their LTA. These were Coxmoor and Crossley Hill.

Riders Point recorded no data for much of February and therefore has been excluded from this month's report.

1.5 Reservoir stocks

By the end of February, 8 of the Midlands reservoirs had above average storage compared to the LTA. These reservoirs ranged from 93% to 100% full. Six of these were full and spilling. Carsington and Ogston recorded average storage for February at 92% capacity. The only reservoir to be below the average storage compared to the LTA was the Dove reservoirs at 68% capacity.

Reservoir storage either increased or remained the same since last month for all the Midlands reservoirs. Those which remained the same, Vyrnwy, Derwent, Tittesworth, Blithfield, Charnwood and Elan, remained at full capacity.

1.6 Environmental impact

The East Midlands moved into normal incident status on the 6 February 2026. The West Midlands moved into normal incident status on 10 February 2026. These are both moved from the previous drought recovery incident status. We continue to work with water companies and other abstractors to manage water resources.

1.7 River Severn operations

The River Severn is regulated to maintain a minimum flow at Bewdley gauging station. This ensures sufficient water flows along the river to support environmental and water supply requirements. Regulation is instigated when flows drop below a threshold.

River Severn regulation was not instigated in February.

1.8 River Wye operations

Throughout February, flows at Redbrook were above the regulation threshold and storage at Elan reservoirs was above the release control line. Therefore, regulation releases were not in operation during February.

1.9 Water abstraction restrictions

As of 28 February 2026, there was one water abstraction licence restriction in place across the Midlands affecting 2 licences in total.

Area	Rivers and stations restricted
West Midlands	Garren Brook at Marstow Mill

Author: Midlands Hydrology, midlandshydrology@environment-agency.gov.uk

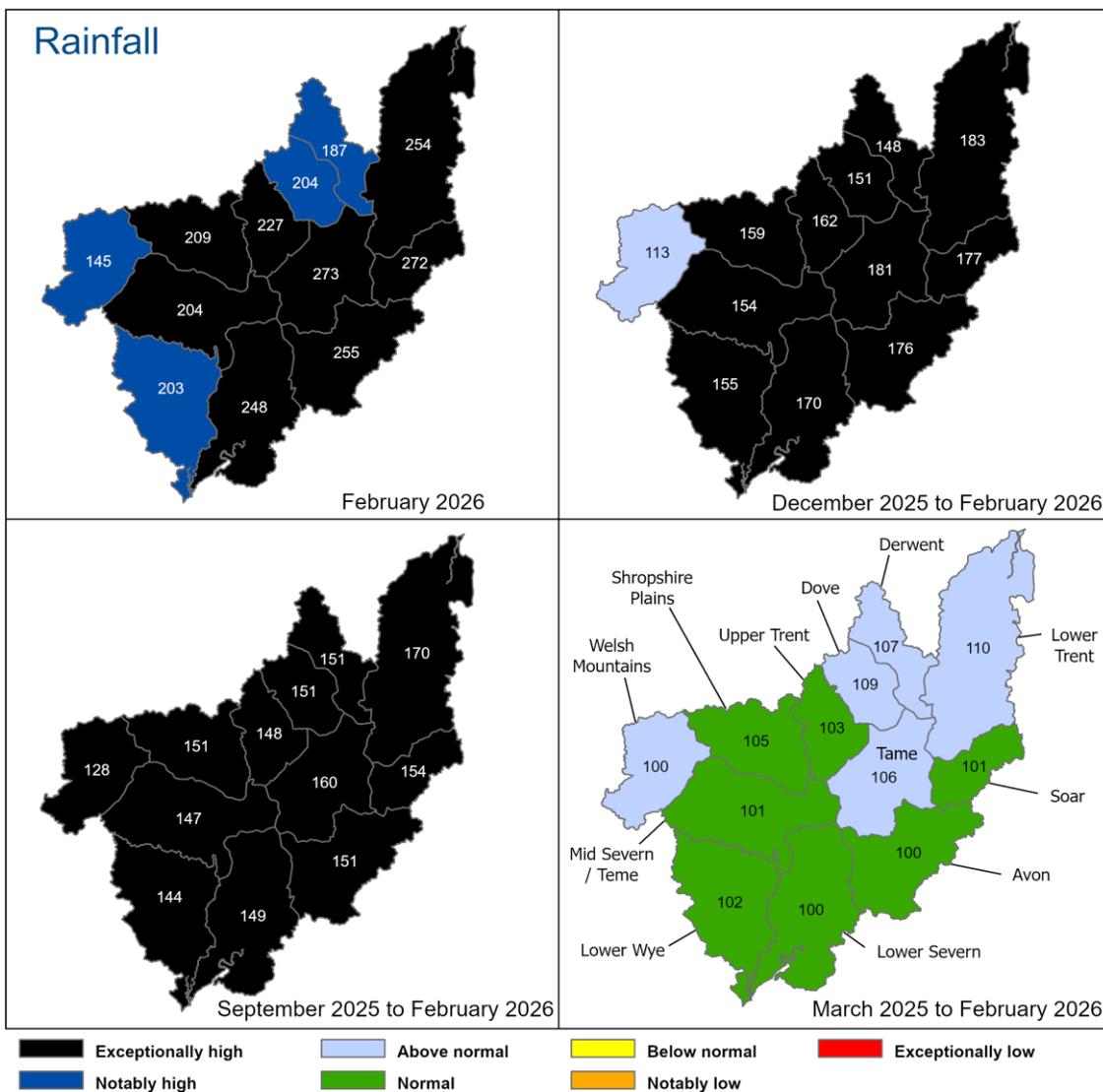
Contact Details: 03708 506 506

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2 Rainfall

2.1 Rainfall map

Figure 2.1: Rainfall as % LTA for hydrological areas for the current month (up to 28 February 2026), the last 3 months, the last 6 months, and the last 12 months, relative to an analysis of respective historic totals from 1991 to 2020. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

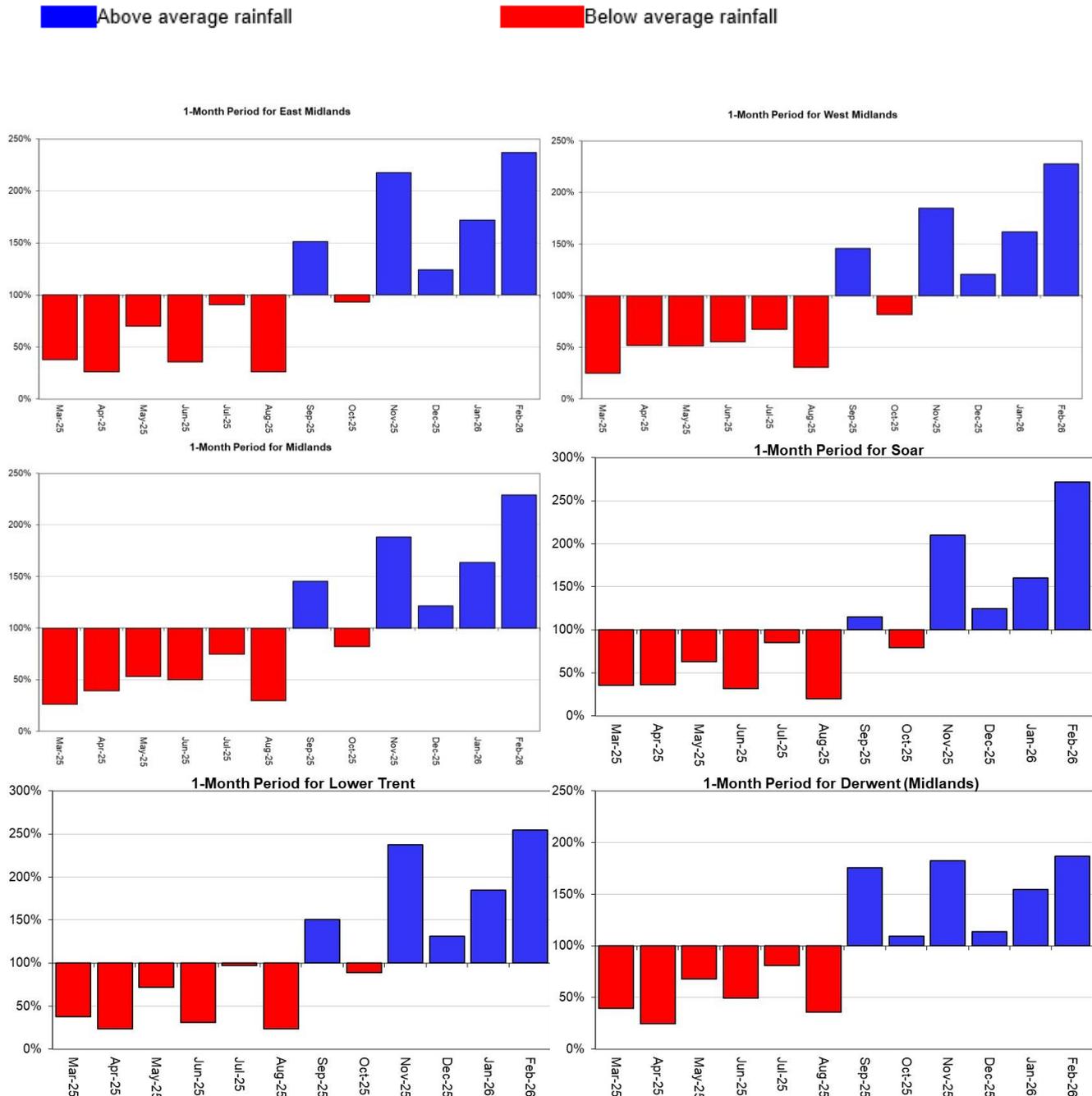


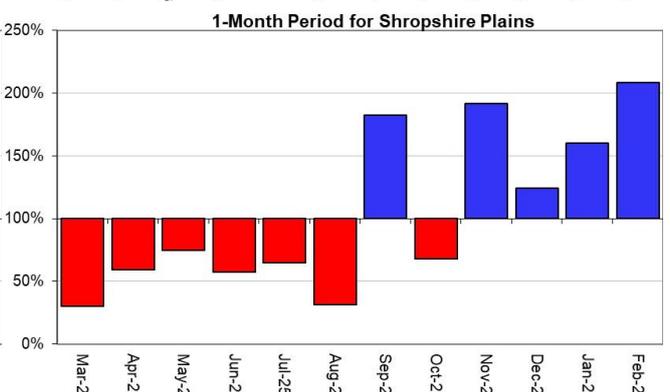
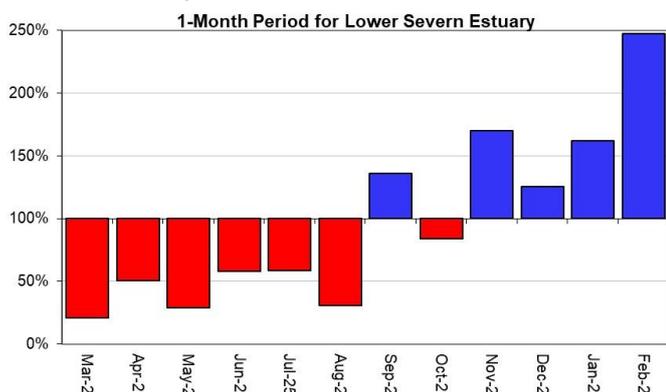
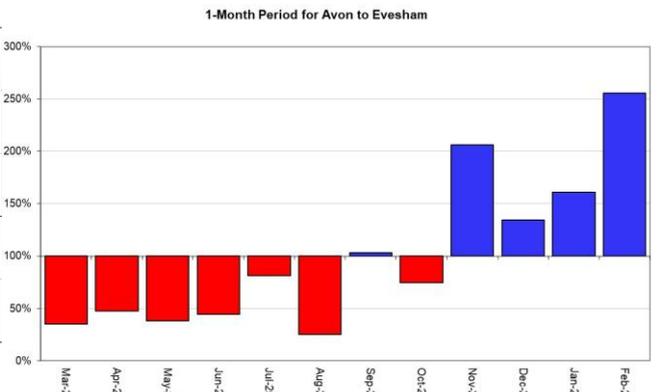
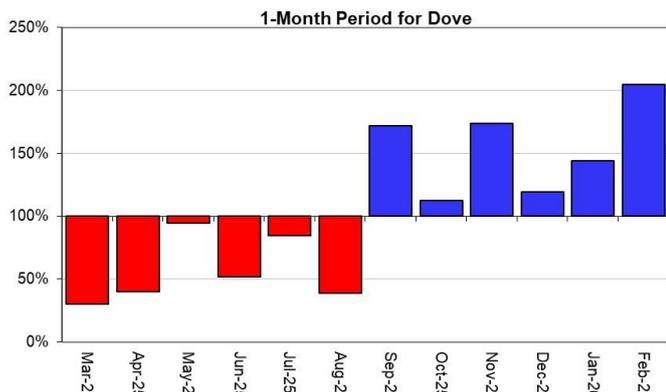
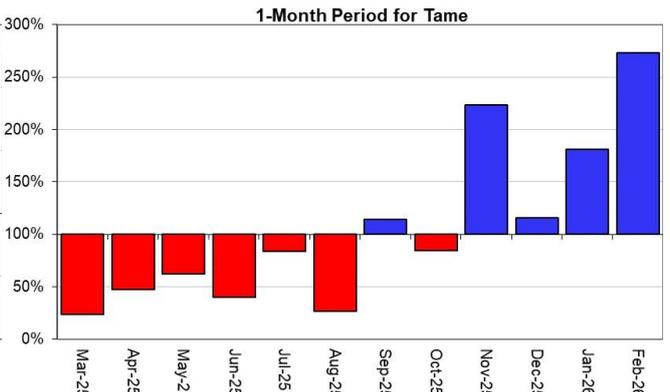
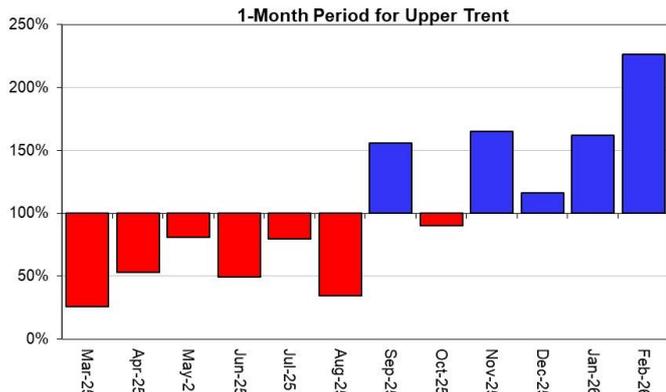
Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025,

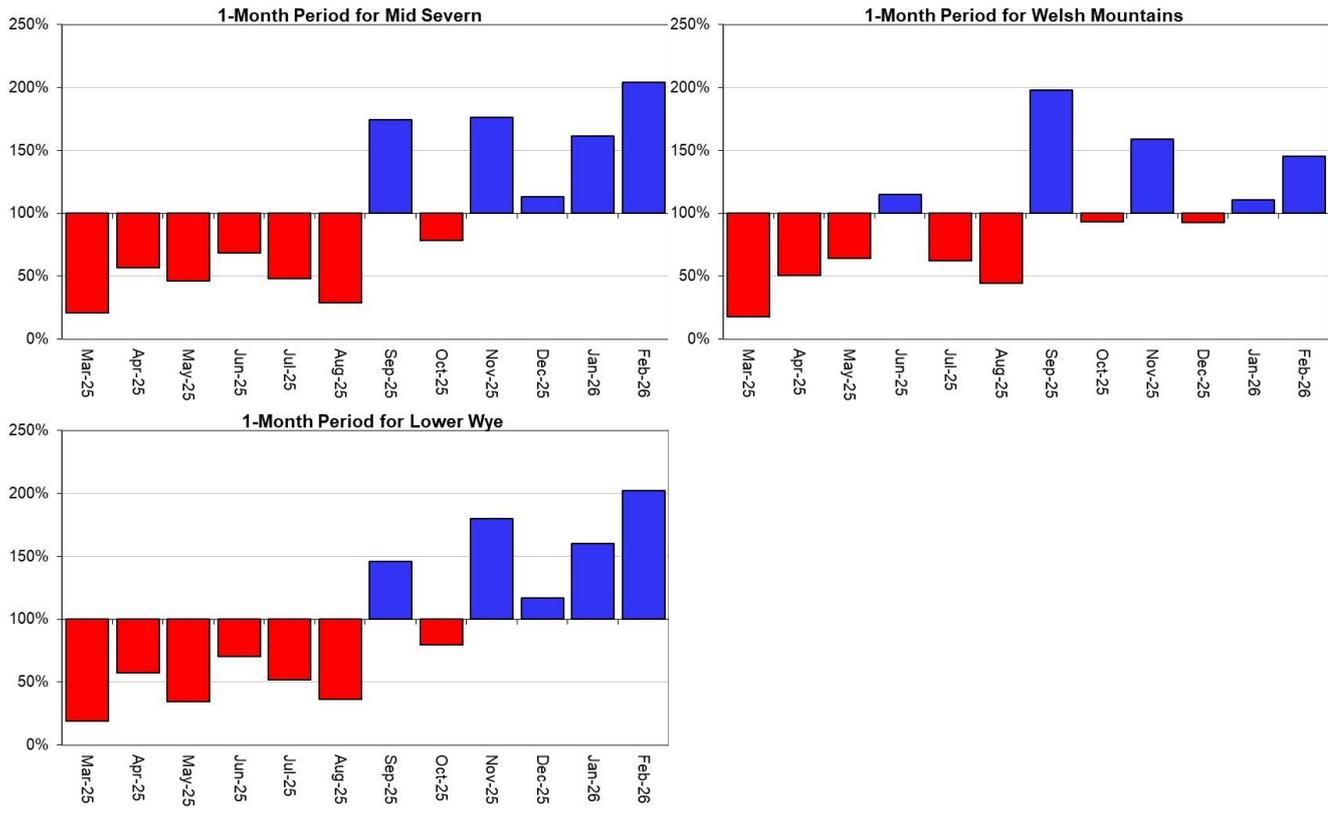
extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

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 hydrological areas across the Midlands region.





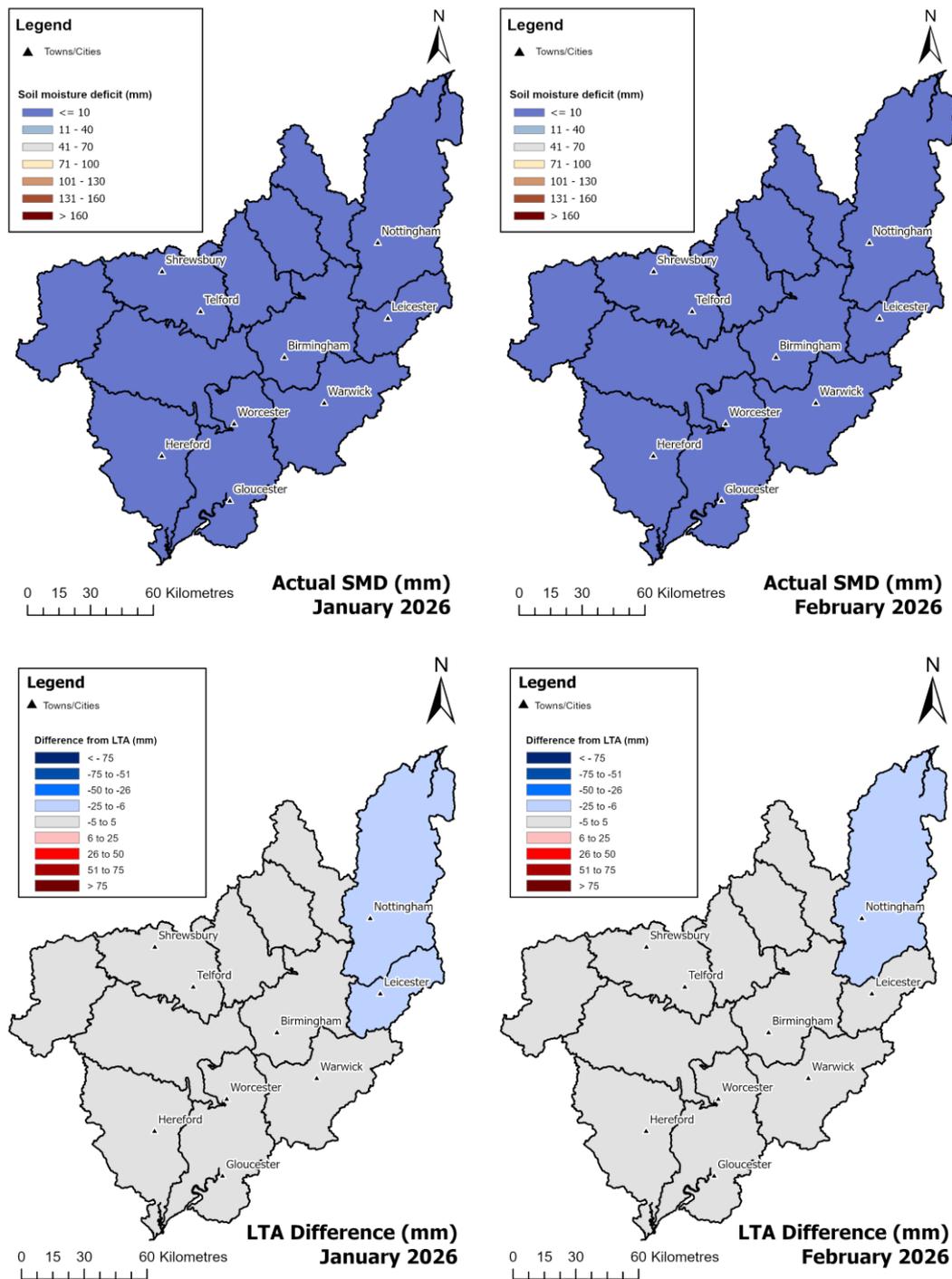


Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

3 Soil moisture deficit

3.1 Soil moisture deficit map

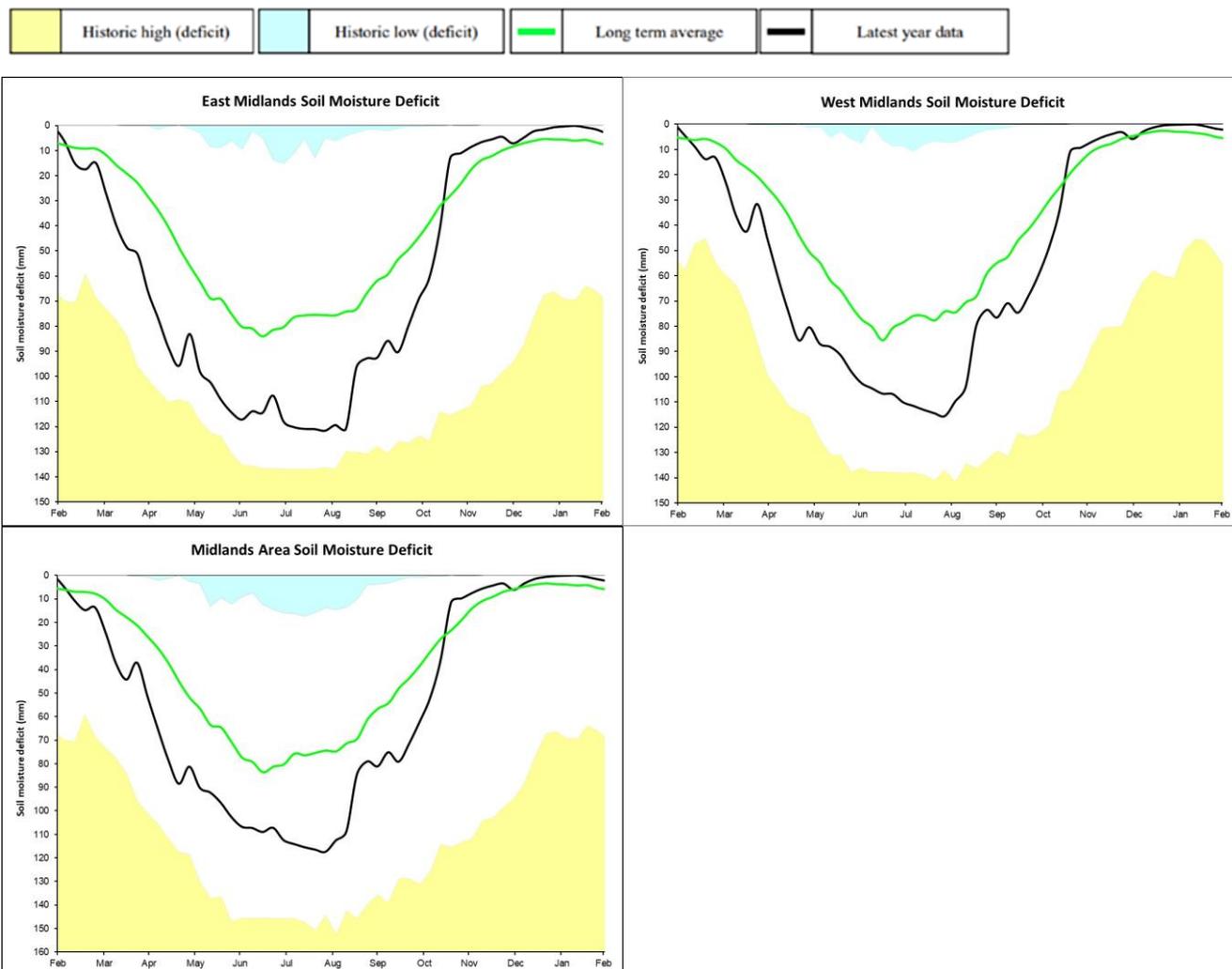
Figure 3.1: Soil moisture deficits for weeks ending 28 February 2026. The difference (mm) of the actual soil moisture deficit from the 1991 to 2020 long term average soil moisture deficits. MORECS data for real land use.



(Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026). All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2026.

3.2 Soil moisture deficit charts

Figure 3.2: Latest soil moisture deficit charts for selected areas across the Midlands.

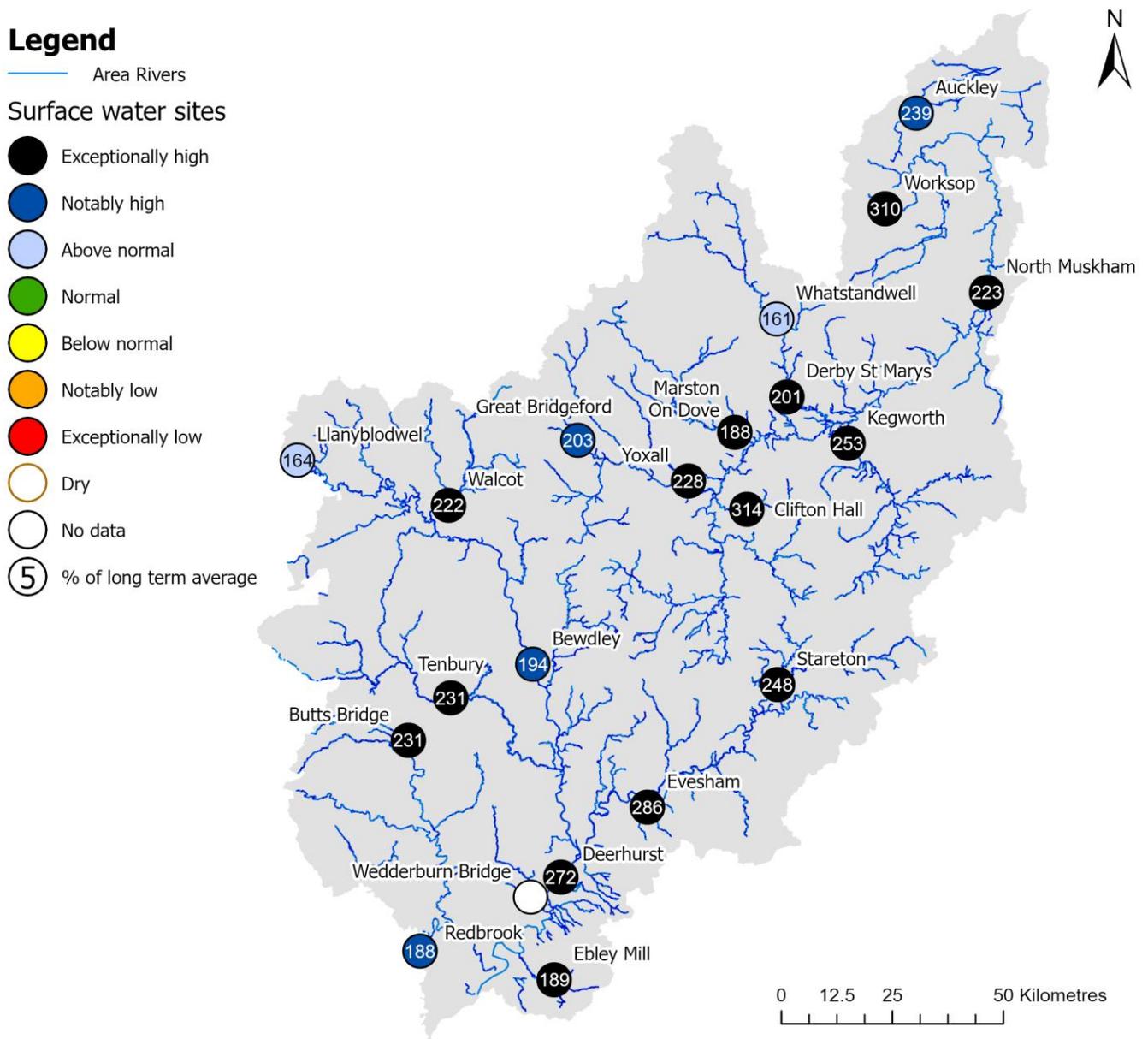


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4 River flows

4.1 River flows map

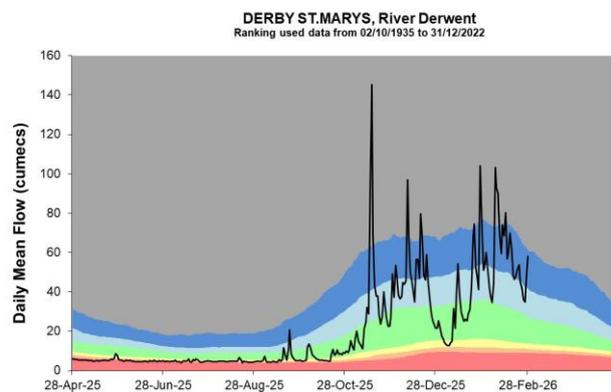
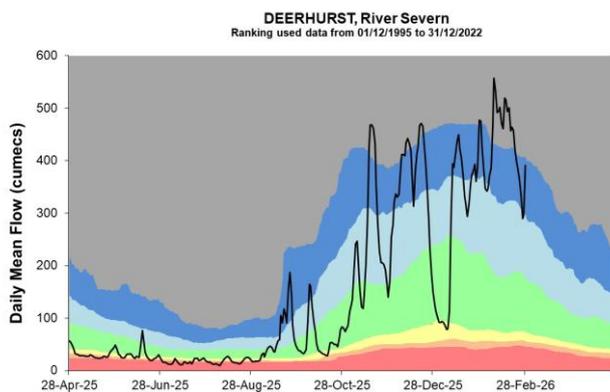
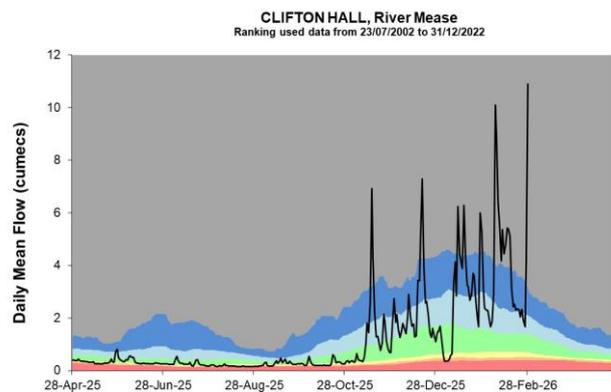
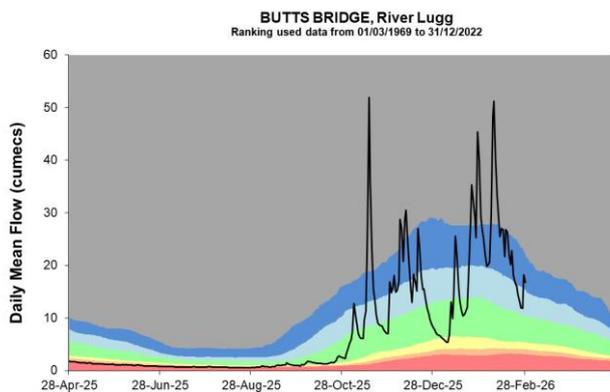
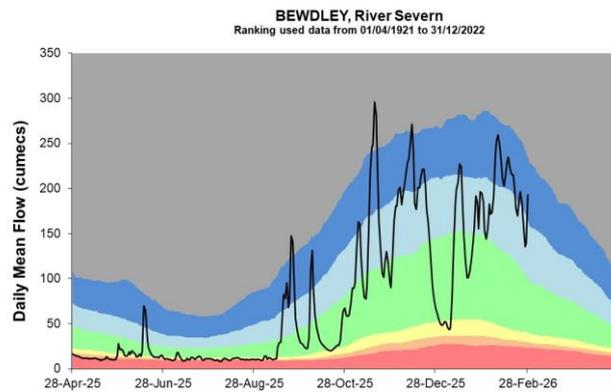
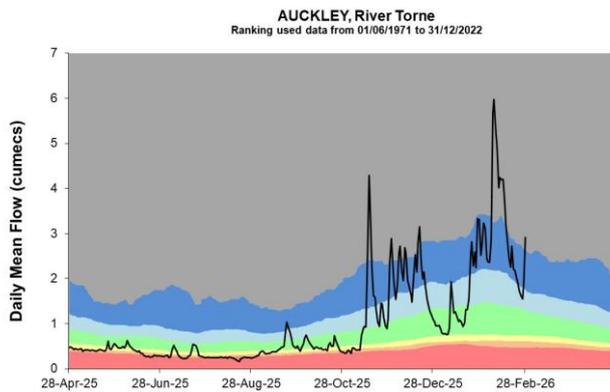
Figure 4.1: Monthly mean river flow for indicator sites for February 2026, expressed as a percentage of the respective long term average and classed relative to an analysis of historic February monthly means. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

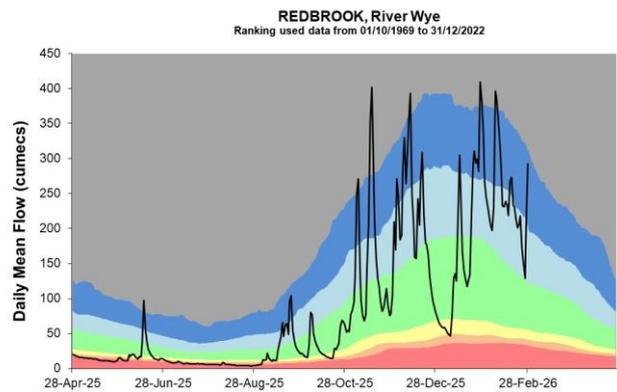
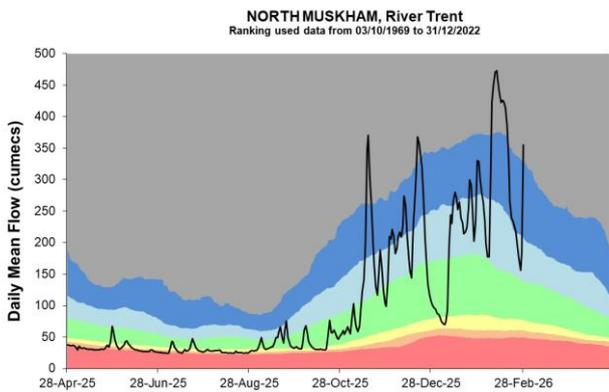
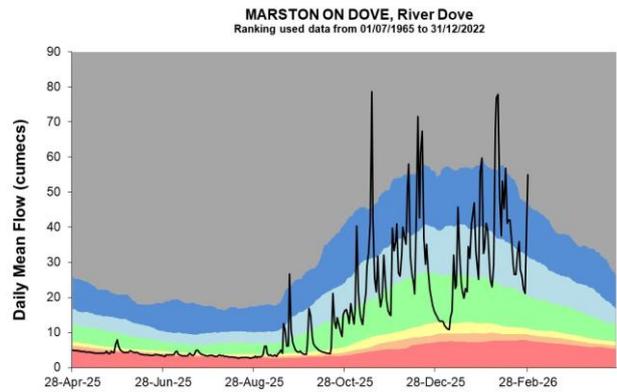
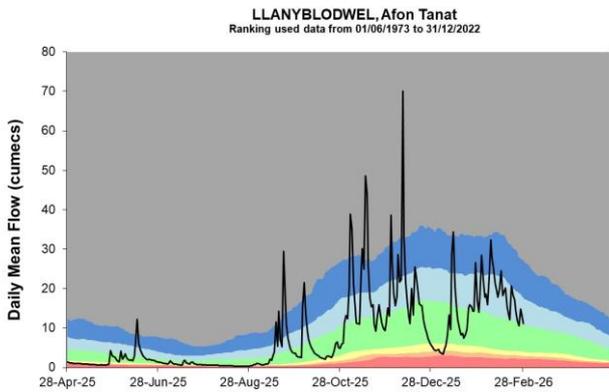
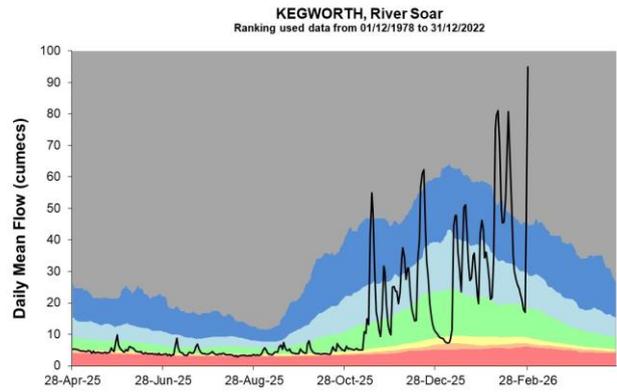
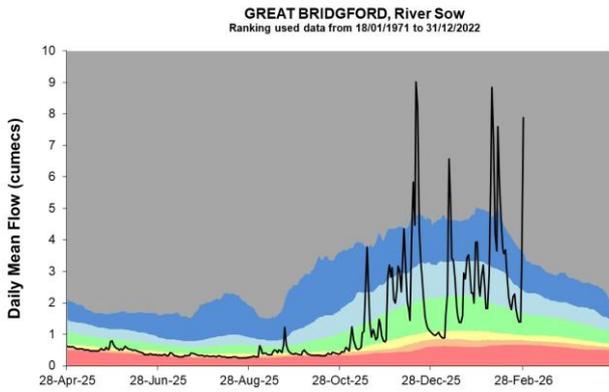
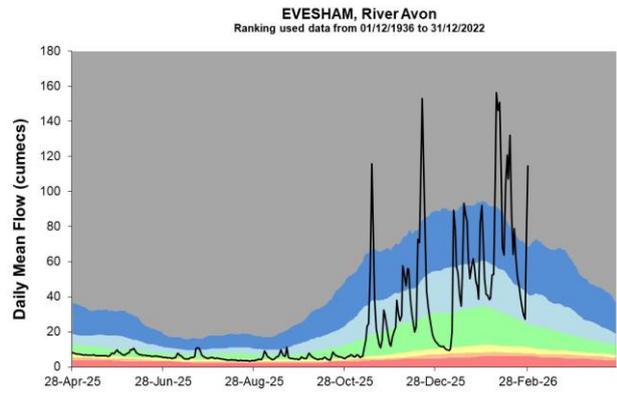
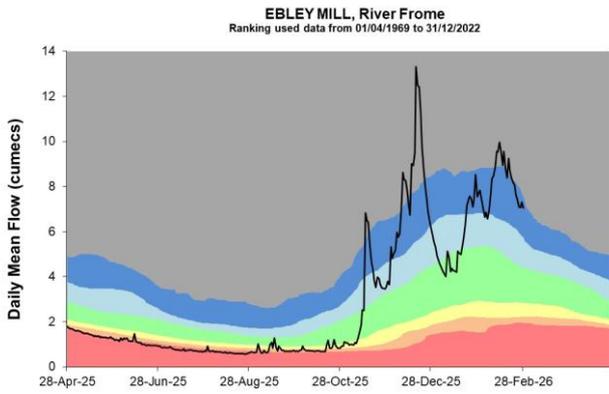


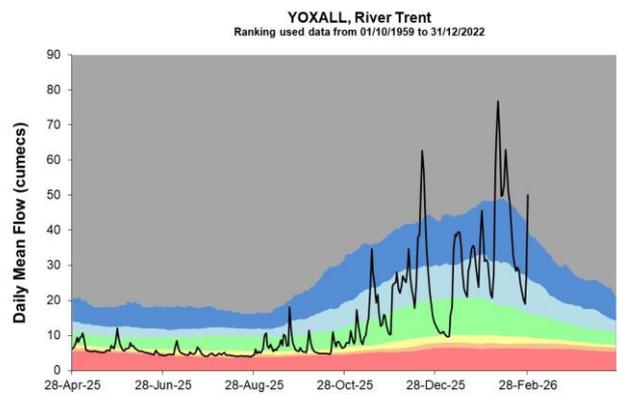
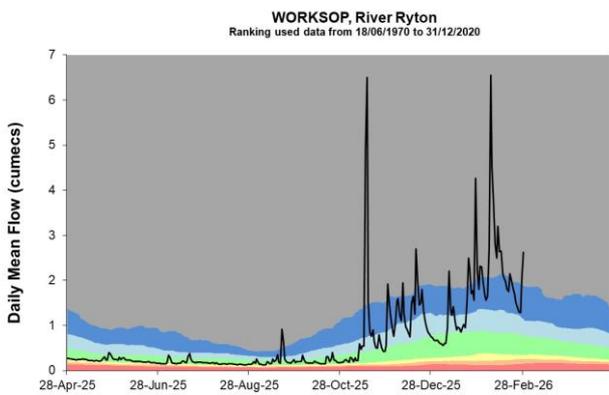
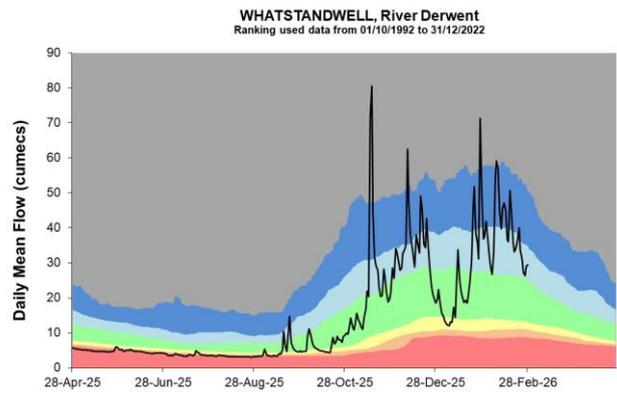
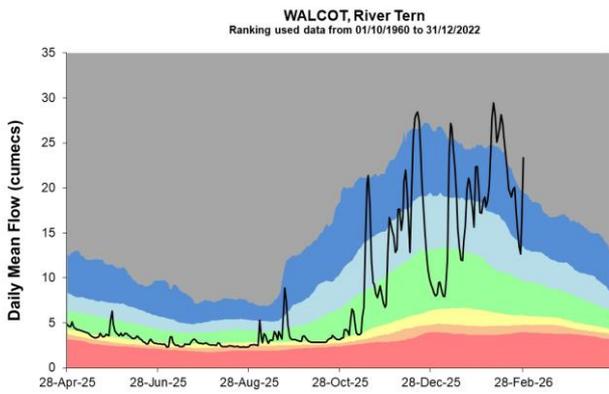
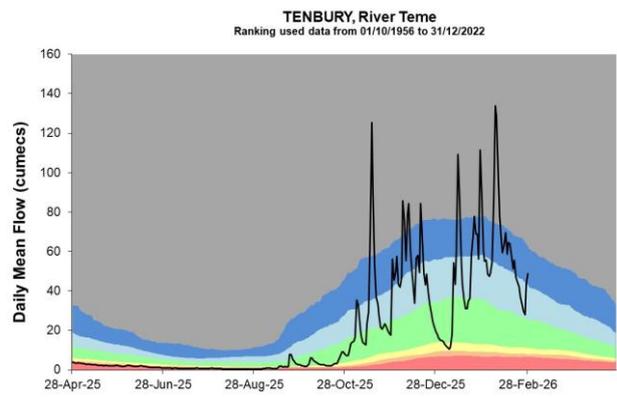
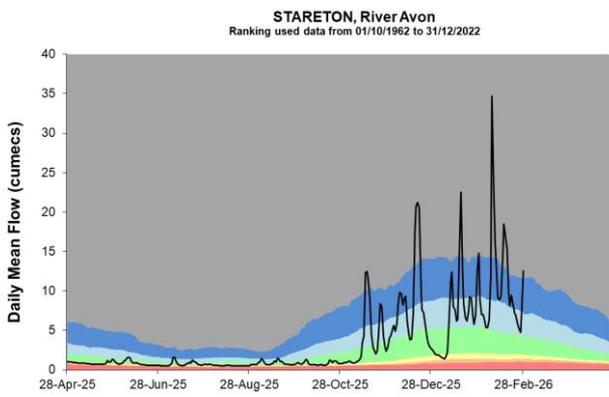
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4.2 River flow charts

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.





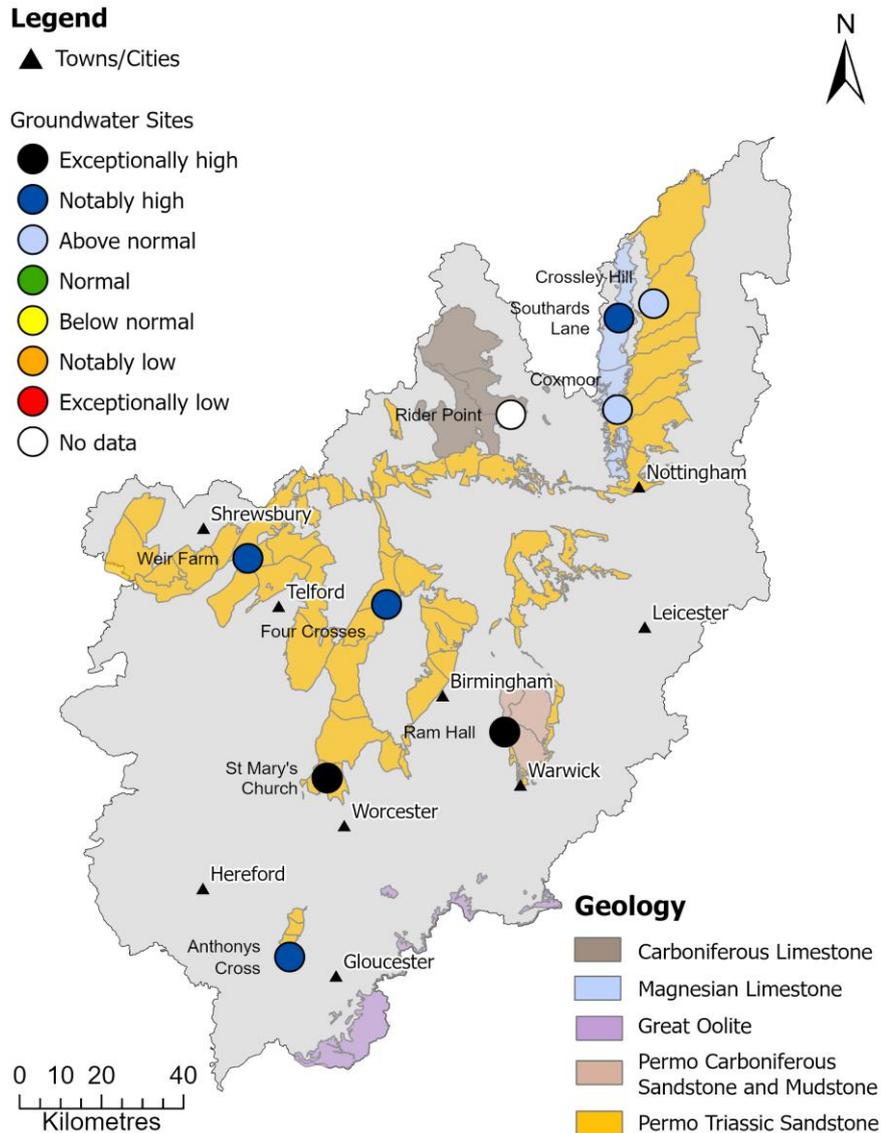


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

5 Groundwater levels

5.1 Groundwater levels map

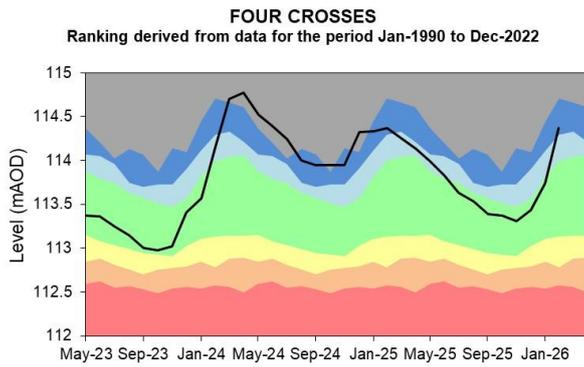
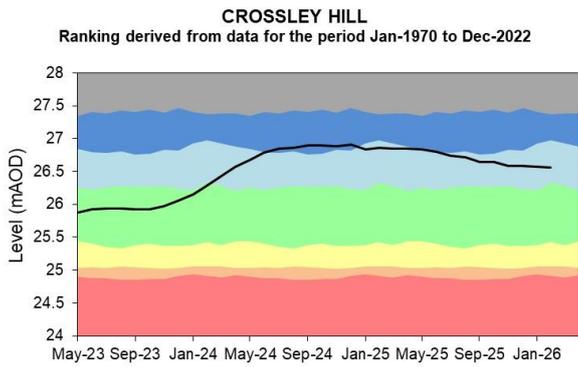
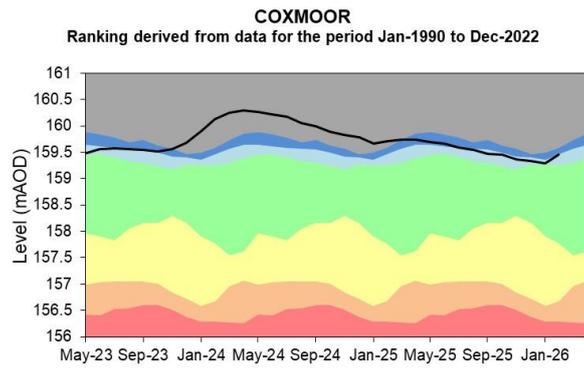
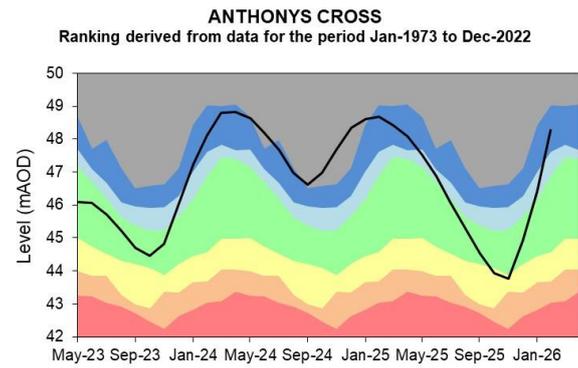
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of February 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic February levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information, including aquifer type.

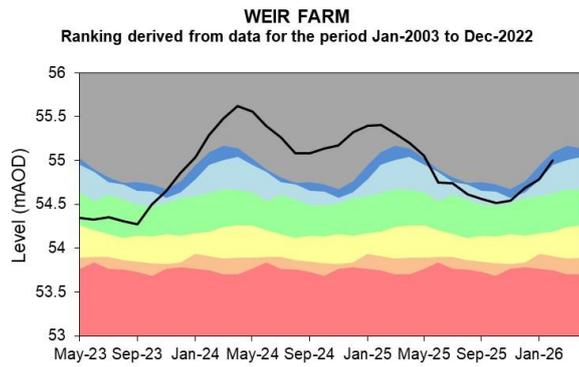
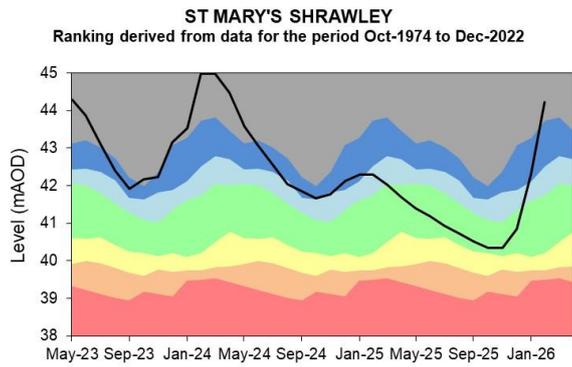
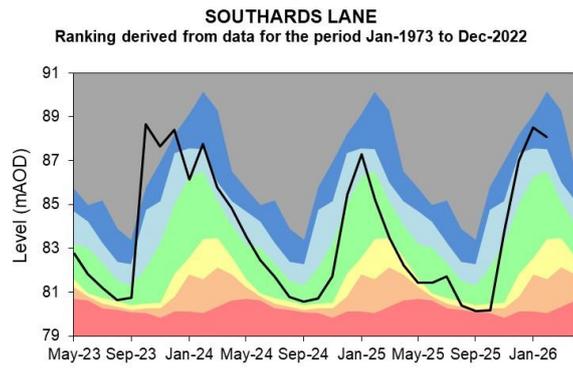
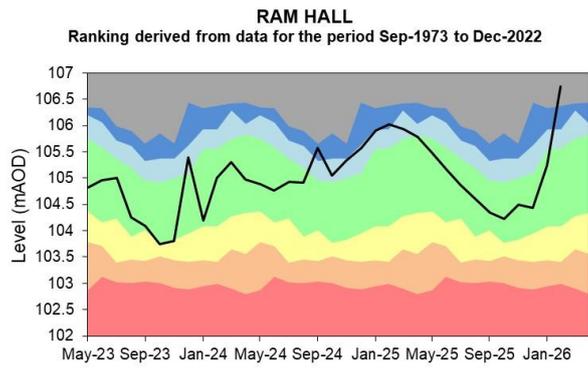


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5.2 Groundwater level charts

Figure 5.2: End of month groundwater levels at index groundwater level sites for major aquifers. 34 months compared to an analysis of historic end of month levels.

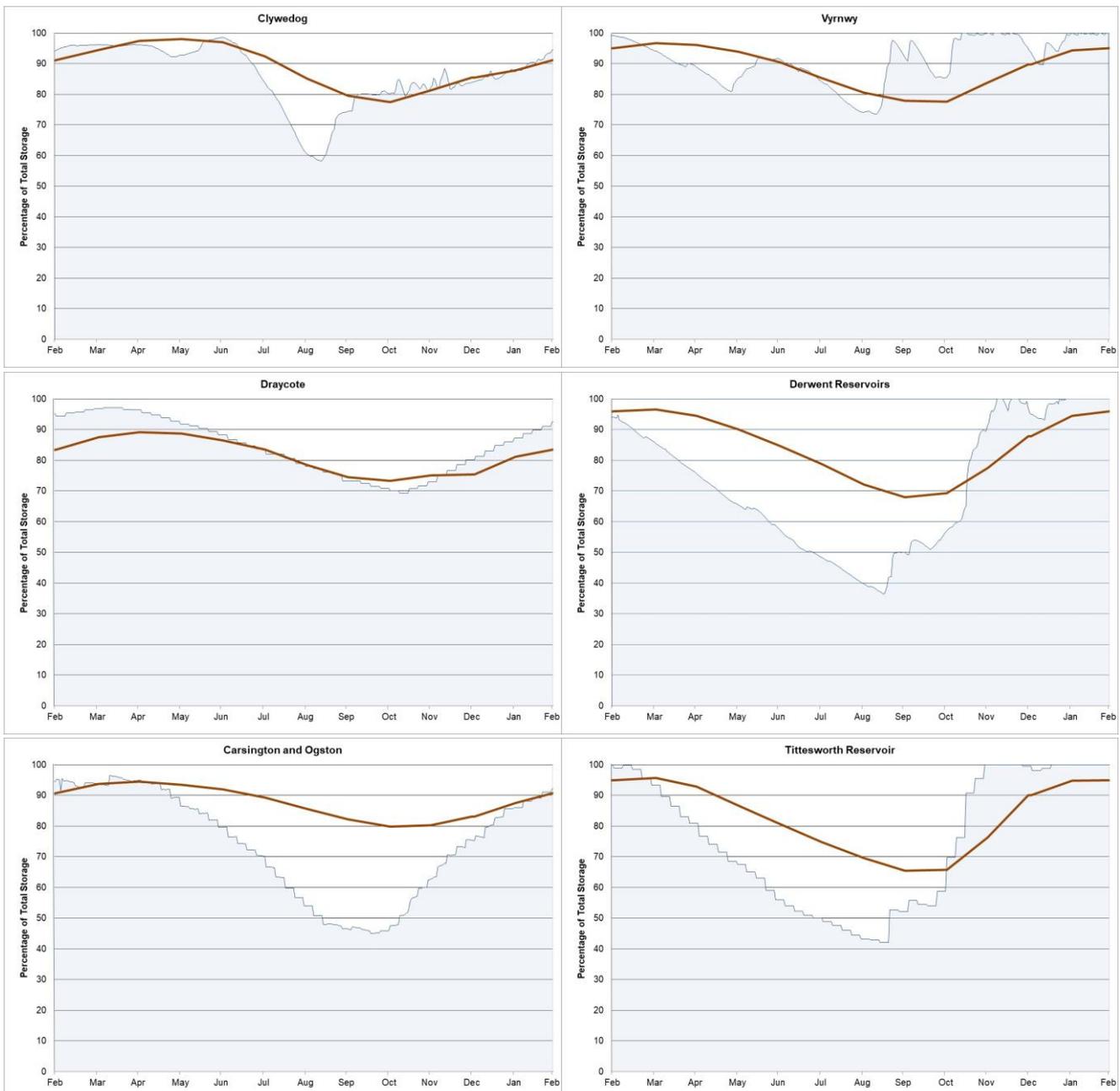


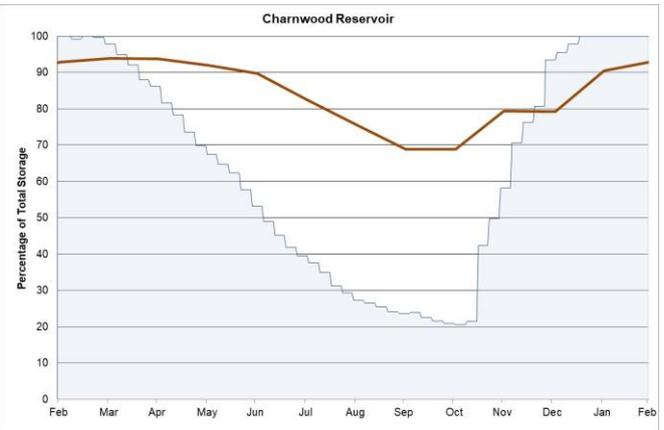
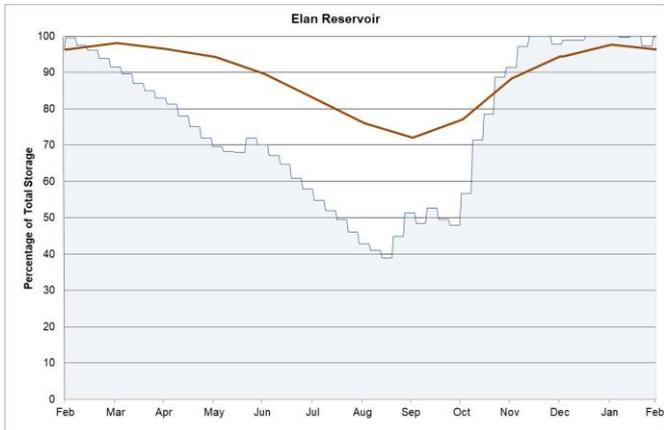
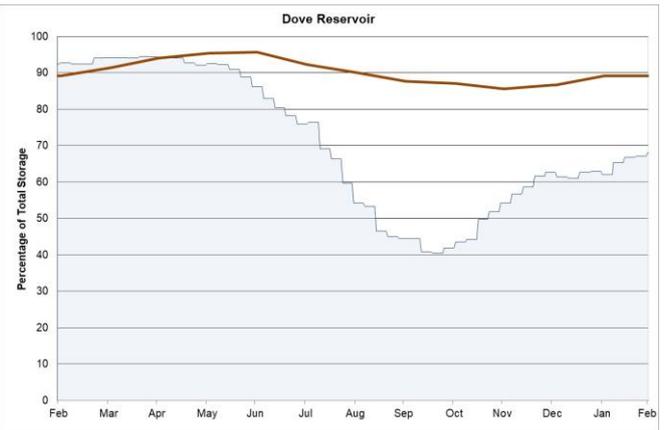
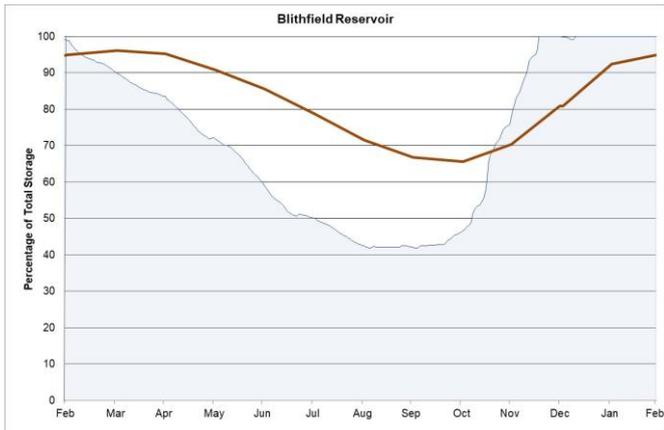


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

6 Reservoir stocks

Figure 6.1: End of month regional reservoir stocks compared to long term average stocks. Note: Historic records of individual reservoirs and reservoir groups making up the regional values vary in length. Please see Section 7.4 for a map detailing the locality of the Midlands reservoirs reported on.





(Source: water companies).

7 Glossary

7.1 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).

Field capacity

Soil at field capacity is holding all of the water which it can hold against gravity.

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).

7.2 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

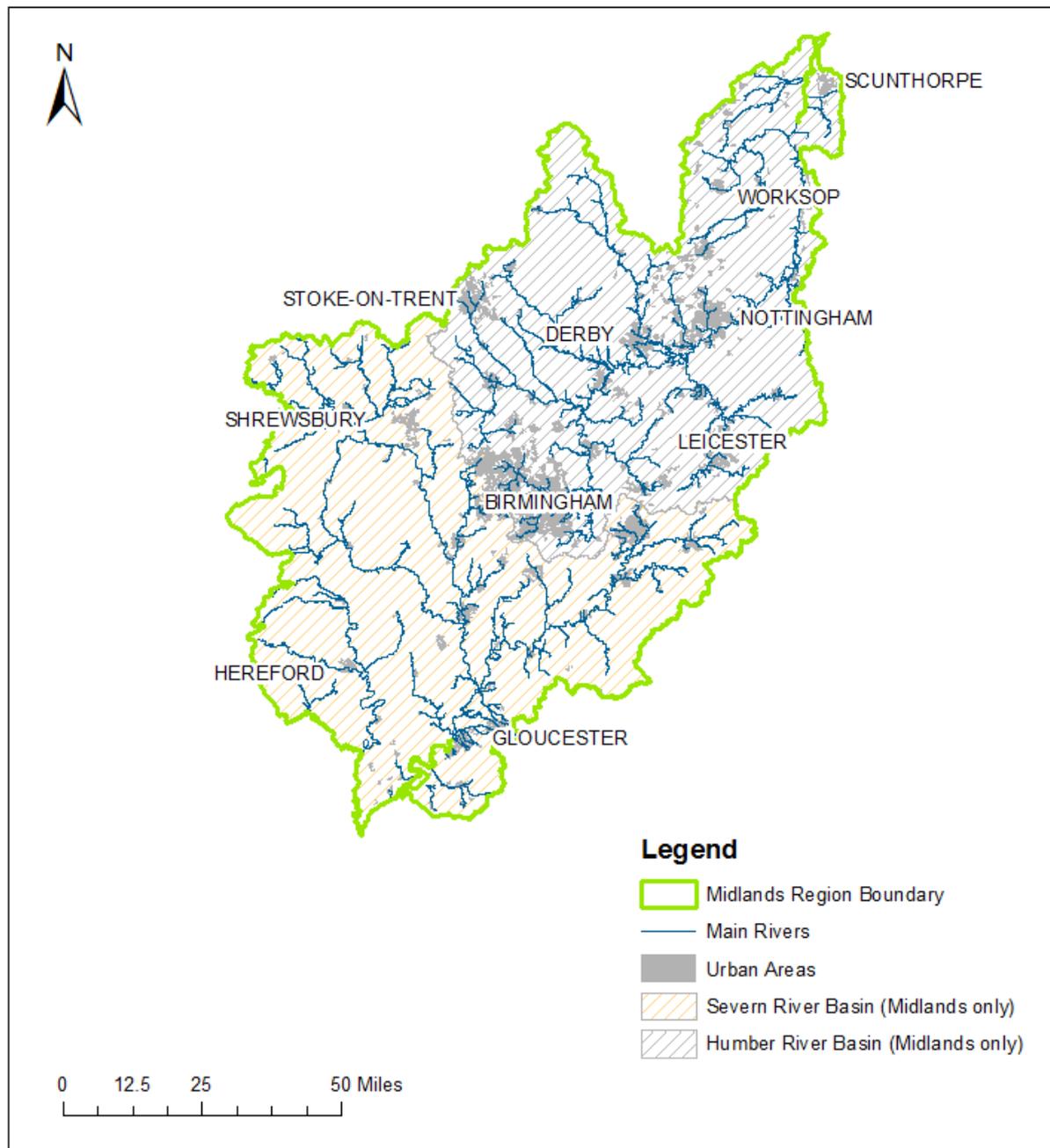
Value likely to fall within this band 8% of the time.

Exceptionally low

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

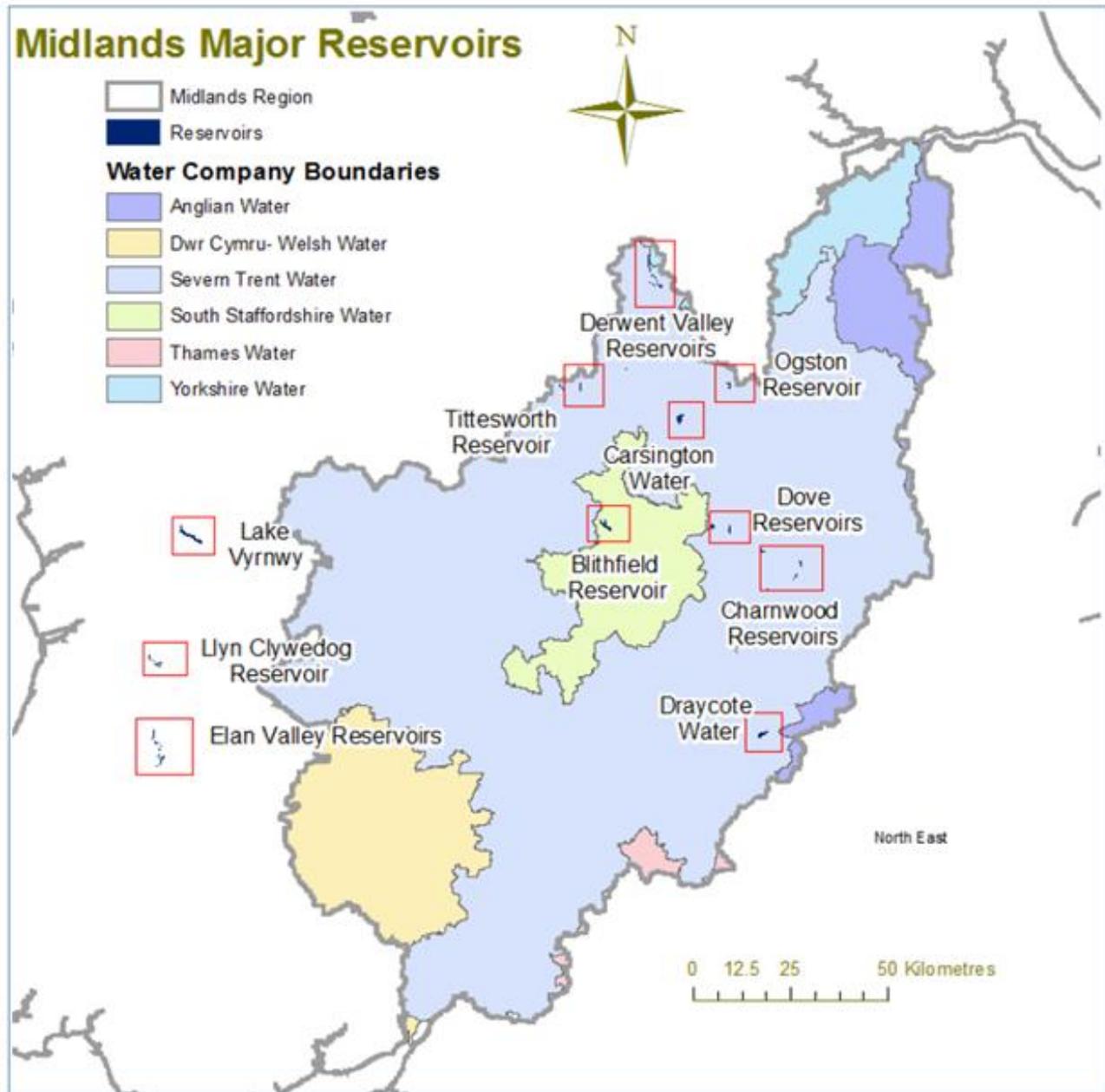
7.3 Midlands regional coverage

Figure 7.1: The Midlands regional boundary and the hydrological boundaries of the River Severn and River Trent.



7.4 Midlands major reservoirs

Figure 7.2: Location of major reservoirs in the Midlands.



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8 Appendices

8.1 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
Avon To Evesham	255	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Derwent (Midlands)	187	Notably High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Dove	205	Notably High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Severn Estuary	248	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Lower Trent	254	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Wye	203	Notably High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Mid Severn	204	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Shropshire Plains	209	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Soar	272	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal

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
Tame	273	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Upper Trent	227	Exceptionally High	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Welsh Mountains	146	Notably High	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Above normal

8.2 River flows table

Site name	River	Catchment	Feb 2026 band	Jan 2026 band
Auckley	Torne	Torne	Notably high	Above normal
Bewdley	Severn	Severn Lower Mid	Notably high	Normal
Butts Bridge	Lugg	Lugg	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Clifton Hall	River Mease	Mease	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Deerhurst	Severn	Severn Lower	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Derby St. Marys	Derwent	Derwent Der to Markeaton confl.	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Ebley Mill	Frome (Gloucs.)	Frome Gloucs	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Evesham	Avon (Midlands)	Avon Warwks Lower	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Great Bridgford	Sow	Sow Upper	Notably high	Normal
Kegworth	Soar	Soar to Kingston Brook confl.	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Llanyblodwel	Tanat	Severn Upper River Tanat	Above normal	Normal

Site name	River	Catchment	Feb 2026 band	Jan 2026 band
Marston On Dove	Dove (Midlands)	Dove Derb to Hilton Br confl.	Exceptionally high	Above normal
North Muskham	Trent	Trent to Cromwell	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Redbrook	Wye (Herefordshire)	Wye H and W d s Lugg	Notably high	Normal
Stareton	Avon (Midlands)	Avon Warwks Upper	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Tenbury	Teme	Teme	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Walcot	Tern	Tern	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Whatstandwell	Derwent	Derwent Derb to Amber confl.	Above normal	Normal
Worksop	Ryton	Ryton Upper to Oldcoates Dyke	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high
Yoxall	Trent	Trent to Tame Mease confl.	Exceptionally high	Above normal

8.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Feb 2026 band	End of Jan 2026 band
Anthony's Cross	Severn Vale Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Normal
Coxmoor	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Above normal	Above normal
Crossley Hill	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Above normal	Above normal
Four Crosses	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Normal
Ram Hall, Meriden	Permo Carboniferous Sandstones and Mudstones	Exceptionally high	Normal
Rider Point Via Gellia	Carboniferous Limestone	No data	Exceptionally high
Southards Lane, Bolsover	Magnesian Limestone	Notably high	Notably high
St Mary's Church, Shrawley	Triassic Sandstone	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Weir Farm	Bridgnorth Sandstone Formation	Notably high	Above normal

