

# Monthly water situation report: Yorkshire Area

## 1 Summary - February 2026

Rainfall and river flows were both above average for the time of year in Yorkshire this month. Soils began the month fully saturated and remained wet throughout. Groundwater levels increased in most aquifers but decreased in the Millstone Grit and Corallian Limestone. Reservoir stocks increased and remained above the long term average (LTA) for the time of year.

### 1.1 Rainfall

Rainfall in Yorkshire this month was above average for the time of year across all catchments. Monthly totals ranged from 112% of the LTA in the Rye catchment to 213% of the LTA in the Don catchment, based on the Met Office HadUK-Grid data set.

In most catchments the rainfall occurred as individual small events distributed between days 5 and 15, with very few dry days in this period. In the Don and Rother catchments the large rainfall totals for the month were the result of concentrated rainfall on days 5 and 6. In particular, South Elmsall in the Don catchment recorded two-thirds of the expected rain for the month on just day 5.

It was the wettest 3-month and 4-month period ending in February in the Don catchment since 1871. It was also the wettest 4-month period ending in February in the Ouse catchment since 1871.

The 6-month cumulative rainfall totals since September were notably high in the Rye and Derwent catchments and exceptionally high in all others, which showed the influence of the wet autumn and early winter.

### 1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

Soils began the month completely saturated across Yorkshire and remained so throughout the month.

### 1.3 River flows

Monthly mean flows were high for the time of year in all rivers in Yorkshire. They ranged from 112% of the LTA to 247% of the LTA.

In the Pennine catchments of north and west Yorkshire, above normal to exceptionally high river flows resulted from each of the rainfall events. Flows recovered and returned to normal following each event. The exception to this was the River Swale which fluctuated but

maintained high flow conditions throughout. As a result, monthly mean flows reflected this mixed picture, ranging from normal to notably high.

In the east and south of Yorkshire monthly mean flows were exceptionally high. However, daily mean flows steadily declined until day 5 but then rose to exceptionally high by day 11 in response to the accumulating rainfall amounts. From day 17 river flows reduced, although most remained above normal.

Flow in the West Beck was exceptionally high for the entire month beyond day 3, sustained by the exceptionally high groundwater levels in the chalk. In the final week the flow began to gradually recede.

## **1.4 Groundwater levels**

### **Magnesian Limestone**

The groundwater level within the Magnesian Limestone increased at Brick House Farm and became exceptionally high for the time of year.

### **Millstone Grit**

The groundwater level within the Millstone Grit decreased at Hill Top Farm and was normal for the time of year. The groundwater level at this observation borehole may be affected by its use for water abstraction by means of a pump.

### **Sherwood Sandstone**

The groundwater level within the Sherwood Sandstone increased at Great Ouseburn and was above normal for the time of year. The groundwater level increased at Riccall Approach Farm and was normal for the time of year.

### **Corallian Limestone**

The groundwater level within the Corallian Limestone decreased at Sproxton and was above normal for the time of year

### **Chalk**

The groundwater level increased at Wetwang and became exceptionally high for the time of year. The groundwater level increased at Dalton Estate Well and became exceptionally high for the time of year.

## **1.5 Reservoir stocks**

Yorkshire Water combined reservoir stocks increased slightly over the month. At the end of February, stocks were at 97.8%, 4.2% more than the LTA.

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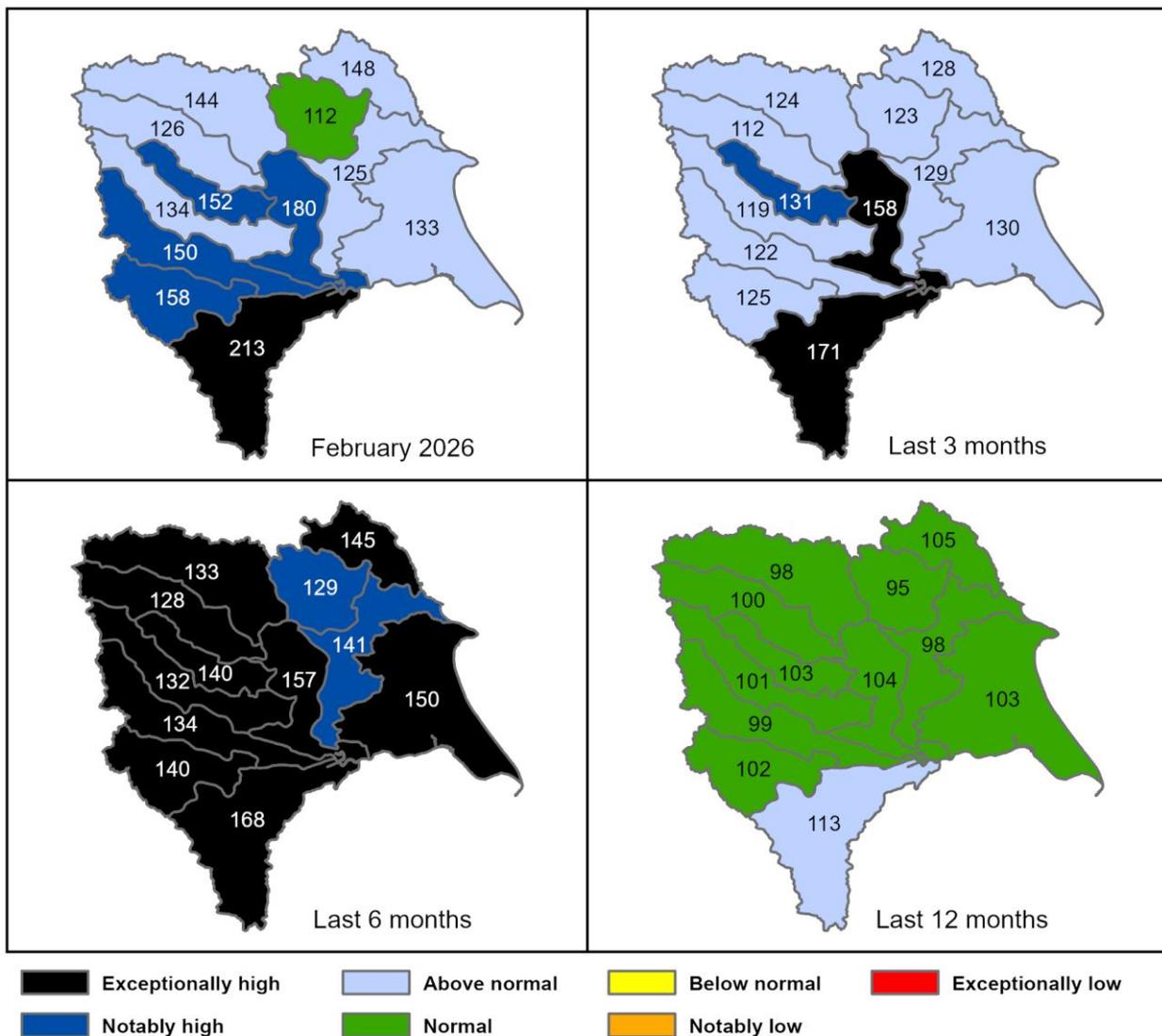
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## 2 Rainfall

### 2.1 Rainfall map

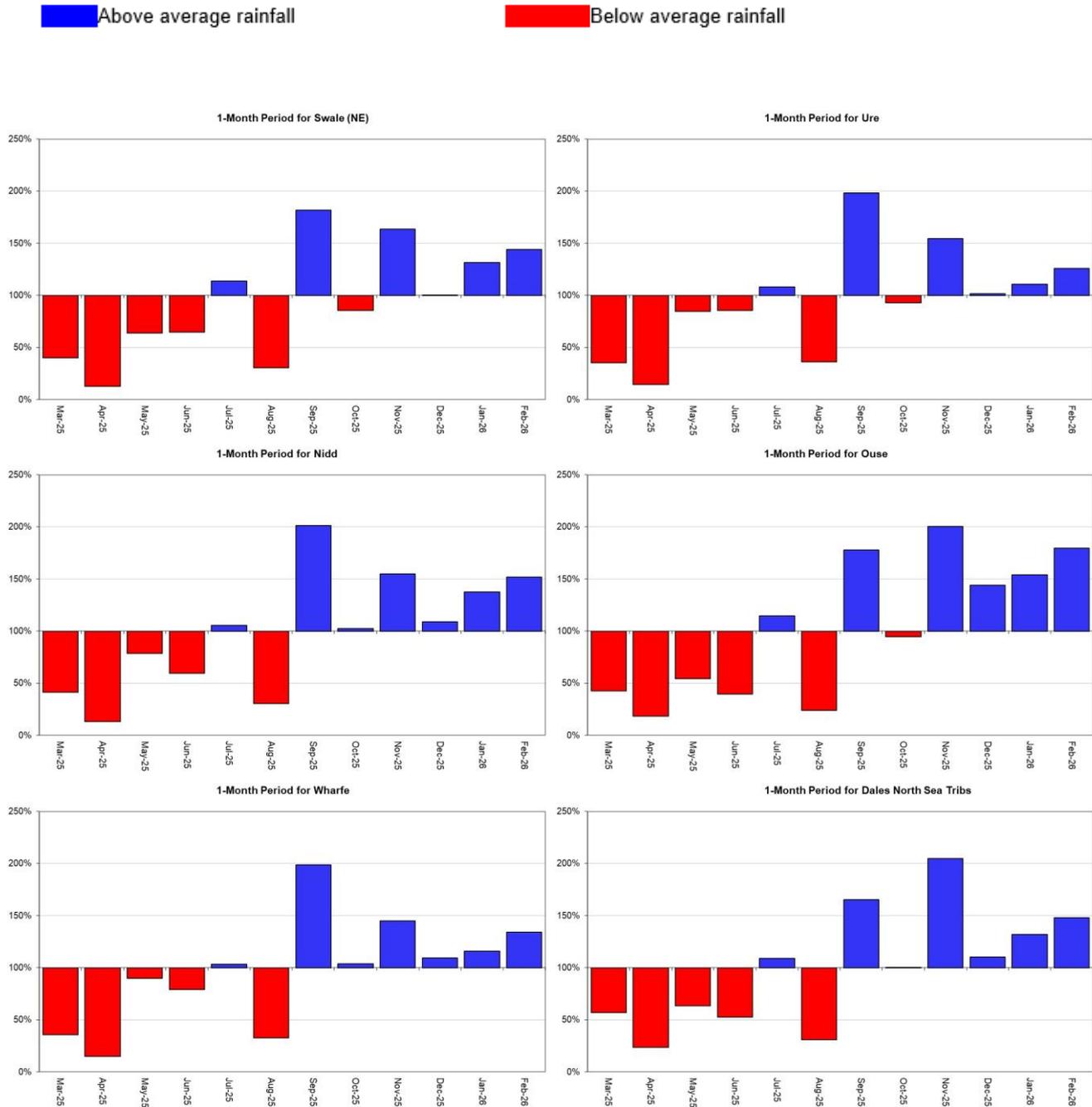
Figure 2.1: Total rainfall for hydrological areas across Yorkshire, expressed as a percentage of the 1991 to 2020 long term average rainfall, for the current month (up to 28 February 2026), the last 3 months, the last 6 months, and the last 12 months, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic totals. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

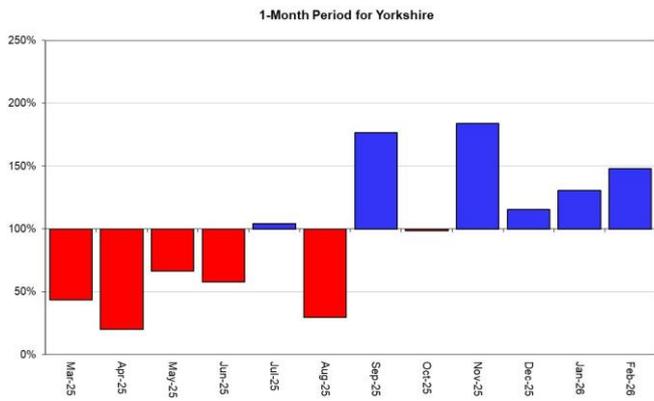
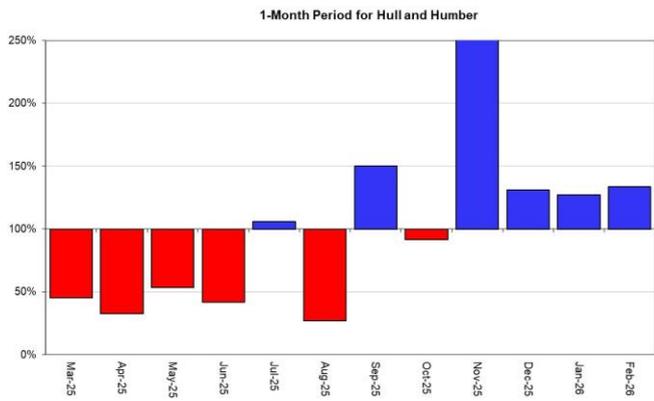
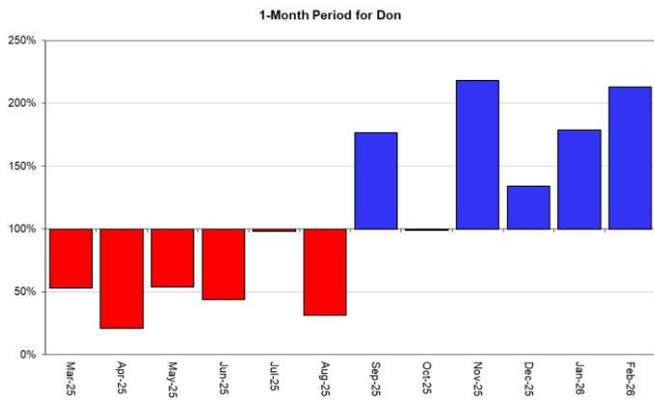
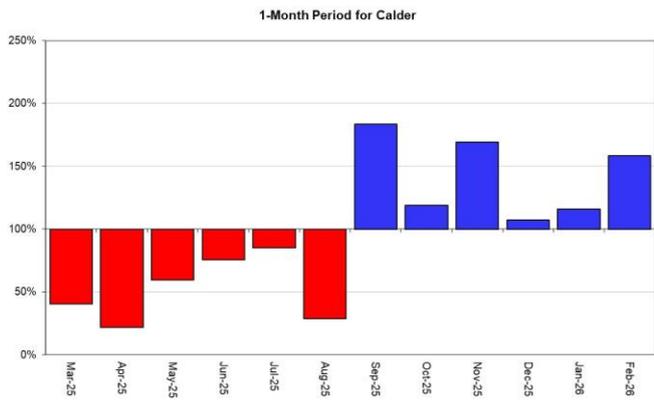
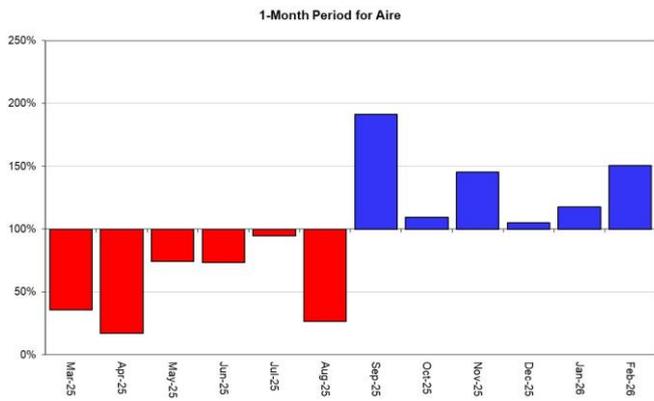
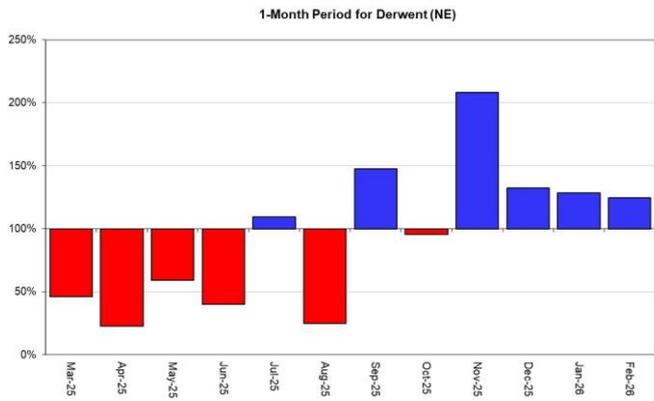
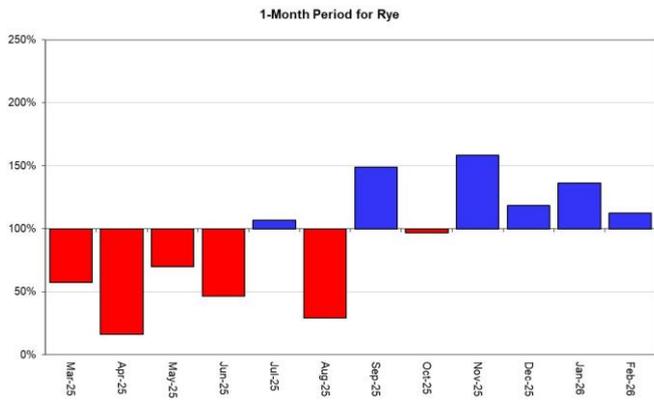


Rainfall data for January 2025 onwards, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded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





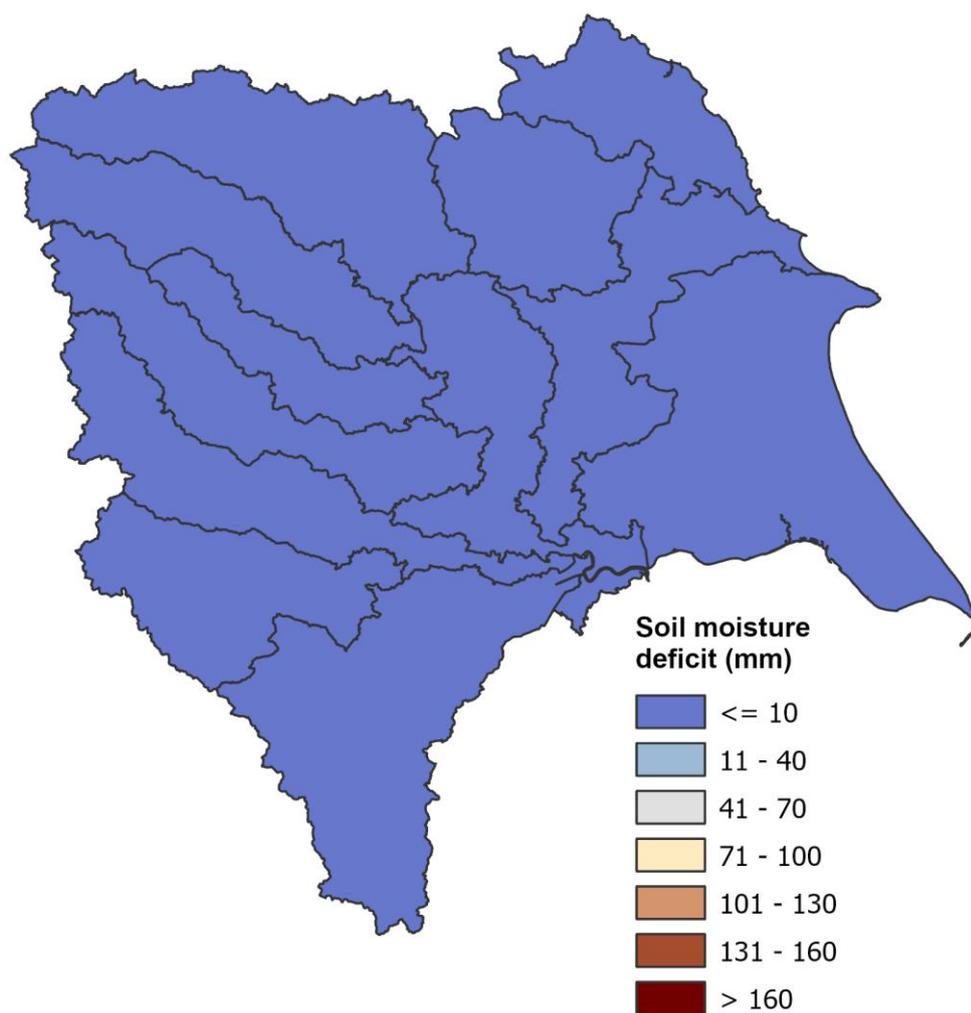
Rainfall data for January 2025 onwards, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment

Agency. Crown Copyright, 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. Shows the actual soil moisture deficits (mm) within each hydrological area. Calculated from MORECS data for real land use.

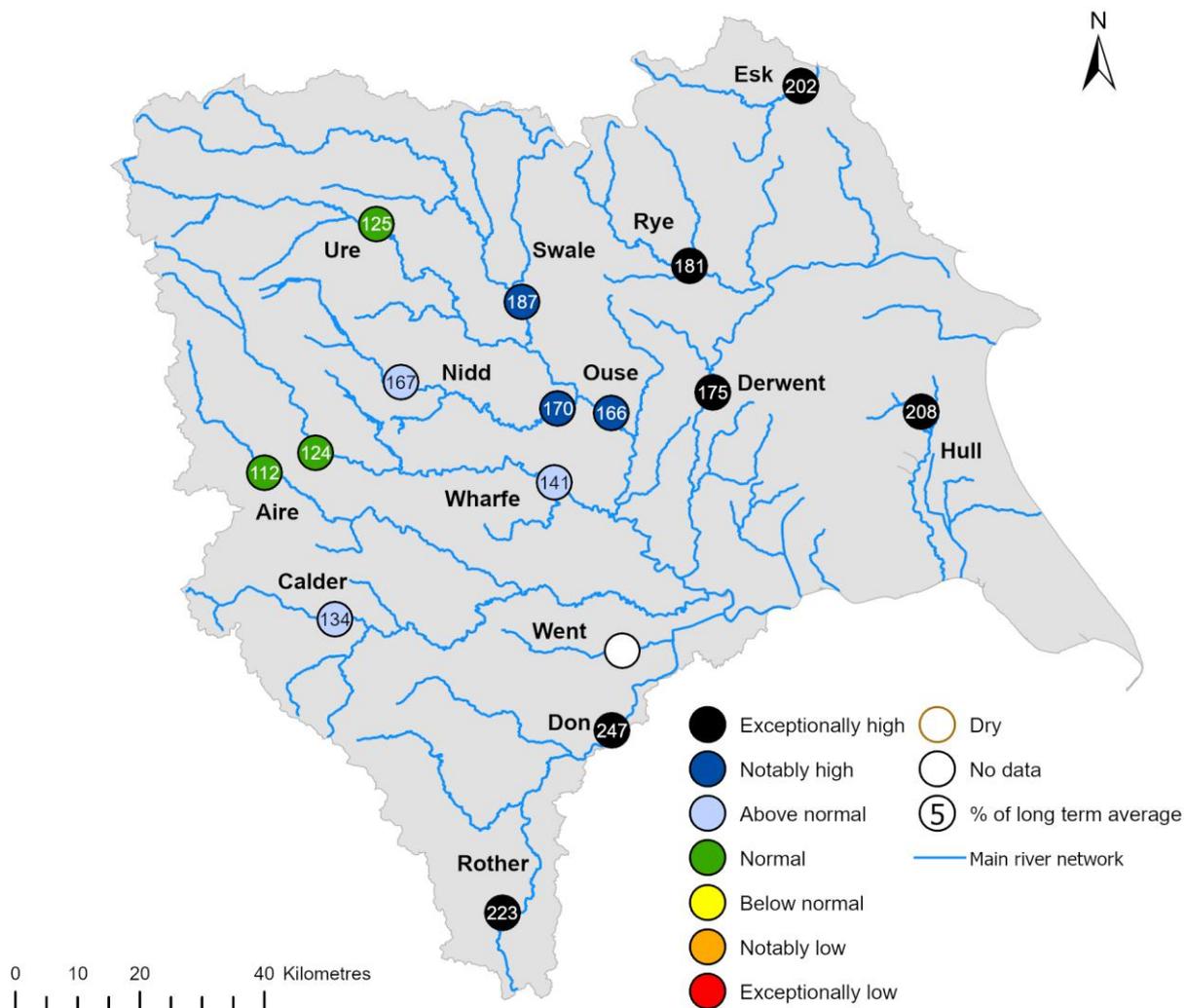


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## 4 River flows

### 4.1 River flows map

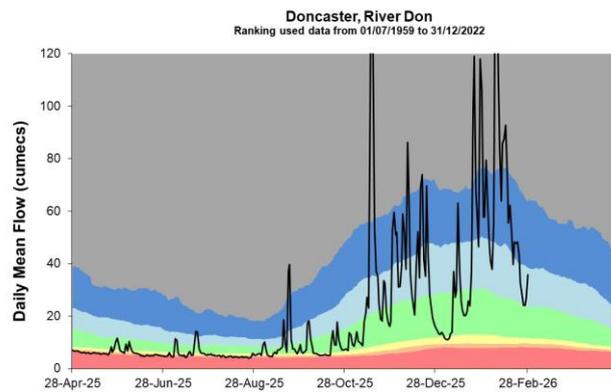
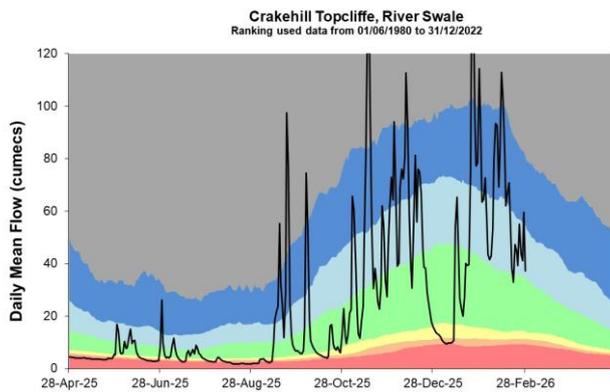
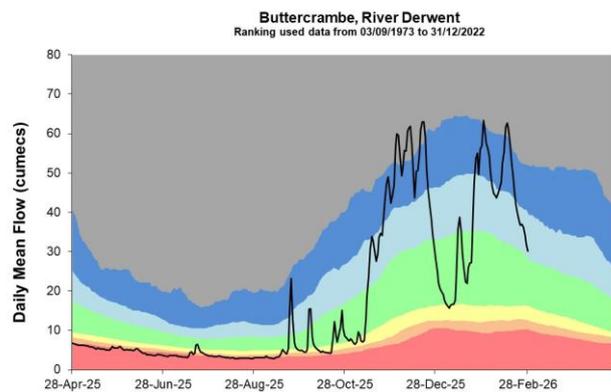
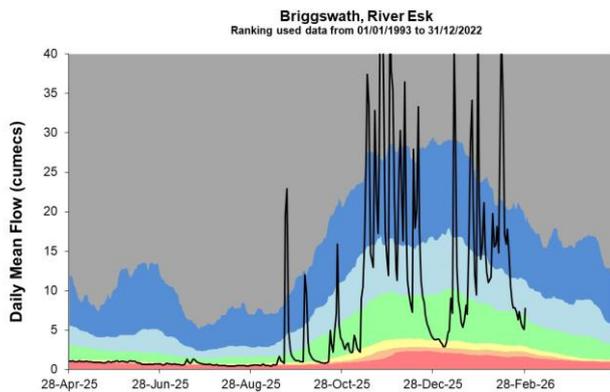
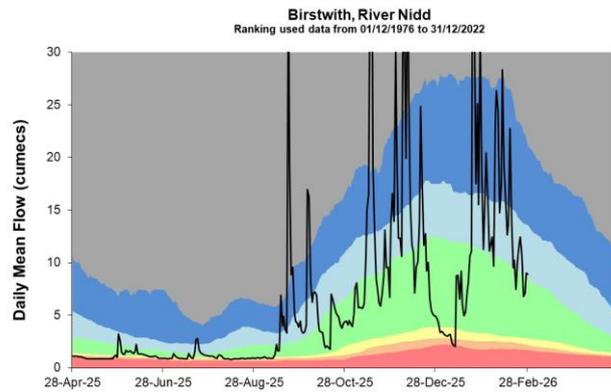
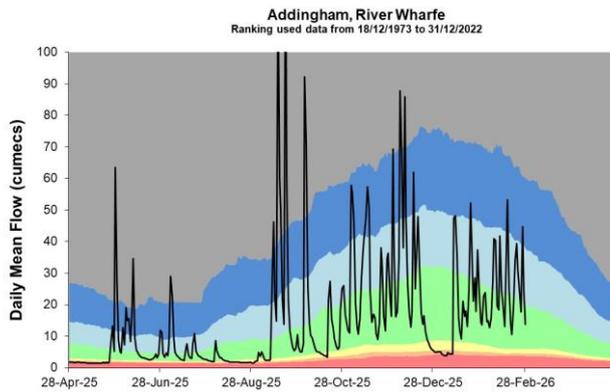
Figure 4.1: Monthly mean river flow for indicator sites for February 2026, expressed as a percentage of the respective long term average and classed relative to an analysis of historic February monthly means. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.



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

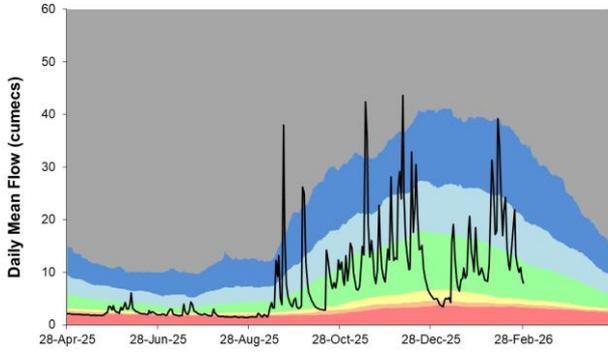
## 4.2 River flow charts

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.



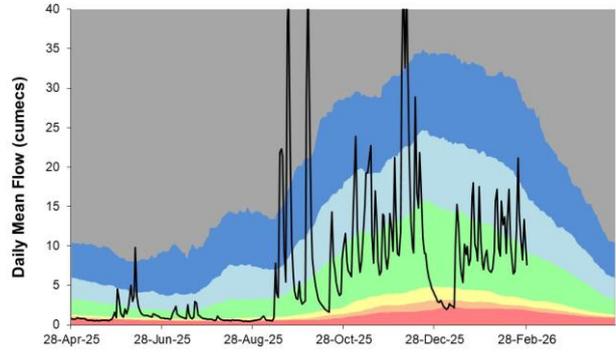
**Elland, River Calder**

Ranking used data from 01/07/1971 to 31/12/2022



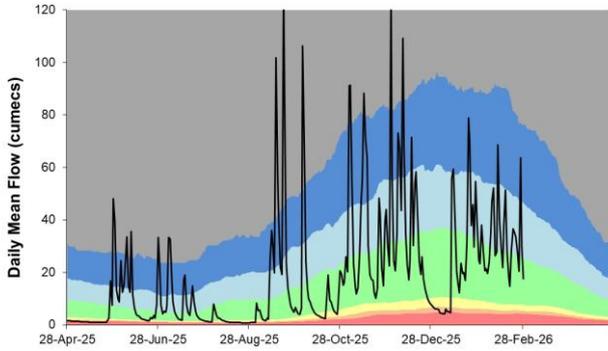
**Kildwick, River Aire**

Ranking used data from 01/08/1971 to 31/12/2022



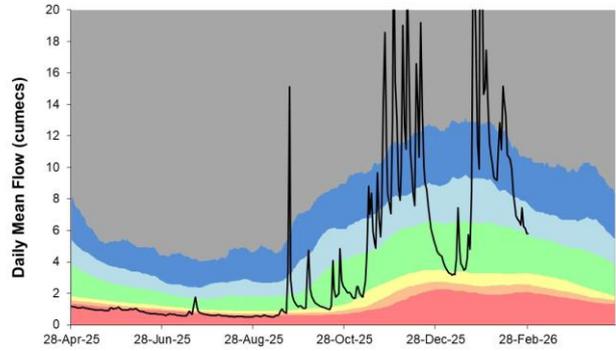
**Kilgram Bridge, River Ure**

Ranking used data from 01/08/1971 to 31/12/2022



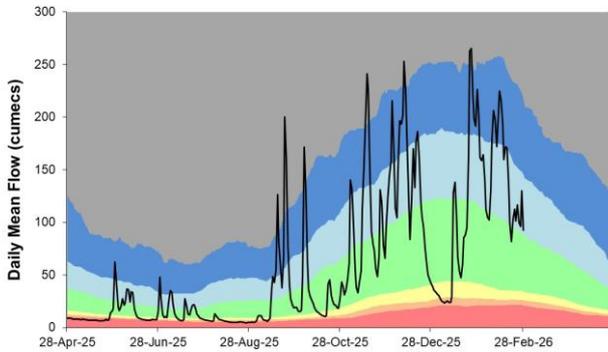
**Ness, River Rye**

Ranking used data from 01/09/1974 to 31/12/2022



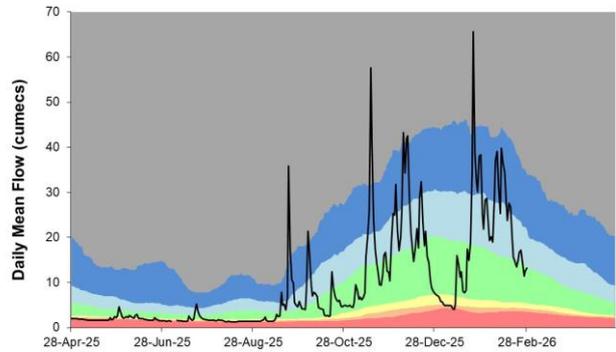
**Skelton, River Ouse**

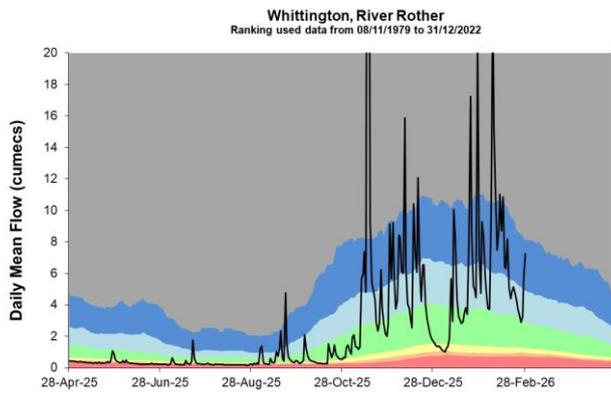
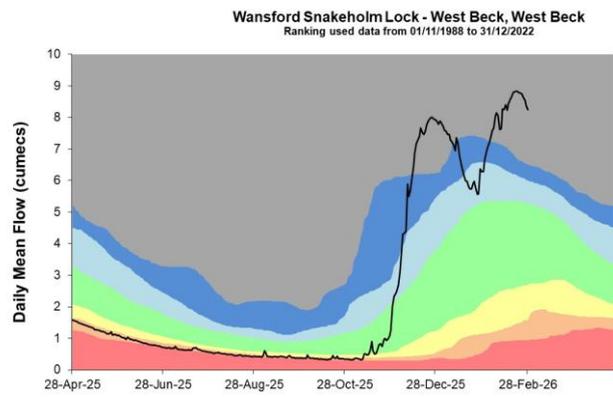
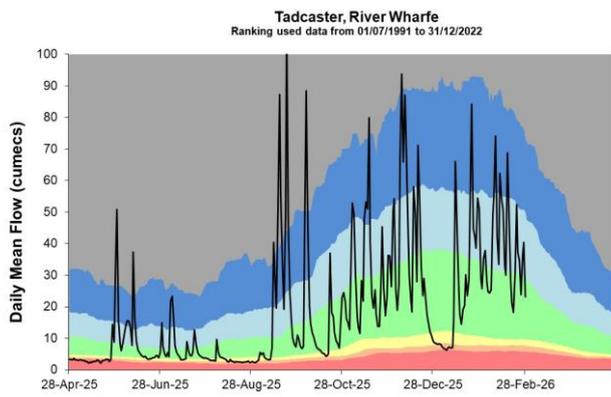
Ranking used data from 18/09/1969 to 31/12/2022



**Skip Bridge Kirk Hammerton, River Nidd**

Ranking used data from 12/06/1979 to 31/12/2022



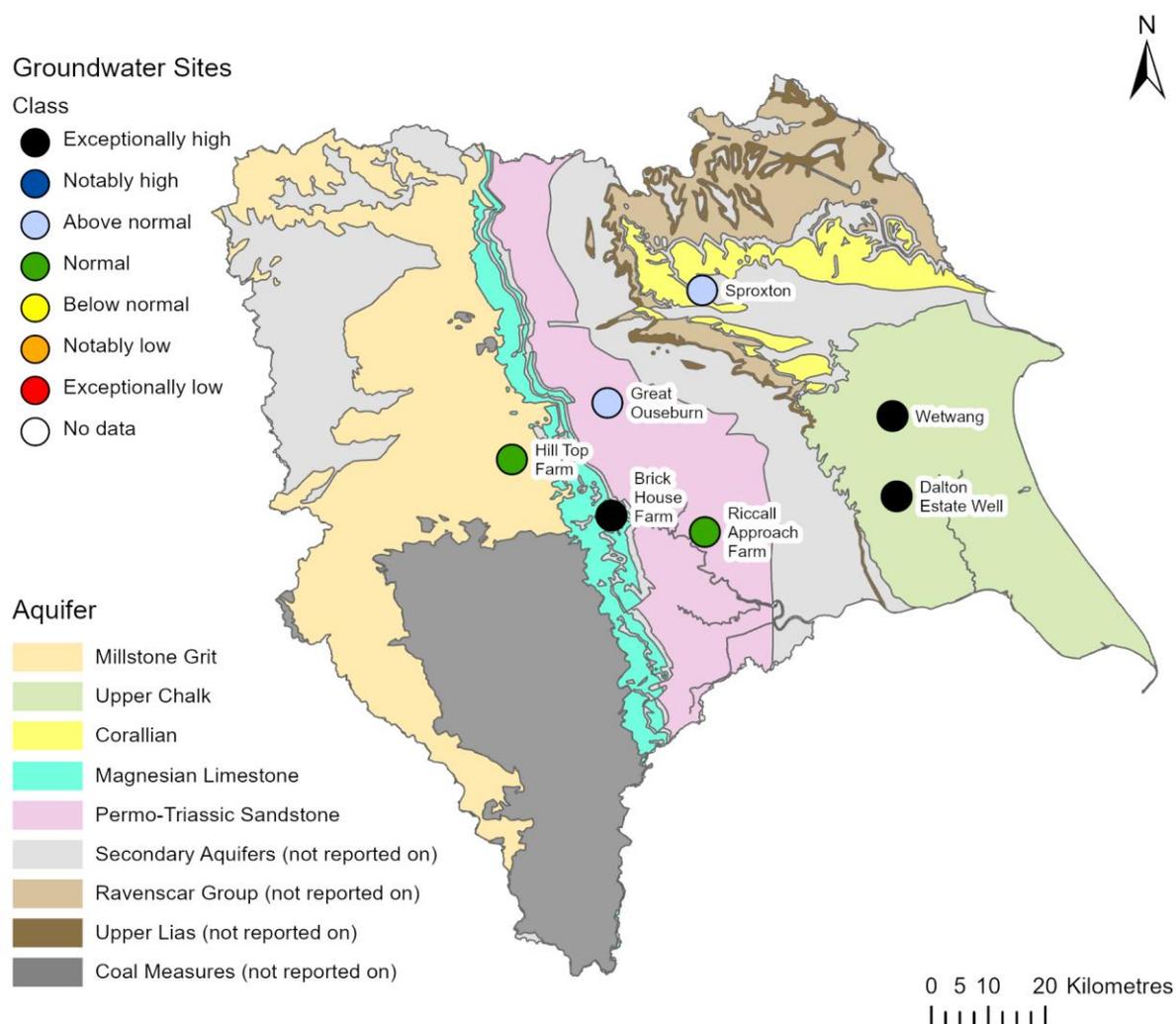


(Source: Environment Agency).

## 5 Groundwater levels

### 5.1 Groundwater levels map

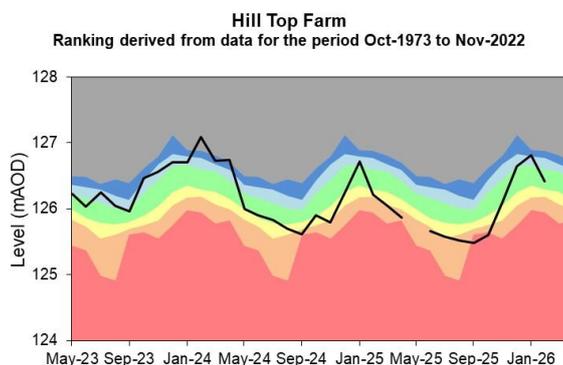
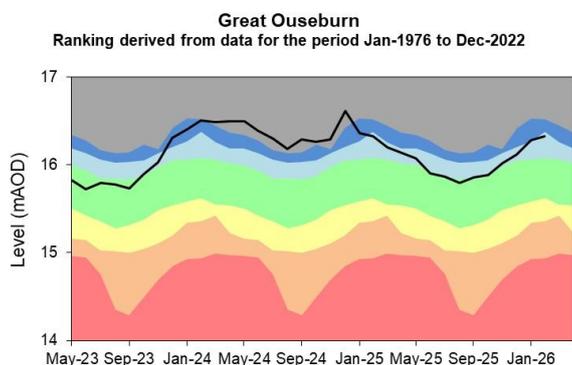
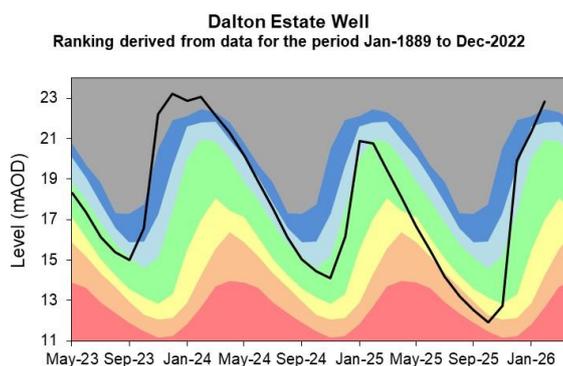
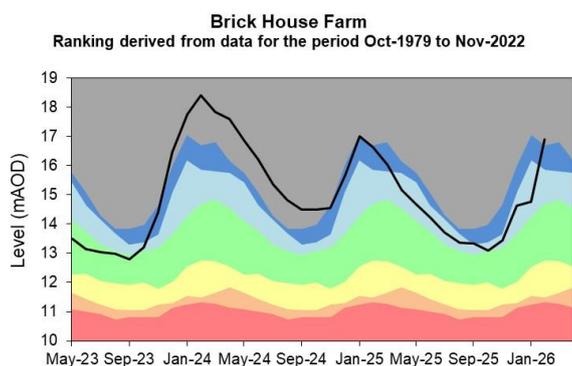
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of February 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic February levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information.

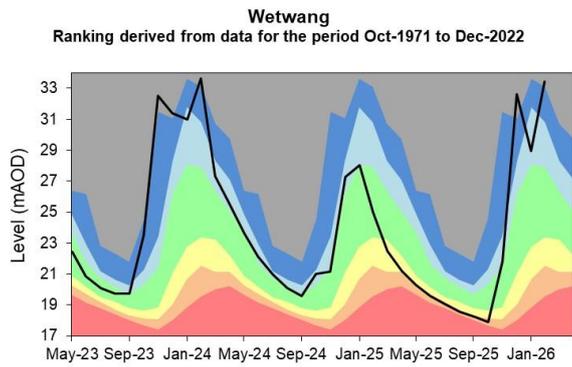
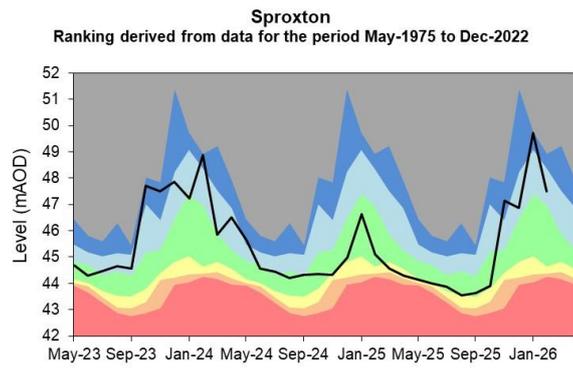
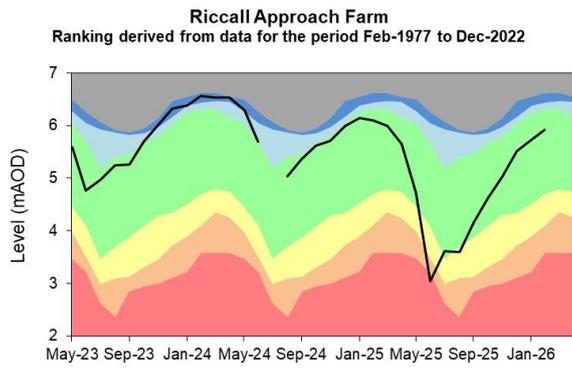


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## 5.2 Groundwater level charts

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.



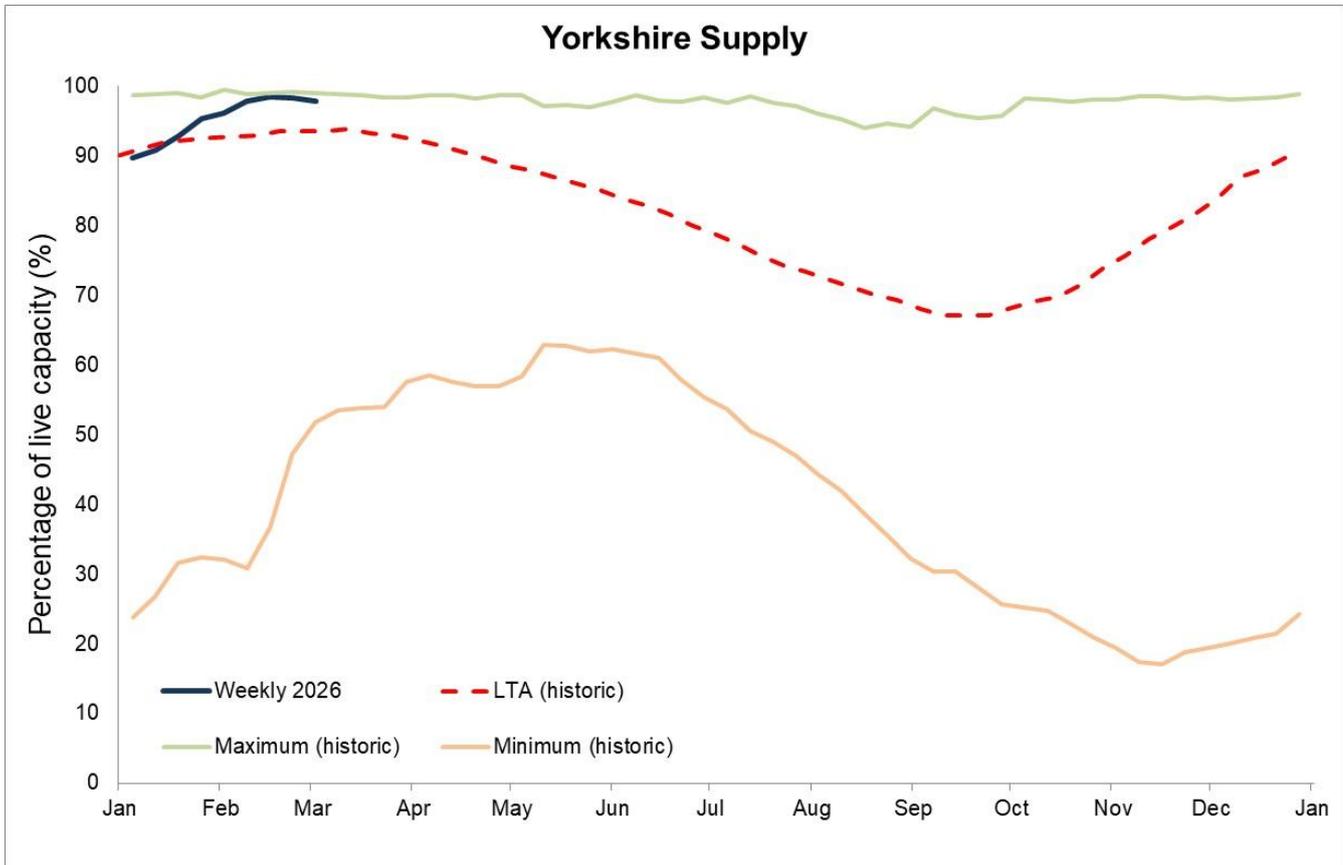


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

N.B. Hill Top Farm observation borehole is used for abstraction, therefore, the groundwater level record will be directly affected by pumping.

## 6 Reservoir stocks

Figure 6.1: End of month regional reservoir stocks compared to long term maximum, minimum and average stocks. Note: Historic records of individual reservoirs and reservoir groups making up the regional values vary in length.



(Source: Yorkshire Water).

## 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 ( $\text{m}^3\text{s}^{-1}$ ).

#### **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).

## 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.

## 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
Aire	150	Notably high	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Calder	158	Notably high	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Dales North Sea Tributaries	148	Above normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Derwent (NE)	125	Above normal	Above normal	Notably high	Normal
Don	213	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Hull and Humber	134	Above normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Nidd	152	Notably high	Notably high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Ouse	180	Notably high	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Rye	112	Normal	Above normal	Notably 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
Swale (NE)	144	Above normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Ure	126	Above normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Wharfe	134	Above normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal

## 8.2 River flows table

Site name	River	Catchment	Feb 2026 band	Jan 2026 band
Addingham	Wharfe	Wharfe Middle	Normal	Normal
Birstwith	Nidd	Nidd Middle	Above normal	Normal
Briggswath	Esk	Esk Yorks	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Buttercrambe	Derwent	Derwent Yorks Middle	Exceptionally high	Normal
Crakehill Topcliffe	Swale	Swale Lower	Notably high	Above normal
Doncaster	Don	Don Lower	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Elland	Calder	Calder Yorks Upper	Above normal	Below normal
Skip Bridge Kirk Hammerton	Nidd	Nidd Lower	Notably high	Normal
Kildwick	Aire	Aire Upper	Normal	Below normal
Kilgram Bridge	Ure	Ure Middle	Normal	Normal
Ness	Rye	Rye	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Skelton	Ouse	Ouse Yorks	Notably high	Normal

Site name	River	Catchment	Feb 2026 band	Jan 2026 band
Tadcaster	Wharfe	Wharfe Lower	Above normal	Normal
Wansford Snakeholm Lock	West Beck	Hull Upper	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Whittington	Rother	Rother Yorks	Exceptionally high	Above normal

### 8.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Feb 2026 band	End of Jan 2026 band
Brick House Farm	Wharfe Magnesian Limestone	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Dalton Estate Well	Hull and East Riding Chalk	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Great Ouseburn	Sherwood Sandstone	Above normal	Notably high
Hill Top Farm	Millstone Grit and Carboniferous Limestone	Normal	Notably high
Riccall Approach Farm	Sherwood Sandstone	Normal	Normal
Sproxton	Sherwood Sandstone	Above normal	Notably high
Wetwang	Hull and East Riding Chalk	Exceptionally high	Above normal