Monthly water situation report: Midlands

1 Summary - March 2026

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

Rainfall - Over March, the majority of the Midlands received normal rainfall totals for the time of year.

Soil moisture deficit – At the end of March soil moisture deficit (SMD) measured between 11mm and 40mm across all areas of the Midlands. SMD was therefore average for the time of year.

River flows – In March the majority of sites recorded normal flows compared to the long term average (LTA). The remainder mostly recorded above normal flows but 2 recorded notably high flows.

Groundwater levels – Most sites recorded notably high groundwater levels in March.

Reservoir stocks - All reservoirs apart from Dove were at average or above average storage capacity by the end of March.

1.1 Rainfall

Over March, the majority of the Midlands received normal rainfall totals for the time of year. These totals ranged from 64% to 102% of the LTA. The exceptions were the Lower Severn and Avon hydrological areas, which received below normal rainfall totals. All but 2 of the Midlands hydrological areas received less than 100% of their LTA rainfall. This means that for most of the areas, March was a little drier than average, but not unusually so.

Over the last 3 months, all hydrological areas received exceptionally high rainfall totals apart from Welsh Mountains, which received above normal rainfall totals. This is likely a result of the high rainfall totals received last month: the fourth wettest February since records began in 1872. January also saw higher than average rainfall in most hydrological areas. Additionally, it has been the wettest 3-month period since records began for the Tame catchment.

Over the last 6 months, rainfall totals in the Midlands hydrological areas were mostly exceptionally high. Only Welsh Mountains and Lower Wye did not fit into this banding, but they received notably high rainfall totals. Over this time there were several intense rainfall events across the Midlands, the cumulative impacts of which can be seen in the 6-month totals.

Over the last 12 months, the southern half of the Midlands received normal rainfall totals compared to the 12-month LTA. The northern half mostly received above normal totals apart from Derwent, which received notably high totals.

1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

SMD has increased in most hydrological areas since February, now measuring between 11mm and 40mm. This meant that soils in these catchments had become drier over March. The exceptions are the north-western catchments and two of the north-eastern catchments, which retained a deficit less than or equal to 10mm. Comparison to the LTA shows that all catchments have a deficit of -5mm to 5mm from the LTA. This means that soils are as expected for this time of year. The Lower Trent catchment is now closer to its LTA for the month than it was in February.

1.3 River flows

Over March most sites recorded normal flows for the time of year, ranging from 93% to 116% of the LTA. Seven sites recorded above normal flows, mostly located in the south-eastern and south-western parts of the Midlands region. These sites all recorded over 120% of the LTA. The remaining 2 sites Clifton Hall and Worksop recorded notably high flows.

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

1.4 Groundwater levels

The majority of sites across the Midlands recorded notably high groundwater levels for March. Exceptions were Ram Hall (which recorded normal levels) and Southards Lane and Crossley Hill (which both recorded above normal levels). Groundwater levels have therefore mostly remained quite high since the winter.

1.5 Reservoir stocks

All reservoirs had storage of between 93% and 100% by the end of March except for Dove reservoir, which had 67% of storage. Both Tittesworth and Blithfield were at full storage capacity. All sites had average or above storage for the time of year except for Dove, which had below average storage.

1.6 Environmental impact

The East Midlands moved from drought recovery status into normal incident status on 6 February 2026. The West Midlands moved from drought recovery status into normal incident status on 10 February 2026. 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 March.

1.8 River Wye operations

Throughout March, 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 March.

1.9 Water abstraction restrictions

As of 7 April there are 6 water abstraction licence restrictions in place across the Midlands affecting 12 licences in total. Two of the restrictions are located in West Midlands and the remaining 4 are located in East Midlands.

Table 1.2: Water abstraction licence restrictions

Area	Rivers and stations restricted
East Midlands	River Ryton at Blyth
West Midlands	River Sow at Great Bridgford River Stour at Puxton

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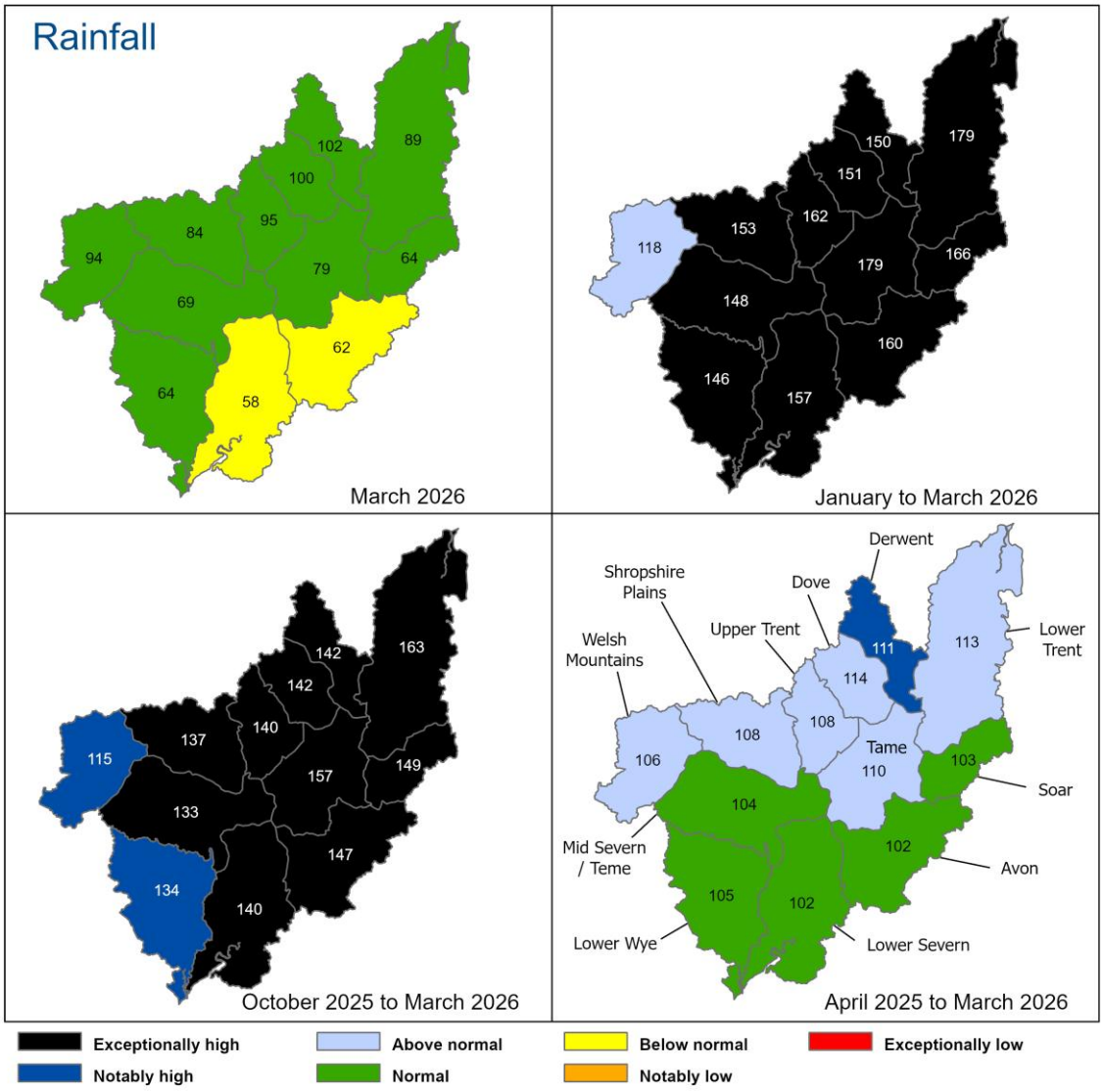
Contact Details: 03708 506 506

2 Rainfall

2.1 Rainfall map

Figure 2.1: Rainfall as % LTA for hydrological areas for the current month (up to 31 March 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.

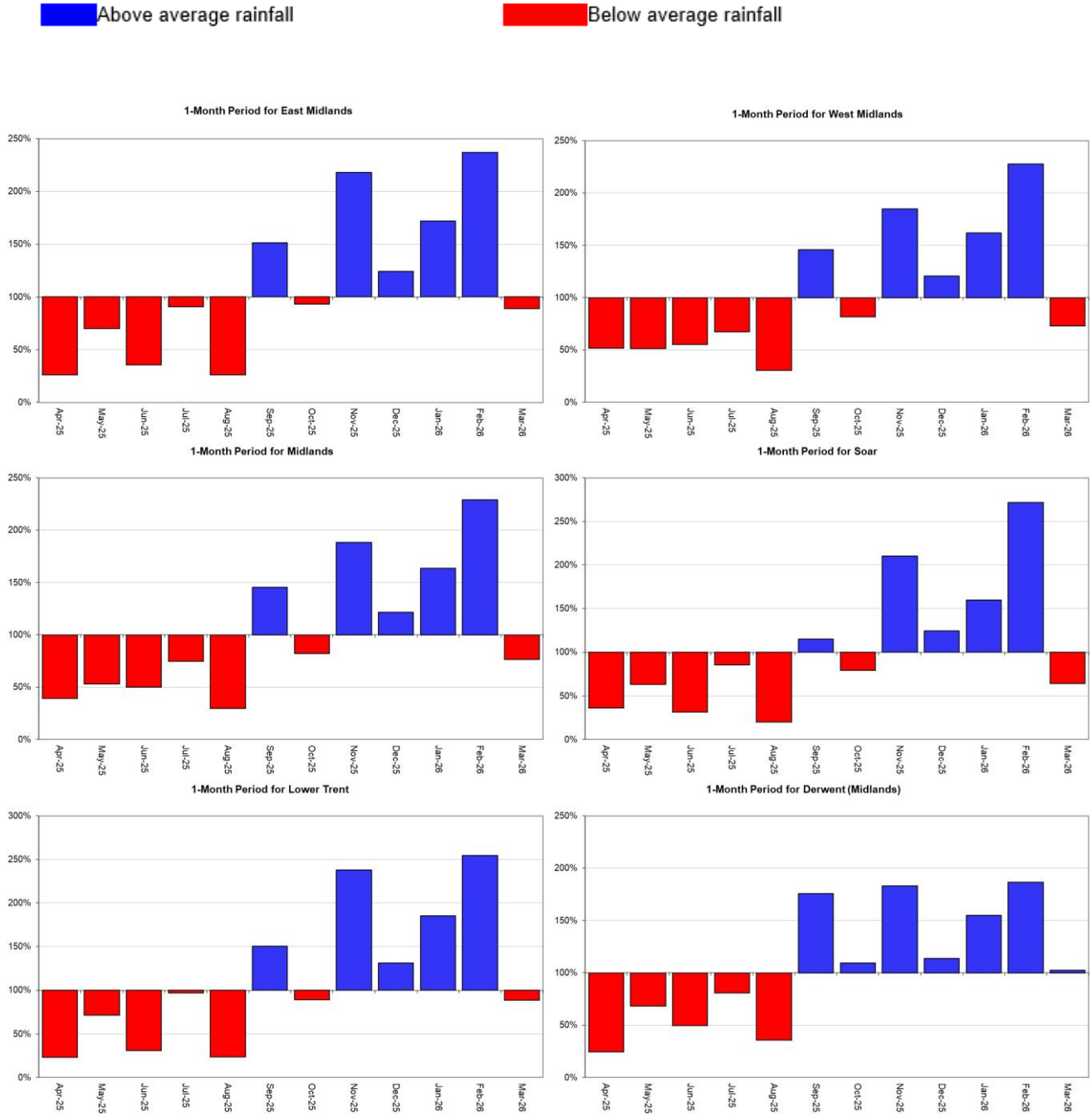


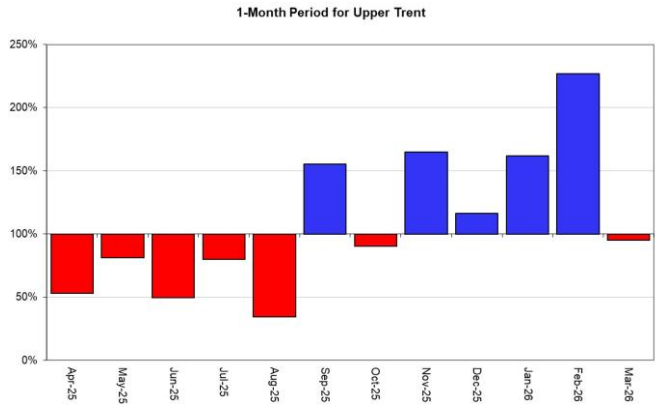
Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025,

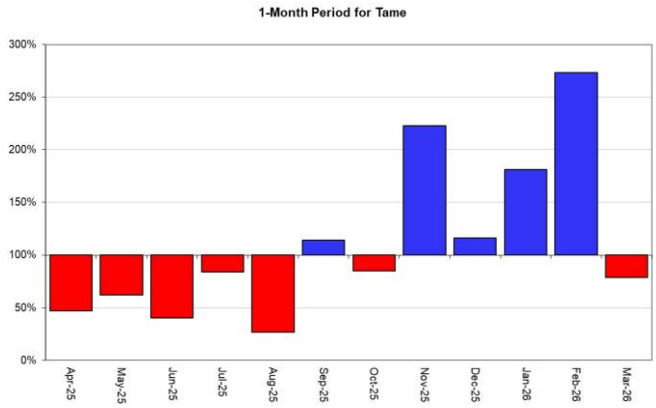
extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

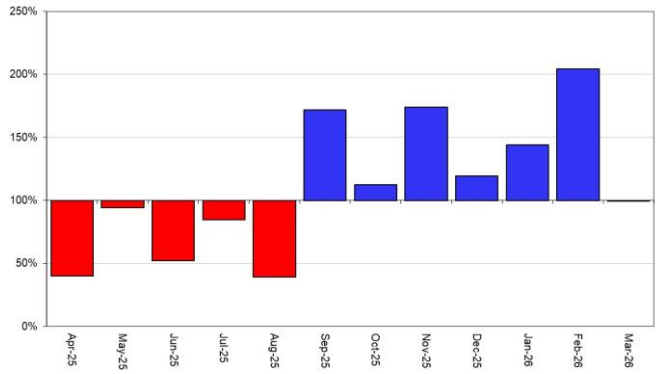
2.2 Rainfall charts

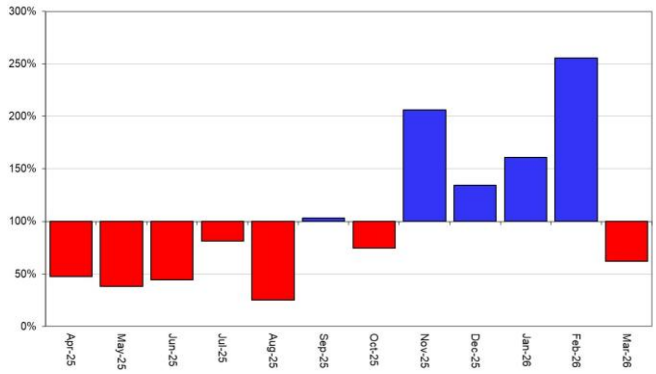
Figure 2.2: Monthly rainfall totals for the past 12 months as a percentage of the 1991 to 2020 long term average for hydrological areas across the Midlands region.

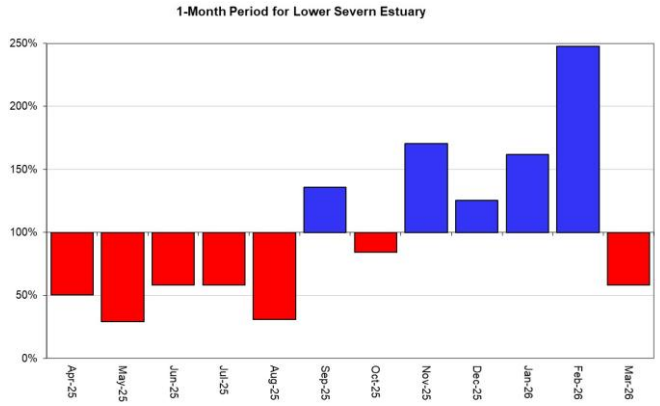


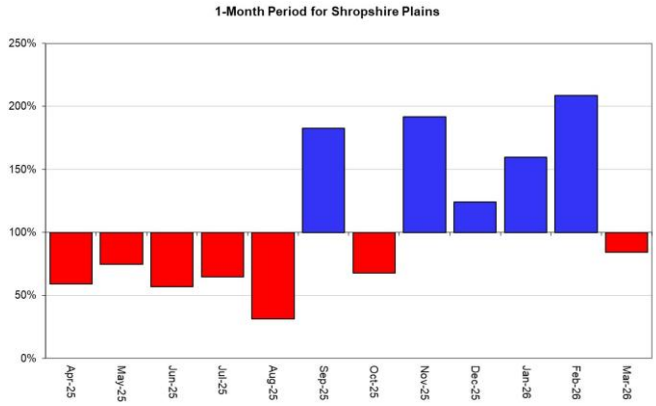

1-Month Period for Upper Trent
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26

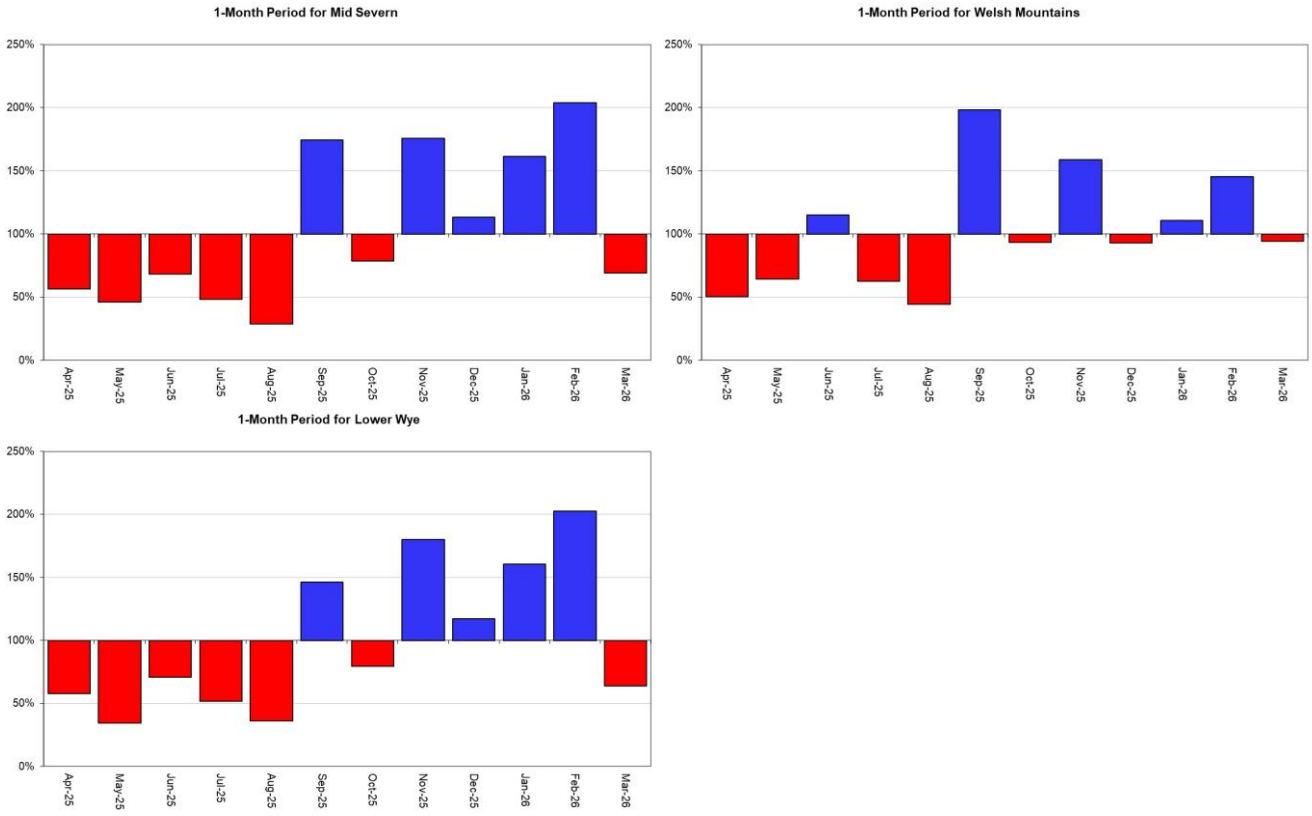

1-Month Period for Tame
300%
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26


1-Month Period for Dove
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26


1-Month Period for Avon to Evesham
300%
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26


1-Month Period for Lower Severn Estuary
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26


1-Month Period for Shropshire Plains
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
Apr-25
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26

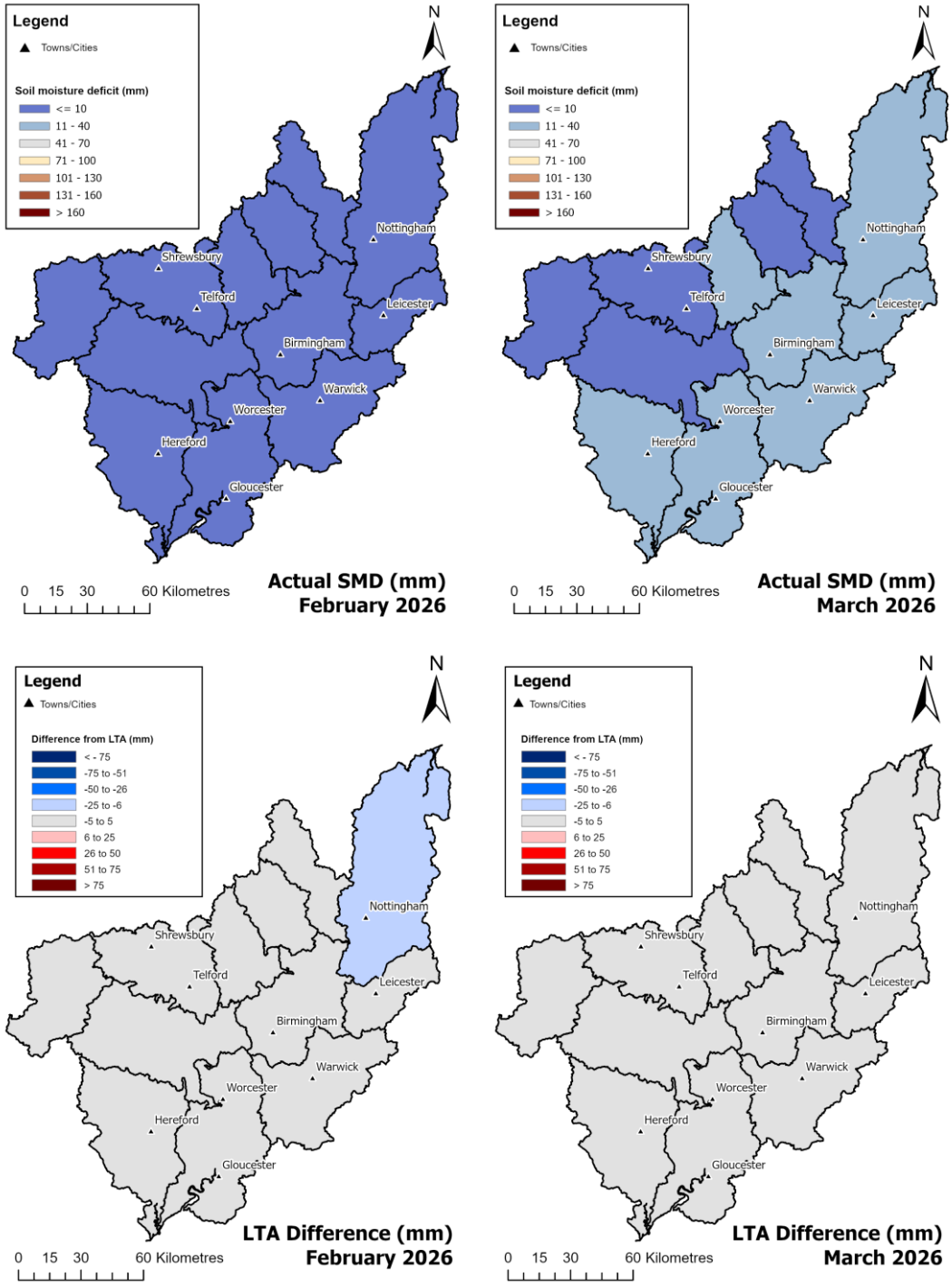


Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall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

3 Soil moisture deficit

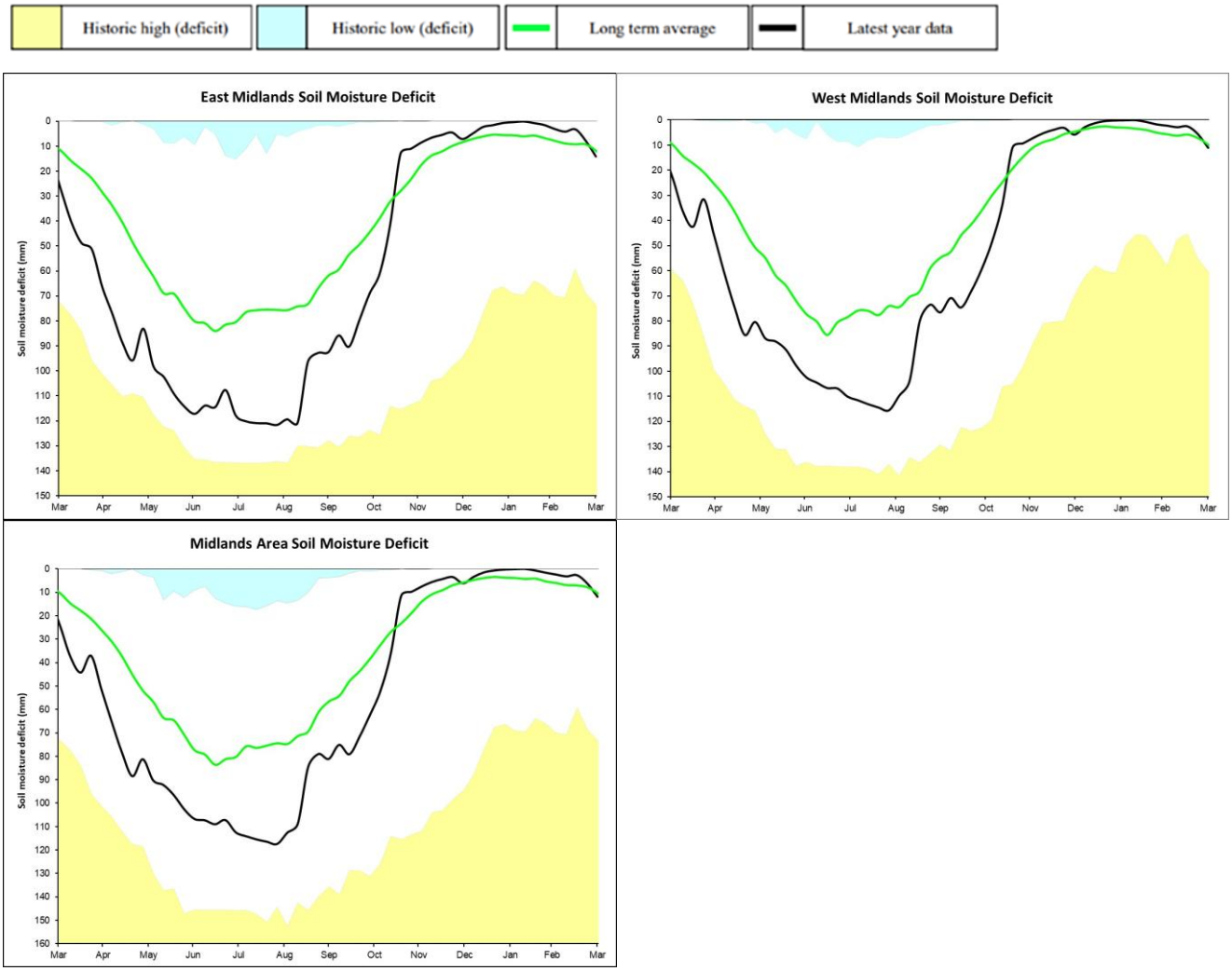
3.1 Soil moisture deficit map

Figure 3.1: Soil moisture deficits for weeks ending 31 March 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.



3.2 Soil moisture deficit charts

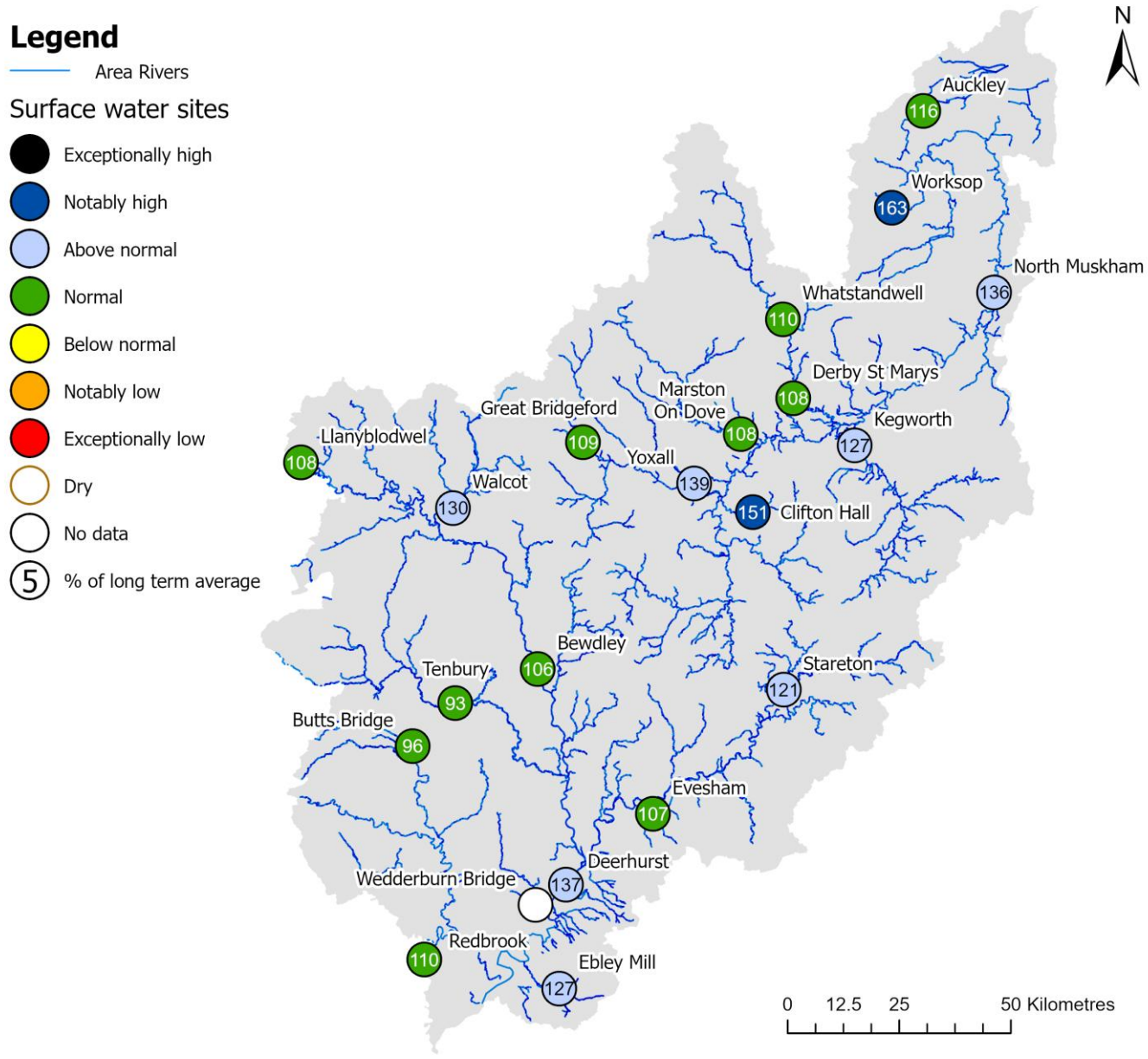
Figure 3.2: Latest soil moisture deficit charts for selected areas across the Midlands.



4 River flows

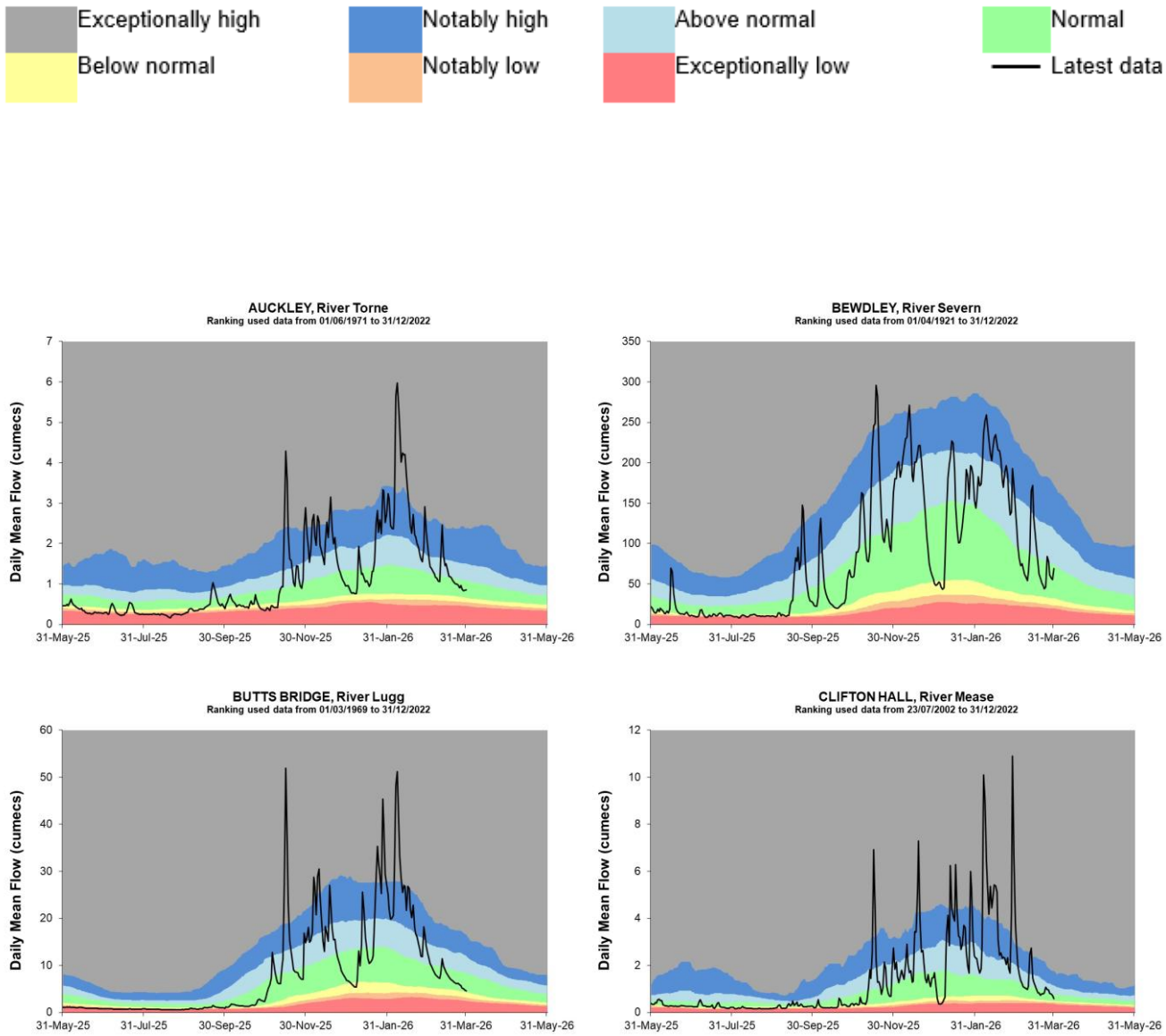
4.1 River flows map

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

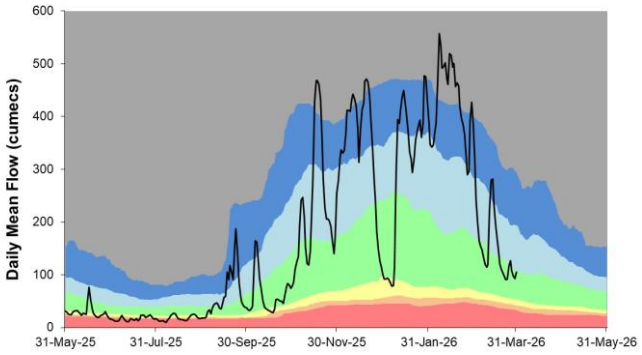


4.2 River flow charts

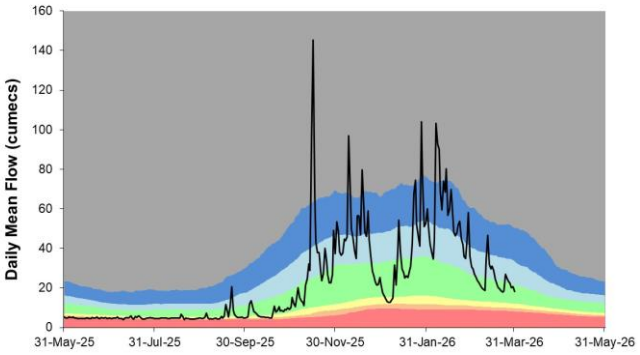
Figure 4.2: Daily mean river flow for index sites over the past year, compared to an analysis of historic daily mean flows, and long term maximum and minimum flows.



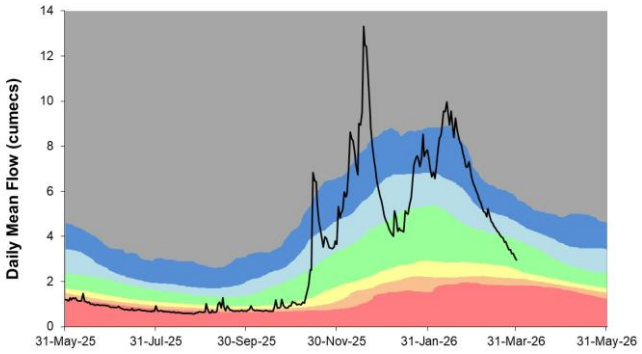
DEERHURST, River Severn
Ranking used data from 01/12/1995 to 31/12/2022



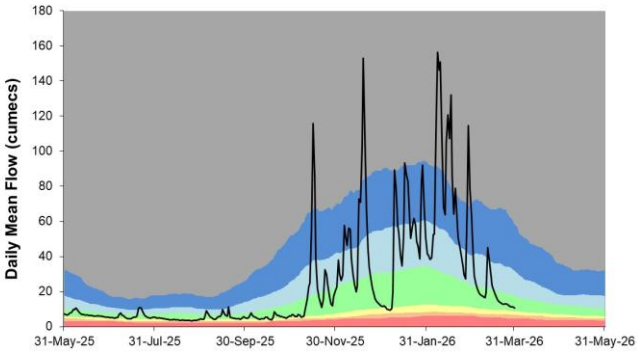
DERBY ST.MARYS, River Derwent
Ranking used data from 02/10/1935 to 31/12/2022



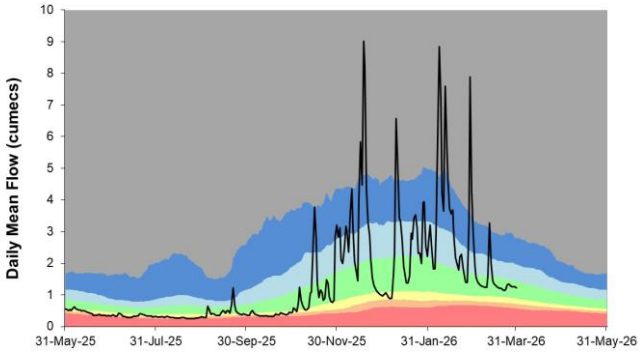
EBLEY MILL, River Frome
Ranking used data from 01/04/1969 to 31/12/2022



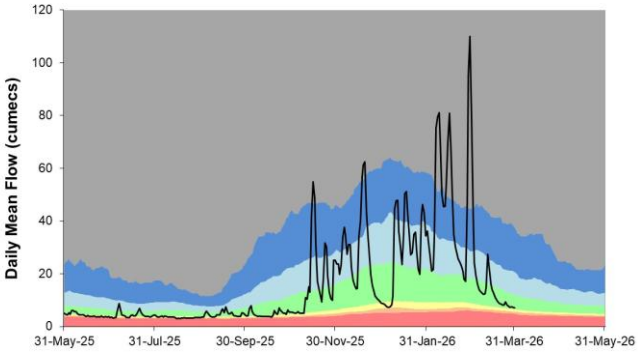
EVESHAM, River Avon
Ranking used data from 01/12/1936 to 31/12/2022



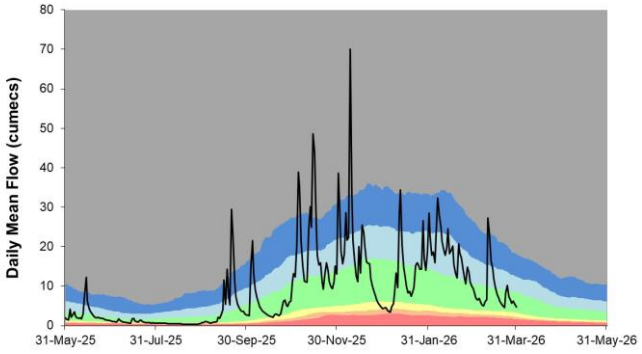
GREAT BRIDGFORD, River Sow
Ranking used data from 18/01/1971 to 31/12/2022



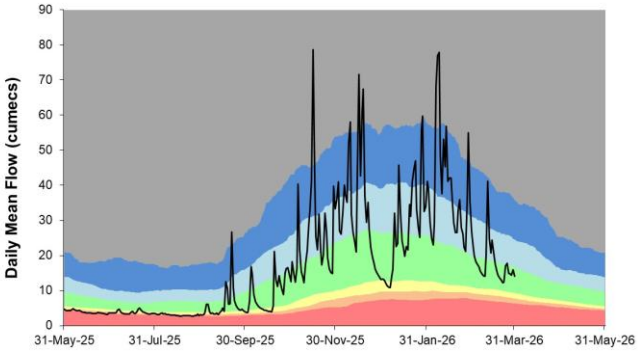
KEGWORTH, River Soar
Ranking used data from 01/12/1978 to 31/12/2022



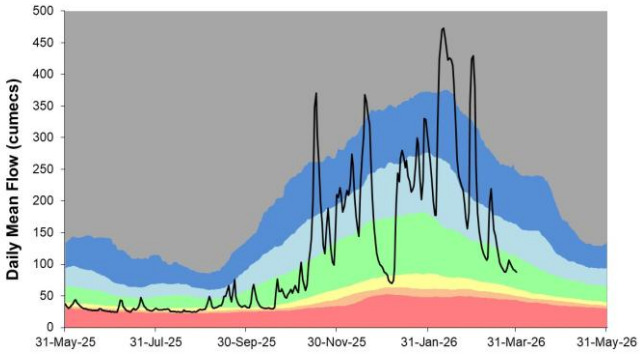
LLANYBLODWEL, Afon Tanat
Ranking used data from 01/06/1973 to 31/12/2022



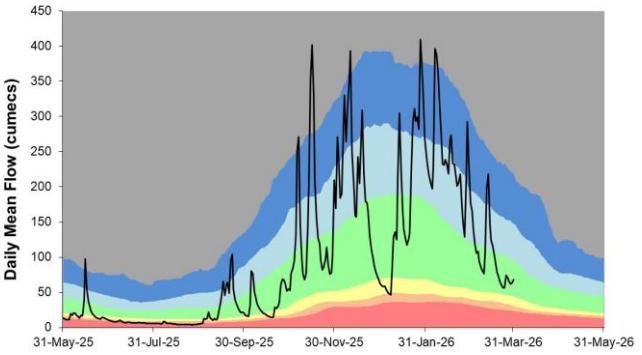
MARSTON ON DOVE, River Dove
Ranking used data from 01/07/1965 to 31/12/2022



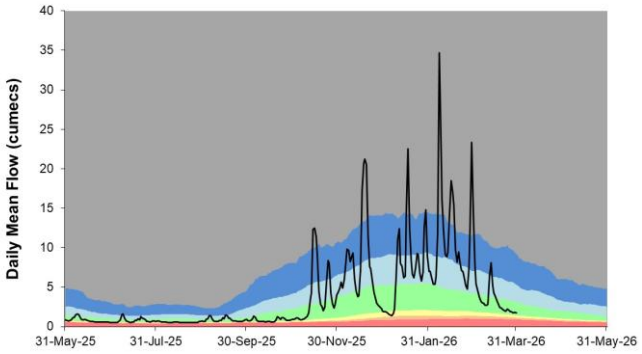
NORTH MUSKHAM, River Trent
Ranking used data from 03/10/1969 to 31/12/2022



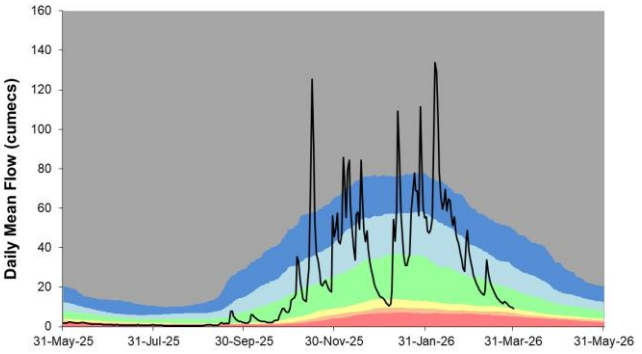
REDBROOK, River Wye
Ranking used data from 01/10/1969 to 31/12/2022



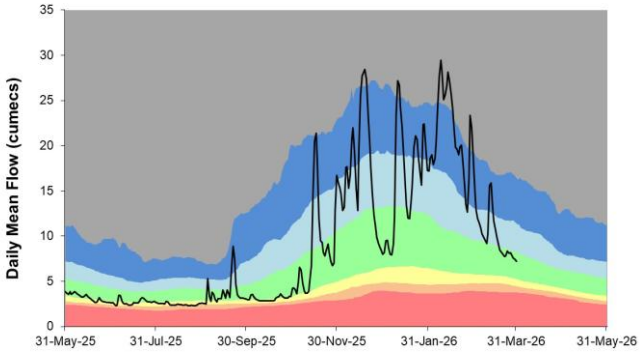
STARETON, River Avon
Ranking used data from 01/10/1962 to 31/12/2022



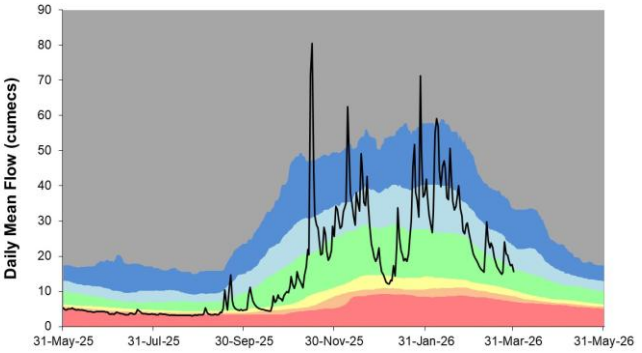
TENBURY, River Teme
Ranking used data from 01/10/1956 to 31/12/2022



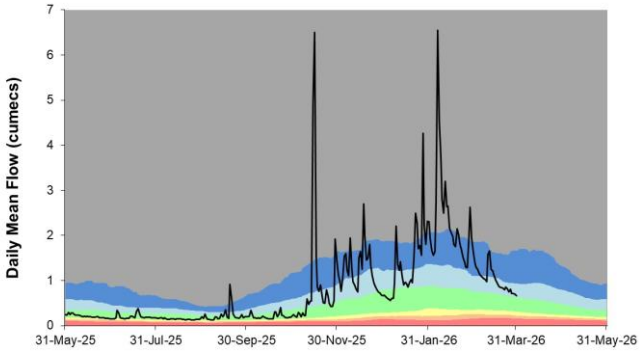
WALCOT, River Tern
Ranking used data from 01/10/1960 to 31/12/2022



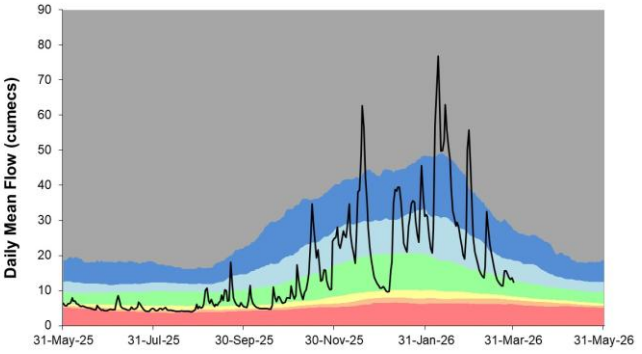
WHATSTANDWELL, River Derwent
Ranking used data from 01/10/1992 to 31/12/2022



WORKSOP, River Ryton
Ranking used data from 18/06/1970 to 31/12/2020



YOXALL, River Trent
Ranking used data from 01/10/1959 to 31/12/2022

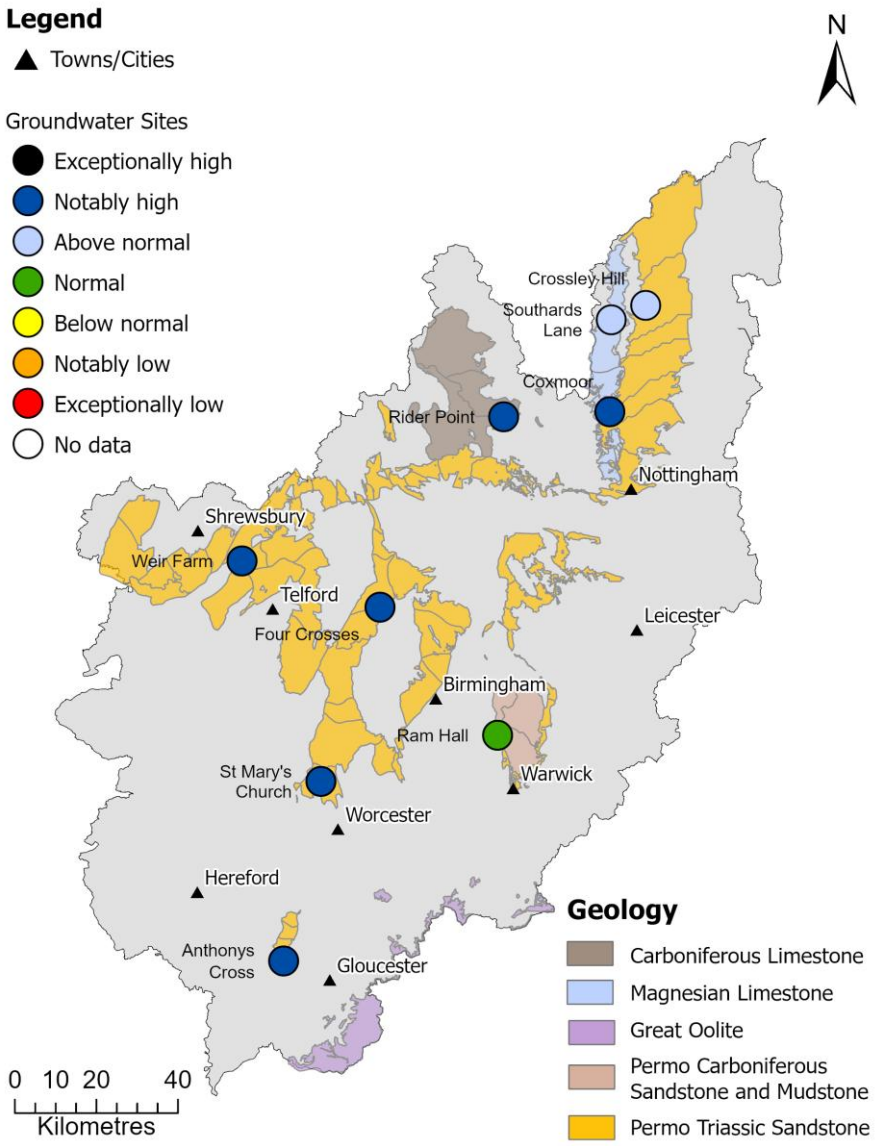


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

5 Groundwater levels

5.1 Groundwater levels map

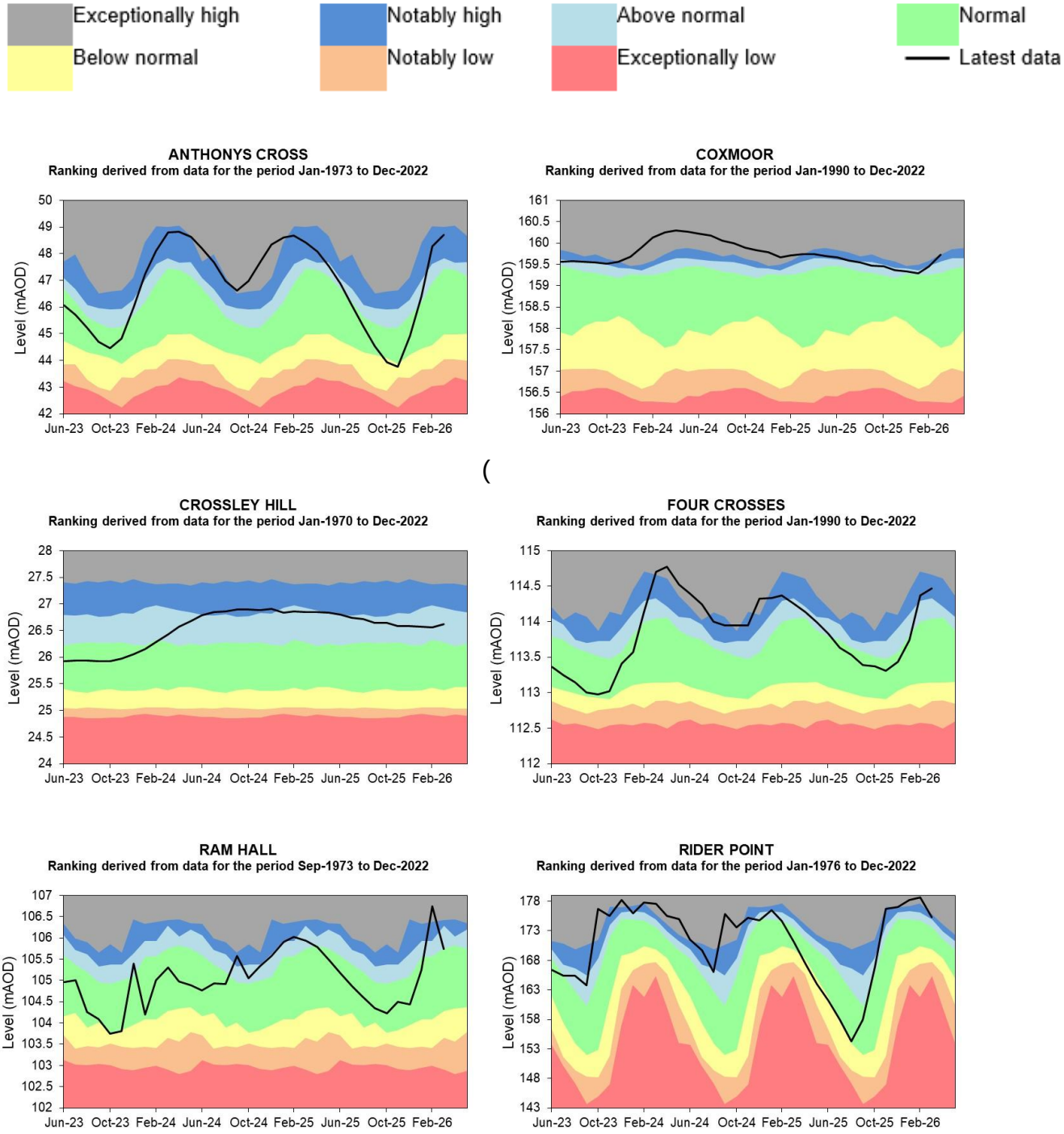
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of March 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic March levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information, including aquifer type.

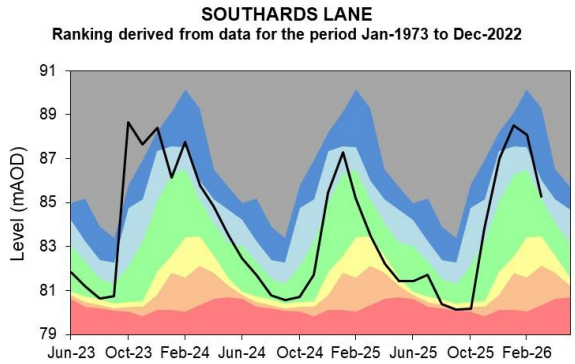


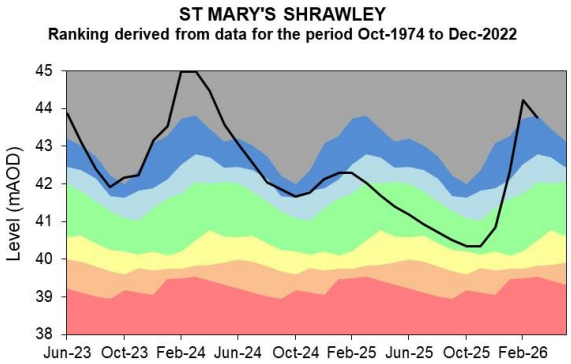
(Source: Environment Agency). Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS copyright NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2026.

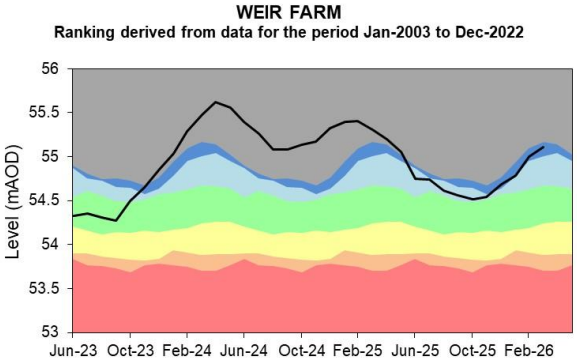
5.2 Groundwater level charts

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.





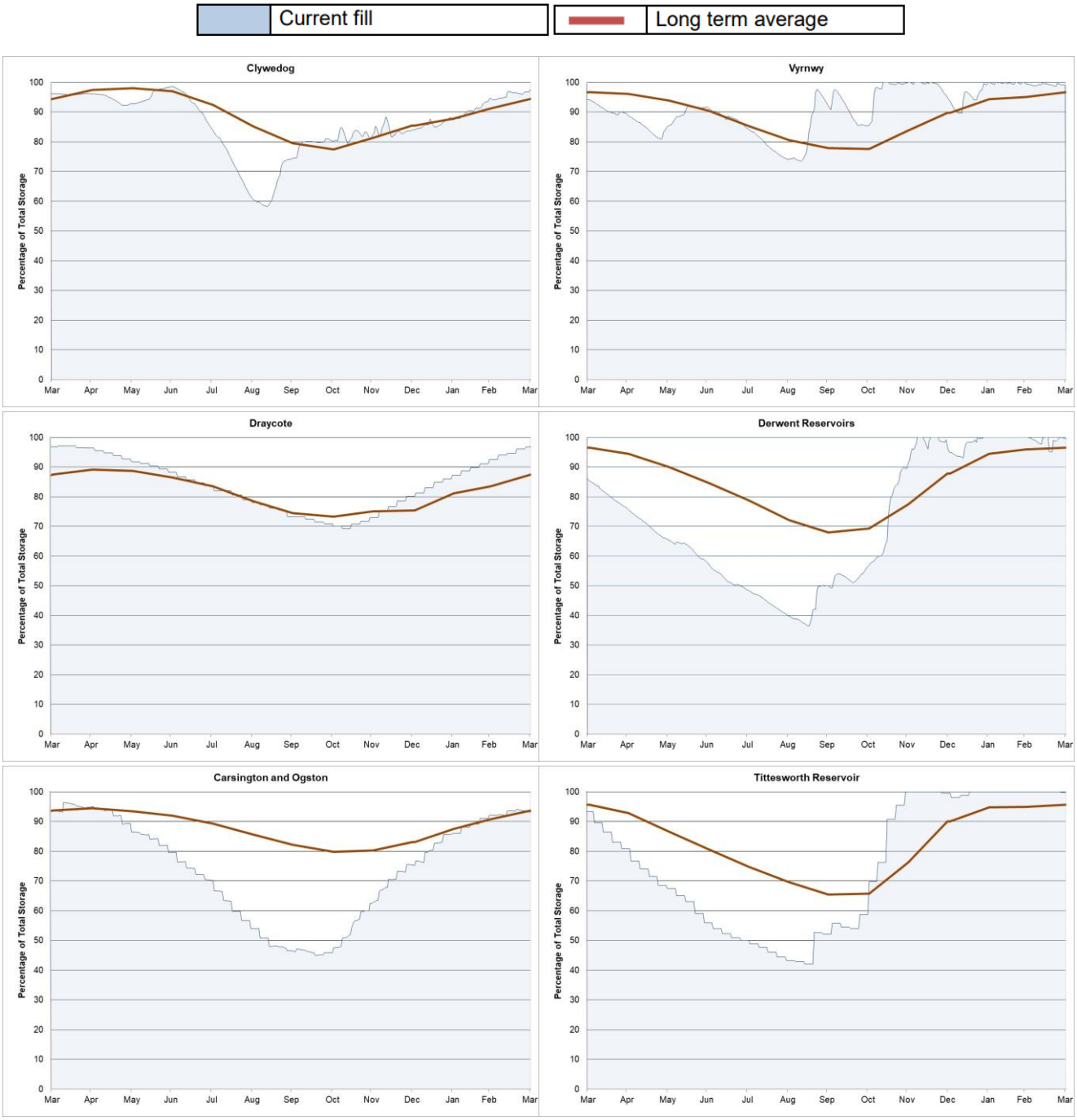


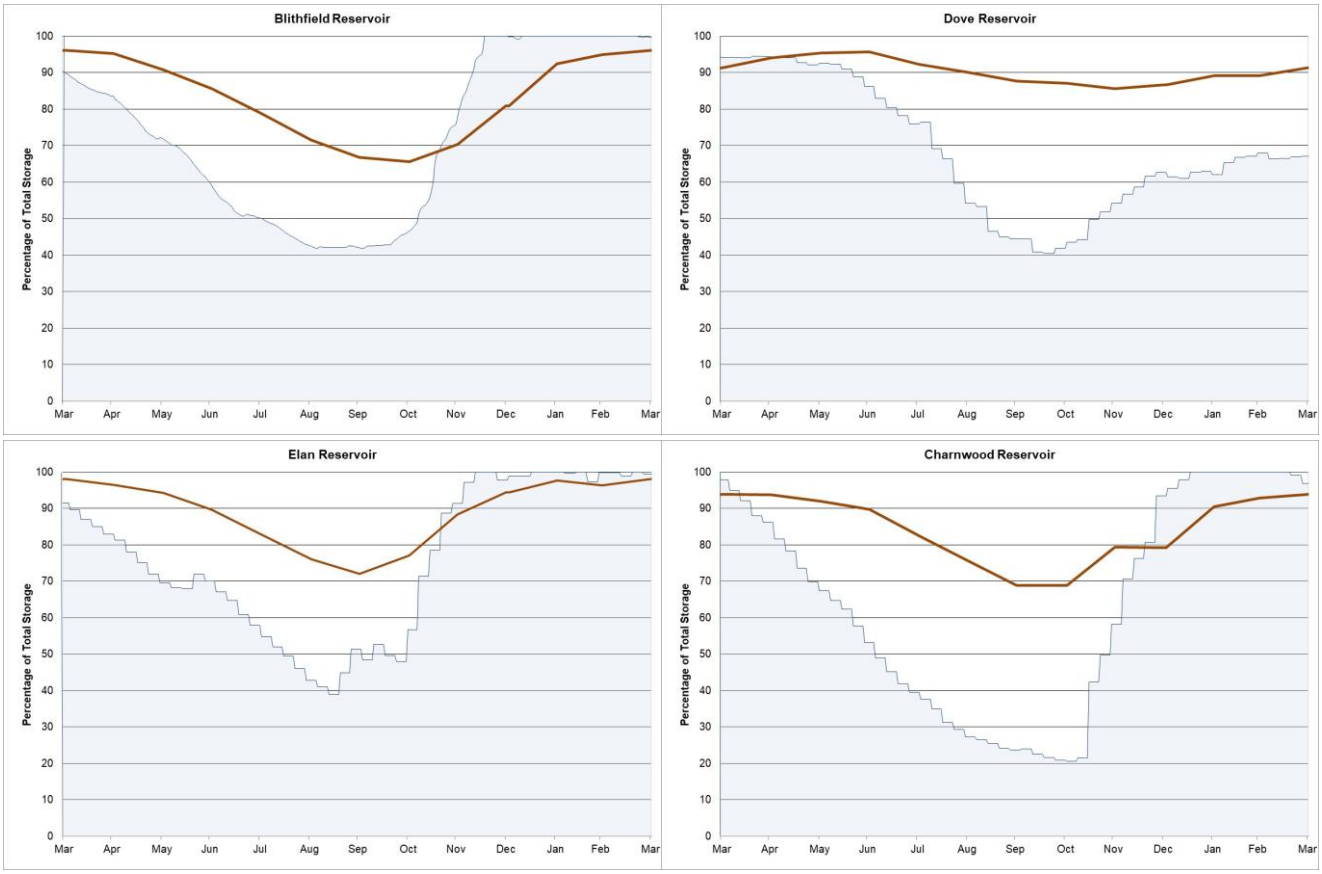


Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

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

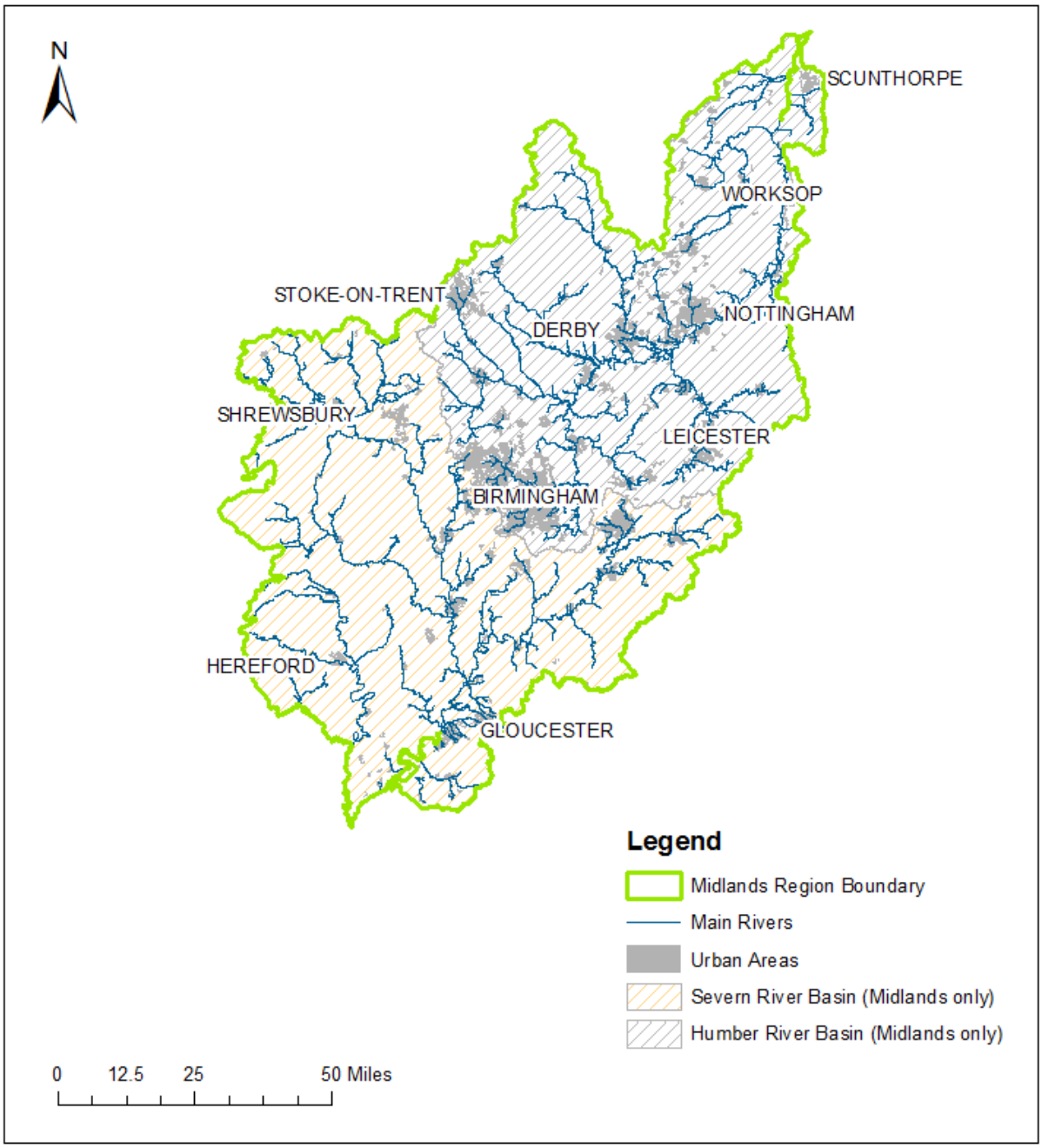
Value likely to fall within this band 8% of the time.

Exceptionally low

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

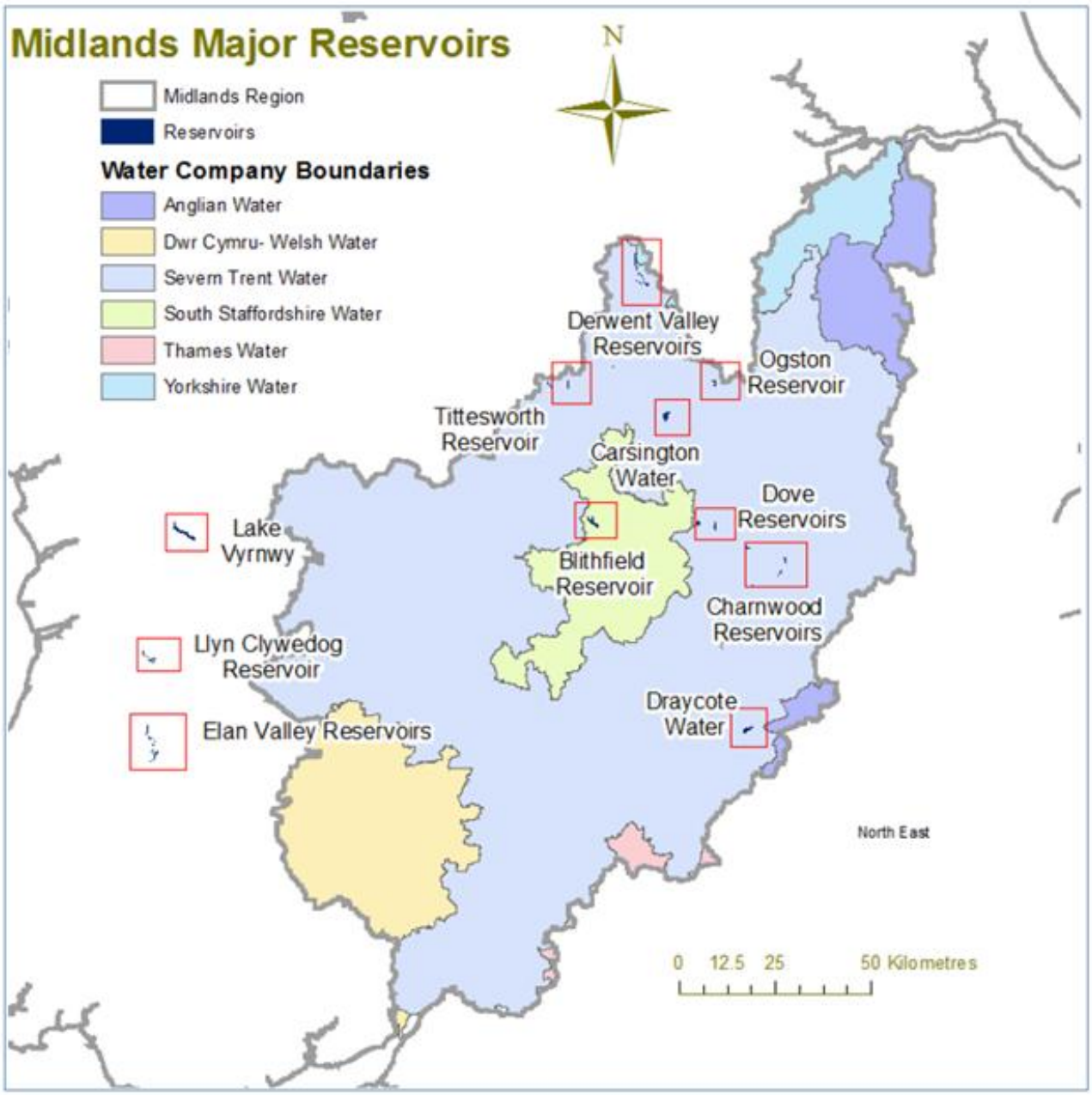
7.3 Midlands regional coverage

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.



8 Appendices

8.1 Rainfall table

Hydrological area	Mar 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Mar 2026 band	Jan 2026 to March cumulative band	Oct 2025 to March cumulative band	Apr 2025 to March cumulative band
Avon To Evesham	62	Below Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Derwent (Midlands)	102	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Dove	100	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Severn Estuary	58	Below Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Lower Trent	89	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Wye	64	Normal	Exceptionally high	Notably high	Normal
Mid Severn	69	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal
Shropshire Plains	84	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Soar	64	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Normal

Hydrological area	Mar 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Mar 2026 band	Jan 2026 to March cumulative band	Oct 2025 to March cumulative band	Apr 2025 to March cumulative band
Tame	79	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Upper Trent	95	Normal	Exceptionally high	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Welsh Mountains	94	Normal	Above normal	Notably high	Above normal

8.2 River flows table

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

Site name	River	Catchment	Mar 2026 band	Feb 2026 band
Marston On Dove	Dove (Midlands)	Dove Derb. to Hilton Br confl.	Normal	Exceptionally high
North Muskham	Trent	Trent to Cromwell	Above normal	Exceptionally high
Redbrook	Wye (Herefordshire)	Wye H and W d s Lugg	Normal	Notably high
Stareton	Avon (Midlands)	Avon Warwks. Upper	Above normal	Exceptionally high
Tenbury	Teme	Teme	Normal	Exceptionally high
Walcot	Tern	Tern	Above normal	Exceptionally high
Wedderburn Bridge	Leadon	Leadon	No data	No data
Whatstandwell	Derwent	Derwent Derb. to Amber conf.	Normal	Above normal
Worksop	Ryton	Ryton Upper to Oldcoates Dyke	Notably high	Exceptionally high
Yoxall	Trent	Trent to Tame Mease confl.	Above normal	Exceptionally high

8.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Mar 2026 band	End of Feb 2026 band
Anthonys Cross	Severn Vale Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Notably high
Coxmoor	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Above normal
Crossley Hill	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Above normal	Above normal
Four Crosses	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Notably high
Ram Hall, Meriden	Permo Carboniferous Sandstones and Mudstones	Normal	Exceptionally high
Rider Point Via Gellia	Carboniferous Limestone	Notably high	Exceptionally high
Southards Lane, Bolsover	Magnesian Limestone	Above normal	Notably high
St Marys Church, Shrawley	Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Exceptionally high
Weir Farm	Bridgnorth Sandstone Formation	Notably high	Notably high