Monthly water situation report: Midlands

1 Summary - April 2026

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

Rainfall – In April, catchments in the Midlands received either below normal or notably low rainfall amounts for this time of year.

Soil moisture deficit – Soil moisture deficits (SMD) in April recorded higher than average across all Midlands catchments. This means soils were drier than average for April.

River flows – The majority of sites recorded normal flows in April. Six remaining sites recorded below normal flows. All sites recorded below 100% of their long term average (LTA).

Groundwater levels – Groundwater sites in April ranged from exceptionally high groundwater levels to normal groundwater levels. The majority of sites recorded notably high groundwater levels compared to the LTA.

Reservoir stocks – Reservoir storage levels across the Midlands ranged from 75% to 99% by the end of April.

1.1 Rainfall

In April, 6 catchments in the Midlands recorded below normal rainfall totals compared to their LTA. These catchments tended to concentrate in the west of the Midlands, but includes Dove and Derwent in the east. These totals ranged from 43% to 55% of their LTA. The other 6 catchments, trending towards the east half of the Midlands, recorded notably low rainfall amounts compared to their LTA. These catchments ranged from 28% to 41% of their LTA.

Over the last 3 months, most catchments recorded above normal rainfall totals compared to their 3-month LTA. Four remaining catchments, the Welsh Mountains, Mid Severn, Lower Wye and Avon catchments, recorded normal rainfall totals compared to their 3-month LTA.

Over the past 6 months, every catchment, except for the Welsh Mountains, recorded exceptionally high rainfall totals compared to the 6-month LTA. The Welsh Mountains recorded notably high rainfall totals compared to its 6-month LTA.

Over the past year, 6 catchments recorded normal rainfall totals compared to their 1-year LTA. 5 catchments recorded above normal rainfall totals compared to the 1-year LTA. These were the Dove, Upper Trent, Tame and Lower Trent in the north half of the Midlands, and the Welsh Mountains to the west. The Derwent catchment in the north of the Midlands was the only catchment to record notably high rainfall totals compared to the 1-year LTA.

1.2 Soil moisture deficit and recharge

SMD has increased across all hydrological areas since March. Most sites in April, excluding the Welsh Mountains, are measuring between 41mm and 70mm of SMD. The Welsh Mountains is recording between 11mm and 40mm. This means that soils have become drier over April. Last month, soils were as expected compared to the LTA. This April, the soils in the north and west of the Midlands recorded a 6mm to 25mm difference from the LTA. Soils in the south recorded a 26mm to 50mm difference from the LTA. This means that soils, especially in the south, have been drier compared to the LTA.

1.3 River flows

In April the majority of sites recorded normal flows for this time of year. These ranged from 58% to 86% of their LTA. Six of the remaining sites recorded below normal flows compared to their LTA, ranging from 54% to 68%.

Deerhurst gauging station is currently down, and the data has been substituted with flows from the nearby gauging station Haw Bridge. Wedderburn Bridge has been showing unreliable data from September 2024 onwards; therefore, its data has been removed from this report.

1.4 Groundwater levels

Groundwater sites in the Midlands ranged from exceptionally high to normal groundwater levels in April. Coxmoor, in the north, recorded exceptionally high groundwater levels compared to its LTA. Four sites in the west of the Midlands, Weir Farm, Four Crosses, St Marys Church and Anthonys Cross all recorded notably high groundwater levels in April. Rider Point and Crossley Hill in the north both recorded above normal groundwater levels. Southards Lane and Ram Hall are both recording normal groundwater levels compared to their April LTA.

1.5 Reservoir stocks

All reservoirs had storage between 86% and 99% by the end of April except for Dove reservoir, which had 75% storage. Five reservoirs are at below average storage for this time of year. Two sites are at average storage, and the remaining 3 sites are at above average storage for this time of year.

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 April.

1.8 River Wye operations

Throughout April, flows at Redbrook were above the regulation threshold. Therefore, regulation releases were not in operation during April.

1.9 Water abstraction restrictions

As of 30 April there are 5 water abstraction licence restrictions in place across the Midlands affecting 5 licences in total.

Table 1.1: Water abstraction licence restrictions

Area	Rivers and stations restricted
East Midlands	Rothley Brook at Rothley River Ryton at Blyth
West Midlands	River Cole at Coleshill (Bacons End) River Sow at Great Bridgeford River Stour at Puxton

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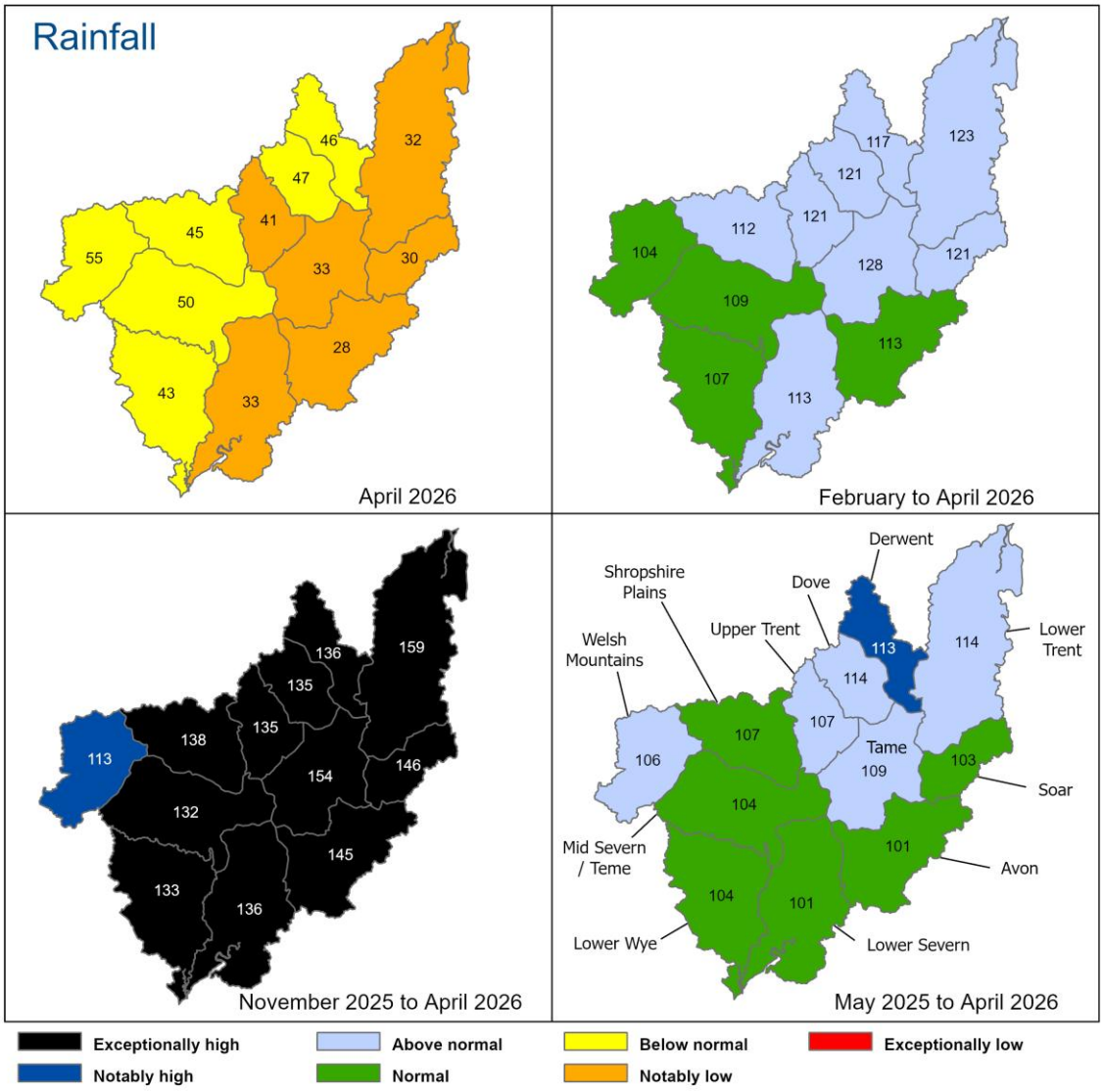
Contact Details: 03708 506 506

2 Rainfall

2.1 Rainfall map

Figure 2.1: Rainfall as % LTA for hydrological areas for the current month (up to 30 April 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.

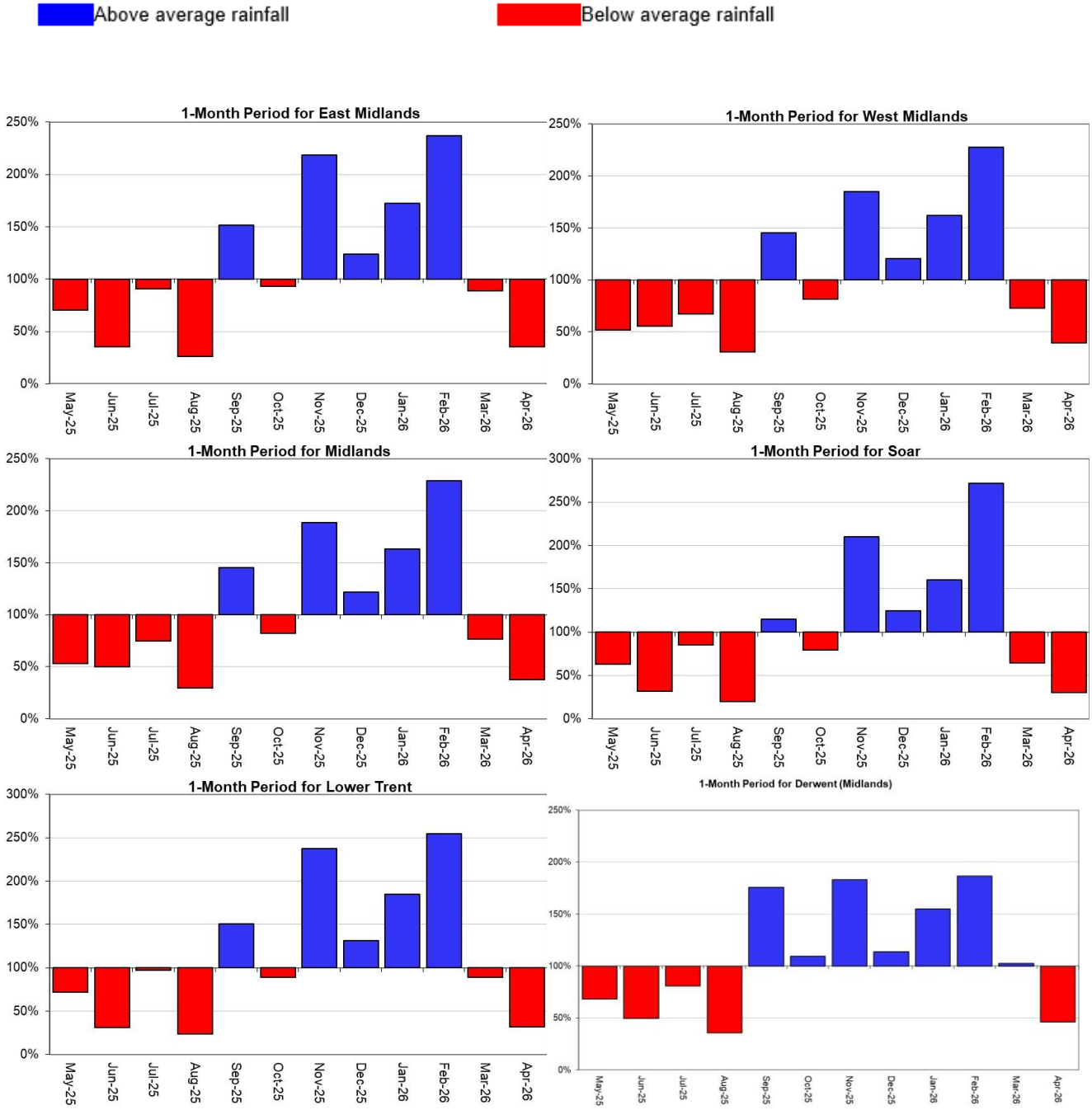


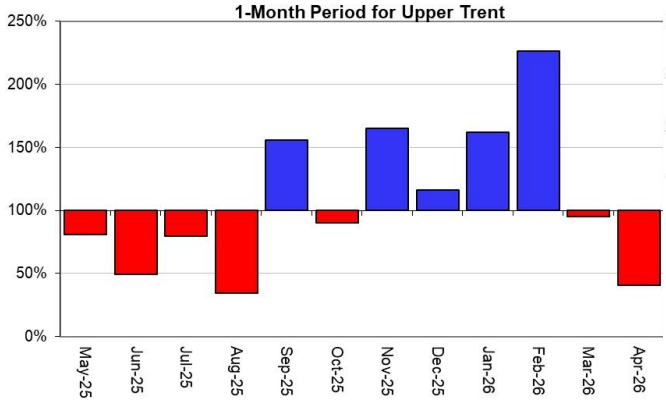
Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025,

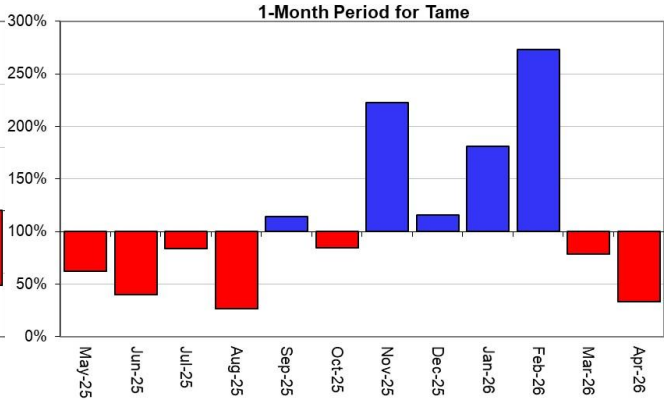
extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from registered rain gauges (Source: Met Office. Crown copyright, 2026).

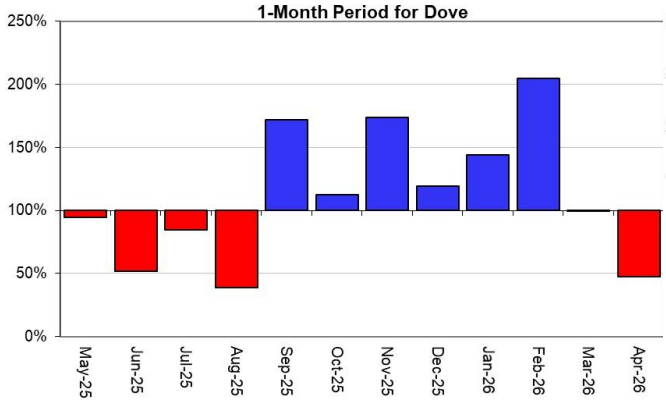
2.2 Rainfall charts

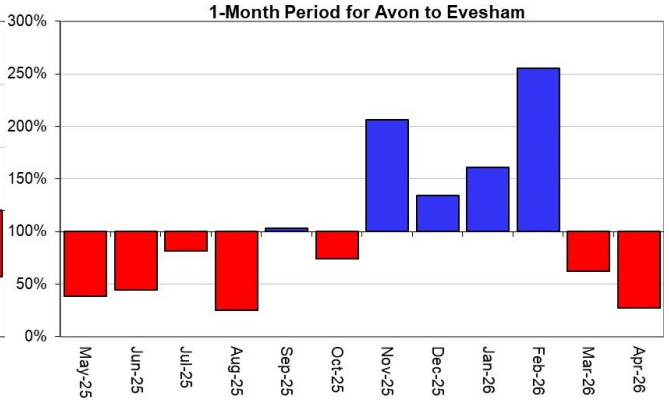
Figure 2.2: Monthly rainfall totals for the past 12 months as a percentage of the 1991 to 2020 long term average for hydrological areas across the Midlands region.

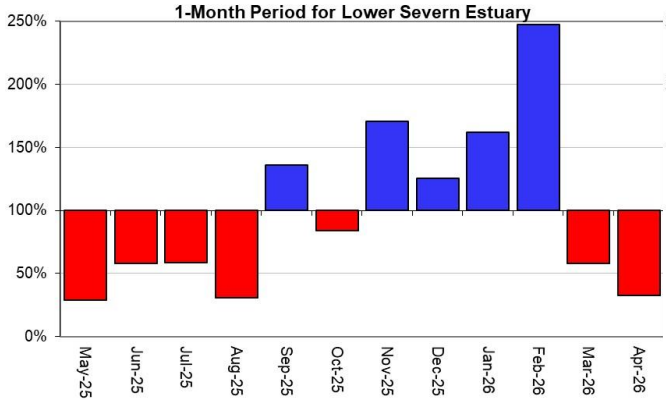


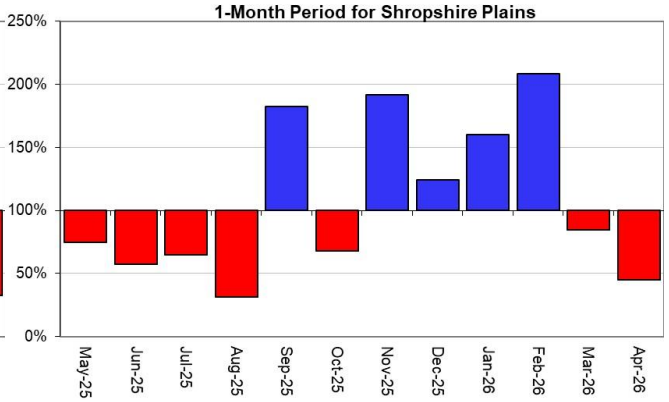

1-Month Period for Upper Trent
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26
Apr-26

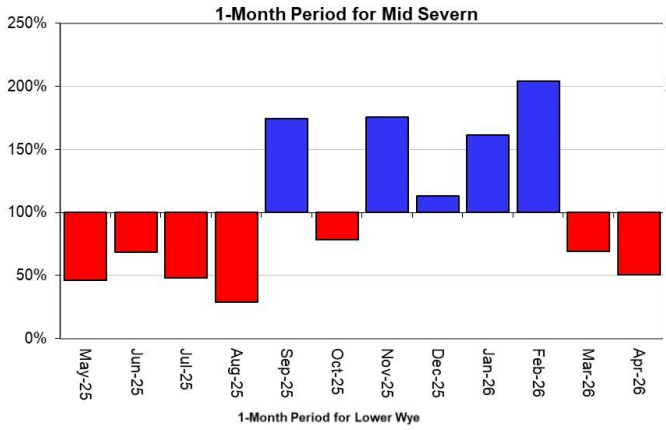

1-Month Period for Tame
300%
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26
Apr-26

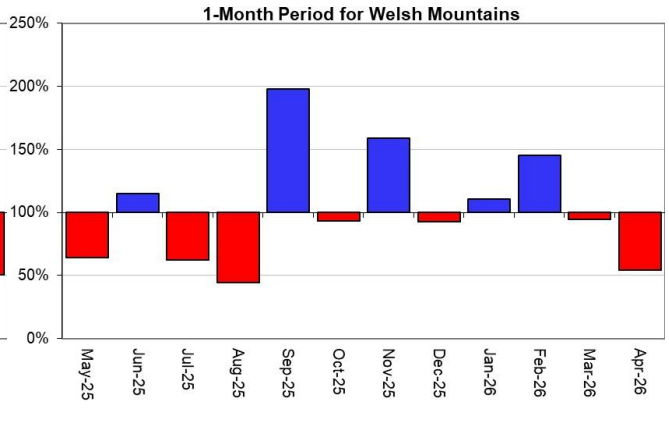

1-Month Period for Dove
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26
Apr-26

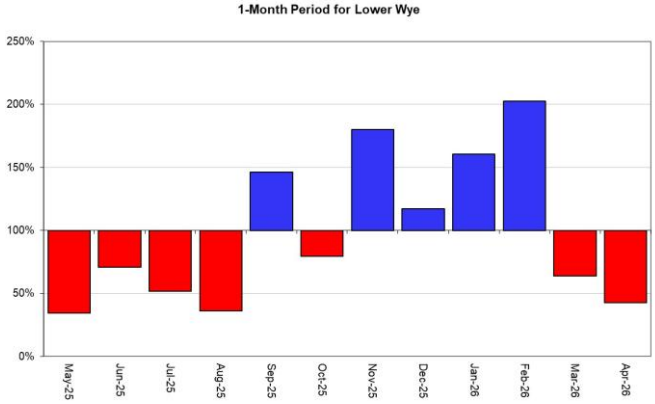

1-Month Period for Avon to Evesham
300%
250%
200%
150%
100%
50%
0%
May-25
Jun-25
Jul-25
Aug-25
Sep-25
Oct-25
Nov-25
Dec-25
Jan-26
Feb-26
Mar-26
Apr-26


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


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





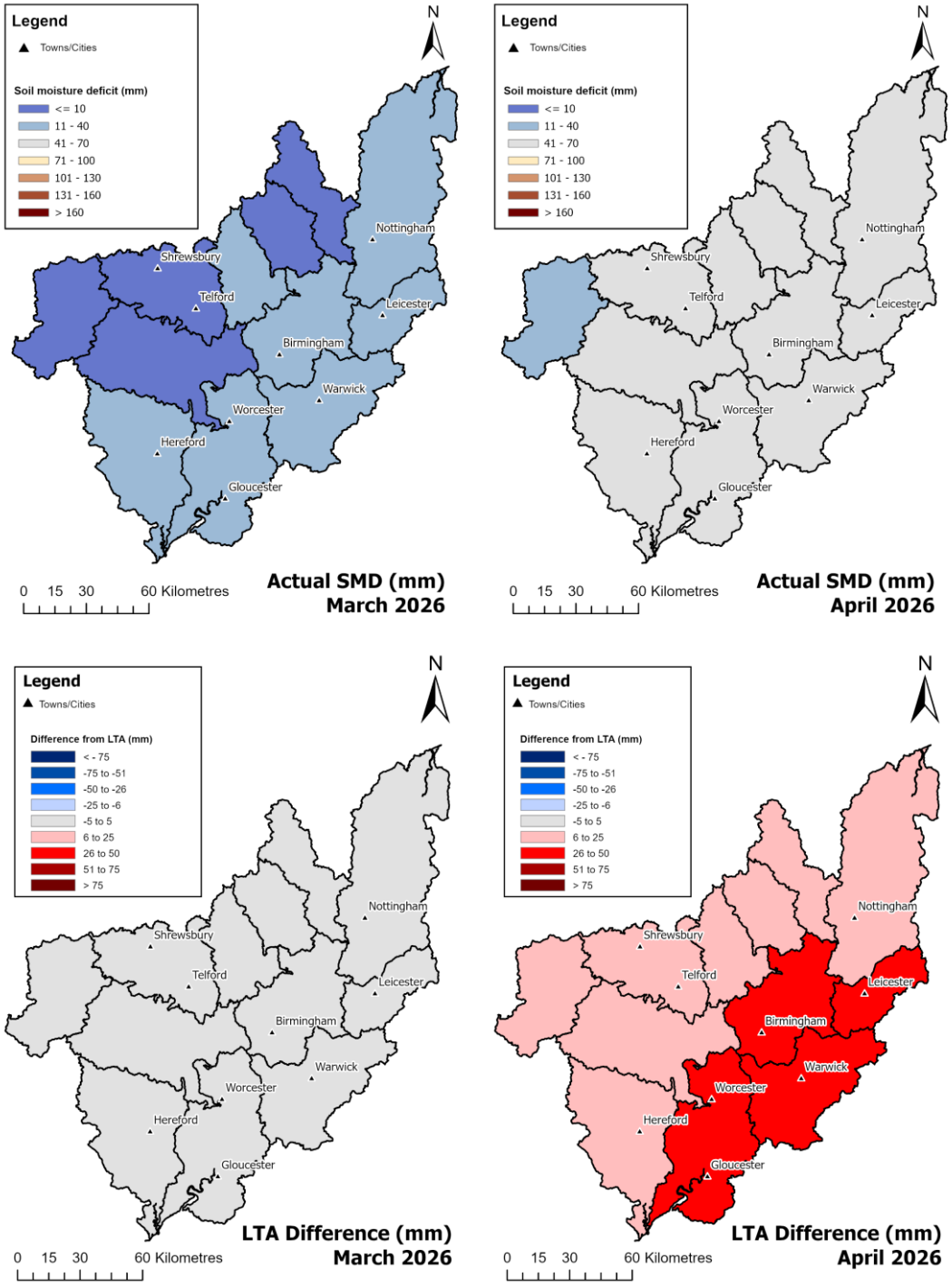


Rainfall data since January 2025, extracted from Environment Agency 1km gridded rainfall dataset derived from Environment Agency intensity rain gauges. (Source: Environment Agency. Crown Copyright, AC0000807064, 2026). Rainfall data prior to January 2025, extracted from Met Office HadUK 1km gridded rainfall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

3 Soil moisture deficit

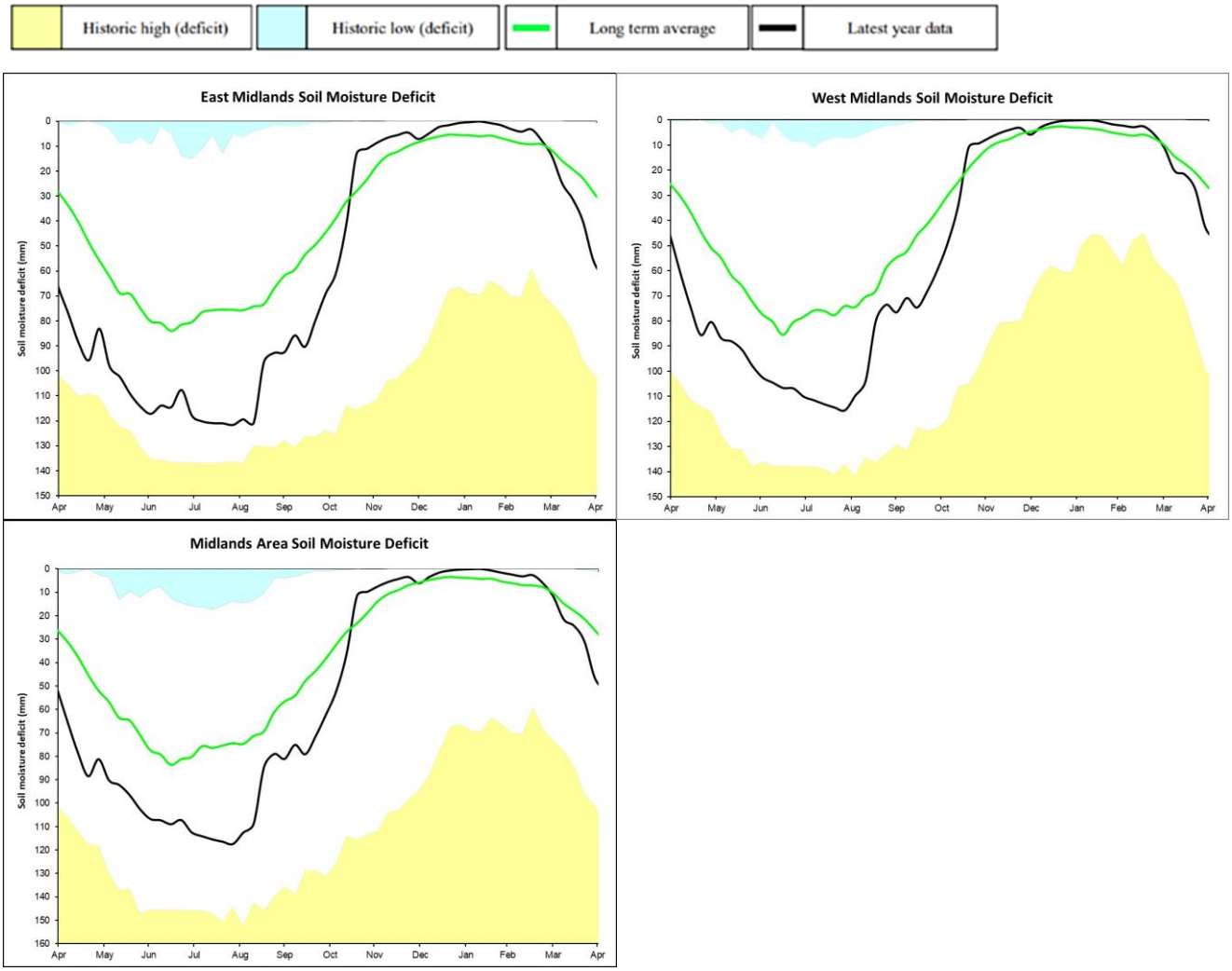
3.1 Soil moisture deficit map

Figure 3.1: Soil moisture deficits for weeks ending 30 April 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

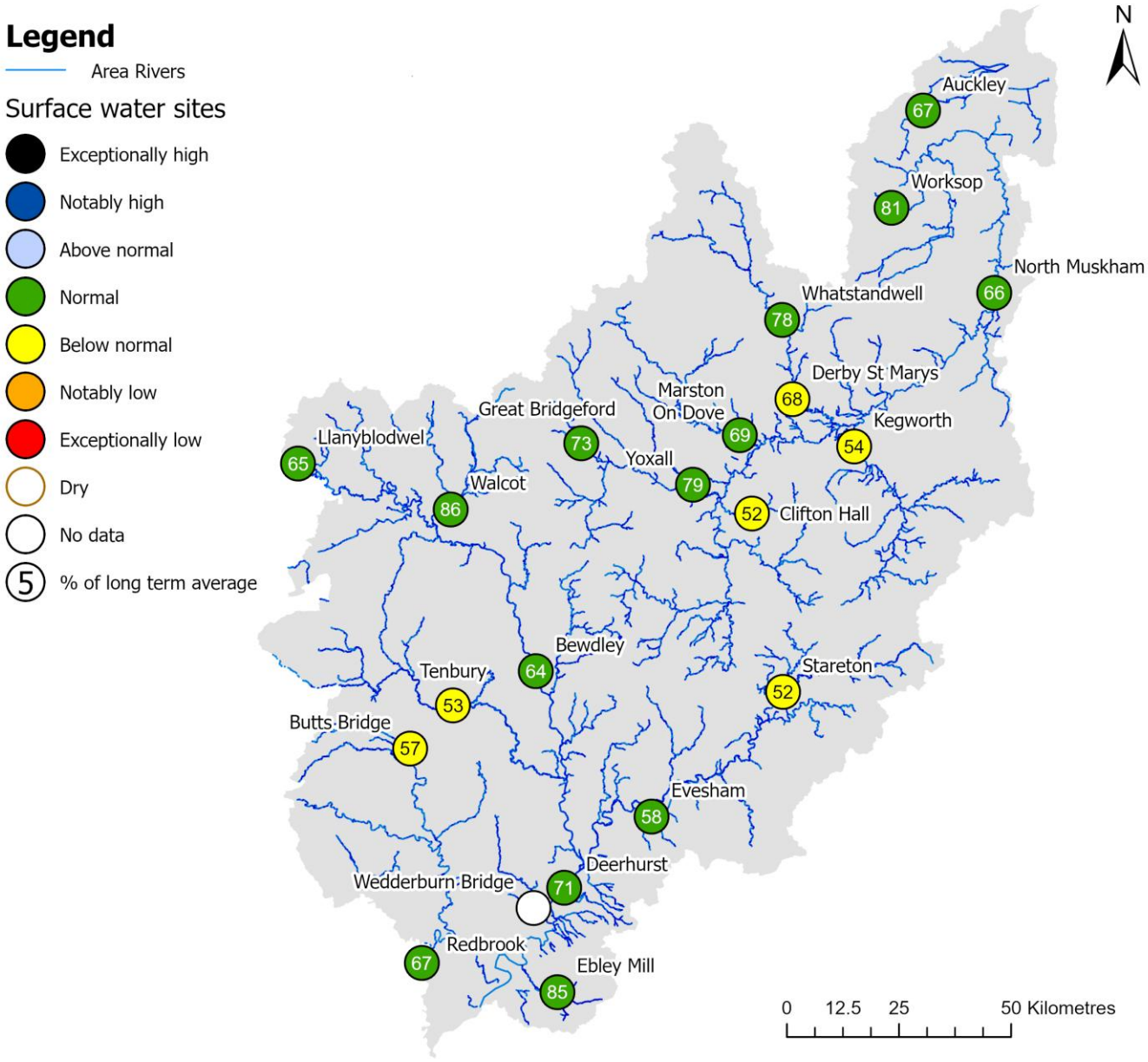
Figure 3.2: Latest soil moisture deficit charts for selected areas across the Midlands.



4 River flows

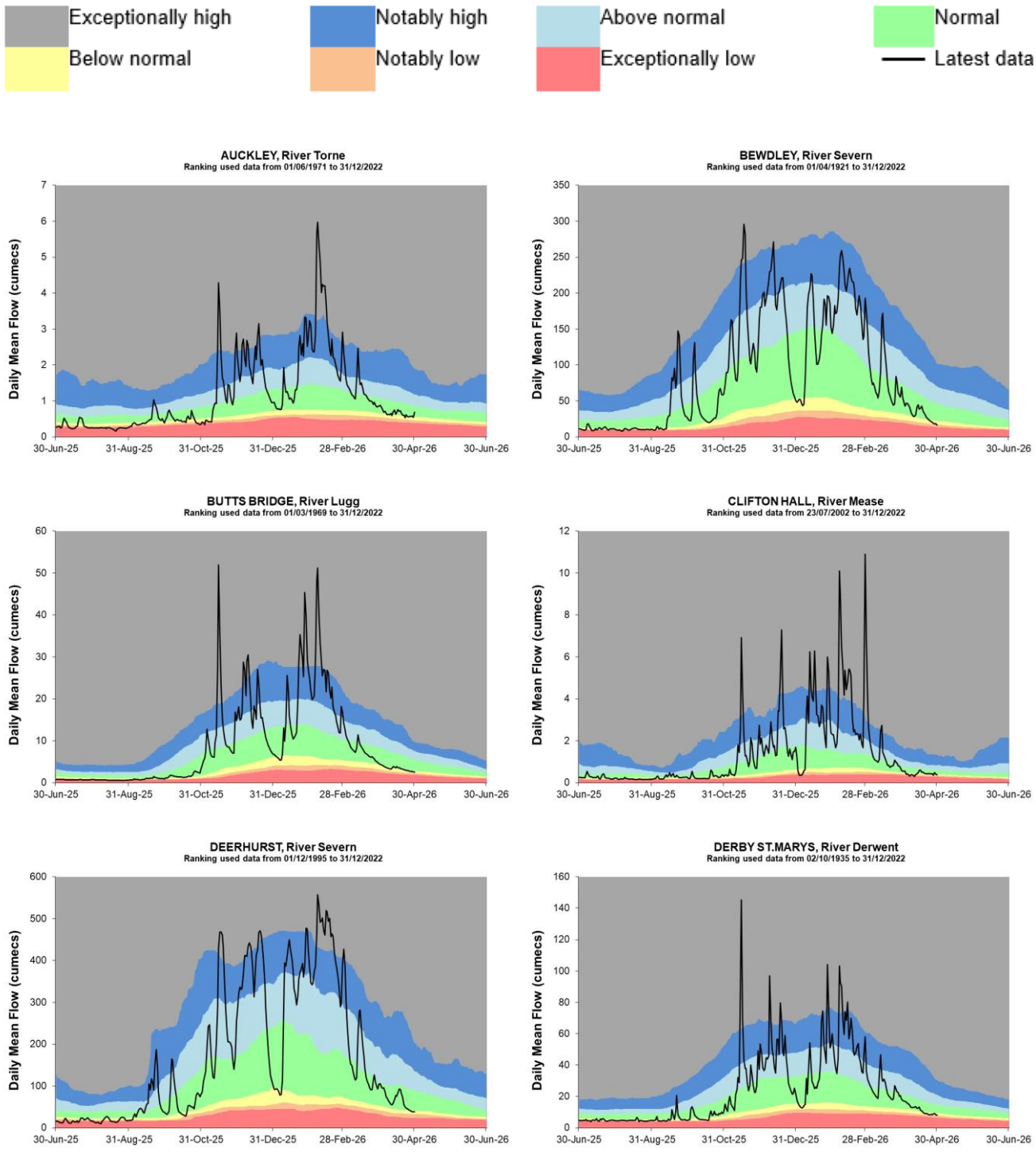
4.1 River flows map

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

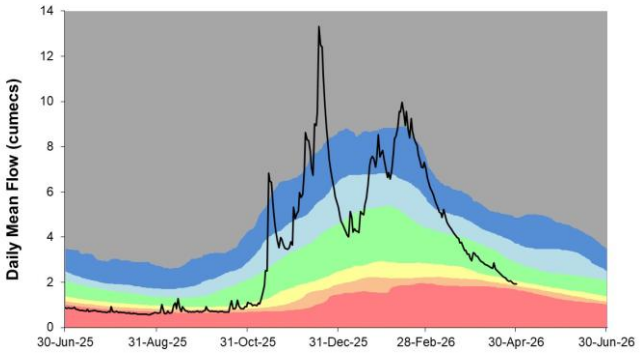


4.2 River flow charts

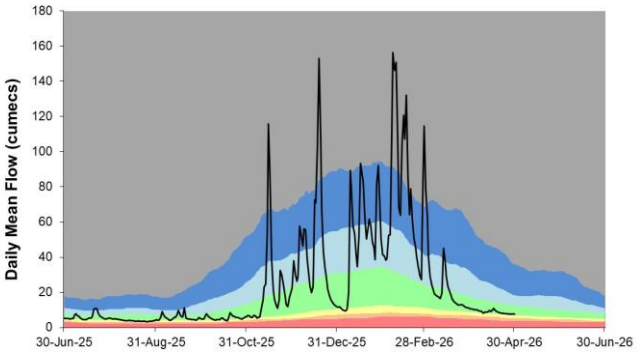
Figure 4.2: Daily mean river flow for index sites over the past year, compared to an analysis of historic daily mean flows, and long term maximum and minimum flows.



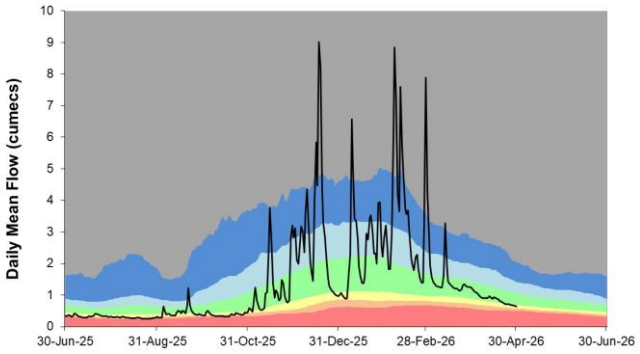
EBLEY MILL, River Frome
Ranking used data from 01/04/1969 to 31/12/2022



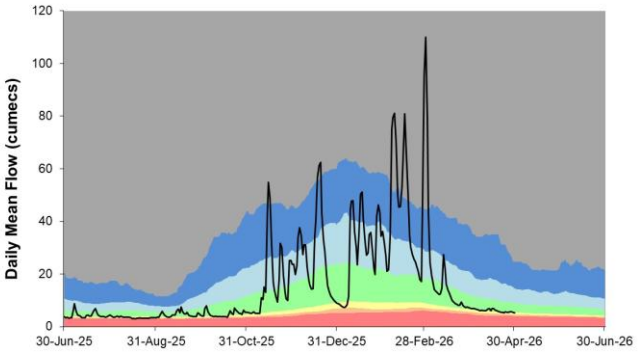
EVESHAM, River Avon
Ranking used data from 01/12/1936 to 31/12/2022



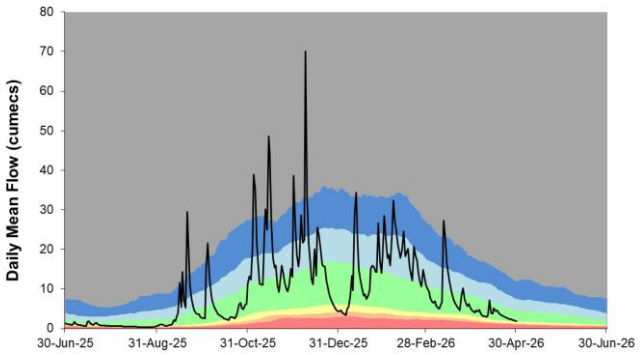
GREAT BRIDGFORD, River Sow
Ranking used data from 18/01/1971 to 31/12/2022



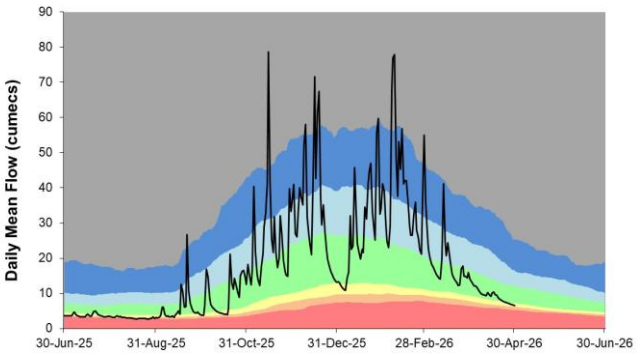
KEGWORTH, River Soar
Ranking used data from 01/12/1978 to 31/12/2022



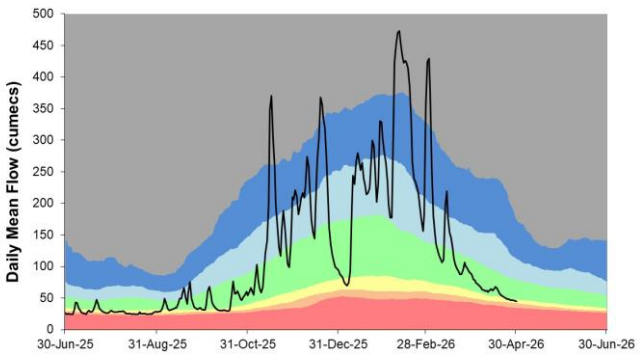
LLANYBLODWEL, Afon Tanat
Ranking used data from 01/06/1973 to 31/12/2022



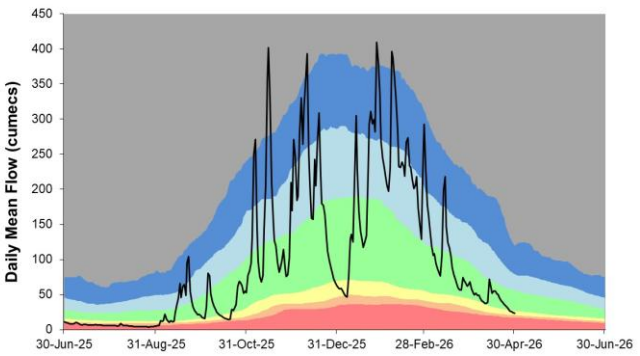
MARSTON ON DOVE, River Dove
Ranking used data from 01/07/1965 to 31/12/2022

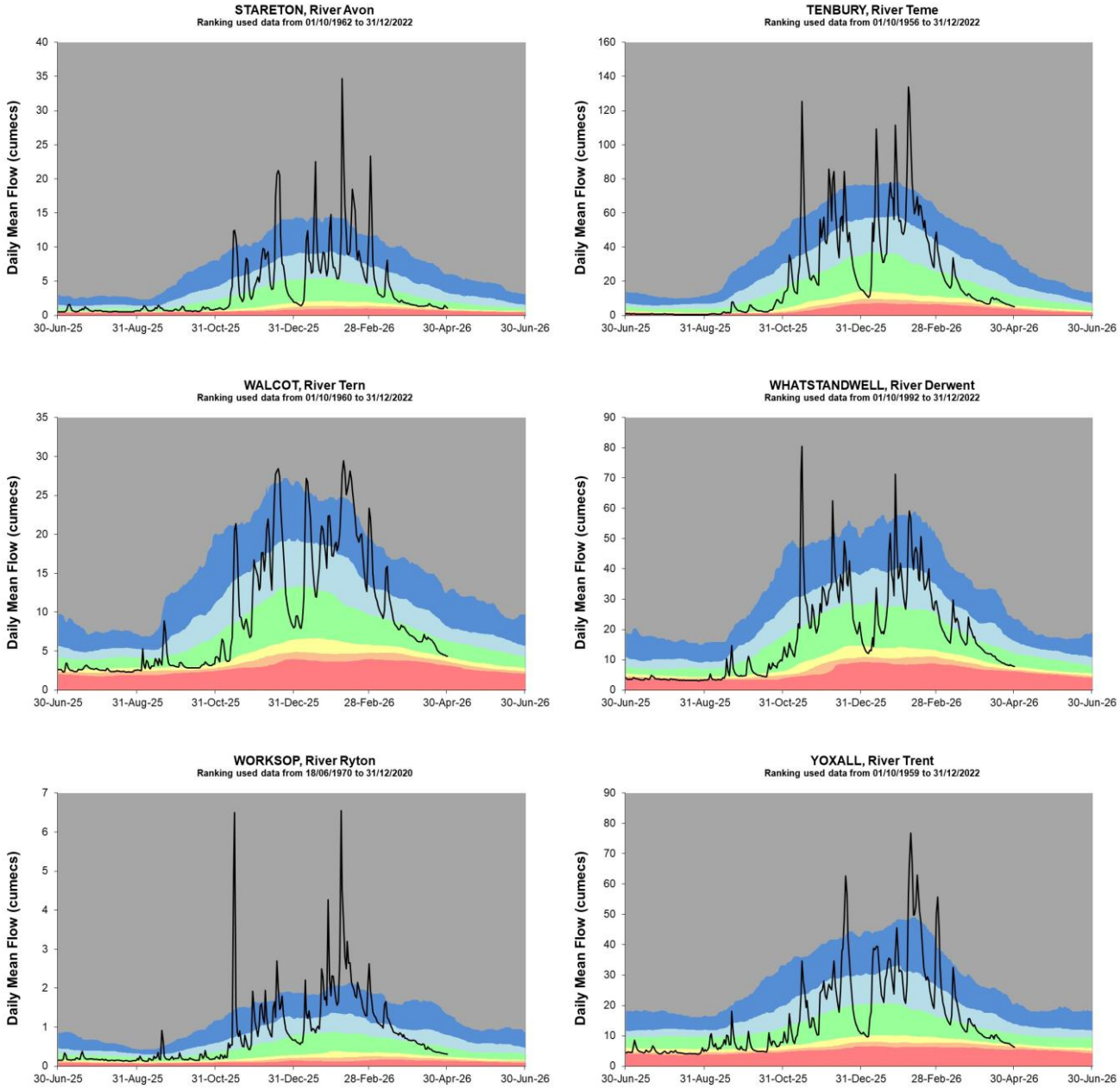


NORTH MUSKHAM, River Trent
Ranking used data from 03/10/1969 to 31/12/2022



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



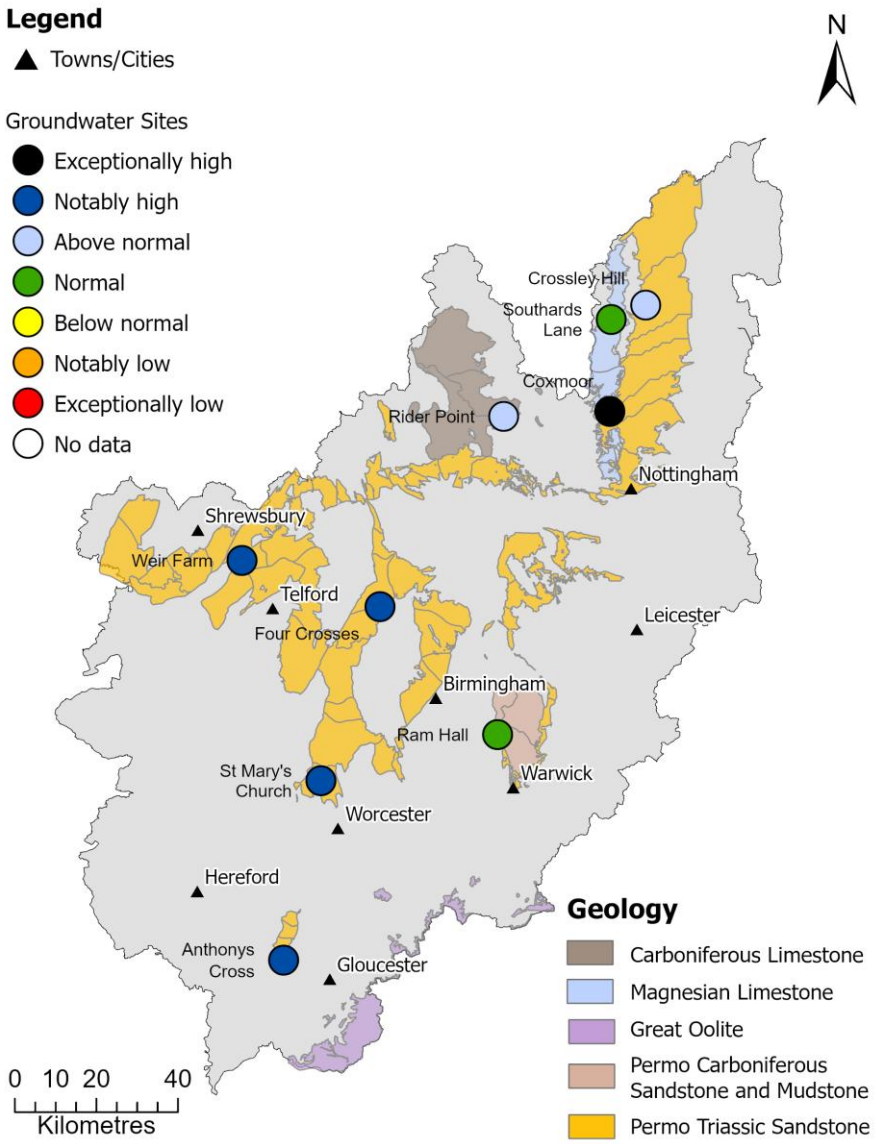


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

5 Groundwater levels

5.1 Groundwater levels map

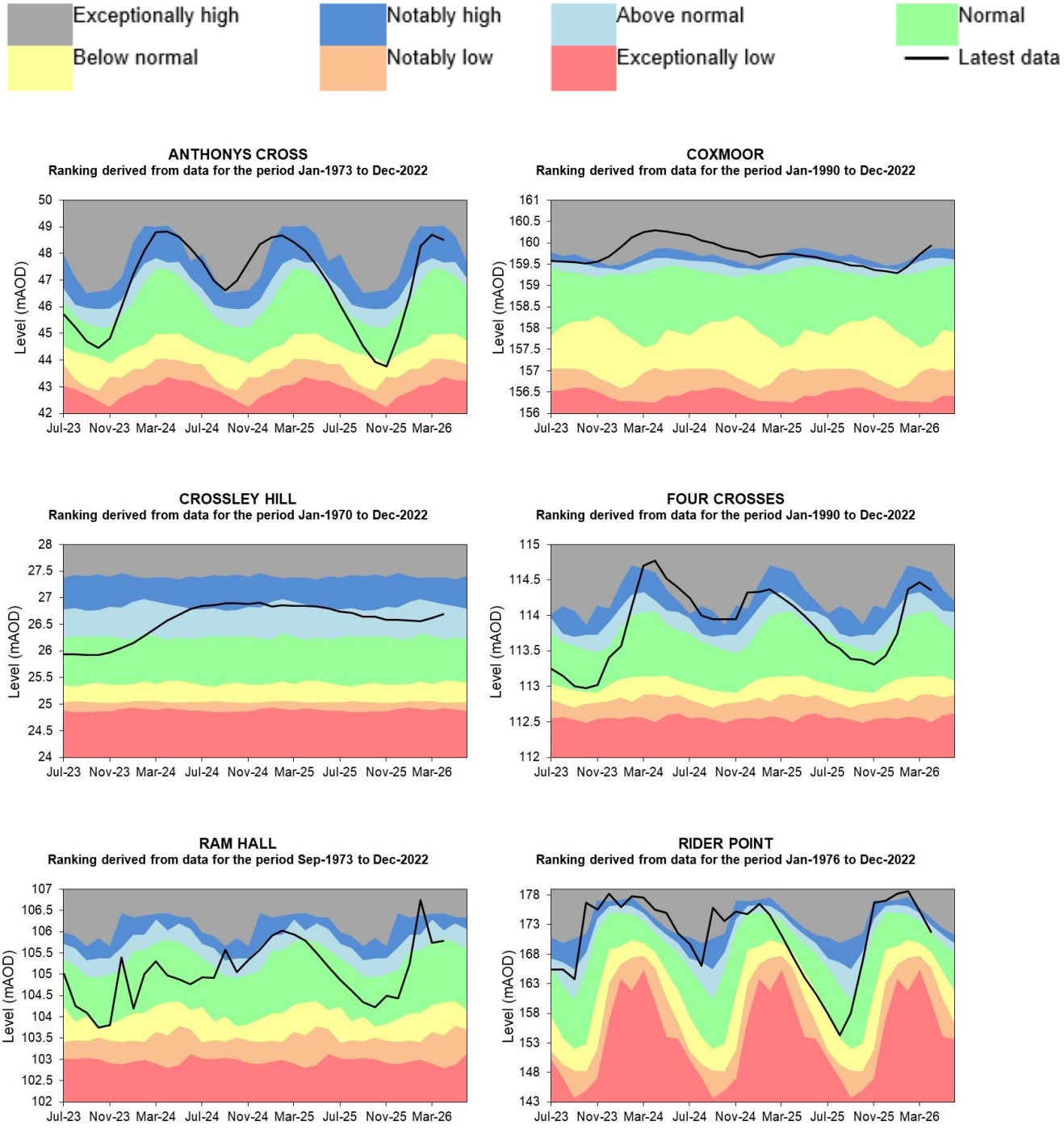
Figure 5.1: Groundwater levels for indicator sites at the end of April 2026, classed relative to an analysis of respective historic April levels. Table available in the appendices with detailed information, including aquifer type.

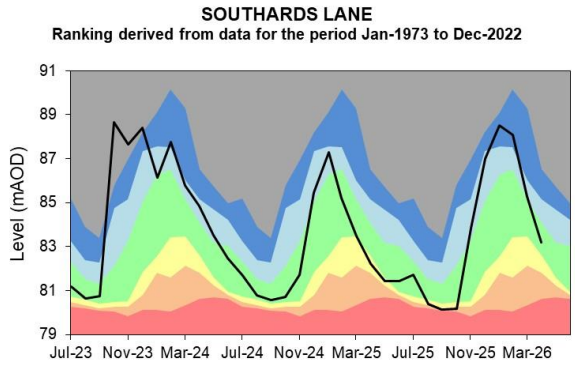


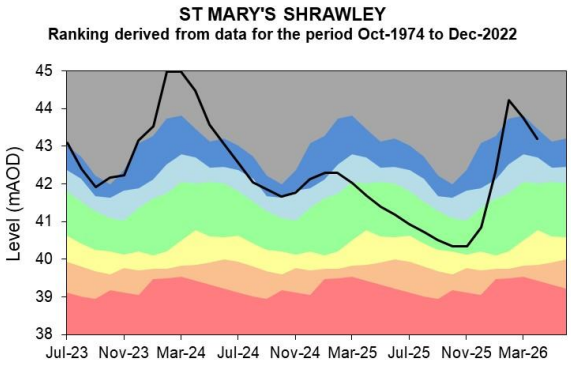
(Source: Environment Agency). Geological map reproduced with kind permission from UK Groundwater Forum, BGS copyright NERC. Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Environment Agency, AC0000807064, 2026.

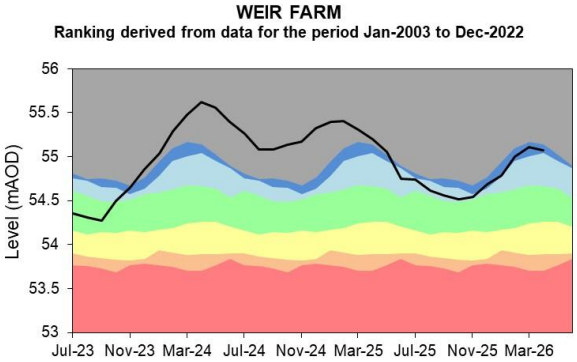
5.2 Groundwater level charts

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.





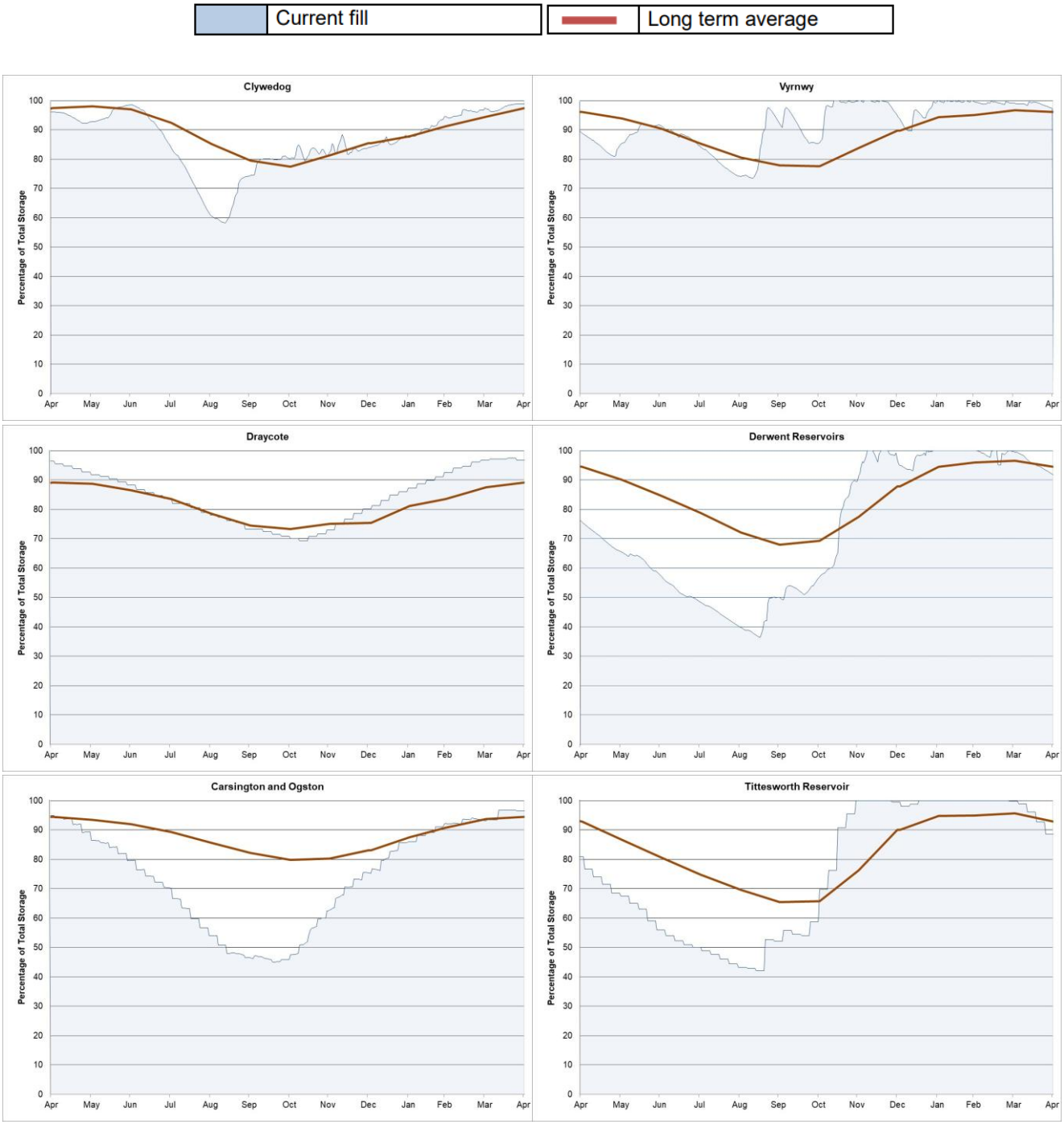


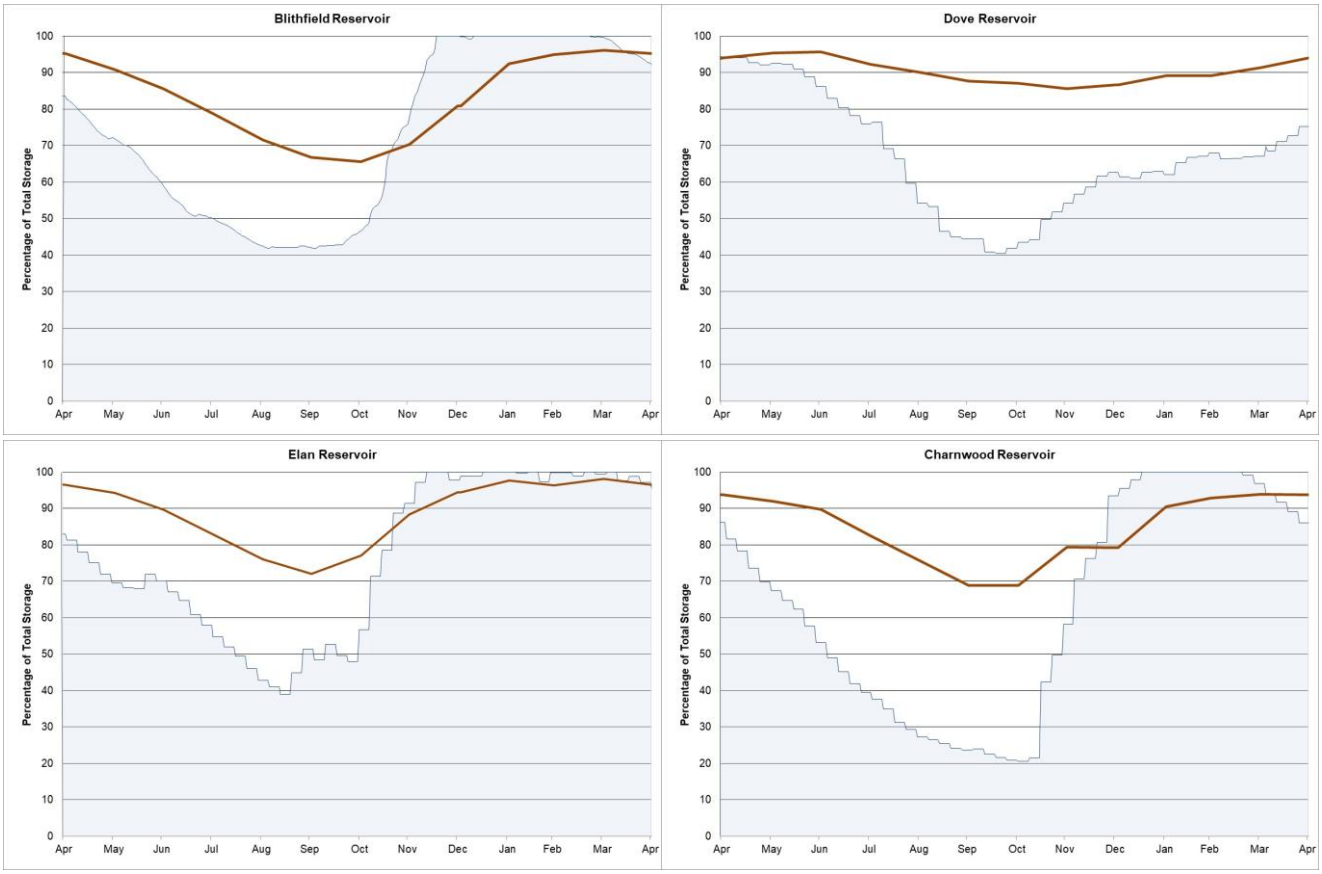


(Source: Environment Agency, 2026).

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

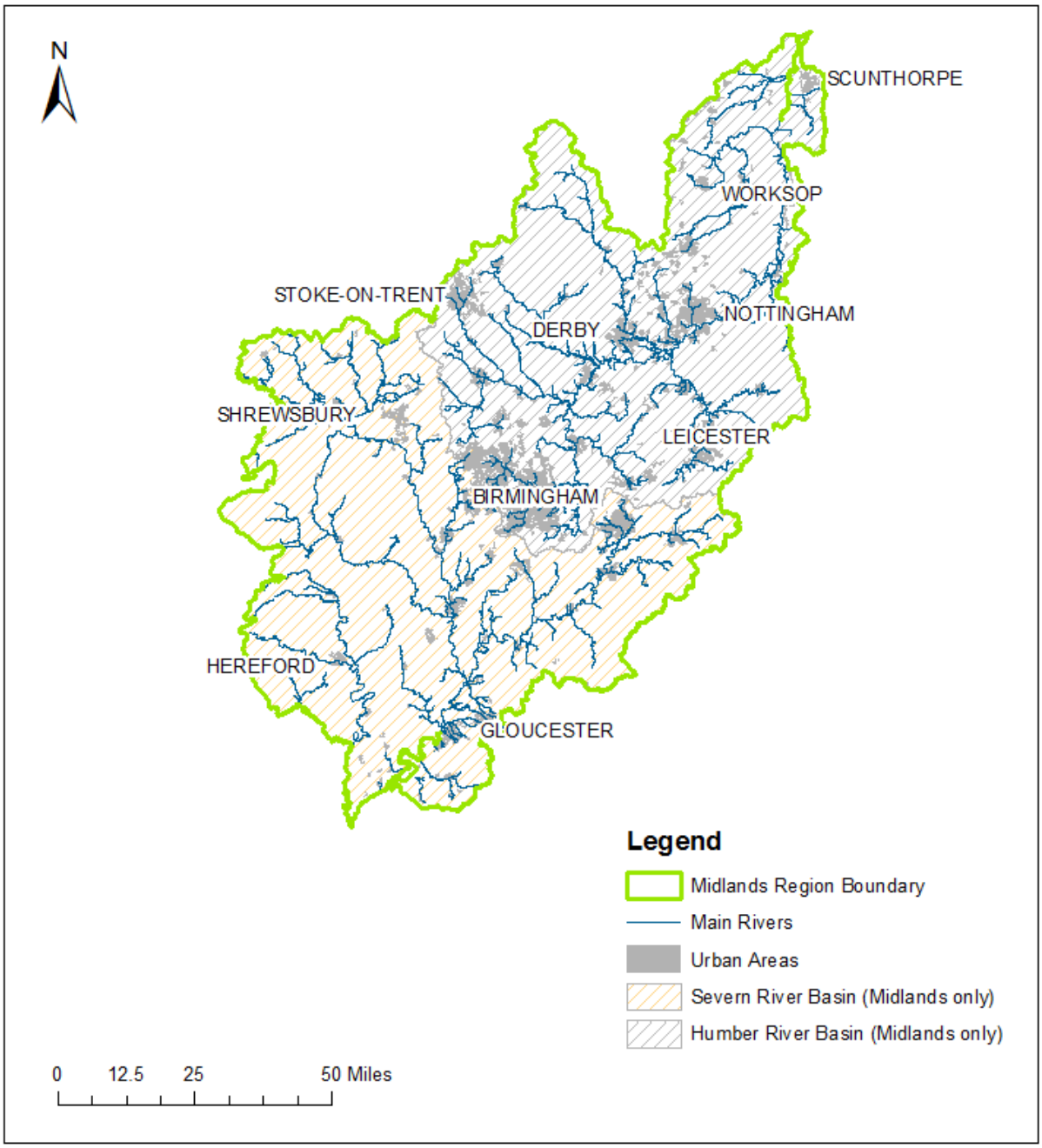
Value likely to fall within this band 8% of the time.

Exceptionally low

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

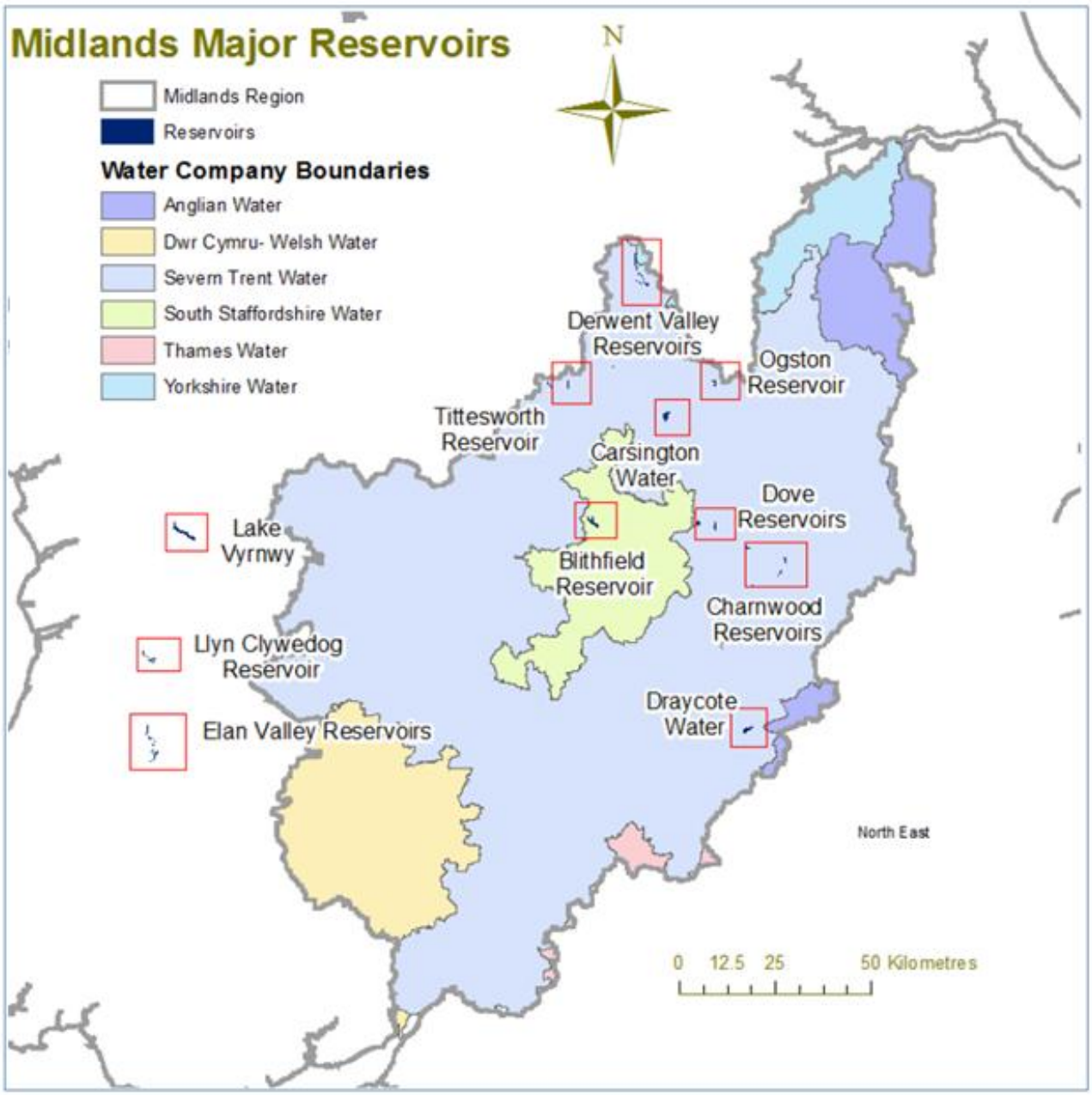
7.3 Midlands regional coverage

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	Apr 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Apr 2026 band	Feb 2026 to April cumulative band	Nov 2025 to April cumulative band	May 2025 to April cumulative band
Avon To Evesham	28	Notably Low	Normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Derwent (Midlands)	46	Below Normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Notably high
Dove	47	Below Normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Severn Estuary	33	Notably Low	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Lower Trent	32	Notably Low	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Lower Wye	43	Below Normal	Normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Mid Severn	50	Below Normal	Normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Shropshire Plains	45	Below Normal	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal
Soar	30	Notably Low	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Normal

Hydrological area	Apr 2026 rainfall % of long term average 1991 to 2020	Apr 2026 band	Feb 2026 to April cumulative band	Nov 2025 to April cumulative band	May 2025 to April cumulative band
Tame	33	Notably Low	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Upper Trent	41	Notably Low	Above normal	Exceptionally high	Above normal
Welsh Mountains	55	Below Normal	Normal	Notably high	Above normal

8.2 River flows table

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

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

8.3 Groundwater table

Site name	Aquifer	End of Apr 2026 band	End of Mar 2026 band
Anthonys Cross	Severn Vale Permo Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Notably high
Coxmoor	Permo Triassic Sandstone	Exceptionally high	Notably high
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	Normal
Rider Point Via Gellia	Carboniferous Limestone	Above normal	Notably high
Southards Lane, Bolsover	Magnesian Limestone	Normal	Above normal
St Mary's Church, Shrawley	Triassic Sandstone	Notably high	Notably high
Weir Farm	Bridgnorth Sandstone Formation	Notably high	Notably high