

Weekly rainfall and river flow summary

Wednesday 20 May to Tuesday 26 May 2026

1 Summary

It has been a much drier week across the country compared with last week, with rainfall totals less than 1mm across the south and east. Consequently, river flows have decreased at almost all of the river flow sites that we report on.

1.1 Rainfall

It has been a consistently dry week across the country with a significant decrease in rainfall totals compared with last week. Rainfall totals ranged from 5mm in north-west England to less than 1mm in east, south-east and south-west England (Table 1 and Figure 2). Rainfall totals for May so far, range from just 46% of the long term average (LTA) in east England to 83% LTA in both the north-west and north-east. England as a whole has received just 2mm of rain this week and has only received 66% LTA of the rainfall expected for the month.

1.2 River flows

As a result of this week's dry conditions, river flows have decreased at almost all (93%) of the sites that we report on, compared with the previous week. Almost exactly half (51%) of the sites that we report on were classed as below normal for the time of year. Twenty sites (36%) were classed as normal, 5 sites (9%) were notably low and 2 sites (4%) were exceptionally low, one in east England and the other in the north east. (Figure 3.1).

1.3 Outlook

Thursday will be mostly dry and sunny with persisting warm conditions. However, showers and thunderstorms may be expected to break out across England later in the day. Friday will remain warm and sunny with showery and cooler conditions to be expected as the weekend progresses. Monday and Tuesday are expected to be dry in the south and east, with a mixture of dry weather and more frequent showers in the west and north-west.

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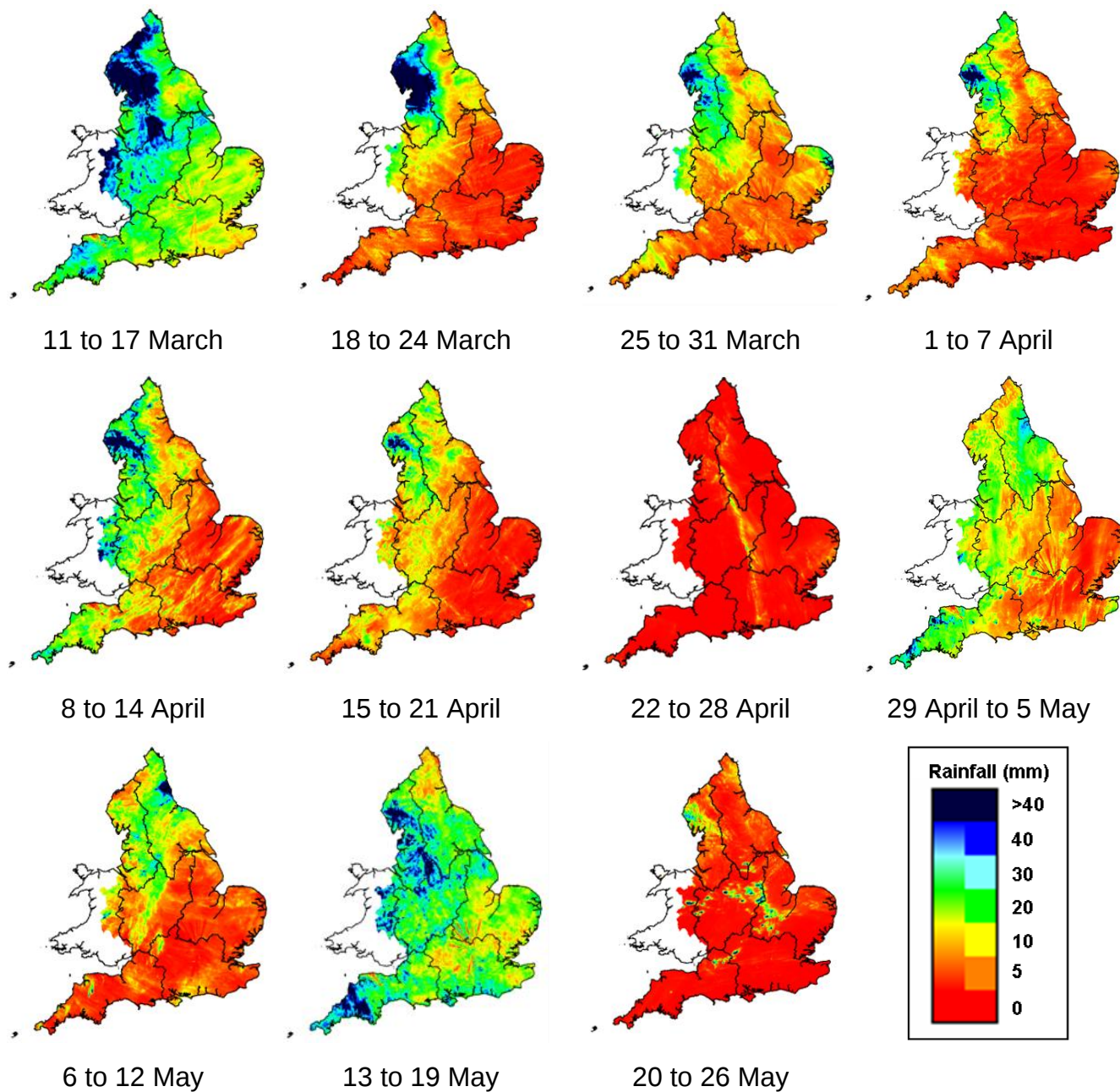
Table 1: Latest rainfall summary information (Source: Met Office © Crown Copyright, 2026)

Geographic regions	20 to 26 May 2026 total rainfall (mm)	May 2026 to date total rainfall (mm)	May 2026 to date rainfall % of LTA	Apr 2026 total rainfall (mm)	Apr 2026 rainfall % of LTA	Last 3 months Feb to Apr 2026 total rainfall (mm)	Last 3 months Feb to Apr 2026 rainfall % of LTA	Last 6 months Nov 2025 to Apr 2026 total rainfall (mm)	Last 6 months Nov 2025 to Apr 2026 rainfall % of LTA	Last 12 months May 2025 to Apr 2026 total rainfall (mm)	Last 12 months May 2025 to Apr 2026 rainfall % of LTA
north-west	5	62	83	55	78	292	110	774	116	1,462	115
north-east	2	46	83	28	47	184	98	532	118	909	103
central	2	40	72	20	38	181	115	521	140	803	105
east	<1	22	46	5	12	107	87	351	118	580	92
south-east	<1	28	53	8	16	146	92	465	114	766	99
south-west	<1	42	65	27	39	243	103	792	131	1,204	110
England	2	38	66	21	38	182	101	549	123	907	104

Notes: Long term average (LTA) rainfall for 1991 to 2020. Data for the current month are calculated using MORECS (Met Office Rainfall and Evaporation Calculation System); data for past months are provisional values from the National Climate Information Centre (NCIC). The data are rounded to the nearest millimetre or percent except when values are less than 1. Recorded amounts of rainfall are likely to be underestimated during snow events.

2 Rainfall

Figure 2: Weekly precipitation across England and Wales for the past 11 weeks. UKPP radar. Note: Images may sometimes include straight lines originating from the centre of the radar, resulting from tall trees and buildings located near the radar installation affecting its performance. This does not reflect actual conditions on the ground.

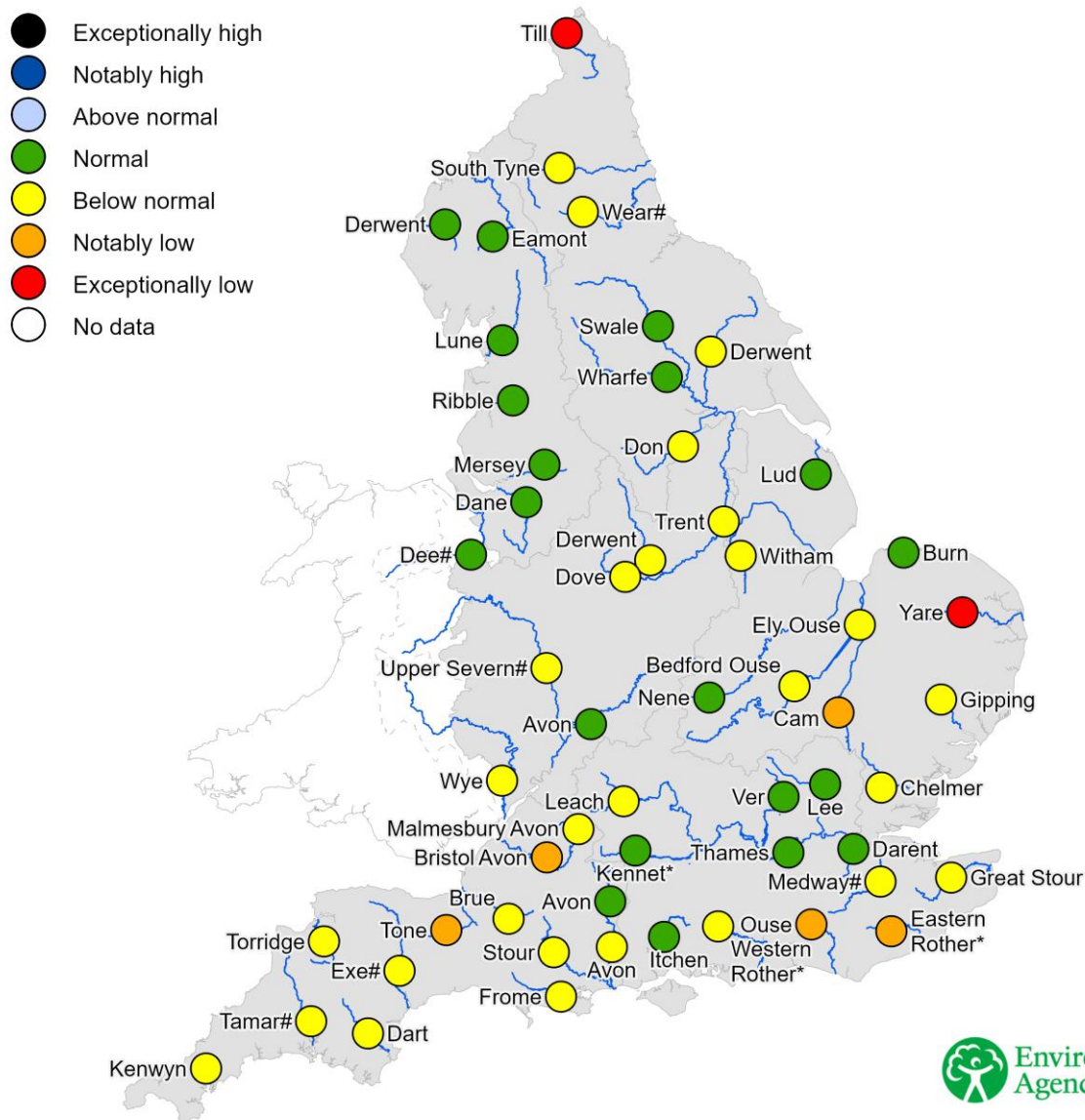


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3 River flows

3.1 River flows map

Figure 3.1: Latest daily mean river flow, relative to an analysis of historic daily mean flows, classed by flow percentile for the same time of year. River flows for the River Thames at Kingston and the River Lee at Feildes Weir are naturalised. * Flows may be overestimated and data should be treated with caution. # Flows may be impacted by upstream reservoir releases.



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3.2 River flow 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