

**SUMMARY** The outlook for March is for above normal river flows and groundwater levels across parts of southern and central England. River flows and groundwater levels elsewhere are likely to be normal to above normal for March. Over the March-May period, above normal river flows and groundwater levels are likely in southern and central England. Across the rest of the UK, river flows are likely to be in the normal range and groundwater levels are likely to remain normal to above normal throughout Spring.

**Rainfall:**

February's rainfall was above average for the UK, with 123% of average recorded. Much of England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and eastern Scotland recorded more than 170% of their average February rainfall. Rainfall for western Scotland was below normal, with large areas seeing less than 70% of the February average. The long-range forecast (issued by the Met Office on 23.02.2026) indicates a slight signal for a wet March, with a stronger signal for mild temperatures. Over March-May, the forecast suggests that the next three months are likely to be warm with a normal chance of wet conditions, and a slightly increased chance of average rainfall.

**River flows:**

River flows in February were below normal for northern Scotland and in the normal range for western Scotland, northwestern England, northern Wales, and parts of East Anglia. Elsewhere, February river flows were above normal to notably high, with some catchments on the south coast of England registering new record high February flows.

The outlook for March indicates that above normal flows are likely across much of central and southern England, particularly in groundwater-dominated catchments in the south of England. For the rest of the UK, river flows are likely to be normal to above normal for March. The outlook for Spring (March-May) is for river flows across much of the UK to be within the normal range, except for parts of southern and central England where above normal flows are likely to persist.

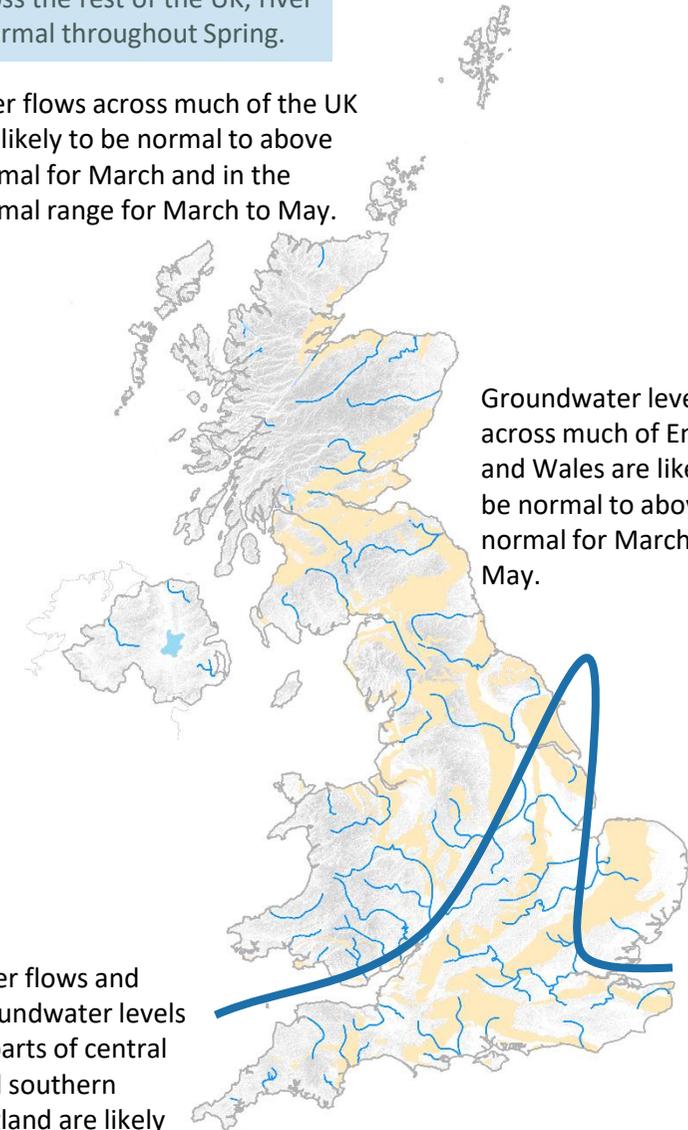
**Groundwater:**

Groundwater levels at the end of February were above normal or notably high in most aquifers, except for East Anglia and northern Scotland where some boreholes recorded normal or below normal levels. The outlook indicates that groundwater levels in the southern Chalk, Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Chalk, and Jurassic limestones are likely to be above normal to high over the coming month. Normal to above normal levels are likely elsewhere. Over the next three months, groundwater levels in the southern Chalk are likely to remain above normal to high. Across the rest of the UK, levels are likely to be normal to above normal for the March-May period.

River flows across much of the UK are likely to be normal to above normal for March and in the normal range for March to May.

Groundwater levels across much of England and Wales are likely to be normal to above normal for March to May.

River flows and groundwater levels in parts of central and southern England are likely to be above normal for March to May.



Shaded areas show principal aquifers

The UK Hydrological Outlook provides an outlook for the water situation for the United Kingdom over the next three months and beyond. For guidance on how to interpret the outlook, a wider range of information, and a full description of underpinning methods, please visit the website: [www.hydoutuk.net](http://www.hydoutuk.net)

## About the UK Hydrological Outlook:

This document presents an outlook for the UK water situation for the next 1-3 months and beyond, using observational datasets, meteorological forecasts and a suite of hydrological modelling tools. The outlook is produced in a collaboration between the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH), British Geological Survey (BGS), the Met Office, the Environment Agency (EA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), and for Northern Ireland, the Department for Infrastructure – Rivers (DfIR).

## Data and Models:

The UK Hydrological Outlook depends on the active cooperation of many data suppliers. This cooperation is gratefully acknowledged. Historic river flow and groundwater data are sourced from the [UK National River Flow Archive](#) and the [National Groundwater Level Archive](#). Contemporary data are provided by the EA, SEPA, NRW and DfIR. These data are used to initialise hydrological models, and to provide outlook information based on statistical analysis of historical analogues.

Climate forecasts are produced by the Met Office. Hydrological modelling is undertaken by UKCEH using the Grid-to-Grid and GR6J hydrological models. Hydrogeological modelling uses the AquilMod model run by BGS. Supporting documentation is available from the Outlooks website: <https://hydoutuk.net/about/methods>

## Presentation:

The language used in the summary presented overleaf generally places flows and groundwater levels into just three classes, i.e. below normal, normal, and above normal. However, the underpinning methods use as many as seven classes as defined in the graphic to the right, i.e. the summary uses a simpler classification than some of the methods. On those occasions when it is appropriate to provide greater discrimination at the extremes the terminology and definitions of the seven class scheme will be adopted.

	Percentile range of historic values for relevant month
Exceptionally high flow	> 95
Notably high flow	87-95
Above normal	72-87
Normal range	28-72
Below normal	13-28
Notably low flow	5-13
Exceptionally low flow	< 5

## Disclaimer and liability:

The UK Hydrological Outlook partnership aims to ensure that all Content provided is accurate and consistent with its current scientific understanding. However, the science which underlies hydrological and hydrogeological forecasts and climate projections is constantly evolving. Therefore any element of the Content which involves a forecast or a prediction should not be relied upon as though it were a statement of fact. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, the UK Hydrological Outlook Partnership excludes all warranties or representations (express or implied) in respect of the Content.

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The UK Hydrological Outlook is supported by the Natural Environment Research Council funded NC-UK (NE/Y006208/1) and [Hydro-JULES](#) (NE/S017380/1) Programmes.

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## Further information:

For more detailed information about the UK Hydrological Outlook, and the derivation of the maps, plots and interpretation provided in this outlook, please visit the UK Hydrological Outlook website. The website features a host of other background information, including a wider range of sources of information which are used in the preparation of this Outlook. Dynamic access to many of the outputs of the UK Hydrological Portal are available on the [UK Hydrological Outlooks Portal](#).

## Contact:

UK Hydrological Outlooks, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 8BB  
t: 01491 838800 e: <https://hydoutuk.net/contact>

## Reference for the UK Hydrological Outlook:

UK Hydrological Outlook, 09 March 2026, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Oxfordshire UK, Online, <https://www.hydoutuk.net/latest-outlook/>

## Other Sources of Information:

The UK Hydrological Outlook should be used alongside other sources of up-to-date information on the current water resources status and flood risk.

Environment Agency Water Situation Reports: provides summary of water resources status on a monthly and weekly basis for England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/water-situation-reports-for-england>

Flood warnings are continually updated, and should be consulted for an up-to-date and localised assessment of flood risk:

- Environment Agency: <https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/map>
- Natural Resources Wales: <https://flood-warning.naturalresources.wales/>
- Scottish Environment Protection Agency: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/flooding.aspx>

Hydrological Summary for the UK: provides summary of current water resources status for the UK: <https://nrfa.ceh.ac.uk/monthly-hydrological-summary-uk>

UK Met Office forecasts for the UK: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/>

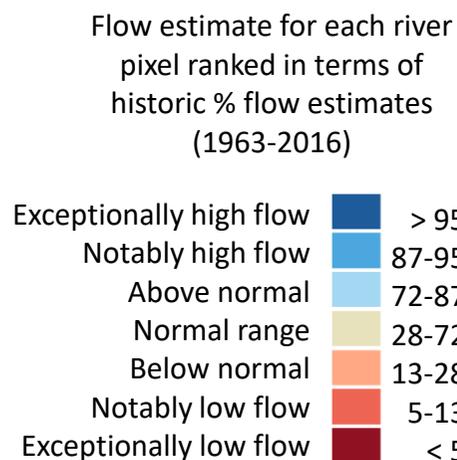
UK Water Resources Portal: monitor the UK hydrological situation in near real-time including rainfall, river flow, groundwater and soil moisture from COSMOS-UK: <https://eip.ceh.ac.uk/hydrology/water-resources/>

Issue date: 04.03.2026

This map shows the simulated monthly mean flow across Great Britain for last month, ranked in terms of 54 years of historical flow estimates (1963 – 2016).

These flows are produced by the 1km resolution Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model, which is run up to the end of each calendar month using observed rainfall and MORECS potential evaporation as input.

Note that the G2G model provides estimates of natural flows.

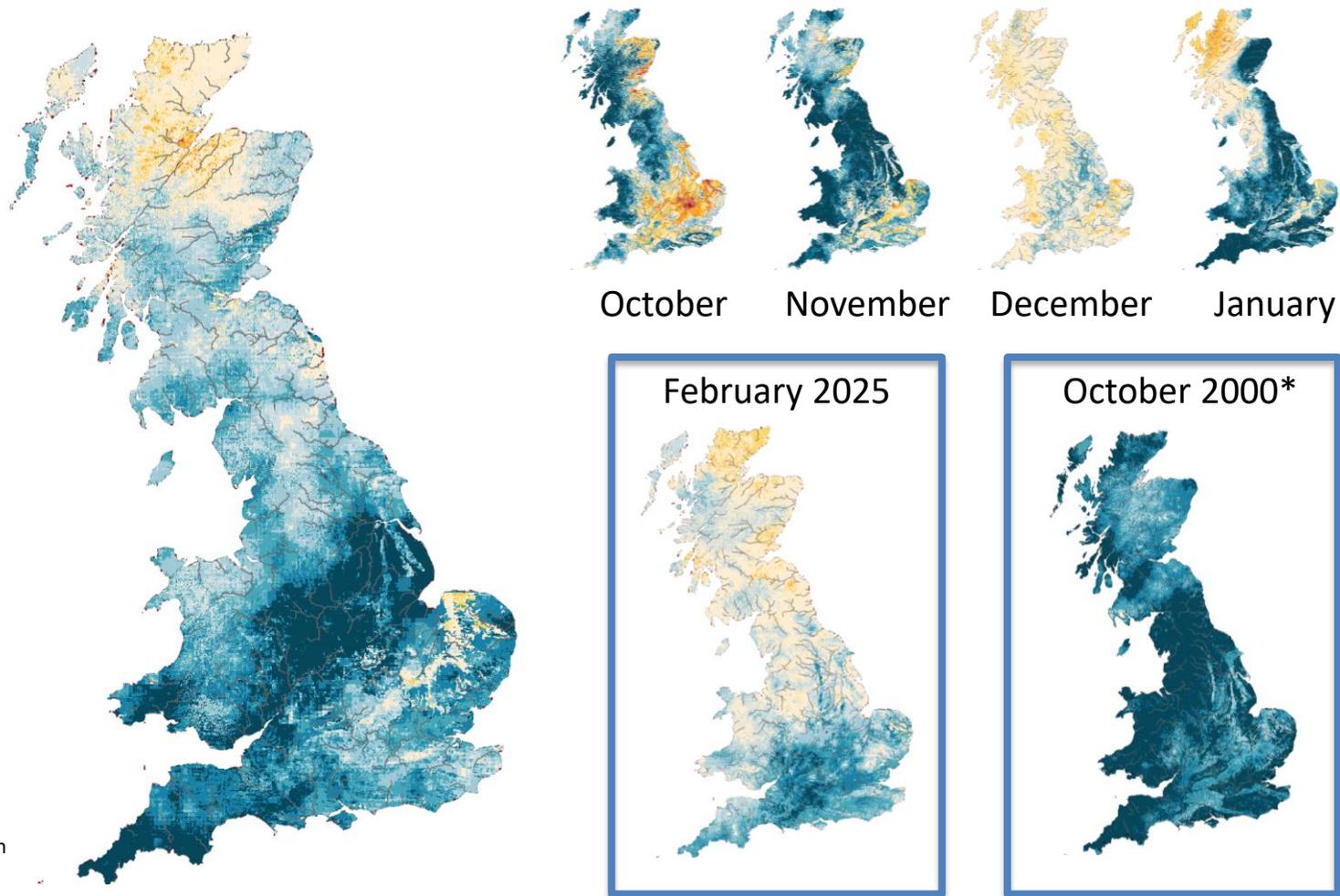
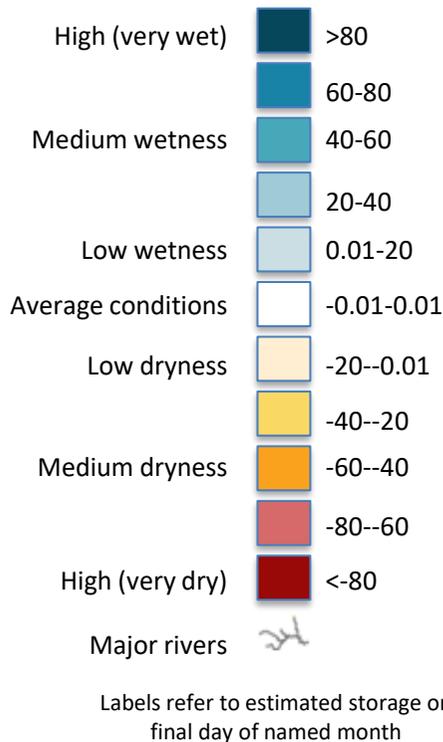


These maps are based on Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model simulated subsurface water storage (water in the soil and groundwater), expressed as an anomaly from the historical monthly mean. To highlight areas that are particularly wet or dry, the storage anomaly is presented relative to historical extremes. Rainfall in WET areas with high positive relative wetness could result in flooding in the coming days/weeks. Areas of negative relative wetness indicate locations which are particularly DRY, and little or no rain in these areas could potentially lead to (or prolong) a drought. Maps of soil moisture only are available on the next page.

**SUMMARY:** Subsurface water stores remain higher (wetter) than usual across England, Wales, and southern Scotland, and are particularly high in the West Midlands. Stores in northern Scotland and parts of the chalk aquifer in southern England are marginally lower (drier) than normal.

## Relative wetness

Water storage anomaly as a % of maximum (positive wetness) or minimum (negative wetness) storage anomaly (zero indicates average value)



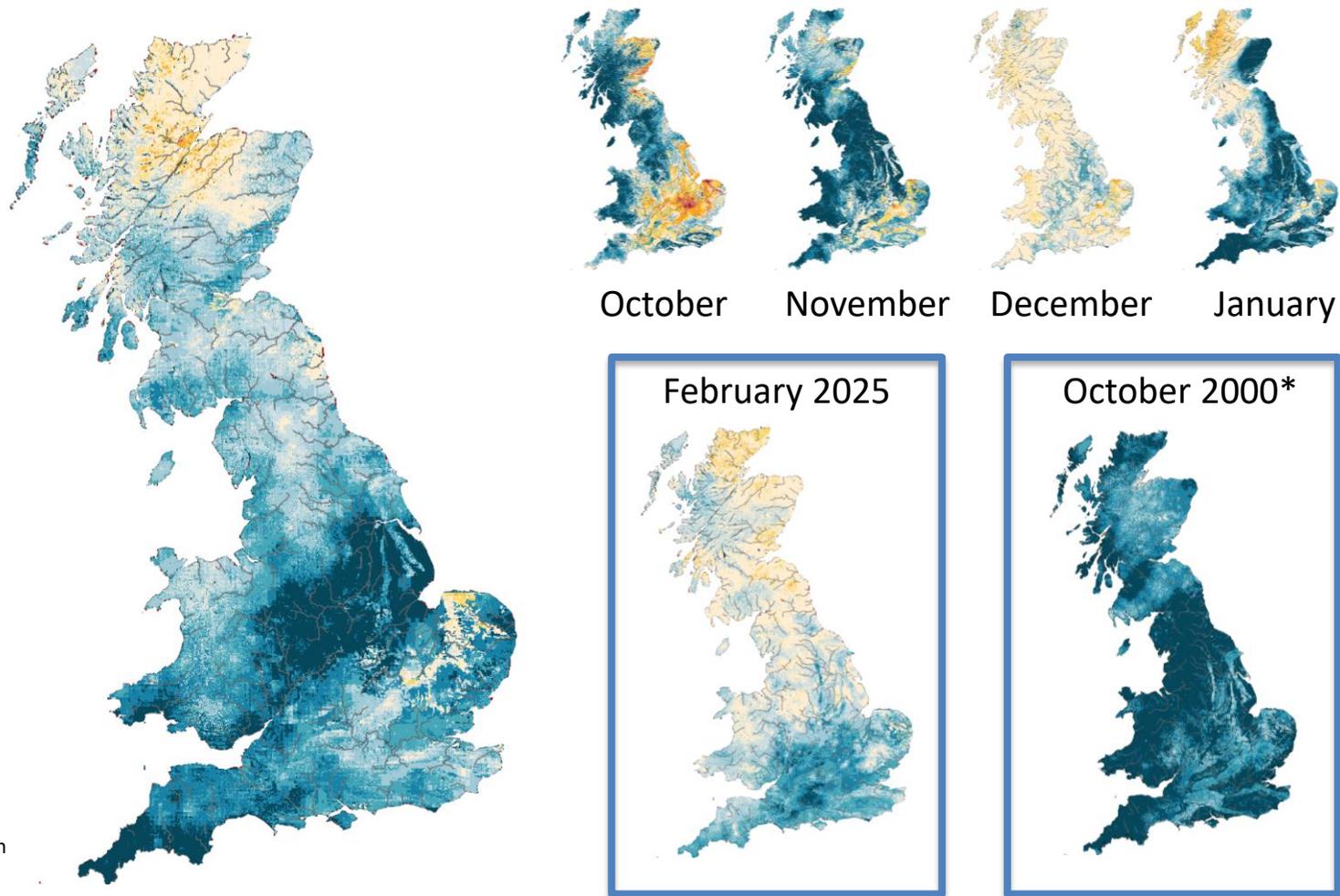
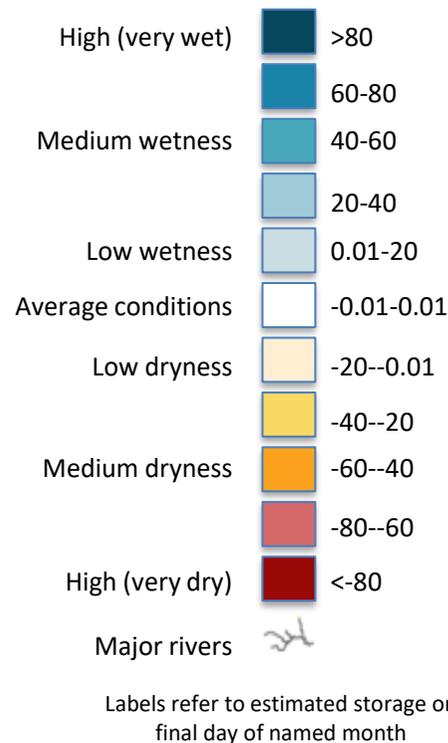
\*Example month displaying extreme positive wetness

These maps are based on Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model simulated soil moisture, expressed as an anomaly from the historical monthly mean. To highlight areas that are particularly wet or dry, the soil moisture anomaly is presented relative to historical extremes. These maps are not a forecast; rather an indication of current conditions. Soil moisture will often look similar to total storage (shown on the previous slide), since total storage comprises both soil moisture and storage in the saturated zone.

**SUMMARY:** Soil water stores remain higher (wetter) than usual across England, Wales, and southern Scotland, and are particularly high in the West Midlands. Stores in northern Scotland and parts of the chalk aquifer in southern England are marginally lower (drier) than normal.

## Relative wetness

Soil moisture anomaly as a % of maximum (positive wetness) or minimum (negative wetness) storage anomaly (zero indicates average value)



\*Example month displaying extreme positive wetness

These maps show the Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model simulated subsurface water storage, expressed as an anomaly from the historical monthly mean (1981-2010), presented on a 1km grid and as regional means. Subsurface storage deficits, i.e. where the subsurface water storage anomaly is less than zero, are highlighted in red/pink.

The subsurface storage deficit (mm) can be interpreted as an estimate of additional rainfall that would be required in future months to overcome dry conditions (i.e. rainfall in addition to what is expected on average). Regional mean values of additional rainfall required are provided in the table below.

### Regional estimate of additional rainfall required (mm)

#### SCOTLAND

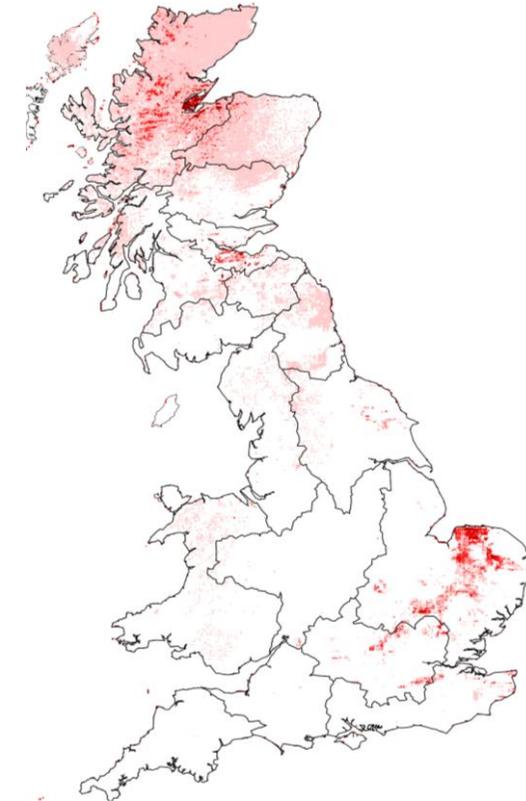
- 9 HR Highlands Region
- 0 NER North East Region
- 0 TR Tay Region
- 0 FR Forth Region
- 0 CR Clyde Region
- 0 TWR Tweed Region
- 0 SR Solway Region

#### ENGLAND

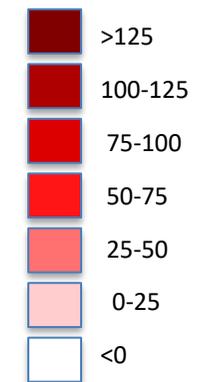
- 0 N Northumbria
- 0 NW North West
- 0 Y Yorkshire
- 0 ST Severn Trent
- 0 A Anglian
- 0 T Thames
- 0 W Wessex
- 0 S Southern
- 0 SW South West

#### WALES

- 0 WEL Welsh



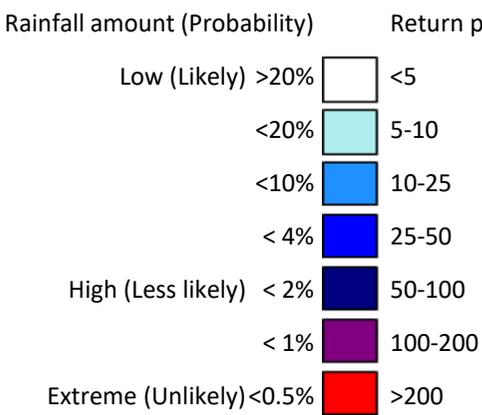
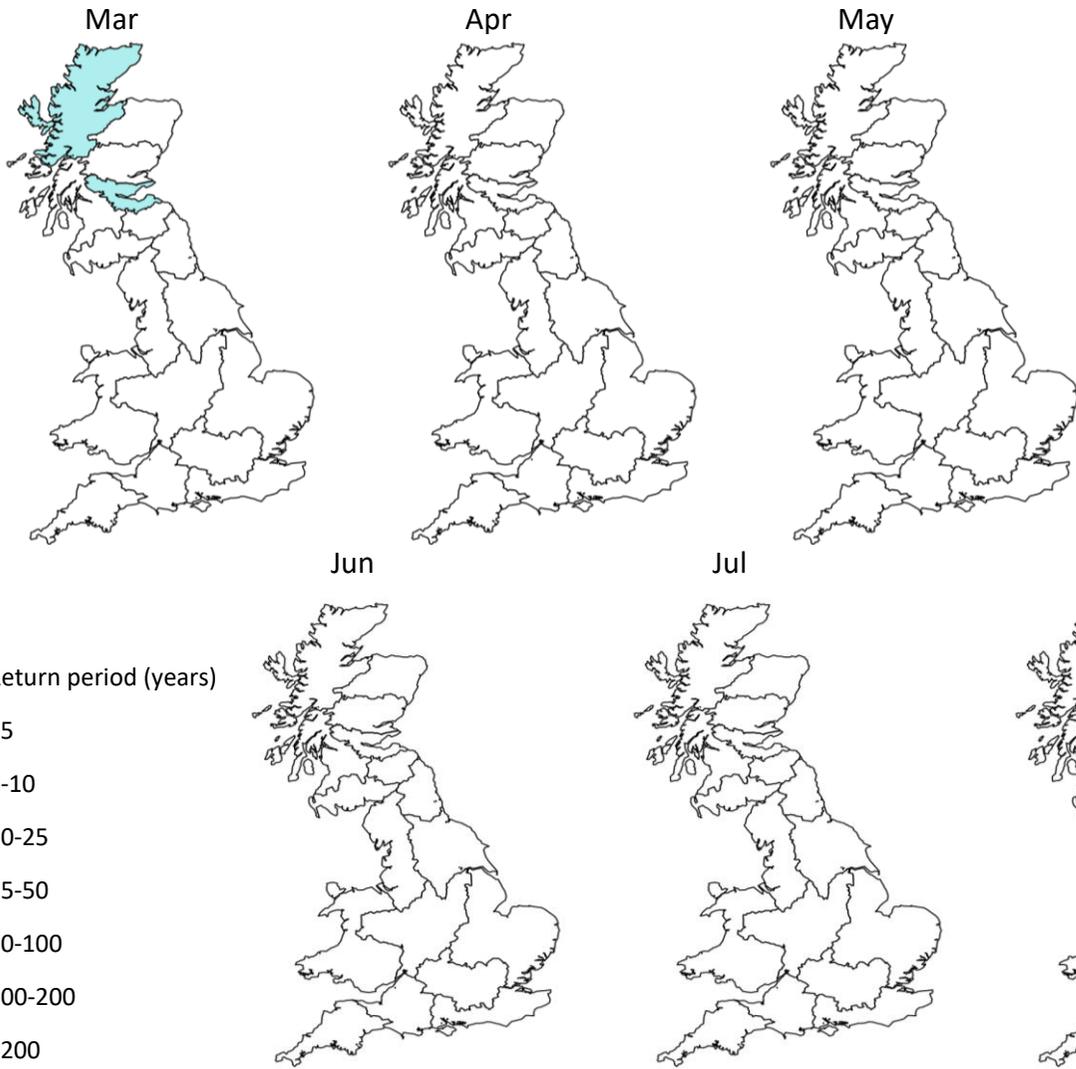
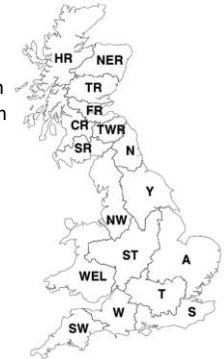
Water storage deficit (anomaly; mm)



These maps show the return period of the rainfall required to overcome dry conditions simulated using the Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model. The maps are coloured according to the return period of accumulated rainfall required to overcome the estimated current subsurface water storage deficit over the next one to six months (areas with no storage deficit will always be white). These maps do not provide a drought forecast; instead they indicate whether particularly heavy rainfall would be required to return to normal conditions for the time of year.

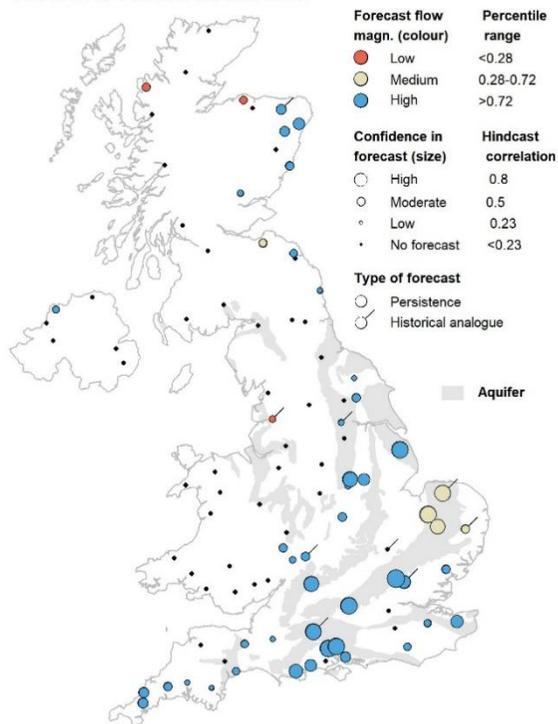
**SUMMARY:**  
 Modest deficits in the Highlands and parts of the Forth Region will require unusual (5-10 year return period) rainfall to recover within the next month, but are likely to recover by the end of April.  
 No other deficits present elsewhere in Great Britain require unusual rainfall to recover.

- SCOTLAND**  
 HR Highlands Region  
 NER North East Region  
 TR Tay Region  
 FR Forth Region  
 CR Clyde Region  
 TWR Tweed Region  
 SR Solway Region
- ENGLAND**  
 N Northumbria  
 NW North West  
 Y Yorkshire  
 ST Severn Trent  
 A Anglian  
 T Thames  
 S Southern  
 W Wessex  
 SW South West
- WALES**  
 WEL Welsh



**SUMMARY:** The outlook for March and for the March–May period indicates that flows across much of England and eastern Scotland are likely to be above normal. Normal flows are more likely in East Anglia and north-western areas. However, forecast availability is very limited across parts of northern and western Britain.

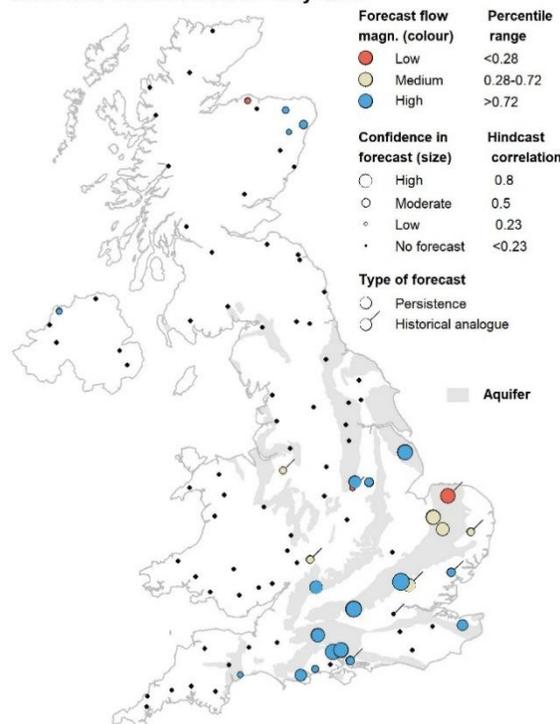
River flow outlook for Mar 2026



1-month flow outlook

Outlooks from hydrological analogues are based on a comparison of river flow during recent months with flows during the same months in previous years at a set of approximately 90 sites from across the UK. These sites are depicted on the two maps. Years with observed flows that most closely resemble current conditions are identified as the best analogues and the outlook is based on extrapolating from current conditions based on these analogues.

River flow outlook for Mar - May 2026



3-month flow outlook

It is, however, often the case that a simpler forecast based on the persistence of river flow provides a better forecast than provided by analogy. This is particularly true for slowly responding catchments associated with aquifer outcrops.

Both methods are considered at each site and the forecast from the method with the higher confidence is presented. A simple classification of flows is used (high, medium and low) as indicated by the colours of the dots, with the confidence

of the forecast being represented by the size of the dot. A tag on the dot indicates which method has been used in each instance.

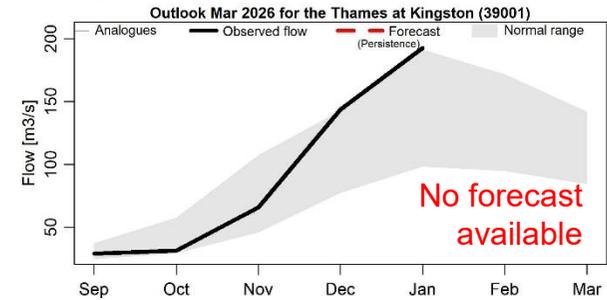
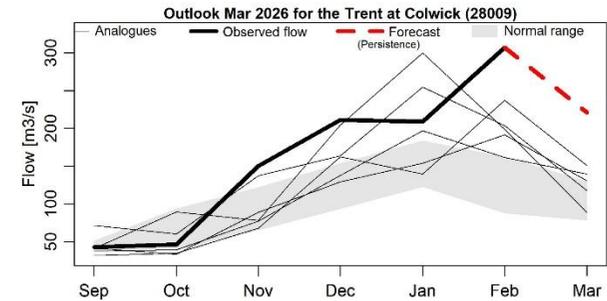
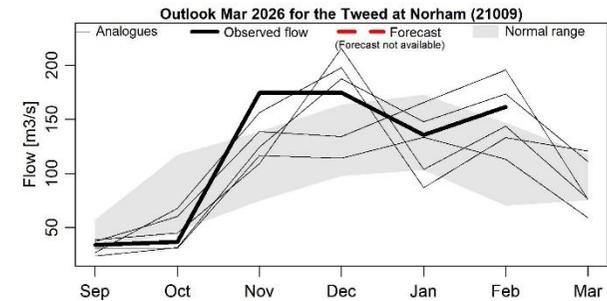
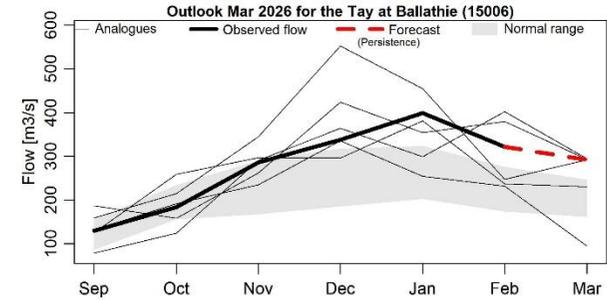
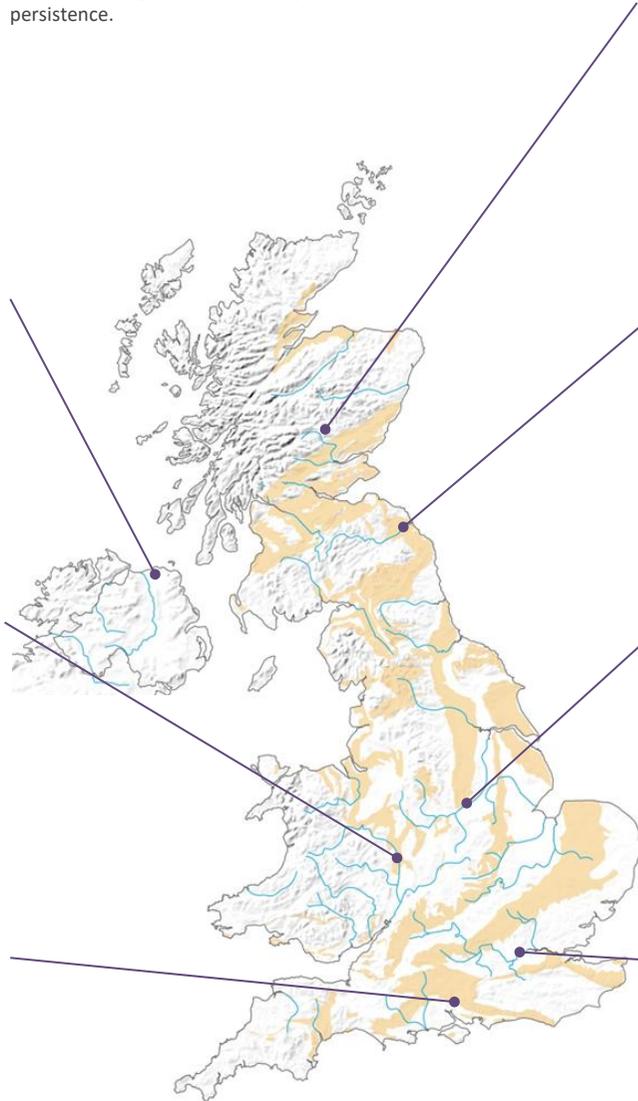
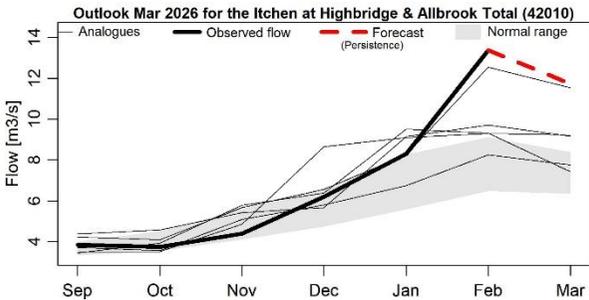
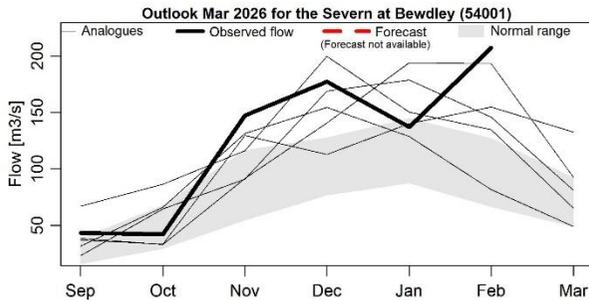
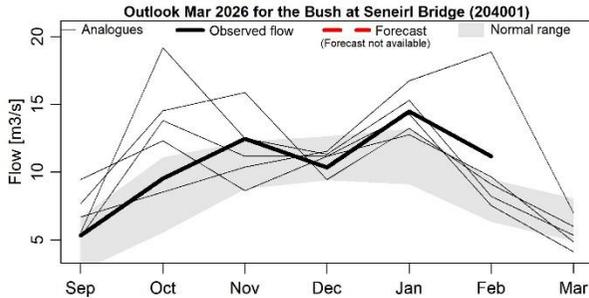
Period: March 2026

Issued on 06.03.2026 using data to the end of February 2026

These figures provide insight into the hydrological analogue methodology for a set of sites from across the UK.

In each of the time series graphs the bold black line represents the observed flow during the past six months. The grey band indicates the normal flow range (the normal band includes 44%

of observed flows in each month). The selected analogues are shown as thin lines and the trajectories that flows took in the following month are also shown. The forecast is shown as the dashed red line, and in each plot it states whether this has come from the analogues or has been generated on the basis of persistence.



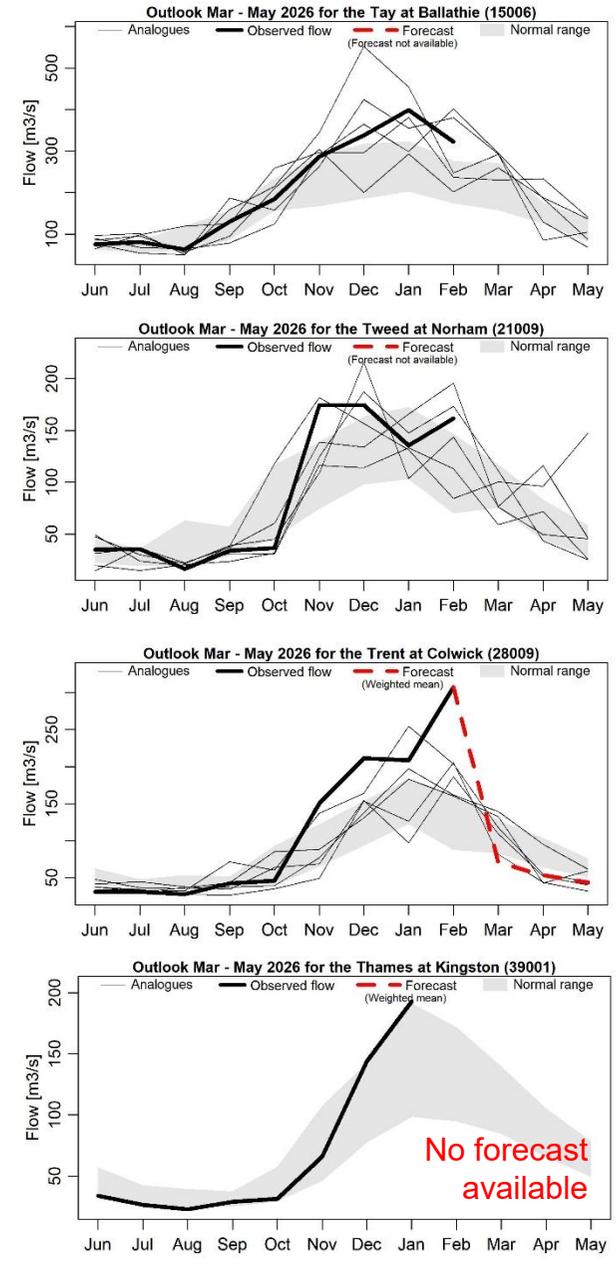
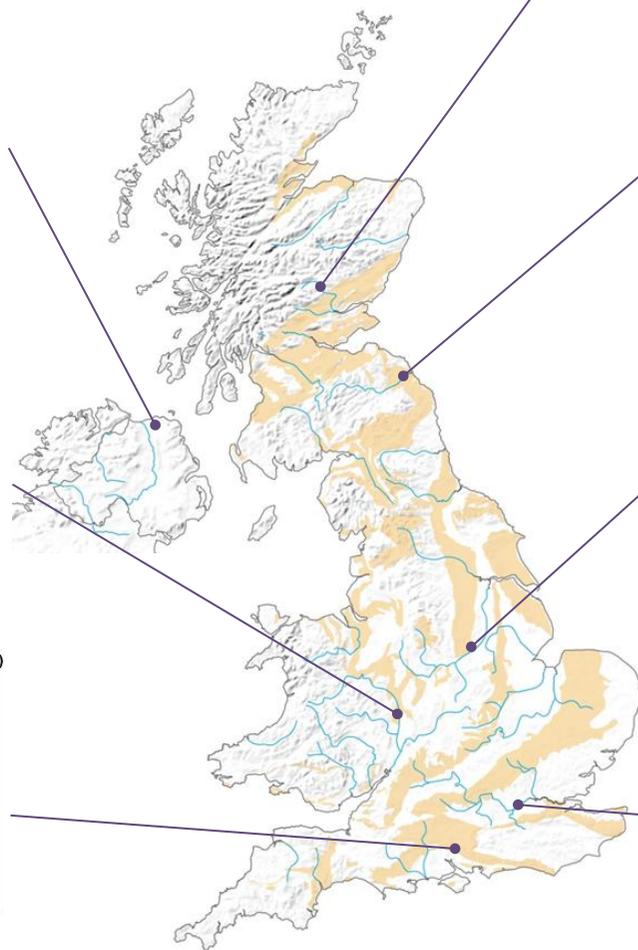
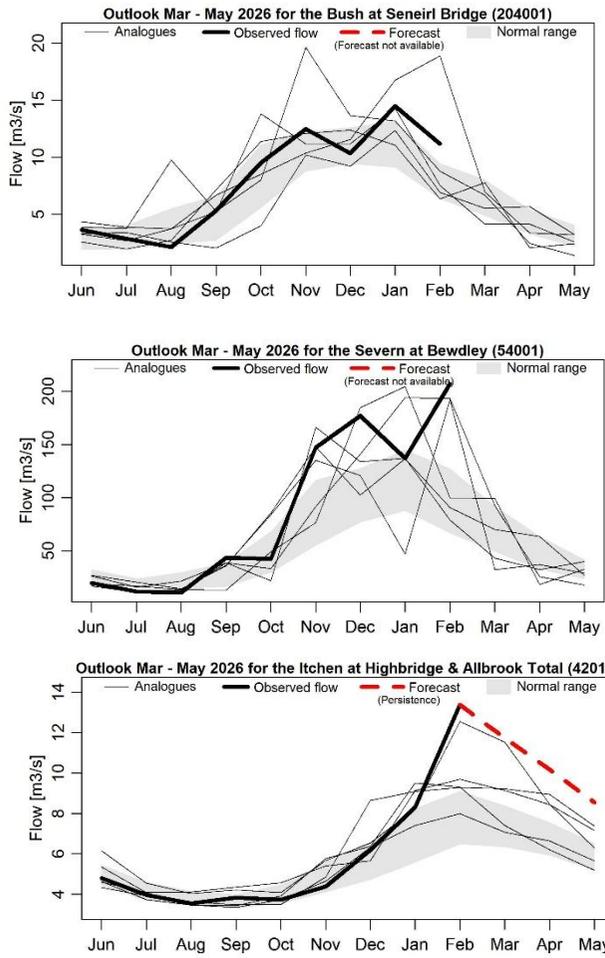
Period: March 2026 – May 2026

Issued on 06.03.2026 using data to the end of February 2026

These figures provide insight into the hydrological analogue methodology for a set of sites from across the UK.

In each of the time series graphs the bold black line represents the observed flow during the past nine months. The grey band indicates the normal flow range (the normal band includes 44%

of observed flows in each month). The selected analogues are shown as thin lines and the trajectories that flows took in the following three months are also shown. The forecast is shown as the dashed red line, and in each plot it states whether this has come from the analogues or has been generated on the basis of persistence.

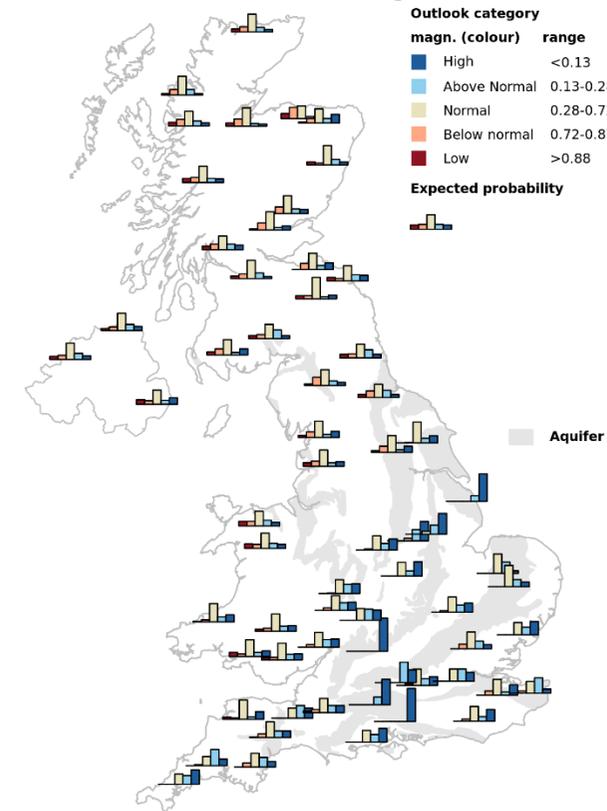


Period: March 2026 – August 2026

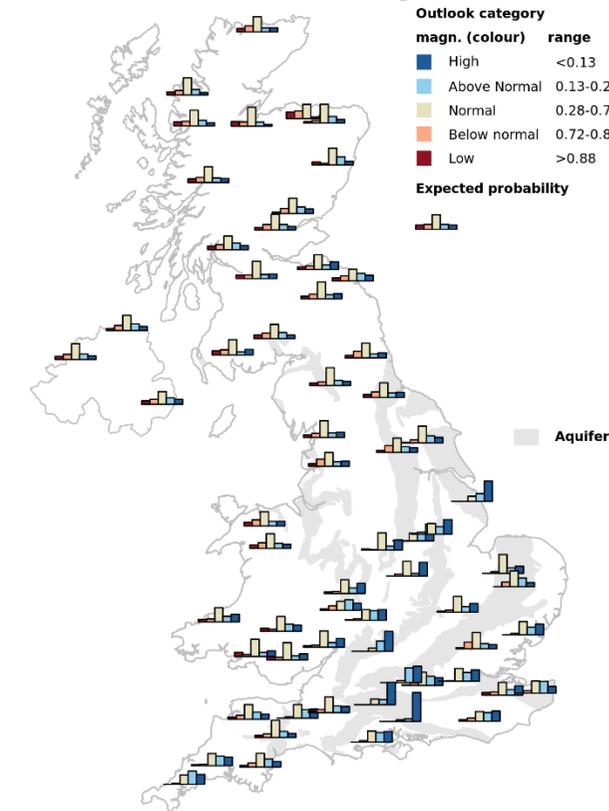
Issued on 03.03.2026 using data to the end of February 2026

The outlook for March indicates that river flows are likely to be normal to above normal across much of the UK, except for normal to below normal flows in parts of western Scotland and above normal to high flows in southern and southeastern England. The March to May outlook indicates the persistence of above normal to high flows in southern England and some parts of the East Midlands and normal to above normal flows in eastern Scotland.

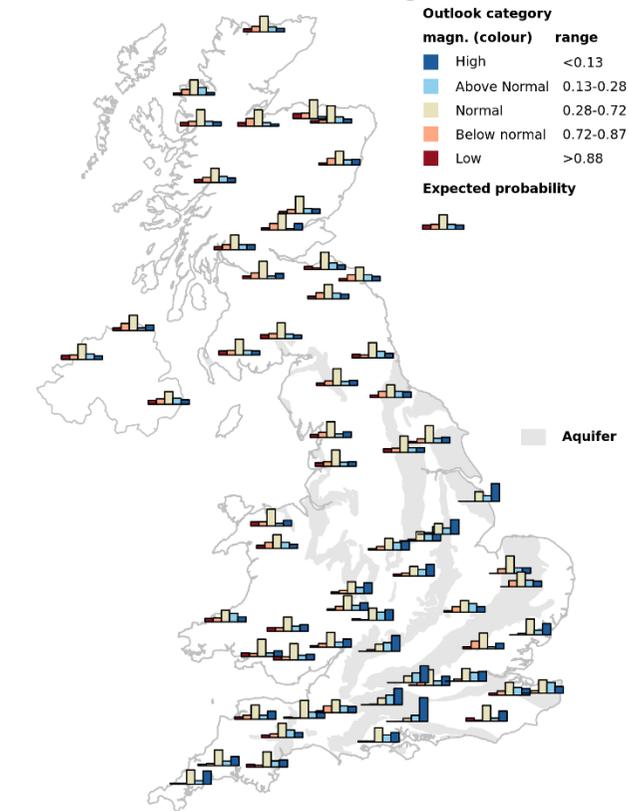
1-month river flow outlook starting Mar 2026



3-month river flow outlook starting Mar 2026



6-month river flow outlook starting Mar 2026

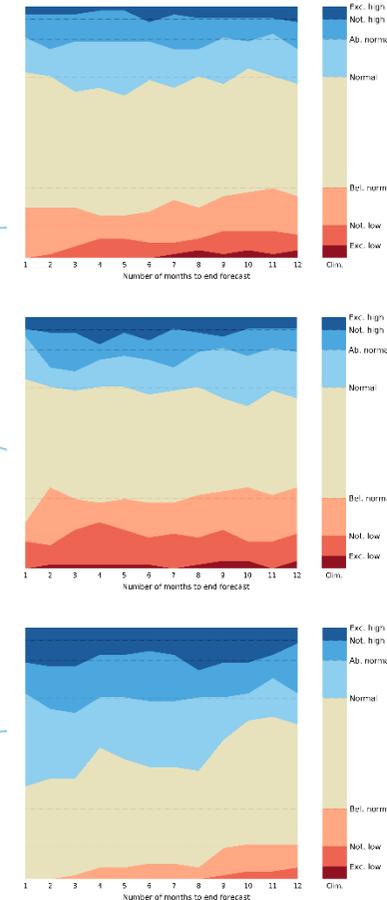
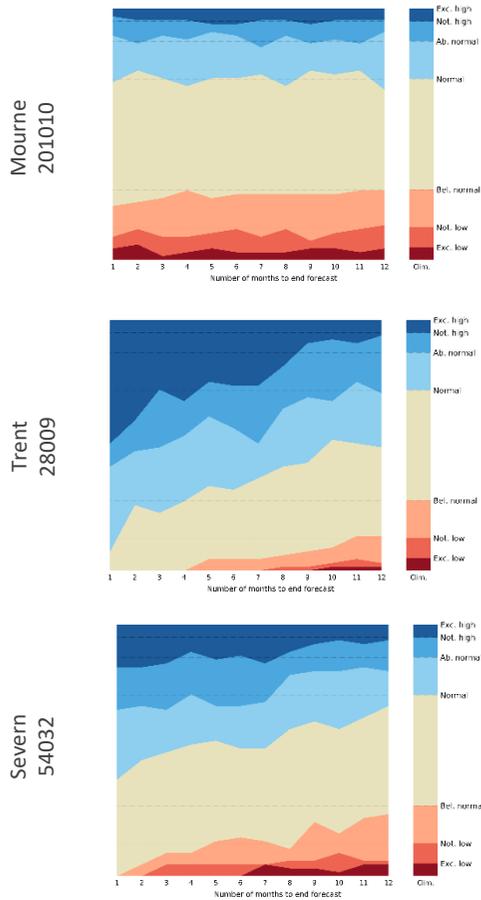


This outlook is based on monthly ensembles of historical sequences of observed climate (rainfall and potential evapotranspiration) that form input to a hydrological model. The outputs are probabilistic simulations of the average river flow over the forecast period (1 to 12 months ahead), at each location. The simulations are generated by the GR6J conceptual rainfall-runoff model from INRAE (France) calibrated on observed or naturalised flows.

The bar plot maps show the outlook distribution for 1, 3 and 6-month period for 64 catchments across England and Wales. Each bar plot represents the probabilistic distribution of the simulated river flow compared to the historical river flow, for the same n-month period. The probabilities fall within five categories, classified as: low, below normal, normal, above normal and high.

This outlook is based entirely on historical sequences and therefore does not contain any knowledge of the state of the atmosphere and ocean. It is hence possible that some of the historical sequences used might be inconsistent with current large-scale atmospheric conditions and would therefore be unlikely to occur in the next few months.

Please note that *Outlooks based on modelled flow from historical climate* from October 2023 onwards were generated using GR6J model, whereas until September 2023, they were produced using GR4J model. For more details, please see the section on River flow from historical climate at this link: <https://hydoutuk.net/about/methods/river-flows>



This outlook is based on monthly ensembles of historical sequences of observed climate (rainfall and potential evapotranspiration) that form input to a hydrological model. The outputs are probabilistic simulations of the average river flow over the forecast period (1 to 12 months ahead), at each location. The simulations are generated by the GR6J conceptual rainfall-runoff model from INRAE (France) calibrated on observed or naturalised flows.

The stack diagrams show the variation over time of the outlook distribution for a number of individual catchments. Each graph represents variation over time of the number of simulated river flows, in each month ensemble, that fall within each of seven categories: exceptionally low, notably low, below normal, normal, above normal, notably high and exceptionally high. The categories represent cumulative flow conditions, e.g. For 3-month, the simulated total 3-month flow compared to the historical 3-month flow distribution. The monthly variations can be compared to the long-term average distribution of river flows (shown as columns on

the right of each timeline graph). This outlook is based entirely on historical sequences and therefore does not contain any knowledge of the state of the atmosphere and ocean. It is hence possible that some of the historical sequences used might be inconsistent with current large-scale atmospheric conditions and would therefore be unlikely to occur in the next few months.

Period: March 2026 – May 2026

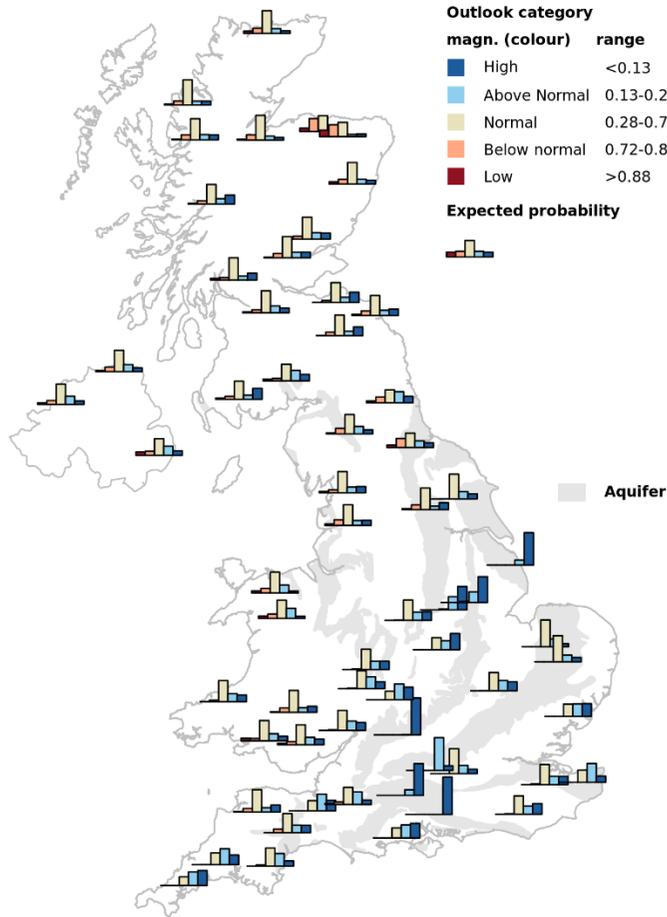
Issued on 03.03.2026 using data to the end of February 2026

The outlook for March indicates that flows across the UK are likely to be normal to above normal, except for normal to below normal flows in parts of western Scotland and above normal to high flows in parts of southern and southeastern England. The March to May outlook suggests river flows are likely to be normal to above normal in parts of southern England and the East Midlands, with normal conditions more widespread elsewhere.

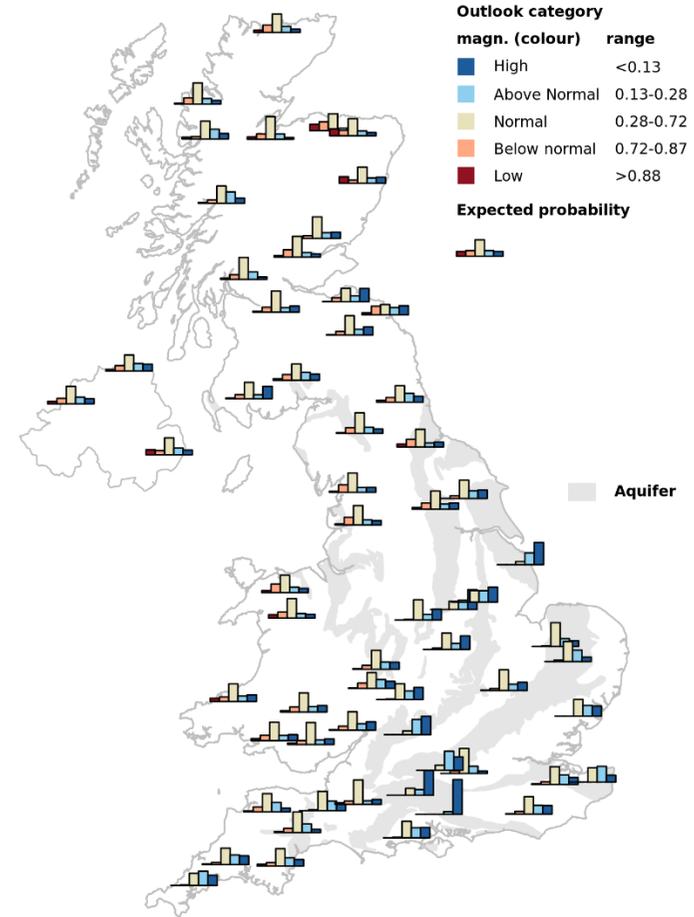
The historical weather analogues method uses Met Office predictions of average weather 1 and 3 months ahead to provide inputs to a hydrological model. Like the ESP method, observed rainfall and temperature data from past years are used to drive the predictions, however, the analogue method constrains the selection of past rainfall using the weather conditions in the meteorological forecasts (which are summarised for this forecast in the Met Office likelihood of impacts blocks underneath the maps). For each member of the Met Office forecast ensemble, the 10 analogues that best match the predicted average weather pattern (surface pressure map) over the forecast period are selected. Precipitation and temperature sequences constructed from the selected analogue scenarios are corrected to account for historic trends and used as inputs to hydrological models. Here, the GR6J model is run using these inputs, creating an ensemble of hydrological forecasts.

The outputs shown in the maps are the likelihoods of different outcomes for the average river flow over the one-month and three-month forecast periods at each location. The outlooks maps show the distribution for 64 catchments across the United Kingdom. Each bar plot represents the likelihood of the simulated river flow compared to the historical river flow, for the same n-month period. The probabilities fall within five categories, classified as: low, below normal, normal, above normal and high. The expected climatological probability of ensemble members in each of these categories is shown under the legend.

1-month river flow outlook starting Mar 2026



3-month river flow outlook starting Mar 2026



Met Office 1-month likelihood of precipitation impact



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Met Office 3-month likelihood of precipitation impact



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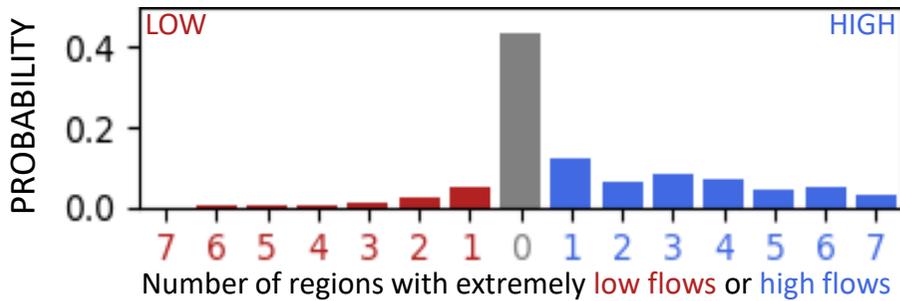
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in Scotland** over the next month. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

## Summary

### Scotland – one month

Extreme flows are unlikely to occur in Scotland over March, with a weak signal towards high flows in eastern parts.

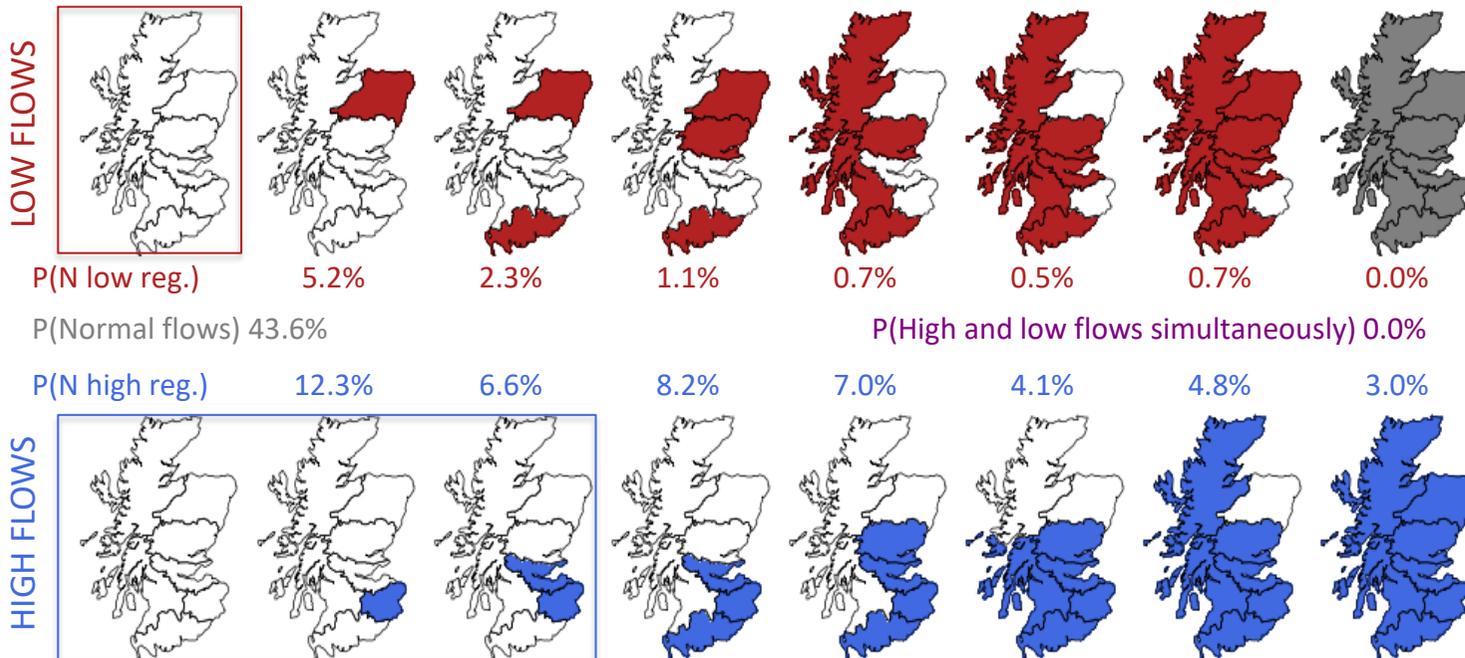
### How likely are we to experience extremely low or high flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

0.0%

### Which regions are most likely to experience extremely low or high flows?



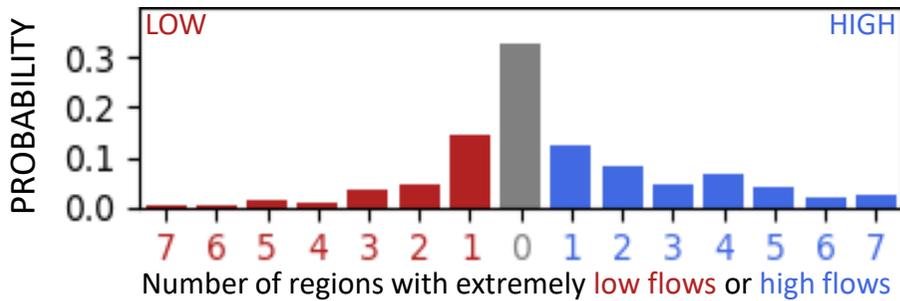
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in Scotland** over the next three months. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

## Summary

### Scotland – three months

Extreme flows are unlikely to occur in Scotland over the next three months.

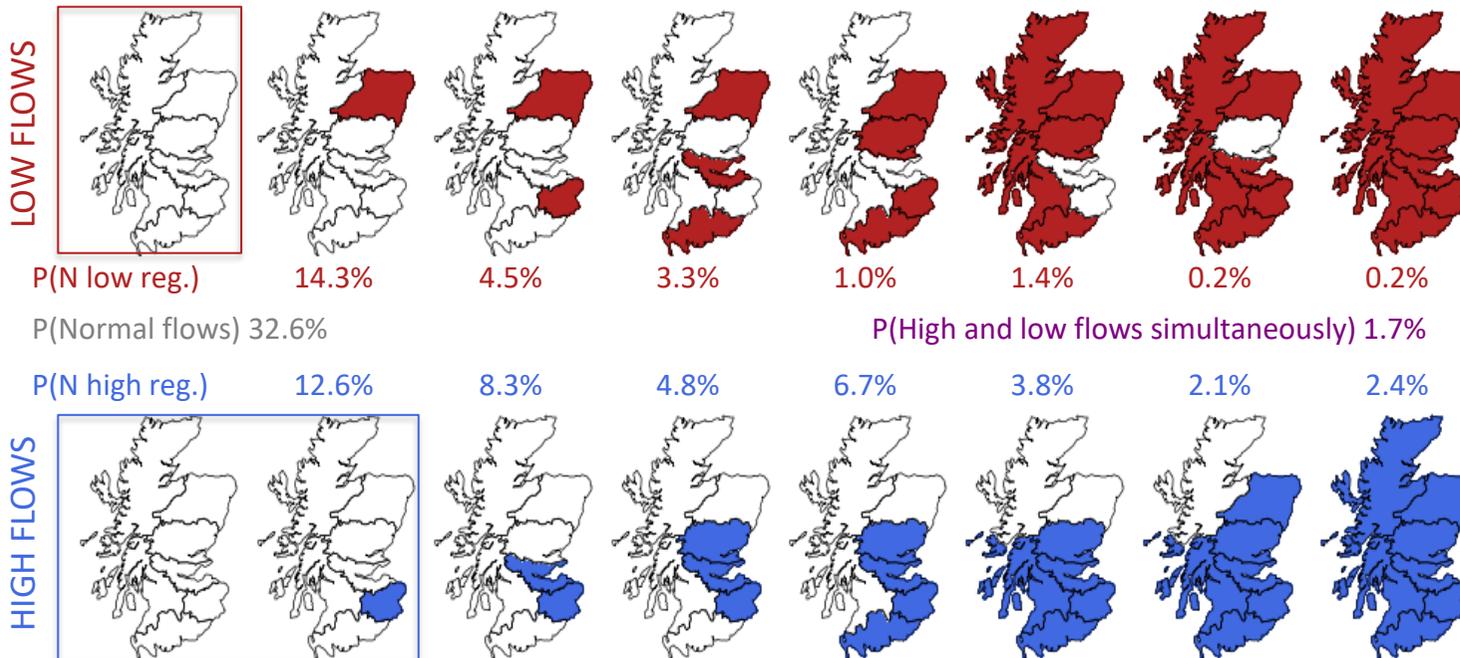
### How likely are we to experience extremely low or high flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

1.7%

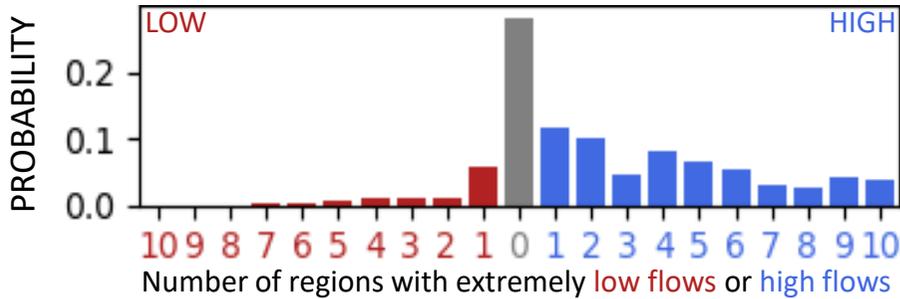
### Which regions are most likely to experience extremely low or high flows?



This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in England and Wales** over the next month. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

**Summary**  
**England and Wales – one month**  
 Extremely high river flows are likely to occur in parts of central, southern and eastern England over the next month.

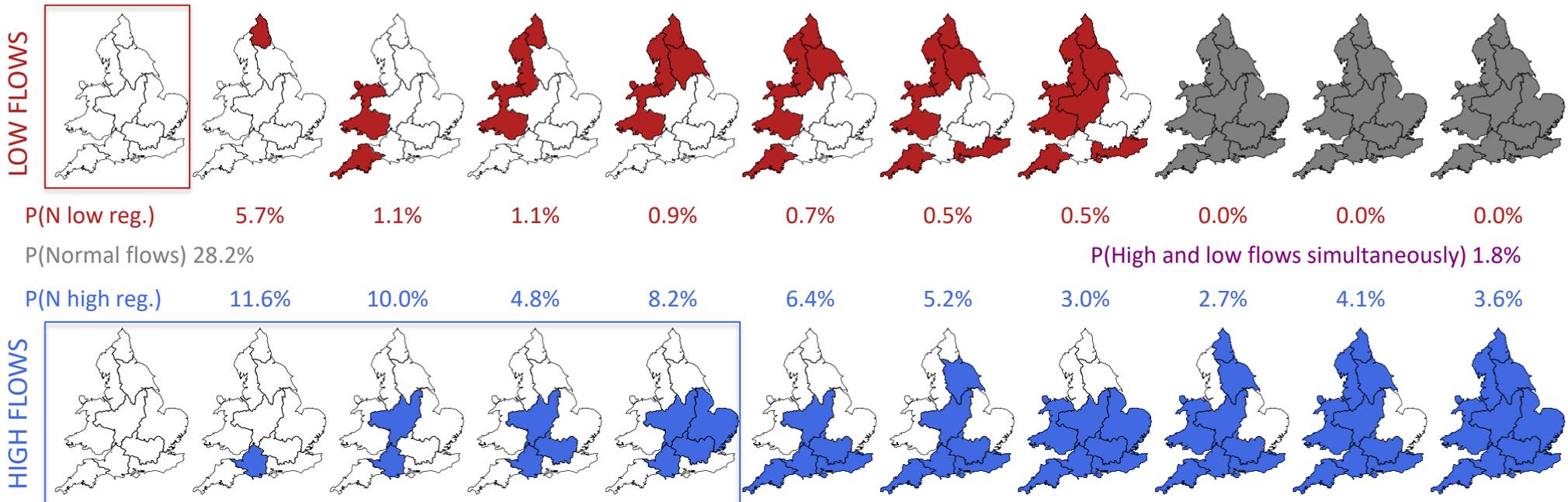
## How likely are we to experience extremely low or high flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

1.8%

## Which regions are most likely to experience extremely low or high flows?



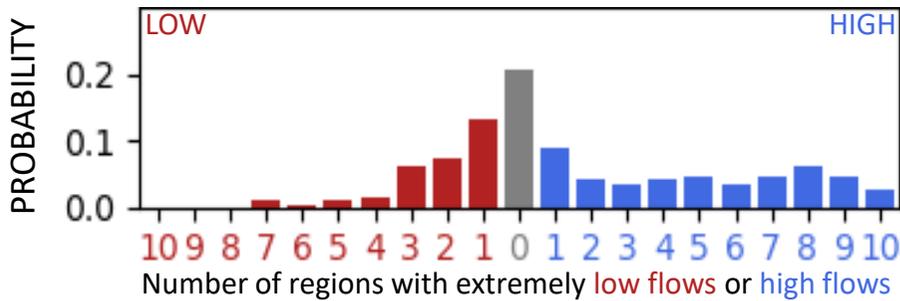
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in England and Wales** over the next three months. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

## Summary

### England and Wales – three months

Extremely high river flows may occur in the England over the next three months, with a low probability that these flows are widespread across much of the country,

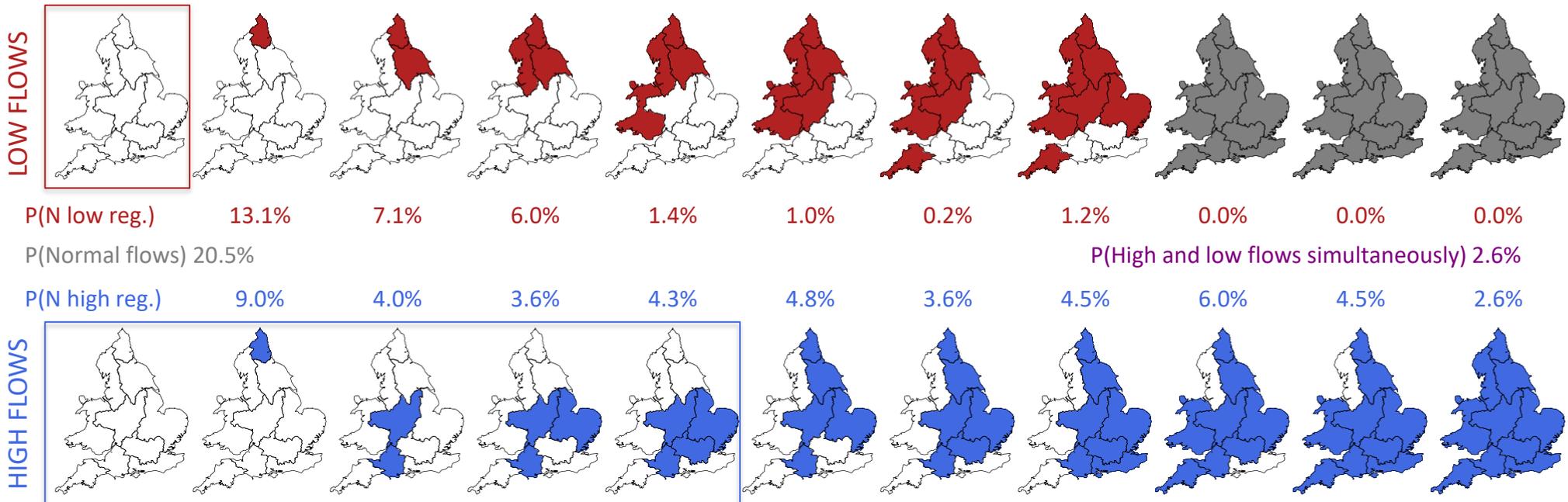
## How likely are we to experience extremely low or high flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

2.6%

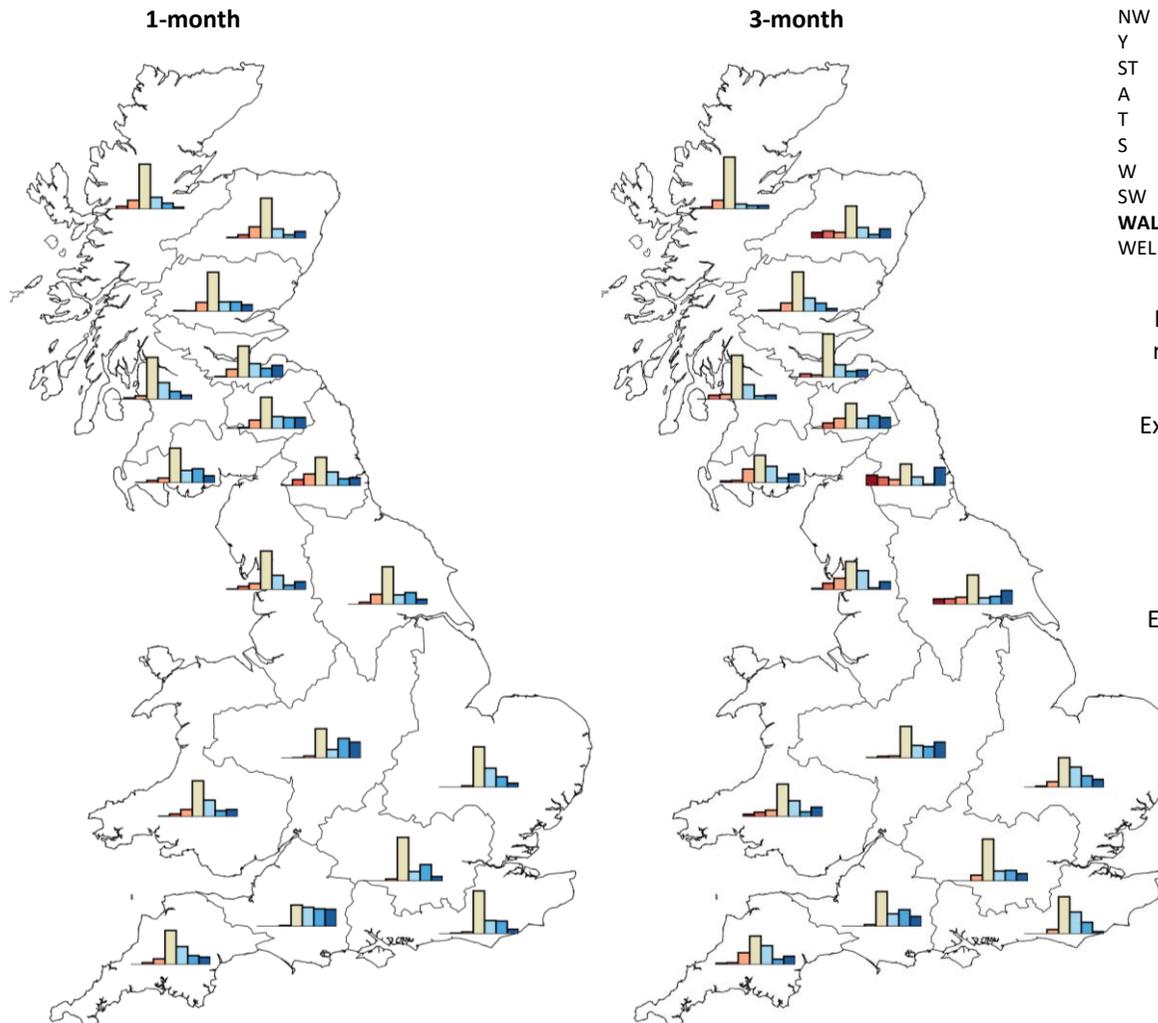
## Which regions are most likely to experience extremely low or high flows?



- This page shows the **ensemble flow distribution for each region** over the next 1- and 3-month periods.
- The 1km flow forecasts are averaged within each region, then categorised according to the historical flows.
- The histogram in each region indicates the proportion of ensemble members in each flow category.

**SUMMARY: Over the next month,** flows in England, Wales and southern Scotland are likely to be in the *normal range* to *notably high*. Elsewhere flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.

**Over the next three months,** flows in most areas are likely to be in the *normal range* to *notably high*. In western Scotland, flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.



## SCOTLAND

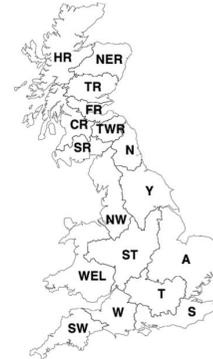
- HR Highlands Region
- NER North East Region
- TR Tay Region
- FR Forth Region
- CR Clyde Region
- TWR Tweed Region
- SR Solway Region

## ENGLAND

- N Northumbria
- NW North West
- Y Yorkshire
- ST Severn Trent
- A Anglian
- T Thames
- S Southern
- W Wessex
- SW South West

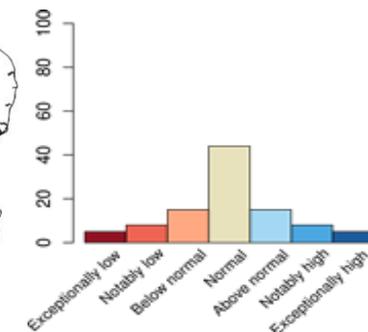
## WALES

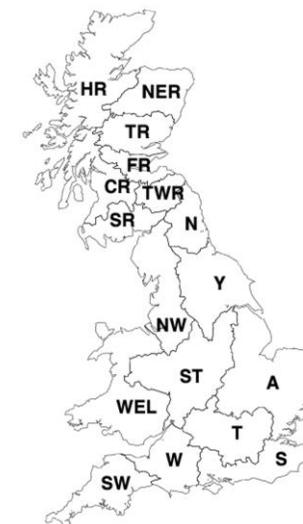
- WEL Welsh



Flow estimate for each river pixel ranked in terms of historic % flow estimates (1963-2016)

Exceptionally high flow	> 95
Notably high flow	87-95
Above normal	72-87
Normal range	28-72
Below normal	13-28
Notably low flow	5-13
Exceptionally low flow	< 5





- This page shows **the ensemble flow distribution for each region** over the next 1- and 3-month periods.
- The 1km flow forecasts are averaged within each region, then categorised according to the historical flows.
- The table indicates the percentage of ensemble members in each flow category.

**SUMMARY:** Over the next month, flows in England, Wales and southern Scotland are likely to be in the *normal range to notably high*. Elsewhere flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.

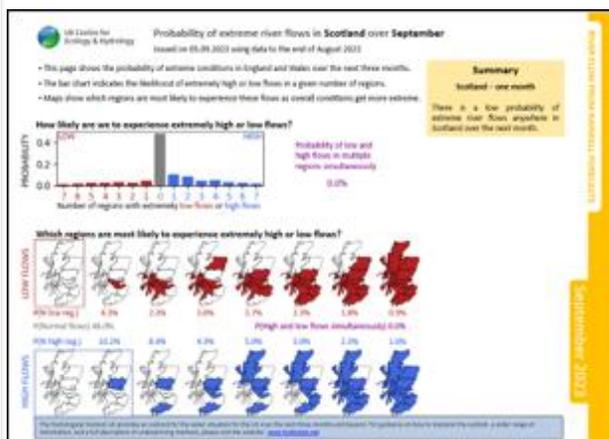
Over the next three months, flows in most areas are likely to be in the *normal range to notably high*. In western Scotland, flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.

1-month ahead	A	NW	N	ST	SW	S	T	WEL	W	Y	CR	FR	HR	NER	SR	TR	TWR
Exceptionally high flow	6	11	10	21	10	6	6	10	22	7	6	16	3	9	10	9	15
Notably high	14	6	10	26	12	17	22	8	23	16	10	12	8	5	19	13	15
Above normal	25	19	18	11	23	17	12	22	25	12	22	18	16	12	16	13	16
Normal range	53	50	37	38	44	56	57	47	28	49	55	41	58	52	45	51	41
Below normal	2	8	16	3	8	3	3	9	1	13	5	11	12	15	6	12	11
Notably low	0	4	8	0	3	1	0	4	0	3	2	2	4	5	3	1	2
Exceptionally low flow	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

3-month ahead	A	NW	N	ST	SW	S	T	WEL	W	Y	CR	FR	HR	NER	SR	TR	TWR
Exceptionally high flow	11	10	24	21	11	3	10	12	13	18	6	10	5	13	12	4	15
Notably high	15	2	2	15	7	15	14	6	22	11	5	8	5	5	6	11	17
Above normal	26	25	12	17	25	28	13	21	17	9	20	17	7	14	22	18	14
Normal range	39	37	28	41	37	48	55	43	46	38	58	57	68	42	36	52	33
Below normal	7	15	8	3	16	6	8	9	2	9	7	3	12	8	18	11	14
Notably low	2	9	11	2	3	0	0	6	0	8	6	5	3	10	3	2	7
Exceptionally low flow	0	2	14	0	2	0	0	3	0	7	0	0	1	8	2	2	0

- The data on these (yellow-bordered) pages are based on approximately 400 rainfall scenarios provided by the Met Office, which are used as inputs to a water balance hydrological model.
- River flow forecasts for every 1km grid cell are ranked according to the historical flow estimates and aggregated within each region.
- A full description of this method and these summary products is given in the technical documentation available via the Hydrological Outlook website.

## Probability of extreme river flows



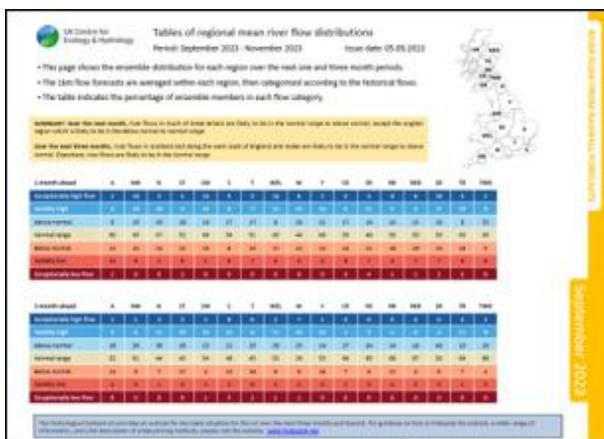
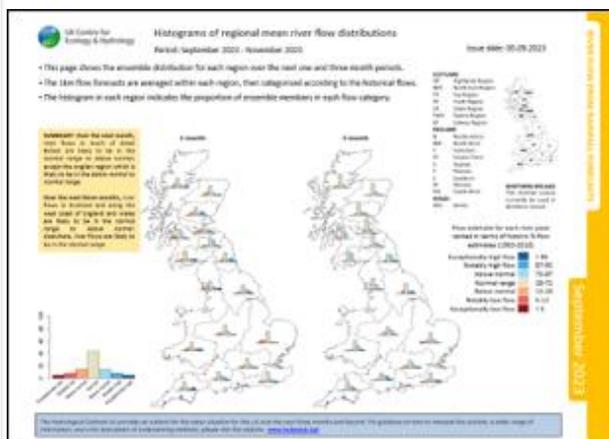
Extreme river flows are defined as those which rank in the lowest or highest 13% of historical flow estimates (1963 - 2016). This definition encompasses the 'Notably' and 'Exceptionally' high/low flow bands used elsewhere in the Outlook.

The bar chart shows the probability of a given number of regions experiencing extremely high/low flows, where scenarios showing both extremely high and extremely low flows in different regions simultaneously excluded. These probabilities are also shown beneath the maps.

Shaded regions on each map are those most likely to experience extreme flows from the set of scenarios with at least a given number of regions experiencing such flows. If shown, grey maps indicate scenarios not observed in the ensemble.

The box drawn around some maps spans the central 50% probability interval, excluding scenarios where extremely high/low flows are observed simultaneously. If these excluded cases constitute a significant probability, details are given in the yellow box summary.

## Regional mean river flow distributions



The maps illustrate the ensemble distribution of regional mean river flows. The historical distribution is shown at bottom-left, and allows deviations from the normal distribution to be determined by comparing the forecast distribution to the historical distribution. A summary is given in the yellow box.

The table gives access to the data shown in the histograms. The numbers in the tables are the percentage of ensemble forecasts falling in each of the flow categories. As before results are averaged by region then ranked in terms of 54 years of historical regional flow estimates (1963 – 2016).

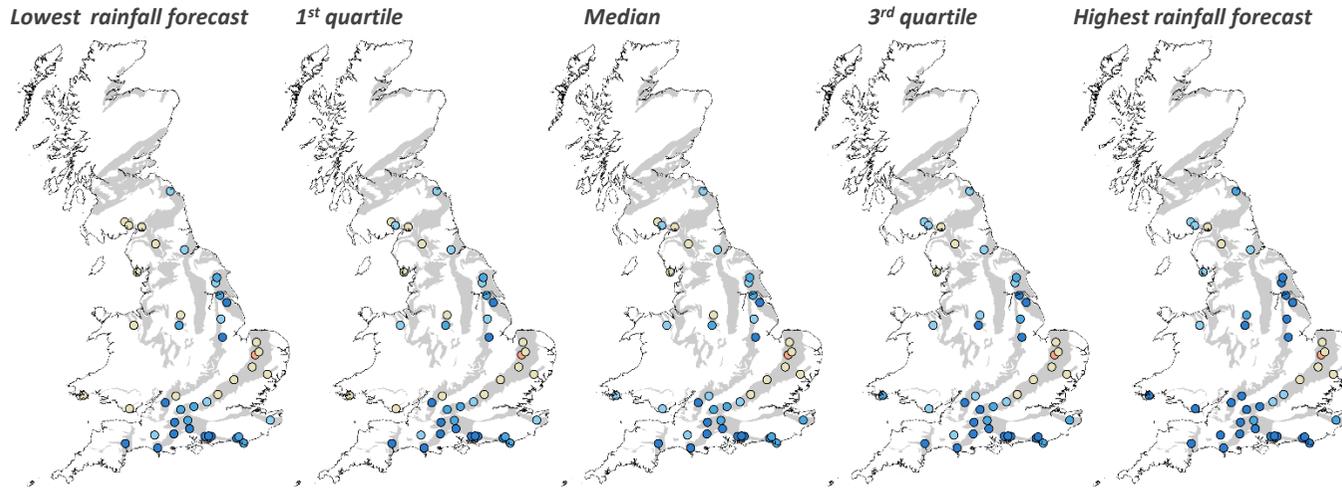
Period: March 2026 – May 2026

Issued on 05.03.2026 using data to the end of February

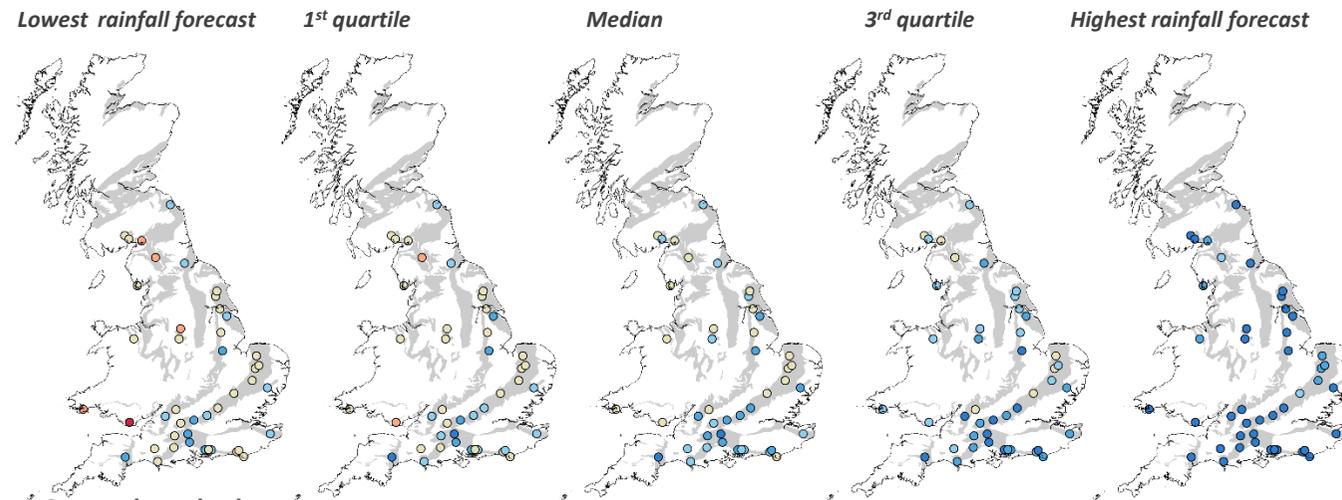
Under median rainfall conditions, groundwater levels in the southern Chalk, Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Chalk and Jurassic limestones are expected to be within the above normal to exceptionally high range over the coming month. Levels across the rest of the country are more mixed, with mostly normal levels forecast in the Chalk of East Anglia, and normal to above normal levels anticipated across Wales and northern England. Over the next three months, levels in the southern Chalk are expected to decrease slightly but remain in the above normal to exceptionally high range. In the Jurassic limestones and Yorkshire and Lincolnshire Chalk, levels are forecast to decrease to within normal to notably high conditions. Across the rest of the country, groundwater levels are expected to decrease slightly but remain within the normal to above normal range.

These forecasts are produced by running five members of the Met Office ensemble climate forecast through groundwater models of observation borehole hydrographs at 42 sites across the country. The sites are distributed across the principal aquifers.

Based on the distribution of observed historical groundwater levels in a given month, seven categories have been derived for each site: very low, low, below normal, normal, above normal, high, and very high. The forecast groundwater level is assigned to one of these seven categories depending on where it falls within the distribution of the historically observed values.

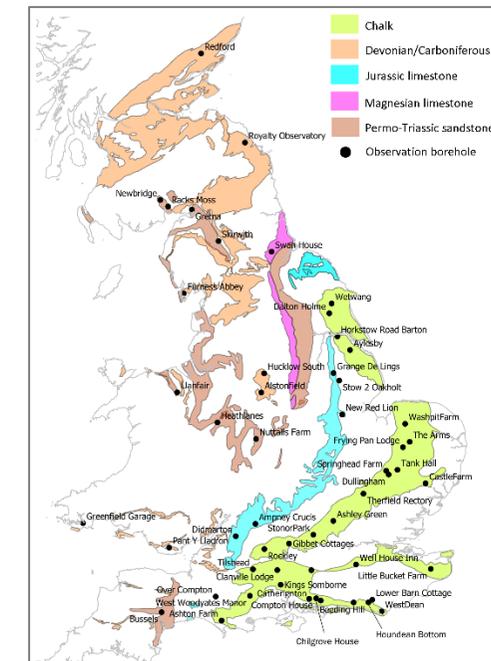


1-month outlook



3-month outlook

Key	Percentile range of historic observed values for relevant month
Exceptionally high levels	> 95
Notably high levels	87-95
Above normal	72-87
Normal	28-72
Below normal	12-28
Notably low levels	5-13
Exceptionally low levels	< 5

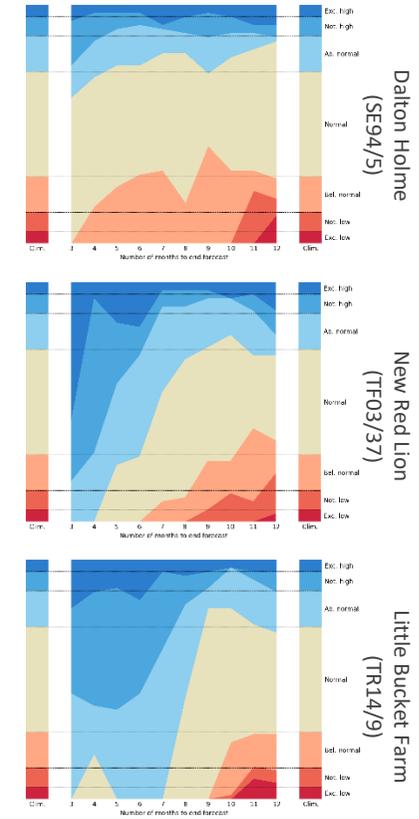
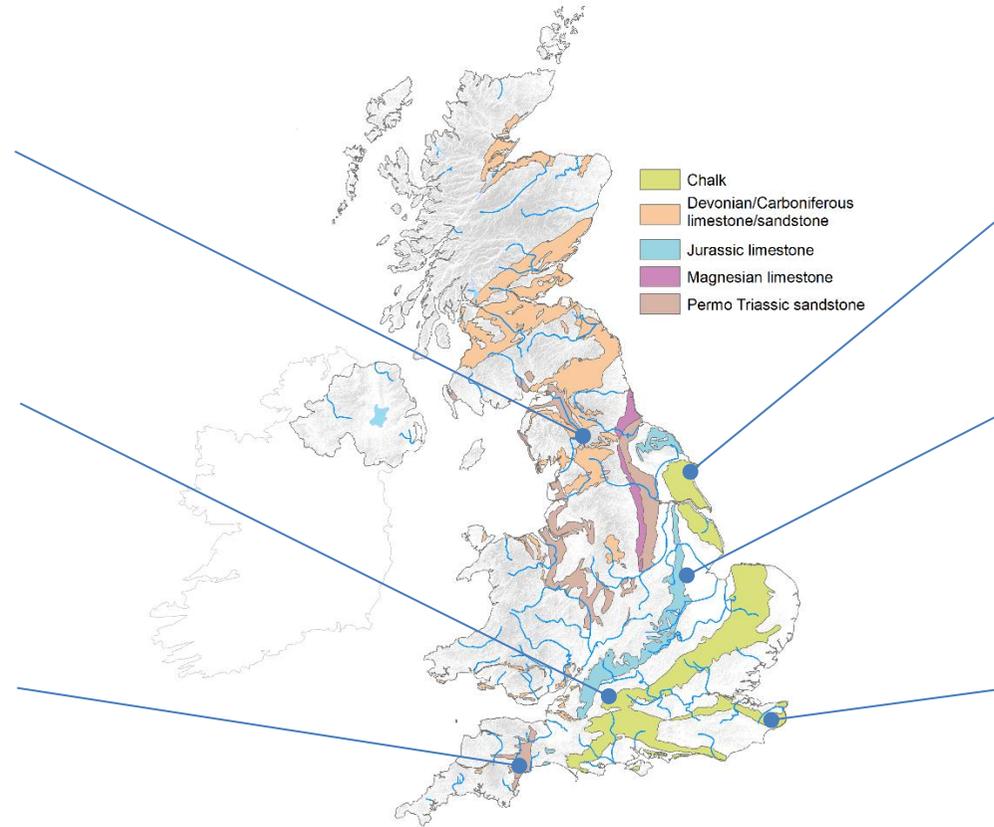
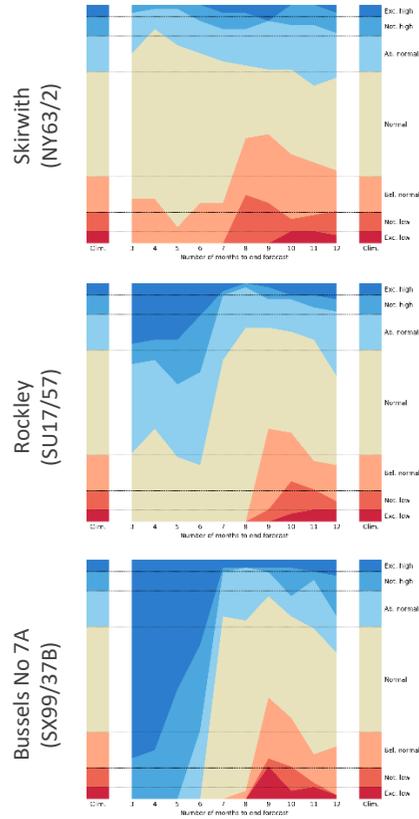


# Outlook based on modelled groundwater from historical climate

Period: March 2026 – February 2027

Issued on 05.03.2026 using data to the end of February

In the North of England groundwater levels in the Permo-Triassic sandstone at Skirwith, and Chalk at Dalton Holme, are expected to remain broadly within normal ranges over the next twelve months. In the Chalk at Rockley, above normal levels are projected to decline over the next six to seven months towards more normal conditions. In the Permo-Triassic Sandstone at Bussels No 7A exceptionally wet conditions are forecast to persist for the next five to six months before returning towards more normal conditions. In the Chalk at Little Bucket Farm, and the Jurassic Limestone at New Red Lion, above normal to notably high levels are expected to trend towards normal over the next seven to eight months.



This outlook is based on monthly ensembles of historical sequences of observed climate (rainfall and potential evapotranspiration) that form input to hydrological models. The outputs are probabilistic simulations of the average groundwater level over the forecast horizon (3 to 12 months ahead), at each location.

that fall within each the seven categories: exceptionally low, notably low, below normal, normal, above normal, notably high and exceptionally high. The monthly variations can be compared to the long-term average distribution of levels, which are shown as columns on the left and right of each graph.

the atmosphere and ocean. It is hence possible that some of the historical sequences used might be inconsistent with current large-scale atmospheric conditions and would therefore be unlikely to occur in the next few months.

The graphs show variation over time of the number of simulated groundwater levels in each monthly ensemble,

This outlook is based entirely on historical sequences and therefore does not contain any knowledge of the state of