

SUMMARY Low river flows have persisted in England following a dry September. The rainfall forecast for October is balanced, meaning that flows are likely to remain below normal in most areas. Above normal flows are expected in parts of western Scotland, Northern Ireland and the northwest of England. Over the next three months, the forecast is for above normal rainfall, suggesting that river flows in many parts are likely to recover to their normal to above normal ranges. Low flows are likely to persist in the groundwater-fed catchments in the southeast of England as groundwater levels slowly rise but remain low.

Rainfall:

September's rainfall was below average in many areas, with almost all of England experiencing less than 70% of their average rainfall, and parts of eastern England receiving less than 30%. Western Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of South-West Wales received above average rainfall. The forecast (issued by the Met Office on 28.09.2026) indicates October is likely to be warm, but the likelihoods of wet or dry conditions are evenly balanced, with near-normal conditions most probable. The three-month forecast is for a mild but wet October-December, with twice the normal likelihood of a wet start to winter.

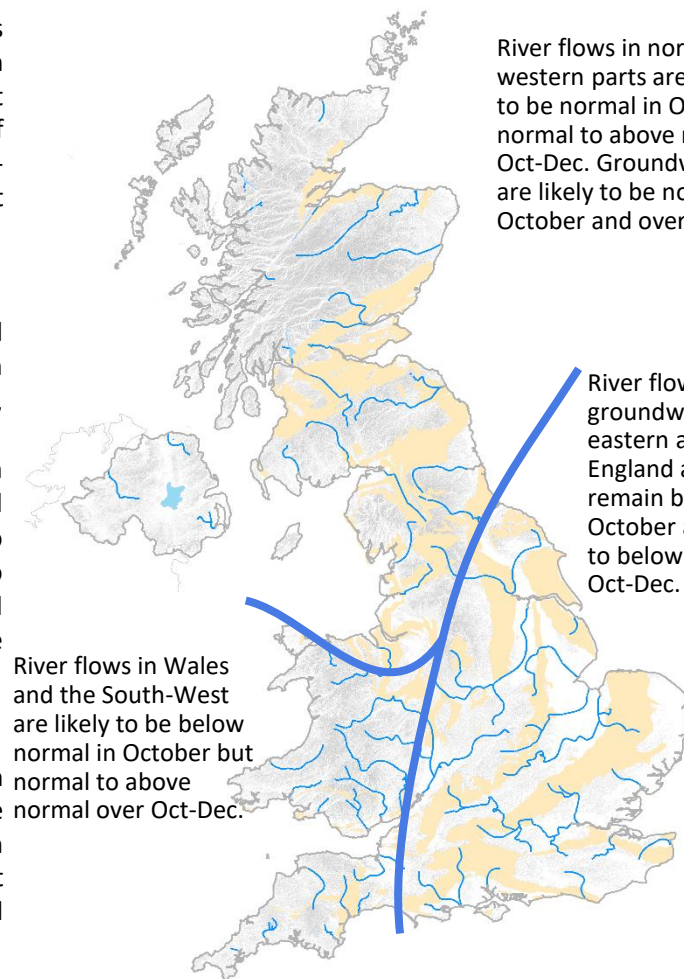
River flows:

Low river flows persisted in much of England and Wales throughout September, with the low rainfall continuing the pattern of previous months. Exceptionally low flows continued in much of southern England, with the Tone recording a new September low. However, flows in north-west England, Northern Ireland and southern Scotland were normal, and those in western Scotland above normal. The outlook for October is that flows are likely to remain below normal across Wales and southern and eastern England but elsewhere flows are likely to be in their normal range. Over the period October-December the forecast for higher rainfall suggests that more responsive areas are likely to see increasing flows. Rivers in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, and southwest England are likely to be in the normal to above normal range. However, in the slower-responding groundwater-fed catchments of southeastern England flows are likely to remain below normal for the next three months.

Groundwater:

Groundwater levels at the end of September remain low across many sites in England, especially in south Wales and southern England. Levels at sites in southern Scotland and north-west England are mostly normal. The outlook indicates that groundwater levels are likely to remain below normal in October, with some sites in southern and eastern areas notably or exceptionally low. Over the next three months, levels at most sites are expected to recover to their normal range, but below normal levels are likely to persist in several of the 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



River flows in northern and western parts are expected to be normal in October and normal to above normal in Oct-Dec. Groundwater levels are likely to be normal in October and over Oct-Dec.

River flows and groundwater levels in eastern and southern England are likely to remain below normal in October and be normal to below normal over Oct-Dec.

River flows in Wales and the South-West are likely to be below normal in October but normal to above normal over Oct-Dec.

Shaded areas show principal aquifers

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 AquMod 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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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, 08 October 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/>

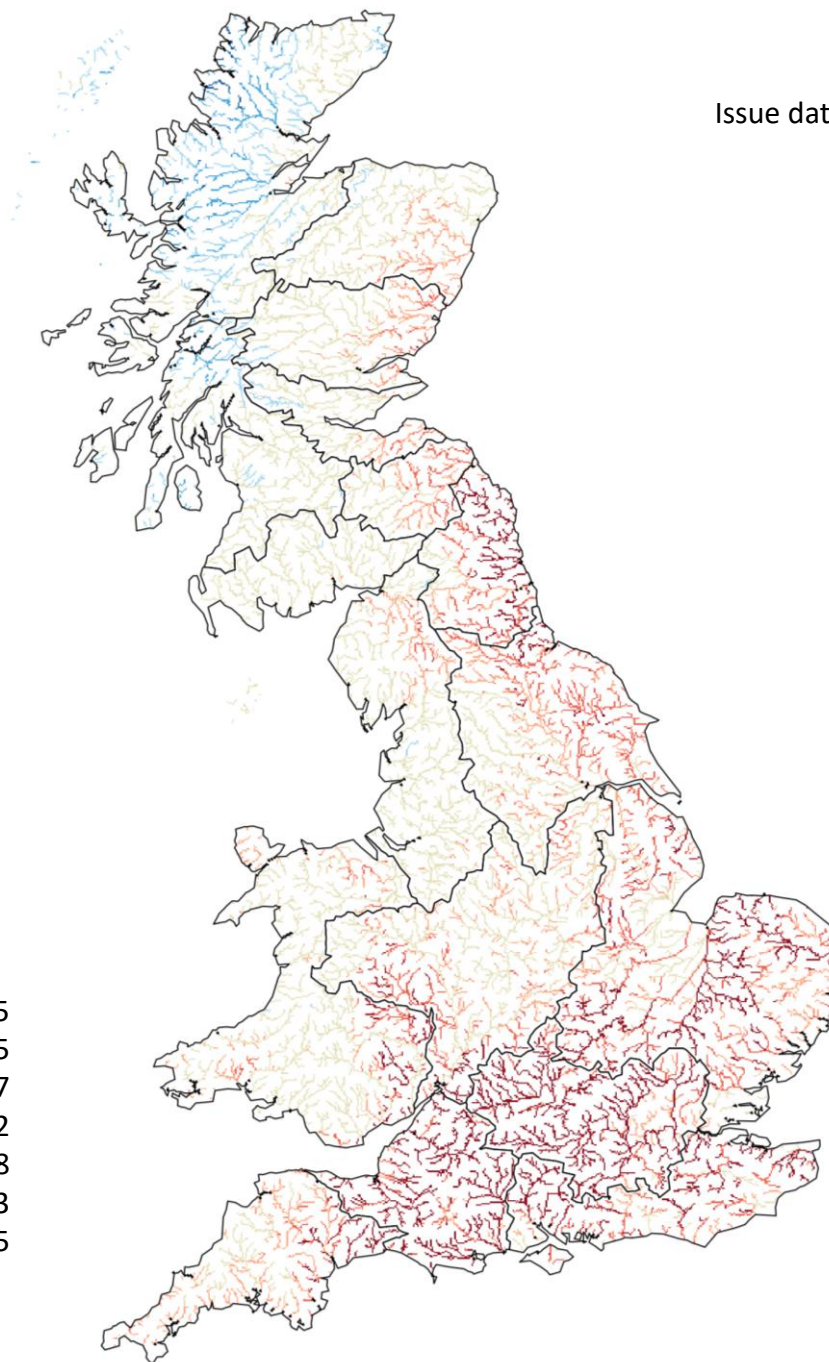
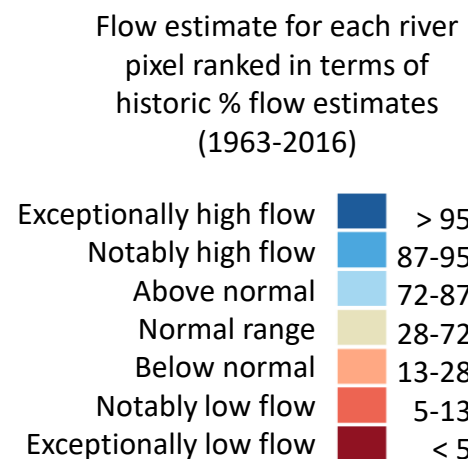
UK Water Resources Portal: monitor the UK hydrological situation in near real-time including rainfall, river flow, groundwater and soil moisture from COSMOS-UK: <https://eip.ceh.ac.uk/hydrology/water-resources/>

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).

Issue date: 05.10.2026

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.

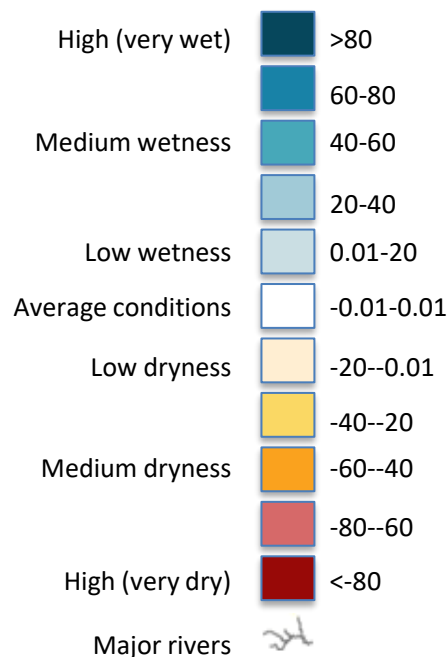


These maps are based on Grid-to-Grid (G2G) hydrological model simulated subsurface water storage (water in the soil and groundwater), expressed as an anomaly from the historical monthly mean. To highlight areas that are particularly wet or dry, the storage anomaly is presented relative to historical 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.

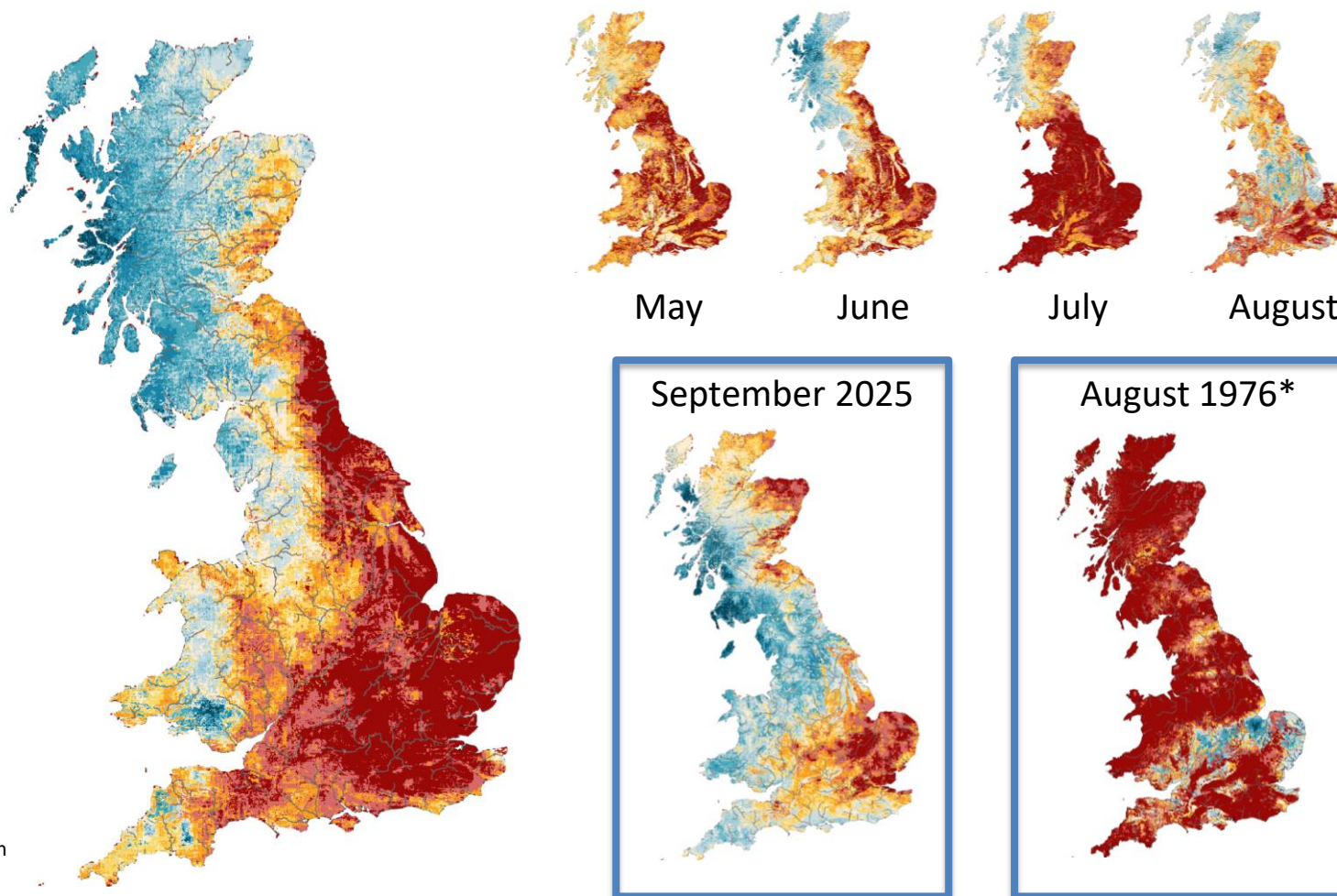
SUMMARY: Subsurface water stores for the south and east of England have depleted further and are very dry for this time of year. In parts of western England and Wales subsurface water stores have recovered to be only marginally lower (drier) than usual, with stores in much of Scotland higher (wetter) than usual.

Relative wetness

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



Labels refer to estimated storage on final day of named month



*Example month displaying extreme negative wetness

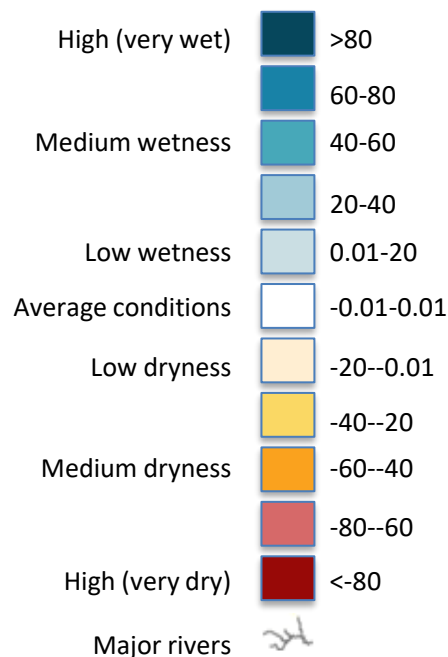
October 2026

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.

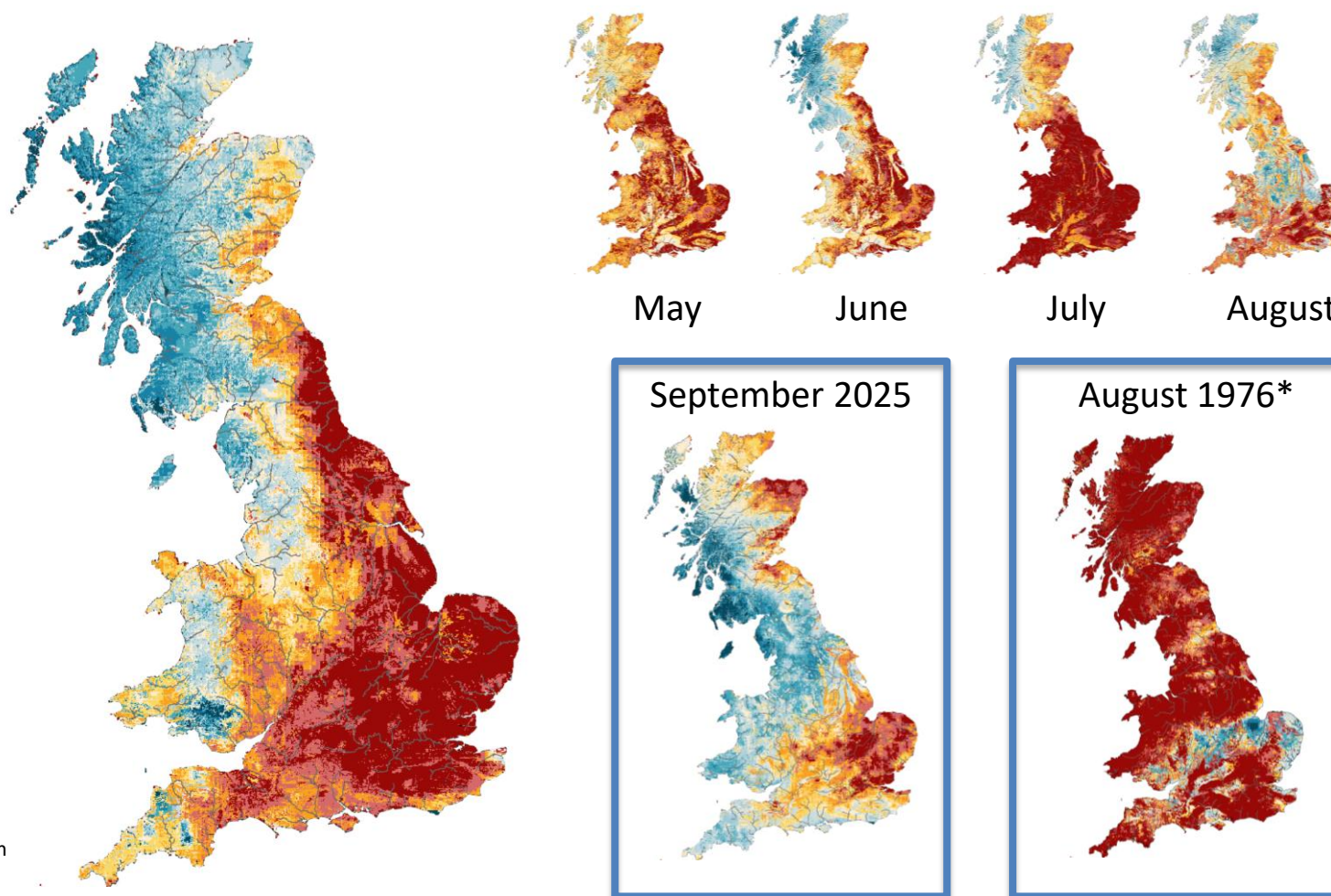
SUMMARY: Soil moisture stores for the south and east of England have depleted further and are very dry for this time of year. In parts of western England and Wales subsurface water stores have recovered to be only marginally lower (drier) than usual, with stores in much of Scotland higher (wetter) than usual.

Relative wetness

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



Labels refer to estimated storage on final day of named month



*Example month displaying extreme negative wetness

October 2026

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

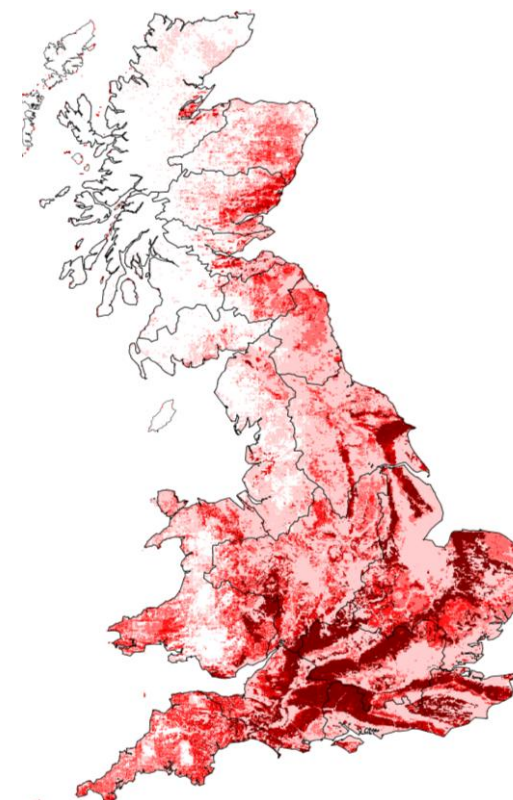
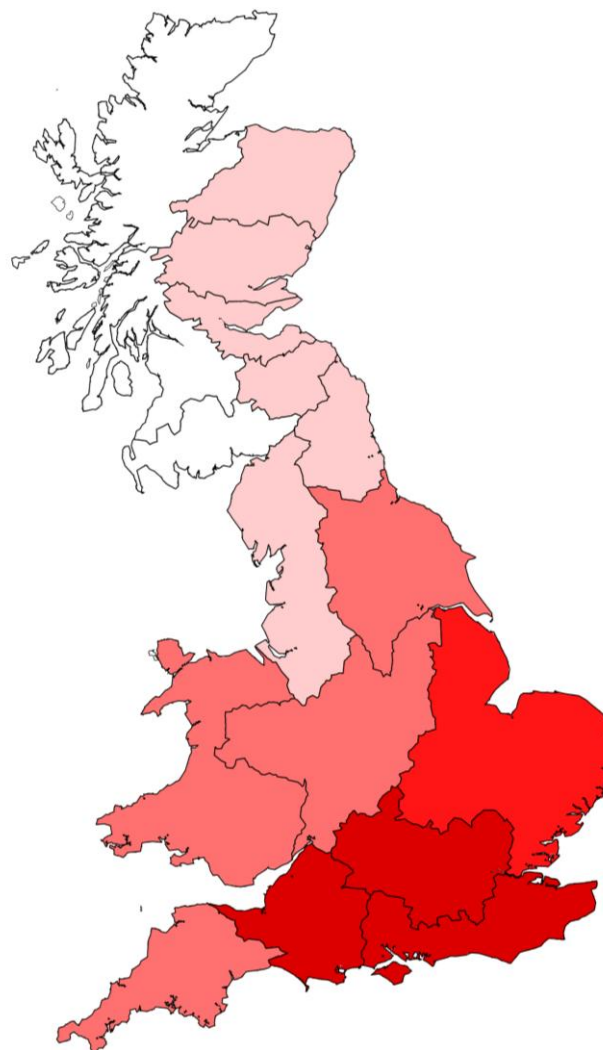
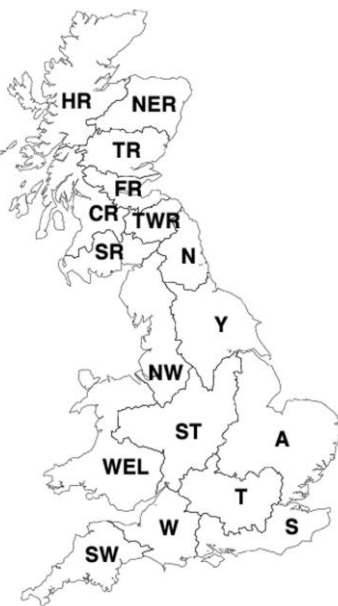
0	HR	Highlands Region
9	NER	North East Region
14	TR	Tay Region
7	FR	Forth Region
0	CR	Clyde Region
22	TWR	Tweed Region
0	SR	Solway Region

ENGLAND

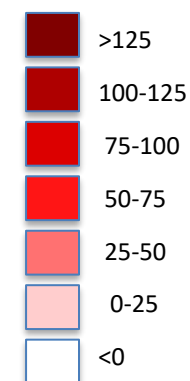
22	N	Northumbria
5	NW	North West
35	Y	Yorkshire
40	ST	Severn Trent
62	A	Anglian
94	T	Thames
84	W	Wessex
80	S	Southern
38	SW	South West

WALES

25	WEL	Welsh
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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: Subsurface water stores are below normal across much of the country, particularly in the Southeast.

In some areas, especially the Southeast of England, these would require unusually high rainfall (>5-year return period) to recover to their average levels over the next six months.

SCOTLAND

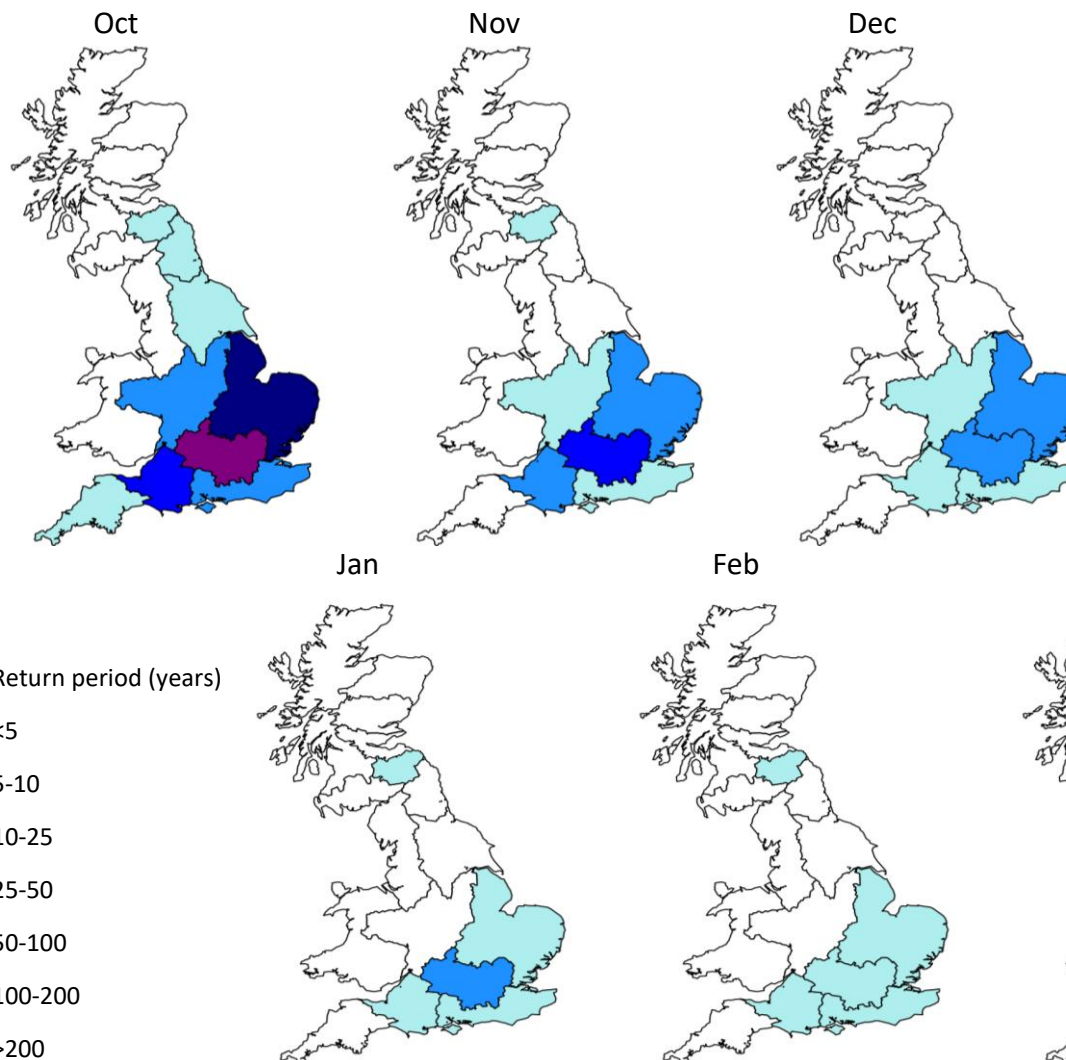
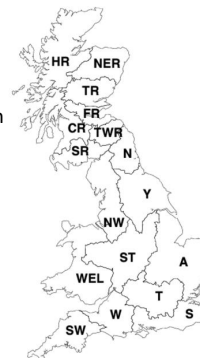
HR Highlands Region
NER North East Region
TR Tay Region
FR Forth Region
CR Clyde Region
TWR Tweed Region
SR Solway Region

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



Rainfall amount (Probability)

Low (Likely) >20%

<20%

<10%

< 4%

High (Less likely) < 2%

< 1%

Extreme (Unlikely) <0.5%

Return period (years)

<5

5-10

10-25

25-50

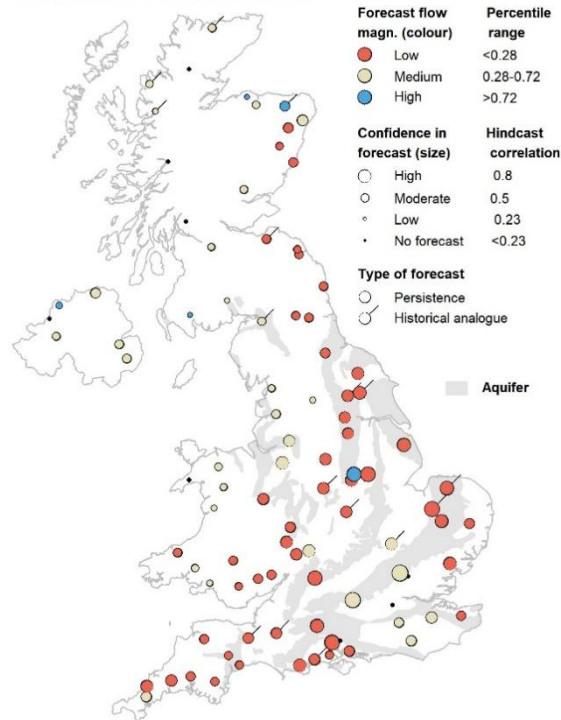
50-100

100-200

>200

SUMMARY: The outlook for October indicates that river flows across large parts of Britain are expected to be below normal. However, parts of south-east England, along with western and northern areas of Britain, are forecast to lie within the normal range. The October-December outlook remains broadly similar, although there is a signal for normal to above normal flows in northern Scotland.

River flow outlook for Oct 2026



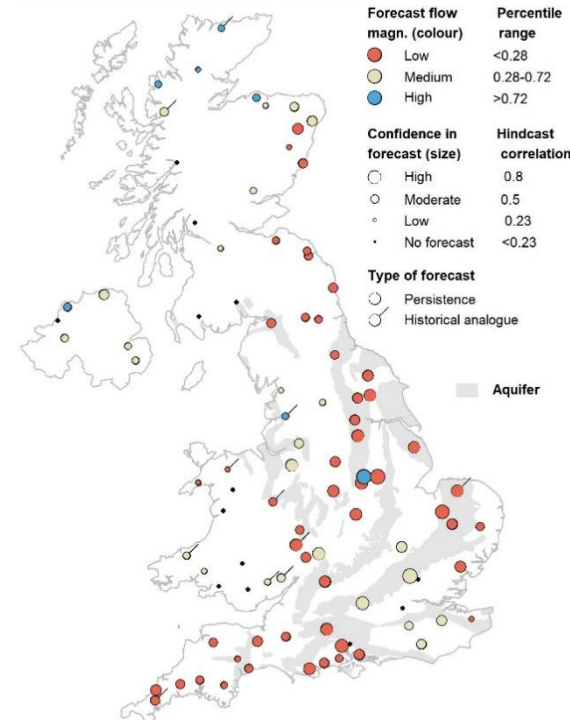
1-month flow outlook

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.

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

River flow outlook for Oct - Dec 2026



3-month flow outlook

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.

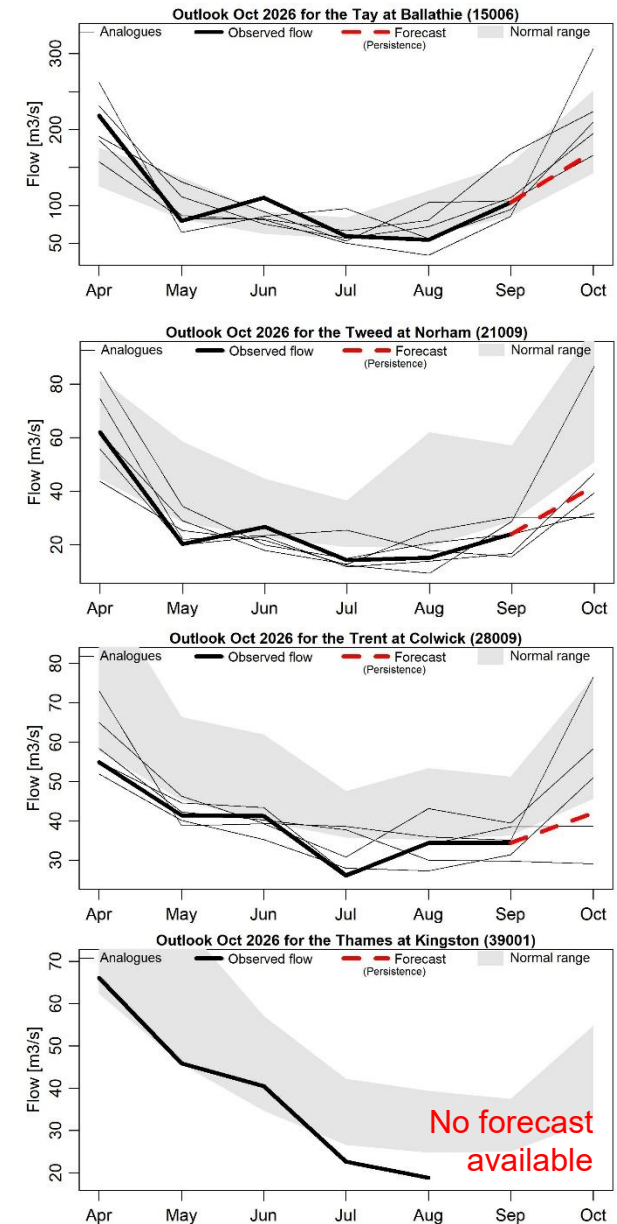
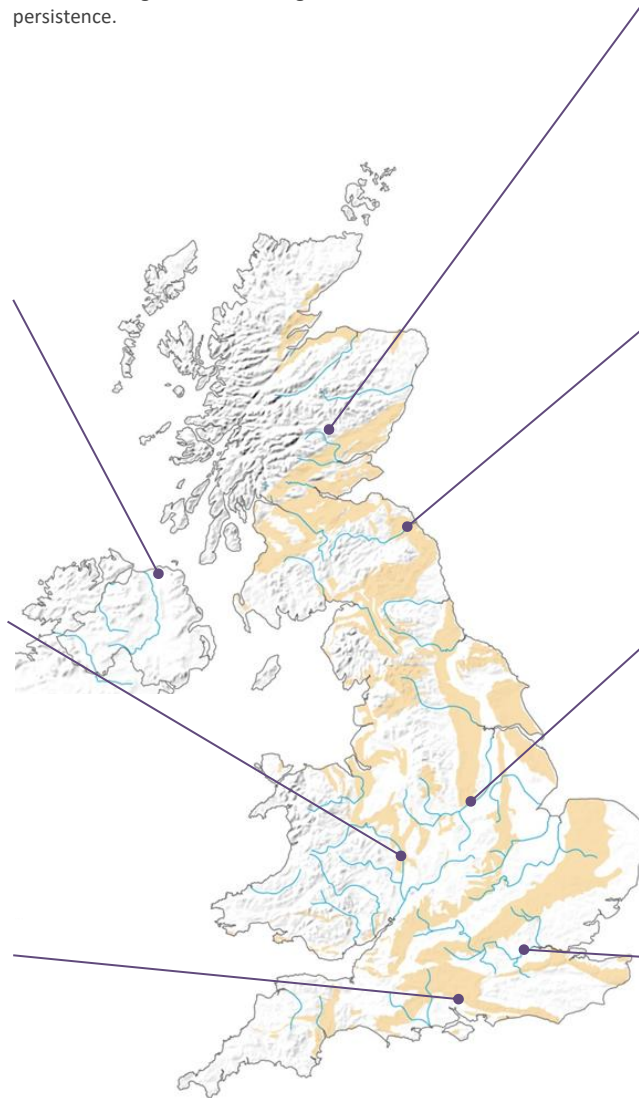
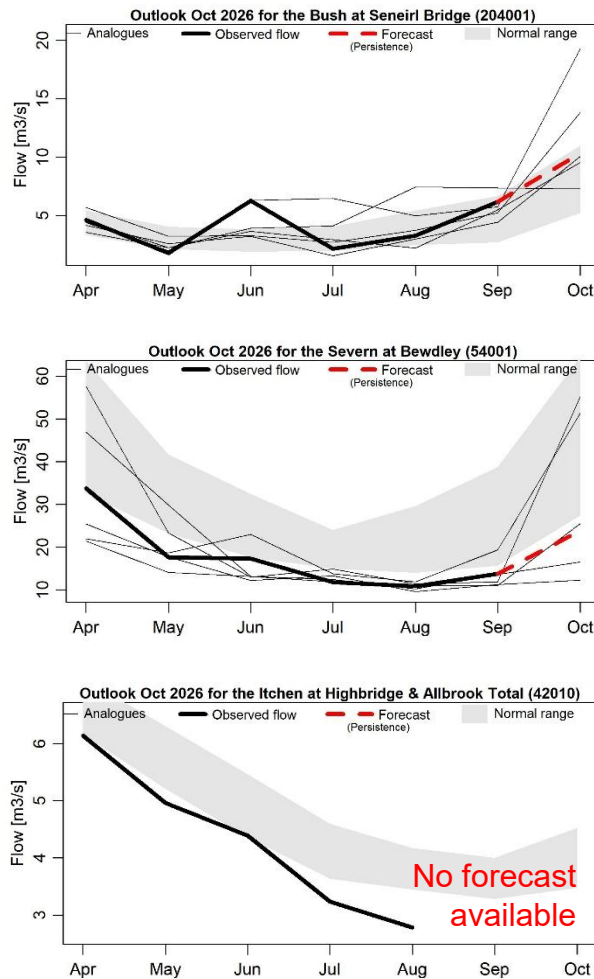
Period: October 2026

Issued on 06.10.2026 using data to the end of September 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.



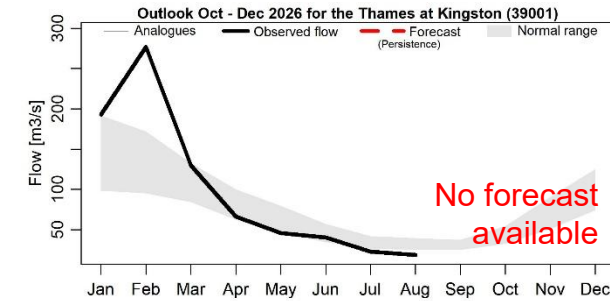
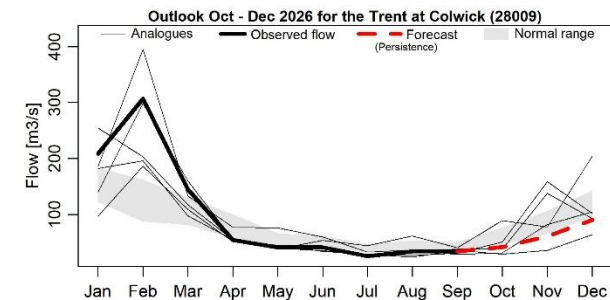
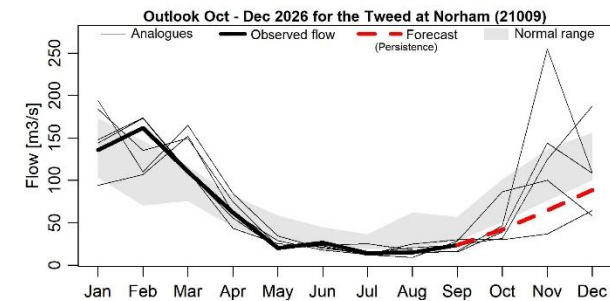
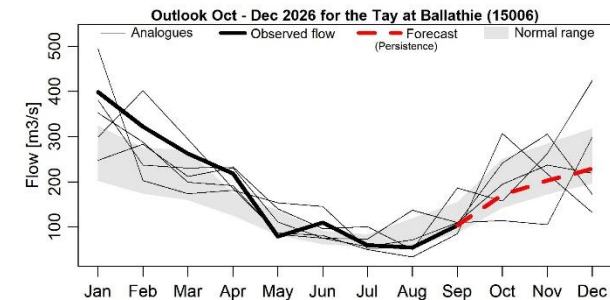
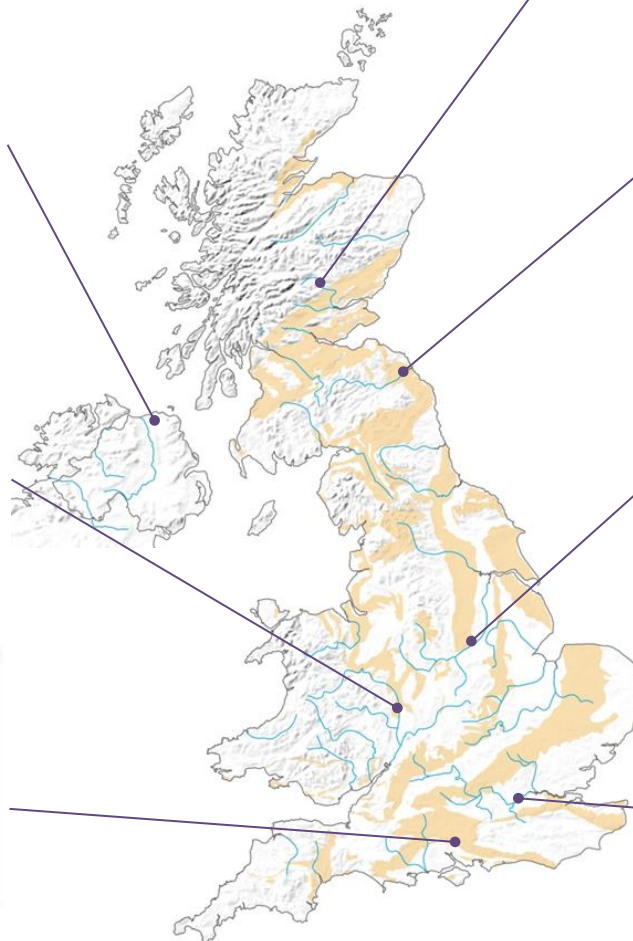
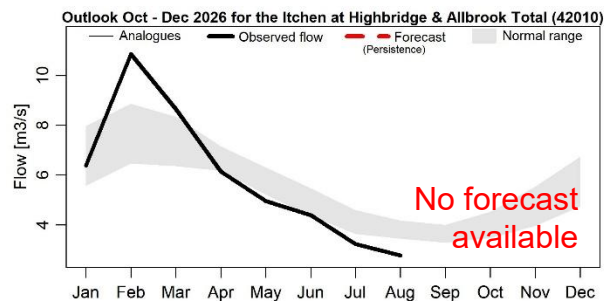
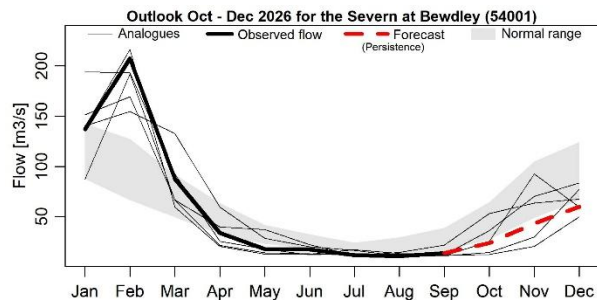
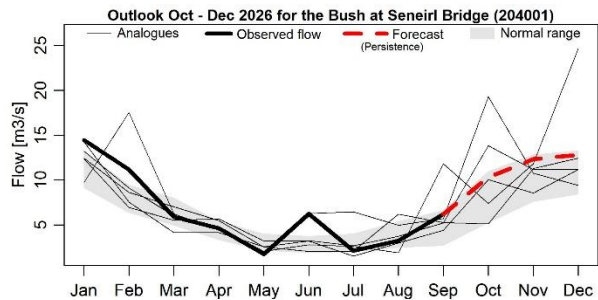
Period: October 2026 – December 2026

Issued on 06.10.2026 using data to the end of September 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.

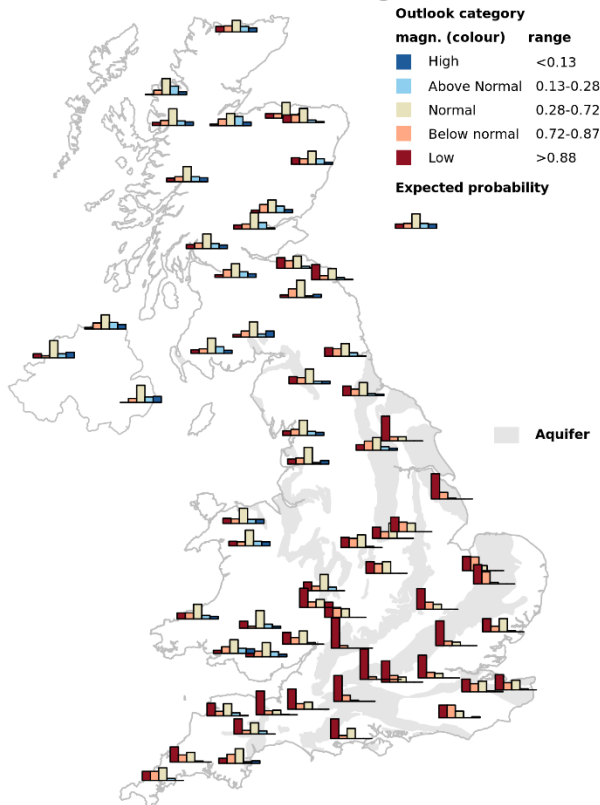


Period: October 2026 – March 2027

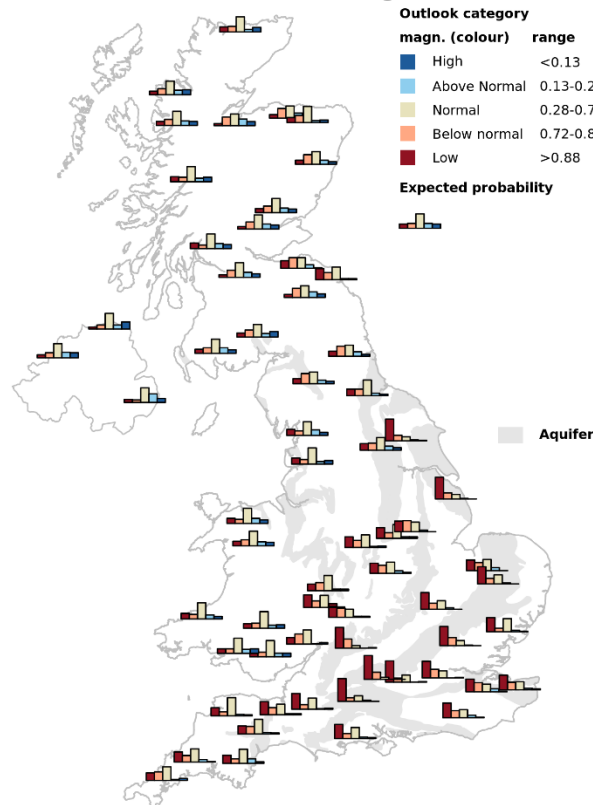
Issued on 02.10.2026 using data to the end of September 2026

The outlook for October indicates that river flows are likely to remain low across southern and central England. Flows are likely to be normal to below normal for south Wales and parts of eastern Britain. Elsewhere, flows are likely to be in the normal range. The October to December outlook indicates that flows are likely to be below normal to low across southern and central England and normal to below normal for parts of northeast England. Elsewhere, flows are likely to be in the normal range.

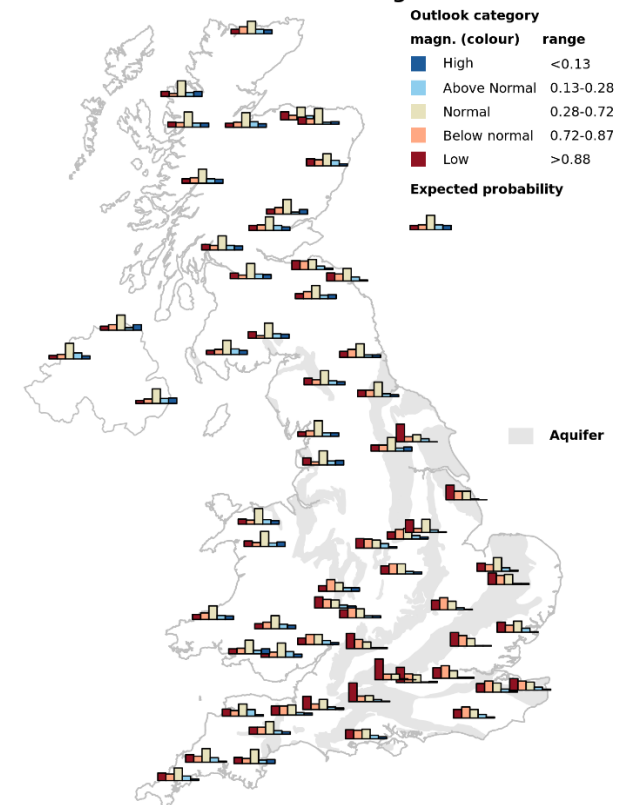
1-month river flow outlook starting Oct 2026



3-month river flow outlook starting Oct 2026



6-month river flow outlook starting Oct 2026

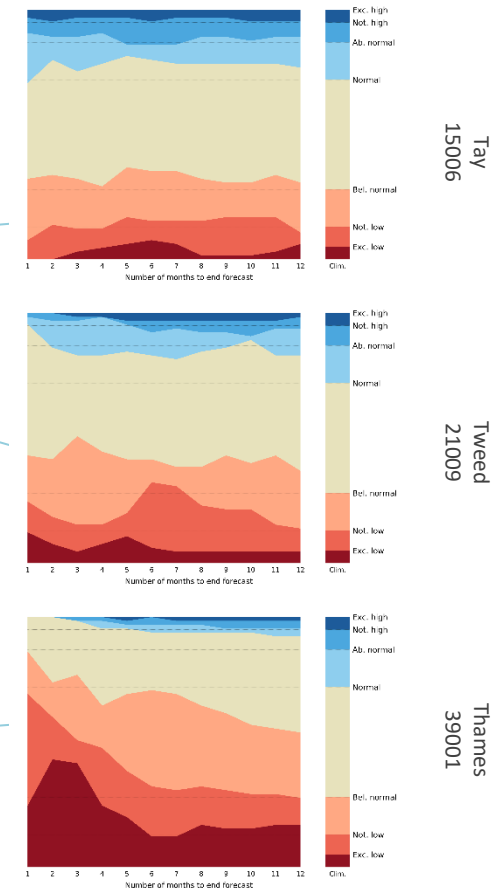
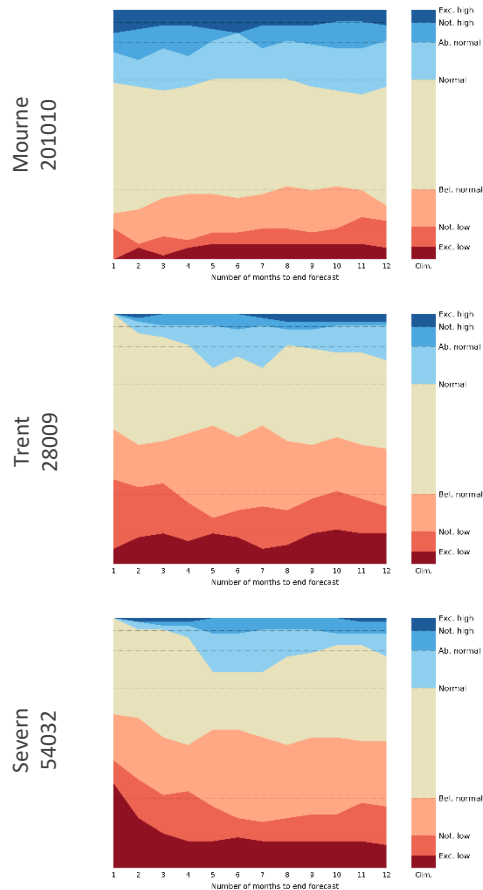


This outlook is based on monthly ensembles of historical sequences of observed climate (rainfall and potential evapotranspiration) that form input to a hydrological model. The outputs are probabilistic simulations of the average river flow over the forecast period (1 to 12 months ahead), at each location. 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).

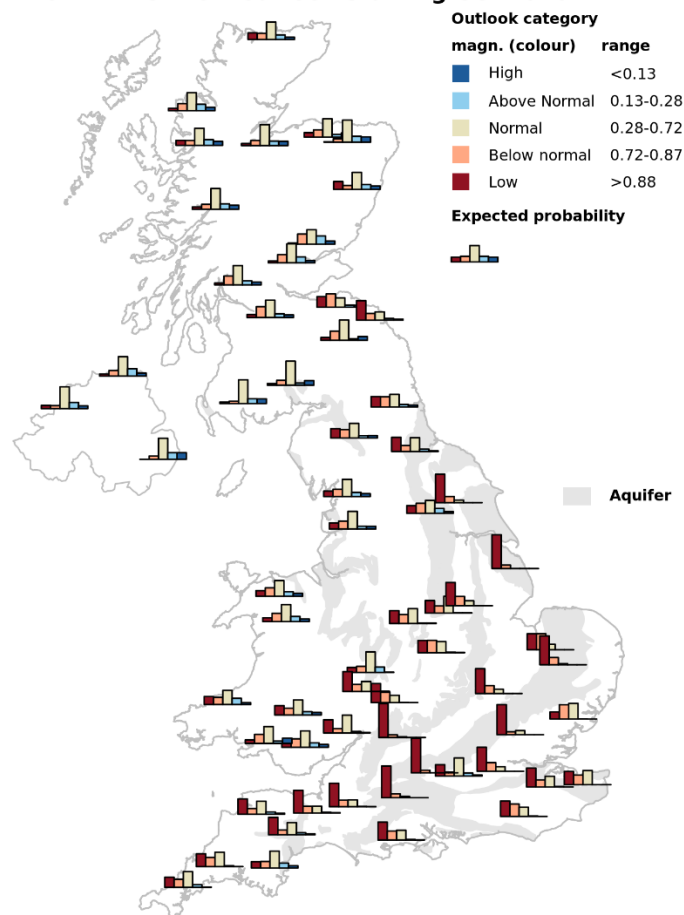
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The outlook for October indicates that river flows are likely to be low across southern England and normal to below normal in parts of northeast England and south Wales. Elsewhere, flows are likely to be in the normal range. The October to December outlook indicates a strong shift towards above average to high flows for eastern Scotland, northern England and Wales. Below normal flows are likely to persist for slow-responding catchments in southeast England.

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 Oct 2026

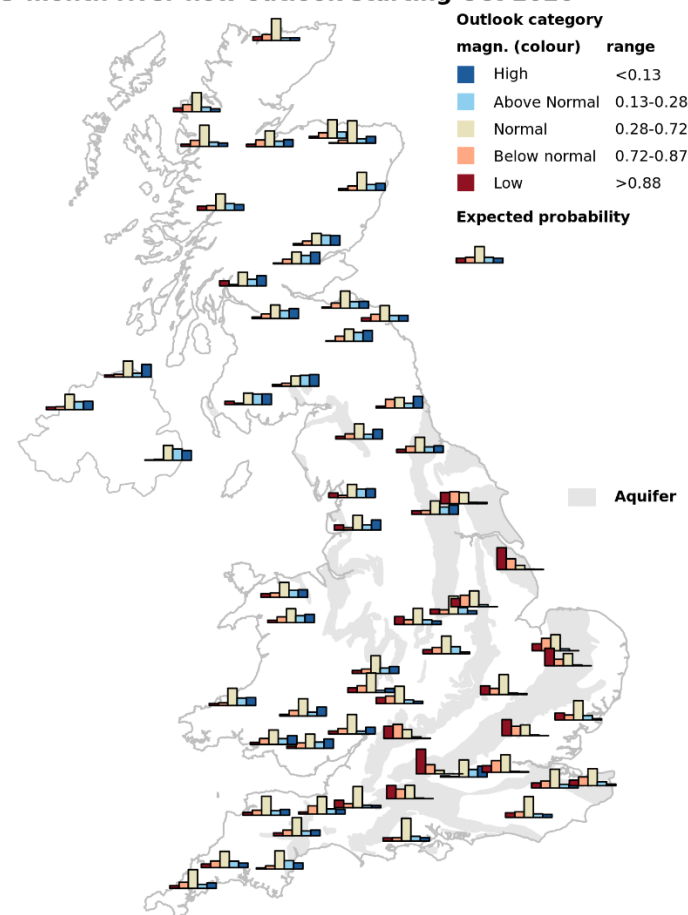


Met Office 1-month likelihood of precipitation impact



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3-month river flow outlook starting Oct 2026



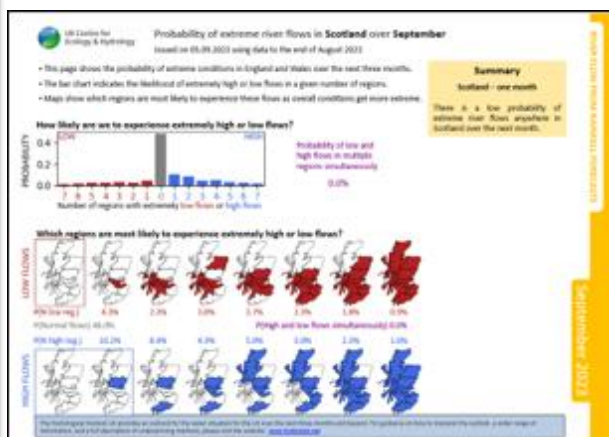
Met Office 3-month likelihood of precipitation impact



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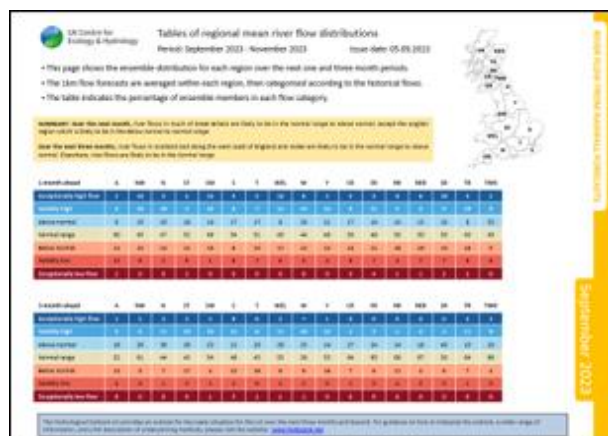
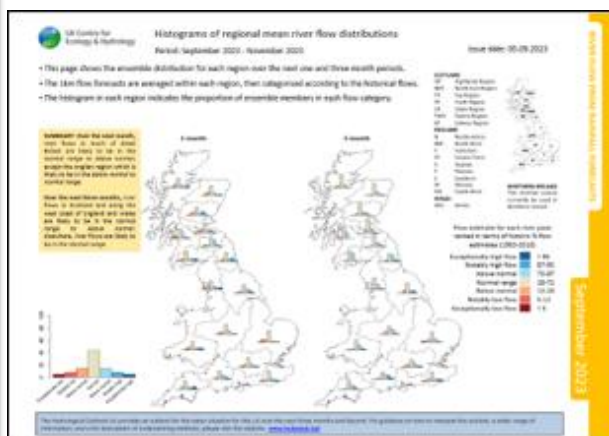
- These (yellow edged) pages summarise river flow forecasts produced by the UKCEH Water Balance Model.
- This model uses an ensemble of rainfall forecasts provided by the Met Office and a hydrological model to forecast river flows for the next one- and three-months ahead.
- A detailed description of these forecast products can be found on the final page, and a full technical description is given in the documentation available via the Hydrological Outlook website.
- Additional forecast products are available on the Hydrological Outlook Portal, via the website.

Probability of extreme river flows



- **Use these pages if you are interested in extreme conditions across multiple regions.**
- These pages summarise the risk of extremely high or low flows being observed across GB.
- The four pages show the risk for **Scotland** and for **England & Wales** over the next one and three months.
- The slides indicate the **probability of widespread extreme conditions** and which regions are most likely to experience extremely high or low flows.

Regional mean river flow distributions



- Use these pages if you are interested in the ensemble distribution in a single region.
- The first page shows the ensemble distribution as a histogram for each region.
- The second page shows the percentage of ensemble members in each band for each region.

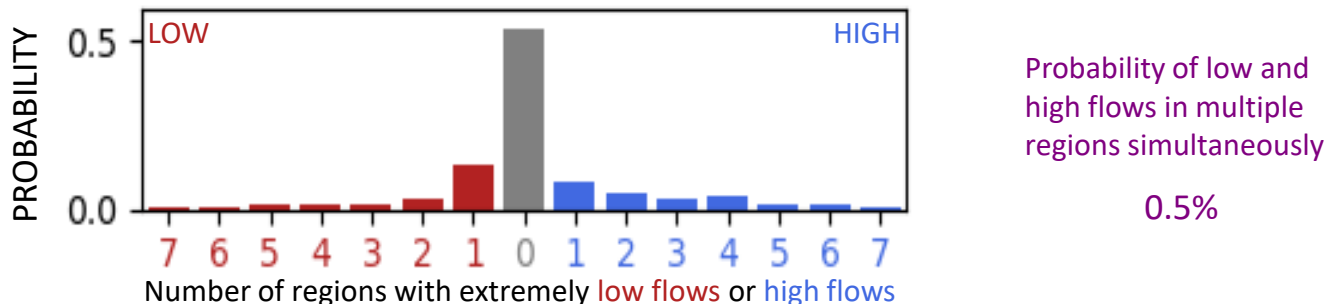
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in Scotland** over the next month. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

Summary

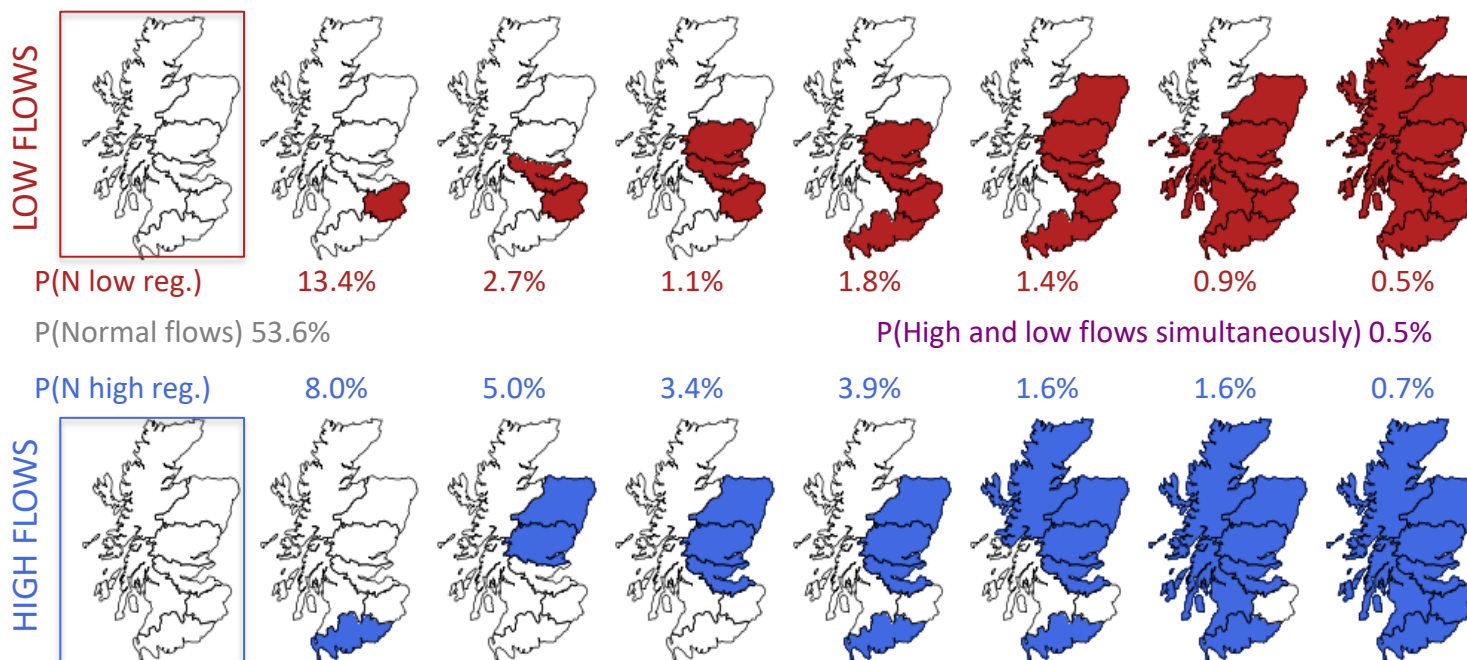
Scotland – one month

Extremely high or low flows are not likely to be widespread in Scotland over the next month.

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



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



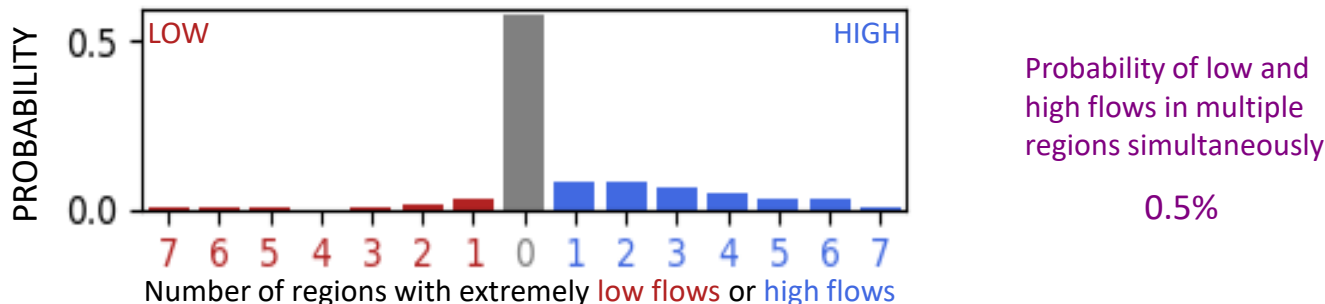
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in Scotland** over the next three months. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

Summary

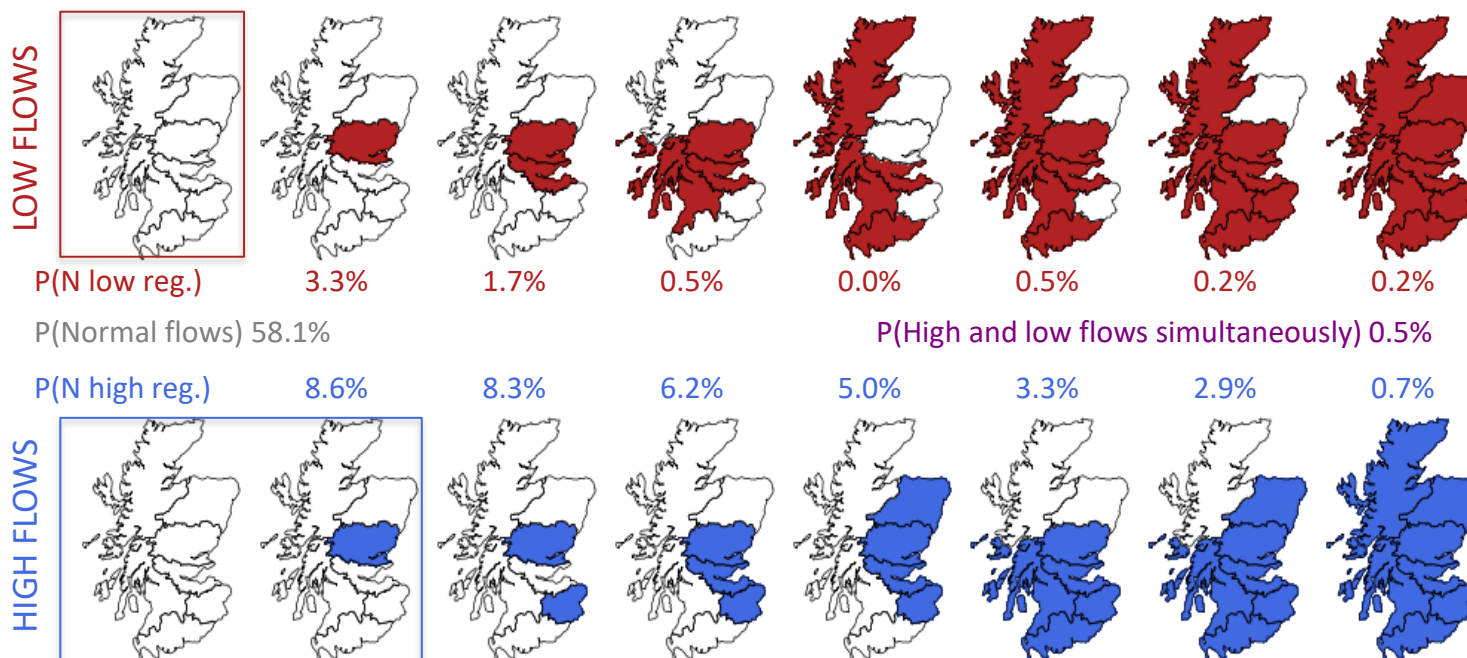
Scotland – three months

Extremely high or low flows are not likely to be widespread in Scotland over the next three months.

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



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



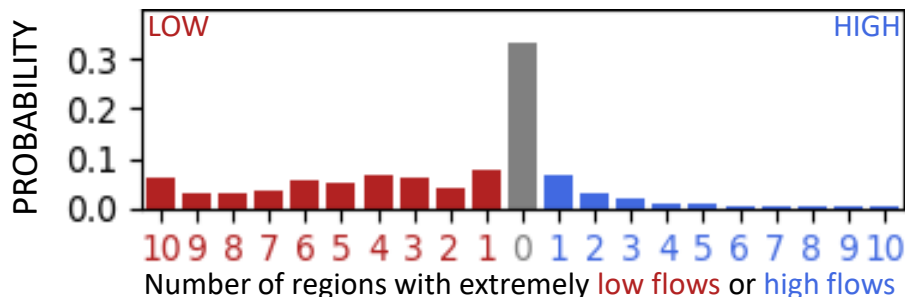
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in England and Wales** over the next month. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more extreme.

Summary

England and Wales – one month

Extremely low flows are likely to persist in southern England over the next month.

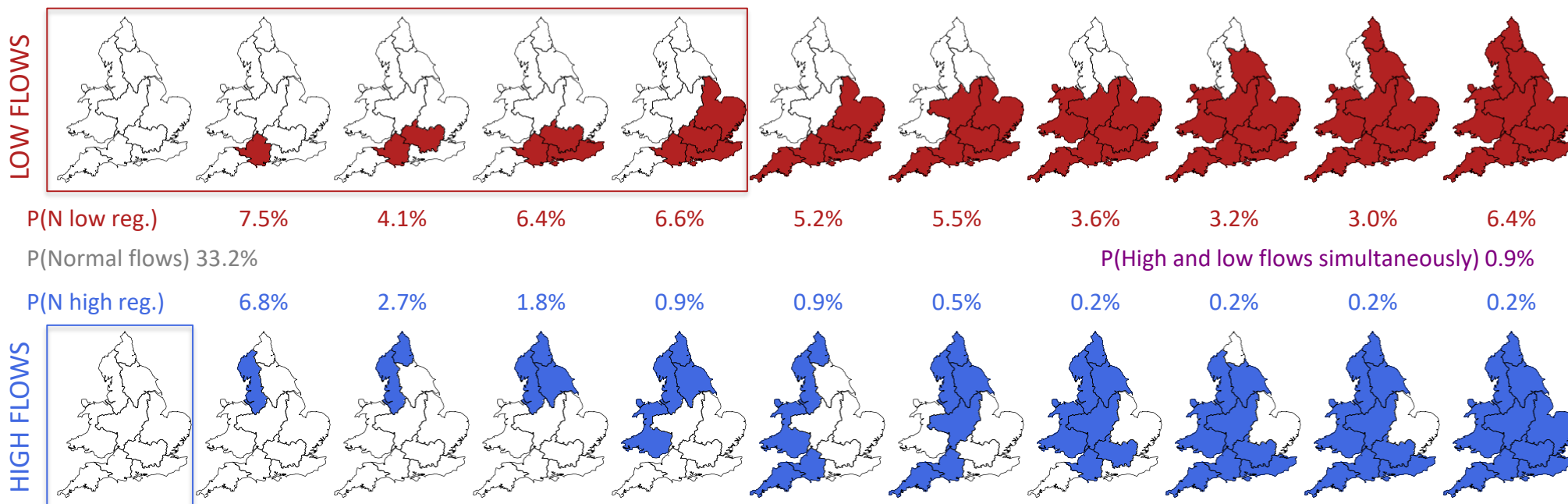
How likely are we to experience extremely **low** or **high** flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

0.9%

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



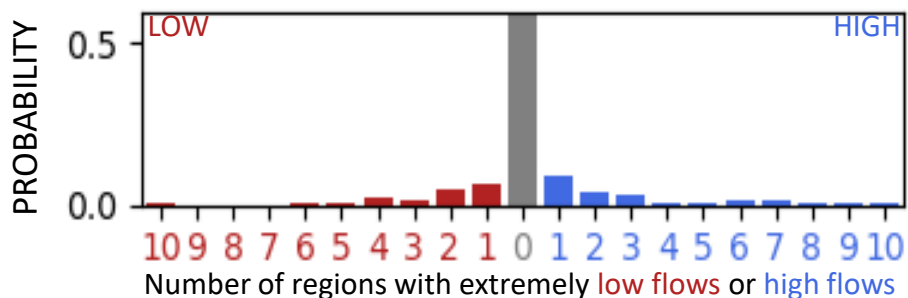
This page shows the **probability of extreme conditions in England and Wales** over the next three months. The bar chart indicates the likelihood of extremely high or low flows in a given number of regions. Maps show which regions are most likely to experience these flows as overall conditions get more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

Summary

England and Wales – three months

River flows in England and Wales are unlikely to remain extreme over the next three months.

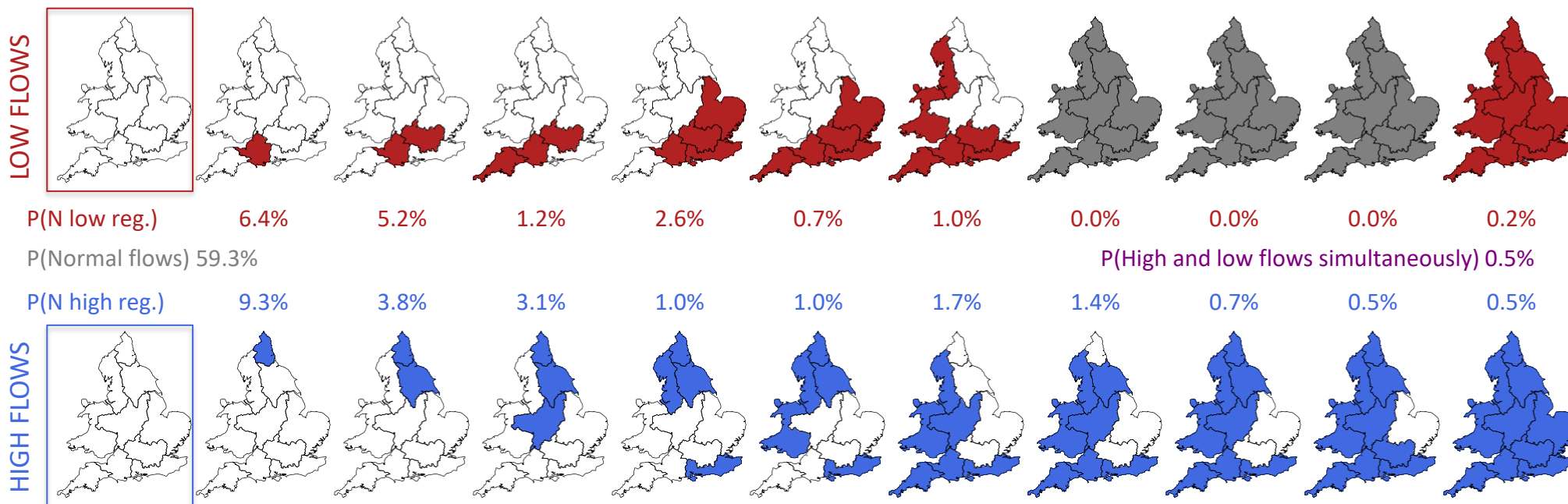
How likely are we to experience extremely **low** or **high** flows?



Probability of low and high flows in multiple regions simultaneously

0.5%

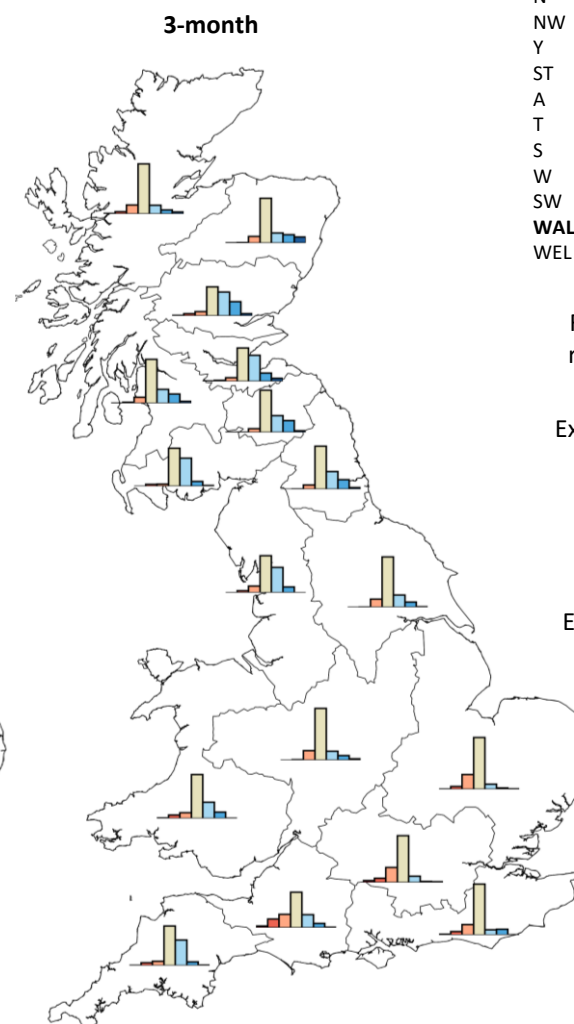
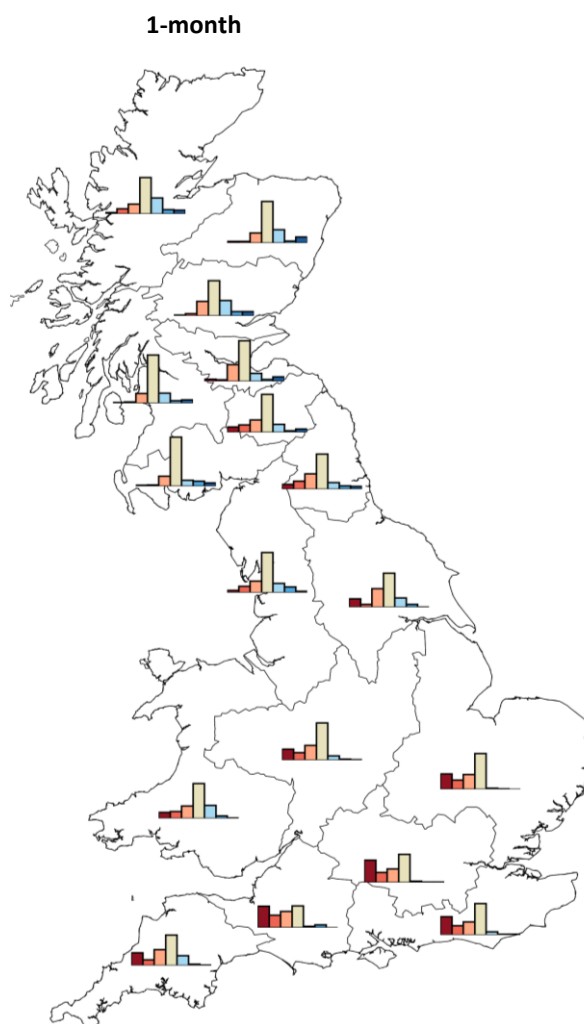
Which regions are most likely to experience extremely **low** or **high** flows?



- 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, river flows in southern England are likely to be in the *normal range* to *exceptionally low*. Elsewhere, river flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.

Over the next three months, river flows in England and Wales are likely to be in the *normal range*. In Scotland and parts of Northern England river flows are likely to be in the *normal range* to *above normal*.



SCOTLAND

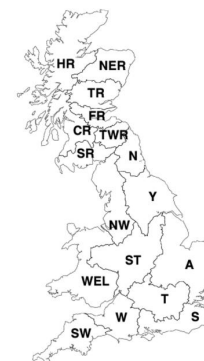
HR Highlands Region
NER North East Region
TR Tay Region
FR Forth Region
CR Clyde Region
TWR Tweed Region
SR Solway Region

ENGLAND

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

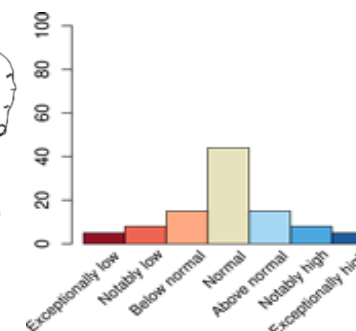
WALES

WEL Welsh



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

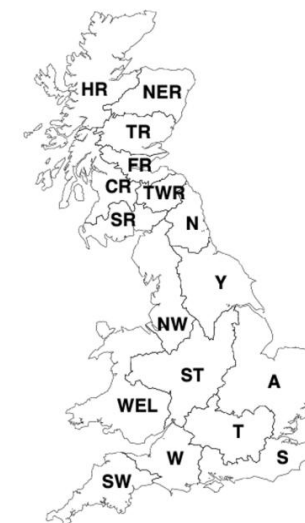
Exceptionally high flow	> 95
Notably high flow	87-95
Above normal	72-87
Normal range	28-72
Below normal	13-28
Notably low flow	5-13
Exceptionally low flow	< 5



- 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, river flows in southern England are likely to be in the *normal range* to *exceptionally low*. Elsewhere, river flows are likely to be in the *normal range*.

Over the next three months, river flows in England and Wales are likely to be in the *normal range*. In Scotland and parts of Northern England river flows are likely to be in the *normal range* to *above normal*.

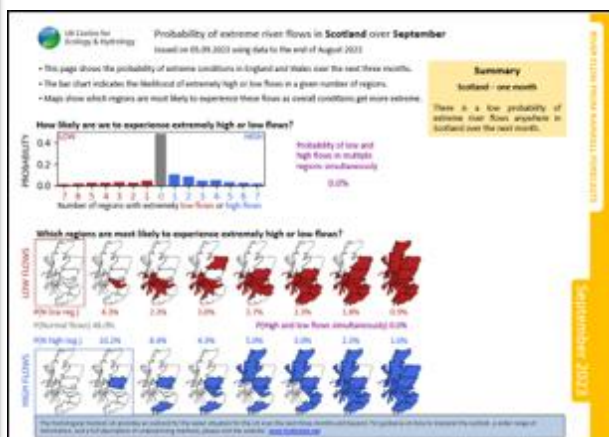


1-month ahead	A	NW	N	ST	SW	S	T	WEL	W	Y	CR	FR	HR	NER	SR	TR	TWR
Exceptionally high flow	0	2	4	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	4	6	5	8	4	6	4
Notably high	0	8	4	1	2	1	0	3	4	4	3	3	6	3	7	6	2
Above normal	1	12	9	6	13	4	2	17	2	12	13	10	21	17	8	20	10
Normal range	47	52	46	49	40	41	37	46	29	44	63	53	48	54	64	46	50
Below normal	19	15	20	19	21	17	18	16	21	24	13	22	13	13	13	19	16
Notably low	12	8	10	10	8	12	13	9	16	4	2	2	7	2	2	3	10
Exceptionally low flow	20	3	6	14	17	24	29	8	28	11	1	3	2	2	1	1	7

3-month ahead	A	NW	N	ST	SW	S	T	WEL	W	Y	CR	FR	HR	NER	SR	TR	TWR
Exceptionally high flow	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	4	2	8	1	3	2
Notably high	2	8	13	6	5	8	1	8	6	7	12	11	5	11	6	19	16
Above normal	7	33	23	12	33	7	8	21	17	16	18	34	11	13	37	31	22
Normal range	68	48	56	68	52	66	61	58	46	66	57	44	66	59	50	38	55
Below normal	19	9	6	13	6	14	20	7	17	10	8	5	12	9	3	6	5
Notably low	4	3	0	0	4	4	6	4	11	0	1	1	3	0	2	3	0
Exceptionally low flow	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	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



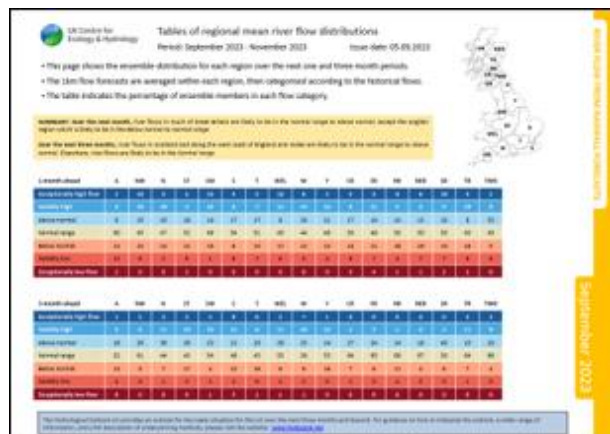
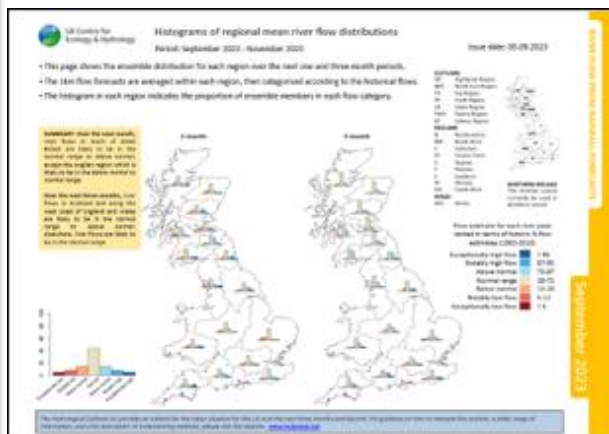
Extreme river flows are defined as those which rank in the lowest or highest 13% of historical flow estimates (1963 - 2016). This definition encompasses the 'Notably' and 'Exceptionally' high/low flow bands used elsewhere in the Outlook.

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 summary box.

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).

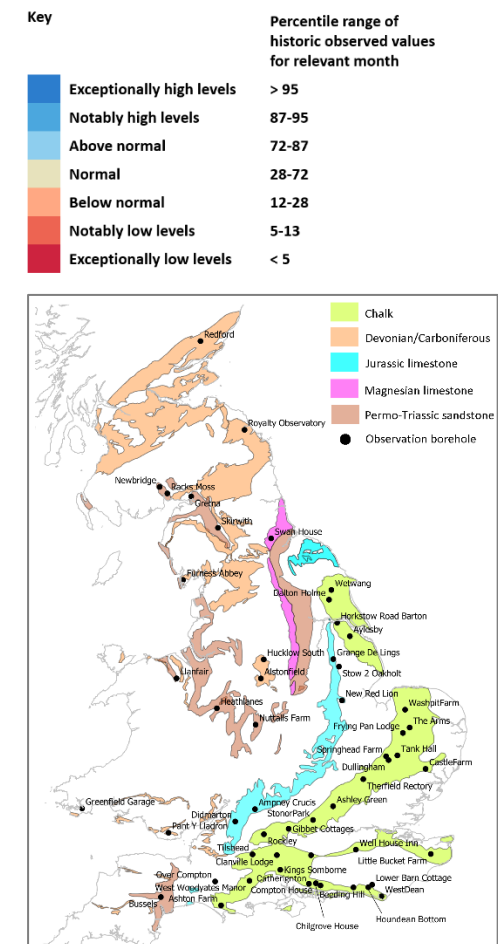
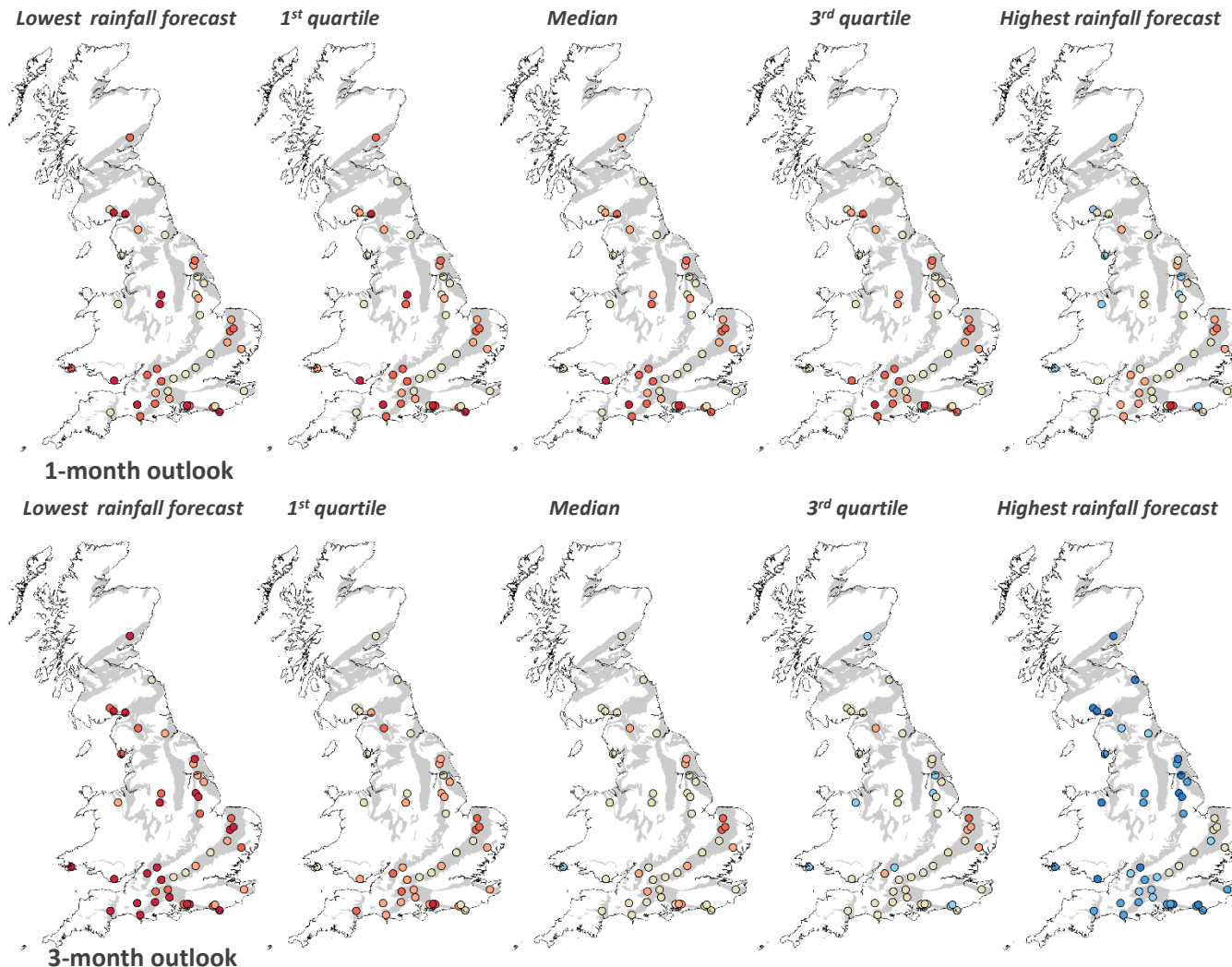
Period: October 2026 – December 2026

Issued on 05.10.2026 using data to the end of August

Under median rainfall conditions, groundwater levels over the next month are forecast to be normal to below normal across much of Great Britain, with notably low to exceptionally low levels persisting in parts of southern England, East Anglia, South Yorkshire and South Wales. The majority of forecast sites are expected to be in below-normal groundwater categories. Over the following three months, groundwater levels are generally expected to recover towards the normal range, with fewer than a third of forecast sites remaining in below-normal categories. However, below-normal levels are likely to persist in parts of southern and eastern England, with notably low levels continuing in East Anglia.

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.

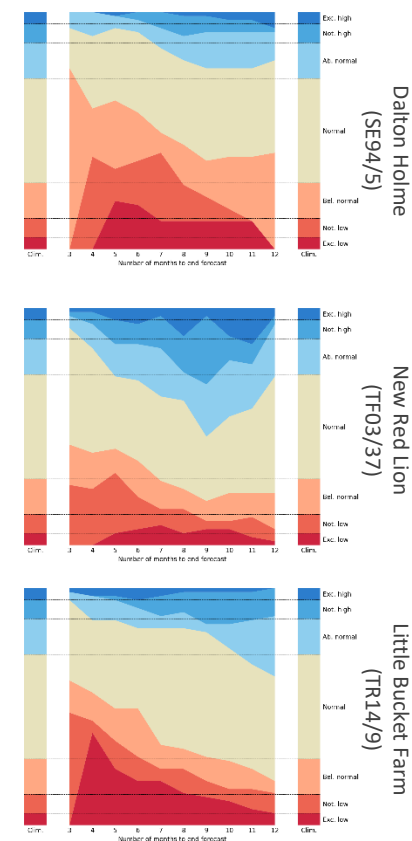
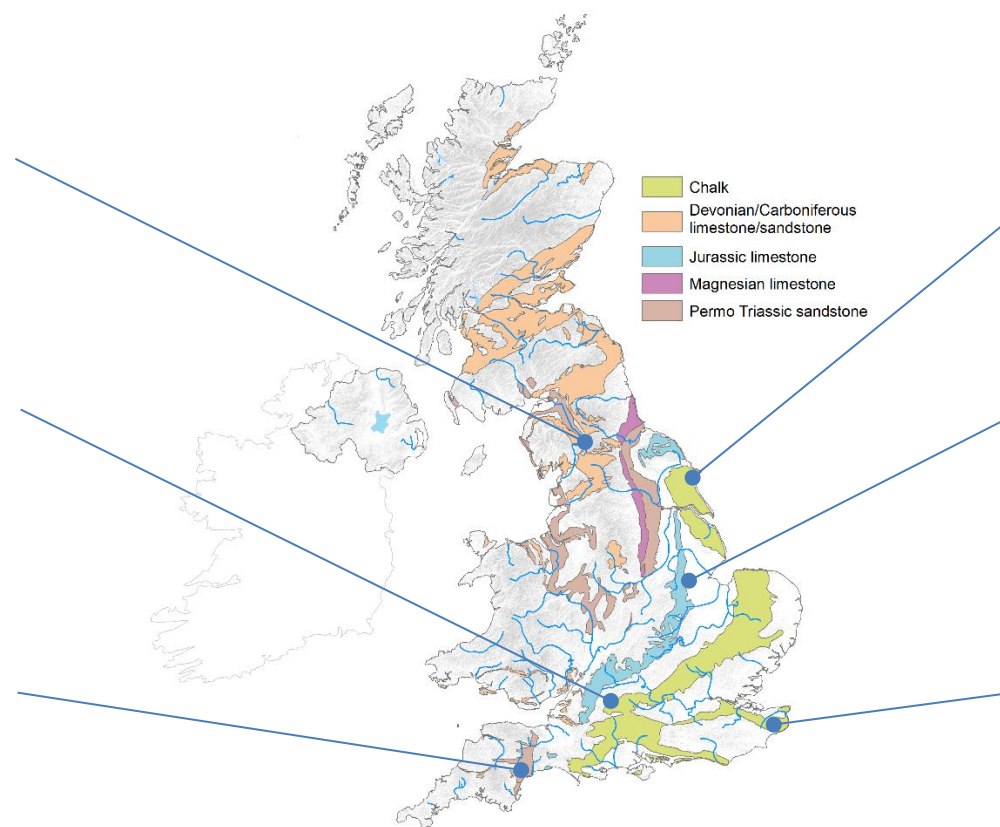
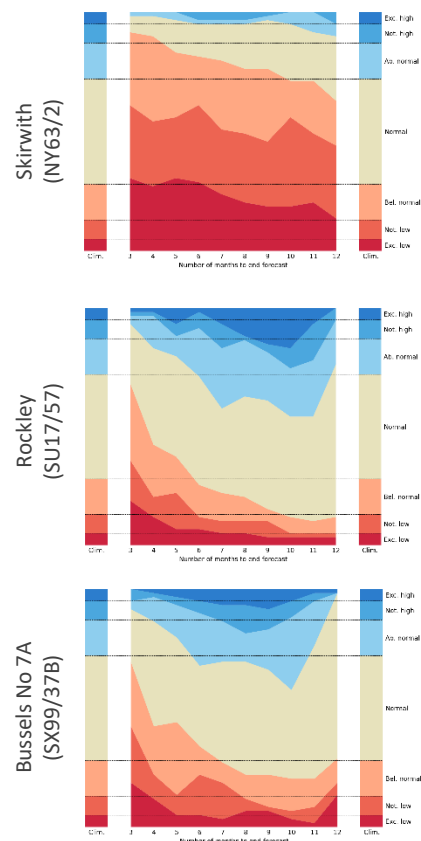


Outlook based on modelled groundwater from historical climate

Period: October 2026 – September 2027

Issued on 05.10.2026 using data to the end of September

Groundwater levels in the Chalk at Rockley, the Permo Triassic sandstone at Bussels No. 7A and the Jurassic Limestone at New Red Lion are projected to remain below normal to notably low for the next four months before gradually recovering to normal or above normal conditions in six months time. In contrast, levels in the Chalk at Dalton Holme and Little Bucket Farm are forecast to remain below normal to exceptionally low for much of the coming year, with above normal conditions appearing unlikely. The driest outlook is in the Permo Triassic sandstone at Skirwith, where levels are expected to remain below normal to exceptionally low throughout the forecast period, with little prospect of returning to normal within 12 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.

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

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.

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.