UK Hydrological Outlook

Delivered in partnership by: UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

Period: From June 2025

Issued on 11.06.2025 using data to the end of May 2025

SUMMARY The river flow outlook for June is for below normal to low flows in eastern, central and southern areas, with notably or exceptionally low flows likely to persist in some catchments. In contrast, the outlook is for normal to above normal flows in northwestern areas. The June - August outlook suggests a similar contrast, but between normal flows in the northwest and below normal flows elsewhere. For groundwater, the outlook for both June and June-August is for normal to below normal levels across the country.

Rainfall:

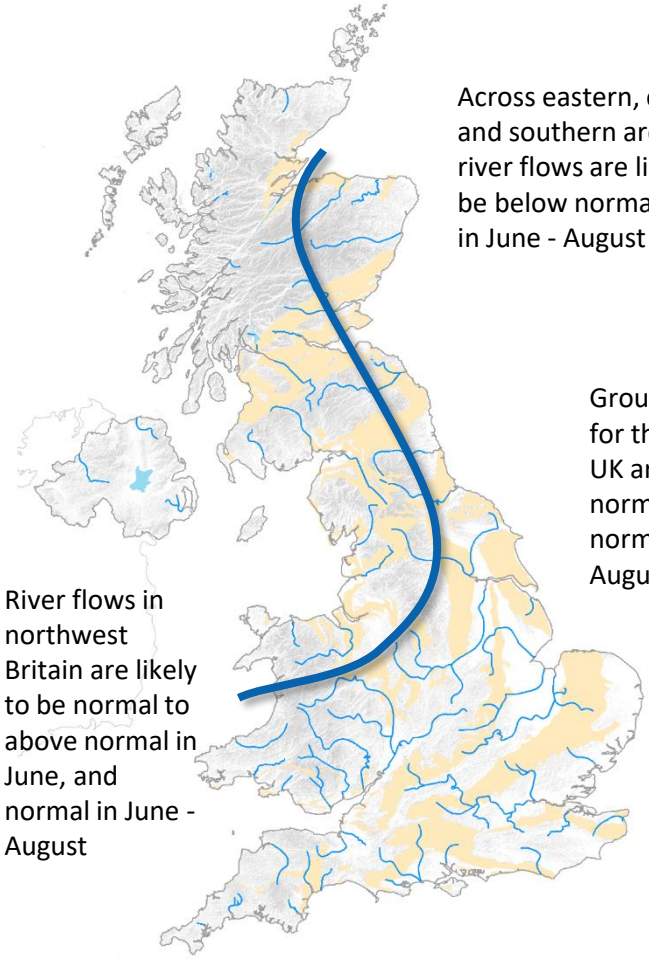
May rainfall was above average in parts of northwest England and western Scotland, but it was a dry month elsewhere, particularly across southern England. The spring as a whole was exceptionally dry across most of the UK. The forecast (issued by Met Office on 27.05.2025) indicates the chance of a wet June is slightly higher than normal, with the start of June especially likely to be wet. The chances of a wet or a dry summer (June - August) are evenly balanced.

River flows:

River flows in May were in the normal range in some western catchments, but below normal across most of the UK – with notably or exceptionally low flows (including many new record May minimum flows) across eastern Britain, central England and south Wales. The outlook for June is for normal to above normal flows in northwest Britain, reflecting late May/early June rainfall. Elsewhere, below normal to low flows are the most likely outcome, with notably or exceptionally low flows likely to persist in some catchments. The June - August outlook is for a similar geographical contrast, but with normal flows most likely in the northwest and below normal to low flows elsewhere, again with some catchments likely to be significantly below normal.

Groundwater:

Groundwater levels in May were largely in the normal range or below normal across the UK, with below normal levels concentrated in the Chalk of central southern England and northeast England. Levels were above normal in a few boreholes in central England. The outlook for June is for normal to below normal levels across most of the country, with notably low levels likely to persist in some areas. Localised above normal levels are possible in some areas (e.g. the Chilterns). For June - August, normal to below normal levels are the most likely outcome across all aquifers.



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

UK HYDROLOGICAL OUTLOOK

June 2025

UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology · British Geological Survey · Department for Infrastructure An Roinn Bonneagair www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk · Environment Agency · Met Office · Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru Natural Resources Wales · SEPA Scottish Environment Protection Agency

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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 AquiMod 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

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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:

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Reference for the UK Hydrological Outlook:

UK Hydrological Outlook, 10 June 2025, 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:
i. Environment Agency: https://flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk/map
ii. Natural Resources Wales: https://flood-warning.naturalresources.wales/
iii. 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/

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