

Water Situation Report

29th July 2021



HEADLINE

The Wigtownshire area of Galloway, and the Wick area have been raised to Significant Scarcity.

Significant and Moderate Scarcity remains in place in many areas of northern and south-western Scotland.

The Clyde catchment has been raised to Moderate Scarcity.

Many areas in the south and west of Scotland have been raised to Alert.

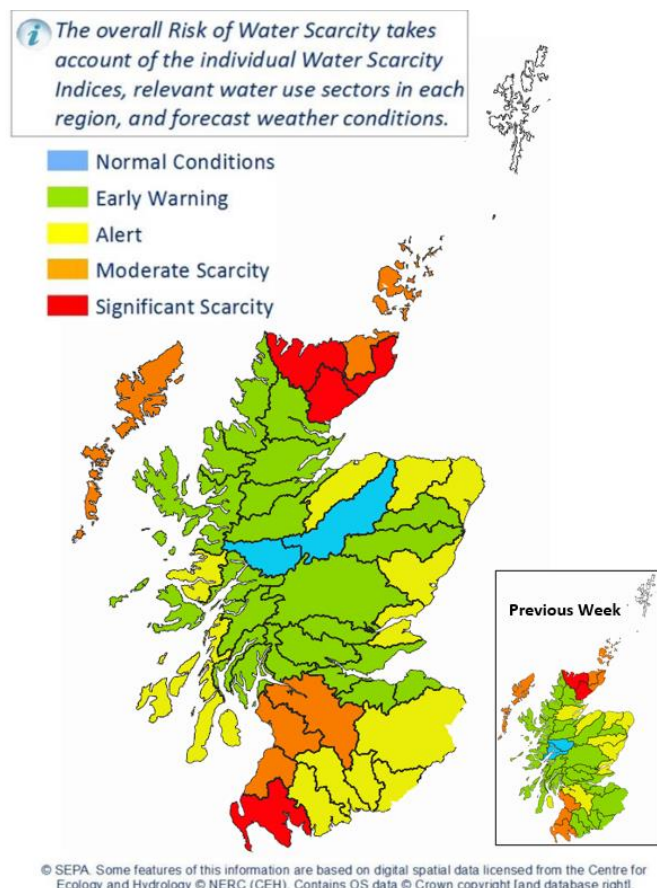
Some recovery has occurred in the North-East, with the Conon and the Dee returning to Early Warning, and the Spey returning to Normal Conditions.

Situation Summary

Parts of central and north-east Scotland have seen heavy rainfall over the last few days. However, regions currently affected by water scarcity have seen little rainfall.

Because of low river levels, the Wick area has been raised to Significant Scarcity. Many areas of north Scotland, Orkney and the Western Isles are now at Significant or Moderate Scarcity.

In southern Scotland, river levels are also now sufficiently low that the Wigtownshire area has been raised to Significant Scarcity, the Clyde catchment has been



raised to Moderate Scarcity, and all other areas in south-west Scotland and the Borders previously at Early Warning have been raised to Alert. The Girvan area, and Irvine and Ayr areas, remain at Moderate Scarcity.

In west Scotland, some coastal areas have also been raised to Alert and Early Warning due to a combination of low rainfall, dry ground conditions and low river levels.

In the north-east, the recent heavy rainfall has led to recovery in ground conditions in the Conon and the Spey and Dee catchments. Further recovery across the north-east by next week is possible due to current heavy rainfall, but a prolonged dry period may still cause rapid deterioration in conditions.

Areas experiencing Moderate or Significant Scarcity have seen little rainfall. Significant prolonged rainfall in these areas will be required to ease the current situation.

SEPA is monitoring the situation closely and coordinating steps to manage water resources in line with Scotland's National Water Scarcity Plan which is available on SEPA's website: <https://www.sepa.org.uk/environment/water/water-scarcity/>.

You can help us by reporting any evidence you see of water scarcity. For details of information that would be useful to us and where to send it see: [Water scarcity in your area | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#).

Advice for water users

Water sources used for irrigating farm land are at risk of becoming limited in the Alert and Moderate areas. We are urging farmers in these areas, especially if taking water from burns and small rivers, to:

- Only irrigate when, and only as much as, absolutely necessary.
- Make sure irrigation equipment isn't leaking.
- Try to irrigate at night to reduce evaporation losses.
- Explore how you and your neighbours in the same river catchment could avoid irrigating at the same time.

- Consider whether you could switch to using groundwater rather than river water if conditions worsen. If you would need a new borehole to do this, your local SEPA office will be able to help and advise.

Managers of golf courses are asked to do the same.

For the most up to date advice please see: [Advice for abstractors](#).

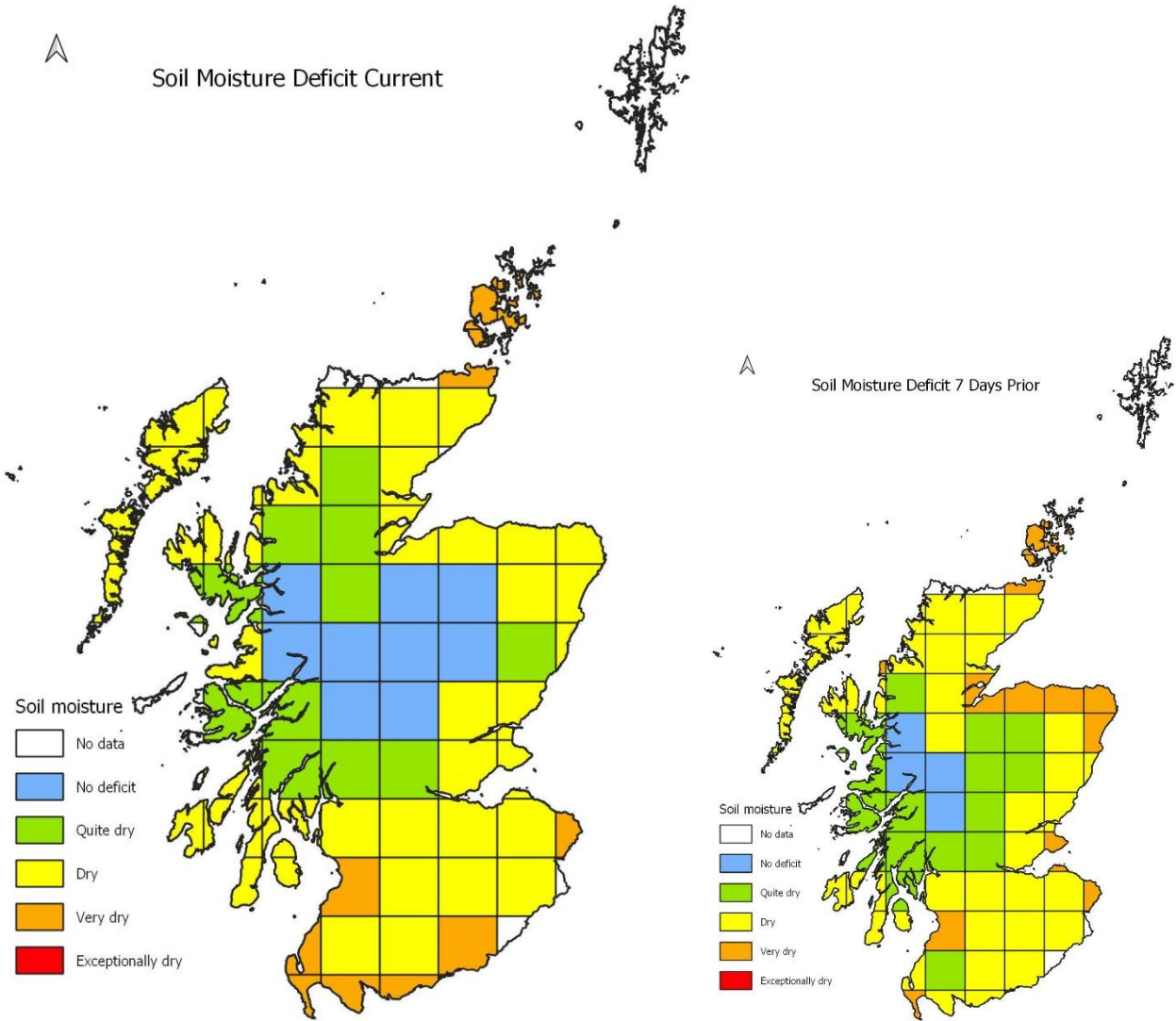
Water abstractors with concerns about meeting licence conditions or wishing to discuss contingency measures should get in touch at the following e-mail address [water scarcity mailbox](#).

Weather forecast (29/07/21)

A few showers across the north on Thursday. Scattered showers will develop across the SE Highlands, Fife and across SE Scotland this afternoon and evening, occasionally heavy. A few showers continuing on Thursday night across the Southern Highlands and Central Belt. Friday will see a risk of heavy showers across the southern Highlands, Central Belt and southwest, mainly dry elsewhere. The weekend and Monday will be largely dry.

For the start of August changeable conditions continuing to dominate, with a mixture of sunny and dry periods, showery periods and the chance of longer spells of rain. For the second half of August, more settled conditions are likely; this means drier conditions may become more prevalent, although there is still the risk of showers or thunderstorms at times.

Further details are available in the following figures:



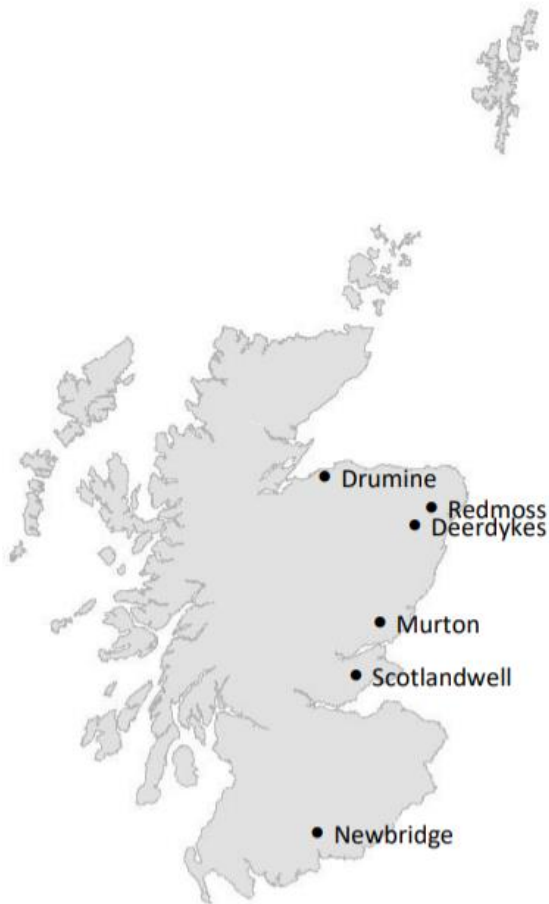
These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (27th July 2021) and 7 days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.



Natural water storage situation

In each river catchment there is some degree of water storage, which can maintain river flows even when it is not raining. This natural water storage is mainly held in lochs and groundwater. When natural storage has been depleted it will take a lot of rainfall for levels to recover.

27th July 2021

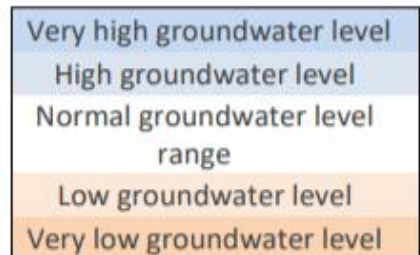


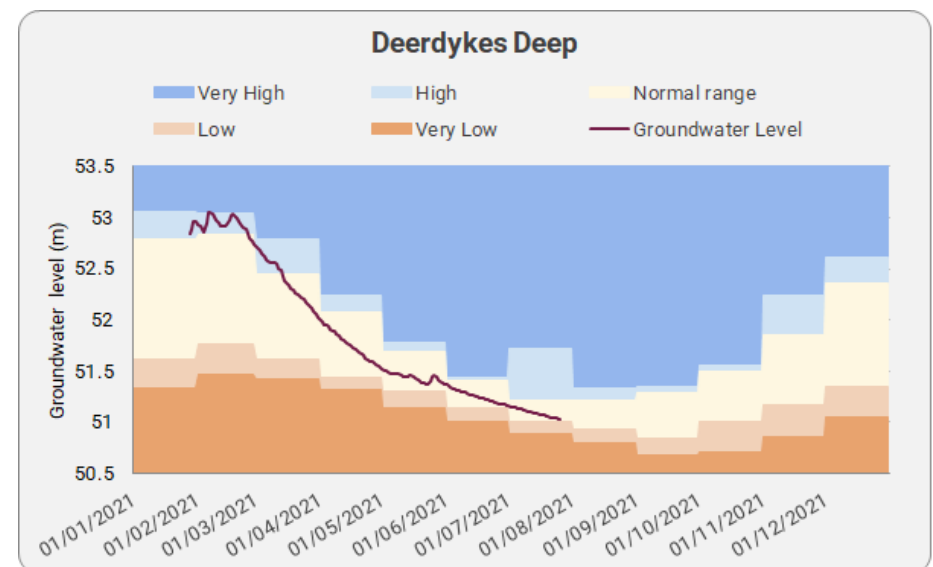
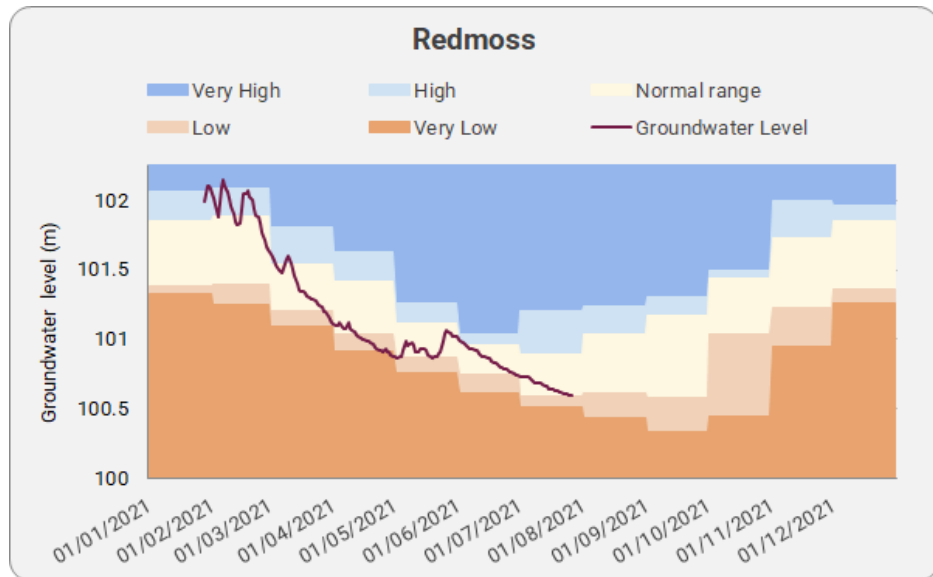
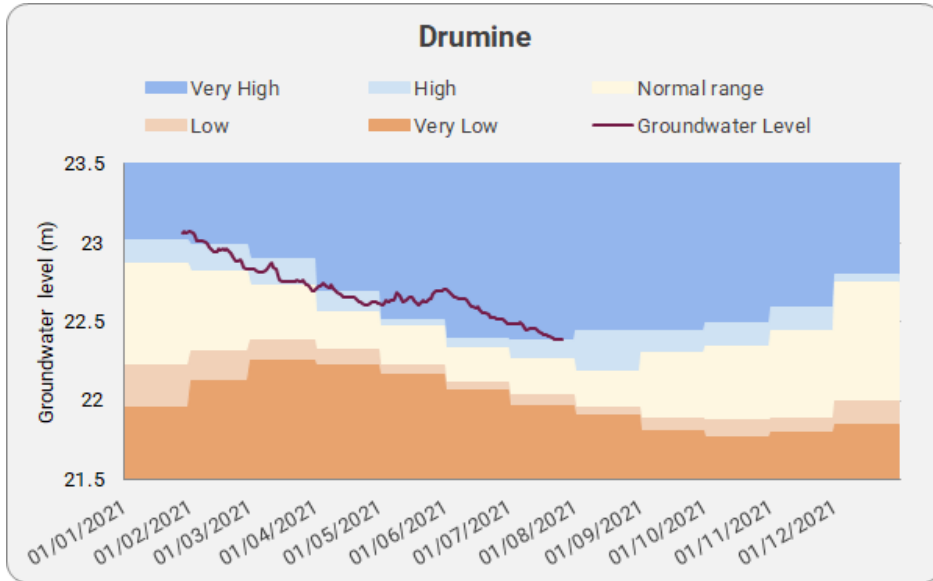
Groundwater levels are falling but remain within the normal or high range for the time of year.

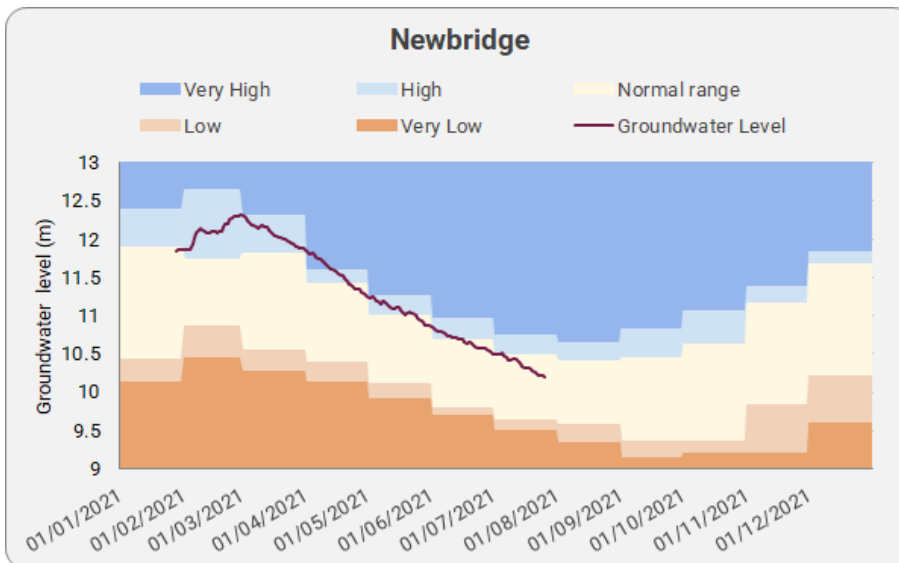
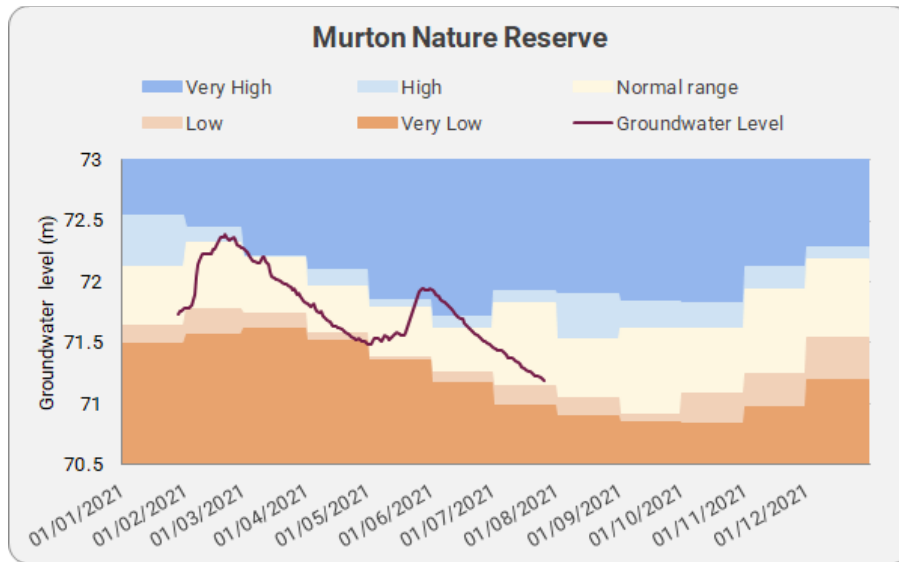
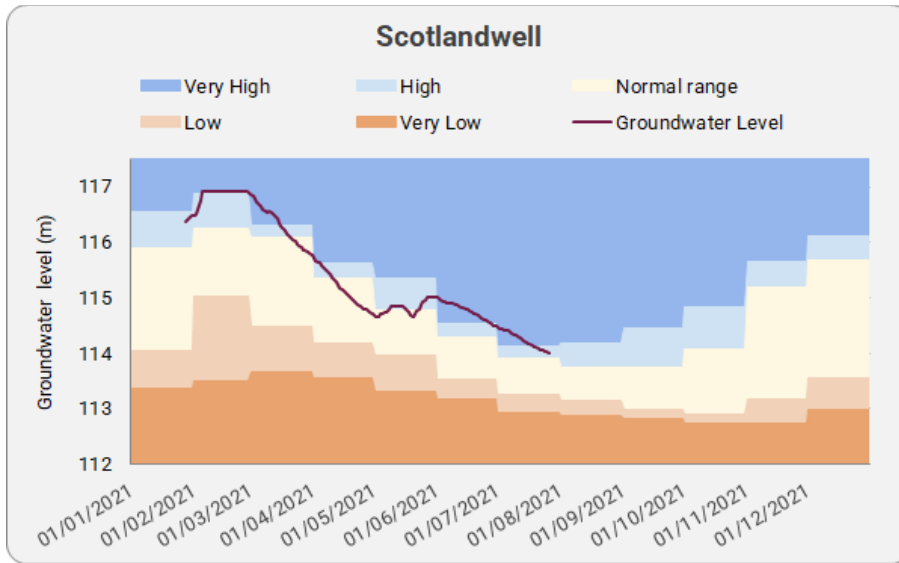
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation.

Loch level data is not currently available.

The following charts show the trend in groundwater level (GWL) since start of the year at selected monitoring sites (see map above). The black line shows the recorded groundwater level. This is plotted over level trend bands, which are based on the long-term record of mean monthly level values.







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If you are a user of British Sign Language (BSL) the Contact Scotland BSL service gives you access to an online interpreter enabling you to communicate with us using sign language.

<http://contactscotland-bsl.org/>

www.sepa.org.uk

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