

Water Scarcity Report

02nd September 2021



HEADLINES

Wick remains at Significant Scarcity for the sixth consecutive week. Thurso and Orkney are still at Moderate Scarcity.

North Ayrshire has been raised to Moderate Water Scarcity.

South Ayrshire, Esk (Dumfriesshire) and Annan in the south of Scotland have returned to Alert level.

The Deveron and Firth of Forth catchments have also been raised to Alert level.

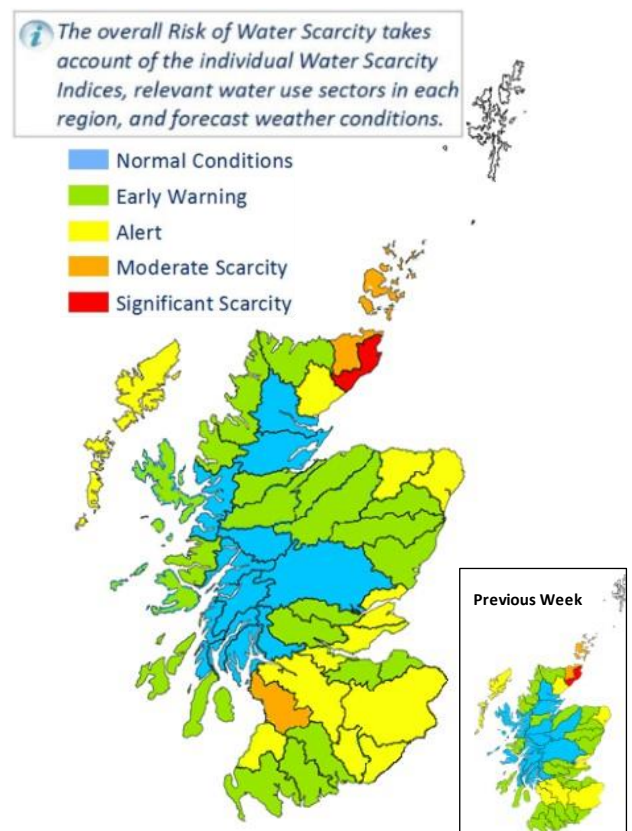
The Outer Hebrides, most of southern Scotland, and areas in the northeast remain at Alert.

Situation Summary

There has been almost no rainfall this week so ground conditions have become drier and rivers have again started to reach low flows across the country.

Wick remains at Significant Scarcity and Thurso and Orkney are still at Moderate Scarcity.

North Ayrshire has been raised to Moderate Scarcity. Most catchments in the south of the country are at Alert level, with some that had shown slight recovery last week (South Ayrshire, Dumfriesshire) having been raised again as expected.



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The areas shown in this map represent major river catchments. Details on how levels are set and actions required can be found in SEPA's National Water Scarcity Plan.

Several catchments along the Moray coast (Ness, Spey, Deveron) have also been raised a level as ground conditions have become drier.

With the dry, warm weather forecast to continue, and a relatively dry autumn possible, conditions are likely to deteriorate further in the weeks ahead. In the areas worst affected it will take a significant amount of rainfall before recovery is seen.

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

Scottish Water are asking customers to use water wisely in and around their homes. More information can be found on the [Scottish Water](#) website.

Farmers and Managers of golf courses irrigating in the Alert and Moderate areas are urged, 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.

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

WaterScarcity@sepa.org.uk

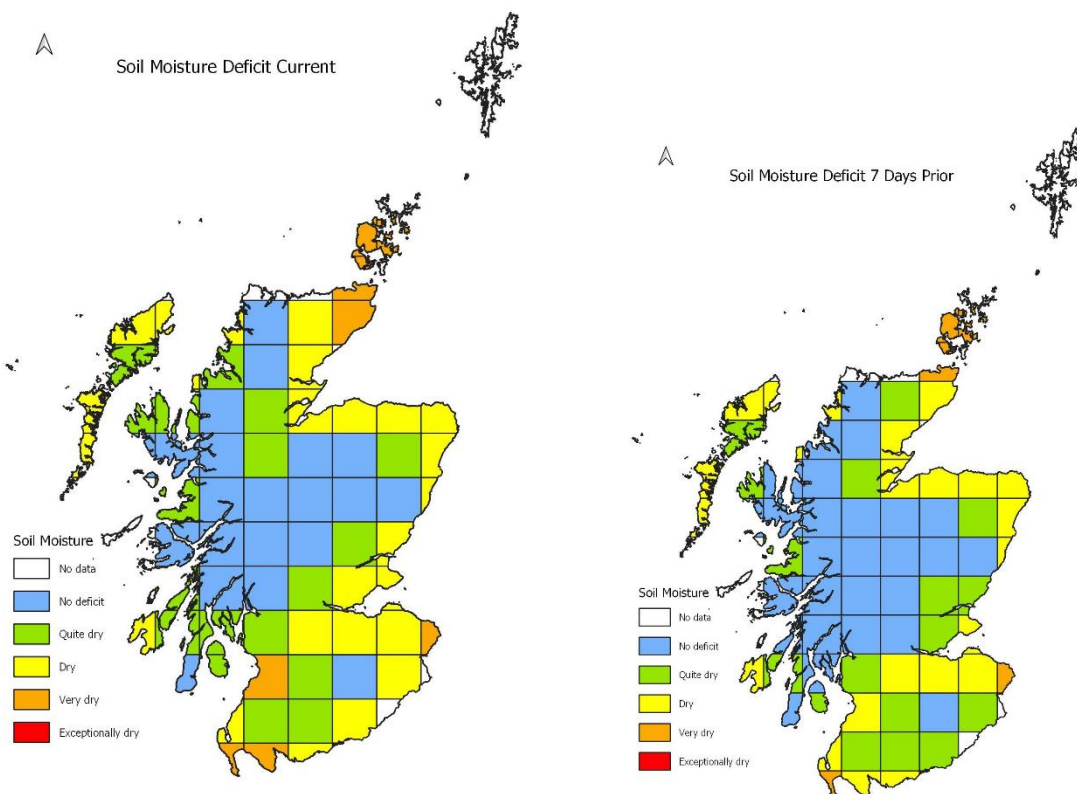
Weather forecast (02/09/21)

High pressure will continue to bring largely dry weather across Scotland into early next week, however a little rain may affect the west on Sunday and Monday.

Current forecasts suggest an unsettled period is possible through the middle of the month with a return to drier conditions following that. However, confidence in the forecast is relatively low at this time of year.

At a seasonal timescale, models suggest that Autumn is more likely to be dry than wet, with more than double the chance of higher than average temperatures.

Further details are available in the following figures:

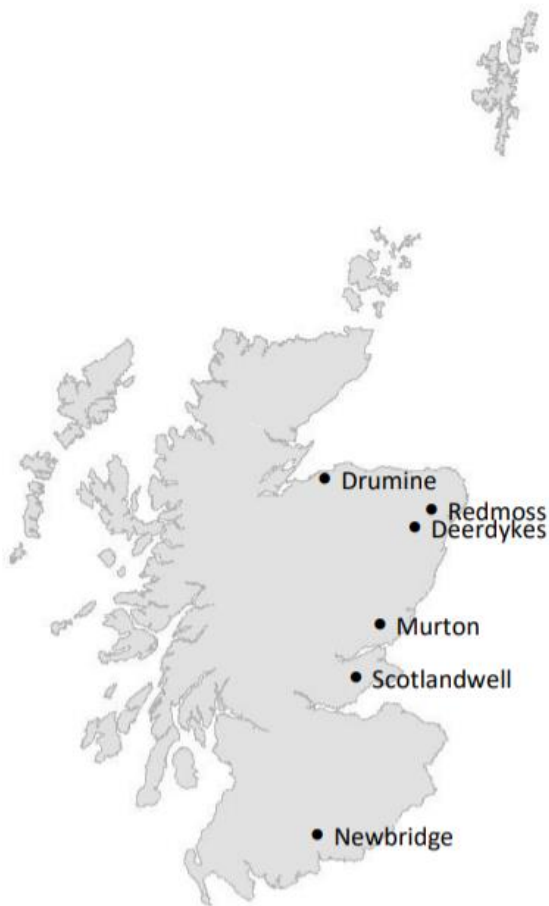


These maps depict the current latest Soil Moisture Deficit (01st September 2021) and seven days prior for comparison. Based on the MORECS data obtained from the Met Office.



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.



31st August 2021

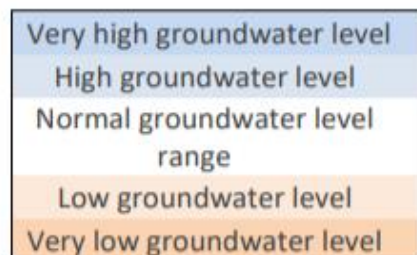
Groundwater levels in the north-east are now low for the time of year and continuing to fall.

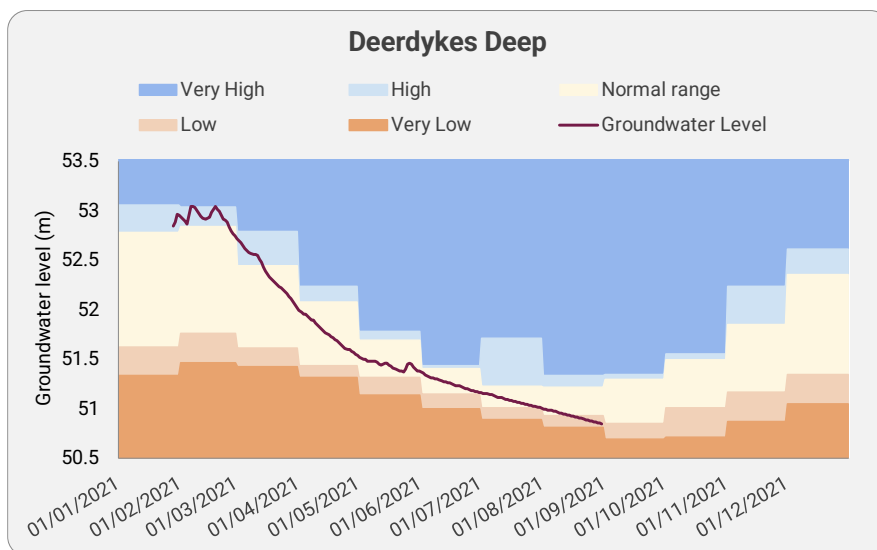
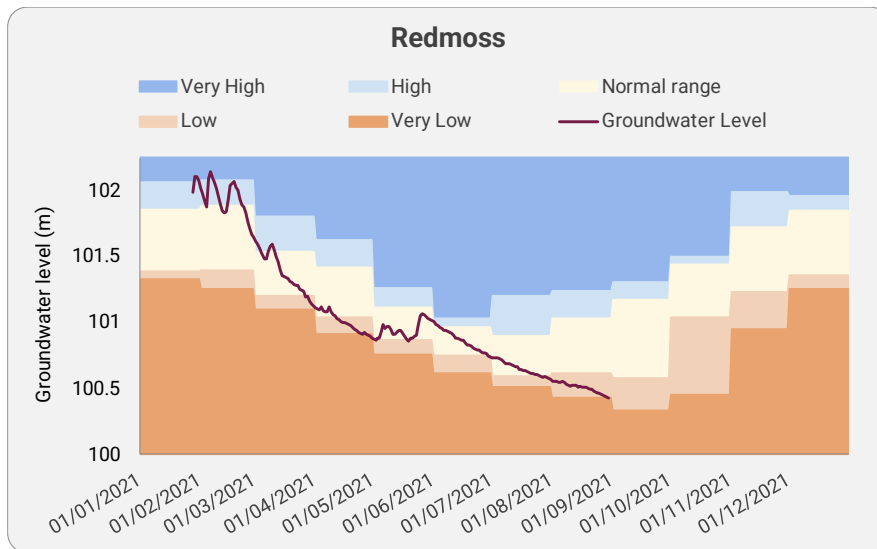
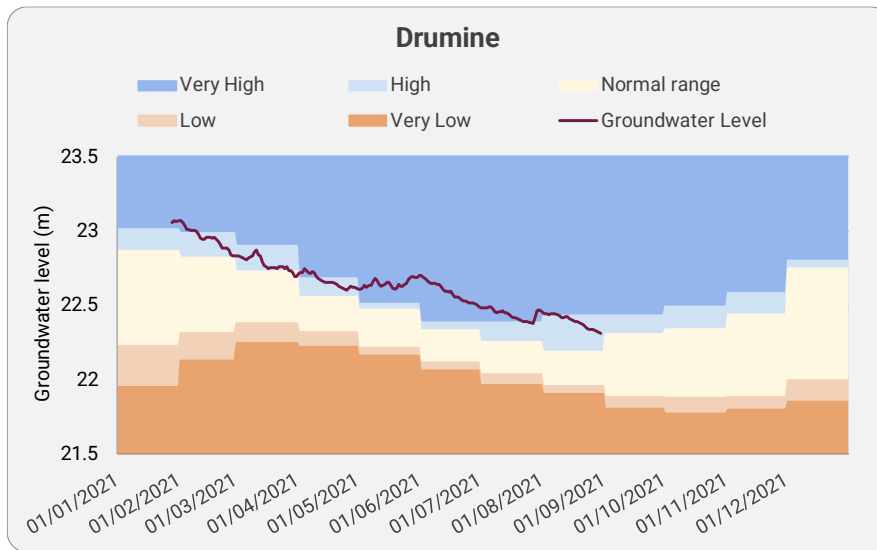
Groundwater levels in other areas are also falling but remain within the normal or high range for the time of year.

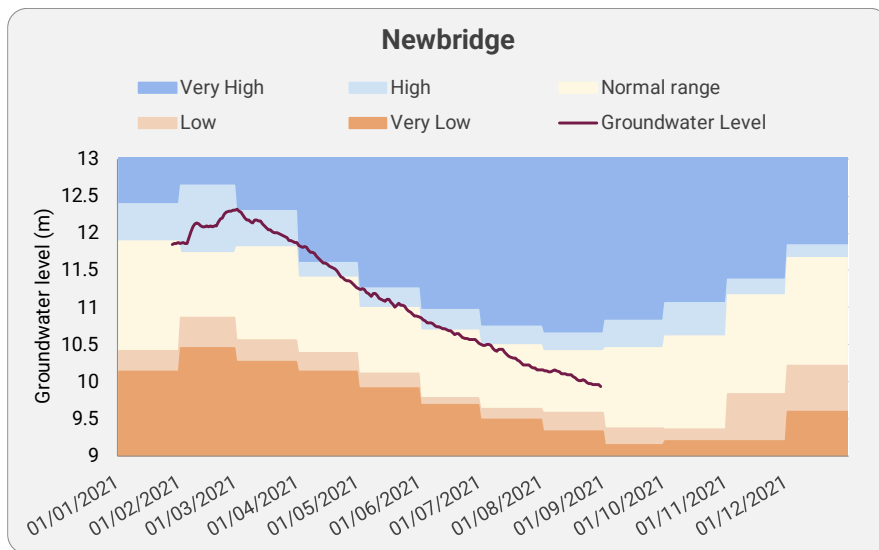
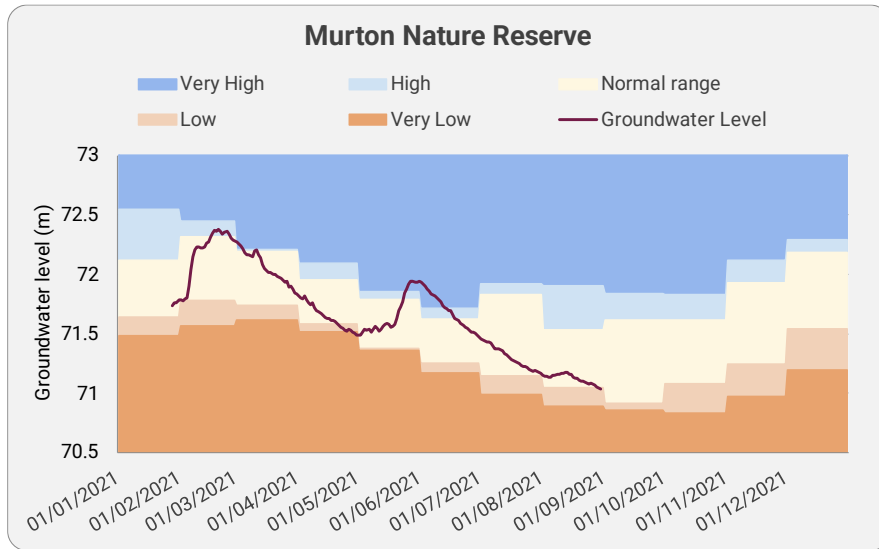
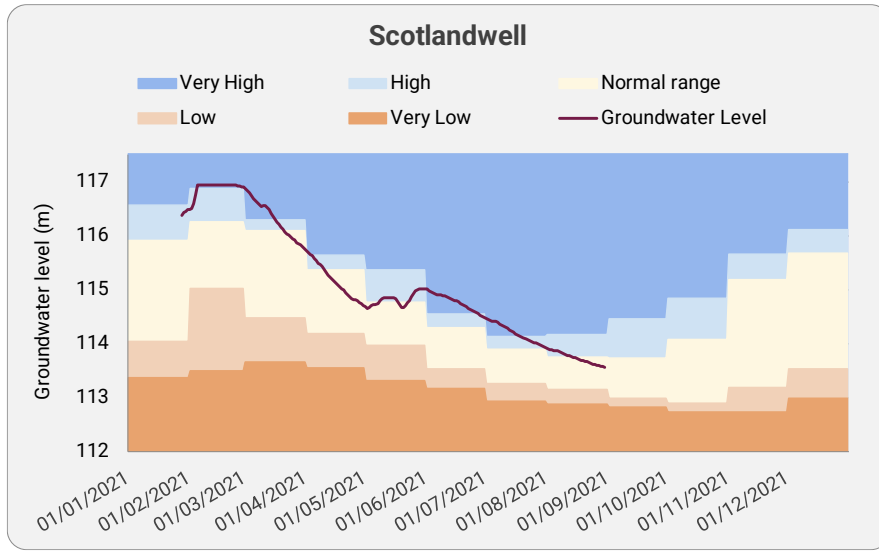
We have up to date data for 11 groundwater level monitoring sites, spread across the east and south-west of the country, giving a good picture of the current situation.

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

www.sepa.org.uk

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