

# Environment Agency East Anglia Drought Update February 2023 Briefing

15 February 2023

## Most of East Anglia area remains in drought

Despite receiving above or near average rainfall over the winter months throughout East Anglia most catchments remain in Drought status. River flows had broadly improved with response to the rainfall in recent months before the recent dry spell we are experiencing. Groundwater levels in some catchments have only just started to show signs of recharge. Our ecological data is showing that the river ecology is still showing signs of stress and the effects of drought.

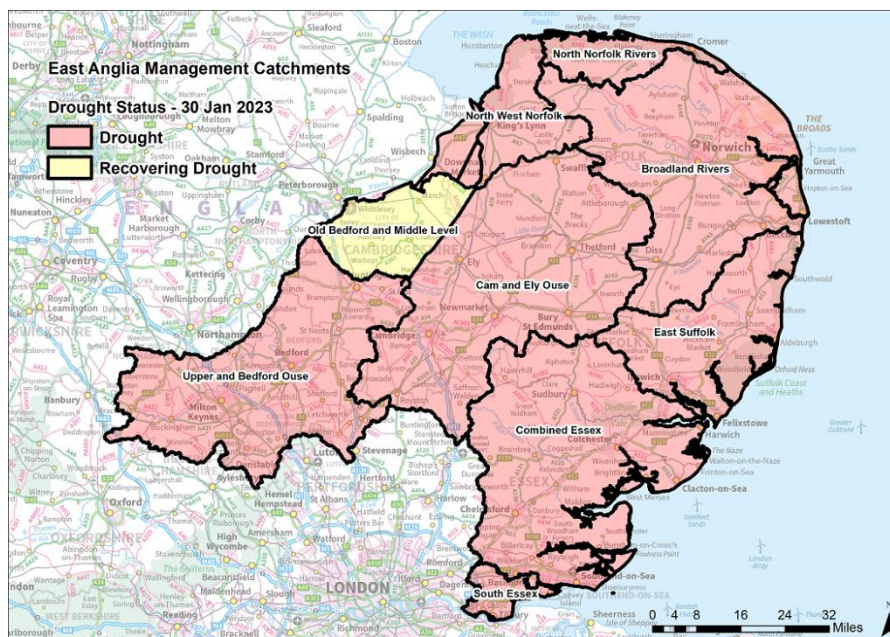
### The following catchments remain in 'Drought':

North-West Norfolk  
North Norfolk  
Upper Bedford Ouse  
Broadland  
East Suffolk  
Essex

Due to the winter rainfall in the River Nene catchment (part of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire area) we are consequently seeing healthy levels in Middle Level.

### The following catchment has been moved into 'Recovering Drought':

Old Bedford & Middle Level



Map of Drought catchments in East Anglia

We still need to manage water availability at a local level and require more rainfall for our rivers and groundwater to recover to normal conditions by the end of winter in most locations. If the

current period of dry weather continues, river flows may recede further, and it is likely further abstraction restrictions will be enforced.

## What are we doing?

Our teams continue to monitor and report on the situation, producing regular water situation reports available at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). We will continue to collect and analyse ecology samples to observe the ecological response and effect of drought.

We are reviewing our response to the Drought and planning for further dry weather impacts into 2023.

## Water companies

We are liaising regularly with water companies to share information on water availability, operational activities and to understand any emerging concerns.

Water companies have reported they are taking actions in accordance with their own Drought Plans and are scenario planning for 2023.

## Looking ahead

Given average rainfall we can expect the situation to continue to improve, but further rain is required to avoid risk of dry weather impacts later in 2023.

## How you can help

We can all do our part to use water wisely and manage this precious resource, and there are useful water saving tips for us all at [Waterwise](#).

We encourage the public to report sightings of fish in distress or other impacts on the environment by telephoning our 24hr Incident Hotline: 0800 80 70 60.

Kind regards

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More information can be found here:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency)