# UK braced for mid-30s heat and amber alerts as drought leaves reservoirs low



A surge of hot, humid air moving up from the continent is set to push temperatures across much of the UK into the high 20s and low 30s this week, with the day of greatest heat expected on Tuesday, 12 August 2025. The BBC’s weather coverage warns that parts of central and southern England could reach as high as 34°C and that health services and transport networks may face disruption as amber heat‑health alerts come into force for large swathes of England. At the same time, the National Drought Group has warned that England is already experiencing “nationally significant” shortfalls in water — a situation with consequences for farming, wildlife and water supply. (According to the original report and official drought briefings.)

### 📌 Reference Map:

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-drought-group-meets-after-driest-spring-in-132-years), [[5]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/how-is-summer-2025-shaping-up-so-far)

The UK Health Security Agency has issued regionally graded warnings to reflect those risks: amber heat‑health alerts for the Midlands, East Anglia, London and the South East and yellow alerts for parts of the North, Yorkshire and the West Country. The alerts — shown in the agency’s live dashboard — signal increased demand on health and social care, and advise organisations and vulnerable people to take steps to reduce heat exposure. The amber warnings were scheduled to begin at 09:00 on Tuesday and remain active through 18:00 on Wednesday. (According to the UK Health Security Agency’s public dashboard and the BBC’s coverage.)
- Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/weather-health-alerts/heat/south-east?type=heat), [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss)

Meteorologists say a northward displaced jet stream and a high pressure ridge to the east are drawing warm air from continental Europe into the UK. That same air mass has already produced record temperatures in parts of France this week — Bordeaux and Bergerac reported temperatures in excess of 41°C amid red heat warnings — and forecasters caution that UK values will be amplified where the flow is southeasterly and overnight temperatures remain high. The Met Office’s explanatory material underlines that humidity and warm nights increase health risk even where daytime maxima are not record‑breaking.
- Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss), [[7]](https://www.bfmtv.com/meteo/canicule/41-6-c-bordeaux-42-1-c-a-bergerac-des-records-absolus-de-chaleur-battus-ce-lundi_AN-202508110486.html), [[4]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/will-we-have-a-heatwave-and-how-do-we-define-one)

The heat arrives against a backdrop of unusually low water availability. The government convened the National Drought Group after England recorded its driest March–May period since 1893; in its briefing the Environment Agency described low reservoir levels, depleted soils, fish rescues and canal navigation restrictions. The group — which brings together the Met Office, regulators and water companies — warned of tangible environmental and agricultural impacts, including reduced crop yields and poorer livestock feed, and signalled the need for monthly oversight and faster operational responses from the water industry. (According to the government press release and Environment Agency updates.)
- Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-drought-group-meets-after-driest-spring-in-132-years)

The current spell also sits within an exceptionally warm summer so far. Met Office analysis notes a run of above‑average temperatures, with the highest UK reading this year recorded at 35.8°C in Faversham on 1 July and further mid‑30s values logged across England and Wales in July. Those trends have produced more days above 30°C than the long‑term average in the south of England and are an important factor in rising drought pressure. The Met Office cautions that whether a particular hot spell is classified as an official heatwave depends on meeting county‑specific thresholds for at least three consecutive days — thresholds that vary across the country and were recently updated using a modern climatology.
- Paragraph 5 – [[5]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/how-is-summer-2025-shaping-up-so-far), [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss), [[4]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/will-we-have-a-heatwave-and-how-do-we-define-one)

Forecasts suggest the hottest conditions will persist through Wednesday for many areas, with a modest return to cloudier, more humid conditions and a risk of thunderstorms from Thursday. High pressure is expected to rebuild into the weekend, bringing a renewed warm spell with mid‑ to high‑20s likely and the possibility of 30°C again in southern England and south Wales. If specific locations record their threshold temperatures for three days in a row, the Met Office’s definition means parts of the UK could register a fourth heatwave of the summer. (Based on Met Office forecasts and explanatory guidance.)
- Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss), [[5]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/how-is-summer-2025-shaping-up-so-far), [[4]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/will-we-have-a-heatwave-and-how-do-we-define-one)

Local impacts are already being reported: the BBC’s live coverage has documented heat‑related rail disruptions, event adjustments and calls for water‑use prudence, while French media and weather agencies described school activity limits and public‑health advisories where continental temperatures blew past 40°C. The government has urged the public to report environmental incidents and for water companies to speed up action; regulators and agencies say contingency measures such as targeted water restrictions are being considered where needed to protect critical supplies and habitats. Public health advice remains to keep cool, stay hydrated and check on elderly or medically vulnerable neighbours and relatives.
- Paragraph 7 – [[6]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/live/cvg8v98n1vgt), [[7]](https://www.bfmtv.com/meteo/canicule/41-6-c-bordeaux-42-1-c-a-bergerac-des-records-absolus-de-chaleur-battus-ce-lundi_AN-202508110486.html), [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-drought-group-meets-after-driest-spring-in-132-years), [[3]](https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/weather-health-alerts/heat/south-east?type=heat)

The unfolding combination of intense short‑term heat and a prolonged spring deficit highlights the twin pressures of extreme weather and chronic water stress. Experts and agencies say short‑term operational measures are essential to protect people and wildlife, while the pattern underlines wider questions about resilience and long‑term water management as summers become warmer and drier on average. The National Drought Group will meet regularly to keep ministers and stakeholders updated and to co‑ordinate responses with water companies and environmental agencies. (According to government statements and Met Office commentary.)
- Paragraph 8 – [[2]](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-drought-group-meets-after-driest-spring-in-132-years), [[5]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/how-is-summer-2025-shaping-up-so-far), [[4]](https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/will-we-have-a-heatwave-and-how-do-we-define-one)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czerrzdewzxo?at_medium=RSS&at_campaign=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-drought-group-meets-after-driest-spring-in-132-years> - This UK Government press release reports the National Drought Group convened after England experienced its driest March–May period since 1893. The Environment Agency updated ministers and stakeholders on reservoir levels, low river flows and depleted soils, and outlined immediate operational responses. The release notes reservoir levels, fish rescues and navigation restrictions on canals, and warns of environmental and agricultural impacts such as reduced crop yields and poorer feed for livestock. It describes the Group’s membership — including the Met Office, regulators and water companies — the need for monthly meetings and urges public reporting of incidents and faster action by water companies.
3. <https://ukhsa-dashboard.data.gov.uk/weather-health-alerts/heat/south-east?type=heat> - The UK Health Security Agency heat–health alerts dashboard page gives live details of heat-health alerts by region. The South East page shows amber and yellow alerts, their start and end times, risk scores and likely impacts on health and social care services. It explains what an amber alert signifies — widespread health impacts, increased demands on services and greater risk to older people and those with pre-existing conditions — and offers practical advice for staying safe during hot weather. The dashboard is updated frequently and links to action cards for health and social care providers and the voluntary sector.
4. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/will-we-have-a-heatwave-and-how-do-we-define-one> - This Met Office explainer sets out how the UK defines a heatwave and the varying thresholds used across counties. It explains that an official heatwave requires the daily maximum temperature to meet or exceed location‑specific thresholds for at least three consecutive days, and that thresholds were updated using a more recent climatology. The piece clarifies that thresholds vary from north and west to eastern counties and describes how humidity and prolonged high night‑time temperatures increase health risks. It also outlines why a given spell may fall inside or outside the official definition, and gives context about increasing heat frequency due to climate change.
5. <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/blog/2025/how-is-summer-2025-shaping-up-so-far> - This Met Office overview reviews summer 2025 to date, describing a run of above‑average temperatures across the UK and regional differences. The bulletin highlights that early July produced the highest UK temperature so far in 2025 — 35.8°C at Faversham — and notes that southern England has been especially warm with an increased number of days above 30°C compared with long‑term averages. It summarises daily maximum and minimum temperature trends, explains the meteorological drivers of the warm spells and comments on implications for drought risk and water resources, providing authoritative national statistics and provisional monthly analysis.
6. <https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/live/cvg8v98n1vgt> - This BBC News live page and related coverage detail the UK heatwave episodes in July 2025, reporting regional peak temperatures and impacts. The live updates record that parts of England and Wales reached the low‑to‑mid 30s, Wales saw highs around 33.1°C in Cardiff’s Bute Park, Scotland recorded around 32.2°C in Aviemore and Northern Ireland reached about 30.0°C at Magilligan. The BBC also documents heat‑related disruptions such as rail issues, event cancellations and hosepipe bans, and summarises Met Office and UKHSA alerts and guidance for staying safe during extreme heat, giving a national media perspective on local measurements.
7. <https://www.bfmtv.com/meteo/canicule/41-6-c-bordeaux-42-1-c-a-bergerac-des-records-absolus-de-chaleur-battus-ce-lundi_AN-202508110486.html> - BFM TV reports on an extreme August heat episode in south‑western France, citing Météo‑France provisional observations that Bordeaux recorded 41.6°C and Bergerac about 41.4°C (with some local stations reporting even higher values). The article explains that multiple departmental red heat warnings (vigilance rouge) were issued, schools closed or limited activity, and public health authorities urged vigilance for vulnerable groups. It describes the scope of the event across nearby towns, notes wildfire and public‑safety concerns, and refers readers to Météo‑France bulletins for provisional station values and evolving warnings during the heatwave.