

To: Kent Flood Risk & Water Management Committee – Wednesday
4th November 2026

From: Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and
Corporate Services

Subject: KCC severe weather response activity.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To update Kent Flood Risk & Water Management Committee on the severe weather alerts and warnings received from the Met Office and Environment Agency, and corresponding KCC response activity since the last meeting of the Committee on 4th November 2026.

Background

- 1.1 This report provides the latest update to the Committee on the water-related alerts received by Kent County Council and the corresponding incident response activity led by the Resilience & Emergency Planning Service through the role of the Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO). It outlines recent severe weather events, and the operational actions taken to mitigate associated risks.
- 1.2 The Environment Agency (EA) and Met Office send 24/7 regular alerts and warnings regarding severe weather to a list of recipients including the KCC Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO), KCC Highways Senior Duty Officer, and KCC's Contact Point. The DEPO is also alerted to site-specific severe weather impacts by the emergency services and other responding agencies, with reports from the public received by Contact Point. KCC further initiates reporting using the Severe Weather Impacts System (SWIMS) to capture multi-agency resources and costs arising from severe weather incidents.
- 1.3 Across the county, 85,500 residential and commercial addresses are in areas at risk from fluvial (river) or tidal (coastal) flooding. Where possible, flood vulnerable properties are offered a Flood Warning Service by the EA. An early warning of flood risk to communities (including areas outside of floodplains) is delivered by Flood Guidance Statements, Severe Weather Warnings and the activation of a multi-agency Severe Weather Advisory Group (SWAG) by the Kent and Medway Resilience Forum (KMRF).

Kent water situation and weather statistics in Kent

2.1 Alerts

2.1.1 Flood alerts:

There were 2 flood alerts raised between April and September 2026. A table highlighting areas and number of alerts per area can be viewed in **Appendix 1**. A full list of flood alerts and warnings comparison to previous quarters and years can be found in **Appendix 2**. A visual representation of the flood zones and comparison to the same quarter last year can be found in **Appendix 4**.

2.1.2 Weather alerts:

Between April and September 2026 there were a total of seven weather alerts. The alerts were divided in the following categories:

- Heat warning – 3 alerts
- Thunderstorm warning – 2 alerts
- Wind warning – 2 alerts

2.1.3 Thames Barrier:

The Thames Barrier was closed on three different occasions for testing, and a further three times for operational reasons on:

- 7th April
- 6th May
- 4th June
- 6th July
- 3rd August
- 14^h September

More details on weather warnings, Thames Barrier closures, and comparison with previous quarters can be found in **Appendix 3**. A full comparison with graphs of the type of alerts received, and flood alert areas can be found in **Appendix 5**.

Recent Incident Response

3.1 Actions taken in response to incidents:

During the last two quarters, the DEPO was involved in the response to minor incidents, including:

- Monitoring the situation
- Liaising with other partner agencies
- Providing additional resources
- Activating SWAG meetings

3.2 Incidents of note:

- Between the 23rd May and 3rd June, water supply disruption affected or threatened areas across Kent including Whitstable, Herne Bay, Ashford, Maidstone, and surrounding villages.

- This disruption was attributed to low storage and very hot weather over the bank holiday weekend.
- On 26th May, the widespread disruption prompted the activation of Tactical and Strategic Coordinating Groups, led by Kent County Council.
- Several KCC services including Resilience and Emergency Planning, Education, Public Health, Social Care, Infrastructure, Communications, Trading Standards, and Highways were involved in the incident response.
- Between the 4th and 5th August several reservoirs and booster supplies were at risk because of high demand and low storage affecting Maidstone and Ashford:
 - This resulted in direct bottled water deliveries for 3,500 customers, with three bottled water stations and five community hubs established.
 - No multi-agency escalation was required as the water company managed the response well and implemented mitigation measures.
- Between 14th and 16th August, South East Water identified multiple actual and potential outages across Kent due to hot weather, low storage levels and smaller bursts.
 - Conditions escalated during the weekend, resulting in bottled water stations, rolling situation reports and regular communication with affected partners and KCC services.
 - No multi-agency escalation was required as the water company managed the response well and implemented mitigation measures.
- Additionally, during August KCC chaired a weekly operational information sharing meeting between the water companies and responding agencies, to improve situational awareness and preparedness for potential incidents.

Throughout all water supply incidents, KCC's Duty Emergency Planning Officer (DEPO) and relevant services were fully engaged in the response. Command and control structures were established where appropriate to manage the response, ensuring that risks to vulnerable residents and critical services were identified, monitored, and managed effectively.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 Members to make note of the warnings received since the last meeting of the Committee; contribute to further planning, and comply with response policy and practice through oversight and debate.

7. Contact Details

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Appendix 1: Flood Alerts and Warnings per Area

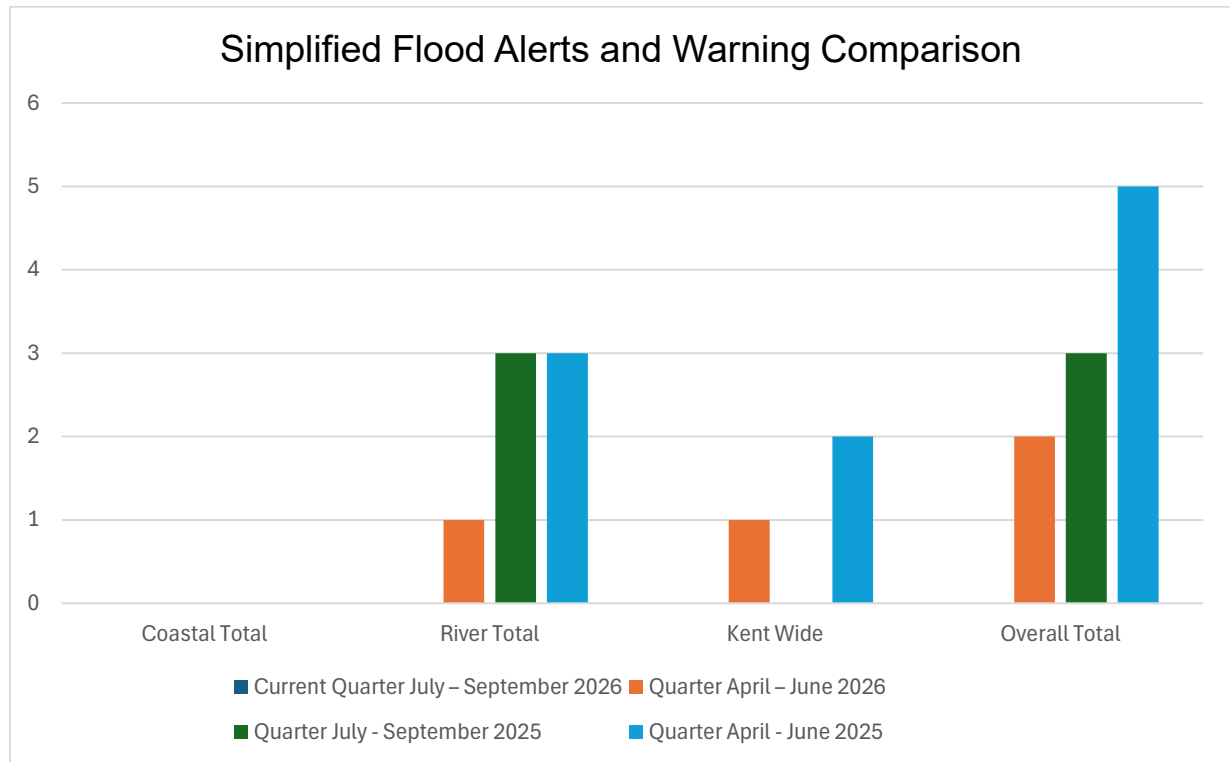
Warning area	Flood alerts & warnings Apr – Jun 2026	Flood alerts & warnings Jul - Sep 2026	Flood alerts & warnings Apr - Jun 2025	Flood alerts & warnings Jul - Sep 2025
RIVERS				
Upper River Stour	-	-	-	-
Lower River Stour	-	-	-	-
Tidal River Stour	-	-	-	-
River Darent	-	-	1	0
River Cray & Shuttle	1	-	1	2
River Rother	-	-	-	-
Tidal Rother	-	-	-	-
River Beult	-	-	-	-
River Teise and Lesser Teise	-	-	-	-
River Bourne	-	-	-	-
Rivers Eden and Eden Brook	-	-	-	-
Tidal Medway, Medway estuary	-	-	-	-
Lower River Medway	-	-	-	-
Upper River Medway	-	-	-	-
Middle River Medway	-	-	-	-
River Medway, Teise & Beult at Yalding	-	-	-	-
Little Venice Country Park and Marina	-	-	-	-
Tidal Thames (From Dartford Creek to Thames Barrier)	-	-	-	-
Rivers of the Isle of Sheppey	-	-	1	-
Pent Stream	-	-	-	1
Kent	1	-	2	0
TOTAL	2	0	5	3
COAST				
Isle of Sheppey and Coast from Kemsley to Seasalter	-	-	-	-
Coast from Ramsgate to Kingsdown	-	-	-	-

Warning area	Flood alerts & warnings	Flood alerts & warnings	Flood alerts & warnings	Flood alerts & warnings
	Apr – Jun 2026	Jul - Sep 2026	Apr - Jun 2025	Jul - Sep 2025
Coast from St Margaret's at Cliffe to Sandgate	-	-	-	-
Coast from Dartford to Allhallows	-	-	-	-
Coast from Whitstable to Margate	-	-	-	-
Coast from Sandgate to Dungeness	-	-	-	-
Coast from Fairlight to Dungeness (including tidal Rother)	-	-	-	-
Coast from Littlestone Golf Course to Dungeness	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

Appendix 2: Flood Alerts and Warnings Quarter comparison

Time period	Coastal alerts	Coastal warning	Total Coastal	River Alerts	River Warnings	River Total	Kent wide	Overall total
Jul – Sep 2026 (Current Quarter)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Apr – Jun 2026	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	2
Jan – Mar 2026	4	-	4	64	5	67	-	71
Oct – Dec 2025	15	-	15	14	-	14	-	29
Jul – Sep 2025	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	3
Apr – Jun 2025	-	-	-	3	-	3	2	5
Jan – Mar 2025	11	1	12	32	5	37	3	52
Oct – Dec 2024	15	-	15	29	-	29	-	44
Jul – Sep 2024	1	-	1	14	3	17	-	18
Apr – Jun 2024	18	1	19	10	1	11	-	30
Jan – Mar 2024	5	-	5	84	5	89	-	94
Jan – Dec 2024	79	2	81	144	9	153	-	234
Jan – Dec 2023	39	-	39	74	2	76	-	115
Jan – Dec 2022	41	1	42	68	11	79	-	121

Graph Comparison of Flood Alerts and Warnings April – September 2025 & 2026



Appendix 3: Weather Warnings and Thames Barrier Closures

Weather Warnings - April to June 2026 and July to September 2026 comparison with equivalent quarter previous year.

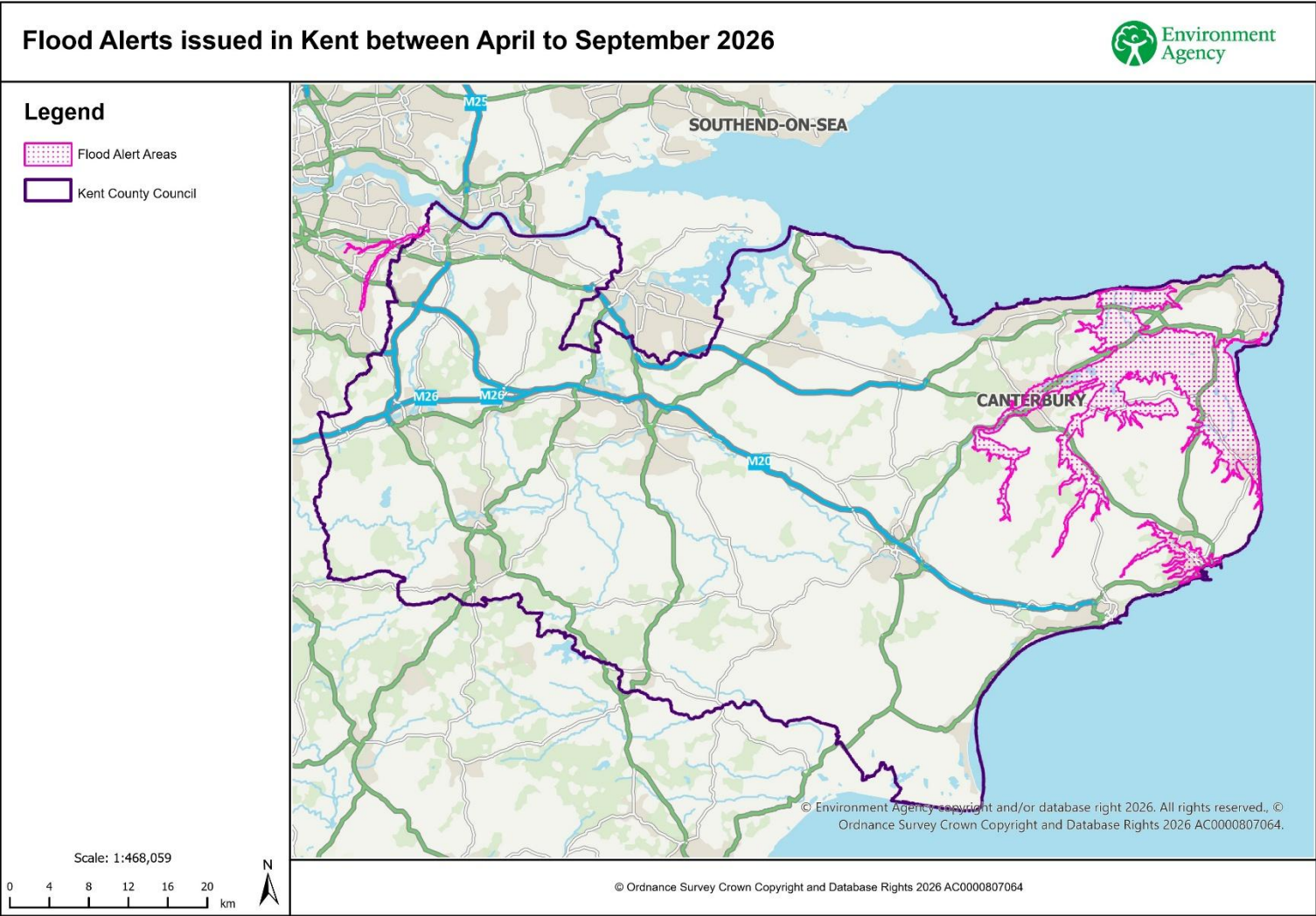
Weather	Apr – Jun 2026		Jul – Sep 2026		Apr – Jun 2025		Jul – Sept 2026	
	Warnings	Events	Warnings	Events	Warnings	Events	Warnings	Events
Thunderstorm	1	1	1	1	4	4	6	6
Rain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fog	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Ice	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wind	1	1	1	1	-	-	1	1
Snow	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cold-health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Heat-health	2	2	1	1	3	3	2	2

Thames Barrier Closures - April to June 2026 and July to September 2026 comparison with equivalent quarter previous year

	Apr – Jun 2026	Jul – Sep 2026	Apr - Jun 2025	Jul - Sep 2025
Operational closures	-	-	-	-
Test closures	3	3	3	3

Appendix 4: Visual Representation of flooding areas across Kent

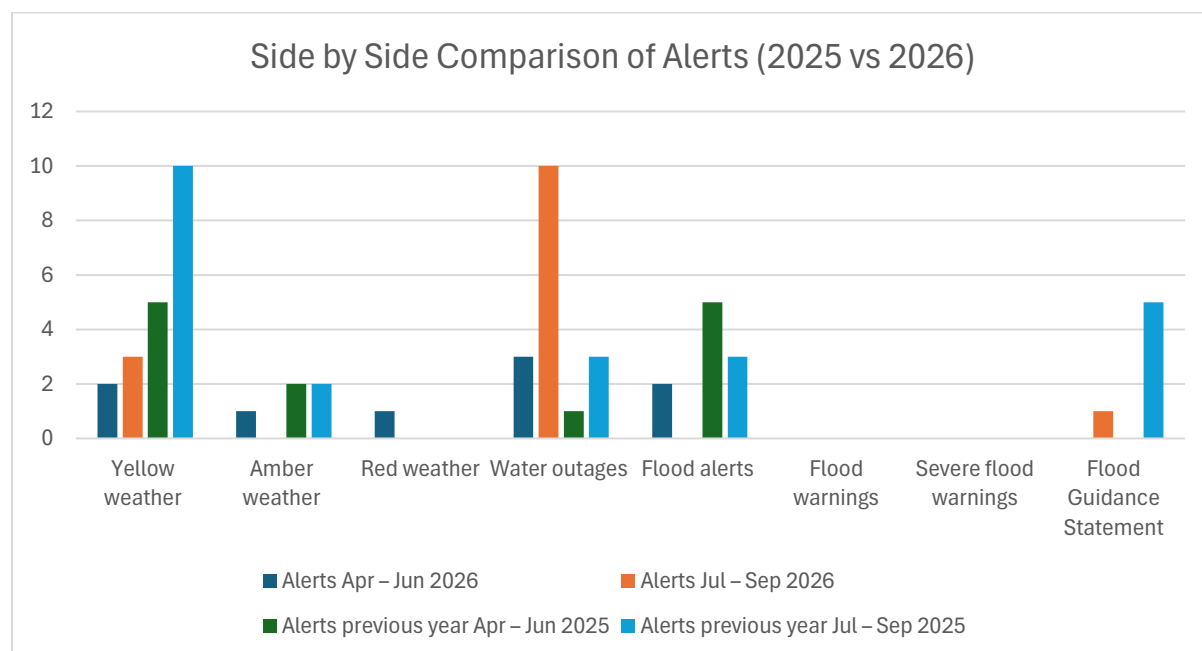
(April - September 2026) visual map display of alerts and warnings



Appendix 5: Type and number of alerts received between the current quarters (April to June 2026 and July to September 2026), and previous year equivalent quarters.

Alert type	Apr – Jun 2026	Jul – Sep 2026	Received from	Apr – Jun 2025	Jul – Sep 2025
WEATHER					
Yellow weather	2	3	Met Office	5	10
Amber weather	1	-		2	2
Red weather	1	-		-	-
FLOODING					
Water outages	3	10	Water companies	1	3
Flood alerts	2	-	Environment Agency	5	3
Flood warnings	-	-		-	-
Severe flood warnings	-	-		-	-
Flood Guidance Statement	-	1	Flood Forecasting Centre	-	5

Graph comparison of alerts received



Fluvial Flood Alerts (2025 vs 2026)

