

MONTHLY WEATHER REPORT

COMPILED FROM RETURNS OF OFFICIAL AND VOLUNTARY OBSERVERS

OCTOBER**1984**

VOLUME 101

NUMBER 10

Unsettled, rather wet and windy at times

During the first three days of October a complex low-pressure area covered the British Isles. On the 4th a vigorous depression moved from the Bay of Biscay into central France, then turned north-eastwards on the 5th, affecting south-east England. The depression filled and moved away into Denmark on the 6th. A succession of frontal systems crossed the British Isles until the 10th, when a ridge of high pressure became established and dominated south-east England for nearly a week. During the evening of the 17th a rapidly deepening depression approached south-west Ireland. The associated vigorous frontal system brought a strong westerly airstream to all areas. Further depressions and their frontal systems crossed the British Isles during the next seven days. During the 24th a depression deepened rapidly to the south of Ireland and moved slowly north-eastwards across the British Isles during the following day. On the 26th pressure rose over France, building a ridge into southern and eastern England. These southern areas were influenced by high pressure for the rest of the month, but northern and western areas continued to be affected by depressions tracking north-eastwards from Ireland to Scotland.

Weather

All districts had rather wet, unsettled weather, with strong winds and heavy rain at times. There were widespread and frequent thunderstorms in most areas during the 2nd and 3rd and prolonged thundery activity in southern and eastern areas on the 5th. Flooding was reported from a number of places in Suffolk and Essex and in south-west London. Some places had about eight hours of more or less continuous thunderstorms. In Suffolk three houses were reported damaged by lightning strikes and in south-west Essex large hail fell for a time. The generally unsettled weather continued in Scotland and northern England for the next two weeks while in the south it was mainly dry with overnight fog patches. After widespread rain, heavy in western parts of the United Kingdom on the 17th, nearly all areas were affected by heavy rain and gale-force winds over the next few days. Thundery outbreaks were accompanied by hail at times, especially on the 20th when hail showers were widespread in western areas. From the 24th the weather in the south became somewhat more settled, but in northern and western districts it remained unsettled for the rest of the month.

Wind

For the first half of the month winds were mainly light to moderate, with fresh to strong, occasionally gale-force winds in western districts. In the second half of the month winds were mostly fresh to strong, gale force at times.

On the 18th there were gale-force winds in many areas and they caused a great deal of damage and disrupted traffic: the Severn Bridge, the Britannia Bridge in Gwynedd, and the Tay Bridge were all closed to high-sided vehicles. Snaefell, Isle of Man and Great Dun Fell, Lancashire recorded maximum gusts of 94 kn on the 18th. The highest gust reported on that day was 100 kn at Pendennis Point, near Falmouth, Cornwall. Wind directions during the month were mostly southerly or south-westerly.

Temperature

Mean temperatures were generally below the monthly average in Scotland and Northern Ireland but above average in England and Wales. Anomalies ranged from 1 °C below normal in the north-east of the Grampian Region to 1 °C above normal in parts of the Midlands and East Anglia.

Temperatures exceeded 20 °C on only two days during the month: the afternoon temperature reached 21 °C at Finningley, South Yorkshire and Liphook, Hampshire on the 8th; most parts of England except the south-west had between 17 °C and 20 °C, thus giving quite a warm day; on the 15th temperatures in the Buchan area, Grampian Region reached 20 °C to 21 °C as the result of a föhn wind and the area had its warmest October day since 1973.

Air frost occurred on the first five days in the north. In the south there was frost only once after the 5th when, on the night of the 26th/27th, the lowest minimum was -3.7 °C at Liphook, Hampshire.

Rainfall

The month as a whole was rather wet over Scotland whereas in England and Wales rainfall was only a little above normal. Northern Ireland had near-normal rainfall.

Most places had frequent periods of rain or showers in the first ten days and many had heavy falls. Anvil Green, Kent recorded 72 mm on the 2nd. The 5th was the wettest day of the month for many places and London had its wettest day of the year so far. At Ewell, Surrey 43 mm was recorded during the day, 28 mm of it falling in 75 minutes around midday. Rain was again widespread on the 17th and 18th, with a fall of 59 mm at Llyn Fawr Reservoir, Mid Glamorgan on the 17th and 66 mm at Lubreoch Dam, Tayside on the 18th. During these two days 80 mm fell at the Sloy Power Station, Strathclyde. Further widespread heavy rain gave 89 mm at Cwm Dyli, Gwynedd on the 21st and 59 mm at Slapton, Devon on the 22nd. Northern and western areas again had rain on the 24th and 25th, some places in Scotland having falls

in excess of 60 mm. Heavy rain was confined to northern areas during the rest of the month. On the 28th there was a fall of 88.1 mm at Honister Pass, Cumbria, on the 29th Buckieburn Filters, Central Region reported 67.8 mm and on the 31st 75.0 mm was reported by Prabost, Western Isles.

Snow

There were fresh falls of snow over the higher peaks of the Scottish mountains on about 12 days during the month, snow lying for only about five days. Wintry showers fell on lower ground around the 18th as far south as North Humberside, but did not lie for long.

Sunshine

Sunshine amounts were near average generally in England and Wales, and in Scotland, but above average in Northern Ireland. Baltasound, Shetland recorded 171 per cent, more than twice the amount of sunshine in the previous two Octobers, to make this the sunniest October in a record going back to 1906. Northern Ireland had one of the sunniest Octobers on record, only 1981 being equally sunny since 1966. In England and Wales, central and eastern areas had above average sunshine, while the north-west and most southern parts of England were below average.

Fog

Overnight fog was frequent, mainly in the Midlands and southern England, up to the 17th and again from the 27th to the end of the month. Sea fog affected mainly southern and western coasts fairly frequently. Fog was thick at times: on the 15th an oil tanker was reported aground in thick fog at Milford Haven, Dyfed. There was occasional patchy fog on higher ground, mainly in southern areas, but on the 28th in England and Wales hill fog was widespread for a time.

Miscellaneous Phenomena

On the 3rd London Airport (Heathrow) reported a funnel cloud. A whirlwind formed on the 4th at Hampton Park, Hereford and did considerable damage to roofs in the course of a minute. On the 18th a minor tornado at Tuffley, Gloucestershire damaged more than 30 houses.

Table 1 District values

District	Air temperature °C					Mean 30 cm soil temp°C	Rain- days	Rainfall	Sun- shine
	Highest Max*	Lowest Min*	Max.	Min.	Mean				
			Difference from average						
0 Scotland N	18.2	−4.3	0.0	−0.4	−0.2	−0.4	+6	144	101
1 Scotland E	19.5	−4.0	+0.3	−0.6	−0.2	−0.2	+3	136	97
2 England E & NE	20.4	−1.3	+0.8	+0.5	+0.6	+0.5	+2	105	116
3 East Anglia	20.4	−2.0	+0.7	+0.8	+0.7	+0.6	+1	105	99
4 Midland Counties	20.5	−3.5	+0.8	+0.8	+0.8	+0.6	+2	109	98
5 England SE & Central S	21.1	−1.0	+0.5	+0.8	+0.6	+0.6	+4	141	83
6 Scotland W	17.2	−2.3	0.0	−0.1	0.0	+0.2	+7	159	91
7 England NW & Wales N	20.4	−1.7	+0.1	+0.7	+0.4	+0.7	+6	135	95
8 England SW & Wales S	21.2	−1.7	+0.3	+0.7	+0.4	+0.7	+5	134	92
N Ireland	19.5	−2.5	+0.1	−0.9	−0.4	+0.2	+4	109	117
Scotland	19.5	−4.3	+0.1	−0.4	−0.1	−0.1	+5	151	96
England & Wales	21.2	−3.5	+0.5	+0.7	+0.6	+0.6	+3	125	97

*Highest maximum and lowest minimum of District Value Stations