

## February 2013

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

### UK overview

The month was rather unsettled during the first half, but much more settled for the second half as high pressure brought mainly dry but often cloudy conditions with lower temperatures. This was the longest spell of dry weather of the whole winter. Any snowfalls that occurred were no more than would be expected in a typical winter.

Temperatures for February were somewhat below normal, continuing the 'cold but not particularly so' theme of December and January. The UK mean temperature was 2.8 °C, which is 0.9 °C below the 1981-2010 average. February was somewhat drier than average in most areas, and the vast majority of the rain fell in the first half of the month. The UK overall had 68 % of the average February rainfall. It was a relatively sunny month with 108 % of the long-term average sunshine for the UK overall. Scotland and Northern Ireland were particularly sunny, but it was duller over southern England.

A maximum temperature of 13.9 °C was recorded at Kinlochewe (Ross & Cromarty) on the 17th. A minimum temperature of -10.0 °C was recorded at Aviemore (Inverness-shire) early on the 22nd. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 on the 14th, 76.4 mm of rain fell at Alltdearg House (Isle of Skye). A wind gust of 78 mph was recorded at Culdrose (Cornwall) during the 4th. At 0900 GMT on the 14th, a snow-depth of 22 cm was measured at Whitehillocks (Angus).

### Weather impacts

In contrast to recent months, there were few major weather events impacting the UK during February. A number of snow events occurred through the month, but these were generally relatively short-lived.

High winds off the west coast of Scotland over the 4th and 5th saw some high swell and unusually large waves, causing disruption to ferry services.

### England diary of highlights

The first half of the month was generally unsettled, with variable temperatures and periods of rain, and snow at times in some areas (although this was mainly short-lived). After a short sunnier spell in mid-month, the weather turned colder and cloudier as high pressure became established.

The mean temperature was 1.2 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was rather drier than normal for most areas, with 70% of the long-term average rainfall. The month was near average for sunshine, with 96% of the normal sunshine hours, but rather duller towards the east and south, and bright in the north-west.

#### 1st to 13th:

Rain cleared from the south-east on the morning of 1st leaving scattered showers in the north-west. A ridge of high pressure built on 2nd to give a fine day. The 3rd was generally dry apart from patchy rain in the south-east. The 4th remained dry in the south, but northern areas had frequent showers and strong winds. Rain spread from the west into the Midlands and North on 5th, with strong winds in southern areas and gusts reaching around 60 mph. It was colder on 6th in a strong northerly wind, with some showers for eastern areas turning to

snow at times inland. Dry on 7th until rain reached the far south-west in late afternoon. Eastern coastal areas had patchy rain on 8th. A band of rain, sleet and snow spread across the south on the morning of 9th, with most areas overcast. On 10th another band of rain and snow spread from the west, and a strengthening south-east wind made it feel very cold. There were further pulses of snow in the early hours of 11th, many areas recording 3-7 cm and High Wycombe (Buckinghamshire) reporting 12 cm. Generally dry and overcast on 12th. A band of rain, sleet and snow spread eastwards to all areas during 13th with High Wycombe recording 9 cm snow depth, the rain clearing the south-east after midnight.

#### **14th to 19th:**

A brighter day on 14th, temperatures reaching 12 °C in London, though with some showers in the south-east later. High pressure built from the south, giving more settled conditions from 15th onwards, with night frosts and morning fog for some areas but generally sunny days.

#### **20th to 28th:**

Colder air arrived from the east on 20th, overnight temperatures falling to -6.7 °C at Preston Montford (Shropshire), and from now on it was generally overcast. The 21st again remained cold, with snow flurries for parts of Humberside and East Yorkshire. South-eastern areas saw some light snow on 22nd in a brisk east wind, and temperatures struggled to reach 3 °C. A band of snow showers affected the north-east on 23rd, with Copley (County Durham) recording 11 cm, and the south-east also had a few snow showers. The 24th was generally overcast, with scattered showers in the north-east again. Overcast, dry and cold on 25th and 26th. There was some sunshine for many on 27th and 28th and it remained dry.

## **Wales diary of highlights**

The first half of the month was mostly unsettled, with periods of rain and showers, and becoming windy but mild for a time. From mid-month it became more settled as high pressure took over, with little further rain and spells of sunshine, but much lower temperatures.

The mean temperature was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was rather drier than normal for most areas, with 68% of the long-term average rainfall. Monthly sunshine totals were near normal with exactly 100% of the long-term average for Wales overall.

#### **1st to 6th:**

The 1st brought a mixture of showers and sunshine, with the showers dying out on 2nd as a ridge of high pressure developed with sunny spells. After a frosty start, 3rd was overcast with some light rain. The 4th was windy, with some showers inland but sunny spells on coasts, and 5th was again windy and showery. Generally sunny on 6th, but breezy with isolated showers.

#### **7th to 14th:**

The 7th was dull, with light rain moving east in the afternoon and evening. Sunshine and showers on 8th, the showers merging into more general rain later. A band of generally light rain lay across the area for most of 9th. On 10th there were periods of light to moderate rain, and 19.2 mm was recorded at Capel Curig (Conwy). Colder on 11th and 12th, some higher inland places not getting much above freezing, with some brightness in the far north-west but overcast with light rain in the south-west. On 13th a band of rain, with snow on higher ground, passed through in the morning, clearing by mid-afternoon with milder air behind, but another band of rain arrived in the evening; Capel Curig recorded 56.8 mm. The 14th started wet then cleared to sunshine and scattered showers.

#### **15th to 28th:**

The 15th was generally dry, mild and sunny, with light winds. Variable cloud on 16th and again relatively mild. It was fine and sunny from 17th to 19th, but colder at night. It became colder by day also on 20th, with some mist and low cloud in eastern areas. Dry, cold and generally sunny on 21st, and similar on 22nd but more overcast inland. Generally overcast with patchy rain on 23rd and 24th, the precipitation wintry over higher ground in northern and central areas. It was generally dry again by 25th, with variable cloud-cover. After a milder night, some mist and low cloud developed on 26th. Dry with sunshine in the north but cloudier and misty further south on 27th and 28th.

## Scotland diary of highlights

The first half of the month was unsettled, with some cold interludes, and rain or snow at times. From mid-month it became more settled as high pressure took over, with much lower temperatures for a while but also some sunny days, especially so across the north-west Highlands.

The mean temperature was 0.5 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was rather drier than normal for most areas, with 63% of the long-term average rainfall. There was plenty of sunshine, particularly towards the north-west, with 130% of the normal sunshine hours. For Scotland this was one of the sunniest Februarys in the series from 1929.

### 1st to 13th:

After frosty mornings, 1st and 2nd were dry and bright apart from scattered showers in the far north. Another cold start on 3rd before rain spread into western areas in the afternoon. The 4th saw frequent showers, some heavy and wintry, with strong westerly winds; again on 5th there were frequent showers and strong winds, and South Uist (Outer Hebrides) recorded a gust of 62 mph. It was cooler on 6th with a strong northerly breeze, and snow showers in the north. After a quiet start on 7th, a band of patchy rain, with sleet and snow for higher ground, spread from the west during the afternoon, with further weak fronts to follow on 8th. Dull and cloudy on 9th, with rain and hill snow spreading from the west in the evening. On 10th there was some patchy rain and snow, mainly in the west, and it felt raw in a strengthening south-easterly wind. The 11th and 12th were generally dry and bright, with only a few scattered showers for eastern coasts. A band of snow spread from the west on 13th, Glasgow recording 6 cm, but it turned to rain later as milder air followed.

### 14th to 28th:

It was dry and bright in the east on 14th, but scattered showers remained in the west. A ridge of high pressure built on 15th, giving more settled conditions for several days with frosts overnight but sunshine by day, particularly in the north-west. It was mild at times, with Kinlochewe (Ross and Cromarty) reaching 13.9 °C on 17th. The settled conditions continued on 20th, still sunny in the west but cloudier and cooler in the east with a few scattered showers. Continuing fine on 21st, but cloudier in the east. It was cold at night, especially in the Highlands, temperatures falling to -10.0 °C at Aviemore (Inverness-shire) and -9.7 °C at Altnaharra (Sutherland) on 22nd. Still mostly dry and cold from 23rd till 26th, but some sleet and snow showers in the east on 23rd and 24th. It was a pleasant day on 27th and felt warm in the sunshine, fog in the central belt clearing later in the day. The south continued sunny on 28th with fog in the Central Belt clearing by the end of the morning, while the north had more cloud with some patchy rain and drizzle.

## Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The first half of the month was mostly unsettled, with periods of rain. The second half was more settled as high pressure took over, with much drier and colder conditions and plenty of sunshine.

The mean temperature was 0.4 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was slightly drier than normal for most areas, with 88% of the long-term average rainfall. The month was quite sunny, especially the second half, with 120% of the normal sunshine total.

### **1st to 11th:**

Rain spread southwards to all areas for a time on the morning of 1st. It then became dry, and 2nd was dry and sunny under a ridge of high pressure. Rain spread in from the west after dusk, clearing early on 3rd to leave another mainly dry and milder day. Winds strengthened from the west on 4th and brought scattered blustery showers. On 5th there was further rain, heavy at times and falling as snow on high ground, and strong north-westerly winds. The 6th was windy too, but dry and bright as pressure built. The 7th started dry and bright but a narrow band of rain passed through in the afternoon. A dry start on 8th but it became dull and wet later; remaining wet on 9th with only western areas seeing any brightness. Another area of rain on 10th cleared away in the afternoon, and 11th started wet before pressure began to build.

### **12th to 16th:**

The 12th was dry and bright, with just scattered showers in a few places. The 13th was dull with periods of rain, some heavy in the east, continuing overnight but clearing on 14th to a mix of sunshine and showers for many areas. After a generally dry and bright day on 15th, there was some light rain early on 16th after which settled, dry and bright weather took control again.

### **17th to 28th:**

Dry, sunny days followed from 17th until 20th, but clear night skies allowed widespread frosts to form. It remained mainly settled for the remainder of the month, although 21st to 23rd were cloudier with fewer night frosts and there were scattered showers in the east at times. Clearing skies early on 24th saw a return to overnight frosts, and the days were dry and sunny from 25th until 28th.

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