


A winter of contrasts

7 March 2011 - This winter wasn't as cold as  Our services help to minimise delays last year, despite the exceptionally cold December, provisional figures show.

The mean UK temperature was 2.4 °C, compared to 1.6 °C last winter. A 'normal' winter average temperature would be 3.7 °C

Heavy snow and very cold weather dominated the UK through much of December. However, during January UK mean temperatures were close to average and by February were above average.

So, through the course of the winter, we went from the coldest December on record to the ninth warmest February on record.

Snowy period

Met Office forecasts and warnings highlighted the **severe weather** throughout the coldest December in the UK for at least 100 years.

We helped the public and a number of businesses manage through the periods of severe weather. These include Bristol Airport which takes our **OpenRunway** service - which helps operators keep runways open and flights run on time. It was used by the airport operations team to minimise the impact of the snow and ice through the winter.

Robert Sinclair, CEO of Bristol Airport said: "**OpenRunway** enabled Bristol Airport to reinforce its risk assessment-based approach to winter operations. Accurate forecasting information enabled resources to be maximized, reducing the impact of severe weather, both airside and landside."

Winter 2010/11 - a round-up

- **Cold** - overnight temperatures fell to between -10 and -20 °C at times through December. The lowest winter temperature was -21.3 °C at Altnaharra in the Scottish Highlands - not quite as cold as last year when the mercury dipped to -22.3 °C.
- **Sun** - sunshine amounts varied widely across the UK, with the sun shining across Northern Ireland for more than 220 hours - almost 100 more than parts of South East England.
- **Rain** - rainfall was below average across most parts of the UK - with East Anglia having the least rain, 125mm for the whole winter.

This table shows the temperatures for winter across the UK. *All figures are provisional.*

	Long-term average temp (1971-2000)	Mean temp, 1 Dec-28 Feb	Coldest since (mean winter temp)	Coldest winter (since 1910)
UK	3.7 °C	2.4 °C	2009/10 (1.64 °C)	1962/63 (-0.18 °C)
England	4.1 °C	3.0 °C	2009/10 (2.26 °C)	1962/63 (-0.56 °C)
Northern Ireland	4.3 °C	2.6 °C	2009/10 (2.04 °C)	1962/63 (1.51 °C)
Scotland	2.7 °C	1.2 °C	2009/10 (0.39 °C)	1962/63 (0.16 °C)
Wales	4.2 °C	2.8 °C	2009/10 (2.21 °C)	1962/63 (-0.33 °C)

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