

January 2007

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1961-1990.

UK overview

Mean temperatures ranging from around 1.5 °C above average across the Northern Isles to over 3.5 °C above average across some areas of central England. Provisionally over the UK, it was the warmest January since 1916, and second warmest in areal series back to 1914. Well above average rainfall across much of western Scotland, with Scotland W district area having its wettest January since 1993. In contrast, parts of Eastern Scotland and southernmost areas of England had slightly below average rainfall. Sunshine was generally above average with the best of the sunshine compared to average across E and NE England. However, some western areas of Scotland received below average sunshine.

England diary of highlights

Very mild, except for one colder interlude around 22nd to 26th. Rainfall above average for the month, despite a fairly dry last week to the month. Widespread strong winds on 18th.

1st to 4th: Windy and showery conditions to start the year, with Land's End recording gusts to 60 m.p.h. on the 1st, in a westerly flow. Temperatures were above normal, and reached 10 °C in the south on most days. Showers gradually became more confined to the north and west.

5th to 7th: A wet spell with frontal rain pushing southeast later on the 5th, then further rain, heavy in the southwest, moving northeast across most parts on the 6th. Western parts stayed wet on the 7th with drier conditions in the east. Temperatures above normal.

8th to 13th: Wet weather continued with some strong westerly winds, especially on 11th when they reached 60-80 m.p.h. quite widely, and on the 12th in the north too. Temperatures remaining above normal.

14th to 19th: Largely dry and sunny on the 14th, but becoming more cloudy through the 15th, with rain spreading in, especially overnight. Then largely cloudy conditions with further outbreaks of rain persisted, and it became windy too, with gusts to 55 m.p.h. in the northwest on the 17th. Strong winds became widespread on the 18th with 77 m.p.h. gusts recorded at Heathrow airport, with damage and disruption due to the wind over many areas. Temperatures remaining generally above normal.

20th to 25th: A colder spell, with temperatures around or just below normal. Sunny spells and blustery showers, with many parts having frosty nights too. The west recorded 50 m.p.h. gusts on the 20th, whilst the east was largely dry. Blustery showers continued on the 21st, with snow over the Pennines and some western parts, and by the 22nd sleet fed down the east coast. Sleet and snow pushed south over many parts on the 24th, with 4 cm snow reported at Odiham, and further snow showers affected the southeast on the 25th. Western parts were generally drier and sunnier through this period.

26th to 31st: A settled end to the month. Wintry outbreaks cleared south on the 26th with high pressure bringing plenty of dry, but cloudy conditions and just occasional patches of light rain around. Temperatures rising back to generally above normal.

Wales diary of highlights

Very mild, except for one colder interlude around 22nd to 26th. Rainfall well above average over N Wales, but close to average across SW Wales. Widespread strong winds on 18th.

1st to 7th: The first week of January was generally mild, with bands of heavy rain and strong to gale force westerly winds. 25 mm of rain was recorded in parts of South Wales on the 1st. Some drier and brighter spells for a time on the 2nd and 3rd and then again on the 5th, but with scattered showers. Temperatures reached 14 °C on the 5th in East Wales. A band of heavy rain on the 7th, with 39 mm at Capel Curig and 21.8 mm at Sennybridge.

8th to 14th: This period continued in an unsettled theme with weather fronts spreading quickly from the west giving periods of heavy rain and strong to gale force westerly winds. On the 8th, it was wet and windy with very mild overnight temperatures and 54 mm of rain at Capel Curig overnight, and then a further 41 mm at Capel Curig on the 9th. Further heavy rain and gales on the 11th with gusts reaching 89 m.p.h. on the 11th at Capel Curig. There was further heavy rain on both the 13th and 14th.

15th to 21st: Again it was a very wet and windy period with bands of heavy rain and strong to gale-force westerly winds with a period of severe gales on the 18th. Exceptional gusts on the 18th led to disruption with gust speeds reaching 100 m.p.h. at Capel Curig, 90 m.p.h. at Lake Vyrnwy, 81 m.p.h. at Rhyl and 76 m.p.h. at Swansea.

22nd to 31st: On the 22nd, the winds slowly turned to the north with high pressure building from the north leading to a more settled period of weather. This led to generally drier weather, although with some frosty nights. Some sleet and snow fell over Welsh hills on the 22nd, then a frost overnight. Dry, sunny and cold on the 23rd. A band of rain, sleet and snow spread southwards on the 24th, with snow on the higher hills of east Wales. Then dry, bright, cold and frosty on the 25th. Largely cloudy and mainly dry for the end of the month. Slightly milder air spreading around the high pressure kept frosts at bay with winds generally from the west or northwest.

Scotland diary of highlights

A very mild month overall, but with a spell slightly below normal between 16th and 26th. A very wet month across western Scotland, although some eastern areas recorded below average rainfall.

An unsettled start to January with a mixture of bright, sunny or clear spells and showers. As various fronts tracked eastwards the showery weather was interrupted by spells of rain. The 1st and the 4th were windy, with 62 m.p.h. being recorded at Machrihanish. A touch of ground frost led to icy conditions on the 8th, with Aboyne recording a temperature of -1.7 °C. Cloud and rain spread northeast on the 8th, this rain was heaviest in the south-west. Rain continued overnight and at Eskdalemuir, 28 mm fell in the 12 hours to 0900 UTC on the 9th.

The 10th to 15th was a very wet and windy spell. On 10th, heavy showers affected the north during the morning with snow on hills, but mainly dry elsewhere. Heavy rain and gale to severe gale southerly winds edged in from the west coast during the evening. Blustery showers and severe gales on the 11th, with gusts of 79 m.p.h. at Islay and 77 m.p.h. at Lerwick. On the 12th, temperatures reached 15 °C in Aberdeen, winds gusted to 89 m.p.h. at Lerwick and around 50 mm of rain fell at Tyndrum. More rain in the west on the 13th with drier, brighter, conditions in the east, but still windy with gales in places. Cloudy on the 14th with rain, heavy at times, with 33 mm being recorded at Tyndrum. Brighter or clearer to the lee of the mountains, where there was a ground frost around dawn. Windy, at times, with strong winds or gales, severe at times with gusts to 72 m.p.h. at Wick during the early morning and 69 m.p.h. at Inverbervie during the evening. Very windy again on the 15th with severe gales across the northwest and Northern Isles, gusts to 83 m.p.h. at Sella Ness and 80 m.p.h. at Lerwick. A waving cold front brought heavy rain to the Isles and the western hills, with 45 mm at Cassley, 43 mm at Lusa (Skye) and 36 mm at Tulloch Bridge. The front eventually pushed southeast and weakened introducing wintry showers across the northwest with a lighter north-westerly wind.

Frosty over much of the country during the morning and evening of the 16th, with light rain, sleet and snow pushing into central and southern parts during the evening. Wintry showers developing on the 17th, although the northeast stayed mainly dry. Rain spreading north on the 18th soon turned to snow, causing morning rush-hour problems in the central belt and the Southern Highlands. Windy for a time in the south with a gust to 70 m.p.h. at Dundrennan. The 19th was bright with showers, before more persistent rain spread northeast later, with snow on northern high ground. Gales returned to the south by midnight, with westerly winds reaching severe gale strength by dawn on 20th. Gusts 60 to 65 m.p.h. in many places with 75 m.p.h. recorded at Rosehearty.

From the 21st to the 25th a wintry spell of weather covered parts of Scotland with some heavy snow across high ground, but also to lower levels too. The morning of the 25th was particularly frosty with Dalwhinnie dipping down to -7.1 °C. On the 25th, cloud and patchy drizzle in the northwest slowly pushed across the country, though many eastern areas remained dry.

From the 26th the weather was characterised by cloudy conditions, more so across the north and west. There was also rain at times, this becoming heavy and prolonged across the West Highlands from the 29th to the 31st. Occasional colder intrusions were experienced in the north, but on the whole the weather was mild with the best of the sunshine to be found to the east of the mountains. A temperature of 13 °C was recorded at Leuchars on the 28th and 14 °C at Dyce on the 31st. Windy, at times, with gusts to 60 m.p.h. at Kirkwall on the 28th and 70 m.p.h. at Lerwick on the 29th.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

A very mild month. Rainfall above average across the west, but close to average across eastern areas.

An unsettled spell of weather at the start of January with a mixture of bright, sunny or clear spells and showers. This was interrupted at times, by longer spells of rain. Of note was the 51 m.p.h. gust at Castlederg on the 3rd, and heavy rain on the 7th when St Angelo reported 26 mm of rain which was followed by another 28 mm on the 8th. The 8th and 9th turned out to be mild days with temperatures reaching 13 °C and 11 °C respectively.

Gale or severe gales affected Northern Ireland, at times, from the 10th through to the 12th with a gust of 63 m.p.h. being recorded at Ballykelly on the 11th and 70 m.p.h. on the 12th. It was also mild with a temperature of 13 °C on the 12th. The weather remained unsettled throughout with showers of longer spells of rain.

The 13th to 15th were showery days, these showers merging to give longer spells of rain at times. The 16th started cold with a widespread frost, with -3 °C being recorded at Katesbridge. It became milder with rain during the evening, although there was a return to colder weather with wintry showers on the 17th.

Stormy for a time on the 18th with Killowen reporting a gust to 81 m.p.h., and several stations reached over 70 m.p.h. in gusts. Weather-wise on the 18th, it was showery and fairly mild. The morning of the 19th was bright with the odd shower, then cloudier in the afternoon with some rain. The evening was very mild with temperatures reaching 13 °C but gales became severe with gusts reaching 70 m.p.h. at Ballykelly. The severe gales slowly eased during the morning of the 20th but scattered showers affected many places during the day with some sunshine. A colder day, with highest temperatures of around 5 °C.

The 21st saw sunny spells and scattered showers falling as snow over hills, with winds turning more northerly through the day. A crisp winter's day on the 22nd, with mainly sunny skies, although the odd wintry shower later in the evening. The 23rd started on a similar note before thicker cloud pushed more frequent showers across all areas in the afternoon, these showers by now mostly of rain. Showers died out early on the 24th to leave a mainly dry day with some sunshine, though a strong northeast breeze affected the east coast. A sharp frost overnight led to temperatures dipping to -4.1 °C at Castlederg. The 25th was mainly sunny though cloud edged in from the north through the day.

The period 26th to 31st was a cloudy spell of weather with the odd spot of rain or drizzle across the northwest but a few bright or clear spells in the southeast.

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