

April 2013

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

UK overview

The cold dry weather of late March continued into the first few days of April. Temperatures did return to near the seasonal average as the month progressed, as the persistent easterly winds finally gave way to winds from a westerly or southerly quarter around 11th. Temperatures rose as high as 23 °C in some eastern areas on 25th, but it then became rather chillier once again, especially at night with some late-season frosts occurring quite widely on 29th and 30th.

Temperatures for April were below average everywhere. The UK mean temperature was 6.3 °C, which is 1.1 °C below the 1981-2010 average, very similar to 2012 but otherwise the coldest April for the UK since 1989. The month was drier than average across most of England and Wales, with a band from Cheshire to Humberside receiving less than 20% of average. In contrast northern and western Scotland received higher than average rainfall for the month. The UK overall had 87% of average rainfall. There was 113% of the long-term average sunshine for the UK overall, with most of Scotland and eastern areas of England above average.

A maximum temperature of 23.1 °C was recorded at Faversham (Kent) on the 25th. A minimum temperature of -11.2 °C was recorded at Braemar (Aberdeenshire) on the 2nd. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 18th, 84.8 mm of rain fell at High Snab Farm (Cumbria). A wind gust of 84 mph was recorded at Aberdaron (Gwynedd) on the 18th. At 0900 GMT on the 1st, a snow-depth of 22 cm was measured at Ballypatrick (Antrim).

Weather impacts

The cold weather of March persisted into early April with some ice and wintry snow showers. As mid-month approached some warnings of low-level impacts from rain and snow melt were issued for parts of central Scotland.

In the middle of the month some disruption was caused by high winds, particularly around the 17th and 18th for north-west Wales, northern England and southern Scotland.

England diary of highlights

The month began chilly with some wintry showers before turning more unsettled with rain or showers, and strong winds between 14th and 18th. Following this, a somewhat drier, warmer and brighter period prevailed before finally turning cooler again with some heavy showers before the end of the month.

The mean temperature was 0.9 °C below the 1981-2010 average, similar to that of April 2012. It was a very dry month with only 54% of average rainfall, and parts of the North Midlands to the east coast received less than 20% of average. The sunshine total was 109% of the long-term average, slightly brighter in parts of the east and duller in the south-west.

1st to 7th:

The 1st was generally dry and bright but cold in an easterly wind. The 2nd remained cold with wintry showers affecting eastern coastal areas. It was a cold start on 3rd and temperatures fell to -7 °C in parts of Cumbria,

but it was a dry and bright day. There was light rain and snow for southern areas on 4th and 5th but dry and remaining cold elsewhere. High pressure dominated on 6th and 7th, which remained dry with sunny spells and slightly higher temperatures.

8th to 18th:

There was patchy rain for southern and south-western areas on 8th and 9th, but other areas were dry and bright. A bright start on 10th but rain spread in to the south-west during the late afternoon. There was rain for western areas on 11th but the east remained dry. The 12th saw showers in some central and south-eastern areas but it was brighter in the north. Rain spread from the west on the morning of 13th accompanied by increasing south-westerly winds. A band of rain and strong winds spread from the north-west during the morning of 14th, with High Bradfield (North Yorkshire) recording a gust of 70 mph, although it was warm in the south-east with Manston and Gravesend (Kent) reaching 22 °C. The 15th was generally dry but breezy in a south-west wind. Another windy but mainly dry day on 16th although rain reached the far south later. A band of rain in western areas moved north during the morning of 17th accompanied by strong winds. The 18th saw rain for many areas with the strong winds continuing and High Bradfield recording a gust of 78 mph.

19th to 25th:

It became more settled on 19th and 20th as high pressure built from the south. The 21st saw more cloud, and a band of rain spread from the west during the day. A dry start on 22nd but a band of patchy rain spread from the west in the afternoon. It was a dry and warm day on 23rd with temperatures reaching 20 °C in the south-east. The 24th again was warm in the south-east but a band of patchy rain in northern and central areas spread slowly southwards during the day. The temperature reached 23 °C in Cambridge and Kent on 25th, but a band of rain spread slowly southwards reaching the south-east during the late evening.

26th to 30th:

The 26th was mainly dry for northern areas but southern and central areas saw scattered showers, some heavy with hail and thunder. It was another showery day on 27th, some showers becoming heavy with thunder in eastern areas. A band of patchy rain spread from the north-west during 28th although southern areas stayed generally dry. It was cooler on 29th as a brisk northerly wind set in and brought showers for northern areas. Drier for all on 30th with sunny spells.

Wales diary of highlights

The first week saw cold nights but sunny days before it turned more unsettled but milder. The 17th and 18th were stormy with high winds. From 19th it turned generally more settled with patchy rain and some bright spells.

The mean temperature was 1.2 °C below the 1981-2010 average, so the coldest April since 1989. It was drier than average in most areas with 60% of average rainfall. Sunshine was close to average with 105% of the long-term average.

1st to 7th:

The 1st was dry and cold, but cloudy except in the north-west. The 2nd to 6th were slightly milder, dry and sunny during the day but with cold nights e.g. -7.6 °C at Sennybridge (Powys) on 3rd. The 7th was dry too, but cloudier with sunny intervals.

8th to 16th:

The 8th and 9th were milder at night, with more cloud and some light, patchy rain in the south and east. The 10th had sunny intervals and patchy rain, a more organised band of rain developing later in the south. It was warmer, minimum temperatures staying above freezing, on 11th with short periods of rain, heavy at times. The

12th had some rain and showers dying out then some sun with temperatures near normal for the time of year. Wind, cloud and rain moved in late morning and early afternoon on 13th. The 14th had a band of rain passing through west to east in the morning, becoming lighter and patchier by the afternoon. The 15th had sunshine, then showers developed later. Early rain and a fresh wind on 16th, becoming mainly dry and sunny.

17th to 18th:

A band of rain accompanied by strong winds spread from the south-west on 17th with Aberdaron (Gwynedd) recording a gust of 74 mph. Breezy and showery on 18th with strong westerly winds and Aberdaron recording an 84 mph gust.

19th to 23rd:

High pressure built from the south to give fine sunny days on 19th and 20th. A band of rain spread from the west during 21st. A dry start on 22nd but some patchy rain spread into western areas during the afternoon. The 23rd was dry with sunny spells.

24th to 30th:

There was rain for western areas on 24th which spread east during the afternoon. A bright start on 25th but a band of rain spread from the north-west during the afternoon. The 26th brought showers, heaviest and most frequent in central and eastern areas. The 27th was another showery day with the heaviest and most frequent over central areas. A dry and bright start on 28th, but rain spread into northern areas during the afternoon. It was drier and brighter on 29th but cooler in a north-west wind. High pressure built from the west on 30th to give a dry bright day.

Scotland diary of highlights

The month started cold and frosty with rain or snow at times. It was milder, but also wet and windy, through the middle of the month. There was a brief dry, settled spell on 19th and 20th, before a return to windy and unsettled conditions for the end of the month.

The mean temperature was 1.3 °C below the 1981-2010 average, so the coldest April since 1989. It was wetter than average in the north and west of the country and drier along the east coast; Scotland overall received 129% of average rainfall. With the exception of the Borders, most areas had above average sunshine with 127% of the long-term average.

1st to 9th:

From 1st to 5th high pressure remained in charge, and it was mainly dry and bright but with a few light showers on 2nd and 4th. However, it was cold and frosty at night with a minimum temperature of -11.2 °C at Braemar (Aberdeenshire) early on 2nd. Some rain in the north on 6th as a cold front moved slowly south, which continued into 7th with rain, sleet or snow in the north. The cold front moved south on 8th with sleet and snow in the north and only the south and far north staying dry. Mainly dry and bright on 9th except for a few showers in the north.

10th to 18th:

Rain or showers for many places on 10th, especially the north. Rain in the south-west on 11th spread slowly northwards. Rain again in the south-west on 12th moved slowly east, but mostly dry elsewhere. Mostly dry on 13th and a lot milder. However by the end of the day wind and rain spread in from the west. Wet and windy for most of the country on 14th with 58.2 mm recorded at Cluanie Inn (Ross-shire). The rain cleared to the east early in the afternoon with showers following in behind for some northern areas. A band of showers in the south on 15th moved slowly north, but the rest of the country was mainly dry and bright apart from some showers in the north-west in the morning. Strong winds and rain spread to most areas overnight and then

through the day on 16th; the wind reached gale force in many areas with a gust of 72 mph recorded at Inverbervie (Angus), and 42 mm of rainfall was recorded at Achnagart (Ross & Cromarty). The wind eased on 17th until later in the day, but it was very wet everywhere as rain spread in from the west with 63.6 mm recorded at Lusa in Skye (Highland). Rain in the north on 18th and blustery showers in the south with gale-force winds across the country.

19th to 20th:

Dry and bright for most areas on 19th, apart from a few showers in the Northern Isles. Mostly dry again on 20th with a few showers in the north, but a cold front moved into the north-west in the evening.

21st to 30th:

A cold front brought rain to most areas on 21st before clearing to the east during the afternoon to leave strong winds and blustery showers. Mostly dry in the east on 22nd but blustery showers in the west; very windy again with gusts to gale force across the country. The strong winds continued into 23rd with scattered showers across the country. Overnight rain mostly cleared away east by dawn on 24th, leaving a drier day with lighter winds but with some scattered showers. Wet at first in the south on 25th but clearing by early afternoon, while further north it was showery all day. Frequent showers everywhere on 26th, many of which were of sleet or hail as well as thundery. Mostly dry on 27th with a few showers in the far south, but rain spread into the north-west by evening. This band of rain cleared overnight, but it was windy for the remainder of 28th with frequent blustery showers. Frequent blustery showers again on 29th, especially in the north. Some scattered showers on 30th, with rain edging into the north-west in the evening.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The start of the month was settled, cold and bright with easterly winds but some light rain by the 10th. Mid-month became more unsettled but milder with strong south-westerly winds and some gale-force gusts on 16th. The remainder of the month saw some settled interludes but was generally cool with a mixture of sunshine and showers.

The mean temperature was 1.1 °C below the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall was close to the long-term-average at 103%, and it was rather sunny with 113% of average.

1st to 7th:

Mainly dry and sunny as high pressure remained in charge and light winds continued from an easterly direction. There were overnight frosts, and temperatures fell below -5 °C in places on 4th. Snow that had fallen in some places in late March continued to melt gradually.

8th to 12th:

The 8th and 9th continued dry and bright but with more cloud and a fresh easterly wind. The 10th started dry but with some light rain for most later on. A dry start on 11th but a wet afternoon and night followed with 29.4 mm recorded at Ballypatrick Forest (Antrim). The rain cleared from the west during 12th, leaving a mainly dry and milder day, but some showers lingered in the south-east.

13th to 18th:

It was dry early on 13th but as the wind swung to a more southerly direction and strengthened, rain spread quickly to all areas during the afternoon. The rain cleared early on 14th to leave a bright day with blustery showers and winds gusting to 52 mph in several places. Rain on 15th cleared to give a bright day with scattered blustery showers. The 16th was mainly dry and bright, westerly winds reaching gale force with a gust of 61 mph at Magilligan (Londonderry). Winds remained strong and rain spread in quickly on 17th, but cleared most areas during the afternoon. Blustery showers, heavy at times, continued throughout 18th.

19th to 30th:

Rain over western areas on 24th spread east during the afternoon. A bright start on 25th but a band of rain spread from the north-west during the afternoon. The 26th was showery, the heaviest and most frequent showers in central and eastern areas. The 27th was another showery day with the heaviest and most frequent over central areas. After a dry and bright start on 28th, rain spread into northern areas during the afternoon. It was drier and brighter on 29th but cooler in a north-west wind, and as high pressure built from the west on 30th it was dry and fine for all.

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