

March 2007

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

UK overview

Mean temperatures around 1 °C above average across Northern Ireland, but generally around 1.5 to 2 °C above average across England, Wales and Scotland. Rainfall generally close to average, although some stations in north-east England only received around 50% of average rainfall. Sunshine levels generally well above average, with many southern and eastern areas of England recording over 150% of average sunshine.

England diary of highlights

Overall, a mild and sunny month with slightly below average rainfall. A cold snap after mid month brought some areas some snow.

1st to 7th: The first week of March was unsettled with bands of rain and strong winds, but it was generally mild. Rather cool on the 1st with showers at first, then a ridge building overnight with a temperature of -3 °C recorded at Benson. This was followed by a deepening area of low pressure and spells of heavy rain later on the 2nd. Further bands of rain and strong winds on the 3rd with gusts over 50 knots in Kent and 13 °C in London, followed by a ridge of high pressure overnight. Bands of heavy rain brought 25 mm or more to the south-west on the 4th with gusts to 51 knots at Brixham. Gusts reached 64 knots in the south-west on the evening of the 5th with heavy rain on the 6th, but more showery on the 7th. Mild with temperatures around 14 or 15 °C in the south-east on the 6th and 7th.

8th to 14th: Pressure began to build on the 8th from the south with a weak showery trough on the 8th and 9th. Generally mild with sunny spells, 15 °C was recorded in London on the 8th, 15 °C in Great Malvern on the 10th, 17 °C in London on the 11th and 19 °C in Norfolk on the 12th. Further weak fronts spread through between the 12th and 14th, but it was mainly dry. Some dense fog overnight 13/14th.

15th to 21st: Pressure began to decline from the 15th to 16th which led to an unsettled period with bands of heavy rain and strong south-westerly winds. It was generally mild at first, but foggy on the 15th. Some patchy light rain on the 16th and 17th with mild temperatures of 14 to 15 °C in the south, then some heavy rain and strong winds on the 18th. Turning colder with showers on the 19th and some wintry showers over high ground, then a strong cold northerly flow developed by the 20th, with 2 cm of lying snow reported at Wattisham. Pressure then built from the west again by the 21st, but with further light coverings of snow on east coasts.

22nd to 31st: The remainder of the month saw predominately high pressure to the north-east of the UK, with cool north-easterly winds at times, but with some showery troughs as well particularly on the 29th and 30th. On the 22nd a band of rain spread south-east with light snow in the south-east. High pressure developed on the 23rd but with a band of light rain spreading westwards. Then frosty overnight, with -2 °C recorded at Keswick, but milder again on the 24th with 13 °C in Plymouth, but at High Wycombe the maximum temperature was only 5.8 °C. Most places dry on 24th, and mainly dry again on the 25th, but isolated showers along the south coast. Mainly dry and bright on the 26th with pockets of frost, with -2 °C being recorded at Odiham. Some warm areas by day with 17 °C being recorded at the Solent. Similar on the 27th with dry and bright weather, with -2 °C being recorded overnight at Yeovilton and 19 °C by day at Herstmonceux. On the 28th mainly dry and warm, with 18 °C being recorded at Heathrow, but isolated thundery showers in the south-west. Cooler on the 29th with patchy rain and showers, with a maximum temperature of 12 °C in

Bournemouth. Rather cool and showery on the 30th, but many places dry on the 31st with pressure building again from the north, some showers along the south coast.

Wales diary of highlights

Overall, a mild and sunny month with close to average rainfall. A cold snap after mid month brought some areas some snow.

1st to 9th: A dry start to the month with temperatures mostly above normal. The 2nd saw a change to wet and windy weather with some heavy and persistent rain in the south and parts of the east especially. Although the 3rd saw a brief dry and bright spell, the 4th brought more wet weather with 25 mm of rain in the south-west. The windy, but mild, weather continued into the 5th with further spells of rain spreading in from the west along with gale-force winds. Rain cleared early on the 6th and the winds eased, bringing a pleasant morning however, heavy showers developed during the afternoon. The 7th started dry, sunny and mild, but further rain spread in from the west by the evening. A similar pattern continued on the 8th with a further 15 mm of rain for Capel Curig.

10th and 11th: A brief spell of dry and settled weather as high pressure built across the country with temperatures remaining in the mild category, 14 to 16 °C.

12th and 13th: Rain returned on 12th, spreading in from the west, but clearing by the afternoon, temperatures remained mostly near or above normal. A further band of rain swept in from the north on the 13th but turned showery during the day.

14th to 16th: High pressure dominated the middle part of the month with a spell of lighter winds and some dry sunny/clear spells however, there were also some periods of mainly light rain at times. Again temperatures remained above average, but with some overnight frosts under clear skies.

17th to 22nd: All change, as cold weather became the dominant feature. The 17th was a cloudy day with two periods of rain, light in the morning but heavier in the evening. The latter, a cold front, brought a strong northerly blast with snow showers on higher ground on the 18th. Temperatures were generally between 6 and 8 °C, well below previous days. The cold weather continued into the early part of the week with further snow showers, 10 cm of snow across the Brecon Beacons on the morning of the 19th. The 21st was dry and sunny although still cold. Rain spreading in from the west on the 22nd brought an end to the cold snap.

23rd to 31st: A ridge of high pressure built across the country bringing dry and settled conditions, although with a mixture of some sunny/clear periods but also some cloudier spells. Clear spells brought overnight frost and fog in places while daytime temperatures were mostly in the mild category, 14 to 16 °C. Winds were fairly strong through this period making it feel much cooler. The end of the last week brought a couple of period of rain and showers, especially on 31st in the south, where there were a few heavy thunderstorms.

Scotland diary of highlights

Mean temperatures and sunshine above average, with rainfall close to average.

A cloudy and showery start to the 1st with gale-force northerly winds. It became drier and brighter during the day with winds easing. Dry and frosty start to the 2nd, with sunny spells in the east but the west became cloudy with occasional rain, extending to eastern Scotland during the evening. Sunny spells and scattered showers on the 3rd, the showers mainly in the west. A dry and bright start to the 4th with patchy frost. Heavy rain pushing north during the day with south-easterly gales developing. Some sunshine on the 5th with scattered showers, then heavy rain and gales swept north-east later in the afternoon and through the evening. South Uist had a gust to 72 m.p.h. Rain and gales cleared the mainland by dawn on the 6th and Shetland by the early afternoon with sunny or clear spells and showers following. These showers being more frequent and

heavier across the west, where as many places in the east remained dry. This showery regime persisted through the 7th, the showers being heaviest and more persistent across the west with the best of the sunshine across the east where many places reached 12 °C.

A bright start to the 8th with a ground frost across the north-east and parts of the south. Cloud with rain, falling as snow on the mountains, pushed eastwards through the afternoon and evening with gales developing across the north and the north-west. Heavy showers on the 9th, especially in the west with hail, thunder and snow over hills, but drier and brighter in the east. More persistent rain in the north-west during the evening. Strong south-west winds. The 10th was cloudy in the west with patchy drizzle but heavy rain at times in the north-west. The south and east was mainly dry, brighter and mild, with a temperature of 15 °C in Aberdeen. The 11th started dry over south and east Scotland. Rain in the north-west edged slowly southeast during the day, heaviest over western Scotland. Drier weather followed to the north-west during the evening, which continued to move south-east through the morning of the 12th leaving bright, sunny or clear spells and showers, these wintry across the mountains. These showers merged to give a longer spell of rain on the morning of 13th, this clearing to sunny or clear spells and occasional showers. Windy in the far north with a gust of 57 m.p.h. at Sella Ness. The 14th was cloudy in the north and west with a little rain, most of this in the north-west. Drier in the south and east with some sunshine. Persistent rain affected the north-west from the early hours of the 15th, with 30.8 mm at Kinlochewe. This rain moved south-east and weakened, with sunshine and showers following from the north-west. Another spell of rain on the 16th produced 34.4 mm at Cassley, with little rainfall reaching the sheltered east. Very windy over the Northern Isles in the evening with Foula recording a gust of 77 m.p.h. and Sella Ness 74 m.p.h. Mostly cloudy with outbreaks of rain on the 17th, although some drier and brighter spells in the east. Windy with severe gales in the north by the end of the day.

A change to much colder conditions on the 18th with heavy and blustery wintry showers, snow lying over high ground. Stormy at first in the north with a gust of 94 m.p.h. recorded at Foula. Plenty of wintry snow in the north on the 19th and 20th with significant snow over high ground. The wintry showers were well scattered in the south with sunny/clear spells. On the 21st the east was dry and bright for much of the day, but rain gradually spread from the west, with some hill snow for a time. Patchy rain cleared southeast during the early hours of the 22nd with sunny spells developing.

The 23rd and 24th were dry in most places with sunny spells. A little drizzle affected parts of the east coast both evenings. Low cloud and patchy mist cleared on the morning of the 25th, then mainly sunny skies, but patchy low cloud returning during the evening. Low cloud and mist in many parts on the morning of the 26th, then bright and sunny with a repeat performance on the 27th when the temperature reached 16 °C at Kinlochewe. More cloud for many areas on the 28th with some showery rain in the north-west. Elsewhere mist slowly burned back to the east coast with some sunshine developing but a line of showers formed across the Grampians later, this merging with the rain in the north-west after dark. A wet night followed with Aboyne recording 13 mm of rain. The rain slowly cleared south-west on the 29th, and while remaining cloudy in many areas, some sunshine developed over parts of the south and west. Temperatures ranged from 7 °C in the Borders to 11 °C in Strathallan and Glasgow Bishopton. On the 30th cloud persisted across much of Lothian, Borders, Morayshire and East Highland bringing patchy drizzle. Elsewhere sunny spells developed with temperatures reaching 14.5 °C on Islay. A fine end to the month as temperatures reached 17 °C on the 31st at Dalmally under sunny skies.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

Mean temperatures and sunshine above average, but rainfall slightly below average.

A cloudy and windy start to the 1st, but it became drier and brighter with winds easing, although showers continued, especially in the north. The 2nd started dry and bright with a touch of frost. Then cloudy during the day with showers or longer spells of rain. Sunny spells and scattered showers on the 3rd. Wet and windy on the 4th, clearing to scattered blustery showers later. The morning of the 5th was bright with sunshine and scattered showers. Rain then spread from the west in the afternoon and persisted into the evening, bringing

17.8 mm to St Angelo and gales also became widespread. The rain cleared the east coast during the early hours on the 6th leaving a mixture of clear or sunny spells and showers, these being more frequent across the north and west. A clear, bright or sunny morning on the 7th, but showery rain developed through the afternoon and cleared eastwards through the evening. A touch of ground frost to start the 8th with a bright morning, but rain pushed eastwards through the afternoon and cleared to occasional showers during the evening. A showery day followed on the 9th, heaviest during the morning, then dying out through the afternoon with more sunshine.

The 10th was mainly dry and cloudy with a few drizzly showers. Some brighter spells in the south-east, with a temperature of 13 °C in Belfast. On the 11th, most places started dry but rain edged in from the north-west during the morning becoming persistent and heavy at times during the afternoon and evening. This rain cleared overnight leaving, bright, sunny or clear spells and occasional showers for the 12th. These showers merged to give a longer spell of rain during the morning of the 13th, these clearing eastwards after dawn to bright or sunny spells and occasional showers. The 14th was mostly dry and mild with some bright or sunny intervals. A band of rain pushed east on the morning of the 15th followed by mainly dry weather with some sunshine. Rather cloudy and breezy on the 16th with some mostly light rain at times. Mainly dry on the morning of the 17th, but patchy rain during the afternoon and evening with strengthening winds.

Much colder conditions on the 18th with heavy and blustery showers, often wintry with lying snow over high ground. The wintry showers continued on the 19th, with some lying snow at times over higher ground. Fresh to strong winds, with gales around the coast. More wintry showers on the 20th, with a mixture of rain, hail, sleet, and snow reported. Conditions were sunnier and drier in the east. Temperatures only reaching around 5 or 6 °C, but the fresh to strong northerly winds eased later. Rather cloudy on the 21st with outbreaks of light rain spreading east. Rather cloudy again on the 22nd, with overnight patchy rain and drizzle clearing. Dry on 23rd with light winds and although cloudy at times, all parts had some sunshine. A mostly sunny day followed on the 24th. Patchy low cloud and frost at first on the 25th, but bright or sunny spells then developing. Low cloud and mist on the morning of the 26th, then bright and sunny with a repeat performance on the 27th. The 28th dawned misty with some thick fog in the Belfast area but this cleared as more general cloud brought some light showery rain. The 29th started with sunshine and showers but a longer spell of rain spread from the northeast, bringing 9 mm to Ballypatrick. A chilly day, with Belfast Aldergrove only reaching 6.3 °C. The 30th was bright with the best of the sunshine along the north coast, although the odd shower broke out in the east. Warmer with temperatures reaching 11 or 12 °C. A fine end to the month, with temperatures reaching 15 °C under sunny skies on 31st.

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