

Winter 2009/10

The following represents an assessment of the weather experienced across the UK during winter 2009/10 (December 2009 to February 2010) and how it compares with the 1971 to 2000 average (the period used for the seasonal forecast).

Mean temperatures over the UK were 2.0 °C below the 1971-2000 average during December, 2.4 °C below average during January and 1.6 °C below average during February. The UK mean temperature for the winter was 1.6 °C, which is 2.0 °C below average, making it the coldest winter since 1978/79 (1.2 °C). Over England and Wales it was also the coldest since 1978/79. Over Northern Ireland and Scotland, winter 2009/10 was comparable with 1978/79 and 1946/47, with only winter 1962/63 significantly colder in series from 1910. For northern Scotland, it was the coldest winter on record, with the highest number of frosts. A generally mild first 10 days in December was followed by a colder period. This cold spell persisted for the first half of January, with some severe frosts. After mid-month, temperatures rose to around normal before a return to colder conditions. These persisted for most of February, with only a few brief milder interludes mostly in the west and south.

Significant snowfalls occurred widely at times from mid-December until the end of February. These included falls of over 20 cm in southern England in early January and over 30 cm in central and northern Scotland in late February. During each month, rainfall totals over the UK were below the 1971-2000 average with 81% in December, 66% in January and 86% in February. Less than 50% of normal was recorded in each month in many western areas, especially western Scotland.

Sunshine duration over the UK was above the 1971-2000 average during December (132%) and January (122%) whilst that in February was close to normal (96%). The sunniest places were in Northern Ireland and near western coasts, where some parts had over a third more sunshine than usual. The duller places were along the east coast.

UK statistical summary

Mean temperature

The mean value is 1.6 °C, which is 2.0 °C below the 1971-2000 average.

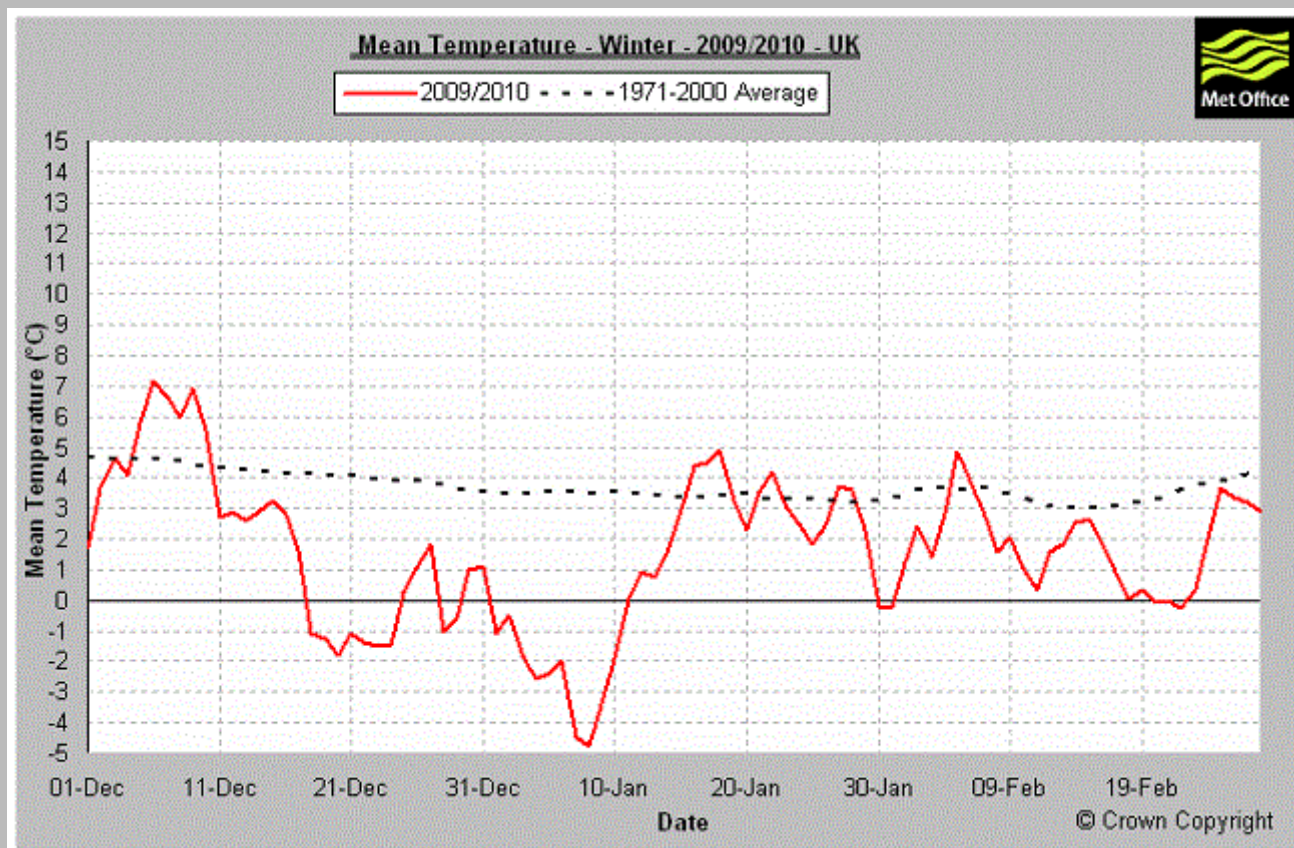
Rainfall

The total is 255 mm, which is 77% of the 1971-2000 average.

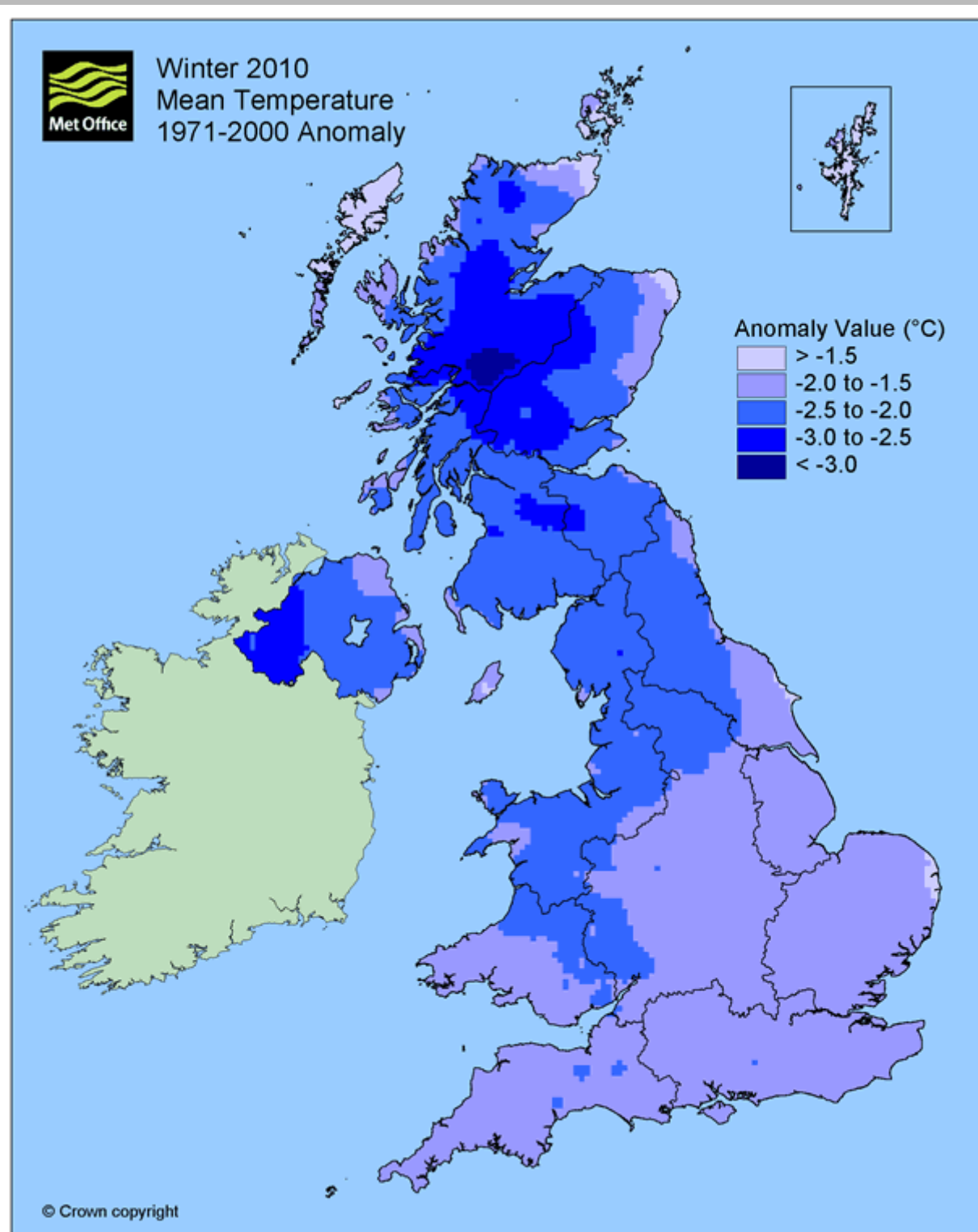
Sunshine

The total is 168 hours, which is 113% of the 1971-2000 average.

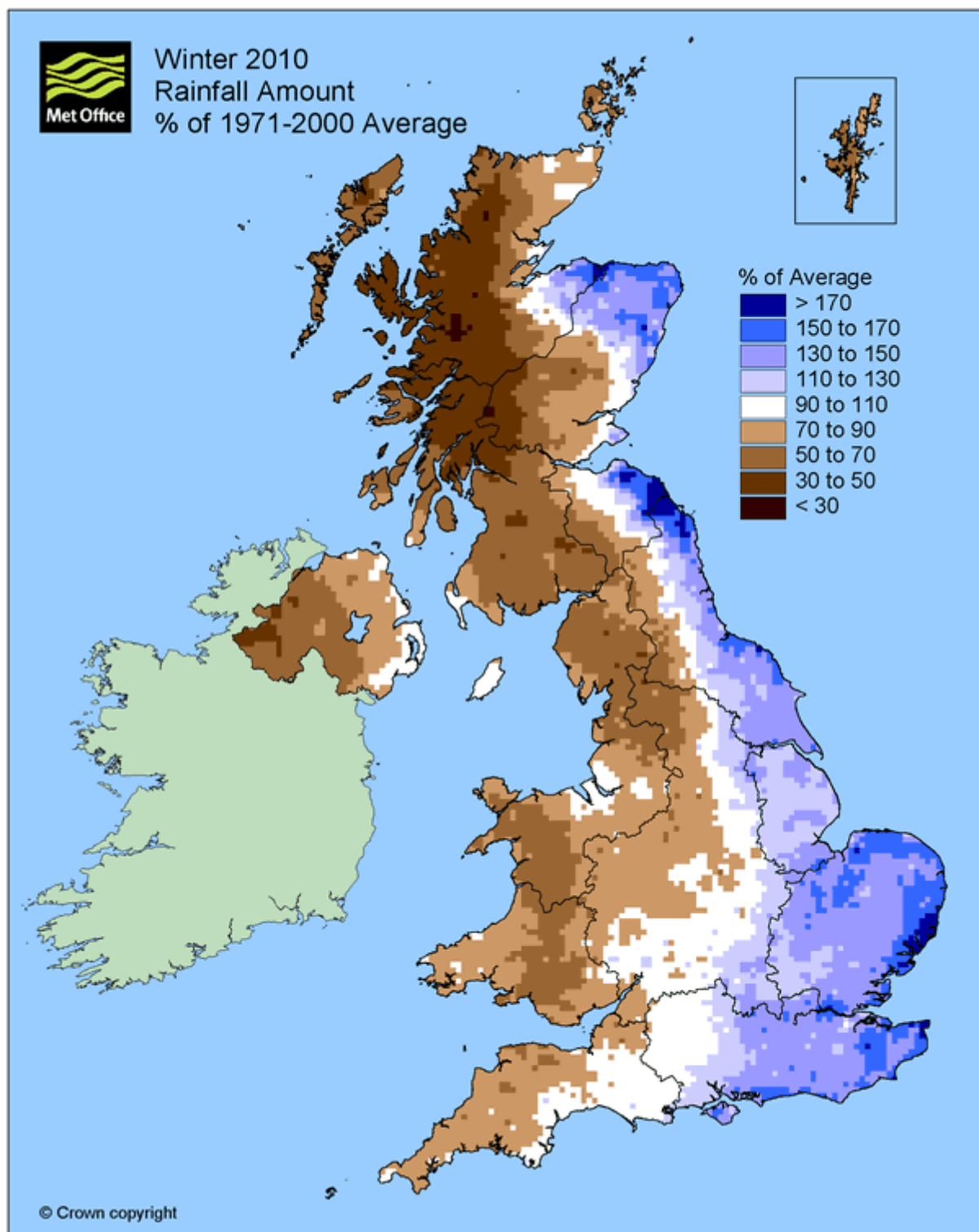
Provisional graph of UK daily mean temperature for Winter 2009/10 (December, January and February)



Mean temperature anomaly (difference from average) map for Winter 2009/10 (December, January and February)



Rainfall percent of average map for Winter 2009/10 (December, January and February)



Last updated: 27 February 2013