

Winter 2008/09

The following represents an assessment of the weather experienced across the UK during Winter 2008/09 (December 2008 to February 2009) and how it compares with the 1971 to 2000 average (the period used for the seasonal forecast).

Mean temperatures over the UK were 1.1 °C below the 1971-2000 average during December, 0.5 °C below average during January and 0.2 °C above average during February. The UK mean temperature for the winter was 3.2 °C, which is 0.5 °C below average, making it the coldest winter since 1996/97 (also 3.2 °C). Over England and Wales it was the coldest since 1995/6 and over Scotland and Northern Ireland the coldest since 2000/1. A generally cold first half to December was followed by a milder period, before turning very cold by the new year. This very cold spell persisted for the first 10 days of January, with some severe frosts, followed by alternating milder and colder periods. Despite a cold (and snowy) first half of February, milder conditions later resulted in near-normal temperatures overall.

Rainfall amounts over the UK were below the 1971-2000 average during December with 70%, January was close to average with 99% and February was again below average with 70%. In December, parts of south-east England, East Anglia and Wales had less than 50% of the average rainfall and in February much of Wales, north-west England and south-west Scotland recorded less than 50% of average. Significant snowfalls occurred in the first half of February, particularly over England and Wales during the first week when depths greater than 15 cm were recorded quite widely.

Sunshine durations were well above the 1971-2000 average during both December (141%) and January (116%), whereas February was duller than average (80%). It was the 2nd sunniest December over the UK, in series back to 1929.

UK statistical summary

Mean temperature

The final mean value is 3.2 °C, which is 0.5 degC below the 1971-2000 average.

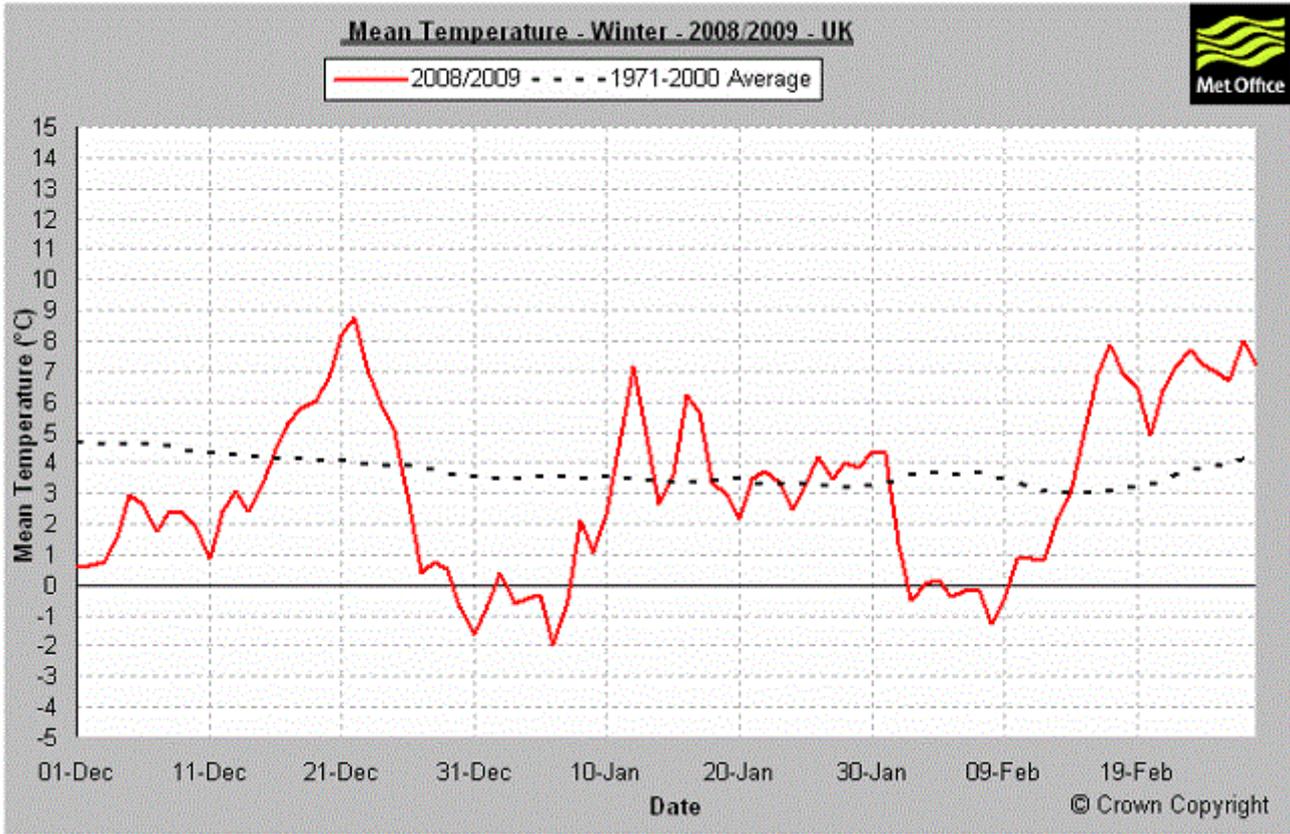
Rainfall

The final total is 268 mm, which is 81% of the 1971-2000 average.

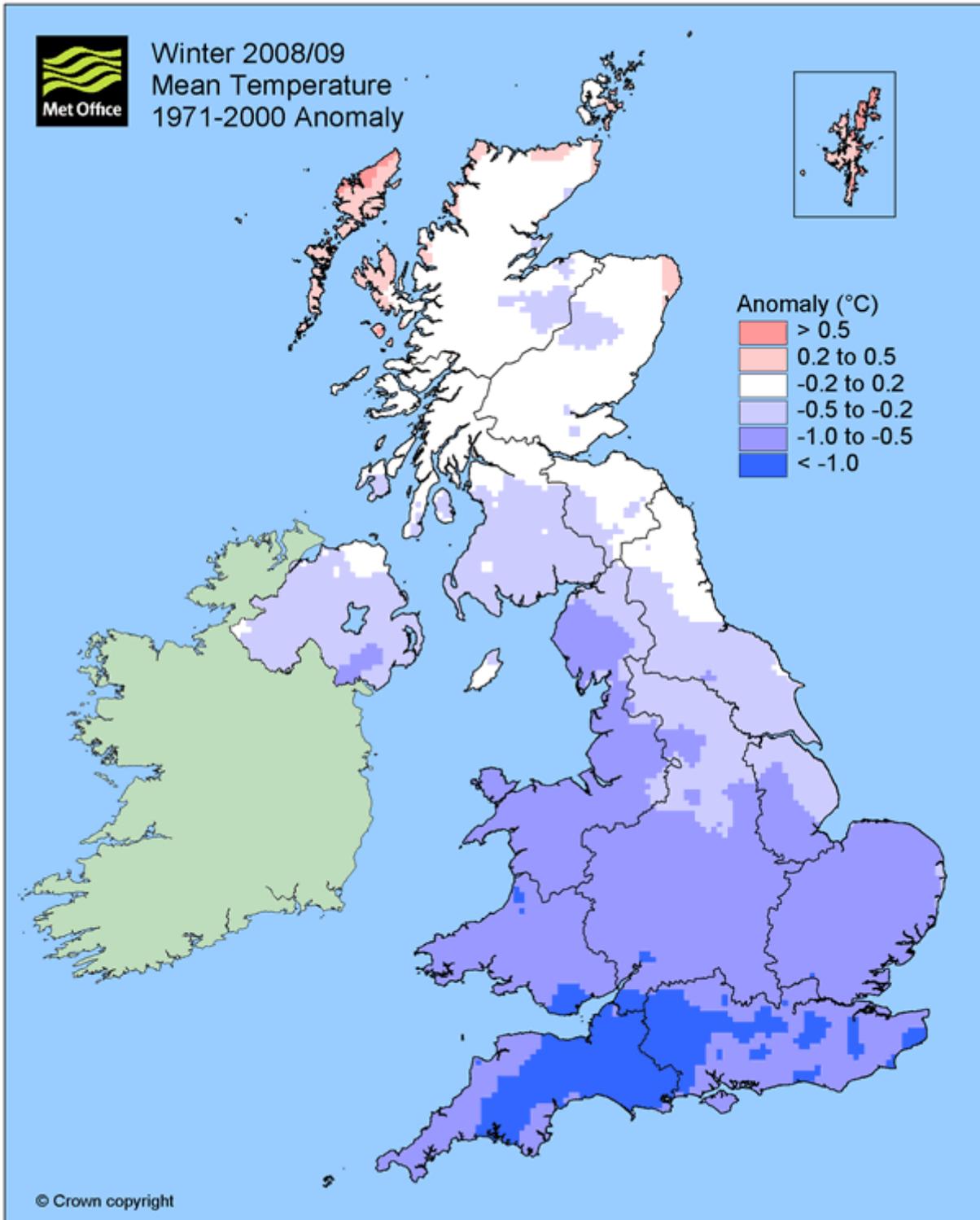
Sunshine

The final total is 158 hours, which is 107% of the 1971-2000 average.

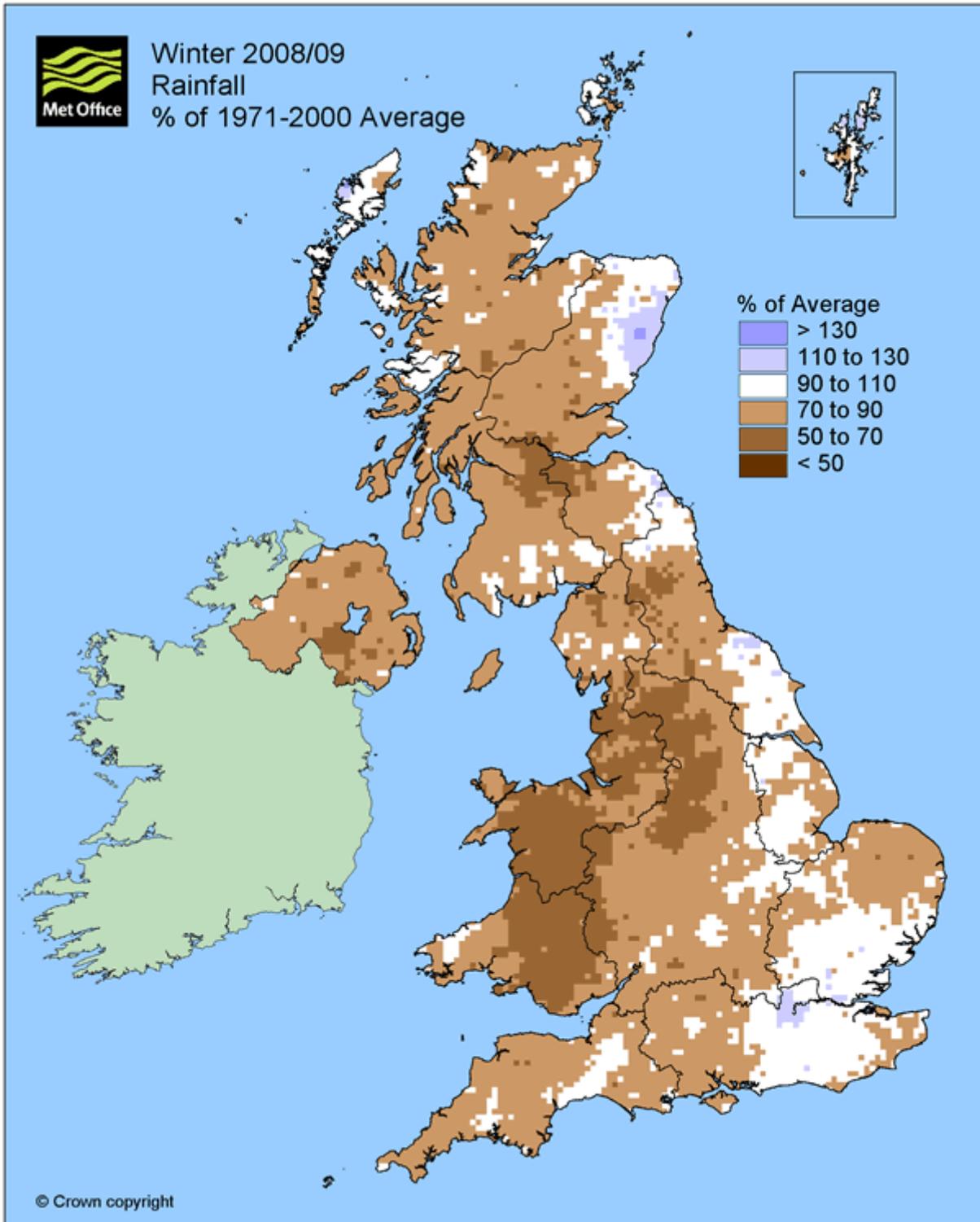
Provisional graph of UK daily mean temperature for Winter 2008/09



Mean temperature anomaly (difference from average) map for Winter 2008/09



Rainfall percent of average map for Winter 2008/09



Last updated: 27 February 2013