

Mild February marks the end of a dry Winter

Author: Press Office

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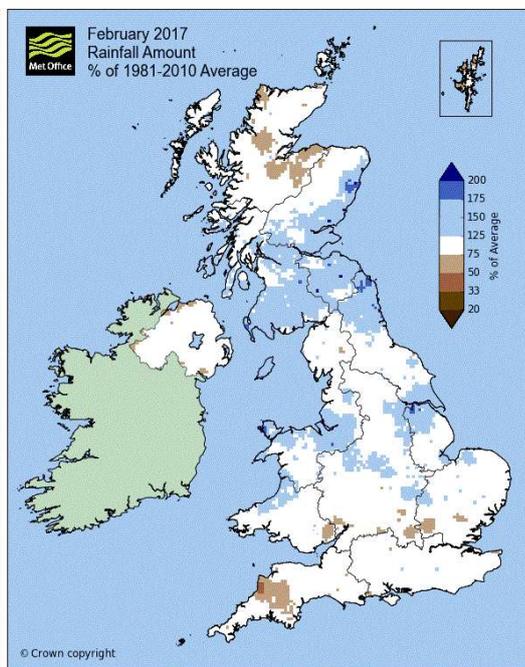
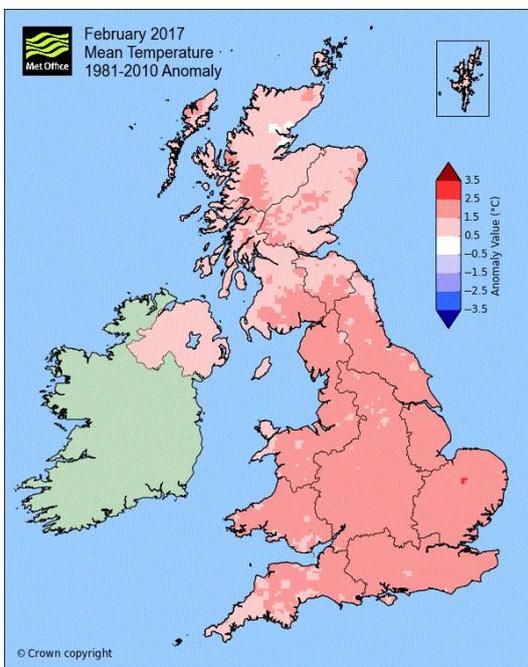
Preliminary statistics show that the 2016/17 winter has been dry and mild compared to the long-term average. Meanwhile, early February statistics show a milder than average month to end the season.

February has brought winter to a close with above normal temperatures for all areas of the country, with the UK mean temperature 1.6°C above the 30-year average. Fermanagh has been closest to its 4.5°C average at just 0.8°C above, while Suffolk has been furthest from its average with an anomaly of 2.2°C above its long-term average mean temperature of 4.2°C.

North Scotland is the only region to have seen more sunshine than average, with 74.8 hours of sunshine making 132% of its long-term average. North-west England and Wales has had the least sunshine with just 40.9 hours, 60% of its average. This is reflected in the UK total, which is 55.1 hours of sunshine, 79% of the average.

February's driest county has been Essex, with just 35.3mm of rainfall; the wettest has been Dunbartonshire with 228.9mm. The driest region compared to its average is Moray with 74% of its normal monthly rainfall total, and the Isle of Man is the wettest with 163% of its average monthly rainfall total.

Provisional February 2017 data	Mean temp (°C)		Sunshine (hours)		Rainfall (mm)	
	Actual	Diff from avg	Actual	% of avg	Actual	% of avg
UK	5.3	1.6	55.1	79	93.9	106
England	5.9	1.8	53.5	72	62.0	103
Wales	5.6	1.7	43.4	62	125.9	113
Scotland	4.0	1.3	62.3	99	141.3	109
N Ireland	5.3	1.0	47.5	71	74.9	89



A mild February brings an end to a dry 2016/17 Winter



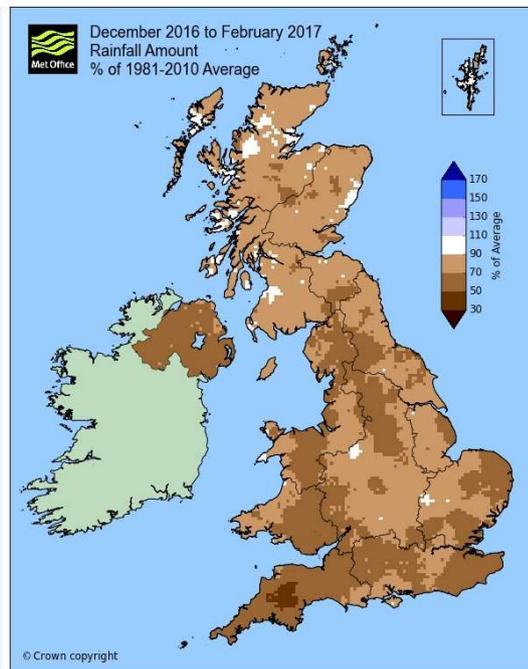
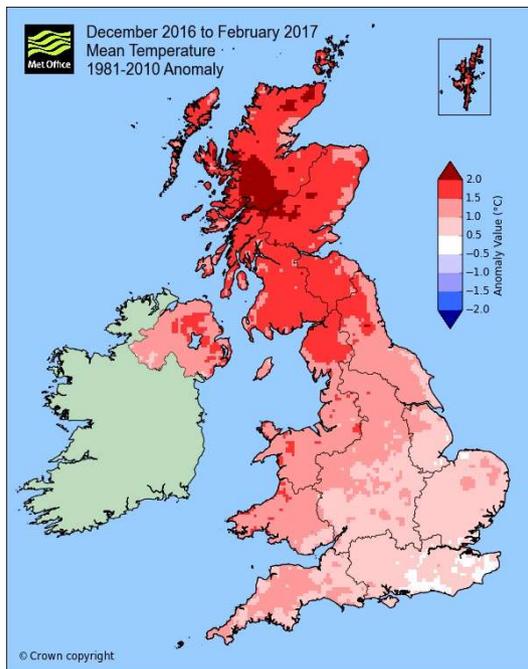
Statistics for the whole of winter 2016/17 show that this winter has been much milder than average across the whole of the UK. In fact this winter has been provisionally the fourth mildest on record for Scotland and the fifth mildest winter for Northern Ireland. The UK as a whole has seen the ninth mildest winter on record.

Interestingly the winters of [2013/14](#) and [2015/16](#) were both milder than this winter; however the key difference is that those winters were also very wet and often stormy. Conversely, the [2016/17](#) winter has been very settled and much drier in comparison thanks to extended periods of blocked high pressure conditions.

It has also been a dry winter, with the UK receiving 76% of its average seasonal rainfall, 251.9mm in total. Northern Ireland has been the driest with 66% of its average (206.4mm), making the 2016/17 winter its third driest winter on record.

Climate Scientist Dr Mark McCarthy from the National Climate Information Centre said: “This winter has been dry for most of the UK. What is unusual is the combination of mild and dry conditions, as these factors do not usually go hand in hand in a typical UK winter. This is due to spells of high pressure bringing settled calm conditions being mixed in with depressions that have pulled warm air up from the south.”

Provisional 2016/17 Winter data	Mean temp (°C)		Sunshine (hours)		Rainfall (mm)	
	Actual	Diff from avg	Actual	% of avg	Actual	% of avg
UK	5.0	1.3	154.0	98	251.9	76
England	5.2	1.0	171.8	98	162.3	70
Wales	5.5	1.3	134.6	84	307.1	71
Scotland	4.4	1.7	133.6	104	393.3	83
N Ireland	5.6	1.3	132.8	90	206.4	66



*These maps include data from 1 December 2016 up to and including 26 February and will be updated once the final data has been incorporated.

The extended outlook for the UK as we head in to Spring shows that an unsettled picture is likely as frontal systems move into the UK from the south or south-west, bringing wet and windy weather at times. Between frontal systems, there should be some spells of brighter weather with showers which may be wintry at times in the north. Nevertheless, some brief quieter, drier spells are also likely.

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