

Apr 84

## April was a record

April 1984 will go into the record books for contrasting reasons. It has certainly been the sunniest in well over half-a-century, the final week producing almost maximum totals on each day. However, the month also produced over 20 ground frosts, itself a new record, as well as providing the highest daytime temperature in well over 50 years.

The month began dry, but cold, air temperatures falling to minus 3.3C (26F) on the 5th, with grass temperatures as low as minus 9.1C (16F) on the 3rd, the lowest recorded since 1968.

Daytime temperatures did not pick up until the 19th, and then from the 21st to the 28th, the average day maximum was 21C (70F), peaking at a new record high of 23.5C (74F) on the afternoon of the 25th — temperatures quite in keeping for a June day. These high temperatures and very low humidities created summer-like conditions over the Easter period.

Rainfall was exceptionally low, only 4mm (0.16in) falling in the month, and this in a little over 14 hours on only four days. This figure is only 1mm above the all-time low for Hayley Green of 3mm for April 1957. In fact we have only had 7 per cent of the normal April rainfall and now have conditions of partial drought. An absolute drought will occur if we do not have measurable rainfall by the early part of May.

Winds have been predominantly easterly and light, and cloud amounts, especially towards the end of the month, have been very low. Snowflakes were recorded on one occasion, with hail on one and fog on two. Though the mean humidity has been about average, individual readings over the final week were very low indeed falling to as little as 30 per cent on one or two afternoons.

In summary, a month which has seen new records set in four areas: the highest maximum temperature of 23.5C, a mean maximum temperature of 14.6C, a maximum number of occasions of ground frost (20) and the lowest mean cloud cover of 48 per cent. Truly a memorable April, coupled with a sunny and very warm Easter to provide a real tonic after the rigours of winter.

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