

THE WINTER OF 1991.

In overall conditions, the winter ending on February 28th last was the sixth worst since 1956. In order of severity, the worse winters have been 1963, 1979, 1956, 1982 and 1985.

Though total rainfall has been marginally down on the 30 year means, days of snow or sleet were up, at 25 occasions against the normal 15. Snow lay on 13 mornings against the usual 12, but it was the occasions of frost which have made the winter a colder than normal one. Frost in the air occurred on 49 days (normal 33), and on the ground on 76 occasions (normal 49).

The coldest night in the air was February 14th with a low of minus 10.1C, and on the ground, February 10th with a low of minus 17.7C both being well below the usual values.

Sunshine was 177 hours against the normal 154 hours, the best day being February 14th with 8.2 hours. In all 33 days saw no sun at all (normal 37).

Some exceptional events of the winter were the two thunderstorms in December, one on Christmas Day, and the two gales in February when the wind gusted to 50 knots (60m.p.h.)

After the three very mild winters, this one has come as a reminder that we can still experience cold spells despite the talk of gradual warming.