

THE WEATHER OF APRIL 1991.

April 1991 was in marked contrast to that of last year which saw near-record high temperatures and prolonged sunshine. This year produced almost a quarter as much rain again as usual, though temperatures were well up to expectation by day. Air frost was 25% up on normal at 6, with ground frost marginally up at 13.

Snow or sleet occurred on 4 days, almost one and a half times expectation, with 2 occasions of hail reported though no thunder was heard.

Sunshine just broke even at 134 hours against the usual 131 hours, with only 4 days totally sunless. This was a mere 70% of that recorded last year which was exceptional.

April 29th was the wettest day with 30.4mm (1.20in), roughly 40% of the entire month's total. It was the wettest day since 22 August 1987 and the 2nd wettest April day on record (previous 32.3mm [1.23in] on 23 April 1971. In terms of duration, April 29 was the wettest day on record with 24 hours continuous rainfall.

The month was the windiest in a decade with gale force gusts on 3 days and it was this which apparently produced a seemingly cold month through "wind chill". Wind chill is a physiological effect and cannot be registered on thermometers, but rather felt on the skin. In illustration of this the wind chill on the 3rd was minus 5 C though the air temperature was 6C with a wind of 30knots. Several days were at or below 0C with wind chill, though no day had air temperatures near freezing at the time.