

thunderstorms one of which passed over the Wolverhampton area during the late evening after a day of long sunny periods. Halesowen lay on the southern edge of this and caught no more than a passing shower amounting to 1.2mm of rain. Skies cleared overnight on the 27th/28th leading to mist and fog patches over the Midlands, and some slight ground frost in sheltered areas. The day began bright with almost half of the days total of 9.4 hours of sunshine registered before 10.00 UTC. The afternoon again saw a breakdown to heavy showers in the mainly unstable air mass within the slack area of low pressure still dominating the country.

The pressure pattern began to change on the 29th as the area of low pressure started to migrate south eastwards towards Brittany and a developing high appeared in the south west Approaches. The migrating low allowed an occluded front to move slowly north eastwards giving a period of quite heavy rain over the South West peninsula. This rain area progressed gradually towards the Midlands during the day though it never really materialised, just a few light showers occurring in the late afternoon.

A strong ridge developed across the country from this high centre on the 30th and this killed off much of the shower activity over the Midlands though it remained predominantly dull. A mere 1.6 hours of sunshine was recorded which managed to push afternoon temperatures no higher than 11.4C. Also no precipitation at all was recorded, only the first time for the month.

SUMMARY FOR APRIL 1998.

Rainfall.

The month was the third wettest here in 52 years, both 1961 (141.1mm) and 1983 (126.7mm) being wetter. In terms of wet days ($\geq 0.2\text{mm}$) it was equal worst with 1983. In fact only one day (30th) saw no precipitation. In terms of rainfall duration it was the worst on record with 123.7hours. The previous record was the 112.2hrs in 1989 . The 21 wet days ($\geq 1\text{mm}$) was also the worst on record.

Temperature.

The highest maximum of 17.4C on the 22nd was the lowest since the 15.6C in 1989 and some 6.1C below the highest on file. The coolest day (lowest maximum) of 3.4c on the 10th was the worst since the 2.8C registered in 1986. The mean maximum of 11.6C was the lowest since the 11.0C of 1989 whilst the mean daily of 7.7C was also the worst since 1989 which recorded 6.4C. In fact the mean daily temperature only managed to climb above 10C on five days of the month.

Sunshine.

The total of 115.8 hours of bright sunshine was the lowest recorded since 1993 when a mere 97.6 hours occurred. In all 5 days were totally without sun, the worst figures since the 7 sunless days of April 1993. Also the highest daily total of 10.1 hours on the 25th was the lowest maximum since the 10.0 hours seen in 1992.

Miscellaneous.

The 2 days of lying snow was the worst since 1983, also with 2 occasions whilst the 7 occurrences of sleet or snow was the greatest since 1994 which saw 8. The 3 reported thunderstorms for the month was the highest incidence since 1994 which had 4. Both ground and air frosts were down on average.