

SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR 1999.

1999 was another exceptional year in terms of warmth. The mean daily temperature of 10.4C equalled that of 1997 and 1989 coming second to the 10.6C of 1990. This is now the seventh month to register above 10C since 1956, and the 6th in the last decade. The mean maximum of 14.3C was 5th in line behind the record of 14.9C, also set in 1990.

The highest daily temperature in 1999 was 30.0C being recorded twice, and this is well below the 34.7C of 1990 and several others in the range 32.6C in 1975 and 1976 to 30.1C in 1969, so no new records were set. There were 22 days with daily maxima above 25C or above, similar to 1997. There were 41 such days in 1995, 32 in 1990 and 35 in 1976.

The warmest night was July 9th with 17.8C equalling July 22nd 1989, well below the 18.6C in 1968, 18.3C in 1987, 18.4C in 1991 and 20.1C in 1975. Night frosts have fallen considerably. There were 90 ground frosts this year whereas from 1984 to 1995 inclusively there were well over 100, peaking at 134 in 1986. 1963 saw 121. Air frosts have behaved similarly with 29 this year against the 89 of 1963, 78 in 1962 and 75 in 1996.

Sunshine totalled 1583.1 hours, well above the 30 year mean and higher than last year. It was well behind the record total of 1837.9 hours set in 1995. Bight sunshine is certainly increasing, being some 15% higher than the 1950's decade. This year saw 46 sunless days, the lowest since recording began here in 1956 and less than half of the 100 days notched up in 1960. The sunniest day in 1999 was June 5th with 15.2 hours, a mere 24 minutes behind the record set in 1995 on June 29th. December's sunniest day with 7.0 hours also equalled the station's record for the month.

Rainfall in 1999 stood at 898.3mm, the second wettest since records began in 1946, this behind the 1033.7mm which fell in 1960. This new pattern of wetter years ties in with the theory of climate change which is producing much stormier weather for the British Isles, despite the additional sunshine and warmth. The wettest day, August 8th, saw a fall of 44.8mm, well behind that of the immediate area which saw in excess of 60mm in several places and also well behind the record fall of 72.7mm on September 14th 1994. Rain fell on 206 days at a rate of 0.2mm/day or more, the highest total since the 208 occasions in 1967 and 210 in 1960 making it the 3rd wettest year in this respect since 1946.

Winds were predominantly WSW on 65 days and average 5.9 knots with a maximum gust to 44 knots on December 2nd. The maximum recorded gust here is 62knots registered on April 11th 1989.

Snow or sleet occurred on 28 days with snow lying on 4 days, the most since 1997 but well below the records seen in such years as 1963 with 56 days, 1956 with 31 days, 1979 with 48 days and 1985 with 33 days.

Thunder would seem to be more prevalent with 17 storms occurring this year against the 21 each in 1982/1983 which were the worst years noted. The least number of occasions of thunder was in 1991 when just 2 were noted.

The year was thus wet, but also sunny and relatively warm. Very odd combinations!