

## DECEMBER DATA

Early December came in with low pressure and mild air dominating the scene. Winds were in a westerly quarter bringing air from the Atlantic, air that was both warm and moist. The maximum temperature on the 1<sup>st</sup> was 10.1°C [50.2°F] with 0.5mm [0.02in] of rain falling as a shower during the afternoon. After several weeks of relatively “quiet” weather it became stormier with winds approaching gale force on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and peaking with several gale force gusts on the 5<sup>th</sup> reaching a maximum of 38 knots [46mph]. This finally saw the end of all leaves; trees become almost “skeletal” overnight. Ground frost was quite common, occurring on several nights during the early part of the month with a minimum of –4.4°C [24.1°F] on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Rain fell on three of the first five days totalling 14.9mm [0.59in] with a maximum fall of 9.4mm [0.37in] on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Pressure began to rise appreciably from the 6<sup>th</sup> as a large and intense Siberian high developed and pushed an arm westwards to cover the UK. This gave sharp night frosts and cool to cold days.. Fog also became a problem at night on both the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> though at no time did it become dense.

The early month period produced a day maximum of 12.2°C [54.0°F] on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a nighttime minimum of –1.8°C [28.9°F] on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The warmest night occurred on the 1<sup>st</sup> with a temperature of 8.6°C [47.5°F] whilst the coldest day was the 10<sup>th</sup> when the temperature failed to rise above 4.6°C [40.3°F] under anticyclonic gloom. During the period 15.3mm [0.60in] of rain fell whilst sunshine totalled 20 hours. Winds showed an easterly component on 3 days and a westerly on 7 with a maximum gust of 38 knots [46mph] on the 5<sup>th</sup>.

Mid December followed on from the earlier part of the month with little change in the overall pressure pattern, the anticyclone making only slight migrations from its original position. This resulted in minor changes in wind direction and little general change in the prevailing weather that remained in general, cold but dry with quite sharp night frosts and occasionally foggy nights. The morning of the 15<sup>th</sup> saw a ground frost of –4.8°C [23.4°F] whilst the air fell to –4.4°C [24.1°F], the coldest night of the month to date. This period remained generally dry with just occasional slight drizzle on the 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> and sunny days. The 14<sup>th</sup> saw 5.8 hours of bright sunshine recorded at ground level, whilst the electronic recorder on the roof measured 6.6 hours, almost a maximum for this time of the year. The electronic record for the 12<sup>th</sup> was even higher at 6.9 hours measured from sunrise to sunset.

From the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> just one night, the 19<sup>th</sup> recorded no ground frost. The period was not particularly wet, rain falling on most days, but just a trace on many. The heaviest fall was of 1.5mm [0.06in] on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Days remained cool with a maximum temperature of 6.1°C [43.0°F] registered on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. Winds remained in a westerly quarter and were light, peaking at 30 knots on the 20<sup>th</sup>.

The latter part of December was ushered in with high pressure to the east and low to the west giving a mainly west to south west air flow. Temperatures remained suppressed reaching no higher than 8.6°C [47.5°F] on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Night frost was quite common, occurring on eight nights from the 20<sup>th</sup> to the end of the month in the air reaching a low of –7.5°C [18.5°F] in the air and –11.0°C [12.2°F] both on the 31<sup>st</sup>. To add to the problems snow showers began during the 25<sup>th</sup> with a few flakes, becoming more widespread and heavy by the 30<sup>th</sup> when 7cm [2.8in] of level snow lay on the ground at 09.00. Further heavy snow showers occurred on the 30<sup>th</sup> itself giving a further 3cm [1in] of fresh snow with a total depth of 9cm [4in] by the 31<sup>st</sup>. The last day saw a maximum no higher than 1.0°C [34°F] though we had continuous sunshine all day.