

JANUARY SUMMARY.

Although January began cold with sharp frosts and lying snow, it ended very mild, wet and windy. Despite the early frosts, the mean daily temperature ended at 5.1°C [41.2°F], 1.2°C above the 30 year mean. The highest maximum of 13.3°C [55.9°F] on the 27th was also above average by 1.6°C, equalling the January record last seen on January 9th 1998. The coldest night, January 1st saw an overnight minimum of -9.5°C [14.9°F], 3.6°C below expectation making this a month of extremes in terms of temperature. The minimum over snow of -10.9°C [12.4°F] on the 2nd was itself 1.2°C below the 30 year mean. Despite this, almost all soil and earth temperatures produced positive anomalies ranging from +0.1°C at 50cm depth to +1.7°C on the surface. Only the 100cm mean depth produced a negative anomaly and that of just -0.1°C. After the first week when we had regular frost, nights became much milder with the month as a whole producing 10 ground frosts and just two in the air, the latter the lowest since 1988.

January was also rather a dull month with 14 sunless days, the worst figures since 1997 with it's 15. The total sunshine stood at 46.1 hours, 88% of the normal with the best day providing 6.9 hours, marginally above average but not exceptional. As a result, radiation levels were rather depressed with a maximum of just 310 watts per square metre on the 28th.

Rainfall for the month was also a little below expectation, though it did rain on 21 days of the month, many days seeing only light falls. The wettest day, the 26th, produced a fall of 17.5mm [0.68in], roughly a fifth of the entire fall. Though snow or sleet fell on only one day, snow lay on 5 mornings to a maximum depth of 7.5cm [3ins] on the 1st.

The month was windy with gusts to gale force on 2 days, though the 28th was particularly windy with gusts to 45 knots [54mph], with the mean speed above 16 knots [20mph] for 7 hours. This was enough to bring branches from trees and cause slight structural damage to property,

Though there was no incidence of thunder, a line squall on the 28th produced a substantial fall of hail at 07.45 UTC, giving a total of two days having a fall of hail during the month. Fog was prevalent being reported on 7 days just one occurrence below the record of 8 set in 1979. Mean sea level pressure ranged from 1039.0 hPa on the 1st to 987.8 hPa on the 23rd, with successions of depressions crossing the country after the first week. Prevailing winds were WSW with a mean speed of 6.6 knots [8 mph].