

## October 2020

The averaging period used for the following assessment was 1981-2010.

October began very unsettled, with Storm Alex bringing rain and strong winds to much of England and Wales on the 2nd, and a very wet day followed for much of the UK on the 3rd. From the 4th to 13th it remained unsettled with rain or showers, and from the 8th winds changed to a mainly northerly or north-westerly direction. It was more settled from the 14th to 18th with easterly winds, though many places were rather cloudy at times. The weather turned very wet and windy from the 19th onwards, with mainly westerly and south-westerly winds, and rain belts crossed the country at frequent intervals, with some brighter showery weather in between.

The provisional UK mean temperature was 9.4 °C, which is 0.1 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average. Mean maximum temperatures were around 0.5 °C below average in many places, while mean minimum temperatures were mostly up to 0.5 °C above average. For most of the UK it was a wet and dull month, with 142% of average rainfall and 72% of average sunshine – provisionally the fifth wettest October in a series from 1862, and also the fifth dullest since 1919. Rainfall was near average in some western areas, but well above average further east, with over 200% of normal for London and the south-east and also parts of Aberdeenshire and Moray. Sunshine was particularly low for much of England and Wales, with only the south of Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man having above average sunshine.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 19.1 °C was recorded at Writtle (Essex) on the 8th. A minimum temperature of -3.3 °C was recorded at Tyndrum (Perthshire) on the 15th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 4th, 127.1 mm of rain fell at Fettercairn (Kincardineshire). A wind gust of 69 knots (79 mph) was recorded at Altnaharra (Sutherland) on the 25th.

### Weather impacts

Storm Alex brought numerous impacts on the 3rd and 4th. A number of A and B roads in north-east Scotland were flooded, with bus services delayed and flooding on a number of rail lines in Aberdeenshire and Grampian; at least two landslips were reported in Fife. Some roads were also flooded in parts of Northern Ireland, with some travel disruption. In Wales trees blocked roads in Monmouthshire, and properties were flooded near Llanfairfechan and Gwynedd. In the West Midlands there were several rescues from vehicles trapped in floodwater and some roads were flooded. Across the East of England widespread flooding was reported with a number of roads impassable; buses were diverted and trains delayed due to flood water. In London 50 people were rescued from their homes in West Drayton. A number of roads were flooded, with a tree blocking the railway at Wembley Central, and fallen trees and flooding disrupted other routes too. In the south-east, a number of rescues took place from vehicles stranded in floodwater, with fallen trees and widespread flooding disrupting road and rail travel. All ferries at Dover port were delayed. The south-west of England also saw rescues, ferry and flight cancellations, flooding on roads and rail lines, as well as debris causing disruption along the sea front in Swanage. The bridges over the Severn Estuary were closed due to high winds.

Frequent heavy showers on the 6th caused some impacts across north-west England. In Lancashire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside, roads were flooded, resulting in diversions, delays and closures of some lanes on the M60. Northern Rail reported a landslip on the Bolton to Preston line with further flooding impacting lines into Wigan Wallgate and Kirkby. On the 7th and

8th in Wales, there was flooding on the A44 and A487, and on the rail line between Machynlleth and Shrewsbury.

After a quieter spell of weather, Storm Barbara caused some impacts, with flooding on the Glasgow to Ardrossan/Largs railway line on the 19th. Some roads saw flooding on the 21st including the A82, A90 and A96, and six homes were evacuated in the Aberdeen area due to flooding, with railways flooded between Nairn and Elgin and between Portlethen and Aberdeen. Debris poured down the hillside at the Rest and Be Thankful which resulted in the closure of the main road there.

In the London area on the 24th there was flooding on a few roads with one report of a tree blocking a railway line. The A143 between Haverhill and Bury St Edmunds was blocked by a fallen tree. In Kent and Sussex flooding was reported on a number of A roads, with trees blocking the A272, A267 and a number of railway lines, and a power cable was brought down in Littlehampton. Further rain warnings were issued for the 29th onwards as Storm Aiden swept across the country. In Scotland, flooding arose at the Rest and Be Thankful, along the A82 and some local roads. Trees blocked the A9 and some roads in Inverness. In the Central Belt a building collapsed on the A814, and rail travel was disrupted. In Northern Ireland there were numerous flooded roads and fallen trees affecting travel across the country, and a tree on the track delayed the Belfast to Dublin train service. In Wales, some roads were closed due to flooding including the A498 and the rail line between Machynlleth and Shrewsbury was closed by flooding. In Lancashire trains going to and from Chorley, Blackburn and Preston were delayed or cancelled due to flooding on the lines, with flooding on the A586 and A591. The south-west saw delays to flights and cancellations to ferry services connecting the Isles of Scilly to Cornwall, fallen trees blocked roads in Cornwall, as well as some flooding and fallen trees in Devon causing travel disruption. There were also a number of power cuts in the south-west.

## England diary of highlights

**October was a generally dull and unsettled month with rain crossing the country at frequent intervals and some heavy and persistent falls of rain at times. It was drier and more settled from the 14th to 19th with mainly easterly winds, but the rest of the month was mostly wet and windy.**

The mean temperature for October was provisionally 0.1 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average, with temperatures generally a little below normal by day and a little above normal by night. Rainfall was 154% of average and sunshine was just 65% of average, and it was the equal 4th dullest October in a series from 1919. Much of the area around London had more than twice the normal rainfall amount, but the rainfall was less exceptional elsewhere.

### 1st to 7th

A westerly flow brought frequent rain during the first week. The 1st was a generally showery day, and persistent rain, heavy at times, spread across the south from early afternoon. After a cold start to the 2nd in some areas with a minimum of -2.4 °C at Shap (Cumbria), rain, locally heavy, and strong winds spread slowly northwards with in excess of 50 mm in places, associated with Storm Alex. In its wake, the 3rd was another very wet day for most, with many places recording well over 25 mm and some recording over 60 mm, although it was drier over East Anglia and the south-east. A swathe of rain persisted over much of East Anglia, the Midlands and the south on the 4th, turning more intermittent by the 5th, with brighter weather and some showers elsewhere. The 6th was a day of sunshine and showers, with thunder locally in central and south-eastern counties. The 7th was mostly dry and bright with a few showers in the west, but rain spread from the west late in the day, reaching the Midlands and south-west by dusk.

## **8th to 13th**

Winds veered north-westerly on the 8th, with rain moving south-eastwards through the Midlands and south during the morning followed by a mainly cloudy picture with isolated showers. It was warm in the south-east with Writtle (Essex) recording a maximum of 19.1 °C. Another belt of rain moved southwards through the country on the morning of the 9th, followed by brighter weather with widespread, locally thundery, showers. Further rain moved south on the 10th followed by showers, with thunder in parts of East Anglia. The wind veered northerly by the 11th, bringing showers for the south-west and the east coast, but it was dry and sunny elsewhere following early morning mist and fog for parts of the Midlands. A broad area of rain spread south-eastwards through the country on the 12th, then on the 13th rain affected the south-east and north-east with brighter weather further west and showers for the south-west.

## **14th to 19th**

Easterly winds set in, bringing quieter and cooler weather. Sunshine and showers for most on the 14th with showers in the east becoming more widespread in the afternoon, then the 15th had fewer showers, but these persisted in eastern counties, while Camborne (Cornwall) recorded 9.6 hours of bright sunshine. Weak fronts brought generally cloudy weather on the 16th, 17th and 18th with occasional light rain, though many places remained dry, and there were some sunny spells at times mainly in the south-west. Winds turned southerly on the 19th, bringing dry bright weather across the south for a time, but it was generally cloudy again and rain spread slowly from the west, reaching most parts during the evening and overnight.

## **20th to 31st**

A very disturbed west to south-westerly type set in and brought frequent wet and windy weather. The 20th was mainly cloudy with scattered showers in the west, and it was very windy in the far south-west and some exposed places, but parts of the north-east saw plenty of sunshine. The night of the 20th/21st was notably mild with Gosport (Hampshire) not falling below 14.3 °C. It was generally wet on the 21st but more showery in the north with the odd brighter interlude in the north-west. The 22nd was brighter for many places, with scattered showers in places, but cloudier and showery in the north-west. The 23rd started off dry and sunny in the south and south-east, but a belt of rain, already into the north-west by dawn, spread eastwards through the country, turning more patchy in central and southern parts as it moved eastwards. More wet and windy weather spread across most counties on the 24th with Needles (Wight) seeing gusts to 74 mph. There was a mix of sunshine and showers for most on the 25th and 26th, the showers locally thundery, especially over East Anglia on the 26th, and northern areas had a wet start on the 26th. The 27th was generally cool, dull, wet and windy with Redesdale (Northumberland) only reaching 8.1 °C. It was brighter with showers, these locally thundery in the south, on the 28th, while remaining cool with Buxton (Derbyshire) only reaching 8.1 °C. The 29th was a very wet day for most with 89.8 mm at Seathwaite (Cumbria). Rain spread south-east on the 30th, most of it light. The 31st was generally wet and very windy, and winds gusted over 60 mph in some places, with brighter showery weather following from the west.

## **Wales diary of highlights**

**October was a generally cloudy and wet month with near-average temperatures, and the last third of the month was particularly wet and windy. It was briefly settled but still mainly cloudy from the 14th to 18th.**

The mean temperature for the month was 0.2 °C below the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall was 123% of average and sunshine was 68% of average. Sunshine was near normal in the far north-west but well below normal elsewhere, and it was the 3rd dullest October in a series from 1919.

## **1st to 8th**

The 1st started off mostly sunny with isolated showers, but a band of rain, heavy at times, moved in from the west from mid-afternoon, mainly affecting the south-west, with thunder locally. Storm Alex brought a wet day on the 2nd, and it was very wet again on the 3rd with over 50 mm of rain in places. The rain slowly cleared south-westwards on the 4th leaving a brighter end to the day, and it was very windy for a time in the west and south with a gust to 74 mph at Capel Curig (Gwynedd). Rain in the north spread to all parts on the 5th, turning lighter and patchier through the afternoon. The 6th was a day of sunshine and showers, then the 7th was mainly cloudy, with rain spreading from the south-west late in the day.

## **8th to 13th**

This period had a mainly north-westerly type. On both the 8th and 9th, bands of rain moved south through the country followed by brighter weather with showers, and showers became widespread on the afternoon of the 9th. It remained mainly showery on the 10th and 11th, with plenty of cloud on the 10th, but generally more sunshine on the 11th. Rain crossed the country from mid-morning on the 12th, turning lighter and patchier in the afternoon, and it brightened up from the north late in the day. Showers and longer spells of rain cleared southwards early on the 13th, but more followed from the north-east later, and it turned breezy.

## **14th to 18th**

The weather turned more settled with mainly easterly winds, but it was mainly cloudy. The 14th was rather cloudy, with scattered afternoon showers mainly in the north. The 15th was generally brighter, after a cold start with a minimum of 0.4 °C at Trawscoed (Dyfed), a few isolated showers affecting the north late in the afternoon, and Aberporth (Dyfed) recorded 9.8 hours of sunshine. From the 16th to 18th inclusive it was predominantly dry and cloudy, but with a little light rain or drizzle in places on the 16th and 18th, and mist and fog patches in a few places early on the 18th.

## **19th to 31st**

This period was mainly wet and windy. As pressure fell to the west on the 19th, rain spread from the west into most parts by dusk. Southerly winds brought warm weather on the 20th, with scattered showers and occasional sunny interludes, strong winds at times in western counties, and a high of 18.0 °C at Hawarden (Clwyd). A mild night followed, with Cardiff Bute Park not falling below 13.7 °C, then on the 21st rain persisted over central, southern and eastern counties, brighter with isolated showers elsewhere. A weak front brought a cloudy day with some light rain in northern and central parts on the 22nd, but it was brighter and mainly dry elsewhere, and Lake Vyrnwy (Powys) only reached 8.1 °C. On both the 23rd and 24th, it was windy with rain moving eastwards across the country, clearing later with isolated showers following behind. There was a mix of sunshine and showers on the 25th and 26th, the showers locally thundery on the 25th, and it remained windy. Rain spread eastwards through the country on the 27th, clearing in the afternoon, followed by scattered showers and sunny intervals. The 28th had sunshine and blustery, locally thundery, showers. It was dull and wet on the 29th and 30th, and Capel Curig (Gwynedd) recorded 77.4 mm on the 29th. The rain cleared away late on the 30th, but more rain spread from the west followed by sunshine and blustery showers on the 31st, with gusts exceeding 70 mph in places.

## **Scotland diary of highlights**

**It was a generally dull and wet month with rain frequently crossing the country. It was briefly more settled, if rather cloudy, from the 14th to 18th with easterly winds. It was often wet and windy from the 19th onwards.**

The mean temperature for the month was 0.1 °C below the long-term average. Most of the country had a cloudy and wet month, with 136% of average rainfall and 80% of average sunshine overall. Some eastern parts had more than twice the normal rainfall, but rainfall was near or just slightly above average in parts of the west and in the Northern Isles.

### **1st to 7th**

Rain persisted in northern and eastern parts for much of the day, edging northwards, but there was sunshine in southern and some western parts with 10.6 hours of sunshine at Dundrennan (Kirkcudbrightshire), and strong to gale force winds developed in Fair Isle and the Shetland Islands during the evening. The 2nd was a mostly dry sunny day, after rain cleared the far north-west early morning, but it clouded over from the south late on with rain spreading into the Borders around dusk. The 3rd was a very wet day for most with well over 50 mm falling widely and 100 mm in parts of Aberdeenshire, with 127.1 mm at Fettercairn (Kincardineshire). The rain cleared westwards from most parts on the 4th leaving brighter weather with some showers, and Auchincruive (Ayrshire) reached a high of 18.0 °C. After a mild night, with Tiree (Argyll) not falling below 12.3 °C, the 5th was dry and bright in the north and west with frequent showers for central and eastern parts, but rain brushed parts of the Western Isles and the south-west late in the day. The 6th and 7th were mainly showery, with a band of more persistent rain early on the 6th, the showers mostly in the north on the 7th.

### **8th to 13th**

Winds turned north-westerly or northerly for much of this period. The 8th had showers and longer spells of rain spreading from north-west to south-east, reaching the south and east by mid-afternoon. Showers, locally thundery, for the north and west spread to almost all parts by early afternoon on the 9th. The 10th was a predominantly cloudy day with showers and longer spells of rain, heaviest and most frequent in the north and east. A northerly flow brought a brighter day for most on the 11th, but with showers along the east coast, and more general rain affecting the Western Isles towards evening. Rain crossed the country on the 12th, followed by brighter weather with frequent and locally heavy showers in the north and west. The 13th had sunshine and showers, the showers most frequent in central and eastern parts, sunniest and driest in the west, and it was breezy at times in exposed parts.

### **14th to 18th**

The weather turned cooler and more settled with easterly winds, but it remained mainly cloudy. A band of showers and longer spells of rain spread only slowly southwards through central and southern parts on the 14th, and most places were cloudy. Some places saw clear skies and frost early on the 15th, with a minimum of -3.3 °C at Tyndrum (Perthshire), then there were rain or showers along the east coast and in the south, and Dalwhinnie (Inverness-shire) only reached 6.9 °C. It remained cool and cloudy from the 16th to 18th inclusive, with some light rain and drizzle at times, mainly in the east.

### **19th to 23rd**

The winds turned southerly on the 19th and rain became persistent, widespread and locally heavy, particularly in the west, with over 50 mm in places. Further rain belts crossed the country on the 20th, and it was breezy in exposed parts. Logan Botanical Gardens (Wigtownshire) did not fall below 12.3 °C overnight, then the 21st brought further rain at times, especially in the north and north-west, but it was drier in the south and far east, with sunny spells in parts of the east. The 22nd was a mainly cloudy and showery day, with a very wet start in the far north-east, but with some brighter spells over the Northern Isles. On both the 23rd and 24th, belts of persistent rain spread eastwards through the country, with brighter showery weather following from the west, and

it was windy at times. The 25th had sunshine and locally thundery showers, with longer spells of rain in the north and west for a time, and gales in exposed parts. Rain swept south-eastwards through parts of the west and south-west early on the 26th, otherwise it was another day of sunshine and scattered showers. After a dry sunny start in northern and north-eastern parts on the 27th, rain spread from the south-west. There were showers and longer spells of rain on the 28th, heaviest and most frequent in the south and west, with a high of just 6.9 °C at Dalwhinnie. After a dry sunny start over the north and east on the 29th with a few showers over the north-west, more rain spread from the south-west. The 31st was a day of sunshine and showers, then Storm Aiden brought persistent and locally heavy rain, with gusts to 79 mph at Altnaharra (Sutherland).

## **Northern Ireland diary of highlights**

**October was a mainly unsettled month with frequent rain, though it turned more settled from the 8th to 18th, especially around mid-month when the winds became easterly. It was very wet and windy at times from the 19th onwards, with areas of rain interspersed with brighter showery weather.**

The mean temperature for the month was 0.1 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average. Rainfall was 139% of average and sunshine was 101% of average. Sunshine was a little above normal in the south, and a little below normal in the north.

### **1st to 7th**

The 1st began chilly in places with a minimum of -1.4 °C at Katesbridge (County Down), followed by a bright day, with isolated showers developing in the north and west. The 2nd was another day of sunshine and isolated showers, with 9.7 hours of bright sunshine at Aldergrove (County Antrim). The 3rd was mostly dry and cloudy, and rain spread from the east in the afternoon, giving over 40 mm in some eastern locations, and the rain slowly cleared westwards later on the 4th. Rain edged away north-eastwards on the 5th, and the 6th was a day of sunshine and showers. The 7th was another cloudy day with a little light rain, and more general rain spread from the south to all parts from late afternoon.

### **8th to 13th**

The winds veered north-westerly and then northerly. There was a mix of sunshine and scattered showers on the 8th and 9th, then the 10th was rather cloudier with more widespread showers. It was mainly cloudy on the 11th with a little patchy rain during the morning, and a further band of rain crossed the country overnight 11th/12th, clearing the east around dawn on the 12th followed by sunshine and scattered showers. It was mainly cloudy on the 13th, with any showers becoming increasingly isolated.

### **14th to 18th**

The weather turned more settled with mainly easterly winds. Showery rain cleared westwards by midday on the 14th, followed by a sunny afternoon with a high of 17.2 °C at Armagh (County Armagh). The 15th was cloudier with a few showers, and then it was mostly cloudy with some light rain and drizzle from the 16th to 18th, but it brightened up in the afternoon on the 18th.

### **19th to 31st**

The weather turned very wet and windy during this period. Rain became heavy and persistent on the 19th, with totals exceeding 40 mm in places, and 58.2 mm at Trassey (County Down). It was mainly cloudy on the 20th with a belt of persistent rain spreading from the south. After a mild night, with Ballywatticock (County Down) not falling below 11.6 °C, the 21st saw showers mainly in the north and west. The 22nd was a mainly cloudy day with isolated showers, then a belt of rain crossed the country overnight, followed by sunshine and showers on the 23rd, though the showers

were isolated in the south. Another area of rain spread from the west overnight 23rd/24th, followed by sunshine and scattered blustery showers from the 24th to 26th, with strong winds. Another belt of rain spread north-eastwards early on the 27th followed by a return to sunshine and scattered blustery showers, and the 28th was a cool bright showery day with a high of just 8.3 °C at Lough Fea (County Londonderry). The 29th was mainly dull and wet, but brighter showery weather spread from the west through the afternoon. Showers were isolated on the 30th, following clearance of early patchy rain, but it was wet and very windy early on the 31st, followed by sunshine and blustery showers with gusts to 64 mph at Magilligan (County Londonderry).