

April 2019

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

April started off cool with showers and longer spells of rain, bringing sleet and snow to some places especially on high ground. Easterly winds prevailed from the 5th to 18th, and between the 5th and 9th it turned generally warmer, though still quite unsettled. It turned colder with widespread overnight frosts between the 10th and 16th, though often dry and sunny. The weather turned settled and very warm with plenty of sunshine for most between the 17th and 23rd, with the warmest and sunniest weather coinciding with the Easter weekend, producing a new record high temperature for Easter Sunday. It turned more unsettled during the last week with strong winds on the 26th and 27th associated with Storm Hannah.

The provisional UK mean temperature was 8.4 °C, which is 1.0 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. Mean maximum temperatures ranged from 3 °C above normal in parts of north-west Scotland to less than 0.5 °C above in some eastern coastal counties, while mean minimum temperatures ranged from 2°C above normal in north-west Scotland to nearly 1 °C below in parts of eastern England. Rainfall was 71% of average overall, and was well below normal in East Anglia and the south-east and in western Scotland, and mostly near normal elsewhere. Sunshine was mostly above normal except in Northern Ireland and south-western Britain, with 114% of average overall.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 25.8 °C was recorded at Treknow (Cornwall) on the 19th. A minimum temperature of -6.8 °C was recorded at Braemar (Aberdeenshire) on the 10th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 28th, 58.2 mm of rain fell at Buxton (Derbyshire). A wind gust of 71 knots (82 mph) was recorded at Aberdaron (Gwynedd) on the 26th. A snow depth of 13 cm was measured at Warcop Range (Cumbria) on the 3rd.

Weather impacts

On the 3rd, a mixture of rain, sleet and snow led to difficult driving conditions across Scotland, notably between Aviemore and Inverness. There were road traffic accidents on the M74, the A9 was closed for a time at Slochd, and Dulnain Bridge suffered power outages. Traffic delays were widespread in the higher parts of Cumbria and in north-east England, where there was a multi-vehicle crash on the A1231. In Essex and Suffolk, hailstorms were followed by road traffic accidents on the A12 and A14. On the 4th, traffic disruption and school closures affected the higher parts of mid- and south Wales.

The weather turned mostly settled for the next two weeks but the dry weather increased the risk of fires. A large wildfire was reported near Loch Don in south-west Scotland on the 14th, and homes were evacuated in Sutherland as a wildfire spread close to properties. In Wales, several grass fires broke out in the mountains over the Easter period (19th-22nd). A large moorland fire broke out on Ilkley Moor in West Yorkshire over the Easter weekend, destroying 700 acres of moorland. There were also reports of a fire on Bodmin Moor. The settled weather broke down on the 24th, when lightning damaged the railway signalling system between Leeds and York and there were incidences of flooding around Manchester.

On the 26th and 27th Storm Hannah brought wet and windy weather to most of the country. In Wales strong winds led to the closure of the M48 Severn Bridge, A548 Flintshire Bridge and the A55 in Holyhead. There were fallen trees on some roads and railways with bus replacement services put in place on the Conwy Valley line. Over 2000 properties experienced power outages with the worst affected areas in Builth Wells and Haverfordwest. In north-west England, J16 on the M6 and J14 on the M60 were closed due to flooding. There were delays and some cancellations to bus and rail services due to flooding, fallen trees and damage to overhead electric wires. The 21:00 P&O sailing between Liverpool and Dublin was cancelled. The east, south-east and south-west of England were affected by fallen trees and cancelled outdoor events, and the Isle of Wight ferry service was suspended. In Northern Ireland, rain on the 27th led to some transient minor road flooding.

England diary of highlights

April started off with a cold and unsettled spell for the first five days. Easterly winds then persisted until mid-month, initially bringing warmer weather but it turned colder again from the 9th to 14th. The weather turned dry, sunny and very warm for most between the 17th and 22nd, coinciding with the Easter weekend. The last week was more unsettled.

The mean temperature for April was provisionally 0.7 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average, entirely due to above average daytime maximum temperatures. The mean temperature was mostly near normal in the east and above normal in the west. Rainfall was near normal in most western areas but well below average in the east and south-east, while sunshine was mostly above normal except in the south-west. Overall, England had 64% of average rainfall and 116% of average sunshine.

1st to 4th

Most places were sunny and dry on the 1st, but frontal cloud spread from the north-west into northern areas, bringing rain which then spread south-eastwards overnight 1st/2nd, clearing eastwards on the 2nd followed by a cold north-westerly with sunshine and showers, the showers wintry on high ground and widely producing hail. After a widespread frost, the 3rd was cold with persistent rain and hill snow in the north and south-west, with 13 cm of lying snow at Warcop Range and a maximum of only 3.1 °C at Spadeadam (both Cumbria). Snow briefly extended to low levels locally in the north, while elsewhere there were showers. Showers affected the north-east on the 4th and there was persistent rain in the south-west, but most of eastern and south-eastern England was dry with some sunshine.

5th to 14th

Easterly winds dominated during this period. There was persistent rain in the south-west on the 5th, but otherwise the 5th and 6th were dry, albeit cloudy in many areas. A belt of rain moved into most eastern parts on the 7th, and rain became slow-moving across the Midlands and south-east on the 8th, slowly moving further south on the 9th. Many other areas turned warmer and sunnier, but this triggered some showers and thunderstorms in parts of East Anglia late on the 8th, and overnight fog was slow to clear in some areas, proving persistent near north-eastern coasts. From the 10th to 14th, colder air moved in from the east bringing mostly cold dry bright weather with widespread overnight frosts. There was a minimum of -6.1 °C at Ravensworth (North Yorkshire) on the 11th. Isolated showers developed in eastern counties on the 12th and showers became more frequent and widespread in the east on the 13th, but were lighter and more isolated again on the 14th. Persistent rain and strong winds spread into the south-west on the 14th.

15th to 23rd

Warmer air moved in from the south-east, and the easterly flow fizzled out late in this period, and so the weather became settled and much warmer. Most areas were cloudy on the 15th and 16th, though central areas had some sunshine on the 15th, and rain in the south-west on the 15th spread slowly north-eastwards through the country on the 16th. Fog was slow to clear in parts of the Midlands and south on the 17th and 18th, but otherwise the weather turned dry and sunny for most, and increasingly warm away from the east coast. Between the 19th and 21st most of the country was very warm and sunny, with Treknaw (Cornwall) reaching 25.8°C on the 19th, and East Malling (Kent) had 14.1 hours of sunshine on the 21st, but it was often cooler near the east coast with fog slow to clear in parts of Lincolnshire. The temperature fell no lower than 13.8 °C at Blencathra (Cumbria) overnight 19th/20th. The 22nd and 23rd continued mostly warm and sunny but high cloud increasingly spread from the south, especially on the 23rd, and showers developed in the south-west late on the 23rd. However, eastern coastal areas turned cooler on the 23rd.

24th to 30th

It turned somewhat more unsettled during this period with temperatures gradually returning towards the seasonal average. An area of rain spread northwards on the 24th, turning thundery across parts of the north Midlands and northern England, followed by drier brighter weather. Showers and longer spells of rain spread north on the 25th, again turning heavy and thundery in parts of northern England. After a bright start in eastern areas, rain moved eastwards on the 26th, turning showery across the south. Further rain spread from the west overnight 26th/27th associated with Storm Hannah, and the 27th was mostly wet and windy with 58.2 mm at Buxton (Derbyshire) and gusts to 66 mph at the Needles (Isle of Wight), with a few thunderstorms over Cumbria but it was drier with sunshine in the south. A band of light rain persisted over the south-west on the 28th and 29th, clearing by the 30th, while otherwise it was generally dry with some sunshine and increasingly warm. Fog was sometimes slow to clear, particularly over parts of Northumberland, the Vale of York, east Lincolnshire and the Home Counties on the 30th.

Wales diary of highlights

April started off cool and unsettled, followed by a long spell of predominantly easterly winds. After warming up briefly, it turned cold again between the 10th and 14th, but became dry, sunny and very warm between the 17th and 22nd. The last week was generally cloudy with frequent rain, and windy at times, especially on the 26th and 27th.

The mean temperature for April was provisionally 1.2 °C above the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall and sunshine were mostly close to normal, with Wales as a whole having 113% of average rainfall and 100% of average sunshine.

1st to 4th

The 1st was dry and bright in most areas, but cloudier with a little light rain in the far north-west later. Rain spread from the north-west overnight followed by colder north-westerlies, and the 2nd had a mix of sunshine and scattered showers which were wintry on high ground. The temperature fell to -5.6 °C early on the 3rd at St Harmon (Powys), and the 3rd was a mostly cloudy wet day, again with sleet and snow on high ground, penetrating at times to lower levels too. The 4th was another cloudy wet day with sleet and snow mainly on high ground, and a high of just 4.5 °C at Lake Vyrnwy (Powys); 3 cm of snow was reported at Sennybridge and St Harmon (both Powys).

5th to 14th

Easterly winds dominated during this period. Rain affected most areas at times on the 5th, especially the south, but this cleared away from the far south-west early on the 6th, leaving dry and mostly sunny weather on the 6th and 7th, though low cloud sometimes affected eastern counties. A belt of rain spread slowly south-westwards across the country on the 8th and 9th, followed by brighter, colder weather which became established across all of Wales by the afternoon of the 10th. The 11th, 12th and 13th were generally cold, sunny and dry with overnight frosts, but cloud increased from the south-west late on the 13th. The 14th was cloudier in the west with rain sometimes nudging into coastal fringes, but still with some sunshine in the east.

15th to 23rd

Warmer air masses moved in from the south-east and then high pressure developed over Britain, bringing settled and much warmer weather. Rain continued to affect western coastal areas on the 15th with dry and bright weather further east, and it was warmer than recent days. The rain spread north-eastwards across the country on the 16th. Between the 17th and 21st the weather was dry, sunny and very warm, with a high of 25.4 °C at Prestatyn (Clwyd) on the 19th, and 13.2 hours of sunshine at Aberporth (Dyfed) on the 21st, though there was some overnight fog in places. The 22nd was another mostly sunny day but high cloud increased from the south during the afternoon with isolated showers. Under the veil of high cloud the temperature did not fall below 13.4 °C at Cardiff Bute Park overnight 22nd/23rd. The 23rd was a dry bright day but cloud-cover continued to increase from the south.

24th to 30th

The weather turned more unsettled. Rain spread from the south on the 24th, reaching all parts by mid-afternoon, and this was followed by sunshine and showers on the 25th, some of the showers merging into longer spells of rain and also turning thundery, especially in the north and east. The 26th and 27th were both wet days, and it also turned very windy due to the arrival of Storm Hannah. Aberdaron (Gwynedd) recorded a gust to 82 mph late on the 26th, and Capel Curig (Gwynedd) recorded 55.8 mm of rain on the 27th. The 28th and 29th had a slow-moving belt of rain in western counties, but this became more confined to western coastal fringes on the 30th. Elsewhere it was dry and, after a mostly cloudy day on the 28th, it turned progressively brighter. Fog was slow to clear in some areas on the 29th.

Scotland diary of highlights

April began quite cold and unsettled with some snow especially for high ground, mostly rain and sleet at low levels. Easterly winds brought warmer air between the 5th and 9th, but between the 10th and 16th it was generally cold with some overnight frosts. Most places became dry, warm and mostly sunny between the 17th and 23rd, then the last week was often cloudier and wetter.

The mean temperature for April was provisionally 1.4 °C above the long-term average, making it the 6th warmest April in a series from 1910. The north-west was much warmer than normal but temperatures were closer to normal in the east. Most regions had a dry sunny month although rainfall was close to normal in some eastern areas. Overall Scotland had just 61% of average rainfall, and sunshine was 121% of average.

1st to 4th

Some areas started off dry and bright on the 1st but a belt of rain spread to most parts from the west, followed by a cool north-westerly type. Persistent rain lingered in eastern counties on the

2nd, with 48.2 mm of rain at Tomnavoulin (Morayshire), while elsewhere there was sunshine and showers with widespread hail, and some of the showers were wintry, especially but not exclusively over higher ground. The 3rd was dull and wet with sleet and snow in places, again especially over high ground, with a high of only 2.9 °C at Dawyck Botanic Gardens (Peebles-shire) and gusts to 62 mph at Tiree (Argyll). The persistent rain, sleet and snow continued in the north on the 4th with 6 cm of lying snow at Tomnavoulin, while central and southern counties saw sunshine and wintry showers.

5th to 9th

Easterly winds dominated during this period and brought in warmer air. Most places were dry and bright on the 5th although rain spread into the far north-east during the afternoon. This rain spread south-westwards across the country overnight 5th/6th and became persistent for a while across south-eastern, central and north-western areas on the 6th, before fizzling out. Most places were cloudy on the 7th with some mist, fog and drizzle in eastern and central counties, but it was sunny in the Northern Isles. It generally brightened up on the 8th away from the north-east, and most places were sunny on the 9th.

10th to 16th

Colder air spread in from the east on the 9th and 10th, and the night of the 9th/10th had a widespread frost with a minimum of -6.8 °C at Braemar (Aberdeenshire). The 10th was a sunny day following clearance of patchy fog in the far north, and despite the cold start it turned warm in central and western areas. Cloud and drizzle affected eastern counties on the 11th and 12th but central and western parts stayed sunny and dry, again after overnight frost. On the 12th some patchy rain developed in the far east. It was generally dry, sunny and quite cold on the 13th and 14th, but increasingly breezy, and on the 14th scattered showers developed in the south-east and cloud increased generally from the south-west, bringing rain into the Western Isles. Rain over western areas on the 15th spread slowly eastwards on the 16th, but eastern parts stayed cloudy and dry except for some drizzle near the east coast.

17th to 23rd

This period was settled and warm as high pressure built over the British Isles. On the 17th rain over the north died out by midday, followed by dry and generally sunny weather. The 18th was bright and dry, though with a fair amount of high cloud in many areas, and temperatures reached 20 °C in some western parts but it was cooler near the east coast. Most places were dry, sunny and warm between the 19th and 22nd with a high of 24.8 °C at Floors Castle (Roxburghshire) on the 20th, but the 21st was generally cloudier; the north-west however was cloudier and some rain spread into the far north-west on the 19th, persisting on the 20th and 21st. The 22nd was cloudier for some, and the temperature did not fall below 14.4 °C at Achnagart (Ross & Cromarty), an exceptionally high minimum for April. The 23rd was still dry and bright for many areas but with a lot of high cloud, and some rain or showers in the north early in the day; a few showers also developed in the south-west and moved north during the day.

24th to 30th

The weather turned somewhat more unsettled during this period. The 24th was a bright day in the south and west but cloudier in the north and east and a narrow band of rain or showers developed through central parts in the afternoon. A belt of rain cleared northwards early on the 25th followed by brighter weather, but showers spread from the south and became locally heavy and thundery. Showers were generally fewer on the 26th but were replaced by longer outbreaks of

rain across southern parts. Storm Hannah brought a cool, cloudy, breezy day on the 27th with showers and longer spells of rain, accompanied locally by thunder in southern parts. A belt of rain reached western coastal counties after midday on the 28th but failed to make much progress eastwards, with other areas dry and bright. The rain in the west died out on the 29th, and following clearance of patchy fog in southern and eastern areas, the 29th was dry and sunny for most with 14.7 hours of bright sunshine at Kinloss (Morayshire). After a sunny start, especially in the east, further cloud and rain spread into central and western parts on the 30th.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

April started off cold and showery with snow mainly on high ground. Easterly winds dominated from the 5th to 16th, and it turned warmer initially but was generally colder from the 10th to 16th. It was settled and warm with some sunshine between the 17th and 23rd but from the 24th onwards it was mostly cloudy and wet.

The mean temperature for April was provisionally 0.9 °C above the long-term average. Rainfall was 105% of average and sunshine was 87% of average. Rainfall was near or just above normal everywhere while sunshine was below normal in the west but near normal in the east.

1st to 4th

The 1st was a cloudy day, rain spreading from the north-west during the afternoon heralding a cold north-westerly airflow. This brought sunshine and scattered showers on the 2nd with widespread hail, and some of the showers were wintry especially on high ground with 1 cm of lying snow at Lough Navar (County Fermanagh). On the 3rd the showers were replaced by longer outbreaks of rain, with sleet and snow in places especially on high ground. Altnahinch (County Antrim) recorded a maximum of only 4.6 °C and 26.4 mm of rain. The rain had cleared by the 4th leaving sunshine and scattered showers.

5th to 9th

Easterly winds started to dominate during this period and temperatures recovered. Cloud and rain spread from the east on the 5th, though it turned brighter and more showery in the afternoon. The 6th was generally dry, sunny and warm, and it remained dry on the 7th but generally cloudier. A belt of rain spread from the north-east on the 8th and became slow-moving and increasingly weak across the south by the 9th, while it became sunny further north and east.

10th to 16th

Colder, clearer air moved in from the east by the 10th, which was cooler than recent days but it was also sunny and dry. Katesbridge (County Down) fell to -4.8 °C early on the 11th, then most places had a sunny start but it turned cloudier from the west. Both the 12th and 13th started off dry with some sunshine but turned cloudier from the south-west. An area of rain spread erratically eastwards across the Province between the 14th and 16th, with rain mainly in the west on the 14th, in all parts on the 15th, then on the 16th becoming confined to the east by mid-afternoon.

17th to 22nd

The weather turned settled and warmer as high pressure built over the British Isles, although cloud amounts were variable. The 17th started off cloudy with patchy fog in places but brightened up in the afternoon, and most places had a fine bright day on the 18th, albeit with a lot of high cloud. The 19th started off sunny and warm following the clearance of patchy fog in the west, but cloud increased from the west during the afternoon. The 20th to 22nd were mostly warm and

sunny, though still with some high cloud at times. The temperature reached 22.3 °C at Armagh on the 20th, and Aldergrove (County Antrim) recorded 13.1 hours of sunshine on the 22nd.

23rd to 30th

An area of showers spread northwards on the 23rd, clearing by mid-afternoon, followed by a cloudy night with the temperature falling no lower than 12.0 °C at Killowen (County Down), though some sunshine came through during the day on the 24th. A showery southerly type dominated on the 25th and early on the 26th, but it turned wet and windy later on the 26th ahead of Storm Hannah. This storm brought gusts to 59 mph at Killowen (County Down) on the 27th, with rain followed by sunshine and showers. A belt of rain spread eastwards across the Province on the 28th and then became slow-moving in eastern areas on the 29th and 30th, while there was also widespread mist and patchy fog.