

Unprecedented heatwave with high humidity, June 2026

The second half of June 2026 saw an extended period of above average temperature over much of the UK with heatwave conditions reached somewhere in the country every day from 16-30 June. A red weather warning for heat in southeast England was issued for three consecutive days, the longest period of red warnings since extreme heat warnings were introduced to the weather warnings system in 2021. High pressure over Europe moved gradually north, extending heatwave conditions from France across the UK. A new UK maximum June temperature of 38.0°C was recorded at Lingwood (Norfolk) on 26 June and a provisional new Wales maximum temperature of 35.1°C was recorded at Hawarden Airport also on the 26th. Minimum temperatures were also much higher than average, and Hastings (East Sussex) recorded the UK's highest daily minimum June temperature of 23.2°C on the 26th. Temperatures dropped back closer to normal for the time of year for most of the country on the 28th. This heatwave was notable for the high humidity and high minimum temperatures providing little respite overnight, resulting in high discomfort and negative effects on human and animal health.

Impacts

Travel disruption was reported across the UK with train services reduced and cancelled and authorities advising against non-essential travel. Hundreds of schools were reported to have closed in England and Wales and at least six NHS trusts were reported to have declared critical incidents after being overwhelmed with patients. South East Water reportedly introduced a hosepipe ban for around 850,000 customers in Kent.

Yellow thunderstorm warnings were also issued for Northern Scotland, Northern Ireland and south-west England. Overnight on the 22-23rd June there were intense rainstorms and lightning strikes in some parts of London with significant flooding and at least two house fires reported. On 25th of June flash flooding and hail were reported in the Highlands, flights were disrupted at Edinburgh airport and a house in Midlothian reportedly had its roof destroyed by fire caused by a lightning strike.

Due to the high overnight temperatures and high humidity the UKHSA issued a red heat health alert for the southeast of England for the period 24-26th June, warning of danger to life. Around 2,200 excess deaths due to heat related causes have been estimated in England and Wales for the period 18-28 July¹.

Weather data

The analysis charts at 0600 UTC 22 June 2026 shows the UK situated in a warm airmass under an area of high pressure extending over most of Europe.

¹ <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/about-us/news-and-media/media-centre/weather-and-climate-news/2026/more-than-2700-excess-deaths-estimated-in-england-and-wales-during-may-and-june-heatwaves> Accessed 17/07/2026



**Red warning
Extreme Heat**

Between
09:00 Wed 24 Jun 2026 and 23:59 Thu 25 Jun 2026



An exceptional spell of hot and humid weather is expected across this region, with impacts to the general population highly likely.

What to expect

- Population-wide adverse health effects experienced, not limited to those most vulnerable to extreme heat, leading to serious illness or danger to life
- Substantial changes in working practices and daily routines will be required
- High risk of failure of heat-sensitive systems and equipment, with the loss of power and other essential services, such as water, electricity, gas or mobile phone services
- Significantly more people visiting coastal areas, lakes and rivers, leading to an increased risk of water safety incidents
- Delays on roads and road closures, along with delays and cancellations to rail and air travel, with significant welfare issues for those who experience even moderate delays

Issued at 10:30 Mon 22 Jun 2026 | Updated at 10:45 Wed 24 Jun 2026

For enquiries regarding this warning please contact the Met Office Weather Desk

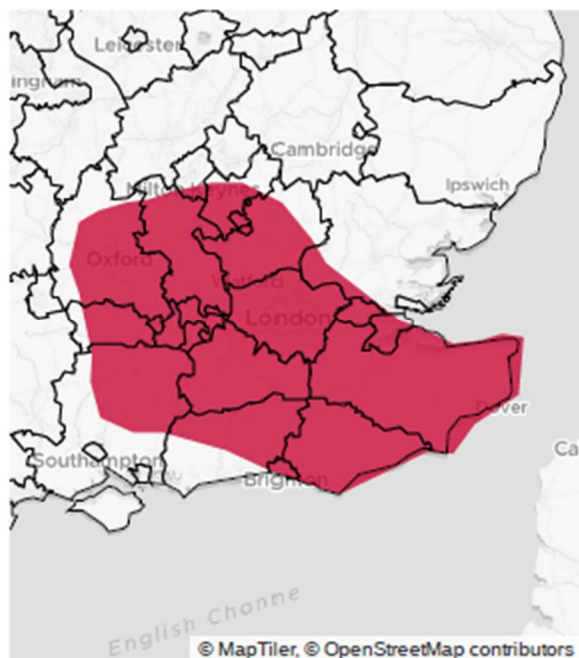
Phone: 0370 900 0100 **E-mail:** enquiries@metoffice.gov.uk

Visit: <https://hazardmanager.metoffice.gov.uk>



**Red warning
Extreme Heat**

**Between
00:00 Fri 26 Jun 2026 and 21:00 Fri 26 Jun 2026**



The exceptional spell of hot and humid weather will continue across this region, with impacts to the general population highly likely.

What to expect

- Population-wide adverse health effects experienced, not limited to those most vulnerable to extreme heat, leading to serious illness or danger to life
- Substantial changes in working practices and daily routines will be required
- High risk of failure of heat-sensitive systems and equipment, with the loss of power and other essential services, such as water, electricity, gas or mobile phone services
- Significantly more people visiting coastal areas, lakes and rivers, leading to an increased risk of water safety incidents
- Delays on roads and road closures, along with delays and cancellations to rail and air travel, with significant welfare issues for those who experience even moderate delays

Issued at 11:04 Thu 25 Jun 2026

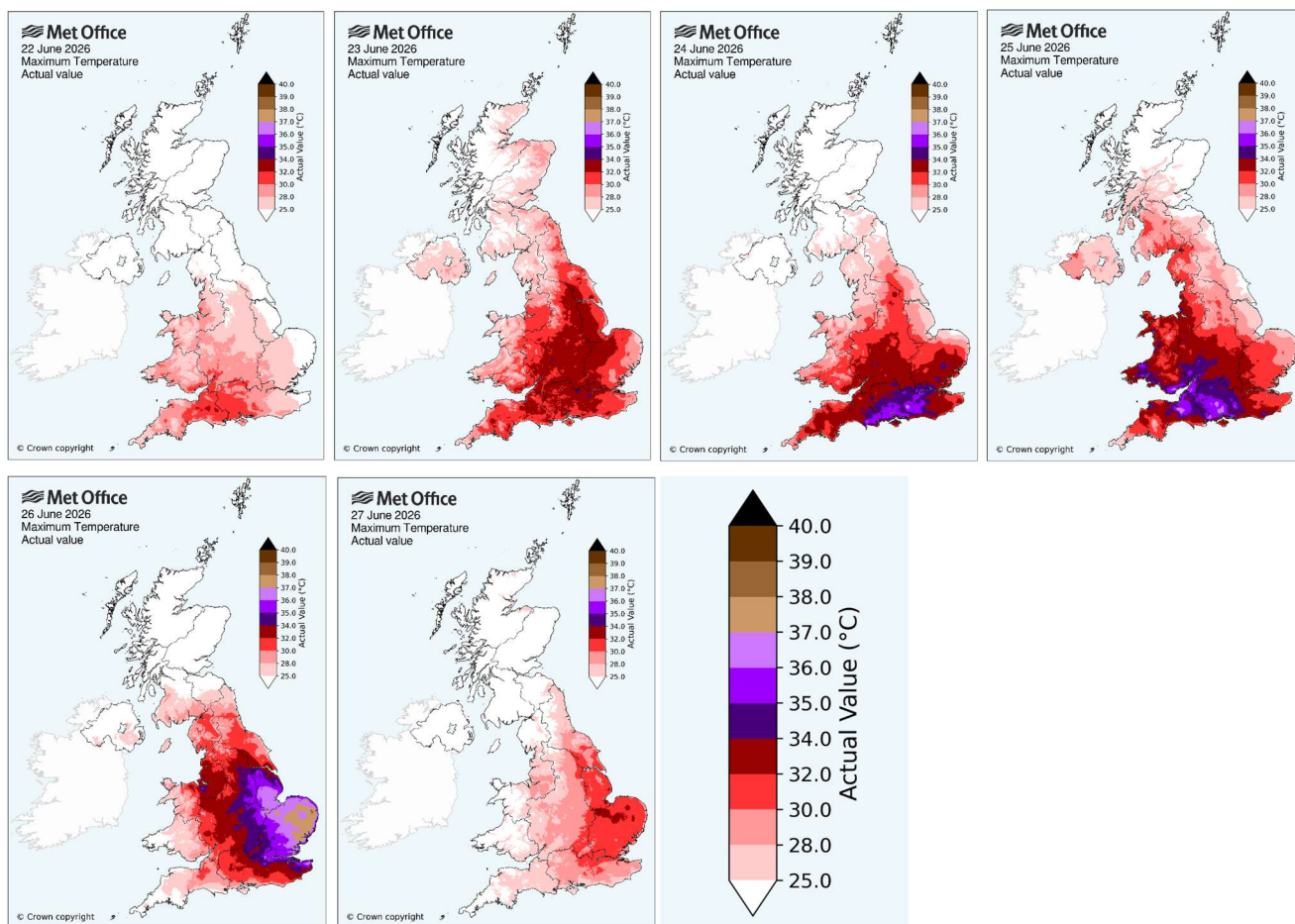
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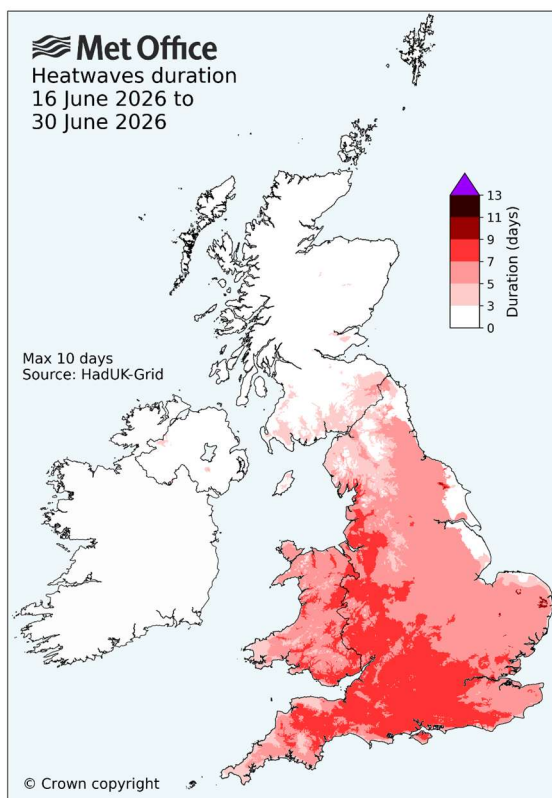
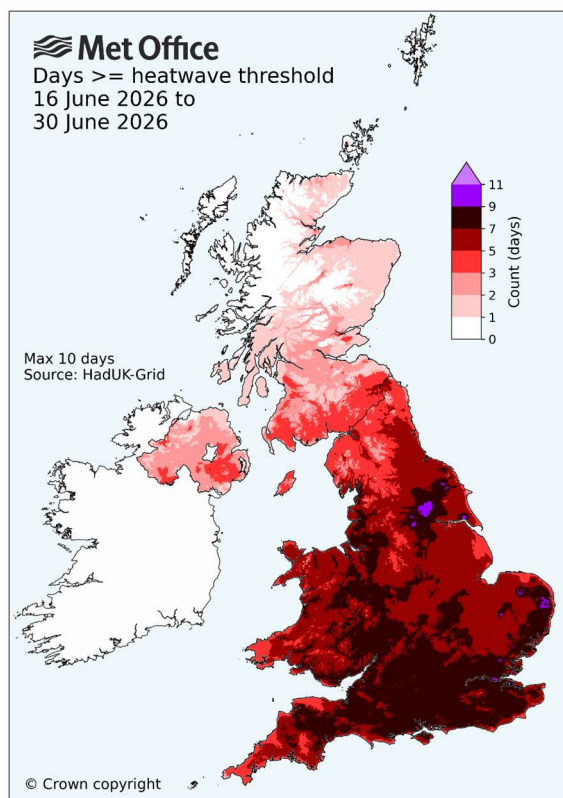
Visit: <https://hazardmanager.metoffice.gov.uk>

The maps below show daily maximum temperatures from 22-27 June. Between 24 and 25 June large areas of southern England saw temperatures above 35°C and parts of southern Wales

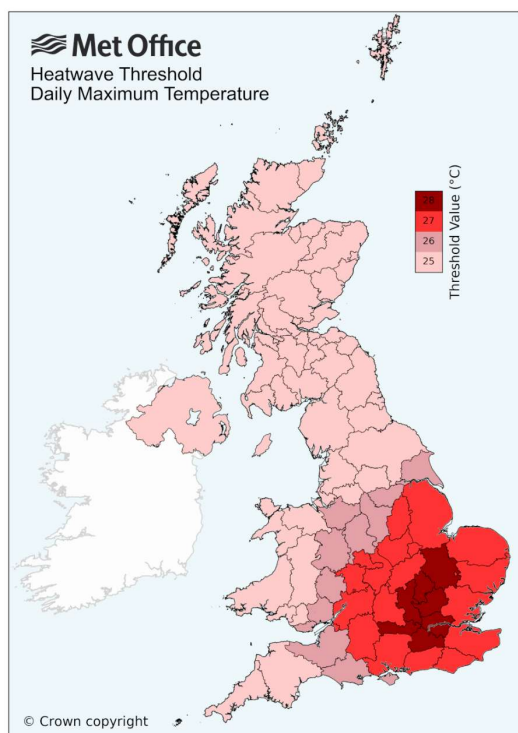
exceeded 35°C on the 25th. Station records over that period were widely broken across southern England with 37°C exceeded by 6 stations on both 25th and 26th. Minimum temperature records were also broken widely across Wales and in parts of England and Northern Ireland on the 26th reflecting the warm nights experienced in this heatwave, with associated risks to health.



All of England and Wales, most of Northern Ireland and significant parts of Scotland experienced extreme conditions during the second half of June. The number of days above the heatwave threshold is shown in the map below on the left with the map on the right showing heatwave duration (when the period of time exceeded 3 days) across the UK, with some areas recording 10 consecutive days of heatwave conditions.

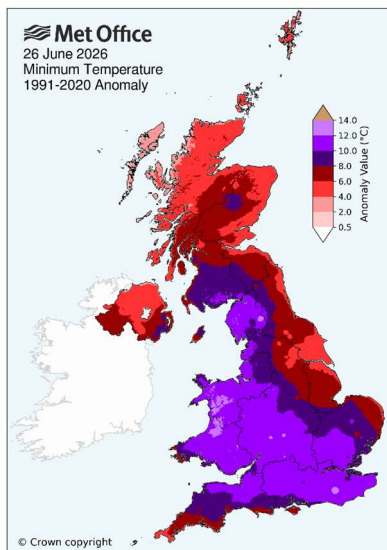
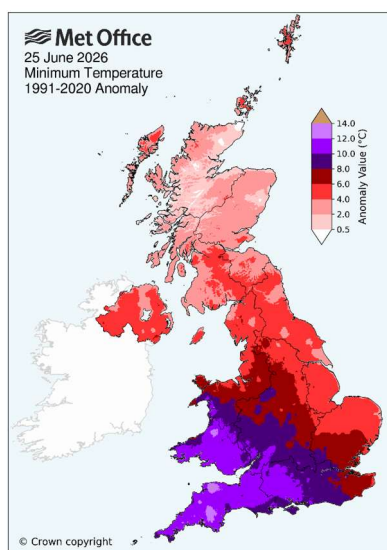
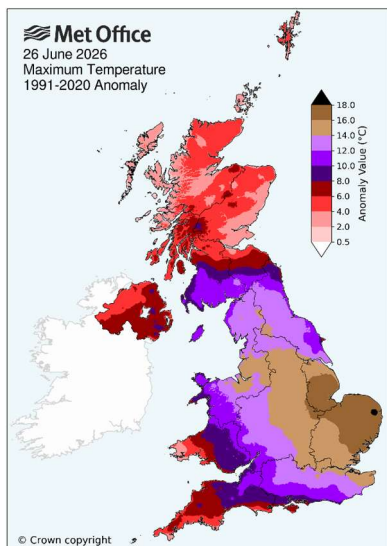
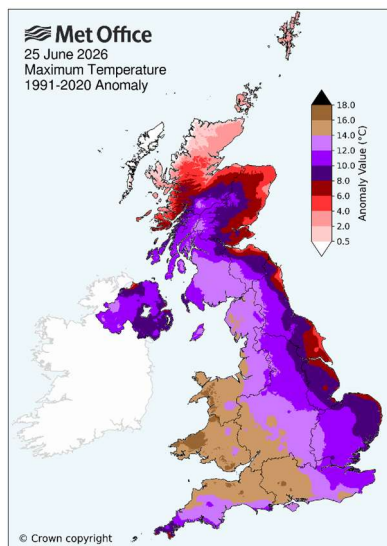


A UK heatwave threshold is met when a location records a period of at least three consecutive days with daily maximum temperatures meeting or exceeding the heatwave temperature thresholds as shown on the map below. Defining a heatwave in this way is a useful mechanism to provide the media and public with consistent and reliable messaging.



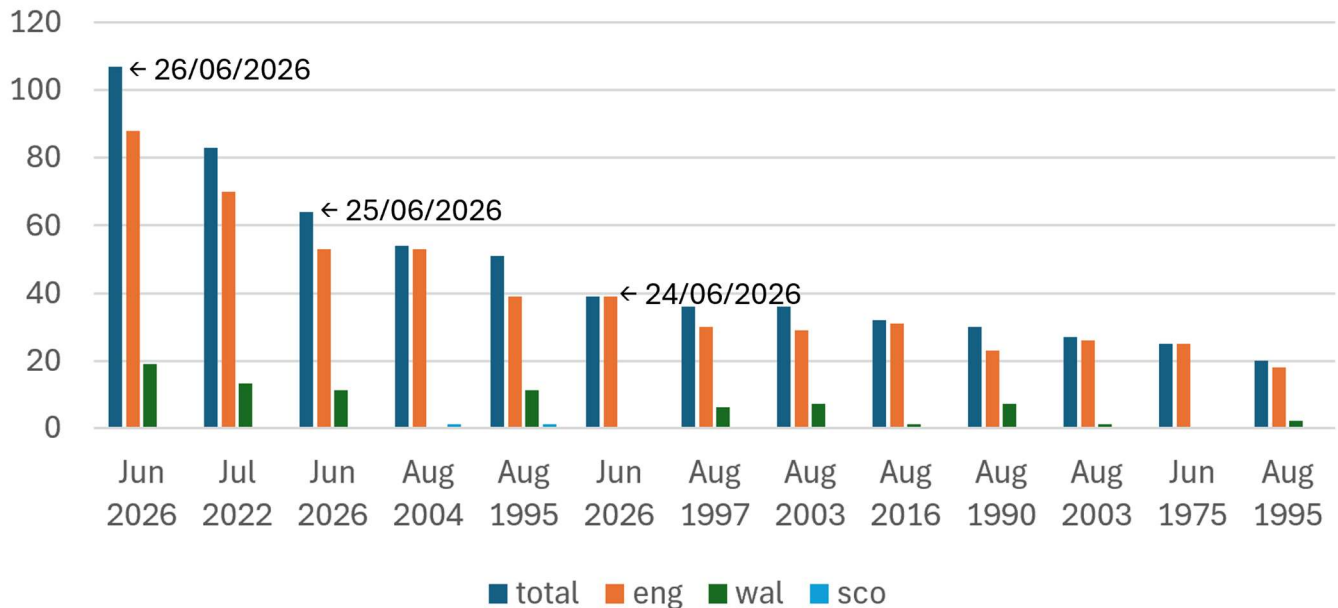
The most extreme temperatures occurred on 25 and 26 June 2026. The maps below show daily maximum temperature anomalies for these two dates compared to the 1991-2020 June average, also shown are the minimum (overnight) temperature anomalies for these dates (note the scales

for maximum and minimum anomalies are different). On 25 June much of Wales and southwest England saw maximum temperatures around 15°C above average during the day and widely more than 10°C above average minimum temperatures reflecting the overnight conditions, with smaller areas seeing more than 12°C above average. On 26 June the focus of the daytime heat had moved to the southeast of England which experienced daily maximum temperatures more than 16°C above average in parts of East Anglia. Overnight temperatures, however, stayed high across Wales, while expanding eastwards, again reaching 12°C very widely and up to 14°C in some areas.



On 26 June 107 stations in England and Wales recorded minimum temperatures exceeding 20°C. The nights with the most stations exceeding 20°C are shown in the chart below for each country in the UK. Compared to the July 2022 heatwave the daytime temperatures were not as extreme (40°C was reached in 2022) but the overnight temperatures were far higher. This made the June heatwave one of the most uncomfortable and dangerous heatwaves of recent years with high humidity and overnight temperatures causing risks to health reflected by the heat health warnings.

Number of Stations recording Tmin $\geq$ 20C Top 13 days

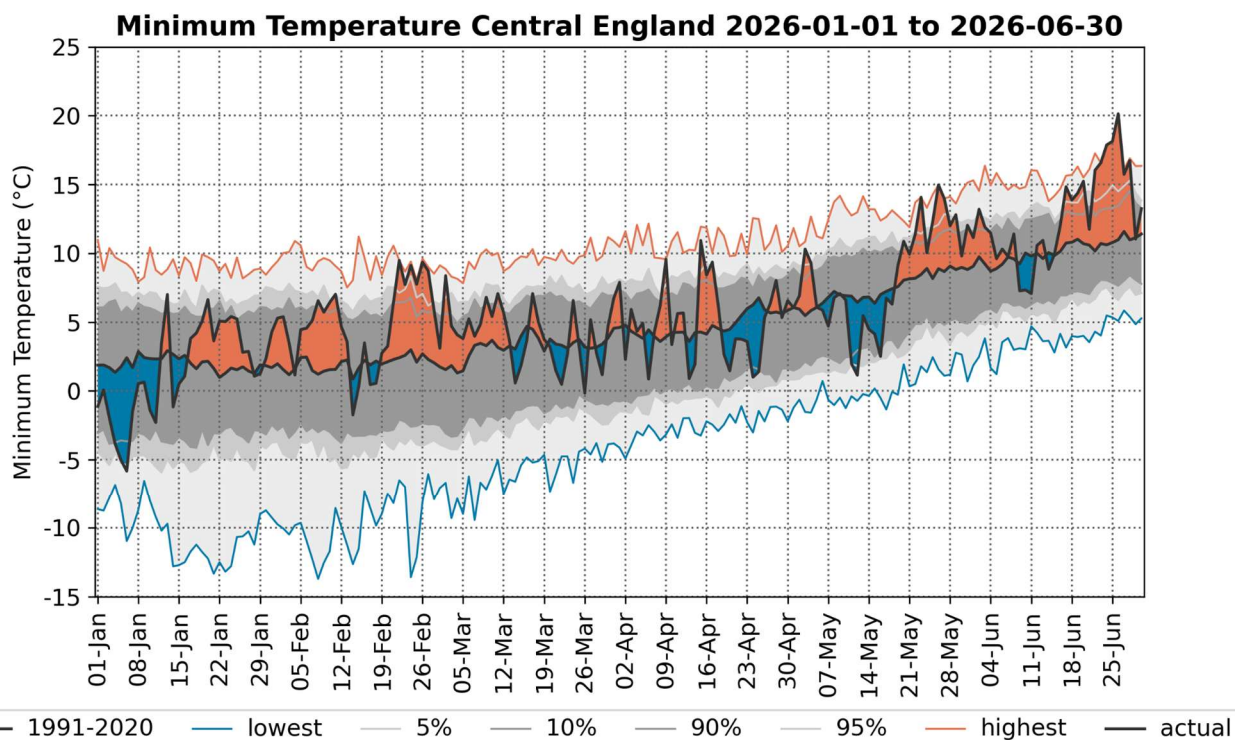


The Central England Temperature (CET) series provides a long-term perspective of this event based on a 250+ year daily mean temperature series from 1772 with maximum and minimum temperatures from 1878. The chart below shows average daily minimum temperatures from CET for 2026 so far against all other years from 1878 and shows how extreme this event was in terms of overnight temperatures, exceeding the maximum for any month so far in the series.

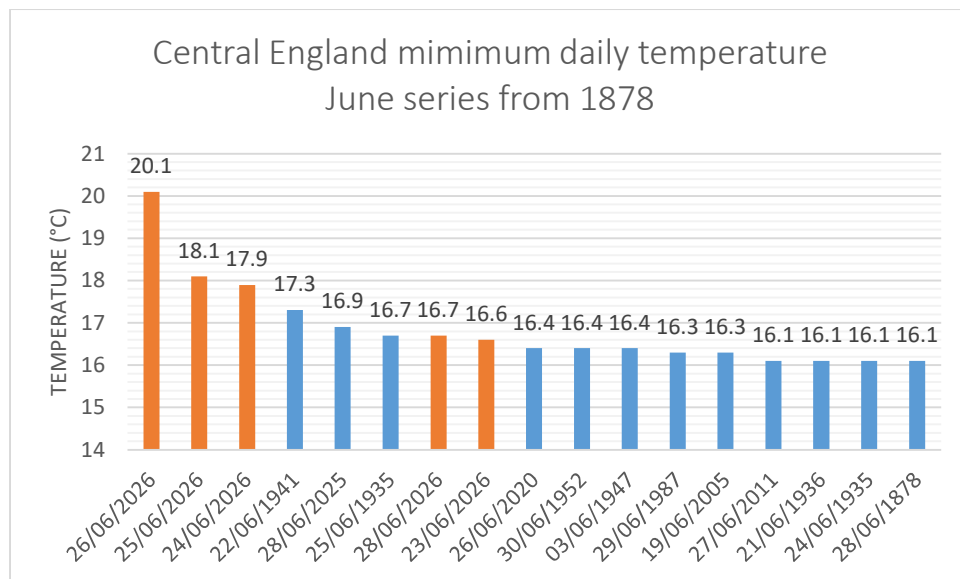


Source: HadCET 17/07/2026 14:27

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The chart below shows that 24, 25 and 26 June days were by far the warmest June days for daily minimum CET in a series from 1878, with 26 June exceeding the previous record by over 2°C. On this chart days in June 2026 are highlighted orange and the number of 2026 days appearing in the top ten minimum temperatures shows how exceptional this heatwave was in terms of overnight temperatures for the time of year.

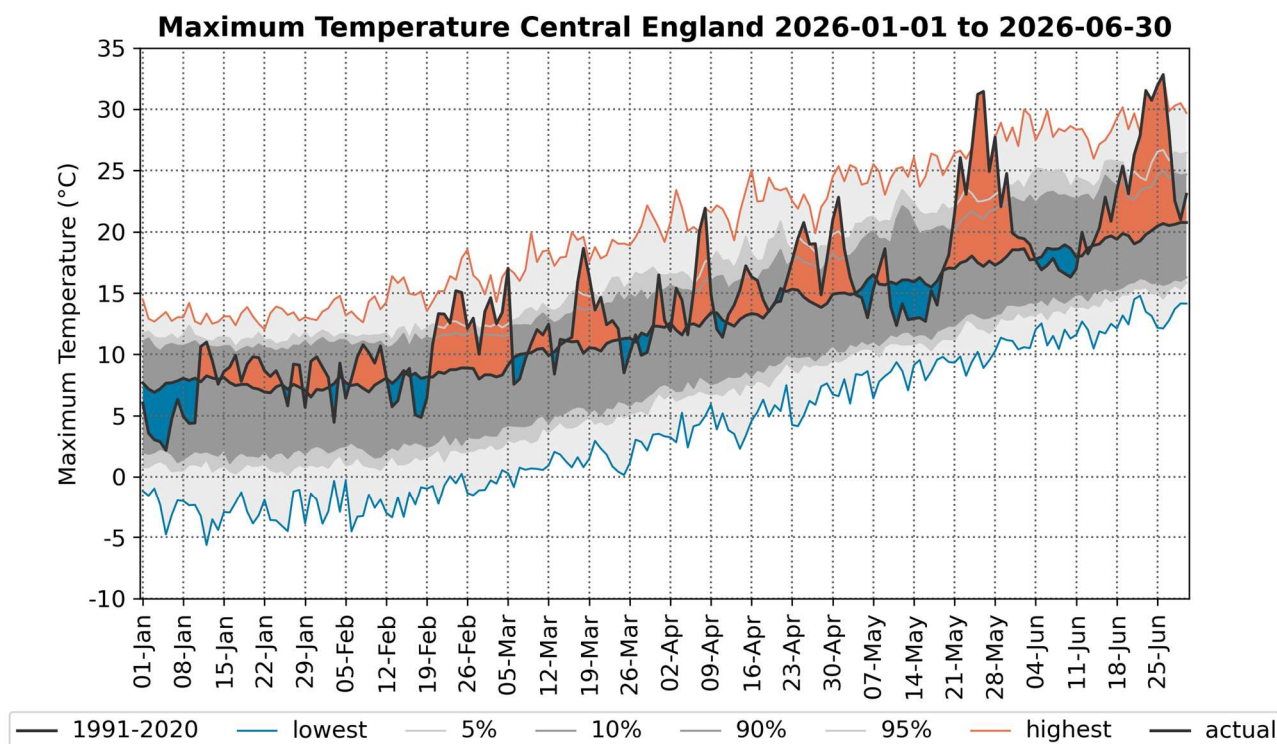


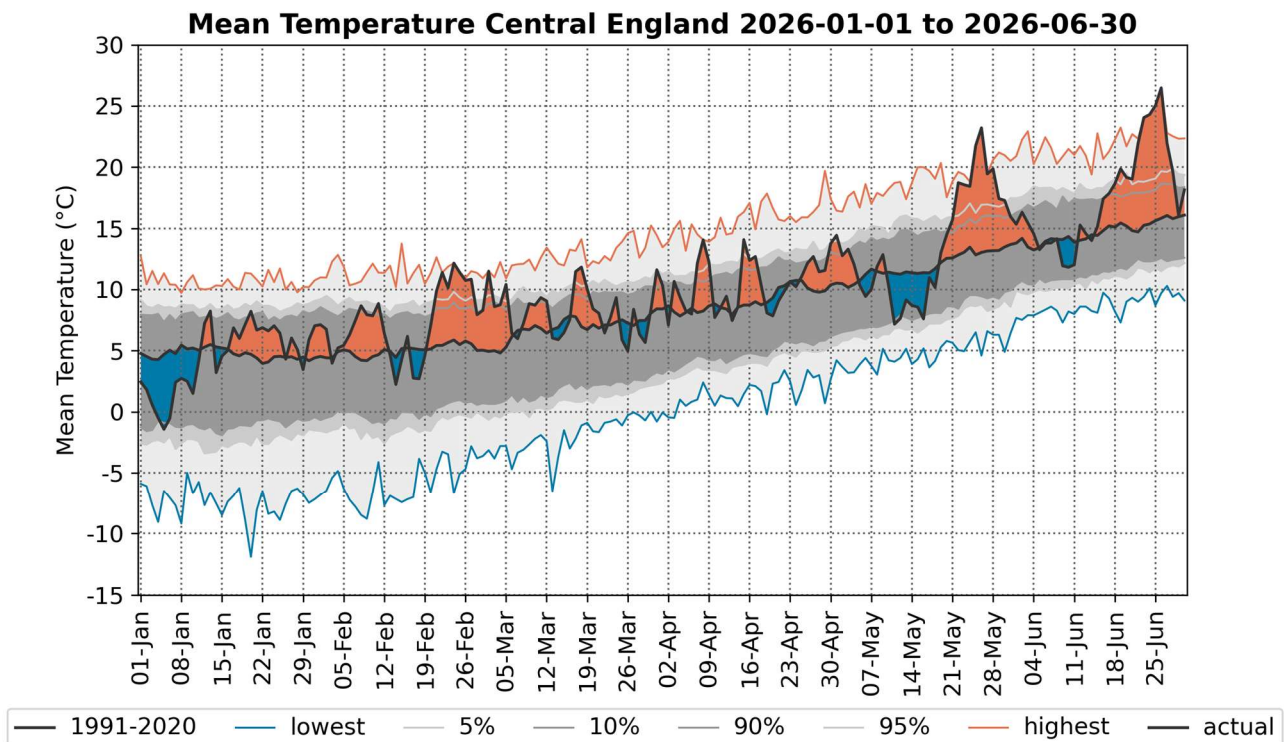
The CET maximum temperature was also extreme for this heatwave, shown in the graph below from a series from 1878, and below that the mean temperature for the same series which extends back to 1772. Both show the exceptional, record breaking, nature of both the May and June 2026 heatwaves in central England.



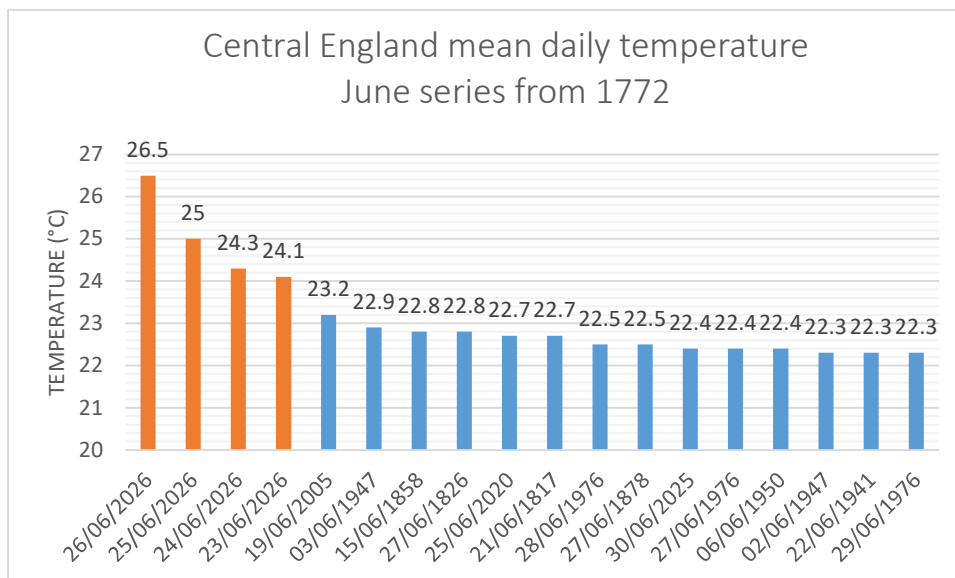
Source: HadCET 17/07/2026 14:26

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The chart below shows that, at a mean temperature of 26.5°C, 26 June 2026 was the warmest June day in the CET series (back to 1776) by quite a margin, with 25, 24 June also more than a degree higher than the previous record year, 2005. The highest daily CET mean anomaly for any month was also recorded in this heatwave.



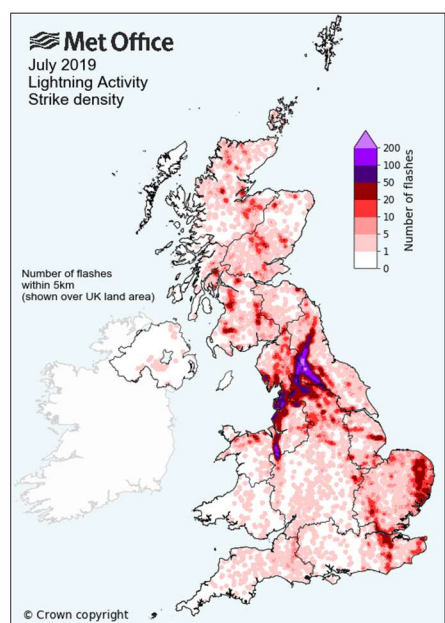
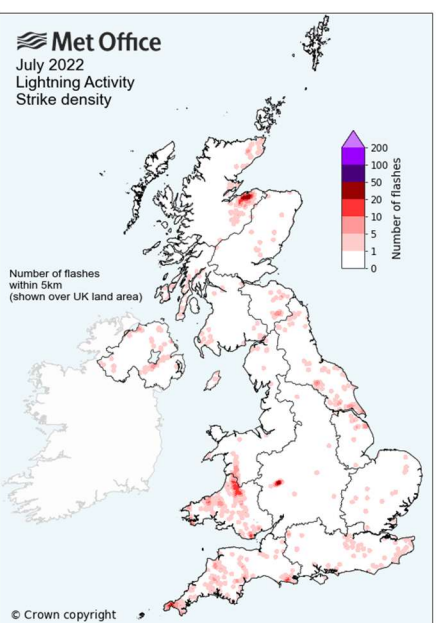
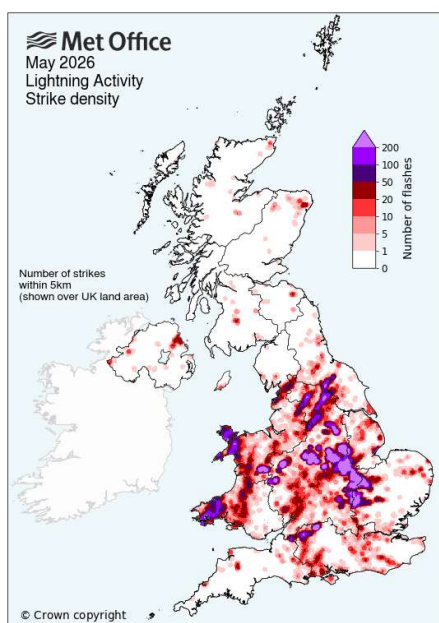
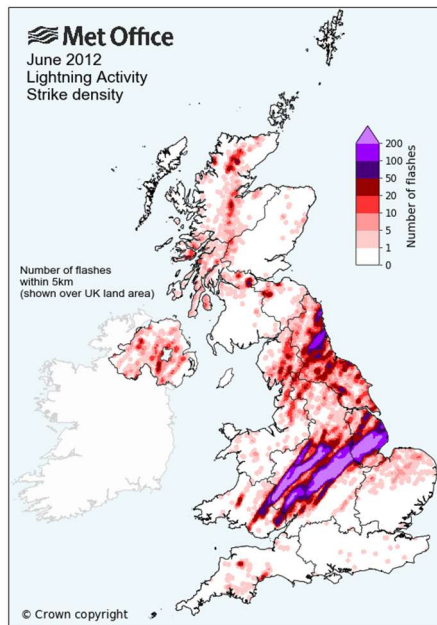
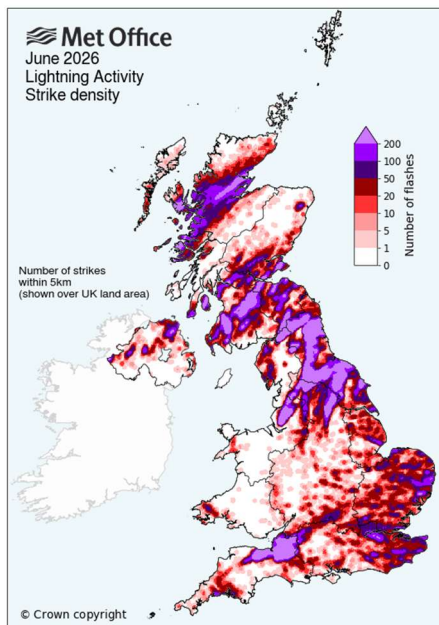
The England average daily maximum temperature on 26 June 2026 was 32.0°C, the highest June value in a daily series from the HadUK-Grid series from 1931 and the 5th highest for any month. The 25, 24 and 23 June 2026 were the 2nd, 3rd and 4th hottest June maximum temperatures for England. Wales saw its highest June minimum temperature on record at 20.4°C.

The table below shows UK and national temperature records set during this heatwave. Records were set for the highest daily maximum and highest daily minimum temperature in June for England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the UK overall. All official records are available at <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/uk-climate-extremes#?tab=climateExtremes>

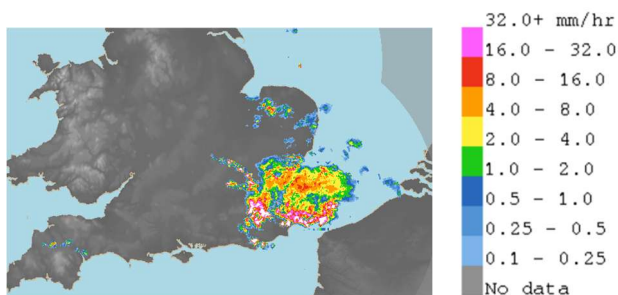
Record type for June	Station	Value (°C)	Date	Previous value (°C)	Previous station and date
UK and England highest Tmax	Lingwood, Strumpshaw Hill, Norfolk	38.0	26 June 2026	35.6	Camden Square, Greater London 29 June 1957 Southampton, Mayflower Park, 28 June 1976
Northern Ireland joint highest Tmax	Castlederg, Tyrone	30.8	25 June 2026	30.8	Knockarevan, County Fermanagh 30 June 1976
Wales highest Tmax	Hawarden Airport, Flintshire	35.1	26 June 2026	33.7	Machynlleth, Powys 18 June 2000
UK and England highest Tmin	Hastings, East Sussex	23.2	26 June 2026	22.7	Ventnor Park, Isle of Wight 28 June 1976
Northern Ireland highest Tmin	Murlough, Down	19.1	26 June 2026	18.2	Aldergrove (County Antrim) 21 June 2025
Wales highest Tmin	Tenby	22.7	25 June 2026	20.0	Prestatyn (Denbighshire) 25 June 2023

Many stations in the UK's network set new June maximum temperature records, including many long-running stations, although the margin by which these records was broken was not as extreme as for the recent May 2026 heatwave.

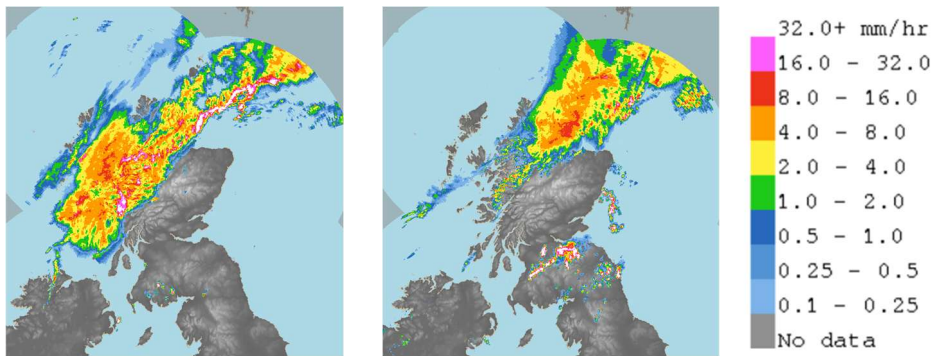
One notable aspect of the weather during the heatwave was the extraordinarily high amount of lightning activity across the country. Thunderstorms and lightning are often associated with heatwaves as the additional energy accumulated in the atmosphere by the high temperatures is discharged through electrical activity. The map below shows the density of lightning strikes for the month of June 2026 with the northeasterly track of the frontal activity in Scotland clearly visible. For comparison maps of lightning for June 2012, May 2026, July 2022 and Jul 2019 are shown. June 2012 saw extensive and severe lightning across central England, south Wales and parts of northern England caused by a Spanish plume event on the 28th, Although heatwave conditions were not met in this case is it an example of an extreme lightning event. For comparison with recent heatwaves May 2026, July 2022 and Jul 2019 are shown. None of these previous months compare for lightning activity showing how extraordinary this heatwave was for density of lightning strikes.



The radar image for 0400 UTC on 23 June 2026 shows the convective rainfall which accompanied the lightning over London and the southeast of England



Northern and western Scotland also experienced a large number of lightning strikes accompanied by heavy rain and flash flooding on the 26 June. The radar images at 0000 and 0200 UTC are shown below illustrating the extremely high frontal rainfall over the northwest of Scotland in the first image and secondary convective event in the south of the country a few hours later.



Amy Doherty, Met Office National Climate Information Centre

Last updated 04/08/2026

