



Weather chart for 1200 UTC on 31 January 1953

Daily weather extremes

Highest Maximum Temperature:
7.8 °C at St. Mary's (Isles of Scilly)

Lowest Maximum Temperature:
2.2 °C at Dyce (Aberdeenshire)

Lowest Minimum Temperature:
-1.7 °C at Balmoral (Aberdeenshire)

Lowest Grass Minimum Temperature:
-2.8 °C at Stornoway (Isle of Lewis)

Most Rainfall:
14.0 mm at Dyce (Aberdeenshire)

Most Sunshine:
6.5 hours at Eastbourne (Sussex)

General summary

It was a cloudy night across the United Kingdom with outbreaks of rain, some of which was heavy and persistent, especially across eastern Scotland. The rain quickly pushed south to clear the south coast by dawn. Heavy and blustery showers followed on behind.

The morning dawned cloudy with frequent showers. The showers across southwest England were well scattered with some places staying dry but elsewhere they were more frequent and heavy, with hail and thunder at times; the showers across Scotland turned increasingly wintry.

The afternoon continued to see frequent and squally showers across many northern and eastern parts of the United Kingdom with many western areas having only light and well scattered showers.

During the evening many of the showers across western areas died away with most places becoming dry. Even the showers across eastern districts tended to become lighter and more scattered.

The most prominent feature of the weather was the wind. To start the day, the wind was a strong north-westerly, approaching gale force across Scotland. During the afternoon the wind veered to a northerly with the strongest winds transferring to the eastern side of the country. Gale or severe gale force winds affected many eastern counties of Scotland and England during the late afternoon and evening with the east coast taking the brunt of the winds. A storm surge accompanied the winds down the east coast causing severe flooding across many low-lying areas of East Anglia and the Thames Estuary.

It was a cold day generally with temperatures well below the late January average.

Significant weather event

- The Stranraer to Larne ferry boat 'Princess Victoria' foundered with the loss of 133 lives
- 307 people died across southeast England (including 58 at Canvey Island and 35 at Jaywick)
- 1800 people died in Holland as a direct result of the storm surge
- 160,000 acres of eastern England flooded by sea water

Highest wind gusts

	(knots)	(mph)
Costa Hill (Orkney)	109	126
Lossiemouth (Moray)	98	113
Grimsetter Airport (Orkney)	93	107
Dyce (Aberdeenshire)	88	101
Lerwick (Shetland)	85	98
Valley (Anglesey)	79	91

Daily weather statistics

	London	Edinburgh	Cardiff	Belfast
Maximum Temperature/°C:	5.6	3.9	5.6	3.9
Minimum Temperature/°C:	4.4	1.7	2.8	0.0
Rainfall Amount/mm:	6.2	2.0	5.0	5.0
Sunshine Amount/hours:	4.3	0.6	4.6	1.8