

July 2020

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

July began with low pressure dominating, giving mainly cloudy weather with showers and longer spells of rain. It continued unsettled and mostly cloudy until the 9th. Between the 10th and 22nd, high pressure often ridged into southern parts of the UK, bringing dry sunny weather to southern England, and from the 10th to 12th and 19th to 21st, the high moved further north bringing more widespread fine weather, but central and northern counties otherwise remained unsettled and often cloudy. It was generally changeable from the 23rd to 29th, but a brief hot southerly incursion on the 30th and 31st brought unusually high temperatures to many parts of the UK, locally reaching 37.8 °C (100 °F) in the south-east.

The provisional UK mean temperature was 14.3 °C, which is 0.8 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average. Mean maximum temperatures were around 1.5 °C below average in western areas from Wales northwards, but less than 0.5 °C below normal in the south-east. Mean minimum temperatures were generally around 0.5 °C below normal. Rainfall was 122% of average, and it was a wet month in eastern and south-western Scotland and in north-west England, but drier than average in parts of the south and in some coastal parts of north-east England. Sunshine was 83% of average, and was near or above average in parts of southern England and in eastern Scotland, somewhat above normal in Shetland, but generally below normal elsewhere, especially in Northern Ireland.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 37.8 °C was recorded at Heathrow (London) on the 31st. A minimum temperature of -0.6 °C was recorded at Kinbrace (Sutherland) on the 8th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 4th, 101.8 mm of rain fell at Aberllefenni, Cymerau Farm (Gwynedd). A wind gust of 58 knots (67 mph) was recorded at Capel Curig (Gwynedd) on the 5th.

Weather impacts

[To appear]

England diary of highlights

July had a cool, changeable and cloudy westerly type for most of the month, but ridges of high pressure brought dry sunny weather mainly to the south at times, especially between the 11th and 22nd. It briefly turned very hot in central and eastern areas on the 31st.

The mean temperature for July was provisionally 0.6 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average. The negative temperature anomaly was generally larger by day than by night. Rainfall was 104% of average, and it was a wet month in the north-west but drier than average in most southern areas and near the north-east coast. Sunshine was 85% of average; it was a very dull month in many central and northern counties but sunshine was close to average in southernmost counties.

1st to 10th

An area of low pressure brought cloudy weather with showers and longer spells of rain on the 1st and 2nd, just occasional sunny interludes, with some thunderstorms in the south-east early afternoon on the 2nd. Fylingdales (North Yorkshire) had a maximum of just 11.6 °C on the 2nd. Fronts brought rain at times, especially to the north, on the 3rd and 4th; on the 3rd Seathwaite (Cumbria) recorded 87.4 mm of rain and there were gusts to 62 mph at Needles (Isle of Wight).

The rain cleared south-eastwards on the morning of the 5th, which became a brighter day, with showers mainly in the north, where they were locally heavy and thundery. Many places caught a few showers on the 6th, especially the north, but as pressure rose from the south-west, it turned brighter and drier for most during the afternoon. Fronts brought rain at times for most of the country between the 7th and 9th, heaviest and most persistent on the 7th and also late on the 8th, but the far north and south stayed mostly dry. A north-westerly flow brought sunshine and showers for the north and east on the 10th, with thunder locally, but the south-west stayed dry and fine.

11th to 17th

Ridges of high pressure from the Azores often affected the south during this period, giving spells of dry sunny weather, but elsewhere it remained mostly cloudy and unsettled. High pressure temporarily extended further north on the 11th and 12th, bringing dry sunny weather to most of the country, though still more cloudy in the north, with 14.9 hours of sunshine at Shoeburyness (Essex) on the 12th. Belts of rain swept eastwards on the 13th to most parts, though the south-east stayed mostly dry and bright until late afternoon. The 14th was a mostly dry cloudy day, with scattered showers in the far south and another area of persistent rain moving into the west later on. The 15th was cool, grey and drizzly except in the far south. It turned warmer on the 16th and 17th, but the 16th was still cloudy for most with some light rain and drizzle. The 17th was a generally sunny day in the south, but still mostly cloudy and drizzly in the north.

18th to 22nd

High pressure again extended further north at times. A belt of rain moved slowly southwards through most of the country on the 18th, though the far south had another sunny day. The rain slowly cleared from the south on the 19th, allowing sunshine further north, with 14.9 hours at Morecambe (Lancashire). Southern areas had a sunny day on the 20th with 14.9 hours at Bude (Cornwall), but it was cloudier with scattered showers in the north. The night of the 20th/21st was chilly in places, with a minimum of 2.4 °C at Shobdon (Herefordshire), followed by a dry day with sunny intervals, though isolated showers developed in central and eastern counties. The south stayed fine on the 22nd but it was cloudy with rain in the north, which extended into some central counties.

23rd to 31st

Low pressure systems tracked further south bringing unsettled weather to all parts. The 23rd was a generally wet day for most parts but mainly dry for the south-east, with persistent coastal mist and fog in some places. Most places were dry but rather cloudy on the 24th, with rain spreading from the west from late afternoon. Rain and showers spread across most parts of the country on the 25th, thundery in places, especially the south-west. Most areas had showers on the 26th, then persistent rain spread eastwards across the country on the 27th, followed by scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms. The 28th was bright and breezy for most, with some showers mainly in the north-west. It was cool and cloudy again for most on the 29th, with some rain crossing the Midlands from late afternoon. Rain became confined to northern areas on the 30th, and it became sunny and very warm in the south. A short-lived heatwave gave a minimum of 19.1 °C at St Catherine's Point (Isle of Wight) early on the 31st, and a maximum of 37.8 °C at Heathrow (London). Most places were sunny, but showers developed in the south-west around midday, and thunderstorms developed over the Midlands, spreading into Humberside and Yorkshire.

Wales diary of highlights

It was a generally dull and unsettled month with westerly winds. Brief ridges of high pressure brought drier brighter weather from the 10th to 12th and 19th to 21st, and a brief southerly incursion brought hot sunny weather to much of the country on the 31st.

The mean temperature for the month was 0.9 °C below the long-term average. Rainfall was 124% of average and sunshine was just 79% of average, although it was not as dull as July 2012. Rainfall was just below normal in some eastern areas but above normal in the west.

1st to 9th

Low pressure brought a cloudy day with showers and longer outbreaks of mainly light rain on the 1st. The cloudy showery weather continued early on the 2nd, but it became mainly dry and sunny in the afternoon. Fronts brought dull wet weather on the 3rd and 4th, with 101.4 mm at Aberllefenni Cymerau Farm (Gwynedd) on the 3rd, but it turned drier from late afternoon on the 4th. The 5th was a mostly bright and breezy day but some afternoon showers spread into the north, and Capel Curig (Gwynedd) was coolest and windiest with a maximum of just 13.2 °C and gusts to 67 mph. It was mostly cloudy and showery on the morning of the 6th, but drier and sunnier in the afternoon. Frontal systems brought further dull weather with rain at times on the 7th, 8th and 9th, and it was especially wet in central and northern parts on the 7th, and in central and western parts late on the 8th.

10th to 21st

It was briefly more settled between the 10th and 12th, as a ridge of high pressure brought mostly dry and bright weather, with just isolated showers early on the 10th, and cloudier weather spread from the west on the 12th with isolated showers for the west and north-west. High pressure was further south from the 13th to 18th allowing a return to cloudy, unsettled weather. It was generally wet on the 13th with mist and low cloud hugging western coasts, and after a dry cloudy start, more rain spread from the west on the 14th. It was dull and drizzly on the 15th, and mostly dry and cloudy on the 16th. Many areas started the 17th with some sunshine, but cloud increased in the afternoon with light rain in the north late in the day. A belt of rain spread slowly south-eastwards on the 18th, heaviest in the north. Between the 19th and 21st, a ridge of high pressure brought relatively settled weather, with plenty of sunshine and just isolated showers on the 19th. Under clear skies, the night of the 19th/20th was chilly with a minimum of -0.1 °C at St Harmon (Powys).

22nd to 31st

The high pressure moved away south-eastwards on the 22nd, which continued mostly dry and sunny in the south, but was cloudier in the north and west with outbreaks of rain. Rain affected most parts on the 23rd, and after a dry cloudy start to the 24th, rain spread from the west to all parts from late afternoon. The 25th was quite cloudy with scattered showers, which turned thundery in places, and a band of heavy rain crossed the south from mid-afternoon. The 26th was brighter with scattered showers. A spell of widespread, locally heavy and thundery, rain spread eastwards on the 27th followed by sunshine and showers. There were showers mainly in the north on the 28th, with fewer showers in the south, and some sunny intervals. After a mostly dry cloudy start to the 29th, rain spread from the west in the afternoon. A brief southerly incursion caused warm sunny weather to extend northwards across the country on the 30th following a cloudy start. The night of the 30th/31st was warm in places with Mumbles (West Glamorgan) not falling below 17.4 °C, and most areas had a hot sunny day with a high of 31.1 °C at Colwyn Bay (Clwyd). Showers moved into the south late in the day and spread up the west coast.

Scotland diary of highlights

July was an unsettled, westerly-dominated month throughout, with just brief ridges of high pressure, and frequent rain or showers.

The mean temperature for the month was 1.1 °C below the long-term average, making it the joint coolest July (alongside 2012 and 2015) since 1993. For Scotland as a whole, rainfall was 137% of average and sunshine was 84% of average. It was generally a wet month in the south-west and

north-east, with near average rainfall in the north-west and south-east. Sunshine was below normal in central and western counties, but near normal in the east and above normal in Shetland.

1st to 6th

Low pressure systems tracked over Scotland during this period. The 1st was a cloudy and cool day, with a maximum of only 10.3 °C at Dalwhinnie (Inverness-shire), with showers and longer spells of rain for central and southern areas, but it was drier and brighter in the north. It brightened up in some places on the 2nd after a cloudy start, but still with scattered showers. Fronts brought dull wet weather on the 3rd and 4th, with persistent and locally heavy rain at times, clearing early on the 5th leaving a day of widespread blustery showers, which turned thundery over the Borders. The 6th saw sunny spells in parts of the south, but was cloudier with showers further north.

7th to 12th

This period was generally brighter with showers. After a cloudy wet start in parts of the Central Belt and the south on the 7th, the rain moved off south-eastwards, leaving sunshine and scattered showers. There was a cold start to the 8th with a minimum of -0.6 °C at Kinbrace (Sutherland), followed by a mostly bright day with scattered showers, but rain spread from the west into southern counties in the afternoon. The weather was mostly bright and showery on the 9th, 10th and 11th, and rather breezy at times, and the showers on the 9th were locally thundery. A ridge of high pressure brought a dry sunny start to the 12th, but cloudier skies spread from the west, with rain into the west from late afternoon.

13th to 21st

High pressure often ridged into the south of the UK during this period but in Scotland it was generally cloudy and unsettled. The 13th was generally cloudy with some bright intervals and light rain or scattered showers. A ridge of high pressure brought a mostly dry cloudy day on the 14th but a band of rain spread into Argyll & Bute and the Firth of Clyde. It was mostly grey and drizzly on the 15th, 16th and 17th, and rather warm by night with Dunbar (East Lothian) not falling below 17.0 °C on the night of the 16th/17th. The cloud and rain and drizzle cleared northern areas during the 17th, leaving brighter weather and a few scattered showers, and this brighter showery weather extended to all parts on the 18th, the showers heaviest and most frequent in the north. The 19th and 20th were generally showery, with more cloud on the 20th except in Shetland. After a mostly dry bright start on the 21st rain, heavy at times, spread into far western and south-western counties during the afternoon.

22nd to 31st

The 22nd started dull and very wet with 45.6 mm of rain at Dundrennan (Kirkcudbrightshire), the rain moving eastwards during the day followed by drier weather with isolated showers, but it was sunny and dry in the far north, with 14.9 hours of sunshine at Lerwick (Shetland). Most places had a dull, misty and wet day on the 23rd with persistent rain for the south. The 24th was generally cloudy and dry in the south, brighter with some showers in the north, until rain spread from the west from late afternoon. Showers and longer spells of rain fell on the 25th, persisting over the north-east and turning thundery in places from mid-afternoon. A belt of rain crossed the country on the 26th followed by sunshine and scattered showers, and a broader, more persistent area of rain soon reached all parts on the 27th. The 28th had rain, heavy at times, in Fair Isle and the Orkney Islands, breezy with sunshine and scattered showers elsewhere. A ridge of high pressure brought a generally dry cloudy day on the 29th, though light showers continued in the north. The 30th was a cloudy day, with rain spreading from the west by the afternoon. The 31st saw some rain in western fringes, otherwise many areas were sunny and quite hot with a maximum of 28.8 °C at Kinloss (Morayshire). Thunderstorms developed across the south-west from early evening and moved north into central areas around dusk.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

July was a very dull and unsettled month with westerly winds, and several sites failed to reach 100 hours of sunshine. Brief ridges of high pressure brought drier brighter weather from the 9th to 12th and from the 18th to 21st.

The mean temperature for July was 1.0 °C below the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall was 147% of average and sunshine was just 59% of average, making it the second dullest July (after 1986) in a series from 1919.

1st to 8th

Low pressure brought a cloudy day with showers and longer outbreaks of rain on the 1st, and the cloudy and showery weather continued early on the 2nd, followed by brighter weather in the south and east during the afternoon, before cloud increased from the west ahead of a more organised area of rain. Fronts brought dull wet weather on the 3rd and 4th, with outbreaks of rain which turned heavy and persistent later on the 4th. The 5th and 6th had sunshine and showers, and the 5th was also windy with winds gusting to 53 mph at Orlock Head (County Down). It was mainly cloudy on the 7th, with persistent rain spreading eastwards across the south, and after a dry bright start to the 8th, rain spread eastwards into all parts.

9th to 17th

A ridge of high pressure moved in from the west bringing relatively settled weather. The 9th was a mostly dry and bright day, sunniest in the north-east and east. The 10th had sunshine and scattered showers, and then the 11th was mostly cloudy with occasional sunny intervals and isolated showers. The 12th started off dry and bright, but outbreaks of rain spread from the west during the afternoon. Unsettled weather returned from the 13th, which was a cloudy day with some light rain and drizzle, though it turned brighter and more showery later. The 14th was cool and cloudy with a high of just 12.3 °C at Banagher Caugh Hill (County Londonderry), with persistent rain spreading from the north-west. It was generally dull and drizzly on the 15th and 16th, but the 16th was warm, with a high of 23.9 °C at Murlough (County Down). The 17th was another dull and wet day.

18th to 25th

Another ridge of high pressure brought a few days of relatively settled weather. The 18th and 19th had sunny spells and scattered showers, and the intervening night was cool with a minimum of 1.4 °C at Katesbridge (County Down). Thomastown (County Fermanagh) recorded 12.4 hours of bright sunshine on the 19th. The 20th was cloudier, with isolated light showers. The 21st started off dry and bright, but it clouded over and rain spread from the west from mid-afternoon. It was mainly cloudy on the 22nd with some rain and drizzle, and heavier rain early on over southern counties, with 24.0 mm at Killylane (County Antrim). Rain early on the 23rd cleared by noon but it stayed cloudy and misty with light rain or drizzle. The 24th was another cloudy day, with rain spreading from the west from midday. After a cloudy start to the 25th with patchy light rain, it turned dry for a time, then showers and longer spells of rain developed in the afternoon, turning thundery in places.

26th to 31st

The weather continued unsettled, and Northern Ireland largely missed the brief hot interlude that affected other parts of the UK at the end of the month. It was mainly cloudy with scattered showers on the 26th, with a dry sunny interlude followed by more rain spreading from the west in the evening. The rain cleared eastwards by midday on the 27th, followed by sunshine and scattered showers. The 28th was bright and breezy with scattered showers. The 29th and 30th were cloudy with rain at times, and patchy fog affected central parts early on the 30th. The night

of the 30th/31st was warm with Magilligan (County Londonderry) falling no lower than 16.9 °C, and a band of rain moved eastwards on the 31st, with thunderstorms developing over the east by the afternoon, followed by scattered showers.