

October 2021

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

The weather during most of October was unsettled and wet, though there was a drier spell across most areas between the 8th and 17th. Temperatures were above average for much of the time, and frosts were few, but sunshine was in short supply for some areas. The heaviest rain came in the closing days of the month, with some notable totals in Cumbria, and there were gales also on the 31st.

The provisional UK mean temperature was 10.9 °C, which is 1.4 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. For most areas, mean monthly minima were slightly more elevated relative to normal than mean monthly maxima. Many parts of the UK saw more rainfall than average, with a few areas near average and only isolated spots below average. The wettest areas were southern Scotland, Cumbria, the north-west corner of Wales, and southern England, with many places above 150% of average, and the UK overall had 128% of average October rainfall. Sunshine was somewhat below average in Scotland, northern and south-eastern England, and most of Wales, giving an overall figure of 87% of average.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 22.9 °C was recorded at Thornes Park (West Yorkshire) on the 8th. A minimum temperature of -3.6 °C was recorded at Redesdale Camp (Northumberland) on the 16th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 UTC on the 28th, 222.6 mm of rain fell at Honister Pass (Cumbria). A wind gust of 65 knots (75 mph) was recorded at Needles (Isle of Wight) on the 31st.

Weather impacts

In the first week of the month, strong winds and rain caused flooding on roads in parts of South Wales and Pembrokeshire, with about 30 homes affected in Rhondda Cyon Taf. Overnight rain brought flooding to parts of London on the 5th. Prolonged rain fell across western Scotland but caused minimal impacts during the second week.

Unsettled weather prevailed during the second half of October. Some roads were closed in Swansea and Carmarthenshire on the 20th due to flooding, including the M4 and parts of the Fabian Way into Swansea. In Merseyside and Greater Manchester a possible tornado resulted in damage to houses and vehicles. Heavy rain affected the south of England overnight 20th/21st. Essex Fire Services reported over 120 flood-related incidents including the rescue of a pensioner from their car. Several roads were impacted by flood water including the A127 and the B1014. Several bus routes were disrupted, and trains between Dartford and Gravesend were delayed due to a landslip. Both Southend seafront and Huntingdon High Street were temporarily closed due to flooding, and London saw widespread flooding on roads, with disruption to numerous rail services due to flooded platforms, stations, or lines. Vehicles were stranded in flood water in Ashington, West Sussex, and a mini-tornado was reported in Worthing causing some minor damage to gardens. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue reported an extremely busy night due to flooding incidents, logging almost 300 calls. Four people were rescued from St Kew Ford in Cornwall, and five people were rescued from a flooded cave in Priddy, Cheddar. Many roads were flooded across Devon and Cornwall including the A30, A303, and A390.

The last five days of the month brought further issues. Widespread flooding in parts of Scotland on the 27th and 28th caused problems, including on parts of the M8. Some drivers were stranded in cars on flooded roads, and a landslip affected the railway line between Carstairs and Carlisle. A major incident was declared in Hawick with school closures, widespread travel disruption, and plans to evacuate residents. There were similar reports of disruption and flooding across

Cumbria, with impassable roads, cancelled bus services, several cars stranded in floodwater on the A592, and major disruption to rail services to and from Carlisle. Widespread flooding in Cocker mouth meant flood defences and pumping were in operation. On the 29th, the Rhondda South Wales and Bangor to Holyhead railway lines were flooded, followed by flooded roads and fallen trees elsewhere across Wales on the 30th and 31st. There were a number of fallen trees in Northamptonshire, and fire crews dealt with over 130 incidents. Rail services were also impacted by fallen trees. There were some reports of flooding on the A205 and A20 in London. In Oxfordshire fallen trees blocked roads and railway lines and brought down power lines, the latter causing some power cuts. There were also flooded roads in Woking and Farnham.

England diary of highlights

Much of the month was unsettled, with some spells of heavy rain, although from the 6th to 17th it was drier. Some of the rain during the last week was heavy and prolonged. Temperatures were broadly above average, especially during the 6th-10th and 17th-19th.

The mean temperature was provisionally 1.4 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. Minimum temperatures were around 2 °C above average in the Midlands and further north. Rainfall was broadly above average, especially in the north-west and in many southern counties, with over twice the average in parts of Cumbria. The overall figure for England was 136% of average. Sunshine was below average in both the north-west and the south-east, and near average elsewhere, with an overall figure of 92%.

1st to 5th

It was wet on the 1st, with a band of rain crossing all areas in the morning followed by showers and sunshine, the showers easing later. The north-west began showery on the 2nd; other areas began dry before rain quickly spread north and east during the morning, reaching all parts by early afternoon, locally heavy at times, but clearing from the south-west by teatime. Early rain cleared the south-east on the 3rd to leave a brighter day for most of the country, but showers in western areas spread their influence eastwards through the day to affect all parts, some becoming heavy and thundery, with just East Anglia and the south-east remaining drier. After a dry start for most on the 4th, showers in the north and west gradually spread inland to all parts, turning thundery in parts of the Midlands during the afternoon. Heavy overnight rain cleared most areas early on the 5th but persisted over the north, with showers spreading east to all other areas by the afternoon.

6th to 16th

The 6th started fine and bright for all, except for eastern counties with patchy rain and drizzle, but cloud increased from the west, with some rain reaching western parts. The 7th, after early fog in certain areas, was generally cloudy with outbreaks of rain and drizzle in the north-west, and slightly brighter in eastern parts. Mist and fog for many central and southern parts on the 8th persisted in some places until lunchtime; the north-east became sunny and warm, Thornes Park (West Yorkshire) reaching 22.9 °C, with other areas remaining cloudy. Fog for the southern half of the country on the 9th was slow to clear in places, then there was some sunshine in the south-east, but more cloud elsewhere with a band of rain moving into northern counties during the afternoon. The 10th began with mist and fog for some coastal areas, and patchy rain for the south-east, but was otherwise mostly sunny and still quite warm. The 11th was fine and dry also, but with occasional patchy rain in the far north. Some southern and eastern coasts began misty on the 12th, then it was dry and bright in the west and south but more cloudy with rain for northern and eastern counties. Mist and fog affected many areas on the 13th, persisting in the south until late morning, then parts of the south became brighter, Camborne (Cornwall) recording 10.0 hours of bright sunshine, but other areas saw patchy rain or drizzle. Fog across much of the south on the 14th again persisted in places until late morning, then the south was sunny but other areas remained cloudy, with rain in the far north by dusk. The 15th saw showers on the east coast, sunshine across the north, and cloud for central and southern parts with patchy light rain at times.

After a frost in the north and east early on the 16th, Redesdale Camp (Northumberland) falling to -3.6 °C, and mist and fog for the south-west first thing, some areas had light rain, with more significant rain spreading into the north-west around dusk.

17th to 23rd

Much of the country was overcast on the 17th, with mist and fog in some areas, and outbreaks of rain and drizzle for many places, these mostly dying out in the afternoon with brighter weather in the south. The 18th started dry for many, foggy for some, but rain already in the west spread to all parts by mid-afternoon, clearing all areas except East Anglia and the south-east by dusk. A mild night, with Swanage (Dorset) not falling below 15.9 °C, was followed by rain on the 19th, mainly for central and northern counties, with some brighter spells in the south, and another area of rain reaching the south-west around dusk. A dry start in the north on the 20th was short-lived, as a band of rain, heavy or very heavy at times, across the Midlands and parts of the south, continued moving north-eastwards with sunshine and scattered blustery showers developing for a time, and thunderstorms during the afternoon especially over eastern counties, before another area of heavy rain moved into the south-west and across southern parts by early evening, with strong winds. Rain over the southern half of the country cleared away during the morning of the 21st, then it became sunny but colder, Fylingdales (North Yorkshire) and Buxton (Derbyshire) both struggling to only 8.3 °C, with a few isolated afternoon showers for western counties. The 22nd was windy at times, with sunshine and scattered showers. The 23rd was mainly cloudy, but dry for most and breezy at times, with isolated pockets of rain mostly in the far north.

24th to 31st

This period was very unsettled, often windy, though still mild until the last two days. The 24th began mainly cloudy, with a band of showers in western parts clearing north-eastward, leaving sunshine and showers, though staying mainly dry in the south-east and most of East Anglia. After isolated early fog patches in the south on the 25th, there was sunshine and showers for most areas. The 26th was cloudy, with light rain at times in many parts, but drier and slightly brighter across eastern counties. The 27th began cloudy, with patchy rain and drizzle in places, before a more organised area of precipitation, heavy or very heavy at times, moved into the north-west and parts of the north, persisting in places and leading to a total of 222.6 mm of rain at Honister Pass (Cumbria); it was windy generally, with some sunny spells developing in the south-east and East Anglia. The 28th was fine and bright in the south-east, but cloudy elsewhere with further heavy and persistent rain for the north, giving significant totals, and more rain moving into the south-west and towards the West Midlands in the afternoon, some of it heavy. The 29th brought showers for many parts, with an area of occasionally heavy rain crossing northern counties during the afternoon, clearing away after dark. Rain across the bulk of the country early on the 30th cleared the east coast around lunchtime, with sunshine and scattered showers soon following. Another similar band of rain followed on the morning of the 31st, moving quickly east and north to clear the east coast by mid-afternoon, again followed by brighter weather, but with scattered showers for central and western counties, and very windy with gusts to 75 mph at Needles (Wight), and a more significant spell of rain developing over the north during the afternoon.

Wales diary of highlights

The first few days of the month were unsettled, often windy, but reasonably mild, before it became drier for a time. There was further rain after mid-month, some of it heavy and persistent in the closing days, and it was colder around the 21st to 23rd and the 29th to 31st.

Mean temperatures for the month were provisionally 1.6 °C above average, with minima higher relative to average than maxima. The north-west corner of Wales was much wetter than average, and much of the country had a rather dull month. There was 123% of average rainfall overall, and 83% of average sunshine.

1st to 9th

A band of rain crossed the country early on the 1st, followed by brighter weather with isolated showers. The 2nd was cloudy, with rain spreading north and east during the morning, persisting into the afternoon but easing somewhat by the end of the day. The 3rd brought sunshine and widespread, frequent, and locally heavy and blustery showers. Showers on the 4th affected most areas throughout the day, turning thundery in the east during the afternoon, and further rain spread into the west by dusk. The 5th was mostly cloudy with widespread, frequent and locally heavy showers. There was early sunshine on the 6th before increasing cloud brought outbreaks of rain and drizzle to some parts for a time. The 7th was cloudy, with outbreaks of rain and drizzle in places, but warm with Hawarden (Clwyd) recording a maximum of 21.8 °C. The mild theme continued overnight into the 8th with Colwyn Bay (Clwyd) not falling below 15.5 °C, then it was cloudy but mainly dry. The 9th was cloudy too, with a narrow band of light rain crossing parts of the west and north during the afternoon.

10th to 16th

The 10th was mostly sunny, after some early fog around Anglesey. The 11th was fine, with variable amounts of cloud. There was more cloud on the 12th and 13th, with outbreaks of patchy light rain and drizzle, and the 14th was similar too, remaining mild. Cloud and patchy light rain sat over the south on the 15th, while it was sunny in the north, with Valley (Gwynedd) recording 9.4 hours of bright sunshine. The 16th was cloudy but mainly dry.

17th to 25th

The 17th was a dull day, with outbreaks of rain and drizzle almost anywhere, especially in the morning, but brightening up in the south late in the day. Rain spread east to all parts during the morning of the 18th, clearing away in the afternoon but with further remnants of light rain or drizzle. Patchy fog in a few places early on the 19th preceded some wet spells, with bands of rain crossing the country through the day. The 20th started with heavy rain over northern and central counties, and heavy showers in southern parts, clearing eastwards through the morning, then scattered blustery showers, though sunny spells developing in the south for a time, before further rain moved in across the south in early evening, with strong winds at times. The 21st was colder with sunshine and scattered showers, followed by a cold night, St Harmon (Powys) falling to a minimum of 0.6 °C. The 22nd gave frequent showers but also occasional sunny intervals, and felt breezy at times. The 23rd was cloudy, with patchy rain at first, this lingering in some western counties as winds increased. The 24th began mostly cloudy, with bands of showers in central and western parts, these clearing north-eastwards, then sunshine and showers, the showers tending to die out by late afternoon, and breezy. The 25th was another breezy day with sunshine and scattered showers.

26th to 31st

The 26th was cloudy and breezy, with some showers or spells of rain for many places. The 27th was cloudy too, with patchy rain and drizzle, before a more organised area of precipitation swept in, mainly affecting northern and north-western counties where it was very heavy in places, but the worst of it clearing north-eastwards by early evening. Rain for western parts early on the 28th moved away, but a further area of rain spread to all parts during the afternoon, turning heavy at times, with Brecon Beacons Storey Arms (Powys) recording 79.8 mm. Rain for most places during the morning of the 29th cleared northwards by lunchtime, followed by scattered showers. Early rain in the east on the 30th cleared away eastwards, then it became brighter with scattered showers. The 31st felt chilly and windy, with widespread and locally heavy rain clearing east during the morning, followed by brighter conditions, but showers became widespread and locally heavy and thundery, especially further north, Tredegar (Gwent) and Libanus (Powys) both recording maxima of only 9.5 °C and Aberdaron (Gwynedd) reporting gusts to 74 mph.

Scotland diary of highlights

Most of this month was unsettled, with only short drier spells, and some heavy rain over certain areas especially during the final week, though for much of the time it was milder than average.

The provisional mean temperature for the month was 1.3 °C above the long-term average, with minimum temperatures further above average than this, particularly in parts of the Highlands. Rainfall was near or slightly above average in the north, but well above average across the south and south-east, with Scotland as a whole having 125% of average rainfall. It was a dull month, especially towards the north-west, with an overall sunshine figure of 74% of average making it the equal seventh dullest October in a series from 1919.

1st to 9th

The 1st was wet, the rain persistent and heavy at times for central and western areas, with some locally high totals being recorded, but just light and patchy rain in eastern counties. Western areas saw showers from the start on the 2nd, some heavy, with rain spreading from the south into central areas from early afternoon, this clearing away east into the evening. There was early brightness across the north-east on the 3rd, with showers elsewhere, before an area of rain, heavy at times, crossed the north during the afternoon, and it was very windy with Lerwick (Shetland) recording gusts to 69 mph. Showers were widespread on the 4th, heavy and thundery at times. The 5th saw rain, persistent and heavy at times, for central, eastern and southern counties, with scattered showers for the north. The 6th started fine, albeit cloudier in the far north-east and the Western Isles with patchy rain and drizzle; cloud increased from the west during the morning, bringing further rain to western parts, heavy or very heavy at times as it spread into central counties with winds increasing. On the 7th, areas of rain affected all parts on and off throughout. It was very mild overnight into the 8th, with Edinburgh Gogarbank not falling below 15.9 °C, then there were bands of rain crossing west to east, affecting all parts at times throughout the day, but continuing very warm with Kinloss (Morayshire) enjoying a maximum of 21.2 °C. A band of locally heavy rain on the 9th cleared east by late afternoon, followed by further patchy rain or showers.

10th to 17th

Patchy fog in the south on the 10th cleared mid-morning, then it was mostly cloudy with showers for all parts through the day, most frequent across the north and west. The 11th was cloudy, with rain, persistent and heavy at times especially over the north and east, but more showery in nature further south. The 12th was dry and bright in the north-east, but cloudy elsewhere with patchy light showery rain. It was generally cloudy on the 13th, with outbreaks of rain or drizzle affecting all parts at times through the day. The 14th was overcast and windy, with rain over the north spreading southwards to all areas by dusk. After a chilly start on the 15th, even frosty in a few places, the far north and north-east had showers, while other areas were brighter, Dundrennan (Kirkcudbrightshire) recording 9.8 hours of sunshine. The 16th began with showers for the north and patchy light rain for the south, with rain reaching western counties from midday, spreading steadily east and north to reach all but the far north-east before dark. Most areas were dull on the 17th, with coastal mist and fog, and outbreaks of rain and drizzle in many places through the day.

18th to 23rd

Milder air soon brought rain into the west on the 18th, spreading to all parts by late morning, mostly clearing away during the afternoon but remaining overcast with further mainly light rain and drizzle. The 19th was wet, with widespread, occasionally heavy rain crossing the country through the day, turning more showery in the afternoon with isolated thunderstorms for western counties later. The 20th was windy at times, with sunshine in places at first, with scattered blustery showers in the north-west, and a band of rain, heavy at times, over the far north and the Northern Isles slipping southwards into central parts by late afternoon, and isolated showers in the north

later. The 21st brought sunshine and showers, with fewest showers in the south, but widespread, persistent and wintry showers at times further north; it was colder, with a maximum of only 6.4 °C at Lerwick (Shetland). The 22nd was breezy with sunshine and isolated showers, the latter wintry over high ground. After a frosty night in the north-east, Aboyne (Aberdeenshire) recording a minimum of -3.1 °C, the 23rd was mainly cloudy with patches of light rain in the south, and more organised areas of rain, heavy or very heavy at times, affecting mainly western and northern areas through the day, with winds increasing.

24th to 31st

The remainder of the month was often wet and windy. The 24th saw some sunshine, but showers too, heaviest and most frequent in western counties, with strong winds in exposed parts but remaining mild. It began fine for many on the 25th, but showers initially in western parts soon spread north and east, merging into longer spells of heavy rain for a time in some northern and north-western parts, while south-eastern areas had fewer showers. The 26th was wet and windy with widespread, persistent and locally heavy bands of rain, particularly across central and northern areas. The 27th was mainly cloudy, breezy and mild, starting with patchy rain and drizzle in southern parts and showers in the north-west, before a more organised area of precipitation moved into southern and central parts, heavy or very heavy in places, reaching the north-east by late afternoon, Eskdalemuir (Dumfries & Galloway) reporting 89.8 mm of rainfall. The 28th brought showers for the Western Isles, and heavy and persistent rain for southern, central and eastern areas, with some significant totals being recorded especially around the Borders. Rain on the 29th soon became widespread and locally very heavy and thundery, clearing from the south-west during the afternoon but lingering over the north-east into the evening. Most places began wet on the 30th, the rain clearing the east coast late afternoon, with brighter skies spreading from the west bringing scattered showers. The 31st was wet and windy, heavy rain initially over the south and west spreading to all parts by mid-afternoon, but it turned brighter from the south with showers, becoming widespread and locally heavy, merging into longer spells of rain especially for the Borders.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

The first week brought regular falls of rain, but the second week was mild and became less unsettled. There were many wet days during the second half of the month, sometimes with strong winds too.

The mean temperature was 1.6 °C above the 1981-2010 average. Rainfall was close to average generally, but it was wetter in the south-east of the Province, with 106% of average overall, and sunshine was close to average with a figure of 98%.

1st to 9th

The 1st was a bright and breezy day with showers. An area of rain crossed eastwards during the morning of the 2nd, replaced by brighter skies with scattered showers for the afternoon. The next three days were characterised by sunshine and showers; on the 3rd the showers were widespread, frequent and locally heavy, on the 4th heaviest and most frequent over the west and north, and on the 5th they were more scattered. North-eastern parts saw early sunshine on the 6th, but patchy rain formed through the morning, ahead of a more organised area of rain, heavy at times, moving in from the west, reaching all counties but largely clearing by dusk. The 7th had widespread and occasionally heavy rain in the morning, the rain becoming confined to the north and west in the afternoon, but was very mild with Stormont Castle (Down) reaching 20.1 °C. The mild theme continued overnight, with Magilligan (Londonderry) not falling below 16.0 °C, then there were showers or longer spells of rain during the 8th, heaviest and most frequent over the north and west. Widespread rain on the 9th cleared east by late morning, then it remained cloudy with occasional light rain or drizzle.

10th to 16th

The 10th was brighter with isolated showers after clearance of any early fog. The 11th was mostly fine with some sunshine, then the 12th was cloudy with outbreaks of rain and drizzle. Further rain and drizzle on the 13th was most prevalent in the east. It was cloudy again on the 14th with rain or showers, especially across the north and west. After frost overnight into the 15th for some spots, Katesbridge (Down) falling to $-0.4\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, mist and fog covered western districts, with sunshine elsewhere, Aldergrove (Antrim) recording 8.1 hours. The 16th began dry but cloudy, with patchy mist and fog especially in the west, ahead of rain spreading eastwards, becoming widespread and locally heavy by late afternoon.

17th to 25th

The 17th was overcast, with mostly light rain and drizzle affecting most places. The next two days were mild but windy, with widespread rain, heavy at times, clearing away east late morning on the 18th, but remaining cloudy with further patchy light rain and drizzle. The 19th again saw widespread, occasionally heavy rain during the morning, followed by scattered but locally heavy showers. The 20th began clear and bright, with scattered blustery showers developing in the west during the morning, spreading south and east later. The 21st and 22nd were days of sunshine and scattered showers, and breezy at times. It was generally overcast on the 23rd, with patchy rain at first in far western parts, then rain, heavy at times, spread eastwards across most places, with increasing winds. The 24th was dry and bright at first, and rather mild, but scattered blustery showers swept north-eastwards across most parts during the afternoon. Early sunshine again on the 25th gave way to scattered showers, in far western counties to begin with but spreading eastwards during the afternoon.

26th to 31st

The 26th was cloudy and windy, with rain or showers through the day. The 27th was breezy, with patchy rain and drizzle at first, but organised bands of precipitation, heavy at times, swept across most parts, mainly clearing north-eastwards by early evening but lingering in the far south-east, with Killowen (Down) recording 28.2 mm of rain. Occasionally heavy rain in the south-east cleared by lunchtime on the 28th, but it remained generally cloudy with some showers or longer spells of rain through the afternoon. Rain cleared away from eastern counties during the morning of the 29th, then it was brighter for a time, with scattered showers further west during the afternoon. Early mist and fog in the west on the 30th cleared, and cloud broke up during the morning but with scattered showers in the afternoon; it was chilly with Killylane (Antrim) reaching only $9.1\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$. Overnight rain cleared the east coast early on the 31st, then it was windy with sunshine and a few blustery showers, Killowen and Orlock Head (both Down) reporting gusts to 63 mph.