

March 2024

A vigorous low in the Irish Sea extended a series of fronts which cleared eastward during the early hours of the 1st with heavy rain clearing to blustery rain & hail showers by dawn. These showers continued through the day with cooler temperatures and strong and gusty southwesterly winds which only moderated by dawn on the 2nd. Those showers became less frequent too as that low tracked steadily east to leave us in a brighter and clearer but cooler northwesterly flow with excellent visibility around the islands.

Following the departure of that low we were left with fairly slack pressure covering the UK, still with a few residual showers within the general flow but 16.5 hours of sunshine for the 2nd & 3rd was a welcome tonic after the gloom of the previous month. A brief ridge late on the 3rd declined rapidly ahead of the next deepening low out to the west, with cloud thickening and lowering by dawn on the 4th together with strengthening south to southeasterly winds. Rain arrived a little later that morning, becoming persistent by noon before mixing with drizzle and mist for the afternoon. The clearing cold front went through late afternoon with a sharp veer in wind direction to the southwest and moderation in strength, albeit with a rash of showers overnight in to the 5th.

Brightening skies through the morning of the 5th started a more settled and pleasant run of weather for a few days as any frontal activity was kept at bay out to the west by an extensive area of blocking high pressure over Scandinavia. Light, occasionally moderate, southeast or easterly winds and clear skies resulted in plenty of sunshine by day but cooler nights with a ground frost noted by dawn on the 6th. Gradually though, low pressure to the southwest nudged up against that blocking high with freshening easterly winds down the Channel and a thickening shield of high cloud encroaching from the southwest making sunshine hazy at times. It remained dry until late on the 8th however, before a series of weak fronts edged in from the south with patchy rain overnight in to the 9th. This became heavier and more persistent through the day before eventually clearing during the early hours of the 10th.

Slack low pressure centred in Biscay had by now displaced the influence of that blocking high across most parts of the UK, with milder but cloudier and wetter conditions affecting most parts of mainland Britain. Clear skies and light winds overnight in to the 11th led to a heavy dew and patchy shallow fog in parts of the island but with a temporary ridge building up from the south we enjoyed a pleasant day in the islands with plenty of sunshine, light winds and temperatures up around 11°C. This wasn't to last unfortunately as that ridge broke down overnight ahead of an advancing warm front which brought rain to our shores just before 0300 on the 12th. That rain eased away by mid morning but it remained cloudy and became misty with patchy drizzle and hill fog from midday through to mid afternoon. A fairly fresh southwesterly flow was now established over the islands and while most of the frontal activity was confined to more northern parts of the UK we remained in a rather damp and cloudy flow with another sunless day noted across the Bailiwick.



The Town Seafront at the top of the 10.3m tide on the morning of the 12th. Photo credit Adam Heaume.

Hazy sunshine was more in evidence for the 13th as that low cloud broke up to leave us with various layers of thinner medium and upper cloud, but it remained dry throughout as a belt of high pressure to the south continued to steer a southwesterly flow up the Channel. By the 14th that high was starting to drift east to be centred over Austria, allowing a weak occluded front in association with low pressure over Ireland to roll in from the west. The first splashes of rain arrived late afternoon on the 14th before turning more to drizzle with mist and fog patches through the evening and overnight. A tightening pressure gradient over the UK saw winds freshening locally by dawn on the 15th with scattered showers through the day before turning to drizzle and mist by evening. As that low tracked northeast to be over Scandinavia by dawn on the 16th so our winds fell light from the southeast with patchy fog affecting the islands until mid morning, before a weak front crossed the area that afternoon leading to outbreaks of rain and drizzle.

Further fronts made inroads overnight with outbreaks of rain, drizzle and fog patches but temperatures remained in double figures, well above the seasonal norm. That early gloom then mostly cleared by midday to leave another dull afternoon but it did remain dry.

The charts were still showing an unsettled look to our weather with low pressure never far away, but with a belt of more settled high pressure nudging up from the Azores, the worst of the weather was once more steered away to the north of us. Moderate westerly winds brought mild but rather cloudy conditions over the next few days and with a long sea track for our airflow we did see some mist and fog over higher parts of the island together with some patchy rain or drizzle at times. Little had changed by the 21st but clearer skies overnight led to extensive shallow fog across the higher parishes and sea fog in the Channel encroaching inland from coastal areas. This fog thickened readily shortly after sunrise, plaguing the islands' airfields through most of the morning before clearing after midday.

Low pressure over Iceland was now looking to drop a cold front down across the UK, with a cooler, fresher and more showery airflow digging in behind. This front arrived around noon on the 22nd with a damp, cloudy afternoon before conditions brightened up just before sunset. As the winds veered in to the northwest they freshened with a few isolated showers rolling in to the Channel overnight in to the 23rd. These became more frequent through the morning with hail at times, hurried along on that strong westerly flow.

A tight pressure gradient between that deep low pressure now off Norway and the Azores High to the southwest kept our winds a tad lively for most of the 23rd but a brief ridge early on the 24th eased our winds down a notch, before falling light and backing in to the southwest by evening. Cloud thickened late afternoon into the evening with rain arriving on a warm front just before midnight, in association with a slow moving low centred over Ireland. This was really only a weak affair but winds backed further in to the southeast by morning with a few more spits of rain late afternoon and evening. The clearing cold front went through during the small hours of the 26th with little or no precipitation, leaving us in a cooler and clearer airflow by dawn. Extensive medium and upper cloud kept sunshine hazy throughout the day but we enjoyed excellent visibility around the islands, although daytime temperatures just fell short of double figures.

A glance at the North Atlantic weather charts showed a rather messy and unsettled picture with various low pressure systems moving slowly east into Northern Europe. Storm 'Nelson' became the amalgamation of these systems as it swept in off the Atlantic by the 27th with rain arriving in the Channel shortly after dawn, becoming heavy for a spell before clearing around 0900hrs. Strong southerly winds veered sharply in to the southwest on that clearance before backing once more in to the south that afternoon, and freshening by evening. More rain arrived that evening on a secondary system within the general flow of 'Nelson' with some very heavy rain and hail battering the islands around 2200hrs as that feature swept through. Winds veered sharply once more into the west together with a 4 degree drop in temperature, with just 3.7°C on the mercury by 2218hrs.

A day of strong winds and blustery showers ensued for the 28th then as 'Nelson' encouraged a very turbulent southwesterly flow, with embedded troughs, up over the British Isles. The winds did finally start to abate some 36 hours later as those showers became more isolated by dusk on the 29th. Low pressure was still very much the driving force for our weather though with a fair scattering of showers running up the Channel, but they stayed largely away from the islands for the 30th leading to a rather pleasant 9.3 hours of sunshine, the sunniest day of

the year to date. Cloudier conditions greeted the last day of March though, as another smaller depression made its way up through France with some hefty showers arriving in the Channel that afternoon. However, skies did clear later to a fine evening with excellent visibility to close out the month.

Another warmer than average month, some 1.1°C above the long term average, making it the 11th warmest March on record although March 2022 was warmer. Sunshine totals were disappointing again but rainfall was just about average for March.

MARCH 2024

DAY	DATE	TEMPERATURE deg C							WIND				RAIN mm	SUN hrs	WEATHER		
		BAROMETER		AIR		GRASS	SOIL		DIR'N	SPEED(knots)							
		hPa		MAX	MIN	MEAN	MIN	30cm	100cm	9a.m.	9a.m.	MEAN				MAX	
Fri	1	994.7	8.6	<u>3.6</u>	<u>6.1</u>	2.8	8.5	9.9	260	<u>23</u>	20.1	<u>50</u>	9.2	3.2	Early hvy rain clrng to cldy occn fine/fair w with frqnt rain/hail shw rs		
Sat	2	991.8	8.9	4.3	6.6	2.5	7.8	9.9	280	08	11.3	36	0.4	8.4	Fine occn fair w with frqnt shw rs bec isol pm. Xlnt viz		
Sun	3	1002.5	9.5	4.2	6.9	-0.5	7.7	9.8	310	08	8.8	23	1.4	8.1	Fair w ith isol shw rs am. Sct shw rs eve. Xlnt viz		
Mon	4	1007.4	9.3	5.5	7.4	1.6	8.1	9.7	150	17	14.5	40	<u>14.7</u>	NIL	Cldy by daw n w ith rain from late am clrng to shw rs eve		
Tue	5	1012.8	10.6	5.0	7.8	3.6	8.2	9.6	300	07	7.1	19	TR	7.6	Cldy w ith early hvy shw rs bec fine pm		
Wed	6	1020.3	10.7	4.4	7.6	<u>-1.5</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>9.5</u>	160	08	7.6	17	NIL	8.1	Fine w ith early frost bec cldy late pm. Fine late eve		
Thu	7	1017.1	10.7	5.9	8.3	3.0	8.0	<u>9.5</u>	100	16	13.8	26	NIL	8.1	Fair or fine		
Fri	8	1002.4	9.7	6.6	8.2	5.1	8.3	<u>9.5</u>	080	16	13.3	26	1.0	0.2	Cldy w ith rain from early eve		
Sat	9	989.1	<u>8.5</u>	7.1	7.8	6.6	8.7	<u>9.5</u>	110	14	12.7	29	5.7	NIL	Early rain clrng then cldy w ith rain from mid am, clrng mid eve		
Sun	10	994.5	11.5	4.6	8.1	0.6	8.7	<u>9.5</u>	140	06	5.0	13	TR(DEW)	6.1	Cldy w ith early rain & shallow fog bec fair pm then fine eve		
Mon	11	1007.5	11.2	5.9	8.6	0.4	8.4	<u>9.5</u>	310	08	8.5	18	2.0	8.0	Fair occn cldy w ith early shallow fog & hvy dew		
Tue	12	1015.0	11.4	7.6	9.5	5.2	9.2	9.6	240	17	14.5	28	TR	NIL	Cldy w ith rain early then drz & mist pm clrng eve		
Wed	13	1016.1	13.2	9.7	11.5	8.2	9.7	9.6	210	14	10.7	20	NIL	4.1	Cldy occn fair w ith hazy sunshine		
Thu	14	1008.7	13.7	8.7	11.2	6.3	9.8	9.7	160	08	10.0	24	6.2	0.3	Cldy w ith rain pm. Rain, drz, mist & hill fog eve		
Fri	15	1009.0	12.8	9.8	11.3	<u>10.3</u>	10.4	9.7	230	15	16.8	36	0.1	0.6	Cldy w ith occn shw rs. Patchy drz eve		
Sat	16	1021.6	12.5	7.9	10.2	2.8	10.2	9.9	180	09	7.5	15	3.3	0.1	Cldy w ith mist & fog ptchs am. Isol rain & drz pm		
Sun	17	1016.5	12.7	<u>10.4</u>	11.6	9.6	10.6	10.0	240	13	10.7	20	0.3	0.2	Cldy w ith rain, drz and fog am		
Mon	18	1017.5	13.3	9.6	11.5	9.3	10.8	10.1	220	09	9.3	19	TR	3.6	Cldy occn fair pm. Rain, drz, mist & fog ptches from daw n clrng pm		
Tue	19	1017.0	12.4	9.8	11.1	7.7	<u>11.0</u>	10.3	190	12	8.6	17	NIL	NIL	Cldy		
Wed	20	1017.6	<u>14.8</u>	8.7	<u>11.8</u>	7.0	<u>11.0</u>	10.4	020	<u>02</u>	<u>4.3</u>	12	TR(DEW)	5.3	Cldy until mid pm then bec fair/fine		
Thu	21	<u>1028.2</u>	11.9	7.6	9.8	2.5	10.9	10.5	290	07	6.7	16	TR	0.9	Cldy. Early shallow fog thickening to dense fog am, clrng pm		
Fri	22	1021.9	11.0	7.9	9.5	6.4	<u>11.0</u>	<u>10.6</u>	270	11	11.7	26	1.3	0.9	Cldy w ith mist, rain and drz from noon, clrng late pm to fine eve		
Sat	23	1020.2	10.3	6.8	8.6	4.8	9.9	<u>10.6</u>	290	17	16.4	36	1.5	7.2	Fair w ith sct rain/hail shw rs		
Sun	24	1016.9	11.2	6.4	8.8	5.0	9.7	<u>10.6</u>	300	14	11.6	24	TR	8.7	Fair or fine bec cldy eve w ith rain by midnight		
Mon	25	1000.1	10.9	7.8	9.4	3.6	10.2	10.5	160	18	12.9	24	TR	1.0	Cldy w ith very light patchy rain early am and late pm & eve		
Tue	26	988.8	10.2	6.4	8.3	3.5	10.5	10.5	210	07	8.4	21	2.9	0.2	Cldy w ith good viz		
Wed	27	980.4	11.7	4.2	8.0	4.3	9.7	<u>10.6</u>	230	11	16.8	42	6.1	3.1	Cldy by daw n. Rain occn hvy clrng late am. Fair/fine pm. Cldy w ith rain/shw rs		
Thu	28	<u>975.6</u>	11.6	3.7	7.7	1.2	9.4	10.5	170	<u>23</u>	<u>22.0</u>	48	7.4	3.5	Cldy w ith shw rs mod to hvy & persistent at times		
Fri	29	987.1	12.8	7.3	10.1	6.2	9.7	10.5	190	17	14.2	29	TR	9.1	Fine/fair occn cldy early am. Occn brief light shw rs am		
Sat	30	994.4	12.4	7.1	9.8	3.8	10.4	10.4	180	10	11.3	23	NIL	<u>9.3</u>	Fine bec cldy pm		
Sun	31	989.4	13.5	7.0	10.3	5.2	10.3	10.4	080	13	10.6	21	1.7	3.5	Fair bec cldy mid am, shw rs pm clrng by eve		
MEAN 30 YEAR AVG 1991-2020	1005.9	11.4	6.8	9.1	4.4	9.5	10.0	S	12.2	11.5	TOTAL	65.2	119.4				
	1017.2	10.2	5.8	8.0	3.1	8.1	8.4	SW	11.8	11.7	////	63.3	135.3				
EXTREMES ARE IN BOLD TYPE	NUMBER OF DAYS WITH	RAIN ≥0.2mm	WET ≥1.0mm	SNOW/ SLEET	HAIL	THNDR	LGHTNG	AIR FROST	GROUND FROST	FOG	FOG 9a.m.	GALE	NO SUN				
		16	14	0	3	0	0	0	2	6	2	0	4		TOTALS FOR YEAR TO DATE		
RECORDS FROM JANUARY 1947														RAINFALL	288.4 mm	SUNSHINE	249.7 hrs
WETTEST DAY DAY/YEAR	30.0mm 28th/1960	DRIEST MONTH YEAR	2.7mm 1961	LOWEST MIN DAY/YEAR	-2.2°C 10th/11th/1958	WARMEST MNTH YEAR	10.3°C 1957	SUNNIEST MNTH YEAR	214.8 2009	RAIN DAYS	60	SUNLESS I	23	WET DAYS	46		
WETTEST MNTH YEAR	179.6mm 2001	HIGHEST MAX DAY/YEAR	19.6°C 30th/2021	LOWEST GRASS DAY/YEAR	-9.4°C 3rd/1965	COLDEST MNTH YEAR	4.4°C 1962	DULLEST MNTH YEAR	67.4hrs 1964								

