

February 2021

Low pressure out in the Western Approaches opened the new month, with overcast conditions; rain, drizzle, mist & hill fog through the 1st with a band of heavier rain marking the passage of a clearing cold front overnight in to the 2nd. Only a few bright intervals that afternoon, punctuated with showers before a further system pushed in from Biscay to bring over half an inch of rainfall to our shores through the small hours of the 3rd. This feature cleared through eastward quite smartly around dawn with the winds veering sharply from south to northwest, again with a residue of showers through the day.

Unsettled conditions prevailed for the next few days as low pressure over Ireland induced a relatively mild southerly drift across the Bailiwick, with scattered showers affecting the islands. Rainfall totals were somewhat less than of late though, with the 5th producing some 8.5 hours of sunshine, together with temperatures up in double figures.

Gradually though, that low pressure feature over western parts of the UK filled, as an intensifying area of high pressure centred over Norway started to introduce colder, drier air from more eastern climes. Cold Siberian air met with milder Atlantic air over Central Europe, giving rise to Storm 'Darcy'. Strong winds, falling air temperatures and heavy falls of snow affected many parts of northern mainland Europe, causing widespread damage and disruption as the storm tracked east. That same Norwegian high was also starting to drag cold air across the North Sea into eastern parts of Scotland and northern England. Moisture picked up en-route fell as snow in these areas, again causing much disruption to travel, as temperatures fell sharply across the country.

Locally, clear skies and light winds overnight in to the 6th saw ground temperatures fall below zero by dawn, and as the day progressed so air temperatures also fell away to just 5°C by evening. A weak front overnight with outbreaks of rain marked the arrival of this colder air from the northeast, again with temperatures falling further through the 7th. Light wintry showers started to fall that evening and by dawn on the 8th temperatures were hovering just above freezing, with a continuation of mostly light showers of snow or ice pellets through the day leading to some very small accumulations in places around the islands. As we moved in to the 9th our winds veered more easterly, allowing prevailing winds a more continental run in across Normandy. Temperatures started off just above freezing but this drier, colder air saw them dip sub-zero for the afternoon, with any showers staying to the north of the Bailiwick.

Meanwhile a low pressure system was edging in from the west, tracking eastward over central France with a very real threat of snow on its northern edge stretching up over the islands that evening and overnight. However, apart from a few light flurries around midnight, we remained clear with that snow band reaching up only as far as Jersey's north coast. Our sister isle received about 1cm of the white stuff by morning, whilst we remained just cold and breezy.



Jersey Met Office Radar imagery showing how close the snow got to us overnight in to the 10th.

Following the departure of that overnight low, the cloud broke up through the day on the 10th with plenty of sunshine although temperatures barely made 2°C by day's end. Scattered showers that built up in mid Channel made little progress southward, so again we missed out on any significant snowfall.

There were signs out in the near Atlantic of milder air trying to nudge in across the UK, but that Scandinavian high was reluctant to give ground as the battle of the two air masses across the country continued. Slowly though, the Atlantic air made inroads as it rode in over the top of the colder air mass with a band of sleet, followed by rain, started to transfer eastward across the British Isles. Again it was so near and yet so far, as that band of wintry precipitation out to the west headed up the Channel, but dissipating all the while. Shortly after dawn on the 13th we saw a mixture of snow pellets and freezing rain with air temperatures just below zero, as that freezing rain left just the briefest of glazed rime in favoured spots around the islands. Any remaining precipitation turned to rain through the afternoon as temperatures increased, though amounts were small.

The change to milder air was now very much under way with a strengthening southeasterly flow pushing up across all parts of the country through the weekend, ahead of Atlantic low pressure now looking to dominate our weather from the 14th. At 0300 on the 14th air temperatures stood at just 2.6°C, but by the same time on the 15th we were at 8.6°C and steadily rising as that milder air made steady progress eastward across the UK. Patchy rain with occasional mist & hill fog accompanied this arrival, with the next couple of days seeing above average temperatures, fresh southerly winds and cloudy conditions as low pressure to the north of Scotland returned us to a more mobile flow.

Sunshine totals remained low over the next few days too, as a series of Atlantic fronts became slow moving out to the west, with pulses of rain moving northeast over western areas of the UK. Some of that rain became heavy and persistent with parts of south Wales receiving over a month's rainfall (100mm) in just 24 hours. We continued to remain mostly just to the east of these fronts, although we did manage a few hours of rain in the early hours of the 21st, but this had cleared northward by dawn to leave a dry but cloudy day in the islands.

A similar pattern emerged overnight in to the 22nd as that waving cold front out to the west again nudged in across the islands giving us a few more hours of mostly light rain, before clearing away to the east this time, with conditions improving through the morning. With the upper winds originating from as far south as North Africa, we saw some Sahara Dust mixed in with this precipitation, leaving a very fine, rust coloured deposit on many a shiny car across the Bailiwick. A brighter afternoon ensued as we enjoyed a respite before the next system made inroads across the British Isles. This next band of fronts again slowed as they neared our shores, as a broad area of high pressure over Central Europe affected their eastward progress, and it wasn't until just before dawn on the 25th that we saw some outbreaks of mainly light rain before clearing later that morning.

A strengthening ridge of high pressure was building quickly behind this clearance, and with winds falling light under clearing skies, temperatures fell quickly away that evening leading to an extensive ground frost by dawn on the 26th. That high pressure continued to build, becoming centred over the UK for the last 3 days of the month, leading to some 30 hours of sunshine, although air temperatures fell away slightly on the 28th as the southern flank of that high brought in a cooler, easterly flow off the nearby continent, but it did remain dry.

The statistics show February to have been a pretty average month, but after a mild first week, temperatures fell sharply and not reaching double figures again until the start of the 3rd week where they remained just above average for the rest of the month. A dull and wet start to February gave way to a brighter, drier end to the month, with those last 3 days providing some 30% of the month's sunshine total. Overall we ended up with temperatures very close to the new long term average; drier and also slightly sunnier. Despite recording the

equal lowest (with 1998) maximum gust for February at the airport (35.4kts on the 9th), the mean wind speed was only 0.1kts short of the average.

Winter 2020/21 saw a mild & wet December, a cold & wet January and a reasonably average but slightly dry February, leading to the 5th wettest winter at the airport and 8th wettest on record going back to 1843. Sunshine and temperatures ended up very close to the average, but rather strangely we noted the most amount of days with snow reported (13) since 2010, despite an almost total absence of the white stuff on the ground.

DAY	DATE	BAROMETER							TEMPERATURE deg C				WIND				RAIN	SUN	WEATHER
		mb		AIR		GRASS	SOIL		DIR'N	SPEED(knots)			mm	hrs					
		at 9a.m.	MAX	MIN	MEAN	MIN	30cm	100cm	9a.m.	9a.m.	MEAN	MAX							
Mon	1	995.3	9.6	7.3	8.5	6.8	8.4	8.7	060	06	6.5	24	10.5	NIL		Cldy, ptchy ra/drz & fog ptches. Hvy rain late eve			
Tue	2	998.6	12.3	8.9	10.6	8.5	8.9	8.8	230	13	16.7	31	13.8	2.7	2.7	Drz, mist & fog ptches am. Clrng to fair w occ show ers pm			
Wed	3	993.8	10.5	7.4	9.0	7.3	9.2	8.9	310	11	10.8	24	1.1	2.2	2.2	Cldy, rain, mist, fog early am. High cloud pm, bec fine eve			
Thu	4	1007.9	11.3	7.5	9.4	4.2	8.8	9.0	180	10	10.3	20	4.5	2.7	2.7	Cldy wth early fog patches & rain. Occn fair w wth shw rs pm & eve			
Fri	5	1009.8	10.5	5.7	8.1	0.5	8.7	9.1	210	10	7.7	21	0.3	8.5	8.5	Fair wth early shw r bec fine. Cldy eve wth shw rs			
Sat	6	1008.0	8.7	3.4	6.1	-2.5	8.1	9.1	320	02	3.0	09	0.6	5.1	5.1	Fine, slight hoar frost early, isol show ers late eve			
Sun	7	1004.4	5.8	2.5	4.2	-0.9	7.5	9.1	040	10	9.9	25	TR	1.3	1.3	Cloudy wth occ show ers. Sleet show ers eve			
Mon	8	1000.9	2.6	0.6	1.6	0.5	6.8	8.9	030	10	9.6	22	3.0	NIL		Cldy wth shw rs of snow pellets or snow			
Tue	9	1003.0	2.4	-0.7	0.9	-0.4	6.0	8.8	100	19	16.8	35	TR	NIL		Cloudy. Snow pellets & sleet am. Sit snow late eve			
Wed	10	1010.1	3.3	-0.3	1.5	-0.7	5.3	8.6	070	18	16.4	32	NIL	5.0	5.0	Isol light snow shower early, cloudy became fair for a time			
Thu	11	1021.1	1.8	-1.9	0.0	-2.8	4.9	8.4	110	22	20.2	35	TR	NIL		Cloudy, occ dry air			
Fri	12	1022.5	4.0	0.0	2.0	-0.2	4.5	8.2	100	21	18.2	32	TR	4.9	4.9	Slight snow flurries ovnt, cloudy soon clearing to fine. Dry air			
Sat	13	1027.5	2.9	-0.7	1.1	-2.0	4.4	8.0	130	17	18.2	29	0.1	0.2	0.2	Cldy wth snow pellets & freezing rain am, rain late pm & eve			
Sun	14	1024.2	7.9	1.6	4.8	1.0	4.6	7.7	160	19	18.9	31	2.4	NIL		Cloudy wth patchy rain			
Mon	15	1020.2	10.9	7.5	9.2	4.9	5.6	7.6	200	11	13.7	27	4.7	0.5	0.5	Cldy wth rain & drz and occn hill fog. Occn fair pm			
Tue	16	1011.3	10.7	8.9	9.8	7.0	6.9	7.5	200	12	14.6	26	3.2	1.4	1.4	Cldy wth rain & fog, soon clearing to fair wth show ers pm			
Wed	17	1012.7	11.4	8.6	10.0	6.1	7.3	7.6	190	15	15.5	28	2.8	0.2	0.2	Cldy wth occn rain am & early pm			
Thu	18	1002.4	10.2	7.0	8.6	6.2	7.6	7.8	280	14	14.8	30	TR	6.3	6.3	Rain cleared by mid-morning, became fine			
Fri	19	1008.2	11.3	7.1	9.2	3.9	7.5	7.9	170	18	16.6	29	TR	0.1	0.1	Cloudy wth occasional light rain pm			
Sat	20	1001.1	12.6	9.5	11.1	7.9	7.9	8.0	150	18	15.2	28	3.5	0.4	0.4	Cloudy wth occn light rain			
Sun	21	1007.5	11.3	9.1	10.2	7.1	8.3	8.2	140	08	8.5	17	3.2	1.7	1.7	Rain clearing am to cldy occn fair			
Mon	22	1014.4	10.6	5.3	8.0	7.2	8.7	8.2	320	09	7.1	17	0.1	5.5	5.5	Rain until mid-morning, became fine pm			
Tue	23	1024.1	12.3	6.7	9.5	1.2	8.4	8.4	170	19	16.6	28	NIL	7.6	7.6	Cloudy until dawn. Became fine before cloud returned pm			
Wed	24	1024.3	13.3	9.6	11.5	7.9	8.8	8.5	170	12	12.7	26	0.3	3.5	3.5	Mostly cloudy, some sunny periods			
Thu	25	1027.8	11.4	7.2	9.3	7.1	9.3	8.7	320	07	7.5	17	TR	0.2	0.2	Cloudy wth light rain am, clearing to fair pm, fine eve			
Fri	26	1037.9	10.2	4.0	7.1	-0.4	8.6	8.8	030	03	5.3	11	NIL	10.0	10.0	Fine			
Sat	27	1041.1	11.0	2.9	7.0	-1.8	7.9	8.9	050	03	7.0	23	NIL	9.9	9.9	Fine wth early morning hoar frost			
Sun	28	1034.8	9.5	5.3	7.4	2.9	7.9	8.8	070	11	12.8	28	NIL	10.0	10.0	Fine occ fair, haze early morning			
MEAN		1014.1	8.9	5.0	7.0	3.1	7.4	8.4	S	12.4	12.5	TOTAL	54.1	89.9					
30 YEAR AVG		1017.8	8.8	4.9	6.9	2.5	7.0	8.0	SW	12.5	12.6	/////	75.8	87.0					
1991-2020																			
Diff from prev Avg		-0.2mb	+0.4°C	+0.3°C	+0.4°C	+0.3°C	+0.4°C	+0.4°C	SW	-0.5Kt	-0.5Kt		+5.6mm	+1.4hrs					
EXTREMES		NUMBER	RAIN	WET	SNOW/	HAIL	THUNDER	LGHTNG	AIR	GROUND	FOG	FOG	GALE	NO					
ARE IN		OF DAYS	≥0.2mm	≥1.0mm	SLEET				FROST	FROST		9a.m.		SUN					
BOLD TYPE		WITH	14	11	6	4	0	0	4	9	6	1	0	5					
RECORDS FROM JANUARY 1947																			
WETTEST DAY	59.0mm	DRIEST MONTH		4.8mm	LOWEST MIN		-7.2°C	WARMEST MNTH		9.0°C	SUNNIEST MNTH		150.5	RAINFALL		242.5 mm	SUNSHINE		145.0 hrs
DAY/YEAR	18th/1978	YEAR		1965	DAY/YEAR		21st/48.7th/91	YEAR		1990	YEAR		2019	RAIN DAYS		41	SUNLESS		15
WETTEST MNTH	182.8mm	HIGHEST MAX		16.1°C	LOWEST GRASS		-11.1°C	COLDEST MNTH		1.5°C	DULLEST MNTH		36.1hrs	WET DAYS		35			
YEAR	1978	DAY/YEAR		27th/2019	DAY/YEAR		12th/1978	YEAR		1986	YEAR		1976						