

May 2024

Low pressure just off the west coast of Ireland draped a slow moving cold front in a north-south line down across the UK bringing rain to the islands by early afternoon on the 1st. This front stalled its progress eastward allowing that rain to become persistent through the evening and overnight before clearing around the morning commute on the 2nd. Skies cleared around noon to allow some brightness through the afternoon although temperatures came in a little below average at just 13°C. That low off Ireland filled and slipped out further west to be replaced by a complex but shallow low over the North Sea with generally fair conditions locally for the 3rd with just the odd passing shower, excellent visibility and light to moderate southwesterly winds.

The 4th dawned bright and clear with just a band of high cloud across the horizon to the south marking the slow advance of a system developing over Biscay. This feature arrived overnight into the 5th with patchy rain, drizzle, mist and fog that morning, mostly clearing by midday to leave a bright afternoon but the low itself slowing to a near-halt over Brittany. Generally cloudy conditions prevailed through the 6th with patchy rain during daylight hours but improving conditions overnight in to the 7th as that low eased away into Central France and filled.

High pressure was by now making a welcome return, building in from the west, with a broad belt of more settled conditions stretching from the Orkneys right the way down to Corunna. As this ridge intensified it slipped east to be centred over Ipswich by noon on the 8th with light and variable winds across the islands together with plenty of sunshine. We did see some early morning mist and low cloud at times over the next few days but this burnt off quite readily shortly after sunrise as we enjoyed a very pleasant, dry and settled run of weather. Temperatures edged slowly upward too, with the 10th reaching 19.0°C and the 11th topping out at 20.3°C.

Clear skies late on the 11th overnight into the 12th led to some remarkable sightings locally of the Northern Lights (*Aurora Borealis*) which extended far enough south to put on a rather splendid display for islanders. Intense solar activity saw large Coronal Mass Ejections (CME's) from the sun impacting the Earth's magnetosphere producing this stunning display.



Spectacular *Aurora Borealis* late on the 11th, view from near Vale Church. Photo Credit James Wilson

That high remained in charge pretty much until late on the 11th as it meandered gently across the UK, but gradually it started to edge away to the east to be centred over the German coast by dawn on the 12th, allowing fronts to move in from the west as a damper and murkier southwesterly flow set up across the Channel. Patchy fog and low cloud affected the islands during the day and overnight, but it wasn't until mid morning on the 13th that we started to see the first rain in over a week start to fall as a spicy little low swept into the Southwest Approaches bringing a broad band of wet and windy weather to our shores. That rain became heavier and persistent with mist and hill fog at times before clearing later that evening. The 12 hour period 1000-2200hrs yielded just under half an inch of rain, with a 24 hour total of 13.7mm, making it the wettest day of the month.

Although that front had cleared through to the east, the low remained stubbornly slow moving in the mouth of the Channel with bands of showers within the general circulation. Despite the proximity of this feature, the 14th remained dry albeit with a fresh southeasterly breeze with any showers passing by the islands, and it was a similar story for the 15th but with a light peppering of showers that afternoon. By the 16th the bulk of those showers had transferred northwards as we enjoyed a bright day across the Bailiwick with light winds and air temperatures up in the mid to high teens. A developing low over the Low Countries saw cloud thickening during the morning of the 18th with patchy rain around midday as a weak front dropped down into the Channel, but this was a short-lived system with pressure building from the west by late afternoon.

Clearing skies and light winds that evening saw the overnight formation of extensive shallow fog in places across the island. This cleared readily through the morning however, to leave us with a day of hazy sunshine and light northeasterly winds as that high eased its way across the UK. It was a similar picture for the next few days with fairly quiet conditions despite the presence of any high pressure. Eventually though, another low developed over the Low Countries by the 22nd, tracking north up the North Sea with a westerly flow becoming established up the Channel. The worst of the weather with this system stayed to the north of us, producing a lot of rain across much of the UK with some areas of Wales recording 150mm of rain in 24 hours. By the 23rd that system had become slow moving off Newcastle, still drawing a rash of showers down the west side of Scotland but again we stayed in the clear with just variable amounts of cloud and light to moderate northwesterly winds, although air temperatures stayed rather disappointingly in the low teens.

As that low in the North Sea finally started to slip away, a broad ridge slid in from the west to stretch our dry run of dry weather to 11 days but edging in behind that ridge was an active little system that brought rain to our shores by late afternoon on the 25th. That rain became persistent through the evening before clearing by midnight with a fresher feel to the new day on the 26th. Despite the fresh breeze we enjoyed some 12 hours of sunshine before a rash of mostly light showers swept in later that evening, largely clearing by dawn on the 27th.

This brisk southwesterly flow continued through the morning with a few isolated showers across the islands but the next low was already making inroads from the west, with cloud thickening and lowering through the afternoon and evening with the first spots of rain arriving just before sunset. That rain turned more to drizzle overnight with mist descending into fog by the small hours of the 28th as mild and damp tropical air replaced that brighter flow from earlier. The drizzle and fog eased off for a while around late morning but returned shortly after midday with some heavier bursts of rain later that afternoon. Visibility remained poor across the islands as another series of fronts arrived for the 29th, again leading to damp and murky conditions before the clearing cold front went through late afternoon. We did manage a brief burst of sunshine before the sun went down, but with pressure building quickly in from the northwest the last couple of days of May saw mostly dry, settled conditions albeit a tad cooler than average with light to moderate northerly winds.

May was the first month since September last year with less than average rainfall with an 11 day period (14th-24th inc) with no recordable rain. Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$'s of the month's total fell on just 3 days, rather neatly spaced out on the 1st, 13th & 28th. The 13th was also the wettest May day for 7 years. Although sunnier than average, this May was duller than the previous 2 years and we noted 3 sunless days through the month. It was another mild month with the mean temperature 1.0°C higher than average making it the 9th warmest since 1843.

Spring closed out at the end of May with an average temperature across the 3 months of 11.0°C, the 3rd warmest on record. A dry May helped keep the rainfall total fractionally below average at 161.2mm and sunshine was just above average at 582.2 hours. There were no air frosts noted and only 2 ground frosts, both back in March.

MAY 2024

DAY	DATE	BAROMETER	TEMPERATURE deg C						WIND				RAIN	SUN	WEATHER			
		hPa	AIR			GRASS	SOIL		DIR'N	SPEED(knots)								
		at 9a.m.	MAX	MIN	MEAN	MIN	30cm	100cm	9a.m.	9a.m.	MEAN	MAX				mm	hrs	
Wed	1	1009.3	<u>11.9</u>	8.6	<u>10.3</u>	7.9	12.5	<u>12.0</u>	150	04	4.9	13	7.0	NIL	Cldy with ptchy light rain from early pm bec persistent			
Thu	2	1005.5	13.0	8.3	10.7	7.8	<u>12.3</u>	<u>12.0</u>	290	14	13.0	28	TR	7.3	Rain clrng mid am bec fair to cldy			
Fri	3	1012.4	14.4	8.8	11.6	6.5	12.8	12.1	230	12	8.8	17	NIL	12.4	Cldy w with brief light shw r early am, fine pm			
Sat	4	1010.3	15.2	<u>7.0</u>	11.1	4.4	13.0	12.2	110	09	7.2	16	0.1	12.6	Fine bec cldy eve. Xlnt viz. Drz & fog late eve			
Sun	5	1007.0	15.4	10.5	13.0	11.0	14.2	12.2	150	11	7.7	20	2.0	6.1	Cldy with rain. Drz & fog clrng by noon to fair/fine. Cldy eve			
Mon	6	1007.4	13.9	9.4	11.7	6.8	14.1	12.4	330	<u>03</u>	5.2	13	0.5	3.4	Cldy with early rain clrng to isol shw rs. Rain mid eve			
Tue	7	1020.6	15.9	10.7	13.3	8.9	14.4	12.5	030	11	7.3	18	NIL	12.1	Fair with mist early am, bec fair then fine. Haze eve			
Wed	8	<u>1029.2</u>	17.7	10.6	14.2	5.5	14.4	12.7	240	05	4.8	12	NIL	11.7	Hazy sunshine			
Thu	9	1027.6	16.1	9.0	12.6	7.6	14.8	12.9	120	10	8.2	18	NIL	13.2	Early low cloud & mist bec fair			
Fri	10	1022.8	19.0	10.4	14.7	9.0	15.1	13.0	090	09	9.2	22	NIL	12.3	Hazy sunshine			
Sat	11	1018.7	<u>20.3</u>	<u>12.9</u>	<u>16.6</u>	11.2	15.7	13.2	090	09	9.3	18	NIL	<u>14.1</u>	Hazy sunshine			
Sun	12	1012.6	17.9	11.6	14.8	12.9	16.4	13.4	270	07	10.6	24	TR	11.7	Hazy sunshine, patchy fog early pm			
Mon	13	1006.5	13.5	11.2	12.4	10.3	15.9	13.6	150	15	12.9	25	<u>13.7</u>	NIL	Cldy with rain from mid am with mist & fog patches. Clrng late eve			
Tue	14	<u>998.0</u>	16.6	11.4	14.0	10.2	14.9	13.7	170	18	12.3	25	NIL	10.7	Fair			
Wed	15	1001.8	16.3	11.2	13.8	10.2	15.2	13.7	140	14	11.8	22	TR	5.7	Bec cldy pm with isol shw rs late pm			
Thu	16	1004.7	16.5	10.5	13.5	8.8	15.8	13.8	130	09	7.5	15	NIL	14.0	Fair or fine			
Fri	17	1008.9	16.6	10.1	13.4	8.2	15.9	13.9	160	07	6.7	14	NIL	7.9	Cldy bec fair then fine pm. Coastal fog patches pm. Cldy late eve			
Sat	18	1014.3	16.3	11.0	13.7	9.3	16.1	14.0	360	05	4.6	11	TR	1.1	Cldy with light rain from late am to early pm			
Sun	19	1014.3	17.4	10.7	14.1	7.2	15.7	14.1	360	04	5.3	14	NIL	8.8	Early mist & fog patches clrng to hazy sunshine			
Mon	20	1012.9	16.7	9.9	13.3	8.2	15.9	14.1	060	08	8.1	19	NIL	13.8	Early mist & fog soon clrng to fine. Cldy occn fair pm & eve			
Tue	21	1010.5	16.8	10.9	13.9	9.2	16.1	14.2	300	<u>03</u>	7.1	18	NIL	3.7	Cldy with haze pm thickening to mist eve			
Wed	22	1011.7	16.9	12.3	14.6	10.9	16.2	14.3	270	14	13.2	25	NIL	13.5	Fair or fine bec cldy late eve			
Thu	23	1016.4	16.0	11.1	13.6	10.4	<u>16.6</u>	14.3	310	07	9.0	20	NIL	12.8	Fair/cldy am bec fine pm. Cldy eve			
Fri	24	1020.1	15.7	10.2	13.0	9.3	15.8	14.4	160	04	<u>4.2</u>	12	NIL	6.2	Cldy bec fair then fine by late pm. Xlnt viz			
Sat	25	1016.9	16.7	7.4	12.1	<u>3.3</u>	15.1	14.4	100	12	7.1	16	3.0	7.2	Fine/fair am bec cldy with rain from mid pm clrng by midnight			
Sun	26	1013.4	16.2	12.1	14.2	11.3	15.7	14.4	240	14	12.9	25	0.3	12.2	Fair/cldy am, fine/fair pm, cldy eve with isol shw rs			
Mon	27	1017.9	15.9	10.3	13.1	9.0	16.2	14.4	250	14	12.6	24	4.3	6.8	Cldy occn fair with shw rs early am. Isol shw rs pm, rain & drz eve			
Tue	28	1016.7	15.3	11.6	13.5	12.2	15.4	<u>14.5</u>	240	<u>20</u>	<u>15.6</u>	<u>28</u>	6.6	NIL	Cldy. Rain, drz, mist & fog, clrng brfly late am. Occn hvy rain mid pm			
Wed	29	1012.6	15.8	12.6	14.2	<u>13.6</u>	15.2	<u>14.5</u>	280	05	8.5	21	0.3	0.2	Cldy with rain, drz, mist & fog am, slowly clrng by late pm			
Thu	30	1013.6	16.1	11.6	13.9	10.0	15.3	<u>14.5</u>	310	13	11.5	26	NIL	12.4	Cldy am with isol shw rs, bec fair then fine			
Fri	31	1021.2	17.2	12.1	14.7	10.7	15.9	<u>14.5</u>	360	11	9.1	18	NIL	<u>14.1</u>	Fine occn fair			
MEAN		1013.4	16.1	10.5	13.3	9.1	15.1	13.5	SE	9.7	8.9	TOTAL	37.8	268.0				
30 YEAR AVG		1016.9	15.1	9.4	12.3	7.2	13.4	12.2	NE	10.9	10.4	/////	49.0	238.9				
EXTREMES		NUMBER	RAIN	WET	SNOW/	HAIL	THNDER	LGHTNG	AIR	GROUND	FOG	FOG	GALE	NO	TOTALS FOR YEAR TO DATE			
ARE IN		OF DAYS	≥0.2mm	≥1.0mm	SLEET				FROST	FROST		9a.m.		SUN				
BOLD TYPE		WITH	9	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	3				
RECORDS FROM JANUARY 1947															RAINFALL	384.4 mm	SUNSHINE	712.5 hrs
WETTEST DAY		40.4mm	DRIEST MONTH		4.1mm	LOWEST MIN		0.1°C	WARMEST MNTH		13.9°C	SUNNIEST MNTH		336.4hrs	RAIN DAYS	82	SUNLESS I	27
DAY/YEAR		24th/1950	YEAR		1989	DAY/YEAR		2nd/1979	YEAR		1989	YEAR		1989	WET DAYS	62		
WETTEST MNTH		128.7mm	HIGHEST MAX		25.9	LOWEST GRASS		-5.6°C	COLDEST MNTH		9.9°C	DULLEST MNTH		136.9hrs				
YEAR		1994	DAY/YEAR		30th/2003	DAY/YEAR		5th/1979	YEAR		1984	YEAR		1981				