

October 2024

The vigorous low that closed out September slowed its progress northeast, being centred just off the Norfolk coast by dawn on the 1st. Our winds veered into the northwest and moderated with the resulting airflow lending us a scattering of showers at times through the day. A building anticyclone to the northwest of Scotland helped encourage these showers down the Channel, but it was a cool, clear airmass with excellent visibility outside of any showers.

That high maintained its dominance over northern parts of the UK for a few more days, but gradually it eased away towards Scandinavia, before dropping southeast over the Baltic to allow a series of Atlantic systems to move in from the west. Our winds veered through east into the southeast and by late on the 5th those fronts arrived in the Western Channel with the first drops of rain starting to fall around mid evening, turning more to drizzle overnight with mist and patchy hill fog developing by dawn on the 6th. This warmer Atlantic air nudged temperatures up a shade too and following the clearance of the cold front early that afternoon, a scattering of showers on a fresh southwesterly breeze rolled up the Channel before skies finally cleared through the evening.

Despite the clear skies, low pressure was now very much the dominate player across the UK and nearby continent, remaining rather slow moving off the southwest coast of Ireland. Blustery showers made for a damp afternoon on the 8th but the winds eased down for the 9th as ex-hurricane 'Kirk' swept in from the near Atlantic, passing to the south of the islands over central France, with its associated area of rain just skirting south of Jersey.

As this complex and extensive area of low pressure continued to make progress eastward, so the retreating edge of this system started to draw down cooler air from the north, again with a scattering of showers, occasionally heavy, but the resulting clearer airflow made for excellent visibility across the islands. Clear skies in conjunction with high solar activity also led to the spectacular *Aurora Borealis* (Northern Lights) being seen across the islands that evening as the sun nears the peak of its 11 year cycle.



A stunning picture of the Northern Lights (*Aurora Borealis*) on the evening of the 10th. Photo credit J Wilson.

This cooler airflow saw air temperatures drop into single figures by dawn on the 11th and a brief funnel cloud was spotted to the east of the airport early that afternoon. A slow moving trough ahead of another low pressure system in Biscay brought a period of rain to our shores through the morning of the 12th, clearing by noon but with one or two isolated showers that afternoon. Again, excellent visibility prevailed following the clearance of this trough as a transient ridge built across the UK, although extensive high cloud for the 13th kept our sunshine totals low.

Cloud thickened and lowered ahead of a warm front approaching from the south later on the 13th as that low continued its drift up from Biscay to replace that temporary high which was retreating eastward over the Low Countries. Patchy rain and drizzle arrived in the small hours of the 14th, and plagued the islands on and off through the day. This milder air brought temperatures back up to the high teens with 17.1°C reached by day's end, although extensive low cloud chased any sunshine away.

With a large area of low pressure out in the near Atlantic and an extensive blocking anticyclone still sitting over Eastern Europe, a rather damp southeasterly flow became established over the islands, with a blanket of cloud stretching across the Channel. Early mist and fog cleared to leave us with a dull day on the 15th with scattering of showers through the afternoon and even a report of lightning off the northwest coast that evening. It was a similar picture for the 16th as well; dull with patchy rain and drizzle but fog affected the islands that afternoon and evening before clearing overnight as a cold front eased through around midnight.

Clearing skies and fresher westerly winds then gave us a brief respite with a transient ridge building across the south of the UK, but further fronts an association with a deep low off Iceland made inroads from the west by early evening on the 18th. Rain, occasionally heavy overnight, cleared by dawn bringing another clear day to our shores for the 19th but again it was brief as a major depression out in mid Atlantic deepened, bringing strong winds and more rain across much of the UK for the 20th. This system became the first named storm of the season, Storm 'Ashley' and whilst it affected mainly central and northern parts of the UK as it swept eastward across northern Scotland, it brought dull conditions to the islands with outbreaks of rain and drizzle together with mist and hill fog which cleared only slowly through the afternoon. Winds were fresh to strong as well and produced the highest gust of the month at 35 knots just after sunrise. As 'Ashley' rattled its way off over Norway so the trailing cold front waved back into the Channel early on the 21st bringing half an inch of persistent rain through the morning, the wettest day of the month, before finally clearing south and east over the continent, leaving us with a brief glimpse of sunshine just before sunset.

Ridge conditions pushed in overnight with a calmer, brighter day for the 22nd with just a light scattering of showers through the Channel later that evening. This ridge then developed into a major anticyclone, centred over Eastern Europe, with a light southeasterly flow setting up over the islands. Plenty of sunshine for the 23rd then but a slow moving band of low cloud on the 24th stubbornly lay in a north/south line over the islands for most of the day, with less than an hour's worth of sunshine by close of play that evening. As that high to the east drifted slowly away eastward, a low out to the west edged in with the associated band of rain arriving in the early hours of the 25th. This feature did manage to clear by mid morning but was reluctant to continue its progress further due to that blocking high. The low continued to sit out in the Southwest Approaches feeding the odd shower up the Channel but we remained largely fine and dry. Eventually this feature lost its identity as pressure began to build in from the west by the 26th with fine and dry conditions enjoyed across the islands until a weakening cold front dropped into the Channel around midday on the 27th leading to a cloudier spell with the odd isolated shower.

Settled anticyclonic conditions continued to try and work up from the southwest but a series of Atlantic fronts spilling in across the UK brought cloudier conditions to our shores. Overnight into the 29th saw a slow moving cold front stall in the Channel with outbreaks of drizzle, mist and hill fog which only cleared away to the south around midday. Although the visibility improved markedly, it remained cloudy as pressure started to build once more across the UK.

This new high had all the makings of a more permanent feature, but extensive low cloud was stubborn to clear our area, with only a few rather brief hours of sunshine later on the 30th and none at all recorded on the 31st. The month closed out then on a dry, settled but cloudy note with evening mist thickening into patchy fog late on the 31st.

Despite a dull finish to October, we managed above average totals for sunshine, below average figures for rainfall and we also ended up slightly warmer than the long term average. Storm 'Ashley' on the 20th produced the wettest day of the month and we also noted the lowest mean monthly wind speed for this month since 2018.

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
Tue	1	1012.7	15.7	12.5	14.1	9.7	14.6	15.8	310	08	9.6	19	TR	7.6	Fair or fine w ith isol shw rs early am & early eve, bec cldy late pm	
Wed	2	1013.0	16.1	13.3	14.7	10.9	14.8	15.7	360	07	8.7	23	TR	3.3	Mainly cldy w ith sct shw rs, occ fair/fine mid pm	
Thu	3	1019.2	16.5	11.7	14.1	10.5	14.8	15.6	060	12	9.7	23	NIL	8.8	Fair am w ith isol shw r bec fine pm. Xlnt viz	
Fri	4	1021.4	15.0	10.9	13.0	7.5	15.0	15.6	150	10	8.7	17	NIL	7.4	Fine am bec fair w ith xtntsv high cloud. Xlnt viz	
Sat	5	1014.9	16.3	12.2	14.3	8.9	14.1	15.5	150	16	15.3	33	11.2	8.2	Fine w ith xlnt viz bec cldy late pm w ith rain from mid eve	
Sun	6	999.4	16.6	11.9	14.3	11.4	14.4	15.4	200	10	13.5	29	3.9	0.3	Cldy. Rain drz fog & mist clrng mid am. Shw rs early pm to mid pm	
Mon	7	999.1	17.5	14.1	15.8	11.5	14.7	15.3	180	13	13.1	23	2.0	5.7	Fair or fine am, bec cldy pm w ith shw rs early eve clrng late eve	
Tue	8	993.3	18.3	13.6	16.0	11.9	15.0	15.3	190	15	17.9	34	8.4	7.1	Fair am bec cldy early pm w ith sct shw rs, occn hvy eve	
Wed	9	987.4	15.5	12.4	14.0	11.5	15.2	15.3	350	02	8.4	22	2.5	5.0	Fair w ith isol shw rs. Xlnt viz pm	
Thu	10	1005.4	14.9	10.0	12.5	9.6	14.7	15.3	310	12	7.4	20	4.3	9.0	Mainly fine, occn fair to cldy. Brief light shw r pm. Xlnt viz	
Fri	11	1016.1	14.9	9.3	12.1	6.0	14.0	15.3	130	06	8.1	24	5.6	5.1	Cldy w ith hvy rain early bec fair w ith xlnt viz. Funnel cloud @ 1245z	
Sat	12	1007.7	15.2	11.0	13.1	10.7	14.3	15.2	120	06	7.4	20	0.4	1.4	Cldy. Rain early am clrng late am, isol shw r pm. Xlnt viz from late am	
Sun	13	1019.6	14.4	8.7	11.6	5.4	13.8	15.1	080	04	8.0	19	0.2	1.2	Xtntsv high cloud low ering and thickening, rain late eve	
Mon	14	1013.3	17.1	13.7	15.4	11.8	14.4	15.1	260	14	9.6	23	TR	1.8	Cldy. Occn rain, drz & mist am. Occn fair pm, cldy eve w ith drz later	
Tue	15	1012.3	17.4	14.4	15.9	13.9	14.9	15.0	120	09	10.9	23	0.6	0.4	Cldy. Early mist & fog soon clrng. Occn shw rs pm. Lightng eve	
Wed	16	1000.3	17.5	15.8	16.7	15.4	15.5	15.1	160	11	10.2	24	8.7	NIL	Cldy. Drz, rain, mist & fog pm & eve	
Thu	17	1011.1	17.3	12.9	15.1	11.6	15.3	15.1	240	10	9.6	19	NIL	7.8	Cldy bec fair then fine pm	
Fri	18	1017.9	16.0	10.9	13.5	8.1	14.9	15.2	250	07	10.0	23	10.9	6.3	Fine bec fair mid am. Fair bec cldy pm w ith rain from early eve	
Sat	19	1012.7	15.7	11.4	13.6	12.0	15.0	15.2	300	10	10.0	24	1.4	8.2	Cldy w ith rain, occn hvy, clrng by daw n to fair then fine. Cldy eve	
Sun	20	1009.3	17.0	13.3	15.2	9.2	14.9	15.2	180	19	17.4	35	12.9	NIL	Cldy. Rain, drz, mist & fog am slowly clrng pm	
Mon	21	1022.2	15.0	10.3	12.7	11.8	14.8	15.2	190	08	7.0	18	5.1	0.2	Cldy w ith rain, clrng by mid pm. Bec fair/fine by early eve	
Tue	22	1030.3	15.7	10.7	13.2	7.8	14.0	15.1	240	11	9.9	19	TR	6.7	Fine/fair am, bec cloudy/fair pm. Isol show er late pm	
Wed	23	1032.8	15.0	11.4	13.2	9.2	14.2	15.1	170	07	8.5	23	NIL	8.0	Fair/cldy am bec fine	
Thu	24	1018.6	16.2	12.3	14.3	9.6	13.9	14.9	170	15	13.3	22	6.1	0.9	Fine bec cldy mid am. Cldy pm, occn fair eve	
Fri	25	1011.9	16.2	13.3	14.8	12.2	14.3	14.8	200	13	11.0	26	NIL	8.3	Cldy w ith rain, occn hvy, clrng mid am bec fair then fine pm & eve	
Sat	26	1016.3	16.6	10.2	13.4	7.0	13.8	14.8	180	05	4.3	11	NIL	8.9	Fine	
Sun	27	1023.3	16.4	10.4	13.4	4.7	13.2	14.8	300	01	3.8	10	NIL	5.0	Mainly fine/fair, occn cldy w ith one brief light shw r am	
Mon	28	1025.6	15.0	10.3	12.7	6.7	13.4	14.6	230	12	12.8	23	4.3	1.4	Mainly cldy but occn fair @ noon. Light rain & drz eve	
Tue	29	1025.8	14.7	11.8	13.3	13.4	13.7	14.6	330	03	6.6	21	0.3	0.1	Cldy w ith drz/mist/fog am clrng @ noon. Cldy w ith xlnt viz pm	
Wed	30	1028.3	16.3	12.2	14.3	8.9	14.0	14.5	040	02	5.2	15	TR(DEW)	4.1	Cldy bec fine late pm	
Thu	31	1026.6	13.3	11.4	12.4	8.9	13.8	14.5	100	10	6.9	16	TR	NIL	Cldy by daw n w ith mist & fog patches from mid eve	
MEAN	1014.4	16.0	11.9	13.9	9.9	14.4	15.1	S	9.3	9.8	TOTAL	88.8	138.2	20th - Storm 'Ashley'		
30 YEAR AVG 1991-2020	1015.0	15.3	11.1	13.2	8.4	13.7	14.7	SW	11.9	11.7	/////	97.9	120.1			
EXTREMES ARE IN BOLD TYPE	NUMBER OF DAYS WITH	RAIN ≥0.2mm	WET ≥1.0mm	SNOW/ SLEET	HAIL	THNDER	LGHTNG	AIR FROST	GROUND FROST	FOG	FOG 9a.m.	GALE	NO SUN	TOTALS FOR YEAR TO DATE		
		18	14	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	0	0	3			
RECORDS FROM JANUARY 1947													RAINFALL	716.7 mm	SUNSHINE	1724.4 hrs
WETTEST DAY	59.1mm	DRIEST MONTH	3.4mm	LOWEST MIN	3.5°C	WARMEST MNTH	15.2	SUNNIEST MNTH	176.4hrs	RAIN DAYS	147	SUNLESS	37			
DAY/YEAR	12th/2014	YEAR	1978	DAY/YEAR	28th/2003	YEAR	2001/06	YEAR	1971	WET DAYS	114					
WETTEST MNTH	233.9mm	HIGHEST MAX	23.6°C	LOWEST GRASS	-4.0°C	COLDEST MNTH	9.6°C	DULLEST MNTH	72.6hrs							
YEAR	1960	DAY/YEAR	1st/2011	DAY/YEAR	30th/1983	YEAR	1974	YEAR	1968							