

August 2020

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

August started off with low pressure and showery, mostly cloudy weather. Between the 6th and 13th the weather turned warm or hot and sunny in most regions, with some thundery outbreaks, and temperatures widely exceeded 30 °C in the south and locally 35 °C in the south-east. The weather turned more unsettled mid-month with showers and longer spells of rain. From the 19th to 28th the weather was often wet and windy with depressions heading in from the west, and Storms Ellen and Francis brought especially wet and windy weather to most of the country on the 20th-22nd and 25th. It turned cooler and quieter during the last few days.

The provisional UK mean temperature was 15.9 °C, which is 1.0 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. Mean maximum temperatures were mostly between 0.5 and 1.0 °C above average, but were slightly below average in eastern coastal parts of Scotland, and more than 2 °C above average in parts of the south-east. Mean minimum temperatures were widely between 1 and 2 °C above average except in northern Scotland, and August's UK mean minimum temperature was the third highest in a series from 1884. Rainfall was 135% of average and sunshine was 88% of average, and it was a cloudy and wet month over most of the UK, but it was drier and sunnier than average in north-west Scotland.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 36.4 °C was recorded at Heathrow and Kew Gardens (London) on the 7th. A minimum temperature of -0.4 °C was recorded at Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty) on the 24th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 13th, 103.8 mm of rain fell at Hollies (Staffordshire). A wind gust of 70 knots (81 mph) was recorded at Needles (Isle of Wight) on the 25th.

Weather impacts

On the 4th, there were road and rail closures across the Central Belt and evacuations at Garnock Valley and Tillicoultry. A landslip closed the rail line near Helensburgh and another landslip blocked the A83 at the Rest and be Thankful.

Thunderstorms caused some impacts between the 7th and 17th. On the 10th, there was flooding in Aberystwyth, Gower and Llandeilo in Wales, the A5 was flooded and there were some localised power shortages in Ceredigion and Gower. On the 11th, lightning damaged the railway signalling system in the Pitlochry area leading to rail disruption, and the A68 was closed due to a landslip.

On the 12th in Scotland, thunderstorms led to evacuations at a holiday home park, flooding on roads and rail and school closures, with rail disruption on some Edinburgh and Aberdeen routes. The very heavy rain from the thunderstorms seems likely to have been a factor in the landslip that caused a train derailment near Stonehaven, which tragically led to three fatalities and a number of casualties. Between the 12th and 17th, in Wales, a landslip blocked the Shrewsbury to Llandrindod Wells line, and there was flooding around Wrexham. There was also flooding in Cumbria, Blackpool and the Midlands. Flooding affected the east and south-east of England too, especially St Albans, Suffolk and the M25.

Between the 19th and 21st, there were impacts from Storm Ellen. In Northern Ireland there was flooding, fallen trees, the Foyle Bridge was closed to high-sided vehicles and several hundred were without power. In Wales, flooding affected the A48, fallen trees blocked the railway between

Tywyn and Barmouth, there were restrictions on the A55 and around 200 properties in south Wales lost power. In eastern England fallen trees caused delays on roads and railways, and fallen trees on wet roads may have contributed to a number of deaths.

On the 25th there were many impacts associated with Storm Francis, with flooding, fallen trees and power outages. Flooding especially affected Glasgow, the west of Scotland, the M8, Newcastle and Pembrokeshire. There were speed restrictions on the rail network in Wales, fallen trees in Cardiff and over 12000 without power in mid- and north Wales with evacuations in north Wales. A woman was hurt by a fallen tree in the east of England.

On the 27th, rain and localised thunderstorms brought flooding and fallen trees in Northern Ireland, while in Broxburn people had to be rescued from their homes due to flooding. In London, the rail line between West Hampstead Thameslink and St Albans was flooded. Road and rail closures affected south-western routes, especially in Devon and Cornwall, with property flooding in Plymouth.

England diary of highlights

After a changeable start, a generally hot and sunny spell with some thundery outbreaks set in from the 6th, with temperatures in the low to mid 30s Celsius in the south. It turned more unsettled mid-month, and then from the 19th it was unsettled and often windy with some deep depressions moving from west to east. Temperatures were mostly near normal during this spell, but it turned cool during the last few days.

The mean temperature for August was provisionally 1.3 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average, and the mean minimum temperature was the second highest in a series from 1884. Rainfall was 158% of average, and it was a wet month almost everywhere except eastern parts of East Anglia and south-east England. Sunshine was 86% of average, and was near or just above normal in northern Lancashire, Cumbria and parts of the south-east, but below average elsewhere.

1st to 5th

A slack westerly flow brought sunshine and scattered showers on the 1st and 2nd, the showers heaviest and most frequent in the north, and on the 2nd showers turned thundery over parts of Teesside and the North York Moors. Most places had fewer showers on the 3rd, but some sharp ones developed over East Anglia, locally thundery in Suffolk. The 4th was sunny in the south-east with 13.9 hours of sunshine at Eastbourne (East Sussex) but cloudy and windy elsewhere, with rain from the Midlands northwards clearing north-eastwards but more rain moving across Cumbria and Northumberland in the evening. The 5th continued bright in the south-east with rain in the north-west, and belts of rain crossed most areas from late morning, heaviest in the west, with the far south-east staying largely dry.

6th to 13th

A southerly and then easterly flow brought in hot continental air. Most areas started off cloudy on the 6th with a little rain and drizzle in the south, but it turned sunny and dry in the south and south-east. It became hot in many areas on the 7th with a high of 36.4 °C at Heathrow and Kew Gardens (London); most places remained fine, but scattered showers and thunderstorms over the south-west spread north and east. The night of the 7th/8th was unusually warm with Langdon Bay (Kent) not falling below 22.3 °C. Between the 8th and 11th, it was widely hot and sunny but low cloud proved slow to clear at times in Midland and northern counties, especially on the 9th. Thunderstorms in Devon and east Cornwall on the 10th spread northwards into north-west England. Thunderstorms broke out widely on the 12th with 103.8 mm of rain at Hollies

(Staffordshire). There were more thunderstorms in the south on the 13th, while it was dry and sunny in the north-west and cloudy in the north-east.

14th to 18th

Most areas were cloudy on the 14th and 15th, with some rain or showers and thunderstorms in the south on the 14th, spreading to most parts on the 15th, but the north-west had further dry sunny weather. Most of the country had a cloudy day on the 16th with showers and longer spells of rain at times, and some thunder in East Anglia and the south-east. On the 17th, rain in the north cleared by early afternoon, with showers, scattered thunderstorms and some bright intervals in the Midlands and south. There was further rain in the north on the 18th, and fog early on in the north-east, with sunshine and showers, with thunder in places, in the Midlands and south.

19th to 25th

It remained unsettled and became windy at times. Rain, heaviest in the south, spread north and east on the 19th, followed by a brighter day on the 20th with scattered showers and increasingly strong winds in the west. Bands of rain, heaviest in the west, swept north-eastwards across the country overnight 20th/21st, followed by sunshine and scattered showers on the 21st with gales in some exposed parts. It remained showery on the 22nd, the showers turning thundery in central and eastern counties, with some persistent rain moving into the north-west late in the day. The 23rd was a cloudy and showery day for most. Many areas continued cloudy on the 24th, but with some sunshine in central and north-western parts, and thunderstorms broke out in the south-east. A belt of rain associated with Storm Francis spread north-eastwards overnight 24th/25th, and persisted in the north for most of the day, while southern areas were brighter with scattered showers, and it was very windy with gales in some places.

26th to 31st

It remained unsettled and turned cooler. The 26th was a dull day in the north with some light rain, brighter with some isolated showers in the south, and again windy (though not generally as windy as the 25th) with gales locally along exposed coasts. Persistent rain spread from the south-west on the 27th, with thunder in parts of the south and east, followed by brighter weather with scattered showers, and exposed parts of the south were windy. The 28th saw persistent rain in the north-east which headed south through the east Midlands and western parts of East Anglia, with sunshine and showers and scattered thunderstorms elsewhere, and gales locally along exposed eastern coasts. The 29th was cool and cloudy; the east saw scattered showers and longer spells of rain, with a high of only 11.5 °C at Loftus (North Yorkshire), but the west was drier and brighter. A ridge of high pressure brought mostly dry and increasingly bright weather on the 30th and 31st, though with variable amounts of cloud. Ravensworth (North Yorkshire) fell to 0.6 °C early on the 31st.

Wales diary of highlights

August was wet and unsettled for most of the month, but there was a spell of hot and at times sunny weather with some thundery outbreaks from the 6th to 13th. It was often windy from the 19th onwards, but turned more settled and cooler towards the end of the month.

The mean temperature for the month was 1.1 °C above the long-term average, and the mean minimum temperature was the second highest for August in a series from 1884. It was a cloudy and wet month with 163% of average rainfall and 74% of average sunshine, making it the 10th dullest August in a series from 1919.

1st to 5th

A westerly flow brought scattered showers and variable amounts of cloud on the 1st, 2nd and 3rd, and the showers were thundery over Snowdonia for a time on the 2nd. A cloudy wet south-westerly type set in on the 4th and 5th, bringing patchy light rain on the 4th, and a band of heavier, more organised rain spread from the west on the 5th, with strong winds in exposed parts.

6th to 13th

The weather turned hot with showers and thunderstorms at times but some early fog patches in places. The 6th started mainly bright but turned cloudier with a little light rain and drizzle. The 7th, 8th and 9th were warm, dry and sunny for most after dull misty starts in many parts, with 13.6 hours of bright sunshine at Valley (Gwynedd) on the 8th. The 10th was cloudier, with showers, turning thundery by mid-morning, spreading north across western coastal counties, and another cluster of storms developed across the north by late afternoon with more showers developing across central parts. Most places were sunny and warm or very warm on the 11th, with thundery showers developing in the south late afternoon and moving northwards into central parts during the evening. The 12th was hot in places with a high of 33.5 °C at Usk (Monmouthshire), but thunderstorms developed off the west coast in the early afternoon and spread inland, becoming widespread and persisting well into the evening. The night of the 12th/13th was notably warm with Porthmadog (Gwynedd) falling no lower than 20.0 °C. Showers became confined to the south during the morning of the 13th, but another area of showers and longer spells of rain spread from east to west during the afternoon, turning thundery, particularly to the west of Snowdonia.

14th to 18th

The 14th and 15th had some sunshine in the north, but the south had more cloud with the odd isolated thunderstorm. Showers developed widely on the 16th following a misty start with patchy fog, turning thundery in the south by late afternoon. The 17th started off foggy in some places in the north, and showers became widespread by late morning, with scattered thunderstorms developing in the afternoon, mostly in the south. The 18th was generally cloudy and showery, the showers heaviest and most frequent in the south, turning brighter and drier from late afternoon.

19th to 25th

It was very windy on the 19th, and two areas of rain spread from the south during the day, with a record-breaking (for August) gust to 79 mph at Capel Curig (Gwynedd). It remained very windy with bright or sunny intervals and scattered showers on the 20th and 21st, with gales in exposed parts on the 21st. The 22nd and 23rd continued showery and rather less windy, with sunny spells developing especially in parts of the west from early afternoon on the 23rd. The 24th was mostly dry and bright in the north, but with scattered showers and then some patchy rain especially affecting south-western counties. Storm Francis brought a very wet night on the 24th/25th, and it remained very wet in the north on the 25th with 94.2 mm of rain at Capel Curig, though with brighter and drier spells in the south-west.

26th to 31st

It turned cooler, initially unsettled but turning more settled from the west. There was sunshine and scattered showers with strong winds at times on the 26th. Another depression brought a wet day on the 27th with a high of only 12.1 °C at Lake Vyrnwy (Powys), with brighter weather and scattered showers developing in central and southern parts. The 28th started mainly cloudy, though with sunshine at first in the south, and showers developed with some thunderstorms in the south, mostly clearing off southwards before dusk. Showers were isolated on the 29th, which was a mainly bright though rather breezy day. The night of the 29th/30th was cool in places with a minimum of 1.4 °C at Sennybridge (Powys), followed by a mainly dry bright day but with showers in the far north-west and south-west. The 31st was dry with variable amounts of cloud.

Scotland diary of highlights

August was a mostly unsettled month but there was a spell of warm or hot and sunny weather with some thundery outbreaks from the 6th to mid-month, especially in western areas, though eastern counties were more affected by low cloud. It was often wet and windy from the 19th onwards, but the north-west and Northern Isles mostly missed the rain.

The mean temperature for the month was 0.5 °C above the long-term average. Averaged across the country, sunshine and rainfall were both near normal, with 100% of average rainfall and 96% of average sunshine, but it was a dry sunny month in the north-west and a cloudy and wet month in the south and in the Central Belt.

1st to 5th

The first three days were generally showery, cloudy on the 1st and 3rd, brighter on the 2nd, and the showers turned thundery across the north-east on the afternoon of the 2nd. A moist south-westerly flow brought a cloudy wet breezy day on the 4th with 99.0 mm of rain at Inveruglas (Dunbartonshire), and further belts of rain affected mainly central and southern parts on the 5th.

6th to 12th

The weather turned brighter and warmer but with some thunderstorms at times. The 6th was a mainly sunny day in the north and east, but cloud increased from the south-west through the day. Showers and longer spells of rain spread from south-west to north-east during the day on the 7th. The 8th and 9th were generally dry and sunny, with 14.4 hours of sunshine at Edinburgh Gogarbank on the 8th and at Fair Isle on the 9th, but the 9th was somewhat cooler along the east coast. The 10th was mostly cloudy except in the west, and thunderstorms reached the south-west by mid-afternoon, affecting the Central Belt by evening and persisting into the early hours of the 11th. The 11th was mainly warm and sunny for most but with more thundery showers spreading from the south, producing severe thunderstorms for Tayside, Grampian and Aberdeenshire overnight and through the morning of the 12th. Dundrennan (Kirkcudbrightshire) fell no lower than 17.8 °C overnight 11th/12th. Thunderstorms developed over the south-west in the afternoon on the 12th, and Threave (Kirkcudbrightshire) reached 28.8 °C during the day.

13th to 18th

With a slack easterly flow, the 13th and 14th were warm and sunny in the west, but cooler with low cloud in the east. Low cloud was more widespread on the 15th and 16th, but it was warm and sunny in the north-west, and isolated showers affected the Borders late in the afternoon on the 16th. A belt of rain spread north and west through the country on the 17th, with mist and fog plaguing the coasts. Fog in eastern coastal counties mostly cleared by mid-morning on the 18th, but persisted into the afternoon in the far north, with showers or longer spells of rain in the south, and showers developed across the north-west in the afternoon, turning thundery over the north-west Highlands and the Moray Firth.

19th to 25th

A spell of wet and windy weather set in. The 19th had a foggy start in the north and east, with showers briefly developing across the Central Belt, and patchy rain spread from the south from mid-afternoon, affecting most parts overnight and clearing northwards from mid-morning on the 20th. Scattered showers followed behind on the 20th, then showers and longer spells of rain spread northwards through western areas, and it turned very windy with a gust to 62 mph at South Uist (Western Isles). A band of persistent heavy rain swept north-eastwards on the 21st followed by sunshine and scattered showers, and gales in exposed places in the south-west. It was mainly bright with scattered showers on the 22nd for most, but mainly cloudy and dry in the Northern Isles. Most places were cloudy on the 23rd, with rain in the west, south and Central Belt turning

more showery, and just isolated showers in the north. Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty) fell to -0.4 °C early on the 24th; some central and eastern parts had occasional rain and drizzle during the 24th but it remained mostly dry and bright elsewhere. Storm Francis brought a very wet day for most on the 25th, with strong winds in places and gales in very exposed parts, but the Northern Isles remained largely dry.

26th to 31st

It turned cooler, remaining unsettled for a time, but became more settled near the end of the month. More rain spread eastwards on the 26th, followed by scattered showers, but parts of the north and Northern Isles remained dry and bright. The 27th was a wet day for most, and heavy afternoon downpours, thundery at times, tracked north-westwards, but the far north and Northern Isles again remained largely dry. Rain moved off southward on the 28th, though scattered showers followed behind in the north and north-east and persisted on the 29th, when a few penetrated further south into central counties, with strong winds in exposed locations; many places were dry and bright, but Balmoral (Aberdeenshire) reached only 10.4 °C. The 30th was mostly dry and bright after a cool start, while the 31st was dry if rather cloudy.

Northern Ireland diary of highlights

August had a spell of warm and at times sunny weather from the 6th to 15th, with occasional thundery outbreaks, but otherwise it was a cloudy, wet and unsettled month, and often windy from the 19th onwards.

The mean temperature for the month was 0.6 °C above the 1981-2010 long-term average. It was a dull and wet month, with 161% of average rainfall and 80% of average sunshine.

1st to 5th

A westerly flow brought showers and longer spells of rain on the 1st, and sunshine and scattered, locally heavy, showers on the 2nd. The 3rd was a mostly cloudy day with a few showers dying out during the afternoon. An area of rain spread eastwards through the country on the night of the 3rd/4th, and the 4th was cloudy with rain across northern and western areas. Rain, very heavy at times, spread to most parts on the 5th, clearing later followed by drier weather with sunny intervals.

6th to 15th

It started off mainly dry and sunny on the 6th apart from some isolated fog patches, but cloud spread from the south-west, with isolated showers moving into the west and south-west late afternoon. The night of the 6th/7th was warm with a minimum of 16.6 °C at Magilligan (County Londonderry), and on the 7th bands of showers spread eastwards through the day, turning locally heavy at times. Most places were warm and sunny on the 8th after a foggy start in the west, with 13.4 hours of bright sunshine at Magilligan. The 9th was dry and warm, if fairly cloudy; the 10th started dry and bright but rather cloudy, but showers and longer spells of rain spread from the south from late afternoon. It was fine and warm on the 11th, though cloudier in the south-east. The 12th had persistent fog and mist near the north coast, but was otherwise dry and bright. There were isolated thunderstorms early on the 13th, and some fog patches, clearing away leaving a dry day with variable amounts of cloud, and a high of 25.4 °C at Thomastown (County Fermanagh). The 14th and 15th started off with widespread mist and fog but some sunshine came through in most places.

16th to 25th

The weather turned unsettled from the 16th, and windy from the 19th. The 16th was generally cloudy with scattered showers, and rain in the east on the morning of the 17th spread westwards

to all parts by mid-afternoon after a dry, cloudy start. Showers and longer spells of rain crossed the country on the 18th. A deep depression brought rain, mainly light and patchy, northwards during the afternoon of the 19th, and a cloudy and very windy day followed on the 20th as bands of showers and longer spells of rain crossed the country from late morning, with gusts to 63 mph at Glenanne (County Armagh). Heavy persistent rain moved away northwards on the 21st followed by sunny intervals, scattered showers and strong winds. A belt of rain spread eastwards through the country on the 22nd, followed by scattered showers, and there was another spell of rain early on the 23rd followed by scattered showers, these locally heavy and thundery. The 24th started off dry and sunny, with some isolated fog patches, but cloud and rain associated with Storm Francis headed in from the south-west during the afternoon, with 76 mm falling at Trassey (County Down). The 25th was wet and windy with just a brief respite early afternoon when the rain turned light and patchy in places.

26th to 31st

It turned cooler but eventually became more settled. The 26th was a day of sunshine and scattered showers, then another depression brought a cloudy wet day on the 27th. Rain moved off southwards on the 28th followed by windy weather with sunshine and just isolated showers. It was bright with scattered light showers on the 29th, with a chilly northerly airflow and a high of just 13.4 °C at Altnahinch (County Antrim). The night of the 29th/30th was chilly with a minimum of -0.1 °C at Katesbridge (County Down), followed by sunshine in the east and cloudy weather further west with isolated showers, turning cloudy elsewhere also. The 31st was dry with variable amounts of cloud.