

## April 2021

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

**April began settled, but soon turned very cold, and a notable feature throughout the month was the number of air frosts. Daytime temperatures did recover from the middle of the month, but it was cold and showery in the closing days. Overall it was an unusually cold, dry and sunny month.**

The provisional UK mean temperature was 5.7 °C, which is 1.7 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average, with April being colder than March for the first time since 2012. Mean maximum temperatures were within a degree of average except in eastern England, but mean minimum temperatures were widely around 3 °C below average away from westernmost coastal counties. The number of days of air frost across the UK was the highest in a series since 1960. Many areas were very dry, with only parts of Wiltshire and northern Scotland exceeding 50% of average rainfall, making it provisionally the UK's fourth driest April in a series from 1862. Sunshine was well above average everywhere, especially across northern England and southern Scotland, with 152% of average overall, narrowly beating 2020 to become the sunniest April in a series since 1919.

The UK monthly extremes were as follows: A maximum temperature of 21.4 °C was recorded at Treknock (Cornwall) on the 1st. A minimum temperature of -9.4 °C was recorded at Tulloch Bridge (Inverness-shire) on the 12th. In the 24 hours ending at 0900 GMT on the 28th, 28.8 mm of rain fell at St Athan (South Glamorgan). A wind gust of 65 knots (75 mph) was recorded at Fair Isle (Shetland) on the 5th. A snow depth of 12 cm was recorded at Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty) on the 7th.

### Weather impacts

Frequent snow showers set in across parts of Scotland later on the 4th, with significant accumulations in some areas by the morning of the 5th. These gave difficult driving conditions across the north-east of Scotland, with a road traffic collision involving a lorry on the A9. In Sandwick, Shetland two buses skidded off the road in snowy conditions. There were a number of other road closures and some road traffic collisions which impacted public transport. There were also reports of difficult lambing conditions. In Wales and Northern Ireland there were a few reports of difficult road conditions.

Some northern parts of the UK saw snow showers around the 11th. Snow caused some localised impacts, including a multi-car collision on the M60 in Greater Manchester, and the temporary closure of some roads around Bacup, Lancashire. Across the north-east there were reports of difficult lambing conditions, with some difficult road conditions in North Yorkshire.

During the remainder of April as the weather became largely settled, cold and very dry, reports of wildfires started to come in. Wildfires were reported in the Mourne Mountains in Northern Ireland, in Whinlatter Forest, Cumbria, at Marsden Moor, West Yorkshire, and across Wales. South Wales Fire and Rescue reportedly received nearly 950 calls in 24 hours related to wildfires.

### England diary of highlights

**Cold air swept in across the country during the 1st and 2nd, and was dominant for most of the month, particularly during the 5th to 12th, with winds often from a northerly quarter and high pressure influencing the weather for much of the time. The last four days of the month were more showery.**

The mean temperature for April was provisionally 1.9 °C below the 1981-2010 long-term average; notably, minimum temperatures were more than 3 °C below average in some areas, while maxima were almost up to average in the south-west and the north. It was a dry and sunny month, especially sunny in the north-west, with 19% of average rainfall overall, and 148% of average sunshine. For minimum temperatures it was the second coldest April in a series from 1884, and it was England's seventh driest April in records from 1862. Sunshine (since 1919) was second highest, with only April 2020 having been sunnier.

### **1st to 4th**

After a mild night, most areas were cloudy on the 1st, with scattered showers in the Midlands and south-west, and warm in the south with Treknaw (Cornwall) reaching 21.4 °C. The 2nd saw an early frost and a clear start in the north-west, with more cloud elsewhere, but with western areas turning sunny by afternoon. The 3rd started cold in a few places, with sunshine in the north-west and south-west spreading to all but south-eastern areas by evening. The 4th began frosty in most areas, with early fog in the north-west, and sunshine for all once the cloud in the south-east cleared away, but northern areas clouded over later.

### **5th to 15th**

During the next fortnight, frosts were regular and often widespread. The north dawned clear on the 5th, a generally cold and windy day for all, with rain further south clearing and brighter skies following, though with wintry showers across the north and along the east coast from late afternoon; the maximum at Pennerley (Shropshire) was only 3.1 °C, and winds gusted to 61mph at Walney Island (Cumbria). The 6th saw showers in the south-west throughout, also developing across the north from lunchtime then spreading south through the day, falling as sleet, hail or snow in the north, but these showers died away in some areas towards evening. The 7th was mainly bright or sunny, though cloudier in the West Midlands and the south-west, with scattered showers in some areas. The 8th began dry for many, but the north was dull with patchy rain and drizzle for most of the day, especially later in the north-west, while southern areas had isolated showers at times, with winds strongest in the north and north-east. The 9th was cloudy across central parts, with patchy rain slowly sinking south and east, though turning more widespread and persistent over East Anglia, but it was sunny further north with isolated wintry showers, and the south had a few showers later also. The 10th started cold in northern areas, and was bright with showers of sleet, snow and hail, becoming more widespread; south-eastern areas were cloudy with rain, patchy at first, becoming more persistent for a time later, with the south-west being driest and brightest. Widespread frost again on the 11th, with Shap (Cumbria) coldest (overnight minimum -8.4 °C), and some sunshine, but wintry showers at first over north-eastern coasts became more widespread generally with rain, sleet, snow and hail, Buxton (Derbyshire) recording 4 cm of lying snow. It was coldest in eastern areas to start the 12th; cloudy at first in southern counties with some sleet and snow at first, and showers in the south-west mostly clearing during the afternoon, though isolated wintry showers still showed up elsewhere. The 13th brought sunshine for most areas, but cloud increased with showers developing, merging into longer spells of rain particularly in the north, with the East Midlands and East Anglia staying dry and sunny. It was another cold start on the 14th, with isolated fog patches, then fine and mainly dry, though cloud increased with very isolated showers developing for a time. The 15th was similar, bright for many, with a few showers breaking out over East Anglia and the south-east.

### **16th to 26th**

It was less cold by day during this period, but most nights continued to see frosts in places. The 16th was generally bright or sunny, with a few morning showers in parts of East Anglia. The 17th was sunny, but some cloud bubbled up over the south-west and East Anglia during the afternoon. Coldest across southern counties early on the 18th, then bright or sunny for many, but cloudier in

the north-west with patchy light rain arriving. Fog covered central and eastern areas first thing on the 19th, which was also frosty in some places, then it was generally sunny, but the far south-west had cloud and some patchy light rain. Frost on the 20th was restricted to prone locations in the south, with early fog for East Anglia and the south-east; otherwise fine, but cloud bubbling up by afternoon with isolated showers across the Midlands. Parts of East Anglia and the south-east had early fog again on the 21st, then there was patchy rain for the Midlands, dying out by lunchtime, with showers developing across the south-west in the afternoon. Frosty for the Midlands and north on the 22nd, then largely sunny, Rostherne (Cheshire) recording 13.7 hours of bright sunshine. Cold again early on the 23rd, but becoming generally bright or sunny. The 24th started milder in the south, with the temperature at St Mary's (Scilly) not falling below 10.4 °C, and it was another bright or sunny day. The 25th was fine, with sunshine for most, but cloud plagued the east coast through the day. The 26th was sunny again, but cloud increased from the north, with rain later spreading slowly south but becoming lighter and patchier as it did so.

### **27th to 30th**

The month ended with a sequence of cooler, showery days. The 27th began clear and chilly in the south, but cloudier with showers or longer spells of rain elsewhere, heaviest and most frequent across central and eastern counties, Friar Waddon (Dorset) recording 26.6 mm. There were scattered showers in northern and some central parts on the 28th, but more widespread showers further south, with isolated thunderstorms, coalescing into longer spells of rain, heavy at times, the best of any dry and sunny weather in eastern counties. It was generally a fine if rather chilly start on the 29th, with showers initially over the north and south-west soon becoming widespread and wintry in places with snow and hail in the mix, only southernmost counties avoiding the heaviest showers. The 30th started chilly again, with scattered showers initially around the coasts but developing inland by midday and becoming widespread through the afternoon.

## **Wales diary of highlights**

**Settled weather very quickly gave way to a very cold and showery spell, then around mid-month it became more settled, with a recovery in daytime temperatures. The month ended on a chilly and showery note.**

Mean temperatures for the month were provisionally 1.5 °C below average; minimum temperatures were particularly far below average, with numerous frosts throughout the month. It was a predominantly dry and sunny month, with 19% of average rainfall and 150% of average sunshine, provisionally the sunniest April in a series from 1919.

### **1st to 5th**

The 1st was a mild day, after a minimum temperature at Mumbles (West Glamorgan) no lower than 10.7 °C. The 2nd started chilly but became mostly sunny. Some western locations had frost early on the 3rd, then after cloud cleared eastern areas it was sunny for all. The 4th began with fog over Anglesey, and a widespread frost, ahead of further sunshine. Patchy rain on the morning of the 5th gave way to sunshine, but it brightened up and turned much colder, with wintry showers over the north later.

### **6th to 14th**

It was frosty away from coasts early on the 6th, with blustery showers throughout the day, some wintry with hail and snow, heavier and more widespread during the afternoon; the maximum temperature at Capel Curig (Gwynedd) was only 3.2 °C, and winds gusted to 52 mph at Aberporth (Dyfed). Another cold start on the 7th, then mostly cloudy with a few showers, wintry over high ground, dying out during the afternoon, and briefly brighter in the south-west later. The 8th saw some sunshine before cloud increased, with scattered showers sweeping in from the west on an

increasing wind. The 9th began mainly cloudy, with bands of rain across northern and central parts, showers and bright intervals further south; the rain bands moved southwards through the day, being replaced by brighter and breezier conditions in the north. The next several mornings started generally frosty; on the 10th, after early sunshine, cloud increased and brought scattered showers in some central, southern and eastern counties, wintry at times over higher ground. On the 11th, with Sennybridge (Powys) having fallen to -6.3 °C overnight, showers soon began to feed into the north-west, wintry at times, spreading south and east to most counties for a time. The 12th saw isolated early fog in central rural parts, then was fine and mainly dry, with only isolated showers, wintry over high ground with Lake Vyrnwy (Powys) reporting 4 cm of lying snow. The 13th started fine, but cloud increased through the morning with showers developing, soon becoming widespread, and continuing through the afternoon. The 14th started with patchy fog over parts of Anglesey, then there were sunny periods for many, but cloud and scattered showers developed for a time.

### **15th to 26th**

The sequence of frosts continued, but the next few days grew gradually milder. The 15th was largely fine and sunny, as was the 16th albeit with cloud increasing in places during the afternoon. The 17th was another sunny day for many. The 18th was cloudier, with a brief spell of light rain across the far north in the morning, but turning brighter later. The 19th was mainly sunny, though with some cloud over western coasts. There was more cloud for a time on the 20th, but some areas brightened up, before the arrival of patchy rain or isolated showers in the north. The morning of the 21st saw some patchy light rain, the afternoon then being brighter but rather cloudy. The last widespread frost for now gave way to a sunny day on the 22nd. The 23rd was mainly sunny again, Aberdaron (Gwynedd) recording 13.8 hours of bright sunshine, and became quite warm with Porthmadog (Gwynedd) reporting a maximum of 20.8 °C; further largely sunny days followed on the 24th and 25th. The 26th started chilly, but brought further sunshine, before cloud increased from the north in the afternoon.

### **27th to 30th**

The 27th was cloudy with widespread showers, amounting to 28.8 mm at St Athan (South Glamorgan). The 28th was mainly cloudy and cool, breezy in places, with showers affecting most parts, occasionally heavy in the south during the afternoon. After a sunny and rather chilly start on the 29th, cloud increased through the morning with showers developing around lunchtime and quickly becoming widespread with snow and hail at times. Frosty in many places to start the 30th, with bands of showers moving south in the morning, becoming widespread by the afternoon.

## **Scotland diary of highlights**

**The weather was settled at the start of the month, but soon turned unseasonably cold with northerly winds. It was rather milder around mid-month but cold again towards the end, often settled but with spells of showery weather around the 19th and from 26th onwards. Frosts were a regular occurrence throughout the month.**

The mean temperature for the month was 1.5 °C below the long-term average, with overnight temperatures being lowest relative to average. Scotland had 39% of average rainfall, provisionally the sixth driest April in a series from 1862, though with parts of northern Scotland getting relatively close to their average rainfall totals. Sunshine totals were 160% of average, making it the sunniest April in a series from 1919.

### **1st to 11th**

The 1st started rather cloudy with a few showers, but turned brighter in the afternoon. The 2nd saw a widespread frost, except in the Northern Isles; it was fine except in northern areas, where showers died out around midday, although cloud continued to spread southwards through the day.

After another cold start, the 3rd was fine, but cloud hugged eastern and northern coasts for much of the day. Patchy fog in the south soon cleared on the 4th, then rain already across the north spread southwards, becoming heavier and more persistent, reaching central districts by evening. Frosts were widespread and sometimes severe during the next several days. The 5th was sunny in the south, with frequent, locally heavy, blustery showers elsewhere, a cold northerly wind bringing sleet, snow and hail, and Fair Isle (Shetland) recording gusts to 75 mph. The 6th was generally cold, but sunny in the south, with showers elsewhere, often wintry, becoming widespread by lunchtime and persisting through the day, although dying out in the south by evening, and the maximum temperature at Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty) was only 0.7 °C. The 7th was mainly bright to start, but cloudier in a few areas, with scattered showers in central and northern counties, wintry at times, mostly dying out during the afternoon; Loch Glascarnoch (Ross & Cromarty) reported 12 cm of lying snow, and exposed parts were windy. Northern and western parts started the 8th very wet, the rain heavy or very heavy at times, Achnagart (Ross & Cromarty) receiving 27.6 mm, with snow over high ground; other areas started off bright or sunny and mainly dry, before the rain spread southwards and eastwards to remaining parts during the afternoon, clearing for a time in the north-east, and winds were strong at times. The 9th was bright or sunny, with blustery showers of rain, sleet, snow and hail in the north, some spreading south and east, and remaining breezy. The 10th again saw some brightness, but with scattered wintry showers in the far north, while cloud bubbled up elsewhere during the morning with wintry showers breaking out over most counties. The 11th brought showers in the far north and north-east at first, and in parts of the south-west too by midday, the showers becoming more widespread with rain, sleet, snow and hail.

### **12th to 17th**

The weather gradually quietened down, still with frosts by night, but with a gradual recovery in daytime temperatures. On the 12th, Tulloch Bridge (Inverness-shire) was coldest with an overnight minimum of -9.4 °C; it was a fine bright day, with any isolated wintry showers mainly confined to the far north and north-east. The 13th was bright or sunny in the north-east, but cloudy elsewhere with showers or longer spells of rain already in the west gradually spreading east and south through the afternoon. On the 14th there was patchy fog at first in parts of the south-west, then it was fine and mainly dry, though cloud increased towards noon with isolated showers developing for a time. The 15th was generally bright or sunny and milder, then the 16th was fine too but with rain skirting the west coast by the end of the day. The 17th remained fine, with sunshine for most areas but a veil of high cloud over western coastal areas.

### **18th to 25th**

Rain across the west early on the 18th, heavy in places, moved slowly east but became lighter and patchier. It was mild overnight into the 19th, the temperature at Achnagart (Ross & Cromarty) not falling below 9.2 °C, then generally cloudy, with rain plaguing the west all day, but sun in the east and south-east. A slow-moving band of rain on the 20th tended to fizzle out through the day, with showers to the north-west and cloudy but dry to the south-east. The north started frosty on the 21st, which was a largely sunny day. The 22nd saw a frost for many, but was warm by afternoon, a mostly sunny day but with cloud increasing across the north in the afternoon with the odd spot of rain. The 23rd started chilly towards the south, then was generally bright and warm, but with cloud spreading from the west through the afternoon; the temperature at Bowhill (Selkirkshire) reached 20.0 °C. The 24th started frosty in the north-east, and became another bright or sunny day. Again the 25th started chilly and then remained mostly sunny, but isolated showers broke out to the west of the Cairngorms during the afternoon.

### **26th to 30th**

A frontal system brought bands of rain on the 26th, soon reaching the north and then spreading steadily south, reaching the English border by lunchtime, with further rain affecting central and

northern parts through the afternoon. Showers or longer spells of rain affected all parts on the 27th, heaviest and most frequent in the east. The 28th started fine with some sunshine, but with isolated showers in the far north and north-east, and eastern parts of the Central Belt, tending to develop further by midday, spreading south and west to most parts by early evening; it was breezy in exposed places. After a bright and chilly start on the 29th, showers soon became widespread, locally heavy, and wintry with snow and hail in places. The 30th again began clear and chilly, with sunshine and widespread showers or longer spells of rain, and Tiree (Argyll) recorded 14.2 hours of sunshine.

## **Northern Ireland diary of highlights**

**After a mostly fine start, the weather turned cold by the 5th with a few showers. It was milder by day from mid-month, but still often cold by night, and there were further unsettled spells around the 18th to 19th and 26th to 29th.**

The mean temperature for April was 1.1 °C below the 1981-2010 average. It was a notably dry and sunny month, with 33% of average rainfall and a sunshine figure of 147% of average, provisionally the sunniest April in a series since 1919.

### **1st to 8th**

The 1st was dry and fine, with sunshine in places, and, after a cold start, the 2nd was sunny. The 3rd dawned frosty and foggy in places, but was sunny generally. A few spots saw early fog or frost on the 4th, which was a cloudier day, with a few spots of rain later. The 5th was much colder, with the maximum at Banagher (Londonderry) struggling to 3.5 °C, a day of sunshine and frequent, locally heavy and wintry, showers. It was frosty but bright to start the 6th, with blustery showers all morning, wintry at times, then drier briefly before rain spread south to all parts by late afternoon, with 2 cm of lying snow reported at Lough Fea (Londonderry) and winds gusting to 54 mph at Orlock Head (Down). The 7th began cold, mostly cloudy with a few showers, wintry over high ground, becoming more widespread by the afternoon. The 8th was again mostly cloudy, with showers, these becoming more widespread and persistent in the afternoon, coalescing for a time and heavy in places, with winds increasing too.

### **9th to 17th**

Overnight frosts were common over the following week. The 9th saw some brightness, but with blustery showers, wintry at times. On the 10th, after a minimum of -7.4 °C at Katesbridge (Down), it was bright or sunny with scattered showers, wintry at times. The 11th again saw Katesbridge down to a minimum of -7.4 °C, then there was some brightness, but also showers at first over some northern counties, these slipping southwards by the afternoon and becoming increasingly widespread and wintry. The 12th was rather similar, with a few pockets of fog in western parts, then some brightness, and showers, isolated at first, becoming more widespread during the afternoon, especially in Tyrone, and wintry over high ground. There was some patchy fog early on the 13th, then some sunshine before it clouded over, with showers in the north by lunchtime, spreading to affect all parts at times through the afternoon. By this time high pressure had become dominant, and daytime temperatures progressively recovered. The 14th was fine and dry, though with cloud tending to form by the middle of the day. After patchy fog in the west early on the 15th, it again became bright or sunny. The 16th was fine too, though with rain skirting the west by the end of the day. Early low cloud in places on the 17th cleared, leaving a sunny day especially further east.

### **18th to 25th**

After a milder night, most places had a wet morning on the 18th, the rain becoming lighter and patchier through the day. Mild again into the 19th, temperatures no lower than 8.5 °C at

Magilligan (Londonderry), with rain reaching the west by mid-morning, spreading slowly east during the day but eastern counties staying dry. Patchy rain clearing the east during the morning of the 20th, then brightening up from the north through the afternoon. The next few days were more settled, the 21st being a fine day with variable amounts of cloud. It was bright or sunny on the 22nd, then after a frosty start on the 23rd it was fine, though generally cloudier by the afternoon. The 24th was sunny, Thomastown (Fermanagh) recording 13.4 hours of bright sunshine, and warmer with Armagh reaching 18.7 °C. The 25th started chilly in the west, but became reasonably warm under bright or sunny skies.

### **26th to 30th**

After a sunny start on the 26th, cloud spread southwards, with mainly light rain reaching the north by midday and spreading to all parts by the end of the day. The 27th was somewhat cooler, with numerous showers and longer spells of rain. The 28th started dry with some brightness, but cloud increased by late morning, with isolated showers during the afternoon, becoming breezy in exposed parts. Showers were widespread on the 29th, some with snow and hail. The 30th began clear and frosty, with showers developing by lunchtime and becoming widespread through the afternoon.