



Weather Front

August 2021/1921

August 2021

Observers Notes.

Bablake: The warmest day was the lowest in August since 2010 while, the coolest night was the highest in over 129 years. It was also the driest August since 2003 and the dullest since 1968.

Lowdham: August 2021 saw the lowest “high maximum” temperature, in August, since 1993. It was also the first “thunder free” August since 1995. Locally, it was the dullest August since 1963, with only 97.6 hours (57%) of sunshine recorded at Radcliffe-on-Trentⁱ, and only 20.2 hours recorded between the 17th and 21st. The previous lowest, in 1963, were 94 hours at Netherfield (Met Office approved site) and 97.7 hours at the Meteorological Office, Watnall.

Middleton: The highest maximum temperature of 21.3 C was the lowest for August since 1992, while the maximum daily rainfall of 9.2 mm was the least for the month since 1995. It was the dullest August since 2008 and the second dullest for the month on the station record (1963).

Derby: One of the “quirkier” observations on the station record, since 1952, is that in years where July maxima reached 30 C or more (twenty-two of them), August has reached maxima of 25 C or more in each case – except this year! The 7 C gap between the July maximum and the August Maximum is the largest for these months since 1986.

Pitsford: Generally unsettled. Most days cloudy with limited spells of sunshine and associated showers. Temperatures below average.ⁱⁱ

Ely: Although August 2021 was the driest August since 2003 the “18 rain days” reported are unusually high due to the frequency of days with drizzle and light rain, particularly in the second fortnight. The lack of sunshine during August made it more like November!

Mountsorrel: A cooler month than normal, and the dullest August on the 21-year station record. There was a thunderstorm, overnight on the 21st, with 11 mm of rain being recorded. There were only 5 hours of sunshine between the 24th and 31st.

Saltfleeby: Warm and humid day on the 18th with heavy downpour of rain giving 18.3 mm.

Desford: Disappointing cloudy feeling unseasonably cool and very dry. Endless days of cloudy conditions and sometimes brisk NE'ly winds with small diurnal temperature ranges. Gave unremarkably mild nights but suppressed daytime temperatures, which at times felt rather cool for summer. Very little rain so dry conditions prevailed.

Coton-in-the-Elms: A disappointing summer month, very cloudy and rather cool. A distinct lack of any real summer month!

Weather impactsⁱⁱⁱ

The poor weather of late July continued into August. Flooding was reported in Faversham, Kent on the 1st, with disruption to public transport, and some roads temporarily closed. Flooding across parts of the Isle of Wight on the 2nd caused disruption to buses and some rail services. In Wales there was flooding on the M4 near Swansea, and a landslip on the railway line near Neath/Skewen on the 2nd. On the 4th, trains were disrupted around Ballymena in Northern Ireland, and also between Sheffield and Stockport. There was further unsettled weather during the following week. In Scotland on the 6th, flooding around Edinburgh caused road congestion and delays to bus and train services. A number of roads in Glasgow were closed, and West St station was closed due to flooding. There was flooding in some parts of Belfast, with reports of property flooding in the Ardoyne area. Strong winds brought down trees causing delays on the A127 in Essex, and reportedly delayed rail services between Lowestoft and Ipswich. Further flooding arose across parts of Scotland on the 9th, notably in Corstorphine and at the Cameron Toll in Edinburgh. Lothian Buses warned customers of diversions and/or disruption to services as a result of flooding. Numerous roads in Glasgow saw flooding, with some closed. Some ScotRail services were delayed or diverted around Edinburgh and Glasgow. Further south, flooding around Stansted Airport on the 9th meant at least one cancelled train to London, and delays on the A12. Services between Brighton and Haywards Heath were suspended due to a flooded line, and police in Gosport asked people to avoid Leesland Road due to flooding. Further flooding was reported in Brighton, Newbury and on parts of the M25.

August 1921

Observers Notes.

Derby/Burton-on-Trent: The severe drought was tempered by quite a soaking in this area during August 1921. All local rainfall sites had more than 100 mm of rain; most were in the range 110 to 120 mm with one in Burton as high as 136 mm. The extremes of temperature occurred at the beginning of the month, around 26 C to 28 on the 1st and, at the end of the month, around 2 C or 3 C on the 31st; the broader river valleys may have had a rare August ground frost. Overall, the mean temperatures were around 15 C or 16 C.^{iv}

A note in the Meteorological Office Monthly Weather Report says, "The weather in the British Isles has presented few outstanding features during the month. Notes by observers which formed an important feature on the returns received in the preceding months, were few and might well be summed up in the remarks of one observer, "There has been nothing extraordinary!"^v

Overview of August 1921.

August 1921 was generally unsettled with a series of depressions crossing the country from the Atlantic. Temperatures were considerably lower than during July.

Rainfall in the north and west was large, but the south-east of England remained below average considering the distribution of pressure. Pressure was lowest near the Faroe Islands between the 1st and 5th, while secondary depressions moved north and east over the country. These secondaries produced a south-westerly gale along parts of the south-west coast on the night of the 5th. There were also thunderstorms, which occurred widely, on the 2nd and 3rd. These were associated with low upper air temperatures; [-14 C] was recorded at 13,600 ft at Baldonnell (Dublin) on the 2nd, which was [10 C] below average. These low temperatures were due to a cold northerly over Iceland, which had curved round the stationary low over Faroe. August 3rd saw thunderstorms over south-east England and was the coldest day in that area since July 5th. However, there had been no thunder reported during the preceding warm period, except for an isolated occasion on July 17th.

A secondary depression brought heavy rain to western areas on the 5th, which developed into an independent system, and moved north-east into the Gulf of Bothnia, but further secondary depressions continued to produce unsettled weather over the country. A shallow depression, moving slowly south-east over the British Isles between the 9th and 11th, turned north-east into Denmark. This centre produced heavy rain with localised thunder, but no rain fell in south-east England until the 13th. At Pulham (Norfolk) there was a severe thunderstorm during the afternoon of the 13th during which 75 mm fell in 80 minutes; Lowestoft had 52 mm during the same afternoon.

The Azores anticyclone caused a temporary improvement on the 14th and 15th, but a depression developed off north-west Ireland and renewed the unsettled conditions. Rain fell generally, except in the extreme east of England, and was heaviest in the south of Scotland. There was an improvement, all be it slight, when a ridge of high pressure formed over the islands on the 18th and 19th. This brought fine weather, and the hottest days of the month when temperatures exceeded [27 C] at several stations. The 20th saw a return to overcast weather, heavy rain, and thunder, when a depression, which had originally passed to the south of France, returned north.

From the 25th to the end of the month a westerly airstream produced mainly fair weather in the south of England, but rain in northern areas. On the 28th a depression formed off the

west coast of Ireland, moved east, and produced heavy falls of rain, notably in the north-east of England and south-west Scotland. Howden had 27 mm of rain during a thunderstorm on the 28th and Tynemouth had 44 mm on the 29th, while south-east England practically escaped any rain from this depression. However, a cold northerly extended south in the rear of this depression; screen minima reached [4 C] at Valencia on the night of the 19th, and [-1 C] at Eskdalemuir and South Farnborough on the night of the 30th. On the 31st a depression to the west of Ireland saw a change to a more southerly airstream with rain in western areas.

Fog persisted along north-east coasts from the 18th to 23rd and extended south to Yarmouth from the 21st to 24th while, in the Irish Sea, there was extensive fog on the 19th. Elsewhere visibility was mainly good for the rest of the month.

In Scotland the temperature was moderate to low, with ground frost in places at the end of the month. Warm weather was noted at times during the month, particularly on the 20th, when the reported temperature reached [26 C] at Ruthwell. At Braemar, Balmoral, and West Linton on the 29th, and at Eskdalemuir on the 30th, the screen minimum was [-1 C]. There were some rather heavy falls of rain, the heaviest being associated with thunderstorms on the 16th and 20th. While the total rainfall was below average in the north-east and north-west, elsewhere rainfall amounts exceeded the average by 50% or more. Sunshine amounts were below average everywhere and by as much as one hour per day in Edinburgh and Marchmont.^{vi}

August 1921 in Europe and the Empire.

During the first ten days the weather was fine and hot in France and Germany, although there were local thunderstorms on the night of the 3rd, Berlin reporting 80 mm of rain. Forest fires and the destruction of property were reported daily in France, particularly in the forest of Vorey-sur-Azon, which threatened the towns of Vorey and Bellvu; it was also very hot in Italy. A tornado was noted in the vicinity of Lake Geneva on the evening of the 3rd. Temperatures remained high in Poland until the 12th, reaching [37 C] on that date. Subsequently the maximum in Warsaw reached only [16 C] on the 14th. There were also gales in the Baltic and North Sea, with heavy rain on the 15th near the centre of a depression located over the Skagerrak.

Violent hailstorms were reported on the 16th in Bavaria and Württemberg, which resulted in considerable damage. In some places large hailstones lay piled on the ground to a depth of one foot [30 cm]. On the same day a storm damaged the wireless station near Lyon suspending all communication with America and the Far East. Snow fell on the mountains of Savoy on the 15th, while heavy rain and thunderstorms were recorded France and Switzerland between the 17th and 24th; at Perpignan on the 18th 94 mm at Sanguinaria in Corsica, again on the 18th, 98 mm, and at Lugano on the 22nd, 135 mm. Fine weather returned to France and Central Europe by the end of the month.

The prolonged drought ruined the Hungarian and Yugoslavian maize crop, but the Austrian corn harvest was excellent.

Further afield, the total rainfall in India for the summer months was near or above average, except in eastern Rajputana. A report, received on the 10th, suggested that the monsoon was strong in northern India, but weak in the Peninsula [probably Malaya]. Flooding occurred in parts of Kathiawar, with considerable damage also being done in various parts of the Afghan frontier. Gales and floods, which occurred in eastern Australia in July, were followed, in New South Wales and Victoria, by the coldest weather in twenty-five years; snow fell in places that had never experienced it before.^{vii}

Central England Data.^{viii} August 1921 (Averaging period is 1891 to 1920.)

Mean Maximum Temperature: 19.1 C. Average: 20.1 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 11.6 C. Average: 11.3 C.

Mean Temperature: 15.4 C. Average: 15.4 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 93.5 mm. Average: 89.6 mm.

Midlands Mean Maximum Temperature: 19.3 C.

Midlands Mean Minimum Temperature: 10.8 C.

Midlands Mean Temperature: 15.1 C.

Midlands Rainfall: 11.4 mm.

August 2021 (Provisional).

Central England (Averaging period is 1991-2020).

Mean Maximum Temperature: 19.8 C. Average: 20.9 C.

Mean Minimum Temperature: 11.9 C. Average: 12.1 C.

Mean Temperature: 15.8 C. Average: 16.5 C.

England and Wales Rainfall: 54.6 mm. Average: 82.3 mm.

ⁱ T Scholey observer, J Osborne, by email.

ⁱⁱ Monthly Weather Report, Pitsford, August 2021, p.2.

ⁱⁱⁱ Monthly Weather Report, Meteorological Office, August 2021, p.1.

^{iv} D J Stanier, by email, 2 Sept 2021.

^v Monthly Weather Report, Meteorological Office, August 1921, HMSO, 1922, p. 99.

^{vi} Monthly Weather Report, Meteorological Office, August 1921, HMSO, 1922, p. 99.

^{vii} Meteorological Magazine, September 1921, p. 239.

^{viii} Hadley Centre, Central England and Midlands, Meteorological Office.