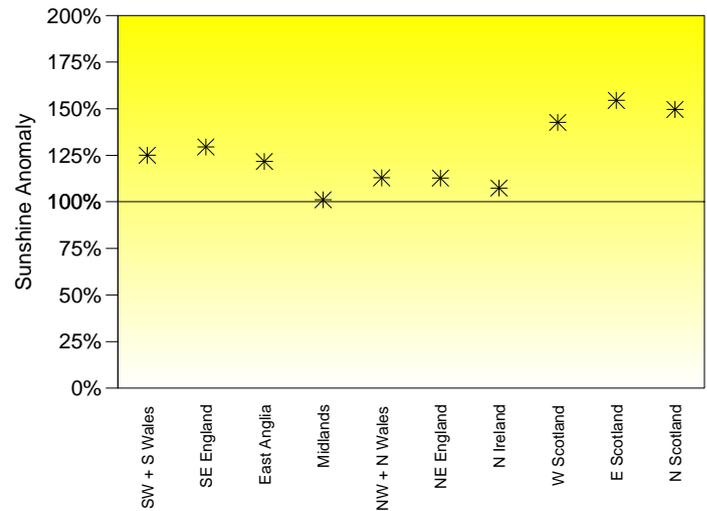
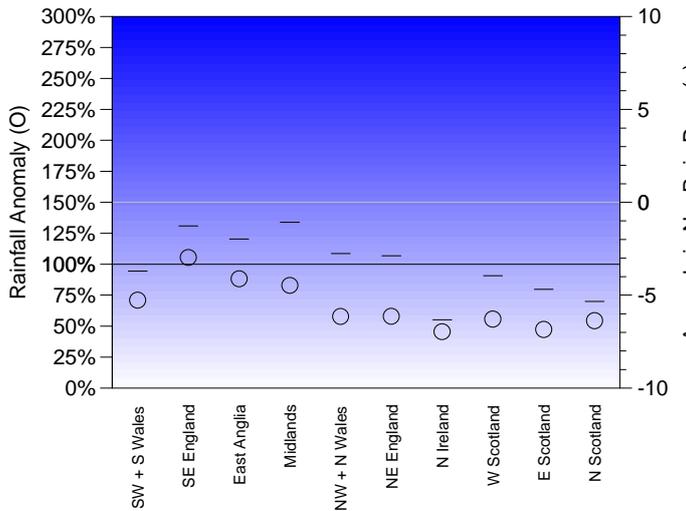


Extremes for January 2017	
Hottest:	14.0°C Hawarden, Clwyd, 31st
Coldest:	-9.6°C Braemar No 2, Grampian, 30th
Most Rain:	55.4mm Loch Glascarnoch, Highland, 15th
Most Sun:	8.4hrs East Malling, Kent, 18th
Windiest:	82mph Emley Moor No 2, West Yorkshire, 11th
Warmest:	9.0°C Scilly St. Mary's SAWS, Cornwall
Coolest:	2.6°C Santon Downham, Norfolk
Wettest:	207.2mm Cluanie Inn No 3, Ross & Cromarty
Driest:	25.0mm Edinburgh Botanic Garden No 2, Lothian
Sunniest:	101.0hrs Jersey St Helier, Channel Islands
Dullest:	11.6hrs Lerwick, Shetland



January is on average the windiest month of the year - and for most of the UK, the coldest. The temperature contrast between the frigid Arctic and the warm Atlantic reaches its annual maximum during the first fortnight - generating deep depressions and fierce gales. This year continued the theme of the winter so far and was remarkably calm, with an entire absence of named storms.

January began fairly dry, settled and cold in a northerly airstream. High pressure built steadily from the 5th and icy conditions in eastern and south eastern England caused a spate of road traffic accidents on the 5th and 6th. The weather became milder and progressively more unsettled from the 7th particularly in the north, as high pressure drifted south. On the 11th strong winds led to numerous power cuts across the north and overturned a lorry on the Forth Road Bridge near Edinburgh - closing it for 18 hours. It then turned cold - and snow showers spreading from Scotland on the 12th caused travel disruption to the A9 and then high level routes further south. South east England was also affected - and snow caused major delays on the M25 in Kent and forced a handful of flights at Gatwick to be cancelled. Snow rarely settled on lower ground and in the south, but by 0900 the next morning measured 18cm at Tulloch Bridge, Inverness-shire. On the 13th, strong winds felled trees across the country, resulting in power outages and the closure of the rail line between Norwich and Lowestoft. In the Southeast the NHS reported a spike in A&E attendance due to slips, trips and falls in the icy conditions. From the 17th, high pressure built steadily from the west and transferred eastward. A very mild south-westerly airstream was blown across Scotland, whilst southern and central England was beneath a cold, dry easterly flow - giving rise to some spectacular sunny days and clear starry, frosty nights. The cold dry, continental air, high cloud (and atmospheric pollution) produced some stunning sunsets. Freezing fog and ice on the 23rd, but more especially on the 24th, caused disruption at all principal airports across the south-east - and at Heathrow 100 flights were cancelled. Isle of Wight ferries were suspended for a time, and icy roads caused a number of road traffic accidents. The 25th was very mild across north and west Scotland (14.2°C, 57.6°F in Sutherland), whilst in High Wycombe (Buckinghamshire) on the very next day, temperatures never rose above -1.4°C (29.4°F)! January finished on a mild note, as the anticyclone that had been influencing the weather from mid month was finally pushed away by milder south-westerly winds that eventually spread across the whole country by the 31st.

The UK received just two thirds of its normal rainfall during January, making it the driest in a decade. This disguises the fact that rainfall was fairly typical for much of the England - whilst Wales and Northern Ireland were dry - and Scotland exceptionally so (some places there received just 25% of their normal January rainfall). Scotland and Northern Ireland enjoyed a very mild month, but it was cool in south east England and East Anglia - which experienced up to 6 more air frosts than usual. Central England was often blighted by low cloud and had a dull month, but everywhere else it was sunnier than average - and Scotland had its 3rd sunniest January since records began in 1929.

An icy cold wave swept eastern and southern Europe 6th-10th. In Turkey, the Bosphorus was closed to shipping after a winter storm dumped 40cm of snow on Istanbul. Temperatures in northern Greece plunged to -18°C (0°F), while in Athens temperatures hovered around 0°C throughout 7-8th with snow covering the Acropolis. Even Greece's islands were buried under deep drifts, with a state of emergency declared on Evia, where the snow reached 2m in depth and cut off electricity and water supplies. In Serbia, ice on the Danube caused all river transport to be suspended as temperatures plunged to -28°C (-18.4°F). In Croatia's coastal resorts of Dubrovnik and Split temperatures plummeted to -7°C (19°F) and fierce 'Bora' winds felled ancient pine and olive trees, creating havoc along the Adriatic coast. Ferries and planes were grounded, pipes froze, leaving thousands without running water and the sea froze in bays, trapping fishermen's boats. In Italy, Rome's famous fountains were transformed into eerie displays of icicles. Further west sun seeking Brits shivered in sub zero temperatures and found beaches from Alicante to Majorca buried deep beneath snow for the first time in 100 years.

Across the Atlantic, 2nd-3rd brought devastating storms to the Southeast USA. Four women in Rehobeth, Alabama were killed when a tornado blew a tree onto their home. In Georgia, severe squalls moved through the town of Albany - damaging 1000 homes. On 12th-13th storms dumped rain and massive amounts of snow across northern California, causing flash flooding, power outages and mudslides. On the 14th-16th, a prolonged ice storm left thousands without power in the Great Plains from Texas north into Iowa and east through central Indiana. On 22nd-23rd a tornado blew through a trailer park in Cook County, southern Georgia, destroying 20 homes and killing seven people.

In Asia, on the 8th, southern Thailand was hammered by torrential rain. The resulting flooding left 18 people dead, thousands of villages partially submerged and displaced nearly one million people across 10 southern provinces. By the 17th a series of downpours had also caused some disastrous flooding and 7 fatalities across the Philippines. Rainfall totalled a colossal 311mm in Borongan, Visayas, 15th-17th and further southwest, 185mm fell in only six hours at Dipolog City on the 16th.