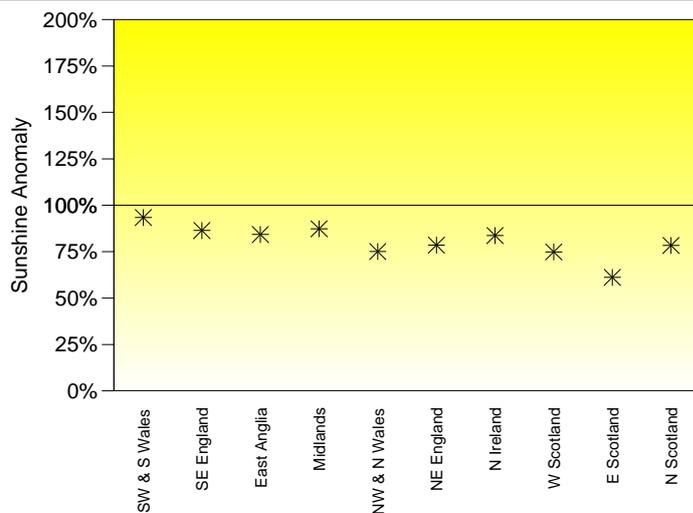
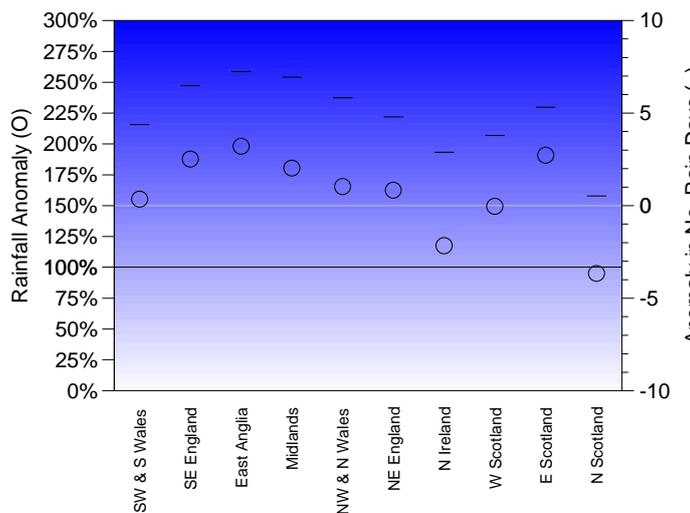


Extremes for July 2012		
Hottest:	33.1°C	London Olympic Park North, Greater London,
Coldest:	0.0°C	Resallach, Highland, 2nd
Most Rain:	65.7mm	Dorchester, Dorset, 7th
Most Sun:	16.0hrs	Haselbury Plucknett, Somerset, 22nd
Windiest:	61mph	Berry Head, Devon, 7th
Warmest:	17.6°C	St James Park, Greater London
Coollest:	11.3°C	Fair Isle, Shetland
Wettest:	219.5mm	Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd
Driest:	24.2mm	Wych Cross, East Sussex
Sunniest:	327.6hrs	Radstock, Somerset
Dullest:	59.3hrs	Eskdalemuir, Dumfries and Galloway



July marks the period of high summer. It is usually our warmest month, and in nearly half of all years it boasts our hottest day. July also ranks (alongside August) as the least windy month, but despite this, unsettled weather often features - and this was certainly the case this year.

The first three weeks saw a continuation of the very unsettled conditions prevalent in June. Showers or longer spells of rain dominated during the first five days, and low pressure moving north from the Continent brought widespread heavy rain and flooding to much of England and Wales on the 6th. Conditions became more showery on the 7th and 8th, but heavy rain triggered more flooding to parts of Edinburgh, the Lothians and the Borders. Several rivers also burst their banks in east Devon and Dorset, with Wilmington (Devon) notching up a colossal 119mm in 24 hours to 1800 on the 7th. Very cool northerlies then affected northern Britain 9th - 11th with maxima struggling to exceed 13°C (55°F) - making it feel more like October! On the 9th, Calder Valley, West Yorkshire, was hit by serious flooding for the third time in a fortnight. A new depression swept in late on the 12th and brought more rain to England and Wales - but Scotland and Northern Ireland largely escaped - a frequent pattern so far this summer owing to the southerly track of low pressure. The 14th and 15th were brighter though still with some showers, but the following week saw more unsettled weather with the 16th and 18th notably wet. On the latter day, landslips delayed rail services in Fife and on the Glasgow-Oban route, but again the far north of Scotland remained largely dry. A marked change began on the 20th as the last in the long series of lows moved away into Scandinavia and pressure at finally began to rise. Showers died away by the 21st, and the main depression track transferred further north to the Iceland area, so that although northern Britain was wet on the 22nd and 23rd, the south basked in sun and warmth. Temperatures climbed steadily, peaking at 30.7°C (87°F) at St James Park, London on the 25th. As the opening ceremony of the Olympics approached, the heat began to ebb, but the worst of the thundery showers stayed away over the near Continent. Cooler, showery weather followed from the 28th and some showers did turn thundery on the 29th affecting some of the sporting events. A warm front approached late on the 30th, and this gave much of the south a damp and humid end to the month.

July was a cool and wet month for most parts. England, north Wales and eastern Scotland received over twice their average rainfall, but interestingly, the far north-west of Scotland and the west of Northern Ireland were a good deal drier than normal. Very wet ground conditions in many places added to the soggy, gloomy feel, and affected crop harvests in low-lying areas. At least, though, the persistent rain enabled the final four water companies in south-east England to lift remaining hosepipe bans. Sunshine was in deficit almost everywhere and Scotland had one of its dullest Julys ever.

In Europe, powerful tornadoes struck Poland on the 15th leaving at least one person dead and another 10 injured. The twisters hit the northern and western regions of Kujawy-Pomorze and Wielkopolska, where they wrecked 100 homes and flattened swathes of forest. Witnesses saw a camper van flying through the air with a family of three inside; luckily, the occupants were not seriously injured. Also on the 15th, the temperature soared to a scorching 42.4°C (108°F) at Giurgiu, 60 km south of the Romanian capital Bucharest.

Blistering heat affected the USA well into July. On the 1st, Chattanooga, Tennessee tied the all-time record of 42°C, (107°F) set just the previous day, while Charlotte, North Carolina reached 40°C (104°F) and tied the all-time record for the third successive day. On the 5th Chicago hit 37.7°C (100°F) for the third day in a row. A powerful thunderstorm felled hundreds of trees and killed two people on the 5th as it whipped through Tennessee's Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Elsewhere, eight people were killed by lightning in the USA in storms 3rd - 16th. The severe drought in the Midwest forced barges on the Mississippi river to lighten their loads for fear of getting stuck and raised concerns about higher prices for food and fuel. Almost 30% of the nine-state Midwest was suffering extreme drought by the 24th. Firefighters in three Nebraska counties battled expanding wildfires, and the town of Ola, Arkansas, was evacuated as a firestorm bore down on it. In contrast, coastal Alaska experienced the coldest first half of July on record; the average temperature in Anchorage being just 11.5°C, (53.1°F)

Up to 280mm rain overnight 7th - 8th brought massive flooding to the Krasnodar region of southern Russia. There were 171 deaths, most around the city of Krymsk, where floodwaters quickly rose to 7 metres. Meanwhile, river flooding triggered by monsoonal rains ravaged the northeast Indian state of Assam. The Brahmaputra River and its tributaries overflowed in the worst flood in the state since 1998. Kaziranga National wildlife Park was devastated and there were at least 121 deaths. At least fifteen people were killed by flooding and landslides as rainstorms swept southwestern Japan on the 13th. Rainfall totals were reportedly as high as 500 mm. About 48,000 people were evacuated from the city of Kumamoto and blackouts hit thousands of homes. A cloudburst also hit Beijing on 21st, believed to be the heaviest rain in the Chinese capital since records began in 1951. Rivers burst their banks and flooded major highways, submerging then sweeping away large numbers of vehicles. More than 152mm of rain fell in Beijing city, while outlying areas recorded as much as 350mm.