

Bracknell Harmanwater May 2004 Weather Summary

May began with the continued dullness, but temperatures were on the rise during the day, but cooler overnight as the cloud finally broke during the evening of the 1st. The first sunshine since 27th April was recorded on the 2nd, ending 4 continuous sunless days, with a maximum of 20.9c recorded. Rain fell from 0750hr on the 3rd to produce a wet day with rain ceasing at 1300hr. A marked cold front moved through the area on 3rd at 1030hr with wind veering from WSW to N and a rain rate of 10.7mm/hr. The 4th also began wet with rain from 0515hr and the passage of another cold front at 0855hr produced very heavy rain in a short burst of 43.2mm/hr. Moderate / heavy showers followed in the afternoon with thunder at 1319-28hr and hail (3mm) at 1325hr. It was a cold day with maximum temperature only reaching 10.6c. Mean Surface Level (MSL) barometric pressure fell to a new record low of 977.9mb at 1759hr, since records began in 1946 a period of 59 years, breaking the previous lowest May reading in the area of 985.8mb on 2 May 1954. However, this record was then broken on 5th at 0059hr when the MSL fell to 977.0mb. The 5th was also showery with thunder at 1440hr and heavy downpours with 36.3mm/hr falling at 1230hr. The 6th was dry at the station although showers were around the area, but it began to feel warmer with 15.7c maximum recorded. On the 7th a frontal system began to move in from the east which saw high level cloud increase and thicken during the day, but temperatures were improving to 17.5c. The 8th had a wet start and it remained dull with showers after the rain had generally ceased around 0900hr GMT. With the dull wet weather the temperature struggled to only 11.5c. The 9th was again wet first thing with drizzle, but after 0900hr it was generally dry with a little brightness around midday. The 10th was much improved with milder conditions and max up to 21.0c, but sunshine was limited to 3 hours. The warmth set off a thunderstorm over Reading during the evening. With high pressure now in charge of the weather the 11th saw a misty start and generally cloudy but dry conditions with some sunshine. The 12th was generally cloudy but dull and dry. There was a little brightness during the evening. The 13th was warmer than the 12th with the '12th' maximum being beaten at 0900hr on 13th 13.9c. The 14th was sunny with variable cloud with temperature reaching 20.6c, warmer and sunnier weather was to come with the 15th recording 22.8c and 16th 24.3c. Overnight temperatures were above normal between 8c and 9c. There were two possible sea breezes on the 16th and 17th at 1800-15hr (16th) and 1430-45hr (17th). The 17th saw a maximum of 24.7c, with the 18th recording 25.2c the highest of the month. The 19th recorded 13.97hrs of sunshine the highest of the month and 24.7c. However, the 20th saw cooler conditions move into the area, with a very heavy burst of rain at 1800hr. 2.0mm fell in a matter of minutes at a rate of 55.9mm/hr and the air temperature fell 1.5c in the same period. This was the first rain fall for 10 days. With a northerly air stream on 21st the air temperature was much lower with a maximum of only 16.1c. The night of 21/22nd saw the air temperature fall to 3.9c. An even colder night on 22nd/23rd with minimum of 3.1c the lowest temperature since 23 April. Much drier air moved into the area on the 23rd with remarkable fall in Relative Humidity 97% at 0545hr to 68% 30 minutes later and down to 36% at 0815hr. A period of sunny intervals with variable cloud cover from 23rd to 25th with maximum temperature 19 to 21c. Rain during the evening of 26th moved from west to east with surface wind remained easterly. The 27th and 28th continued with sunny intervals and variable cloud but the 29th was generally cloudy. There was a return

to sunny intervals and variable cloud on the 30th. There was a peel of thunder at 1940hr. The 31st began sunny and continued dry with 8.08hrs of sunshine, but cloud increased in the afternoon with sunshine lost by 1700hr due to thicker cloud with rain by 2000hr which became light to moderate by 2045hr A wet night with 12.7mm of rain by 0900hr on 1st June.

So overall the month was warmer than average for maximum (+1.8c) and minimum (+1.3c) temperatures with mean 1.6c above normal. Rainfall was 100% of average. There were no air or ground frosts the lowest since 1999 and only 1978, 1983 and 1999 have recorded none since records began in 1973. There were 3 days with thunder heard the highest since 2000.

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