

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE MONTH.

December came as a shock after some fairly mild months. It ended as the coldest since 1981 with a mean maximum of 4.5C (40.1F). All temperatures were below average by as much as -3.2 for the ground minimum. Only the 100cm earth temperature remained above the 30-year mean, a legacy of the warm Summer.

There were 16 air and 19 ground frosts, both above average and again the worst since 1981. Snow lay on 6 days, over twice its normal incidence, to a depth of 3cm on the 21st. Snow or sleet occurred on 11 days with the worst of all Winter phenomena, freezing rain, on the 30th causing severe glazing. The month ended wetter than usual, rain falling on 19 days for a duration of 102.6 hours, both substantially above the 30-year means.

Sunshine was, however, above expectation by a quarter, with 6.5 hours recorded on the 29th. making it the sunniest since 1984. There were more dull days than usual with 16 against the norm of 13.6.
