

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE MONTH.

After the sunniest year ever in 1995, January 1996 ended as the dullest on record with a mere 12.5 hours sunshine, 7 hours LOWER than the previous worst in 1961. In all 21 days were sunless, equalling the record first set in 1970.

However, despite the wintry end to the month, January was not particularly cold, the mean daily temperature being 0.3C above the 30-year mean, both 1991 and 1992 being colder overall. In fact, mid month was quite mild, temperatures peaking at 11.2C (52F) on the 9th. Consequently, all soil temperatures remain above normal for the time of the year.

Rainfall was below average by 17mm (0.67in), with rain, sleet or snow on 16 days. Snow lay on 7 days to a maximum depth of 2cm (1 inch).

The worst weather event was the spell of freezing rain on four occasions giving severe glazed ice on all exposed surfaces on the 25th in particular.