

HEAVY RAINFALL OF SUNDAY AUGUST 8TH.

The trend towards climate change now taking place is leading to some quite unusual weather patterns, not only in the U.K., but many other parts of the world. Here we are getting much more extreme conditions, especially regarding storms which can deposit huge amounts of rainfall over small areas in short time intervals leading to severe flooding.

Sunday August 8th was no exception to this when two narrowly separated bands of rain moved northwards across the Midlands. The first of these gave moderate rainfall which continued for much of the day. It was the second of these which brought in the heavy rain, beginning at around 20.30 and lasting approximately an hour. During this period a total of 16.2mm (0.64in) of rain fell, the heaviest spell at the rate of 90mm (3.5 ins) per hour at 21.08. Such intense rain cannot be absorbed by the soil, so it runs off causing flooding in lower lying areas and forcing drains. People living alongside normally placid water courses can find themselves engulfed by torrents of water in a matter of minutes.

The 24 hour fall from 09.00 on the 8th to 09.00 on the 9th was 44.8mm (1.76ins) which, contrary to expectation, is not too uncommon in the area. In the 53 years since 1946 we have had 14 occasions with a 24 hour total of more than 40mm, the worst of all on August 19th 1970 when 74.9 mm (2.94ins) fell over the period.

This occurrence of much more extreme weather, both in rainfall and temperature, is likely to continue as weather patterns change.

C.G.ROBERTS. M.B.E.