

## Weather for the Winter Quarter 2023/24

December began as the last few days of November ended - very cold indeed. On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December the temperature remained below zero for the whole 24 hours. Unfortunately this was the day of the Wickham Christmas Market and there were many very cold stall holders and customers. Such days are very rare and this was only the third such in the last ten years.

The temperature gradually rose over the next few of days, but a damp dullness set in - so perhaps a dry bright sunny day for the market day was not so bad! The generally dull weather continued right up until Christmas. Indeed the sunshine total for December (as recorded at Wattisham) was well below the 10-year average. Just 55 hours - almost 40% below them average.

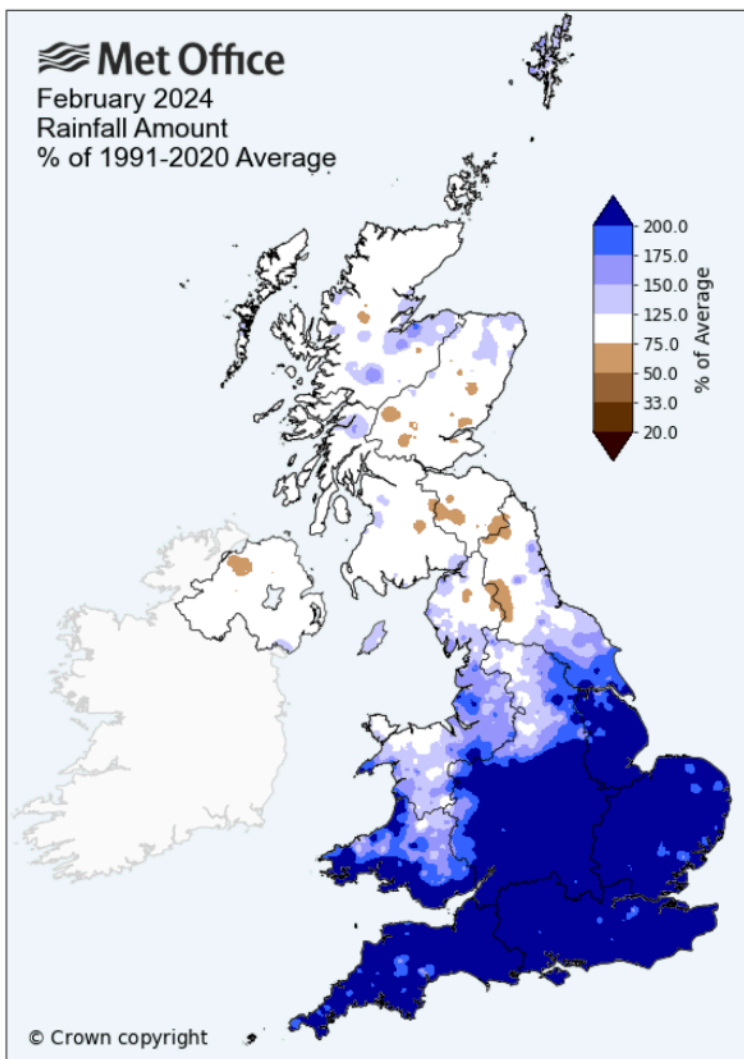
January also began with dull skies and there was heavy rain on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> - a total of 40.5 mm over the four days. The month then quickly developed into a see-saw of westerly storms and colder high pressure spells. The high pressure periods gave us some very cold nights with hard frosts on 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> - a minimum of -4.8 °C. It also gave us some glorious sunshine, doing much to make up for the very dull December.

The 21<sup>st</sup> of the month brought the onset of Storm Isha together with a high wind warning for the whole country - an unheard of event up until then. Fortunately Wickham Market largely escaped the high winds and the rain, but gust of just over 50 mph were recoded at Wattisham. There was major disruption to travel and power supplies particularly in the West and North of the country.



Porthcawl in Wales

February was spectacularly wet with over 94.8 mm of rain compared to a ten-year average of 55.2 mm. Gardeners might remember that February 2023 was one of the driest ever with just 2.2 mm of rain! There were 23 days in February with at least some rain - so 79% of the days in the month were wet. Not surprisingly there were relatively few hours of sunshine (as recorded at Wattisham), just 55.2 hours compared to the average of 89.4. Most significantly the puddles that had formed in fields around Wickham at the end of October were still there at the end of February. If there was any good news it was that all the clouds and rain made for very few frosty nights - just two nights in February when we might reasonable have expected six.

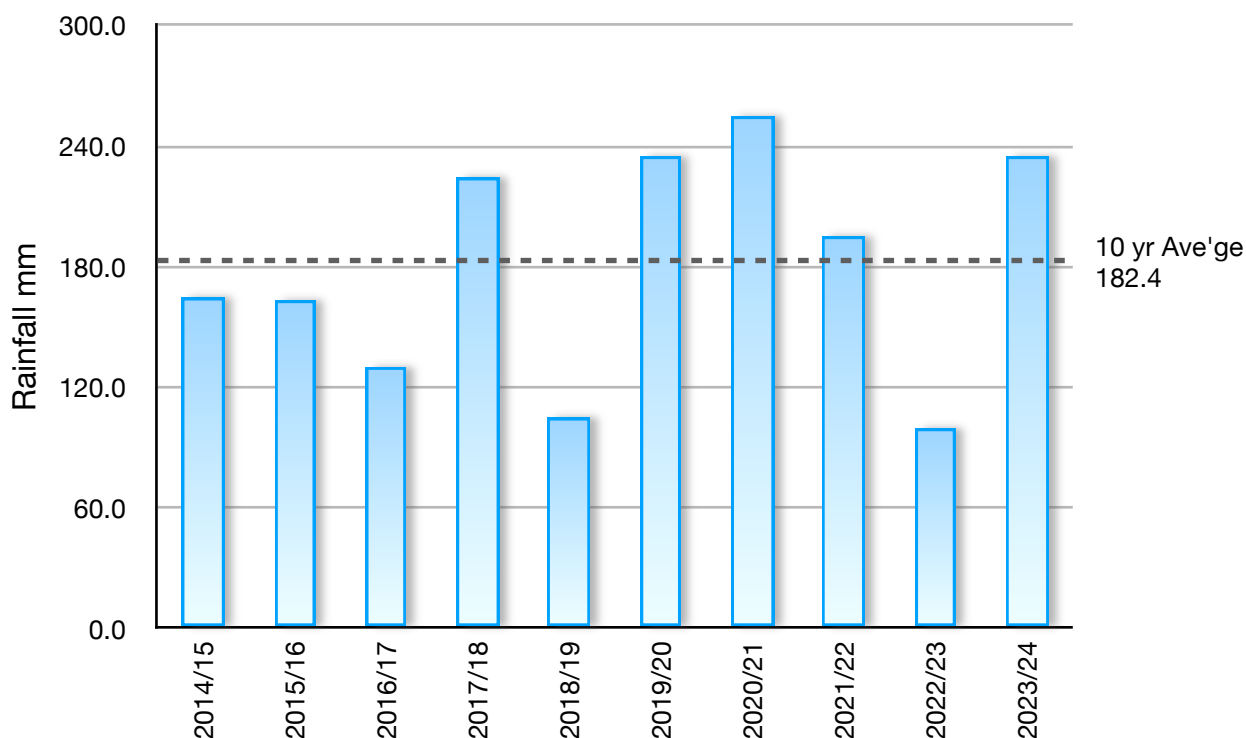


The Met Offices Anomaly Map for February underlines what a wet month it really was for the whole of Southern England. Wide areas received 200% of the expected rainfall.

None of this provided good weather for gardening. The bulbs duly appeared as expected but the ground was constantly wet and this made normal Spring preparations very difficult.

Overall the Autumn was warm and wet. The rainfall over the three months was 29% above the 10-year average. There were only 14 nights below zero when we might have expected 20. The average temperature over the whole three month period was 5.9 °C, a whole degree warmer than the 10-year average.

### Winter (Dec, Jan and Feb) Rainfall 2022/23



# Average Maximum and Minimum Temperatures

