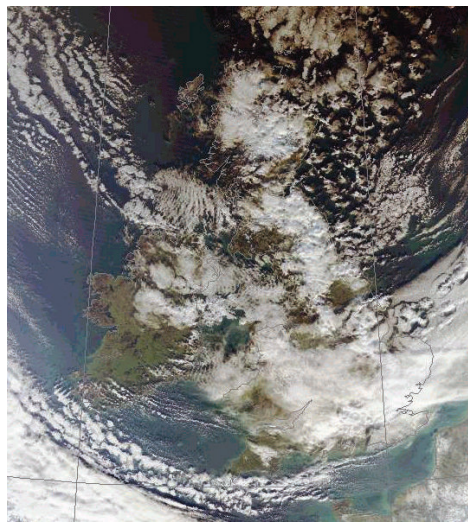


SUMMARY OF HEAVY SNOWFALLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM 2003

The year 2003, was an average year of heavy snowfalls with a total of nine heavy snowfall days throughout. Most of the heavy snowfalls occurred in January, however one occurred in October, the first since 1934.

Wednesday 8 January 2003

Snow fell across many parts of the UK, mainly E Scotland, SW England, South Wales, East Anglia, Lincolnshire, SE England and the Midlands. In central London, 5cm of snow fell (the last record for this amount of snow to affect London was in February 1994). Also on this date, 10cm of snow was reported on the ground in parts of Essex. At Heathrow Airport, London, 150 flight cancellations occurred, while train services between Hexham, Northumberland and Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear were cancelled as the railway line was forced to close. There were also delays to train services across SE England due to severe weather. In Kent, more than 100 schools closed and the Bluewater shopping centre's 300 shops and restaurants were also forced to close.



Satellite Picture of the UK at 11:27UTC on 8 January 2003 (Dundee University)

Thursday 30 January 2003 – Friday 31 January 2003

Heavy snow caused havoc in many parts of the UK over this period. Conditions south of Aberdeen, Grampian were particularly bad. Several drivers were stranded in drifting snow for more than 5 hours in a 12-mile traffic jam on the A92 south of Stonehaven, Grampian. Even snow ploughs and gritters were out of action for a short period of time. In other parts of Grampian, the police had to escort cars off the A90 after several vehicles became trapped, while the A939 Cock Bridge to Tomintoul route at the Hecht was closed for a period of time. The police also asked motorists not to use the M40 in Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire because of major traffic problems caused by the snow. In North Yorkshire, people were advised to avoid the A64 Malton to Scarborough road because of extreme snowdrifts at Rillington, while lorries became stuck on the A171 at Cloughton Bank. The main arterial route across North Yorkshire, the A64, was closed at Crambeck and the A174 at Whitby was also badly hit. Severe snowdrifts were also reported in the Pocklington and Driffield areas of East Yorkshire. In Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, emergency services said it was a miracle that no one had been killed in a 21-car road traffic accident on the A69, which left several people injured. On the A19 at Crathorne, North Yorkshire, a 20-car road traffic accident on the northbound stretch occurred, but again no one injured.

In parts of Lincolnshire and the East Midlands, 30,000 homes were left without a power supply until the 1 February and around 30 schools closed early. In Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire hundreds of schools were forced to close, while thousands of homes were left also without power. The bad weather also led to the closure of 17 schools in the Highlands, including 11 in Caithness. All schools in Orkney were closed, while several were closed across Grampian and North Yorkshire, mainly in the Ryedale area.

Up to 10cm of snow fell in Surrey and Sussex, with major routes such as the M3 and A3 seeing numerous road accidents. At Lowestoft, Suffolk, snow fell to a depth of 15cm. Snow also caused disruptions on some London Underground lines, including the Metropolitan, Piccadilly, Bakerloo, Northern and Jubilee lines. Stansted Airport was forced to close Thursday evening until Friday afternoon as the runway was 'too dangerous' for flights to fly as well as operational staff unable to get to work. The extreme weather conditions also caused significant disruption to BA flights in and out of Heathrow and Gatwick; Ryanair flights out of Northern Ireland and Easyjet services out of Luton also suffered with cancellations.

On Thursday evening motorists were stuck for hours across London and surrounding areas because of accidents and people driving more slowly in the icy conditions. Commuters leaving London were stranded on the A1(M), A141, A142, A47, M25 and the M11 during the night with more than 200 lorry drivers sleeping at South Mimms service station, Hertfordshire at the junction of the A1(M) and M25 north of London. The worst traffic jams were on the M11 between London and Cambridge (junctions 7 to 9), as the ice and snow brought traffic to a standstill. Some drivers reported being stranded on the M11 motorway for 20 hours as 12 lorries had jack-knifed on the northbound carriageway. Many drivers abandoned their vehicles on the M11 motorway during Thursday evening and did not recover them until the following day. The Highways Agency said heavy traffic prevented its teams from spreading grit on the M11 and radio failure among its gritting teams contributed to road chaos on Thursday afternoon. Police said rescue centres had been set up by the Women's Royal Voluntary Service to provide motorists with food and drink, after stranded drivers had been forced to use truckers' toilet facilities and share food. The government indicated after the chaos on the M11 motorway there would be a new legislation to force councils to grit roads.

All Eurostar services from Waterloo and Ashford, Kent to the continent were also cancelled because of the severe weather. The snowy conditions meant travel misery for the Chancellor Gordon Brown, whose flight to the Rosyth naval shipyard in Fife to see the new refit of HMS Invincible was delayed by several hours on Friday afternoon.

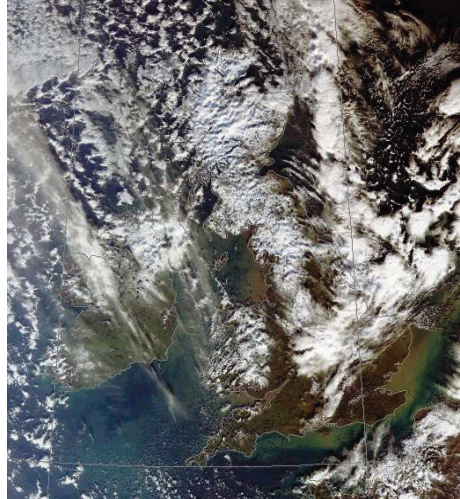


The M11 motorway in Essex on the morning of the 31 January 2003 (BBC News)

Monday 3 February 2003 – Tuesday 4 February 2003

Snow showers and strong winds caused problems across Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England. Almost all Highland, Orkney, Fife and Dumfries and Galloway schools remained closed during Monday and Tuesday, affecting 25,000 pupils. All schools in Caithness, Moray and the Shetland Islands were also closed. More than 70 primary and secondary schools in Cumbria were also forced to close because of the snow. A number of major roads were closed in the Highlands, including the A9 at Nevidale, Caithness, with drifting snow causing problems on the A9 south of Inverness at Slocht. Other roads that were closed included the A835 Tore to Ullapool - at Corrieshalloch and the A889 Dalwhinnie to Laggan. In Aberdeenshire, the A96 in the Huntly and Elgin area and the A939 Ballater to Lecht road was also closed for a time. Two lanes of the M6 were also closed in Cumbria because of the heavy flurries of snow. High roads across Cumbria including the A686 between Penrith and Alston and the A6 at Shap were also closed for a short period. In Northern Ireland, the Glenshane Pass from Belfast to Londonderry was also closed, while the M1 in South Yorkshire was shut due to a number of collisions on the northbound carriageway.

By Monday evening, 30cm of snow had fallen in parts of Highland, with 25cm of snow lying at Culloden, Highland. By Tuesday morning, 20cm of snow was lying at Aviemore, Highland. The snow caused the closure of Inverness Airport for a time, while parts of Northern Ireland, 12cm of snow fell during Monday evening and Tuesday morning in parts of Magherafelt, Dungannon and Cookstown which caused hazardous driving conditions. The Belfast, Bangor and Larne railway lines also experienced delays due to the snow.

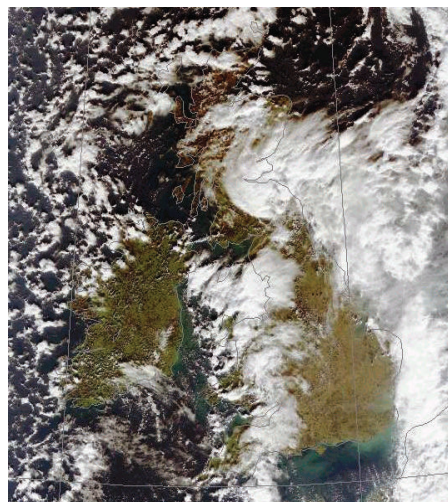


Satellite Picture of the UK at 11:09UTC on 4 February 2003 (Dundee University)

Tuesday 21 October 2003

Residents and motorists across the north of Scotland saw heavy snow cause several accidents across the area. Several accidents caused hold-ups on the A9 in the Highlands and the A96 in Aberdeenshire, which saw 10cm of snow near Huntly. Other parts of Grampian saw between 10-15cm of snow. A number of drivers required hospital treatment, but the emergency services said no one was seriously injured. The main road south of Inverness was worst affected between the Slochd summit and Aviemore.

In Grampian, two heavy goods lorries jack-knifed on the Huntly side of the Glens of Foundland, causing lengthy delays on the A96. A driver was injured when a white transit van overturned on the A95 Banff to Portsoy road, while a 25-year-old man was taken to hospital with a suspected neck injury following an accident on the A952 New Leeds to Cortes Junction near Fraserburgh.



Satellite Picture of the UK at 11:39UTC on 21 October 2003 (Dundee University)

Sunday 21 December 2003 – Monday 22 December 2003

Heavy snow caused many roads across Scotland, northern England, Wales, the Midlands, SE England and East Anglia to close as drivers faced hazardous conditions. The A93 between Braemar and Perth in Grampian was forced to closed as well as the A9 around Inverness, Highland. In North Yorkshire, the A171 between Whitby and Scarborough was closed as cars and lorries blocked the carriageway and the A169 at Blue Bank south of Whitby was impassable. The hazardous conditions also caused an accident on the A170 at Sutton Bank, North Yorkshire which police officers said was passable only for four-wheel drive vehicles.

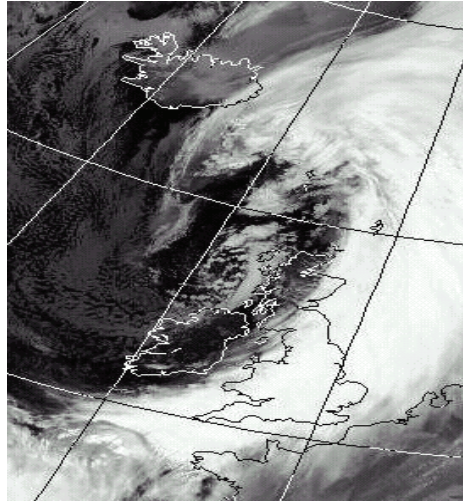
In East Yorkshire, the worst affected area was between Bridlington and Driffield, with lorries blocking the B1253 at Boynton and cars abandoned at Nafferton off the A614. The higher routes across the Lake District, in Cumbria, were also closed. Northumbria Police said there were problems on both carriageways of the A1058 Coast road in North Tyneside leading to major tailbacks, while the A189 Ashington/Blyth road was reported as poor through to the Moor Farm roundabout in Newcastle upon Tyne. Other major roads in North East England that were affected included the A19 and the A66. The A11 road was closed southbound near Wymondham, after a lorry jack-knifed in the early hours of the morning. A police spokesman said the driver received hospital treatment, but was not badly injured. The North Yorkshire Moors had 30cm of snow over the period, while parts of Norfolk received up to 5cm of snow.



A lorry jack-knifed on the southbound carriageway of the A11 at Wymondham, Norfolk in the early hours of Monday morning due to heavy snow (BBC News)

Wednesday 31 December 2003

Heavy snowfall brought New Year Eve misery to large parts of Northern England and Scotland. Across NE England and southern Scotland, 43,000 households lost their power during the evening due to snow and high winds stretching down the east coast from Berwick in the Scottish borders to North Lincolnshire and west across the Pennines. In North Yorkshire, the Whitby area and the villages of Ampleforth, Easingwold, Sheriff Hutton, Oswaldkirk and Leppington in Ryedale were among the worst affected. Wooler, Morpeth, Alnwick, Allendale in Northumberland, and around Consett in County Durham were also badly affected. In Cumbria, 25,000 homes were left without electricity around Sedburgh, Ambleside, Penrith and Shap after high winds and heavy snow damaged power lines on New Year's Eve. Police in Lancashire and Yorkshire said atrocious driving conditions led to roads including the A672 towards Huddersfield, A66, A171 and the A56 near Burnley being closed. Other routes across the Pennines were passable only by four-wheel drive vehicles and the M62 between Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire was reduced to just one lane by drifting snow.



Satellite Picture of the UK at 21:41UTC on 31 December 2003 (Dundee University)