

SUMMARY OF HEAVY SNOWFALLS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM 2004

The year 2004, was an above average year of heavy snowfalls with a total of twelve heavy snowfall days throughout. Most of the heavy snowfalls occurred in January and February.

Thursday 1 January 2004

The year 2004 started off with a heavy snowfall during the morning period across Scotland and N England. Thousands of homes lost their electricity supply across the Scottish Borders, the Pennines and many districts across NE England, particularly in the Whitby area of North Yorkshire. The snow caused the cancellation of some sporting events, while the A672 and the A56 in Lancashire were closed for some time. Copley, County Durham reported a snow depth of 10cm by 09:00 GMT.

Thursday 15 January 2004

Heavy snow fell across parts of northern England and southern Scotland, particularly the higher ground of North Yorkshire, County Durham and Cumbria. Snow closed several roads across the region for a short period of time. These included the B6265 Pateley Bridge to Grassington across the North Yorkshire Dales, the A66 Pennine route at Scotch Corner, Cumbria, the A6 at Shap, Cumbria and the A170 at Sutton Bank, North Yorkshire. In Durham and Chester-le-Street, County Durham, the snow nearly caused the traffic to be brought to a standstill during the late afternoon and early evening. The snow also closed Newcastle Airport, Tyne and Wear during the evening of the 15th for several hours causing the delay of several flights. Up to 13cm of snow fell across the higher ground near Morpeth, County Durham, with 10cm of snow lying at Boltshope Park by the morning of the 16th.

Wednesday 28 January 2004 – Thursday 29 January 2004

By mid-morning on the 28th, thunder and blowing snow was being reported from the Northern Isles due to an Arctic cold front. This band of snow, accompanied by thunder spread southwards during the day, reaching the London area during the evening rush hour. By 09:00 GMT on the morning of the 28th, Coningsby, Lincolnshire was reporting a snow depth of 13cm. Also that morning, North Wales saw a heavy snowfall affecting the Dolgellau, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Abergele, Bangor and Wrexham areas; causing the closure of a few schools. The snow across the London area, resulted in some flights from Heathrow, Luton, London City and Gatwick Airports to be cancelled, be delayed or the airport to be completely closed for a short period of time.

Even Bournemouth Airport, Dorset, closed during the early evening of the 28th due to the snow. In Crystal Palace, London, people abandoned their cars as the snow made it impossible to drive in places, while a 74-year-old man from Berwickshire died due to having a heart attack trying to free his wife's car from a snowdrift. In Scotland, an estimated 70,000 children were unable to attend school, as the snow resulted in the closure of 300 schools. In Chelmsford, Essex, the traffic queues caused by the snow, meant that a woman had to give birth in the back of her car because she could not get to hospital. Lisa Wetherell delivered a 7lb 9oz baby on the rear seat of her Volkswagen Sharan during the evening of the 28th. In Thirsk, North Yorkshire, a 70 year-old man died when his Range Rover left a snow covered private road and turned over in the grounds of Ravensthorpe Manor.

By the morning of the 29th, snow depths at 09:00 GMT included 30cm at Fylingdales, North Yorkshire, 28cm at Glenlivet, Grampian, 22cm at Aviemore, Grampian and 12cm at Aberdeen (Dyce) Airport, Grampian. It was reported that drifting snow had reached 40cm deep at Garrowby Hill, East Yorkshire.

Wednesday 25 February 2004 – Friday 27 February 2004

Heavy snow showers affected N Scotland during the 25th, particularly the Northern Isles creating 'blizzard' conditions as winds gusted to 60 knots at times. In the Shetland Islands, around 2500 homes lost their electrical supply, while ferry services and the islands main airport were forced to close for a period of time. Over 200 schools across Scotland were forced to closed, including all 24 schools across the Orkney Islands and the 35 schools across the Shetland Islands. In Aberdeenshire, the A90 was blocked in places due to snow for a short period of time. These snow showers pushed southwards during the day to affect N Ireland, NE and E England in particular.

These snow showers continued into the 26th, with Wales, northern England and N Ireland seeing the heaviest snowfalls. At 09:00 GMT, Aberdeen (Dyce) Airport, Grampian reported 11cm of snow lying on the ground, with many roads and schools closed across the Grampian region. Up to 15-30cm of snow was reported lying on some Welsh roads and in the Llanelli, Swansea and Carmarthen areas of

South Wales. Many homes in Llanelli, Dyfed also lost electrical power due to the snowfall. Many traffic accidents occurred, including a two-car collision on the A487 near Llwyncefn, Pembrokeshire, while many roads across Northumberland, South Yorkshire, County Durham, Gwynedd, Pembrokeshire, Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire were closed for a time, including the A57, A68, A689, A48, A40 and the A487. This snow extended into SW and central southern England during the afternoon and evening with 15cm of snow being reported lying at Verwood, Dorset. The main road (A338) heading northwards out of Bournemouth, Dorset was forced to close for several hours during the evening, due to a series of weather-related accidents. During the late evening of the 26th, the Newcastle United football team returning home from their UEFA Cup match in Oslo was diverted to Manchester Airport, as Newcastle Airport was closed due too much snow lying on the runway.



Snow chaos in Aberystwyth, Dyfed, early afternoon on the 26 February (BBC News)

By the 27th, many schools across Scotland, SW England, N England, N Ireland and Wales in particular remained closed, with numerous roads remaining blocked with snow. Snow depths on the morning of the 27th, included 18cm at Glenlivet, Grampian. Further heavy snow continued to affect northern and central areas of Scotland during the 27th, with lighter falls across other eastern and western areas of Great Britain. The snowfall of the 27th caused the Division One football match between Sunderland and Norwich to be called off.

Friday 12 March 2004

Moderate to heavy snow affected Northern Ireland, Wales, the Midlands, and central southern England for much of the morning, with many roads in the Cardiff, South Glamorgan area being forced to close. The M4 motorway in South Wales was down to one lane because of snow between Bridgend and Cardiff. A large number of schools across Wales and the West County, particularly Gloucestershire were forced to close. The greatest snowfall was confined to the Malvern Hills, where up to 13cm of snow fell.

Friday 19 March 2004

A deepening depression crossed from SW Ireland to NE Scotland during the morning, resulted in heavy snow falling during the morning across southern and eastern Scotland with 14cm of snow falling in South Lanarkshire. The snow caused the closure of the M8 at Harthill, Lanarkshire, after several lorries became stuck on a snow-covered slip road. The B764, Eaglesham Moor Road, near East Kilbride, Lanarkshire was also closed for a period of time.

Thursday 18 November 2004

During the morning of the 18th, snow was falling across northern and NE Scotland, which pushed southwards during the day to affect N England during the early afternoon and the Midlands by early evening. The snow resulted in the closure of East Midlands Airport. At Middleton, Derbyshire, 13cm of snow fell (largest single fall of snow in November since records began in the year 1977).

Sunday 19 December 2004

During the morning of the 19th, as much as 15cm of snow fell across the hills of south Wales, with some lighter falls of snow occurring over parts of Central Southern England for a time.

Saturday 25 December 2004

Snow affected many areas of the United Kingdom, particularly northern and central Scotland, N Ireland, SW England, central southern England, Wales and the Midlands. The highest snowfalls were

across the hills of North Wales, while Moel-y-Crio, Flintshire reported a snow depth of 12cm, while 8cm of snow was recorded at Culloden, Inverness-shire.