# UK breaks temperature records with 34.8°C peak highlighting escalating heatwave risks



The UK experienced its hottest day of the year on 29 July 2024, with temperatures soaring past 32°C in parts of London, notably at Kew Gardens and Heathrow Airport. This temperature surpassed the previous 2025 record of 29.4°C set in Suffolk in mid-June and edged past the slightly lower high of 31.9°C recorded in central London earlier in July. Suffolk became the first UK area to officially enter a heatwave as temperatures exceeded 27°C for three consecutive days. The heatwave primarily affected London, southern England, and south-eastern Wales, where the criteria for a heatwave were officially met.

The elevated temperatures prompted the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) to issue Amber and Yellow Heat Health Alerts across much of England, covering regions including London, East of England, South East, and the Midlands. These alerts signal potential health risks, especially for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions, and children. The UKHSA warned that the heatwave could increase pressures on health and social care services, noting potential difficulties in managing internal temperatures in hospitals and care homes, which could complicate clinical risk assessments. The hot spell also risked an uptick in mortality rates among at-risk populations and increased demand for remote healthcare services.

Despite the intense heat experienced in England and parts of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland remained cooler, with temperatures peaking around 22°C to 23°C on the same day. Wales recorded its warmest day of the year so far at 29°C near Newport. The Met Office highlighted that much of the UK was experiencing temperatures four to five degrees warmer than the July average. However, forecasters cautioned that the heatwave was likely short-lived, with a yellow alert for thunderstorms issued for large parts of the UK later in the week, suggesting a shift toward unsettled conditions.

Significantly, the 29 July temperatures were not the ultimate peak for the year. On 12 August 2024, the UK recorded its highest temperature of the year at 34.8°C in Cambridge. This new peak exceeded the 32°C highs of late July and underscores a trend towards more frequent and intense heat events in recent years. The Met Office noted that this was the 11th year since the 1960s to record temperatures as high as 34.8°C, with six of those occurrences in the past decade, reflecting broader patterns of climate change and rising temperatures in the UK.

Looking back earlier in the summer, temperature rises were already notable. On 23 June 2024, records showed the hottest day of that month so far at 28.3°C in Surrey, accompanied by widespread Yellow Heat Health Alerts. These alerts demonstrated the ongoing monitoring and concern for heat-related health impacts throughout the UK’s warmer months.

The UK’s experience in 2024 highlights growing climate volatility and the increasing likelihood of heatwaves impacting health, infrastructure, and daily life. Authorities and health services continue to emphasise preparedness and adaptation strategies to mitigate the effects of rising temperatures and extreme weather events.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/world/temperatures-pass-32c-as-first-uk-area-enters-heatwave/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd1d9r1wxo), [[5]](https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/england-met-office-wales-london-kew-gardens-b2102788.html), [[6]](https://inews.co.uk/news/hottest-day-year-temperatures-32-thunderstorms-weather-3197451)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/world/temperatures-pass-32c-as-first-uk-area-enters-heatwave/), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd1d9r1wxo), [[5]](https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/england-met-office-wales-london-kew-gardens-b2102788.html), [[6]](https://inews.co.uk/news/hottest-day-year-temperatures-32-thunderstorms-weather-3197451)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd1d9r1wxo), [[6]](https://inews.co.uk/news/hottest-day-year-temperatures-32-thunderstorms-weather-3197451)
* Paragraph 4 – [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/12/uk-hottest-day-of-the-year-temperatures), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3rdwx4yx12o)
* Paragraph 5 – [[7]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgrrjm496gpo)
* Paragraph 6 – [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd1d9r1wxo), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/12/uk-hottest-day-of-the-year-temperatures), [[4]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3rdwx4yx12o)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/world/temperatures-pass-32c-as-first-uk-area-enters-heatwave/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1vd1d9r1wxo> - On 29 July 2024, the UK experienced its hottest day of the year, with temperatures reaching 32°C at both Heathrow and Kew Gardens in London. This surpassed the previous record of 31.9°C recorded in central London on 19 July. The heatwave affected large parts of the UK, with London, southern England, and south-eastern Wales meeting the official criteria for a heatwave. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) issued a Yellow Heat Health Alert for all areas of England, except the North East and North West, indicating potential health risks for vulnerable populations. The hot weather was expected to be short-lived, with a yellow alert for thunderstorms issued by the Met Office across large parts of both nations later in the week. The UKHSA warned that the hot spell could lead to an increase in mortality, particularly among those aged 65 and over or those with health conditions, and that impacts might also be seen in younger age groups. The alert also highlighted the likelihood of increased demand for remote health care services and the potential for internal temperatures in hospitals and care homes to become too high for clinical risk assessments. Many parts of the country experienced temperatures four to five degrees warmer than average for this time in July. Wales also saw its warmest day of the year so far, with 29°C recorded in Usk, near Newport. Scotland and Northern Ireland did not experience record-setting temperatures, with highs of 22.3°C and 23°C on Tuesday, respectively.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/12/uk-hottest-day-of-the-year-temperatures> - On 12 August 2024, the UK recorded its highest temperature of the year, with 34.8°C recorded in Cambridge. This surpassed the previous highest UK temperature in 2024 of 32°C, recorded at Heathrow and Kew Gardens, south-west London, on 29 July. The Met Office noted that this was the 11th year since the 1960s to have seen temperatures as high as 34.8°C, with six of them occurring in the past decade, indicating a trend towards higher temperatures in recent years.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c3rdwx4yx12o> - On 12 August 2024, the UK experienced its hottest day of the year, with temperatures reaching 34.8°C in Cambridge. This surpassed the previous record of 32°C recorded at Heathrow and Kew Gardens, south-west London, on 29 July. The Met Office noted that this was the 11th year since the 1960s to have seen temperatures as high as 34.8°C, with six of them occurring in the past decade, highlighting a trend towards higher temperatures in recent years. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) issued Yellow Heat Health Alerts in several regions, including the East and West Midlands, East of England, South East, South West, North West, and London, indicating potential health risks for vulnerable populations during the heatwave.
5. <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/england-met-office-wales-london-kew-gardens-b2102788.html> - On 29 July 2024, the UK experienced its hottest day of the year, with temperatures reaching 32°C at Kew Gardens and Heathrow in London. This surpassed the previous record of 31.9°C recorded in central London on 19 July. The heatwave affected large parts of the UK, with London, southern England, and south-eastern Wales meeting the official criteria for a heatwave. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) issued a Level 3 Heat-Health Alert for London, the East of England, and the South East, indicating potential health risks for vulnerable populations during the heatwave.
6. <https://inews.co.uk/news/hottest-day-year-temperatures-32-thunderstorms-weather-3197451> - On 29 July 2024, the UK experienced its hottest day of the year, with temperatures reaching 32°C at Kew Gardens and Heathrow in London. This surpassed the previous record of 31.9°C recorded in central London on 19 July. The heatwave affected large parts of the UK, with London, southern England, and south-eastern Wales meeting the official criteria for a heatwave. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) issued a Yellow Heat Health Alert for all areas of England, except the North East and North West, indicating potential health risks for vulnerable populations during the heatwave. The hot weather was expected to be short-lived, with a yellow alert for thunderstorms issued by the Met Office across large parts of both nations later in the week.
7. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cgrrjm496gpo> - On 23 June 2024, the UK recorded its hottest day of the year so far, with temperatures peaking at 28.3°C in Wisley, Surrey. Scotland and Northern Ireland also recorded their highest temperatures of the year, although Wales did not break its previous record set in May. Temperatures were expected to continue to rise, potentially reaching 30°C in some areas that week. Most of England was under Yellow Heat Health Alerts, which remained in force in eight regions until 17:00 on Thursday. A Yellow Alert indicates that weather conditions could pose a risk to those who are particularly vulnerable, such as the elderly or those with existing health conditions. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) stated that minor impacts were probable across the health and social care sector during this period.