

Storm Bella 26 to 27 December 2020

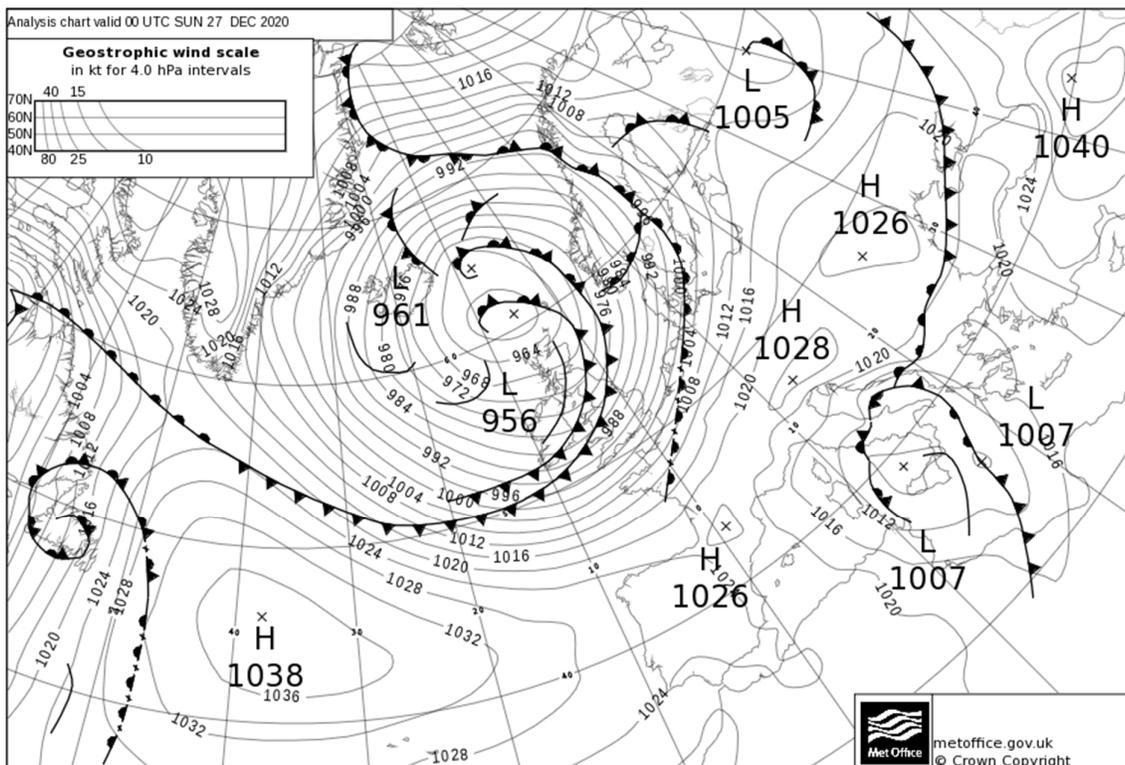
Storm Bella was the second named storm of the 2020/2021 season. Bella was a large, deep area of low pressure dominating the North Atlantic, bringing persistent heavy rain across western Scotland on 26 December, with heavy rain and very strong winds sweeping across England and Wales overnight 26 to 27 December. The strongest winds were across Wales, south-west and southern England, where this was one of the most powerful storms of the year.

Impacts

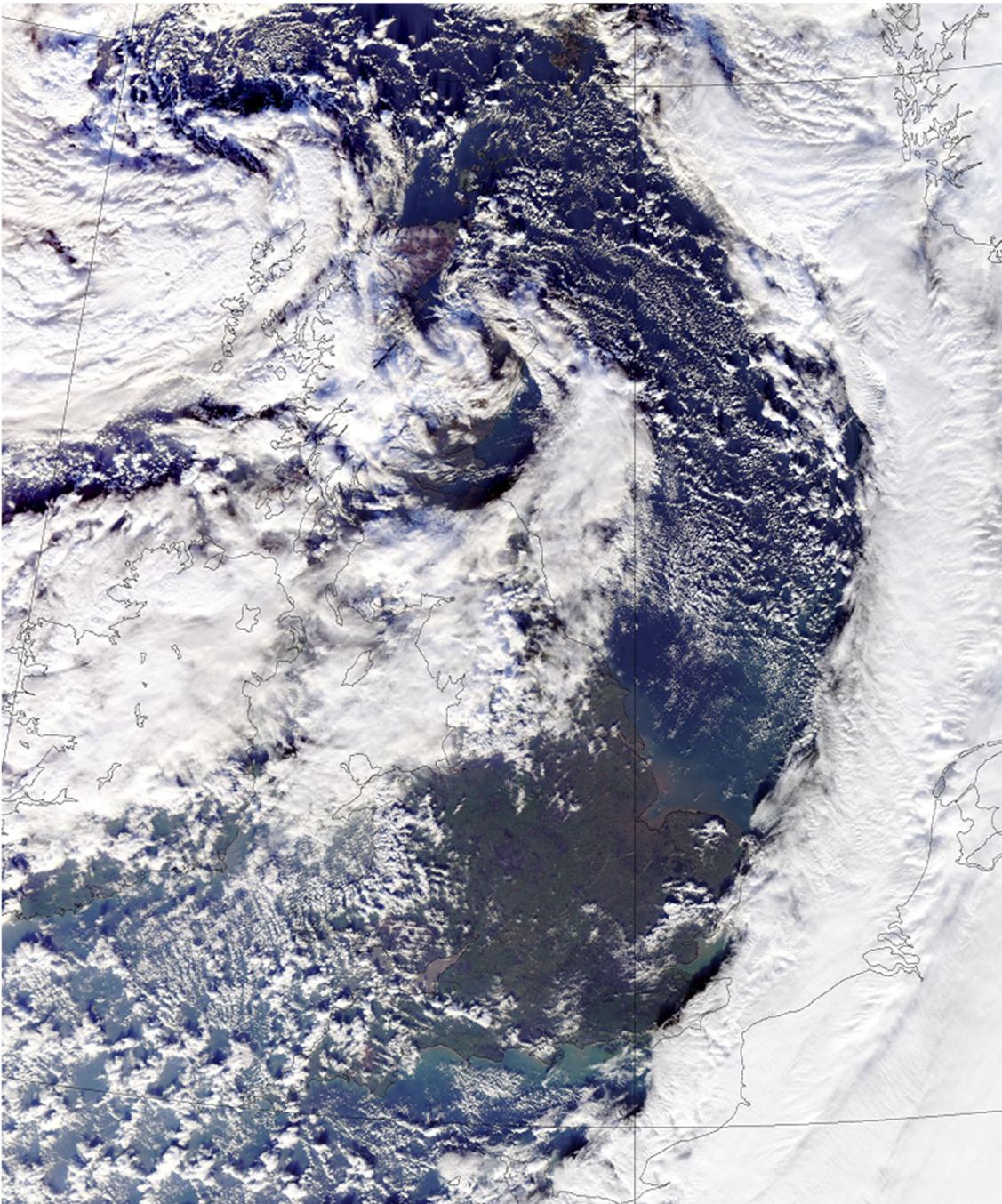
Fallen trees caused disruption to rail services in the south-west, south-east and London, while Dover to Calais ferry services were also disrupted. Large waves battered coastlines of Wales and southern England. Heavy rain from storm Bella, falling on already saturated ground, following wet and unsettled weather through much of the month resulted in localised transport disruption from flooding and a number of properties flooded in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire. The Welsh Grand National at Chepstow was called off due to a waterlogged course.

Weather data

The analysis chart at 0000 UTC 27 December 2020 shows the centre of storm Bella to the north of Scotland with associated cold fronts sweeping across the UK.



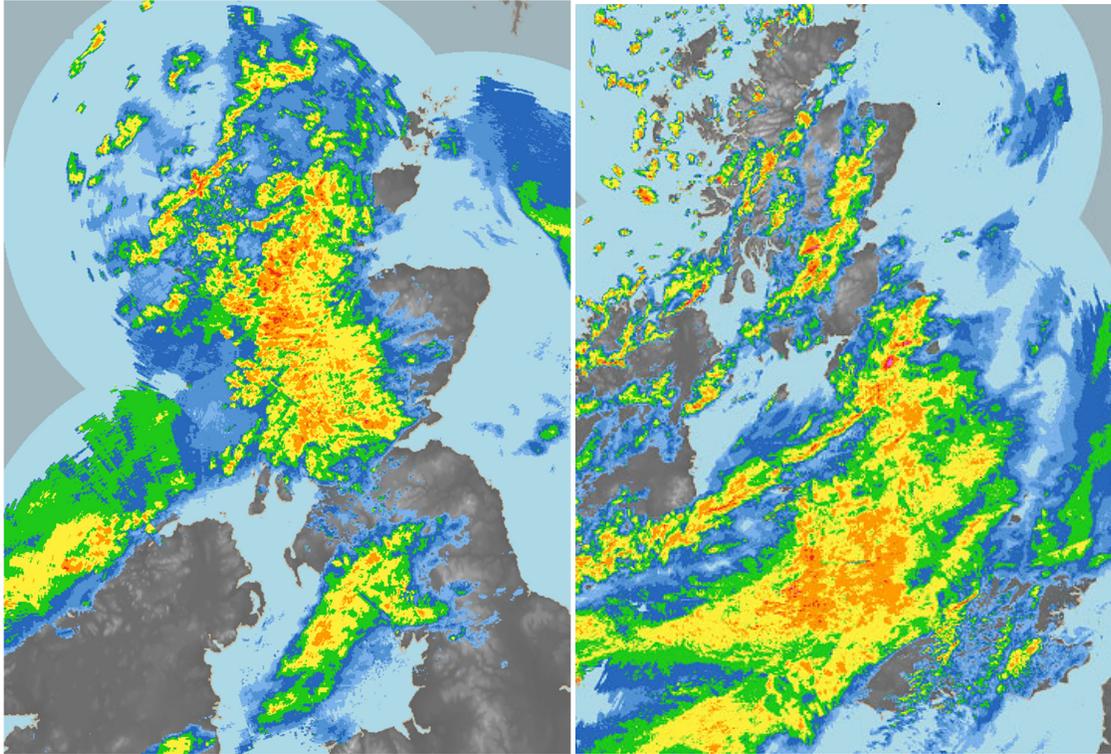
The satellite image on 27 December 2020 shows the back of the cold front clearing East Anglia and Kent with sunshine across much of the southern half of the UK, and the centre of storm Bella to the north-west of Scotland.



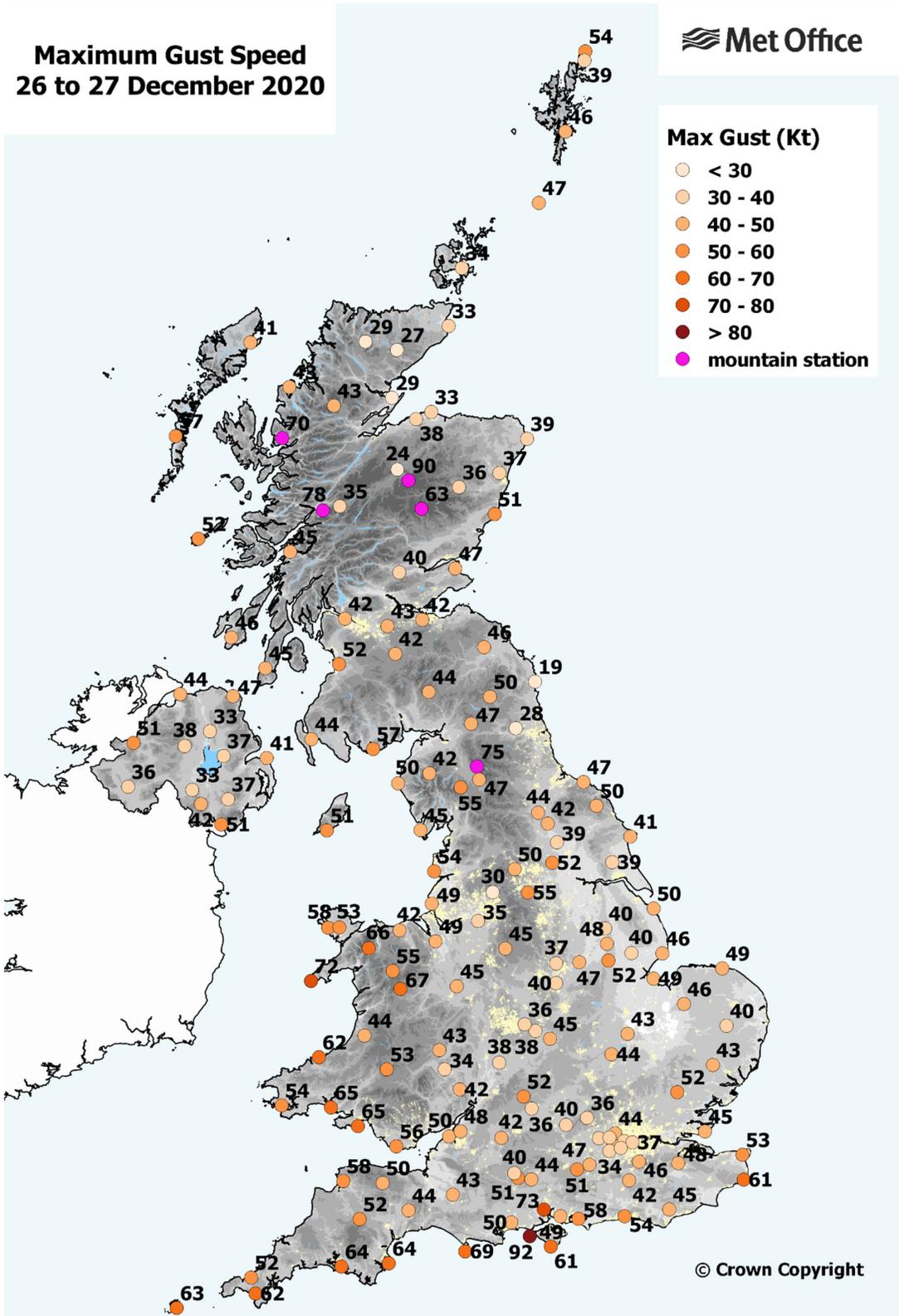
The rain-radar images below show heavy and persistent rain from storm Bella across western Scotland - falling as snow across the mountains - with heavy rain across northern and western and England and Wales overnight, clearing to leave blustery showers across Scotland and Northern Ireland.

1200 UTC 26 December 2020

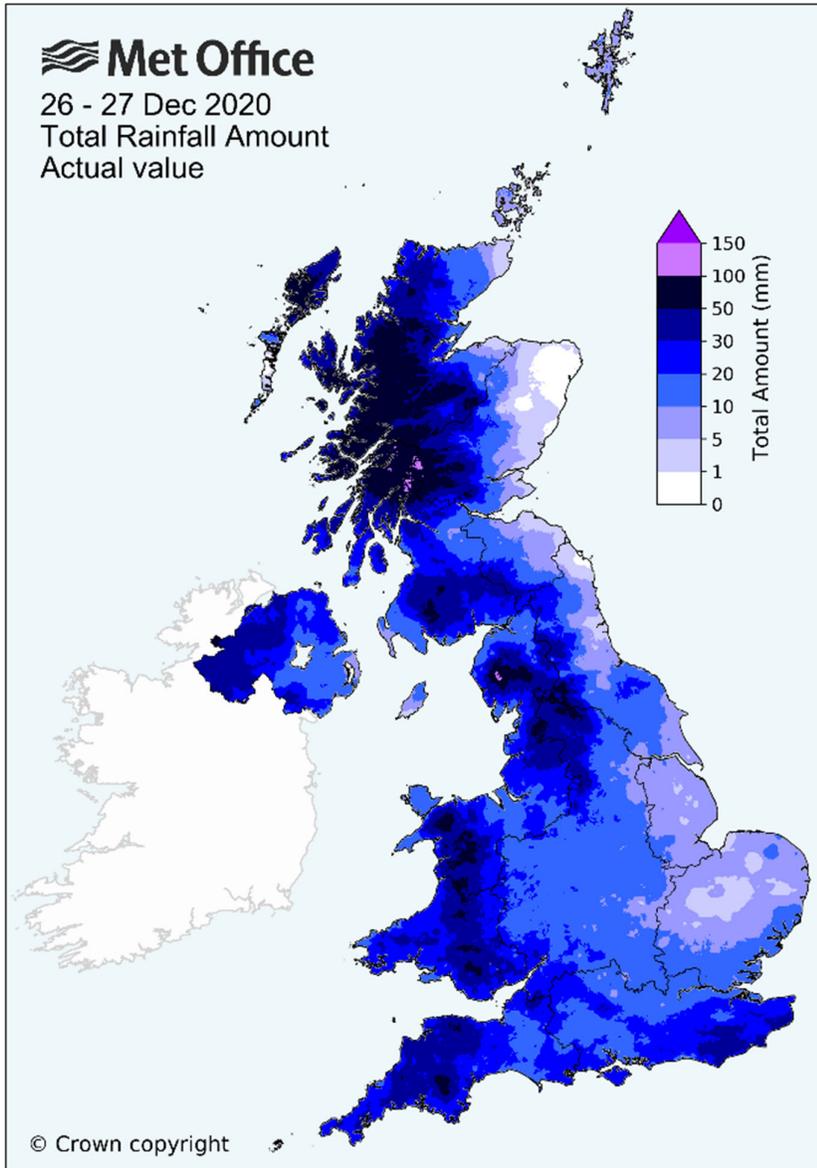
0000 UTC 27 December 2020



The map below shows maximum gust speeds across the UK from 26 to 27 December 2020. The strongest winds from storm Bella were around the coastline of Wales, south-west and southern England, where wind gusts exceeded 60Kt (69mph). Needles Old Battery (Isle of Wight) recorded 92Kt (106mph), the UK's highest wind gust since 2 November 2019 (excluding mountain stations), while Aberdaron, Llŷn Peninsula recorded 72Kt (83mph).



The map below shows daily rainfall totals from storm Bella for 26 to 27 December 2020. Over 30mm fell across parts of Kent and Sussex with 30 to 50mm falling widely across upland parts of south-west England, Wales, and northern England, and over 50mm across much of western Scotland. Two-day totals from storm Bella included 57.0mm at Capel Curig, Conwy, 64.6mm at Shap, Cumbria, 80.2mm at Tyndrum, Perthshire and 71.0mm at Achnagart (Highland). Three days prior to the arrival of storm Bella, 23 December 2020 was a particularly wet day in a swathe from Devon, south Wales, the Midlands to East Anglia, so the rain of 26 to 27 December fell on already saturated ground, exacerbating flooding problems.



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Last updated 30/12/2020