The UK’s rainiest autumn places revealed as major El Niño could bring wetter and stormier weather

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- **Neath is the UK’s rainiest place during autumn, averaging 616.6mm between September and November.**
- **Eight of the 15 wettest locations are in Wales, including Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda, Bridgend and Swansea.**
- **Clacton-on-Sea is the driest place in the study with 199.6mm, although just 0.4mm separates the top three.**

The parts of the UK that usually receive the most rain during autumn have been revealed, at a time when the country could be heading into a much wetter end to the year.

The Met Office has warned that the El Niño developing in the Pacific may be the strongest for more than a century. Its effects are expected to be felt around the world and, for the UK, forecasters are seeing signs of increased rainfall and stormier weather around November.

This follows an exceptionally hot and dry summer which left much of England and all of Wales in drought. While a wetter autumn would help replenish water supplies, sudden or sustained rainfall after months of dry weather may also bring issues for homeowners.

With this in mind, leak detection specialists ADI Leak Detection analysed average September to November rainfall across 305 UK cities and large towns, using figures from 2020 to 2025.

The 15 wettest UK places during autumn

Rank	Place	Country	Region	Average September-November rainfall 2020-2025 (mm)
1	Neath	Wales	Wales	**616.6**
2	Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	Wales	**568.4**
3	Kendal	England	North West	**553.4**
4	Rhondda	Wales	Wales	**550.0**
5	Bridgend	Wales	Wales	**534.7**
6	Llanelli	Wales	Wales	**528.0**
7	Swansea	Wales	Wales	**526.4**
8	Barrow-in-Furness	England	North West	**522.1**
9	Irvine	Scotland	Scotland	**519.3**
10	Lancaster	England	North West	**514.4**
11	Greenock	Scotland	Scotland	**503.2**
12	Kilmarnock	Scotland	Scotland	**474.4**
13	Ebbw Vale	Wales	Wales	**472.0**
14	Morecambe	England	North West	**470.5**
15	Pontypool	Wales	Wales	**451.6**

Neath is the UK’s rainiest place during autumn, receiving an average of **616.6mm** between September and November. It is the only location in the study to pass 600mm and receives 48.2mm more than anywhere else in the ranking.

Second place goes to **Merthyr Tydfil**, where an average autumn brings **568.4mm** of rain. This is around 8% less than Neath, but still 15mm more than the highest-ranking location outside Wales.

That location is **Kendal**, which places third overall and first in England with **553.4mm**. The Cumbrian town narrowly finishes ahead of **Rhondda** in fourth. Rhondda averages **550mm**, leaving only 3.4mm between the two.

Another two Welsh locations come next. **Bridgend** places fifth with **534.7mm**, while **Llanelli** ranks sixth on **528mm**. The difference between them is only 6.7mm across the whole three-month period.

Nearby **Swansea** follows in seventh place, averaging **526.4mm**. That puts three South Wales locations in a very close group: less than 8.5mm separates Bridgend, Llanelli and Swansea.

Barrow-in-Furness is the second English entry in the table and ranks eighth overall with **522.1mm**. It receives around 31mm less than Kendal, the other Cumbrian location in the top 15.

The highest-ranked Scottish location is **Irvine**, which places ninth with an average of **519.3mm**. It is followed by **Lancaster** in tenth on **514.4mm**, meaning less than 8mm separates the locations in eighth, ninth and tenth.

At number 11, **Greenock** receives **503.2mm** during a typical autumn. It is the final location in the ranking with an average above 500mm and records 28.8mm more than **Kilmarnock**, which places 12th with **474.4mm**.

The next two are almost level. **Ebbw Vale** ranks 13th on **472mm**, with **Morecambe** just 1.5mm behind on **470.5mm**. Morecambe is also the fourth North West location to appear, alongside Kendal, Barrow-in-Furness and Lancaster.

Pontypool completes the top 15 with an average of **451.6mm**. Its inclusion means eight of the 15 rainiest locations are in Wales. Four are in North West England and the remaining three are in Scotland.

There is a fairly obvious westward pattern to the results, but the small gaps between some locations are important. Places such as Kendal and Rhondda, or Bridgend, Llanelli and Swansea, have very similar averages and should not be treated as having dramatically different autumn conditions simply because they sit a few positions apart.

The 10 driest UK places during autumn

Rank	Place	Country	Region	Average September-November rainfall 2020-2025 (mm)
1	Clacton-on-Sea	England	East of England	**199.6**
2	Cambridge	England	East of England	**199.9**
3	Ipswich	England	East of England	**200.0**
4	Colchester	England	East of England	**204.9**
5	Bury St Edmunds	England	East of England	**206.5**
=6	Canvey Island	England	East of England	**209.3**
=6	Ely	England	East of England	**209.3**
7	Letchworth Garden City	England	East of England	**213.2**
8	Chelmsford	England	East of England	**213.7**
9	Basildon	England	East of England	**214.7**
10	Sittingbourne	England	South East	**215.4**

At the other end of the study, **Clacton-on-Sea** is the UK's driest place during autumn with an average of **199.6mm**. However, there is almost nothing between the first three places. **Cambridge** follows with **199.9mm**, while **Ipswich** receives an even **200mm**.

Only 0.4mm separates Clacton-on-Sea and Ipswich when rainfall is averaged across six autumns. In practical terms, the three locations experience extremely similar levels of rain, even though the table has to place them in an order.

Colchester ranks fourth driest with **204.9mm**, followed by **Bury St Edmunds** on **206.5mm**. Both remain close to the 200mm mark, with Bury St Edmunds receiving only 6.9mm more than Clacton-on-Sea across the season.

Canvey Island and **Ely** share sixth place, each averaging **209.3mm**. Their identical figures reflect separate weather grid cells that returned the same six-year average, rather than the two places sharing one reading.

The figures remain close further down the table. **Letchworth Garden City** ranks seventh driest with **213.2mm**, **Chelmsford** follows in eighth on **213.7mm**, and **Basildon** places ninth with **214.7mm**.

Sittingbourne completes the bottom ten, averaging **215.4mm** between September and November. It is the only South East location in this section, with each of the other ten entries found in the East of England.

Only 15.8mm separates the whole group. The contrast with Neath is much larger: the Welsh town receives 417mm more rain during an average autumn, or just over three times the total recorded in Clacton-on-Sea.

Peter Jones, Director at ADI Leak Detection**, said:** “Going from such a dry summer into a potentially wet and stormy autumn is something homeowners should take seriously. It does not mean every forecast downpour will cause a problem, but it is much better to find a loose roof tile or blocked drain now than during several hours of heavy rain.

“The El Niño reports are especially relevant because the signal for the UK appears to be stronger around November. That gives people some time to prepare. Gutters will also begin filling with leaves during the same period, so a drainage system which coped perfectly well in summer may struggle once rain becomes heavier and more frequent.

“After a prolonged dry spell, the ground may be hard and less able to absorb a sudden volume of water. Rain can then run towards the house, collect near external walls or overwhelm a drain surprisingly quickly. Check that gullies are clear and that downpipes are actually carrying water away rather than spilling it beside the property.

“I would also look around windows, doors and visible roof areas for small gaps, worn seals or damage. You do not need to climb onto the roof yourself. A visual check from the ground can still pick up a slipped tile, and anything higher up should be left to somebody with the right equipment.

“Indoors, the early signs are not always a dramatic stream of water. It may be a faint damp mark, paint beginning to bubble, a musty smell in one room or a patch which returns after being cleaned. If it appears after rain, make a note of the weather and take a photo. That timing can help narrow down where the water is entering.

“Even the places at the dry end of this table still average around 200mm over autumn. More importantly, an average says nothing about how quickly that rain falls. One intense storm can expose a weakness in any home, so residents in Clacton, Cambridge or Ipswich should not assume the El Niño warning only matters to traditionally wetter parts of Wales, Scotland or North West England.”

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Methodology

ADI Leak Detection analysed September to November rainfall totals from the ERA5-Land climate reanalysis for UK cities and large towns. Each location’s average was calculated using the six autumn periods from 2020 to 2025.

ERA5-Land uses weather grid cells of roughly 9km. This means neighbouring places can sometimes share a cell and return the same rainfall reading. Of the original 360 locations, 104 shared a grid cell with at least one other place. Only the largest settlement in each shared cell was retained, leaving 305 independent locations in the final ranking.

Locations with equal averages from different weather cells are shown as ties. Very small differences between other locations have also been noted in the release and should not be interpreted as a significant difference in their typical weather.

The ranking is based on historical average rainfall and is not a forecast for autumn 2026.

The 100 wettest UK places during autumn

Rank	Place	Country	Region	Average September-November rainfall 2020-2025 (mm)
1	Neath	Wales	Wales	**616.6**
2	Merthyr Tydfil	Wales	Wales	**568.4**
3	Kendal	England	North West	**553.4**
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13	Ebbw Vale	Wales	Wales	472.0
14	Morecambe	England	North West	470.5
15	Pontypool	Wales	Wales	451.6
16	Saint Davids	Wales	Wales	449.1
17	Plymouth	England	South West	447.2
18	Bangor	Wales	Wales	444.7
19	Pontypridd	Wales	Wales	441.2
20	Ayr	Scotland	Scotland	433.3
21	Barnstaple	England	South West	410.5
=22	Oldham	England	North West	406.7
=22	Colwyn Bay	Wales	Wales	406.7
23	Blackburn	England	North West	405.4
24	Cardiff	Wales	Wales	402.9
25	Ashton-under-Lyne	England	North West	402.7
26	Bolton	England	North West	402.1
27	Rochdale	England	North West	401.2
28	Darwen	England	North West	399.8
29	Chorley	England	North West	396.0
30	Paisley	Scotland	Scotland	394.5
31	Dumfries	Scotland	Scotland	393.3
32	Cumbernauld	Scotland	Scotland	383.7
33	Blackpool	England	North West	383.1
34	Preston	England	North West	382.6
35	Weymouth	England	South West	381.3
36	Southport	England	North West	380.1
37	Middleton	England	North West	379.8
38	Leyland	England	North West	379.4
39	Lytham St Annes	England	North West	378.3
40	Tyldesley	England	North West	377.3
41	Cwmbran	Wales	Wales	376.1
42	Wigan	England	North West	371.7
43	Barry	Wales	Wales	368.5
44	Glasgow	Scotland	Scotland	368.2
45	Truro	England	South West	365.4
46	Saint Asaph	Wales	Wales	362.9
47	Burnley	England	North West	362.0
48	Redruth	England	South West	359.8
49	Stirling	Scotland	Scotland	358.6
50	Coatbridge	Scotland	Scotland	356.5
51	Skelmersdale	England	North West	355.8
52	Newport	Wales	Wales	352.7
53	Falmouth	England	South West	349.1
54	Birkenhead	England	North West	349.0
55	Urmston	England	North West	348.6
56	East Kilbride	Scotland	Scotland	346.4

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