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PENZANCE RAINFALL EVENT – 24 Hours commencing 07:00BST on 26th June

Up until 07:00BST on 26th June 2006 had been exceptionally dry. The total rainfall being just 10.7mm, making it the 2nd driest month on record after June 1996. However all this changed in a dramatic way.

On 26th June almost the whole of the UK had a barometric pressure of 1019-1021mb. The air was very humid & unstable. Lines of showers existed along old fronts trapped in the stagnant air.

Rain started around 07:00BST, patchy at first, but a heavy burst gave around 15mm between 10:00 & 11:00BST. By noon 22mm had fallen. The afternoon was then mainly dry with glimpses of the sun, and initially it appeared that this rainfall event was over.

During the afternoon, each time the sun broke through, the cloud would rapidly develop, the temperature would fall back, and the cycle would repeat itself. But late afternoon a longer bright interlude led to the temperature rising to an unexpected still & muggy 19.1C. This started a sea breeze and very rapid cloud development.. This led to some very localised (basically just the Penzance area) torrential rain in the evening/early night as the cumulonimbus cells drifted very slowly overhead. 19mm fell in one 45 minute period.

82.1mm fell in the 24 hours from 07:00BST on 26th to 07:00BST on 27th. Several areas of Penzance suffered significant flooding, including parts of Heamoor, Alverton, and areas near the promenade.

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The rainfall total to 09:00GMT on 27th June was 78.9mm, the 2nd highest one record (since 1991). My record being on 84.5mm 13th November 2002. Trengwainton Gardens recorded 76.2mm in the same 24 hour period. According to the MetO, the wettest June day recorded in Penzance prior to this was 65.6mm recorded at Penlee Gardens on June 20th 1986.

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