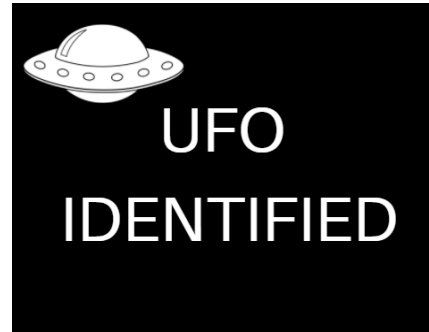


## The UK UFO Report 2023



**By Ash Ellis (@Identifiedufo)**

**Founder of UFOIdentified.co.uk and host of Pursuit of the Paranormal Podcast**

As you will see as you progress through reading this report, **UFO sightings in 2023 have taken a big dive** from the numbers seen during 2022. This seems odd when you consider the steps taken across the pond in the United States, and events around the world, that threw UFOs into the mainstream limelight multiple times in the previous 12 months, which is a point when we would usually see an increase in reports, not a decrease.

Consistent with our tradition, we maintain the use of the familiar term **UFO** throughout this report when describing news and sightings, to ensure clarity and continuity amidst various other acronyms and terminology.

Starting in February 2023, the skies across the USA, literally the whole of the USA, were the focus of the world's media as multiple 'balloons' were seen floating across the length of the country, with incredible footage showing the US military shooting them down in dramatic fashion. The spring and summer saw dramatic revelations being made by former Intelligence Officer **David Grusch** who made multiple claims around proof of crash retrievals and even 'biologics' being recovered from UFO crash sites. The end of the year saw more high-profile political talk around UFO legislation, the outcome of which we are still to see.

Bringing things a bit more closer to home, August saw the release of our first book on Amazon - **UK UFO Sightings: The Reports 2020-2022** - which is a collection of over 100 new and recent sightings that have been reported directly to us. The book also includes data around these sightings similar to what you will find in this report.

October saw the third instalment of our **UFO Identified Mini-Con**, which sold out for the third year in a row, with fascinating talks from a serving Police Inspector, a Doctor of Psychology, and much more. More locally we introduced monthly meetings in Manchester, Liverpool, and Warrington, providing our community members with regular opportunities to connect and discuss all things UFO and paranormal with like-minded others!

For updates on upcoming events, please visit our website's Events section or join our active Facebook group at [www.northwestufo.co.uk](http://www.northwestufo.co.uk).

Looking ahead to 2024, we're excited to take our Mini-Con event series on the road with **Mini-Con Locals** across the north-west. Additionally, we're on the verge of launching our UFO Investigation Training Course which will give you the skills and knowledge that we believe will allow you to become a capable UFO investigator. We are also expanding our operations beyond the north-west, spanning across the UK - if you would like to be involved, whether it's to become an investigator or maybe to launch regular meet-ups in your area, make sure you reach out via the website!

---

Moving onto the report now, which is based on the **395 UFO sighting reports** that are publicly available (reported up to 31st January 2024). Reports received after this date will be in our database but will not be included in this report.

Like previous years, over 50 Freedom of Information Requests were submitted to help gather more information to help with this data and to push the conversation forward.

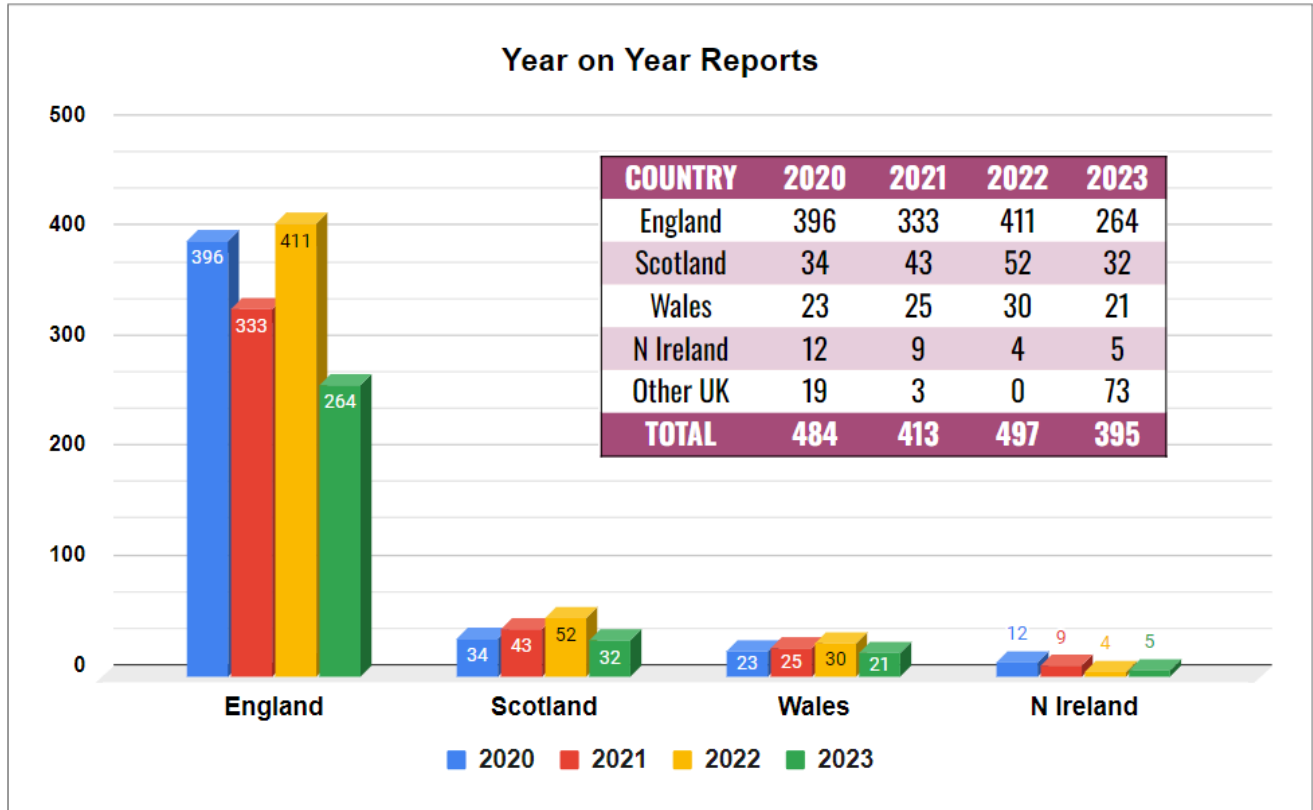
Sources include, but are not limited to, the following organisations/groups:

UFOIdentified.co.uk  
Mutual UFO Network (MUFON)  
National UFO Reporting Center (NUFORC)  
TruthProof.uk  
Birmingham UFO Group (BUFOG)  
Swansea UFO Network (SUFON)  
Cornwall UFO Research Group (CUFORG)  
Northern Ireland UFO Society (NIUFOS)  
Local / National Media  
Social Media inc. Facebook  
UK Police Forces  
Ministry of Defence  
Civil Aviation Authority  
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

**Please note:** Due to an issue with one of the source databases, there was no location data for 72 sightings. All other aspects of these reports such as date, time, description, shape etc are included.

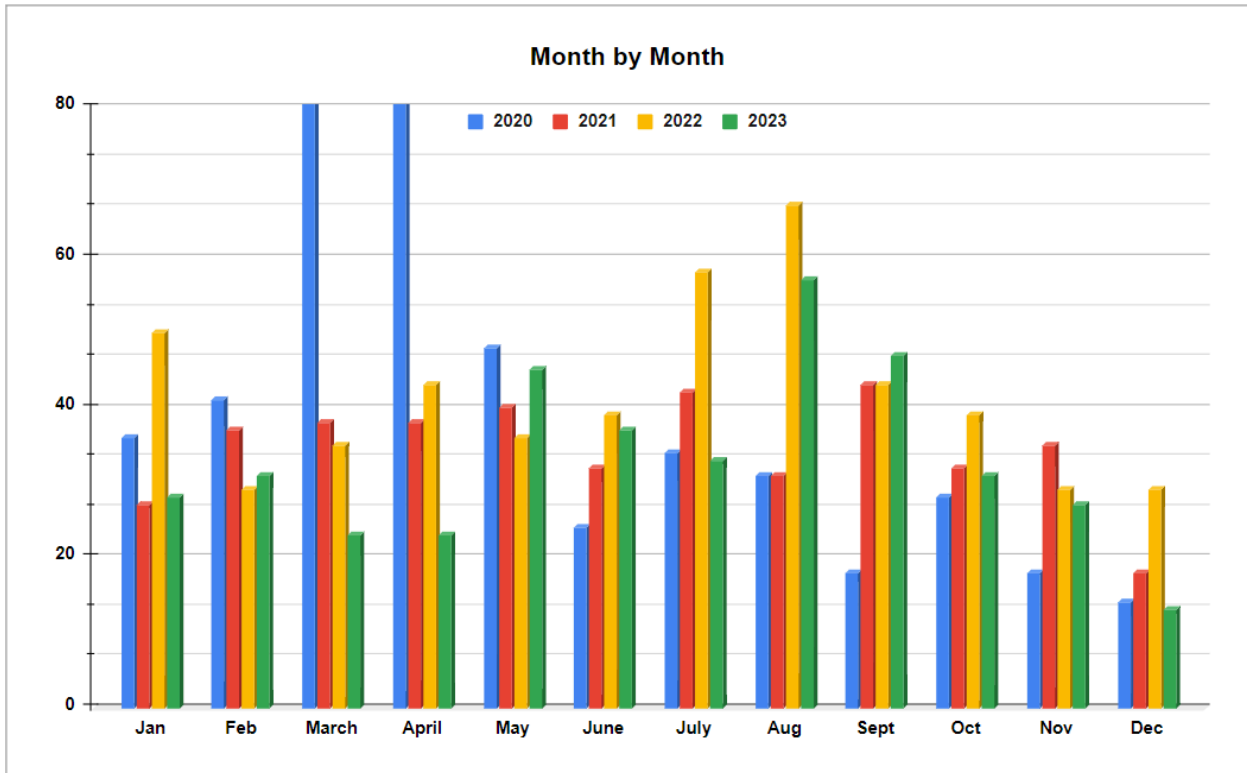
# The Data

We know that there has been a big drop in reported sightings during 2023 but let's have a look at how this compares year-on-year since our database began.



Apart from Northern Ireland with a small increase, it's clear to see the reduction in sightings to the lowest numbers of the previous 3 years. It's a stark contrast compared to 2022, where at this point last year we considered whether the reduction of the stigma was making its way across from the USA to the UK allowing for more people to report what they are seeing, so now we have to question why is there such a big drop this year, which we certainly weren't expecting.

During the covid pandemic, a lot of media outlets talked about a rise in sightings during lockdown, but our data showed that this wasn't the case at all as we can see from the numbers above. In fact, the numbers for 2020 and 2022 are fairly similar, as are the 2021 and 2023 numbers almost like they are alternating. Does this mean 2024 will be a bumper year? Time will tell, but we really need a bigger data sample of previous years proper to 2020 to make any kind of analysis like that, although I do know from our records that the numbers of reports in 2020 was a big decrease from 2018 - which is how we know there wasn't an increase in sightings during the main lockdown years which were 2020 and 2021 both dropping from the 2019 number.



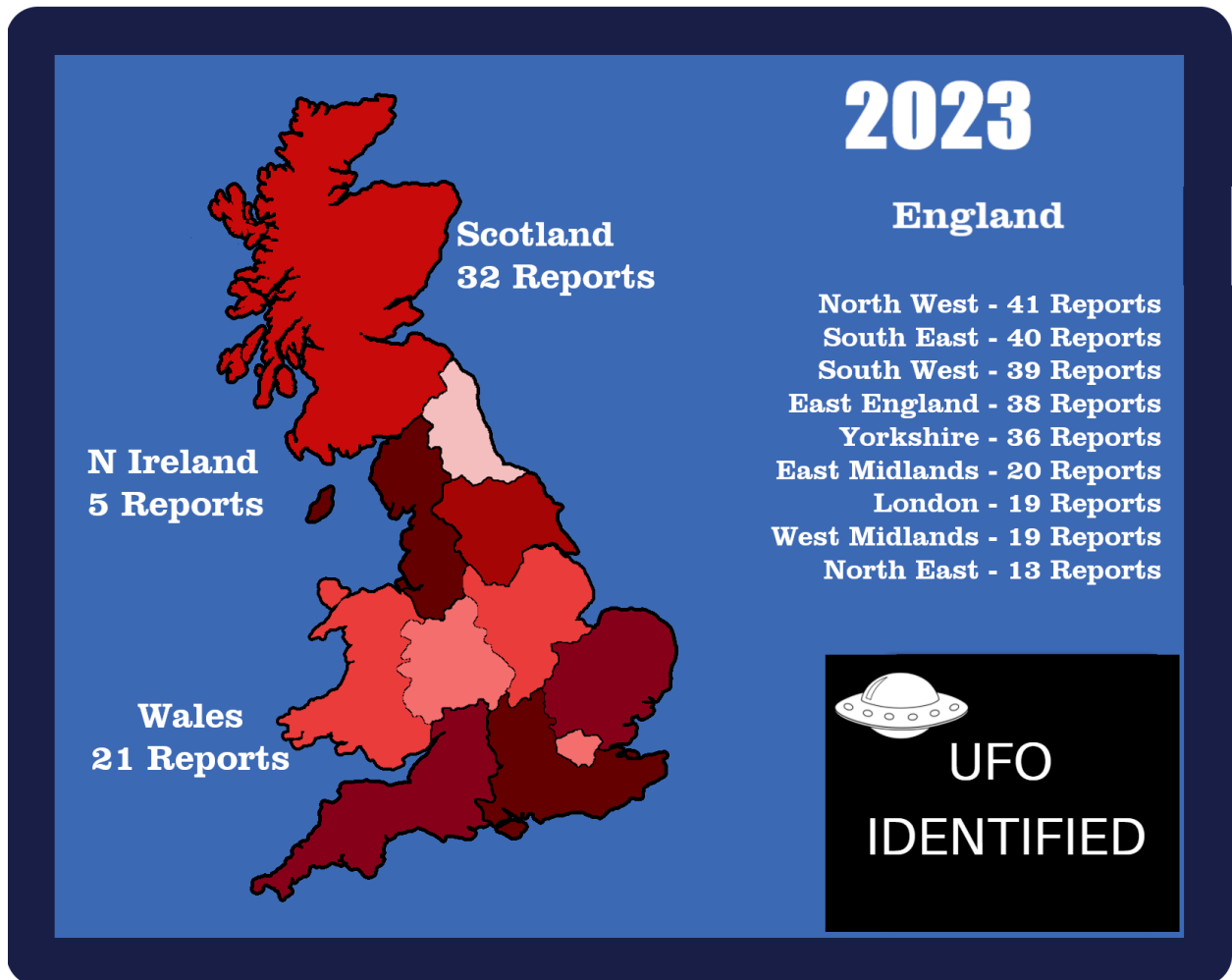
Comparing the month by month data, a lot of the months do follow a similar trend to previous years except March and April which seem particularly low, to the big increase in August in both years and somewhat in September. Is this because the past two summers have been the first “proper summer” we’ve had since lockdown and therefore more people were outside in the warmer months, hence more sightings?

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023
Jan	36	27	50	28
Feb	41	37	29	31
March	102	38	35	23
April	90	38	43	23
May	48	40	36	45
June	24	32	39	37
July	34	42	58	33
Aug	31	31	67	57
Sept	18	43	43	47
Oct	28	32	39	31
Nov	18	35	29	27
Dec	14	18	29	13

## Breaking Down the Numbers

Lets now dig a bit deeper into the 395 sightings for 2023 and see exactly where in the UK these reports are coming from, and how it compares to previous years.

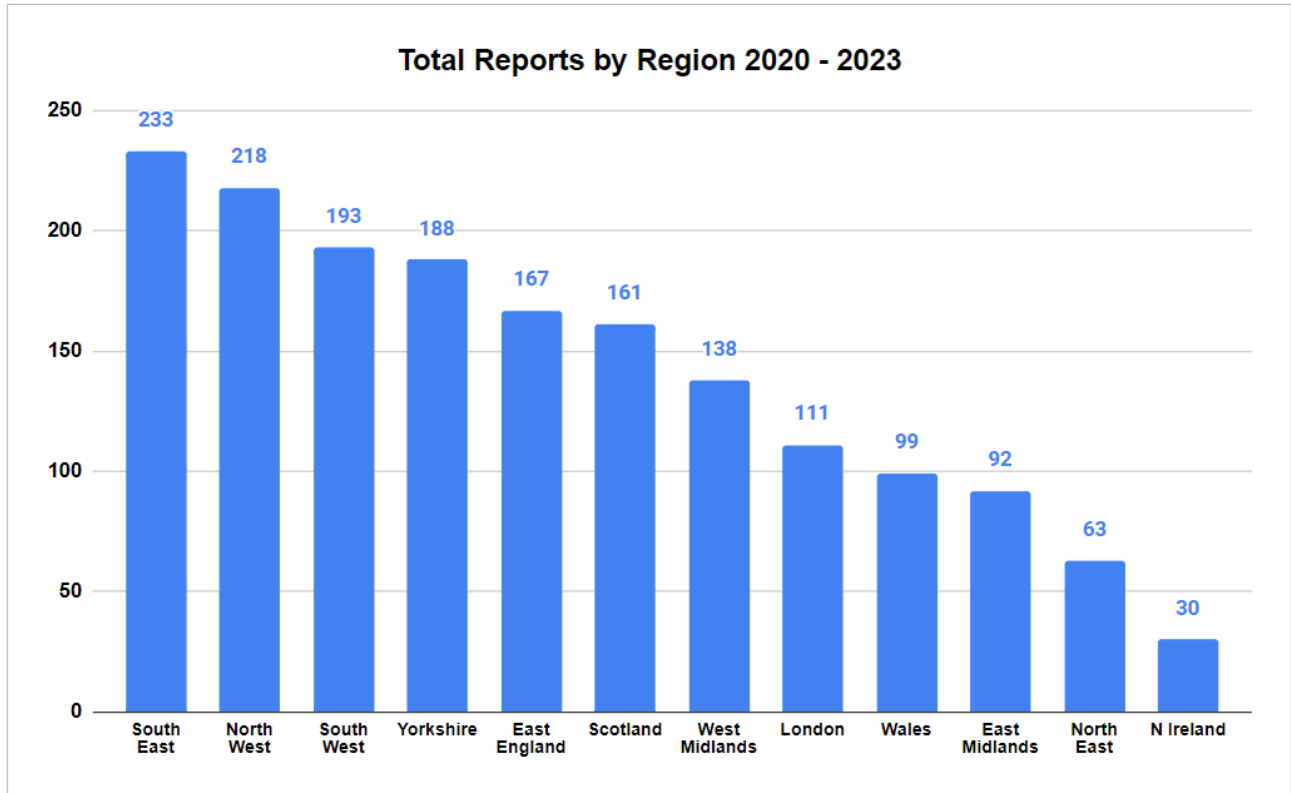
Our trusty heat map returns, showing the areas with more reports being a darker red, going lighter with the areas with the least number of reports. The south of the UK dominates again, with the North West leading the fight for the rest of the country, and Yorkshire hot on the heels, living up to their reputations of being UFO hotspots!



What is striking to me, and if you have read our previous annual reports, is that the table of reports is nearly identical in terms of the counties with the most sightings. The top 5 English counties are the same as last year, with the only exception being the North West re-taking the crown at the top spot from 2022's most popular county South East, after being the top spot in 2021!

At the bottom of the table, the North East is, again, the county with the least amount of reported sightings. Likewise, the capital London is low down, keeping in trend with previous years.

If we look at the total number of reports for each region for the full four years worth of data, it clearly shows that those top 5 regions are constantly reporting high numbers, more than anywhere else in the UK, with the South East coming out on top.



In the appendix of this report you will find a further breakdown of each region of the UK detailing how many sightings each individual county of the UK recorded during 2023.

This doesn't show a true representation of course, it's not all about the number of sightings reported as population density plays a part. As always, we are now going to take a look at the 'Rate of Sightings' figure for each region.

The 'Rate of Sightings' (RoS) is a mathematical formula based on the population of each region, and country, of the UK. This gives us a simple figure, with the higher the figure, the higher number of sightings reported per person. We believe this creates a more accurate representation of where you are more likely to have seen a UFO during the year.

The 'Rate of Sightings' for the United Kingdom as a whole in 2023 was:

United Kingdom	<b>1.5</b>
----------------	------------

Simply put, this means that there were **1.5 UFOs reported last year, for every 250,000 people**. This is a decrease of 0.3 from the 1.8 in 2022, not unexpected with such a decrease in reports overall.

Likewise, we expect to see a decrease across the board when we break it down into each country of the UK. With the exception of Northern Ireland which saw a small increase, there was a huge reduction in the RoS no matter where you were in the United Kingdom.

Country	2020	2021	2022	2023
Wales	1.8	1.9	2.4	<b>1.7</b>
England	1.8	1.5	1.8	<b>1.2</b>
N Ireland	1.6	1.1	0.5	<b>0.7</b>
Scotland	1.5	1.9	2.4	<b>1.5</b>

	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>UK</b>	1.8	1.6	1.8	<b>1.5</b>

The below tables show the RoS for each region of England, and compared with the pure number of reports. Straight away you can see how much changes when we look at the data in this way.

The North West, which had the highest number of reports, drops to distinctly mid-table with a below average RoS of just 1.4, likewise the previous UFO lofty heights of the South East drop into actually being one of the least likely areas to see a UFO.

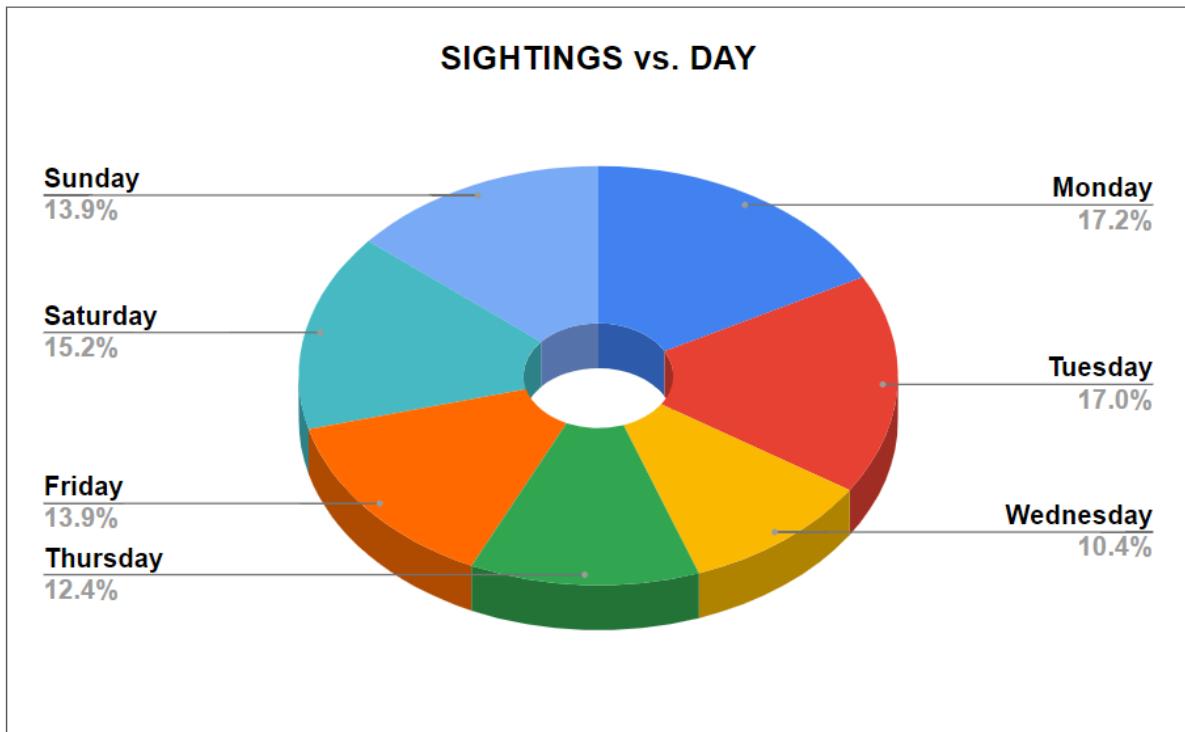
A notable shoutout for Wales, despite the relatively low number of reports, actually comes joint-top of the table due to the lesser population of the country, cementing their place as a long-known UFO hotspot!

So if you want to see a UFO this year, maybe take a holiday to Wales or the South West coast - the South West actually being the most likely area for the **THIRD YEAR OUT OF FOUR**, continuing from their top form of 2020 and 2022, a stat that cannot be ignored.

REGION	REPORTS
North West	41
South East	40
South West	39
East England	38
Yorkshire	36
Scotland	32
Wales	21
East Midlands	20
London	19
West Midlands	19
North East	13
Northern Ireland	5

REGION	RoS
South West	1.7
Wales	1.7
Yorkshire	1.6
East England	1.5
Scotland	1.5
North West	1.4
North East	1.2
South East	1.1
East Midlands	1.0
West Midlands	0.8
Northern Ireland	0.7
London	0.5

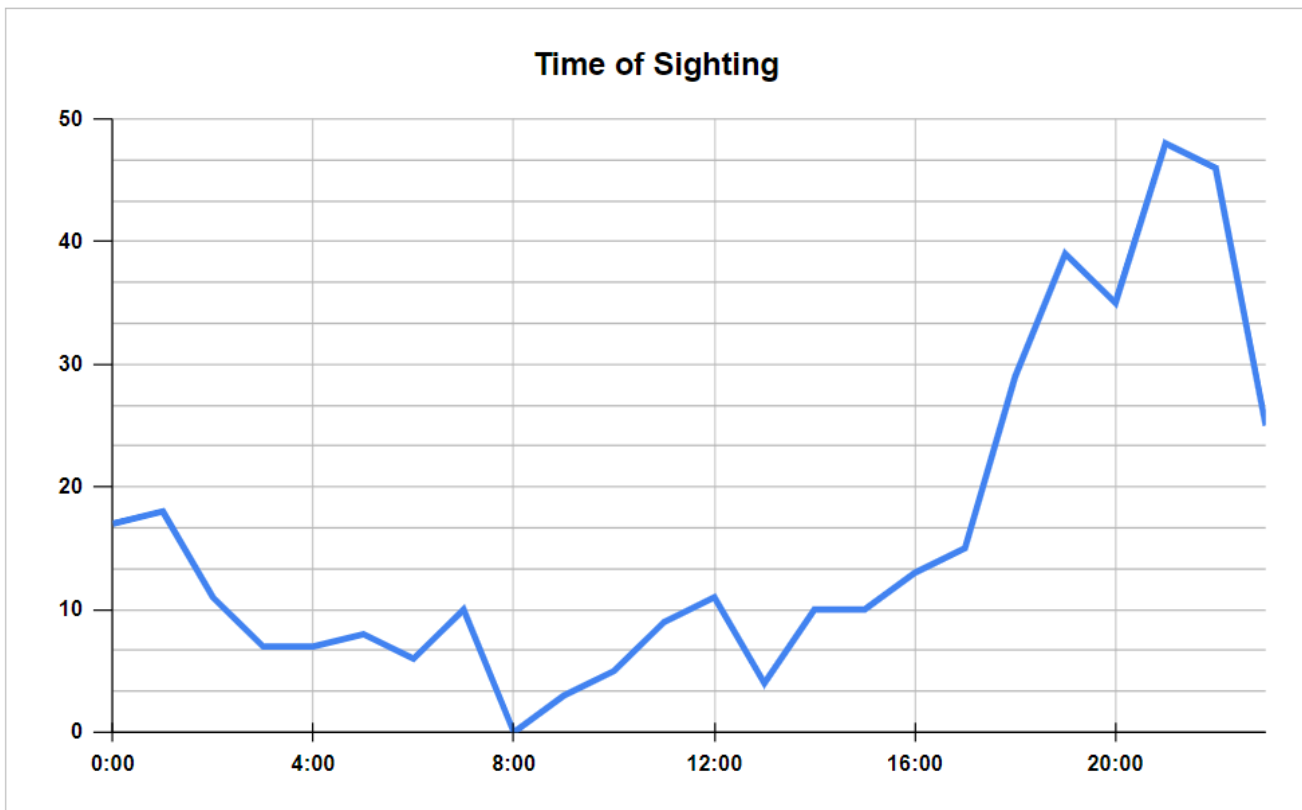
We've looked at **WHERE** you were most likely to see a UFO, but what about **WHEN**?





This is really interesting, as **Monday** was the most popular day last year, followed closely by Tuesday. This is a departure from all three previous years which had either Saturday or Sunday as the most popular days, and we would usually be discussing why that might be, whether going out and drinking alcohol has an effect on the number of sightings, or because a lot of people don't work at weekends, but Monday and Tuesday? It's hard to theorise why the sudden jump to these mid-week days, especially when we see a downturn to Wednesday with just a 10% of sightings.

Moving on now to the **TIME** of day, which in previous years, the most common reported time of sightings is between 9pm and 11pm. Let's see if there are any more surprises in 2023...



We can see a clear upwards spike from the early evening through to late night, with the most popular time indeed being **between 9pm and 10pm** with a total of 48 reports followed by 46 reports of sightings made between 10pm and 11pm. That's a quarter of all reports occurring in that 2 hour period. Notably however, is that there are reports made continually throughout the day, made during daylight hours, with the exception of the hour between 8am and 9am which saw no reports during 2023.

So for 2023, the most common time to have seen a UFO would have been

**On a MONDAY between 9pm and 10pm!**

## A Visual Phenomena

Let's now turn our attention to WHAT has been seen in our skies in the previous 12 months...

That's where and when looked at, but what about WHAT people are reporting to see?

There are a WIDE range of different shapes and descriptions given, so for recording purposes different descriptions can be categorised into one section. For example, a description of a 'Tic-Tac' or 'Cigar' shaped object, is categorised as a **Cylinder**. Likewise, 'Delta' and 'Arrow-head' descriptions would be classed as a **Triangle** shape and so on. The 'Other' category includes mainly one-off shapes or descriptions such as 'line' or 'cloud-like' that don't fit into the more readily obvious categories. The list would be ENDLESS if we listed every individually reported shape singularly.

These shapes are taken from the (sometimes very basic and limited) description given by the reporting witness.

SHAPE	SIGHTINGS
Star-like	89
Orb	81
Circular	41
Sphere	39
Cylinder	35
Triangle	35
Disc	21
Other	17
Unknown	16
Rectangle	8
Oval	7
Diamond	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>395</b>

Following the trend of the previous three years, the two most commonly-reported shapes are 'Star-like' and 'Orb,' making up over 40% of total reports.

Similar to the data we looked at above, we see similar patterns emerging. The next 5 most common categories of shapes are the same as 2022 with the only difference being 'Sphere'-shaped UFOs leapfrogging 'Cylinder'. Is this anything to do with the leak of numerous videos and photos in the US showing metallic sphere-like objects filmed by the military?

Looking again at the top spot, 'Star-like' UFOs will include a lot of commonly misidentified objects such as satellites, the International Space Station, aircraft, and actual stars and planets. Saying that, however, a lot of these reports include these points of lights making turns and manoeuvres that satellites and planets cannot do. As always, we don't make any claim to what each report may or may not be, we look at the data and facts as they are reported by the witnesses.

# Close Encounters

Dr J. Allen Hynek developed the Close Encounters system of classifying UFO reports in 1972, after he stopped investigating UFO reports on behalf of the US Government.

- Nocturnal Lights refer to lights seen in the night sky. In our data we differentiate between simple 'points of light' in the night sky, and actual craft seen at night.
- Daytime Discs are UFOs seen in daylight
- Close Encounter of the First Kind is a visual sighting showing visual detail and at a distance of no more than 500 feet away
- Close Encounter of the Second Kind is attributed to a UFO sighting which has also left a physical effect, such as vehicle malfunction, animals reacting, or a ground impression
- Close Encounter of the Third Kind is when an entity is witnessed, seemingly occupying or piloting the UFO.
- Further classifications of the Hynek Scale have been introduced, including a Close Encounter of the Fourth Kind which involves an abduction event, and a Close Encounter of the Fifth Kind which involves human-initiated communication with an ET

Sightings made during 2023 in the UK can be classified via the Hynek Scale as below:

CE RATING	SIGHTINGS
NL in the sky	162
NL craft	83
Daylight Disc	120
CE1	27
CE2	2
CE3	0
CE4	0
CE5	0
Unknown	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>395</b>

Clearly, and not unsurprisingly, the majority of sightings were made at night-time. However there are still a considerable amount of reports made during daylight hours - **30% in 2023** (a drop from 37% in 2022 and 36% in 2021) - so it doesn't always mean skywatching is a cold, nighttime hobby, sunny days can be included!

Similarly, there are plenty of reports that mention UFOs going in and out of clouds, so you don't always need a clear sky either!

Close Encounters of the First Kind more than doubled from **12 in 2022** to **27 in 2023**. These are reports of UFOs seen in close proximity, and this year have included **a police officer investigating a craft in a farmers field** and objects flying low above, and even IN, gardens in residential areas.

# Where's the Evidence?

A fair question, and one that we have included in our data since 2022, showing what, if any, evidence accompanied reports being made. Over half of reports had no accompanying evidence (56% up on the 52% in 2022) and so are made up of witness testimony only.

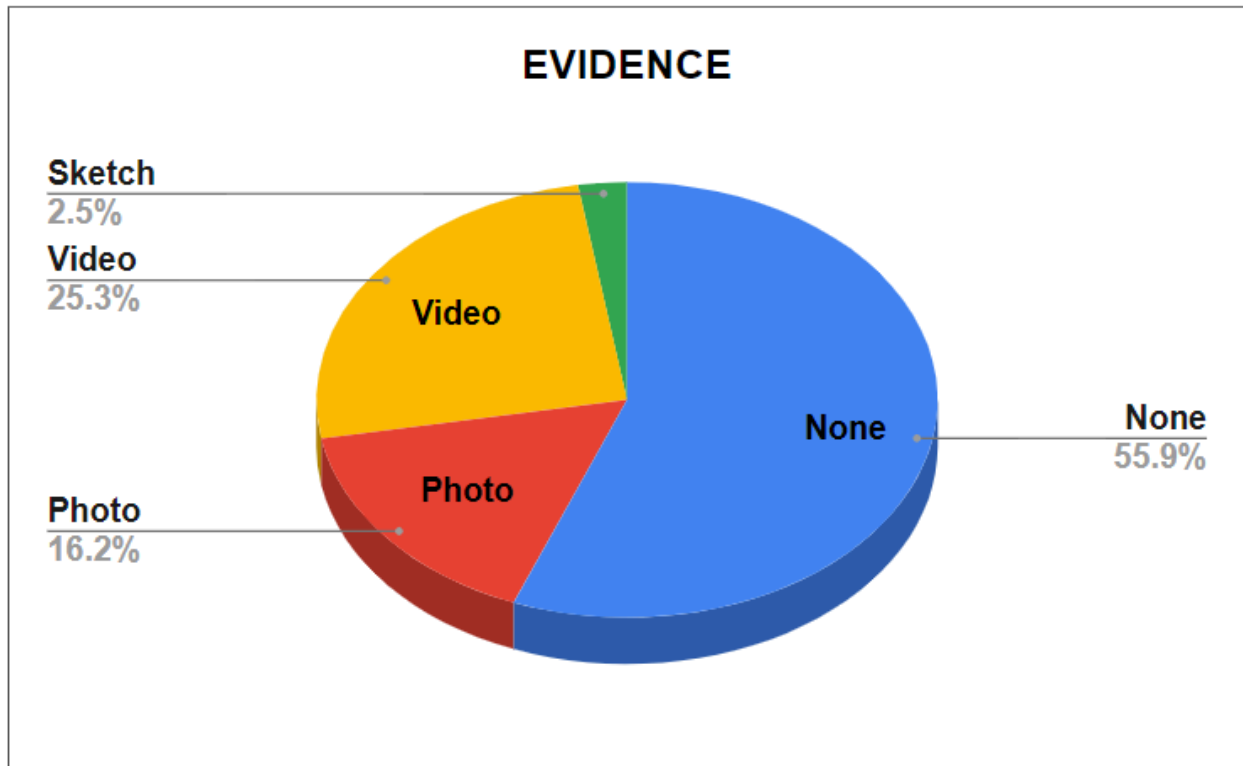
EVIDENCE	SIGHTINGS
None	221
Photo	64
Video	100
Sketch	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>395</b>

A **'sketch'** is when the witness has added a drawing or a computer graphically-designed image to illustrate what they had seen.

In the cases that had both photo and video evidence, these are recorded under **'Video'** only as the stronger piece of evidence.

A promising 25% of reports in 2023 had accompanying video evidence, a very similar figure to 2022, with both video and photo evidence making up 41% of reports.

So when sceptics say stuff like *"Everyone has a camera in their pocket now, how come there's no photos or videos of UFOs then?"*, the answer is **there are!** You just need to look for it.



## Conclusion

Overall, it's disappointing to see such a big decrease in reports this year, especially after the bumper year of 2022. This time last year we were hoping that a reduction in the stigma surrounding the topic would lead to more reports being filed, but this clearly hasn't been the case. Hopefully as we, and other groups around the country similar to us, continue giving people space and a platform to talk about their experiences will help more people come forward and be confident to stand up and tell their story. As mentioned earlier, we now host at least 3 public meet-ups/events each month across the north west, and are expanding these across the country this year - if you are interested in setting up a local meeting in your area, get in touch via our website.

Despite the reduced number of reports, we continue to see the same trends across different datasets. Whether that's the area in which sightings are being made, to the time of day, and the described shape of UFO's, and so on, these have all been consistent over the past four years. This, to me, tells us that there ARE areas which are more prone to seeing UFOs and we will be using this data to forecast areas of interest over the coming years.

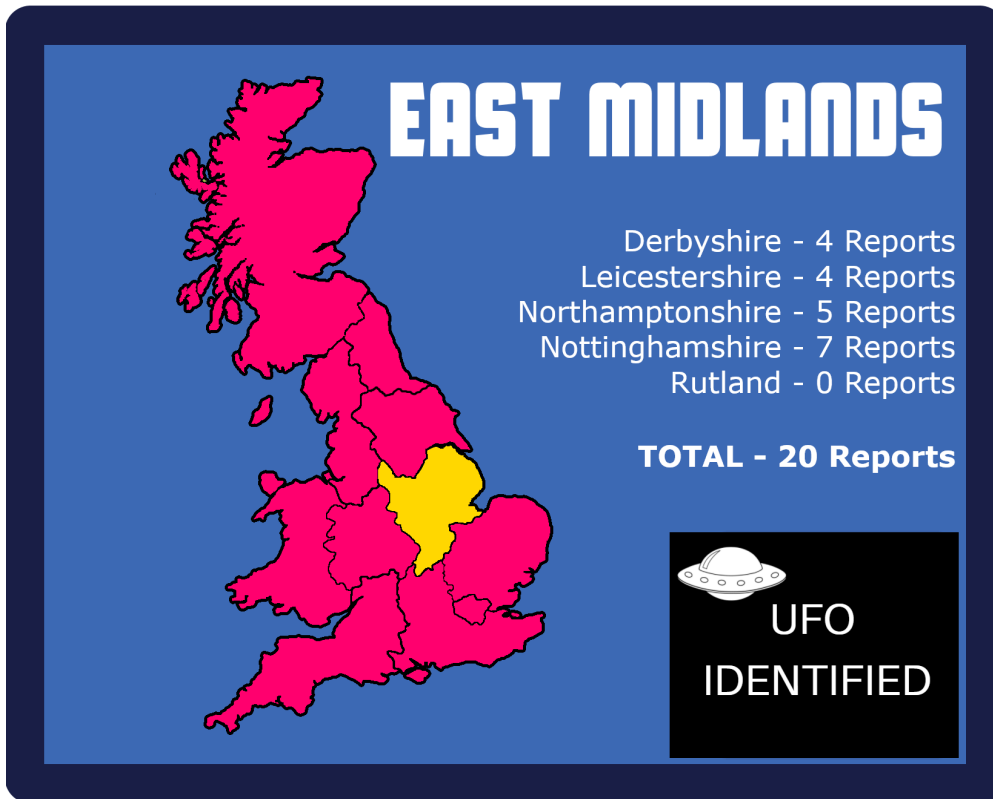
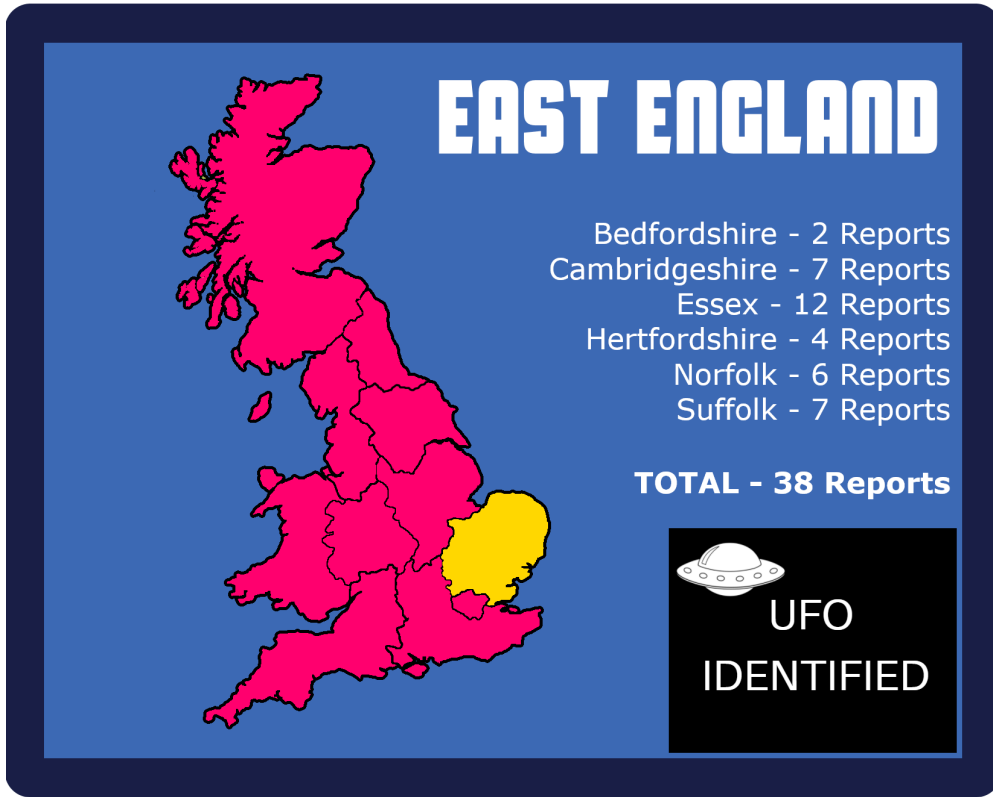
As always, none of what we do could be possible without the team behind UFOIdentified. Abigail Hyslop, Natalie Pearce and Steve Yarwood work so hard year in, year out, in all aspects of what we do. As we continue our expansion we will soon be announcing new team members that have recently joined us as investigators - and on that note, I can announce that we will soon be launching our Investigators Training Course, giving those interested in the investigation side of Ufology to learn the skills and approaches needed to competently evaluate and investigate sightings.

I would like to give special thanks to my good friend Dave Hodrien, chairman of Birmingham UFO Group who has been there for advice and a pint since I started UFOIdentified four years ago. Dave invited me to speak at his group's first meeting of the year at the start of January, which was a great experience being able to share all our data, findings, and investigations to a great bunch of people.

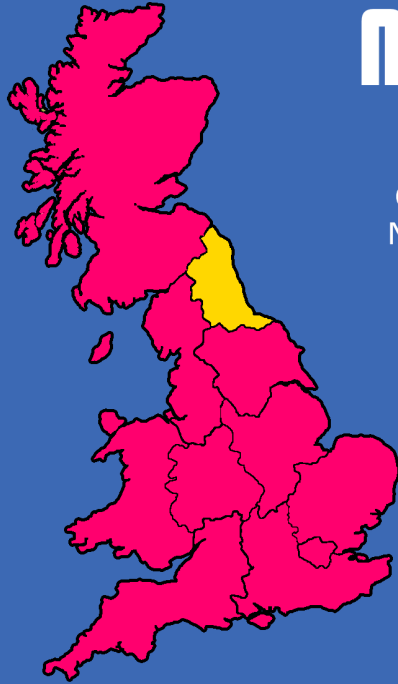
I urge everybody to please share this information, lets get it out there that MANY people are seeing unusual things in the UK, and urge people to file reports when they do see something, whether that's to us or one of the many other groups and databases out there, just report it SOMEWHERE! (but ideally to us ;) ).

All of what we do, we do on a volunteer basis spending money out of our own pockets to put on these many events and travelling to meet witnesses and investigate sightings... not to mention the cost of running the UK's biggest database of current-day UFO reports. If you like what we do and would like to support us, any help is greatly appreciated and really does make a difference! Donations can be sent to [paypal.me/ashellisufo](https://paypal.me/ashellisufo) or buy our book on Amazon "**UK UFO Sightings: The Reports 2020-2022**" **Thank you for reading and for your support, see you soon!**

**Appendix**  
Sightings by County



# NORTH EAST



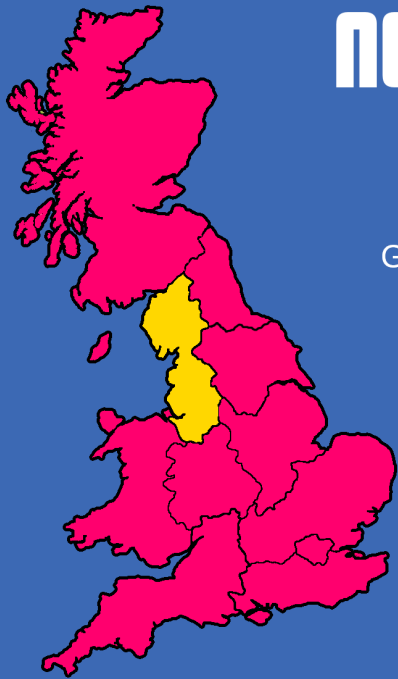
County Durham - 4 Reports  
Northumberland - 4 Reports  
Tyne and Wear - 5 Reports

**TOTAL - 13 Reports**



UFO  
IDENTIFIED

# NORTH WEST



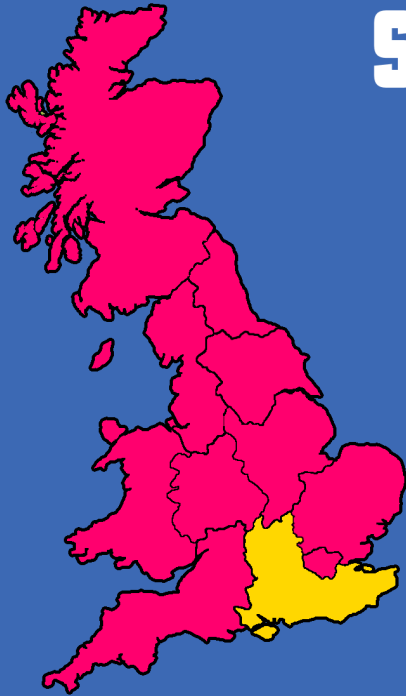
Cumbria - 2 Reports  
Cheshire - 9 Reports  
Gtr Manchester - 14 Reports  
Lancashire - 5 Reports  
Merseyside - 11 Reports

**TOTAL - 41 Reports**



UFO  
IDENTIFIED

# SOUTH EAST



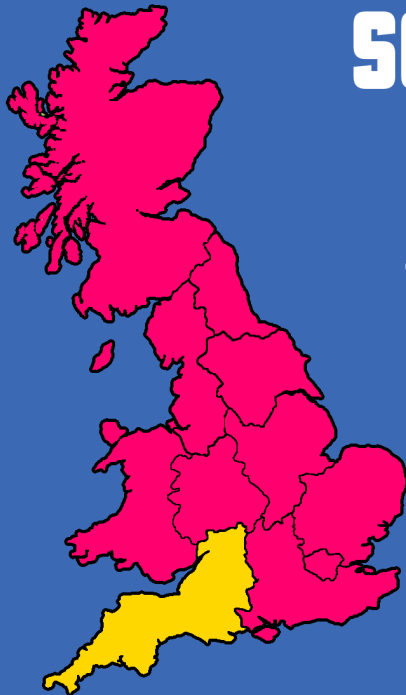
Berkshire - 4 Reports  
Buckinghamshire - 3 Reports  
East Sussex - 4 Reports  
Hampshire - 9 Reports  
Isle of Wight - 1 Report  
Kent - 11 Reports  
Oxfordshire - 2 Reports  
Surrey - 4 Reports  
West Sussex - 2 Reports

**TOTAL - 40 Reports**



**UFO  
IDENTIFIED**

# SOUTH WEST



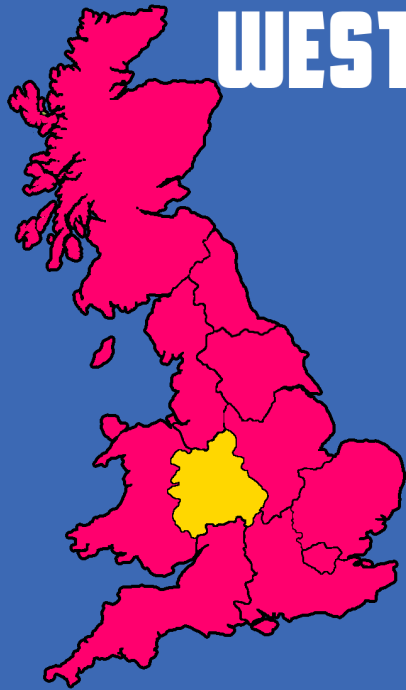
Cornwall - 9 Reports  
Devon - 9 Reports  
Dorset - 5 Reports  
Gloucestershire - 5 Reports  
Somerset - 6 Reports  
Wiltshire - 5 Reports

**TOTAL - 39 Reports**



**UFO  
IDENTIFIED**





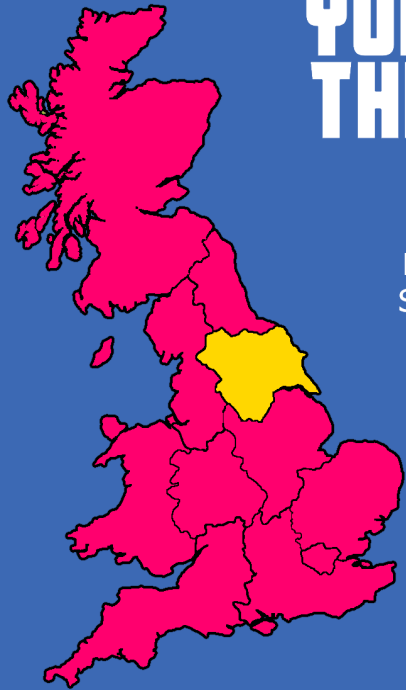
# WEST MIDLANDS

Herefordshire - 2 Reports  
Shropshire - 3 Reports  
Staffordshire - 3 Reports  
Warwickshire - 3 Reports  
West Midlands - 5 Reports  
Worcestershire - 3 Reports

**TOTAL - 19 Reports**



UFO  
IDENTIFIED



# YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER

East Riding - 15 Reports  
Lincolnshire - 4 Reports  
North Yorkshire - 6 Reports  
South Yorkshire - 3 Reports  
West Yorkshire - 8 Reports

**TOTAL - 36 Reports**



UFO  
IDENTIFIED