

The UK UFO Report 2020

By Ash Ellis - Founder of the North West UFO Research and Investigation Group, co-host of the Pursuit of the Paranormal Podcast and owner of UFO Identified.

Lots of media outlets have recently been reporting an increase in UFO sightings throughout 2020. But was this actually the case? Over the past 12 months I have been acquiring UFO reports from many different sources and analysed the data from what I believe to be the biggest collection of UFO reports made in the United Kingdom during what has been an unusual and historic year.

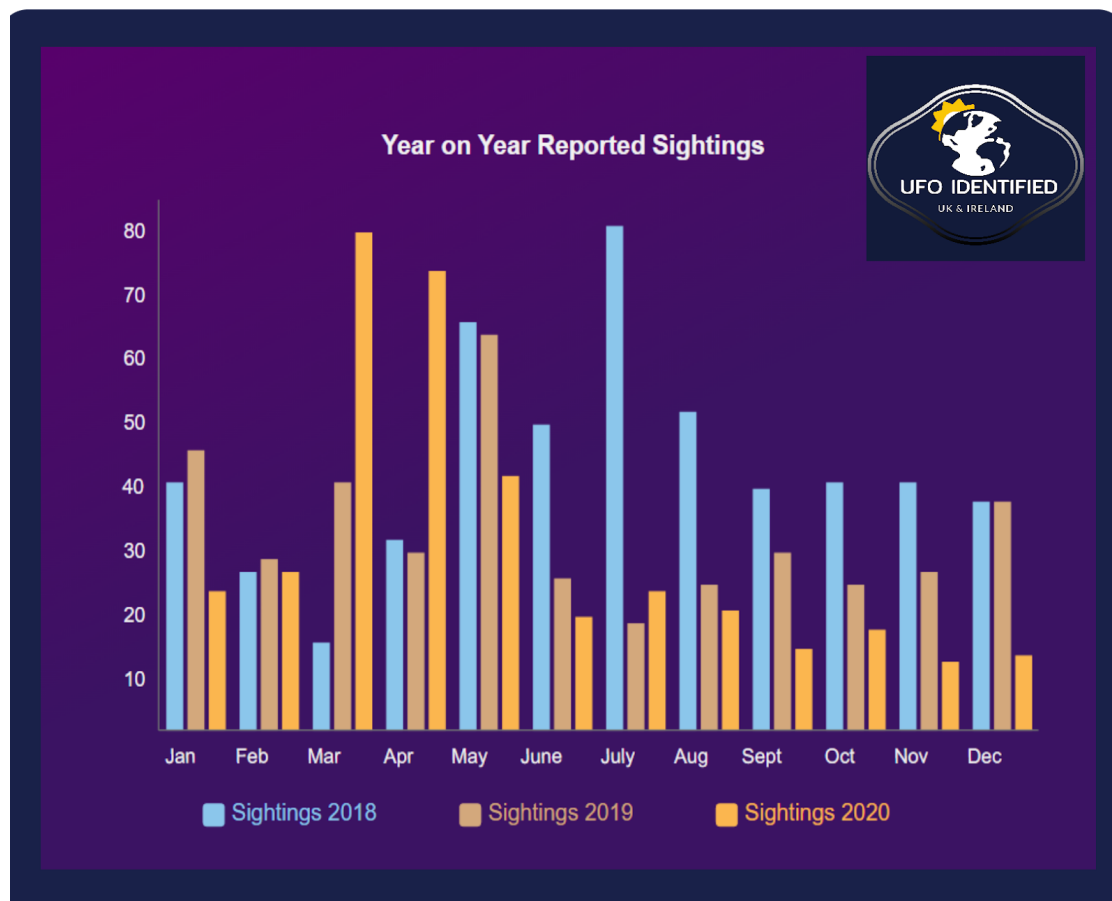
With reports collected from members of the public directly, from sightings reported to a number of UFO organisations around the world, as well as information gained from over 50 Freedom of Information Requests made to every police force in the UK as well as military, Government and aviation organisations, I discover the truest picture of the UFO phenomena within the British shores and airspace.

From a total of 484 reports compiled, over a third of these were made in just two months, with 192 sightings made in March and April alone, a massive increase of 148% and 200% respectively from 2019. The biggest reason for this huge jump in reports was down, in no small part, to the SpaceX satellite trains, a number of which were launched during March and April,

These trains consist of dozens of satellites, appearing as a link of star-like lights in the sky following each other and very visible to those looking up, leading to a flurry of reports made to the numerous UFO organisations, with some members of the public worried about an impending alien invasion in response to the unusual and startling formations and movements of these satellites.

Over 100 reports made in 2020 can be attributed to these Space X satellites. A similar jump in UFO reports was seen in November and December 2019 with earlier launches of these satellites. Responding to complaints from astronomers and members of the public alike, SpaceX founder Elon Musk took a number of steps to reduce the visibility of the satellites, including the 'Visorsat' approach, which helped to block sunlight from the antennas, therefore preventing reflection and decreasing the brightness of the satellites. Since these steps were implemented in late April, reports of this type reduced dramatically.

For most of the rest of 2020, sightings continued to fall below the rates of previous years as can be seen in the following graph.



There were a total of 525 sightings reported to various organisations in 2018, with a drop to 400 reports in 2019. Although there is an increase from 2019's figure to the 484 reported in 2020, this is still considerably lower than in 2018.

Out of the 45 freedom of information requests made to police forces across the UK, 10 forces refused to give information under Section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, 19 forces failed to reply, 6 forces had no information on record and 10 forces gave information pertinent to the request, with a total of 32 sightings information gained via this method.

Further FOIA requests were made to the Ministry of Defence, the Royal Air Force, and the Aviation Authority amongst others, as well as to non-public organisations such as BALPA and NATS.

Notable Responses to FOI Requests

Bedfordshire Constabulary replied to our FOI request with the following statement:

Frivolous request

The subject matter is trivial, appears to lack any serious purpose and appears to be made for the purpose of amusement rather than for information which is in the public interest.

Given the burden of your request on our available resources and the concerns that there is no serious purpose, your request has been refused under section 14(1).

Should you have any further enquiries concerning this matter please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference number.

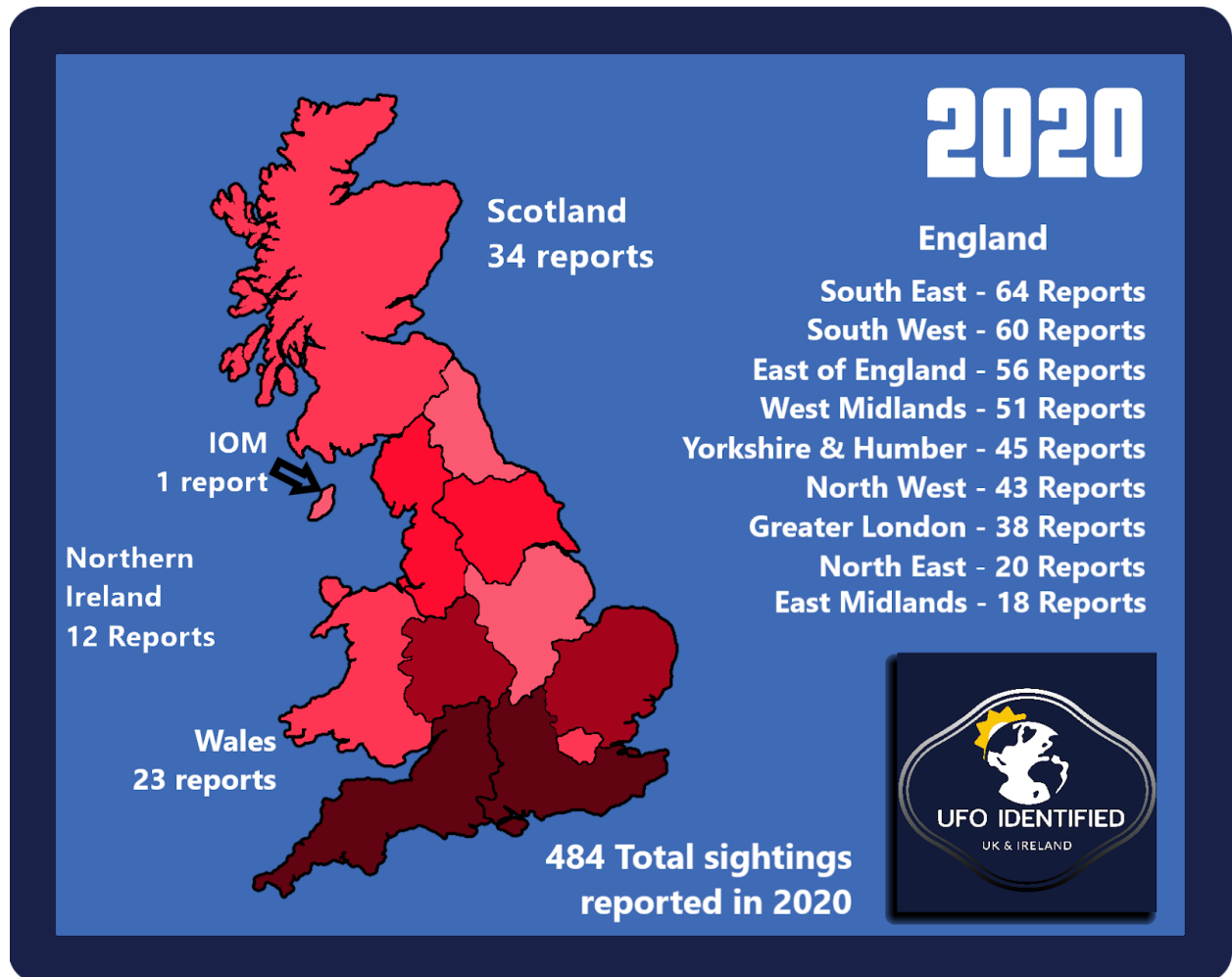
This shows how many of our authorities do not take this subject seriously. A complaint has been made, which to this date has received no reply.

Greater Manchester Police provided information on 169 incidents that contained keywords relating to UFO, Unidentified Flying Object, Lights in the sky and similar. Only very basic information including month of incident and area was included, and on reply they were unwilling to divulge any further information on these incidents. It is believed that the majority of these incidents don't refer to UFO activity or reports and were linked to keywords in words such as Unidentified, Object, and Lights as well as car registrations containing the letters UFO or UAP and thus would have no reason to be classed as a UFO incident or report. None of these 169 incidents are included in this report.

Breaking Down the Data

COUNTRY	SIGHTINGS
England*	396
Scotland	34
Wales	23
N Ireland	12
Just stated "UK"	19
TOTAL	484

*Includes one report made from the Isle of Man



As we can see, the most sightings were made in the south-east (64 reports) with the South as a whole reporting more UFOs than the rest of the country.

Of course, it's not all about the number of sightings reported, as population density plays a part. The higher the population, the more people there are to see a UFO, right?

Let's find out. Below is the rate of UFO sightings, as calculated for every 250,000 population for the country and then by region.

Total average for United Kingdom	1.8	England	1.8
		Scotland	1.5
		Wales	1.8
		N Ireland	1.6

South West	2.7
East of England	2.2
West Midlands	2.1
Yorkshire & Humber	2.0
North East	1.9
South East	1.7
North West	1.5
London	1.1
East Midlands	0.9

Very notable here is that despite having the highest number of sightings in the UK, the South East is actually below the national average with just 1.7 reports per 250,000 population.

You were more likely to see a UFO in the South West with its 2.7 reports per 250,000 people a huge 50% higher than the 1.8 UK average.

Breaking down this regional data further, looking at individual counties. Outside of London, Essex was the area with the highest number of reports with 22, and a huge sighting rate of 2.9 reports per 250,000 people.

London's 38 sightings leaves the area with a lowly 1.1 sighting rate.

Infographics at the end of this report will show how each region is broken down further into counties.

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

The data from all the reports made during 2020 show that you are more likely to see a UFO or UAP...

On a Sunday between 9 and 10pm!

Don't skip out on that Sunday evening walk, grab the dog's leash and get out there and look up!

DAY	SIGHTINGS
Monday	57
Tuesday	68
Wednesday	64
Thursday	63
Friday	61
Saturday	69
Sunday	91

TIME	SIGHTINGS
21:00	64
20:00	59
22:00	48
23:00	33
19:00	31

A Visual Phenomena

There's a lot of unusual things being seen in the sky, but what EXACTLY are people seeing?

SHAPE	TOTAL
Star-like	200
Orb	53
Other	36
Triangle	33
Oval	31
Fireball	18
Disc	14
Cylinder	8
Diamond	4
Unknown	46

These shapes are taken from the description given by the witnesses. As mentioned at the beginning of this report, over 100 sightings can be explained by the Star Link satellites, which is why the 'star-like' figure is so high. Planets, especially Venus which was very prominent early last year, and actual stars can also be mis-identified and reported as a UFO.

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

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 or animals reacting

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 2020 in the UK can be classified via the Hynek Scale as below:

CLASSIFICATION	TOTAL
Nocturnal Lights	274
Daylight Disc	127
CE1	18
CE3	3
CE4	1
CE2	0
CE5	0
Unknown	22

So contrary to media reports that UFO sightings have increased during this year and during the Covid pandemic, the evidence I have collected so that this is in fact not the case and if it wasn't for the Star Link satellites then the number of sightings would have been considerably lower.

When I speak to witnesses, and others interested in this phenomena, I always urge them to make a report if they see or photograph something unusual. Whether it's with my group, a National organisation such as BUFORA or MUFON, or to the UFO community group local to them, I believe it is vital for the continuing study of this subject to have as much data as possible as the research continues to be more and more scientific based.

To quote my favourite podcast host and UFO researcher, **Ryan Sprague...**


Go where the science is, not where the bias is

I welcome all feedback and discussion on this report and the information contained within. I also recommend viewing the accompanying video which contains a useful animated heat map as well as some bits of more information!

Thanks to everyone who has helped in developing this report and assisting with gaining information, especially Natalie Myers, Abigail Hyslop and Gail Broli who were a big help when dealing with the Freedom of Information Requests.

Images created by Jonny Jones from Serpo Design www.facebook.com/serpodesign

This analysis was completed with data gained from UFO sighting reports made to:



Plus information gained from over 50 FOIA Requests

Additional information - Region and county sightings

