

I think it might be too much to describe us as obsessed, but it would be true to say that Scots definitely show a keen interest in the weather. Our friends from warmer climates might laugh at how we start every conversation with a comment about the current meteorological situation. Their problem is their weather can be pretty dull: day after day of sunshine in the summer, and night after night of Alpine snow with sunny days in the winter.

We only talk about it so much because our weather is actually interesting. They don't have to look out the window in the morning to see what the day will be like as they know already. Even if you listen to the forecast or the travel reports before you peek through the curtains, you might still get a surprise. "Snowy showers in the Highlands" might accurately reflect Ullapool but not Dingwall and vice versa.

Today I am working from home as it was snowing quite heavily when I got up. I am lucky enough that I can just as easily work here as in the office (and the coffee is better). Tomorrow I will be heading in, curious to see if anyone even missed me. I am writing this while gazing out over a snow covered garden, but by the time you read it you may well be getting the barbeque fired up for the season. Such dramatic changes in a few days are not completely unknown.

Of course everybody is starting to wonder what happened to global warming. I am sure there are a few people that were secretly thinking it might be no bad thing for Ross-shire to heat up just a little bit. The truth is that the rise in the core temperature of the earth will give us, not milder winters and Mediterranean-type summers, but rather what they call 'extreme weather events.' Nothing we have had so far this winter could be described as extreme, although our Southern neighbours certainly seem to be suffering. The only big freeze I wasn't expecting was the council tax freeze. One more year, thank you Mr Salmond.

I do enjoy the dark nights of winter, there's something cosy about the feeling of hibernating for a few months. Shutting the weather out, lighting the fire and eating some comfort food just feels like the right thing to do at this time of year. And there's the added bonus of all those clothes hiding the effects of the comfort food.

It's already starting to get lighter in the mornings, which means I can now see our dog before she bounces up on her morning walk. Although last night we were throwing snowballs for her & heard a yelp before she came back limping. I have no idea what happened, but she soon recovered so it couldn't have been anything too serious.

The changes in the light and the wee bit of sunshine now poking through means I am now looking forward to the spring. I have sent away for my seed packets and the first ones came yesterday. Last summer we put down a lawn, and grew vegetables but this year I'm planning a pond with frogs and an abundance of wildlife friendly plants. I hope my husband and any local frogs reading this will take note as I doubt I will be able to do it all on my own. Once the snow melts, I look forward to watching them in the garden doing their stuff.