

Summers are getting hotter – honest

It might not seem like it, but warm summer days are up to 2C hotter now than in the 1950s due to climate change, according to new study by the London School of Economics.

Office workers enjoy their lunchbreak on the sunny steps of St Paul's Cathedral in 1959 Photo: GETTY IMAGES

By Louise Gray, Environment Correspondent

6:11PM BST 11 Sep 2013

In 2012 Britain had the wettest summer in 100 years and 2011 was the coldest for almost two decades.

In contrast many in the older generation remember the gloriously long and sunny summer of 1959.

But according to the Grantham Institute for Climate Change at LSE and the University of Warwick the hottest summer days in southern England have got 2C hotter in many places since 1950.

The study, published in the journal Environmental Research Letters, looked at the effect of global climate change on local weather.

It found that an area across southern England, the Low Countries, northern Germany and Denmark experienced the greatest increase in the temperature of hottest days over the last 60 or so years.

At the same time in the UK, the frequency of nights which fall below zero decreased substantially in the north east, falling by ten per cent in some areas.

Over the whole of Europe climate change had a variable effect in different areas.

In central France and Germany, it is the average summer days that have seen the greatest increase in temperature since the 1950s, while most regions in Europe have seen little change in their coolest summer days.

In Norway and Sweden, there has been little change in temperatures for all types of summer days – hot, average and cool.

Dr David Stainforth, the lead author on the paper, said global warming will affect different areas of Europe in different ways.

He said the study will help policymakers to plan for further climate change in the future.

“Climate is fundamentally the distributions of weather. As climate changes, the distributions change. But they don’t just shift, they change shape.

“How they change shape depends on where you are. In Britain, climate change will feel very different if you live in Northumbria to if you live in Oxfordshire; different again in Devon.”

© Copyright of Telegraph Media Group Limited 2013