

# **Birth defect variations in England & Wales from 1987-2001**

by Michael Ryan BSc, C Eng, MICE

## **Abstract**

Rates of total birth defects in England and Wales fell to minimum rate of 68.4 defects per 10,000 total births [live and stillbirths] in 1993 and 1994, followed by significant increases. Table A, which was included in the beginning of each year's data published by the Office of National Statistics [ONS] until 1997, listed a smaller selection of defects and showed a similar decline to a lower, and less well-defined, minimum rate around 45 defects per 10,000 from 1993 to 1997. Discontinuation of Table A in ONS data after 1997 meant that the significantly increasing rate of cardiovascular anomalies could not be readily seen in context of an eleven-year trend - suggesting political interference, from which ONS claims to be free.

## **Background**

Birth defects are caused by "DNA disrupters" such as radioactivity, OP pesticides and toxic emissions from some industrial processes such as oil refineries, "waste-burning" cement works, power stations and incinerators.

In December 2002, The Environment Agency admitted authorising 34 incinerators in England and Wales to burn radioactive waste. [1] The list of radioactive waste-burning incinerators included Grundons, which is sited on the border between Berkshire and the London Borough of Hillingdon.

Hillingdon had the highest recorded rate of birth defects in London in 2000 and 2001, and receives emissions from two incinerators at Colnbrook, operated by Grundons. The Belgian incinerator report proved increased rates of birth defects as well as a host of other health damage to residents in Sint Niklaas. [2].

John McDonnell, the MP for Hayes and Harlington, requested details of birth defect variations in London and elsewhere, and invited the author and Dr Dick van Steenis to the House of Commons on 9 March 2004. In addition to Office of National Statistics [ONS] data and other material relating to airborne pollution, Mr McDonnell was handed a copy of the Shropshire Star article [4 March 2004] about Lembit Opik MP, whose inquiry to the Department of Health over soaring birth defect rates in Wales had been referred to the Treasury. [3]

On 24 March 2004, John McDonnell asked the following question [163606], which was listed as question 11 on that day: "John McDonnell (Hayes and Harlington): To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what the incidence of birth defects was in each year since 1996, broken down by region." [4]

The ONS had been gathering birth defect data since the Thalidomide scandal "to serve as an early-warning system for environmental causes of birth defects" according to the front page Independent article of 18 March 2002. [5]

Detailed birth defect data by location was first published by ONS in 1987, when 200 locations in England and Wales were listed, showing total recorded births [ie live and stillbirths] and the numbers of defects recorded in 18 columns of different defects. [6] .....

Sheet 2

From 1995 onwards, the headings of some of the 18 columns changed. From 1987 to 2001, the numbers of locations listed was gradually reduced to 100, making trend analysis difficult in many locations. [7]

**Methodology**

To get an overview, the total number of defects recorded in England and Wales in each year from 1987 to 2001 was calculated and divided by the total number of recorded births, then multiplied by 10,000 to get the rate per 10,000 total births. Note that the changed categories from 1995 altered the continuity in the Total defects graph from 1994 to 1995.

The results are listed in Table 1, together with the rates per 10,000 based on Table A selected defects.

**Table 1**

Year	Recorded Defects		Total Recorded Births	Rate per 10,000 births	
	Total	Table A		Total	Table A
1987	8,991	6,394	684,566	131.1	93.4
1988	8,473	5,983	696,561	121.6	85.9
1989	8,246	5,830	690,608	119.4	84.4
1990	6,346	4,343	709,034	89.5	61.3
1991	5,920	4,018	702,134	84.3	57.2
1992	5,083	3,514	692,452	73.4	50.7
1993	4,627	3,093	676,887	68.4	45.7
1994	4,567	3,092	668,114	68.4	46.3
1995	6,671	2,975	651,315	102.4	45.7
1996	6,479	2,857	652,595	99.3	43.8
1997	6,620	2,817	645,146	102.6	43.7
1998	7,038	3,105	638,950	110.1	48.6
1999	8,530	3,392	624,862	136.5	54.3
2000	9,267	4,001	607,304	152.6	65.9
2001	8,748	3,499	597,506	146.4	58.6

Table 1 above shows the average rate of total birth defects per 10,000 total recorded births in England and Wales. Note the decline in rate of defects until 1993/4 and the sudden apparent increase in 1995 to 102.4, which was caused by the change of categories from 1995 onwards.

Around 1990, controls of polluting airborne emissions were tightened. The effect can be seen by the rise in birth rate from 1989 to 1990 and the corresponding sharp drop in birth defects. The birthrate increased from 1989 to 1990 and fell for each subsequent year except 1996. Factors that cause birth defects will also cause many pregnancies to fail, either by miscarriage or by termination for known or suspected defects. In 1990, the number of terminations due to known or suspected defects was 1,668 - the minimum number recorded in the above fifteen year period.

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## Discussion of findings

In 1992, a decision was taken to allow “alternative” fuels to be burnt in power stations, cement kilns etc. despite causing a massive rise in PM2.5s. That decision soon led to increases in asthma in certain areas, with marked variations in rate in adjacent areas proving linkage with polluting sources and also proving that many cases of asthma were caused by industrial emissions of PM2.5s, i.e. particles of 2.5 microns and less in diameter, which are small enough to get deep into the lungs. [8,9]

Many more articles and reports than referenced here have been published on the work of Dr Dick van Steenis regarding increased rates of industrial PM2.5 emissions causing increased rates of asthma and over eighteen other illnesses and increased mortality. [10,11, 12]

Some locations have shown huge rises in the rate of birth defects, e.g. North Nottinghamshire data revealed an increase in the rate of total birth defects of 660% from 1998 to 1999. BBC Countryfile [18 April 2004] featured herons in North Nottinghamshire with birth defects and the BBC website revealed that there had been an earlier programme featuring defects at the same heronry in 2000. [13] The City of Nottingham had an increase of almost 1,500% from 1998 to 1999, but such astronomic increases in the rates of human birth defects seem to have gone unreported.

Whenever rates have been calculated for different locations [such as Hillingdon etc.] and a graph has been plotted, the control that has been chosen is Camden and Islington, being sited in the middle of a large urban area, which has heavy traffic.

The ONS published “Table A”, which had appeared at the front of each year’s publication, for the last time in 1997. The author was intrigued by the deletion of such a useful table, which listed the numbers of a selection of defects for 11 years, up to and including the year of publication.

ONS claim to be free from political interference [14] and yet there must have been an instruction to cease printing Table A. The author used ONS data to calculate the rate of defects per 10,000 total births for the selected defects in Table A from 1987 to 1997 inclusive using the data listed in Table A. The same calculations were made from 1998 to 2001 using the same ten types of defect listed in Table A.

[Insert Table A 1987-2001]

Graphs of Total-v-Table A defects were plotted from Table 1 above for years 1987 to 2001, showing an upward trend from 1993/4 in both cases. The discontinuity in the graph of Total defects at year 1995 was due to the change in classification of defects. The post 1995 trend is clear in both graphs and shows a major increase in the rate of birth defects in England and Wales. Graphs of “total defects” will provide an accurate indication of a range of adverse health trends, when plotted for locations in England and Wales - particularly those adjacent to known or suspected sources of PM2.5 pollution, such as the incinerators at Colnbrook, whose emissions impact on the downwind London Boroughs of Hillingdon, Ealing, Hammersmith, Hounslow, Brent, and Harrow.

...../4

[Insert graph, Total-v-Table A]  
and also Hillingdon/Ealing/Brent/Camden graph 1993-2001

## Conclusion

The ONS birth defect data from 1987 showed an initial reduction in rates of birth defects, followed by a marked upward trend from 1997. The author has been unable to get any response from ONS about the decision to suspend publication of Table A. [15] It seems probable that a political instruction was given to ONS to cease printing Table A. If such an instruction was given, the timing would have coincided with knowledge of the marked increase in birth defects since 1997.

In 1997, Table A showed that numbers of cardiovascular anomalies recorded in England and Wales had risen each year from the minimum of 459 in 1995 to 515 in 1997. If Table A had been continued in 1998 and beyond, it is most unlikely that the doubling of numbers of cardiovascular anomalies recorded to 1,113 in 2000 would have remained unnoticed and given wider publicity.

The 1998 figure of 624 cardiovascular anomalies in 1998 is the most significant statistic in the "Table A" selected defects. Whoever decided to order that Table A was to be deleted probably took the decision in 1998 or 1999, when accurate contemporary data, both of recorded defects and terminations for cardiovascular anomalies and other defects, would have been available.

The deletion of Table A from ONS data in 1998 has delayed the opportunity of publication of definitive proof of worsening health impacts of increased industrial emissions of PM2.5s and other factors by more than five years. Such censorship of data, which reduces the opportunity to improve the health and life-expectancy of the nation, is inexcusable.

North and East Devon had the highest recorded rate of birth defects in England and Wales in both 1999 and 2000, and the fourth highest rate in 2001. The only resident who seemed concerned was Diane Irwin, a long-established dog breeder from Kingsteignton, Devon, who found birth defects in litters, which had never occurred before: "I've been breeding dogs since 1969 and I've never suffered deformities before, but in the past year I had a puppy born with two toes where there should have been one. I took her to the vet and he asked me if I had move next door to Sellafield." [16] The Sellafield quotation attributed to the unnamed vet in the Sunday Telegraph was actually made by the world-renowned top breeders from Somerset, who were contacted by Diane Irwin as her dogs shared the same bloodlines. [17]

## Footnote

The 2002 ONS data was seen by the author for the first time on 8 May 2004. The 200 locations listed in 2001 have been reduced to just 33, with the same five locations in Wales as in 2001. England, which had 95 locations listed in 2001, only had 28 locations listed, making trend analysis by location impossible.

...../5

## Sheet 5

John McDonnell MP had asked an earlier Parliamentary Question [163589] about birth defects in Hillingdon. The answer was provided on 29 March 2004 [18] and revealed birth defect rates in both 1994 and 2000 that were significantly higher than those obtained from ONS published data, despite both coming from the same source and using identical birth data. The Hansard rates for Hillingdon have been plotted against the ONS rates and both graphs show a marked upward trend.

[insert graph of Hillingdon defects: ONS-v-Hansard]

### References

1. Letter dated 23 December 2002 from Barbara Young, Chief Executive, Environment Agency to author.
2. Mispelstraat: Living under the smoke of a waste incinerator, Belgian Platform of Environment and Health, July 2001, [www.milieugezondheid.be](http://www.milieugezondheid.be)
3. MP's alarm at rising levels of birth defects, Shropshire Star, 4 March 2004, page 23
4. Hansard, Written Questions for answer on 24 March 2004, Question 163606.
5. Huge rise in babies born with birth defects, by Jeremy Laurance, The Independent, 18 March 2004, page 1
6. Congenital Malformation Statistics 1987, Office of National Statistics, ISBN 0-11691263-4
7. Congenital Anomaly Statistics 1995, ONS, ISBN 0-11-621029-X
8. Children face power plant asthma threat, by Anna Morrell, Western Mail, 3 March 1995, page 1
9. Airborne pollutants and acute health effects, Dr Dick van Steenis, The Lancet; 345: 923, 8 April 1995
10. Toxic Detective-Interview with Dr Dick van Steenis, Corporate Watch Issue 8, Spring 1999
11. Poisoning the poor, by George Monbiot, The Guardian, 20 June 1999
12. Industrial Air Pollution and the Country Doctor, Dr Dick van Steenis, [www.countrydoctor.co.uk](http://www.countrydoctor.co.uk)
13. BBC Countryfile Homepage, 19 April 2004, [www.bbc.co.uk/nature/environment/programmes/countryfile](http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/environment/programmes/countryfile)
14. Congenital Anomaly Statistics 2001 Press Release by ONS, 17 October 2002
15. Personal communication, Nirupa Dattani, Office of National Statistics.
16. Beware of the landfill, by Ross Clark, Sunday Telegraph, 11 January 2004
17. Diane Irwin. Personal communication. May 2004
18. Letter from Len Cook [National Statistician] to John McDonnell MP, 29 March 2004, Hansard.

See notes on following page

## **Additional Notes made on 9 June 2004:**

See references to birth defect statistics in:

1. North Devon Journal, 6 May 2004 and 20 May 2004
2. Shropshire Star, 16 January 2004, 18 February 2004, 4 March 2004
3. Western Mail, 17 February 2004, 18 March 2004, 31 May 2004
4. Barnsley Chronicle, 30 January 2004

All the above refer to birth defect statistics, and I am named in five of the above articles as having carried out the research.

See also December 2003 press release about birth defects dated at [www.countrydoctor.co.uk](http://www.countrydoctor.co.uk)

The rates of total birth defects per 10,000 recorded births [ie live and stillbirths] for Hillingdon are given below. I've no idea why the ONS reply to John McDonnell's parliamentary question number 163589 should vary so much from the previously published data in 1994 and 2000.

Year	Rate of defects from ONS published data	Rate of defects from reply to PQ 163589
1987	91.3	
1988	119.6	
1989	78.9	
1990	33.7	
1991	85.5	
1992	70.6	
1993	84.1	
1994	124.2	194.8
1995	152.0	140.3
1996	129.5	146.7
1997	189.3	177.8
1998	109.8	107.0
1999	131.3	146.2
2000	267.4	348.6
2001	242.3	266.9

Note that North West London had the highest rate of defects in London according to the recently published 2002 data.

The response to PQ 163606 is online and provides no useful information as the ONS construed "incidence of birth defects" as the numbers of recorded defects, and fails to include the terminations for defects. Also the data is provided by government region and not by the 100 locations.

Table A: "Number of babies born with selected conditions" from Congenital Anomaly Statistics 1997 [1987-1997] and from Table 2a data, 1998-2001

	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
Central nervous system anomalies	511	509	426	360	324	319	255	256
Anencephalus	31	41	34	26	22	32	14	26
Spina Bifida	209	157	135	120	104	82	81	47
Hydrocephalus	117	137	109	92	102	99	71	79
Cleft lip with or without cleft palate	588	529	543	542	526	492	438	444
Cleft palate	251	274	275	217	261	239	220	185
Cardiovascular anomalies	922	726	820	612	577	545	507	489
Hypospadias & epispadias	1,123	1,102	1,063	869	740	545	551	535
Talipes	2,183	2,080	1,938	1,090	922	767	645	717
Down's Syndrome	459	428	487	415	440	394	311	314
Total defects	6,394	5,983	5,830	4,343	4,018	3,514	3,093	3,092
Total recorded births	684,566	696,561	690,608	709,034	702,134	692,452	676,887	668,114
Rate per 10,000 births	93.4	85.9	84.4	61.3	57.2	50.7	45.7	46.3
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	
Central nervous system anomalies	253	239	206	258	265	348	233	
Anencephalus	35	24	30	22	25	27	12	
Spina Bifida	75	60	48	62	61	83	47	
Hydrocephalus	66	69	61	73	61	97	65	
Cleft lip with or without cleft palate	385	405	375	384	394	390	356	
Cleft palate	187	151	197	199	183	197	191	
Cardiovascular anomalies	459	481	515	624	754	1,113	1,014	
Hypospadias and epispadias	491	513	466	501	555	597	573	
Talipes	709	596	637	609	757	756	664	
Down's syndrome	315	319	282	373	337	393	344	
Total defects	2,975	2,857	2,817	3,105	3,392	4,001	3,499	
Total recorded births	651,315	652,595	645,146	638,950	624,862	607,304	597,506	
Rate per 10,000 births	45.7	43.8	43.7	48.6	54.3	65.9	58.6	

Note: Cardiovascular anomalies listed as "heart and circulatory defects" from 1995 onwards. Talipes listed as "Deformities of feet" by ONS in Table 2a

Prepared by Michael Ryan, 28 April 2004

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## The Who at big festival

The Manic Street Preachers  
are to play this year's Isle  
Of Wight festival.

They will perform as special  
guests of headline act The  
Who on Saturday, June  
12. Stereophonics and  
David Bowie have already  
been confirmed to play  
the three-day event in  
Newport.

The legendary Isle Of Wight  
festival was revived in  
2002 after a 32-year  
absence.

During the 1960s it played  
host to the likes of Bob  
Dylan, The Doors and  
Joni Mitchell. Jimi Hen-  
drix famously appeared  
there in 1970.

Virgin Radio will broadcast  
the festival live over the  
weekend of June 11-13.

Street and the town cen-  
tre have become increas-  
ingly clogged up with  
traffic.

Part of the road was con-  
structed when Somerfield  
supermarket was built in  
the early 1990s, but after  
problems with funding,  
council chiefs anticipated  
the completion of the road  
would need to be develop-  
ment-led.

An application for an  
ambitious £22 million devel-  
opment for a new Tesco  
supermarket and Focus DIY  
store at the Old Smithfield  
site has now been backed by  
the council, it is hoped the  
relief road will go ahead in  
the near future.

As a result, councillors are  
being asked to set aside  
£327,900 to contribute  
towards the construction of  
the rest of the relief road.  
The resources and finance  
committee will discuss the  
matter on Monday.

made by her husband in Iraq  
in which he complains about  
the lack of equipment.

Mrs Roberts said of Mr  
Hoon: "He does have blood  
on his hands, certainly  
Steve's blood."

## Charity worker inspires party

A party is to be held to  
mark the efforts of a hard-  
working north Shropshire  
resident who was recently  
awarded the MBE.

Winnie Goodwin, of  
Cheswardine, was awarded  
the MBE in the New Year for  
her services to charity and  
the community.

Councillors in the parish  
now want to throw their own  
party for Mrs Goodwin as a  
way of saying thank you.

The party will take place  
at the village hall on Febru-  
ary 20 at 8pm.

# Pressure mol tuition vote at

Tony Blair is to face a critical 24 hours  
later this month which could decide his  
future as Prime Minister.

A crucial Commons vote on university  
tuition fees on January 27 will be followed  
less than a day later by publication of the  
Hutton Report into the death of Ministry of  
Defence weapons expert David Kelly.

Mr Blair said at his monthly press confer-  
ence yesterday that he was confident that  
the Government would win the argument -  
and the vote - on tuition fees despite the con-  
tinuing revolt by backbench Labour MPs.

However, should he lose, a vote of confi-  
dence would be held the following day amid  
all the fall-out surrounding the Hutton find-  
ings.

And Mr Blair was today holding talks with  
senior ministers on the progress of his pub-  
lic sector reforms.

The ministers were discussing the impact

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# Council accused of breaching rights

Shropshire County Council has been  
accused of breaching human rights by  
ignoring the health risks in its waste  
blueprint.

The claim was made yesterday at the  
public inquiry which is considering  
objections to the Shropshire Waste  
Local Plan.

Michael Ryan, a chartered civil engi-  
neer from Shrewsbury, said his objec-  
tions were health-related.

His recent research into birth defect

data had proved that the adverse  
health effects of industrial processes,  
including disposal of waste by landfill  
and incineration, had not been consid-  
ered anywhere in England and Wales.

He told the inquiry inspector that  
the plan was vague in respect of the  
final treatment of waste and incinera-  
tion and other "unsafe treatments"  
were possible.

"The Local Waste Plan is unclear  
whether hazardous waste is to be dis-

posed of in Shropshire and fails to  
mention what waste, hazardous or oth-  
erwise, is to be imported into Shrop-  
shire for disposal or storage," said Mr  
Ryan.

He added: "The proposed local waste  
plan is a blueprint for any form of  
waste disposal and by ignoring health  
implications at this crucial early stage,  
Shropshire County Council has  
breached the human rights of every cit-  
izen."

## Restful line- for Buddhis

Telford Buddhist Pri  
offering a program  
restful events.

The events coming  
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For more inform  
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# chase

4 March 2004, PAGE 23  
 STARS  
 SUREPSURE

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AGA Foodservice	256	+1 1/2
Alvis	211	+1
AMEC	284	-2
Amstrad	177 1/2	
Andrews Syke	197	
Anglesey Mining	4 1/4	
Aviva Foods	61 3/8	-1 1/8
Aviva	380 7/8	+3 3/8
Aston Villa	202	
Aviva	579	-1 1/4
AWG	559	-1
BAA	543 1/2	+1
BAE Systems	207	+2
Baggeridge Brick	169	-3 1/2
Beattie (James)	136	
BG	316 1/2	-5 1/2
BP	444	-1
Brambles	214	+3 1/4
British Airways	324 3/4	+13 1/4
Brown & Jackson	87	
BSKYB	720 1/2	-1 1/2
BT Grp	178 1/2	-1
Cadbury-Schw	443 1/4	+3 1/4
Carillion	185 1/8	+1 1/8
Centrica	216 3/4	-3 1/4
Coe Group	18	+3 1/4
Corus	45 3/4	+3 1/4
Dairy Crest	486 1/8	-7 1/8
Dechra Pharms	146	
Dixons	157 3/4	+2 1/4
EMI	263 1/4	+1 1/2
Euro Disney	31	
Eurotunnel	38 1/8	+7 1/8
Friends Provident	151 1/4	+1 1/4
GKN	256 1/4	+1 1/4

missing, and did not return until 15 minutes later when he said he had been robbed.

He said he had heard a banging on the fire exit door and opened it to see a man he did not know, waving a knife "like a madman".

He said the man forced him to open the safe and hand over the money before slashing Chambers' back and making his escape.

But Mr Clarkson said evidence cast doubt on Chambers' claims. He said a knife was found, with the defendant's blood on the handle.

"The crown says the defendant touched the knife himself, either slashing himself or getting someone else to do it for him, in order to cover up the theft."

Chambers denies both charges.

The trial continues.

## Chilly night heated up by ceilidh

More than 60 people braved the cold to attend a St David's night celebration at Knighton Community Centre on Monday.

The event was organised by the Community Centre Management Committee and St Edward's Church.

A cool start to the evening was hotted up by a ceilidh band who persuaded a number of people to join in a few energetic, traditional dances before the centre's caretaker and secretary managed to get the heating in the main hall working again.

Matilda Phillips sang a selection of traditional Welsh songs accompanied by Olwen Breeze.

Father Andrew Pearce, vicar of East Radnor, gave a short talk, and the evening ended with more music.

Acting chairman Trevor Johnson thanked everyone who helped to make the event such a success.

## Cult show for summer

Shropshire followers of sci-fi films and cult television programmes are in for a treat later this year when a

# MP's alarm at rising level of birth defects

Montgomeryshire MP Lembit Opik has pledged to lobby the Government over the alarming increase in birth defects in Wales after receiving a "disappointing" letter from the Department of Health.

Mr Opik said he had written to the department hoping to prompt an inquiry into the increasing number of youngsters born with birth defects in Wales.

But the reply, he said, referred the MP on to HM Treasury.

"The levels of birth defects are alarming, this is a matter that urgently needs to be looked into."

"I expected the Department of Health to understand, and commit to looking into an issue with such large public health repercussions," said Mr Opik.

But a reply from the Department of Health said: "Your letters has been passed to HM Treasury who have responsibility for matters regarding statistics."

Mr Opik said he was disappointed with the reply.

"I understand the need to look into statistics, but I was surprised the Department of Health wouldn't handle it themselves," he said.

"I can think of no other department that has as much authority to handle the issue of birth defects."

"Consulting statistics may help to explain the problem, but statistics won't give us solutions."

"If the answer to my inquiries comes from HM Treasury, that means the Department of Health will not be offering any assistance is confronting this problem, and birth defects will likely continue to rise. I have resigned myself to the fact that this is the beginning of a big campaign."

## Hundreds ready for an island existence

Hundreds of people have applied for two "get away from it all" jobs on a tiny 1,000-acre island.

Lundy Island, just 10 miles off the north Devon coast, has advertised for a multi-skilled handyman and a general assistant.

They will live on the three-and-a-half mile long granite outcrop, which has a population of 20 full-time workers. The pair will have to have a partner or spouse willing to work in the Marisco Tavern - Lundy's only pub - and help out with housekeeping duties.

After advertising the jobs at the beginning of last month, Lundy general manager Paul Roberts was "amazed" to receive more than 500 applications from across the UK.

Some of them were prepared to take a pay cut of more than 50 per cent for the chance to work and live on the island, he said.

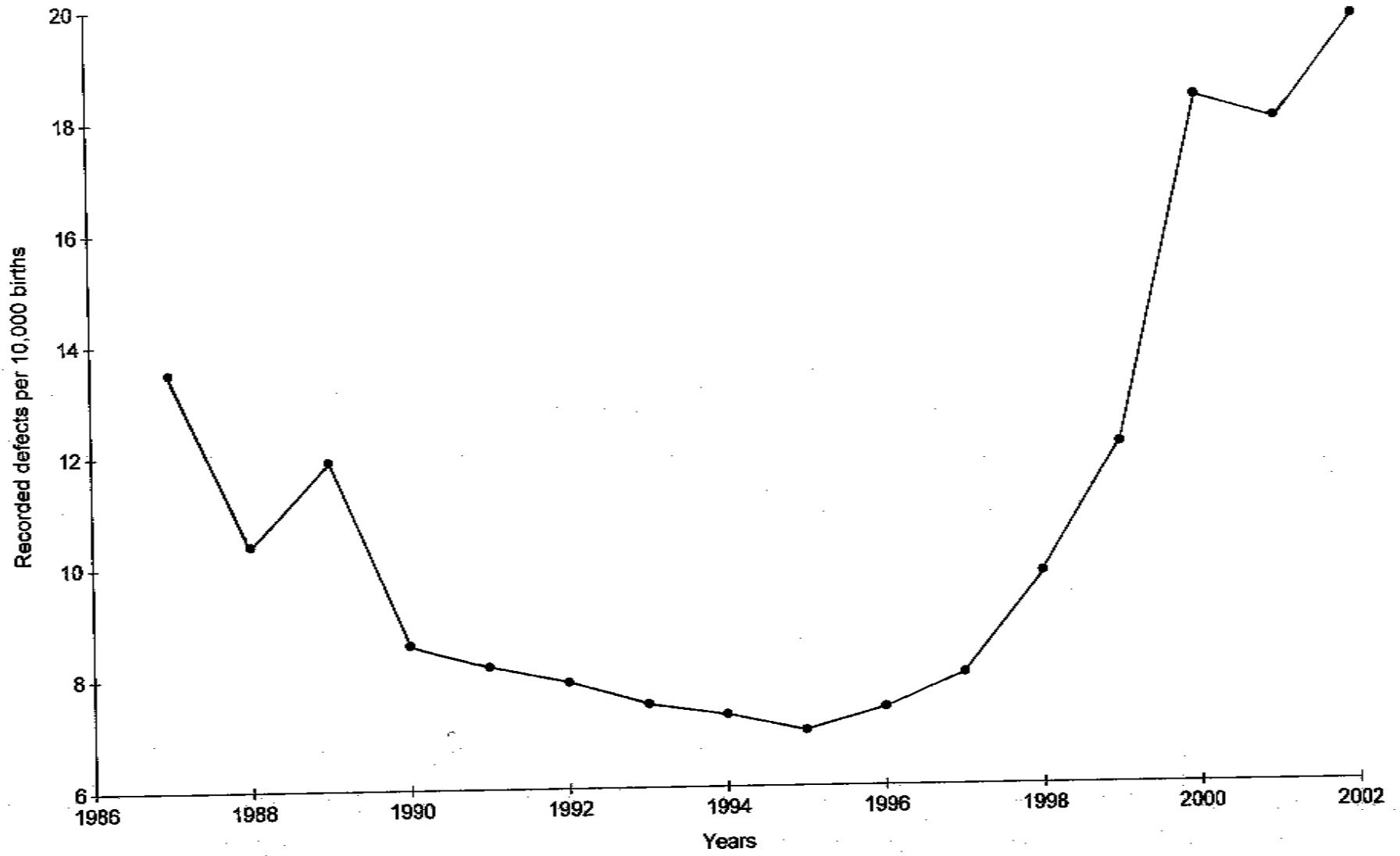
He is now drawing up a shortlist for each post of three candidates, who will go through a "working interview" on the island.

The successful six candidates will be flown out to the island next week.

Heart & circulatory defects in England & Wales from 1987-2002 based on ONS data. Rates are per 10,000 births [ie live & stillbirths]

Year	England			Wales			England & Wales		
	Defects	Births	Rate per 10,000	Defects	Births	Rate per 10,000	Defects	Births	Rate per 10,000
1987	859	646,554	3.3	63	38,012	16.6	922	684,566	13.5
1988	672	657,551	10.2	54	39,010	13.8	726	696,561	10.4
1989	767	652,413	11.8	53	38,195	13.9	820	690,608	11.9
1990	569	669,988	8.5	43	39,046	11.0	612	709,034	8.6
1991	537	663,878	8.1	40	38,256	10.5	577	702,134	8.2
1992	504	654,765	7.7	41	37,687	10.9	545	692,452	7.9
1993	469	640,094	7.3	38	36,793	10.3	507	676,887	7.5
1994	446	632,539	7.1	43	35,575	12.1	489	668,114	7.3
1995	426	616,663	6.9	33	34,652	9.5	459	651,315	7.0
1996	456	617,529	7.4	25	35,066	7.1	481	652,595	7.4
1997	454	610,466	7.4	61	34,680	17.6	515	645,146	8.0
1998	440	605,330	7.3	184	33,620	54.7	624	638,950	9.8
1999	636	592,596	10.7	118	32,266	36.6	754	624,862	12.1
2000	961	575,855	16.7	152	31,449	48.3	1,113	607,304	18.3
2001	792	566,735	14.0	277	30,771	90.0	1,069	597,506	17.9
2002	896	568,910	15.7	285	30,369	93.8	1,181	599,279	19.7

### Heart & circulatory defects Eng & Wales by Michael Ryan, based on ONS data





**ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY**

**Our ref:** BSY/MAB/1202-62-2800  
**Date:** 23 December 2003

Michael Ryan  
44 Gains Avenue  
Bicton Heath  
Shrewsbury  
SY3 5AN

Dear Michael

**Re: A simple guide to health effects of landfill sites and incinerators**

Thank you for your email dated 12 November 2002. In this letter and the attached documents I have addressed the issues you have raised.

The Environment Agency has a limited role with regard to health protection and it is not appropriate for the Agency to comment on health issues concerning individuals. I would suggest that you talk to your local health professionals on questions related to your son's leukaemia and death and on the patterns of disease and deaths.

I have enclosed a copy of the Agency's position statement on the role of incineration in waste management strategies. In this you will see the conclusions of the Government's expert advisory Committee on the Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food and Consumer Products and the Environment (COC), with respect to the potential risk of cancer and the Government's advisory Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollutants (COMEAP), with respect to the potential health impacts of municipal waste incinerators.

I have also enclosed a recent press release from the Committee on Medical Aspects of Radiation in the Environment (COMARE) that refers to a study currently being undertaken on the geographical distribution of childhood cancer in Great Britain in the last 30 years or so. This study should help improve our understanding of this complex issue.

Finally, I enclose comments on the document "Listening to Local Concerns" that you sent me in June and a current list of incinerators in England and Wales authorised to burn radioactive material. Please note that radiological assessments of proposals to dispose of waste by incineration are undertaken and show that the risk to human health is below internationally agreed thresholds.

Yours sincerely

*Barbara Young*

**BARBARA YOUNG**  
Chief Executive

Environment Agency  
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**List of incinerators authorised to burn radioactive waste in England and Wales**

Addenbooks Hospital, Cambridge  
BNFL Capenhurst, Cheshire  
BNFL Berkeley, Gloucestershire  
British Energy, Heysham, Lancs  
British Energy, Hartlepool, Cleveland  
Bristol University, Bristol  
Clinical Waste Incineration, Sheffield  
Clinical Waste, Denmark Hill, London  
Eurocare, Wrexham  
Glaxo, Stevenage  
Magnox Electric, Wylfa,  
Magnox Electric, Dungeness  
Magnox Electric, Oldbury  
Magnox Electric, Sizewell  
Medical Energy, Worcester  
Medipower Services, Bristol  
North West Energy, Salford  
Nottingham NHS Trust, Nottingham  
S Grndon (Services), Slough  
Shanks Chemical Services, Hythe  
Shanks Chemical Services, Pontypool  
SmithKline Beecham, Welwyn  
South Manchester NHS Trust, Manchester  
St. Mark's Hospital, Northwick Park  
Viridor, Plymouth  
White Rose, Ashford  
White Rose, Bolton  
White Rose, Bournemouth  
White Rose, Ipswich  
White Rose, Leeds  
White Rose, Nottingham  
White Rose, Oldham  
White Rose, Pontefract  
White Rose, Sidcup

December 02

### Hillingdon defects: ONS-v-Hansard by Michael Ryan, based on ONS data

