# MPs reintroduce Ella’s Law to enshrine right to clean air by 2030



A cross-party group of MPs in the UK is set to reintroduce legislation named “Ella’s Law,” honouring nine-year-old Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, who tragically died from an asthma attack linked directly to toxic air pollution. Ella’s death in 2013 near the busy South Circular Road in Lewisham was a watershed moment for environmental and public health law, as she became the first person in the UK to have air pollution listed as a cause of death following a landmark 2020 inquest. The proposed bill aims to enshrine the right to clean air into UK law, compelling the government to achieve clean air standards nationwide by January 2030 in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines. Green MP Sian Berry will present the bill to the House of Commons, supported by Labour, Liberal Democrat, SNP, and Independent MPs, with hopes that it will feature in the next King’s Speech and gain government backing.

Ella’s mother, Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, has been a tireless campaigner for stronger air pollution regulations since her daughter’s death. She expressed hope that the legislation will transcend party politics, emphasising the universal right to breathe clean air, particularly highlighting how poorer and marginalised communities suffer the harshest consequences of pollution. This legislation follows an earlier version of Ella’s Law that was introduced by the Green Party peer Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb in the House of Lords in 2022 and sponsored by Caroline Lucas MP in the Commons before the parliamentary dissolution for the 2024 general election. Rosamund said tackling air pollution should not be a partisan issue, as its impact is felt nationwide regardless of background.

Estimates suggest that toxic air pollution contributes to somewhere between 29,000 and 43,000 premature deaths annually in the UK—a figure that has been a cause of concern for over a decade. Earlier reports, such as those from 2010, placed the death toll from air pollution at between 35,000 and 50,000 each year, with fine particulate matter and sooty particles from transport and industry responsible for shortening lives by an average of seven to eight months. Vulnerable groups living in dense urban areas like central London were found to face even greater risks, with potential life-shortening of up to nine years. The economic cost associated with air pollution-related health issues has been estimated to total between £7 billion and £20 billion annually, reflecting the severe strain on public health systems and communities.

Public health experts further underline the urgency of legislative action. Sarah Sleet, CEO of Asthma + Lung UK, noted that current policies fall short in protecting the millions with lung conditions, with four out of five sufferers reporting worsened symptoms due to poor air quality. The incongruence between the scale of health impacts and policy efficacy underscores a systemic failure to ensure public health through environmental measures.

Ella’s tragic case also set a legal precedent. After her death, the coroner called for law changes to better inform the public about air pollution’s dangers and to enforce stricter governance. This inquest was the first official recognition in the UK that unlawful pollution levels contributed to a child’s death. In October 2023, the UK government departments involved settled a compensation claim brought by Ella’s estate, expressing sorrow and acknowledging the gravity of the loss. However, discussions continue around the complexities of attributing air pollution as a direct cause in individual cases. Experts stress the importance of comprehensive air quality monitoring and robust public health data to address the broader systemic issue adequately.

The renewed push for Ella’s Law arrives at a time when Clean Air Day is observed across the UK, signalling rising public awareness and campaign momentum. Advocates hope that, with cross-party support and continued public pressure, this legislation will herald stronger national commitments to ending toxic air pollution, safeguarding public health, and ultimately preventing further needless deaths like Ella’s.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/), [[5]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-55330945), [[7]](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-56801794)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/), [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/31/proof-air-pollution-killed-my-daughter-ella-new-inquest)
* Paragraph 3 – [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/feb/23/air-pollution-deaths-sooty-particles), [[3]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/mar/22/air-pollution-deaths), [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/31/proof-air-pollution-killed-my-daughter-ella-new-inquest), [[5]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-55330945), [[1]](https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/), [[6]](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/sep/16/how-anti-ulez-campaigners-misused-air-pollution-finding-in-ella-adoo-kissi-debrah-death)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/uk/mps-to-reintroduce-bill-in-name-of-girl-9-who-died-in-pollution-linked-death-2LVKYBACF5L2ZFMMTYJLZZGCIE/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/feb/23/air-pollution-deaths-sooty-particles> - In 2010, The Guardian reported that air pollution, particularly from sooty particles emitted by transport and industry, was linked to approximately 35,000 premature deaths annually in Britain. Environment Minister Jim Fitzpatrick acknowledged this figure during a committee session, highlighting the significant health impact of air pollution. The report also estimated that the economic cost of these health issues ranged between £7 billion and £20 billion each year. This underscores the severe public health and economic consequences of air pollution in the UK.
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/mar/22/air-pollution-deaths> - A 2010 article in The Guardian highlighted that air pollution was responsible for up to 50,000 premature deaths annually in the UK. The Environment Audit Committee's investigation revealed that fine particulate matter from burning fuels could shorten lives by seven to eight months, with vulnerable individuals in areas like central London potentially losing up to nine years. This finding emphasized the urgent need for effective air quality management to protect public health.
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/aug/31/proof-air-pollution-killed-my-daughter-ella-new-inquest> - In 2018, Rosamund Kissi-Debrah, mother of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, wrote in The Guardian about her daughter's death linked to air pollution. Ella, a nine-year-old from Lewisham, London, died in 2013 after a severe asthma attack. A subsequent inquest found that unlawful levels of air pollution contributed to her death. This case marked the first time air pollution was listed as a cause of death in the UK, highlighting the severe health risks associated with poor air quality.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-55330945> - In 2020, BBC News reported that Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah became the first person in the UK to have air pollution listed as a cause of death. The nine-year-old from Lewisham, London, died in 2013 after a severe asthma attack. An inquest found that excessive levels of nitrogen dioxide near her home contributed to her death. This landmark decision underscored the significant health risks posed by air pollution in urban areas.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2023/sep/16/how-anti-ulez-campaigners-misused-air-pollution-finding-in-ella-adoo-kissi-debrah-death> - In 2023, The Guardian discussed how anti-Ulez campaigners misused findings from Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah's death. The article highlighted the complexities in attributing air pollution as a direct cause of death and the challenges in replicating such findings in other cases. Experts emphasized the need for comprehensive air quality monitoring and public health data to better understand and address the impact of air pollution on health.
7. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-56801794> - Following Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah's death, BBC News reported that the coroner called for a change in the law. The inquest into her death found that air pollution contributed to her fatal asthma attack. The coroner recommended that more information about air pollution and its impact be made available to the public, highlighting the need for greater awareness and legislative action to address air quality issues.