Reviewer's report

Title: Mid-term Body Mass Index increase among obese and non-obese individuals in middle life and deprivation status: A cohort study

Version: 2 Date: 21 March 2005
Reviewer: Rebecca Hardy

Reviewer's report:

General
The manuscript has been improved. Although I am not sure I necessarily agree with the conclusions reached in terms of the impact of missing data and the reasons for the difference in findings from other studies, these issues have now been adequately addressed in the discussion.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)
My point regarding the differential drop out by social class was that it may be that those who dropped out were of lower individual social class than those who did not, i.e. that a greater proportion from manual occupations dropped out, thus making the groups based on the Townsend index more homogeneous in terms of their individual social class and characteristics. This could be investigated to some extent by assessing drop out in terms of own social class.

Page 4, second paragraph: The closing bracket starting “(i.e. either in relation to degree of job grade…” is missing.

p<0.000 should be changed to p<0.001. A p-value cannot be less than 0.

Page 6: clarify what is meant by “the true coverage among deprived invitees”.

It is stated that deprivation group is entered as a continuous variable in paragraph 1 on page 9 when analysing baseline differences, but in paragraph 2 it is stated that it was entered as an ordinal variable for the main analyses. The reason from this requires clarification.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
I apologise that my comment related to the presentation of the p-values for each deprivation strata refer to table 3 (not table 2 as I had erroneously stated in my original report).

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published
**Statistical review:** No

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests