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Contributors

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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1953

INCORPORATING THE

Report of the Sanitary Inspector

(Mr. G. W. TATE)

John Wilkinson (Printers) Ltd., Ashington
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To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Ashington.

Madam Chairman and Councillors,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1953.

The vital statistics are very satisfactory. There has been a fractional increase in the birth rate, and a definite fall in the death rate. The still-birth rate has declined and the infantile and tuberculosis mortality rates are the lowest ever recorded in the district.

With the exception of the general death rate all the above-mentioned rates are better than the corresponding rates for the whole of England and Wales and are also better than the average rates for the 160 smaller towns among which Ashington is included.

The total number of deaths under 1 year was only 9 and neo-natal deaths, i.e. under the age of one month, accounted for two-thirds of this total.

The incidence of notifiable infectious diseases was low and new cases of Tuberculosis notified totalled only 14, compared with 25 in the previous year.

It is gratifying to be able to report that, for the fourth successive year, no case of Diphtheria occurred in Ashington and that in the past seven years this disease has caused no deaths.

The housing problem is still with us and the time when every family can have its own home appears to be still distant. There can be no doubt that overcrowding, and the friction which often results when families have to share houses, can have serious ill-effects not only on the physical but also on the mental health of the persons involved and can cause many broken marriages and much unhappiness.

Apart from the perennial problem of housing, there is little else of outstanding importance to record. In the body of the report details are given which show that a large amount of persevering, patient effort has been devoted to the service of the community. The work accomplished, though routine and unexciting, is, nevertheless, important to the health of the people of the district.

In conclusion, I should like to thank members of the Council for the consideration they have shown me and, in particular, for the kind concern which they evinced during my illness at the end of last year. I must also express my appreciation of the work of the Sanitary Inspectors and the help I have received from other departments of the Council.

I am,

Mr. Chairman and Councillors,

Your obedient servant,

C. B. McGregor,

Medical Officer of Health,
Urban District of Ashington.

August, 1954.

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URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ASHINGTON

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1953

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Medical Officer of Health	C. B. McGREGOR, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Assistant Medical Officer	KATHLEEN DICK, M.B., B.S., B.Hy., D.P.H.
Sanitary, Housing, Meat Inspector	G. W. TATE, F.S.I.A., M.R.S.I.
Sanitary, Meat Inspector	H. S. WILSON, M.S.I.A.
Sanitary, Meat Inspector	R. P. BRUCE, R.S.I., S.I.E.J.B.
Office of the Medical Officer of Health	146 Station Road, Ashington.
Telephone	Ashington 2287.
Office of the Sanitary Inspector	Council Chambers, Ashington.
Telephone	Ashington 3210.

SECTION A

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Ashington is an Urban District of 6,057 acres. It is bounded on the south by the River Wansbeck, on the west and north by the Morpeth Rural District, and on the east by the Urban District of Newbiggin-by-the-Sea.

The main industry is coal-mining, but there are also three factories engaged in electrical engineering, and the manufacture of clothing and of cake decorations, respectively. Some employment in agriculture is provided by the eleven farms in the district.

Most of the houses belong to the National Coal Board. The Council will not be faced with a large slub clearance programme, but the majority of houses require modernisation to bring them up to a satisfactory standard.

Area in Acres ...	6,057
Registrar-General's estimate of Resident Population mid-1953 ...	28,430
Rateable Value ...	£131,168
One Penny Rate produces ...	£500
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1953) ...	8,211

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS:

LIVE BIRTHS:	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate ...	472	237	235
Illegitimate ...	12	7	5
	484	244	240

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population ...	17.02
(Comparability Factor 1.05) Standard Birth Rate ...	17.87

STILL BIRTHS:	Total	Male	Female
Legitimate ...	9	5	4
Illegitimate ...	0	0	0
	9	5	4

Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) Births ...	18.26
Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population ...	0.32

DEATHS:	Total	Male	Female
	288	167	121

Death Rate per 1,000 of the population ...	10.13
(Comparability Factor 1.18) Standard Death Rate ...	11.95

Deaths from Puerperal Causes (heading 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List):—

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
No. 30. Pregnancy, Childbirth and Abortion ...	Nil	Nil

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year:—

All Infants per 1,000 live births ...	18.595
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...	19.07
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live Births ...	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages) ...	48
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years) ...	Nil

The Registrar-General supplies the following: —

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1953

		Male	Female
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	1
2.	Tuberculosis (other forms)	—	1
3.	Syphilitic Disease	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough	—	—
6.	Meningococcal Infections	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—
8.	Measles	—	—
9.	Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	—	1
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	5	6
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	7	1
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	—	2
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	—	2
14.	Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	15	10
15.	Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	1	—
16.	Diabetes	1	2
17.	Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	31	16
18.	Coronary Disease, Angina	29	22
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	4	3
20.	Other Heart Disease	19	24
21.	Other Circulatory Disease	7	2
22.	Influenza	—	—
23.	Pneumonia	3	3
24.	Bronchitis	11	5
25.	Other Diseases of Respiratory System	3	1
26.	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	2	—
27.	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	—	2
28.	Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	2	—
30.	Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	—	—
31.	Congenital Malformations	1	2
32.	Other Defined and Ill-defined Diseases	10	10
33.	Motor Vehicle Accidents	4	—
34.	All other Accidents	8	4
35.	Suicide	1	—
36.	Homicide and Operations of War	—	—
		167	121

Deaths of Infants under 1 year :—	Male	Female
Legitimate	6	3
Illegitiamte	—	—
	6	3

CHIEF CAUSES OF DEATH IN ASHINGTON

	Number	% of total deaths
Diseases of Heart and Circulation	110	38.19
Malignant Neoplasms	48	16.67
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	47	16.32
Bronchitis	16	5.56
Accidents (including road accidents)	16	5.56
	237	82.30%

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING 1953

The total number of deaths of children under 1 year was 9, a decrease of 11 on the total for 1952. The mortality rate was 18.595 per 1,000 live births, and is, by a very considerable margin, the lowest ever recorded in Ashington and substantially lower than the national rate.

The Registrar-General's Table S.D.55 gives the Infantile Mortality Rate as follows:—

For England and Wales, 26.8 deaths per 1,000 live births.

For 160 Great Towns, 30.8 deaths per 1,000 live births.

For 160 Smaller Towns (pop. 25,000 - 50,000), 24.3 deaths per 1,000 live births.

The following table shows the comparative mortality rates during the past thirteen years:—

	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Number of deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years	1	1	2	5	2	—	1	1	2	—	1	—	—
Infantile deaths under 1 year	30	23	42	24	27	30	29	29	16	21	24	20	9
Infantile Mortality	74.4	55.4	82.19	44.52	48.82	49.9	46.9	58.1	30.01	39.1	45.8	41.75	18.59

The following table gives details of the cause of death in the different age groups under 1 year:—

INFANTILE MORTALITY, 1953

Cause of Death	Under 1 day	1—6 days	1—2 wks.	2—3 wks.	3—4 wks.	Total under 1 mth.	1—3 mths.	3—6 mths.	6—9 mths.	9—12 mths.	Total 1—12 mths.	Total under 1 year
Prematurity	3	1	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	4
Congenital Abnormality .	—	1	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	2
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Bronchitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1
Meningitis (T.B.)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
Total ..	3	2	1	—	—	6	2	—	—	1	3	9

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

LABORATORY FACILITIES

These are provided by the Public Health Laboratory Service at the Newcastle General Hospital. The extent to which these facilities have been utilised is shown below:—

Specimen sent by	Specimen	Pos	Neg.
Regional Hospital Board Chest Physician	Sputa for B. Tuberculosis	27 ...	265
General Practitioners	do.	— ...	8
Regional Hospital Board Chest Physician	Faeces for B. Tuberculosis	— ...	5
General Practitioner	Swabs for Vincent's Angina	— ...	1
General Practitioner	Swabs for B. Diphtheriae	— ...	1
General Practitioners	Swabs for Haem. Streptococci ...	— ...	2
General Practitioner	Swabs for Staph Aureus	1 ...	—
Medical Officer of Health	Coliform Organisms	1 ...	—
General Practitioner	do.	1 ...	—
Medical Officer of Health	Cream for pathogenic organisms ...	— ...	1
Medical Officer of Health	Urine for pathogenic organisms ...	— ...	20
Medical Officer of Health	Faeces for pathogenic organisms ...	14 ...	81
General Practitioners	do. ...	3 ...	16
Regional Hospital Board Physician ...	do. ...	2 ...	—

AMBULANCE FACILITIES

These are provided by the Northumberland County Council. In Ashington there are now six ambulances, and nine drivers are employed, working shifts, providing a 24-hour service.

NURSING IN THE HOME

Domiciliary nursing and midwifery services are provided by the Northumberland County Council. The staff is as follows :—

1 Superintendent.
3 Midwives.
2 General Nurses and 1 General Relief Nurse.

HOSPITALS

There are two hospitals in the district, the Ashington General Hospital and North Seaton Hospital, and both are controlled by the Newcastle Regional Hospital Board. North Seaton Hospital was formerly the Isolation Hospital and is now used for general nursing of medical cases and for surgical cases transferred from the General Hospital.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS

A Chest Clinic, dealing with cases of Tuberculosis, is held at the Elizabeth Craigs Memorial Clinic in Lintonville Terrace.

These premises, also, are under the control of the Regional Hospital Board. A Chest Physician attends twice weekly.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE

This service is provided by the Northumberland County Council and clinics are held at the Child Welfare Centre, South View, as follows :—

ANTE-NATAL CLINIC

Every Wednesday — morning and afternoon. Every Friday, except the last in the month — held morning and afternoon on the first and third Friday of each month, and on the fourth Friday when there are five Fridays in the month. Held in the morning only on the second Friday. A doctor is always in attendance.

POST-NATAL CLINICS

Held monthly — on last Tuesday in the month.

CHILD WELFARE CLINICS

Every Monday and Tuesday morning, and Thursday afternoon.

SUN-RAY CLINICS

Every Monday and Thursday morning, during winter months only.

TODDLERS' CLINICS

Every Tuesday afternoon, except the last Tuesday in the month.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

All day the last Friday in the month.

OPHTHALMIC CLINICS

On Saturday mornings at two-monthly intervals.

DENTAL CLINICS

All day, every weekday.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER. All the properties in the district are supplied with water from the Tynemouth Corporation supply, and samples taken periodically from various points in the area show that it continues to be of the highest purity. The following table shows the results of the examinations carried out :—

Source	Date	Coliform bacilli per 100 ml.
Town Supply	15/4/53	Nil
Town Supply	12/6/53	Nil
Town Supply	6/8/53	Nil

There are in the district 8,211 occupied houses, and of these 13 are supplied by standpipe, representing 0.15% of the total.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE. During the year 209 drainage systems were repaired or reconstructed, and in all cases these were tested and approved by this Department. In the majority of cases consultations and discussions with owners or builders have taken place, and advice given by your Inspectors has always been readily acted upon, with the maximum benefit to all concerned.

The provision of a sewerage disposal plant to deal with Bothal Village is to be considered, which, if approved, will enable conversions to be carried out in the village.

RIVERS AND STREAMS. No action was taken under this heading during the year.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION. During the year two earth closets were converted to the water carriage system. In each of these cases a grant towardsthe cost of conversion was made to the owners.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA. Emphasis on the use of informal action to secure the carrying out of essential repairs continues, with uniformly satisfactory results.

Complaints about disrepair are often advanced by applicants for Council houses, but when these are put into proper perspective are invariably found to be of little moment. Instances have been found where owners have endeavoured to carry out works of repair, but Tenants have declined to co-operate for fear of jeopardising their chance of a Council house. In such cases the taking of a firm line with the tenant achieved the desired result.

The implementation of Improvement Grants under the Housing Act should eventually show a considerable raising of housing standards in the district. When the implications have been more thoroughly examined by property-owners it is reasonable to hopefor a steady programme of work in this much-to-be-desired direction.

Seventeen Statutory Notices to secure the carrying out of works to abate nuisances were served. In one case it was found necessary to resort to Court action because of persistent failure to abate the nuisance. The case was adjourned for two months to allow the defendant time to carry out the necessary work, but when the Magistrates learned at the adjourned hearing that nothing had been done an Order was made. At the end of the year the position was unaltered.

The following table summarises the notices served:—

Nuisances dealt with and work required to be done	Verbal or Written Notice	Complied with
To clear choked drain or w.c. . .	97	97
To provide ashbins	30	27
To repair gutters and rain water pipes	52	35
To repair sinks and waste pipes .	8	6
Defective roofs, damp walls	59	43
Defective kitchen ranges	28	25
Defective outbuildings	39	28
Defective w.c. basins	3	3
Defective seshcords	24	18
Defective wall plaster	3	2
Offensive accumulations	2	2
Defective food stores	9	7
Defective ceilings	25	19
Defective water supply	12	10
Other defects	19	17

SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS. The Institute Bath, which is open to the public as well as to Institute members, was inspected at frequent intervals during the year. Examinations of the chlorine content and bacteriological examinations of the water were carried out, with satisfactory results. During the year the toilet facilities and dressing cubicles were re-decorated.

SCHOOLS. All Schools in the district have a main water supply and a water carriage system. Following an outbreak of dysentery last year at one school a new block of 18 W.C.s was provided for the children, and the installation was supervised by this Department.

CINEMAS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS. Whilst no complaints were received during the year these buildings all received routine inspections, and improvements to the sanitary Convenience at two cinemas were carried out by informal action.

CAMPING AND CARAVAN SITES. There are no such sites in the area. During the year the Council gave consideration to the matter, but because of the lack of suitable sites, and the proximity of facilities in adjoining districts, no action was taken.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION. On this subject, little impact appears to have been made on the majority of householders in the district, with the result that the deposit of soot, etc., remains demontrably high. Because coal is by no means in short supply in the district, its value and the need for its careful use enjoy a low rating. Until householders appreciate the ill effects on public health and the unnecessary expenditure of time and money to attempt the elimination of dirt they themselves produce, little progress will be made. The loss of sunshine in Ashington by reason of the shockingly wasteful use of coal must be considerable and this, together with the harmful constituents of atmospheric dust produced thereby needs to be clearly realised by all who profess to be concerned with healthy living. Apart from the economics of the situation, this continued "fouling of one's own nest" is tragic.

COLLIERY SPOILBANKS. The general question of the colliery spoilbanks was referred by the Council during the year to the Northumberland Urban District Councils Association for a collective examination of the problem. The subject has assumed much bigger proportions and is receiving attention in different parts of the country in different ways. It seems now essential that this matter be tackled as a national problem, and at the highest level.

The concern of Ashington with the question is that tipping on number 1 and 2 stone heaps reached that a third stone heap be permitted, with a maximum with the Area Officials of the N.C.B. it was agreed its maximum during the year, and following consultation life of three years, it being felt that this period can be used for an examination of the question at a higher level. The new heap did not come into operation by the end of the year, but arrangements for it to commence were well advanced. The firing on the stone heaps will continue to be marked so long as coal is tipped in the quantities at present deposited, and this aspect of the matter should undoubtedly receive urgent attention. Available land for tipping in the Ashington area is very limited and unless some positive approach to the problem has been reached by early 1956 a serious position is likely to arise. The co-operation of the Alkali, etc., Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government during the year was again much appreciated.

RODENT CONTROL. The full co-operation between the general public and your Sanitary Department was evidenced by the solid work carried out during the year. There is no doubt that by reason of the free service provided, early indications of the presence of rats and/or mice are given, and this helps in the work.

Feeding of birds, while commendable, should be carried out by appropriate methods and not by the over-enthusiastic scattering of waste food indiscriminately, to the advantage of rodents. During the year all types of promises and properties (dwelling houses, shops, stores, canteens, clubs, allotments, schools, refuse tip, greyhound stadium, factories, railway embankments ,open spaces, etc.) were serviced, baited or gassed according to circumstances, and much good work in the extermination of vermin was completed.

The following table marks the work done :—

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				
	L.A.	Dwelling Houses	Agricultural	All other (including business premises)	Total
Total no. of properties in district	8	8042	27	930	9007
No. inspected because of —					
(a) Complaint	—	75	3	26	104
(b) As routine surveys	8	182	21	160	374
No. of rat infestations —					
(a) Major	1	—	6	4	11
(b) Minor	—	53	13	27	93
No. of mouse infestations —					
(a) Major	—	—	—	8	8
(b) Minor	1	24	—	12	37
No. of infested properties treated by Local Authority	2	77	7	51	137

BURIAL GROUNDS. A check-up on the spaces available in the three burial grounds indicates that at the present rate of committal there is a future of about seven years in the two Church of England burial grounds, and little more than two years in the Roman Catholic burial ground. In view of this an early examination of the matter is desirable so that appropriate action can be taken in time.

PET ANIMALS. There are no shop premises in Ashington licensed under these provisions, but the lessee of the place known as Ashington Market hired out stalls to persons trading in pets.

This not being a market within the meaning of the term and because of the inability of the stall-holders to provide the minimum requirements of the Act, the Council declined to issue a licence. Because of persistent ignoring by two traders of warnings, legal proceedings were instituted against them for selling pet animals without a licence. Fines of £1 and 7/6 respectively were imposed against the traders.

To avoid any misconception, amendment of the definition of a market seems necessary to prevent the possibility that a collection of stalls set up in any place can be classified as a market without regard to other factors.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT—Year ending 31st December, 1953

	No. of Inspections during year	No. of Defects or Contraventions of Bye-laws	No. of Informal Notices served	Defects remedied by Informal Action	No. of Statutory Notices served	Defects remedied by Statutory Action	Legal Proceedings
HOUSING							
Structural Defects	873	257	234	154	48	40	1
Defective Food Store	30	9	7	2	3	2	—
Dampness	129	59	42	31	17	12	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
WATER SUPPLY							
Insufficient .. / Unsatisfactory	34	12	10	10	2	—	—
DRAINAGE							
Insufficient / Defective	167	74	—	74.	—	—	—
SANITARY CONVENIENCES							
Insufficient / Defective	223	100	3	100	—	—	—
Food Premises	724	12	—	12	—	—	—
Dairies	6	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slaughterhouses	946	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tents, Vans, etc.	17	3	2	2	1	1	—
Offensive Trades	46	—	—	—	—	—	—
Factories and Workplaces	137	17	—	17	—	—	—
Keeping of Animals	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Insanitary Ashpits and Bins	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Offensive Accumulations	9	2	2	2	—	—	—
Smoke Nuisances	63	11	2	11	—	—	—
Total	3410	556	302	415	70	55	1

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 AND 1948

There are 120 factories and workshops in the district. The following tables give details of the inspections made and the defects found during the year under review.

The "other premises" included in section (iii) of Table 1 are two building sites on which sanitary accommodation had to be provided.

There are no outworkers in the district.

1. *INSPECTIONS.*

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	38	47	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	80	86	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) . ..	2	4	—	—
Total	120	137	—	—

2. *CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.*

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	5	6	—	1	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	1	1	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ..	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences:					
(a) Insufficient	1	1	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	3	9	—	6	—
(c) Not separate for sexes . ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act ..	—	—	—	—	—
Total	10	17	—	7	—

SECTION D

HOUSING

TABULAR STATEMENT OF HOUSING FOR THE YEAR

Houses completed during the year:—

(a) By Local Authority 56
(b) By other Bodies or Persons 9

1. *CLOSING AND DEMOLITION OF HOUSES*

A. *Formal Action*

(1) Number of houses demolished during 1953 as a result of Clearance Schemes or other formal action ... ... Nil

(Number of houses included in above which were from pre-war confirmed Clearance Areas ... ... Nil)

(2) Number of houses *closed* but not demolished as a result of formal action ... ... Nil

B. *Informal Action*

(1) Number of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings as a result of informal action and not included above 2

2. *RECONDITIONING AND REPAIR*

Number of houses made fit during 1953 by procedure under either Housing or Public Health Acts:

(*a*) As a result of informal action 154
(*b*) By owners as a result of statutory notice 14
(*c*) By Local Authority in default of owners ... ... Nil

3. *IMPROVEMENT GRANTS: HOUSING ACT, 1949*

	Number of separate Houses
(*a*) Applications submitted to Local Authority during year	16
(*b*) Applications rejected by Local Authority	—
(*c*) Applications forwarded to Ministry	—
(*d*) Applications rejected by Ministry.	—
(*e*) Applications approved	—
(*f*) Total number of applications approved since inception of scheme	—

At 31st December, 1953, the scheme was approved in principle, but no applications had been approved by the Council at that date.

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

ICE-CREAM (HEAT TREATMENT) REGULATIONS, 1947

During the year 8 samples of ice-cream were taken and submitted to the prescribed tests under the above Regulations. Reports were returned as follows:—

Grade 1 — 4 samples.
Grade 2 — 2 samples.
Grade 3 — 2 samples.

FOOD SHOPS AND FOOD-PREPARING PREMISES

The number of food premises, by type, in the area is as follows:—

Confectionery	19
Grocery and General Dealers	101
Butchers	19
Greengrocery	12
Bakery	12
Temperance Bars	10
Fish (Wet)	3
Fish and Chips	18
Cafes	4

Sixty premises are registered for the sale of ice-cream and five for the manufacture of preserved, etc., meat.

Seven premises are registered as dairies and 16 other premises are registered for the sale of sterilized milk.

Seven hundred and twenty-four visits to food-preparing premises were made during the year, and contraventions of the Byelaws regarding the handling of food or of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, were found in twelve cases. All of these contraventions were remedied after letters or interviews.

Action was taken against one bakery firm in the district for having a stotty cake in which was found a portion of a cigarette, and the Magistrates imposed a fine of £10 and costs.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

The Ministry of Food Slaughtering Depot for Ashington and Newbiggin was situated in premises belonging to the Ashington Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd., and during the year the following animals were slaughtered:—

	Bullocks	Heifers	Cows	Bulls	Calves	Pigs	Sheep
Normal Kill	1089	1086	186	4	649	46	8813
Casualties	23	20	51	13	38	33	347
Owners' Risk	6	4	25	—	—	—	—
Total	1118	1110	262	17	687	79	9160

The amount of meat and organs condemned, together with the reasons for condemnation, is set out in the following tables. All meat and offal condemned is processed under Ministry of Food supervision for the extraction of fat, glues, etc.

MEAT AND OTHER ORGANS CONDEMNED, SURRENDERED AND DESTROYED FOR TUBERCULOSIS

Bovine:—

Lungs	122
Heads and tongues	69
Skirts	20
Livers	11
Hearts	9
Mesenteries	8
Spleens	3
Tripes	2
Beef	90 lbs.

Carcases (including seven casualties and 1 Owners' risk — 18
(Total weight 903¾ stones).

Swine:—

Heads	2

For other Defined Diseases

Bovine:—

Livers	Cirrhosis (whole) 352, (part 432, abscesses 20, echinococcus cysts 19.
Heads and Tongues	Actinomycosis 26, c. bovis 5.
Lungs	Pleurisy 8, parasites 15, actinomycosis 1, pneumonia 2.
Udders	Mastitis 46.
Stomachs	Inflammation 12.
Gut	Johne's disease 22, inflammation 14.
Skirts	Abscesses 9, c. bovis 5, inflammation 1.
Spleens	Infarcts 2.
Hearts	C. bovis 5, pericarditis 2.
Kidneys	Nephritis 2.
Beef	Bruising 98 stones, abscesses 24½ stones, fat necrosis 60 lbs.
Carcases (of which 9 were casualties) ...	Johne's disease with emaciation 2, acute peritonitis 1, generalised carcinoma 1, septic metritis 1, oedema and emaciation 3, septic mastitis 1, malignant neoplasms 1, emaciation and ill-setting 1. Total 11 (total weight 392¼ stones).

Sheep:—

Plucks	Pneumonia 119, parasites 32, abscesses 18, pleurisy 1.
Livers	Cirrhosis 3.
Gut	Inflammation 16.
Heads	Abscesses 17, bruising 4.
Stomachs	Inflammation 3.
Mutton	Bruising 106 lbs., abscesses 823 lbs., arthritis 58 lbs.
Carcases (of which 46 were casualties) ...	Oedema and emaciation 28, septicaemia 8, septic pneumonia 9, oedema and illsetting 4, illbleeding 2, moribund 1, pyaemia 1, septic arthritis 1, traumatism 1, acute mastitis 1, emaciation and illsetting 1. (Total 57 (total weight 190 stones).

Calves:—

Plucks	Pneumonia 2.
Heads	Inflammation 1.
Stomachs	Inflammation 2.
Carcases (of which three were casualties) ...	Immaturity 52, pyaemia 1, jaundice 1, septicaemia 1. Total 55 (total weight 117 stones).

Swine:—

Lungs	Pneumonia 9.
Livers	Parasites 1.
Stomachs	Inflammation 3.
Gut	Inflammation 8.
Kidneys	Nephritis 2.
Pork	Bruising 292 lbs.
Carcases (all casualties)	Pathological emaciation 1, acute rheumatism 1. Total 2 (total weight 102 lbs.).

CARCASES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
No. killed and inspected	2245	262	687	9160	79
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS					
Whole carcases condemned	8	3	55	57	2
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	423	164	4	173	14
Percentage affected with disease other than tuberculosis . ..	19.2	63.7	8.6	2.5	20.3
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY					
Whole carcases condemned ..	11	7	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	115	51	—	—	2
Percentage affected with tuberculosis	5.6	22.1	—	—	2.5

OTHER FOODS. The following foods were found to be unfit and were condemned and destroyed :—

Poultry	163 lbs.
Canned Goods	1723 tins
Bread, Flour and Cakes	654 lbs.

SECTION F

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Hospital accommodation for infectious disease is provided at Walkergate Hospital, Newcastle.

TABLE SHOWING ANALYSIS OF NOTIFIED CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES UNDER AGE GROUPS

	Age Unknown	Under 1 year	1 — 2 years	3 — 4 years	5 — 9 years	10 — 14 years	15 — 19 years	20 — 34 years	35 — 44 years	45 — 64 years	65 yrs. and over	Total	Admitted to Hospital	Deaths
Scarlet Fever	—	—	6	8	16	2	—	—	—	—	—	32	—	—
Pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	5	2	8	—	6
Dysentery	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	3	—	—
Measles	—	4	10	13	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	30	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	2	8	4	6	1	—	—	—	—	—	21	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	1	4	—	—
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
Meningococcal Meningitis	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	—
Typhoid	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	—

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

There was no major outbreak of any notifiable infectious disease during 1953.

TYPHOID FEVER

The single case of this disease was the result of infection being transmitted by a previously-known carrier.

DYSENTERY

Three cases of Sonne Dysentery were notified during the year; one in April, one in August and one in December.

The first patient was a member of a household of nine persons. On immediate investigation it was found that four other persons were infected with the organism and, later, two more were found to be excreting Sh. Sonnei. None of these six persons was ill and all were regarded as symptomless carriers. One, a school child, continued to harbour the germ for at least a month and had to be excluded from school for two months before she was considered free from infection.

The case which occurred in August was also a member of a large household, but no other member of the family was found to be infected.

The remaining case appeared to have acquired the infection while working in another area.

ACUTE POLIOMYELITIS

Only one case of this disease was noted during the year. The patient was a child of two years who rapidly developed respiratory and bulbar paralysis and died within three days of the onset of the illness. No connection with any other case could be discovered.

DIPHTHERIA

No case of Diphtheria occurred in 1953. This means that during the past four years this disease has caused no illness and for seven consecutive years it has caused no deaths in Ashington.

The following table shows the notifications and deaths in the past 20 years :—

	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
Cases	196	115	56	32	175	179	8	5	12	18	34	197	76	9	5	1	—	—	—	—
Deaths	3	4	—	3	5	4	—	1	2	2	2	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

During 1953 there were treated for the first time, at Child Welfare Centres, at the schools and by private doctors, 428 pre-school and 224 school children. In addition, re-inforcing injections were given to 216 pre-school and 1,102 school children.

The annual return required by the Ministry of Health for the year 1953 took a different form from that for previous years, in that it distinguished between children who had completed a course of immunisation in the years 1949 to 1953, and those who had done so in 1948 or earlier. It is estimated that 4,535 children in Ashington, under the age of 15 years, at 31st December, 1953, had completed a course of treatment during the preceding five years and that 986 had been immunised in 1948 or earlier.

The percentage of children treated in the five years 1949-1953 is now termed "the Immunity Index".

The return shows an Immunity Index of 13.9 for children under one year, 70.7 for children aged 1 - 4 years, and 76.3 for children aged 5 - 14 years.

If the total figures are considered, 59.49% of pre-school children, 99.55% of school children and 85.94% of all children under the age of 15 have been immunised at some time.

The following table, supplied by the Ministry of Health and the Registrar-General, shows the steady decline of Diphtheria in England and Wales since the beginning of the Immunisation Campaign.

TOTAL OF DEATHS AND NOTIFICATIONS IN THE PAST 13 YEARS

Year	Deaths	Cases (Original uncorrected)	Corrected
1941	2,641	50,797	—
1942	1,827	41,404	—
1943	1,371	34,662	—
1944	934	(29,949)	23,199
1945	722	(25,246)	18,596
1946	472	(18,283)	11,986
1947	244	(10,465)	5,609
1948	156	(8,035)	3,575
1949	84	(4,971)	1,890
1950	49	(2,833)	962
1951	34	—	699
1952	31	—	375
1953	24*	—	240*

* Provisional

The average annual number of deaths for the ten-year period 1931 - 40 was 2,800.

The following table, which uses figures from the Registrar-General's return S.D. 55, shows the comparative figures of notifications of certain infectious diseases in England and Wales, the 160 smaller towns, and Ashington.

Disease	Cases Notified in the District	Rate per 1,000 of population Ashington	160 Smaller Towns	England & Wales
Typhoid Fever	1	0.04	0.00	0.00
Pneumonia	8	0.28	0.76	0.84
Measles	30	1.06	12.32	12.36
Whooping Cough	21	0.74	3.38	3.58
Meningococcal Infections	2	0.07	0.03	0.03
Poliomyelitis, Non-Paralytic ...	—	—	0.04	0.04
Poliomyelitis, Paralytic	1	0.04	0.06	0.07
Erysipelas	4	0.14	0.13	0.14

TUBERCULOSIS

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1953

	New Cases				Deaths			
	Resp.		Non-Resp.		Resp.		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1 - 4 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 - 14 years	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 - 24 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 - 34 years	1	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
35 44 years	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
45 - 54 years	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55 - 64 years	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—
65 years and over	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total ...	5	9	—	—	1	1	—	1

Case Rate of notified Respiratory Tuberculosis — 0.49 per 1,000 of the population.

TUBERCULOSIS

Notifications of Tuberculosis totalled 14 Respiratory compared to 18 in 1952. There were 2 deaths from Respiratory Tuberculosis and one from Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis.

DEATH RATE FROM TUBERCULOSIS

In Ashington — 0.11 per 1,000 of the population.
In 160 Smaller Towns (25,000 - 50,000) — 0.19 per 1,000 of the population.
In England and Wales — 0.20 per 1,000 of the poputation.

Deaths of notified cases	1
Deaths of non-notified cases	2
Total Deaths from Tuberculosis ..., ...	3

MORTALITY FROM MALIGNANT NEOPLASMS

Site	MALES							FEMALES					
	10 - 14	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 +	Total	35 - 44	45 - 54	55 - 64	65 - 74	75 +	Total
Brain	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tongue	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tonsil	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nasopharynx	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Larynx	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lung and bronchus	—	—	1	4	2	—	7	—	1	—	—	—	1
Breast	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Oesophagus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Stomach	—	—	3	—	—	2	5	—	1	1	2	1	5
Pancreas	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Liver	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bowel	1	—	—	—	4	1	6	1	—	—	1	1	3
Rectum	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Kidney	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Peritoneum	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Bladder	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Uterus	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2
Prostate	—	—	—	1	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lymphatic and blood-forming tissues	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Gall-bladder	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Totals ..	1	1	6	6	8	6	28	3	4	5	6	2	20

Death rate from malignant neoplasms — 1.69 per 1,000 of population.

ANNUAL REPORTS OF MEDICAL OFFICERS OF HEALTH — 1953

VITAL STATISTICS

Birth-rates, Death-rates, Analysis of Mortality, Maternal Mortality and Case-rates for Certain Infectious Diseases in the Year 1953. Provisional figures based on Quarterly Returns

	England and Wales	160 County Boroughs and Great Towns* (including London)	160 Smaller Towns (Resident Population 25,000-50,000 at 1951 Census)	London Administrative County
Births	**Rates per 1,000 Home Population**			
Live Births	15.5	17.0	15.7	17.5
Still Births	0.35	0.43	0.34	0.38
	22.4 (a)	24.8 (a)	21.4 (a)	21.0 (a)
Deaths				
All Causes	11.4	12.2	11.3	12.5
Typhoid and paratyphoid	0.00	0.00	—	—
Whooping Cough	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00
Diphtheria	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Tuberculosis	0.20	0.24	0.19	0.24
Influenza	0.16	0.15	0.17	0.15
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Acute poliomyelitis (incl. polioencephalitis)	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Pneumonia	0.55	0.59	0.52	0.64
Notifications (Corrected)				
Typhoid fever	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
Paratyphoid fever	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Meningococcal infection	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03
Scarlet Fever	1.39	1.50	1.44	1.02
Whooping cough	3.58	3.72	3.38	3.30
Diphtheria	0.01	0.01	0.01	—
Erysipelas	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.12
Smallpox	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Measles	12.36	11.27	12.32	8.09
Pneumonia	0.84	0.92	0.76	0.73
Acute poliomyelitis (incl. polioencephalitis)				
Paralytic	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.07
Non-paralytic	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03
Food Poisoning	0.24	0.25	0.24	0.38
Puerperal pyrexia	18.23 (a)	24.33 (a)	12.46 (a)	28.61 (a)
Deaths	**Rates per 1,000 Live Births**			
All causes under 1 year of age	26.8 (b)	30.8	24.3	24.8
Enteritis and diarrhoea under 2 years of age	1.1	1.3	0.9	1.1

Maternal Mortality in England and Wales

	Intermediate List No. and cause	Number of Deaths	Rates per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births	Rates per million women aged 15-44
A115	Sepsis of pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	68	0.10	—
A116	Abortion with toxaemia	7	0.01	1
A116	Other toxaemias of pregnancy and the puerperium	166	0.24	—
A117	Haemorrhage of pregnancy and childbirth	90	0.13	—
A118	Abortion without mention of sepsis or toxaemia	30	0.04	3
A119	Abortion with sepsis	39	0.06	4
A120	Other complications of pregnancy, childbirth and the puerperium	125	0.18	—

(a) Per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births.
(b) Per 1,000 related live births.