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Borough of Aylesbury

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT

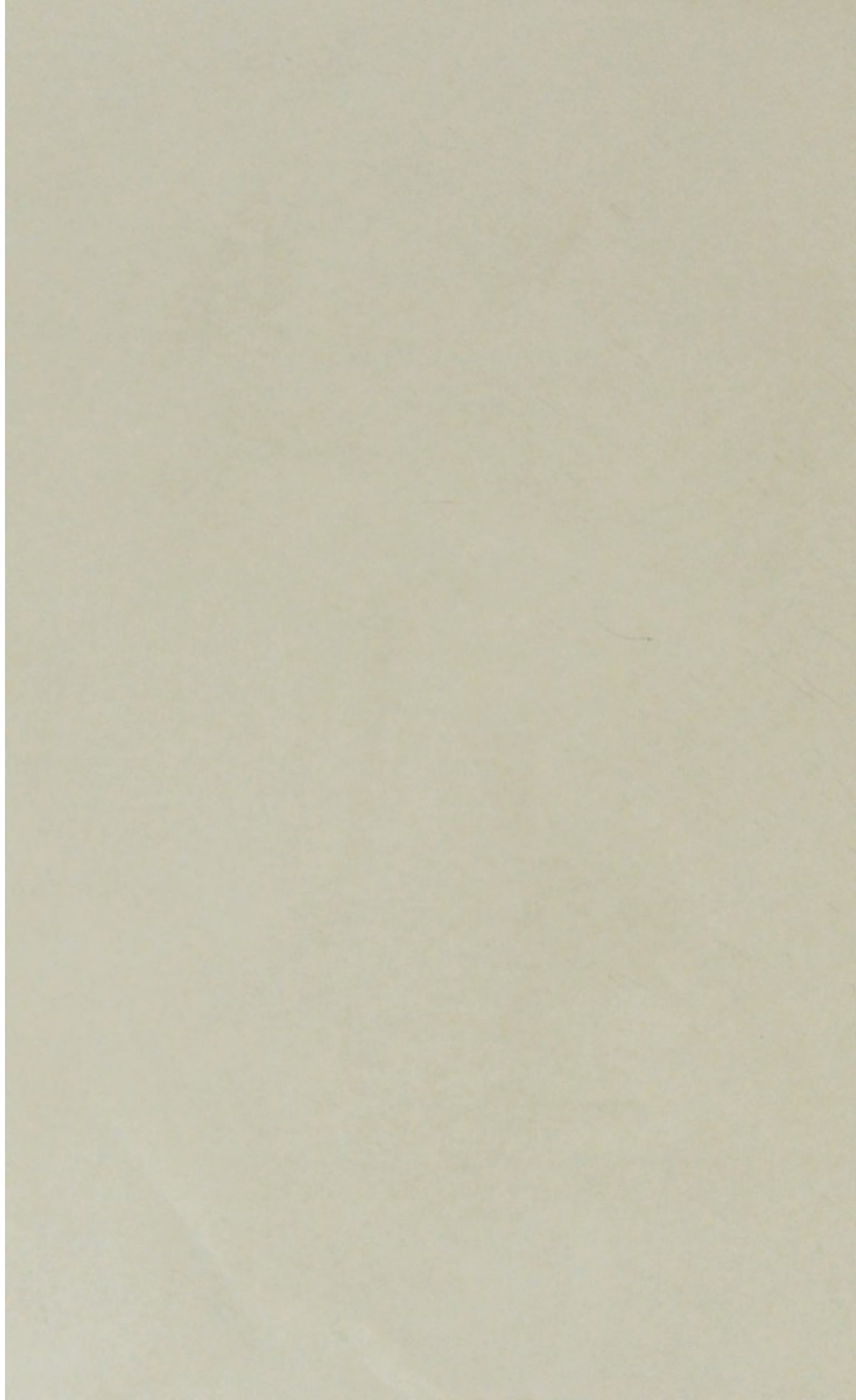
ON THE HEALTH OF THE BOROUGH
FOR THE YEAR 1969

A. W. PRINGLE,
B.A., M.B., B.CH., D.P.H.
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

G. F. SLOCOMBE,
M.B., B.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.,
DEPUTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

W. EWART RUSE,
A.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I.,
BOROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR





HEALTH COMMITTEE

(Constituted May, 1969)

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Councillor P. R. C. Gilkes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor A. E. Roblin (Mayor)
Alderman H. W. Poole (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor M. E. S. Bond
Councillor A. T. Bootle
Councillor Mrs. J. Clarke
Councillor Mrs. Reed
Councillor Mrs. Roberts
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Councillor G. R. M. Thomas

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A. W. Pringle, B.A., M.B., B.CH., D.P.H.

DEPUTY MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

G. F. Slocombe, M.B., B.S., L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S., D.P.H.

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Douglas Andrew, C.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

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CLERICAL STAFF

Mrs. V. Tranter
Miss V. Fowler

BOROUGH OF AYLESBURY

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
MUNICIPAL OFFICES,
FRIARS SQUARE,
AYLESBURY.

June, 1970

MR. MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS,

As this Report is concerned with the last year of the nineteen sixties it is of some interest perhaps to look back at any changes which have taken place in the vital statistics over the past decade.

The birth rate, although always keeping above that for England and Wales, has followed the national trend and is at its lowest level this year. It would be unwise to firmly predict that it would continue its present trend, but there is the obvious possibility that the increase in family planning activities will further reduce the rate in future.

The percentage of live births which were illegitimate has declined from a peak of 8.63% in 1965 to 7.55%.

The death rate has remained fairly constant around the 11 per 1,000 population mark over the period. It has only been fractionally higher than the rate for England and Wales on two occasions. The infant mortality rate for 1969 was 13.48 per 1,000 live births, as compared with 23.31 in 1960. Over the same period the figure for England and Wales has only shown a fall of 2.7 points. This, coupled with the fact that no mothers were lost over the 10 year period reflects great credit on the maternity services.

During the period under review the population of the Borough increased by 12,320.

Looking at the unfavourable health trends during the year, there was an increase in notifications of "food poisoning". This is, perhaps, an out-of-date description because it brings to most people's imagination a picture of meat which smells or tastes bad. In fact a wide range of food from broiler chickens to raw milk can be infected, and the usual organism of infection is a member of the salmonella group. It is unusual to find that taste or smell is altered in any way.

Salmonellae are widespread in the animal kingdom, and it is difficult to assess whether the increased incidence is real or apparent. Certainly more outbreaks in cattle are being reported by the veterinary services, but this may be due to greater awareness of the disease and better diagnostic facilities. When these occur a visit is made to the farm by me or your Health Inspectors with the object of preventing the infection spreading to farm workers and the general public by unpasteurised milk. There were several classic examples in which all those who drank raw milk from a herd became infected. Their illness led to investigation of the herd and isolation and treatment of infected cattle.

There has been some interesting work done in recent years to estimate the amount of infected imported meat. Samples examined arriving from Holland showed that 3.8% were contaminated, and from the Republic of Ireland 4.5%, and doubtless

the figures from other sources are no better. It is comforting to know, however, that salmonellae are destroyed by ordinary cooking, but not, let it be noted, by spit-roasting of chickens which may not produce a high enough temperature in the birds interior.

At the request of another Authority samples of washings from broiler houses in the district were examined, but no salmonellae were found in these.

All the 12 cases who were notified were investigated, and isolated when necessary until free from infection. Two of these cases were due to eating insufficiently cooked duck.

Food Hygiene

Besides routine visits to food shops and restaurants all notifications of dysentery and food poisoning were followed up with a view to ensuring that nobody with these diseases returned to work even remotely connected with food handling until he or she was no longer excreting the germs. The large self-service food stores were particularly hygiene conscious in this respect and co-operated readily in the exclusion of employees who were cases or contacts until cleared by laboratory tests.

A further course of lectures on food hygiene for those employed in the food industry was held at the College of Further Education.

Tuberculosis

During the year 14 new cases of respiratory tuberculosis were notified. This is an increase of 4 over the previous year. Only three of the new notifications applied to Pakistani immigrants and it is also interesting to note that five of the cases were aged 45 years and over.

New Cases

<i>Year</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Respiratory</i>	<i>Rate per 1,000 of Population</i>
1959	23,580	22	17	0.72
1960	24,410	12	6	0.25
1961	27,040	5	5	0.18
1962	29,090	10	7	0.24
1963	31,030	17	15	0.48
1964	32,510	9	7	0.22
1965	33,680	9	6	0.11
1966	34,380	11	8	0.23
1967	35,190	12	11	0.31
1968	35,990	10	10	0.28
1969	36,730	16	14	0.38

Venereal Disease

Figures obtained from the Royal Bucks Hospital of persons living in Aylesbury and attending the special clinic show a decrease on the previous year. There was only one new case of syphilis, and on looking back at the figures for several years, it is

clear that this once dread disease is becoming quite rare in this area. There were 17 new cases of gonorrhoea, a decrease, but 75 new cases of other venereal conditions, mainly non-specific urethritis.

The senior pupils at all the secondary schools in the area were given talks and shown films on venereal disease, and this is now a regular feature of the health education programme.

Typhoid and Paratyphoid Infections

An Italian family consisting of father, mother and three children returned to the Borough on the 30th August, having spent a month's holiday near Rome. The mother became ill on the 4th September, and the father on the 6th September. One of the children complained of feeling unwell, but had no serious signs or symptoms. All three were admitted to the Slade Hospital, Oxford, on 13th September, where a diagnosis of paratyphoid fever was confirmed. One of the two remaining children was subsequently found to have a salmonella Heidelberg infection which did not require hospital treatment.

A feature of this family outbreak was the length of time the cases were under treatment before being declared free from the infection. In spite of language difficulties all contacts were traced, and persuaded to co-operate in the necessary laboratory tests, and no further cases arose.

During November four passengers who disembarked from the S.S. Angelina Laura at Southampton were confirmed as typhoid cases. Of the 200 or so other passengers, two families were traced to destinations in this area, and were cleared following laboratory tests. Other holidaymakers were similarly followed up on returning from the North African coast, following the typhoid outbreak in a hotel at Hammamet, Tunisia.

It has been reported that half the cases of typhoid notified in England and Wales in 1967 were infected abroad. This certainly indicates that people travelling to North Africa and the Middle East should consider being immunised well in advance of their journey. Travel agents will normally be prepared to advise clients who are going to Southern Europe on the need for immunisation when visiting particular areas.

Measles Immunisation

There was a setback to the immunisation campaign in March, 1969, when one of the major manufacturers of the vaccine had to withdraw all supplies because there was some evidence that their vaccine was not entirely safe. Production from other sources was only sufficient to allow immunisation of priority groups, such as delicate children. The campaign had only been going for ten months before this setback, but nevertheless, all children up to the age of 15 years in the area who had not had measles had been offered immunisation. It would, however, be over optimistic to think that all susceptible children were immunised, and that should there be an epidemic there would be a sufficiently high level of immunity in the child population to halt it completely. I am glad to report that at the time of writing sufficient supplies of vaccine are available to start general immunisation again.

Drug Dependence

No-one knows how many people use the so-called soft drugs but we do know that it is a small minority. As for the hard drugs, in 1968 the total known number of heroin addicts under the age of twenty was 709. It might be thought that 709 out of four million teenagers is a very small proportion, but the fact is that the number has risen quite sharply in recent years. There is, therefore, no grounds for complacency.

Meetings took place throughout the year with doctors and other groups who would be likely to know of drug activity in this area. The general assessment of the present situation was that there is a very limited amount of soft drug (cannabis, barbiturates and pep-pills) activity in the Borough, and no evidence of use of hard drugs in the area beyond one or two isolated cases under treatment. A Committee is being formed to look at the situation in the County, and to advise on any preventive measures which might be required over and above those already included in the health education programme. It is tempting to think that because no real problem exists locally at present, all will be well in future, but clearly unless there is a reversal in the national trend it cannot be expected that young people in this area will remain isolated from risk. The fact that drug taking has become a symbol of rebellion to some young people does not make it any easier to put over the real danger of addiction.

Influenza Epidemic

A sharp epidemic of influenza, due to the Hong Kong variant of influenza virus A2 hit this area about the middle of December, 1969. Starting in South-East England it spread fairly rapidly to the rest of the country, having a high attack rate in most places. An epidemic had been expected the previous year and steps were taken to immunise old people and others, such as known cases of chest disease, but it did not materialise. The duration of immunity conferred by immunisation then was not long enough to give individual protection against this unexpected epidemic, and there was pressure on medical beds in the local hospitals, especially the chest wards at Tindal General Hospital. As influenza is not a notifiable disease it is not possible to say how many local people caught the infection, but it is certain that many will not have happy memories of Christmas, 1969.

Third London Airport

It became known that Cublington was to be considered by the Roskill Commission as one of the possible sites for a third London Airport. The proposal was at once opposed by the County Council and all the District Councils in the area. A local organisation was also formed to collect funds and present an independent case in opposition to the idea.

It is difficult to obtain concrete evidence from research on the effect of aircraft noise on people because it must of necessity be subjective in that it has to be based on people's reactions. It must be conceded, however, that many people, especially those living or working near the proposed site and in the flight paths, would react badly and would suffer some deterioration in wellbeing or leave the area.

The modern concept of health is not simply freedom from disease but that the individual should also have a positive sense of wellbeing. How can a person feel really well when he is subjected to the continual irritation of noise which if made by another source would be described as a statutory nuisance? One hears much of cost analysis in this connection, but how does one evaluate the loss of peace of mind and appreciation of surroundings? It seems hard to believe that it should even be contemplated that an area in the centre of this crowded island should be sterilised for reasonable living for the foreseeable future.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their continued advice and support throughout the year, my Deputy, Dr. Slocombe, the Borough Public Health Inspector, and the staff of the Public Health Department for their willing co-operation at all times.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

A. W. PRINGLE,

B.A., M.B., B.CH., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area	3,594 acres
Population (estimated mid-1969)	36,730
Number of inhabited houses (at end of 1969 according to Rate Books)	11,600
Rateable Value	£2,504,169
Sum represented by a penny rate	£10,111

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Live Births:			1968			1969		
			M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Legitimate			381	329	710	351	335	686
Illegitimate			24	28	52	30	26	56
						1968		1969
Rate per 1,000 population						21.17		20.20
Rate (corrected)						17.57		16.77
Rate for England and Wales						16.9		16.3
Illegitimate live births (per cent of total live births)						6.82		7.55

Still Births:

			1968			1969		
			M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Legitimate			6	4	10	6	4	10
Illegitimate			—	—	—	1	—	1
						1968		1969
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births						12.95		14.61

DEATHS

			1968			1969		
			M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Deaths			154	162	316	143	155	298
						1968		1969
Rate per 1,000 population						8.78		8.11
Standardised Rate						11.41		10.79
Rate for England and Wales						11.9		11.9

Deaths of infants under one year of age:

			1968			1969		
			M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Legitimate			6	5	11	4	6	10
Illegitimate			—	1	1	—	—	—
Death rate of infants under one year of age:—						1968		1969
All infants per 1,000 live births						15.75		13.48
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births						15.49		14.58
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births						19.23		—
Infant Mortality Rate for England and Wales						18.0		18.0

Deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age:—

				1968			1969		
				M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Legitimate	..	..	..	2	2	4	4	3	7
Illegitimate	..	..	..	—	1	1	—	—	—
Neo-Natal Mortality Rate per 1,000 total live births				1968			1969		
				6.56			9.43		

Deaths of infants under 1 week of age:—

				1968			1969		
				M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Legitimate	..	..	..	2	2	4	3	2	5
Illegitimate	..	..	..	—	1	1	—	—	—
Early Neo-Natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)				1968			1969		
				6.56			6.74		
Perinatal Mortality Rate (still births and deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live and still births)				19.43			21.25		

Maternal Mortality:

Number of deaths (including abortion)	..	..	..	—	—
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	..	..	..	—	—

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS

							M	F
Enteritis and other diarrhoeal diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Other infective and parasitic diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	—
Malignant neoplasm, buccal cavity, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	—
Malignant neoplasm, oesophagus	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	..	..	..	..	..	..	3	2
Malignant neoplasm, intestine	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, larynx	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	..	..	..	..	..	..	13	1
Malignant neoplasm, breast	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	6
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	3
Other malignant neoplasms	..	..	..	..	..	..	7	8
Benign and unspecified neoplasms	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Diabetes mellitus	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	4
Other endocrine, etc., diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
Anaemias	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	1
Mental disorders	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	—	1
Other diseases of nervous system, etc.	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Chronic rheumatic disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2
Hypertensive disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	2

Ischaemic heart disease	38	46
Other forms of heart disease	3	4
Cerebrovascular disease	12	20
Other diseases of circulatory system	6	5
Influenza	1	—
Pneumonia	9	11
Bronchitis and emphysema	16	3
Asthma	—	1
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	2
Peptic ulcer	2	—
Intestinal obstruction and hernia	1	1
Cirrhosis of liver	—	2
Other diseases of digestive system	1	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	1
Other diseases, genito-urinary system	1	1
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system	—	1
Congenital anomalies	1	4
Birth injury, difficult labour, etc.	2	1
Other causes of perinatal mortality	1	1
Motor vehicle accidents	2	4
All other accidents	3	3
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries	1	2
All other external causes	—	2
	<hr/> 143	<hr/> 155

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

Hospitals

During the year the Royal Bucks, Tindal General and Stoke Mandeville Hospitals have provided accommodation for surgical and medical cases, whilst the Isolation Hospital continued to admit persons suffering from infectious diseases.

Stoke Mandeville Hospital also provided accommodation for paraplegic cases.

The above hospitals situated in the Borough are administered by the Royal Buckinghamshire and Associated Hospitals Management Committee, who are responsible to the Oxford Regional Hospital Board.

Pathology Laboratory, Stoke Mandeville Hospital

Routine samples of ice cream and water and other specimens requiring bacteriological examination were sent to this Laboratory throughout the year. Reports were received with the minimum delay, and the help and advice given by the Medical Director were much appreciated.

Ambulance Services

These are provided by the Bucks County Council and are under the direction of the County Medical Officer. Nine ambulances and five dual purpose vehicles were available at the Ambulance Headquarters, Buckingham Road, for use in the Borough

and surrounding districts. In addition, there is also a convertible 'ambulance car' for the carrying of sitting or stretcher cases who have to be conveyed by road over long distances, and a purpose built ambulance with an hydraulic tail lift for the conveyance of wheelchair patients. There is two-way radio link between all vehicles and Headquarters.

The ambulance car service which was introduced during 1968 to supplement the directly provided services has proved to be highly satisfactory.

The majority of long distance journeys are carried out by train, stretcher cases being accommodated in reserved compartments, although this is now somewhat limited due to the increase of the modern Pullman type coaches.

All casualties in the Borough are conveyed to the Casualty Department of the Royal Bucks Hospital.

Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics

The following Clinics were functioning during the year:—

<i>Times open</i>	<i>Clinic</i>	<i>Number of children attending</i>	<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Doctor attended</i>
71	Pebble Lane	1,928	Every Tuesday, 2nd and 4th Wednesday	65
76	Quarrendon	1,897	Every Wednesday, 1st and 3rd Tuesday	74
24	Southcourt	617	1st and 3rd Wednesday	22
71	Limes Avenue	2,587	Every Monday, 2nd and 4th Wednesday	71
<hr/> 242 <hr/>		<hr/> 7,029 <hr/>		

Child Welfare

Some parents cease to attend the Clinic as soon as all primary immunisations are completed, and the child has reached an age when feeding difficulties are less common.

The appointment system for consultations has been extended to all Clinics in the Borough, and immunisation appointments are computerised so that the parents of all children are made aware when immunisations are due, either at the Clinic or their own doctor's surgery. There was a very considerable increase in the number of attendances at the Clinics throughout the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

	Total Notifications received			Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital	
	1968	1969		1968	1969
		Male	Female		
Measles	48	19	21	—	—
Whooping Cough	20	—	—	—	—
Dysentery	4	25	37	2*	14*
Scarlet Fever	1	4	3	—	—
Pneumonia	10	—	—	—	—
Food Poisoning	1	5	7	1	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	—	—	—	—
Paratyphoid Fever	1	1	2	1	3
Infective Jaundice	3	4	3	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—	—	—

*Manor House

Incidence of Notifiable Diseases during the year with analysis under age groups

	Under 1 year	1—2 years	3—4 years	5—9 years	10—14 years	15—24 years	25—44 years	45—65 years	Over 65	Age Unknown	Totals
Measles ..	3	14	9	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	40
Dysentery ..	2	7	9	24	9	6	5	—	—	—	62
Scarlet Fever ..	—	1	—	4	—	2	—	—	—	—	7
Food Poisoning	—	2	—	—	1	2	5	2	—	—	12
Infective Jaundice ..	—	—	—	—	2	3	2	—	—	—	7
Paratyphoid Fever ..	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	—	—	—	3

TUBERCULOSIS

	New Cases			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F
Age Groups:—				
0—	—	—	—	—
1—	—	—	—	—
5—	—	1	—	—
15—	2	1	1	—
25—	4	— (1)	—	—
35—	1	—	—	—
45—	3	1	1	—
55—	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—
Age Unknown	—	—	—	—
Totals:	11	3 (1)	2	—

The figures in brackets denote the number of cases notified originally in other districts, and who have moved into the Borough during the year.

MASS RADIOGRAPHY SERVICE

Oxford Regional Hospital Board (Northern Area)

Report of survey carried out at H.M. Prison, Aylesbury, on 3/10/69

Summary of Work					Male	Female	Total
No. of miniature films taken	..	..	..	..	175	1	176
No. referred to chest clinic	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
No. referred to general practitioners	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
No. previously examined by M.M.R.	..	..	..	..	43	1	44
No. not previously examined by M.M.R.	..	..	..	..	132	—	132

Results of cases referred to Chest Clinic NIL

Summary of newly discovered significant cases of tuberculosis

Group	No. Examined	Active P.T.	Rate per Thousand	Inactive P.T.	Rate per Thousand
Staff	24	—	—	—	—
Prisoners ..	152	—	—	—	—
Total ..	176	—	—	—	—

**Report of survey carried out at
Manor House Hospital, Aylesbury, on 17/10/69**

Response: 100%

Summary of Work					<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
No. of miniature films taken	..	..	..	..	38	125	163
No. referred to chest clinic	..	..	..	..	—	1	1
No. referred to general practitioners	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
No. previously examined by M.M.R.	..	..	..	..	36	114	150
No. not previously examined by M.M.R.	2	11	13

Results of cases referred to Chest Clinic

Normal	—	1	1
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Summary of newly discovered significant cases of tuberculosis

<i>Group</i>		<i>No. Examined</i>	<i>Active P.T.</i>	<i>Rate per Thousand</i>	<i>Inactive P.T.</i>	<i>Rate per Thousand</i>
Staff	..	69	—		—	
Patients	..	94	—		—	
Total	..	163	—		—	

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA

Water Supply

The water supply of the Borough is obtained through the Bucks Water Board from wells situated at Dancers End, New Ground, Hawridge and High Wycombe.

Sampling has been carried out during the year by the Water Authority at their wells and also in the town.

Eleven samples of water were taken from the main service by this Department during the year, all of which proved to be satisfactory.

All houses in the Borough are connected to the main supply and the quantity of water supplied to the town is adequate.

Drainage

Although the whole of the surface water has not been separated from the foul drainage within the central area, it can be assumed that the Borough is drained on the separate system.

Sewage Disposal Works

The Sewage Disposal Works constructed at the confluence of the Bear Brook and the River Thames is producing effluent well within the Thames Conservancy's standard, and is to be extended to cater for the increase in population of the Borough.

Sludge Disposal

This is by means of tankers and is distributed in liquid form on surrounding farms.

Public Cleansing

Refuse disposal is carried out by controlled tipping at Calvert, thirteen miles on the Bicester side of Aylesbury. The new controlled tip has been in operation since May, 1964, and is proving satisfactory.

A comprehensive salvage collection scheme is in operation. The Corporation has three suction type sweepers which have proved themselves invaluable during the year.

Open-Air Swimming Pool, Park Street

The water in the pool circulates continuously throughout the period of use, being filtered and chlorinated before re-introduction to the swimming pool. Six samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination during the summer months, and all proved to be satisfactory.

At the beginning of the 1969 season an Akdolit Filter Media was installed by the Baths Manager and his staff. This is not only a filter media, but also a pH corrector. This means that no matter how much chlorine is added, the pH and bicarbonate alkalinity will adjust to the correct quantity in parts per million on the pH scale and also as CACO_3 in parts per million. This media will filter solids down to one micron.

Since the heating plant has been installed at the Open Air Swimming Pool the bathing load has steadily increased. In 1968 the number of bathers using the Pool was 101,144 as compared with 102,807 in 1969.

School Swimming Pools

During the year, and at the request of the County Health Inspector, the Department accepted responsibility for sampling the school swimming pools in the Borough, the numbers of which are rapidly increasing.

Seventy-eight samples (seven bacteriological and seventy-one for chlorine content) were taken during the year, all of which proved to be satisfactory, with the exception of one bacteriological sample.

Hot Baths

Attendances at the Hot Baths, adjoining the Swimming Pool at Park Street, amounted to a total of 3,223 during the year. The total for 1968 was 3,631.

Schools

The water supply and sanitary accommodation to all schools in the Borough are adequate.

Local Rainfall

January	..	..	2.12 ins.	July	..	..	1.94 ins.
February	..	..	0.99 ins.	August	..	..	2.54 ins.
March	..	..	2.04 ins.	September	..	..	0.44 ins.
April	..	..	1.4 ins.	October	..	..	0.08 ins.
May	..	..	2.77 ins.	November	..	..	2.53 ins.
June	..	..	1.13 ins.	December	..	..	2.02 ins.

(Figures supplied by Mr. B. G. Hannay, Borough Engineer and Surveyor).

Mr. Hannay stated that the total rainfall for the year was 20.0 inches; this is less than in the previous year and below the yearly average of 24.8 inches. Rain fell on 159 days, compared with 168 days in 1968. The amount of rainfall for October was the lowest for that month since records started in 1906. The reading for April was the lowest for eight years, that for June was the lowest for seven years, and the September reading was the lowest for ten years. The reading for March was the highest for five years, and for August the highest for six years. The May recording was the highest for thirteen years, apart from 1967 when 4.44 inches was recorded.

The highest daily rainfall occurred on 2nd August, when 1.35 inches was recorded.

FACTORIES AND WORKPLACES

Informal action has been taken where necessary under the provisions of the Factories Act, 1937, to remedy contraventions of the requirements of this Act, in mechanical and non-mechanical factories and workplaces.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937

1. Inspections for the purpose of provisions as to health

	Number of		
	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories without mechanical power } Factories with mechanical power }	96	—	—

2. Defects found—Nil

Outwork in unwholesome premises

There are eight outworkers' premises in the town, all of which are in a satisfactory condition.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOROUGH PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Public Health Department,
Municipal Offices,
Friars Square,
Aylesbury.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the work of the Public Health Department during the year 1969. This is the 27th Annual Report I have had the honour to present to the Council, and it will be my last in the series as I shall have retired before the next Report is prepared.

Further progress in slum clearance was made during the year with the confirmation of the Mill Street Clearance Area, and this has left only one area, St. John's Road, which it is hoped will be submitted early in 1970, when the slum clearance programme for the Borough will be completed.

The other work of the Department continued normally, as shown under the various headings which follow, and there were no outstanding or unusual events to which reference need be made.

HOUSING

As stated above, the Public Inquiry into the Mill Street Clearance Order was held during the year, and the Order was confirmed with modifications in that the Inspector removed from the Order four houses forming one block. In respect of one of the houses in this block he confirmed that the property was unfit, but suggested that the matter be dealt with other than by clearance, and subsequently the Council made a Closing Order in respect of this property. Demolition of the Brook Row and St. John's Road Areas was completed during the year, and rehousing from the Hale Street Area proceeded as housing accommodation became available. With the submission of the St. John's Road Clearance Area, which, as already stated, it is hoped to make early in 1970, the slum clearance programme for the Borough will be completed, and as far as can be seen at the moment there are no areas of unfit houses awaiting action in the immediate future. It is possible that a number of individual unfit houses will require action, but in the main the activity of the Department in the immediate future so far as housing is concerned will be directed more towards the repair and improvement of existing houses rather than demolition and clearance.

Houses in multiple occupation continued to present problems from time to time, but apart from a few which require constant attention, the general standard of housing amongst immigrants is showing a gradual improvement. The trend mentioned in my last Report for West Indian families to move from multi-occupied houses to individually occupied houses continues, and it is noticeable that the number of women and children in the Indian and Pakistani community is growing, and it seems fairly certain that the trend from communal living to occupation of individual houses is commencing with these immigrants, and will continue in the future. Four cases in

which rent books had not been supplied, as required by the Landlord and Tenant Act, were reported during the year, but following informal action by the Department rent books were supplied.

Four cases of overcrowding were reported and referred to the Housing Department for action.

The general work carried out by the Department under the Housing Act is set out in the following table. (The figures in brackets in this and the following tables indicate the work carried out during 1968).

Number of houses inspected	..	..	..	47	(38)
Visits paid to above houses..	..	..	..	229	(205)
Informal Notices served	..	..	..	65	(57)
Statutory Notices served	..	..	..	3	(6)
Miscellaneous housing visits	..	..	..	61	(59)
Multi-occupation housing visits	..	..	..	184	(188)
Overcrowding visits ..	..	..	..	7	(9)

Houses repaired:

By owners	..	..	..	68	(47)
By the Borough Council in default	..	..	..	—	(—)

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS

Public health, or as it is becoming more commonly known, environmental health, covers almost every facet of everyday life, and over the years many individual aspects of communal living which were originally covered in omnibus fashion in the Public Health Act, are receiving more detailed attention under Acts dealing with specific items which have been introduced, leaving only those matters of general public health importance, and which do not lend themselves to segregation, remaining under the Public Health Act. Drainage and nuisances of a general nature are the main items dealt with under this Act, and other matters formerly dealt with under this general heading are now listed under the individual Acts introduced to deal with them.

The following table shows those matters dealt with under the Public Health Acts:—

Number of houses inspected	..	..	..	167	(97)
Visits paid to above houses..	..	..	..	337	(282)
Drainage visits	..	..	..	374	(380)
Drainage tests	..	..	..	42	(20)
Nuisances found	..	..	..	286	(234)
Nuisances abated	..	..	..	286	(234)
Informal Notices served	..	..	..	12	(10)
Statutory Notices served	..	..	..	12	(25)

NOISE ABATEMENT ACT, 1960

For the second year running no complaints regarding the sounding of ice cream chimes were received by the Department during the year, but nine other complaints of noise nuisance were received. The nuisance referred to in my last Report continued, and following efforts to obtain an abatement by voluntary action, an Abatement Notice was served on the offending Company. The nuisance continued despite this, and eventually the firm were taken to Court and a Nuisance Order obtained, and costs of £22.0.0 were awarded to the Council. Within one week of the Hearing further complaints were received, and the firm were again taken to Court, where they pleaded guilty to failing to comply with the Order made by the Court, and were fined £5.0.0 with £5.5.0 costs. Following this second action the nuisance complained of was abated.

The nine new complaints received included two instances of barking dogs, one of which was referred to the Housing Department for action, and in the second case the complainant was advised to take private action. One complaint concerned noise from the playing of pop records from a Youth Club premises. In consultation with the Bucks County Youth Officer this was subsequently dealt with satisfactorily. One complaint concerned the sounding of the hooter from the Bifurcated and Tubular Rivet Co. Ltd., and Committee felt that as this was a practice which had operated in the town for a great number of years, no action should be taken with regard to it. The five other complaints concerned noise from various factories in the town, and consultation and informal action with the factories concerned resulted in abatement of the nuisances. No formal action was necessary in any case.

Towards the end of the year notification was received that courses on noise nuisance and control were being run early in the new year at the Tottenham College of Technology and arrangements were made for each of the District Inspectors to attend one of the courses to be held.

Ninety-two visits were made in connection with noise nuisance during the year.

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

Once again I have to record my disappointment at not being able to proceed with the implementation of further smoke control areas in the Borough. As pointed out last year, although Aylesbury cannot by any means be termed a "black" area, its position in the table of areas of similar classification in the south of England indicates that for this part of the country it is one of the dirtiest. It is disheartening to note that whilst Oxford, High Wycombe and Hemel Hempstead, to mention three Boroughs in close proximity to Aylesbury, are continuing steadily with their smoke control programme, and will have the whole of their areas covered by Smoke Control Orders within the next few years, Aylesbury is stuck with one Smoke Control Order only, and no progress has been made to implement further areas. Unfortunately, owing to the growing quantities of North Sea gas being fed into the gas system, with the subsequent reduction in the number of stations producing gas from coal, there has been a great reduction in the quantity of gas coke available, and the production of other authorised solid fuel has not increased to keep pace with this reduction. Towards the end of 1969 it was obvious that there was going to be a shortage

of solid smokeless fuels, and to complicate the lack of action already referred to, the Minister intimated that no further Smoke Control Orders would be confirmed to come into operation before April, 1970. This is a matter which is causing grave concern throughout the country, and it is to be hoped that some steps will be taken to increase the availability of solid smokeless fuels to prevent a slowing up of the progress towards cleaner air.

Thirty-three complaints in connection with the Clean Air Act were received during the year, but in every case informal action secured abatement of the nuisance complained of, and no statutory action was necessary. Four hundred and sixty-five visits were made in connection with this Act during the year.

INVESTIGATION OF ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

The measurement of atmospheric pollution at the three stations in the Borough was continued during the year.

As in 1968 the two stations in schools were closed for the period of the school holidays. No appreciable difference has been discovered in the pattern of pollution, and I append a table showing the monthly average concentrations of smoke and sulphur dioxide at the various stations throughout the year.

Monthly average concentrations of smoke and sulphur dioxide in microgrammes per cubic metre

<i>Month</i>	<i>Smoke</i>			<i>Sulphur Dioxide</i>		
	<i>Site 2</i>	<i>Site 3</i>	<i>Site 4</i>	<i>Site 2</i>	<i>Site 3</i>	<i>Site 4</i>
Jan., 1969	.. 85	55	70	102	104	80
Feb., 1969	.. 115	61	77	121	145	107
Mar., 1969	.. 64	50	94	113	177	111
April, 1969	.. 23	20	29	62	61	63
May, 1969	.. 22	15	21	50	43	50
June, 1969	.. 18	10	13	45	42	39
July, 1969	.. 21	10	10	42	19	38
Aug., 1969	.. 21	N	N	43	N	N
Sept., 1969	.. 25	N	N	48	N	N
Oct., 1969	.. 36	24	44	62	29	54
Nov., 1969	.. 45	N	42	51	N	46
Dec., 1969	.. 88	N	75	124	N	102

Site 2—Town Hall

Site 3—Grammar School, Walton Road

Site 4—Oak Green School

NOTE: 'N' indicates that insufficient results were received to give a fair average.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES

ACT, 1963

Seven hundred and sixty-two visits were paid to offices, shops and railway premises during the year, one hundred and seventy-eight being specifically for inspections under the above Act, and the remainder being primarily for some other purpose. Eleven informal notices were served during the year, the majority referring to minor infringements of the Act, i.e., provision of thermometers, first-aid boxes, abstracts of the Act, etc. Very little difficulty is experienced in securing compliance with the notices and in no instance has it been necessary to institute legal proceedings for the enforcement of a notice.

Thirty-four accidents were reported during the year, none of which was fatal. Twenty-three of the accidents were investigated, and in most instances it was found that an element of carelessness on the part of the person injured, or some other person, was the main cause of the accident.

One firm engaged in the packing and despatch of articles seems particularly prone to accidents, and the need for special care was impressed upon the management. In no case was prosecution for a breach of the conditions of the Act or Regulations made under the Act necessary, and informal advice in all cases investigated was felt to be sufficient. A resumé of the return required by the Ministry of Labour is appended:

Class of Premises	Number of premises registered during the year	Number receiving a general inspection during the year	Total number of registered premises at end of year	Total number of persons employed
Offices	7	15	172	1,584
Retail Shops	31	107	292	2,239
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	—	5	21	313
Catering Establishments open to the public, Canteens ..	1	21	26	341
Fuel Storage Depots ..	—	—	1	32

SHOPS ACT, 1950

The operation of the Shops Acts presented very little difficulty during the year, only eleven visits being made in this connection. A number of these were in connection with new premises opening where the proprietors proposed to remain open until 8 p.m. on Friday. This is perfectly legal under the provisions of the Shops Act itself, but unfortunately, Aylesbury has a Closing Order which restricts opening on

Fridays until 7 p.m. In each instance when this was brought to the attention of the persons concerned compliance with the Order was obtained without any difficulty. Although Friday is increasingly becoming a night for late shopping, it is generally found in Aylesbury, whatever the conditions may be elsewhere, that 7 o'clock is sufficiently late for shops to remain open on Friday, and that after this hour the number of customers falls rapidly, and it would probably be uneconomic for shops to remain open to a later hour.

Four informal notices were served on shopkeepers, all being complied with.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 AND 1948

The duties of this Department with regard to factories in which power is used is confined to the inspection of the conveniences. All other aspects, i.e., cleanliness, overcrowding, etc., are the duties of the Factory Inspector. As the days of the one-man or small factory in which no power is employed are practically past, it will be appreciated that apart from sanitary conveniences this Department has little to do with factories concerning conditions of employment. However, from other aspects, i.e., food hygiene in food factories and all other factories maintaining canteens, noise nuisance, smoke nuisance, and complaints of other natures, i.e., paint spraying etc., the Department does in fact visit a large number of factories for various purposes. A number of these visits, food hygiene, noise and so on, are shown under other headings of this Report, so that the visits shown in the following table do not cover the total number of visits actually made to factories.

Mechanical factories on register requiring visiting	127	(120)
Non-mechanical factories on register requiring visiting	19	(19)
Visits paid to factories	96	(60)

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS AND DISINFESTATION

The downward trend in the number of infestations and premises treated over the last two or three years was reversed during 1969, and proved the point made in previous Reports that continued vigilance is necessary in this field to prevent a rapid increase in the rat and mouse population of the Borough. A test bait of the sewers was carried out during May, and of 109 manholes treated only three showed any signs which indicated that rats were present. A follow-up treatment later in the year of the area surrounding the three manholes thought to be infested was not conclusive, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food's representative was not convinced that rats were present in the sewerage system. These results are a tribute to the efficient work done on baiting the sewers in previous years, and to the

care taken whenever evidence has shown a break in the sewer or drainage system allowing rats to escape from, or gain access to the sewers, when steps were taken to efficiently block such means of access. I certainly feel that the absence of rats from the sewerage system of the town is a great help in maintaining the rat population at a relatively low level. The work of preventing rats from gaining access to surface water outfalls referred to in my last Report certainly seems to have been successful, and few complaints concerning rats in roof spaces were received during the year.

The agreement service for the treatment of factories and shops still continues and is appreciated by those firms remaining within the agreement service. Work carried out on business premises other than by the agreement service is charged for, whilst a free service to private householders is continued.

The Borough Council's tip at Calvert, although not within the Borough boundary, is dealt with by the Council's Rodent Operator, and periodic visits are made to ensure that the rat population is kept within reasonable bounds. The tip, in common with the sewage works is inspected from time to time by the Ministry of Agriculture's Inspector, and no adverse comments regarding rat infestations at either premises has ever been received.

The number of wasps nests destroyed showed a dramatic increase to 127, reaching almost to the level of 1967 when 157 nests were destroyed. As previously stated, this is one particular item of the Department's work which is bound to fluctuate from year to year, and is controlled largely by the severity of the winters, the mildness or otherwise of the springs and the length and warmth of the summer seasons.

No reports of bed bug infestations were received during the year, but fifteen instances of flea infestations were reported and dealt with. Other insect infestations in which assistance was given by the Department included beetles, flies, ants, cockroaches, silver fish and caterpillars.

A summary of the work carried out under this Act during the year is appended:—

Private Premises treated	..	..	..	..	180	(164)
Business Premises treated	..	..	..	..	91	(92)
Local Authority Premises treated	..	..	..	..	15	(23)
Rat bodies found	..	..	..	..	428	(376)
Mouse bodies found	..	..	..	..	262	(183)
Points laid—Private Premises	..	..	..	..	506	(409)
Points laid—Business Premises	..	..	..	..	558	(513)
Points laid—Local Authority Premises	..	..	..	..	142	(157)
Manholes treated	..	..	..	..	109	(—)
Visits made by Public Health Inspectors	..	..	..	..	106	(92)
Wasps Nests destroyed	..	..	..	..	127	(8)

FOOD

The amount of foodstuffs surrendered and disposed of from wholesale and retail premises in the Borough as a result of inspections carried out, often on request from shopkeepers, follows:—

	WEIGHT		Number
	lbs.	ozs.	
Butter	13	—	—
Cheese	5	2	—
Fresh Meat	1,090	2	—
Fresh Fish	70	—	—
Tinned Vegetables ..	3,233	14	522
Tinned Fruit	770	6	493
Tinned Meat	412	8	129
Tinned Milk	32	12	44
Tinned Fish	11	6	35
Preserves	248	12	237
Miscellaneous	60	5	96
	5,948 lbs.	3 ozs.	1,556
Frozen Food:—			
Meat	2,794	13	4,724
Vegetables	3,881	10	5,172
Fish	3,548	11	6,144
Fruit	185	10	562
Milk Products	658	11	1,939
Miscellaneous	232	4	635
TOTAL ..	17,249 lbs.	14 ozs.	20,732

Total foodstuffs condemned during the year:—

Total for 1968	5 tons — cwt. 3 qtrs. 7 lbs. 3 ozs.
Total for 1969	7 tons 14 cwt. — qtrs. 1 lb. 14 ozs.

Forty-six complaints were received in the office during the year concerning the condition of foodstuffs purchased and found not to be fit in one way or another. Fourteen of the complaints related to foreign bodies in the food, whilst the remainder concerned either mould, taste or discolouration. In three cases concerning a mouldy chocolate cake, a carton of cottage cheese with mould on the surface, and a mouldy pork pie, prosecutions were instituted and in each case a conviction was obtained and fines of £55.0.0, and costs of £25.4.0 were imposed.

Other complaints of particular interest were firstly, a chicken and mushroom pie which contained a cigarette end. This matter was referred to the manufacturers who took a very serious view of the matter and carried out a number of experiments in an effort to establish how this could have gained access to the pie since they strictly enforce a no-smoking rule in their factory. In the course of the experiments it was found that a cigarette end which could have been brought into the factory with the mushrooms could have survived the washing process to which the mushrooms are subjected, and passed through with them, and then could have been examined as a stalk of a small mushroom. In view of the complaint new measures were being introduced to prevent a recurrence of this type of incident, if in fact, this was the means of the cigarette end finding its way into the pie. Following a number of complaints concerning yogurts which had peculiar tastes and which were found to have exceeded the shelf life placed on them by the manufacturers, investigations were made and it was found that in certain instances yogurts were not being delivered to the retailer until the day on which, according to the manufacturers, they should be sold or removed from sale. The distributing depot was spoken to about this matter on one or two occasions, and subsequently it was found that the deliveries were being made in more reasonable time.

One complaint concerned worms in herrings. This is a condition found more commonly in cod and brill, and is a parasitic worm which infiltrates the musculature of fish. The condition of the fish is in no way affected, and the worms are not apparent until the portion containing them is cut. Under these circumstances no blame could be attached to either the wholesaler or retailer, and complainants are advised to apply for a reimbursement, which is invariably made, and it is explained to them that it would be unfair to take action against a shopkeeper as he could have had no reason to suspect the presence of the worms.

I append a list of the complaints received, and whilst all of them were investigated not all were found to be justified. In a number of cases it was felt either that the evidence was not sufficient to warrant prosecution, the complainant did not wish to appear as a witness, or the complaint was such that administrative action was sufficient to deal with the matter. In all other cases complaints were referred to the Committee for instructions, and in the three referred to above, a Court action was taken.

List of complaints received

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Reason for complaint</i>
Chicken and Mushroom Pie	Cigarette end
Lamb Chops	Slight musty smell
Puff Pastry	Mouldy
Ski Yogurt	Unfit
Boiled Bacon Joint	Muslin cloth
Frankfurters	Found to be fit
Stale Cakes	Stale
Walls Steak Pie	Found to be fit
Egg Sandwich	Found to be fit
Mouldy Cake	Mouldy

List of complaints received (*cont.*)

<i>Commodity</i>	<i>Reason for complaint</i>
Cheese	Mouldy and discoloured
Shippams Crab Paste	Discolouration—Found to be fit
Beans—Frozen Sliced	Found to be fit
Cottage Cheese	Found to be fit
Bishops Baked Beans	Small slit in tin
Wrapped Sliced Loaf	Piece of metal
Plain Flour	Warehouse moths
Iced Bun	Fly on icing
Mouldy Cheese	Mouldy
Bacon Joint	Unfit
Two Cartons Fresh Cream Dessert	Mouldy
Cake	Found to be fit
Cottage Cheese	Mouldy
Tin of Tomatoes	Cotton Wool
Argentine Corned Beef	Discoloured. Liquefaction of fat.
Cheese	Wire
Bread Roll	Head of wasp
Cornish Pasty	Mouldy
Pork Pie	Discolouration. Grease from machinery
Herrings	Thread worms
Wheatmeal Wrapped Loaf	Mouldy
Loaf	Mouldy
Turog Brown Loaf	Mouldy
Heated Cornish Pasty	Did not appear unsound
1½ lbs. Skinless Sausages	Discolouration and sour
Argentine Corned Beef	Unfit
Apricot Pie	Black mark on pie
Toffee	Glass fragments. No glass found
Coleslaw	Existing stocks found to be fit
Ski Yogurt	Appeared unsound
Sponge Cake	Mouldy
Bottle of "Shandayla"	Fly pupae (referred to Weights and Measures Inspector)
Packet of Cakes	Metal clip and stamp pad
Malf Loaf	Stale
Rabbit	Found to be fit
Chicken Pasty	Rubber Band

MILK AND DAIRIES

The only duty now remaining with the Borough Council under this heading is that of registering milk retailers. The milk distribution trade is now confined to the distribution of milk in bottles and containers as received from wholesalers, and supervision by this Department is very much less important than it was in previous

years. Ten visits were made to dairy premises during the year. Milk producers are licensed and controlled by the County Agricultural Committee acting as agents for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

ICE CREAM

One hundred and nine premises in the area are registered for the sale of ice cream, in addition to which a number of vendors who are not subject to registration tour the streets in various vehicles selling ice cream and ice lollies. The majority of the ice cream sold in the Borough by the various retailers is produced by a relatively small number of large manufacturers and it is therefore unnecessary to take a large number of samples to check the methods of production. A large proportion of the mobile ice cream vendors now sell soft ice cream, and it has been found necessary to remind them of the necessity of complete sterilization of the unit at the end of each day's operations. It will be seen from the following table of samples taken during the year that six fell into each of grade 3 and grade 4, which is 'unsatisfactory' and 'very unsatisfactory' respectively. These samples were from soft ice cream vendors, and following the early unsatisfactory reports visits were made to the premises from which they operated and their method of sterilization was checked. On one occasion following such a check a report was received from a neighbouring Authority of a sample taken which fell into grade 4. Since these tests are basically tests of keeping quality, and the adverse samples were received during a period of the year when temperatures were extremely high, it did seem to me that the results were probably indicative more of the hot weather conditions than of unsatisfactory operating conditions by the vendors concerned.

Twenty-three samples of ice-cream were submitted during the year and were graded as follows:—

Grade 1 — 8 samples
Grade 2 — 3 samples
Grade 3 — 6 samples
Grade 4 — 6 samples

Eighty-two visits were paid to ice cream dealers premises and premises from which mobile vans operated during the year.

FOOD SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, ETC.

The general standard of cleanliness and hygiene in food premises remained satisfactory throughout the year, and no cause for formal action arose. Constant vigilance is needed in relation to food shops to ensure that the need for food hygiene is realized and maintained by the staff, and efforts are made to ensure that all restaurants and canteens, in particular, are visited at least twice each year.

The table setting out the inspections made in this connection follows:—

Market Stalls	..	..	..	288	(469)
Grocers	..	..	..	201	(163)
Butchers	..	..	..	61	(65)
Restaurants and Canteens	..			58	(58)
Fishmongers	..	..	..	22	(43)
Food Preparing Premises	..			19	(26)

Three informal notices were served under the Food Hygiene Regulations during the year, all of which were complied with by the end of December.

MARKET STALLS AND DELIVERY VEHICLES

Random checks on delivery vehicles and mobile shops operating in the town have revealed that in the majority of cases they are maintained to a proper standard, as required by the Regulations. In only four cases were breaches of the Regulations found, and informal notices secured the necessary improvements in each case.

WATER SUPPLY

Every house in the Borough is supplied with piped water obtained from the Chiltern Hills by the Bucks Water Board. Eleven samples of water were taken from the main service during the year, and all proved satisfactory.

PETROLEUM

The only point of interest to record in connection with the licensing of petroleum installations during the year was the raising by the Miscellaneous Fees (Variation) Order, of the fees, for the first time since 1928, chargeable for the issue of petroleum licences. As will be seen from the following table this resulted in an increase of fees received from £76.17.6 to £290.10.0.

Particulars of licences issued and quantities licensed to be stored are as follows:—

Licences issued for storage of petroleum spirit and mixtures	70	(69)
Licences issued for storage of carbide of calcium ..	1	(1)
Inspection of petrol and carbide stores	55	(53)

Quantity licensed to be stored:

Petroleum Spirit	207,424 galls.	(210,944 galls.)
Petroleum Mixtures	2,365 galls.	(2,405 galls.)
Carbide of Calcium	300 lbs.	(300 lbs.)
Total of Licence Fees	£290.10.0	(£76.17.6)

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The public conveniences in the town were maintained throughout the year in a satisfactory condition. Complaints of vandalism were not as high as in past years.

MISCELLANEOUS

Other work of the Department not covered by any of the previous headings include the following:—

Miscellaneous Public Health Visits	680	(628)
Interviews	2,059	(1,748)
Complaints received and investigated	357	(299)
Infectious Disease Visits	109	(34)
Smoke Visits	52	(45)
Moveable Dwellings Inspected	4	(16)
Pet Animals Act Visits	3	(11)
Public Convenience Visits	744	(894)

Nine scrap metal dealers are registered in the Borough, and six slaughtermen's licences were issued during the year.

GENERAL

The Clean Air Act, 1968, referred to in my last Report, was brought into operation by Orders made by the Minister of Housing and Local Government during 1969. The new arrangements for control of chimney heights under the Act necessitated Committee delegating their powers under this section to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman since there was a time limit in dealing with applications.

The only new legislation during the year was the Housing Act, 1969. This placed the emphasis of future housing work on improvement of individual houses and areas, but little work under this section of the Act was done during the year.

Another aspect which will mean additional work for the Department is the section dealing with the provision whereby landlords may obtain fair rentals for houses still under control. Before an application can be made to the Rent Officer, the landlord must obtain a qualification certificate from this Department, and it remains to be seen how much extra work this will entail.

There were no changes in the staff of the Department during the year, and I should like to thank the staff for their continued loyalty and service throughout the year.

In conclusion I would like to express my thanks to the Members of the Council and Committee for their continued help and confidence, and to my fellow Officers for their advice and assistance.

I am,

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

Your obedient Servant,

W. EWART RUSE, A.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I.,

Borough Public Health Inspector



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