BILLINGE AND WINSTANLEY U.D. COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

of

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR

for

1950

J.S. MATHER.
Medical Officer of Health.

C. BROWN.
Sanitary Inspector.

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1950.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
BILLINGE-AND-WINSTANLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my nineteenth Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Condition of your district in 1950.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE AREA.

Area in acres -	4,906.
Registrar-General's estimate of resident population mid 1950 -	6,055.
Number of inhabited houses at the end of 1950, according to the rate book -	1,670.
Rateable Value -	£24,146.
Sum represented by a penny rate -	£94.

The general health of the district was well maintained throughout the year, social conditions remaining optimal. The rising cost of living has recently been creating hardship among the more impecunious families but this has not yet reflected itself in any detrimental effect on the general health and stamina.

Coal mining, both deep and opencast, and agriculture continued to be the principal local industries of national importance, whilst brick and terra cotta manufacture and stone quarrying engaged a further section of the male population. The female population have chiefly found employment in the cotton, engineering, and glass factories in adjoining districts. Unemployment has been insignificant.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births.	Total	Male	Female.
Legitimate	75	33	42
Illegitimate.	2	-	2
	77	33	44

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population of the district. -	crude	12.7
	adjusted	14.7

Other live birth statistics, introduced for the purpose of comparison.

	Total	Male	Female.
Live births in district during 1949.	71	33	38
Live birth rate for 1949.		11.7	
Average rate for the previous five years (1945-49).			14.7
Live birth rate for England and Wales in 1950.			15.8

Still Births.	Total	Male	Female.
	2	1	1

Rate per 1,000 total (Live and still) births. 25

Deaths.	Total	Male	Female.
	65	33	32

Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.	crude	10.7
	(adjusted)	11.1
Death rate for district in 1950.	12.5	
Mean death rate for district during five years (1945-49).	12.6	
Death rate for England and Wales in 1950	11.6	

	Deaths.	Death rate per 1,000 total live and still births.
Deaths from Puerperal causes.		
Puerperal and post abortive sepsis.	Nil.	Nil.
Other maternal causes.	Nil.	Nil.

Death-rate of infants under one year of age.

All infants per 1,000 live births.	26
Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births.	27
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births.	Nil.
Number of deaths per 1,000 live births in district in 1950.	85
Mean number of infantile deaths in district per 1,000 live births during five years (1945-49).	55
Number of infantile deaths per 1,000 live births in England and Wales in 1950.	29.8
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages).	Nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age).	Nil.

Neo-Natal Mortality.

Deaths of infants under 4 weeks of age.	1
Mortality rate per 1,000 live births.	13

SECTION B.

General Provisions of Health Services for the Area.

(a) Laboratory facilities.

Pathological Specimens - submitted to Wigan Infirmary.

Bacteriological Examinations carried out at Liverpool City Laboratories.

Chemical Analysis carried out at the Liverpool City Laboratories.

(b) Ambulance facilities.

(1) For all general purposes ambulances and cars are now provided from the Wigan Fire Brigade and Ambulance Station (Telephone Wigan 6202). The service has been prompt and efficient during the year.

(2) For infectious cases the ambulance attached to the hospital concerned is used.

(c) Nursing in the Home.

The District Nurse has continued her excellent services in the district during the year. Her ministrations are generally appreciated both by the general public and by the medical practitioners to whom she is a considerable help.

(d) Clinics and Treatment Centres. No change.

(e) Hospitals.

The all embracing provisions of the National Health Scheme has widened the scope of hospitals available to local patients. Nevertheless, the majority receive their treatment, whether as in-patients or out-patients, at one of the hospitals in the Wigan and Leigh Group. A minority go to the St. Helens hospitals. Special cases have treatment in Manchester or Liverpool hospitals. Infectious cases requiring hospital isolation are usually transported to Whelley.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

(1) Water.

The consumption of water in the district attained a new high record in the year when despite restrictions imposed between June 28th., 1950 and September 29th., 1950, almost 60,000,000 gallons were required. The actual figures and the contributions from the various sources to this total are appended.

Wigan Corporation.	30,755,000 gallons.
Bispham Hall Works Shaft.	19,806,000 gallons.
Cobmoor Shaft.	5,613,000 gallons.
Whittle Shaft.	3,241,000 gallons.
Higher Tunnel.	177,000 gallons.
	59,592,000 gallons.

= 163,175 gallons per day.
= 26·9 gallons per head.

Water (Cont'd.)

The dwindling value of the Whittle Shaft supply, formerly the mainstay, is clearly revealed. In fact no yield was obtained after August, and it is evident this source can no longer be counted on even as an emergency supply. On this assumption, the Council has more recently recognised the advisability of cutting the mounting loss on this plant, discarding it in favour of the Cobmoor source as a reserve to meet extraordinary contingencies.

In the main, however, since April 27th., 1951 we have enjoyed the security afforded by a daily supply of 150,000 gallons from the Liverpool aqueduct augmented by up to 50,000 gallons under a new agreement from Wigan.

As to the Bispham Hall Works supply, it need only be added that having fulfilled its purpose to the vital extent of almost 20,000,000 gallons in the year under review, this dangerous source is now fortunately superflous and dispensed with we hope for good.

Report on Bacteriological and Chemical Samples.

The Bacteriological and Analytical results of samples taken during the year are as follows:-

(1) Result of analytical examination before chlorination - The sample was clear, very faintly yellow and odourless. It contained only a minute trace of suspended matter which consisted mainly of mineral particles.

Observations - The results of analysis indicate freedom from pollution and the water is suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

(2) Bacteriological examination - Two samples were taken, after chlorination, from the taps of houses in the area and were placed in Class I, i.e. Highly satisfactory.

Nine houses with a population of 30 remain unprovided from the public mains. Isolation and inaccessibility have been generally adduced as rendering the prospect impracticable. This argument will now lose cogency in the case of six of the houses, including two farms, in one locality where the wells have gone dry presumably again as the consequence of mining developments. Some provision will become obligatory in one way or another.

(2) Drainage and Sewerage.

The drainage system is of the usual type, storm water and sewage being carried away in a common sewer. The gradients are generally sufficient to facilitate drainage in all localities. Unfortunately, on account of the disposition of the elevations dividing two watershed areas, these gradients diverge, and two main sewage disposal grounds have always been necessary. Both are quite out of date and increasingly inadequate in direct ratio to the evergrowing volume of sewage.

In the Chapel End of the district recognition of this has been taking practical shape in the consideration of an up to date filtration plant. But delays in the development of the scheme have ensued, in the first place through difficulties in the land transaction and later on account of pre-occupation with the water supplies. With

Drainage and Sewerage (Cont'd.)

many of the difficulties now resolved some progress is to be expected.

In the Higher End a solution may be afforded by diverting the sewage - approximately half the bulk, - coursing from the locality adjoining the Orrell Boundary, into the adjacent Orrell Sewer thence for treatment by Wigan.

Certainly the Northern Sewage Field as it stands could cope with the remainder, including the New Grammar School now in process of erection. The feasibility of this is being investigated as an alternative to putting down a new filtration plant.

As to the small hamlet at Kings Moss which is isolated from the general systems by its remote and low lying situation, a separate scheme is the only radical solution. Some consideration is being given to this.

(3) Rivers and Streams.

These are kept under the close surveillance of the County Rivers Board. The potential danger from sewage contamination is ever present. No complaint was made in the year under review. Other than this there is no risk of pollution.

(4) Sanitary Accommodation.

A grant of £7 or half the cost, whichever is the less, is made towards the conversion to a W.C. Twenty-one owners availed themselves of this offer to convert.

The provision of a plentiful supply of water has removed one obstacle to the progress of the scheme, originally calculated to remove all the privies within five years. There yet remains the difficulty of sewage disposal in every locality of the district. Albeit a concentrated endeavour is now being made with this end in view.

Closet Accommodation at the end of 1950.

No. of privy middens.	96.
No. of closets attacnhed to these middens.	373.
No. of pail closets.	4.
No. of dry ashpits (excluding middens).	Nil.
No. of movable ashbins.	998.
No. of houses on water carriage system.	1,018.
No. of fresh water closets.	1,056.
No. of waste water closets.	Nil.

(5) Public Cleansing.

Street scavenging and the weekly removal of house refuse was carried out by the Local Authority as previously. Privy middens are also emptied regularly. Tipping continued on selected and controlled sites, there being no destructor in the district. Paper is collected separately for salvage. The introduction of bin trolleys is a facility duly appreciated by the men engaged in this work.

(6) Shops.

The Shops Act, 1934, relating to ventilation and temperature of shops and to sanitary conveniences and the Public Health Act, 1936 relating to conditions in offices, i.e. ventilation, sanitary conveniences, etc. are administered by the County Council. The Sanitary Inspector visits all premises included within the meaning of the Acts, and reports to the County Council.

(7) Sanitary Inspection of Area.

(Vide Sanitary Inspector's Report.)

(8) Smoke Abatement.

There are five factory and works chimneys in the district and five observations were made during the year. The time limit for the emmission of black smoke is two minutes in the hour. No infringement was observed in the year.

(9) Swimming Baths and Pools.

None - Public or private in this district.

(10) Eradication of Bed Bugs.

The routine disinfestation of the household goods of those transferring to new Council Houses is not a practice in this district. The Council's resolution will only permit disinfestation where the need is patent. No such instance arose in the year.

(11) Schools.

The sanitary condition of the two Schools in the district remained satisfactory. The general health of the children was well preserved and the attendance was not appreciably reduced by sickness.

(12) Offensive Trades.

There are none in the district.

(13) Common Lodging Houses.

There are none in the district.

(14) Canal Boats.

There are none in the district.

SECTION D.

Housing.

Housing development continued a major consideration in the Council activities during the year. Scarcity of materials caused some delay in the progress of building but 34 houses on the Claremont Estate were completed and occupied. This estate of 150 houses in all is now approximately half finished. Many of the worst cases of overcrowding (24 in the year) have thus been relieved, the points system of allocation working equitably to this end. Nevertheless, it was computed at the end of the year that 45 dwellings still remained overcrowded, involving 74 families and 277 persons. This overcrowding is not

Housing Cont'd.

confined to a particular type of house or locality. Much of the older property in the district is constituting a problem from the point of view of repairs. The dereliction of the past, and the dilapidations of age are generally on a scale beyond the economic possibilities afforded from the meagre rentals with the high costs involved. Yet the property does not come within the category warranting demolition. The embarrassment of ownership is keenly felt in such cases even to comply with the elementary sanitary standards we are bound to require. It is not surprising therefore, that apart from the Council property, few houses are to let, the tendency being to sell at the first opportunity.

As to the prevailing extent of housing shortage, some indication may be obtained from the fact that 146 applications for Council Houses remain for attention. It is impossible to assess the precise number and type of the houses required but generally it may be said that the smaller two-bedroomed houses and bungalows are in greatest demand.

Statistics.

Number of new houses erected during the year:-

(i)	By the Local Authority -	34
(ii)	By other Local Authorities -	Nil.
(iii)	By other bodies or persons -	9

Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:-

(i)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) -	36
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose -	78
(ii)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932. -	Nil.
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose -	Nil.
(iii)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation. -	4
(iv)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. -	32

Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers - 24

Action under statutory powers during the year:-

(a) Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs - Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:-

(i) By owners - Nil.

(ii) By Local Authority in default of owners - Nil.

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied - Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-

(i) By owners - Nil.

(ii) By Local Authority in default of owners - Nil.

(c) Proceedings under Section 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made - Nil.

(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders - Nil.

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made - Nil.

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit - Nil.

Housing Act, 1936 - Overcrowding:-

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year - 45

(ii) Number of families dwelling therein - 74

(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein - 277

(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year - Nil.

Housing Act, 1936 - Overcrowding (Cont'd.):-

(c)	(i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year -	24
	(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases -	121
	(iii)	Number of cases of overcrowding in houses owned by Local Authority which have been relieved during 1950 -	7

Fitness of Houses:-

(a)	No. of houses which have not an adequate internal water supply -	9
(b)	No. of houses which have no separate water closet or other adequate sanitary accommodation -	60 approx.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Food:-

(a) Milk Supply.

There were 54 Cowkeepers (including dairy farmers) and 9 milk purveyors (other than Cowkeepers) on the register. The approximate number of cows reckoned to be in the district was 420. One-hundred-and-eight inspections were made during the year. The premises generally were satisfactory. The Lancashire County Council undertakes the duties of sampling in the area.

(b) Meat and other foods.

There is no slaughter house within the district. All shops, stalls and vehicles where food is prepared were inspected but no cause for complaint was found, and no infectious disease was reported in connection with persons dealing with such food. The inspection of locally slaughtered animals is the duty of the Sanitary Inspector who includes in his report an account of the work.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other diseases:-

Measles was again the predominant infectious disease occurring sporadically throughout the year but prevailing in moderate epidemic form in Chapel End in June and again more extensively in December. A minor epidemic of whooping cough in a locality of the Higher End in September was responsible for six of the eight notifications of this disease. Scarlet fever was of infrequent occurrence, mild type and sporadic incidence. The notifications of Puerperal pyrexia emanated from Billinge Hospital.

Diphtheria immunisation in the year safeguarded a further 67 younger children and 6 of school age, while 114 benefitted by a reinforcing injection. The effectiveness of the measure and the adequacy of the scheme are alike demonstrated again by the complete freedom of the district from this dangerous disease which formerly wrought such havoc, especially among the young.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other diseases (Cont'd.)

No immunisation against the Enteric Group was undertaken during 1950.

No local action has been taken with regard to the use of measles serum for prophylaxis or attenuation of the illness.

There was no outbreak of food poisoning in the district in 1950.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (other than Tuberculosis) DURING THE YEAR 1950 (AFTER CORRECTIONS).

Notifiable Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.												Hospital.	
	Total cases at all ages.	Age Periods - Years.										Total Deaths.	Total Cases Removed to Hospital.	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to the Distri
		0	1	3	5	10	15	25	45	65 & over.	Age Unknown.			
Scarlet Fever.	3	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles (excluding rubella)	73	2	8	33	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough.	8	-	-	3	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute pneumonia (primary & influenzal)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total.	87	2	8	37	37	-	-	3	-	-	-	5	-	-

DISINFECTION AFTER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The method employed with regard to premises was fumigation with formaldehyde gas. Nine houses were so treated. Fomites are disinfested in the autoclave by steam.

Tuberculosis.

No action was necessary under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925 (relating to persons suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis employed in the milk trade) or under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936 (relating to the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from tuberculosis). The notification of tuberculosis in the area is efficient, there being no instance of a non-notified tuberculosis death.

TUBERCULOSIS - NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1950.

AGE PERIODS	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Years								
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
15	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
35	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
45	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
65	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-
75 & upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total.	1	3	-	2	2	2	-	-
	4		2		4		-	

SECTION G.

Factories and Workshops.

There was no offence under the Factory Act, 1937 during the year under review. The Sanitary Inspector working in liaison with H.M. Inspector of Factories, maintained effective supervision of local factories and workshops from the Public Health aspect.

The following is a list of the factories and workshops operating in the district in 1950.

Collieries	-	4.
Opencast mining plant	-	4.
Stone Quarries	-	2.
Boot and Clog Repairing	-	2.
Brickworks	-	2.
Joinery	-	5.
Government Radar Station	-	1.

Chief Sanitary Requirements of District.

1. Improvement of Sewage Disposal methods.

2. Conversion of Privy Middens.

I am,
Your obedient servant,

J.S. MATHER.

Medical Officer of Health.

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR, 1950.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
BILLINGE-AND-WINSTANLEY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

To the Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my fifth Annual Report as Sanitary Inspector of your district.

Water Supply.

Despite the many difficulties during the year, we managed to supply within reason an adequate amount of water. Inhabitants in certain areas suffered more than others due to cut-offs and restrictions but, generally speaking, I am of the opinion that 1950 was a far better year than its predecessor. I am happy to think that the worst has passed and that the new supply along with the auxiliary supplies will provide us with a wholesome and adequate supply for some years to come. So far as I can see, the only difficulties will be the cottages not supplied by the mains and I feel we shall have many difficulties in the coming years with the service pipes to some of the older types of houses due to corrosion etc.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

It was possible in the year to give more time to the general inspection of the area. More houses were inspected under the Public Health Acts and Housing Acts whilst drainage received much attention. The number of premises inspected during the year was 129, and the number of informal notices served was 144, which was 22 more than the previous year. I found it easier to get work done and the Contractors were willing to give more attention to the repairing side of their business.

Sewage Disposal.

Sewage continued to be treated on the broad irrigation system and, whilst it is unsatisfactory in method, no complaints were received from the Rivers Board who took regular samples of the effluent. Chapel End was the most urgent area for consideration but the erection of new property in the Higher End will cause some anxiety not only on the disposal but on the sewers available in the vicinity of the development. It was necessary during the year to draw the attention of the Contractor who supervises the Higher End Sewage Field to his obligations and, although continued reminders were given, the irrigation area was never kept up to standard.

Public Cleansing.

A weekly collection of house refuse was maintained during the year, the weekly annual holiday being the only occasion when house refuse was not collected. The amount of refuse collected was still very high, the average amount being 44 tons per week and the average per dustbin was approximately 73 lbs. per week. There are no destructors in the area and controlled tipping continued at the Marl Pits in the Chapel End area and at Orrell Brick Works in the Higher End. The tips were kept reasonably free from pests and they were treated four times during the year for rats. No complaints were received from the residents about the tips.

Shops.

The shops in the area were inspected on behalf of the Lancashire County Council and were found to be highly satisfactory, only in one case was it necessary to serve a notice with regard to cleanliness. Improvements were made in three of the shops under Section 13 of the Food and Drugs Act. Three bake-houses are now in existence and these were visited quarterly and found to be satisfactory. Only one Ice Cream Manufacturer exists in the area and the improvements started last year were continued. He has now an ideal place for the manufacture of ice cream. The number of retailers of ice cream in the area is twelve, eleven of which retail prepared wrapped ices of well-known makes.

Meat and Other Foods.

No slaughter houses are at present operating within the district but shops and vehicles where food is offered for sale were inspected. A large number of cottage pigs were slaughtered locally and your Sanitary Inspector inspected 152. Where necessary, the owners were advised to destroy certain parts of the carcasses. The principal disease being tuberculosis.

I am,
Your obedient servant,

C. BROWN.

Sanitary Inspector.