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1957.

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE HEALTH

OF THE

COWES URBAN DISTRICT



BY

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ISLE OF WIGHT:

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COUNTY HALL,

NEWPORT, I.W.

Tel. Newport 2261

To the Members of the Cowes Urban District Council:-

MR. CHAIRMAN AND COUNCILLORS.

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report on the health of the District for the year 1957.

The Birth Rate rose slightly from 14.0 to 14.5 and the Death Rate continued to fall from 11.9 to 10.5.

The Infantile Mortality Rate fell from 21.2 to 16.3.

The number of deaths from Cancer continued to fall (38 in 1955, 34 in 1956) 31 in 1957.

The number of cases of death due to Lung Cancer fell from 8 to 4, all the cases occurring in males.

For the second year running there was no death from cancer of the lung in females.

Only one case of death from cancer of the breast occurred.

Heart disease occurred for 63 of the deaths.

The Stillbirth Rate fell from 28.8 to 23.8.

Two deaths were due to Respiratory Tuberculosis.

There were no deaths from Measles or Whooping Cough.

During the year 81 samples of milk were examined for the presence of tuberculosis, none were found to be positive but two of the samples were found to contain Brucella Abortus. Three hundred and twenty-four cases of Measles occurred during the year but it was only necessary to admit seven to hospital.

Two cases of Poliomyelitis occurred and were admitted to hospital. There were no deaths from this disease.

Four cases of Food Poisoning were notified.

The quality of water supplied by the Isle of Wight Water Board to certain areas of the District continues to be very poor, and continuous pressure is being brought to bear for the improvement of the supply.

With the growing campaign of vaccination against poliomyelitis it is perhaps not too much to hope that we will see this illness go the way of diphtheria.

As the poliomyelitis vaccine becomes more and more available a time should soon be reached when one hundred per cent of the population are protected.

The use of the more common name for poliomyelitis, infantile paralysis, implied that the disease was one of children. While its incidence in the young was higher than in older persons it has been repeatedly demonstrated that immunity to poliomyelitis is not acquired simply by growing older.

The opportunity of gaining immunity against the disease by natural means is one of chance and is attended with such grave risks that the provision of a safe vaccine must be heralded as one of the greatest steps ever taken in the field of preventive medicine.

It behoves every man, woman and child to avail themselves of the great boon offered in poliomyelitis vaccination. The principle disadvantage to the present system of poliomyelitis vaccination is the necessity for multiple injections to keep the resistance of the body at the required level. This is indeed a small price to pay for protection but research is continuing and it is hoped that eventually a safe, powerful, vaccine given by mouth will be available.

Much apprehension was aroused by reports that an epidemic of influenza, with its origin in Asia, was sweeping the world.

The disease struck the Island in August and during the following months of the year a great many cases occurred.

Unlike the Influenza pandemic at the end of the First World War, the disease proved mild in type and was only rarely followed by complications, such as pneumonia.

The school population was stricken to a fairly great extent. In the Cowes area 540 pupils were affected, an incidence of 17.2%. In some schools in the Island however the incidence rose to 44%.

The maximum incidence of the disease occurred towards the end of October.

It does not seem to be widely enough appreciated that a cold room can cause death in the new born infant. This cause of infant death is not rare and is certainly one that can be prevented.

Cases usually occur during periods of very cold weather and generally after home confinements. A room temperature can fall very rapidly during the night when the fire gets low or even goes out or after an electric, gas or paraffin heater is turned off.

The danger is at its greatest in premature and thin babies and where the baby's clothes and covers are not of adequate warmth. It is also naturally dangerous to bathe the baby in a cold room.

In all cases a steady temperature of 65° Farenheit must be maintained in the room where the baby is to be born and attended to.

One of the most serious and pathetic aspects of life today is the problem presented by the chronic sick in the community. It is not simply a question of old age, one person may be old at 50, another young at 80. At the moment hospital beds are not available for those who so desperately need them.

The people in most need of care are often those who value their independence and privacy most highly. In spite of great need they resent offers of help and especially any suggestion of their transfer to a guest house or hospital bed.

It is a disturbing sight to see a person living in extremes of squalor and privation, cold and suffering from malnutrition with bedding in rags and tatters and yet bitterly resenting any official efforts to alleviate their suffering.

The greatest tact and gentleness is needed in approaching these patients.

In the older individuals with chronic illness they frequently have additional burdens to bear.

Their sight is often failing, making them naturally more prone to accidents in the home.

Their sense of smell deteriorates so that they are especially liable to suffer from accidents involving coal gas.

An outside lavatory presents a cruel, additional hazard and their struggle is increased by their need to carry fuel and especially in country districts by the need to dispose of excreta carried from the house.

A further problem facing the aged sick is often the difficulty in obtaining the medicine prescribed by the doctor. The journey to the chemist and perhaps a wait while the prescription is "made up" often requires monumental effort, as indeed does the trip to "draw my pension at the post office".

One of the difficulties in this field is ascertainment. Anything in the nature of an Old Person's Register seems unpopular so that the degree of knowledge of need in the population, is to say the least, very patchy. Frequently, the services available to these persons are not known to them.

It is true that rapid deterioration frequently follows the death of a spouse, so that perhaps it would be an advantage if a Health Visitor were to call on the family when a death is notified, so that, if required, necessary aid may be rendered or at least the available services made known to the survivor.

This is a great human problem which is worthy of all our efforts. It is of little use prolonging human life with the latest medical discoveries if the prolongation simply means an attenuated existence of cold, squalor and perhaps above all, loneliness.

It is not possible to stop the process of ageing, but changes commonly regarded as the result of age may not have their causation merely in the passage of time.

These changes are overt manifestations of multiple damaging influences under which the patient has lived his life. They represent the sum of his experiences with health and disease and, as such, may to some extent be modified.

A patient's history is of paramount importance. Familial tendencies towards diseases such as diabetes or cardio-vascular diseases must be considered. Occupational hazards may be pin-pointed and harmful habits may be brought to notice and eliminated.

Obesity does not usually trouble those who are truly aged because the obese die relatively young as a result of hypertension, diabetes or degenerative disease of the blood vessels.

Starvation is seldom met with today but selective malnutrition without actual starvation is not uncommon. This condition causes only obscure changes in the early stages and is frequently overlooked.

The relatively common practice of the use of large amounts of mineral oil by the aged is an example of a procedure which may result in additional conditioned nutritional deficiency.

Iron deficiency anaemia is fairly common as a result of the familiar "biscuits and milk" diet which is so trouble-free to prepare.

For women, the late fifties and early sixties are particularly hazardous from the nutritional standpoint. At this time the family group is often reduced, outside interests are restricted and stimulation of new interests is lacking.

In spite of the increased efforts to improve the hygiene of food in general, bread the commonest of all foods, and one that is consumed uncooked, is frequently delivered in a dirty state.

Certain properties in the district have fallen into a deplorable state of disrepair because the landlord is unwilling to carry out necessary works while a grossly negligent or otherwise unfit tenant is in occupation.

The squalor which some even comparatively young people are prepared to endure is almost beyond belief.

Section 47 of the National Assistance Act is a most difficult social measure to apply.

In essence its purpose is to deprive a person of his liberty for his own good in the main. The fact that this section has to be invoked at all carries with it the certainty that the person to whom it applies will not agree to voluntary co-operation with the services available to look after him.

No matter how humble, dirty or verminous, a home is a home. There is all the difference in the world to the old person living, in to what is to him cosiness, between his home and the almost clinical cleanliness and necessary regimentation (at least to a certain degree) in the accommodation offered to him by the Welfare Authority.

The release of the first atomic bombs followed by their development and increase in destructive power has brought a new awareness of radioactivity and its dangers but it is not yet fully realised to what extent we are continually exposed to external radiations of natural origin.

Their affects are in addition to those of the small but measurable quantities of radio-active substances that normally accumulate in our bodies.

In the earth's outer crust radio-active materials are plentiful but because they are widely dispersed they are well diluted. A square mile of surface soil one foot thick is estimated to contain an average of one gram of radium, three tons of uranium and six tons of thorium, all of which are radio-active. From the realms of outer space we are bombarded by penetrating radio-active cosmic rays and even the air we breathe contains minute amounts of radon and thoron—gaseous decay products of radium, uranium and thorium from the earth.

Food and water, especially water from wells and mineral springs, also contain traces of radio-active substances in measurable amounts but these quantities are very small and apparently harmless.

Even man-made structures of wood, brick or concrete give off small quantities of radio-activity and interior walls of plaster are sufficiently radio-active to affect the function of detecting instruments.

To all this natural back-ground radiation man has now added a phenomenal output of his own and even the experts who control the artificial sources are not infallible as may be demonstrated by the Windscale accident.

It is true that we can never avoid exposure to radio-activity but now that we are beginning to create it, we must at least understand and try to regulate it.

It would seem a logical step for a figure to be established recording the standard natural background radiation for each district. A regular measurement of this level might be kept and any rise in the level to be reported on and accounted for.

In addition radio-active sources such as the isotopes used in medicine and increasingly in industry should, in my opinion never enter into the area controlled by a Medical Officer of Health without his notification.

The relationship between cigarette smoking and cancer of the lung appears to the experts to be significant. A vigorous campaign against smoking is urged especially aimed at the young.

The efforts against smoking, however, seem puny when children are nightly bombarded with high pressure cigarette sales-talk from their television screens.

Health Propaganda to be effective must obviously be as powerful, if not more powerful, than its adversary.

In the United States, certain Health Authorities have their own television programmes through which they can hammer out high powered propaganda on all aspects of prevention of ill health. It seems a pity that the great power of television for good cannot be put to more use in this country.

At least so far as adults are concerned, since the scare of cancer of the lung has been raised, they seem to have increased the number of cigarettes they smoke, not reduced them.

Short of positive prohibitive action, which I hardly see likely ever to take place, smoking will continue, but smokers must be aware that they are taking a calculated risk.

Supposing it were discovered that tea drinking produces cancer of the stomach. It would indeed be a monumental task to eradicate tea drinking in this country. It is likely that the calculated risk would be taken.

As long ago as 1906 an attempt was made to deal generally with the educational aspect of the cancer problem. Since then sporadic attempts have been made to nibble at the subject.

Outside the medical profession nobody wished to discuss it or to know anything about it, largely because of the widespread conviction that nothing could be done for it.

The adoption of the ostrich-like policy of ignoring cancer and its dangers led every member of the community to hope that, whatever happened to his neighbour, he himself would not be the unlucky one to be attacked.

Even today it is a subject which one must ponder very deeply before discussing. Fear of cancer can produce very great mental anguish and psychological disturbance. Early diagnosis of cancer in accessible sites gives rise to hope of cure.

Should the public be told the early signs and symptoms of cancer in its various stages?

In the present state of cancer knowledge it seems that extensive cancer education might well do more harm than good.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Chairman and Members of the Council for their kindness and consideration, my fellow officers in other departments for their assistance, and Mr. Howard and his Staff for their enthusiastic help and co-operation.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN MILLS, Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS, 1957.

Medical Officer of Health:-

JOHN MILLS, M.D., Ch.B., M.R.C.S. (Eng.), L.R.C.P. (Lond.), D.P.H.

Senior Public Health Inspector: -

R. H. HOWARD, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Public Health Inspector :-

P. T. G. Woods, M.P.H.I.A.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in acres No. of inhabited houses (end of 1957) per	rate books	5,542 5,490
Rateable value, as at 1. 4. 57 Sum represented by 1d. rate (1956-57)	7)		£208,462 £866

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

These are unchanged since the last report.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS.

Population (Registrar General's Figures)	16,910
Live birth rate per 1,000 of estimated resident	
population	14.5
Comparative factor (births)	1.07
Comparative Birth Rate	15.5
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	23.8
Crude death rate per 1000 of the estimated	
resident population	10.5
Comparative factor (deaths)	0.89
Comparative death rate	9.3
Puerperal death rate per 1,000 total (live and	
still births)	Nil
Infantile Mortality:-	
All infants per 1,000 live births	16.3
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births	16.7
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	31
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	Nil

BIRTHS.

The total number of live births was 246, giving a live birth rate per 1,000 living of 14.5, the corresponding rate for England and Wales being 15.7.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths was 177 giving a death rate of 10.5 per 1000 of the estimated resident population. The corresponding rate for England and Wales was 11.5.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The Infantile Mortality rate was 16.3 per 1,000 registered live births, the rate for England and Wales being 23.0.

CA	USES	OF	DE	HT
60	USES	OT	DE	1111.

CAUSES OF	DEAL	11.	
CAUSE		MALE	FEMALE
Tuberculosis, respiratory		1	1
Tuberculosis, other		_	1
Syphilitic disease			-
Diphtheria		_	
Whooping Cough		_	
Meningococcal infections			
Acute Poliomyelitis		_	-
Measles		_	
Other infective and parasitic dise	eases		
Malignant neoplasm, stomach		6	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronc		4	_
Malignant neoplasm, breast	1145		1
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	***	_	2
Other malignant and lymphatic r	eonlasm	s 9	7
Leukæmia, aleukæmia	icopiasiii	1	1
Distance		1	1
Vascular lesions of nervous syste	***	7	11
			11
Coronary disease, angina		14	13
Hypertension with heart disease		4	2
Other heart disease		14	16
Other circulatory disease	***	1	2
Influenza		2	2
Pneumonia	***	+	4
Bronchitis		3	4
Other diseases of respiratory sys		_	-
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum		3	_
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhœa		1	2
Nephritis and nephrosis		1	2
Hyperplasia of prostate		6	_
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion		_	_
Congenital malformations		2	1
Other defined and ill-defined dise	ases	7	7
Motor vehicle accidents		1	1
All other accidents		1	1
Suicide		_	2 .
Homicide and operations of war		-	
ALL CAUSES		92	85

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Your Senior Public Health Inspector has furnished the following details of the sanitary and public health inspections during the year 1957.

For the first five months of the year owing to staff shortages the work of the department had to be restricted to essentials and urgent every-day problems and complaints.

Mr. P. G. T. Woods was appointed as Additional Public Health Inspector and commenced his duties on the 1st June. Despite numerous advertisements of the post and offers of increased emoluments, only one applicant for the post was eventually short-listed. This meant that from September, 1956, a period of nine months, the department functioned at only half the inspectorate staff, which is reflected in the figures, as compared with previous years, of duties and inspections carried out and enumerated within this report.

These circumstances regrettably meant that the Slum Clearance programme was delayed and the implications of the Food Hygiene Regulations were unable to be enforced, to any degree, also the many varied and statutory responsibilities demanding attention had to be overlooked and neglected.

Following a review in May of the Council's "Housing Waiting List", the system of keeping applicant's records was re-organised and all such information, management and interviewing housing applicants, previously performed in the Clerk's Office, were transferred to the Public Health department; this was found necessary in order to ensure uniformity in the treatment of housing applicants.

The report now continues under the headings of the duties performed in this area.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTIONS IN THE AREA

These figures cover the entire work carried out by the Public Health Department and include all aspects and phases of the duties performed, and demanded by statute.

Number of dwelling houses surveyed (inspection)	1st	573
Number of dwelling houses re-inspected (2		010
inspection)		974
Other visits and inspections (1st inspection)		991
Other visits and inspections (2nd inspection)		811
Ineffectual visits		169
Total number of inspections and re-visits ma	ide	
during the year		3,518

This figure is a decrease of 405 on the 1956 figures.

NOTICES SERVED

		Informal	Formal
Public Health Acts	 	172	4
Housing Acts	 	Nil	26
Food and Drugs Act	 	59	Nil
Factories Act	 	2	Nil
Shops Act	 	2	Nil

DETAILS AND NUMBERS OF INSPECTIONS

Public Health Acts

Houses inspected for nuisances	 	582
Office premises	 	5
Verminous premises	 	27
Other insects	 	31
Ponds, ditches and watercourses	 	16
Tents, vans, caravans and camps	 	75
Keeping of animals	 	15

Accumulation of refuse and provision	n of d	lust-	
bins			47
New drainage works and existing dr	ainage	e	376
Other nuisances			48
Yards, passages, car parks			3
Infectious Diseases and Food Poisoning E	nquir	ies	71
Food Poisoning			66
Food and Drugs Act, and Food Hygiene I	Regula	tions	
Restaurants, kiosks, canteens			104
Butchers			45
Fish shops			16
Fried Fish shops			4
Greengrocers			20
Grocers			62
Bakehouses			13
Ice-cream premises and vehicles			23
Cooked meat premises			3
Other food premises			16
Milk and Dairy Regulations			18
Meat inspections			8
Unsound food			88
Informal Sampling			
Ice-cream			21
Water			259
Housing Legislation			
			207
Repairs, overcrowding, slum clearar	ice		207
Improvement Grants			14
Certificates of Disrepair			14
Council Housing			
Application for Council Housing			267
Routine Council House inspections			375
Housing Management enquiries			141
Conditions of tenancy			150

Factories Act Mechanical Power 8 2 Non-mechanical Power 8 Smoke Abatement 25 Shops Act Miscellaneous Public Conveniences 4 Schools ... 5 Fairgrounds 6 ... Rodent Control 36 Bathing establishments 18 Pet Animals Act 5 Ineffectual visits 169 Rag Flock Act ... 2

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES

Members of the public, and occupiers of dwellings made a total of 405 complaints to the Public Health Offices during the year.

Details of the various nuisances detected and remedied in relation to properties to the total of 387, are set out in the table below.

Doors, windows, frames floors	, sasho	ords re	epaired	76
Grates, flues, chimneys repair	ed			15
Gutters, roofs and rain-water Defective and choked drains r			d	67 77
Vermin eradicated				15
Verminous bedding and furnit	ture de	stroye	d	4
Water closets and flushing cis-	terns r	epaire	d	14
Accumulations of refuse remov	ved			17
Wall and ceiling plasters repa	ired			18
Sinks repaired and renewed				5
New water services provided				2
Pavings and yards repaired				4

Defective walls and 1	pointing	renew	ed	 8
Dampness abated				 44
Cesspools emptied				 21

RODENT CONTROL

All rodent control work in the District is carried out by the Rodent Officer for the Isle of Wight (Rodents Destruction) Joint Committee.

Of the 107 complaints of rodent infestations received by this office all were referred to the Rodent Officer who has submitted the following figures for the year ending 31st March, 1958.

Total number of properties inspected resulting from notification and survey in the Urban area	67
Total number of inspections to Council owned properties, (Refuse tips, stores, depots, etc.)	72
Number of dwelling houses and Council houses inspected	1,485
Number of business and industrial premises inspected	672

One major infestation within the area was located.

Eighty-nine minor rat and 84 minor mice infestations were dealt with.

The total number of inspections and re-visits to all types of properties for rodent control work was 2,229.

VERMIN AND INSECT CONTROL

The evils of verminous premises is something of the past. Not one complaint was received or infestation found of the bed-bug, during the year 1957. This indeed is a welcome decline and the credit must surely be placed with the effectiveness of modern insecticides and the improved standards of general cleanliness in homes and premises.

Fourteen dwellings were treated for flea infestation either by spraying with a chlordane/D.D.T. base insecticide or, according to the location and degree of the infestation, with lindane insecticide fumers, which disperse the insecticide in a fine white smoke leaving a residual film on all exposed surfaces. Complete eradication of the vermin was brought about in each case by these methods of treatment by the department's staff.

There are at least 800 known species of fleas but the most common type normally found in dwelling houses is the human flea (Pulex irretans), also the cat and dog flea, all of which are prolific breeders.

The eggs which are oval shaped, fall to the floor and are found and live in the fluffy matter which collects between floor boards or in crevices in furniture, these being the locations for treatment when carrying out disinfestation.

Other insects which are not accepted as vermin but to the public are often a source of nuisance and, therefore, are dealt with and treatment given by the department, include cockroaches, ants, carpet beetles, and many other insects for which advice is always available should the necessity arise.

Although no specific powers exist for dealing with wasp nests by a Local Authority, the public make use of the service provided for the destruction of the nests. Approximately 55 wasps nests were destroyed during the summer months. In order to safeguard the disinfector suitable protective clothing was purchased at the commencement of the year for performing this task.

No charge is made to the public availing themselves of this service.

DRAINAGE

The Public Health department are responsible for the supervision of all drainage works carried out in the district,

in connection with new and old buildings. As a routine practice deposited plans are seen and approved for all drainage works, subject to Building Byelaw approval.

Three hundred and seventy-six visits were made in connection with both new and existing drainage works, and 54 new drainage systems were subject to a water, smoke or air test under pressure.

New drain materials and the transformation of constructional methods were introduced to the district during the year. This material, named "pitch fibre" is not a recent idea but manufacture in this country is comparatively new and the advantages claimed for this product are many and in practice they are found to substantiate the manufacturers claims which are:—no concreting is necessary, lightness in weight, simplicity in laying, time-saving, resistance to chemical action, adaptability for conversion works, and reduction in labour costs.

Despite the lack of craftsmanship and pride of appearance associated with the art of drain laying these new materials have many advantages which are gaining popularity. Only time and age will determine their strength, ability, and improvement of the old established methods and materials.

In those areas where no main sewerage is available 21 septic tanks and cesspools were emptied and cleansed by the mechanical gulley emptier which is hired for this work from an adjoining Authority.

Building development continues in areas not provided with main drainage; Alverstone Road and Coronation Avenue sites being instances of where septic tank dramage is the only means of sewage disposal, suitable for those new dwellings.

The total number of dwellings served by this form of drainage throughout the district is continually growing but not all such systems installed in the past necessitate periodical emptying.

HOUSING

In the return submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, under Section 1 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, the figure of 110 houses was given as those houses being scheduled for demolition and clearance; the period for this task was given as five years and terminates in 1960.

The year under review has seen progress in achieving that target.

"Slum Clearance" are words often used without any serious thought of what the conditions are like for those unfortunate occupants compelled to live in such dwellings. The word "slum" denotes in general, houses which in this day and age can no longer be regarded as fit for human habitation and the only satisfactory method of dealing with such properties is their demolition and clearance.

The cause of slums is something of the past, i.e. bad design and layout, faulty structural conditions, neglect of building maintenance, and lack of basic amenities to the changing standards of present day life.

Although the problems associated with this district are small in comparison with large cities, the clearance of substandard dwellings is a worth while job and must be continued in order to help people achieve a full life by the provision of good, decent homes in a pleasant environment.

An abstract from the statement submitted to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government is summarised in the following return.

HOUSING ACT, 1936

1. Houses Demolished or Closed

Demolished as a result of formal or informal
procedure

12

2.	LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT, 1953	
	Closed as a result of closing orders under Section 10 (1) and 11 (2)	7
3.	Repairs	
	Unfit houses rendered fit and houses in which defects were remedied during the year as a result of informal action under the Housing and Public Health Acts	226
4.	Public Health Acts. Formal Action	
	Housing in which defects were remedied:—	
	(a) By owners	4
	(b) By local authorities in default of owners	Nil
5.	Housing Act, 1936. Formal Action	
	Housing in which defects were remedied:-	
	(a) By owners	Nil
	(b) By local authorities in default of owners	1

It will be noted that a total of 68 dwellings have now been either demolished, closed, or in the process of clearance since August, 1955, leaving approximately 42 of the total figure still to be dealt with.

The St. Andrews Street Clearance Area was the subject of an Official Representation in November, 1957, dealing with a total of 23 dwellings, being the largest scheme ever submitted by your Authority for a single area, and when confirmed by the Ministry and final demolition takes place will result in the clearance of the northern end of St. Andrews Street and the removal of properties, many of which were over 120 years of age and were scheduled for slum clearance in 1937.

RENT ACT, 1957

This much discussed legislation came into force on the 6th July, and will add even more duties and work for the Public Health department, in the issuing of Certificates of Disrepair and inspection of the properties concerned.

The measures contained within the Act have aroused considerable controversy and the future will decide whether the predictions made will be fulfilled.

Five applications were made during the year by tenants, for Certificates of Disrepair. Three certificates were granted, but for the remaining two, undertakings were given by the landlords to remedy the defects within six months.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

The year under review was one in which no applications for Improvement Grants were considered by the Council.

This decision, not to accept applications, was taken as an economy measure for a period of twelve months, when the situation would again be reviewed.

COUNCIL HOUSING

With no designated Housing Officer or separate department responsible for Council Housing, the duties associated with this important function and duty, have grown with the increased units of accommodation now owned by this Council.

This figure at the conclusion of 1957, reached a total of 657, comprising flats, bungalows, prefabricated bungalows, and post and pre-war houses.

All duties concerned with the keeping of applicant's records, interviewing of applicants, and preparing lists of nominees for the Housing Selection Committee have during the year been assimulated into the routine workings of the Public Health department. This responsibility combined

with the continual increasing public health administrative work stresses the need for a full time clerk within the department in order to relieve the Officers, who by training are qualified and can be more gainfully employed on technical duties.

Visits and inspections numbering 933 were carried out in relation to all housing management matters delegated to this department. This comprised 375 monthly routine inspections of properties to determine the conditions relating to overcrowding, dirty or verminous premises, state of repair and redecoration, and observance of "Conditions of Tenancy".

Resulting from these inspections 335 recommendations were made to the Surveyor's Works department who are responsible for the maintenance works and supervision of repairs.

These figures are considerably less than previous years, and do not maintain the minimum average of each Council owned property being visited annually by a Public Health Inspector.

The number of new houses built within the Urban District for the year was compiled as follows:—

Local Authority ... 18 houses

Housing Association ... Nil houses

Private enterprise ... 41 houses

Total ... 59 houses

The problem family still continues to exist and from time to time the Welfare Officer or Health Visitor will bring to your Officers notice an applicant who is considered a worthy case for housing consideration in an effort to bring about some order from the chaos and conditions under which the particular family are at present living. These families usually follow a similar pattern—substandard accommodation, overcrowding, and inadequate furniture and furnishings. They are mostly families who are well known to your Officers by their continual moving from one address to another with little or no security of tenancy.

During the year, having met with many such families, a close liason and understanding has been built up between the Isle of Wight County Council Health and Child Welfare Service officials, with the result that much background knowledge and useful information can often be gained when reporting and recommending rehousing for these problem families.

Rehousing and rehabilitation of these families does not always work. Many problems and difficulties have to be overcome and results must be assessed as a long term policy, but of those families rehoused by your Council to which the term "problem families" has been applied in the past, I can report that the experiment has been worth while in providing a home from which a new and better life for them has commenced.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD PREMISES

"Food Business" is a definition contained within the Food Hygiene Regulations, and speaking generally it means where any person engages in the handling of food.

This indeed covers wide varieties of premises and means any business or undertaking where food is supplied for human consumption, whether the premises are conducted for profit or not.

Examples of this definition are considerable and concerns the selling, showing for sale, preparation, transport, and storage of food; in fact in all cases where food is handled, then your Health Inspectors have a statutory duty to carry out to enforce and execute the provisions of legislation dealing with food.

Much work has still to be done before the food premises of the district can be classified in all respects as "satisfactory". It was with regret that the high hopes as envisaged during 1956, that all food premises would be surveyed under the new Food Hygiene Regulations, were impossible to complete.

The total inspections to some of the premises coming within the definition of food business for the purpose of securing the clean handling of food and prevention of contamination are given below:—

Restaurants, kiosks, canteens, dining ha	ills 104
Butchers shops	45
Fish and fried fish shops	20
Greengrocers shops	20
Bakehouses, bakers and confectioners	13
Grocers shops	62
Ice-cream retailers and vehicles	23
Cooked meat shops	3

The problem of dogs in food premises is not new and it was hoped that the new food regulations would prohibit their presence in food rooms.

To most people the sight of a dog sniffing around foodstuffs is aesthetically objectionable whether the foods be packed or tinned. It is not beyond the scope or ability of a dog to perform feats of balancing on three legs when adjacent to food; this in particular can often be witnessed in forecourts and shop fronts.

Some protection against these habits of the dog are provided in the Food Hygiene Regulations by insisting that food is placed 18in. from ground level, but I do not think this emphasis on protection from contamination is sufficient or

definite enough. The onus of the Manager or shop owner to refuse the entry of dogs should be removed and suitable powers be made available by the Minister to prohibit dogs and cats from rooms where food is stored, sold or prepared.

A further instance of co-operation with other Local Authorities' Officers and the constant vigilance maintained in safeguarding food supplies, was the instance where a London Metropolitan Borough in the course of routine sampling discovered in a consignment of Danish Crystal Egg Albumen, traces of Salmonella Typhimurium. This is an organism associated with food poisoning.

A list of premises to whom cartons had been despatched was notified to this district and in accordance with the provisions, that where any food is suspected of causing food poisoning, notice was given to the persons concerned. In this instance it was requested that until our investigations were complete the egg albumen was not to be used for human consumption, or removed from the premises.

Samples of the albumen submitted to the Public Health Laboratory, proved the presence of Salmonella Typhimurium. In co-operation with colleagues in many districts the procedure was adopted of collecting the egg albumen and despatching it to the Company, who were to carry out heat treatment of the product under the strict control of the local Public Health department.

The amounts of various foods which were condemned and voluntarily surrendered for the year under review are given below:—

1,050 ti	ns and	jars	of fish,	fruit,	vegeta	ables,
milk a	and coo	ked m	eats			1,530 lbs.
Fish						42 lbs.
Cheese						35 lbs.
Sausage	s					183 lbs.

Meat and offal 363 lbs. 2,153 lbs.

Making a total of 19 cwts., 25 lbs.

As in previous years the bulk of all food surrendered in the Urban District is confined to the multiple companies.

All condemned food and tinned goods are disposed of by burying at the refuse tip previous to which they are coloured with a dye to indicate their unfitness and to prevent any form of scavanging.

ICE-CREAM

The total number of premises registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for the sale of ice-cream was 75, and the figure includes two manufacturers who use a cold mix. This product which is capable of manufacture into ice-cream with the addition of water only is made by evaporating a liquid mixture which has been subject to heat treatment.

Two new applications were made during 1957, both being granted subject to compliance with the provisions of Section 16.

Twenty-one samples of bulk ice-cream and ice lollies were taken for bacteriological examination and the results are tabulated below:—

Grade I 6 samples
Grade II 6 samples
Grade III ... 5 samples
Grade IV ... 4 samples

With the exception of the two manufacturers of ice-cream, all registered premises are supplied by four main producers, with plant and storage equipment outside the Urban District. All known and reputable vendors of ice-cream from mechanical vehicles operating in the district are subject to routine inspection and can all claim to conform to a high standard—the construction of the vehicles being on modern and hygienic lines with provisions for hand washing and hot water.

The error of the "human element" is always something that must be considered but in comparison with the "icecream man" of the past, the change is revolutionary and a credit to all concerned with the manufacture and sale of icecream under hygienic conditions.

FOOD AND DRUGS SAMPLING

For the year 1957, samples of food and drugs taken for analysis in the Cowes area by the Isle of Wight County Council, who are the Food and Drugs Authority, are as follows:—

			Totals	Unsatisfactory
Milk			20	2†
Borax			1	_
Cream of chick	en sot	ір	1	_
Cheese spread	with	ham		
and onion			1	_
Dressed crab			1	
Dried egg			1	
Ice-cream			1	
Lemon juice			1	-
Salmon paste			1	_
Sausages (cann	ed)		1	1*
Tomato chutne	y		1	-
			The state of	
Тота			30	3
			-	

Unsatisfactory samples

- †1. Deficient in fat-Producer advised
- 1. Added water—Producer-retailer fined £3 3s. 0d.
- *1. Labelling infringement

I am indebted to the Sampling Officers of the Isle of Wight County Council for these figures.

MILK SUPPLIES

Twenty-one persons are registered as Distributors within the area, under the Milk and Dairy Regulations, 1949. Eleven of the registrations are for retail shops where milk is sold in the sealed bottles as delivered to the shop premises.

Two premises are registered as "Dairies".

Licences for the sale of designated milks as requested by the Special Designated Orders were granted in the following:—

To use the Special Designation "Pasteurised"

18 dealers

To use the Special Designation "Tuberculin Tested"

15 dealers

Where holders of Dealers Licences, authorising them to use the Special Designation trade in adjoining areas to that which they are licensed, a further licence is required to be issued.

For that purpose 9 supplementary licences were granted to dealers whose main Dealers Licences were granted by neighbouring Authorities.

The Milk (Special Designations) (Specified Areas) Order, 1957

All milk sold by retail after 25th November, 1957, must now be a special designated milk, that being either "Pasteurised", "Sterilised", or "Tuberculin Tested" milk—the first two of which milks are heat treated. The Order covers the whole of the Isle of Wight and makes it illegal for any person to sell by retail any milk other than that which is specially designated in accordance with the provisions of the Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, or the Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations.

This means that all persons retailing milk in this district will now need to be licensed by the appropriate Licencing Authority and is a step further in ensuring that all milk consumed by the public is safe and once and for all does away with the old practice of ladling milk from a churn into the consumer's jug.

SHOPS ACT, 1950

The register required to be kept by statute of shops for 1957, records a total of 287 shops in the Urban District, which are controlled on all matters relating to early and general closing hours, conditions of employment, health, comfort and welfare of shop workers—these duties being administered by the Public Health department whose Inspectors are the designated Shops Act Inspectors.

The new Shops Bill to control shops, which was pending in 1956, came under some very heavy criticism and was therefore, shelved. Unfortunately the ambiguities and list of exempted goods still remain as part of the Shops Act, 1950, and provide many difficulties in administration.

The total number of inspections carried out in enforcing the provisions relating to shop premises was 25. This figure I regret is again less than previous years.

No contraventions were found necessary to report during the years work.

WATER SUPPLY

To assist the Isle of Wight Water Board, the statutory water undertakers for the Urban District, routine bacteriological water samples are taken from two supply points at West Cowes and one point at East Cowes.

In addition samples of treated water are taken from the seven distribution systems.

This policy of the Local Authority Officers carrying out routine water sampling for the Board has been in practice since 13th April, 1955, during which time 852 bacteriological water samples have been taken.

Tabulated below are the results and points at which the samples were taken for 1957.

Highly Satis- Sus- Unsat- Total satisfactory factory picious isfactory West Cowes Broadfields Well Newport Road Reservoirs Low level area Tower area Newport Road Filtered water area Newport supply area East Cowes East Cowes Well Tower area Reservoir area ... Newport supply area

The following classification is that used by the Laboratory when grouping the samples of water. The presence of Bacterium Coli places the sample in Grade 4 (unsatisfactory).

			Bacterium coli count per ml.,	
Class 1.	Highly satisfacto	ory	Nil	Nil
Class 2.	Satisfactory		1—2	Nil
Class 3.	Suspicious		3—10	Nil
Class 4.	Unsatisfactory		Greater than 10	Ni1

It will be seen that of the total—162 samples—taken from consumer's taps (treated water), 26, or 15.4% were classified as Suspicious and Unsatisfactory.

Forty-one samples were taken from domestic taps within the Newport Road Filtered water area, which because of its source is kept under constant observation. Twelve of these samples, or 29.3% were classified as Suspicious and Unsatisfactory.

Complaints of water supply in this area were received during the course of the year regarding "phenolic" taste, also about the amount of suspended matter contained within the water.

Chemical water samples were taken and submitted to the Public Analyst, Portsmouth, who reported the following:—

Certificates of Analysis

Source of Sample:

Sample of water from Newport Road Reservoirs, No. 4 Sample taken 11.30 a.m., 10/6/57 Sample received 1.30 p.m., 11/6/57

Observations

"These results indicate that this water contains a small amount of organic matter but that this is unlikely to have been derived from recent sewage pollution.

The water is moderately hard, quite alkaline in reaction and free from metallic contamination. This sample is free from any abnormal taste and treatment with chlorine did not produce any abnormal odour or taste.

In my opinion this sample would be satisfactory for drinking and domestic purposes after filtration and chlorination.

Complaints of taste, sometimes described as "phenolic", can be caused by the action of chlorine on minute traces of substances present in the water, the compounds produced being detected by taste in extreme dilution. The occurrence of these substances is likely to be intermittent and this sample appeared to be free from this contamination. These substances may well be derived from vegetable sources and have no significance from a health aspect, other than their effect on taste.

If consistent complaints of this nature are received, it may be necessary to consider a different method of purification of the water".

(Signed) W. B. CHAPMAN

Deputy Public Analyst

Source of Sample:

Sample of water from 37 Bernard Road, Cowes Sample taken 11.35 a.m., 19/6/57 Sample received 9 a.m., 20/6/57

Observations

"The chemical composition of this sample resembles that of the previous sample of untreated water taken on 10/6/57.

The taste of this sample is inferior and it might well be described as having a phenolic taste. A sensitive test for monohydric phenols yielded negative results and I am of the opinion that the taste is not derived from direct contamination from tar washings or similar sources.

Certain vegetable extracts are known to yield chlorophenols after chlorination and this is the most likely origin of the taint, especially if it is found to be intermittent. If it is not possible to identify the particular area of the gathering ground which is responsible and eliminate it from the supply, the appropriate treatment is to filter through active charcoal after chlorination".

(Signed) A. L. WILLIAMS

Public Analyst

Source of Samples:

Two samples of tap water from (a) Electrical Repair Shop; (b) Kitchen; at J. S. White's Shipyard, Cowes

Samples taken 11 a.m., 4/12/57

Samples received 10.15 a.m., 5/12/57

Observations

"Both these samples contained a faint trace of suspended matter.

Microscopical examination shows that the suspended matter is free from animal life but contains diatoms. This finding has no significance from a public health aspect; it merely shows that the filtration of the water is not perfect.

In my opinion the proportion of suspended matter in these samples is insignificant and does not characterise the water as unwholesome".

(Signed) A. L. WILLIAMS

Public Analyst.

SWIMMING AND PADDLING POOLS

There are no public swimming pools in the Urban District, the only pool being situated at the Gurnard Pines Holiday Camp, which is in constant use during the holiday season by campers, also for instructional swimming purposes by children attending the Gurnard and Northwood County Primary Schools.

In order to ensure that the bathing water is clean, fresh, free from harmful bacteria and in a sparkling condition, the continuous filtration method is used followed by sterilization and aeration.

At the completion of the holiday season for 1957, in view of the age of the existing chlorination equipment, which was installed in 1937, a new Breakpoint Chlorination plant was ordered from the manufacturers. This will be in operation for the following year.

Of bacteriological samples taken from the swimming and children's paddling pools of the Camp, during the seasonal months, all were returned after examination as "Highly Satisfactory".

In the interest of public health, following frequent unsatisfactory bacteriological reports of the water contained within the East Cowes Esplanade paddling pool, it was decided because of the difficulties and financial implications of providing safe and clean water, to close the pool.

The system by which the paddling pool water was changed was the "Fill and Empty" method. This consisted of emptying the pool approximately once a fortnight and filling with sea water by a small pump. The intervals for refilling depended to a degree on the state of the tide.

With this method, during hot weather and heavy usage of the pool by small children, who in this shallow depth of water found ideal bathing facilities, the appearance and bacteriological state of the water rapidly deteriorated, and as such was a threat to the health of children using the pool.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

This duty of refuse disposal is the responsibility of the Surveyor and Engineer's department, all refuse being disposed of by tipping and burning at the two refuse tips situated at Whippingham and Arctic Road.

As in previous years routine visits and inspections are carried out to ensure that the tip is at all times kept free from vermin and insects.

For many years now the tendency has increased to use certain vacant bomb sites as dumping grounds for refuse and rubbish of all descriptions. These actions are seldom seen and appear to take place at night with the result that certain plots of open land are continually being littered with such articles as bicycle frames, old mattresses, carpets and lino, and in fact all types of miscellaneous rubbish.

The practice of dumping rubbish creates many difficulties and is one where the responsible person can seldom be found. For that purpose the public's attention was drawn to the fact that the Council do provide a service for the disposal of articles from the home which are unable to be collected in the normal weekly refuse service, therefore, this habit which is anti-social and a danger to public health is one which it is hoped will decline as more members of the public become aware of the services provided by the Local Authority.

The total number of moveable dwellings licensed under the Public Health Act, 1936, Section 269, is now 184. This is more than in previous years and the number appears to increase annually.

There are four main caravan camps situated throughout the district, two of which are in use as residential sites and cater for caravans occupied throughout the year. These four camps are licensed for 152 caravans and 19 temporary huts. The remaining 12 moveable dwellings licensed are confined to individually sited caravans on plots of land adjoining private dwelling houses.

All caravan sites are provided with permanent brick built toilet blocks with flush sanitation, clothes washing and ablution facilities. Main water supplies are available at points with drain gullies and concrete aprons to each standpipe.

Additional refuse collections are made during the seasonal months. In practice this is found desirous at week-ends in order to remove the clearings of the outgoing occupier and the wrappings of the newly arrived campers.

One contravention was found necessary to report during the year in respect of the Waverley Hotel and Caravan Park, Old Road, where it was found the number of moveable dwellings licensed by your Authority was being exceeded.

The site owner was instructed to apply for a licence for the additional number of caravans. This licence was granted subject to the construction of a new toilet block to comply with the Conditions (i.e. 1 toilet to five caravans).

FOOD AND DRUGS (MILK AND DAIRIES) ACTS, 1944. URBAN DISTRICT OF COWES

Samples of milk were taken during the year from herds whose milk is retailed raw without heat treatment. These samples were examined at the Public Health Laboratory, Winchester, for the presence of live Tubercle Bacilli.

Number of samples taken for T.B. during 1957		81
Number of samples found to be positive		Nil
Number of samples in which Brucella Abortus v	vas	
isolated		2

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

There were 345 notifications of infectious diseases, 324 of which were for Measles. There were no cases of Diphtheria.

41

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Food Poisoning	4	2	_
Meningococcal Infec-			
tion	_	_	_
Smallpox	_	_	-
Scarlet Fever	8	_	_
Diphtheria	_		-
Enteric Fever (includ-			
ing Paratyphoid)	_	-	_
Puerperal Pyrexia	_	_	
Pneumonia	1	_	_
Erysipelas	1	1	-
Encephalitis	-	_	-
Poliomyelitis	2	2	-
Ophthalmia			
Neonatorum	201	_	_
Measles	324	/	
Whooping Cough	5	_	-
Malaria	_	-	_
Dysentery	-O.J. Donn		_
Totals	345	12	_

AGE AT DATE OF NOTIFICATION.

Age.	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Dysentery	Puerperal Pyrexia	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Whooping	Measles	Meningococcal Infection	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Acute Poliomyelitis	Food	Acute Encephalitis
Under 1 1 and under 2 2 ,, 3 3 ,, 4 4 ,, 5 5 ,, 10 10 ,, 15 15 ,, 20 20 ,, 35 35 ,, 45 45 ,, 65 65 and over Totals	- - 1 - 6 1 - - - - - - -	111111111111	11111111111				- 1 - 4 - - - - - 5	4 32 26 30 36 187 5 2 2 — —					

TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE PERIODS.			New Cases.					Deaths.			
	Totals.	Pulm	onary	Pulm	on- onary	Totals.	Pulm	onary	Pulm	on- onary	
	T	M	F	M	F	T	M	F	M	F	
0 and under 1 1 ,, ,, 5 5 ,, ,, 10 10 ,, ,, 15 15 ,, ,, 20 20 ,, ,, 25 25 ,, ,, 35 35 ,, ,, 45 45 ,, ,, 55 55 ,, ,, 65 65 and over Total		- - - 1 1 1 4 -	- - 1 1 1 3 1 - 1	- - 1 - - - -	- 1 - 1 - - - - -	1 - - - 1 - 1		- - - - - - - 1		1	

[†]Included in this total are five transfers from the mainland.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

Local Authorities or "District Councils" as they are termed under the Factory Act, 1937, are responsible for administering the provisions relating to:—

Sanitary conveniences in all types of factories;

Cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature and ventilation in non-mechanical power factories; and

Homework (Outworkers)—Condition of premises in relation to health of outworkers.

A summary of the information required by the Ministry is tabulated below:—

PART I OF THE ACT.

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.)

	Number	Number of						
Premises			Written	Occupiers prosecuted				
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	6	2	1	_				
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	77	8	1	_				
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is en- forced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	5	_	_	-				
Total	88	10	2	_				

2.—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions they are reckoned as two, three or more ''cases.'')

	Number of ca	ases in whi	ich defects	h defects were found Number				
Particulars	Found	Remedied	То Н.М.	By H.M. Inspector	of cases in which prosecu- tions were instituted			
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	3	3	_	1	-			
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-			
Unreasonable tempera- ture (S.3) Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	- 3				
(S.4)	1	1	-	1	-			
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	2	2	-	_				
(a) insufficient	1	1	-	-	-			
(b) Unsuitable or defective (c) not separate for sexes	2 1	2 1	_		=			
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)			_	_				
Total	10	10	-	2				

PART VIII OF THE ACT.

OUTWORK. (Sections 110 and 111.)

Nature of Work		Section 110		Section 111			
	No. of out- workers in August list required by Sect 110 (1) (c)	cases of	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwhole- some premises	Notices served	Prosecu- tions	
Lampshades Other classes of work	228	=	=	=	=	_	
Total	228	_	-	-	-	-	







