

[Report 1957] / Medical Officer of Health, Harpenden U.D.C.

Contributors

Harpenden (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1957

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/nv8wgdbw>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>



1 in Ward 2
2 Library



HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL

REPORT



of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

James C. Sleigh,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

John Snowdon
M.A.P.H.I.

FOR THE YEAR 1957.

15
aw



HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

James C. Sleigh,
M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

and

SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

John Snowdon
M.A.P.H.I.

FOR THE YEAR 1957.

HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1957

Chairman: Mr. F.M. Drake, J.P.

Vice-Chairman: Mr. L.T. Fowler.

Mrs. G.E. Freely	Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.
Mrs. C. West	Mr. R.S. Hammett
Mr. E. Ackroyd	Mr. H.A.F. Malden
Mr. M.H. Akeroyd	Mr. C.F. Putterill, C.A.
Mr. A. Clark	Mr. V.E. Truss
Mr. C.W. Curl	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.
Mr. L.W. Edgell	

Public Health Committee

Chairman: Mr. A. Clark

Mrs. G.E. Freely	Mr. R.S. Hammett
Mrs. C. West	Mr. H.A.F. Malden
Mr. M.H. Akeroyd	Mr. V.E. Truss
Mr. F.N. Gingell, M.B.E., J.P., C.C.	Mr. H.C. Williamson, J.P.

URBAN DISTRICT OF HARPENDEN.

To the Chairman and Councillors of the
Harpenden Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my report on the health of Harpenden for the year 1957.

The general health of the district remains good except for an epidemic of measles in the first half of the year and about October a widespread but mild form of Asian flu. For this a vaccine was prepared by the Ministry of Health to be issued to Doctors and Nurses. Unfortunately it arrived rather too late, as the peak of the epidemic was over - in any case its value was rather doubtful. The disease was mild and the reaction from vaccination was in some instances as bad as the disease. It was impossible to say whether it did in fact prevent cases of the disease but it certainly was not 100% effective.

To you Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish to record my sincere thanks for all consideration and help you have at all times shown me, and to my staff I wish to record my sincere thanks for their effort and conscientious performance of their duties.

I am also deeply indebted to the Chief Clerk and Secretary in the Divisional Health Office for their assistance in the preparation of the statistics for this report and for the many extra duties carried out by them during the year, which were actually outside their Divisional Health Office duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

J.C. SLEIGH,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	3,157
Registrar General's estimate of resident population	..	..	..	16,020
Number of inhabited houses on the Rate Books:				
Inhabited dwelling-houses (including flats and huts but excluding caravans)	..	..	..	5,213
Shops with living accommodation	..	..	..	69
Licensed premises with living accommodation	..	..	..	23
Rateable Value	..	..	..	£274,846
Sum represented by a penny rate (estimated)	..	..	..	£1,090

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Live Births - Legitimate	..	133	121	254
Illegitimate	..	1	2	3
Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	..	..	..	16.04
Still Births	..	8	3	11
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 total live and still births)	..	..	..	41.04
Still Birth Rate (i.e. per 1,000 of estimated population)	..	..	..	0.69
Deaths	..	76	85	161
Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population	..	..	..	10.05

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths from Pregnancy, Childbirth, or Abortion:	-	-	-
Rate per 1,000 (total live and stillbirths)	..	..	-
Deaths of Infants under 1 Year:			
Legitimate ..	3	2	5
Illegitimate ..	-	-	-
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age (all infants per 1,000 live births):	..	..	19.46
Neonatal Death Rate:	..	..	15.56

BIRTHS: The number of births during 1957 was 257.

DEATHS: There were 161 deaths.

The Infant Mortality rate of 19.46 is much higher than last year (7.94) - this is not alarming, because in actual numbers there were only five infant deaths this year, as compared with 2 in 1956. The causes of death were: premature births - 3; congenital defects - 2. The ages at death were 20 hours; 3 days (in two instances); 7 days; and 3 months.

The number of stillbirths also shows an increase - from 2 in 1956 to 11 this year but again, having regard to the low numbers involved, no conclusions can be drawn.

+ + + + + +

CAUSES OF DEATH

<u>Cause.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory ..	-	-	
2. Tuberculosis, other ..	-	-	
3. Syphilitic Diseases ..	-	-	
4. Diphtheria ..	-	-	
5. Whooping Cough ..	-	-	
6. Meningococcal infections ..	-	-	
7. Acute Poliomyelitis ..	1	-	
8. Measles ..	-	-	
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases ..	-	-	
10. Malignant Neoplasm, stomach ..	6	2	} 31 Cancer.
11. Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus ..	4	-	
12. Malignant Neoplasm, breast ..	-	5	
13. Malignant Neoplasm, uterus ..	-	-	
14. Other lymphatic and malignant Neoplasms ..	7	7	
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia ..	-	-	
16. Diabetes ..	-	1	
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system ..	8	11	
18. Coronary disease, angina ..	9	9	} 60 Heart Disease
19. Hypertension ..	5	3	
20. Other heart disease ..	13	21	
21. Other circulatory disease ..	4	5	
22. Influenza ..	-	-	
23. Pneumonia ..	1	2	
24. Bronchitis ..	2	3	
25. Other diseases of respiratory system ..	3	1	
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ..	1	-	
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ..	-	-	
28. Nephritis and nephrosis ..	-	2	
29. Hyperplasia of prostate ..	1	-	
C/fwd ..	65	72	

<u>Cause.</u>		<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
	B/fwd ..	65	72
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	..	-	-
31. Congenital malformations	..	-	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	..	5	6
33. Motor vehicle accidents	..	3	4
34. All other accidents	..	3	2
35. Suicide	..	-	-
36. Homicide and operations of war	..	-	-
	<u>Totals</u> ..	76	85
		--	--

Cancer Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 1.94

Heart Disease
 Death Rate (per 1,000 of estimated population) - 3.75

It can safely be said that the majority of cases under the heading "Heart Disease" could be more accurately described as death from old age.

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Welfare Centres and Clinics.

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are now held at No. 40 Luton Road on the first and third Wednesday afternoons of each month and at Batford J.M.I. School on the second and Fourth Wednesday afternoons.

The Ophthalmic and Dental clinics are at 40 Luton Road by appointment.

This arrangement is working very well. At Batford we are deeply indebted to the Headmaster, Mr. Bridges, for his enthusiastic co-operation.

National Health Service Act.

The Divisional Administration of the health services administered by the Local Health Authority, the County Council, continues to work very smoothly and an increasing amount of detailed administration is being passed out to Divisional Health Offices from Hertford.

The records available in the Divisional Health Office on Local Health Authority work are of the greatest value to me in my local Sanitary Authority (Medical Officer of Health) work, especially in what is my most difficult job, assessing medical points for housing applications.

Ambulance Service.

I am omitting figures for the ambulance service as applied to Harpenden. The service is running at full strength and whether a case is served from Harpenden or St. Albans depends on circumstances such as urgency, availability of ambulances or sitting cars.

Hospitals.

The Harpenden Memorial Hospital forms part of the Luton and Hitchin Group administered by the Management Committee under the North-West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board. Four House Committees have been appointed by the Management Committee, one of which is concerned with this Hospital and for this purpose the Hospital is linked with Welwyn and Stevenage.

Statistics.

Year ended December 1957.

<u>Bed complement:</u>	Surgical and Medical	..	18	
	Maternity	..	<u>12</u>	30
<u>Average daily number of occupied beds</u>		..		20
<u>Admissions</u>	..	..	..	589
<u>Discharges</u>	..	..	..	586
<u>Number of Births:</u>	Live	..	..	271
	Still	..	..	7
	Death	..	..	-

Out-patient Departments:

<u>Physiotherapy Dept.</u>	<u>New Patients.</u>	<u>Attendances.</u>
In -patients	46	360
Out-patients	691	9,302
<u>Casualty Dept.</u>	594	637
<u>Specialist Consultations.</u>	231	316
<u>Out-patients treated by</u>		
<u>General Practitioners.</u>	73	89

+ + + + + +

General Nutrition.

Poor nutrition is rare and usually is the result of fussing parents indulging food fads. Underweight children often are of small birth weight or have small parents.

I must emphasise that there is no fixed weight for age. Both weight and height vary within rather wide limits in completely healthy children.

Nursing in the Home.

The District Nursing Sisters are available for all cases of domiciliary nursing which includes Midwifery and General Nursing and in all cases where there is illness in the home where a request is made personally or at the request of the Doctor in attendance.

Home Help Service.

This service is administered by the Hertfordshire County Council and provides domestic help for households where such help is required owing to the presence of any person who is ill, lying-in, an expectant mother, mentally defective, aged, or a child not over school age, within the meaning of the Education Act, 1944.

The Organiser, who is a member of the Divisional Health Department Staff, receives requests from doctors, health visitors, midwives, and hospital almoners. No one is denied help on financial grounds and every case can be assessed according to the family income.

The service is proving extremely popular, so much so, in fact, that we are unable to provide all the help that is desired because we cannot get sufficient numbers of Home Helps. This is particularly difficult in the period Christmas to Easter when, of

SAFETY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

course, illness is at its height and one must remember that illness affects Home Helps as well as other members of the community.

Health Visiting.

There are two Health Visitors in the area. They are employed for the visiting of persons in their homes for the purpose of giving advice as to the care of young children, old persons suffering from illness, and expectant or nursing mothers, and as to the measures necessary to prevent the spread of infection.

+ + + + + +

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

The Public Water Supply is provided by the Harpenden Water Company from boreholes at Shakespeare Road and East Hyde, both fairly near the River Lee which is well known to be highly polluted with sewage. The water is, therefore, chlorinated, a very necessary precaution. I am glad to say that we have received considerably fewer complaints in regard to taste than in previous years.

Sewage Disposal:

I am indebted to Mr. H. Pettingale, the Council's Engineer and Surveyor for the following details:

The total quantity of sewage treated at the Sewage Works was 227,133,000 gallons compared with 228,303,000 gallons in 1956.

The rainfall was 21.99 inches compared with 25.82 inches in 1956.

+ + + + +

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Re-housing.

This is still the greatest problem confronting the Council. The points scheme is in use and in addition all certificates from medical practitioners requesting priority for any of their patients are submitted to me as Medical Officer of Health. I have the power to recommend additional points on medical grounds without disclosing my reasons for doing so. In extreme cases I also have the power of recommending absolute priority but this power I am very unwilling to use as, of course, if this power were abused it would ruin the whole points scheme with which I am completely in favour.

The duty thus imposed on me is a very difficult one and I have no doubt that on occasions I shall make mistakes but I can assure the Council that I shall do my utmost to make their housing scheme work as fairly as humanly possible, bearing in mind the very large and urgent demand for houses.

Points are allotted independently of me for such conditions as overcrowding. I therefore never give points for conditions which already attract points under the Housing points scheme.

Number of new houses and flats erected during
the year:

(a) By the Local Authority ..	35
(b) By St. Albans Rural District Council ..	4
(c) By private enterprise ..	200
	<hr/>
	239

+ + + + + +

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year:

(i)	(a)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health and Housing Acts)	203
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	503
(ii)	(a)	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations 1925	7
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose	10
(iii)		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	2
(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	-

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice:

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	47
---	----

+ + + + + + +

3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year:

A. Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:

- (i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs -
- (ii) Number of dwelling houses rendered fit after service of Formal Notices: -
 - (a) By Owners -
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners -

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

- (i) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied 49
- (ii) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices:
 - (a) By Owners -
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of Owners -

+ + + + + + +

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Food Poisoning Outbreaks - Nil.

SECTION F.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1957.

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Total Cases.</u>	<u>Deaths.</u>
Scarlet Fever ..	4	-
Whooping Cough ..	14	-
Acute Poliomyelitis ..	7 (4 Paralytic)	1
Measles ..	601	-
Diphtheria ..	-	-
Pneumonia ..	2	-
Dysentery ..	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica ..	-	-
Typhoid and Paratyphoid ..	-	-
Erysipelas ..	1	-
Meningococcal Infection ..	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia ..	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..	-	-
Malaria ..	-	-
Undulant Fever ..	-	-
Cerebro Spinal Fever ..	-	-
Infective Hepatitis ..	4	-
Food Poisoning ..	-	-
Gastro Enteritis ..	-	-
Pneumococcal Meningitis ..	-	-

+ + + + +

Smallpox. There were no cases during 1957.

Vaccination.

Number of Persons vaccinated (or re-vaccinated) during 1957.

<u>Age at 31st December:</u>	<u>Under 1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2-4</u>	<u>5-15</u>	<u>15 or over</u>	<u>Total</u>
Number vaccinated	210	12	7	5	3	237
Number re-vaccinated	-	-	3	6	29	38

Number of cases specially reported during period (age groups as above)

- Nil -

Number of births registered for Harpenden .. 257

Primary vaccination rate per 100 births .. 92.22

Of the total number of vaccinations (275), 27 were carried out at County Council clinics.

A primary vaccination rate of 92 per 100 births is very satisfactory indeed, being considerably higher than my past experience when vaccination was compulsory!

I would emphasise that the ideal age for primary vaccination is under one year of age, when the risk of complications is practically nil. Complications do occur when the primary vaccination is done later in life, but not when re-vaccination takes place at an older age. Vaccination is compulsory for many people who wish to travel abroad or take up certain employment, and it is well worth while having all babies vaccinated so that no risk may be run if they have to be vaccinated in adult life.

+ + + + + + +

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1957:

Age at date of Final Injection.

Under 5.	5 - 15.
318	20
Total - 338	

Number of children who were given a secondary or reinforcing injection (i.e. subsequent to complete Full Course):

Total - 267

Births for the same area 257

Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births .. 131.5

The numbers shown above include 294 children who received combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria immunisation injections.

+ + + + + + +

Whooping Cough.

On the 16th March, 1953, the County Council scheme under Section 26 of the National Health Service Act, 1946, was extended to cover protection against Whooping Cough.

It is obviously wise to immunise children as soon as possible, because by far the greatest danger occurs in the first year.

Number of children who completed a Full Course for Primary Immunisation in the Authority's Area (including temporary residents) in 1957:

Age at date of Final Injection.

<u>Under 5.</u>	<u>5 - 15.</u>
325	10
Total	- 335
	===

Primary Immunisation Rate per 100 births 130.3

These figures include 294 children who received a primary immunisation with a combined Whooping Cough - Diphtheria vaccine.

It will be noted that once again we have an immunisation rate both for Diphtheria and Whooping Cough of above 100%. It is emphasised that it is difficult to check that all the children who are immunised against Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, and Smallpox actually reside in Harpenden. You will appreciate that a Harpenden postal address by no means implies that the child actually resides within the Urban District boundary but I am sure the number of children in Harpenden who escape immunisation is very, very few.

+ + + + + + + +

Programme of Protective Inoculations.

The following should be the routine procedure for young children:

Month of Age.

Before 3rd month (or at 4½ months)	-	Smallpox	Vaccine	
3rd month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
4th month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
4½ months	-	Smallpox	Vaccine	
6th month	-	Poliomyelitis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
7th month	-	Poliomyelitis	Vaccine	1 c.c.
8th month	-	Diphtheria Formol Toxoid		1 c.c.
9th month	-	Diphtheria Formol Toxoid		1 c.c.
12th month	-	Pertussis	Vaccine	1 c.c.

Booster.

Diphtheria 1 c.c. Formol Toxoid or T.A.F. immediately before or after the child starts school.

Poliomyelitis Vaccine.

The only contra-indications considered to be valid at present are the same as those applying to the other types of immunising procedures, viz: acute or intercurrent illness, poor or indifferent general health, acute constitutional disturbances, etc. If a child is to have tonsils or adenoids removed and is also due for the vaccine, it should be given at least two weeks before the operation if possible in the hope that the child may develop some immunity.

B.C.G. Vaccine.

If this vaccine is to be, or has been, given to a young child contact, there should be no immunising injections of any kind for two weeks before or for six weeks afterwards.

+ + + + + + + + +

Poliomyelitis.

There were seven cases of poliomyelitis (four paralytic and three non-paralytic) notified during 1957, with one death. None of these cases had been vaccinated.

During the year, the scheme of vaccination against poliomyelitis was extended to those children born in 1955/56 and on the 1st January 1958 to all children from six months to fifteen years of age.

The production of British poliomyelitis vaccine was very disappointing and the Government decided to import large quantities of American (Salk) vaccine. At first this vaccine was doubly tested, that is both in America and in this country, but as this delayed the supply vaccine tested only in America is now being issued.

The American vaccine is produced from the three most prevalent types of poliomyelitis virus in America, whilst the British vaccine is prepared from the three most prevalent types in this country. Two of the three types are common to both countries but the one which in fact causes most paralytic cases is different. In theory, therefore, it is best to have the British vaccine if you are resident in Britain and equally so the American vaccine if you are living in America. I rather doubt, however, whether there is very much in this theoretical difference and with the supply position as it is I would recommend the American (Salk) vaccine, as it is quite impossible to estimate when the supply of British vaccine will be available.

Tuberculosis.

Cases on Register as at 31st December, 1957.

<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-pulmonary</u>		<u>Totals</u>
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
45 (38)	33 (29)	4 (4)	12 (10)	94 (81)

Figures as at 31st December 1956, are in brackets.

REPORT OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my fifth report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department.

It is pleasing to record that further progress was made during the year in closing the temporary hutted encampment at Milford Estate and also the re-housing of the remaining tenants from the cottages at Breadcroft Lane was completed.

New legislation in the form of the Rent Act, 1957, brought many enquiries during the latter part of the year and tenants served with notice to quit invariably applied to the Council for housing accommodation. As time has elapsed, however, many problems between landlord and tenant relating to rent, repairs, and new leases have resolved themselves to the benefit of both parties concerned.

In the field of housing, apart from re-housing applicants in new houses, much attention was directed to the problem of making the fullest use of existing accommodation. Some houses still remain under occupied and with the tempo of new Council building development having slowed down in the past few years it has become necessary to take stock of existing accommodation and to endeavour to make the best use of it. With this object in mind, voluntary exchanges between tenants are always encouraged and constant attempts are made to persuade tenants in houses too large for their needs to move to smaller and more suitable accommodation. Progress in this direction has been reasonably encouraging and the Council so far have quite naturally been very reluctant to compel any tenant to move against his wishes. This I feel is a very proper and humane policy to adopt, despite all the arguments against it.

I should like to express my appreciation to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health and Housing Committees for the keen interest taken in the work of the Department and for their friendly and close support at all times.

114	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
115	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
116	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
117	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
118	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
119	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
120	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
121	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
122	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
123	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
124	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
125	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
126	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
127	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
128	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
129	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
130	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
131	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
132	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
133	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
134	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
135	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
136	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
137	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
138	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
139	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
140	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
141	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
142	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
143	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
144	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
145	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
146	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
147	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
148	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
149	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
150	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
151	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
152	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
153	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
154	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
155	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
156	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
157	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
158	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
159	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
160	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
161	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
162	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
163	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
164	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
165	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
166	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
167	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
168	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
169	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
170	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
171	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
172	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
173	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
174	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
175	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
176	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
177	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
178	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
179	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
180	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
181	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
182	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
183	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
184	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
185	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
186	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
187	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
188	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
189	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
190	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
191	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
192	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
193	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
194	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
195	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
196	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
197	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
198	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
199	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
200	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

General Sanitation.

Public Health Acts	-	primary inspections	..	229	
		re-inspections	..	414	
Drainage		..	..	135	
Infectious Disease		..	..	12	
Movable Dwellings		..	..	62	
Refuse Collection and Disposal		..	..	15	
Rodent Control		..	..	2,230	*
Factories Act		..	..	123	
Smoke Observations		..	..	19	
Outworkers		..	..	5	
Housing Acts		..	..	193	
Water Supplies		..	..	23	
Shops Act		..	..	12	
Petroleum Regulations		..	..	46	
Pet Animals Act		..	..	6	
Miscellaneous Visits		..	..	7	
				3,531	

* Includes 2,161 visits made by the Council's Rodent Operative.

Food Hygiene.

Bakehouses	..	..	6
Butchers Shops	..	..	33
Dairies	..	..	16
Foodshops and Stalls	..	..	278
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	74
Restaurants	..	..	69
Milk Distributors - sampling	..	..	37
Fish Shops	..	..	6
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	74
			593

GENERAL SANITATION.

Complaints.

During the year, 229 complaints were received and dealt with; 145 of these were regarding infestations by rats and mice.

Disinfection.

Two premises were disinfected after cases of infectious disease with proprietary formaldehyde preparations and liquid disinfectants.

Drainage.

A considerable amount of work was again carried out during the year in connection with the testing, alteration and repairs of existing drainage systems and 135 visits were made for the purpose. Following complaints of rat infestation, thorough checking of the drainage systems of all infested premises and those in the immediate vicinity was carried out.

The drainage systems of 239 new houses and flats constructed during the year were connected to the sewer.

Cesspools.

There were at the end of the year 56 cesspools in use and in most cases the houses concerned are in scattered small groups where connection to main drainage is not practicable at the present time. Although it may be possible in due course to connect some of the properties with cesspools to main drainage, the majority will remain out of reach of public sewers for some time.

+ + + + + +

Cesspool Emptying Service.

The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises that are not within reasonable distance of the Council's sewers. This work was undertaken by the St. Albans Rural District Council and I must record my thanks to Mr. D.J. Graham, Senior Public Health Inspector, for his co-operation and help at all times with this very essential service. During the year 42 emptyings were carried out.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The following table shows the number of registered factories within the district, the number of inspections, and details of defects:

<u>Premises.</u>	<u>Number on Register.</u>	<u>Inspections.</u>
Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are enforced by the Local Authority.	7	11
Factories not included above in which section 7 is enforced.	57	63
Other premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	48	49
	—	—
	112	123
	---	---

<u>Defects.</u>	<u>Number found.</u>	<u>Remedied.</u>	<u>Referred by H.M. Inspector.</u>
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.):			
(a) Insufficient	2	2	1
(b) Defective	2	2	1
	—	—	—
	4	4	2
	=	=	=

Outworkers.

At the end of the year there were 24 persons on the register of outworkers employed mainly by firms outside the area. The persons concerned are all engaged on making or trimming hats or other wearing apparel.

Moveable Dwellings.

During the year the use of caravans as a means of human habitation did not decline and 35 caravans were licensed under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, and in addition 18 caravans continued to be stationed on the Council's temporary site at Milford Estate.

28 of the licensed caravans are stationed on three sites where proper provision has been made for the disposal of elsan contents, refuse collection, mains water supply, and on two of the sites sanitary accommodation for both males and females. The remaining 7 caravans are on individual sites and adequate facilities are available. 62 visits were made during the year in connection with caravans and it is pleasing to report that no adverse conditions were found and the use of caravans as temporary accommodation on properly regulated sites assists considerably in alleviating the housing shortage which still exists.

Notices.

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance with notices was effected without the necessity of serving formal notices or instituting legal proceedings.

Informal Notices.

Notices ..	..	49
Complied with by owners ..	..	47

+ + + + +

Rodent Control.

The extermination of rats and mice is carried out as a free service to the occupiers of private premises. A charge is made in respect of business premises at an hourly rate to cover the cost of labour, materials and administration.

145 complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with, resulting in the treatment of 315 properties. For this purpose 2,161 visits were made and 275 dead rats were found.

The Council employ one Rodent Operative (Mr. E.A.C. Faram) for this work.

Sewers:

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, a ten per cent test of sewer manholes and two treatments of infested sewers were carried out during the year. 88 manholes were test baited, of which 6 were found to be infested. 21 manholes were baited during the two treatments. 15 were found to be infested during the winter treatment and 6 during the summer treatment. The treatments were followed by a check of house drainage systems in infested areas.

Council Properties:

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation of the Sewage Works and Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager and the Rodent Operative.

Wasps' Nests:

25 complaints were received of wasps' nests and these were treated by the Rodent Operative.

Shops.

There are 206 retail shops in the district. The provisions of the Shops Act, 1950, were administered and 48 visits were made for this purpose.

CONTROL OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES.

Meat Supply and Slaughtering Facilities.

No slaughterhouses within the Urban District were licensed during the year, but satisfactory slaughtering facilities for the area were available at the former Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse at Sandridge, in the St. Albans Rural District. Since de-control of slaughtering, however, some of the meat supply for the area has come from other sources and a careful check was therefore kept on the transport and handling of the meat.

Arrangements are still in force whereby assistance in meat inspection duties would be given to the St. Albans Rural District Council should the necessity arise at any time.

The following meat and meat products were condemned as being unfit for human consumption at premises in Harpenden during the year:

Mutton	..	..	29	lbs
Beef	..	..	18	lbs
Sausages	..	..	7	lbs
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	..	..	21	lbs

Other Food Inspection.

The following foodstuffs were condemned as being unfit for human consumption, and disposal by incineration or burying on the refuse tip was arranged in every case:

Fruit (other than tinned)	..	..	84	lbs
Tinned Fruit	..	..	112 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs
Tinned Vegetables)	..	..	26 $\frac{1}{2}$	lbs
Soups and Fish )	..	..
Tinned Milk	..	..	8	tins
Preserves	..	..	12	lbs
Ice Cream	..	..	56	blocks

+ + + + + +

The Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

During the year 593 visits were made to food premises in the area and inspections were carried out under the above Regulations. No certificates of exemption were issued and all improvements were secured without the need for formal action by the Council.

Food Premises.

There are 140 food premises in the area which are made up as follows:

General Stores and grocers	..	38
Cafes and Canteens	..	25
Confectioners and Bakers	..	24
Greengrocers	..	8
Butchers	..	11
Licensed Premises	..	25
Chemists	..	6
Fish Shops	..	3

11 premises are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages and 33 visits were made to these premises. Conditions were generally found to be satisfactory.

+ + + + + + +

Ice-cream.

There are in the district 43 premises registered for the sale or storage of ice-cream under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and in each case the ice-cream is obtained from one of the well known large manufacturers. Practically all the ice-cream sold from these premises is pre-packed. No premises are registered for the manufacture of ice-cream.

A number of vehicles from which ice-cream is sold move into the district from neighbouring towns and at present the effective control of the sale of ice-cream from such vehicles is exceedingly difficult since they invariably operate at week-ends and holidays.

74 visits were made to premises registered for the storage and sale of ice-cream and 24 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, the results being set out below:

<u>Type of Sample.</u>	<u>Grade.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
	<u>1.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>4.</u>	
Pre-packed ..	8	2	-	-	10
Loose ..	6	3	2	3	14
					<u>24</u>
					==

N.B. Samples in Grades 1 and 2 are considered satisfactory.

When unsatisfactory samples were obtained further samples were procured and thorough investigations carried out in each instance, which included contacting other local authorities in whose areas the ice-cream was manufactured.

+ + + + + +

Milk and Dairies Acts, Orders and Regulations.

There are in the district 12 registered distributors of milk and three registered dairies, although no milk is actually pasteurised in Harpenden. Such milk is supplied from three large processing plants in adjoining areas and all samples of this milk submitted for testing proved satisfactory.

The following licences were issued during the year:

Dealers' licences authorising the use of the special designation.

Pasteurised	5
Sterilised	6
Tuberculin Tested ..	3

Supplementary licences authorising the use of the special designation.

Pasteurised	2
Sterilised	2
Tuberculin Tested ..	2

Details of the milk samples are given below:

<u>Type of Milk</u>	<u>Number examined</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>
Pasteurised	26	26	-
T.T. (Farm Bottled)	22	21	1
T.T. (Pasteurised)	21	21	-
	—	—	—
	69	68	1
	—	—	—

+ + + + + + +

HOUSING.

Rent Act, 1957.

This Act came into operation on the 6th July 1957 and amongst its important provisions it enabled landlords of private property rated at £30 or below to increase rents to a figure not exceeding twice the gross value of the property. Where, however, a house is in need of repair a tenant can prevent a rent increase by applying to the Local Authority for a Certificate of Disrepair providing the tenant has first sent details of the necessary repairs, on the appropriate form, to the landlord.

It is known that many of these forms were sent to the landlords when the Act came into force but by the end of the year only nine tenants had applied for Certificates of Disrepair. It can be assumed therefore that many tenants reached agreement with their landlords over repairs and this was one of the results which it was hoped would be achieved when the Act came into force.

A summary of the applications received for Certificates of Disrepair is as follows:

<u>Applications received.</u>	<u>Notices by Local Authority to Landlord.</u>	<u>Applications refused.</u>	<u>Under-takings received.</u>	<u>Certificate of Disrepair issued.</u>
<u>Form I.</u>	<u>Form J.</u>		<u>Form K.</u>	<u>Form L.</u>
9	8	1	4	4
+	+	+	+	+

HOUSING MANAGEMENT.

The Council now owns 594 houses, 166 flats, 12 emergency huttled dwellings, and 25 prefabricated bungalows, making a total of 797 housing units. In addition, the management of 72 houses belonging to a Workmen's Housing Association is the responsibility of the Department.

Further progress can be reported regarding the clearance of the emergency huttled encampment at Milford Estate which originally contained 69 dwellings. Twelve huts were actually demolished and the tenants rehoused in permanent accommodation, leaving only 12 huts still occupied at the end of the year. I must record again that despite all criticism this camp has proved invaluable in providing temporary shelter for persons with limited claims on the Council for accommodation but nevertheless the unsatisfactory condition of the huts now gives rise to much concern and complete clearance is essential as soon as possible. As the Council's building programme is still proceeding, I hope that this will be achieved during 1958.

It was also possible during the year to rehouse the remaining tenants of the condemned cottages in Breadcroft Lane and it is to be hoped that the building of old people's dwellings on the site will not be long delayed.

During the year, the following visits and inspections were made in the performance of the duties of housing management:

To applicants	..	116
Maintenance	..	1,471
Administration	..	38
Tenancies	..	77

+ + + + + +

Summary of Housing Applicants.

<u>Applicants.</u>	<u>Active List.</u>	<u>Deferred List.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Married couples with children	63	47	110
Married couples and Engaged couples	62	41	103
Single persons	16	1	17
Old persons	89	-	89
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	230	89	319
	===	==	===

The total number of applicants for housing accommodation at the end of the year - 319, compares with 303 at the 31st of December 1956, 336 at the end of 1955, and 347 at the end of 1954. The number of applications from old people has risen from 56 to 89 and this to some extent has been caused by the provisions of the Rent Act, 1957, where tenants of private houses have received Notice to Quit.

Although the total number of applicants on the housing list still tops the 300 mark, urgent cases of overcrowding and applicants living in insanitary conditions are becoming less and less. Many young couples with or without children living with the parents of either the applicant or his wife still look to the Council for accommodation, presumably because high interest rates and building costs still put house purchase beyond their reach. There is, however, a great demand for the purchase of Council

houses in view of the favourable terms offered by the Council and since the scheme was introduced 39 houses have been sold. In addition, 47 applicants who are all tenants of houses which are not for sale are waiting for suitable vacancies to occur on other no estates so that they may purchase a house as the opportunity arises.

30 new houses were completed and occupied during the year. In addition, however, another 22 applicants were re-housed in existing houses or flats which became vacant. 7 mutual exchanges were arranged between tenants of other local authorities and 9 transfers were also agreed during the year.

All housing accommodation is allocated strictly in accordance with the Council's points scheme. Applicants are required to have a 5-year residential qualification within the Harpenden Urban District and no application is considered until it has been deposited for 12 months.

+ + + + +

PETROLEUM REGULATIONS.

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 26 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit and 46 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON,

Senior Public Health
Inspector.
