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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

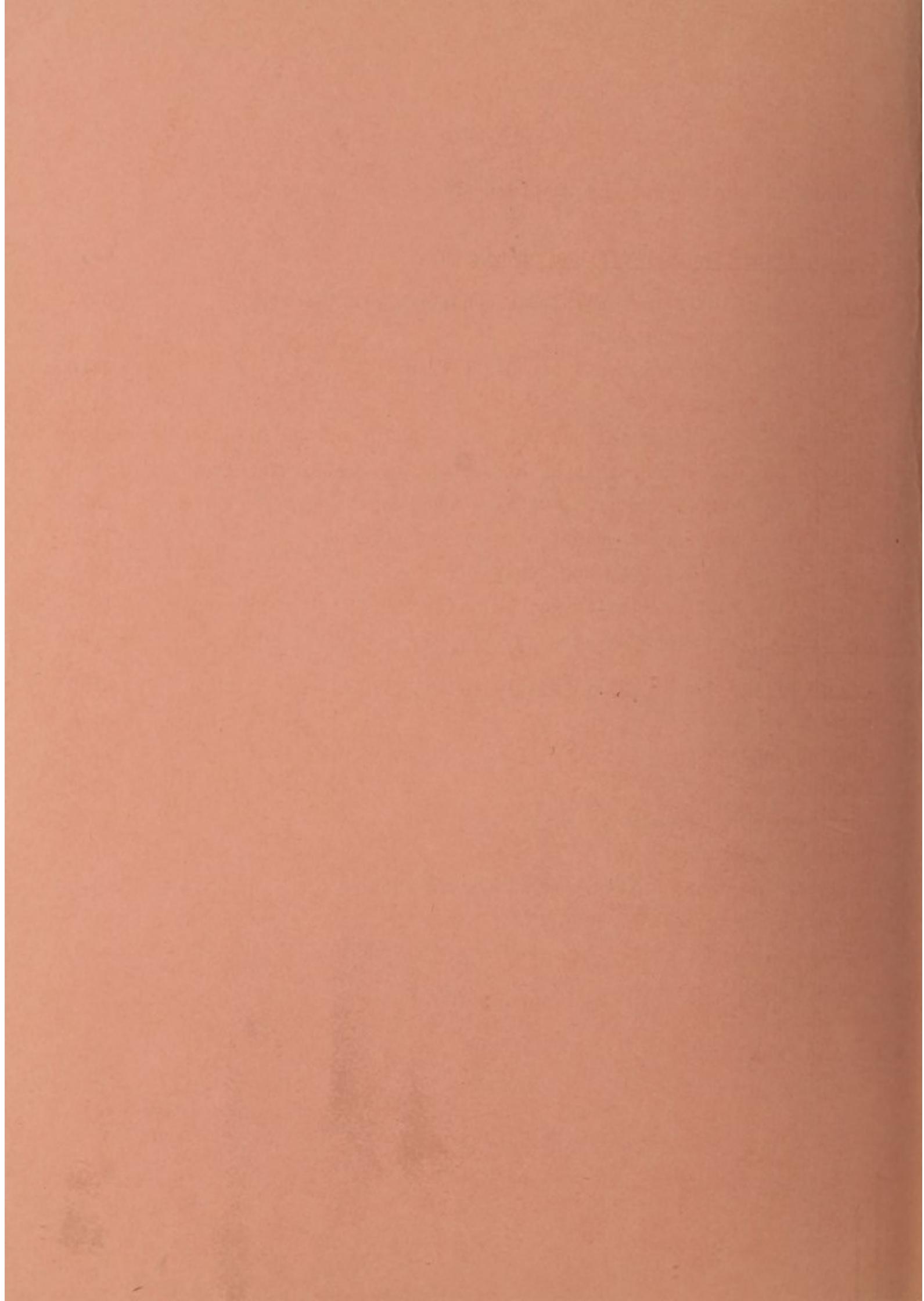
GEORGE CUST M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

AND

**SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR**

JOHN SNOWDON M.A.P.H.I.

**FOR THE YEAR 1965**



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HARPENDEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1965

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Chairman : Cllr. K.H. Bond, M.C., J.P.

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

Cllr. E. Ackroyd.	Cllr. A.W. Hunt.
Cllr. A.W. Bath.	Cllr. Dr. A.B. Miller, M.B., M.R.C.P.
Cllr. C.W. Curl.	Cllr. A.M.H. Redmayne.
Cllr. R.H. Fox.	Cllr. V.E. Truss.
Cllr. J.H.F. Fryd.	Cllr. H.C. Williamson, M.B.E., J.P.
Cllr. E.G. Hill.	Cllr. Mrs. W.M.M. Wyborn.
Cllr. E.F.E. Howard.	

Public Health Committee.

Chairman : Cllr. C.W. Curl.

Cllr. L.T. Fowler.	Cllr. Dr. A.B. Miller.
Cllr. R.H. Fox.	Cllr. A.M.H. Redmayne.
Cllr. E.G. Hill.	Cllr. H.C. Williamson, M.B.E., J.P.
Cllr. A.W. Hunt.	Cllr. Mrs. W.M.M. Wyborn.

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HARPER'S GREEN DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF

1965.

G. Cust, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H. Medical Officer of Health.

J. Snowdon, M.A.P.H.I. Senior Public Health Inspector  
and Housing Manager.

G.T. Chaplin, M.A.P.H.I. Additional Public Health  
Inspector and Assistant  
Housing Manager.

P.D. Wright. Student Public Health  
Inspector (From September, 1965).

R. Sturman. Housing Assistant.

Miss M. Saunders. Typist.

E.A.C. Faram. Rodent Operative.

Divisional Health Office,  
Bleak House,  
St. Albans,  
Herts.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health and the report of the Chief Public Health Inspector on the health of Harpenden for the year 1965.

I am very pleased to say that the health of the residents continues to be satisfactory. The major causes of death are those diseases which are common to all western urbanised societies, namely diseases of degeneration; cardiovascular diseases and the cancers. Of the 197 deaths in the district during 1965, 50.1% were in people of over 75 years of age.

One of the more important happenings in 1965 was the decision of the Council to take part with the other district councils in the St. Albans Health Division in forming the St. Albans Health and Welfare Divisional Executive which means that your representatives will have a greater say in the personal health services run by the County Council in this area and that more services of the County Council's Health and Welfare Services will be delegated to the local divisional staff. It is because that now the District Councils will hear from their representatives what is being done in the personal health services in their areas, that I am not, this year, including an appendix to this annual report on Divisional Health Services as I have done previously. The Divisional Medical Officer will be making each year an annual report on these services to the Divisional Executive.

I would draw your attention to Mr. Snowdon's excellent report and particularly to his section on noise nuisances on page 22. Investigation and control of these sophisticated nuisances can be time consuming and difficult, as these are nuisances which are often intermittent and, of course, are subjective. It would appear that in many cases of noise nuisances today dealt with by local authorities, that many of these are due to an 'intensification of use' of existing business premises, which previously had never caused any nuisance, but which when taken over by a new company, or when the original business expands; that the complaints of noise nuisances arise. It is a pity that there are no planning regulations at the present time which can prevent this intensification of use, where a noise nuisance could arise.

Divisional Health Office,  
Black House,  
Albany.

The work of the Health Department involves many people and I would like to thank all those people on whose co-operation we rely, our medical colleagues, both in general practice and hospital services, our colleagues in local government and in the schools, central government departments and the public of Harpenden. I would like to record my thanks to the staff of the department, Mr. Snowdon and his staff in Harpenden and Mr. Jewell and the staff of the Divisional Health Office, for all their work and help throughout the year.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen for all the consideration you have given me and the members of my staff during the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE CUST

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Registrar General's Estimate of Resident Population	20,890
Area in Acres	3,157
Number of Inhabited houses on the rate Books	
Dwelling Houses (including caravans)	6,800
Shops with living accommodation	58
Licensed Premises with living accommodation	24
Rateable Value	£1,162,229
Sum represented by a penny rate	£4,645

Vital Statistics.

Live Births

Number	359
Rate per 1,000 population	17.2

Illegitimate Live Births

Number	15
Rate % of total live births	4.2

Stillbirths

Number	6
Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths	16.4

Total live and stillbirths

365

Infant Deaths (deaths under one year)

Number	4
Rate per 1,000 live births	11.1

Infant Mortality Rates

Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	11.1
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	11.6
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	-

Neo-Natal Mortality Rate

Number	3
Rate per 1,000 total live births	8.4

Early Neo-Natal Mortality Rate

Number	3
Rate per 1,000 total live births	8.4

Peri-Natal Mortality Rate

Number (stillbirths and deaths under one week)	9
Rate per 1,000 total live and stillbirths	24.7

Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

-

Deaths

Number of deaths	197
Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated population	9.4

In order to make comparisons between the rates in different areas and the country as a whole, the Registrar General has supplied 'Comparability Factors' to be applied to these two rates so that comparisons can be made.

<u>Crude Birth Rate</u>	<u>Adjusted Birth Rate</u>	<u>Crude Death Rate</u>	<u>Adjusted Death Rate</u>
17.2	17.5	9.4	10.3

Death, Birth, Infant Mortality, Stillbirth and Peri-Natal Mortality Rates

<u>Year</u>	<u>Crude Death Rate</u>	<u>Crude Birth Rate</u>	<u>Infant Mortality Rate</u>
1948	9.3	18.1	11.7
1949	10.4	15.7	17.5
1950	9.3	13.3	25.5
1951	11.7	13.0	16.0
1952	9.1	12.8	42.5
1953	10.7	13.8	29.6
1954	3.4	14.6	4.6
1955	10.5	15.5	12.7
1956	10.5	16.1	7.9
1957	10.1	16.0	19.5
1958	10.6	19.0	25.5
1959	9.3	19.8	17.6
1960	9.9	20.7	27.8
1961	8.8	16.1	27.1
1962	9.4	18.1	14.5
1963	9.9	17.3	14.6
1964	8.5	19.0	5.2
1965	9.4	17.2	11.1

<u>Year</u>	<u>Stillbirth Rate</u>	<u>Peri-Natal Mortality Rate</u>
1961	6.7	23.6
1962	17.1	25.7
1963	17.2	28.7
1964	12.8	17.9
1965	16.4	24.7

Causes of Death :

	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory.	-	-
2. Tuberculosis, other.	-	-
3. Syphilitic disease.	-	-
4. Diphtheria.	-	-
5. Whooping Cough.	-	-
6. Meningococcal infections.	-	-
7. Acute Poliomyelitis.	-	-
8. Measles.	-	-
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases.	-	-
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach.	3	1
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.	8	1
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast.	-	5
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus.	-	1
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms.	12	9
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia.	1	3
16. Diabetes.	-	2
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system.	15	18
18. Coronary Disease, angina.	21	19
19. Hypertension.	2	5
20. Other heart disease.	5	18
21. Other circulatory disease.	5	5
22. Influenza.	-	-
23. Pneumonia.	2	5
24. Bronchitis.	4	1
25. Other diseases of respiratory system.	1	-
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.	-	-
27. Gastritis, Enteritis, Diarrhoea.	-	-
28. Nephritis and nephrosis.	1	1
29. Hyperplasia of prostate.	-	-
30. Pregnancy, childbirth and abortion.	-	-
31. Congenital malformations.	2	-
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases.	6	5
33. Motor vehicle accidents.	4	1
34. All other accidents.	1	3
35. Suicide.	-	1
36. Homicide and operations of war.	-	-
	—	—
	93	104
	==	==

## Vital Statistics 1965 - England and Wales.

Provisional figures based on Quarterly Returns of Registrar General.

### Births.

* Live births (per 1,000 total population)	18.0
Stillbirths (per 1,000 total live and stillbirths)	15.7
* (First year since 1955 that births have fallen compared with the previous year.)	

### Deaths.

All causes (per 1,000 total population)	11.5
* Infants under 1 year (per 1,000 related live births)	19.0
Maternal Mortality (per 1,000 total live and stillbirths)	0.25
Neo-Natal Death Rate (per 1,000 related live births)	13.0
Peri-Natal Mortality Rate (per 1,000 total live and stillbirths)	26.9
* (lowest ever recorded in this country).	

This table is included to enable comparisons to be made between local rates and national rates, but in dealing with the relatively low numbers from which local rates are calculated one must be very cautious about drawing conclusions.

### Number of Deaths and Death Rate from Tuberculosis and Cancer, 1965.

The provisional number of deaths and death rates per million population for England and Wales during the year are as follows :-

	<u>Number</u>			<u>Rate per million population</u>		
	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Persons</u>
Respiratory Tuberculosis	1,500	508	2,008	65	21	42
Other Tuberculosis	141	133	274	6	5	6
Cancer of Lung and Bronchus	22,231	4,168	26,399	957	170	553
Other Cancer	35,233	44,706	79,939	1,517	1,822	1,674

### Commentary on Vital Statistics

#### Births:

There were 359 live births in the area during 1965, giving a birth rate of 17.2 per thousand. This compares with 387 births in 1964, a birth rate of 19.0 per thousand. In 1964 the birth rate was the highest for 4 years whereas in 1965 the birth rate dropped below the national birth rate of 18.0. There were 6 stillbirths in 1965, giving a stillbirth rate of 16.4, compared with 5 stillbirths and a stillbirth rate of 12.8 in 1964. There were 4 infants who died under the age of 1 year, giving an infant mortality rate of 11.1. This is compared with a rate of 5.2 in 1964 when 2 infants died. Deaths of these children are shown in the following table :-

Table 1.

Analysis of Infant Mortality.

Causes of Death	TOTAL					Under 1	Under 3	Under 6	Under 9	Under 12	TOTAL
	1 Week	2 Weeks	3 Weeks	4 Weeks	Under 1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	9 Months	12 Months	Under 1 Year.	
Prematurity	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
Congenital Heart Disease	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Asphyxia	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
	3	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	4

Looking at this table it can be seen that three of these children died in their first week of life, giving an early neo-natal mortality rate of 8.4. As no other children died under four weeks this gives a neo-natal mortality rate of 8.4 and an infant mortality rate of 11.1, since one other child died at the age of 5 months. As there were 6 stillbirths and 3 children who died in their first week of life, these deaths combined give a peri-natal mortality rate of 24.7 compared with 17.9 last year. Overall these figures for these vital statistics are very satisfactory when compared with the national figures. With such small figures the slight differences from year to year are so small that they are most likely due to chance.

Deaths:

There is nothing special about the individual causes of death. Disease of the heart and arteries, and cancers are the two most common groups of diseases which caused death in Harpenden, as they did in the rest of England and Wales. The most common single cause of death was, once again, coronary artery disease, causing 40 deaths (21 in men and 19 in women). An analysis of these deaths is shown in the table following :-

Table 2.

25-35		35-45		45-55		55-65		65-75		75 +		Total	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
-	-	-	-	2	-	6	1	6	5	7	13	21	19

The present stage of medical research would lead us to believe that this is one of the preventable diseases. This disease causes death more commonly, and at an earlier age, in men than in women; in those who are obese and overeat; take insufficient exercise; smoke cigarettes and are subjected to mental stresses and strains :- than those who are thin, take a reasonable amount of exercise, are non-smokers and who deal better with their mental stresses and strains.

Table 3.

Cancers.

40 people died of cancers, 23 men and 17 women. The ages of death for both men and women for the various sites of the cancers, compiled from local records, are shown in Table 3 set out below :-

<u>Site</u>		Under 34	35-45	45-55	55-65	65-75	75 +	Total
Stomach	Male	-	-	-	2	-	1	3
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Lung	Male	-	-	2	1	5	-	8
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Breast	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Female	-	-	1	3	1	-	5
Bladder	Male	-	-	-	2	-	1	3
	Female	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Rectum	Male	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ovary	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Female	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Colon	Male	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Prostate	Male	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
	Female	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Uterus-Cervix	Female	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Pancreas	Male	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Female	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
Others	Male	-	1	2	-	1	1	5
	Female	1	1	-	-	2	-	4

After the very small number of lung cancer deaths in 1964 these again rose steeply to 9 in 1965. I think everyone is now well aware of the links between this disease and cigarette smoking.

It is worth drawing your attention to the one death from cancer of the cervix, a subject about which there has been a great deal of publicity, as compared with the 5 deaths from cancer of the breast.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

No. of Cases.

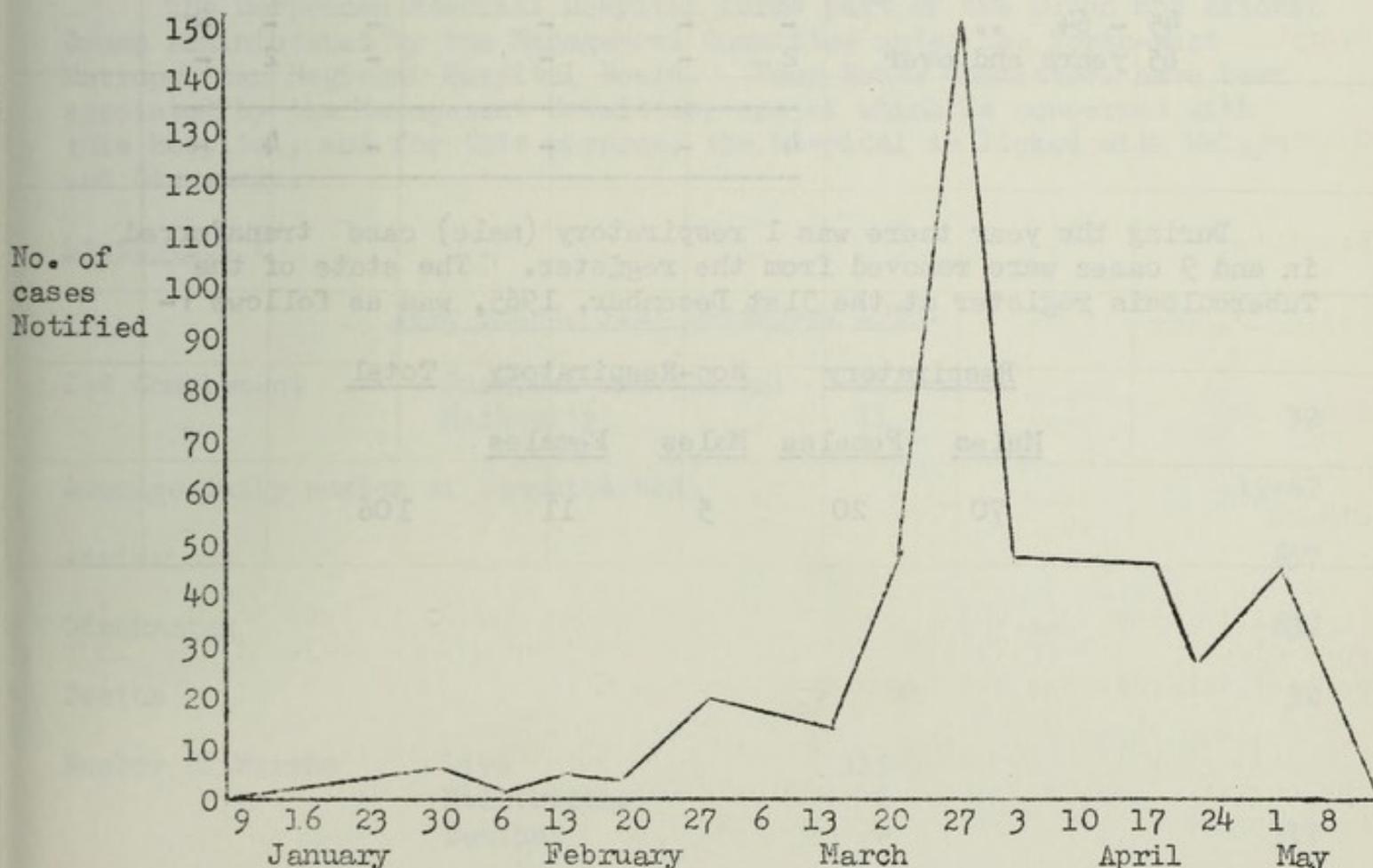
Scarlet Fever	7
Measles	598
Infective Hepatitis	3
Erysipelas	1
Food Poisoning	3
Dysentery	4
Pneumonia	2
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	4

Measles.

There was a very heavy outbreak of measles during the year. 1965 was an expected measles epidemic year and we anticipated a large outbreak because in 1964 there had only been 60 cases of measles and in the previous epidemic year 1963 the epidemic had been relatively light with only 354 cases.

I thought this year the epidemic was a severe one, particularly in the latter part of March when 150 cases were reported in one week.

Harpenden Urban District



### Food Poisoning.

There were three cases of food poisoning notified during the year, 2 of which were Salmonella typhimurium infections contracted out of the district and one case of Salmonella enteritis infection contracted at a wedding party, again, not in this district.

### Influenza.

There was an outbreak of mild influenza during February and March in the district, as there was in many other parts of the country.

### Tuberculosis.

During 1965 the following new cases of tuberculosis were notified in the Urban District :-

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
Under 5 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 14 years	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 24 ..	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 44 ..	2	-	-	-	2	-
45 - 64 ..	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 years and over	2	-	-	-	2	-
	4	-	-	-	4	-

During the year there was 1 respiratory (male) case transferred in and 9 cases were removed from the register. The state of the Tuberculosis register at the 31st December, 1965, was as follows :-

<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>		<u>Total</u>
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	
70	20	5	11	106

SECTION B.

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE HEALTH SERVICES OF THE AREA

Welfare Centres and Clinics :

The County Council Child Welfare Clinics are held at 40, Luton Road every Wednesday afternoon, the Doctors being in attendance at each session and at Batford Junior School on the second and fourth Thursday afternoons. An Infant Welfare Clinic is also held at the Methodist Church Hall, Southdown Road every Friday afternoon, with the Doctor in attendance on the second and fourth Fridays.

The Ophthalmic, Dental and Speech Therapy Clinics are held at 40, Luton Road, by appointment.

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

The extensions and alterations to the main Health Centre at 40, Luton Road have now been completed.

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, 31st December, 1965.

Bed Complement	Surgical and Medical	21	
	Maternity	11	32
Average daily number of occupied beds			19.47
Admissions			657
Discharges			637
Deaths			32
Number of Births	Live	315	
	Stillbirths	2	
	Deaths	-	317

New Patients

Attendances

Physiotherapy Dept:

In-patients	404	666
Out-patients	348	3,303

Casualty Department:	1,035	1,294
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Specialist Consultations:	944	1,988
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Out-patients treated by General Practitioners	124	137
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## SECTION C

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

#### Water Supply :

The water supply for the whole area is supplied by a private undertaking, the Colne Valley Water Company, whose headquarters are at Watford but the local office and pumping station have been retained under the control of an Area Engineer.

The supply of water, which has been satisfactory both in quality and quantity, is obtained from two boreholes, one in Shakespeare Road and one at East Hyde, which is just outside the District. The raw supply at both bore-holes is chlorinated as a precautionary measure and very few complaints are now received as to taste or contamination.

Samples taken during the year were as follows :-

Bacteriological - main supply .. .. 47

Results in all cases were satisfactory. The degree of hardness is in the region of 25 and is such that no difficulties arise from plumbo-solvent action. Every house in the district is supplied with water from the main supply.

#### Sewerage :

The majority of properties in the district enjoy main drainage facilities and the sewage is treated at one main sewage works under the control of the Council's Surveyor.

In view of the rapid growth of the district in post war years, the sewage works has been extended from time to time in order to cope adequately with the increased load and the effluent, which is discharged into the River Lea, has continued to be found satisfactory. Now, however, it has become necessary to remodel the sewage works completely and Consultants were engaged to design modifications and large scale extensions to cater for the anticipated further growth of the district. Work commenced early in the year and when it is completed, in about two years time, the difficulties which have arisen from time to time with sludge treatment and disposal should be over-come.

The total quantity of sewage treated at the sewage works was 308,841,000 gallons compared with 297,513,000 gallons in 1964 and 255,436,000 gallons five years ago.

There are 49 cesspools in use which serve scattered small groups or single properties and although it may be possible to connect some of these properties to main drainage in due course, the majority will remain out of reach of the public sewers for some time.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Common Lodging Houses:

There are no common lodging houses within the district.

Public Swimming Bath :

The Council's open air swimming pool in Rothamstead Park, which was opened in 1960, continues to be an outstanding amenity. The use made of the pool increases every year and by constant and adequate supervision no conditions detrimental to public health arose. The water, which circulates continuously, is treated by pressure sand filters followed by break-point chlorination, together with the requisite chemical dosing to maintain pH at the correct level. The installation of an electric heating system to maintain the water at about 68°F. has been very worth-while.

Twice daily tests to ascertain the pH, free, residual and combined chlorine were carried out at the pool and in addition 30 bacteriological samples were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory with satisfactory results in each case.

Paddling Pools :

A constant check was kept upon the Council's two paddling pools and 27 bacteriological samples were submitted to the Public Health Laboratories. It is extremely difficult to ensure that the water in the paddling pools is kept to a high standard of bacterial purity at all times, particularly in view of the excessive use especially at week-ends and public holidays during the summer months and the impracticability of installing proper equipment to dose the water regularly.

The number of small children in and around the pool on a fine week-end has to be seen to be believed and, therefore, every effort is made to dose the pools regularly with a chlorinating agent and to remove stones, glass and other articles which could cause personal injury. Paddling pools may be a great attraction for small children but from a public health view point they present numerous problems.

SECTION D

HOUSING

Number of new houses and flats erected during the year :

(a)	By the Local Authority	..	..	17
(b)	By private enterprise	..	..	249
				<u>266</u>

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)	..	79
	b.	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	145
(ii)	a.	Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (i) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations, 1925.	..	-
	b.	Number of inspections made for the purpose	..	-
(iii)		Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	..	10
(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	..	68

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

	Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	..	..	59
--	---	----	----	----

3. Action under Statutory Powers during this year :

A. Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 12 of the Housing Act, 1957 :

(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. .. 68

(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 -

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS  
REPORT OF THE SENIOR PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my thirteenth report on the work of the Public Health and Housing Department for the year 1965.

I have commented, at some length, in the body of the Report about the problem of noise and the abatement of noise nuisances. This is a relatively new part of public health work, although, no doubt, in this mechanical age it is likely to become more and more of a problem.

During the year under review a considerable amount of work was carried out under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963, and any contraventions found, most of which were of a very minor nature, have been brought to the notice of those responsible. It is difficult to know whether all accidents to persons affected by the Act were reported, since details of nine accidents only were received. However, each occupier of premises has been made clearly aware of his responsibilities and liabilities under the Act.

Harpenden is a pleasant and healthy area in which to live, there are no pressing public health problems to overcome but, nevertheless, routine inspection work is, and must be, carried on.

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.

In addition I must thank the members of my staff for their assistance in preparing the statistical information for the report and for their help in running the Department, where the volume of work and number of complaints continues to increase from year to year.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS

Public Health Acts	Primary Inspections	150
	Re-visits	239
	Visits to:-	
	Houses	275
	Moveable Dwellings	10
	Business Premises	69
	Other premises	35
	Visits re:-	
	Repairs	145
	Drainage	22
	Infectious Diseases	53
	Disinfestations	8
	Smell Nuisances	51
	Noise Nuisances	40
	Other Nuisances	10
Housing Acts		44
Rent Acts		2
Improvement Grants		2
Rodent Control (By Rodent Operative)		1,594
.. .. (By P.H.I.)		8
Factories Act		52
Petroleum Acts		58
Pet Animals Act		3
Animal Boarding Establishment Act		2
Shops and Offices Act		298
Food Hygiene		188
	Visits to:-	
	Bakers and Confectioners	32
	Butchers	29
	Cafes and Canteens	36
	Chemists	7
	Dairies	2
	Fish Shops	5
	General Stores and Grocers	51
	Greengrocers	14
	Licensed Premises	12

2,640

## GENERAL SANITATION

### Complaints :

During the year 485 complaints of all types were received and the majority were perfectly straight forward matters which could be successfully resolved without difficulty. For example, 185 complaints were regarding infestations by rats and mice and 220 concerned wasps' nests.

The number of complaints from occupiers of tenanted property is now very small indeed since it seems that the more affluent tenant nowadays very seldom has reason to complain about the short-comings of his landlord. It is, of course, a fact that the number of privately rented properties in the district is rapidly diminishing as more and more tenants are themselves able to realize the advantages of becoming property owners.

It is perhaps fortunate that no evidence has been found of multi-occupation of dwelling houses where conditions give rise to complaints from the tenants.

Under this heading of complaints reference must, I feel, be made to complaints received about noise. There can be no doubt that the public generally is becoming much more noise conscious and it now seems to be known that local authorities have power to deal with noise nuisances. Securing the abatement of such a nuisance is, however, in most instances a very time consuming and difficult operation.

To some people noise of any sort can be most distressing indeed, whilst others similarly affected "just couldn't care less". So often it seems, complaints are made in good faith by residents of private houses about the noise from factories in the neighbourhood although one's immediate reaction is to question whether the noise is such that it constitutes a genuine nuisance or whether the residents are more concerned about the possible effect on the amenities of the area. Even when the intensity of noise is scientifically measured, the final assessment has to be made as to whether the noise is, in fact, a real nuisance and this to my mind is largely a matter of opinion. One can, of course, sympathise with the owner of a private dwelling house sited for many years next to a business where the amount of activity and noise during the day is very limited. However, on change of occupation, the business, although not changed in any way in its nature, can suddenly become very thriving and, therefore, more noisy. This question of "intensity of use" of premises where there has been no change in the original business use has presented considerable problems.

I would also comment that so many new factories built today seem to be constructed of very lightweight materials which do little to reduce the noise and I feel more regard should be paid to the everyday items of equipment, such as compressors and generators which are likely to be used within the building. I also think many machines used in industry create

an excessive amount of noise and the siting of a particular machine seems only to be determined by the convenience with which it will fit into the building. Frequently little or no regard is paid to the possible noise which will emanate from such machines and the consequent effect on those people who happen to live in the neighbourhood.

Drainage and Cesspools :

22 visits were made for the purpose of testing and checking existing drainage systems including cesspools. The arrangements whereby the St. Albans Rural District Council empty cesspools in the area were continued and during the year 37 emptyings were carried out. Difficulties do from time to time arise by the failure of property owners to appreciate that adequate notice must be given that a cesspool will require to be emptied. The Council bear the cost of one emptying of a cesspool each year for premises not within reach of the Council's sewers.

Factories Act, 1961 :

The following tables show the prescribed particulars on the administration of the Factories Act:-

Part 1 of the Act.

<u>Premises</u>	<u>Number</u> <u>on</u>	<u>Inspections</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Written</u>	<u>Occupiers</u> <u>Prosecuted</u>
	<u>Register</u>		<u>Notices</u>	
Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority:	2	2	Nil	Nil
Factories not included in above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority:	57	47	Nil	Nil
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Outworker's premises):	64	3	Nil	Nil
	<u>123</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>Nil</u>	<u>Nil</u>

2. Cases in which defects were found :

<u>Particulars</u>	<u>Number of cases in which defects were found</u>				<u>Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.</u>
	<u>Found</u>	<u>Remedied</u>	<u>To H.M. Inspector</u>	<u>By H.M. Inspector</u>	
Want of cleanliness (S.1.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Overcrowding (S.2.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Unreasonable Temperature (S.3.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)					
(a) Insufficient	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(b) Unsuitable or defective	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
<b>Total:</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>

Part VIII of the Act :

Outwork - Section 133.

<u>Nature of Work</u>	<u>No. of Outworkers in August list required by S. 133 (1) (c).</u>	<u>No. of cases of default in sending lists to Council.</u>	<u>No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists.</u>
<u>Wearing apparel.</u>			
Making etc.			
Cleaning and Washing.	8	Nil	Nil
All other types of outwork.	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total:	8	Nil	Nil

All are employed by firms outside the district.

Outwork - Section 134.

<u>Nature of Work</u>	<u>No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises</u>	<u>Notices Served</u>	<u>Prosecutions</u>
<u>Wearing apparel.</u>			
Making etc.			
Cleaning and Washing.	Nil	Nil	Nil
All other types of outwork.	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total:	Nil	Nil	Nil

Moveable Dwellings :

There are now two caravan sites in the district; one is privately owned and licenced for sixteen caravans and the other is owned by the Council and provides accommodation for twelve caravans. Both sites are in situations where they do not impair local amenities and they do help to satisfy a local demand.

During the year the Council provided their site with a proper roadway, flush toilets, chemical closet disposal unit, laundry facilities and electricity supplies to each caravan.

Similar amenities were already available on the privately owned site.

Notices :

The following notices were served during the year. Compliance was effected without the need for instituting legal proceedings.

Informal Notices.

+ Notices served during the year .. 75

Complied with by owners  
during the year .. .. . 78

Formal Notices

Notices served during the year ... -

Complied with by owners  
during the year .. .. . -

+ Excluding notices served under  
Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963.

Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963 :

(i) Enforcement.

This Act, which came into force in 1964, required registration, with the Local Authority, of the majority of offices and shops in the area. This registration was virtually completed by August, 1964. It was then necessary to inspect all premises so registered to ensure that they complied with the health and welfare provisions of the Act. By the end of 1964, 106 premises had received an initial inspection and during the year now under review the remaining registered premises all received inspections apart from a small number where for particular reasons inspection has been temporarily deferred.

The following schedule gives details of contraventions of the Act which were discovered and for which notices were served on the occupiers of premises. It will be seen that the three most common shortcomings were lack of thermometers, first aid kits and hot or cold water supplies. All occupiers of premises have been acquainted by letter of their responsibilities under the Act so there can be no doubt as to any future liability.

By the end of the year, 254 premises were on the register and, of these, 115 were known to comply fully with all the requirements of the Act. No doubt this number will be rapidly increased as soon as "follow up" inspections can be made.

Contraventions found

Lack of Thermometer	114
.. .. First Aid Box	94
.. .. Hot and/or cold water	43
.. .. Clothing accommodation	1
.. .. Seating	4
.. .. Facilities for meals	1
.. .. Handrail to stairs	13
.. .. Washing facilities	11
Inadequate heating	9
.. .. ventilation	10
.. .. lighting	28
.. .. sanitary conveniences	19
Want of cleanliness	10
Accumulations of refuse	1
Dangerous floors or stairs	7
Machinery unguarded	3
Openings unguarded	1
	—
Total contraventions:	369
	==

Further statistical information on the administration of this Act is given below:-

Table A.                      Registration and General Inspections.

<u>Class of Premises.</u>	<u>Number of Premises Registered in year</u>	<u>Total number of registered Premises at 31.12.65.</u>	<u>General Inspections during year</u>
Offices	4	66	21
Retail Shops	11	172	98
Wholesalers etc.	1	1	1
Caterers etc.	2	15	7
Fuel Storage Depots	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>127</b>

Table B.

Number of visits of all kinds  
by Inspectors to Registered Premises ... .. (298)

Table C.

Analysis of Persons Employed  
in Registered Premises by Workplace.

<u>Class of Workplace</u>	<u>Number of Persons Employed</u>
Offices	578
Retail Shops	682
Wholesale Departments, Warehouses	13
Catering Establishments open to the Public	99
Canteens	9
Fuel Storage Depots	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,381</b>
Total males	543
Total females	838

Table D.

Exemptions.

No applications for exemption certificates were received.

Table E.

Prosecutions.

No prosecutions were instituted.

Table F.

No. of Inspectors appointed - 2

No. of other staff employed - Nil

(ii) Notification of Accidents.

Nine accidents were reported, all of which were non-fatal, and these were as follows:-

Strains ... ..	2
Surface Injury (Cuts)	3
Bruising ... ..	4

It was felt that three accidents might have been due to contraventions of the Act and these were subsequently investigated. However, each case was found to be a "true accident" and no further action was required.

(iii) Lighting.

Special Report on Lighting Standards relating to the last Quarter in 1965

- Standards of lighting found generally in both offices and shops have been reasonably adequate. In cases where the natural lighting is insufficient, satisfactory artificial lighting has been provided in most instances. However, there is one out-standing exception in the case of external water closets, where in approximately half the premises inspected having external water closets, no artificial lighting was provided therein. Other parts of buildings including stair cases, corridors, washrooms etc., were, for the most part, adequately lit.
- Examples of other unsatisfactory lighting found include a typist's office where the lighting at work level was found to be 6 lumens per sq. ft. and a shop store room in which there was a general level of 6 lumens per sq. ft. These two cases were the only ones found in rooms where employees were required to work.
- No specific standards, in terms of lumens, have been recommended in advice to occupiers since employees carrying out work requiring high standards of illumination tend to demand that adequate lighting shall be provided.
- No instances of excessive glare were noted.

Lighting Statistics for the Month of November, 1965.

a. Office Premises: Number of office premises found where lighting measured at the working place was:-

(i)	Less than 5	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
(ii)	5 - 10	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
(iii)	11 - 15	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
(iv)	16 - 25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	8
(v)	Above 25	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6

b. Comparative Standards in Shops between Non-selling and Selling Areas.

<u>Non-selling Area</u>	<u>Selling Area</u>
20	32
22	32
6	25
30	25
20	12
17	10
19	10
14	16
28	28
35	45
100	36
10	19
160	33
300 (watchmaking)	33
90	22

N.B. In 11 other shops inspected the non-selling and selling areas were contained in 1 room.

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.

185 complaints concerning infestations by rats and mice were received and dealt with and treatment was carried out at 258 properties. For this purpose 1,602 visits were made and 95 dead rats were found.

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

Council Properties :

Careful supervision of the Council's Depots and Stores was maintained during the year and any infestation of the Sewage Works or Refuse Tip was dealt with by the Manager and the Rodent Operative. Improvements in the method of operating the refuse tip have assisted considerably in checking rodent infestations.

Wasps Nests :

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

## Control of Food and Food Premises

### Meat Supply and Slaughtering Facilities :

No slaughterhouses have been used in the district since the war but adequate slaughtering facilities are available in surrounding districts. The demand from local butchers for such facilities is, however, very limited indeed and most retailers seem to rely on supplies of carcase meat from wholesale meat markets. A careful check has been kept on the vehicles used for transporting meat, together with the protective clothing worn by the meat handlers.

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 during the year.

Beef	66 lb.
Poultry	69 lb.
Tinned Meat and Meat Products	43 lb.

### Food Inspections :

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.

Cakes and Pastries	8 lb.
Tinned Fruit	1 lb.
Tinned Vegetables, Soup and Fish	1½ lb.
Frozen Foods.	609 lb.

The considerable increase in the quantity of frozen food surrendered is due to the breaking down of several cabinets in the district during the year.

## Food Premises :

There are 150 food premises in the area which fall into the following general categories (in some cases there is more than one category in a single premises):-

General Stores and Grocers	30
Cafes, Restaurants and Canteens	49
Bakers and Confectioners	31
Greengrocers	11
Butchers	12
Public Houses etc.	24
Chemists	6
Fish Shops	6

14 premises are registered for the manufacture and sale of sausages, preserved food etc.

188 routine inspections of food premises were carried out during the year with particular attention being paid to the requirements of the Food Hygiene Regulations.

## Food Complaints :

Various types of complaint regarding food sold from shops in the district during the year were received. Each case was fully investigated and, where appropriate, written warnings were issued.

In two cases the Council considered that the nature of the complaint warranted legal action being taken against the firms concerned and successful prosecutions were secured.

The first case was against a local baker who pleaded guilty to selling a loaf of bread containing a large portion of a handkerchief. He was fined ten pounds with one guinea costs.

The second case was against a butchery department of a local firm who pleaded guilty to selling pork pies containing extensive mould growth. The firm was fined ten pounds with four guineas costs.

The number of food complaints still continues to increase from year to year but I feel this is due to higher standards rightly demanded by the public rather than any increase in the actual number of faulty or unsound products sold. In dealing with these complaints, however, one has to appreciate the difficulties of manufacturing and distributing large quantities of foodstuff and it is essential to maintain a fair balance between the interests of the consumer and the trader.

### Ice Cream :

54 premises are registered for the sale and 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.

The trend towards the sale of "soft" ice-cream continues, particularly from mobile vehicles. Effective control of such vehicles continues to be exceedingly difficult since they mainly operate at weekends and holidays and are all based at premises outside the urban district.

49 visits were made to premises registered for the storage and sale of ice-cream and 7 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory at Luton for examination, with the results 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>	
Block	3	-	-	-	3
Cone	2	2	-	-	4
	-	-	-	-	-
	5	2	-	-	7
	=	=	=	=	=

### Milk and Dairies :

There are in the district 15 registered distributors of milk and one registered dairy, although no milk is actually processed or bottled in Harpenden. Milk is supplied from three large plants in adjoining areas and only heat treated milk is now sold within the district.

Housing Act, 1957 :

During the year ten families were rehoused from properties in or adjoining Clearance Areas and eleven properties were demolished. Since the programme for dealing with sub-standard property was commenced in 1955, 61 houses have actually been demolished, 23 of these since 1964, when a start was made on clearing the Heath Road area.

Rent Act, 1957 :

One application for the issue of a Certificate of Disrepair and one application for the Revocation of a Certificate of Disrepair were received during the year and both applications were approved.

Since the Act came into force, only 28 tenants of rent controlled property have applied for Certificates of Disrepair and it would appear that landlords, with the benefit of increased rents, have been able to carry out essential repairs, with the result that tenants generally have not needed to seek the assistance of the local authority.

It is known that many tenants have been able to purchase their properties as sitting tenants and, with present day trends, the number of rented houses in the district is rapidly diminishing, apart from those owned by the Local Authority.

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

During 1965 a further 8 flats and 10 new houses were completed.

The total number of housing units owned by the Council is as follows:-

Houses	690
Flats	205
Old Peoples Dwellings	53
Prefabricated bungalows	-
	<hr/>
	954
	<hr/>

During the year the remaining six temporary prefabricated bungalows were demolished and a further 8 flats and 4 houses were completed on the site. Six industrialised houses were built on the new Depot Site in Dark Lane for Council employees.

The policy of purchasing property in the Heath Road area was continued during the year and the erection of 22 one bedroom flats and 20 two bedroom flats was commenced on the site. Plans for redeveloping Phase II of the area are now in the course of preparation.

The following visits and inspections were made in the performance of duties connected with housing management.

To Applicants	79
Maintenance	2,905
Administration	99
Tenancies	93

Summary of Housing Applicants.

<u>Applicants</u>	<u>Active List</u>	<u>Deferred List</u>	<u>Total</u>
Married Couples with children.	93	43	136
Married Couples and Engaged Couples.	59	45	104
Single Persons.	29	16	45
Old Persons.	62	-	62
	<u>243</u>	<u>104</u>	<u>347</u>

It is significant that the total number of applications for housing accommodation seems invariably to exceed 300 despite the number of people who are rehoused and the number who are able, ultimately, to provide their own accommodation. There can be no doubt, however, that even in this affluent age of full employment many people can still only look to the Council for accommodation as land and property prices keep rising.

In this area the amount of privately rented accommodation is very limited indeed and very few properties lend themselves for conversion into flats.

It is alarming to note, however, how many young people, still only in their teens, have been forced into early marriage and immediately look to the Council for accommodation, in view of the lack of resources to fend for themselves. This is a development which has been very marked in the last few years and certainly was quite rare 10 or 15 years ago.

The system of allocating Council flats and houses solely on 'need' was continued successfully during the year and appears to be accepted by most applicants as being quite fair and reasonable.

During the year, in addition to the 19 new dwellings completed, a further 10 houses and 11 flats became vacant.

PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

The provisions of the Petroleum Acts and Regulations are administered by the Department. 28 occupiers of filling stations, repair garages and other premises are licensed to store petroleum spirit and 58 visits were made to such premises during the year.

I am,

Your Obedient Servant,

J. SNOWDON.

Senior Public Health  
Inspector.

