

[Report 1957] / Medical Officer of Health, Wycombe R.D.C.

Contributors

High Wycombe (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1957

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/cje6khds>

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>

4424(3)



1 2 Dr. G. S. B.
2 Li. G. S. B.

WYCOMBE RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Bucks

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

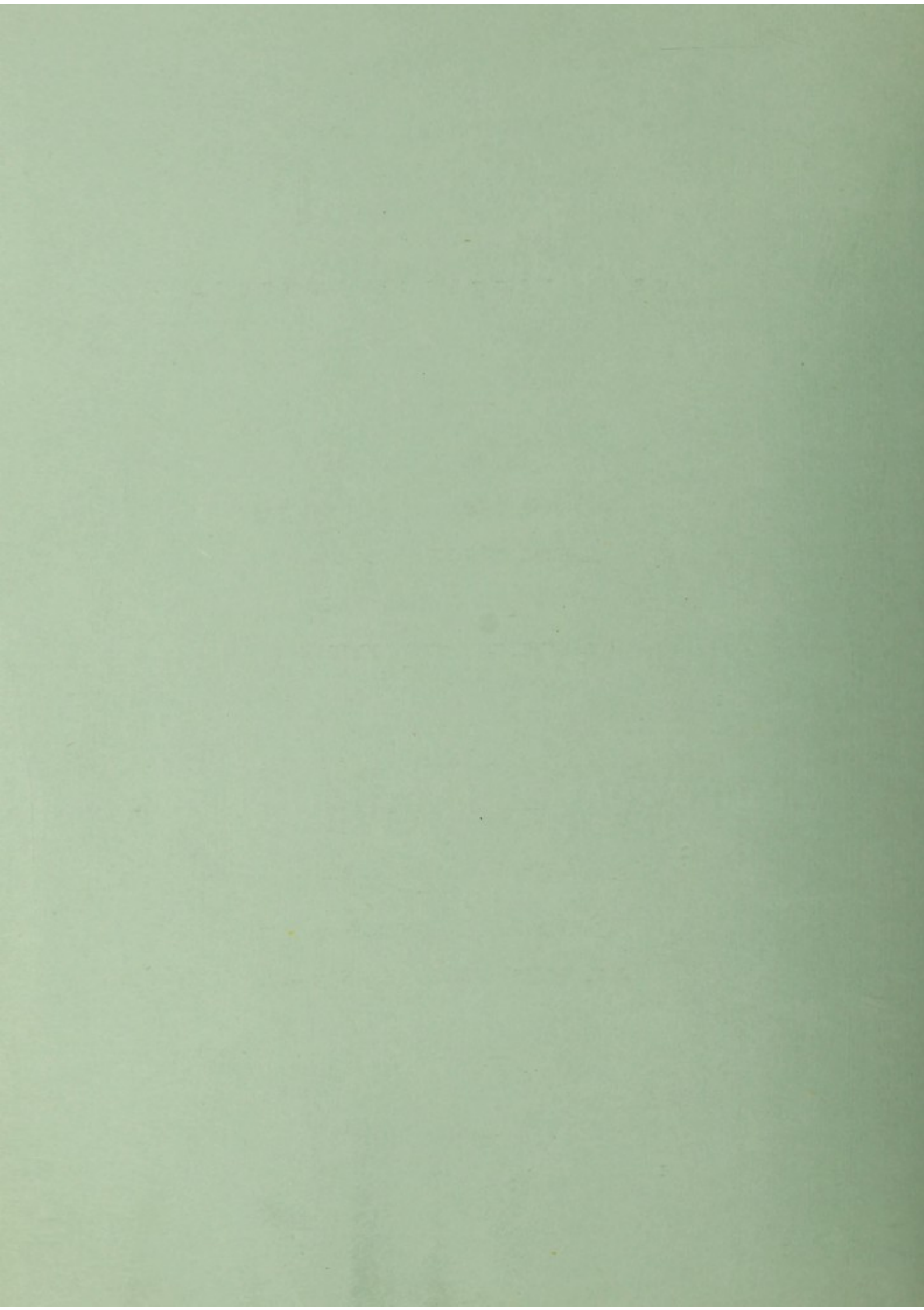
AND OF THE

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

1957



B.
G.



W Y C O M B E
R U R A L D I S T R I C T C O U N C I L

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND OF THE
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR


1957

Medical Officer of Health:

A.J. MUIR, M.B., Ch.B., B.Hy., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

J.P. PERRY, M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29428245>

WYCOMBE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

1957

Chairman:

Mr W.J. TAPPING

Vice-Chairman:

Mr C. MORRIS

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

at 1st May, 1957.

Chairman:

Mr G.B. Lee

The Chairman of the Council

The Vice-Chairman of the Council

The Ex-Chairman

The Chairman of the Finance Committee

The Chairman of the Public Works Committee

Mrs F.L.E. Bradley

Mrs A.S. Laing

Mr H.W. Bristow

Mr H.E. Nixey

Rev. J.D. Charlesworth

Mrs F.H. Pitcher

Mrs A.M. Conoley

Mr W.J. Pollard

Mr A. Fleet

Mrs D.M. Walker

Brig. Gen. E.S. Hoare-Nairne

Mrs C. Wontner

Sqdr.Ldr. H.B. Jefferies

Mrs R. Wooster

WYOMING RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

1927

Chairman:

Mr. W. J. TARPING

Vice-Chairman:

Mr. C. MORRIS

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

at last May, 1927.

Chairman:

Mr. G. B. Lee

The Chairman of the Council
The Vice-Chairman of the Council

The Chairman

The Chairman of the Finance Committee

The Chairman of the Public Works Committee

Mr. A. S. Loring

Mr. E. E. Hines

Mr. E. H. Hines

Mr. W. J. Tarping

Mr. E. H. Hines

Mr. E. Hines

Mr. E. Hines

Mr. E. Hines

Mr. E. Hines

STAFF:

Medical Officer of Health:

A.J. MUIR, M.B. Ch.B., B.Hy., D.P.H.

(Also Area and Divisional School Medical Officer,
Buckinghamshire County Council.

Medical Officer of Health, High Wycombe Borough and
Marlow Urban District Council).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health:

R. HANDY, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

(Also Assistant County Medical and School Medical Officer,
Buckinghamshire County Council.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health, High Wycombe Borough
and Marlow Urban District Council).

Chief Public Health Inspector:

J.P. PERRY, M.A.P.H.I., M.R.S.H., Meat Certificate.

Public Health Inspectors:

D.J. SULLIVAN, M.A.P.H.I.

S.A. LATIMER, C.R.S.H.

R.J. DAVIES, M.A.P.H.I.

Clerks:

MISS R.M. SPENCER

MRS A.F. SUTTON

Rodent Operative:

E.V. BOWLER

WYCOMBE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Public Health Department,
28, High Street,
High Wycombe.

October, 1958.

To the Chairman and Members of
the Wycombe Rural District Council.

Mr Chairman, My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my report for the year 1957.

The registrar general's estimate of the population in mid-1957 was 44,480 which was 860 above the figure for the previous year and this was partly accounted for by an excess of 377 births over deaths.

There were 779 births during the year - an increase of 34 on the previous year's figures and the number of deaths - 402 - was 33 down.

The most satisfactory feature of the statistics was the low number of infant deaths. There were only 7 and the infantile mortality rate of 9 per 1,000 live births is the lowest ever recorded in the district and compares very favourably with 16.1, the figure for 1956. However one must not expect such a low figure every year because when one is dealing with a relatively low number of births there are apt to be rather wide variations in the rate from year to year. Be that as it may it is a matter for congratulation that the rate is so low.

Although, as usual, diseases of the heart and circulation accounted for most deaths there was again an increase in the number of deaths from cancer. These numbered 84 as against 79 in 1956 when there were 33 more deaths in all. The organ most frequently the site of the disease was the lung and this variety of cancer caused 18 deaths, 4 of them in respect of females. The average age at death was 60.4 years and in fact only two deaths were in persons over 70 years. It is therefore predominantly a disease of middle aged males or to be correct of those males who in their time have indulged in tobacco smoking particularly cigarette smoking. On the face of it this appears to be one of the types of cancer than can be prevented but adolescents beginning to indulge in cigarettes are not very worried about possible consequences thirty or forty years hence and it is very doubtful if propaganda against smoking will have beneficial effects.

Among the infectious diseases notified there was nothing unusual, the most notifications were in respect of measles which accounted for 390 cases. There were three cases of poliomyelitis, two paralytic and one non-paralytic. As is usual these days no case of diphtheria was notified.

We had been led to expect an epidemic of Asian flu and when it did arrive in the autumn of the year on the whole it turned out to be mild in virulence although there were five deaths in which influenza was a contributing factor.

In the early autumn the Ministry of Health extended the age range of children eligible for poliomyelitis vaccination so that it was possible for any child born 1943 and later to be registered for vaccination. Unfortunately the demand for this far exceeded the available supplies but at the end of the year arrangements were being made to import vaccine made in America with the promise that supplies would be sufficient to clear the extensive waiting lists.

Another change in immunological procedure was made at the end of the year when the giving of combined vaccines against diphtheria and whooping-cough was discontinued. These were thought to provoke poliomyelitis in a very small number of children particularly when the reagent contained alum. The result is that whereas immunity against diphtheria, whooping-cough and tetanus could be obtained by three injections of a combined vaccine now it is necessary to have five injections to produce immunity to diphtheria and whooping-cough and another three to give immunity to tetanus. When three injections of polio vaccine are given and also smallpox vaccination it is evident that in the first year of life an infant is nothing more than a pin cushion. It is hoped that someone will produce a combined vaccine which will do away with the need to submit young infants to so many immunological procedures.

In conclusion I thank the Council for their encouragement during the year and to Mr Perry and my brother officials special thanks are due for their assistance so freely given at all times.

A.J. MUIR

Medical Officer of Health

STATISTICS.

Area in acres.....	71,232
Population (1951) census.....	39,352
Registrar General's Estimate of population mid-1957.....	44,480
No. of inhabited houses on rate book (31st March, 1957).	12,938
Rateable Value as at 1st April, 1957.....	£513,391
Estimated Product of Penny Rate 1st April, 1957.....	£2,143

EXTRACT FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS

FOR THE YEAR 1957.

BIRTHS.

		<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Live Births	Legitimate	386	357	743
	Illegitimate	18	18	36
		<hr/> 404	<hr/> 375	<hr/> 779
Still Births	Legitimate	4	3	7
	Illegitimate	0	0	0
		<hr/> 4	<hr/> 3	<hr/> 7

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the Estimated Population.....	17.5
Comparability Factor - Birth Rate.....	1.01
Adjusted local Birth Rate.....	17.67
Birth Rate of England and Wales.....	16.1
Still Birth Rate per 1,000 births live and still.....	8.9

DEATHS.

Number of Deaths	Males	-	216
	Females	-	186
			<hr/>
			402
			<hr/>
Death Rate per 1,000 of the Estimated Population.....			9.0
Comparability Factor.....			1.00
Adjusted Local Death Rate.....			9.00
Death Rate of England and Wales.....			11.5
Tuberculosis Death Rate, Wycombe Rural District.....			0.04
Tuberculosis Death Rate, Total County.....			0.05

INFANT MORTALITY.

7 infants died under the age of one year.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Legitimate.....	4	3	7
Illegitimate.....	0	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4	3	7

This represents a mortality rate of 9.0 per 1,000 related births compared with 23.0 as a general figure for England and Wales.

Neo-natal mortality rate - 6.4, compared with a county rate of 16.0.

MATERNAL DEATHS.

- (a) From puerperal sepsis..... 0
- (b) From other maternal causes 0

TABLE OF DEATHS.

<u>DISEASE.</u>	<u>MALES.</u>	<u>FEMALES.</u>	<u>TOTAL.</u>
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory.....	1	1	2
2. Tuberculosis, other.....	0	0	0
3. Syphilitic diseases.....	1	0	1
4. Diphtheria.....	0	0	0
5. Whooping Cough.....	0	0	0
6. Meningococcal Infections.....	0	0	0
7. Acute Poliomyelitis.....	0	0	0
8. Measles.....	0	0	0
9. Other infectious diseases.....	1	0	1
10. Cancer, stomach.....	4	6	10
11. Cancer, lungs.....	14	4	18
12. Cancer, breast.....	0	9	9
13. Cancer, uterus.....	0	3	3
14. Other cancers.....	23	21	44
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia.....	2	2	4
16. Diabetes.....	0	1	1
17. Vascular lesions, nervous system.....	18	30	48
18. Coronary disease, angina.....	49	20	69
19. Hypertension with heart disease.....	5	4	9
20. Other heart diseases.....	15	26	41
21. Other circulatory diseases.....	9	16	25
22. Influenza.....	5	1	6
23. Pneumonia.....	19	8	27
24. Bronchitis.....	16	6	22
25. Other respiratory diseases.....	2	0	2
26. Gastric and duodenal ulcer.....	1	0	1
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea.....	0	0	0
28. Nephritis, nephrosis.....	3	2	5

TABLE OF DEATHS. (contd)

<u>DISEASE.</u>	<u>MALES.</u>	<u>FEMALES.</u>	<u>TOTAL.</u>
29. Hyperplasia of prostate.....	5	0	5
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion.....	0	0	0
31. Congenital malformations.....	3	0	3
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	11	18	29
33. Motor vehicle accidents.....	1	1	2
34. Other accidents.....	4	6	10
35. Suicide.....	4	1	5
36. Homicide and operations of war.....	0	0	0
All causes..	216	186	402

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

	<u>Rates per 1,000 Total (Live and Still) Births.</u>	
	<u>England' and Wales.</u>	<u>Wycombe Rural District.</u>
(a) Maternal causes, excluding abortion	Nil	Nil
(b) Due to abortion.....	Nil	Nil
(c) Total maternal mortality.....	0.47	0.00

CANCER DEATHS.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages):-

Males.....	41
Females.....	43
Total.....	<u>84</u>

Yearly comparison of cancer deaths:-

1957.....	84
1956.....	79
1955.....	62
1954.....	61
1953.....	76
1952.....	72

The following organs were effected:-

Stomach.....	10
Lungs.....	18
Breast.....	9
Uterus.....	3
Other Sites.....	44
Total.....	<u>84</u>

TUBERCULOSIS DEATHS.

Tuberculosis Death Rate (all cases).....	0.04
Total Deaths - Respiratory Tuberculosis.....	2
Respiratory Tuberculosis Death Rate.....	0.04
Total Deaths - Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis.....	0
Non-Respiratory Tuberculosis Death Rate.....	0.00
Total Deaths - Respiratory (excluding Tuberculosis).....	51
Respiratory Death Rate (excluding Tuberculosis).....	1.14

POPULATIONS, BIRTH AND MORTALITY RATES FOR THE YEAR 1957

District	Population Census 1951	Registrar-General's estimated Population Mid-1957	Crude Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	Crude Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Tuberculosis Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Births	Neo-Natal Mortality Rate per 1,000 Births	Maternal Mortality per 1,000 live and still births
Bucks County	386,164	430,700	16.7	9.7	0.06	21.6	16.0	0.55
Total Urban	193,168	210,900	16.5	9.5	0.06	25.6	18.1	1.13
Total Rural	192,996	219,800	16.9	9.8	0.05	17.8	14.0	0.00
Wycombe Rural	39,352	44,480	17.5	9.0	0.04	9.0	6.4	0.00
England and Wales			16.1	11.5	0.11	23.0	16.5	0.47

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS) 1957.

- 11 -

Disease	Total Cases Notified	Age Periods								15 - 24 years	25+
		Under 1 year	1 year	2 years	3 years	4 years	5 - 9 years	10 - 14 years	15 - 24 years		
Scarlet Fever	18	1	1	-	1	2	12	-	1	-	-
Whooping Cough	34	8	4	-	6	2	10	1	-	-	3
Acute Poliomyelitis: Paralytic	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Non-Paralytic	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	390	6	19	35	36	40	220	27	1	6	6
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Pneumonia	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	11	-
Dysentery	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Smallpox	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Encephalitis Infective	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post Infectious	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric or Typhoid Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paratyphoid Fevers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals:	469	15	24	35	43	46	242	29	7	28	-

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1957

Age Periods	(a)				(b)			
	New Cases		Deaths		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		M		F	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
10	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	5	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
35	3	1	-	1	-	1	-	-
45	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
55	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
65+	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	12	5	2	2	1	1	-	-

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

Immunisation against diphtheria (and, where desirable whooping-cough), is carried out in Schools and Infant Welfare Centres in your district, the arrangements being made by the County Council. It is also possible for parents to arrange for this to be done by their own doctor. Records of immunisation are kept at the County Offices.

PRIMARY IMMUNISATIONS.

Under 1 year.	1 year.	2 years.	3 years.	4 years.	5 - 9 years.	10 - 14 years.
451	164	22	8	20	63	14

Total: 742

BOOSTER DOSES.

1 - 4 years.	5 - 9 years.	10 - 14 years.
12	423	210

Total 645

VACCINATION AGAINST POLIOMYELITIS.

During the year a small amount of vaccine was made available to Local Health Authorities for use in certain age-groups: viz. children born in the years 1947 - 1954 inclusive. In this area, (Wycombe Borough, Wycombe Rural, Amersham Rural, Marlow and Chesham Urban Districts), approximately 15,000 children were registered but only a very small proportion were vaccinated by the end of the year.

VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX.

During the year 552 primary vaccinations and 77 re-vaccinations were carried out.

VACCINATION AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS.

As in the previous year vaccination was offered to 13 year old children attending both private and Council schools. After a preliminary tuberculin test the negative reactors were vaccinated.

The proportion of acceptances was very high and it is hoped that this procedure will have some effect in reducing the incidence of the disease in young people.

HOSPITALS.

The available hospitals in the District are the High Wycombe War Memorial Hospital, Booker Hospital, Amersham General Hospital, Maidenhead Isolation Hospital, Canadian Red Cross Hospital, Taplow; Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury Isolation Hospital, Royal Bucks Hospital, Aylesbury; The Radcliffe Infirmary, Churchill Hospital and the Slade Hospital, Oxford; and the Battle Hospital, Reading.

AMBULANCE SERVICES.

The ambulance station situated at West End Street, High Wycombe, serves the major portion of the district.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT 1948.

Section 47

-

No formal action.

DETAILS OF WATER SUPPLY.

I am indebted to your Engineer & Surveyor for the following table:-

Parish	Supplied direct by pipes into houses		Supplied by Standpipes.	
	No. of Houses.	Estimated Population.	No. of Houses.	Estimated Population.
Bledlow-cum-Saunderton..	561	1,853	6	25
Bradenham.....	39	129	-	-
Ellesborough.....	268	886	6	20
Fawley.....	56	186	4	14
Fingest.....	552	1,822	19	65
Hambleton.....	411	1,358	14	49
Hampden, Gt & Lt.....	98	324	6	21
Hedsor.....	40	133	1	3
Hughenden.....	1,675	5,454	20	74
Ibstone.....	92	305	3	11
Kimble, Gt & Lt.....	251	828	2	7
Lacey Green.....	369	1,220	10	36
Longwick-cum-Ilmer.....	165	545	2	7
Marlow, Gt.....	500	1,651	24	86
Marlow, Lt.....	258	853	8	27
Medmenham.....	121	401	5	18
Radnage.....	172	568	3	9
Princes Risborough.....	1,799	5,945	4	15
Stokenchurch.....	776	2,562	6	21
Turville.....	101	334	14	47
West Wycombe Rural.....	554	1,830	12	40
Wooburn.....	2,139	7,026	28	89
Wycombe, Chapping Wycombe	2,257	7,454	38	138
Totals.....	13,254	43,567	235	832

I am also indebted to your Engineer and Surveyor for the following figures:-

District	Area covered	Estimated Gallonage Removed
1	Speen, Lacey Green, Gt & Lt Hampden, Butlers Cross, Terrick, Ellesborough, Loosley Row, Parslow Hillock, Bradenham, Dunsmore, Bryants Bottom, North Dean, Hughenden Valley.....	2,417,000
2	Princes Risborough, Monks Risborough, Bledlow, Bledlow Ridge, Longwick, Meadle, Ilmer, Saunderton, Kimble, Marsh, Horsenden, Askett, Whiteleaf, Bradenham, Pictonville, Owlswick.....	2,443,500
3	Tylers Green, Penn, Hammersley Lane, London Road, Loudwater, Queensmead, Fassetts Road, Norwood Road, Robinson Road, (Loudwater)	2,374,000
4	Stokenchurch, Radnage, Water End.....	3,463,000
5	Naphill, Walters Ash.....	1,810,000
6	Gt & Lt Marlow, Sheepridge, Frieth, Ibstone, Fawley, Hambleden, Cadmore End, Turville, Skirmett, Medmenham, Fingest, Bovingdon Green, North End, South End.....	1,770,500
7	Hazlemere, Holmer Green, Dashwood Hill, Horsley Green, Studley Green, Beacons Bottom, Terriers, Eastern Dene.....	2,786,000
8	Flackwell Heath.....	2,185,000
9	Gt Kingshill, Widmer End, Four Ashes, Cryers Hill, Prestwood, Spurlands End, Western Dene.....	3,384,000
10	Wooburn, Wooburn Green, Cores End, Hawks Hill, Berghers Hill, Upper Bourne End, Kingsmead Road, Hedsor, Heavens Lea, Harvest Hill, Wooburn Moor.....	2,415,000
11	Bourne End, Well End.....	2,208,000
12	Downley, Piddington, Lane End, Wheeler End, (West Wycombe Part), Bolter End.....	2,355,000
13 & 14	Extra vehicle used in all District.....	2,563,500
	Total.....	32,174,500

RAINFALL 1957.

I am indebted to the Director of the Forest Products Research Laboratory, Princes Risborough, for the following particulars of rainfall recorded during 1957.

Rainfall recorded at Princes Risborough

Station: 333 feet above sea level

Month	Monthly Rainfall.	No. of days on which rain fell with .01 or more measured.	Largest Rainfall	
			Date	Amount
January.....	1.62	19	31st	.27
February.....	3.19	19	7th	.61
March.....	1.22	15	26th	.22
April.....	0.23	9	11th	.07
May.....	1.26	9	8th	.25
June.....	2.24	9	30th	.72
July.....	3.30	19	11th	.53
August.....	2.20	16	8th	.43
September....	2.83	17	10th	.73
October.....	2.31	10	16th	.50
November.....	2.29	8	2nd	1.00
December.....	2.90	15	12th	.99
Total.....	25.59	165		

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1957.

Public Health Department,
28, High Street,
High Wycombe.

To the Chairman and Members of
the Wycombe Rural District Council.

Mr Chairman, My Lord, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Herewith I beg to submit a Summary of the work carried out
by the Department in the year 1957.

I am

Mr Chairman, My Lord,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J.P. PERRY

Chief Public Health Inspector.

FOREWORD.

HEALTH EDUCATION.

Few things are more important to a community than health. Sanitary law was born in fear in the nineteenth century owing to the filth, dirt and disease and degradation of one section of the community which threatened the security of the rest. The urgency of the legislation resulted in it being of a punitive character.

Immense progress has been made in the past fifty years in the field of environmental hygiene, but a curious paradox exists whereby the higher the standard of public health the greater does the volume of public health legislation become, whilst at the same time increasing reliance is placed not on the exercise of legal powers to secure further advances but on education and persuasion. It is not surprising that legislation increases in volume as conditions improve. As some problems are brought under control or solved, demands arise for further activity in other directions. Legislation can only be effective if it is firmly based on an informed public opinion.

In the contemporary approach to environmental hygiene it is necessary to keep constantly in mind the targets towards which we aim. Lack of vigilance or thought will allow our standards to diminish or fade, or even worse, be lowered for administrative convenience or to meet economic pressure.

Improvement of housing conditions, clean air, good sanitation, wholesome drinking water and safe food are some of the objectives pursued by your public health inspectors in the course of their duties.

Broadly the functions of a public health inspector is a regulatory one in order to secure compliance on the part of the public with certain branches of law designed to protect the health of the community.

Securing compliance rather than to enforce is the desirable method, because whilst enforcement by law is the ultimate remedy, compliance is in fact increasingly achieved by advice, persuasion and education.

The Council's participation in the field of environmental hygiene is reflected to some extent in the report submitted under the following sections:-

Section 'A'	HOUSING
Section 'B'	WATER SUPPLIES
Section 'C'	SANITATION
Section 'D'	PEST INFESTATION CONTROL
Section 'E'	SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES
Section 'F'	FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS
Section 'G'	ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION AND SMOKE ABATEMENT.
Section 'H'	MISCELLANEOUS

SECTION 'A'

HOUSING.

The provision and maintenance of adequate living accommodation has become and will probably remain one of the major social services of local authorities.

The problem of ensuring satisfactory housing for every family in the country is one which is still urgent and for which there is no easy solution. Having regard to the competing interests in the use of land and to the financial resources of the nation, it would seem that in the foreseeable future an answer cannot be found by depending entirely on the provision of new dwellings. Though the provision of new dwellings may be considered to be the ideal objective, every effort should be made to maintain and adapt existing sound houses to prolong their useful life, in order that the many families with no prospect of moving to a new house can enjoy comparable amenities.

Standards.

The statutory standard of fitness which omits consideration of such matters as provision of bath, hot water supply, internal water closet, heating of rooms and artificial lighting cannot be regarded as a satisfactory one, and a standard is required at a level well above that set out in the present Housing Act.

Improvement Grants.

The judicious use of the improvement grant provisions of the Housing Act 1949 as amended by the Housing Repair & Rents Act 1954, can be of great help in raising the standard of housing accommodation.

Improvement grants are however of a permissive and not mandatory character, and both the tenant and the owner must be willing partners to an arrangement to improve a dwelling. There are other factors which limit or retard application of improvement grants, and from official returns it appears that the percentage of grants made is still small in relation to the potential number of eligible properties.

The Rent Act, 1957.

The Rent Act was not designed to secure directly the repair of houses, but the rent increases for controlled houses and the decontrol of a substantial number of larger houses should enable landlords to carry out essential repairs and maintain their property in satisfactory condition.

The penalty of reduced rent where certificates of disrepair are granted should also encourage works of repair.

It is difficult to assess with any degree of accuracy the precise effect the Act has had. It is however to be hoped that the Act will produce well-maintained houses, prevent the development of slums and increase the number of houses to let.

Certificates of Disrepair.

Rent Acts in this country in providing for increases of rent have always contained provisions for such increases to be withheld upon the grounds that the dwelling - house was not maintained in good repair. The Rent Act 1957 is no exception to this rule.

The standard of repair is related to the items enumerated by the occupier on the formal notice that is served upon the owner. Therefore serious structural conditions are likely to be ignored due to this legal restriction. Many houses are sub-standard owing to bad arrangement, darkness and their structural conditions, but such defects are often not eligible for inclusion in a certificate of disrepair having regard to the consideration which must be given to the age, character and locality of a dwelling when assessing the defects of a property.

Obtaining certificates of disrepair involves a cumbersome and protracted procedure.

Re-housing.

The Exchequer subsidy for dwellings for displaced persons is now £22.0s.0d. per annum per dwelling for 60 years.

Problems attendant to re-housing persons from unfit houses include inability to pay higher rent, and aged persons not being readily disposed to leave dwellings in which they have lived for many years.

When prepared to move their needs often relate to a small self contained bungalow where they can look after themselves, be independent and continue to have the privacy of their own home, to pay a low rent and to have nearby neighbours to give help in a case of emergency.

The National Assistance Board is extremely helpful in cases of the needy aged and other cases of need in paying part or all of the rent and rates of a re-housed family based on assessment of the means of the family.

National economy has curtailed the building of Council houses, and the re-housing of families from unfit houses has accordingly been retarded. It is to be hoped that financial conditions will improve and enable Council house building to be resumed in order that these families may be re-housed at an early date.

Unfit Houses.

In 1954 the Minister of Housing & Local Government requested local authorities to resume the full exercise of their powers under the Housing Act, 1956, in connection with slum clearance, and by the end of 1955 to submit for the Ministry's approval proposals for dealing with unfit houses liable to demolition within their areas.

Implementation of the Council's proposals has steadily proceeded in the ensuing years and the position at the end of 1957 is recorded in the accompanying tables:-

	<u>Number of houses.</u>
Total houses to be dealt with.....	451
<u>Formal Action.</u>	
(a) Houses the subject of undertakings to make fit for human habitation.....	108
(b) Houses the subject of undertakings not to use for human habitation when vacated.....	79
(c) Demolition orders made.....	50
(d) Houses the subject of formal housing action - decisions pending.....	33
<u>Informal Action.</u>	
(e) Houses made fit for human habitation.....	111
(f) Houses demolished.....	3
(g) Total houses dealt with by formal/informal action.....	384

HOUSING STATISTICS.

Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-

- (a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 & 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 and Sections 9, 10 & 12 of the Housing Act, 1957:-
- (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs, (informal notices)..... 17
 - (2) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which formal notices were served requiring repairs..... Nil
 - (3) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of notice..... 17
- (b) Proceedings under Sections 11, 12 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 and Sections 16, 18 & 23 of the Housing Act, 1957:-
- (1) Number of dwelling houses dealt with under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 and Section 16 of the Housing Act 1957..... 66
 - (2) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made..... 9
 - (3) Number of dwelling houses the subject of undertakings not to use for human habitation when vacated..... 31
 - (4) Number of dwelling houses the subject of undertakings to repair..... 20
 - (5) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders..... 20
 - (6) Number of dwelling houses repaired as a result of undertakings given by owners..... 46
 - (7) Number of demolition orders revoked..... 4
- (c) Proceedings under the Public Health Act 1936:-
- (1) Houses in which defects were remedied after the service of informal/formal notices..... 102

CERTIFICATES OF DISREPAIR.

(d) Proceedings under the Housing Repairs & Rents Act, 1954:-

(1) Number of applications for certificates of disrepair.....	4
(2) Number of certificates issued.....	4
(3) Number of certificates revoked.....	1

(e) Proceedings under the Rent Act 1957:-

Part 1. Applications for Certificates of Disrepair.

(1) Number of applications for certificates.....	15
(2) Number of decisions not to issue certificates...	Nil
(3) Number of decisions to issue certificates.....	15
(4) Number of undertakings given by landlords under paragraph 5 of the First Schedule.....	10
(5) Number of undertakings refused by Local Authority under proviso in paragraph 5 of the First Schedule.....	Nil

Part 11. Applications for Cancellation of Certificates.

(1) Applications by landlords to Local Authority for cancellation of Certificates.....	Nil
--	-----

SECTION 'B'

WATER SUPPLIES.

One hundred years ago polluted drinking water caused many deaths annually, whilst today water-borne disease has been reduced to insignificant proportions. This achievement is highly satisfactory but there is no room for complacency and the possibility of disease from water must never be overlooked.

A network of water mains in a district is one of the basic necessities of environmental health.

The water undertakings in the Council's district comprise:-

1. Wycombe Rural District Council.
2. Wycombe Borough Council.
3. The Rickmansworth & Uxbridge Valley Water Company.
4. The Amersham, Beaconsfield & District Water Company.
5. The Marlow Water Company.
6. The Bucks Water Board.

There are comparatively few houses which are not within reach of public water mains.

Despite the provision of main water supplies the occupiers of some houses still derive their water from wells and rainwater tanks. In certain cases individual properties are away from lines of mains, in other cases owner-occupiers with limited incomes are reluctant to incur the cost of a main water supply, whilst the occupiers of other dwellings have a prejudice in favour of their individual supplies as compared with a main water supply.

Supplying main water to houses which are isolated often presents a financial problem which may be overcome by asking householders to make a special contribution towards the cost of extending the mains.

Supervision of water supplies is an important feature of the work of the public health inspector and sampling has been carried out wherever deemed to be necessary. Where adverse reports have been received after chemical/bacteriological examination of samples, owners have been requested to provide a wholesome and sufficient water supply.

The Council's water supply serving the parishes of Stokenchurch, Radnage, part of Bledlow-cum-Saunderton and Bradenham and derived from the boreholes at Lower Road, Bennett End, Radnage, has been regularly checked at source. All samples submitted for examination have been reported upon as conforming to a satisfactory standard of purity.

SECTION 'C'

SANITATION.

As a network of water mains is one of the basic necessities of environmental health in a district so too is a network of sewers.

During the year under review there has not been any significant change with respect to constructional work on main drainage schemes, and cesspool drainage remains the predominant form of drainage in the district.

The deficiencies of the cesspool drainage system are well known and include limitation of the sanitary services of the house, defective and overflowing cesspools, potential threat of pollution of water supplies, difficulty of installing cesspools due to high water level, difficulty of maintaining an adequate cesspool emptying service owing to staffing problems, lack of suitable sites for disposal of sewage and offensive odours during the emptying operations.

Such conditions give rise to complaints which have again claimed the attention of your officers.

Unfortunately economy policy at national level is a factor which retards the implementation of main drainage schemes prepared for the district.

It is pleasing to record however the commencement of the Hambleton sewerage scheme to which can be connected the 143 properties in this area.

With the rapid development which is taking place in the district the necessity for main drainage throughout the area is made increasingly evident. It is to be hoped that sewerage schemes awaiting implementation may be proceeded with at an early date.

SECTION 'D'

PEST INFESTATION CONTROL.

Apart from financial considerations the control of pest infestations is fundamental in relation to environmental health.

Rats and mice consume and foul the nations food, carry disease to human beings and cause great damage to goods and property. With the urgent necessity of conserving world food supplies, rodent extermination becomes a factor of major importance, particularly when it is realised that one-sixth of man's food is consumed by pests, mostly rats and mice.

The necessity to protect humans from the menace of rats and mice is reflected in the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, which is an important instrument in the campaign for the destruction of rodents. The legislation clearly defines the duties of owners and occupiers of premises and local authorities in the work of pest extermination.

Since the introduction of the Act, trained personnel using special equipment and employing methods of poisoning, fumigation and trapping have been employed in the work of pest destruction, resulting generally in a decrease of infestations, which trend is reflected in the Council's area.

Such a result does not justify complacency in this matter. Rodents breed at a prolific rate and the utmost vigilance is needed in order to maintain and improve upon the results which have been achieved after years of intensive rodent control work.

Workable Area Committee.

The Council is a constituent member of the South Bucks and East Berks Workable Area Committee, and meetings of the Committee have been held at regular intervals.

These meetings provide an opportunity for discussion on operational problems and are a co-ordinating medium between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, local authorities and other associations engaged in the work of pest control

Rodent Control Treatment.

The Council's rodent control service has been consistently applied throughout the year. As a result of survey and notification by occupiers of infested premises, extermination of rodents has been carried out at dwelling-houses, factory premises, food premises, refuse tips, etc.

Details relating to the work carried out during the year are submitted in the accompanying table:-

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1942.

Type of Property	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses (including Council Houses).	All other (including Business Premises).	Total	Agricultural.
I. Number of properties in Local Authority's District	16	13,500	815	14,315	321
II. Number of properties inspected as a result of:-					
(a) Notification	-	418	112	530	44
(b) Survey under the Act	16	177	32	225	36
(c) Otherwise	-	2,961	378	3,339	51
III. Number of properties inspected (in Sec. II) which were found to be infested by:					
(a) Rats	1	-	-	1	2
Major					
Minor	5	256	30	291	16
(b) Mice	-	-	-	-	1
Major					
Minor	-	56	16	73	1
IV. Number of infested properties (in Sec. III) treated by the Local Authority.	7	312	46	365	-

SECTION 'E'

SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

Food Hygiene.

Great advances have been made in the methods of food preparation and display. Food hygiene is being recognised as good business by increasing numbers of traders and consumers and progress is to be seen everywhere. Everywhere there is a trader doing more business than his neighbour because food care is an obvious part of his routine.

For food hygiene success we need clean premises and clean people in these premises on both sides of the counter. Improvement of premises has been most noticeable. Lay-out, good storage, protective display, sanitary fitments and cleansing routines, are increasingly becoming food trade considerations.

In spite of these improvements, the latest published annual figure for food poisoning incidents totalled 7,713.

It would appear that we have not been so successful with the individual as with the premises, and it is the action of the individual that decides for or against food care. Many people practice good standards of food hygiene, but to be successful food care must be practised by everyone. Home is still the centre of environmental health standards and it is those standards which are introduced into food premises and at work.

Some explanation of the increased evidence of food poisoning may be found in the lowering of environmental health standards during the war and the increase in communal feeding which has continued in the post war years.

General rules to combat food poisoning include scrupulous domestic and personal cleanliness, careful cooking, quick cooling, adequate cold storage accommodation for foods both before and after cooking; the household refrigerator should be an essential installation in every house.

Food hygiene cannot be dealt with by punitive action alone. The human element is a vital factor, and the natural habits of food handlers are reflected in the degree of protection afforded to food under their care or conversely the danger to which it is exposed.

Education must play an ever increasing part in promulgating healthy environmental conditions generally. Education in its widest sense including public lectures, newspaper and magazine articles, radio and television programmes, food guilds, exhibitions, etc.

Cafes. Restaurants and Food Shops.

The Food Hygiene Regulations have now been in force for two years.

Certain matters in the regulations are somewhat ambiguous. Doubts regarding the wash-hand basin controversy require removing and the anomalies relating to temperature control, which control should be extended to food factories, preparation rooms, stores and retail shops. Omissions from the present regulations include precise requirements in relation to the cleansing and sterilization of equipment and utensils. One might also hope in time to see the provision of clean, washable overalls made compulsory for food handlers, the prohibition of newspapers even as outer wrappings and the condemnation of chipped and cracked crockery.

To achieve food hygiene success by public education is a long term policy. The less spectacular method of imparting knowledge is in the course of routine inspections of food premises when bad practices and faulty techniques can be observed and corrected on the spot.

In this sphere of work the public health inspectors have been actively engaged advising traders on the application of the Food Hygiene Regulations, in order to ensure, where necessary, improved conditions and practices where food is being prepared, stored or sold for human consumption.

A summary of the work of the department relating to food premises is as follows:-

Number of visits to food premises.....	1,093
Food rooms redecorated.....	37
Food rooms repaired (floors, walls, ceiling, windows)	26
Wash basins provided.....	12
New sanitary accommodation provided.....	4
Provision of constant hot water supply.....	7
Rodent infestation dealt with.....	17
Additional ventilation provided.....	6
Refuse receptacles provided.....	8

Sale of Ice-cream.

Sales of this popular commodity continue to increase.

Nineteen forty-five was a year of great importance in the food hygiene story. There was an awareness of the increasing incidence of food poisoning and the Food Hygiene Division of the Ministry of Food was formed to deal with the situation as a specialised problem. Conferences, official working parties on the preserved meat trades and the catering trades and new legislation for handling and wrapping of food all appeared.

One food trade, the ice-cream industry, newly established in this period had an early set-back through food poisoning attributed to their product. It became almost a guinea-pig trade for food hygiene. Legislation for this particular food was produced by the Ministry of Health which added hygienic care to methods of production, storage and sale.

Today ice-cream can be classed as being amongst the safest food. The aim of the trade is for ice-cream to be of good standard quality, an hygienic nutritious food product as well as a dainty confection.

During the year 1957 twelve new registration of premises for the sale of ice-cream were approved and the number of registered premises now total 93.

Supervision in connection with the sale of this commodity has been exercised by inspection of premises and sampling of ice-cream for bacteriological cleanliness. Premises generally were found to be in good condition and samples conformed to a satisfactory standard.

Milk.

Since the first specified areas were created some years ago the sale of designated milks has increased to such an extent that, today, the greater part of the nation's milk supply - probably somewhere around about 87 per cent - is either heat treated or comes from tuberculin tested herds and sold raw

Only milk which is heat-treated or tuberculin tested can be sold in the Council's district which is a "specified area".

However it would be wrong for the public to believe that all designated milk is necessarily germ free. Risk to health can still arise through the consumption of raw milk - not with tuberculosis but brucellosis.

The milk from infected cows may contain brucella abortus and this can cause undulant fever in human beings who consume infected milk.

When the consumer buys tuberculin tested milk he accepts the designation as a hall-mark of purity and freedom from harmful organisms. He has every right to expect his milk to be a "safe milk". Tuberculin tested milk however may not be a "safe milk". It could contain the organism brucella abortus which caused undulant fever in man.

The main defence against human infection is of course pasteurisation and the compulsory heat-treatment of all milk should be enforced.

The Council's participation in administering legislation dealing with the production and sale of milk is reflected in the following information:-

Number of visits to dairy premises.....	146
" " registered dairies.....	10
New dairy premises registered.....	Nil
Number of dealers licences issued to use designation	
"Pasteurised".....	20
" " " " issued to use designation	
"Tuberculin Tested".....	19
" " supplementary licences issued to use	
designation "Tuberculin Tested..	5
" " " " licences issued to use	
designation "Pasteurised".....	4
" " licences issued to use designation "Sterilised"	5
" " cases of milk infected with tubercle bacilli..	2
" " " " " " brucella.....	8
" " milk samples taken for biological examination.	12

Meat Inspection.

The Government's long term policy for regulating the provision of slaughterhouses in England and Wales was published in a White Paper in May 1956.

Perhaps the most important point which emerges from this statement of policy is that the original conception of moderate concentration, that is the restriction of the number of slaughterhouses and the control of their siting by central planning, has finally been abandoned. The Inter-departmental Committee, in view of new developments since the de-control of fatstock and meat in June 1954, expressed the view that the central planning of slaughterhouses was no longer advisable and recommended instead that, subject to normal town planning requirements and to the premises reaching the prescribed standards, there shall be a limited period during which meat traders should be free to provide their own slaughterhouses of the type and in the places best suited to their individual businesses. After this period a measure of control would be imposed.

As a result of the White Paper the Council sent representatives to a meeting consisting of representatives of local authorities in Buckinghamshire. The meeting which was held at Aylesbury was convened by the Borough Council of Aylesbury and was of an exploratory character. No decisions were made.

Subsequently the Wycombe Rural District Council convened two meetings, the first being attended by meat traders in the rural district and other interested organisations, the second meeting comprising members of neighbouring local authorities. The primary objective of the meetings was to try to determine the needs of the meat traders in the area in relation to slaughtering facilities.

The traders were unable to indicate their requirements in this matter and it was considered that further meetings would be necessary when the traders had formulated their proposals.

It is pleasing to record that the occupiers of the licensed slaughterhouses within the Council's area have been most co-operative in their efforts to maintain satisfactory food hygiene standards, in relation to the methods employed in preparing the carcasses and maintenance of premises.

The Slaughter of Animals Act 1933 to 1954 requiring the stunning of animals by means of mechanically operated instruments, and the licensing by the local authority of slaughtermen together with other rules relating to slaughterhouse practices have claimed the attention of your officers. These enactments have generally been well observed.

All animals killed in the slaughterhouses within the Council's area have been examined by your officers.

The amount of meat condemned has been comparatively small in quantity. This again being due to selective buying by the butchers, and the purchase of animals reared locally resulting in a minimum of transportation with consequent reduced risk of bruising.

Details relating to the animals slaughtered and inspected are set forth in the table on Page 36.

Investigations.

Matters which have claimed the attention of the public health inspectors have included glass in mincemeat, red colouration of foodstuffs due to chromobacterium prodigisum organisms, packets of Danish egg albumen which formed part of a consignment portions of which had contained typhi-murium organisms, clay particles in tins of pineapple, black material in a fruit pie and dirty milk bottles.

MEAT.

Carcases inspected and condemned.

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed.....	412	59	121	1,174	1,009	-
Number inspected...	412	59	121	1,174	1,009	-
<u>All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci:-</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned.....	-	-	-	6	4	-
Part carcass or organ condemned....	106	18	5	87	112	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci.....	5.8	8.6	2.8	9.4	10.3	-
<u>Tuberculosis only:-</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Part carcass or organ condemned....	12	6	-	-	9	-
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis.....	2.9	10.2	-	-	.89	-
<u>Cysticercosis:-</u>						
Part carcass or organ condemned..	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carcasses refrigerated.....	-	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned.	-	-	-	-	-	-

These figures represent a total carcass weight condemned of 5 cwt. 12 lbs. and weight of offal 12 cwt. 16 lbs.

SECTION 'F'

FACTORIES AND WORKPLACES.

The factory premises registered with the Council number 162.

The tables submitted herewith contain statistical information required by the Ministry of Labour and National Service, and include the work of the public health inspectors in relation to factory administration as it concerns the local authority.

The usual lists of persons engaged in their homes in carrying out work for factories were returned during February and August. The lists showed that outworkers were employed at premises within the Wycombe Rural District in specified occupations principally relating to the making and altering of wearing apparel.

1. Inspections Made for Provisions as to Health.

Premises	Number on Register	Inspec- tions	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities...	10	21	3	Nil
(2) Factories not in- cluded in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.....	152	100	12	Nil
(3) Other Premises in which Sec. 7 is en- forced by the Local Authority (ex. out- workers premises)...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total.....	162	121	15	Nil

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness.....	1	1	Nil	Nil	Nil
Overcrowding.....	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Unreasonable temperature.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Inadequate ventilation...	2	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
Ineffective drainage of floors.....	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Sanitary Conveniences:-					
(a) Insufficient.....	4	4	Nil	1	Nil
(b) Unsuitable or defective.....	6	5	Nil	2	Nil
(c) Not separate for sexes.....	2	2	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).....	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Totals.....	15	14	Nil	3	Nil

Number of Certificates issued relating to the provision of sufficient means of Fire Escape..... 5

OUTWORK.

(Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work	No. of outworkers in August list required by Sec. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists.	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.	Notices Prosecuted.
Wearing apparel Making etc....	31	-	-	-	-
Household Linen	12	-	-	-	-
Lace, Lace curtains & nets	14	-	-	-	-
Artificial flowers.....	6	-	-	-	-
Totals.....	63	-	-	-	-

Rag Flock.

The Rag Flock & Other Filling Materials Act, 1951, forbids the use of filling materials to which the Act applies for such purposes as upholstery and the stuffing of bedding, toys and baby carriages except on premises registered by a local authority.

The number of registered premises total 19.

Standards of cleanliness of filling materials are given by Regulations and penalties are prescribed for using unclean material.

Accordingly premises have been visited, records checked and samples of rag flock taken where deemed necessary. Generally the filling materials were found to be marked with the British Standards Institution mark signifying that the materials comply with the prescribed standard of cleanliness.

Two samples of rag flock however, did not conform to the prescribed standard of cleanliness.

After due consideration of the facts of these cases, the Council decided not to institute legal proceedings in connection with the contraventions involved.

SECTION 'G'

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION AND SMOKE ABATEMENT.

Clean Air Act.

The Beaver Committee appointed to report on the subject of atmospheric pollution had a dramatic send-off, when following the great London smog of 1952, 4,000 lost their lives due to pollution of the atmosphere.

The nation was at last determined to do something about the age-old problem. The Beaver Committee rose to the occasion and something closely following their recommendations found its way into a Government Bill in record time. Its passage through Parliament was more or less a triumphal procession supported by all parties.

The Beaver Committee aimed reasonably high. They suggested as a target the creation of smoke control areas involving alteration of fuel burning appliances in 7 million households over a period of 15 years, no industrial chimney need normally emit more than light haze and recommendations were made covering railways, spoilbanks, special industries etc.

The provisions of the Clean Air Act 1956 are operable in stages, the main provisions taking effect in 1958.

We should not be discouraged if progress seems slow during the first few years while people are becoming accustomed to the idea of smoke control. The important point to bear in mind is that domestic smoke accounts for nearly half the total smoke in the atmosphere and unless councils and individual citizens are prepared to face up to that fact we shall never solve the problem of atmospheric pollution.

No one denies the desirability of clean air; everyone appreciates bright sunshine and clean surroundings. But many people will support a clean air policy up to a point where it touches their own personal habits or prejudices. The overcoming of these habits and prejudices by education alone is a long and disheartening task, it being made much easier if some immediate personal benefit is apparent.

This could, for example, be overcome very speedily by raising the price of coal to domestic consumers and lowering the price of smokeless fuels.

It is generally accepted that the Clean Air Act 1956, is only the beginning of a new approach to the problem of atmospheric pollution. Considering it is the first time Parliament has attempted to deal with domestic smoke, and that several of the Act's provisions concerning industrial smoke are entirely new, it would be surprising if perfection was reached in one stride. There is no doubt that as experience is gained the need for many improvements will become apparent.

Control measures which the Council are at present operating in order to prevent atmospheric pollution include:-

- (1) Action where necessary against the emission of dark smoke and securing the minimum emission of grit and dust.
- (2) Ensuring that new industrial furnaces are not installed unless they are capable so far as practicable of being operated without emitting smoke.
- (3) Regulating the height of chimneys in connection with the erection or extension of industrial buildings.
- (4) Implementing byelaws which require all new buildings to be equipped with smokeless fuel appliances.

The success of the Act will depend upon the sincere belief of local authorities, industry and the general public in the policy of clean air and their determination to make effective such policy.

SECTION 'H'

MISCELLANEOUS.

Moveable Dwellings.

Many people are living in caravans because of housing shortage or because they cannot purchase houses at the prices they can afford. Most of these people would be better in houses and would prefer to be in houses. The fact that people are settling in caravans in increasing numbers does not excuse relaxation of housing programmes.

It is to be hoped that the nation's economic resources will improve and permit implementation of a housing policy which will secure for every family in the land a house in which they can live a full and happy life.

The use of caravans for recreational pursuit purposes and for semi-permanent housing accommodation have necessitated the Council reconciling these needs to housing and public health standards and protection of existing amenities. Work in this connection is related to the following data:-

Number of visits for inspection of sites and dwellings.....	412
" " licences issued.....	67
Caravans removed from site as a result of Council's intention to take formal action for contraventions.....	15
Number of licences refused.....	1

Registration of Dealers in Old Metals & Marine Stores.

In accordance with Section 86 of the Public Health Amendment Act, 1907 records must be kept in relation to articles purchased by dealers in old metal and dealers must be registered.

Two new applications were approved during the year under review. The total registrations number 12.

The National Assistance Act, 1948. Section 50.

Under Section 50 it is the responsibility of a local authority to arrange for the burial or cremation of any person who has died or been found dead in the area. The duty is exercisable only where it appears to the Council that no other suitable arrangements have been or are being made.

The Council were not called upon to arrange for the burial of any persons during the year 1957.

Pet Animals Act 1951.

This Act regulates the sale of pet animals making provision for the licensing of pet animal shops and imposing conditions for the animals to be accommodated and cared for in a satisfactory manner.

Two shops were licensed during the year under review.

The Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Regulations, 1953.

Visits have been made to premises where appliances were exposed for sale. This Act makes it an offence to sell or expose for sale any heating appliances not fitted with a suitable guard.

The appliances inspected conformed with the regulations.

Licensing of Game Dealers.

Two licences authorising dealers to buy and sell game were issued during the year.

Infectious Diseases.

Visits have been made in connection with cases of notifiable infectious diseases. Relevant information with regard to the history of the cases obtained and recorded, contacts checked and disinfection of rooms and bedding carried out. Details of the department's work is indicated below:-

Number of visits paid.....	56
" " re-visits.....	11
" " premises disinfected (tuberculosis).....	21
" " premises disinfected (other infectious diseases).....	16

CONCLUSION.

In order to maintain a healthy environment constant vigilance and action is necessary. As certain public health problems are resolved other problems arise, and those engaged in public health work must be prepared to widen their knowledge if they are to grapple effectively with the new problems.

Two problems which are claiming increasing attention are hazards to health from nuclear radiation and ill-health from noise.

Sources of radiation may occur from medical and industrial radiology, occupational exposure, fall-out from weapons test, disposal of waste radio-active materials embracing discharge to the atmosphere, discharge to inland waters, discharge to sea, discharge to sewers, incineration, burial and disposal to refuse dumps. It is quite clear that the nuclear era is having an ever increasing impact on public health matters. The part to be played by local authorities in this field requires defining.

The noise that assails us on all sides from innumerable sources does not make for a peaceful existence and may on occasion seriously affect the nervous system of some people. In an increasingly crowded and industrialised environment it becomes a steadily more urgent and more difficult task to protect our-selves against noise and vibration.

Mainly as a result of the advent of more powerful noise sources - the jet aircraft for example - the post war years in particular have seen a growing disposition on the part of the public and of our administrators and planners to take the problem seriously. Much research work is required in connection with the objective description of noise, acceptable noise levels, the influence of noise on working efficiency, damage to hearing, measurement of noise levels and methods of noise control in order that legislation may be evolved which will safeguard human comfort against the increasing noise from an expanding and industrialized environment.

I trust that the report will serve to emphasise the targets which are our objectives and provide an incentive to action which will ensure satisfactory environmental conditions.