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REPORT

TO THE

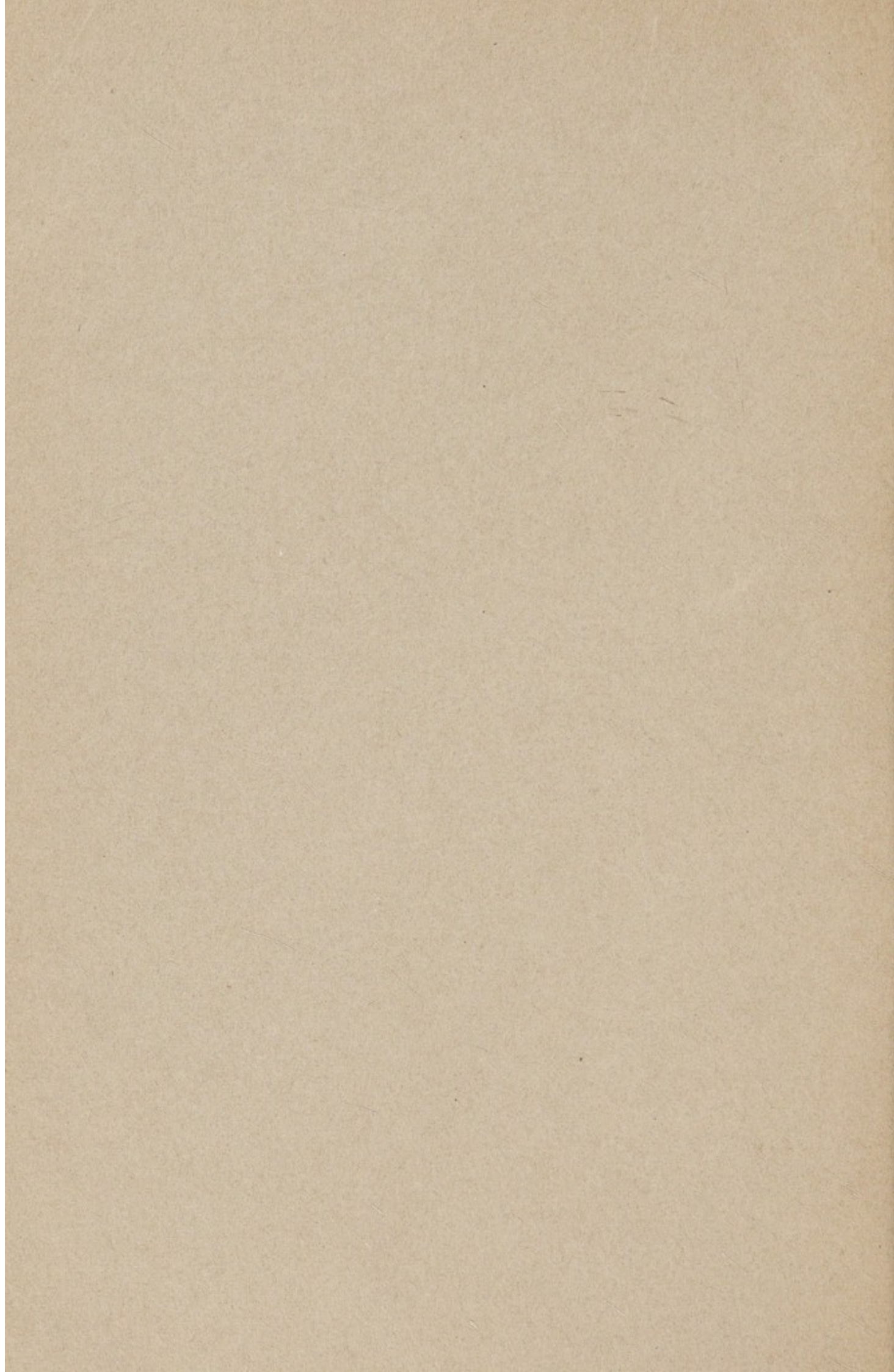
BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

For the Year 1958

BY



J. M. McEWAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health



REPORT

TO THE

BELLINGHAM RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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J. M. McEWAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health

STAFF :

Medical Officer of Health :

J. M. McEWAN, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Senior Public Health Inspector :

S. CLOUGH, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector :

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

(Resigned 31st January, 1958)

Additional Public Health Inspector :

E. B. MILLER, C.R.S.H.

(Appointed 1st July, 1958)

Mrs. J. FULLERTON - *Clerk/Typist.*

OFFICES :

COUNCIL OFFICES, BELLINGHAM,

HEXHAM - NORTHUMBERLAND

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*To the Chairman and Members of the Rural District Council of
Bellingham :*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year ending 31st December, 1958.

The social conditions of the area show little change, nor is much change from year to year to be expected. The population has again increased, to the extent of 200, continuing a gradual small rise over a number of years. Already the area is popular with visitors, and the National Park will no doubt attract increasing numbers.

In a district so large as Bellingham, with so scattered a population, rural problems are seen at their most severe. The Council continue to be concerned about rural transport and employment. Much is being done to ease the transport difficulties for special groups, such as mothers and young children, school children and those requiring hospital attention, but the service for the general public is not good. The problem is a national one and will require solution on a national basis. There is undoubtedly lack of opportunity for local employment among young people leaving school, and many must look elsewhere. Difficulties of communication make the district unattractive to new light industry, and the most obvious solution would be workshops dealing with wood or wood products as timber comes from the new forests in increasing amounts.

The rural nature of the district also has its effect when it comes to reporting on progress on housing, water and sewage disposal. In fact, no new houses were built by the Council in 1958, but the preliminary steps were taken for providing further houses at Otterburn and old people's houses at Bellingham and Wark. Older property continues to be given a further lease of useful life by improvement grants, and these are of the greatest value in this district, where the Council have had to defer new building on account of the cost and the resulting high rent. Negotiations have continued with a view to supplying Stannersburn with piped water, and several other schemes have been considered. In every case the proposed scheme is wholly uneconomic, the expected revenue being a fraction of the expenditure involved, and it appears that, regrettably enough, small communities far from a suitable source of water cannot be given the abundant and

pure water enjoyed by the larger centres of population. The only large sewage disposal scheme outstanding is that for Otterburn, which is being considered by the Ministry, and though the scheme is expensive it is urgently required on health grounds. Smaller schemes are still at the planning stage, and none has yet been built.

Life in the rural district has its problems, but it also has its advantages. It will be noted that no deaths during 1958 were from bronchitis, pneumonia or indeed from any respiratory disease. The death rate is well below the national average, and the age at death is very high—80% of the deaths were of people aged 70 or over, one third of the deaths of people aged 80 or over. The infant mortality rate was nil. Infectious disease presented little problem, though measles was widespread. On all these grounds it can be said that the health of the community is satisfactory.

Mr. Miller joined the staff in July, 1958, as Additional Public Health Inspector. He came with an excellent record, and has proved able and efficient. Mr. Clough continues to give capable and loyal service as Senior Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

I again have to express my appreciation of the interest and encouragement of the Chairman and Councillors, who have done so much of recent years to improve amenities, and of the co-operation given me by the Clerk and the other officers.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

J. M. McEWAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

VITAL STATISTICS

Population

The population of the Rural District, estimated at 30th June, 1958, was 5,530. This is an increase of 200 on the previous year, and the trend over the last few years is for a gradual increase in population.

Birth Rate

There were 90 live births during 1958, and when an adjustment factor is applied this gives a birth rate of 18.22 per 1000 population, while the figure for England and Wales is 16.4 per 1000. There were 2 still births during the year, giving a rate of 22.0 per 1000 total births. The National figure is 21.6 per 1000.

Infant Mortality

There were no deaths of infants under one year. The infant mortality rate for England and Wales is 22.5 per 1000.

Death Rate

A total of 45 deaths occurred during 1958, a substantial decrease from the 60 deaths in 1957. This gives a crude death rate of 8.01 per 1000 population. The figure for England and Wales is 11.7 per 1000 population.

To Summarise :

Live births	90
Live births per 1000 population	18.22
Still Births	2
Stillbirth rate per 1000 live and still births	22.0
Total live and still births	92
Infant deaths	Nil.
Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births	Nil.
Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births—	
legitimate	Nil.
Infant mortality rate per 1000 live births—	
illegitimate	Nil.
Neonatal mortality rate per 1000 live births	Nil.
Illegitimate live births per cent. of total births..	2.2
Maternal deaths	Nil.
Maternal mortality rate per 1000 live and still	
births	Nil.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Measles

There were 59 cases of measles during the year, and the disease was widespread throughout the country.

Erysipelas

One case occurred.

Scarlet Fever

For the first time for some years no case of scarlet fever was notified.

Whooping Cough

Only one case was notified.

Dysentery

There were no cases during the year.

Tuberculosis

Two cases of pulmonary tuberculosis, both young men, were notified. There was also one case of glandular tuberculosis in a schoolgirl.

Poliomyelitis and Diphtheria

There were no notifications during 1958.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

The area of the Bellingham Rural District is 246,645 acres.

The estimated population for 1958 is 5,530.

The number of inhabited houses on 31st December, 1958 was 1,681.

The sum represented by a penny rate is £240.

The rateable value is £68,370.

HEALTH SERVICES

Laboratory Facilities

Facilities in the area continue to be provided by the Government Laboratory in Newcastle General Hospital, which gives an efficient service.

Ambulance Service

The local ambulance service is administered for the County Council by the Red Cross, and a satisfactory service is maintained. In addition to the ambulance, a car service is available for suitable cases and is of considerable value in such a large district. Since the passenger train service was discontinued much extra mileage has been run to enable patients to keep hospital appointments and to allow mothers and children to attend clinics.

Home Nursing and Health Visiting

The district nurses are all provided with cars and their nursing work continues to be excellent. In spite of the difficulty of arranging for suitable help in a country district the Home Help Service run by the County Council continues to function satisfactorily. The County Health Visitors work in harmony with the General Practitioners in the area and do much valuable work.

Maternity and Child Welfare

Four Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, staffed by the County Council, operate at Bellingham, Otterburn, Kielder and Wark. Immunisation against diphtheria is carried out at these centres or is done by the General Practitioner, while all vaccination is carried out by the General Practitioners. The demand for poliomyelitis vaccination has been met in the age-groups eligible by special sessions at Kielder, Wark, Otterburn and Bellingham as well as by vaccination at schools, clinics and the surgeries of family doctors.

TABLE I.

The following table shows the principal statistics for the years 1955-1958.

Year	Live Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	General Death Rate per 1,000 Population	Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births
1955	19.93	11.30	20.6
1956	19.39	10.39	Nil.
1957	22.90	11.25	Nil.
1958	18.22	8.01	Nil.

**ANNUAL RETURNS OF FOOD POISONING
NOTIFICATIONS, YEAR 1958**

**Food Poisoning Notifications
Returned to Registrar General**

1ST QTR.	2ND QTR.	3RD QTR.	4TH QTR.	TOTAL
Outbreaks due to indentified agents	Nil
Outbreaks of undiscovered cause	Nil
Single Cases :				
Agent identified	Nil
Unknown cause	Nil
Total				Nil

TABLE II.

Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1958.

Notifiable Disease	Males	Females	Totals
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	1	1
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—
Measles	36	23	59
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Acute Pneumonia	—	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—
Smallpox	—	—	—
Acute Encephalitis	—	—	—
Enteric or Typhoid Fevers	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	1	1
Meningococcal Infection	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—
Tuberculosis	—	—	—
Totals	36	25	61

TABLE III.
TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1958.

Age Periods	New Cases				Nett Deaths in Bellingham Rural District			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

The following table classifies deaths according to their age groups :—

Age Groups	Males	Females	Totals
0—1	—	—	—
1—9	—	—	—
10—19	—	—	—
20—29	1	—	1
30—39	—	—	—
40—49	1	3	4
50—59	1	—	1
60—69	4	1	5
70—79	10	9	19
80—89	9	6	15
90—99	—	—	—
	26	19	45

INFANT MORTALITY
during year ending 31st December, 1958
NIL.

ANALYSIS OF DEATHS BY CAUSES.

According to Registrar General's Classification.

Causes of Death	1957		1958	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
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 ..	—	1	1	—
11. Malignant Neoplasm, Lung and Bronchus	—	1	—	—
12. Malignant Neoplasm, Breast ..	—	1	—	—
13. Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus ..	—	1	—	—
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	3	—	3	3
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	—	—	—	—
16. Diabetes	—	—	—	—
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	7	4	4	2
18. Coronary disease, Angina	4	5	8	4
19. Hypertension with heart disease ..	—	1	—	—
20. Other heart disease	5	11	3	9
21. Other circulatory disease	2	—	2	—
22. Influenza	—	—	—	—
23. Pneumonia	1	2	—	—
24. Bronchitis	1	1	—	—
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	—	—	—	—
26. Ulcer of Stomach & Duodenum ..	1	—	1	—
27. Gastritis, Enteritis, Diarrhoea ..	—	—	—	—
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	—	—	1	—
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	—	2	—
30. Pregnancy, Child Birth, Abortion	—	—	—	—
31. Congenital Malformations	—	—	—	—
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	—	1	—	—
33. Motor vehicle accidents	3	—	—	—
34. All other accidents	3	—	1	1
35. Suicide	—	—	—	—
36. Homicide and operations of war ..	—	—	—	—
	31	29	26	19
	60		45	

Public Health Inspector's Annual Report

FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1958.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE AREA.

WATER.

The Newcastle & Gateshead Water Order, 1950, is now fully implemented, the last phase, Kirkwhelpington, being completed in May, 1958. Owners and occupiers in the main settlement areas have not been slow to take advantage of this basic service as the "green light" to go ahead with the provision of hot and cold, bath and water closet.

The back has been broken of this water problem, which is more commendable when related to an area of 380 square miles. As the Medical Officer reports there are still small pockets where need is established, but the hard factor of cost is the deciding issue. The limit has been reached for capital spending by the Local Authority on water services to be within reasonable cost. Individual and isolated holdings with inadequate or suspect supplies are diminishing in number—advantage continuing to be taken of grant aid from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Water Samples.

Samples taken by the Local Authority, together with the Newcastle & Gateshead Water Company, numbered 174 : 23 proved unsatisfactory, the remainder were of excellent and satisfactory quality.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

Modern treatment plants operate at Bellingham, Woodburn, Wark and Birtley. Birtley scheme was completed in October, 1958, and as a consequence some 25 privy conversions were effected.

Maintenance is carried out by one full time employee and part time employees. The time is not far distant when the work involved will necessitate two full time employees to ensure efficient and adequate maintenance. The oversight of the four pumping plants alone merits full time duties of one employee.

Private Septic Tanks.

Seventeen treatment plants have been installed.

Conversions

Some 42 conversions have been effected from privies to water carriage system.

HOUSING.

Local Authority building : Nil. Private building : 3.

Housing Act, 1949 : Improvement—Reconditioning.

19 applications for improvement grants were approved. During the year, financial assistance to grant-aided schemes completed amounted to £8,659.

Hill Farming and Livestock Rearing Acts, 1946—1954.

A further 11 grants were approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Rent Act, 1957.

One Certificate of Disrepair was issued during the period under review.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Regular and systematic cleansing of the main settlement groups throughout the area has been maintained.

The areas covered are :

Bellingham	Wark	Ridsdale
Reedsmouth	Stonehaugh	Great Bavington
Greenhaugh	Birtley	Little Bavington
Kirkharle	Falstone	Rochester
Kirkwhelpington	Kielder	Otterburn
Byrness	East Woodburn	West Woodburn

Number of properties serviced : 1,395.

Tips. There are nine tips in the area situate at :—

Birtley	Woodburn	Knowesgate
Otterburn	Falstone	Stonehaugh
Hareshaw	Kielder	Byrness

Employees : Two loader-drivers and three loaders.

Tonnage : 3,450 tons.

Cost : £4,240.

Litter Bins.

A further 8 litter bins were provided during the year.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

One operator is in the employ of the Council and methods of treatment are those approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food.

Treatments :

Sewers : Regular and systematic treating in Bellingham, Woodburn and Wark.

Farms and Business Premises ..	4
Tips	4
Other properties	3
	—
	11
	—

FOOD.

PUBLIC HEALTH (MEAT) REGULATIONS, 1924—1954.

SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1933—1954.

There are five butchers in the area—three operate slaughterhouses and two buy carcass meat. 100% meat inspection is maintained. There is an increase in the purchase of carcass meat for retail.

Analysis of inspection is as under :

Bullocks.....	171	
Heifers	97	
Calves.....	1	
Pigs	134	
Sheep	533	Total : 936.

Condemned :

Bovine	Sheep	Pigs
12 livers	2 livers	1 liver
12 pr. lungs	Forequarters	5 pr. lungs
2 heads		1 head
3 tongues		4 hearts
Forequarters (146 lbs.)		

These statistics reveal a decrease in carcass meat consumption on the previous year 1957.

Other foods examined and found unfit for human consumption :—

8 tins Fruit	12 tins Meat	5 tins Tomatoes
1 tin Beans	7 tins Peas	1 tin Bournvita
	3 tins Coffee	

Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1949—1954.

Licences issued during the year are as under :

West Wylam & Prudhoe Co-operative Society Branches:

Bellingham	)	Pasteurised, Sterilised and
Wark	)	Tuberculin
Falstone	)	Tested.

W. Hogg, Fourstones—retails in the area Pasteurised and Tuberculin Tested.

G. Craghill, Wark—Tuberculin Tested.

M. Slassor, Ridsdale—Sterilised.

FOOD HYGIENE REGULATIONS, 1955-56.

Some fifty six premises in the area come within the scope of this legislation. Regular inspection has been made and considerable time spent in "selling" the merits of food hygiene. The process of education is slow but there is evidence that propaganda is now having results. Such work, from the official side, could be considerably reinforced if the consumers were more vigilant in their approach to this aspect of public health.

Food Premises : The following are the types of food premises in the district :

Bakeries	..	..	..	..	..	2
Butchers	..	..	..	..	..	5
Cafes	..	..	..	..	..	6
Clubs	..	..	..	..	..	4
Fried Fish	..	..	..	..	..	1
General Dealers (including Grocers, etc.)	..	..	..	..	..	18
Public Houses	..	..	..	..	..	11
School Kitchens	..	..	..	..	..	9

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936. Sec. 269

Tents, Vans and Sheds.

The Forestry Commission caravan site at Lewisburn, Kielder, in the Border Forest Park, is increasing in popularity, and the establishment of a similar caravan site by the Local Authority might be to its advantage, particularly when large areas of the National Park and Border Forest Park are situate within its boundaries, and, due to publicity, are providing an increasing attraction to the tourist.

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED

	By Informal Action	By Statutory Notice	Total
SANITARY CONVENIENCES :			
Privies and privy ashpits abolished . .	42	—	42
Water closets provided	44	—	44
Number of above for which grant was given (P.H.A. 1936, Sec. 47)	25	—	25
Sanitary bins provided	36	—	36
DRAINAGE :			
New drains constructed	58	—	58
Drains repaired or reconstructed	41	—	41
Additional gullies provided	207	—	207
Old gullies replaced	7	—	7
Scullery sinks provided	54	—	54
Scullery waste pipes repaired	18	—	18
Scullery waste pipes trapped	5	—	5
Yards repaired or reconstructed	8	—	8

INSPECTIONS AND VISITS

Housing :					
Demolition	..	..	..	..	35
Improvements and repairs	..	..	..	..	406
Verminous premises	..	..	..	..	2
Water supply	..	..	..	..	54
Drainage	..	..	..	..	306
Factories and workshops	..	..	..	..	28
Licensed premises	..	..	..	..	27
Refuse collection and disposal	..	..	..	..	189
Rodent control	..	..	..	..	27
Infectious disease	..	..	..	..	46
Slaughterhouses	..	..	..	..	474
Shops	..	..	..	..	196
Fishmongers (van)	..	..	..	..	8
Ice cream samples	..	..	..	..	1
Bakeries	..	..	..	..	46

1958 has been a year of steady and solid progress, made possible by the support of loyal colleagues and the goodwill of the members of the Council.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

S. CLOUGH

Senior Public Health Inspector.

