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Contributors

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Councillor J. S. S. Plant

Errata

Preface: Insert 'Councillor H. Hood' in list of Members of Health Committee.

P.27: Last line of report on Offices etc. should read ", to a greater extent than hitherto".

H. E. Wilson, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., D.O., F.B.O.A.

Chief Public Health Inspector

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

Senior Additional Public Health Inspector

E. N. Whitehead, M.M., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors

R. P. Tabbinor, M.A.P.H.I.

J. Clough (as from 21/10/71)

Senior Clerk


Mrs. H. A. Hulme

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
LEEK URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my eleventh Annual Report. The Annual Report for 1971 has been prepared in accordance with Circular 1/72 of the Ministry of Health.

POPULATION: The Registrar General's figure for the estimated mid-year home population is 19,340 compared with 19,150 in 1970 an increase of 190.

BIRTH RATE: There has been a decrease in the number of live births compared with the previous year. In 1971, 272 births occurred whilst in 1970 there was a total of 292. Further details will be found on page 5.

Adjusted birthrate is 15.5 (comparability factor 0.97) compared with a national birthrate of 16.0. The proportion of illegitimate live births was 7% there being 20. The national figure for 1971 is 8.00%.

STILL BIRTHS: The number of still births per 1,000 of total births during the year was 7 against the national average for England and Wales of 12.

INFANT MORTALITY: In 1971 a total of 6 deaths occurred under one year of age. Further details will be found on page 7.

DEATHS: There were 294 deaths in 1971 compared with 266 in the previous year. The following major causes of death are of interest:—

Disease of the heart and circulatory system (neglecting hypertension with heart disease)	165	56.1%
Malignant Disease	60	20.4%
Respiratory Disease	28	9.5%

Cancer of the lung accounted for more than one in every five cancer deaths. This is one cause of death which is almost completely preventable by stopping smoking. So much publicity has been given to the relationship between cigarette smoking and cancer of the lung that it must now surely be known to everyone. In my experience less well known are the other killing effects from bronchitis and heart disease. The Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Health and Social Security in his Annual Report 1970 points out that as a conservative estimate ONE QUARTER of all deaths (in England and Wales) between the ages of 45 to 64 years and ONE-IN-FIVE of those aged 65 — 74 years are due to smoking. Confronted with such evidence how can people continue smoking.

Much is done to maintain and improve the health of the people by public health measures and curative medicine yet the most dramatic further improve-

ment could be achieved by individuals themselves if they gave up smoking, avoided being overweight and regularly took exercise.

Further details regarding deaths will be found on pages 6 and 7.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES: During 1971 the total number of confirmed notified diseases during the year amounted to 28 compared with 85 in 1970. It is pleasing to report yet again that there were no cases of diphtheria or poliomyelitis. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that parents should take advantage of immunisation and vaccination for their children, including boosters, available free of charge from the family doctor, baby clinics, or through the School Health Service. Protection is now available for diphtheria, poliomyelitis, tetanus, tuberculosis, measles and rubella.

The attitude towards smallpox vaccination has changed, and it is no longer recommended as a routine procedure in early childhood. Although vaccination remains the most reliable measure for the protection of individuals liable to be exposed to smallpox, it carries a very small but definite risk of serious complications. As a result of the smallpox eradication programme by the World Health Organisation over the past few years there is now much less risk of this disease being introduced into this country. This risk of infection is now considered to be less than the danger of serious complications from smallpox vaccination. However, it is recommended that all travellers to and from areas of the world where smallpox is still endemic or countries where eradication programmes are in progress should be protected by recent vaccination. Vaccination and regular re-vaccination is offered to health service staff who come into contact with patients.

1971 was significant in that no notified cases of food poisoning were confirmed by subsequent laboratory tests, although five suspected cases were investigated. Regular inspections are made by this Department of food premises not only to enforce the Food Hygiene Regulations but to offer help and advice where necessary to ensure that food offered for sale in the district is as safe as possible. One food offence during the year resulted in a prosecution and conviction with a fine of £30.00.

Five confirmed cases of bacillary dysentery occurred. Four cases were notified in one household where part of the premises was used as a food shop. Action was taken under the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1968 to prevent the possible spread of infection by food. I am indebted to the family doctors whose patients were involved and to Dr. Laing Brown, Physician Superintendent of Bucknall Hospital for the help and co-operation given to me.

There were two cases of infectious jaundice in the early part of the year involving school children. These cases concluded the outbreak which commenced in 1970 and was confined to one primary school in Leek. Details of this outbreak were described in my Annual Report for that year. At present no vaccine is available against this disease.

Notified cases of measles amounted to 6 only, the lowest number since 1960 and doubtless due mainly to the introduction of vaccination against the disease first introduced in 1968.

Other diseases notified during the year will be found on page 13.

BRUCELLOSIS: This is not a notifiable disease, but it can produce a serious and protracted illness in human beings for which treatment is un-

certain. The illness is usually contracted by drinking milk from infected cows, which has not been heat treated to destroy the germs. The taste of the milk is not affected by the presence of these organisms and the only certain way of avoiding this and other infections from milk is by drinking pasteurised, sterilised or ultra heat treated milk. The County Council's milk sampling officer takes milk from herds in the district which is then tested for the presence of brucellosis and tuberculosis by the Public Health Laboratory. In connection with brucellosis of the 133 samples taken none were found positive either by direct culture or biological test. No milk samples in connection with brucellosis were taken by this authority.

WATER SUPPLY: Following further discussions with the Staffordshire Potteries Water Board the Council, in October, agreed to request the Board that amalgamation of the two Undertakings should take effect from the 1st April 1972 if administratively possible but failing this from the 1st April, 1973.

In February the electrical switch gear panel controlling one of the two new pumps at the Poolend Pumping Station was badly damaged by water from a burst pipe. Apart from this and some teething troubles from chlorinating equipment the station has continued to operate satisfactorily during the year.

One new 75 h.p. pump of 40,000 gallons per hour capacity manufactured by Messrs. New Haden Pumps Limited, Cheadle, was installed at the Mount Reservoir to replace one of the two Tangye pumps which have been in operation for many years. These pumps deliver water from the Mount Reservoir to the Kniveden Reservoir which supplies the higher part of the town.

During the year the Bradnop bulk water supply agreement with the Staffordshire Potteries Water Board was varied to allow for an anticipated additional supply of 5,200 gallons per day to be given to properties within the Parish of Thorncliffe.

Further details concerning chemical analysis and bacteriological results will be found on pages 10 and 11.

SEWERAGE: Work has passed the half-way stage on the reconstruction of the Leekbrook Sewage Treatment Works. Substantial completion has been reached on the preliminary treatment section of the works, which includes Comminutors and a Pista Grit Trap, and on the two 100 ft. diameter primary sedimentation tanks. This part of the works is already operational. Work is continuing on the six additional 120 ft. motorised bacteria beds, the four 80 ft. diameter humus tanks, the main pumping station, the final effluent screw pumping station and the sludge press house.

The complete works will treat a dry weather flow of 3 million gallons per day and the cost of the extensions will be approximately £1,100,000. The average weekday flow over the past year has remained steady at just above 2,800,000 gallons per day.

Inevitably there have been many problems for Mr. Tricker, the Sewage Works Manager running the works during reconstruction. In several instances old plant had to be taken out of operation before its replacement had been commissioned. One of the biggest problems was the drying of the sludge after the old drying beds had been demolished within the first few weeks of the contract. This necessitated the building of temporary beds which was achieved by Mr. Tricker at a minimum cost using the works labour force. Considering the small size of these beds they have performed extremely well

and over the last two years have saved several thousand pounds in tankering costs, the only alternative

In conjunction with the building of the works a new trade effluent control scheme has been introduced. This will protect both the works and the River Churnet from toxic contaminants as well as ensuring that the works is operated within its design capabilities.

Analysis of all trade effluents and works samples amounting to over 2,000 samples per annum is carried out in the new works laboratory.

A relatively small proportion of the district contains approximately 112 houses erected on scattered sites and this area is to be sewered in the near future. The existing drainage installations consist of individual septic tanks with or without filter beds and a small installation serving some twenty houses. In addition there is a cesspool which receives the effluent from a further twenty houses and requires emptying periodically. All the properties will, in the near future, be connected by main sewers to the Leekbrook disposal plant.

An additional Public Health Inspector Mr. J. Clough was appointed towards the end of the year and has proved to be a valuable asset to the Department. We have been particularly unfortunate with illness amongst the health inspectors during the last two years which has placed additional work on the others. I record my thanks to all the staff of the Health Department for their continued efforts during the year.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help and co-operation from other departments of this Council, and I am grateful for the interest of Members in the work of the Department which is so essential for the continued progress and development of environmental health.

H. E. WILSON
(Medical Officer of Health)

SECTION A

GENERAL STATISTICS

	1970	1971
Area in Acres	4,306	4,306
Registrar General's mid-year estimate of home population (all ages)	19,150	19,340
Number of inhabited houses in the Rate Book at end of year	7,289	7,321
Number of persons per house	2.6	2.6
Number of persons per acre	4.4	4.4
Rateable Value at 31st March	£755,687	£770,013
Sum represented by 1d rate for financial year ended 31st March	£3,033	£3,140

VITAL STATISTICS

	Male	Female	Total
Live births	148	124	272
(Illegitimate births)	12	8	20
Live births, rate per 1,000 population			14.1
Adjusted birthrate (comparability factor 1.10)			15.5
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births			7%
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births (England and Wales)			8%

NOTE ON ADJUSTED BIRTHRATE

Local birthrates are usually expressed in terms of population. These populations are estimated by the Registrar General and comprise persons of all ages, including many who quite obviously have no influence on the reproductive process. These latter do, however, affect the birthrate in that a preponderance of them in the population of an area tends to lower and a small proportion of them to raise, the true rate. Considerable variation in the size of this proportion exists in different areas, and it is therefore apparent that the elimination or standardisation of such a factor enables a truer comparison between areas.

A result on these lines is obtained through the issue by the Registrar General of a comparability factor for each area for use with birthrates. The adjusted birthrate resulting from the multiplication of the crude birth rate of an area by its comparability factor may be regarded as being comparable with the adjusted rate of any other area or with the crude rate for England and Wales.

	Male	Female	Total
Still births	0	2	2
(Illegitimate)	0	0	0
Still birthrate for 1,000 live and still births			7
Still birthrate (England and Wales)			12
Total live and still births	148	126	274
(Illegitimate)	12	8	20

INFANT DEATHS	Male	Female	Total
Deaths under 1 year of age	3	3	6
(Illegitimate)	0	1	1
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births			22
(Legitimate)			20
infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births (Illegitimate)			50
Infant mortality rate (England and Wales) (Legitimate)			17
(Illegitimate)			24
Neonatal mortality, deaths under 4 weeks of age (Legitimate and Illegitimate)	3	1	4
Neonatal mortality rate per 1,000 live births (first 4 weeks)			15
Neonatal mortality rate (England and Wales)			12
Early neonatal mortality rate (first week) per 1,000 live births			15
(Deaths under 1 week were 4)			
Perinatal mortality rate (still births plus deaths during the first week) per 1,000 total live and still births ...			22
Perinatal mortality rate (England and Wales)			22

DEATHS — ALL AGES	128	166	294
Death rate per 1,000 estimated population			15.2
Adjusted death rate (comparability factor 0.79)			12.0
NOTE: This comparability factor is obtained and used on a similar principal to that for comparability for births .			
Death rate (England and Wales)			11.6

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES, 1971	Male	Female	Total
Enteritis and Other Diarrhoeal Diseases	0	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity, etc.	2	0	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	0	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	6	3	9
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	2	7	9
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	10	5	15
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	0	6	6
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	2	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	2	0	2
Leukaemia	1	3	4
Other Malignant Neoplasms	4	5	9
Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	0	1	1
Diabetes Mellitus	0	2	2
Other Endocrine etc. Diseases	0	1	1
Anaemias	0	1	1
Other Disease of Nervous System	1	3	4
Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	0	3	3
Hypertensive Disease	2	6	8

Ischaemic Heart Disease	40	25	65
Other Forms of Heart Disease	7	15	22
Cerebrovascular Disease	18	45	63
Other Disease of Circulatory System	7	5	12
Influenza	0	1	1
Pneumonia	7	7	14
Bronchitis and Emphysema	6	3	9
Other Disease of Respiratory System	2	2	4
Peptic Ulcer	1	0	1
Cirrhosis of Liver	2	0	2
Other Disease of Digestive System	0	2	2
Hyperplasia of Prostate	2	0	2
Disease of Musculo-Skeletal System	1	1	2
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	2	1	3
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	1	0	1
Symptoms of Ill Defined Condition	0	5	5
Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	1	2
All Other Accidents	1	3	4
	128	166	294

NOTE ON CAUSES OF DEATH:

MALIGNANT DISEASE (Cancer): This caused 60 deaths i.e. 20.4% of all deaths (in 1970 it was 19.2%).

Cancer of the lung killed 10 men and 5 women in 1971 i.e. 25.0% of all cancer deaths (in 1970 it was 21.6% of all cancer deaths).

Those deaths due to cancer of the lung were in males between 55 and 64 (6), between 65 and 74 (1) and 75 and over (3). There were five female deaths between 55 and 64 (1), between 65 and 74 (2) and 75 and over (2).

HEART DISEASE: 87 deaths were due to this i.e. 29.6% of all deaths (in 1970 it was 29%).

BRONCHITIS AND EMPHYSEMA: This common complaint had 9 deaths as a result in 1971, 3% of all deaths (in 1970 it was 6%).

ACCIDENTS: This accounted for 6 deaths, 2 of which were motor vehicle accidents.

SUICIDE: No deaths due to this cause were reported during the year.

INFANTILE MORTALITY 1971

Deaths under 1 year of age — 6.

3 males under 1 year — under 4 weeks (3); under 1 week (3).

3 female — under 1 year of age (3); under 3 weeks (1); under 1 week (1).

There was one illegitimate deaths under 1 year 1 female under 4 weeks (1); under 1 week (1).

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES:

The Urban District Council is the sanitary authority responsible for the environmental services.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES :

The Urban District Council is the authority responsible for environmental services.

The County Council is the Local Health and Local Education Authority. It is responsible for the following services. Maternity and Child Welfare, The School Health Service, Domiciliary Midwifery, Vaccination and Immunisation and Ambulance Service, a Health Visiting Service, the administration of the Mental Health Services "care and after care" and the provision of Home Nursing and "Home Helps". It also has the duty of providing Health Centres.

There are two County Clinics within the Urban District and facilities provided include Child Welfare, Speech Therapy, Chiropody, Cervical Cytology and Ante-Natal Clinics. Visits to one of these clinics are made by an Ear Nose and Throat Specialist and Ophthalmologist as part of the School Health Service.

The County Social Services Department which came into being on 1st April 1971, with the amalgamation into one department of the former County Welfare and Children's Department, together with certain aspects of the County Health Department, is responsible for the provision of the following services previously administered by the County Health Department.

The provision of domestic help for certain households. The regulation of day nurseries (play groups) and child minders. The welfare of the mentally ill and subnormal.

In addition, certain welfare services are now required under the provisions of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act, 1970.

The Social Services Department is also responsible for the whole range of services formerly provided by the Children's and Welfare Departments. These include the care of children deprived of a normal home life. The protection of the young in relation to criminal proceedings; the supervision of children awaiting adoption; support for families where children may be at risk; accommodation for the elderly and promotion of their welfare, including residential, day and night care, and promotion of the welfare of the disabled and physically handicapped.

The Area Social Services Department's Office at 1A Market Place, Leek, is responsible for the administration of these services in the Leek Urban, Leek Rural and Biddulph Urban Districts. The work is carried out by a team of social workers, at present 6 in number, with two senior officers. There is also a Handicraft Instructor and a Domestic Help Organiser with 65 domestic helps working in the Leek Urban and Rural Districts, visiting a total of 312 households.

The integration of the various services into one department is now fully complete in all its aspects, with the benefit to the community being the increased efficiency and availability of those services.

A cordial relationship has been established in Leek between the staffs of the Health and Social Services Departments as a result of the need for co-operation when some residents in the district require the services of both Departments.

LABORATORY FACILITIES

Leek is served by the Public Health Laboratory Service, Stafford, and is a component of a free national laboratory service for England and Wales. The work of the Laboratory is designed to assist the Medical Officer of Health and the general practitioners, in the diagnosis, prevention and control of communicable diseases. Its activities include the examination of throat and nose swabs, sputum, blood and excreta of human origin as aids to diagnosis of suspected or actual infectious diseases. Its sanitary work includes mainly the bacteriological examinations of drinking water, the testing of sampled milk for cleanliness and for the presence of the tubercle bacillus and other pathogenic organisms, and the bacteriological testing of food samples, ice cream, synthetic cream, and shellfish as distributed to the user or consumer.

MILK: The laboratory continues to report on the results of general bacteriological tests and biological tests for tubercle bacilli and Brucellosis in samples of milk submitted to it by the County Council Milk Sampling Officer of milk sold in the Leek Urban District.

103 samples of pasteurised milk were submitted to the METHYLENE BLUE test, a test for ordinary bacteriological cleanliness, no samples failed to pass the test.

Of the 103 samples of pasteurised milk examined by the PHOSPHATASE TEST — to ascertain the effectiveness of the process— there were no failures.

1 sample of sterilised milk was submitted to the TURBIDITY TEST, and was found satisfactory.

1 sample of ULTRA HEAT TREATED milk gave a negative colony count test.

BIOLOGICAL TESTS: Tests for the presence of tubercle bacilli and Brucellosis are carried out on samples submitted. All tests for tubercle bacilli and brucellosis were negative.

Farmers in the Leek Urban District retail varying amounts of their total milk production, sending the remainder for heat treatment. 133 routine bulk milk samples by the County Council all gave negative ring tests.

MORTUARY

The Council's mortuary is situated in Condlyffe Road. Essential equipment is provided by the local authority and a mortuary attendant is available when required.

The mortuary was used for 9 persons during 1971. No post mortems were performed.

WATER SUPPLY

The Town's Water Supply is obtained from two sources; a series of springs at Upperhulme, and a borehole at Pool End.

The supply from Upperhulme flows by gravity to the point at which it joins the distribution system; part is fed directly into the mains and the remainder passing direct to the Mount Reservoir.

The supply from Pool End is derived from a borehole, and is pumped directly to the Mount Reservoir. Part is then pumped to the Kniveden Reservoir to supply those parts of the town which are too high to be supplied from the Mount Reservoir.

From Upperhulme a supply is afforded to the Blackshaw Moor Camp and to other properties in the vicinity of Blackshaw Moor and Upperhulme.

Water is supplied from Pool End to a number of properties in the Leek Rural District Council area. Water from Pool End also passes via a water tower in the Rural District to properties at the top of Ladderedge in the Leek Urban District.

Four dwellings in the district have independent water supplies. Two dwellings are without piped supplies of water, both in isolated situations.

There are no common stand-pipes for domestic supplies.

RESERVOIRS: There are now no open reservoirs in the district. This has eliminated the problem of contamination of the water by insect larvae and by algae, both sources of considerable trouble to the water department in times past.

The covering has also very much reduced the likelihood of casual contamination by birds or animals.

WATER TREATMENT

FILTRATION: The water from neither Pool End nor Upperhulme is subjected to filtration. The water is clear and free from sediment.

CHLORINATION: Chlorination is necessary for the water from both sources of supply. Untreated water from either source displays bacterial contamination.

Chlorine is introduced into the system in the form of hypochlorite solution. It is administered by drip feed at the Upperhulme dosing chamber, and by injection under pressure at the Pool End Pumping Station.

A new chlorination plant was installed at Pool End pumping station during the year. The plant provides for chlorine gas to be taken into solution and the solution injected into the pumping main under pressure as it leaves the station. The system is provided in duplicate in the case of failure of a component.

FLUORIDATION: The advisability of adding a controlled dose of fluoride to drinking water has been proved beneficial in reducing the incidence of dental caries in children. The practice involves a dosage of 1 part of fluoride per million parts of water.

The fluoridation of domestic water supplies has been recommended by the Central Government and to this the Urban District Council has agreed. The County Council have signified their willingness to meet the cost.

SAMPLING: Samples for bacteriological examination are taken weekly. The samples go to the Public Health Laboratory at Stafford for examination.

The samples are taken from points which are representative of the sources of supply and also from a point after the supplies have been mixed.

During the year 169 samples of treated water were taken, of which 6 were returned as unsatisfactory on the basis of colony counts.

CHEMICAL ANALYSIS OF WATER SUPPLY

Samples of untreated water were taken from each source and submitted for chemical analysis. The results are submitted below.

Upperhulme Source: Upland Springs

Chemical Examination — Sample taken 20/12/71

	Parts per million
pH 7.0	
Solids in Solution (Dried at 180°C)	115
Chlorides (as Cl)	16
Total Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	76
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	60
Carbonate Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	60
Non-Carbonate Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	16
Free Ammonia	0.01
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.02
Nitrate Nitrogen	1.5
Nitrite Nitrogen	Nil
Oxygen Absorbed in 4hrs. at 27°C	0.35
Fluoride (as F)	0.05
Free Residual Chlorine	1.5
Total Residual Chlorine	1.5
Metals (p.p.m.)	Nil

Opinion: Satisfactory chemical quality.

Pool End Supply: Borehole

Chemical Examination — Sample taken 29/6/71

	Parts per million
pH 6.6	
Solids in Solution (Dried at 180°C)	130
Chlorides (as Cl)	18
Total Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	96
Total Alkalinity (as CaCO ₃)	64
Carbonate Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	64
Non-Carbonate Hardness (as CaCO ₃)	32
Free Ammonia	Nil
Albuminoid Ammonia	Nil
Nitrate Nitrogen	1.9
Nitrite Nitrogen	Nil
Oxygen Absorbed in 4hrs. at 27°C	0.10
Fluoride (as F)	Nil
Free Residual Chlorine	0.15
Total Residual Chlorine	0.15
Metals (p.p.m.) Zinc	0.13
Copper	0.03
Lead	0.15

Opinion: Satisfactory chemical quality.

SWIMMING BATHS: Samples of water from the swimming baths are also submitted weekly for examination. The samples taken during the year were 72 in number, of which 4 displayed a high colony count.

SECTION C

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Full details of notifiable diseases can be found in the tables on the following pages.

Leek is fortunate in that the Infectious Disease Isolation Hospital for the area is at Bucknall — a comparatively short distance away. This receives all types of infectious disease apart from smallpox, which is treated at the Catherine de Barnes Hospital, Solihull. Bucknall Hospital is administered by the Stoke-on-Trent Hospital Management Committee. Admission is arranged directly by the local general practitioners and transport is provided by the local ambulance service.

ADMISSIONS TO BUCKNALL HOSPITAL

1. HERPES ZOSTER and HYPOPHYON — 1 female aged 65 years.
2. NON-SPECIFIC GASTRO-ENTERITIS — 11 cases from 2 months to 73 years.
3. NON-SPECIFIC GASTRO-ENTERITIS and SORE THROAT — 1 female aged 28 days.
4. NON-SPECIFIC GASTRO-ENTERITIS and FEBRILE CONVULSIONS — 1 female aged 8 months.
5. NON-SPECIFIC GASTRO-ENTERITIS and UPPER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION — 1 male aged 3 years.
6. NON-SPECIFIC GASTRO-ENTERITIS and BRONCHO PNEUMONIA — 1 male aged 3 months.
7. LEFT BASAL PNEUMONIA — 1 female aged 5 years.
8. LYMPHOCYTIC MENINGITIS and URINARY TRACT INFECTION — 1 female aged 23 years.
9. VIRUS MENINGITIS — 1 male aged 23 years.
10. GLANDULAR FEVER — 1 female aged 18 years.
11. TONSILLITIS and ARTHRITIS OF THE ANKLE JOINTS — 1 male aged 35 years.
12. SUBACUTE BACTERIAL ENDOCARDITIS — 1 male aged 54 years.
13. UPPER RESPIRATORY TRACT INFECTION and RIGHT ACUTE BRONCHITIS — 1 male aged 3 months.
14. INFECTIVE HEPATITIS — 1 male aged 9 years.

TUBERCULOSIS

One case of respiratory tuberculosis was notified during 1971 and at the end of the year the position of the Register was as follows.

TOTAL CASES	PULMONARY			NON-PULMONARY		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
48	23	16	39	3	6	9

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Urban District of Leek

for the year ended 31st December, 1971

	Scarlet Fever		Whooping cough		Acute poliomyelitis				Measles (excluding rubella)		Diphtheria		Dysentery		Meningo-coccal infection	
					Paralytic		Non-paralytic									
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Numbers originally notified																
Total (All Ages)	3	—	4	6	—	—	—	—	4	2	—	—	2	4	1	—
Final numbers after correction																
Under 1 year			2												1	
1— years			1													
2— years														1		
3— years																
4— years	1			3												
5—9 "	2		1	3					4	1			1	1		
10—14 "																
15—24 "										1			1	1		
25 and over																
Age unknown																
Total (All Ages)	3	—	4	6	—	—	—	—	4	2	—	—	2	3	1	—
Numbers originally notified	Leptospirosis		Smallpox		Acute poliomyelitis				Enteric or Typhoid fever		Paratyphoid fever		Infective Jaundice		Food poisoning	
					Infective		Post-infectious									
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Total (All Ages)	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	1	2	3
Final numbers after correction																
Under 5 years															1	
5—14 years															1	
15—44 "					1								2	1		3
45—64 "																
65 and over																
Age unknown																
Total (All Ages)	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Number originally notified	Tuberculosis						Total of new cases coming to the knowledge of Medical Officer of Health otherwise than by formal notification		Other notifiable diseases		Original		Final			
	Respiratory		Meninges and C.N.S.		Other						M	F	M	F		
Total (All Ages)	1	1	—	—	—	—			Ophthalmia neonatorum	—	—	—	—			
Final numbers after correction									Anthrax	—	—	—	—			
Under 1 year							Male	Female								
1— year							—	—								
2—4 years																
5—9 "																
10—14 "																
15—19 "																
20—24 "																
25—34 "																
35—44 "	1															
45—54 "																
55—64 "																
65—74 "																
75 and over																
Age unknown																
Total (All Ages)	1	—	—	—	—	—										

† Specify Disease and Sex but not age

LEEK U.D. — INFECTIOUS DISEASES 1962-1971 (Confirmed Notifications)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Scarlet Fever	27	35	—	24	15	6	24	18	12	3
Whooping Cough	—	8	38	10	6	44	11	11	4	10
Measles	19	358	24	344	39	439	133	10	62	6
Acute Encephalitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Dysentery	38	28	15	3	6	1	—	1	—	5
*Infective Jaundice	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	2
†Puerperal Pyrexia	—	1	2	3	—	1	—	—	—	—
Encephalitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Typhoid Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Paratyphoid	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Meningitis	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Food Poisoning	1	2	2	1	1	—	6	2	1	—
Tuberculosis:										
Pulmonary	6	3	6	5	2	2	—	1	2	1
Non-Pulmonary	—	—	2	3	2	—	—	—	—	—

* Infective Jaundice made notifiable in 1968

† Not notifiable since 1968

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS

	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Population	19,120	19,140	19,100	19,210	19,180	19,150	19,340
No. of inhabited houses	6,931	6,937	7,015	7,086	7,199	7,289	7,321
No. of live births	262	264	280	305	313	292	272
Birth rate (crude)	13.71	13.79	14.7	15.88	16.3	15.2	14.1
No. of still births	—	5	2	2	1	4	2
Maternal mortality	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Infant mortality rate	11.48	30.31	32.14	19.67	29	10	22
Infant mortality (No. of deaths)	3	8	9	6	9	3	7
No. of deaths (all ages)	254	280	287	295	293	266	294
Death rate (crude)	13.28	14.6	15.0	15.36	15.3	13.9	15.2

Chief Public Health Inspector's Report

To the Chairman and Members of the Leek Urban District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In presenting my first annual report to you for 1970 I was pleased to express a sense of optimism that the agreed staffing increase would enable 1971 to be recorded as a year of significant progress in many aspects of our duties.

In the event the year's activities were dominated by continuing extensive work on petroleum installations and the lengthy absence through illness of the Additional Inspector, this situation being further aggravated by the failure to appoint the further Inspector until the end of October. The Department as a result was 50% under establishment for 3 months and 25% underestablished for 8 months.

Yet again, enforcement duties had, for the greatest part of the year, to take second place to carrying out routine work and dealing with the incoming demands upon the officers' time. Nevertheless the year's efforts were certainly not fruitless as may be seen from comment under the various heads later in this report.

The end of the year saw the completion of all the major works required at petroleum installations; and the two year summary given later will perhaps bring to Members' attention the severe impact these duties have had upon the time which would otherwise have been spent on public health work.

As also may be seen later there were quite significant reductions in some "on demand" duties. It was fortunate that this occurred, for during September and early October there were occasions on which it became quite impossible to deal with other than priorities, and only urgent ones at that.

It was therefore particularly pleasing that Mr. J. Clough was appointed and commenced his duties at the end of October; and with full staffing by the end of December, one is optimistic that 1972 will be a year in which a programme of progressive public health work can be achieved.

INSPECTIONS AND VISITS UNDER THE ACTS

Public Health Acts etc:

Complaints	330
Nuisances	281
Drainage	443
Keeping of Animals	30
Infectious Diseases, food poisoning etc.	117
Water Supplies	271
Dirty and/or Verminous premises	128
Pet Shops	3
Animal Boarding	4
Agricultural Premises	6
Scrap Metal Dealers	2
Theatre Licences	6
Caravans and Sites	42
Rodent Control (Inspectors Visits)	115
Miscellaneous	29
Informal Notices Served	40
Statutory Notices Served	2

Housing Acts:

Inspections for Representations	27
Revisits	176
Inspections — Searches	100
Improvement Grants — Standard	181
Improvement Grants — Discretionary	37
Qualification Certificates	14
Overcrowding	1
Multiple Occupation	6

Food and Drugs Acts etc:

Meat Inspection — Abattoir	513
Inspection of Abattoir	5
Fried Fish and Chip Shops	25
Ice Cream — Vehicles	31
Ice Cream — Registered Premises	22
Other Registered Premises	13
Other Food Premises	338
Unsound Food	83
Informal Notices/Letters	55

Cleansing:

Re Dustbins and Storage	52
Business Premises	15
Miscellaneous	20

Factories Acts:

Factories with power	37
Factories without power	13

Petroleum Spirit:

Inspections	654
Home Office Inquiries	1
Home Office Inspector's Visits and Inspections	4

Indoor Market:

Inspections	55
-------------	----

Street Market:	
Inspections	17
Clean Air Act 1956:	
Smoke Control Areas	13
Factories — boiler plant	88
— chimney heights	26
Noise:	
Investigation and assessment	69
Informal notices	3

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS ETC.

During the year some 240 complaints were received from various sources. Of these only some 4 were complaints of housing defects, reflecting the continuing trend of increasing owner occupation, the clearance of unfit houses, the improvement of older property and, perhaps, the willingness of tenants of comparatively low rental property to accept disrepair and dampness etc. as being tolerable provided the rent stays low.

The majority of complaints (125) arose from rat or mice infestations. None were major infestations, and a summary of the work carried out over the year shows that some 231 properties were inspected. The treatment of these showed that 97 had evidence of rat infestation and some 23 were troubled by mice. As a percentage of the total of all properties in the area this represents 1% and 0.3% infested properties respectively, which is a comparatively low figure, the national average for this type of area being respectively 2.2% and 0.6%. These figures demonstrate a 50% reduction of infestation rate as compared to 1969 and are, I believe, the result of more comprehensive treatment procedures which have been adopted.

As a continuing and concurrent policy the treatment of the sewers of the town was carried out in May and September. Some 275 and 218 manholes respectively were baited, checked and further treated where necessary.

Some 54 complaints regarding defective drainage were dealt with in the year in addition to drainage work required where inspections for other purposes were carried out. The rectification of drainage defects and investigating unrecorded drains and sewers put down 100 years ago can involve time and patience to a high degree; and in the year some 443 visits and inspections are recorded in respect of this work alone.

It is interesting to note that the overall complaint level dropped by 25% (of the 1970 figure), rat and mice complaints to a lesser degree and that drainage complaints although slightly higher in number, necessitated a level of inspection etc nearly 50% lower than in 1970.

During the year 169 water samples were submitted for bacteriological analysis.

It is the normal practice to submit a distribution sample (treated) from each of the two sources and a distribution mixed supply sample each week.

These samples are further supplemented by direct source samples (i.e. untreated) being taken from each source in order to give a better overall picture of the situation in the event of proven or suspected contamination

The results of these examinations indicates that during 1971 the distributed water supply was bacteriologically satisfactory. Difficulties with the installation of new chlorinating equipment at Pool End and with the inefficient equipment at Upperhulme resulted in a few unsatisfactory results (colony counts).

Chemical sampling was also carried out as was sampling for lead and other metals. All were satisfactory.

The condition of the water in the public baths was also kept under investigation. Some 72 samples were taken for bacteriological examination and a few were reported as unsatisfactory (colony counts). The control of the purity of baths water, attempting as it does to produce a water of the same purity as drinking water requires close supervision to vary and adjust the various dosing and treatment media, under continuously changing and often unpredictable situations.

With the everchanging variations in load (number of persons using) and associated contamination from contact with the bathers' bodies, including perspiration, saliva, urine etc. the main aims are to provide a clear water with sufficient free chlorine available to kill off all bacteria and destroy organic matter at the same time controlling the pH within a narrow range (7.5—8.0).

Investigation into reported unsatisfactory samples was undertaken with the full co-operation of the Baths Manager, in a continuing effort to maintain a satisfactory and safe water in the baths.

During the year the licensed caravan site came in for continuing attention but although facility conditions on the site were to the standards laid down in the Model Code and the licence conditions imposed, the manner of use of the site by both the licensee and the van occupiers left much to be desired.

Generally, the many duties and responsibilities under the Public Health Acts and closely allied legislation received prompt attention as did complaints as and when they came to our notice.

HOUSING ACTS

During the year some 5 houses were dealt with as unfit and Demolition Orders etc. were made. 12 vacated condemned houses were demolished. It is apparent that although only approximately 100 houses remain on the clearance programme last determined in 1964, the continuing neglect of many other houses since this time has resulted in them becoming unfit and substandard properties which should be cleared.

The Joliffe Street and Cornhill Street area was inspected and a public inquiry is to be held in early 1972.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

During the year a total of 41 applications for Grants were received and the following statistics are relevant.

(1) Standard

	Owner/ occupiers	Tenanted
1. Number of applications Received	36	Nil
Number of applications Approved	36	Nil
Number of applications Refused	Nil	Nil
2. Number of dwellings improved	36	Nil

3. Amount paid in grants	£7016.98
4. Average grant per house	£ 194.92

5. Amenities provided

(a) fixed bath	31
(b) shower	—
(c) wash-hand basin	31
(d) sink	—
(e) hot water supply (to any fittings)	31
(f) water closet (1) within dwelling	36
(2) accessible from dwelling	—

(2) Discretionary

	Owner/ occupiers	Tenanted
1. Number of applications received	3	2
2. Number of applications Approved	3	2
3. Number of applications Refused	Nil	Nil
4. Number of dwellings Improved	5	Nil

5. Amount paid in grants	£2225.25
6. Average grant per house	£445.05

It is estimated that there are some 900 or more older houses in the town which still do not have all the standard facilities (i.e. bath, wash hand basin, sink, hot and cold water, internal W.C.); and it is hoped that publicity campaigns will make a greater local impact than has resulted from previous efforts in this direction. There is a need for more active involvement in this work by the Department but events and staffing difficulties made this impossible during the year.

QUALIFICATION CERTIFICATES

During the year 11 applications were received, five Certificates being granted and three refused. Whether this procedure (enabling landlords to have the rents increased for property in good repair and with all facilities) will encourage the repair and improvement of tenant property remains to be seen. At the present time it is making little impression upon owners of tenanted properties in Leek.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS ETC.

Meat Inspection

The one hundred per cent detailed inspection of all animals slaughtered in the local abattoir involves some 12-14 hours per week of your Inspectors' time. The frequent visits necessary to the abattoir for the purpose interrupts the continuity of other duties which must, on many occasions, take second place to the statutory responsibility for ensuring that all carcasses are inspected and marked as having been inspected and found fit for human consumption.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	850	1	1	2999	1290
Number Not inspected	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci					
Whole carcasses condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	124	Nil	Nil	152	162
Tuberculosis only					
Whole carcasses condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	8
Cysticerci					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcasses submitted to refrigeration	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned ...	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

Unsound Food Surrendered or Condemned

	Tons	Cwts.	lbs.
1. Meat at Slaughterhouse	1	5	37
2. Meat at retail shops		1	10
3. Cooked meat and meat products			—
4. Canned meats			92
5. Other canned foods		1	32
6. Fish (fresh)		1	0
7. Frozen foods due to cabinet breakdown			58
8. Other Foods		1	74
Total :	1	11	79

During the year some five cases of foreign bodies in food were brought to our attention. In each instance a thorough investigation was carried out at the retail premises and pursued with the wholesaler and manufacturer. In no instance was the complainant prepared to be involved in legal proceedings.

A prosecution was taken under Section 2 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955 in respect of bacon, and a fine and costs totalling £50.00 was imposed.

Food Hygiene Regulations

The following numbers of the various classes of food premises are recorded:—

Butchers Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	14
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Catering Establishments	...	...	...	...	...	...	94
Confectioners	...	...	...	...	...	...	24
General Grocers	...	...	...	...	...	...	65
Greengrocers	...	...	...	...	...	...	12
Wet Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
Market Stalls	...	...	...	...	...	...	16
						Total	257

As and when possible, efforts are being made to ensure that premises comply with the relevant Regulations.

However, pressure of work in other directions has meant that this part of our duties has not received the attention which is necessary and it was impossible to make headway in 1971 with the backlog of outstanding work in food hygiene, although commencement of a programme of detailed inspection did begin at the end of the year when full staffing was available.

It is of deep concern to me that this very important aspect of our work is not being continuously pursued as it should; and it is a matter which will, of necessity, receive priority attention in 1972 consequent upon the appointment of the additional Inspector.

CLEANSING

A weekly collection of refuse is provided, 3 x 35 cu. yd. vehicle being used; disposal being by controlled tipping at Fowlchurch tip.

In the year some 1,600 loads were collected.

The new paper bailing building came into use in October 1970 and during 1971 a total of 698 tons of paper and board salvage were baled, realising an income of £7,575.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1961

PART I OF THE ACT

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes or provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspec- tions (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prose- cuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by local Authorities *	—	—	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	114	49	3	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority † Section 1, 2, 3, 4 (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total	114	49	3	—

* To prevent any differences between the lists kept respectively by the Local Authority and H.M. Inspectors of Factories of the numbers of factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Factories Act, 1937 are enforced by Local Authorities, it is requested that Local Authorities should compare their lists of factories with the lists kept by H.M. Inspectors of Factories.

† i.e. Electrical Stations (Section 103 (1), Institutions (Section 104) and sites of Building Operations and Works of Engineering Construction (Sections 107 and 108).

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found

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

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
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)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	Nil	Nil	Nil
(c) Not separate for sexes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total ...	3	3	Nil	Nil	Nil

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

(Sections 110 and 111)

Notifications were received under Section 110 (1) of a total of 54 outworkers employed in the making of wearing apparel. No action arose from these notifications.

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT 1963

Extracts from the Annual Report statistics statutorily required by, and submitted to, the Safety Health and Welfare Division of the Department of Employment, are shown below.

REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS

Class of Premises	Number of Premises newly registered during the year	Total Number of registered premises at end of year	Number of registered premises receiving one or more general inspections during the year
Offices	3	53	21
Retail Shops	4	129	56
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	Nil	4	Nil
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	Nil	13	4
Fuel Storage depots	Nil	4	Nil
Totals	7	203	81

NUMBER OF VISITS OF ALL KINDS (INCLUDING GENERAL INSPECTIONS) TO REGISTERED PREMISES — 88.

ANALYSIS BY WORKPLACE OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES AT END OF YEAR	
Class of workplace	Number of persons employed
Offices	833
Retail Shops	588
Wholesale Departments, Warehouses	48
Catering establishments open to the public	108
Canteens	18
Fuel Storage depots	10
Total	1605
Total Males	765
Total Females	840

Analysis of contraventions found:—

Section	Number of Contraventions found	
4	Cleanliness	2
6	Temperature	1
7	Ventilation	2
9	Sanitary conveniences	6
16	Floors, passage and stairs	7
19	Training of young persons working at dangerous machinery	1
24	First Aid	4
	Other matters	5
	Total	28

As will be seen, the level of inspection under this Act is low, and it is evident that with the constant change of use of premises only more regular inspection can bring our information up to date and reduce the number of contraventions. Eight years after the Act, structural and welfare deficiencies are still being found, which suggests that some employers are either ignorant of their responsibilities or unwilling to consider the welfare of their staff unless forced to do so.

Whilst 81 premises received a general inspection, the inability to follow up contraventions is clearly shown by only a total of 88 visits for all purposes.

As will be seen, the numbers of persons employed in premises coming under the provisions of the Act (1605) represents an equivalent of 8% of the total (all ages) population of the Urban area and approximately 16½% of employed persons in the area; a percentage sufficiently significant to warrant greater efforts on their behalf, and it is hoped that we shall be able to pursue the Act, on their behalf, to greater than hitherto.

PETROLEUM (REGULATION) ACTS 1928 and 1936

Work on installations continued throughout the year at a continuously high rate; and for the second year in succession can be said to have dominated our activities.

The following details will perhaps give some idea of the extent to which we were committed, having regard to the fact that all this work had not only to be supervised but also that direction on installation and procedures had to be given in detail in order to ensure satisfaction with the results achieved.

	1970	1971
Number and size of tanks infilled	14 (12 x 500 galls. 1 x 750 galls. 1 x 300 galls.)	8 (6 x 500 galls. 2 x 400 galls.)
Tank use changed	4	4
New tanks installed	—	6
Pumps renewed or dismantled	13	21
Partial or complete rewirings	13	18
Interceptors installed	2	8
Number of Site inspections	602	654

During the year one installation went out of use and the tanks were infilled and made safe.

The Home Office inquiry into the refusal to licence the installation at the Police Station was held on 18th January, 1971 and I think it not unreasonable to comment on the marked difference in the circumstantial pressures exerted upon, on the one hand, the local authority Petroleum Officer and on the other hand the Home Office in that it was not until 8 months later that the decision was notified.

In September an incident occurred involving an installation having a total storage of 10,000 gallons of petrol. Petrol vapours were found in an adjacent drain and were also affecting the public sewer and the cellar of a nearby house. After uplifting all petrol on site and thorough testing of the whole of the installation the faults found were rectified. This work took eleven days of continuous work, inquiry and investigation.

Whilst the end of the year saw the end of two years very hard work on petroleum it should be remembered that whilst re-inspections can now be reduced, there is a continuing degree of work which must be carried out; in 1972 some 14 tanks which have been in use for between 20 and 40 years have to be tested, together with their associated pipelines.

35 licences were approved for 1972, involving 70 storage tanks with a total capacity of 100,000 gallons; and some 2,150 gallons of petroleum mixtures are also stored under licence.

CLEAN AIR ACT

Domestic

The original Smoke Control Area continues to be infilled with the final stages of the housing development in the area. Only a comparatively small number of properties in the Area depend upon a supply of solid smokeless fuel, and the problem of enforcement is minimal.

Factories

The conversion or replacement over the years of hand fired coal burning installations has resulted in marked improvement in industrial pollution. Whilst automatic stokers are not, unfortunately, fault free and difficulties do at times arise, these are usually unavoidable and every effort is made to speedily rectify the situation and ensure efficient operating and consequent minimal smoke emission.

During the year a considerable amount of investigation and advice was given on visits to industrial boiler plant, as was the necessary investigation and assessment of chimney heights for new and extended plant.

NOISE

Complaints of all kinds have been received — barking dogs, road vehicles, factory noise, radios, ice cream chimes, practising boys' bands, church bells

Noise is sound which is undesired by the recipient and is clearly subjective, involving people and their feelings, its assessment being related to complex human values and environments.

People vary enormously in their susceptibility and adaptability to noise and each of us may be annoyed by one noise but not by another of similar characteristics.

Complaints are often related to the association or emotion a noise excites rather than to its actual intensity. Moderate noise is often psychological rather than physical in its effect.

A person living in an area having a relatively high ambient level of noise may well, if moving to a low ambient noise level area, complain of a noise nuisance in respect of an emitted noise subjecting him to a level lower than that in which he had been accustomed to live. The reverse is also very true and he may well be, in this latter case, the only complainant — the others are used to it and find no reason for complaint.

It may be of interest to record the difficulties and complexities met when investigating a complaint and assessing a situation, this being an actual case.

A factory puts machinery into use, the level of noise being 89dBA in the factory. The employees are used to this and scoff at the idea that an outside level of 58dBA is noisy. An adjacent house occupier, used to a quieter environment, finds this outside level impinges upon him in his house to an intolerable degree, and complains. It is considered that the emitted noise is a nuisance, the factory carry out certain works which they consider will reduce the external noise level. In fact, the unapproved works result in no recordable difference in noise level whatsoever but the complainant, having seen the work carried out, says that he believes an improvement to have resulted — purely a psychological reaction not based on fact.

It is personally believed that the levels of noise should be limited in relation to the planning development of an area in the same way as areas are drawn to permit development of differing classifications i.e. residential, commercial, light industry, heavy industry etc.; and that any production of noise which results in a noise level in excess of that permitted in a classified area should whatever its source location be capable of being dealt with summarily as an immediate and punishable offence, with the Courts having power to enforce immediate cessation of the use of the offending noise source. This is not to suggest the slow, piecemeal procedure of noise control areas, but that legislation apply reasonable limitations to all the varying classification levels use in area planning, town maps etc., and these to apply nationally at a certain date.

As with vehicle noise these levels would be reasonable initially so as to prevent further aggravation of the present unsatisfactory situation. Later these permitted levels could be progressively reduced, once the idea had sunk in that talking about noise is just more noise and that all levels of society have to contribute if any positive results are to be forthcoming.

GENERAL

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation of the support given to the work of the Department by the Members of the Health Committee and Council, and in particular by the Chairman of the Health Committee, Mr. K. V. Rushton, whose helpful advice during the year was of considerable value as was his understanding of our difficulties and of the attempts being made to further the accepted programme of work.

This year has had its share of difficulties because of staffing deficiencies and it would be remiss of me were I not to acknowledge the assistance and the efforts not only of the Inspectors but also of the staff generally. The duties they have performed and the contribution they have made to the functioning of the Department more than warrants recognition and an expression of appreciation, as does their involvement in the preparation and presentation of this Report.

R. GOUCHER

Chief Public Health Inspector

HILL BROS.
(LEEK) LTD.
