

[Report 1971] / Medical Officer of Health, Meriden R.D.C.

Contributors

Meriden (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1971

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RURAL DISTRICT OF MERIDEN

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1971





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*To the Chairman and Members of the
Meriden Rural District Council*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the state of the health of the Meriden Rural District for the year 1971.

A brief review of the Vital Statistics shows that the previously observed rapid growth in the size of the population has now come to an end. The rehousing of families into the District from the City of Birmingham is now virtually complete. During the year a National Census was carried out and the population was found to be 102,547.

The birth rate continues its upward trend to 25.0 per 1,000 population and is still higher than the National rate.

The downward trend in the death rate has, however, halted and a slight increase is shown on the previous year.

Epidemiologically, the year was without major incident and the health of the District was maintained at a satisfactory level. Although there was a slight increase in the total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year in comparison with the previous year, it is gratifying to note the reduction in the number, viewed over the last decade, particularly whilst bearing in mind the increase in population which has occurred in the same period of time.

Measles is once again the most prevalent of the notifiable communicable diseases, amounting to approximately three quarters of the total number. This is a matter of some concern, since an effective vaccine exists to afford protection from the disease. Regrettably parents have not yet fully accepted Measles vaccination for their children. If there were general acceptance and a high level of immunity against Measles were conferred upon the child population, this disease could virtually be eliminated. This has already occurred in the case of Diphtheria and Poliomyelitis and the contraction of these illnesses is now a rarity.

Although it is temptingly easy to take the absence of both Diphtheria and Poliomyelitis for granted the organisms causing those diseases continue to be present and capable of striking down the unfortunate unprotected child as the occasional incident bears witness. Moreover, behind the scenes there are many who contribute to the success of this aspect of preventive medicine. A great deal of the credit must go to our Health Visitor and medical personnel who spend much time discussing immunisation programmes and arranging for vaccination. The Health Visitors, particularly, who visit the homes of young children use their powers of persuasion to the utmost in encouraging mothers to bring their children to the clinics for vaccination.

Amongst the classified cases of death, heart disease and Cancer

predominate. It is disturbing to note that there has been an increase of approximately 30% in the number of deaths from malignant growths of the lung and bronchus in comparison with the previous year. The increase has occurred almost entirely in women. There can be few who are not now aware of the relationship which exists between smoking and diseases of the lung, particularly since each cigarette packet now carries a health warning. Cigarette smoking has sometimes been described as "suicide in full public view" and there is some merit in this description of a somewhat protracted *felo de se*.

The Meals on Wheels service has continued to expand. During the year 38,796 meals were prepared and delivered to elderly recipients in their own homes or to luncheon clubs where those more mobile were able to enjoy a nutritional meal and at the same time benefit from social contact. This Service is greatly appreciated and I should like to pay tribute to the ladies of the Womens Royal Voluntary Service who give so generously of their time and are prepared to brave the elements to deliver the meals.

In concluding the introduction of this report, which must necessarily be one of the last relating to the Rural District of Meriden, I must record my appreciation of the fullest co-operation which I have received at all times from other Chief Officers and their staffs. In the compilation of the report, many sections have been contributed by the Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr. Haines, to whom I am especially grateful. Those sections outline the work of the Public Health Inspectors but do not reveal the vast amount of education in health matters afforded to the public. To Mr. Stephenson, Engineer and Surveyor, I am much indebted for information relating to sewerage, sewage disposal and refuse collection.

J. E. PEARSON,
Medical Officer of Health.

Park Road,
COLESHILL.
October, 1972.

MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

1971

Chairman of the Council :

E. SAKNE

Vice-Chairman of the Council :

R. W. MEDDINGS

Clerk of the Council :

RAYMOND E. HALE, F.C.I.S.

Public Health Committee: 1971-72

Antrobus, W. E.	Elliman, P. T.	Rogers, H. G.
Austin, E.	Harper, A. R.	Samuels, K. J.
Duffy, P. J.	Kelsey, E. J. O.	Wallace, Mrs. D. V.
Earle, R. J.	Kelsey, H.	Watts, E. W.
Edwards, N. A.	Meddings, R. W.	Wheeler, V. A.

Housing Committee: 1971-72

Aylesford, Earl of	Cosgrove, M. J.	Martin, Mrs. L. E.
Burman, G. C.	Davies, W. H.	Sakne, E.
Clough, D.	Jackson, Mrs. V. L.	Welborn, Mrs. B.
Collins, P. R.	Kellie, P. F.	Wyldebore-Smith,
Cooper, S.	Marklew, R. A.	A. R.

**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF
AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1971**

Medical Officer of Health :

**J. E. PEARSON, M.B., B.S., B.Pharm., F.P.S.
M.F.C.M., M.R.C.S., D.P.H., D.B.A.**

(Also Area Medical Officer, North Western Area, Warwickshire
County Council).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health:

Vacant

Chief Public Health Inspector :

R. HAINES, M.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I.

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector :

G. B. STOKES, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors :

W. W. G. CUTTS, M.A.P.H.I.

R. L. TUDGE, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. (resigned 7.5.71)

B. H. HALES, M.A.P.H.I., D.M.A.

E. FOSTER, M.A.P.H.I., D.M.A.

S. C. GOULD, M.A.P.H.I.

D. WRIGHTING, M.A.P.H.I.

S. JOHNSTONE, B.Sc. (Env. Hlth), M.A.P.H.I., (appointed 1.6.71)

Principal Administrative Officer:

A. M. HAWKSLEY, D.M.A. (appointed 1.4.71)

Council Offices :

Council House,
Coleshill
Telephone : Coleshill 63141.

Office of the Medical Officer of Health:

Area Health Office,
Park Road,
Coleshill.
Telephone : Coleshill 62331.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS

Area

The area of the district during 1971 was 66,531 acres.

Population

Census 1961	57,250
Estimated Mid 1968	70,360
Estimated Mid 1969	89,840
Estimated Mid 1970	105,000
Census 1971	102,547
Estimated Mid 1971	102,670

The estimated mid year population is provided by the Registrar General.

General Statistics

No. of inhabited dwellings (Dec. 1971)	32,033
Rateable Value (1st April, 1971)	£4,046,574
Product of 1p Rate (1970/71)	£39,319

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	1,251	1,160	2,411
Illegitimate	71	83	154
Totals	1,322	1,243	2,565

Live birth rate: 25.0 per 1,000 population (crude rate), an increase over the rate of 22.70 for 1970.

After using the area compatibility factor of 0.80, the local adjusted birth rate becomes 20.0 per 1,000 population. This is higher than the comparable figure for England and Wales which is 16.00.

The 154 illegitimate births represented 6 per cent of all live births. The corresponding figure for England and Wales was 8 per cent.

Birth Rate

25.00 per 1,000 estimated population

1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
25.00	22.70	18.60	17.01	15.64	15.98	17.66	18.65	18.58	19.37

Still Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	12	12	24
Illegitimate	Nil	1	1
Totals	12	13	25

The number of still births per 1,000 total live and still births was 10.0. The rate for England and Wales was 12 per 1,000.

Still Birth Rate

10.00 per 1,000 total (live and still) births

1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
10.00	13.00	9.00	12.38	13.04	9.10	17.94	18.11	18.86	20.08

Deaths

The crude death rate for the district was 6.8 per 1,000 home population. When multiplied by the area compatibility factor of 1.55 the crude rate is converted to an adjusted rate of 10.5 per 1,000, a higher rate than 9.9 in 1970 but remaining below the comparable figure of 11.6 for England and Wales.

The pattern of causes of death continues unchanged with heart disease and cancer predominant. Cancer in various forms caused 149 deaths and of these 42 were due to lung cancer.

Accidents accounted for the deaths of 43 persons, of these 19 were caused by motor vehicles.

	Males	Females	Total
Deaths from all causes ..	380	323	703

Crude Death Rate

6.8 per 1,000 estimated population

1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
6.80	6.40	6.60	7.03	7.36	7.65	7.34	6.81	7.41	7.06

Deaths under one year of age.

Legitimate	54
Illegitimate	3

The mortality rate for all infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births was 22. The figure for England and Wales was 18.

The mortality rate for legitimate infants under one year of age per 1,000 legitimate live births was 22. The figure for England and Wales was 17.

The mortality rate for illegitimate infants under one year of age per 1,000 illegitimate live births was 19. The figure for England and Wales was 24.

Classified Causes of Death.

<i>Cause of Death</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Enteritis and other Diarrhoeal Diseases	—	1	1
Meningococcal Infection	2	—	2
Measles	—	1	1
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	3	—	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	—	2	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	11	5	16
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	13	13	26
Malignant Neoplasm, Larynx	1	—	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	32	10	42
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	—	20	20
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	—	2	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	3	—	3
Leukaemia	1	2	3
Other Malignant Neoplasms	11	23	34
Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	2	1	3
Diabetes Mellitus	1	6	7
Avitaminoses, etc.	1	1	2
Other Endocrine etc. Diseases	1	—	1
Anaemias	2	2	4
Mental Disorders	1	—	1
Meningitis	—	1	1
Other Diseases of Nervous System, etc.	6	1	7
Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	5	5	10
Hypertensive Disease	9	14	23
Ischaemic Heart Disease	92	55	147
Other Forms of Heart Disease	10	15	25
Cerebrovascular Disease	33	40	73
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	3	12	15
Pneumonia	29	24	53
Bronchitis and Emphysema	21	3	24
Asthma	2	2	4
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	6	4	10
Peptic Ulcer	6	1	7
Intestinal Obstruction and Hernia	2	2	4
Cirrhosis of Liver	2	2	4
Other Diseases of Digestive System	7	6	13
Nephritis and Nephrosis	2	2	4
Hyperplasia of Prostrate	2	—	2
Other Diseases, Genito-Urinary System	2	2	4
Other Complications of Pregnancy, etc.	—	1	1
Congenital Anomalies	18	6	24
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	4	2	6
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	11	3	14
Symptoms and Ill Defined conditions	3	3	6
Motor Vehicle Accidents	11	8	19
All other accidents	8	16	24
Suicide and Self-inflicted Injuries	1	2	3
All other external causes	—	2	2
Total all causes	380	323	703
Total all causes 1970	388	289	677

Deaths under four weeks of age.

Legitimate	37
Illegitimate	1

The neonatal mortality rate of infants under 4 weeks, per 1,000 live births was 15. The corresponding figure for England and Wales was 12.

Deaths under one week of age.

Legitimate	34
Illegitimate	1

The early neonatal mortality rate of infants under 1 week of age per 1,000 total live births was 14, and the number of still births and deaths of infants under 1 week of age combined, per 1,000 total live and still births, was 23. The corresponding figures for England and Wales were 10 and 22 respectively.

Comparative Births, Deaths and Population figures 1967—1971.

Year	Estimated Population	Total Live Births	Total Deaths	Net Increase	*Birth Rate	*Death Rate
1967	62,930	984	463	+ 521	13.4	11.2
1968	70,360	1197	495	+ 702	14.1	10.4
1969	89,840	1671	597	+1074	15.1	10.2
1970	105,000	2385	678	+1707	18.2	9.9
1971	102,670	2565	703	+1862	20.0	10.5

*Birth rate per 1,000 population after local adjustment.

*Death rate per 1,000 population after local adjustment.

Area Comparability Factors.

Differences in the age structure of population render invalid direct comparisons between areas of crude birth and death rates. To enable comparisons to be made area comparability factors have been devised to compensate for disparities such as a predominantly old or young population.

The factors for this district, mentioned earlier in this report, are, Births 0.80 and Deaths 1.55, which indicate that the age structure of the population is predominantly young.

SECTION B.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Total number of cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1971.

Notifiable Disease	Number of Cases Notified. at Ages — Years								Total cases re- moved to Hospital
	At all ages	Un- der 1	1-5	5-15	15-25	25-45	45-65	65 and up- w'ds.	
Measles	709	78	338	278	15	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	52	-	22	29	-	1	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Typhoid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	32	-	11	21	-	-	-	-	1
Malaria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	34	1	15	5	4	9	-	-	21
Acute Meningitis	19	1	2	6	3	7	-	-	19
Acute Poliomyelitis :									
Paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Infective Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	6	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	6	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	6
Other forms of Tuberculosis	3	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	2
Food Poisoning	11	-	2	1	4	-	2	2	8
Infective Hepatitis ..	46	-	11	14	5	14	2	-	3
Tetanus	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Totals	919	86	401	355	33	35	6	3	65

Total Cases of Infectious Disease notified during previous years.

Notifiable Disease	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
Measles	709	675	206	652	549	588	1,077	379	1,028	93
Whooping Cough	52	60	5	56	48	63	31	25	40	11
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Typhoid	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	32	16	10	35	11	16	28	25	15	15
Dysentery	34	18	86	98	31	72	22	106	90	158
Acute Meningitis	19	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Acute Poliomye- litis : Paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Infective Encephalitis	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	6	1	6	3	-	3	3	-	43	22
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	6	7	7	2	5	12	18	12	9	19
Other forms of Tuberculosis	3	2	5	4	2	4	4	2	4	3
Food Poisoning	11	42	35	4	18	3	-	-	8	9
Infective Hepatitis	46	33	38	37	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tetanus	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	919	857	398	904	692	781	1,243	571	1,349	433

General Comment

The total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during 1971 was 919 as compared with 857 for the previous year. Over three quarters of these notifications were for Measles.

Measles

The number of cases of Measles notified during the year was 709, which represents a small increase of 34 over the figure of 675 for 1970.

There can be no doubt that almost all of these cases could have been avoided if parents had presented their children for vaccination against Measles.

The acceptance rate of vaccination against Measles is, however, slowly improving. The following table gives the number of vaccinations carried out in 1971.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Measles in 1971.

Age	Vaccinations
0-1	620
2-5	943
6-15	124
Total	1,687

Whooping Cough

The number of cases reported decreased from 60 to 52.

The following table gives details of the number of children who have received protection against Whooping Cough. Combined antigens are generally used so that children protected against Whooping Cough will probably have received protection against Diphtheria and Tetanus in the same course of injections.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Whooping Cough in 1971.

	Age at Date of Injection					Total
	Under 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	
Primary	167	2,106	138	110	7	2,528
Reinforcing	-	89	41	141	11	282
Totals	167	2,195	179	251	18	2,810

Diphtheria

No cases of Diphtheria were notified.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Diphtheria during 1971.

	Age at date of injection					Total
	Under 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	
Primary	174	1,796	521	234	166	2,891
Reinforcing	—	51	75	1,833	420	2,379
Totals	174	1,847	596	2,067	586	5,270

Acute Poliomyelitis

Once again no cases were notified and the following table summarises the vaccination campaign.

Poliomyelitis Vaccinations completed during 1971.

	Age at date of Vaccination			Total
	0—1	2—5	6—15	
Vaccinated	1,933	624	400	2,957
Re-vaccinated.....	62	1,609	462	2,133
Totals	1,995	2,233	862	5,090

Smallpox

Table showing number of Persons vaccinated against Smallpox in 1971

	Age at date of Vaccination					Totals
	Under 1	1	2-4	5-14	15 or over	
Vaccinated	24	271	753	82	16	1,146
Re-Vaccinated ..	—	—	8	102	—	110
Totals	24	271	761	184	16	1,256

Dysentery

Compared with recent years the total number of 34 cases of Dysentery notified during 1971 was low. Of these 34 cases 16 occurred in a small outbreak in an institution, the remaining cases were distributed sporadically throughout the District.

Food Poisoning

During 1971 the number of cases of Food Poisoning notified was 11. This figure represents a decrease of 35 from the previous year. The cases notified were spread throughout the District.

Infective Hepatitis

A total number of 46 cases of Infective Hepatitis were notified during 1971, this represented a small increase in comparison with 33 in 1970.

Tuberculosis

The following table shows that there was a slight increase in both pulmonary and non-pulmonary cases of Tuberculosis remaining on the register at the end of 1971.

Total number of Tuberculous persons remaining on Register at 31st December, 1971

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F
1. Total on register at 31st December, 1970	215	147	23	30
2. New Cases	2	4	2	1
3. Inward Transfers	6	2	1	—
4. Removals	5	7	—	—
5. Total on register at 31st December, 1971	218	146	26	31

Both existing and new cases of Tuberculosis are subject to regular supervision. The following table gives details of the age and sex distribution of new cases notified during 1971.

Age and Sex Distribution of New Cases Notified during 1971

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards ..	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	2	4	2	1	—	—	—	—

Routine milk samples are taken by the County Health Department in the District and biologically examined for Tuberculosis. During 1971, 9 samples of tuberculin tested milk were taken, and all proved to be satisfactory.

SECTION C.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

National Assistance Act 1948.

Patients assessed during the year as requiring admission to chronic sick or residential accommodation were admitted appropriately on a voluntary basis. In no instance was statutory action by me necessary for compulsory removal under Section 47 of this Act.

Sewerage.

The scheme for sewerage Station Road, Coleshill has been completed and at the end of the year a total of 14 factory properties had connected. A scheme for sewerage 40 properties in Bennetts

Road North, Corley, has been substantially completed. A contract to provide sewers in Blackfirs Lane, Bickenhill Lane and Bickenhill Road, Marston Green has been commenced. When completed this scheme will serve 58 properties.

Public conveniences have been completed in Church Lane, Fillongley.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

The various refuse collection services have operated satisfactorily during the year.

Further progress was made in the replacement of pail closets and since 1960 a total of 472 closets have been replaced.

Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector

GENERAL INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Inspections and visits made :

Public Health

Nuisances, general	1,399
Nuisances, noise	83
Sewers, drains and sanitary conveniences ..	509
Ditches and water courses	122
Water supplies	239
Infectious diseases	398
Filthy and verminous premises	20
Infestation (insects)	240
Moveable dwellings other than caravans ..	19

Caravan Sites

Inspections and observations	378
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Housing

Houses inspected and recorded	10
Other visits	1,477
Overcrowding	4

Food and Drugs

Food premises including registered premises	1,018
Food stalls and vehicles	69
Bakehouses	9
Slaughterhouses premises	154
Food examination including meat at slaughter- houses	1,314
Investigations of complaints about food....	164

Air Pollution

Houses visited for smoke control areas	783
Other inspections and visits	934
Enforcement visits:	
Houses	21
Industrial premises	23

Factories

Power	100
Non-power	7
Other registered premises	8

Offices and Shops

Premises inspected and recorded	71
Re-inspections	370
Other visits	81

Rodent Control

Premises inspected, excluding visits by rodent operator	111
--	-----

Burial of the Dead	7
Animal Boarding Establishments	14
Miscellaneous	1,275
	<hr/>
	11,431
	<hr/>

Nuisances

Nuisances reported and dealt with totalled 591, including 39 relating specifically to noise and 130 involving smoke or other forms of air pollution. There were no unusual features. A notice under Section 35 of the Public Health Act, 1936, served on an occupier requiring him to cleanse a filthy house, was not complied with and the Council employed a contractor to do the work in default. The growing practice of trespassing on the Council's refuse tip and sorting and taking away deposited materials contrary to Section 76 of the Public Health Act 1936, led to proceedings being authorised against 8 persons. The cases had not been heard by the end of the year.

Complaints

The total of 1,899 complaints received and investigated compares with 1,611 in the previous year and 1,583 in the year 1969. The principal matters complained of were nuisances generally, housing defects, unfit food and infestations.

Enforcement

Informal notices	406
Statutory notices	21
Legal proceedings	2

HOUSING

Register of Applications for Council Houses

The register is revised and brought up to date each year and continues to be maintained selectively. Applications are accepted only from persons considered to have a proper claim, based mainly on actual need of accommodation and taking some account of other factors, such as length of residence in the district. This policy ensures that the housing needs of the district are not distorted by the inclusion in the waiting list of people who have adequate accommodation but would prefer one of the Council's houses. The housing register, supplemented by other enquiries and by information obtained in the course of other departmental activity, thus provides a reliable index of the true housing requirements of the district.

Even after the various exclusions have been applied, the degree of need varies considerably amongst the registered applicants and

is generally much reduced compared with earlier, more difficult years. The following table, which gives the position numerically, does not show this change of emphasis, which has appeared only in the past two years or so. Waiting times are now relatively short in most cases and viewing the position generally it can be claimed that the housing problems of the district have very largely been overcome. At the same time it will be noted that after letting 141 houses the total number of "live" applications was reduced by only 44, indicating the need for a continuing modest programme of new building. Casual vacancies alone, at the rate of 50 or 60 a year, are not sufficient, and no account has yet been taken of likely "second generation" applications from the newly-occupied Chelmsley Wood estate.

Number of applications on register at end of year :	
General needs	271
Slum clearance	
General	5
Old people	12
Agricultural (tied to industry)	4
Old people (other than slum clearance)	84
	<hr/>
	376
	<hr/>
Comparative total at end of 1970.....	420
 Allocations of Tenancies	
General needs	92
General needs (old people)	40
Slum clearance.....	2
Slum clearance (old people)	5
Agricultural (tied to industry)	-
Other priorities, including Council staff	2
	<hr/>
	141
	<hr/>
 Exchanges allowed	
Transfers to other houses	19
Exchanges proposed privately between tenants of Council houses	4
Exchanges between Council tenants and others, including tenants of other local authorities	3
	<hr/>
	26
	<hr/>

Number of houses available for letting :

<i>Year</i>	<i>Building Completions</i>	<i>Casual Vacancies</i>	<i>Total</i>
1971	84	57	141
1970	16	63	79
1969	86	70	156
1968	48	53	101
1967	108	58	166

SLUM CLEARANCE**Clearance Areas**

Number of orders made	—
Number of houses affected	—
Number of orders confirmed	—
Number of houses demolished	—

Single houses

Number of demolition orders made	—
Number of houses demolished	9
Number of undertakings accepted	—
Number of closing orders made	—

Houses made fit—

by owners, voluntarily	3
by owners, after formal notices	—
by Council, in default of owners	—

Overcrowding

The position at the end of the year was as follows:

Number of private houses known to be overcrowded	2
Number of Council houses known to be overcrowded	2
Number of families involved	4
Number of persons involved	40
Cases relieved during year by Council	—
Cases relieved during year otherwise	—

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Nil

The Council's programme, prepared and submitted early in 1970 in response to circular 92/69, proposed dealing with 146 unfit houses by way of individual orders during the four years 1970 to 1973. Only 16 orders were made in 1970 and none in 1971, whilst in the same two years 11 houses were returned as having been made fit voluntarily by owners. The latter figure relates only to houses in

respect of which formal action was begun. It excludes a significant number made fit or demolished by owners without Council compulsion. The effective progress towards the elimination of unfit houses is more accurately shown in the following table:

Houses demolished in compliance with orders	16
Houses demolished voluntarily by owners	9
Houses improved or converted without formal Council intervention	31
Houses vacant, awaiting improvement or clearance and redevelopment of sites	12
	68

WATER SUPPLIES

Source of public supplies

Public supplies are provided by four statutory water undertakings, viz: Birmingham Water Department, Coventry Water Undertaking, North-east Warwickshire Water Board and the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company. All supplies have been satisfactorily maintained and there is no problem of plumbo-solvency. Supervision of the quality of public supplies is left largely in the hands of the statutory undertakings, which take their own samples and supply copies of the results to the district council. Three casual samples taken by public health inspectors from the mains were satisfactory.

Extent of supplies

The usual tabular presentation of the position in the separate parishes could not be given for 1970, because of changes in parish boundaries and the creation of two new parishes. The detailed information is now available but it may suffice to refer instead to the houses still without main supplies available, amounting in total to only 28 in the whole of the district. They are all in relatively isolated positions. Attempts are being made to devise a viable scheme for laying mains to six of them, at Hollyberry End, Meriden, where there are distribution difficulties due to the high levels of the houses in relation to the available reservoir.

Further progress was made during 1971 by the completion of the following new mains, all of which were ordered the previous year:

- (1) Marsh Farm, Ryton End, Barston:
383 yards of 4" and 317 yards of 1½" main, to supply one house; estimated cost £2,135.

- (2) Washbrook Lane, Allesley:
350 yards of 4" main to supply two houses; estimated cost £1,300.
- (3) Birmingham Road, Kenilworth (parish of Balsall):
500 yards of 4" main to supply one house; estimated cost £1,800.
- (4) Cornets End Lane, Meriden (parish of Berkswell):
760 yards of 4" main to supply one house; estimated cost £2,515.
- (5) Kinwalsey, Meriden:
900 yards of 4" and 400 yards of 2" main to supply 8 houses; estimated cost £4,100.

Connections to water mains

Attention is being given to houses which have a water main available but have not been connected. In some of these cases, long and relatively costly private services are involved, and where the work has to be done in default, only £60 can be recovered from the owner, any excess having to be borne by the Council. Provision for such expenditure is made in the annual estimates.

Aircraft water supplies

The fitness for drinking purposes of water contained in the tanks of aircraft operating from Birmingham (Elmdon) airport was again checked by casual sampling. Unsatisfactory results in two cases were referred to the aircraft operators.

SUPERVISION OF FOOD HANDLING

Licensing of slaughtermen

Licences have been issued to thirty-six slaughtermen.

Slaughterhouses and meat inspection

There are still six licensed slaughterhouses in the district. Generally they are so maintained as to comply with legal standards, although various minor matters had to be referred to the licensees for attention. The meat inspection service was fully maintained. Particulars of the inspections and condemnations are given in the tables which follow.

Meat Inspection

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number inspected	3,191	227	1,197	21,041	9,832
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	3	2	10	37	29
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	871	147	15	5,085	2,606
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysti- cerci	27.37	65.64	2.09	24.34	26.80
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	—	—	—	—	26
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with tuberculosis	—	—	—	—	0.27
<i>Cysticercosis</i>					
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigera- tion	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

Condemnations of unfit food

		Tuberculosis tons. cwts. lbs.			All other diseases and conditions tons. cwts. lbs.		
Meat							
Cattle (excluding cows)							
	Carcase meat	—	—	—	—	15	59
	Offals	—	—	—	3	10	33
Cows							
	Carcase meat	—	—	—	—	8	67
	Offals	—	—	—	—	13	11
Sheep							
	Carcase meat	—	—	—	—	15	19
	Offals	—	—	—	3	10	9
Pigs							
	Carcase meat	—	2	70	1	10	28
	Offals	—	—	—	1	17	83
Calves							
	Carcase meat	—	—	—	—	7	55
	Offals	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals		2 70			13 8 28		

One case of suspected foot and mouth disease and one of suspected anthrax appeared in the course of routine meat inspection and were reported to the local veterinary officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, who did not confirm the diseases but accepted that the suspicions were justified.

Complaints relating to food

Forty-five complaints were received and investigated, compared with 19 in the year 1970. They included 16 allegations of mould growth on food, 13 instances of foreign matter in food and 2 relating to dirty milk bottles. The remainder involved various forms of unfitness. Four of the complaints were not upheld. Four others originated outside the Council's district and were referred to the respective local authorities, one which took legal action and secured penalties in respect of dirty milk bottles. All the other complaints were dealt with informally, the circumstances seeming not to necessitate court proceedings. Most of the examples of mouldy food arose from faulty stock rotation, for which warnings were given and apparently heeded, there having been no repetition.

Poultry inspection

The report for the year 1970 showed little change from the position in 1969, when only four small slaughtering establishments were operating and the total kill was about 16,000 birds a year. The largest of the four operators has now ceased. Slaughtering by the other three is on such a small scale as to be insignificant and only casual visits are therefore paid: they totalled 35 during the year and are included in the figure of food inspection visits appearing in the table on page 20 under the heading "Food and Drugs".

Disposal of condemned food

The Council's arrangements for collecting and destroying condemned meat from slaughterhouses were described in the report for 1969. They were interrupted for some months during 1971 when the destructor was unexpectedly closed for major repairs. During that time it was necessary to revert to the former practice of disposal to a private processor. This temporary arrangement continued beyond the end of 1971.

Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960

The following is a classified list of premises in the district to which these Regulations apply:

Category	Number inspected and recorded	Number complying with Regulation 16*	Number to which Regulation 19† applies	Number complying with Regulation 19
Grocery	74	74	74	74
Grocery and General (not exclusively food) ..	48	48	48	48
Bread and cakes	9	9	9	9
Sweets and confectionery ..	43	43	42	42
Greengrocery	32	32	32	32
Butchery	37	37	37	37
Fish, wet and/or fried ..	9	9	9	9
Restaurants, Cafes, etc. ..	53	52	53	53
Hotels and Licensed Premises	96	92	89	89
Ice-cream (incidental to trades other than food)	7	7	7	7
Industrial Catering ..	33	33	33	33
Bakehouses	5	5	5	5
School Kitchens	60	60	60	60
	506	501	498	498

* Regulation 16 requires the provision of wash-hand basins for the use of food personnel.

† Regulation 19 requires the provision of sinks for washing food and equipment where open food is handled.

Registered food premises

The following premises are registered under section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955:

Manufacture and sale of ice-cream	3
Sale only of ice-cream	170
Manufacture of sausage and/or cooked meat	17
Fish frying.....	9

Inspection of food premises

Visits to food premises, other than slaughterhouses, totalled 1,096, compared with 984 the previous year. The number of defects and contraventions reported and dealt with increased from 561 in 1970 to 908 but were of a minor character. Despite the large number of infringements, the overall standard of hygiene remained fairly high and the contraventions reported were readily rectified on request. Consequently the need for legal proceedings did not arise. It does, however, seem likely that without constant supervision by the public health inspectors, conditions would quickly deteriorate. The contraventions dealt with are summarised in the following table:

Defects of premises and ineffective maintenance	393
Defective or inadequate equipment	123
Unhygienic practices	349
Contraventions involving food vehicles	43
	<hr/>
	908
	<hr/>

Milk and Dairies

The following are registered as distributors of milk:

Retail dairymen having premises in the district	26
Shopkeepers selling bottled milk	65
	<hr/>
	91
	<hr/>

CONTROL OF AIR POLLUTION

Smoke control orders

Further progress was made with the Council's programme. Smoke Control Order No. 5 was confirmed and made operative as from the 1st December, 1971 in respect of the Bradford Ward of Castle Bromwich. Meanwhile, preparatory work had been proceeding for order No. 6, affecting Marston Green Ward in the parish of Bickenhill, and this order was submitted for approval.

The emission of smoke from domestic firegrates in smoke control areas still occurs from time to time, due to the use of unauthorised fuels. Sixteen written warnings about offences of this type were given during the year. Such contraventions are easily detected, the smoke emissions being quite conspicuous in an otherwise clean atmosphere.

Measurement of pollution

Results obtained from instruments measuring air pollution at sites around the Hams Hall generating stations of the Central Electricity Generating Board are given below for the past seven years. Column 2 shows the amount of deposited solid matter in milligrammes per square metre per month. The sulphur dioxide figures in column 3 are expressed in empirical units.

1 Year	2 Total solid matter	3 Sulphur dioxide
1965	126	1.45
1966	148	1.32
1967	123	1.33
1968	129	1.29
1969	135	1.09
1970	130	0.93
1971	121	0.73
Average of 7 years	130	1.16

The figure of deposited solids for 1971, the least in 7 years is one of the lowest recorded. The conversion of Hams Hall "C" station to firing by natural gas during 1971 may have some significance in this respect although it is too early to draw firm conclusions. Sulphur pollution has been remarkably consistent over many years, e.g. the average for the years 1949 to 1960 was 1.06, compared with the average of 1.16 for the seven years shown in the table above. Again the reduction in 1971 may be related to the change of fuel at "C" station. A sustained increase during the years 1965 to 1968 corresponds with a period in which gas was made by the Lurgi process at the West Midlands Gas Board's Coleshill works nearby: This plant included a sulphur recovery process and was claimed not to emit sulphur to the air.

Proposed sludge-burning plant

A proposal by the Upper Tame Main Drainage Authority to build and operate at its Coleshill works a large plant for burning sewage sludge was considered in relation to possible air pollution. The Council needed an assurance that the best practicable means would be adopted to minimise the emission of smoke and grit and to avoid nuisance from smell and noise. The process, developed abroad, was unfamiliar and only one similar plant was known to be operating in this country, at Sheffield. The chief and deputy chief inspectors visited the Sheffield plant and later studied a comparable installation in Switzerland. As a result of the experience thus gained, the Council asked for material modifications in the design.

The applicant Authority ultimately agreed and the proposal in its amended form was then given planning permission. The height of the proposed chimney was approved under section 6 of the Clean Air Act 1968, and the proposed installation of three furnaces was approved under section 3(1) of the Act and section 3(3) of the Clean Air Act 1956, subject to conditions.

CARAVAN SITES

At the end of 1971, 5 permanent and 17 temporary sites were licensed, permitting respectively 118 and 105 caravans. All the sites are maintained in a generally satisfactory condition although the problem of drainage (referred to in the 1970 report) at the large site at Meriden remains.

A proposal to establish a privately-owned and operated site for gipsies at Bickenhill was initially refused planning permission, which however was granted by the Minister on appeal. The site had not been developed by the end of 1971.

Legal proceedings were taken in respect of the use of land in the parish of Balsall for caravans without a licence. An absolute discharge was granted on a plea of mitigating circumstances but costs of £20 were awarded the Council. Another case involving the use of unlicensed land for caravans could not proceed because the defendant had left the country. Several minor contraventions were dealt with informally.

PEST CONTROL AND MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

The following table records the work done in rodent control and other manual services:

Number of visits by rodent operators	2,068
Premises found to be infested with rats and/or mice and subsequently treated—	
Domestic	522
Industrial and commercial	153
Sewage works	10
Drains examined and tested	252
Insect and other infestations dealt with	450
Collection and disposal of unfit food (visits)	241

Reference was made in the report for the year 1969 to the reappearance of bed bugs in the district after apparent freedom from them for many years. An increased number of cases was recorded in 1970. The position worsened somewhat in 1971: 81 cases were reported and dealt with and they included some reinfestations. There is no obvious explanation. The pests seemingly affect clean households as often as the not-so-clean and it is rarely possible to trace a source of infestation. Chemical treatment is nearly always effective but householders are sometimes slow to report infestations and do not always recognise it. Indeed a few have seemed unaware of it, which makes eradication so much more difficult.

MORTUARY

The Council's mortuary at Coleshill was substantially reconstructed and extended during 1971 and additional refrigerated storage space was provided. Facilities generally were improved and the premises, although not ideal, are adequate for the present and foreseeable needs of the district.

Burial of the Dead

Two bodies were buried by the Council, as required by section 50 of the National Assistance Act, 1948, the relatives having claimed inability to pay the funeral expenses.

OFFICES AND SHOPS

Registrations and inspections under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963, are summarised in the following table:

Class of premises	Premises Registered during year	Total registered premises at end of year	General Inspections during year
Offices	19	121	68
Retail shops	51	321	207
Wholesale shops, warehouses	4	11	9
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	2	63	51
Fuel storage depots	—	2	2
Totals	76	518	337

The total number of inspections and visits for all purposes was 522. Contraventions reported totalled 381, which included 80 cases of insufficient first-aid equipment and 76 of failure to provide thermometers in workrooms. Informal action was considered to be sufficient in all cases.

Analysis by workplace of persons employed in registered premises:

Class of Workplace	Number of persons employed
Offices	872
Retail shops	1,518
Wholesale departments, warehouses	77
Catering establishments open to the public	833
Canteens	25
Fuel storage depots	6
Total	3,331
Total Males	1,448
Total Females	1,883

FACTORIES

Inspections made

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	—	7	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	163	100	31	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	8	8	1	—
Total ..	171	115	32	—

Defects found

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) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	1	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7) :—					
(a) Insufficient ..	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	18	15	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences ..	—	—	—	—	—
Total ..	19	15	—	—	—

Outworkers

Nature of Work (1)	Section 133			Section 134		
	No. of outworkers in August list required by Section 133(1) (c) (2)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (3)	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists (4)	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises (5)	Notices served (6)	Prosecutions (7)
Wearing apparel making etc.	1	—	—	—	—	—
File making	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carding, etc., of buttons, etc.	3	—	—	—	—	—
Total ..	5	—	—	—	—	—

STAFF

The rapid increase in the population of the district in recent years has created scope for much additional work. Experience confirms that new communities in modern houses make demands on the public health inspectorate which (with the obvious exception of slum clearance) are as great as those arising from the older established towns and villages. The accepted ratio of inspectors to population would justify a minimum of eleven inspectors at present. The establishment remains at eight, no expansion having been suggested because of impending local government changes. Indeed there is now a vacancy: a very experienced, senior district inspector resigned in May and was replaced in July by the promotion of a newly-qualified inspector, who left shortly after the end of 1971 and is not being replaced.

Against this background of depleted staff, some curtailment of activity is unavoidable, but it has been found possible to continue a limited amount of public relations work, including lectures and talks to various local organisations and in schools.



