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Prudhoe Urban District Council.

County of Northumberland,



ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER

OF HEALTH

AND

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

For the Year 1953.



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County of Northumberland.

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For the Year 1953.

HEALTH COMMITTEE.



Chairman : Councillor H. PEART, J.P.

Members : Councillors J. BELL.
Dr. C. R. DAVISON.
Mrs. P. GRANGE.
T. PEEL.
Ald. Rev. R. E. ROBSON, J.P.
S. RUTHERFORD.
Mrs. E. E. STOKOE.
J. L. STOKOE.



OFFICERS OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH :

MADGE HOPPER, M.B., B.S., B.HY., D.P.H.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR :

W. G. TWEDDLE, M.R.S.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.S.E.

CLERK AND SHORTHAND-TYPIST : Miss J. GRAY.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

For the Year Ended 31st December, 1953.

To the Chairman and Members of the Prudhoe Urban District Council :

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report upon the vital statistics and health of the district for the year ended 31st December, 1953.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	3,889
Population (Registrar General's estimated mid-year Home Population)	9,681
Inhabited Houses	2,725

The main occupations in the area are Coal Mining and Chemical Works.

The district consists of the following Parishes :—

Prudhoe	1,457.4 acres.
Prudhoe Castle	645.0 acres.
Eltringham	355.7 acres.
Mickley	1,430.6 acres.

The Registrar General's estimate of population shows an increase of 287 on the 1952 figure from 9,394 to 9,681 in 1953. This is the highest population ever shown for the Urban District and represents a 3.5% increase on the 1952 figure.

BIRTHS.

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	76	69	145
Illegitimate	3	—	3
	79	69	148

There was a further slight increase in the birth rate to 14.67 (figure corrected for age and sex distribution) per 1,000 population. The comparable rate for England and Wales was 15.5 per 1,000 population.

The uncorrected birth rate was 15.2 per 1,000 population compared with a rate of 14.05 per 1,000 population in 1952 and 13.3 in 1951.

The number of illegitimate births decreased by one in 1953.

The total number of births was 148 in 1953 and 132 in 1952.

The still birth rate was 0.20 per 1,000 population in 1953 and 0.31 in 1952. The still birth rate for England and Wales was 0.35 per 1,000 population in 1953. There has been a steady decline in the number of stillbirths during the last few years from 5 in 1950, 6 in 1951, 3 in 1952 to 2 in 1953.

Still Births.

	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	1	—	1
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	—	2
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

GENERAL DEATH RATE.

The total number of deaths registered in 1953 was 105. From the 1st January, 1953, due to a change in the Registrar General's method of transferring deaths in Mental Hospitals and Hospitals for the Chronic Sick, those occurring in the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital were no longer transferable but assigned to this district.

During 1953, there were 16 deaths at the Hospital.

There was a slight decrease in the total number of deaths registered in the Urban District (other than those occurring in the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital) to 89 in 1953 from 91 in 1952 and 88 in 1951.

If the institutional deaths had been excluded, this would have given a rate of 9.1 per 1,000 population compared with the rate of 9.6 per 1,000 population in 1952 and 9.2 in 1951.

The total death rate (corrected for age and sex distribution) was 12.5 per 1,000 population compared with 11.4 for England and Wales in 1953.

Natural Increase of Population.

The number of births in excess of deaths (other than the non-transferable hospital ones) was 59 during 1953; it was 41 in 1952 and 38 in 1951.

The chief causes of death were as follows :—

	Male	Female
Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	—
Tuberculosis, other	1 (1)	—
Syphilitic disease	—	1
Diphtheria	—	—
Whooping Cough	—	—
Meningococcal infections	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis	—	—
Measles	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases	1	—
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	1	—
Malignant, neoplasm, breast	—	2
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	—	2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	2	6
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	—	—
Diabetes	—	—
Vascular lesions of nervous system	7	3
Coronary disease, angina	13 (1)	4
Hypertension with heart disease	—	—
Other heart disease	6	12 (4)
Other circulatory disease	1	3
Influenza	1	—
Pneumonia	4 (3)	4 (2)
Bronchitis	1	2
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	—
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	1
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	—	2
Hyperplasia of prostate	3	—
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	1
Congenital malformations	—	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	4 (4)	4 (1)
Motor vehicle accidents	1	—
All other accidents	3	1
Suicide	—	1
Homicide and operations of war	—	—
	<hr/> 53 (9)	<hr/> 52 (7)

Figures in brackets denote Hospital deaths.

Individual Causes of Death.

There was an increase in the number of deaths classified as due to "Heart and Circulatory Disease," generally from 24 in 1952 to 34 in 1953. In addition, 5 deaths at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital were classed under this heading.

Deaths from "Malignant Neoplasm" showed a welcome decrease to 15 in 1953 from 23 in 1952. Those from "Malignant Neoplasm,

stomach" decreased by 5, and those classified as due to "Malignant Neoplasm of other sites" by 7. Deaths from "Malignant Neoplasm, breast and uterus" increased by 4. There was one death from "Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus" in both 1953 and 1952.

The number of deaths from respiratory diseases generally showed an apparent increase to 12 in 1953 from 9 in 1952 but 5 of these occurred at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital.

There was one death from "Influenza" in 1953; none in 1952.

Deaths from "Ulcer of stomach and duodenum" numbered 2 in 1953, whereas in 1952 there were no deaths registered from this cause.

In both 1953 and 1952 there was one death from a "Motor vehicle accident" but in 1953, the number of deaths classified as due to "All other accidents" increased to 4 from one in 1952. One of these deaths was due to shock and fracture, following a fall at home of an old lady of 83 years; one to a colliery accident; one, the late result of a former accident; and one was due to drowning in the River Tyne.

There was one death from "Suicide" in 1953.

Maternal Mortality.

One death from maternal causes was registered in 1953. No deaths under this heading had been registered for the previous five years. The maternal mortality rate for the district was 6.6 per 1,000 total live and still births in 1953 and that for England and Wales was 0.76.

Infant Mortality.

During 1953, there was one death of an infant during the first year of life, compared with 4 in 1952, 6 in 1951, 7 in 1950 and 8 in 1949.

This death occurred a few hours after birth and was due to "Extreme prematurity."

The infant mortality rate for the Urban District in 1953 was 6.7 per 1,000 live births compared with the rate of 26.8 per 1,000 live births for the country generally and the rate of 30.3 per 1,000 live births for this district in 1952.

This is a dramatic fall and worthy of note. It is the first time that the infant mortality rate for Prudhoe has fallen below that of the country and in 1953, it was approximately a quarter of the rate for England and Wales. When one considers that in 1945, the infant mortality rate for Prudhoe was 67.6 per 1,000 live births and that of the country 46.0, it will be realised that, if that rate had continued at the same level in this district, an additional eight or nine children under 1 year of age would have died in each successive year.

The introduction and use of the antibiotics and sulphonamide drugs has in recent years practically wiped out infection as a cause of infant mortality but the "hard core" of prematurity and congenital defects has remained. Ever improving ante-natal care, the increasingly meticulous treatment of premature infants and research into the causes of congenital defects appears to be, at last, beginning to diminish this "hard core."

Of course, the figures involved in this district are small and one death causes a big difference in the rate. Even though the rate may rise a little in future years, this low rate for 1953 is an achievement and it is hoped that it will continue.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Extreme prematurity (28 weeks) ..	Female	6 hours.
	Total ..	<u>1 death</u>

**TABLE OF DEATH AND BIRTH RATES
COMPARED WITH ENGLAND AND WALES.**

Year	General Death Rate per 1,000 Population		Infant Mortality Rate		Birth Rate per 1,000 Population	
	Prudhoe	England & Wales	Prudhoe	England & Wales	Prudhoe	England & Wales
1945	8.9	11.4	67.6	46.0	15.3	16.10
1946	10.16	11.5	60.8	43.0	15.8	19.1
1947	10.1	12.0	60.24	41.0	17.95	20.5
1948	9.2	10.8	51.7	34.0	18.73	17.9
1949	9.5	11.7	52.9	32.0	16.16	16.7
1950	10.2	11.6	51.8	29.8	14.23	15.8
1951	9.2	12.5	47.6	29.6	13.3	15.5
1952	9.6	11.3	30.3	27.6	14.05	15.3
1953	12.5	11.4	6.7	26.8	14.67	15.5

INFECTIOUS DISEASES. PREVALENCE AND CONTROL.

TUBERCULOSIS.

There were 2 deaths (1 pulmonary and 1 non-pulmonary) registered from this cause in 1953. The death from non-pulmonary tuberculosis occurred at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital.

In 1952 and 1951, three deaths from tuberculosis (2 pulmonary and 1 non-pulmonary) were registered.

The death rate for tuberculosis (all forms), which includes the one institutional death was 0.20 per 1,000 population compared with the same rate for England and Wales.

The number of new notifications of tuberculosis increased to 12 in 1953 from 8 in 1952 and 11 in 1951. There was no notification of the non-pulmonary form of the disease, whereas in 1952, there were two and in 1951, five.

The increase in incidence is therefore entirely of pulmonary tuberculosis from 6 in 1952 to 12 in 1953 and is wholly among the female cases, the cases in males having decreased to 2 in 1953 from 4 notified in 1952. Cases notified in the female age groups, 15—25 years and 25—35 years, increased in 1953 by 7.

The register at 31st December, 1953, showed 50 cases made up as follows :—

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1 year ..	—	—	—	—
1—5 years ..	—	—	—	—
5—15 „ ..	2	1	—	1
15—25 „ ..	4	7	4	—
25—35 „ ..	9	8	2	1
35—45 „ ..	—	4	—	1
45—55 „ ..	3	2	—	1
55—65 „ ..	—	—	—	—
65 and over ..	—	—	—	—
	18	22	6	4

Classification of New Cases Notified in 1953.

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1 year ..	—	—	—	—
1—5 years ..	—	—	—	—
5—15 „ ..	1	1	—	—
15—25 „ ..	—	3	—	—
25—35 „ ..	1	5	—	—
35—45 „ ..	—	1	—	—
45 and over ..	—	—	—	—
	2	10	—	—

The following table gives the state of the Tuberculosis Register at 31st December, 1953, and the previous six years :—

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
31st December, 1947 ..	13	13	11	16	53
31st December, 1948 ..	16	8	8	10	42
31st December, 1949 ..	15	8	9	8	40
31st December, 1950 ..	20	14	9	9	52
31st December, 1951 ..	21	17	12	10	60
31st December, 1952 ..	20	18	11	11	60
31st December, 1953 ..	18	22	6	4	50

The Mass Miniature Radiography Unit No. 2 of the Regional Hospital Board visited Prudhoe twice during the year, once in July for one week and again in October for three days, operating from the Gospel Mission Hall. In the two visits, 1,562 examinees attended and four cases (1 male, 3 female) of active tuberculosis were discovered showing percentages of 0.13 and 0.35 respectively.

NOTIFIABLE ACUTE INFECTIOUS FEVERS.

The notifications of these diseases are set out in a separate table of the report.

The total number of infectious diseases notified during the year was 194 compared with 213 in 1952.

Measles and Whooping Cough.

The usually observed biennial increase in the incidence of Measles took place in 1953, the number of cases notified being 137, compared with 59 in 1952 and 94 in 1951. The majority of the cases occurred during May and June. One case required hospital treatment for sinus complications.

The incidence of Whooping Cough declined to 14 cases notified in 1953, from 51 in 1952, and 23 in 1951.

Scarlet Fever.

Fifteen cases of Scarlet Fever were notified compared with 4 in 1952. All were of a mild type.

Diphtheria.

No case of Diphtheria was notified for the sixth year in succession.

Poliomyelitis.

In early September, one case of Acute Poliomyelitis was notified (a young girl of 12 years). At the onset, the illness was acute but progressed extremely well. There was no residual paralysis and no further cases occurred.

No case of Poliomyelitis had been notified during the two previous years.

Dysentery and Food Poisoning.

Twenty-three cases of Dysentery (both Flexner and Sonne) were notified, all at the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital. During 1952, 95 cases of Dysentery were notified at the Hospital. The cases diminished to two or three a week during 1953.

No case of Dysentery or Food Poisoning occurred among the home residents of the district in 1953 as in 1952.

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN 1953.

Smallpox	..	..	..	..	..	..	—
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	..	..	..	—
Diphtheria	..	..	..	..	..	..	—
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Measles	..	..	..	..	..	..	137
Dysentery	..	..	..	..	..	..	23
Malaria	..	..	..	..	..	..	—
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	—
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	..	..	14
Poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Poliomyelitis (Non-Paralytic)	..	..	..	..	..	..	—

FOOD POISONING.

Food Poisoning Notifications (Corrected) Returned to Registrar
 General Nil

Outbreaks due to Identified Agents.

Total outbreaks	.. Nil.	Total cases	.. Nil
(a) Chemical Poisons	.. .. .		.. Nil.
(b) Salmonella Organisms	.. .. .		.. Nil.
(c) Staphylococci (including toxin)	.. .. .		.. Nil.
(d) Cl. botulinum	.. .. .		.. Nil.
(e) Other bacteria Nil.

Outbreaks of Undiscovered Cause.

Total outbreaks	.. Nil.	Total cases	.. Nil.
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Single Cases.

Agent identified	————	Unknown cause	————
Number of Deaths	.. Nil.	Food involved	.. Nil.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

The examination of faeces, sputum, swabs, milk, water, and ice-cream was carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Westgate Road, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Bacteriological Reports.

	Results		Total
	Positive	Negative	
Faeces specimens	.. —	2	2
Sputum —	—	—
Throat swabs	—	—
Vaginal swabs	1	1
	—	3	3

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Immunisation is carried out at the Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic (children 0—5 years), at the schools (5—15 years) and by the general practitioners of the district.

At the 31st December, 1953, 88% of the total child population had been immunised at sometime during their lives, compared with 86% in 1952, 82% in 1951 and 85% in 1950. The percentage of immunised children under 5 years was 65% in 1953, 64% in 1952, 62% in 1951 and the percentage of immunised children 5—15 years was 98% in 1953 as in 1952.

During the year, 143 children received a primary course of immunisation, 142 (0—5 years) and 1 (5—15 years) and 141 received a reinforcing injection.

The Ministry of Health has stressed the importance of keeping the immunity of children up to a high level and a return has now been made calculating the population of children in each age group who have had a course of immunisation within the last five years. This gives the Immunity Index of the age groups. At the end of 1953, the Immunity Index

for children under one year was 19%, children (1—4 years) 81%, children (5—14 years) 63%. The Immunity Index of children under 15 was 66%. In interpreting the Index, it will have to be borne in mind that of children under one at the end of the year, only one-third will have attained the age of eight months (when immunisations are normally given) and that, even if all of this group aged eight months and over were immunised, the Index for them would only be 33%.

The dramatic fall in both the incidence and number of deaths from Diphtheria in the last ten years has amply justified the value of immunisation against Diphtheria and its reinforcing at intervals both before and during the school life of a child.

In 1944, for the country generally the number of corrected notifications of the disease was 23,199 and the number of deaths 934. In 1953, the provisional figures were, number of corrected notifications 240, number of deaths 24.

Whooping Cough Prophylaxis.

Four children received a course of injections of combined Whooping Cough and Diphtheria prophylactic.

Vaccination against Smallpox.

In 1953, there were 32 primary vaccinations and 2 re-vaccinations compared with 5 primary vaccinations and 3 re-vaccinations in 1952. This shows a slight increase in vaccinations last year but the number is still extremely low and means that a large proportion of the population would be at risk should a case of the disease, probably imported, arise.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

Section 47.—Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention.

A total of fourteen visits were made to several elderly persons under this section, but in no case was formal action necessary.

Two vases voluntarily entered a Home under Part III Accommodation through the County Welfare Department.

Home Helps were provided in several cases where necessary.

Section 50.—Burial of the Dead.

No action was necessary under this section of the Act.

PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

1. Hospitals.

In the district there is the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital for mental defectives under the Prudhoe and Monkton Hospital Management Committee.

The Hexham and Newcastle groups of hospitals are available to patients from this district.

2. Ambulance Service.

PRUDHOE AMBULANCE :

The urban district is served directly by an ambulance stationed at 4, High Row South, Mickley Square, Stocksfield. Telephone No. 3110 Stocksfield. In addition, ambulances are available from the Newburn Station, at Westway, Throckley. Telephone No. 7-4535 Lemington.

During 1953, the Mickley Ambulance made 488 journeys, carried 3,247 patients including 410 stretcher and 130 accident and emergency cases and had a total mileage of 24,335 miles. There was an increase of 162 stretcher cases and 52 accident and emergency cases carried during 1953 than during 1952.

A course of lectures and training for Civil Defence Ambulance Personnel was held during the year.

3. Home Help Service.

During 1953, 89 cases resident in the urban district were served with home helps for varying periods, an increase of ten cases on the previous year. These cases included 9 of illness, 72 aged and infirm people, 5 confinements, 1 case of accident, 1 paralysed and 1 blind person.

The number of aged and infirm people served increased from 45 in 1952 to 72 in 1953.

4. Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic.

CHILD WELFARE CENTRE : Council Yard, Prudhoe.

Sessions for babies, children, expectant mothers and dental treatment are held by the Northumberland County Council at the above centre.

Children's Sessions : Every Wednesday, 9-30 a.m. to 12 noon.
1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Ante-natal Sessions : 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.
1st and 3rd Friday, 1-30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

5. Midwifery and Home Nursing Service.

These services are administered by the Northumberland County Council. There are three nurse/midwives in the Prudhoe Urban District Council's area, two working in Prudhoe and one in the Stocksfield and Mickley districts.

6. Nursing Care Committees.

There are two Nursing Care Committees in the district, one at Prudhoe and the other at Mickley.

These committees are voluntary organisations who visit sick people on occasions and supply articles of nursing equipment to them if required. The Honorary Secretaries of these committees are :—

Mr. B. NICHOLLS, 27, High Row North, Mickley, Stocksfield.

Mrs. A. L. KNOX, 1, Grange Terrace, Prudhoe.

7. Care and After-Care.

In February, 1953, responsibility for the care and after-care of persons suffering from Tuberculosis was transferred to the Area Health Sub-Committees of the County Council.

The Newburn and Prudhoe After-Care Sub-Committee comprising 15 Members (8 Councillors and 7 Voluntary Members) was formed in April, 1953.

Meetings of the new sub-committee were held at two-monthly intervals.

HOUSING.

During 1953, the Council completed 16 houses and a further 9 were built privately.

Work commenced on Stage 1 of the West Wylam Scheme, roads and sewers being provided for an estate of 110 houses.

Nos. 4 and 5, Locomotive Yard, Prudhoe, were demolished.

Demolition Orders were made in respect of 26 back-to-back houses in Wilfred Street and Norman Street, West Wylam.

A general survey of the area was in progress so that Slum Clearance could be taken up as soon as the Council were able to provide accommodation for occupants of condemned houses.

Four back-to-back houses were broken through and made into two dwelling houses.

Three cases of Tuberculosis were considered by the committee as regards more suitable housing accommodation, one case has already been rehoused.

WATER SUPPLY.

The district is supplied by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. Eighteen samples of water were taken at different points in the area throughout the year and all were found to be satisfactory as regards quality. The examination of these samples was carried out by the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Westgate Road, Newcastle.

There are still 60 houses without an internal water supply, chiefly in Eltringham. One cottage is still dependant on a spring for its supply.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

The details shown under this section have been compiled by Mr. W. G. Tweddle, Public Health Inspector.

I again express my thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee of the Council for their interest and help ; to Mr. W. G. Tweddle, Public Health Inspector and Miss J. Gray, Clerk in the Health Department, for their sustained work during the year, also other officials of the Council for their assistance.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Lady and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

M. HOPPER,

Medical Officer of Health.

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR
For the Year Ended 31st December, 1953.

To Dr. Madge Hopper,

I herewith submit my Annual Report.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

During 1953 the following visits were made to examine properties, deal with complaints made to the Health Department, to supervise premises where food is prepared and to carry out the provisions of the various acts including the Public Health Acts, Housing Acts, Factories Acts, Food and Drugs Act, Slaughter of Animals Act, Water Act, Milk (Special Designations) Act and Prevention of Damage by Pests Act :—

Water Supply	48
Drainage	99
Stables and Piggeries	41
Fried Fish Shops	28
Tenements	29
Tents, Vans and Sheds	19
Factories and Outworkers	89
Bakehouses	11
Public Conveniences	86
Places of Entertainment and Licensed Premises	44
Refuse Collection and Disposal	179
Rats and Mice	76
Atmospheric Pollution	31
Schools, Shops and Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	298
Public Health Acts	182
Housing Acts	153
Overcrowding	20
Filthy or Verminous Premises	22
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	60
Inquiries in cases of I.D.	50
Disinfection, etc.	
Visits to Slaughterhouses, Butchers, Canteens, Dairies, Fish- mongers, Grocers, Greengrocers and Food Preparing Prem- ises	215
Ice Cream Premises and Restaurants	50
Street Hawkers' Carts, etc.	21
Miscellaneous Food Visits	86

1,937

Number of Nuisances found	95
Number of Nuisances abated	95
Number of Verbal Notices served	218
Number of Verbal Notices complied with	218
Number of Informal Notices served	271
Number of Informal Notices complied with	246
Number of Statutory Notices served	18
Number of Statutory Notices complied with	14

Sanitary Administration.

The number of complaints made to the Health Department totalled 293 and in addition many verbal complaints received whilst inspection of the district was being carried out were dealt with.

Schools.

There are six schools : Mickley, Eltringham, Low Prudhoe, West Prudhoe, East Prudhoe and Prudhoe R.C. All sanitary conveniences are situated in the school yards and in each case water is supplied by the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company.

Sewerage and Drainage.

The Council maintains four Sewage Disposal Works :—

MICKLEY SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. Sludge beds are in poor condition and the works are old.

ELTRINGHAM SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. Small works for treating the discharges from 60 houses in Eltringham Village.

EASTWOODS SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. Small works serving only 12 houses.

LOW PRUDHOE SEWAGE DISPOSAL WORKS. The main disposal works in the urban district receiving all sewage east of Beamont Terrace to the district boundary at Stanley Burn.

Works difficult to manage due to the quantity of sludge generated and the time required for drying the sludge before removal. Additional sludge bed accommodation and humus tanks required. Method of disposing of screenings very insanitary and an incinerator should be provided.

Investigations were proceeding at the end of the year, the Council's Consulting Engineers being detailed to carry out a survey of the sewers in the Prudhoe District and at the Low Prudhoe Sewage Disposal Works.

West Wylam and Mickley Square Areas.

Much general repair work to colliery houses in the above areas was carried out during the year. Many houses were provided with new eaves gutters and fallpipes, roofs were repaired, internal and external walls plastered and pointed up respectively. Improvements were also carried out in 222 houses where new living room fireplaces with back boilers for the supplying of hot water to new wash-up sinks have made conditions for the occupants much better. The problem in these colliery villages of bad sanitation still remains and will continue until the houses are ultimately removed under Slum Clearance Schemes.

Public Health Act, 1936.

Further progress was made with the conversion of privies to W.C's., 23 privies being removed. The following list shows the locality where the work was carried out :—

Beaumont Terrace	(1)	Low Prudhoe Post Office	(1)
Wesley Street	(4)	Ash Street	(1)
River View	(4)	West Road	(4)
Mount Pleasant	(3)	Neale Street	(1)
Oaktree Terrace	(1)	Fair View	(1)
Mickley Moor Farm House and Cottage	(2)		

At the end of the year the number of privies in the area was 492 serving 715 houses. The total number of houses in the district is 2,725 and the percentage of houses still using ash privies is 26.2. This percentage has fallen from 40.6 in 1946.

23 open ashpits are still in use at the following places :—

Oak Street	(2)	Elm Street	(3)
Gordon Terrace	(4)	Broomhouse Farm ..	(2)
Drawback	(1)	High Mickley	(4)
Durham Riding Cottages ..	(3)	Eltringham Farm Cottages	(1)
Oakwell Terrace	(1)	Oakfield Terrace ..	(2)

During the year two ashpits in Brookhouse Yard were removed.

New drainage work was supervised, the following figures show the amount of work done :—

Number of lineal yards of drains laid ..	553
Number of inspection chambers provided ..	35

In addition many old insanitary gullies and traps were removed when drainage was being extended or renewed.

Public Conveniences.

BRANCH END :	For males and females.
PRUDHOE ROAD ENDS :	For males and females.

The Council maintain the above premises. Minor repairs have been carried out especially after frosty weather when water supply pipes were damaged.

Refuse Collection and Disposal. (House and Trade Refuse).

This service which can be very costly if not properly administered and organised is a necessity for protecting the public health of the district. Regular removal of garbage, ashes, tins and excrement is essential if a town is to be kept sweet and clean and during the past year very few complaints were received regarding the service, usually after breaks for public holidays.

The number of premises scavenged weekly is 2,900 a percentage increase of 21 since the war. The refuse is exceptionally heavy in this district due to the poor type of coal supplied to miners. Checks taken of bins have shown that the total weight of bin and ash is as high as twelve stones.

Council housing estates are extending and the distance for bin removal is often considerable with many steps to be negotiated and this is an important factor in the cost of refuse collection and should be taken into account when estates are designed.

The Council have five Refuse Collection Vehicles, Karrier Bantams, four being in constant use and one kept in reserve.

REGISTRATION NO.	YEAR PURCHASED
JVK 199	Feb., 1945.
JVK 361	Aug., 1945.
KBB 118	Mar., 1946.
BJR. 306	Dec., 1946.
ETY 298	May, 1951.

Disposal of refuse is carried out at West Wylam Tip and it is estimated that at least 6,000 tons of refuse was deposited during the year.

50 to 60 loads of refuse are deposited on the tip weekly.

The total cost of Refuse Collection and Disposal including labour, transport and purchase of new vehicles over the past eight years has been as follows :—

YEAR	NET COST	RATE IN THE £	
		s.	d.
1946 ..	£5,082	2	9.8
1947 ..	£4,413	2	5.1
1948 ..	£4,368	2	3.7
1949 ..	£4,865	2	7.3
1950 ..	£5,027	2	7.1
1951 ..	£4,788	2	5.5
1952 ..	£6,089	3	1.2
1953 ..	£5,848	2	10.2

To prevent cattle straying onto the tip a barbed wire fence was erected around the periphery of the tip.

Factories Acts, 1937 and 1948.

The register at the end of 1953 showed the following types of premises :—

Garages	10
Joiners' and Builders' Premises	8
Bakeries	2
Boot Repairers	4
Sanitary Pipes and Brickworks	3
Blacksmiths' and Light Engineering	2
Battery Charging	4
Chemical Works	1
Sand and Gravel Extraction	2
Miscellaneous	18
	—
	54
	—

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.
Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health.

PREMISES	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.. .. .	26	53	3	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	26	27	—	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises) ..	2	8	1	—
TOTAL ..	54	88	4	—

CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

PARTICULARS	Number of Cases in which Defects were Found				No. of cases in which Prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M.I.	By H.M.I.	
Want of cleanliness	3	3	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	1	1	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ..	5	5	—	—	—

OUTWORK.

NATURE OF WORK	NO. OF OUT-WORKERS IN AUGUST
Wearing apparel (Making, etc.)	1

Inspection of Meat and Other Foods.

Meat was again brought to the area from Hexham and Newcastle to supply the six butchers' shops. Routine examination of carcasses was made but no exceptional matter occurred during the year to which attention was necessary.

Vans carrying the meat were kept in a clean condition.

Particular attention was given to the preparation of sausages, potted meat and black puddings.

FOOD INSPECTION.

UNSOUND FOOD	Surrendered
Minced Pork	89 lbs.
Fruit	208 lbs.
Canned Goods, etc.	546 contrs.
Sausages	83½ lbs.
Cooked Ham (Tinned)	249 lbs.
Jellied Veal, Ox-Tongue and Corned Beef, etc.	96 lbs.
Cheese	4 lbs.
Flour	3 lbs.
Pudding Mixture	30 lbs.
Cake	14 lbs.

The disposal of most of the above unfit food was dealt with by burying in the refuse tip, sufficient ash being deposited to effectively cover the articles of food and so prevent access for vermin. Disinfectant was poured over some of the foods.

Thirteen samples of ice-cream and one iced "lolly" were taken and examined at the Public Health Laboratory, General Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne.

	Result	
	Grade 1	Grade 2
Ice-Cream	11	2
Iced "Lolly"	No pathogens isolated.	

Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 38—Sale of Horse Flesh.

There are no premises selling horse flesh.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 13.

There are still a few small general dealers' shops requiring a constant supply of hot water.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Section 14—Registration of Premises.

The number of premises registered under this section is now 33 including one ice-cream manufacturer, 18 retailers of ice-cream and the remainder of the premises being fish fryers or engaged in the manufacture of meat products.

With one exception all ice-cream is sold direct from a refrigerator and is prepacked.

In the summer months itinerant vans selling ice-cream visit the area and examination has been made of these vehicles.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 57.—Licensing of Slaughter Houses and Knackers' Yards.

Three licences are in force in the area but no actual slaughtering took place during the year.

Snack Bars.

These receive regular visits to see that cleanly conditions are observed.

Food and Drugs Act, 1938, Section 13.

Public Health Act, 1936, Section 89.

There are thirteen licensed premises consisting of nine public houses and four clubs.

PRUDHOE WORKING MEN'S SOCIAL CLUB, SOUTH ROAD, PRUDHOE.

The sanitary accommodation was improved and is now satisfactory.

THE ADAM AND EVE PUBLIC HOUSE, LOW PRUDHOE.

This year saw the completion of the new toilets for both males and females and the accommodation is now of the very best type.

Hawkers Vans and Carts.

From time to time hawkers selling fish, herrings, kippers and fruit are found in the area. Examinations have been made of the commodities for sale and the vehicles. Verbal instructions were given where necessary.

Travelling Vans and Shops.

Due to the Council's building schemes since the war and the spread of the estates, it has been noticed that travelling shops and vans are to be seen going from door to door retailing goods. Examination of these vehicles has shown them to be satisfactory.

Inspection and Control of Milk Supplies.

During 1953 the district on the east side of Prudhoe was declared an area in which only Heat Treated or Tuberculin Tested Milk could be sold. In Prudhoe Urban District, raw milk is still allowed to be sold but the major part is Heat Treated being either Sterilised or Pasteurised. This milk is prepared at either the C.W.S. Dairy, Stocksfield or Coast Creamery Ltd., Foxhunters Road, Whitley Bay.

The distribution of milk is still unsatisfactory, open vehicles with no weather protection being in use in some cases.

Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Number of licences . . . 11.

Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Number of licences to retail Pasteurised . . . 10.
 Number of licences to retail Sterilised . . . 11.

Dairies.

There are three on the register.

Public Health Act, 1936, Section 269.—Tents, Vans and Sheds.

There is only one licence in force.

Stables, Manure Pits and Piggeries.

These are gradually decreasing but regular visits are made to ascertain conditions.

Disinfection of Premises.

Fourteen dwelling houses have been disinfected after infectious disease and other causes.

Disinfestation of Premises.

Occupants of dwellings who have been troubled with infestations have received advice on how to eradicate the various types of pests and twelve houses have been dealt with by the Health Department. It is far better for occupiers of houses to come and report the presence of vermin than to have the trouble going on indefinitely with consequent spread of the infestation to other premises.

Places of Public Entertainment. Circular 120, Ministry of Health.

There are two cinemas in Prudhoe and one at Mickley. All were in satisfactory condition.

Other halls have been inspected.

Pollution of the Atmosphere. Public Health Act, 1936, Section 101. Smoke Nuisances.

There are a few large factory chimneys in the district, the main ones being at Prudhoe Hall, I.C.I. Factory and Stocksfield and District Laundry. The latter chimney has been responsible for emitting excess smoke from time to time and regular observations have been made, with requests to improve the conditions, otherwise there are no grounds for complaints that the atmosphere is polluted by smoke in the area.

The haulage of chalk from the I.C.I. Factory has presented a difficult problem during windy weather. All wagons are sheeted up but the substance is very light and difficult to contain in a motor vehicle and is liable to be spilled onto the roadway through any defect in the body of the wagon.

BURNING SPOIL BANK, WEST WYLAM COLLIERY.

This spoil bank has been on fire for some time and efforts have been made to control the fire. However, most of the deposit is now practically burnt out.

Offensive Trades. Public Health Act, 1936. Section 107.**Restrictions on establishment of offensive trade in Urban District.**

There are no offensive trades in this district.

Housing Acts.

A number of houses were repaired after service of notices and general repairs to colliery houses proceeded steadily at Mickley and West Wylam to keep these houses as habitable as possible and improve the living conditions.

A general inspection of the district was being made to ascertain the properties which should be dealt with under Slum Clearance in the next few years. There are approximately 300 back-to-back colliery houses for demolition.

The following table gives a list of the various repair work carried out during the year :—

Dampness abated	12
Walls and ceiling plaster repaired	16
Roofs repaired	37
External walls repointed	25
Eaves gutters renewed or repaired	61
Floors repaired or renewed	10
Doors repaired or renewed	12
Window frames repaired or renewed	16
W.C.'s. repaired and provided	56
Water pipes repaired	13
Yard surfaces renewed	7
Fireplaces renewed or repaired	201
Chimney stacks rebuilt or repointed	12
Drains cleared	50
Dustbins provided (additional)	47
Dustbins provided (renewal)	54
Additional W.C.'s. provided	13
Food stores provided or repaired	6
Accumulations removed	16
Scullery sinks provided	198
Old gullies replaced	5
Additional gullies provided	22
Drains repaired or reconstructed	16
New drains constructed	31
Hot water supplies to dwelling houses ..	190
Baths provided	35
Coal houses repaired	5
Staircases repaired	3
Privies and Privy ashpits abolished	25
Privies repaired	19

RODENT CONTROL, PESTS ACT, 1949.

The number of complaints made to the office was 33, these were immediately investigated and suitable action taken. A wide range of poisons, Zinc Phosphide, Red Squill Biscuits, Warfarin with Bread Mash and Biscuit Meal have all been used whichever was the most suitable for the infestation. Traps have been set occasionally. The Council sewers were again baited, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries accepting part financial responsibility.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY				Total
	Local Authority	Dwelling Houses	Agri-cultural	All other (including Business Premises)	
1. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District	12	2,725	27	83	2,847
2. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority as a result of (a) notification	(a) —	77	6	12	95
(b) survey under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949 ..	(b) 12	52	15	8	87
(c) otherwise, e.g., when visited primarily for some other purpose	(c) —	42	6	14	62
3. Number of properties inspected (see Section 2) which were found to be infested by rats	Major 1 Minor 8	— 31	— —	— —	1 39
4. Number of properties inspected (see Section 2) which were found to be seriously infested by mice	1	9	—	2	12
5. Number of infested properties (see Sections 3 and 4) treated by the Local Authority	10	40	—	2	52
TOTAL ..	44	2,976	54	121	3,195

HOUSING.

NEW HOUSES COMPLETED DURING YEAR	With State Assistance	Unaided	Total
(a) By Local Authority ..	16	—	16
(b) By any other Housing Authority	—	—	—
(c) By private persons ..	—	9	9

Total number of Inhabited Houses in District .. 2,725.

1. —CLOSING AND DEMOLITION OF HOUSES.

A. Formal Action.

(1) Number of houses demolished during 1953 as a result of Clearance Schemes or other formal action	8
(Number of houses included in above which were from pre-war confirmed Clearance Areas.. ..)	8
(2) Number of houses closed but not demolished as a result of formal action	5

B. Informal action.

(1) Number of houses permanently discontinued as dwellings as a result of informal action and not included above	2
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2.—RECONDITIONING AND REPAIR.

Number of houses made fit during 1953 by procedure under either Housing or Public Health Acts :—

(a) As a result of informal action	249
(b) By owners as a result of statutory notice	11
(c) By Local Authority in default of owners	—

3.—IMPROVEMENT GRANTS : HOUSING ACT, 1949.

	Number of separate houses.
(a) Applications submitted to Local Authority during year	23
(b) Applications rejected by Local Authority	3
(c) Applications forwarded to Ministry	—
(d) Applications rejected by Ministry	—
(e) Applications approved	20
(f) Total number of applications approved in your area since inception of scheme	20

LIST OF BYE-LAWS IN FORCE IN THE DISTRICT.

9th October, 1950.	Model Byelaws, Series (1), Ministry of Food. Section 15, Food and Drugs Act, 1938. For securing cleanly conditions and practices in connection with the handling, wrapping and delivery of food and sale of food in the open air.
31st December, 1953.	Model Byelaws (Buildings).

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Conclusion.

In concluding my report, I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Miss J. Gray, Shorthand-Typist, for the efficient manner in which the duties of the department have been carried out involving the tabulation of various visits and reports, the costing of transport and the keeping up to date of the filing system.

Yours faithfully,

W. G. TWEDDLE,
Public Health Inspector.



