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Contributors

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STEVENAGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



Heals

ANNUAL REPORTS
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
and the
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR 1959



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STEVENAGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS 1959

Medical Officer of Health and Divisional M.O.
for North Herts area:

V. R. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector
and Housing Officer:

R. V. LAMEY, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors:

A. E. Flintoff, A.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

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

Offices:

Medical Officer of Health:

Divisional Health Office, 12 Brand Street, Hitchin.

Tel: 3757.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

10 High Street, Stevenage.

Tel: 436-7-8.

STEVENS AND DISTRICT OFFICE

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS 1939

Medical Officer of Health and Epidemiologist
for North West Area:

V. E. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., D.Sc., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector
and Housing Officer:

W. V. LAMBY, M.B.B.S., M.A.P.H.I.

Assistant Public Health Inspector:

A. E. VINCIGILL, A.M.B.S., M.A.P.H.I.

P. HODGES, A.M.B.S., M.A.P.H.I.

Officer:

Medical Officer of Health:

Epidemiologist, Health Officer, 15 Grand Street, Brighton.

Chief Public Health Inspector:

15 High Street, Newmarket.

STEVENAGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1959

To the Chairman and Members of the Stevenage
Urban District Council.

I present the above report prepared in accordance with the
directions of Ministry of Health Circular 1/60.

SECTION A

LOCAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	5,895
Home Population - Mid 1959	
(Registrar General's Estimate) ..	34,580
Number of habitable houses at 31.12.59.	11,020
Rateable Value at 31.12.59.	£618,427
Estimated product of a Penny Rate	
(1959/60)	£2,400

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR
THE YEAR 1959

	<u>STEVENAGE</u> <u>URBAN</u> <u>DISTRICT</u>		<u>Comparable</u> <u>Rate for</u> <u>England &</u> <u>Wales</u>
<u>LIVE BIRTHS</u>			
	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Legitimate	972	516	456
Illegitimate	38	21	17
	<u>1,010</u>	<u>537</u>	<u>473</u>
Rate per 1,000 population	29.2		16.5
Illegitimate Live Births per cent			
of total live births	3.8%		

STEVENAGE
URBAN
DISTRICT

Comparable
Rate for
England &
Wales

STILL BIRTHS

	<u>Totals</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Legitimate	18	9	9
Illegitimate	1	1	-
	19	10	9

Rate per 1,000 total
(live and still) births ... 18.5 20.7

TOTAL LIVE & STILL BIRTHS

<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
1,029	547	482

DEATHS

<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
173	80	93

Rate per 1,000 population ... 5.0 11.6

INFANT DEATHS

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Under 1 week	12	6	6
1 - 4 weeks	-	-	-
4 - 52 weeks	4	3	1
	16	9	7

	<u>STEVENAGE</u> <u>URBAN</u> <u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>Comparable</u> <u>Rate for</u> <u>England &</u> <u>Wales</u>
<u>Infant Mortality Rates</u>		
Total infant deaths per 1,000		
total live births ...	15.8	22.0
Legitimate infant deaths per		
1,000 legitimate live births ...	14.4	
Illegitimate infant deaths per		
1,000 illegitimate live births ...	52.6	
<u>Neo-natal Mortality Rate</u> (deaths under		
4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	11.9	15.8
<u>Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate</u>		
(deaths under 1 week per 1,000		
total live births) ...	11.9	
<u>Perinatal Mortality Rate</u> (stillbirths		
and deaths under 1 week combined		
per 1,000 total live and still		
births) ...	30.1	
<u>Maternal Mortality</u> (including abortion)		
Number of deaths ...	One	
Rate per 1,000 total live and still		
births ...	0.97	0.38

Comment on Vital Statistics

With a total of live births for the year almost five times the local figure of registered deaths Stevenage continues to be a very young town. At 5.0 the local death rate is still far below the National figure of 11.6, reflecting the younger than average age distribution of new population; the Comparability Factor of 2.23 supplied by the Registrar General produces a 'standardised' death rate of 11.1.

The estimated mid-year population for 1959 of 34,580 (an annual increase of 4,440) is already out of date through continued inward immigration.

Deaths from Cancer (all sites) number 34, of which 10 were from cancer of the lung and bronchus, 9 being males. From motor vehicle accidents, deaths this year number 2 (both males), against figures of 5 and 8 for the two previous years.

No single death is recorded from any form of infective or parasitic disease, nor from any form of tuberculosis.

During the record dry warm summer of 1959 the welcome absence of any food poisoning is remarkable. Contributory factors must be the enforcement of good standards of hygiene in premises engaged in the preparation of food, and the increased availability of trade and domestic refrigerated food storage.

The local stillbirth and infant mortality figures again compare favourably with the National rates, indicating a continued favourable local family environment. The only unfavourable rate is that for maternal mortality, one local death during the year giving a rate higher than the National figure.

The following table shows the main local vital statistics over the ten years 1950 - 1959:-

		<u>Birth Rate</u>	<u>Death Rate</u>	<u>Infant Mort. Rate</u>
1959	...	29.2	5.0	15.8
1958	...	30.1	5.2	13.2
1957	...	31.1	5.3	18.4
1956	...	30.8	5.4	17.7
1955	...	28.4	6.0	11.6
1954	...	29.1	6.8	12
1953	...	24.8	7.7	29
1952	...	20.8	7.7	6
1951	...	18.4	10.4	16
1950	...	14.0	10.5	Nil

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

These are unchanged.

SECTIONS C to E

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA & INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Full reports on the above are contained in the attached report of your Chief Public Health Inspector.

SECTION F

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious & Other Diseases

For the year 1959 total notifications of acute infectious diseases (after correction) were: Measles 767; Scarlet fever 77; Acute pneumonia 15; Infective hepatitis 10; Whooping cough 4; Dysentery 1; Erysipelas 1 and Puerperal pyrexia 3.

Measles was epidemic in the first and, to a less degree, in the second quarter of the year.

Whooping cough notification is seen, compared with measles, to have been remarkably infrequent, with 4 notifications confined to the fourth quarter. This disease, possibly as a result of considerable acceptance of infant immunisation, appears often to present itself in a form so mild as not to be capable of a definite label.

Half the Scarlet fever cases fell in the first quarter, but it continued sporadically throughout the year. All but 3 cases were under 10 years and surprisingly roughly half were under school age. Cases appeared mild and uncomplicated, differentiated mainly from a tonsillitis by the presence of a short-lived scarlatiniform rash.

Infective hepatitis had a mild prevalence (10 cases) in the first two quarters.

During the year there was a complete absence of Acute poliomyelitis, enteric infection, or recognised Food poisoning - despite the hot dry summer.

Immunisation against both diphtheria and whooping cough continues to be popularly accepted through family practitioners and welfare centres; in immunisation against poliomyelitis there was a high degree of co-operation from factory medical officers.

TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Deaths during the year 1959

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Resp.		Non-Resp.		Resp.		Non-Resp.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0 - 1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 - 5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 15	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 25	- (4)	2 (5)	1	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35	3(21)	1(12)	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45	3 (3)	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 55	4 (2)	- (1)	1	-	-	-	-	-
55 - 65	1	- (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
65 & over	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not known	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	14(30)	7(21)	3 (1)	-	-	-	-	-

* Figures in brackets indicate inward transfers.

Comment: New notifications of respiratory cases are seen to number 21, against totals of 8 and 16 for the two previous years; non-respiratory cases numbered 3, against 1 and 1 in the two previous years.
No death was registered locally during the year from any form of tuberculosis.

In conclusion, I would acknowledge having received every help during the year from your chief officers; particularly I would acknowledge the most valuable assistance from your Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr. R. V. Lamey, who is responsible for the compilation of the Sanitary sections of this report.

Your obedient Servant,

V. R. Walker

District Medical Officer of Health.

June 1960.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the year

1959

To the Chairman and Members of the Stevenage
Urban District Council.

I have pleasure in presenting my report for the year ending
31st December, 1959.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

i) Water Supply

The water undertaking is at present vested in the Stevenage Development Corporation. The supply is obtained from boreholes Nos. 1, 2 and 3 at Whitehall Pumping Station from which about 2 million gallons per day are obtained - the station is capable of supplying some 3.7 million gallons/day when this is required by future development.

Two storage reservoirs each of 2 million gallons capacity and a high level water tower having $\frac{1}{2}$ million gallon capacity have been constructed at Pinn Green, an area some 4 miles distant from the pumping station. The water tower is not yet in use except as a supply to some isolated cottages.

A reserve of about $\frac{1}{2}$ million galls/day is available at Broomin Green borehole. This supply would require special chlorination before it could be used for drinking purposes as it is subject to periodic contamination. At the present time it is used only for research purposes by the Water Pollution Laboratories of the Department of Scientific & Industrial Research.

The water supply is regularly sampled, and during the year I submitted 131 samples to the Public Health Laboratory Service at Luton for bacteriological examination - 130 samples proved

satisfactory and 1 unsatisfactory; repeat sampling of this suspected water, however, proved satisfactory.

An adequate supply of water throughout the area is being maintained.

ii) Sewage Disposal

All main foul water drainage from the town is now dealt with at the Ryemead Sewage Works at Hertford. Few properties remain connected to cesspools or septic tank installations, and these will further decrease as extensions of the main sewerage systems take place.

iii) Refuse Collection

The Public Cleansing Services are controlled by the Council's Surveyor. No tipping is carried out in the town; all refuse is transported some 11 miles away to a site at Holwell, near Hitchin.

The Council operates a Waste Paper and Trade Refuse Collection Service.

iv) Rodent Control

Complaints of rat and mice infestations show an increase of approximately 20% on 1958 and have necessitated the full time employment of the Rodent Operator for a longer period than was originally estimated.

No major infestations were found anywhere in the district and the infestations treated occurred generally throughout the town rather than in any specific area.

The increase in this work is likely to continue with the growth of the town and is not necessarily indicative of a large increase in the rodent population, but rather of a growing awareness by the public of the value of the Council's rodent control service.

Details of Rodent Control work carried out during the year are as follows:-

Total inspections	...	...	1931
No. of infested properties found			324
No. of infested properties treated			321
Complaints received	...	...	285

The infestations were classified as follows:-

Major infestation - Rats ...	...	Nil
Minor infestation - Rats ...	...	285
Minor infestation - Mice ...	...	36

v) Moveable Dwellings

Visits to these dwellings have increased during the year and a strict control has been necessary in order to prevent the build up of caravans on various sites throughout the town.

A New Town provides an attraction to various types of caravan dwellers, artificial flower and clothes peg sellers find a new area in which to trade, as do also scrap metal and rag merchants, and workers engaged on new building sites and outlying road works often wish to live in caravans which they are then reluctant to move when the contract is completed.

It is not uncommon for a family to move into the area with a caravan which is often grossly overcrowded, in the hope that they will obtain some priority for housing assistance, either from the Stevenage Development Corporation or the Council.

Control of these dwellings is an expensive matter to the Local Authority, in both time and money, for the present cumbersome legislation contained in the 1936 Public Health Act may necessitate, if a prosecution is contemplated, a visit to the dwellings by two Inspectors on at least 42 consecutive days. It is to be hoped that the enquiries into the problems associated with caravan dwellers will soon be completed, and that new legislation will speedily follow.

vi) Open Air Market.

A market with 54 stalls was opened by the Council in the New Town Centre on the 16th October, 1959. No open food, other than fruit or vegetables, is permitted to be sold.

Hot and cold water supplies, together with sinks, are provided for the washing of stallholders' equipment, and a new public convenience, with hot and cold washing facilities for market traders, will soon be available.

The market is administered by the Public Health Department.

vii) Knackers Yard

There is one licensed Knackers Yard in the town. This is of model design and is maintained in a satisfactory condition. The premises are regularly inspected.

viii) Petroleum Installations

47 licences for the storage of Petroleum and Petroleum Mixtures have been issued during the year. Four new petroleum stores and two underground installations have been constructed in an approved manner, and air pressure tests on tanks and fuel lines have proved satisfactory.

ix) Air Sampling

For some time now, air samples have been taken in order to establish any changes that may arise in the radioactive background of the area. All samples have proved satisfactory and have been closely related to those results that are from time to time published for the country as a whole.

The samples have been taken with equipment loaned to the Council by a local firm, Messrs. Fleming Radio (Development) Limited, who manufacture in Stevenage the necessary monitoring equipment. Assistance in the evaluation of the readings obtained has also been given by the Scientific staff of the Company and I should like to record my appreciation of their services.

x) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA
ANALYSIS OF VISITS

Disinfestation	...	159
Drainage defects	...	147
Factories including canteens	...	189
Food Premises	...	835
Infectious Disease and Food Poisoning	...	132
Knackers Yard	...	31
Moveable Dwellings	...	272
Mobile Vans and Market Stalls	...	133
Public Health & Housing Act Inspections (including revisits)	...	1599
School kitchens	...	20
Slaughterhouses	...	843
Miscellaneous visits	...	819

SECTION E

i) Inspection and Supervision of Food Premises

New shops of all descriptions continue to open as the town expands and, during the year, 18 new food premises opened in the main and neighbourhood shopping centres, bringing the total number of food shops for the district as a whole to 206.

In order to ensure compliance with the Food Hygiene Regulations, negotiations take place with the owners of all new food premises at the time application is made for Planning and Byelaw approval, thus, from the outset, ensuring that the design and layout of the premises will comply with the provisions of the Food Hygiene Regulations.

Self-service shops and Supermarkets continue to be prominent and prove popular with the shopping public. Open food is wrapped and ample refrigerated cabinets, both for display and storage, are provided. The problems that previously arose in connection with the storage of pre-packed meats and meat products have not recurred, following the insistence on a rigid system of coding and daily examination of the meat.

All food traders were advised, in writing, against piercing any foodstuff, particularly pork pies, with price tickets, and it was pointed out that complaints of mould growths in pork pies could often be traced to the piercing of the crust and gelatine of the pie with a price ticket.

It is interesting to record that following this letter, the Chief Chemist of a nationally known firm of grocers communicated with me to say how much his company agreed with this instruction and expressed the hope that other Local Authorities in the country would insist on the same standards.

Details of the food trades, including those contained in the supermarkets, are as follows:-

Bakehouses	...	6
Bakers	...	14
Butchers	...	26
Cafes	...	11
Canteens	...	31
Confectioners	...	23
Fishmongers	...	10
Greengrocers	...	27
Grocers	...	36
Guest Houses	...	6
Hotels	...	4
Licensed Premises		32

ii) Registration of Food Premises
(a) Food & Drugs Act 1955

Premises registered under Section 16 of this Act are as follows:-

Sale of Ice Cream	42
Sale of Preserved	
Food etc.	30

(b) Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949/54

There are no registered dairies within the town. Licences have been granted to 16 dealers and 2 distributors in accordance with the provisions of these Regulations.

iii) Inspection of Registered Food Premises

Regular visits were made to premises registered for the sale of Ice Cream and the preparation or manufacture of Sausages or Potted, Pressed, Pickled and Preserved food intended for sale. Those premises selling Ice Cream, but excluded from registration under the Food and Drugs Act, were also inspected.

iv) Disposal of Condemned Food

During the year, apart from meat condemned at the private slaughterhouses, 14-cwts. 2-qrs. 2-lbs. 15-ozs. of foodstuffs were condemned at various food premises in the town. All condemned food is stained with a naphthalene dye and removed from the food shops by the Council's Refuse Collection Service; strict control is exercised over its disposal.

v) Ice Cream Heat Treatment Regulations

A regular check is made of the many Ice Cream vendors operating within the town. There are no manufacturers of Ice Cream in Stevenage.

vi) Sampling

The following samples were taken during the year:-

		<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Milk	...	140	-
Water	...	131	1
Ice Cream	...	150	1

vii) Slaughterhouses and Meat InspectionMEAT INSPECTIONCarcases Inspected and Condemned

	Cattle including Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
<u>NUMBER KILLED</u>	606	109	12,730	2,203	Nil
<u>NUMBER INSPECTED</u>	606	109	12,730	2,203	Nil
<u>ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS & CYSTICERCI</u> <u>Whole carcasses condemned.</u>	Nil	2	1	Nil	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	224	1	598	338	Nil
Percentage of the number inspect- ed affected with disease other than Tuberculosis & Cysticerci.	36.96	2.75	4.71	15.34	Nil
<u>TUBERCULOSIS ONLY</u> <u>Whole carcasses condemned</u>	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	25	Nil	Nil	31	Nil
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	4.29	Nil	Nil	1.41	Nil
<u>CYSTICERCOSIS</u> <u>Carcases of which some part or</u> <u>organ was condemned.</u>	2	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Generalised and totally condemned.	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

vii) Slaughterhouses and Meat Inspection (Cont'd)

2 premises in the town are licensed by the Council for private slaughtering and 16 persons are licensed as Slaughtermen. One of the slaughterhouses is now being reconstructed and enlarged, in accordance with plans approved by the Council and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. The owner of the other slaughterhouse is at present considering the possible modernisation of his premises so as to ensure compliance with present-day standards.

A considerable increase in the number of animals slaughtered in the town again occurred in 1959, when 15,648 animals were slaughtered as against 7,043 in 1958 and 5,913 in 1957.

I am pleased to report that 100% meat inspection has again been maintained and, as a result of these inspections, 3-tons 6-cwts. 1-qr. 13-lbs. of meat and offal were condemned at the slaughterhouse during the year. Condemned meat is stained and then taken to the licensed Knackers' Yard, where it is used either for animal feeding, or is despatched to a nearby factory for processing into glue or fertilisers.

The total number of animals slaughtered may appear small by comparison with the slaughtering figures for certain other abattoirs, but it should be remembered that, in Stevenage, all work is carried out in a relatively small slaughterhall. In order to deal with this throughput, it has, therefore, been necessary for slaughtering to take place each day and evening until approximately 8 p.m. and all day Saturdays and Sundays, although lately, work has ceased by 1 p.m. on Sundays. It is fortunate, from the meat inspection point of view, that a large proportion of the animals slaughtered are sheep.

The maintenance of a 100% meat inspection service has, therefore, entailed the performance of much work after normal office hours and at week-ends and public holidays, and I would particularly like to record my thanks to Mr. A. E. Flintoff, the Senior Additional Public Health Inspector, for the willing manner with which he has co-operated with me in this work.

Once again I must say how much I regret that in spite of the many representations made by Stevenage and other Local Authorities, no action has yet been taken to limit by legislation the hours at which slaughtering may take place.

General

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the Public Health Inspectors and other members of the staff for their loyal service, valuable assistance, and co-operation throughout the year.

Your obedient Servant,

R. V. LAMEY.

Chief Public Health Inspector.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH IN
RESPECT OF THE YEAR 1959 FOR THE URBAN DISTRICT OF
STEVENAGE IN THE COUNTY OF HERTFORD.

FACTORIES ACT 1937

(PART I)

INSPECTIONS for the purpose of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspect- ions	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	5	20	-	-
(2) Factories not included in (1) above in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	58	84	-	-
(3) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises).	35	75	-	-
Total	98	179	-	-

2. Cases in which defects were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1.)	2	2	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2.)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3.)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors. (S.6.)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	7	7	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).	-	-	-	-	-
Total	12	12	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT
OUTWORK (Sections 110 and 111)

Nature of Work	Section 110			Section 111		
	No. of Outworkers in August list required by Section 110 (1)(c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council	No. of Prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work on unwholesome premises	Notices Served	Prosecutions
Wearing apparel making etc.	30	-	-	-	-	-
Plastic Bags	1	-	-	-	-	-
Jewellery	1	-	-	-	-	-
Total	32	-	-	-	-	-

