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Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1947

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Wisbech.

GENTLEMEN.

I have the honour of submitting to you my report on the general health of the Borough for the past year, ending the 31st December, 1947.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area, 4666 acres
Estimated resident population mid-1947, 16,340
Rateable value, £81,686
Sum realised by a penny rate, £322 : 18 : 3
Number of inhabited houses about 4,750

	Total	M.	F.	
Live Births	Legitimate 352	187	165	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population mid-1947, 23·8
	Illegitimate 38	20	18	
Stillbirths	Legitimate 7	4	3	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, 25·00
	Illegitimate 3	2	1	
Deaths	245	125	120	Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated average population, 14·9

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births
Deaths from puerperal causes:—		
Puerperal sepsis	1	2·5
Other puerperal causes ...	1	2·5
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age:—		
All Infants per 1,000 live births		43·5
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births ...		39·7
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births ...		78·9
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)		23
Deaths from Measels (all ages)		0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)		0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)		1

In the Borough there is one School Clinic, a Tubercular Clinic, a General Hospital, an Infectious Diseases Hospital and an Orthopaedic Clinic held bi-monthly at the North Cambridgeshire Hospital.

Excellent Motor Ambulance facilities are available, whilst Diphtheria Antitoxin and Pathological and Bacteriological examinations are provided when necessary.

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

The duties connected with this are carried out by the M.O.H. who is a part time Officer, the Borough Surveyor, the Borough Senior and Additional Sanitary Inspectors, all full time officers, together with those of the Council's employees who are specially needed for sanitary work.

INFANT AND CHILD WELFARE.

The Infant and Child Welfare Clinic is held weekly in Park Hall, Ruby Street, and is well attended.

First attendances of children under 1 year	..	164
First attendances of children over 1 year	...	250
Total attendances of children under 1 year	...	1,350
Total attendances of children over 1 year	...	1,894

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Number of children under the age of five years who have completed a full course of immunisation against Diphtheria during the year, 188.

HOUSING.

Municipal Permanent Housing.

24 3-Bedroom Traditional Type Houses have been completed and a further 12 U.T.2 type are under construction. Tenders have been invited for a further 12 of this type.

Out of 50 B.I.S.F. type houses under construction 4 have been completed.

8 Airey Type Houses had been allocated to Wisbech and tenders had been invited for these. Preliminary site preparation had been completed for all of the above houses.

An additional site for the erection of 40 houses was purchased and the layout approved.

Temporary Housing.

26 Tarran Type Houses have been completed and occupied. Advance site works are complete for an additional 50 aluminium houses, 26 of which are occupied, the remaining 24 being almost complete.

Private Enterprise.

Plans were approved under the Building Byelaws for :—

- (1) 30 New Dwellings.
- (2) 1 Re-building of a War Damaged House.

10 new dwellings were completed during the year and 8 are still under construction.

Future requirements.

There are 621 families on the application list for houses.

Condemned Houses.—There are at present 7 families living in houses which have been condemned.

WISBECH JOINT ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

A total of 96 cases were treated in the Wisbech Joint Board's Isolation Hospital—the main admissions being from the following districts:—

Diphtheria—

	Admissions			Deaths
Wisbech Borough	6	(suspected	0	
Marshland Rural District	1	cases)	0	
Wisbech Rural District	0	...	0	
March Urban District	0	...	0	
Whittlesey Rural District	0	...	0	
Thorney Rural	0	...	0	

Scarlet Fever—

Wisbech Borough	22	...	0
Marshland Rural District	23	...	0
Wisbech Rural District	4	...	0
Whittlesey Rural District	8	...	0
March Urban District	0	...	0

Erysipelas—

Wisbech Borough	1	...	0
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Measles—

Wisbech Borough	3	...	0
Marshland Rural District	3	...	0
Wisbech Rural District	2	...	0

Notifiable Diseases during the year:—

	Total cases notified	Deaths
Small Pox	0	0
Scarlet Fever	22	0
Diphtheria	0	0
Pneumonia	8	5
Erysipelas	2	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	2	0
Enteric Fever	0	0
Measles	200	0
Cerebral Spinal Fever	0	0
Whooping Cough	63	0

NOTIFICATIONS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Periods.	New Cases.						Deaths.					
	Pulmonary.		...	Non-Pulmonary.		...	Pulmonary.		...	Non-Pulmonary.		...
	M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.		M.	F.	
1	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...
5	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...	1	1	...
15	2	0	...	0	1	...	0	0	...	0	0	...
25	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	1	...	0	0	...
35	1	1	...	1	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...
45	2	0	...	0	0	...	1	0	...	0	0	...
55	0	0	...	0	0	...	3	1	...	0	0	...
65 & over	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...	0	0	...
	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>		<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	

I remain, Gentlemen,

Very faithfully yours,

H. LESLIE GROOM, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,

Medical Officer of Health.

Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year 1947

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
ALBION PLACE,
NENE QUAY, WISBECH

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Wisbech

LADY AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present to you my report for the year 1947, being my twenty-eighth Annual Report.

The report which is mainly in summary form, covers the work carried out by my department in the interests of the health of the Borough. The major part of the work has been executed by direct action and by informal notice and has thereby saved the time of the Public Health Committee as only those matters requiring statutory action are specially reported on.

Nuisances which have been investigated during the year and which have called for no less than 688 visits, have only entailed the service of 3 statutory notices, the remainder were abated by informal action. In one case however, it was found necessary to resort to Legal Proceedings and in this instance an order for abatement with costs was obtained. The indiscriminate tipping of refuse into small pits and dykes without proper clean covering has been on the increase so as to create nuisances from flies, etc., and has called for special attention. This brings to the fore the question of the old Wisbech Canal. For many years after taking up my appointment in the Borough, I have endeavoured to make useful suggestions for the abatement of the canal nuisance, including the piping and filling in, and even the question of drying up. Another practical suggestion for reducing the area, might take the form of narrowing the channel by deepening the centre of the water-way and throwing the earth on to the sides. This would at least reduce the width of the canal to be fouled and would prepare the channel for piping, in addition to increasing the flow during filling and emptying.

Housing work has again progressed as far as available materials and labour would allow and an increased number of houses have been repaired. It is essential, whilst the present shortage of housing accommodation prevails, that the life of existing houses should be extended, so that families may at least have such separate accommodation as circumstances will permit. More families are broken up by having to share houses than by other causes.

In addition to the above, many houses have deteriorated so much as to be almost beyond repair so that in the not far distant future, the Council will be called upon to take in hand a rehousing programme and remove a number of houses which have outlived their usefulness. This cannot be taken in hand whilst the present shortage continues so that an old house repaired will still be required to accommodate one separate family unit.

Twenty-seven cases were reported on for statutory action where informal notices to execute repairs were not complied with and two houses were repaired in default of statutory notices. Two certificates were issued under the Rent and Mortgage Interest Restrictions (Amendment) Act, 1933, with respect to houses not in a reasonable state of repair.

The number of cases of infectious disease notified during the year has again been low. Every case, as it occurs is investigated and disinfection of the house is carried out immediately after the removal of the case to hospital or after recovery.

Premises where food is stored or prepared for sale are regularly visited and daily visits are paid to the Central Slaughter-houses for the purpose of meat inspections. The following summaries give details of the condemnations made, resulting from the examination of food during such visits.

The following Licences have been issued during the year :—

Licences to Slaughter or Stun Animals ...	...	34
Dealers Licences to sell T.T. Milk ...	...	4
Dealers Licences to sell Pasteurised Milk ...	...	1
Knackers Licence ...	...	1
Camping Licences ...	...	4
Gangmaster's Licences ...	...	28

Rodent Control is proceeding satisfactorily. The sewers and manholes have been treated and block control is now organized and in operation. The proof that rat extermination is bringing results, is the increase in applications from owners of properties for regular service.

The work done may be summarised as follows :—

Number of pre-baits laid ...	...	2,019
Number of poison baits laid ...	...	550
Dead rats recovered ...	...	330
Estimated kill... ..	...	930

In addition to the above, premises are continually inspected for recurrence of infestations after treatment.

Applications are from time to time made for treatment of wasps nests and in this respect 47 nests have been destroyed, the cost of the work being charged against the owners of the premises.

I would thank the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their consideration of the many matters brought from time to time to their notice and the support they have given to such measures as have been necessary for the general improvement of the health of the Borough.

SUMMARIES.

INSPECTION OF PREMISES.

Inspections under Public Health Acts	688
Inspections under Housing Acts	287
Inspections after Infectious Diseases	23
Inspections of Factories	24
Inspections of Workshops and Bakehouses	25
Inspections of Shops and Food Stores	85
Inspections of Slaughter-houses	448
Inspections of Dairies and Cowsheds	34
Inspections of Common Lodging Houses	17
Inspections of Works in progress	387
Re-inspections as to compliance with notices... ..	181
Complaints investigated	367
Houses disinfected after Infectious Diseases	29
Houses treated for vermin	21
Smoke and water tests applied to drains	41

WORK CARRIED OUT IN COMPLIANCE WITH NOTICES AND UNDER SUPERVISION.

DRAINAGE.

New pipe drains provided	35
Drains repaired and cleansed	68
Waste pipes trapped... ..	9
Inspection chambers built on drains	30
Cesspools emptied	21
New cesspools built	7

SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

New water-closets provided	9
Closets repaired	24
Flushing cisterns provided to W.C.'s	24
Privies converted into water-closets	3

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories provided with sufficient Sanitary Accommodation	3
Factories provided with improved Sanitary Accommodation	1
Workshops provided with sufficient Sanitary Accommodation	1

MISCELLANEOUS.

Houses repaired	62
Houses cleansed	2
Houses provided with new sinks	2
Yards paved	8
Accumulations of refuse removed	4
Cases of overcrowding abated	3

Food.

ARTICLES CONDEMNED.

FRESH MEAT.

Whole carcasses of Beef ...	...	...	30
" " " Pork ...	...	...	16
Part " " Beef ...	...	...	69
" " " Pork ...	...	...	5
" " " Mutton ...	...	...	1
" " " Veal ...	...	...	1
Ox Livers (whole)...	...	...	295
" " (part) ...	...	...	156
" Offals (complete) ...	...	...	51
" Lungs ...	...	...	84
" Heads and Tongues ...	...	...	53
" Spleens ...	...	...	79
" Hearts ...	...	...	10
Pigs Plucks ...	...	...	37
Pigs Heads ...	...	...	1
Part Heads ...	...	...	2
Pigs Lungs ...	...	...	2
Pigs Hearts...	...	...	2
Sheeps Plucks ...	...	...	1
" Heads ...	...	...	6
" Livers ...	...	...	8
" Lungs ...	...	...	2

CAUSES FOR CONDEMNATION.

Tuberculosis ...	...	14,953 lbs.
Inflammation ...	...	1,666 "
Dropsey ...	...	3,361 "
Degeneration ...	...	442 "
Cirrhosis ...	...	2,750 "
Actinomycosis...	...	478 "
Bruised ...	...	1,913 "
Pyæmia...	...	1,036 "
C. Angioma ...	...	263 "
Congestion ...	...	1,281 "
Jaundice ...	...	114 "
Erysipelas ...	...	68 "
Emaciation ...	...	1,498 "
T. Pericarditis...	...	79 "
Septicæmia ...	...	918 "
Hydræmia ...	...	37 "
Necrosis...	...	45 "
Parasitic ...	...	27 "
Fibrosis ...	...	10 "
Bone Taint ...	...	123 "

31,062 lbs.

Or 13 tons 17 cwts. 1 qr. 10 lbs.

ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED.

Cattle...	...	...	...	1,550
Sheep ...	...	...	...	2,027
Pigs ...	...	...	...	420
Calves ..	...	...	...	62

Total 4,059

FROZEN MEAT.

Beef ...	...	...	...	71 lbs.
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FRESH FISH.

Wet Fish ...	...	...	...	476 lbs.
Crabs ...	...	...	...	318 lbs.

TINNED FOODS.

Corned Beef...	...	...	...	256
Luncheon Meat	...	...	...	31
Ox Tongue ...	...	...	...	5
Stewed Steak	...	...	...	11
M. & V. Ration	...	...	...	16
Soup ...	...	...	...	3
Fish ...	...	...	...	291
Milk ...	...	...	...	1,054
Vegetables ...	...	...	...	706
Fruit ...	...	...	...	73
Fruit Juice ...	...	...	...	28
Prepared Food	...	...	...	116
Preserves ...	...	...	...	72
Mustard ...	...	...	...	16
Cocoa ...	...	...	...	3
Dried Egg ...	...	...	...	1

Total 2,682 tins

JARS

Fruit ...	...	...	...	1
Preserved Foods	...	...	...	92
Pickles ...	...	...	...	11

Total 104 jars

PACKETS

Cake Mixture	...	...	...	2
Ryvita ...	...	...	...	3
Force ...	...	...	...	1
Tea ...	...	...	...	1
Dried Egg ...	...	...	...	2

Total 9 pkts.

CARTONS

Chocolate Spread ...	...	...	...	18
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FRESH FRUIT

Pears	...	1 ton, 14 cwt., 0 qrs., 17 lbs.
Strawberries	...	1 ton, 12 cwt., 3 qrs., 7 lbs.
Plums	...	6 cwt., 3 qrs., 0 lbs.

VARIOUS

Sugar Confectionery	...	309 lbs.
Nuts...	...	424 "
Biscuits	...	80½ "
Fruit	...	134 "
Orange Pulp	...	6,313 "
Tongue	...	3½ "
Sausage Rusk	...	112 "
Cheese	...	69½ "
Suet...	...	8½ "
Bacon	...	59 "
Spaghette	...	177 "
Flour	...	357 "
Margarine	...	55½ "
Sugar	...	11 "
Tea ..	...	31½ "
Cucumbers...	...	38 crates
Eggs...	...	60

I have the honour to be Lady and Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

E. J. SUTCLIFFE, M.S.I.A.

Senior Sanitary Inspector.