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HEALTH
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Urban District of Woodhall Spa

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1955



WOODHALL SPA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health
1955

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

S.A. O'HAGAN, M.B., B.S., D.P.H.

Sanitary Inspector

N.R. BOLTON, M.S.I.A., A.R.S.I.
(Resigned December, 1955)

N.J. ARNEY, A.I.A.S., M.S.I.A.
(Appointed February, 1956)

The Highways, Sewerage and Public Health Committees deal with the majority of the Public Health matters although a separate Water Committee and Parks and Playing Fields Committee deal with water supplies and swimming baths.

All members of the Council sit on all Committees.

The Council of the Urban District of Woodhall Spa.

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1955.

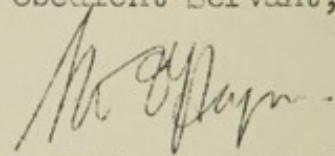
In a small Urban district, the majority of Councillors have an opportunity of seeing most of the Council's activities but some explanation of technical points may be of value.

In the field of Food Hygiene Legislation, the Regulations under the Food and Drugs Act of 1955 greatly strengthen the hand of the Medical Officer of Health and Inspector. An informal inspection of all food premises will be required to ascertain what defects need to be remedied to make the premises comply, followed later by a formal inspection to ascertain that the new requirements for structure and practice have been met. Initial inspections have suggested that whilst the structures of many food premises need modification, the actual hygienic practice of the tradespeople is satisfactory.

Some figures relating to population and age distribution is shown by the 1951 Census are given.

I must record my thanks to Mr. Bolton and Mr. Mills for their past help and welcome their successors.

I am, Sirs,
Your obedient Servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS

AREA OF URBAN DISTRICT:	1874 acres
REGISTRAR GENERAL'S MID-YEAR ESTIMATE OF RESIDENT POPULATION:	2140
DENSITY OF POPULATION:	1.14 persons per acre
NUMBER OF INHABITED DWELLINGS:	
Houses	585
Flats	51
Temporary Dwellings, Caravans, etc.	4
RATEABLE VALUE OF URBAN DISTRICT:	£15,528.
SUM REPRESENTED BY PENNY RATE:	£51. 15. 1.656

VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Live Births		
Legitimate	Male	15
	Female	<u>14</u>
		29
Illegitimate	Male	0
	Female	<u>2</u>
		2
Crude live birth rate per thousand estimated population		14. 5
Standardized live birth rate per thousand estimated population		19. 1
Live birth rate, England and Wales		15. 0

There were no still-births during the year.

The live birth rate shows a continued healthy surplus over the rate for England and Wales.

DEATHS

	Male	18
	Female	<u>22</u>
		<u>40</u>
Crude death rate per thousand estimated population		18. 7
Standardized death rate per thousand estimated population		12. 2
Death rate, England and Wales per thousand estimated population		11. 7

The age distribution of deaths remains satisfactory and the figures now available from the 1951 Census, which will not be widely divergent from today's figures, allow a calculated 24% of Woodhall population as over 60. This is to be compared with 13. 9% for the administrative county of Lindsey, 18. 7% for Horncastle U.D. and 16% for Horncastle R.D.

Whilst this age distribution in the Spa is partially artificial in that there is an immigration of elderly persons in a position to choose their place of retirement, rich and poor alike suffer the difficulties of increasing age, so that it is even more necessary to keep the elderly folk of Woodhall in touch with life for even where welfare services are available, it is often difficult to get some old folks to make use of them.

Causes of Death as shown in the Registrar General's short list

Short

<u>List No.</u>	<u>Cause of Death</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
1.	Tuberculosis, Respiratory	0	0	0
2.	Tuberculosis, other	0	0	0
3.	Syphilitic disease	0	0	0
4.	Diphtheria	0	0	0
5.	Whooping Cough	0	0	0
6.	Meningococcal infection	0	0	0
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	0	0	0
8.	Measles	0	0	0
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	0	0	0
10.	Malignant Neoplasm, stomach	0	0	0
11.	Malignant Neoplasm, lung, bronchus	1	1	2
12.	Malignant Neoplasm, breast	0	1	1
13.	Malignant Neoplasm, uterus	0	0	0
14.	Other Malignant and lymphatic Neoplasms	3	1	4
15.	Leukaemia, aleukemia	0	0	0
16.	Diabetes	1	0	1
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	2	7	9
18.	Coronary disease, angina	2	1	3
19.	Hypertension with Heart Disease	0	0	0
20.	Other Heart Disease	1	4	5
21.	Other Circulatory Disease	0	1	1
22.	Influenza	0	0	0
23.	Pneumonia	2	1	3
24.	Bronchitis	1	0	1
25.	Other diseases of Respiratory System	0	0	0
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	0	1
27.	Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	1	0	1
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	1	0	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	0	0	0
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	0	0	0
31.	Congenital malformations	0	0	0
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	2	3
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	0	0	0
34.	All other accidents	0	3	3
35.	Suicide	1	0	1
36.	Homicide and operations of war	0	0	0
	TOTAL	18	22	40

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Notification of infectious diseases during the year were as follows :-

Whooping Cough	15
Measles	2
Scarlet Fever	3
Pneumonia	14
Puerperal Pyrexia	1

The high incidence of pneumonia is interesting; the cases are predominantly elderly but the proportion of those over 60 years old at the 1951 Census was not more than 5% more than in Horncastle U.D. whilst notifications of pneumonia ran several times as high as Horncastle.

There is a possible climatic factor in that the wooded nature of Woodhall Spa is conducive to a highly moisture-laden atmosphere in winter, whilst in Horncastle U.D. the majority of houses have little garden and there are few trees, so that brief drying periods in winter are more effective.

Scarlet fever was the cause of less concern than last year but is still excessive for so small a community.

The following tables show the vaccinations and immunizations carried out under the County Council's scheme.

Diphtheria Immunizations

Age 0 - 5 years	5 - 14 years	Booster Doses Usually 5 - 14 years
1954. 20	0	34
1955. 0	1	17

Whooping Cough Immunizations

This is only recommended at ages under 5 years.

Age	under 1	1+	2+	3+	4+	Total
1954.	8	10	3	5	1	27
1955.	0	2	0	1	1	4

Combined Diphtheria and Whooping Cough protection

	Under 1 year	one	two	three	four	Total
1954	2	0	0	0	0	2
1955	18	3	0	0	2	23

Smallpox Vaccinations

		Under 1	1 - 4	5 - 14	15+	Total
1954	Primary Vaccinations	12	1	0	2	15
	Revaccinations	0	0	3	1	4
1955	Primary Vaccinations	10	1	0	2	13
	Revaccinations	0	4	3	6	13

The protection of the community against infections of known cause has always been a prime duty of public health and the adoption of combined diphtheria and whooping cough prophylactic has become very popular, so that time and trouble is saved with rather better protection for the baby. Recently it has been suggested that tetanus protection should be included and there is no technical objection although its ultimate economic value may be doubtful, although recent cases of tetanus show that preventable deaths are still allowed.

Well under half the "civilian" babies are vaccinated and the apathy of the people seems unlikely to be disturbed by anything short of an outbreak of smallpox. However, modern improved technique has reduced the upset of the child's well being to the stage when few babies are even fretful for a day.

At the same time, the amount of time and money the nation can afford to spend on health is limited, and economic pressure may force diversion of resources to the prevention of other less lethal or disfiguring diseases, but ones which are still with us although we have the means for their banishments.

The end of the year saw the parents of the nation perplexed regarding their attitude to the forthcoming offer of free protection against poliomyelitis. The first campaign has been completed without incident and has done much to reassure those who were disturbed by the American disaster.

Food Poisoning and Dysentery

During 1955 there was no indication of the threat to young children which was to develop in 1956, when Coningsby district and Horncastle amongst many other areas suffered severely from dysentery.

How Woodhall escaped is a mystery, but no notifications were received.

Since the mode of spread of dysentery and food poisoning is in some respects similar, and the catering trade is so vital to the Spa, one cannot emphasize too strongly too often, the dangers of inadequate hygiene in food rooms and the toilet accommodation.

Milk is always a potential danger and the most satisfactory way of dealing with the risk is to have only safe sources of supply - our aim already achieved in some parts of the country - then, since the risk of contamination of milk between leaving the udder of a healthy cow and consumption cannot be overlooked, pasteurization of the milk, whatever its reputation is the final safeguard.

The use of raw undesignated milk is a danger too serious to be overlooked and caterers and parents of young children should specially bear this in mind.

NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE

The General Medical and Nursing Services remain as in 1954. The small Hospital is, of course, devoted to the treatment of rheumatic conditions. The main general Hospitals serving the area being Lincoln, Louth and Boston.

Health Services of the County Council

The Woodhall Spa Infant Welfare Centre is now well established and is serving a valuable purpose which, it should be emphasized, is not competitive with the G.P. service but complementary to it.

The other clinic services at Horncastle remain available to the residents of the Spa, as in previous years.

Clinic	Day and Time	Place	Attendance
INFANT WELFARE	2nd and 4th Wednesday at 10am.	WOODHALL SPA	CASUAL
Infant Welfare	1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday at 2pm.	Horncastle	Casual
Ante-natal	1st, 3rd & 5th Tuesday at 10am.	Horncastle	Casual
Ophthalmic Orthopaedic Dental	By appointment		

Appointments for children of school age and under are made either by the Maternity and Child Welfare Officer, the School Medical Officer or the family doctor and in former case both the family doctor and the County Medical Officer's staff receive copies of Specialist's Reports, so that all may work together. It is found, however, that where a child is seen by a Specialist at the request of the family doctor, there are a few lapses where inconvenience is caused by non-receipt of the report by the School Medical Officer.

National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 47

No case was reported to me for action during the year.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

Water Supply

No decrease in consumption can be expected and the small Urban waterworks, whilst at present able to meet demands with very little need to limit consumption, has not a very large margin for eventualities or increased population.

A surplus of some 40,000 gallons per day is sold to Horncastle R.D.C. to supply the Coningsby and Tattershall area, but this has to be curtailed in periods of drought and a portable pump has in the past been used to augment the feed to the filters.

During the year, however, minor schemes were developed to increase storage and to interconnect the two main sources.

The acidity of the water which after percolating through leaf-mould and heather lies in a lime-free gravel, still causes some difficulty but both plants now have electrically operated dosing plants to chlorinate and neutralize the water.

It has proved necessary to change the alkali from soda ash to sodium hydroxide to enable the plant to meet the demand. This is unpleasant material to handle, but so far difficulties have been overcome as they have arisen.

The old iron mains in part of the town are still the cause of serious alarm for it is repeatedly reported that the flow either ceases or is reduced to a trickle. The risk to public health and the danger of fire is not overlooked by the Council but financial stringency has prevented any effective action and no improvement can be expected without an increase in rates.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

There has been a considerable amount of anxiety over the overloaded state of the works and consequent bad effluent. Plans were approved to increase the capacity of the works and to provide a new sewer with gravitation to a new ejector point at the Green Lane works.

At the time of writing, this work has just been commenced.

Scavenging and Refuse Collecting

Whilst it is recognised that modern grates are specialized appliances not designed to receive household waste, the amount of paper and other burnable and bulky material collected by the workman is appalling, and calls for additional expense in collection and disposal by burning. This is, of course an increasing and widespread problem and the provision of an incinerator at the tip should be considered.

The Swimming Pool

No difficulties were encountered during the year. The slow turnover of the filter permanently worries the Medical Officer, but the provision of additional equipment would cost a prohibitive price.

The effect of slow turnover is that an excessively high dose of chlorine has to be applied and there is a high concentration at the shallow end, detrimental to fabric and to a lesser degree to the body whilst at the same time the deep end from which water is about to be withdrawn is liable to remain chlorine-free when the pool is in heavy use.

It was, not found possible to maintain a person in the pool premises for life-saving purposes and this must remain a cause of anxiety.

Meat

No slaughtering takes place in the Spa, and much is derived from Horncastle, Boston or Lincoln where adequate inspection is maintained.

Handling and storage in the shops is a matter for the Council's attention and the small shops in the Spa create difficulties in achieving modern standards of hygiene.

Under the 1955 Food Hygiene Regulations the Council will have to enforce a high standard of hygiene in preparation and handling and difficulties can be foreseen in making some premises comply.

Meat Products

No difficulties arose from the small quantity of fresh sausages made by one butcher.

Ice-Cream

The effect of the current Ice-Cream regulations has been to practically eliminate the small maker, together with most of the risk.

It is interesting to note that, nationally, ice-cream, has ceased to be a factor in the spread of food poisoning.

Local analysis of samples is difficult for rapid transport to the Laboratory at Lincoln needs private transport and refrigeration or at least carbon-dioxide snow and vacuum flask cooling and these have not so far been available.

Other Foodstuffs

There was no evidence of any unusual phenomena. Enquiry reveals that the negligible proportion of unsaleable food is partly due to the smallness of stocks held by retailers and the consequent rapid turnover. It is probable that any condemnations take place before the foodstuffs reach the retailer in the Spa and the very occasional blown tin is usually replaced by the wholesaler without need for a certificate of condemnation.

Housing

Woodhall Spa contains a large mass of late 19th and early 20th Century houses, many of which are too large for their occupant's needs. Their structural state varies greatly but few are likely to reach demolition quality for many years. Referring again to the Census, there were 44 families in Woodhall Spa without a separate home, involving 108 persons.

The Council have gone a long way since 1951 to meet this housing need and little further building is likely.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY SANITARY INSPECTOR
DURING THE YEAR

HOUSING

Total Number of Houses erected during the year	20
(I) By Local Authority	10
(II) By other Local Authorities	-
(III) By other bodies or persons	10
Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954	
(i) Return of Proposals in accordance with Part I of the Act and Circular 55/54 (see Appendix A at end of report)	
(ii) Number of Certificates of Disrepair issued following applications by tenants served with rent increase Notice (Section 26)	1
Inspection of dwelling houses during the year	
(1)(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	27
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	35
Remedy of defects during the year without service of Formal Notice	
Number of defective dwellinghouses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	3
Action under Statutory Powers during the year	
(a) Proceedings under Sections 9 & 10 of the Housing Act, 1936 :-	
(1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	-
(2) Number of dwellinghouses which were rendered fit after service of formal notice	
(a) By Owners - (b) By Local Authority -	
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts :-	
(1) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	-
(2) Number of dwellinghouses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices	
(a) By owners - (b) By Local Authority -	

(c) Proceedings under Section 11 & 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :-

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | - |
| (2) | Number of dwellinghouses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders | - |
| (3) | Number of dwellinghouses subject to undertakings or Closing Orders | - |

(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :-

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made | - |
| (2) | Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or rooms having been rendered fit | - |

(e) Proceedings under Sections 25 & 26

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of Clearance Orders made | - |
| (2) | Number of dwellinghouses demolished in pursuance thereof | - |

Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding

- | | | |
|---------|--|----|
| (a) (I) | Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year | - |
| (II) | Number of persons concerned in such cases | - |
| (b) (I) | Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year | 2 |
| (II) | Number of families dwelling therein | 2 |
| (III) | Number of persons dwelling therein | 13 |

Housing Act, 1949

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| (a) | Number of applications for grants received | 4 |
| (b) | Number of grants made | 1 |
| (c) | Number of applications for grants made by Local Authority | - |

Movable Dwellings, Tents, Vans, etc.

- | | | |
|--|---|----|
| | Number of Site Licences | 2 |
| | Number of Individual Licences | 1 |
| | Total number of caravans permitted under Licences | 13 |
| | Number of inspection during the year - Sites | 2 |
| | - Dwellings | 1 |
| | Number of contraventions remedied | - |

FOOD PREMISES

Bakehouses

Number in district	2
Number of Inspections	24
Number of contraventions	-
Defects remedied	-

Milk Supplies

Number of distributors on Register	(a) Sterilised	3
	(b) Pasteurised	3
	(c) T.T.	3
	(d) N/D	1
Number of samples of milk taken in course of delivery		-
Number of inspections of dairy premises		24
Contraventions remedied		-

Ice Cream

Number of manufacturers on Register	2	
Number of premises licensed for sale of Ice Cream	9	
Number of inspections of premises made	20	
Number of contraventions found	-	
Number of contraventions remedied	-	
Number of samples taken - Grade I	6	
	Grade II	1
	Grade III	-
	Grade IV	-

Meat Products

Number of premises registered for manufacture of meat products	1
Number of inspections made	12
Number of contraventions found	-
Number of contraventions remedied	-

Other Food Premises

Number of inspections	-
Number of contraventions found	-
Number of contraventions remedied	-

Slaughterhouses

Number licensed - Abattoir type	-
Private (individual?)	-
Number operated by Local Authority	-

Unsound Food

Carcases inspected and condemned	-
----------------------------------	---

Rats and Mice Destruction

Number of rodent operatives employed	1 Part time
Number of premises treated :-	23
(a) dwellinghouses	5
(b) other premises	No
Are there any serious reservoirs of rats in district?	-
Other Foods condemned	-

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Closets

Number of houses with privy vaults in district	1
Number of houses with pail closets in district	9
Number of houses with water closets in district	619
Number of water closets substituted for pail closets and privy vaults	2

Cesspools and Septic Tanks

Number of Cesspools and septic tanks emptied, cleansed, etc.	2
Number of Cesspools and septic tanks abolished	-

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Details of areas or villages where provision has been made of new sewers or where existing sewerage arrangements improved - Scheme approved by Ministry for improvement of Sewerage System and sewage disposal works.
Tenders now in course of preparation.

WATER SUPPLIES

Domestic

Number of houses supplied from public mains - in house	624
- standpipe	5
Number of samples taken for chemical examination :-	1
from public supplies - satisfactory	-
- unsatisfactory	-
from private supplies - satisfactory	-
- unsatisfactory	-
Number of samples taken for bacteriological examination :-	12
from public supplies - Class 1	-
from private supplies - Class 1	-

Appendix A.

HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954

Return of Proposals in accordance with Part I of the Act and Circular 55/54

Total number of permanent dwellings in the local authority's area 641

PART I The total problem

- (i) Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936 11
- (ii) Period in years which the Council think necessary for securing the demolition of all the houses in (i) 5

PART II Orders already made, etc.

- (iii) Number of houses in (i) in clearance areas and already covered by operative or compulsory purchase orders or owned by the local authority
- (iv) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders have been submitted to the Minister but have not yet become operative -

PART III Action in the first five years

- (v) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders are to be made or which are to be purchased by agreement within the five years -
- (vi) Number of houses which are to be included in clearance areas still to be declared and which within the five years will be owned by the local authority or will have been included in a clearance order or a compulsory purchase order submitted to the Minister -
- (vii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) to be patched (if necessary) and retained within the five years under section 2 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, for temporary accommodation -

- (viii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) to be demolished in the five years -
- (ix) Number of houses (including those already comprised in operative demolition orders) to be demolished in the five years as a result of action under section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936 11

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 & 1948

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (Including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector).

Premises	No. on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	5	0	0
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	9	23	0	0
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	28	0	0

Cases in which defects were found

Premises	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	Referred By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences				
a. insufficient	-	-	-	-
b. defective	-	-	-	-
c. not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-
Other offences, etc.	1	-	1	-
TOTAL	1	-	1	-



