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# **Urban District of Woodhall Spa**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

of the

**Medical Officer of Health**

**1969**



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WOODHALL SPA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report  
of the  
Medical Officer of Health

1969

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL

Medical Officer of Health

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

Public Health Inspector

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

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

Public Health Committee

F.W. Mills  
C.H. Brown  
J.W. Fletcher  
L.D. Fowler  
W. Gill  
D.W. Harrison  
E.W. Harber  
A. Leggate  
M.J.C. Wheeler

Housing Committee

F.W. Mills  
Mrs. M.F. Farmery  
A.H.H. Brown  
J.W. Fletcher  
W. Gill  
E.W. Harber  
A. Leggate  
R.G. Webb  
M.J.C. Wheeler

To The Chairman and Members of  
The Urban District Council of Woodhall Spa,

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Farmery and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my annual report for 1969.

The luck of the draw in the causes of death in a small area has been favourable - as I commented last year there is hope that eventually we may educate the public into ways of life that will reduce arterial disease and so strokes and cardiac disease will cease to be major causes of early death. Since Woodhall Spa is remarkable for its very high mean age at death, the foregoing may seem odd but we do have a junior population and owe a duty to them to protect them as far as possible. Over eating and smoking are known hazards to which reference has often been made but against which taxation and inflation will do more than local authority. No criticism can be made of the Councils' facilities for physical recreation which is believed to go a long way to preserve the circulation. Unfortunately the most practical exercise for the bulk of the population - in both senses of the phrase - is quiet walking and it has lost its popularity even with the canine population to which also, the car is evidently a status symbol. Amongst them too, lack of exercise and over-feeding is a prime cause of early death so that dog-ownership and proper care, including adequate walking may well keep dog and master alive and well. Animals in dwelling houses have not been traditionally over-welcome to housing authorities who, inevitably, hear of those who become a nuisance. Nevertheless, we are all members of one another and animals may well be the necessary friends of the toddler, the "way-out" teenager, and as we all know the companion of the aged and lonely. Possibly only the latter have been accepted by the community generally but the others are well worth a second thought. Many, as soon as animals are mentioned think first of disease and, currently, of the scare over rabies. This is a virus disease and in common with other viruses diseases like measles and the common cold treatment is not particularly successful, but, unlike the latter, rabies does not spontaneously recover and most interesting work is going on on the production of a safe vaccine capable of reliably preventing rabies in a person or animal bitten by a rabid animal. The hazard in this part of the country is infinitesimal but public alarm is out of all proportion. In fact, even in the absence of proper treatment, the bite of a rabid animal is followed by disease in only a minority of cases. Before leaving the question of animal bites, it is well known to doctors that the bites of all animals including man, if severe enough to cause breakage of skin and marked bruising carry some (probably quite small) risk of tetanus and it is usual, therefore, to give a booster of tetanus toxoid to an already immunized person (i.e. most children and most who served in the armed services).

If the person bitten has not been properly immunized, however, the relative risk from the bite and from the administration of serum must be carefully considered. It is notable, however, that when bitten by their own pet, not suspected of being ill, few people seek medical advice or come to any harm. On balance, the advantages of house-animals to their owners must be seen as far outweighing the definite but remote risks, either of rabies or other transmissible diseases.

The birth rate in the Spa fluctuates widely from year to year because the numbers are so small that one birth more or less makes a big difference in the rate. This is even more true in the case of the minute figures for illegitimacy, where a mere 4 births produce a illegitimacy rate of 16%.

Sanitarily, the Spa contrives to survive despite increasing difficulties; the increase in cars has made their accommodation in a place not planned for them, either moving or static, a matter for concern. The continued increase in bulk of refuse and declining dry ash content has increased the difficulty both of collection and disposal. Increased building of new dwellings results in an increased volume of sewage, albeit without much increase in solids, calling for more work from the pumping equipment and the works to remove the solids. With the chronic problem of massive infiltration of soil water, the prospect is a daunting one. It is tempting to think that amalgamation of districts into a unitary authority, commanding vast financial resources, would deal with these problems promptly. However, no suggestion has been made as to how these large authorities would get the day-to-day information or whether, in the welter of other matters, they would act more effectively, remain to be seen. It seems apparent that for a local authority to be reasonably efficient it should be big enough to hold reserves of men, machinery and money for the occasional crisis, without having to question whether "its in the estimates".

Notifications of infectious disease remain quite minimal. This is, of course, an artefact; resulting from Ministry decisions on which infectious diseases shall be deemed notifiable. Mumps, German Measles and Chicken Pox can rage without my official knowledge, as can tonsillitis, so long as the patient does not get a rash, for tonsillitis with a rash becomes scarlet fever. Most of the traditional fevers are now well under control and preventive medicine is more concerned with other aspects of the quality of life, but regular reporting of any cases of those diseases against which immunization is practised is vital to ensuring that our material and methods remain effective. This is especially true of whooping cough in which variations of antigenic strain occur every few years, necessitating the isolation of the new strain and modification of the vaccine to include it. The grape-vine suggests that this may be happening at present but, in the absence of notifications or laboratory isolation, one can only guess.

Water Supply has been long-standing difficulty in the Spa for those involved and, occasionally with the public. Originally the works owned by this Council were reasonably adequate for the needs of the community but, when taken over by the Water Board, it was believed a magic wand would remove all problems. Works have been done aimed at the long-term improvement in the supply and delivery. In the course of these works, the velocity of water in mains has been altered so that loose rust from cast-iron pipes is stirred up and muddy water comes from taps. If water were unlimited at source, mains flushing would be value but with limited supplies, flushing can only be done under controlled conditions.

During the year the question of refuse-tipping space was again considered. Whilst a certain amount more space may be created on the existing site it is evident that neither the local land owner nor the County Council are prepared to allow any extension of the site and that the alternative will greatly increase the cost of collection by increasing the length of journey (to the R.D.'s tip). The possibility has to be envisaged of either two vehicles and drivers or one large vehicle which would make only one trip to the tip each day. With the proposals of the Maud Committee, it seems unlikely that any commitment will be undertaken by this Council.

1969 was not a year of achievement in the Council Housing. The initial group of dwellings for the elderly having been very well received, it was resolved during the year to build a further group similar in concept to the recently completed scheme in Horncastle. A start is expected early in 1970.

During the year there were four cases of deaths resulting from conditions not normally inevitably fatal. This is a high percentage of the total. Two cases were of conditions that are always life-threatening and in which the element of chance fell unhappily but the two women who died of cancer of the neck of the womb are most unlikely to have been examined in accordance with the Ministry's scheme. Had they been so examined it is most probable that the disease could have been found at a stage when cure is virtually certain.

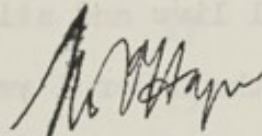
The year has been remarkably free from infectious disease - only one case of infectious hepatitis (catarrhal jaundice) being reported. Minor outbreaks of measles occurred in 1967 and 1968 but in no way enough to rule out further cases in 1969 or 70. Whooping Cough is now rare in all of my districts due, no doubt to efficient immunization, but the incidence of Measles in 1968 was so high in other districts that its absence in 1969 was predictable even without any vaccination against it. Consequently, too, there were few children left to be vaccinated.

Currently the announcement of a vaccine against German Measles is "news". The disease is usually trivial except to the woman in early pregnancy whose child runs a serious risk of being grossly injured - to the point, in fact, when some people feel that the pregnancy should be aborted. This should be a last resort and a confession of failure since a more conservative approach would be to ensure that women do not contemplate pregnancy without first becoming immune to german measles; either by vaccination or natural attack.

The cost to the community of terminating a pregnancy is considerable whilst that of catering for a seriously handicapped person throughout life may be truly enormous. This is the background against which the cost of immunizing probably thousands of girls to prevent one case of a damaged foetus, must be assessed. The matter is medically practical and the question remains one of the individual or national cost. A dose of vaccine costs roughly a pound; plus the cost of administration. The situation is rather similar to that of poliomyelitis where again there is a small risk of an overwhelming catastrophe.

I must not conclude without once again thanking all members of the Council and the Officers and Staff for their willing co-operation throughout the year.

I remain,  
Your obedient Servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

## STATISTICS

Area of Urban District :	1874 acres
Registrar General's Mid-Year Estimate of Resident Population:	2250
Density of Population:	1.20 persons per acre
Number of Inhabited Dwellings:	765

## VITAL STATISTICS

<u>BIRTHS</u>	Male	Female
<u>Live Births</u>	11	14
Rate per 1000 population	11.1	(E & W 16.3)
Ratio of locally adjusted birth rate to national rate	0.89	
Illegitimate live births % total	16%	

### Still Births

Rate per 1000 total live and still births 0

Infant Deaths (deaths under 1 year) 0

### Infant Mortality Rates

Total infant deaths per 1000  
total live births 0

Legitimate infant deaths per  
1000 legitimate live births 0

Illegitimate infant deaths per  
1000 illegitimate live births 0

### Comparability Factors

Births 1.30

Deaths 0.50

Neo-natal Mortality Rate

	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>
(deaths under four weeks per 1000 total live births)	0	0	0

Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate

(deaths under one week per 1000 total live births)	0	0	0
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Perinatal Mortality Rate

(stillbirths and deaths under one week combined per 1000 total live and still births)	42	0	0
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Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

Number of deaths	0	0	0
Rate per 1000 total live and still births	0	0	0

DEATHS

Male	17	19	20
Female	25	28	28
	—	—	—
Totals	42	47	48
	—	—	—

Deaths per 1000 population (E & W 11.3) 21.3

Ratio of locally adjusted death rate to national rate 0.89

Causes of Death at ages under 65 years

Cancer	1
Insect Sting	1
Coronary disease	1
Stroke	1

Causes of Death as shown in the Registrar General's Short List

Short List No.	Cause of Death	Sex	Total All Ages	Age in years										75 & over
				Under 4 weeks	4 weeks & under 1 year	1 - 5	5 - 15	15 - 25	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 55	55 - 65	65 - 75	
B19(8)	Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	F	3	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	-
B19(11)	Other Malignant Neoplasms	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
B21	Diabetes Mellitus	F	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B26	Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
B27	Hypertensive Disease	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
B28	Ischaemic Heart Disease	F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
B29	Other Forms of Heart Disease	F	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	6
B30	Cerebrovascular Disease	F	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
B46(5)	Other Diseases of Circulatory System	M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
B32	Pneumonia	F	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
B46(6)	Other Diseases of Respiratory System	F	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
B39	Hyperplasia of Prostate	M	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
BE48	All other accidents	M	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
		F	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
		M	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
TOTAL ALL CAUSES			20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	14	
		F	28	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	4	20	

### The National Health Service

No changes have occurred in the National Health Service during the year.

### Water Supply

The water supply of Woodhall Spa is under the control of the East Lincolnshire Water Board. No complaints have reached me regarding the quantity or quality of the water supplied.

Copies of bacteriological reports are received regularly.

The Department is now pressing health authorities to carry out a policy of fluoride correction on public water supplies.

After 11 years study, the benefits have been clearly shown whilst adverse effects have not. Until it is implemented I can only continue to advocate "tea for toddlers" as a partial source of the fluoride they need.

### Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Some difficulties were experienced, apparently through ingress of large quantities of builders sand into a sewer, involving considerable expense in its removal, because of the unfortunate nature of the subsoil surrounding the sewers.

### Refuse Collection and Disposal

No solution has been found to the problem of where to deposit the refuse without offence to health or amenity.

### Common Lodging Houses

This item is required by the Department. It may suffice to say that no such institution has ever, to my knowledge, existed in Woodhall Spa.

Food and Drugs Act, 1955

(a) Milk Supplies - Brucella Abortus

This is dealt with mainly at County level. I am always informed of positive results. No action was necessary in respect of Woodhall Spa.

(b) Liquid Egg (Pasteurization) Regulations 1963

No pasteurization plant operates in the area.

(c) Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960

Trade	No. of premises	No. fitted to comply with Reg.16.	No. to which Reg. 19 applies	No. fitted to comply with Reg.19.
Hotels and Public Houses	6	6	6	6
Cafes, Restaurants and Snack Bars	3	3	3	3
Butchers	3	3	3	3
Bakers	2	2	2	2
Grocers	4	3	4	4

(d) Poultry Inspection

No poultry processing premises operate within the Spa.

REPORT OF WORK DONE BY PUBLIC HEALTH

INSPECTOR DURING THE YEAR

1969

HOUSING:

Total number of dwelling-houses and flats in district	765
Total number of houses erected during the year :-	
(1) By local authority	0
(2) By other local authorities	0
(3) By other bodies or persons	28
Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954 - 1957 :-	
(1) Number of certificates of disrepair issued	0
Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year :-	
(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health and Housing Acts)	28
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	49
Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices :-	
Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers	20
(1) Proceedings under Public Health Acts	0
(2) Proceedings under Housing Acts	0
(3) Slum Clearance - proceedings under the Housing Acts :-	
(a) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which demolition orders were made (individual unfit)	0
(b) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders (individual unfit houses only)	0
(c) Number of dwelling-houses, or parts, subject to Closing Orders	0
(d) Number of dwelling-houses, or parts, rendered fit by undertakings	0
(e) Number of dwelling-houses included in confirmed Clearance Orders	0
(f) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance thereof	0
(g) Total number of dwelling-houses on which Demolition Orders are operative and which are still occupied except under the provisions of Sections 34, 35 and 46 of the Housing Act, 1957	0
(h) Total number of dwelling-houses occupied under Sections 34, 35 and 46 of the Housing Acts, 1957	0

(i) Houses demolished or closed voluntarily by owners which would otherwise have been the subject of statutory action to secure demolition or closure	2
Housing Act - Overcrowding	
(a) (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	1
(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases	6
(b) (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	1
(2) Number of families dwelling therein	1
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein	6
Housing Acts, 1949 - 64	
Number of dwellings for which applications for grants have been received - standard	5
- discretionary	0
Number of dwellings subject to grant - standard	5
- discretionary	0
Number of houses owned by Local Authority which have been the subject of grant aid by the Ministry	0
Housing Act, 1969	
Number of dwellings for which applications for grants have been - Standard Grant (Sec.8)	5
- Improvement Grant (Sec.2)	0
- Special Grants (Sec.13)	0
Number of dwellings subject to grant - Standard Grant	5
- Improvement Grant	0
- Special Grant	0
Number of declared General Improvement Areas	0
Number of dwellings in these areas	0
Number of other buildings (e.g. shops)	0
Number of dwellings included which qualify for :-	
- Standard Grants	0
- Improvement Grants	0
- Special Grants	0
Moveable Dwellings, Tents, Vans, etc.	
Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960	0
Public Health Act, 1936	
Number of site licences	2
Number of individual licences	1
Total number of moveable dwellings permitted under the above licences	48

# Public Health Act, 1936 continued

Number of inspections during the year - sites	61
- dwellings	0
Number of contraventions remedied	0
Number of sites exempt from licence	0
Number of moveable dwellings thereon	0

## FOOD PREMISES

### Bakehouses

Number in district	1
Number of inspections	2
Number of contraventions	0
Defects remedied	0

### Ice Cream

Number of manufacturers on register	2
Number of premises licensed for the sale of ice cream	8
Number of inspections of premises made	11
Number of contraventions found	0
Contraventions remedied	0
Number of samples taken	0

### Meat Products

Number of premises registered for manufacture of meat products	1
Number of inspections made	2
Number of contraventions found	1
Contraventions remedied	1

### Other Food Premises

Number of other food premises (i.e. excluding bakehouses and premises registered for manufacture of ice cream and meat products)	27
Number of inspections made	48
Number of contraventions found	3
Contraventions remedied	3

### Slaughterhouses

Number licensed - abattoir type	0
- private individual	0

### UNSOUND FOOD

Carcases and offal inspected and condemned in whole or part	0
Other Food Condemedned	0
Method of disposal	Incineration

## DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

### Closets

Number of houses with privy vaults in district	1
Number of houses with pail closets in district	0
Number of houses with water closets in district	761
Number of water closets substituted for pail closets or privy vaults	2
Do Council operate pail closets emptying service?	No

### Cesspools and Septic Tanks

Number of cesspools and septic tanks emptied, cleaned etc.	3
Number of cesspools and septic tanks abolished	0
Do Council operate cesspool/septic tanks emptying service?	No

### Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Details of areas or villages where provision has been made for new sewers or where existing sewage arrangements improved :-	0
Details of areas or villages where provision has been made of new sewage disposal facilities or existing arrangements improved :-	0
Any part of district urgently requiring public sewers and/or treatment works for public health reasons :-	No

## WATER SUPPLIES

### Domestic

Number of houses supplied from public mains	
- in house	763
- standpipe/outside tap	1
Number of houses supplied from private sources	0
New sources of supply and location	0
Number of public supplies closed	0
Any part of district requiring public supply for public health reasons	No
Number of samples taken for chemical examination	0
Number of samples taken for bacteriological examination	0

### Swimming and Paddling Pools

	Swimming Pools	Paddling Pools
Number in operation	1	1
Number fitted with continuous mechanical filtration and chlorination	1	1
Number of samples of water taken for chemical examination	8	8
Number of samples taken for bacteriological examination	0	0

## GENERAL

### Offensive Trades

Number of Premises in district 0

### Knackers Yards

Number Licensed 0

### Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963

Number of premises licensed 32

Number of inspections 41

Number of defects 3

Number remedied 3

### Disinfection and Disinfestation

Rooms or premises disinfected

(a) infectious disease other than tuberculosis 0

(b) tuberculosis 0

Number of premises subject to disinfestation 0

### Refuse Collection and Disposal

Number of premises from which refuse is collected 796

Frequency of collection 7 - 8 days

Type of receptacle bin

Method of disposal Controlled Tipping

Is this satisfactory? Yes

Number of Tips 1

Number of vehicles 1

Is collection by Local Authority or Contract? L.A.

Estimated amount of refuse disposed of annually 1,400 tons

### Details of nuisances abated

	After Informal Intimation	After Statutory Notice
Refuse	6	-
Foul ditches, ponds and stagnant water	15	-
Drainage	12	-
Poultry and animals	0	-
Dangerous Premises	0	-
Miscellaneous nuisances	6	-
	<u>39</u>	

### Rats and Mice Destruction

Number of rodent operatives employed 1 part time

Number of premises treated - dwellinghouses 59

- other premises 24

Are there any serious reservoirs of rats  
in the district? No

Service covers, domestic, business and agricultural premises.

## Atmospheric Pollution

Number of visits	0
Number of nuisances found	0
Number of nuisances abated	0

## 1961 - 62. FACTORIES ACT, 1961

Part I of the Act - inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Public Health Inspectors)

	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1. factories in which secs. 1 - 4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	4	0	0
2. factories not included in (1) in which sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	9	25	0	0
3. ther premises in which sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	29	0	0

Particulars	No. of cases in which defects were found				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	to H.M. Insp.	by H.M. Insp.	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	-	-	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act	1	1	-	1	-
TOTAL	1	1	-	1	-





