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AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

A N N U A L R E P O R T S

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

1953.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS:-

D. McGOWAN	M.B.,CH.B.,D.P.H. Medical Officer of Health.
J. H. ELLIS	Chief Sanitary Inspector. Certificate of R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B. Certificate of R.S.I. for Inspectors of Meat and other Foods.
W. HIGHAM	District Sanitary Inspector. Certificate of R.S.A. (Scotland) Certificate of R.S.A. (Scotland) for Inspectors of Meat and other Foods.
D. GRANTLEY SMITH	District Sanitary Inspector. Certificate of R.S.I. and S.I.E.J.B.
J. S. STRONG	Rodent Officer.

AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1953.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Greenhill and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you the Annual Report on the health of the District and the work of the Public Health Department for 1953.

Generally speaking the health of the Community was good and apart from the epidemic of measles and the increase in the number of Scarlet-fever cases towards the end of the year there was no undue incidence of any of the serious notifiable diseases.

The Registrar General's estimate of the population showed a surprisingly large increase from 26,470 in 1952 to 28,710 in 1953. The corrected Birth Rate (15.2 per 1,000 of total population) is very close to that of England & Wales as a whole and the table on page 3 of the report shows that the post-war rise in the number of births has now settled down to normal again and for the past 3 years has remained about the same level.

The corrected Death Rate was 10.1 per 1,000 of the total population which is somewhat lower than the provisional Death Rate for England & Wales which was 11.4.

The Infant Mortality Rate was high (36.0 per 1,000 live births) but this rate tends to show large annual variations owing to the comparatively small numbers involved.

Regarding the environmental services, the provision of new houses by the Local Authority during the year was satisfactory but as Mr. Ellis has pointed out in his Report, we are now approaching a stage where the emphasis is shifting from the building of new property by the Local Authority to the repair and improvement of existing property and new building by private enterprise. There are still a very large number of families in the District who require adequate housing.

Finally, I would like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Committees with which the Health Department is associated, for their support, and the Officers and Staff of other Departments for their assistance and co-operation.

I remain,
Your obedient Servant,

D. McGOWAN.

Medical Officer of Health.

September, 1954.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

General Statistics.

Area of District.		90,551 acres.
Population:	1931 Census	22,076
"	1952 " (R.G's Estimate)	26,470
"	Registrar General's Estimate for Mid.1953.	28,710
Rateable Value.		£198,415
Number of Inhabited houses.		7,859

Extracts from Vital Statistics for Year 1953.

LIVE BIRTHS:

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate.	190	164	354
Illegitimate.	4	3	7
	194	167	361

BIRTH RATE: per 1,000 population = 12.6

CORRECTED BIRTH RATE:(Comparability Factor 1.21) = 15.2

STILL BIRTHS:

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate.	1	5	6
Illegitimate.	-	-	-
	1	5	6

STILL BIRTH RATE: (per 1,000 total births) = 16.4

DEATHS:

Male.	Female.	Total.
165	157	322

CRUDE DEATH RATE: = 11.2 per 1,000 population

CORRECTED DEATH RATE: (Comparability Factor 0.90) = 10.1

MATERNAL DEATHS:- Nil

INFANT MORTALITY: (Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age).

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate.	6	6	12
Illegitimate.	-	1	1
	6	7	13

INFANT MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 live births = 36.0

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

The Registrar General gives the corrected number of live births in the District as 361 (194 boys and 167 girls), this being 25 births more than in 1952. Of these births 7 were illegitimate (4 boys and 3 girls).

The crude birth rate for 1953 was 12.6 and when the comparability factor (1.21) is applied, the corrected birth rate was 15.2 per 1,000 of the total population compared with 14.0 in 1952. The birth rate for England & Wales in 1953 was 15.5

The following table shows the trend of the birth rate following the high peak at the end of the last war.

Birth Rates.

Year:-	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953
England & Wales.	19.1	20.5	17.9	16.7	15.8	15.5	15.3	15.5
Axbridge Rural District.	17.9	18.1	17.5	16.9	14.0	13.7	12.7	12.6

STILL BIRTHS.

The registered number of stillbirths in 1953 was 6 (1 male & 5 females) of which none were illegitimate, thus giving a still birth rate of 16.4 per 1,000 total births or 0.21 per 1, 000 of total population. The comparable still birth rate for England & Wales was 22.4 per 1,000 total births or 0.35 per 1, 000 of total population.

DEATHS.

After correction for transferable deaths the net total assigned to the District by the Registrar General was 322 (165 males and 157 females). This is 9 more than in 1952 and gives a crude death rate of 11.2 . When adjusted for age and sex distribution to make it comparable with other districts, the total death rate was 10.1 per 1,000 of total population compared with 11.4 for England & Wales as a whole.

The number of deaths in the four quarters of the year were:-

	1953	1952
First Quarter	87	80
Second Quarter	93	73
Third Quarter	63	70
Fourth Quarter	79	90

The following table shows the causes of death in 1953:-

Causes of Death.	1953.		
	Males.	Females.	Total.
Tuberculosis of respiratory system	-	1	1
Other forms of Tuberculosis	-	-	-
Syphilitic diseases	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	1	1
Meningococcal Infections	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-
Other infective & Parasitic diseases	-	-	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	7	4	11
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	3	1	4
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	4	4
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	1	1
Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasm	16	13	29
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	2	2
Diabetes	1	3	4
Vascular Lesions of nervous system	19	30	49
Coronary disease, angina pectoria	24	14	38
Hypertension with heart disease	3	2	5
Other heart disease	34	41	75
Other circulatory diseases	6	8	14
Influenza	2	2	4
Pneumonia	6	-	6
Bronchitis	7	2	9
Other diseases of respiratory system	3	-	3
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	4	1	5
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	4	4
Nephritis and neprosis	5	4	9
Hyperplasis of prostate	2	-	2
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-	-
Congenital malformations	1	-	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	8	14	22
Motor vehicle accidents	7	1	8
All other accidents	6	2	8
Suicide	1	2	3
Homicide and operations of war	-	-	-
All Causes - Total	165	157	322

Notable features of the death returns were that only 1 death was due to lung tuberculosis, compared with 7 in 1952 and that lung cancer is again shown to be mainly confined to men. During the past two years, of the 12 deaths due to this cause, 11 occurred in men. There was an increase in the road deaths from 6 in 1952 to 8 in 1953.

SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS, 1953.
(The figures in brackets are those of 1952).

Ages at Death in Years:-	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 1	6 (6)	7 (3)	13 (9)
1 to 9	2 (2)	- (3)	2 (5)
10 to 24	5 (2)	1 (2)	6 (4)
25 to 44	7 (6)	6 (7)	13 (13)
45 to 64	27 (47)	16 (26)	43 (73)
65 to 69	20 (22)	20 (12)	40 (34)
Total under 70 years	67 (85)	50 (53)	117 (138)
70 to 74	28 (13)	17 (18)	45 (31)
75 to 79	30 (26)	37 (38)	67 (64)
80 to 84	25 (15)	23 (26)	48 (41)
85 to 89	13 (6)	18 (17)	31 (25)
90 to 94	2 (3)	8 (8)	10 (11)
95 to 99	- -	3 (3)	3 (3)
100 & over	- -	1 -	1 -
Total over 70 years	98 (65)	107 (110)	205(175)
	165 (150)	157 (163)	322(313)

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

There were no deaths during the year from maternal causes.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Cause of death	Under 1 Day	1-7 Days	1-4 Weeks	Total under 1 Month	1-3 Months	3-6 Months	6-9 Months	9-12 Months	Total under 1 Year.
Asphyxia Neonatorum	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Prematurity	5	2	-	7	-	-	-	-	7
Erythroblastosis	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Congenital Heart Disease	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Atelectasis	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Asphyxiation, Accidental	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total:	8	2	-	10	1	-	1	1	13

After correction for transferable deaths, 13 children (6 boys and 7 girls) under the age of 1 year, died in 1953. This is four more than in 1952 and gives a comparatively high Infant Mortality Rate of 36.0 per 1,000 live births as compared with 26.8 for the whole of England & Wales. The relatively small numbers involved, however, make big fluctuations in the Infant Mortality Rate inevitable.

It will be seen from the table showing the causes of death in infants that 11 of the 13 deaths were due to conditions present at birth and therefore could be called "non-preventable". Prematurity accounted for 7 of the 13 deaths. Of the 2 "preventable" deaths, one was due to broncho pneumonia caused by whooping cough whilst the other was due to accidental asphyxiation. The latter, unfortunately, is still too frequently found as a cause of death in infants.

WATER SUPPLIES.

Generally speaking, the water supplies in the District are satisfactory for quality and quantity but the deficiencies in quantity noted in previous reports in the Brean and Berrow area continued. Temporary relief was again obtained during the summer months by installing an auxiliary pump to boost the water pressure in the line of mains, and in addition, to avoid increased consumption of water, no new licences for caravan sites in the area were issued. At the time of writing this report, the link main at Brean and Berrow to improve the water supply has just been completed.

Every parish has a piped water supply and 7,347 houses representing an estimated population of 25,920 are supplied from the public mains. 24 houses representing 50 people obtain water supplies from standpipes. 427 houses rely on wells for water supply and during the year a piped supply was given to 16 houses in place of a well supply.

The following extensions of the public water supply were carried out in 1953.

	Cost.
Extension of main at Cheddar to obtain further bulk supply from Bristol Waterworks Co.	£1,012.

Future proposals for extensions or improvements are as follows:-

	Estimated Cost.
Water Supply - Wrington Hill, Wrington.	£3,250.
Extension of Main - Kewstoke.	£2,761.
Water Supply - Charterhouse	£20,267.

The Public Health Department collects samples of water from the mains at points throughout the District and submits them at regular intervals for examination at the Public Health Laboratory.

The results of the sampling of water supplies for bacteriological analysis are given in the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

Parish.	Dwelling houses.	Dwelling-houses receiving a supply from Public Water Mains.	Population supplied from Public Water Mains. Direct to houses.	Stand-pipe.
Axbridge	294	292	1,173	8
Badgworth	114	113	371	2
Banwell	660	639	2,188	-
Berrow	120	118	372	-
Blagdon	341	333	1,155	-
Bleadon	213	196	616	-
Brean	99	97	319	-
Brent Knoll	251	238	809	-
Burnham Without	97	97	318	-
Burrington	144	112	397	-
Butcombe	63	54	173	-
Chapel Allerton	80	78	282	-
Cheddar	861	844	3,023	4
Churchill	373	319	1,099	2
Compton Bishop	128	108	457	-
Congresbury	467	408	1,539	-
East Brent	224	224	766	-
Hutton	186	160	549	9
* Kewstoke	245	212	682	-
+ Locking	88	74	192	-
Loxton	59	49	163	-
Lympsham	157	157	541	6
Mark	266	265	962	5
Puxton	49	46	190	-
Shipham	202	191	612	2
Weare	136	134	425	-
Wedmore	722	638	2,394	9
Wick-st-Lawrence	51	47	193	-
Winscombe	696	690	2,386	3
Wrington	473	414	1,594	-

* Weston-s-Mare Borough Council Water Supply Area.
\+ Excluding R.A.F.Station personnel.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The following parishes in the District have main drainage and efficient sewage disposal systems - Banwell, Blagdon, Cheddar, Butcombe & Winscombe.

The following extensions, new works or improvements were carried out during the year.

	Cost.
Extension of the existing sewage disposal works at Banwell.	£ 7,000
Virtual completion of Axbridge & Cross Sewerage Scheme.	£41,000

Future proposals include:-

	Approx. Cost.
Congresbury & District Sewerage & Sewage Disposal Scheme.	Under revision.
Extension of sewers - Hollow Lane, Shipham.	£ 1,265.
Sewerage Scheme - Parish of Locking.	£12,840.
Extension of sewer at "Mooseheart", Winscombe.	£714.
Extension of irrigation area at Wedmore Sewage Works.	£400.
Extension to St.Michael's Home, Axbridge.	£515.

HOUSING.

Progress in the erection of new houses during the year was again very satisfactory, the Local Authority building 124 houses compared with 114 in 1952 and private enterprise building 83 compared with 31 in the previous year.

The programme of building by the Local Authority in 1954 however, only allows for the building of 64 houses, and with the waiting list of applicants for Council Houses still above 500, I cannot see any satisfaction of the demand for housing for many years to come.

Reconditioning of sub-standard property is proceeding, and is being helped considerably by grants made to house owners by the Local Authority under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1949. The effect of the new Rents & Repairs Act on the improvement of existing property still remains to be seen.

The following tables show the progress of housing during the year.

	Houses erected in 1953.		Houses in course of erection at end of year 1953.	Conversion to flats and dwellings.	
	Perm.	Temp.	Perm.	Perm.	Temp.
Local Authority.	124	-	38	-	-
Private Enterprise.	83	-	35	4	-
	207	-	73	4	-

	December 1953.	December 1952.
No. of houses owned by the Council.	1,211	1,087
No. of houses requisitioned by the Council.	32	38
No. of hutments administered by the Council.	20	43
No. of applicants for Council Houses.	503	541
No. of families rehoused during the year.	165	152

The number of post-war houses erected by the Local Authority up to the end of 1953 is 692 and the programme for 1954 provides for the erection of 60 houses.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The usual biennial outbreak of measles which began towards the end of 1952 continued into the early months of 1953 and a total number of 392 cases were notified by the end of the epidemic. Scarlet Fever appeared as a widespread outbreak at the end of the year and continued in most of the Parishes of the District for several months in 1954. The disease in the great majority of cases was very mild and caused no more than a few days illness. Its mildness, however, probably contributed to the widespread and prolonged course of the outbreak as, in addition to the notified cases, there were probably many children attending school and other public places who were infected but so mildly that their parents had not troubled to call in their private doctor. There were probably many cases also who had a mild sore throat and tonsilitis but had no obvious rash and therefore escaped detection.

Only two cases of Poliomyelitis occurred in the District during the year despite the fact that in the southern part of the County there was a severe outbreak during the summer months.

There were no notified cases of Food Poisoning or Dysentery during the year but this certainly does not mean that these infections were absent from the district. Dysentery, due to Shig.Sonnei, is probably widespread in many parts of the district.

Notified cases of Whooping Cough were less than in 1952 but unfortunately one child died from this infection.

The following table shows the notifications of infectious diseases in the District during the year.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Measles	247	-	-
Scarlet Fever	41	11	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Enteric & Paratyphoid Fever	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	1	1	-
Dysentery	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	45	-	1
Pneumonia	8	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	2	-
Acute Encephalitis	-	-	-
Small Pox	-	-	-
Erysipelas	5	1	-
Food Poisoning	-	-	-

TUBERCULOSIS.

32 new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and 5 cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis were registered during the year. There was only one death from pulmonary tuberculosis. The number of cases on the register at the end of 1953 was:-

Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.	
Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.
67	49	10	11	77	60

It is pleasing to see that throughout the country, deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis are steadily falling in number, probably due to more effective and better facilities for treatment being available. The number of new cases being notified, however, appears to be rising, but this is probably due to better methods of case finding rather than a true rise in the incidence of the disease. One of the most effective methods of finding early cases at a stage when they can be treated comparatively easily is through the Mass Radiography Service. Until the present, it has not been possible to arrange a visit of a unit of this service to the Rural District, although facilities have been available to adjacent districts, but arrangements have been made for a visit to Axbridge & Cheddar in September, 1954.

DIPHTHERIA.

Again there were no cases of diphtheria notified during 1953, the last to occur in the District being in 1946. Immunisation against diphtheria by private doctors and in Infant Welfare Clinics

continued throughout the year and 195 children under 5 years of age received primary immunisation. 45 children in the age group 5 - 14 years received primary immunisation and 307 children under the age of 15 years received reinforcing doses.

A total of 2,628 children under the age of 15 years have completed a full course of immunisation during the five years up to the end of 1953.

It cannot be emphasised too often that the low incidence of diphtheria in the country is due to the extensive campaign for immunisation which has been carried out since 1940. We cannot afford to be complacent and allow the level of immunisation in the child population to fall. The only way to ensure that diphtheria does not return as an epidemic disease is to have every child effectively immunised.

VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX.

No cases of Smallpox occurred in the District during the year. The following table shows the number of people vaccinated or revaccinated by private general practitioners during the year.

Under 1 Year.		1 Year.		2 - 4 Yrs.		5 - 14 Yrs.		15 Yrs or over.		TOTAL.	
P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.	P.	R.
76	1	6	-	7	2	-	6	12	30	101	39

P = Primary Vaccination.
R = Revaccination.

HOSPITALS, CLINICS ETC.

Hospital facilities for general medical and surgical cases are adequate in that Hospitals in the Bristol Group, Weston-s-Mare & Burnham-on-Sea admit patients from the Rural District. Since 1949 all cases of infectious disease have been admitted to Ham Green Hospital, Bristol and Shute Shelf Hospital, Axbridge, which was originally the Infectious Diseases Hospital, is now used for tuberculosis. St. Michael's Home, Axbridge also deals with tuberculous cases, and Compton Bishop Children's Hospital admits non-infectious pre-tubercular children and children with tuberculous glands. Ilex Lodge Hospital in Axbridge is meeting a great need in the District in providing for elderly and infirm patients. Maternity cases who require admission to hospital either on medical or social grounds are admitted to various maternity hospitals in Bristol, Clevedon, Weston-s-Mare, Bridgwater and Wells.

Infant Welfare Clinics are held at Axbridge, Cheddar, Winscombe, Banwell, Hutton, Kewstoke and Wrington.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

1953.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Greenhill and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the Year. 1953.

HOUSING.

The Year 1953 marks a turning point, in the post war period, in the problem of the sub-standard house. The restrictive influence of building licensing gave way to the encouragement provided by the extensive publicising of improvement grants.

These grants are particularly attractive to the owner/occupier. It is obvious that many a sitting tenant of the older type of house is dissatisfied with the lack of modern amenities in his home. The cost of building or acquiring a satisfactory house is, in many cases, beyond his means and he has accordingly regarded the tenancy of a council house as the only practicable means of improving his housing circumstances. If the property he occupies is fundamentally sound, and he is able to acquire it at a reasonable figure, the assistance of an improvement grant may make the provision of a satisfactory home an economic proposition for such a man, a home moreover, in which he can take that pride which only ownership can bring.

From the table given below it will be seen that more applications for improvement grants were approved in this District during the year 1953 than during the whole of the preceding 3 years. From the number of enquiries which were coming in towards the end of the year it is obvious that improvement grants will tend to play an increasingly important part in the reconditioning of sub-standard houses.

Improvement Grants.

	Received.	Approved.	Rejected.
Position at 31.12.52.	5 applications (7 premises)	3 applications (4 premises)	2 applications (3 premises)
Applications dealt with during 1953.	7 applications (8 premises)	6 applications (6 premises)	1 application (2 premises)
Position at 31.12.53.	12 applications (15 premises)	9 applications (10 premises)	3 applications (5 premises)

The average cost of improvements per dwelling approved was £534.

Rural Housing Survey.

The position at the end of the year was as follows:-

Estimated number of dwelling-houses to be surveyed (i.e. all those of £16 rateable value and under excluding private dwelling-houses erected since 1930 and Council Houses).	4,055	
Number of properties surveyed (total to 31st. December.1953).	3,663	90.3%
Number of properties found to be satisfactory in all respects. (Category 1)	420	11.5%
Number of properties found to have minor defects. (Category 2)	488	13.3%
Number of properties requiring repair or structural alteration. (Category 3)	2,366	64.6%
Number of properties unfit for habitation and incapable of repair at reasonable cost. (Category 5)	389	10.6%

During the year a total of 18 surveyed houses has been made fit as the result of informal or formal action, making a total of 69 such houses made fit since the commencement of the survey in 1946.

Category	2	9
"	3	24
"	5	36
		69

OVERCROWDING.

On the 31st. December. 1953 there were 9 cases of statutory overcrowding on the register.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

Once again the total number of licensed camping sites, and the maximum number of moveable dwellings permitted thereon, shows very little change from the previous year's figure. It is only in the Brean and Berrow area that there is any considerable pressure for additional camping facilities and that area is, of course, still subject to the licensing "standstill" imposed by the District Council because of the excessive demand on the public water supply.

The number of moveable dwellings used for living purposes was 125 in December.1953, an increase of ten over the previous year's figure. Residential camping appears to have become a permanent feature of our national life. The revised site conditions, relating to this type of camping, adopted by the District Council during the year should have the desirable effect of increasing the amenities on sites catering for the residential caravanner.

No. of camping sites licensed during the year	59
Total number of moveable dwellings permitted on these sites.	1419
Total number of individual moveable dwellings licensed.	41

FOOD PREMISES.

In accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health, particulars of the various types of food premises in the District are given below.

Number of food premises in area.
(excluding registered dairy premises).

A. Food Manufacturing Premises.

Edible Fat Refineries	2
Cheese Straw Factory	1
Cheese factories	2
Bakers	16

B. Retail shops.

Grocers	108
Confectioners	31
Butchers	19
Fishmongers & Greengrocers (combined)	4
Greengrocers	4
Dairies	2

C. Catering premises. 59

D. Premises registered under the provisions of Section 14 of the Food & Drug Act.1938.
(excluding premises used for the manufacture storage & sale of ice-cream).

Sausage making	13
Fish frying	2

Routine inspections were carried out during the year of all these premises. Particulars of the numbers of inspections are given at the end of this report.

MILK AND DAIRIES.

Number of registered dairies	10
Number of milk distributors registered (premises in this District)	23
Number of milk distributors registered (premises outside this District)	11

Milk Samples.

Tuberculin Tested	59 satisfactory	18 unsatisfactory
Pasteurised	14 satisfactory	Nil unsatisfactory

Tested for Tubercle Bacilli - 62 Negative 2 Positive
(As a result of the two positive samples, three cows were discovered by the Divisional Veterinary Inspector to be suffering from tuberculosis and were slaughtered).

A noteworthy tendency is the gradual disappearance of the small dairyman. The milk retailer is becoming increasingly the distributor of milk which has been bottled, and perhaps pasteurised, on large, modern, well-eqipped dairy premises.

ICE CREAM.

All ice-cream manufactured in the District is manufactured in accordance with the provisions of the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment etc) Regulations 1947 to 1952 in suitable preparation rooms.

Number of premises registered for the manufacture of ice-cream. 5 (Complete cold mix)

Number of premises registered for the sale of ice-cream 122

Summary of results of ice-cream samples taken.

	Grades 1.	2.	3.	4.	Total
Ice-cream manufactured within the District.	13	2	1	-	16
Ice-cream manufactured outside the District.	82	12	3	1	98
	95	14	4	1	114

WATER SUPPLIES.

The following is a summary of the results of the bacteriological examinations of the monthly water samples taken from the public supplies. All these supplies are chlorinated, with the exception of the Burrington supply.

	Probable No. of Coliform Bacilli MacConkey 2 days 37°C.				
	0 per 100 ml.	1 per 100 ml.	2 per 100 ml.	13 per 100 ml.	25+ per 100 ml.
Cheddar & Axbridge	14 samples				
South Mendip (Cross)	11 samples	1 sample			
South Mendip (Dunyeatt)	16 samples	1 sample			1 sample
Winscombe	12 samples				
North Mendip	12 samples				
Burrington (Not chlorinated)	12 samples	1 sample			
Twin Brook Adit	11 samples		1 sample		
Blagdon	12 samples				
Kewstoke	11 samples	1 sample		1 sample	1 sample
North Mendip (Chelvey)	7 samples				
Totals:	118 "	4 "	1 "	1 "	2 "

A sample of water from each of the above supplies was submitted for chemical analysis during the year. All ten samples were reported upon by the analyst as being free from plumbo-solvency or other harmful contamination.

Samples were also taken of the untreated water from each of the sources of supply within the District.

Twelve samples of well water were taken for bacteriologinal examination from nine private premises. The samples of water from four of these premises proved to be unsatisfactory, and measures were taken to replace the well supplies by a supply from the public main. The supplies to the other five premises were reported upon as satisfactory.

CESSPOOL CLEANSING.

Although the cesspool cleansing vehicle performs a very useful function, too much is expected, in some quarters, of the service the District Council provides. The great majority of the individual drainage disposal systems in the District are of the septic tank type, with sub-soil irrigation of the effluent, which needs removal of sludge from the tank at infrequent intervals. Unless there has been lack of attention by the occupier of the premises, the removal of this sludge is never a matter of urgency.

Before the last war, this work was invariably done manually. Because of the increasing difficulty of finding labour for dealing with septic tanks on their own housing estates, the District Council acquired a tanker for this purpose and later made it available to the general public.

Overflowing septic tanks and inspection chambers are more often due to blocked drains and choked sub-soil irrigation arms than to septic tanks which require emptying. The cleansing of these blocked or choked drains is the responsibility of the owner or occupier of the premises, yet invariably when trouble of this nature arises the occupier expects the District Council to send along the tanker, often at a moment's notice, to pump out the septic tank. Although every effort is made to assist householders in these cases by cleansing the septic tank, and incidentally abating temporarily at least the overflow of sewage, it should be appreciated that the tanker is not kept standing by, like an ambulance, waiting for emergency calls and that it's work and routing are often fixed up for several days in advance. Additionally, running from one part of the District to another to deal with these pressing cases is an uneconomic way of operating the tanker.

Total number of cesspool and settlement tanks cleansed during the year.	513

DRAINAGE.

Constantly recurring complaints of troubles with septic tank drainage systems serve to emphasise the need for public sewers wherever these are a practicable proposition. No individual house system of drainage can be as satisfactory as drainage to a public sewer, if only for the fact that the individual system needs a certain amount of attention, which is rarely given unless trouble arises.

REFUSE COLLECTION.

Because of the continual rise in the cost of refuse collection and disposal, due mainly to wage increases, the emphasis has been on consolidation rather than expansion in the refuse collection service. Attention has been directed to the problem of collecting the annually increasing amount of refuse and disposing of it in a reasonably satisfactory manner without employing additional vehicles and labour. Householders could assist greatly towards this end.

It is disheartening to stand on the refuse tip and see masses of dirty paper which could have been burned, vegetable matter which could have been fed to pigs and chickens or composted, and cinders which could have been sifted from ash to supplement our scarce fuel supplies.

Some householders put out for collection, as a general rule, only ashes, bottles and tins. If all householders were able to do this, the amount of household refuse to be collected would fall by one third.

It was reported last year that salvaged waste paper became unsaleable towards the end of 1952. The District Council continued to collect waste paper as salvage and this policy was justified when, in the autumn of 1953, there was again a market for the material, although at a much reduced price. In these circumstances, the sale of salvaged material realised a much lower sum in 1953.

Estimated total amount of refuse collected during the year.	4,517 tons.

Total amount of salvage material collected and disposed of during the year.	T.	Cwt.	Qr.
(a) Paper and Cardboard.	19.	1.	3.
(b) Rags	3.	5.	3.
(c) Bones		9.	0.
(d) Scrap Non-Ferrous Metal		10.	3.

The sale of materials salvaged realised £268.15.5d.

RAG FLOCK & OTHER FILLING MATERIALS.

No. of premises where filling materials are used - Nil

No. of premises where rag flock is manufactured - One

The premises where rag flock is manufactured was duly licensed in accordance ith the provisions of the Rag Flock & Other Filling Material Act,1951.

During the year ending 31st. December.1953 the following samples were taken and submitted for analysis. All were found to comply with the statutory requirements of the Rag Flock & Other Filling Material Regulations, 1951.

Coir Fibre	-	3
Rag Flock	-	4

PETROLEUM.

Revised conditions governing the storage of petrol were adopted by the District Council at the beginning of the year. As a result, major alterations were made to three installations and minor alterations to six installations.

No. of premises licensed for the storage of petrol.121.

RODENT CONTROL.

The following is a copy of the annual return submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries, which gives details of rodent control work carried out in the District during the 15 months ending 31st. March.1954.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.
REPORT FOR 15 MONTHS ENDED 31st. MARCH, 1954.

Name of Local Authority: AXBRIDGE.R.D.C. County: SOMERSET.

	Local Authority	Type of Property Dwelling Houses	Agri-cultural	All other (including Business premises).	Total
1. Total number of properties in Local Authority's District.	20	6681	950	530	8181
11. Number of properties inspected by the Local Authority durin the 15 months ended 31st. March 1954. as a result of (a) notification (b) survey under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949 (c) otherwise e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose.	(a) -	101	35	23	159
	(b) 19	1724	162	151	2056
	(c) -	10	2	6	18
111. Number of properties inspected (see Section II) which were found to be seriously infested by rats.	Major 1	21	29	5	56
	Minor 10	541	98	12	661
IV. Number of properties inspected (see Section II) which were found to be seriously infested with mice	-	11	4	4	19
V. Number of infested properties (see Section III & IV) treated by the Local Authority.	11	552	29	18	610
VI. Number of notices served under Section 4. 1) Treatment.	-	-	-	-	-
2) Structural Works (i.e. Proofing)	-	-	-	-	-
VII. Number of cases in which default action was taken by the Local Authority following the issue of a notice under Section 4.	-	-	-	-	-
VIII. Legal Proceedings.	-	-	-	-	-
IX. Number of "block" control schemes carried out.	12	-	-	-	-

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The following table gives the particulars of the work carried out during the year.

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions of health:-

	Premises	Number on Register	Number of Inspections	Written notices.
(i)	Factories in which Sections 1, 2,3,4,& 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	9	9	-
(ii)	Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	98	103	-
(iii)	Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Outworkers' premises).	18	7	-
		125	119	-

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found:-

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

FOOD INSPECTION.

Particulars of foods condemned during the year are as follows:-

Meat

	Inspected	Condemned	Cause of Condemnation
Beef	320 lbs.	45 lbs.	Bone taint
Pork	150 lbs.	30½ lbs.	Tuberculosis

Canned Goods.

Condensed Milk	15 cans	Jams	1 can
Fish	23 "	Soups	2 cans
Meat, various	37 "	Vegetables	29 "
Fruit	110 "		

SUMMARY OF WORK DONE BY SANITARY INSPECTORS

Total number of inspections made (including re-inspections)	3,545
Total number of houses and premises inspected	1,903
Number of inspections of	
Food premises and catering establishments (Food & Drugs Act)	401
Camping Sites and Moveable Dwellings	439
Factories	119
Shops (Shops Act)	306
Ice-Cream premises	26
Petrol installations	189
Number of samples taken :-	
Milk	170
Ice-cream	120
Water	148
Rag flock and other filling materials	7
Complaints investigated:	178
Investigations into cases of infectious disease	54
Written notices and letters sent	1,269
Rooms, classrooms etc. disinfected	43
Nuisances from the keeping of animals abated	4
Nuisances from the accumulation of manure abated	2
Drain tests of drainage systems believed to be defective	56

I would like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council, the Medical Officer of Health, the Clerk and other Officers of the Council for their consideration and help during the year and to record my appreciation of the support I have received from the members of the staff and from the employees of the Public Health Department.

I remain,
Your obedient Servant,

J.H.ELLIS.

Chief Sanitary Inspector.