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AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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ANNUAL REPORTS  
of the  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
and  
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR  
1957

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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS :-

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Medical Officer of Health.

J.H. ELLIS.

Chief Public Health Inspector.  
Certificate of R.S.I. and  
S.I.E.J.B. Certificate of  
R.S.I. for Inspectors of Meat  
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Rodent Officer.

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AXBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1957.

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

Mr. Chairman, Ladies 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 in 1957.

Once more, the only infection producing a fairly high number of notifications was Measles, and notifications of the other infections were low. Under the section on Causes of Death I have commented on the diminution of the infectious diseases as a cause of death, and have especially referred to tuberculosis. The scheme for vaccination of children of school leaving age against tuberculosis will, we hope, help towards the elimination of this disease as a cause of illness in the not too remote future. Again, the increasing supplies of poliomyelitis vaccine will help to keep under control a disease which is feared so much.

The Registrar-General's estimates again show that the population of the District is steadily increasing, and for the first time, the 30,000 mark has been reached. This again emphasises my comments that some parts of the district, especially in summer time, should no longer be regarded as rural, and that they require all the sanitary services which are available in a town.

Again there was good progress in the building of new houses both by the Local Authority and private enterprise, but the number of applicants on the Council's housing list does not differ much from 1956. Much work still remains to be done in improving the many sub-standard houses in the district, and the grant-aided improvement schemes has helped a lot in this respect.

The Report of Mr. Ellis gives details of many aspects of Public Health work in a Rural District, and it is only by such steady routine inspection and appropriate advice and recommendation that the standards of living in the district can be raised higher from year to year.

Finally, I wish to thank the Members of the Committee 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.

October, 1958.

## SUMMARY OF STATISTICS.

### General Statistics.

|                                                 |               |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Area of District                                | 90,551 acres. |
| Population: 1931 Census.                        | 22,076        |
| " 1951 "                                        | 26,535        |
| " Registrar General's<br>Estimate for Mid 1957. | 30,390        |
| Rateable Value.                                 | £326,477      |
| Number of Inhabited Houses.                     | 8,571         |

### Extracts from Vital Statistics for Year 1957.

#### LIVE BIRTHS:

|              | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Legitimate   | 201         | 174           | 375          |
| Illegitimate | 7           | 6             | 13           |
|              | <u>208</u>  | <u>180</u>    | <u>388</u>   |

BIRTH RATE: per 1,000 population = 12.76

CORRECTED BIRTH RATE: (Comparability Factor 1.25) = 15.95

#### STILL BIRTHS:

|              | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Legitimate   | 9           | 5             | 14           |
| Illegitimate | -           | -             | -            |
|              | <u>9</u>    | <u>5</u>      | <u>14</u>    |

STILL BIRTH RATE: (per 1,000 total births) = 34.8

#### DEATHS:

|  | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--|-------------|---------------|--------------|
|  | 159         | 173           | 332          |

CRUDE DEATH RATE: 10.92 per 1,000 population.

CORRECTED DEATH RATE: (Comparability Factor 0.90) = 9.8



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

|              | <u>Male</u> | <u>Female</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Legitimate   | 5           | -             | 5            |
| Illegitimate | 1           | 1             | 2            |
|              | <hr/> 6     | <hr/> 1       | <hr/> 7      |

INFANT MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 live births) = 18.64

MATERNAL DEATHS: NIL

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS

The Registrar General gives the corrected number of live births in the District as 338 (208 boys and 130 girls), this being 58 births more than 1956. Of these births 12 were illegitimate (7 boys and 5 girls)

The crude birth rate for 1957 was 12.76 and when the comparability factor (1.28) is applied, the corrected birth rate was 15.95 per 1,000 of the total population compared with 12.8 in 1956. The birth rate for England and Wales in 1957 was 16.1.

BIRTH RATES.

| <u>Year:</u>            | <u>1948</u> | <u>1949</u> | <u>1950</u> | <u>1951</u> | <u>1952</u> | <u>1953</u> | <u>1954</u> | <u>1955</u> | <u>1956</u> | <u>1957</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England and Wales.      | 17.9        | 16.7        | 15.8        | 15.5        | 15.3        | 15.5        | 15.2        | 15.0        | 15.6        | 16.1        |
| Axbridge Rural District | 17.5        | 16.9        | 14.0        | 13.7        | 14.0        | 15.2        | 16.0        | 14.6        | 12.8        | 15.9        |

STILL BIRTHS

The registered number of still births in 1957 was 14 (9 males and 5 females) of which none were illegitimate, thus giving a still birth rate of 34.8 per 1,000 total births. The comparable still birth rate for England and Wales was 22.4 per 1,000 total births.

DEATHS

After correction for transferable deaths the net total assigned to the District by the Registrar General was 332 (159 males and 173 females). This is the same as in 1956 and gives a crude death rate of 10.92. When adjusted for age and sex distribution to make it comparable with other districts, the death rate was 9.8 per 1,000 of total population compared with 11.5 for England and Wales as a whole.

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

|                | <u>1957</u> | <u>1956</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|
| First Quarter  | 80          | 118         |
| Second Quarter | 84          | 72          |
| Third Quarter  | 73          | 68          |
| Fourth Quarter | 95          | 74          |

The following table shows the causes of death in 1957 :-

| <u>Causes of Death</u>                  | <u>1957</u>  |                |              |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
|                                         | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Tuberculosis of respiratory system.     | -            | -              | -            |
| Other forms of tuberculosis.            | -            | -              | -            |
| Syphilitic diseases.                    | -            | -              | -            |
| Diphtheria.                             | -            | -              | -            |
| Whooping Cough.                         | -            | -              | -            |
| Meningococcal Infection.                | -            | -              | -            |
| Acute Poliomyelitis.                    | -            | -              | -            |
| Measles.                                | -            | -              | -            |
| Other infective & parasitic diseases.   | -            | 2              | 2            |
| Malignant neoplasm, stomach.            | 4            | 7              | 11           |
| Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.     | 10           | 1              | 11           |
| Malignant neoplasm, breast.             | -            | 11             | 11           |
| Malignant neoplasm, uterus.             | -            | 2              | 2            |
| Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasm.   | 15           | 10             | 25           |
| Leukaemia, aleukaemia.                  | -            | 1              | 1            |
| Diabetes.                               | -            | 3              | 3            |
| Vascular lesions of nervous system.     | 17           | 37             | 54           |
| Coronary disease, angina pectoria.      | 18           | 12             | 30           |
| Hypertension with heart disease.        | 3            | 8              | 11           |
| Other heart diseases.                   | 39           | 34             | 73           |
| Other circulatory diseases.             | 7            | 11             | 18           |
| Influenza                               | 1            | 4              | 5            |
| Pneumonia.                              | 7            | 1              | 8            |
| Bronchitis.                             | 5            | 3              | 8            |
| Other diseases of respiratory system.   | 2            | -              | 2            |
| Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.          | 3            | 3              | 6            |
| Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea.     | -            | 1              | 1            |
| Nephritis and nephrosis.                | 1            | 1              | 2            |
| Hyperplasia of prostate.                | 2            | -              | 2            |
| Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion.        | -            | -              | -            |
| Congenital malformations.               | 2            | -              | 2            |
| Other defined and ill-defined diseases. | 10           | 17             | 27           |
| Motor vehicle accidents.                | 4            | 1              | 5            |
| All other accidents.                    | 6            | 3              | 9            |
| Suicide.                                | 3            | -              | 3            |
| Homicide and operations of war.         | -            | -              | -            |
| All Causes - Total.                     | 159          | 173            | 332          |



SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION OF DEATHS 1957.  
 (The figures in brackets are those of 1956)

Ages at Death in Years :-

|                              | <u>Males</u> | <u>Females</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|
| Under 1                      | 6 ( 7)       | 1 ( 3)         | 7 (10)       |
| 1 to 9                       | 1 ( 1)       | 1 ( 2)         | 2 ( 3)       |
| 10 to 24                     | 4 ( 2)       | 1 ( -)         | 5 ( 2)       |
| 25 to 44                     | 4 ( 3)       | 6 ( 1)         | 10 ( 4)      |
| 45 to 64                     | 34 (44)      | 29 (21)        | 63 (65)      |
| 65 to 69                     | 22 (23)      | 10 (12)        | 32 (35)      |
| <u>Total under 70 years.</u> | 71 ( 80)     | 48 ( 39)       | 119 (119)    |
| 70 to 74                     | 32 (25)      | 27 (27)        | 59 (52)      |
| 75 to 79                     | 23 (21)      | 37 (32)        | 60 (53)      |
| 80 to 84                     | 21 (21)      | 26 (39)        | 47 (60)      |
| 85 to 89                     | 7 (10)       | 26 (17)        | 33 (27)      |
| 90 to 94                     | 5 ( 2)       | 8 (12)         | 13 (14)      |
| 95 to 99                     | - ( 2)       | 1 ( 5)         | 1 ( 7)       |
| <u>Total over 70 years.</u>  | 88 ( 81)     | 125 (132)      | 213 (213)    |
|                              | 159 (161)    | 173 (171)      | 332 (332)    |
|                              | ====         | ====           | ====         |

The table showing the causes of death in 1957 deserves some study as it shows the changes which have taken place over the years. It can be seen that the infectious diseases which were the great "killers" of the past, especially among younger people, are no longer of importance in this respect. This is especially emphasised by the fact that for the first time since records have been kept, no deaths occurred in the District in 1957 from tuberculosis. At the risk of uttering a platitude, however, death is inevitable, and other causes are taking the place of the infectious diseases. Cancer in its various forms accounts for 18.4% of all deaths in 1957, and the particular type of cancer which has received most attention by the public in the past year or two has been cancer of the lung, ten of which were in men. There is no doubt that one of the contributory causes of cancer of the lung is excessive smoking, especially of cigarettes, over a prolonged period, and although there has been much publicity given to this in the national newspapers and most people are aware of it, there has not been any noticeable drop in the consumption of cigarettes.

The decision to give up smoking is one for each individual to make for himself. Some find it easy, but many, alas, find it extremely difficult.

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

There were no deaths from maternal causes in 1957.



## INFANT MORTALITY

| Causes of Death                          | Under 1 day | 1-7 days | 1-4 wks. | Total under 1 month | 1-3 mths | 3-6 mths | 6-9 mths | 9-12 mths | Total under 1 year |
|------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|--------------------|
| Prematurity                              | 2           | -        | 1        | 3                   | -        | -        | -        | -         | 3                  |
| Congenital heart disease                 | -           | 1        | -        | 1                   | -        | 1        | -        | -         | 2                  |
| Birth Injury                             | -           | 1        | -        | 1                   | -        | -        | -        | -         | 1                  |
| Asphyxia due to ante-partum haemorrhage. | 1           | -        | -        | 1                   | -        | -        | -        | -         | 1                  |
|                                          | 3           | 2        | 1        | 6                   | -        | 1        | -        | -         | 7                  |

After correction for transferable deaths, seven children (6 boys and 1 girl) under the age of one year, died in 1957. This is three less than in 1956 and gives an Infant Mortality Rate of 18.0 per 1,000 live births as compared with 23.0 for the whole of England and Wales. Five of the seven deaths were due to prematurity or congenital malformations.

### WATER SUPPLIES.

Due to drought and the large influx of holiday makers, there were brief water shortages during parts of the holiday season in the Parishes of Brean and Berrow. As in 1956, supplementary water was obtained by means of emergency filtration units and a booster pump was employed in the Brean and Berrow area. Work was commenced on the new supply main to this area and it is expected that this will provide enough water to meet all the needs of this strip of coast for many years to come.

Every parish has a piped water supply and 8,350 houses representing a population of 29,892 are supplied from the public mains. Eight houses representing 20 people obtain water from standpipes. 213 houses rely on other sources for water supply. During the year a piped supply was given to nine houses in place of a well supply.

The following extensions or improvements were started in 1957 :-

|                                                                     |          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Charterhouse Water Supply (including bulk supply to Clutton R.D.C.) | £37,988. |
| Replacement of defective main at Brean and Berrow.                  | £22,428. |

The Council's Water Undertaking was transferred to the Bristol Waterworks Company on 1st. April, 1958, and it is expected that this Company will carry on and improve the excellent work which the District Council has so ably done over the past years.

Samples of water, both treated and untreated, are collected at regular intervals for bacteriological examination. The results of such sampling are given in the Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector.

| Parish           | Dwelling<br>Houses | Dwelling-houses<br>receiving a supply<br>from Public water | Population supplied<br>from Public Water |                 |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                  |                    |                                                            | Mains<br>Direct to<br>Houses             | Stand-<br>Pipes |
| Axbridge         | 323                | 321                                                        | 1117                                     | -               |
| Badgworth        | 107                | 106                                                        | 368                                      | 2               |
| Banwell          | 701                | 694                                                        | 2483                                     | -               |
| Berrow           | 131                | 131                                                        | 440                                      | -               |
| Blagdon          | 348                | 326                                                        | 1055                                     | -               |
| Bleadon          | 221                | 215                                                        | 745                                      | -               |
| Brean            | 116                | 115                                                        | 307                                      | -               |
| Brent Knoll      | 263                | 258                                                        | 767                                      | -               |
| Burnham Without  | 103                | 103                                                        | 340                                      | -               |
| Burrington       | 151                | 135                                                        | 380                                      | -               |
| Butcombe         | 63                 | 60                                                         | 193                                      | -               |
| Chapel Allerton  | 82                 | 82                                                         | 280                                      | -               |
| Cheddar          | 1018               | 1007                                                       | 2822                                     | 8               |
| Churchill        | 433                | 414                                                        | 1303                                     | -               |
| Compton Bishop   | 125                | 120                                                        | 418                                      | -               |
| Congresbury      | 493                | 474                                                        | 1583                                     | -               |
| East Brent       | 257                | 257                                                        | 840                                      | -               |
| Hutton           | 221                | 217                                                        | 580                                      | 6               |
| ± Kewstoke       | 288                | 271                                                        | 928                                      | -               |
| Locking          | 171                | 168                                                        | + 3382                                   | -               |
| Loxton           | 55                 | 50                                                         | 178                                      | -               |
| Lympsham         | 181                | 181                                                        | 560                                      | -               |
| Mark             | 270                | 270                                                        | 895                                      | 5               |
| Puxton           | 51                 | 51                                                         | 200                                      | -               |
| Shipham          | 224                | 218                                                        | 595                                      | 2               |
| Weare            | 137                | 137                                                        | 470                                      | -               |
| Wedmore          | 710                | 680                                                        | 2405                                     | 4               |
| Wick St Lawrence | 50                 | 50                                                         | 190                                      | -               |
| Winscombe        | 758                | 749                                                        | 2418                                     | 2               |
| Wrington         | 520                | 490                                                        | 1640                                     | -               |

+ Including R.A.F. Station personnel

± Weston-super-Mare Borough Council Water Supply Area.

#### SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The following parishes have main drainage and efficient sewage disposal systems - Axbridge (with Cross), Banwell, Blagdon, Butcombe, Cheddar, Winscombe, Locking and part of Shipham.

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

|                | Cost    |
|----------------|---------|
| Locking        | £17,666 |
| Sandford Batch | £ 3,257 |

Future proposals include :-

|                                     | Approximate Cost |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Congresbury Scheme.                 | £53,000          |
| Wrington - New Works.               | £12,935          |
| Cheddar - New Pumping Station.      | £ 5,629          |
| Kewstoke - Part Village.            | £ 3,001          |
| Cheddar - New Road Sewer Extension. | £ 6,090          |



With the rapid increase in the residential population of the District, and the even more rapid increase in the summer population due to the influx of holiday visitors, there are many parts of the District, especially along the coastal belt which can no longer be considered as "rural" in the true sense of the word. The parishes of Brean and Berrow and Kewstoke are especially affected by this summer increase in population, and although water supplies and existing methods of sewage disposal may be adequate for the permanent residents in winter time, they may become completely inadequate in the summer months. Problems of water supply have been largely overcome and the most urgent problem now is sewage disposal. Much of the land used for caravan sites is too low lying to allow for adequate soakaways for effluents from septic tank and other similar types of sewage treatment plant, and great difficulty is being met in finding suitable land for the disposal of cesspit contents.

Yet, many of the villages in the District also need adequate sewage disposal systems, and the task of trying to decide priorities is certainly not an easy one.

#### HOUSING.

The number of new houses erected by the Local Authority during the year was 112, compared with 87 in 1956. 124 houses were completed by private enterprise compared with 100 in 1956. The number of families re-housed during the year was 165 and the number of houses still requisitioned are 2. The number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of 1957 was 385. There is only one hutment occupied by a family.

Grants approved under the Housing Act, 1949 to improve sub-standard houses increased during the year and some good work is being done in preventing such houses from falling into a state of complete disrepair. Details of the scheme are given in the Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector.

The following table summarises the progress of housing during the year :-

|                                                 | <u>Houses erected in 1957</u> |             | <u>Houses in course of erection at end of year 1957</u> | <u>Conversion to flats and dwellings</u> |             |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------|
|                                                 | <u>Perm</u>                   | <u>Temp</u> | <u>Perm</u>                                             | <u>Perm</u>                              | <u>Temp</u> |
| Local Authority                                 | 112                           | -           | 29                                                      | 4                                        | -           |
| Private Enterprise                              | 124                           | -           | 78                                                      | -                                        | -           |
|                                                 | <u>236</u>                    | <u>-</u>    | <u>107</u>                                              | <u>4</u>                                 | <u>-</u>    |
|                                                 |                               |             |                                                         |                                          |             |
|                                                 |                               |             | <u>December 1957</u>                                    | <u>December 1956</u>                     |             |
| Number of houses owned by the Council.          |                               |             | 1504                                                    | 1389                                     |             |
| Number of houses requisitioned by the Council.  |                               |             | 2                                                       | 2                                        |             |
| Number of hutments administered by the Council. |                               |             | 1                                                       | 7                                        |             |
| Number of applicants for Council Houses.        |                               |             | 385                                                     | 362                                      |             |
| Number of families re-housed during the year.   |                               |             | 165                                                     | 169                                      |             |

The number of post-war houses erected by the Local Authority up to the end of 1957 is 983 plus 4 flats, and the programme for 1958 provides for the erection of 45 houses.



### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Measles was the only notifiable disease which reached epidemic proportions in 1957, but the number of cases notified was less than half the number notified in the 1955 epidemic. There was also an increase in the number of cases of Whooping Cough notified, and it has been noted before that Measles and Whooping Cough seem to come together.

Two cases of Poliomyelitis occurred in the District in 1957. Both were adult men, one being a visitor on holiday from South Wales and the other a local resident. Both suffered from severe paralysis.

Asian influenza arrived in the District in the late autumn, but although it produced a considerable number of casualties, my impression was that the incidence was not as high as in other parts of the country. The majority of cases was comparatively mild and recovered quickly.

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

| <u>Disease</u>                | <u>Total<br/>Cases<br/>Notified</u> | <u>Cases admitted<br/>to Isolation<br/>Hospital</u> | <u>Total<br/>Deaths</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Measles                       | 206                                 | 1                                                   | -                       |
| Scarlatina                    | 19                                  | 1                                                   | -                       |
| Diphtheria                    | -                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Enteric and Paratyphoid Fever | -                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Puerperal Pyrexia             | 3                                   | 1                                                   | -                       |
| Ophthalmia Neonatorum         | 1                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Meningococcal Infection       | -                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Dysentery                     | 1                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Whooping Cough                | 60                                  | -                                                   | -                       |
| Acute Primary Pneumonia       | 24                                  | 1                                                   | -                       |
| Acute Influenzal Pneumonia    |                                     |                                                     |                         |
| Acute Poliomyelitis           | 2                                   | 2                                                   | -                       |
| Acute Encephalitis            | -                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Typhoid Fever                 | -                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Erysipelas                    | 8                                   | -                                                   | -                       |
| Food Poisoning                | 1                                   | -                                                   | -                       |

### TUBERCULOSIS.

Seventeen new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and two cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis were notified during the year, but as I have pointed out elsewhere there were no deaths due to this cause during the year. The number of cases on the Register at the end of the year was :-

| <u>Pulmonary</u> |               | <u>Non-Pulmonary</u> |               | <u>Total</u> |               |
|------------------|---------------|----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| <u>Male</u>      | <u>Female</u> | <u>Male</u>          | <u>Female</u> | <u>Male</u>  | <u>Female</u> |
| 63               | 72            | 6                    | 9             | 69           | 81            |

### B.C.G. VACCINATION.

B.C.G. Vaccination is a method of raising the immunity of individuals to tuberculosis, and in 1956 it was decided to offer vaccination to all children in the County born in 1943. In the North-West Somerset Divisional Area the parents of 342 children accepted the offer. 101 of these children were in the Axbridge Rural District. A preliminary skin test - Heaf Test - was made on all children first to determine whether any had already received some infection with tuberculosis. The "negative" reactors were then vaccinated, whilst the "positive" reactors and their family contacts were offered the opportunity of further investigation at the Chest Clinic. 88 of the 101 children in the Axbridge area were vaccinated.



## DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

Again there were no cases of diphtheria notified during 1957, 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 228 children under 5 years of age received primary immunisation. 50 children in the age group 5 - 14 years received primary immunisation and 180 children under the age of 15 years received reinforcing doses.

## POLIOMYELITIS IMMUNISATION

Only small supplies of poliomyelitis vaccine were available during 1957, and 59 children received it during the year.

## VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX.

The following table shows the number of people vaccinated or revaccinated by private general practitioners.

| <u>Under</u><br><u>1 Year</u> |    | <u>1 Year</u> |    | <u>2 - 4 Yrs.</u> |    | <u>5 - 14 Yrs.</u> |    | <u>15 Yrs or</u><br><u>Over</u> |    | <u>TOTAL</u> |    |
|-------------------------------|----|---------------|----|-------------------|----|--------------------|----|---------------------------------|----|--------------|----|
| P.                            | R. | P.            | R. | P.                | R. | P.                 | R. | P.                              | R. | P.           | R. |
| 114                           | -  | 2             | -  | 6                 | 1  | 11                 | 1  | 9                               | 18 | 142          | 20 |

P. = Primary Vaccination

R. = Revaccination.

## HOSPITALS, CLINICS ETC.

Hospital facilities for general medical and surgical cases are available for patients in the Rural District at Bristol, Weston-super-Mare and Burnham-on-Sea. Since 1949, cases of infectious diseases have been admitted mainly to Ham Green Hospital, Bristol, but a few from the southern part of the district are admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital.. Shute Shelve Hospital, which was originally the Infectious Diseases Hospital, was used for some time for tuberculosis, but now takes post-operative cases from Bristol and Weston-super-Mare. Functioning as such, it plays a very valuable role in increasing the number of patients being treated in such hospitals as the Weston-super-Mare General Hospital, and thus helps to reduce the hospital waiting list.

Ilex Lodge Hospital in Axbridge and Drove Road Hospital in Weston-super-Mare are meeting a great need in helping to provide for the chronic sick, and for elderly and infirm patients, but even with these hospitals the needs of the District are still much greater than the available beds can deal with. Too many old people who are ill are being nursed in unsatisfactory conditions at home. The population of Axbridge Rural District and Weston-super-Mare has a higher proportion of old people than many other parts of the country and the problem of dealing with the sick old persons will become greater as the years pass. Although the home nursing and home help services are of great benefit to these old people in their own homes, more beds are required in hospitals for dealing with many who cannot be nursed satisfactorily at home.

Maternity cases who require admission to hospital either on medical or social grounds are admitted to various maternity hospitals in Bristol, Clevedon, Weston-super-Mare, Bridgwater or Wells.

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



ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

1957

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

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the Year 1957.

HOUSING

The improvement grant scheme continues to be of great value in encouraging the re-conditioning of sub-standard dwellings. The majority of the grants approved relate to this type of property. Grants have now been made by the District Council towards works costing in total over a quarter of a million pounds, a substantial contribution towards the overall investment in housing in this District.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the valuable co-operation which has been received from local architects in the operation of the scheme. The interest they have shown has been an encouragement and a stimulus. The considerable amount of work which an architect may put into the preparation of a re-conditioning scheme, work which often requires a higher degree of skill than the planning of a new house, is sometimes not appreciated.

Improvement Grants

|                                      | <u>Received</u>                     | <u>Approved</u>                     | <u>Rejected</u>                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Position at 31st. Dec. 1956.         | 187 applications<br>(217 dwellings) | 178 applications<br>(206 dwellings) | 9 applications<br>(11 dwellings)  |
| Applications dealt with during 1957. | 42 applications<br>(43 dwellings)   | 41 applications<br>(42 dwellings)   | 1 application<br>(1 dwelling)     |
| Position at 31st December, 1957.     | 229 applications<br>(260 dwellings) | 219 applications<br>(248 dwellings) | 10 applications<br>(12 dwellings) |

Rural Housing Survey

During the year 55 surveyed houses were made fit compared with 62 in 1956. The summary of categories, revised to December, 1957, is as follows :-

|                                                                                                       |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Number of properties satisfactory in all respects<br>(Category 1)                                     | 728   |
| Number of properties with minor defects<br>(Category 2)                                               | 517   |
| Number of properties requiring major repair or structural alteration (Category 3)                     | 2,301 |
| Number of properties unfit for habitation and incapable of repair at reasonable cost.<br>(Category 5) | 369   |



Statutory Action under the Provisions of  
The Housing Acts.

During the year, statutory action under the provisions of Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936 and of Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1957 was instituted in respect of 27 dwellings. The result of such action is summarised as follows :-

|                                        |    |
|----------------------------------------|----|
| Cases under consideration at 31.12.56. | 20 |
|----------------------------------------|----|

During 1957.

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Demolition Orders made. .... | 1 |
|------------------------------|---|

|                                                                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Undertakings accepted not to use premises<br>for human habitation until made fit. | 31 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

|                                             |   |
|---------------------------------------------|---|
| Undertakings accepted to make premises fit. | 4 |
|---------------------------------------------|---|

|                                        |    |
|----------------------------------------|----|
| Cases under consideration at 31.12.56. | 11 |
|----------------------------------------|----|

OVERCROWDING.

On the 31st. December, 1957 there was 1 case of statutory overcrowding on the register.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

The total number of moveable dwellings permitted on licensed sites only exceeds last years figure by 16. Individual moveable dwellings licensed show an increase of 17.

The number of caravans used for living purposes rose from 157, accommodating 371 persons, to 182 accommodating 430. Residential caravans occupied by families with children totalled 63 compared with 51 in 1956.

It is impossible not to feel concerned at the growing number of families with children living in caravans. Whether or not a caravan should be regarded as sub-standard living accommodation is hotly debated. If, however, caravans are not to be so regarded then it would seem, by implication, that the average small family house is excessively lavish in such matters as floor space, ceiling heights, drainage and sanitary facilities.

Where family life in caravans is concerned there are also such considerations as lack of privacy and inadequate facilities for children to do homework. Where partitioning exists in caravans it is usually insufficient to achieve any degree of sound proofing.

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of camping sites licensed during<br>the year. | 56 |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|

|                                                                 |       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Total number of moveable dwellings<br>permitted on these sites. | 1,769 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|

|                                                            |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Total number of individual moveable<br>dwellings licensed. | 55 |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----|

### FOOD PREMISES.

The general standard of food premises in the District has continued to improve. All these premises have now been provided with adequate hand-washing facilities with the exception of about half a dozen premises which will need the District Council's formal consideration in the coming year.

The fitting of refrigerated display counters in food shops is now becoming commonplace. The importance of this development in keeping meat and meat products cool and protected cannot be over-emphasised.

The leading hoteliers and inn-keepers in the District are second to none in their appreciation of the need for hygienic conditions in refreshment houses and their premises stand comparison with the best in any other branch of the food trade in the District. Many inns have not kept pace with modern hygienic requirements. No one would suggest a garish conversion of attractive old inns but whilst there is every justification for retaining the essential features of time mellowed bars and lounges there is none for retaining antique sinks and other appliances and neglecting to provide such necessary facilities as adequate hot water systems. Excellent work has been done by one or two of the more progressive brewers but it is considered that the time has come when this modernisation programme could very well be expedited.

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                | 12 |
| Soft Drinks Factory   | 1  |

##### B. Retail Shops

|                                          |     |
|------------------------------------------|-----|
| Grocers                                  | 123 |
| Confectioners                            | 41  |
| Butchers                                 | 21  |
| Fishmongers & Greengrocers<br>(combined) | 4   |
| Greengrocers                             | 9   |
| Dairies                                  | 2   |

##### C. Catering Premises (including licensed premises) 143

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

|                |    |
|----------------|----|
| Sausage making | 12 |
| Fish frying    | 3  |



MILK AND DAIRIES.

Investigations were made in to the causes of all unsatisfactory milk samples. Collaboration with the County Milk Officer, when unsatisfactory samples indicated faulty methods at the place of production, has been maintained.

|                                                                           |    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Number of registered dairies                                              | 9  |
| Number of milk distributors<br>registered (premises in this District)     | 54 |
| Number of milk distributors<br>registered (premises outside the District) | 16 |

Milk Samples

|                   |                 |                    |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Tuberculin Tested | 55 Satisfactory | 12 Unsatisfactory  |
| Pasteurised       | 5 Satisfactory  | Nil Unsatisfactory |

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 preparation rooms which have been especially constructed or adapted for the purpose. There are no matters which call for special comment.

The overall results of the samples taken are regarded as satisfactory.

|                                                                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of premises registered for the manufacture<br>of ice cream (Complete cold mix) | 4   |
| Number of premises registered for the sale of<br>ice cream.                           | 161 |

Summary of results of ice-cream samples taken.

|                                                 | <u>Grades</u> |           |           |           | <u>Total</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
|                                                 | <u>1.</u>     | <u>2.</u> | <u>3.</u> | <u>4.</u> |              |
| Ice cream manufactured within<br>the District.  | 14            | -         | -         | 1         | 15           |
| Ice cream manufactured outside<br>the District. | 32            | 2         | 3         | 3         | 40           |
|                                                 | 46            | 2         | 3         | 4         | 55           |



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.

|                              | <u>0 per</u><br><u>100 ml.</u> | <u>1 per</u><br><u>100 ml.</u> | <u>3 per</u><br><u>100 ml.</u> | <u>5 per</u><br><u>100 ml.</u> | <u>25 per</u><br><u>100 ml.</u> |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cheddar & Axbridge           | 12 samples                     | 1 sample                       |                                |                                |                                 |
| South Mendip (Cross)         | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
| South Mendip (Dunyeatt)      | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
| Winscombe                    | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
| North Mendip                 | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
| Burrington (Not chlorinated) | 9 "                            | 2 "                            | 1 sample                       | 1 sample                       |                                 |
| Twin Brook Adit.             | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
| Blagdon                      | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                | 1 sample                        |
| Kewstoke                     | 11 "                           | 1 "                            |                                |                                |                                 |
| North Mendip (Chelvey)       | 12 "                           |                                |                                |                                |                                 |
|                              | <u>116</u> "                   | <u>4</u> "                     | <u>1</u> "                     | <u>1</u> "                     | <u>1</u> "                      |

A sample of water from each of the above supplies was submitted for chemical analysis during the year. All these 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.

Six samples of well water were taken for bacteriological examination from six private premises. The samples of water from four of these premises proved to be satisfactory and two to be unsatisfactory.

MEAT INSPECTION

The three slaughterhouses licensed in the District following the decontrol of slaughtering continued in operation throughout the year.

The following table gives particulars of carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part during the year :-

|                                                                                                 | Cattle | Cow   | Calves | Sheep<br>and<br>Lambs | Pigs | Horses |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|--------|-----------------------|------|--------|
| Number killed                                                                                   | 232    | 80    | 34     | 1,163                 | 802  | -      |
| Number inspected                                                                                | 232    | 80    | 34     | 1,163                 | 802  | -      |
| <u>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci.</u>                                         |        |       |        |                       |      |        |
| Whole carcasses condemned                                                                       | -      | -     | -      | -                     | 1    | -      |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned                                             | 80     | 49    | 1      | 33                    | 93   | -      |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci | 34.5   | 61.3  | 2.9    | 2.8                   | 11.7 | -      |
| <u>Tuberculosis only.</u>                                                                       |        |       |        |                       |      |        |
| Whole carcasses condemned                                                                       | 1      | -     | -      | -                     | -    | -      |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned.                                            | 11     | 20    | -      | -                     | 32   | -      |
| Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis.                                  | 5.2    | 25.0  | -      | -                     | 4.0  | -      |
| <u>Cysticercosis.</u>                                                                           |        |       |        |                       |      |        |
| Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned                                             | 1      | 1     | -      | -                     | -    | -      |
| Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration                                               | -      | -     | -      | -                     | -    | -      |
| Generalised and totally condemned.                                                              | -      | -     | -      | -                     | -    | -      |
| <u>Weight of meat condemned (in lbs.) for :-</u>                                                |        |       |        |                       |      |        |
| (a) Tuberculosis                                                                                | 810    | 638   | -      | -                     | 329  | -      |
| (b) Cysticercosis                                                                               | 28     | 28    | -      | -                     | -    | -      |
| (c) Other                                                                                       | 486½   | 497   | 1      | 39½                   | 305½ | -      |
| Total (in lbs.) condemned                                                                       | 1324½  | 1,163 | 1      | 39½                   | 634½ | -      |



DRAINAGE

Rightly, a considerable amount of care is taken by those responsible for the main water course in the District to ensure a very high standard of effluent discharged to these water courses from sewage disposal works. No account appears to be taken, however, of the effect on the purity of the water course system from the uncontrolled discharge to sub-soil, which is often of heavy clay, of the effluent from thousands of septic tanks. It is obvious that there can be no measure of real control under such conditions until a major part of the District is adequately sewered.

CESSPOOL CLEANSING.

The number of cesspools and settlement tanks cleansed during the year is exactly the same as last year's figure. The call on this service is heavy and it is impossible at times to avoid delay in dealing with applications for emptying tanks. Unfortunately the demands arising from the construction of new septic tanks are outstripping any relief afforded by new connections to sewerage systems.

Total number of cesspools and  
settlement tanks cleansed during the year. 605

REFUSE COLLECTION

This year there has been a heavy increase of approximately 700 tons in the amount of refuse collected. If this trend continues it will be impossible to institute the weekly refuse collection planned for parts of the District unless an additional refuse vehicle is put into service.

The sales of salvaged materials remained steady throughout the year.

Estimated total amount of refuse collected  
during the year. 5,847 tons

Total amount of salvaged material disposed  
of during the year.

|                                                            | <u>T.</u> | <u>Cwt.</u> | <u>Qr.</u> | <u>£.</u> | <u>s.</u> | <u>d.</u> |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| (a) Paper and Cardboard                                    | 163       | 0           | 0          | 885.      | 2.        | 7.        |
| (b) Rags                                                   | 2         | 0           | 1          | 90.       | 11.       | 3.        |
| Total amount realised by the sale of<br>material salvaged. |           |             |            | £975.     | 13.       | 10.       |



RODENT CONTROL.

The following is a copy of the annual return submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food, which gives details of rodent control work carried out in the District during the 12 months ending 31st March, 1958.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.  
REPORT FOR 12 MONTHS ENDED 31st MARCH, 1958.

| TYPE OF PROPERTY                                                                                                         |                    |                                                 |                                           |                                |                   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Non-Agricultural                                                                                                         |                    |                                                 |                                           |                                |                   |
|                                                                                                                          | Local<br>Authority | Dwelling<br>Houses<br>(inc. Council<br>Houses.) | All other<br>(inc. business<br>premises.) | Total<br>of Cols. 1, 2 &<br>3. | Agric-<br>ultural |
|                                                                                                                          | 1.                 | 2.                                              | 3.                                        |                                |                   |
| I. No. of properties in<br>Local Authority's<br>District.                                                                | 20                 | 8571                                            | 544                                       | 9,135                          | 950               |
| II. No. of properties<br>inspected as a<br>result of :                                                                   |                    |                                                 |                                           |                                |                   |
| (a) Notification                                                                                                         | 1                  | 74                                              | 4                                         | 79                             | 4                 |
| (b) Survey under the<br>Act.                                                                                             | 15                 | 840                                             | 112                                       | 967                            | 341               |
| (c) Otherwise (e.g.<br>when visited<br>primarily for<br>some other purpose)                                              | 4                  | 260                                             | 184                                       | 448                            | 91                |
| III. Total inspections<br>carried out - inc.<br>re-inspections.                                                          | 48                 | 2444                                            | 298                                       | 2,790                          | 650               |
| IV. No. of properties<br>inspected (in Sec.<br>II) which were<br>found to be infested<br>by :-                           |                    |                                                 |                                           |                                |                   |
| (a) Rats (Major)                                                                                                         | 1                  | 1                                               | 1                                         | 3                              | 18                |
| (a) Rats (Minor)                                                                                                         | 12                 | 401                                             | 23                                        | 436                            | 300               |
| (b) Mice (Major)                                                                                                         | -                  | 20                                              | 4                                         | 24                             | 20                |
| (b) Mice (Minor)                                                                                                         | 1                  | 16                                              | 18                                        | 35                             | 54                |
| V. No. of infested<br>properties (in<br>Sec. IV) treated<br>by the L.A.                                                  | 14                 | 405                                             | 11                                        | 430                            | 24                |
| VI. Total treatments<br>carried out inc.<br>re-treatments.                                                               | 29                 | 470                                             | 11                                        | 510                            | 28                |
| VII. No. of notices served<br>under Sec. 4. of the Act:                                                                  |                    |                                                 |                                           |                                |                   |
| (a) treatment                                                                                                            | -                  | -                                               | -                                         | -                              | -                 |
| (b) structural work<br>(i.e. proffing)                                                                                   | -                  | -                                               | -                                         | -                              | -                 |
| VIII. No. of cases in which -<br>default action was taken<br>following the issue of a<br>notice under Sec. 4 of the Act. | -                  | -                                               | -                                         | -                              | -                 |
| IX. Legal Proceedings.                                                                                                   | -                  | -                                               | -                                         | -                              | -                 |
| X. No. of "Block" control<br>schemes carried out.                                                                        | 16                 | -                                               | -                                         | -                              | -                 |



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 :-

| <u>Premises</u>                                                                                               | <u>Number on Register</u> | <u>Number of Inspections</u> | <u>Written Notices</u> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| (i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.                         | 2                         | 2                            | -                      |
| (ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.                     | 101                       | 98                           | 3                      |
| (iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority. (excluding Outworkers' premises). | 18                        | 10                           | -                      |
|                                                                                                               | 121                       | 110                          | 3                      |

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found :-

| <u>Particulars</u>                                                          | <u>Number of cases in which defects were found</u> |                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                                                                             | <u>Found</u>                                       | <u>Remedied</u> |
| Want of cleanliness (S1)                                                    | -                                                  | -               |
| Overcrowding (S2)                                                           | -                                                  | -               |
| Unreasonable temperature (S3)                                               | -                                                  | -               |
| Inadequate ventilation (S4)                                                 | -                                                  | -               |
| Ineffective drainage of floors (S6)                                         | -                                                  | -               |
| Sanitary Conveniences (S7)                                                  |                                                    |                 |
| (a) Insufficient                                                            | -                                                  | -               |
| (b) Unsuitable or defective                                                 | 3                                                  | 3               |
| (c) Not separate for sexes                                                  | -                                                  | -               |
| Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) | -                                                  | -               |
|                                                                             | 3                                                  | 3               |

RAG FLOCK & OTHER FILLING MATERIALS.

Number of premises where filling materials are used - Nil  
 Number of premises where rag flock is manufactured - One

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

During the year ending 31st December, 1957 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 - 4  
 Rag Flock - 4

PETROLEUM

All petroleum storage installations are inspected annually before applications for renewal of licences are considered by the Public Health Committee.

Number of premises licensed for the storage of petrol - 131



SUMMARY OF WORK CARRIED OUT BY, OR UNDER THE  
SUPERVISION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTORS.

|                                                             |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Total number of inspections made (including re-inspections) | 4,570 |
| Total number of houses and premises inspected.              | 1,997 |
| Number of inspections of :                                  |       |

|                                                             |       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Food premises and catering establishments(Food & Drugs Act) | 469   |
| Camping Sites and Moveable Dwellings.                       | 1,041 |
| Factories.                                                  | 110   |
| Shops (Shops Act).                                          | 201   |
| Ice Cream Premises.                                         | 31    |
| Dairies.                                                    | 64    |
| Drainage Systems.                                           | 175   |
| Petrol Installations.                                       | 315   |

Number of Samples taken:

|                                                           |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Milk                                                      | 72  |
| Ice Cream.                                                | 55  |
| Water                                                     | 141 |
| Rag Flock & Other Filling Materials.                      | 8   |
| Tests of Swimming Bath Water.                             | 17  |
| Investigations into cases of infectious diseases.         | 46  |
| Premises, disinfected or disinfested.                     | 19  |
| Drain tests of drainage systems believed to be defective. | 24  |

In conclusion I would like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council for their support and the Medical Officer of Health, the other Chief Officers of the Council and the staff of the Public Health Department for their co-operation and assistance during the year.

I remain,  
Your obedient Servant,

J.H. ELLIS.

Chief Public Health Inspector.