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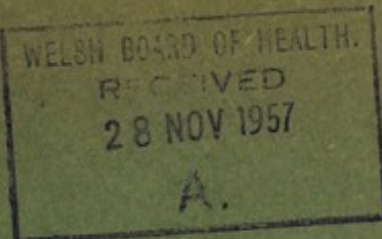
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CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

- OF THE -

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1956



"HIGH TREES",
CHEPSTOW, MON.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

LIST OF RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Chairman : Brig. G.B. Vaughan-Hughes

Vice-Chairman : Mr. E. Griffiths

Councillors :

Mrs. K. Amooore	Mr. L. Jones
Mr. B. Beale	Mr. S.G. Jones
Mr. D.T. Coleman	Mr. A.H. Morgan
Mr. S.P. Crompton	Mr. L. Nevison
Mr. E.M. Davis	Mr. R.A. Newall
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Mr. K.D. Hill	Mr. C.R. Read
Mr. S.M. Hill	Mr. J. Roberts
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Mr. L. Hughes	Mr. E.G. Saunders
Mr. A. Jones	Mr. W.J. Sterry
Mr. A.E. Jones	Mr. W.J. Titley
	Mr. F.C. Walker

Officers of the Council :

Clerk - Mr. T.T. Birbeck, F.A.I.

Medical Officer of Health - Dr. E.N. Dowell, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector & Surveyor - Mr. L. Whittingham,
M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A., Cert.S.I.B., M.A.Rur.S.,
Certified Inspector of Meat & Other Foods.

Additional Public Health Inspector - Mr. D.C. Powell, A.M.I.P.H.E.,
M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A., M.R.I.P.H.H., Cert.S.I.B.,
Incorporated Sanitary Engineer. Certified
Inspector of Meat & Other Foods.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

*"High Trees,"
Chepstow*

To
The Chairman and Members of the
Rural District Council of Chepstow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the Health
and Sanitary Conditions of your District for the year ended 31st
December, 1956.

The health of your district was satisfactory.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Whittingham and
Mr. Powell for their help and co-operation during the past year,

I remain,
Your obedient Servant,

E.N. DOWELL.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (acres)	42,459
<u>Population</u>	
Estimated mid-year population	10,620
Number of inhabited houses	3,487
Rateable Value	£78,217
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£178. 0s. 3d.

EXTRACTS FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Live Births

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	96	98	194
Illegitimate	4	2	6

In 1952 the total live births were 177 and in 1953 they were 158. The number of illegitimate live births in 1955 was 10.

Still Births.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	1	3	4

In 1950 there were 5 still births.

INFANT MORTALITY

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths of Infants under one year of age.			
Legitimate	1	4	5

In 1952 and 1954 there were 5 deaths of infants under one year of age.

The following gives a list of infant deaths under one year of age, giving age and cause of death :-

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Female - 7 hours | 1.a. Massive Pulmonary Haemorrhage. |
| | b. Haemorrhage Neonatorum. |

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| (2) Female - 1 day | 1.a. Atelectasis.
b. Multiple Congenital Abnormalities. |
| (3) Female - 2 weeks | 1.a. Broncho-pneumonia
b. Jejunal Atresia. |
| (4) Male - 2 weeks | 1.a. Broncho-pneumonia
b. Prematurity. |
| (5) Female - 9 months | 1.a. Gastro-enteritis.
11. Congenital Heart Disease |

DEATHS

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Deaths	57	57	114

In 1954 and 1953 there were 112 deaths. Natural increase (the number of births exceeds the number of deaths) = 86.

There were 7 male deaths attributed to neoplasm of lung or bronchus, which is 3 more than in 1955 and 5 more than in 1954. There were no deaths attributed to any form of tuberculosis. Of the total deaths, 53 were 70 years or over at the time of death. Table I gives a classification of the causes of death and the number attributed to each cause.

GENERAL EPIDEMIOLOGY

Diphtheria

No cases were notified. This is the fourth year of no cases.

Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year 203 children were immunised against diphtheria. Of this number 94 were born in 1955 and 33 in 1956. Of the 175 children born in 1955, 100 had been immunised against diphtheria by the end of 1956. This year vaccinations and immunisations were not discontinued owing to the occurrence of Poliomyelitis.

Vaccinations (Smallpox)

During the year 96 vaccinations against smallpox were carried out. Of this number 40 were babies born in 1956.

Scarlet Fever

5 cases were notified. There were 3 notifications in 1953.

Measles

There were 3 notifications. In 1955 there were 65 notifications.

Whooping Cough

There were 20 notifications as against 12 in 1955. There were 28 in 1954.

Immunisation against Whooping Cough was commenced in the Area in May, 1955. Children are immunised against Whooping Cough alone or in combination with diphtheria vaccine.

Poliomyelitis

As in 1953 and 1954 there were no notifications. There were 3 in 1955. During the year 16 children were vaccinated against Poliomyelitis. Schools in the area were visited with the mobile Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic.

Tuberculosis

The following were the notifications of new cases received during the year :-

- (1) Female - 17 years. Lungs
- (2) Female - 63 years. Lungs
- (3) Female - 25 years. Lungs
- (4) Female - 6 years. Lungs
- (5) Male - 17 years. Lungs
- (6) Male - 70 years. Lungs
- (7) Female - 7 years. Lungs


During 1952 10 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified. In 1954 and 1953, 7 cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis were notified.

DEATHS 1956

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Malignant neoplasm, stomach.	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus.	7	-
Malignant neoplasm, breast.	-	3
Malignant neoplasm, uterus.	-	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms.	2	7
Leukaemia, aleukaemia.	-	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system.	6	13
Coronary disease, angina.	10	6
Hypertension with heart disease.	1	4
Other heart disease.	11	4
Other circulatory disease.	2	2
Influenza.	1	1
Pneumonia.	1	1
Bronchitis.	4	4
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum.	4	-
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea.	-	1
Nephritis and nephrosis.	1	2
Congenital malformations.	1	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases.	2	2
Motor vehicle accidents.	1	-
All other accidents.	2	3
	-	-
ALL CAUSES	<u>57</u>	<u>57</u>

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES (OTHER
THAN TUBERCULOSIS) ACCORDING TO AGE GROUPS

DISEASE	CASES NOTIFIED - AGE GROUPS :-							Total all ages
	Under 1 year	1 2	3 4	5 9	10 14	15 24	25 & over	
Diphtheria								
Scarlet Fever				5				5
Cerebro-spinal Fever								
Pneumonia								
Acute Poliomyelitis								
Enteric Fever								
Encephalitis Lethargica								
Dysentery								
Ophthalmia Neonatorum								
Puerperal Pyrexia								
Measles and German Measles			2		1			3
Whooping Cough		6	5	9				20
Erysipelas								
Other Diseases								
TOTALS		6	7	14	1			28



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Surveyor and Public Health Inspector's Annual Report
for the Year 1956

Inspections during the year.

Dairies and Cowsheds	...	...	8
Food Preparing Premises	...	...	178
Bakehouses	...	...	10
Food Inspection	...	...	340
Drainage	...	...	126
Drain Testing	...	...	46
Sewerage	...	...	161
Water Supply	...	...	484
Housing (Complaints)	...	...	122
Infectious Disease & Disinfection	...	...	28
Nuisances	...	...	37
Disinfestation	...	...	9
Shops Acts	...	...	211
Housing Sites	...	...	672
Council House Repairs	...	...	839
Refuse Collection & Disposal	...	...	361
Factories	...	...	88
Building Byelaws	...	...	462
Petrol Licences	...	...	47
Miscellaneous	...	...	522

Work Done

by Owners after Informal Notices :-

Housing Repairs	...	...	46
Drainage Repairs	...	...	22
Nuisances abated	...	...	12

by Owners after Statutory Notices :-

Housing Repairs	...	...	1
Drainage Repairs	...	...	-
Nuisances abated	...	...	-

Notices Served

Informal Under Housing Acts	...	32
Informal Under Public Health Acts	...	48
Statutory Under Housing Acts	...	-
Statutory Under Public Health Acts	...	19

WATER SUPPLY

The District is supplied with water purchased in bulk from Chepstow Water Company, Newport Corporation and Magor and St. Mellons Rural District Council, in addition to the relatively small village schemes which have been constructed and are maintained at the expense of the Council themselves.

The villages of Portskewett and Caldicot are supplied with a bulk supply taken from the main of Chepstow Water Company near Moun-ton House by 6" diameter asbestos cement pipes which reduce to 4" after passing through Caldicot. This main continues until it links up with a supply from Magor and St. Mellons Rural District about which more will be said later. Branches of smaller pipes are laid to Black Rock, Crick, Sudbrook and Caerwent Brook and although the mains were laid in 1937 and are, therefore, in relatively good condition, this cannot be said of some of the branches which were laid originally by the Great Western Railway as part of the scheme that was at that time serving the district. In this particular connection part of the branch and many of the services in Sudbrook can be considered to be among the worst. The agreement with Chepstow Water Company is for a term of 50 years from the 30th June, 1938, and provides for a supply not exceeding 50 million gallons per annum, equivalent to 137,000 gallons per day. The price payable is 6d. per thousand gallons but is subject to a rebate of 4d. per thousand gallons up to 20 million gallons and 3d. per thousand gallons for the further quantity up to 50 million gallons per annum. During 1956 39,324,000 gallons were taken at a cost of £408. 4s. 4d.

The Council are not to supply in the Parishes of Moun-ton, Mathern and St. Pierre without the written consent of the Company and then only at such terms as the Company may require. The quality of this water is satisfactory although considerable discolouration occurs at times of heavy rain owing to the lack of storage facilities at the source.

The black spots mentioned in the Report for 1955, viz., Leechpool Smallholdings and The Brockwells, Caldicot, showed no improvement and once again it is urged that consideration should be given by the industrial users at Leechpool to the provision of adequate storage tanks.

Originally Highmoor Hill was supplied with water from Newport Corporation taken from the termination of an old 2" private main at Carrow Hill connected to Newport Corporation main near Penhow. It was badly corroded and for that reason the Council discontinued a few years ago and connected to the Admiralty main at Five Lanes. Carrow Hill still derives its supply from the private main referred to but it is in a very poor state and gives an unsatisfactory supply. 2,528,000 gallons were purchased during the year for Highmoor Hill at a cost of £142. 4s. 1d.

The village of Caerwent is supplied by Monmouthshire County Council who take a bulk supply from Chepstow Water Company at Mounton at the same point as the Rural District Council. They have laid parallel 4" and 3" mains to a point near Crick where they are reduced to a single 3" main and eventually 2" to terminate at Five Lanes. Many tapings are taken off the mains en route and there are 84 premises supplied in addition to the County Council's own properties which are agricultural users and, therefore, heavy consumers. The pressure in the village of Caerwent has consequently been extremely poor particularly during times when cattle are being milked and at these periods, is so low as to be considered serious. Quality is satisfactory but this poor supply merits urgent consideration.

The Council supply their own houses with water taken from Caldicot through a new 2" main.

Llanfair Discoed in the parish of Caerwent is supplied by 2" and 1½" pipes laid by the Welsh Land Settlement Society from the Admiralty main which is taken from Newport Corporation at Penhow. The Monmouthshire County Council also supply from springs above Village Farm to a standpipe in the village, but the quality of this water is poor.

The villages of Rogiet and Undy were formerly supplied with Chepstow Water Company's water but owing to the lack of pressure at Leechpool, due partly to the Council's development at Caldicot, both these villages were alternatively supplied with Newport Corporation water distributed as far as the district's Western boundary through Magor & St. Mellons Rural District Council's mains and thereafter in the Council's own mains. During the year 30,562,000 gallons were consumed at a cost of £2,037. 9s. 4d.

The source of supply at Devauden is a main spring in the Fedw Valley piped by 6" pipes to a hydraulic ram which raises the water through 2" pipes to two 10,000 gallon header tanks. From this point, 1", 2" and 3" pipes distribute the water to Devauden, Cobblers Plain and Star Hill whilst the supply is also linked to Kilgwrrwg so that the latter scheme may be augmented in times of short supply. Quantity and quality were satisfactory during the year.

Kilgwrrwg is supplied by the Council who purchased a private estate supply in 1954 the source of which is a main spring near Cwm Vagor. This is raised by a ram to a 10,000 gallon header tank and from there, the water gravitates to supply 24 premises which are mainly agricultural. The exhaust from the ram is piped to Cwm Vagor and Clydach. The mains to this scheme were laid in 1911 and are therefore in extremely poor condition whilst constant attention has also to be given to the pumping arrangements, so that this is not an economical scheme to operate.

The village of Shirenewton is supplied by the Council through their own mains with water purchased in bulk from Chepstow Water Company, the agreement being for a maximum of 15,000 gallons per day at a cost of 1s. 6d. per thousand gallons. During the year 2175,000 gallons were consumed at a cost of £163 . The mains are of 4" and 3" cast iron and are taken from a 13,000 gallon storage reservoir situated at a point below Mynders Farm. The water is taken from Chepstow Water Company's works at Whitemill, Shirenewton, which is also the source of their supply to Portskewett and Caldicot, and is pumped by electrically operated pumps to the reservoir.

St. Arvans is supplied by two schemes which are linked - the original scheme consisting of a spring near Hill Farm being conveyed to an 11,000 gallon storage tank built near a second spring at the Pound from which 3" pipes are taken through the village to Piercefield Hotel. A further series of springs in Gorse Wood are piped to a 10,000 gallon reservoir constructed in 1954, which is joined to the original main at a point near The Woodlands. This extra storage capacity has alleviated the acute shortage which arose at certain periods previously and the supply may now be considered satisfactory both in quantity and quality. A small scheme consisting of 1,000 gallon storage tank supplying two standpipes and 7 houses was constructed during the year and this relieved the houses situated above the two tanks previously mentioned and has given them satisfaction.

The scheme to supply Tintern was almost completed during the year and this consists of a 10,000 gallon reservoir, 4½ miles of mains which are 4" and 3" in size. The cost of the scheme is £25,000, and it will eventually supply 110 properties. Attention is again drawn to the absolute necessity for a sewerage system for this village.

The Council considered the problem of providing new schemes to Earlswood, Llangwm, Llansoy, Trellech Grange and Wolvesnewton and the improvement of existing supplies to the Severn Tunnel Area. For this purpose they divided their district into Northern and Southern areas, with each area having its own particular problems and remedies.

The following proposals which are briefly outlined are considered to be the answer to many of the Council's difficulties in the Northern area :-

Earlswood

Water to be pumped from Chepstow Water Company to a 10,000 gallon storage reservoir to serve 58 premises at a cost of approximately £30,000. This estimated cost is around £500 per property.

Llangwm

- (1) 128 ft. Borehole at the Bridge Inn to supply 21 premises at £12,750 or £607 per property,
- (2) Springs at Gaer Vawr to supply 25 premises at £14,750 or £590 per property.
- (3) By pumping to an additional 6 cottages at an extra cost of £2,000 the latter scheme would cost £16,750 or £540 per house.

Llansoy

By extending the existing main from Devauden and renewing a portion of the present main which is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ " reducing to $1\frac{1}{4}$ ", 17 properties would be supplied at a total cost of £10,000 or £588 per dwelling.

Trellech Grange

Ten premises could be supplied by extending a main from Monmouth Rural District at a cost of £5,000 or £500 per property added to which, the water would need to be purchased in bulk from the authority mentioned.

Newchurch

This would be a continuation of the main serving Kilgwrrwg and 8 premises would receive a supply at a total cost of £3,750 or £469 per property.

Wolvesnewton

A supply could be given by gravitation from the spring near Cwm Vagor. 6 premises would be served at a cost of £6,700 or £1,116 per dwelling.

The Glyn, Devauden

This area would be supplied by an extension from the Kilgwrrwg Scheme at a cost of £2,700 and as 6 properties would be served, the cost per dwelling would be £450.

The high cost per dwelling will be noted in all the above schemes and in view of the limited agricultural benefit to be derived from many of them, one wonders if any of these schemes will ever be brought to fruition.

The problem in the Southern area was mainly the improvement of supply to Caerwent village from which the County Council were anxious

to be relieved, an increased supply to Llanfair Discoed mainly for horticultural purposes, a new supply to Common-y-Coed and an improved supply to Carrow Hill. It was considered that Industrial users such as the 42 Smallholdings at Leechpool could improve their own supplies by providing storage tanks and the detection and prevention of waste would also assist to cut down consumption. Consequently, much effort was concentrated to reduce the wastage of water during the year but in view of the poor state of some of the branch mains previously referred to, it is a very difficult problem. One leak emerges as soon as another is repaired. It seems likely that some of the branches will require complete renewal within the next year or so.

One of the difficulties of the problem in the Southern area is that although adequate water can be taken from Newport Corporation to relieve any shortage from whatever cause, through the mains supplying Chepstow Water Company's water, it costs the Council 1s. 3d. per thousand gallons as compared with less than 6d. per thousand from Chepstow. Therefore it is obviously desirable to use as much of Chepstow Water Company's supply as possible up to the maximum of 50,000,000 gallons per annum.

A proposal to take a main from Penhow off Newport Corporation's supply along the line of the existing Carrow Hill private main to Highmoor Hill will eventually be considered by the Council. From this point, a main can be taken to link up with the County Council main on the Western side of Caerwent and a storage reservoir can also be constructed from which an additional main can be taken to Caldicot in the event of any future development in that locality. Llanfair Discoed may be supplied from Wentwood Reservoir and this also can link up with Caerwent's main.

The following table shows the number of samples taken during the year :-

Parish	Samples	Raw	Treated	RESULTS	
				Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Undy	3		3	3	
Caldicot	8		8	8	
Rogiet	4		4	4	
Portskewett	2		2	2	
Mathern	2		2	2	
Caerwent	7		7	7	
St. Arvans	19	19		5	14
Shirenewton	2		2	2	
Devauden	2	2		2	
Kilgwrrwg	3	3		3	
TOTAL	52	24	28	38	14

HOUSING

The following table shows the Council's building programme for the year :-

Parish	Type	Completed	Under Construction
Caldicot	Hawksley Unity Wimpey	28 20 9	43
Rogiet	Traditional	8	26 Houses 8 Bungalows
Caerwent	Gregory	36	
Undy	Gregory	8	
TOTALS		109	77

It will be seen that the Council's progress was still maintained during 1956, and the general need for houses was almost satisfied by the end of the year. Although 208 persons still remained as applicants on the Council's files it could not be said that the degree of urgency was as noticeable as it had been during previous years.

Of the total number of houses owned by the Council, 100 had been allocated for workers from the Royal Naval Propellant Factory, Dinham, a proportion to workers from British Railways, 33 to applicants who resided outside the district and the remainder to local persons.

It was satisfactory to note that the plan to build 8 bungalows for aged persons was started at Rogiet and some of these would be allocated to persons from adjoining parishes. It is hoped that this principle will be extended so that elderly people occupying large houses will be encouraged to make room for younger people with growing families.

During the year two Undertakings were accepted from persons in respect of dwellings scheduled for demolition. The Improvement Grant scheme was encouraged by the Council who made 23 grants to the value of £6,340. Up to December, 1956, 37 grants had been made to the value of £8,786, and the result of this scheme was beginning to make itself evident in the various parishes within the district.

Much of the Council's programme has included the building of New Tradition houses and at December, 1956, the Council owned 270 Unity

houses, 120 Hawksley, 9 Wimpey and 54 Gregory, making 453 of this particular type. The sound insulation in many of these houses leaves much to be desired and there is apparently no standard for such a requirement as is the case regarding thermal insulation.

SEWERAGE

The district is badly served with sewers and parts of those which are already in existence are not in a good state of repair. With the exception of small housing site systems, the only villages which are sewered are parts of Rogiet, Caldicot and Sudbrook. It is now time that the Council considered their programme for Sewerage Schemes throughout the District as they have almost completed their building programme and the area is relatively well supplied with water apart from the areas previously mentioned. It is significant to note that trouble has been experienced in the sewers to the new housing site at Caldicot caused by bad workmanship, and the emergence of rats through badly jointed sewers has already been noted.

Caldicot and Rogiet have a sewerage system constructed in 1924 and are linked to a common outfall known as Dowle's Drain which passes under the main London to Cardiff railway line before terminating at the River Severn into which sewage is discharged in its raw state. Neither the sewage nor sewerage is satisfactory inasmuch as the lower portion of the system, particularly at Rogiet, becomes surcharged in times of high tide and as a considerable portion is either near the surface or above ground level there is the resulting nuisance. The Rogiet system and a large part of the Caldicot system is combined (i.e. the sewers carry both foul and storm water) so it will be seen how the situation is aggravated in times of heavy rainfall. Part of the Caldicot Sewage is pumped by 3" electrically operated Stereophagus pumps to the West End of the village whence it gravitates to Dowle's Drain. The lower part of the new housing estate runs from Caldicot Pool near Severn View to this point also. The Council have considered the provision of a new sewerage system to serve Portskewett, Caldicot and Rogiet for many years, but no progress can be reported. It is suggested that this matter be expedited with all possible speed.

The parish of Sudbrook is served with a system of sewers discharging sewage into the River Severn in its raw state and these pipes were laid when the village was built in 1876. They are not in a good condition although serving the village quite well at the present time.

The parish of Undy is fairly urbanised in character, as is Portskewett, but is still without any hope of a sewerage scheme. It is proposed to link this village with Magor in the adjoining Rural District and the disposal works will be sited there. It therefore seems that

unless the adjoining authority decide to carry out their scheme Undy will be deprived of their sewerage system indefinitely. It might be as well for the Council to consider an alternative idea in this matter and allow Magor & St. Mellons R.D.C. to link up with them if they so wished at a later date.

St. Arvans is a village which would provide an economical system and 75 premises could easily be connected to a centrally sited disposal works. It may be necessary to pipe the effluent to the River Wye but the present primitive arrangement should not be allowed to continue.

Attention was again drawn to the inadequacy of the disposal arrangements at the Council House Site at Devauden and the Ministry were informed of the unsatisfactory state of affairs. Nuisance was in fact being caused but still approval could not be obtained for the new scheme to be carried out.

The Council considered the provision of a sewerage system at Tintern and submitted the proposed scheme to the Ministry in November for their consideration. This is a fairly difficult village to sewer inasmuch as it necessitates pumping arrangements being made and the estimated cost of £47,000 to serve 120 premises shows that the system will also prove expensive to install. However, it should be borne in mind that Tintern is the village which attracts more tourists to the District than any other, yet its present sanitary arrangements can only be described as primitive. This is one scheme that must be allowed to continue particularly as the new water scheme will aggravate the position for disposal of waste water. As long as occupiers have to carry water, they will conserve it, be economical in its use and careful in its disposal, but as soon as a supply is laid on inside the house they will naturally consume more and this brings many problems of disposal. This is particularly so at Tintern where the siting of most of the houses prevents the installation of individual cesspools or septic tanks.

The Cesspool Emptying Scheme continued to operate on 3 days per week, but this was becoming very difficult and it would soon be necessary to put this on a full time basis. During the year 436 cesspools were emptied at an average cost of less than £3 per pit. 382 persons applied for the service which allows for 2 free emptyings per year and additional emptyings at 10s.0d. each. Business premises are emptied at the rate of £1 per hour.

RODENT CONTROL

The Council's Rodent Operative inspected 831 private premises during the year in addition to 342 farms and 11 business premises and smallholdings. The following table shows this figure made up in monthly totals :-

Month	Private Dwellings	Sewers	Local Authorities Premises
January	65	14 M.H's	2
February	67		2
March	69		2
April	74		2
May	47		2
June	82		2
July	73	18 M.H's	2
August	89		2
September	68		2
October	86		2
November	62		2
December	49		2

The year of 1956 was a fairly quiet one as far as the discovery of rats on agricultural premises was concerned although this appears to have been general throughout the country. This is no doubt due to constant inspections made during previous years and the treatment of infestations as soon as they occur. There were no major infestations noted during 1956 and one contrasts this with the position 10 years ago when it was possible to discover major infestations almost at random.

Although there are 629 farms and smallholdings in the district it is noted that only 52 of these had entered into contracts with the local Agricultural Executive Committee and it is assumed that most of

the remainder treat their premises themselves. Although it is not a policy which is agreed upon by all authorities, the Council might offset the cost of the pest prevention service which amounted to £662 during 1956, by endeavouring to undertake the Contract system, for an experimental period, for premises which refuse the Agricultural Executive Committee's scheme.

Further experiments were carried out at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture whereby a survey of Ricks was undertaken and infestations of rats and mice noted when the ricks were threshed. The results showed that there was a predominance of mice in these ricks and in one instance a major infestation was discovered and destroyed. The Prevention of Damage by Pests (Threshing and Dismantling of Ricks) Regulations, 1950, were operated and warnings were given to two threshing contractors who failed to take the necessary precautions when carrying out their operations. Eventually they carried out the requirements without further trouble.

The sewers at Caldicot, Rogiet and Sudbrook were treated and inspections made at other housing sites which were served by individual sewage disposal plants. The sewers at Caldicot showed minor infestations particularly in the new portions laid to the Council's Housing Site and as stated elsewhere it was noted that rats had emerged from manholes where sewers had been incorrectly jointed into the brickwork. They had followed the line of sewer and drain eventually to emerge in tenants gardens and these matters were attended to promptly. Baiting trays were built into several manholes on the new Housing Estate as these had been omitted at the time of construction.

No infestations were discovered in the sewers at the other housing sites referred to above and the usual periodic inspections were also carried out to streams within the district, particularly at Tintern, as well as the Council's Refuse Tips.

REFUSE COLLECTION

The time is now approaching when the Council will need to revise their Refuse Collection service and engage the two refuse vehicles on a full time basis. During 1956, one vehicle operated full time and one operated on only two days a week - the remaining 3 days being on Cesspool Emptying - but the increased development at Caldicot, Rogiet, Portskewett and Caerwent makes it necessary for a revision of the scheme in order to maintain the existing service. In addition to this, improvement can be effected in the Northern area where a fortnightly collection is given at the present time. This can be increased to a weekly collection.

The Council took informal action against 32 persons in respect of defective dustbins and in each case the occupier of the premises

agreed to replace the existing bin with one of more suitable construction. The job of refuse loading, particularly to a side loading vehicle where the loading line is relatively high as compared with some other types of vehicle, is difficult and arduous enough even with bins of proper construction and the problem of lifting and emptying a large two handled bath or large drum without handles is too much to be expected. It is not generally appreciated what work is undertaken by the Refuse Crews who carry out their duties in all weather in a most efficient and courteous way in view of the shortage of labour and the difficulties encountered by many industries, the Council may be considered fortunate in having such satisfactory service.

The total cost of Refuse Collection and Disposal throughout the year was £2,991, as compared with £2,968 last year, but as no special staff is employed for disposal purposes on the tips it is not possible to separate the costs. The loading crews are employed each Saturday morning upon the tips and a large measure of control is ensured this way. One person is employed as a Driver-Chargehand and he is responsible for the day to day discharge of refuse and the raking down and covering of this. Large quantities of covering material such as ashes are obtained locally and it is indeed difficult to detect the existence of the Council's Refuse Tips until one gets almost upon the face of the tips. They are sprayed regularly during the summer months with tip dressing to eliminate fly nuisance and are inspected monthly by the Council's Rodent Operative.

The experiment of placing litter bins at salient points throughout the district was tried during the year and this proved a great success. It was an effort to keep the district tidy particularly in the Wye Valley and at 'bus stops and the bins were emptied each week by the Refuse Crews as they passed the particular spot. This is a scheme which could be extended considerably and one which had most encouraging results.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

There were 40 factories within the district and once again there were no complaints from the Factory Inspector. The Council are responsible for sanitary conveniences in all factories and in factories not employing mechanical power they are also responsible for cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation, lighting and drainage of floors. In addition to these sections of the Act the Council are also responsible for ensuring that there are adequate means of escape in case of fire and in this connection they are grateful for the assistance rendered by the County Fire Brigade whose officer carried out a joint inspection with the Council's Officer and gives him the benefit of his specialist advice.

The following table shows the inspections which were carried out during the year :-

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1. Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	15	46	-	-
2. Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	25	42	-	-
3. Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority- (excluding outworkers premises).	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	40	88	-	-

	Number of cases in which defects were -				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	4	4	-	-	-
Overcrowding					
Unreasonable temperature					
Inadequate ventilation	1	1	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	1	1	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient					
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes					
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).					
TOTAL	9	9	-	-	-

FOOD

The long awaited Food and Drugs Act, 1955 became law on 1st January, 1956, and the Food Hygiene Regulations which were made under that Act also became enforceable from the same date. These Regulations reinforced the Food Handling Byelaws which were previously in operation but which left many important loopholes.

The following table shows the number and type of food premises in the district and the number of inspections made during the year.

Premises	Number	Inspections
Dairies	3	8
Bakehouses	2	10
Butchers Premises	6	22
Fish & Fruit Premises	3	8
Fried Fish Shops	1	5
Food Vehicles	4	14
Ice Cream Premises	18	47
Provision Shops	36	138
Restaurants & Kitchens	29	163

At the beginning of the year all establishments were circularised with a summary of the Food Hygiene Regulations and these were given to the person in charge so that he could instruct the employees under his control. The Regulations are divided into five main parts namely, (1) General Requirements (2) Requirements relating to persons engaged in the handling of Food (3) Structural Requirements (4) Requirements relating to Stalls (5) Requirements relating to the transport of Meat. The Council are mainly concerned with 1, 2 and 3 and the sections relating to stalls apply mainly to markets and similar establishments.

The problem of enforcement can be divided mainly into 2 groups, i.e. Restaurants and Kitchens on the one hand and all other premises on the other hand. Although the Regulations apply equally to all premises, they are not as easy to enforce in the kitchens as in other premises due partly to the fact that greater numbers of persons are working together and thereby corrupt each other with their lax methods. When one can talk to one or two persons engaged in a shop or similar establishment, one is able to get better results particularly if that person is also the proprietor who realises that failure to comply with the Regulations and possible prosecution could mean loss of business for him.

The General Requirements cover the cleanliness of equipment and during the year informal notices were served in respect of dirty,

cracked or broken equipment. Generally speaking, one encountered a high degree of co-operation in this respect and it was not found necessary to take legal proceedings for any contravention.

The requirements relating to persons engaged in the handling of food proved far more difficult to operate as one would need to be in constant attendance to ensure that there was no breach of the Regulations. The co-operation referred to above, did not extend to the enforcement of these sections and the employees were generally silently resentful in their attitude. Even after many talks and explanations as to the possibility of food poisoning outbreaks and other dangers, this attitude was not improved, but it is hoped that time will bring a greater degree of harmony and co-operation in this respect. 16 warnings were issued for dirty clothing and 5 employees were forbidden to smoke in the food preparation rooms. Notices were displayed telling employees not to smoke in addition to other posters obtained from the Central Council for Health Education. These covered a variety of subjects such as instructions to wash hands, cover all cuts and sores and cover food against flies.

Of the 77 food premises in the District 27 were without hot water supply and a further 8 were situated in villages without piped supply and where it was impossible to comply with the Regulations. In these cases it was recommended that adequate storage facilities be provided on the premises.

The structural requirements invoked much opposition mainly on the grounds of expense to the occupiers of the premises and during the year 62 informal notices were served although the Regulations do not actually provide for notice being given. Any contravention is at once an offence but the view is taken that enforcement by education and co-operation is preferable to legal proceedings in the long term.

24 Occupiers were instructed to install wash-hand basins for persons engaged in food handling and all of these complied. First aid materials were provided in 53 establishments. In 39 cases inadequate provision had been made for the clothing and footwear of persons engaged in the premises and lockers or cupboards were provided. In 27 premises, the occupiers were told to cleanse the floors, walls, ceilings and windows whilst two proprietors were also required to provide additional lighting.

The transport of meat is undertaken in the district by Contractors operating from Newport County Borough and a marked improvement was noted in the construction of these vehicles. Adequate provision was made for the conveyance of offal and the clothing and headgear of persons engaged in handling the meat was also of a satisfactory standard. There is only one private slaughterhouse in the district which is used for the slaughter of sheep, pigs and calves as cattle are transported to Newport Abattoir for slaughter at that place. During the year 293 sheep, 18 pigs and 2 calves were killed and the following meat found to be unfit for human consumption :-

Organs	Reason
15 sheeps livers	Cirrhosis
1 Pigs head	Post Pharyngeal Abscess

The standard of cleanliness was maintained at the slaughterhouse and as slaughtering only takes place regularly on one day per week, there is no nuisance from offal, hides and other by products which are collected on the day after slaughter by a local manufacturer.

The Council received a proposal from Monmouth Borough Council to provide a public slaughterhouse in that town and asked whether the Council in conjunction with neighbouring authorities would be interested in considering that the needs of their district would be thereby satisfied. This was deferred pending the Government's proposed memorandum.

It was decided to hold joint consultations with Chepstow Urban District Council following the Memorandum on the policy to Regulate the Provision of Slaughterhouses, but this meeting did not materialise before the end of the year. It was said that the Urban District Council would construct a slaughterhouse at Chepstow Cattle Market and in this case, it would be also to the benefit of butchers from within the Rural Area.

The following table shows the foodstuffs examined during the year and found unfit for human consumption. They were voluntarily surrendered and this is not surprising as the complainant in each case was only concerned with obtaining a certificate with which he could obtain a cash rebate from his suppliers. The tins were all disposed of on the Council's Refuse Tip at Portskewett.

Description	Reason for Condemnation	Amount in lbs.
Bacon	Decomposition	8
Tinned goods	Decomposed and blown	87
Cheese	Mould	6

In April, 1956 the Milk (Special Designation) (Specified Areas) Order, 1956, became operative and this had the effect of ensuring that all milk which was to be sold in the future within a large area of which Chepstow Rural District was a part, would need to be specially designated, that is to say that it would have to be tuberculin tested in the case of untreated milk or pasteurised or sterilised in the case of milk treated by heat. There were 14 licences issued to 7 retailers during the year comprising 7 licences to use the Designation Pasteurised 6 Tuberculin Tested and 1 sterilised. There was one additional shop registered for the sale and storage of icecream making the total number of such premises up to 18 within the district and all samples taken were placed in Category 1. One application to manufacture was received but the premises were found to be unsuitable and the proposal was eventually withdrawn. There are no manufacturers within the district and all ice cream which is sold is prepacked. The figure of 18 premises does not include 6 hotels which are exempt from the registration provisions inasmuch as they cater mainly for their own residents.

Two bakehouses went out of existence during the year and this was due to the fact that they were purchased by a large firm who were operating from Newport County Borough with delivery vans covering much of the Rural Area. Notice was given to one baker to cleanse the walls and install a wash-hand basin and he did in fact comply with this requirement.

