

[Report 1953] / Medical Officer of Health, Bury St Edmunds Borough.

Contributors

Bury St. Edmunds (England). Borough Council. no2007054786

Publication/Creation

1953

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/xkru9hyz>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



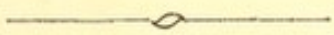
Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

Library

HEALTH
16 AUG 54
R.



Borough of Bury St. Edmunds

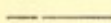


ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE


Medical Officer of Health

1953.



BURY ST. EDMUNDS :

F. G. PAWSEY AND CO., LTD., HATTER STREET,
PRINTERS.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b28969480>

THE WORSHIPFUL THE MAYOR
ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS
OF THE BOROUGH OF BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

MR. MAYOR, MRS. BATES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Public Health Service for the year 1953.

The population of Bury St. Edmunds has been increasing steadily each year since the end of the war, but in 1953 this trend was reversed.

The birth rate has increased, the death rate has decreased and both rates compare favourably with those for England and Wales as a whole.

The total number of cases of infectious diseases notified was much lower than in the previous year when there was an extensive epidemic of measles.

Further efforts to raise the general standards of food hygiene included the delivery of an illustrated public lecture to an appreciative audience of food handlers and others who filled the Athenaeum to capacity.

A preliminary survey of sub-standard houses which was made during the year has emphasised once again the need for vigorous action to improve, close or demolish this type of property.

Mr. E. F. Eldred, your Senior Sanitary Inspector, is to retire in April, 1954 after serving the Council for 31 years, most of this service was during the period of office of the late Dr. E. Stork, D.S.O., J.P., M.B., whom it was my privilege to succeed. Reference was made in a previous annual report to Mr. Eldred's unfailing loyalty and to his co-operation which has been so generously extended to me. At this time of his retirement I would like to repeat the words used by Dr. Stork some years ago, "Mr. Eldred has helped me more than I can say."

In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation of the continued interest and encouragement of the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

P. COGGIN BROWN,

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Officers of the Authority

P. COGGIN-BROWN M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health

E. F. ELDRED,
Senior Sanitary Inspector

E. H. BOX, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.,
Additional Sanitary Inspector

VITAL STATISTICS.

ALL FIGURES IN BRACKETS which follow in the sequence of this report relate to the corresponding figures for 1952.

POPULATION.—Registrar General's Estimate for 1953 19,820 (20,240)			
Census April 1951	.....	.....	20,045
Rateable Value	.....	.....	£135,704
Sum Represented by a Penny Rate (Est.)	.....	.....	£545
Area	.....	.....	.....3,623 Acres

Since the end of the war and until 1953 there has been a steady increase in the population of Bury St. Edmunds as judged by the Registrar General's annual estimates, but in the year under review there was a reversal of this trend, the figure showing a reduction of 420.

BIRTHS.—There was a further increase in the birth rate for Bury St. Edmunds in 1953, and the figure when corrected for the age and sex distribution of the population was appreciably above that for England and Wales as a whole. The number of illegitimate births decreased from 20 to 15, but the still-births increased from 6 to 8.

LIVE BIRTHS.		Total.	Male.	Female
Legitimate	.....	318 (291)	176 (158)	142 (133)
Illegitimate	.....	13 (20)	5 (8)	8 (12)
Birth Rate per 1,000 of Population	.....	.....	.....	16.7 (15.4)
" "		corrected for comparability	.....	17.5 (16.1)
" "		per 1,000 of Population England and		
		Wales	.....	15.5 (15.3)

STILLBIRTHS.—		Total.	Male	Female.
Legitimate	.....	6 (6)	2 (2)	4 (4)
Illegitimate	.....	2 (0)	1 (0)	1 (0)
Stillbirth Rate per 1,000 of Population	.....	.....	.....	.4 (.3)
" " " "		England and Wales		.35 (.35)
" " " "		Total (live and still) births		23.6 (18.9)

DEATHS.—There was a decrease in the death rate for Bury St. Edmunds in 1953, and the figure, when corrected for comparability, was below that for England and Wales. The causes of death are listed on page 9

DEATHS.—		Total.	Male.	Female.
		235 (249)	123 (118)	112 (131)
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 population	.....	.....	.....	11.9 (12.3)
Death Rate per 1,000 Population corrected for				
comparability	.....	.....	.....	11.0 (11.4)
Death Rate per 1,000 of Population England and				
Wales	.....	.....	.....	11.4 (11.3)

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS.—During the year 9 deaths occurred from accidental causes, only 2 of which were due to motor vehicle accidents. This was the highest figure for accidental deaths since 1949 and probably the highest for more than 20 years, but prior to 1949 a different system for the classification of the causes of death was in use, consequently the figures for the years before and after that date may not be strictly comparable. However, it is a fact that in Bury St. Edmunds during the last 3 years the number of accidental deaths exceeded the sum total of deaths from tuberculosis, syphilis, whooping cough, meningococcal infections, poliomyelitis, measles, and other infective and parasitic diseases. Accidents are preventable, and they should not be allowed to maintain this position of prominence on our list of the causes of death.

INFANT MORTALITY.—The total number of deaths of infants under one year of age increased from 5 in the previous year to 16 in the year under review. It is to be expected that the infant mortality rate will show considerable variation from year to year because the figure is based upon a relatively small number of births.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age:—

	Total.	Male.	Female
Legitimate	16 (5)	7 (4)	9 (1)
Illegitimate	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Rate per 1,000 live births			48.3 (16.1)
„ „ „ „ England and Wales			26.8 (27.6)

Birth injury, prematurity and congenital abnormalities were factors connected with 12 infant deaths, 9 of which occurred in the first week of life.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year was much lower than in the previous year when there was an extensive epidemic of measles.

WHOOPING COUGH.—Fewer notifications of whooping cough were received than in the previous year.

SCARLET FEVER.—Fourteen cases of scarlet fever were reported, but in most of these cases the disease was very mild in character.

DIPHTHERIA.—Once again no case of diphtheria was reported in Bury St. Edmunds. It must be pointed out, however, that the continuance of this state of affairs is dependent upon the maintenance of a high level of immunity amongst the child population. Immunisation is free of charge and parents should make sure that their young children are protected against this deadly disease.

POLIOMYELITIS.—One case of paralytic poliomyelitis was reported, and one fatal case of polioencephalitis occurred. In the latter case the diagnosis was made at post mortem examination.

INFECTIVE HEPATITIS.—In the last few months of 1953 single cases of Infective Hepatitis were notified at intervals of almost exactly one month. Enquiry at the homes of these patients revealed the existence of several other possible cases which escaped notification, together with a clear history of direct personal contact throughout the series of cases. Uncertainty regarding the precise mode of transmission of the virus, the long and variable incubation period and the possibility of the occurrence of very mild cases all tend to reduce the efficiency of measures to control the spread of this disease. It is suggested therefore that early isolation of the patient and diligent search for "missed cases" are all the more important.

FOOD POISONING.—The six cases of food poisoning which were notified during the year occurred as an outbreak of five cases of suspected staphylococcal food poisoning, and one single case of infection by *Salmonella aertrycke*.

The outbreak of food poisoning provided an example of the valuable assistance in the investigation of infectious diseases which is so readily available from the staff of the Public Health Laboratory at Cambridge. Upon receipt of the first notifications enquiries were made at the home, and suspicion was directed towards certain articles of food which had been consumed at the previous meal. Samples of the remnants of this meal were despatched forthwith to the Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological examination, and within twentyfour hours the bacteriologist reported by telephone that *Staphylococcus aureus* had been recovered from a sample of boiled bacon. This infected bacon was considered to be the cause of the outbreak, but in spite of a high degree of co-operation which was received from the manager and staff of the shop at which the bacon was cooked and sold, further attempts to determine the source of the infection and at what stage of preparation it occurred were unsuccessful.

TUBERCULOSIS.—There was one death from tuberculosis. Eight new cases were reported, this was appreciably fewer than occurred in the previous year.

TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE PERIODS.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
1	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
5	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
10	(-)	(-)	(-)	1	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
15	(-)	(2)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
20	(1)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
25	(2)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
35	3	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
45	(3)	1	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)
55	(4)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
65 and over	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(1)	(-)	1	(-)
Age unknown	(1)	(-)	(1)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)	(-)
Totals	3 (14)	4 (5)	(1)	1 (1)	(3)	(-)	1 (1)	(-)

AGE INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

(other than Tuberculosis).

Disease	-1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	35	45	65	65+	Age Un-known	All Ages
Whooping Cough		1		1	1									3
Measles	1	9	9	13	22	52	6	2					4	118
Pneumonia				1		2					3			6
Scarlet Fever				2	1	9	1		1					14
Puerperal Pyrexia									1					1
Food Poisoning										1	1	4		6
Poliomyelitis						1			1					2
Infective Hepatitis							1		2				1	4
TOTALS	1	10	9	17	24	64	8	2	5	1	4	4	5	154

MONTHLY INCIDENCE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.

(other than Tuberculosis).

Disease.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Totals
Whooping Cough	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	3
Measles	4	27	50	20	1	2	1	10	1	2	—	—	118
Pneumonia	1	1	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	6
Scarlet Fever	1	4	1	1	—	—	3	—	1	2	1	—	14
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Food Poisoning	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	5	—	—	—	6
Poliomyelitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Infective Hepatitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	4
TOTALS	6	32	52	22	1	5	5	12	9	5	3	2	154

CAUSES OF DEATHS DURING THE YEAR 1953
IN BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

				Registrar General's Figures.			
				M.		F.	
ALL CAUSES				123	(118)	112	(131)
1	Tuberculosis, respiratory	....	....	—	( 2)	—	(—)
2	Tuberculosis, other	....	....	1	(1)	—	(—)
3	Syphilitic disease	....	....	—	( —)	1	(—)
4	Diphtheria	....	....	—	( —)	—	( —)
5	Whooping Cough	....	....	—	( —)	—	( —)
6	Meningococcal infections	....	....	—	( —)	—	( —)
7	Acute poliomyelitis	....	....	1	(—)	—	(—)
8	Measles	....	....	—	( —)	—	( 1)
9	Other infective and parasitic diseases			1	(—)	—	(—)
10	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	....		3	(6)	1	(—)
11	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus			3	(5)	—	(—)
12	Malignant neoplasm, breast	....		—	( —)	3	(4)
13	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	....		—	( —)	5	(3)
14	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms			10	(16)	8	(19)
15	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	....	....	1	(—)	—	(1)
16	Diabetes	....	....	1	(1)	—	(—)
17	Vascular lesions of nervous system			14	(19)	21	(27)
18	Coronary disease, angina	....	....	20	(20)	16	(12)
19	Hypertension with heart disease	....		—	( 1)	4	(3)
20	Other heart disease	....	....	20	(15)	19	(21)
21	Other circulatory disease	....	....	—	( 3)	8	(9)
22	Influenza	....	....	3	(—)	1	(—)
23	Pneumonia	....	....	4	(4)	4	(11)
24	Bronchitis	....	....	7	(3)	2	(3)
25	Other diseases of respiratory system			—	(1)	2	(1)
26	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	....		4	(2)	—	(1)
27	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	....		—	( —)	—	( 2)
28	Nephritis and nephrosis	....	....	4	(3)	1	(—)
29	Hyperplasia of prostate	....	....	5	(1)	—	(—)
30	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	....		—	( —)	—	( —)
31	Congenital malformations	....	....	—	( —)	3	(1)
32	Other defined and ill-defined diseases			16	(10)	8	(10)
33	Motor vehicle accidents	....	....	2	(1)	—	(—)
34	All other accidents	....	....	2	(4)	5	(2)
35	Suicide	....	....	1	(—)	—	(—)
36	Homicide and operations of war	....		—	( —)	—	( —)

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.—It is regretted that there is no progress to report regarding the construction of a new sewage disposal works which is needed so urgently. The existing sewage farm at West Stow continues to discharge an effluent which fails to comply with the general standard of the Royal Commission on Sewage Disposal.

REFUSE COLLECTION.—An improved system of refuse collection has been introduced. Although kerbside collection is still necessary in those parts of the town where the houses have no secondary means of access, a considerable improvement has been made in this essential service.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.—The need for additional public conveniences in the Angel Hill area has long been recognised, and in order to meet this need plans have been approved for the erection of new public conveniences in the Abbey Gardens.

IODINE CONTENT OF WATER. An enquiry was received from a Dermatologist concerning the iodine content of the public water supply at Bury St. Edmunds, a suggestion having been made that if this water had a high iodine content it might have been a precipitating factor in a particular case of Dermatitis herpetiformis which developed for the first time while the patient was staying in this town.

The estimation of minute traces of iodine in water is a very delicate and laborious process. Samples were despatched to the Laboratory of Human Nutrition at the University of Oxford, where the estimation was made at the iodine laboratory established through the generosity of a commercial firm. The findings indicated a total iodine content of 4.7 gamma per litre, an amount considered sufficient to prevent goitre but not such as is likely to be toxic even in a sensitive person.

FLUORINE CONTENT OF WATER.—Considerable public interest has been shown in a method of reducing the incidence of dental decay in children by the addition of fluorine to public water supplies in those areas where the natural fluorine content of the water is low. The United Kingdom Mission, which studied this matter in the United States of America, issued a report in 1953 and recommended that fluoridation in selected areas in the United Kingdom should be studied before fluoridation is adopted generally. The fluorine content of the public mains supply in Bury St. Edmunds is very

low. The report of the chemical analysis of a sample of this water taken at the end of the year stated :—

“Fluorine : absent (less than 0.1 parts per million)”.

Already there is a great weight of evidence to show that fluoridation does reduce the incidence of dental caries in children, but there has been some criticism, much of it uninformed, of the addition of fluorine to drinking water. A time will come, although if we have to wait the result of further studies in this country it may be years hence, when the Council will be asked to decide whether fluoridation should be adopted here.

The following is the report of the Borough Surveyor and Water Engineer :—

WATER—GENERAL.

An adequate and wholesome supply of water has been satisfactorily maintained throughout the year.

Fortnightly samples of water drawn from the wells have maintained their usual very high standard of bacterial purity, and all chemical analyses have also proved satisfactory.

Vigilance continues in connection with the taking of samples from the distribution system, and each week 4 samples have been submitted to the Public Health Laboratories, Ipswich. This service of weekly samples from taps, is a great safe-guard against serious pollution, due to the possibility of foreign matter finding its way into the distribution system .

WASTE DETECTION.

Eight new waste water meters have been installed, and although the incidence of waste remains high, night inspection has increased in order to produce more satisfactory results.

PUMPING STATION—KING'S ROAD.

This year has virtually seen the completion of the reconstruction of the pumping station in King's Road. Three pumps have been installed, and each of the boreholes has been driven to a depth of 250-ft. Terrazzo tiling to walls and floors has been laid, leaving certain electrical connections to be made, and instrument panels to be installed.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

The difficulties in disposing of refuse at the present works increase with the general growth of the town. Tipping of clinker has been continued at the Haberden.

SEWERAGE.

A length of 105-yds. of 6" soil sewer has been laid as a replacement of a faulty existing sewer in Cotton Lane. A 9" diameter surface drain, 100-yds. long, has been laid in Hardwick Lane between Vinery Road and Horsecroft Road.

A considerable amount of work has been carried out in the cleaning and dragging of main soil sewers and surface water drains.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

SLAUGHTERHOUSES.—Two slaughterhouses controlled by the Ministry of Food have remained in use for the slaughter of animals for Bury St. Edmunds and the surrounding districts.

It has been mentioned in earlier annual reports that the existing slaughterhouses are old buildings which are badly sited in a congested part of the town, and lack the amenities of a modern abattoir. For a long time past efforts have been made to secure certain improvements at these premises. During the year under review sanitary accommodation and much needed washing facilities were provided at one slaughterhouse.

MEAT INSPECTION.—The total number of animals examined was 11,522 which was slightly below the figure for 1952. The accompanying tables showing the number of carcasses inspected and condemned, and the causes of the condemnation of meat, emphasise the importance of the daily routine of meat inspection.

UN SOUND FOOD.—Foodstuffs found to be unfit for human consumption and diverted to other purposes or destroyed were :—

Meat and Offals	.....	.....	26 tons	2 cwts.	1 qr.
Miscellaneous Articles	.....	.....	1 ton	3 cwts.	3 qrs.

In addition 2,151 tins of meat, fish, milk, vegetables, etc., were destroyed and 949 certificates of condemnation issued.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	1878	436	1344	5145	2719
Number inspected	1878	436	1344	5145	2719
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS.					
Whole carcasses condemned	11	9	11	28	80
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	523	116	2	257	282
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	28.4%	28.6%	.9%	5.5%	13.3%
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.					
Whole carcasses condemned	12	4	—	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	90	67	—	—	46
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	5.4%	16.2%	—	—	1.7%

Cysticercus Bovis was found in 46 cattle (4 cows and 42 others).

ANALYSIS OF CONDEMNED

Cattle

	Whole Carcases	Head and Tongues	Lungs	Livers	Pt. Livers	Hearts	Spleens	Part Carcases	Whole Carcases	Heads
Tuberculosis	13	76	119	18		1	7	6		
Pneumonia Pericarditis Pleurisy, Peritonitis Septic Pneumonia	8		16	3		7			6	
Pyæmia, Pyrexia Gangrene, Septicæmia	4								2	
Liver Fluke and other Parasitic conditions			12	274	111					
Cirrhosis, necrosis Degeneration		1		1		3				
Emaciation and oedema	8								16	
Actinomycosis and Actinobacillosis		20	2							
Tumours, abscesses cystic conditions		7	18	186	3		3			
Icterus and uræmia									4	
Swine Fever (suspected)										
Pig Paratyphoid (suspected)										
Swine Erysipelas										
TOTALS	33	104	167	482	114	11	10	6	28	

The following Carcase Meat was also condemned :—

		BEEF
Bruising .....	.....	2033 lbs.
Abscesses .....	.....	104 lbs.
Arthritis .....	.....	—

MEAT AND OFFAL

Sheep				Pigs						Calves				
Livings	Livers	Plucks	Hearts	Whole Carcases	Heads	Lungs	Livers	Hearts	Plucks	Whole Carcases	Heads	Lungs	Livers	Plucks
				1	42	1			3	1				
7	5	10	6	18		80	8	15		2		4		1
				27						4				
4	106						1						2	
							158						2	
				6										
1	36	7			10	2	2		34		1			2
				3						1				
				15										
				7										
				14										
12	147	17	6	91	52	83	169	15	37	8	1	4	4	3

MUTTON

40 lbs.

16 lbs.

—

PORK

936 lbs.

319 lbs.

89 lbs.

FOOD PREMISES.—As requested in Ministry of Health Circular 1/54 the number of food premises in the area classified by type of business is recorded below.

Hotels and public houses	.....	.....	.....	63
Grocers and general provisions	.....	.....	.....	63
Confectioners	.....	.....	.....	27
Butchers and pork butchers	.....	.....	.....	20
Restaurants, cafes and canteens	.....	.....	.....	20
Fish shops (wet, dry and fried)	.....	.....	.....	22
Greengrocers	.....	.....	.....	13

These figures should be regarded as approximate because in many cases different businesses are conducted from the same premises.

The schools in the area, which are controlled by the Local Education Authority, are served from the central kitchen of the School Meals Service and in some cases from kitchens attached to the schools.

The number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938, for the manufacture or sale of ice cream was 56.

Five dairies have been registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949, and 8 dealers licences were issued under the Milk (Special Designation) Regulations 1949.

INFECTED MILK.

In 1952 a sample of milk was found to be infected with *Brucella abortus*, and it was necessary to issue a notice under the authority of the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949 requiring the milk from this herd to be pasteurised before sale. The notice was withdrawn when the infected cows had been indentified and removed from the herd. It was fortunate that the producer continued to have the milk from this herd pasteurised before sale, because in 1953 a further sample was found to be infected with *Brucella abortus*.

Brucella abortus is the causitive organism of contagious abortion in cattle and of undulant fever in man. Undulant fever, which is usually acquired by the consumption of raw infected milk, can be prevented by the elimination of infected animals and by the efficient pasteurisation of milk. This incident emphasises once again the importance of the pasteurisation of milk.

ICE CREAM.

In addition to the performance of routine inspections at premises used for the manufacture and sale of ice cream, samples were sent to the Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge for examination by the Methylene Blue Reduction Test.

The results obtained were as follows :—

Provisional Grade I	.....	28 Samples
Provisional Grade II	.....	7 Samples
Provisional Grade III	.....	4 Samples
Provisional Grade IV	.....	0 Samples

These results indicate an improvement over the previous year. All the samples in Provisional Grade III were produced outside the Borough, and in each case the matter was referred to the appropriate Local Authority for investigation.

CLEAN FOOD CAMPAIGN.

A special effort was made in 1953 to raise the general standards of food hygiene.

At routine inspections of food premises opportunities occur for offering advice and encouragement, and for the correction of defects and deficiencies. It is by taking such opportunities and discussing the problems in a friendly atmosphere of co-operation that most progress is made towards better standards of food hygiene. Throughout the year, and in nearly all cases, genuine co-operation has been received by the members of this department in their daily contacts with food traders.

In order to stimulate interest in the subject of clean food the Council arranged for an illustrated public lecture, entitled "Hygiene in Communal Feeding," to be delivered by Mr. A. H. Walters, a well known bacteriologist from London. This lecture, although open to the general public, was designed particularly to interest food handlers at restaurants and canteens where large numbers of meals are prepared or served. It is at such premises that it is especially important to maintain the highest possible standards because here a single failure in personal hygiene may be the cause of many cases of food poisoning.

An exhibition of clean food posters and topics was staged in the lobby at the Athenaeum and at the entrance to the Public Library during the week preceding the lecture. The managers of all hotels,

restaurants and catering establishments were informed by circular and invited to attend with as many of their food handling staff as they wished to bring. The result was overwhelming. It was necessary to alter the arrangements and to use the Athenaeum because the Town Hall proved much too small to accommodate the audience. The lecture, which was illustrated with film strips, was extremely well received, and short addresses were delivered by the Chairman of the Public Health Committee who presided at the meeting, and by the Medical Officer of Health. The large numbers of food handlers and of the general public who attended this meeting, and the searching questions put to the speaker at "question time" provided clear evidence of the interest taken in this important subject.

It is notoriously difficult to assess the results of a clean food campaign, but we would be well on the way to success if regular washing of the hands with soap and water after every visit to the toilet were more commonly practised. It is impossible to overstate the importance of this fundamental rule of personal hygiene. Every person who disregards this rule is a danger to the community, to his friends and especially to his family, for not only is it known that such diseases as dysentery and typhoid fever are passed on in this way, but it is believed that poliomyelitis may be spread by contact with contaminated hands. At present adequate washing facilities are not available at every public convenience in this town, but it must be our aim to remedy this deficiency as soon as possible.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949.

The work of the department in administering this Act has been continued throughout the year.

The number of inspections made by the staff of this department and of treatments by the Council's operator were as follows :—

Business and other premises	—	Inspections	798
" " " "	—	Treatments	280
Private Dwellings	—	Inspections	1859
" "	—	Treatments	431

In addition to the above, two maintenance treatments were carried out to the sewerage system of the town, and periodic inspections and treatments were made at the sewage farm, refuse destructor and refuse tips. One heavy infestation with rats occurred at the Haberden, where the operator reported a very successful kill. There is no doubt that the presence of rats at the Haberden is mainly

due to the increased volume of refuse that is deposited there, which is in turn due to the fact that the refuse destructor is severely over-taxed. Efforts were made to improve the conditions at the Haberden by covering the refuse with top soil, but there is still room for further improvement.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACT, 1950.

Throughout the year officers of this department continued to perform the duties concerned with the execution and enforcement of the Diseases of Animals Act, 1950.

SWINE FEVER.—Form A.

Notices under the Swine Fever Order 1938, were served on 13 occasions when reports were received of suspected cases of swine fever or of pigs being found dead. The disease was confirmed in 7 cases, 4 of which were detected at the slaughterhouse.

On account of the high incidence of swine fever the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries imposed restrictions on the movement of swine from the 27th April to 20th November, and throughout this period the market was closed for the sale of pigs.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

1.—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises.	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	40	20		
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	141	129		
(iii) Other Premises in which section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)				
Total	181	149		

2.—Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

Particulars.	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found.	Remedied	Referred To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	5	5			
Overcrowding (S.2)					
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	1	1			
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	1	1			
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	1	1			
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	2	3		1	
(b) Unsuitable or defective	6	4			
(c) Not separate for sexes	2	2			
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork)					
TOTAL	18	16		1	

OUTWORK.
(Sections 110 and 111).

Nature of Work.	Section 110.			Section 111		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 110 (1) (c)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council.	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises.	Notices served.	Prosecutions.
Wearing apparel Making, etc.	8					
The making of boxes wholly or partially of paper	3					
TOTAL	11					

HOUSING.

New housing accommodation provided during 1953 was as follows :—

LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Completed in 1953.		Under construction on 31st December, 1953.
New Houses	61	62
Flats	12	30
Maisonettes	12	8
Shops with Flats over	8	—

PRIVATE ENTERPRISE.

Completed in 1952		Under construction 31st December, 1952.
New Houses and Bungalows	34	31

HARDWICK CAMP.

A further 8 families were rehoused from Hardwick Camp during the year, and 8 huts were demolished.

In 1951 the Council adopted a policy of rehousing the tenants from this camp, and of selective demolition of the huts, which is now nearing completion. On December 31st, 1953 only 4 remained out of a total of 54 families who occupied this camp in March, 1951. Lack of amenities and deterioration of the last few huts have made the living conditions very bad, therefore it is earnestly hoped that the camp will be cleared once and for all in 1954.

ABATEMENT OF OVERCROWDING :—

Nine cases of statutory overcrowding were abated during the year. Overcrowded conditions were known to exist at 11 other premises, and it is anticipated that further cases will be brought to light when a more complete housing survey is made.

REQUISITIONED PREMISES.

Nine houses, providing accommodation for 13 families, were derequisitioned, and 5 requisitioned properties remained in the control of the Council at the end of the year.

PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF SUB-STANDARD HOUSES.

Reference has been made in previous annual reports to the well known fact that houses exist in several parts of the Borough, which by reason of obsolete design, deterioration and lack of the necessary amenities fall far short of modern requirements. During the year under review a preliminary survey was made and a sub-committee was appointed to inspect some of these houses, in this way attention was directed to the size and urgency of the problem.

This preliminary survey revealed that some 127 houses were rapidly approaching a state of unfitness for human habitation, and in many cases it was considered that these dwellings were not capable of being rendered fit at reasonable cost. It must be stated, however, that the survey was incomplete, and that the figure of 127 does not include many other sub-standard houses which were thought to be capable of preservation for a limited number of years.

The Bury St. Edmunds Borough Council is aware of this grave problem which is causing concern, not only here, but in many parts of the country. The Housing Manager has been authorised to reserve during each year 10 units of accommodation for the purpose of re-housing tenants of sub-standard houses which are to be the subject of demolition orders. Although the number of houses allocated for this purpose is pitifully small, perhaps it may be possible to transfer some of these families to better accommodation vacated by others on the Council's housing list. Many of the occupants of sub-standard property are paying very small rents, and are unable or unwilling to pay anything approaching the present rent of a new council house. There is still a real need for houses which provide reasonable living conditions and can be let at much lower rents.

THE REPAIR, DEMOLITION AND CLOSING OF INSANITARY PREMISES.

REPAIR.

Much of the work carried out by the staff of this department is directed towards securing improvement in the housing conditions of the people, it is gratifying therefore to be able to report that the number of unfit or defective houses which were rendered fit through formal or informal action during the year was 140.

DEMOLITION AND CLOSING ORDERS.

Demolition Orders were made on 11 houses, Closing Orders were placed on 5 houses, and one undertaking not to re-let was accepted. Nine families were rehoused from these properties, 6 await rehousing, and at the end of the year a further 3 families still occupied accommodation upon which demolition orders were placed in 1952.

CARAVANS.

The close supervision of this type of dwelling, which is so necessary, has been made easier by the transference of some caravans from a number of small sites scattered throughout the town to a new, privately owned, and better equipped site which was opened during the year.

