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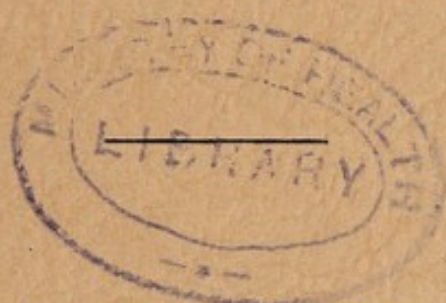
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Braintree Rural District
Council



ANNUAL REPORT
of
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
and
CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR
for
1953



Braintree Rural District Council

ANNUAL REPORT

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W. H. ROOT,
Printer,
HALSTEAD



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PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICES,

TOWN HALL,

BRAINTREE.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

In presenting this Annual Report on the Health and Vital Statistics of your District, I wish to draw attention to the following items.

The Birth Rate is increased to 15.4 per 1,000 against the figure of 14.2 for 1952. The Death Rate remains at approximately the same.

Cases of infectious disease have been few with the exception of the 233 cases of measles notified. Four cases of poliomyelitis occurred—these few odd cases, in my opinion, prove that there must be some high degree of natural immunity amongst the population. The figures for cases of tuberculosis show no marked increase.

HOUSING. The Council's building programme has been carried out and their attention is now drawn to the necessity for Slum Clearance and the improvement of existing houses. The Housing Survey has shown the extent of this policy, and it now becomes the duty of the Council to formulate a plan to deal with it.

This will, of course, entail the rehousing of tenants from property to be demolished. Owner occupiers and employers of labour in tied cottages will probably be anxious to avail themselves of the grant offered to modernise their houses. Sub-standard houses to let may not receive such attention from their owners and it may be necessary for the Council, in order to complete the programme, to purchase the same, and either reconstruct them up to the standard of modern requirements or temporarily repair them until the time comes for their demolition.

There must, however, remain many small houses without modern amenities and as these will be the only dwellings that can be let at a low rent, or purchased at a low figure, they will serve a useful purpose providing that their structure is maintained in a sound and satisfactory condition.

Once again, I wish to thank all members of the Council and their staff for the consideration and courtesy that I have received during the year.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. S. RANSON.

Medical Officer of Health.

1. STATISTICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

		Braintree R.D.C.	England and Wales		
Area in acres	...	59,556			
Population (Registrar General's estimate)		20,360			
Number of inhabited houses according to rate books	...	6,108			
Rateable value	...	£75,332			
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	£298 5 4			
		Total	Male	Female	
Live Births	Legitimate	...	303	147	156
	Illegitimate	...	12	5	7
Still Births	...	...	9	5	4
Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated resident population		...	...	...	15.4
Birth rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.12		...	...	...	17.2
Still birth rate per 1,000 live & still births		...	...	...	27.7
Deaths (Registrar General's estimate)		...	227		
Death rate per 1,000 resident population		...	11.1		11.4
Death rate corrected by comparability figure of .89		...	...	...	9.8
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age		...	7		
Death rate of infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births		...	...	...	22.2
Death rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births		...	...	...	23.1
Death rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births		...	...	...	0
Death from Cancer (all ages)		...	...	37	
Deaths from Measles (all ages)		...	...	0	
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)		...	...	0	

Deaths at Various Age Groups during 1953
(Registered and Transferred)

Age Groups	Registered	No. of Deaths Transferred
Under one year	1	6
1 and under 2 years	—	—
2 and under 5 years	1	1
5 and under 15 years	—	1
15 and under 25 years	1	—
25 and under 35 years	1	1
35 and under 45 years	1	3
45 and under 55 years	5	11
55 and under 65 years	17	12
65 and under 75 years	30	24
75 and upwards	68	43
Totals	125	102

Deaths from all Causes, 1953

The table below was compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar-General and the classification is given under the thirty-six headings based on the Abbreviated List of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, 1948.

				Male	Female
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	1	1
2.	Tuberculosis, other	...	...	—	—
3.	Syphilitic disease	...	...	—	—
4.	Diphtheria	...	...	—	—
5.	Whooping cough	...	...	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections	...	...	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	—	—
8.	Measles	...	...	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	—	—
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	2	3
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	...	...	5	1
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	—	3
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	—	2
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	15	6
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	—	—
16.	Diabetes	...	...	—	—
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	13	19
18.	Coronary disease, angina	...	...	16	10
19.	Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	3	—
20.	Other heart disease	...	...	16	25
21.	Other circulatory disease	...	...	3	5
22.	Influenza	...	...	3	6
23.	Pneumonia	...	...	7	6
24.	Bronchitis	...	...	8	3
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	—	—
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	1	—
27.	Gastritis, enteritis, and diarrhoea	...	...	—	2
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	—	1
29.	Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	1	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations	...	...	2	2
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	18	14
33.	Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	—	—
34.	All other accidents	...	...	3	1
35.	Suicide	...	...	—	—
36.	Homicide and operations of war	...	...	—	—
All Causes				117	110

2. PREVALENCE and CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES

Cases of Infectious Disease notified in 1953.

	Total Cases notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever ...	8	—	—
Whooping Cough ...	89	—	—
Measles ...	233	—	—
Acute Pneumonia ...	4	—	—
Dysentery ...	15	15	—
Acute Poliomyelitis ...	4	4	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	—	—
Infective Hepatitis ...	1	—	—
Totals ...	355	19	—

Tuberculosis Cases Notified during 1953.

Age Periods	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1 year ...	—	—	—	—
1 and under 5 years	—	2	—	—
5 and under 10 years	—	—	—	—
10 and under 15 years	—	—	—	—
15 and under 20 years	—	—	—	—
20 and under 25 years	—	2	—	1
25 and under 35 years	1	1	—	—
35 and under 45 years	2	2	—	—
45 and under 55 years	—	2	—	—
55 and under 65 years	1	—	—	—
65 years and upwards	—	—	—	—
Totals ...	4	9	—	1

Of these cases 3 were of cases re-notified on taking up residence in this District.

Deaths from Tuberculosis:

Pulmonary ...	Male	1
	Female	1
Non-pulmonary ...	Male	—
	Female	—
	Total	2

Food Poisoning Notifications 5

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948. Section 47

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1951. Section 1.

One aged person was removed by Justice's Order and this was followed up by Magistrate's Extension Order for three months. Later this person returned to her home.

Another aged person was moved by Justice's Order to an Institution and has remained there with her own consent.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICES,

ST. PETER'S CLOSE,

BOCKING, BRAINTREE.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting my report on the Sanitary Circumstances of the District and the work of the Sanitary Inspectors' Department for the year ending the 31st December, 1953.

In the year under review there was little important new legislation affecting environmental hygiene. Proposals to deal with the problem of repairs to existing dwellings by way of amendments to existing legislation relating to rent increases, had not materialised at the end of the year, and I feel that until some amendment is made the deterioration of many dwellings will be difficult to arrest.

The housing situation shows a definite improvement, in spite of the fact that the number still remaining on the register for accommodation is fairly constant, and in several Parishes there are distinct indications that the immediate problem has been solved. Careful planning of further development over the next few years is therefore essential.

In this short preamble, I have made little reference to the many and varied duties of the Department, but these are dealt with in greater detail elsewhere in this report.

Finally, I should like to express my appreciation and thanks for the co-operation of all Officers of the Council; for the support and assistance of the Chairman of the Council and Public Health Committee with whom the closest co-operation has been maintained, and to all other members for their interest and assistance where necessary; and last but by no means least, to my own staff for their loyalty and very efficient manner in which they have carried out their duties during a year which whilst being uneventful, has not been too easy.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

C. ORGAN,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

WATER

No further extensions to water mains were made during the year and none were planned for 1954.

The main public water supply generally has been satisfactory during the year as regards quantity and quality.

None of the waters is liable to have any plumbo-solvent action.

The quality of the raw water from the Council's sources of supply and of the water passing into supply is controlled by regular bacteriological examinations. Regular chemical analyses are also made of the raw water from the respective sources. Fourteen samples of main water supplies were taken for analysis during 1953. Copies of typical reports on the analyses of the water from four sources, Petches Bridge Waterworks, Coggeshall Waterworks, Terling Waterworks and the South Essex Water Company will be found along with the details of each works.

All the main water supplies in the District are subject to chlorination at the respective sources. In the case of the Council's undertakings, gaseous chlorine is employed at Petches Bridge Works and hypochlorite solution at Coggeshall and at Terling.

Details of the functioning of each of the undertakings during 1953 are given below. It has not been possible to obtain separate statistics as to trade and domestic consumption for the year under review.

Petches Bridge Waterworks

Number gallons pumped during year ended 31st March, 1954	74,848,500
Average day's pumping	15.15 hours
Number of new connections	40

ANALYST'S REPORT

This sample is clear and bright in appearance and is free from metals. The water is alkaline in reaction but not to an excessive degree. The hardness and its content of mineral and saline constituents are very moderate, and its organic quality and bacterial purity are of a high standard.

These results are indicative of a water which is pure and wholesome in character and suitable for public supply purposes.

Coggeshall Waterworks (A)

Numbers gallons pumped during year ended 31st March, 1954	36,344,000
Average day's pumping	14.22 hours

ANALYST'S REPORT

This sample is clear and bright in appearance, on the alkaline side of neutrality and free from metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water has moderate hardness and a high but not excessive content of mineral constituents in solution. It is of very satisfactory organic and bacterial purity.

The water is considered wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

Terling Waterworks (B)

Number gallons pumped during year ended 31st March, 1954	27,922,500
Average day's pumping	8.49 hours

ANALYST'S REPORT

This sample is clear and bright in appearance, almost neutral in reaction and free from metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water is very hard in character but its hardness and its content of mineral and saline constituents in solution are not excessive. Its organic quality and bacterial purity are of a high standard.

These results are indicative of a water which is pure and wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

South Essex Water Company (C)

Total quantity of water received by this Council from the Company for the year ended 31st March, 1954, is as follows:

EASTERN AREA	Gallons
Augmented supply to Coggeshall, Kelvedon and Feering	16,828,000
Supply to Bradwell, Cressing, Stisted, Black Notley and White Notley	68,797,000
	85,625,000
SOUTHERN AREA	(D)
Augmented supply to Hatfield Peverel, Terling and Fairstead	8,812,000
	94,437,000

ANALYST'S REPORT

This sample is clear and bright in appearance, on the alkaline side of neutrality and free from metal apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water is very hard in character though not excessively so and it contains no excess of salinity or mineral constituents in solution. It shows noticeable but not marked colour and is of satisfactory organic quality. It just fails to comply with the highest standard of bacterial purity but organisms of the Coli-aerogenes group are confined to minimal numbers and Bact. coli are absent. The water is considered wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

Supply from Chelmsford R.D.C. (E)

Total quantity of water received by this Council from the Chelmsford R.D.C. for the year ended 31st March, 1954, was made up as follows:

	Gallons
Ranks Green Extension, Fairstead	861,000
Fuller Street Extension, Fairstead	276,000
"Cardfields" Extension, Hatfield Peverel	420,000
	1,557,000
Number of new connections at A and C	71
Number of new connections at B, D and E	20

SHALLOW WELL SUPPLIES

Only 4 public shallow well supplies were in use at the end of the year as follows:—

Parishes	Wells and Springs
Bradwell.	Two wells at Council Houses and opposite Bridge Hall.
Finchingfield.	Two wells at Hawkins Harvest and at Ost End.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

The Northern Area Sewerage Scheme was completed during the year and connections to properties commenced. By the end of the year the post-war Council Houses in the three villages of Wethersfield, Finchingfield and Great Bardfield had all been connected as well as a number of private properties.

Early in 1953 the flow to Wethersfield sewage works had increased to such an extent that it was obvious that extensions were urgently required. After negotiations with the appropriate Government Departments a scheme of extensions was agreed and work on this contract commenced in October, 1953. It is regretted that there are no further developments to report regarding the provision of main drainage facilities at Rayne, Terling, Stisted and Bradwell. In view of the development in these villages and the provision of modern sanitary facilities the provision of drainage schemes is becoming urgent.

Existing drainage conditions in the London Road Area of Black Notley are becoming increasingly acute, and early consideration must be given to the provision of a main drainage system for this locality.

Coggeshall Sewage Disposal Works

These works are greatly overloaded and although attempts have been made to improve the treatment as much as possible there is no doubt that a completely new works is necessary to produce a consistently satisfactory effluent having regard to the large flow. No samples were taken for a year from these works.

Kelvedon Sewage Disposal Works

These works continue to be considerably overloaded and it is felt that the only satisfactory method of dealing with the problem is a completely new works. Various minor works were carried out during the year to the plant including new scum boards to all the tanks and the servicing of the fourth pump at the pumping station. No samples were taken during the year.

Hatfield Peverel Sewage Disposal Works

There is little change to report on the operation of these works. They are completely out of date and totally inadequate to deal with their flow. Only a completely new works will produce satisfactory effluents. The only sample taken was unsatisfactory.

Wethersfield Sewage Disposal Works

The airfield flow continued to increase during the year so that the works were receiving their fully designed load and in times of rain this was exceeded by a discharge through the works of considerable quantities of storm water.

Some trouble was experienced during the year due to the discharge of oil from the airfield sewer which seriously affected the process of treatment. Strong representations were made to the authorities concerned and a grease trap was constructed on the works which resulted in a considerable improvement to the plant generally. The one sample of the effluent taken was satisfactory.

White Notley Sewage Disposal Works

These works continue to function in a satisfactory manner despite the fact that a considerable number of new houses were connected to the system during the year.

Two of the pumps at the main pumping station were completely overhauled by the makers and a further order was placed for the overhaul of the third pump. One sample was taken from these works which was satisfactory.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

Collection of Domestic Refuse

Little change took place during the year in the service provided for the removal of domestic refuse. This is probably one of the essential public health services of a local authority which will always be full of problems — labour, transport, lack of suitable tips, etc., but which nevertheless must be maintained. The year under review was no exception so far as these difficulties are concerned, but a reasonably satisfactory service was maintained.

The Morris Commercial vehicle which was adapted to this work some years ago, is fast becoming obsolete and worn-out. Towards the end of the year the Council decided to purchase a dual-purpose vehicle, to be engaged part-time on refuse collection, part on night soil collection and cesspool emptying, and the removal of residual lime from the softening plant at the Petches Bridge Pumping Station. Whether such an arrangement will be satisfactory or not remains to be seen.

The use of Coggeshall pit ceased during the Summer but was resumed again on a very limited scale during the winter, in order to fill in areas where settlement had taken place.

Salvage

Salvaged materials to the value of nearly £1,100 were disposed of during the year, a slight increase over the previous year. The greater part of this sum was derived from the sale of waste paper.

Night Soil Collection

There were no extensions to this service during the year, neither was it possible to make any reduction in the number of premises from which collections were made, largely owing to the fact that the Northern Area Sewerage Scheme was still not completed. It is anticipated that many connections to the new sewer will be possible during 1954, but it is doubtful whether during that year, much progress in this respect will be made. Many practical and legal difficulties remain to be overcome before every dwelling within the area served by the new sewers has its main drainage and flush lavatory. The Council will be well advised to deal with this matter most cautiously.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Details of the nature and number of inspections and visits made during the year by the Department are set out below. Once more it will be appreciated that the majority of visits are inevitably a result of housing and allied complaints brought to the notice of the Department, often through applications for housing accommodation which continue to be dealt with by the department.

Nature and Number of Visits, Inspections, etc.

Housing Inspections	...	...	...	...	64
Complaints received and investigated	...	...	...	...	100
Visits to investigate complaints	...	...	...	...	371
Re-visits and inspections of work in progress	...	...	...	...	298
Interviews with owners, builders and architects	...	...	...	...	154
Infectious disease enquiries	...	...	...	...	17
Disinfections carried out	...	...	...	...	none
Infestation of Insect Pests found	...	...	...	...	20
Disinfestations carried out	...	...	...	...	17
Inspections of Dairies	...	...	...	...	3
Visits to Slaughterhouses and Butcher's Shops	...	...	...	...	128
Inspections of Knacker's Yard	...	...	...	...	76
Inspections of Shops	...	...	...	...	64
Inspections of Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	53
Inspections of Fish Fryer's Premises	...	...	...	...	27
Inspections of Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	70
Inspections of Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	...	29
Inspections of Food Preparing Premises	...	...	...	...	112
Inspections of Schools	...	...	...	...	14
Water samples taken	...	...	...	...	16
Ice Cream samples taken	...	...	...	...	12
Drains Tested	...	...	...	...	72
Visits to premises regarding re-drainage	...	...	...	...	161
Visits to Requisitioned Premises	...	...	...	...	58
Visits to Temporary Dwellings	...	...	...	...	72
Visits to Camping and Caravan Sites	...	...	...	...	147
Visits in connection with refuse collection and collection of salvage	...	...	...	...	113
Visits to Refuse Tips	...	...	...	...	108
Visits to premises re. Water Supplies	...	...	...	...	37
Visits to premises re. Improvement Grants	...	...	...	...	125
Visits re. National Assistance Act	...	...	...	...	18
Visits to premises prior to removal to Council Houses	...	...	...	...	327
Visits to premises following applications for Council Houses	...	...	...	...	391
Visits to ascertain Permitted Numbers	...	...	...	...	12
Visits to supervise H.C.N. fumigations	...	...	...	...	7
Inspections re Rats and Mice infestations	...	...	...	...	130
Inspections re. River pollutions	...	...	...	...	12
Attendance in Court	...	...	...	...	2
Miscellaneous Visits and Inspections	...	...	...	...	334

CONTROLLED PREMISES: DETAILS OF INSPECTION, ETC.

Regulated Buildings, Trades, etc.	No. Registered	No. Inspected	Total No. of Inspections	Informal Notices Served	Notices Complied With	Legal Proceedings
Common Lodging Houses	Nil	—	—	—	—	—
Bakehouses ...	16	16	53	3	3	Nil
Dairies and Milkshops	7	7	3	—	—	Nil
Slaughterhouses and Butchers' Shops	16	16	128	7	7	Nil
Knacker's Yards ...	1	1	76	8	8	Nil
Offensive Trades ...	Nil	—	—	—	—	—
Fish Fryers ...	4	4	27	5	5	Nil
Ice Cream Premises ...	47	47	70	11	11	Nil
Factories and Workshops	89	37	82	5	5	Nil

Notices and Letters sent out:—

Informal Notices, Letters, Formal Notices ... 445

Shops Acts, 1934 and 1950

Routine inspections of shops, particularly where this can be combined with inspections of premises used for the preparation, storage and sale of foods was maintained so far as practicable.

Such premises do not present much of a problem since in many instances the shops are attached to, or adjoining, living accommodation where some of the facilities required by the Act are readily available.

Again, no Statutory Action was necessary during the year.

Moveable Dwellings

Six new applications for licences to station and use individual caravans on sites within the District were received and approved during the year. The total number of caravans so licensed was 18.

Whilst the original licence in respect of several of these caravans may have been intended to be for a very limited period only, some are assuming quite a degree of permanency and the Council should consider to what extent such use can be permitted.

Smoke Abatement

Several complaints were received during the year in respect of two of the few factory chimneys in the District. Both have their peculiar problems which are not easy to solve, but it is hoped that a solution will be ultimately found in each case.

Observations on the remaining factory chimneys showed nothing of an abnormal nature.

In a circular letter which accompanied two booklets on Domestic and Industrial Smoke Prevention, received during the year, the National Smoke Abatement Society emphasized the need for more positive and urgent action for the prevention of smoke, both for industrial and domestic premises.

It is appreciated that the problem of smoke laden atmosphere is not so acute in a Rural District as in more built up areas, but nevertheless it is a matter of considerable importance to Public Health.

With that point in mind, the Council decided that every opportunity should be taken to encourage the installation of the more modern and officially approved type of appliance designed for the burning of smokeless fuels, not only in Council Houses, but also in privately owned properties, particularly where the latter were subject to action under the Housing Acts.

Vermin Infestation

Whilst the practice of carrying out inspections of bedding and household effects before tenants move to Council Houses was continued, no case of vermin infestation was found during the year.

Rag, Flock and other Filling Materials Act, 1951

Only one premise is registered under the Act and no cause for complaint was found during the year.

Rodent Control

As a result of complaints received or infestations found during normal inspections, 29 major infestations (20-100 rats), 63 minor infestations (1-20 rats) and 12 cases of infestations by mice were satisfactorily dealt with. In addition, periodical treatments were made to the Council's refuse tips and sewage disposal works.

Infestations were once again found in the sewerage systems at Coggeshall and Hatfield Peverel and were given the necessary treatments.

Factories

Particulars of premises in the Rural District coming within the scope of the Factories Act, 1937, and of inspections made, will be found on page 17.

Notification of the employment of 54 outworkers employed in the District was received during the year. These were engaged in the lampshade and wearing apparel industries.

SCHOOLS

All schools in the Rural District have piped main water supplies available, and the sanitary conveniences continued to be maintained in a reasonably satisfactory state, although not always sufficient for the use of the children.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

I. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provision 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 ...	17	9	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ...	72	73	—	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
Total ...	89	82	—	—

II. 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.)	3	3	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2.) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3.)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary convenience (S.7.)					
(a) Insufficient ...	2	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	1	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including offences relating to outworkers) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Total ...	5	5	—	1	—

HOUSING

The number of additional units of accommodation provided in the District during 1953 was 199, an increase of 15 over the previous year. The number was made up as follows:

New Council Houses	...	...	...	186
Private Enterprise Houses	...	...	...	26
Plus: Additional units provided by conversion of other buildings to new dwellings	...	...	...	—
Total				212
Less: Four cases of re-conditioning where units of accommodation were reduced from three to one or two to one	...	...	...	4
Nine properties occupied in 1952 but now demolished	...	...	...	9
Net total				199

The number of outstanding applications for housing accommodation at the end of the year was 610, a reduction of 48 over 1952.

In spite of the above comparatively large figure it is safe to say that the immediate post-war housing problem is now very much easier, in fact, in some Parishes, it has almost been solved. Gone from the list are most of the families who were living under overcrowded or other bad conditions; whilst a large proportion of those remaining are young, newly married couples, still living with their parents. It is not anticipated that this group of applicant will have to wait so long for accommodation as their counterparts of a year or two ago.

The policy of encouraging exchanges to other accommodation more suited to family needs and finance was pursued, but has now almost reached a stage when further exchanges on any reasonable scale will be impossible without some particular inducement such as removal cost to be borne by the Council as an example. It is possible that a payment of say £5 in this respect would be more than amply repaid in other ways.

Considerable interest must now be centred on the large scaled development planned and being carried out at Cressing. The choice of this Parish is a wise one since in the event of houses becoming difficult to let in years to come, which of course has happened in this District in the past, accommodation on that site is admirably placed for workers at Braintree, Silver End and Witham.

The ultimate success of this project rests on its ability to cater not only for the needs of Cressing but for other Parishes in the District where further large scale development would be neither economical nor desirable. Indications are at the moment that with careful selection of tenants it will be a success.

Representations under the Housing Act, 1936 were made under sections 11 or 12 (Demolition or Closing Orders) in respect of seven properties. Although several areas in Coggeshall were provisionally selected as "Clearance Areas," no definite action was taken during the year.

The promised change in legislation relating to rent increases, which it was hoped would make possible more active work under Section 9 of the Act, did not materialise, and it was therefore impracticable to carry out any large scale programme of repair work.

Eleven properties were completely re-built or extensively re-conditioned during the year following formal or informal action; and nine properties were demolished.

Ten applications, a considerable increase over the previous year, were received for grants towards the cost of carrying out approved "improvement works," and nine were approved. It is particularly gratifying to record a considerable speeding-up in the time taken to deal with these applications by the Regional Officer of the Ministry. Indications are that next year will see a still greater increase in the number of applications for grant.

INSPECTIONS AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Milk Supply

The majority of retailers registered with the Council continue to distribute milk as received by them in sealed bottles, and largely as a result, little trouble was experienced with regard to complaints of unsatisfactory supplies.

Dairies

Twenty distributors and eight dairies were registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949.

The following licences were issued under the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations, 1949,

Dealers' Licence for Tuberculin Tested Milk ...	...	10
Supplementary Licence for Tuberculin Tested Milk ...	...	8
Dealers' Licence for Pasteurised Milk ...	...	9
Supplementary Licence for Pasteurised Milk ...	...	5

Ice Cream Premises

There were 54 premises registered for the storage, manufacture and sale of ice cream in the District, an increase of seven over the previous year. Eight samples were taken, with the following results in terms of the Provisional Grading of the Ministry of Health applicable to the Methylene Blue Reduction Test:

Manufactured in the District	Manufactured outside the District
— Provisional Grade 1	4 Provisional Grade 1
1 Provisional Grade 2	2 Provisional Grade 2
— Provisional Grade 3	1 Provisional Grade 3
— Provisional Grade 4	— Provisional Grade 4

In addition four samples of Iced Lollies were taken during the year. These were found to be of satisfactory quality.

The reduction in the number of samples taken was largely due to the fact that most vendors are now selling a wrapped product of one of the well known manufacturers. Facilities for sampling are, however, maintained throughout the season in order that in the event of it being necessary to renew sampling at short notice, this could be done.

Meat Inspection

Again there were no changes to report in the arrangements for supplying meat to the butchers shops in the District. These supplies so far as home killed meat is concerned continue to be drawn from slaughter-houses in the Urban Districts of Braintree and Witham, where it is inspected at the time of slaughter.

Few complaints as to the quality of meat were received, but again it is necessary to refer to the system of transportation. This leaves much to be desired and not until present controls are lifted, so that the village butcher can either slaughter his own animals or purchase meat from a source of his own choosing, will the meat reach the customer in as near as perfect condition as possible.

No intimation has so far been given that this position will materialise in the near future, but when it does, as inevitably it must, the problems of an efficient meat inspection service will again be with us.

It is pleasing to record once more that the standard of cleanliness generally in the premises concerned, was well maintained and no formal action in this respect was necessary during the year.

Other Foods

The standard of cleanliness of premises used for the preparation, storage and sale of food, together with that of the personnel engaged therein, was given considerable attention during the year, as will be seen from the tables of visits and inspections as set out elsewhere in this report.

It was not necessary to seize any diseased or unsound food, nor was it necessary to take any formal action under the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, or the Bye-laws relating to the handling of foods.

Set out below are the quantities of various foodstuffs it was necessary to certify as unfit for human consumption during the year. All this food was voluntarily surrendered and on no occasion was it necessary to resort to seizure.

475 tins and jars of food of various types	25 lbs. Cooked Ham
108½ lbs. Haricot & Butter Beans	54 lbs. Cooked Veal.
227½ lbs. Beef	172 lbs. Currants & Sultanias
15 lbs. Pork	2½ lbs. Liver
	67 boats of imported Carrots

EAST COAST FLOOD DISASTER—January, 1953

Following the disastrous flooding which occurred along the East Coast, the Council's Sanitary Inspectors carried out full time duty at Harwich over a period of several weeks between February and April.

The work was mainly in connection with first aid and permanent repairs to flood damaged houses, but also included duties concerned with food and water supplies, and sanitation.

Conclusion

Thanks are accorded to the Council's Surveyor and Engineer and his staff for much of the information regarding Public Water Supplies and Sewage Disposal included in the Sanitary Circumstances of the District.