[Report 1948] / Medical Officer of Health, Halesowen Borough.

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BOROUGH OF HALESOWEN

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND

CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

FOR

1948.

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H. PARKES LIMITED
PRINTERS
HALESOWEN

ANNUAL REPORT

INDEX.

MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL OF THE BOROUGH OF HALESOWEN.

Mayor:

ALDERMAN FRANCIS LIONEL ROSE, J.P., C.C.

Deputy Mayor:

ALDERMAN H. PARKES, J.P., C.A.

Aldermen:

HERBERT JOHN COX, J.P., WALTER HODGETTS,
HERBERT PARKES, J.P., C.A.
FRANCIS LIONEL ROSE, J.P., C.C., THOMAS SMITH.

Councillors:

CENTRAL WARD.

Councillor Thomas Craddock, Councillor Alfred George Rudge, J.P.
Councillor Daniel Wellings.

NORTH WARD.

Councillor Alfred Parkes, Councillor Harry Roberts,
Councillor William Parkes, C.C.

SOUTH WARD.

Councillor John Henry Green, Councillor Leonard Harper,
Councillor George Albert Southall, C.C.

EAST WARD.

Council'or William Edward Vernon Hewin Guest,
Councillor Albert Spring, Councillor Raymond Wright.

WEST WARD.

Councillor Karl Kirton, Councillor John James Shakespeare.
Councillor Clifford Willetts.

STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health:

R. L. CORLETT, M.D., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Deputy Medical Officer of Health:

F. S. MELVILLE, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector and Cleansing Superintendent:

A. ARCHER (a.b.c.).

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector:

H. HERBERT (a.b.c.) until September 1948.

Additional Sanitary Inspectors:

E. W. BURROWS, (a.b.).

M. I. PENNINGTON (Mrs.) (a.b.) until July 1948.

A. R. HUMPHRIES (a.b.) from October 1948.

Chief Clerk:

G. W. J. LEWIS.

Clerk to Medical Officer of Health:

MRS. J. PEPLOW.

Clerks:

MRS. H. DEELEY.

MISS V. COOK.

M. HARRISON.

NOTES.

(a) Sanitary Inspectors' Certificate.

(b) Meat and Food Inspectors' Certificate.

(c) Smoke Inspectors' Certificate.

Council House,
Halesowen.

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors
of the Borough of Halesowen.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1948.

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my eleventh Annual Report on the health of the Borough of Halesowen.

As you know the National Health Service Act came into operation in July and the direct responsibility for Diphtheria Immunisation and the Borough Ambulance Service passed to Worcestershire County Council.

The birth rate is below that of England and Wales as a whole and is the lowest since 1941, otherwise our statistics compare favourably with towns of a comparable size.

	148 Smaller Towns Resident Population 25,000—50,000	Halesowen.
Live Births	19.2	14.5
Deaths		
All causes	10.7	9.4
Tuberculosis	0.46	0.28

Rates per 1,000 Live Births.

Deaths.		
All causes under 1 year of age	32	19.3
Enteritis and Diarrhoea under 2 years of age	2.1	0.0

The number of notifications of Pulmonary Tuberculosis showed an increase, there being 40 cases compared with 32 cases for 1947 and 27 cases for 1946.

There was only one actual case of diphtheria during the year, an adult who recovered.

The response to diphtheria immunisation has been most gratifying and the children are now receiving a reinforcing dose as school entrants.

It is greatly to be regretted that road accidents accounted for six deaths.

I would like to thank the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their support and help and the Members of the Housing Selection Sub-Committees who have given every consideration to the re-housing of tubercular patients, also to express my gratitude to Mr. Archer and his staff and to Mrs. Peplow for their help and willing co-operation at all times.

I am,
Your obedient Servant,
R. L. CORLETT,
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions.

The area of the district is	5,247 acres
Population, Census 1931	31,058
Population, mid-1948	39,560
Rateable value, March, 1948	£163,106
The sum represented by a penny rate	£610/8/11

The district is bounded on the north by the Borough of Rowley Regis, on the east partly by the Borough of Oldbury and partly by the City and County Borough of Birmingham, on the South by the Rural District of Bromsgrove, and on the west partly by the Borough of Stourbridge and partly by the Urban District of Brierley Hill.

The district forms part of the northern area of the beautiful County of Worcester. It is partly industrial, partly residential and partly agricultural. The prevailing wind comes from the rural belt surrounding the Borough.

The number of occupied houses in 1921 was 5,843, in 1939 it was 10,909 and by the end of 1948 was 11,472.

The principal industries are: brickmaking, button manufacture, clothing manufacture, fireclay and terra-cotta, chain and spike making, tube and tube fittings, perambulators, iron casting, odd iron work, coal mining, electrical work, and agriculture.

A large majority of the population work in the Borough in the industries mentioned above.

VITAL STATISTICS.

BIRTHS.

(a) Live Births:	M.	F.	Total
Legitimate	278	279	557
Illegitimate	6	11	17
	284	290	574
(b) Still Births:			
Legitimate	11	6	17
Illegitimate	1	—	1
	12	6	18

Birth Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population 14.5
Birth Rate for England and Wales 17.9

Below is a table giving the Birth Rate in the Borough for the last ten years.

	Halesowen.	England & Wales.
1939	17.05	15.0
1940	15.9	14.6
1941	13.2	14.2
1942	17.56	15.8
1943	19.29	16.5
1944	20.9	17.6
1945	18.44	16.1
1946	16.47	19.1
1947	18.7	20.5
1948	14.5	17.9

DEATHS.

M.	F.	Total.
194	178	372

Crude Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population 9.4
Death Rate for England and Wales 10.8
Death Rate for 148 towns estimated resident population 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census 10.7

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	7	4	11
Illegitimate	—	—	—
	—	—	—
	7	4	11
	—	—	—

CAUSES OF DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 YEAR.

Causes of Death:	Total Deaths.	Under 1 month.
Prematurity	4	4
Congenital Abnormalities	2	—
Congenital Malformations	1	1
Broncho-pneumonia	2	—
Intracranial Hæmorrhage	1	1
Septicaemia	1	1
	—	—
	11	7
	—	—

CAUSES OF DEATH.

		Male	Female
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid fevers	—	—
2.	Cerebro-spinal fever	1	—
3.	Scarlet Fever	—	—
4.	Whooping Cough	—	1
5.	Diphtheria	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	7	4
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
8.	Syphilitic diseases	1	—
9.	Influenza	1	—
10.	Measles	—	1
11.	Acute poliomyelitis and polioencephalitis	—	—
12.	Acute infectious encephalitis	—	—
13.	Cancer of buccal cavity and œsophagus (M)	2	—
14.	Cancer of uterus (F)	—	1
15.	Cancer of stomach and duodenum	10	6
16.	Cancer of breast	—	8
17.	Cancer of all other sites	22	22
18.	Diabetes	3	4
19.	Intracranial vascular lesions	18	29
20.	Heart disease	56	44
21.	Other diseases of the circulatory system	3	4
22.	Bronchitis	21	5
23.	Pneumonia	9	10
24.	Other respiratory diseases	2	2
25.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	3	—
26.	Diarrhœa (under two years)	—	—
27.	Appendicitis	1	—
28.	Other digestive diseases	1	2
29.	Nephritis	2	5
30.	Puerperal and post abortive sepsis	—	—
31.	Other maternal causes	—	—
32.	Premature birth	2	2
33.	Congenital malformations, birth injuries and infantile diseases	4	2
34.	Suicide	3	—
35.	Road Traffic accidents	4	2
36.	Other violent causes	5	5
37.	All other causes	13	19
		194	178

Of those who died from Heart Disease, sixteen were due to Coronary Thrombosis. They belong to the following age groups.

	Male	Female
30—40 years	1	—
40—50 ,,	1	—
50—60 ,,	3	1
60—70 ,,	4	2
70—80 ,,	4	—
	13	3

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

(a) (i) *Public Health Officers.*

The Staff of the Public Health Department is given on page five.

(ii) *Laboratory Facilities.*

The work is carried out at the Worcester County Laboratory by the County Analyst.

After the 5th July, the Bacteriological work has been done by the Public Health Laboratory Service, Royal Infirmary, Worcester.

(b) *Ambulance Facilities.*

From January to July 4th three ambulances were available for taking non-infectious cases to and from hospital or nursing homes, two ambulance drivers being employed. The use of the ambulance was free of charge.

Under the National Health Service Act, on the appointed day, July 5th, the organisation of the Ambulance Service passed to the Worcestershire County Council and the driving complement increased to three men in August and four men in November.

An Ambulance duty hut was erected in the Council's depot and the Chief Sanitary Inspector acts as the Ambulance Officer on behalf of the Worcestershire County Council in the Halesowen Area.

At intervals during the week and at weekends the volunteer personnel of the St. John Ambulance Brigade attend at the station and participate in the work.

During 1948 3,715 cases were taken to and from the various institutions and the distance travelled by the ambulances was approximately 35,540 miles.

The hospitals used by the inhabitants of the Borough are the hospitals in the City of Birmingham, the Corbett Hospital, Amblecote, and the Guest Hospital, Dudley. Maternity cases go to the Mary Stevens Maternity Home, Stourbridge, and the Lucy Baldwin Maternity Home, Stourport. Infectious cases were conveyed to hospital by one of the two ambulances operated until the 5th July by the North Worcestershire Joint Isolation Hospital Board, from the hospital at Hayley Green.

(c) *Nursing in the Home.*

The Worcestershire County Council are the Maternity and Child Welfare Authority for the district. They have also arranged a ' Home Help ' service in conjunction with the W.V.S.

(d) *Tuberculosis.*

Up to July 5th, the work was carried out by the County Council, since then the work has been done by the same doctors through arrangements between the Worcestershire County Council and the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary is held every Thursday at No. 14, Laurel Lane, Halesowen, at 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

The Tuberculosis Pavilion at Hayley Green Isolation Hospital consists of a block containing 19 beds for males.

(e) *Infectious Disease.*

The cases of infectious disease are admitted to the North Worcestershire Joint Isolation Hospital, situated at Hayley Green, Halesowen. This hospital is recognised by the General Nursing Council as a Training School for Fever Nurses.

Since the 5th July this hospital has been transferred to the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board and the day to day administration of the hospital now comes under Group 17, Dudley, Stourbridge & District Hospital Group, Birmingham Region.

(f) *Clinics and Treatment Centres.*

School Clinics, Infant Welfare Centres and Ante-Natal sessions are provided by the County Council. There are three centres, namely: Cradley, Halesowen and Hill and Cakemore. The district is well catered for.

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER.

The water supplied to the Borough is a constant supply satisfactory in quality. Except as regard an area at Hayley Green where the pressure is low when there is a heavy demand, the quantity is always sufficient to meet any need. Steps are being taken to deal with the problem mentioned.

The water is supplied by the South Staffordshire Water Works Company from the Shavers End reservoir system. The system is supplied by pumping stations at Ashwood, Hinksford, Prestwood and Kinver, all situated in the Smestow Valley where water is pumped from the new red sandstone formation. A further supply of water for this system is obtained from a fifth pumping station which utilises surface water impounded in storage reservoirs near Lichfield, and from a sixth pumping station near Lichfield which abstracts underground water.

Samples of water from the various pumping stations are examined regularly, both bacteriologically and chemically and bacteriological examinations are also made of raw water, except in the case of one station where the plant layout prevents such examinations.

Raw water samples are taken at frequent intervals and during 1948 a total of 78 samples of raw water were taken from four supply stations a'l of which were free from all types of coliform bacteria. In the case of the fifth pumping station where it is impossible to sample the raw water fifteen samples of treated water were examined and all found to be free from coliform bacteria.

In the case of the surface supply near Lichfield, some 306 samples of raw water were examined in 1948 all of which showed the presence of coliform bacteria. Of the 306 samples of treated water examined from this source, all were free from all forms of coliform bacteria.

In addition to samples at the supplying stations, routine samples are taken at monthly intervals in the Borough and during 1948 all twelve samples were found to be free from coliform bacteria.

Chemical analyses of the raw water are not normally taken but all the chemical analyses of treated water pumped to supply or taken in the Borough during 1948 were satisfactory, the average chemical results being as follows:—

	Parts per million.
Alkalinity ($CaCO_3$)	101
Chlorides (Cl)	30.2
Ammoniacal Nitrogen (N)	Trace
Albuminoid Nitrogen (N)	.038
Oxidised Nitrogen (N)	4.1
Oxygen absorbed (3 hr. at 27° C)	.44
Temporary Hardness	94
Permanent Hardness	84
Total Hardness	178
Iron (Fe)	.04
Manganese (Mn)	Nil
Zinc	Nil
Free Chlorine	Trace

Contamination at source is dealt with by sterilisation and treatment at source. Contamination en route, from burst or damaged mains, is safeguarded against by emergency chlorination on the site.

The waters are not liable to plumbo-solvency but regular tests are made.

The extensions of water mains during 1948 in the Borough were as follows:—

Locality	Dia. of main	Length laid in yards
Hasbury Farm Housing Site	3"	167
	4"	662
Fatherless Barn Site	4"	385
	6"	190
Blackberry Lane	6"	518
Manor Lane & Bromsgrove Road	6"	392
Victoria Road, Blackheath	4"	123

The number of houses in the Borough is 11,472 and of these 11,460 are supplied with mains water. Included in the latter total are approximately 769 houses which have taps outside the house, usually in the wash house adjacent.

The department is indebted to R. A. Robertson, Esq., B.Sc., M.Inst.C.E., Engineer-in-Chief to the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company for most of the information on the water supply.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

There is a dual system of sewers in the district the surface water being collected separately from the foul wastes. With the exception of isolated dwellings and the group of houses at Illey, most of the premises in the Borough are connected to a sewer. The main sewers are maintained by the Upper Stour Valley Main Sewerage Board.

The sewage is treated by broad irrigation on farm lands at Whittington, near Kinver, where an area of 650 acres is utilised for this purpose.

Work is in progress for the construction of sedimentation tanks, filter beds, humus tanks, sludge digestion tanks and drying beds, pumping stations and accessory plant to treat a portion of the flow going to Whittington, and to provide for increase in population in the Board's area. In addition, approval has been given by the Ministry of Health for the construction of storm water tanks and additional sewers at Belle Vale.

PUBLIC CLEANSING AND TRANSPORT.

The removal and disposal of refuse, the collection of salvage and the maintenance of Corporation vehicles is carried out under the supervision of the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

Details of inspection of houses are referred to later in the Report.

Prior to the War, the Council had erected 1,844 houses. Since the War, up to the end of 1948, 289 permanent and 86 temporary houses have been erected.

Thirteen families were allocated new houses in 1948 on health grounds, namely tuberculosis.

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Details of this work will be found in the Chief Sanitary Inspector's Report.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

NOTIFICATIONS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population.

	England & Wales	Halesowen
Typhoid	0.01	0.00
Paratyphoid	0.01	0.02
Scarlet Fever	1.73	0.96
Whooping Cough	3.42	2.90
Diphtheria	0.08	0.025
Measles	9.34	7.76
Smallpox	0.00	0.00
Erysipelas	0.21	0.07
Pneumonia	0.73	0.32
Cerebro Spinal Fever	0.03	0.00
Acute Poliomyelitis	0.04	0.00
Acute Polioencephalitis	0.00	0.00

SMALLPOX.

No case was reported during the year.

SCARLET FEVER.

There were thirty-eight cases of scarlet fever during the year. The incidence continues to be low and of a mild type.

DIPHTHERIA.

There was only one case of diphtheria during the year. The patient, who was an adult, was admitted to hospital and recovered. During the year there were four cases admitted to hospital as suspects but fortunately though severe types of tonsilitis, they proved to be non-diphtheritic.

INCIDENCE AND SEVERITY OF DIPHTHERIA.

Year	Total Cases	Deaths	Mortality Rate	Immunised Children Cases	Immunised Children Deaths	Percentage of children under 15 years Immunised
1939	11	—	—	—	—	—
1940	10	1	10.0	—	—	21.49
1941	37	1	2.7	1	—	57.0
1942	30	1	3.33	5	—	65.9
1943	45	2	4.44	8	—	76.17
1944	40	3	7.5	17	—	76.31
1945	30	1	3.33	18	—	76.25
1946	33	1	3.03	20	—	78.7
1947	6	—	—	4	—	81.4
1948	1	—	—	—	—	82.0

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Free diphtheria immunisation has been provided by the Borough Council since 1935. The response by the parents is good. An immunisation session is held monthly at Cradley, Halesowen, and Hill and Cakemore, at the following times and places:—

Tenter Street Clinic, Halesowen: 1st Wednesday each month, 2.15 p.m.—3.30 p.m.

Cradley Infant We'fare Clinic: 2nd Thursday each month, 2.15 p.m.—3.30 p.m.

Hill Top School Clinic, Long Lane, Hill & Cakemore: 3rd Tuesday each month, 2.15 p.m.—3.30 p.m.

Reinforcing doses are also given at these clinics, and where necessary extra sessions are arranged at the schools.

After the 5th July this year, this work became the responsibility of the County Council and we continue to carry on these clinics on their behalf.

I wish to acknowledge the help I have a'ways received from Dr. Eileen Bulmer, and the County Nurses, also the Head Teachers and their staffs for their willing co-operation.

The percentages of the child population immunised at 31st December, 1948, were:—

Under 5 years	59.8
5—15 years	96.5

Estimated mid-year population 1948, being:—

Under 5 years	3,528
5—15 years	5,391

The numbers of children treated in 1948 were as follows:—

	Primary Treatment Completed	Primary Treatment Injected	Supplementary Treatment Completed	Supplementary Treatment Injected
Under 5 years	532	1,084	12	12
5—15 years	31	70	586	589
	563	1,154	598	601

The numbers of reinforcing injections given up to 31st Dec., 1948 are as follows:—

5—9 years inclusive = 979. 10—14 years inclusive = 733.

Of this total of 1,712, 598 were given reinforcing injections this year.

ACUTE ANTERIOR POLIOMYELITIS.

No case was reported.

ERYSIPELAS.

There were three cases reported, two were treated in hospital. There were no deaths.

CEREBRO-SPINAL MENINGITIS.

No case was reported.

WHOOPING COUGH.

There was a marked increase in the number of notifications of this illness over the previous year, there being 115 cases. Three of these were sent to hospital. There was one death in a chiid aged four years.

MEASLES.

There were 307 cases notified compared with 308 cases for the previous year. In 1947 all but 3 of the notifications occurred in the first half of the year whereas in 1948 the main incidence was in the latter part of the year.

	WARDS.					
	North.	South.	East.	West.	Central.	Total.
January	—	—	1	1	1	3
February	2	3	1	2	14	22
March	—	5	2	—	2	9
April	—	2	—	1	—	3
May	1	13	—	2	—	16
June	3	12	1	9	4	29
July	5	—	—	7	—	12
August	—	—	—	5	—	5
September	—	—	—	1	—	1
October	2	2	1	1	3	9
November	3	3	—	19	43	68
December	20	35	6	16	52	129
Totals	36	75	12	64	119	306

PNEUMONIA.

Of the thirteen cases notified, seven were removed to hospital.

PARATYPHOID B.

In August there was one child of school age who contracted Paratyphoid B and who was admitted to hospital and made a satisfactory recovery.

The other members of the family were all examined with negative results.

It was impossible to trace the source of infection in this isolated case.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Forty-one cases were notified during the year; 40 of these were cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and 1 was non-pulmonary tuberculosis.

CASES OF TUBERCULOSIS ON REGISTER AT END OF 1948.

Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
Males.	Females	Males.	Females.
88	76	14	17

NEW CASES NOTIFIED DURING 1948.

	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
0—1 years	—	—	—	—
1—5 ,,	1	1	—	—
5—10 ,,	—	4	—	—
10—15 ,,	—	—	—	—
15—20 ,,	2	3	—	—
20—25 ,,	4	7	—	—
25—35 ,,	7	2	—	—
35—45 ,,	3	—	1	—
45—55 ,,	3	2	—	—
55—65 ,,	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—
	21	19	1	—

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES FOR THE YEAR 1948.

Disease.	Total	Under 1	1—2	2—3	3—4	4—5	5—10	10—15	15—20	20—35	35—45	45—65	65+
Scarlet Fever	38	—	—	3	2	2	22	7	—	2	—	—	—
Diphtheria	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Measles	307	21	27	29	59	49	120	2	—	—	—	—	—
Whooping Cough	115	13	11	14	19	24	33	—	—	—	1	—	—
Pneumonia	13	2	—	1	2	—	3	1	—	1	—	1	2
Erysipelas	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	—
	477	36	38	47	82	75	178	10	—	5	1	3	2

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

During 1948 the work of the department was considerably handicapped by staff changes. Nevertheless a great deal of useful work was done, very much more than can be indicated in this type of report. Much of the time was taken up by the inspection of the circumstances of applicants for Corporation houses, the inspection of premises in which food is prepared, or from which food is sold, and the inspection of dwelling houses with a view to the remedy of the more obvious defects.

There is a great deal more to be done in the field of environmental hygiene. Side by side with purely preventive and inspectorial work, should be developed a positive advisory service based on a planned scheme. Matters which might come within this scope for example, are the improvement in food handling methods, elimination of atmospheric pollution and improvement of working conditions in shops and offices. To effect this is needed not so much more knowledge but sufficient staff to apply what is already known. Public health officers are the least complacent and satisfied with things as they are.

In presenting this report on behalf of the staff I am grateful for the help and co-operation of the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. R. L. Corlett, and of the Town Clerk, Mr. A. Basterfield, O.B.E. and for the assistance given by officers and colleagues in other departments.

A. ARCHER,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

HOUSING.

The number of notices sent out in accordance with the provisions of the Public Health Act 1936, gives some indication of the amount of minor repairs carried out to houses at the instance of the department. Because of the housing situation, this type of work which makes for temporary alleviation of urgent nuisances, goes on each year but gives little satisfaction because it usually involves property which ought to be completely reconditioned, or in some cases demolished.

Whenever the Council propose to rehouse a tenant, a general inspection of the house is made, and where it is felt that the condition is such as to make it imperative that it shall not continue to be used for human habitation, steps are taken to serve a demolition order. This was done in six instances during the year and gradually helps to remove some of the very worst properties.

There were two applications for certificates as to the state of repair of dwelling houses one of which was granted.

TABLE I.

1.	*Inspection of dwelling houses during the year*:—		
	(1)	(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	328
		(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	524
	(2)	(a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected & recorded under the Housing Consolidation Regulations 1925 and 1932	6
		(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	10
	(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	6
	(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	322
2.	Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:—		
		Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	215

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs — nil

(2) Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—

(a) By Owners .... — nil

(b) By Local Authority in default of owners .... — nil

(b) *Proceedings under Public Health Acts*:—

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied .... — 111

(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—

(a) By Owners .... — 110

(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners — nil

(c) *Proceedings under Sections* 11 *and* 13 *of the Housing Act,* 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ..... — 6

(2) Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders .... — 4

(d) *Proceedings under Section* 12 *of the Housing Act,* 1936:—

(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made .... — nil

(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit .... — nil

4. Housing Act, 1936, Part IV—Overcrowding:—

No detailed figures are available as to the extent of overcrowding.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD DISTRIBUTION

MILK SUPPLY.

Most of the milk retailed in the Borough is heat treated and very little raw milk is consumed. By far the largest amount of trade is done by three large dairy firms, one of which operates a very efficient heat treatment plant in the Borough.

There were fourteen farmers producing milk and thirteen dairymen excluding producers, selling milk, from premises within the Borough.

The farms and dairies were always found to observe a reasonable standard of cleanliness and most dairymen appreciate the necessity for producing a clean product.

One sample of raw milk produced in the Borough was found to contain tubercle bacilli and two cows in the herd were eventually slaughtered.

The following table indicates the results of the examination of milk samples.

Description	No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Tuberculin-tested	10	10	—
Accredited	9	8	1
Pasteurised	38	38	—
Sterilised	4	4	—
Raw	19	17	2
Heat-treated	1	1	—

Fourteen samples of milk were examined biologically, and with the exception of the sample mentioned earlier, were all found free from tubercle bacilli.

BOTTLES.

The work of sampling milk bottles was continued and the results are set out below.

Number of Bottles	Bacterial Count
7	Nil
20	50 — 150
10	151 — 300
14	301 — 500
12	501 and over

In every instance the bottles were found to be free from coliform bacteria.

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

All the meat consumed in the Borough is distributed from Birmingham and is brought in metal lined vans. The small number of slaughter houses were used only for killing of pigs of which

quite a considerable number are reared by householders. Most of these pigs are inspected and are usually found to be healthy.

Food generally is inspected in the shops and markets, and the cleanliness and quality was satisfactory.

The list of foodstuffs found to be unfit for consumption is given below . Most of this was voluntary notified to the department for surrender.

MEAT.

4 Heads (pig) (tuberculosis)
6 Lungs (pig) (tuberculosis)
2 Liver (pig) (hepatitis)
1 Lung (pig) (strongylus paradoxus)
8 Lungs (pig) (pneumonia)
1 Carcase (pig) (swine erysipelas)
5 Kidneys (pig) (nephritis)
3 Heads (pig) (abscess)
1 Pluck (pig) (tuberculosis)
1 Mesentry (pig) (tuberculosis)
1 Liver (pig) (tuberculosis)
438 lbs. Beef (bone taint)
60 lbs. Rabbit (decomposition)

OTHER FOODS.

Various Tinned Foods	1,414 tins	Prunes	25 lbs.
Carrots	27 lbs.	Fish	70 lbs.
Sweets	4 lbs.	Cheese	47 lbs.
Jam	2 lbs.	Bacon	42¼ lbs.
Marmalade	14 lbs.		

FOOD PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION.

A great deal of time was spent in visiting bakehouses, shops, cafes, canteens and other premises where food is handled.

The premises were usually found to be satisfactory although minor repairs were called for from time to time. In carrying out inspections stress is always directed to discovering and eliminating faulty methods. However careful the inspection, there must always be potential danger when there are in the aggregate a large number of persons handling food in premises which are more often adapted rather than designed for the purpose for which they are used. Education of everyone handling food is very necessary because acts and omissions will continually occur, if the worker does not distinctly understand how food infections arise.

FOOD SAMPLING.

Although not a Food & Drugs authority, considerable interest is taken in sampling foods and 106 samples were submitted for analysis. These included:—

Milk	23	Custard	1
Ice-cream	46	Baking Powder	1
Tinned Meat	2	Sago	6
Artificial flavouring	7	Mineral Water	1
Condiments	5	Preservatives	5
Medicinal products	4	Tapioca	4

ICE-CREAM.

The following registrations were in force at the end of 1948 in respect of ice-cream:—

Registration for manufacture, storage and sale 14

Registration for sale only 23

All the manufacturers are on a small scale, and only make ice-cream as a subsidiary interest, usually to the sale of sweets or confectionery. With two exceptions the cold mix method is used.

The premises were as satisfactory as it is possible to ensure within the limits of existing legislation.

The table below indicates the result of samples taken and examined in accordance with the methylene blue test. It should be explained that the methylene blue test is an examination for defining four grades of bacterial cleanliness, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 3, Grade 4.

Since it is unwise for various reasons to pay too much attention to the result of any one sample, 50 per cent of samples from any particular vendor throughout the year should fall into Grade 1, 80 per cent into Grades 1 or 2, not more than 20 per cent into Grade 3, and none into Grade 4.

Number of Samples	Grade
27	1
4	2
7	3
8	Not graded.

There was considerable variation in the amount of fat found to be present in the samples but as there is no legal standard for ice-cream, no official action could be taken even where the amount was considered unduly low. It was significant that on one occasion

three samples were taken from different suppliers, all of whom used the cold mix product of a particular firm. Each vendor claimed to have made up the mix according to the manufacturer's directions. One sample had a fat content of 1.6%, the second 4.4% and the third 7.2%. The makers of the cold mix powder in question claim that if the correct quantity of water is added in accordance with their instructions, the finished mix will have a fat content of approximately 7% and this claim has been verified. As the only substance to be added to a comp'ete cold mix powder is water, it is clear that some makers of ice-cream take unfair advantage, both of the public and of their competitors by using a higher ratio of water to powder than is desirable or necessary.

Results of the chemical analysis of ice-cream samples were as follows:—

No. of Samples	Fat Content %
20	0.1 — 3
10	3.1 — 5
6	5.1 — 7
10	7.1 —10

Samples from individual retail suppliers varied considerably in fat content and two examples are given below:—

Supplier ' A '		Supplier ' B '	
Date	Fat Content %	Date	Fat Content %
29. 6.48	3.07	30. 3.48	8.8
25. 8.48	2.9	25. 8.48	5.1
14. 9.48	2.4	12.10.48	2.8
12.10.48	5.0	3.11.48	4.6
3.11.48	4.8	18.11.48	3.5

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

The extent of the atmospheric pollution in the Borough is probably much less than in many adjacent areas and when staff difficulties are easier, it is proposed to form some assessment by installing three deposit gauges, four lead peroxide instruments and a combined smoke filter and volumetric sulphur di-oxide apparatus.

It was not possible to do much work on this problem during 1948 although complaints were investigated as they arose. It is known that there is some pollution from chimneys of industrial

plant, from kilns and furnaces, and that there is a grit nuisance from various cupolas.

Pollution of the atmosphere is a problem which needs to be tackled systematically and energetically, and little progress will be made until sufficient time is devoted to it.

POLLUTION OF RIVERS AND STREAMS.

In his report for the year ending December 31st, 1901, the then Medical Officer of Health, the late Dr. T. Brett Young, drew attention to the pollution of the River Stour. It is probable that this pollution has increased considerably in the intervening years and the appearance of some of the streams as they enter the Borough and which discharge into the River Stour, compared with the appearance of the river itself as it leaves the Borough tells its own story. The true extent of the pollution and the sources can only be discovered by devoting a considerable amount of time to the matter. Until this is done no real improvement will be effected.

CONTROL OF RATS, FLIES, ETC.

In March 1948 a maintenance treatment was carried out on the sewers to deal with any rat infestation. 81 manholes were baited in areas which had shown evidence of infestation during the previous treatment, and the results indicated a further reduction in the already diminished rat population. Only a small number of minor infestations were encountered in property and these were dealt with satisfactorily. A few infestations of mice were treated usually by employing poisoned bait.

So far as was possible measures were taken to keep down the breeding of flies by such measures as careful control of the refuse tip, and treating with insecticide, and by regularly cleaning the few communal kitchen waste containers still sited in the streets.

When inspecting premises used for handling food special attention is directed to the fly problem, and improvements in the temporary storage of waste products were asked for where it was felt that there was any risk from fly contamination.

Bugs and cockroaches were only occasionally met with, and were dealt with by treatment with insecticides incorporating ' DDT ' or ' BHC.'

SHOPS AND OFFICES.

The working conditions in shops and offices is to a great extent unknown, since it was only possible to inspect these when visiting for other purposes. There is need for a survey of all such premises.

FACTORIES.

Inspections of factories were carried out as frequently as possible and inspections were in general comprehensive, taking in such items as sanitary conveniences, canteens, examination of fuel burning plant, presence or otherwise of rats, discharge of any pollution into adjacent water courses.

In connection with the means of escape in case of fire twelve certificates were issued during the year.

PETROLEUM (CONSOLIDATION) ACT, 1928.

During 1948 there were eighty-nine licences issued for the storage of petroleum spirit, and four licences for the storage of calcium carbide. Several additional petrol tanks were installed, usually at small garages and these were examined during installation.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

The public cleansing service maintained by the Public Health Department includes in its scope the collection and disposal of domestic and trade refuse and the collection and disposal of salvageable material. Street cleansing, gulley emptying and snow removal are dealt with by the Highways Department under the supervision of the Borough Surveyor, Mr. T. W. Tivey, M.I.M.E.

Two sites for tipping are owned by the Corporation, but for various reasons only one, that situated off Stourbridge Road, was used during 1948. The tip, most of which is visible from the main road running alongside and which is very close to houses, is carefully controlled. As the work of tipping proceeds all refuse is covered with fine ashes, waste moulding sand or earth. Exposed faces of the tip are covered at the end of the day's work and during week-ends with heavy tarpaulin sheets.

Household refuse is collected in modern specially designed freighters, four of which have a capacity of seven cubic yards and one of ten cubic yards. The latter vehicle has a large cab which accommodates the loaders as well as the driver. It is hoped that this fitting will become a standard feature of refuse vehicles.

Associated with refuse collection is the collection of paper, rags and metal. These are subsequently sorted and in the case of paper and rags baled and returned to industry. Trailers are attached to the refuse freighters, and salvage which is kept separate from the refuse is collected in this way. A separate salvage collection is made from shops, factories and offices.

Kitchen waste is also collected separately from canteens, from the communal bins still in the streets, and from domestic premises in certain areas. Most of the communal bins have been replaced by individual containers and by the end of 1948, 800 of these had

been issued. They are emptied twice weekly. The kitchen waste is subsequently boiled and sold to pig keepers.

The table on page 32 shows comparative statistics relating to salvage recovery.

The collection of refuse varies considerably in frequency. During the winter months there is often 16—21 days interval between collections. In winter much more refuse is produced and it is heavier than in summer. Weather conditions especially when there is snow, frost and fog, hamper the work and increase the interval between collections by causing a reduction in the number of houses which can be visited each day. Add to these factors the difficulty in getting suitable labour and it will be appreciated why it is impossible to guarantee for example, a regular weekly collection. The following figures illustrate the labour problem.

Number of Workmen engaged.			
Service	15th Dec. 1947	1st Jan. 1948	1st Feb. 1948
Refuse collection	19	18	16
Salvage recovery and disposal	5	5	4
Tip	5	4	3
	29	27	23

During the whole of the period every effort was being made to attract men to the work without result. Of the 23 men available on the 1st February three were elderly and three suffered from some serious disability which prevented their doing other than light work.

Most of the workmen do what is hard, unattractive work, very well, and I think the majority of householders appreciate the difficulty of maintaining the services.

TRANSPORT.

The department maintains and repairs all Corporation transport. At the end of 1948 the following vehicles and equipment were being maintained and serviced.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

4 Karrier Bantam refuse collection vehicles.
1 Morris refuse collection vehicle.
1 Shelvoke & Drewry refuse collection vehicle.
1 Morris truck.
1 Ford van.

MAYORAL CAR.

1 Austin 16.

SURVEYOR'S DEPARTMENT.

1 Austin truck.
2 Bedford trucks.
1 Morris truck.
1 Ford van.
1 Karrier gully emptier.
3 Motor mowers.
1 Vauxhall car.

The repair depot and garages are adapted buildings and unsuitable for their purpose. Consideration will need to be given to the establishment of a modern depot in the near future.

GENERAL COMMENT.

This report is intended to show the general scope of the work of the Public Health Department and so far as possible to indicate some of the results. Opportunity is also taken to suggest the direction in which it is considered that further work might profitably be performed.

The least important part of the report is that which shows the number of inspections carried out. The figures are to a large extent meaningless except to the Department. What is important is the way in which the inspections are done, and the results which are achieved. An inspector may on one day pay a single visit but may achieve much more than on another when twenty visits are made.

The work of a public health department should involve not only the investigation and remedy of day to day complaints and other routine duties, but should also embrace research into many problems which are relevant to the living and working conditions of the community.

To help in understanding some of the technical aspects of the report, the practice is continued of submitting an appendix with explanatory notes.

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

The discharge of smoke, dust, grit etc., into the air constitutes atmospheric pollution. Much pollution is associated with industry but the domestic chimney also contributes no small share. A great deal of it is preventable but the legal sections dealing with this subject are so difficult to apply that the development of civic consciousness and co-operation by industry are the most valuable weapons to use.

ICE-CREAM.

Ice-cream varies considerably in the way it is made and in what it contains. At present it only rarely contains any milk and various substitutes are used to enable it to contain any fat at all. For various reasons there is at the present time no legal standard of quality.

The Ministry of Health have prescribed a standard of bacterial cleanliness and this is referred to in the report on ice-cream. Most of the ice-cream made by small manufacturers is made by adding water to a complete cold-mix powder, mixing and freezing. In the case of large manufacturers the process usually consists of mixing the raw materials, pasteurisation, homogenization, cooling, freezing and hardening.

MILK.

Milk is usually sold in bottles but it may be sold loose. The serious objections to the sale of loose milk are obvious. Milk sold in bottles may be ' raw ' i.e. not treated in any other way than by being cooled or it may be described by one of several designations. The following are brief particulars:—

(1) **PASTEURISED MILK.**
Milk heated to a temperature below boiling point, and subsequently cooled, the process being carried out under carefully controlled conditions. The treatment ensures destruction of any organisms which might give rise to disease and which might be present in the milk.

(2) **TUBERCULIN TESTED MILK.**
Milk from cows which are periodically tested and found to be free from tuberculosis and certain other conditions. If tuberculin tested milk is subsequently pasteurised, it is then described as Tuberculin tested (Pasteurised).

(3) **ACCREDITED MILK.**
Milk from cows which are periodically examined (but not tuberculin-tested) and which appear to be free from tuberculosis and certain other conditions.

These designated milks must be produced under satisfactory conditions and are sold to the public in sealed bottles marked with the appropriate designations. ' Sterilized ' milk denotes milk which has been heated to a high temperature and rendered free from all bacteria. The process results in significant changes in the milk and affects its food value.

MILK QUALITY.

There is a legal standard below which milk must not normally fall. It is that milk shall contain not less than 3.0% butter fat and 8.5% solids other than butter fat.

TABLE II.

PUBLIC CLEANSING SERVICE—HOUSE AND TRADE REFUSE

TABLE SHOWING COST FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1948.

Particulars.	Collection with depreciation on loan charges included or excluded.		II. Disposal with depreciation on loan charges included or excluded.		III. Total with depreciation on loan charges included or excluded.	
(1) (2)	Included (3)	Excluded (4)	Included (5)	Excluded (6)	Included (7)	Excluded (8)
REVENUE ACCOUNT						
A. Gross Expenditure	£7,079	£6,616	£1,965	£1,873	£9,044	£8,489
B. Gross Income	£232	£232	£18	£18	£250	£250
C. Net Cost	£6,847	£6,384	£1,947	£1,855	£8,794	£8,239
UNIT COST						
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.		s. d.
D. Gross Expenditure per ton	15 10	14 9	4 6	4 4	£1 0 4	19 1
E. Gross Income per ton	6	6	½	½	6½	6½
F. Net cost per ton	15 4	14 3	4 5½	4 3½	19 9½	18 6½
G. Net cost per 1,000 population	£175 11 5	£163 13 10	49 18 5	£47 10 5	£225 9 8	£211 4 3
H. Net cost per 1,000 houses	£570 11 5	£532 0 0	£162 5 0	£154 11 5	£732 16 5	£686 11 5

Cost of collection and disposal of refuse.

Net cost of collection and disposal of refuse for each house per week 3¾d., per year, 14/7d.

Net cost of collection and disposal of refuse for each resident per week 1d., per year, 4/6d.

COMPARATIVE SALVAGE STATISTICS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEARS 1947-1948.

TABLE III.

TONNAGE.

Year	Kitchen Waste	Paper	Scrap Metal	Baled Tins	Bones	Rags	Sacking & String	Bottles	Total Tonnage
	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	T. C. Qrs.	Dozen	T. C. Qrs.
1947	133 18 2	187 13 3	26 7 3	57 16 3	1 3 1½	7 9 3	17 2	248½	415 7 1½
1948	163 9 0	225 10 0	23 4 1	36 10 2	1 2 1½	8 5 1½		1273½	458 1 2
Increase	29 10 2	37 16 1				15 2½		1025	42 14 0½

TABLE IV.

INCOME.

Year	Kitchen Waste	Paper	Scrap Metal	Baled Tins	Bones	Rags	Sacking & String	Bottles	Total Income
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1947	524 10 3	1207 7 10	79 10 11	112 15 8	6 7 0	190 16 9	4 7 6	21 16 6	2147 12 5
1948	791 14 6	1480 5 8	79 10 1	71 5 9	6 17 8	174 0 4		59 1 10	2672 15 3
Increase	267 4 3	272 17 10			10 8			37 5 4	525 2 10

FACTORIES ACT 1937.

Premises	Number on Register (3)	Number of		
		Inspections (4)	Written Notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	14	2	1	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by local authority	190	123	9	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by local authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	204	135	10	—

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	Reference		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
(1)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Want of Cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	1	—	1	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)	—	—	—	—	—
(a) Insufficient	2	2	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	9	11	—	1	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including offences relating to Home-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	11	14	—	2	—

TABLE V.

RECORD OF INSPECTIONS.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.	
Drainage, public sewers	88
Drains	320
Sanitary accommodation	141
Infectious disease	37
Tuberculosis	33
Nuisances (Section 93)	
Premises	1501
Keeping of animals	179
Dust or effluvia	62
Accumulations	11
Offensive Trades	12
Refuse—Dustbins	198
Salvage	108
Trade refuse	79
Tips	281
Smoke nuisances	2
Observations	42
Visits to plants	35
Tents, vans, sheds	21
Verminous premises	4
Council houses	39
Other houses	28
Watercourses, streams	16
Water supply	72
FAIRGROUND	1
LAND CHARGES	301
PETROLEUM ACTS	32
RODENT CONTROL	310
RENT ACT CERTIFICATES	5
FACTORIES—with power	108
without power	6
outworkers	11
HOUSING ACTS:—	
Detail house inspections	58
Houses let-in-lodgings	7
Overcrowding	7
Individual unfit	96

COUNCIL HOUSE APPLICATIONS	1217
FOOD INSPECTION:—	
Butchers' Shops	26
Bakehouses	28
Cowsheds	23
Cafes, canteens etc.	38
Dairies, milkshops	36
Fishmongers, poulterers	7
Fried fish shops	35
Food preparing premises	10
Greengrocers, fruiterers	5
Grocers	35
Ice-Cream premises	71
Markets	3
Slaughterhouses	22
Other food premises	7
Licensed premises	16
Pigs inspected on private premises	433
MISCELLANEOUS	665
TOTAL	6917