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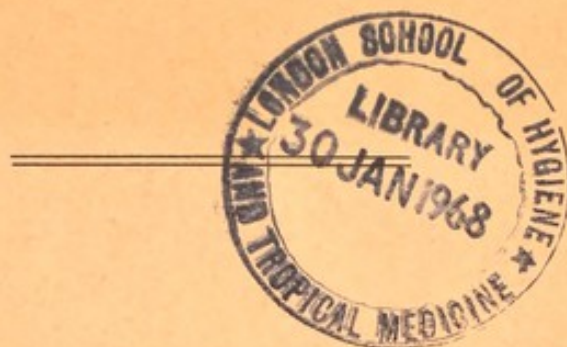
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Luton Rural District Council.



ANNUAL
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Medical Officer of Health

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YEAR 1949.



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Luton Rural District Council.

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Medical Officer of Health

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YEAR 1949.

To the Luton Rural District Council.

Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1949.

The Chairman & Councillors of the
Rural District of Luton.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting the Annual Statistical Report on the health of the district for the year 1949.

The population of the district has shown a steady rise since 1943 and the present figure approximates to that of 1941 when the district had a swollen population due to refugees from London. The birth rate remains fairly high and does not show the fall that has been so marked in many other areas.

The incidence of infectious disease requires little comment. There were five cases of poliomyelitis, but there were no deaths from this complaint. There was one death attributed to measles and one to whooping cough.

I wish to acknowledge with thanks the help that has always been given to me by the Clerk to the Council and the Sanitary Inspectors.

I have the honour to be,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

H. A. A. PARGETER,

Medical Officer of Health,
Rural District of Luton.

SECTION A.—Statistics and Social Conditions.

1. Vital Statistics.

Area of district, 48,590 acres.

Population as estimated by Registrar-General :—

Civilian	...	...	...	...	...	18,970
Services	...	...	...	...	...	50
Total						19,020
Number of inhabited houses (approximate)	...	...	...	...	...	5,800
Rateable Value as at 1st April	...	...	...	...	...	£82,630
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	...	£329 4 0
Number of new houses erected :						
(a) Council	...	...	...	...	...	149
(b) Private enterprise	...	...	...	...	...	10

Extracts from vital statistics for the year.

The following table gives extracts from the Vital Statistics of the year 1949 as furnished by the Registrar-General:—

Live Births :

Legitimate	...	...	...
Illegitimate	...	...	...
Birth Rate per 1,000 of population	...	...	...

Total	M	F
333	166	167
317	156	161
16	10	6
17.6		

Still Births :

Legitimate	...	...	...
Illegitimate	...	...	...
Rate per 1,000 (live and still births)	...	...	...

Total	M	F
7	4	3
1	—	1
23.5		

Deaths :

Death Rate per 1,000 of population ...

Total	M	F
180	87	93
9.5		

There was one maternal death in 1949.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:—

Total	...	8	Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	24
Legitimate	...	8	Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	25
Illegitimate	...	—	Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	—
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	...	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	27

2. Population.

The population figures as supplied by the Registrar-General for the last 7 years are as follows:—

1943	...	...	...	17,480
1944	...	...	...	17,590
1945	...	...	...	17,250
1946	...	...	...	17,630
1947	...	...	...	18,110
1948	...	...	...	18,600
1949	...	...	...	18,970

The natural increase in the population or difference between the birth and death rates are as follows:—

1943	...	...	...	7.3
1944	...	...	...	8.5
1945	...	...	...	6.8
1946	...	...	...	9.1
1947	...	...	...	8.9
1948	...	...	...	6.9
1949	...	...	...	8.1

3 & 4. Birth and Death Rates.

Year	Population	Births	Birth Rate	Birth Rate for England & Wales	Deaths	Crude Death Rate	Death Rate for England & Wales
1943	17,480	319	18.2	16.5	192	10.9	12.1
1944	17,590	353	20.1	17.6	204	11.6	11.6
1945	17,250	293	16.9	16.1	174	10.1	11.4
1946	17,630	340	19.3	19.1	178	10.2	11.5
1947	18,110	364	20.1	20.5	202	11.2	12.0
1948	18,600	339	18.2	17.9	211	11.3	10.8
1949	18,970	333	17.6	16.7	180	9.5	11.7

The following shows the locally estimated population for the different villages in the district at June 1949.

Barton	...	...	...	...	1,073
Billington	...	...	...	...	270
Caddington	...	...	...	...	1,308
Slip End, ...	...	...	...	...	1,008
Chalgrave	...	...	...	...	354
Eaton Bray	...	...	...	...	1,121
Eggington	...	...	...	...	218
Heath & Reach	...	...	...	...	833
Hockliffe	...	...	...	...	463
Houghton Regis	...	...	...	...	2,745
Hyde	...	...	...	...	588
Kensworth	...	...	...	...	815
Stanbridge	...	...	...	...	405
Streatley	...	...	...	...	1,548
Studham	...	...	...	...	611
Sundon	...	...	...	...	2,296
Tilsworth	...	...	...	...	206
Toddington	...	...	...	...	2,253
Totternhoe	...	...	...	...	796
Whipsnade	...	...	...	...	194
TOTAL					19,105

BIRTH RATES, DEATH RATES. ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL DEATH RATES AND CASE RATES FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1949.

(England and Wales, London, 126 Great Towns and 148 Smaller Towns).
(Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns).

							LUTON RURAL DISTRICT	ENGLAND AND WALES	126 County Boroughs and Great Towns including London	148 Smaller Towns (Resident Population 25,000 to 50,000 at 1931 Census)	London Administrative County
Births :							* Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population				
Live	...	...	...	...	...	...	17.6	16.7‡	18.7	18.0	18.5
Still	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.42	0.39‡	0.47	0.40	0.37
Deaths :											
All causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	9.5	11.7‡	12.5	11.6	12.2
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.05	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.32	0.45	0.52	0.42	0.52
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.16	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.11
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.15	0.51	0.56	0.49	0.59
							Rates per 1,000 live births				
Deaths under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	24	32‡	37	30	29
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	3.0	3.8	2.4	1.7
Notifications :							Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population				
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Paratyphoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.89	1.63	1.72	1.83	1.46
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.74	2.39	2.44	2.39	1.70
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.07
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.15	0.19	0.20	0.19	0.17
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.23	8.95	8.91	9.18	8.54
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.69	0.80	0.91	0.65	0.55
Acute Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.26	0.13	0.13	0.12	0.18
Acute Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.01
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.11	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.19
(a) Notifications :							Rates per 1,000 Total Births (Live and Still)				
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	6.31	8.14	5.30	6.82
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00				
(b) Maternal Mortality :											
Puerperal Infection (No. 147)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00	0.11 0.11 0.05 0.71 0.98	Not available		
Abortion with Sepsis (No. 140)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00				
Abortion without Sepsis (No. 141)	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.00				
Others	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.93				
Total	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.93				

* A dash (—) signifies that there were no deaths or notifications.

† Per 1,000 related births.

‡ Rates per 1,000 total population.

6. Infant Mortality.

The following table shows deaths of infants from stated causes in weeks and months under one year of age.

			Weeks				Total under one month	Months					Total under one year
			0-	1-	2-	3-		1-	3-	6-	9-		
Permaternity	...	...	2	2	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	4
Accidental	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Congenital heart disease	...	...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Birth Malformation	...	...	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	...	...	3	2	1	—	6	—	2	—	—	—	8

DEATHS OF RESIDENTS IN THE RURAL DISTRICT OF LUTON DURING THE YEAR 1949.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>						<i>M</i>	<i>F</i>
1.	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever	...	...	...	...	—	—
2.	Cerebro-Spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	—	—
3.	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	—	—
4.	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	—	1
5.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	...	2	4
7.	Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	—	2
8.	Syphilitic Disease	...	...	...	...	—	1
9.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	4	—
10.	Measles	...	...	...	...	—	1
11.	Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
12.	Acute Infectious Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
13.	Cancer of Buc. Cav., etc.	...	...	...	...	1	1
14.	Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	...	...	2	2
15.	Cancer of Breast	...	...	...	...	—	5
16.	Cancer of all other Sites	...	...	...	...	12	4
17.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	1
18.	Intra-cranial Vascular lesions	...	...	...	...	10	11
19.	Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	23	26
20.	Other Diseases of the Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	3	2
21.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	11	1
22.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	1	1
23.	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	—	2
24.	Ulceration of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...	...	—	1
25.	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	—	—
26.	Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	—	1
27.	Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	4	2
28.	Nephritis	...	...	...	...	—	1
29.	Puerperal and Post-Abortive Sepsis	...	...	...	...	—	1
30.	Other Maternal Causes	...	...	...	...	—	—
31.	Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	2	—
32.	Congenital Malformations, Birth Injury, Infantile Disease	...	...	...	...	2	2
33.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	—	—
34.	Road Traffic Accidents	...	...	...	...	3	1
35.	Other Violent Causes	...	...	...	...	1	3
36.	All other Causes	...	...	...	...	6	16
TOTALS						87	93

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR 1941-1949

Year	LIVE BIRTHS				STILL BIRTHS			DEATHS		INFANT DEATHS				MATERNAL DEATHS			
	Estimated Population	No.	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	No.	Rate per 1,000 total births	No.	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	Under 4 weeks	4 weeks to 12 months	Total	Rate per 1,000 live births	Sepsis	Other	Total	Rate per 1,000 total births		
1941	19,940	330	16.5	7	20.8	222	11.1	7	7	14	42	—	—	—	—	—	—
1942	18,190	332	17.8	9	27.1	202	11.1	8	7	15	46	—	1	1	3.0		
1943	17,480	319	18.2	12	36.3	192	10.9	7	5	12	38	—	—	—	—	—	—
1944	17,590	353	20.1	10	27.5	204	11.6	9	8	17	48	—	1	1	2.8		
1945	17,250	293	16.9	8	26.6	174	10.1	1	4	5	17	—	—	—	—	—	—
1946	17,630	340	19.3	7	20.2	178	10.2	4	3	7	21	—	1	1	2.9		
1947	18,110	364	20.1	10	26.7	202	11.2	6	4	10	27	—	1	1	2.7		
1948	18,600	339	18.2	10	28.7	211	11.3	8	6	14	41	—	—	—	—	—	—
1949	18,970	333	17.6	8	23.5	180	9.5	6	2	8	24	1	—	1	2.9		

NOTIFIED INFECTIOUS DISEASES (Civilian).

	<i>Under 1 yr.</i>	<i>1-</i>	<i>3-</i>	<i>5-</i>	<i>10-</i>	<i>25-</i>	<i>Total</i>
Scarlet Fever	—	2	2	11	2	—	17
Whooping cough	4	9	11	28	—	—	52
Ac. poliomyelitis	1	3	1	—	—	—	5
Ac. polioencephalitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Measles (excluding rubella)	5	27	47	112	2	1	194
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. pneumonia	—	—	1	1	1	10	13
Dysentery	—	—	—	2	—	1	3
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. encephalitis Lethargica	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enteric or typhoid fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paratyphoid fevers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	1	1	1	3
Cerebro-spinal fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Food poisoning	—	—	—	—	1	1	2
Puerperal pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia neonatorum	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	10	41	62	155	7	14	289

The table above shows the incidence of infectious diseases during the year under review. It will be noted that again no cases of diphtheria were notified and that measles was very prevalent.

Five cases of poliomyelitis were notified compared with one case in 1948 and five cases in 1947. There were no deaths from this disease in 1949.

TUBERCULOSIS. NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1949.

<i>Age periods</i>	<i>New Cases</i>				<i>Deaths</i>			
	<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>		<i>Pulmonary</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary</i>	
	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 year	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 "	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
15 "	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 "	2	3	—	—	—	1	—	—
25 "	3	4	—	—	1	—	—	—
35 "	2	—	—	—	—	1	—	2
45 "	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—
55 "	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
65 and upwards	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS	10	10	1	2	2	4	—	2

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report, 1949.

1. (i) WATER SUPPLY.

21 samples were taken from the Main supplies throughout the district during the year. The Bacteriological reports have been satisfactory. The main supplies at Kensworth, Caddington, Streatley and Slip End were sampled for Chemical examination during the year. These were found to be satisfactory except that at Streatley and Slip End a high figure for Nitric Nitrogen was indicated. The Chemist observed that efficient chlorination should render these supplies safe for drinking and Bacteriological tests carried out subsequently have confirmed that the chlorination carried out since is efficient.

During the year the Main supply of water was extended to the village of Sewell thus affording a wholesome and adequate water supply to a village where previously the supply from a village spring and some wells had proved inadequate and of a doubtful Bacteriological standard.

The shallow wells supplying the village of Sharpenhoe will soon be closed with the extension of the Council's Main supply, preparation for which has already been commenced.

The shallow wells from which the village of Bidwell draws its water supply were sampled for Bacteriological examination and all the reports indicated the presence of faecal coli. In some instances these wells had also proved inadequate during the Summer. On reporting the seriousness of this position to the Council immediate steps were taken to extend the Main water supply to this area and having regard to the progress of this scheme a wholesome and adequate water supply should be available early in 1950.

Private Water Supplies.

Samples of water for Bacteriological examination were obtained in sixteen instances only three of which proved to be satisfactory. Where the Main supply was found to be available the owners of these private sources readily agreed to obtain a supply therefrom.

With regard to the water supply at the Sundon Switching Station where on previous occasions a minute trace of arsenic had been found subsequent to the use of an arsenical weed-killer, samples were taken for Chemical and Bacteriological examination and the results have been satisfactory.

Samples of water from Doolittle Mill Farm, Totternhoe, have indicated pollution and the Bacteriologists's reports have confirmed this. The owners have taken steps to filter the water but it appears that such precautions are inadequate and the owner has been requested to provide a wholesome water supply.

1. (ii) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The Sanitary Circumstances throughout the district in this respect remain unaltered.

The Sewage Disposal works at Barton, Sundon, Eaton Bray and Stanbridge were not designed originally to treat the quantity of sewage now passing through them consequently the effluent produced here falls short of the standard desired.

The ditches at Barton and Sundon have been cleansed during the year in order to minimise the Nuisance arising therein. The need for adequate treatment of the increasing sewage produced in these parishes has become a matter of extreme urgency.

The recurring ditch Nuisances in the parishes of Caddington, Heath and Reach. Billington, Stanbridge, Tilsworth and Eggington are a constant reminder of improper and insanitary methods of drainage disposal obtaining in these parts of the district.

The installation of small but efficient treatment plants in connection with small Housing Schemes is to be commended and the idea should be extended in preference to the construction of cesspools on Housing sites. However, there are practical difficulties to be considered when contemplating such installations and unless there is an adequate watercourse for the reception of the effluent or suitable land for irrigation purposes a Nuisance may arise in connection with the disposal of the effluent.

Cesspool Emptying.

During the year 3,750 cesspools were emptied comprising 7,545 loads. The number of cesspools emptied show a reduction on the 1948 figure and this, in my opinion, is due to the introduction of the 44 hour week. The number of cesspools however, continue to increase with new Housing schemes, improvements to dwelling houses under the Public Health and Housing Acts and the silting of septic tank soakaways.

More than half of the cesspool emptying in the district is carried out in the parishes of Caddington and Streatley. Having regard to the total cost of cesspool emptying, £4,500 approx., it appears to be a matter of economics in addition to good sanitary administration to resort to the provision of sewers in these areas as soon as possible. It can be seen from these figures that it costs £1 4s. 0d. to empty a cesspool or approximately 12/- per load.

1. (iii) PONDS, DITCHES AND WATERCOURSES.

The position with regard to ponds remains unaltered except for the fact that they are becoming less in number. The large pond at Fancott has been filled with material from building excavations and a pond at Streatley is gradually being filled. Provided that the surface water from the highway and surrounding land water can be disposed of without subsequent flooding it may benefit the Public Health to fill some of the ponds with suitable material. The countryside however, will be poorer and less attractive without its wayside ponds.

Ditches continue to receive attention by the Council's workmen and these are cleansed at intervals. Not until the unsewered villages in the district are provided with the essential amenity of a good sewerage scheme will it be possible to ensure that ditches and watercourses receive land water only.

2. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

The rivers Lea and Great Ouse Catchment Boards supervise the condition of rivers and streams throughout the district and every assistance is given by one Authority to the other to maintain a satisfactory condition in all such watercourses.

3. (i) CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

The conversion of privy middens and pail closets into water closets is being pursued in the Parish of Toddington as rapidly as builders and materials appear to be available. During the year the shortage of water service materials delayed the progress of some of the schemes being undertaken by the owners of dwelling houses. At the present rate of progress the necessary conversions will be completed by the end of 1951 except possibly to houses scheduled for treatment under sections 11 or 25 Housing Act 1936.

Some progress has also been made in the parishes of Eaton Bray and Barton but in the latter it is limited by the conditions obtaining at the Sewage Disposal Works. As desirable as it may be to press for conversions at the dwelling houses it is not good sanitary administration to do so and thereby cause a Nuisance or aggravate an existing Nuisance at another point in the parish. The need for an efficient Sewage Disposal installation for Barton is long overdue.

3. (ii) PUBLIC CLEANSING.

House Refuse Collections.

During the year the twice monthly collection of all household refuse in the district was maintained. The refuse is collected from the rear of houses. The collectors carry skeps made of aluminium and transfer the refuse from the household bin into their skep. By so doing, the double journey which would have to be made if the household bin had been carried out to the vehicle and returned empty, is avoided. The rate of collection is thereby increased and householders do not have to handle the bin.

There are two 11 cub. yd. and one 7 cub. yd. capacity side-loading vehicles in operation. The labour consists of three Driver-Collectors and four Collectors.

The cost of Refuse Collection and Disposal during the year, was approximately £3,650. The number of properties from which refuse is collected approximates to 5,800. The cost of this service per household is therefore 12/6d. per annum or 6½d. per collection.

Refuse Disposal.

There are three refuse tips in the district and a system of partially controlled tipping obtains at each of them.

In one instance land adjacent to a farm house and its buildings is being reclaimed for ultimate agricultural use and conditions there indicate the possibilities of tipping refuse near dwelling houses without causing a Nuisance.

D.D.T. tip dressing is used from time to time on the tips and Rodent Control is carried out at frequent intervals.

Subsequent to failure to find a site for the disposal of household refuse from the parishes of Streatley and Barton arrangements were made to use the Luton Borough Controlled Tip for which a charge of 2/6d. a ton is made.

Salvage.

During the year it became evident that the demand for all kinds and grades of waste material was on the decrease and a reduction in the price offered for waste paper and old textiles necessitated the consideration of the entire position. Having regard to the value of salvage, waste paper baling in particular, as being a means of finding something profitable for a workman engaged in the Cleansing Services to do at the Council's Depot when his vehicle is in for repairs, maintenance, etc., it was considered advisable to continue with salvage operations. The Refuse Collectors return a fair amount of waste paper and all the old textiles and scrap iron included in the monthly return but much of the waste paper is collected from the shops in the district by a special collection carried out approximately once a month by the "Dennis" Tipping Lorry.

The following is a summary of the income received from the sale of waste materials during the year.

Waste Paper	...	...	£248	6	1
Textiles	...	...	32	7	3
Scrap Metals	...	...	23	0	6
Bones, etc.	...	...		13	0
			£304	6	10

a decrease of £124 4s. 8d. on the year 1948.

During the three years ending December 1949, the income from the sale of salvage has amounted to £964 7s. 9d.

Trade Refuse.

During the year a proper collection of this class of refuse was instituted within the framework of section 73 (2) Public Health Act 1936 which requires a Local Authority to make a reasonable charge for removing trade refuse. The charge being made is 10/6d. per bin per annum (twice monthly collection) and so far twenty business premises averaging two bins each are within the schemes providing an income of approximately £20 0s. 0d. per annum.

3. (iii) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

My Deputy Mr. W. T. Stone took up his appointment on the 11th April and subsequently all factories and workshops, bakehouses, cafes, restaurants and other classes of special premises were inspected. There has also been an increased number of housing inspections carried out and the value of an additional Sanitary Inspector in the district is reflected in the following numerical summary of inspections, re-inspections, investigations, etc., carried out during the year.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Sewerage and Drainage	...	...	...	288
Sanitary Conveniences	...	...	...	46
Refuse	...	...	...	59
Water Supply	...	...	...	122
Miscellaneous and re-inspections	...	...	...	23
Cleansing Services	...	...	...	261

NUISANCES.

Premises	...	...	...	162
Filthy or Verminous Premises	...	...	...	25
Disinfestations (Bugs)	...	...	...	17
" (Other Pests)	...	...	...	22
Animals	...	...	...	31
Accumulations, deposits, etc.	...	...	...	17
Smoke Nuisances	...	...	...	10
Miscellaneous and re-inspections	...	...	...	42

SANITATION OF SPECIAL PREMISES.

Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	94
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	...	104
General Stores	...	...	...	2
Butchers Shops	...	...	...	19
Knackers Yards	...	...	...	23
Bakehouses	...	...	...	97
Schools	...	...	...	26
Cinemas	...	...	...	1
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	4

FOOD.

Food Inspection	...	...	...	43
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	5
Cafes, Restaurants, etc.	...	...	...	127
Milk and Dairies	...	...	...	32
Cowshed and Dairy Inspections	...	...	...	46
Sediment Tests	...	...	...	56
Churn Rinsings	...	...	...	25
Ice Cream	...	...	...	84
Milk Samples	...	...	...	35
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	6
Ice Cream Samples	...	...	...	15

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Investigations	...	...	...	44
Disinfections	...	...	...	30
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	22

GENERAL.

Petroleum	...	...	...	12
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	5
Rodent Control	...	...	...	23

HOUSING.

Premises	...	...	...	286
Overcrowding Investigations	...	...	...	48

TOTAL	...	...	2,438
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Schools—Sanitary Accommodation.

During the latter part of the year the sanitary accommodation at the 23 schools in the district was inspected. The conditions at four schools were found to be satisfactory but in many of the remainder, the sanitary accommodation fell far short of the standard provided in housing accommodation owned by Local Authorities and the Standard of Fitness aimed at in connection with the repair and improvement of dwelling houses in recent Housing Legislation.

The sanitary accommodation of the schools in the parishes of Toddington and Barton comprised pail closets and urinals flushed only by rainwater. Washing facilities at the Toddington V.P. School (195 pupils) comprised one enamel bowl filled from an enamel jug. These schools have recently become "Controlled" schools and doubtless steps will be taken soon to provide adequate sanitary accommodation.

Improvement in the sanitary condition of the remaining schools is very much dependent upon the extension of sewerage schemes to the villages concerned, or the installation of cesspool or septic tank systems of drainage.

All schools suffered from a shortage of towels, which were generally sufficient only to permit a maximum of one per class.

In view of the general shortage of towelling materials and its high cost, it is suggested that the installation of mechanical hot air driers in schools is worthy of serious consideration.

No special provision appeared to be made in the Senior Schools for the disposal of sanitary towels, a problem which has been aggravated by the raising of the school leaving age. Several comparatively cheap and easily operated incinerators, such as are used in factories, etc., are now readily available and it is suggested that the installation of such apparatus is necessary in all Senior Schools.

Bearing in mind the need for the education of children in the elementary principles of Hygiene, especially as they relate to clean food, it can be readily seen that it is quite impossible to achieve satisfactory results in this direction under the conditions referred to above which simply make a mockery of the teaching of such principles. If education in Hygiene must start with the children then of necessity all schools must be provided with good, up-to-date, sanitary accommodation.

Abatement of Nuisances.

79 Nuisances were abated during the year. Generally the informal action taken is sufficient to effect abatement. However, owners of property are finding it extremely difficult to find builders who are prepared to execute minor repairs or works of abatement and in many cases it has been necessary for me or my deputy to persuade local builders to deal with certain jobs as a matter of extreme urgency. Delays are also caused by builders accepting orders and then leaving the job until more labour or materials are available and in some instances the order has been completely overlooked.

30, 32, 34, Thomas Street, Heath and Reach—Legal Action.

With respect to the Nuisances existing here it was necessary to resort to Statutory Action and subsequently the Leighton Buzzard Magistrates on hearing the complaint made an Order requiring the Abatement of the Nuisances. The Order was duly complied with.

The Unlawful Depositing of Refuse—Legal Action.

A person found depositing rubbish in a lane within the parish of Caddington was summoned before the Luton Court and fined £3 0s. 0d. Shortly before this person committed the offence, a Public Notice had appeared in the Local Press drawing attention to proper refuse tips which were available for this purpose on payment of a small charge.

It is regrettable that a few hauliers, carters and other persons bring factory and shop waste out of the towns and dump it "ad lib" on country road-sides with complete disregard for blocking ditches or watercourses and despoiling the beauty of these country lanes.

3. (iv) SHOPS AND OFFICES.

The majority of shop inspections were confined to Butchers' Shops where conditions were usually found to be satisfactory. If the standard of cleanliness was found to be lower than that required the Butcher's attention was drawn to it.

The standard of cleanliness at two General Stores was improved following inspections and informal notice.

3. (v) CAMPING SITES.

There is one site in the district, in the village of Whipsnade, licenced under section 269 (1) (i) of the Public Health Act 1936. Periodical inspections are carried out and generally the conditions found are satisfactory. Although there is a wholesome water supply within a reasonable distance of the site, during the Winter the access to the standpipe is difficult. The owner of the site has taken steps to improve the condition of this approach but being situated in a farmyard maintenance is difficult. When main water is available to this village the owner will doubtless provide a standpipe in the meadow where the moveable dwellings are stationed. During the Summer 35 caravans were stationed on the site but only five of these were used regularly throughout the year.

By the end of the year 38 licences had been issued with respect to moveable dwellings under section 269 (1) (ii) Public Health Act 1936. These caravans are inspected on an average twice a year and where there is evidence of any failure to comply with conditions attached to licences the occupiers are served with an informal notice.

Most of the applications to use this type of dwelling come from persons who live in "rooms" in the towns bordering on the Rural District and doubtless the failure to obtain a "house to themselves" brings this situation about. Whilst the housing shortage in the towns continues resort to caravans will increase and having regard to the limitations of section 269 of the Public Health Act 1936 it has been decided that each application must obtain the approval of the local Planning Authority. Control under the Town and Country Planning Act 1947 appears to be more effectual than under the Public Health Act 1936.

Court Proceedings. Section 269 (3), etc., Public Health Act 1936.

The occupier of two caravans at Slip End was summoned at Luton Court for failure to comply with the requirements of the section. He pleaded guilty and the summons was adjourned for fourteen days to enable him to make alternative arrangements. The site was cleared within the adjournment period.

3. (vi) SMOKE ABATEMENT.

The Nuisance which had been associated with the buildings known as the Government Training Centre at Sundon Park was abated during the year and there appears to have been no recurrence of the Nuisance since. The installation of new grit arrestors, new smoke and soot blowers, raised chimney stacks and the use of smokeless fuel collectively contributed to the improvement.

Dust Emission.

It is an accepted fact that "cement cannot be made without making dust." With two large cement factories and several lime works in the district residents have a lot of dust to contend with during the course of the year, particularly those living near these works. The position is continually kept under observation and close contact with the Inspector of Alkali, etc., Works is kept with regard to this matter.

3. (vii) SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are no public swimming baths in the district. The Blue Waters Pool at Houghton Regis was closed following a case of Poliomyelitis in the village. This pool like a few other ponds and pools in the district is used during school holidays. The owners of the "Blue Waters" have now prohibited the use of the water for bathing.

3. (viii) ERADICATION OF BED BUGS AND FLEAS.

No. of Council houses found to be infested	...	7
" " disinfecting	...	7
No. of other houses found to be infested	...	8
" " disinfecting	...	8

Disinfestation is carried out by one of the following methods: (a) Fumigation by Thermatox, (b) D.D.T. fumigators, (c) Blowlamp followed by spraying with an insecticide containing D.D.T. The spraying is repeated ten days after first treatment.

3. (ix) ERADICATION OF FURNITURE BEETLE.

Subsequent to a complaint regarding the presence of insects in furniture and damage thereto the matter was investigated in the house of the person complaining and extended to adjoining houses. The presence of furniture beetle (*Anobium punctatum*) was confirmed in five houses all of which were owned by the Council, and the necessary disinfestation with special insecticide was carried out. Doubtless the use of unseasoned timber in dwelling houses will cause an increase in the ravages of timber beetles and with this in mind it is intended to send a circular to all tenants of Council houses asking them to report immediate signs of what appears to be pinholes in woodwork in their homes. The furniture beetle is not aptly named as its activities are not confined to furniture and much damage can be caused to woodwork by this timber pest.

SECTION D—HOUSING.

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)	448
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	448
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	—
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	—
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	10
(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	423
(5) Number of dwelling-houses found to be satisfactory	15
(6) Number of houses placed in Category 5 (Rural Housing Survey) which were rendered fit for habitation	9

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	126
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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	80
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	—
(b) By Local Authority in default of owner	—

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which formal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	3
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	3
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	—
(1a) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which informal notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	94
(2a) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of informal notices	68

(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 ...	—
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	—
(3) Number of unfit dwelling-houses demolished	2

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

4. HOUSING ACT 1936. PART IV—OVERCROWDING.

During the year the Council rehoused 149 families and as many of these had earned points for overcrowding the abatement of this condition proceeds satisfactorily in some parishes.

However, in the parishes of Houghton Regis, Hyde and the Sundon Park area much overcrowding is still evident and during the year five new cases of overcrowding were confirmed in these areas. The building of new houses to relieve the worst cases in these areas is a matter of extreme urgency and the Council has already taken steps during the year to effect a solution to some of these overcrowding problems.

SECTION E—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.

The coming into operation on 1st October, 1949, of The Food and Drugs Act (Milk and Dairies) 1944 and The Milk (Special Designations) Act 1949 marked the end of an epoch in the history and progress of Clean and Pure Milk Production. Under this new legislation the functions of Local Authorities with regard to Milk Production, Registration of producers and their premises were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture.

It will not be possible to place in proper perspective or to fully appreciate the work done by Local Authorities in improving the Nation's milk supply and rendering it "Safe" for the simple reason that it can hardly be expected to compare favourably with the progress which should be made under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture who has, before taking on this responsibility conferred upon itself powers which have always been refused to Local Authorities particularly the power to remove unsatisfactory producers.

However, while Local Authorities unwillingly forego powers they have exercised for more than thirty years and their officers rankle over the loss of duties for which many of them are specially qualified and to which they have devoted much time and study they will readily co-operate with the Ministry of Agriculture and its officers if by so doing they can help to ensure further improvements in the Standard of Cleanliness and the production of Milk free from pathogenic organisms.

The new law also provides that if the Ministry of Agriculture is able to make the necessary arrangements, the Sale of Raw Milk by Retail will be discontinued by 30th September, 1954 unless it is "Tuberculin Tested" or "Pasteurised."

Local Authorities remain responsible for:—

(i) To Licence Distributors of Tuberculin Tested Milk and Accredited Milk (other than Dairy farmers) and their premises.

(ii) The inspection and control of premises (other than Dairy farms) from which Tuberculin Tested Milk and Accredited Milk is distributed including the sampling of milk from such premises.

(iii) To Licence Dealers in Pasteurised or Sterilized milk who are not Pasteurizers or Sterilizers.

(iv) To continue to be responsible for the provisions relating to diseases communicable to man.

Sediment Testing.

During the early part of the year 46 premises were visited at the time of milk production usually between 7.0 a.m. and 9.0 a.m. Particular attention was paid to the methods employed and 56 sediment tests chiefly on unstrained milk were carried out. Where the tests failed to produce good results or where the Milk and Dairies Order was found to be contravened in any respect the matter was taken up with the producer. In one instance where a producer had continually failed to heed the advice given to him on clean milk production legal action was resorted to. This producer was summoned before the Woburn Court for:—

- (i) Failure to clean udders, teats, etc., before milking.
- (ii) Failure to ensure that the milkers hands were clean.
- (iii) Failure to keep milking stools clean.

He was fined £10 0s. 0d. with respect to the first two summonses but the third summons was dismissed.

During his evidence the farmer said "I should have to bath the cows all over every day and give them a 'perm' as well, to suit the standard set."

This has always been the cry of the bad producers and if Local Authorities had been granted power to remove such producers from the register it would not have been necessary to transfer these functions to the Ministry of Agriculture.

The following is a statement relating to Milk and Dairies Licences and Registrations at the end of 1949:—

(i)	"Tuberculin Tested" Milk Producers	...	...	43
(ii)	"Accredited" Milk Producers	...	...	13
(iii)	Ungraded Milk Producers	...	...	113
	Total	...	...	169
(iv)	Retail Purveyors	...	...	22
(v)	Producer-Retailers included in (i) to (iii)			53

Milk (Special Designations) Orders.

(vi)	Tuberculin Tested Milk Dealers	...	...	3
(vii)	Pasteurised Milk Dealers Supplementary	...		1

Retailers Premises.

32 inspections were carried out during the year and general conditions were found to be satisfactory. However, from time to time it is necessary to draw retailers' attention to the worn condition of cleansing brushes and to the importance of a "clean hot water rinse" after "cleaning with a detergent."

Churn Rinsings.

This extremely useful check by Local Authorities on a major cause of milk souring has also "gone by the board" under the new arrangements. Prior to the transfer twenty-five churn rinsings were taken for bacteriological examination and thirteen of these proved to be unsatisfactory. Five samples proved to be uncountable. Although in the last resort the milk producer must see that the churn is clean before using it, it is most difficult for farmers to ensure this is so especially during the harvesting season. When a buyer cleanses a churn he should do so "thoroughly" and thus remove the necessity for a further cleansing at the farm.

It is hoped that under the new arrangement this important factor, amongst the causes of milk souring, will receive the attention it deserves.

Inspection and Supervision of Other Foods.

The following quantities of foods were voluntarily surrendered on being found to be unfit for human consumption.

Cheddar Cheese	12 lbs.
Processed Cheese	14 lbs.
Bacon	17 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.
Potted Meat (4 oz. tins) ...	7 tins.
Minced Beef Loaf ($\frac{3}{4}$ lb. tins)	2 tins.
Veal & Ham (12 oz. tins)	1 tin.
Meat Soup	1 tin.
Tomato Ketchup ($\frac{1}{4}$ lb. tins)	10 tins.
Peas (11 oz. tins) ...	2 tins.
Beetroot (2lb. tins) ...	16 tins.
Evaporated Milk	5 tins.
Red Plum Jam (1lb. jars)	12 jars.
Salad Cream	56 lbs.
Sausage Rusk	10 cwts.
Flour	140 lbs.
Cooking Fat Compound ...	12 lbs.
Fish Cakes	1800.

This food was diverted for animal feeding when considered suitable for the purpose. The remainder was disposed of at the Council's Refuse Tips.

Private Slaughter of Pigs Under Food Office Licences.

Thirty-seven pigs were inspected. Generalised T.B. was found in one carcase and the whole including the offal was condemned as being unfit for human consumption. Three heads and parts of organs were found to be affected with T.B. and these were voluntarily surrendered. Almost all the private slaughtering is carried out at four private slaughterhouses within the Rural District.

Cafes, Snack Bars, Fried Fish Shops, etc.

Practically all premises on which food is prepared and consumed were inspected twice during the year and in some cases, particularly where the staff appeared to have very little regard or appreciation for the elementary principles of hygiene several visits were paid. Regular inspections and timely advice appeared to have the necessary effect and generally the standard of cleanliness showed a marked improvement.

When cafe and restaurant management and staffs regard cleanliness and sterile conditions in the kitchen and in food preparation rooms with the same measure of importance and urgency as, for instance, the taking of cash for sales, then we shall begin to observe a decline in food poisoning. With the increase in communal feeding in schools, factories and the general tendency to "take meals out" the need for the highest appreciation of the elementary principles of hygiene is imperative.

Inspection of Other Special Premises. Private Slaughterhouses.

During the year nineteen private slaughterhouses in the district were inspected. Seven of these are in use for occasional slaughter of animals under Ministry of Food Licences. Many of these premises are now being used as workplaces, garages, etc., and it would appear that the owners thereof have no intention of using them as slaughterhouses again.

Factories Act, 1937.

During the year 191 inspections were carried out in Factories including Bakehouses. In eleven instances premises were found to be below the standard of cleanliness and in seven instances unsuitable or defective sanitary conveniences were found. Bakehouses received special attention and approximately half of the inspections were carried out in these premises.

In several factories it will be necessary to make further investigations into the "means of escape in case of fire," and this will be done in conjunction with the Fire Prevention Officer for the area.

Ice Cream.

Fifteen samples were taken during the year and the results obtained were as follows:—

Provisional Grade I	(Good)	...	...	...	4
"	"	II	(Fairly Good)	...	3
"	"	III	(Fair)	...	5
"	"	IV	(Poor)	...	3

On following these results up it became evident that some of the Grade III results were obtained on ice cream that had been over-stored although in some cases it was doubtless due to failure on the part of the wholesaler or retailer to maintain a satisfactory standard of cleanliness. On investigation of the Grade IV results it was found on making enquiries with the Authority within whose district the ice cream was manufactured that they had obtained similar results but towards the end of the year a distinct improvement was noticed in the standard of ice cream coming from this source. The amount of pre-packed ice cream sold in the district appeared to be on the increase whereas a corresponding decrease in the unpacked commodity was noticed. This situation is much to be desired and doubtless as wrapping material becomes more readily available the position will continue to improve. During the year quite a number of small retail stores within the district were licenced for the sale of ice cream and it was noticeable that in practically every case only pre-packed ice cream will be sold. There are now thirty-eight premises in the district registered for the sale of ice cream and as the commodity is invariably pre-packed this is a much more satisfactory state of affairs than would obtain if we had a number of street barrows travelling the district selling ice cream. However, the Council will not rest assured with regard to the sale of ice cream until pre-packing is compulsory.

Rodent Control.

During the year a marked improvement was achieved in the co-operation with the County Agriculture Committee's Pest Destruction Service and doubtless this has been of much benefit to all concerned in Rodent Control. There is little doubt that the control that has been exercised during the past six or seven years is now proving its worth. Whereas in the early days of Rodent Control quite a number of "major" infestations were found and occasionally a "reservoir" infestation, now it is a rare occasion to find serious infestations and even "minor" infestations are soon cleared up. The persistent warfare against these destructive pests must however, be carried on with the same intensity and by the method of "Block Control" of business premises and dwelling houses as adopted in this district, a satisfactory position will be maintained.

The Council's sewers, sewage disposal works and refuse tips were treated at the requisite intervals during the year and the situation at these places is satisfactory.

Complaints of infestation are rare but systematic inspection of business premises, poultry keepers premises and pig-sties, etc., are carried out and where an infestation is found the dwelling houses in the vicinity are inspected for the presence of rats and mice.

112 treatments by the methods laid down by the Ministry of Food (Infestation Division) were carried out where "minor" infestations were found. The number of investigations and inspections involved in clearing these "minor" infestations by the "Block of Properties" principle, numbered approximately 650. No "major" or "reservoir" infestations were found. Seventy-four of the above treatments were chargeable by reason of the infestation being on business premises or at dwelling houses where negligence was established.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

L. G. HILL,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.

