

[Report 1950] / Medical Officer of Health, Luton R.D.C.

Contributors

Luton (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1950

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Luton Rural District Council.

ANNUAL
REPORTS

of
Medical Officer of Health
and

Sanitary Inspector

for the
YEAR 1950.





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ANNUAL
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Medical Officer of Health

and

Sanitary Inspector

for the

YEAR 1950.

To the Luton Rural District Council.

Medical Officer's Annual Report, 1950.

The Chairman & Councillors of the
Rural District of Luton.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting my Annual Report on the health of the Luton Rural District for the year 1950.

The population steadily increases from year to year and is now nearly 20,000. The birth rate fell during 1950 to the figure of 16.5 and this may be compared with the high figure of 20.1 in 1944. Infant mortality was rather high; seventeen deaths of infants under one year being notified.

Of infectious diseases, there were 104 cases of measles and 74 cases of whooping cough. No cases of diphtheria were notified.

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	...	...	...	19,290
Number of inhabited houses (approximate)	...	...	...	6,115
Rateable value as at 1st April	...	...	...	£82,630
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	£337 11 0½
Number of new houses erected:				
(a) Council	...	...	...	60
(b) Private enterprise	...	...	...	27

Extracts from vital statistics for the year.

The following table gives extracts from the Vital Statistics of the year 1950 as furnished by the Registrar-General:—

Live Births :

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

Total	M	F
324	155	169
305	147	158
19	8	11
Crude Rate	16.8	
Adjusted Rate	16.5	

Still Births :

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

Total	M	F
10	6	4
—	—	—
	29.9	

Deaths :

Death Rate per 1,000 of population	...	...	...
------------------------------------	-----	-----	-----

Total	M	F
212	112	100
Crude Rate	10.9	
Adjusted Rate	10.7	

There were no maternal deaths in 1950.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age:—

Total	...	17	Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	52
Legitimate	...	17	Rate per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	52
Illegitimate	...	—	Rate per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	—
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	—
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under two years of age)	...	...	...	...	...	3
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	...	...	...	26

NOTE :—Adjusted birth and death rates are obtained by multiplying the 'crude' rate by the area comparability factor supplied from the General Register Office. This factor for both births and deaths in the Luton Rural District is 0.98.

2. Population.

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

1944	...	...	...	17,590
1945	...	...	...	17,250
1946	...	...	...	17,630
1947	...	...	...	18,110
1948	...	...	...	18,600
1949	...	...	...	18,970
1950	...	...	...	19,290

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

1944	...	...	...	8.5
1945	...	...	...	6.8
1946	...	...	...	9.1
1947	...	...	...	8.9
1948	...	...	...	6.9
1949	...	...	...	8.1
1950	...	...	...	5.9

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
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
1950	19,290	324	16.8	15.8	212	10.9	11.6

BIRTH RATES, DEATH RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL DEATH RATES AND CASE RATES FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1950.

(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	...	...	...	...	...	...	16.5	15.8	17.6	16.7	17.8	
Still	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.52	0.37	0.45	0.38	0.36	
Deaths :												
All causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.7	11.6	12.3	11.6	11.8	
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.26	0.36	0.42	0.33	0.39	
Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.11	0.10	0.09	0.10	0.07	
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	
Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.01	
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.36	0.46	0.49	0.45	0.48	
								Rates per 1,000 live births				
Deaths under 1 year of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	52.0	29.8†	33.8	29.4	26.3	
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis under 2 years of age	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.3	1.9	2.2	1.6	1.0	
Notifications :								Rates per 1,000 Civilian Population				
Typhoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	
Paratyphoid Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
Meningococcal Infection	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.62	1.50	1.56	1.61	1.23	
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	3.84	3.60	3.97	3.15	3.21	
Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.10	0.17	0.19	0.16	0.17	
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—	—	—	—	
Measles	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.39	8.39	8.76	8.36	6.57	
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.47	0.70	0.77	0.61	0.50	
Acute Poliomyelitis, Paralytic	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.20	0.13	0.12	0.11	0.08	
Acute Poliomyelitis, Non-Paralytic	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.05	
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.93	0.17	0.16	0.14	0.25	
(a) Notifications :								Rates per 1,000 Total Births (Live and Still)				
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.99	5.81	7.43	4.33	6.03	
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	...	...	...	...						
(b) Maternal Mortality :												
Abortion with sepsis (651)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.09	Not available			
Other abortion (650, 652)	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.05				
Complication of pregnancy and delivery	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.54				
Sepsis of childbirth and the puerperium	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.03				
Other complications of the puerperium	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.15				
TOTAL	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	0.86				

* 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-	
Prematurity	5	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	5
Congenital heart disease	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Birth malformation	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	2
Birth injury	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	3
Gastro enteritis	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	3
Fibrocystic disease of lungs	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Broncho pneumonia	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Totals	10	—	2	—	12	2	2	1	—	17

DEATHS OF RESIDENTS IN THE RURAL DISTRICT OF LUTON DURING THE YEAR 1950.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>					<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	...	...	...	...	3	2
2. Tuberculosis, other	...	...	...	...	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease	...	...	...	...	—	—
4. Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	—	—
5. Whooping cough	...	...	...	...	—	—
6. Meningococcal infections	...	...	...	...	—	—
7. Acute poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	—	—
8. Measles	...	...	...	...	—	—
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases	...	...	...	...	—	1
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...	...	...	...	1	1
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung bronchus	...	...	...	...	3	—
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	...	...	...	...	—	2
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...	...	...	...	—	3
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	...	...	...	...	11	5
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	...	...	1	—
16. Diabetes	...	...	...	...	—	1
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system	...	...	...	...	11	17
18. Coronary disease, angina	...	...	...	...	8	4
19. Hypertension with heart disease	...	...	...	...	—	1
20. Other heart disease	...	...	...	...	24	18
21. Other circulatory disease	...	...	...	...	6	2
22. Influenza	...	...	...	...	1	1
23. Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	4	3
24. Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	12	4
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	1	—
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	1	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...	...	...	...	1	2
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	...	...	...	...	1	1
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	...	...	1	—
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...	...	...	...	—	—
31. Congenital malformations	...	...	...	...	4	2
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	...	...	...	...	16	23
33. Motor vehicle accidents	...	...	...	...	1	2
34. All other accidents	...	...	...	...	—	2
35. Suicide	...	...	...	...	1	1
36. Homicide and operations of war	...	...	...	...	—	—
TOTALS					112	100

COMPARATIVE STATISTICS FOR 1941-1950

Year	LIVE BIRTHS				STILL BIRTHS		DEATHS		INFANT DEATHS				MATERNAL DEATHS			
	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	—
1950	19,290	324	16.5	10	29.9	212	10.7	12	5	17	52	—	—	—	—	—

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	—	1	2	7	2	—	12
Whooping Cough	3	17	20	30	1	3	74
Ac. poliomyelitis (Paralytic)	—	—	1	3	—	—	4
Ac. poliomyelitis (Non-paralytic)	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Measles (excluding rebecca)	4	14	19	57	9	1	104
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. pneumonia	—	1	1	—	2	5	9
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. encephalitis (Infective)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ac. encephalitis (Post-infective)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enteric or typhoid fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Paratyphoid fevers	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Meningococcal infection	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Food poisoning	—	1	—	—	—	17	18
Puerperal pyrexia	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Ophthalmia neonatorum	1	—	—	—	—	—	1
TOTALS	8	34	43	98	14	29	226

The table above shows the incidence of infectious diseases during the year under review. Measles was very prevalent in the district as it was in the previous year 1949 (194 cases).

Twelve cases of scarlet fever were notified and were all of a mild type. There were five cases of poliomyelitis notified, compared with five cases in 1949 and one case in 1948. No cases of diphtheria were notified.

Eighteen cases of food poisoning were notified and, of these, seventeen occurred in a sudden epidemic at a factory canteen in June 1950. The causal organism was not definitely identified.

TUBERCULOSIS. NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1950.

<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	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—
10 "	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 "	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 "	2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 "	—	4	—	—	—	1	—	—
35 "	3	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
45 "	3	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
55 "	3	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and upwards ...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS ...	13	11	1	2	3	2	—	—

Sanitary Inspector's Annual Report, 1950.

1. (i) WATER SUPPLY.

55 samples were taken from the various main supplies within the district. Of these five proved to be unsatisfactory, presumptive coli having been found on Bacteriological examination. It was suspected that the contamination was from the tap having regard to the fact that the samples had been obtained from public standpipes and this appeared to have been confirmed when satisfactory results were obtained after "flaming" the tap. The fact that unsatisfactory results are from time to time obtained when the water is drawn from a public standpipe stresses the importance of providing every house with a separate main water supply and abolishing the public standpipe. It may be held that before taking a water sample that the tap should always be sterilized but I am of opinion that the most satisfactory results are obtained when the first sample is taken from the tap as the consumer takes it and a second sample taken following the sterilization of the tap.

Private Water Supplies.

15 unsatisfactory results were obtained from samples of water taken from private supplies and in each case these were followed up until a satisfactory position was obtained.

At Doolittle Mill Farm, Totternhoe, where the water supply is obtained from a brook and where a high percentage of faecal coli was found amongst the contaminating organisms an approved type of water filter has been installed and a satisfactory result subsequently obtained.

Water Main Extensions.

These have been carried out at Kensworth, Lynch, Church End, Kensworth, Dovehouse Lane, Kensworth, and Bidwell Hill, Houghton Regis. Generally no great difficulty has been experienced as a result of requesting the property owners to provide a main water supply to the dwelling houses and in no instance was it found necessary to take Statutory Action to enforce this provision.

1. (ii) DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The sanitary circumstances throughout the district with regard to these matters remain unaltered except for the fact that in connection with some of the Council's Housing Schemes small sewage disposal works have been constructed to receive the drainage from the new houses.

The sewage disposal works at Barton, Sundon, Eaton Bray and Stanbridge are quite inadequate to deal with the ever increasing amount of drainage being discharged into the sewers. These works were originally designed to receive sink waste only and are quite incapable of treating effectually the additional drainage from the provision of water closets and the installation of baths. The position at Barton is serious as the existing works hardly function as settlement tanks and the amount of treatment to the sewage is negligible, thus we have almost crude sewage as an effluent discharging into a ditch which runs quite near the highway. The ditches throughout the district have been cleansed from time to time but however frequently this is done they are nothing better than open sewers and as such are a Nuisance and contribute to the pollution of rivers and water courses.

Cesspool Emptying.

During the year 4,168 cesspools were emptied comprising 8,323 loads indicating an average of two loads per cesspool. The number of cesspools emptied during the year show an increase of 418 on the previous year and in order to do so, overtime has had to be worked on Saturday mornings.

The number of cesspools in the district continue to increase with new Council Housing Schemes, new private houses and improvements to dwelling houses under the Public Health and Housing Acts. The parishes of Caddington and Streatley make considerable demands upon this service and more than half the cesspool emptying in the district is carried out in these areas. With the continued increase in wages, petrol, vehicles, etc., and maintenance costs it would be a matter of sound economics in addition to good Public Health Service and Administration to provide sewers in these areas as soon as possible.

There are four cesspool emptying machines in regular service and one held in reserve.

Disposal of Cesspool Emptier Contents.

This has become an acute problem in certain parishes by reason of the fact that there are no suitable pits or quarries available and farmers who have turned over to the production of T.T. milk naturally will not have this drainage disposed of on their arable land if such is anywhere near pasture. It is comparatively an easy matter to empty a cesspool but few householders on cesspool drainage appreciate the problem of disposing of cesspool emptier contents and there is no doubt that the major cost of this service can be set against disposal. Some years ago there was no difficulty in finding a farmer who would take many loads on his land but nowadays very few farmers will provide disposal sites. Householders are averse to having cesspool emptiers dispose of their waste within about half a mile or so of their dwellings despite the fact that a good disposal point may be available, but they are quick to complain if their application for cesspool emptying does not receive early attention. Sites near public footpaths have also to be avoided. The possibility of composting has been considered but the scale on which this can be carried out is such that very little relief is obtained. Fortunately on the East of the district the Luton Borough sewer is available for this purpose but in the parishes of Kensworth, Whipsnade and Studham the position became acute and the cost of disposal as against actual emptying lost all reasonable proportion.

1. (iii) PONDS, DITCHES AND WATERCOURSES.

The position with regard to these is very much as reported in 1949 and ditches receiving drainage of any kind are included in the report on drainage and sewerage. The other ditches within the district are controlled by the highway authority or the River Conservancy Boards.

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 ACOMMODATION.

The conversion of privy middens and pail closets into W.C.'s is progressing at a steady pace in the parish of Toddington. Some progress is also being made in other parishes particularly where there is a sewer but to some extent the number of conversions possible is conditioned by the ability of the sewage disposal works to deal with this type of drainage. In those parishes where the installation of sewers are contemplated within the next five years, closet conversion is almost at a standstill, it being considered prudent not to require these conversions and install cesspools which would have to be abandoned when the sewer is available for connection thereto.

3. (ii) PUBLIC CLEANSING.

House Refuse Collection.

During the year the twice monthly collection of all household refuse in the district was maintained. The method by which refuse is collected from the rear of dwelling houses by transferring the household refuse to skeps carried by the men is still being operated. This method is not entirely satisfactory to sanitarians but, having regard to labour difficulties it appears to be the only means possible at the moment of ensuring a reasonably frequent collection and provided the men exercise due care in transferring household refuse from the bin to the Council's skep very little Nuisance or annoyance should arise. The alternative to this method is of course for the householder to know exactly the date and time of collection and place the bin at the entrance to the property. This method however, leaves much to be desired as it is extremely difficult to maintain regular dates and times and in villages where the dwelling houses are adjacent to the pavements it means that the bins are standing either on the pavements or at the curb-side and the subsequent Nuisance or annoyance is often far greater than when the alternative method of skep collection is being carried out.

During the year the third 11 cub.yd. side-loading vehicle was brought into operation replacing the 7 cub.yarder. Each of these vehicles are now fitted with a partition by which the bay nearest the driving cab can be used for the collection of salvage. During the year a further 200 hereditaments were added to the number of properties having refuse collection but the frequency of collection was hardly interfered with.

Refuse Disposal.

The position here remain unchanged from that reported during 1949, except for the fact that the Council's tips at Lords Hill, Houghton Regis and Gatehouse Farm, Caddington are unlikely to take refuse for more than another year. A suitable site for the Toddington and Houghton Regis area was found in the parish of Toddington and following a public enquiry conducted by the Ministry of Health the site has been approved of and obtained and will be used for refuse disposal early in the year 1951. The alternative to the Caddington site will mean a larger quantity of refuse going to the Luton Borough tip from the villages of Caddington and Slip End and it is hoped to find a site in the South of the district for the parishes of Kensworth, Studham and Whipsnade.

Salvage.

The demands for waste materials lessened gradually during the year and it became difficult to dispose of any waste with the exception of scrap iron. However, towards the end of the year the demand for old rags returned and also some indication that waste paper was scarce and that there would very soon be a ready market offering a good price for the disposal of this type of salvage.

The following is a summary of income received from the sale of waste material during the year:—

Waste Paper	...	...	£157	5	1
Textiles	...	...	12	5	7
Scrap Metals	...	...	12	18	9
			£182	9	5

a decrease of £121 17s. 5d. on the year 1949.

Trade Refuse.

During the year a few additional applications for this collection were received and these are being carried out at the usual charges of 10/6d. per bin per annum for a twice monthly collection.

3. (iii) SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following is a numerical summary of inspections, re-inspections, investigations, visits, interviews, etc., carried out during the year.

GENERAL SANITATION.

Sewerage and Drainage	...	...	...	244
Ditches	...	...	...	16
Refuse/Accumulations, Deposits, etc	...	...	...	33
Water Supply	...	...	...	65
Water Samples	...	...	...	70
Miscellaneous and re-inspections	...	...	...	9

NUISANCES.

Premises (defects)	...	...	...	178
Filthy or Verminous Premises	...	...	...	18
Disinfestation (Bugs, Fleas)	...	...	...	17
„ (Other Insects)	...	...	...	65
Animals	...	...	...	27
Smoke and Dust	...	...	...	38
Rodents	...	...	...	116
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits and re-inspections	...	...	...	219
Sewer Survey (Rats)	...	...	...	246

SPECIAL PREMISES.

Factories and Outworkers	...	...	...	22
Knackers Yards	...	...	...	2
Schools	...	...	...	37
Hotels and Public Houses	...	...	...	16
Petroleum	...	...	...	48
Moveable Dwellings	...	...	...	228

FOOD.

General Stores	...	...	...	...	17
Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	1
Fish Shops and Vehicles	...	...	...	...	4
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	55
Cafes, Restaurants, etc.	...	...	...	...	51
Meat and Food Inspection	...	...	...	...	51
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	12
Clean Food Campaign	...	...	...	...	57

MILK AND ICE CREAM.

Dairies	...	...	...	...	19
Milk Retail Vehicles	...	...	...	...	2
Milk Samples	...	...	...	...	57
Bottle Rinsings	...	...	...	...	2
Ice Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	56
Ice Cream Samples	...	...	...	...	44
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	1

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Investigations	...	...	...	...	39
Disinfections	...	...	...	...	45
Food Poisoning	...	...	...	...	15
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	2

CLEANSING SERVICES

HOUSING.

Houses Inspected	...	...	...	...	109
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	39
Re-inspections	...	...	...	...	343
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	16

MISCELLANEOUS.

National Assistance Acts	...	...	...	...	5
Civil Defence	...	...	...	...	1

Abatement of Nuisances.

56 Nuisances were abated during the year. Only in four instances was it necessary to resort to Statutory Action and in one case the owner was summoned before the Luton Court. He was given two months in which to comply with the Statutory Notices which concerned two dwelling houses and subsequently the order of the Court was complied with. The increasing costs of labour and materials impedes to a marked degree the prompt abatement of Nuisances and it is not an unfamiliar experience to find a willing owner unable to find the willing builder.

Contravention of Bye-laws for the Good Government of the District.

An action was taken under these bye-laws against a person identified as being responsible for the depositing of rubbish in a country lane. It appears that a number of persons have come into the salvage business since the prices for these waste commodities have been made attractive. The practice amongst some of these dealers is to sell their profitable waste and dispose of the residue which may often amount to a considerable bulk in the nearest country lane. These people have no regard for civic duties or natural beauty, and they should be dealt with severely. In this case the offender was fined £1/-/-d. and ordered to move the refuse.

3. (v) CAMPING SITES.

The number of caravans stationed in the district practically doubled throughout the year and each of these holds a licence under Section 269 of the Public Health Act 1936. All of them are inspected at least once a year and where there is any question of the standard of camping being below that which is required these are subject to more frequent inspections.

There is one caravan site licenced within the district and frequent inspections are carried out here and conditions generally are maintained at a satisfactory level. There is no doubt that this form of habitation will be with us for some time to come and nothing for the maintenance of satisfactory conditions can replace a regular inspection.

During the year overcrowding conditions and cases of improper water supply have arisen and these are dealt with immediately and the outcome although not arrived at quickly does eventually prove to be satisfactory.

3. (vi) SMOKE ABATEMENT.

There has not been any difficulties experienced during the year except that occasionally trouble has arisen at a building formerly known as The Government Training Centre at Sundon Park. Where this Nuisance has arisen immediate steps to effect abatement have been taken. The occasional recurrence of this Nuisance can be traced to unskilled labour or poor quality fuel and there is little doubt that the management here is doing everything possible to prevent the recurrence of this annoyance to residents in the locality.

Dust Emission.

Close liaison has been maintained with the Inspector of Alkali, etc., Works with regard to the cement factories in the district. The position is certainly better than it was a few years ago but there always appears to be room for improvement here. It may be an accepted fact that cement cannot be made without making dust but both management and workers must not allow this maxim to create a state of mind whereby the presence of dust in the atmosphere is taken for granted. Generally speaking the co-operation in the district at these works is satisfactory and it is hoped eventually to have more detailed information with respect to dust emission by the installation of suitable gauges near the factories.

3. (vii) SWIMMING BATHS AND POOLS.

There are no Swimming Baths in the district.

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

No. of Council houses found to be infested	...	Nil.
" " disinested	...	Nil.
No. of other houses found to be infested	...	4
" " disinested	...	4

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.

The ravages of *Anobium punctatum* are being met with in various parts of the Rural District and in 65 dwelling houses treatment has been carried out. Tenants of Council houses in particular, are co-operating quite willingly in giving effect to the necessary steps to eradicate this pest from their furniture and other woodwork.

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)	...	287
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose		287
(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	...	44
(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	...	231
(5) Number of dwelling-houses found to be satisfactory	...	12
(6) Number of houses placed in Category 5 (Rural Housing Survey) which were rendered fit for habitation	...	35

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	...	113
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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	15
(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	4
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	4
(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	138
(2a) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of informal notices	113
(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 ...	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	Nil
(3) Number of unfit dwelling-houses demolished	1
(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.

During the year the Council rehoused 80 families some of whom had earned additional points by reason of living under overcrowded conditions. There appears to be very little legal overcrowding remaining in the district. 30 investigations into suspected overcrowding were carried out and 11 of these were confirmed as being legally overcrowded. In the remaining cases which were usually two families per house room overcrowding was obvious and difficulty found in separating sexes. The Sundon Park Ward appears to be the only seriously overcrowded area and with the approval of schemes for building new houses to abate this overcrowding within a short time the position here will be greatly eased.

SECTION E—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The coming into operation of the "Model" Food Byelaws during the year marked another step forward in the efforts of Local Authorities to ensure "safe food" to the public.

The year was also marked by a Clean Food Campaign which included a sharing of interest with the neighbouring Authorities of Luton, Dunstable and Leighton Buzzard in the Clean Food Exhibition they promoted.

Clean Food Film shows and talks were also given at all schools in the Rural District these being promoted in conjunction with the County Health Education Department. Evening film shows followed by questions and discussions were given at two Women's Institutes in the District.

248 inspections, visits, etc., of food premises were carried out during the year. All retail food premises and school canteens were visited and copies of the new Byelaws were handed to the persons in control. Such advice as may be necessary was given in each case and the amount of co-operation leaves little to be desired.

It appeared that the major difficulty which had to be met by food retailers was that of insufficient wrapping material. As the year went on the position appeared to worsen and the time appears to have arrived when the former hygienic practice of taking the meat dish to the butchers and the basin to the fishmongers, particularly for fried fish, should be encouraged.

Food Poisoning.

An outbreak occurred amongst the staff of one of the largest factories in the district and the only food common to all the cases was "tinned peas" which had been consumed at lunch on the day the sickness arose.

The tins from which the peas were taken were examined at the Public Health Laboratory as were the faeces of the staff and many of the cases. Although the results of all the investigations provided nothing positive no further cases were reported after destroying the remaining tins of peas.

Damage to Food Supplies.

It appears from the amount of tinned foods that have to be examined in order to determine whether or not these are fit for human consumption that damage during transit is on the increase. It should be impressed upon all persons engaged in the transport of food that damage to one tin in a case may spoil the appearance of the remainder and leave them in an unmarketable condition. In several instances one or two tins of milk have been damaged and the contents had so rusted the remainder that it would be quite impossible to retail them. Whatever assurances may be given to customers, unless the tin appears to be wearing a clean label and appears bright they will invariably reject it.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

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

Strained Prunes (4½ oz. tin)	...	...	1 tin.
Red Cherries in Syrup (14 oz. tins)	...	...	7 tins.
Oranges	...	...	4 tins.
Greengages (1 lb. 7 oz. jars)	...	...	1 jar.
Peaches	...	...	1 tin.
Plums (2 lb. tin)	...	...	1 tin.
Damsons	...	...	1 tin.
Mango Jam	...	...	3 tins.
Plum Jam	...	...	1 tin.
Scone Flour Mixture (8 oz. packets)	...	...	4 packets.
Bun and Cake Flour (7 oz. packets)	...	...	38 packets.
Ginger Cake Pudding Mixture (8 oz. packets)	...	...	28 packets.
Meat	...	...	89 lbs.
Minced Meat	...	...	30 lbs.
Pork (3 lb. 4 oz. tins)	...	...	12 tins.
Corned Beef (6 lb. tin)	...	...	1 tin.
Pork Luncheon Meat (12 oz. tins)	...	...	3 tins.
Veal Brawn	...	...	12 lbs.
Bacon	...	...	15 lbs.
Sandwich Spread (3½ oz. tins)	...	...	62 tins.
Pork Pies	...	...	24 pies.
Carrots (15 oz. tins)	...	...	1 tin.
Processed Peas (15 oz. tins)	...	...	3 tins.
Beans (16 oz. tins)	...	...	1 tin.
Tomatoes	...	...	9 tins.
Pickle	...	...	5 bottles.
Coffee Essence	...	...	2 bottles.
American Cheddar Cheese	...	...	11 lbs.
Evaporated Milk	...	...	3 tins.
Cod Fillets	...	...	40 lbs.
Plaice Fillets	...	...	14 lbs.
Pilchards (7¾ oz. tins)	...	...	10 tins.
Whiting (10 oz. tins)	...	...	4 tins.

Milk—Report on Milk Sampling.

Ungraded.	Satisfactory	...	35
	Unsatisfactory	...	9
Accredited.	Satisfactory	...	4
	Unsatisfactory	...	Nil
Pasteurised.	Satisfactory	...	8
	Unsatisfactory	...	1
Tuberculin Tested.	...	...	Nil
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	...	...	Nil

Where the result has been below the required standard further inspections have been made and samples have been taken until satisfactory results are forthcoming.

The Milk (Special Designations) Act 1949. Licences.

Accredited Milk Dealers	...	...	...	1
Pasteurised Milk Dealers	...	...	...	8
Tuberculin Tested Milk Dealers	...	...	...	4
Pasteurised Milk Dealers Supplementary	...	...	...	2
Tuberculin Tested Milk Dealers Supplementary	...	...	...	1
Retail Purveyors	...	...	...	20
Producer-Retailers	...	...	...	51

80 inspections, visits, etc., have been made in connection with retailers premises, vehicles, etc., and on the whole conditions have been satisfactory.

Churn and Bottle Rinsings.

When the transfer of functions occurred the Public Health Laboratory Service discontinued the examination of churn rinsings. It was understood, however, that this practice would be resumed when the new arrangements under the control of the Ministry of Agriculture were in operation. It appears very necessary that churn rinsings should be Bacteriologically examined particularly for the purpose of determining whether the milk produced at the farm or the state of the churn is responsible for any lowering in the standard of purity. It is not good enough to leave it at the stage where the farmer must make certain that he puts his milk into a clean churn. The buyer is required to see that churns are thoroughly cleansed before leaving his premises and once a churn has been treated thus it should not be necessary to have to do so a second time. This involves the trade in a double use of labour and materials and the producers can hardly afford either. It is hoped to be able to resort to churn rinsings and bottle rinsings during the next year.

Cafes, Snack Bars, Fried Fish Shops, etc.

Regular inspections have been maintained in these premises and with the increasing number of persons resorting to communal feeding both in schools and factories such inspections almost take priority in the Public Health Service. If food poisoning is to be kept at a minimum, vigilance in this respect is essential.

Factories Act 1937.

During the year 22 inspections were carried out in factories including bakehouses. The latter received special attention and at least one inspection during the year has been carried out at all bakehouses and where there has been contravention of the Act the baker's attention has been drawn to such and further inspections carried out where considered advisable.

Ice Cream.

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

Provisional	Grade	I	(Good)	...	...	16
"	"	II	(Fairly Good)	...	...	20
"	"	III	(Fair)	...	...	4
"	"	IV	(Poor)	...	...	4

It can be seen herefrom that the proportion of fair and poor results has declined considerably and this is due largely to the fact that practically all the ice cream now sold within the Rural District is pre-packed. Where the results have not been satisfactory check samples have been taken immediately and where the first result has been confirmed the matter has been taken up with the Senior Sanitary Officer for the district in which the ice cream was manufactured.

During the year 20 premises have been registered for the storage and sale of ice cream and wherever possible it is being emphasised that only pre-packed ice cream shall be sold where the premises are also used as a General Stores. In country villages it is inevitable that such premises are always used as the village stores and every possible article may be sold. It becomes quite essential therefore that the sale of pre-packed ice cream should be insisted upon. The large increase in the number of premises registered has been associated with a corresponding decline in the number of street carts and barrows from which ice cream has been sold and the advantage gained from the sale of this commodity from premises is indicated by the high proportion of satisfactory results.

Rodent Control.

With the coming into operation of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 and the Prevention of Damage by Pests (Threshing and Dismantling of Ricks) Regulations 1950, the responsibility of the enforcement passed entirely to Local Authorities. Due to the previous good relations with the County Agricultural Committee's Pest Destruction Service the transfer of this responsibility, as regards Agricultural land, was rendered easier. One Abatement Notice was served on an occupier of agricultural land, subsequently the infestation was satisfactorily neutralised by the local representative of the Agricultural Committee's Pest Destruction Service. As a direct result of the warfare waged during the past 10 years, no major infestation was found in private or business premises, but this satisfactory position will only continue, whilst a state of constant vigilance is maintained by all concerned.

The Council's sewers, sewage disposal works and refuse tips were treated at the requisite intervals during the year thus maintaining the previous satisfactory situation.

The continued decline in the number of complaints of infestation was due, I feel, to the systematic inspection of business premises, poultry keepers premises and pig-sties, etc., and the inspection of all dwelling houses in the vicinity where an infestation was found at any of the former premises.

During the year 167 properties were inspected for the purposes of confirming whether or not a minor infestation existed. This involved the rodent operative in 393 visits for the purpose of carrying out treatment at private dwellings. The number of treatments carried out at premises where negligence was confirmed or at business premises totalled 45.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

L. G. HILL,

Senior Sanitary Inspector.