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RURAL DISTRICT OF MERIDEN

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR

1972/





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ANNUAL REPORT

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1972/3



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*To the Chairman and Members of the
Meriden Rural District Council*

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the state of the health of the Meriden Rural District for the year 1972. Owing to the increased work involved in the reorganisation of the Local Government and Health Services there appears to be little prospect of being able to prepare a report for the year 1973. This report then will necessarily be the last one which I shall write as your Medical Officer of Health.

An examination of the Vital Statistics reveals that the population of the District has shown only a moderate increase since 1971.

It is interesting to note, however, that there has been a marked fall in the birth rate from 25.0 to 21.6 per 1,000 population in comparison with the previous year, although it remains at a higher level than the rate in England and Wales.

The death rate, on the other hand, continues to rise but is still below the levels of the early 60's.

It is always pleasing to record a fall in the number of cases of infectious diseases notified during the year. In 1972 the total number was less than half of those notified in the previous year. Measles again gave rise to the greatest proportion of cases, but even here, there has been a welcome reduction. Disappointment must be expressed that fewer children have received vaccination against measles than in the previous year.

On the 1st April 1974, the Meriden Rural District will cease to exist and its constituent parishes will be distributed amongst three newly created Local Authorities. The statutory offices of Medical Officer of Health and Chief Public Health Inspector will lapse. District Councils will still have responsibility for environmental health and the control of communicable diseases, but medical advice will in future be given by a Community Physician employed by the Area Health Authority. In some cases this will be the District Community Physician and in others a specialist in Community Medicine on the Area staff.

During my term of office as your Medical Officer of Health it has been my privilege to work with chief officer colleagues for whom I have the highest regard. I have enjoyed at all times the fullest co-operation from them and their staffs. To all of them I am greatly indebted.

It is also a pleasure to acknowledge the courtesy, help and kindness which I have continued to receive from the Chairmen of the Council, Chairmen of Committees and Members of the Authority.

J. E. PEARSON,
Medical Officer of Health.

Park Road,
COLESHILL.

MERIDEN RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

1972/73

Chairman of the Council :

E. G. FISH

Vice-Chairman of the Council :

Mrs. D. V. WALLACE

Clerk of the Council :

RAYMOND E. HALE, O.B.E., F.C.I.S.

Public Health and Housing Committee: 1972-73

Aylesford, Earl of	Edwards, N. A.	Samuels, K. J.
Bird, E.	Elliman, P. T.	Watts, Mrs. D. J.
Bradley Miller, K.	Marklew, R. A.	Watts, E. W.
Burman, G. C.	Martin, Mrs. L. E.	Welborn, Mrs. B.
Clough, D.	Rogers, H. G.	

**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT STAFF
AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1972**

Medical Officer of Health :

**J. E. PEARSON, M.B., B.S., B.Pharm., F.P.S.
M.F.C.M., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H., D.B.A.**

(Also Area Medical Officer, North Western Area, Warwickshire
County Council).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health:

Vacant

Chief Public Health Inspector :

R. HAINES, M.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I.

Deputy Chief Public Health Inspector :

G. B. STOKES, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Additional Public Health Inspectors :

W. W. G. CUTTS, M.A.P.H.I.

B. H. HALES, M.A.P.H.I., D.M.A.

E. FOSTER, M.A.P.H.I., D.M.A.

S. C. GOULD, M.A.P.H.I.

D. W. WRIGHTING, M.A.P.H.I.

S. JOHNSTONE, B.Sc. (Env. Hlth), M.A.P.H.I., (resigned 31.1.72)

Principal Administrative Officer:

A. M. HAWKSLEY, D.M.A.

Council Offices :

Council House,
Coleshill.

Telephone : Coleshill 63141.

Office of the Medical Officer of Health:

Area Health Office,
19 Parkfield Road,
Coleshill.

Telephone : Coleshill 63896.

SECTION A.

STATISTICS

Area

The area of the district during 1972 was 66,531 acres.

Population

Census 1961	57,250
Estimated Mid 1969	89,840
Estimated Mid 1970	105,000
Census 1971	102,331
Estimated Mid 1972	107,670

The estimated mid year population is provided by the Registrar General.

General Statistics

No. of inhabited dwellings (Dec. 1972)	..	approx.	32,240
Rateable Value (1st April, 1972)	£4,046,547
Product of 1p Rate (1972/73) estimated.	£42,000

VITAL STATISTICS

Live Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	1,114	1,067	2,181
Illegitimate	75	70	145
	—	—	—
Totals	1,189	1,137	2,326
	—	—	—

Live birth rate: 21.6 per 1,000 population (crude rate). The rate for 1971 was 25.0 per 1,000.

After using the area comparability factor of 0.81, the local adjusted birth rate becomes 17.3 per 1,000 population. This is higher than the comparable figure for England and Wales which is 14.8.

The 145 illegitimate births represented 6 per cent of all live births. The corresponding figure for England and Wales was 9 per cent.

Birth Rate

21.6 per 1,000 estimated population

1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963
21.6	25.00	22.70	18.60	17.01	15.64	15.98	17.66	18.65	18.58

Still Births

	Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	13	10	23
Illegitimate	2	1	3
Totals	15	11	26

The number of still births per 1,000 total live and still births was 11.0. The rate for England and Wales was 12 per 1,000.

Still Birth Rate

10.0 per 1,000 total (live and still) births

1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963
11.00	10.00	13.00	9.00	12.38	13.04	9.10	17.94	18.11	18.86

Deaths

The crude death rate for the district was 7.3 per 1,000 home population. When multiplied by the area comparability factor of 1.72 the crude rate is converted to an adjusted rate of 12.6 per 1,000, a higher rate than 10.5 in 1971, and slightly higher than the comparable figure of 12.1 for England and Wales.

The pattern of causes of death continues unchanged with heart disease and cancer predominant. Cancer in various forms caused 176 deaths and of these 45 were due to lung cancer.

Accidents resulted in death for 33 persons, of these 11 were caused by motor vehicles.

	Males	Females	Total
Deaths from all causes ..	402	379	781

Crude Death Rate

7.3 per 1,000 estimated population

1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963
7.3	6.80	6.40	6.60	7.03	7.36	7.65	7.34	7.81	7.41

Deaths under one year of age.

Legitimate	42
Illegitimate	2

The mortality rate for all infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births was 19. The figure for England and Wales was 17.

The mortality rate for legitimate infants under one year of age per 1,000 legitimate live births was 19. The figure for England and Wales was 17.

The mortality rate for illegitimate infants under one year of age per 1,000 illegitimate live births was 14. The figure for England and Wales was 21.

Classified Causes of Death.

<i>Cause of Death</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
Enteritis and other Diarrhoeal Diseases	2	—	2
Meningococcal Infection	2	—	2
Measles	—	1	1
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	2	2	4
Malignant Neoplasm, Buccal Cavity, etc	1	1	2
Malignant Neoplasm, Oesophagus	5	1	6
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	7	6	13
Malignant Neoplasm, Intestine	18	11	29
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	38	7	45
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	1	15	16
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	—	4	4
Malignant Neoplasm, Prostate	6	—	6
Leukaemia	2	4	6
Other Malignant Neoplasms	25	24	49
Benign and Unspecified Neoplasms	—	1	1
Diabetes Mellitus	—	4	4
Other Endocrine etc. Diseases	3	4	7
Anaemias	1	1	2
Mental Disorders	2	—	2
Meningitis	2	—	2
Other Diseases of Nervous System, etc.	4	7	11
Active Rheumatic Fever	—	1	1
Chronic Rheumatic Heart Disease	3	7	10
Hypertensive Disease	5	2	7
Ischaemic Heart Disease	89	82	171
Other Forms of Heart Disease	9	17	26
Cerebrovascular Disease	41	60	101
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	13	7	20
Influenza	7	4	11
Pneumonia	23	33	56
Bronchitis and Emphysema	32	16	48
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	2	3	5
Peptic Ulcer	4	5	9
Intestinal Obstruction and Hernia	1	1	2
Other Diseases of Digestive System	3	6	9
Nephritis and Nephrosis	2	2	4
Other Diseases, Genito-Urinary System	2	2	4
Diseases of Musculo-Skeletal Systems	2	—	2
Congenital Anomalies	4	5	9
Birth Injury, Difficult Labour, etc.	7	3	10
Other Causes of Perinatal Mortality	7	5	12
Symptoms and Ill Defined conditions	4	3	7
Motor Vehicle Accidents	7	4	11
All other accidents	8	14	22
Suicide and Self-inflicted Injuries	4	2	6
All other external causes	3	2	5
Total all causes	402	379	781
Total all causes 1971	380	323	703

Deaths under four weeks of age.

Legitimate	28
Illegitimate	2

The neonatal mortality rate of infants under 4 weeks, per 1,000 live births was 13. The corresponding figure for England and Wales was 12.

Deaths under one week of age.

Legitimate	25
Illegitimate	2

The early neonatal mortality rate of infants under 1 week of age per 1,000 total live births was 12, and the number of still births and deaths of infants under 1 week of age combined, per 1,000 total live and still births, was 23. The corresponding figures for England and Wales were 10 and 22 respectively.

Maternal Deaths.

There were no maternal deaths during 1972.

Comparative Births, Deaths and Population figures 1967—1972.

Year	Estimated Population	Total Live Births	Total Deaths	Net Increase	*Birth Rate	*Death Rate
1967	62,930	984	463	+ 521	13.4	11.2
1968	70,360	1197	495	+ 702	14.1	10.4
1969	89,840	1671	597	+ 1074	15.1	10.2
1970	105,000	2385	678	+ 1707	18.2	9.9
1971	102,670	2565	703	+ 1862	20.0	10.5
1972	107,670	2326	781	+ 1545	17.5	12.6

*Birth rate per 1,000 population after local adjustment.

*Death rate per 1,000 population after local adjustment.

Area Comparability Factors.

Differences in the age structure of population render invalid direct comparisons between areas of crude birth and death rates. To enable comparisons to be made area comparability factors have been devised to compensate for disparities such as a predominantly old or young population.

The factors for this district, mentioned earlier in this report, are, Births 0.81 and Deaths 1.72 which indicate that the age structure of the population is predominantly young.

SECTION B.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Total number of cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the year 1972.

Notifiable Disease	Number of Cases Notified.								Total cases removed to Hospital
	At all ages	Under 1	1-4	5-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65 and up- w'ds.	
Measles	285	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	134	105	4	3	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Typhoid	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	19	-	7	9	2	1	-	-	1
Malaria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	26	2	5	12	1	6	-	-	1
Acute Meningitis	9	3	1	2	2	1	-	-	9
Acute Poliomyelitis : Paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Infective Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Encephalitis Lethargica	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	8	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	13	1	3	-	2	3	3	1	7
Other forms of Tuberculosis	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	1
Food Poisoning	11	-	3	2	4	-	-	2	4
Infective Hepatitis ..	70	-	4	33	6	18	8	1	14
Tetanus	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	443	53	158	163	21	33	11	4	41

Total Cases of Infectious Disease notified during previous years.

Notifiable Disease	1972	1971	1970	1969	1968	1967	1966	1965	1964	1963
Measles	285	709	675	206	652	549	588	1,077	397	1,028
Whooping Cough	—	52	60	5	56	48	63	31	25	40
Diphtheria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Typhoid	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever....	19	32	16	10	35	11	16	28	25	15
Dysentery	26	34	18	86	98	31	72	22	106	90
Acute Meningitis	9	19	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
Acute Poliomye- litis : Paralytic	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Non-paralytic..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Acute Infective Encephalitis ..	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ..	8	6	1	6	3	—	3	3	—	43
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ..	13	6	7	7	2	5	12	18	12	9
Other forms of Tuberculosis ..	2	3	2	5	4	2	4	4	2	4
Food Poisoning..	11	11	42	35	4	18	3	—	—	8
Infective Hepatitis	70	46	33	38	37	—	—	—	—	—
Tetanus	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	443	919	857	398	904	692	781	1,243	571	1,349

General Comment

The total number of cases of infectious diseases notified during 1972 was 443 as compared with 919 for the previous year. Measles as usual accounted for well over half of the notifications received.

Measles

The number of cases of Measles notified during the year was 285, which represents a substantial decrease of 424 from the figure of 709 for 1971.

There can be no doubt that almost all of these cases could have been avoided if parents had presented their children for vaccination against Measles.

The acceptance rate of vaccination against Measles, however, remains decidedly lower than for protection against other diseases. The following table gives the number of vaccinations carried out in 1972.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Measles in 1972.

Age	Vaccinations
0-1	620
2-5	827
6-15	41
Total	1,493

Whooping Cough

No notifications of whooping cough were received during 1972. The previous lowest figures received were 5 in 1969 and 11 in 1962.

The following table gives details of the number of children who have received protection against Whooping Cough. Combined antigens are generally used so that children protected against Whooping Cough will probably have received protection against Diphtheria and Tetanus in the same course of injections.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Whooping Cough in 1972.

	Age at Date of Injection					Total
	Under 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	
Primary	110	1,677	89	88	4	1,968
Reinforcing	—	81	16	64	3	164
Totals	110	1,758	105	152	7	2,132

Diphtheria

No cases of Diphtheria were notified.

Table showing number of children Immunised against Diphtheria during 1972.

	Age at date of injection					Total
	Under 1	1-2	3-4	5-9	10-14	
Primary	120	1,809	104	249	50	2,332
Reinforcing	—	125	244	2,196	109	2,674
Totals	120	1,934	348	2,445	159	5,002

Acute Poliomyelitis

Once again no cases were notified and the following table summarises the vaccination campaign.

Poliomyelitis Vaccinations completed during 1972.

	Age at date of Vaccination			
	0—1	2—5	6—15	Total
Vaccinated	1,583	487	273	2,343
Re-vaccinated	74	2,143	463	2,680
Totals	1,657	2,630	736	5,023

Smallpox

Table showing number of Persons vaccinated against Smallpox in 1972

	Age at date of Vaccination					Totals
	Under 1	1	2-4	5-14	15 or over	
Vaccinated	—	92	118	44	22	276
Re-Vaccinated ..	—	—	1	10	35	46
Totals	—	92	119	54	57	322

Dysentery

Continuing the trend since 1970, the total number of 26 cases of Dysentery notified during 1972 was again low. The cases notified were distributed sporadically throughout the district.

Food Poisoning

During 1972, the number of cases of Food Poisoning notified was 11. The same number was in 1971. The cases notified were spread throughout the District.

Infective Hepatitis

A total number of 70 cases of Infective Hepatitis were notified during 1972, this represented an increase in comparison with 1971. Of the 70 cases notified 11 occurred in one small outbreak. The remainder occurred sporadically during the year.

Tuberculosis

The following table shows that there was a slight increase in both pulmonary and non-pulmonary cases of Tuberculosis remaining on the register at the end of 1972.

Total number of Tuberculous persons remaining on Register at 31st December, 1972

	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F
1. Total on register at 31st December, 1971	218	146	26	31
2. New Cases	10	3	2	—
3. Inward Transfers	5	2	—	1
4. Removals	1	1	—	—
5. Total on register at 31st December, 1972	232	150	28	32

Both existing and new cases of Tuberculosis are subject to regular supervision. The following table gives details of the age and sex distribution of new cases notified during 1972.

Age and Sex Distribution of New Cases Notified during 1972

Age Groups	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1 ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 ..	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25 ..	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 ..	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 ..	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 ..	2	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals ..	10	3	2	—	—	—	—	—

Routine milk samples are taken by the County Health Department in the District and biologically examined for Tuberculosis. During 1972, 20 samples of tuberculin tested milk were taken, and all proved to be satisfactory.

SECTION C.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

National Assistance Act 1948.

Patients assessed during the year as requiring admission to chronic sick or residential accommodation were admitted appropriately on a voluntary basis. In no instance was statutory action by me necessary for compulsory removal under Section 47 of this Act.

Sewerage.

The scheme for sewerage 40 properties in Bennetts Road North, Corley, was completed in the early part of the year.

The scheme for sewerage 58 properties in Blackfirs Lane, Bickenhill Lane, and Bickenhill Road, Marston Green, was completed in the Autumn.

The Whitacre Heath Sewerage Scheme was commenced towards the end of the year. The scheme, costing approximately £ $\frac{1}{3}$ million involves the construction of six pumping stations and the laying of six miles of sewer and rising main and will serve 239 properties.

A scheme has been prepared for sewerage Corley Ash and Corley Village and a tender has been accepted. Work is expected to commence at the beginning of 1973. The scheme will serve a total of 158 properties.

Refuse Collection and Disposal.

The various refuse collection services have operated satisfactorily during the year.

Further progress was made in the replacement of pail closets and since 1960 a total of 497 closets have been replaced.

Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector

The public health inspection service was maintained throughout 1972 on a somewhat reduced scale. There had been no addition to the inspectorate to serve the extra population brought to the district by the development of the Chelmsley Wood Estate. A further staff problem arose when it became clear that casual vacancies in the establishment ought not to be filled, so as to avoid prejudicing the prospects of existing officers in the forthcoming reorganisation. Thus the resignation of a district inspector in January 1973 meant that only seven public health inspectors were effectively available for the year. There were also vacancies at other levels in the department.

The situation fortunately has not led to an appreciable reduction of environmental health standards in the Council's district. Only routine visiting has been curtailed, attention having been first directed to those matters which were judged to have the greatest public impact.

Particulars of the extent of the general inspections are given in the usual form in the following table.

GENERAL INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT

Inspections and visits made :

Public Health

Nuisances, general	1,252
Nuisances, noise	547
Sewers, drains and sanitary conveniences ..	337
Ditches and water courses	81
Water supplies	269
Infectious diseases	167
Filthy and verminous premises	42
Infestation (insects)	181
Moveable dwellings other than caravans ..	23

Caravan Sites

Inspections and observations	176
------------------------------------	-----

Housing

Houses inspected and recorded	226
Other visits	1,165
Overcrowding	6

Food and Drugs

Food premises including registered premises	841
Food stalls and vehicles	24
Bakehouses	11
Slaughterhouses premises	115
Food inspection, including meat at slaughterhouses	1,442
Investigations of complaints about food....	145

Air Pollution

Houses visited for smoke control areas	1,053
Other inspections and visits	709
Enforcement visits:	
Houses	6
Industrial premises	21

Factories

Power	65
Non-power	
Other registered premises	11

Offices and Shops

Premises inspected and recorded	18
Re-inspections	178
Other visits	37

Rodent Control

Premises inspected, excluding visits by rodent operator	32
-------------------------------------------------------------------	----

Burial of the Dead 10

Animal Boarding Establishments 8

Miscellaneous 515

Deposit of Poisonous Waste 45

9,758

Nuisances

Nuisances investigated and dealt with totalled 395, mostly of a routine nature and with few special features. Included in the total were 42 cases of excessive noise and 69 involving air pollution in various forms. The total number of complaints of all kinds received and dealt with was 1,323, the lowest for several years. As usual, many of them related to nuisances and housing defects.

The 1971 report referred to legal proceedings which were pending against persons found trespassing on the Council's refuse tip and sorting and taking away deposited materials, contrary to section 76 of the Public Health Act 1936. The public health risks involved were thought to be obvious and the Council's decision to prosecute indicated their concern that the practice should be stopped. It had become a regular feature. Eight defendants pleading guilty to the charges were convicted. One was fined £3 and the others £2 each. The Council's application for costs was refused. The deterrent effect of this costly administrative exercise is not yet apparent: the practice continues, virtually unchecked.

Enforcement

The following notices were served:

Informal	330
Statutory	34

Deposit of Poisonous Waste Act 1972

This Act came into force in August 1972 and provided a much-needed power to control the use of a large and hitherto virtually uncontrolled private industrial tip at Packington. This tip had for some time been an example of the injury to the environment caused when private commercial interests are permitted to dump enormous quantities of industrial waste over large areas of land. Administrative steps were quickly taken to lessen the obvious risks of pollution. A firm of industrial chemists was retained to assess the notifications required by the Act and to advise as to any action needed. An early result was the exclusion of much unacceptable material from several sources. Co-operation was established with the Birmingham Water Department and with the Trent River Authority, because of the proximity of the tip to the River Blyth, from which the Department abstracts water for public drinking supplies and by the end of November the tip operators had agreed not to accept any more toxic wastes of any kind on to the site.

HOUSING

Register of Applications for Housing Tenancies

Applications continue to be received selectively and subject to certain prescribed qualifications being satisfied. The register thus remains a good index of the general housing conditions in the district. There was little change in the overall position during the year and it remained reasonably satisfactory. The total number of "live" applications at the end of 1972 was 435, compared with 376 in December 1971 and 420 a year earlier. During 1972, 43 new houses became available for letting and there were 63 casual vacancies. Of the total of 106 tenancies available, 11 were allotted to slum clearance cases, 3 to Council staff and the remainder to applicants in no special group. Whilst there has always to be evidence of need before an application is accepted, the degree of need in current cases is generally much less than hitherto, and instances of hardship are uncommon. Any case of acute need can usually be dealt with fairly quickly, though account is always taken of the circumstances in which the need arises.

It will be noted that there was a net increase in the total number of unsatisfied applications after allowing for all the allocations made during the year. This confirms the continued need for some further housing provision, as indicated in the report for 1971.

Slum Clearance

The expression "slum clearance" is now hardly appropriate when applied to housing conditions in the Council's district. Even the few remaining houses that fail to meet the current legal standards of fitness are not "slums" as normally understood. Most of them are repairable and capable of improvement to accepted modern standards. Usually condemnation becomes necessary only when

owners and tenants cannot agree on rents to be paid after proposed improvements have been made, or where demolition and rebuilding would make more effective use of available land. A few fit houses were demolished voluntarily by the owners to enable sites to be redeveloped at higher densities. There were no clearance or closing orders. Two demolition orders were made in respect of individual houses. Fourteen houses were demolished as a result of previous formal action by the Council and seven were made fit.

An unusual situation arose in respect of two unfit houses at Curdworth. They had been vacant for several years and were subject to demolition orders, the enforcement of which had been deferred to permit the preparation of an improvement scheme. Subsequently the owners found that improvement would be uneconomic and they decided on demolition. They were, however, slow to act. The County Council refused consent for redevelopment of the site and served a preservation notice, thereby abrogating the demolition orders. The degree of dereliction increases and there is no progress in any direction.

Overcrowding

The position was unchanged from the previous year. With four families totalling 40 persons) involved, two in privately-owned accommodation and two in Council houses. No case involved more than one family in a house so relief could not be given by re-housing only some of the occupants and no house became available large enough to accommodate a whole family.

Larger types of houses required for big families are generally needed only for relatively short periods, since problems of overcrowding tend to resolve themselves by family changes. At other times, the larger houses are often under-occupied and thus become too expensive for the tenants, as well as wasteful of accommodation. The Council's policy has, therefore, been to make the best practicable use of their few larger houses but not to build more of them.

There were no known cases of houses in multiple occupation.

Number of applications on register at end of year :

General needs	306
Slum clearance	
General	2
Old people	4
Agricultural (tied to industry)	18
Old people (other than slum clearance)	105
	<hr/>
	435
	<hr/>
Comparative total at end of 1971	376

Allocations of Tenancies

General needs	64
General needs (old people)	28

Slum clearance.....	4
Slum clearance (old people)	7
Agricultural	—
Other priorities, including Council staff	3
	<hr/> 106 <hr/>

Exchanges approved

Transfers to other houses	33
Exchanges between Council tenants.....	13
Exchanges between Council tenants and tenants of other authorities	12
	<hr/> 58 <hr/>

Number of houses available for letting :

<i>Year</i>	<i>Building Completions</i>	<i>Casual Vacancies</i>	<i>Total</i>
1972	43	63	106
1971	84	57	141
1970	16	63	79
1969	86	70	156
1968	48	53	101

SLUM CLEARANCE

Clearance Areas

Number of orders made	—
Number of houses affected	—
Number of orders confirmed	—
Number of houses demolished	—

Single houses

Number of demolition orders made	2
Number of houses demolished	14
Number of undertakings accepted	—
Number of closing orders made	—

Houses made fit—

by owners, voluntarily	1
by owners, after formal notices	6
by Council, in default of owners	—

Overcrowding

Number of private houses known to be overcrowded	2
Number of Council houses known to be overcrowded	2
Number of families involved	4
Number of persons involved	40
Cases relieved during year by Council	—
Cases relieved during year otherwise	—

Houses in Multiple Occupation Nil

WATER SUPPLIES

Sources of public supplies

Supplies are provided by four statutory water undertakings, each of which covers a part of the Council's district. The practice of preparing a tabular statement showing the position in individual parishes has been discontinued: it no longer serves a useful purpose since public mains are now available to all but a very few houses throughout the district.

All the public supplies have been satisfactorily maintained. Each water authority takes its own samples to check on the purity of the supplies and notifies the results to the Council. Additionally, eleven casual samples were taken by the public health inspectors and all were reported satisfactory. Of 37 samples taken from old wells and springs, 24 were unsatisfactory. Most of these samples were incidental to action taken to compel connections to water mains where owners had not acted voluntarily.

A long-delayed scheme for laying a new main to six houses in the Hollyberry End area of Meriden parish was eventually prepared and approved, after satisfactory arrangements had been made with the water authority for providing local storage and boosting facilities. A scheme for laying 230 metres of new main to a house at Lea Marston, and another involving a main extension of 325 metres at Barston, were also approved. None of the work had been started by the end of the year.

SUPERVISION OF FOOD HANDLING

Slaughterhouses and meat inspection

Licences in respect of six slaughterhouses were renewed and the premises continued to be used, all but one of them on only a limited scale. The standard of structure and layout is mainly poor but in general the legal requirements are met. Minor defects and infringements arise from time to time and are referred to the occupiers, who, however, are sometimes slow to attend to them. Continuous compliance with the Hygiene Regulations is difficult to achieve, because of the nature of the trade. Whilst theoretically a good deal of fault can be found, in practice the various premises produce good quality

meat in a very presentable condition. The question of possible legal enforcement action arises from time to time but so far it has not been necessary to complain to the justices. Conditions are unlikely to be better than barely acceptable whilst these mainly old, adapted and improvised premises remain in use. They would have been better closed years ago and the slaughtering concentrated in Council-controlled premises, either within the district or elsewhere. In the Council's favour, it has succeeded over a period of years in reducing the number of licensed slaughterhouses in the district from twenty-three to the present six.

The meat inspection service was fully maintained throughout the year. Particulars of the inspections and condemnations are given in the tables which follow.

Meat Inspection

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number inspected	3,116	230	722	23,513	10,993
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	2	2	12	32	21
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	681	144	6	4,027	2,403
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysti- cerci	21.92	63.47	2.49	17.26	22.05
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	2	—	—	—	41
Percentage of the num- ber inspected affected with tuberculosis	0.06	—	—	—	0.37

Cysticercosis

Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned

Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration

Generalised and totally condemned.....

Condemnations of unfit food

			Tuberculosis tons. cwts. lbs.			All other diseases and conditions tons. cwts. lbs.		
Meat								
Cattle (excluding cows)								
	Carcase meat		—	—	60	—	8	67
	Offals		—	—	—	2	4	101
Cows	Carcase meat		—	—	—	—	7	58
	Offals		—	—	—	—	11	8
Sheep	Carcase meat		—	—	—	1	1	17
	Offals		—	—	—	3	—	14
Pigs	Carcase meat		—	2	101	1	18	25
	Offals		—	—	—	1	12	67
Calves	Carcase meat		—	—	—	—	4	59
	Offals		—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals			3 49			11 8 80		

Other Food

15 tons 9 cwts. 21 lbs.

Complaints relating to food

Fifty-five complaints were received and investigated, ten more than in 1971. They referred to a variety of conditions affecting many kinds of food. In a few cases the complaints were not substantiated. Most cases involved conditions which could have been avoided by the exercise of greater care, e.g. in stock rotation or examination of food before sale. Vendors and/or manufacturers were approached and warnings given where appropriate. None of the cases was thought to justify legal proceedings.

Poultry inspection

The slaughtering of poultry for sale is now carried on at only one premises and on a very small scale, which does not call for regular inspections. Casual visits are made for inspection purposes.

Disposal of condemned food

Following established practice, all condemned meat from slaughterhouses was collected by Council vehicles. It was disposed of, under supervision, to a new factory engaged in the production of fertilizers.

Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960

The following is a classified list of premises in the district to which these Regulations apply:

Category	Number inspected and recorded	Number complying with Regulation 16*	Number to which Regulation 19† applies	Number complying with Regulation 19
Grocery	74	74	74	74
Grocery and General (not exclusively food) ..	48	48	48	48
Bread and cakes	9	9	9	9
Sweets and confectionery ..	43	43	42	42
Greengrocery	32	32	32	32
Butchery	37	37	37	37
Fish, wet and/or fried ..	9	9	9	9
Restaurants, Cafes, etc. ..	53	52	53	53
Hotels and Licensed Premises	96	92	89	89
Ice-cream (incidental to trades other than food)	7	7	7	7
Industrial Catering ..	33	33	33	33
Bakehouses	5	5	5	5
School Kitchens	60	60	60	60
	506	501	498	498

* Regulation 16 requires the provision of wash-hand basins for the use of food personnel.

† Regulation 19 requires the provision of sinks for washing food and equipment where open food is handled.

Registered food premises

The following premises are registered under section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act 1955:

Manufacture and sale of ice-cream	4
Sale only of ice-cream	169
Manufacture of sausage and/or cooked meat	17
Fish frying.....	11

Inspection of food premises

The total number of visits to food premises other than slaughterhouses, during the year was 876, compared with 1096 in 1971. As in previous years, many contraventions were recorded. Most were of a minor character and were readily rectified in response to informal

requests. One case involved more serious infractions and, because of delays in complying with legal requirements after requests had been made informally, authority for legal proceedings was sought. Prompt and drastic action by the management followed and the desired result was achieved without the case going to court. The improvement was subsequently maintained.

Milk and Dairies

There are 102 persons registered with the Council as distributors of milk, including 69 selling milk in bottles from retail shops.

CONTROL OF AIR POLLUTION

Smoke Control Orders

Order No. 6, applying to the village of Marston Green in the parish of Bickenhill, had been submitted in 1971 and was approved early in 1972, to operate from October 1972. Meanwhile preliminary work had been done for Order No. 7, which was submitted in May 1972. It covers some 245 acres at Water Orton and affects 1294 houses and a few other buildings. It was later confirmed and will operate from October 1973. Considering the incidence of local large-scale industrial pollution which is outside the scope of the Order, public reception was creditably favourable and there was no formal objection.

Some difficulty was experienced in coping with the mass of minor administrative work arising from making and implementing the orders, the staff being somewhat depleted, but there were no arrears of consequence at the end of the year and conversion grants were paid without undue delay.

Measurement of pollution

Measurements were continued, as in previous years, under the aegis of the Warwickshire Clean Air Council. Local interest has been concentrated for many years on pollution from the Hams Hall electricity generating stations. A table in the 1971 report (Page 30) gave the average figures for seven years of total solid matter deposited and of sulphur pollution, obtained from instruments operated nearest the power stations. The monthly average of deposited matter for 1972, expressed in m/g per square metre per month, was 111, compared with 130 over the previous seven years, thus continuing the downward trend. Sulphur showed a marked reduction, from an average of 1.16 to 0.7 empirical units. The figure of solid deposit, being an average, does not reveal some occasional heavy deposits of grit which were the subject of complaint by residents.

CARAVAN SITES

The position at the end of 1972 was as follows:

Number of licensed sites:

Permanent 8; temporary 15;

Number of licensed caravans permitted:

Permanent 157; temporary 65.

Conditions were generally satisfactory. There was no improvement (and there is no early prospect of any) in the drainage disposal arrangements at the largest permanent site, at Eaves Green, Meriden. Present drainage is to a large cesspool which is primitive but does not often give rise to nuisance. There is an increasing need for a public sewer to serve this site and a group of houses in the locality.

PEST CONTROL AND MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES

These services were maintained as in earlier years, with a minimum of manual staff. The following table records the activities under the various headings.

Rodent control:

Visits by operators, not including investigating and supervisory visits by inspectors	2,164
Premises found to be infested with rats and/or mice and subsequently treated:	
Domestic	558
Industrial and commercial	192
Sewage works and sewers	13
Highway lay-byes	11
Refuse tips	12
Insect and other infestations	389
Drains examined and tested	159
Collection and disposal of unfit food (visits)	224
Collection and disposal of medical refuse (visits)	540
Miscellaneous visits	29

The collection and disposal of "medical" refuse by the rodent operators is, in effect, an extension of the normal refuse collection service, being comparable with the arrangement made by the Engineer's department for the collection of bulky items of household refuse. It was undertaken originally to meet difficulties which arose in smoke control areas, consequent on the lack of burning facilities at houses. It has since been extended and has become a burden on the very small staff available. A case can be made for transferring it to the refuse collection department, where the larger

number of manual employees would provide greater flexibility for maintaining the special collections during periods of absence for holidays, sickness and other reasons.

The two previous reports referred to a renewed incidence of infestation of houses by bed-bugs, after an almost total absence for many years. The trouble seemed to be increasing and this trend has continued, although the larger number of cases dealt with might still be due to better recognition of the problem and an increasing willingness by householders to seek help in dealing with it. The number of cases rose from 81 in 1971 to 100 in the year under review. Fortunately there are effective means of treatment but it has not been possible to identify a source of infestation.

MORTUARY

The Council's mortuary at Coleshill remains adequate for present and short-term future needs, having been reconstructed and extended during 1971. A telephone has since been installed at the request of the police.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

Two bodies were buried at the cost of the Council. In one case there were no known relatives to accept responsibility and in the other the relatives could not pay the cost involved.

OFFICES AND SHOPS

Registrations and inspections under the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act, 1963, are summarised in the following table:

Class of premises	Premises Registered during year	Total registered premises at end of year	General Inspections during year
Offices	16	134	27
Retail shops	8	312	93
Wholesale shops, warehouses	3	13	11
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens	7	68	27
Fuel storage depots	—	2	1
Totals	34	529	159

The total number of inspections and visits for all purposes was 233. Contraventions reported totalled 101, which included 22 cases of insufficient first-aid equipment and 21 of failure to provide thermometers in workrooms. Informal action was considered to be sufficient in all cases.

Analysis by workplace of persons employed in registered premises:

Class of Workplace	Number of persons employed
Offices	858
Retail shops	1,637
Wholesale departments, warehouses	138
Catering establishments open to the public	1128
Canteens	33
Fuel storage depots	6
Total	3,800
Total Males	1,543
Total Females	2,257

FACTORIES

Inspections made

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	—		—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	180	65	13	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	7	11		—
Total ..	187	76	13	—

Defects found

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7) :—					
(a) Insufficient ..	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	10	10	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes ..	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences ..	3	3	—	—	—
Total ..	13	13	—	—	—

Outworkers

Sections 133 and 134—Nil)



