

[Report 1956] / Medical Officer of Health, Newmarket R.D.C.

Contributors

Newmarket (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1956

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NEWMARKET RURAL DISTRICT

in the

Administrative County of Cambridgeshire



ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

Including the

Report of the Chief Public Health Inspector

for

1956

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GENERAL STATISTICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area: Land 80,856 acres.

Water 245 acres.

Number of Parishes: 22

Rateable Value: £134,741

Estimated sum represented by a penny rate: £500

Number of inhabited houses: 6,901

Estimated mid-year Home Population: 20,190

Census Population 1951: 20,220

Birth Rate	..	..	14·5
(Corrected)	..		15·9
Death Rate	..	..	10·4
(Corrected)	..		9·6
Infant Mortality Rate			17·1

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

CHAIRMAN

Councillor C. W. L. Woollard.

COUNCILLORS

H. R. Baker.

J. P. Clark.

J. T. Cowley, J.P.

W. Jackson.

F. Murfet.

H. Palmer.

J. G. A. Paul.

C. C. Petch, J.P.

H. J. Sadler.

C. F. Sargeant.

Mrs. J. O. Smith (from March, 1956).

A. H. Trinder.

Rev. P. R. K. Whitaker (from May, 1956).

STAFF

Medical Officer of Health: P. A. Tyser, M.D., B.S., D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector: D. Howells, A.M.I.P.H.E., M.R.S.H.

Additional Public Health Inspector: F. H. Mason, A.R.S.H.

Clerk: Miss R. Muir.

To the Chairman and Members
of the
Newmarket Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This report is prepared in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 19/56, dated December 11th, 1956.

It will be recalled that in my 1951 report an attempt was made to review the changing pattern of public health in the area in the first half of the century as illustrated by the reports of my predecessors. A review of the last five years' progress now seems appropriate.

A brief incursion into public health history in this country may serve as a useful form of introduction as well as providing the essential background to the public health work of a local sanitary authority.

Early in the 19th century concern arose about the health of the people and there developed from the work of Edwin Chadwick a philosophy, the 'Sanitary Idea.' It was believed that if the people were given an hygienic environment their health would improve and sickness and death rates would fall. Great advances were made in the latter half of the 19th century to this end, and it was just before the turn of the century that the majority of local sanitary authorities, the custodians of the 'Sanitary Idea,' were placed on a firm local government basis. Their work was in the main orientated around the provision of pure water supplies, sewage and refuse disposal, the provision and maintenance of satisfactory housing standards in their areas, and the protection of food supplies; in other words, the establishment of an hygienic environment for the people. Their duties covered both man's home and work environment. The Country was somewhat dismayed during the Boer War to find so many young men unfit for service with the armed forces. This situation led to the development of the personal health services as exemplified by the school health service and the maternal and child welfare service. These personal health services which have developed during this century are the logical step following the provision of a satisfactory environment. It remains the duty of the local sanitary authority, that is the county boroughs, municipal boroughs, urban and rural district councils to provide and maintain a satisfactory environment for the population in its care. The advantage to be gained from the work of the personal health services, if they are operated against an inimicable background, is much restricted. A satisfactory environment both at home, in transit and at work remains the prerequisite for the achievement of a high standard of public health.

To advise local authorities in their work the medical officer of health is appointed and the first duty placed upon him by law is that he shall make himself aware of all factors affecting or likely to affect the public health and be prepared to advise his Council. This is indeed a very wide and all-encompassing directive. In this work the medical officer of health is assisted by the public health inspectors who work under his general direction.

I have thought it appropriate to mention these historical and factual points since, with the general upheaval of the second world war and its aftermath it is as well to realise that the prime purpose and duty of the local sanitary authority has in no way changed—it remains the custodian of the 'Sanitary Idea,' be it in a twentieth century guise.

The post war years have seen great advances in the country in the field of environmental hygiene, as well as the challenge of new problems. The great drive for the building of new houses and the development of rural water and sewerage schemes has gone on apace though the country's economic difficulties have, of necessity, caused financial brakes to be applied on a number of occasions. One of the outstanding incidents in the last five years has been the discovery by research workers of an association between tobacco smoking and lung cancer. Certainly on the available evidence the youth of the country should be clearly made aware of the dangers of acquiring the smoking habit. The diseases of the circulatory system are another main cause of mortality and though investigation into their causes is continually being carried out no such indicative results have been forthcoming as in the case of lung cancer.

Though not of particular importance to this Council, the introduction of legislation this year to combat atmospheric pollution is a long needed measure the desirability of which was most forcibly demonstrated following the London smog incident a few years ago, when it was clearly shown how great was the rise in the deaths from respiratory illness at the time of the smog.

The fight against tuberculosis is achieving excellent results but the battle is not yet won, nor will it be if there should be any complacency about the situation. Tuberculosis is an infectious disease and as long as there are people abroad innocent of their infectious state fresh cases will continue to occur. The use of mass miniature radiography to carry out 100% surveys of populations is one means of discovering cases and an example of this type of survey is described in the body of the report.

In 1955 the County Council introduced a scheme for immunisation against *whooping cough*. At the beginning of this year the Government announced plans for the limited use of a new *poliomyelitis* vaccine, but the quantities available did not match expectations and only a few children of those whose parents had expressed willingness for vaccination were able to be protected.

The cessation of food rationing and the return to private enterprise of slaughtering brought their problems, together with additional work. The introduction in 1955 of new Food Hygiene legislation was commented upon in last year's report. Both these factors are important facets of environmental hygiene.

Turning to our own affairs, since 1951 the Council has made further strides in providing a healthy environment for the community in its care.

In the field of housing much has been accomplished. The Council has provided a great number of new houses and has brought about the demolition or closure of an impressive number of unfit dwellings. Fresh impetus was given to this policy by the Government in its Housing Repairs and Rent Acts, 1954. The provision of adequate housing accommodation for the people is one of the most important features in a programme to promote better public health.

The completion of the comprehensive water scheme, together with the many subsequent extensions has brought to every village a pure public main water supply from which every house can derive benefit. The completion of the Soham and Bottisham sewerage schemes is a fine start upon another stage of improved environmental hygiene. It is hoped that in 1957 permission will be given to undertake the Lode sewerage scheme.

The Council's plans for the housing of the aged and their present deliberations upon a policy for the social education of problem families are further evidence of their forward policy pursued to such advantage over the years.

On August 2nd the Sanitary Inspectors (Change of Designation) Act, 1956, came into force changing the title 'Sanitary Inspector' to 'Public Health Inspector' which bears more relation to the important duties performed by these officers.

During the year the work of the department has been particularly concentrated upon food hygiene drainage and sewerage, and housing. The large number of inspections in connection with slaughterhouses and butchers' shops is a measure of the work entailed in maintaining 100% meat inspection.

Turning now to the vital statistics for the year it will be seen that no change has taken place in the population of the district, 20,190. The birth rate of 15.9 per thousand population is slightly lower than last year; it is also lower than the average for the five years 1951/55 which was 16.3 as against 15.3 which is the average for England and Wales. The death rate of 9.6 per thousand population is higher than last year (8.8) but compares favourably with the five years average of 9.7 (11.6 for England and Wales). The infant mortality rate was 17.1 deaths of children under one year of age per thousand live births which compares favourably with previous years and with the five years average of 24.0 (England and Wales 26.8).

The incidence of infectious disease does not call for particular note; comment is made in the body of the report.

Once again to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee, and indeed to all Members of the Council, I record the gratitude of the department for their interest, help and appreciation.

Mr. Howells, chief public health inspector, and Mr. Mason, have had another very busy year and as always have given me most readily of their assistance.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

P. A. TYSER.

July, 1957.

VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

(The mid-year home population is used for the statistical calculations).

Live Births.								MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	137	137	274
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	2	8
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	143	139	292

Birth Rate per thousand estimated population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	14.5
Birth rate corrected by comparability factor (1.10)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15.9
Birth rate per thousand population (England and Wales)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	15.7

Stillbirths.								MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	4
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2	2	4

Rate per thousand live and still births	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	26.50
Rate per thousand live and still births (England and Wales)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23.1

								MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Deaths..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	97	113	210
Death rate per thousand estimated population	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10.4
Death rate corrected by comparability factor (0.92)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9.6
Death rate per thousand population (England and Wales)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	11.7

Infant Mortality. Deaths of infants under one year of age.								MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 (1)	3 (2)	5 (3)
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	-	-	-
Totals	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2 (1)	3 (2)	5 (3)

(Deaths of infants under four weeks of age are shown in brackets).

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Infant Mortality Rate (Infant deaths under one year per thousand live births)	..	..	17.1
Infant Mortality Rate (England and Wales)	..	..	23.8
Neonatal Mortality Rate (Infant deaths under four weeks per thousand live births)	..	10.3	
Legitimate Infant deaths per thousand legitimate live births	..	..	18.3
Illegitimate Infant deaths	..	..	Nil
Maternal Deaths (Deaths ascribed to pregnancy, childbirth and abortion)	..	..	Nil

TABLE CLASSIFYING DEATHS UNDER AGE GROUPS

Deaths from cancer (all ages)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	32
Deaths from tuberculosis (all ages)—Respiratory..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Non-Respiratory	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Deaths from whooping cough	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Deaths from measles ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Deaths from pneumonia	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Deaths from influenza	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil
Deaths from diarrhoea (under 2 years)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Nil

CERTAIN COMPARATIVE RATES.

	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956
*BIRTH RATE.. .. .	13.4	13.9	16.6	15.6	14.6	14.5
*DEATH RATE	12.8	12.1	9.9	11.5	10.4	10.4
INFANT MORTALITY RATE	22.1	10.8	14.9	44.6	27.2	17.1
	(6)	(3)	(5)	(14)	(8)	(5)

*These rates are uncorrected. The figures in brackets are the number of infant deaths in each year.

TABLE CLASSIFYING DEATHS UNDER AGE GROUPS.

	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Under 1 year	2	3	5
1 and under 2	1	—	1
2 and under 5	—	—	—
5 and under 15	1	2	3
15 and under 25	1	2	3
25 and under 35	1	1	2
35 and under 45	4	2	6
45 and under 55	11	5	16
55 and under 65	17	10	27
65 and under 75	20	20	40
75 and over	39	68	107
Totals	97	113	210

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

Medical Officer of Health.

"The Cambridgeshire United Districts (Medical Officer of Health) Order 1951" provides for the appointment of a medical officer of health to the Chesterton, Newmarket and South Cambridgeshire Rural District Councils. Under present arrangements the officer is also appointed deputy county and school medical officer to the Cambridgeshire County Council.

Public Health Inspectors.

Mr. Howells continues as Chief Public Health Inspector assisted by Mr. Mason. Following legislation coming into force on August 2nd, their title was changed to 'public health inspector.'

Laboratory Facilities.

Chemical and bacteriological examinations of water are made by the Public Analyst at Cambridge. The Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, undertake bacteriological and biological examinations of milk and bacteriological examinations of water samples, and all necessary examinations in cases of infectious diseases.

Hospitals.

There are no General Hospitals situated in the area. Cases of infectious disease requiring hospital treatment are sent to Cambridge City Isolation Hospital or to the Exning Isolation Hospital.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1956.

The incidence of infectious diseases is recorded in the accompanying table. The epidemic of *measles* occurring in the previous year died out and no recrudescence was observed. Apart from the two cases of *poliomyelitis* referred to in a subsequent paragraph there is no disease calling for particular comment. Neither *food poisoning* outbreaks nor incidents connected with *Sonne dysentery* troubled the area.

It is not without interest in passing to note that in the last five years there have been no cases of *diphtheria*. This does not signify that the disease is extinct. Only by the maintenance of a high rate of immunisation amongst the child population can the chances of its recurrence be avoided. In the ten years 1941/50 there was a total of 8 cases with three deaths.

In the same period there were 230 cases of *scarlet fever* whereas, though not strictly comparable, there have been only 55 in the five years 1951/55.

Poliomyelitis.

Only two cases occurred in the district during the year, in November; one paralytic and the other non-paralytic. These cases occurred within a few days of each other and about the time of the reporting of a small number of cases in Newmarket Town in the County of West Suffolk. Previously, in October, a few cases had occurred amongst American children connected with the American Air Force bases in West Suffolk. The paralytic case in our district might conceivably have become infected via this source though there was no direct contact. The origin of the other case in our district remains unsolved; the child regularly entered Newmarket Town and may have had contact in that way. Cases continued to occur in Newmarket Town until after Christmas. No further cases occurred in our district.

It should be recorded for information that at Brookfields Hospital, Cambridge, there is a recognised poliomyelitis unit for the diagnosis and treatment of this infectious disease. The admission, therefore, of suspected cases to general hospitals, or the attempted treatment of cases of poliomyelitis in the patient's home, is, in my opinion, to be deprecated both on the grounds of the patient's safety as well as that of the community. During the small epidemic in Newmarket Town close liaison was maintained with my colleague in that authority and the principal school medical officers of the Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk Education Authorities were included in the consultations, since problems relating to school children concerned both authorities.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH (Infectious Disease) REGULATIONS, 1953.

Under these Regulations a special provision is made to facilitate the investigation and control of outbreaks of 'Food Poisoning' (which includes typhoid fever, paratyphoid fever, or other salmonella infection, dysentery and staphylococcal infection likely to cause food poisoning) in that (a) the existing provisions regarding the prevention of a person suffering from a food poisoning infection from con-

tinuing in or entering into an occupation connected with the preparation and handling of food or drink are now extended to include 'carriers' of food poisoning infections, (b) local authorities may authorise their medical officer of health to issue on their behalf notices where required to effect (a) immediately if he thinks it necessary and then report such action to his authority as soon as possible.

Such authority has been given to the medical officer of health but has not so far had occasion to be used.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Seven cases of respiratory tuberculosis and four cases of non-respiratory tuberculosis were notified for the first time during the year. Two respiratory cases were transferred to the district, previously notified in other areas. On balance at the end of the year there were four less respiratory and two more non-respiratory cases on the register.

Comparing the state of the register at the end of 1956 with the same period in 1951 it is noted that there are now 45 male and 35 female respiratory cases on the register as opposed to 48 and 42 in 1951.

In the case of non-respiratory disease the figures are 14 males and 16 females at the end of 1956 to compare with 22 and 32 at the end of 1951. In the 1951 report mention was made of the changing pattern of the illness and the use of mass miniature radiography in detecting cases. In February, 1956 the Cambridgeshire Mass X-ray Unit carried out a survey run on community lines of a Cambridgeshire Village with the purpose of X-Raying 100% of the population able to come to the Unit stationed in the village. In the event 92% of the population was examined. This successful experiment was given a further trial in the Parish of Burwell (2,300 population) towards the end of the year. This village straggles along a main thoroughfare of some $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles with a fair proportion of farms and cottages scattered throughout the Parish. The same principles were adopted as before except that in this case a chairman and committee was formed from a meeting of all those interested and representing village organisations. This committee was responsible, *inter alia*, for the recruitment and organisation of the canvassers who undertook the house to house visiting, arranging of appointments, and compilation of the census; some 70 canvassers were needed, each having 12 households to look after. The actual survey ran from December 10th to 15th, 1956, when the majority of those X-Rayed attended. In the following week 'failed attenders' and others were visited and persuaded to attend. Petrol rationing both *de facto* and *de jure*, and thick fog provided a dismal background to the occasion. Despite these conditions and shortage of Unit staff 83% of the X-Rayable population was examined.

The 1951 census population of this village was 2,364, since when a boundary adjustment has, it is estimated, reduced the population to 2,300 of which 183 are children under 5 years of age. A further 175 were classified as disabled, sick or away, and 136 had had a recent X-Ray elsewhere, thus leaving 1,806 who were able to attend. In fact, 1,506 were X-Rayed, or 83%. (The number of persons enumerated by the canvassers in their survey was 2,223 which compares very well with the census figure).

In addition 274 non residents comprising 209 schoolchildren from outlying villages attending the village secondary school and 65 factory workers were also X-Rayed.

It is hoped that when the Unit can again be made available for this type of community survey as good if not better response will be achieved by other villages.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

Section 47.

No action was required under this Section during the year.

Section 50.

No action was required under this Section during the year.

NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN AGE GROUPS, 1956.

Age in Years	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Acute Poliomyelitis Paralytic	Non-Paralytic	Dysentery	Measles	Totals
Under 1 year	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
1 — ..	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
2 — ..	-	2	1	-	-	1	4
3 — ..	2	-	-	-	-	3	5
4 — ..	-	1	-	-	-	2	3
5 — 9 ..	4	1	-	-	-	11	16
10 — 14 ..	-	-	-	1	-	3	4
15 — 24 ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
25 and over	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Age Unknown	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
TOTALS ..	7	4	1	1	-	24	37
1955 TOTALS	24	52	-	-	4	446	526

Age in Years	Acute Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Food Poisoning	Puerperal Pyrexia	Para- typhoid	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Totals
Under 5 ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
5 — 14 ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 — 44 ..	1	1	1	-	-	-	3
45 — 64 ..	2	-	1	-	-	-	3
65 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS ..	4	1	2	-	-	-	7
1955 TOTALS	5	-	1	1	1	-	8

Annual Case Incidence and Deaths, 1946-1956.

Disease	Years											Total	1956
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955			
MEASLES													
Cases ..	36	143	57	492	11	176	94	48	94	446	1,597	24	
Deaths ..	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	
WHOOPING COUGH													
Cases ..	32	46	52	15	51	101	64	16	86	52	515	4	
Deaths ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	

TUBERCULOSIS REGISTER.

		Respiratory Male	Female	Non-Respiratory Male	Female	Total Male	Female
1. Number of Cases on Register at commencement of year	..	45	39	11	17	56	56
2. Number of Cases notified for first time during year under Regulations		6	1	4	-	10	1
3. Cases restored to Register	..	-	-	-	-	-	-
4. Cases added to Register otherwise than by notification under Regulations—							
(a) Transferred from other Districts	..	-	2	-	-	-	2
(b) From Death Returns	..	-	-	-	-	-	-
5. Number of Cases removed from Register	..	6	7	1	1	7	8
6. Number of Cases remaining on Register at end of year	..	45	35	14	16	59	51

AGE AND SEX DISTRIBUTION.
RESPIRATORY AND NON-RESPIRATORY TUBERCULOSIS
CASES ON REGISTER AT 31.12.56.

Age Group	Male		Female		Total		Grand Total
	Resp.	Non-Resp.	Resp.	Non-Resp.	Resp.	Non-Resp.	
0 — 15 ..	1	7	2	5	3	12	15
15 — 25 ..	6	2	8	4	14	6	20
25 — 35 ..	10	2	14	2	24	4	28
35 — 45 ..	15	-	7	2	22	2	24
45 — 55 ..	7	2	2	1	9	3	12
55 — 65 ..	4	-	-	1	4	1	5
65 and over ..	2	1	2	1	4	2	6
TOTALS ..	45	14	35	16	80	30	110

REPORT OF THE CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

The following is a summary of the inspections carried out during 1956:—

Slaughterhouses and Butchers' shops	..	..	..	..	..	1,061
Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	78
Fried Fish Shops and other premises registered under Section 16, Food and Drugs Act, 1955	..	..	..	..	..	321
Miscellaneous food premises	..	..	..	..	..	266
Canteens	..	..	..	..	..	13
Licensed Premises	..	..	..	..	..	44
Shops	..	..	..	..	..	155
Knacker's Yard	..	..	..	..	..	3
Factories	..	..	..	..	..	113
Public Cleansing	..	..	..	..	..	99
Infectious Disease enquiries	..	..	..	..	..	19
Premises disinfected or disinfested	..	..	..	..	..	8
Drainage and Sewerage	..	..	..	..	..	537
Sewage Disposal Works	..	..	..	..	..	5
Schools (excluding visits for milk sampling)	..	..	..	..	..	2
Movable Dwellings	..	..	..	..	..	19
Dwellinghouses (including re-visits)	..	..	..	..	..	456
Water Supply (excluding visits for sampling)	..	..	..	..	..	21
Housing Act, 1949 (re Improvement grants)	..	..	..	..	..	129
Nuisances (including re-visits)	..	..	..	..	..	55
New drains tested	..	..	..	..	..	28
Petroleum Acts and Regulations	..	..	..	..	..	103
New petrol tanks tested	..	..	..	..	..	6
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	208
Sanitary Accommodation	..	..	..	..	..	45
Dangerous building	..	..	..	..	..	1
TOTAL						<u>3,795</u>

Number of samples taken:—

Water	..	..	..	..	..	73
Milk	..	..	..	..	..	35
Ice Cream	..	..	..	..	..	5
Informal notices served	..	..	..	..	..	121

HOUSING

Houses not included in Clearance Areas.

DEMOLITION & CLOSING ORDERS.

(1) Houses demolished as a result of formal or informal procedure under Section 11, Housing Act, 1936	28
(2) Unfit houses closed under Section 11, Housing Act, 1936 and Sections 10 and 11, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953	14
(3) Parts of buildings closed under Section 12, Housing Act, 1936	2

REPAIRS.

HOUSES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE REMEDIATED

(4)	After informal action by Local Authority	..	..	..	34
(5)	After formal notice under Public Health Acts				
	(a) by owners	..	..	..	Nil
	(b) by Local Authority	..	..	..	Nil
(6)	After formal notice under Housing Act, 1936—				
	(a) by owner	..	..	..	1
	(b) by Local Authority	..	..	..	Nil

ACTION TAKEN DURING THE POST-WAR PERIOD.

(7)	Houses on which demolition orders have been made	.. ..	167
(8)	Houses on which closing orders have been made under Sections 10 and 11, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953	.. ..	36
(9)	Parts of buildings closed for human habitation	.. ..	4
(10)	Undertakings not to relet unfit houses accepted	.. ..	10
(11)	Houses made fit in accordance with undertakings given by owners	.. ..	3

Number of new permanent dwellings completed during the year:—

(a)	By the Local Authority—Houses	76
	Bungalows	48
(b)	By private enterprise	49
	TOTAL	173

HOUSING REPAIRS AND RENTS ACT, 1954: Section 1.

At the end of the year, 240 unfit houses remained occupied; these are houses which were included in the Council's first 5-year demolition programme but it is noteworthy that the figure has been reduced by 51 dwellings over a period of twelve months.

Council Houses.

The Council now owns 1,727 houses which are under the management of the Council's Surveyor. At the end of the year, only 10 war-time hutments remained occupied, compared with 51 which were occupied in 1948. Progress on the demolition of these sub-standard dwellings has been very satisfactory.

Housing Improvements—Housing Act, 1949.

The above Act provides for the payment of grants of up to 50% of the cost of structural improvements consisting of drainage, sanitary fittings, hot and cold water supplies, improved lighting and ventilation, damp-proofing, etc. During the year, 129 visits were made in this connection and owners were advised on the specified requirements and the procedure involved before they could qualify for a grant. Everything is done to simplify the planning and clerical work and owners are generally well satisfied with the co-operation they receive from the department. When the final application is received, it is checked carefully by the Council's Surveyor and submitted to a Committee for the actual grant to be assessed. The Surveyor also supervises the work in progress and issues the final certificate.

It is with some degree of satisfaction that one can report the complete modernization of 71 houses during the year, under this scheme; grants paid towards the cost of this work amounted to £22,181.

Movable Dwellings. Public Health Act, 1936—Section 269.

There is no serious caravan problem in this area, the only movable dwellings being occupied mainly by people who have no other home or persons engaged on casual agricultural work. One application for a licence was refused on public health grounds but nine licences were issued to persons wishing to station trailer caravans for human habitation. There are no licenced camping sites in the area.

INSPECTION OF FOOD AND FOOD PREMISES

Slaughterhouses.

The slaughtering situation is exactly as it was last year, five premises still being licensed within the rural area. One slaughterhouse is far below a reasonable standard and is badly sited but the Ministry's policy, outlined in "Slaughterhouses Cmd. 9761," has not yet been implemented and the premises continue to be licensed under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955. A good standard of meat inspection has been maintained and quality has been generally excellent. No case of cruelty has been reported.

1,061 visits were made to slaughterhouses and butchers' shops and the following table shows the quantity of meat and offal condemned as unfit for human consumption:—

Meat and Offal Condemned.

	Bovine	Pigs	Sheep and Lambs
Whole Carcases	2	6	—
Livers	78	22	6
Half Livers	24	1	—
Lungs	23	8	3
Heads	17	71	—
Kidneys	1	1	—
Hearts	2	7	—
Mesentery	9	5	—
Spleen	1	—	—

Miscellaneous.

Pork, Bruised	41 lbs.
Pork, abscess	75 „
Tinned Foods, various	185 tins

**Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part
during the year 1956.**

	Cattle not Cows	Cows	Calves	Pigs not Sows	Sows	Sheep and Lambs
Number killed and inspected ..	659	7	31	2261	46	723
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci—						
Whole carcases condemned ..	1	—	—	6	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	97	1	1	31	—	8
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis and Cysticerci ..	14·8	14·2	3·2	1·63	—	1·1
Tuberculosis only—						
Whole carcases condemned ..	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	32	—	—	69	4	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ..	5·0	—	—	3·05	8·7	—
Cysticercosis—						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	1	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

The bulk of these Regulations came into operation on the 1st January, 1956 and the parts relating mainly to structural alterations in food premises came into force on the 1st July, 1956.

The Regulations apply to the following premises within this rural area:—

Butchers	17
Bakers	14
Fish and Chip Friers	6
Groceries and General	61
Restaurants and Snack Bars	4
School Canteens and Schools where meals are served	21
Sweets and Confectionery	6
Factory canteens, Hotels and public houses, approx.	75
Miscellaneous	6
TOTAL (approx.)	210

It will be noted that these Regulations do not apply to slaughterhouses but they do apply to stalls, snack bars, etc. at village fêtes and agricultural shows.

This long-awaited legislation has been generally well received by the trades concerned, where it is appreciated that food displayed and handled under hygienic conditions results in better business. It was rather unfortunate, however, that at the time the Public Health Inspectors were asking tradespeople to spend money on their premises, their rateable values were being doubled and trebled under the provisions of the new Rating Act.

However, reports, suggestions and requests were prepared and submitted to the occupiers of all food premises where compliance with the Regulations had become a matter of urgency.

It is gratifying to be able to report that, by the end of the year, the following improvements had been recorded:—

New or reconditioned premises	9
Adequate washing facilities provided	17
Improved or new sanitary accommodation ..	5
New drainage systems	7
Drainage improved	2
Improvements to fittings, benches etc. ..	17
General decorations	17
General repairs	6

825 visits were made to food premises (excluding slaughterhouses) but there is still a great deal of work to be done, when time permits.

In the meantime one can report that progress has been very satisfactory.

Registered Food Premises.

The following premises were registered under the now repealed Food and Drugs Act, 1938 or since registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955:—

(a) Sausage and cooked meat premises	14
(b) Fried fish shops	6
(c) Premises used for the storage and sale of ice cream.. ..	51
(d) Premises used for the manufacture of ice cream	1

321 visits were made to the above premises during the year but, where sausage making premises are attached to slaughterhouses, a cursory inspection is made almost daily and, of course, unrecorded.

Ice Cream.

Five samples of ice cream were submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for examination and all were reported as Grade 1. The registered manufacturer of ice cream was requested to comply with the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment, etc.) Regulations, 1947-1952 by repairing the defective recorder on his plant. Apart from this, there were no known cases of non-compliance with these Regulations. 116 visits were made to ice cream premises during the year.

Milk.

The two registered dairies have not been in use and these will in due course be struck off the register. Ten distributors are registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949-1954. Milk production is supervised by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and we are informed that 55 dairy farms are registered in this area; 27 of these are Tuberculin Tested herds.

Licences.

Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Dealers' Licences issued	10
Supplementary Licences issued	4

Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulations, 1949.

Dealers' Licences issued	1
Supplementary Licences issued	1

Sampling.

Thirty-five samples of pasteurised milk were collected from schools and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory for statutory examination. Six of these samples failed to pass the phosphatase test and the matter was immediately reported to the manager of the dairy, which was situated in the adjoining urban district. The Public Health Inspector and Licensing Authority for the area concerned were informed and the plant defect was quickly found; further samples proved satisfactory. The six samples which failed the test were biologically examined and no evidence of tuberculosis or *Brucella abortus* was found.

Including the above, 23 samples were submitted for biological examination; no evidence of tuberculosis or *Brucella abortus* was found.

Licensed Premises.

44 inspections of public houses were made during the year and major improvements to sanitary accommodation and glass washing facilities at twelve premises were supervised. The future of some premises is apparently causing concern among the brewers but it is noted with satisfaction that the Licensing Justices continue to press for improvements.

Bakehouses.

Seventy-eight visits were made to bakehouses during the year and, as a result of discussions with the owners, extensive improvements were made at five premises.

The fact that seven village bakehouses have closed down in recent years is a sign of the times.

Slaughter of Animals Acts, 1933—1954.

Twenty licences were issued to slaughtermen although a number of the men concerned are not engaged in regular slaughtering.

Knacker's Yard.

One old established Knacker's Yard is licensed but very little business is carried on; no horses were slaughtered and no horse carcasses were brought into the premises.

Disposal of Condemned Food.

Diseased meat is stained with a green dye before being despatched to a well known hide and skin firm for ultimate sterilization and conversion into animal feeding stuffs. Lungs, livers, pigs' heads and similar small articles are destroyed by burning at the slaughterhouse premises.

Unmarketable livers, not actually affected by disease, are allowed to be sent to manufacturing chemists for medicinal purposes.

Other foods which are unfit for human consumption are disposed of in the Council's controlled tips.

WATER SUPPLY

There has been no appreciable change in conditions since the last report. The consumption shows an increase of 8,000,000 gallons over the figure for 1955 and the supply has been maintained in all parishes. It is expected that a booster will be installed at Saxon Street and in operation before the summer of 1957, so as to increase pressure at Ashley and Cheveley.

Chlorination.

All supplies are chlorinated by automatic plant at the source.

Sampling.

All public supplies are sampled monthly for bacteriological examination and at quarterly intervals for full chemical analysis. New bores are sampled as and when required.

The following samples were collected and submitted to the Public Health Laboratory or Public Analyst for routine examination:—

Sample	Main Supplies		Private Supplies		Total
	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	
Chemical ..	9	1	1	10 }	73
Bacteriological ..	40	4	8		

One sample taken from a main supply contained iron compounds and required frequent flushing and another contained a faint trace of copper from new pipes. One private supply was overhauled and finally produced a good supply of water and arrangements were made for the other defective private sources to be replaced by a mains extension.

Public Health Act, 1936—Section 138.

Three statutory notices, requiring owners to provide piped water supplies to dwelling houses, were complied with.

GENERAL INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Shops Act, 1950.

The department is responsible for inspections under the provisions of Section 38 relating to sanitary accommodation, ventilation and heating of shops where persons are employed. In the majority of shops a combined inspection can be made to ensure compliance with the Act and the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955.

Swimming Baths and Pools.

There are no swimming baths or pools in the district.

Offensive Trades.

There are no premises registered for offensive trades in the district.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

A rodent officer is employed by the Council on survey and treatment duties under the provisions of the above Act. A close liaison is maintained with the Agricultural Executive Committee who continue to deal with agricultural lands by contract, and this department undertakes work on private and business premises and premises and land owned by the Council. A free service is now provided to householders but the occupiers of business premises are charged at the rate of 7/6 per hour.

Pet Animals Act, 1951.

No licence to keep a pet shop was issued during the year.

Eradication of Vermin.

Advice is given to occupiers on request, and where necessary rooms are sprayed with a modern insecticide or treated with a suitable powder. A rather heavy infestation of cockroaches which affected seven houses was dealt with but infestations are generally mild.

Petroleum (Regulations) Acts, 1928 and 1936.

The department is responsible for the licensing of petrol storage installations and the inspection and testing of new tanks.

Six new installations were approved during the year, which brings the total to 96 licences issued for the storage of petroleum spirit. In accordance with the Home Office recommendations, a seepage test was carried out on 25 underground tanks which were over 20 years of age; it was found that two of the tanks were leaking and while one was replaced the other passed out of use.

103 visits were made in connection with this legislation.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

The Soham Sewerage Scheme was completed during the year.

The immediate task was to disconnect all foul drains from the old and extremely defective road drains which discharged their contents either into the river or into open ditches in close proximity to dwellinghouses.

With close liaison between the department, the Resident Engineer and the Council's contractor, this work has progressed very satisfactorily and by the end of the year the following figures could be reported:—

(a) Number of premises disconnected from old road drains and connected to new sewer	162
(b) Other premises connected to the new sewer (including Council houses)	272
	<hr/>
TOTAL	434
	<hr/>
(c) Defective private drains which were partly or wholly relaid in response to informal action	41

The Bottisham sewerage scheme was almost completed during the year and 109 premises (including Council houses) were connected to the new sewer to abate the nuisances created by overflowing septic tanks. It is indeed unfortunate that the part of the scheme covering Lode and Swaffham Bulbeck could not be commenced before the latest "credit squeeze" had its effect.

Fourteen vault closets were converted to the water carriage system and further conversion schemes are going ahead. A closet conversion grant is not paid but owners are encouraged to embark on an improvement grant scheme, if the property is considered suitable.

All new drains are tested by water under pressure but this testing is only carried out by the Public Health Inspector at premises which are subject to routine inspections, such as food premises, factories, public houses and in cases where the owner has been requested to make good a defective drainage system. All other new drains are examined by a member of the Surveyor's staff.

A standard type of septic tank has been adopted throughout the area and this has proved satisfactory. With the increase in piped water supplies and modern sanitary fittings, it is inevitable, however, that ditches will become fouled and complaints continue to be received.

Eighteen small sewage treatment plants on Council Housing Estates and three village treatment works, all maintained by the Surveyor's Department, have been kept in satisfactory working order by regular supervision and cleansing.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

Household rubbish and salvage is still collected by direct labour, as outlined in previous reports, and there has been no increase either in personnel or vehicles, although one old vehicle has been replaced by a Shelvoke and Drewry Fore and Aft 16/18 cub. yard tipping vehicle. A light trailer has been provided for the carting of paper and it is found that the two existing vehicles can deal with half the area weekly and the other half fortnightly. Paper is baled at the Burwell depot, where metals and rags are stored for sale, with a consequent reduction in the cost of the service. The market price of waste paper, unfortunately, continues to fall but householders are still encouraged to save this material in the hope that the salvaging of same will once more become profitable.

A fortnightly collection is now provided in the Soham Fen area in lieu of the monthly clearance mentioned in the last report.

All rubbish is disposed of by controlled tipping at Burwell Broads and Fordham but the finding of suitable sites for this work is now becoming an urgent matter. The Council's rodent officer makes frequent inspections of the pits to ensure proper control over rats and by spraying at frequent intervals there has been no nuisance caused by cricket infestations.

The refuse vehicles are kept roadworthy by a high standard of maintenance and this vigilance is paying good dividends.

Collection and Disposal of Rubbish.

Year ended 31st March, 1957.

Number of loads cleared	785
Miles travelled	15,894
Gallons of fuel used	2,489

Salvaged Materials.

Material	Year ended 31st March, 1957			Year ended 31st December, 1955		
	T. C. Q.	£	s. d.	T. C. Q.	£	s. d.
Waste Paper	82 13 0	497 16 7		108 8 0	882 8 1	
Ferrous Metals	10 6 0	37 5 5		15 14 2	62 13 11	
Non-Ferrous Metals	10 1	47 8 9		2 12 1	56 2 3	
Rags and Sacking	2 1 0	47 16 7		2 8 3	67 2 11	
Sundries		12 11 10			18 13 1	
TOTALS	95 10 1	642 19 2		129 3 2	1087 0 3	

At the end of the year the following prices were being obtained for scrap materials:—

Mixed Waste Paper	£5 0s. 0d. per ton
Cast Iron	£5 10s. 0d. „ „
Light Iron	£2 5s. 0d. „ „
Lead	£58 0s. 0d. „ „
Brass	£110 0s. 0d. „ „
Rags	£32 0s. 0d. „ „
Sacking	£10 0s. 0d. „ „

Nightsoil Collection.

The disposal of nightsoil presents a problem to the occupiers of many cottages where garden space is limited but one anticipates the situation will be improved now that two sewerage schemes have been completed.

The Council has not undertaken the collection of nightsoil but a contractor is available to householders by private arrangement.

Cesspool Emptying.

The "Shelveke and Drewry" 1,100 gallon cesspool emptier continues to deal with all Council estate septic tanks and cesspools and also private cesspools on request.

The following statistics are of interest:—

Year ended 31st March, 1957.

(a) Council house cesspools cleared	893
(b) Private cesspools cleared	252
(c) Number of loads from (a)	1,432
(d) Number of loads from (b)	300
	1,732
(e) Mileage	8,776
(f) Fuel used	gallons 1,720
(g) Charges—Council Houses—one load	£1 10s. 0d.
do. —additional loads	£1 15s. 0d.
(h) Private—one load	£2 0s. 0d.
do. —additional loads	£1 0s. 0d.

Owing to the pressure of work, it has been necessary to engage a private contractor on numerous occasions and it has not been possible to assist the Surveyor's department in the desludging of small sewage disposal plants. The position has now improved, with the connection of many Council houses to new sewers, and the cost of hiring a private contractor will be substantially reduced during 1957.

On many occasions, cesspool contents are dumped into the Council's public sewers at Soham and Bottisham; this is not an entirely satisfactory procedure but it is wellnigh impossible to find suitable dumping places when agricultural land has been sown.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 & 1948.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health:—

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of		
		Inspection (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers prosecuted (5)
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are enforced by Local Authorities (i.e. factories not having mechanical power)	4	2	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the L.A. (i.e. factories having mechanical power)	59	111	5	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the L.A. (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	63	113	5	—

2. Cases in which defects were found:—

Particulars (1)	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred		No. of cases in which prosecu- tions were instituted (6)
			To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temp. (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective Drainage of Floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)—					
(a) Insufficient	4	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	3	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Out-work)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	5	3	—	—	—

