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ROCHFORD
RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH

(W. J. MOFFAT, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.)

FOR

1955

W. H. HOULDERSHAW, LTD., 49-55, LONDON ROAD
SOUTHEND-ON-SEA.



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PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Chairman : Councillor T. W. Bysouth

Vice Chairman : Councillor C. H. Muggleton

All members of the Council wishing to serve on the Committee

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Staff

Medical Officer of Health : W. J. Moffat, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
(also Area Medical Officer and Divisional School Officer,
South East Essex, Essex County Council).

Chief Sanitary Inspector : H. Jepson, M.S.I.A. (also Inspector
of Meat and Other Foods, Petroleum Inspector, etc.).

Assistant Sanitary Inspector : C. H. M. Hazlewood, M.S.I.A.,
A.R.San.I. (Inspector of Meat and Other Foods from
May, 1955). Resigned August, 1955. Appointment
vacant for remainder of year.

Clerk and Typist : Mrs. Z. Sargent.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
COUNCIL OFFICES,
ROCHFORD.

October, 1956.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Rochford Rural
District Council.*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present for your consideration my Annual Report on the health and sanitary conditions in your district for the year 1955.

There was a continuing increase in the local population during the year, due in the main to the presence of the many newcomers who have become owner occupiers of the recently built houses in the district. It would appear, from the birth and death rates for 1955 and the immediately preceding years, that the population of the district no longer differs so markedly from that of England and Wales as a whole, in having a greater than average proportion of the elderly in its constitution.

There was no marked incidence of infectious disease during the year. It is now over eight years since a case of diphtheria was notified, but the acceptance rate for immunisation against this disease is still below that considered sufficient to prevent its re-appearance. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the continued absence of the disease from the District will only be assured if it can be constantly brought home to all parents of young infants that they ought to take advantage of the facilities for immunisation that are available to them, either through the family doctor or the local Child Welfare Centre. This should not be forgotten despite the other similar procedures more recently available for the prevention of whooping cough, of tuberculosis and now of poliomyelitis.

The building of new houses, and particularly of those intended for owner occupation, continued at an even more rapid pace

throughout 1955 than in the previous year. The parish of Hockley had an increase of approximately fifteen per cent in its population in twelve months. Also in the housing sphere some progress was made with the clearance by demolition of unfit houses and the re-conditioning of others.

Similarly, continued progress took place in extending the system of main drainage in the more built up parts of the area here.

There still continues to take place what appears to be an undue proportion of residential development in parts of the District where there is no main sewer, or likelihood of such in the near future. An indication of the trouble that this may be storing up for the future can be seen from the numbers of inspections, i.e. 221, carried out by the Council's Inspectors under the heading of drainage and cesspools, and of the informal notices served in consequence.

The first full year of the post-war era of private slaughtering showed a notable increase in the number of animals killed and inspected as compared with pre-war years, largely because slaughterhouses in the District were killing to supply other areas as well as their own. A good deal of time had, naturally, to be devoted to the work of meat inspection.

In catering premises, including school canteens, the taking of swabs of crockery and utensils for bacteriological examination proved to be one successful way of checking on the success or otherwise of the cleansing practices of these establishments and of stimulating an interest in food hygiene generally in those concerned.

So far, the Council have not been persuaded of the advantages of installing wash hand basins in their public conveniences.

No recourse to formal action under Section 47 of the National Assistance Act 1948 was necessary to secure the removal of any aged and chronic sick person to hospital or other accommodation. What the position would be without the home help service is almost impossible to contemplate.

I am glad of this opportunity to thank the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their support during the year.

To Mr. Jepson, who because of recent legislation, one can address for the last time by the honoured title of Chief Sanitary Inspector, I am, as always greatly indebted for much assistance in the preparation of this report.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

W. J. MOFFAT.

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	.....	36,080
Registrar General's estimate of Resident population at mid-year, 1955	... ..	21,310
Number of Habitable Houses according to Rate Books at 31st December, 1955	.....	7,296

	£	s.	d.
*Rateable Value at 31st March, 1955	125,332	0	0
*Product of a Penny Rate at 31st March, 1955	506	19	1

*These figures are based on the property valuations which were operative prior to the revaluation which took place under the Rating and Valuation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1955. The latter did not come into effect until 1st April, 1956.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

There has been no substantial change in the social conditions of the area. The rapid rate of private house building in certain localities, and in the parish of Hockley in particular, which had been such a feature of the previous two years, continued during 1955. The imminent electrification of the railway to London is undoubtedly a factor in this, and the majority of the new householders travel daily to work in the Metropolitan area.

VITAL STATISTICS

In Table I on page 7 will be found certain extracts relating to population, births and deaths of residents of the Rochford Rural District for the years 1939 to 1955 inclusive. It will be noted that the rate at which the population is increasing has itself increased considerably in the past four years.

Deaths

In Table II on page 8 are given the causes of death of the 248 residents of the Rochford Rural District who died in 1955, whether death occurred in the District or elsewhere in England and Wales.

The principal cause of death was again, as in the immediately preceding years, disease of the heart and circulatory system.

This group accounted for 41 per cent of the total deaths, again the highest proportion so far recorded in any year. Coronary disease was the most frequent individual cause in this group.

Ages at Death

The various ages at which the 248 deaths occurred were as follows :—

Age at Death					Male	Female	Total
Under 1 year	...	...	...	...	2	2	4
1 and under 5	...	...	...	...	—	1	1
5 and under 15	...	...	...	...	1	3	4
15 and under 25	...	...	...	...	1	1	2
25 and under 45	...	...	...	...	4	2	6
45 and under 65	...	...	...	...	25	17	42
65 and under 75	...	...	...	...	39	22	61
75 and upwards	...	...	...	...	60	68	128
Totals					132	116	248

The deaths of persons aged 65 and upwards accounted for 75.2 per cent of all deaths, while the deaths in the age group 75 and upwards accounted for 51.6 per cent of the total, the highest proportion in this group so far recorded.

Births

The total of 317 births to residents of the District during 1955 was an increase of 50 on the previous year, and was comprised as follows :—

	<i>Males</i>			<i>Females</i>
Total	165	152
Legitimate	164	150
Illegitimate	1	2

The illegitimate births were three less than in the previous year. There were seven still births, three males and four females. None of these still births was illegitimate.

Deaths of Infants Under One Year

There were four deaths of infants under one year old, two male and two female, all of whom were legitimate. All of these infant deaths occurred in the first week of life—three in the first twenty-four hours. All had congenital defects or malformations,

TABLE I.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for the years 1939 to 1955 inclusive.

Year	Population esti- mated mid. year	Births (Nett)			Deaths (Nett)						Natural Increase (Excess of Births over Deaths)
		Number	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	Rate, England and Wales	Under 1 year of age		At all ages				
					Number	Rate, England and Wales, per 1,000 "related" births.	Number	Rate per 1,000 estimated population	Standardised Death Rate	Rate, England and Wales	
1939	16,920	251	14.8	14.8	12	51	183	10.8	8.4	12.1	68
1940	16,200	215	13.2	14.1	11	57	220	13.6	11.1	14.4	5
1941	15,070	238	15.5	13.9	8	60	205	13.6	11.1	13.5	33
1942	14,880	249	16.7	15.6	16	51	220	14.7	12.0	12.3	29
1943	14,450	280	19.3	16.2	8	49	209	14.4	11.8	13.0	71
1944	14,800	275	18.5	17.5	8	45.4	191	12.8	†	11.6	84
1945	15,240	264	17.3	16.1	14	46.0	220	14.4	†	11.4	44
1946	16,830	317	18.8	19.2	16	42.9	245	14.6	†	11.5	72
1947	17,480	380	21.1	20.6	10	41.4	255	14.5	†	12.0	125
1948	18,550	330	17.8	17.9	5	33.9	218	11.8	†	10.8	112
1949	18,700	323	17.3	16.7	4	32.4	234	12.5	9.6	11.7	89
1950	19,000	261	13.7*(15.1)	15.8	9	29.6	255	13.4	10.3	11.6	6
1951	19,010	241	12.7*(13.8)	15.5	5	29.7	227	11.8	9.0	12.5	14
1952	19,310	290	15.0*(16.4)	15.3	4	27.6	242	13.0	9.9	11.3	48
1953	19,540	271	13.9*(15.3)	15.5	6	26.8	245	12.5	8.9	11.4	26
1954	20,150	267	13.3*(14.6)	15.2	4	25.4	274	13.6	9.7	11.3	—7
1955	21,310	317	14.9*(16.4)	15.0†	4	24.9	248	11.6	8.3	11.7†	69

†Provisional.

†No Area Comparability Factor available for these years.

*The figures in brackets represent the birth rate when allowance is made for the differing age and sex distribution of the population of the District as compared with that of England and Wales as a whole.

TABLE II

Causes of Death of Residents 1955

The following table compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar-General, is classified under the 36 headings based on the Abbreviated List of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death 1948.

Causes of Death	Males	Females	Totals
Tuberculosis, Respiratory	0	0	0
Tuberculosis, Other	0	1	1
Syphilitic Disease	1	0	1
Diphtheria	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0
Meningococcal Infection	0	0	0
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	0	1
Measles	0	0	0
Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	0	1	1
Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach ...	5	2	7
Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	6	1	7
Malignant Neoplasm, Breast ...	0	3	3
Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus ...	0	0	0
Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	8	8	16
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	0	0	0
Diabetes	1	2	3
Vascular Lesions of Nervous System ...	26	19	45
Coronary Disease, Angina	29	15	44
Hypertension with heart disease ...	7	3	10
Other heart disease	15	24	39
Other circulatory disease	3	7	10
Influenza	0	2	2
Pneumonia	12	11	23
Bronchitis	6	4	10
Other diseases of Respiratory System	1	0	1
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum ...	1	1	2
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea ...	0	1	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	0	0
Hyperplasia of Prostate	2	0	2
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion ...	0	0	0
Congenital Malformations	0	1	1
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	7	4	11
Motor Vehicle Accidents	1	0	1
All other accidents	2	3	5
Suicide	1	0	1
Homicide and operations of War ...	0	0	0
Totals	135	113	248

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

Public Health Officers

The list of officers of the health department during 1955 as shown on the first page of this report, shows no change in the numbers of staff as compared with the previous year, but it will be noted that the post of Additional Sanitary Inspector was vacant from August, until the end of the year. The range of duties was as described in previous reports.

Committees of the Council

The following standing committees of the Council are concerned directly or indirectly with public health matters :

- Public Health Committee
- Sewerage Committee
- Housing Committee
- Pleasure Grounds Committee
- Town Planning and Plans Committee
- Civil Defence Committee

Representation on Other Bodies

The Rural District Council was represented during 1955 on the following committees or bodies which are concerned, directly or indirectly with public health matters :—

- Rural District Councils Association—two members.
- South-East Essex Health Area Sub-Committee—
three members.
- South-East Essex Tuberculosis Care Association—
one member.
- Essex Boroughs and District Councils Association—
two members.
- East Central Essex Area Planning Sub-Committee—
two members.
- South-East Essex Divisional Executive for Education—
three members.

Local Health Authority Services

Among the services provided in the Rochford Rural District by the Local Health Authority, i.e. Essex County Council, were a weekly child welfare clinic at Rochford Health Services Clinic; similar child welfare clinics held twice monthly in hired premises at Hullbridge, Hockley and Great Wakering, and monthly at Canewdon, Barling and Foulness. Because of the great increase in population in that area, the twice monthly session at Hockley was increased to a weekly one towards the end of the year. Vaccination and immunisation were also carried out at these clinics. Ante-natal clinics were held weekly at Rochford and fortnightly at Great Wakering, while a weekly clinic at Rayleigh served part of Hockley and Hullbridge.

Weekly clinics for school children's minor ailments were also held at Rochford, Great Wakering and Rayleigh and such auxiliary services as speech therapy and physiotherapy were also available at these places. Eye clinics for school children and pre-school children were also provided, by arrangement with the Southend Hospital Management Committee, at the Health Services Clinic at Rochford and Rayleigh.

Dental services for school children and for mothers and young children were held regularly at the County Council's Health Services Clinics at Rochford and Rayleigh.

During the year, the Essex County Council had under construction a new Health Services Clinic at Great Wakering which was anticipated coming into service in the early part of 1956. Thereafter, apart from the vastly improved premises which will then be available, additional services such as dentistry, speech therapy and eye clinics would be available in Great Wakering.

In regard to nursing staff, the midwifery and home nursing services were maintained by seven home nurse midwives and one part-time nurse, all of whom were residents in the Rural District. Three health visitors served the whole Rural District except for Hullbridge, which is within the area covered by the health visitors from Rayleigh.

The Home Help Service, which is entirely maintained by the employment of part-time Domestic Helps, continued to prove an indispensable aid to many, particularly the aged and chronic sick, in the community, and notably relieved pressure on the hospitals.

Among other facilities made available by the Local Health Authority are the provision of convalescence for patients not

requiring medical or nursing care, the loan of sickroom equipment for the home nursing of patients and the provision of additional nourishment and shelters, if required, for tuberculous patients.

The ambulance services in the County are centrally administered as are also the County Council's Mental Health Services.

Hospital Services

The hospital services available to residents of the District continued on similar lines to those described in former years, i.e. the general hospitals in Southend and Rochford, the latter also providing hospital maternity services, Westcliff hospital for infectious disease cases and Lancaster House Chest Clinic. Owing to the relative nearness of the Metropolitan area, many patients also obtain treatment at hospitals there.

Laboratory Services

The bacteriological examinations of water supplies, milk, ice cream and for purposes of food hygiene generally continued to be undertaken as in previous years, by the Medical Director of the Westcliff Laboratory, Public Health Laboratory Services.

Use was also made of the facilities of the Counties Public Health Laboratories when the occasion arose for the complete, i.e. chemical and bacteriological analysis of water samples.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

As will be seen from the tabular statements of the incidence of notifiable infectious disease other than tuberculosis, set out on pages 14 and 15, there was no undue prevalence of any of the commoner infectious diseases. Measles once more exhibited its biennial prevalence in the odd years as far as this District was concerned.

Tuberculosis

The number of new cases notified for the first time during the year was twelve—which figure is the lowest so far recorded, but the number of patients already suffering from the disease transferring into the District continues to show a steady increase and

is another measure of the amount of new house building going on at present. The additions to the Tuberculosis Register were made up as follows :

Age	New Notifications				Transfers into the district			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Under 1 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 — 5 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 — 10 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 — 15 ...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
15 — 20 ...	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
20 — 25 ...	1	1	—	—	1	2	—	—
25 — 35 ...	1	2	—	—	3	2	—	—
35 — 45 ...	1	—	—	—	2	2	—	—
45 — 55 ...	1	1	—	1	—	2	—	—
55 — 65 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and over ...	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS ...	6	4	—	2	7	8	—	—

There were four deaths of tuberculous patients. Two males died from the respiratory form of the disease, one female from tuberculous meningitis, whilst the fourth case—a female—died from causes other than tuberculosis.

During the year the names of sixteen persons were removed from the Tuberculosis Register. Nine of these had recovered from the disease and seven others, in whom the disease remained active, had gone to live in other districts.

At the end of the year there were 118 names on the Tuberculosis Register as compared with 111 at 1st January 1955. These cases were classified as follows :

	<i>Respiratory</i>		<i>Non-Respiratory</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
1st January, 1955	56	39	4	12
31st December, 1955	58	46	2	12

Poliomyelitis

The eight cases of poliomyelitis occurred in the period September to December. One of the four paralytic cases—a boy of eight years—died on the third day after onset. Of the non-paralytic cases three were members of the same family, but apart from these

there was no direct evidence of case to case spread or contact with possible intermediaries.

Food Poisoning

Included in the total of 21 notified cases of food poisoning were ten hospital patients and four members of the kitchen staff. The causative organism was salmonella typhi-murium, and the vehicles were most probably cakes and buns served at tea.

One of these four members of the kitchen staff, who was known to have handled the suspect articles of food which had been eaten by all those affected, had been admitted to hospital and appendicectomy performed two days prior to the onset of symptoms in the first case in this outbreak.

This man's previous history had been that some seven weeks prior to the outbreak he had been admitted to hospital for investigation because of abdominal symptoms. He had remained an in-patient for three weeks and among the investigations made, the one bacteriological examination of faeces had proved negative. Similarly, when he was convalescing prior to his brief (two-day) return to duty, he had symptoms which led to further bacteriological examination, again with negative results. It was not until two weeks subsequent to his operation that a faecal specimen yielded salmonella typhi-murium.

Infective Hepatitis

More than half of the 20 cases notified occurred in Rochford in the first quarter of the year. In one family, five members were affected. There were also multiple cases in the autumn in the children in one family at Sutton, and in another family at Hockley, but in the remaining cases no connection between them or other cases could be traced.

Puerperal Pyrexia

Amending Regulations regarding the notification of puerperal pyrexia came into force on 1st March, 1955. The new Regulations require the cause of the condition where known, to be stated. Of the total of 73 cases notified during the year, 70 were from the Maternity Department of Rochford Hospital, 54 being within the period during which the new Regulations were in force. In 16 cases a cause was given, urinary infection accounting for half of these, uterine infection and mastitis the remainder.

Table Shewing Local Distribution of Cases of Notifiable Disease (Other than Tuberculosis) During 1955.

PARISH	Scarlet Fever	Whooping Cough	Measles	Poliomyelitis		Puerperal Pyrexia	Infective Hepatitis	Food Poisoning	Dysentery	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Meningococcal Infection	Total
				Paralytic	Non-Paralytic									
Ashington	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	11
Barling Magna	5	3	33	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42
Canewdon	2	—	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	33
Foulness	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	5
Hawkeley	1	—	11	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Hockley	1	7	58	1	—	1	3	2	4	—	4	—	—	81
Paglesham	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Rochford	12	3	119	—	—	72	14	19	—	—	—	—	1	243
Stambridge	—	—	10	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Sutton	2	1	7	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Great Wakering	22	1	34	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	59
TOTAL	45	15	317	4	4	73	20	21	4	3	4	2	1	513

HOUSING

Unfit Houses

As required by the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954, the Council furnished the Minister of Housing and Local Government in July 1955, with an estimate of 218 unfit houses in the District, which would require to be dealt with in the 5-year period either by demolition or extensive reconditioning to bring them to an adequate standard. The Council decided that 40 of these 218 properties would be dealt with in the course of the first year.

The position in regard to action already taken under the Housing Act 1936, from January 1947 up to the date of the submission of the above return, was that a total of 167 houses had been dealt with. Demolition had taken place in respect of 50, whilst a further 14 were awaiting demolition, although some of these were still occupied. Reconditioning of 91 properties had taken place and undertakings by the owners not to relet had been accepted, or closing orders had been made, in the remaining 12 cases.

The rehousing of the occupants of these unfit properties is not without its difficulties, as there is a very considerable waiting list of applicants for housing by the Council. This factor tends to put a brake on the work of dealing with unfit properties.

New House Building

The rate of new building in the District continued undiminished during 1955. The Council completed 32 new houses, while 340 were completed for private owners. At the end of the year there were under construction 57 houses for the Council and 345 for private developers.

Council Owned Houses

At 31st December 1955 the Council owned 895 dwellings.

Housing Repairs and Improvements

During the year 35 applications were approved by the Council for improvement grants under the Housing Act, 1949. The number of properties on which improvements were completed during the year also amounted to 35.

Only one application was received from a tenant under the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, objecting to a rent increase on the grounds of disrepair. The owner subsequently carried out the necessary works.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER SUPPLY

Main Water Supplies in the District

In 1955 various small lengths of water main were laid to serve the several new housing estates then in course of development. There were 557 new connections made to the mains during the year, of which 9 were to existing properties.

Frequent samples of the raw water supplies and of the main water as supplied to consumers, are taken by the statutory water undertakers, the Southend Waterworks Company, for examination in their own laboratory. In addition, from time to time, samples are submitted by the Company and also by the Council, to the Counties Public Health Laboratories for examination. A copy of a report from the Counties Public Health Laboratories on the chemical analysis and bacteriological examination of a sample of main water in supply, taken on the 23rd June, 1955, from the Southend Waterworks Company's mains in the District is set out on page 18.

There was no instance of any contamination of the main water supply during the year. The waters in supply are not liable to have any plumbo-solvent action.

The table on page 20 shows, for each of the eleven parishes of the Rochford Rural District, the number of houses therein and the estimated population served by the main water supplies at the end of the year 1955.

Shallow Well Supplies

Once again there was a decrease in the number of shallow wells used for domestic supplies. Apart from a few houses beyond reasonable reach of the water mains, which are dependent on shallow wells for their supplies, there remained at the end of the year, the following house properties on the line of the existing water mains which still relied on shallow wells for their supply.

Great Wakering	...	...	4	Rochford	...	...	3
Barling Magna	...	...	10	Canewdon	...	...	1
Stambridge	...	...	6				

The majority of the above properties are owner occupied, and in such cases the owners have been reluctant to connect to the

main water supply because of the expense involved and the lack, up to the present, of a main sewer to serve their properties.

WATER ANALYSIS

Copy of a report by Counties Public Health Laboratories on a sample of water taken from mains of the Southend Waterworks Company, at South Fambridge, 23rd June, 1955.

Chemical results in parts per Million

Appearance	...	...	...	...	Clear and Bright
Turbidity	...	...	...	...	Nil
Colour	...	...	...	...	7
Odour	...	...	...	...	Nil
Reaction, pH	...	...	...	...	9.0
Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	...	...	Absent
Electric Conductivity	...	...	...	...	500
Total Solids	...	...	...	...	335
Chlorine present as Chloride	...	...	...	...	50
Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate	...	...	...	...	15
Hardness : Total	...	...	...	...	130
Carbonate	...	...	...	...	15
Non-carbonate	...	...	...	...	115
Nitrate Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	4.4
Nitrite Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	Absent
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	0.007
Albuminoid Nitrogen	...	...	...	...	0.072
Oxygen Absorbed	...	...	...	...	1.0
Residual Chloride	...	...	...	...	Absent
Metals : Iron	...	...	...	...	0.15
Other metals	...	...	...	...	Absent

Bacteriological Results

No. of Colonies developing on			
Agar :			
1 day at 37°C.		0 per ml.	
2 days at 37°C.		2 per ml.	
	<i>Present</i>	<i>Absent</i>	<i>Probable</i>
	<i>in</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>number</i>
Presumptive Coli-aerogenes	—	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.
Reaction	—	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.
Bact. coli (Type 1)	—	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.

This sample is clear and bright in appearance, faintly alkaline in reaction and free from metals apart from a minute trace of iron. The hardness of the water and its content of mineral and saline constituents are very moderate. The water is of satisfactory organic quality and of a high standard of bacterial purity.

These results are indicative of a water which is pure and wholesome in character and suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

(Signed) ROY C. HOATHER.

5th July, 1955.

MAIN WATER SUPPLIES

Houses and Population in Each Parish on Main Supply, December 1955.

Parish	Acreage	No. of Houses	Estimated Population	Houses on Main Supply	Estimated Population on Main Supply	Houses Supplied by Standpipe	Estimated Population Supplied by Standpipe
Ashington (including South Farnbridge)	2,503	468	1,366	430	1,256	4 + 10*	12 + 25
Barling Magna (including Little Wakering)	2,747	332	969	310	905	9	27
Canewdon	6,845	268	802	261	762	6	18
Foulness†	7,235	109	318	109	318	—	—
Great Wakering	3,314	951	2,777	931	2,718	—	—
Hawkwell	1,408	1,089	3,180	1,083	3,162	2 + 4*	6 + 12
Hockley* (including Hullbridge)	3,631	1,912	5,583	1,893	5,527	13 + 3*	39 + 9
Paglesham	1,687	115	336	80	234	6	18
Rochford	2,988	1,824	5,961‡	1,780	5,833‡	27	81
Stambridge...	2,202	162	473	156	454	—	—
Sutton	1,520	66	193	66	193	—	—
	36,080	7,296	21,958	7,099	21,362	67 + 17*	201 + 46

*Council standpipes on roadside. Other standpipes are in curtilage of private properties.

†War Department Mains.

‡includes population in hospital and hostel accommodation.

Drainage and Sewerage

Some further progress with the much needed extensions to the sewerage system in the District took place during 1955, work on the laying of main sewers in Albert Road, York Road and Alexandra Road, all in Hawkwell parish, was well advanced. This will provide, when completed, additional lengths of sewer totalling approximately 1,400 yards. The Council has undertaken this work in these three roads as part of their general scheme for sewerage extensions in the District, instead of trying to invoke the Private Street Works Act.

The major project of sewerage being undertaken during 1955, was the Hullbridge No. 1 scheme which was well in hand at the end of the year. This scheme cannot become operative until Rayleigh U.D.C. have completed the extensions to their Sewage Disposal Works, which will drain the Hullbridge area.

In addition to the above projects, 511 yards of soil and surface water sewers were laid by the Council in Rochford Garden Estate during the year, while private estate development entailed the laying of 568 yards, 376 being in Hockley parish and 192 in Hawkwell.

The new connections made to the main sewerage system during the year were as follows :—

<i>Parish</i>						<i>No. of Connections</i>
(a) Existing dwellings :						
Ashingdon	...	...	...	...	...	12
Hawkwell	...	...	...	...	...	3
Hockley	...	...	...	...	...	2
(b) New dwellings :						
Great Wakering	...	...	...	...	...	7
Hawkwell	...	...	...	...	...	22
Hockley	...	...	...	...	...	150
Rochford	...	...	...	...	...	43

PUBLIC CLEANSING SERVICES

To meet the ever increasing demand, one additional refuse collection vehicle was put into service in June 1955, and the staff establishment was increased by one. Otherwise the service continued along the lines previously described. There are now 6,473 houses from which refuse is collected regularly and 705 from which a pail closet collection is made. The pail closet collection was extended to Foulness in November 1955, but as the Council's own resources were insufficient, a contractor was employed.

The collection of salvage continued and the following amounts were collected :—

	tons	cwts.	qrs.	lbs.
Waste Paper ...	137	18	1	—
Other Salvage ...	5	6	3	—
Total	143	5	—	—

The value of this salvage was £1,222 8s. 4d.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

The table below shows for the year 1955 the number and nature of the inspections made by the Council's Inspectors, together with the number of notices, formal and informal, served under the relevant enactments and as a result of those inspections :

Nature of Inspection	Total Inspec- tions	Notices Served	
		Informal	Formal
Camping Sites	19	—	—
Damage by Pests Act	101	—	—
Disinfections	3	—	—
Disinfestations	9	2	—
Drainage and Cesspools	221	47	3
Drainage (Essex County Council Act, 1952)	2	—	13
Factories Act, 1937	17	—	—
Food Premises	109	18	—
Hairdressers' Byelaws	1	—	—
Heating Appliances (Fireguards Act, 1952)	1	—	—
House Refuse Removal and Dustbins	57	28	1
Housing and Public Health Acts ...	598	51	4
Houseboats	98	1	1
Infectious Disease Enquiries	92	—	—
Knackers Yards	8	—	—
Licensed Premises	8	2	—
Miscellaneous	199	—	—
Movable Dwellings	24	—	—
National Assistance Act, 1948	—	—	—
Nuisances, Public Health Act	62	2	1
Outworkers (Factories Act, 1937) ...	—	—	—
Pet Animals Act, 1951	3	—	—
Petroleum Acts	34	—	—
Rag, Flock and other Filling Materials Act, 1951	—	—	—
Rehousing Enquiries	33	—	—
Schools	11	—	—
Smoke Abatement	5	3	—
Shops Act	16	—	—
Water Courses	5	3	—
Water Samples	8	—	—
Water Supplies	23	2	—
Totals	1,767	159	23

Factories Act, 1937

In 1955 there were 68 factories for which the Council were responsible for the enforcement of the provisions of the Factories Act 1937, relating to sanitary accommodation. In 14, i.e. the factories without power, the Council were also responsible for the provisions relating to cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation and floor drainage. Apart from one instance of want of cleanliness, which was remedied on representation, no contraventions of the above provisions of the Act were discovered during the year.

There were 41 outworkers in the District in 1955. All were employed by factories outside the District.

Damage by Pests Act, 1949

The Council gave free treatment in the course of the year to 35 private dwelling houses for minor infestations, principally by rats. It was not necessary to conduct regular surveys of the District for the purpose of ascertaining infestations.

Licensed Premises

From time to time, inspections of licensed premises were carried out. In one instance, it was found necessary to make a thorough survey of the premises concerned and to ask for extensive works of maintenance and repair, owing to the progressive deterioration which had taken place over a period.

Houseboats

The action taken as a result of Part VII of the Essex County Council Act 1952, and reported in my previous annual report, resulted in the complete removal of all except one of the houseboats in the District. The majority of the craft dealt with were in poor condition and only used for part-time occupation.

Movable Dwellings and Camping Sites

There were six caravan sites in the District at the end of the year, all but one in the parish of Hockley (three at Hullbridge, one in Lower Road, and the fifth in the centre of Hockley). The sixth site was in Rochford. On the average at any time during the year, there were some 320 families living permanently in caravans on these sites. A further 40 caravans were in occupation on individual sites, but in the majority of cases the latter were more temporary occupations, as the owners were awaiting the building of their houses on the sites.

FOOD

Meat

The table below shows the extent of the work of meat inspection carried out by the Council's Inspectors during 1955, which was the first full year of private slaughtering since 1939.

**Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned
in whole or in part**

	Cattle exclud- ing Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed	889	13	99	548	2264	—
Number inspected	885	13	99	513	2263	—
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci :</i>						
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	80	1	—	8	28	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci ...	9.03	7.7	—	1.55	1.23	—
<i>Tuberculosis only :</i>						
Whole carcasses condemned	1	—	—	—	1	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	44	2	1	—	10	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	5.08	15.3	1.00	—	0.48	—
<i>Cysticercosis :</i>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	1	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration ...	1	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—	—

It is of interest to compare the above figures for animals inspected with the corresponding figures for 1939. Approximately similar numbers of calves, sheep and pigs were inspected in that year, but only one-eighth of the number of cattle as compared with 1955.

The five slaughterhouses mentioned in last year's report continued to be used regularly throughout the year. The work of

inspection devolving on the Council's Officers inside and outside of normal office hours demanded, on an average, the services of one officer for a half of every day. As the Council were without an Additional Sanitary Inspector from early August until the end of the year, and indeed well into 1956, it was a commendable effort on the part of the Chief Sanitary Inspector that all but a few of the animals slaughtered were inspected. As many as 781 visits had to be paid during the year to slaughterhouses. Under the Slaughter of Animals Acts, sixteen licences were granted to slaughtermen during 1955.

No meat was condemned in butchers or other retail premises in the District during the year.

Milk

Following on the survey of the area undertaken in the previous year by his Area Milk Officer, the Minister of Food together with the Minister of Health, made an order specifying the Rochford Rural District as an area in which only special designated milks may be sold. This order came into operation on December 6th, 1955.

There now remains only one firm of producer-retailers of milk operating in the District, and registered as such by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. There are as well four distributors of milk who operate from two premises. Each purchases milk already bottled from licenced distributors outside this District.

The Council granted licences during 1955 to 26 dealers to sell sterilised milk from their premises. These premises are mainly shops in the general store category. Other licences were granted to 11 milk dealers to sell pasteurised milk and to a further five for the sale of tuberculin tested milk. Two supplementary licences were granted to distributors whose dairies are situated elsewhere, to retail milk in the District.

Clean Food Campaigns

At 31st December 1955, the following premises were engaged in handling food of one kind or another :

Catering Premises	...	...	31
Licensed Premises...	...	...	30
General Stores	...	...	74
Confectionery Shops	...	...	18

Butchers	...	...	...	153	14
Greengrocers	...	...	...		10
Fishmongers	...	...	...		6
Bakehouses	...	...	...	171	8

Because of the provisions of the Essex County Council Act 1933, the registration of premises in the Rural District under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938, was not applicable. Under the former Act there were 64 premises and five vendors from vehicles registered for the sale of ice cream. Two hawkers of food were registered under the Essex County Council Act 1952.

There were no dairies as such in the District registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations 1949.

Because of lack of staff only 12 visits were paid to premises registered under the Essex County Council Act 1933, for the sale of ice cream. Samples were taken on these visits for grading on the Methylene Blue Test, by the Public Health Laboratories, with the following results :—

Grade		I	II	III	IV
No. of Samples	...	5	4	1	2

All samples were the pre-packed article and all originated outside the Rural District.

No organised educational activity for food handlers took place, but during routine inspections of food premises discussions always took place with the management on the current legislative requirements and on any practical difficulties regarding the realisation of a satisfactory standard of hygiene in the premises concerned. The practice which was begun in the previous year of taking swabs for bacteriological examination from crockery and utensils in catering establishments, including school canteens, was continued during the summer months of 1955. In all, 35 sets of 6 swabs each were taken, 24 from catering establishments and 11 from school canteens. In the former category several were repeat examinations, because of the unsatisfactory results obtained originally. Generally improved results were obtained on the second occasion. This bacteriological check on the efficiency of the cleansing processes in use has had probably a greater effect in stimulating interest in food hygiene generally than any other thing tried so far.

Disposal of Condemned Food

The following tinned foods were condemned during the year and disposed of :—

Meat	12 tins
Preserves	4 tins
Soup	4 tins
Fish	6 tins
Milk	19 tins
Vegetables	24 tins
Fruit	31 tins

The practice of colouring condemned fresh meat with an approved indelible dye was continued. The meat so treated was then collected for industrial purpose by a contractor.