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Urban District of Solihull



ANNUAL REPORT

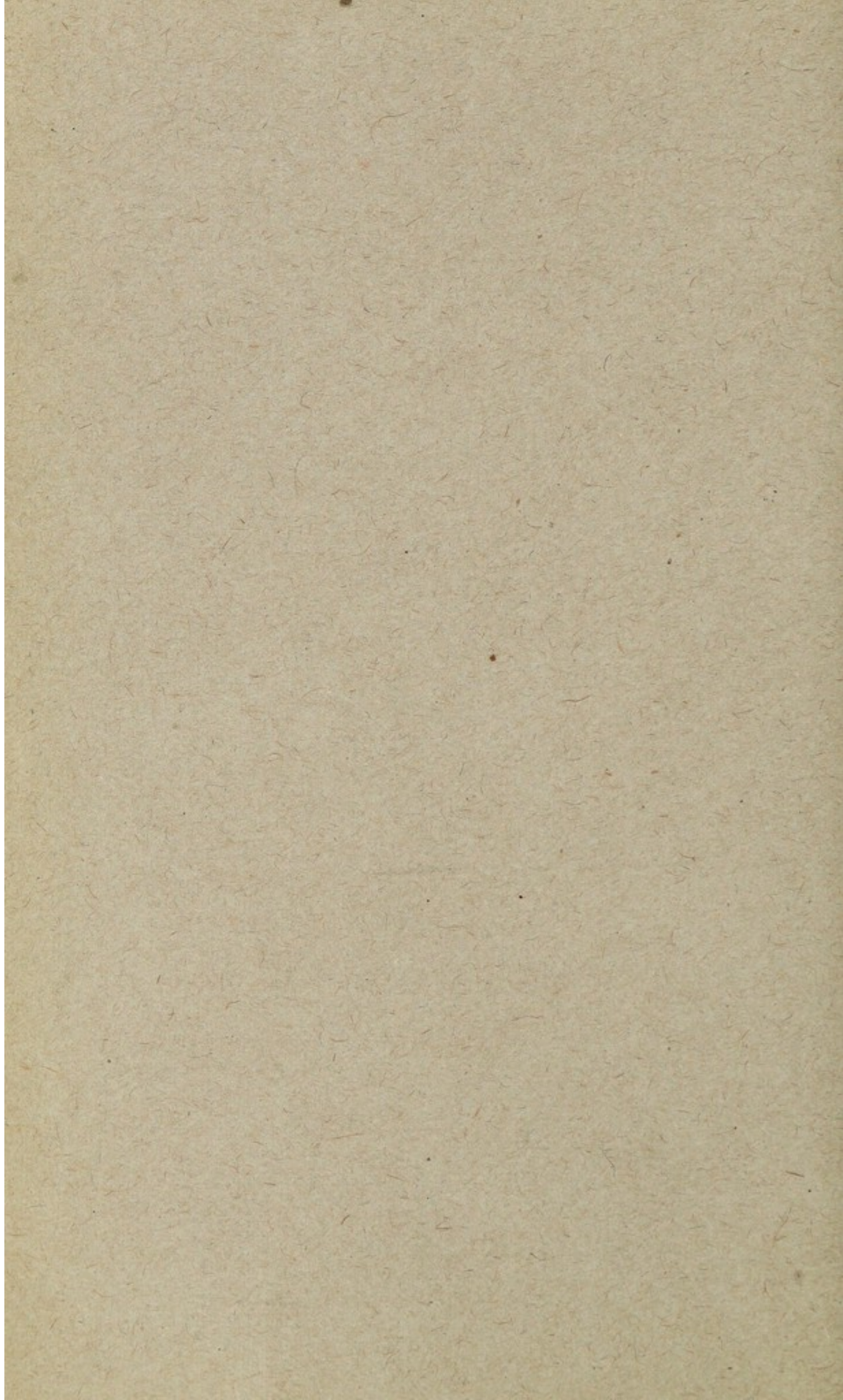
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**HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT
FOR THE YEAR 1949**

by

**IAN M. McLACHLAN
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH**

*Printed at
The Dorridge Press
Blue Lake Road, Knowle
Birmingham*



69, NEW ROAD,
SOLIHULL.
November, 1950.

Although this introduction is written by me as Medical Officer of Health for Solihull it incorporates aspects seen by me as Area Medical Officer to the Warwickshire County Council.

To the Solihull Urban District Council

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

My Annual Report for the year 1949 will make most depressing reading as the whole year has been one of frustration and uncertainty. One is appalled at the contrast between the lavish spending of the Regional Hospital Board on curative medicine compared with the sum spent on preventative medicine; the old axiom "Prevention is better than Cure" seems to be completely out of date.

I consider that certain branches of the National Health Service now under the control of the Regional Hospital Board could be administered as efficiently at much less cost by the Local Authority, and I find there is no co-operation on the part of the Regional Hospital Board with the Medical Officer of Health.

It would be to the advantage of the Medical Officer of Health to have one set of working conditions, one superannuation scheme and one "boss."

Day Nurseries. These should only be provided for women who are the sole wage earners and for women during their confinements or short-term illnesses. They should not be provided so as to encourage mothers to go out to work for pin money and evade their responsibility towards their children.

School Medical Service. Much of the interest for the School Medical Officer (due to clinical follow-up) after the school examination has now gone so that the work has become monotonous and soul-destroying.

Housing. Many of the problems that confront me as Medical Officer of Health are indirectly due to the Housing shortage. Garages, offices, etc. appear to be more important than homes for the people.

School Dental Service. Owing to the shortage of Dental Surgeons the school dental service is rapidly deteriorating and a vicious circle has been set up as much more work has to be done in each mouth than ever before. The result is that the children are not getting the attention they should do.

Clean Food. The general public appears to have lost its sense of proportion regarding this important matter. Wrapped bread is demanded but the inevitable cat still sleeps in the shop window of food shops, whilst dogs still continue to urinate on milk bottles and foodstuffs stored near the ground.

Aged People. As one who has worked in a Municipal Hospital where beds were always available for old people, I am appalled at the way old people are left to die at home without hospital care. To me it appears that the aged are not wanted in the present State. If animals were permitted to linger and die as some of our old people are doing at the present time there would be a general outcry and prosecutions, yet we call certain tribes uncivilised who permit euthenasia for their old people.

Notification of Infectious Diseases. I find that there is a growing tendency on the part of general practitioners and hospitals not to notify infectious diseases and tuberculosis.

Tuberculosis. The general attitude to tuberculosis is one of placid indifference; it has not the publicity value of smallpox and infantile paralysis. In Solihull we are fortunate in having excellent co-operation with the local Chest Clinic Staff. I feel that artificial pneumo-thorax facilities and evening sessions (with over-time rates for the medical and nursing staff) and evening X-ray facilities would be an advantage to the patients. After the tuberculosis patient has become chronic no one appears to be interested any longer. The present tuberculosis scheme is under the control of too many Departments.

Road Deaths. The police are frequently criticised because a large amount of their time is occupied "chasing" motorists and not investigating burglaries, etc. The following figures for Solihull Urban District show that road accidents represent one of the biggest killers in our midst. Indirectly the Police Force do extremely valuable public health work in preventing deaths and serious ill health.

Accidents involving persons.

Fatal	....	....	....	....	6
Serious	....	....	....	....	48
Slight	....	....	....	....	170
Other Accidents	....	....	....	....	74
					<hr/>
			Total	....	298
					<hr/>

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

IAN McLACHLAN,

Medical Officer of Health.

SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Chairman of the Council : Councillor M. WALKER, J.P.

Vice-Chairman of the Council : Councillor H. N. CARTWRIGHT,
M.C., J.P., C.C.

Members of the Public Health Committee : Councillor V. A. RAINIER (Chairman), Councillor Dr. D. E. QUINET (Vice-Chairman), Councillors C. F. BAKER, M. G. LINES, P. S. LYONS, H. I. PEDLEY, V. A. PERRY and H. H. PLESTER.

The CHAIRMAN of the Council is an *ex-officio* Member of the Public Health Committee.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Medical Officer of Health :

IAN M. McLACHLAN, L.R.C.P. & S. Ire, L.M., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector :

a, c, e, f.

ERNEST VAUGHAN.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector :

a, c, d.

JOSEPH S. FORMAN.

Additional Sanitary Inspectors :

b, c.

GEOFFREY N. DEAN.

b, c, e.

STANLEY MONKS

(Resigned July, 1949).

a, c, d.

ERNEST SOUTHERN.

b, c.

ROBERT P. CHURCHILL.

Rodent Inspector :

E. CALLAGHAN.

Clerks :

GLADYS A. ALCOCK (*nee* HALFORD).

PHYLLIS H. HOPKINS.

BRENDA C. MYERS

(Resigned August, 1949).

SHEILA M. EMMETT

(Commenced September, 1949).

Public Analysts :

BOSTOCK HILL & RIGBY.

- a. Qualifying Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.
- b. Qualifying Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute and Sanitary Inspectors' Association Joint Examination Board.
- c. Meat Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.
- d. Sanitary Science Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.
- e. Smoke Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute.
- f. Certificate of the Institute of Public Cleansing.

SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT

A. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Population Year 1949 (Registrar General)	....	....	66,850
Birth Rate	....	....	15.5
Still Birth Rate—Rate per 1,000 total births	....	....	16.8
Death Rate	....	....	8.8
Deaths from Diseases and Accidents of Pregnancy and Child-birth	}	From Sepsis	—
	}	„ other causes	—
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age :—			
All Infants per 1,000 live births	....	....	31.3
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	....	....	28.5
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	....	....	2.8
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	....	....	—
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	....	....	1
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	....	....	3

Population.—There is a slight increase in the Population, viz., 66,850 as against the figure of 66,600 in 1948.

Birth Rate.—The figure of 15.5 per 1,000 is lower than in 1948, but compares favourably with the figure for England and Wales, viz., 16.7

Death Rate.—The figure 8.8. is lower than the figure for England and Wales, viz., 11.7.

Statistics for the past few years and of England and Wales are shewn in Table II.

B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

1. *Public Health Officers.*—A complete list of personnel is given at the front of this report. The Inspectorial staff now comprises a Chief Sanitary Inspector, his deputy and four additional Sanitary Inspectors. In addition, appropriate clerical staff, and one operative carrying out the work of rodent destruction.

2. *Laboratory Facilities.*—Bacteriological examinations carried out by the Public Health Laboratory, Coventry.

	Positive.	Negative.	Total.
Diphtheria	—	4	4
Paratyphoid	2	22	24
Respiratory Tuberculosis	3	90	93
Total			121

3. *Hospitals.*—These are administered by the Birmingham Regional Hospital Board.

4. *Ambulance facilities.*—The Ambulance Service continues to be administered by the Warwickshire County Council. The ambulances are housed at The Hermitage, Lode Lane, Solihull.

C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. *Water.*

(i) and (ii) The water supply has generally been satisfactory in quantity and the situation remains as outlined in previous reports, that is, the City of Birmingham Water Department supply is adequate and the City of Coventry supply is subject to periods of low pressure, but this difficulty is being remedied by the laying of new trunk mains.

Samples were submitted to the Analyst from the supplies of each of the water undertakers for chemical and bacteriological examination. All samples proved satisfactory.

(iii) *The facts as to contamination by lead.*—There is no evidence to show that the mains water supplies serving the Urban District of Solihull are liable to be plumbo-solvent.

(iv) *Action in respect of contamination.*—No complaints were received in respect of contaminated water supplies from the public or piped supplies. Individual wells which were the subject of complaint were investigated and where unsatisfactory samples were found further investigations were carried out. Advice was given for rectifying either by suggesting structural repairs or alterations or connecting the water supply to the water mains.

(v) Number of houses and population served by public water mains.

(a) *Direct to the houses.*

The number of houses and retail shops, as ascertained from the rate books is 20,013. Of these, approximately 19,056, or 95.3 per cent., are connected to mains direct to the houses and 846 or 4.2 per cent., are served by 612 wells.

(b) *By standpipes.*

111 houses or approximately 0.5 per cent. are served with mains water from 30 standpipes or taps in out-buildings for the common use of several houses.

The proportion of the population supplied from the public water mains is not accurately known.

For further particulars on the subject of water supplies see the Chief Sanitary Inspector's report.

2.—*Drainage and Sewerage.*—The local sewerage system has been extended by 50 yards of foul sewers and 2,368 yards of storm water sewers.

3.—*Closet Accommodation and Cesspools.*—Twenty-five pail and five hand flushed closets were converted to water closets during 1949 with financial assistance by the Council, four cesspools being dispensed with, the total amount paid in grants being £581.

The Surveyor's Department, which is responsible for the cleansing service states that the number of pails closets still existing is 895 and the number of privy middens 33, whilst 1690 premises are still served by 831 cesspools.

4.—*Public Cleansing.*—The Council undertake the removal of house refuse from all premises within the Urban District area, the ashbin method of storage being general. The system of disposal is that of controlled tipping.

D. HOUSING.

The following table gives details of houses completed during the year.

Council Houses	112
Private Houses	48
Police Houses (County Council)	1
	<hr/>
	161
	<hr/>

The standards used to determine whether samples were satisfactory were those set down in the Milk (Special Designations) Orders and Regulations which lay down standards for Tuberculin Tested, Accredited Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk. Sterilised Milk became milk to which a special designation could be applied with the coming into force of the provisions of the Milk (Special Designations) Act, 1944 on October 1st, 1949.

A study of the table with those of previous years indicates a steady improvement in the bacteriological quality of raw milk as sampled at the farm. The following table shows the progress that has been made towards the goal of cleaner milk in the years since the end of the 1939-45 war as indicated by the methylene blue test :—

Raw Milk Samples.

	<i>Samples Satisfactory.</i>	<i>Samples Unsatisfactory.</i>	<i>Total No. of Samples.</i>	<i>Percentage Satisfactory.</i>
1946	102	103	205	50%
1947	77	54	131	59%
1948	132	77	209	63%
1949	71	17	88	81%

During the year a publicity campaign was organised in support of pasteurised milk—this was a great success.

The reasons for a lesser number of samples being bacteriologically examined during 1949 are two fold. Firstly, the powers of registration and supervision of dairy farms were transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries during the year and secondly, the loss of the services of a Sanitary Inspector.

In the case of one pasteurising plant, the receipt of several unsatisfactory samples indicating incomplete pasteurisation caused an investigation to be carried out which in the event proved to be complex. Over a period, samples were taken. The leakage of raw milk into the pasteurised milk was rectified. Samples of materials used in the dairy were submitted to the Analyst for examination for the presence of phenol, and temperatures and times of pasteurisers checked. Whilst several contributing factors were identified and dealt with the main cause of trouble was found to be the incomplete heat treatment of some of the milk. The corrective measures advised were the more complete correlation of temperature and treatment time, the keeping of more accurate records, the making good of leaks and the provision of additional thermometers at appropriate points. Subsequent samples taken regularly since the close of the investigation have proved satisfactory from every point of view.

The unsatisfactory number of samples of pasteurised milk shows an increase and is largely due to one batch of samples, most of which were reported by the bacteriologist to be unsatisfactory. This batch was taken in the heat of the summer under exceptional weather conditions and included several dairies whose samples had previously been beyond reproach. Resampling showed the product of these firms to be satisfactory.

On the whole it is believed that the satisfactory standard of clean milk production has been maintained.

Tuberculous Milk.—24 samples were submitted to the guinea pig inoculation test in order to ascertain the presence or absence of the tubercle bacillus. Each sample represented a herd or group of cows.

The following table shows the number of samples taken in each of eight recent years and the percentage found positive :—

	<i>Number of Samples Examined.</i>	<i>Number positive to Tubercle Bacillus.</i>	<i>Percentage Positive.</i>
1942	21	3	14.2
1943	73	—	—
1944	144	4	2.8
1945	58	6	10.3
1946	67	3	4.5
1947	28	1	3.6
1948	82	3	3.7
1949	24	—	—

DAIRY FARMS.

On the 1st October, 1949, the duty of registration and inspection of cowsheds was transferred from local authorities to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, by the bringing into operation of the provisions of the Milk and Dairies Act, 1944. So came to an end the carrying out of a progressive policy of dairy farm improvement which has steadily gathered momentum in the post war years.

The Public Health Committee and other members of the Council will probably share a feeling of regret that at a time when the effects of the war with its shortages of materials and labour were being overcome the power of supervision of dairy farms should be transferred to another authority, with an apparent reduction in the amount of supervisory work carried out.

The following work was carried out in the nine months to October 1st under the Department's direction.

Cowsheds.

New Cowshed constructed	1
New milking parlour constructed	1
Floors reconstructed	7
Floors repaired	5
Internal walls cement rendered	4
Natural lighting and ventilation improved	3

Dairies.

New dairies provided	3
----------------------	---

UN SOUND FOOD.

The following amounts of food were examined and disposed of after inspection had shown that they were unfit for human consumption :—

	<i>Tons</i>	<i>Cwts.</i>	<i>Qrs.</i>	<i>Lbs.</i>
Meat	—	5	3	—
Fish	—	1	3	—
Dried Fruit	—	4	1	4
Sugar	—	4	3	6
Miscellaneous Foodstuffs	—	6	—	5
„ Tinned Food-stuffs	1	8	2	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	2	11	—	16
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Of the above, 5 cwts. 1 qr. was destroyed, the sugar which had been damaged by water in a fire, was returned to the refinery, the meat was returned to the distributing depot, whilst the remainder was diverted for use as animal food.

In connection with this work, 798 surrenders of unsound food were made in respect of which 372 certificates of unfitness were issued to persons applying for them.

ICE CREAM.**Manufacturers.**

The following table shows the number of manufacturers registered at the close of the year and the action taken in connection with ice cream manufacturers' premises :—

<i>Manufacturers' Premises :</i>			
Registered at close of 1949			15
Transfers of registration			2
New premises constructed			1
Premises improved			1
New premises registered during year			1
Premises still to be improved			1

Of those registered, 7 use the hot mix method and 5 the cold mix method of manufacture, whilst 3 use both methods.

Vendors.

The number of vendors registered was as follows :—

Registered at close of 1949	115
Registered during year	30
Registrations transferred during year	4

The vendors' premises where pre-packed and/or loose ice cream was sold were numerically as follows :—

Selling pre-packed ice cream only	.....	.....	.....	62
Selling pre-packed and loose ice cream	.....	.....	.....	34
Selling loose ice cream only	.....	.....	.....	19

The increase in the number of registrations reflects the Government's policy of gradual release of more materials for ice cream manufacture. The number of those selling pre-packed ice cream only can be considered as satisfactory under present circumstances.

The methylene blue test as developed by the Ministry of Health and provisionally used for judging the bacteriological quality of ice cream according to a system of four grades, has been continued in use. 123 samples were submitted to the test and placed in the following grades by the analyst :—

Grades	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	2	3	4
No. of Samples	.....	.....	.....	.....	37	37	25	24

Grade 1 is the highest grade.

The figures show that whilst many more samples were taken during 1949 than 1948, the percentage of satisfactory samples was greater during 1949. Whilst one or two unsatisfactory samples from a manufacturer may not be of undue significance, a series of such samples calls for an investigation of manufacturing methods, the theory being that samples in Grades 3 or 4 contain more bacteria than those in the higher grades because of the introduction of bacteria at some stage in the manufacturing process.

As a result of poor quality samples the methods of one of the larger manufacturers in the district were investigated over a period and improvements suggested which gave better results on subsequent sampling.

Fat Content.

Fifty-eight samples were purchased and analysed for fat content, with the following result :—

Below 2.5%	.....	.....	.....	.....	6
Over 2.5% to 5%	.....	.....	.....	.....	11
Over 5% to 10%	.....	.....	.....	.....	33
Over 10%	.....	.....	.....	.....	8

The samples were found to contain fat ranging in percentage between .9% and 16.2%, the average being 6.9%.

THE MANUFACTURE OF MEAT PRODUCTS.

Under the provisions of the Solihull Urban District Council Act, 1936, the applications of occupiers of premises to be registered were approved by the Council in three cases and the premises were also registered.

The number of registered premises was as follows :—

Registered at close of 1949	12
New premises registered during year	3
New premises constructed	2
Existing premises adapted	1

Other Food Preparation Premises.

By means of liaison with the Surveyor's Department, plans illustrating the proposed alteration of existing premises or the provision of new premises were examined before being approved by the Council. In this way alterations were suggested so that the requirements of current legislation could be envisaged by the applicant for approval of any scheme before building started.

In this way supervision during the progress of work was carried out in the following cases in co-operation with the Surveyor's Department :—

New Cafes	3
New kitchen for Cafe	1
New Bakehouses	1
Fried Fish Shops	3

For further particulars on the subject of Food and Drugs Sampling see the Chief Sanitary Inspector's report.

SWIMMING POOLS.

The exceptionally fine summer was the cause of high attendances at the two swimming baths open to the public and the peak loads of bathers experienced led to difficulties in the control of the purity of the water, the department being called into advise on several occasions.

Both pools are provided with modern continuous filtering and chlorinating plant.

Eleven samples of swimming bath water were submitted to chemical and nine samples to bacteriological examination during various checks and examinations during the year.

FACTORIES.

The number of factories in the area during 1949 was :—

With mechanical power	16
Without power	153
Works of building or engineering construction	17

For the most part, these factories are engaged on light engineering work.

The cases where defects were found are listed below :—

	<i>Found.</i>	<i>Remedied.</i>
<i>Sanitary Conveniences :</i>		
Insufficient	1	—
Unsuitable or defective	12	9
Not separate for sexes	1	1
	—	—
Total	14	10
	—	—

114 visits were made to factories during 1949.

INDUSTRIAL SMOKE ABATEMENT.

The relatively few factories in this residential area do not give rise to serious complaint, but when cause for complaint does arise, it soon becomes very obvious and can be given individual attention. The only serious cause of complaint during the year arose from the chimney mentioned in last year's report, the cause on this occasion being mechanical breakdown in combination with a change of stoker who was unfamiliar with the plant. The stoker was instructed, the defective mechanical parts renewed and the nuisance abated.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION.

The rodent operative employed on this work appears to control adequately the growth of the rat population as is shown by the thin but widely scattered incidence of infestations found and dealt with upon complaint and of investigations carried out on his own initiative. Of 256 infestations dealt with during the year at private dwellings only one was estimated to be of a major character, i.e., of more than 50 rats.

Business premises treated in addition to the above numbered twenty. Three refuse tips were treated, one of them in respect of a major infestation.

The charges made for the operative's services are as outlined last year.

Sewers.

Two treatments of the sewerage system were undertaken in March and September respectively. The general principle employed is to place bait on the benchings of approximately 10% of the sewer manholes spread over the district using different manholes during each treatment. If the bait is eaten, poisoned bait is laid and left for consumption by the rats at their leisure. If the original bait is eaten in manholes in the same district, then all intervening and neighbouring manholes are treated.

During the treatment carried out in March, 214 manholes were tested, and in 61 cases the bait was wholly or partially eaten. When September's treatment was undertaken, the manholes affected in March were retested in addition to the 10% mentioned above. As a result, in September, 293 test baitings were carried out and in 31 cases bait was taken. The result suggested that the March treatment had been satisfactory.

F. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

1. Incidence of Commoner Infectious Diseases since 1944.

	Smallpox.	Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Pneumonia.	Encephalitis. Lethargica.	Puerperal Fever.
1944	—	7	167	—	39	—	11
1945	—	7	90	—	34	—	10
1946	—	12	114	—	40	—	3
1947	—	22	101	—	37	—	1
1948	—	33	105	1	50	—	2
1949	—	1	113	—	41	—	5

Reference to Table III will give the age distribution of the cases notified in 1949.

Diphtheria.—One case notified, male aged 7 years who had been immunised. No deaths occurred.

Scarlet Fever.—113 cases were notified distributed as follows :—Shirley 35 ; Solihull 37 ; Sheldon 15 ; Knowle 1 ; Olton 24 ; and Hockley Heath 1. No deaths occurred.

Poliomyelitis.—During the year, three cases of Poliomyelitis were notified in the district, all males, aged $2\frac{1}{4}$ years, 5 years and 27 years. Two of the cases were treated in hospital, but the child aged $2\frac{1}{4}$ years was a mild case and was not admitted to hospital. No deaths occurred.

Non-Notifiable Infectious Diseases.—Nothing of Note.

No schools closed.

Notification of all Infectious Diseases occurring among school children are duly forwarded to me from the schools.

2. Diphtheria Immunisation.

Immunisation continued throughout the year, and at the 31st December, 1949, 7,077 children of school age had been treated, and 3,233 under school age, giving a grand total of 10,310 immunised up to the end of 1949.

3. Tuberculosis.

During the year 57 new cases were notified, 47 respiratory and 10 non-respiratory. Of these cases 6 were transferred from other authorities.

The following table shows the age incidence of the new cases and of deaths from the disease :—

AGE—PERIODS	NEW CASES				DEATHS.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
5	3	1	2	2	—	—	—	—
15	5	9	—	—	2	—	—	—
25	1	8	2	2	—	3	—	—
35	7	3	—	1	3	1	—	—
45	4	2	—	—	—	1	—	—
55	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
65 and upwards	2	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
TOTALS	23	24	4	6	5	6	1	—

Twelve cases were admitted to Sanatoria during the year and 13 were discharged after treatment (including some admitted during the previous year).

4. Smallpox.

During the year several passengers from ships on which cases of smallpox had developed came into the district and were kept under observation as contacts.

I wish to express my thanks for the kind co-operation afforded to me by the Superintendent of Police, Solihull, and his staff in tracing the whereabouts of these contacts.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Those who are in close contact with the work of local authorities will probably agree that of all the problems created by the last war, that of providing separate homes for those families living under unsatisfactory conditions is the most pressing. Government policy has decreed that only a limited number of permanent houses should be built, but during the year under review, materials apparently became available to permit the construction of motor trailer caravans in quantity. These mobile structures originally designed for recreational use, are coming to be looked upon, by some, as the solution of the housing problem. Those with experience of the overcrowded conditions that can arise from the permanent occupation of caravans will watch the development of temporary dwellings and caravan sites in the district with anxiety, and seek to prevent a repetition of the conditions which arose after the 1914-18 war. The declared policy of this Council is to discourage the use of temporary dwellings for permanent habitation and to demolish the worst of those that remain as they become vacant, and a close watch will need to be kept upon the development of the situation during 1950.

Apart from this tendency the year has been marked by the passing of the traditional powers of the authority to supervise milk production at the dairy farm and the removal of their responsibility to control the pollution of rivers and streams. The passing of these powers, two only amongst many, is additional evidence of the tendency to regionalise administration. Simplification is certainly desirable, for in the case of the supervision of milk supplies there are, in the case of some grades, five separate administrative bodies supervising production between the cow and the consumer. So far as dairy farms are concerned, such evidence as is at present available indicates that the amount of inspection work done at the farm will decline.

In another direction, the coming into force of the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, consolidates a system of administration of rodent control which has developed during recent years, the local authority acting in effect as agents for a government department, the method being to pay a grant, the work being done according to methods previously approved. A representative of the Ministry from the regional office checks the work of the operative occasionally and carries out supervision of the work of a number of authorities.

Pail closet conversion work goes on, and whilst the simpler conversions have been carried out the time has arrived to expect complexity in the way of more difficult and distant sewer connections reflecting increased costs and larger grants.

In retrospect, the year has been one of transition in which the capabilities of a conscientious and loyal staff have been tested and not found wanting, whilst at the same time the full support of a keenly interested Public Health Committee is recorded and thankfully acknowledged.

E. VAUGHAN,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT SAMPLING.

The work done during the year is detailed below :—

<i>Total number of samples taken—</i>			<i>Formal.</i>	<i>Informal.</i>
Milk	.....	.....	126	24
Miscellaneous Foods and Drugs	.....	.....	6	144

Of these, 120 formal and 23 informal samples of milk, 3 formal and 127 informal samples of miscellaneous foods and drugs were reported as genuine.

The following samples of milk were reported unsatisfactory :—
(The legal minimum standards of solid content in milk are laid down by the Sale of Milk Regulations, as fat 3% and solids-not-fat 8.5%. The purpose of the freezing point test is to confirm the presence of added water).

<i>No.</i>	<i>Method.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
541	Informal.	Contained at least 55% of extraneous water and was deficient of 10% fat. Consisted of opened bottle of milk delivered to office by complainant. Sample repeated.—Genuine.
606	Formal	Contained 5.5% of extraneous water. Sample from Retailer.—Producer not known owing to mixing of milks. Sample repeated.—See No. 607.
607	Formal	Contained 8.3% of extraneous water. Producer known. Sample repeated at farm. See Nos. A1231, A1232 and A1233.
A1231	Formal	Contained 11.8% of extraneous water Contained 12.5% of extraneous water Contained 4.3% of extraneous water Solids-not-fat 7.8% Fat 3.3% Freezing Point not determined owing to souring of milk. Producer warned.
A1232	Formal	
A1233	Formal	
A1222	Formal	

} Legal proceedings instituted a fine of £5 with £2 12s. 6d. costs being imposed on the defendant.

The results of unsatisfactory samples of Foods and Drugs other than milk were as follows :—

<i>No.</i>	<i>Article.</i>	<i>Method.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
499	Egg Substitute	Informal	Labelling Offence. Should now be sold as Golden Raising Powder and on that basis is deficient of 70% Carbon Dioxide. Old stock, purchased 12-18 months previously.
522	Mixed Herbs	Informal	Contained 1.1 parts per million of Arsenic in excess of recommended maximum amount for foods. (Sample repeated—See No. 557).

535	Ground Ginger	Informal	Contained 70 p.p.m. Copper and 200 p.p.m. Zinc. (Sample repeated—Genuine).
538	Syrup of Figs	Informal	Labelling Offence. No formula given. Manufacturer warned.
557	Mixed Herbs	Formal	Contained 2.5 p.p.m. Arsenic. Manufacturer warned.
594	Lemon Barley....	Informal	Contained 23 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide and 25 p.p.m. Benzoic Acid, only one preservative being allowed in Cordials. (Sample repeated—Genuine).
701	Pork Sausage	Informal	Contained 168 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide and should be sold with a declaration that preservative is present. Retailer warned.
721	Pork Sausage	Informal	Deficient of 20% of required amount of meat. Sample from large manufacturer. (Samples repeated from other retailers—See Nos. 728, 729, 730, 731 and 732.)
722	Pork Sausage	Informal	Contained 160 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide and should be sold with a declaration that preservative is present. Manufacturer warned.
723	Beef Sausage	Informal	Deficient of 15% of required amount of meat. (Sample repeated—See No. 735).
724	Pork Sausage	Informal	Deficient of 9.6% of required amount of meat. (See Nos. 728 et seq).
725	Pork Sausage	Informal	Deficient of 15% of required amount of meat. (Sample repeated—See No. 733).
728	Beef Sausage	Informal	Contained 80 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide
729	Beef Sausage	Informal	Contained 36 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide
730	Beef Sausage	Informal	Contained 136 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide
731	Beef Sausage	Informal	Contained 56 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide
732	Sausage Meat	Informal	Deficient of 6.8% of meat Contained 64 p.p.m. Sulphur Dioxide

All samples of same manufacture but obtained from different retail shops. Manufacturer warned of meat deficiencies and of labelling requirements with regard to preservatives

733	Pork Sausage	Formal	Deficient of at least 6.6% of required amount of meat. Manufacturer warned.
735	Pork Sausage	Formal	Deficient of at least 16.8% of required amount of meat. Manufacturer warned.
751	Honey of Borax	Informal	Labelling Offence. No statement of ingredients given. Manufacturer warned.

WATER SUPPLIES.

With the laying of a water main in Chapel Lane, Packwood, the three years programme of water mains extensions to existing properties commenced in 1946 was completed during the year. During this period 9 miles 1,303 yards of main have been laid by the City of Birmingham Water Department in 16 separate schemes, the obligation of this Council being to pay annually 12½% of the capital cost of laying the mains over a period of twelve years. After the end of that time the Birmingham Water Department are to maintain the main in perpetuity in accordance with the terms of the Water Act, 1945. The capital cost of the schemes was approximately £29,400 and annual cost to this Council approximately £3,670 for the twelve yearly period.

Since 1945, the numbers of existing houses which have been connected to water mains annually are as follows :—

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of Houses Connected to Mains.</i>	<i>No. of Wells Redundant.</i>
1945	118	63
1946	84	60
1947	47	38
1948	105	58
1949	69	47

During 1949, 47 wells were rendered redundant, but approximately 846 houses still rely on 612 wells for their water supply, the number served by water mains being now 19,167.

Results of Samples.—Either for the purpose of investigating complaints or for supervisory purposes, a number of samples from individual wells were submitted to the analyst and the results were as follows :—

Number of samples submitted to both chemical and bacteriological tests	13
Number satisfactory in both tests	5
Number unsatisfactory in both tests	7
Number satisfactory chemically but unsatisfactory bacteriologically	1

CARAVANS AND TEMPORARY DWELLINGS.

After thirty years of life there still remain in the western part of the district dwellings, used for full time habitation, of the summer holiday bungalow type built of impermanent materials and erected after the 1914-18 war. Wood being the principal material used for the outer walls, many have now deteriorated until their continued life, even in times of housing shortage, is difficult to justify.

In order to ascertain the size of the problem a survey was undertaken in June of this year for purposes of record and in order that the Council might consider the formation of a policy with respect to temporary dwellings generally. The survey was directed towards the poorest type of dwelling and did not take cognizance of :—

- (1) Ex-Services Camps which had become occupied by squatters.
- (2) Bungalows constructed of impermanent materials but which were in reasonable condition and of adequate size.
- (3) Caravans used temporarily for agricultural purposes or not used for permanent habitation.

The survey revealed that the number of existing temporary structures was as follows :—

Permanently occupied :—

Wooden Bungalows	....	....	....	127
Gypsy type caravans	....	....	....	18
Motor trailer caravans	....	....	....	4
Converted Nissen huts	....	....	....	3
				152
		Total	....	152

Not permanently occupied :—

Wooden Bungalows	....	....	....	21
Gypsy type caravans	....	....	....	3
Motor trailer caravans	....	....	....	3

Voids :—

Bungalows	....	....	....	13
Gypsy type caravans	....	....	....	2
				194
		Total	....	194

In considering the formulation of a policy the Council considered the long term effect on the district of these dwellings of poor construction, inadequate size and lacking in amenity, and the general effect on the inhabitants as a result of living in such dwellings for many years in overcrowded conditions.

By the terms of their resolution the Council instructed the Chief Sanitary Inspector to report to the Public Health Committee any such dwellings which had become void with a view to demolition action being considered under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1936.

By the policy so formulated six temporary bungalows were reported to the Public Health Committee as being unfit for habitation and incapable of being rendered fit at reasonable cost and in accordance with the procedure of the Housing Act, 1936. Four demolition orders were made and in two cases offers made by the owners were accepted. At December, 1949, two of the bungalows had been demolished.

Five applications to site caravans were considered by the Council during the year; four were refused and as the remaining one was adjacent to a permanent dwelling and was used by relatives of the occupier for recreational purposes only, formal permission was not deemed to be necessary.

RIVERS POLLUTION.

With the passing of rivers pollution work from local authorities to specialist administrative bodies under the River Boards Act, 1948, some local interest in the pollution of watercourses must in time, also wane, although some duties still remain to local authorities under the Public Health and Drainage of Trade Premises Acts with regard to liquid effluents discharged to sewerage systems. The advantage of local administration is that complaints can be dealt with quickly.

No complaints were received of metallic poisons being discharged into the sewerage system during the year. Two cases were dealt with in an advisory way one of which involved the installation of a new barium carbonate filter to treat the effluent from a new chromium plating plant and in the other case assistance was given to dispose of a quantity of concentrated chrome solution without causing ill effects at the sewage works, or the river into which the effluent from the works discharged.

Two other cases of pollution, one of oil found to emanate from a disused catch pit on the surface water system of a factory, and the other of the sewage effluent from a sewage disposal plant were dealt with satisfactorily.

At dusk on the 14th July, a complaint was received from the Tame and Rea Drainage Board that a number of dead fish had been observed in the River Blythe, and investigations were immediately commenced in conjunction with the Deputy Engineer to the Board. Samples of fish and water were collected, and finally the mortality of the fish was attributed to asphyxiation due to the exhaustion of oxygen in the water by storm and organic pollution, together with the abnormally high climatic temperatures prevailing at the time.

The number of new consents to discharge trade liquids into the sewerage system during the year was four.

SHOPS.

Routine visits are paid to shops in order to secure compliance with closing hour requirements and to enforce the welfare provisions of the Shops Acts. The state of the supply position has not led to the kind of competition which causes shops to be open after normal closing hours and welfare requirements are promptly complied with.

PETROLEUM.

108 installations were licensed for the storage of 144,282 gallons of petroleum spirit and/or petroleum mixtures, and one was licensed for the storage of 56,000 lbs. of carbide of calcium. The income received from the payment of licence fees was £78 10s. 0d.

TABLE OF WORK DONE—1949.

DWELLING HOUSES.	
<i>Internal Defects remedied :</i>	
Defective plaster	54
Defective floors	62
Defective kitchen ranges, fireplaces and flues	18
Defective washboilers	22
Defective windows and cords	19
Defective doors	7
Defective sinks and waste pipes	17
New sinks and waste pipes provided	4
<i>External Defects remedied :</i>	
Defective roofs	72
Defective pointing and brickwork of walls	44
Defective chimneys	9
Defective rainwater pipes	6
Defective eavesgutters	20
Defective dustbins	36
Defective yard paving	2
DEMOLITION.	
Houses demolished	3
DRAINAGE.	
Defective drains reconstructed	17
Defective drains cleansed or repaired	68
Houses connected to sewers	38
Handflushed and Pail closets converted to W.C.'s	32
Defective and obstructed W.C.'s	31
Ditches cleared	4
WATER SUPPLY.	
Houses connected to water mains	69
Defective hot water apparatus remedied	9
Defective water supply and burst pipes repaired	5
FARMS AND DAIRIES.	
New Cowsheds constructed	1
Reconstructed cowsheds	1
New dairies built or adapted	3
Structural defects at farms and dairies remedied	22
New Milking Parlour constructed	1
FOOD PREMISES.	
Premises cleansed	2
New food preparing place constructed	1
MISCELLANEOUS.	
Defects at factories remedied	10
Lots of infected bedding disinfected or destroyed	4
Houses disinfected after cases of infectious diseases	67
Miscellaneous defects remedied	63
TOTAL	
843	

TABLE I.

SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND NOTICES SERVED IN THE SANITARY
INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1949.

	Inspections made	Notices Statutory	Served Informal	Notices complied with
Dwelling Houses and Schools	1348	12	167	159
Drainage	280	—	54	42
Pail Closets	11	1	2	1
Ashbins	35	13	37	31
Offensive Accumulations	9	—	1	3
Keeping of Animals	7	—	3	3
Other Food Premises	251	—	6	1
Dairy Farms	241	—	2	—
Dairies and Milkshops	83	—	—	—
Stables and Piggeries	69	—	3	2
Smoke Observations	16	—	—	—
Tents, Vans and Sheds	309	—	—	—
Factories (with mechanical power)	77	—	—	2
Factories (without mechanical power)	37	—	—	—
Outworkers premises	16	—	2	2
Bakehouses	11	—	—	—
Milk Sampling for bacteriological examination	190	—	—	—
Ice Cream Sampling and Inspection of Premises	258	—	—	—
Food and Drugs Sampling for chemical examination	281	—	—	—
Water Supplies	122	—	4	4
Water Courses and Ditches	12	—	—	—
Swimming Pools	29	—	—	—
Infectious Diseases and Disinfections	190	—	—	—
Rat and Mice Complaints	16	—	—	2
Verminous Premises	10	—	—	—
Offensive Trades	4	—	—	—
Shops	45	—	—	—
Petroleum Installations	42	—	—	—
Interviews	108	—	—	—
Miscellaneous	697	—	2	4
Drainage of Trade Premises Act	28	—	—	—
TOTALS	4,832	26	283	256

E. VAUGHAN,
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

TABLE II.
SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT.

VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1949 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

YEAR	Population estimated to Middle of each Year	BIRTHS		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT			
		Nett		Under 1 Year of age		At all Ages	
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births	Number	Rate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1941	58,850	1,106	18.8	60	54	577	9.3
1942	60,960	1,204	19.8	52	43	560	9.2
1943	60,670	1,380	22.8	51	37	537	8.8
1944	60,070	1,400	23.4	44	31	532	8.8
1945	58,770	1,143	19.5	34	30	518	8.8
1946	61,720	1,223	19.5	41	33	555	8.9
1947	63,890	1,345	21.1	32	24	546	8.5
1948	66,600	1,169	17.5	21	17.9	545	8.1
1949	66,850	1,052	15.5	33	31.3	589	8.8

VITAL STATISTICS IN ENGLAND AND WALES, 1949.

ENGLAND AND WALES.

*Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Infantile Mortality during the Year 1949.
(Provisional Figures).*

Annual Rate per 1,000 Population.

	Live Births	Still Births	Deaths	Deaths under one year to 1,000 Births
England and Wales	16.7	0.39	11.7	32
26 Great Towns, including London	18.7	0.47	12.5	37
48 Smaller Towns	18.0	0.40	11.6	30
London	18.5	0.37	12.2	29

TABLE III.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING THE YEAR 1949.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE	Number of Cases notified								Total cases removed to Hospital	Total Deaths
	At all Ages	At Ages—Years								
		Under 1	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 45	45 to 65	65 and upwards		
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Plague	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diphtheria (including Membranous Group)	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—
Erysipelas	13	—	1	3	—	9	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	113	—	86	19	8	—	—	—	13	—
Paratyphoid Fever	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	1
Enteric Fever	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pneumonia	41	6	7	6	—	13	—	9	1	30
Malaria	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	5	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	3	—
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poliomyelitis	3	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	2	—
Encephalitis Lethargica	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Polio-Encephalitis	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	47	—	—	18	9	16	2	2	—	11
Other forms of Tuberculosis	10	—	5	—	4	1	—	—	—	1
Totals	238	10	102	47	21	45	2	11	22	43

TABLE IV.
SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1949.

CAUSES OF DEATH	MALES	FEMALES
All Causes	286	303
1 Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	—	1
2 Cerebro Spinal Fever	—	—
3 Scarlet Fever	—	—
4 Whooping Cough	—	1
5 Diphtheria	—	—
6 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	5	6
7 Other Forms of Tuberculosis	1	—
8 Syphilitic Diseases	2	—
9 Influenza	6	7
10 Measles	—	—
11 Acute Poliomyelitis and Polioencephalitis	—	—
12 Acute Infantile Encephalitis	—	—
13 Cancer of Buccal Cavity and Oesophagus (M) Uterus (F)	4	8
14 Cancer of Stomach and Duodendum	8	6
15 Cancer of Breast	—	11
16 Cancer, other Sites	35	27
17 Diabetes	—	1
18 Intra Cranial Vasc. Lesions	34	47
19 Heart Disease	65	82
20 Other Diseases of Circulatory System	19	20
21 Bronchitis	18	15
22 Pneumonia	15	15
23 Other Respiratory Diseases	5	1
24 Ulcer of Stomach and Duodendum	4	1
25 Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	1	2
26 Appendicitis	—	1
27 Other Digestive Diseases	8	7
28 Nephritis	7	6
29 Puerperal and Post Abortive Sepsis	—	—
30 Other Maternal Causes	—	—
31 Premature Birth	1	2
32 Congenital Malformation, Birth Injury, etc.	7	11
33 Suicide	2	1
34 Road Traffic Accidents	10	2
35 Other Violent Causes	3	4
36 All Other Causes	26	18

