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STAINES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

HEALTH
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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and

Chief Sanitary Inspector

1955




CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Constitution of Public Health Committee and Staff of Public Health Department	1
Medical Officer of Health's Report	2
General Statistics and Summary of Vital Statistics	5
Provisions of Hospitals and Clinics in the Area	6
Tables :	
Infectious diseases notified	7
Tuberculosis notifications and deaths	8
Causes of death	9
Infant deaths	10
National Assistance Act, 1948	11
Food Poisoning	11
Water	11
Chief Sanitary Inspector's Report	13
Summary of Inspections	15
Housing Statistics	16
Overcrowding	16
Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954	17
Legal Proceedings	18
Drainage and Sewage	18
Refuse	19
Inspection and Supervision of Food	20
Inspection of Meat	21
Food Hygiene	23
Milk and Dairies Regulations	23
Ice-Cream (Heat-Treatment) Regulations	24
Middlesex County Council Act, 1950, Sec. 11 (Hawkers)	25
Food and Drugs Act, 1955	25
Factories Act, 1937	28
Moveable Dwellings	30
Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Act, 1952	31
Shops Act, 1950	31
Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949	32

List of Illustrations

Factory Toilets	30
Poultry Keeping	33
Offensive Trade	29
Smoke Abatement	29



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STAINES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Public Health Committee 1955

Chairman : Councillor S. B. Willerton.

Vice-Chairman : Councillor P. Davis.

Councillors :

Mr. G. Frewin, Mrs. G. E. Goodman, Mr. W. T. Kay, Miss M. Nixon, Mrs. E. J. Perkins, Miss A. Phipps, Mr. C. G. Ricketts, Mrs. N. V. Wallage, Mr. P. Wildash.

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health (part-time) :

L. A. MATHESON, M.B., CH.B., D.P.H., D.C.H., M.M.S.A.

Chief Sanitary Inspector :

JOHN MULLIN, M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A., A.I.HSG.

Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector :

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

Sanitary Inspectors :

G. A. EVANS, M.S.I.A., A.I.HSG.

R. E. SMITH, M.S.I.A., A.M.I.SAN.E.

Senior Clerk and Shorthand Typist :

MISS L. M. PERRYMAN.

Assistant Clerk and Shorthand Typist :

MISS P. REEVE.

Assistant Rodent Officer :

H. A. CROUCHER.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS
of the
STAINES URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The general health of the population remained very satisfactory during 1955, reflecting the higher standard of living now experienced in this country generally.

Once again I am happy to report there were no cases of diphtheria and therefore no deaths from this cause. It is now nearly ten years since a case of diphtheria was notified in this district, a striking tribute to the value of immunisation against this disease. Nevertheless, I must continue to stress that parents of young children should have them immunised against diphtheria and so maintain a high level of immunity.

Poliomyelitis as is well known was much more prevalent in Great Britain last year and Staines was no exception. There were thirteen cases of which six were paralytic and seven were non-paralytic. No family or other association with any two cases was traced in spite of very careful investigation, and each case appeared to be an isolated one. In no instance was there more than one case in one household. Staines had what might be termed an attack of average severity compared with other districts in Middlesex.

Measles had an exceptionally high incidence, 1,052 cases being notified. The epidemic, not very severe in type, affected all parts of the district, but the worst cases occurred towards the end of the outbreak. There were no deaths from this cause.

The North West Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board Mass X-Ray Unit again visited this district on the 18th-29th April, 1955, when 2,189 of the general public attended, together with 2,430 in organised groups, 140 ex-school leavers and 106 old people. It was felt that emphasis should be placed on the desirability of inviting old people particularly, to submit themselves to mass x-ray. The Staines and Feltham Red Cross division most helpfully co-operated by voluntarily arranging a tea party complete with film

display to which all members of the Darby and Joan Clubs in the four wards of the district were invited.

As no fewer than 106 old people all over sixty were x-rayed, it was felt that this was a step in the right direction. There is no doubt whatever that a considerable hard kernel of tuberculous infection still remains undiscovered among old people. I intend to develop this idea as opportunity affords in the future by any means acceptable to old people.

The Council has accepted a programme of demolition of unfit houses to be completed within the next five years. In my opinion the housing position is now such that the demolition of unfit houses should be tackled and I consider it reasonable to expect that within fifteen years of the end of World War II this should be a fait accompli. In no other way can the general standard of housing the people be raised; even in this district, which is relatively a very fortunate one. There are still too many families living in sub-standard houses and there is much truth in the slogan—better housing means better health.

My Department continues to be concerned with the care of elderly people in the district; the work in this direction is undoubtedly increasing and it is felt that some assistance to the community is thereby rendered. Dealing with old people involves many considerations and is often difficult. Despite this I welcome this opportunity of public service. Examples of the variety of problems presenting themselves are shown by some case histories as follows:

A woman inmate of an almshouse was incontinent and despite the care of the warden her surroundings were becoming very unwholesome. After visiting and discussing the matter with the old lady, she accepted admission to an old people's home and it has since been ascertained that she is quite happy there, in fact very much better off than she could hope to be looking after herself.

By a circuitous route information was received that an old man aged 77 was needing care and attention, he had not seen his doctor for many years and was found to be needing medical attention in hospital to which his admission was arranged.

A lady aged 92 occupied a small cottage with her unmarried daughter aged 68. The daughter was of low mentality and peculiar habits. The house was in a very dirty condition indeed and was full of rubbish of every possible kind which the daughter had regularly brought from jumble sales and rubbish dumps. There were two married sons living elsewhere but co-operation was not

forthcoming and the conditions were such that action was necessary. Three lorry loads of rubbish were removed with the agreement of the occupier and after some persuasion; this was done in the hope of making possible domestic cleansing. The services of a home help were refused and the house is still in a dirty condition.

I have been much concerned at the sale of stale cakes containing imitation cream fillings. Bakers have been known to sell stale cream cakes cheaply the day after delivery to the shop. This is, in my opinion, a most dangerous practice. Bacteriological investigation shows that large numbers of organisms (relatively harmless in small numbers) can cause sickness and gastric disturbance. Uncountable millions of organisms have been reported as present in samples examined forty-eight hours after manufacture. In other words stale cream cakes do become dangerous and should not be eaten.

A report on the adverse effects of overcrowding on the family was submitted to the Public Health Committee. Attention was mainly directed to the preventable bronchitis group of illness and deaths in children under five and it was pointed out that eleven children under 12 months of age have died of chest diseases other than tuberculosis in the past four years. Subsequently the Council decided to increase the allocation of houses for families living in conditions of statutory overcrowding.

Particular attention has been paid to the desirability of the provision of washing facilities in public conveniences. A growing section of the public is concerned with the need for this and the Council has agreed to the provision of hot and cold water with soap in the new Elmsleigh car park toilets at no extra cost. Paper towels are available. In line with the Public Health Committee's policy of health education, it appears to me axiomatic that the Council's premises should set a standard rather than belatedly follow public demand. Put in another way, "Now Wash Your Hands" is an essential law of health. By the time this Report appears in print, these facilities will be in use.

My thanks are extended to all members of the Council and staff for their continued support. Particularly I appreciate the ready co-operation of Mr. J. Mullin the Chief Sanitary Inspector.

L. A. MATHESON.

General Statistics

Area—8,271 acres.

Population (Estimated Mid 1955)	42,330
Number of Houses, Bungalows and Flats at 1.4.55 ...	11,906
Rateable Value at 1.4.55	£432,172
Sum represented by a penny rate at 1.4.55	£1,733

Summary of Vital Statistics

Live Births

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	365	343	708
Illegitimate	13	11	24
	378	354	732

Birth Rate (per thousand population)	17.3
Comparability factor is 0.96, giving adjusted birth rate of	16.6
Birth Rate England and Wales	15.0

Still Births

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Legitimate	13	11	24
Illegitimate	—	—	—

Still Birth Rate (per thousand population)	0.57
Still Birth Rate England and Wales	0.36

Deaths

Male ...	189
Female ...	165
	354

<i>Death Rate</i> (per thousand population)	8.36
Comparability factor is 1.11, giving adjusted death rate of	9.28
Death Rate England Wales	11.7
Deaths from Maternal Causes	1
Infant Deaths under one year	14
Infant Mortality Rate (per thousand live births) ...	19.1
Infant Mortality Rate England and Wales	24.9

**Provision of Hospitals and Clinics
in the Area During 1955**

Hospitals :

Ashford Hospital, London Road, Ashford.

Staines Hospital, Kingston Road, Staines.

Chest Clinic :

Chest Clinic, Ashford Hospital, London Road, Ashford.

Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, etc.:

These are provided by the Middlesex County Council at the following addresses :

“ The Grange ”, Gresham Road, Staines.

The Health Centre, Stanwell Road, Ashford.

Laleham Village Hall, Laleham.

Stanwell Village Hall, Stanwell.

Notifiable Diseases

A chart showing the diseases notified in their age groups is appended.

Tuberculosis

Thirty-two cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were notified and there were four deaths from pulmonary tuberculosis during the year. A chart showing the age and sex distribution of the notifications and deaths is appended.

Infectious Diseases Notified during 1955

	Under 1 yr.	1-2 yrs.	3-4 yrs.	5-9 yrs.	10-14 yrs.	15-24 yrs.	25 & Over	Total
Scarlet Fever	—	2	10	28	4	—	—	44
Whooping Cough	10	10	8	31	—	—	2	61
Acute Poliomyelitis	2	1	2	3	3	1	1	13
Measles ...	14	170	258	589	13	3	5	1052
Diphtheria ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

	Under 5 yrs.	5-14 yrs.	15-44 yrs.	45-64 yrs.	65 & Over	Total		
Acute pneumonia	...	—	1	5	2	1	9	
Dysentery	3	2	1	—	6	
Acute encephalitis	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Paratyphoid fevers	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	
Erysipelas	—	—	—	1	1	
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	—	—	2	—	—	2	
Food poisoning	—	2	2	2	1	7

TUBERCULOSIS

Age Periods	NOTIFICATIONS						DEATHS		
	Pulm.		Non-Pulm.		Pulm.		Non-Pulm.		
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
0—1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2—4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—14	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—24	5	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—34	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—44	3	2	—	1	—	2	1	—	—
45—54	2	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
55—64	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65—74	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
75—84	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	20	12	—	1	—	3	1	—	—
	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	32			1		4			

Causes of Death

<i>Disease</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Tuberculosis, respiratory	3	1
Tuberculosis, other	Nil	Nil
Syphilitic disease	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria	Nil	Nil
Whooping Cough	Nil	Nil
Meningococcal infections	Nil	1
Acute poliomyelitis	Nil	Nil
Measles	Nil	Nil
Other infective and parasitic diseases	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	5	4
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	9	2
Malignant neoplasm, breast	Nil	9
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	Nil	4
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	20	14
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	Nil	Nil
Diabetes	2	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	19	24
Coronary disease, angina	34	19
Hypertension with heart disease	4	5
Other heart disease	19	35
Other circulatory disease	11	8
Influenza	2	Nil
Pneumonia	6	9
Bronchitis	13	3
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	2	Nil
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	2	1
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	Nil
Hyperplasia of prostate	5	Nil
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	Nil	1
Congenital malformations	2	4
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	11	14
Motor vehicle accidents	7	1
All other accidents	7	1
Suicide	2	Nil
Homicide and operation of war	Nil	1
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	189	165
	<hr style="width: 100%; border: none; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"/>	<hr style="width: 100%; border: none; border-top: 1px solid black; margin-top: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"/>

INFANT DEATHS

	Under 1 day		1-6 days		1 week'		2 weeks		3 weeks		Total under 1 month		1-2 months		3-5 months		6-8 months		9-11 months		Totals	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Prematurity ..	3	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	—
Congenital Abnormality	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	1	2	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	3	3
Broncho-pneumonia	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1
Birth injury ..	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Meningitis ...	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
TOTALS	3	—	—	1	—	—	2	2	—	—	5	4	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	8	6

National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 47.

No formal action under these powers was necessary; all the cases of old people in need of care and attention that came to my notice were dealt with by persuasion.

National Assistance Act, 1948, S.50.

Under the provisions of this Act the Council is required to arrange for the burial of a deceased person where no arrangements are being made by relatives or other persons. In practice this action is occasionally required when elderly people living alone have died in their homes, probably having outlived or having been long separated from relatives. Where the death occurs in an institution or a home, that authority is responsible for the burial.

Two burials were arranged, one of a widow of 79, and one of a married woman aged 46 who was found dead from narcotic poisoning at an hotel. In the latter case the husband of the deceased was in goal and no provision was being made for the burial. Arrangements were also made for the burial of an elderly man living alone who was found dead, but the arrangements were not proceeded with because friends and workmates subscribed to meet the cost of a private funeral.

Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949.

No action was necessary under Regulation 20 to prohibit the sale of milk suspected of causing disease.

Food Poisoning.

Again I am glad to say that no outbreak of food poisoning occurred during 1955, but there were seven unrelated cases notified. As always in unrelated cases, investigation as to the source proved difficult and in no case was it possible to ascertain with accuracy the source of the infection although close enquiries were made at the home and there was full bacteriological investigation.

Four cases had salmonella infections, one proved to be a fungus poisoning, and in two cases the source was not ascertained. There were no deaths attributable only to food poisoning.

Water.

Arrangements for the supply of water are unchanged; practically the whole of the area is supplied by the South West Suburban Water Co. which draws water from the River Thames at their waterworks at Egham. This Company has recently improved and modernised its treatment plant and the supply continues to be satisfactory both in quality and quantity.

A very few houses in the Laleham ward adjacent to Chertsey Bridge are supplied by the West Surrey Water Company and a part of Colnbrook by the Borough of Slough Water Undertaking. The water from these supplies is also quite satisfactory in quality and in quantity.

The arrangements for the chemical analysis and bacteriological examination of raw water and treated water continue to be on the lines mentioned in previous reports and this Department continues to take check samples of main water. All of these have been satisfactory. The water has no plumbo solvent action and there were no reports during the year of contamination of piped supplies. Eleven houses have stand pipes for water supply. This is twelve less than 1954. The following report is on a sample of water taken from the South West Suburban Water Co.'s mains submitted for examination during 1955.

Chemical Results in Parts per Million

Appearance: Clear and bright.

				Turbidity	...	...	Nil
Colour	...	...	4	Odour	...	...	Nil
pH	...	...	7.5	Free Carbon Dioxide	...	...	9
Electric Conductivity	...	...	540	Total Solids	...	...	355
Chlorine present as				Alkalinity as			
	Chloride	27		Calcium Carbonate	195		
Hardness: Total	250.	Carbonate	195.	Non-carbonate	55.		
Nitrate Nitrogen	...	3.2	Nitrite Nitrogen	Less than	0.01		
Ammoniacal Nitrogen	...	0.004	Oxygen Absorbed	...	0.60		
Albuminoid Nitrogen	...	0.033	Residual Chlorine		absent		
Metals	...	absent					

Bacteriological Results

Number of Colonies developing on Agar 1 day at 37° C. 2 days at 37° C. 3 days at 20° C.
 0 per ml. 0 per ml. 3 per ml.

	<i>Present in</i>	<i>Absent from</i>	<i>Probable number</i>
Presumptive Coli-aerogenes Reaction	... —ml.	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.
Bact. coli (Type 1)	... —ml.	100 ml.	0 per 100 ml.
Cl welchii Reaction	... —ml.	100 ml.	

This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance, neutral in reaction and free from metals. The water is hard in character but its hardness and its content of mineral and saline constituents in solution are not excessive. Its organic quality and bacterial purity are of a high standard.

These are very satisfactory results indicative of a water which is pure and wholesome in character and suitable for public supply purposes.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

To the Chairman and Members of the Council,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit this report on the tenth year of my service with your Council.

The Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, came into force during the year and provided the powers to implement the proposals made by the Government in 1953 for widening the scope of housing policy.

Since the war this policy had been mainly concerned with the erection of new houses and flats for families without a separate home of their own. With this Act Parliament decided that the time had come to give more attention to existing houses. The new Act required the Council to submit to the Minister of Housing and Local Government proposals for dealing with houses in the area which appear to be unfit for habitation and liable to demolition.

A survey of unfit houses was completed and a report made to the Public Health Committee in which it was estimated that 129 houses should be demolished during the next five years. In arriving at this figure all those older houses which were considered capable of and worthy of repair and improvement were excluded but unless such houses are made fit it will be necessary at a future date to consider their condition with a view to action under the Housing Acts. The Council accepted this report and agreed a programme of rehousing of occupiers of houses subject to Clearance or Demolition Orders at the rate of twenty per year.

Elsewhere in this report I have referred to the failure of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act 1954 to have any effect in making it easier to secure the repair of older houses and I feel that legislators still have to find a satisfactory solution to this very difficult and controversial problem. Many of the rent controlled houses continue to deteriorate due to lack of repair and maintenance and the statement is frequently made by owners of this type of house that they cannot afford to carry out repairs. This is particularly the case when notices under the Public Health or Housing Acts requiring repairs are served. The Council has power to serve notices under Section 9 Housing Act 1936 and to carry out the works specified on such notices in the default of the owner but having regard to the net rents, to the present cost of repairs and to the fact that the Act requires the house to be capable of repair at reasonable expense, it is not practicable to use these powers to any extent.

Meat inspection at private slaughterhouses continued to occupy much of your inspectors' time and inspections continued to have to be made in the evenings, after normal office hours, but it became apparent that the peak killing had been reached at the end of 1954 following derationing of meat and from mid 1955 onwards there was a marked reduction in the number of animals killed. Particulars of the number of carcasses inspected and of diseased meat condemned are given on page 22.

Once again I would like to express my appreciation of the support afforded me by the members of the Council, to mention the advice and co-operation received from all the officers and in particular Dr. Matheson, and to thank the staff of the Department for their work throughout the year.

JOHN MULLIN.

Summary of Inspections.

Inspections under Public Health or Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	1896
Improvement Grants	...	...	...	...	...	...	76
Certificates of Disrepair	...	...	...	...	...	...	73
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	...	...	125
Food Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	634
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	1476
Pet Animals Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	18
Massage and Chiropody Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Cesspools	...	...	...	...	...	...	273
Drainage Works	...	...	...	...	...	...	546
Drain Testing	...	...	...	...	...	...	43
Heating Appliances (Fireguard) Regns., 1953	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Factories and Outworkers	...	...	...	...	...	...	223
Smoke Abatement	...	...	...	...	...	...	88
Rodent Control (includes visits by Rodent Staff)	...	...	...	...	...	...	1989
Vermin	...	...	...	...	...	...	63
Keeping of Animals and Poultry	...	...	...	...	...	...	96
Water Supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	34
Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	108
Offensive Trades	...	...	...	...	...	...	47
Caravans	...	...	...	...	...	...	195
Places of Public Entertainment	...	...	...	...	...	...	29
Shops Act	...	...	...	...	...	...	74
Hawkers	...	...	...	...	...	...	51
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	...	127
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	32
River Pollution	...	...	...	...	...	...	45
Refuse Deposits	...	...	...	...	...	...	144
Hairdressers	...	...	...	...	...	...	38
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	170
							8751

Number of Notices Served :

				<i>Informal</i>	<i>Formal</i>
Housing Act, 1936, Section 9	...	...	...	12	8
Public Health Act, 1936	...	...	...	169	72
Food & Drugs Act, 1938	...	...	...	24	—
Factories Act, 1937	...	...	...	3	—
Pests Act, 1949	...	...	...	3	—
				211	80
				211	80

Housing Statistics.

Number of new houses erected during 1955:—	
By the Local Authority	61
By a Housing Association	253
By other Persons	383
Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year:—	
Number of dwelling-houses inspected under Public Health or Housing Acts	1896
Number of dwelling-houses found not to be in all respects fit for human habitation	159
Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action	85
Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—	
(a) Proceedings under Section 9 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	8
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a) By owners	5
(b) By local authority in default of owners	2
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Act:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	156
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—	
(a) By owners	47
(b) By local authority in default of owners	23
(c) Proceedings under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	22
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	8

An undertaking was accepted from the owner of one building not to use it for human habitation following the rehousing of the occupants by the Council.

Overcrowding.

All the known cases of overcrowding were visited when it was found that 32 cases of statutory overcrowding existed in December, 1955; this is a reduction of 15 cases on 1954. 16 overcrowded families were rehoused by the Council during 1955.

Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

This Act came into force at the end of August 1954 and despite the controversy and fears at the time of its passing, its effect upon repairs and rents has been negligible; in fact, estate agents and property owners have largely ignored it. Among other reasons it is not considered worth while increasing rents by the permitted amounts for the small return in rent income having regard to the expenditure necessary on repair; a further point influencing owners is that in order to continue to demand increased rents, houses would have to be maintained in good repair and tenants would expect a standard of repair which might even result in the net income from the house being less. It is also a fact that many owners have not spent the amounts on maintenance specified by the Act to qualify for increased rent. Whatever the reasons, it is clear that the Act has proved a failure in this area and has done nothing to make it easier to get repairs done to the older rent-controlled houses. I understand that the same situation exists nationally.

Four certificates were issued on the request of tenants after the owner had served notices of increase of rent; three of these were revoked at the owners' requests after the specified repairs had been completed. Of certificates issued during 1954, seven were revoked at the owners' request during 1955.

Housing Act, 1949.

Improvement Grants.

Eleven applications for improvement grants were approved; these with one exception were from owner/occupiers and all were for the addition of bath rooms and hot water supply to older properties. Six improvements were completed during 1955. The average cost of the improvement works was £262 12s. 0d. and the average grant £122 0s. 0d. While these are desirable improvements, it should be borne in mind that the primary purpose of the Act was to secure the improvement and modernisation of older houses. Unfortunately owners of property do not seem to be interested in the possibility of obtaining grants for this very desirable object. It seems that there are several reasons for this, among which are lack of capital on the part of owners to meet their share of the cost, unwillingness to put a house in full repair in order to secure a grant for improvement, the necessity to secure the tenant's approval to carrying out the improvement and the payment of an increased rent. Whenever I have discussed this with the tenant of a rent controlled house where a bathroom and a hot water supply

would have been a desirable improvement, the tenant has almost invariably said that he would pay an increased rent for these amenities. In fact there is little doubt that most tenants would pay from 7s. 6d. to 10s. per week extra (especially where there are grown-up children), an amount that would show an ample return. There has been no dissatisfaction with the rents fixed by the Council as part of the condition of making the grant, and I do not believe that it is this factor which mitigates against wider use of these provisions.

Legal Proceedings.

It was necessary to take proceedings against the occupier of one house, the subject of a demolition order, who had refused several offers of alternative accommodation. The Court made an Order for possession and the tenant was rehoused by the Council.

Proceedings were taken under the Food and Drugs Act 1938 against two grocery shops owned by the same firm, for dirty conditions, lack of hot water supply and for failure to prevent contamination of food. Fines totalling £36 were imposed with five guineas costs to the Council.

A butcher was fined £5 with £5 5s. costs, for offences under the Food and Drugs Act and Byelaws made under the Food & Drugs Act.

It was necessary following repeated failure to give notice of intention to slaughter to take proceedings against one wholesale slaughterer. In this instance the magistrates recorded a conviction.

A summons was issued under the Middlesex County Council Acts 1944/50 for occupying a caravan without prior consent. A fine of £2 with one guinea costs was recorded.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The arrangements for treatment of the sewage of the Urban District at the West Middlesex Main Drainage Works at Mogden continued unchanged. Small extensions of two sewers to serve seven cottages were carried out. Cesspools serving twelve houses were abolished and the houses connected to the sewer. The total number of cesspools abolished since the area was enlarged by the addition of the adjoining rural district in 1934 is now 4646. It was anticipated that the provision of main drainage for the Stanwell and Poyle areas would be commenced during 1955 together with the relaying of sewers in part of the Staines ward, and it is regretted that it was not found possible to commence this work. It is however, hoped that the work will not be unduly delayed.

Refuse.

Domestic refuse is incinerated at the new refuse destructor plant operated by the Twickenham Borough Council on behalf of three authorities including Staines. There are no Council owned refuse tips in the area, but difficulty continues to be experienced with deposits of refuse found on waste land and on roadside verges. The Council continues to remove such deposits. Such irresponsible dumping of builders' refuse and other materials is unsightly and unhygienic and puts the Council to considerable expense. It is very difficult to prevent dumping on such sites and still more difficult to secure a conviction of the persons responsible because the refuse is usually deposited during darkness or on unfrequented sites.

It would be an advantage if there could be a more frequent removal of refuse from traders in the shopping areas, particularly food traders. Many of these have such restricted storage accommodation that it is difficult to store more than one or two days' refuse. I appreciate the present labour difficulties but I would like to see the service extended to meet this demand when possible.

Clean Air.

There has been considerable public interest in atmospheric pollution since the smog disaster in Greater London during December 1952. This was followed by the report of the Beaver Committee on atmospheric pollution and now the Clean Air Bill.

This awakening of the public conscience is welcomed since I feel smoke abatement propaganda went unheeded far too long. Domestic smoke is the principal source of pollution in this area but the district being largely residential is suitable for declaration as a smoke control area, and at long last the new legislation gives Local Authorities better powers to deal with factory smoke.

There is however, another source of pollution which causes some concern when one considers the enormous volume of motor traffic passing through the town. Staines High Street is notorious in the Home Counties for its traffic jams, vehicles crawl bumper to bumper hour after hour each emitting exhaust gases containing carbon monoxide. Fuel research experts say, after measurements in London streets that there has been no great increase in air pollution from vehicles in recent years, mainly because of the increased efficiency of the internal combustion engine, but the fumes from motor vehicles and particularly from those with diesel engines are, to say the least, thoroughly objectionable, and cause considerable discomfort to pedestrians. Apart from the traffic problem, the construction of the new Staines By-Pass will be welcomed as a contribution to clean air.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

Food Premises :

The number of food premises in the area, by type, and the number of inspections are as follows :

	<i>No. of Premises.</i>	<i>No. of Inspections</i>
Slaughterhouses	5	1476
Butchers	31	68
Restaurants, Cafes and Snack Bars	36	84
Bakers and Confectioners	15	25
Grocers	86	142
Greengrocers	34	53
Licensed Premises	39	18
Off-Licences	8	4
Sweets and Tobacco	40	61
Wet and Fried Fish	15	74
Dairies	6	21
Wholesale Warehouses	3	32
Works Canteens	10	18
School Kitchens	15	24
Mineral Water Manufacturer	1	2
Cannery and Winery	1	6
Brewery	1	2
	346	2,110

	<i>Other Food</i>		
	<i>Butchers</i>	<i>Kitchens</i>	<i>Premises</i>
Premises cleansed	—	6	7
Ventilation provided	—	1	—
Hot water supply provided	2	—	—
Floors and walls cleansed	—	4	5
Lighting improved	—	—	—
Other improvements	—	—	2

Food premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

(a) Ice Cream Manufacturer	1
(b) Sale of Ice Cream	130
(c) Sausage Manufacturers	21
(d) Fish Friers	7
(e) Cooking of Ham	1

Food premises registered under Section 11 of the Middlesex County Council Act, 1950.

(a) Personal registration of Hawkers	...	45
(b) Registration of Hawkers' Premises where food is stored	... ..	15
Dairies registered under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949	... ..	6

The following foods, examined by your Inspectors in the various types of food premises, excluding slaughterhouses, were surrendered as unfit for human consumption :—

1,098 canned foods	52 lbs. cheese
60 lbs. lambs' livers	4 lbs. cake
70 lbs. pigs' livers	28 lbs. dried apricots
142 lb. pigs' kidneys	17 cases peaches
28 lbs. frozen liver	38 lbs. margarine
26 lbs. ox liver	4 lbs. butter
23 lbs. ox offal	$\frac{1}{2}$ stone smoked cutlets
14 lbs. ox head	1 stone fresh haddocks
446 lbs. bacon and ham	$\frac{1}{2}$ stone kippers
103 lbs. pork	2 stone cod
245 lbs. beef	2 stone herrings

Meat Inspection at Slaughterhouses.

A list is appended showing the number of animals killed, the carcasses inspected and details of carcasses condemned. The total number of animals killed was 20,931.

Fuller details of the meat condemned have been reported to the Public Health Committee each month and records are available should they be required for statistical or other purposes.

Carcasses and Offal Inspected and Condemned in whole or in part.

	<i>Cattle Excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number killed (if known)	... 585	497	3760	2047	14042
Number inspected	... 584	495	3708	2045	14014
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	... —	—	3	3	21
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	... 88	195	8	172	1780

	<i>Cattle Excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci ...	15.0	39.4	0.3	8.6	12.9
<i>Tuberculosis only:</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned ...	—	1	—	—	7
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	18	90	—	—	181
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	3.08	18.4	—	—	1.3
<i>Cysticercosis</i>					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration ...	3	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	—	—	—	—	—

All condemned food, meat and offals is disposed of at a large factory in the area which treats bones and fats for industrial purposes.

Condemned meat is dyed green at the slaughterhouse, and the method of disposal is quite satisfactory.

Considerable difficulty was experienced at one slaughterhouse in getting the butcher concerned to observe cleanly practices and to observe the provisions of the legislation applicable to slaughterhouses and the handling of meat. Despite several warnings this butcher did not improve his standards and it was necessary to take enforcement action. Proceedings were instituted in the Magistrates Court; these were strongly defended, and after several adjournments had not been decided by the end of the year.

The licence for this slaughterhouse expired at the end of 1955 and having regard to the very unhygienic conditions observed over a period the Council refused to renew the licence.

At the request of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, your Inspectors act as Certifying Officers under the Ministry's scheme for payments to pig producers. The Inspector has to see the carcase weighed and issue a certificate for payment.

6,234 pigs were certified and the fees received by the Council from the Ministry amounted to £204 16s. 6d. In my opinion the payment is inadequate for the work involved, when certifying is done at several private slaughterhouses.

Food Hygiene.

The Sanitary Inspectors continued the policy of pointing out wrong practices at the time of their inspections of food premises and to explain to food traders and their employees the reasons for correct methods. In my view public opinion is now in advance of many traders in demanding higher standards, this view is supported by the increasing number of complaints received from the public on dirty methods, foreign matter in food, and dirty milk bottles. No doubt the publicity given to food hygiene in recent years by the press, Local Authorities and other bodies has done a great deal to stimulate this demand for higher standards. It is encouraging to note that the more progressive traders appreciate the present situation and are taking steps to meet it. Short talks on food hygiene were given to several local women's organisations.

The trend towards the self service food store continues and a large grocer's shop has been converted to this method of shopping a most attractive and hygienic layout. Self service shops require the goods to be largely pre-packed and from the public health aspect this is an advantage, but provision has to be made in the store for a preparation room in which foods can be handled in a clean manner and for adequate storage space.

The visit of a Mass X-Ray Unit provided the opportunity of an "audience" on the spot to see a photographic exhibition of hygienic food handling. The exhibition was so placed that those attending for X-ray passed by; it was attractively presented and lighted and received favourable comment from many of the 4,500 persons who saw it. The cost was small, a little over £20; this was due to many of the exhibits being obtained free of cost.

Milk and Dairies Regulations.

Since 1st October 1949 only heat treated or designated milk has been allowed to be sold in the area and the milk supply is now largely in the hands of three large firms. Check samples are taken to ascertain whether heat treatment has been properly carried out. Of 19 samples taken, 13 samples of pasteurised milk proved satisfactory, 2 were unsatisfactory and 4 sterilised samples were reported satisfactory. One dairy has a pasteurising and milk bottling plant and regular inspections were made.

Complaints were again made by members of the public of dirty milk bottles delivered to them. Most of these were of milk supplied by a large dairy company and in previous years it had been necessary for the Public Health Committee to interview the

management of this particular firm, when an assurance was given that all possible steps were being taken to avoid complaints. Some of the milk bottles complained of had deposits of cement, sand or plaster indicating that they had been used on building sites. Others were contaminated in various ways indicating that they had been used for other than milk in the home, and one had a large brass cup hook stuck to the bottom.

In one case a contaminated bottle was referred to the authority in whose area the milk bottling was carried out, proceedings were taken by that authority against the firm, and these were successful. Experience of this problem indicates that the firms concerned are only too anxious to prevent contaminated milk bottles reaching their customers and go to some lengths to achieve this object. Among methods used are a bonus payment to a "spotter" on the milk plant, a scheme whereby empty bottles seen to be contaminated are placed by the roundsman in a special crate in order that they can receive special attention at the dairy; while one firm pays its roundsman a bonus not to deliver milk if it is noticed that anything is wrong with the bottle. Despite these precautions, contaminated bottles do reach the customer and I do not think there is any doubt that many more are delivered than come to the notice of this Department. It seems that the human element is at fault and the problem is a difficult one to solve.

Ice-Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations.

Most of the ice-cream retailed in the area is by firms of national repute. This is one result of the coming into force of these Regulations, since the small retailer making his own ice-cream has ceased to do so because he would or could not provide the plant necessary to comply with the regulations.

18 samples of ice-cream were submitted to the methylene blue test. 14 of these were placed in grade 1, one in grade 3 and three in grade 4. Nearly all these samples were from vendors of ice-cream made by smaller firms where the quality might be expected to vary. Samples from the larger firms are usually found to be satisfactory.

Six samples of ice lollies were examined for chemical contamination and reported free from lead and fit for consumption. 56 inspections were made of ice-cream premises to check methods of serving and handling ice-cream and to ensure that storage was satisfactory. The three samples of ice-cream placed in grade 3 were taken from one vendor selling from a vehicle, and in view of these results the vendor was notified that his registration under

S.11 of Middlesex County Council Act 1950 would be withdrawn, but this was not enforced because the vendor changed his source of supply to one known to be satisfactory.

Middlesex County Council Act 1950 S.11.

This Act enables the Council to require hawkers of food to be registered both as to themselves and to the premises where food is stored. The object is to prevent unsatisfactory persons from carrying on such a business and from using unhygienic premises. Eight new hawkers were registered and the total is now 45.

Food and Drugs Act, 1955.

I am indebted to the Chief Officer, Public Control Department, Middlesex County Council, for the following report on duties under the Food and Drugs Act carried out by his Department:—

SAMPLES PROCURED IN THE URBAN DISTRICT OF STAINES DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1955

<i>Article</i>	<i>Total samples</i>	
	<i>procured</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Milk	103	24
Apples	1	—
Apple & Cider Fudge with Cider Vinegar	1	1
Arrowroot	1	—
Bread	1	—
Butter	8	—
Cakes	7	—
Cheese	8	3
Cooked Meats	4	—
Drugs	18	2
Cream	6	—
Fish	10	—
Fish Paste	2	—
Flavoured Syrup	1	—
Glace Cherries	1	—
Ice-cream	1	—
Liver	1	—
Minced Meat	2	—
Marzipan	1	—
Oranges	3	—
Pickles	1	—
Sausages	6	4

<i>Article</i>	<i>Total samples procured</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Sweets	3	—
Sausage Meat and Rolls ...	2	—
Vinegar	13	—
Victoria Plums	4	—
Wines and Spirits	8	—
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	217	34
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Regarding the samples noted as unsatisfactory, I add the following comments:—

Milk. Of the twenty-four unsatisfactory milk samples twenty were obtained from one farmer. The samples were chiefly deficient in solids-not-fat, but added water was found in five of these samples. A letter of warning was first sent to the farmer and later he was subsequently officially cautioned. Of the remaining four unsatisfactory samples, two were of new milk; one deficient in solids-not-fat and the other deficient in fat. Associated and subsequent samples proved genuine and no further action was taken. Two samples were of hot milk: one contained added water and an official caution was issued—the other was deficient in fat but a follow-up sample proved genuine and no further action was taken.

Cheese. Three samples of cheese described as “Cream Cheese”—two from one retailer—were found to be processed whole milk cheese. Official cautions were issued.

Drugs. Two samples of iodine, each from a different retailer, were found to be deficient in iodine. Follow-up samples were genuine and no further action was taken.

Apple and Cider Fudge with Cider Vinegar. This sample contained no cider vinegar. A letter of caution was sent to the manufacturers.

Sausages. Four samples of sausages contained undeclared preservative. The two retailers concerned were officially cautioned.

Merchandise Marks Acts, 1887-1926. Eighty-three inspections of shops were undertaken to ensure that the Marking Orders relating to certain imported foodstuffs made under the Merchandise Marks Act, 1926 were complied with. 1,092 separate displays of meat, apples, tomatoes, dried fruits and poultry were examined. Verbal cautions were given in respect of minor infringements not being found so serious as to warrant more stringent action. No serious infringements were disclosed.

The Labelling of Food Order, 1953. This Order requires that in general pre-packed foods shall bear on the label a clear statement of the designation of the food and, in the case of compound foods, the ingredients. It also requires that the name and address of the packer or labeller appears. At thirty-five premises 180 articles of pre-packed food were examined. No substantial infringements were discovered of sufficient seriousness to warrant the authorisation of proceedings, but in respect of infringements found see paragraph "False or Misleading Descriptions" below.

False or Misleading Descriptions. In addition to the foregoing activities which arise specifically from inspections in your area a considerable amount of work has been done for the benefit of all districts of Middlesex equally in scrutinising advertisements and the labels of pre-packed foods and correcting false or misleading descriptions or errors in statement of composition found therein. Corrective action during the year in question included biscuits, confectionery, spirits, sausages in brine, cereals, fruit squashes, margarine, ginger wine, imitation cream, liver puree, iced lollies, cheese spreads, tinned fruit and vegetables.

The Defence (Sale of Food) Regulations, 1943. In addition to the above, a firm of fruiterers in your area falsely described Packham pears as "William" pears. Proceedings were authorised and the firm fined £5 on each of two summonses and ordered to pay £4 4s. 0d. costs.

Special Designated Milk. During the year in question one firm was licensed by my Council to use the special designation "pasteurised" in respect of milk processed at premises within your district. The premises were inspected regularly throughout the year; fifty-two samples were taken, all of which proved satisfactory.

Safe Milk. In addition to the foregoing, twenty-six samples of raw milk were procured and submitted to test for the presence of tubercle bacilli. None was found contaminated.

Factories Act, 1937.

Inspections for Purposes of Provisions as to Health.

(Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

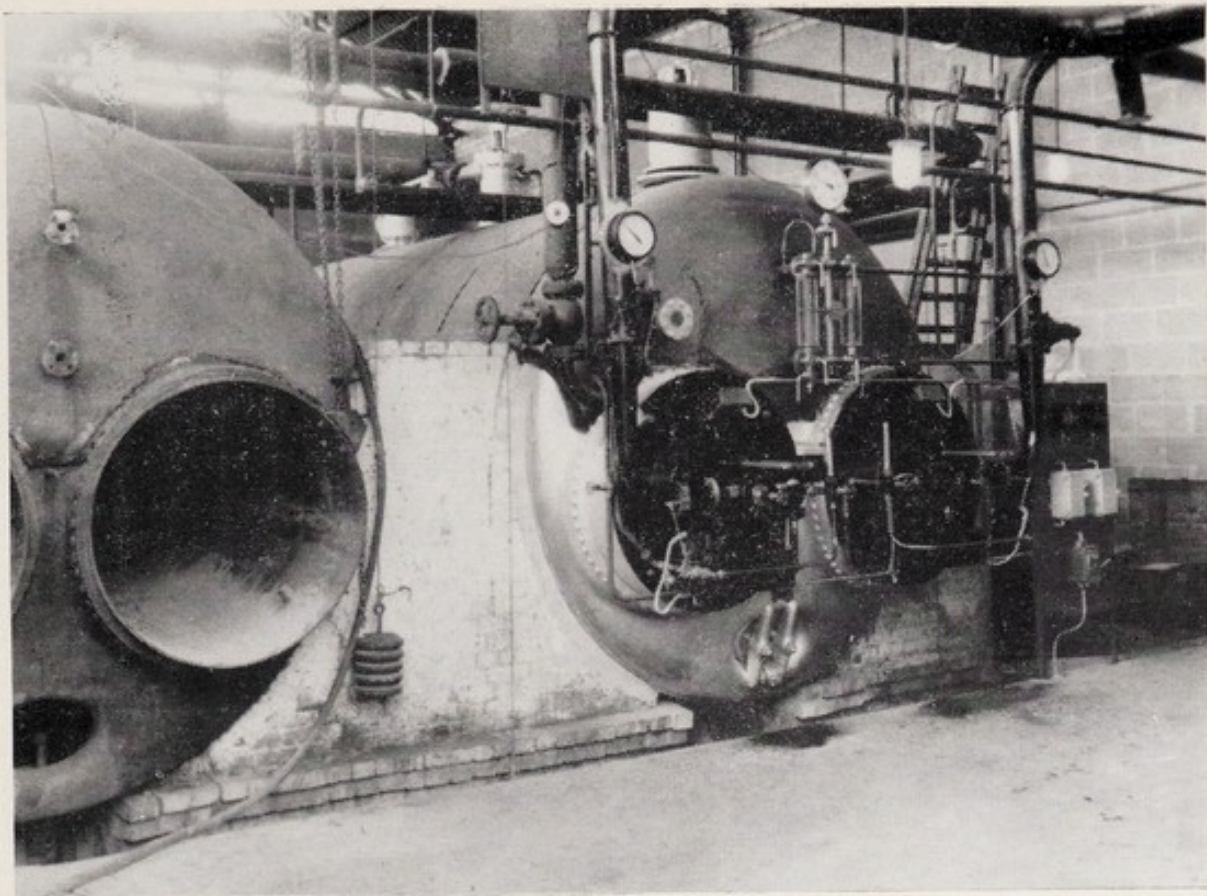
	<i>Number on Register</i>	<i>Inspections</i>	<i>Number of written notices</i>	<i>Occupier prosecuted</i>
1. Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by L.A.s ...	15	4	—	—
2. Factories not included in 1, in which Section 7 is enforced by the L.A. ...	251	196	3	—
3. Other Premises under the Act (excluding out-workers' premises) ...	3	3	—	—
TOTALS	<u>269</u>	<u>203</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>—</u>

Cases in which Defects Were Found.

	<i>Found</i>	<i>Remedied</i>	<i>Referred To H.M. By H.M.</i>		<i>Number of cases in which prose- cutions were In- stituted.</i>
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable Temp. (S.3) ...	—	1	—	1	—
Inad. Vent'n. (S.4) ...	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffect. drainage on floors (S.6)	2	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7):—					
(a) insufficient ...	—	—	—	1	—
(b) unsuitable or defective	5	1	—	—	—
(c) not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences, not includ- ing offences relating to Homework ...	—	—	1	—	—
TOTALS	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>—</u>

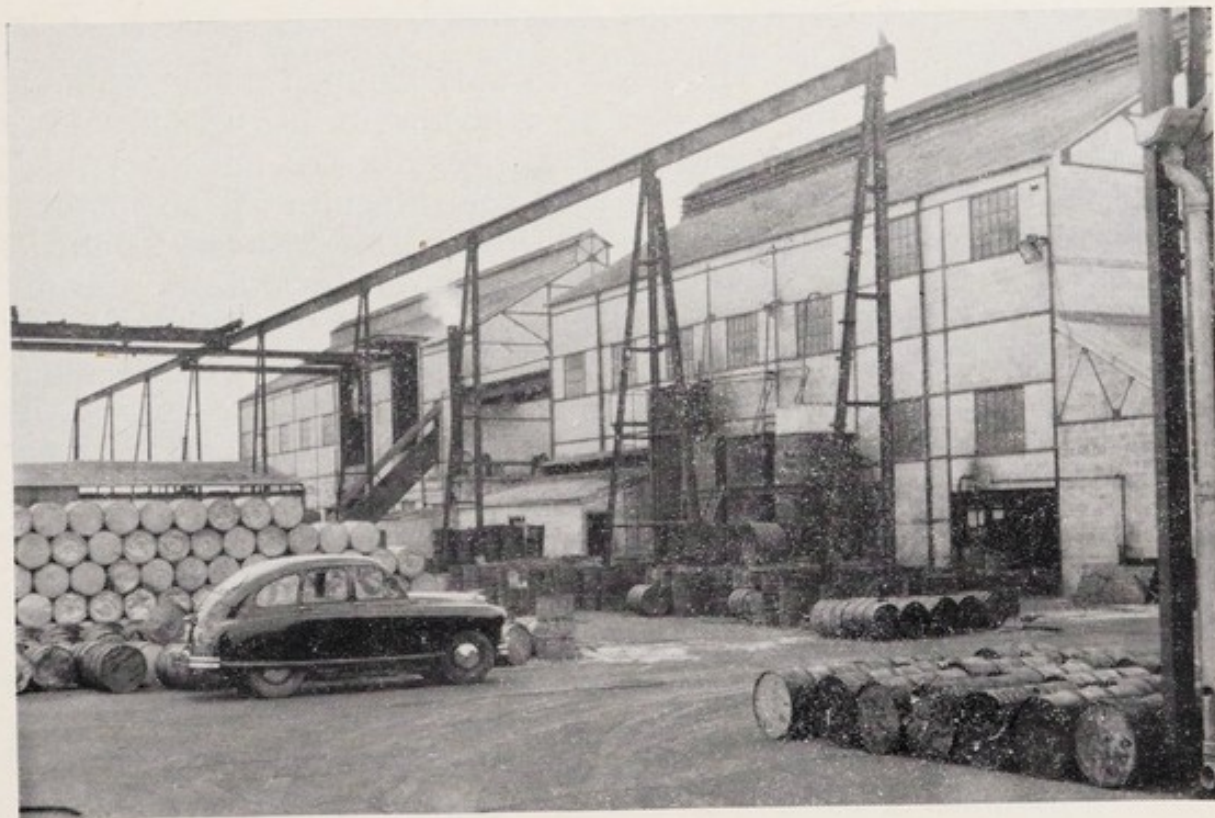
Outworkers :

There are 20 out-workers in the Area, all making wearing apparel.

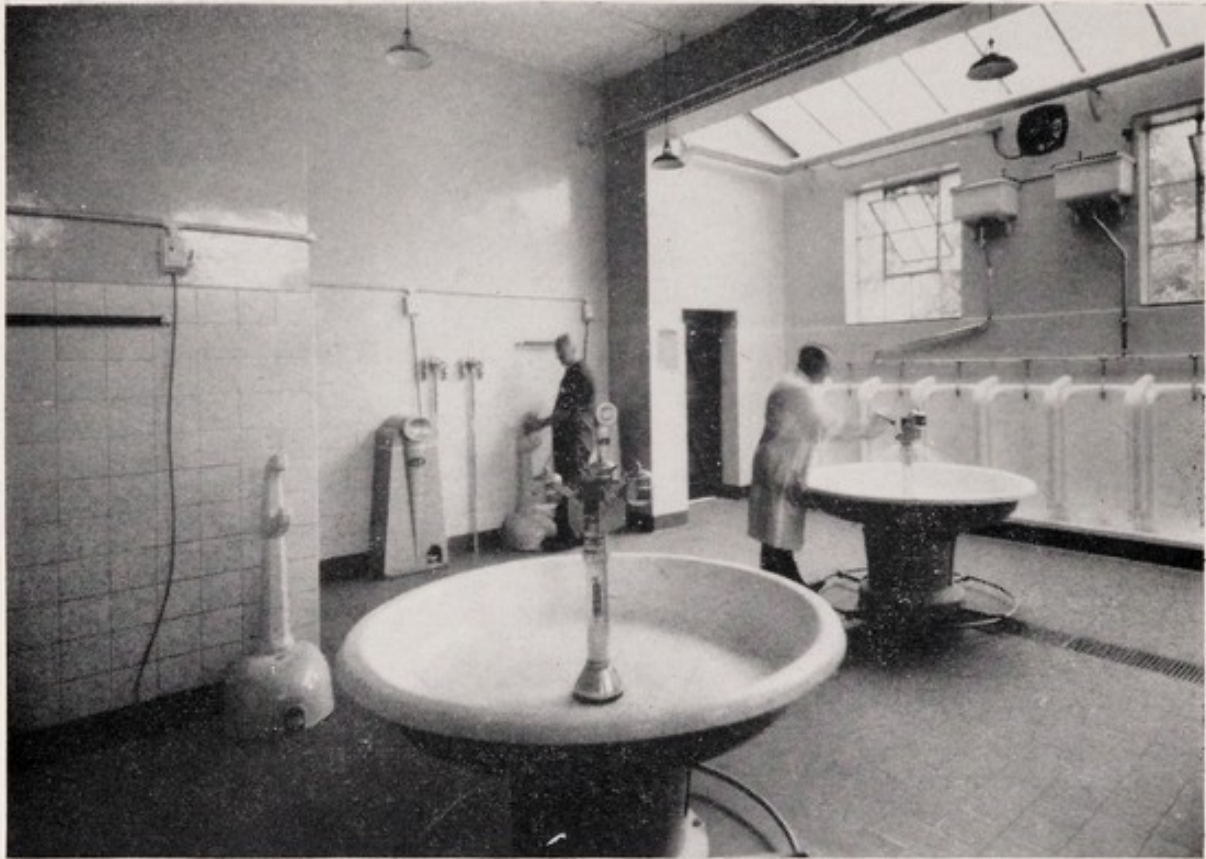


A step towards clean air. Lancashire Boilers at this factory being converted to oil burning.

Completed conversion on right.



Factory carrying on offensive trade of bone boiling and fat recovery. Illustrates improvements carried out in recent years.



Modern factory conveniences with washing facilities. Note hot air hand dryers on left.

Moveable Dwellings.

It is the policy of the Middlesex County Council under planning powers to restrict the number of caravans in the County to a minimum. This is because Middlesex is regarded as an "overspill" area and it will only add to the housing difficulties if an increase in the number of caravans in the district is allowed. The Council's powers for this purpose are contained in the Middlesex County Council Acts 1944 and 1950 and Section 269 of the Public Health Act 1936 is not in force. Before a caravan can be occupied, apart from certain exemptions, it is necessary for the consent of the Council to be sought in addition to planning consent, and consent is refused except in those cases where hardship would be caused by a refusal. By conforming to this policy the caravan problem in this area has been reduced to negligible proportions.

The Council continues to provide a caravan site with modern amenities on the riverside at Laleham. This attractive site is operated on behalf of the Council by the Camping Club of Great Britain and is open from May until September in each year, and is very popular.

There are thirty-one occupied caravans on approved sites or on land in gardens adjacent to houses. These are nearly all owner/occupied modern trailer caravans and have satisfactory facilities. In addition to these, twelve caravans are occupied by agricultural workers and seven by travelling showmen. Seven applications to occupy caravans were given temporary consent and by the end of the year five of these were not on the sites for which permission was given.

It was necessary to continue to prevent the occupation of caravans on waste land and roadside verges by persons of the vagrant type. These families, known locally as "diddykies", are not true gypsies, and when they establish themselves, complaints are usually received on their behaviour and of nuisance caused by their habits. On several occasions it was necessary to seek the co-operation of the police to secure the removal of this type of caravan.

Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Regulations, 1953.

Enforcement of this Act is the responsibility of this Department but inspections throughout the year showed that no gas, electric or oil space heating appliances were on sale without adequate guards. This Act was designed to prevent accidents in the home particularly to children and old persons who are more liable to accidents from burning, and it is clear that it has proved effective. Manufacturers and traders have co-operated well and inspections show that no heating appliances to which the Regulations apply were on sale unless they were fitted with an adequate guard.

Shops Act, 1950.

The Council is the authority responsible for the administration of this Act which deals with health and welfare provisions for shop workers, with the general closing hours of shops, Sunday employment and hours of employment of young persons.

The Sanitary Inspectors are appointed as inspectors under the Shops Act and 74 visits were made. In addition to these, the provisions of the Shops Act are borne in mind by each inspector during his visits to shops for other purposes.

Middlesex County Council Act 1944, Part XII.

Seven premises are registered under Part XII of the Middlesex County Council Act for Massage and Special Treatment. All premises are inspected prior to renewal of the licence.

Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949.

As in former years the majority of infestations dealt with arose from the keeping of pigs or domestic poultry. I am satisfied that if all those who are responsible for keeping animals and poultry would adopt a higher standard of hygiene, take more care of feeding arrangements and see to the removal of all rubbish, far less trouble would be experienced from rat breeding. It was not considered necessary to test bait the Council's sewers in view of the lack of infestation disclosed by test baiting over several years. Three notices were served under the Act requiring the carrying out of works to prevent harbourage of rats. The following is a summary of inspections and treatments carried out :

Number of properties inspected	...	...	1984
Number of properties found to be infested by rats or mice	...	...	792
Number of dwelling houses treated for rats and mice	...	...	733
Number of other premises treated	...	...	63
Total number of visits and revisits	...	...	1989

Other Pests.

The advice of the Council's Inspectors continued to be sought in connection with various types of insect pests, and every effort is made to provide advice on the correct treatment to eradicate a particular pest. The first step is to identify the insect and when the less well known ones are encountered the advice of the Entomological Section of the British Museum is sought and freely given.

There were a number of complaints of infestation of dwelling houses by the gooseberry mite. This is a tiny mite which invaded newly built houses in the early summer and was present in countless numbers. Treatment was prolonged and difficult but usually the mites disappeared in two to five weeks.

DOMESTIC POULTRY KEEPING.

The other photograph shows a simple home-made chicken run, well constructed with space beneath. Any rat infestation can readily be discovered and easily dealt with.



Photograph above shows poorly constructed chicken run and rabbit hutch where rat infestations are frequent and difficult to eradicate.



