ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

HUGH MORRISON, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

AND

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

G. M. PAWSON, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

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BOROUGH OF TAUNTON FOR THE YEAR 1963

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Public Health Department,
St. Paul's House,
Taunton.
July, 1963.

The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses,
THE BOROUGH OF TAUNTON,
Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1963.

The report is drawn up in accordance with Ministry of Health instructions, and follows the general lines of previous reports, so that comparisions with the conditions of former years may easily be made.

From the tables of Vital Statistics it will be seen that the birth rate and the death rate in Taunton were both rather lower than the national average. The infant mortality rate was much lower than that of England and Wales as a whole: 12.1 as against 20.9. There were only two deaths from infectious conditions, if one excludes pneumonia and bronchitis: one from tuberculosis and the other from influenza. Deaths from cancer of the lung remained high at 16 compared with 20 in the previous year, and the number of fatal motor vehicle accidents increased sharply from 3 in 1962 to 7 in 1963.

Epidemic diseases did not present a serious problem during the year, and this may be attributed in no small measure to the immunisation procedures which are constantly being carried out. There are detailed references to this subject in the body of the report, and particular attention might be drawn to a paragraph pointing out the advantages of protection against tetanus.

The personal health services provided in the Borough are again dealt with in some detail. An interesting trend in this connection is the tendency towards co-operation between Health Visitors of the Local Health Authority and General Practitioners, and reference is made to a pilot scheme of this nature which has begun in Taunton.

The subject of Fluoridation of Water Supplies was keenly debated by the Council, but it was decided not to recommend treatment of the local water supplies at the present time, in spite of a favourable report on the procedure by myself as Medical Officer of Health, and a decision in favour of the project by the Health Committee. No doubt there will be further opportunities to consider this matter after experience of the results of fluoridation in other areas has become available.

I wish to express appreciation of the valuable help I have received during the year from the Chairman of the Public Health Committee, Councillor J. Clough, from the Public Health Inspectors and from my fellow officials and the staff of the Public Health Department.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

HUGH MORRISON,

Medical Officer of Health.

BOROUGH OF TAUNTON

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, 1963

GENERAL STATISTICS

Acreage of Borough	2,581
Population (estimated by Registrar General, mid-year)	36,410
Number of inhabited houses and flats (separately assessed) at the end of 1963 (according to the rate books)	10,935
Rateable value at the end of 1963	£1,370,440
Estimated product of a penny rate Original and Revised ...	£5,460

VITAL STATISTICS

It should be pointed out that in the figures which follow the standardisation of the rate for births and deaths allows for the differing age and sex distribution of the population in different areas, and is obtained by multiplying the crude rate by a comparability factor for the district furnished by the Registrar General. This enables comparison to be made with the figures for the country as a whole, or with those for other districts.

I. Births.

(a) Live Births

	M	F	Total
Legitimate	294	256	550
Illegitimate	21	19	40
Total	315	275	590

Birth Rate per 1,000 population	16.20
Standardised Birth Rate :—	
Taunton	16.52
England and Wales	18.2
Percentage illegitimate of total live births	6.78

(b) Still Births

Total	8
Rate per 1,000 live and Still births :—	
Taunton	13.38
England and Wales	17.3
Total live and Still Births	398

2. Deaths.

(a) Total Deaths 430

Death Rate per 1,000 population 11.81

Standardised Death Rate :—

Taunton 11.22

England and Wales 12.2

(b) Infant Deaths (deaths under 1 year) :—

Total 7

Infant Deaths per 1,000 live births :—

Taunton 12.1

England and Wales 20.9

Legitimate Infant Deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births ... 10.91

Illegitimate ,, ,, ,, ,, illegitimate ,, ,, ... 25.0

Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 live births) 13.56

Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 live births) 10.19

Perinatal Mortality Rate (Still Births and deaths under one week combined per 1,000 live and Still Births) 25.08

Causes of Infant Deaths :—

Cause of Death	Under 1 week	Under 4 weeks	Totals under 1 year
Congenital Heart Disease	—	1	1
Congenital Malformations	2	—	2
Pneumonia	1	—	1
Prematurity	3	—	3
Totals ...	6	1	7

(c) Maternal Mortality

Total Maternal Deaths ... ... NIL

(d) Deaths from Cancer :—

Cancer of the Lung	Males ...	11
	Females...	5
	Total ...	16
Cancer in all other situations	Males ...	14
	Females...	35
		49

REGISTRAR GENERAL'S TABLE OF DEATHS

Cause of Death	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	—	1
Tuberculosis, other	—	—	—
Syphilitec disease	—	—	—
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Whooping cough	—	—	—
Meningococcal infections	—	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis	—	—	—
Measles	—	—	—
Other infective and parasite diseases ...	—	—	—
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	2	2	4
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ...	11	5	16
Malignant neoplasm, breast	—	9	9
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	—	1	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	12	23	35
Leukaemia, aleukaemia	—	1	1
Diabetes	—	2	2
Vascular lesions of nervous system	20	48	68
Coronary disease, angina	57	27	84
Hypertension with heart disease	7	7	14
Other heart disease	17	27	44
Other circulatory disease	13	11	24
Influenza	—	1	1
Pneumonia	12	17	29
Bronchitis	21	7	28
Other diseases of respiratory system ...	1	—	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	6	—	6
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	—	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	—	1
Hyperplasia of prostate	1	—	1
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—	—
Congenital malformations	3	1	4
Other defined and ill-defined diseases ...	15	24	39
Motor vehicle accidents	6	1	7
All other accidents	2	4	6
Suicide	1	2	3
Homicide and operations of war	1	—	1

INFECTIOUS DISEASES, 1963

Disease	No. of Cases notified
Measles	524
Scarlatina (Scarlet Fever)	8
Puerperal Pyrexia	9
Meningococcal Infection	—
Dysentery	34
Whooping Cough	3
Pneumonia	2
Poliomyelitis	—
Erysipelas	2
Food Poisoning	3
Tuberculosis—Respiratory	3
Tuberculosis—Non-Respiratory	4

DYSENTERY

The 34 cases were all of the Sonne type, which is the one commonly found in this country. They all occurred in the course of a sharp epidemic affecting the junior department of one of the independent boy's schools in the Borough, and were concentrated into a period of about one month in the early part of the year. Some of the cases were fairly severe, but all went on to make a good recovery, as is the general experience with this disease.

MEASLES

Following on a year when measles notifications were relatively low, the year under review showed a high incidence, thus conforming to the general pattern in this disease of epidemic prevalence during each alternative year. It is hoped that immunisation against measles will become available in the near future, and this should be of considerable value in preventing attack in children who, for one reason or another, may be particularly vulnerable.

TUBERCULOSIS

	Pulmonary	Non-Pulmonary
Cases on the Borough Register 31.12.63	105	16
Including New Cases 1963	3	4
Deaths	1	—

Tuberculosis is now very much less of a problem than it was up to about ten or fifteen years ago. Many factors are responsible for this change, but probably the main one is the present availability of potent antibiotic remedies which have enormously improved the outlook for sufferers from this infection. The disease process is usually

brought quickly under control in the individual patient, with a minimum period of hospitalisation or even of bed-rest. The period during which the case is infective to others has been drastically curtailed, and this results in a lessened likelihood of spread within the community. The number of known cases on the Tuberculosis Register is showing a slow but steady fall over the years, in Taunton as in other areas, and this is revealed by the figures above when compared with the statistics of former years. Another indication of the same trend is the fact that the number of children who are found to have been previously infected with Tuberculosis when tested at the age of thirteen in connection with the B.C.G. vaccination scheme has reached a low level, and is continuously falling. The chief remaining reservoir of infection at present appears to exist among elderly male patients in whom the disease may pursue a chronic course for a considerable period of time without arousing suspicions of its presence. There are some signs in certain parts of the country that antibiotic resistant strains of tubercle bacillus may be emerging and giving rise to fresh cases of infection; but nothing of this has, as yet, been reported in our area. These cases will probably present considerable difficulties in treatment and control, and their occurrence suggests that there is no room for complacency regarding the rapid elimination of tuberculosis from the population as a whole.

IMMUNISATION

Diphtheria Immunisation.

The immunisation campaign against diphtheria has been an outstanding success in this district, and in the country as a whole; but it remains essential that all young children should be given the benefit of this protection, and there is some evidence that without constant stress on this fact, the number of children being immunised each year might easily fall to a dangerously low level.

Reinforcing injections are offered to children on entering school and at the age of 10 years.

	1963	1962
Total "Primaries" under 5 years ...	293	482
Total "Primaries" 5—14 years ...	10	65
Total Re-inforcements	337	316

Tetanus Immunisation.

Immunisation against tetanus is now regarded as a very important protective procedure. The disease is not common, but when it does strike the consequences can be devastating, and life is always endangered. There are some indications that tetanus may occur

more frequently in the West Country than in many other areas of Great Britain. It is perhaps not generally realised that the disease may follow the most trivial injury, and that in a fair proportion of cases there may be no obvious injury at all preceding the attack, although the bacteria must then be presumed to have entered the body through some minute abrasion.

It has been customary for many years to give anti-tetanus serum to patients presenting wounds of various sorts, especially those which are deeply penetrating or contaminated with soil; but it is now usual to combine this with injections of anti-tetanus toxoid which gives a much longer lasting immunity. This is the substance used in the routine immunisation of children, and the number of injections required is three. They are given in conjunction with the diphtheria and whooping cough courses. All parents are strongly urged to ensure that their children are given this valuable protection.

	Primaries	Re-inforcing
Under 1 year	195	—
1—5 years	312	21
6—10 years	34	225
11—16 years	—	195

Whooping Cough Immunisation.

It is customary in the Borough to combine immunisation against whooping cough with the course used to protect against diphtheria and tetanus and this is also a most valuable public health measure, since whooping cough is now probably the most serious of the common infectious diseases affecting young children.

Of the children born in 1962 and 1963, approximately 40% had completed a course of immunisation against whooping cough by the end of 1963.

Poliomyelitis Immunisation.

Poliomyelitis immunisation, which formally involved injections is now carried out by giving the material by mouth. During 1963 the following persons received a course of primary vaccinations or oral doses.

	1963	1962
Children born in 1963	38	37
Children born in 1962	21,111	555
Children born in 1943—1961	1,400	61
Young persons born 1933—42 ...	283	No figures available
Persons under 40 years and priority groups	372	135

In addition 94 persons, comprising all groups, received their third (re-inforcing) injection.

16 children between 5 and 12 years received a 4th re-inforcing injection.

74 persons (all groups) received a re-inforcing dose of Oral vaccine following two Salk injections.

516 children between 5 and 12 years received a dose of Oral after 3 injections or 2 injections and 1 Oral dose.

B.C.G. Immunisation against T.B.

Immunisation against Tuberculosis by the use of B.C.G. vaccine is offered to susceptible children at the age of thirteen.

525 children were given the Heaf Test and approximately 93.7 of these were given the B.C.G. Vaccination.

Smallpox Vaccination.

Vaccination of children in the second year of life is now the standard procedure.

In comparing the figures below with those of the previous year it will be seen that there has been a drastic fall in the numbers treated. This is because 1962 was the year in which a sharp epidemic of smallpox occurred in the North and Midlands. It requires the obvious proximity of danger to persuade many people to accept the simple measures necessary to safeguard health.

	Vaccination		Re-vaccination	
	1962	1963	1962	1963
Under 1 year	392	111	—	—
1 year	51	21	3	—
2—4 years	214	6	79	2
5—14 years	814	6	653	29
15 or over	1,238	20	2,130	107
	2,709	164	2,865	138

PERSONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Administered in Taunton Municipal Borough by the Somerset County Council.

Health Visiting Services.

There were six Health Visitors engaged on work in the Borough During 1963 their activities included :—

Home Visiting of Children.

Number of cases dealt with :—

Children under one year	644
Children aged one to five years ...	3,383

Ante-natal Visits.

During the year the scheme was continued whereby expectant mothers booked for hospital confinement were visited and if necessary kept under observation by the Health Visitors in co-operation with the Domiciliary Midwives.

School Medical Inspection.

Each Health Visitor visits the schools in her area to assist the School Medical Officer with routine medical inspections and immunisation. When necessary she carries out hygiene surveys in the schools. Every child now has an annual eye test.

School Children.

Visits are paid to children at the request of the doctor following on the work of the school medical inspections.

Old People.

Special visits are paid to old people as requested, by doctors, hospital almoners, welfare officers, etc.

Other Visits.

Amongst other cases referred to and dealt with by the Health Visitors are handicapped persons, infectious diseases, difficult social conditions, etc. Visiting of tuberculosis cases and other chest conditions is carried out by a Health Visitor specialising in this work. The work of the Health Visitor in the Mental Health field has increased considerably since the coming into operation of the Mental Health Act 1959.

Child Welfare Centres.

Attendances were as follows :—

652 attended Tower Lane, on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons.

395 attended All Saints' Church Hall, Halcon, on Wednesday afternoons.

380 attended St. Peter's Church Hall, Priorswood on Friday afternoons.

201 attended St. Michael's Church Hall, Galmington, on Monday afternoons.

A total attendance of 9,237 children under 5 years of age, including 795 new cases. This is an increase of 436 over the previous year.

Liaison with Family Doctors.

Much has been said and written at Health Conferences and elsewhere throughout the Country on the desirability of Health Visitors working in closer co-operation with the Family Doctor. There are very obvious benefits to be expected from this sort of liaison, but only too often lip service is paid to the idea and no visible results are achieved. It is gratifying to report that, for the first time so far as Taunton is concerned, an arrangement has been made with one of the General Practitioners in the town, at his own suggestion, whereby a Health Visitor attends his surgery premises during one afternoon of each week to give assistance with a special Children's Clinic. The Health Visitors each in turn take a three month spell of this duty and they find the work valuable and rewarding. It is hoped that the idea may in time be taken up by other practices in the Town.

Ante-natal Clinics.

The blood tests clinic for ante-natal patients has been discontinued. Facilities for this service are now available at the Family Doctors' surgeries and at Musgrove Park Hospital.

The Ante-natal Clinic is staffed each Monday by Domiciliary Midwives who help and advise expectant mothers booked for Wellington Maternity Home or for domiciliary confinement.

Mothercraft Classes.

These are held weekly in the Health Centre with a short break between each series of seven talks.

Classes for relaxation exercises and talks by a Doctor, a Health Visitor or a Midwife are given each time.

There is an average of 30—36, slightly higher during the winter months. It is necessary to divide the classes into two groups, the talks being given to each group in turn while the other group is having relaxation exercises. During 1963 186 women attended and the total number of attendances was 684.

Domiciliary Midwifery and Nursing.

4,854 midwifery and nursing visits are made to patients in their own homes during the year by domiciliary midwives and nurses, and this figure is tending to increase because of the more intensive follow-up visiting demanded by the practice of earlier discharge from hospital.

Premature Baby Service.

In addition to the arrangements for the care of full-term babies a special service is provided for premature infants. If there is a risk that a child will be born after less than 37 or 38 weeks' gestation, arrangements are made for the admission of the expectant mother to Musgrove Park Hospital where special facilities are available and special equipment is provided where necessary.

Small or premature babies unsuitable for nursing at home are admitted to that Unit from the district and a special Oxygenaire incubator is sent by ambulance to collect them.

If premature babies born at home can be nursed there, the district midwife can obtain special equipment for this and advice, if required, from the Area Nursing Officer who follows up all premature births.

During 1963, 34 premature infants were born in hospitals of whom three died; one was born at home.

Distribution of Welfare Foods.

National dried milk, orange juice and codliver oil for infants and vitamin tablets for expectant mothers, provided by the Ministry of Food, are distributed at the Welfare Centres.

Certain brands of dried milk, babies cereals and rose hip syrup are sold to mothers and children who attend the Clinics at approximately cost price.

The Day Nursery.

This is situated at Victoria Park, East Reach and is open each weekday except Saturdays and Public Holidays.

Accommodation is provided from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. for a maximum of 30 children.

The average daily attendance during 1963 was 24, the vast majority of the children on the register belonging to the Priority 1 group.

Home Help Service.

During 1963, 327 Borough residents received assistance in their homes against 334 in 1962. These included the following types of cases :—

Maternity	12
Post and pre-natal	12
Old age	186
General illness	21
Chronic sick	49
Post operative	17
Child care	8
Mental illness	6
Accidents	4

Of these cases, 164 remained on the books at the end of the year, 102 having received help from the service for over twelve months.

The Taunton area office moved from the County Hall in February, 1963, to Upper High Street and from thence to 5 Hammet Street.

Orthopaedic Clinic.

This is held in the Health Centre on Tuesday mornings and Wednesday afternoons. The Orthopaedic Surgeon attending on the 2nd and 4th Fridays during the month. This service is the responsibility of the Regional Hospital Board but is administered on an agency basis by the Somerset County Council.

Dental Clinic, Tower Lane.

The treatment given to school children during the year ended 31st December, 1963 was as follows :—

1.	Number of pupils inspected by the Authority's Dental Officers :		
	(a) Periodic age groups		6,071
	(b) Specials		283
	Total (1) ...		6,354
2.	Number found to require treatment		3,420
3.	Number offered treatment		2,283
4.	Number actually treated		1,065
5.	Attendances made by pupils for treatment		3,916
6.	Half-days devoted to :—		
	Periodic School Inspections	58	
	Treatment	766	
			824

The treatment given to expectant and nursing mothers and to pre-school children is shown below :—

		Adults	Pre-school children
1.	Number of cases inspected ...	15	55
2.	Number found to require treatment	7	44
3.	Number of cases treated ..	7	47
4.	Number of attendances	32	190
5.	Dentures provided	—	—

Note.—The above figures include a number of cases attending the clinic from the areas surrounding Taunton Borough.

Ambulance Service.

The main Ambulance Station and Control for the South-West of the County is situated at the entrance to Musgrove Park Hospital. The Ambulance Station serves a very wide area and at 31st December the establishment of vehicles and staff was as follows :—

Vehicles—6 Ambulances
5 Sitting-case Ambulances
1 Car
Staff— 5 Senior Drivers
19 Driver/Attendants

The following details comprise of patients carried and mileage run by vehicles at the Taunton Station during 1963 :—

Ambulances ..	11,048	99,313
Sitting-case Ambulances ...	18,428	124,500
Car	782	12,755

All vehicles at this Station are fitted with radio.

The demands on the Ambulance Service have grown considerably during the past twelve months, and this despite the fact that in the first three months of the year the demands dropped somewhat due to the severe weather conditions.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948—Section 47

No court proceedings had to be taken to remove persons in need of care and attention from their homes to hospital or other institutions.

MASS RADIOGRAPHY SERVICE.

No public sessions were held during 1963 but plans are in hand for a regular service to be made available in the Borough at frequent intervals throughout the year.

WATER SUPPLY.

On 1st April, 1963, the water undertakings of the Borough of Taunton were transferred to the West Somerset Water Board. The area covered by the Board amounts to 610 square miles and the total population served is approximately 154,000. The Board has its Headquarters in Taunton, with Divisional Offices in Taunton, Bridgwater and Minehead.

The Chief Officers are :—

Chief Engineer—W. J. Wonnacott, M.I.C.E., M.I.W.E, Chartered Civil Engineer.
Clerk/Financial Officer—A. N. Cockayne, A.I.M.T.A.
Part-time Solicitor—K. A. Horne, Town Clerk, Taunton.
Deputy Chief Engineer—J. Moat, A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E.
Chemist—M. Barker, A.R.I.C.

The following information has been kindly supplied by Mr. Wonnacott, the Chief Engineer :—

The total amount of treated water delivered into supply during 1963 was :—

Taunton Statutory Area	829,963,000	gallons
Bulk Supplies to Taunton R.D.C. ...	59,984,000	,,
Wellington R.D.C. ...	134,286,000	,,
Williton R.D.C. ...	181,195,000	,,
Bridgwater R.D.C. ...	2,479,000	,,
Free Supplies	1,900,000	,,
	1,209,808,000	,,

The amount pumped from the River Otter in 1963 was :— 75,702,000 ,,

This represents 9.12% of the water available from all sources.

The total rainfall recorded at the various stations was :—

Leigh Reservoir (Blackdowns)	...	40.41 inches
Clatworthy Reservoir (Brendons)	...	48.53 ,,

During the year 1963 considerable progress in new works has been made in the Taunton Division of the Board. The bulk of this work affects localities outside the Borough of Taunton, but owing to the extent of the area covered by the Board it has now become very difficult to restrict the report to one Local Authority territory. In future years it is proposed to deal with water supply activities as they affect Taunton Borough and Rural Districts and Wellington Urban and Rural Districts. These districts together constitute the Taunton Division of the Water Board, and each of the four shares the services of the same Medical Officer of Health.

The principal schemes of work completed during 1963 were as follows :—

(a) Eastern Parishes—Blagdon 250,000 gallon service reservoir —£19,110.

(b) Thornfalcon to Knight's Garage—6in. main—£3,750.

(c) Wellington Ford Street—Foxmoor—4in. main—£4,970.

(d) Wellington Ford Street—4in. main—£550.

(e) Wellington Tonedale, Wellington—4in. main—£2,000.

(f) Housing Sites—12in., 6in., 4in. and 3in. mains—£17,425.

During the year 418 new supplies were connected to the Corporation's mains.

Water Samples—Taunton Division

Test	Raw Water	Treated Supply	
		Satisfactory	Not satisfactory
Bacteriological ...	33	233	10
Chemical ...	3	9	—

Of the 10 samples which were not satisfactory, 7 relate to water supplies in Wellington R.D.C. from Spring Supplies, 1 in Taunton R.D.C. from a Spring Supply, and 2 in Taunton Borough, which were considered to be due to local contamination.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The sewage disposal works described in detail in the 1959 Annual Report continues to give satisfactory service and the new method of sludge disposal by tanker still operates satsifactorily.

Average Dry Weather Flow 1963—4.2 million gallons.

The sewerage system is being improved by a new 6ft. diameter outfall sewer along Priory Bridge Road.

HOUSING.

I am indebted to the Borough Architect, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor and the Housing Officer for the following information and tables :—

TABLE I.

No. of Post-War Houses errected to 31st December, 1963		Programme for 1964
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise	By Local Authority
2,714	732	98

Houses required :—	1963
To abate overcrowding	3
To overcome unsatisfactory conditions	676
Total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of 1963	808
Temporary housing units occupied	225

TABLE 2.

Details of Post-War Houses :—

Temporary Bungalows	225
Permanent Bungalows	84
Woolaway Bungalows	1
Brick Bungalows	10
Bedsitting Room Flats	44
Five bedroomed houses	8
Four bedroomed houses	46
Three bedroomed houses	1,290
Two bedroomed houses	451
Two bedroomed flats	298
One bedroomed flats	145
Three bedroomed maisonettes	6
Two bedroomed maisonettes	15
	2,755

Two bedroomed flats	2
One bedroomed flats	2
Three bedroomed maisonettes	2
Two bedroomed maisonettes	12
	18

TABLE 3.

	Houses errected during 1963	In course of errection	Conversions
Local Authority ...	195	297	—
Private Enterprise	6	170	12

TABLE 4.

1. Houses to be completed between 1st January and 31st December, 1964	317
2. Houses expected to be in contract between 1st January and 31st December, 1964 but not completed	98
	375

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

Discretionary.

Number of applications and houses dealt with during the year 1963 :—

	Applications	No. of dwellings
Received	23	24
Approved	15	18
Rejected	8	6

Standard Improvement Grants.

Number of applications and dwellings dealt with during the year 1963 :—

	Applications	No. of dwellings
Received	36	36
Approved	29	29
Rejected	5	5

Number of dwellings in current years applications where improvements have been completed 32

The number of Council Houses dealt with by Standard Improvement Grants was 51.

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR

for the year 1963

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses,

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to present my Annual Report for 1963. The year has been one of great interest; and has once again produced its quota of new delegated duties, which are designed to benefit the well-being of the community generally. As had been anticipated the old Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924 were replaced by the Meat Inspection Regulations, 1963 which came into force on 1st October. These new Regulations made it obligatory for Local Authorities to inspect all animals killed in their areas for human consumption: and besides laying down a very stringent and comprehensive code of both ante and post mortem examination, also provided for the marking of such carcases with an approved stamp after being inspected and passed fit for consumption. The Health Committee gave this matter their very careful consideration and came to the conclusion that such additional duties—involving the inspection of over 30,000 animals each year—could not be undertaken by the existing staff without serious detriment to the other duties, including such very important ones as housing and food inspection. It was therefore decided to increase the staff by the addition of one Public Health Inspector; and this appointment was filled by Mr. G. W. Mathews who came to us from the East Sussex County Council. The other delegated duties for which the Department became responsible during the year were The Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963, and the Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations 1963.

Apart from meat inspection and other routine duties—the full details of which appear later in this report—the staff has been mainly concerned with the inspection of Houses in Multiple Occupation. Some progress has been made in this sphere; but this has been greatly hampered by the casual indifference of some landlords, scarcity of builders willing to undertake work of this nature, and by the Regulations themselves which are very involved and cumbersome in their application and enforcement. Systematic house-to-house inspection has not been possible at all; but one group of ten houses was dealt with as a Clearance Area, and many individual premises were dealt with under the Public Health or Housing Acts.

The Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act 1963 is likely to become operative in 1964. This Act together with the Regulations made thereunder will place new and very heavy responsibility and obligations on Local Authorities whose Public Health Inspectorate is already stretched to almost full capacity. It would seem that if these new responsibilities are to be properly implemented, that serious consideration must be given to the employment of suitable non-qualified technical assistants working under the supervision of Public Health Inspectors. It is only in this way that we shall be able to fulfil our obligations.

In November we arranged a Sessional Meeting on behalf of the Royal Society of Health, and this attracted a large number of delegates from a wide area. In the morning two papers were read —the first "Whither Psychiatry ?" was given by Dr. K. C. Bailey, M.A., M.D., D.P.M., Consultant Psychiatrist to the South Western Regional Hospital Board: and the second—"Housing and Health—A Review of Current Practice and Problems in a Non-County Borough" was given by A. E. Eames, Esq., M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. who is one of the Borough's own Public Health Inspectors. Both papers were well received and stimulated much useful discussion. In the afternoon visits were arranged to various places of interest to the delegates.

In conclusion I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Chairman and Members of the Health Committee, the Medical Officer of Health, and all members of the staff for their unfailing co-operation and kindness at all times.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

G. M. PAWSON,

Chief Public Health Inspector.

SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS

Housing and General Sanitary Work.

Houses inspected under the Public Health Acts	161
Houses inspected under the Housing and Rent Acts	49
Houses inspected under the Taunton Corporation Act	87
Re-inspections under the above Acts	636
Houses in Multiple Occupation inspected and re-visited	691
Miscellaneous housing inspections	108
Smoke observations, etc.	53
Moveable dwellings	14
Dealers in old metal	1
Infectious diseases and disinfections	4
Drainage, in connection with	629
Factories	48
Verminous or infested premises	95
Interviews	433
Noise, in connection with	25
Offensive trades	3
Offices and shops	109
Pet shops	14
Cinemas and Places of Entertainment	7
Refuse collection and disposal	13
Rag Flock premises	3
Rodent Control (excluding visits by Rodent Operator)	132
Schools	6
Water Sampling	355
Miscellaneous visits	631

Housing Repairs.

During the year 130 complaints were received with regard to housing defects, and these were dealt with either informally or by statutory action under the Public Health Acts. It was not found possible to carry out any routine housing inspection.

The following lists sets out in detail the various items of repair and renewal which were actually completed during the year. These totalled 783 which represents a 70% increase over the previous year's total of 455. This figure is particularly encouraging, as it is entirely exclusive of the results achieved in connection with our new duties concerned with Houses in Multiple Occupation—the full details of which appear later in this report.

It will be noted that at long last there has been an appreciable increase in the provision of certain amenities such as baths, sinks, wash hand basins and water heating systems. This has in part been achieved by persuading landlords to take advantage of the generous help given in respect of Improvement Grants, whilst at the same time carrying out necessary repairs and works of maintenance.

The extremely cold conditions experienced during the early months of the year undoubtedly caused much of the damage to the sewers and drains, which became blocked from fallen rendering which had been loosened by the frost. During the year 636 visits were made in connection with complaints concerning unsatisfactory drainage, and as a result 79 sewers and 39 drains were cleared of obstructions—representing a 100% increase over such work in previous years. Other troubles directly attributable to the winter conditions were the large number of frozen water pipes, cracked tanks and flushing cisterns, fractured W.C. pans and lavatory basins, and broken eaves gutters from melting snow. The number of such defects was past counting, and nearly all builders' merchants were completely sold out once the extent of the devastation became known. Most of these matters were put right without any prompting from this department—due no doubt to the help of insurance companies footing the bill.

During the year the following work was carried out :—

Drains cleared	39
Drains renewed or repaired	24
New drains provided	23
Sewers cleared	79
Cesspools emptied	2
Inspection chambers built	24
Inspection chambers repaired	23
Inspection chambers—new covers provided ...	8
New gullies provided	5
Yard surfaces renewed	8
Eaves gutters renewed	24
Eaves gutters repaired	6
Rainwater pipes renewed	18
Waterclosets provided	5
W.C. pans renewed	43
W.C. flushing cisterns provided	38
W.C's—new seats provided	4
Roofs renewed	9
Roofs repaired	54
Chimney stacks rebuilt	10
Chimney stacks repaired	10
Chimneys—flashings renewed	5
Walls rebuilt	8
External walls repaired	25
Ceilings renewed or repaired	25
Floors renewed	15
Floors repaired	7
Skirting boards renewed	7
Sub-floor ventilation improved	2
Wall rendering renewed or repaired	15
Dampness abated	30
Fireplaces renewed or repaired	9
Doors renewed or repaired	5
New windows provided	11

Windows repaired	16
Window sills renewed	6
Windows—sash cords provided	8
Natural lighting improved	2
Ventilation improved	10
Water service pipes renewed	11
Water heating systems installed	43
Baths provided	36
Wash-hand basins provided	34
Kitchen sinks provided	37
Ventilated food cupboards provided	29
Electric services repaired	1
Total ...	783

Housing Act, 1957.

The inspection of housing, despite the heavy demands of other aspects of environmental health, still retains a high degree of priority in the daily round of a Public Health Inspector's duties. Nevertheless these other duties have gradually encroached on the total time available, so that during the year it has not been at all possible to give effect to systematic "house-to-house" inspection. One wonders if, with the ever-increasing commitments, it will ever again be possible to carry out such worthwhile and rewarding inspections. Such inspections are invaluable in assessing the overall state of housing conditions existing in one's area; and in alleviating disrepair before it reaches such an advanced state that remedial measures are both impracticable and unreasonable due to high costs.

Nevertheless much useful work has been accomplished in this field during the year following on complaints received at the Health Department. In all 250 inspections and visits were made. Ten houses in Tancred Street—occupied mostly by elderly persons—were made the subject of a Clearance Area. Both the Whitehall No. 1 and the East Reach No. 14 Clearance Areas were confirmed without amendment by the Minister.

Ten houses in the Paul Street No. 5 and the Wilton Street No. 2 Clearance Areas were demolished—more than twenty years after confirmation. Four other houses were demolished for street widening or industrial development.

Housing presents Health Departments everywhere with one of their most serious and difficult problems. Costs—both of labour and materials—are rising all the time; and in most instances are far outstripping the rent income of the landlords, who are now finding that certain types of property ownership to be a very dubious investment. To make matters worse nearly all builders have more work than

they can cope with, so that generally they can pick and choose as suits themselves. As a result they are very reluctant to carry out minor repairs, when more lucrative contracts are waiting for them. We are led to hope that the new Housing Act, which has been promised for next year, will solve or at least lessen some of our more urgent worries. The proposed Improvement Areas and compulsory purchase powers for Local Authorities should help to raise standards and expedite essential repairs. It must be borne in mind that many tenants would still find it a very great hardship to pay increased rents and rates resulting from comprehensive repairs and added amenities. If matters are not handled very carefully, it may lead to a condition of stalemate. This happened very recently in the operation of Certificates of Disrepair under the Rent Act 1957, which had a brief moment of glory and then shortly afterwards fizzled out quite ignominiously.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

Unspectacular but nevertheless steady progress has been made in tackling this very difficult and serious housing problem, which has of recent years gained a certain degree of notoriety in the public eye as the result of press revelations exposing the callous and inhuman treatment of the tenants of such properties who are virtually unprotected against eviction orders. The problem in Taunton cannot in any way be compared with that in some of the larger cities, particularly those with racial problems; but nevertheless it does exist to a certain extent and much time has been devoted to it. Since the survey commenced 61 premises involving 226 separate dwellings have been inspected. As the result of our action 30 units of accommodation have ceased to be used for multi-occupation; the properties concerned being either unsuitable for improvement for technical reasons as to arrangement or lay-out, etc.; or because of prohibitive costs.

The ravages of the Artic-like weather conditions experienced in the first three months of the year had particularly serious effects on this type of property. Water supplies were completely disrupted, drainage and toilets were frozen for days and even weeks on end Chemical closets had to be provided in some instances; and it certainly high-lighted a serious weakness in the law relating to space heating of these bed-sitters and flatlets. Due to structural faults and for other reasons owners frequently seal off fireplaces, and provide an electric or gas point in lieu. In a high proportion of the lettings the standard of the space heating arrangements was totally inadequate, particularly when one considers that often the rooms are large with high ceilings and prone to excessive draughts. Passages

and communal rooms are rarely if ever heated, with most disastrous results in bathrooms and toilets.

The problems concerned with the lack of protection associated with the Rent Act 1957 causes many difficulties, as tenants are very reluctant to take any action which is more than likely to precipitate eviction. Another barrier to the fulfilment of proper conditions is the lack of suitable alternative accommodation, which inevetably slows down informal action in securing added amenities. The proposed Housing Bill should strengthen the powers of Local Authorities by authorizing them to take over those houses where unsatisfactory conditions prevail—this would certainly be a vast improvement on the present position.

A number of elderly men have been found to occupy bed-sitters in these houses; and they pose a unique problem of supervision or re-housing. On the one hand they are too independent for true hostel accommodation, but they still need some form of supervision and assistance. In future some provision will have to be made for this type of person in the sphere of Local Authority housing schemes, as private landlords rarely provide suitable accommodation or facilities.

The following schedule sets out the work carried out during the year, and as before this entailed many visits outside normal office hours.

Summary of work carried out—Houses in Multiple Occupation

External.

Roofs repaired	21
Roofs renewed	2
Eavesgutters repaired or renewed	8
Rainwater pipes repaired or renewed	10
Walls repaired	20
Choked drains cleared	7
Yard paving repaired or renewed	3
Extra dustbins provided	7
Water closets repaired or renewed	16
Drainage repaired	9

Internal.

Walls repaired or renewed	35
Ceilings repaired or renewed	15
Floors repaired	12
Doors repaired or renewed	3
Windows repaired or renewed	30
Staircases repaired	2
Rooms redecorated	24

Staircases redecorated	4
Dampness abated	4
Ventilation improved	17
Larders repaired or renewed	6
New ventilated larders provided	35
Refrigerators provided	11
Electric fittings repaired or provided	12
Heating installations provided/repaired	5
Hot water supply repaired or renewed	3
Hot water supply provided	28
Cold water supply repaired or renewed	3
Wash-hand basin renewed/repaired	4
Sink and/or draining board renewed	4
Cooking facilities provided or improved ...	18
Additional W.C.'s provided	7
Additional bathrooms provided	12
Baths renewed or repaired	1

Other Items.

Units of accommodation closed as unfit for habitation	9
Units of accommodation ceased to be used for multi-occupation	21
Number of cases of overcrowding reduced ...	9

Complaints.

During the year 839 complaints were received at the Health Department having reference to the following matters :—

Housing conditions	130
Drainage	175
Rats or mice	200
Unsound food	140
Miscellaneous	88
Insect Pests	106

All these complaints were investigated and appropriate action taken.

Public Health Act, 1936—Section 24.

During the year 79 sewers were found to be choked, and were cleared by the Corporation. Sewers dealt with under this section are those that were maintainable by owners of property under previous Public Health Acts.

CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

During the year ten proposals for new boiler installations were considered, and in six cases the chimney heights were modified in accordance with our recommendations. In one instance the fuel concerned was anthracite: and in the remaining nine the installations were designed for oil firing—this being in accordance with the prevailing trend, particularly in smaller plants.

In May, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government issued a memorandum on chimney heights and this has proved a useful guide when considering new applications.

Investigations of complaints of smoke and smuts took place during the year and in one instance, where a plant burnt heavy fuel oil, considerable nuisance from smuts occurred in the surrounding built up area. A number of measures have been taken to eliminate this phenomena associated with installations operating at high efficiencies, and at the end of the year the matter was still under review.

Consideration was given to adopting the model byelaw relating to the use of approved appliances in new dwellings but in view of the impending new Building Regulations action has been deferred. Following the issue of the government white paper on "Domestic Fuel Supplies and the Clean Air Policy" concern was expressed at the possible shortage of smokeless fuel in this area, but we have since been advised that no difficulty is being experienced locally and at least for the next six years the quantity of Gloco and Gloco Nuts produced for sale in this area will be increasing and adequate supplies will be available for domestic use. This is a most encouraging position, and it is to be hoped that before long all new homes being erected in Taunton will have to be equipped with modern efficient fireplaces capable of operating on smokeless fuel.

RENT ACT, 1957

For the second year in succession no applications for Certificates of Dis-repair were received. This is a clear indication of the complete ineffectiveness of this Act to achieve an improvement in housing conditions.

VERMIN

During the year 106 treatments were carried out for the eradication of various types of infestation. Wasps accounted for 80 of these treatments, and the rest were for ants, fleas and cockroaches. It is very interesting to note that in the previous year only 14 complaints were received in respect of wasps; and after the extremely cold conditions of the winter months, which one would have imagined would have greatly reduced the population of queen wasps, it was indeed surprising and against all expectations to find such a greatly increased infestation of this particular pest. One of the most encouraging aspects of this type of work is the almost complete disappearance of the menace of that old and persistent enemy, the bed bug. Before the last war it was quite usual to treat several houses each week, but nowadays such cases are rare and rarely exceed half a dozen in a year. In fact no such complaints were received in the current year; neither were there any in respect of cluster flies, which often seem to occur in cycles.

Rodent Control.

Following several changes the Corporation appointed Mr. L. Wood as their Rodent Operator in February, and he has proved himself to be a most efficient and concientious member of the Department.

During the year the system of surveys has been brought up to date, and has already proved a very useful yardstick in assessing the degree of rodent infestation in various areas in the Borough. This has been reflected in the greatly increased number of business premises which have been found to be infested. The total number of such premises which were treated during the year was 195 as compared with 55 in 1962.

The following work was carried out during the year :—

Treatment at private dwellings	344
Visits involved	1,016
Treatments at business premises	195
Visits involved	632
Treatments at Council premises	63
Visits involved	195
Survey visits	222
Wasps' nests destroyed	80
Other vermin, etc.	31

Disinfection.

Disinfection of premises and bedding after the occurance of disease, or after death, was carried out in 4 houses.

SPECIAL CLASSES OF PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS SUBJECT TO CONTROL BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Public Health Act, 1936.

Offensive Trades—	
Tanners	1
Hide and Skin Depots	1
Rag and Bone Merchants	2

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960.

The Owners of the two residential sites have made continued progress in their work of bringing the sites into conformity with the Model Standards; and a considerable measure of improvement has been achieved in the accommodation and associated amenities. The total number of vans on each site has been gradually reduced so that overcrowding no longer exists.

The number of individual caravans is six; whilst several others are occupied by personnel on building site operations which are exempt from the usual licensing requirements.

The Rag, Flock and Other Materials Act, 1951.

Registered premises	8

These premises are subject to regular inspection, and during the year one sample of white cotton felt was analysed and found to be of the required standard.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907—Section 86.

This Act provides for the registration of all Dealers in Old Metal or Marine Stores and their places of business, etc. Such places are subject to police control, but periodic visits are also paid by the Public Health Inspectors.

Dealers in old metal and places of business registered under this Section	12

Public Health Act, 1936—Section 107 (3).

This Section provides for the consent of Local Authority to authorise the carrying on of "Offensive Trades" in their district. In Taunton this is confined to two old-established firms who are Rag and Bone Dealers. Both businesses are well conducted, and have not given any grounds for complaint.

Pet Animals Act, 1951.

Licences to keep pet shops 5

The conditions prevailing at the above premises during the year was found to be satisfactory.

Animal Boarding Establishments Act, 1963.

This Act provides for the inspection and licensing of Animal Boarding Establishments on somewhat similar lines to the Pet Animals Act. At the time of the commencement of this Act no such premises were known to be established in the Borough.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1961.

The Oil Heaters Regulations, 1962.

These Regulations which should be considered with the Heating Appliances (Fireguards) Act, 1952 and its Regulations made in the following year, prescribe standards of construction, design and performance of unflued domestic oil heaters. The powers and duties of the Council are delegated to the Accident Prevention Committee, but the Health Committee have given consent for the Public Health Inspectors to exercise that power to inspect, test and enforce the Regulations.

Generally speaking all the reputable manufacturers are well aware of the standards imposed by the Regulations; and it has not been found necessary to take statutory action to enforce them.

Sampling of Swimming Bath Water.

During the year 122 samples of the water at the St. James' Street Baths, taken at the inlets and outlet ends, were tested for residual chlorine. All the samples were found to be satisfactory.

These figures are less than in previous years, due to the shutting down of the Baths for the months of February, November and December when a new boiler was installed and works of maintenance were carried out.

FOOD INSPECTION

Visits in connection with the inspection and supervision of foods and food premises; and the sampling of food for bacteriological examination :—

Slaughterhouses	971
Wholesale Meat Depots	113
Butchers and Fishmongers	103
Dairies and Ice Cream Premises	82
Bakehouses and Confectioners	116
Grocers and Greengrocers	218
Food preparation premises	96
Restaurants and Hotels, etc.	110
Licensed Premises	94
Other visits	598
Total	2,501

This total shows an increase of 547 visits over the previous year's total of 1,954 and is a clear indication of the better supervision of such premises which has been made possible with the increase in staff.

Milk Supply.

There are 8 registered Dairies, and 28 registered Distributors of Milk operating within the Borough.

The Milk (Special Designation) Regulations, 1960 greatly reduced the duties of the Council, so that sampling is no longer carried out. The Council are still responsible for the registration of persons as Distributors of Milk.

Ice Cream.

During the year 2 premises were registered for the Storage and Sale of Ice Cream; and the total number of registrations under the Food and Drugs Act is as follows :—

Manufacture and Sale	3
Storage	1
Storage and Sale	114

Food Preparation Premises.

The total of such premises is 54, and 3 of these were new registrations. These premises are mainly butchers, fried fish and chip shops, and bakehouses where meat pies or faggots are manufactured These premises receive frequent visits and their products are subject to periodic sampling.

BACTERIOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF FOOD

Over the last three years the whole range and variety of foods taken for bacteriological examination has been greatly extended; and besides the usual ice cream, water and liquid egg, it now includes meat, all types of meat and fish products, artificial cream and dessicated coconut. Such sampling has now become an integral part of food hygiene supervision; and is of inestimable value in making a proper assessment of the hygienic practices—or lack of—in the various food preparation premises, shops and catering establishments. Sampling is carried out at all stages from the original unprocessed ingredients, during processing or manufacture, and in the shops as sold to the customer. This also enables us to keep a check on those foodstuffs which are manufactured outside the borough, but retailed in local shops, etc.

Details of the various samples taken are given below :—

Artificial Cream.

The total number of samples taken was 102, of which about 20% were taken at the place of manufacture and the rest from confectionery which was exposed for sale in the shops. No evidence of pathogens was found.

Ice Cream.

The total number of samples taken was 58; of which 41 were from the large national manufacturers, and 17 from two local producers who use the "Cold Mix" method of manufacture.

Details are as follows :—

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4
Hot Mix	36	2	—	—
Cold Mix	16	1	—	—
Soft Ice Cream	1	—	—	2

Soft Ice Cream.

The two unsatisfactory results of the Soft Ice Cream samples were thoroughly investigated; and the cause was found to be the lack of care and attention given to the proper methods of cleansing and sterilization of the equipment by the operator. A very meticulous routine of maintenance is essential if ice cream of high bacterial standards is to be produced in equipment such as this which is specially made for this purpose. These machines would appear to be somewhat prone to this sort of trouble, and it is imperative that the staff operating them should receive proper instruction in plant

maintenance, together with the basic principles of hygienic cleansing and sterilization techniques. This type of ice cream, which is actually made in a specially designed machine immediately before sale, is rapidly gaining in popularity and effective supervision will be necessary to ensure a resulting product of high quality.

Liquid Egg.

At the beginning of the year there were two plants producing liquid egg, but towards the end of the year there was only one in operation. This latter anticipating the coming into force in 1964 of the Liquid Egg (Pasteurisation) Regulations, has made plans for a very large extension to its existing premises. These plans also provide for the installation of the most modern egg breaking machines and pasteurisation plant; and for the setting-up of an elaborate and well organised egg collecting service covering several counties.

During the year a total of 69 samples of raw liquid egg were examined for bacteriological quality, and all were found to be satisfactory.

Meat Products, Etc.

A total of 162 samples were examined and none found to contain any pathogenic organisms; but three samples (cooked ham, cooked tongue and liver sausage) were found to be contaminated with Staph. albus. This organism has no food poisoning significance, but its presence does indicate some degree of slackness of hygienic practices either in preparation or handling. As a consequence all the premises concerned were subjcted to a particularly thorough inspection, and the personnel warned of the possible outcome of such slackness had pathogens been present in the original samples.

Details of the various samples are as follows :—

Beef Brisket	2	Beef—minced ...	6
Beef Croquettes ...	2	Bacon savoury ...	1
Black Puddings ...	6	Chicken Croquettes ...	2
Brawn	3	Chicken and Ham Mould	1
Chicken Galantine ...	1	Cocktail Pie	1
Chitterlings	1	Corned Beef	7
Cornish Pasty ...	1	Faggots	13
Fish Cakes	2	Ham	16
Liver Sausage ...	5	Leberwurst	1
Luncheon Meat ...	6	Pasties	8
Polonies	2	Pork—roast	10
Pork Luncheon Meat	4	Pork Pies	9
Sausages—beef ...	9	Pork—Stuffed Roll ...	3
Sausages—pork ...	17	Salami	1
Sausage Meat ...	1	Steak and Kidney Pies	5
Sausage Rolls ...	4	Scotch Egg	1
Tongue	5	Tripe	4
Veal and Pork—stuffed	1	Veal, Ham and Egg Pie	1

Water.

The routine sampling of water has continued, and 241 samples were examined. Of this total 25 were of raw water from the Fulwood Works, and five from a well. All samples were found to be satisfactory.

Food Inspection.

As a result of inspection of food at food shops and warehouses, the following commodities were condemned :—

CANNED AND FROZEN FOODS

	Tins or Packets
Meat (various)	485
Tongue	8
Fish	280
Soup	22
Milk and Cream	55
Fruit (various)	550
Fruit Juices (various)	44
Vegetables	81
Peas	352
Beans	54
Tomatoes	301
Carrots	16
Miscellaneous	47

OTHER FOODS

Jams	36 Jars
Sauces and Pickles	76 ,,
Cakes and Cake Mixes	71 Items
Biscuits and Cereals	33 Packets
Jellies	4 ,,
Coffee	2 Tins
Fresh Fruit	4 lbs.
Fish	122 ,,
Butter	14½ ,,
Cooking Fats	15 ,,
Cheese	1¼ ,,
Cooked Meats	3 ,,
Flour	21 ,,
Sausages	18 ,,
Bacon	427 ,,
Poultry	82 Birds
Miscellaneous	45 Items

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955

The control and supervision of food in all its stages of preparation, transportation, storage and sale in wholesale premises, shops and restaurants, etc., is one of the most important and essential duties carried out by Public Health Inspectors. Unlike some other

aspects of environmental health practice it demands almost constant attention; as a moment of temporary relaxation can sometimes and in certain circumstances have far-reaching and serious repercussions. This has on occasion been most vividly illustrated in food poisoning outbreaks, which have resulted directly from the neglect of some of the most elementary of the precepts of food handling hygiene. It is most encouraging to note that in recent years there has been a growing awareness amongst the public of what they expect and demand as to the quality and condition of the food they buy and eat, and the standard of cleanliness in the places where it is bought and eaten. This welcome trend has been reflected in the greatly increased number of complaints received during the year. These in some instances resulted in prosecutions being taken concerning the sale of foods which were out of condition or otherwise unfit for human consumption.

Brief details of the cases are as follows :—

	Offence	Result
1.	Mould in pork pie	Fine of £20 imposed
2.	Mould in sliced loaf	Fine of £20 imposed plus costs of £10 15 0
3.	Glass fragment in cheese croquette ...	Fine of £15 imposed
4.	Mould in apple turnover	Fine of £10 imposed
5.	Joints of beef and pork in store, and unfit for human consumption ...	Fine of £30 imposed

In each case a thorough investigation was carried out by a Public Health Inspector; and it was found that, except in the instance of glass fragments in the cheese croquette, the foods had been kept in the shops for periods far exceeding the recommended "shelf life" of the product. In one case the age of the mouldy food could not be ascertained with any degree of accuracy. However an experiment was carried out in the office (where the room temperature was between 60 and 65 degs. F) with an exactly similar product and it was nearly two weeks before any evidence of mould formation appeared. Even after three weeks the mould was not nearly so widespread as in the item which was the subject of the complaint.

If such food is to reach the consumer in a fresh and wholesome condition, it is imperative that considerably more care must be taken by the retailers to ensure that perishable goods—particularly those prepared in factories and prepacked—are not kept on the shelves beyond the recommended period. Particular care must be taken to see that the storage, display and temperature conditions are suitable for any particular product.

Although the Food Hygiene Regulations have now been in force for seven years there are still members of the butchering trade who disregard the obligation to wear a suitable and washable head covering when carrying meat which is liable to come into contact with their neck or head. In three instances such offenders were prosecuted, when two fines of £5 and one of £3 were imposed.

It is felt that there is still room for improvement in the transport and handling of meat, particularly is this so in the case of very large consignments which can still be carried on open lorries provided the vehicle is covered with canvas or other washable material. The Regulations should be amended to prohibit the transport of meat, except in closed vehicles of approved construction; and where meat is carried for long distances the vehicles should be refrigerated.

Summary of works carried out at all premises in 1963

	Butchers & Fish-mongers	Bakers and Dairies, etc.	Grocers and Green-grocers	Catering Establish-ments	Licensed Premises	Total
Works of Major Reconstruction ...	3	—	3	3	—	9
Food Rooms						
Walls renewed or repaired	5	4	—	6	3	18
Walls redecorated	6	4	1	6	11	28
Ceilings renewed or repaired ...	3	—	2	6	—	11
Ceiling redecorated	4	2	1	6	10	23
Floors repaired or renewed ...	2	3	—	5	—	10
Improvement of lighting	2	1	—	3	—	6
Improvement of ventilation ...	1	1	—	2	—	4
Renewed or repaired drainage ...	2	—	2	3	4	11
Equipment, etc.						
New sinks provided	—	—	—	5	2	7
Hot water supply provided ...	3	—	—	4	1	8
New drainage boards provided ...	—	—	1	4	2	7
Preparation tables, etc. retopped ...	4	—	2	10	—	16
New equipment, etc. provided ...	7	4	—	10	—	21
Dustbins provided	1	—	—	5	4	10
Means of protection of food provided	—	2	2	—	—	4
Refrigerators provided	2	—	5	1	—	8
Sanitary Accommodation						
New W.C.'s or urinals installed ...	—	—	—	4	—	4
Sanitary accommodation repaired	1	1	2	1	1	6
Sanitary accommodation redecorated	1	—	—	1	—	2
Improved lighting	—	—	—	1	—	1
Sanitary Notices fixed	1	—	2	6	—	9
Toilet Accommodation						
Wash-hand Basins provided ...	1	—	1	6	—	8
Hot water supply provided ...	1	—	1	4	—	6
Toilet requisites provided	1	—	2	3	—	6
Redecoration of toilet accommodation	—	—	—	3	—	3
Provision of lockers	1	—	—	2	—	3
Miscellaneous.						
Protective clothing provided ...	1	—	—	—	—	1
Treatments for vermin	—	2	—	2	—	4
Fly destruction units fixed ...	1	—	—	—	—	1
Totals ...	51	24	24	109	38	246

Meat Inspection.

The slaughtering of food animals is carried on in two licensed slaughterhouses and a bacon factory. It will be seen that there has been a considerable increase (39%) in the number of animals slaughtered during the year.

The following animals were slaughtered during the year :—

Beasts	304
Cows	61
Sheep and Lambs	1,793
Calves	39
Pigs	32,528

The inspection of the above carcases revealed disease as set out in the following table :—

	Cattle (excl. cows)	Cows	Calves	Sheep Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	304	61	39	1,793	32,528
Number inspected	304	61	39	1,793	32,528
Whole carcases condemned for disease other than T.B. ...	—	—	2	14	63
Carcases from which some part or organ was condemned ...	25		—	27	8,028
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than T.B.	6.85%		5.13%	2.29%	24.9%
Tuberculosis only—					
Whole carcases condemned ...	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases from which some part or organ was condemned ...	—		—	—	1,271
Percentage of number inspected affected with T.B.	—		—	—	3.9%
Cysticerus Bovis—					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	5				
Carcases subjected to treatment by refrigeration	5				
Carcases generalised and totally condemned	—				

In addition, the following meat was condemned at butchers' premises on account of bone taint and other causes :—

Beef	867 lbs.
Pork	2,594 ,,

METEOROLOGICAL READINGS

The year was remarkable for the intense and prolonged period of snow and ice which lasted from the beginning of January until mid February and was the coldest winter since 1938. During this period snow lay on the ground the whole time, which enabled many people to enjoy for the first time winter sports at home. For two months the temperature only exceeded 40 degs. F. on twelve days, whilst remaining below freezing point for over three weeks. The mean temperatures for January and February were 24.22 degs. F. and 30.98 degs. F. compared with the average (over the last fifty years) of 40.11 degs. F. and 40.27 degs. F. respectively. This was reflected in the average mean annual temperature which was reduced from 49.58 degs. F. to 47.59 degs. F.

The coldest winters in Britain over the past 150 years give no clue as to the kind of summer we can expect. The Meteorological Office says that it is anyone's guess, and this is supported by statistics. The coldest winters, and the summers which followed (in brackets), were in: 1829-30 (cold); 1878-79 (very wet); 1890-91 (wet and dull); 1894-95 (very cool and wet); 1916-17 (very wet); 1928-29 (cool with fair amount of rain); 1940-41 (dry and sunny); 1946-47 (dry and sunny).

The only exceptional months as to barometric pressures were October when the monthly average rose from 29.93 to 30.06, and November when it fell from 29.87 to 29.52.

The year was also remarkable for its lack of sunshine which totalled only 1,454.25 hours, the lowest since 1958 and about 100 hours below average. July replaced June as the sunniest month with 212.25 hours, but the maximum number of hours in a single day was 15 recorded in June. The number of sunless days was 61, which was as the average.

The rainfall of 30.34 inches was slightly above average. A heavy fall on February 13th of .85 inches, and combined with the deeply frozen state of the ground produced near-flooding conditions in the low-lying parts of the town. August, one of the main holiday months, was spoilt by rain falls on 27 days and this was aggravated by only 143.5 hours sunshine which was well below average. The wettest month was November with 5.69 inches and the driest, September, with 1.01 inches.

The figures below set out the main readings for 1963 as compared with those in the previous year and the annual averages.

	Mean Barometer	Mean Temperature	Hours of Sunshine	Sunless Days	Total Rainfall	Days rain fell	Days of .04 inches rain or more
1963 ...	29.93	47.59	1,454.25	61	30.34	188	137
1962 ...	30.00	48.17	1,601.00	61	26.16	166	110
Average	29.93	49.63	1,550.21	66	28.98	179	125

METEOROLOGICAL READINGS FOR 1963

Month	Barometer			Thermometer			Sunshine			Rainfall			
	Mean	Max.	Min.	Mean	Max.	Min.	Hours	Max. Reading	No. of Sunless Days	Inches	Days Rain fell	Days with 0.04in. or more	Max. Reading
January ...	30.18	30.83	29.35	24.22	40	−2	58.5	6.25	14	1.28*	6	5	.47*
February ...	29.98	30.36	29.15	30.98	46	10	81.25	9.75	11	3.04†	12	9	.85
March ...	29.79	30.56	28.90	44.90	59	20	119.0	8.5	4	4.68	17	15	.65
April ...	29.84	30.39	29.02	49.65	61	30	113.75	9.25	1	2.43	20	19	.36
May ...	30.02	30.34	29.61	52.08	79	35	201.75	13.0	—	1.57	13	10	.39
June ...	29.87	30.12	29.47	59.73	80	46	207.0	15.0	2	2.36	18	14	.53
July ...	30.03	30.47	29.71	59.81	80	41	212.25	14.50	—	2.50	13	10	.87
August ...	29.79	30.10	29.42	59.19	78	44	143.5	10.5	—	2.95	27	15	.65
September ...	30.02	30.32	29.61	56.42	74	38	127.75	9.5	3	1.01	11	7	.31
October ...	30.06	30.51	29.30	53.42	69	38	78.75	7.75	4	1.38	14	6	.48
November ...	29.52	30.16	29.06	44.37	60	29	70.50	6.25	9	5.69	26	20	.72
December ...	30.08	30.65	29.56	36.37	54	11	41.25	5.5	13	1.45	11	7	.60
Total or Average ...	29.93	—	—	47.59	—	—	1,454.25	—	61	30.34	188	137	—

* Snow † Snow plus rain

FACTORIES ACT, 1961

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes as to provisions as to health

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(1) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	23	5	—	—
(2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	237	37	4	—
(3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) ...	6	6	1	—
TOTAL	266	48	5	—

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	4	2	—	3	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature ...	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors ...	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences—					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	4	3	—	4	—
(c) Not separate for Sexes ...	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to outwork)	1	1	—	—	—
TOTAL	12	9	—	7	—

OUTWORK (Sections 133 and 134)

Nature of Work	No. of out-workers in August list	Section 133		Section 134	
		No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
Making of wearing apparel ...	249	—	—	—	—

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