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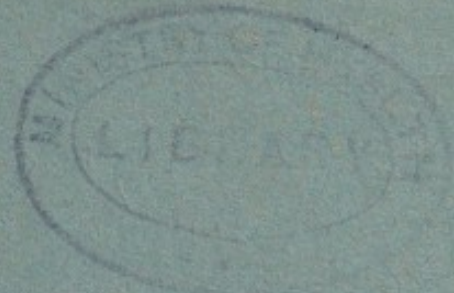
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TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT

Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

AND

Chief Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE YEAR 1954

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FOR THE YEAR 1954

TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF, 1954

*Medical Officer of Health and Medical Superintendent of the
Taunton Isolation Hospital and Taunton
Tuberculosis Sanatorium, Taunton :*

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(appt. August, 1946).

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W. PLIMMER, C.R.S.I. (appt. July, 1950).

Additional Sanitary Inspector :
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To :

THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for 1954. The report contains the usual information on the health and sanitary circumstances of the district. This has again been divided into two sections, the first referring to the province of the Medical Officer of Health, and the second contributed by the Chief Sanitary Inspector. The report, in the main, follows the same lines as that of the previous year, but certain fresh facts have been incorporated in the various sections.

Attention may be drawn here to a few noteworthy points connected with the year under review:—

- (1) A scheme of household quarantine for family contacts of poliomyelitis was prepared in association with the Health Authorities of Taunton Borough. This was based on the hypothesis that spread of the disease occurs chiefly through faecal contamination, and on the known fact that practically all family contacts excrete the virus in the faeces for some weeks after the occurrence of a case in the household. It was planned to confine these family contacts strictly to house and garden for a period of three weeks from the time when the case was removed to hospital. In the event, it happened that only one case of poliomyelitis was notified in the district, and this one came in the early part of the year before the scheme referred to had been worked out. It is hoped, however, to try out these measures when poliomyelitis strikes the district again.
- (2) The year saw the end of Government-controlled centralised slaughtering, and arrangements had to be made by the Public Health Department for private slaughter-houses in the district to be licensed by the Council. Thirteen of these came into operation and it is gratifying to be able to report that excellent co-operation took place on the part of the proprietors concerned, and that the premises involved were brought up to a high public health standard.
- (3) A beginning was made during 1954 on a new slum clearance programme for the district. Details of early steps taken with this will be found in the section dealing with housing.

- (4) Chlorination was applied to one of the public water supplies, namely that of the Cothelstone district. Installation of plant was satisfactorily carried out, and a pure and safe supply is now assured in this area.
- (5) No dramatic occurrence falls to be recorded in the field of infectious diseases. Measles produced roughly half the number of notifications received in the previous year, but whooping cough was distinctly more prevalent, producing ninety notifications as against twenty-three. Tuberculosis shows a welcome fall in the number of new cases notified.

Once again I wish to thank the Members of the Council, the Clerk and Officials of other Departments, the Staff of the Public Health Department, and the Matron and Staff of the Isolation Hospital for their willing assistance and co-operation.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

HUGH MORRISON.

TAUNTON RURAL DISTRICT

Statistics of the Area for the Year 1954

Area (in acres)	70,675
Estimate of resident population, mid-year 1954 ...	21,000
Census population, 1951	20,516
No. of inhabited houses according to the Rate Books on 31st December, 1954	5,810
Rateable value 31st December, 1954	£112,700
Sum represented by a 1d. Rate, year 1954/55	£455

Physical Features and Social Conditions

Taunton Rural District lies in the south-western region of Somerset, surrounding Taunton Berough, the County Town. It is roughly triangular in shape, with Taunton Borough situated near the middle of the triangle. The boundary of the district is formed on the north by the Rural Districts of Williton and Bridgwater; on the east and south-east by the Rural Districts of Langport and Chard; on the south by the County of Devon; on the south-west and west by the Rural District of Wellington.

There is considerable variation in the type of country found in different parts of the district: in the north and north-west there is high ground forming portions of the Quantock and Brendon Hills; in the south the land rises to the hill parish of Churchstanton lying in the Blackdowns; between these regions lies the fertile valley of Taunton Deane, with the ground falling towards the east to the flat moors and marshy ground surrounding the lower reaches of Tone and Parret. Geologically also, the formations vary. In the north are found chiefly old and new red sandstone; in the south, lower lias and upper greensand; the valley regions have new red marl, new red sandstone and alluvium.

The climate is equable, with an average annual rainfall of 36.6 ins., and an average mean daily temperature of about 41° F. in January and 62° F. in July.

Rich arable and pasture land covers most of the district, but some of the hill regions are in the rough uncultivated state, and the soil on the Blackdown Hills tends to be poor in quality. In the eastern parishes the land is subject to seasonal flooding. Communications are good, and almost all parts of the district are easily accessible by road. Following the Tone valley through the middle of the district runs one of the main lines of the Western Region of British Railways and three branch lines leave it at or near Taunton to run to the north, south and west.

There are thirty-two parishes with estimated populations varying from 80 to 2,650. Habitations are widely scattered over these parishes, but there are several sizeable villages, the largest being Bishops Lydeard, Bishops Hull, Lydeard St. Lawrence, North Curry and Trull.

Most of the inhabitants are engaged in some form of agriculture, dairy farming being particularly important. General farming is also largely practised, and allied activities are withy growing and basket-making, fruit farming and cider-making. There is a paper mill in the district which employs a fair number of people, and another source of employment for men is stone-quarrying which is carried out on a considerable scale. Many of the residents in the rural district travel daily to Taunton to work in factories and other establishments.

There is one large institution in the district, namely Tone Vale Hospital in the parish of Norton Fitzwarren, which, with its patients and resident staff, accounts for a population of about 1,200.

VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR

With reference to the figures which follow, it should be pointed out that the standardisation of the rate for births and deaths allows for the differing age and sex distribution of the populations 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.

1. Births.

(a) Live Births.

	M.	F.	Total	} Crude birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resi- dent population 13.10
Legitimate	130	128	258	
Illegitimate	8	9	17	
Totals	138	137	275	

{ Standardised Birth Rate, Taunton R.D. ...	...	14.67
{ Birth Rate, England and Wales ...	...	15.2

(b) Still Births.

Total	...	...	...	...	6
{ Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births—					
{ Taunton R.D.	...	...	...	...	21.82
{ England and Wales	...	...	...	...	23.5
{ Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population—					
{ Taunton R.D.	...	...	...	...	0.29
{ England and Wales	...	...	...	...	0.35

2. Deaths.

(a) Total Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	312
Crude Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population...						14.86
{ Standardised Death Rate, Taunton R.D. ...	...	...	...	...	...	13.37
{ Death Rate for England and Wales	...	...	...	...	...	11.3

(b) Maternal Mortality.

Total maternal deaths from all causes	...	...	0
---------------------------------------	-----	-----	---

{ Death Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—					
	Taunton R.D.	...	...	...	0.0
	England and Wales	...	...	...	0.76

(c) Infant Mortality.

Deaths of infants under 1 year of age—

Total	...	...	...	...	9
Deaths among legitimate infants	...	...	...	...	8
„ illegitimate „	...	...	...	...	1

{ Death Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—					
	Taunton R.D.	...	...	...	32.03
	England and Wales	...	...	...	25.5

(d) Deaths from Cancer (all ages)—

Total	...	...	...	...	39
-------	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

Infant Mortality during 1954

Cause of Death.				Under 1 week	1 to 2 weeks	1 to 6 months	6 to 12 months	Total under 1 year
Prematurity	...	...	...	2	—	—	—	2
Bronchopneumonia	...	...	...	—	—	3	—	3
Congenital Heart Disease	...	...	...	—	—	1	1	2
Cerebral Thrombosis	...	...	...	—	—	—	2	2
Total	...	...	...	2	—	4	3	9

Causes of Death during 1954

	M.	F.	Total.
Tuberculosis, respiratory	5	—	5
Tuberculosis, other	—	—	—
Syphilitic disease	1	1	2
Diphtheria	—	—	—
Whooping cough	—	—	—
Meningococcal infections	—	—	—
Acute poliomyelitis	1	—	1
Measles	—	—	—
Other infective and parasitic diseases ...	—	1	1
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	3	6	9
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ...	2	2	4
Malignant neoplasm, breast	—	6	6
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	—	1	1
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ...	12	7	19
Leukæmia, aleukæmia	1	—	1
Diabetes	3	—	3
Vascular lesions of nervous system ...	16	25	41
Coronary disease, angina	29	14	43
Hypertension with heart disease	3	1	4
Other heart disease	22	34	56
Other circulatory disease	8	13	21
Influenza	—	2	2
Pneumonia	9	12	21
Bronchitis	9	5	14
Other disease of respiratory system ...	3	2	5
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	3	1	4
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhœa	—	—	—
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	—	1
Hyperplasia of prostate	—	—	—
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	—	—	—
Congenital malformations	2	—	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases ...	14	21	35
Motor vehicle accidents	5	—	5
All other accidents	—	5	5
Suicide	1	—	1
Homicide and operations of war	—	—	—
All Causes—Total	153	159	312

GENERAL PROVISION of HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

Domiciliary Services

(1) Medical and Nursing

There are six general medical practitioners living and carrying on the main part of their practice in different areas of the district. In addition to this, most of the Taunton Borough practitioners have some rural district residents on their lists, and there is also, as would be expected, some overlap from the surrounding rural districts in the provision of medical attention. There are adequate arrangements for domiciliary consultation, when required, with consultants serving the Taunton area, and speaking generally, the practice of medicine in the district is of a high standard. The provisions for domiciliary nursing are also satisfactory.

(2) Home Help Service

This service, administered by the Somerset County Council, is now well established in the district, and invaluable assistance is given in many cases of illness and the domestic difficulties arising therefrom. There is no doubt that this is one of the most useful of all public services. I am indebted to the County Organiser for the following analysis of cases where help was arranged in Taunton Rural District during 1954. It will be noted that the number of cases in which help was provided was considerably higher than in 1953.

Maternity	...	...	...	...	...	45
Old age	...	...	...	...	...	27
Chronic illness	...	...	...	...	...	26
Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	3
Emergency illness	...	...	...	...	...	27
Total						128

Hospital Services

The Hospital Services of the district are administered by the Taunton Hospital Management Committee, under the general direction of the S.W. Regional Hospital Board. Some of the provisions for the needs of various types of patient are detailed below :—

(1) General Medical and Surgical

The Taunton and Somerset Hospital together with Musgrove Park Hospital which is also situated in the Borough of Taunton, and which is probably eventually destined to supersede the first-named establishment, cater for most medical and surgical conditions. Musgrove Park Hospital takes most of the adult cases, and also has a comprehensive Pædiatric Department. The Taunton and Somerset Hospital is in the meantime dealing with Orthopædics, Ophthalmology and Ear, Nose and Throat work. It also houses the Casualty Department for the area. Both hospitals have out-patient facilities in addition to in-patient beds. Certain cases requiring special investigation or treatment such as neurosurgery or radio-therapy are referred to Bristol Hospitals for this purpose.

(2) Infectious Diseases

Cases of infectious disease from Taunton Rural District are sent to the Taunton Isolation Hospital, situated in the Borough of Taunton. This hospital was administered up to 4th July, 1948, by a Joint Hospital Board, representing the various districts from which cases were admitted. Since that date, administration has passed to the Regional Hospital Board, with day to day management being carried out by the Taunton Hospital Management Committee. There are three large wards for the isolation and treatment of patients suffering from the commoner epidemic diseases, but these have become less useful since Diphtheria has become a rare condition, chiefly owing to the success of the national immunisation campaign, and since Scarlet Fever has apparently entered a mild phase in which most of the cases can be successfully isolated and nursed at home. The bulk of the Isolation Hospital work is done in a more recently constructed cubicle block. The hospital has been admitting in the past year or two many cases, especially among children, of various pyrexial and nutritional illnesses not coming into the strict category of notifiable diseases, which would formerly have been treated in General Hospitals. Home isolation is carried out wherever the home conditions are satisfactory. Most cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum are admitted to the Isolation Hospital and also cases of Puerperal Pyrexia.

(3) Tuberculosis

Cases of pulmonary and non-pulmonary Tuberculosis come under the Regional Hospital Board for treatment, which is supervised by the Chest Physicians for the area. The Sanatoria are at Quantock, Wincanton and Taunton for pulmonary cases. Cases requiring Orthopædic treatment are admitted to the Chard Sana-

torium and to Bath Orthopædic Hospital. Pre-tubercular children and children with tubercular glands are sent to Compton Bishop Children's Home, near Axbridge.

(4) **Poliomyelitis**

Suspected cases are sent for diagnosis to the Taunton Isolation Hospital. If the condition is confirmed they are seen by Regional Specialists who arrange for continuation treatment either as out-patients or as in-patients at Bath Orthopædic Hospital.

(5) **Smallpox**

Provision for the accommodation of cases of smallpox is made at a hospital at Cossington, near Bridgwater. Fortunately there has been no need to use the institution for this purpose for many years.

(6) **Chronic Sick**

Patients are received into hospitals, chiefly those in Taunton and Wellington, which have now passed from Public Assistance administration to that of the Regional Hospital Board. The status and reputation of these institutions is improving, more or less rapidly, as their association with the less desirable features of the old Poor Law fades from public memory. A geriatric service for the Taunton area is in process of development.

Powers now exist under the National Assistance Act, 1948, Section 47, for the compulsory removal to a suitable institution of persons who are not able to devote to themselves and are not receiving from other people, proper care and attention. There are adequate safeguards against misuse of these powers, but cases do crop up from time to time when they are very useful and in the true interest of the person concerned. The onus is thrown upon the Medical Officer of Health to investigate these cases and to advise on whether these powers ought to be invoked. No cases required to be dealt with in this way in the Taunton Rural District during 1954, although preliminary steps were taken on several occasions and these resulted in removal to an institution without compulsion having to be applied.

(7) **Mental Sick**

Cases are admitted to the Mental Hospital at Tone Vale, near Taunton. The psychiatric specialists conduct out-patients' clinics for the area, and it is felt that now, more than ever before, mental patients are having the benefit of treatment at an earlier and more hopeful stage of the disease.

Mentally defective cases are well provided for at Sandhill Park Hospital which is situated in Taunton Rural District.

Clinics and Treatment Centres

(1) Tuberculosis

Clinics for patients suffering from this disease, and for the supervision of suspects and contacts, are held by the Chest Physicians at Musgrove Park Hospital. There is an After-Care Committee working in co-operation with these clinics. Mass radiography has been carried out from time to time on various groups of the County population, by a team working from a centre in Bristol, but this service has not been called upon to deal with residents in Taunton Rural District.

(2) Venereal Disease

A combined Clinic and Treatment Centre is carried on at the Taunton and Somerset Hospital which caters for male and female patients of this and surrounding districts. This centre has now come under the administration of the Regional Hospital Board. Early cases of syphilis are usually sent to Frenchay Hospital, Bristol, for a fortnight's intensive penicillin treatment as in-patients. Afterwards they continue observation and treatment at the Taunton Clinic.

(3) Maternity and Child Welfare

The Maternity and Child Welfare Acts are administered by the County Council, under whose supervision are also the Health Visitors and Midwives practising within the area. There is an excellent Maternity Home in the Urban District of Wellington at which some of the mothers from Taunton Rural District are confined. Obstetric Consultants in Taunton are available for consultation with Medical Practitioners in the District. Abnormal and complicated cases can be admitted for hospital treatment when necessary. Every case of Puerperal Pyrexia and Maternal Mortality is investigated by the Medical Staff of the County Council.

Laboratory Facilities

The Public Health Laboratory Service has a Laboratory in Taunton which undertakes the bacteriological examination of swabs, blood, faeces and sputum, etc. This service is available also to the Doctors practising in the District. Bacteriological and chemical analyses are also undertaken for the examination of milk, foods,

water supplies and sewage effluents, etc. The co-operation and assistance of the Public Health Laboratory Staff in investigating all types of bacteriological and epidemiological problems is of the greatest value.

Ambulance Facilities

Ambulance transport for all cases has now become the responsibility of the Somerset County Council. A central ambulance department has been set up which arranges for vehicles to be provided as required. A twenty-four hour service is maintained throughout each day of the week.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Acute Infectious Diseases

The following table gives the number of notifications received for various notifiable diseases, their age groups, and the number admitted to Taunton Isolation Hospital:—

[illegible]

The following table shows notification rates of the above diseases for Taunton Rural District compared with the same rates in the previous year. In each instance these rates are calculated as numbers of notified cases per 1,000 of population, except with Puerpera Pyrexia in which the rate is furnished by the number of cases per 1,000 total live and still births:—

Diseases.	No. of Notifications in Taunton Rural District.	Rates for Taunton R.D.	
		1954.	1953.
Scarlet Fever	19	0.90	1.03
Diphtheria	—	0.00	0.09
Measles	143	6.81	13.82
Whooping Cough	90	4.29	1.07
Pneumonia	2	0.10	0.28
Dysentery	2	0.10	0.98
Food Poisoning	2	0.10	0.14
Poliomyelitis	1	0.05	0.37
Erysipelas	1	0.05	0.09
Puerperal Pyrexia	—	0.00	3.31

Detailed comments on the various common infectious diseases and their prevalence in the district were made in the Annual Report for 1953, and it is unnecessary to repeat these points. In 1954 a similar pattern of incidence was observed to that of the previous year, but measles was responsible for only about half the number of notifications received in 1953. This is in accord with the usual biennial epidemic prevalence of this disease. Notifications of whooping cough were considerably more numerous than in 1953. It is hoped that immunisation against this dangerous disease of childhood will soon begin to show an effect in lessening the incidence. Poliomyelitis was fortunately confined to one case and it will be noted that the disease did not reach high prevalence in England and Wales as a whole. There were no notifications of diphtheria.

Tuberculosis

The following table gives the number of new cases of respiratory and non-respiratory Tuberculosis notified during 1954, and mortality from the disease:—

New Cases and Mortality during 1954

Ages in Years	New Cases				Deaths			
	Resp'tory		Non-Resp.		Resp'tory		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 — 1 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 — 5 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5 — 10 ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 — 15 ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 — 20 ...	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
20 — 25 ...	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
25 — 35 ...	4	4	1	1	—	—	—	—
35 — 45 ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
45 — 55 ...	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55 — 65 ...	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—
65 and up...	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Not known ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total ...	21		5		4		—	

At the end of the year, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names and addresses of 104 cases of pulmonary Tuberculosis and 23 cases of non-pulmonary Tuberculosis.

The table shows a welcome drop in the number of new male cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and although the female numbers have risen slightly, there is a substantial fall in the total of new cases. Once again it will be noted that this disease tends to attack most frequently those in the prime of life since two-thirds of the new cases were between the ages of fifteen and forty-five.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis

Immunisation against Diphtheria continues to be carried out by the Medical Staff of the Somerest County Council and by the Medical Practitioners in the District. The County Council's Immunisation

Scheme, which was begun in Taunton Rural District during 1941, continues to make progress, and the following figures supplied by the County Council show the condition of the child population as regards immunisation at the end of 1954:—

Pre-School Children : aged 0—4 years

Number Immunised.	Estimated percentage immunised of total children in this Age Group.
583	42.5

School Children : aged 5—14 years

Number Immunised.	Estimated percentage immunised of total children in this Age Group.
1,320	73.13

The striking fact demonstrated by the above table is that the number of children under five years of age being immunised remains far too low. The proportion treated amounts to about two-fifths of the population in this age group, whereas to provide satisfactory protection against epidemics in the community it ought to be maintained at a level of at least threequarters of the population in question.

One must continue to emphasise that attention should be given to this matter by parents and others concerned at a time well before the child reaches the age of one year. It is felt that the table published in last year's Report should be repeated here as showing a striking example of the benefits of diphtheria immunisation in a district of this type:—

Diphtheria Statistics—Taunton Rural District

	Cases.	Deaths.
Twelve years 1912–1923, inclusive. (Before serum treatment or immunisation were practised)	145	29
Twelve years 1926–1937, inclusive. (Serum treatment in use, but no immunisation)	132	8
Twelve years 1942–1953, inclusive. (Immunisation carried out on a large scale)	17	—

The full benefits of immunisation in this country are now beginning to come to light, and the following table shows the dramatic change which has taken place in the incidence and mortality of the disease.

Diphtheria Statistics—England and Wales

Year	Diphtheria Notifications	Diphtheria Deaths
1944	23,199	934
1954	182	9

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

Water Supply

There are five public water supplies owned by the Council in the district, serving approximately 4,000 dwelling houses. Of these, three are treated by chlorination, viz.,

1. Eastern Parishes Supply (formerly Orchard Portman).
2. Churchstanton.
3. Cothelstone.

The remaining two are unchlorinated, viz.,

4. West Bagborough.
5. Westleigh, Lydeard St. Lawrence.

All these supplies are subjected to regular chemical analysis and bacteriological testing. A tabular statement of these water analyses will be found in the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector. The scheme of chlorination for Cothelstone water supply, projected in the previous year, was put into operation during 1954, and subsequent testing of the water indicated that a very satisfactory standard was being maintained.

These public supplies yield an adequate amount of water for the areas which they serve, but in the case of the Eastern Parish Supply the margin between adequacy and shortage is not very great. No serious shortage was experienced in the year under review.

In addition to the supplies owned by the Taunton Rural District Council there is an extensive portion of the district served by the Taunton Corporation Water Undertaking. The following parishes are supplied as a whole or in part from this source:—Bishops Hull, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Corfe, Creech St. Michael, Kingston, Norton Fitzwarren, Orchard Portman, Pitminster, Ruishton, Staplegrove, Thornfalcon, Trull and West Monkton. This water is regularly tested and kept under supervision by the Taunton Borough authorities, and has maintained a consistently excellent standard.

The remainder of the district is supplied chiefly from wells, most of them coming into the shallow category, and thus being very liable to pollution. Cleaning of contaminated wells followed by chlorination sometimes results in a pure supply for a period of time, but the trouble is always likely to recur, and the wells can never be relied upon to provide a constant wholesome supply. Often boiling of water before use has to be advised, and the problem will not be satisfactorily solved until piped water is taken to the properties concerned. Sometimes shortage occurs in the well supplies, particularly in West Hatch parish, but this was not generally a cause of concern during the year under review.

No plumbo-solvent action exists in any of the water supplies of the district.

It is understood that progress is being made with the Taunton Borough Council Scheme for constructing a reservoir at Clatworthy, and when this comes to fruition it is hoped that many of the problems of water supply in the rural district will be solved.

The following table sets out the position as to the distribution of piped supplies in the District:—

PARISH.	Area of Parish. Acres.	No. of houses in Parish.	No. of houses having a piped water supply under pressure into or on to the house (including those with a tap outside only).	Of the houses not included in 3 (1), the number having within 100 yards of a water main available for a supply.	Of the houses not in 3 (1) & (2) the number that are in villages, hamlets or groups consisting of 20 or more houses so placed as to be within a circle ¼ mile in diameter.	Of the houses not connected to a public sewer the number in villages, hamlets or groups of 20 or more houses so placed as to lie within a circle ¼ mile in diameter.
	1	2	3 (1)	3 (2)	3 (3)	4
Ash Priors	641	36	19	11	—	—
Bickenhall	1143	47	38	—	—	—
Bishops Hull	1283	501	473	9	—	—
Bishops Lydeard	4832	604	344	42	—	20
Cheddton Fitzpaine	1883	320	229	17	—	23
Churchstanton	5435	175	86	—	—	38
Combe Florey	1382	72	56	4	—	—
Corfe	1165	82	81	—	—	22
Cotthelstone	1455	41	16	—	—	—
Creech St. Michael	2298	310	307	3	—	172
Curland	648	39	21	—	—	—
Durston	1013	53	—	—	—	43
Halse	1320	85	47	15	—	58
Hatch Beauchamp	1408	130	107	5	—	—
Kingston	2584	233	30	—	79	123
Lydeard St. Lawrence	2748	118	80	2	—	39
North Curry	5822	411	344	30	—	—
Norton Fitzwarren	2054	315	252	70	—	—
Orchard Portman	1665	50	27	—	34	—
Otterford	2446	112	—	—	—	—
Pitminster	5780	397	250	84	—	34 (Pitminster) 33 (Blagdon) 64 (Staplehay) 49 (Staplehay) 114
Ruishton	1027	183	153	27	—	—
Staple Fitzpaine	3029	60	44	—	—	—
Staplegrave	1027	89	51	42	—	37
Stoke St. Gregory	4135	360	356	3	—	25
Stoke St. Mary	2019	161	111	9	—	—
Thornfalcon	822	46	42	—	—	—
Tollard	842	24	2	—	—	—
Trull	2172	301	244	36	—	140
West Bagborough	2006	114	103	—	—	57
West Hatch	1619	89	11	—	—	—
West Monkton	2972	421	380	87	20	110 (Bathpool) 101 (M. Heath) 39 (Village)

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal

Of the 32 parishes in the District, only seven have sewage disposal works, and of these works, perhaps three may be regarded as meeting disposal requirements satisfactorily, namely those in the parishes of Bishops Lydeard, Bishops Hull and Norton Fitzwarren, while the remaining four at Combe Florey, Hatch Beauchamp, North Curry and Corfe are inadequate for their purpose.

The occupiers of properties in other parts of the District make use of either pail closets, of which there are estimated to be almost 2,000 still in use, or drainage systems connected with septic tanks. Both these methods of disposal can yield satisfactory results from the Public Health point of view in certain circumstances, but all too often these circumstances do not exist. The use of pail closets demands access to adequate ground space and suitable soil in which the contents may be buried, and involves attention the distasteful nature of which is becoming almost intolerable in modern times. The result is that very often the requisite attention is not or cannot be given, and nuisances and danger to health are likely to arise. Disposal by septic tank and filter bed is less open to objection, and many properties in isolated situations will certainly have to continue to be served in this way. Again, efficiency of disposal depends on a number of factors such as the nature and contour of the ground, the continuous functioning of a fairly delicate mechanism, and the bestowal of a certain amount of attention in keeping the plant in order. From the number of nuisances arising from faulty septic tanks it is obvious that the efficiency of the process can very easily break down.

There can be no doubt that water carriage of sewage to a proper disposal works is the method of choice in dealing with this matter, and the Council are fully aware of the inadequacy of the present provisions, and have had schemes prepared for installing the necessary works when it becomes economically possible to do so. The construction by Taunton Borough Council of a large disposal works at Ham, in the parish of Creech St. Michael, is proceeding, and a large part of the rural district in the vicinity of the town will be drained into this when it is completed.

The Sewerage Sub-Committee of the Council made a number of visits, along with Council officials, to various areas where nuisances from faulty sewage disposal were particularly troublesome, and often it was possible to put measures in hand for the alleviation of nuisance.

Housing

Provision of houses in the District by the Council has gone on steadily throughout the year. 88 were completed in 1954, and since the end of the war 422 have been built. In addition to this, about 154 houses have been built by private enterprise during the same period. This building activity has had some effect on the waiting list of families requiring accommodation, but continued efforts in this direction will be required for some time to come. There were about 476 applicants for Council houses on the waiting list at the end of 1954.

A beginning was made towards the end of the year with a comprehensive scheme of clearance of unfit houses. This will involve clearance area and demolition procedures. A Sub-Committee of the Council was formed to inspect, along with officers concerned, properties where these procedures might be in question. It was planned to carry out inspections systematically, parish by parish throughout the district, with, in each case, the member for the parish concerned joining the Sub-Committee in carrying out the inspection. Several parishes of the district had been dealt with in this way by the end of the year.

A number of Improvement Grants under the Housing Act, 1949, were made by the Council during recent years. Consideration by members of Council and officials of applications for grants of this type has to be extremely careful and detailed, since considerable disbursement of public money is involved, but in cases which fulfil the requirements, this is a most useful way of saving property which would otherwise fall below the housing standards now demanded. During the year under review grants were approved in respect of eleven houses, and six had been the subject of grants in previous years.

Many families in the district, some of them perhaps from choice, but more of them probably from necessity, make use of caravans as permanent dwellings. It cannot be felt that this is the most desirable way of life, more especially when children form part of the family. Up to the end of 1954, 99 moveable dwelling licences had been issued, most of them for individual caravans, but some for sites capable of accommodating several. It was estimated that 223 caravans were in use with a total population of about 500.

Of the ex-military camps which were unofficially occupied in 1946, all have fallen into disuse for housing purposes except Sandhill Park where there still were, at the end of 1954, about 125 occupied huts.

The Council's building programme was as follows:—

Parish.	Number completed during 1954	Number under construction at 31st Dec., 1954
Norton Fitzwarren	40	—
Corfe	4	—
Cheddon Fitzpaine	10	—
West Monkton	8	—
Bishops Hull	16	22
West Bagborough	—	12
Lydeard St. Lawrence	—	8
Kingston St. Mary	—	8
		50

The following table shows the Parishes in which the Council have erected houses under the various Acts:—

Parish.	Address.	Number of Houses.
Bishops Hull ...	1/74 Smithy Cottages ...	74
do. ...	20/35 Mountway Cottages ...	16
	7/28 Northfield Estate ...	22 112
Bishops Lydeard ...	1/8 Gore Cottages ...	8
do. ...	1/10 Pound Lane ...	10
do. ...	1/12 Mill Lane Cottages ...	12
do. ...	1/30 Halfyard Cottages ...	30
do. ...	1/52 Darby Way ...	52
		— 112
Cheddon Fitzpaine ...	1/8 School Cottages ...	8
	1/10 Cheddon Lawns ...	10
		— 18
Churchstanton ...	1/4 Stapley Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Church Road Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/6 Gillards Mead ...	6
do. ...	7/16 Gillards Mead ...	10
		— 24

Parish.	Address.	Number of Houses.
Combe Florey ...	1/4 Meadowside ...	4
Corfe ...	1/4 Brook Cottages ... 1/4 Adcombe View ...	4 4 — 8
Creech St. Michael ...	1/8 Ryes Terrace ...	8
do. ...	1/6 Charlton Lane Cottages ...	6
do. ...	1/4 Cheads Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/16 Rocketts Cottages ...	16
do. ...	1/10 Creechwood Terrace ...	10 — 44
Curland ...	1/4 Castle View ...	4
Hatch Beauchamp ...	1/4 Palmers Green Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/8 Crimthorne Cotts ...	8 — 12
Kingston ...	1/6 Parks Cottages ...	6
do. ...	1 and 2 Chaces ...	2
do. ...	1/8 Greenway Terrace ...	8
do. ...	1/4 Fulford Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/10 Parsonage Cottages ...	10 — 30
Lydeard St. Lawrence..	1/8 Cross Croft ...	8
do. ...	1/4 Nethercott Road ...	4 — 12
North Curry ...	1/6 Oxen Lane ...	6
do. ...	1/4 Backham Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/10 Croft Cottages ...	10
do. ...	1/8 Lillesdon Terrace ...	8
do. ...	1/8 Cricket Cottages ...	8
do. ...	1/14 Town Close ...	14
do. ...	15/20 do. ...	6
do. ...	21/24 do. ...	4 — 60
Norton Fitzwarren ...	1/4 Burnshill Terrace ...	4
do. ...	1/24 Rectory Road Cottages ...	24
do. ...	1/10 Station Road Cottages ...	10
do. ...	1/4 Manleys Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/4 Court Cottages ...	4
do. ...	1/10 The Crescent ...	10
do. ...	1/56 Hilly Park ...	56 — 112
Otterford ..	1/4 Brook Cottages ...	4

Parish		Address	Houses Number of
Pitminster	...	1/8 Littleham Cottages	8
do.	...	1/8 Colleylake Cottages	8
			— 16
Ruishton	...	1/5 Ruishton Lane Cottages	5
do.	...	1/3 Lipe Lane Cottages	3
do.	...	1/4 Slades Cottages	4
do.	...	1/12 Steart Cottages	12
do.	...	1/28 Coronation Close	28
			— 52
Staplegrove	...	1/6 Hillhead Cottages	6
Stoke St. Gregory	...	1/16 Willey Road	16
do.	...	1/8 Stathe Cottages	8
do.	...	1/20 Woodhill Terrace	20
do.	...	1 and 2 Meare Green Cottages	2
			— 46
Stoke St. Mary	...	1/4 Homefield Cottages	4
do.	...	1/8 Pattens Cottages	8
			— 12
Thornfalcon	...	1/8 Glebe Cottages	8
Trull	...	1 and 2 Horts Cottages	2
do.	...	7/14 Mill Lane	8
do.	...	1/4 The Green	4
			— 14
West Bagborough	...	1/10 Vale View Cottages	10
do.	...	1/4 Hill View Cottages	4
do.	...	1/4 South View Cottages	4
do.	...	1/4 Parkside	4
			— 22
West Monkton	...	1/4 Titley Cottages	4
do.	...	1/4 Brittons Ash Cottages	4
do.	...	1/6 Hyde Lane Cottages	6
do.	...	1/14 School Road Cottages	14
do.	...	1/8 Elms Estate	8
do.	...	9/16 do.	8
do.	...	17/20 do.	4
do.	...	21/54 do.	34
		1/8 Bungalow Elms Estate	8
			— 90
TOTAL			822

Of the above total of 822 houses, 204 were built to replace houses dealt with by Slum Clearance in previous years, under the Housing Acts of 1930 and 1936.

Refuse Collection

There are no new facts to report on this service. It is hoped that a more frequent collection may be possible in some areas in future years, but the ruling factor here at the present time is expense. Some efforts towards the provision of more suitable containers were apparent, but the Chief Sanitary Inspector is still concerned about the widespread lack of proper dustbins throughout the district.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR

The following is a tabular statement of work carried out during the year 1954:—

Number and nature of inspections:—

Dwelling houses	...	...	...	...	...	195
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	8
Food premises	...	...	...	...	...	37
Government Slaughterhouse	...	...	...	...	...	1,377
Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	...	...	17
Water supplies	...	...	...	...	...	139
Drainage, foul ditches, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	177
Moveable dwellings	...	...	...	...	...	108
Infectious diseases	...	...	...	...	...	4
Refuse and salvage collection and disposal	...	...	...	...	...	327
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	38

Water Samples

77 samples of water have been obtained for bacteriological examination during the year. Of this number 45 have been taken from private supplies, and reported on as follows:—

Grade 1.	4 samples.
2.	3 „
3.	8 „
4.	30 „
	—
	45 „
	—

Advice on improving existing supplies and warnings against drinking water without boiling have been issued in all appropriate cases.

38 samples of water have been obtained from public supplies in the area. The results are as follows:—

Supply.	No. of Samples.	Satisfactory.	Unsatisfactory.
West Bagborough ...	8	5	3
Cothelstone (chlorinated) ...	9	8	1
Lydeard St. Lawrence ...	11	7	4
Portman Supply (chlorinated) ...	3	3	0
Churchstanton (chlorinated) ...	7	7	0

Investigations have been made in conjunction with the Surveyor to the Council in cases where reports fall short of the required standard—recent samples have shown a marked improvement.

Five chemical analyses have been taken and all were satisfactory.

Rodent Control

An operator is employed jointly with Wellington R.D.C. During the year the sewers, sewage disposal works and refuse dumps were inspected and treated systematically. Private dwelling houses and business premises have been surveyed and treated both from complaints made and infestations discovered during surveys. The inspections of farm premises have been carried out in areas suspected or where complaints had arisen, and co-operation with the Agricultural Executive Committee Pest Department has been working effectively. Summary of inspection and control measures taken are as follows:—

Report for 12 months ending 31st December, 1954

	Non-Agricultural				(5) Agricul- tural
	(1) Local Autho- rity	(2) Dwell- ing Houses	(3) All others (includ- ing Business Premises)	(4) Totals 1, 2 & 3	
I. Number of Properties in Local Authority's District	17	5,526	357	5,900	553
II. Number of Properties in- spected as a result of	—	95	6	101	9
(a) Notification ...	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Surveys ...	17	301	125	443	244
(c) Otherwise ...	—	81	26	107	23
III. Total Inspections carried out—including re-inspec- tions ...	114	628	173	915	285
IV. Number of Properties in- spected which were found to be infested by					
(a) Rats { Major	1	2	7	10	10
Minor	13	175	16	204	40
(b) Mice { Major	—	—	—	—	—
Minor	—	4	—	4	—
V. Number of Infested Prop- erties treated by the L.A.	14	181	6	201	4
VI. Total Treatments carried out including re-treatments	23	223	6	252	4
VII. Number of Notices served under Section 4 of the Act					
(a) Treatment ...	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Structural Work (i.e. Proofing)	—	—	—	—	—
VIII. Number of cases in which default action was taken following the issue of a Notice under Section 4 of the Act ...	—	—	—	—	—
IX. Legal Proceedings ...	—	—	—	—	—
X. Number of "Block Con- trol" schemes carried out	—	7	—	—	—

Offensive Trades

There are two offensive trades in the district within the meaning of Section 107 of the Public Health Act, 1936. One is that of tripe boiling and the other a Knacker's Yard for the provision of dog and cat food.

Bakehouses

There are 13 bakehouses in the district and 8 visits were made to them during the year. Several minor defects have been noted and dealt with by informal action.

Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949

The number of persons registered with the Council as distributors of milk in the area is 8.

Milk (Special Designation) (Pasteurised and Sterilised Milk) Regulation, 1949

One dealer's licence is in force under the above Regulation, plus three dealers' supplementary licences.

Milk (Special Designation) (Raw Milk) Regulation, 1949

Seven dealers' licences are in force under the above Regulation, plus five dealers' supplementary licences.

Ice Cream

The number of retailers of this product in the area is 43; of this number one only is an actual manufacturer. The remainder of the retailers sell pre-packed ice cream, which is stored in properly constructed refrigerators.

Meat Inspection

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known)	1,062	347	15,751	6,733	11,341
Number inspected ...	1,062	347	15,751	6,733	11,341
All diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole carcasses condemned	0	1	88	13	28
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	11	41	35	188	309
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	1.04	12.11	0.78	2.84	2.97
Tuberculosis only.					
Whole carcasses condemned	2	9	7	0	10
Carcases of which some part or organ was con- demned	18	60	1	0	341
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	1.88	19.88	0.05	0	3.09

Report for the year ending December 31st, 1954

Reasons for condemnation

Beasts	...	T.B.	...	...	11 carcasses
					41 heads
					1 pluck
					6 livers
					24 prs. lungs
					1 stomach and mesenteries
					1 udder
					4 forequarters
		Abscesses	...	...	2 heads
					5 plucks

Beasts	...	Abscesses	...	...	7 livers
					1 pr. lungs
		Bruising	...	...	1 carcase
					1 hindquarter
		Cirrhosis	...	...	30 livers
		Flukes	...	...	3 livers
		Actinomycosis	...	...	1 head
Calves	...	Septic Mastitis	...	...	1 hindquarter
		Cysticercus Bovis	...	...	1 head and organs
		T.B.	...	...	7 carcasses
					1 pluck
		Abscesses	...	...	3 heads
					22 plucks
		Bruising	...	...	1 carcase
					1 knuckle
		Inflammation	...	...	12 carcasses
					1 pluck
		Melanosis	...	...	2 carcasses
					1 pluck
		Immaturity	...	...	1 carcase
		Leukaemia	...	...	1 carcase
		Jaundice	...	...	22 carcasses
Sheep	...	Septicaemia	...	...	41 carcasses
		Joint Ill	...	...	8 carcasses
		Ringworm	...	...	4 heads
		Fatty infiltration	...	...	3 livers
		Inflammation	...	...	2 carcasses
					3 plucks
		Abscesses	...	...	1 head and pluck
					4 plucks
					2 livers
		Emaciation	...	...	5 carcasses
		Oedema	...	...	1 carcase
		Road accident	...	...	4 carcasses
		Decomposition	...	...	1 carcase
		Flukes	...	...	1 pluck
					156 livers
Pigs	...	Cirrhosis	...	...	10 livers
		Pleurisy	...	...	9 forequarters
					2 breasts
Pigs	...	T.B.	...	...	10 carcasses
					314 heads

Pigs	...	T.B.	...	...	25 plucks
					2 hindquarters
		Abscesses	...	...	6 carcasses
					21 plucks
					1 pr. lungs
					5 forequarters
					5 hindquarters
					2 legs
		Inflammation	...	...	9 carcasses
					22 plucks
					2 prs. lungs
					1 heart
		Pleurisy	...	...	1 carcass
					3 plucks
					6 forequarters
		Peritonitis	...	...	2 carcasses
					2 hindquarters
		Pneumonia	...	...	1 carcass
		Jaundice	...	...	1 carcass
		Savaging	...	...	1 carcass
		Bruising	...	...	2 hocks
		Gangrenous conditions			1 carcass
		Cirrhosis	...	...	106 livers
		Milk Spot	...	...	131 livers
		Moribund	...	...	2 carcasses
		Badly bled	...	...	1 carcass
		Blood splashing	...	...	3 carcasses
Other Foods		Decomposition	...	...	40 lbs. Pork Loin
					24 lbs. Luncheon Meat
		Bone Taint	...	...	434 lbs. Imported Hind-quarter of Beef
		Bruising	...	...	12 lbs. English Hind-quarter of Beef
		Fatty infiltration	...	...	2 lbs. English Lamb's Liver

Refuse Collection

This has continued on the lines of the reorganisation carried out in 1951.

The following details refer to times of collection and salvage recovered:—

Frequency of Collections in the Area

<i>Area of Collection.</i>	<i>Collection Day.</i>	<i>Frequency.</i>
1 North Curry (Village only), Stoke St. Gregory Village, Woodhill, Curload, Athelney	Tuesday ...	Fortnightly.
2 Remainder of Stoke St. Gregory Parish	Tuesday ...	Monthly.
3 Remainder of North Curry Parish ...	Tuesday ...	Monthly.
4 Blagdon Hill, Culmhead Camp, Blagdon, Sellick's Green, Fulwood Staplehay, Eastbrook, Trull	Wednesday ...	Fortnightly.
5 Remainder of Pitminster Parish ...	Wednesday ...	Monthly.
6 Ash Priors, Combe Florey, Cothelstone, Halse, Lydeard St. Lawrence, Tolland, West Bagborough	Thursday ...	Monthly.
7 Sherford Camp	Saturday ...	Fortnightly.
8 Creech St. Michael Village, Ruishton, Stoke St. Mary	Tuesday ...	Fortnightly.
9 Adsborough, Creech Heathfield, Langaller, Ham	Tuesday ...	Monthly.
10 Cheddon Fitzpaine	Wednesday ...	Monthly.
11 West Monkton	Wednesday ...	Fortnightly.
12 Bickenhall, Churchstanton, Corfe, Curland, Orchard Portman, Otterford, Staple Fitzpaine	Thursday ...	Monthly.
13 Kingston, Norton Fitzwarren ...	Thursday ...	Fortnightly
14 Staplegrove	Friday ...	Fortnightly
15 Durston, Thornfalcon	Tuesday ...	Monthly.
16 Hatch Beauchamp, West Hatch ...	Wednesday ...	Monthly.
17 Bishops Lydeard	Friday ...	Weekly.
18 Bishops Hull	Monday ...	Weekly.

Salvage Collection and Sales

1954 proved to be a very difficult year for trading in salvage materials, prices and outlets being extremely uncertain. The following items were disposed of during the year, yielding a surplus of approximately £235 after paying all expenses and a bonus of 20% on sales to the collectors:—

Material.	T.	C.	Q.	lbs.	£	s.	d.
Newsprint	40	10	0	0	249	2	4
Cardboard	16	13	2	0	136	18	3
Rags	2	6	1	0	27	15	0
Wool		4	0	13	17	18	3
Sacking		8	1	0	2	9	6
Mixed Iron	19	17	2	0	93	19	0
Steel	1	15	3	0	7	3	0
Bottles		305	doz.		21	10	0
Cast iron	4	18	2	0	24	12	6
Light iron	5	19	1	0	12	10	8
Non-ferrous Metals	1	6	2	15	65	4	6
Battery Lead		5	2	14	13	9	0
Batteries			3		1	4	0
Bed Rails			48		2	8	0
Drums			6			15	0
Broken concrete posts			—		2	0	0
	94	5	1	14	378	19	0

Food Poisoning Outbreaks

There were no outbreaks of food poisoning during the year. Two cases were notified, both from the same household. The responsible organism was not discovered and no future associated cases came to light.

Factories Act, 1937

The inspection of factories and workshops in the district from a public health point of view is carried out by the staff of the Public Health Department. Routine visits are paid to the various premises and the following table gives particulars of this work. It is to be

noted that the term Factories as used in this connection now includes Workshops, which accounts for the large number on the Register in this Rural District.

Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors):—

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspection.	Written notices.	Occupiers prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	11	4	0	0
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 applies	54	19	0	0
(iii) Other Premises under the Act (excluding out-workers' premises)	0	0	0	0
Total ...	65	23	0	0

National Assistance Act, 1948.

Section 50—Burial of the Dead

One notification was received during the year that a person in the area had died and that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body had been made. The burial was accordingly arranged by the Council.

