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Witham Urban District

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**REPORT**

OF THE

**Medical Officer of Health**

**A. P. KALRA**

M.B., M.R.C.S., D.P.H., D.C.H.

FOR THE YEAR

**1950**

TOGETHER WITH THE

**Report of the**

**Chief Sanitary Inspector**

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Witham :

J. H. Clarke & Co., (Chelmsford) Ltd.  
High Street



# Witham Urban District Council

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## PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

*Chairman :* D. J. MAIDMENT, ESQ., J.P. (until October, 1950)

T. R. MOTT, ESQ., J.P. (from October, 1950)

*Members :* MRS. J. N. PELLY.

A. J. GOODRICH, ESQ., J.P.

W. G. LOVEDAY, ESQ.

S. H. POND, ESQ.

S. C. GIGGINS, ESQ.

J. AGER, ESQ.

## PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

### Medical Officer of Health

A. P. KALRA, M.B., M.R.C.S., D.P.H., D.C.H.

### Chief Sanitary Inspector and Inspector of Meat and Other Foods

E. H. C. WADHAMS, M.R.SAN.I., M.S.I.A., A.M.I.S.E.

### Additional Sanitary Inspector

H. R. SCOTT, M.S.I.A.

### Clerical Assistant

R. G. CHAPMAN.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICES,

TOWN HALL,

BRAINTREE.

August, 1951.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1950 on the health and sanitary circumstances of the Witham Urban District.

The birth rate was 14.7 and the death rate 9.7 per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.

The incidence of infectious disease was similar to that of the previous year, and the most prevalent disease was whooping cough. Five cases of poliomyelitis occurred between May and October, the details of which appear in the report.

The section on the General Provision of Health Services sets out the Services provided by the Essex County Council, the North-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board and the Essex Executive Council.

A considerable amount of work was done in connection with Food Hygiene, including the holding of a special film show and exhibition in April.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the members of the Council, the Council's Officers, and, in particular, the staff of the Public Health Department for their help and co-operation during the year.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

A. P. KALRA,

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
COUNCIL OFFICES,  
WITHAM.

To the Chairman and Members of the Urban District Council of Witham.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MADAM AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit, in conjunction with the report of the Medical Officer of Health, my report upon the sanitary circumstances of the Urban District for the year 1950, with details of the public services administered by my Department.

The year under review was the fifth since my appointment by your Council. It is interesting to note that although the limitations imposed by post-war national circumstances made progress appear at times to be laboured and fraught with difficulty, nevertheless, in retrospect, it can now be seen that a very real advance has in fact been achieved. The Council's record for new housing is impressive; considerable improvements in water supply and sewerage have been made and more are in progress or preparation; the public cleansing service has been improved and extended; and, not least, the general health standards and sanitary circumstances of the community have been maintained. Food hygiene has been both preached and practised, in keeping with the national need for higher standards to offset the dangers inherent in increased communal feeding. Every aspect of sanitation has received attention, and though in many respects the ideal of perfection is still far distant, the Council is fully aware of such unsatisfactory conditions as exist, and steady progress towards their elimination is being co-ordinated as far as possible with the work of planning the expected development and expansion of the district.

It is perhaps in the improvement of existing housing conditions that least progress has been made. This is a national post-war characteristic, and is due mainly to the very necessary emphasis upon the provision of new houses. However, the need for resolution at national level of the vexed questions of economy and priority in property repair and maintenance becomes yearly more apparent, as undoubtedly some of the effect of post-war house building will be nullified if all existing property capable of repair to modern standards is not prevented from falling into such disrepair that demolition becomes an economic proposition.

I would like to express my appreciation of the support and encouragement I have received from the Council during the last five years, and particularly from the Chairmen and Members of the Public Health Committees. It would also be ungrateful not to acknowledge the very great assistance I have received from Mr. H. Crook, the Clerk of the Council, whose advice, experience and knowledge of the district is always so readily available and so helpful in approaching many problems.

I would also like to pay tribute to the assistance I have received from the Medical Officer of Health and the other Officers of the Council, and to the staff and workmen of my own Department for their loyal support.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

E. H. C. WADHAMS,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

## GENERAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres) ... ..	7,329
Population (estimated mid-year) ... ..	8,457
Number of inhabited houses according to rate books ...	2,565
Rateable Value (March, 1950) ... ..	£45,407
Sum represented by a penny rate ... ..	£175

## SOCIAL CONDITIONS

The area has two minor industrial centres in the town of Witham and the garden village of Silver End. The remainder of the area is almost entirely agricultural.

There was no unemployment problem during 1950.

## VITAL STATISTICS

On page 7 are set out the extracts of the Vital Statistics of the District for the ten-year period 1941-50 in regard to the estimated mid-year populations, and the local and national birth and death rates for each year during that time.

### BIRTHS

In the year 1950 there were 124 live births in the Urban District and these were as follows :—

	Male	Female
Total	69	55
Legitimate	67	51
Illegitimate	2	4

The birth rate was 14.7 per 1,000 of the estimated resident population and was lower than that of the previous year.

## STILL BIRTHS

There were 6 still births registered in 1950 and these were as shown below :—

	Male	Female
Total	3	3
Legitimate	3	3
Illegitimate	—	—

## DEATHS

The number of deaths relating to the Urban District during 1950 was 82, of which 41 were males and 41 were females.

The death rate was 9.7 per 1,000 of the estimated resident population, the rate being lower than that of the last year. The details of the nett deaths in the district in 1950 are given on page 6.

It will be seen that the percentage of deaths occurring in the age group from 65 upwards was approximately 75% and that diseases of the heart and circulatory system accounted for nearly half of the total deaths and that cancer was again the next important cause of death.

## INFANT DEATHS

There were only 2 deaths of infants under 1 year of age and, of these, both died during the first 4 weeks of life.

The infant mortality rate was 16.1, which is considerably lower than that of the last year.

The cause of infant deaths was atelectasis in each case.



## DEATHS

All ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 2	2 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 35	35 and under 45	45 and under 55	55 and under 65	65 and under 75	75 and upwards
82	2	1	—	2	1	—	3	3	10	16	44

### CAUSES OF DEATH

The Table below was compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar-General and the classification is given under the 36 headings based on the Abbreviated List of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries & Causes of Death, 1948.

Cause of Death		Male	Female
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory ... ..	—	—
2.	Tuberculosis, other ... ..	—	—
3.	Syphilitic disease ... ..	—	—
4.	Diphtheria ... ..	—	—
5.	Whooping Cough ... ..	—	—
6.	Meningococcal infections ... ..	—	—
7.	Acute Poliomyelitis ... ..	—	—
8.	Measles ... ..	—	—
9.	Other infective and parasitic diseases ... ..	—	—
10.	Malignant neoplasm, stomach ... ..	1	—
11.	Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ... ..	3	—
12.	Malignant neoplasm, breast ... ..	—	—
13.	Malignant neoplasm, uterus ... ..	—	1
14.	Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ... ..	7	5
15.	Leukaemia, aleukaemia ... ..	—	—
16.	Diabetes ... ..	—	—
17.	Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	4	7
18.	Coronary disease, angina ... ..	1	8
19.	Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	—	1
20.	Other heart disease ... ..	4	7
21.	Other circulatory disease ... ..	3	2
22.	Influenza ... ..	1	—
23.	Pneumonia ... ..	1	—
24.	Brónchitis ... ..	2	4
25.	Other diseases of respiratory system ... ..	1	—
26.	Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ... ..	1	1
27.	Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ... ..	—	—
28.	Nephritis and nephrosis ... ..	—	1
29.	Hyperplasia of Prostate ... ..	—	—
30.	Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ... ..	—	—
31.	Congenital malformations ... ..	—	—
32.	Other defined and ill-defined diseases ... ..	6	2
33.	Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	3	—
34.	All other accidents ... ..	3	1
35.	Suicide ... ..	—	1
36.	Homicide and other operations of war ... ..	—	—
All causes		41	41

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1950 AND PREVIOUS YEARS

Year	Population estimated mid-year	BIRTHS			DEATHS										Natural Increase (excess of Births over Deaths)
		NETT			Total Number Registered in District	TRANSFERABLE		NETT							
		Number	Rate	Rate England & Wales		Of non-residents registered in District	Of residents not registered in District	Number	Rate per 1000 nett births	Rate England & Wales	Number	Rate	Rate England & Wales		
1941	7,929	121	15.6	13.9	67	7	20	3	24.8	x60	80	10.1	13.5	41	
1942	7,781	124	15.9	15.6	52	11	26	3	24.2	x51	67	8.6	12.3	57	
1943	7,949	114	14.3	16.2	53	10	28	2	37.5	x49	71	8.9	13.0	43	
1944	7,735	128	16.6	17.7	61	14	27	8	63.5	x45	74	9.6	12.7	54	
1945	7,619	145	19	15.9	71	18	28	10	68.9	x46	81	10.6	12.6	64	
1946	7,960	170	21.5	19.1	66	6	25	6	35.3	x43	85	10.7	12.0	85	
1947	8,144	149	18.3	20.5	57	7	28	5	33.6	x41	78	9.6	12.3	71	
1948	8,252	143	17.3	17.9	50	8	26	1	7.0	x34	68	8.2	10.8	75	
1949	8,363	131	15.7	16.7	65	12	38	6	45.8	x32	91	10.9	11.7	40	
1950	8,457	124	14.7	15.8	53	12	41	2	16.1	x29.8	82	9.7	11.6	42	

x Rate per 1,000 related births.

# GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES

## PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

For list see page 1.

The Medical Officer of Health is also the Medical Officer of Health for the Urban District of Braintree and Bocking, and for the Rural Districts of Braintree and Dunmow, and Assistant Medical Officer for the Essex County Council.

The Braintree and Bocking Urban District Council, by arrangement with the Authorities concerned, provide office accommodation for the Medical Officer of Health in the prefabricated annexe of the Town Hall, Braintree.

The Chief Sanitary Inspector, in addition to his ordinary duties and meat inspection, continues to be responsible for the Council's Refuse and Salvage Collection Scheme, for the management of the Council's Sewage Disposal Works, including the farming of the land at the Witham Sewage Works.

## SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

### CARE OF EXPECTANT MOTHERS

Regular ante-natal clinics are held, with a lady doctor in attendance, at the Combined Treatment Centre, Guithavon Street, Witham.

### CARE OF YOUNG CHILDREN UP TO SCHOOL AGE

Child Welfare Clinics are held fortnightly at the Combined Treatment Centre in Witham and also at the Village Hall in Silver End. Injections for Diphtheria Immunisation are given with the parents' consent. Children requiring treatment are referred to the local general practitioners, hospitals or special arrangements made at the Combined Treatment Centre.

### DAY NURSERY

The Essex County Council have a Day Nursery at Brookcote, Chipping Hill, Witham, for some 30 children whose mothers are engaged in industry.

### CARE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

Regular school medical inspections are carried out and the children with defects are referred for treatment. Boosting doses of diphtheria prophylactic are given to increase the resistance of the children to diphtheria.

### HEALTH VISITING

The Health Visitors visit the homes of young children, act as school nurses and help at the clinics at the Combined Treatment Centre, Witham, and the Village Hall, Silver End.

## **HOME NURSING AND DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY**

These services are carried out by the District nurse midwives resident in the area.

## **DOMESTIC HELP SERVICE**

Applications for domestic help should be made to the County Medical Officer, County Hall, Chelmsford. This service is not provided free of cost.

## **AMBULANCE FACILITIES**

The ambulance service continued to function satisfactorily throughout the year.

## **CARE OF THE AGED AND INFIRM**

Residential accommodation is provided at St. Michael's Hospital, Braintree, and Stisted Hall.

## **LABORATORY SERVICES**

The Essex County Council provide a laboratory service which includes the bacteriological and chemical analyses of water samples, the chemical analyses of sewage effluents, and the examination of other food for pathogenic organisms. These examinations are carried out by the Counties Public Health Laboratories, 61, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

Examination of milk samples from the District are also arranged by the Essex County Council and the service is provided by the Essex Institute of Agriculture at Writtle, near Chelmsford.

Chemical examination of foodstuffs are undertaken by the Public Analyst to the Essex County Council.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NORTH-EAST METROPOLITAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD**

The hospitals are managed by the Regional Hospital Board and provide medical, surgical and special treatment. The hospitals which serve the Witham population are those in Chelmsford, Colchester and Braintree. A Chest Clinic is held weekly at the Combined Treatment Centre, Braintree, and treatment for Venereal Disease is available in Chelmsford and Colchester.

## **SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE ESSEX EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Under the National Health Service Act, 1946, this Council provides the general Medical, Dental, Pharmaceutical and Supplementary Ophthalmic services through the family doctors, dentists, chemists and opticians in the area.

# PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The incidence of infectious disease in the Urban District during 1950 was similar to that of the previous year, the number of cases notified was 216 and the major portion of these were due to whooping cough. Particulars as to numbers and ages of the cases, other than tuberculosis, for the year are given on page 12. A few brief comments are made on some of the infectious diseases.

## **POLIOMYELITIS (INFANTILE PARALYSIS)**

During 1950, there were 5 cases of poliomyelitis in the district between May and October. 4 of these occurred in Witham and one in Silver End. Three cases were paralytic and 2 non-paralytic and all were sent to hospital for treatment and isolation. Contacts were closely observed for 21 days and all child contacts were excluded from school. Disinfection of the premises was done in each case after removal to hospital.

It was not possible to establish any definite connection between the 5 cases, although in one case, a definite contact was established with another case of poliomyelitis from outside the district. The incubation period of the case in Witham was 18 days, the usual period being 7-14 days, but may be longer. Once again full use was made of the Press to keep the public informed as to the number of cases, as rumour tends to exaggerate the position and cause unnecessary alarm.

## **DIPHTHERIA**

For the third year running there were no confirmed cases of diphtheria in the district. The value of diphtheria immunisation of infants and school children is illustrated by local figures during the last 20 years. In the 1931-40 ten-year period there were 32 cases of diphtheria, with 2 deaths, whereas in the ten-year period 1941-50, when the immunisation scheme was operating, there were only 4 cases of diphtheria with 2 deaths.

The need for continuing diphtheria immunisation among infants and school children is still great, so that a very high proportion of the child population is protected against this deadly disease.

## **FOOD POISONING**

There were no definite cases of Food Poisoning in Witham during the year. In August, 15 cases of illness, described as food poisoning, were notified. Most of these were mild with diarrhoea and vomiting lasting a day or two at the most. In one family, 6 members were affected, and in another where four were taken ill, no definite food could be implicated. In the other 5 cases, 3 occurred in one family and 2 in another. In these it was thought that the diarrhoea and vomiting started after eating cream cakes. Samples of cream were taken from the baker and in one sample there were a large number of non-pathogenic organisms, but no food poisoning organisms were discovered

Following the death of a Croydon man from *typhi murium* infection traced to duck eggs from the Witham Packing Station, samples of eggs were examined by the Pathologist at the Black Notley Laboratory. Of the random samples selected, 10% were found to contain the organisms, and in view of this disturbing report, the matter was referred to the Ministry of Food, whose Scientific Advisers Bureau were called in. Further local investigation was not carried out, however, because of research in the matter then being done on a large scale by the Ministry of Health Research Laboratories.

### NON-NOTIFIABLE DISEASES

Five cases of chicken pox and 2 cases of German measles were reported to the Public Health Department during the year.

### TUBERCULOSIS

Particulars of the new cases of tuberculosis reported during the year and of deaths from the disease are set out in the Table below.

Age Periods (Years)	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-respiratory		Respiratory		Non-respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0—1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—10	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
10—15	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—20	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—
20—25	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
35—45	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	16	3	—	1	2	—	—	—
	19		1		2		—	

At the end of the year there were 79 cases on the Tuberculosis Register of the District and these were as follows :—

Males		Females	
Respiratory	Non-respiratory	Respiratory	Non-respiratory
36	9	27	7

The Council take into consideration the circumstances of families in whom there are cases of tuberculosis and, within their resources, endeavour to provide housing accommodation when existing housing conditions are prejudicial to the health of members of such families.

### DISINFECTIONS

Fourteen of which were performed, were carried out with formaldehyde vapour or disinfectant spray; infected bedding and clothing being treated with steam at the disinfecting station operated by the Braintree and Bocking Urban District Council. Library books are disinfected or destroyed as the circumstances require. In addition, disinfectant is issued to occupiers of premises where infectious disease has occurred.



## HEALTH EDUCATION

During April a special film show and exhibition was held in connection with the Clean Food Campaign. The films shown were "Another Case of Food Poisoning" and "Fly about the House". In the interval a lecture was given by the Medical Officer of Health and questions answered at the end of the programme.

The exhibition material was obtained from the Central Council of Health Education and the Central Public Health Laboratory and arranged by the Health Education Department of the Essex County Council. The Sanitary Inspectors also took an active part in showing the exhibits and answering questions.

A further opportunity to show the general public the fundamentals of Food Hygiene was taken at a section of the Essex Agricultural Show held at Stisted in June. The Sanitary Inspectors collected specimens and staffed the exhibition.

## HOUSING

The Council continued its building programme throughout the year, during which a further 47 houses were completed at Powers Hall End, Maldon Road, Ebenezer Close, Western Road and Highfields Road. In the same period, 12 houses were erected by private enterprise. At the end of December, there were 28 Council houses and 3 private enterprise houses under construction. The number of new houses erected in the Urban District since the end of the war is as follows :—

By the Local Authority	250 (includes 84 pre-fabricated bungalows).
By private enterprise	58.

The number of applicants for Council Houses was 317 at the end of 1950, compared with 341 at 31st December, 1949. In addition there were 44 applications for aged persons' bungalows. It is therefore apparent that considerably more houses are required to satisfy the local demand. For this purpose the Council's immediate programme includes the completion of the new estate in the Spinks Lane—Highfields Road area, which will contain a total of 44 houses. The Council is also preparing to erect an housing estate in the Maldon Road area, as part of the development plan for the district. This scheme should be in progress by the end of 1951. A further scheme of development, comprising 50 houses at Rivenhall Oak, cannot be completed until the sewerage of that area has been effected. Government approval in principle of the sewerage scheme has now been granted.

Progress with regard to sub-standard houses continues to be limited. Of the condemned houses still occupied at 31st December, 1949, three became vacant when the tenants were rehoused. One further house was the subject of a Demolition Order made by the Council during the year,



leaving 22 still in occupation at the end of 1950. While there are undoubtedly a further number of houses which warrant condemnation, the housing shortage precludes such action at the present time.

A certain amount of reconditioning was carried out during 1950, but work in this direction is limited by the continuing demand on building labour and materials and by economic factors related to pre-war housing legislation still in force. Much existing property is rapidly deteriorating, and the provision of new houses cannot have the desired effect upon housing requirements generally, if such property is allowed to reach a stage at which it would be uneconomic to carry out repair and modernisation.

The following Table gives a summary of action taken in connection with the inspection of houses during 1950 :—

<b>1. Inspection of dwellinghouses during the year :—</b>	
(a) Total number inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..	107
(b) Number found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ..	1
(c) Number (exclusive of those referred to under sub-heading (b) ) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... ..	49
<b>2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notice :—</b>	
(a) Number of houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its Officers ...	31
<b>3. Action under Statutory Powers : Housing Act, 1936 :—</b>	
(a) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... ..	Nil
(b) Number of dwellinghouses rendered fit after service of formal notice ... ..	Nil
(c) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ..	Nil
(d) Number of Dwellinghouses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ..	1
(e) Number of written undertakings accepted ... ..	3
<b>4. Action under Statutory Powers : Public Health Act, 1936 :—</b>	
(a) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ..	8
(b) Number of houses in which defects were remedied under service of formal notice ... ..	8
<b>5. Number of dwellinghouses demolished : in pursuance of action under Secs. 25-33 Housing Act, 1936 (Clearance Orders)</b>	4

## WATER SUPPLY

There was no change in the sources of the Public supply in the Urban District: the Council's Braintree Road Waterworks supply (deep bore); the South Essex Water Company's supply from the Abberton impounding reservoir; and the Bradwell Springs supply (deep spring) operated by the Crittall Manufacturing Co. Ltd. Silver End and Rivenhall are fed by the Bradwell Springs undertaking, while the remainder of the district receives a mixture of all three supplies. All supplies undergo chloramination at the source.

Quality and quantity have been uniformly satisfactory throughout the year, though inadequate capacity and high demand on parts of the mains system cause serious loss of pressure in some parts of the area. The Council is considering measures for improving and maintaining the pressure in the mains concerned.

Samples are submitted periodically for bacteriological and chemical examination. The results, detailed below, showed that all supplies at the source, both before and after treatment, were satisfactory.

**Source : BRADWELL SPRINGS. Date of sample, 28th June, 1950.**

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

These results are consistent with a water which is pure and wholesome in character and suitable for public supply purposes."

**Source : BRAINTREE ROAD WATERWORKS. Date of sample 8th June, 1950.**

"This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance, has a reaction on the alkaline side of neutrality and is free from metals apart from a minute trace of iron. The water is soft in character but has a rather high content of mineral and saline constituents in solution. It is of very satisfactory organic quality and bacterial purity, consistent with a wholesome water suitable for drinking and domestic purposes."

**Source : SOUTH ESSEX WATER COMPANY TRUNK MAIN. Date of sample, 14th December, 1950.**

"This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance, has a reaction on the alkaline side of neutrality and is free from metals apart from a negligible trace of iron. The water is very hard in character but its hardness and its content of mineral and saline constituents in solution are not excessive. It is of passable organic quality and of a high standard of bacterial purity.

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

The chemical analyses of mains water indicate that slight corrosive action may be exerted by the Bradwell Springs supply, owing to high content of free carbonic acid. In addition, this supply and the South Essex supply are both very hard in character. The admixture of soft water from the Braintree Road Works is insufficient to offset this hardness. The Council have considered the possibility of installing a water softening plant, in conjunction with a proposal to purchase the Bradwell Springs undertaking, but decided that no action should be taken at the present time.

The number of well supplies in the Urban District has been reduced by the connection of a further 7 houses to the new Maldon Road main. Other wells of unsatisfactory quality exist in the neighbourhood of Blue Mills and the Council is considering the extension of the mains service in this direction.

#### HOUSE CONNECTIONS, ETC.

No. of separate dwellings in the Urban District ... ..	2565
No. of separate dwellings having internal piped mains supply	2458
Estimated population so served ... ..	8101
No. of separate dwellings connected during the year: New ...	59
Existing ...	8
No. of separate dwellings served by standpipe ... ..	55
Estimated population so served ... ..	186
Remaining houses, served by shallow wells, springs or cartage	52
Estimated population so served ... ..	170
Mains extension during 1950 :—	
3 in. main: Western Road ... ..	100 yards.
Highfields Road ... ..	150 yards.
Cuppers Close ... ..	167 yards.
Blunts Hall Road ... ..	233 yards.
$\frac{3}{4}$ in. main: Western Lane ... ..	167 yards.

#### WATER CONSUMPTION AND FUTURE REQUIREMENTS

Total water supplied by :—

1. Braintree Road Waterworks ... ..	20,970,000 galls.
2. Bradwell Springs :	
(a) To Silver End (estimated) ... ..	36,500,000 galls.
(b) To remainder of Urban District ... ..	36,960,000 galls.
3. South Essex Water Company ... ..	46,766,590 galls.
Total Consumption ... ..	141,196,590 galls.

Average consumption per head per day :—

Domestic demand ... ..	28.02 gallons.
Trade demand ... ..	18.05 gallons.
Average total consumption per head per day	45.74 gallons.

The average consumption per head per day in the district continues to increase. This gradual increase is to be expected with the continuous development of modern housing estates, and there are signs that average domestic consumption for the district has not yet reached its peak. In addition, the trade consumption is high in relation to the size of the area.

Owing to loss of pressure in some areas, due to high peak demands, the Council is undertaking a scheme of trunk mains extension, which will also assist in the provision of supplies to proposed development areas at a later date.

The Council's provisional reservation of water from the South Essex Water Company ensures that ample supplies are available for the present and expected needs of the district. This reservation is to be reviewed in 1951 in the light of information then expected to be available relating to the future development of the town.

### SAMPLING

The following Table shows the number of samples submitted for examination.

		Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Total
<b>1. Mains Water :</b>				
Chemical	... ..	10	—	10
Bacteriological	... ..	40	—	40
<b>2. Other Supplies :</b>				
Chemical	... ..	1	—	1
Bacteriological	... ..	1	—	1
		52	—	52
		52	—	52

## DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

The following Table shows the drainage facilities in use in the district at 31st December, 1950 :—

Houses with—	Drainage to—						Totals
	Sewer	Septic Tanks	Cesspools	Ditches via Cesspools	Direct to Ditches	No Drainage	
W.C.s, Sinks & Drains	2361	5	29	9	—	—	2404
W.C.s, Gulley Drains, No Sinks	7	—	—	—	—	—	7
Pail Closets, Sinks and Drains	—	—	57	30	36	—	123
Pail Closets & Sinks	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Pail Closets and Gulley Drains only	—	—	—	—	8	—	8
Privies and Gulley Drains only*	—	—	—	—	6	—	6
Pail Closets, no Sinks or Drains	—	—	—	—	—	13	13
Privies, no Sinks or Drains*	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Total	2368	5	86	39	50	17	2565

\*Property already condemned under the Housing Act, 1936.

Of the 197 properties not at present connected to the sewer, 9 are capable of immediate connection, and the proposed sewerage scheme for Rivenhall will provide for the connection of 80 dwellinghouses. Prospective future development along the lines at present suggested should allow for the serving of another 20-30 existing houses. There will then remain 80-90 agricultural and isolated properties for which no economic sewerage scheme appears to be possible.

The existing sewer systems at Witham and Silver End are both liable to surcharging at times of heavy rainfall. At Witham, where a combined system of soil and surface water drainage predominates, building development has so taken up the available sewer capacity, that the marginal capacity available for storm water is inadequate. In addition, certain lengths are known to be in poor structural condition, lacking correct falls, and silted to a considerable extent. At Silver End, where a totally separate system was designed, storm water nevertheless gains access to the sewers, not only causing serious surcharge and flooding, but increasing the flow to proportions far beyond the capacity of the sewage works.

The Council has been considering a recommendation that a complete survey of all sewers should be undertaken, in order that a true assessment of the district's needs could be made.

The following extensions to the main sewers were carried out during 1950 :—

**Western Road/Western Lane :**

778 yards of 6 in. sewer.

243 yards of 4 in. sewer.

**Highfields Road/Spinks Lane :**

487 yards of 6 in. sewer.

## SEWAGE DISPOSAL

There are three major sewage disposal plants in the Urban District, two owned by the Council and one administered by the Ministry of Works for the National Assistance Board. The Urban District Sewage Works serve the communities of Witham and Silver End, and the third plant treats sewage from the Board's Hostel for Displaced Persons at Rivenhall Aerodrome Camp. The Council proposes to install a third disposal plant to deal with flows from the proposed Rivenhall Sewerage Scheme.

### WITHAM SEWAGE WORKS

Details of the layout and capacity of this plant have been given in previous reports. No major alteration or improvement has been made and the flow to the works continues to increase with the development of the town. The plant remains, therefore, inadequate for present needs and overloaded by more than 40%. Once again the majority of effluent samples failed to achieve the required standards of the Essex County Council and the Southend Waterworks Company. The present size, design and condition of the works do not allow of proper purification of sewage at the present rate of flow. Apart from general lack of capacity, the major defects are lack of provision for storm water ; disintegrated and badly graded filter medium ; and inadequate undrained sludge lagoons. Needed repairs to tanks, carriers and sprinklers cannot be carried out because the rate of flow precludes any opportunity of resting the plant, or any part of it, while repair work is progressing. However a slight improvement in effluent purification was achieved, comparing the reports with those for 1949, due probably to the lessening effect of trade wastes with which the works had previously been saturated.

The inadequate and defective condition of the plant has been a source of some concern to the Council for a considerable time, and early in 1949, Consulting Engineers were instructed to prepare improvement proposals. This scheme, the preliminary layout of which has received the Council's approval, provides for immediate enlargement of the works to cope with a 25% increase on present population and for a two or three-stage future expansion, should the development of the district require it. It is hoped to commence to put this scheme into operation as soon as the Rivenhall sewerage undertaking is in progress.

Little difficulty was experienced with trade constituents in the sewage during the year. The plant installed by the Crittall Manufacturing Co., Ltd., in June, 1949, continued to operate satisfactorily, with a notable improvement in the quality of the sewage.

#### **Farmland :**

The third complete cropping season since the Council decided to cultivate its land at the Witham Sewage Works proved only partially successful from a farming point of view.

Failure of 6 acres of winter wheat necessitated re-cultivation in the spring of 1950, and the loss incurred thereby almost accounted for the profit obtained from crops harvested. One portion of the land, about 10 acres, produced only a fair crop, though the re-sown area and the remainder of the land did well. Profit on the season amounted to £3, and average profit for the three seasons worked is now £109.

Cost and difficulty involved in hiring labour and equipment were considered by the Council's Public Health Committee in connection with a proposal to purchase certain basic equipment for farm use. No decision had been reached by the end of the year.

#### **SILVER END SEWAGE WORKS**

This plant, described in detail in previous reports, serves the community of Silver End, a population of about 2,000. The plant is well designed, except for the siting of the secondary filters, which were added after completion of the original design, and are situated below the humus tanks, thus allowing no facility for removal of secondary humus. In addition, the smaller capacity of the secondary system, involving higher rates of flow, becomes overloaded more easily than the primary section. This was accentuated during the year, by the addition of certain trade discharges to the normal sewage flow. These, amounting to some 25,000 gallons per day, though innocuous to the plant, have increased its dry weather flow to the maximum permissible for the size of the works, with the result that at peak periods or during wet weather, much effluent is discharged from the storm overflow without undergoing secondary filtration. These conditions, coupled with the need to renew the medium of the secondary filters, led the Council to ask their Consulting Engineers to prepare a scheme of extension and improvement, to cope with present flows and expected development during the next few years. A further complication is the very large amount of surface water which is received at the works during wet weather, in spite of the so-called "separate" system of soil and surface water sewers serving the locality. This amounts to much more than the pumping plant can cope with, resulting in the discharge directly to the outfall stream of large quantities of dilute fresh sewage. This also is being considered by the Consulting Engineers and must contribute appreciably to the cost of any scheme of improvement.

The average dry weather flow to the works is estimated to be over 100,000 gallons daily, which indicates a somewhat higher domestic water

consumption than in other parts of the Urban District. This rate of flow involves a theoretical settlement period of 12-13 hours retention, with dosage to the primary filters of 105 gallons and to the secondary filters of 320 gallons per cubic yard per day. The resulting standard of purification is very satisfactory.

Minor improvements carried out during the year include the under-drainage of one of the new sludge lagoons, in continuation of a scheme of sludge disposal improvement out of current revenue.

It has not yet been possible for the Council to house the attendant near the works to facilitate supervision and control, but arrangements have been made for the purchase of a plot of land for this purpose.

#### **RIVENHALL CAMP SEWAGE WORKS**

This plant, constructed during the war to serve the Aerodrome, now treats the sewage from some hundreds of displaced persons occupying the camp under the control of the National Assistance Board.

The plant is not working to capacity and has maintained an efficient standard of treatment.

#### **SAMPLING OF SEWAGE, EFFLUENTS, ETC.**

Sixty-one samples of effluent were submitted for analysis, and the results were as follows :—

	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Total
Witham Sewage Works ...	20	29	49
Silver End Sewage Works ...	6	1	7
Rivenhall Camp Sewage Works	5	—	5
Totals ...	31	30	61

In addition, 5 samples were submitted for special short analysis to check the trade waste contents of sewage and effluent.

### **RIVERS AND STREAMS**

The rivers Blackwater and Brain, with tributary streams, pass through the Urban District and contribute appreciably to its natural beauty. The Council is anxious that these water courses shall not become fouled, and my Department maintains constant supervision to discover and remedy any pollution which may occur. This work is done in close co-operation with the Southend Waterworks Company which draws river water for its supply, and is therefore equally anxious to prevent pollution.

Of the two rivers, the Brain is the lesser, and receives larger quantities of sewage effluent and road surface water on its course. It is also the more liable to trade waste pollution. Its purity is therefore of a lower standard than that of the Blackwater, but is nevertheless sufficient for it to support a certain amount of fish life in the length within the Urban District. It is necessary, however, to ensure that no further general deterioration can occur.



## **SAMPLING**

The following pollutions were discovered and remedied during the year. In no case was formal action necessary.

<b>River affected</b>	<b>Polluting substance</b>
River Brain.	Ferrous iron sulphate and zinc.
River Blackwater.	Organic wastes from fruit processing plant.

Complaints were received of the fouling and silting of a stream in the rear of some 30 properties in separate ownership. Owing to the difficulty of apportioning the responsibility for maintaining the stream in a clean condition, it was suggested that the work should be the joint responsibility of the County Council and the Urban District Council. The Council have accepted their share of this responsibility, and the matter was being considered by the County Council at the end of the year.

In the above cases, action was taken to stop further pollution, and the managements of the industries concerned co-operated with the Council in taking preventive measures against recurrence.

In one other case, involving pollution of the river Brain by oil from a neighbouring district, the matter was taken up by the local authority concerned, with satisfactory results.

## **PUBLIC CLEANSING**

Of the Public Cleansing services, that of Street Scavenging, including sweeping, road gritting and snow clearing is carried out by the Essex County Council and the Urban Council Highways Departments. Again during the year, the Council were dissatisfied with the state of cleanliness of the County Roads in the area, and negotiations were continued for improvement in this respect.

The remaining services, refuse collection and disposal, and salvage recovery, are administered by the Council's Public Health Department. Details are given on page 24. In addition, the delivery in June, 1950, of a new vehicle with inter-changeable bodies, enabled this Department to undertake routine work of cesspool emptying, gully cleansing, and sewer flushing, as well as to effect necessary improvements in the refuse collection schedule.

## **REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL**

### **Collection :**

The routine collection of house refuse for the whole of the Urban District has been reorganised and improved during the year, providing a weekly collection from all parts of the area. Previously, some 250 houses in the rural parts of the district had been served by fortnightly collections.

There are now two vehicles operating this service : the 8 cubic yard S.D. freighter, which has now completed its fourth year of continuous

service without major breakdown or repair; and the new 11 cubic yard S.D. "W" type vehicle, which is used for 1½ days per week on collection.

### Disposal :

In the Spring of 1950, the small tip site in use on the north side of the railway viaduct was completed, and as for various reasons it was impracticable to continue the Council's original scheme for tipping in this area, disposal was commenced on marshland in the Council's possession on the banks of the river Blackwater. This area, which had been used for many years as a dump for indiscriminate tipping of all kinds, is now taking shape as a properly controlled tip, and will reclaim for agricultural or recreational use, land of little or no present value. In addition, it is expected that the site will provide tipping space for some 10 years.

### SALVAGE

Collection of salvage is effected in conjunction with house refuse collection. The improved collection schedules allowed by the use of the additional vehicle also brought about an increase in salvage collection, and this, with higher prices ruling at the end of the year, enabled the Department to show an annual income of more than £1,000 for the first time. Details are as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Waste Paper ...	807	4	3
Bones ...	33	4	2
Rags ...	58	12	5
Sacking ...	42	18	0
Scrap Iron ...	12	7	6
Metal ...	26	4	3
Bottles and Jars ...	36	15	0
Miscellaneous ...	4	3	4
	<hr/>		
Total	1021	8	11
Sale of Saivage Hut	100	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£1121	8	11
	<hr/>		

This total represents an increase of £297 8s. 7d. over receipts during 1949/50. Costs of collection and disposal of salvage amounted to £877 9s. 3d., an increase of £173 10s. 6d. on the previous year, leaving a profit of £243 19s. 8d. The sale of the salvage hut for £100 has been included in the above figures as the previous and current year's expenditure has been debited with the purchase and erection of the new salvage hut. It is anticipated that salvage collection will continue to be a profitable undertaking, as well as a very effective means of lessening refuse disposal work and reducing the proportion of combustible material in the tip itself.

## COSTS

Total net cost of refuse collection and disposal, and salvage, (detailed in the Table below) rose during the year by £586.

### REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL, AND SALVAGE

Table showing Costs per year ending 31st March, 1951 :—

	Total collection & disposal costs with depreciation or loan charges included or excluded					
	Included			Excluded		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
A. Gross Expenditure ... ..	3993	4	9	3775	2	4
B. Gross Income ... ..	1168	17	3	1168	17	3
C. Net Cost ... ..	2824	7	6	2606	5	1
<i>Unit Costs—</i>						
D. Net Cost per ton ... ..	1	9	7	1	7	4
E. Net Cost per 1,000 population ...	333	19	4½	308	3	6½
F. Net Cost per 1,000 houses or premises from which refuse is collected ... ..	1101	2	5	1016	1	8
<i>Rate Poundage—</i>						
G. Net Cost, equivalent rate in £	16.138d.			14.89d.		
H. Percent. of G. to total rate in £	6.22			5.74		

1. Total refuse collected in tons (estimated) ... ..	1906
2. Population ... ..	8457
3. Area (statute acres) ... ..	7329
4. Weight in cwts. (per 1,000 population) per day (365 days to year) ... ..	12
5. Number of houses and premises ... ..	2565
6. Rateable value ... ..	£45407
7. Produce of a penny rate ... ..	£175
8. Total rates in £1 ... ..	21s. 0d.
9. Method of collection—mechanical vehicles ... ..	2
10. Method of tipping. Controlled tipping, i.e., on lines of Ministry's precautions ... ..	100%
11. Average length of journey ... ..	7 miles
12. Percentage of refuse collected ... ..	100

## SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

A total of 4,071 visits and inspections were made during the year as follows :—

Housing Acts ... ..	155
Public Health Acts ... ..	273
Verminous Premises :	
Visits ... ..	21
Disinfestations ... ..	13
Complaints (other than dwelling houses) ... ..	55
Slaughterhouse ... ..	840
Butchers' Shops ... ..	3
Fish Shops ... ..	8
Bakehouses ... ..	22
Restaurants ... ..	3
Ice Cream Vendors ... ..	51
Food Preparation Premises ... ..	45
Dairies ... ..	9
Cowsheds ... ..	1
Milkshops ... ..	2
Sampling :	
Ice Cream ... ..	72
Milk ... ..	3
Water ... ..	47
Sewage Effluent ... ..	36
Shops ... ..	11
Factories ... ..	26
Infectious Disease Prevention :	
Visits ... ..	76
Disinfections ... ..	14
Water Supplies ... ..	16
Streams and Watercourses ... ..	60
Drains and Sewers :	
Inspected ... ..	253
Tested ... ..	45
Cesspools, Septic Tanks and Pail Closets ... ..	56
Refuse Tips ... ..	159
Sewage Works ... ..	173
Salvage ... ..	144
Rodent Control ... ..	1212
Tents, Vans and Sheds ... ..	52
Offensive Accumulations ... ..	4
Public Conveniences ... ..	3
Schools ... ..	6
Places of Amusement ... ..	8
Miscellaneous ... ..	63
Council House Applicants ... ..	31

In addition, a total of 1,155 interviews were given to owners, builders, tenants and other interested parties.

#### Nuisances, etc., on Books, with number of Notices Served

No. of Notices outstanding, 31st December, 1949	...	20
No. of Intimation Notices served during the year	...	99
No. of Statutory Notices served during the year	...	8
No. of Notices complied with during the year	...	109
No. of Notices on Books, 31st December, 1950	...	18

The following list classifies the nuisances and defects dealt with :—

Dampness: Rising and penetrative	...	5
Defective Brickwork, pointing, rendering, etc.	...	5
Defective roofs, parapets, gutters, R.W.P.s, etc.	...	15
Defective walls and ceilings	...	9
Defective doors, floors, windows, etc.	...	7
Defective wash copper	...	1
Defective cooking ranges, register stoves	...	2
Defective back boiler	...	1
Defective W.C. accommodation	...	2
Defective W.C. Flushing pipe and cistern	...	3
Defective and choked drainage systems	...	9
Defective I.C. Covers	...	4
Defective Vent Pipe	...	1
Overflowing Cesspools	...	2
Offensive ditches and hedge	...	3
Offensive accumulations	...	2
Filthy condition of rooms	...	1
Filthy condition of Bedding	...	1
Inadequate water supply	...	1
Vermin Infestation :		
Rodents	...	2
Bed Bugs	...	5
Ants	...	10
Woodworm	...	4
Flies	...	5
Beetles	...	1
Maggots	...	2
Absence of/Defective condition of dustbin	...	58

#### FACTORIES ACT, 1937

During the year, 26 visits were paid to factories and workshops throughout the district, which figure does not include visits to Food Preparation Premises also classified as factories, as these are dealt with under another heading. Conditions generally were found to be satisfactory. New sanitary accommodation has been erected to my Department's requirements at one factory during the year. At the end of 1950, the number of outworkers on the register was 245, comprising :—

	Witham U.D.C.	Other local authorities
Glove Manufacturers ...	43	198
Seed Merchants ...	4	—

Notification of outworkers employed in other districts was made to the 26 local authorities concerned.

Details of the inspections made during the year to premises in the Urban District under the Factories Act, 1937, are given in the Table below :—

### Factories Act, 1937

1. INSPECTION for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	8	3	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	36	23	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers premises)	3	—	—	—
Total	47	26	—	—

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 (S.1)	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperatures (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences (not including offences relating to outworkers)	—	—	—	—	—
Total	—	—	—	—	—

## SHOPS ACTS

Eleven visits were paid to shops, apart from those dealt with under other headings. No action was taken under the Shops Acts, 1912-1938. The major part of the Shops Act administration is enforced by the Essex County Council.

## MOVABLE DWELLINGS

On several occasions during the year, caravans were stationed on sites within the district. As distinct from previous years, when mainly gypsy-type vans were involved, some of the van dwellers are people lacking housing accommodation, temporarily occupying mobile dwellings while unable to find houses. Residence in a caravan within the district cannot be allowed, of course, automatically to qualify for priority allocation of a Council House, and these people therefore present a long-term problem. In some cases, water supply and waste disposal facilities are absent or primitive in the extreme, and the sites available are not always satisfactory. It is hoped that the Council will consider the provision of a properly equipped caravan site, with plots to let at an economic rent.

The number of movable dwellings dealt with, led the Council to ask the Ministry of Health to make an Order bringing into force the licensing requirements of the Public Health Act, 1936, in place of the less easily administered legislation under the Essex County Council Act, 1933. Accordingly, the Witham Urban District (Movable Dwellings and Camping Grounds) Order, 1950, was made, and at the end of the year there were five vans licensed on five sites. In one case, where licence was refused for sanitary reasons, and notices for the abatement of statutory nuisances had been disregarded, prosecution was considered but postponed owing to the serious illness of the occupier's wife.

In all cases, before licences are issued, the Council has to be satisfied with facilities for water supply, hard standing, refuse disposal and sanitary accommodation. The number of defects of this nature dealt with was as under :—

Defective or inadequate sanitary accommodation	1
Inadequate or inaccessible water supply ... ..	2
Lack of dustbin ... ..	3
Lack of waste water disposal ... ..	2
Lack of satisfactory hard standing ... ..	2

## INSECT PESTS

Pest infestation, other than by rodents, was not encountered to any serious extent during the year. The following cases were dealt with :—

Bed Bugs ... ..	5	Ants ... ..	10
Woodworm ... ..	4	Beetles ... ..	1
Flies ... ..	5	Insect Larvae ... ..	2

In addition, the Council's refuse tips are periodically treated to destroy crickets and other insects. Insecticides used are D.D.T. (5%) and gammexane, both in liquid and powder form, and cyanide preparations. The latter are only used in cases where the safety of human beings and domestic animals can be ensured. Also for minor household infestations,

chiefly by flies of various kinds, a pyrethrum compound giving quick "knock-down" effect is used.

### RODENT CONTROL

The Council conducts its own Rodent Control service, employing a specially trained operative for the purpose. Systematic inspection and treatment routine over a number of years has succeeded in limiting the rodent population of the district to a minimum. The work has been carried out in co-operation with the pest control department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. Details of the year's work are as follows :—

Inspections made	...	...	1076
Treatment visits	...	...	254
Infestations found :			
	Minor	...	44
	Major	...	3
Bodies recovered :	Rats	...	221
Estimated kill :	Rats	...	469

The whole of the District sewer system was treated with satisfactory results. The following details of the treatments show that the sewer infestation was slight :—

		Witham	Silver End
Manholes Test Baited	...	25	36
Manholes showing takes	...	2	6
Manholes Poison Baited	...	6	10

On 1.4.1950, the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, came into force, replacing the Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act, 1919, and placing upon the local, as distinct from the County authority, the duty of ensuring the freedom of each district from rodent pests. As the Witham Urban District Council had for many years undertaken the service by delegation from the County Council, little reorganisation was required, apart from extension of the recording and accounting system to qualify for Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries grant-aid now available.

One very great improvement in the service is empowered under the new Act: that of providing free service to domestic occupiers where infestation does not arise as a result of neglect or default. The Council had long sought power to provide this service, but were advised that under the old law it was not permissible. It is now in operation and is of great assistance in ensuring that my Department is informed of infestations at a very early stage, when they are, of course, much easier to deal with.

## INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

### MEAT INSPECTION

6986 animals were killed at the Ministry of Food Slaughterhouse during the year, an increase of 594 on 1949. This increase comprised cattle (494), pigs (122) and calves (256), offset by a decrease of 377 sheep killed. As sheep normally require very much less detailed inspection than



other food animals, the differences involved considerably more inspection work. The present figures compare with those of the pre-war year 1938, as follows:—

	1938	1950	Increase	Decrease
Cattle, excluding cows ...	710	1547	118%	—
Cows ... ..	12	566	4617%	—
Calves ... ..	135	1005	644%	—
Sheep and Lambs ...	2438	3198	31%	—
Pigs ... ..	2266	668	—	70.5%

It must be remembered, of course, that the 1938 figures apply only to animals killed in the Witham Urban District, whereas those for 1950 represent home killed meat supplied to Witham and four adjoining local authority districts. As however, much killing for the wholesale market was done in Witham during pre-war years, the figures do not give an accurate indication of comparative consumption, and are useful only as a guide to comparison of inspection work, and to trends in livestock production for meat purposes.

All inspection is carried out on the lines of Memo 62 Foods issued by the Ministry of Health, with the exception that ante-mortem inspection is not always possible. The high proportion of casualty animals and cows now killed accounts largely for the post-war increase in condemnation.

The following Table sets out the particulars of the animals slaughtered and of inspections and condemnations:—

	Cattle excl. Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep & Lambs	Pigs	Goats	TOTAL
Number killed	1547	566	1005	3198	668	2	6,986
Number inspected	1547	566	1005	3198	668	2	6,986
<b>All Diseases except Tuberculosis</b>							
Whole carcasses condemned	6	14	30	16	15	—	81
Weight in lbs. condemned	3316	7331	1316	714	1820	—	14,497
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	710	219	50	231	286	—	1,496
Weight in lbs. condemned	19041	7035	558	926	1060	—	28,620
Percentage affected	46.25	41.16	7.96	7.72	45.06	—	22.57
<b>Tuberculosis only</b>							
Whole carcasses condemned	10	18	3	—	3	—	35
Weight in lbs. condemned	5483	10710	129	—	731	—	17,053
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	162	200	2	—	62	—	425
Weight in lbs. condemned	9209	12428	46	—	1306	—	22,989
Percentage affected	11.11	42.51	0.49	—	9.73	—	6.61

In addition, 29 cases (1.37%) of *Cysticercus Bovis* were detected and in these cases the Ministry of Food's recommended procedure was adopted i.e., condemnation of parts known to be affected and refrigeration of the remainder for at least three weeks before issue. It is a notable feature of this disease that it occurs most frequently in young well-fattened cattle, and is rarely encountered in old animals.

## MILK AND DAIRIES

The transfer of control of milk production to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, and of pasteurising establishments to the County Council (as Food and Drugs Authority), in 1949, left little work to be done by the local sanitary authority, which is now responsible only for the supervision of distribution and the registration and licensing of dairies, distributors and dealers. The following local registrations and licences are in force under the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949 :—

	Tuberculin Tested	Pasteurised
Dairies ... ..	—	3
Dealers ... ..	2	3
Supplementary Dealers ... ..	2	1

### Bacteriological Examination of Samples

As only two main distributors are concerned, very little sampling has been carried out. Three samples, one each of Tuberculin Tested, Pasteurised and Tuberculin Tested Pasteurised, were found to be satisfactory.

However, now that it has been possible to digest the spate of recent milk legislation, it appears that the local District Council is entitled to sample at the commencement of distribution, i.e. at the farms, and as it appears that little or no sampling is being done at these points, it is proposed to recommence this necessary practice.

A further duty of the Urban Council is to ensure that milk is free from transmissible disease, including Tuberculosis, and it is proposed to arrange for the submission of samples from the place of production for biological examination.

## ICE CREAM

The registration of manufacturers and vendors, and their premises, is effected by the Urban Council under the Essex County Council Act, 1933, and supervision is exercised to ensure compliance with the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations, 1947. Although 4 persons are registered as manufacturers within the Urban District, no ice cream is at present made in the area. The numbers of registrations at 31st December, 1950, were as follows :—

Manufacturers/Vendors ...	4
Vendors only ... ..	21
Registered premises ... ..	25

In addition, many vendors registered in other areas operate within the Urban District.

Every make of ice-cream is sampled periodically to ascertain its standard of bacterial purity. 72 such samples were taken during the year, and the results are given below :—

Bacteriologist's description	Ministry of Health's Provisional Grading				
	I.	II.	III.	IV.	Totals
Satisfactory . . . . .	41	4	—	—	45
Passable . . . . .	—	4	1	—	5
Unsatisfactory . . . . .	—	9	4	9	22
<b>TOTALS</b> . . . . .	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>72</b>

Of the above, two samples were of fruit-ice. Both of these were satisfactory. Of those classified as unsatisfactory, 6 contained organisms of faecal origin and may be regarded as the worst. 10 of the unsatisfactory samples were from the same source. In this case, after careful investigation by the Inspectors of both the local authorities concerned, the firm decided to cease manufacture until it was possible to completely re-organise and re-equip their plant. Sample reports are sent, for information and/or action, to manufacturers and vendors and local authorities of the district of origin. By co-operation with these authorities, and further sampling at stages of production and distribution, it has usually been possible to detect and remedy the faults responsible for unsatisfactory reports.

#### **HYGIENE OF FOOD PREPARATION PREMISES**

The number of premises where food is prepared, stored or retailed is 94, as follows :—

Restaurants . . . . .	10
Factory and school canteens . . . . .	8
Manufacturing butchers . . . . .	6
Bakehouses . . . . .	6
Fried fish shops . . . . .	2
Retail butchers' shops . . . . .	7
Other retail food shops . . . . .	34
Retail wet fish shops . . . . .	3
Licensed premises . . . . .	18

All are subject to inspection and generally found to satisfy the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. 132 visits of inspection were made during the year. In two cases it was necessary to issue warnings concerning lack of cleanliness and other unsatisfactory conditions. Subsequent improvements rendered it unnecessary to consider formal action in these cases. The Table below shows defects required to be remedied during the year :—

Structural defects . . . . .	31
Insanitary sink . . . . .	1
Untrapped waste pipe . . . . .	1
Inadequate supply of constant hot water . . . . .	3

Defective/Inadequate sanitary accommodation	2
Defective/Inadequate washing facilities ...	3
Defective/Inadequate food storage facilities ...	2
Defective/Inadequate refuse storage facilities	3
Defective yard paving ... ..	2
Defective ventilation ... ..	2
Lack of cleanliness ... ..	2

The erection of a new bakehouse, to replace an old inadequate one, was completed, and another old and unsatisfactory bakehouse is in course of rebuilding to modern standards. Considerable improvement and re-organisation of a roadside café was effected, with the co-operation of the new management.

Interest in food hygiene among food handlers has been maintained and every effort has been made to foster it. A Food Hygiene Exhibition and Film Show organised by the Council in the early part of the year was successful and well attended by both the general public and personnel of the food handling establishments.

In common with other local authorities, the Council have recently adopted Byelaws governing the Handling, Wrapping, Delivery and Sale of Food.

#### CONDEMNATION OF FOOD (other than MEAT)

As a result of inspections carried out at food shops and food preparing premises in the District, and following surrender by local retailers, the items listed below were condemned as unfit for human consumption :—

	cwts.	sts.	lbs.
Fish, fresh ... ..	5	—	
Fish, tinned ... ..	1	7	
Vegetables, tinned ... ..	1	—	12
Jam or Marmalade, tinned ...	1	7	
Fruit, tinned ... ..	5	7	
Milk, tinned ... ..	6	7	
Soup, tinned ... ..	1	—	
Meat, tinned ... ..	2	3	
Pudding, tinned ... ..			2
Flour ... ..			13
Semolina ... ..			2
Cereals ... ..			5
Sweets ... ..			3
Sauce ... ..			4
Sugar ... ..	1	11	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	4	3	13
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

## FOOD AND DRUGS (ADULTERATION)

The Chief Inspector of Weights and Measures, Essex County Council, has kindly supplied the following details of food sampled in the Urban District during 1950, for the detection of adulteration :—

Commodity	No. of Samples	Genuine
Arrowroot ... ..	1	1
Butter ... ..	5	5*
Beef sausages ... ..	2	2
Cooking fat ... ..	2	2
Chicken paste ... ..	1	1
Cocoa ... ..	1	1
Curry powder ... ..	1	1
Custard powder ... ..	1	1
Dessert powder ... ..	1	1
Desiccated coconut ... ..	1	1
Fish paste ... ..	1	1
Ground almonds ... ..	2	2
Golden raising powder ... ..	1	1
Gravy powder ... ..	1	1
Ginger ... ..	1	1
Ice-cream ... ..	4	4
Milk—ordinary ... ..	6	6
taken at Schools ... ..	6	6
taken at Institutes ... ..	4	4
Pepper ... ..	1	1
Suet ... ..	1	1
Tarragon vinegar ... ..	1	1
Vinegar ... ..	6	6
	—	—
Total ... ..	51	51
	—	—

\*One sample of butter containing a black stain was submitted for analysis at the request of a local grocer. It was certified as being contaminated by a black mould growth. The Analyst reported however, that the fat was neutral and free from rancidity and the taste was unobjectionable.

## STAFF

Several changes occurred amongst the manual staff during the year. Details of the Department's Staff at 31st December, 1950, were as follows :

### Office :

Chief Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector.  
Additional Sanitary Inspector.  
Clerical Assistant.

### Cleansing :

1 Foreman-driver.  
1 Tip-chargehand.  
1 Driver/Loader.  
3 Refuse Loaders.  
1 Refuse Loader/Gully Emptyer Attendant.  
2 Tiphands.

### Sewage Disposal :

2 Works Foremen.  
3 Labourers.

### Other :

1 Disinfector/Rodent Operative (part-time).

The average age of the permanent outside staff is approximately 41 years.







