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WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.


REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year
1955

together with the



REPORT
of the
CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR.



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WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman:

D.J. Maidment, Esq., J.P.

Members:

R.S. Brown, Esq.

G. Clarke, Esq.

G.A. Malyon, Esq. (ex officio)

A.E. Moss, Esq.

T.R. Mott, Esq., J.P., C.C. (ex officio)

Mrs. J.N. Pelly.

S.J. Soar, Esq.

R.A. Tweed, Esq.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Medical Officer of Health:

J.S. RANSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Acting)(retired May, 1955).

G.R.C. RAINSFORD, M.D., D.P.H., D.T.M. (appointed May, 1955).

Chief Sanitary Inspector and Inspector of Meat and Other Foods:

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

Additional Sanitary Inspector:

H.R.D. SCOTT, M.S.I.A. (resigned April, 1955).

H. BATTESON, A.R.S.H., (Appointed July, 1955).

Clerical Assistants:

R.G. CHAPMAN (Senior).

M.G. BLIZZARD (Junior) (Appointed August, 1955).

Public Health Offices,
Town Hall,
Braintree.

August, 1956.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you my Annual Report on the health, vital statistics and sanitary circumstances of the district for 1955. Included is the report of your Chief Sanitary Inspector and information about the Child Welfare and other services run by the Essex County Council.

1955 was a healthy year with a very low incidence of infectious disease.

The major problems of Housing, Water Supplies and Sewage Disposal are all discussed at some length in the body of this report and it only remains for me, in this introductory letter, to underline some of the salient features.

On Housing, you will note that fewer houses were built than in previous years and that there are still 150 names on the Council's waiting list. This is a reduction of 62 on 1954.

On Sewage, there is good progress to report on the new Witham Sewage Works but it seems that extensions will be necessary, if and when the greater Witham scheme gets going. Plans have been laid accordingly.

On Water Supplies, it is satisfactory to note that the quality was excellent and the quantity adequate.

We are still having difficulties with meat inspection. Only 42.6% of the meat killed at Witham was examined by a qualified Meat Inspector before release. This is a slight improvement on the last quarter of 1954, but is far from satisfactory. We must aim at a 100% inspection. The difficulties are discussed in this and last year's report.

Atmospheric Pollution is a new old national problem. New, because we, as a great industrial people are only just beginning to realise the amount of damage done to health, agriculture and buildings by smog. Old, because it is recorded that in 1273 efforts were made to prohibit the burning of coal in London as the fumes were prejudicial to health.

Public Health Department
Council Offices,
Widnes.

It is gratifying that your Council have agreed to participate in the Essex County scheme to put up instruments to record the extent of the atmospheric pollution in this district. It is hoped that a start will be made in 1956.

It has not been necessary to take any action under the provisions of the National Assistance Act during the year.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their courtesy and help since I assumed office in May. My thanks also go to the Officers of the Council and especially to your Chief Sanitary Inspector, whose detailed knowledge of the district I have found so valuable.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

C.R.C. RAINSFORD.

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,
Council Offices,
Witham.

August, 1956.

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

Mr. Chairman, Ladies 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.

The year 1955 was comparatively uneventful, no major alteration taking place in any of the public services. Emphasis on good housing conditions and food hygiene was renewed following new legislation and preliminary surveys were made to re-assess local requirements in these respects. In housing, the amount of slum clearance required was found to be small, as was expected, though there is much scope in the area for reconditioning and improvement of older property. In food administration, meat inspection proved again to be the most difficult problem. In spite of all efforts, full inspection could not be achieved with the available staff. Routine inspection and control of special premises was, however, maintained.

There was no important change in the sewage disposal and public cleansing services during the year. The long delayed extension of the Witham Sewage Works was commenced and good progress made towards its expected completion in 1956, while the new Rivenhall sewer and disposal scheme satisfactorily completed its first full year of operation. Salvage recovery continued to be worthwhile and profitable and the Council gave preliminary consideration to a scheme of refuse/sewage compost in view of the impending need to find additional refuse tipping space. Suitable and adequate labour for the disposal services again proved difficult to obtain.

A prospect of major importance to the district, that of rapid development by absorption of overspill population from East London, was considered by the Council and at the end of the year, draft schemes for this development, together with plans for the necessary extension of the local health and sanitary services were being prepared for consideration by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government.

Mr. H.R.D. Scott, Additional Sanitary Inspector in the Department since March, 1949, left in April to take up another appointment. I would like to acknowledge the good work performed by this conscientious and capable officer during those years. He was replaced in July by Mr. H. Batteson.

I would like to thank the Members of the Council for their support and encouragement and the Clerk of the Council and other Officers for their courteous cooperation. My special thanks are also due to my Assistants and the manual Staff of the Department, without whose loyal support and hard work during the year, I could not have presented so satisfactory a report.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

E.H.C. WADHAMS.
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

1. STATISTICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	7,329.
Population (Registrar-General's estimate)	8,790.
Number of inhabited houses	2,756.
Rateable Value	£53,273.
Sum represented by a penny rate	£203.16s.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	
Legitimate	119.	57.	62.	
Illegitimate	3.	2.	1.	
Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population				13.88
Birth rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.09				15.13
Birth rate for England and Wales per 1,000 population				15.0

STILL BIRTHS:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	
Legitimate	4.	2.	2.	
Illegitimate	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	
Rate per 1,000 total births				31.75
Rate per 1,000 total births England and Wales				23.1

MATERNAL MORTALITY:

Pregnancy, Childbirth and Abortion	Nil.
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INFANTILE MORTALITY:

Deaths of infants under 1 year:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
Legitimate	2.	-.	2.
Illegitimate	-.	-.	-.

Mortality rate of legitimate infants per 1,000	
legitimate live births	16.81
Total infantile mortality rate per 1,000 live births	16.39
Infantile mortality for England and Wales per 1,000 live births	24.9

DEATHS:

<u>TOTAL.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
87.	44.	43.

Death rate per 1,000 estimated population	9.90
Death rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.01	10.00
Death rate per 1,000 population England and Wales	11.7

All the above rates are calculated on the estimated population given by the Registrar-General.

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES, 1955.

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 and Causes of Death, 1948.

Cause of Death.	Male.	Female.
1. Tuberculosis, respiratory	3	-
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	-	3
0. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	2	1
1. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	2	-
2. Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	2
3. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	-
4. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	1	8
5. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-	-
6. Diabetes	-	-
7. Vascular lesions of nervous system	6	7
8. Coronary disease, angina	4	1
9. Hypertension with heart disease	4	-
0. Other heart disease	7	5
1. Other circulatory disease	3	-
2. Influenza	-	-
3. Pneumonia	2	1
4. Bronchitis	3	1
5. Other diseases of respiratory system	-	1
6. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	1
7. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	-	-
8. Nephritis and nephrosis	-	1
9. Hyperplasia	1	-
0. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	-	-
1. Congenital malformations	1	-
2. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	2	9
3. Motor vehicle accidents	1	1
4. All other accidents	-	1
5. Suicide	1	-
6. Homicide and operations of war	-	-
All Causes	44	43

NOTES ON VITAL STATISTICS.

The estimated 1955 population is 8,790, an increase of 80 on 1954. Two babies died within the first year, one from congenital heart disease and one from uraemia.

Total deaths numbered 87, giving a corrected death rate of 10 per 1,000, which is lower than that for England and Wales - 11.7

Analysis of the Table showing causes of death reveals that the largest groups are cardio-vascular disease with 37 and malignant disease with 16. There were 3 deaths from respiratory tuberculosis, 4 from bronchitis and 3 from pneumonia. There was no mortality from influenza, measles or whooping cough.

CA	M	All Causes
		Medicine and operations of war
		2000
		All other accidents
		Motor vehicle accidents
		Other defined and ill-defined diseases
		Congenital malformations
		Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion
		Hypertension
		Hepatitis and nephritis
		Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea
		Ulcer of stomach and duodenum
		Other diseases of respiratory system
		Bronchitis
		Pneumonia
		Influenza
		Other circulatory diseases
		Other heart diseases
		Hypertension with heart disease
		Coronary disease, angina
		Vascular-lesions of any one system
		Diabetes
		Leprosy, leishmaniasis
		Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms
		Malignant neoplasms, uterus
		Malignant neoplasms, breast
		Malignant neoplasms, lung, bronchus
		Malignant neoplasms, stomach
		Neurotic and psychopathic diseases
		Measles
		Scarlet fever
		Whooping cough
		Influenza
		Pneumonia
		Bronchitis
		Other diseases of respiratory system
		Ulcer of stomach and duodenum
		Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea
		Hepatitis and nephritis
		Hypertension
		Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion
		Congenital malformations
		Other defined and ill-defined diseases
		Motor vehicle accidents
		All other accidents
		2000
		Medicine and operations of war

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES.

a) Under the control of the Essex County Council:-

(i) Clinics were held at the following centres during the year:-

WITHAM: Essex County Health Services Clinic, Guithavon Street.

			Attendances.
Child Welfare.	1st. and 3rd. Wednesdays.	2.00 p.m.	811
Minor Ailments.	1st. and 3rd. Thursdays.	9.30 a.m.	111
Dental.	Monday, Tuesday, Friday weekly.	10.00 a.m.	3223
Ante Natal.	1st. Thursday.	9.30 a.m.	11

SILVER END: Garden Village Hall.

	1st. and 3rd. Friday.	2.15 p.m.	631
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(ii) Home Help Service:

This useful service is administered from the Area Health Office,
Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

(iii) Ambulance Service:

The Ambulance Station is situated at Guithavon Street, Witham. There is one Ambulance and one car for sitting cases. A full 24-hour cover is provided.

(iv) Laboratory Services:

The Essex County Council provide a laboratory service which includes the bacteriological and chemical analysis of water samples, the chemical analysis of sewage effluents and the bacteriological examination of ice-cream, and the examination of other foods for pathogenic organisms. These examinations are carried out by the Counties Public Health Laboratories, 66, 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 Public Health Laboratories, Borough General Hospital, Ipswich.

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

I am grateful to the Pathologist, Black Notley Hospital, for examining throat swabs and other specimens.

b) Under the control of the North-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board:-

(i) Chest Clinics: Held weekly at St. Michael's Hospital, Braintree.

(ii) Orthopaedic Clinics: Held twice weekly at the Essex County Health Services Clinic, Coggeshall Road, Braintree, and an Orthopaedic Specialist from Black Notley Hospital attends the Clinic every three months.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

A glance at the attached Table shows that 1955 had a record low incidence of infectious diseases. This is due to the few cases of measles. On the debit side paralytic poliomyelitis increased from 2 in 1954 to 4 in 1955. These 4 cases were carefully investigated but no connection could be traced between any of them. The usual preventive measures were taken i.e. advice to parents re personal hygiene and home and garden quarantine for child contacts. It is only in exceptional circumstances that quarantine of adult contacts is justified.

Tables are attached, showing the incidence of infectious diseases month by month and according to age, (G) and (D).

The prevalence of infection, deaths and admissions to hospital is shown in Table (A) and for comparison Table (B) gives the incidence from 1950-1955.

TABLE A.

DISEASES.	TOTAL NOTIFIED.	ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL.	TOTAL DEATHS.
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	-	-	-
Erysipelas	2	-	-
Food Poisoning	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis ...	8	-	-
Measles	12	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-
Pneumonia	7	1	1
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	1	1	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	4	4	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	2	-	-
Tuberculosis, pulmonary	10	6	3
Tuberculosis, non-pulmonary	2	-	-
Whooping Cough	3	-	-
Totals	51	12	4

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

TABLE B.

Disease.	1950.	1951.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	7	-	5	-	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	4	-	-	2	1	2
Food Poisoning	-	-	1	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis .	1	3	2	1	5	8
Measles	69	46	251	15	73	12
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	7	5	4	8	6	7
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	-	-	-	-	-	1
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	3	-	-	-	2	4
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	2	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	14	4	7	11	1	2
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	19	14	14	13	5	10
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	1	2	2	2	1	2
Whooping Cough ...	116	24	8	87	4	3
Totals	236	105	289	144	98	51

TABIE C.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED ACCORDING TO AGE

Disease	At all ages											Age un-known	
	Under 1	1 - 2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65		65 & over
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, pulmonary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, non-pulmonary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	2	1	5	4	1	13	-	4	3	3	8	7	-

TABLE D.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED MONTH BY MONTH.

Disease.	Total Notified.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Cholera	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
Poisoning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Hepatitis	8	-	1	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	2
Smallpox	12	1	1	-	2	-	1	5	2	-	-	-	-
Staphylococcal Infection ...	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarletina	7	2	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
General Pyrexia	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Typhoid Fever	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary ...	10	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	1	1	2
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	3	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Totals	51	8	4	1	4	3	5	7	4	5	1	2	7

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following Table gives particulars of the 10 cases of pulmonary and 2 of non-pulmonary tuberculosis notified during the year.

Age Periods	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary.		Non-pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1 - 2 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 - 3 years.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 - 4 years.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 - 5 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 10 years.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 - 15 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 20 years.	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
20 - 25 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25 - 35 years.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 45 years.	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 65 years.	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	-
65 and over.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	3	7	1	1	3	-	-	-

Of these cases, 3 were cases re-notified on taking up residence in this district.

DIPHTHERIA.

The Urban District remained free from diphtheria. The last case occurred in 19

Preventive immunisation against diphtheria and whooping cough was carried out in previous years by County Council staff and General Practitioners. The number immunised was fairly satisfactory.

The importance of diphtheria immunisation cannot be over emphasised and constant propaganda is carried on by Health Visitors to persuade parents to have their children immunised in good time. Although diphtheria is now a rare disease, it could take hold again.

Immunisation against Diphtheria.

Children who completed a full course of primary immunisation during the year.		Children who were given a reinforcing injection during the year.	
By General Practitioners.	By County Council Staff.	By General Practitioners.	By County Council Staff.
(a) 67	36	20	85
Total = 103		Total = 105.	

Immunisation against Whooping Cough.

Children who completed a full course of immunisation under the County scheme.		Records of combined diphtheria pertussis immunisation received.
By General Practitioners.	By County Council Staff.	
26	10	(b) 5.
Reinforcing injections. 3	-	1.

Note: Figure (b) is included in figure (a).

Vaccination against Smallpox: Vaccinations were carried out by General Practitioner as follows:-

Number vaccinated during the year = 82.
 Number re-vaccinated during the year = 28.

HOUSING.

For a number of reasons, the year saw a slowing down of the Council's building programme, which had reached its highest momentum in 1954 when 121 houses were completed.

During the year 1955 a further 67 Council houses, including 6 aged persons' bungalows, were completed and 3 houses were built by private enterprise. At the end of December there were 37 Council houses and 5 private 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: 564 (includes 84 prefabricated bungalows).
By private enterprise: 95.

The number of applicants for Council houses was 150 at the end of 1955, compared with 212 at December 31st. 1954. This figure included the following categories:-

Ordinary List	79 applicants.
Aged persons	24
Single Persons	3
Supplementary List	7
Exchange List	8
Engaged Couples	
List	23
Industrial Workers	
List	<u>6</u>
	<u>150.</u>

Apart from the houses under construction, referred to above, the Council had made no provision for further building in 1956, but were engaged in formulating a new policy and programme in the light of the impending alterations in subsidy payments. The Council had no opportunity during the year to operate their policies of building houses for key workers in industry and of providing serviced sites for private house building.

The curtailment of the Council's building programme, coupled with the lack of any firm prospect of large scale development by private enterprise must inevitably mean the continuation of the housing shortage in the area. While this shortage is by no means so desperate as that of the immediate post-war years, it cannot improve until the supply of houses from all sources once again begins to approach the continuing demand.

Pre-War Council Houses: Some further progress was made on schemes for the improvement and modernisation of over 200 of the Council's pre-war houses. The schemes include the installation of bathrooms, hot water systems and modern cooking, heating and washing facilities, and in the case of the outlying rural estates, sewer connections and conversion to water carriage drainage. The position at the end of the year was as follows:-

Improvements completed: 58 houses.
Pail closet conversions
to W.C's., and drainage: (a) temporary: 12 houses.
(b) permanent: 24 houses.

Arrangements had been made for sewer connections and closet conversions at a further 16 houses early in 1956, by direct labour. Also, schemes for 169 houses were being prepared, to be carried out by contract during the financial year 1956-57, subject to loan sanction being obtained.

Housing and Public Health Acts.

Progress with regard to sub-standard private houses was continued during the year, though limited to some extent by pressure of other work and by the lack of an Additional Sanitary Inspector during a period of 4 months. The following data shows the work undertaken during the year:-

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| (a) Clearance Orders) | 4 houses vacated. |
| Compulsory Purchase Orders) | 7 houses demolished. |
| | 2 Orders (7 houses) under consideration
December, 1955. |
| (b) Demolition Orders: | 1 house demolished. |
| | 1 Order revoked following
reconditioning of the house. |
| (c) Closing Orders: | Nil. |
| (d) Voluntary Undertakings by Owners: | 6 houses demolished. |

Of the 4 properties vacated on formal action, the tenants of 3 were rehoused by the Council. In addition, the Council completed the rehousing of tenants from the 6 cottages subject to voluntary undertaking. Also, in a few cases of urgent need, accommodation was provided for tenants from other sub-standard dwellings not yet formally dealt with. Every effort is made to prevent such dwellings becoming a recurrent liability to the housing authority by continuous re-occupation, but this is not always possible.

Schemes for the re-development of two Clearance Area sites, one as a subsidiary shopping centre and one as a car park, were well in hand at the end of the year.

Following the Government's call for local authorities to submit slum clearance programmes, the Council considered the position in their district and submitted the following proposals, which have been approved by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, for implementation during the next five years:-

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (i) No. of houses fit for demolition: | 57. |
| (ii) No. already subject to operative orders: | 17. |
| (iii) No. of years required for securing demolition: | 5. |

The number of dwellings found to be fit for demolition is small in

lation to the total number of dwellings in the district, but the Council's pre-war slum clearance schemes eliminated the majority of the totally unfit property, while action resumed during the period 1946-1956 resulted in the clearance of a further 80 unfit dwellings. The problem now facing the Council is therefore not a large one.

So far as reconditioning is concerned, however, it is estimated that about 500 houses in the district are defective in some respects. Many are Victorian and Edwardian terrace houses, sound in structure, but lacking in amenity and beginning to show evidence of their age. By reason of their design and layout, they are often difficult and costly to modernise, but it is clearly necessary to preserve this large amount of available accommodation, to improve it wherever possible and to prevent any chance of its gradual deterioration to slum status. A programme of inspection for reconditioning and improvement is being prepared.

The following Table summarises action taken in connection with the inspection of dwellinghouses during 1955:-

Inspection of dwellinghouses during the year:

(a) Total number inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	98.
(b) Number found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.
(c) Number (exclusive of those referred to under sub-heading (b) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	38.

Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notice:

(a) Number of houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or its Officers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	27.
(b) Number of other defective conditions remedied after informal action by Local Authority or its Officers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36.

Action under Statutory Powers - Housing Acts, 1936-1954:

(a) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
(b) Number of dwellinghouses rendered fit after service of formal notice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
(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	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(e) Number of undertakings accepted	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.

Number of dwellinghouses demolished:

(a) In pursuance of Clearance Orders	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7.
(b) In pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
(c) Voluntarily by owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6.

5. Overcrowding:

(a) Houses found to be overcrowded	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
(b) Overcrowding abated, after statutory action	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.

Improvement Grants: Housing Acts, 1949-1954.

Prior to 1955, no advantage had been taken of grant-aid provisions for the improvement or conversion of existing dwellings, apart from four houses purchased by the Council in 1950 and improved under the Housing Act, 1949. During 1955, however, a number of applications for grant were received and dealt with as under:-

Applications submitted in respect of:	10 houses.
Applications granted in respect of:	9 houses.
Applications refused in respect of:	1 house.

A further number of applications and tentative inquiries were received but were withdrawn when the conditions of the grant scheme were fully explained to the applicants. It was hoped that owner/occupiers and investment property owners would take advantage of the grants available, but so far it has proved to be mainly the owners of agricultural cottage property who have considered it worthwhile to do so.

Housing (Repairs and Rents) Act, 1954.

During the year, no Certificates of Disrepair under the above Act were issued by the Council. One Certificate, which had been previously issued, was revoked following satisfactory completion of the necessary repairs to the house.

WATER SUPPLY.

Supplies to the Urban District mains remained the same during the year: the South Essex Water Company's supply from the Abberton impounding reservoir and the Council's Bradwell Springs supply (deep spring). The Council's Braintree Road Waterworks has been out of action due to pump defects and borehole difficulties since 1953 and it is doubtful whether the Council will resume supplies from this source. Silver End and Rivenhall are fed by the Bradwell Springs undertaking, while the remainder of the Urban District receives a mixture of the two supplies both of which undergo chloramination at the source.

The Bradwell Springs undertaking, purchased in 1954, was maintained satisfactorily and without major incident. The Council's Consulting Engineers are preparing a scheme to increase the available output and to check a slight corrosive tendency due to the high carbon dioxide content of the water.

The South Essex supply is used to implement the Bradwell source to the current daily requirements and the Council holds a reservation with the South Essex Company ensuring ample water for present and expected needs.

Quality and quantity have been uniformly satisfactory throughout the year and satisfactory pressure for all normal domestic and industrial purposes

has been maintained. All new mains are super-chlorinated by the Council's staff before being put into use.

Samples, submitted periodically for bacteriological and chemical examination, showed that both supplies at the source were pure and wholesome, as is shown by the following table.

Samples submitted:

	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
<u>1. Mains Water.</u>			
Chemical	4.	1.	5.
Bacteriological	28.	2.	30.
<u>2. Other Supplies.</u>			
Chemical	-.	-.	-.
Bacteriological	<u>1.</u>	<u>-.</u>	<u>1.</u>
Totals	<u>33.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>36.</u>

The three unsatisfactory reports were in respect of the mixed supply from a branch main serving several cottages and commercial premises. On investigation it was found that a proportion of dirty water from a grain washing machine was being drawn back into the main and finding its way in a diluted form to adjoining premises. Action was taken immediately to prevent any recurrence.

House Connections, etc.

Number of separate dwellings in the Urban District	...	...	...	2756.
Number of separate dwellings having internal piped mains supply	...	...	...	2688.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	8577.
Number of separate dwellings connected during the year	...	...	...	70.
Number of separate dwellings served by standpipe	...	...	...	30.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	95.
Remaining houses served by shallow wells or springs	...	...	...	38.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	118.

The following extensions to the Council's mains were made during the year:

4"	370 yards.
6"	420 yards.

Water Consumption and Future Requirements.

Total water supplied by:

1. Braintree Road Waterworks	... ..	Nil.
2. Bradwell Springs:		
(a) To Silver End	... ..	29,162,000 gallo
(b) To remainder of Urban District	... ..	57,152,000 gallo
3. South Essex Water Company	... ..	59,835,090 gallo
4. ex Braintree R.D.C. Main (Bradwell)	... ..	<u>5,089,680 gallo</u>
	Total Consumption	<u>151,238,770 gallo</u>

Average consumption per head per day:

Domestic demand	... ..	32.10 gallons.
Trade demand	... ..	16.51 gallons.
Average total consumption per head per day	... ..	48.61 gallons.

The average consumption shows an increase of .31 gallons per head per day. During the 10 year period, January 1946 to December 1955, total consumption has increased by approximately 10 gallons per head per day.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

A further 10 existing properties were connected to the Council's sewer systems during the year. The following table shows the drainage facilities in use in the Urban District as reviewed at December 31st. 1955:-

Houses connected to mains sewer systems:	2595.
Houses drained to septic tank systems:	17.
Houses drained to cesspools:	96.
Houses drained to ditches:	32.
Houses without drainage:	<u>16.</u>
	<u>2756.</u>

Of the 161 properties not at present connected to the sewer, some 34 are capable of connection. Prospective future development should allow for the serving of another 20-30 existing houses. There will then remain about 100 agricultural and isolated properties for which no economic sewerage scheme appears to be possible. Some of these are houses which will probably be demolished within the next few years, but the figure is unlikely to alter radically, as these are likely to be replaced by some limited development of individual houses in the outlying parts of the district. The Council provides a free emptying service for domestic cesspools, three times annually and additional emptying when required, on repayment. This service is also available to industrial and agricultural premises not connected to the sewer system.

The existing sewer systems at Witham and Silver End are both liable to surcharging at times of heavy rainfall.

Rivenhall Sewer Scheme.

This scheme, with its own sewage disposal works at Rivenhall, was completed in the latter half of 1953. Since then a considerable number of connections have been completed, with conversions of pail closets to W.C's and, in many cases, the installation of bathrooms. All the drainage from the 40 pre-war Rivenhall Council houses has been connected, though schemes of closet conversion and improvement have not yet been completed in all of them. It is hoped, if loan sanction can be obtained, to complete this work during 1956. This, with the conversion of the few remaining private properties, will bring the scheme into full operation.

The Rivenhall Primary School will be one of the last premises in the area to take advantage of main drainage, despite all the efforts of the Council and the School Managers. However, the Education authority has undertaken to effect its conversion during 1956.

Sewer Extensions.

Extensions of sewer systems during the year have been as follows:-

			<u>Soil Sewers.</u>	<u>Surface Water Sewers.</u>
9 in.	...	...	30 yards.	115 yards.
12 in.	...	...	50 yards.	27 yards.
15 in.	...	...	157 yards.	488 yards.

Most of this work was done to complete the servicing of the Council's new industrial estate. On this estate, the soil sewer is designed for ultimate connection to the Witham Sewage Works, but for the time being discharges to a large double cesspool of 6,000 - 7,000 gallons capacity. The amount of industrial development possible at present will therefore be limited until the new outfall sewer is laid.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

There are four major sewage disposal plants in the Urban District, three owned by the Council and one administered by the Ministry of Works. The three Urban District Sewage Works serve the communities of Witham, Silver End and Rivenhall and the fourth plant treats sewage from the National Assistance Board's Hostel for Displaced Persons at Rivenhall Aerodrome Camp.

WITHAM Sewage Works.

In January 1955, work was commenced by the Council's Contractors, on the new sewage works extension scheme and good progress on it was maintained throughout the year, though none of the new plant was in operation by December 31st. It is expected that the scheme, which will cost some £55,000 in all, will be completed by the Autumn of 1956. The plant will then have a capacity of some 5-10% above present dry weather flow and will suffice for the needs of the town for a number of years unless very extensive and rapid development should occur. The present scheme has been designed to allow of second and third stage future extensions, when required, to provide for an ultimate population of about 20,000.

The works extension contract, involving much alteration and reconditioning of existing plant, has necessarily created considerable difficulty in coping with the sewage flow during the year. The old plant, previously described, has been seriously overloaded for many years and has been kept operating only by a series of improvisations. A reasonably satisfactory standard of purification has generally been maintained, however, by careful organisation, though the additional difficulty of the contract period has resulted in some deterioration, compared with previous years.

The new plant, designed by Messrs. Pick, Everard, Keay and Gimson, the Council's Consulting Engineers, will reduce the manual labour now required, though its control will be more complicated and will call for intelligent supervision and maintenance. My Department is fortunate in having a Works Manager, Mr. T. Thorpe, who is eminently fitted for the day-to-day control of such plants, but he has now three sewage works to look after and the low general standard of labour available for their maintenance has proved a serious handicap. This will have to be overcome if the Council's modern plants are to operate at full efficiency.

No unduly adverse effect of detergents in the sewage flows was apparent during the year, though in view of other difficulties it is not possible to assess to what degree their presence has accounted for the lower standard of purification achieved during recent years.

Trade wastes in the Witham sewage flows caused no serious complications during 1955, though sample reports have indicated that a general review of the situation is desirable. It is proposed to undertake this during 1956.

Farmland.

The Council continued the cultivation and cropping of their land adjoining the Witham works, and the 1954-55 cropping season was favoured by good weather and a satisfactory harvest. The crops produced a net profit to the Council of £216. 10s. 8d., from the 16 acres under cultivation, in spite of one acre of this having to be abandoned owing to the requirements of the works extension contractors. The crops grown were wheat (10½ acres sown, 9½ acres harvested) and flax (5½ acres sown and harvested). For the 1955-56 season, it is proposed to sow 15½ acres of wheat and 4½ acres of runner beans.

The experimental cultivation of refuse tip-land, this time with wheat, was continued on about half an acre and was entirely successful, a good crop being recovered. The Council therefore propose to extend the experiment during 1956, to a total of three acres. It is anticipated that in this way an area of about 10 acres of useless marshland, being reclaimed by tipping of house refuse and trade wastes, can eventually be brought into full agricultural production.

The financial return from the sewage works farmland, during the eight years since the Council undertook the cultivation, is shown in the following Table, and compares favourably with the annual rental of £33.12s. 6d. previously received when the land was let to a local farmer.

Season.	Crops.	Profit.			Loss.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1947-48.	Wheat, potatoes	63.	7.	10.	-	-	-
1948-49.	Barley, potatoes	294.	1.	4.	-	-	-
1949-50.	Wheat	2.	19.	-	-	-	-
1950-51.	Clover, mangold, flax	-	-	-	58.	7.	7
1951-52.	Flax, wheat	128.	19.	3.	-	-	-
1952-53.	Wheat, clover, flax	335.	3.	-	-	-	-
1953-54.	Wheat, flax	212.	19.	10.	-	-	-
1954-55.	Wheat, flax	216.	10.	8.	-	-	-
		1254.	-	11.	58.	7.	7

Net profit £1195. 13. 4.
Net annual profit £149. 9. 2.

SILVER END Sewage Works.

This plant, described in detail in previous reports, serves the community of Silver End, a population of about 2,000. Increased flows over the last ten years, due to development and a large trade flow, involve overloading of the plant at peak periods and in wet weather. The Council's Consulting Engineers are preparing a scheme of extension and improvement to cope with present and expected development and with the effect of trade discharges. The latter are of a nature and quantity of some concern to the Council and a detailed investigation was maintained throughout the year, with the cooperation of the Company concerned, with the object of organising and maintaining a proper system of control.

The average dry weather flow to the works, gauged in 1953, is 95,000 gallons daily. 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 generally satisfactory, but consistent results are prevented by lack of marginal capacity and by the gross quantities of surface water which find their way to the works during wet weather.

The secondary filters had given recurrent ponding trouble over several years and are undergoing reconditioning. The rebuilding of one was completed during the year and the second has been dismantled in readiness for replacement of the filter medium and walling-in. Work of cleaning and regrading of the medium is being done by Departmental labour, and it is hoped to have both filters rebuilt and operating satisfactorily during 1956.

RIVENHALL Sewage Works.

This modern plant operated successfully throughout the year, during which the flow to it increased to about two-thirds of its designed dry weather flow (18,000 gallons per day). Only in two aspects was the plant's performance less than could be desired. In the first place, the twin humus tanks, necessarily very small, do not appear consistently to retain sufficient of the suspended matter from

the effluent. It is hoped by observation and adjustment, to achieve a rate of flow which will overcome this defect. Secondly, the plant shows signs of producing considerably more sludge than the four small drying beds can cope with during the winter season. How this can be remedied without additional beds is difficult to foresee, in view of the fact that the plant is not yet operating to its full capacity. This also is being kept under observation.

Smell nuisance from manholes, due to septic action in the sewers, diminish during the year as the flow gradually increased and the sewers became more self-cleansing.

Apart from these matters, the plant has proved efficient and easy to maintain and reflects credit upon the Council's Consulting Engineers, who designed it.

RIVENHALL Camp Sewage Works.

This plant, constructed during the war to serve the Aerodrome, now treats the sewage from 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 purification.

Sampling of Sewage, Effluents, etc.

	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Witham Sewage Works	31.	21.	52.
Silver End Sewage Works	10.	2.	12.
Rivenhall Sewage Works	6.	2.	8.
Rivenhall Camp Sewage Works	1.	-	1.
Totals	<u>48.</u>	<u>25.</u>	<u>73.</u>

DRAINAGE OF TRADE PREMISES.

Investigation and control of the trade discharges from local industries has been maintained throughout the year, as under:-

- (1) Witham:
- (a) Galvanising Wastes: Treatment and disposal by agreement with the Company as previously described.
 - (b) Etch Wash Wastes: Periodic controlled discharge after prior notification to Council.
 - (c) Flour Mill Washings: Treated and discharged under agreement as previously described.
 - (d) Fruit Processing Wastes: Improvised treatment proceeds under observation.
 - (e) Maltings Wastes: Investigation of discharges to arrange proper treatment and control.
 - (f) Plating Wastes: Investigation of discharges to arrange proper treatment and control.

Certain of the above wastes are discharged to the sewer by virtue of old-standing agreements with the Council. It is proposed to review the position during 1956.

- 2) Silver End: (a) Galvanising Wastes:) These wastes, all treated to some extent by the Company, have had a variable adverse effect on sewage disposal processes for some years and their control had proved to be very difficult. With the cooperation of the Company a very full investigation was carried out and at the end of the year work was in hand to provide adequate treatment and flow control of the combined wastes, under agreement with the Council.
- (b) Sherardising Wastes:)
(c) Bronzing Wastes:)
(d) Case Hardening Wastes:)
(e) Metal Polishing Wastes:)
- 3) There are no industrial wastes discharging to the Council's sewer system at Rivenhall.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Street sweeping, road gritting and other highway cleansing services are maintained respectively by the Essex County Council Highways Department and the Council's Works Department on the County and district roads.

The remaining services, refuse collection and disposal, salvage recovery, cesspool and gully emptying and sewer flushing are administered by the Council's Public Health Department.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

Collection:

The collection of house refuse for the whole of the Urban District has been maintained during the year, providing a weekly collection from all parts of the area.

Two standard side-loading vehicles are now employed on collection of refuse, a second full-time vehicle having been made available by the purchase during the year of an additional chassis. This enabled the dual purpose refuse collecting/cesspool emptying machine to be converted into two separate vehicles. The two purpose machine, purchased in 1951, had proved highly successful in coping with both kinds of work while there was insufficient of either kind to justify the use of a full-time vehicle for each purpose.

One of the collection vehicles, a Shelvoke and Drewry Mark II freighter, purchased in 1946, is now approaching the end of its useful life and its replacement will have to be considered within the near future.

Disposal:

Controlled tipping has continued throughout the year on the Council's land adjoining the river Blackwater, where marshland is being made up. It is hoped by tipping in this area, to add some 10 acres of useful agricultural land to that now

farmed at the adjoining sewage works. Tipping capacity at this site was assessed in October, 1955, as being adequate for 2-3 years' disposal, at present rate of development. Further marshland meadow, liable to flooding, is available at the confluence of the rivers Brain and Blackwater and the Council has already considered the possible use of this land, the majority of which, it is felt, could be returned to good agricultural use after tipping operations were completed.

The Council has also under preliminary consideration, the possibility of a refuse separation and sludge/refuse composting scheme. There is no doubt that very much valuable raw material would be recovered and a large quantity of high grade compost produced. The Council received a special report on this subject in December 1955, outlining the principles of the scheme and the probable costs and income. This is to be considered further in relation to the allied question of acquisition of additional land for tipping purposes. It is felt that the intensely agricultural nature of the area around Witham favours the success of such a venture, which would provide a less wasteful means of refuse disposal, reduce the district's tipping space requirements and eliminate sludge drying and handling difficulties in an economic manner. It would also contribute to soil fertility, by returning natural organic wastes in a safe form to the land.

SALVAGE.

Collection of salvage is effected in conjunction with house refuse collection, with the exception that a special collection is made weekly from trade premises. Figures for the 1955-56 financial year, given below, show an increase in income. A profit of £744 accrued to the Council, after bonus of £458. 13s. was paid to the collection staff. Some expenditure was incurred in improvements to the Depot at Maldon Road.

Commodity.	1954-55.						1955-56.					
	Weights.			Value.			Weights.			Value.		
	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	£.	s.	d.	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	£.	s.	d.
Waste Paper	134.	6.	2.	1076.	7.	2.	143.	18.	0.	1343.	4.	
Bones	1.	6.	1.	8.	10.	6.	2.	1.	1.	11.	17.	
Rags	3.	8.	1.	131.	13.	9.	3.	18.	3.	152.	5.	
Sacking	1.	16.	0.	11.	15.	5.	1.	8.	3.	8.	12.	
Iron	67.	17.	2.	307.	13.	8.	75.	10.	0.	339.	16.	
Metals		18.	0.	109.	7.	9.	1.	1.	0.	160.	15.	
Jars	2.	0.	0.	12.	12.	0.	1.	4.	0.	7.	14.	
Bottles		14.	0.	3.	19.	6.	1.	0.	0.	5.	15.	
Miscellaneous				3.	10.	0.				7.	5.	
Totals	212.	6.	2.	1665.	9.	9.	230.	1.	3.	2037.	6.	

Cesspool, Gulley Emptying and Sewer Flushing.

The following work was performed by the Council's cesspool emptier during the year:-

Domestic emptyings (free service):	187 cesspools,	204 loads.	204,000 gallons.
Rechargeable work:	178 cesspools,	287 loads.	287,000 gallons.
Trade Waste:		482 loads.	482,000 gallons.
		<hr/>	
	365 cesspools,	973 loads.	973,000 gallons.

Almost all the liquid wastes removed were disposed of at the Council's refuse tip, by the adoption of a special tipping routine to form large lagoons on the tip land. These lagoons have not only sealed off the wastes from the neighbouring rivers, but have given a high degree of drying by evaporation. Final drying of the resulting sludge, when a lagoon is sufficiently full, is accomplished by the heat produced in the natural decomposition of house refuse, tipped over the lagoon to a depth of 3' - 4' and covered with soil.

In addition to the above work, the sewer systems of the district were flushed on three occasions and the road gulleys on all district roads were cleansed on three occasions.

The vehicle is also used on any required emergency work on sewers and sewage disposal, involving emptying of tanks or manholes.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

A total of 5742 visits and inspections were made during the year, as follows:-

Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	406.
Public Health Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	112.
Verminous Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	60.
Complaints	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	65.
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	586.
Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	24.
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Ice-Cream Vendors	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	78.
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12.
Food Preparation Premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21.
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.
Milk Shops	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Sampling: Ice-Cream	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50.
Water	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	39.
Sewage Effluent	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20.
Shops Acts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36.
Factories	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	69.
Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36.
Water Supplies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17.
Drains and Sewers: Inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	206.
Tested	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23.
Cesspools, Septic Tanks and Pail Closets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14.
Refuse Tips	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	131.
Sewage Works	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	167.
Salvage	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	129.
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3279.
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30.
Offensive Accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6.
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19.
Places of Amusement	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Council House Applicants	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20.
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	59.

In addition, a total of 914 interviews were given to tenants, landlords, builders and other interested parties.

Nuisances, etc., on Books, with Number of Notices served.
(Public Health Acts only).

Number of Notices outstanding, 31st. December, 1954	...	...	...	...	23.
Number of Intimation Notices served during the year	...	...	...	...	56.
Number of Statutory Notices served during the year	...	...	...	...	Nil.
Number of Notices complied with during the year	...	...	...	...	49.
Number of Notices outstanding on Books, 31st. December, 1955	...	...	...	...	30.

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

Dampness, rising and penetrative	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.
Defective roofs, parapets, gutters, R.W.P's etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14.
Defective brickwork, rendering and pointing etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	16.
Defective ceilings and walls	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Defective doors, windows and floors	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Defective cooking ranges, firegrates and flues	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Defective yard/access paving	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8.
Defective W.C. structures	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11.
Defective W.C. fittings	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14.
Defective sinks, waste pipes etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	9.
Drainage defects	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	36.
Defective vent pipes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Sewer connections/conversions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Inadequate means for disposal of roof water	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Defective/overflowing cesspools	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Disused cesspools sealed.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Overcrowding	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Dirty/Offensive condition of premises	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Offensive ditches	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Offensive accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Nuisance from keeping of animals/chickens	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Absence/Defective condition of dustbins	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	67.
Infestations: Rats and Mice	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	333.
Vermin and insects (including woodworm)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	30.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

During the year, a total of 46 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 was found to be necessary at one factory and conditions at a number of building sites was kept under constant supervision. At the end of 1955, the number of outworkers on the register was 717, comprising

	<u>Witham U.D.C.</u>	<u>Other Local Authorities.</u>
Glove manufacturers	...	59.
Seed Merchants	...	7.
		651.
		-.

Notification of outworkers employed in other districts is made to the 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		
		In-spections	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by local authorities.	4.	2.	Nil.	Nil.
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority.	48.	40.	4.	Nil.
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority (excluding outworkers' premises).	6.	4.	2.	Nil.
TOTAL	58.	46.	6.	Nil.

2. Cases in which DEFECTS were found.

	Number of cases in which defects were found.				Number of cases in which prosecutions were institute
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred.		
			To H.M. Inspector.	By H.M. Inspector.	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	1	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7) --					
(a) Insufficient	2	1	-	1	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	1	-	-	1	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	-	-	1	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers)	1	1	-	1	-
TOTAL	6	2	-	4	-

SHOPS ACTS.

In addition to the normal duties of the local authorities, under the Shops Act, 1950, the Council have accepted delegation from the Essex County Council (the major Shops Acts authority) of powers of enforcement of Sections 3, 4 and 5 of Section 38.

36 visits were paid to shops during the year, apart from purposes other than Shops Act administration. The following matters were dealt with:-

Routine inspections	...	...	36.
Dampness	...	...	3.
Structural defects	...	...	4.
Washing facilities	...	...	4.
Sanitary accommodation	...	...	3.
Ventilation	...	...	4.
Drainage	...	...	4.
Water supply	...	...	2.
Shop reconditioning and modernisation			3.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

The Council's caravan site, completed in February 1954, was occupied by its full complement of 12 trailer caravans during the major part of the year. On this site, individual plots are let to van occupiers at reasonable rentals. Hard standing, water supply, W.C. accommodation, drying ground and waste disposal facilities are provided. The site is lighted at night during street lighting hours.

It is certain that without the Council's site, van occupiers would find it very difficult to obtain satisfactory locations. While demand for plots remains high, as is to be expected, the site will serve a useful purpose and the rents received amply cover the expense of providing and maintaining this service.

Where private sites are licensed by the Council, they require to be satisfied to hard standing, water supply, sanitary accommodation and waste disposal facilities. One such site remained licensed during the year and 4 licences were issued for the stationing of individual vans at various parts of the Urban District.

Overcrowding in one caravan was abated, following service of statutory notice in 1954. A further notice, also served in 1954, incorporating the conditions of licence of the private site referred to above, was complied with.

INSECT PESTS.

The following cases of infestation were dealt with:-

Flies	...	...	1.	Ants	...	...	...	10.
Woodworm	...	...	15.	Wasps	...	...	...	3.
Bed Bugs	...	...	1.					

Minor infestations are dealt with by the issue of insecticides and advice to the householders concerned. Difficult cases are dealt with by the Department on a rechargeable basis.

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 used only 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 a quick "knock-down" effect is used.

RODENT CONTROL.

The Council conducts its own Rodent Control service, using a specially trained operative for the purpose. The work has been carried out in co-operation with the pest control department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Details of the year's work are as follows:-

Inspections made	...	...	...	...	1609.
Treatment visits	...	...	...	...	1670.
Infestations found:	Mice	...	...	...	19.
	Minor	...	...	...	305.
	Major	...	...	...	9.
Bodies recovered:	Mice	...	...	...	173.
	Rats	...	...	...	846.
Estimated kill:	Rats	...	...	...	1830.

The sewer systems at Witham and Silver End were treated with satisfactory results. Infestation in both systems was found to be light. A test pre-baiting of the Rivenhall system gave negative results. The following are the details of the treatments carried out:-

	<u>Witham.</u>	<u>Silver End</u>
Manholes, test baited	6.	12.
Manholes, test baited showing takes	1.	2.
Manholes, poison baited	4.	6.
Manholes, poison baited showing takes	1.	2.
Bodies recovered	-	-

A free domestic treatment service has been in operation for some years. This enables prompt action to be taken to deal with incipient infestations and particularly with the influx of rodents to the town from the surrounding rural area, which occurs annually.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

at Inspection.

Only one slaughterhouse was operating during the year, though another remained licensed but unused. None of the district butchers found it necessary use local slaughtering facilities, which confirmed the Council's decision in 54 that no additional facilities were required in the Urban District.

In meat inspection, the unsatisfactory position prevailing at the end of 54 continued throughout 1955. The one operative slaughterhouse, as previously described, is a privately owned property, situated unsuitably in the centre of the town and used to conduct a large wholesale slaughtering and meat marketing business serving North and East London and the larger Essex towns. The premises, though old, satisfy the requirements of the Meat Regulations and their maintenance is reasonably satisfactory. It cannot, however, be regarded as an asset to the town, as the size and nature of the business make it undesirable in its present situation. Moreover, less than 5% of the meat produced is consumed locally, it cannot be said to serve any requirement of the Urban District. It is estimated that the output of the slaughterhouse serves a population of approximately 40,000.

The matter is further complicated because, for trade reasons and in spite of repeated representations from the Council, the management have been unwilling and unable to organise the throughput on any uniform basis. Slaughtering is heavy and sporadic, often taking place late in the day or overnight and continuous throughout weekends. Reference to the Table below will show that the total of animals killed has risen since decontrol by about 25%, though as there has been a disproportionate increase in the number of pigs, the amount of inspection time required is somewhat more than 125% of that in 1952-53, when 100% inspection was being maintained, though with difficulty. Owing, however, to the disjointed intensive killing programmes now in operation, it has been possible to inspect less than 50% of the total kill during 1955. The achievement of 100% inspection would involve a quite uneconomic amount of inspection time, including night and shift work, for which staff are not available.

This slaughterhouse remained licensed during the year, the Council having issued successive short-term licences, in the hope that impending new legislation governing slaughterhouses would enable them to arrange more satisfactory control.

Comparative Slaughtering Figures 1938-1955.

	1938.	1952.	1953.	1954.	1955.
Cattle	782.	2531.	2337.	1878.	1262.
Calves	135.	1376.	861.	719.	987.
Sheep and Lambs	2438.	3529.	3704.	3625.	2875.
Pigs	2266.	1701.	3328.	6256.	7372.
Goats	—	3.	1.	1.	—
Totals	5561.	9140.	10231.	12479.	12496.
Percentage inspected	100.	100.	100.	81.	42.6

Licensing: Slaughterhouses and Slaughtermen:

At 31st. December, 1955, the following licences were in operation:-

Slaughterhouses 2. Slaughtermen 3.

The following Table sets out the particulars of the animals slaughtered and of inspection and condemnation.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs.	Total
Number killed	1262		987	2875	7372	12,496
Number inspected	527		837	1319	2646	5,329
<u>All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	2		3	8	31	44
Weight in lbs. condemned	846		120	346	1500	2812
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	210		4	114	319	647
Weight in lbs. condemned	3022		26	337	1196	4581
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	40.3		.83	9.2	13.2	
<u>Tuberculosis only:</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	1		-	-	2	3
Weight in lbs. condemned	412		-	-	186	598
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	111		-	-	9	120
Weight in lbs. condemned	2382		-	-	98	2480
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	21.2		-	-	.41	
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	2		-	-	-	2
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	2		-	-	-	2
Generalises and totally condemned	Nil		-	-	-	Nil

No horses were slaughtered within the Urban District during the year.

Note:- For reasons beyond the control of the Meat Inspectors, it was not always possible to differentiate condemnations between cows and cattle other than cows.

MILK AND DAIRIES.

The local sanitary authority 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 to 1953:-

	<u>Tuberculin Tested.</u>	<u>Pasteurised.</u>
Dairies	3.	3.
Dealers	4.	4.
Supplementary Dealers	2.	2.

No unsatisfactory conditions were found during 1954.

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. The number of registrations at 31st. December, 1955, was as follows:-

Manufacturers ...	Nil.
Vendors only ...	31.
Registered Premises	31.

In addition, 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. 53 such samples were taken during the year and the results were as follows:-

Bacteriologist's Description.	Fruit Ices.	Ministry of Health's Provisional Grading.				Total.
		I.	II	III	IV	
Satisfactory	10	20	3	-	-	33
Passable	1	-	3	-	-	4
Unsatisfactory	8	-	2	3	3	16
TOTAL	19	20	8	3	3	53

The unsatisfactory samples were in almost every case from the supplies of itinerant vendors operating from outside this area. Representations to the local authorities concerned resulted in some improvement towards the end of the season and it is hoped that better results will be forthcoming in 1956.

By arrangement with three adjoining local authorities, the Council maintains stocks of CO₂ refrigerant, which is available to all the Sanitary Inspectors concerned for the maintenance of samples at low temperatures during despatch to laboratory.

HYGIENE OF FOOD PREPARATION PREMISES.

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

Restaurants	...	...	...	10.
Factory and School Canteens	...	...	...	9.
Manufacturing Butchers	...	...	...	7.
Bakehouses	...	...	...	5.
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	2.
Retail Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	7.
Other Retail Food Shops	...	...	...	43.
Retail Wet Fish Shops	...	...	...	2.
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	18.

All are subject to inspection and generally found to satisfy the requirements of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. 148 visits of inspection were made during the year. In several 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:-

Re-design and modernisation of:				
Food Shops	...	...	...	2.
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	1.
Structural defects	...	...	...	3.
Defective/Inadequate sanitary accommodation	...	...	...	1.
Defective/Inadequate sink drainage facilities	...	...	...	4.
Defective/Inadequate hot water and washing facilities	...	...	...	4.

Preparations were in hand at the end of the year for a complete survey of food manufacturers and distributors in the district, following the passing of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, and in view of the impending new Food Hygiene Regulations.

Condemnation of Food (other than Meat).

As a result of inspections carried out at food shops and food preparation premises in the District, a total of 5 cwts. 9 lbs. of food (other than meat) was voluntarily surrendered to and condemned by my Department.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

The district has no local air pollution problem, almost the only sources of atmospheric impurity being domestic chimneys and the main line railway. The Essex County Council, however, are concerned at the possible effect of pollution in the County from the Thameside and Metropolitan industrial areas and the Council has agreed to participate in a County Council plan for continuous observation and recording of atmospheric impurity. It is proposed to set up recording stations at two or three points in the Urban District, the records from which will be co-ordinated with those from similar stations throughout the County.

STAFF.

As stated in my introduction, the Department was without an Additional Sanitary Inspector for 4 months, following the resignation of Mr. H.R.D. Scott, after a long period of service and good work in the district. His successor, Mr. H. Batteson, was appointed in July, 1955.

Following a review of the Department's staff, the Council approved the appointment of an additional clerical assistant (junior) and Mr. M.G. Blizzard was engaged in this capacity in August, 1955. His appointment will ease pressure of routine work in the Department and enable the Senior Assistant, Mr. R.G. Chapman, to devote more of his time to responsible duties, for which he is needed.

Once again the year was marked by difficulty in obtaining and retaining adequate manual staff and the work was further complicated by absence due to sickness. Increases in negotiated rates of pay during the year have not materially affected this position. The efficient administration of the public services involves arduous and sometimes unpleasant work and it is to the great credit of the staff employed that all shortages and difficulties have been overcome without major interruption of any part of the service.

Details of the Department's staff at 31st. December, 1955, were:-

Office: Chief Sanitary Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector.
Additional Sanitary Inspector.
Senior Clerical Assistant.
Junior Clerical Assistant.

Cleansing: 1 Foreman-Driver.
1 Tip-Chargehand.
2 Driver/Loaders.
1 Driver/Loader/Gullier Emptier Driver.
4 Refuse Loaders.
1 Tiphand.
1 Refuse Loader/Gulley Emptier Attendant.

Sewage Disposal:
1 Works' Manager.
1 Chargehand.
3 Labourers.
2 Labourers (Part-time).

Other: 1 Disinfector/Rodent Operative (Part-time).

The average age of the permanent outside staff is approximately 48 years.

