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HEALTH  
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WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT  
OF THE  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

*Emet*

for the year  
1956

together with the

REPORT  
OF THE  
CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR.



*Aw.*



WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

Chairman:

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

Members:

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E.T. Mawdsley, Esq. (resigned September).

A.E. Moss, Esq.

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

Mrs. J.N. Pelly.

S.E. Smith, Esq. (elected November).

The Hon. C.R. Strutt.

R.A. Tweed, Esq.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS.

Medical Officer of Health:

C.R.C. RAINSFORD, M.D., D.P.H., D.T.M.

Chief Public Health Inspector and Inspector of Meat and Other Foods:

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

Additional Public Health Inspector and Inspector of Meat and Other Foods:

H. BATESON, A.R.S.H.

Clerical Assistants:

R.G. CHAPMAN (Senior).

M.G. Blizzard (Junior).

July, 1957.

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 1956.

I have to thank Dr. Miller Wood for providing particulars of the work done at the Child Welfare and Maternity clinics.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

The Registrar General's estimated population is 8,840, an increase of 50 over 1955.

There were 141 live births, giving a birth rate of 15.95 per thousand of the population. The corrected birth rate is 17.38, which compares with the figure of 15.7 for England and Wales.

Total deaths numbered 102 and the corrected death rate per 1,000 of the population comes to 11.64 which corresponds closely to the figure for England and Wales - 11.7.

The low Infantile Mortality rate of 14.11 per 1,000 live births represents a total of 2 infant deaths.

From the general mortality figures you will note that there were 2 deaths from Influenza and 2 from Respiratory Tuberculosis, but that the two largest groups are Cardio Vascular disease with 55 a malignant disease with 13.

### NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

With the exception of Whooping Cough, the incidence of Infectious Diseases was very low.

101 cases of Whooping Cough were recorded, the highest figure since 1950 when there were 116. Although there were no deaths, six patients were transferred to hospital. The majority of cases (67) occurred during March, April and May and the 5-10 age group was the hardest hit with 69.

Whooping Cough is a most tiresome disease for both parent and child, it is often accompanied by vomiting and may take weeks to clear up, but the modern whooping cough vaccine is most effective and parents should see that their children are immunised within the first year. The immunisation can be carried out either by the family doctor or at the Essex County Council Health Clinics.

Once again I can report a "nil" return for diphtheria and I am glad to see that the number of children immunised shows a considerable increase over 1955. Figures are given later in the report.

One case of Paralytic Poliomyelitis was recorded in a child of 5.

Small supplies of the new Poliomyelitis vaccine became available during the year and 39 Witham children received the full course of 2 injections. It is hoped that the vaccination campaign will be speeded up during 1957.

It is, of course, too soon to assess the value of the vaccine, but there is every reason to expect that it will be, at least, as effective as the American vaccine which has given up to 80% protection.

### ENVIROMENTAL HYGIENE.

The field of enviromental hygiene has been adequately surveyed by your Chief Public Health Inspector and you will find later in the report a great deal of statistical information on the routine work of the Department.

One of the big events of the year was the completion of the extensions and improvements to the Witham Sewage Works. There is no change to report with regard to water supplies: the water is tested regularly and is of excellent quality.

At the end of the year, there were still 141 applicants on the Council's waiting list, 9 fewer than in 1955. 37 new houses were built by the Council and 6 by private enterprise. In addition, 36 Council houses and were improved and 6 private houses were improved with the aid of grants given under the Housing Act of 1949. Further improvement schemes were in the course of preparation for about 100 pre-war Council houses.

Three Clearance Orders, comprising 11 houses, were confirmed by the Ministry.

The difficulties in connection with Meat Inspection were referred to in my two previous reports. They remain substantially the same, although the percentage of meat inspected has increased from 42% to 51%.

Instruments for recording Atmospheric Pollution were purchased and installed during the year.

The importance of clean food cannot be over emphasised and we welcome the Food Hygiene Regulations, 1955, which give us greater powers to see that high standards are maintained in food premises. The necessity of adequate protection of open food from dust and flies is stressed and it is now compulsory for hand washing facilities to be provided for persons who deal in 'open' food. Every effort has been made to make these regulations widely known and to see that they are duly complied with. The response from owners of food premises has been good.

It is a pleasure to record my thanks to the Chairman and members of the Public Health Committee for their encouragement and support, and to the officers of the Council, with special mention of Mr. Wadhams, for their unflinching help and co-operation.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

C.R.C. RAINSFORD.

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
Witham.

August, 1957.

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 has been one of steady progress and the generally satisfactory standards, previously reported, have been maintained.

In housing, a commencement has been made on the clearance programme approved by the Minister of Housing and Local Government, towards the elimination of the few remaining unfit dwellings. Reconditioning of suitable properties has continued and a considerable amount of improvement effected with the assistance of grants from the Council. While much remains to be done to bring older properties into good repair and up to modern standards, the housing conditions of the district, apart from a continued shortage of dwellings to let, are well above the average.

Inspection of food and supervision of food premises and distribution has been maintained and the implementation of the new food legislation is proceeding satisfactorily. It is a matter of regret, however, that it has not been possible to resume 100% inspection of food animals slaughtered, for reasons previously reported and outlined in a later section of this Report.

The completion of the Witham Sewage Works extension contract towards the end of the year has brought the Council's sewage disposal services to satisfactory capacity for the present population. While this new plant was long overdue, it is to be stressed that it has been no fault of the Council that its installation has been so long delayed.

Refuse collection and disposal and salvage recovery have continued satisfactorily, without any major alteration during the year, though the shortage of available tipping space is becoming acute and will have to receive serious consideration during 1957. A possible scheme for composting of sewage sludge with refuse, first considered during 1955, is still under investigation.

The draft scheme for rapid development of the district, to take surplus population from the over-populated districts, was still under consideration by the Government Departments at the end of the year. If such a scheme is to be implemented, major extension of all the Council's services will be required and preliminary consideration has already been given to these matters.



No changes took place in the Department's office staff during the year, though several changes occurred among the manual staff. It is largely due to the work and loyal support of my Assistants and workmen that I can continue to present satisfactory reports to the Council and I would like to express once again my appreciation of their work during the year.

I must also thank the Clerk of the Council, the Medical Officer of Health and the other Officers for their continued assistance and co-operation and add how much I have valued the support and encouragement accorded to me in my work by the Members of the Council and, in particular, the Members of the Public Health Committee.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

E.H.C. WADHAMS.

Chief Public Health Inspector.

STATISTICS AND LOCAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,329.
Population (Registrar-General's estimate)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8,840.
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2,796.
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£106,168.
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£410.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	
Legitimate	134.	71.	63.	
Illegitimate	7.	5.	2.	
Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population	...	...	...	15.95
Birth rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.09	...	...	...	17.38
Birth rate for England and Wales per 1,000 population	...	...	...	15.7

STILL BIRTHS:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	
Legitimate	-	-	-	
Illegitimate	-	-	-	
Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...	---
Rate per 1,000 total births England and Wales	...	...	...	23.0

MATERNAL MORTALITY:

Pregnancy, Childbirth and Abortion ... Nil.

INFANTILE MORTALITY:

Deaths of infants under 1 year:

	<u>Total.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	
Legitimate	2.	1.	1.	
Illegitimate	-	-	-	
Mortality rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births				14.99
Total infantile mortality rate per 1,000 live births				14.11
Infantile mortality for England and Wales per 1,000 live births				23.8

**DEATHS:**

	TOTAL.	Male.	Female.
...	102.	60.	42.

Death rate per 1,000 estimated population	...	...	...	11.53
Death rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.01	...	...	...	11.64
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.

STILL BIRTHS:

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population	...	...	...
Birth rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.01	...	...	...
Birth rate for England and Wales per 1,000 population	...	...	...

MATERNAL MORTALITY:

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...
Rate per 1,000 total births England and Wales	...	...	...

INFANTILE MORTALITY:

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Deaths of infants under 1 year	...	...	...
Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...
Rate per 1,000 live births England and Wales	...	...	...

DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES, 1956.

The Table below was compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar-General and the Classification is given under the thirty-six 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 ... ..	2	-
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 ... ..	1	-
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast ... ..	-	-
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus ... ..	-	1
14. Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms ... ..	5	4
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia ... ..	1	-
16. Diabetes ... ..	-	-
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system ... ..	7	5
18. Coronary disease, angina ... ..	8	7
19. Hypertension with heart disease ... ..	4	2
20. Other heart disease ... ..	8	9
21. Other circulatory disease ... ..	3	2
22. Influenza ... ..	1	1
23. Pneumonia ... ..	2	3
24. Bronchitis ... ..	2	3
25. Other Diseases of respiratory system ... ..	1	-
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ... ..	2	-
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea ... ..	-	-
28. Nephritis and nephrosis ... ..	1	-
29. Hyperplasia of prostate ... ..	-	-
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion ... ..	-	-
31. Congenital malformations ... ..	1	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases ... ..	9	3
33. Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	1	-
34. All other accidents ... ..	1	-
35. Suicide ... ..	-	-
36. Homicide and operations of war ... ..	-	-
All Causes	60	42

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.

			Attendance.
Child Welfare.	1st. and 3rd. Wednesdays.	2.00 p.m.	855.
Minor Ailments.	1st. and 3rd. Thursdays.	9.30 a.m.	102.
Dental.	Mon. Tues. Friday weekly.	10.00 a.m.	545.
Ante Natal.	1st. Thursday.	9.20 a.m.	8.

SILVER END: Garden Village Hall.

	1st. and 3rd. Friday.	2.15 p.m.	507.
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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 Essex County Council 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, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.

A new Public Health Laboratory opened in November, at Chelmsford. It will undertake both chemical and bacteriological examinations and will, I am sure, prove of great value.

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: These are held every Wednesday afternoon and the 2nd. and 4th. Tuesday mornings at the Essex County Health Services Clinic, Coggeshall Road, Braintree. Orthopaedic patients who need special advice are referred to Black Notley Hospital.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

DISEASES.	TOTAL NOTIFIED.	ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL.	TOTAL DEATHS.
Diphtheria ...	-	-	-
Dysentery ...	1	-	-
Encephalitis ...	-	-	-
Enteric Fever ...	-	-	-
Erysipelas ...	2	-	-
Food Poisoning ...	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	1	-	-
Measles ...	3	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-
Pneumonia ...	7	3	5
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	1	1	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever ...	1	-	-
Tuberculosis, pulmonary	8	4	2
Tuberculosis, non-pulmonary	-	-	-
Whooping Cough ...	101	6	-
Totals	125	14	7

	At all ages	under 1 yr.	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-35	35-45	45-65	65 & over.
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Food Poisoning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Measles	3	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	7	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	1	2
Puerperal Pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	2	1
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	101	6	5	9	5	8	63	3	-	1	-	1	-
Total	125	6	5	12	5	9	69	3	-	5	1	5	5

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED MONTH BY MONTH.

Disease.	Total Notified.	Month											
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Diphtheria ... ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery ... ..	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Encephalitis ... ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enteric Fever ... ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas ... ..	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning ... ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Measles ... ..	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia ... ..	7	1	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever ... ..	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	8	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	1	2	1	-
Tuberculosis, non-Pulmonary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough ... ..	101	-	-	9	27	31	7	8	1	3	3	5	7
<b>Totals ... ..</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>

TUBERCULOSIS.

The following Table gives particulars of the 8 cases of 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.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 - 5 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 10 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 - 15 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 20 years.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 - 35 years.	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
35 - 45 years.	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 65 years.	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
65 and over.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Of these cases, one was a case renotified on taking up residence in this district.



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.	
<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>
(a) 102.	(a) 67.	35.	36.	22.	20.	228.	85.
<u>Totals:</u> 1956: = 137.				<u>Totals:</u> 1956: = 250.			
1955: = 103.				1955: = 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.			
<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>
53.	26.	11.	10.	(b) 26.	(b) 5.
<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>
Reinforcing injections. 1.	3.	-	-	-	1.

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

VACCINATION AGAINST SMALLPOX.

	<u>1956.</u>	<u>1955.</u>
Number vaccinated during the year:	64.	82.
Number re-vaccinated during the year:	20.	28.

## HOUSING.

The reduction in Council House building, reported in 1955, continued during 1956 until, at the end of the year, no Council Houses were under construction.

During the year 1956, a further 37 Council Houses, including 5 flats, were completed and 6 houses were built by private enterprise. At the end of December there were no Council Houses and 10 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:	601	(including 84 prefabricated bungalows).
By private enterprise:	101	

The number of applicants for Council Houses was 141 at the end of 1956, compared with 150 at December 31st. 1955. This figure included the following categories:-

Ordinary list	75 applicants.
Aged persons	23
Single persons	4
Supplementary list	10
Exchange list	10
Engaged Couples list	16
Industrial Workers list	<u>3</u>
Total	<u>141</u>

At December 1956, the Council was preparing to undertake the erection of 84 further houses at the Howbridge Estate and it was hoped also to find a site for aged persons bungalows at Rivenhall. It is unlikely, however, that these schemes will be completed during 1957.

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.

Pre-War Council Houses: Further progress was made on schemes for the modernisation of over 200 of the Council's pre-war houses. The position at the end of the year was as follows:-

Improvements completed during the year:	36 houses.
Pail closet conversions to W.C's and drainage:	
(a) completed	12 houses.
(b) in progress	4 houses.

Schemes for 169 further houses were being prepared and considered at the end of the year. It should be added that the work has been held up by difficulty in obtaining loan sanctions, but better progress is expected during 1957.

## Housing and Public Health Acts:

Progress with regard to sub-standard private houses was continued. The following data shows the work undertaken during the year:-

(a) Clearance Orders )	8 houses vacated.
Compulsory Purchase Orders)	17 houses demolished.
	3 Orders (11 houses) made and confirmed
(b) Demolition Orders:	1 house demolished.
(c) Closing Orders:	1 house demolished voluntary by owner.
	1 Order made.
(d) Voluntary undertakings by Owners:	2 houses demolished.
	1 undertaking not to re-let accepted.

Schemes for the re-development of two Clearance Area sites, one as a subsidiary shopping centre and one as a car park, were completed during the year.

Implementation of the Council's provisional 5-year clearance programme is, therefore, well in hand.

The following Table summarises action taken in connection with the inspection of dwellinghouses during the year 1956:-

### 1. Inspection of dwellinghouses during the year:

(a) Total number inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... ..	96.
(b) Number found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ... ..	15.
(c) Number (exclusive of those referred to under sub-heading (b) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ... ..	41.

### 2. 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 ... ..	34.
(b) Number of other defective conditions remedied after informal action by Local Authority or its Officers ... ..	51.

### 3. Action under Statutory Powers - Housing Acts, 1936-54:

(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 ... ..	1.

- (d) Number of dwellinghouses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... Nil.
- (e) Number of undertakings accepted ... 1.

4. Number of dwellinghouses demolished:

- (a) In pursuance of Clearance Orders ... 17.
- (b) In pursuance of Demolition Orders ... 1.
- (c) Voluntarily by owners ... 3.

5. Overcrowding:

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

Improvement Grants: Housing Acts, 1949-1954:

During the year a number of applications for grant were received and dealt with. Details for 1955 and 1956 are as follows:-

	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>
Applications submitted in respect of:	10 houses.	8 houses.
Applications granted in respect of:	9 houses.	8 houses.
Applications refused in respect of:	1 house.	-----
Applications withdrawn in respect of:	-----	3 houses.
Improvement schemes completed in respect of	-----	12 houses.

Though the number of applications has been small, each one involves a very considerable amount of work for the Department's staff, both in checking plans and specifications and tenders, and in supervising the work when carried out. While it is to be hoped that these improvements will be undertaken on an increasingly wide scale, the extent to which they can be effected must to some extent be limited by the Department's ability to cope with applications as well as by the amount of rate fund money allocated by the Council for the purpose. To date, the Council's liability for loan repayment on grants approved does not exceed  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate.

Housing (Repairs and Rents) Act, 1954:

During the year, no Certificates of Disrepair under the above Act were issued by the Council.

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. 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 indicated by the following table.

Samples submitted:

	<u>Satisfactory.</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
<b>1. <u>Mains Water.</u></b>			
Chemical ... ..	3.	-	3.
Bacteriological ...	32.	-	32.
<b>2. <u>Other Supplies.</u></b>			
Chemical ... ..	1.	1.	2.
Bacteriological ...	<u>4.</u>	<u>2.</u>	<u>6.</u>
Totals	<u>40.</u>	<u>3.</u>	<u>43.</u>

The three unsatisfactory samples were from private well supplies, serving five dwellings. The occupiers have been warned that the water should be boiled before consumption or domestic use. The Council are considering, with the property owners concerned, the possibility of extending the public main to the area.

House Connections etc.

Number of separate dwellings in the Urban District	...	...	...	2796.
Number of separate dwellings having internal piped mains supply	...	...	...	2746.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	8681.
Number of separate dwellings connected during the year	...	...	...	45.
Number of separate dwellings served by standpipe	...	...	...	17.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	54.
Remaining houses served by shallow wells or springs	...	...	...	33.
Estimated population so served	...	...	...	105.

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

3"	...	...	...	...	...	...	467 yards.
4"	...	...	...	...	...	...	396 yards.
6"	...	...	...	...	...	...	402 yards.

Water Consumption and Future Requirements:

Total water supplied by:

1. Bradwell Springs:

(a) To Silver End (estimated) ...	31,512,333 gallons.
(b) To remainder of Urban District ...	63,024,667 gallons.

2. South Essex Water Company ...	60,337,190 gallons.
3. ex Braintree R.D.C. Main (Bradwell) ...	<u>158,100</u> gallons.

Total consumption ... 155,032,290 gallons.

Average consumption per head per day:

Domestic demand ...	29.63 gallons.
Trade demand ...	18.64 gallons.
Average total consumption per head per day	48.27 gallons.

The average consumption shows a decrease of .34 gallons per head per day. During the 10 year period, January 1947 to December 1956, 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. 1956:-

Houses connected to main sewer systems	2669.
Houses drained to septic tank systems	13.
Houses drained to cesspools	94.
Houses drained to ditches	15.
Houses without drainage	<u>5.</u>
Total	<u>2796.</u>

Of the 127 properties not at present connected to the sewer, a few are capable of connection. There will then remain about 100 agricultural and isolated properties for which no economic sewerage scheme appears to be possible. The figure is unlikely to alter radically and may even be increased 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 and is now operating fully. Almost all properties capable of connection have been connected to the system, but not all are yet provided with bathrooms. Closet conversion to the 40 pre-war Council houses were completed during the year and a contract had been let for the conversion and connection of the Rivenhall Primary School sanitary accommodation early in 1957.

#### Sewer Extensions.

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

##### Soil Sewers.

6 in.	...	...	...	195 yards.
9 in.	...	...	...	135 yards.
12 in.	...	...	...	110 yards.

#### 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.

During the year the works extension contract was almost completed and in November the new plant was officially opened at a special meeting of the Council, when the Members inspected the works with their Officers, the Consulting Engineers and the works Contractors.

The new plant will, on final completion, have cost about £55,000. It comprises new pumphouse and pumping plant, flow recorder, screens, constant flow detritus channels, vertical flow settlement tanks, rotary filter beds and vertical flow humus tanks, with storm overflow tanks on both trunk sewer outfalls. Its designed capacity is 250,000 gallons per day dry weather flow, which at the time the scheme was prepared in 1951 allowed some 10% margin over current requirements, but this margin had already been largely taken up by the development of the district during the intervening years. The widespread use of detergents during recent years is also thought to have imposed slight extra load on the works. The plant can therefore be regarded as adequate for little more than the present population it serves. It was already apparent, by December 1956, that even with the new sludge drying beds, some difficulty might be experienced in handling the greatly increased amount of sludge now separated from the sewage.

The new works had not been fully operating long enough by the end of the year to reach full purification efficiency, but should do so during 1957, when a marked improvement in effluent quality is to be expected.

The plant has been designed by the Council's Consulting Engineers, Messrs. Pick, Everard, Keay & Gimson of Leicester and the principal Contractors were as follows:-

Civil Engineering Works	Bosworth and Wakeford, Ltd. Daventry, Northants.
Cast Iron Pipes	The Stanton Ironworks Co. Ltd. Nr. Nottingham.
Sewage Pumping Machinery	Wallwin (Pumps) Ltd. Warwick.
Valves and Fittings	Hartleys (Stoke-on-Trent) Ltd. Stoke-on-Trent.
Distributors	Adams Hydraulics, Ltd. York.

The works have been designed and constructed to allow of second and third stage extensions, if required, for future development of the town.

#### Farmland:

The Council continued the cultivation and cropping of their land adjoining the Witham works. The 1955-56 cropping season was not favoured by good weather and in the circumstances a satisfactory harvest resulted. The crops produced a net profit to the Council of £279. 4s. 4d., from the 18 acres under cultivation. The crops grown were wheat (14 acres) and runner beans (4 acres). For the 1956-57 season it is proposed to sow wheat, runner beans and, for the first time, sugar beet. The last crop has been chosen as a possible substitute for flax, for which there is now no demand.

The experimental cultivation of refuse tipland, again with wheat, was extended to about three acres and was successful, a satisfactory crop being recovered. The Council therefore propose to continue the experiment during 1957. It is hoped 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 nine 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 ... ..	229.	14.	5.	-	-	-
1955-56.	Wheat, runner beans ... ..	279.	4.	4.	-	-	-
		1546.	9.	-	58.	7.	7.

Net profit ... .. £1488. 1. 5.

Net annual profit ... .. £165. 8. 7.

#### 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 to prepare a scheme of extension and improvement to cope with present and expected development, when the latter is more clearly defined. Trade flows to these works, which have been of some concern to the Council during past years, will be brought under control by agreement with the Company concerned during 1957, following a very detailed investigation of flows and characteristics, which is now almost complete.

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, which had given recurrent ponding trouble over several years have both been rebuilt and were operating satisfactorily by the end of the year.

#### RIVENHALL SEWAGE WORKS.

This modern plant operated successfully throughout the year, at the end of which it was estimated to be receiving about 80% of its designed dry weather flow (18,000 gallons per day).

Difficulties with separation of humus have been overcome by adjustment

of dosing rates, but the plant continues to produce more sludge than the drying beds can cope with. One additional sludge lagoon has therefore been constructed with Departmental labour, and it is expected that a further one will be required during 1957.

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	20.	40.	60.
Silver End Sewage Works	6.	1.	7.
Rivenhall Sewage Works	5.	1.	6.
Totals	<u>31.</u>	<u>42.</u>	<u>73.</u>

#### DRAINAGE OF TRADE PREMISES.

Investigation and control of trade discharges from local industries has been maintained throughout the year. It is worthy of note that, for the size of the district, disproportionate amounts and varieties of industrial wastes are produced. Moreover, the waste producing processes are constantly being altered, extended or supplemented, in the development of the industries concerned (mainly metal processing, pickling and plating) which necessitates constant vigilance to protect the relatively small sewage plants at Witham and Silver End from adverse effect. Fortunately, a close and amicable liaison with the factory managements concerned has facilitated this work and joint investigation of its problems has led to mutually satisfactory solutions. Contact is also maintained in this matter with the pollution officers of the Essex River Board and the Board's requirements as to trade waste content of sewage effluents have been taken into account in framing control and treatment measures.

The most important wastes under supervision during the year were as follows:-

- (1) Witham: (a) Galvanising: ) Treatment, control and discharge by  
 (b) Anodising: ) agreement with the Company. Disposal of  
 (c) Etch Wash: ) sludges and other wastes by tanker, as  
 (d) Electro-plating: ) rechargeable work.
- (e) Grain Washing: Treated and discharged under Agreement.
- (f) Fruit Processing: )  
 (g) Maltings: ) Under supervision and investigation.  
 (h) High-class plating: )

In addition, the wastes from a local abattoir and hide-salting establishment are kept under observation, the former because of the high organic content of the waste flows and the latter because of organic content and strength of chloride.

- (2) Silver End: (a) Galvanising: ) All these processes, in the same factory,  
 (b) Sherardising: ) have been fully investigated during the  
 (c) Bronzing: ) year and agreement has been reached with  
 (d) Case Hardening: ) the Company's Officers as to the necessary  
 (e) Metal Polishing ) treatment and control measures. It is  
 and Plating: ) hoped to seal an Agreement between the  
 Council and the Company under the Public  
 Health (Drainage of Trade Premises) Act,  
 1937, early in 1957.

- (3) There are no industrial wastes discharging to the Council's sewer system at Rivenhall.

The Department's work under this heading during the past ten years is now showing to good effect. The recurrent adverse effect of industrial wastes on sewers, sewage works and in the local rivers, which occurred periodically during and after the war has been eliminated and the risk of such occurrences reduced to a minimum. It is to the credit of the Council and the Companies concerned that this has been effected in a spirit of goodwill and co-operation.

#### 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 employed on collection of refuse, 8 and 11 cubic yards capacity respectively. The smaller of the two, purchased in 1946, is still giving good service, but is approaching the end of its useful life.

#### Disposal:

Controlled tipping has continued throughout the year on the Council's land adjoining the river Blackwater, where marshland is being made up. Tipping in this area will add some 10 acres of useful agricultural land to that now farmed at the adjoining sewage works. Unused tipping space at this site at December, 1956, was adequate for two years disposal and the acquisition of a future tip site has now become a necessity. Further marshland meadow, liable to flooding, is available at the confluence of the rivers Brain and Blackwater and the Council is conducting negotiations with a view to its possible use as a tip site.

Further consideration was given by the Council during the year to the possibility of a refuse separation and sewage sludge composting scheme, it being thought that the extensively agricultural and horticultural nature of the area would enable ready disposal of a good compost of stable quality. On the information then available, it appeared that while a sound scheme was possible for a population of about 15,000, it might be more difficult to design an economic plant for the present population of the Urban District. However, the development of such processes is still in its infancy. The principle of returning useful organic residues to the soil, if it can be done safely and economically, cannot be gainsaid. Other possible advantages include increased recovery of salvageable materials, drastic reduction of tipping space requirements and the whole or partial elimination of unpleasant and costly methods of sludge disposal. The Council has therefore instructed their officers to undertake further investigation of the matter during 1957.

#### 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 1956-57 financial year, given in the following Table, show a slight increase in income. A profit of £500. 15. 2d. accrued to the Council, after bonus of £460. 19. 1d. was paid to the collection staff. Some expenditure was incurred in improvements to the Depot and Maldon Road and a further baling press was purchased.

Commodity.	1955-56.						1956-57.					
	Weights.			Value.			Weights.			Value.		
	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	£	s.	d.	tons.	cwts.	qrs.	£	s.	d.
Waste Paper	143.	18.	-	1343.	4.	10.	152.	19.	3.	1361.	5.	11.
Bones	2.	1.	1.	11.	17.	3.	1.	13.	1.	8.	15.	4.
Rags	3.	18.	3.	152.	5.	-	4.	14.	1.	165.	3.	1.
Sacking	1.	8.	3.	8.	12.	6.	2.	5.	1.	13.	10.	9.
Iron	75.	10.	-	339.	16.	-	67.	3.	3.	297.	7.	-
Metals	1.	1.	-	160.	15.	9.	1.	8.	1.	187.	17.	2.
Jars	1.	4.	-	7.	14.	-	)	2.	10.	18.	1.	6.
Bottles	1.	-	-	5.	15.	9.						
Miscellaneous				7.	5.	-				10.	15.	-
Totals	230.	1.	3.	2037.	6.	1.	232.	14.	2.	2062.	15.	9.

It is thought that the year's return from salvage would have been higher but for the fact that a quota restriction on despatches of waste paper was imposed in July, 1956. This was said to be due, not to lack of demand, but to the incapacity of the pulping mills to handle more raw material. It is hoped that the extension of pulping plant in different parts of the country will allow the lifting of the quota towards the end of 1957.

#### Cesspool, Gulley Emptying and Sewer Flushing.

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

Domestic emptyings (free service):	155 cesspools, 203 loads, 203,000 glns.
Rechargeable work:	237 cesspools, 359 loads, 359,000 glns.
Trade Waste removal:	<u>496 loads, 496,000 glns.</u>

392 cesspools, 1058 loads, 1,058,000 glns.

The liquid wastes removed are disposed of at the Council's refuse tip by the adoption of a special tipping routine to form large lagoons on the tip land, as previously described. This method has proved satisfactory and economic.

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 four occasions.

The vehicle, an 1,100 gallons cesspool/gulley emptier is also used on any required emergency work on sewers and sewage disposal, involving emptying of tanks or manholes. It has been in constant full-time use ever since its purchase in 1949 and the enormous amount of useful work it has performed, coupled with its reliability and economy of maintenance, have fully justified its high initial cost. It is to be expected that a certain amount of overhaul and reconditioning will soon be required. The cost of this will be offset by the completion of the 7-year loan repayment and it is expected that the vehicle will continue to give satisfactory service for some years to come.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

A total of 5931 visits and inspections were made during the year, as follows:-

Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	...	863.
Public Health Acts	...	...	...	...	...	343.
Verminous Premises	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Complaints	...	...	...	...	...	63.
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	...	566.
Butchers' Shops	...	...	...	...	...	11.
Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	40.
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Restaurants	...	...	...	...	...	48.
Ice-Cream Vendors	...	...	...	...	...	26.
Licensed Premises	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Food Preparation Premises	...	...	...	...	...	41.
Dairies	...	...	...	...	...	8.
Milkshops	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Sampling: Ice-Cream	...	...	...	...	...	30.
Water	...	...	...	...	...	43.
Sewage effluents	...	...	...	...	...	80.
Shops Acts	...	...	...	...	...	37.
Factories	...	...	...	...	...	78.
Infectious Disease	...	...	...	...	...	23.
Water Supplies	...	...	...	...	...	43.
Drains and Sewers: Inspected	...	...	...	...	...	411.
Tested	...	...	...	...	...	50.
Cesspools, Septic Tanks, Pail Closets	...	...	...	...	...	26.
Refuse Tips	...	...	...	...	...	132.
Sewage Works	...	...	...	...	...	297.
Salvage	...	...	...	...	...	124.
Rodent Control	...	...	...	...	...	2243.
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	...	...	...	...	20.
Offensive Accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	43.
Stables and Pig Styes	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	12.
Places of Amusement	...	...	...	...	...	9.
Council House Applicants	...	...	...	...	...	12.
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	...	...	188.

In addition, a total of 913 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, 1955	...	...	...	30.
Number of Intimation Notices served during the year	...	...	...	74.
Number of Statutory Notices served during the year	...	...	...	3.
Number of Notices complied with during the year	...	...	...	91.
Number of Notices outstanding on Books, 31st. December, 1956	...	...	...	16.

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

Dampness, rising and penetrative	...	...	...	...	...	7.
Defective roofs, parapets, gutters, R.W.P's etc.	...	...	...	...	...	27.
Defective brickwork, rendering and pointing etc.	...	...	...	...	...	21.
Defective ceilings and walls	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Defective doors, windows and floors	...	...	...	...	...	4.
Defective cooking ranges, firegrates and flues	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Defective W.C. Structures	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Drainage defects	...	...	...	...	...	40.
Sewer connections/conversions	...	...	...	...	...	10.
Inadequate means for disposal of roof water	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Defective stopcock	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Offensive ditches	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Offensive accumulations	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Ill-effects of fumes from factory	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Absence/Defective condition of dustbins.	...	...	...	...	...	72.
Nuisance from keeping of animals, poultry or pigeons	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Infestations: Rats and Mice	...	...	...	...	...	342.
Vermin and Insects (including woodworm)	...	...	...	...	...	53.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

During the year, a total of 78 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 were kept under observation. At the end of 1956, the number of outworkers on the register was 295, comprising

	<u>Witham U.D.C.</u>	<u>Other Local Authorities.</u>
Glove manufacturers	58.	229.
Seed Merchants	6.	-
Lampshades	2.	-

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

### Means of Escape in Case of Fire.

An effort has been made during the year to complete the surveys of factories for the issue of statutory Certificates. The very considerable amount of work involved in these surveys, especially in the case of large factories with constantly changing layouts, has prevented any rapid progress in this respect. Despite the assurance of the Minister of Labour and National Service that plans need not be prepared in all cases, it has been found impracticable to prepare a lucid schedule for a large factory without such a plan for reference. However, much of the survey work has now been done and it is proposed to continue, as time allows, until all the registered factories requiring certificates have been dealt with.

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 Public Health Inspectors.

Premises.	Number on Register.	Number of		
		Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	4.	4.	Nil.	Nil.
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority	50.	66.	3.	Nil.
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority (excluding outworkers).	6.	8.	Nil.	Nil.
	60.	78.	3.	Nil.



2. CASES in which DEFECTS were found.

	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 temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7) --					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	-	1	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	-	2	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	1	1	-	1	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	7	7	-	4	-

SHOPS ACTS.

In addition to the normal duties of the local authorities, under the Shops Act, 1950, the Council has 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.

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

Routine inspections	37.
Dampness	2.
Structural defects	6.
Washing facilities	2.
Sanitary accommodation	3.
Drainage	4.
Shop reconditioning and modernisation	3.

## MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

The Council's caravan site, for 12 trailer caravans, remained fully occupied during the year. On this site, plots are let to 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.

Demand for plots remains high and the site continues to serve a useful purpose while the rents received amply cover the expenses involved.

Where private sites are licensed by the Council, they require to be satisfied as 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.

The seasonal arrival of gypsy type vans occurs each year. Usually these vans remain for very short periods and control of them is necessarily limited to supervision and prevention of nuisance.

## INSECT PESTS.

The following cases of infestation were dealt with:-

Crickets	...	...	4.	Flying Ants	...	...	5.
Flies	...	...	2.	Ants	...	...	17.
Woodworm	...	...	10.	Wasps	...	...	6.
Cockroaches	...	...	2.	Earwigs	...	...	3.
Maggots	...	...	1.	Moths	...	...	1.
Mosquitoes	...	...	2.				

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, cyanide preparations and pyrethrum compounds.

## 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		791.
Treatment visits		1570.
Infestations found:	Mice	21.
	Minor	319.
	Major	2.
Bodies recovered:	Mice	61.
	Rats	772.
Estimated kill:	Rats	1311.

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

	<u>Witham.</u>	<u>Silver End.</u>
Manholes, test baited	12.	12.
Manholes, test baited showing takes	1.	3.
Manholes, poison baited	4.	9.
Manholes, poison baited showing takes	1.	3.
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. Commercial and industrial infestations are dealt with on a rechargeable basis.

Seasonal infestations, occurring each autumn and early winter, indicate that constant control of rodents in the large agricultural areas of the district is essential if heavy infestations of the residential areas is to be avoided. The responsible authority for rodent control on such land is at present the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Should this Ministry relinquish its contract disinfection service, it would be advisable for the Council to consider the extension of the present local service to cover agricultural property and land.

#### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

##### Meat Inspection.

Only one slaughterhouse was operating during the year, though another remained licensed but unused. None of the district butchers found it necessary to use local slaughtering facilities, which confirmed the Council's decision in 1954 that no additional facilities were required in the Urban District.

In meat inspection, the unsatisfactory position prevailing at the end of 1955 continued throughout 1956. 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, as 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.

For various reasons and in spite of further representations from the Council, the management has again been unwilling or unable to organise the throughput on uniform basis. Slaughtering is heavy and sporadic, often late in the day or overnight and continuous throughout weekends. The Table below will show that the total of animals killed has risen since decontrol by about 25%, but inspection, which had been maintained since 1945 at 100%, has unavoidably dropped since private slaughtering recommenced. The year's percentage of inspection is rather higher than that for 1955, but is still far from satisfactory. 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 long promised new Regulations governing slaughterhouses would enable them to arrange more satisfactory control.

Comparative Slaughtering Figures 1938-1956.

	<u>1938.</u>	<u>1952.</u>	<u>1953.</u>	<u>1954.</u>	<u>1955.</u>	<u>1956.</u>
Cattle	782.	2531.	2337.	1878.	1262.	1592.
Calves	135.	1376.	861.	719.	987.	1705.
Sheep and Lambs	2438.	3529.	3704.	3625.	2875.	5629.
Pigs	2266.	1701.	3328.	6256.	7372.	2991.
Goats	—	3.	1.	1.	—	—
Totals	5561.	9140.	10231.	12479.	12496.	11917.
Percentage inspected	100.	100.	100.	81.	42.6	51.4

Licensing: Slaughterhouses and Slaughtermen:

At 31st. December, 1956, the following licences were in operation:-

Slaughterhouses 2.                      Slaughtermen 5.

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

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows and Bulls.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.	Total
Number killed	596.	996	1705	5629	2991	11917
Number inspected	360	741	880	2991	1157	6129.
<u>All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	5	3	1	3	12
Weight in lbs. condemned	-	2592	122	60	410	3184
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	59	288	10	97	26	480
Weight in lbs. condemned	733	4468	92	416	200	5909
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis or cysticerci	16.39	39.54	1.48	3.27	2.50	
<u>Tuberculosis only</u>						
Whole carcasses condemned	-	1	-	-	-	1
Weight in lbs. condemned	-	618	-	-	-	618
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	17	93	-	-	4	114
Weight in lbs. condemned	690	3064	-	-	45	3799
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	4.72	12.68	-	-	.34	
<u>Cysticercosis</u>						
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	-	1	-	-	-	1
Carcasses submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	1	-	-	-	1
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-	-

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

## 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, 1949-1953:-

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

No unsatisfactory conditions were found during 1956, and samples of milk retailed in the district were reported by the laboratory as satisfactory.

## 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, 1956, was as follows:-

Manufacturers	Nil.
Vendors only	33.
Registered premises	33.

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. 30 such samples were taken during the year and the results were as follows:-

<u>Bacteriologist's description.</u>	<u>Fruit Ices.</u>	<u>Ministry of Health's Provisional Grading.</u>				<u>Total.</u>
		I.	II.	III.	IV.	
Satisfactory	12	18	-	-	-	30
Passable	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unsatisfactory	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	12	18	-	-	-	30

These results show a marked improvement over those for 1955, when about 30% of samples were regarded as unsatisfactory.

By arrangement with three adjoining authorities, the Council maintains stocks of CO<sub>2</sub> refrigerant, which is available to all the Public Health Inspectors concerned for the maintenance of samples at low temperature during despatch to laboratory.

## HYGIENE OF FOOD PREPARATION PREMISES.

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

Restaurants	9.
Factory and School Canteens	11.
Manufacturing Butchers	7.
Bakehouses	3.
Fried Fish Shops	3.
Retail Butchers' Shops	7.
Other Retail Food Shops	41.
Retail Wet Fish Shops	2.
Licensed Premises	18.

In addition, a number of mobile food vans tour the area. There is no food market in Witham, but a number of food stalls are beginning to appear seasonably on the trunk road, A.12.

All are subject to inspection, 171 visits having been made during the year. All food handling firms and establishments have been circularised, notifying the requirements of the Food and Drugs Acts and the Food Hygiene Regulations and implementation of the new provisions is proceeding satisfactorily. The Council has adopted Byelaws for Food Handling and Distribution and the Public Health Department maintains contact with all food handlers on matters of food hygiene. Difficulty has been experienced with one large transport cafe, where the intermittent intensity of the summer coach trade tends to overwhelm all normal hygiene routine. This establishment will be under new management during 1957 and it is hoped that considerable improvements will then be effected. A number of warnings concerning other matters have been issued during the year, but formal action was not necessary. Relations with the trade have been good and conditions can be regarded as generally satisfactory.

The Table below shows defects and other conditions required to be remedied during the year:-

Re-design and modernisation of:	
Food Shops	6.
Licensed Premises	1.
Structural defects	2.
Defective/Inadequate sanitary accommodation	1.
Defective/Inadequate sink drainage facilities	3.
Defective/Inadequate hot water and washing facilities	4.

### Registration of Food Preparation Premises:

Operation of Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, is precluded by the effect of the Essex County Council Act, 1933, Part IX governing the registration of ice-cream manufacturers, vendors etc. It is proposed during 1957 to consider whether to apply to the Minister of Health for an Order making Section 16 operative in the Urban District.

### Sampling.

No formal samples were taken under Section 91 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, but a number of informal samples have been submitted at the request of members of the public. In no case has adulteration or unfitness have been confirmed. Further, the Sampling Officers of the Food and Drugs Authority (the Essex County Council) have reported no unsatisfactory results from their routine sampling in the district.

### Condemnation of Food (other than Meat).

Long standing contact with the local food establishments has resulted in regular notification to the Public Health Department of all unfit and suspected foods. A considerable quantity is voluntarily surrendered for condemnation in this manner and the effectiveness of the system is indicated by the fact that no unfit food was found during routine inspections. The Department takes possession of all food surrendered and arranges for its disposal at the refuse tip. 5 cwts. 27 lbs. of various foods were dealt with in this way during 1956.

### ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION.

Following the Council's decision, in 1955, to participate in the Essex Smoke Plan organised by the County Council, arrangements were completed by the end of 1956, for recording to commence on 1/1/1957. The Plan is designed to coordinate recordings by local authorities throughout the County in order to assess the general degree of pollution and the effect on the County as a whole of the highly industrial Thameside and Metropolitan areas.

The contribution of the Witham Urban District Council to the Plan will be the establishment of the following recording stations:-

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Witham (West):    | One Deposit gauge.<br>One Lead Peroxide Instrument. |
| 2. Witham (Central): | One Daily Instrument (Smoke and SO <sub>2</sub> ).  |
| 3. Rivenhall:        | One Daily Instrument (Smoke and SO <sub>2</sub> ).  |

The stations lie roughly from South-West to North-East along the line of the prevailing wind and will constitute part of the main chain of stations throughout the County.

I think it is to the credit of this small authority, itself not unduly affected by atmospheric pollution problems, that it should undertake such a considerable commitment in the wider interests of public health.

Of the few local industrial furnaces, the smoke emitted by three has been the subject of observation and discussion during the year. In two cases improvement has been achieved, though further observation is going on. In the third case, that of a newly erected boiler-plant, smoke and ash control has been consistently so poor that negotiations are in hand with the installation firm regarding the need for radical and early improvement.



In the town of Witham itself, the most obvious polluting influences are smoke from the main line railway and petrol and diesel fumes from the traffic using the trunk road A.12, which passes through the centre of the town. The operation of the Clean Air Act, 1956, and the later proposed conversion from steam to electricity will probably reduce pollution from the railway, but it would appear that nothing less than the building of the long awaited Witham by-pass will eliminate the heavy concentrations of noxious traffic fumes to which the town is now intermittently subjected. Emphasis on these points should not disguise the fact that the domestic chimney is still a major contributor to air pollution. In an area such as Witham, however, situated in open country and subject to no significant impurity load, the need for rapid evolution from the use of bituminous coal and inefficient open fires is not acute.

#### STAFF.

As stated in the introduction, there was no change in the Department's office staff during the year. Mr. H. Batteson, appointed Additional Public Health Inspector in July 1955, has become conversant with the district and has done some very good work, particularly on housing improvements, meat and food inspection, drainage work and factory inspection. He will also be mainly responsible for the maintenance of the smoke recording programme commencing in January, 1957.

The Senior Clerical Assistant, Mr. R.G. Chapman, of whose work and loyal support I cannot speak too highly, has now completed nine years of very worthy service and it is largely due to his intimate knowledge of the Department's work and ready grasp of essentials that the day-to-day routine of the Department and its services has been maintained so smoothly.

The Junior Clerical Assistant, Mr. M.G. Blizzard, also appointed in 1955, has shown himself to be keen and conscientious and his contribution to the work of the Department is of increasing value. With the Council's approval and assistance, he has commenced a three year course of studies in Building and Physics, prior to undertaking the training course and qualifying examination for Public Health Inspectors.

Mr. T. Thorpe, the Sewage Works Manager, has maintained his enviably good record throughout a difficult year, despite the handicap of temporary ill-health. He has enthusiastically tackled all the problems arising from the coming into operation of the new Witham plant and from continued shortage of good-class labour. For the proper performance of his duties and the important works he superintends, it will be essential to provide him with some skilled assistance during 1957.

Difficulty has again been experienced in finding suitable replacement manual staff and though there has been some improvement in this respect, it is obvious that basic wage rates for refuse and sewage services are still not attractive enough to overcome an understandable reluctance to engage in this type of work. The margin of the labour establishment of the Department is therefore in a constant state of flux, with resulting disturbance of routine.

The older men are gradually reaching retiring age and though a number of young men have joined the staff during the last two years, it is still necessary to employ men over retiring age and part-time pensioners. In these conditions, it is to the great credit of the main body of the men that the Department's services have been maintained efficiently without major interruption during the course of the year. The salvage bonus paid to the refuse staff since 1948 has been a great encouragement and incentive to those receiving it and has undoubtedly contributed very greatly to the stability of this service. So far as sewage disposal is concerned, it has become obvious that means must be found to attract more highly skilled and intelligent men to maintain the efficiency of the modern and complicated treatment plants now in operation. In this respect, the mechanisation of as much work as possible will undoubtedly assist and more importance must in future be attached to having sufficient tools and machines available for use when required rather than to the overall amount of work to be performed annually by any one machine. Too much of the arduous and unpleasant work of the disposal services still has to be done by hand and labour for this type of work will continue to become increasingly difficult to obtain.

Lastly, the fact that I have had to emphasise certain difficulties should not be allowed to detract any credit from the work performed by the staff of the Department as a whole. My own work has been rendered easier and more pleasant by their willingness and loyal support at all times.

Details of the Department's staff at 31st. December, 1956, were:-

- Office: Chief Public Health Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector.  
Additional Public Health Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector.  
Senior Clerical Assistant.  
Junior Clerical Assistant.
- Cleansing: 1 Foreman.  
1 Tip-Chargehand.  
1 Refuse Loader/Chargehand.  
2 Driver/Loaders.  
1 Relief Driver/Loader.  
1 Gulley Emptier Driver.  
3 Refuse Loaders.  
1 Tiphand.  
1 Gulley Emptier Attendant.  
1 Labourer (Part-time).
- 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 45 years.

