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WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1970

together with the

REPORT OF THE

CHIEF PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR



BRAINTREE, DUNMOW AND WITHAM  
UNITED DISTRICTS

With the Compliments  
of  
The Medical Officer of Health

Public Health Department  
Town Hall  
Braintree

Braintree  
226

WITHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILPUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE 1970 - 1971

## Chairman:

Councillor R. Berry

## Members:

Councillor R.V.C. Brown (Chairman of the Council) (ex officio)  
 Councillor J.E.B. Gyford  
 Councillor J.R.F. Keeling  
 Councillor I. Kinloch (Vice Chairman of the Council) (ex officio)  
 Councillor Mrs. J.M. Lyon  
 Councillor E.A. Pryor  
 Councillor D.L. Williams

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS

## Medical Officer of Health:

Elizabeth J. Vaughan, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

## Chief Public Health Inspector:

E.H.C. Wadhams, F.R.S.H., F.A.P.H.I., F.I.P.H.E.

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

D. Stedman, M.A.P.H.I.

## Additional Public Health Inspector:

J.Y. Anderson, C.R.S.H. (to 13th June, 1970)

P.B. Shailer, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I. (from 9th November, 1970)

## Technical Assistant:

A.G.G. OniBiyo

## Clerical Assistants:

Mrs. E. J. Woolnough (to 31st July, 1970)

Mrs. E. Moore (from 7th September, 1970)

Mrs. D. P. Welham

## Refuse/Sewage Disposal Manager:

H. A. Diaper, M.R.S.H.

## Fitter/Relief Manager:

R. Coupe

## Laboratory Assistant:

R. Robinson



Public Health Department,  
Town Hall,  
Braintree,  
Essex.  
CM7 6HB

September 1971

To the Chairman and Members of  
Witham Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting for your information the Annual Report for 1970 on the health, vital statistics and sanitary circumstances of Witham Urban District.

I am grateful to Dr. J. A. Slattery, Area Medical Officer, Mid-Essex, for providing statistics relating to work carried out at Essex County Council clinics in the area.

#### VITAL STATISTICS

The Registrar General's mid-year estimate of population is 16,270 which is an increase of 3,190 over 1969, and is double the figure for 1947 when the population for the area was 8,144.

416 live births were recorded giving an increase of 10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> above 1969 and a corrected birth rate for 1970 of 25.3, which is more than half as much again as the birth rate for England and Wales per 1,000 population which is 16.0.

There was a steep rise in infant deaths with 13 in 1970 compared with 3 in 1969. Causes of these deaths were 4 congenital heart disease (2 with pneumonia), 5 prematurity (one with respiratory distress syndrome), 1 asphyxia (drowning; inattention at birth), 1 hydrocephalus with meningomyelocele, and 1 myelocytic leukaemia with congestive heart failure. The infant mortality rate for the area is therefore 31 compared with 18 for England and Wales. 5 deaths occurred in both the first and third quarters of the year, 1 in the second and 2 in the fourth quarter.

The general mortality rate (corrected) was 12.2 compared with 11.7 for England and Wales. Coronary heart disease was again the commonest cause of death from which 28 men and 11 women died compared with 16 men and 7 women in 1969. Prevention of heart attacks in middle life is associated with the need for regular physical exercise and correct diet with avoidance of smoking and also of frequent anxiety and tension which is often the result of taking on too much in life.

The work of Witham Safety Committee was a valuable contribution to the health of the community in 1970. Accidents in the home, on the road, at work and elsewhere have contributed nationally to a surgical epidemic, and the outcome for the patient can be deformity, disfigurement, emotional disturbance, mental retardation or death. Interest in preventive medicine, including the diseases of middle and late life, is not nationally linked with similar interest in preventive surgery, yet through accidents young life is frequently lost in ways that could be prevented by greater perception and foresight followed by appropriate action. In Britain the number of deaths from accidents in the home exceeds the number of deaths on the road, but in 1970 in Witham there were 3 deaths in motor vehicle accidents and only 1 death from all other accidents.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASE

During the year 178 cases of measles were notified to me, 3 cases of food poisoning, 3 of dysentery and 3 of pulmonary tuberculosis.

There was continued anxiety in Europe due to the westward spread of El Tor cholera during the present seventh pandemic. It seems reasonable to anticipate no large scale epidemics of this disease in Britain in the future due to our relatively safe food and water supplies. There are likely however to be isolated cases and perhaps small outbreaks of cholera here associated with international travel. During 1848-9 when water was infected 53,300 people in England died from cholera.

STAFF MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

In 1970 staff medical examinations continued to be carried out relating to the Superannuation Act, the licensing of Heavy Goods Vehicle drivers and other matters.

ENVIRONMENTAL HYGIENE

The year was the last during which water was supplied by the Urban District Council. It was a wholesome water, hard but unfortunately still grossly deficient in fluoride and therefore it did not give protection in early life against dental decay later.

Your Chief Public Health Inspector has referred to the fact that 1970 was the last year in which the Public Health Department was responsible for sewage disposal and refuse collection and disposal. I shared the enthusiasm of Mr. Wadhams for a modern hygienic system of mechanical refuse disposal such as he recommended to the Council and also his disappointment when the scheme was rejected. This would have been a fine contribution from Witham towards European Conservation Year.

6½2 houses were built during the year and of the Council's erections all houses as well as old persons flatlets were intended for G.L.C nominees under the Town Development Scheme, none for local residents.

My main concern regarding atmospheric pollution in Witham in 1970 continued to relate to autopollution caused by tobacco smoking. The disease this habit is related to include coronary heart disease, lung cancer, bronchitis and emphysema. In spite of warnings at both national and local levels many people in the town adopted the Russian roulette attitude towards life by starting or continuing to smoke. When smoking takes place in enclosed spaces the right of the non-smoker to unpolluted air is all too often not respected.

The very high birth rate of 24.6 in 1969 and the even higher one of 25.3 in 1970 roused the interest of the Council both in the relationship between increasing size of the population and public health problems likely to result and also in the need for a Family Planning Clinic in the town to help individuals wishing to attend.

I am very grateful to the Chairman and Members of the Public Health Committee for their interest and support throughout the year, also to Mr. Wadhams and his staff and to Officers in other departments I should like to express my appreciation for their co-operation in 1970.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

ELIZABETH J. VAUGHAN

Medical Officer of Health.



4.  
Public Health Department,  
Council Offices,  
Collingwood Road,  
Witham, Essex.

November 12th, 1971

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

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conjunction with the Report of the Medical Officer of Health, I beg to detail further aspects of environmental health importance in your Urban District during the year, including the work of my own Department.

The year 1970 was my 25th in the service of the Urban Council. More significantly, though a happy coincidence for me, it was the "Year of the Environment", possibly the most encouraging upsurge of public awareness of social responsibility (beyond the needs of direct personal health and welfare) since the great sanitary reforms of the last century.

Less happily for me, due to the Council's reorganisation of its services, the year also proved to be the last of my Department's administration of refuse and sewage disposal, services in which I had kept a direct personal and professional interest throughout my career, and in whose efficiency and smooth running I took constant pride. In taking my leave of these services, I cannot record too highly my esteem of the many staff, past and present, who so loyally supported me in maintaining for the Council, often in difficult and adverse conditions, consistently enviable standards of performance.

It is also a matter of personal regret that the Council found it necessary to turn down the proposed comprehensive refuse disposal project, since it is still my conviction that such a plant would most effectively and economically serve the future waste disposal needs of the district and its surrounding area.

The generally satisfactory conditions of 1969 continued during 1970, the overall pressure of the Town Development Scheme, at about its mid-point, being felt in all aspects of the Council's work. In housing, local authority building was again confined to providing dwellings for the G.L.C. nominees, to some extent it must be said to the exclusion of local demand, for which little provision has been made in recent years. Nevertheless, the general standard of housing in the district is high. The several hundred slum properties still in being in 1945 have all been cleared, while unfitness and disrepair are rapidly becoming things of the past, particularly following the impetus given to improvement by grant-aid by the Housing Act 1969.

One disquieting matter however, is the incidence of serious dampness due to condensation, which particularly in some of the new houses has proved extensive and difficult to rectify. This also is a matter of national concern, and there is some question whether modern house design and construction provides adequately against the condensation risk inherent in the absence of traditional indirect ventilation and in the changed family living routines now prevailing.

In food control, as elsewhere in the country, there has been a greater public demand for action in respect of unsatisfactory food, and many more complaints were received for investigation. This is in spite of the fact that the general level of food quality is probably higher than ever before.

One inception calling for routine attention from the Department has been the new open market. Conditions here have generally been satisfactory. Apart from any question of public health, it is probably on the Saturday market days that the town exhibits best the new vitality which the development scheme has infused.

In the matter of water supply, I think the Council is to be congratulated in completing a comprehensive storage and distribution system for the new Witham before it became necessary to hand over their water undertaking to the Essex Water Company. Adequacy of supply and pressure has thereby been assured for the future.

Difficulty with the control of industrial odours causing annoyance to residents again calls for comment. This again, is a problem engaging the attention of authorities and industries in many areas, and it is understood that the Government is to set up a Working Party to investigate the whole question.

The report contains much statistical and other details of routine work under many headings not less important because not picked out for mention in this introduction. I believe the picture it presents is of an effective environmental health administration and I would like to thank the Council for their support in upholding it. At the same time I must point out that the Department has suffered to some extent by shortage and changes of staff which have so far not been corrected by the recent reorganisation. This in fact to a large extent, explains the delay in preparing of this report.

In conclusion I would like to express my appreciation for the help and support I have received from the Medical Officer of Health, my Chairman and Chief Officer colleagues, and other Officers of the Council, and particularly my own staff. For the work of the latter during the year under review I have nothing but praise.

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)	...	...	...	16,270
Number of inhabited houses	...	...	...	5,643
Rateable value	...	...	...	£822,363
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	£3,500

VITAL STATISTICS

LIVE BIRTHS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	219	186	405
Illegitimate	6	5	11
Total live births	225	191	416

Birth rate per 1,000 estimated population	...	...	25.6
Illegitimate live births per cent of total live births	...	...	3.0
Birth rate corrected by comparability figure of 0.99	...	...	25.3
Birth rate for England and Wales per 1,000 population	...	...	16.0

STILL BIRTHS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	4	1	5
Illegitimate	-	-	-

Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	...	...	12.0
Rate per 1,000 total births England and Wales...	...	...	13.0
Total live and still births - 421			

INFANT DEATHS

Deaths of infants under 1 year -

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	7	6	13
Illegitimate	-	-	-
Total infant deaths	7	6	13

INFANT MORTALITY

Total infant deaths per 1,000 total live births	...	...	31.0
Legitimate infant deaths per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	32.0
Illegitimate infant deaths per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	Nil.
Neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1,000 total live births)	...	...	19.0
Early neo-natal mortality rate (deaths under 1 week per 1,000 total live births)	...	...	17.0
Perinatal mortality rate (still births and deaths under 1 week combined per 1,000 total live and still births).	...	...	29.0
Infantile mortality for England and Wales per 1,000 live births	...	...	18.0

MATERNAL MORTALITY (including abortion)

Number of deaths	...	...	...	Nil.
Rate per 1,000 total live and still births	...	...	...	Nil.

DEATHS

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
	82	75	157
Death rate per 1,000 estimated population ... ..	...	...	9.6
Death rate corrected by comparability figure of 1.27 ... ..	...	...	12.2
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 1970

The table below was compiled from figures supplied by the Registrar General and the classification is given under the sixty-five headings based on the International Abbreviated List 1968, with additional headings included to improve comparability with statistics published each year in the Registrar General's Statistical Review. Only those cause headings with deaths allocated to them are shown, headings with no deaths allocated to them are omitted.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Late effects of respiratory T.B. ... ..	1	-
Meningococcal infection ... ..	1	-
Malignant neoplasm, stomach ... ..	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, intestine ... ..	2	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus ... ..	7	1
Malignant neoplasm, prostate ... ..	1	-
Malignant neoplasm, breast ... ..	-	4
Leukaemia ... ..	1	2
Other malignant neoplasms ... ..	2	10
Diabetes mellitus ... ..	-	1
Other endocrine etc. diseases ... ..	-	1
Multiple sclerosis ... ..	1	-
Other diseases of nervous system ... ..	-	2
Hypertensive disease ... ..	-	1
Ischaemic heart disease ... ..	28	11
Other forms of heart disease ... ..	2	1
Cerebrovascular disease ... ..	5	18
Other diseases of circulatory system ... ..	4	4
Influenza ... ..	-	1
Pneumonia ... ..	7	5
bronchitis and emphysema ... ..	5	-
Other diseases of respiratory system ... ..	1	-
Peptic ulcer ... ..	1	-
Intestinal obstruction and hernia ... ..	1	2
Diseases of musculo-skeletal system ... ..	-	1
Congenital anomalies ... ..	3	4
Birth injury, difficult labour etc. ... ..	1	1
Other causes of perinatal mortality ... ..	3	-
Motor vehicle accidents ... ..	2	1
All other accidents ... ..	1	-
Suicide and self-inflicted injuries ... ..	1	-
Total All Causes	82	75

BIRTH RATE/DEATH RATE TRENDS IN RECENT YEARS

Year	Population	Corrected Birth Rate		Corrected Death Rate	
		<u>National</u>	<u>Witham</u>	<u>National</u>	<u>Witham</u>
1960	9,070	17.1	20.1	11.5	12.9
1961	9,490	17.4	18.1	12.0	11.6
1962	9,650	18.0	18.6	11.9	12.5
1965	9,860	18.2	18.8	12.2	11.5
1964	10,190	18.4	18.1	11.5	10.1
1965	10,666	18.0	22.6	11.5	8.7
1966	10,880	17.7	19.0	11.7	10.2
1967	11,780	17.2	20.8	11.2	8.6
1968	12,750	16.9	19.5	11.9	11.8
1969	13,080	16.3	24.6	11.9	10.2
1970	16,270	16.0	25.3	11.7	12.2



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.

			<u>Attendances</u>
Child Welfare	Every Thursday	10 a.m. )	2,633
	1st and 3rd Wednesdays	2 p.m. )	
School Clinic	1st and 3rd Thursdays	9 a.m.	261
Dental Clinic	Every Tuesday and Thursday	10 a.m. (By Appt.)	1,433
Speech Therapy	Every Wednesday and Thursday	(By Appt.)	

SILVER END Garden Village Hall.

Child Welfare	1st Friday	2 p.m.	438
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(ii) Home Help Service

This service is administered by the Home Help Organiser at the Social Service Department Office, 75, Springfield Road, Chelmsford.

(iii) Ambulance Service

The Essex County Council Ambulance Station is situated at Guithavon Street, Witham. There is one ambulance and one vehicle 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 either the Counties Public Health Laboratories, Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1., or the Public Health Laboratory, Chelmsford and Essex Hospital, New London Road, Chelmsford.

(b) Under the control of the North-East Metropolitan Regional Hospital Board:-(i) Chest Clinic Held twice weekly at St. Michael's Hospital, Braintree.(ii) Orthopaedic Clinics Orthopaedic patients who need special advice are referred to Notley Hospital.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE

DISEASES	TOTAL NOTIFIED	ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL	TOTAL DEATHS
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Dysentery	2	-	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-
Food Poisoning	3	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	-	-	-
Measles	178	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	3	-	-
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	3	1	1
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	1	-	-
TOTALS	190	1	1

INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFIED FROM 1901 TO 1904

DISEASES	Total Notified	Month													
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.		
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dysentery	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Encephalitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Food Poisoning	3	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Infective Hepatitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	178	-	1	-	7	61	63	30	16	-	-	-	-	-	-
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	3	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	3	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Totals	190	1	2	-	9	61	66	31	16	2	-	2	-	-	-



DISEASES	AGE GROUPS														Totals
	At all ages	Under 1 year	1	2	3	4	5 - 9	10 - 14	15 - 19	20 - 34	35 - 44	45 - 64	65 and over	Age unknown	
Diphtheria	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Dysentery	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Encephalitis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Food Poisoning	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Infective Hepatitis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Measles	178	8	15	13	22	22	86	7	2	2	1	1	1	1	
Meningococcal Infection	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Non-paralytic Poliomyelitis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Scarlet Fever	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Tuberculosis, Pulmonary	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Tuberculosis, Non-pulmonary	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Whooping Cough	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1</b>	

TUBERCULOSIS

The following Table gives particulars of the three 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 year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5 - 9 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10 - 14 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 19 years	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
20 - 34 years	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
35 - 44 years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
45 - 64 years	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
65 and over	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-

Of these, two were cases re-notified on taking up residence in the District during 1970.

During the year the Council decided to discontinue the practice of accepting applications from married couples.

It must be noted that the Council's housing programme during recent years, while providing some 1,500 houses for rented families from the public sector, has barely kept pace with local housing needs, the basic application list having exceeded Council status while the list of applicants for approved persons' accommodation has steadily increased.

VACCINATION AND IMMUNISATION

<u>Primary Courses</u>	<u>By General Practitioners</u>	<u>By County Staff</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus	243	67	310
Diphtheria and Tetanus	1	10	11
Diphtheria	-	-	-
Pertussis	-	-	-
Tetanus	1	3	4
Poliomyelitis	245	84	329
Smallpox	222	-	222
B.C.G.	-	47	47
Measles	210	12	222
Rubella	-	39	39
<u>Reinforcing Doses</u>			
Diphtheria, Pertussis and Tetanus	104	2	106
Diphtheria and Tetanus	88	122	210
Diphtheria	-	6	6
Pertussis	-	-	-
Tetanus	9	24	33
Poliomyelitis	185	164	349
Smallpox	8	-	8



HOUSING

642 new dwellings were erected during the year, which was 10 $\frac{1}{2}$  less than in 1969. The decrease was wholly in Local Authority building, the figures for which were 455 completions in 1970 compared with 627 in 1969. Private enterprise building on the other hand completed 184 dwellings compared with 117 in 1969. The Council's completions comprised 444 houses and 11 old persons' flats, all intended for G.L.C nominees under the Town Development Scheme.

The number of dwellings erected in the Urban District since 1945 is as follows:-

By Local Authority:	2388
By Housing Associations:	30
By Private Enterprise:	<u>1188</u>
	<u>3606</u>

Taking into account 407 Council houses constructed pre-war and the bulk acquisition of 478 houses and flats at Silver End in 1969, the Council's total ownership at December, 1970 was 3,273 dwellings.

At the 31st December, 1970 the Council had under construction a total of 195 dwellings, of which 33 flats were intended for occupation by elderly persons. 111 dwellings were under construction at the same time by private enterprise. At the end of the year the Council had approved plans for the erection of Phase IV (a) of the Development Scheme comprising 388 dwellings in Witham and also for the erection of 15 flatlets for elderly and/or single persons at Witham and for 44 old persons' flats at Silver End.

Housing need

The number of applicants for Council houses at the end of 1970 was 292 compared with 196 at the end of 1969 comprising the following categories (1969 figures in brackets):

Ordinary List	75	(31)
Single Persons' Units	18	(12)
Engaged Couples' List	85	(69)
Old Persons' Bungalows )	85	(65)
Bungalow Exchange List )		
"River View" Hostel	29	(22)

During the year the Council decided to discontinue the practice of accepting applications from engaged couples.

It must be noted that the Council's housing programme during recent years, while providing some 1,400 homes for needy families from the G.L.C area, has barely kept pace with local housing needs, the basic application list having remained almost static while the list of applicants for aged persons' accommodation has actually increased.

Demolition and Closure

Of the 63 dwellings scheduled in the 1965 clearance programme, 61 have already been dealt with. There remains a further number of "border-line" houses for early attention. At the end of 1970 there were 16 houses and parts of houses subject to Closing Orders or undertakings not to re-let.

Housing Act, 1961: Houses in multiple occupation

The district is fortunate in having only a handful of houses falling within this category. No action was required in respect of them during the year.

Rent Act, 1957: Certificates of Disrepair

As in previous years advice was given in response to several enquiries, but no applications for certificates were received.

Housing Act, 1969: Qualification Certificates

(a) Qualification Certificates:

Applications received	2
granted	1
refused	1
Appeals	Nil

(b) Certificates of Provisional Approval:

Applications received	4
granted	4
refused	Nil

Inspection of dwellinghouses during the year:-

(a) Total number inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	132
(b) Number found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	7
(c) Number (exclusive of those referred to under sub-heading (b)) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	54

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)	21
(b) Number of other defective conditions remedied after informal action by local authority (or its officers)	44

Action under Statutory Powers - Housing Acts 1936-64  
Public Health Acts 1936-61

(a) Number of houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	3
(b) Number of dwellinghouses rendered fit after service of formal notice	3



Housing Acts 1949-1969: Improvement Grants

During the year a total of 18 applications for grant aid were received and dealt with.

Details of applications for Improvement (previously called "Discretionary") Grants are as follows:-

	<u>1949-63</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>
Submitted	38	9	-	-	4	1	5	4
Granted	37	9	-	-	4	1	5	4
Refused	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Withdrawn	3	1	-	2	-	1	-	-
Schemes completed	30	5	3	2	-	4	1	3

There were 5 schemes outstanding at the end of 1970.

Details of applications received for Standard Grants since their inception in 1959 are as follows:-

	<u>1959-63</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>1966</u>	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>
Submitted	57	10	25	19	10	19	7	14
Granted	57	10	25	19	10	19	7	14
Withdrawn	1	2	-	2	1	5	-	2
Schemes completed	54	7	18	13	19	9	16	5
Outstanding at 31st December	2	3	10	14	4	9	-	7

Council House Improvement

No further work of improvement to Council houses was carried out during the year, but in accordance with the Council's previous decision a survey of all pre-war Council houses, including the newly-acquired Silver End ones, was undertaken with a view to a comprehensive scheme to bring them all up-to-date, commencing in 1971. The re-wiring of one section of pre-war houses, commenced in 1969 as a matter of urgency, was completed.

Compulsory Improvements

No action was taken under this procedure during the year. 2 houses for which compulsory improvement had been begun, were finally improved by the executors of the estate following the owner's death. The 6 houses referred to in the 1969 report as having been subject to very prolonged negotiation, were still awaiting action at the end of the year to implement the Council's decision to acquire and improve them.

General Improvement Areas

There is no area of any considerable extent which calls for large scale improvement on an environmental pattern, but consideration is being given to the possibility of using this procedure in two or three small areas of adjoining streets.



WATER SUPPLY

1970 proved to be the last complete year of the Urban District water supply service as a local authority undertaking, which it had been, at least in the Witham town area, for something like 100 years. At December preparations were in hand to transfer the undertaking to the newly formed Essex Water Company on April 1st, 1971. This change, which had been delayed by legal technicalities, followed from the broader recommendations of the Spens Report in 1966. In the intervening period the Council found it necessary, because of inadequate storage and loss of pressure in parts of the growing town, to extend the undertaking by the provision of a large new service reservoir and high pressure main. These were programmed to be in service prior to the transfer of the undertaking.

Sources of supply remained as in previous years, the Council supplementing its own Bradwell Spring source by water purchased from the Essex Water Company, whose trunk mains skirt the Urban District and serve the new reservoir and the two high pressure mains into the town area. The Bradwell supply, due to its location, serves principally the Silver End and Rivenhall areas of the district with the surplus from this demand mixing with the Essex Company's supply at the Council's water tower. The quality of both supplies is consistently satisfactory as shown by frequent analysis. A summary of sample reports is given below:-

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Mains Water</u>			
Chemical	12	-	12
Bacteriological	26	1	27
<u>Other Supplies</u>			
Chemical	1	-	1
Bacteriological	8	1	9

Typical reports of the chemical water analyses of the mains supplies are given below:-

Bradwell Springs Supply (12.11.70)

"This sample is practically clear and bright in appearance, neutral in reaction and free from metals. The water is very hard in character but contains no excess of mineral or saline constituents in solution. Bacterial impurity includes coliform bacteria in small numbers, with Bact. coli absent from 100 ml. The water is considered very suitable for treatment by chlorination for public supply purposes, apart from the disadvantages of its hardness for uses with soap".

Mixed Public Supply (12.11.70)

"This sample is clear and bright in appearance, has a reaction on the alkaline side of neutrality and is free from metals. The water is very hard in character but contains no excess of mineral or saline constituents in solution. It is of very satisfactory organic quality and bacterial purity. These results indicate a pure and wholesome water suitable for drinking and domestic uses".

Fluoride Content

The fluoride content of the mains supplies falls far below the recommended level of 1.0 p.p.m., the maximum concentration having been found to be 0.3 p.p.m in the South Essex supply and 0.1 p.p.m in the Bradwell water.

Water consumption and future requirements

The Council's Engineer and Surveyor has given the following figures of the total water supplied from the Council's mains during the year:-

Bradwell Springs:	117,000,000 gallons
Essex Water Company:	267,400,000 gallons
Other Supplies:	<u>Nil</u>
Total	<u>384,400,000 gallons</u>

Average consumption per head of population per day:

Domestic demand:	40.985 gallons
Trade demand:	<u>24.833 gallons</u>
Total	<u>65.818 gallons</u>

The above total consumption shows an increase of 2.078 gallons per head per day over that for 1969, but this rate is not significantly different from the average over recent years.

With regard to future requirements, the Essex Water Company has given an assurance to the Council that adequate supplies will be available for the district's needs to the full extent of the town development scheme.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

A further 642 houses together with a number of commercial and industrial properties were connected to the Council's sewer systems during the year. Household drainage facilities in use in the Urban District at the 31st December, 1970 were as follows:-

Houses connected to main sewer systems ... ..	5,679
Houses drained to septic tanks, cesspools etc ...	99

The Engineer and Surveyor states that the total length of public sewer, of all sizes, constructed during 1970 was 10,150 yards.

Sewer systems

It will be seen from the above figures that almost the whole of the Urban District is sewered, there being four separate systems serving the Witham town area, while Silver End and Rivenhall Oak/Rivenhall End have hitherto had their own independent systems linked to separate sewage disposal plants. During 1970 however work commenced on a new major trunk sewer which will link the Silver End drainage area with the Witham disposal works picking up part of the Rivenhall sewage flow on its way.

Of the 4 sewer systems serving Witham town, 2 pre-war systems have been supplemented in recent years by a new low level trunk sewer following the Brain valley to serve the major part of the town development on the west and north-west and a further trunk sewer at higher level picking up flow from the developing industrial estates on the eastward side of the town. All 4 systems gravitate to their respective outfalls at the disposal works, but the greater part of the flow then has to be lifted to the head works of the treatment plant. Excessive infiltration and storm flow in the old low level combined system have been lessened by the new scheme but still tend to cause temporary overload in very wet periods.



## SEWAGE DISPOSAL

There are four sewage disposal plants in the Urban District, three of which are owned and operated by the Council. That at Silver End, as described above, is due to go out of existence on completion of the new sewer scheme. The fourth plant, originally serving an aerodrome and H.M. Forces camp, is now owned and privately operated for part of the year only to deal with the waste effluent from a large pea vining plant.

### Witham Sewage Works

The first phase of the extension scheme to provide for the rapidly increasing sewage output of the developing town, commenced in 1966, became fully operational during 1969. The remainder of that year and 1970 have been occupied in tests, adjustments and minor modification to ensure optimum performance from this modern highly mechanised plant, the designed capacity of which is 1.0 m.g.d dry weather flow. As anticipated, by the end of 1970 much of this capacity had been taken up by increased flow from the rapidly growing town, and in view of the impending connection of Silver End sewage to this Witham plant, instruction was given to consulting engineers to prepare the next phase of the extension scheme. It is hoped that work on this will commence early in 1972, and will increase the capacity of the plant to about 1.6 m.g.d dry weather flow.

The new plant includes mechanical removal of detritus, comminuting of sewage solids, scraped radial flow settling tanks, traditional type percolating filters, and radial flow humus tanks. Flow control of sludge, settled sewage and recirculated effluent is power operated from the control building. Sludge, after consolidation and treatment with lime and ferrous sulphate, is mechanically dewatered by vacuum filtration.

The use of large effluent lagoons as a tertiary "polishing" process had proved so eminently successful during the long years of overload on the old works that the lagoons have been kept in being for future experimental use, and possible extension.

The teething troubles encountered in the operation of the dewatering plant, mentioned in the 1969 report, have been largely overcome during 1970, and sludge cake of a satisfactory moisture content is normally produced. Trials to test the possible advantages of using poly-electrolytes as substitute for either lime or ferrous sulphate were commenced and will be carried on in 1971.

By arrangement with the neighbouring Braintree Rural District Council fresh sewage sludge from the nearer of that Council's sewage plants is received into the Witham Works for dewatering and disposal, on mutually agreed terms.

### Silver End Sewage Works

This plant, also previously described and considerably overloaded, began to produce less than satisfactory effluents. At the same time, considerable residential development in the Silver End area was being held up for lack of sewage disposal capacity. As the Council had decided to transfer the treatment of Silver End sewage to the Witham works by the trunk sewer scheme described above, it was necessary during the year to improve the operation of the existing works until such time as the new sewer became effective. For this purpose a series of effluent polishing lagoons, each of one day's theoretical retention has been put in, with excellent results. In addition to regaining a satisfactory



standard of effluent quality it was found possible by these means and also by the installation of a small portable high-rate filtration unit to achieve a considerable temporary increase in the capacity of the plant, and thus release some part of the development previously restricted. The plant will become inoperative on the completion of the trunk sewer contract and will be dismantled, after 45 years of quiet service to the community of Silver End.

#### Rivenhall Sewage Works

This is a small plant, built in 1953 to serve the village area of Rivenhall Oak and Rivenhall End. It has a designed capacity of 18,000 g.p.d which has been taken up in recent years by housing development in the area. The necessarily small components of this size of plant allow little margin for overload, and this was indicated particularly by the inability of the humus tanks at times to adequately remove the secondary solids. The conversion of the two horizontal flow humus tanks to upward flow "Banks-type" clarifiers rectified this difficulty however and satisfactory effluents are again produced. A considerable part of the flow to the plant, from the Rivenhall Oak area will be diverted to the new Silver End/Witham trunk sewer, and will thereby restore a fair margin of capacity to this plant in 1971.

#### Rivenhall Camp Sewage Works

As stated above, this plant is now used for treatment of pea vining waste, and as the season for this is very short, it is out of use for the major part of the year. Prior to the commencement of the pea vining, the plant is 'seeded' with sewage and sludge from the U.D.C sewage works, to produce the biological conditions necessary to break down the very strong waste which is produced in the vining process.

#### Sampling of Sewage Effluent

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Total</u>
Witham Sewage Works	14	6	20
Silver End Sewage Works	15	2	17
Rivenhall Sewage Works	<u>3</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3</u>
	<u>32</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>40</u>

In addition, many sets of samples were submitted for analysis to check the performance of various sections of the works. Frequent field tests are also carried out by the works staff to detect and trace any major deviation from the normal character of the sewages reaching the three plants. The new Witham Works has full laboratory facilities.

DRAINAGE OF TRADE PREMISES

Control of large quantities of industrial effluent discharged to sewer has been maintained since 1949. In most cases the discharges are measured by recording instruments installed by the Council under agreements with the companies concerned based on rates and strength of flow, means of pre-treatment and negotiated charges. Periodic sampling for chemical analysis checks the observance of the quantitative conditions. One agreement, in respect of a large dairy ceased to have effect during the year, leaving 8 agreements in operation at December 31st. Charges for these were reviewed during the year to bring them in line with current disposal costs.

The types of trade effluents now discharged to the Council's sewers are as under:-

Metal processing (various):	3 main discharges
Poultry packing:	1 discharge
Fruit pulping and concentrates:	1 discharge
Maltings:	1 discharge
Etching and engraving:	1 discharge
Electronics engineering:	2 discharges
Farm wastes:	2 discharges

23 samples of trade waste were submitted for laboratory analysis for routine examination or as spot samples for special purposes.

In pre-treating their industrial effluents, some companies produce large quantities of sludge. The Council operates a road tanker removal service for disposal of these sludges on a rechargeable basis. Some 1,800,000 gallons were collected in this way and disposed of at the Council's refuse tip during 1970.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

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

The remaining services, refuse collection and disposal, salvage collection, cesspool and gully emptying and sewer flushing have been administered by the Public Health Department since 1945, but under a reorganisation to operate from the 1st January, 1971, will in future be administered by the Council's Engineer and Surveyor.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSALCollection

The weekly collection of house refuse from all parts of the Urban District was maintained during the year. The incentive bonus scheme, started in March 1965 to overcome difficulty in obtaining labour for this service, continued successfully in its double object of attracting and keeping an adequate labour force, and coping with the additional collection work. A considerable increase in the number of premises to be served has been absorbed without appreciable increase in collection staff. Adjustment is made when collection work becomes too much for a particular gang and an additional man has to be allocated to some part of the collection round. This is a gradual process achieved by employing sewage disposal labourers also as relief refuse loaders, and does not unduly affect the collection bonus figure which has averaged about £5. 10. 0d per man per week during the year.



The paper sack system continued to be extended during 1970, by the end of which 2,000 houses on the newly developed estates were being serviced in this way. No full-scale conversions from bin collection have yet taken place, but trials have been conducted with both paper and plastic sacks as bin liners, which may be of use in considering the most economic way of effecting satisfactory conversions. There is no doubt that the sack system of refuse storage fulfils the claims made for it in the matters of hygiene and ease of removal, and lends itself better than the bin system to solving the problem of the ever increasing bulk of household refuse requiring removal.

At the end of the year the collection fleet comprised two rear loading vehicles, one with bulk container lift attachment, a small side-loader, with a fore-and-aft rear loader in reserve. In addition the refuse foreman is equipped with a 3 cubic yard side-loading runabout.

The hire and emptying service provided to local industrial and commercial premises by the use of 1 cubic yard bulk containers was extended during the year and is now responsible for the removal to tip of the greater part of this waste output of such premises. A further collection vehicle, due for delivery early in 1971, will also be equipped to empty these containers.

### Disposal

Comments under this heading remain much the same as in previous years. Tipping, controlled as far as practicable under present conditions, has been maintained on the Council's marshland site adjoining the sewage works and within the confluence of the rivers Blackwater and Brain. In this area since 1949 some 25 acres of marshland owned by the Council have been used for refuse disposal purposes but very little now remains to be filled. Town development to the ultimate proposed population, demands that additional adequate and satisfactory facilities be found. This need had not been overlooked and the Council had for some ten years past maintained an active interest in mechanical methods of refuse treatment to achieve effective hygienic disposal with less demand and restriction on tipping space. Following a very extensive research, over several years, into methods and systems available a scheme was submitted for the Council's consideration early in 1970. This scheme, for which part provision had been made in capital estimates for the financial year was a "package deal" offer from a firm experienced in refuse disposal, tailored precisely to Witham's needs with adequate margin over and above the town development expected population and capable of absorbing all but the very largest and most intractable refuse items, to produce end products which would be either salvageable or of such a kind as could be tipped economically and inoffensively without the disadvantages, controls and restrictions attaching to the tipping of crude refuse. The total cost of disposal by this means was estimated to be less than £1.50 per ton.

The Council rejected the scheme and the disposal problem remains unsolved. Negotiations were in hand at the end of the year to acquire tipping rights and the necessary planning approvals for the use of disused gravel workings in an adjoining district. Such proposals invariably involve discussions with the River Authority in view of the possibility of contamination of underground water supplies and approval, if obtainable, is very rightly subject to protective restrictions.

Control of the present tip area is maintained by the use of 1 cubic yard mechanical shovel, which is also used for excavation and covering work elsewhere.



### DERELICT VEHICLES

A collection and disposal service for abandoned vehicles, commenced in 1965, dealt with a further 37 derelicts during the course of the year. The vehicles are dismantled at the refuse tip before being removed as scrap by a local dealer. Charges are made to owners, when known, for removal and disposal, but residents of the Urban District are offered free disposal facilities for vehicles brought to the Council's tip. The police and the local taxation authority are notified of the registration numbers of all vehicles disposed of in this way.

### SALVAGE

The following figures indicate the various categories of salvage collected and sold in the course of the refuse collection and disposal service during the past two financial years:-

	1969-70						1970-71					
	weight			Value			Weight			Value		
	Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs	£.	s.	d	Tons.	Cwts.	Qrs	£.	s.	d
Waste Paper	271	1	2	2820	2	11	263	13	0	2866	7	0
Rags and Sacking	3	2	1½	37	8	6	5	6	0	63	12	0
Scrap Metals	4	0	0½	89	6	1	1	15	3	43	2	0
TOTALS	278	3	4	2946	17	6	270	14	3	2973	1	0

During the year 1970-71 a bonus amounting to £295. 2. 11d was paid to the salvage staff.

### CIVIC AMENITIES ACT 1967

As forecast in the 1969 report, proposals for providing tipping facilities in different parts of the district were put into effect during 1970 by the siting in selected areas of a number of 6 cubic yard portable refuse skips. These are left in position for a weekend or two or three days during which time they become filled with rubbish of all kinds from the householders in their vicinity. They are then removed and emptied at the refuse tip and re-sited. This has proved very effective and popular. At the end of the year 10 such skips were in use and a further supply was on order. They are transported and moved into place by a single tractor towing a special trailer chassis. In transit the skip is suspended on the chassis and lowered hydraulically to the ground on reaching its destination. In this manner a surprisingly large amount of refuse is being cleared and this undoubtedly prevents much of it being dumped indiscriminately in the rural area surrounding the town.

Tipping facilities for the public are also available at all times at the Council's refuse tip in Maldon Road, Witham.

### LITTER ACT 1958

In a drive to reduce the amount of litter in the area, the Council co-operated with the Witham and Countryside Society in a number of litter collection exercises, in which woods, hedgerows, ponds, a large gravel pit and lake were cleared of what must have been several years accumulated rubbish. Similarly, by joint action notices warning the public of the penalties for deposit of litter were posted at many appropriate points throughout the district.

CESSPOOL, GULLEY EMPTYING AND SEWER FLUSHING

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

	<u>Cesspools</u>	<u>Loads</u>
Domestic emptyings (free service)	201	216
Rechargeable work	350	635
Trade waste removal		1497

Apart from some increase in trade waste removal, these figures show little change from those for 1969. Every effort is still made to encourage firms to reduce their sludge disposal requirement by improved pre-treatment of effluents, because of increasing difficulty in disposing of the vast quantities involved. The 2,348 loads listed above represented rather more than 2½ million gallons.

In addition to the above removal work the tanker vehicles carry out the cleansing of all district road gullies three times annually and also perform periodic sewer flushing.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

For many years the Council has maintained a small caravan site with space for 12 trailer caravans, equipped with the basic amenities of hard standing, water supply, W.C accommodation, drying ground and waste disposal facilities. Electricity supply is available to each occupier. The site is only a temporary one and must give way to other development in the area in the foreseeable future and for this reason the Council has decided that it is to be run-down and closed. The Council also decided to replace it with a larger modern site, to current Ministry standards, but difficulty has been experienced in finding an area which can be developed economically for this purpose and would also receive planning approval.

Two small permanent sites in the district are occupied by travelling showmen and their families as winter quarters, and occasionally groups of gypsy vans stay for a few nights in the district. As there is no suitable site for the latter they are encouraged to move on. Numbers of residential caravans are quartered for varying periods in the district for seasonal agricultural work and also in connection with the extensive civil engineering and similar works which are currently in progress.



RODENT AND OTHER PEST CONTROL

The Witham Council is a member of the Braintree, Halstead and Witham Joint Rodent Control Committee. The Committee's operatives undertake all disinfection work in the district, including disinfection of agricultural holdings under annual contract.

The number of such contracts for 1970 was 19. The free domestic treatment service remains unaltered and has been extended to include wasps and other insect pests.

Details of the year's work are as follows:-

	<u>Non-Agricultural</u>	<u>Agricultural</u>
Inspections made	324 (148)	28 (13)
Treatment visits	606 (295)	132 (23)
Infestations found:		
Mice	115 (24)	4 (1)
Rats (Major)	6 (2)	6 (2)
Rats (Minor)	150 (62)	15 (3)

Other Pests

The following cases of infestation were dealt with:-

Wasps	...	...	...	...	...	58 (41)
Bees	...	...	...	...	...	2 (-)
Squirrels	...	...	...	...	...	- (-)
Rabbits	..	...	...	...	...	5 (2)
Pigeons	..	...	...	...	...	1 (3)
Moles	...	...	...	...	...	6 (11)

In each case the figures in brackets are those for the previous year, 1969.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD

Meat Inspection

There are no slaughterhouses within the Urban District. Checks are carried out periodically to ensure that all meat entering the area is inspected at its place of origin.

Poultry Packing

Daily inspections are maintained by the Department at the two Witham packing stations, special scrutiny being given to birds rejected by the plant staff for abnormality. The total estimated average weekly output of birds was 36,000. Unfit birds are wholly or partly condemned, according to the conditions found. The services of the Ministry of Health Laboratory at Chelmsford are utilised for pathological identification and differentiation of obscure conditions. Contrary to what is understood to be experienced in other districts, routine laboratory examination had failed to disclose any salmonellae organisms in any of the birds examined.



Of the two permanent packing stations in the area, the larger was opened in 1969 to replace an earlier plant which the business had outgrown. The new factory incorporates the most up-to-date methods of processing and packing. In addition, a by-products treatment plant in course of installation at December, 1970, will convert all waste organic matter from the poultry processing into suitable stock food additives.

### Milk and Dairies

Registration and licensing of dairies and other milk premises, producers, dairymen and distributors is a responsibility shared with the Essex County Council.

The following registrations were in force at the 31st December, 1970:-

	<u>Untreated</u>	<u>Tuberculin Tested</u>	<u>Pasteurised</u>	<u>Sterilised</u>	<u>U.H.T</u> *
Dairies (1) )					
Dealers (15) )	1	10	14	5	8

\* Ultra Heat Treated

### Ice Cream

The registration of manufacturers and vendors and their premises is carried out in the Urban District under the Essex County Council Act, 1953, and supervision is exercised to ensure compliance with the Ice Cream (Heat Treatment) Regulations 1947-1959. The number of registrations at 31st December, 1970 was:-

Manufacturers	Nil
Vendors only	55
Registered premises	55

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

### Food Hygiene

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

Residential Hotels	5
Restaurants	5
Factory & School Canteens	21
Manufacturing Butchers	5
Fried Fish Shops	2
Retail Wet Fish Shops	3
Retail Butchers' Shops	6
Supermarkets	5
Other Retail Food Shops	45
Licensed Premises and Clubs	22
Fruit Juice Concentrates	1
Maltings	1
Poultry Packing Stations	2
Poultry and Egg Producers	2

In addition, a number of mobile food vans tour the area and all are subject to inspection. The standard of hygiene is generally satisfactory, but in a number of cases attention was called to contraventions requiring to be rectified.

#### Weekly Market

During the year in response to local demand the Council instituted a weekly market on a small car park in the centre of the town. The market is run by a private firm, under contract to the Council, and with-in regulations governing its conduct and operation. This venture has proved very popular, and some 40 stallholders now do business at the market each week. A number of these are food traders, supervision of whom is maintained to ensure compliance with the Food Hygiene (Markets, Stalls and Delivery Vehicles) Regulations, 1966.

#### Condemnation of Food

Considerable quantities of food are voluntarily surrendered by local traders for condemnation. In 1970, 12 tons, 18 cwts, 90 lbs were inspected for this purpose and disposed of to the Department's requirements.

The categories were as follows:-

	<u>tons</u>	<u>cwts</u>	<u>lbs</u>
Poultry	11	18	-
Cooked Meats	-	-	21
Canned Meats	-	-	30
Other canned foods	-	18	16
Fish, fresh	-	-	56
Frozen foods	-	1	79
	<hr/>		
Total	12	18	90
	<hr/> <hr/>		

Court Proceedings

On a number of occasions during the year it was necessary to institute proceedings for offences under various of the Regulations. Details are as follows:-

## (a) Food Hygiene (General) Regulations 1960:-

	<u>Summonses</u>	<u>Convictions</u>
(i) Part II - General requirements:	7	7
(ii) Part III - Handling of food:	2	2
(iv) Part IV - Food premises:	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>

Total fines and costs imposed: £251

## (b) Food and Drugs Act 1955, Sections (2) and (8)

	<u>Complaints</u>	<u>Summonses</u>	<u>Convictions</u>
(i) Section 2: Foreign matters in food:	5	1	1
(ii) Section 8: Unfitness for human consumption:	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	<u>13</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>

Total fines and costs imposed: £115

Food Sampling (Witham Urban District Council Public Health Department)

The Department submitted the following samples for bacteriological examination during the year:-

	<u>Satisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatisfactory</u>
Milk	4	-
Ice Cream	5	2
Cooked Pigs Meat	1	-
Sausages (all types)	9	1
Chickens	31	2
Fruit Salad	1	-
Sliced Meat	11	1
Sausage Meat	1	1
Fresh Cream	1	-
Synthetic Cream	3	-
Meat Pies	5	-
Scotch Egg	1	-
Cole Slaw Salad	1	-
Minced Meat	4	-
Flour confectionery	6	-
Lamb Tongues	1	-
Prawns	1	-
Cockles	3	-
Winkles	1	-
Faggots	3	-
Cornish Pasty	2	-
Beefburgers	2	-
Sausage Roll	1	-
Steakettes	3	-
Milk Custard	1	-



Sampling: (Essex County Council, Weights and Measures Department)

The Chief Officer of the Food and Drugs Authority has kindly supplied the following tables indicating (a) the samples taken by his department under the Food and Drugs Act, 1955 in the Witham Urban District during 1970, and (b) particulars of complaints and investigations under the Trade Descriptions Act, 1968.

Table (a)Food and Drugs

<u>Article</u>	<u>Number sampled</u>
American Superbread	1
White sliced bread	1
Breakfast cereal chocolate flavour	1
Breakfast oats	1
Butter including imported butter	1
Welsh salted butter	1
Cornflour	1
Choice Australian Two Fruits in heavy syrup	1
Choice Pineapple round cut slices in syrup	1
Country style paté	1
Creamed macaroni milk pudding	1
Custard powder vanilla flavour	1
Crispy Danish rusks	1
English refined lard	1
Finest cut macaroni	1
Grapefruit segments in syrup	1
Margarine	1
Marzipan	1
Plain Flour	2
Pork sausages	1
Starch reduced savoury crisp bread	1
Steak and kidney pie	1
Milk	
Pasteurised	9
School	12
Sterilised	4
Channel Island	2
County establishment	1
'Long Life'	2
Homogenised	2
U.H.F.	1
Drugs	
Pentobarbitone (Nembutal) capsules 100mg BP	1
Amylobarbitone Sodium capsules (Sodium Amytol) BP	1
Quinalbarbitone Sodium Seconal Sodium capsules BP	1
Aneurin compound BPC Tablets	1
Aneurin Hydrochloride Tablets BP	1
Total number of samples taken ... ..	61

There were no adverse reports

Table (b)Trade Descriptions Act, 19681. Complainants

Total number	...	...	...	...	...	15
Number resident in Witham Urban District	...					9
Number resident outside Witham Urban District						6

2. Complaints against

Witham traders	...	...	...	...	...	12
Traders outside Witham Urban District					...	3

3. Notes on complaints

Short life of flowers supplied by a florist  
 Delay in delivery of a carpet  
 Failure to supply gift tokens with petrol  
 Misleading prices for meat  
 Stain resistant suite  
 Faulty radiogram  
 Date on seed packets  
 Misdescribed carpet  
 Rusty car from garage  
 Dress pattern  
 Brand of squash balls  
 Rose bushes wrongly illustrated on bush wrappers  
 Weight of bacon  
 Weight of peekanuts  
 Number of polythene bags

The Chief Inspector states: "Each complaint was investigated and it was not found necessary to institute proceedings."

Since the inception of the Trade Descriptions Act in November, 1968, two cases have come before the Witham Court in respect of complaints received in the Witham area, one was against a car dealer, who was fined £60 with £1 costs for an offence which alleged that the odometer reading of a car had been reduced from 92,000 to 52,776 miles and another concerned a national advertisement by a clothing boutique. On this occasion a child's corduroy suit was falsely described as fully washable, the company were fined £50 with £54 costs."

FACTORIES ACTS 1937-1959

During the year a total of 147 visits were paid to factories, exclusive of visits to food preparation premises, also classified as factories. The rapid expansion of the new industrial estates includes a great variety of light industry. Plans for new factories are examined on submission to the Council and recommendations made as to observation of statutory requirements, sanitary accommodation, working amenity, canteen and welfare facilities, and waste disposal. At the same time, proposals for boilerhouses and furnaces are checked for compliance with the Clean Air Act. Conditions in these new establishments are generally very satisfactory.

A number of minor contraventions were noted and rectified during the year. A considerable amount of time was spent checking noise levels both in and around the larger factories. Public concern regarding the effect of noise nuisance on human health and comfort is increasing and this work will be continued.

A few outworkers are employed within the district, in the following occupations:-

8 Manufacturing Drapery

2 Seed Packing

A small number of outworkers in other districts are employed by a Witham firm.

Details of the inspections made during the year of premises in the Urban District under the Factories Acts are given in the Table below:-

FACTORIES ACTS 1937-1959

1. INSPECTION for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspection made by Public Health Inspectors).

	Number on Register	In - spections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	2	Nil	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	81	117	4	Nil
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers)	16	28	5	Nil
	98	147	9	Nil



## 2. CASES in which DEFECTS were found:

	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred to H.N. Inspector	by	
Want of cleanliness (S.1)	2	2	-	1	-
Overcrowding (S.2)	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	1	1	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	1	1	-	-	-
Sanitary conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	-	2	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	3	3	-	1	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outworkers)	-	-	-	-	-
TOTALS	10	10	-	4	-

OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963

The total number of premises registered in the Urban District under this Act at December 31st, 1970 was 140. They comprised the following categories, employing the numbers of personnel shown:-

<u>Class of Premises</u>	<u>No. Registered</u>	<u>No. of Persons Employed</u>
Offices:	44	237
Retail Shops:	82	409
Wholesale Shops and Warehouses:	2	7
Catering establishments and canteens:	8	90
Fuel Storage Depots:	4	41
	140	784

(Males 379: Females 405)

A total of 178 visits and inspections were made to registered premises during the year. Minor contraventions, 26 in number, exceeded those noted in 1969, but all received prompt attention from the respective managements. No major contraventions were noted and no prosecutions necessary.

Three minor accidents were reported and investigated, followed by recommendations to managements in each case.

NOISE

Four complaints were received concerning noise said to cause annoyance to residents in the neighbourhood of certain industrial premises. All were investigated and a degree of noise nuisance confirmed in three of them. In each case the complaints concerned high pitched noises at night from machinery in operation and the pick-up and off-loading of heavy materials.

As in 1969 warnings were issued in a number of cases where mechanical breakers and compressors were used without adequate muffling or shielding. No formal action under the Noise Abatement Act, 1960 was necessary however.

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION PREVENTION

Daily smoke and sulphur dioxide recordings are maintained and the records forwarded to the Fuel Research Station of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research for inclusion in the National Survey. No significant degree of pollution has been noted, except during short periods of foggy conditions. The need thus remains to prevent any increase in average concentration, though this has been assisted during the last fifteen years by the radical change from solid fuels to other forms of heating in the older domestic premises of the district, while at the same time the newly developing estates are all "smokeless". Most of the houses currently being built are centrally heated. Of these, the majority to date use gas or electrical installations, and this contributes to a lowering of the sulphur dioxide output of the community. Much the same can also be said of the growing industrial area of the town where the use of solid fuels is insignificant, though in the industrial concerns a higher proportion of appliances are oil-fired.

All industrial furnaces and boiler installations are inspected under the provisions of the Clean Air Act 1956, and chimney heights for new premises are assessed in accordance with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government Memorandum. As from 1969 all commercial or industrial furnace installations have had to receive prior approval of the local authority and are subject to appropriate conditions for the prevention of air pollution.

The following is a summary of the action under the Clean Air Act 1956 during the year:-

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Dark smoke (section 1):             |  |
| (a) Contraventions recorded            | 3  |
| (b) Remedied by informal action        | 3  |
| 2. Grit and dust (section 2):          |  |
| (a) Emissions: Contraventions recorded | Nil  |
| (b) Arrestment plant plans submitted   | 1  |
| (c) Arrestment plant plans approved    | 1  |
| 3. Furnaces (section 3):               |  |
| (a) Applications for approval          | 4  |
| (b) Applications granted               | 4  |
| 4. Chimney heights (section 6):        |  |
| (a) Applications                       | 4  |
| (b) Alterations required in            | 3  |
| (c) Number finally approved            | 4  |
| 5. Smoke control (domestic):           | No smoke control areas have been declared in the Urban District. |



Odour emission

As has been reported in many other districts throughout the country, recurrent difficulty is experienced in endeavouring to control the emission of industrial odours which whilst not falling within the definition of "statutory nuisance" under the Public Health Act, 1936, nevertheless by their persistence, recurrence or degree of concentration cause annoyance to considerable numbers of residents within range of the offending emissions. The range depends, of course, on a number of variable factors such as atmospheric conditions, wind direction, height of stack or other emission point, but can extend some miles in certain instances. As is wellknown, many odours are strongly perceptible in what might be termed micro-minute dilution in the air.

During recent years Witham has suffered from a number of such emissions, from stock food, food essences and maltings industries, and though the co-operation of the managements concerned has generally been forthcoming, it cannot be said that all the problems have been solved to the satisfaction of either the Council or the local residents. In particular, in the case of a maltings which installed a large new malt and grain roasting process late in 1969 recurrent complaints have been and are still being received from residents in spite of all the Council's and the Company's efforts in the matter. The Council has, therefore, reluctantly been compelled to seek enforcement of the planning condition attaching to the erection of the new process plant restricting the Company from emitting "such smells, fumes or noises as would, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, cause annoyance to persons living in the locality."

As stated above, it appears from reports from other districts that the practical difficulties and the lack of adequate statutory control of emissions of this kind is causing increasing concern to local authorities in many areas. Apart from better administrative control, what appears to be needed is research to establish the most effective methods of dealing with the different kinds of emissions under variable commercial and industrial conditions.

REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF SPECIAL PREMISES

Inspections for the purpose of registrations and licensing, and periodic revisits, are also carried out in respect of the following:

- |       |                                |   |                         |
|-------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| (i)   | Rag Flock Act 1961             | : | Two registered premises |
| (ii)  | Pet Animals Act 1964           | : | One registered premise  |
| (iii) | Riding Establishments Act 1963 | : | One registered premise  |
| (iv)  | Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964   | : | Two registered dealers  |
| (v)   | The Game Act 1831              | : | Two dealers licensed    |

Supervision is also maintained of waste food collectors operating in the Witham Urban District, but who are licensed in other districts.



STAFF

Details of the Department's staff at 31st December, 1970 were:-

Office:

- \* Chief Public Health Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector
- \* Deputy Public Health Inspector, Meat and Foods Inspector
- \* Additional Public Health Inspector
- Technical Assistant
- \* Clerical Assistant
- Clerk/Shorthand Typist

External:

Works Manager, Sewage and Refuse Disposal  
 Fitter/Relief Manager, Sewage and Refuse Disposal  
 Assistant Manager (Sewage - part-time)

- 1 Laboratory Assistant
- 1 Sewage Foreman
- 1 Chargehand Plant Operator
- 4 Plant Operators
- 1 Sewage Works Attendant

Chargehand Tanker Driver  
 Second Tanker Driver

- 1 Refuse Foreman
- 1 Refuse Depot Chargehand
- 3 Refuse Driver/Loaders
- 5 Refuse Loaders
- 1 Salvage Baler
- 1 Digger/Loader Driver (also relief Plant Operator)

- 1 Tractor Driver (Post vacant at 31st December 1969)
- 2 Labourers/Relief Refuse Loaders
- 1 Part-time Labourer

The average age of the permanent outside staff was 47 years.

- \* In accordance with the Council's decision to reorganise its services, all but those members of the above staff marked with an asterisk were to be transferred to the Engineer and Surveyor's Department as from 1st January, 1971.



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