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Borough of Hyndburn

**ENVIRONMENTAL
HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**Borough
Environmental Health Officer**

GEORGE GREENWOOD, M.R.S.H., M.R.I.P.H.H., M.I.S.A.A., M.E.H.A.

1978

BOROUGH OF HYNDBURN

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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1978

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STAFF OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Borough Environmental Health Officer

George Greenwood, M.R.S.H., M.R.I.P.H.H., M.I.S.A.A., M.E.H.A.

Deputy Borough Environmental Health Officer

Brian Mayers, M.R.S.H., M.E.H.A.

Principal Assistant Environmental Health Officers

Housing and General District	Stanley Pilkington
Food and Safety	Garry S. Bell
Air Pollution and Noise	Stephen A. Todd

Senior Assistant Environmental Health Officers

North Division	John M. Davey
South Division	Gary E. Robinson
Air Pollution and Noise	Rodger L. Wightman

Assistant Environmental Health Officers

North Division	Mrs. S. J. Crow
South Division	James A. Livesey
Food and Safety	Mrs. S. Bell

Environmental Health Technicians

Housing	Keith Snape
Food and Safety	William W. Wood
	Michael G. Bell (Authorised Meat Inspector)
Air Pollution and Noise	David S. Finney
North Division	Richard Webster
South Division	William I. Houston

Student Environmental Health Officers

James W. Brimlow
Miss H. Fell
Miss K. C. Kelly

Chief Administrative Assistant

Robert McConnell, D.M.A.

Administration

Administrative Assistant Mrs. P. Butterworth

Clerical Assistants Peter Brandwood
Mrs. M. Wilkin (Air Pollution and Noise)
William Whiteley (Cleansing Depot)

Secretariat

Secretary Miss M. Cunliffe

Shorthand/Typists Mrs. T. Chaplow
Miss E. Kelsall

Receptionist

Mrs. S. Hayslop

Cleansing Superintendent

Ernest Livesey

Cleansing Inspectors

David Taylor
Fred Teese
Fred Vickery

.....

Public Analyst Mr. A. C. Bushnell, F.R.I.C., M.Chem.

District Community Physician L. P. Grime, M.F.C.M., D.P.H. (London)

Consultant Veterinarian Mr. John Tindall, M.R.C.V.S.

(3)

Environmental Health Department,
20 Cannon Street,
Accrington.

To the Mayor and Members of the
Hyndburn Borough Council

Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my fifth Annual Report on the Environmental Health Services of the Borough for the year ended 31st December, 1978.

I have referred in my reports of recent years to the severe restrictions which have been imposed upon local government and these have been affecting the Environmental Health Services within the Borough. These problems are still present and having a very serious effect upon the standard of service which the ratepayers are receiving.

I discussed in great detail the directives issued by Central Government since 1974 in the introduction to last year's report and so I do not propose to discuss these further except to say that similar circulars were received during 1978 which meant a further reduction in services. The retail price index at the end of the first quarter of 1978 stood at 190.6 as against 210.6 at the end of the same quarter of 1979, an increase of 20 points or 10.49%, whilst the Departmental Budget rose during the same period from £626,425 to £682,675, an increase of 8.98%.

The conversion of insanitary waste water closets to the fresh water system is still proceeding satisfactorily albeit at a relatively slow rate. This is due to several factors, the main one being the shortage of contractors who will undertake this type of work. This project has now been underway for four years and it is my intention, during the next 12 months, realistically to assess the situation in the light of the experience gained to date in order to ascertain whether the present rate of progress is realistic or, perhaps, if resources are available to increase the conversion rate.

The construction of the new sewer in Great Harwood is now proceeding despite major problems and the Department's Noise Control staff have spent many hours both during the daytime and night time assessing the levels of noise emissions from the equipment in use. It is essential that this type of work should not be neglected if the environment is to be protected for those resident in the area. Everyone accepts that a project of this magnitude cannot be carried out without some temporary effect upon the quality of life in the area, however, this does not mean that people should live in intolerable conditions when it is perfectly possible, by using acoustically treated equipment, to undertake the work with little more than a minor inconvenience to the residents.

As agents for the Department of Transport in the implementation of the Sound Insulation Regulations the Department has almost completed the first part of the work in preparation for the construction of the M.65 Motorway, the survey of all premises likely to be affected by noise. This does not only mean the increase in noise levels when the motorway is in operation but also noise emitted by traffic and plant during the actual construction phase.

The Council's present Clearance Programme, a five year programme compiled in 1974, is now approaching completion and it is imperative that a start should be made during 1979 upon a survey of the Borough so as to establish the extent to which the housing stock has deteriorated during this period. It is also important that the improvement of the housing stock should be examined in the whole sphere and not simply the replacement of unfit properties by newly built houses which are expensive to produce, very often situated on the periphery of the township and also the destroyers of established communities. The clearance of worn out structures will always be necessary, as indeed will be the construction of new dwellings but, I trust, on a greatly modified scale. The improvement of the present houses, both by means of area improvement and also the renovation of individual derelict houses, must be considered very seriously if the small neighbourhood communities are to be preserved and accommodation is to be provided at a price which people can afford to pay. I appreciate that this is only one factor in the complicated equation but when some old aged pensioners are unable to feed themselves adequately and others are dying from hypothermia, surely, it is a very important one. It is my intention to bear these factors in mind both during the survey and eventually when presenting the various options to Members in the form of a report.

I have mentioned several times in previous annual reports new projects which would be beneficial to the residents of the Borough. These include an improvement of the street cleansing service, the extension of the plastic bin-liner system of refuse collection, the introduction of bulk refuse storage containers at appropriate premises and the abolition of refuse storage compartments (bin sheds). Some preliminary work has been undertaken on most of these schemes and reports will be placed before Members giving all the implications, including financial and staffing, in due course.

I have included in this report for the first time a section which shows some of the work undertaken during 1978 in the European Economic Community. I feel that it is important that Members should be aware of the effect which the Community is having upon a local authority, particularly in the field of Environmental Health. I have also included towards the end of my report a list of major statutes, statutory instruments and circulars issued by various bodies during 1978 affecting Environmental Health.

There have been several changes in staff during the year. Mr. John L. Palk and Mrs. Alice Thornley have both retired from local government service after many years (32 years and 26 years respectively) and I should like to take this opportunity of thanking them most sincerely for their loyal and devoted service to the Borough both before and since re-organisation and to wish them both a long and happy retirement. Mr. Stephen A. Todd was appointed to the post of Principal Assistant to replace Mr. Palk and Mrs. P. Butterworth took over the duties of Administrative Assistant in place of Mrs. Thornley.

(5)

Mr. Trevor W. Mitton, Assistant Environmental Health Officer, resigned to take up a similar post in the Pendle District whilst Mr. Albert V. Williams and Miss Caroline L. Sutcliffe, Environmental Health Technicians, resigned to take up posts of a similar nature with other authorities.

Mr. Rodger L. Wightman was appointed to the post of Senior Environmental Health Officer (Air Pollution and Noise Control), Mrs. Sheila Bell to the post of Assistant Environmental Health Officer (Food and Safety), Mr. Keith Snape to the post of Environmental Health Technician (Housing) and Mr. William Wood to the post of Environmental Health Technician (Food and Safety).

Mr. Ian P. Smith and Mr. Anthony A. Gilrane, Student Environmental Health Officers, were both successful in passing their final examinations during the year and in addition, Mr. Smith was honoured with the award of the Ronald Williams Bronze Medallion for the third best student throughout the whole of the examinations. Unfortunately, at the time of their successes, there were no vacancies within the Department so both Messrs. Smith and Gilrane resigned to take up posts of Assistant Environmental Health Officers with other authorities. Miss Hazel Fell was appointed to one of the vacated posts of Student Environmental Health Officer.

I should like to wish all the former members of staff every success in their new appointments and to thank them for their loyalty and service during their period within the Department. I welcome all the new members to the staff and hope that they enjoy their work in Hyndburn.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE BOROUGH

Area	18,073 acres
Population (Census 1971)	80,533
(Department of Environment's estimate of resident population, mid 1978)	79,700
Rateable Value (April 1978)	£6,473,955
Sum represented by a penny rate	£134,787

The social conditions of the Borough are generally good. Chief industries are textile weaving, finishing and printing, textile and general engineering, chemical manufacturing, brick manufacturing, food manufacture and preparation and dairy farming.

WATER SUPPLY

Over the greater part of its area the Borough is supplied with mains water by the Calder Water Supply Unit of the North West Authority although Knuzden and Belthorn in the south west are supplied by the Fylde Water Supply Unit.

All public water supplies are passed through pressure filters and chlorinated but regular routine samples are taken by the Unit from every source and submitted for bacteriological and chemical analysis. The results of the samples are monitored by members of the staff of the Health Department.

The public water supplied by the Calder Water Supply Unit is liable to plumbo-solvency due to the acid nature (low pH value) of the gathering grounds. The water is, therefore, treated with lime and chalk to raise the value to a safe level - pH 7.5 to 8.0. The lead content is less than 0.05 mg/litre.

Approximately 150 dwellings do not receive a supply of water from the public mains but have to rely on private supplies from wells and springs. This number is likely to increase due to sporadic development in remote areas. These supplies should be studied closely and be under constant surveillance; routine sampling should be carried out at least four times a year but pressure of other work will not permit this to be done.

Complaints are investigated and advice given regarding the introduction of filtration to these private supplies. It is most unlikely that many of these services can be replaced by mains supplies as they are mainly in the isolated parts of the Borough and the cost of such mains supply would probably be prohibitive. However, it is becoming more urgent that a detailed survey be carried out to identify all the private supplies in the Borough and investigations undertaken into the feasibility of a mains supply being provided. I am becomingly increasingly concerned and am of the opinion that this is one aspect of the Department's work which cannot be ignored for much longer without the definite possibility of serious consequences from the increasing use of chemicals on farm lands from which, of course, these private supplies are gathered.

During the year 22 samples were taken for bacteriological analysis and 9 samples for chemical analysis. 8 bacteriological samples proved on analysis to be unsatisfactory for domestic use and the users were advised on methods to adopt to improve the quality and to protect the consumers.

Over 19,000 properties in the Borough share a common supply pipe and as a result many properties have an inadequate supply of water from the mains. A survey undertaken during the year underlined the large number of properties suffering from this problem. During the year this Authority have been instrumental in a joint investigation into the problem with the North West Water Authority with whom a case will be presented to Central Government with a view to a national attack on the problem. As an interim measure a streamlining of the present grant scheme, which offered 50% of the cost of providing a separate supply to most householders, has been agreed and a grant of £70 will be made in most cases. The grant in each case is shared equally by this Authority and the North West Water Authority.

Regular visits are made to the two public swimming pools in the Borough and during the year 133 samples were submitted for bacteriological analysis, 28 of which were found to be unsatisfactory. No samples were taken from private swimming pools.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The investigation of infectious diseases has taken up quite a proportion of the time of the staff, these investigations taking priority over all other work. 17 cases required investigation during the year, the majority being food borne infections. Several cases have run over into the current year and samples are still being submitted to the laboratory in the hope that final clearance can be given to the individuals concerned. Some patients become chronic excretors of the particular bacteria which causes their initial infection and they remain under constant supervision to ensure that they do not take up occupations which could create an outbreak.

Food Poisoning

Trends continue to be increasing although the figures show a possible lesser number. This is because of non-confirmed cases and the fact that many investigations are carried out where there are suspicions of food poisoning. Many cases occur which do not receive investigation because of non-notification and also many notifications are so old that proper investigation is impossible owing to the passage of time.

One major outbreak occurred during the year and was traced back to the canteen of a large factory in an adjoining local authority's area. Many people were involved and the causative organism was the same in all cases. The incriminating foodstuff was not traced, however, because of delay between investigations and the original onset. This was owing to many reasons - notification; investigation; sampling; etc.

In no case was an implicating food found and all the cases were of an isolated nature.

A new development in food poisoning, seen this year, has been the revelation of new strains of pathogenic bacteria found to cause gastro-intestinal illness. Previous years have shown *Bacillus cereus* to be the cause in cases associated with the eating of rice and under certain circumstances pathogenic *Escherichia coli*. This year has seen the identification of *Campylobacter* species as a cause of food poisoning and many of the un-typed cases have been allocated to this bacteria.

As notification of infectious diseases is an essential provision for preventive action by the Local Authority, certain diseases have been made notifiable. These have been listed below together with the number of notifications received during the year in each category.

Acute Encephalitis	-
Acute Meningitis	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-
Anthrax	-
Cholera	-
Diphtheria	-
Dysentery (Amoebic or Bacillary)	7
Food Poisoning (or suspected Food Poisoning)	17
Infective Jaundice	3
Leprosy	-
Leptospirosis	-
Malaria	-
Measles	31
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	-
Paratyphoid Fever	-
Plague	-
Relapsing Fever	-
Scarlet Fever	-
Smallpox	-
Tetanus	-
Tuberculosis	22
Typhoid Fever	-
Typhus	-
Whooping Cough	112
Yellow Fever	-

Total 192

A Local Authority may, by order, subject to the approval of the Minister of Health, make notifiable any infectious disease in their area, e.g. during outbreaks of smallpox it is sometimes considered advisable to make chickenpox notifiable.

When a case of notifiable disease occurs in any building used for human habitation including shops, canal boats, caravans and certain other premises the notification of the relevant facts to the Local Authority is compulsory under the provisions of the Public Health Act, 1936 Section 144 (as amended). The attending medical practitioner is the responsible person and is required to submit at once the relevant information on a form prescribed for this purpose.

TUBERCULOSIS

I am becoming increasingly concerned at the increase in the number of cases of the disease amongst the immigrant population. Difficulties have arisen from time to time in securing co-operation from families and contacts. There is a very definite need to establish a more formal means of communication with representatives of the ethnic minority groups; this would be of great value to many of the facets of Local Authority work.

22 new cases of Tuberculosis were notified during the year; of these 18 were respiratory cases and 4 non-respiratory.

The incidence of males to females infected was as follows:-

Respiratory	12 males	6 females
Non-Respiratory	2 males	2 females

<u>Age Periods</u> <u>Years</u>	<u>Pulmonary</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>	
	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>F</u>
0	1	-	-	-
1	1	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	1
10	-	1	-	-
15	-	-	-	1
20	-	-	1	-
25	1	2	1	-
35	3	-	-	-
45	3	1	-	-
55	1	1	-	-
65 and upwards	2	1	-	-
Age unknown	-	-	-	-
Total	12	6	2	2

At the end of the year the total number of cases of Tuberculosis remaining on the active register was 231 as follows:-

	<u>Respiratory</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory</u>
Males	117	32
Females	57	25
	<u>174</u>	<u>57</u>

FOOD POISONING

A total of 17 cases were notified during the year the types being:-

St. Paul	1
Newport	1
Virchow	5
Indiana	1
Bredeney	1
Typhimurium	2
Not Typed	6

Total	17
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ITINERANT CARAVANS

The areas of land which have given rise to problems have changed. The Harvey Street Site in Oswaldtwistle has been sealed off, there remain however two sites in Huncoat, one at Bolton Avenue owned by the Council and one off Altham Lane owned by the National Coal Board. The itinerants cause problems for residents in the area and a great deal of staff time is taken up dealing with complaints and even more with the eviction of itinerants from Council-owned land.

The Cripps report has now been accepted by the Government and the policy of providing sites under grant is now nationally accepted. Work is now in hand for the provision of the site at Altham and every endeavour must be made to complete the site at the earliest opportunity. The early part of the year was very quiet with regard to itinerant activity but during the latter part of the period activity has stepped up. From discussions with the itinerants it appears that they are under the mistaken impression that the site delay is due to this Authority 'dragging its feet' and this increased activity is their method of exerting pressure on the Council.

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION

Progress has continued in the compulsory conversion of waste water closets. More contractors have shown an interest in the carrying out of this work which has eased the problems of having these conversions completed. 102 compulsory waste water closet conversions were carried out and 25 voluntarily.

The problem of the septic tanks in Burnley Road, Clayton-le-Moors is now nearer solution, as the Water Authority have accepted responsibility. I anticipate that the problem will be resolved satisfactorily during the forthcoming year.

DRAINAGE

The Department offers a free service to the public for the releasing of choked drains and frequently the visits by the drainage operator to carry out this work are followed up, in the first place by a Technical Assistant or, if necessary, by an Environmental Health Officer, who offers advice to the householder following the discovery of drainage defects.

Several areas of the Borough are not served by the sewerage system and rely upon septic tanks, cesspools, pail closets and soakaways for the disposal of the waste water and surface water. Routine survey work is not being carried out to my satisfaction. Pressure of work within the Department prevents the monitoring of this large area of drainage work. The number of these installations is increasing due to development in remoter areas of the Borough and their proximity to private water supplies gives cause for concern. It should also be remembered that maintenance of these installations is neglected until serious problems occur.

RODENT CONTROL

During the period 1st January, 1978 to 31st December, 1978, 616 confirmed rat infestations and 438 confirmed mice infestations were treated.

A systematic treatment has been carried out of all the sewers in the area, entailing the poisoning of 2531 manholes. The control of rodents within the sewer system is an important aspect of Rodent Control work as the egress of rodents from the sewerage system is the main cause of surface infestation.

DOG WARDEN SERVICE

The scheme continued on a full-time basis during the year. The number of dogs seized reduced by 317 when compared with last year's figure but at 1,056 is almost exactly the average of the number seized during 1975 and 1976. This perhaps indicates that the introduction of a part-time service such as operated during 1976 does not become apparent to dog owners until the year after its introduction. Then again it may indicate that even with a full-time service there is a hard-core of irresponsible dog owners who will always let their dogs roam about unattended. Perhaps the scheme has not been in operation for long enough to arrive at any firm conclusions.

The number of licences issued continued its downward trend from the peak of 5,729 in 1976 to 5,282 this year. This statistic tells us little except that the revenue to the Authority from this source is reduced, 'not a lot' since the fee is a mere 37½p.

Although there were no reports of incidents of sheep and cattle worrying, which made headlines in the local press, persons did get bitten, vehicle accidents were caused, footpaths, grass verges, playing fields and parks were fouled - all by dogs. Please do not blame the dogs - point the finger at the owners.

Another year has passed and still the 1976 Report on Dogs is gathering dust at the Department of the Environment.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The Road Construction Unit have agreed to pay compensation for the demolition of the Public Conveniences in Clayton-le-Moors and this finance will be allocated to the provision of new conveniences on a site on the opposite side of Blackburn Road.

Every effort is made to repair vandal damage as quickly as possible and to erase graffitti where possible. The unattended conveniences are closed during the hours of darkness to reduce vandalism to a minimum.

In addition to the 10 public conveniences in the urban areas many of the parks and playing fields have toilet facilities available to the public.

LICENCES

In addition to the licences issued under legislation mentioned elsewhere in this report, the Department is responsible for issuing licences under various enactments and details of these, together with the number of licences issued are as follows:-

Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976	1
Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969	5
Pet Animals Act 1951	6
Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963	8
Riding Establishments Act 1964	3
Breeding of Dogs Act 1975	7
Scrap Metal Dealers (Registration only)	19
Slaughtermen	16
*Dog Licences Act 1959	5282

*these licences are issued by the Post Office acting as agent for this Authority

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS 1948 and 1951

No action was necessary during the year under the provisions of the above-mentioned Acts for the removal of persons in need of care and attention.

Section 50 of the 1948 Act imposes on the Local Authority the duty of causing to be buried or cremated the body of any person who has died in their area, in any case where it appears to the Authority that no suitable arrangements for the disposal of the body will be made otherwise than by the Authority.

During the year under review no action was necessary under this section of the 1948 Act.

HEALTH EDUCATION AND HOME SAFETY

Health Education forms the basis of the work of Environmental Health Officers and in addition to what is considered to be the "normal" work of the Department as itemised throughout this report, members of staff took every opportunity to give talks and lectures on a variety of subjects to groups and organisations.

Whilst being armed with a wide range of statutory powers, which were used when necessary, far more positive results were obtained informally by persuasion and education. In order to achieve permanent improvements in the field of environmental health time and patience are necessary to enable staff fully to explain why certain works are necessary or why certain actions are prohibited. Merely quoting sections of Acts of Parliament is not sufficient if long-term improvements are to be gained.

Despite the approach to the work of the Department, however, it is regrettable that due to severe economic restrictions more time was not available for staff to organise more formal "educational" talks. The training of student Environmental Health Officers within the Department continued and a close liaison was maintained with the Blackburn District of the Area Health Authority in the training of Nurses and Medical Students, a number of whom spent some time within the Department.

One of the main areas of neglect in Health Education, however, was that of Home Safety where virtually no practical work at all was done to bring home to the public the dangers which are present in the home. The statistics relating to accidents in the home from falls, fires, scalds, poisonings, etc., are frightening and it is felt that far more effort should be put into this work which, since 1974, has been a District Council responsibility.

Mention must again be made of the need to make Home Safety a statutory function of Local Authorities, instead of an optional one. This work is essential and not merely desirable.

The Chairman of the Environmental Health and Control Committee, together with the Deputy Borough Environmental Health Officer, attended the quarterly meetings of the North West Home Safety Council, which is supported by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA), an organisation to which the Authority is affiliated.

PUBLIC MORTUARY

The arrangements agreed some years ago between the former Accrington Borough Council and the Blackburn and District Hospital Management Committee for the use of facilities at Victoria Hospital as the Public Mortuary have been continued for the Borough and are operating satisfactorily.

HOUSINGCLEARANCE AREAS

The programme of clearance which was approved by the Council in 1974 is progressing according to schedule. Minor adjustments to the programme have been made during the year. These additions to and subtractions from the programme having been referred to the Council.

Position of Clearance Programme at31st December, 1978

<u>Demolition Deferred</u>	<u>No. of dwellings</u>
Thompson Court C.O. 1965 (Accrington)	5
Cockerill Court C.O. 1969 (Accrington)	3
	<u>8</u>
	—
<u>Confirmed and Awaiting Demolition</u>	
Cross Street/James Street, Oswaldtwistle	78
Church Street/Bradley Street, Church	37
Burnley Road, Clayton-le-Moors	32
Shed Street, Oswaldtwistle	9
Canning Street, Accrington	71
Bent Street, Oswaldtwistle	4
Glebe Street, Great Harwood	3
Union Road/Clayton Street, Oswaldtwistle	5
Milnshaw Lane, Accrington	8
Canal Street/Oswald Street, Clayton-le-Moors	116
Maden Street, Church	44
	<u>407</u>
<u>Represented and Awaiting Confirmation</u>	
Henry Street/Blackburn Road, Church Nos. 1 & 2	63
Bridge Street, Church	11
Wade Street, Church	63
Dowry Street/Burnley Road, Accrington	51
Dowry Street/Arnold Street, Accrington	24
Edward Street, Great Harwood	8
Hindle Street, Accrington	15
Church Street/Bradley Street, Church No. 3	3
Victor Street, Clayton-le-Moors	2
	<u>240</u>

DemolishedNo. of dwellings

Henry Street/Lion Street, Church	10
Commercial Street/Ernest Street, Church	51
Sparth Road, Clayton-le-Moors	16
Dale Street, Accrington	4
Dinely Street, Church	4
Frederick Street, Accrington	2
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	87
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INDIVIDUAL UNFIT PROPERTIES

The efforts of the Council are directed to the voluntary purchase of dwelling houses which at the present time are empty and derelict. With regard to the occupied individual unfit dwellings it is the practice of the Council in respect of those properties that can be repaired at reasonable expense, to serve a notice (Section 9 and 9A, Housing Act 1957) on the owner with the intention of carrying out the work in default if there is a failure to respond. In respect of those occupied properties which are incapable of being repaired at reasonable expense it is the Council's policy to hold a 'Time and Place' meeting to which all interested parties are invited in order that the future of the properties can be determined. One of the following three alternatives is adopted:-

- 1) An Undertaking from the owner to repair
- 2) Closing the property for human habitation
- 3) Demolition of the property

During the year 11 properties were officially closed for human habitation. In addition 8 Undertakings by owners to repair unfit properties were accepted by the Council. A demolition order was made on 1 property.

3 of the individual empty and derelict properties have now been purchased and rehabilitated. No further progress has been made due to difficulties in negotiating for purchase.

The Council agreed during the year to make Compulsory Purchase Orders on 7 houses in order that they could be rehabilitated.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENT AREAS

It was resolved early in the year that there was an urgent need for a new policy with regard to area rehabilitation and that plans be formulated for consideration as early as possible. It was further decided that a comprehensive report, which included staffing implications, be prepared for consideration by Members of the Council.

As an interim measure, a scheme for environmental works at George Street, Oswaldtwistle was drawn up, approved and work put in hand. The public meetings which have been held to discuss area rehabilitation have been well attended and it has become evident that it is the desire of residents in general to rescue their homes, to spend money on them and continue to live in the area. Once they are confident of the length of life of their home they are not reluctant to invest their resources in them.

The Housing Action Area at Blackpool Street/South Shore Street, Church is beginning to show signs of success. Two improvements have been completed and the house fronts and gables have been stone painted. The occupants of the area are now wholeheartedly behind the scheme.

There are several declared General Improvement Areas within the Borough that require the attention of staff resources in order to regenerate interest in the improvement of individual properties within the area.

Unfortunately I have not the resources within the present staffing levels to carry out this essential work.

FOOD/SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

The year past has provided no major problems in this field apart from the usual difficulties associated with finance and the need to review and curb expenditure. No expansion of service had been possible and this mounted great stress on the service provided because of the demands of new legislation and increases in new food products and food industries within the District.

Work has continued to centre round the food administration with Health and Safety enforcement taking a back seat because of demands upon staff time and also because of the need for retraining of staff in Health and Safety work.

The work undertaken had to be reviewed to achieve a greater return for input. This was brought about by re-allocation of work to individuals and a re-assessment of the work done. Each item was categorised and the least onerous had to be ignored so that those matters which were of an urgent, or potentially dangerous nature, could be given priority.

No major legislation appeared during the year but the full effects of previously enacted laws began to have consequences. The Poultry Meat Hygiene Regulations came fully into force and many producers throughout the country had ceased to trade; the two major producers in Hyndburn, however, continue to trade but with their trade concentrated in this Area. The Slaughterhouse Hygiene Regulations were brought into force, in part, during the middle of the year and were designed to introduce some of the E.E.C. requirements in relation to red meat slaughtering into effect in the production of home produced meat.

Table A - Chemical Sampling

Article sampled	Number analysed		Number adulterated or non-standard	
	Formal	Informal	Analysis	Labelling
Milk	98	204	27	1
Cream		16		
Dairy products		6		
Alcoholic beverages				
Baby foods				
Canned goods		3		
Cereals				
Confectionery		18		1
Cooked meats/meat products		27	5	
Fish		9		
Fruit		5		
Meat		18	3	
Medicinal preparations/drugs				
Miscellaneous		13		
Poultry		2		
Preserves				
Soft Drinks		8		
Sweet Confectionery		13		
Vegetables		7		
Tests for Pesticides				
Tests for metallic contamination				

The figures show how the sampling was undertaken and the number of foods obtained. Once again milk continues to dominate the table and proportionately the failures are small, the adulterated samples being mainly minor processing faults and no deliberate attempts to defraud were found.

The aim in food sampling has been a continuing one of dealing with local products rather than the probable wastage of time and money in sampling nationally well known and tried products. A close watch is kept on these by other Local Authorities.

Confectionery had been sampled more frequently than previously as an attempt is made to monitor the local bakery trade and to see trends in manufacturing. Cooked meats and meat products also form a high proportion of samples mainly because current trends are away from the traditional "joint" and more towards the cheaper cuts and processed meats.

Not shown in the table were the large numbers of foods which were sampled as frozen foods. The increase in convenience and frozen foods for home freezers has been recognised and an attempt is being made to monitor this source of foodstuffs. The expense in procuring samples, however, had become rather expensive when buying from "bulk" as was the practice originally.

Soft drinks and sweet confectionery were other areas to be examined during the year, mainly because of the influx of cheap foreign imports which were being sold in the markets and cheaper-type shops.

No samples were obtained specifically for pesticides or metallic contamination, however, vegetables and fish had been obtained which were examined during routine examination for these two tests.

Table B - Bacteriological Sampling

Article Sampled	Number Sampled	Number Unsatisfactory
Untreated milk	139	9 Pos. brucella - Nil
Pasteurised milk	170	1
Sterilised milk	24	Nil
UHT milk (Long Life)	19	Nil
Cream	21	2
Ice Cream	77	Grade 1 .. 66) Satis- Grade II .. 2) factory
		Grade III 7) Unsatis- *Grade IV 2) factory
Meat/Meat products	8	2
Poultry	4	Nil
Other	12	Nil

* Advice given and re-sampled -
Series of samples taken and faults rectified

Here again milk features greatly because of the quantities produced and consumed but one point worthy of mention is that for the fourth consecutive year no brucella positive samples were found. This is primarily because of the eradication scheme being pursued by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. It is a progressive operation but undoubtedly is now having its effect on this most debilitating of diseases.

The continuance of the bacteriological examination in milk are now aimed at the bacteriological cleanliness and the monitoring of other infections carried in milk. Not indicated here were the numerous samples of milk socks (filter pads) used to roughly filter milk on the production line. These were taken where there were suspicions of contamination of the milk supply.

The problems encountered in ice cream samples were all as a result of poor handling and storage and all were rectified following advice and help from the Department's staff.

Table C - Food Complaints

Commodity	Foreign Matter		Mould	Unfit Otherwise
	Home Produce	Imported		
Milk	3			2
Butter				1
Cheese			2	5
Bread	18			
Canned Meat	2		1	1
Cooked Meat	1		2	3
Meat Pies	9		2	1
Fruit	6		2	1
Jam				
Vegetables	3			
Sweets	3			1
Confectionery	6		3	1
Other	20		1	8
Premises				20

As can be seen from the table complaints cover a broad spectrum of foods and are biased towards prepared foods. The high incidence of baked items reflected a rather poor record in this trade and also perhaps, the public's reluctance to accept less than the best in these types of products. Bread alone must be singled out as being the subject of most complaints and particularly in relation to the inclusion of foreign matter. This point had been made in contacts with the Department of Fair Trading. However, bread is probably one of the manufactured products produced in the greatest numbers and consequently must present more problems in production and a higher risk.

There had, over the year, been an increase in the number of complaints received relating to premises. These were complaints such as unhygienic practices and premises, refuse storage, lack of facilities, etc. The number, although relatively small at 20, does show an increase over previous years and must reflect an increased public awareness and a desire for improvement in food hygiene standards.

Table D - Food Prosecutions

Under Reg. 27 M & D Regs. (Dirty Bottles)	1
Under Sec. 2 F & D Act (Foreign Bodies)	5
(Mould)	1
Under Sec. 8 F & D Act (Unsound Food)	1
Under Food Hygiene Regulations (Dirty Premises)	Nil
Other	Nil

Prosecutions for dirty milk bottles were low, probably because of the "filtration" process undertaken by other Local Authorities and the willingness of those Authorities to deal with complaints when they are received.

One prosecution taken was particularly gruesome and related to a coil of metal in an apple pie. A young girl had bitten into the pie and the metal was found in her mouth. This was a case of a bakery not taking sufficient care in the manufacture of its products. Another case related to a cockroach being found in a carton of spanish salad. The salad was sold by retail from a large counter display and packed at the time of sale. The food had obviously not been protected during storage.

A case taken against a local shopkeeper for selling a packet of teacakes containing a metal needle had sinister consequences for the Authority; the defendant cross summonsed the bakery to answer the charge and the Magistrates saw fit to decide upon an absolute discharge to both defendants, awarding costs of £78 against the Authority.

Three summonses were laid against one defendant in a case for three separate offences of having unfit food on sale in his shop. The food - bacon shanks - were decomposing and smelling. A further case against the same defendant was for selling to a member of the public unfit (smelling, mouldy and very old) Philadelphia soft cheese. The pack was, in fact, 8 months outside the date code on the packet.

The bakery trade featured in another case taken for a hexagonal steel nut being discovered in a Hovis loaf. This was probably from an item of machinery in the bakehouse.

A second prosecution was taken against the baker who featured in the first case (that of metal in an apple pie) this time for a piece of aluminium in a potato and meat pie. Either the man was very unlucky or is not taking adequate precautions - I feel the latter!!

Finally, only one case was taken for the hardy annual of dirty milk bottles - only the worst cases come before the Courts so we cannot be accused of deliberately or viciously prosecuting.

FOOD HYGIENETable E - Number of Premises

Type	Number on Register
Bakehouses	35
Butchers	62
Cafes, snack bars, etc.	37 + 109 canteens
Confectioners	46
Dairies	2
Fish fryers	57 (including 9 take aways)
Fishmongers	5
Greengrocers and fruiterers	57
Grocers	184
Hawkers	36
Ice Cream Premises	5 All Manufacturers
Licensed Premises	239
Market Stalls	30
Preserved Foods	19
Sweet Confectionery	80
Others	23 Misc. + 3 poultry
TOTAL	1029

The table shows a large increase in the total number of premises and is as a result of records being updated and individual types of premises being better classified. There were no marked trends but the small bakehouses seem to be on the decline - more and more bread and confectionery is being produced in the large plants.

Food hygiene inspections continued to be the major item of work in this Section but a reappraisal had to be made in order to achieve a greater throughput in the higher risk premises. This was being done at the expense of lower risk corner shop type premises.

MILK AND DAIRIES - MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATION) REGULATIONS 1963, etc.Table F - Details of Licences

	Number
Milk Producers	11
Milk Producers/Retailers	39
Milk Retailers	33
Milk Processors - pasteurisers	2
sterilisers	2
U.H. Treatment	1

No major changes occurred in the milk and dairies field during the year; mostly minor administrative alterations - dealers come and go and the registration of new persons and the deletion of traders who cease handling milk are administratively time-consuming, nevertheless are essential to the smooth running of the Section.

INSPECTION OF FOODSTable G - Unsound Foods - Condemned

Number and types seized:	Nil
Food surrendered:-	
Type	Approximate weights
Frozen Foods	4700 lbs.
Fresh meat (a) slaughterhouse	65356 lbs.
(b) wholesale premises	12277 lbs.
(c) retail shops	1452 lbs.
Cooked/canned/meat products	4107 lbs.
Canned foods	2842 lbs.
Fruit/Vegetables/Fish	3732 lbs.
Others	3622 lbs.

No unsound foodstuff required to be seized but extremely large amounts of unfit food were voluntarily surrendered. These foods were all disposed of by tipping in the absence of incineration facilities locally.

Frozen foods continue to be a major source of unsound foodstuffs on account of the unreliability of frozen food cabinets and because of rapid deterioration of the food when failures do occur.

The incidence of disease and unfitness in meat at the time of slaughter illustrates the importance of the meat inspection service and serves to show that the human population could be affected with many diseases were this preventive action not taken. The large increase in food surrendered from wholesale premises was, in the main, owing to large consignments being unfit when delivered to a major boning plant within the area.

IMPORTED FOODS

Table H - Inspections

Number of visits paid in connection with imported foods	180
Number of samples taken	17

The general trend in transport universally is for more efficient methods and for less handling, resulting in a quick turn round and a reduction in manpower. This has resulted in the containerisation of imported foodstuffs. Now five major sites are situated in the Borough where foods arrive from overseas locked in a container until opened for inspection. The workload in this respect is increasing greatly but the companies involved are most co-operative and a good working relationship has been built up.

One company receives meat from many places on the Continent virtually on a daily basis, a second company receives fruit and vegetables regularly and a third company receives meat products at varying intervals. A large proportion of the trade in imported foods is undertaken by a warehousing company who receive and break down containerloads.

SLAUGHTERHOUSE ACT 1974
SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT 1958

MEAT INSPECTION

The figures in Table (J) show the throughput of the one red meat slaughterhouse in the Borough and of the parts condemned as being unfit for human consumption.

The meat inspection service is financed by the levying of a charge on the meat contractor and this is now undertaken by charging monthly for the Inspector's time with a balance at the financial year end.

No cases of cysticerci were found during the year and no action was necessary. 16 Slaughtermen were licensed during the year including 3 for Mohammedan ritual slaughter.

SLAUGHTER OF POULTRY ACT 1967
POULTRY MEAT (HYGIENE) REGULATIONS 1976

The figures in Table (K) show the throughput at the two major poultry slaughtering establishments in the Borough. Whilst no inspection of the birds was carried out, numerous inspections of the plant were made.

TABLE J
SUMMARY OF ANIMALS SLAUGHTERED AND PARTS CONDEMNED

MONTH	CATTLE	CONDEMNED		SHEEP & LAMBS	CONDEMNED		PIGS	CONDEMNED		TOTAL CARCASSES	TOTAL CONDEMNED	
		WHOLE	PART		WHOLE	PART		WHOLE	PART		WHOLE	PART
JAN.	265	2	199	4226	51	1144	1	-	-	4495	53	1344
FEB.	185	1	86	4012	53	1278	-	-	-	4197	54	1364
MARCH	156	1	60	3971	44	1086	-	-	-	4128	46	1147
APRIL	246	1	96	3554	62	1287	-	-	-	3804	64	1383
MAY	94	-	28	2699	80	844	-	-	-	2796	81	874
JUNE	14	-	3	3141	37	1120	-	-	-	3156	37	1123
JULY	57	1	23	3539	31	1008	-	-	-	3598	32	1031
AUG.	184	-	86	5356	44	1527	-	-	-	5540	44	1613
SEPT.	151	-	52	4170	22	1337	-	-	-	4323	22	1389
OCT.	178	-	75	4114	31	1255	-	-	-	4292	31	1334
NOV.	233	1	118	5513	24	1501	-	-	-	5746	25	1619
DEC.	144	-	123	4999	21	1397	-	-	-	5144	21	1521
TOTALS 1907		7	953	49294	500	14784	1	-	-	51219	510	15742

TABLE K

POULTRY SLAUGHTERING FIGURES

MONTH	PLANT NO. 1				PLANT NO. 2				TOTAL KILLED			
	Chickens	Hens	Capons	Turkeys	Chickens	Hens	Capons	Turkeys	Chickens	Hens	Capons	Turkeys
JANUARY	5972	208	90	114	5480	-	-	-	11452	208	90	114
FEBRUARY	5206	140	-	-	6200	-	-	-	11406	140	-	-
MARCH	8056	432	-	130	9470	-	120	280	17526	432	120	410
APRIL	5855	114	-	63	8140	-	150	-	13995	114	150	63
MAY	8840	370	-	97	11000	-	-	-	19840	370	-	97
JUNE	6742	122	-	63	8885	-	-	-	15627	122	-	63
JULY	6062	170	-	48	9210	-	-	-	15272	170	-	48
AUGUST	7766	235	-	90	11355	-	-	-	19121	235	-	90
SEPTEMBER	6732	140	-	73	9060	-	-	-	15792	140	-	73
OCTOBER	8972	210	-	219	9300	-	-	-	18272	210	-	219
NOVEMBER	6320	310	-	83	11565	-	158	165	17885	310	158	248
DECEMBER	5610	270	532	821	8920	-	850	730	14530	270	1382	1551
TOTALS	82133	2721	622	1801	108585	-	1278	1175	190718	2721	1900	2976

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORKHEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK ACT 1974 AND
OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT 1963

The enforcement of the Health and Safety at Work Act has not been undertaken to any great extent because of lack of staff time but the duties are onerous and more far reaching than those imposed by the Offices, Shops and Railway Premises Act. The identification of the premises to be administered by local authorities has been outlined in Enforcement Regulations and has extended the duties previously undertaken.

The work which has been carried out was restricted to investigation of complaints, investigations and processing of accidents and the administrative and registration procedures imposed by these duties. The number of registered premises continues to increase owing to the fact that very few deletions are made to the register because of the lack of inspections of those on the register. The number registered during the year is again small and this relates to the work undertaken in the Department in the food hygiene field where food premises are also registrable under the Acts. The figures shown for inspections made are therefore in the main food premises.

The extremely low number of accident notifications in my opinion does not reflect accurately the number occurring and enforcement cannot help to reduce industrial injury when notifications are not made.

Only one formal notice was served under the Health and Safety at Work Act for a danger seen at a launderette.

Registered Premises

Type	Number Registered at Year End	Number Registered During Year	Number Inspected During Year	No. of Employees	
				M	F
Offices	166	1	2	535	459
Shops	416	4	47	440	1122
Wholesale Shops, Warehouses	27	-	2	196	101
Catering establishments	72	2	28	138	315
Fuel storage depots	8	Nil	Nil	18	5
TOTALS	689	7	79	1327	2002

Accidents

	Number
Offices	-
Shops	4
Wholesale shops, etc.	4
Catering establishments	-
Fuel storage depots	-
TOTALS	8
<u>Cause:</u>	
Handling goods	1
Falls one level to other	4
Falls same level	1
Misuse of hand tools	-
Struck by falling object	-
Stepping on or striking object	1
Miscellaneous	1
<u>Nature:</u>	
Bruising, crushing or concussion	-
Fractures or/and dislocations	-
Sprains and strains	3
Open wounds and surface injury	3
Internal injury	1
Multiple injuries	1
<u>Site:</u>	
Head	1
Hands	-
Feet	1
Lower leg or ankle	2
Back	3
Trunk	-

Lifts and Hoists

Reports received

-

Notices under HASAW Act

Improvement Notices	Nil
Prohibition Notices	1
Deferred Prohibition Notices	Nil

SHOPS ACT 1950 etc.

Administration of this legislation centres mainly around opening hours and Sunday trading as these two areas are the main source of problems. All complaints were dealt with informally and most traders accept the need for restrictions but the law is anomalous and there are very many problems in differentiating between one type of trading and another.

At the year end proposals were being considered for a survey of premises for 6 day trading.

Number of complaints received	15
Number of visits made	12
Number where informal action needed	6

ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTIONAir Pollution

The final smoke control order in the former Borough of Accrington District came into operation on the 1st November, 1978. This concludes a decade of smoke control in this area.

No. 39 Smoke Control Order, which will include the whole area of Clayton-le-Moors and Altham was made by the Council on 18th January, 1978 and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Environment on 21st March, 1978 to become operative on 1st November, 1979.

This will leave the only non -smoke controlled area on the westerly side of the Borough for attention. This area will include the Knuzden and Red Cap Estates together with the Parish of Belthorn and the surrounding rural district. A decision will have to be made on the reasonableness of including the whole of this area in a Smoke Control Order in compliance with Council policy. It is felt that in view of the comments expressed in the fifth report of the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, the Council may have to revise its programme and leave out the more rural part of this remaining unsmoke controlled section of the Borough.

Existing Smoke Control Areas

During the winter months up to the end of December several smoke emissions were noticed from domestic premises in smoke controlled areas. In most cases where coal was being burnt it was of the prepacked kind which is available from retail shop outlets in 28lb bags. It is not an offence to sell from a retail shop to a customer coal of this kind, on the grounds that the shopkeeper cannot be expected to determine where the coal is going. It is an offence, however, to acquire bituminous coal under these circumstances.

This creates something of a problem from an enforcement point of view and I question whether a change in the legislation is not now called for, in particular in areas like Hyndburn which will soon be almost entirely smoke controlled.

National Survey

The Department continues to operate a site monitoring the urban ground level concentrations of suspended particulates (smoke) and ground level concentrations of sulphur dioxide.

Whilst admitting the fallibility of statistics it is felt that the following readings (table A), taken at a town centre site by the former Accrington Borough Council and now by this Authority, serve to illustrate the significant reductions in ground level concentrations directly attributable to the progressive smoke control programme.

Table A

	Urban Ground Level Concentrations 1962 - 1978			
	Smoke - microgram per cubic metre		Sulphur dioxide-microgram per cubic metre	
	Winter mean	Annual mean	Winter mean	Annual mean
1962 - 3	335	188	365	236
1963 - 4	222	154	269	198
1964 - 5	194	130	260	192
1965 - 6	148	117	204	177
1966 - 7	159	148	188	182
1972 - 3	162	156	141	140
1973 - 4	151	136	107	104
1974 - 5	91	78	112	93
1975 - 6	89	73	118	92
1976 - 7	108	87	130	99
1977 - 8	83	68	90	93

Although the policy of pollution control in this country has always been to achieve the lowest level having regard to the 'best practicable means' criteria it can be useful to compare results obtained to existing or proposed guideline standards.

In fact, with the current programme of European legislation and the harmonisation of regulations, it may be that this country will have to adopt air quality standards.

Table A shows the yearly average particulate material and sulphur dioxide ground level concentrations together with the winter mean levels. Because of the climatic contribution to urban ground level concentrations of pollutants the winter mean level gives the levels for smoke and sulphur dioxide which can be compared with the following proposed standard:

European Commission's proposed Health Protection Standard for Particulates
Sulphur dioxide

- a) Winter median values of daily mean particulates and sulphur dioxide not to exceed 130 microgrammes per cubic metre unless the median value of particulates is less than 60 microgrammes per cubic metre when the median value of sulphur dioxide is not to exceed 180 microgrammes per cubic metre.

- (b) Annual median values of daily mean particulates and sulphur dioxide not to exceed 80 microgrammes per cubic metre unless the median value of particulates is less than 40 microgrammes per cubic metre when the median value of sulphur dioxide is not to exceed 120 microgrammes per cubic metre.

It can be demonstrated therefore that at the current sampling site at 119 Blackburn Road, Accrington the winter mean levels are complied with although the levels recorded are in excess of the proposed annual mean levels.

There is, therefore, no cause for complacency, however the proximity to pollution from road vehicles could well be affecting the results.

Industrial

The task of securing and maintaining a pollution free atmosphere is carried out by the Department. This involves the regular surveillance of emissions from industrial combustion processes and boilers in the district to ensure that they are operated within the limits specified by the Clean Air Acts from the point of view of smoke, fume, grit and dust emissions.

There are 6 registered works with a total of 13 registered processes carried out in the district the control of which is administered by the Alkali Inspector. A good working relationship exists between the staff of the Department and the District Alkali Inspector and a policy of mutual co-operation is pursued.

A steady level of complaints relating to industrial emissions has been investigated by the Department. In the main informal action has resulted in a satisfactory conclusion.

During the year widespread complaints have been received of a sulphurous smell associated with the combustion of colliery waste at a tip in the area. The National Coal Board have carried out extensive excavation works in an attempt to dig out the area of fire. However this was found to be not practicable and the measures taken, which appear to have been successful to date, have included the regrading of the tip face together with the blinding of the surface with soil and clay.

A standard deposit gauge has been sited in various areas of the Borough both to assess the amount of grit and dust generally as a monitoring exercise and also to evaluate grit emission levels from particular industrial operations.

A fairly steady level of notifications of the installation of new boiler plants has been received. This is required by Section 3 of the Clean Air Act 1956. In some cases when the fuel burning rate is in excess of a certain level it is necessary for the height of the chimney to be approved. This ensures that any new plant installed, or increases in the size of plant which occur, will not result in conditions being created in the neighbourhood which will be a health risk or a nuisance to the inhabitants due to the inadequate dispersion of waste flue gases.

Complaints of offensive odour emanating from various sources in the District continue to be received. In the main the level of complaint is not considered to be excessively high. A policy of investigation is pursued together with liaison and advice to the companies concerned. Unfortunately, in most cases, the cost of control equipment is very high and therefore in the case of complaints of a marginal nature a complete solution is seldom possible.

NOISE

General

Complaints concerning noise emissions from industrial, commercial and domestic premises continue. These are investigated and, where the complaint is considered justifiable, action is taken to alleviate the problem.

The assessment of noise levels has to be objective but to the complainant, obviously, the level is assessed subjectively. One of the problems which has been evident during the year is the difficulty in explaining to a complainant, who in the opinion of the Department, has no grounds for complaint that the noise problem is not one in which the Local Authority can involve itself.

Sound Insulation Regulations 1975

The Department is acting as agent to the Department of Transport in the administration of the provisions of the above regulation as they apply to houses affected by noise from the proposed M65 motorway as it passes through the District.

Houses can be offered sound insulation works where they will be subject to noise from the construction of the new road for a significant period of time and where they will receive a certain level of noise based on the predicted traffic flows on the new road. Some houses will qualify on both grounds

The insulation package offered comprises acoustic double glazing to windows on the eligible facade of the dwelling together with venetian blinds (for solar heat control) and sound attenuated ventilator units where appropriate.

During the year all affected properties have been surveyed and an insulation scheme prepared in anticipation of the work commencing. However, until the Secretary of State makes a decision on the report of the Public Inquiry which was held in 1978, no further progress can be made.

Consultation with other Departments

Planning

The Department continues to play an active part in the determination of planning applications. Recommendations are made regularly on the impact of proposed developments both from the point of view of noise and pollution emissions. Where appropriate requests are made for the inclusion of conditions to effectively limit noise etc. to acceptable limits. As necessary the developments are monitored to confirm compliance with these conditions.

Health and Safety at Work

During the year noise surveys have been carried out in noisy working environments for the Council's Safety Officer. It has then been possible to make recommendations concerning occupational noise exposure levels.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The policy of the Council to provide a weekly service throughout the year was interrupted briefly by a local dispute in April 1978.

Apart from this, however, and despite the restrictions on Local Government expenditure, a reasonable service was maintained throughout most of the year. The success or otherwise of local services can perhaps be measured by the number of complaints received and when it is considered that almost 33,000 refuse containers were emptied every week, the number of complaints received were infinitesimal.

Two of the main causes of unrest amongst the staff were the apparent difficulties in interpreting the finer points of the bonus system of payment and the inability of the Management at times to provide a full complement of suitable serviceable vehicles.

During the summer of 1978 regular discussions took place with representatives of the manual staff in an effort to simplify the bonus system and a reasonable compromise solution was reached towards the end of the year which went a long way to removing at least some of the difficulties inherent in bonus systems.

During 1978 attention was drawn on numerous occasions to the apparent failings in the vehicle maintenance system in operation. This meant that crews either had to wait for a vehicle to become available before they could start work or on occasions crews were using unsuitable vehicles in which to collect refuse.

By the end of 1978, the situation was reaching crisis point whereby the refuse collectors were considering taking industrial action in an attempt to achieve an improvement in vehicle maintenance.

Apart from these irritations the collection of domestic and trade refuse was continued successfully, although the charges made for the collection of trade waste still caused resentment among some of the tradespeople.

Assistance was given to the Oswaldtwistle Civic Society who once again operated a most successful rubbish amnesty in Oswaldtwistle. Householders were encouraged to bring all unwanted articles of household furniture, fittings and accessories to four sites manned by volunteers from the Society who assisted in the loading of vehicles. Considerable quantities of rubbish and unwanted articles were moved and disposed of in this way.

STREET CLEANSING AND LITTER CONTROL

This particular aspect of the Cleansing Services suffered once more due to the inability adequately to "man" the section and/or the inability to maintain in good working order 3 street cleansing machines.

The ultimate solution to the litter problem rests solely with the public and until individuals accept that they have a responsibility in the control of litter it is doubtful whether Local Authorities will ever cope adequately with the problem.

The economic restrictions placed on the Department have meant that, at times, the Cleansing Section has been severely restricted in its activities and consequently the service to the public has been unsatisfactory. A detailed examination of this function is at present being undertaken and it is hoped to prepare a report for the consideration of Members during the coming year.

REFUSE STORAGE ACCOMMODATION

The provision of dustbins under the Municipal Dustbin Scheme continued throughout the year, a total of 2,725 bins being issued as compared with 2,835 in 1977. Since Local Government reorganisation in 1974, a total of 13,003 bins have been provided under this scheme and generally speaking the standard of container throughout the Borough is reasonable, bearing in mind that several of the constituent Authorities of Hyndburn operated a Municipal bin provision scheme before reorganisation.

The main areas of concern in refuse storage accommodation still centres around the "bin sheds" in use in Accrington and the lack of adequate refuse storage facilities in many of the shops and offices, particularly in the Accrington town centre.

Investigations were continuing into the possibility of introducing bulk storage containers at some of the problem premises.

The issue of plastic sacks as bin liners continued and was much appreciated by the areas of the Borough where this system is in operation. Unfortunately, it was not possible to extend this system throughout Hyndburn due to financial restrictions.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Co-operation with the officers of the Waste Disposal Authority was maintained at a high level.

The Church land-fill site continued as the disposal point for the domestic and trade waste collected by the Department. The site was restricted to our own use but cars, small vans and pick-up type vehicles were also allowed to use the tip. No industrial waste was disposed of at this site.

Further discussions took place with the County staff regarding future disposal facilities but no firm conclusions were reached.

WASTE PAPER SALVAGE

During the early summer of 1978 a publicity campaign was launched with the aid of Messrs. Thames Board Mills Ltd., in an effort to effect the recovery of more waste paper.

Unfortunately despite an initial response from the public, the collectors quickly became dissatisfied with the bonus earned and by November the use of trailers at the rear of the refuse vehicles had been discontinued.

Discussions were being held at the end of the year in an attempt to agree a more suitable bonus system.

WORK IN THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY DURING 1978

There is a great deal of work proceeding through the Commission and Council of Ministers on environmental health matters. A large amount of publicity has been given to the food harmonisation programme but it will be of interest to Members to see the amount of other work with which the Community is involved.

On 26th June the Council adopted a directive on the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous pesticides. This is one more in a long line of directives relating to dangerous substances and preparations already adopted by the Council. On 19th December the Council adopted a directive relating to the labelling, preparation and advertising of foodstuffs for sale to the ultimate consumer. This prohibits the use of misleading information on labels and also applies to the presentation and advertising of products. Also in 1978 existing E.E.C. legislation was brought into line with technical and scientific progress relating to additives in foodstuffs, cocoa and chocolate products and fruit juices and nectars. Specific criteria of purity were also laid down for anti-oxidants and for emulsifiers and similar agents.

The Scientific Committee for Foodstuffs was involved in work relating to the Council directive on vinyl chloride monomer and the Commission recommendation of 29th March on saccharine.

Health Aspects in the Environment

The study of the consequences to health of pollutants present at places of work and in the environment continued with the preparation of documents on criteria (relationships between exposure and effect on health). Documents concerning cadmium, organophosphorus pesticides and asbestos were published. The Commission also continued its work on diseases associated with asbestos. A scientific advisory committee to examine the toxicity and ecotoxicity of chemical compounds was set up by the Commission. This includes a section to deal with the toxicological problems relating to man.

At meetings held by the Commission the quality control programme for the measurement of blood levels was finalised pursuant to the directive of 29th March, 1977 on biological screening of the population for lead.

Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work

A directive on the protection of the health of workers exposed to vinyl chloride monomer was adopted by the Council on 29th June.

Training courses were organised on industrial safety and industrial medicine; 6 courses for inspection staff and 2 for worker and employee representatives.

Protection of the Aquatic Environment

The work on discharges of specific dangerous substances, commenced during 1977, continued during the year. Primarily concerned with discharges of mercury by industries manufacturing chlorine, caustic soda and industrial discharges of aldrin, dieldrin and endrin, towards the end of 1978 the Commission concluded its consultations on proposals for emission standards applicable to discharges of these substances.

On 19th December the Council approved the proposal for a Council directive on the quality of water intended for human consumption put forward by the Commission in August, this directive concerns all water supplied directly as drinking water for domestic purposes and water which is to be used in the food industry.

Measures to Combat Atmospheric Pollution

On 29th June the Council adopted a directive on the approximation of the laws of member states relating to the lead content of petrol. The Council is giving detailed consideration to a proposal for a directive on air quality standards for sulphur dioxide and suspended particulate matter.

Noise

In the campaign against noise the work already undertaken by the Commission on construction plant and equipment continued and resulted in a proposal from the Commission and the adoption on 19th December of a Council directive on the level of noise from such plant and equipment. A proposal for a directive on noise from compressors was also presented to the Council as were six others including one on noise from subsonic aircraft.

Other noise abatement measures came under the heading of removal of technical barriers to trade; they were the directives limiting motorcycle noise which the Council adopted on 24th November and the proposal for a directive on the noise made by lawnmowers which the Council is examining.

Chemicals in the Environment

On 30th May the Council adopted a resolution on fluorocarbons in the environment. The Commission conducted a study to discover what would be the economic and social consequences of restricting the use of these substances, the aim being to frame, in the near future, an appropriate community policy in this area.

The final touches have now been put to a proposal for a Council directive on the risk of accidents in certain dangerous industrial activities. This proposal will be laid before the Council as soon as the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work has been consulted.

Milk

The Council continued during 1978 its examination of proposals relating to untreated whole milk and heat treated milk. The results of this examination, when published, will need careful scrutiny as it could have serious implications for the United Kingdom.

Finally, Mr. Mayor, I should like to thank you, your Deputy and all the Members of the Council for the support, understanding and encouragement shown to me and to the staff during another difficult year. I must also express my thanks to my colleague officials for their most valuable co-operation and willing assistance at all times. To my Deputy and an exceedingly willing, capable, conscientious and loyal staff I must extend my sincere gratitude.

I am, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

G. GREENWOOD

Borough Environmental Health Officer

LEGISLATION 1978

The major Statutes, statutory instruments and circulars affecting environmental health issued in 1978.

STATUTES

Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978
Homes Insulation Act 1978
Consumer Safety Act 1978

STATUTORY INSTRUMENTSMinistry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

No. 32 The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) Order 1978
105 Antioxidants in Food Regulations 1978
201 The Slaughter of Poultry Act 1967 Extension Order 1978
209 Packaging and Labelling of Dangerous Substances Regulations 1978
286 The Public Health (Aircraft)(Amendment) Regulations 1978
287 The Public Health (Ships) (Amendment) Regulations 1978
541 Brucellosis (England & Wales)(Amendment) Order 1978
594 Brucellosis Incentive Payment Amendment Scheme 1978
597 The Disease of Animals (Export Health Certificates) 1978
646 Labelling of Food (Amendment) Regulations 1978
689 The Brucellosis (England and Wales)(Amendment)(No. 2) Order 1978
708 The Diseases of Animals (Fees for the Testing of Disinfectants)
Order 1978
884 The Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1978
934 Disease of Animals (Approved Disinfectants)(Amendment) Order 1978
975 Enzootic Bovine Leukosis Order 1978
976 Enzootic Bovine Leukosis (Compensation) Order 1978
1108 The Fertilisers (Sampling and Analysis) Regulations 1978
1188 Diseases of Animals (Miscellaneous Fees) Order 1978
1420 The Coffee and Coffee Products Regulations 1978
1480 The Brucellosis (England and Wales) Order 1978
1483 The Brucellosis and Tuberculosis (England and Wales) Compensation
Order 1978
1927 The Materials and Articles in Contact with Food Regulations 1978

Department of the Environment

No. 99 The Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) Regulations 1978
723 The Building (First Amendment) Regulations 1978
816 The Control of Pollution Act 1974 (Commencement No. 12) Order 1978
954 (C23) The Control of Pollution Act 1974 (Commencement No. 13)
Order 1978
1600 Clean Air Act 1956 Exempted Fireplaces Order 1978
495 The Rent (Forms etc.) Regulations 1978

Department of Employment

No. 1126 The Factory (Standards of Lighting) Revocation Regulations 1978

CIRCULARSDepartment of the Environment

- No. 7/78 Building (First Amendment) Regulations 1978
 11/78 Clean Air Act 1956. The Smoke Control Areas (Authorised Fuels) Regulations 1978
 12/78 Report of the Mobile Homes Review
 20/78 River Pollution Survey of England and Wales. Updated 1973.
 River Quality and Discharges of Sewage and Industrial Effluents
 23/78 Energy Conservation - Public Sector Housing
 29/78 The Control of Pollution Act 1974 - Part 1 - Waste on land
 38/78 Housing Strategies & Investment Programmes for Local Authorities in England 1979/80
 41/78 Rent Act 1977 Part VIII Conversion of Controlled into Regulated Tenancies: Revised Forms
 42/78 Refuse Disposal (Amenity) Act 1978
 47/78 Control of Pollution Act 1974 - Part 1 - Waste on Land
 49/78 Clean Air Act 1956 Exempted Fireplaces
 52/78 Compulsory Purchase Orders - A Guide to Procedures
 54/78 Local Government Act 1978 - Commission for Local Administration in England and Wales
 55/78 Revision of Form of Documents on Declaration of Housing Action Areas, Priority Neighbourhoods and General Improvement Areas
 56/78 Energy Conservation Measure
 57/78 Accommodation for Gypsies - Report by Sir John Cripps
 58/78 Report of the Committee on Planning Control over Mineral Working
 59/78 DHSS LAC (78) 14 Adaptations of Housing for People who are Physically Handicapped
 60/78 Homes Insulation Act 1978
 63/78 Report of a Study of General Improvement Areas 1969/1976
 68/78 Inner Urban Areas Act 1978
 72/78 Statement on the Use of Chlorine Gas in the Treatment of Water in Swimming Pools

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

- No. 25/1 The Disease of Animals (Approved Disinfectants) Order 1978
 29/5 Diseases of Animals (Export Health Certificates) Order 1978
 18/7 The Diseases of Animals (Approved Disinfectants (Amendment) Order 1978
 27/7 Enzootic Bovine Leukosis Order 1978
 25/8 Diseases of Animals (Miscellaneous Fees) Order 1978
 1/11 Brucellosis (England & Wales) Order 1978
 FSH1/78 Poultry Meat Hygiene - Health Marking of Bulk Packages of Poultry Meat
 FSH2/78 The Antioxidants in Food Regulations 1978
 FSH3/78 Water Content of poultry meat
 FSH4/78 The Labelling of Food (Amendment) Regulations 1978
 FSH5/78 The Slaughterhouses (Hygiene) Regulations 1977 -
 The Slaughterhouses Act 1974 - Electric Stunning
 FSH6/78 The Authorised Officers (Meat Inspection) Regulations 1978
 FSH8/78 Milk & Dairies (General) Regulations 1959 - Approved Chemical Agents
 FSH9/78 Imported Milk
 FSH10/78 The Coffee and Coffee Products Regulations 1978. Food Technical Circular No. 36 Brodifacoum. New anti-coagulant rodenticide for the control of rats and mice.

Home Office

- No. 36/1978 Fire Precautions Act 1971 - Consultation with Authorities Responsible for Enforcing Health & Safety Legislation in Railway Premises.

Department of Transport

- No. 13/78 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 Section 7:
Control of Roadside Trading
4/9/78 Noise Insulation Regulations 1975
27/78 Spillages of Hazardous Chemicals in the Highway

Department of Health and Social Security

- LASSL (78)2 Disconnection of Gas or Electricity Supply
LAC(78)23 International Vaccination Certificates: Approved Stamp
LAC(78)16/2 Sea and Airport Health Procedures
LASSL (78)20 Safe Temperatures for Heated Surfaces and Hot Water
LASSL(78)
(Hazard) 2 Plastic drain off Taps - fitted to Hot Water Boilers, Urns, etc.
LAC(78)25 Annual Return of Food Poisoning
A/S12/67 Virus Contamination of Shellfish

Department of Prices and Consumer Protection

- No. 9/1978 The Cosmetic Products Regulations, 1978
13/1978 The Consumer Safety Act 1978
18/1978 The Cosmetic Products Regulations 1978

OFFICIAL REPORTS AND MEMORANDADepartment of Health and Social Security

Advisory Memorandum on Processing, Handling and Cooking Trout

British Standards Institution

- B.S.5601 Part I 1978 Code of Practice for Ventilation and Heating Caravans
B.S.5601 Part II 1978 Solid Fuel Heating in Caravans

Health and Safety Commission

- Asbestos - Measurement and Monitoring of Asbestos in Air
Asbestos - Work on Thermal and Acoustic Insulation and Sprayed Coatings
LAAIC/A/1.2/2) Restrictions in hours of work under the Factories Act 1961
LAAIC/8/9.1/1) Issue of specific exemption orders
LAAIC/A/1.12/3 Storage of Petroleum Spirit
LAAIC/A/1.12/4) Gas Explosions. Liaison with Department of Energy
LAAIC/C/1.36/2) Health and Safety Executive May 1978
LAAIC/A/1.32/1 Issue of HSE Guidance notes to Local Authorities August 1978
LAAIC/A/3/2 Consultation and co-operation between the fire authorities and authorities enforcing the H.S.W.etc. Act 1974

Health and Safety Commission (continued)

- LAAIC/A/3/3)
 LAAIC/B/3.1/2) Written Safety policy statements June 1978
 LAAIC/A/3/4 Investigation of complaints
 LAAIC/A/4/1) The Health & Safety (Enforcing Authority) Regulations 1977
 LAAIC/B/2/1) Allocation of responsibilities between enforcing authorities in multi occupied premises April 1978
 LAAIC/A/5.3/1 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Annual Reports by Local Authorities. April 1978
 LAAIC/A/6/13/1 Information on the Use of Enforcement Notices
 LAAIC/B/3.1/1) English Language as an employment qualification
 LAAIC/B/9.2/1) Possible conflict between Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Race Relations Act 1976. June 1978
 LAAIC/C/1.21/5 Safeguarding of carpet paternosters April 1978
 LAAIC/C/1.35/1) Toxic and Fire risk from the use of
 LAAIC/C/12.1/1) "Salamander" type of portable oil burning heaters. June 1978
 LAAIC/C/1.52/1 Use of Liquified Petroleum Gases (LPG) as a fuel for vehicles (Revised)
 M.S.-11 Eyes
 G.S.8 Articles and Substances for Use at Work
 Chem.Safety/1 Industrial Use of Flammable Gas Detectors
 EH.20 Phosphine, Health and Safety Precautions
 GM/B/3.1/3 The Safety Representatives and Safety Commission Regulations 1978 - Guidance by HSC on Enforcement
 GM/B/4/1 Means of Enforcement
 GM/4.8/2 Enforcement of Health & Safety Legislation against the Health & Safety Executive and its Employees August 1978
 GM/3/4/1 Improvement and Prohibition Notices Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
 EH15/77 Threshold Limit Values for 1977
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

Report on the Review of the Use of Sorbic Acid in Food
 Materials and Articles containing Vinyl Chloride Monomers
 Report on Water in Food
 Report on the Review of Solvents in Food
 Food Surveillance Paper No. 1: The surveillance of food contamination in the United Kingdom

House of Commons Paper (Sessions 1977-78)

- No. 648 Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. Research and Development Work on Equipment for the Disabled

Department of the Environment

- Housing Survey Report No. 10 English House Conditions Survey - 1976 (Part 1: Report of the Physical Condition Survey).
 Waste Management Papers:
 No. 17 Waste from Tanning, Leather Dressing and Fellmongering
 No. 19 Waste from the Manufacture of Pharmaceuticals, Toiletries and Cosmetics

