

with an area of over 16 acres, the land for which was acquired by public subscription and as a gift from Lord Egerton, and it was opened on June 5, 1875. The next in extent is St. Thomas's, of over 10 acres, purchased from John Reade's trustees and the exors. of W. Barnsley, and this was opened on October 22, 1892. Other recreation grounds are Heaviley, Grimesbottom (an anonymous gift to the Corporation), Shaw Heath (land presented by the Countess Dundonald), Mid-Reddish (land presented by the late Sir William H. Houldsworth), South Reddish, New Zealand Road, Heaton Moor, Thornfield Road, and Heaton Mersey. The total area of all the parks and recreation grounds in the town is 122 acres 1 rood and 20½ poles, and the total cost in capital outlay £71,936 16s. 0d. Bowling greens and tennis courts have been provided in many of the parks, and they are well patronised. In addition to these open spaces for the public a considerable area of land has been acquired by the Playing Fields Association as playing fields.

The town has an efficient police force and fire brigade. The police force consists of 133 officers and men, with headquarters in Warren Street. The police buildings there were altered and enlarged at a cost of £15,000, the extension being completed and occupied in January, 1916. The fire brigade is thoroughly equipped with motor and horse-drawn fire engines, fire escapes, motor ambulances, and the most modern of fire-extinguishing appliances, and the central fire station is connected with every part of the town with a system of telephone fire alarm boxes, and there is a branch fire station at Reddish. The present central fire station was opened in 1902, the headquarters of the brigade formerly being in Corporation Street. The brigade affords fire protection to a number of outside districts. In recent years the town has enjoyed a gratifying immunity from serious fires, and this is largely due to the smart and efficient way in which the brigade turns out and deals with outbreaks before they assume large proportions.

No more important work is performed by the local authority than in safeguarding the health of the community. This is mainly under the control and direction of the Health Committee. In the 1921 report of the Medical Officer of Health the death-rate of the borough was shown to be 12.87 per thousand of the population, and was the lowest recorded in the borough. The infant mortality rate was 97.2 per thousand, this being the lowest mortality rate for infants under one year. Some years ago Stockport was notorious for its high infant death-rate. In 1891 the infant mortality rate per 1000 births was 224, and in 1900 female inspectors were appointed to visit homes and give advice to mothers on hygiene and the feeding and care of infants. In 1907 the infant mortality rate had dropped to 157 per 1000, and it has continued to fall since. Maternity and child welfare work has made great strides in the town. In addition to the School for Mothers and Babies' Welfare at Churchgate House, to which the Corporation makes a grant of £100 per annum, a municipal maternity and child welfare centre was opened in Portwood in August, 1920, and here mothers can have their babies weighed and receive general advice on the up-bringing of their children. The centre is attended by health visitors, and assistance is given by voluntary workers. Since the centre was opened 635 cases have been dealt with, the total attendances number 5,278, the total weighings 4,153, and the medical consultations 872. At Churchgate House and the branch centre at Bangor Street, South Reddish, 522 children have received attention, and there have been 5,753 weighings. The greater portion of the time of the five female health visitors on the staff of the health depart-