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Contributors

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ASHBOURNE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health
for the year ended 31st December, 1940.

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

Gentlemen,

In presenting to you my report for the year 1940, I am omitting those particulars which have not changed during the year.

The area of the district is 1075 acres land and water, and the number of inhabited houses at the end of the year was 1554, an increase of two on the year 1939. Both the houses were erected by private enterprise.

The estimated population according to the Registrar General, 5122.

The rateable value of the district is £30,845, and the sum product of a penny rate is £122.

Vital Statistics.

The number of births in 1940 was 85, 50 male and 35 female, compared with a total of 58 in 1939 and 68 in 1938. There were 8 illegitimate births (6 male and 2 female) in 1940, as compared with 3 in 1939, and 3 still births as compared with 2 in 1938.

The Birth-Rate for 1940 is 16.6 as compared with 12.08 in 1939, which was the lowest birth-rate on record for the Urban District of Ashbourne. The rate for 1940 has not reached the high rate which was recorded in 1937; viz:- 19.34 which was the highest birth rate in recent years. The birth rate for the whole country in 1940 was 14.6

The number of deaths in 1940 was 70, 29 males and 41 females. In 1939 the number was 74 when the rate of males and females was more even, viz. 36 to 38. The total deaths in 1938 was 70. Before 1938 a comparison is not fair, as the size of the district has been increased in recent years. There were 29 deaths of persons over 70, 13 of these were over 80, and one over 90. War conditions do not appear to have reduced the average age at which old persons die.

The Death-rate for the year 1940 is 13.6 as compared with 15.41 in 1939 and 14.59 in 1938. The death rate for the whole of England and Wales in 1940 is 14.3

Heart Disease is, as it has been in all recent years, the commonest single cause of death. There were 18 deaths registered as due to heart disease, and 3 in addition from other diseases of the circulation. The death rate from heart disease is 3.5, higher than in any previous year.

There were 11 deaths from Cancer, all females, representing a death rate of 2.3. This is the highest death rate from this disease yet recorded.

Respiratory Diseases accounted for only 3 deaths, 2 from Bronchitis and 1 from Pneumonia, and Tuberculosis caused 2 deaths only.

There were no deaths from Zymotic diseases in spite of a rather extensive epidemic of Diphtheria lasting from March to November, and the beginning of an outbreak of Measles in November.



Infectious Diseases.

An epidemic of Diphtheria was the chief infectious disease which had to be dealt with in 1940. There were 34 cases, none of a really severe type, and 33 were transferred to the Infectious Diseases Hospital at Belper. Diphtheria Antitoxin was supplied to most of the cases, being given free of charge by the Local Authority when necessary. The Council had under consideration the question of artificial immunisation against the disease, and decided to offer free immunisation to all children in the district. The consent of 527 parents was obtained including a number of evacuees, and the immunisation has since been carried out and completed in the present year (1941).

The few cases of scarlet fever were sporadic cases occurring at long intervals from each other, and the 13 cases of measles in November and December were the beginning of an epidemic which lasted far into 1941. There were 16 cases of Pneumonia, nearly all in January February and December. Two cases of cerebro-spinal fever were of a mild type and made a complete recovery.

Comparative table of infectious disease occurring in the five years ending 31st December 1940.

	<u>1940.</u>	<u>1939.</u>	<u>1938.</u>	<u>1937.</u>	<u>1936.</u>
Scarlet Fever.	4	50	45	7	6
Diphtheria.	34	5	9	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia.	2	2	1	2	2
Pneumonia	16	6	6	6	4
x Measles	13	0	-	-	-
x Whooping cough.	0	4	-	-	-

x Not notifiable before November 1st 1939.

Water Supply.

Though no extensions of water mains have been carried out during the year, the consumption of water has been considerably increased as a result of the influx of evacuees.

The main source of water supply is the same as in previous years and no alterations have been made during the year. Owing to the additional consumption it has, however, become necessary to pump two shifts, and the Council are now contemplating the installation of electric motors with automatic switch gear, in order to pump during the night hours. At the present time, water is pumped by two diesel engines from two 24 inch boreholes, 300 feet deep in Bunter sandstone to two reservoirs on Derby Road. The reservoirs have a total capacity of 400,000 gallons which is equal to approximately three day's normal demand. The water is softened before entering the reservoirs by the Base Exchange Process from 28 parts to 10 parts of hardness per 100,000 gallons.

The yield of the boreholes has remained constant during the year, and it is possible to obtain approximately 340,000 gallons in the 24 hours.

The average daily consumption of water during the year was 131,800 gallons, equivalent to 24.87 gallons per head per day on the estimated population.

The rainfall during the year has been 31.82 inches as compared with 31.91 in 1939.

Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

No additions, extensions or improvements were carried out to sewerage and sewage disposal works during the year. Owing to financial restrictions, the Council were not allowed to proceed with the extension of the sewage disposal works, contracts for which had been accepted and approved by the Ministry of Health.

Legislation.

No new legislation or bye laws affecting Public Health came into force during the year.

Rivers and Streams.

The Henmore Brook has been regularly inspected for any sources of pollution and action taken when necessary.

Public Cleansing.

House refuse is collected weekly from all premises by a covered refuse motor vehicle, and is disposed of at a Meldrums two-celled Refuse Destructor.

Tins, rags, bones and bottles are sorted from the refuse and disposed of as salvage.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

(Signed). Ernest A. Sadler.

Medical Officer of Health.

24th July, 1941.