

[Report 1949] / Medical Officer of Health, Bromyard R.D.C.

Contributors

Bromyard (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1949

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BROMYARD RURAL DISTRICT
HEREFORDSHIRE

ANNUAL REPORT

on the

STATE of the PUBLIC HEALTH
for the Year
1949



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Staff of the Public Health Department

| | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--|
| Medical Officer of Health | | M. J. PLEYDELL, M.C., M.D., D.P.H. |
| Clerk | | MISS S. DENSHAM (Resigned on 31st May, 1949) G. PROSSER • (Appointed on 1st June, 1949) |
| Sanitary Inspector | | J. N. S. HARRISON, M.S.I.A., M.I.E.T. (Telephone No.: Bromyard 128) |

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To The Chairman and Members of the Bromyard Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1949, which has been compiled in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 2/50.

The completion of the housing survey of just over two thousand houses in the district reveals the following noteworthy facts. More than a third of the houses are situated at a distance greater than a hundred yards from the roadside. Approximately one-seventh of the houses are classified as not being repairable at reasonable cost; nearly a third of the houses have no drainage arrangements; more than two-thirds of the houses have no water supply within the house and are without a bath; and in nearly a quarter of the houses there is no provision for the storage of food.

Two Council houses were completed during the year and the work on forty-four council houses is proceeding satisfactorily. When completed these houses should help to satisfy the increasing requirements of the area.

The hop-picking season this year was favoured by an exceptional period of fine weather which helped in the maintenance of satisfactory living conditions in the quarters. As a result of last year's suggestions, external stairways to quarters above the ground floor were provided at those farms where previously they were absent. The cleanliness of the quarters varied considerably from one farm to another. As a general observation it is probably correct to say that the smaller the farm, the more satisfactory are the living conditions of the pickers. On the large farms it is essential that a camp supervisor should be appointed to control the general cleanliness of the area, to act as liaison between farmers and pickers, and to prevent the misuse of such furniture as is provided. The general health of the pickers appeared to be good. At one farm, a child suspected of suffering from scarlet fever was taken home immediately, and at another farm a man found to be suffering from open tuberculosis was persuaded to go home.

Two general problems in Public Health are worthy of mention. The gravest is that of tuberculosis. At present the prevention treatment and care of persons suffering from tuberculosis come under the control of three separate bodies: the District Councils, the Regional Hospital Boards, and the County Councils respectively. A greater degree of unification is required to combat an infection of such vast magnitude.

The care of the aged is a problem which will claim more and more attention in the forthcoming years. At present it is estimated that there is one person over working age (65 years) for every six persons of working age, and it is ex-

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|------------------------|
| Halmonds Frome | ... | ... | ... | 8,600 gallons per day |
| Cradley (Greenhills springs) | ... | ... | ... | 15,500 gallons per day |
| Whitbourne (New House Farm springs) | ... | ... | ... | 24,700 gallons per day |
| Little Cowarne (Caulder Spring) | ... | ... | ... | 47,000 gallons per day |

The Council are proposing putting forward the Whitbourne area supply independant of the district supply because of the urgent need for water in that area and the simplicity of the gravitation scheme.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

New sewage treatment tanks have been approved to thirty-eight new houses including twenty-two new Council Houses at Cradley and drainage works to seventy-eight houses and nineteen other premises. An Elsan sewage disposal system was installed and approved at one house.

All new drains were tested by water pressure and were provided with all the necessary traps, ventilators and inspection chambers. Water closets were provided in all cases where new drainage systems were installed.

The only sewer for which the Council are responsible is that serving a few premises in Bishops Frome. The outfall is an open ditch on the Ledbury Road, which gives rise to complaints in warm weather. The Council have this regularly cleaned and are considering a scheme for the provision of a treatment plant.

As a result of the Housing and Water Survey completed this year the following information is available:—

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| Number of houses with water closets | ... | ... | ... | 426 |
| Number of houses with chemical closets | ... | ... | ... | 157 |
| Number of houses with pail closets | ... | ... | ... | 774 |
| Number of houses with other types of closet | ... | ... | ... | 814 |
| | | | | 2,171 |
| Number of houses with no form of drainage | ... | ... | ... | 600 |

FLOODING, RIVER AND STREAM POLLUTION

No complaints of flooding or pollution of rivers or streams have been received. The district is usually free from flooding.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

There is no organised collection of refuse in the district. A few requests have been received for collection. The Sanitary Inspector advised on suitable means of disposal in each case.

Complaints were received concerning the blockage of the ditch by the remnants of a war-time Salvage Dump at Munderfield. This was cleared and deposited at a suitable disposal point.

RODENT CONTROL

No complaints were received. No action to report.

The Council are considering together with other authorities the necessary arrangements that are required to carry out when they become responsible under the Pest Control Act, 1949, for the extermination of vermin.

DISINFECTION

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Number of houses disinfected for | | | | |
| (a) Bedbugs, fleas, etc. | ... | ... | ... | 1 |
| (b) Infectious diseases | ... | ... | ... | 10 |
| Number of other premises disinfected | ... | ... | ... | 85 |

The preventative disinfection of the barracks, cookhouses and latrines, etc., to all hop-farms were again carried out this year to endeavour to combat fly nuisance. Preventative disinfection was also carried out at two Boys' School Annual Camps.

CAMPING SITES AND VAN DWELLINGS

One application was received and approved to use a site on a farm at Whitbourne, for use as a caravan site. Three camping sites are licenced at Cradley; they are supplied with piped water and chemical closets.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

| Inspections under | Number | Informal Notices served | Statutory Notices served | Notices Complied with |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Housing Acts | 2696 | 59 | 3 | 54 |
| Public Health Acts | 43 | 10 | — | 10 |
| Cowsheds and Dairies | 68 | 32 | — | 32 |
| Factories and Workshops | 5 | — | — | — |
| Bakehouses | 4 | — | — | — |
| Hop-pickers' Quarters | 351 | 104 | — | 141 |
| Water Supplies | 194 | 23 | — | 49 |
| Infectious Diseases | 59 | — | — | — |
| Food Shops | 19 | 2 | — | 1 |
| Ice Cream | 15 | 10 | — | 5 |

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

INSPECTIONS UNDER THE FACTORIES ACTS, 1937

| Premises | Number on Register | Number of Inspections | Number of written Notices | Occupiers Prosecuted |
|---|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.—Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2.—Factories not included in 1, in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| 3.—Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

A complaint was received of a smoke nuisance from the Linton Tile Works. The owners are providing additional equipment to overcome this complaint.

HOP-PICKERS' LODGING ACCOMMODATION

The annual Hop-picking season passed off very smoothly this year primarily because of the fine weather but also because of the works of improvement carried out by the farmers which were required to be done from the previous season. The provision of four hop-picking machines in the district has reduced the number of pickers required by about 1,000. It is believed that further machines are ordered for installation before the 1950 season.

The complaints which arose were mostly due to the carelessness of the pickers, such as dirty closets, refuse thrown about, lack of cleanliness of the quarters after occupation and the risks from fire due to the making of open fires inside the living cubicles. At one farm a set of bucket closets which were closed for use the previous year were found to be in use and in a filthy condition. The owner was warned against further use and asked to demolish or replace same before the next season.

A suspected case of Scarlet Fever was visited and a check kept on possible contacts. The suspected case and family returned home and no further cases were reported.

As in previous years my assistant was able to visit most farms to spray the latrines, etc., with a suitable D.D.T. insecticide to combat fly nuisances. Several farmers are continuing to use the Gammexane fumigators before occupation and obtaining satisfactory results.

Between the seasons, the owners of farms adversely reported upon were visited and improvements made in each case. At Ridgway Farm a new set of barracks were provided complete with cookhouse and latrines.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

The Council own twenty-eight houses as follows: Heathfields, 2; Cricks Green, 4; Pencombe, 6; Much Cowarne, 4; Stoke Lacy, 4; Wolferlow, 2; Avenbury, 2; Cradley, 2.

These include the two Swedish timber houses at Pencombe which have been reconditioned following the fire which destroyed one and damaged the other when they were practically ready for occupation.

The two houses at Heathfields have been reconditioned and redecorated. A water supply has been laid on and a new drainage system provided.

The Council's contract for 44 new houses is now well in hand and sited as follows: Cradley, 22; Linton, 8; Stoke Lacy, 6; Evesbatch, 4; Ullingswick, 4.

Number of Council Houses completed during the year:—

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Traditional | ... | ... | ... | 0 |
| Non-traditional | ... | ... | ... | 2 |

Number of privately built houses during the year:—

| | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|---|
| Traditional | ... | ... | ... | 3 |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|---|

Number of housing units provided by conversions of existing buildings:—

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------|
| Two houses were made into | 5 units |
| Four outbuildings were made into | 4 units |
| | 9 units |

Total Housing Units provided: 14.

The Housing and Water Survey of the district is now complete and the following information is available:—

Number of houses visited for the purpose of the Survey: 2,171; which were divided as follows:—

| | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|
| Group 1. Fit in all respects | ... | ... | ... | 545 | 25% |
| Group 2. Minor defects only | ... | ... | ... | 410 | 19% |
| Group 3. Major defects only | ... | ... | ... | 519 | 28.5% |
| Group 4. Reconditioning required (Housing Act, 1949) | ... | ... | ... | 238 | 11% |
| Group 5. Not repairable at a reasonable cost | ... | ... | ... | 359 | 16.5% |
| | | | | 2171 | 100% |

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|------|
| Property with no drainage arrangements | ... | ... | ... | 600 |
| Property with no sink | ... | ... | ... | 500 |
| Property with no bath | ... | ... | ... | 1500 |
| Property with no wash copper | ... | ... | ... | 150 |
| Property with no food store | ... | ... | ... | 500 |

SANITARY ACCOMMODATION

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Property with water closet | ... | ... | ... | 426 |
| Property with chemical closet | ... | ... | ... | 157 |
| Property with pail closet | ... | ... | ... | 774 |
| Property with other type of closet | ... | ... | ... | 814 |

2171

WATER SUPPLY

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Property with water laid on inside the house | ... | ... | ... | 688 |
| Property with water outside, within 100ft. | ... | ... | ... | 892 |
| Property with water outside, over 100ft. but less than 100 yds. | ... | ... | ... | 195 |
| Property with water outside, over 100 yards | ... | ... | ... | 395 |

2171

ACCESS TO PROPERTY OR DISTANCE FROM HARD ROAD

| | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-------------|
| Property situated on the roadside | ... | ... | ... | 137 |
| Property situated within 100ft. of roadside excluding above | | | | 975 |
| Property situated within 100 yds. from roadside excluding above | ... | ... | ... | 276 |
| Property situated over 100 yards from roadside | | | | 783 |
| | | | | <u>2171</u> |

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR

| | | | | |
|--|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 1. (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for Housing defects under the Public Health and Housing Act | ... | ... | ... | 904 |
| (b) Number of houses visited for the purpose of the Housing Survey | ... | ... | ... | 1456 |
| | | | | <u>2360</u> |
| (c) Number of inspections made for the purpose under the Public Health and Housing Acts | | | | 1240 |
| (d) Number of inspections made for the purpose of the Housing Survey | ... | ... | ... | 1456 |
| | | | | <u>2696</u> |
| 2. Number of dwellings found not to be, in all respects, fit for human habitation under the Public Health and Housing Acts | | | | 904 |
| Number of dwellings found not to be, in all respects, fit for human habitation under the Housing Survey | ... | ... | ... | 1092 |
| | | | | <u>Total</u> |
| | | | | <u>1996</u> |
| Number of demolition orders made | ... | ... | ... | 0 |
| Number of closing orders made | ... | ... | ... | 0 |
| Number of Statutory Notices served | ... | ... | ... | 3 |

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLIES

From the 1st October, 1949, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries took over the Control of the licensing and visiting of Dairy Farms. The Local Authority is now responsible for dealers' premises only. This amounts to one Retailer-Bottler's licence for Tuberculin Tested Milk and one Retailer-Bottler's licence for ordinary milk, both licences for the same premises.

| | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| Visits to Dairy Farms | ... | ... | ... | ... | 68 |
| Number of Dairies and Cowsheds repaired or improved during the year, up to October 1st, 1949: | | | | | |
| (a) for ordinary milk production | ... | ... | ... | ... | 5 |
| (b) for designated milk production | ... | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| | | | | | <u>17</u> |
| Number of Samples taken | ... | ... | ... | ... | 3 |

All schools are now provided with Pasteurised Milk by the Kidderminster Co-Operative Society.

Cases of Scarlet Fever at two farms where milk was produced and sold retail made it necessary for temporary arrangements to be made for the whole of the milk produced on the premises to be sent for pasteurisation and for supplies of designated bottled milk to be brought into the district and sold as received.

MEAT AND FOOD PREMISES

A complaint was received in July of the meat being delivered in a decomposed state. The butcher had an unsatisfactory delivery vehicle but gave the cause as lack of cold storage during hot weather. It was alleged that animals killed at the Hereford Abattoir one week-end were not available for delivery to the households until the following week-end and that it was in the delivery van several hours before delivery. Arrangements were made for the butcher to use a cold storage in Bromyard for his meat in future and he was required to improve his delivery vehicle.

Number of inspections of Meat and Food premises 19

ICE CREAM

A manufacturer's retailers licence was issued for Teme Valley Ices at Whitbourne where new premises have been adapted.

One licence was issued for the sale of pre-packed Ice Cream at a Cradley Store.

Several warnings, owing to unsatisfactory conditions, were given to Ice Cream purveyors who visited the various hop-yards in the season, from outside districts.

Number of visits made 15

Number of samples taken 3

OTHER FOODS

There were only a few defective tins of milk and various foods condemned when surrendered by the owner.

One Catering Licence was approved to the Cafe, Storridge, on behalf of the Ministry of Food.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Sixty-one cases of Measles were notified during the year. These occurred during the first six months of the year and were distributed throughout the different age groups of the child population. No deaths resulted from this infection.

Eleven cases of Scarlet Fever were notified during the latter months of the year. These originated chiefly in the Brockhampton and Bringstye area. Routine precautionary measures were adopted and the school buildings were disinfected, but the infection persisted in the neighbourhood throughout and after the school holidays. During the present year 'dropping' cases have occurred over a wide area and are presumably an indication of a widespread haemolytic streptococcal infection. No single source was discovered and there was no indication that milk played any part in the spread of this infection.

Three cases of Dysentery occurred at a small milk producing farm, and in this instance, and in one farm where a case of Scarlet Fever occurred, the milk supplies had to be diverted for pasteurisation.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE

| DISEASE | AGE OF PATIENT | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|----|
| | 0-1 | 1-2 | 2-3 | 3-4 | 4-5 | 5-6 | 6-7 | 7-10 | 10-15 | 15-20 | 20-30 | 30-40 | | Over 40 | Unknown | |
| Measles | — | 5 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 17 | 11 | 2 | 2 | — | — | — | 1 | 61 |
| Pneumonia | — | — | — | — | — | 3 | — | 2 | — | — | 2 | — | — | — | — | 17 |
| Erysipelas | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 2 | — | 3 |
| Whooping Cough | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 2 |
| Scarlet Fever | — | — | — | 2 | — | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | 11 |
| Dysentery | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | 1 | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 3 |

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The following figures are presented through information supplied by the County Medical Officer.

Number of children at 31st December, 1949 who had completed a course of immunisation at any time before that date (i.e. at any time since 1st January, 1935):

| Age at 31.12.49 | Under 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5-9 | 10-14 | Total under 15 | Estimated mid-year child population 1949 | | | |
|----------------------|---------|----|----|----|----|-----------|-----------|----------------------|---|------|-------|--|
| | | | | | | | | | Under 5 | 5-14 | Total | |
| i.e. Born in year | 1949 | 48 | 47 | 46 | 45 | 40- 44 | 35- 39 | | | | | |
| | 5 | 61 | 81 | 80 | 67 | 467 | 407 | 1168 | 657 | 1120 | 1777 | |

These figures indicate that 44.7% of the child population under five years of age has been immunised against diphtheria as compared with 38.6% at the end of 1948. 78% of the child population of 5-14 years has been immunised against diphtheria as compared with 68.2% at the end of the previous year; while 65.7% of the children under 15 years of age has been protected against diphtheria by immunisation.

TUBERCULOSIS

At the end of 1949, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of twenty-two males and ten females who normally reside in the district.

During the year, fifteen new cases were notified, twelve on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and three because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs. During the same period, seven deaths of persons suffering from the disease occurred, one left the district and three recovered.

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages)

| DISEASE | | | |
|---|----|----|----|
| Tuberculosis (of the respiratory system) | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| Cancer (all forms) | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| Intra-cranial vascular lesions | 10 | 2 | 12 |
| Diseases of the Heart and Arteries ... | 21 | 17 | 38 |
| Bronchitis, Pneumonia and other Respiratory diseases ... | 3 | 4 | 7 |
| Diseases of the Digestive system ... | 1 | — | 1 |
| Nephritis | — | 1 | 1 |
| Congenital conditions at birth ... | — | 1 | 1 |
| Suicide | 1 | — | 1 |
| Violence | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| All other causes | 3 | 5 | 8 |

PHYSICAL INVESTIGATION

The following figures are presented and the information supplied by the
County Health Officer.

Number of houses at the different times when the water supply was
interrupted during the summer of 1917.

Year of Interruption: 1917
Number of houses: 100
Number of houses: 100
Number of houses: 100

Number of houses: 100
Number of houses: 100
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