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Contributors

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Buglawton Urban District Council.

REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year ending 31st December, 1919.

R. B. DAVIDSON,

M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., L.R.C.P.,

L.R.C.S., L.R.F.P.S.

Member Royal Sanitary Institute.

To the Chairman and Members of the Board of Directors
of the [illegible] Company

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

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

During 1919 you were largely occupied with an important Housing Scheme, which will undoubtedly benefit the inhabitants from a public health point of view, and materially improve the prosperity of the District, by providing more and better houses for those working at the various thriving industries in the District. You have, I think, very wisely applied for the Notification of Measles to be made compulsory in Buglawton.

This Report differs in many respects from previous ones, following closely the Memorandum issued by the Ministry of Health.

Natural and Social Conditions of the District.

Buglawton consists of an Urban portion and a Rural portion, the former given over to trade, and the latter chiefly to agriculture; in no sense can Buglawton be considered a residential District.

*The chief Occupations of the inhabitants are:—*Agriculture, Towel Weaving, Bleaching and Dyeing, Velvet Cutting, Branches of Paper Trade, and Shirt Making. Most of these occupations are healthy, but at the Bleaching and Dyeing Works there are a certain number of cases of Dermatitis, though I have not noticed any other impairment of health among the employees that can be put down to industrial causes. The trade of the District is very brisk at present, several new industries either having been started or are proposing to do so.

The lowest lying part of the Urban portion is only 280 feet above sea level, whilst Cloud End reaches at one point 1000 feet above sea level.

The subsoil of the District is clay drift, overlying red marl, beneath this again is red sandstone, and beneath that yellow sandstone. Cloud Hill consists of millstone grit outcropping through the subsoil, beneath this are strata of crowstone and mountain limestone. Here and there pockets of sand are found throughout the District.

Acreage of Urban District	...	...	...	2911
Population at 1911 Census	...	...	...	1439
Estimated Population in 1919	...	...	...	1427

I have not been able to get a full account of the Poor Law Relief in 1919, but hope to be able to do so for 1920. There is no Hospital in Buglawton, cases going to Congleton Cottage Hospital, and Hospitals at Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent.

Vital Statistics.

Births 31—Males 17. Females 14.

1919 Birth-rate 18·2. 1918 Birth-rate 19·3.

1919 Birth-rate for England and Wales 18·5.

Illegitimate Births 4. Illegitimate Birth-rate 12·9 per cent. of births.

Deaths 24—Males 13. Females 11.

1919 Death-rate 14·6. 1918 Death-rate 13·9.

1919 Death-rate for England and Wales 13·8.

Deaths of Infants under one year of age 2.

1919 Infantile Mortality-rate 64·5 per 1000 births.

1918 Infantile Mortality-rate 0.

1919 Infantile Mortality-rate for England and Wales 89.

Number of Deaths from Zymotic Disease 0.

1919 Zymotic Death-rate 0. 1918 Zymotic Death-rate ·6.

Number of Deaths from Tuberculosis 1.

1919 Tuberculosis-rate ·6. 1918 Tuberculosis-rate 2·0.

Number of Marriages in 1919—16.

The Registrar General gives a population of 1701 for calculating the Birth-rate, and 1633 for calculating the Death-rate.

The causes of death were :—

Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	...	1.
Cancer...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Organic Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Congenital Debility, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Violence, apart from Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Other Defined Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

The causes of death of children under 1 year of age were :—

Immaturity at birth 1, and Influenza 1.

Sanitary Circumstances of the District.

Water.—The Water is obtained from upland springs on Cloud Side; there is no plumbo-solvent action, and it is not liable to contamination. The supply has been satisfactory in amount, though eventually other springs will have to be taken in, and further storage provided. On 1st January, 1919, I received the

Analyst's Report on a sample taken from the Storage Tank ; the water was of a satisfactory degree of organic purity and fit for general domestic use. In 1918 I drew your attention to the necessity of your Surveyor taking samples of your water regularly, owing probably to changes in the Surveyorship during the year ; this has been neglected, and I hope you will instruct the Surveyor to submit a sample for analysis quarterly. In February the Analyst reported that water from a Well at Havannah Lane Farm was dangerously polluted with cesspool or allied drainage, and this is not now used ; the water from another well on this farm has also been analysed, and the report was that it was satisfactory for dietetic purposes, subject to protection from contamination ; the owner has now this matter in hand.

Rivers and Streams.—The Daneinshaw Brook and the Timbersbrook are both slightly polluted by effluent treated before discharged from factories where chemicals are used in the manufacturing processes. Any action required is taken by the Rivers' Pollution Committee of the County Council.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Only the Urban portion is sewered, the sewage being almost entirely of a domestic character, and is treated at the Congleton Borough Sewage Works, the final effluent from which is invariably satisfactory. None of the Rural portions of the District are sewered, and owing to the very scattered positions of the dwelling-houses, no scheme is practicable.

Closet Accommodation.—Water-closets 53, Pail-closets 189, Privy-middens 144.

CONVERSIONS OF CLOSETS.

Year.	Pail-closets to Water-closets.	Privy-middens to Pail-closets.
1919	0	27
1918	0	35
1917	0	26
1916	0	30

Pail-closets are emptied weekly; house refuse is collected weekly, being removed to tips in outlying parts of the District. There are no earth-closets in the District; there are 12 cess-pools, which are emptied on notice being given, as are also the privy-middens, the latter after being emptied are deodorized with Sanitas.

There are a number of movable ashbins, but very few have proper coverings.

Sanitary Inspection of District.—This will be found in Table B at the end of the Report. The Sanitary Inspector reports that he has made 682 inspections, served 43 Statutory and 19 informal notices for defects, all of which have been complied with.

Premises and Occupations which can be Controlled by Bye-laws or Regulations.

Cowsheds, Dairies, and Milkshops.—There are 82 in the District, which have been inspected, and 5 notices were served for defects found, which were all remedied.

There are no Common Lodging Houses nor houses let in lodgings in the District.

Other Sanitary Conditions requiring Notice.

(1). *Factories and Workshops.*—Were generally in a satisfactory condition.

(2). *Rag Flock Act.*—I made most careful enquiries several times throughout the District, but could hear of no person dealing in Rag Flock; the Act will be strictly enforced if occasion arises.

Schools.—There is one public elementary School, opened in 1913; there are water-closets, and water for hand-basins in the school; the lighting, heating, and ventilation are good, and the school is admirable in every respect.

Food.

(a). *Milk Supply.*—Was wholesome and sufficient in amount, and was all produced in the District.

Milk (Mothers and Children) Order, 1918.—Is administered by the County Council.

(b). There is only one Bakehouse, which was in a satisfactory condition.

There is no Slaughter-house in the District.

Prevalence and Control over Infectious Diseases.

During 1919, 20 cases were notified :—

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	1
Other forms of Tuberculosis...	...	...	...	...	2
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	...	...	...	...	3
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	2
Malaria	...	...	...	...	1
Influenzal Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	6
Primary Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	2
Measles	...	...	...	...	3

Diphtheria Antitoxin is supplied by the Council to medical practitioners, on application being made to me; none was required in 1919.

Lists of cases of infectious or suspected infectious disease from the Headmaster of the Council School are of great use when any epidemic disease is in the District, and the cases given are carefully enquired into.

I have no complaints to make with regard to prompt notification of Tuberculosis in this District.

Malaria.—This case was visited, the patient being a discharged soldier who had contracted the disease abroad, and he was receiving quinine from his doctor.

Erysipelas.—Both cases were visited by me, and advised with regard to spread of infection.

Pneumonia.—These cases were visited, and so far as possible isolation carried out, and disinfectants provided.

Tuberculosis.—In these cases a leaflet containing advice is provided, disinfectants are provided, and when the patient goes to a Sanatorium or dies, the house and bedding are disinfected.

In none of the houses where infectious diseases were notified in 1919 were any serious sanitary defects found.

Influenza.—Was again epidemic in the District from the middle of February to the end of March; a few cases occurred during April, and again a few chiefly of a very mild type in December, though one death was then ascribed to this disease. The cases during the epidemic were of a very severe type, Pneumonia being the chief complication. The severe cases were almost entirely confined to the Rural portion of the District, the few cases that occurred in the Urban part being mostly of a mild type. A large number of the worse cases could be definitely traced to some member of an infected family having attended a farm sale that took place at the beginning of the epidemic, this being so in all the fatal cases. The period of incubation was very short, in some cases as short as 6 to 12 hours. Nine deaths occurred amongst families of persons attending this sale, most of them coming from adjoining Districts, and only 4 out of Buglawton. The School and Sun-

day Schools were closed from 24th February to 24th March ; literature was issued and posters exhibited. The number of deaths ascribed to Influenza during 1919 I give under each week :—

Week ending 22nd February	...	...	1 death
" " 8th March	...	...	1 death
" " 15th March	...	...	2 deaths
" " 27th December	...	...	1 death

Four of these deaths were of males and 1 of a female, the ages being : 11 months, 20 months, 12 years, 47 years, and 76 years.

Influenza Vaccine can now be obtained from me for treatment or prophylaxis.

In cases of serious infectious disease, *e.g.*, Diphtheria and Scarlet Fever, I endeavour, unless isolation can be satisfactorily carried out at home, to have the case removed to hospital, when the bedding and house are disinfected, the bedding and clothing being disinfected at the Fever Hospital. When the case is isolated at home, either I or the Sanitary Inspector pay periodical visits to see that our instructions are being carried out. Contacts are followed up so far as is practicable. Fortunately no cases of Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Typhoid, nor Smallpox occurred during 1919.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—I visited the 3 cases notified, and advised with regard to prevention of infection ; all three cases were treated by medical practitioners and recovered without any permanent injury to either eye.

Measles.—Three cases occurred in December ; they were all related to each other, but the primary source of infection could not be discovered, and they were fairly satisfactorily isolated.

Mumps.—A few cases occurred in the second quarter of the year.

Chicken-pox.—A few cases occurred in July and August.

Whooping-cough.—A fair number of mild cases occurred in the December quarter.

In the above diseases children from the same houses are excluded if in the Infant Department, or if they have not already had the disease.

There are no Midwives in Buglawton, and the provision of one or more is a most pressing need.

Sanitary Administration.

1. *Staff.*—Sanitary Inspector (part time), who also carries out duties under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order,

Factory and Workshops Act, and Housing of the Working Classes Act.

The Surveyor (part time) is responsible for the Scavenging, and for the Town's Water.

An Analyst examines samples of water for the Council.

2. *Hospital Accommodation.*—Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria, and Typhoid Fever, and Trench Fever if beds are available, are treated at the West Heath Sanatorium, Congleton, which is administered by the Congleton and District Joint Hospital Board, and the accommodation has been found adequate. Smallpox cases can be admitted to the Smallpox Hospital at Arelid in Congleton Rural District. I do not advise the provision of hospital accommodation for Influenza. Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis and Dysentery should undoubtedly have hospital accommodation provided for them.

3. *Local Acts, Special Local Orders, or General Adoptive Acts in force in the District.*

Buglawton Enclosure Act, 1813.

Congleton and District Joint Hospital Board Order.

The Public Health (Measles and German Measles) Temporary Regulations, 1919.

The Medical Officer of Health visits every case of Measles, advises the parent to obtain medical assistance, endeavours to isolate, and excludes the other children in the infected house from school.

4. Specimens from suspected cases of Diphtheria, Typhoid, and Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis are examined at the Public Health Laboratory, Manchester University, and sputum from suspected cases of Tuberculosis since 14th July, 1919, at the County Laboratory, Chester.

One specimen from a suspected case of Diphtheria and 1 from a suspected case of Tuberculosis were examined with negative results in both cases.

Housing.

(I.) *General Housing Conditions in the District:*—

(1). Number of Houses in the District	...	417
Number of Houses for the Working Classes		377

The number, however, includes 44 unoccupied houses in the Havannah that cannot be made fit for habitation, 4 other unoccupied houses that require re-construction before they can be used as dwellings, and 4 used for business purposes.

New houses erected for working classes during the year, or in course of erection—0.

(2). Population (estimated) 1427

Changes during the year, or anticipated in the future.—A small, steady increase, due to prosperity in trade, as new industries have been recently, and are about to be started, always providing that house accommodation can be found.

(3). (a). Extent of shortage of houses ... 34 houses

(b). Measures taken or contemplated to meet any shortage.—Erection of 34 houses of a better type.

(II.) *Overcrowding* :—

(1). Extent... .. 20 houses

(2). Causes.—In 14 instances due to large families, and in 6 instances to two or more families occupying one house.

(3). Measures taken or contemplated to deal with overcrowding.—Erection of new houses of a better type.

(4). Principal cases of overcrowding dealt with during the year and action taken.—None, owing to no alternative accommodation being available in the District.

(III.) *Fitness of Houses* :—

(1). (a). General standard of houses in the District.—A moderate standard, but practically no modern houses; water-carriage system only in a very few houses.

(b). General character of the defects found to exist in unfit houses.—Ground dampness, defective lighting and ventilation, lack of yard space, lack of back doors, bedrooms deficient in number and size, defective pointing and spouting, unsuitable position, and defective structure of closets.

(2). Action taken as regards unfit houses under—

(a). Public Health Acts.—7 statutory and 6 informal notices served, all of which were complied with.

(b). The Housing Acts.—71 defective houses were represented to the District Council; 44 houses which had been closed for a number of years, and were neither dangerous nor a real factor in the housing of the District, owing to difficulty of approach, but were of considerable artistic value and local interest, the Council decided, on my advice, to take no immediate steps with regard to them; 27 others were represented for the purpose of re-construction, which would entail turning the 27 houses into 25, a loss of 2 houses to the District.

(3). Difficulties in remedying unfitness, special measures taken, and any suggestions in the matter.—No available houses for occupiers while re-construction is being carried out; there is also a shortage of skilled labour and materials.

(4). Conditions, so far as they affect housing, as regards water supply, closet accommodation, and refuse disposal, together with measures taken during the year in these matters.—Water supply has been found sufficient under present conservancy system, but if water-carriage system was generally introduced into the Urban portion of the District, and many new houses were erected, other springs would require to be added to the present supply; this difficulty, however, could be overcome. There is no difficulty about removing refuse to tips, but naturally in a small District like this there is no Refuse Destructor.

(IV.) *Unhealthy Areas*:—

(1). Action taken as regards areas represented before the beginning of the year under Part I. or Part II. of the Housing Act, 1890.—One house was demolished before the war, and another belonging to the Overseers was so thoroughly re-constructed as to be practically re-built.

(2). Particulars of, and action taken, as regards areas represented during the year.—The Havannah Village, which had already been voluntarily closed, consisted of 44 houses, and the Council were advised to take no further steps for the present; 27 houses were represented for re-construction, entailing a loss of 2 houses; this will be carried out when new houses are erected to house the displaced occupants of the two houses, and when labour and materials are available.

(3). Information as to complaints made during the year that areas were unhealthy and action taken.—No complaints received, except representations by me as mentioned in the last sub-section (IV. (2)).

(V.) *By-laws relating to Houses, to Houses let in Lodgings, and to Tents, Vans, Sheds, etc.*:—

(1). As to working of existing by-laws.—There are no by-laws.

(2). As to need for new by-laws or revision of existing by-laws.—It is a very necessary matter that by-laws should be framed.

(VI.) *General and Miscellaneous*:—None.

(VII.) *Appendices.—Statistics for the 12 months ended 31st December, 1919.*

(1). Number of dwelling-houses, in respect of which complaints were made that they are unfit for human habitation.

(a). By householders.—None.

(b). In the case of Rural parishes, etc.—Not applicable.

(2). Action under Section 17 of the Housing Act of 1909.

(a). Number of dwelling-houses inspected under and for the purpose of the Section.—15.

(b). Number of dwelling-houses which were considered to be unfit for human habitation.—3.

(c). Number of dwelling-houses, the defects in which were remedied without the making of closing orders.—The owner of 4 houses voluntarily arranged to remedy defects, but it was impossible to commence work before January, 1920.

(3). Action under Section 28 of the Housing Act, 1919.—

(a). Number of Orders for repairs issued.—0.

(b). Number of cases in which repairs carried out by the Local Authority.—0.

(c). Number of dwelling-houses voluntarily closed on notice by owner that they could not be made fit without re-construction.—0.

(4). Closing Orders.—(a). Number of representations made to the Local Authority with a view to the making of closing orders.—None.

(b). Number of closing orders made.—None.

(c). Number of dwelling-houses in regard to which closing orders were determined on the houses being made fit for human habitation.—None.

(5). Demolition Orders.—(a). Number of demolition orders made.—None.

(b). Number of houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders.—None.

(6). Number of houses demolished voluntarily.—3.

(7). Obstructive Buildings.—None.

(8). Staff engaged in housing work, with duties of each officer:—

Medical Officer of Health, inspecting, making continuous survey of District, and making representations to Council.

Sanitary Inspector, inspecting.

Architect, preparing plans, attending Housing Meetings, dealing with tenders for building, supervising building, etc.

Quantity Surveyor, making out bills of quantities.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

R. B. DAVIDSON,

M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., L.R.F.P.S.,

Member Royal Sanitary Institute.

Cheshire County Council.

Tabular Summary of Sanitary Work during 1919.

Name of District—Buglawton Urban.

I.—WATER SUPPLY.

1. Have any extensions been carried out during 1919? If so please append brief note. *None.*
2. Number of Samples analysed during 1919—chemically.—*None from Town's Supply since 27th December, 1918, but 2 from Wells; bacteriologically. None.*
3. Are any, and if so what, parts of your District still without a proper supply of water? *Outlying Districts, e.g., Dane-inshaw.*

II.—SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

1. Specify any new works of sewerage carried out during 1919. *None.*
2. Are any, and if so what, parts of your District still without a proper system of sewers? *Yes. Outlying and Small Areas.*
3. Have there been any complaints to your knowledge during 1919 as to the disposal works? *No.*
4. Have any alterations or extensions taken place to your knowledge in the disposal works during 1919? *No.*

III.—HOUSING.

1. Number of new houses built during 1919? *None.*
2. Number of dwelling-houses inspected under s. 17 Act of 1909. *15.*
3. Number of such houses considered unfit for habitation. *Three, since demolished without any order being made.*
4. Number of representations made to Local Authority. *None.*
5. Number of closing orders made by Local Authority. *None.*
6. Number of houses where defects remedied *without* closing orders being made. *The owner of 4 defective houses voluntarily arranged to remedy the defects; but it was not possible to have it done until early in 1920.*
7. Number of houses where defects remedied *after* closing orders made. *None.*

8. Estimated or ascertained number of houses within limits of rent in s. 14 of Act of 1909. 377, but of these 44 in *The Havannah* are unfit for habitation; 4 more must be re-constructed before fit for habitation; all these 48 are unoccupied; and 4 others are used for business purposes.
9. Number of such houses in respect of which notice was served during 1919. *None.*
10. Number of such houses closed after notice. *None.*
11. Number of such houses where Local Authority has executed necessary repairs, &c. *None.*
12. Approximate number of back-to-back houses in District. *Two.*
13. Approximate number of cellar dwellings in District. *None.*
14. What number of dwelling-houses for the working classes has your Council decided are required under the recent Housing Act? 34.

IV.—TOWN PLANNING.

Has any scheme of Town Planning been put forward during 1919 for your District or any part thereof? If so please make brief note of (a) part of District covered by Scheme. *None.*

(Signed) R. B. DAVIDSON.

3rd March, 1920.

