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BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

Annual Report for 1944 of the Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
DARTFORD.

1st October, 1945.

TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN AND COUNCILLORS
OF THE BOROUGH OF DARTFORD

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report as Medical Officer of Health for the year 1944.

The report is, on the instructions of the Ministry of Health, presented in an abbreviated form. The restrictions on the publication of population statistics have been removed and details regarding population and vital statistics are again included in the report.

All the usual particulars and statistics have been compiled and are kept for record purposes.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,234
Population (Registrar-General's estimated figures mid-1944)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	33,910
Population (Census, 1931)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	28,928
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1944, according to Rate Books)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10,107
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£295,554
Sum represented by 1d. Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£1,187

						Males.	Females.	Total.
Live Births :	Legitimate	...	...	...	...	311	301	612
	Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	19	20	39
						<u>330</u>	<u>321</u>	<u>651</u>

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 of population	...	...	...	...	...	19.19
Live Birth Rate for England and Wales for the year	...	...	...	...	...	17.6

Still Births :	Number of still births during the year	...	...	...	...	18.
	Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...	...	27.65

									Males.	Females.	Total.	
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	211	156	367	
	Death Rate per 1,000 of population								...	...	...	10.82
	Death Rate for England and Wales for the year								...	...	...	11.6

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of, childbirth:—

From Sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	None
Other Causes	...	...	...	...	...	None

						Males.	Females.	Total.
Infantile Mortality :								
	Legitimate	...	...	...	...	12	11	23
	Illegitimate	...	...	...	...	3	0	3
						<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>26</u>

Death Rate of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	...	39.94
Infantile Death Rate for England and Wales for the year	...	...	...	...	...	46

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1944

	Causes of Death.						Male.	Female.
1.	Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
2.	Cerebro-spinal fever	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
3.	Scarlet fever	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
4.	Whooping cough	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
5.	Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
6.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	...	...	...	10	11
7.	Other forms of tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	...	3	1
8.	Syphilitic diseases	...	...	...	...	...	4	—
9.	Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
10.	Measles	...	...	...	...	...	—	1
11.	Ac. polio-myel. and polio enceph.	...	...	...	...	...	—	—

12.	Ac. inf. enceph.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	—
13.	Cancer of buc. cav. oesoph and uterus	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5	6
14.	Cancer of stomach and duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	5
15.	Cancer of breast	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	2
16.	Cancer of all other sites	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	18	15
17.	Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
18.	Intra-cranial vascular lesions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	12	13
19.	Heart disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	53	43
20.	Other diseases of circ. system	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	5
21.	Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	14	3
22.	Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	4
23.	Other respiratory diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	3
24.	Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	1
25.	Diarrhoea under 2 years	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
26.	Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
27.	Other digestive diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	3
28.	Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4	2
29.	Puerperal and post-abort. sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
30.	Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	—	—
31.	Premature birth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7	3
32.	Congenital mal.; birth inj.; Infant dis.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6	2
33.	Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1
34.	Road traffic accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3	—
35.	Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	17	17
36.	All other causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21	13
									211	156

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

Water Supply.

The Borough is supplied with water by the Metropolitan Water Board. The supply is from deep chalk wells and is satisfactory in both quality and quantity. The water is chlorine treated, and has no plumbo-solvent action.

Frequent tests are carried out by the Board and in addition periodical samples are taken by the Sanitary Inspector and submitted to the County Laboratory for bacteriological examination. All samples taken during the year were satisfactory.

With the exception of eleven houses, all houses in the Borough are supplied from the Board's mains (direct to the houses in all cases but three, which have a stand pipe supply). Of the eleven houses not on the Board's mains eight are supplied from deep artesian wells.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The district is main sewered, and the water carriage system is general. The sewage is dealt with by the West Kent Main Sewerage Board (of which the Dartford Corporation is a constituent Authority) at their works at Long Reach, Dartford. There have been no extensions of the sewerage system during the year.

There are only 94 houses not connected to the public sewers.

Rivers and Streams.

Pollution of the Stanham Brook by industrial waste arising in an adjoining district has again had to be dealt with during the year, and samples of the water have been taken.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF DISTRICT.

This is dealt with in the Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector which is appended hereto.

HOUSING.

No new houses were built during the year and the shortage of working class houses and overcrowding has increased during the period.

The Corporation have considered the provision of houses to meet this shortage and as a first instalment, arrangements are being made to build 78 permanent houses on the Princes Road Housing Site and also for building temporary houses on three sites that have been arranged. Work on the latter was commenced in 1945.

The shortage of labour and the difficulties in obtaining materials for the repair of existing houses and the remedying of defects and nuisances has been increasingly difficult during the year.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

The Council are the Food and Drugs Authority under the above Act.

Mr. W. E. Balchin, the Chief Sanitary Inspector, is the Sampling Officer and particulars of the 101 samples taken during the year are given in his report.

INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

Smallpox.

No cases of Smallpox were notified during the year.

Diphtheria.

The number of cases of Diphtheria notified (exclusive of Institutional cases) was 10, compared with 13 in 1943.

On admittance to hospital only 4 of the cases were found to be bacteriologically positive.

An Immunisation Clinic is held weekly at the M. & C. W. Clinic, and in addition there is a scheme for immunisation by the medical practitioners in the district.

During the year 416 children were immunised.

Aproximately 62% of the children under 15 years in the Borough are now immunised.

Propaganda work by posters, etc., has been carried out throughout the year.

Scarlet Fever.

The number of cases of Scarlet Fever notified (exclusive of Institutional cases) was 57, as compared with 84 in 1943.

There were also 6 cases notified from Institutions.

Whooping Cough.

The number of cases notified during the year was 39.

A scheme for immunisation against Whooping Cough was commenced in 1943. 40 children were immunised during 1944.

Measles.

During the year 85 cases (excluding German Measles) were notified.

Enteric Fever.

No cases of Enteric Fever were notified during the year.

Food Poisoning.

One case of Food Poisoning was notified during the year.

Tuberculosis.

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Number of cases notified	37	12	9	4	62
Number of deaths	13	13	1	0	27

The following is a summary of cases on the Tuberculosis Register at the end of the year:—

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Total.
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	
Number on Register at commencement of year	157	95	29	39	320
Number on Register at end of year ...	174	88	33	40	335

Scabies and Body Vermin.

In 1943, a Cleansing Centre was fitted and established at the Gas Cleansing Station, King Edward Avenue. The work is carried out by the British Red Cross Society's personnel. Cases are referred to the Department by the Medical Practitioners and the Education Authorities. I am glad to be able to report that the treatment has been beneficial. During 1944 184 males and 337 Females were treated.

The Health Visitors and the staff of the Day Nurseries keep observations with regard to head lice and general cleanliness and provision is made for treatment.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Particulars of Attendances at the Child Welfare Clinic.

Number of new entrants during the year	403
Total number of children who attended during the year ...	846

Ante-Natal Clinic.

Total number of cases on Register during the year	...	...	176
Number of new cases	...	...	144
Number of clinics held	...	...	49
Total number of attendances	...	...	538
Average attendance per Clinic	...	...	11

Birth Control Clinic.

This Clinic was held monthly during the year. 66 new cases received advice and 191 attendances were made. Every care is taken to see that the objects of the Clinic are fulfilled.

Maternity Service.

A scheme is in force whereby expectant mothers can be admitted to either the County Hospital or the Livingstone Hospital for their confinements. Financial assistance is given according to the income of the applicants.

3 cases were admitted under the scheme during the year.

Puerperal Pyrexia.

13 cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified during the year. Eleven occurred at the County Hospital, one at Livingstone Hospital and one where the confinement took place at the patient's own house. The latter was admitted to Bow Arrow Hospital.

Other Services.

In connection with the ancillary services of the Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, 4 children received orthopaedic treatment, and 4 mothers and 1 child dental treatment during the year.

MILK (MOTHERS AND CHILDREN) ORDERS, 1919 and 1921.

During the year 1944 the amount of milk supplied under these Orders was as follows:—

333 lbs. dried milk free.

154 „ „ „ half-price.

The distribution of Liquid Milk free, or at a reduced price, is undertaken during the war by the Food Office.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION.

The two Health Visitors are appointed as Infant Protection Officers.

Number of visits paid to foster children during the year	...	181
Number of foster mothers on register at end of year	...	7
Number of foster children on register at end of year	...	10

Under the Adoption of Children (Regulation) Act, 1939, Notice of Adoption was received with regard to 7 children. The adoption of 5 of these children was completed during the year.

HOME VISITATION.

VISITS OF HEALTH VISITORS.

The following visits were paid by your Health Visitors during the year: —

Number of new-born infants visited	...	...	...	...	602
Number of visits to infants under one year	...	...	...	...	1,739
Number of visits to children over one year	...	...	...	...	4,040
Total visits made by Health Visitors during year	...	...	...	...	6,381

In addition to these visits the following have been paid: —

Ante-natal visits	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	65
Death enquiries	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

DAY NURSERIES.

Day Nurseries have been established at 21, West Hill and Oakfield Lane. Owing to enemy action and evacuation the attendances varied considerably from month to month.

The issue of babies anti-gas helmets and the exchange of helmets for Mickey Mouse respirators was continued from the Public Health Department during the year.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS FARTHING,

Medical Officer of Health.

ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

SIR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to report as follows on some of the most important matters relating to the Sanitary Inspection, etc., of the Borough for the year 1944.

General.

Number of complaints investigated and dealt with	...	...	...	433
Number of cases of infectious disease investigated	...	...	...	78
Number of premises disinfected: Infectious disease	...	...	...	93
Vermin	...	...	...	18
Bedding disinfected	...	...	...	10 sets (142 articles)
Number of Notices served: Preliminary	...	...	...	223
Statutory	...	...	...	9
Number of drains tested: Water 27, Smoke 7	...	...	...	Total 34

Supervision of Milk Supplies.

Samples of Milk taken under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders:—

Eight samples of pasteurized milk were taken from licensed dealers. One sample was delayed in transit to the laboratory and was inconclusive. Seven complied with the prescribed conditions.

128 inspections of dairies, cowsheds and milkshops were made during the year.

Two samples of mixed milk were taken from local herds, under the Tuberculosis Order, 1938, and both were found to be negative.

INSPECTIONS IN CONNECTION WITH FOOD SUPPLIES

Meat and other food inspections	...	...	...	...	283
Market and Hawkers inspections	...	...	...	...	97
Inspections of food preparation premises	...	...	...	...	78
Bakehouse inspections	...	...	...	...	62

FOOD AND DRUG SAMPLING.

During the year 101 samples were obtained (67 formal and 34 informal) and were submitted to the Public Analyst. The following table shows the results of the analysis of these samples:—

	Formal.	Informal.	Genuine.	Not Genuine	Remarks.
Milk	36	1	37	—	All of good quality.
Almond flavouring	—	1	1	—	
Baking powder	—	1	1	—	
Breakfast Cereal	—	1	—	1	Slightly affected by mites. Stock withdrawn.
Butter	3	—	3	—	
Cocoa	3	—	3	—	
Coffee	4	—	4	—	
Coffee Essence	—	1	1	—	
Curry Powder	1	—	1	—	
Custard Powder	1	1	2	—	
Drugs	1	11	12	—	
Dried Fruit	3	—	3	—	
Egg Substitute	—	1	1	—	
Fish Paste	—	1	1	—	
Flour	2	—	2	—	
Gelatine	2	—	2	—	
Ground Ginger	—	2	2	—	
Jam	1	—	1	—	
Lard	2	—	2	—	
Lemonade Powder	—	1	1	—	
Malt Extract Tablets	—	1	1	—	
Margarine	4	—	4	—	
Mixed Spice	1	—	1	—	
Nutmeg (ground)	1	—	1	—	
Pepper	1	2	3	—	
Pudding and Cake Mixture	—	2	2	—	
Saccharine Tablets	—	2	2	—	
Salad Dressing	—	1	1	—	
Savoury Stuffing	—	1	1	—	
Soya Flour	1	—	1	—	
Vanilla Essence	—	1	1	—	
Vinegar	—	1	1	—	
Whisky	—	1	1	—	
	67	34	100	1	

UNSOUND FOOD.

The total quantity of unsound food destroyed or salvaged during the year was 4 tons 1 cwt. 3 qrs. 14 lbs., as follows:—

Beef: 18 cwt. 2 qrs. 27 lbs. (including three tubercular carcasses and offal).

Mutton: 1 cwt. 10 lbs.

Pork: 13 lbs.

Offal: 10 lbs.

Rabbits: 1 cwt. 18 lbs.

Bacon: 1 cwt. 27 lbs.

Fish: 6 cwt. 2 qrs. 9 lbs.

Tinned Goods: 9 cwt. 3 qrs. 21 lbs. (consisting of: meat 139 tins, fish 212 tins, fruit 13 tins, vegetables 45 tins, milk 745 tins, jam 40 tins, soup 16 tins).

Sausages: 1 cwt. 25 lbs.

Bread (due to breakdown in ovens): 35 cwt. 2 qrs. 24 lbs.

Cereals (due to weevils): 1 cwt. 2 qrs. 13 lbs.

Sugar: 1 cwt. 26 lbs.

Cheese: 24 lbs.

Miscellaneous Foods: 2 cwt. 2 qrs. 11 lbs.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT

42 complaints regarding rats were investigated and dealt with necessitating 72 inspections during the year. In two instances the drains of the houses were tested and defects found. Assistance, as far as possible, with the reduced staff has been given to occupiers of premises infested.

A major infestation was found at the Sewage Works, Long Reach, and has been dealt with by the Kent County Council War Agricultural Executive Committee.

One infestation by black rats has been found, these were apparently brought into the district from the dock area of London.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

No legal proceedings were taken during the year.

I am, Sir, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

WALTER E. BALCHIN,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

UNSUBS TOOD

RAIS AND MCB DISTRICT ACT

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS