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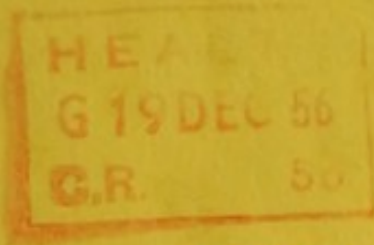
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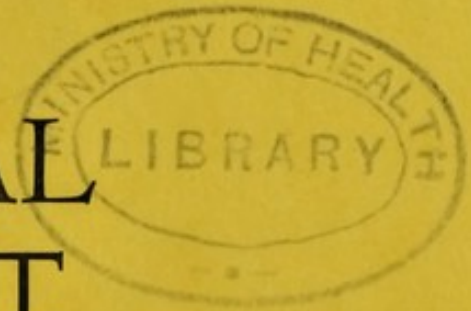
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**DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

ANNUAL
REPORT



OF THE

Medical Officer
of Health
and

Senior Public Health
Inspector

for 1955



DEVIZES RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1955

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

It is my duty to compile an Annual Report for the Year 1955. This has been done from the records available in the Department and with the help of the Senior Public Health Inspector, Mr. G. E. Williams.

After the unfortunate death in July of your Medical Officer of Health, Dr. G. H. H. Waylen, it was decided that the appointment should be readvertised so that a single officer should hold the position of Medical Officer of Health for the two County Districts of Devizes, and also be employed part-time in County Council services. I have taken the opportunity to refer in the text of the Report to some of the duties such an officer would be called upon to discharge.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

KENNETH J. ADAMS,

Medical Officer of Health.

(Appointed February, 1956.)

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF.

Medical Officer of Health:

G. H. H. WAYLEN, M.B., D.P.H. (Cantab.). (Deceased July, 1955).

Senior Public Health Inspector (also Building Surveyor and Waterworks Engineer):

G. E. WILLIAMS, M.R.San.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Public Health Inspector (also Deputy Building Surveyor and Deputy Waterworks Engineer) :

V. C. S. ROBEY, M.S.I.A.

Second Additional Public Health Inspector:

D. W. E. JESSETT. (Appointed April, 1955.)

Housing Inspector:

E. C. BISHOP.

Rodent Operative:

F. W. BARRETT (Part-time, being shared with Borough of Devizes).

Clerks:

W. H. POULTNEY.

G. W. MADDOX.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area in Acres—63,515.

Population (Registrar General's Estimate)—16,620.

Number of inhabited Houses—3,930.

Rateable Value—£74,504.

Product of 1d. Rate—£296 16s. 0d.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births and Infantile Deaths.

	Legitimate			Illegitimate			Totals		
	Male	Fem.	Tot.	Male.	Fem.	Tot.	Male	Fem.	Tot.
Live Births ..	97	108	205	3	4	7	100	112	212
Still Births ..	2	1	3	—	—	—	2	1	3
Deaths under 1 year	2	1	3	—	—	—	2	1	3
Deaths under 4 weeks	2	1	3	—	—	—	2	1	3

Births and Death Rates Compared.

(Births and Deaths per 1,000 Population.)

				Birth Rate	Death Rate
England and Wales .. .. .	..	..	..	15.0	11.7
Greater London .. .. .	..	..	..	13.8	10.7
Wiltshire .. .. .	..	..	..	17.13	10.24
Devizes Rural District .. .. .	..	..	..	15.4	13.34

Area comparability factors for the birth and death rates are issued by the Registrar General and when the local rates are multiplied by the factors they are "corrected" for irregularities of distribution of age and sex. The above local rates are thus corrected and so are a more accurate method of comparing the healthiness of one area with that of another.

There were three deaths in infants under one year of age to 212 live births in the area. This is too small a figure to work out an infantile mortality rate but it seems to compare favourably with the National rate of 24.9 deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births, and the Wiltshire rate of 18.41.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

	Male.	Female.	Total
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system ..	—	2	2
Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—	—
Syphilitic Diseases	—	—	—
Cancer and other malignant neoplasms ..	17	15	32
Diabetes	—	1	1
Vascular disease of the nervous system ..	9	12	21

					Male.	Female.	Total.
Coronary disease, Angina	..	..	..	..	18	13	31
Hypertension with heart disease	..	..	..	..	9	1	10
Other Heart Disease	..	..	..	..	35	47	82
Other Circulatory Disease	..	..	..	..	4	9	13
Influenza	..	..	..	..	1	—	1
Pneumonia	..	..	..	..	4	7	11
Bronchitis	..	..	..	..	5	1	6
Other Diseases of Respiratory system	..	..	..	..	1	1	2
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrohea	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	..	..	..	..	—	1	1
Nephritis and Nephrosis	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
Hyperplasia of Prostate	..	..	..	..	2	—	2
Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
Congenital Malformations	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	..	..	..	..	8	7	15
Motor Vehicle accidents	..	..	..	..	1	1	2
All other accidents	..	..	..	..	5	3	8
Suicide	..	..	..	..	1	—	1
Homicide and operations of war	..	..	..	..	—	—	—
Totals	..	..	..	..	120	121	241

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

There were two deaths from tuberculosis in 1955 and these were the only deaths from communicable disease during the year.

Cases notified were as follows:—

Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Whooping Cough	..	..	..	..	..	..	3
Acute Poliomyelitis	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Measles	..	..	..	..	..	..	32
Dysentery	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Typhoid Fever	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Meningococcal Infection	..	..	..	..	..	..	1

Diphtheria.

There was no case of this disease during the year.

That such a state of affairs continues depends upon the state of immunity of the child population. The figures for England and Wales for last year were 169 notifications with 13 deaths.

The Annual return of Diphtheria Immunisations for the year in this area submitted by the County Medical Officer of Health, Dr. C. D. L. Lycett, is as follows:—

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATIONS.

Immunisation in Relation to Child Population

Primary Immun. Completed dur. 1955			Total Immunised Child Population 31st December, 1956							
Under 1	1—4 years	5—15 years	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5—9	10—14	Total under 15
71	53	45	21	101	133	123	143	172* 837†	336* 639†	2505

*Immunised before 1.1.51

†Immunised since 1.1.51

The Ministry of Health recommends that 75% of children should be immunised before their first birthday. In the Rural District the number of children so protected is 34%. The national figure is approximately 30%.

SMALLPOX VACCINATION.

	Under 1 year	1 year	2—4 years	5—14 years	15 or over
Vaccinations ..	109	4	2	3	5
Re-vaccinations ..	—	—	—	22	14

HOSPITAL SERVICES.

Devizes and District Hospital.

Total Bed Complement	..	..	..	..	..	60
Average daily number of occupied beds	..	..	..	..	..	40
Total number of admissions	..	..	..	..	..	1,149

Physiotherapy Department.

Out-patient Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	9,515
In-patient Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	925

Radiological Department.

Out-patient Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	3,086
In-patient Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	524

Out-Patients Department.

Number of new Out-patients	..	..	..	..	..	1,259
Number of Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	4,408

Pathological Department.

Number of Visits (In-patients and Out-patients)	5,880
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Number of Operations.

Major	113
Intermediate	254
Minor	540

Casualty Department.

New Out-patients	..	..	..	..	..	2,011
Number of Attendances	..	..	..	..	..	6,155

**THE JOINT APPOINTMENT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH FOR COUNTY DISTRICTS AND COUNTY
COUNCIL.****Extract from Circular 27/51—Ministry of Health.**

“ County Councils and County District Councils should have regard to the advantages which may be expected to flow from a plan, which besides providing for a single officer to hold the office of Medical Officer of Health for two or more County districts, also provides for him to be employed part time in County Council services, and so help to administer the personal health services of the County Council in the area.”

Such a Medical Officer of Health should be executively responsible for:—

(1) The Environmental Health Service (County District).

This will include the epidemiology and control of infectious disease, and the maintenance and improvement of the sanitary state of the area if necessary by using statutory powers conferred by the Public Health Act, 1936, the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, the Milk and Dairies Regulations, 1949, the Factories Act, 1937-1948 and the Housing Acts, 1936-1954.

(2) The Personal Health Services (County Council).

This will include:

The care of the school child.

The care of the deprived child.

The care of the mentally ill and mentally defective.

The care of the young child.

The care of the handicapped.

Occupational Health.

Health Education.

He should also be prepared to advise you on aspects of social medicine where responsibilities may fall short of his executive control (ranging from housing to refuse disposal). In short, it is his duty to consider all matters affecting the health of the area.

Report of the Senior Public Health Inspector 1955

Mr. Chairman, Madam and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Report for the Year 1955.

The duties of a public health inspector are defined by law. My report contains many particulars which are not within the realm of a public health inspector, *e.g.*, Water Supply, Sewerage, Town and Country Planning, Council House Estate Maintenance, Building Surveying, etc., but I have included some reference to these activities because they have a direct or indirect bearing on Public Health, and in the hope also that they might be of interest to the Council.

The decontrol of fatstock and meat in July, 1954, led to the opening of three private slaughterhouses in the District between that date and December, 1955. The additional meat inspection duties arising from this new activity, together with the Slum Clearance Programme and the taking of milk samples recommended by the County Medical Officer of Health, were the main reasons for the appointment of a second Additional Public Health Inspector. Mr. D. W. E. Jessett was appointed in April, 1955, to meet the increasing work of the Department.

The death of your late lamented Medical Officer of Health, Dr. G. H. H. Waylen, in July, 1955, meant that there was no officially appointed Medical Officer of Health during the latter half of the year. The County Medical Officer of Health kindly made available the services of Dr. D. L. Johnson, Senior County Medical Officer, whenever necessary.

I wish to take this opportunity of thanking the Staff of the Department for the efficient and conscientious way in which they have carried out their duties, and the Council for their continued appreciation.

HOUSING.

The change of emphasis which occurred in the Government's housing policy during 1954 was carried a step further during 1955 in that all local authorities were required to submit to the Minister of Housing and Local Government their programme in regard to slum clearance for the next five years. The amending legislation in regard to improvement grants also began to take effect during this year.

The provisional five-year Slum Clearance Programme approved by the Council and subsequently by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government showed the estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936, to be 197. Of this number statutory action had already been taken in respect of 75 houses and 37 of these were void. It was thus necessary for action to be taken in regard to a further 122 houses of which 25 were vacant.

Housing Acts, 1936 and 1949, and Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954.

The following is a copy of a return made to the County Medical Officer of Health respecting housing matters:—

Total number of permanent dwellings in the Local Authority's area	3,900
Total number of permanent dwellings owned by Local Authority	733

Part 1. The Total Problem.

(i) Estimated number of houses unfit for human habitation within the meaning of Section 9 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, and suitable for action under Section 11 or Section 25 of the Housing Act, 1936	197
(ii) Period in years which the Council think necessary for securing the demolition of all the houses in (i) ..	5

Part 2. Orders Already Made, etc.

(iii) Number of houses in (i) clearance areas and already covered by operative clearance or compulsory purchase orders or owned by the Local Authority ..	45
(iv) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders have been submitted to the Minister but have not yet become operative	Nil

Part 3. Action in the First Five Years.

(v) Number of houses which are already in clearance areas and for which clearance or compulsory purchase orders are to be made or which are to be purchased by agreement within the five years	Nil
(vi) Number of houses which are to be included in clearance areas still to be declared and which within the five years will be owned by the Local Authority or will have been included in a clearance order or a compulsory purchase order submitted to the Minister ..	33
(vii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v) and (vi) to be patched (if necessary) and retained within the five years under Section 2 of the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954, for temporary accommodation ..	Nil
(viii) Number of houses under (iii), (iv), (v), and (vi) to be demolished in the five years	78
(ix) Number of houses (including those already comprised in operative demolition orders) to be demolished in the five years as a result of action under Section 11 of the Housing Act, 1936	119

	Houses erected during year	Houses in course of erection	Gained from conversion of large houses or buildings into flats or dwellings	Lost from conversion of two or more houses into one
Local Authority Private Enterprise	41 20	63 10	— 1	— —
Totals ..	61	73	1	—

Number of Post-War Houses erected from 1st April, 1945 to 31st December, 1954.	
By Local Authority	By Private Enterprise
381	96

Number of temporary housing units occupied 22 (Caravans).

Houses Required:—

- (i) To abate overcrowding 1
- (ii) To overcome unsatisfactory conditions, *e.g.*, two families living in same house but not included in (i) Not Known

Total number of applicants for Council Houses at end of year 300

Improvement Grants made under the Housing Acts, 1949-54.

Number of applications and houses dealt with by the Local Authority:—

	(1) Received		(2) Approved		(3) Rejected		(4) Under Consideration		(5) Withdrawn	
	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses	Aps.	No. of houses
31/7/49 to 31/12/54	9	12	9	12	—	—	—	—	—	—
31/12/54 to 31/12/55	24	31	22	29	1	1	—	—	1	1
Totals:	33	43	31	41	1	1	—	—	1	1

Number of Houses improved as result of grants:—

	No. of grants made by Local Authority	Cost of grants made	No. of houses improved including new houses brought into use by conversion
31/7/49 to 31/12/54	2	£700 0 0	3
31/12/54 to 31/12/55	13	£4,952 15 6	16
Totals:	15	£5,652 15 6	19

Grants amounting to £6,682 have been approved pending the completion of improvements to 22 houses. Work was in progress on 19 of these houses at the end of 1955.

53 additional houses were inspected following enquiries as to their suitability for improvement grants, but for various reasons schemes for only 6 of these houses were being prepared at the year's end.

All schemes are prepared by an architect or surveyor in consultation with the Council's technical officers and compliance with the legal standards is agreed before submission to the Council.

Inspection of Dwellings during the year 1955.

(i)	Inspected for housing defects under Public Health Acts	63
(ii)	Inspected for housing defects under Housing Acts	308
(iii)	Number of dwellings found so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for habitation ..	199
(iv)	Number of dwellings found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for habitation	172

Remedy of Defects by Informal Action.

Number of dwellings rendered fit in consequence of Informal Action	72
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Action under Statutory Powers (Public Health and Housing Acts).

(A) *Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of Housing Act, 1936.*

(i)	Number of dwellings in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ..	Nil
(ii)	Number of dwellings rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a)	By Owners	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners ..	Nil

(B) <i>Proceedings under Public Health Acts.</i>		
(i)	Number of dwellings in respect of which formal notices were served	Nil
(ii)	Number of dwellings rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a)	By Owners	Nil
(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners ..	Nil
(C) <i>Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of Housing Act, 1936.</i>		
(i)	Number of Demolition Orders made	3
(ii)	Number of houses demolished as result of Demolition Orders	6
(iii)	Number of undertakings accepted	Nil
(iv)	Number of undertakings completed	Nil
(D) <i>Proceedings under Sections 25 and 26 of Housing Act, 1936.</i>		
(i)	Number of houses upon which Demolition Orders were made	Nil
(ii)	Number of houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	14
(E) <i>Proceedings under Section 12 of Housing Act, 1936.</i>		
(i)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were made	Nil
(ii)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which closing orders were cancelled as result of premises having been made fit ..	Nil

Housing Act, 1936—Part IV—Overcrowding.

(i)	Number of cases of overcrowded dwellings at end of year	Not Known
(ii)	Number of cases discovered during year	1
(iii)	Number of cases abated during year	Nil

Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1953.

Closing Orders made under Section 10 (i)	2
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WATER SUPPLY.

Area Supplied.

Ten of the twenty-four parishes in the District are totally served by water mains and seven are partly served. The following is a list of the Council's water systems:—

1. The Great Cheverell System.
2. The North Western Area System.
3. The Erlestoke System.

4. The Nursteed System.
5. The Roundway System.
6. The Brickley Lane System.
7. All Cannings Council House Estate System.
8. Marden Council House Estate System.
9. Chirton Council House Estate System.
10. Urchfont Council House Estate System.
11. Etchilhampton Council House Estate System.
12. Patney Hostel System (Part Ownership).

TABLE I.

The amount of water supplied in 1955 from Great Cheverell, Erlestoke, Devizes Borough and Calne and Chippenham R.D.C. sources, expressed in thousands of gallons per month:—

	Great Cheverell	Erlestoke	Nursteed	Fairway	Dunkirk	Brickley Lane	Roundway	North Westn.
Jan.	2,457	84	5	1,942	1,504	15	15	—
Feb.	2,335	77	5	1,876	1,407	13	15	—
Mar.	2,620	94	6	2,121	1,594	14	16	—
Apr.	2,583	79	7	2,045	1,506	15	18	—
May	1,923	103	5	1,333	299	14	17	1,494
June	1,804	105	4	508	9	14	19	2,713
July	2,299	113	1	1,332	—	17	26	2,625
Aug.	2,301	114	6	1,965	—	13	21	3,873
Sept.	2,188	117	5	1,258	—	13	21	2,844
Oct.	2,516	126	6	1,151	—	14	19	2,958
Nov.	2,570	102	7	957	—	13	15	2,894
Dec.	2,342	99	9	1,009	—	13	26	2,962
	27,938	1,213	66	17,497	6,319	168	228	22,363

	1955	1954
Supplied from Great Cheverell Borehole	27,938,200	27,274,400
Supplied from Devizes Borough	242,78,120	36,296,630
Supplied from Calne and Chippenham R.D.C.	22,363,000	—
Supplied from Erlestoke Source	1,212,400	1,016,700
	<u>75,791,720</u>	<u>64,587,730</u>

The total shows an increase of 11,203,990 gallons over the amount for 1954, or approximately 17 per cent.

The following Tables II and III show the position in regard to the availability of piped water supplies:—

TABLE II.

PARISH	Details of Connections				Estimated Population Supplied	Estimated Total Population
	Dom-estic	Pt Dom. Pt. Tde	Trade	Halls etc.		
GREAT CHEVERELL & NORTH WESTERN SYSTEMS:						
Great Cheverell ..	99	11	8	1	364	367
Market Lavington	287	30	22	2	1,118	1,256
Marston	28	10	2	—	138	138
Potterne	273	29	18	2	1,096	1,155
Poulshot	69	15	10	1	319	323
Rowde	179	21	20	1	710	862
Seend	263	43	44	—	904	904
Worton	100	12	5	2	342	342
Bromham	235	36	16	3	1,001	1,559
Easterton*	34	1	7	—	116	446
Little Cheverell* ..	18	5	—	1	79	182
West Lavington* ..	83	4	1	—	284	989
*Note: Part only of these parishes is supplied.						
	1,668	217	153	13	6,471	8,523
ERLESTOKE SYSTEM:						
Erlestoke	35	—	1	—	119	238
MAIN EXTENSIONS FROM BOROUGH OF DEVIZES—PARISH OF ROUNDWAY.						
Roundway Village System	15	1	1	—		
Nursteed System ..	13	4	—	—		
Fairway System ..	17	1	—	—		
Brickley Lane System	10	—	—	—		
	55	6	1	—		

Note. In addition, the Devizes Borough Council supply direct fifty houses, plus Roundway Hospital and its nine private houses, the Flax Factory, Card's Garage, and a reserve to supply Roundway Farm (Mr. Pike) and cottages in the Parish of Roundway.

In the Village of Bishops Cannings ninety properties are supplied by the Devizes Borough Council.

TABLE III.

Parish	No. of houses supplied	Population Supplied
COUNCIL HOUSE ESTATE		
BOREHOLES:		
All Cannings	22	77
Chirton	16	56
Etchilhampton	8	28
Marden	12	42
Urchfont	22	77
Patney	4	14
	84	294

TABLE IV.

The following is the number of new connections made to the water systems:—

	Great Cheverell and North Western Systems	Erlestoke System	Round- way Village System	Council House Estates Boreholes
Domestic	209	4	—	—
Part Domestic and Part Trade	31	—	1	—
Trade Only	27	—	—	1
Halls etc.,	5	—	—	—
Total	272	4	1	1

TABLE V.

Results of Samples of Great Cheverell Public Supply.

Date	Before or After Chlorination	Result
6.1.55	Before	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
6.1.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
31.1.55	Before	Fair
31.1.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
9.5.55	Before	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
9.5.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
18.7.55	Before	Fair
18.7.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
13.9.55	Before	Bacteriologically Unsatisfactory
13.9.55	After	Fair
20.9.55	Before	Fair
20.9.55	After	Fair
28.9.55	Before	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
28.9.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory

TABLE VI.
Results of Samples of Erlestone Public Supply.

Date	Before or After Chlorination	Result
6.1.55	Before	Fair
6.1.55	After	Fair
31.1.55	Before	Fair
31.1.55	After	Fair
28.2.55	Before	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
28.2.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
9.5.55	Before	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
9.5.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory
18.7.55	Before	Fair
18.7.55	After	Fair
25.7.55	Before	Fair
25.7.55	After	Fair
4.8.55	Before	Fair
4.8.55	After	Fair
17.8.55	Before	Fair
17.8.55	After	Bacteriologically Satisfactory

TABLE VII.
Table showing Water Consumption on certain Council House Estates.

Estate	No. of Houses	Estimated Population	Annual Consumption	Average Consumption per Head per Day
All Cannings	22	77	490,150 galls.	17.44 galls.
Chirton ..	16	56	346,580 galls.	16.95 galls.
Etchil-hampton	8	28	159,690 galls.	15.61 galls.
Urchfont ..	22	77	488,000 galls.	17.36 galls.
Total ..	68	238	1,484,420 galls.	17.09 galls.

The Great Cheverell and North Western Systems Consumption Statistics.

1. Total number of premises supplied	2,051
2. Total number of metered connections	370
3. Total number of domestic connections	1,668
4. Total number of other connections, e.g., Halls, etc.	13
5. Total overall consumption	74,117,200 gallons
6. Total metered consumption	28,592,466 gallons
7. Estimated total domestic consumption	51,069,084 gallons

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| 8. <i>Estimated average domestic consumption per head of the population per diem</i> .. | 21.62 gallons |
| 9. <i>Estimated average overall consumption per head of the population per diem</i> | 31.38 gallons |

It should be noted that Nos. 7—9 above are estimated figures. It is not possible to give precise figures as the water which is recorded by most service meters, *e.g.*, farms, is used for both domestic and non-domestic purposes. Again, an estimate of population (3.5 persons) per house is used in arriving at the above figures as a physical count is not practicable. No adjustment has been made for the waste factor.

Notwithstanding these assumptions the figures may be taken as reasonably reliable.

The following inferences may be drawn from a study of the preceding tables and statistics:—

1. Ninety-four per cent. of the population of those parishes which have had mains water throughout the parish since 1937 are connected up. It will probably never be economically possible to obtain a hundred per cent. connection owing to the distance of a number of properties from the water mains and to the fact that some properties are above the hydraulic gradient.

2. The domestic consumption per head of the population per day, *viz.*, 21.62 gallons, shows a slight decrease compared with the figure arrived at for 1954, and an increase of 36 per cent. compared with the figure arrived at for 1950. The computation for 1950 had to be made on an estimated population and without the help of the correction available from the 1951 Census. Thus a part of the increase may be due to an error in this respect.

The general trend in regard to the domestic consumption per head of the population per day is one of increase, and the slight decrease for 1955 as compared with 1954 is probably due to the fact that the Parish of Bromham has a new system of water mains and services and loss through leakage was negligible.

3. The estimated average domestic consumption per head of the population per day on the small Council house estate systems, shown in Table VII, is 17.09 gallons, compared with 21.62 gallons on the Great Cheverell and North Western Systems. The apparent relatively excessive consumption on the Great Cheverell and North Western Systems, to which are connected numerous houses having no water closets or baths, indicates that water is being wasted through undetected leakages, misuse or undue consumption. In the absence of a properly organised system of waste detection and the records that would go with it, it is not possible to give a more detailed analysis of the causes of the increase and the remedies therefor. I hope to be able to give greater attention to this aspect of the work when the spate of applications for connection to the new Water Supply Schemes has been dealt with.

4. The figure of 21.62 gallons per head per day is only 13.5 per cent. below the design figure of 25 gallons per head per day used for your Post-War Water Schemes.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

The North Western Area Water Supply Scheme, commenced in 1954, was completed towards the end of the year. This brought a public water supply to the whole of the Parish of Bromham which for several years had only had a public water supply in a small part thereof.

A great deal of intensive market gardening is carried out in the Parish of Bromham where the soil is exceptionally fertile. Several of the horticulturists felt that provision should be made in this Scheme for supplying water for irrigation purposes. The use of potable water from a public supply system for irrigation purposes postulated a number of difficult questions on which there appeared to be little experience to give guidance. Estimates of the quantity likely to be required and the times and periods of the requirement varied widely. The economics of making such extra provision were also difficult to determine both from the point of view of the horticulturists and from that of the Council. A compromise solution was arrived at in the design stage of the Scheme whereby the Council will be able to afford a limited supply of water for horticultural purposes subject to certain conditions and limitations. Up to date only two horticulturists have used water in any substantial quantity for irrigation.

One of the main purposes of the North Western Scheme was to augment the Great Cheverell System where the pressure was inadequate in certain sections and the volume of water available insufficient. The linking of these two systems during August put an end to the numerous complaints which were being received up to that date.

The North Eastern Area Water Supply Scheme was almost completed but unfortunately difficulties arose in regard to the terms on which the Devizes Borough Council were prepared to sell water, which resulted in a long hold-up on this Scheme.

Good progress was made on the South Eastern Area Water Supply Scheme.

Some progress was made in regard to the South Western Area Water Supply Scheme, particularly in regard to the acquisition of the V.I.S.T.R.E. boreholes.

I estimate that when the South Eastern and North Eastern Schemes are completed during the latter part of 1956 a public water supply will be available to about 97 per cent. of the population.

In the Ministry of Health Report on Wiltshire Water Supplies in 1948 it was stated that 75 per cent. of the population in this District were without a public water supply. Despite the late start made on the Post-War Water Supply Schemes the Council may congratulate themselves on the good progress made, as by 1957 the District will be practically completely covered and will compare satisfactorily with the most progressive areas in the Country.

SEWERAGE.

The Council are responsible for:—

Approximately 15 miles of public piped sewer.

Approximately 5 miles of public sewer ditch.

Several miles of private sewer and drains on Council house estates.

24 sewage works.

Substantial progress was made in regard to the provisions of drainage schemes in several parishes, as follows:—

Easterton, Market Lavington and West Lavington.

Tenders for Stage I of this scheme were received and one was accepted but the firm concerned were not willing to sign a formal Contract and later withdrew their tender.

Rowde.

Tenders for this scheme were received and one was accepted.

Seend.

A scheme for this Village was approved following an Inquiry.

Urchfont.

The Minister of Housing and Local Government has approved the revised scheme for this Village in principle.

Stanton St. Bernard and Wedhampton.

An Engineering Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government made an informal visit to investigate these Schemes on the 19th October.

Etchilhampton.

A scheme for this Village was approved by the Council.

Potterne.

Stage 2 of this Scheme was substantially completed.

Bromham and Great Cheverell.

Schemes are being prepared for these Parishes.

FOOD INSPECTION.

Slaughterhouses.

Construction of the slaughterhouse at Coate, owned by Mr. R. Douse was completed and slaughtering commenced on the 30th July, 1955. Much consultation took place with the owner with a view to obtaining a slaughterhouse, lairage accommodation and cooling room which conforms with modern standards of hygiene and convenience. The result is by no means ideal but is a big advance on previous standards and the other licensed slaughterhouses in this area.

There are two licensed slaughterhouses in the District in addition to the above, *viz.*, Messrs. H. F. Stiles & Son, Jockey Lane, Bromham, and Mr. W. H. Andrews, Urchfont. The constructional standards, convenience and situation of these two slaughterhouses leave much to be desired.

All slaughterhouses were maintained and operated in a satisfactory manner.

Meat Inspection.

The following table gives particulars of carcasses and offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part:—

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	282	103	44	558	367
Number Inspected ..	282	103	44	558	367
ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS AND CYSTICERCOSIS: Whole Carcasses con- demned	—	—	1	1	3
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	35	16	—	14	4
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tub- erculosis & Cysticercosis	12.27%	15.53%	2.28%	2.69%	1.91%
TUBERCULOSIS ONLY: Whole Carcasses con- demned	—	—	—	—	1
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned	7	10	—	—	4
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	2.48%	9.70%	—	—	1.36%

Other Food Inspection.

The following food was surrendered and condemned as unfit for human consumption:—

11 lbs. Kippers (decomposed).

MILK AND DAIRIES.

There are 13 registered "Distributors" operating in the District of which six have premises within the area.

A number of other persons produce and retail milk in the District but in these cases the Council are only concerned with the cleanliness of the milk after it has left the producer's premises.

Five Dealer's Licences and three Supplementary Licences to use the designation "Pasteurised" and two Dealer's Licences and three Supplementary Licences to use the designation "Tuberculin Tested" were issued.

Milk Sampling.

The following are the results of samples of milk submitted for examination:—

	Passed	Failed	Total
Methylene Blue Test (for keeping quality)	35	7	42
Phosphatase Test (for efficient Pasteurisation) ..	18	—	18
Biological Test (for presence of Tuberculosis) ..	24	—	24

ICE CREAM.

There are thirty-two registered retailers of ice cream in the District. The premises are satisfactory. Most ice cream now sold is wrapped and there is little chance of contamination of the product at the place of sale. All ice cream is stored in electric conservators.

FOOD POISONING.

No case of food poisoning was reported during the year.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL.

After ten years of operation at remarkably low cost (far below any other district in the County) it became necessary to reorganise the system of refuse collection and disposal. The reorganised system, which included the redistribution of the various collection routes, came into being on the 1st July, 1955. It results in smoother working, the avoidance of overtime and improved conditions for the workmen. A new Diesel-driven dual-tip vehicle was purchased, of far larger capacity than the vehicle previously used, with resultant economy of operation. This type of vehicle handles the refuse in a more hygienic and dust-free manner, makes loading much easier for the workmen, saves the hard work of trimming the load and gives better cab accommodation.

The negotiations with the War Department for the collection and disposal of refuse from military establishments within the area, commenced during 1954, were completed in 1955 and brought into operation in November.

A fortnightly collection of refuse obtains throughout the District with the exception of the military establishments where a twice-weekly collection is carried out.

The total cost of collection and disposal of refuse for the year ended 31st March, 1955, was £1,882 14s. 7d., and the net cost after deducting income received (£25 8s. 0d.) was £1,857 6s. 7d. The approximate cost of the service per head of the population served was 2s. 11.96d.

The volume of refuse collected has increased greatly in recent years, due to continual small extensions of the service to properties not hitherto served and to newly-built properties, and perhaps more particularly to the fact that the inhabitants are generally becoming more conscious of the refuse service and thus utilising it to a greater extent than hitherto.

Difficulties in regard to the disposal of refuse have been increasing each year for the following reasons:—

1. The large area of the tip now covered calls for a great deal of attention arising from uneven subsidence.
2. It is difficult to prevent heavy vehicles with very small wheels from “ bogging down ” on the tip in very wet weather.
3. There is increasing unwillingness on the part of the refuse workers to undertake the heavy labour of constantly moving the sleeper track when this work could obviously be avoided by the use of suitable mechanical plant.
4. Inconvenience is caused to business people wishing to dispose of non-domestic refuse and finding that the tip is locked due to there being no full-time tip attendant.
5. It is difficult to prevent serious fly nuisance in hot weather.

The answer to all the above difficulties lies in the provision of proper mechanical aids which will eliminate the necessity for sleeper tracks, ensure proper consolidation of the refuse and enable the requisite soil to be provided for cover, etc.

RODENT CONTROL.

The tabular form of report required annually by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, which accompanies these comments, shows the amount of work carried out in connection with this duty.

The refuse tip and sewer ditches, etc., of the Council have received quite a lot of attention. This is very necessary to prevent heavy infestations.

I am sure that the daily work of the conscientious and competent Rodent Operative, Mr. Barrett, is materially helping to keep the rat menace in check and his work is appreciated by the general public.

The practice of sharing the services of the Rodent Operative with the Devizes Borough Council continues to work smoothly.

	Type of Property				
	(1) Local Auth'y	(2) Dwelling Houses (inc. Council Houses)	(3) All Other (inc. business Prem- ises)	(4) Total of Cols. (1), (2) & (3)	(5) Agri- cultural
I. Number of properties in Local Authority's District	6	2,885	244	3,135	845
II. Number of properties inspected as result of: ..					
(a) Notification ..	—	7	—	7	—
(b) Survey under the Act	6	1,452	168	1,620	139
(c) Otherwise (e.g., when visited primarily for some other purpose)	—	—	—	—	—
III. Total Inspections carried out — including re-inspections	Figures not readily available.				
IV. Number of properties inspected (in Sec.II) which were found to be infested by:					
(a) Rats—Major ..	2	19	22	43	6
Minor ..	4	259	26	289	4
(b) Mice—Major ..	—	—	1	1	—
Minor ..	—	—	—	—	—
V. Number of infested properties (in Sec. IV) treated by the Local Authority ..	6	278	49	333	10
VI. Total treatments carried out—including re-treatments	Figures not readily available.				
VII. Number of notices served under Section 4 of the Act:					
(a) Treatment	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Structural Work (i.e. Proofing)	—	—	—	—	—
VIII. Number of cases in which default action was taken following the issue of a notice under Sec. 4 of the Act	—	—	—	—	—
IX. Legal Proceedings ..	—	—	—	—	—
X. Number of "Block" control schemes carried out	Total 95				

FACTORIES ACT.

There are 53 factories in the District.

Owing to the demands of other activities it was not possible to give much attention to this aspect of the work during the year. There is, however, no reason to believe that any serious breach of legislation is taking place.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

Licences were in force in respect of five sites. Individual licences were granted in respect of nine moveable dwellings.

COMPLAINTS.

The following Table shows the position in regard to complaints made to your Officers either verbally or by correspondence.

Type of Complaint	Number	Remedied	Out-standing	No Action Necessary
Housing (excluding Council houses)	15	6	8	1
Overcrowding	1	—	1	—
Insanitary Houses	—	—	—	—
Sewerage	5	4	1	—
Drainage	35	25	6	4
River Pollution	2	1	1	—
Water Supply	21	18	3	—
Refuse	10	8	1	1
Keeping of Animals	6	5	1	—
Fly Infestation	6	5	—	1
Rodent Infestation	14	14	—	—
Footpaths	2	2	—	—
Miscellaneous	12	7	3	2
Totals	129	95	25	9

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT AND BUILDING BYELAWS.

198 plans were submitted for approval, 116 of these plans requiring approval under the Town and Country Planning Act.

The explanation of the complicated procedures in regard to the submission of plans and applications, etc., made heavy inroads into the time of your Officers. In many cases applicants were not willing to engage professional assistance from persons who are acquainted with the complexities of the law governing these matters; this means that your Officers have to fulfil that role.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Housing	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,221
Nuisances	..	..	..	..	..	..	87
Building	..	..	..	..	..	..	938
Drains ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	467
Sewerage	..	..	..	..	..	..	453
Water Supply ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	571
Water Samples	..	..	..	..	..	..	56
Cowsheds and Dairies	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
Milk Sampling	..	..	..	..	..	..	63
Food ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	196
Food Shops	..	..	..	..	..	..	59
Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	26
Refuse ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	206
Workshops and Factories	..	..	..	..	..	..	12
Petroleum Regulations	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Rodent Control	..	..	..	..	..	..	22
Council Houses	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,110
Town and Country Planning ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	228
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	189

I am,

Your obedient servant,

G. E. WILLIAMS.

Senior Public Health Inspector.

C.H. WOODWARD of Devizes



