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Medical Officer's

Report

TO THE

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

OF

BARNSTAPLE,

For the Year 1937.



BARNSTAPLE:

W. ERNEST HILL, PRINTER, HIGH, STREET.





Medical Officer's

Report

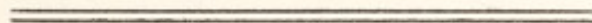
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THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT,

THE RED HOUSE,

CASTLE STREET,

BARNSTAPLE,

May, 1938.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Barnstaple Rural District Council

Gentlemen,

I beg to forward you the report upon the
Public Health of the Barnstaple Rural District for
the year 1937.

Your obedient Servant,

JOHN R. HARPER,

Medical Officer of Health.

Public Health Staff.

Medical Officer of Health, Dr. J. R. Harper (whole time).

Chief Sanitary Inspector, Meat Inspector, and Engineer,

S. P. Smith, A.M.Inst.B.E., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Additional Sanitary Inspector, F. M. King, A.R.S.I.

With Three Articled Pupils.

Social Conditions.

The chief occupations of the District are :—

1. Agriculture.
2. Market Gardening.
3. Catering for Visitors.

The locality may be regarded as purely non-industrial and employment is on the whole steady.

1937.

—
ANNUAL REPORT
Of the Medical Officer of Health
For the Barnstaple Rural District.

STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	...	129, ³⁴⁶ 768
Population, 1921 census	...	...	...	...	19,293
Population, 1931 census	...	...	...	...	18,793
Estimated Resident Population of the Area, 1937					18,760
Rateable Value of the District	...	...	...	...	£86,815
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£373
Number of Inhabited Houses at the end of 1937					6,168

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.		M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate	...	117	118	} 242
Illegitimate	...	1	6	
Still Births.		M.	F.	
Legitimate	...	10	3	
Illegitimate	...	0	1	

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—54·7

Birth Rate 1,000 estimated resident population—12·9

Birth Rate per 1,000 for England and Wales—14·9

Deaths.	M.	F.	Total.
	135	127	262

Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population—13·97

Corrected Death Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population 10·7

Death Rate per 1,000 for England and Wales—12·4

Death from Puerperal Cause.

	Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 (live and still) births.
Puerperal Sepsis ...	0	—
Other Puerperal Causes	0	—
Total	0	—

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age
per 1,000 births 74·2

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age
per 1,000 Births England and Wales 58

Death of Infants under one year of age—

	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate ...	10	9	19
Illegitimate ...	0	0	

Rate per 1,000 legitimate live birth—80·85

Deaths from Measles at all ages	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough at all ages ...	1
Deaths from Diarrhoea under two years of age ...	1
Deaths from Cancer at all ages	23

General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

Hospitals.

1. Tuberculosis.

- a.* Hawley Sanatorium, which is situated in the Borough of Barnstaple, has 28 beds. The Medical Officer in charge is Dr. Dixey.
- b.* Sydney House, Torrington, is an institution which was established shortly after the war for the reception of delicate children of school age. It has accommodation for 48 children. There is a resident teacher, and children are under regular medical supervision and treatment.

The results of the work of this Institution have been much appreciated by parents.

From January 1st, 1931, to December 31st, 1937, no less than 361 children completed a course of treatment here.

2. Maternity Care.

The Devon County Council have made arrangements with the Barnstaple and North Devon Infirmary for the admission of women in the area requiring Institutional Provision for Maternity Care under the following conditions :—

- a.* Those found to have some abnormal condition.
- b.* Those having unsuitable accommodation for confinement in their own homes.
- c.* Those suffering from puerperal fever, or pyrexia.

Consultant Services, Home Helps, and Maternity Outfits, are provided in necessitous cases.

The Maternity Department of the Infirmary consists of a lying in ward of six beds, a labour ward of one bed, and a separate sanitary annexe. The department is under the care of a Sister and a Nurse—each holding the C.M.B. certificate and one probationer—a nurse is on duty in the ward at night.

During the year one hundred and eleven (111) cases were admitted, compared with the previous year of 80 of the total admissions 78 were normal deliveries and 62 were County Council cases. There were no maternal deaths.

Ante Natal Clinic. Eighty-one mothers attended the clinic of the Infirmary with a total of 396 attendances, of this number 25 were Devon County Council cases with a total 130 attendances.

The need of the Maternity Department of the North Devon Infirmary has become more evident than ever, and the increased use of the services has necessitated the Hospital Committee to consider how provision can be made to deal with the urgent problem of accommodation.

3. Isolation of Infectious Disease.

The Bideford and District Fever Hospital is situated just outside Bideford Borough. It is of recent construction, and exceedingly well equipped in every way for the treatment of Infectious Diseases.

It comprises 30 beds, 4 cots, and 6 observation cubicles, which are situated in three separate blocks.

The Visiting Medical Officer is Dr. Ellis Pearson, and there is an adequate, and well trained staff with a matron in charge.

During the year 13 cases were admitted from the Barnstaple Rural District.

4. Smallpox.

Any case of Smallpox that may arise in this area will be treated in the Smallpox Hospital of the Devon County Council.

5. General.

The Barnstaple and North Devon Infirmary serves North Devon exceptionally well, in providing modern medical and surgical treatment. It is available to anyone whose circumstances are such that they are unable to afford the advantages of the excellent Nursing Homes in Barnstaple and in Braunton. Application for admission must be accompanied by a doctor's letter. Recommendations are no longer required.

The hospital is recognised as a training centre for the Nursing Profession, and it contains from 70 to 80 beds, and has a most modern and up-to-date X-Ray plant.

Clinics and Treatment Centres.

The Tuberculosis and Venereal Clinics have been established at the North Devon Infirmary where completely new Clinics have been erected. They are in charge of Dr. McMillan, Tuberculosis Officer, and Dr. Jonas.

Professional Nursing in the Home.

The majority of our parishes have the very great advantage of the services of District Nurses. It is, however, unfortunate that there are still some without a Nurse's services.

Midwives.

Midwives are practising in the following parishes:—Arlington, Ashford, Berrynarbor, Bishop's Tawton, Bratton Fleming, Braunton, Brendon, Combe Martin, Challacombe, East Down, Fremington, Goodleigh, Georgeham, Heanton Punchardon, High Bray, Instow, Horwood, Landkey, Loxhore, Newton Tracey, Marwood, Morteheo, Parracombe, Pilton West, Shirwell, Swimbridge, Tawstock and West Down.

Local Acts or General Adoptive Acts.

a. Urban powers are in force in regard to the following parishes :—

Berrynarbor.—For removal of house refuse.

Bishop's Tawton.—For removal of house refuse.

Braunton.—For removal of house refuse, cleansing and watering streets, and street numbering.

Brendon.—For removal of house refuse.

Combe Martin.—For cleansing and watering streets, and removal of house refuse.

Countisbury.—For removal of house refuse.

Fremington.—For removal of house refuse.

Georgeham.—For removal of house refuse.

Instow.—For removal of house refuse.

Landkey.—For removal of house refuse.

Mortehoe.—For the removal of house refuse, the watering and cleansing of streets, and bye-laws with regard to bathing.

Shirwell.—For the removal of house refuse.

Swimbridge.—For the removal of house refuse.

Tawstock.—For removal of house refuse.

West Down.—For removal of house refuse.

b. The following sections of the Public Health Act, 1925, have been adopted :—

Part 2, sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33.

Part 8, sections 68, 72, 74, 75.

c. The following sections of the Public Health Act, 1925, are also in force :—

Sections 17, 18, 19.

Also, Instow, Fremington, Morthoe.—Provision of Fire Hydran's.

Braunton, Morteheo, Combe Martin and Instow.—Public Conveniences.

Public Health Act, 1875, Section 169 (2), 169 (3) and 170.

Public Health Acts (Amendment Act), 1890. Sections 29, 30, 31.—Slaughterhouses.

Prevalence of Infectious Diseases.

The following table gives a list of infectious diseases notified during the year, together with a distribution of the cases.

Scarlet Fever. 37 cases were notified from the following parishes:—

Bishop's Tawton	...	...	...	...	3
Braunton	...	...	...	...	14
Fremington	...	...	...	...	3
Instow	...	...	...	...	3
Loxhore	...	...	...	...	1
Marwood	...	...	...	...	7
Morteheo	...	...	...	...	1
Shirwell	...	...	...	...	1
Swimbridge	...	...	...	...	1
West Down	...	...	...	...	1
Westleigh	...	...	...	...	2

Pneumonia. Total number of cases 42.

Bittadon	...	...	...	...	1
Bishop's Tawton	...	...	...	...	2
Braunton	...	...	...	...	18
Bratton Fleming	...	...	...	...	2
Challacombe	...	...	...	...	1
Combemartin	...	...	...	...	2
Georgeham	...	...	...	...	4
Landkey	...	...	...	...	4
Morteheo	...	...	...	...	1
Parracombe	...	...	...	...	1
Swimbridge	...	...	...	...	1
Tawstock	...	...	...	...	2
West Down	...	...	...	...	3

Diphtheria. 4 notifications were received from the parish of Braunton.

Erysipelas. 6 cases were notified as under :—

Braunton	...	...	...	...	...	4
Combe Martin	...	...	...	...	...	1
Tawstock	...	...	..	...	...	1

Dysentery. Total number of cases notified 15.

Bishop's Tawton	...	...	...	...	1
Braunton	...	...	...	...	2
Fremington	...	...	...	...	5
Instow	...	...	...	...	1
Parracombe	...	...	...	...	2
Swimbridge	...	...	...	...	2
Tawstock	...	...	...	...	2

Name of Disease.	No. notified.	No. admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever ...	37	11	0
Diphtheria ...	4	1	1
Pneumonia ...	42	0	9
Erysipelas ...	6	1	0
Dysentery ...	15	0	0
	---	---	---
Totals ...	104	13	10
	---	---	---

Age Periods.

	AGES.								Total
	Under 1 year	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-65	Over 65	
Scarlet Fever	0	11	20	3	0	0	3	0	37
Diphtheria ...	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	4
Pneumonia...	3	3	6	2	2	4	19	3	42
Erysipelas ...	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	6
Dysentery ...	0	3	3	1	1	0	6	1	15

					Total	...			104

It will be seen that approximately 80 per cent. of the notifications were from Scarlet Fever and Pneumonia.

- a.* Scarlet Fever seems to have been upon the whole of a mild character, there were no deaths.
- b.* Diphtheria—4 cases notified, one death.
- c.* There were no notifications of Puerperal Fever or Puerperal Pyrexia.
- d.* Typhoid—no cases.
- e.* Dysentery.

Throughout the British Isles, on the Continent and in America there has been a widespread outbreak, especially during the last half of the year, of Bacillary Dysentery of the Sonne type.

In our own district several cases have been notified. Unfortunately, many have escaped recognition for some reason or another. The infection, which has on the whole been of a mild character and the illness although acute, and of short duration, has nevertheless in some instances been very severe and the cause of some considerable anxiety. Adult infections appear to be far more common than is generally recognised and there has been shown a tendency for them to readily infect children in whom the symptoms are by no means so slight.

It should be noted that the disease is spread in the same way and requires the same precautions to be adopted with regard to protection of members of the household, water and food supply as in typhoid fever. A further point and an important one is the fact that whilst the infection can be carried from one person to another many remain infectious after they have apparently completed their convalescence. As a rule this carrier state does not last longer than 3—6 weeks. It is as well that these facts should be fully understood so that Dysentery, however mild the attack may be, should not be treated lightly.

The services of the County Bacteriologist have been invaluable in the diagnosis of this disease and have been in much request. Efforts to isolate the organisms from food stuffs, etc., have been made. Examination of milk and water usually yield negative results. Uncooked vegetables are suggested as a likely source of the conveyance of infection.

f. Acute Poliomyelitis.

Whilst during the year no case of this disease has been notified in our district, adequate preparations have been made by the County Medical Officer to deal with any cases that may occur. Being an infectious and notifiable disease, it becomes the duty of the local authority to provide, where required, the necessary isolation, and in view of the fact that after the first two weeks special orthopaedic supervision and treatment become important, the County Council have made arrangements for this to be obtained at the Princess Elizabeth Hospital or at a Hospital within easy reach of specialist services.

Laboratory Facilities.

The Public Health Service of the Devon County Council has a bacteriological laboratory established at 7 Dix's Field, Exeter, in charge of Dr. T. Lawson McEwan, B.Sc, (Hons). F.I.C., M.B., Ch.B. (Hons).

This laboratory is completely installed with the necessary equipment for bacteriological investigations of all kinds. Its diagnostic and consultative services are available for all patients suffering from communicable diseases who are, from lack of means, unable to afford the necessary expense of having such skilled assistance.

This service is extremely valuable and has been widely used throughout our district by medical practitioners.

The laboratory also undertakes the analysis of drinking water and milk, and the examination for tubercle in milk, butter and cream.

The particulars of samples submitted will be found in the Sanitary Inspector's Report.

Disinfection of Infected Bedding and Clothing.

By an arrangement with the Barnstaple Town Council all infected bedding and clothing can be disinfected in their steam disinfector.

Tuberculosis.

The number of cases of Tuberculosis remaining on the register on December 31st, 1937, was as follows:—

<i>a.</i>	Pulmonary.	Males	...	...	43
		Females	...	...	36
					—
					79
					—
<i>b.</i>	Non-Pulmonary.	Males	...	...	16
		Females	...	...	17
					—
					33
					—
Total cases on the register, Dec. 31st, 1937					112
" " " " " 1936					120

1. New Cases.

During the year 18 fresh cases of Tuberculosis were notified in accordance with the regulation:

<i>a.</i>	Pulmonary.	Males	...	...	8
		Females	...	...	5
					—
					13
					—
<i>b.</i>	Non-Pulmonary.	Males	...	...	1
		Females	...	...	4
					—
					5
					—
TOTAL					18

The following are the notifications for the last five years:

			Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	Total.
1933	...	...	22	4	26
1934	...	...	23	11	34
1935	...	...	12	4	16
1936	...	...	11	0	11
1937	...	...	13	5	18

2. Age Periods (new cases).

	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year ...	0	0	0	0
1 to 5 years ...	0	0	0	1
5 to 10 years ...	1	1	0	2
10 to 15 years ...	0	0	0	0
15 to 25 years ...	0	1	0	0
25 to 35 years ...	3	0	1	0
35 to 45 years ...	3	1	0	0
45 to 55 years ...	1	1	0	0
55 to 65 years ...	0	1	0	1
65 and over ...	0	0	0	0
	—	—	—	—
	8	5	1	4
	—	—	—	—

3. Organs Affected :

Lungs 13, Kidney 1, Glands of Neck 1, Left Breast Tissue 1, Left Arm 1, Tuberculosis Meningitis 1.

4. Distribution of cases.

Cases were notified from the following Parishes :
Bishops Tawton 1, Bratton Fleming 1, Braunton 7, Combe Martin 1, Fremington 2, Georgeham 2, Goodleigh 1, High Bray 1, Instow, 1, Loxhore 1.

5. Social Position.

Business Executive (retired) 1, Domestic 2, Farm Labourers 2, Fried Fish Shop, 1, Housewives 3 Labourers 2, School 5, Various 2.

Mortality from Tuberculosis.

Total deaths 7 (Respiratory 6, Non-Respiratory 1).

The deaths occurred in the following Parishes :

Braunton 3, Combe Martin 1, Mortehoe 1, West Down 1, Westleigh 1.

Age Periods (Deaths).

		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
		M.	F.	M.	F.
0	...	0	0	0	0
1	...	0	0	0	1
5	...	0	1	0	0
15	...	0	0	0	0
25	...	0	1	0	0
35	...	1	2	0	0
45	...	0	0	0	0
55	...	0	0	0	0
65 and over	...	0	1	0	0
		—	—	—	—
		1	5	0	1
		—	—	—	—

The Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, 1926 and 1931.

These Acts have now been in operation for ten years and the Act of 1926, which has been twice extended, will now continue until the 24th June, 1938. It has been intimated that it is the intention of the Government to extend their operation for a further period of four years.

Reference has been made in previous reports of the advantages these Acts have brought to the owners of small cottages. In the Barnstaple Rural District at the end of the year no less than 265 cottages and buildings have been dealt with.

Devon of all the counties of England and Wales has succeeded in re-conditioning more buildings than any other County.

The following extracts from the report of the chairman of the Housing (Rural Workers Act) Sub-Committee, of the Devon County Council, will be of interest :

2. Operation of Scheme in Devon.

During the period the Acts have been in operation the County Council have sanctioned the re-conditioning of 1,850 dwellings, the position to date being :

Dwellings completed and grants paid	...	1,595
„ in course of reconditioning	...	156
„ on which grants have been promised provisionally	... ..	80
Remainder	... ..	19
		<hr/>
		1,850
		<hr/>

3. Estimates.

From June, 1927 to March, 1937, the County Council approved estimates amounting to £185,000 for payment of grants and loans, and this sum has been distributed as follows :

Grants paid in respect of completed dwellings	£156,028
Less amounts refunded (excluding interest)	3,726
	<hr/>
	£152,302
Grants promised on dwellings in course of reconditioning	... .. 16,840
Grants promised provisionally	... .. 8,000
Loans advanced for reconditioning	... .. 6,578
Balance	... .. 1,280
	<hr/>
	£185,000
	<hr/>

4. Charge upon the County Rates.

The cost to the County Council in loan charges on the sums already voted amounts to approximately £7,250 per annum for twenty years, and an equivalent charge is borne by the Ministry of Health. Administration and supervision charges have to be added, and these amount to £750 per annum.

The total annual cost to the County Council is therefore £8,000 or a rate of approximately two-thirds of a 1d in the £.

County Councils are required by the Housing Act of 1930 to contribute at least £1 per house for a period of forty years towards the cost of new houses erected by Rural District Councils for members of the agricultural population. It is anticipated that under the new Housing Bill, County Councils will be called upon to make greater contributions towards the cost of providing new houses for agricultural workers in order that they may be let at very low rentals.

The County Council's policy of re-conditioning has obviated to a considerable extent the need for erection of new houses in Rural areas, and a continuance of that policy will result in considerable saving both to District Councils and to County Councils in subsidies under other Housing Acts.

6. Conditions of Grant.

The following conditions apply for a period of twenty years after payment of grants:—

a. The dwelling must be occupied by a person (whether as owner or tenant) whose income is such that he would not ordinarily pay a rent in excess of that paid by agricultural workers in the district.

b. The rent must not be more than the ordinary agricultural rent, or the average rent paid during the previous five years, plus 4 per cent on that part of the cost of the works not covered by the grant.

If these conditions are not complied with the grant must be repaid at compound interest.

Owners are required to submit once every year a statement that the above conditions are being complied with. The following is a summary of the amount of weekly rents charged for the cottages reconditioned to date:—

3/- and under	3/1 to 3/6.	3/7 to 4/-	4/1 to 5/-	5/1 to 6/-	6/1 to 7/-	Over 7/-
656	90	169	361	204	82	32

7. Districts from which approved applications were received:—

Rural. Barnstaple 265, Tiverton, including Bampton and Culmstock 179, Torrington 168, Okehampton 145, South Molton 95, Crediton 93, St. Thomas 89, Honiton 81, Newton Abbot 66, Holsworthy 65, Bideford 61, Axminster 57, Tavistock 46, Totnes 40, Kingsbridge 33, Plymton 20, Broadwoodwidge 10.

Urban. Great Torrington 130, Northam 27, Brixham 20, Buckfastleigh 14, Okehampton 8, Holsworth 7, Axminster 7, Sidmouth 5, Ashburton 4, Honiton 4, Ifracombe 3, Totnes 3, Bideford 3, Paington 3, Barnstaple 2, Dartmouth 2, Tavistock 1, Tiverton 1,

Causes of Death during the Year 1937.

Causes of Death.	M	F
Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	0	0
Measles	0	0
Scarlet Fever	0	0
Whooping Cough	1	1
Diphtheria	1	0
Influenza	13	8
Encephalitis Lethargica	0	0
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	1	0
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	5
Other Tuberculous Diseases	0	1
Syphilis	0	0
General Paralysis of the Insane, Tabes Dorsalis	0	0
Cancer,	9	14
Diabetes	2	2
Cerebral Haemorrhage, &c.	3	3
Heart Disease	32	28
Aneurysm	0	0
Other Circulatory Diseases	21	21
Bronchitis	7	6
Pneumonia (all forms)	5	4
Other Respiratory Diseases	1	0
Peptic Ulcer	1	1
Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years)	1	0
Appendicitis	1	0
Cirrhosis of Liver	1	0
Other Liver Diseases	1	1
Other Digestive Diseases	1	2
Acute and Chronic Nephritis	3	2
Puerperal Sepsis	0	0
Other Puerperal Causes	0	0
Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, Malformations, &c.	5	9
Senility	8	3
Suicide	1	1
Other Violence	6	4
Other Defined Diseases	9	11
Causes Ill-Defined or Unknown	0	0
Diarrhoea	0	0
Small-Pox	0	0
Poliomyelitis	0	0
Polioccephalitis	0	0
All Causes	135	127
Total Deaths	262	

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE CHIEF SANITARY INSPECTOR, ENGINEER
AND BUILDING SURVEYOR.

THE RED HOUSE,

CASTLE STREET,

BARNSTAPLE,

May, 1938.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Barnstaple Rural District Council.

Gentlemen,

I beg to present for your consideration my first Annual Report and Summary of work carried out during 1937.

I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the Council for honouring me with the appointment on July 1st, 1937 and I trust that I shall at all times, merit the confidence you have placed in me. I should also like to express my appreciation of the keen and willing co-operation of Mr. M. King, your newly appointed Additional Sanitary Inspector, especially in the early months of my appointment.

General.

The area of the Rural District is 129,768 acres, or roughly 200 square miles, and has an estimated population of nearly 20,000. Development in recent years, especially around the coast, has been rapid, and that, together with the Public Health drive directed by the Minister of Health, consolidation of existing Acts of Parliament and fresh Public Health legislation, has intensified immensely the work in this Rural area.

For your information, I give herewith some of the important Acts of Parliament which have recently come into operation :—

1. Public Health Act, 1936, and new Bye-laws made under same.
2. Housing Act, 1936.
3. Factories Act, 1937.
4. Agricultural Act, Part IV, 1937.
5. Tuberculosis Order, 1938.
6. Milk (Special Designations) Amendment Order, 1938.

There is also the new Food and Drugs (Consolidation) Act, 1938, which will shortly come into operation.

These Acts, and the Daily Press, have brought to the Public consciousness a realization of their rights, and consequently demands upon Public Health Departments are greater than ever before. This is especially so with regard to :—

1. Milk Supplies.
2. General Sanitation.
3. Meat Inspection.
4. Building.

(Further detail reports on the above are made on other pages.)

This together with the rapid growth in this area—and it must be remembered that Braunton, Woolacombe and Combe Martin may be likened to small but growing towns suffering from the sanitary growing pains of all such towns—makes it imperative that the Council should consider the question of adequate staffing of the Public Health Department, in order that all the work under the Council's administration may be executed efficiently.

Sanitary Condition of the Area.

General.

1937 saw a Survey of of the water supplies in the County undertaken for the County Council by Mr. Rafferty, Consulting Engineer of Westminster.

It is interesting to note that the Grid Scheme recommended by him, would include North Devon as far as Barnstaple, but that the area of the Barnstaple Rural District Council, North of Barnstaple, was, according to the report capable of providing all the water demands from local supplies.

This report is consistent with the observations of this Department, which have recorded gaugings of numerous springs, and noted generally, that the district abounds with spring water supplies.

Details of existing water supplies, together with proposed new and supplementary supplies to various Parishes are as follows : —

Braunton.

This system has been further extended during 1937 to serve new building sites and 20 new connections have been made.

Consumption meter readings during the year showed that the highest consumption on the 6th August, 1937 was 126,150 gallons of water, whilst the lowest on 16th November, 1937 was 60,450 gallons.

During August the consumption averaged 94,800 gallons per day, and in this time the reservoir level was lowered 2 feet.

The growth of Braunton, and its popularity as a holiday centre, makes it essential that the supplies should be augmented at the earliest possible moment, and additional storage provided.

In December, samples of water from taps, and both the high and low level reservoirs were analysed by the County Bacteriologist and proved to be unsatisfactory. As a result, consumers were advised to boil water used for domestic purposes until further notice, and steps were taken immediately to ascertain the causes of pollution.

Reports on the position will be made during 1938.

Combe Martin.

The summer of 1937 proved to be a very dry one, and that together with a "bumper" season as far as holiday-makers were concerned, taxed the resources of the reservoir supplies to the limit. During the month of August the consumption averaged 102,908 gallons per day, and on the 8th August the consumption was 118,300 gallons. During this time the reservoir level dropped 4 feet, and it was estimated that the consumption was in excess of the yield from the existing springs by 1,100 gallons per day. Calculations based on normal and summer population with normal and summer consumption showed that the average consumption per head is over 35 gallons. This is an unusually high figure, and will be investigated, but it behoves all Combe Martin residents to use water in the summer seasons with the greatest care until additional supplies are obtained.

With regard to augmenting the Combe Martin supplies, investigations are proceeding with a view to securing water from the Sterridge Valley, Berrynarbor, and reports thereon will be made during 1938.

Berrynarbor.

Water Shortage has been reported during the year in the above Parish, and the Council have under consideration the purchase of existing supplies, and provision of a joint supply for Berrynarbor and Combe Martin from the Sterridge Valley. Further reports on the above are being prepared and it is hoped to have the Council's decision on this proposal during 1938.

Georgeham and Croyde.

The proposal to secure supplies for the above Villages from Darracott has been abandoned. The Council have now under consideration the provision of supplies from either :—

1. Ilfracombe Urban Supplies.
2. Springs in Spreacombe Valley.

Further reports on the cost of each of the above schemes are being made, and I hope to have the Council's instructions to proceed early in 1938.

Croyde and Georgeham, as in the case of other townships on the coast in the Rural District, are highly populated during the summer months, and the water demand is extraordinarily high. For example, it is anticipated that there will be over 300 people at the N.A.L.G.O. Holiday Camp in 1938 and the consumption there is estimated to be some where about 6,000 gallons per day, so that it can be seen that the provision of a supply should not be unduly delayed.

Marwood—Milltown.

A scheme for supplying Milltown, Muddiford, and Higher Muddiford, was approved by the Council during the year, and details and plans are almost complete. These will be submitted to the Ministry of Health early in 1938.

Guineaford and Prixford.

Reports on the suggested improvements to supplies at the above villages will be made during 1938.

Swimbridge and Landkey.

The Council have from time to time considered reports on the supplies to Swimbridge and Landkey and on the suitability of the existing supplies at Indiwell for both Parishes. Gaugings taken up to the end of the year suggest that the quantity of water at Indiwell is sufficient for the needs of both villages. There are however other excellent supplies available for Landkey only, if a separate system is thought desirable, notably from Birch Farm and valley.

Records in this office show that Landkey is in real need of a proper water supply, and the Council should consider the provision of a supply here, at an early date.

West Down.

The provision of a water supply for West Down is still under consideration, and it is hoped that the Council's decision as to whether the supply is to be from Ilfracombe or from local springs, will be made during the coming year.

Bratton Fleming.

A new piped supply for Bratton Fleming is being laid, with the water from two sources at Castle Moor and Cross Park.

The system should be completed early in 1938, and the water available during the summer months.

Sewerage.

Bishops Tawton.

The question of disposing of Easter Street drainage has again been before the Council for further consideration. It is hoped that contributions towards the cost of this work will be made by adjoining property owners, when the work will be carried out.

Bratton Fleming.

A new sewer and sewage disposal works have been constructed at Bratton Fleming, and should be ready for operation early in 1938.

Braunton.

An extension of the sewer to serve new building sites has taken place at Pixie Lane.

At Vellator, the outfall sewer discharge into the Pill has been the cause of many complaints during the past year. Reports and proposals for dealing with the trouble have been made to the Council, who are giving the matter their careful consideration.

Saunton.

A Public enquiry was held by A. H. Hainsworth, Esq., Ministry of Health, Inspector on the 4th November, 1937, into the proposed sewerage scheme for Saunton, engineered by Lemon and Blizard of Plymouth. The Scheme, which contained proposals for disposal of the sewage at works in the marsh, was opposed by the Marsh Commissioners and Messrs. Seymour Cobby, Ltd., owner of the Bulb Farm at Braunton. The Minister upheld the objections to the scheme, which was turned down, and suggested that the disposal of the Saunton sewage into the Braunton Sewers be considered.

Proposals are now being considered by the Council, with a view to authorising the preparation of a scheme on the lines indicated by the Ministry of Health.

Knowle-Braunton.

The plant at Knowle consisting of settling tanks and a filter bed, is now functioning very satisfactorily.

Fremington.

The scheme mentioned in previous reports embracing the villages of Fremington and Bickington, is in the hands of the Ministry of Health, and no doubt their decision will be known in due course.

Parracombe.

Plans and details for a scheme to deal with the whole of the village, have been completed, and will be submitted to the Ministry of Health in 1938.

Swimbridge.

A new length of outfall sewer has been completed at Swimbridge, and is functioning satisfactorily.

Combe Martin.

Combe Martin sewers are functioning satisfactorily and little trouble has been experienced throughout the year. A rather flat section of the sewer at the junction of Church Road with High Street, which is most likely to give trouble, was reported to the Council, and instructions were given to provide a flushing tank. This work will be carried out in 1938.

Tawstock.

A new sewer is being provided for the Old Sticklepath Hill area and includes a new Estate being developed at the top of the hill. This sewer is connected to the Barnstaple Borough Sewer, and should be completed early in 1938.

Several reports have been made since 1937 on the advisability of providing new sewers for the Hele Manor Estate. This Estate comprises about 112 houses with septic tank drainage, which in many cases, has given rise to serious nuisances. The Council have under their consideration alternative schemes for dealing with this area, and it is hoped that authority to proceed with the preparation of an approved scheme will be given during the coming year.

Pollution of Rivers and Streams.

No complaints have been received during the past year.

Closest Accommodation.

Progress is still being made in conversions from earth and pail closets to the water carriage system. The provision of water supplies in various parishes, however, would help considerably towards the abolition of insanitary type closets, and it is hoped that further progress will be made during the next year.

Public Cleansing.

Public Scavenging is carried out by Contract in the following Parishes.

Parish	Cleansing done	Period.
Berrynarbor	Tins and Bottles only	Twice Monthly
Bishops Tawton	"	Monthly
Braunton	"	Weekly
Combe Martin	" Twice	{ Weekly in Summer Weekly in Winter
Fremington	"	Monthly
Georgeham	"	Monthly
Instow	"	Twice Weekly
Landkey	"	Bi-Monthly
Mortehoe	"	Twice Weekly
Shirwell	"	Monthly
Swimbridge	"	Bi-Monthly
Tawstock (Sticklepath)	"	Monthly
West Down	"	Monthly

Tips are situated at :—

Braunton
Berrynarbor
Mortehoe
Fremington
Swimbridge
Georgeham
Shirwell
West Down.

The supervision of Contractors and Control of tips is carried out as well as possible, but it must be pointed out that the Contract system, from the point of absolute control and efficiency, is unsatisfactory. Tips at Mortehoe, Swimbridge and Georgeham may be cited as good examples of what lack of control throughout the years results in.

A Scheme for a cleansing service under the direct control of this Office to include collection as far as possible from all the larger populated villages and to allow of "controlled" tipping, is being prepared, and will be presented to the Council during 1938 for their consideration.

Summary of Inspections.

Number of complaints received	25
Nuisances reported to the Council	13
Total Notices served (as under)	117
Notices under Meat Regulations	2
Notices under Milk and Dairies Order, 1926	73
Notices under Public Health and Housing Acts...	43

Total number of Inspections and Re-Visits ... 4571

Made up as follows :—

Inspections under Milk and Dairies Order, 1926...	810
Visits re Infectious Diseases	145
Meat Regulations (Slaughterhouses, etc.)	1560
Number of Drains Tested	270
No. of Disinfections of premises following Infectious Disease	76
Inspection of Schools	43
Inspection under Petroleum Acts	15
Visits to Bakehouses	49
Visits to Offensive Trades, Interviews and General Inspections	256
Water Supplies	537
Housing and Public Health Acts	175
New Drains	226
Scavenging	53
Water Closets	53
Sewerage	256
Factories and Workshops	47

Shops Act, 1934.

Provision of Sanitary Accommodation in several shops has been enforced during the year. Before real progress can be made, however, a survey of the shops and other premises included under the Act must be carried out.

Swimming Pools and Baths.

The one Swimming Pool in this District is privately owned and is situated on the seashore in Berrynarbor Parish.

The pool is covered by each tide and conditions are always satisfactory.

Smoke Abatement.

No action has been necessary during the past year.

Eradication of Bed Bugs.

No cases have been reported during the year under review.

Schools.

The 37 Schools of the District have been inspected from time to time. On the whole, conditions are satisfactory, although the water supply at Marwood (Milltown) School will be vastly improved when the new water scheme is in operation.

Premises and Occupations Controlled by Bye-Laws.

Bye-laws are in operation for the Control of Offensive Trades of which there are three.

1. The Tannery at Swimbridge.
2. Tallow Melting at Brynsworthy, Fremington.
3. Gut Scraping at Pilton West.

There is no need for regulations in this district in respect of underground sleeping rooms.

Bye-laws are in force relating to Tents, Vans and Sheds. Under the Public Health Act, 1936, power is given to control Camping Sites and Bye-laws will be shortly intervened to enforce requirement as to Sanitation, Water Supply, Distribution of Tents, etc.

Barnstaple Rural Area is very popular with visitors for Camping Holidays and there are a very large number of camping sites all over the district, particularly around the coast, which will entail a great deal of supervision during the summer seasons.

HOUSING.

STATISTICS.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year :

(1).	a.	Total number of Dwelling Houses inspected for housing defects (under the Public Health or Housing Acts)	125
	b.	Number of inspections made for the purpose	162
(2).	a.	Number of Dwelling Houses (included under Sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Consolidated) Regulations,	5
	b.	Number of Inspections made for the purpose	12
(3).		Number of Dwelling Houses found to be in a state so dangerous to health as to be unfit for human habitation.	0
(4).		Number of Dwelling Houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	80

2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of formal notices :

		Number of defective Dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	67
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year :

A.—Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

(1)		Number of Dwelling Houses in which notices were served requiring repairs ...	5
(2)		Number of Dwelling Houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :	
	(a)	By owners (including those for whom notices were served previously) ...	18
	(b)	By Local Authority in default of owners	0

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1)		Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	20
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- (2) Number of Dwelling Houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :
- (a) By owners (pending at December 31st, 3) 18
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners 0

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

- (1) Number of Dwelling Houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made 0
- (2) Number of Dwelling Houses Demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders 0

D.—Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :

- (1) Number of separate Tenements or Underground Rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made 0
- (2) Number of above in respect of which Closing Orders were determined 0

E. HOUSING ACT, 1936, Part IV.—Overcrowding :

- (a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year 16
- (ii) Number of families dwelling therein (one in each dwelling) 16
- (iii) Number of persons dwelling therein (under Housing Act, 1935 standard) 96
- (b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year 2
- (c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year 1
- (ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases ... 23
- (d) Cases in which dwelling houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding 0
- (e) Particulars with respect to over-crowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health consider in desirable to report ... 0

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

During the year 218 samples of milk have been taken and examined for cleanliness by the County Bacteriologist.

Of these 102 passed and the remainder failed the tests. The number of " Passes " is under 50% and is not at all satisfactory. Although a very large number of farmers try to attain and maintain a standard of cleanliness in milk production methods, a very large number are careless as to the methods they employ, and it is with the latter group that we are mainly concerned. Efforts are made to induce farmers to become producers under the " Accredited " Milk Scheme, which means that not only are the Public assured of a clean milk supply, but the producers themselves benefit financially.

When it is known that there are nearly 900 registered farms and dairies in this area, and only 22 " Accredited " producers it will be realised that there is room for progress in this direction.

Retail methods in a great many instances, are not satisfactory. I refer to a very large number of retailers carrying their cans on the luggage grids, or at the rear of the cars, with the taps immediately over the exhausts. The result is that dust, mud and exhaust fumes get into the taps, and is washed into the consumers jugs when milk is being delivered.

Retailers are advised that this is a bad practice, and in all instances to date, changes have been made which resulted in delivery taps being enclosed and protected.

Details of Registered Dairies and Producers.

No. of Registered Dairies and Cowsheds	...	889
No. of " Accredited " Producers	... ..	22
No. of " Tuberculin Tested " Producers	...	1

Meat and other Foods.

All Slaughterhouses in the district have been inspected regularly, and on the whole, the Orders and Regulations have been found to be observed.

Pig killing on farms is an accepted practice in North Devon, and an enormous number of pigs are slaughtered annually, generally in ones and twos at a time, and naturally, the inspection of these involve this department in a considerable amount of work and travelling. During the past year 493 pigs have been inspected on farms. Of these there were 61 carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned.

Details are given herewith in connection with the supervision of food.

Meat Condemned.

A total of 7,744 lbs. of meat was condemned as unfit for human consumption, as detailed under headings on the next page, for the year ending 31st December, 1937.

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	Cattle exclud- ing Cows	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs.
Number killed (notified) ...	903	497	18	22,492	3,025
Number inspected ...	898	494	18	21,368	2,987
All Diseases except Tuberculosis.					
Whole Carcasses Condemned ...	0	0	0	14	0
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned ...	67	41	0	701	109
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	7%	8·1%	0	3·25%	3·6%
Tuberculosis only.					
Whole Carcasses Condemned ...	1	2	0	0	6
Carcasses on which some part or organ was condemned ...	52	69	0	0	281
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis ...	5·9%	14%	0	0	10·2%

All condemned meat is destroyed at the Knackers Yard, or by incineration.

Premises where Food is prepared for sale have been visited periodically.

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Premises.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted.
Factories ...	17	Nil	Nil.
Workshops ...	9	1	Nil.
Workplaces ...	21	3	Nil.
Total ...	47	4	Nil.

Defects found in Factories, Workshops, and Workplaces.

	Found.	Remedied.	Other Action.
Want of Cleanliness	3	3	Nil.
Other Nuisances ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Other Offences ...	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Sanitary Accommodation (defective)	1	1	Nil.
Total ...	4	4	Nil.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER,
INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

			Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Pneumonia	Erysipelas	Dysentery.
Bishops Tawton	...	...	3		2		1
Bittadon	...	...			1		
Braunton	...	..	14	4	18	4	2
Bratton Fleming	...	...			2		
Challacombe	...	...			1		
Combe Martin	...	...			2	1	
Fremington	...	...	3				5
Georgeham	...	..			4		
Instow	...	...	3				1
Landkey	...	...			4		
Loxhore	...	...	1				
Marwood	...	...	7				
Mortehoe	...	..	1		1		
Parracombe	...	..			1		2
Shirwell	...	...	1				
Swimbridge	...	...	1		1		2
Tawstock	...	...			2	1	2
West Down	...	..	1		3		
Westleigh	...	...	2				

At least two visits are paid to each notified case of Infectious Disease, and the room or rooms fumigated at the termination of the illness.

Disinfectants are freely given.

Seven premises have been disinfected in cases of Tuberculosis.

The above table gives the Parishes in which Infectious Diseases have occurred.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servent,

S. P. SMITH.

Building Surveyor's Annual Report.

The Red House,
Castle Street,
Barnstaple,

May 1938.

To the Chairman and Members of the
BARNSTAPLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Gentlemen,

I beg to present the following Report illustrating the activity of the Building Surveyor's Department during the year 1937.

Total number of Dwelling Houses completed during the year was 135.

These comprise of :

Bunglows	...	...	...	63
Two or more storied buildings				72

The dwellings were built of the following materials :—

Brick or Stone	...	...	123
Wood and/or Asbestos		...	12

The majority of houses are detached or semi-detached and a large percentage have been provided with baths.

Plans deposited during 1937 provided for :—

Dwelling Houses	...	...	127
Alterations, additions and other Buildings	...	...	75

Houses completed during the year 1937.

Ashford	...	..	...	...	1
Atherington	...	...	...	...	1
Berrynarbor	...	...	...	...	4
Bishops Tawton		...	...	...	6
Bratton Fleming		...	...	...	3
Braunton	...	...	...	...	24
Brendon	...	...	...	...	1
Combe Martin	...	...	...	...	9
Fremington	...	...	...	...	20
Georgeham	...	...	...	...	17
Heanton Punchardon	...	...	...	...	1
Instow	...	...	...	...	9
Kentisbury	...	...	...	...	1
Landkey	...	...	...	...	1
Morteohoe	...	...	...	...	23
Shirwell	...	...	...	...	1
Tawstock	...	...	...	...	11
West Down	...	...	...	...	1
Westleigh	...	...	...	...	1

Total 135

Regional Planning.

The Council is a constituent authority of the North Devon Regional Planning Committee which is now preparing a Planning Scheme for North Devon. Until such time as the Scheme comes into force, development is controlled by the Interim Development Order which became operative on November 15th, 1937.

The method of procedure is that all plans are now submitted to this Office in duplicate, one set being forwarded to the Regional Planning Officer. This Officer considers them in the light of good planning and design, and the effect of the proposals in relation to adjacent development, forwards his observations to me and these are included in my report to the Council.

The Council's approval is then usually subject to the recommendations of the Regional Planning Officer being carried out. This department is responsible for seeing that these conditions are complied with and that the buildings are erected in accordance with plans to a greater detail than before, when control was exercised only under Building Bye-laws.

Through Regional Planning it has been possible to obtain improved elevations, better materials and construction in many cases, and the co-operation of the Regional Planning Officer with this Office has at all times been good. In some instances improvements in the plans have been obtained before they were put before the Council. It will be a little time before the effect of Regional Planning will be properly appreciated, but in my opinion it has already begun to operate for the good of the District.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT.

The particulars of the Council's present Housing Scheme are appended :—

Parish.	No.	Area to Sq. ft.	Type.
Fremington	6	856	Parlour
Mortehoe	4	856	Parlour
Combe Martin	12	856	Parlour
Georgeham	6	774	Non-Parlour
Marwood (Prixford)	2	774	Non-Parlour
West Down	8	774	Non-Parlour
Swimbridge			
(Cobbaton)	4	774	Non-Parlour
Tawstock (Stoneyland)	2	774	Non-Parlour
Swimbridge (Village)	4	774	Non-Parlour
Braunton	10	774	Non-Parlour
Bishop's Tawton	4	774	Non-Parlour
Marwood (Milltown)	4	774	Non-Parlour
Fremington	} 6	774	Non-Parlour
Bickington			
Marwood (Whitehall)	2	774	Non-Parlour
Bratton Fleming	2	756	Non-Parlour
Landkey	4	756	Non-Parlour
Instow	6	756	Non-Parlour
Brendon	2	774	Non-Parlour

A Total of 88 houses.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

S. P. SMITH,

Building Surveyor.



