

[Report 1923] / Medical Officer of Health, Gillingham (Kent) Borough.

Contributors

Gillingham (Kent, England). Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1923

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BOROUGH OF



GILLINGHAM
(KENT).

REPORT
ON THE
Health of the Borough
— OF —
Gillingham, Kent,
For the
Year ending 31st December, 1923.

BY

W. A. MUIR, M.D., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health,
Medical Superintendent of the Isolation Hospital,
School Medical Officer.

GILLINGHAM:
PARRETT & NEVES, LTD., 70, BALMORAL ROAD.

1924.

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Health Committee. 1922—1923.

Composed of all the Members of the Council.

Chairman : ALDERMAN A. M. DAVENPORT.

Maternity and Child Welfare Committee, 1922—1923.

Composed of all the Members of the Council, and the following
co-opted Members :—

MR. F. A. CHAPPELL.	MRS. RISBOROUGH.
MR. S. HORE, J.P.	MRS. FOAD.
MRS. A. E. FARROW.	MRS. J. ROGERS.
MRS. D. KENYON.	

Chairman : ALDERMAN A. W. TAPP. J.P.

Staff of the Public Health Department.

*Medical Officer of Health, School Medical Officer, Medical
Superintendent of Isolation Hospital :*

W. A. MUIR, M.D. (Glas.), Ch.B., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector :

DAVID L. BALL, Cert. Royal San. Inst.,
Bronze Medallist and Prizeman, City and Guilds, London.

Assistant Sanitary Inspectors :

JAMES ARNOLD and L. E. CROUCHER,* A.R.S.I.

Veterinary Surgeon (part-time) :

ELMER EBBETTS, M.R.C.V.S.

Health Visitors :

MRS. A. LEECH (C.M.B. Cert., Health Visitors' Cert.) ;
Miss M. W. MELLOR (Half-time), (C.M.B. Cert., S.I. Cert.).

Matron of Isolation Hospital :

Miss F. J. TAYLOR (C.M.B. Cert.).

Clerks :

A. E. R. SOUTH and H. F. C. TAYLOR.

*Also Inspector under the Shops Act.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY FOR 1923.

Total Area in Acres (excluding Foreshore and Tidal Water)	4988
Population (Registrar General, June, 1923) ...	55200
Density of Population per acre (1921 Census) ...	10.9
Number of Inhabited Houses (1921 Census) ...	11343
Number of Families or Separate Occupiers (1921 Census)	12486
Number of Births registered	1072
Birth Rate (Registrar General)	19.4
Number of Deaths registered	487
Death Rate (Registrar General)	10.2
Infantile Mortality Rate per 1,000 births	48.5
Phthisis Death Rate ... ..	.8
Total Tuberculosis Death Rate	1.2
Cancer Death Rate	1.1
Zymotic Death Rate ... ..	.27
Rateable Value	£156,274
Sum represented by a Penny Rate (District Fund)	£740

In 1923-1924 the total Rates were 14s. 2d. in the £
(excluding Water Rate and charges).

**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,
GARDINER STREET,
GILLINGHAM, KENT.**

7th April, 1924.

*To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the
Borough of Gillingham, Kent.*

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present herewith my second Annual Report on the health of the Borough. The year 1923 was a strenuous one. Administrative methods in the Department have been overhauled and records placed on an up-to-date footing. The duties of the Sanitary Inspectors have been defined, and each has been made responsible for a district. As pointed out in the body of the Report, certain improvements have been carried out at the Isolation Hospital and a motor ambulance provided for the removal of infectious cases.

Attention may be called to the following figures:—

- (a) A general death rate of 10.2 per 1,000, the lowest on record, the previous lowest being 11 per 1,000.
- (b) The birth rate, 19.4 per 1,000, the lowest on record, the previous lowest being 20.2 per 1,000.
- (c) An infantile mortality rate of 48.5 per 1,000 births, the lowest on record except in 1920, when it was 47.2.
- (d) Attendances at the Child Welfare Centre have increased during 1923 by nearly 2,000.

It is a pleasure to record the satisfactory service rendered by the Staff of the Department, in particular the work of your Chief Sanitary Inspector, and to express my appreciation of the help and support of the Chairman and Members of the Committee. I have also to acknowledge the co-operation of my colleagues in other Departments.

I have the honour to be,

Mr. Mayor and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

W. A. MUIR,

Medical Officer of Health.

VITAL STATISTICS.

POPULATION.

The population at the last Census in 1921 was 54,038. The Registrar General's estimated mid-yearly population for 1923 is 55,200, an increase of 1,162 in two years.

For calculating the birth rate the Registrar General gives the population as 55,200, and for death rates as 47,620. These figures have been used throughout the Report for calculating the rates in the Borough.

BIRTHS.

The number of births registered was 1,118. After correction for inward and outward transfers the net number is 1,072, and the Birth Rate for the year **19.4 per 1,000** of the population.

The births were distributed as follows:—

	Male.	Female.	Total.
Legitimate	508	540	1048
Illegitimate	13	11	24
	<hr/> 521	<hr/> 551	<hr/> 1072

The Birth Rate for 1923 is contrasted with that of previous years and with the figures for London and for England and Wales in the appended table:—

Birth Rate per 1,000 of Population.

Year.	Gillingham.	London.	England & Wales.
1920	28.4	26.5	25.4
1921	23.3	22.3	22.4
1922	20.2	21.0	20.6
1923	19.4	20.2	19.7

It will be noted that the birth rate continues to fall.

The illegitimate births were 2.2 per cent. of the total births, compared with 2.8 per cent. in 1922.

The natural increase of population during the last three years, that is the excess of births over deaths, has been as shown:—

Year.	Natural Increase of Population.
1921	623
1922	574
1923	585

DEATHS.

The net number of deaths in Gillingham, after deducting deaths of those who were not "residents" and adding deaths

of " residents " whose death occurred outside the Borough, is 487. This number represents a Death Rate of **10.2 per 1,000** of the population.

The death rate for 1923 is contrasted with that for previous years in the following table:—

Death Rate per 1,000 of the Population.

Year.	Gillingham.	London.	England & Wales
1919	11	13.6	13.7
1920	11.7	12.4	12.4
1921	11.8	12.4	12.1
1922	11.0	13.4	12.9
1923	10.2	11.2	11.6

SUMMARY OF BIRTHS AND DEATHS.

		Total.	M.	F.	
Births {	Legitimate	1048	508	540	{ Birth-rate 19.4
	Illegitimate	24	13	11	
Deaths		487	262	225	Death-rate 10.2
Number of Women dying in, or in consequence of, child-birth					{ from sepsis 0
					{ „ other causes 1
Deaths of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 births					48.5
Legitimate, 43.4. Illegitimate, 83.2.					
Deaths from Measles (all ages)					0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)					6
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)					10

The next tables are self-explanatory.

Birth-rate, Death-rate, and Analysis of Mortality during the year 1923.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1923, while those for the towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1922. The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns.)

	BIRTH- RATE PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULA- TION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION.										RATE PER 1,000 BIRTHS.		PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEATHS.		
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under Two Years).	Total Deaths under One Year.	Causes of Death Certified by Registered Medi- cal Practitioners.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.	
England and Wales	19.7	11.6	0.01	0.00	0.14	0.03	0.10	0.07	0.22	0.44	7.7	69	92.0	6.9	1.1	
105 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London.	20.4	11.6	0.01	0.00	0.15	0.03	0.12	0.09	0.22	0.40	9.9	72	92.2	7.2	0.6	
157 Smaller Towns (1921 Adjusted Populations 20,000-50,000).	19.8	10.6	0.01	—	0.19	0.02	0.10	0.06	0.21	0.38	6.4	69	92.6	6.1	1.3	
London	20.2	11.2	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.02	0.09	0.13	0.17	0.45	10.2	60	90.8	9.1	0.1	
Gillingham	19.4	10.2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.29	9.3	48.5	91.3	6.1	2.4	

GILLINGHAM DISTRICT.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1923 and previous Years.

YEAR.	Popula- tion estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.			TOTAL DEATHS REGIS- TERED IN THE DISTRICT Number.	TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Un- corrected Number.	Nett.			of Non- residents registered in the District.	of Resi- dents not registered in the District.	Under 1 year of age.		At all ages.	
			Number.	Rate.				Number.	Rate per 1,000 Nett Births.	Number.	Rate.
1915	45058	1080	1069	23.7	611	17	23	101	95.0	605	13.4
1916	45058	1213	1213	26.9	625	23	30	87	71.7	632	14.0
1917	45646	1052	1052	23.0	575	21	33	86	81.7	587	12.8
1918	43154	1037	1037	21.4	715	21	32	66	63.6	726	16.8
1919	47914	1135	1135	25.0	531	14	15	70	61.5	532	11.0
1920	45233	1483	1483	28.4	520	11	22	70	47.2	531	11.7
1921 Census	54038	—	1260	23.3	637	56	11	82	65.0	581	11.8
1922 {	a54750	1197	1109	20.2	467	47	118	70	61.0	538	11.0
1923 {	b48630	1118	1072	19.4	405	46	126	52	48.5	†485	†10.1
	a55200										
	b47620										

a Registrar-General's Estimate for calculating Birth-rate.

b Registrar-General's Estimate for calculating Death-rate.

† Figure given by Registrar-General 487.

‡ Figure given by Registrar-General 10.2.

CAUSES OF DEATH.

The subjoined table is provided by the Registrar General :

Causes of Death in Gillingham Municipal Borough, 1923.

Causes of Death.		M.	F.
ALL CAUSES		262	225
1. Enteric Fever			
2. Small-pox			
3. Measles			
4. Scarlet Fever			1
5. Whooping Cough	3	3	
6. Diphtheria	3	3	
7. Influenza	2	4	
8. Encephalitis lethargica			
9. Meningococcal meningitis			1
10. Tuberculosis of respiratory system	25	21	
11. Other Tuberculous diseases	11	3	
12. Cancer, malignant disease	26	27	
13. Rheumatic Fever	1	1	
14. Diabetes	2	3	
15. Cerebral hæmorrhage, &c.	16	16	
16. Heart disease	33	34	
17. Arterio-sclerosis	9	4	
18. Bronchitis	15	17	
19. Pneumonia (all forms)	12	13	
20. Other respiratory diseases	3	2	
21. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2	2	
22. Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	9	1	
23. Appendicitis and typhlitis	3		
24. Cirrhosis of liver	2		
25. Acute and chronic nephritis	3	5	
26. Puerperal sepsis			
27. Other accidents and diseases of pregnancy and parturition			1
28. Congenital debility and malformation, premature birth	14	7	
29. Suicide	5	3	
30. Other deaths from violence	6		
31. Other defined diseases	57	53	
32. Causes ill-defined or unknown			

Special Causes (included above) :

Poliomyelitis	
Polioencephalitis	

Deaths of Infants under 1 year :

Total	31	19
Illegitimate	2	

TOTAL BIRTHS	521	551
Legitimate	508	540
Illegitimate	13	11
POPULATION :		
For Birth Rate	55200	
For Death Rate	47620	

It will be noted that 53 deaths were due to cancer, 46 to pulmonary tuberculosis, and 67 to heart disease.

CANCER AND MALIGNANT DISEASE.

The number of deaths due to cancer or malignant disease each year since 1918 is shown in the following table:—

Year.	Number.	Death-rate.	Percentage of Total Deaths.
1918	49	1.1	—
1919	50	1.1	—
1920	35	—	—
1921	69	1.4	—
1922	52	1.1	9.7
1923	53	1.1	10.8

It is to be observed that during 1923 approximately 10 per cent. of all deaths were caused by cancer.

Since the year 1850 the death-rate from cancer in England and Wales has increased four times. In 1922 it caused 46,903 deaths. This increase is partly attributable to the larger proportion of the population now living at those ages at which deaths from cancer more commonly occur. But when this is allowed for the death-rate in the space of a generation has increased three times.

During 1922 the British Empire Cancer Campaign was inaugurated to co-ordinate all known facts about cancer and to direct research on any line of work which might lead to the discovery of the cause of the disease. In accordance with the recommendation of the Health Committee a leaflet was drawn up and distributed throughout the Borough to nurses, midwives, parents, etc., its aim being to give information of the early signs and symptoms of cancer for the purpose of enabling early and immediate treatment to be applied for. The leaflet was worded as follows:—

CANCER.

Cancer commences as a small local growth or sore, which at first causes *no pain*.

The only known *cure* for Cancer is *early* and complete removal by operation.

Do not waste time in trying “patent medicines.” Delay may render a cure impossible.

If you recognise any of the following danger signals go *at once* to a Hospital or to a doctor and insist upon a thorough examination.

DANGER SIGNALS that may mean CANCER.

1. Every lump in the breast of a woman, especially after 40 years of age. All such lumps are not Cancer, but a doctor should be consulted at once.
2. Any irregular or excessive bleeding at the change of life is suspicious.
3. Recurrence of bleeding or presence of discharge after the change of life is almost invariably due to Cancer.
4. Any sore on the lower lip that does not heal, especially in a man over 40 years of age, is usually Cancer.
5. Any sore or swelling of the tongue in a man over 40 years of age should be thoroughly examined at once.
6. Onset of persistent indigestion and loss of weight in middle life may be Cancer.
7. Bleeding from the bowels after 40 years of age may be due to "piles" or Cancer.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The deaths under one year were 52, as compared with 70 in 1922; 82 in 1921; and 70 in 1920. The infantile mortality rate (deaths under one year per 1,000 births) was 48.5, that of London being 60, and of England and Wales 69. The rate for Gillingham for the previous year was 61. Different factors may be held to account for the fall which has now continued over a series of years, but the work carried out at Child Welfare Centres and by Health Visitors in the homes of the people in educating mothers, especially young mothers, in the hygiene of pregnancy and in methods of infant feeding must have gone far to bring about the present low rate of mortality.

ILLEGITIMATE DEATHS.

The number was two, giving an infantile mortality rate amongst illegitimate infants of 83.2 per 1,000 illegitimate births registered, compared with 43.4 per 1,000 legitimate births.

The following table shows the infantile mortality rate, the number of infant deaths, and the number of deaths under four weeks during 1922 and 1923:—

Year.	No. of births.	Infantile mortality rate.	Infant deaths.	Total No. of deaths under 4 weeks.
1922	1109	61	70	—
1923	1072	48.5	52	26

It is important to note that 26 of the 52 deaths (50 per cent.) occurred before the infants reached four weeks of age, and of these, 19 (36.5 per cent.) occurred during the first week of life. It is therefore obvious that preventive measures must be brought into action before birth. Hence the reason for the establishment of ante-natal clinics.

INFANT MORTALITY.

Nett Deaths from stated Causes at various Ages under One Year of Age.

Cause of Death.	Under 1 week.	1-2 weeks.	2-3 weeks.	3-4 weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	4 weeks and under 3 months.	3 months and under 6 months.	6 months and under 9 months.	9 months and under 12 months.	Total Deaths under 1 year.
All Causes { Certified { Uncertified....										
Small-pox.....										
Chicken-pox										
Measles										
Scarlet Fever										
Whooping Cough							1			1
Diphtheria and Croup.....										
Erysipelas										
Tuberculous Meningitis						2				2
Abdominal Tuberculosis								1		1
Other Tuberculous Diseases								1		1
Meningitis (not Tuberculous)									2	2
Convulsions						2	1			3
Laryngitis.....										
Bronchitis.....			1		1	2				3
Pneumonia (all forms)									1	1
Diarrhoea							1	1		2
Enteritis	1	2			3	2		2		7
Gastritis						1	1			2
Syphilis										
Rickets										
Suffocation, overlying										
Injury at Birth										
Atelectasis										
Congenital Malformations						1				1
Premature Birth	10				10					10
Atrophy, Debility, and Marasmus	1	3		1	5		1	1		7
Other causes	7				7	1	1			9
	19	5	1	1	26	11	6	6	3	52

**PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER
INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

The following are the Infectious Diseases compulsorily notifiable in the Borough:—

Diphtheria	Erysipelas	Malaria
Scarlet Fever	Continued Fever	Dysentery
Enteric Fever	Relapsing Fever	Trench Fever
Puerperal Fever	Typhus Fever	Smallpox

Cholera
 Plague
 Cerebro-spinal Fever
 Acute Poliomyelitis
 Acute Encephalitis Lethargica

Acute Polio-Encephalitis
 Ophthalmia Neonatorum
 Acute Primary Pneumonia
 Acute Influenzal Pneumonia
 Tuberculosis

During the year 379 [434*] notifications of infectious diseases were received, 115 [122*] of which related to various forms of tuberculosis, and 254 to other infectious diseases.

The following two tables are self-explanatory.

Table showing the Distribution in Age Groups of the Cases notified during 1923, the number of cases removed to Hospital, and the total number of deaths in the Borough from these diseases.

Notifiable Disease	Number of Cases Notified.							Total Cases removed to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
	At all ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 45	45 and under 65	65 & upwards.	
Small-pox	88	1	23	56	3	4	1	80	6
Cholera (D) Plague (P)	11			1	1	3	3	106	1
Diphtheria	143		24	98	16	5	3	2	
Erysipelas	2			1		1			
Scarlet Fever									
Typhus Fever									
Enteric Fever									
Puerperal Fever									
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	2			2				1	
Poliomyelitis									
Malaria	1	1						1	
Ophthalmia Neonatorum									
Encephalitis Lethargica	82	1		14	22	35	7	3	42
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	33		3	23	3	2	2	17	17
Other Forms of Tuberculosis ..	17		2	1		8	4	2	20
Pneumonia									
Dysentery									
Totals	379	3	52	196	45	58	17	188	87

* Figures in brackets refer to the previous year.

GILLINGHAM DISTRICT.

Table showing the seasonal incidence of the different infectious diseases.

	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Erysipelas	Cerebro Spinal Fever	Poliomyelitis	Puerperal Fever	Enteric Fever	Malaria	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	Pneumonia
January.....	18	3	3							5
February	20	8	1		1					4
March	18	7	1							2
April	24	3	1							
May	10	1	1							
June	14	25								
July	7	10	2							3
August	2	11	1				2			
September	13	4								
October.....		9	1		1				2	1
November	8	5								2
December.....	9	2								
Totals	143	88	11		2		2		2	17

SCARLET FEVER.

During the year 143 cases of scarlet fever were notified, a decrease of eight on the number notified during the previous year. 68 per cent. of the persons affected were between the ages of 5 and 15 years. 106 cases or 74 per cent. [78] were removed to the Isolation Hospital. During the year one death only occurred, the type of disease in this case being malignant with persistent vomiting and delirium. The great majority of the cases were mild in type.

RETURN CASES.

These numbered three. The period between date of discharge from hospital and the date when the secondary case took place is here shown:—

Year.	No. of cases	Total.	Under 7 days.	Under 14 days.
1923		3	1	2

Table showing notifications, number of deaths, etc., from scarlet fever during 1915—1923 :—

Year.	Population.	Number Notified.	Deaths Registered.	Treated in Hospital.	Percentage Removed to Hospital.	Attack rate per 1,000 of Population.	Mortality per 1,000.
1915	45058	139	—	92	66	—	—
1916	45058	98	—	67	68	—	—
1917	45646	115	3	89	77	—	.06
1918	46008	178	1	124	69	—	.02
1919	47914	149	1	121	81	—	.02
1920	47914	129	—	86	66	—	—
1921	54038	139	—	108	77	—	—
1922	54750	151	1	118	78	—	.01
1923	47620*	143	1	106	74	3	.02

* Excluding Non-Civilians.

DIPHTHERIA.

The number of cases notified was 88, compared with 132 in 1922. There were six deaths, giving a death-rate of .12 per 1,000 of the estimated population. The 88 cases came from 79 families. In each of nine houses there were two cases, in one house three cases, one house five cases, and one house six cases. In the last-mentioned house the large number infected was apparently explained by the fact that the first child to take ill was diagnosed as and treated for tonsillitis. 80 cases or 90.9 per cent. [87] were removed to Hospital. Of the 88 cases notified during the year, 50 per cent. occurred in the months of June, July, August. During June a small outbreak occurred in the Old Brompton district and continued during July. Many of the cases were of a severe type with extensive membrane spreading on to the uvula and soft palate. The outbreak could not be traced to any one milk supply, school, or household. To assist in diagnosis, bacteriological outfits are available at the Public Health Department and are also supplied by the County Medical Officer of Health at Maidstone. Diphtheria anti-toxin is obtainable at the Isolation Hospital and at the Public Health Office. During the year 157,000 units were supplied to practitioners, either for prophylactic purposes or for treatment in home-treated cases. It is exceptional for serum to be injected before a patient is admitted to Hospital.

Every case notified is carefully investigated by one of the Sanitary Inspectors. Contacts of school age are brought to the School Clinic for swabbing before being allowed to return to school.

Prior to a convalescent patient being discharged from the Isolation Hospital one negative swab is insisted upon, and where there is any abnormal condition of the naso-pharynx, viz., enlarged tonsils, etc., two consecutive negative bacteriological reports must be received.

During the year two carriers were admitted to Hospital, and in each case the strain of organism isolated proved virulent to a guinea-pig. It is recognised that the treatment of carriers in the absence of visible pathological conditions of the naso-pharynx is distinctly unsatisfactory, but fortunately the two cases admitted during the year cleared up within a few weeks of admission.

When possible all positive carriers are taken to Hospital, but if the culture proves non-virulent to guinea-pigs further isolation is considered unnecessary. Laboratory research has gone far to prove that a strain non-virulent to guinea-pigs is also non-virulent to human beings, and that once non-virulent it remains so.

Table showing notifications, cases isolated, number of deaths, etc., from Diphtheria during 1915—1923 :—

Year.	Population.	Number Notified.	Deaths Registered.	Treated in Hospital.	Percentage Removed to Hospital.	Attack Rate Per 1000 of Population.	Mortality Per 1000.
1915	45058	94	12	53	56	—	·2
1916	45058	43	3	29	67	—	·06
1917	45646	38	1	26	68	—	·02
1918	46008	35	3	28	80	—	·06
1919	47914	49	3	41	83	—	·06
1920	47914	116	14	85	73	—	·2
1921	54038	159	14	116	72	—	·2
1922	54750	126	9	110	87	—	·16
1923	47620*	88	6	80	90·9	1·8	·12

* Excluding Non-civilians.

ENTERIC FEVER.

Two cases occurred during the year, as compared with three in the previous year. They were both notified on 9th August, but no connection between the two could be traced. No definite source of infection was found in either case. They ran a mild course and serologically proved to be B. Paratyphosus B. infections.

Laboratory Report was as given:—

- (a) Serum in a dilution of 1 in 100 showed typical agglutination with B. Paratyphosus B.

- (b) Serum in a dilution of 1 in 60 showed typical agglutination with *B. Paratyphosus* B.

(No mention was made of agglutination with *B. Typhosus*).

SMALLPOX.

The Borough was free of smallpox during the year, but the Medical Officer of Health was consulted on many occasions with regard to doubtful cases. These proved to be chiefly chicken-pox, but a number of the patients showed anomalous rashes apparently caused by mosquito bites. 159 cases of chicken-pox reported to the School Medical Department were carefully examined by the school nurses unless a medical practitioner was in attendance. When the diagnosis was in any way doubtful the Medical Officer of Health visited the house. Six smallpox contacts coming into the Borough were also visited.

The prevalence of smallpox in England and Wales has been increasing for the past few years and is still on the increase as evidenced by the following figures:—

Year.	No. of cases notified.	No. of deaths.
1918	63	28
1919	294	30
1920	263	5
1921	315	
1922	979	27
1923	2500*	7*

* Provisional figures.

Fortunately the majority of cases have been mild in type, but there is no guarantee that the disease may not again become virulent in character. The London outbreak in 1922 in the Poplar Poor Law Institution was one of extreme virulence.

VACCINATION.

The Vaccination Officer for the district has been good enough to supply me with the following return for the year 1923:—

Number of Births	1134
Certificates of Successful Vaccination	769
Certificates of Exemption (Statutory Declaration)	360
Removals from District	27
Not found	6

The percentage of known successful vaccinations was therefore 64.2 compared with 58 per cent. in the previous year.

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.

The appended table shows that only two cases were

notified during the year, as compared with five, six, and two respectively in the previous three years :—

Ophthalmia Neonatorum	CASES.				Vision unimpaired	Vision impaired.	Total Blindness.	Deaths.
	Notified.	TREATED.						
		At Home.	In Hospital.					
	2	1	1	2				

Ophthalmia neonatorum means a purulent discharge from the eyes of an infant, commencing within twenty-one days from the date of its birth. The disease is contagious and should be treated energetically without delay as it often results in partial loss of sight or complete blindness. Under the Public Health (Ophthalmia Neonatorum) Regulations, 1914, the condition is notifiable by doctors and midwives. Also under the rules framed by the Central Midwives' Board it is the duty of a midwife to call in to her assistance a registered medical practitioner when there is any inflammation of or discharge from the eyes (of a newly-born child), however slight.

All cases notified are visited by the Health Visitors, who arrange to treat the eyes at frequent intervals if the medical practitioner in attendance so desires.

The number of visits paid to ophthalmia cases by the Health Visitors was eight.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

No cases of puerperal fever were notified during the year. The numbers in the three previous years were two, one, and one respectively.

ERYSIPELAS.

Eleven cases of erysipelas were notified, but none proved fatal. The notifications for the preceding three years numbered twenty-two, nine, and nine respectively.

PNEUMONIA.

All cases of acute primary pneumonia and of influenzal pneumonia require to be notified. As only 17 notifications were received during the year and 20 deaths were certified it is evident that many medical practitioners neglected this duty.

Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	}	No cases notified during the year.
Encephalitis Lethargica		
Dysentery		
Trench Fever		

ACUTE ANTERIOR POLIOMYELITIS.

Two cases were notified, as compared with one in the previous year, both being between the ages of 5 and 15 years. One of them is now known to have wasting of the right leg and to be wearing splints. She received massage at the Royal Naval Hospital.

TUBERCULOSIS.

All cases of tuberculosis are notifiable to the Medical Officer of Health of the Borough. He in turn forwards weekly lists to the County Medical Officer of Health, as the County Council is the responsible authority for the administration of the tuberculosis scheme throughout the county.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

During the year 82 cases of tuberculosis of the lungs were notified, representing an incidence rate (cases per 1,000 of population) of 1.6, and 33 of surgical tuberculosis, giving an incidence rate of 2.3 for all forms of tuberculosis. The notifications were received as follows:—

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

Notifications from private practitioners	46
Notifications from Poor Law Institutions	4
Notifications from R.A.M.C.	1
Notifications from Sanatoria and Hospitals	16
Notifications from the Tuberculosis Officer	15
	—
	82
	—

NON-PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

Notified by private practitioners	10
Notified by Hospitals	12
Notified by Tuberculosis Officer	11
	—
	33
	—

Of the non-pulmonary cases, fifteen referred to cervical glands, seven to bones and joints, five to peritonitis, three to meningitis of brain, and three to other forms.

The number of deaths assignable to the Borough after correction for transferable deaths was 59 (42 (Registrar General 46) being due to pulmonary and 17 (Registrar General 14) to non-pulmonary forms of the disease), representing a death-rate of 1.2 per 1,000 of the population for all forms of tuberculosis, and of .8 per 1,000 of the population for pulmonary tuberculosis.

The following table gives details with regard to sex, age, etc., of notified new cases and deaths during 1923 :—

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0 - -	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1
1 - -	—	—	2	1	—	—	5	2
5 - -	2	5	5	10	—	—	2	—
10 - -	2	5	2	6	—	2	—	1
15 - -	7	6	1	1	3	3	—	—
20 - -	6	3	1	—	4	2	2	—
25 - -	8	11	1	1	8	8	1	—
35 - -	9	7	—	—	3	2	—	—
45 - -	4	2	—	2	3	3	—	1
55 - -	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—
65 and upwards	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	43	39	12	21	22	20	12	5
	82		33		42		17	

For purposes of comparison of the deaths from tuberculosis a table is given below of the death-rate for each year since 1916. It is to be noted that there was a decided fall in 1923 from the high figure of 1922 :—

Year.	Deaths.			Death Rates per 1,000 of population.		
	All Forms.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.	All Forms.	Pulmonary.	Non-Pulmonary.
1916	73	63	10	1.5	1.3	.2
1917	72	53	19	1.5	1.1	.4
1918	61	54	7	1.25	1.1	.15
1919	59	48	11	1.2	1.	.2
1920	54	40	14	1.12	.83	.29
1921	61	50	11	1.12	.92	.2
1922	75	66	9	1.5	1.3	.2
1923	59	42	17	1.2	.8	.4

NOTIFICATION OF TUBERCULOSIS.

There is no doubt that many medical practitioners are neglectful of the statutory obligation to notify cases of tuberculosis. Of the 59 deaths from tuberculosis in 1923, in 17 the case was not notified during the patient's life-time, thus giving a ratio of non-notified tuberculosis deaths to total tuberculosis deaths of 23.7 per cent. (Of the 17 non-notified cases 14 were of residents whose death actually took place in the Borough).

The following table demonstrates that 13 per cent. of notified cases of pulmonary tuberculosis died within three months of notification:—

Period between Notification and Death.	Number.	Percentage.
Notified within 7 days of death	3	2.6
One to four weeks of death ...	8	6.8
One to three months of death	5	4.3
		<hr/>
Total ...	13.7	(17% in 1922)

TREATMENT OF TUBERCULOSIS.

The Kent County Council Tuberculosis Dispensary in Nelson Road is open on Tuesday from 7.30 to 10.30 and on Friday from 2 to 3 and 5 to 6.

The Tuberculosis Officer has kindly supplied me with the following figures referring to Gillingham cases:—

Number of new cases	246
Total number of attendances (old and new) ...	2186
Number sent to Institutions	41
Number receiving Tuberculin	0

DIAGNOSIS—New cases (excluding children of school age)

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	55
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	4
Bronchitis	5
Other diseases	2
Apparently healthy	47
Under observation	1

114

DIAGNOSIS—New cases (children of school age only)

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	19
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis	25
Bronchitis	5
Other diseases	2
Apparently healthy	80
Under observation	1

132

INSTITUTIONS to which patients were sent during 1923

County Sanatorium, Lenham	10
Keycol Hill Sanatorium, Sittingbourne	10
Grosvenor Sanatorium, Kennington	6
Croydon Borough Sanatorium, Cheam	2
Brompton Hospital, London	3
Frimley Sanatorium, Surrey	1

Royal Sea Bathing Hospital, Margate	...	...	3
Papworth Hall, Cambridge	...	...	1
St. George's Hospital, London	...	...	1
Oak Bank Open-Air School, Sevenoaks	...	...	2
Victoria Home, Margate	...	...	2
			<hr/>
			41
			<hr/>

NON-NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

MEASLES.

Measles is not compulsorily notifiable in the Borough. During the year 97 cases were notified by parents, head teachers, school attendance officers, etc. They were visited by the school nurses and advice given as to treatment and exclusion of contacts from school. All contacts attending infant schools and those over seven years of age who have not had the disease are excluded for 21 days (reduced to 17 days during year 1924). As the death-rate from measles *after* the age of five years is relatively small it is of the utmost importance that young children should be protected as far as possible until they have reached this age. The majority of cases occur in the third, fourth, and fifth years of life.

There were no deaths from measles.

WHOOPING COUGH.

During the year information regarding 106 cases of whooping cough was received from different sources. All cases reported were followed up by the Health Visitors and exclusion from school of the patient and contacts effected.

There were six deaths, as compared with two in the previous year.

CHICKEN-POX.

During the late autumn a small outbreak of chicken-pox occurred amongst children attending one of the Infants' Schools.

The total cases investigated during the year numbered 106.

INFLUENZA.

There were six deaths from influenza, compared with two in the previous year, representing a death-rate of .12 per 1,000 of the population, that of London being .17, and of England and Wales .22.

EPIDEMIC DIARRHŒA OR INFECTIVE ENTERITIS.

This is a condition which affects young children, more particularly during the summer months.

There were ten deaths of children under two years of age, compared with three in the previous year.

VENEREAL DISEASE.

The Clinic administered by the Kent County Council is held at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester.

For men: Tuesday & Thursday, 5.30 to 7 p.m.

For women: Thursday, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The number of new Gillingham cases during the year was 42, and the number of attendances 692. The undermentioned figures were supplied by the Medical Officer in charge of the Clinic:—

New cases.	Diagnosis.	Attendances.
27	Gonorrhœa	502
14	Syphilis	182
1	Non-venereal after tests for syphilis	8
—		—
42		692
—		—

NURSING ARRANGEMENTS, HOSPITALS, AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS AVAILABLE FOR THE DISTRICT.

1. PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(a) General Nursing. The Gillingham Local Nursing Association has three nurses working in the town. The Association is financed by Voluntary Subscribers and by contributions from patients and Local Societies. The nurses pay approximately 6,000 visits annually.

(b) Infectious Diseases. No provision has been made for the actual nursing of cases of infectious disease in the homes of the people, but all cases of measles and whooping cough are visited by the Health Visitors.

The services of the District Nurses are not available.

2. MIDWIVES.

The number of resident registered midwives is sixteen, all of whom, with one exception, are certificated. Others resident in Chatham also practise in Gillingham. Four of the sixteen are attached to the Royal Naval Maternity Home.

The Council does not employ or subsidise any midwives.

During the year the Local Authority decided not to accede to the request of the Local Midwives' Association that the Council should pay their fees or a portion of same where the parents were necessitous.

3. CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

(a) Maternity and Child Welfare Centre, United Methodist Chapel, Arden Street, Gillingham. Premises

used consist of three rooms, waiting, weighing, consulting, etc. The Council pays a small sum annually to cover cost of gas, light, etc.

Days of attendance are Mondays and Thursdays, at 2.30.

(b) School Clinics, Gardiner Street, Gillingham. Four rooms. Provided by Local Authority.

Minor Ailments.—Monday, Tuesday, Thursday at 9 a.m.
Tuesday and Thursday at 5 p.m.

Dental.—Wednesday at 9.30 a.m. and 1.30.

Friday at 9.30 a.m.

(c) Arrangements have been made with the Trustees of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester, for the operative treatment of adenoids and tonsils, for refraction examinations, and for the X-ray treatment of ringworm.

(d) Tuberculosis Dispensary, at Nelson Road, Gillingham. Open Tuesdays, 9.30 to 10.30, and Fridays, 2 to 3 and 5 to 6. Provided by Kent County Council.

(e) Venereal Disease Clinic, at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester. Administered by Kent County Council.

4. HOSPITALS PROVIDED OR SUBSIDISED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY OR COUNTY COUNCIL.

(a) General Hospital (St. Bartholomew's, Rochester), with 105 beds. As the population of Gillingham, Chatham, and Rochester alone amounts to 129,000 approximately, the number of beds is obviously insufficient for the needs of the locality.

(b) Poor Law Infirmary, Chatham, with 400 beds. This includes eight maternity beds. The majority of mothers in the Borough refuse to be confined in any institution connected with the Poor Law.

(c) Royal Naval and Marine Maternity Nursing Home, Barnsole Road, Gillingham, opened in 1922, has 24 beds. The Local Authority does not make any grant towards the expenses of the Home.

(d) Isolation Hospital, Canterbury Street, Gillingham, has approximately 50 beds for the isolation of cases of scarlet fever, diphtheria, and enteric fever. Provided by the Local Authority.

(e) Smallpox Hospital, Wigmore, Gillingham, with 16 beds. Provided by the Local Authority.

(f) Tuberculosis cases are sent by the County Council to different Sanatoria throughout the County—Lenham Sanatorium, Keycol Hill Sanatorium, Sittingbourne, Grosvenor Sanatorium, Kennington, Church Army Sanatorium, Farnham, Surrey. Non-pulmonary—Royal Sea Bathing Hospital, Mar-

gate, Victoria Home, Margate, Cranbrook Convalescent Home, Royal Victoria Hospital, Folkestone.

There are 36 tuberculosis beds at the Poor Law Infirmary, Chatham.

(g) There is no Children's Hospital in the District, but children's beds are available at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester, and at the Poor Law Infirmary, Chatham.

5. INSTITUTIONAL PROVISION FOR UNMARRIED MOTHERS, ILLEGITIMATE INFANTS, AND HOMELESS CHILDREN.

(a) Medway Workhouse.

(b) Diocesan Home (10 beds) Chatham.

6. AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(a) For non-infectious, accident and emergency cases the Council has provided a motor ambulance. It is stationed in a central position adjacent to the Council Offices. Accident cases are removed free, but the charge for emergency cases is 8d. per mile and 1s. 4d. an hour for driver's time. For the year ending 31st March, 1923, the receipts were £117 and the expenses £85.

(b) For infectious cases. It was recommended in last year's report that it was highly desirable that the horse ambulance should be replaced by a motor conveyance. It is gratifying to be able to state that a half-ton Ford motor ambulance was purchased during the year and has been in use since August last. Many advantages have since accrued, amongst which may be mentioned the greater rapidity with which cases are transported to the Hospital and the diminished length of time the nurses are absent from their wards on ambulance duty. The total cost of the ambulance and accessories was £218 10s. Its capacity is one stretcher case, and one seat for a nurse. The old horse ambulance, stored in a shed at the Isolation Hospital, is available for the removal of smallpox cases should such occur.

7. LABORATORY WORK.

All specimens are examined free of charge in the Kent County Council Laboratory at Maidstone.

The following examinations were made during the year :—

	Number.	No. positive.	Percentage positive.
Swabs for B. Diph.			
From Isolation Hospital	255	82	32.1
From School Clinic	162	15	9.2
From Private Practitioners ...	104	20	19.2

Sputa for Tubercle Bacillus.

From Tuberculosis Officer ...	92	32	34.8
From School Clinic	1	0	—
From Private Practitioners ...	77	25	32.6
Blood for Widal's Test in suspected			
Typhoid Fever	12	2	—
Hairs for Ringworm Parasite	19	14	—
Diphtheria Organisms for Virulence ...	10	8	—

Outfits for taking and forwarding specimens are supplied direct to practitioners by the County Council, but are also obtainable at the local Public Health Department. 157,000 units of Diphtheria Antitoxin were supplied to practitioners during the year, either from the Isolation Hospital or from the Public Health Office. Tetanus Antitoxin is always in stock, but none was asked for during the year.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

It has been reported to the Council on many occasions that the Isolation Hospital possesses very few of the attributes generally considered necessary for such an institution. The buildings are now in such a condition that the annual cost of repairs is heavy. Apart from repairs carried out by the Surveyor's Department, £300 was spent during the year on installing modern baths, fireplaces, decorating, etc. Purchases were made of bed-linen, blankets, domestic articles of different kinds, all of which stocks had fallen below what is necessary for the efficient administration of an isolation hospital. In addition improvements were effected in relation to general working arrangements of the Hospital.

An incinerator was built and now consumes daily all the perishable refuse which in the past was dumped in an open ash-pit in the Hospital grounds and removed only once weekly, thereby constituting a nuisance.

During the year steps have been taken towards obtaining land on which to erect a modern hospital, and the Committee has had offers of a number of suitable sites before them for consideration.

The site of the present Hospital (two acres in extent) is not large enough on which to erect an up-to-date institution, and is too centrally situated to be ideal.

It has been suggested that Gillingham might become a Constituent Authority with Chatham and Rochester in their Joint Hospital in Rochester. If this suggestion falls through it is desirable that the Council should make an early purchase of one of the suitable sites offered.

It is unnecessary to re-iterate that the provision of a new Hospital is urgent.

The total number of cases admitted to the Hospital was 198, as compared with 233 in 1922.

The following table gives details of cases, including the number of deaths:—

Cases admitted to Isolation Hospital during 1923.

Disease.	Admissions.	Discharges.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever (notified as Scarlet Fever)	101	93	1
Scarlet Fever (notified as Diphtheria) ...	2	2	
Diphtheria (notified as Diphtheria) ...	83	73	7*
Para-Typhoid B. Fever	2	2	
Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria	2	2	
Measles	1	1	
Tonsilitis (notified as Diphtheria) ...	5	4	
Diphtheria Carriers	2	2	
	—	—	—
Totals	198	179	8
	—	—	—

* Including two patients also suffering from Whooping Cough.

One patient notified as Diphtheria also suffered from Chicken-pox, and three from Whooping Cough.

One case of Laryngeal Diphtheria required Tracheotomy, but made a good recovery.

Visits by relatives and friends are not permitted, except in the case of seriously ill patients. It had been the custom for many years to allow relatives to see patients through the windows of the wards on two afternoons per week, but this practice was undoubtedly prejudicial, especially to children suffering from diphtheria, as they sat up in bed to talk to their friends. For that and other reasons the custom was a bad one. Relatives now call daily between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. to leave parcels and to make enquiries.

METHODS OF DISINFECTION.

No fumigation or spraying of schools with disinfectant solutions has been carried out. When considered desirable floors, woodwork, furniture, etc., were washed with hot water and soap. Caretakers were also advised to leave windows wide open.

Towards the end of the year a report on methods of disinfecting rooms and contents was presented to and adopted by the Health Committee. The chief recommendation was that fumigation of rooms after the occurrence of cases of scarlet fever, diphtheria, or enteric fever, should be discontinued and that in its place the following procedure be adopted. (A printed card with these instructions is left at the house of the patient by one of the Sanitary Inspectors):—

Bedding, etc.—Mattresses, Pillows, Bolsters, and, if considered necessary, Clothing and Mats, will be removed by ambulance for Steam Disinfection.

Linen, Clothing, etc.—Bed Linen (Pillow Slips, Sheets), Blankets, Handkerchiefs, Underclothing, should at once be steeped in a DISINFECTANT SOLUTION for an hour or more. Blankets should then be washed, and Linen and Cotton Goods boiled in soapy water.

Utensils.—Spoons, Plates, Cups, etc., should be placed in boiling water.

Disinfection of the Sick Room.—The room occupied by the patient should be spring-cleaned and the floors and other woodwork scrubbed by the occupier with hot water and soap. Windows and doors should be widely opened.

Disinfection of Books.—The Householder should deliver to the ambulance driver, for disinfection, any library book used by the patient.

If the above instructions are carried out it is not necessary to fumigate the bedroom, but if desired by the parents fumigation will be carried out if the cost is paid in advance at the Public Health Department.

W. A. MUIR, Medical Officer of Health.

On account of special local difficulties, such as shortage of staff at the Hospital, etc., fumigation of rooms is still carried out after deaths from or removal of patients suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE WORK.

This work includes the welfare of expectant mothers, provision of accommodation for confinements, visiting and making inquiries under the Notification of Births Act, provision and administration of child welfare centres, and the supply of milk free or at cost price. The supervision of midwives is the duty of the County Council, but this could be more satisfactorily performed by any Local Authority which administers its own Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme. Gillingham has such a scheme which, while not complete, is efficient as far as it goes. The Child Welfare Centre is open twice weekly and is popular judging by the number of mothers who attend. Doubtless a number come for what they can get—dried milk, etc.—but all mothers receive instructions with regard to the best methods of infant feeding, clothing, etc., and the majority of them are anxious and willing to follow the instructions given. As emphasised in last year's report, the work of the Centre is essentially educative and preventive in character, and no treatment is given except in cases of diarrhoea, the

result of errors in feeding. All infants requiring treatment are referred to a private medical practitioner or to St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Rochester.

The Staff at the Centre consists of the Medical Officer of Health, who attends once weekly, of two Health Visitors, and of a number of Voluntary Workers. It would be impossible to carry on the work of the Centre without the assistance of the Voluntary Workers, and anyone visiting the Centre can at once observe the innumerable ways in which they give valuable assistance to the Municipal Staff.

Work of the Centre.		1923.	1922.
New cases (infants)	... ..	293	279
Expectant Mothers	... ..	17 (during 9 months)	
Total attendances	... ..	5253	3258
Average daily attendance	... ..	52	62
Cases referred for treatment	...	8	
Percentage of total births brought to Centre	... ..	28	
At first visit.	Infants breast fed	... ..	154
	Infants breast and bottle fed	... ..	41
	Infants bottle fed	... ..	72
Infants on Register 1st Jan., 1924		612	

MILK (MOTHERS' AND CHILDREN'S) ORDER, 1919.

No raw cow's milk has been supplied under this Order except in a few cases of mothers residing in the country parts of the Borough.

Otherwise dried milk only (Glaxo and Cow and Gate) has been distributed at cost price, or free where the income of the household fell below the scale of income given in last year's report. It is supplied to nursing mothers, infants up to twelve months of age, and to expectant mothers in the last three months of pregnancy.

The distribution of free milk is carried out with care, and all applicants are required to fill up and sign a form giving full details of income. No case of abuse has been detected during the year.

125 parents were considered necessitous. 1,043 pints of cow's milk and 1,063 lbs. of dried milk were given free at a cost of £93, of which only half is chargeable to the rates.

NOTIFICATION OF BIRTHS ACT, 1907.

Under the Notification of Births Act it is a statutory duty of the father of the child *and* of any person in attendance on the mother to notify the birth, within 36 hours, to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which the child is born. The

birth must also be registered within six weeks at the office of the Registrar for Births, Deaths and Marriages.

	1923.	1922.
No. of Births Registered ...	1118	1197
No. of Births Notified	1087 (97.2%)	1125 (94%)

Of the 1,118 registered 74 were ordinarily resident beyond the boundaries of the Borough.

Total births notified:—

By Medical Practitioners	266
By Midwives	809
By Parents	12
By Registrar	31
	<hr/>
	1118
	<hr/>

Of the total births 272, or 24.3 per cent., took place in Maternity Homes.

WORK OF THE HEALTH VISITORS.

The Council has one whole-time Health Visitor and one part-time. As pointed out in last year's report, this is insufficient staff for a Borough with a population of 55,000, especially when the new births to be visited annually reach an approximate figure of 1,000.

Two full-time Health Visitors and two full-time School Nurses are necessary to overtake the work of the Health and School Medical Departments—a total of four instead of three as at present.

As ignorance with regard to correct methods of infant feeding is widespread it is highly desirable that the average infant should be visited at least four times during the first twelve months. Otherwise mothers tend to continually change the type of milk and the hours at which it is given, with consequent detriment to the child. With the present staff it is impossible to even approach this standard.

The following table gives the total number of visits paid and indicates the multiplicity of conditions which the nurses are required to investigate:—

Visits by Health Visitors (one whole-time and one half-time).

First visits re registered births	975
Re-visits re registered births	2119
Visits to children aged 1 to 5 years	492
Visits re milk inquiries	54
Visits to expectant mothers	21
Visits re still births	10
Visits re midwives' fees	—

Visits re Ophthalmia Neonatorum	8
Visits re Puerperal Fever	—
Visits to Acute Poliomyelitis	1

Children suffering from measles, whooping cough, or chicken-pox are visited by the School Nurses.

METHODS OF INFANT FEEDING.

	Breast Fed.	Breast and Bottle.	Bottle.
First visits at Centre	154 (57.6%)	41 (15.3%)	72 (26.9%)
First home visits by Health Visitor	733 (87.2%)	29 (3.4%)	78 (9.2%)

Of 372 children visited at an average age of four months 59.9 per cent. were breast fed, 13.9 per cent. breast and bottle fed, and 25 per cent. wholly on the bottle.

MATERNITY HOME.

Gillingham has no Municipal Maternity Home, but the Royal Naval and Marine Maternity Home, opened in 1922, is situated within its boundaries. It has twenty-four beds, and is a thoroughly modern institution. The usual fee for civilian cases is £4 4s. per week inclusive, but Gillingham residents sent with a recommendation for admission from the Medical Officer of Health on behalf of the Gillingham Council are admitted at fees varying between 2½ and 3 guineas per week. Three cases were admitted under this arrangement during the year.

The authorities of the Home also agreed to admit necessitous civilian cases at two guineas per week if the Council were willing to subsidise a certain number of such cases annually. The Council, however, resolved not to make any such grant.

As conditions are at present, a necessitous mother must be confined at home, often under undesirable conditions, or must seek admission to the Poor Law Institution, and this the majority of them refuse to do.

SANITARY ADMINISTRATION.

Many of the facts relating to this part of the report have been prepared by your Chief Sanitary Inspector.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The water carriage system of sewage disposal is in use in the Borough, except in the country districts and in a few positions in the populous part of the town where connection with a sewer is difficult or impossible. This statement applies especially to Imperial Road. The cesspools there are insufficient for the work they are called upon to do, and their

frequent emptying costs the Council a considerable sum annually. A suggested scheme of the Surveyor's for connecting these houses to a sewer was not accepted by the Council.

DRAINAGE, WATER CLOSETS, ETC.

195 cesspools are known to exist in the Borough, with approximately 360 water closets discharging into them. Thirty-five privies are known to exist in the country districts. Other details will be found in list of defects on page 34.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

The public conveniences have been regularly inspected by the Sanitary Inspectors and defective conditions found remedied. 1,046 visits were made. The conveniences maintained by the Council number eight—of which four have accommodation for both men and women. One new convenience was opened (Paget Street) and one urinal, near the "Lines," demolished.

SCAVENGING AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

These are undertaken by the Surveyor's Department. House refuse is collected once weekly, summer and winter. An additional collection, especially during the summer months, would be advantageous. The inhabitants of the town collect refuse in every variety of receptacle, from hand-barrows to pails, the number of covered galvanised iron bins in use being small. This use of uncovered vessels constitutes a public nuisance, especially in warm weather, whilst all the year round dogs and other animals in their search for food distribute bones, etc., on the public footpaths.

PUBLIC MORTUARY.

At the Public Mortuary adjacent to the Council Chambers nineteen bodies were received, on fourteen of which post-mortem examinations were made.

OFFENSIVE TRADES.

There are none in the Borough.

There are no bye-laws for the control of the existing fish-frying shops, but no complaints have been received in connection therewith.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT, 1919.

The Council does not employ a rat-catcher. During the year forty-nine complaints were received and investigated, and where necessary notices served.

It is the duty of the occupier to rid his premises of rats, but the Chief Sanitary Inspector advises as to the best methods to adopt.

SHOPS ACT.

One of the Sanitary Inspectors is also Inspector under this Act.

Visits to shops during 1923	...	...	...	...	...	...	433
Number of shops on Register at December 31st, 1923	...						672
Letters sent to tradesmen respecting infringements of Act							22
Cases reported to Health Committee	...	...	...	...	...		3
Letters of warning sent	...	...	...	...	...	...	3

RAG FLOCK ACT, 1911.

Three samples of Flock taken under this Act proved satisfactory on analysis.

NOISY ANIMALS.

Seven complaints were received. In only three cases were notices served under the Council's byelaws. The remaining four complaints were not dealt with owing to the fact that the "Form of Notice," which must be signed by three householders in the vicinity of the alleged nuisance was not returned.

ANIMALS IN GARDENS OF COUNCIL HOUSES.

Under a resolution of the Council, the Medical Officer of Health is empowered to grant permission to tenants of Council houses to keep poultry in their gardens. Investigation during the year revealed that many tenants were keeping poultry, rabbits, guinea-pigs, etc., in excessive numbers and without permission.

The following recommendations of the Medical Officer of Health were adopted by the Council:—

- (a) That fowls up to the number of twelve may be kept, on condition that the run is at the far end of the garden.
- (b) That no rabbits, guinea-pigs, or ducks be kept.

NUISANCES, ETC.,

dealt with during the year are included in the following summary:—

CESSPOOLS.

Cesspools emptied and cleansed	382
--------------------------------	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

DRAINAGE.

Drains repaired (being 22.05 per cent. of drains tested)	...	...	...	...	...	...	120
Subsidiary drains cleared	...	...	...	...	...	...	1322
Subsidiary drains or sewers cleared (Works Department)	...						7
Drains cleared by owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	122

Inspection chambers constructed	10
Inspection covers and frames fitted	6
Vent shafts repaired	39
Vent shafts repaired (Works Department)	12

DAMPNESS.

Roofs repaired and made watertight	230
Eaves guttering and down water pipes provided or repaired	215
External walls protected from dampness	100
Damp proof courses inserted above ground level	7
Ventilation provided under floors	6
Forecourts paved with cement concrete	31

GENERAL.

Accumulation of refuse in yards removed	28
Cellar walls cleansed and concrete laid to floors	20
Cooking ranges and coppers repaired	122
Dangerous cellar flaps repaired	18
Doors, frames, stairs, and floors repaired	195
Back additions underpinned or repaired	80
Filthy houses cleansed by tenants	48
Removal of animals	31
Rooms repapered, including ceiling distempered	788
Sashes and frames renewed or repaired	249
Smoke nuisances abated	41
Overcrowding	4

SINKS AND BATHS.

Glazed stoneware sinks fixed	40
Sink waste pipes provided	57

WATER CLOSETS.

New L.C.C. pans fitted	27
Pans cleansed by tenants	37
Water closets rebuilt in 9-inch brickwork	15
Water closet seats, brickwork, and floors repaired	60
Water fittings repaired	91

WATER SUPPLY.

Pipes repaired	18
-----------------------	----

YARDS.

Drained and paved with cement concrete	91
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PREMISES, ETC., VISITED DURING 1923.

	Inspected.	No. of visits.
Milk Shops		290
Dairies		41
Cowsheds		24
Bakehouses		69
Slaughter-houses		1143
Factories and Workshops		340
Outworkers under the Factory Acts		203
Number of houses inspected (including Closing Orders)		499
Animals kept so as to be a nuisance		31

Enquiries re Notified Infectious Diseases	261
Houses, re verminous cases	16
Drains tested	544
Inspections under the Rat Destruction Order	49
Visits under Shops Act	433
Refreshment Houses, or where food is prepared	151
School Lavatories	351
Public Lavatories	1046
Contacts re Plague	12
Contacts re Smallpox	6
Contacts re Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis	3

PRELIMINARY AND STATUTORY NOTICES.

During the year the following notices have been served:—

Preliminary Notices for the abatement of various nuisances under Section 94 of the Public Health Act, 1875	592
Final Notices concerning various nuisances under Section 94 of the Public Health Act, 1875	267
(Final Notices are served in each instance where the owner fails to carry out work specified in the Preliminary Notices. The number served is an increase of 6.1 per cent. over that of last year, and is due in a large measure to the extensive repairs asked for, the cost of materials, and the financial position of the small owners of property, who in many instances rely on the proceeds of rents for their income).	
Preliminary Notices to provide galvanised iron dust bins under the Council's Byelaws relating to Slaughter Houses	10
Preliminary Notices to provide a separate w.c. to each house under Section 36 of the Public Health Act, 1875	5
Final Notices under the same Section	5
Statutory Notices respecting the removal of manure or other offensive matter under Section 49 of the Public Health Act, 1875	28

Statistics for last four years.

Preliminary Notices served.

1920	493
1921	373
1922	400
1923	592

Statutory Notices served (Sec. 94, P.H.A., 1875).

1920	231 (46.8 per cent. of Preliminary Notices)
1921	200 (53.6 per cent. of Preliminary Notices)
1922	159 (39.7 per cent. of Preliminary Notices)
1923	267 (45.1 per cent. of Preliminary Notices)

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.

Prosecutions were taken during the year as set out hereunder:—

(a) *19, Medway Road.* Failing to comply with Notice

under Section 94 of the Public Health Act, 1875, respecting abatement of nuisances.

RESULT: Order made for the work to be carried out in 28 days and to pay cost of summons.

(b) 35, *Tennyson Road*. Failing to comply with Notice under Section 94 of the Public Health Act, 1875, re various nuisances.

RESULT: Order made for the work to be carried out in 28 days and to pay cost of summons.

(c) 42, *Medway Road*. Failing to comply with Notice under Section 17, Sub-Section 4 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

RESULT: Ejectment Order made, and complied with.

(d) 1, 2, 3, & 7, *Mansion Court*. Failing to comply with Notices under Section 17, Sub-Section 4 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1909.

RESULT: Cases adjourned for two months, and premises to be visited by the Magistrates.

FOOD.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT AND MILK AND CREAM REGULATIONS.

These Acts are administered by the County Police.

During 1923 ninety samples were taken by the Inspector and forwarded to the County Analyst.

Nature.	No.	Nature.	No.
Whiskey	6	New milk	46
Brandy	1	Vinegar	1
Gin	2	Cocoa	2
Butter	13	Jam	2
Margarine	4	Ground rice	1
Condensed milk	2	Cornflour	1
Tea	2	Sugar	2
Marmalade	1		—
Lard	2	Total	90
Self-raising flour	2		—

Proceedings were instituted in one case: the defendant was fined 10s. in each of two cases for selling milk deficient in fat, one sample being 5.6 and the other 5.3 deficient.

UN SOUND FOOD.

The following articles of food were surrendered and destroyed as being unfit for the food of man, the approximate weight being 4 tons, 1 cwt., 1 qr., 26 lbs.:—

Carcases of Beef, tubercular	...	...	...	...	...	7
Hindquarters, tubercular	...	...	...	...	...	1
Top pieces, bruised and bone taint	...	...	...	...	...	5 (701 lbs.)
Joints, bruised and bone taint	...	...	...	...	...	361 lbs.
Pigs, swine fever	...	...	...	...	...	1
Pigs' heads, tubercular	...	...	...	...	...	5
Ox heads, tubercular	...	...	...	...	...	1
Ox livers, flukes, tubercular	...	...	...	...	...	4
Rabbits, heated	...	...	...	...	...	16
Condensed milk, blown	...	...	...	...	...	670 tins.
Preserved tin fruit, fermented	...	...	...	...	...	87 tins.
Tinned salmon, blown	...	...	...	...	...	24 tins.
Shrimp paste, sour	...	...	...	...	...	31 bottles.
Kidney suet, mouldy	...	...	...	...	...	91 lbs.
Plums, mouldy, soft	...	...	...	...	...	42 lbs.
Soup powder, mouldy, damp	...	...	...	...	...	8 boxes.
Prunes, mouldy and damp	...	...	...	...	...	16 boxes.
Onions, soft, frost-bitten	...	...	...	...	...	10 cwts.
Fish, soft, dull	...	...	...	...	...	351 lbs.
Corned beef, blown, mouldy	...	...	...	...	...	459 lbs.
Liver, heated	...	...	...	...	...	18 lbs.
Rice, stored with paraffin	...	...	...	...	...	2 cwts.
Eggs, rotten, spotted	...	...	...	...	...	1075

CLEAN FOOD.

A report was made to the Health Committee with regard to the unhygienic conditions under which articles of food are exposed in shops and delivered at houses. In Gillingham two firms sell wrapped bread; one wraps the bread by machinery in waxed paper and the other by hand in unwaxed paper.

After consideration of the report the Committee resolved that wrapped bread only should be delivered at the Isolation Hospital. This bread has proved satisfactory and is clean. An additional advantage is that it keeps fresh longer than unwrapped bread.

The following table summarises certain statistics relating to food:—

	No. in District.	No. of Visits in 1923.	No. of Defects found.	No. of Defects remedied.
Bakehouses.....	11	69	5	5
Dairies	8	41	1	1
Cowsheds	5	24	3	3
Milkshops	46	290	4	4
Slaughter-houses	11	1143	14	14
Other Food Preparing Places	51	151	17	17

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There are eleven licensed Slaughter Houses on the Register. As the Public Health Act (Amendment), 1890, is in force in the district licenses are granted for one year.

Under the local byelaws it is necessary for butchers to notify the Sanitary Inspector of the slaughtering of cattle after 9 p.m. during the winter months and on Sundays. Thirty-nine such notifications were received during the year, compared with forty-three in 1922. On several occasions it has been necessary to remind occupiers of slaughter houses that offal must not be thrown into open ash-pits or manure-pits. To obviate this objectionable practice all slaughter houses are now provided with covered galvanised iron bins which are required to be emptied at least once in every twenty-four hours.

A few of the slaughter houses were found not to reach a reasonable standard of cleanliness, and in addition appeared to be used as stores for old clothes, old bicycles, etc. Steps were taken to remedy these conditions.

Number of visits made 1143

Notices for defects 14

The local byelaws adopted in 1919 lay down that "the humane killer" must be used for the slaughtering of all animals. No complaints have been received concerning its use during the year. In November your Chief Sanitary Inspector attended a demonstration of the different methods of slaughtering which was arranged to be held in Birmingham by the National Federation of Meat Traders' Associations. The

Association holds the view that the humane killer interferes with the keeping properties of meat, more especially of pig's flesh. The demonstration was arranged with the object of deciding whether or not their view was a correct one, and if so that steps should be taken to have the section in the byelaws of certain local authorities deleted. No final decision has as yet been come to as the flesh of the animals slaughtered by the various methods is meantime under minute examination by pathologists and others.

BAKEHOUSES.

It is now the duty of the Local Authority to supervise factory bakehouses as well as workshop bakehouses.

The total number of bakehouses on the Register is eleven, of which two are underground.

Number of visits to bakehouses	69
Number of notices for defects	5

MILK.

Number of Cowsheds on the Register at 31st Dec., 1923	5
Number of Dairies on the Register at 31st Dec., 1923	8
Number of Milkshops on the Register at 31st Dec., 1923	46
	—
	59
	—

During the year 355 visits were paid to these premises.

The number of milk cows in the Borough is now small, and the great bulk of the milk supply is delivered by rail.

During the year attention has been given to the milkshops on the Register, many of which are unsuitable for the sale of milk inasmuch as they are small general overcrowded shops, selling such articles as clothes, newspapers, vegetables, fruits, firewood, etc. The quantity of milk sold is generally half a gallon or less a day, and is stored merely to attract customers for the other articles in the shop.

Under the Milk and Dairies (Amendment) Act, 1922, a Local Authority has power to refuse registration or to remove from the register purveyors of milk if they are satisfied that it is sold or stored under conditions likely to endanger the public health. The Council, in view of these facts and powers, resolved that in future registration or transfer of registration should be refused in small general shops under the following conditions:—

(1) General overcrowding of a small shop so that it cannot be kept clean and free of dust.

(2) Selling of the following articles in conjunction with and in close proximity to milk:—

- (a) Those attracting flies, i.e., open jams, open sugar, jam tarts, soft fruit, meat.
- (b) Those with strong odours or creating dust, such as open pickles, vinegar, potatoes, onions, apples, firewood, paraffin.

During the year one application for registration and one for transfer of registration was refused.

MILK (SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS) ORDER, 1923.

No applications have been received for the licensing of Producers or Distributors of Certified, Grade A, or Pasteurised Milk.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT.

	Number.	Visits made.	Defects found and remedied.
Factories on Register	63	98	9
Workshops on Register	79	242	7
Outworkers' Premises on Register	40	203	

Five notices were received from H.M. Inspector respecting the occupation of Factories and Workshops, and ten under Section 5 of the Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, referring to conditions remediable under the Public Health Acts.

Three notices were served under Section 110 prohibiting Home Work in houses where infectious disease occurred.

HOUSING.

There is still a marked shortage of houses. Fifty-five have been built during 1923 by private builders, for sale only.

The Council has made extensive use of its powers under the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899. This Act enables persons to acquire the ownership of small houses in which they reside. The market value of the house must not exceed £1,200, and the advance made by the Local Authority must not exceed 90 per cent. of the market value of the house. Approximately £15,000 has been advanced during the year ending 31st March, 1924.

As long as the present shortage of houses continues so the difficulties in dealing with unfit and defective property will endure. The cost of building municipal houses during the last few years has been so high that the poorest class of the community is unable to pay the rents asked, and consequently continues to inhabit unfit houses which under better conditions would be demolished.

Thirteen Closing Orders in respect of two blocks of houses were made during the year, and in the case of one block ejectment orders were applied for and granted. (These were later postponed at the request of the Council, February, 1924).

COMMON LODGING-HOUSES.

There are none in the Borough.

HOUSES LET IN LODGINGS.

Hitherto no register has been kept, but byelaws made under Section 26 of the Housing and Town Planning Act, 1919, were adopted by the Council in December. These byelaws apply to any house used for occupation by the working classes and let in lodgings or occupied by members of more than one family. Seven houses placed on the Register were visited on twenty-one occasions during 1923.

INCREASE OF RENT AND MORTGAGE (RESTRICTION)
ACT (1920).

No applications for certificates were received, but one granted in 1922 was withdrawn, the house having been rendered fit for habitation.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR 1923.

(Ministry of Health Table.)

Particulars required as set out in circular issued by the Ministry of Health.

Number of New Houses erected during the year.

(a) Total	55
(b) As part of a Municipal Housing Scheme	Nil.

(1) *Unfit Dwelling Houses. Inspection.*

(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for Housing defects under Public Health or Housing Acts	499
(2) Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the (Housing Inspection of District) regulations, 1910.	156
(3) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation... ..	13
(4) Number of dwelling houses exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	35

(2) *Remedy of Defects Without Service of Formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the local authority or their officers	278
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(3) *Action under Statutory Powers.*

(a) Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing Town Planning Act, 1919.	
(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	Nil.
(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied:—	
(a) By owners	Nil.
(b) By local authority in default of owners...	Nil.
(3) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners on intention to close ...	Nil.
(b) <i>Proceedings under Public Health Acts.</i>	
(1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	208
(2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied:—	

(a)	By owners	...	...	...	...	...	...	203
	(This number includes 30 nuisances investigated in 1922 and remedied in 1923, but 35 notices served in 1923 are still outstanding.)							
(b)	By local authority in default of owners							Nil.
(c)	<i>Proceedings under Section 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning Act, 1909.</i>							
(1)	Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
(2)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	...	...	...	...	...	13
(3)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
(4)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.
(5)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil.

LICENCES.

Your Chief Sanitary Inspector is responsible for the work given in detail below.

Licences were granted for the following :—

Hackney Carriages (Horse drawn Vehicles)	2
Motor Omnibuses	142
Motor Taxis... ..	66
Drivers	342
Petroleum	17
Carbide of Calcium	4
Slaughter Houses	11
Game	2

The following are the fees charged for licences :—

Hackney Carriages (Horse drawn)	2/0
Motor Omnibuses	5/0
Motor Taxis	2/0
Drivers	1/0
Petroleum and Carbide	3/9
Game	5/0

The fees for Licensing of Mechanical Propelled Vehicles are recoverable from the Ministry of Transport, to whom a detailed report of licences issued is submitted each year.

Recommendations were made to the Health Committee relating to the necessity of New Byelaws for Motor Omnibuses. The Ministry of Health was written respecting this matter, and a reply was received that the Ministry did not consider it advisable for the Council to proceed with the proposed new Byelaws as the whole question relating to motor transport was being dealt with. They, the Ministry, would forward particulars in due course.

Recommendations were also placed before the Committee respecting the provision of extra exit doors to Motor Hackney Carriages. These provisions are now being enforced.

LIST OF ADOPTIVE ACTS, BYE-LAWS, AND LOCAL REGULATIONS RELATING TO PUBLIC HEALTH IN FORCE IN THE DISTRICT.

	Date of Operation or Confirmation.
Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890 ...	15th April, 1901.
Public Health Amendment Act, 1890 (except Parts IV. and V.)	1st May, 1891.
Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act, 1907 (Parts II., III., V., VI., X., and certain Sections of Part IV.)	12th December, 1908.
Notification of Births Act, 1907	26th May, 1914.

BYE-LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Building Bye-laws	12th March, 1902.
Tents, Vans, Sheds, and similar structures ...	26th June, 1902.
For the Good Rule and Government of the Borough of Gillingham (Prevention of Nuisances)	4th April, 1905.
Employment of Children	1st April, 1910.
Nuisances	1st April, 1912.
Offensive Trades	27th November, 1912.
Milk Traders (under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops Order, 1885)	1st May, 1914.
Removal of House Refuse	1st April, 1912, and 16th April, 1915.
Ashpits in connection with Buildings	16th April, 1915.
Notice of Intended Slaughtering	18th May, 1915.
Slaughter Houses	27th August, 1919.
Hackney Carriages	16th January, 1920.

RAINFALL FOR 1923 (As measured at Gillingham Park).

January	1.68 inches.	July	0.53 inches.
February	3.45 „	August	1.44 „
March	2.21 „	September	1.67 „
April	1.53 „	October	5.16 „
May	2.96 „	November	2.49 „
June	0.33 „	December	1.65 „
Total Rainfall for year 1923		25.1 inches.	
Total Rainfall for year 1922		23.48 „	



