

[Report 1940] / Medical Officer of Health, Dunmow R.D.C.

Contributors

Great Dunmow (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1940

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DUNMOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1940.

Public Health Offices,
St. Peter's Close,
Bocking,
Braintree.

October, 1942.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present you with a short report on the public health and sanitary conditions of the district during the year 1940. The usual type of report has had to be curtailed owing to war-time conditions, and for this same reason no separate report has been submitted by the Chief Sanitary Inspector. A short summary of the work of his department has been included in this report. Although the bulk of the usual statistical information has also been omitted all necessary records have been preserved with a view to their inclusion in fuller reports to be made available after the war.

The general health of the district remained satisfactory during the year, with no serious outbreak of infectious disease.

GENERAL HEALTH SERVICES.

There were no changes in the general health services provided in the district during the year, but the County Council's service of Health Visitors was supplemented by the seconding of one full time Health Visitor from Leyton, whose services provided a very welcome help in a time when such services among the temporary population were much needed.

Staff.

In March the Sanitary Inspector's Department was deprived of the services of a clerk, and in September the second Sanitary Inspector left to take up another appointment. The total staff at the end of the year consisted of the Chief Sanitary Inspector and one unqualified assistant.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.Water.

The public supplies were derived from the Council's waterworks at Thaxted and Dunmow and, in the case of the parishes of Great and Little Hallingbury and Hatfield Broad Oak (including Hatfield Heath), from the Herts and Essex Waterworks Co.

At Thaxted, the installation of the plant for the removal of iron from the water was commenced in May 1940, but owing to the difficulty in obtaining all parts of the apparatus the work was not completed by the end of the year.

In all, 151 new connections were made to the water mains in the course of the year.

Samples from all three sources were analysed by the County Bacteriologist, Dr. Suckling, at regular intervals throughout the year. Typical reports are as follows :-

Thaxted Waterworks. 25th November 1940.

Chemical Results in parts per 100,000.

Appearance	Clear and bright.		
Colour	Normal.		Odour Nil.
Reaction pH	Neutral	7.0	Free Carbonic Acid 4.0
Electric Conductivity at 20°C	705		Total solids dried at 180°C 47.0
Chlorine in Chlorides	3.4		Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate 29.0
Hardness: Total	36.0		Temporary 27.0 Permanent 9.0
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.00		Nitrites Absent
Free Ammonia	0.0220		Ammoniacal Nitrogen -
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0004		Albuminoid Nitrogen -
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs. at 80°F	0.010		
Metals Iron: 0.012			'Free Chlorine': 0.25 p.p.m.

Bacteriological Results.

Number of Bacteria growing on Agar per cc. or ml.	1 day at 37°C	0
" " " " " " " " " "	2 days " 37°C	0
" " " " " " " " " "	3 days " 20°C	-

The Bacillus Coli Present in Absent in 100 c.c.

Report:

This sample is clear and bright and of normal colour.

The water is very hard in character, although not to an abnormal degree, contains no excess of saline or mineral matter in solution, no metals, apart from a minute trace of iron, is of satisfactory organic quality and a high degree of bacterial purity.

These results are consistent with a wholesome water, suitable for the purpose of public supply.

Dunmow Waterworks. 25th November 1940.

Chemical Results in parts per 100,000.

Appearance	Clear and bright.		
Colour	Normal		Odour Nil.
Reaction pH	Neutral	7.3.	Free Carbonic Acid 2.8
Electric Conductivity at 20°C	685		Total Solids dried at 180°C 46.0
Chlorine in Chlorides			Alkalinity as Calcium Carbonate 30.5
Hardness : Total	35.0		Temporary 28.5 Permanent 6.5
Nitrogen in Nitrates	0.00		Nitrites Absent
Free Ammonia	0.0016		Ammoniacal Nitrogen -
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0000		Albuminoid Nitrogen -
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hrs. at 80°C	0.000		
Metals	Absent		'Free Chlorine' : 0.10 p.p.m.

Bacteriological Results.

Number of Bacteria growing on Agar per cc. or ml.	1 day at 37°C	1
" " " " " " " " " "	2 days " 37°C	1
" " " " " " " " " "	3 days " 20°C	.

The Bacillus Coli Present in Absent in 100 c.c.

Report:

This is a satisfactory sample.

It is clear and bright in appearance and contains no iron or other metals.

The water is very hard in character although not to an abnormal degree, contains no excess of saline or mineral matter in solution, and is of a high degree of organic purity.

It is therefore considered wholesome in character and suitable for the purpose of public supply.

There is no evidence from this sample of the addition of lime.

Herts and Essex Waterworks Company. 13th May 1940.

Number of colonies per Cubic Centimetre or
millimetre of water growing upon Agar in 37°C in 1 day 0

Number of colonies per Cubic Centimetre or
Millimetre of water growing upon Agar in 37°C in 2 days 2

Smallest Quantity of water producing acid
gas in Bile Salt Lactose Broth after 2 days
incubation at 37°C
(Presumptive Bacillus Coli Test) Absent in 100 c.c.

Smallest Quantity of water containing the
Bacillus Coli Absent in 100 c.c.

Smallest Quantity of water giving the reaction
of the B. Welchii (Bacillus Enteriditis Sporogenes) Absent in 100 c.c.

This is a satisfactory sample, clear and bright in appearance and
of a high standard of bacterial purity, indicative of a pure and wholesome
water, suitable for drinking and domestic purposes.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Great Dunmow Sewage Works.

These works continued to be overloaded and in consequence
failed to yield satisfactory effluents. Such temporary measures as were
possible were taken, but it could not be expected that any great benefit
would result.

Thaxted Sewage Works.

The deterioration in the quality of the effluent from these
works first noticed in 1939 became worse in 1940. Here again it is obvious
that such improvised steps, which are all that can be attempted under present
conditions, are no solution to the problem.

Felstead Sewage Works.

The improvement noted in these works in 1939 continued in
1940. Only one out of five samples taken gave an unsatisfactory result.

Hatfield Broad Oak Sewage Works.

Although one unsatisfactory sample was given by these works,
that must be regarded as exceptional.

Hatfield Heath Sewage Works.

These works continued to function efficiently during
1940.

Public Cleansing.

The weekly collection of household refuse throughout the district was
modified to fortnightly, in some parts of the district, and to monthly in
others, but with the institution of the scheme for Salvage Collection later in
the year, the collection was shortly restored weekly in lighting areas and
fortnightly in the other parts of the district.

All the work under this heading came under the control of the Chief
Sanitary Inspector.

Sanitary Inspection.

Inspections on complaint were made as promptly as possible, but in many instances owing to shortage of staff there was considerable but unavoidable delay in attending to these matters.

Ordinary routine inspections could not be carried out in the circumstances.

HOUSING.

No licences were issued during 1940 for condemned houses to be occupied, but in many cases, inspection of properties requisitioned to house homeless persons were made and temporary repairs carried out.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.

Inspections of all the premises in the district engaged in the production of milk were carried out. In 1940, 7 samples were taken and of these 6 were satisfactory and 1 was unsatisfactory.

Meat.

Inspection of meat was carried out in butchers' shops and other premises where it is exposed for sale. There is no slaughterhouse under the Ministry of Food's scheme for centralised slaughtering in this area. The slaughterhouse at the Dunmow Bacon Factory still continues to operate with the same arrangements as before with regard to meat inspection, whereby no call is made on the Council's staff for this work.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following cases of Infectious Disease were notified during the year :-

Scarlet Fever	29	Measles	40
Whooping Cough	2	Pneumonia	12
Diphtheria	2	Puerperal Pyrexia	1
Erysipelas	3	Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	6		

One case of Cerebro-Spinal Fever died.

Of the non-notifiable diseases, German measles was particularly prevalent in the spring of 1940.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis.

Previous to 1940 no scheme for protective inoculation against diphtheria for children had existed in the district. In August, Essex County Council, as the Child Welfare Authority in the District had inaugurated a scheme for the free immunisation of children under 5 years of age.

In November, the Rural District Council had agreed to offer immunisation free of charge to the children of school age in the district. Before the Council's scheme could be put into effect, however, Ministry of Health Circular 2230 of 7th December 1940 appeared with its intimation that stocks of alum-precipitated toxoid for this service would be available free of charge to Local Authorities and giving the Minister's approval, under Section 177 (1) of the Public Health Act 1936, to the provision of the necessary facilities.

A small number of children were immunised by the end of the year, but the scheme only came into full swing at the beginning of January 1941.

Tuberculosis.

There were 22 new cases notified during 1940. These were made up as follows :-

Respiratory.		Non-respiratory.	
Male	Female	Male	Female
5	9	3	5

There were 5 deaths from Tuberculosis during 1940.

Under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations 1940, particulars of men on the Tuberculosis Register, kept by the Medical Officer of Health, have, from 23rd September 1940, to be submitted to the County Medical Officer as each age group is called upon to register. After the addition of any necessary information by the latter, these particulars are forwarded to the Ministry of Labour and National Service.

EVACUATION.

Until he left in September, the second Sanitary Inspector was acting as Billeting Officer and was kept largely occupied on this work. After he left, the Sanitary Inspector's department was more or less free from work directly connected with billeting.

As the year advanced the number of evacuees in the district diminished, but in the autumn an additional number of bombed-out families arrived from the London area, and arrangements had to be made for billeting these. No hostels or sick bays were available in the district for the reception of the appropriate type of evacuees and often considerable difficulty was experienced at this stage in finding accommodation for children temporarily unsuitable for ordinary billeting.

CASUALTY SERVICES.

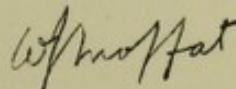
As in the previous years, administrative matters in connection with the local branches of these services devolved in large measure on the Public Health Officers, particularly modifications in the light of actual experience as the year advanced.

In conclusion, I have to thank the members of the Council for their support and the Council Officers for their help during 1940.

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,



Medical Officer of Health.

There have been no changes in the membership of the Council since 1950.

NAME	DATE	REMARKS
Mr. [Name]	1950	[Remarks]
Mr. [Name]	1950	[Remarks]
Mr. [Name]	1950	[Remarks]

The Council has been functioning since 1950. It has been composed of members from the following countries: [List of countries]. The Council has been responsible for the following: [List of responsibilities].

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