

**[Report 1920] / Medical Officer of Health, Huntingdon U.D.C. / Borough.**

**Contributors**

Huntingdon (England). Urban District Council.

**Publication/Creation**

1920

**Persistent URL**

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HUNTINGDON  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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REPORT

UPON THE SANITARY CONDITION

OF THE

Borough of Huntingdon

FOR THE YEAR 1920.

BY

*CHARLES E. HICKS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.*

**Medical Officer of Health.**

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HUNTINGDON:  
COOPER & Co., PRINTERS, HIGH STREET.

1921.

# TO THE HUNTINGDON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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GENTLEMEN,

The Ministry of Health requiring certain information not incorporated in the Annual Report of former years, I am inserting it to save the expense of printing two separate Reports.

The population of the Borough approx. in 1920 was 4201. The population 1911 Census was 4060.

The Borough of Huntingdon is situate on the north bank of the River Ouse, and is composed of a long street a mile in length, running in a northerly direction at right angles to the river, several side streets turn off from the main street, and there are many courts and alleys; the suburb of Newtown is about half-a-mile from the High Street in an easterly direction.

The Borough is more or less surrounded by Commons. The area in acres is 976, the soil is gravel and the surface flat.

The chief occupations of the inhabitants are connected with Agriculture and Motor Body Building.

## **Births—Vital Statistics.**

The births of 83 children were registered during the year, of these 44 were boys and 39 were girls; three of these were illegitimate. The estimated population for birth-rate being 4201, making an average of 19·7 per 1000 persons living, compared with 25·4 the birth-rate for England and Wales.

## **Deaths.**

The deaths of 21 males and 28 females occurred, the population for deaths being estimated at 4201, makes an average of 11·6 per 1000 persons living, compared with 12·4 the death-rate for England and Wales.



### **Infantile Mortality.**

Three deaths of children under one year of age occurred, being 36.1 per 1000 births, Inanition 1, Acute Gastritis 1, Intussusception 1.

### **Water.**

The Water Supply of the Borough is obtained from the gravel of the Ouse Valley, and is collected by pipes laid in the gravel bed and conveyed into a well, from which it is pumped into a reservoir and distributed over the town by gravitation. There is also a high pressure service to supply some of the houses that stand on high levels. The supply to the town generally is constant.

The gathering ground in which the pipes are laid is far removed from any means of contamination from sewage pollution or from the soakage of manurial products.

A few wells remain in the town, but I hope they will soon all be done away with.

No sample of well water was sent for analysis during the year.

The River Ouse runs under the Stone Bridge at the south end of the Town, and there are one or two small streams on the outskirts of the Borough.

### **Sewerage and Drainage.**

There is a complete system of sewerage and drainage, the sewers discharging into the river. An intercepting tank is now in working order near the outlet of the sewer, and is doing good service. The drains are well ventilated, but inspection of the ventilators is a matter of great importance and should be well looked after. The drains are regularly flushed by means of a flushing cart. The old brick sewers have been in many places removed and replaced by sanitary pipes. There is a separate system of drainage for Newtown which discharges into a small watercourse before reaching the river. An intercepting tank is now placed at the outlet of this drain and is working in a very satisfactory manner. The drains are flushed by the water flushing carts and are well ventilated.

### **Closet Accommodation.**

Practically all water flushed appliances.

### **Scavenging.**

House refuse is collected by your scavengers and removed to a field in the Borough. I should like to see more sanitary dust bins in use.

### **Places over which the Council has Supervision.**

There is no registered lodging house in the Borough. *Factories, Workshops, Slaughter Houses, Bakehouses, Cow Sheds and Milk Shops* are all regularly inspected by your Inspector of Nuisances.

There is a *Carriage Manufactory* in the Borough, the sanitary arrangements of which are satisfactory; also two Motor Body Building Works.

The Schools are under the management of the County Council.

### **Abatement of Nuisances.**

Your Inspector of Nuisances, Mr. Gillson, makes frequent Inspections, and if nuisances are not abated he gets an order from your Council for their removal.

### **Sale of Food and Drugs Act.**

Eight Samples of Milk were submitted to the Public Analyst, four were genuine, two adulterated, one poor quality, one 6% deficient in milk fat.

### **Milk Supply.**

The Milk Supply of the Borough is adequate and good. Cow Sheds and Milk Shops are clean and well ventilated.

The Slaughter Houses are Inspected regularly.

### **Infectious and Notifiable Diseases.**

Fifty-six cases of these diseases were notified during the year.



### **Diphtheria.**

Thirty-seven cases were notified during the year, of which two died. There was a plentiful supply of Antitoxin supplied by the County Council, and the Isolation Hospital was practically never without a case under treatment. There were evidently carriers about who could not be located.

### **Scarlet Fever.**

Four cases of this disease were notified.

### **Erysipelas.**

One case was notified.

### **Ophthalmia Neonatorum.**

One case notified.

### **Pneumonia.**

Two cases were notified.

### **Tuberculosis.**

Eleven cases were notified, and seven deaths occurred in the Borough.

The County Council have taken over the administration of Schemes to combat this disease.

### **Cancer.**

Two cases proved fatal during the year.

### **Vaccination.**

Vaccination in the Borough seems a dead letter. Exemptions are easily obtained, and nothing but an outbreak of Small Pox will bring to parents the necessity and advantage of this preventive measure. I should like to see Vaccination and Re-Vaccination made compulsory.

### **Small Pox.**

No cases occurred in the Borough. The Small Pox Hospital is ready for use at a few hours notice.

The Isolation Hospital is about to be acquired by the County for the use of all infectious cases. It has been used by this Borough, the St. Ives Rural and Urban Districts for the last 23 years, and has been of very great service.

### **Disinfection.**

There is an excellent disinfecting apparatus at the Isolation Hospital, which can be used for the disinfection of clothes and bedding from the Borough. You also possess Alformant Lamps for the disinfection of houses with Formic Aldehyde vapour.

### **Inspections.**

In December last I made a systematic inspection of the whole district accompanied by your Inspector of Nuisances. I have made frequent inspections of localities where infectious cases have arisen and where nuisances have existed, and in the latter case your Inspector has given orders for my instructions to be carried out.

### **Public Mortuary.**

A Public Mortuary has been provided, and I hope the public may be advised as to the removal of bodies of persons dying of infectious and contagious diseases from their dwelling-houses to this most necessary institution.

### **Housing.**

House accommodation is of a mixed character, that for the working classes is yearly improving, the old thatched houses are disappearing and more modern ones are taking their places. There are still some delapidated houses left, but none that I could consider as unfit for human habitation.

There is plenty of air space around the dwelling-houses, the surroundings are fairly good. There is some improvement in the gravelling and paving of the yards, but many of them are still in an unsatisfactory condition.

Bye-laws relating to the erection of new dwelling-houses are in force and plans are submitted to your Surveyor.

Forty new houses are in course of erection by your Council, this will tend to decrease the chances of overcrowding, allow some of the defective dwellings to be overhauled or demolished entirely.

CHARLES E. HICKS,

*Medical Officer of Health,  
Huntingdon Urban District Council.*

HUNTINGDON,  
1921.



**Sanitary Inspector's Report, 1920.**

Number of Inspections made	...	432
Number of Notices given (informal)	...	89
Number of Notices issued (statutory)	...	4
Offensive Acculations abated	...	19
Number of Lodging Houses Registered		0
Ditto Inspected	... ..	4
Licensed Slaughter Houses	... ..	5
Ditto Inspected	... ..	21

The Council are particularly anxious that the Sewers of the Town should be put in proper condition, and for that purpose have carefully studied their resources with a view to having as much as possible done every year. During the past 12 months a new length of sewer was laid in High Street, and a piece in Orchard Lane and Ingram Street. Many places were patched up and many more cleaned out temporarily, and it is hoped that these places will be relaid or renewed this year.

OWEN W. GILLSON,

*Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.*



## APPENDICES.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS.

## STATISTICS.

Year ending 31st December, 1920.

**1.—GENERAL.**

(1)	Estimated population	...	...	...	4201
(2)	General death-rate	...	...	...	11·6
(3)	Death-rate from tuberculosis	...	...	...	1·6
(4)	Infantile mortality	...	...	...	36·1
(5)	Number of dwelling-houses of all classes	...	...	...	1046
(6)	Number of working-class dwelling-houses	...	...	...	—
(7)	Number of new working-class houses erected	...	...	...	15

**2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.****I.—Inspection.**

(1)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	224
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910	...	...	...	—
(3)	Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	—
(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	...	...	...	—

**II.—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	...	...	...	14
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**III.—Action under Statutory Powers.***A. Proceedings under section 28 of the Housing Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919.*

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	Nil.
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—				
	(a) by owners	...	...	...	} Nil.
	(b) by Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	

(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close ... ..	Nil.
<b>B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts.</b>	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ... ..	14
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—	
(a) by owners ... ..	14
(b) by Local Authority in default of owners ... ..	Nil.
<b>C. Proceedings under sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, &amp;c. Act, 1909.</b>	
(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders ... ..	—
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ..	—
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit ... ..	—
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ..	—
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ..	—

### 3.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes under (a), Part I., or (b) Part II., of the Act of 1890 :—

(1) Name of area ... ..	—
(2) Acreage ... ..	—
(3) Number of working-class houses in area ... ..	—
(4) Number of working-class persons to be displaced ... ..	—

4.—Number of houses not complying with the building byelaws erected with consent of Local Authority under section 25 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919 ... ..

5.—Staff engaged on housing work with, briefly, the duties of each officer.



**Causes of Death in the Borough of Huntingdon.  
1920.**

	Males.	Females.
All Causes (Civilians only) ... ..	22	28
1. Enteric ... ..	—	—
2. Small-pox ... ..	—	—
3. Measles ... ..	—	—
4. Scarlet Fever ... ..	—	—
5. Whooping Cough ... ..	—	—
6. Diphtheria and Croup ... ..	2	—
7. Influenza ... ..	—	—
8. Erysipelas ... ..	—	—
9. Pulmonary Tuberculosis ... ..	1	2
10 Tuberculous Meningitis... ..	1	—
11. Other Tuberculous Diseases ... ..	—	3
12. Cancer, Malignant Disease ... ..	1	1
13. Rheumatic Fever ... ..	1	1
14. Meningitis ... ..	—	—
15. Organic Heart Disease ... ..	4	2
16. Bronchitis ... ..	2	1
17. Pneumonia (all forms) ... ..	—	—
18. Other Respiratory Diseases ... ..	—	—
19. Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years) ... ..	—	—
20. Appendicitis and Typhlitis ... ..	—	—
21. Cirrhosis of Liver ... ..	1	—
21a. Alcoholism ... ..	—	—
22. Nephritis and Bright's Disease ... ..	1	1
23. Puerperal Fever ... ..	—	—
24. Parturition, apart from Puerperal Fever ... ..	—	1
25. Congenital Debility, &c. ... ..	—	1
26. Violence, apart from Suicide ... ..	—	1
27. Suicide ... ..	1	—
28. Other Defined Diseases ... ..	6	14
29. Causes ill-defined or un-known ... ..	—	—



**TABLE V.—BOROUGH OF HUNTINGDON DISTRICT.**

**Infantile Mortality during the year 1920.**

*Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under one year of age.*

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 1 Month	1-2 Months	2-3 Months	3-4 Months	4-5 Months	5-6 Months	6-7 Months	7-8 Months	8-9 Months	9-10 Months	10-11 Months	11-12 Months	Total Deaths under One Year
	<b>All Causes</b> { Certified ... Uncertified ...			1											1	1	
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus ...																	
Diarrhoea ...																	
Premature Birth ...																	
Bronchitis ...																	
Other Tubercular Diseases ...																	
Pneumonia ...																	
Other Causes ...			1											1	1		
														1	1		3

District (or Sub-division) of Huntingdon.

Births in the year { Legitimate ... 80  
Illegitimate ... 3

Deaths from all Causes at all ages, 49

Population Estimated in middle of 1920, 4201.

Deaths in the year ... } Legitimate Infants, 3  
" " } Illegitimate " 0

**Ten Years Table of Deaths from  
Cancer and Tubercular Diseases.**

Year.	Cancer.	Phthisis and Tubercular Disease.
1911	3	3
1912	11	3
1913	6	0
1914	9	7
1915	7	0
1916	8	8
1917	10	2
1918	3	7
1919	4	7
1920	2	7
	63	44