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KINGSBRIDGE  
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

# REPORT

OF THE


Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1947



KINGSBRIDGE :

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# *Kingsbridge Rural District Council.*

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

Council Offices, Manor House, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

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CLERK TO M.O.H.

MISS ECCLES.

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# Kingsbridge Rural District Council.

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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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Annual Report

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1947

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*Medical Officer of Health* : DR. W. C. SMALES, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.,  
D.P.H.

*Deputy Medical Officer of Health* : DR. W. H. COWPER,  
M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.

*Surveyor and Senior Sanitary Inspector* : MR. N. HARRIS,  
A.I.A.S., C.R.S.I.

*Second Sanitary Inspector* : MR. M. S. POWLING, C.R.S.I. (Inspector  
of Meats and Foods).

*Temporary Sanitary Inspector (Housing Survey)* : MR. A. E. SMITH.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my Report on the health of the district for the year 1947.

The health of the district has continued to be very satisfactory.

**STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.**

Area—70,818 acres.

Population—11,090.

Number of Inhabited Houses at the end of 1947, according to the Rate Book—3,923.

Number of Unoccupied Houses—40.

Rateable Value—£57,687.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—£237. 10s. 11d.

The Area is mainly an agricultural one, although on the coast-line many of the inhabitants are employed in sea-faring pursuits.

There is an annual influx of visitors during the holiday season over the whole of the district, to which they are attracted by the favourable climate and the beauty of the surroundings.

The conditions of employment and environs are conducive to health and longevity.

## VITAL STATISTICS.

### LIVE BIRTHS :

Legitimate—	Male	109	Female	100	Total	209
Illegitimate—	Male	9	Female	5	Total	14
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>
		118		105		223
		<hr/>		<hr/>		<hr/>

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—20.10.

STILL BIRTHS—Male, 2. Female, 2. Total, 4.

Rate per 1,000 of the total (live and still) births—17.61.

DEATHS—154. Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—13.88.

Deaths from Puerperal and post-abortive sepsis—Nil.

Deaths from other maternal causes—Nil.

Deaths of Infants under 1 Year—

	<i>Male.</i>	<i>Female.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Legitimate	5	1	6
Illegitimate	—	—	—

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births—26.30.

(b) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—28.70.

(c) Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births—Nil.

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)—21.

Deaths from Pneumonia—6.

Deaths from Bronchitis—5.

Deaths from Cerebro Spinal Fever—Nil.

Deaths from Influenza—Nil.

Deaths from Diabetes—1.

Deaths from Intra. Cran. Vasc. Lesions—26.

Deaths from Heart Disease—38.

Deaths from other Diseases of Cir. System—7.



# **NOTIFIABLE DISEASES (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS DURING THE YEAR 1947.**

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases Admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Scarlet Fever .....	31	6	—
Erysipelas .....	2	1	—
Whooping Cough .....	17	—	—
Measles .....	36	—	—
Cerebral Spinal Fever .....	2	1	—
Poliomyelitis .....	1	1	1
Diphtheria .....	3	3	—
Puerperal Pyrexia .....	1	—	—
<b>TOTALS</b> .....	<b>93</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

**SCARLET FEVER—BLACKAWTON.** Since 1945, cases of Scarlet Fever have been occurring with some frequency. During 1945, 13 cases occurred, three only in 1946, and in 1947, the year under review, 14 cases were notified in the parish. Blackawton was included in the " Battle Training Area " during the war, and previous to the war there was little or no Scarlet Fever in the parish. When the area was opened up for re-occupation it appears that a family, some of whose members had recently suffered from Scarlet Fever, came to live in the village, and it is likely that the infection was derived from this source. The outbreak was investigated in close co-operation with the County Medical Officer and his Staff and the County Bacteriologist.

For non-infectious cases and accidents, the St. John Ambulance Association provide an ambulance.

**DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION** continued throughout the year to receive considerable attention. Every parent is reminded when their child reaches the age of nine months that immunisation should be carried out, and thereafter every effort is made to see that the child is protected. Frequent clinics are arranged throughout the district. 141 children received a complete immunisation and 342 children a maintenance dose.

## **GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.**

The PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY are a Medical Officer of Health (also Medical Officer of Health of Plympton Rural District, Kingsbridge Urban District, Salcombe Urban District, Kingsbridge and Salcombe Port Sanitary Authority, and Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional).

Two whole-time Sanitary Inspectors.



**LABORATORY FACILITIES** are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations. Seale Hayne College also examines milk samples in cases of suspected mastitis. Urgent bacteriological specimens may be sent to the laboratory at the Prince of Wales' Hospital, Plymouth.

**PROVISION OF ANTITOXIN**—Medical men practising in the district can obtain a free supply of antitoxin. Material is also supplied for the immunisation of children of the district against Diphtheria free of cost.

**NURSING IN THE HOME**—None provided by this Authority, but the County Council employs Health Visitors in the district. There are seven District Nurses, whose services are of the greatest value in the Rural District.

**MIDWIVES.**—The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council. There are five practising midwives in the district.

**MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE.**—There is a centre in Kingsbridge, which is open on Wednesday afternoons.

**VENEREAL DISEASES TREATMENT.**—At the Venereal Disease Dept., City Hospital, Plymouth. Female in-patients are also sent to St. Mary's Home, Exeter. A refund of rail or bus fare can be made in suitable cases by applying to the Medical Officer of the Centre or to the County Medical Officer.

Treatment is also available from a certain number of selected General Medical Practitioners specially approved for the purpose by the County Council, and Ministry of Health. There is one such practitioner at Modbury and another at Kingsbridge.

**ORTHOPAEDIC TREATMENT** is available through the Devon Association for Orthopaedics as In-patients at Exeter and Ivybridge; and for adults at Mount Gold Hospital, Plymouth. For Out-patients there is a clinic at Kingsbridge, and the South-West Clinic, which deals with this district as well, is held at the Mutley Hall Assembly Rooms, Plymouth.

**THE SOUTH HAMS COTTAGE HOSPITAL** provides beds for 16 patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding districts:

Men's Ward	.....	6 beds
Women's Ward	.....	6 beds
Children's Cots	.....	2
Private Wards	.....	2 (one bed each).

It is supported by voluntary effort.

**ISOLATION HOSPITAL.**—By arrangement with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth, and to the Isolation Hospitals at Torquay and Paignton, and ambulances from these hospitals transport the cases.



## TUBERCULOSIS.

### NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1947.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1—5 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5—15 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15—25 years	2	1	—	1	2	—	—	—
25—35 years	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 years	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 years	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65 and over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	6	3	—	1	3	—	—	—

### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

**SCHOOLS.**—There are 19 Elementary Schools in the District. Inspections were carried out by the Sanitary Inspector, and in cases requiring further attention by the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 44 notices were received referring to 105 children who were excluded from school because of communicable disease or because they were contacts.

They were as follows :

Measles .....	33
Scarlet Fever .....	11
Whooping Cough .....	22
Impetigo .....	1
Chicken-pox .....	5
Mumps .....	34

**WATER SUPPLY.**—Water supplied by the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board is distributed by the Council at the present time in twenty-four villages. Water from other sources is distributed at the present time in sixteen villages. In six villages water is distributed by private persons.

In due course the whole of the district will be provided with water supplied by the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board. At the present time steps are being taken with a view to the formation of a Joint Supply and Distribution Board covering the Dartmouth Borough, the Kingsbridge Rural District, the Kingsbridge Urban District, the Salcombe Urban District, and the Totnes Rural District.

In 19 parishes mains have been laid and supplies afforded to 1,653 consumers.



In two parishes mains are being laid at the present time.

Schemes are prepared for laying mains or extensions in 12 parishes.

In six parishes pumping has to take place.

Water is at present supplied only for domestic and dairy purposes.

With a view to estimating agricultural requirements a complete survey of 568 farms has been undertaken, and further details can be seen in the accompanying table.

		Farms.			Type.		
No.	Parish.	No.	Acr'age	Cows.	Other Cattle	Coast'l	In'nd
1.	Aveton Gifford	43	3407	223	322	x	
2.	Bigbury	20	2784	155	397	x	
3.	Blackawton	58	4655	460	714		x
4.	Buckland-tout-Saints	11	1560	114	294		x
5.	Charleton	8	1042	64	124	x	
6.	Chivelstone	17	2244	127	370	x	
7.	Churchstow	26	2569	268	512		x
8.	East Allington	29	3694	247	623		x
9.	East Portlemouth	11	1457	62	164	x	
10.	Kingston	12	1822	288	295	x	
11.	Loddiswell	37	2990	269	556		x
12.	Malborough	24	2770	243	592	x	
13.	Modbury	46	4986	642	1090		x
14.	Ringmore	10	966	82	162	x	
15.	Sherford	11	2280	168	463		x
16.	Slapton	33	2654	193	469	x	
17.	South Huish	17	1124	85	231	x	
18.	South Milton	8	1456	138	353	x	
19.	South Pool	747	1775	93	359	x	
20.	Stokefleming	31	2644	258	405	x	
21.	Stokenham	41	4486	344	781	x	
22.	Strete	12	1170	90	241	x	
23.	Thurlestone	14	1247	102	194	x	
24.	West Alvington	23	2353	195	601	x	
25.	Woodleigh	12	1812	128	409		x
Totals		568	59947	5098	20001	17	8

The eastern part of the District, especially Slapton, Strete, Stokefleming and Blackawton are still in dire need of water. Every effort is being made to expedite the laying of the Eastern pipeline and until this is done it will be necessary to continue during the summer months the expensive and unsatisfactory carting of water to villages whose local supplies invariably fail. Housing is completely held up in the Eastern portion of the Rural District owing to lack of water.



The moorland mains have now been extended to serve the village of Ringmore. Extensions are continuing to form a ring main to supply Challaborough, Bigbury-on-Sea and Bigbury village.

Extensions have also been made to serve a part of the village of Chillington, Stokenham and Torcross, and portions of Sherford village.

**WATER CONNECTIONS.** During the year 159 dwelling-houses were connected to the public water supply, namely :—

Strete	.....	.....	1
Malborough	.....	.....	3
Ford	.....	.....	1
Modbury	.....	.....	5
Sherford	.....	.....	5
Thurlestone	.....	.....	6
Chillington	.....	.....	37
East Prawle	.....	.....	1
Loddiswell	.....	.....	2
Ringmore	.....	.....	43
Stokenham	.....	.....	27
Torcross	.....	.....	28

SEWERAGE. I have again to draw attention to the unsatisfactory conditions prevailing at Bigbury-on-Sea. Crude sewage is still being discharged on the beach, which is crowded with visitors in the summer. Conditions prevailing there are a menace to health and in spite of every effort by the Council since the termination of war, the necessary work is not yet commenced.

To abate a nuisance in the sewer at Modbury an additional storm water overflow has been constructed.

Owing to damage caused by storms to the sea outfall at Thurlestone, approximately 15 yards of cast-iron piping had to be renewed.

The sewer has been extended at East Prawle for a distance of 194 yards in order that various properties could be drained into it.

A portion of the brick sewer in the main road at Stokefleming collapsed owing to heavy traffic, and this has been replaced by spigot and socket piping.

#### Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

No.	Parish.	Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.					
		Major Sewers.	Septic Disp'al Tank Works.	Sea Out-falls.	Schemes pre-pared.	Schemes pre-pared.	
1.	Aveton Gifford	x		x		x	
2.	Bigbury				x		
3.	Blackawton	x		x	x		
4.	Buckland-tout-Saints						
5.	Charleton	x		x			
6.	Chivelstone	x	x				
7.	Churchstow				x		
8.	East Allington	x		x	x		
9.	East Portlemouth	x		x			
10.	Kingston	x		x			
11.	Loddiswell	x	x				
12.	Malborough	x		x			
13.	Modbury	x	x				
14.	Ringmore	x		x			x
15.	Sherford						
16.	Slapton	x	x				
17.	South Huish	x		x			
18.	South Milton	x		x			x
19.	South Pool						
20.	Stokefleming	x		x			x
21.	Stokenham	x		x			x
22.	Strete	x		x	x		
23.	Thurlestone	x		x	x		
24.	West Alvington	x	x				
25.	Woodleigh						
Totals		20	5	10	5	6	5



RURAL HOUSING. The Rural Housing Survey is now completed, 2,366 houses having been inspected. It will be seen that approximately 34% of these houses are in categories 4 and 5. Cottages in the District have deteriorated very much during the war period and are continuing to fall into disrepair. Many of these cottages could be saved and made into quite satisfactory dwellings at a fraction of the cost of a new house. It seems a pity that reconditioning is not now encouraged as it was before the war by the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts. Many of these cottages if reconditioned would last for a number of years.

#### Rural Housing Survey.

		Categories.				
		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Aveton Gifford	7	50	20	41	34
2.	Bigbury	24	21	11	12	10
3.	Blackawton	7	8	27	25	22
4.	Buckland-tout-Saints	1	5	7	8	16
5.	Charleton	10	12	24	6	3
6.	Chivelstone	8	21	33	16	13
7.	Churchstow	5	11	14	4	3
8.	East Allington	8	32	25	3	1
9.	East Portlemouth	8	12	12	5	3
10.	Kingston	8	16	29	7	13
11.	Loddiswell	6	26	33	41	24
12.	Malborough	44	27	34	26	27
13.	Modbury	20	72	63	29	45
14.	Ringmore	7	13	14	10	7
15.	Sherford	6	13	24	11	11
16.	Slapton	15	15	21	16	25
17.	South Huish	20	11	16	20	4
18.	South Milton	17	21	15	7	12
19.	South Pool	7	15	14	17	11
20.	Stokefleming	39	26	23	25	18
21.	Stokenham	45	81	97	34	33
22.	Strete	18	13	11	10	21
23.	Thurlestone	16	26	7	4	33
24.	West Alvington	9	31	33	22	5
25.	Woodleigh	2	7	14	2	8
Totals		357	585	621	401	402



# HOUSES ERECTED PRIOR TO 1946.

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>No. of Houses.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Bigbury	4	
Blackawton	4	
Kingston	6	
Loddiswell	6	
Malborough	4	
Modbury	6	
South Huish	4	
South Milton	6	
Stoke Fleming	4	
Stokenham	12	
Strete	4	
Thurlestone	9	
	—	69

## HOUSES ERECTED SINCE 1946 :

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>Village.</i>	<i>No. of Houses.</i>	<i>Total.</i>
Aveton Gifford	Aveton Gifford	6 (Temporary)	
Loddiswell	Loddiswell	10	
		4 (Temporary)	
Malborough	Malborough	3 (Temporary)	
Modbury (finished, February, 1946)	Modbury	6	
South Milton	South Milton	8	
Stokenham	Chillington	8	
	Chillington	6 (Temporary)	
Thurlestone	Thurlestone	7 (Temporary)	
West Alvington	West Alvington	4 (Temporary)	
		—	
		62 (30 Temporary)	

## HOUSES IN COURSE OF ERECTION 1948.

Blackawton	Blackawton	2	
Buckland-tout-Saints	Goveton	4	
Chivelstone	East Prawle	6	
Churchstow	Churchstow	8	
Malborough	Malborough	18	
Modbury	Modbury	26	14 finished and occupied.
Thurlestone	West Buckland	6	
		—	
		70	

## HOUSES TO BE ERECTED 1948/1949.

Kingston	Kingston	12	
Ringmore	Ringmore	4	
South Pool	South Pool	4	
Thurlestone	Thurlestone	6	
West Alvington	West Alvington	8	
		—	
		34	



**INSPECTION OF MEAT AND FOODS.** Except for emergency slaughtering, this District's fresh meat supply is killed at the Dartmouth Abattoir and inspected by that Authority's Sanitary Inspector. Whilst he is on holiday or attending Conferences this Council's Sanitary Inspector carries out the necessary inspections.

Regular visits are paid to all the grocers' shops in the District and any blown or unsound tinned stuffs are condemned. The total condemnations during the year amounted to 675lbs.

**NUISANCES.** During the year 97 miscellaneous complaints have been satisfactorily dealt with.

**DAIRIES AND COWSHEDS.** All applicants for T.T. and Accredited licences under the Designated Milk Order are visited and advised as to the Devon County Council's requirements; the subsequent alterations to the buildings and the provision of milk room and sterilizer are all supervised. Every possible help and encouragement is afforded.

Milk is now being sold from many farms for the first time, and all such premises are inspected before the necessary licences are granted.

There are many applicants under the Ministry of Agriculture's Grant-Aid Scheme for Farm Water Supplies, and all applications are referred to this Council to ensure that the proposed source of supply is satisfactory.

**HOUSING (REQUISITIONED PREMISES).** During the course of the year the periodic inspection and maintenance of requisitioned properties was handed over to the Architect's Department.

**RATS AND MICE (DESTRUCTION) ACT.** The Ministry of Food's scheme for block control laid down in Circular N.S. 12 ended in this District on 31st December, 1947.

In 1948, the Council's Rat Catcher will still be available to treat private premises free of charge, and the Council's refuse tips, sewage disposal works and other properties will receive periodic attention.

**BAKEHOUSES.** 16 bakehouses are on the register, and they are all in a satisfactory condition.

**SLAUGHTERHOUSES.** There are in the district 21 slaughter houses. These slaughter-houses are not used at present, except for casualty slaughtering.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

W. C. SMALES,

*Medical Officer of Health.*

