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KINGSBRIDGE
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the Year 1958

KINGSBRIDGE:

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KINGSBRIDGE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report
OF THE
Medical Officer of Health
FOR THE YEAR, 1958.

Medical Officer of Health : DR. R. B. WALKER, 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.

Chief Public Health Inspector : MR. D. J. COLE, M.R.S.H.

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector : MR. N. HARRIS, A.I.A.S.,
C.R.S.I.

Additional Public Health Inspector : MR. R. N. NICHOLS, F.I.A.S.,
A.M.P.H.E., M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present the Report on the health of the district for the year 1958.

The Report is in two parts, the second part contains details of matters to which reference is made in the text of the first part.

The area is mainly agricultural, although on the coast many of the inhabitants are employed in sea-faring pursuits. The beauty of the whole area, coast and inland, attracts many visitors throughout the year, the largest number, naturally, being during the summer months. Catering for these visitors is one of the main sources of livelihood for many of the residents of the district. There are situated geographically within the district, the Urban Districts of Kingsbridge and Salcombe.

PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

The personal health services are provided by various bodies, by far the greater part being under the control of the Regional Hospital Board, Devon County Council and the Local Executive Council. The environmental health services are controlled by the District Council.

The Public Health Laboratory Service has a laboratory in Plymouth for the investigation of communicable diseases and the examination of milk, water, ice-cream, foodstuffs, etc.

The Devon County Health Handbook gives details of the health and allied social services in the County of Devon. Much of its information refers to the County as a whole, but there are details of the various services provided in this district.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Notifications of many diseases are still required which appear to be quite valueless and a waste of the time of both practitioner and Public Health Department. It is hoped that sometime in the future, legislation will alter some of the present arrangements, and that the requirements will be brought more in line with modern knowledge. There have recently been administrative alterations in the payment of fees for notifications, which have reduced the amount of clerical work.

Inoculations against Poliomyelitis have been continued by the County Health Services, the age limit being raised to 25 years. Unfortunately, the response from this particularly vulnerable section of the community was not as good as it might have been. The evidence of the value of the Poliomyelitis vaccine is overwhelming, but there is not sufficient appreciation of the necessity for having it done. There is too much of the "it won't happen to me" attitude or "not now, but I will think about it. Most of those who are convinced that they will not get polio are sure that they will one day win a vast sum of money in a football pool. The odds in the latter case are much longer than the former. There is an injection to improve one's chances in the former but not in the latter. There has been a considerable amount of propaganda by posters, in newspapers, etc., but by far the most valuable form of propaganda is, I think, by word of mouth by those connected with youth organisations and by those who have themselves been inoculated or who have had their children done. There were in the District two cases of Poliomyelitis notified, both occurring in adults—one paralytic which was fatal, in a local resident, and one non-paralytic, which occurred in a visitor. The fatal case occurred in a young active man who had taken a considerable amount of exercise during the onset of the disease.

Triple Vaccine is now being used by the County Health Department. It enables immunisation against Diphtheria, Whooping Cough and Tetanus to be carried out in three injections instead of eight, which is not only pleasanter for mothers and children, but also means that more are likely to persevere to complete the course.

There was during the year a survey in part of the district by the small mobile Mass X-ray Unit. It is being increasingly found that X-ray surveys are only of value if they are intensive, aiming at attracting a high percentage of the population. If a short visit is made the majority of those presenting for X-ray are those who are in least need of X-ray or have been X-rayed before. It is of greater value to do a small section of the population as completely as possible than to do very incompletely a large section.

FOOD POISONING.

There have been no outbreaks of food poisoning. Epidemics of vomiting and diarrhoea lasting a short while do occur in both summer and winter. They are usually of so mild a nature as not to be brought to the attention of the Public Health Department. In those outbreaks which have been studied no organism has been isolated.

WATER SUPPLY.

The chief supply is by the South Devon Water Board, which continues to extend. The bacteriological standard of the water continues very high. There are still, however, several private supplies.

The new filtration plant of the South Devon Water Board is likely to be in operation during 1959. It will be one of the most up-to-date plants in the country and should ensure the absolute safety of the water, the human element having been almost completely eliminated.

SEWERAGE.

CHURCHSTOW.—After much delay the new sewerage system is now in course of construction. Although the scheme is a small one, time spent on maintenance will be heavy due to the inaccessibility of the site.

FROGMORE.—A small extension to the sewer has been completed.

HOPE COVE.—An extension to the sea outfall at Hope Cove appears to have considerably improved conditions on the beach near the breakwater. There is no visible evidence of pollution from the sewer and samples of sea-water sent for analysis confirm this.

KINGSTON.—The Ministry have approved the scheme for a new disposal works at Kingston after a public inquiry, but it has not yet been possible to start any work.

MALBOROUGH.—A short length of existing sewer has been relaid with larger pipes in an effort to overcome trouble in Great Lane. This work cannot effect a permanent cure and a more comprehensive scheme for dealing with the northern side of the village is urgently required.

RINGMORE.—Temporary measures have been taken to reduce the nuisance caused at the outfall, but a comprehensive scheme is required in this village.

MAINTENANCE.—The purchase of mechanical equipment to aid the work of sewage maintenance has proved of utmost benefit, but additional labour, to be appointed in the near future, is still urgently required in order to carry out effective maintenance of the numerous works throughout the district.

Arrangements are being made to have various sewage tanks on housing sites emptied by a private firm on a contract basis. I believe this will prove a more satisfactory arrangement, and will also provide a greater measure of control over the disposal of such material, which in the past has on occasion given rise to nuisances.

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

The conveniences at East Portlemouth have not yet been started, but it is hoped that they will be completed for the 1959 holiday season. It appears that it may be necessary at some future date to build a second convenience in this area at Mill Bay. A further convenience at Thurlestone is also under consideration. There is need for a convenience at Strete Gate, but at present there is no water available for it. There is a possibility that a public convenience will be required at Bantham some time in the future.

HOUSING.

Very little progress has been made with slum clearance during the year.

It was hoped that when Mr. Nichols was appointed as Additional Public Health Inspector a survey would be made of the housing throughout the district. A start was made but due to the pressure of other work, in particular that of meat inspection, it has not been possible to make as much progress as desired. It is important that any survey should be completed in as short a time as possible in order to obtain an accurate picture of the housing problem.

It has been interesting to note that in Loddiswell, a parish that has been surveyed, 14 per cent. of the houses inspected are considered suitable for demolition or clearance and that 53 per cent. are dwellings lacking in modern facilities and capable of improvement. It is distressing to note that at this time approximately 50 per cent. of the houses are without a hot water supply, a fixed bath, internal sanitary accommodation, or proper food storage. A great deal of improvement has been made in recent years in connection with water supply and only a small percentage of properties are without an internal supply. It should be noted that in calculating these figures, Council house properties have been omitted.

The Council continue to make Improvement Grants under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1949. Twenty-four applications were approved during the year and grants totalling £5,551 were made.

The continuation by the Council of making Improvement Grants for the improvement by owners of their properties should, in view of the information obtained by the survey, act as a good incentive for modernising such dwellings, and it should be interesting to note if and when Standard Improvement Grants are to be made available, whether such applications will be substantially increased.

HOUSES DEALT WITH AS INDIVIDUAL UNFIT OR SLUM CLEARANCE AREAS.

Represented	.....	—
Confirmed	.....	10
Not confirmed	.....	—
Demolished	.....	13
Families rehoused	.....	6

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

The number of licensed moveable dwellings has increased from 889 to 1017. Standards are gradually improving. Practically all site operators are most co-operative. It is felt that only by co-operation with and advice to the operators will the best standards be attained. It is felt that in the best interests of the locality and the visitors, it is essential that where there are aggregations of moveable dwellings there should be the highest possible standards of hygiene and cleanliness.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS.

Inspection of food premises is, I regret to report, still inadequate. The inspection of all catering establishments should be carried out at least once during the summer. Owing to shortage of inspectors this is not at present being done. During the summer inspection of moveable dwellings and food premises is a full-time job for one inspector.

MEAT INSPECTION.

Meat inspection continues to play an important part in the work of the department, and at times we are sorely pressed to maintain 100 per cent. inspection of all animals slaughtered in the district. A very great deal of overtime is necessary, and the total mileage for the year on meat inspection alone was 10,914.

Some grant is still obtainable in respect of "export meat," but the Rural Districts in which slaughterhouses are scattered throughout the area are very much "the poor relation" when it comes to sharing out the spoils, due to the excessive cost that has to be borne in travelling time and car allowances.

REFUSE DISPOSAL.

A fortnightly collection of refuse is still maintained throughout the district with one lorry and three men, but not without difficulties and a great deal of overtime.

Requests continue to be received for a more frequent collection, especially in the summer months, and also for collections from within the curtilage of individual properties.

PART II.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area—70,818 acres.

Population—11,920.

Rateable Value—£128,180.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—Est. £498.9084.

VITAL STATISTICS.

LIVE BIRTHS :

	Total	Males	Females	Birth rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.
Legitimate	165	100	65	
Illegitimate	6	4	2	14.35
	<hr/> 171	<hr/> 104	<hr/> 67	

STILL BIRTHS :	3	1	2	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still births) 11.49
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DEATHS :	142	74	68	Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population. 11.91
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Deaths as recorded under heading 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List :

	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 total live and still births.
No. 30 Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	Nil	Nil

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	.....	11.32
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births		11.69
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births		Nil

Death Rate of Infants under 4 weeks of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	.....	5.75
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births		5.85
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births		Nil

CAUSES OF DEATH.

	Male.	Female.
1. Tuberculosis of the Respiratory System	—	—
2. Other forms of Tuberculosis	—	—
3. Syphilitic Disease	—	—
4. Diphtheria	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	—	—
6. Meningococcal Infections	—	—
7. Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—
8. Measles	—	—
9. Other Infective and Parasitic Diseases	—	1
10. Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	—	—
11. Malignant Neoplasm, Lung, Bronchus	2	—
12. Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	—	4
13. Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	—	2
14. Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	9	11
15. Leukaemia, Aleukaemia	—	1
16. Diabetes	—	—
17. Vascular Lesions of Nervous System	7	9
18. Coronary Disease, Angina	19	9
19. Hypertension with Heart Disease	1	1
20. Other Heart Disease	10	9
21. Other Circulatory Disease	2	4
22. Influenza	—	—
23. Pneumonia	7	3
24. Bronchitis	3	2
25. Other Diseases of Respiratory System	—	—
26. Ulcer of Stomach and Duodenum	2	1
27. Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	—	2
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	—
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate	4	—
30. Pregnancy, Childbirth, Abortion	—	—
31. Congenital Malformations	—	—
32. Other defined and ill-defined Diseases	5	4
33. Motor Vehicle Accidents	—	—
34. All other Accidents	1	5
35. Suicide	—	—
36. Homicide and Operations of War	—	—
	<hr/> 74	<hr/> 68

INFECTIOUS DISEASES :

Measles	13
Scarlet Fever	3
Whooping Cough	8
Pneumonia	1
Poliomyelitis (non-paralytic)	1
Poliomyelitis (paralytic)	1
	—
	27
	—

TUBERCULOSIS.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1958.

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	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and over	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Totals	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1951.

REMOVAL OF PERSONS IN NEED OF CARE AND ATTENTION.

During the course of the year, no action was necessary under the provisions of the above-mentioned Acts for the removal and detention in a County Welfare Establishment for aged persons.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

LICENSED SITES AND CARAVANS.

No. of Sites.	No. of Caravans licensed.	Individual Caravans licensed.
18	1009	8

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS.

Collection and Disposal of Refuse	.....	.....	.....	57
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal	.....	.....	.....	133
Visits in connection with complaints	.....	.....	.....	36
Infectious Disease	.....	.....	.....	5
Inspections of Camping Sites	.....	.....	.....	32
Houses inspected under Public Health Act	.....	.....	.....	72
Houses inspected under Housing Acts	.....	.....	.....	79
Factories	.....	.....	.....	33
Food Premises	.....	.....	.....	88
Slaughterhouses, Butchers' Shops, Farms, etc.	.....	.....	.....	34
Dairies	.....	.....	.....	3
Schools	.....	.....	.....	4
Rodent Control	.....	.....	.....	7
Water Supply	.....	.....	.....	34
Rent Act	.....	.....	.....	17
Improvement Grants	.....	.....	.....	101
Disease of Animals Act	.....	.....	.....	16
Miscellaneous	.....	.....	.....	18

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOODS.

During the year, visits were made as follows :—

Slaughterhouses	.....	698
Butchers' Shops	.....	18
TOTAL	.....	716

The following carcasses were inspected :

Bulls	.....	.....	2
Cows	.....	.....	309
Heifers	.....	.....	421
Steers	.....	.....	569
Calves	.....	.....	288
Sheep	.....	.....	9517
Pigs	.....	.....	1615
TOTAL	.....	.....	12721

The total weight of meat condemned was 5 tons 3 cwts. and 16-lbs.

Diseased meat, etc., is collected by arrangement and converted into glues and fertilisers.

APPENDIX.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	Cattle excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs	Horses
Number killed (if known)	992	309	288	9517	1615	—
Number inspected	992	309	288	9517	1615	—
All diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticerci :						
Whole carcases condemned	4	—	4	27	1	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	125	124	5	477	54	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis and cysticerci	13.00	40.1	3.1	5.3	3.4	—
Tuberculosis only :						
Whole carcases condemned	—	3	Nil	Nil	5	—
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	12	13	Nil	Nil	34	—
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	1.2	5.1	Nil	Nil	2.4	—
Cysticercosis :						
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned.	4	—	—	—	—	—
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	4	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned	Nil	—	—	—	—	—

OTHER FOODS.

The following table indicates the number of food premises in the area, by type of business :

Bakehouses	.....	6
Butchers' Shops	.....	11
Fishmongers and Fryers		1
Ice Cream—Manufacturers		1
Retailers	.....	52
General Stores	.....	60
Dairies	.....	3
Restaurants and Cafes		18
Hotels, etc.	.....	74

REGISTRATION OF PREMISES UNDER SECTION 14 OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1955 :

Manufacture of Ice Cream		1
Sale of Ice Cream	.....	52
Manufacture of Preserved Food	.....	8
Amount of food condemned during the year	.....	27-lbs.
Number of new registrations under Section 14	.....	Nil

ICE CREAM SAMPLING :

Grade 1	.....	52
Grade 2	.....	8
Grade 3	.....	1
Grade 4	.....	3

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

PRESCRIBED PARTICULARS ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

PART I OF THE ACT.

1. INSPECTIONS for the purposes of provisions as to health
(including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector).

Premises. (1)	No. in Register. (3)	Inspections. (4)	Number of Written Notices. (5)	Occupier Prosecuted (6)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	3	3	—	—
(ii) Factories not in- cluded in (i) in which Sec. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	23	30	3	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Sec. 7 is en- forced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	—	—	—	—
TOTAL	26	33	3	—

RODENT CONTROL.

	TYPE OF PROPERTY.				
	NON-AGRICULTURAL			AGRICULTURAL	
	Dwelling Local Houses (inc. Author'y Council Houses).	All other Houses (inc. Business Premises).	Total of cols. (1) (2) and (3).		
1. Number of properties in Local Authority's District	29	4117	430	4576	748
2. Number of properties inspected as a result of :					
(a) Notification	—	74	12	86	12
(b) Survey under the Act	29	716	62	807	63
(c) Otherwise (e.g. when visited primarily for some other purpose)	—	28	12	40	17
3. Total inspections carried out—including re-inspections	238	901	94	1233	176
4. Number of properties inspected (in Sec. 2) which were found to be infested by :					
(a) Rats—Major	4	—	—	4	4
Minor	24	614	10	648	18
(b) Mice—Major	—	9	—	9	4
Minor	—	42	7	49	16
5. Number of infected properties (in Sec. 4) treated by the L.A.	28	631	8	667	3
6. Total treatments carried out—including retreatments	48	663	13	724	3
7. Number of notices served under Section 4 of the Act :					
(a) Treatment	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Structural Work (i.e. Proofing)	—	—	—	—	—
8. Number of cases in which default action was taken following the issue of a notice under Sec. 4 of the Act	—	—	—	—	—
9. Legal Proceedings	—	—	—	—	—
10. Number of "Block" control schemes carried out	107				

HOUSES.

Number of pre-war houses erected by the Council	HOUSES		BUNGALOWS		TEMPORARY	HOUSES PURCHASED RECONDITIONED	TOTAL
	Tradition	New Tradition	Tradition	New Tradition			
Number of post-war houses up to December, 1957	264	158	38	4	30	—	494
Houses constructed in Year ended December, 1958	—	—	5	—	—	3	8
Houses in course of construction, 1959	4	—	19	—	—	1	24
							595

I am, Your obedient Servant,

R. B. WALKER,

Medical Officer of Health.

July, 1959.