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KINGSBRIDGE  
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

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REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1947



KINGSBRIDGE :  
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# *Kingsbridge Urban District Council*

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CLERK TO THE COUNCIL,

Council Chambers, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2196.

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH,

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

---

CLERK TO M.O.H.

Miss ECCLES,

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2004.

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SANITARY INSPECTOR,

Council Chambers, Fore Street, Kingsbridge, S. Devon.

Telephone : Kingsbridge 2122.



KINGSBRIDGE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Annual Report

OF THE

## Medical Officer of Health

For the Year 1947

*Medical Officer of Health* DR. W. C. SMALES, M.R.C.P., 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 Sanitary Inspector* : MR. R. C. HUNT, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

MR. CHAIRMAN 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 and there has been little infectious disease during the year.

### STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)—1147½.

Population—The Registrar General's estimate of the resident population—2,971.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1947) according to the Rate Book—925.

Number of unoccupied houses—Nil.

Rateable Value—£21,058.

Sum represented by a Penny Rate—£83.

The town of Kingsbridge is the market centre of an agricultural and highly attractive country district, and its inhabitants are mainly engaged in commerce. Unemployment has not had any prejudicial effect on the general health of the community.

The social conditions are generally favourable to health and longevity.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births—Male, 35. Female, 31. Total, 66.

Live (legitimate)—Male, 34. Female, 30. Total, 64.

Live (illegitimate)—Male, 1. Female, 1. Total, 2.

BIRTH RATE per 1,000 of the estimated population—22.24.

STILL BIRTHS—1. Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births—14.92.



DEATHS—37. Death rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—12.45.

Deaths from Puerperal Causes—Nil.

Deaths of Infants under 1 year—2.

Death rate of Infants under one year of age—

(a) All infants per 1,000 live births—30.30.

(b) Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births—31.28.

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

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)—4.

Deaths from Influenza (all ages)—1.

Deaths from Syphilitic Diseases—Nil.

Deaths from other diseases of the Circulatory System—Nil.

Deaths from Bronchitis—3.

Deaths from Intra. Cran. Vasc. Lesions—5.

The conditions of occupation, and of environment, on the whole have not had a prejudicial influence on the general health or mortality.

#### **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 Rural District, Salcombe Urban District, Kingsbridge and Salcombe Port Sanitary Authority, and Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board).

Deputy Medical Officer of Health (occasional).

One full-time Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector.

LABORATORY FACILITIES are provided by the County Council for the examination of milk and water in addition to the usual bacteriological examinations.

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

THE SOUTH HAMS COTTAGE HOSPITAL provides 16 beds for patients from Kingsbridge and the surrounding district

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**—None in the district, but by arrangement with the Plymouth City Council, infectious cases requiring hospital treatment may be sent to the Swilly Isolation Hospital, Plymouth.

The arrangement referred to is provisional only, pending the completion and adoption of a Scheme under Section 63 of the Local Government Act, 1929, for the provision of hospital accommodation for this part of the Administrative County, and which Scheme is in the course of preparation.

**NURSING IN THE HOME**—The Kingsbridge Nursing Association is doing excellent work.

**MIDWIVES**—The Midwives Act is administered by the County Council.

**MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE CENTRE**—There is a Centre in Kingsbridge, which is open on Wednesdays each week. The attendance has been very good during the year.

**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, held at the Mutley Assembly Rooms, Plymouth.

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

Diseases.	Total Cases Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	3	—	—
Measles	14	4	—
Whooping Cough	1	—	—
	18	4	—



There was little infectious disease in the district during the year under review. A few cases of measles (14) were notified. There was no case of Diphtheria and only 3 of Scarlet Fever.

**DIPHTHERIA.**—I would again emphasise that in the treatment of Diphtheria, serum should be given at the earliest possible moment and preferably in one adequately large dose.

The doctor should never wait for the laboratory report before giving antitoxin if he considers on clinical grounds that the patient may be suffering from Diphtheria.

Every attempt should be made by means of bus or passenger train services, special messengers, or by personal delivery to ensure that the swab reaches the laboratory in as short a time as possible after it is taken.

It is important to obtain immediate medical advice in cases of suspected Diphtheria.

**DIPHTHERIA IMMUNIZATION.**—The methods so successful in the past were continued and it can be said with confidence that if a child is not protected against Diphtheria it is not for the want of effort on the part of all concerned.

*Completed.*  
46

*Maintenance dose.*  
117

## 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	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
25—35 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
35—45 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45—55 years	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55—65 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 years and upwards	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
TOTALS	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—

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



## **SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.**

**WATER SUPPLY** (Moorland Supply) from Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board.

The Water Supply is derived from the Kingsbridge and Salcombe Water Board, and is satisfactory in quality and quantity.

Bacteriological examinations of the raw water are made by the Water Board ; six samples of water going into supply were submitted for analysis, and were satisfactory.

No trace of lead was detected in chemical examinations of this water.

The water is chlorinated.

**DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**—Certain aspects of this system are still under investigation.

**PUBLIC CLEANSING.**—No alteration in the system, which is satisfactory in all respects.

## **HOUSING.**

### **CONTRACT FOR 30 HOUSES—RACK PARK.**

Owing to difficulties with labour and materials it was not found possible to complete the above scheme during the year. By the end of 1947, 10 houses had been completed and occupied, and it is anticipated that the remaining 20 will be completed by August, 1948. During the year four additional dwellings were provided by the conversion of part of the Old Public Assistance Institution.

**FOOD SUPPLY.**—Amounts of unfit foods condemned and destroyed :

Various foodstuffs—1 ton 5 cwts.

Various tinned foods—319 tins.

**MILK.**—Number of cowkeepers or dairymen on registers at end of year : Retail, 9 ; Wholesale, 5 ; Total, 14.

**BAKEHOUSES.**—Number in district—4.

**SLAUGHTERHOUSES.**—None in use, but the original three are still kept for future use.

**DISINFECTIONS.**—Number of houses disinfected :

Ordinary Infectious Diseases ..... 4

Rooms and furniture are disinfected with a formalin spray.

**SCHOOLS.**—The three County Schools are in a satisfactory condition.



## NUISANCES, Etc.

Number of complaints received and investigated	7
Nuisances discovered as result of above	3
Number of notices issued	1
Premises on which nuisances were abated	—
Number and nature of nuisances abated	—
Houses renovated or repaired	6
Total number of inspections in connection with erection of new houses and conversions (including new Council houses)	280
Total number of inspections in connection with Public Health	169

Your obedient Servant,

W. C. SMALES,

*Medical Officer of Health.*