

[Report 1947] / Medical Officer of Health, Mexborough U.D.C.

Contributors

Mexborough (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1947

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**MEXBORO'
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL**



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Annual REPORTS

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and the

Sanitary Inspector

for

the Year 1947.



1947

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Dr. T. LINDSAY, M.B., Ch.B.

Sanitary Inspector and Director of Public Cleansing :

H. BREARLEY, Cert.S.I.B., M.S.I.A.

General Assistant :

R. L. McALLISTER.

Clerk :

T. J. TAYLOR.

Mexborough Urban District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31st, 1947.

To the Chairman and Members of the
Mexborough Urban District Council.

Gentlemen,

I have the honour and pleasure to present my Annual Report on the health of the Mexborough Urban District for the year ended 31st December, 1947.

Natural and Social Conditions.

Mexborough is a compact market town of 1451 acres and fringed with collieries, in the heart of industrial South Yorkshire. It is built for the most part on sandstone and gradually rising ground on the north side of the river Don which form the Southern boundary of the Urban District. The chief occupations are Mining, Engineering and Printing.

General Statistics.

Area of the District	... ..	1,451 acres
Population (Mid 1947)	... ..	19,080
Height above sea level	... ..	50 to 150 ft.
No. of houses occupied	... ..	4,914
Average No. of Persons per house	... ..	3.88
Rateable value	... ..	£97,897
Sum produced by 1d. rate	... ..	£368/11/4d.
Rainfall for 1947	... ..	18.06 inches
No. of days on which rain fell	... ..	147 days
Mean temperature	... ..	50°F

Vital Statistics.

Live Births :

	Males	Females	Totals
Legitimate births ...	202	190	392
Illegitimate births ...	10	7	17
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	212	197	409
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Birth rate per 1,000 population 21·4.

These figures show a large increase on the figures for 1946—total births 303 with a birth rate of 15·7 per 1,000 population.

Still Births.

	Males	Females	Totals
Legitimate birth ...	4	5	9

This represents a rate of 23·9 per 1,000 total (live and still) births.

Deaths.

Males	Females	Totals
119	85	204

These figures give a crude death rate of 10·7 per 1,000 population which shows an increase on the 1946 figure of 7·7 per 1,000 population when only 149 deaths were registered.

Maternal Deaths.

During the year there was one maternal death due to Haemorrhage caused by an abortion. This represents a maternal mortality rate of 2·39 per 1,000 live and still births.

Infant Mortality.

In 1947 there were 19 deaths of infants under one year of age which represents an infant mortality rate of 46·5 per 1,000 live births. This figure shows a considerable improvement on 1946 when the infant mortality rate was 59·4 per 1,000 live births.

	Males	Females	Total
Deaths from Cancer all ages ...	15	20	35
Deaths from Measles all ages ...	—	1	1
Deaths			
from Whooping Cough all ages	1	—	1
Deaths			
from Diarrhoea under two years	1	—	1

For the purposes of comparison a table is given below of the principal vital statistics for 1947 for other West Riding Urban Districts, the West Riding Administrative County, and provisional figures for England and Wales.

	Mexborough Urban District	Aggregate West Riding Urban Districts	West Riding Admin. County	England & Wales. (Provisional figures)
BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 estimated population)	21.4	21.6	21.5	20.5
DEATH RATES:— (All per 1,000 estimated population)				
All Causes	10.7	12.7	12.3	12.0
Zymotic Diseases (seven principal) ...	0.16	0.16	0.16	xx
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	0.26	0.38	0.39	0.47
Other Forms of Tuberculosis	0.21	0.09	0.09	0.08
Respiratory Diseases (excluding tuberculosis of respiratory system)	1.83	1.41	1.37	xx
Cancer	1.83	1.87	1.80	1.85
Heart and Circulatory Diseases	2.41	4.23	3.98	xx
INFANT MORTALITY (Deaths under one year per 1,000 live births)	46.5	44	45	41
DIARRHOEA (Deaths in infants under 2 years of age per 1,000 live births)	2.44	5.17	5.31	5.8
MATERNAL MORTALITY (Deaths of Mothers in childbirth per 1,000 live and still births)				
Puerperal Sepsis ...	Nil	0.24	0.21	0.26
Other Causes ...	2.39	0.88	1.07	0.91
Total	2.39	1.12	1.28	1.17

xx No figures available.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Clinic was transferred in the early part of the year from Upper Market Place to the former War-Time Nursery, Adwick Road. These premises are much more suitable and in a more satisfactory state of repair. Two sessions weekly are held on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, and the Medical Officer of Health is in attendance at all sessions, assisted by two Health Visitors, and by a Voluntary Ladies Committee. The Centre is being well patronised by Mothers and attendances during the year shew an increase on the figures for 1946. During the year 6067 attendances were made by Mothers with their children in the following age-groups:—

Children under One year	... ..	4,291
Children aged One to Five years	... ..	1,776

Infectious Diseases.

During 1947, a total of 454 notifications of Infectious Diseases were received as shewn in the following table:—

Poliomyelitis	... ..	1
Diphtheria	... ..	1
Erysipelas	... ..	4
Measles	... ..	322
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	... ..	2
Pneumonia	... ..	23
Scarlet Fever	... ..	29
Typhoid	... ..	1
Whooping Cough	... ..	71
		<hr/>
		454
		<hr/>

23 of the above cases were admitted to Isolation Hospital, made up as follows:— Diphtheria 1; Measles 3; Scarlet Fever 18; Typhoid 1.

The case of Diphtheria had not been immunised.

In the case of the Poliomyelitis this occurred in a child of four years of age not normally resident in your district, who was admitted to Montagu Hospital and then diagnosed as a case of Anterior Poliomyelitis, and transferred.

Tuberculosis.

Eleven cases of Tuberculosis were notified in your District for the first time during 1947 as shewn in the following table :—

Age-Group years	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	
	Males	Females
5—15	—	1
15—25	2	1
25—35	2	2
35—45	2	—
45—55	—	1
Totals	6	5

There were no cases of Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified during 1947.

During 1947, 4 Males and 1 Female died from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and 3 Males and 1 Female died from other forms of Tuberculosis.

The numbers remaining on the Register at the 31st December, 1947 were :—

Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
Males	Females	Males	Females
47	34	1	7

Diphtheria Immunisation.

Diphtheria immunisation is carried out at special clinics held on Friday afternoons in the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre at Adwick Road, under the supervision of the Medical Officer of Health, and in the Schools. During the year under review 152 children were fully immunised, and 42 children received a secondary or reinforcing injection. The percentage of child population immunised up to the 31st December, 1947 is as follows :—

Under 4 years	5—14 years	Total
18%	50.5%	37.5%

Scabies.

The former war-time cleansing station in Victoria Road has been used as a special clinic for the out-patient's treatment of cases of Scabies. The clinic is run under the supervision of the Medical Officer of Health with the help of a part-time Nurse. Medicinal supplies were obtained through the West Riding County Council, and during the year 18 cases, 9 Males and 9 Females, received treatment, which proved successful in all cases.

Water.

The Town's supply is derived from a Borehole at the Waterworks, Pitt Street, Mexborough, and from Ludwell Springs delivering by gravitation to these Works. The supply has been satisfactory in quality and quantity and chlorination was maintained throughout the year. 22 samples were submitted for bacteriological examination, 20 at source and 2 from the piped supply and with the exception of 2 samples which fell in Class II and IV respectively, all samples were Class I. 2 samples from the piped supply were submitted for chemical analysis and were satisfactory. The works have been satisfactorily maintained in all respects during the year.

Sewage Disposal.

The works have been satisfactorily maintained during the year and no complaints with relation to the final effluent were received from the West Riding Rivers Board.

T. LINDSAY,

Medical Officer of Health.

**ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR
FOR YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1947.**

To the Chairman and Members of the
Mexborough Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman, Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my Annual Report on the work of the Sanitary Department during 1947.

Sanitary Inspections of the District.

A total of 2,947 inspections were made by the staff, and these were allocated as follows:—

Nature of Inspections	No. of Inspections
Factories	41
Bakehouses	27
Drainage	101
Offensive Trades	36
Common Lodging Houses	6
Temporary Dwellings	32
Rats & Mice	111
Shops	90
Infectious Diseases	67
Houses	2108
Slaughter houses	103
Ice Cream Premises	49
Restaurants	17
Cowsheds, Dairies & Milkshops	57
Smoke inspections	9
Miscellaneous	93
	2,947

Complaints.

601 complaints were received at the office and these received attention. The majority of the complaints were concerning housing defects. Informal action was taken in each case, followed by formal action where necessary. At the end of the year 15 complaints were outstanding.

Notices Served.

Number of informal written notices served requiring nuisances and defects to be remedied	1507
Number complied with	1489
Number of verbal notices given	24
Number complied with	24
Number of Statutory Notices served	14
Number complied with	14

Housing.

A good deal of time has been devoted to Housing Work and repairs have been carried out to 816 houses. It was not possible to consider a full housing repair policy owing to the shortage of materials and labour but efforts were made to carry out the most essential repairs. The 250 houses which were to have been scheduled for demolition before the war necessitated many visits from contractors but in spite of repairs these houses are never satisfactory. Not until demolition work is allowed to proceed will the problem of the older "bad" houses, be solved.

Total number of houses inspected for defects (Public Health and Housing Acts)	848
Total defects found	2,210
Total defects remedied	2,150
Number of houses in the District	4,832

The following defects were remedied under the Public Health and Housing Acts :—

Chimneys repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	137
Roof repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	515
Windows repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	74
Damp walls remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	132
New sinks	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Plaster renewed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	200
Coppers renewed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Eaves gutters renewed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	442
Rain water pipes renewed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	62
Floors repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20
Range repairs	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	132
Walls repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	31
Sink Pipes renewed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5
Water in cellars remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22
Doors repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	19
W.Cs. repaired	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	147
Smoke nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Choked drains released	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	100
Drains reconstructed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
New drains	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
New man-holes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Man-holes reconstructed	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	11
New W.Cs.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
New gullies	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Yard paving	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Handrails provided	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Defective steps remedied	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2

2,150

In addition one nuisance caused by the keeping of animals was abated.

Overcrowding.

The problem of overcrowding has increased owing to an influx of people to work in essential industries, e.g., mining, and young married couples having to take residence with parents.

To help to abate cases of overcrowding the Council in their house letting scheme awarded points to overcrowded families, with the result that 24 overcrowded families were found alternative accommodation.

Tents, Vans, Sheds.

Temporary dwellings showed a decrease, and apart from 15 vans which periodically were stationed in the Fair Ground, there were no other vans in the urban area.

Common Lodging Houses.

The one Common Lodging House in the area was inspected eight times and was found to be well kept.

Dirty and Verminous Premises.

Regular inspections were carried out for cleanliness and forty-nine houses were found to be in a verminous condition, of which five were Council owned houses. Disinfestation with D.D.T. was carried out in each case.

Squatters.

At the beginning of the year there were twenty-three families squatting, thirteen families in disused N.A.A.F.I. huts adjoining the Drill Hall, eight families in huts at the Trainee Miner's Hostel and two families in houses upon which closing orders were operative. In the course of the year eight families from the Miners' Hostel were given alternative accommodation, while the thirteen families at the Drill Hall were reduced to ten.

The Department has had all the premises under observation frequently, and improvements in living conditions were carried out though unfortunately some of the squatting families had not a sense of cleanliness.

Rodent Control.

The town was surveyed in accordance with Ministry of Food schemes for rodent control. All reported cases of infestations were treated. Four major infestations were found and considerably reduced. A ten per cent check treatment of the sewage system was carried out and the Council's Sewage Works and Tipping Areas were dealt with for rodent infestation.

A preliminary survey for block control measures against infestation was carried out in respect of the whole town.

Premises inspected	...	...	...	...	...	...	792
No. infested and treated	...	...	...	...	...	...	416
No. of baiting points laid	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,827
Post-baits showing infestations cleared	...	...	...	...	...	...	354

Atmospheric Pollution.

The serious nuisance caused by the sulphurous fumes and grit from the Electricity Generating Station continued intermittently throughout the year. Three Lead Peroxide gauges for the measurement of sulphur pollution were set up in 1946, and readings from them were continued throughout 1947. These showed variable concentrations of sulphur according to the prevailing wind.

The matter was taken up by the Council with the Yorkshire Electric Power Company, The Ministry of Fuel and Power, and the Electricity Commissioners with a view to steps being taken to eradicate the nuisance. Unfortunately, though these departments realized the severity of the nuisance, the economic state of the country was such that remedial measures would have to wait for a more favourable time.

Below are shown the readings of the Lead Peroxide Gauges showing the variations in sulphur pollution during the period under review:—

Period	Station	Area Exposed in sq. cm.	Wt. Ba SO ₄			Wt. of SO ₃ collected mg./ 100 sq. cm./day
			in sample (mg.)	in control (mg.)	due to exposure (mg.)	
Jan./Feb.	Market Hall	98.2	489.0	3.0	486.0	2.88
	Sewage Farm	97.8	615.0	3.0	612.0	3.64
	Water Tower	99.4	467.0	3.0	464.0	2.72
Mar./Apr.	Market Hall	98.8	308.0	3.0	305.0	1.74
	Sewage Farm	98.6	482.5	3.0	479.5	2.74
	Water Tower	99.0	325.0	3.0	322.0	1.83
May/June	Market Hall	99.4	358.0	3.0	355.0	2.01
	Sewage Farm	99.5	657.0	3.0	654.0	3.70
	Water Tower	100.0	344.0	3.0	341.0	1.92
July/Aug.	Market Hall	99.4	281.8	3.0	278.8	1.55
	Sewage Farm	99.5	272.0	3.0	269.0	1.50
	Water Tower	100.0	330.0	3.0	327.0	1.81
Sept./Oct.	Market Hall	99.9	533.0	3.0	530.0	3.01
	Sewage Farm	99.9	654.0	3.0	651.0	3.67
	Water Tower	98.5	600.0	3.0	597.0	3.41
Nov./Dec.	Market Hall	99.0	698.0	3.0	695.0	3.89
	Sewage Works	97.9	601.0	3.0	598.0	3.38
	Water Tower	99.9	546.0	3.0	543.0	3.01

Food Inspection.

The District continues to obtain its supply of meat from the Doncaster Abattoir and consequently no slaughter houses were licensed for the slaughter of animals for human consumption.

One hundred and forty-seven inspections were made of cottagers' pigs, though quite a number are slaughtered without the knowledge of this Department.

It is apparent that until the legal position is changed with regard to the slaughtering of cottagers' pigs, there can never be efficient control by this Department over this source of food. With help from the local Food Executive Officer, this Department has attempted to get all owners of cottagers' pigs to notify slaughter, in order that an efficient inspection of the carcase can be carried out.

Periodical visits were made to the Meat Receiving Depot, and weekly visits to wholesale grocers' premises and retail shops.

The following amounts of foodstuffs were found to be unfit for human consumption:—

188	Tins Milk	118	lbs. Rolled Oats
1	Tin Veal Loaf	3	Tins Mussels
89	Tins Beans	133	Tins Peas
12	lbs. Chocolate Cake Mixture	1	lb. Semolina
3	Tins Apricots	14	Tins Peaches
300	lbs. Jam	25	lbs. Dried Apricots
12	lbs. Marmalade	132	Tins Parsnips
42	Meat Pies	25	Boxes Mackerel
13	Tins Pilchards	37	Stone Fillets
20	Tins Grapefruit	1	Pig Carcase and Organs (Septicæmia)
30	lbs. Biscuits	17½	lbs. Roast Beef
26	lbs. Tomatoes	4	Stone Melts
8	Tins Pears	125	lbs. Canadian Beef
144	lbs. Black Puddings	42	lbs. Sausages
1	Tin Chicken	55	Tins Sausages
11	lbs. 6 oz. Chicken	4	lbs. Pressed Beef
7½	lbs. Turkey	36	Tins Pork Ham
1	Fish Cake	12	lbs. Ox Tongue
2	Tins Crab	89½	lbs. Apples
715	Stone Fish	46	Tins Meat & Vegetables
16	Stone Bloaters	28	Jars Pickles
8½	lbs. Beast Heart	10½	lbs. Cheese
1	Bottle Coffee		

12 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. Liver	204 Eggs
3 Tins Fish Paste	28 lbs Prunes
318 lbs. Macaroni	30 Tins Beef Loaf
17 Tins Soup	2 Tins Luncheon Meat
1 Tin Cocoa	12 lbs. Mincemeat
12 Tins Carrots	8 lbs. Lemon Cheese
12 Pkts. Shredded Wheat	22 lbs. Onions
29 Jars Red Cabbage	2 lbs. Kidney Beans
6 Tins Plums	53 Steak & Kidney Puddings
4 lbs. 12 oz. Bacon	12 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. Corned Beef
17 lbs. Dates	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. Kidney
1 Tin Brislings	113 lbs. Flour
11 lbs. Honey	2 cwts. Spaghetti
15 Pkts. Dried Eggs	

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.

Ten licences to slaughter or stun animals were issued during the year.

Food Preparing Premises.

The following food preparing premises are registered with this authority :—

Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Tripe Boilers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Preparation and manufacture of sausages, pressed pickled or preserved foods	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Fish Friers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	23

Frequent inspections of the above premises were carried out and improvements effected in four cases.

Ice Cream.

Fourteen premises were registered for sale of ice cream, most of which was of a well-known manufacture and sold in a wrapped condition. Three samples were taken for bacteriological examination, one of which was found to be unsatisfactory, and in this case, after approach from this Department, the manufacturer closed down until new premises and plant could be obtained.

Milk Production.

There are four farms in the area, all of which produce milk.

Total No. of cows	...	...	...	...	...	...	57
Total No. of cowsheds	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Inspections	...	...	...	...	...	...	47

Public Cleansing.

A weekly collection of refuse was maintained as far as possible but this was seriously interrupted in the February-March period, when excessive frost and snow were experienced. The service was operated by a staff of twenty employees and three Karrier Bantam Refuse Collectors.

A total of 184,459 bin premises were given attention and 3,471 loads of refuse were disposed of by controlled tipping. In addition, there were 266 trade refuse loads and a weekly service for the cleansing of 19 pail closets in a remote part of the town.

The cost of refuse collection and disposal was £5,807.

Salvage.

The following quantities of waste materials were collected by the Department and sold as salvage :—

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.	lbs.
Waste Paper	88	0	3	14
Cullet	3	2	3	0
Textiles	1	5	3	11
Scrap Metals	—	11	1	0
Bottles and Jars	479	Dozens.		

The income received was £610/19/7d., an increase on last year's figures of £47/1/8d. A bonus scheme for the employees has been in operation, and no doubt this has given the collectors incentive to effort.

Conclusion.

Housing work still continues to be the major job of this Department. The town consists, in the main, of old terraced property, on which the war has taken its toll, and I

feel that the question of demolition of some of the older property will have to be considered at the first opportunity. In the meantime, we can only attempt to carry out essential repairs.

Overcrowding has seriously increased, and is fast becoming a major problem, and at the present rate of building a problem which will not be easily remedied.

"Squatters", I am afraid, will remain with us for some little time, and strict supervision by this Department will be needed.

Rodent infestation work has now become a job on its own, and I feel it will be necessary to employ an operator on this work. The town is not badly infested, but there are areas in the town, adjoining the canal and river which could become danger spots if allowed.

The emission of sulphur grit from the generating station is a problem which still confronts us. Evidence of pollution will continue to be compiled and no effort spared to remedy the matter. However, I feel in this case, that the economic status of the country is the main deterrent to our efforts.

This year, foodstuffs have arrived in the town in a better condition, and there is an indication that quality and handling are improving.

The question of refuse collection and disposal is one which will have to be given attention in the future. As more and more houses are built there will be need for at least one more collection vehicle, and more staff. The present tipping site is fast becoming filled up and more land will have to be made available.

The year 1947 has been one of many difficulties for the Department, but the eager co-operation of the Council has assisted in overcoming many of these. I look to the future with every confidence.

H. BREARLEY,

Sanitary Inspector.





