

[Report 1940] / Medical Officer of Health, Midhurst R.D.C.

Contributors

Midhurst (England). Rural District Council.

Publication/Creation

1940

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/bg4t2gdz>

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.



Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

MIDHURST RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1940.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE MIDHURST RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This, the sixty-seventh report of the series, again appears in the attenuated form decreed by war-time conditions. It records the barest statistical details of what has been in other respects one of the most eventful but one of the least described years in the history of the district. To an even greater extent than the year 1939 it has been a year of sanitary frustration, with an end to all public undertakings and a shortage of building materials that has at times brought even the most essential of works to a stop. Yet in spite of all, the year has been a decidedly healthy one: and though it is too early to speak with certainty, there is no statistical or apparent evidence that the war has produced any physical deterioration in the well-being of the district. Indeed, it is possible that the reverse is the case. Rationing has produced a diminution in the consumption of many foods of doubtful benefit such as sugar, while improving the quality of others such as margarine. Shortage of condensed milk has removed the open tin which used to be so constant a feature of the country cottage, and has substituted for it the fresh or dried milk of the national milk scheme. At the same time the control of prices has kept the supply of meat etc. within the reach of the agricultural worker, whose wages have shewn a slight improvement, and who, in any case, has always enjoyed a supply of garden produce above the average. What is probably the most important single factor, namely nutrition, is thus perhaps better for the agricultural worker than it has ever been, but overcrowding, which must be ranked as one of the most serious possible handicaps, not only remains but has become worse, and is liable at any moment to produce the harmful effects noted below in connection with an outbreak of Diphtheria.

Your public health activities were lucky in not having to be restricted owing to loss of staff. To all of these, to the ladies of the W.V.S., and to the officers of other Departments whose co-operation has been so helpful, I am again glad to have an opportunity of expressing my thanks.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

J.L. NEWMAN.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE RURAL DISTRICT
COUNCIL.

J.L. Newman, M.D. Cantab., M.R.C.P. Lond., D.P.H.
Medical Officer of Health, also Assistant County and
Assistant School Medical Officer, West Sussex County
Council.

T.G. Henry, A.R.S.I.
Senior Sanitary Inspector. Inspector under the
Petroleum Consolidated Act. Fuel Control Officer.

F. Lockwood, A.R.S.I.
Assistant Sanitary Inspector

L.H. Newham.
Clerk.

SECTION A.

Area (acres)	66,892.
Registrar General's estimate of resident population (mid 1940).....	18,100.
Estimated No. of inhabited houses according to Rate Books.....	4,600
Rateable Value	£106,206
Sum represented by a penny rate	£425
Number of new houses erected in 1940.....	47
Number of Council Houses erected in 1940.....	8

VITAL STATISTICS, 1940.

1 a. Live Births.	M.	F.	Total.
Legitimate.	98	83	181
Illegitimate.	4	4	8
Total	102	87	189

b. Birth rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population - 10.44

2.a. Still births.			
Legitimate.	1	1	2
Illegitimate.	0	0	0
Total	1	1	2

b. Rate per 1000 total (live and still) births - 10.58

3.a. Deaths.	97	118	215
--------------	----	-----	-----

b. Standardised death rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population
9.86

4.a. Deaths from puerperal causes.			
1. No. 29 puerperal sepsis	1		
2. No. 30 other causes		0	
Total	1		

b. Rate per 1000 total births - 5.29

5.a. Deaths of infants under 1 year of age.			
Legitimate	1	3	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0
Total	1	3	4

b. Death rate of infants under 1 year of age.
 Legitimate infants per 1000 legitimate live births - 21.39
 Illegitimate " " " illegitimate " " - 0.00
 All " " " " " - 20.51

6. Deaths from cancer	8	13	21	Rate per 1000 - 1.16
7. " " Measles				} Nil
8. " " Whooping cough				
9. " " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)				

CAUSES OF DEATH.

	M.	F.	Total
1. Typhoid & paratyphoid fevers	0	0	0
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	1	0	1
3. Scarlet fever	0	0	0
4. Whooping cough	0	0	0
5. Diphtheria	0	0	0
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory system	0	4	4
7. Tuberculosis (other forms)	0	1	1
8. Syphilitic diseases	1	0	0
9. Influenza	2	3	5
10. Measles	0	0	0
11. Acute Poliomyelitis or encephalitis	0	0	0
12. Acute Infect. Encephalitis	0	0	0
13. Cancer of mouth, vesoph. or uterus	0	1	1
14. " " stomach	1	1	2
15. " " breast	0	3	3
16. " other sites	7	8	15
17. Diabetes	3	0	3
18. Intercranial vascular lesions	13	26	39
19. Heart Disease	22	31	53
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	3	5	8
21. Bronchitis	3	5	8
22. Pneumonia	4	4	8
23. Other respiratory diseases.	5	2	7
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	3	0	3
25. Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	0	0	0
26. Appendicitis	1	0	1
27. Other digestive diseases	3	2	5
28. Nephritis	4	1	5
29. Puerperal sepsis	0	1	1
30. Other maternal causes	0	0	0
31. Premature birth	1	0	1
32. Cong. mal: birth injury: inf. vis.	0	1	1
33. Suicide	1	0	1
34. Road traffic accident	0	0	0
35. Other violent causes	6	1	7
37. All other causes	13	18	31
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	97	118	215

SECTION B

(ii) (e)

The private "sick bays" for sick evacuees came to an end with 1939, at a time when the number of such persons in the district was:-

Unaccompanied children	1660
Accompanied "	106
Mothers	54
Teachers.....	148
Helpers.....	35
	<hr/>
	2003

An auxiliary hospital with 26 beds was opened at "Ganavan", Cocking, kindly lent for the purpose by Mr. McArthur. The management has been in the hands of Mr. C.F. Linton, Evacuation Officer, under the supervision of a sub-committee of the Council (Chairman Mr. H.J.R. Murray). In the first place Mrs. G. Craigie Halkett was matron and Miss M. Butcher Sister, but the number of sick children was never great, and by the beginning of July it was decided to close. Negotiations with the Petworth Rural District Council followed for a combined plan of action to deal with sick and difficult children, and though a complete arrangement was not arrived at Ganavan was reopened on October 14th to serve the sick of both districts. Miss E. Newall, S.R.N., became matron and Miss L. Stringer, S.R.N., Sister.

Medical attendance was at first provided by the patients' own doctors, and, when they did not attend, by the M.O.H. Since it has been made possible for patients to be transferred to the care of doctors who visit regularly the M.O.H. has no longer given any treatment; and the present system is working well but for the difficulties caused by the lack of any reserve of drugs or dressings.

Every effort was made to discourage the admission of children whose difficulties were temperamental rather than physical. A wide variety of diseases was treated but most were infectious.

"Scabies"	70
Measles	12
German Measles	2
Whooping cough	1
Etc.	26

SECTION C.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. Water.

- a. Public main supplies are derived from the Wey Valley Water Co., the Petersfield Rural District Council main and the Council's own main supply. The results of samples were as follows.

Satisfactory	15
Doubtful.....	2
Unsatisfactory.....	0

The Rotherfield reserve reservoir and the Henley subsidiary supply were the two which gave results shewing that a higher degree of bacterial purity was desirable. The former is in the supply for which, as required by the Minister of Health, chlorination has now been installed.

- b. Private main supplies. The Cowdray Estate supplies to Heyshott and Cocking gave consistently unsatisfactory results and are now being chlorinated. The same estate's supply to Bepton has also been of doubtful purity but in this case a careful survey of the areas involved shewed that the water was collected from the North side of the Downs where contamination from human sources seemed to be impossible. Another supply that gave trouble was that at Wispers at Stedham, then used by a school and later by the R.A.M.C.; but it was possible, by excluding certain less desirable sources, to produce a satisfactory improvement in its quality. At Harting an extension to a new standpipe in Tipper Lane provides for the new Council Houses. Altogether sampling gave the following results:-

Satisfactory	28
Doubtful.....	7
Unsatisfactory.....	9
	44

- c. Springs and wells, as in previous years, have been a source of difficulty. The twelve cottages at Terwick which had gone short for years had a bore sunk. Sampling of other supplies gave the following results:-

Satisfactory.....	6
Doubtful.....	13
Unsatisfactory.....	12
" (metallic contamination)	2
	23

2. Rivers and Streams. During the dry weather South Pond Midhurst was the cause of a nuisance that gave rise to many complaints. The trouble was caused by polluted waters gaining access to it, combined with stagnation and decaying vegetation. Owing to labour shortage it was impossible for the owners to have the pond cleaned out, but fortunately the trouble was seasonal and has not since recurred.

3. (iii) Sanitary inspection of the area.

Complaints received.....	52
Informal Notices Served.....	233
Informal Notices Complied with.....	195
Statutory Notices, Section 93 of the Public Health Act,	
1936.....	12
" " Section 59(5) of the Housing Act, 1936.....	1
" " Section 168 of the Housing Act, 1936....	1

Visits made:-

Housing First Visits	390
Housing Re-Visits.....	911
Overcrowding.....	2265
Drainage and Sanitary Conveniences.....	1139
Water Supplies.....	913
Sewerage.....	7
Privies, Ditches and Cesspools.....	220
Stables and Piggeries.....	3
Refuse and Accumulations.....	27
Verminous Premises.....	5
Rats and Mice (Destruction) Act.....	34
Schools.....	62
Moveable Dwellings.....	57
Infectious Diseases.....	160
Miscellaneous.....	128

(iv) Shops and Offices.

Visits made.....	34
Notices Served	5
Notices Complied with.....	2

(v) Camping Sites.

(1) The number of camping sites in the area which were used for camping purposes during 1940..... Unknown.

(2) The number of camping sites in respect of which licences have been issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936:-

Licences to erect or station and use a moveable dwelling.....	16
Licences to use land as a site for moveable dwellings.....	2

(viii) Eradication of Bed Bugs.

One house was found to be infested and subsequently cleansed of vermin. The trouble arose through infested bedding being brought into the District by refugees.

(ix) Factories and Workshops.

1. Inspections -

Premises.	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories with mechanical power	33	6	-
Factories without mechanical power.	103	14	-
Other premises.	-	-	-
	136	20	-

2. Defects Found -

Particulars.	Number of defects.			
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	Prosecuted.
Want of Cleanliness.	14	11	-	-
Overcrowding.	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature.	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation.	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors.	1	-	-	-
Insufficient sanitary conveniences.	5	4	-	-
Other offences. (Water Supply).	1	1	-	-
	21	16	-	-

SECTION D.

HOUSING.

1. Inspection of dwelling-houses during the year:-

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)..... 390
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..... 573
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925..... 169
- (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose..... 338
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation..... 23
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation..... 268

2. Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal notices:-

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers 129

3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:-

B. - Proceedings under Public Health Acts:-

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied..... 12
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:-
 - (a) By owners..... 3
 - (b) By Local Authority in default of owners..... 0

C. - Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:-

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made.....	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders.....	1
(3) Number of houses made fit for human habitation under Undertakings given.....	15

OVERCROWDING.

Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding:-

A. - (1) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year.....	30
(2) Number of families dwelling therein.....	33
(3) Number of persons dwelling therein.....	218
B. - Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year.....	37
C. - (1) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year.....	25
(2) Number of persons concerned in such cases.....	200
D. - Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of Overcrowding.	0

These figures shew a deterioration in the position compared with last year, when 125 persons were living under overcrowded conditions and only one new case was reported. The influx of more evacuees was known to be causing overcrowding in the smaller houses but not in the larger ones, as a special survey was carried out to try to put an end to it. Meanwhile Diphtheria broke out in one house where twelve people were sharing a single sitting room, and five of them fell victims to it. Following this, representations were made to the Minister of Health that Midhurst was coming to be an unsuitable place in which to billet many more people; and a meeting was held between the Senior Regional Officer and the Chairman of the Rural District Council with the Evacuation Officers and Medical Officer of Health. At this meeting the Senior Regional Officer gave permission for the relaxation of the one person per habitable room standard, but said that the permitted number allowed by the Housing Act should not be exceeded.

HOUSES OVERCROWDED AT END OF 1940.

Parish.	Ref. No.	Property.	No. of Persons	Equiv. Adults	Perm. No.	Excess	Remarks.
Cocking.	32	C218, Holmingwood.	9	8½	6	2½	
Easebourne	203	C52, Souters Hill	8	6½	5	1½	
Easebourne	222	C35, Upper Street	6	5½	5	½	
Fernhurst	476	4, Sturt Avenue, Camelsdale	11	9½	8½	1	
Graffham	34	2, Woodcote Cottages	8	7	6	1	
Harting	19	5, Slate Cottages, East Harting	6	5½	5	½	
Harting	37	Mount Pleasant, E. Harting	13	10½	7	3½	
Harting	62	4, Loppers Ash	8	7½	7	½	
Harting	168	Brookside, S.Harting	4	3½	2	1½	

Parish.	Ref. No.	Property	No. of Persons	Eqiv. Adults	Perm. Excess No.	Remarks
Heyshott	45	2, Polecats	4	3	2½	½
Heyshott	46	3, Polecats	8	5	3	2
Iping	97	Wardley Green	7	5½	5	½
Linchmere	252	9, Copse Road, Hammer	6	5½	5	½
Lurgashall		6, Dial Green	5	5	4	1
Lurgashall	54	Sibbs, Windfullwood	7	6½	5	1½
Midhurst	35	Woodcote, Ashfield Road	9	9	7½	1½
Midhurst	453	Cl32, North Mill Cottages	4	3½	3	½
Midhurst	456	Cl29, do	4	4	3	1
Midhurst	533	Cl45, Tollgate Cottage	5	4½	3	1½
Midhurst	563	3, Little Ashfield	7	7	6	1
Midhurst	571	6, do	8	7	6	1
North						
Ambersham	6	Bexley Hill.	7	7	6½	½
Rogate	130	1, West Street	7	6	5	1
South						
Ambersham	4	C236, Upper Vining	13	10½	10	½
South						
Ambersham	7	C238, Gosdens Heath Farm	7	5½	4½	1
Stedham	54	2, Frys Farm	8	6	5	1
Terwick	47	Strawberry Villa, Terwick Common	8	8	7	1
Tillington	20	River Street	7	6½	5	1½
Trotton	94	Maysleith, Milland	8	8	6½	1½
West						
Lavington	52	2, Royal Oak Cottages	6	6	3	3

SECTION E.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) Milk Supply.

	Tuberculin Tested.	Accredited.	Undesignated.	Total.
Wholesale Producers.	10	56	41	107
Wholesale and Retail Producers.	3	7	14	24
Retail Producers.	-	6	17	23
Retail Dairies.	-	-	2	2
Retail Purveyors.	-	-	11	11
	13	69	85	167

Inspections made:-

	Cowsheds.	Dairies.
Visits of Inspection.	528	529
Informal Notices Served.	73	69
Informal Notices Complied with.	34	31

6 samples of milk were taken from farms producing undesignated milk, which were reported upon by the County Pathologist as satisfactory. Owing to the War and difficulties in connection with materials and labour, progress in the reconditioning of Cowsheds and Dairies was retarded, but much useful work was done.

(b) Meat and other foods.

Visits to Slaughter Houses, Butchers Shops, Ice Cream Shops, Prepared and Other Food Premises.....	551
Informal Notices Served.....	18
Informal Notices Complied with.....	16
Unsound Food found Unfit for Human Consumption..... approx.	$\frac{1}{2}$ ton

At the beginning of the year meat was found to be in a dirty condition as a result of the conditions under which it was brought to the district and stored. Suitable action has been taken to put an end to this.

SECTION F.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The incidence of infectious disease is shown in the following table.

	<u>Cases</u>	<u>Adm. to Hosp.</u>	<u>Died</u>
Enteric fever	-	-	-
Scarlet "	8	4	-
Diphtheria	7	6	-
Erysipelas	8	1	1
Pneumonia	6	-	-
Meningitis	8	8	1
Whooping cough	14	1	-
Measles	98	35	-

Measles started at the end of the year in the Haslemere District and there were sporadic cases elsewhere. The high figure for admissions to hospital for this disease is due to the fact that five were soldiers and the rest were inmates of two institutions, one of them a hostel for evacuees and the other the Chichester Children's Homes which had temporarily moved into the district.

Meningitis appeared on an increased scale as it did throughout the country but there was no local epidemic. A curious feature of the disease was the fact that, as in the case of infantile paralysis, many of the cases occurred in isolated cottages where the chances of infection might have been expected to be negligible.

Scabies is a disease which has appeared in the district for the first time on a large scale. The latter fact cannot be doubted even though the figures of admissions to the Auxiliary Hospital (70 cases) are misleading. These figures include cases readmitted and undoubtedly a number of these are misdiagnosed. One family in particular, after repeated appearances, were submitted to the opinion of a skin specialist who confirmed the view that they were not cases of scabies. None the less they reappeared at Ganavan in a few weeks again labelled as scabies on the Diagnosis of yet another doctor. To the difficulty of diagnosis must be added the difficulty caused by the unwillingness of contacts to be examined or treated, together with an ill-founded popular superstition that scabies is a disease easily cured by sulphur. Under the best of conditions scabies is a disease which does not lend itself to treatment in the remote country cottage without good cleansing facilities, and perhaps the surprising thing about it is that it is not already a more serious menace than it is.

Tuberculosis.

Age periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.		Non-Respiratory	
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Respiratory	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
25	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	2	-	1	-	-	1	-	1
45	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
55	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-
65	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Totals	8	3	1	1	-	4	-	1

Of the deaths two were in un-notified subjects.

Summary of current cases of tuberculosis.

	Male.		Female.		Total
	Respiratory	Non-respiratory	Respiratory	Non-respiratory	
Cases on register Jan.1st	31	9	26	10	76
New cases added	7	1	4	1	13
Cases removed from register	0	1	2	0	3
Cases on register Dec.31.	38	9	28	11	86