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Contributors

Minehead (England). Urban District Council.

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MINEHEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT FOR 1952.

The Registrar General's figure for the population of the town is 7,237, the figure for 1951 being 7,339; for 1950, 7,331, and for 1949, 7,232. It is probable that during the summer holidays this figure is more than doubled. The seasonal increase usually commences in June and continues until September. There are also minor variations at Easter and Christmas. The large majority of the hotels, boarding houses and apartments close down for the winter months. The health of the community during the year was good.

Vital Statistics.

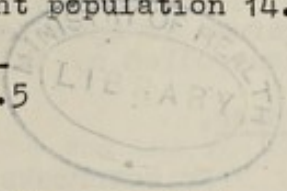
	Total.	M.	F.
Live Births - Legitimate	69	27	42
Illegitimate	5	2	3

Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 10.2

	Total.	M.	F.
Deaths	108	48	60

Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population 14.9

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:-
All infants per 1,000 live births:- 40.5



Water Supply.

This has been on the whole satisfactory throughout the year. The main supply from Nutscale Reservoir, with subsidiary supplies from Broadwood, Longwood and Longcombe, was adequate to meet every demand. Temporary shortage occurred in the Periton and Hopcott areas due to heavy consumption in the lower levels of the town during the height of the season. A new trunk main connected to remedy this defect has had a satisfactory result.

The quality of the water supply to the town is satisfactory. 44 samples were taken during the year; 30 of raw water and 14 of treated water going into the supply. Of the raw water only two samples were not in all respects bacteriologically satisfactory; of the treated water all samples were in all respects bacteriologically satisfactory. All the water was chemically satisfactory. No action was at any time taken respecting any form of contamination.

Practically all the dwelling houses of the town are supplied from public mains direct to the houses; only 24 are still supplied by stand-pipes.

The only structural alterations connected with the water supply are those undertaken in the completion of the dam to Nutscale Reservoir.

Swimming Pools.

There is one swimming pool situated on the sea front which is privately owned. This pool is filled with sea water which undergoes chlorination before being admitted to the pool. The filtration and chlorination plant are under skilled management and the engineer is on duty the whole of the time the bath is in operation. Frequent testing indicates that the water carried the necessary amount of residual chlorine to ensure a safe bathing water. Samples submitted from time to time were all found to be satisfactory.

Sewage Disposal.

The whole of the Urban District is served by a sewage disposal system.

The efficiency of the existing sewers has not developed pari passu with the development of the town. This has resulted in inconvenience from time to time in the lower levels of the town. There are various factors contributing to this condition the two main ones being the sewage outfall and storm water. The whole problem has been discussed at intervals by the Council, and the various measures put forward for dealing with the problem have been closely scrutinised and debated. Up to the present time no definite decisions have been reached.

At the present time no major extensions in the sewage system have been contemplated. A small extension at Periton will be undertaken during the year.

Practically all the houses are served by water-closet accommodation; only 16 are not so served.

The public cleansing is done by direct labour. This also refers to the removal of house refuse. The collection is made weekly. A special scheme for the collection of trade refuse is operated. All the refuse is disposed of at the tip controlled by the Council servants.

Foods.

No outbreaks of food poisoning have been reported during the year.

Meat and other Foods.

Meat is prepared for human food at the Minehead Abattoir from where it is distributed throughout the districts of Minehead, Watchet, Williton and Dulverton. So far as is practical all animals are inspected before slaughter, and all carcasses and offal are inspected in accordance with instructions laid down in Memo. 62 Foods, and appropriate action taken where required.

All places where food is prepared, etc., including the Abattoir, shops, stalls and vehicles, are inspected from time to time and action taken as required. Generally the cleanliness of these establishments and vehicles is satisfactory.

Meat Inspection 1952.
Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	845	287	766	7961	547
Number inspected	845	287	766	7961	547
All diseases except Tuberculosis Whole carcasses	9	17	11	86	16
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	528	162	13	485	38
Percentage of number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	63.55	62.37	3.13	7.17	9.87

	Cattle excluding cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Tuberculosis only. Whole carcasses	7	4	3	0	5
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	67	74	3	0	41
Percentage of the number inspected affected with tuberculosis	8.76	27.18	0.78	0	8.41

Milk.

The milk supply during the year was satisfactorily maintained. Samples taken from time to time that did not come up to the required standard were investigated and the cause ascertained and remedied.

- (a) The total number of Registered Distributors was 5.
- (b) The total number of Registered Dairy Premises was 5.
- (c) The number of supplementary licences issued to distributors whose dairy is outside this area was Nil.

Manufacture of Ice Cream.

The regulations governing this manufacture and the requirements implicit in them have tended to restrict the preparation of ice cream to the large wholesale houses. The distributors find it more profitable to purchase their ice cream in bulk.

Five samples of ice cream submitted for examination during the summer showed that the bulk of the ice cream was of a relatively high grade.

Housing.

The total number of houses is 2,381. 27 houses were erected during the year; 15 by the Local Authority and 12 by private enterprise. 21 houses were in course of erection at the close of the year.

140 houses are reported as unsatisfactory in that two families are occupying the same house.

The total number of applicants for Council Houses at the end of the year was 195.

The number of Post War houses erected up to the 31st December, 1952, was :-

By Local Authority	182
By Private Enterprise	131

Four houses were condemned under the Housing Act as being totally unfit, and closing orders made.

Factories Act.

The Register of Factories is now complete and the Form 572, relating to inspections and defects, is attached to this report.
for the information of the Minister of Labour + National Service.

Overcrowding.

One case of overcrowding was reported and was satisfactorily dealt with.

Infectious Diseases.

An epidemic of scarlet fever occurred which affected the town and the surrounding country. 59 cases were notified in the Minehead area, but the bulk of the cases were of a very mild type. There were no deaths.

Sporadic cases of other notifiable diseases were reported from time to time. One case of non-paralytic poliomyelitis was notified from the town and one was admitted to the Minehead Hospital from a neighbouring district and transferred to the Isolation Hospital at Taunton.

Cases requiring institutional isolation are sent to Taunton Isolation Hospital.

Disinfection of premises after infectious disease is carried out by the Local Authority, also after cases of an unhygienic or unpleasant nature.

Tuberculosis.

There were 4 new cases of tuberculosis notified. There were no deaths.

Hospital.

The Minehead and West Somerset Hospital is entirely administered by the Bridgwater, Minehead and Butleigh Management Committee.

Local representation in the management of the Hospital exists in the House Committee of the Hospital, on which the town is represented. This Committee is responsible for the day to day supervision of the Institution and is empowered to make recommendations and representations to the Committee of Management. The Committee of Management is represented on the Committee by three of its members.

Ambulance Services.

During the year under review the ambulance services vested by the Ministry in the County Council have been carried out by the St. John Ambulance Brigade to the entire satisfaction of the community. Under the arrangement with the County Council the cost of the running and maintenance of the ambulances is the concern of the County Council. Three ambulances and two sitting case cars are based on the St. John Ambulance Headquarters and five full-time trained ambulance drivers are maintained. The remainder of the Service, which includes all night work, is carried out by the local ambulance and nursing divisions. This part of the Service is entirely voluntary and maintained with the financial support of the general public.

Clinics.

Clinics, with the exception of Infant Welfare, are now held at the Minehead and West Somerset Hospital.

Vital Statistics.

An analysis of the vital statistics shows that the total deaths registered were 108; in 1951 the number was 125.

The total live births were 74 compared with 83 the previous year.

With regard to the deaths occurring in age groups, 68 occurred over the age of 70, and of these 29 occurred between 70 and 80; 32 between 80 and 90 and 7 at 90 or over. It would seem that of the 108 deaths only 40 failed to reach the three score years and ten.

In considering the causes of death there is very little variation from the previous year. There were 13 deaths from malignant disease (9 less than the previous year); 23 from vascular lesions of the nervous system. There were 43 deaths from diseases of the circulatory system (13 less than the previous year); of these 10 were due to coronary disease of the heart. There were 2 deaths from influenza. When considered in conjunction with the deaths in age groups this calls for no comment.

Consideration of the various items of this report indicates primarily that the health of the town is on the whole satisfactory. Severe sickness and accidents are dealt with at the Minehead and West Somerset Hospital and transport for the sick and injured is adequately dealt with by the Ambulance Service.

Recent building, although not numerically great, has been of a relatively high standard and it is a matter for congratulation that the general appearance of the new buildings and their lay-out has not detracted from the general appearance of the town.

The survey of the buildings comprising the town has been completed and it is to be hoped that it will be kept up to date. Information thus collected has already been of use.

Two major problems still remain unsolved although they have received your consideration during the period under review, namely the water supply and sewerage. With the former, storage and distribution are the principle points; with the latter, the measures necessary for dealing with storm water and the sewage outfall. I feel sure that these problems will be solved in the near future and definite plans evolved for dealing with them.

I should like to close with an appreciation of the Council's co-operation and patience in dealing with the matters that I have brought before them, and to its servants for their courtesy, co-operation and help in all those matters concerning the public health.

W. BAIN,

M.B., B.S., Lond.,
Medical Officer of Health.

September, 1953.

The report of the Board of Directors is as follows: The Board of Directors has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th inst. in relation to the proposed change in the name of the Corporation.

The Board of Directors has considered the matter and has concluded that it is in the best interests of the Corporation to change its name to the proposed name. The Board of Directors has authorized the officers of the Corporation to execute all necessary documents to effect such change.

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