NEWTON ABBOT RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT of the MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH for 1944

To the Chairman and Members of the Council:-

This Report - the sixth of the War Period - is drawn up in accordance with instructions contained in a Ministry of Health Circular dated 19th March, 1945, which directs that it shall be on similar lines to previous war-time reports and for the main part deal briefly with matters of current interest, with particular emphasis on Water Supply.

From a Public Health point of view 1944 was undoubtedly a good year, and the District in spite of war weariness maintained its usual high standard of health. No dangerous epidemics occurred, staple foods were sufficiently plentiful, and there were no bombs!

On the other hand no important developments took place or could take place in water supplies, sewerage or housing, and work is piling up on all sides. How long after the War is over a start can be made remains to be seen but it is bound to be a slow job and a case of first things first.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES: In this connection a very satisfactory year can be recorded. There were no epidemics and the loss of school time by the children, usually the most regretable aspect of infectious disease, was comparatively small.

DISEASE	CASES	SENT TO HOSPITAL	DEATHS
Measles	36	-	-
Whooping Cough	32	-	-
Scarlet Fever	17	12	1
Diphtheria	3	3	-
Erysipelas	8	-	-
Pneumonia	12	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	-	-

The Measles and Whooping Cough cases were confined to small outbreaks here and there and nowhere assumed epidemic proportions. The same applies to the Scarlet Fever cases most of which occurred in Kingskerswell and Kingsteignton.

Diphtheria it is gratifying to note is becoming uncommon; to what extent this is due to immunisation is difficult to say, but there can be little doubt that it has had a marked effect on the incidence of this dreaded disease. Of the three cases notified one was a Nurse in a Military Hospital, one a young woman in a factory, and the third a youth who contracted it while on holiday and came home ill with it. So far as can be ascertained they had not been immunised.

IMMUNISATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA.

In this connection 70 sessions were held during the year in the villages of the District, usually in the Schools, which have been placed at our disposal for this purpose by the Devon County Education Committee, and a total of 319 children completed the course of whom 259 were under 5 years of age.

Of the total number of children in the District - approximately 3,600, - it is estimated that 65 per cent of those under five years of age and 90 per cent of those going to School have been protected. (N.B. It is much easier to get hold of the latter than the former.) The main problem now is to deal with those children reaching the age of one year, and for this one is almost entirely dependent on the persuasive powers of the lady Health Visitors.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Compared with the previous year there was a decided drop in number of both new cases and deaths:-

	Males	Females	Total
New Cases	8	12	20
Deaths	3	4	7

The totals for 1943 were 30 and 11 respectively. Of the 20 new cases 16 were lung cases as also were 5 of the deaths.

CONTAGIOUS SKIN DISEASE. This continued to give a considerable amount of trouble in the District and causes the loss of much school time for the infected children. Actually there were 37 more cases in 1944 than in the year before; scabies being the commonest infection. Treatment is still carried out at the Sick-bay in Ford Park, Newton Abbot.

The numbers were:-

In-Patients

Scabies	Impetigo	Mixed Infections	Total
34	11	17	62

Out-Patients	(all Scabies	216
		278

Grand Total 278. Of these 108 were Evacuees.

THE EVACUEES. A year ago it was expected and hoped that by this time the position as regards the evacuated population in our midst would have been almost, if not entirely, liquidated. Unfortunately thanks to flying bombs and such like this is not so, and actually there are several hundred more in the District now than there were then.

	Adults	Children	Total
Dec.31st.1943.	280	490	770
Dec.31st.1944.	352	821	1173

For several months in the latter half of the year there were considerably more than this total, but as the bombing grew less so they returned home. We can join the remainder in their hope that it will not be long now before it is safe for them all to go.

HOUSING. Again there is almost nothing to report under this heading. The four agricultural houses at Ilsington and Denbury were completed and occupied and necessary repairs were carried out on old houses as and when labour was available. Building Sites for new houses have been chosen

in most parishes but that is about as far as it has been possible to go without masons and carpenters, bricks and timber. The climax will be reached when the men and women in the Services return and find themselves in many cases without house or home. It is true that the exodus of the Evacuees will free a certain few houses and give a little more elbow room generally, but more than that is necessary. The suggestion that vacated Army Huts be utilised as temporary dwellings has much to commend it and certainly a 30 ft. Nissen Hut with slight alterations can be made very comfortable for a small family.

WATER SUPPLY OF THE DISTRICT. In the last Annual Report it was recorded that with the exception of Bickington, Manaton and North Bovey all the villages of the District had a piped water supply laid on to approximately 80 per cent of the houses and no standpipes. Since then an enterprising resident at Manaton has sunk a bore-hole which now supplies water to most of the houses in the village and though slightly plumbo-solvent and unsuitable for lead pipes is otherwise of excellent quality. In all there are 21 separate supplies and those that serve Moretonhampstead, Bovey Tracey, Chudleigh, Kingsteignton, Ilsington, Denbury, Ipplepen, Hennock, Chudleigh Knighton, Bishopsteignton and Broadhempston are subject to Chlorination. In addition to these Villages, many isolated houses on the line of the Torquay and Paignton trunk Water Mains have chlorinated water. Seven samples have been taken of public supplies during the year and proved satisfactory on analysis.

SEWERAGE. If the water supply of the District can be regarded with satisfaction as it undoubtedly can, the same cannot altogether be said of the Sewerage.
The whole trouble is that owing to the War we are five years behind the times. Schemes that were planned and about to be undertaken at the outbreak of the War had to be abandoned and other Schemes which in pre-war times were reasonably adequate soon showed, chiefly owing to the increase in popultion, that they were not.

SEWERAGE (Contd.)

A summary of the work, in order of priority, that needs doing as soon as possible is as follows:-

1. MORETONHAMPSTEAD. The Town is sewered throughout. the main sewer is laid to the existing Sewage Tanks at Wray Barton. This Outfall has been unsatisfactory for some years. The Council have recently received a report from Mr.F.W.S.Stanton regarding the whole situation, which is receiving the attention of a special Committee. This scheme should take priority in the Post-War Schemes, as Moretonhampstead is the only town of any size in the Rural area which has not had the old system reconstructed and modernised. There has been considerable building between the two war periods, the drains of which have been connected to the Sewers, and further building is contemplated in the Post-War era. This Scheme will involve a large expenditure.

2. OGWELL. The houses in the village are mostly drained to Cesspools which in certain cases are unsatisfactory. Further, a number of houses have earth closets and lack drainage. There is a pressing need for new sewers and outfall works for the Village. This scheme with new Sewers should be conveyed to land situate near the road leading to Ogwell Mills.

   There has been quite a sporadic development in the Canada Hill District, where over 50 houses have been erected. These are all provided with drainage and each house discharging into separate cesspools. This area should be provided with a Sewer before any further development is allowed. The area is so near the Urban District that care will have to be taken in siting and laying Sewers to serve the locality generally.

3. STOKEINTEIGNHEAD. A large sewerage scheme to serve the village and a district in the Maidencombe area (in the Borough of Torquay) has been prepared by Mr.Stanton, and is ready for submission to the Ministry for sanction as a Post-War scheme. The

Special Committee, however, are considering whether a joint Scheme for sewering Stoke and Combeinteignhead - whereby one Outfall Works for the two Parishes can be constructed. If this Scheme can be carried into effect there would probably be a saving in expense and maintenance.

4. IPPLEPEN The village is sewered to a Sewage Tank in Ordnance No.602. This Outfall is much out of date. A new Sewer Outfall Works with extension of Sewers to various positions has been prepared by Mr.Stanton, and is awaiting submission to the Ministry of Health for sanction as soon as possible after the War.

5. HENNOCK (CHUDLEIGH KNIGHTON). The Village is sewered throughout. The present Outfall however is too small to deal with the present population, and the land where it is situated is totally inadequate to provide for enlargement or to deal with any development. A new sewer should be laid from Bunker's Bridge at a higher level than the existing (which is level with the stream) and the provision of new Outfall Works in close proximity to the old ones should be considered.

6. BROADHEMPSTON. Sewers are provided through the village and the area by the Church. New Sewers should be provided through the village and Houndhead district. There is a small Sewage tank at "Stoops Orchard", which is now insufficient to deal with modern requirements. The 9" Sewer should be extended to a position below "Bramblemoor" and a new Outfall Works provided.

7. TORBRYAN. Sewers are provided at Denbury. These are laid as far as Shute Farm where they discharge into a lime-stone fault.

The Village of Torbryan is small, and no sewers are provided; the houses discharge their slop water into the small stream passing through the village: earth closets are mostly provided in this area. Complaints were received during the past summer as to the objectionable smells emanating from the bed of the stream, during the drought. A sewer and a small works should be considered here.

8. NORTH BOVEY. The Village is sewered generally. This discharges into an irrigation gutter in Ordnance No. 718. A Special Committee has been considering the position for this village for some considerable time. The Committee has now provisionally agreed to purchase a small portion of land and to construct a small Outfall Works as soon as possible after the War.

9. IDEFORD. The Village is provided with a Sewer. However, the existing Tank is inadequate to deal with the amount of Sewage. Further, the Sewer serving the area of Coleybrook Farm is conveyed to a second Tank. The proposal for dealing with this Parish is to connect the two sewers and extend the main sewer further down the field and a new Outfall Works provided in Ordnance No. 333 - near Larcombe Bridge.

10. MANATON. The area round "Freelands", "Kestor" and the Council Houses is provided with a Sewer. This discharges into land, without treatment, purchased by the Council (Part Ord.No. 904). Sewage Tanks should be provided on this land.

RAINFALL RECORDS for 1944 (Taken at Seale-Hayne College)

	inches		inches
January	3.09	July	2.54
February	0.46	August	3.60
March	0.10	September	2.89
April	2.50	October	4.64
May	0.45	November	7.62
June	2.75	December	3.51

TOTAL FOR YEAR 34.15 inches

Highest Rainfall in a day: 2.10 inches on 16th November.

Longest period without measurable rain: 45 days (From 15th Feb. (To 30th Mar.)

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Medical Officer of Health

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VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1944

POPULATION: 24,060 (a decrease of 840)

LIVE BIRTHS:
Male: 203 (Illegit.18) Female: 171 (Illegit.19) TOTAL: 374

Birth Rate = 15.5 per 1,000 people

Average rate for last ten years = 13
England & Wales Birth Rate = 17.6

STILL BIRTHS:
Male: 6 (Illegit.1) Female: 4 TOTAL: 10

Still Birth Rate = 26 per 1000 total births.

DEATHS
Male: 170 Female: 180 TOTAL 350

Death Rate (crude) = 14.5 per 1,000 people.
Average rate (crude) for last ten years = 13.2
England and Wales Rate = 11.6

MATERNAL MORTALITY: 1 = A Rate of 2.6 per 1,000 births (live and still)

England and Wales Rate = 1.93

INFANT MORTALITY. (under one year)
Male: 16 Female 5 (Illegit. 2 Males) TOTAL: 21

A rate of 56 per 1000 live births.
England and Wales Rate: 46
