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Contributors

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NORTH WITCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year, 1950.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES and GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my report for the year 1950 on the health conditions of your district during that period.

I also present the Sanitary Inspector's report.

I have the honour to be, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

CECIL THOMAS,
Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR HEALTH SERVICES.

(1) **Public Health Officers.**

Medical Officer of Health - CECIL THOMAS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Sanitary Inspector - J. METCALFE, M.R.San.I.

(2) **Nursing in the Home.**

The entire District has the services of Trained Nurses under the control of the Local Authority.

(3) **Hospitals.**

Most patients are now treated at Doddington Hospital.

(4) **Ambulance Facilities.**

These are now controlled by the Local Authority.

(5) **Child Welfare.**

Clinics are held at Doddington and Manea.

Social Conditions.

The bulk of the adult population is engaged in agricultural work and there are a considerable number of small holdings under the control of the Isle of Ely County Council. Agricultural work also provides seasonal employment for many of the adult female population.

General Statistics.

Area (acres)	26,088
Population (1951 Census)	5,023
Number of inhabited houses	1,557
Rateable Value	£13,417
Sum represented by a penny rate	£56

Vital Statistics.

	M.	F.	Total
Live Births (Legitimate)	29	40	69
Live Births (Illegitimate)	—	2	2
Deaths	36	30	66
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	1	1	2
Deaths of Infants under 4 weeks	—	1	1
Birth Rate (all births) per 1,000 of population			14.13
Death Rate (all deaths) per 1,000 of population			13.13
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year per 1,000 births			42.25

The causes of death were:

Heart Diseases	16
Other diseases of circulatory system	3
Intracranial Vascular Diseases	6
Cancer	15
Ulcer of Stomach	2
Influenza	2
Bronchitis	3
Other Diseases of Respiratory System	1
Enteritis	1
Nephritis	1
All other causes	15
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Disease	Total Notified	Deaths
Measles	159	—
Scarlet Fever	9	—
Pneumonia	13	—
Whooping Cough	9	—
Dysentery	3	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	12	—



NORTH WITCHFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Sanitary Inspector's Report for the Year 1950.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

The following are details of visits and inspections carried out during 1950:

Water supply	35
Drainage	101
Fried Fish Shops	16
Vans and Sheds	31
Factories	2
Bakehouses	6
Sanitary Conveniences	16
Refuse Collection	4
Refuse Disposal	8
Rats and Mice	20
Refuse Accumulations	11
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	19
Nightsoil Disposal	18
Shops under Shop Acts	2
Sewers and Sewage Disposal Works	98
Dykes	55
Building Byelaws	154
Drain Tests	31
Petroleum Installations	10

Housing.

Under Public Health Acts.

No. of houses inspected (including Council Houses)	166
No. of visits paid to above houses	264

Under Housing Acts.

No. of houses inspected	21
No. of visits paid to above houses	77

Overcrowding.

No. of houses inspected	1
No. of visits paid to above houses	1

Verminous Premises.

No. of houses inspected	1
No. of visits paid to above houses	2
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	62
Inquiries in cases of Infectious Disease	1
Visits re disinfection	2

Meat & Food Inspection.

Inspection of Meat at Butchers' Shops	12
Grocers' Shops	10
Dairies	1
Ice Cream Premises	15
Street Vendors	2
Interviews and Meetings	1,014

Notices Served.

No. of Informal Notices served	23
No. of Informal Notices complied with	14
No. of Statutory Notices served	8
No. of Statutory Notices complied with	5

Housing.

Progress has been made during the year in connection with the development of the Council House sites and 22 houses were completed and occupied, bringing the total of post war Council houses up to 58, plus 15 pre-fabricated bungalows. A further 8 Council houses were under construction at the end of the year.

Private enterprise completed 10 new houses and had three others under construction. Two bungalows were also commenced by Drainage Authorities.

There are numerous sub-standard houses in the District, many of which should be demolished, but there is little hope of re-housing the majority of the inhabitants on the present permitted scale of rebuilding. Owing to the lack of proper water supply and drainage facilities, it is not practicable to enforce the provision of sinks, water closets, etc., in many instances, apart from the major problem of expense. It is economically impossible for many owners to comply with existing law in maintaining house property in a reasonable state of repair when one considers that the cost of repairs has increased by as much as 500 per cent, whilst rents remain controlled at pre-war level.

NORTH WICHORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Annual Report for the Year 1911

Presented to the Council

at a Special Meeting held on the 11th day of December 1911

at the Town Hall

by the Mayor

and the Council

in pursuance of a Resolution

passed at a Meeting of the Council

held on the 11th day of December 1911

and in accordance with the

provisions of the Local Government Act, 1902

and the Local Government Act, 1905

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A considerable amount of time has to be devoted to the investigation of complaints and supervision of repairs in Council houses, mainly in those erected between the two World Wars.

The following is a summary of the work carried out:—

No. of houses inspected under Public Health Acts (including Council Houses) for dis-repair	166
No. of visits made for this purpose	264
No. of houses inspected under Housing Acts	21
No. of visits made for this purpose	77
No. of dwelling houses found unfit for human habitation	8
Demolition Orders made under Housing Act, 1936	2
Undertakings given under Housing Act, 1936	4
Closing Orders made	1
Houses demolished by owners	1
Houses completely reconditioned (formal action)	1
Houses partially reconditioned (formal action)	3
Houses reconditioned as a result of informal action	7
Statutory Notices issued under Public Health Acts	1

Civil Building Control.

During the year 13 building licences to the value of £4,300 were issued for repairs and additions to existing dwelling houses and two building licences for new dwelling houses. The 20 per cent. cut in the quota available for licensing did not curtail any work in the District. Fifty-nine plans were deposited and approved by the Council under Building Byelaws.

Water Supply.

The following is the information requested by the Ministry of Health

(i) In those parts of Wimblington and Doddington parishes served by the late Wisbech Waterworks Co., the water supply has been adequate and there have been no complaints as to quality.

In the parish of Manea, the piped supply provided by the Council continued to be a source of complaints because of the insufficiency of pressure; parts of the village being able to get a supply only during the night when pressure rises slightly. There was, however, some slight improvement during part of the year. The small size of the main and distance involved, in addition to lack of pressure in the Water Company's main feeding the Council's system, are responsible for this state of affairs. Work on the proposed new reservoir between March and Wimblington has not yet been commenced.

Benwick village is still without a piped supply, as also are Welches Dam and Stonea. These, together with other outlying houses and farmsteads have to rely on rainwater for drinking and river water for other purposes. Welches Dam carts water from Manea. There was sufficient rainfall during the summer to avoid the necessity of carting water to Benwick and Stonea during the year under review.

(ii) No independent sampling of the piped supply is carried out by the Council.

(iii) The local supply of water is not plumbo-solvent.

(iv) No action was necessary in respect of any contamination.

(v) Proportion of dwelling houses supplied from public mains:

Parish.	Direct to Houses	By standpipe
Wimblington	85 %	2½ %
Doddington	57 %	2 %
Manea	87 %	9 %
Welches Dam	Nil	Nil
Benwick	Nil	Nil

On October 1st, 1950 the newly formed Wisbech and District Water Board took over the water supply undertakings of the Council and the Wisbech Waterworks Company in the area, and plans have been made for a number of extensions, including a supply to Benwick.

Drainage and Sewerage.

Certain portions of the built up areas of Doddington, Wimblington and Manea are served by old combined storm water and foul sewers, all of which discharge into open dykes or obsolete works. The standard of effluent discharged is very poor and complaints are made from time to time of sewage matter being deposited in open dykes. With the present reduction in capital expenditure, there is little likelihood of any new main drainage schemes materialising for many years.

Several minor improvements have been made to the settlement tanks at Newgate, Doddington, and 70 yards of old sewer were replaced by 18in. concrete pipes on the North side of Newgate Street, as part of the scheme to prevent flooding during storms. In addition storm water outlets were constructed to manholes, and other improvements made to relieve congested sewers during storms. The nightsoil contractor's cesspool emptier has been utilised for periodical emptying of sedimentation tanks at the various sewage disposal works, although the latter are not accessible at all seasons of the year.

Drainage disposal to such other houses as are provided with drainage systems is, in the main, by use of septic tanks, cesspools and soakaways, which function with varying degrees of success. A large number of houses, particularly in

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Manea and Benwick, are provided with pail closets, and many other properties have vault closets. All the post-war Council houses are provided with individual cesspools and soakaways for each house.

Action was taken by the Council under Section 24 of the Public Health Act, 1936, with regard to a defective combined drain serving premises in Norfolk Street, Wimblington. The cost of the repairs was apportioned and recovered from the respective owners of the properties concerned.

Public Cleansing.

Night soil is still collected by contract and utilised on the land. The contract provides for 3 collections of pails per fortnight and some 670 closets are dealt with. The chief complaint is the unsuitable time of day at which the contractor often calls to perform the task. Cesspools and vaults are emptied by the same contractor, who uses a modern cesspool emptier for this purpose.

A scheme for collecting night soil and indestructible house refuse by direct labour with modern hygienic equipment was prepared for the consideration of the Council, but did not find sufficient support.

Tins and indestructible refuse are collected at monthly intervals by contract, dumped on dis-used gravel pits and covered by soil. Unfortunately these sites are open to all comers and a certain amount of indiscriminate tipping occurs, which makes it difficult to cover the entire tipping face with soil.

Milk Supply.

The bulk of the milk supply is distributed by three firms operating from dairies outside the District. Such milk is either Pasteurised or Tuberculin Tested.

The following licences were issued during the year under the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations 1949:—

Dealer's Licences	Pasteurised	1
	Tuberculin Tested	1
Supplementary Licences	Pasteurised	2
	Tuberculin Tested	2
	Sterilised	1

One sample of Pasteurised milk was taken in course of delivery, which proved to be satisfactory.

Meat and Food Inspection.

None of the seven slaughterhouses existing in the District has been licensed under Section 57 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938. Home killed meat supplied to this area is slaughtered in the adjoining Urban area, where it is inspected at the time of slaughter. 307 lbs. of beef was inspected at Butchers' shops and rejected because of bone taint. 12 lbs. of Corned beef was also condemned.

Other foods condemned and voluntarily surrendered were:—

- 9 tins of evaporated milk.
- 6 whole cheeses.
- 13 lbs. of luncheon meat.
- 6 lbs. of Jellied veal.
- 8 lbs. of Bacon. (Returned to supplier).

Ice Cream.

No Ice Cream is manufactured in the area. Four additional premises were registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938, for the sale and storage of ice cream, making a total of 10. Seven samples of ice cream were taken and submitted for examination at the Public Health Laboratory, Cambridge, these being placed in the following categories:—

Grade 1	— 3
Grade 2	— 3
Grade 4	— 1

Moveable Dwellings.

Eight licences were issued under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, authorising the use of a caravan for a limited period on a specified site.

Rodent Control.

The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949, came into force on the 1st of March, 1950. Comparatively few complaints have been received regarding infestation generally and these have all been dealt with. The various sewage dykes and refuse tips are treated by the Council's employee. The Pest Department of the Isle of Ely County Agricultural Executive Committee carry out a considerable amount of rat destruction in the area, having contracts for the treatment of over 100 premises.

Factories Acts.

During the year 8 inspections were made to Factories. Three defects were found and remedied. No outworkers are employed.

Shops Acts.

One certificate of exemption for sanitary convenience was granted under Section 38(6) of the Shops Act, 1950.

J. METCALFE,
Sanitary Inspector.

7th September, 1951.

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