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Contributors

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PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council Offices,

PORTLAND.

10th December, 1946.



Mr. Chairman & Gentlemen,

I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1945 on the health and sanitary circumstances of the area. The report is prepared in accordance with Ministry of Health Circular No. 28/46 of 11th February, 1946.

The extracts from the vital statistics for the year show that the death rate is higher and the birth rate lower than in 1944. As I have previously pointed out, however, the population is small, and these figures should not be regarded as an accurate index of the public health.

The water supply was satisfactory in quality and quantity throughout the year. There is now only one house on the Island not supplied by the Council.

The milk supply was reasonably satisfactory. Production on the Island is generally clean and careful, but cases of non-pulmonary tuberculosis still occur, and the milk supply cannot be considered safe until pasteurisation is universal.

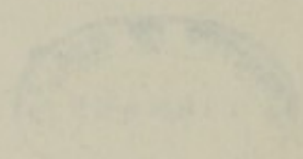
I have included in the report a short account of the destruction of the seaward end of the Chesil outfall, and of the subsequent attempts by the Council to repair the damage and remedy the very considerable nuisance on the beach. The public should know that the responsibility for the long delay does not rest on the Council.

I have again to thank the members of the Council for their consideration and helpful advice, and my fellow officials for their constant kindness and courtesy.

I am, Gentlemen,
Your obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

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Statistics.

Estimated population	7,040.
Number of inhabited houses, according to Rate Book, (exclusive of Government Property)	2,149.
Rateable Value.	£56,790.
Sum represented by a penny rate	£227.

Social Conditions. The destruction, or partial destruction, of a considerable number of houses by enemy air raids, together with the cessation of new building during the war, have, in Portland as in other places, caused an acute shortage of houses. This position is aggravated by the fact that many houses which normally would have been demolished under the Housing Acts, continued to be inhabited, with consequent grave danger to the health of the occupants. The large temporary increase in population due to the continued use of Portland as a major supply base for Allied armies on the continent, produced further housing difficulties, and a considerable number of houses became overcrowded. By the end of the year two war-damaged houses in the Tillycoombe Estate had been reconstructed, several requisitioned houses had been re-conditioned and occupied, and work had commenced on site preparation for 40 temporary pre-fabricated houses.

Extracts from Vital Statistics for 1945.

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	
<u>Live Births</u>	118	61	57	) Birth rate per 1,000 of estimated population = 16.7
Legitimate	104	55	49	
Illegitimate	14	6	8	

<u>Still Births</u>				
(all legitimate)	2	1	1	Rate per 1,000 total births = 16.9

Total Deaths 1945.

(Registrar General's Official Returns)

All Causes.	98	Males	56	Females	42
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CAUSE OF DEATH	Total	Male	Female
Respiratory Tuberculosis...	5	2	3
Syphilitic Disease...	1	1	0
Cancer (all sites)...	13	6	7
Intra-cranial vascular lesions ...	19	11	8
Heart Disease..	27	15	12
Other diseases of the circulatory system.	1	1	0
Bronchitis ...	3	1	2
Pneumonia ...	2	2	0
Other respiratory disease..	1	0	1
Ulcer of stomach or duodenum ...	1	1	0
Diarrhoea, under 2 years...	1	0	1
Other digestive disease ...	3	1	2

Extracts from Vital Statistics continued.

CAUSE OF DEATH	Total	Male	Female
Nephritis	4	2	2
Premature Birth	1	0	1
Congenital malformation, Birth injury	1	1	0
Road traffic accident	3	2	1
Other violent causes.	7	6	1
All other causes	5	4	1

Crude death rate per 1,000 population

13.9

Deaths of infants under 1 year of age
(all legitimate)

Total

Male

Female

4

2

2

(One of these was due to congenital malformation, and one to premature birth).

Infant Mortality rate

(Number of children dying at ages under one year
per 100 live births in the year)

33.9

There were no deaths from maternal causes during the year.

Below is shown the comparison in death rates, birth rates and infant mortality rates between Portland and the 148 Smaller Towns of England and Wales.

	<u>Death rate</u>	<u>Birth rate</u>	<u>Infant Mortality rate.</u>
Smaller Towns	12.3	19.2	43
Portland (1945)	13.9	16.7	33.9
Portland (1944)	12.3	20.9	40.8

Staff. The First Aid Post closed on 30th April, and the whole-time staff, who had run the treatment centre for scabies and verminous conditions, were released. The nurse-in-charge, Miss S. White, and two assistants, were retained on a part-time basis until September, after which they also were released. The thanks of the Council are due to these ladies for their careful and conscientious work in the treatment of these distressing conditions. It is gratifying to note that Nurse White was almost immediately employed by the County Council as Nurse-in-Charge of the Minor Ailments Clinic, where she continues to give most excellent service.

Mr. R. Morgan Sanitary labourer, retired during the year and his place was filled by Mr. C. Otter.

Infectious Diseases notified among civilian population during 1945.

Scarlet Fever	7
Measles	28
Whooping Cough	13
Erysipelas	5
Cerebro-spinal meningitis	1
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	9
Non Pulmonary Tuberculosis	4
Pneumonia	1
Scabies	40
Dysentery (Sonne)	4
Malaria (contracted abroad)	1
Typhoid	1

General Provision of Health Services.

The general health services were maintained throughout the year, and were on the same lines as those outlined in the report

for 1944.

The Minor Ailments clinic was carried on at the First Aid Post until 30th April, and when the Post closed, at the Gas Cleansing Station, High Street until the end of the year.

The Child Welfare Centres, provided by the County Council, continued their very important work among young children and their mothers. The attendances at both Underhill and Tophill centres continue to increase, and the thanks of the Council are particularly due to the Voluntary Helpers, on whom the bulk of the clerical and other routine work falls. In addition to the usual work of child welfare supervision, diphtheria immunisation, and the distribution of cod liver oil, orange juice, National Dried Milk and Vitamins A & D tablets are carried on at the centres.

In view of the expense of carrying on the Scabies treatment centre, this was discontinued in September, and arrangements made for these cases to be treated at Weymouth. The treatment of verminous heads was carried out at home, by the parents, using lethane oil supplied by the Council. The total numbers of cases treated during the year were Scabies 39, Verminous heads 75.

Immunisation against whooping cough was also discontinued in September, recent reliable reports having shown that it was probably of doubtful value. Since this immunisation was commenced in Portland, only sporadic cases have occurred. While the incidence of the disease appeared to be much greater among the non-immunised than among the immunised, it was felt, considering the difficulty of accurate diagnosis in a non-epidemic period, that the evidence did not justify its continuance.

A "Health Education Week" was held during the first week in November, in collaboration with the Central Council for Health Education and the various youth organisations on the Island. The average attendance at the lectures was 50. It was intended to follow this "week" with an Exhibition, but this had to be abandoned owing to the impossibility of securing suitable material.

Water Supply.

Eleven samples from the bore-hole were submitted for bacteriological analysis. Three of these were unsatisfactory, the remainder being reported as satisfactory or highly satisfactory. Two samples from supply were reported as highly satisfactory. One colouration test was carried out, to determine if possible, the source of the occasional contamination. The result was again inconclusive. The supply was satisfactory both in quality and quantity throughout the year.

Milk.

Supervision of the production of milk on the Island was carried out by your Sanitary Inspector and myself. Visits were made to cowsheds and dairies, and owners were advised as to improvements in milking methods and general cleanliness. Seven samples of milk were taken during the year.

Diphtheria Immunisation.

This was continued as before, the position at the end of the year being that 65.9% of children under 5 years of age had been immunised (immunisation was not ordinarily commenced until the 1st birthday), 96% of those between 5 and 15 had been immunised, while the figure for immunisation for all under 15 years of age was 85.5%.

Sewage Disposal.

150 feet of the sewage outfall pipe in Chesil Cove, from high water mark seawards, was destroyed in the storm of December, 1942. The outfall at high water mark rapidly became choked with shingle, and it was necessary to break open the inshore end to allow sewage to escape. Since then the pipe has been extended so as to discharge at approximately low water mark, causing considerable nuisance.

A proposal was put forward for abandoning this outfall, on account of its exposed position, and for discharging sewage into the Portland Harbour. In view of Admiralty opposition to the discharge of unpurified sewage, this proposal had to be given up.

The matter was then put into the hands of John Taylor and Sons, Consulting Engineers, of Westminster, who, after consultation with Messrs. Coode, Wilson, Vaughan-Lee, and Gwyther, put forward a scheme for the reconstruction of the outfall, using special steel alloy pipes and piles, but by the end of the year the matter was not sufficiently far advanced for the materials to be ordered or tenders invited.

SUMMARY of SANITARY INSPECTOR'S VISITS DURING YEAR 1945.

Visits in connection with -							
Public Health Acts & Housing Defects ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	121
Number of Nuisance Visits...	...	...	...	...	...	...	487
Interviews with Owners, Builders, etc...	...	...	...	...	...	...	122
Complaints attended to ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	80
No. of Notices sent...	...	...	...	...	...	...	59
No. of Notices complied with ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	55
Visits to Meat and Food Shops ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	178
Visits to Fish and Frying Premises ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	48
Visits to Bakehouses..	...	...	...	...	...	...	41
Visits to Factories ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
Visits under Shops Acts ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Visits to Slaughterhouse (Dorchester)...	...	...	...	...	...	...	51
Visits in connection with Infectious Disease..	...	...	...	...	...	...	54
Premises disinfected, Infectious Disease ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Visits in connection with Infestations..	...	...	...	...	...	...	48
Premises disinfested..	...	...	...	...	...	...	27
Premises cleansed ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
Accumulations removed. ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Visits to Cowsheds and Dairies	43
Drain tests carried out							
Water	18
Smoke	16
Choked Drains unstopped	137

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