# [Report 1955] / Medical Officer of Health, Portland U.D.C.

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Portland Urban District Council



# ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the

YEAR 1.955



# PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT

on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the

PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1955

Council Offices, PORTLAND.

May, 1956.

To the Chairman and Members of the Portland Urban District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit for your information and consideration my Report for the year 1955 on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Urban District.

There were no outbreaks of serious infectious disease during the year, which indeed can be said to have been a very quiet one so far as notifiable diseases are concerned. The largest number of notifications received was in respect of measles - 23 in all, while there were only 6 cases of whooping cough. One case of paralytic poliomyelitis was notified - this was a Service patient. There was also one case of paratyphoid fever - associated with the small outbreak of this infection which occurred in the South Dorset Area in August and September.

The Standardised Birth Rate for the year (20.06 per 1,000 population) was slightly lower than that of the previous year (20.49) while the standardised Death Rate (10.23 per 1,000 population) was also lower than that of the previous year (10.65). Live births exceeded the number of deaths by 64.

Once more it is a pleasure to place on record my appreciation of the courtesy and consideration which has invariably been extended to me throughout the year. I am also most grateful to my fellow officials and to the Council staff generally for their helpful co-operation. In particular Mr. Bolt and Mr. Williams, his successor as your Sanitary Inspector, and Miss J. Bridle, part-time clerical assistant, have done much to promote the efficiency of the Public Health Department.

I have the honour to be Your obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health

# Public Health Department Staff

Medical Officer of Health:

E. J. Gordon Wallace, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

2. Sanitary Inspector:

Mr. H. R. A. Bolt, Cert.R.S.I., M.S.I.A. (retired 30th June, 1955) Mr. P. A. Williams, M.R.S.H., M.S.I.A. (commenced duties 25th July, 1955)

3. Clerk (part-time)

Miss J. E. Bridle

4. Sanitary Labourer:

Mr. C. Otter

GENERAL STATISTICS	
Area (land and internal water)	2,905 acres
Population (mid 1955) Estimated by Registrar General	15,160
Rateable Value at 1st April, 1956	£96,091
Sum represented by Penny Rate at 1st April, 1956	£385
No. of houses inhabited at 1st April, 1956 (exclusive of Government properties)	2466
Shops assessed with private dwelling accommodation	97
Licensed Premises, hotels or boarding houses	35
Total	2598
VITAL STATISTICS BIRTHS:	
Total Births Birth Rate per 1,000 population  **Comparability Factor (births) Standardised Birth Rate per 1,000 population	170 11.21 1.79 20.06
Live Births: 167	
Males Femal	es Total
Legitimate $\frac{98}{11}$ $\frac{62}{104}$ $\frac{1}{63}$	160 
Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population	11.02

			Males	Females	Total
	Legitimate Illegitimate TOTAL	L	2 1 3		2 1 3
	Still Birth Rate per : Still Birth Rate per :	1,000	populati (live &	on still) births	0.197
DEAT	HS: 103		Males	Females	Total
			56	47	103
X	Death Rate per 1,000 p Comparability Factor Standardised Death Rate	(Death	tion s)	:: ::	6.78 1.51 10.23
Deat	ns of Infants under 1	year:			
		1	Males	Females	Total
	Legitimate Illegitimate		1		1
	TOTAL		1	-	1
Death	ns of Infants under 4 v	weeks:			
		1	Males	Females	<u>Total</u>
	Legitimate Illegitimate		1 1	-	1 1
Infar	nt Mortality Rate				
	All Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Infants per Illegitimate Infants p	live 1,000	births O legitim	nate births	5.9 6.25
	births Neo-Natal Mortality Ra Maternal Mortality Rat	te		3411	Nil 5.9 Nil

X <u>Comparability Factor</u> This is worked out for each District by the Registrar General. Its object is to level out differences in age and sex constitution of the population of the various districts and its use enable us to obtain standardised birth and death rates which are more fairly comparable and more accurate than the crude rates.

## DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES - PORTLAND URBAN DISTRICT - 1955

		Males	Females	Total
1.	Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	_	1
1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.	Tuberculosis, other	-	-	-
3.	Syphilitic disease	-	-	-
4.	Diphtheria	-	-	-
5.	Whooping Cough	-	-	-
6.	Meningococcal infections	-	-	-
7. 8. 9.	Acute poliomyelitis	-		-
8.	Measles	-	-	-
9.	Other infectious and para-			
	sitic disease	-	-	-

# DEATHS FROM ALL CAUSES (continued)

10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach 3 -	3
ll. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus 4 -	
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	4
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus - 1	1
14. Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms 4 8	12
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	-
16. Diabetes - 1	1
17. Vascular lesions of nervous system 6 11	17
18. Coronary disease, angina 6 5	17
19. Hypertension with heart	TO THE REAL PROPERTY.
20. Other heart disease 11 11	22
20. Other heart disease 11 11 21. Other circulatory disease - 1 22. Influenza 1 -	1
23 Preumonia	1
The state of the s	22 1 1 1 3
25. Other diseases of respiratory system - 1	1
system - 1 26. Ulcer of stomach and duo-	1
denum 1 1	2
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	
28. Nephritis and nephrosis	
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	-
30. Pregnancy, childbirth and abortion	-
31. Congenital malformations	-
32. Other defined and ill-	7
doranod drodoop	í
34. All other accidents 13 1	14
35. Suicide 36. Homicide and operations of	
war	
TOTAL 56 47	103

# INFECTIOUS DISEASE

Infectious Disease notified during the year, shown as quarterly totals:

quartorry totals.					Total
	March	June	September	December	1955
Scarlet Fever	-	2	-	-	2
Whooping Cough	3	1	2	-	6
Paralytic Poliomyelitis	-	-	1	- 8	1
Non-paralytic do.	-	-	-	7 - 1 - 1	-
Measles	1	3	12	7	23
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-	-
Acute Pneumonia	7	-	-	1	8
Dysentery	-	-	-	100 -	-
Smallpox	-	-	-	-	-
Acute encephalitis	-	-		100	-
Typhoid Fever	-	-	-		-
Para-typhoid fever	-	-	1	-	1
Erysipelas	-	-	1	-	1
Meningococcal Infection	-	-	Attack to the	-	7
Food Poisoning	2	-	2	-	4
Puerperal Pyrexia		-	7	100 70	-

## FOOD POISONING

Four notifications of food poisoning were received during the year. These were single cases in mone of which was the causal organism identified.

#### FOOD

There are no registered slaughterhouses in the District and all meat for human consumption had been inspected by Meat Inspectors of adjacent authorities before it was brought to the Island. Regular visits were made by your Sanitary Inspector to Butchers' shops. The covered metallined meat van used for bringing meat to the Island has been inspected periodically and found to be maintained in good condition.

One man is registered as a slaughterman, but is employed mainly outside the District or on animals slaughtered privately for family consumption and not for resale.

With regard to the handling and wrapping of food, the Bye-laws made in 1950 under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 have been of considerable assistance. In his visits to food premises your Sanitary Inspector has taken the opportunity of making verbal comment on matters requiring attention and informal notices have been served in regard to the provision of extra sanitary accommodation and washing facilities, tidying of stores and redecoration. The general standard of hygiene in food shops, hotels, licensed premises and cafes was found to be generally satisfactory although improvement will be required to comply with the new Food Hygiene Regulations which became operative in January, 1956.

#### MILK

Since 1st April, 1954 only two grades of milk are permitted to be retailed in Portland (by Ministry order) namely:-

Tuberculin tested and pasteurised (or sterilised).

Responsibility for licensing pasteurising plants rests with the Dorset County Council. There are no pasteuring plants in Portland, the main suppliers of milk to the Island being Messrs. Lovell's Creameries Ltd. and the Weymouth & District Co-operative Society.

During the year the Public Health Laboratory at Dorchester examined 15 samples of pasteurised milk, all of which were reported as being satisfactory.

The following licences were issued under the Milk (Special Designations) or Milk (Pasteurised and Sterilised) Regulations, 1949:-

Tubercu	lin Tested	Pas	teurised	
Dealers or Purveyors	Supplementary Dealers	Dealers or Purveyors	Supplementary Dealers	Sterilised
8	2	8	2	Nil

## WATER SUPPLY

All houses in the District have a main water supply pumped from the Friar Waddon borehole where the supply is chlorinated.

Fifty-two samples of the public water supply were submitted for bacteriological examination and were reported on as follows:-

	Satisfactory	Suspicious	Unsatisfactory	Total
Council Offices Friar Waddon	28	- 6	- 3	28 24
rriar waddon	43	6	3	52

## CHEMICAL ANALYSIS

Report by Messrs. Waterfall & O'Brien on chemical analysis of drinking water submitted for examination on 21st October, 1955:-

"Appearance: Clear and colourless. No smell.

Reaction: pH 7.58

Albuminoid Chlorine (a equivalent Oxygen absolutrite Nitrogen in Total Soli Loss on ig	nt to Sodium Chloride orbed (4 hrs.)  n Nitrite and Nitrate ds nition on ignition  Temporary Permanent	0.008 0.026 25 41 0.08 Very faint reaction 1.3 330 50 No charring 208 37 245
Lead and C	Total	Absent
Doud and o	ALL.	

The water is very pure organically and gives similar results to those found in 1952 when the last chemical analysis was carried out."

During the evening of the 18th July, 1955 there was continuous terrential rain fall for about six hours in South Dorset and this downpour was most intense in the vicinity of the Council's Pumping Station at Friar Waddon where a rainfall of 62 inches was recorded after five hours. By the following morning this had risen to 92 inches.

By 7 p.m. on the evening of 18th July the floor of the Pumping Station was under flood water which was pouring down through the ventilation opening into the borehole in use. The level of subsoil water must have risen very considerably so that water was also entering the borehole through fresh fissures in the chalk stratum below the steel tubing which lines the first 100 feet of the borehole, which has a total depth of 360 feet.

The pumps had been closed down at about 5 p.m. when the reservoir was full. When the pumps were started up at 10 p.m. that evening the degree of chlorination was wisely increased on the initiative of Mr. Carter, Maintenance Fitter. from 2 parts per million to 4 ppm. Shortly after midnight it was possible - through the co-operation of the Dorset Police - to get a message through to the Pumping Station to increase the chlorination to 6 ppm.

A personal visit to Friar Waddon next morning revealed an alarming state of affairs in that a sample of water drawn off from a tap in Mr. Carter's house (which was in a sorry state) could best be described as liquid mud. Chlorination was at once stepped up to 8 ppm. and arrangements were made for householders in Portland to be warned by Police loudspeakers to boil all water for domestic purposes. This advice was not withdrawn until Saturday 23rd July when the Laboratory reported that the five samples submitted from the Portland sampling tap since the 19th July were all satisfactory. Unsatisfactory reports continued to be received on the Pumping Station samples submitted up to the 29th July. The degree of chlorination was gradually decreased until it was back to normal at 2.5 ppm.

When one recollects the muddy discoloured appearance which persisted for several days in the public water supply in Portland, one is inclined to ask why this episode did not apparently have any adverse effect on the health of the inhabitants. The answer is that in the 10 miles of water mains between the Friar Waddon Pumping Station and Portland itself there is a whole day's supply of water for the Island. By the time this was being used up, the "super-chlorination" at the Pumping Station had become effective and had destroyed all dangerous contamination of the supply, although we were not to know this until the first bacteriological reports came through.

It is pleasing to record that throughout this anxious time there was complete co-operation and agreement between the Public Health Department and the Water Engineer and his staff.

#### HOUSING

During the survey required by the Housing Repairs and Rents Act, 1954 some 36 dwelling houses were recorded as being unfit for human habitation, although many others had some rising dampness due to the absence of damp proof courses. It is thought that much of the rising dampness can be remedied.

A notable feature is the high percentage of people who are owner/occupiers who keep their houses in sound and weatherproof condition.

Prior to the 1st September, 1939 the Council had been responsible for building 158 houses. Since the end of World War II a further 413 houses had been provided by the Council.

#### HOUSING ACT, 1936

Under Section 11 of this Act eight houses were represented as being individually unfit for human habitation, namely:-

163 High Street
Notice of "Time and Place" served - December, 1955

38 Reforme Closing Order - Permission for use as store

# HOUSING ACT, 1936 (continued)

8 High Street Closing Order.

No action provided specification of works carried out.

10 Clements Lane
Closing Order - Permission for use as garage and workshop.

58a Weston Road Closing Order.

79 Chiswell Closing Order.

68 Weston Road Closing Order.

# FUBLIC HEALTH ACT, 1936, SECTION 269

Early in the year a licence was granted to Mr. H. and Mrs. D. Legg to use as a caravan site for 25 caravans, the paddock adjoining Pennsylvania Castle. Mr. & Mrs. Legg subsequently surrendered this licence and another licence to use the site was later issued to Messrs. C. W. C. Howe (Caravan Distributors) Ltd.

Licences to station and use individual caravans were granted for specified periods to five persons.

# NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACT, 1948 SECTION 47 NATIONAL ASSISTANCE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1951

It was necessary to use the emergency provisions of the National Assistance (Amendment) Act, 1951 in only one case, that of an elderly lady who was living in most squalid conditions. She died within 48 hours of being removed to hospital.

# PUBLIC HEALTH (INFECTIOUS DISEASES) REGULATIONS, 1953

It was not necessary for me to issue any notices on behalf of the Council under these Regulations.

# PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

One shop was licensed under the Pet Animals Act, 1951. Five visits were made during the year when conditions were found to be satisfactory.

The local Inspector of theR.S.P.C.A.continued to act as Honorary Inspector to the Council under the Act and no adverse comments were received from him.

#### LETHAL CHAMBER FOR ANIMALS

The modern electric cabinet for the humane destruction of cats and dogs presented to the Council by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was available at the Council's Wide Street Depot on Saturday mornings from 10.30 to 11.30 a.m. and Wednesday afternoons from 3.30 to 4.30 p.m.

# LETHAL CHAMBER FOR ANIMALS (continued)

This service has been much appreciated and during the year 62 dogs and 165 cats or kittens were humanely destroyed.

## DEALERS IN OLD METAL

Two dealers in old metal were registered by the Council under the Public Health (Amendment) Act, 1907, and four visits were made during the year by the Sanitary Inspector to their premises.

## PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

The supervision of public conveniences is the responsibility of the Surveyor's Department but regular visits were made by the Sanitary Inspector to check their condition.

A notable improvement has been the reconstruction of the existing convenience at Portland Bill and during the year a new convenience was built at High Street, Southwell. A further public convenience is planned for the growing number of persons occupying temporary seasonal buildings on land near to Portland Bill, but this has not yet been put in hand. The remaining parts of the Urban District are fairly well provided for, and the conveniences were well maintained. Improvements are, however, being considered, notably for Church Ope Cove and Castletown.

# FACTORY ACTS, 1937 & 1948

## PART I OF THE ACT

INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors)

Premises	Number on Register	Inspections	Number o Written Notices	Occupiers
(i) Factories in which secs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by local authorities	27	38	5	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the local authority	28	77	2	-
(iii) Other premises in which Sec. 7 is er forced by the local authority (excluding out-workers' premises	1	0	0	
TOTAL	55	115	7	-

No of					
A STATE OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR	No	of cases	re found	WAR 25 4	No.of cases
<u>Particulars</u>	Found	Remedied	Refe To H.M. Inspec- tor	By H.M. Inspector	in which prosecu- tions wer institute
Want of cleanliness Overcrowding	6	6 -	000 TOES	-	-
Unreasonable Temper- ature Inadequate Ventil-	-	-	140-0.08	100-114	-
ation		- 1	- 00 y		-
ences	1	1	1007-003	-	-
defective (c) Not separate	1	1	ant value of	E 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10 10	
Other offences against the Act	3	3	-	- 1	-
TOTAL	11	11	-	-0	-

# REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR

# SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

The built-up areas of Portland comprise approximately 2,600 houses and business premises and the bulk of these are sewered into four outfalls at Chesil Beach, Chene, Portland Bill and Sheat. From Tophill all the sewage entered the sea by natural fall, but in the Underhill district automatic sewage pumps were employed. The extensions to sewers to serve new housing estates, new Government establishments and added private building caused overloading of the sewers, notably at Chesil and Southwell and to a lesser degree at Easton, and the Council had schemes prepared and applications for approval have since been made to the Ministry of Housing & Local Government to improve certain of the outfalls. There are a few septic tanks remaining on the Island and regular attention was given to these, a Contractor's mechanical sewage tanker being used to convey the sludge to the nearest suitable manhole into the Council's sewerage system. These septic tanks are being reduced in number and arrangements were made for the Bath & Portland Stone Firms' Offices in Easton Lane and the nearby Saw Mill Tavern to be connected to a new sewer completed in 1953.

# RODENT CONTROL

Portland is unique in its need for rodent control, in that the Island is partly rural in character and yet has large areas of quarried land with deep crevasses and fissures in which rodents can find good living space out of reach and under conditions which make it almost a physical imposand under conditions which make it almost a physical imposability for modern methods of rodent control to be brought into action. Many of these quarries are situated along the side roads and tend to be used as dumping places for litter and unfinished food remains from picnics.

## RODENT CONTROL (continued)

One man was employed part-time on rodent control.

Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food's methods were applied, although these were not directly grant-aided by the Ministry, but their Inspector visited regularly and was very satisfied with the quality of rodent control, the rodent population being maintained at a very low level.

Twice during the year all the non-tidal and unflooded portions of the sewerage systems were test baited for rodents or poison baited according to the Ministry Inspector's advice.

No. of visits by part-time rodent operative 1137
Infestations Eradicated 141

Sewer manholes test baited and poison-baited 89

## PUBLIC CLEANSING

The Council maintained a weekly collection of house refuse throughout the year and also removed trade refuse. This work was under the control of the Council's Surveyor. One 'Karrier' 10 cubic yard side loading covered lorry was used for refuse collection and a driver and four assistants were employed on this vehicle. On the tip at Wide Street one man was employed full time to maintain a good standard of controlled tipping.

It is estimated that 3,600 tons of house and trade refuse were disposed of during the year. The tip was maintained free from rats, by being regularly baited. This latter work was also checked by the Rodent Inspector from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

#### ICE CREAM

There were no licensed producers of ice cream within the Urban District, the bulk of the supplies being pre-packed and supplied by the larger manufacturers on the main land. All the premises used for the sale of ice cream conformed to the Ice Cream Regulations, 1947.

## LICENSED PREMISES

A routine check of the licensed premises was made, and four letters addressed to the owners, regarding necessary improvement or repairs, were sent.

Accordingly, one licensed premises is soon to be fitted with hot and cold water over a new sink in the bar, the dwelling will be improved by a bathroom and the drainage will be connected to a recently laid sewer instead of to the cesspool.

Minor repairs resulted at the three other licensed premises.

# UNSOUND FOOD SURRENDERED AND DISPOSED OF

Food	No. of containers	Weight	
Pies	33	20 lbs.	

Food	No. of containers	Weight
Eggs Milk (condensed) Blackcurrants Peaches Pineapple Flour Peas Herrings Strawberries Grapefruit Apricots Dates Gooseberries Tomatoes Sardines Spaghetti Cherries Jam Chocolate Salmon Cod Soup Cream Beans Rabbits Meat Liver	24 1 4 8 2 11 7 2 4 1 1 3 1 3 1 3 1 3 1 4 4 3 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 1 2	4 1bs. 1 1b. 4 1bs. 175 1bs. 2 1b. 25 1bs. 200 1bs. 200 1bs. 1 1b. 25 1bs. 1 1bs. 2 1bs.
Bacon Rice Oats	2 1 29	621 lbs. 66 lbs. 132 lbs.

Condemned food is disposed of at the Council's Wide Street Depot where there is a controlled tip.

# VISITS AND INSPECTIONS

# Houses - Public Health and Housing Acts

Investigating overcrowding or unsatisfactory conditions Structural Defects and disrepair found	25
Sanitary Defects, Nuisances inves-	1.45
tigated	176
Visits re infestation by vermin	176
Premises disinfested by Local	
Authority	22
Premises disinfected by Local	0
Authority	8
Visits to houses owned by Local	
Authority	79
Aged persons called upon	79 14 184
Housing Survey Inspections	184
T. b	50
Interviews with owners, agents etc Interviews with occupiers	59 295
Interviews with occupiers Interviews with contractors	66
Revisits	88
Meat Shops and Preparation Rooms	75

# VISITS AND INSPECTIONS (continued)

	Bakehouses	19	
	Provision Shops Fish Fryers	26	
	Fish Fryers		
	Cafe and Hotel Kitchens	19 14 25 9 6 37 21	
	Ice Cream premises	25	
	Licensed Premises	9	
	School Conveniences	6	
	Shops for the purposes of Shops Acts	37	
	Dairies etc	21	
	Milk samples for bacteriological examin-		
	Routine drinking water samples for bacter	15	
	Routine drinking water samples for bacter-		
	iological examination	16	
	iological examination		
	Analysis	1	
	Analysis	-	
	examination	36	
	examination	115	
	Notices sent under Factory Act	7	
	Notices sent under Factory Act Other matters mentioned Public Sanitary Conveniences Visits re animals	7	
	Public Sanitary Conveniences	65	
	Vicite we enimale		
	Visits re animals Visits re rodents Infestations reported and eradicated Sewer Manholes prebaited (May & October) Sewer Manholes poison baited (May &	1127	
	Theoretations reported and aredianted	1757	
	Cover Markeles probetted and eradicated	141	
	Sewer mannotes predaited (May & October)	00	
	mener riginion of porposi par and that		
14	October)	23 16	
	Visits to refuse tip	10	
	Tip sprayed for files etc	4	
	Tip baited for rodents	12	
	Complaints re refuse collection, dustbins	2 -	
	etc. investigated	15	
	Visits to camping sites	36	
	Pig sties	15	
	etc. investigated Visits to camping sites Pig sties Cess-pools Miscellaneous visits Drainage Inspections and tests:-	15 36 15 5 85	
	Miscellaneous visits	85	
	Drainage Inspections and tests:-	-0	
	Smoke	28	
	Water	56	
	visits re drains	70	
	Accumulations removed	8	
	Drains unchoked by Council men	110	
	Food disposal certificates issued	21	
	Animals destroyed by R.S.P.C.A. machine:-		
	Dogs	62	
	Cats	165	
	Disinfectant supplied:-		
	Bottles	21	
	Gallon containers	14	Andrew Comment
	Mortuary cleaned		times
	Total complaints received re nuisances	51 53 53 62 7	
	Notices served - Informal	53	
	Formal	6	
	Notices complied - Informal ,	53	
	Formal	6	
	Abatement orders from Magistrates Court	2	
	Formal Housing Undertakings accepted		
	Total number of inspections made	2386	