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Annual Report
of the
Medical Officer of Health

for the
URBAN DISTRICT
(Municipal Borough)
OF ROMSEY

Staff

Medical Officer of Health	..	A. C. MACKENZIE, M.D., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	..	JOHN DAVIES, M.I.MUN.E., F.R.I.C.S., M.R.S.I. until 1.9.1952 F. J. EAST, M.I.MUN.E., A.R.S.I. from 1.11.1952
Additional Sanitary Inspector	..	R. D. MORRIS, M.R.S.I. until 8 : 3 : 1952. J. K. HUNT, A.R.S.I. from 1.7.1952.
Meat Inspector		E. H. DAYUS, M.R.C.V.S.
Secretaries		Miss D. RUSSELL and Miss J. HARDING

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

for the

URBAN DISTRICT (Municipal Borough) OF ROMSEY

YEAR 1952

PREFACE

To His Worshipful the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough of Romsey.

Gentlemen,

In accordance with my statutory duty I submit for your information and consideration my Report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Borough of Romsey for the year 1952.

The Report is divided into seven sections.

- A.—Statistics and social conditions of the area.
- B.—General provision of Health Services.
- C.—Sanitary circumstances in the area.
- D.—Housing.
- E.—Administration.
- F.—Inspection and supervision of food and its production.
- G.—Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

The health of the Borough has remained, generally speaking, satisfactory during the year and the incidence of infectious disease was low. Some progress has been made in the clean food campaign and your Health Committee have encouraged efforts to educate the public in safe and healthy living.

On the debit side of the ledger I have to report very little improvement in the housing situation, frequent delays to the building programme and deterioration in the structure of many dwellings already unsatisfactory. Many young married couples are having the gilt taken off the gingerbread by having to share accommodation. You will also see that the enlargement, alteration and repairs planned to improve the Sewage Works have to be modified.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

A. C. MACKENZIE,
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A. Statistics and social conditions of the area.

Area (in acres)	..	..	..	1212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar General)	..			6389
Rateable Value (at 1.4.1953)	..	..	..	£43,442
Sum represented by 1d. rate	..	..	..	£169.6.7
Number of Council Houses built before September, 1939	..			182
Number of Council Houses built after January, 1945	..			168
The Council also owns 11 Flats and 4 Cottages				
Total number of inhabitable premises	..	..		1819

As the Borough houses a Brewery, Paper Mills and a Jam Factory, as well as the usual sources of employment of a Country Town, unemployment is not a problem at present.

Summary of Vital Statistics for the year, 1952.

As supplied by the Registrar General

			Male	Female	Total
Live Births—					
Total Registered	..	..	46	45	91
Legitimate	..	..	43	44	87
Illegitimate	..	..	3	1	4
Still Births—					
Total	..	..	1	0	1
Legitimate	..	..	1	0	1
Illegitimate	..	..	0	0	0
Deaths—					
Total Registered	..	..	52	51	103
<i>Maternal Mortality</i>					
Death from Puerperal causes—					
Puerperal Pyrexia	..			0	0
Other Puerperal causes	..			0	0
Total	..	..		0	0
<i>Infant Mortality</i>					
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—					
Total Registered	..		4	1	5
Legitimate	..	..	4	1	5
Illegitimate	..	..	0	0	0
Death of Infants under 4 weeks of age—					
Total Registered	..		3	1	4
Legitimate	..	..	3	1	4
Illegitimate	..	..	0	0	0

Causes of Death in Romsey Urban District, 1952.

Causes of Death	Males	Females
All Causes	52	51
Tuberculosis	0	0
Cancer	11	10
Vascular lesions of the nervous system ..	8	9
Heart Diseases	20	21
Other Circulatory Diseases	0	2
Bronchitis	5	0
Pneumonia	2	2
Other Respiratory Disease	0	0
Ulcers Stomach and Duodenal	0	0
Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	0
Congenital injuries, etc.	0	0
Suicide	0	0
Road Traffic	0	0
Other Violent	0	0
All Others	6	7

Comparative Statistics (where available)—

Comparability factor	Births 1.17 Romsey	Deaths 0.78 England & Wales
Live births per 1,000 estimated resident population	16.6	15.30
Still birth, rate per 1,000 population	0.16	0.35
Still birth, rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births	10.9	22.6
Maternal Mortality—rate per 1,000—		
Total (live and still) births—		
All causes	Nil	.72
Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age—		
All Infants per 1,000 live births	54.3	27.6
Death rates per 1,000 estimated average population—		
Total	12.5	11.3
Tuberculosis Pulmonary	0.0	.24
Non-Pulmonary	0.0	
Cancer	3.3	—
Measles	Nil	—
Diphtheria	Nil	0.00
Enteritis under 2 years, per 1,000 live births ..	Nil	1.1

It will be appreciated that little significance can be attached to comparative statistics when the population to be considered is extremely small.

SECTION B. General Provision of Health Services.

1. The Medical Officer of Health is also the Medical Officer of Health of the Romsey and Stockbridge Rural District Council and an Assistant Medical Officer of Health and Assistant School Medical Officer to the Hampshire County Council. This combined appointment helps to co-ordinate the Medical Services supplied by the County Council, as the Local Health Authority, in accordance with part III of the National Health Service Act 1946 with the services supplied by the District Council and the Regional Hospital Board.

2. The County Council supply the following services—

(a) *Ambulance Service.*

An ambulance stationed at Romsey serves the area but is controlled from the County Council Offices at Winchester, additional ambulances can be sent to the District from the depot at Winchester if required.

(b) *Nursing in the Home.*

District Nurses are responsible for domiciliary midwifery and home nursing. They keep in close touch with the County Council health visitor, the Medical Officer of Health and the general practitioners in the area. The County Council rent one of the new houses erected by this Authority for use by the two district nurses whose areas are centered on the Borough. No nursing arrangements or contribution are made by the District Council but two members represent the Council on the District Health Sub-Committee of the County Council.

(c) *Child Welfare.*

The County Council employ a Health Visitor who visits children from the age of two weeks, when they pass from the care of the District Nurses, until the age of five years when the child enters school. A child welfare clinic is held every Thursday at Church House.

(d) *Care of Mothers and Young Children.*

Ante-natal supervision and dental care are provided for expectant mothers and dental care is provided for mothers in the first year of the baby's life and for children up to school age. Ante-natal clinics are held every Monday at the County Council Clinic at Church House.

(e) *Home Help.*

This service is provided for mothers confined at home, for those in charge of the elderly; chronic sick, etc. The District Nursing Sub-Committee receives reports.

(f) *Vaccination and Immunisation—see Section F of this report.*

(g) *Prevention of illness, care and after care.*

These services are part of the duties of the Medical Officer of Health, Health Visitor and District Nurses.

3. *Hospital Services.*

The South West Regional Hospital Board supply general, maternity and infectious diseases (including small pox and tuberculosis) hospital services for this area. An orthopaedic physiotherapy out-patient clinic is run in this area for pre-school and school children. This clinic is run in conjunction with the clinics run by the Specialist Staff of the Lord Mayor Treloar Cripples Hospital, Alton.

4. *Laboratory Services.*

Laboratory facilities are available at the Medical Research Council Laboratory, Southampton, and at Salisbury and Winchester.

5. *Services provided by this Council.*

(a) *Prevention of accidents.*

A campaign to lessen the incidence of accidents, especially those in the home, is being waged.

(b) *Health Education.*

Posters and other material from the Central Council for Health Education are received and displayed.

SECTION C. *Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.*

Water.

The area is supplied with a piped supply by the Southampton Corporation from their Waterworks Pumping Station at Timsbury. The quality of the water is good and the supply "constant." A few houses in isolated areas still obtain their supply from shallow wells which are liable to contamination. The numbers of these houses have been reduced as opportunity offers.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The quantity dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 311,742 gallons, which is the discharge expected from a population of 10,392 persons at an allowance of 30 gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 66,357,250 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 363,601 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 12,120 persons. During the six summer months 47,430,625 gallons were pumped, equal to an average 24 hour flow of 259,694 gallons, a discharge expected from a population of 8663 persons, allowing in both instances 30 gallons per head per day.

The Sewage Works have been consistently overworked over the last few years. This has resulted in a marked loss of efficiency of the works particularly the filter beds. Plans for extension of the works and modernisation of certain parts of the equipment were investigated at a public inquiry held on September 12th, 1952 by an Inspector of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The findings of the inquiry were that the Ministry of Housing and Local Government were unable to approve the full scheme in view of the recent restrictions on capital expenditure. A trade effluent notice was served on the Council on

11th November, 1952, by Strong & Co. of Romsey. In view of the Ministry recommending modification of the submitted plans for extension and modernisation, and the service of the above mentioned trade effluent notice, further plans for improvement of the Sewage Works are to be submitted to the Ministry.

Rivers and Streams.

Pollution of the river occurred where the effluent from the Sewage Works discharges into the river. This pollution has been indicated by reports on samples of the effluent taken by the Sanitary Inspector and by the Hampshire River Board. Pollution of the streams running through the town has not been the cause of any nuisance or complaint.

Public Cleansing.

The service is covered by Direct Labour over the whole of the district and mechanical transport is used. All premises are visited once per week, and in certain cases where the waste is heavy and highly putrescent, collections are made more frequently during the week. All the highways receive weekly cleansing, the main roads being cleansed by arrangement with the County Council who contribute towards the cost. The refuse collected is taken to the Controlled Tip at Timsbury, and is tipped into excavated disused gravel pits.

During the year 7.55 tons of metal, 9 cwts. of rags and 26.3 tons of paper were sold as salvage for £286 15s. 6d.

Sanitary Inspection in the Area.

Inspections in the area were carried out by the Medical Officer, the Chief Sanitary Inspector and the Additional Sanitary Inspector.

Most of the inspections were made to investigate and if possible mitigate, unsatisfactory housing conditions; damp, inadequate or defective sanitary accommodation, dangerous structures, etc. Nuisances which could be remedied at reasonable expense were reported and generally dealt with by informal notice of which 24 were served.

Use of a formal notice was made in 5 cases. In many cases the structure of the buildings was found to be such that the nuisance could not be remedied at reasonable cost.

There were no complaints of fly or mosquito infestation.

In the unsewered areas of the Borough a watch was kept for nuisance arising from overflowing cess pits and insanitary bucket closets but no action had to be taken.

Camping Sites.

No sites were used for camping purposes during the year. Estimated number of campers resident in the area at any one time—none.

Smoke Abatement.

No complaints were received during the year. The Borough has few factories.

Swimming Pool.

The Council own and manage the only public swimming pool in the area. The pool is uncovered, measures 75 ft. x 35 ft. and is equipped with a modern water purification system, adequate changing and storage accommodation and washing facilities. All water samples taken have been highly satisfactory and no complaints have been received from bathers. The swimming pool although a charge to the rates of £290 per annum, is an asset to the amenity of the Borough and the health of the inhabitants (particularly of the younger generations). The pool is well patronised as is shown by the attendance figures which were :—

Attendances by Schoolchildren during 1952	..	6,720
Attendances by Adult bathers during 1952	..	1,905
Attendances by Spectators during 1952	..	558

In addition 63 juveniles and 2 adults hold season tickets.

SECTION D. Housing.

New Buildings and Housing.

37 building plans were submitted for approval during the year, as follows :

- 4 plans for the erection of new houses.
- 15 plans for the improvement of existing houses.
- 16 plans for the improvement of business premises.
- 2 plans for the erection of garages.

—
37
—

At the end of 1952, 200 applications for council houses were on the housing list of the Urban District Council. Some families whose need for rehousing is urgent have not put their names on this list perhaps for one or more of the following reasons.

- (a) Pride. Would not consider living in a council house.
- (b) Satisfied with present, unsuitable, housing conditions.
- (c) Unable to pay, or more often unwilling to make sufficient sacrifice of luxuries to be able to pay, the admittedly high rent of council houses.

The council are faced with the problems of finding land for building and the ever present problem of building satisfactory houses at economical rents.

The survey to be undertaken in 1953 should indicate the number of houses which are unfit and can reasonably be rendered fit, and of those unfit which should be demolished. The ground cleared by demolition or clearance orders might well be used for housing.

The work on housing sites and the construction of new dwellings progresses slowly, 4 council houses and 8 private enterprise houses were completed during the year. The work on 24 flats, which has been frequently delayed, progresses.

These flats and some of the 66 houses on the Priestlands Estate, as well as 25 privately built houses for purchase, should be completed during 1953.

In my opinion an average of 35 new council houses per annum should in 10 years reduce the housing list of the District Council to manageable proportions as well as allowing for the rehousing of families overcrowded or living in properties which are either scheduled for demolition or suitable only for such treatment.

SECTION E. Inspection and Supervision of Food.

The inspection and supervision of food premises form a large and increasingly important part of the duties of the Medical Officer of Health and the Sanitary Inspectors. During the year over 200 inspections were made to food premises in the area. Efforts to bring all food premises up to modern hygienic standards met with varying success, and improved sanitary accommodation was installed in 3 premises on the advice of the Sanitary Inspectors. During inspections the importance of the cleanliness of the hands, and of serving utensils was continually stressed and "wash your hands" notices have been provided for staff cloakrooms and lavatories. A notice requesting that dogs should be kept out of premises in which food is sold has been well received by most shopkeepers.

An exhibition centring round the clean food display of the Ministry of Health and showing the film "Another case of food poisoning" was staged in the Town Hall in July. This exhibition was well attended by the younger generation. The older generations, especially the catering trade, evidently considered themselves sufficiently educated in this respect. Attendance was disappointing.

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

Unsound Food Surrendered, 1952.

Canned Foods :

Ham	..	..	..	..	44½ lbs.
Meat Products	..	..	..	..	62½ lbs.
Sausages	..	..	..	..	1 lb.
Fruit	..	..	..	..	15 lbs.
Vegetables	..	..	..	..	30 lbs.
Soup	..	..	..	..	12 tins
Evaporated Milk (No. 1 size)	..	..	..	..	2 tins

Other Foods :

Coffee and Chicory Essence					
(3½ fl. ozs.)	..	..	..	..	164 botts.

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report, 1952.

Emergency and licensed slaughtering of pigs in the Borough during the year amounted to 14 at three Slaughterhouses. Three sheep and seven calves were also slaughtered, and all passed for human consumption.

With regard to cooked meats—a quantity of ham and meat rolls amounting to 70 lbs. was condemned as being unfit for human consumption and destroyed.

Considerable amounts of English beef were condemned throughout the year due to bone taint, reaching the maximum in the pre-Christmas period, when 540 lbs. of prime beef was destroyed for this reason.

The sanitary conditions of the butchers shops have been examined and the general findings have been satisfactory.

The cleanliness of the vehicles delivering fresh and frozen meat to the Borough, shows a great improvement in the conditions indicated in my last year's report.

(signed) E. H. Dayus, M.R.C.V.S., Meat Inspector.

SECTION F. Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases.

The incidence of infectious diseases was low during the year.

The following cases of infectious disease were notified to the Medical Officers of Health:—

Measles	..	..	7
Scarlet Fever	..	..	15
Chicken Pox	..	..	30

Several cases of "Flu" were reported in the early months of the year. During the winter the sickness rate of the staff of the largest employer of labour in the Borough is voluntarily notified and is a useful guide to the general health of the Borough. No undue rise was noted on this rate during the 1st or 4th quarter of the year. No cases of diphtheria or puerperal pyrexia were notified during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases notified during 1952:—

Pulmonary—			Non-Pulmonary—		
Male ..	8		Male ..	1	
Female	7		Female	0	
Total	15		Total	1	
<i>Deaths.</i>					
Pulmonary—			Non-Pulmonary—		
Male ..	0		Male ..	0	
Female	0		Female	0	
Total	0		Total	0	

Infectious disease prophylaxis

Diphtheria Immunisation.

At the end of 1952, the number of children immunised at any time was :—

Born 1952	..	10
„ 1951	..	68
„ 1950	..	76
„ 1949	..	82
„ 1948	..	134
„ 1943-1947	..	365
„ 1938-1942	..	370

129 booster doses were given during the year.

Approximately 75% of the children in the Borough have been immunised.

Whooping Cough Immunisation.

Although not yet nationally sponsored, whooping-cough immunisation is becoming popular and many of the babies in the Borough have been immunised by general practitioners.

Small Pox Vaccination.

A high percentage of the children in the Borough have been vaccinated.

Immunisation by inoculation is a part of the effort made to control infectious diseases. Less spectacular are the activities of the Medical Officer and his Staff to improve the environment of the inhabitants; to reduce overcrowding, to improve housing and to educate the public in healthy habits.

The prophylaxis of many diseases not infectious or contagious may be found in the activities mentioned in the above paragraph.



