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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.N., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	..	..	F. J. EAST, M.I.MUN.E., A.R.S.I.
Additional Sanitary Inspector	..	..	J. K. HUNT, A.R.S.I. until 1.11.1953
Meat Inspector	..	..	E. H. DAYUS, M.R.C.V.S.
Secretary	..	..	MISS J. HARDING

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE

URBAN DISTRICT (Municipal Borough) OF ROMSEY

YEAR 1953

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 1953.

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.

I am,

Your obedient servant,

A. C. MACKENZIE,

Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A. Statistics and social conditions of the area.

Area (in acres)		1,212
Population (as estimated by the Registrar General)	..	6,400
Rateable Value (at 1.4.1954)		£44,819
Sum represented by 1d. rate		£177
Number of Council houses built before September, 1939		182
Number of Council houses built after January, 1945	..	206
The Council also owns 11 Flats and 4 Cottages.		
Total number of inhabitable premises		2,151
Rainfall—Winter months		9.81 inches
Summer months		16.46 inches
Annual		26.27 inches

The Borough of Romsey lies at a height of between 50 and 60 feet above sea level beside the River Test. Streams run through the town and supply power to mills and a garage. Other industries in the town are brewing and jam manufacture. In addition employment is provided by market gardens and there are the usual catering establishments and shops of a market town.

The Market, which is held on Thursday, is for livestock. No street trading licences have been issued.

The health of the borough has been satisfactory throughout the year.

Summary of Vital Statistics for the year, 1953.

As supplied by the Registrar General

						Male	Female	Total
Live Births—								
Total Registered	..	..	..	..	..	41	40	81
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	36	38	74
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	5	2	7
Still Births—								
Total	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	2
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	2	2
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	0
Deaths—								
Total Registered	..	..	..	..	..	50	79	129
<i>Maternal Mortality</i>								
Death from Puerperal causes—								
Puerperal Pyrexia	..	..	..	..	..	—	0	0
Other Puerperal causes	..	..	..	..	..	—	0	0
Total	..	..	..	..	..	—	0	0
<i>Infant Mortality</i>								
Death of Infants under 1 year of age—								
Total Registered	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	3
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	3	3
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	0
Death of Infants under 4 weeks of age—								
Total Registered	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
Legitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	1	1
Illegitimate	..	..	..	..	..	0	0	0

Causes of Death in Romsey Urban District, 1953.

Causes of Death	Males	Females	Total
All Causes	50	79	129
Tuberculosis	1	0	1
Cancer	10	9	19
Vascular lesions of the nervous system ..	6	10	16
Heart Diseases	11	16	27
Other Circulatory Diseases	1	3	4
Bronchitis	3	4	7
Pneumonia	2	1	3
Other Respiratory Diseases	0	0	0
Ulcers, Stomach and Duodenum	2	1	3
Nephritis and Nephrosis	0	0	0
Gastritis, Enteritis and Diarrhoea	1	1	2
Congenital abnormalities, etc.	0	0	0
Suicide	0	1	1
Road Traffic	0	0	0
Other Accidents	1	2	3
All Others	12	31	43

Comparative Statistics (where available)—

	Births	Deaths
Comparability factor	1.17	0.78
	Romsey	England & Wales
Live births per 1,000 estimated resident population ..	14.7	15.5
Still birth, rate per 1,000 population	0.3	0.35
Still birth, rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births ..	23.9	22.4
Maternal Mortality—rate per 1,000—		
Total (live and still) births—		
All causes	Nil	.74
Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age—		
All Infants per 1,000 live births	37.0	26.8
Death rate per 1,000 estimated average population—		
Total	15.7	11.4
Total, excluding deaths of non-residents at St. Luke's Hospital, The Gardens	12.6	
Tuberculosis—Pulmonary }	.15	.20
Non-Pulmonary }		
Cancer	14.7	
Measles	Nil	
Diphtheria	Nil	0.00
Enteritis, under 2 years, per 1,000 live births ..	.31	1.1

Changes in the rules governing the procedure of transferring deaths in hospital were made as from January 1953, so that the deaths shown include 26 cases of deaths occurring at St. Lukes Hospital, The Gardens, of people not normally resident in the borough. The death rate for the borough, if these 26 deaths are included, is high, but if these deaths are excluded the death rate is seen to be only a little above that for England and Wales and compares well with that of last year which was also 12.6 per 1,000 estimated population.

Deaths under the age of 65 years.

Study of mortality figures may give a better picture of the health of a district if the years of life lost by each death, or cause of death, rather than the number of lives terminated by each cause, is considered.

A death from a motor cycle accident of the father, age 32, of 3 children, 6, 2 and 2 months of age is a more social and economic significance than the slipping away of an 86-year-old spinster from senile decay.

The age of 65 is a convenient age to consider as the upper limit of a normal working life and an age beyond which death can be considered as seemly.

Deaths under 65 occurred during the year from cancer, 10 deaths, cerebral catastrophies 4, infectious diseases 4, and heart diseases 3, see table herewith:—

	Age at Death								Total
	0-1 Year	1-10 Years	11-30 Years	21-30 Years	31-40 Years	41-50 Years	51-60 Years	61-65 Years	
Carcinoma		1				2	6	1	10
Cerebral Catastrophies					1	1	1	1	4
Infectious Diseases	2						2		4
Diseases of the heart						1	1	1	3
Others	1					3	2		6

SECTION B. General Provisions 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 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 arrangement or contributions 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 Health Visitors who visit 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 smallpox 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 Laboratories at Southampton, 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.

6. *National Assistance Act 1948, Section 47.*

No case was dealt with under this Section of the Act.

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.

There are 2,151 registered premises in the Borough of which 1,853 are sewered and 298 served by closets.

The quantity of sewerage dealt with is equivalent to an average twenty-four hour flow of 249,560 gallons, which is the discharge expected from a population of 8,300 persons at an allowance of 30 gallons per head per day. During the six winter months 51,663,750 gallons were pumped, equal to an average twenty-four hour flow of 283,867 gallons. During the six summer months 39,445,875 gallons were pumped, equal to an average twenty-four hour flow of 215,551 gallons.

The high volume of winter flow with a low winter rainfall and a low summer flow with a high summer rainfall is explained by the behaviour of the springs in the area which rise in the winter months and seep into the sewers and sewage works.

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. The efficiency of the plant was increased by the construction of 3 new sludge drying beds, each of approximately 30 cubic yards capacity. In addition to routine maintenance of the plant the generator at the Saddler's Mill Pumping Station was overhauled. Plans for extension of the works and modernisation of certain parts of the equipment were investigated at a public enquiry 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, when examination of the nature of the effluent is completed.

Rivers and Streams.

Pollution of the river occurs 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. 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. Approximately 30 tons of refuse per week (1,560 tons per year) was collected. Road sweepings amount to approximately 1 ton per week.

During the year the following salvage was sold: 5 cwts. rags, $9\frac{1}{4}$ tons old iron, $3\frac{1}{4}$ tons mixed metals and $28\frac{1}{4}$ tons of waste paper and cardboard, for the sum of £185. 19s. 9d.

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 notices.

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 cesspits 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.

Part I of the Act.

1. Inspections.

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities.	6	—	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority.	36	24	1	—
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises).	3	50	—	—
TOTAL	45	74	1	—

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Sanitary Conveniences (S. 7) Insufficient	1	—	—	—	—

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 75ft. x 35ft. 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 £392 per annum, is an asset to the amenity of the Borough and to 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 1953	..	2,674
Attendances by Adult bathers during 1953	..	1,120
Attendances by Spectators during 1953	..	609

In addition 104 people hold season tickets.

SECTION D. Housing.

New Buildings and Housing.

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

- 12 plans for the erection of new houses.
- 16 plans for the improvement of existing houses.
- 3 plans for the erection of new business premises.
- 8 plans for the improvement of existing business premises.
- 11 plans for the erection of private garages.
- 3 plans for the erection of other premises.

—
53
—

At the end of 1953, 217 applications for Council houses were on the housing list of the Borough Council.

The work on housing sites and the construction of new dwellings progresses in a satisfactory manner. 26 Council houses and 21 private enterprise houses were completed during the year. Work on Priestlands Estate progresses satisfactorily.

The Council are faced with the problem of finding land for building and the ever present problem of building satisfactory houses at economical rents. It is hoped that new houses will be erected where old houses have been demolished and that one or two unused areas of land in the centre of the town will be utilised for housing.

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 were vigorously exercised. 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.

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

Unsound Food Surrendered, 1953.

Canned Foods:

Ham	..	..	..	..	..	41½ lbs.
Meat Products	..	..	..	..	..	46¾ lbs.
Sausages	..	..	..	..	..	20 lbs.
Fruit	..	..	..	..	..	46 lbs.
Vegetables	..	..	..	..	..	34 lbs.
Evaporated Milk	..	..	..	..	..	7 tins

Other Foods:

Biscuits	..	..	..	..	..	25¾ lbs.
Pickles	..	..	..	..	..	10 lbs.
Dried Fruit	..	..	..	..	..	30 lbs.

The Veterinary Surgeon's Report, 1953.

During the year only a few pigs were slaughtered in the Borough for private consumption and all were fit for human use.

With regard to meat delivered to the butchers in the Borough, through the Ministry of Food, the following amounts were found to be unfit for human consumption and were condemned and destroyed :—914lbs. of Beef, 394lbs. of Pork and 32lbs. of Mutton.

The amount of tinned meats and cooked ham condemned was 68lbs.

The condition of the refrigerators and containers used in the shops show improvement and can be considered satisfactory.

The vehicles used for transport of meat from the wholesalers to the butchers, although better than in the past, still show the need for improvement in the method of storing.

(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 Officer of Health:—

Measles	..	..	..	..	..	..	45
Meningococcal Septicaemia	..	..	..	..	..	..	1
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Chicken Pox	..	..	..	..	..	..	4
Dysentery (Sonné)	..	..	..	..	..	..	5

No cases of diphtheria, scarlet fever or puerperal pyrexia were notified during the year.

TUBERCULOSIS

New cases notified during 1953

Pulmonary—				Non-Pulmonary—			
Male	..	..	3	Male	..	..	1
Female	..	..	3	Female	..	..	1
Total	..	..	6	Total	..	..	2

Deaths.

Pulmonary—				Non-Pulmonary—			
Male	..	..	1	Male	..	..	0
Female	..	..	0	Female	..	..	0
Total	..	..	1	Total	..	..	0

INFECTIOUS DISEASE PROPHYLAXIS

Diphtheria Immunisation.

At the end of 1953 the number of children immunised at any time was:—

Born 1953	..	9
„ 1952	..	47
„ 1951	..	75
„ 1950	..	76
„ 1949	..	82
„ 1944-1948	..	423
„ 1939-1943	..	370
		1,082

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 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.



