

**[Report 1938] / Medical Officer of Health, Ross & Whitchurch R.D.C.**

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Ross and Whitchurch (England). Rural District Council.

**Publication/Creation**

1938

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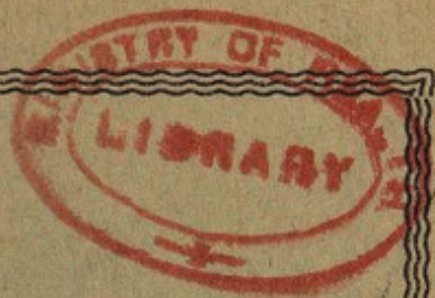
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# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

ROSS & WHITCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT.

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**1938.**

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ISSUED OCTOBER, 1939.





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# Ross & Whitchurch Rural District Council

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Vice-Chairman: Major R. W. Allen, J.P.

Major H. S. Allfrey (Chairman, Public Health  
T. E. Aston, Esq. Committee)  
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G. W. Banfield, Esq.  
Brigadier-General T. R. F. Bate, C.M.G., J.P.  
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E. T. Ward, Esq.  
G. F. Webb, Esq.  
L. T. Williams, Esq.  
Captain E. Wilmot.

\* County Councillor, Herefordshire County Council.

# Ross & Whitchurch Rural District Council

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## BYELAWS IN FORCE IN THE DISTRICT.

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Byelaws are in operation in the District with respect to the following :—

New Buildings, and certain matters in connection with Buildings.

Pleasure Boats and Vessels.

## Staff of the Public Health Department

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*Medical Officer of Health :*

LEO FAY, M.D., D.P.H. (Resigned 31st March, 1938).

WILLIAM HOGG, M.B., B.S., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.  
(Appointed 1st April, 1938).

*Clerk to the Medical Officer of Health :*

P. G. HANCOX, A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.

Public Health Department,

County Council Offices,

Alton Street, Ross-on-Wye.

Telephone—Ross 214.

*Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor :*

G. E. HARDY, L.R.I.B.A., A.R.S.I., M.S.I.A.,  
(Certified Meat and Foods Inspector).

*Additional Sanitary Inspector :*

L. WHITTINGHAM, A.R.S.I.

*Temporary Housing Inspector :*

D. B. FOXWELL.

*Temporary Clerical Assistant :*

J. H. KEEDWELL.

Rural Offices,

Woodside, Ross-on-Wye.

Telephone—Ross 24.



## ROSS AND WHITCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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*Public Health Department,  
County Council Offices,  
Alton Street,  
Ross-on-Wye.  
February, 1939.*

*To the Chairman and Members of the Ross and Whitchurch Rural  
District Council :*

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my first Annual Report on the Health Services of your District, for the year ending 31st December, 1938.

It will be appreciated that I was not responsible for the direction of your health services throughout the entire year, as I did not take over my duties in succession to Dr. Fay until the 1st April, 1938.

The form and arrangement of the Report has been considerably modified, so as to conform more closely to Circular 1728 of the Ministry of Health.

I am pleased to report that, generally speaking, the health of the District has been good throughout the year, there being no serious outbreaks of infectious disease. A slight extension of the facilities for dealing with notifiable disease was provided during the year.

During the summer months, a part of the District experienced a severe shortage of water.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant

WILLIAM HOGG,

Medical Officer of Health.

## **ROSS AND WHITCHURCH RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.**

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### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1938.**

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#### **SECTION A: STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.**

Area (in acres): 72,105.

Registrar-General's estimate of resident population, mid-1938:  
10,750.

Number of inhabited houses (end of 1938) according to Rate  
Books: 3,255.

Rateable Value: £41,278.

Sum represented by a penny rate: £185 10s. 0d.

The Rural District of Ross and Whitchurch, situated in the South of Herefordshire, is purely agricultural in character. Dairy farming and the cultivation of crops are carried on throughout the District, whilst pig-rearing, hop-growing and fruit farming are also important occupations.

The River Wye flows through the District, for a short distance constituting a portion of the boundary, and pleasure boating on the River provides a thriving summer occupation, especially at Whitchurch, which parish claims some reputation as a holiday centre.

#### **Unemployment.**

Whilst it is difficult to obtain precise information on this point, there appears to be little unemployment in the District, and no evidence is available to shew that unemployment has exercised any significant influence on the health or physique of either adults or children.



### Extracts from Vital Statistics of the Year :—

		Total	M.	F.	
Live Births :	Legitimate	165	98	67	Birth Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population : 15.9.
	Illegitimate	6	4	2	
Stillbirths	...	11	5	6	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births: 60.4.
Deaths	...	133	58	75	Death Rate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population : 12.4 (crude).

Adjusted Death Rate (Factor 0.80): 9.9.

Deaths from puerperal causes (Headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar-General's Short List):—

	Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 total (live & still) births.
No. 29.—Puerperal Sepsis	...	Nil
No. 30.—Other puerperal causes	Nil	Nil
Total	...	Nil

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—

All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	40.9
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	42.4
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	Nil
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	19
„ „ Measles (all ages)	...	Nil
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	Nil
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	Nil

## SECTION B.: GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

### Public Health Officers.

A list of the Public Health Officers of the Authority is given on Page 5 of this Report.

### Laboratory Facilities.

A laboratory service for the District is provided by the Herefordshire County Council at the County and City Public Health Laboratory, County Offices, Hereford, to which medical practitioners may forward the usual clinical specimens for examination without charge. In addition to such specimens, the Laboratory also carries out the chemical and bacteriological examination of water on behalf of the Council.

When necessary, Diphtheria swabs for virulence tests are sent to the Bacteriological Department of the University of Birmingham, as the County and City Laboratory is not yet in a position to undertake these tests.

The following is a summary of the number of specimens from the District examined at the County and City Laboratory during the year:—

Swabs for Diphtheria	...	...	36
Swabs for Streptococci	...	...	11
Sputa	...	...	26
Water: Chemical	...	...	55
Bacteriological	...	...	54
TOTAL			182

I regard the laboratory facilities as being a most useful part of the Public Health Service of the District.

### **Ambulance Facilities.**

When necessary, cases of notifiable infectious disease are removed to hospital by the motor ambulance stationed at the Isolation Hospital of the Hereford Rural District Council at Stretton Sugwas.

Non-infectious cases may utilise the ambulance maintained by the Ross-on-Wye Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade and stationed at the Brigade Headquarters, Edde Cross Street, Ross-on-Wye.

During the year, the Council made a grant of £75 to the Division towards the cost of the provision and equipment of the new local Headquarters.

I consider that the ambulance facilities available are adequate for the requirements of the District.

### **Nursing in the Home.**

The Herefordshire County Nursing Association have arranged for the services of a District Nurse to be available in every parish, these Nurses being qualified midwives, and available for maternity and general nursing in the homes of patients.

There are eight such Nurses within the District, stationed at Orcop, Harewood End, Brockhampton, Perrystone, Upton Bishop, Llangrove, Goodrich and Walford.



### **Treatment Centres and Clinics.**

There are no treatment centres or clinics held within the District, which is served by those held within the Urban District of Ross-on-Wye, particulars of which are as follow: —

The Ross-on-Wye Infant Welfare Centre has meetings on alternate Thursday afternoons at the Congregational Church Room, Gloucester Road.

An Ante-Natal Clinic, provided by the Herefordshire County Council, is held fortnightly on Thursdays, at 15, Church Street, Ross.

The Tuberculosis Dispensary is held on alternate Thursday mornings at 2, Church Street, Ross.

A Medical Officer of the County Staff is present at each session of the above Clinics, in addition to the District Health Visitor, Mrs. C. E. Turner.

Cases of Venereal Disease are referred to the County Clinic at Hereford for diagnosis and treatment.

### **Hospitals.**

There are no Hospitals situated within the Rural District, non-infectious cases requiring treatment being for the most part dealt with at the Ross-on-Wye Cottage Hospital, the Hospital Section of the Ross Public Assistance Institution, and at Herefordshire General Hospital at Hereford.

Cases of notifiable infectious disease are removed, when necessary, to the Isolation Hospital of the Hereford Rural District Council at Stretton Sugwas, in which the Council retain two beds. In such cases, removal is effected by means of the ambulance stationed at the Hospital.

The Council have agreed to meet the cost of treatment of cases of Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis admitted by the Medical Officer of Health to the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry, such liability of the Council to be limited to the cost of transport by ambulance and to a period of treatment not exceeding six weeks, viz., the period during which the disease is regarded as being infectious.

## **SECTION C.: SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA**

### **Water.**

The water supplies available in the District are very diverse in character, as will be seen from the following Table, which summarises the particulars regarding each parish:—



PARISH.	WATER SUPPLIES AVAILABLE.
Aston Ingham.	Private shallow wells.
Ballingham.	Private shallow wells, and one public well.
Brampton Abbotts.	One piped supply provided by the Council (water from mains of Ross Water Undertaking), one private piped supply, private wells, and springs.
Bridstow.	A few private shallow wells. Chiefly supplied from mains of the Ross Water Undertaking.
Brockhampton.	One private piped supply, and a few private shallow wells.
Foy.	Two private piped supplies, one public well, and private shallow wells.
Ganarew.	One private piped supply, and private shallow wells and springs.
Garway.	One piped supply provided by the Council, one public spring, private shallow wells and springs.
Goodrich.	One public spring (Coppet Hill Supply), private wells and springs, and a private piped supply.
Harewood.	One private piped supply, and private shallow wells.
Hentland.	Two public springs and some private shallow wells.
Hope Mansell.	Private shallow wells, and one small private piped supply.
How Caple.	Two private deep wells, and private shallow wells and springs. Also one public spring.
King's Caple.	Private shallow wells, and one private piped supply. Also three public springs.
Lea.	One private piped supply, one public spring, private wells and springs.
Linton.	One public well, private shallow wells, and the overflow from the Vicarage Supply.
Llandinabo.	Two private piped supplies, and private shallow wells.
Llangarron.	Piped supplies provided by the Council.
Llanrothal.	Private shallow wells and springs.
Llanwarne.	One public spring, one public well, and private wells.
Marstow.	Four private piped supplies, one public well, and private shallow wells.
Pencoyd.	Private shallow wells and springs.
Peterstow.	Mainly private shallow wells and springs. The mains of the Ross Water Undertaking supply a few houses.
Ross Rural.	Mains of the Ross Water Undertaking.
St. Weonards.	One private piped supply (taken from a brook), one public well, and private shallow wells.
Sellack.	One public well, one public spring, a private piped supply, and private shallow wells and springs.
Sollershope.	Private shallow wells and springs.
Tretire.	Private shallow wells and springs.
Upton Bishop.	One public well, one public spring, one private piped supply, and private shallow wells and springs.
Walford.	Partly supplied by the mains of the Ross Water Undertaking. There are also seven private piped supplies, five public wells, two public springs, and a few private shallow wells.
Welsh Bicknor.	Private shallow wells.
Welsh Newton.	Three public springs, private shallow wells and springs, and one private piped supply.
Weston-under-Penyard.	Partly supplied by the mains of the Ross Water Undertaking. There are also five private piped supplies, one public well, one public spring, and a number of private shallow wells wells and springs.
Whitchurch.	Three private piped supplies, one public well, and rain water.
Yatton.	One small private piped supply, and private wells and springs.



That part of the District immediately surrounding the Urban District of Ross-on-Wye is supplied by the mains of the Ross Water Undertaking, and I am indebted to N. Blake, Esq., Manager of the Undertaking, for the following information:—

“During 1938 a new 3in. main was installed in the Ross and Whitechurch Rural District at Wilton, extending from Wilton Bridge to the Monmouth and Hereford Cross Roads.”

In addition to this piped supply, there are piped supplies provided by the Council in three parishes, the remainder of the District being supplied by springs, wells, and private piped supplies.

In view of the large number of supplies in existence in the District, it will be realised that adequate control is impossible. Nevertheless, 106 samples of water were submitted for examination during the year, 53 of these being for chemical, and 53 for bacteriological examination. 44 samples were reported as unfit for drinking purposes on chemical analysis, and 30 samples unfit on bacteriological analysis.

Before any water can be regarded as safe for drinking purposes, I consider that it should give a satisfactory result on both chemical and bacteriological examinations.

Although a new pump was installed at the pumping station of the Llangarron Water Scheme at the beginning of the year, the supply was interrupted on several occasions as a result of mechanical failure of the plant. Whilst this new plant now seems to be functioning satisfactorily, it would appear that a second pump should be provided to obviate interruptions in the supply.

I regret to report that no further progress has been made with the provision of a water scheme for the Parish of Whitechurch, which is in my opinion urgently required. During the summer, this Parish experienced severe shortage of water, and the Council found it necessary to transport water by road and retail it to the inhabitants. Such a shortage of water is a menace to health, and tends to promote uncleanness and disease. Some of the dwellings in this Parish depend very largely upon rain water for a water supply, which in my opinion cannot be regarded as a satisfactory supply for drinking purposes, since unless proper precautions are taken in the collection and storage of the water it is far from safe for drinking. The first rain water collected from a roof after a spell of dry weather is usually particularly foul, yet few householders have provided means to reject such water. Also, open tanks are very liable to pollution, and it must be remembered that rain water has a tendency to dissolve metals such as lead which might conceivably produce chronic lead poisoning. In addition, with rain water as a supply, the consumer is too dependant upon the prevailing climatic conditions.



During the year, the Council's Scheme for the Parish of Garway has been completed.

Owing to the increased demand in the Parish of Brampton Abbots, an additional storage reservoir of 4,000 gallons capacity is being provided by the Council.

Work has also been carried out to the headworks of the Llancloudy water scheme which has improved the collection from the springs.

Two public wells in the District have been reconditioned during the year, with the object of preventing pollution and conserving the water during dry periods.

In several of the parishes in the District the existing water supplies cannot be regarded as satisfactory. The Parish of St. Weonards is, for example, partly supplied by a private piped supply taken from a nearby brook and put into supply with inadequate purification. A sample taken on 11th May, 1938, showed the following results on bacteriological examination:—

Micro-organisms in 1 c.c. capable of growing on Agar at 37° C. in 48 hours:—	60
Bacillus Coli ... ..	present in 5 c.cs.:
	absent in 3½ c.cs.

Although this has been brought to the notice of the Council, the only action taken has been to serve notice upon the consumers, recommending them to boil the water before using for drinking purposes. This action cannot be regarded, in my opinion, as being sufficient to protect the health of the inhabitants.

### **Drainage and Sewerage.**

There is only one public sewer in the District, this being a short open ditch in the Parish of Goodrich, which occasionally gives rise to complaints of nuisance.

Twenty-four drains were provided for new buildings, and forty-four for existing buildings during the year. These drains for the most part discharge into septic tanks, the effluent of which is dealt with by sub-irrigation.

### **Rivers and Streams.**

No complaints regarding the pollution of rivers and streams were received by the Department during the year.

### **Closet Accommodation.**

During the year, 47 privies have been converted to pail closets and two privies to water closets.

### **Public Cleansing.**

No parish in the District has a system of refuse collection, and as a result of this deficiency complaints are occasionally received regarding the indiscriminate tipping of refuse.



The Council have always regarded the cost of providing a regular collection of refuse in any parish as being prohibitive.

### Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

I am indebted to Mr. G. E. Hardy, Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor, of the following Tabular Statement for the year ended 31st December, 1938, furnished in accordance with Article 27 (Sub-section 18) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935:—

#### Inspections :—

Cowsheds and Dairies	...	...	...	216
Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	81
Housing (Rural Workers) Acts	...	...	...	219
Housing (other Acts)	...	...	...	206
Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	122
Factories and Mechanical Power	...	...	...	7
Factories without Mechanical Power	...	...	...	30
Nuisances	...	...	...	21
Building Byelaws	...	...	...	164
Bakehouses	...	...	...	12
Overcrowding (involving 152 houses)	...	...	...	160
Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	35
Caravans	...	...	...	9
Drains tested:				
(a) Hydraulic Tests	...	...	...	72
(b) Smoke Tests	...	...	...	15
Water Supplies	...	...	...	74
Filthv and Verminous Premises	...	...	...	5
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	80

#### Notices Issued :—

Informal	...	...	...	89
Statutory, re Housing	...	...	...	3
Statutory, under other Acts	...	...	...	Nil
Total	...	...	...	92

#### Summary of Defects Remedied, etc:—

##### (a) Water Supplies:—

Certificates issued re New Houses	...	...	21
New Services from Private Water Supplies	...	...	10
New Services from Ross-on-Wye Water Undertaking	...	...	7
New Services from the Council's Supplies	...	...	2
New Supplies from Existing Wells	...	...	2

Water Samples taken for examination:—

(i) Chemical	...	...	...	...	53
(ii) Bacteriological	...	...	...	...	53
Sources from which more than one sample was taken	...	...	...	...	8
Maximum number of samples taken from one Source	...	...	...	...	3

(b) *Notifiable Disease*:—

Rooms disinfected	...	...	...	...	33
Number of lots of Bedding and Bed-clothing disinfected	...	...	...	...	33
Shelters disinfected re Tuberculosis	...	...	...	...	2

(c) *Drainage and Sewage Disposal*:—

Drains provided for new houses	...	...	...	...	24
New Drains provided for existing Houses	...	...	...	...	44
Privies converted to Pail Closets	...	...	...	...	47
Privies converted to Water Closets	...	...	...	...	2

(d) *Milk and Dairies Order, 1926*:—

Cowsheds improved	...	...	...	...	10
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(e) *Housing Acts*:—

Houses repaired	...	...	...	...	87
Houses reconditioned under Housing (Rural Workers) Acts	...	...	...	...	33
Cases of Overcrowding Relieved	...	...	...	...	2

**Common Lodging Houses:—**

There are no common lodging houses situated within the District.

**Factories, Workshops and Workplaces:—**

There were 7 factories with mechanical power, and 30 factories without mechanical power registered with the Local Authority at the end of the year.

Five defects in connection with lack of cleanliness were found and remedied in the course of inspection during the year.

The following Tables give particulars of the work carried out in the District during the year in connection with the administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, and the Factories Act, 1937 (which superseded the Act of 1901 on 1st July, 1938).



## 1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health.

(Including Inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector).

Premises. (1)	Number of		
	Inspections (2)	Written Notices (3)	Occupiers Prosecuted (4)
Factories with mechanical power	7	—	—
Factories without mechanical power	30	—	—
Other Premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including outworkers' premises) ... ..	—	—	—
TOTALS	37	Nil	Nil

## 2. Defects Found.

Particulars (1)	Number of Defects.			Number of defects in respect of which Prose- cutions were instituted. (5)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred to H.M. Inspector (4)	
Want of Cleanliness (S.1) ...	5	5	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2) ...	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ...	—	—	—	—
Ineffective Drainage of floors (S.6) ...	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7) { insufficient	—	—	—	—
{ unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—
{ not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Other offences ...	—	—	—	—
(not including offences relating to Home Work or offences un- der the Sections mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order, 1921, and re- enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937.)				
TOTALS	5	5	Nil	Nil

### **Outwork in Unwholesome Premises:—**

(Section 108 of Act of 1901 ;     }  
Section III of Act of 1937)     } ..... Nil.

### **Shops and Offices.**

No action was taken during the year under the Shops Act, 1934, or the Public Health Act, 1936, in connection with these premises.

### **Camping Sites.**

No. of sites in the District which were used for camping purposes during 1938	... ..	7
No. of Camping Sites in respect of which licences have been issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936	... ..	7
Estimated number of campers resident in the District at one time during the summer season, 1938.	... ..	250

So far as can be ascertained, the problem of camping does not appear to be very formidable, in spite of the fact that the District possesses much rural charm.

### **Smoke Abatement.**

This problem does not arise within the District.

### **Swimming Baths and Pools.**

There are no (a) public (b) privately owned swimming baths or pools open to the public, in the District.

### **Eradication of Bed Bugs.**

No Council houses or other houses were found to be infested with bed bugs, and no disinfestations were carried out during the year.

The practice adopted in the past in dealing with infested premises has been to secure a thorough cleansing, followed by spraying with a contact insecticide prepared in accordance with Memorandum 180/Med. of the Ministry of Health, this being augmented by fumigation with sulphur candles, and the whole process being repeated after an interval of fourteen days.

This work, which was carried out by the Sanitary Inspector on one occasion, proved quite successful. Where infestation is not heavy, these methods energetically carried out can free the premises from these pests, but if the infestation is very heavy I am convinced that the only method capable of securing complete disinfestation is the use of hydrogen cyanide.

All tenants for houses owned by the Council are approved by the Sanitary Inspector before taking possession.



It would appear, however, that infestation with bed bugs is rare in this District, one factor contributing to the prevention of infestation being the fact that most of the dwellings in the District are of the detached or semi-detached types.

### Schools.

There are 26 elementary schools in the District, all of which are small and of a rural character. The sanitary condition of these is fairly satisfactory, although in several instances the school buildings are old and lack the facilities which are nowadays regarded as essential.

The water supplies of the schools are derived either from wells or from piped supplies. During the year the well used by Peterstow School was found to be polluted, and after a considerable amount of work had been carried out the water was rendered safe for drinking purposes. Garway Council School was connected to the Council's piped supply for that Parish. The position at St. Weonards School is not satisfactory, as the water for this School is obtained from the piped supply in that Parish which has been found on analysis to be unsafe for drinking purposes.

There were fourteen school closures during the year on account of infectious disorders, a tabular statement of which is given below:—

#### *School Closures.*

School.	Period.	Cause.
Upton Bishop C. of E.	6/ 1/38—21/ 1/38	Measles.
St. Weonards C.	20/ 1/38—28/ 1/38	Influenza.
Sellack C. of E.	21/ 1/38—28/ 1/38	Coughs and Colds.
King's Caple C. of E.	21/ 2/38—11/ 3/38	Coughs, Colds & Mumps.
Llanwarne C. of E.	1/ 3/38— 4/ 3/38	Coughs and Colds.
Hentland P.	3/ 3/38—18/ 3/38	Mumps, Coughs & Colds.
Walford Bishopswood	11/ 3/38— 8/ 4/38	Chicken Pox.
Sellack C. of E.	22/ 3/38— 1/ 4/38	Mumps.
Weston-under-Penyard	3/11/38—18/11/38	Whooping Cough.
Garway C.	28/11/38— 9/12/38	Coughs, Colds & Measles.
Whitchurch	29/11/38— 9/12/38	Chicken Pox.
Linton C. of E.	2/12/38—22/12/38	Whooping Cough.
Goodrich C. of E.	19/12/38—22/12/38	Coughs and Colds.
Peterstow C. of E.	19/12/38—23/12/38	Influenza.



## SECTION D.—HOUSING.

21 new houses were erected by private enterprise in the District during the year. I have, however, to report that no new houses were erected by the Council.

The policy of the Council with regard to unfit houses has always been to secure repair under the Public Health and Housing Acts or reconstruction with the aid of grants made under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts, and whilst I have no doubt that much useful work is and can be carried out in this manner, I am of the opinion that such a policy cannot in every instance provide an adequate solution to all housing problems.

This policy cannot, for example, make much contribution to the relief of overcrowding in the District, yet I consider that the abatement of overcrowding should be the first consideration of any policy directed towards the improvement of housing conditions. The problem of overcrowding in this District does not, however, appear to be one of great magnitude.

Moreover, the policy of the Council does not always appear to make provision for an adequate solution to the problem of the unfit house situated on an inaccessible site or at a considerable distance from a water supply.

33 houses were rendered fit during the year, and a further 7 houses were in process of being reconditioned at the end of the year, with the aid of grants made under the Housing (Rural Workers) Acts.

### 1. Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year:—

(1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	...	...	143
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...						206
(2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 and 1932	...	...	...	...	...	...	73
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	...						81
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	...	89

### 2. Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers.	...	...	...	...	...	87
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### 3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year:—

(a) Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs ... ..	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices:—	
(a) By owners ... ..	Nil
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil
(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served required defects to be remedied	Nil
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices:—	
(a) By owners ... ..	Nil
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	Nil
(c) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made ... ..	2
(2) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... ..	1
(d) Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936:—	
(1) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... ..	Nil
(2) Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit ... ..	Nil

### 4. Housing Act, 1936, Part IV.—Overcrowding:—

(a) (i) Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ... ..		9
(ii) Number of families dwelling therein ... ..		10
(iii) Number of persons dwelling therein ... ..		53
(b) Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ... ..		Nil
(c) (i) Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ... ..		2
(ii) Number of persons concerned in such cases		13½
(d) Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding:—		

There were no cases of overcrowding recurring after abatement had been secured by the Local Authority.



## **SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.**

### **Milk Supply.**

There were 224 persons registered with the Local Authority under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, at the end of the year.

When compared with the figure for the previous year this shows a decrease which is due to 43 names being removed, and only 8 added to the register during 1938.

All premises are regularly inspected, 216 such inspections being made during the year, as a result of which improvements were secured in 10 cowsheds.

The Herefordshire County Council are the Authority charged with the administration of the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936, and acting as Sampling Officer on behalf of that Authority the Sanitary Inspector submitted 96 samples for examination for bacterial content and tubercle bacilli during the year, of which 76 proved satisfactory. 15 "Accredited" Licences and 4 "Tuberculin Tested" Licences were granted to producers in the District during 1938.

A considerable portion of the milk produced in the District is sold wholesale for the manufacture of milk chocolate and confectionery of a similar nature, and is collected daily from the various farms by the purchaser.

There are no pasteurisation plants within the District.

### **Meat and Other Foods.**

There are now only two slaughterhouses in use in the District, one being a registered slaughterhouse in the Parish of Whitechurch, and the other a licensed slaughterhouse situated in the Parish of Upton Bishop. Both of these premises are regularly inspected, and are kept in a satisfactory condition.

The decrease in the number of slaughterhouses has greatly facilitated their supervision by this Department, although difficulty is always experienced in the exercising of supervision in rural districts.

The number of animals slaughtered in these slaughterhouses during the year was 988, and almost all of the carcasses were examined. Most of the carcasses were found to be fit for human consumption, but several livers affected with cirrhosis were surrendered and destroyed.

There are very few shops for the retail sale of meat within the District, the greater part of the meat consumed being slaughtered in neighbouring urban districts and delivered by means of motor vans.



It is not possible for any ante-mortem inspection of animals to be carried out within the District, and no meat-marking scheme is in operation.

There are 12 bakehouses in the District, all of which are regularly inspected.

### **Carcases Inspected and Condemned.**

	Cattle, excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed (if known) ...	47	4	21	823	93
Number inspected ...	47	4	21	801	81
<b>ALL DISEASES EXCEPT TUBERCULOSIS.</b>					
Whole carcases condemned ...	—	—	—	2	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	7	—	—	23	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than tuberculosis ...	14.89 %	—	—	3.12 %	4.93 %
<b>TUBERCULOSIS ONLY.</b>					
Whole carcases condemned ...	—	—	—	—	1
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned ...	—	—	—	—	7
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ...	—	—	—	—	9.87 %

### **Adulteration, Etc.**

The Food and Drugs (Adulteration) Act, 1928, is administered in the District by the Police on behalf of the Herefordshire County Council.

### **Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Food.**

Facilities, on a limited scale, exist at the County and City Public Health Laboratory, Hereford, for the bacteriological examination of foodstuffs, e.g., milk for tubercle bacilli and food in suspected cases of food poisoning.

### **Nutrition.**

No action was taken by the Council during the year to increase the knowledge of the public on the subject of nutrition.

### **Shell-fish (Molluscan).**

There are no retail purveyors of shell-fish in the District, and this class of food does not appear to be consumed to any extent by the inhabitants.



The small demand for the edible molluscs is supplied by purveyors in the neighbouring urban districts.

No action was necessary during the year under the Public Health (Shell-Fish) Regulations, 1934, or the Public Health (Cleansing of Shell-Fish) Act, 1932.

## **SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.**

There was no serious outbreak of infectious disease in the District during the year, and the health of the inhabitants has been generally good. The total number of notifications received was 57, showing an increase of 14 on the figure for 1937.

Scarlet Fever was the most prevalent notifiable disease, 27 notifications being received, although all cases were mild in character. In one instance, however, it was necessary for your Medical Officer of Health to take action under the Milk and Dairies Order, 1926, to stop the supply of milk for a short period following an outbreak of Scarlet Fever in the family of a registered wholesale milk purveyor. I am pleased to report that the Council compensated the purveyor for the loss sustained by this action.

There were only two cases of Diphtheria notified during the year, as compared with 6 in 1937.

The Council provide Diphtheria Anti-toxin free of charge to be registered medical practitioners for use in connection with cases of Diphtheria arising in the District, supplies being obtainable either from this Department or from Messrs. Chave and Jackson, of Hereford, and Mr. J. F. Hart, of Ross-on-Wye. No applications were received for this during the year.

Immunisation against Diphtheria is also afforded free of charge by the Council to those who wish to avail themselves of this service, but no applications were received during 1938.

All Diphtheria contacts are swabbed whenever possible.

The remaining notifications received during the year were as follows:—Pneumonia, 15; Puerperal Pyrexia, 5; and Erysipelas, 8.

When necessary, cases of notifiable infectious disease are treated at the Isolation Hospital of the Hereford Rural District Council, situated at Stretton Sugwas. The Council's agreement with that of the Hereford Rural District provides that two beds shall be reserved for the treatment of cases from the Ross and Whitchurch Rural District, who are suffering from Smallpox, Diphtheria or Scarlet Fever, but in the event of the Hospital being required to take a case of Smallpox, all other cases would be required to be sent to their homes.

I consider that these present arrangements are hardly adequate for the requirements of the District, as with only two beds available for a population of 10,750 it may not always be possible for hospital treatment to be afforded to all cases in which it might be urgently required. Moreover, the accommodation



should be available in respect of all notifiable diseases, as it is of far more importance that hospital facilities should be available for the treatment of such diseases as Typhoid and Spotted Fevers than for the present prevailing type of Scarlet Fever.

I am also of the opinion that hospital accommodation for Smallpox should be additional to the existing accommodation, and not alternative. With the arrangements at present in force, the admission of a case of Smallpox to the Hospital might result in severe cases of Diphtheria requiring skilled medical attention being returned to their homes at a critical stage of their illness.

The treatment of cases of Puerperal Pyrexia and Ophthalmia Neonatorum is provided by the Herefordshire County Council as part of the Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme.

The Council have now agreed that cases of Acute Anterior Polomyelitis occurring in the District may be admitted by the Medical Officer of Health to the Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry, and are prepared to meet the cost of treatment of such cases for six weeks, i.e., for the period during which the disease is usually regarded as being infectious. It is hoped that any further treatment required in such cases would be provided by the Herefordshire County Council under the Orthopaedic Scheme. I regard this as being a welcome advance in the facilities for the treatment of infectious disease.

#### Notifiable Diseases during the Year 1938.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox ... ..	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever ... ..	27	21	—
Diphtheria ... ..	2	1	—
Enteric Fever ... ..	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ... ..	5	—	—
Pneumonia ... ..	15	—	3
Erysipelas ... ..	8	1	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—

#### Analysis of the Total Notified Cases According to age.

Disease	AGE GROUPS.												Totals.
	Under 1	1—	2—	3—	4—	5—	10—	15—	20—	35—	45—	65 and over	
Scarlet Fever	—	—	—	—	—	11	6	4	3	2	1	—	27
Diphtheria	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2
Puerperal Pyrexia.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	5
Pneumonia	1	1	1	—	1	—	2	—	1	1	7	—	15
Erysipelas	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	3	2	8
TOTALS	1	1	1	1	1	11	9	4	10	5	11	2	57



### Prevention of Blindness.

The Council have not made any provision for the prevention of blindness under Section 176 of the Public Health Act, 1936, but the treatment of cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum occurring in the District is provided by the Herefordshire County Council as part of the Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme.

Cases of venereal disease affecting the eyes are referred to the County Clinic at Hereford.

### Tuberculosis.

On the 1st January, 1938, there were 30 cases of Tuberculosis on the Register: of these, 19 were respiratory and 11 non-respiratory.

During the year, 12 notifications were received, 7 being for respiratory and 5 for non-respiratory disease. 6 cases (3 respiratory and 3 non-respiratory) were removed from the Register on account of recovery or change of residence.

The number of cases remaining on the Register at the end of the year was 36, of which 23 were respiratory and 13 non-respiratory.

### New Cases and Mortality during 1938.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.		Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0- ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1- ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5- ...	—	—	2	2	—	—	—	—
15- ...	3	1	—	1	—	—	—	—
25- ...	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
35- ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
45- ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55- ...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 & Upwards	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
TOTALS	4	3	2	3	1	—	—	—

The one death due to Tuberculosis was that of a resident of the District who was notified and died whilst temporarily resident in another area.

The notification of cases of Tuberculosis is carried out promptly by the medical practitioners in the District, and no action was necessary during the year under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925, or Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1936.



### Causes of Death.

	Males.	Females.	Total.
Influenza ... ..	—	2	2
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	1	—	1
Cancer ... ..	7	12	19
Diabetes ... ..	2	1	3
Cerebral Hæmorrhage, &c. ... ..	2	3	5
Heart Disease ... ..	21	24	45
Aneurysm ... ..	1	—	1
Other Circulatory Diseases ... ..	3	3	6
Bronchitis ... ..	—	2	2
Pneumonia (all forms) ... ..	1	2	3
Other Respiratory Diseases ... ..	1	3	4
Peptic Ulcer ... ..	—	1	1
Appendicitis ... ..	1	—	1
Cirrhosis of the Liver ... ..	—	2	2
Acute and Chronic Nephritis ... ..	10	3	13
Congenital Debility, Premature Birth, etc. 2	3	5	
Senility ... ..	—	2	2
Other Violence ... ..	2	3	5
Other Defined Diseases ... ..	4	9	13
	—	—	—
All Causes ... ..	58	75	133

### Health Education.

No special action was taken by the Council during the year for the promotion of interest in the prevention of ill-health.

Pamphlets provided by the Herefordshire County Council were, however, distributed from this Department and from the Clinics held in the Ross-on-Wye Urban District.











