[Report 1946] / Medical Officer of Health, Royston (Hertfordshire) U.D.C.

Contributors

Royston (Hertfordshire, England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1946

Persistent URL

https://wellcomecollection.org/works/u4sjxpca

License and attribution

You have permission to make copies of this work under a Creative Commons, Attribution license.

This licence permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See the Legal Code for further information.

Image source should be attributed as specified in the full catalogue record. If no source is given the image should be attributed to Wellcome Collection.

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road
London NW1 2BE UK
T +44 (0)20 7611 8722
E library@wellcomecollection.org
https://wellcomecollection.org

RARY

ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ending

31st. December, 1946.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS:

Medical Officer of Health:

NORMAN MACFADYEN, M.B., D.P.H., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

123, Norton Way, Letchworth.
(Phone: Letchworth 12)

Sanitary Inspector:

S. M. JACKSON, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Town Hall, Royston.
(Phone: 2257)

Council Offices:

John Street, Royston.

H. F. J. BANHAM, Clerk to the Council.
(Phone 2257)

ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH for the year Ending DECEMBER 31st. 1946.

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to submit my Annual Report which covers the period 1st. January to 31st. December, 1946.

This is a condensed summary of the conditions affecting the health of the district and some of the particulars it has been usual to publish are naturally restricted.

My thanks are due to the Sanitary Inspector for his help during the year and in the preparation of this Report.

Section A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the District.

Area (in acres)	1626
Residential Population (Registrar General's figure)	4265
Number of Inhabited Houses	1260
Rateable Value	£26,505
Sum represented by a penny rate	£101 - 1[illegible]

Vital Statistics.

Births.

Legitimate	- Male,	36,	Female,	35;)	Total 77.
Illegitimate	- Male,	3,	Female,	3;)	Birthrate 18.0

Birthrate for England & Wales 19.1.

Deaths.

Male, 18. Female, 39. Total 62. Death-rate 13.4.

Death-rate for England & Wales 11.5.

Still Births.

Legitimate	- Male,	0;	Female,	3)	Total 3.
Illegitimate	- Male,	0;	Female,	0;)	Still Birth-rate 0.72.

Still Birth-rate for England & Wales 0.59.

Infant Mortality.

Legitimate	- Male,	0;	Female,	1;)	Total 1.
Illegitimate	- Male,	0;	Female,	0;)	Rate per 1000 live births 13.

Infant Mortality rate for England & Wales 43.

Infectious Diseases.

The following cases were notified:-

Whooping Cough	8
Infective Hepatitis.	2

No cases of Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria occurred.

The principal causes of death were:-

Disease of Circulatory System ...	40
" " Pulmonary System ...	6
Tuberculosis (pulmonary)	1
Malignant Disease	9
Prematurity or Congenital Defect	1

TUBERCULOSIS.

Notifications of Tuberculosis for the year 1946.

Age Periods.	New cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1								
5								
10								
15								
20								
25								
35	1	1						
45					1			
55								
65 and upwards								
Totals . ..	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	-

It will be seen that there was no death from preventable disease as we know it today, and only one infantile death. This, of course, gave a very satisfactory infantile death rate. The birth rate is still below that of the country generally, and it is interesting that there was no male death from malignant disease. Royston has come through the war years with a good health record.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2018 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b30045010

Water Supply.

The whole of the district is supplied with water from the chalk by the Royston Water Company, by a piped supply of excellent quality.

No shortage was experienced during the year.

4 bacteriological examinations were made during the year.

Chemical Analysis is as follows:-

Physical Examination

Appearance	Clear
Colour	None
Odour	None

Chemical Analysis (expressed in parts per 100,000)

Suspended Solids	Nil.
Dissolved Solids	37.72
Chloride (as Cl_2)	1.4
Free Ammonia	0.009
Albuminoid Ammonia	0.0045
Nitrate (as N_2)	0.43
Nitrate	very faint trace.
Oxygen consumed from Permanganate (4 hrs. at 80°F.)	0.0096 (N/80)
pH value	7.2
Temporary Hardness	19.92
Permanent Hardness	4.86

Conclusion.

The water is in a satisfactory chemical, physical and bacteriological condition and is suitable for drinking purposes.

Section B.

General Provision of Health Services.

Public Health Officials:

(a) Medical.

The Medical Officer of Health is a part-time officer holding a Diploma of Public Health.

(b) Sanitary.

The Sanitary Inspector holds a Certificate of the Royal Sanitary Institute as a Sanitary Inspector and also as an Inspector of Meat and Foods.

He also holds the appointment of Surveyor to the Council.

(c) Clerical.

One male clerk.

Sewerage and Drainage.

2 new houses built by private enterprise were connected to the sewerage system during the year.

1 new house was drained to a cesspool temporarily awaiting a short sewer extension before connection thereto.

Sewage Disposal.

The Sewage Farm, situated near the north eastern boundary of the Urban District, covers 16¼ acres of land, and the method of disposal of sewage is by a system of broad irrigation.

Approximately 3½ acres of the land are planted with soft fruit trees, and during the war, a local farmer was allowed to crop the remainder of the land in the interests of food production.

A very considerable increase in the quantity of sewage has taken place since the Sewage Farm was laid out in 1903, and considerable difficulty has arisen in late years in disposing of the sewage over the land so as not to cause water logging and sickness and to ensure proper filtration. This difficulty is particularly acute on the portion of land available for the disposal of sewage from the north west portion of the town including the P. O. W. Camp, in which area the Council's Housing Estate will eventually result in a further 84 houses being connected to the sewer, thus further increasing the difficulties of satisfactory disposal.

Refuse Removal & Disposal.

Increasing difficulties were met in maintaining a weekly collection of house and trade refuse, arising from the slow and inadequate system in operation, which is nowadays incapable of efficiently carrying out the job.

The vehicle used for refuse collection is a horse drawn cart with wooden body fitted with sliding covers and mounted on pneumatic tyred wheels, which replaced the original wooden wheels in 1936. This cart was purchased in 1912 and has been in continual use ever since. It is now nearly worn out and quite inadequate for present day requirements.

The rising costs of horse hire, and labour difficulties, during 1946, caused anxiety.

The cost of refuse collection rose to 14/8d. per ton, a considerable increase on previous years, and one which needs to be appreciably lowered by the adoption of up to date methods of collection.

The Council have given careful consideration to this matter, and have come to the decision that the work can be more economically and efficiently carried out by direct labour with a motor vehicle.

At the end of the year it had been decided to examine various types of vehicles with the object of obtaining the one most suitable for local conditions.

Disposal of refuse is carried out by tipping at the Sewage Farm Tip at Coombes Hole and every effort has been made this year to bring the tip into a cleaner and more sanitary condition following the neglect which occurred during the war years due to the acute shortage of labour. Unfortunately the labour situation did not allow of all the work contemplated being carried out, and we are still faced with the disposal of the large accumulation of tins left at the end of the war. The flattening and spreading of these tins so that the same can be covered over without danger of forming a harbourage for rats must be undertaken at the first opportunity. General straightening and cleaning up of the tip has been done along with the formation of a firm approach road and the making and keeping of a clean tip face.

Disposal costs for the year work out at 1/8½d. per ton of refuse.

Rat infestation on the tip and also on the Sewage Farm has been kept down by regular baiting and poisoning carried out by the Rodent Control staff of the Herts. War Agricultural Committee and the County Council under contract with the District Council. Though we cannot claim the area is entirely free from rats, there is no doubt the breeding of these rodents has been severely restricted and their numbers kept low.

SALVAGE.

The collection of waste paper and rags was continued during the year from dwelling houses and shop premises.

This collection is of necessity separate from that of refuse collection, due to the small capacity of the refuse vehicle and the impracticability of using a trailer in conjunction with the horse drawn cart. This results in a high collection cost, which, together with the cost of sorting and baling of the salvage, results in the total costs exceeding the amount realised from the sale of the salvaged materials.

The total weight of salvaged materials collected during the year amounted to 23 tons 11 cwts. which realised a sum of £149 - 5 - 0.

It is anticipated that when a motor refuse vehicle is acquired, the work of refuse and salvage collection can be combined, with a considerable lowering of the cost of collection, resulting in an excess of income from salvaged materials over expenditure.

Salvaged materials are stored, sorted, baled and bundled at the Council's Highway Depot in Queens Road, and the work is carried out in an open fronted shed under cramped and exposed conditions, there being a lack of covered accommodation available at the Depot.

HOUSING.

Building Programme.

The Council's Post War Housing Programme provides for the erection of 20 houses on the Day's Close Site and 85 houses on the Orchard Road Site.

Day's Close Site.

Site Preparation Works were commenced on this site at the beginning of the year and roads, sewers and other services were laid before the erection of houses commenced. The completion of Site Preparation Works (surfacing of roads and laying of footpaths) has been left until the houses are at or near completion.

The erection of houses was commenced in January and at the end of the year 18 houses were in course of construction, and the first 4 houses were nearly ready for occupation. These houses comprise 16 with three bedrooms and 2 with four bedrooms.

Orchard Road Site.

In April, the Site Preparation Works were commenced on this site, and concrete roads and footpaths were formed and sewers laid before building operations commenced.

In June, the erection of 41 houses was begun, and in September a further 44 houses were started. Of these 44 houses, 4 are to be of two bedroom type, 24 of three bedrooms, and 16 of four bedrooms.

The rate of progress in the completion of houses has been disappointing, but very great difficulties due to shortages in labour and materials have had to be met, and many obstacles overcome to maintain progress at the maximum rate possible.

HOUSING ACT 1936.

Due to the great amount of time necessarily expended on new housing works and in other directions, it has been impossible to carry out much work in the re-conditioning and repair of old property, and no formal action under the Housing Act was taken during the year.

6 houses in Clearance Areas and 1 house on which a Demolition Order is operative are still awaiting demolition.

Informal action was taken where essential repairs to roofs, walls, floors, windows, ceilings, eaves gutters and downpipes etc. were necessary, with satisfactory results.

Control of Civil Building.

The Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor has been designated as the officer responsible for the issue of Building Licences on behalf of the Minister of Works under Defence Regulation 56A.

During 1946, 6 licences for the erection of new dwelling houses were issued, and three of those houses were completed and occupied by the end of the year.

Two licences were issued for the conversion of existing buildings into dwelling accommodation at an estimated cost of £1225.

304 other applications to carry out building works were received during the year, of which 12 were refused as being for work not considered essential at the present time.

19 licences were issued for work of structural alterations or additions at properties at an estimated cost of £2859. These works included the provision of additional bedrooms, W. C's, bathrooms, garages etc.

273 licences were issued for essential works and repairs to properties of a total estimated cost of £12,819.

Of these licences, 184 were in respect of dwelling houses and 89 in respect of other buildings.

The works licensed included the repair or renewal of roofs, eaves gutters and downpipes, drains, external walls, internal wall plaster, ceilings, chimney stacks, floors, cooking and heating apparatus, water closets, sinks, baths and lavatory basins, the repair and painting of external wood and ironwork, internal redecorations, installation of electric services and other essential works to bring property up to a reasonable standard of repair.

The sorting of applications, the inspection of properties to verify the essentiality of the works proposed, the inspection of works in progress and the considerable amount of office work entailed in the issue of licences, added greatly to the work of the Inspector and his clerk and proved a severe strain throughout the year.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk.

There are three milk producers in the district, one of whom is licensed by the County Council for the production of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

Two of the producers are also retail purveyors of milk in the district and three other retail purveyors obtain their milk from outside the district.

Inspections of the farms and dairies were made and samples of milk taken in accordance with the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations 1936/46 gave results which complied with the standard.

Meat.

No slaughtering of animals is carried out in the district.

Meat in the butchers shops has been inspected, and the following certified as unfit for human consumption.

Beef (Home Killed)	184 lbs.	(Foreign)	20 lbs.
Lamb (Home Killed)	8 lbs.	(Foreign)	14 lbs.

The causes of condemnation were abscesses in musculature, bruising and injury with consequent decomposition, Bone Taint and emaciation.

Other Foods.

Meat and other food shops were visited and the following foods were found to be unfit for human consumption on examination and were destroyed.

New Zealand Cheese	10 lbs.
Bacon	38¼ lbs.
Figs	18 lbs.
Dates	10 lbs.
Larley	14 lbs.
Prunes	10 lbs.
Soya Flour	6 lbs.
Biscuits	½ lb.
Wheat Flakes	2 pkts.
Pudding Powder	100 pkts.

Tinned Foods.

Corned Beef (6 lb, tins)	24
do do (2 lb, tins)	1
do do (1 lb, tins)	9
Stewed Steak	17
Pork Sausage Meat	10
M. O. R.	3
Lemon Curd	12
M. & V. Ration	1
Lamb Tongue	1
Steak & Kidney Pudding	8
Meat & Vegetables	3

Salmon	20
Brisling	1
Pilchards	13
Crawfish	1
Sardines	2
Fish Paste	1
Evaporated Milk	79
Condensed Milk	7
Beans	13
Peas	60
Spaghetti	2
Jam	2
Syrup	1
Plums	4
Date Pudding	1
Soups	2

Summary of the Sanitary Inspector's and Surveyor's Report.

New Streets and Buildings.

Total Number of Plans approved	23
Plans approved for New Houses	5
Plans approved for other buildings	18
New Houses completed:-	
By Local Authority under Housing Acts	0
By Private Enterprise	3
Other buildings completed	10
Drains laid to above	yards 200
Gullies laid to above	18
Connections to sewer	4
Vent Shafts fixed	7
Inspection Chambers built	12
Water Closets fixed	11
Cesspools (temporary)	1
Intercepting Traps fixed	5
Baths fixed	5
Lavatory Basins fix 1	15
Sinks fixed	4
Dust Bins provided	3

Housing Acts & Public Health Acts etc.

Houses Inspected, Housing Acts	18
Houses in Clearance Areas to be demolished	6
Houses under Demolition Orders to be demolished	2
Houses Demolished	0
Statutory Notices served	0
Informal Notices served	39
Notices complied with	36
Legal Proceedings taken	0
House roofs renewed or repaired	35
House windows repaired	44
Houses provided with improved light	3
Houses provided with improved ventilation	3
House chimneys repaired	8
" ceilings renewed or repaired	16
" floors renewed or repaired	20
" walls (external) repaired or plastered	20
" eaves gutters renewed or repaired	20
Internal wall plaster repaired	15
Houses re-drained	6
New drains laid yards	74
Gullies fixed	15
Intercepting Traps fixed	1
New sinks fixed	7
Sinks renewed and repaired	9
Sink waste pipes renewed and repaired	14
W. C. roofs repaired	2
New W. C's fixed	5
W. C. pans renewed or repaired	7
W. C. hopper pan replaced by pedestal pan	1
W. C. cisterns renewed or repaired	39
New baths fixed	10
Inspection Chambers built	6
Inspection Chamber cover renewed	1
New Vent Shafts fixed	1
New F. A. I. fixed	1
Water service pipes repaired	58
Dampness remedied	43
Yards paved or repaired	8
Sub floor ventilation improved	1
Dangerous cellar flaps repaired	8
New larders provided	2
Cooking ranges renewed or repaired	14
Hot water systems renewed or repaired	11
Staircases repaired	4

External doors repaired	21
Dangerous wall rebuilt	1
Blocked drains cleared and cleansed	10
Accumulations of rubbish removed	4
Houses disinfected	4
Bakehouses inspected	8
Bakehouse floors renewed	2
" walls cleansed	4
" ceilings repaired and cleansed	2
Cowsheds and Dairies inspected	12
Dairy roofs renewed	1
Dairies cleansed and limewashed	3
Factories inspected	10
Washing facilities provided in factory	1
Hot water provided in factory	1
Artificial light provided in factory	1
Heating provided in factory	1

The number of inspections carried out during the year are shown in the following summary.

Defects under the Housing Acts	48
Defects under the Public Health Acts ...	162
Defects under the Factory Act	12
Prevention of Infectious Diseases ...	10
Cowsheds & Dairies Orders	42
Food Shops & Stores	45
Prevention of Nuisances	198
House Drainage	24
Supervision of Refuse Collection & Disposal	176
Supervision of Salvage	108
Housing Management	262
Rats & Mice Destruction	32

S. M. JACKSON

Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor.

@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@@

I am,

Mr. Chairman, Ladies & Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant

NORMAN MACFADYEN.

Medical Officer of Health.