

**[Report 1952] / Medical Officer of Health, Sidmouth U.D.C.**

**Contributors**

Sidmouth (England). Urban District Council.

**Publication/Creation**

1952

**Persistent URL**

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/vajz8cnc>

**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](mailto:library@wellcomecollection.org)  
<https://wellcomecollection.org>

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S

ANNUAL REPORT

for

1952

++++

ALPHABETIC LIST OF MEMBERS

MEMBER OF THE BOARD

MEMBER OF THE BOARD

MEMBER OF THE BOARD

1911

1912

1913

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1952

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

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report on the public health  
of the Urban District for the year ending 31st December, 1952.

The report conforms as closely as possible with the requirements  
laid down in the Ministry of Health Circular No. 2/50, dated 25th January, 1950.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

E. L. PERRY

Medical Officer of Health.

S T A F F

Medical Officer of Health .....	E.L.Perry, D.S.O., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector .....	Stanley T. Chard, M.S.I.A.
Additional Sanitary Inspector .....	E.P.Bennett, M.S.I.A., A.R.San.I.
Clerk to Medical Officer, Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector .....	Mrs. M.H.Dodd.

1. Statistics of the Area

Area .....	11,475 acres
Number of inhabited houses .....	3,323
Rateable Value .....	£112,006
Sum represented by a penny rate ..	£45.19.3.
Population .....	9750

2. Vital Statistics

Births Total    Male    Female

(a) Live Births (legitimate)	84	47	37
Live Births (illegitimate)	3	1	2

Birth rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population = 8.92

(b) Still Births (legitimate)	-	-	-
Still Births (illegitimate)	-	-	-

Rate of still births per 1000 total (live and still births) = nil

Deaths 186    77    109

(a) Death rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population = 19.07
--

Deaths from puerperal causes = nil

(b) Infant Mortality

Deaths of infants under 1 year of age (legitimate)	1	-	1
" " " " " " " " (illegitimate)	-	-	-

Deaths of infants under 4 weeks " " (legitimate)	1	-	1
" " " " " " " " (illegitimate)	-	-	-

Death rate of all infants per 1000 live births = 22.9 11.45

(c) Statistics provided by the Registrar-General

<u>Causes of Death</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
1. Tuberculosis, Respiratory	1	0
3. Syphilitic disease	1	0
10. Malignant Neoplasm, Stomach	1	5
11. Malignant Neoplasm, Lungs, Bronchus	3	0
12. Malignant Neoplasm, Breast	0	1
13. Malignant Neoplasm, Uterus	0	2
14. Other Malignant and Lymphatic Neoplasms	6	4
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	2	1
16. Diabetes	1	1
17. Vascular Lesions of nervous system	14	29
18. Coronary disease, angina	14	9
19. Hypertension with heart disease	1	0
20. Other heart disease	6	23
21. Other circulatory disease	4	12
23. Pneumonia	2	2
24. Bronchitis	3	1
25. Other diseases of respiratory system	2	1
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	2	1
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	1	1
29. Hyperplasia of Prostate	2	0
31. Congenital malformations	1	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases	6	12
33. Motor vehicle accidents	1	1
34. All other accidents	1	0
35. Suicide	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>109</b>

Total deaths in 1952 - 186

Deaths from Cancer (all ages) .....	22
Deaths from Measles .....	nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) .....	nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	nil

### 3. Infectious Disease

#### Prevalence of and Control over Infectious and other Diseases

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Scarlet Fever	1	-	-
Measles	74	-	-
Whooping Cough	6	-	-
Food Poisoning	5	-	-
Dysentery	5	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	1	-
Poliomyelitis	6	6	-

### 4. Tuberculosis

#### New Cases and Mortality, 1952

<u>Age Periods</u>	<u>New Cases</u>				<u>Deaths</u>			
	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>		<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>	
	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>
15	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-
35	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
65 upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

### 5. National Health Service Act, 1946

(a) The Devon County Council are the Local Health Authority responsible for the Act under Parts II and II. The Hospital facilities under Part II have been found satisfactory.

#### (b) Isolation

Cases of Infectious Disease are admitted to the Whipton Isolation Hospital at Exeter, and this arrangement has worked very well. The Medical Superintendent and staff have always been most co-operative and helpful.

#### (c) Smallpox

A smallpox hospital at Upton Pyne, administered by the Regional Hospital Board, is available in case of need.

#### (d) Laboratory Facilities

Bacteriological examinations are carried out at the Public Health Laboratory, 7, Dix's Field, Exeter under the direction of Dr. B. Moore who has as usual been most helpful when facilities were needed.

#### (e) Ambulance Facilities

These are provided by the County Council.

#### (f) Dental Care of Mothers and Young Children

These facilities are provided by the County Council.

### 6. National Assistance Act, 1948.

#### Section 47 - Removal to suitable premises of persons in need of care and attention

Three cases were investigated, all being aged persons living alone. In each case the person and premises were verminous, and necessitated very many visits by the staff of the Health Department. Two cases were removed to Hospital voluntarily and the other case, an old lady of nearly 90, died before any statutory action could be taken.

## 7. Water

- (i) The water supply of the area has been satisfactory in quality and likewise in quantity, except that the extension of sanitary amenities such as baths, washbasins and extra water closets, mainly due to increased building and conversions, is having a marked effect on the demand for water.

The Consulting Engineers have submitted a comprehensive scheme for the augmentation of the water supply and for the provision by pumping from mains to Salcombe Regis. The present Salcombe Regis supply will then be discontinued. This report deals with the provision of a new bore hole, the precise site for which has not been finally decided upon. The report also contains a comprehensive scheme for the chlorination of all sources of supply and when this scheme is completed all public supplies will be chlorinated.

Difficulties have arisen in respect of a small private supply in the village of Harcombe. The matter is under investigation.

- (ii) Altogether 47 samples were taken for bacteriological examination and 2 samples for chemical analysis. All supplies bacteriologically examined after chlorination (15) were satisfactory, that is B.Coli has been absent in 100 millilitres. The 2 chemical analyses taken at the outlet of Peak Reservoir and Woolbrook Reservoir were satisfactory.
- (iii) The supply from all springs which yield plumbic-solvent water is passed through beds of limestone chippings.
- (iv) There are 3,323 dwelling houses in the area, of which 3299 are supplied direct from the mains. The remainder (24) are fed by standpipes and these are mainly in the Parish of Sidbury, which has a private supply maintained by the Sidbury Manor Estate.

## 8. Drainage and Sewerage

The sewerage system is reasonably satisfactory, but bearing in mind the augmentation of the water supplies contemplated in the report of the Consulting Engineers referred to above, raises again the question of the adequacy of the main outfall arrangements of the sewerage system and the capacity of the sewers.

Since the new sewer was laid below the overflow tank at Fry's Field there have been no occasions when the sewer has been surcharged so as to force up the manholes.

For particulars of drainage see the Sanitary Inspector's Report.

## 9. Rivers and Streams

Investigation into the pollution of the River Sid have continued, and necessary steps are being taken to ensure that such sources of pollution as overflowing or leaking cesspools are dealt with.

There is still suspicion that the sewer which passes so close to the River Sid on the west bank may be a possible source of pollution, as is also the case with the overflow tank at Fry's field which discharges to the river at certain periods.

## 10. Food

### (a) Meat and other Foods

Slaughtering is no longer carried out in Sidmouth but frequent inspections have been made of all butchers' shops, and as will be seen from the Chief Sanitary Inspector's tabulated statement, a large number of visits have been made to all food premises including catering establishments, hotels, dairies, bakehouses, ice cream premises and retail food shops. Generally the premises were found to be in good condition, though in a few cases it was necessary to take informal action to carry out improvements. No statutory action was necessary during the year.

10. Food (contd.)

(b) Food Poisoning

A small but very serious outbreak of food poisoning which affected some six or seven persons, one of whom died, originated in a bakery in this town.

On the 22nd July a very small consignment of pork pies was prepared, they were not sold in the town but were sent by motor van to the neighbouring town of Beer on the 23rd July. On the 24th July, after the pies had been exposed for sale in the window, they were sold and consumed; throughout this time the weather was excessively hot. On the afternoon of July 25th the Medical Officer of Health of this Sanitary Area reported to me by telephone that everyone who had partaken of the pork pies had become seriously ill during the night of 24th - 25th July. The symptoms were intense abdominal pain, incessant vomiting, headache, fever and diarrhoea, followed by complete collapse in the majority of cases.

I at once got in touch with the manager of the bakery and arranged to inspect his staff on the morning of the 26th July. I inspected the staff and got into touch with Dr. Moore of the Public Health Laboratory, Exeter, and accepted his offer of help. Dr. Moore came out early the same day and examined everything connected with the preparation of the meat and the pies and collected specimens of faeces from everyone concerned. He also collected material from all the apparatus concerned in the manufacture. On the morning that the pies had been manufactured, some egg mixture had been used in the bakery for confectionery but at the time of Dr. Moore's examination none remained for sampling.

The bacillus Typhi-murium was found in the faeces of the employee who had jellied the pork pies. This process of jellying is very favourable to the thorough mixing of any organism which may be accidentally introduced, as obviously occurred in this case. The pies are jellied after they have been baked and a hole is made in the pie and the gelatine is poured in. During the preparation of the solution of gelatine various flavouring materials, salt, etc. are mixed with the mixture by hand, it is not surprising, therefore, that the infection having been introduced in such extremely hot weather which prevailed, a most prolific growth of Typhi-murium was found on examination.

(c) Byelaws under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1936

It has been found that the Bye-laws are generally being complied with and in those few cases where it has been necessary to call attention to breaches, the matter has been remedied without statutory action.

11. Factories Act, 1937

See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

12. Housing

The tabulated statement below shows that the housing position is gradually improving and that it has been found possible to do a certain amount of work under the provisions of the Housing Act, 1936 and the Public Health Act, 1936.

Also during the year a thorough survey was commenced on all properties situated in the Re-development Area in Eastern Town.

Houses completed during the year:

(a)	By the Local Authority	22
(b)	By others	11

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year

(1) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) .....	41
--	----



12. Housing (contd.)

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year (contd.)

- (2) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ..... 4
- (3) Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ..... 27

2. Remedy of defects without service of formal notices

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informed action by Local Authority or its officers ..... 16

3. Action under Statutory Powers

(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) Proceedings under Section 11 and 12 of the Housing Act 1936
- Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Time and Place Notices were served under Section 11 ..... 2
- Number of dwelling houses closed as a result of action above ..... 1
- Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Time and Place Notices were served under Section 12 ..... 1
- Number of dwelling houses closed as a result of action above ..... 1
- Number of dwelling houses closed as a result of informal action ..... 1

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts

- (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied ..... 3
- (2) Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices
- (a) By owners ..... 2
- (b) By Local Authority in default of owners ..... nil

13. Public Cleansing

The refuse collection is under the control of the Surveyor and is disposed of by means of controlled tipping.

14. Public Conveniences

The responsibility for the cleaning and maintenance of the Public Conveniences was taken over by the Public Health Department on 1st April, 1952. Our experience to date shows that there is need for extra accommodation at the Ham, particularly on the ladies' side to deal with the heavy coach traffic during the peak summer period. At the premises on the Three Cornered Plot it was found that the conditions were far from satisfactory, there being insufficient accommodation for both sexes to deal with the bus traffic and from the western end of the beach.

The Council have applied for loan sanction to extend and modernise both these conveniences.

15. Camping Sites

- (a) The number of sites used for camping purposes in 1952 was two.
- (b) The number of licences issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936 was one. Another site is controlled by Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947.

Frequent visits were made, particularly during the peak of the season and in no case was it necessary to take any action.

16. Sanitary Inspection of the Area (Chief Sanitary Inspector's Report)

(a) Disinfection

The Equifix Steam Disinfector sited at the Manstone Highways Depot is still working efficiently and is found invaluable for dealing with bedding and clothing from infecticus or verminous cases. Terminal disinfection is carried out at premises where infecticus disease has occurred.

(b) Verminous Persons

Three cases were dealt with, all being old persons living alone and in each case infested with fleas. In two cases the old persons were removed to an institution and the bedding put through the steam disinfector. The houses were then thoroughly treated with Gammexene smoke generators, and on subsequent visits were found free of vermin. The other case was an old lady of nearly ninety who would not agree to voluntary removal. Statutory action was being considered but she died before anything could be done. The house and bedding was afterwards treated similarly to the other cases.

(c) Eradication of bed bugs

No cases were dealt with during the year.

17. Rodent Control

As will be seen from the tabulated statement a number of visits were made to premises during the year. Many of the complaints investigated were found to be caused by the keeping of poultry. Treatment in most cases was carried out by the Public Health Department. The use of Warfarin has been found to be quite successful, and time is saved by there being no necessity for pre-baiting.

The refuse tip was singularly free of rats during the year.

The annual sewer baiting showed that the sewers were free, there being 'no takes' when token baiting was carried out at the manholes.

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT, 1952

TABLE I

General Inspections

The following table represents the summary of visits, inspections, interviews, etc. by the two Sanitary Officers during the year 1952.

GENERAL SANITATION.

	<u>No. of Visits</u>
Water Supply .....	42
Drainage .....	314
Public Conveniences .....	111
Sewer and River Sampling .....	132
Movable dwellings .....	56
Factories .....	26
Accumulations and Deposits .....	66
Refuse collection and refuse tip .....	33
Pests .....	44
Rodent Control .....	175
Rivers and streams .....	17
Animals improperly kept .....	16
Smoke abatement .....	7
Rag Flock Act .....	3
Petroleum .....	14
Explosives .....	7
Interviews and appointments .....	425

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Enquiries in case of I.D. ....	61
"    "    "    "    other diseases .....	7
Visits re disinfection & disinfestation ...	67

FOOD PREMISES.

Foodshops and restaurants .....	202
Ice cream premises .....	20
Bakehouses .....	18
Dairies and milk shops .....	12
Slaughterhouses .....	8
Other food premises and pig slaughter ....	21

HOUSING.

For most of the year, that is until the end of September, the Chief Sanitary Inspector was acting as Housing Officer, responsible for visits to persons who were applicants for Council houses. Many of the miscellaneous housing visits and interviews were connected with this work.

	<u>No. of Visits</u>
Visits under Public Health and Housing Acts	176
"    re dirty or verminous premises .....	31
Miscellaneous housing visits .....	253

TABLE II

Complaints received .....	53
Nuisances abated .....	48
<u>Notices Served</u>	
Intimation notices .....	22
Statutory Notices served .....	5
Statutory Notices complied with .....	4

## DRAINAGE

The figures below do not include Council houses built or maintained under the directions of the Surveyor.

No. of complete new house drainage systems .....	44
" " house drainage systems repaired, relaid or extended .....	36
" " new water closets .....	61
" " water closets discontinued .....	1
" " old closets replaced with new .....	6
" " drains tested .....	83
" " drains cleared .....	15
" " cesspools discontinued .....	2
" " new septic tanks installed .....	2

## DISINFECTION

No. of premises disinfected after I.D. ....	18
" " " " " T.B. ....	1
" " " " " for other reasons .....	13
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected in steam disinfector after I.D. ....	
	12
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected in steam disinfector after T.B. ....	
	1
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected in steam disinfector for other reasons .....	
	17

## UNSOOUND FOOD

The following amounts of unsound food were examined, and condemned on voluntary surrender for destruction or salvage during the year:-

### Meat and Meat Products:

205 tins (including 28 imported tinned hams).  
12½ lb. English Gammon.  
56 lb. Sausages.  
62 lb. Hindquarter, English Beef.  
62½ lb. (1 side) smoked bacon (returned to curers).  
78 lb. Rabbits.

### Fruit and Vegetables:

628 tins.  
388 boxes of dates.

### Milk and Milk Products:

27 tins  
14½ oz. French Camembert Cheese  
52½ lb. Danish Gorgonzola.  
18 lb. Italian Gorgonzola.  
1½ lb. Cream cheese.  
14 lb. National Processed cheese.

### Fish and Fish Products:

294 tins.  
3 stone crabs.  
6 " kippers.  
3½ " herrings.  
1 " smoked fillets of cod.  
2 " dabs.  
12 " Norwegian salmon.

### Miscellaneous:

1½ cwt. Brown scone flour.  
1 cwt. Sugar.  
120 lb. Biscuits. I am,

Your obedient Servant,

STANLEY T. CHARD.  
Chief Sanitary Inspector.

The figures below do not include Council House bills or returned under the direction of the Surveyor.

44	No. of complete new houses during year
36	" " " " " " " " " "
31	" " " " " " " " " "
1	" " " " " " " " " "
6	" " " " " " " " " "
8	" " " " " " " " " "
12	" " " " " " " " " "
2	" " " " " " " " " "
2	" " " " " " " " " "

DIWYTYN

18	No. of premises situated after I.D.
1	" " " " " " " " " "
13	" " " " " " " " " "
12	Loss of bedding or clothing situated in steam district after I.D.
1	" " " " " " " " " "
17	Loss of bedding or clothing situated in steam district after I.D.
1	" " " " " " " " " "

WISGWD FOD

The following returns of unused food were received, and condensed on voluntary agreement for destruction or salvage during the year:-

Meat and Meat Products:

107 tons (including 10 imported tinned hams).
1/2 lb. English Bacon.
2-1/2 lb. Sausages.
2-1/2 lb. Hamburgers, English Style.
6-1/2 lb. (1 state) mutton bones (returned to carcase).
10 lb. Rabbit.

Birds and Poultry:

628 tons.
260 boxes of bones.

Milk and Milk Products:

27 tons
14 tons French Camembert Cheese
1/2 lb. Danish Gorgonzola
18 lb. Italian Gorgonzola
1/2 lb. Green cheese
14 lb. National Protected Cheese

Fish and Fish Products:

130 tons.
1/2 cwt. mackerel
1/2 cwt. herring
1/2 cwt. salmon
1/2 cwt. cod
1/2 cwt. fish
1/2 cwt. Norwegian salmon

Other Products:

1/2 cwt. Brown bone flour
1 cwt. sugar
120 lb. Raisins 1 and 2