

[Report 1954] / Medical Officer of Health, Sidmouth U.D.C.

Contributors

Sidmouth (England). Urban District Council.

Publication/Creation

1954

Persistent URL

<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/uz8rb9r6>

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>

Library

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

and

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S

ANNUAL REPORT

for

1954



=====

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

RECEIVED BY THE POST OFFICE

SIDMOUTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1954.

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, 1954.

The report conforms as closely as possible to the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 1/54 dated 12th January, 1954, and also Circular 28/54 dated 15th December, 1954.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

E.L. PERRY

Medical Officer of Health.

STAFF

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.
Water Manager H.E. Scadding.
Clerk to Medical Officer, Surveyor
and Sanitary Inspector Miss N.M. Lane.

COMMITTEES CONCERNED WITH PUBLIC HEALTH

General Purposes Committee
Public Health, Water and Highways Committee
Estates Committee
Housing Committee

1. STATISTICS OF THE AREA

Area 11,475 acres

Number of inhabited houses (31.12.54)..... 3394

(An error in the number of inhabited houses
some years ago has been perpetuated since
by additions of new buildings and conversions.
The present figure has been arrived at by a
detailed examination of the Rate Book).

Resident population Mid 1954 9850

(as estimated by the Registrar General).

Product of a penny rate £470

(estimated 31.3.55).

Rateable Value (estimated 31.3.55) £118,224

2. VITAL STATISTICS

BIRTHS

(a) Live Births (legitimate)

Male Female Total

40 50 90

Live Births (illegitimate)

2 1 3

Totals

42 51 93

Birth rate per 1000 of the estimated
resident population = 9.44

(b) Still Births (legitimate)

3 1 4

Still Births (illegitimate)

- - -

Totals

3 1 4

Rate of still births per 1000 of
the total live and still births = 41.23

DEATHS(a) Statistics provided by the Registrar GeneralCauses of Death

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>Tuberculosis</u>			
Respiratory	2	0	2
Other forms	-	-	-
<u>Cancer</u>			
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	6	2	8
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	4	4
Malignant neoplasm, uterus	-	2	2
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	10	8	18
<u>Heart diseases</u>			
Coronary disease, angina	21	4	25
Hypertension with heart disease (high blood pressure)	0	2	2
Other heart diseases	7	20	27
Other circulatory disease	7	10	17
Pneumonia	3	2	5
Bronchitis	4	3	7
Other diseases of respiratory system	2	1	3
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	1	2	3
Leukaemia, alcaukaemia	1	1	2
Diabetes	0	2	2
Vascular disease of nervous system (e.g. cerebral haemorrhage)	15	22	37
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	1	2
Hyperplasia of prostate	2	0	2
Congenital malformation	0	1	1
Syphilitic disease	1	1	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	5	10	15
Motor vehicle accidents	0	1	1
All other accidents	1	3	4
Suicide	1	0	1
Total deaths from all causes	91	103	194

		<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
(b)	Infant Mortality	2	2	4
	Deaths from puerperal causes	Nil	Nil	Nil
(c)	<u>Death rate per 1000 of the estimated resident population = 19.69</u>			

3. INFECTIOUS DISEASES

(a) <u>Disease</u>	<u>Cases Notified</u>	<u>Cases admitted to Hospital</u>	<u>Deaths</u>
Tuberculosis	4	3	2
Acute Pneumonia	4	-	5
Whooping Cough	2	-	-
Measles	4	-	-

4. TUBERCULOSIS

New Cases and Mortality, 1954.

<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>	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
5-14								
15-24								
25-44		1		1				
45-64	1	1			1			
65 upwards					1			

During the first week of February the Mass Radiography Unit from Bristol came to Sidmouth. Despite the fact that the weather was very cold with snow underfoot and hard frost, the visit proved very successful. Previous visits by the Organising Secretary enabled this department to discuss not only siting for the mobile van and trailer, but also to help with lists of factories, hotels, cafes, etc., so that the necessary publicity could be arranged.

660 persons availed themselves of the opportunity to have their chests X-rayed, and the results of the survey are tabulated overleaf.

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Total</u>
Miniature Films	295	365	660
Large films			
Total recalled	19	27	46
Did not attend	-	1	1
Normal	4	9	13
Significant	14	15	29
Under observation	1	2	3

Tuberculous conditions

	Male	Female	Total	<u>% Disposal</u>			
				NA	Dr.	Disp.	San.
<u>Active</u>							
Primary Lesion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Post primary unilateral	-	1	1	-	-	1	-
Post primary bilateral	-	1	1	-	-	1	-
Tuberculosis pleural effusion	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Total</u>	-	2	2	-	-	2	-
<u>Inactive</u>							
Primary Lesion	4	3	7	7	-	-	-
Post primary Lesion	5	1	6	2	-	4	-
<u>Total</u>	9	4	13	9	-	4	-

X NA = No Action

Dr. = Patient's own doctor

Disp.= Under observation at Dispensary

San.= Sanatorium treatment required.

5. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT, 1946.

- (a) The Devon County Council are the Local Health Authority responsible for the Act under Parts II and III. 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

One case was investigated, and followed a pattern which is unfortunately becoming only too familiar. An elderly lady living alone in her own home had gradually been overtaken by her inability to carry on with the domestic "daily round" and had allowed the house to get into a deplorable condition. Fortunately it was possible to persuade her to go to temporary accommodation to enable the premises to be cleaned up and so avoid any statutory action under Section 47.

7. WATER

Public supplies.

The quality of the water has been maintained, but as reported last year the ever increasing demands on the supply particularly during the peak holiday period has again meant very long hours of pumping at the Sidford borehole. Fortunately work on the new borehole has proceeded satisfactorily throughout the year, and there is every indication that the quantity of water will be sufficient to make another 500,000 gallons per day available when the new reservoir at Core Hill is built. This reservoir which will have a storage capacity of 300,000 gallons will be the second phase in the augmentation of the supplies as reported on by the Consulting Engineers.

The samples taken after chlorination were satisfactory, as in fact were most of the spring waters, but some are subject to surface pollution after rain.

Supplies from all plumbic-solvent springs are passed through beds of limestone chippings before passing to the mains.

The present maximum water available for the public supplies under the control of the Council is approximately:-

From springs	350,000 gallons per day
From two boreholes at Sidford	250,000 gallons per day
<u>Total</u>	<u>600,000</u> gallons per day

Private supplies.

Shortage of water again became acute in the village of Harcombe during the year, and after the Public Health Officers and Water Manager had made careful surveys of the system, a tentative scheme was prepared to acquire the existing supply and to carry out the necessary improvements. Before embarking on the scheme however the various users were asked if they were prepared to co-operate financially but the response was disappointing, and so the scheme was left in abeyance. There seems no doubt however that the matter will have to be given further consideration.

During the early part of the year difficulties were experienced with another small supply to 8 houses at Bowd. The Company owning the supply stated that as the supply was installed originally for the tenant farmer he has first call and there is no guarantee of any supply to other users, which is an unsatisfactory state of affairs. Some alleviation was given by the Water Manager.

The following tables show the distribution within the Urban District.

No. of inhabited houses - 3394

Public Supplies.

No. of dwellinghouses connected to S.U.D.C. supply	2991
No. of dwellinghouses connected to Honiton Hill ram	4
No. of dwellinghouses with shared supplies or connected to standpipes	10
	<u>3005</u>

Private Supplies.

Salcombe Regis - properties connected	16
Harcombe - properties connected	15
Fortescue - properties connected	25
Bowd - properties connected	8
Ridgway-Sidbury- properties connected	59
Greenhead- Sidbury - properties connected	78
	<u>201</u>

The remaining properties mostly in the outlying areas have their own supplies.

8. DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

The growth of building which has necessitated the augmentation of the water supply is also having its effect on the sewerage system. This is particularly noticeable in the section which sewers the area north of Exeter Cross where most building is taking place, as all the branches connect eventually with the trunk sewer running through "The Byes". When this was laid in 1931 the normal overflow systems discharging to the River Sid at six times the dry weather flow were installed. It is now becoming apparent owing to the increased volume of sewage and possibly some infiltration of surface water, that these overflows are functioning at less than this figure and consequently some pollution of the river is taking place. This has been confirmed by samples taken from the river over a considerable period. This information has been supplied to the Council's Consulting Engineers who are engaged in preparing improvement schemes for sewerage system.

The part of the Sanitary Inspector's Report dealing with drainage gives some indication of the number of new connections made during the year.

9. RIVERS AND STREAMS.

During the past six years investigations have been carried out by means of periodic sampling to ascertain the extent of pollution in the River Sid. It is now clear that pathogenic organisms are being admitted to the river from the sewer overflow situated in Frys Field. All information available has been given to the Council's Consulting Engineers now engaged in improving the sewerage system. There appears to be no industrial pollution of the River Sid or its tributaries.

10. SEA WATER.

In co-operation with the Public Health Laboratory, Exeter, a bi-weekly investigation of sea water was carried out from mid July to early September. Samples were collected along the water's edge and the relevant details of tide and meteorological information were noted. The results found were similar to those arrived at by the Council's Consulting Engineers in 1934 when the site for the sewer outfall was chosen.

The contamination of sea water rapidly diminishes the further it is from the outfall and this tends to show that the original siting of the outfall was good. The heaviest bathing takes place from the western end of the beach farthest from this point, and the report of the Director of the Public Health Laboratory states that in his opinion the results of the survey show a very satisfactory state of affairs during the period covered by the investigation and adds that "----- it seems highly unlikely that bathing at Sidmouth is a risk to the public health".

I am becoming increasingly aware that the method of disintegrating the sewage is of considerable benefit from the hygienic point of view as well as getting rid of unpleasant nuisance. With the growth of the town there may of necessity be an increase in the contamination of the sea due to the increased amount of sewage being produced, and this problem is one that the Consulting Engineers will study when they consider the improvement of the sewerage system, as the outfall may have to be extended to cope with this position. Therefore the report of the Consulting Engineer is awaited with interest.

11. FOOD

(a) Meat.

When the Ministry of Food decided to decontrol livestock and meat rationing, attention was drawn to the slaughterhouses in the district. Several had fallen into disrepair and disuse (due to the centralised system of slaughtering both during and after the war) leaving four slaughterhouses that were considered by the trade as being possibly suitable for reopening. I was not however prepared to recommend the Council to licence any one of them. The owners of one slaughterhouse appealed but withdrew before the hearing.

All meat for the district comes from the Exeter City Abattoir. This arrangement has proved convenient both to the public and to the trade.

(b) Milk.

The milk supply is satisfactory, there being a modern pasteurising plant within the district which deals with a very large proportion of the raw milk supplied from the local farms. The company operating the plant also retails TT milk. Only two other producer retailers from TT farms are now operating.

On the 1st October, 1954, the Milk (Special Designation) (Special Areas) (No.2) Order, 1954, came into force. This Order prohibits the sale of raw untreated milk, thus only designated milk, i.e. "Tuberculin Tested," "Pasteurised" or "Sterilised" milks are allowed to be sold.

(c) Ice Cream.

There are no manufacturers of ice cream in the district. All ice cream sold in the district is either prepacked by manufacturers or comes in bulk from a large producer in a neighbouring district.

28 samples were taken and the table below indicates the results which show that the bacteriological standard was good, which one expects from the larger manufacturing firms. This is a good instance illustrating the way that cost of labour and economy in administration leads to considerable hygienic improvement.

Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Total
18	9	1	-	28

(d) Hotels, Restaurants, Cafes.

Inspections of catering and food preparation establishments have continued. Recommendations made to improve conditions have, in general, been accepted by the managements and there has been no recourse to statutory action.

The standard of cleanliness was high but there appears to be a continual change of staff which makes education of food handlers difficult.

(e) Food Poisoning.

No cases were reported.

(f) Food Handling and Byelaws made under Section 15 Food & Drugs Act, 1938.

During the year considerable progress has been made with respect to compliance with these byelaws. Managements have co-operated with the Public Health Officers and most trades have improved their techniques in displaying and handling their wares and in protecting them from dust, flies, and other sources of contamination. Again no recourse to statutory action has been necessary.

12. HOUSING

The thorough survey of properties in the Development Area of Eastern Town has been completed and the properties have been classified according to their condition. The map of the Development Area with the properties coloured appropriately to their classification has been forwarded to the County Planning Officer for consideration during the preparation of the Town Plan.

Houses completed during the year:-

(a) By the Local Authority (non-subsidised)-----	7
(b) By others -----	71

1. Inspection of dwelling houses during the year.

(a) Number of dwelling houses inspected under Housing Acts, 1936-54 for purposes of survey.	88
(b) Number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under Public Health or Housing Acts (excluding those in preceeding sub-paragraph).	36
(c) Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation.	Pending completion of survey
(d) Number of dwelling houses found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation (excluding those under the preceeding sub-paragraph)	36

2. Remedy of defects without service of formal ^{NOTICE} number of NUMBER OF dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the L.A. or its officers.

10

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

(a) Proceedings under Section 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.

(1) Number of dwelling houses in which notices were served requiring repairs.	2
---	---

(2) Proceedings under Sections 11 and 12 of the Housing Act, 1936.

Number of dwelling houses in respect of which "Time and Place" notices were served under Sec. 11.	NIL
Number of dwelling houses closed as a result of action above.	NIL
Number of dwelling houses in respect of which "Time and Place" notices were served under Sec. 12.	NIL
Number of dwelling houses closed as a result of action above.	NIL

(b) Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

- (1) Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied.

12

- (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.

10

13. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

The public conveniences at the Three Cornered Plot were entirely rebuilt and enlarged during the year, with the result that the premises now have better amenities such as constant hot water, etc. This was the second stage in providing or improving these facilities, as in 1953 extensions and modernisation was carried out at the Ham conveniences. The other main conveniences in the town have been used to capacity during the peak of the holiday season.

This department has only been responsible for the maintenance of the public conveniences for the past three years, but during this short period it has been noticeable that the use has increased each year. The problem of seasonal labour is a difficulty but it was possible to maintain a high standard during the year.

14. CAMPING SITES.

- (a) There are two licensed sites in the district, both in the Salcombe Regis area.
- (b) The number of licences issued by the Local Authority under Section 269 of the Public Health Act, 1936, was one. The other site is controlled by Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947.

Frequent visits were made during the season, and in no case was it necessary to take any statutory action. It was noted that more people were using both sites and the number of organised camps, i.e. Scouts, Guides and Cadets, were more numerous.

15. RODENT CONTROL.

Very many visits were made in connection with rodent control and several block systems of treatment were carried out. During the latter half of the year the Department was able to engage a man for rodent control work.

The Ministry of Agriculture exempted the Council from making the Annual Test Bait of the sewer system as little trace of rats had been seen on previous annual tests.

16. FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 and 1948.

1. Inspections for purposes of provision as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors).

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	36	26	1	-
2) Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	46	24	-	-
3) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding Out-worker's premises).	-	-	-	-
Total	82	50	1	-

2. Cases in which defects were found.

Particulars	Found	Remedied	Referred		Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	-	-	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable Temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation	-	-	-	-	-
Ineffective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-	-
<u>Sanitary Conveniences</u>					
a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
b) Unsuitable or defective	1	1	-	1	-
c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act not including offences relating to homework	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1	1	-	1	-

(a) Disinfection

Bedding and clothing is disinfected in the Equifix Steam sited at the Manstone Highways Depot. Terminal disinfection is carried out at premises where infectious disease has occurred, and also where persons require it after other diseases such as carcinoma.

(b) Verminous Persons

No cases were dealt with during the year.

(c) Eradication of bed bugs

No cases were dealt with during the year.

TABLE I

GENERAL SANITATION.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

FOOD PREMISES.HOUSING.

Visits under Housing Act, 1936 etc., for purposes of survey (Redevelopment Area)	140
Visits under Public Health and Housing Acts (excluding above)	55
Visits re dirty or verminous premises	17
Visits to Council Houses	107
Miscellaneous Housing Visits	<u>60</u>
Total Number of Housing Visits	379

TABLE II

NOTICES SERVED.

Intimation Notices	16
Statutory Notices Served	12
Statutory Notices complied with	12

DRAINAGE.

The figures below do not include Council Houses or other buildings built or maintained under the directions of the Surveyor but include all other new buildings and adaptations to existing buildings.

No. of complete new house drainage systems	79
No. of house drainage systems repaired, relaid or extended	37
No. of new water closets	177
No. of water closets discontinued	5
No. of old closets replaced with new	4
No. of drains tested (complete or renovated systems) ...	172
No. of drains cleansed	7
No. of cesspools discontinued	2
No. of septic tanks installed	2

DISINFECTION.

No. of premises disinfected after I.D.	2
No. of premises disinfected after T.B.	2
No. of premises disinfected for other reasons	5
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected after I.D.	2
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected after T.B.	2
Lots of bedding or clothing disinfected for other reasons	9

UN SOUND 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:

82 Tins.
8 Tins imported Ham.
82 lb. Argentine Beef.
123 lb. New Zealand manufacturing grade Beef.
12 lb. Beef Sausage.
12 lb. Pork Sausage.

Fruit and Vegetables.

457 Tins.

Milk and Milk Products.

12 Jars Cream.
44 Tins.

Fish and Fish Products.

103 Tins.
9 lb. Fish Cakes.
5 stone Smoked Fillet.
6 stone Skinned Dogfish.
2 stone Dabs.
2 stone Skinned Cod.
1 stone Bloaters.

1810
1811

