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HEALTH
A 14 DEC 1945
C.R. 25

Urban District of Solihull.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

HEALTH OF THE DISTRICT

FOR THE YEAR 1944,

BY

H. GIBBONS WARD, M.D., D.P.H.,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

OF THE

Warwickshire Combined Districts.

Leamington Spa :

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1945.

1, MILVERTON HILL,

LEAMINGTON SPA,

September, 1945.

To the Solihull Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, MRS. TIMMS AND GENTLEMEN,

Herewith the Report for 1944, and it is of special personal interest to me as it marks the completion of 25 years in your service.

As instructed by the Ministry of Health, the Report is only a short statement of fact. For the first time for several years, statistics can be printed in connection with population, etc. ; it is to be hoped that in the future it will be possible to give further details when printing, paper, etc., are more available.

With many thanks for much kindness on the part of the members of the Council and my colleagues.

I am, Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Timms and Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. GIBBONS WARD,
Medical Officer of Health.

Solihull Urban District.

A. EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR.

Population (estimated) Mid-year, 1944	...	...	60,070
Birth Rate	...	...	23.4
Still Births—Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	22
Death Rate	...	...	8.8
Deaths from Diseases and Accidents of Pregnancy and Child-birth	(From Sepsis	...	3
	" other causes	...	1
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age :—			
All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	31
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	30
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	67
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	—
" " Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	1
" " Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	5

B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

1. *Public Health Officers.*—The Sanitary Inspectors employed by the Council during the year comprised the Chief Sanitary Inspector, a Deputy Chief Sanitary Inspector, and an Additional Sanitary Inspector. A Rodent Inspector who also carried out the duties of Operator was also fully employed.

6. *Laboratory Facilities.*—Bacteriological examinations by the Birmingham University :—

	Positive.	Negative.	Total.
Diphtheria	... 17	... 165	... 182
Enteric Fever	... —	... —	... —
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	... 17	... 85	... 102
			284

8. *Hospitals*.—There are no changes to report in the statement given in the Report for 1941.

13.—*Ambulance Facilities*.—The Ambulances are housed at The Hermitage, Lode Lane, Solihull. Telephone Number : 2683 Solihull.

C. SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

1. (i) *Water Supply*.—The water that is supplied to most of the buildings in the area is from the mains of the Cities of Birmingham and Coventry, who are the Water Undertakers, and chemical and bacteriological check samples (one of each from each source) showed the quality to be satisfactory ; no complaint can be made as to the quantity delivered.

In the rural parts of the area, particularly in Shirley South Ward—an area in which the premises are served by wells—both quality and quantity have not been so good as usual, due to four years of sub-normal rainfall. The Council, on being made aware of the conditions, requested the Water Undertakers (in this case the Birmingham Water Department) after permission had been received from the Ministry of Health, to lay mains in the Tidbury Green area—a length of main which was installed in parts of Norton Lane, Fulford Hall Road, Tilehouse Lane, Dickens Heath Road and along the full length of Lowbrook Lane, total 2 miles 290 yards, so making available the mains water to 160 houses. In order to alleviate the shortage the Council instituted a temporary and emergency water service to provide water for essential needs to those without. 50-gallon storage tanks loaned to the Council for Civil Defence purposes were used where other provision could not be made to store water on the premises concerned, and a twice-weekly supply service was in operation to a few premises for the whole of the year.

The installation of the length of main mentioned above reduced this service as water became available from the mains. At the close of the year there was some evidence that increased rainfall had resulted in the raising of the water table to some extent, and water returned to many wells.

Contamination.—Contamination of water supplies has not occurred so far as is known, to any of the main services. On the other hand, water from wells of the shallow type was more often found to be contaminated during this year, due to the lowering of the sub-soil water table and consequent

lowering of the water level of the wells, so that sediment was drawn to the surface with water when pumps were used. The emergency water supply mentioned above helped to alleviate this hardship. In several cases pollution was found to be due to defective drains or cesspools and these were dealt with through the routine work of the Department.

The number of houses and retail shops, as ascertained from the rate books, is 18,255. Of these, 16,958, or 93 per cent., are connected to mains, and 1,297, or 7 per cent., are served by 887 wells. All the houses connected to mains supplies are supplied direct to the houses, there being no mains supplies from stand pipes to houses in the area.

The proportion of the population supplied from public water mains is not accurately known, and could only be estimated in proportion of the number of houses given above.

1. (ii) *Drainage and Sewerage*.—There were no major extensions of sewers or drains during the year, and the four motor driven cesspool emptying machines were kept fully employed in emptying the 662 cesspools serving 1,060 premises in the area. During the year 7 cesspools were abolished and the 10 houses concerned connected to the sewer.

3. (i) *Closet Accommodation*.—95 per cent. of the houses in the area have closet accommodation of the water carriage type with cistern flush.

On the Department's lists are 887 pail closets and 12 privy middens. Of these, 840 pails are emptied weekly by the Local Authority and the remaining pails and privies as required. In special cases pails cleansing is done twice weekly.

During the year 10 pail closets serving 10 houses were converted to water closets. In all these cases financial assistance was given by the Council.

(ii) *Public Cleansing*.—The Council undertake the removal of house refuse throughout the whole of the area. Apart from the 12 premises served by privy middens mentioned in the previous paragraph, the ash bin method of storage is in operation throughout the District. The system of disposal is that of controlled tipping; although this method of deposition on land is carried on near to inhabited premises, no complaint has been received as to nuisance arising, and the work, which is undertaken by the Surveyor's Department, appears to be carried out very satisfactorily.

(iv) *Smoke Abatement*.—Complaints were received during the year in respect of one boiler chimney stack serving an institution, a matter which was dealt with successfully, informally.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION.—An experienced operator was employed during the whole of the year. His full time was devoted to investigation and treatment of infested premises. He discovered 112 infestations, of which 19 were estimated to be major in character (*i.e.*, over 50 rats) and 93 of a minor character. Of these, 94 were disinfested by him, the remainder being treated by the occupiers themselves.

(iv) **SHOPS ACT, 1934.**—Due to limitation of stocks the need of enforcing early closing hours has been considerably reduced. Routine visits have been paid to enforce those provisions of the Acts dealing with sanitary provisions and comfort of workers.

SCHOOLS.—The Elementary Schools and private schools of the District have been inspected as occasion arose.

D. HOUSING.

Full particulars of the usual table have been compiled and are being kept for record purposes.

3. *Overcrowding.*—There were many cases of overcrowding during the year, the causes of this being:—

- (1) The influx of industrial workers into the District to work at factories turning out war products.
- (2) The evacuation of persons from Birmingham during the aerial bombardment of that City, who have had no opportunity or lack the inclination to return.
- (3) The movement of evacuees from London during the flying bomb and rocket attacks on that City.

It is likely that the position as to overcrowding will remain substantially as it is until houses can be erected and the spread of the population achieved.

4. *Fitness of Houses.*—The transfer of building operatives into the London area to deal with war damaged properties has resulted in considerable shortage of building labour in this District.

Normal maintenance is in arrears and the shortage of labour has led to considerable difficulty in securing compliance with Notices served on owners of property.

One of the two premises on which Demolition Orders were served last year has been demolished during this year.

E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

(a) *Milk Supply*.—At the end of the year 1944, there were on the Register, Cowkeepers 93, Cowkeepers who retail the whole or part of their milk 11, Retailers 37, and Milk-shops 50.

The following numbers of Supplementary Licences have been granted for the sale of Designated Milks in this area :—

Tuberculin Tested	...	...	...	4
Tuberculin Tested (Pasteurised)	...	...	...	1
Accredited	...	...	...	1
Pasteurised	...	...	...	4

One licence was granted in respect of a Pasteurising Establishment.

Tuberculous Milk.—144 samples of milk from herds in the area were examined by the Staff of the Birmingham University for the presence of tubercle bacilli. Of these, 4 samples gave positive results, the remainder proving negative.

F. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Incidence of Commoner Infectious Disease since 1938.

		Diphtheria.	Scarlet Fever.	Enteric Fever.	Pneumonia.	Encephalitis Lethargica.	Puerperal Pyrexia.
1939	...	18	50	3	54	—	9
1940	...	24	68	12	40	—	4
1941	...	6	28	24	37	—	4
1942	...	17	91	—	58	1	1
1943	...	12	175	1	71	—	3
1944	...	7	167	1	39	—	11

Reference to Table III. will give the age distribution of the cases notified in 1944.

Diphtheria Immunisation.—Immunisation continued throughout the year, and at December 31st, 1944 4,394 children of school age had been treated, and 2,505 under school age, giving a grand total of 6,899 immunised up to the end of 1944.

Non-Notifiable Infectious Diseases.—Nothing of note.

No schools closed.

Notifications of all Infectious Disease occurring amongst school children are duly forwarded to me from the schools.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE—PERIODS	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	—
5	1	2	—	—	—	—	1	—
15	4	5	3	—	1	1	1	—
25	5	9	1	—	2	—	—	—
35	7	1	—	1	5	2	—	—
45	5	1	—	—	3	1	—	—
55	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 and upwards	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	2
TOTALS ...	24	19	6	2	12	4	3	2

51 new cases of tuberculosis were notified during the year, 43 being Pulmonary Tuberculosis and 8 of other forms.

34 cases were admitted to Sanatorium during the year, 23 were discharged after treatment.

16 deaths were due to Pulmonary Tuberculosis, 5 to Non-Pulmonary tuberculosis. Of the 51 cases notified during the year, 8 died.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The information for this Report is available.

TABLE I.

SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY WORK DONE IN THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S DEPARTMENT DURING THE YEAR 1944.

	Inspections and Observations made	Notices served.		Nuisances Abated after Notices.
		Statutory.	Informal.	
Dwelling Houses and Schools ...	1170	44	254	195
Lodging Houses ...	—	—	—	—
Dairies and Milk Shops ...	45	—	7	7
Cow Sheds ...	146	—	7	5
Bakehouses ...	1	—	—	—
Other Food Premises ...	98	—	1	1
Slaughter Houses ...	—	—	—	—
Caravans and Camp Sites ...	31	—	3	1
Ashpits and Ashbins ...	62	5	26	21
Deposits of Refuse and Manure ...	28	—	8	7
Water-closets ...	9	3	21	9
House Drainage ...	480	4	120	121
Water Supply ...	148	2	16	17
Pigsties ...	32	—	—	—
Animals improperly kept ...	—	1	2	2
Factories ...	37	—	4	1
Smoke Nuisances ...	—	—	—	—
Other Nuisances ...	—	—	15	10
Verminous Premises ...	68	—	14	13
Rat infested Premises ...	392	—	31	26
Swimming Pools ...	12	—	—	—
Infectious Diseases and Disinfections	362	—	—	—
Milk Samples ...	846	—	—	—
Miscellaneous... ..	733	—	6	12
TOTALS	4700	59	535	448

	No.
Seizure and Surrenders of Unwholesome Food ...	242
Samples of Food taken for analysis ...	—
Samples of Food found adulterated ...	—
Samples of Water taken for Analysis ...	48
Samples of Water not in all respects satisfactory ...	30

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

Lots of Infected Bedding, Disinfected or Destroyed ...	42
Houses Disinfected after cases of Infectious Disease ...	192
Schools ditto ditto ditto ...	—

E. VAUGHAN, Chief Sanitary Inspector.

TABLE IV.
SOLIHULL URBAN DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1944.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	MALES.	FEMALES.
All Causes	266	266
1 Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers ...	—	—
2 Cerebro Spinal Fever	1	—
3 Scarlet Fever	—	—
4 Whooping Cough	1	—
5 Diphtheria	—	1
6 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ...	13	5
7 Other Forms of Tuberculosis	3	2
8 Syphilitic Diseases	1	1
9 Influenza	3	3
10 Measles	—	—
11 Ac. Polio-Myel and Polio-Enceph.	—	—
12 Ac. Infant Enceph.	—	—
13 Cancer of B. Cav. and Oesoph (M.) Uterus (F.)	4	7
14 Cancer of Stomach and Duod.	7	5
15 Cancer of Breast	—	14
16 Cancer, other Sites	40	27
17 Diabetes	2	3
18 Intra Cran. Vasc. Lesions... ..	29	48
19 Heart Disease	57	67
20 Other Dis. Circ. Sys.	2	5
21 Bronchitis	7	9
22 Pneumonia	14	8
23 Other Resp. Diseases	2	—
24 Uleer of Stomach and Duod.	8	1
25 Diarrhoea (under 2 years)... ..	3	2
26 Appendicitis	3	—
27 Other Digestive Diseases	9	7
28 Nephritis	6	10
29 Puer. and Post Abort Sepsis	—	3
30 Other Maternal Causes	—	1
31 Premature Birth	2	3
32 Con. Mal., Birth Inj., etc....	12	13
33 Suicide	3	4
34 Road Traffic Accidents	3	6
35 Other Violent Causes	7	3
36 All Other Causes	24	22