Unable to display this page

ST. IVES-BOROUGH COUNCIL.

The Guildhall,

ST. IVES,

Cornwall.

To His Worship the Mayor, Aldermen and
Councillors of the Borough of St. Ives.

Mr. Mayor, Lady and Gentlemen,

The present Report deals very largely with matters of local interest and few items call for special mention here.

Of special importance are the questions relating to the provision of houses for persons who are statutorily overcrowded or suffering from open Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and also the provision of water for Halsetown, and the sewerage for the lower lying parts of Carbis Bay. These are items of immense importance from the point of view of environmental hygiene and though it is rather the fashion to decry this by those sitting at Whitehall it is none the less very real and affects the daily lives of many.

The Council has shown considerable interest in the work of the Public Health Department and I should particularly like to thank the Chairman for his help. I have also received great co-operation from the Chiefs of the other Departments and Mr. Douglas, the Sanitary Inspector, has been of the greatest assistance to me.

I am,

Your obedient Servant,

W.K. DUNSCOMBE.

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.
1949.

1. Civilian Population
   Registrar General's Mid Year Estimate. ... 8,628
2. Area ... ... 4,339 acres.
3. Rateable Value ... ... £80,965.
4. Product of Penny Rate ... ... £325.
5. No. of Inhabited Houses 3,082
6. Comparability Factor ... ... 0·72
7. Live Births ... 44 Male. 42 Female. 86 Total.
   Rate per 1,000 Population 9·96

8. Still Births ... 1 Male. 1 Female. 2 Total.
   Total Rate per 1,000 Total Births 22·7

9. Total Deaths ... 58 Male. 74 Female. 132 Total.
   Rate per 1,000 Population 15·29

10. Infant Deaths ... 2 Male. 1 Female. 3 Total.
    Rate per 1,000 Live Births 34·88

11. Maternal Deaths ... ... NIL.

TABLE OF CAUSES OF DEATH.

		Male.	Female.	Total.
Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	1	-	1
Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	1	-	1
Influenza	...	-	1	1
Acute Inf. Encephalitis	...	1	-	1
Cancer of Buc. Cavity	...	-	3	3
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	1	3	4
Cancer of Breast	...	-	3	3
Cancer of all other Sites	...	5	7	12
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	7	15	22
Heart Disease	...	25	22	47
Other Diseases of Circulatory System	...	2	1	3
Bronchitis	...	1	2	3
Pneumonia	...	-	1	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	...	-	2	2
Other Digestive Diseases	...	1	1	2
Nephritis	...	3	6	9
Premature Birth	...	1	-	1
Congenital Malformations and Prematurity	...	-	3	3
Suicide	...	1	-	1
Road Traffic Accidents	...	1	-	1
Other Violent Causes	...	1	1	2
All other Causes	...	6	3	9

PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF DEATH.

Heart Disease	...	47
Cancer	...	22
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	...	22
Nephritis	...	9

1. WATER SUPPLIES.

Number of Houses with Piped Supply ... 2,849

Number of Houses without Main Supply... 182

(a) The tremendous drought naturally had severe effects on the town's supplies and it says much that, for the Borough as a whole with the exception of Halsetown, in spite of the great influx of visitors we got through the very difficult period without too great restrictions being enforced. At one time the Bussow reservoir was down to the lowest level ever recorded and had it not been for the most valuable supply provided from the Trenwith Mine, things would have been indeed desperate. From the latter source no less than 32 million gallons were pumped and the only objection I have is that this water is entirely untreated, and some of it at least must be surface water. I must, therefore, continue to point out that this water must be treated to make it safe and the Council must take the responsibility of neglecting this simple precaution.

(b) Halsetown. There is, unfortunately, no change to be recorded here and during the drought the inhabitants of this hamlet suffered severely. It is advisable for the Town to look after its own inhabitants before considering the supplying of water to others, and the cost of pumping the relatively small quantity of water likely to be required by the village should not be allowed to be a factor to penalise the persons living there.

2. SEWERAGE.

Further difficulty was experienced in dealing with the sewage of that portion of Carbis Bay below the railway and proposals were made to lift it by means of suitable apparatus into the main trunk sewer which runs alongside the railway. As it involves a lift of over 100 ft. it will be appreciated that to deal with 10,000 gallons per day is no small matter. The scheme has now been sent to the Ministry but there progress is slow.

3. HOUSING.

(a) The Council continues to make quite good progress and a further 34 houses were provided during the year, and 13 by private enterprise. It is unfortunate, however, that the Council housing estates are at the top of the hill as it involves a long walk for mothers pushing prams when they are out shopping or attending the Clinic. It is advisable, therefore, to consider the provision of some shops on the Penbeagle Estate which might also help to serve Halsetown if and when it is decided to develop this hamlet properly.

(b) Points Scheme. In a report towards the middle of the year I drew attention to the fact that medical conditions, especially overcrowding and pulmonary tuberculosis, were not being given the attention by the Housing Committee which in my opinion they deserved. The narrow streets and lack of air space in the Down-Along area are not of themselves conducive to health while if either overcrowding or pulmonary tuberculosis is added, the outlook for the family concerned becomes menacing indeed. We can pay too high a price for a picturesque appearance; but however this may be, it is

essential that the fundamentals in public health or preventive medicine should not be stultified by insufficient consideration of the consequences of their neglect.

It will be remembered that in September a booklet on the Selection of Tenants was published under the aegis of the Ministry of Health. This pointed the way clearly to the need for a revision of the Points Scheme but I have yet to learn that this has even been proposed. The booklet suggested the division of points into (a) basic and (b) balancing, and this seems sound. It is hoped that a revised scheme will at least be considered by the Council at a very early date.

(c) Housing of Old People. If the present trend of population continues, by 1970 more than 17 per cent of the people in the Borough will be aged 65 or over. This is a very serious matter and though, of course, all its implications require consideration the question of the housing of old people is a matter requiring very careful study. Their wants may be few but planning the accommodation they will require is a different proposition altogether. Single storeyed buildings are relatively wasteful in space, old people need relatively flat land for their peregrinations, and they require looking after in a friendly and helpful way in order to ensure that they get an adequate diet, and further, do not allow their houses to deteriorate markedly in cleanliness as so many are inclined to do. All this constitutes a first class social problem but suitable housing would at least do something to help.

4. INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

(a) Throughout the winter and spring we were happily almost free from infectious disease and even in the summer when other areas were being afflicted with poliomyelitis only three cases occurred. One more was suspected but not confirmed. Two cases were in local residents. In view of the enormous turnover in visitors which takes place each summer this is an interesting fact as it must be assumed that some carriers came into the town.

(b) However, there was also a substantial amount of some intestinal disorder, which was chiefly manifest as diarrhoea with some vomiting. It affected residents and visitors alike, and was not related to any article of food or drink as far as we could ascertain, and though numerous samples of faeces were sent for bacteriological examination no pathogenic organism was isolated at any time. This is rather a remarkable occurrence which it is felt should be recorded as I have not seen similar accounts elsewhere. I understand, however, that other cases did occur in other parts of the county and that a similar train of events took place during the war in about 1941 or 1942, again in the course of a very hot dry summer. It is an interesting thing that as soon as a reasonable amount of rain fell it disappeared and I have had a suggestion from a very responsible medical source that it might be due to a virus. These are germs much more minute than ordinary bacteria and about which we know very little especially whether in fact they have anything to do with any similar intestinal disorder.

(c) Diphtheria Immunisation. I have mentioned in the two previous reports that the response to the diphtheria immunisation campaign was very disappointing, worse indeed than in any

other part of the No. 1 Area. It suffered a further setback when, owing to the incidence of poliomyelitis, the clinic was closed for three months. I have in the past expressed the hope that we shall not pay for these sins of omission but this is in fact what has happened and even before the time of writing there has been a very unpleasant reminder that diphtheria is always with us.

5. NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE ACT.

One of the greatest needs in this town for a number of years has been a good clinic. Various makeshifts have helped out and a considerable amount of use has been made of the Sunday School at the Bedford Road Methodist Church both for Infant Welfare and Dental Clinics. It is true that it is situated at the lower end of the town and that the people for whom the clinic is primarily intended are housed at the top, but the fact that they do attend is proof of the need.

In order to try and provide a satisfactory site negotiations were opened with the owner's agents for the purchase by the County Council of the Trewyn gardens which form an oasis in the central part of the town, and the discussion had proceeded quite a long way by the end of the year. We shall be fortunate if this comes off as there will be sufficient ground to provide a very good clinic with provision for several general practitioners to function there also if ever this becomes necessary.

6. PUBLIC CONVENIENCES.

An Inquiry was held into the provision of a public convenience in the Westcott's Quay area. The site suggested, a building which is derelict, was only 40 yards or so from the site previously suggested which was not approved by the Ministry. The Inquiry went against the Council who have thus been unsuccessful on two occasions in their proposals for a convenience in this particular area. It is essential, however, that additional accommodation is provided and extension of the present building at the West Pier seems to be the most obvious proposition.

7. CAMPING SITES.

Camping holidays are now an annual institution all over the country and in view of the popularity of the town it is essential that some permanent arrangement be made to provide these amenities and do away with the siting of cars and caravans on the Island. It is important, however, to see that whatever accommodation is provided is reasonably close to the main part of the town and the beaches, otherwise it defeats its own end.

8. STAFF.

Sanitary Inspector. In the past the Council's arrangement has been that the Borough Engineer occupied the post of Chief Sanitary Inspector and that there was an Assistant Sanitary Inspector in addition. However, the Council resolved that the posts should be split in view of the very considerable amount of work of both officers and the Assistant Sanitary Inspector was appointed Sanitary Inspector. This arrangement seems to be very suitable though the help the Borough Engineer gave in his capacity as Sanitary Inspector has been of great value to the town.

REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR 1949.

1. MISCELLANEOUS VISITS.

Premises Visited re Complaints	...	308
Re inspections	...	229
Drain Test - New and Repair Work	...	177
House Inspections	...	99
Rodent Control Inspections	...	123
Public Conveniences	...	60
Camping Sites	...	17
Factories	...	40
Bakehouses	...	18
Fumigations	...	6
Ice Cream Premises	...	65
Cafes	...	48
Public Houses	...	15
Salvage Depot	...	21

2. FOOD PREMISES.

All premises where food is prepared have been inspected and it is gratifying to see that a number of hotels and cafes have installed all-electric dish-washing machines. This does away with the drying of dishes with tea towels as research has shown that bacteria thrive on dirty tea towels which after use are often thrown in a corner, or not washed as frequently as they should be.

3. MILK.

Twelve samples of milk were taken for bacteriological examination during the year from the retailers in the town selling raw milk. The results received from the County Bacteriologist were :-

10 Passed. 2 Failed.

Two samples were taken for Tuberculosis in the milk, both were returned as satisfactory.

4. ICE CREAM.

During the summer 65 visits were made to ice cream manufacturers' premises, and 46 samples of ice cream were submitted to the County Analyst. The results were as follows :-

Grade 1.	- 20.	Grade 2.	- 10.
Grade 3.	- 10.	Grade 4.	- 6.

This is an improvement on last year, but there should be no samples in Grade 4 and few in Grade 3.

24 samples were taken for fat content, the results varying from 2·2 per cent to 11·7 per cent with an average of 6 per cent. If this is possible now, there is no reason why the Ministry should not fix the standard at 10 per cent when materials are more plentiful.

Registration of Premises. During the year eleven premises were registered for the sale of ice cream.

5. UNSOUND FOOD CONDEMNED.

During the year the following articles of food were inspected and condemned as unfit for human consumption and were voluntarily surrendered :-

258 Tins of various food.
6 Pkts. Dried Eggs.
18 lbs Sugar. (Contaminated).
77 lbs Meat. (Bone Taint).
2 lbs Cheese.
45 Stone Fish.
56 lbs Apples.
11 Jars Liquid Mustard.

The following specimens were sent for bacteriological examination :-

		Result.
1 Sample Cod Roe Spread.	No Pathogenic Organisms Isolated.	
1 Sample Candy Floss.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Dried Milk Powder.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Ice Cream Powder.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Complete Cold Mix Ice Cream Powder.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Tomatoes.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Faeces.	Do.	Do.
1 Sample Vomit.	Do.	Do.

6. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Collection and Disposal of House and Trade Refuse.

Collection is by means of one Karrier 7 cub. yds and one Thornycroft 10 cub. yds lorries. Disposal of house and trade refuse is at Hayle where, in conjunction with the West Penwith Rural District Council, controlled tipping is carried out.

Number of loads of refuse per week.	32.
Approximate weight of refuse per week.	62 tons 14 cwts for first 6 Mtns. 80 tons* for remainder of year.
Approximate weight of refuse per year.	4,525 tons.
Approximate mileage per vehicle per year.	18,000 miles.

* The increase in weight for the last half year is due to the end of salvage collection.

7. SALVAGE.

The amount of salvage collected and dispatched from January to June amounted to 60 tons 1 cwt, value £390. 7. 6d before we were forced to cease collection through lack of a buyer for our salvage. Approximately 14 tons had to be burned. It is unfortunate that after officers and councillors had spent a long time in persuading the public to save salvage and had succeeded, their efforts should have been nullified through lack of Governmental guidance and I am afraid that should the need for

salvage become as urgent as in the war years, the public and local authorities will require a great deal of persuasion as well as a guaranteed price and buyer before they will contemplate starting salvage collection again.

8. ROAD SWEEPING.

The number of miles of road sweeping amounts to 14·1 of unclassified roads and 8·7 of County Council roads.

9. GULLY AND CESSPIT -EMPTYING MACHINE.

In June we took delivery of a new Dennis 600 gallon Cesspit and Gully-Emptying machine which proved its worth during the exceptionally dry summer months by emptying and replenishing the gullies of the Town with clean disinfected water twice a week in a most hygienic manner, very different to the old method of lifting the contents of the gullies and placing it on the road to be lifted by lorry. The vehicle is on hire to Penzance Town Council two days a week and to the adjacent Local Authorities when desired as well as private individual house owners who are not on main drainage.

10. RODENT CONTROL.

During the year the Rodent Operator has been successful in controlling the number of rats. It was estimated that 151 were poisoned, 62 trapped, and 14 mice trapped during the year and regular inspections were made of the sewers and Stennack River.

There is no doubt that the small number of rats found is due to the small diameter of the sewers which fill up during heavy rain and prevent rats from breeding in them. I would like to record my appreciation of the good work carried out by Mr. T. Nankervis.

11. FACTORIES ACTS 1937 and 1948.

During the year 40 inspections were made to the various types of factories, for the purpose of provisions as to health. 7 factories were found to require lime washing or small repairs, and all were complied with.

12. FOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1938.
Report for the Year Ending 31st December, 1949.

I am indebted to Mr. H.A. Rundle of the Cornwall County Council (which is the Food and Drugs Authority) for the following figures of samples taken by his Department.

Details of Samples procured during 1949 in the Borough of St.Ives.

Article.	No. of Samples Taken.	Result of Analysis. Genuine.	Adulterated.	Remarks.
Milk	16.	16.		
Ice Cream	4.	4.		
Sausages	3.	3.		
Butter	1.	1.		
Dessert Gelatine	1.	1.		
Pastry Mix	1.	1.		
Table Jelly Crystals	1.	1.		
Total	27.	27.		

APPENDIX A.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.
(CORRECTED NOTIFICATIONS)
1949.

Disease.	Penzance.	West Penwith.	St. Ives.	St. Just.
Diphtheria.	1.	1.	1.	-
Scarlet Fever.	5.	-	3.	1.
Measles.	24.	205.	60.	34.
Whooping Cough.	3.	26.	12.	-
Cerebro-spinal fever.	-	-	1.	-
Acute Poliomyelitis.	8.	3.	2.	-
Acute Polio-encephalitis.	1.	1.	1.	-
Pneumonia.	-	7.	1.	6.
Erysipelas.	-	3.	4.	-
Food Poisoning.	3.	6.	1.	-
Puerperal Pyrexia.	-	1.	-	-

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.
1949.

Area.	Number of Children who Completed a full Course of Immunisation in 1949.			Number of Children Receiving Refresher Doses.
	Under 5.	5 - 14.	Total.	
PENZANCE.	215.	48.	263.	337.
ST. IVES.	40.	6.	46.	9.
WEST PENWITH.	166.	19.	185.	66.
ST. JUST.	54.	10.	64.	14.

APPENDIX B.

TUBERCULOSIS. NOTIFICATIONS AND DEATHS FOR 1949.

		Nos. on Register at 31.12.49.	1 - 5	5 - 15	15 - 20	20 - 25	25 - 35	35 - 45	45 - 65	Over 65	Total
PENZANCE											
Pulmonary	M.	76.	-	-	-	3.	2(2)	3(2)	1(2)	1(1)	10(7)
	F.	56.	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	4
Non-Pul.	M.	11.	-	1	-	1(1)	-	-	-	-	2(1)
	F.	17.	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	3
WEST PENWITH											
Pulmonary	M.	61.	-	-	1	-	1(1)	3(1)	-	-	5(2)
	F.	43.	-	-	-	1(1)	-	(1)	1(1)	1(1)	3(4)
Non-Pul.	M.	32.	1	(1)	2	-	2	-	-	-	5(1)
	F.	26.	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	1	5
ST. JUST											
Pulmonary	M.	26.	-	-	-	1	(2)	(1)	(2)	-	1(5)
	F.	10.	-	1(1)	-	-	-	-	(1)	-	1(2)
Non-Pul.	M.	6.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	F.	4.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ST. IVES											
Pulmonary	M.	29.	-	-	-	2(1)	1	-	2	-	5(1)
	F.	19	-	1	-	-	-	1	1	-	3
Non-Pul.	M.	6.	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
	F.	6.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

( ) = Deatns.

Total Notifications - 48.
Total Deatns - 23.