

[Report 1947] / Medical Officer of Health, Sturminster R.D.C.

Contributors

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Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June, 1948.

To the Chairman and Members,
Sturminster Rural District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1947.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of Article 17(5) of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations 1935.

I am indebted to Mr. Dean, your Sanitary Inspector, for his co-operation and help during the year and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk, Miss L. Davidge, for her efficient services.

I would also like to thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

NOU F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health.

WILLIAMSON & SON
NEW YORK

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NEW YORK

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
TO THE
STURMINSTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.
for the year
1947.

- A. Area - 45,364 acres.
Rateable value - £37,504.
Production of a penny rate - £159.

Vital Statistics.

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 8,592.

LIVE BIRTHS -

	Male.	Female.		Comparative figures for (a) North Dorset (b) England & Wales.	
Total (172)	90	82	} Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 20.0		
Legitimate	87	79			
Illegitimate	3	3			
				19.7	20.5

STILLBIRTHS -

Total (3)	-	3	} Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 0.3		
					0.3

DEATHS -

Total (126)	54	72	} Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 14.6		
					14.2

Deaths in infants under 1 year - 6			} Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 34.8		
					33.8

- Deaths from Maternal Causes - 1
" " diarrhoea in infants - Nil
" " road traffic accidents - 3
" " other violent causes - 1

B. Personal Health Services in the district.

In view of the impending operation of the National Health Service Act 1946 in July next, for record purposes, it is considered worth while noting the present medical arrangements in the district.

Private Medical Practitioners -

There are 8 Medical Practitioners practicing wholly or in part in the district.

Professional Nursing in the home -

Under arrangements made by the Dorset County Nursing Association 5 District Nurses are resident in the district.

General Hospital Facilities -

There is no hospital within the district. Patients requiring general hospital treatment go to Dorchester, Bournemouth, Sherborne, Shaftesbury or Blandford.

Ambulance Facilities -

An Ambulance for general purposes, provided by your Council and stationed in Sturminster, provides an adequate service for your district.

The Ambulance of the North Dorset Joint Hospital Board, stationed at Sherborne, provides facilities for the transport for cases of infectious disease.

Midwifery Service -

The Dorset County Council through the agency of the County Nursing Association, provides domiciliary midwifery service. 5 District Nurse/Midwives are resident in the district.

Maternity cases requiring admission to hospital are admitted under the County Scheme to the Yeatman Hospital, Sherborne, the Westminster Memorial Hospital, Shaftesbury or the Dorchester County Hospital.

Nursing Homes -

There is only one registered Nursing Home in the district. This provides for occasional maternity cases.

Laboratory Service -

The Dorset County Laboratory (a laboratory in association with the Medical Research Council) provides full laboratory facilities for the district.

There is no public mortuary accommodation in the district. The nearest available accommodation providing facilities for the carrying out of post mortem examination is at Gillingham in the Shaftesbury Rural District.

Tuberculosis -

The Tuberculosis Service is provided by the Dorset County Council. The nearest available clinics are at Dorchester and Poole.

Venereal Disease -

The Venereal Disease Service is provided by the Dorset County Council. The nearest diagnostic and treatment clinics are held at Poole and Dorchester.

School Health Services -

These are provided by the Dorset County Council. There are no school minor ailment clinics held in the district, nor are school nursing staff available for attendance, with the Medical Officer, at routine school medical inspections.

Child Welfare -

Child Welfare provision is made by the Dorset County Council. One health visitor is resident in the district and a weekly Child Welfare Centre is held at Sturminster Newton.

C. Sanitary circumstances of the district.

1. SANITARY STAFF.

Senior Sanitary Inspector	-	J.H. Dean, M.S.I.A.
Assistant Sanitary Inspector	-	F. Hodson, M.S.I.A., A.M.I.S.E.

Both officers are engaged full time on sanitary duties.

As from the 1st April 1947, at the request of the Council, the duties of Licensing Officer were transferred to the Building Surveyor and the Senior Sanitary Inspector took over the full responsibility for the District Water Supply.

These arrangements have worked very satisfactorily during the year, and it is evident that this re-grouping of duties as between the departments, gives efficient and satisfactory control.

Clerical Staff -

One wholtime clerk is employed in connection with sanitary duties and in addition, further assistance is available from the office "pool" of shorthand-typists.

2. WATER SUPPLY.

Apart from various storage and distribution problems the latter part of the year proved the most difficult period for the availability of water at the sources of supply that the Council has had to face since becoming a water supply authority. The severe wintry period in the early months of the year followed by brilliant hot summer and an abnormally dry autumn caused the yield of the springs to drop to record low levels. At the same time the highest consumption yet met with was also reached.

The statistical data is as follows:-

Rainfall (as recorded at Cookwell pumping station) from June to December -

June	1.38 ins.
July	1.44 "
August	1.02 "
September	1.39 "
October	1.09 "
November	1.49 "
December	2.70 "

Total rainfall for the year - 29.21 ins.

Total annual rainfall for the preceding 5 years was -

1942	34.73
1943	28.34
1944	26.70
1945	24.64
1946	35.35

The lowest yield of springs (December 1947) was 317,000 gallons per day. The previous lowest yield recorded was in August 1943 when the yield was 350,000 gallons per day.

The highest consumption 1947 (October) was 374,000 gallons per day.

The highest recorded consumption during each of the past 5 years, for comparison purposes, was as follows:-

1942	173,842 gallons per day.
1943	186,985 " " "
1944	282,771 " " "
1945	290,000 " " "
1946	340,084 " " "
1947	374,000 " " "

In order to deal with the emergency the following steps were taken:-

Early in the year arrangements were made to take approximately 10,000 gallons per day into an existing 1½" pipe line from the Wincanton R.D.Cs. 5" water main at Priors Down, Stalbridge pending the laying of a 6" connection which has been approved by the Ministry of Health and which will eventually form part of the Sturminster R.D.Cs. post-war water scheme for Alton Pancras.

In November 1947 restriction was placed on all supplies in the district between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. and the use of water for watering gardens and washing cars by hose was prohibited. It also became obvious that more drastic restrictions would have to be imposed unless additional water could be obtained and following strenuous efforts by the maintenance staff 20,000 gallons per day were obtained from the Wincanton R.D.C. at Priors Down, Stalbridge by the installation of an electric booster and 10,000 gallons per day from the Shaftesbury R.D.C. through an emergency 2" connection to that authority's main near Moorside, Marnhull.

In addition, further difficulties arose due to the collapse of green sand into the Duntish springs at Buckland Newton in March 1947 involving considerable interruption of water supplies, particularly in the Stalbridge area

and also, by reason of the defective condition of the trunk main between Buckland Newton and Stalbridge, it was necessary to restrict water supplies periodically at night.

With the steady demand for improved agricultural water supplies, apart from the increasing domestic consumption due to the building programme, it is certain that even with normal weather conditions the autumn of 1948 will be a period of water shortage and for this reason it is hoped that it will be possible to press forward with the first part of the development scheme for the provision of additional water from the new Alton Pancras boreholes.

New Works.

Two new boreholes were sunk at Alton Pancras. The results of the test pumping satisfied the requirements of the Ministry of Health and it is understood that a public local inquiry will be held early in 1948 in connection with the proposed new scheme of water supply based on Alton Pancras sources of water.

New connections to the Council's main carried out during the year were as follows:-

(1) domestic use	33
(2) agricultural purposes	47
(3) other purposes	16

The number of houses (other than Council houses) supplied by mains supply direct to the house or by standpipes or from other means is shown in the following table:-

PARISH	Council Mains.			Private Mains.			Wells etc.	
	In	Out	Stand-pipe.	In	Out	Stand-pipe.	In	Out.
Child Okeford	95	14	15				5	37
Fifehead Magdalen	27	2	3	2				
Fifehead Neville	33	6					1	1
Hazelbury Bryan	100	25					4	12
Hanford	5	2		2				3
Hammoon	15	1						
Hinton St. Mary	6			34	10	4		2
Ibberton	20	7	5				2	
Lydlinch	46	22	3				1	2
Manston	22	15	6					
Mappowder	32	5	6					4
Marnhull	198	26	44				6	46
Okeford Fitzpaine	87	12	29	5			1	1
Pulham	24	11	4					2
Stalbridge	197	43	42					6
Shillingstone	95	15	8				3	19
Stoke Wake				10	4	1		2
Stourton Caundle	28	5	19					2
Sturminster Newton	349	39	41					3
Woolland				16	3			7
Wootton Glanvilles	40	11	1					2
Total -	1419	261	226	69	17	5	23	151

Examination of water supplies. Bacteriological.

60 samples of water were taken during the year from the Council's supplies for bacteriological examination.

52 samples were taken from private water supplies in the district for bacteriological examination. 3 samples of water were submitted for chemical examination from sources under consideration for use by the Council.

3. DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

Hazelbury Bryan.

The first portion of this sewerage and sewage disposal scheme was completed early in the year.

All the Council Housing estates and two other houses have now been connected to the scheme which is working very satisfactorily.

Samples of effluent are taken every three months and all have so far proved satisfactory.

Stalbridge.

Good progress was made on the new sewage disposal works scheme.

Proposed Scheme.

A public local inquiry was held during the year into the proposed scheme for Stourton Caundle, and which was eventually approved.

No further progress has been made with regard to the schemes for Mappowder and Glanvilles Wootton.

Approved Schemes.

The following schemes for sewerage and sewage disposal have been approved by the Ministry of Health and await permission to proceed:-

- (a) Child Okeford, Shillingstone and Okeford Fitzpaine Combined Scheme.
- (b) Marnhull & Hinton St. Mary Combined Scheme.
- (c) Sturminster Newton.
- (d) Stourton Caundle.
- (e) Second part of Hazelbury Bryan.

A small portion of the Stourton Caundle scheme, as required for housing purposes, has been commenced.

To meet urgent new housing requirements it is necessary to carry out portions of:-

- (a) Child Okeford and Shillingstone Scheme.
- (b) Marnhull Scheme.
- (c) Hazelbury Bryan Scheme as affecting the hamlet of Kingston.

4. PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Collection of House Refuse -

There have been no changes in the routine arrangements for house refuse collection, which are directly operated by the Council.

Refuse disposal is by means of controlled tipping at one central dump, where there is now only space available for approximately two more years of tipping, and steps will have to be taken to acquire another site as early as possible.

The amount of refuse collected is steadily increasing and appear to be attributable to -

the increase in number of separate dwellings,
a tendency of householders to increase the quantity of organic refuse in bins as against their previous practice of disposal in gardens,
a greater appreciation by the public generally of the danger of accumulations as regards pest control.

Salvage Scheme -

The following materials were salvaged and sold during 1947:-

Waste Paper	40 tons. 16 $\frac{1}{4}$ cwts.	£221.	5.	-.
Textiles	2 tons. 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ cwts.	12.	-.	-.
Bones	1 ton. 10 cwts.	8.	15.	-.
Copper	$\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.		10.	-.
Lead	3 cwts.	2.	2.	6.
Non-Ferrous Metal	9 $\frac{3}{4}$ cwts.	6.	10.	-.
Bottles & Jars	3 tons. 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ cwts.	24.	5.	-.
Ferrous metal	4 tons. 10 cwts.	9.	-.	-.
		<hr/>		
		£284.	7.	6.

Cesspool Emptying -

This service is not carried out by the local authority, but considerable difficulty was encountered during the year mainly on Council Housing Estates due to overflowing cesspools. Many complaints were also received regarding private cesspools, and as a result of these considerations, together with the increase of cesspools on Council Housing Estates, it has been decided to purchase a new "Dennis" Cesspool Emptier.

Adjoining local authorities have been informed that the vehicle will be made available to them on agreed terms.

5. RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION.

Milk Factories -

No further progress has been made with the owners of milk factories at Sturminster Newton and Shillingstone regarding the reception of trade waste into the Council's proposed sewage disposal schemes, but it is understood that at the milk factory at Sturminster Newton it is proposed to put in an efficient private treatment scheme for trade wastes before their discharge into the river.

Saw Mills, Stalbridge -

The position remains unchanged. The nuisances caused by gas produced waste flowing into the adjoining water course continues and is likely to continue to do so until machinery is available to permit Messrs. Turner Bros., to fulfil their undertaking to substitute their gas producer plant with electric power.

6. SHOPS ACT.

No. of inspections carried out	91
No. of defects found	10
No. of notices served	10
No. of notices complied with	10

7. FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

	No. on register.	Inspections.	Written Notices.
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, & 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority.	17	40	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority.	24	35	1
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-worker's premises)	21	25	-
<hr/>			
Total -	62	100	1

	No. of cases in which defects were -		
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.
Want of cleanliness	3		
Sanitary Conveniences			
(a) insufficient	2	1	1
(b) unsuitable or defective	2	1	
Total -	7	2	1

No. of outworkers - 147.

8. SMOKE ABATEMENT.

No action was necessary during the year.

9. SWIMMING BATHS.

There are no swimming baths in the district, but portions of the River Stour are used extensively in the summer by the public for bathing.

In Sturminster Newton, the Parish Council permits bathing from an enclosure on an Island in the River near the Recreation Ground.

The condition of the River Stour is ~~not~~ hardly satisfactory for this purpose owing to pollution at various points in its course.

10. CAMPING SITES.

There are two licensed sites in the district.

The time is fast approaching when, owing to the rapid increase in the number of trailer caravans, it may be advisable for the local authority to consider providing a suitable camping site, in order to prevent the indiscriminate camping which is tending to occur.

11. VERMINOUS PREMISES.

Total No. of disinfestations carried out	19
Details - Fleas	6
Cockroaches	7
Flies	3
Ants	3

12. RATS AND MICE.

The work of rodent destruction is carried out under the responsibility of a Joint Committee of the North Dorset Authorities, and the Rodent Officer keeps in close contact with the Sanitary Inspectors of each Local Authority. Whilst for the most part the work carried out by the Joint Committee is satisfactory, the divided responsibility as between agricultural property and other property in built up areas reduces the efficiency of control.

13. RAG FLOCK ACTS 1911 - 1922.

No action was called for or taken during the year.

14. SCHOOLS SANITATION (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS).

48 sanitary inspections were carried out at schools and 27 at school canteens in the district. Inspection of schools has been mainly in connection with conservancy arrangements.

(a) School Canteens -

With the exception of the new canteen in Sturminster, canteens are situated in premises adapted for the purpose and are not altogether

satisfactory. The Stalbridge canteen is particularly unsatisfactory. Particulars of all defects found on inspection have been brought to the notice of the County Council.

(b) School lavatories -

Inspections were carried out at each of the schools in the district and a detailed report was submitted to you during the year, a copy of which was sent to the County Council.

15. HOUSING.

The good progress made in your district with regard to the re-housing of those without homes of their own and those living in unsatisfactory sanitary conditions was maintained during the first half of the year, but was checked later when a large proportion of houses provided had to be specifically allocated to agricultural workers. This necessity does seriously prejudice the chances of those persons who are not agricultural workers and who are living under unsatisfactory conditions, or who are young married couples with no home of their own.

Until comparatively recently a Medical Officer of Health concerned with unsatisfactory housing conditions in his area was more disposed to consider the effects of bad housing on the physical rather than the mental health of those living under unsatisfactory conditions. At the present time, whilst many persons are still living in damp, insanitary houses detrimental to their physical health, I find myself, more and more, concerned with that equally large group of persons being forced to live in circumstances which can only be calculated to have serious effects on their mental health and happiness.

Many persons in this group are newly married couples who do not enjoy the happy advantage of starting their new life in a home of their own. Many of these are having to live in unsatisfactory furnished rooms at a rent beyond their capacity. Others are forced to share a home with their 'in-laws'. In some instances this arrangement works satisfactorily, but only too often it leads to that friction and mental strife which undermines an otherwise happy relationship with disastrous results to both parents and children alike.

In my report for last year I referred at some length to the need and provision of 'aged persons dwellings' as a result of the changing structure of the population. Toward the end of 1947 the first of such newly constructed dwellings were completed in the district. The number of applications received both from inside and outside the district for these dwellings not only show the demand for such type of dwellings exists, but also that this type of dwelling is acceptable to the type of person for which they are provided.

The first type of dwellings to be provided in this district for 'aged persons' are a block of 13 bungalows each containing a living room, a bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom. In the centre of the block a communal dining, common room is provided with an adjoining kitchen so that communal meals can be taken if so desired by the residents. Alternatively, they have all the necessary provisions in their bungalow to live and feed themselves independently if they so wish. In the central block there is accommodation for a warden and his wife who are available to give assistance, when required, to persons living in the cottages. Hot water both for domestic and central heating purposes is provided from a central boiler. A spare furnished room is available in the central block for use by relatives or friends visiting the persons living in the cottages.

Inspection of houses.

(1) Total No. of dwelling houses inspected during		
(a) the year for housing defects (under P.H. or Housing Acts)		472
(b) No. of inspections made for the purpose		727
(2) (1) No. of informal notices served		67
(2) " " " " complied with		62
(3) No. of Statutory notices served		2
(4) " " " " complied with		2

- (3) (1) No. of houses 'reported' under Section 11 of the Housing Act 1936 38
 (2) Action taken by Local Authority in respect to such houses
 (a) demolition orders made 25
 (b) Undertaking accepted for
 (i) Closure Nil
 (ii) re-conditioning 11
 (c) Other action (to be used as stores only) - 2

- (4) Overcrowding.
 (1) No. of cases of 'Statutory overcrowding' found and reported to local authority Nil.
 (2) No. of cases of overcrowding abated Nil.
 (3) Particulars of any cases in which dwellings have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding Nil.

Rural Housing Survey.

Total No. of working class houses in the district		2569	
No. inspected (with classifications)		Preliminary.	Detailed.
Category 1		1220	52
" 2		615	476
" 3)			
" 4)		313	304
" 5		305	297
Deferred		116	-
Total -		2569	1129

Provision of new houses & re-housing.

No. of houses provided by the Local Authority -

	Temporary Prefab.	Swedish Timber.	Traditional. Type.	Other.
(a) During 1947	Nil.	6	45	36
(b) Post-War	35	20	70	36

No. of houses held under requisition at the end of the year 76
 No. of houses on which demolition or closing orders had been made, occupied under licence at the end of the year. 11
 Total No. of families re-housed during the year by the Local Authority 146

During the year 35 recommendations for the granting of priority on medical grounds in connection with their applications for a Council house, were made by the Medical Officer of Health in respect of the conditions under which 63 applicants were living, following inspections carried out by him.

6. INSPECTION & SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

1. Milk -

(a) Milk & Dairies Order 1926.

No. of farms in the district registered for milk production	357
No. of farms producing designated milk	
(a) T.T.	46
(b) Accredited	51
No. of farms producing non-designated milk	260
No. registered dairymen (cowkeepers and milk sellers)	350
No. registered as wholesale	350
" " retailers	Nil
" " wholesale and retailers	56

(b) Cowsheds and Milk Shops.

No. of inspections made during the year	106
No. of cases in which contravention of the regulations were found	11
No. of prosecutions undertaken	Nil.

(c) Milk (Special Designation Order) 1936 - 1941.

No. of licences granted during the year -

Tuberculin Tested -	
Dealers	1
Supplementary	1
Pasteurised -	
Dealers	1
Supplementary	1

(d) Samples.

No. of samples taken and submitted for examination during the year -

Tuberculin Tested	4
Accredited	Nil.
Pasteurised	32

2. Other Food Premises.-

No. of premises in the district subject to Section 13 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938	95
No. of inspections of such premises during the year	104
No. of premises in the district subject to registration under Section 14 of the Food & Drugs Act 1938	19
No. of such premises registered in respect to -	

(a) Ice Cream	10
(b) Sausages & Prepared meats	11
(c) fish frying	2

No. of such premises inspected during the year	35
No. of samples of ice cream taken and submitted for Methylene Blue test	17

Results -	Grade 1	Nil
	Grade 2	1
	Grade 3	1
	Grade 4	15

I am pleased to record the increasing interest which licensing Magistrates in the district are taking in the sanitary arrangements provided in licensed premises.

Meat Inspection.

(a) Slaughterhouses -

No licensed slaughterhouse are in use in the district.

(b) Butchers and other shops -

Particulars of quantities condemned - Meat - 640lbs.

Other Foods.

Particulars of quantities condemned -

Tins batches	43 (includes 18 cases of herrings and 727 tins assorted food in one batch)
--------------	--

Fish	11 stones.
Cheese	8½ lbs.
Lard	3 lbs.
Sugar	20 lbs.
Semolina	18 lbs.
Kippers	9 stones.
Bacon	52 lbs. (ham)
Tea	6 lbs.
Potatoes	2 cwts.
Butter	15½ lbs.
Dried prunes	60 lbs.
Margarine	6 lbs.

17. SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTION CARRIED OUT.

1. Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	2750
" " Informal notices served	78
" " Informal notices complied with	73
" " Statutory notices served	2
" " Statutory notices complied with	2
No. of prosecutions	1

18. INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

No. of investigations carried out	4
No. of disinfections carried out	6

D. NOTIFI BLE DISE SE (OTHER THAN TUBERCULOSIS)

Incidence.

<u>Disease.</u>	<u>Total Cases Notified.</u>	<u>Cases Admitted to Hospital.</u>	<u>Total Deaths.</u>
Measles	40	-	-
Puerperal Pyrexia	3	-	-
Acute Lobar Pneumonia	3	-	-
Erysipelas	3	-	-
Whooping cough	21	-	-
Polio encephalitis	1	-	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	-	-
Scarlet fever	2	-	-

There was an increased incident of measles during the first half of the year.

One case of polio encephalitis was notified after death.

Protection against Diphtheria.

The number of children who received treatment during the year is as follows:-

<u>Under 5 years of age.</u>	<u>5 - 14 years of age.</u>
85	8

The corresponding figures for the preceding year were 101 and 19 respectively.

The 85 children (under 5 years of age) protected as compared with the number of births in the preceding year (129) suggest that a sufficient number of new babies are being protected to maintain the percentage number of children protected at a fairly satisfactory figure. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement until every child born is protected during its first year of life.

During the year you extended the scope of your scheme to provide for the giving of a 'reinforcing' injection at the time of school entry to children previously protected during their earlier years.

In order to draw the attention of all parents to the need for this 'reinforcing' treatment and in order to emphasize to parents of children who had not already been protected, the value of treatment being given on school entry, arrangements were made with the Food Executive Officer for a suitable pamphlet to be issued with the new ration book issued to all children reaching five years of age.

Tuberculosis.

<u>New Cases Notified.</u>		<u>Deaths.</u>	
<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>	<u>Respiratory.</u>	<u>Non-Respiratory.</u>
2	1	3	1

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health.