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**Contributors**

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Borough of Great Torrington

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

Medical Officer of Health

and the

Borough Surveyor and  
Public Health Inspector

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For the Year ending  
31st December, 1966



# Public Health Staff.

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## **Medical Officer of Health:**

C. F. R. BRIGGS, M.B., B.S.; L.R.C.P., M.R.C.S.

Glen Tor, Villa Road, Torrington.

Telephone 3222.

## **Borough Surveyor and Public Health Inspector:**

P. F. R. E. SYMONS, M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices, 6, Halsdon Terrace, Torrington.

Telephone 2164.

## **Housing Officer and Additional Public Health Inspector:**

C. R. SOUTHGATE, CERT. R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

(To 25:5:66)

P. McCANDLISH, D.M.A., M.A.P.H.I.

(From 12:9:66)

## **Committees:**

HOUSING, SANITARY, BUILDING and  
IMPROVEMENTS, SPECIAL SEWERAGE.



Council Offices,  
6, Halsdon Terrace,  
Great Torrington.

Mr. Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors,

We have pleasure in presenting our report for the year ending 31st December, 1966.

There was a widespread outbreak of influenza during February and March: the disease was generally mild in nature. Apart from this the general health of the Borough was very good. There was no other epidemic.

The corrected birth rate was 14.9 per 1,000 population. That for the whole of England and Wales was 17.7 - the birth rate in England and Wales is falling, and this is the lowest since 1961.

The corrected death rate was 14.4 per 1,000 population: the figure for the whole of England and Wales was 11.7.

We are,

Yours faithfully,

**C. F. R. BRIGGS,**

Medical Officer of Health.

**P. F. R. E. SYMONS,**

Public Health Inspector and Surveyor.

# Borough of Great Torrington

## 1966

### CHIEF INDUSTRIES AND OCCUPATIONS.

Agriculture.	Agricultural Engineering.
Cattle Breeding Centre.	Glove Making. Milk Factory.

### GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (statute acres)	...	...	...	...	3,592
Mid-year Population (estimated)	...	...	...	...	2,880
Number of Inhabited Houses	...	...	...	...	1,064
(Number of Council-owned Houses)	...	...	...	...	222
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£92,360
Product of Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£369 10s. 4d.

### VITAL STATISTICS.

Year	Mid-year Population	Corrected Birth Rate	Corrected Death Rate
1962	2,880	15.3	14.1
1963	2,860	15.0	12.1
1964	2,880	14.6	13.3
1965	2,880	15.7	12.5
1966	2,880	14.9	14.4

#### BIRTHS

Live Births	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	17	19	36
Illegitimate	—	—	—

Comparability factor for births—1.19

Corrected birth rate per 1,000 population	14.9	England & Wales 17.7
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Still Births	Male	Female	Total
Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total live and still births	—	—	England & Wales 15.4

<b>Infant Mortality</b>	Male	Female	Total
Deaths of infants under 1 year	—	1	1
"    "    "    "    4 weeks	—	—	—

This baby died from pneumonia.

The infant mortality rate for the whole of England and Wales in 1966 was 19.0 per 1,000 live births. This was the lowest ever recorded in this country.

### Maternal Mortality

There were no maternal deaths.

The total number of births which took place in the Borough was 63, - 26 boys and 37 girls. Fifty six of these births were in the Cottage Hospital: the maternity department of the Hospital reopened in February, 1966.

	Male	Female	Total
<b>DEATHS</b> ... ..	25	49	74

Comparability factor for deaths—0.56

		England & Wales
Corrected death rate per 1,000 population	14.4	11.7

<b>Causes of Death</b>	Male	Female
Cancer of stomach ... ..	2	1
Cancer of lung ... ..	1	1
Cancer of breast ... ..	—	3
Cancer of uterus ... ..	—	1
Cancer, other - including leukaemia ...	5	5
Diabetes ... ..	1	—
Vascular disease of nervous system - apoplexy	4	6
Coronary disease, angina ... ..	4	5
Other heart disease ... ..	3	8
Other circulatory disease ... ..	2	8
Influenza ... ..	—	3
Pneumonia ... ..	—	2
Bronchitis ... ..	1	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum ...	1	—
Gastritis, enteritis ... ..	—	1
Other disease ... ..	1	2
Accidents not involving motor vehicles ...	—	1
Suicide ... ..	—	1
<b>Total all causes</b> ... ..	25	49



### Cancer of the Lung

Cancer of the lung is often associated with cigarette-smoking. The dangers of smoking are brought to the attention of the public by posters in doctors' surgeries and elsewhere.

### Cancer of the Uterus

A cervical cytology service is available, and use has been made of this service during the year.

### Age at Death Table

<i>Age at Death</i>	Male	Female
Under 4 weeks ... ..	—	—
4 weeks — 1 year ... ..	—	1
1—4 years ... ..	—	1
5—14 ... ..	1	—
15—24 ... ..	—	—
25—34 ... ..	—	—
35—44 ... ..	—	—
45—54 ... ..	2	2
55—64 ... ..	6	6
65—74 ... ..	5	8
75—84 ... ..	9	18
85 and over ... ..	2	13
Average age at death ... ..	68	74

### INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The following cases of infectious disease were notified during the year :-

Whooping cough ... ..	16
Pneumonia ... ..	15
Scarlet fever ... ..	4
Measles ... ..	4
Dysentery ... ..	1
Erysipelas ... ..	1

There was no major epidemic during the year.

Immunisation against smallpox, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough continues as before.

### **Tuberculosis**

No new case has been notified. The following cases were on the register at the end of the year :--

	Male	Female
Pulmonary ... ..	2	1
Non-pulmonary ... ..	--	2

The Mass Radiography Service has a unit which operates once a fortnight in Bideford and in Barnstaple. The services of this unit are freely available to the public.

### **Venereal Disease**

There are facilities for clinic treatment in Barnstaple. No case of venereal disease has come to our notice.

## **CARE OF EXPECTANT MOTHERS.**

Arrangements continue as in previous years, and are very satisfactory.

## **DOMICILIARY MIDWIFERY AND HOME NURSING**

There were seven home confinements during the year. This is fewer than in recent years owing to the re-opening of the Cottage Hospital. Our District Nurse/Midwife has all modern equipment available for domiciliary midwifery and for general nursing.

## **WELFARE CLINICS.**

These are run along the same lines as in previous years; the arrangements have proved very satisfactory.

## **MEALS ON WHEELS.**

This service continues as in previous years. Meals are prepared in Torridge View, and are taken by volunteers twice weekly to any needy inhabitants of the Borough. A charge of 1/6 per meal is made. On average 40 meals a week were served during the year.

This voluntary service was first discussed by the Council and was inaugurated in 1965. It has proved of great benefit to the community.



## AMBULANCE SERVICE.

Our County ambulance is based at Heard's Garages, Torrington, and is operated in conjunction with the British Red Cross Society. It is equipped with two-way radio, the control centre being in Barnstaple.

Patients carried in 1966	...	...	810
Total mileage ...	...	...	16,428

These figures show a considerable increase on those of previous years.

## TORRINGTON COTTAGE HOSPITAL.

	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
Patients admitted during the year	194	150	135	150	148
New out-patients	299	210	293	370	380
Total out-patient attendances	817	756	598	670	719
Births	56	1	—	18	—

It will be seen that the work done in the Hospital increased considerably last year; one argument against the proposed closure of the Hospital.

The variation in the numbers of births in recent years is due to the fact that the maternity department has been closed for several years, owing to shortage of staff. The department was open for 11 months during 1966 and is, of course, still open. The maternity department takes only "normal" maternity cases. In addition to the figures given above, five mothers had their babies in the North Devon Infirmary and were transferred to Torrington Hospital within a few days. These were "abnormal" cases, and the transfers to our Hospital helped to relieve pressure on the limited number of maternity beds in the North Devon Infirmary.

## NATIONAL BLOOD TRANSFUSION SERVICE.

In September the South Western Division of the National Blood Transfusion Service came to Torrington. One hundred and three volunteers gave blood:— 58 men and 45 women. This is a record number of volunteers for Torrington.

## RAINFALL.

Details of rainfall during recent years are as follows :—

	1966	1965	1964	1963
January ...	3.15	6.86	0.85	0.92
February ...	4.59	0.09	1.81	1.53
March ...	1.40	3.50	2.72	4.29
April ...	5.34	2.66	1.74	4.00
May ...	2.81	2.80	2.65	1.48
June ...	2.77	5.35	1.29	2.45
July ...	2.06	4.41	2.55	2.56
August ...	3.77	5.55	2.67	4.95
September ...	2.25	4.85	1.93	2.62
October ...	4.84	1.28	4.88	1.75
November ...	3.08	5.79	4.80	9.80
December ...	5.05	9.96	5.47	1.25
Total ...	41.05	48.88	55.34	57.58

## SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL.

The enlarged and improved sewage disposal works is functioning well. Our only real problem is that which is common to so many works, - the drying and disposal of sludge.

A new diverter, or sewage pumping station, to deal with the sewage from the new housing development on Calvesford Road is under construction.



## FACTORIES ACT, 1961. Part I of the Act.

### 1—INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Public Health Inspectors)

Premises (1)	Number on Register (2)	Number of			Occupiers prosecuted (5)
		Inspections (3)	Written notices (4)		
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 5, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ... Non-Power	5	3	—	—	
(ii) Factories not included in (i) to which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ... Power	19	7	—	—	
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises) ... Building sites etc.	—	—	—	—	
TOTAL ...	22	10	NIL	NIL	

### 2—CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found			Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred To H. M. Inspector By H. M. Inspector	

Overcrowding (S.2) ... ..									
Unreasonable temperature (S.5) ... ..									
Inadequate ventilation (S.4) ... ..									
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6) ... ..									
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7) ... ..									
(a) Insufficient ... ..									
(b) Unsuitable or defective ... ..									
(c) Not separate for sexes ... ..									
Other offences (not including offences relating to Homework) ... ..									
TOTAL ... ..	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL

### OUTWORK—(Sections 133 and 134). Part VIII of the Act.

Nature of Work	Section 133			Section 134		
	No. of out-workers in August list required by Sect. 133 (1) (c) (2)	No. of cases of default in sending lists to the Council (3)	No. of prosecutions for failure to supply lists	No. of instances of work in unwholesome premises	Notices served	Prosecutions
(1)	157	NIL	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Wearing apparel, Making, etc.	157	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL



## WATER SUPPLY.

The water supply has been very good throughout the year. Apart from a restriction on the use of hosepipes for a period, there has been no shortage.

Samples have been taken quite frequently and all have given first class results. In all, twenty four samples were taken and no evidence was found of contamination by Coliform bacilli or Bact. coli.

Water normally supplied to Torrington comes from the reservoir at Wistlandpound and has a natural content of 0.02 parts per million of fluorine. It contains no deleterious substances and is not plumbo-solvent.

Of the total population of 2,880 it is estimated that 2,781 are supplied with mains water. 1,026 out of the total of 1,064 houses are connected to the mains.

## HOUSING.

The sixteen two-bedroomed flats, twelve three-bedroomed houses and the house and shop at Sandfords Gardens, Mill Street, have been completed and occupied.

Plans have been approved for the layout and development of part of the land at Calvesford Road and work on the construction of the roads and laying of sewers is well in hand. Four bungalows, four two-bedroomed flats and a block containing ten one-bedroomed flats, a communal lounge, dining room and kitchen are to be built to house the Swedish workers who are coming to staff the new glass factory which is under construction for Messrs. Dartington Glass Ltd. When the Swedes leave, after establishing the factory and training English workers in the very highly skilled trades which, together, go into the making of glass and the manufacture of glass tableware, the bungalows and flats will become available for general housing needs. The communal block, in particular, will be used for elderly persons.

The Council appreciate that with the coming of new industries there will be many calls for accommodation for key workers, as well as for general housing needs, and they have quite ambitious schemes to provide such housing. We hope to be able to build some two hundred flats and houses during the next two to three years. Designs under consideration for both flats and houses incorporate central heating and are to full Parker Morris standards.

## COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

There are no common lodging houses in the Borough.

### PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT 1949.

No serious infestation has been found or reported during the year. Regular inspections of properties are carried out by the rodent operator who is still employed jointly by the Rural and Borough Councils.

### THE OFFICES, SHOPS & RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963.

Inspections of premises under the above act have continued, but have been limited by changes in staff. No serious contraventions have been found.



## INSPECTION OF MEAT AND OTHER FOODS.

Slaughtering is carried out regularly at two private slaughter-houses within the Borough and Tables A and B give details of animals slaughtered, meat condemned, etc.

TABLE A.

Carcases and Offal inspected and condemned in whole or in part.

	<i>Cattle excluding Cows</i>	<i>Cows</i>	<i>Calves</i>	<i>Sheep and Lambs</i>	<i>Pigs</i>
Number killed ... ..	105	—	2	253	337
Number inspected ... ..	105	—	2	253	337
<b>All Diseases except Tuberculosis and Cysticercosis</b>					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	1*	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned ... ..	24	—	—	14	4 includes 2 "casualty"
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuber- culosis and Cysticercosis	22.86	—	—	5.93	1.19
<b>Tuberculosis</b>					
Whole carcasses condemned	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned ... ..	—	—	—	—	1
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis ... ..	—	—	—	—	0.3
<b>Cysticercosis</b>					
Carcasses of which some part or organ was con- demned ... ..	—	—	—	—	—
Carcasses submitted to treat- ment by refrigeration	—	—	—	—	—
Generalised and totally condemned ... ..	—	—	—	—	—

\* "Casualty" or "Emergency slaughter".

TABLE B.

Summary of Meat condemned with cause and weight.

	<i>Part or Organ Condemned</i>	<i>Cause</i>	<i>Weight</i>
<b>Cattle excluding Cows</b>	9 part livers	Cirrhosis & Distomatosis	31 lbs.
	12 whole livers	Distomatosis	73 lbs.
	2 whole livers	Abscesses & Cysts	15 lbs.
<b>Sheep and Lambs</b>	*1 whole carcass of offal	Accident - badly bled & not set	55 lbs.
	6 whole livers	Distomatosis	17 lbs.
	6 part livers	..	9 lbs.
	1 sheeps lungs	Strongyli	1½ lbs.
<b>Pigs</b>	1 head	Tuberculosis	11 lbs.
	*2 plucks	Badly bled	14 lbs.
	*1 hind leg	Broken bone	9 lbs.
	1 set of lungs	Pneumonia	3 lbs.
	3 livers	Cysts	8 lbs.

\* "Emergency" or "Casualty" cases.



TABLE C.

Details of other foodstuffs condemned during the year.

<i>Food</i>	<i>Reason for Condemnation</i>	<i>Weight</i>
1 Tin of Prunes	Tin punctured	7 lbs.
1 Tin of Ham	" "	1 lb.
1 Tin of Corned Beef	" "	6 lbs.
2 Tins Pork Shoulder	Decomposition	22 lbs.
1 Tin of .. ..	Tin blown	11 lbs.

## SUMMARY OF VISITS AND INSPECTIONS MADE DURING THE YEAR.

Allotments and Fields ... ..	33
Building Regulations and Planning ... ..	74
Caravan Sites ... ..	3
Cattle and Pannier Markets ... ..	68
Cemetery and Churchyard ... ..	57
Disinfection or Fumigation ... ..	5
Drain Testing and Inspecting ... ..	43
Factories ... ..	10
Food Premises and Food Inspection ... ..	22
Housing ... ..	840
Improvement Grants ... ..	120
Industrial Development ... ..	91
Meat Inspection ... ..	202
Miscellaneous ... ..	68
New Building Work ... ..	84
Nuisances (including obstructed drains) ... ..	39
Offices, Shop & Railway Premises Act ... ..	7
Petroleum Licensing and Storage ... ..	14
Playing Field ... ..	13
Public Conveniences ... ..	36
Refuse Collection and Disposal ... ..	12
Rodent Control ... ..	6
Sewerage and Sewage Disposal ... ..	217
Street Lighting ... ..	21
Water ... ..	9
Total	2,094









