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**Contributors**

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June 1946.

To : The Chairman and Members of the  
 Council, Warminster Urban District.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Annual Report.

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the District for 1945. Relaxation of restrictions has made it possible to circulate a more complete report than in the war years.

Your obedient Servant,

D. F. MORGAN.

Medical Officer of Health

WARMINSTER URBAN DISTRICT.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer  
 of Health for the Year 1945.

1. Staff.

Dr. H. L. Blackley relinquished his appointment as Acting Medical Officer of Health on my return from the Forces on January 6th 1945.

Medical Officer for 1945 - D. F. Morgan, M.B., D.P.H.,  
 Engineer and Surveyor - F. J. Reilly, M.Inst.M.C.E., M.R.San.I.  
 Sanitary & Meat Inspector - A. C. F. Gisborne, A.R.San.I.

2. Social Condition and Statistics.

Area of Warminster Urban District 5651 acres  
 Estimated population 6091  
 Number of inhabited houses 1800  
 Rateable Value £50,893  
 Production of 1d Rate £217

The main industries are farming, silk-weaving and glove-making. Engineering works (branch of R.E.M.E.) paint works and saw mills.

Vital Statistics.

Births Registered 56 Male 56 Female - Total 112 of which 17 were illegitimate.

Birth Rate per 1000 ... 18.4.

Birth Rate England and Wales (Per 1000 total population) 16.1.

Birth Rate Previous Years. 1942. 1943. 1944. 1945.

Warminster Urban District 17.0 17.6 21.4 18.4

England & Wales generally 15.8 16.5 17.6 16.1

Stillbirths 2 Male 1 Female - Total 3 of which 1 was illegitimate

Deaths of Infants under 1 year. 8 Male 4 Female - Total 12 giving an Infant Mortality Rate of 10.7 per 1000 live births. Infant Mortality Rate England & Wales 46

3. Causes of Death.

	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
1. Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	Nil	Nil	Nil
2. Cerebro-spinal Fever	1	Nil	1
3. Scarlet Fever	Nil	Nil	Nil
4. Whooping cough	Nil	Nil	Nil
5. Diphtheria	Nil	Nil	Nil
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	2	Nil	2
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	Nil	Nil	Nil
8. Syphilitic diseases	Nil	Nil	Nil
9. Influenza	Nil	Nil	Nil
10. Measles	Nil	Nil	Nil
	<u>3</u>	<u>Nil</u>	<u>3</u>

c/f

	b/f	Male.	Female.	Total.
11. Acute Polio-myelitis & polio-encephalitis.		3	-	3
12. Acute Infantile Encephalitis.		-	-	-
13. Cancer of buccal cavity & oesophagus (M) uterus (F)		-	1	1
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum.		2	1	3
15. Cancer of breast.		-	1	1
16. Cancer of all other sites.		3	3	6
17. Diabetes.		2	1	3
18. Intraerianial vascular lesions.		-	4	4
19. Heart disease.		7	7	14
20. Other diseases of circ. system.		-	-	-
21. Bronchitis.		3	3	6
22. Pneumonia.		1	6	7
23. Other respiratory disease.		1	1	2
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum.		-	1	1
25. Diarrhoea under 2 years.		-	-	-
26. Appendicitis.		-	-	-
27. Other digestive disease.		-	-	-
28. Nephritis.		6	4	10
29. Puerperal and Post-abortion Sepsis.		-	-	-
30. Other Maternal causes.		-	-	-
31. Premature births.		-	-	-
32. Congenital Malformations: birth injury and infantile disease.		5	1	6
33. Suicide.		-	-	-
34. Road Traffic Accident.		-	-	-
35. Other violent causes.		1	1	2
36. All other causes.		7	4	11
		<u>41</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>80</u>

Death rate for the district - 13.3 per 1,000 population.

Death rate for England and Wales - 11.4 per thousand population.

#### Notifiable Infectious Diseases.

The following Infectious Diseases were notified during the year :-

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May.	June.	July.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Scarlet Fever.	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	2
Whooping Cough.	1	2	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Measles	3	33	53	20	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia	3	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Total (136)	<u>7</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>

No cases of Diphtheria were notified among civilian population and there was only one military case.

There were no deaths from the outbreak of measles in February and March. There were no schools closed for infection during the year.

#### Diphtheria Immunisation.

As in previous years, free immunisation was undertaken by the County Council. As the Welfare Authority, <sup>the County Council</sup> was made responsible for immunising infants and children of pre-school age.

The Ministry of Health required figures of the numbers of children immunised in the District and the County Medical Officer has therefore arranged for these figures to be available to Local Authorities in future.

At 31st December 1945 the Immunisation position was :-

	1 - 5 years.	5 - 15 years.
Estimated Mid Year Population	533	877
No. of children who had completed Im'n.	192	804

The gratifying absence of any civilian cases of Diphtheria is noteworthy, but it is necessary to remind parents constantly of the necessity for immunisation especially for children before they start school.

It is also hoped to commence regular Immunisation Clinics in Warminster which will take the place of the clinics now held occasionally in the schools.

#### Tuberculosis.

Treatment of all forms of Tuberculosis is undertaken by the County Council, and full reports are made by the County Medical Officer. During the year, the greatest difficulty was shortage of Nursing and Domestic staff. This shortage prolonged the period of waiting for sanatorium beds and a grave obstacle to treatment was thereby created.

<u>New Cases 1945.</u>					<u>Deaths in 1945.</u>				
<u>Pulmonary.</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>			<u>Pulmonary.</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>		
<u>Age.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Age.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
0-					0-				
1-				1	1-				
5-		1		1	5-				
10-					10-				
15-			2		15-				
20-	1	1			20-				
25-		1			25-				
30-		1			30-				
35-					35-	2			
45-					45-				
55-					55-				
65-					65-				
Unknown					Unknown				
<u>Total</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>N11</u>	<u>N11</u>	<u>N11</u>

Number of civilian cases on the Register at the end of 1945 [including old cases, new cases, transfers in and out and those for whom there is no recent record].

<u>Pulmonary.</u>		<u>Non-Pulmonary.</u>	
<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>	<u>Male.</u>	<u>Female.</u>
11	12	8	10

Total 41 cases.

Beckford Lodge, Warminster, the Dorset County Council Orthopaedic Surgical Tuberculosis Hospital was used sometimes for Wiltshire cases by arrangement between the two County Councils.

#### Isolation Hospitals.

The Warminster Isolation Hospital remained closed for infectious diseases throughout the year and was used as a Children's Home by the County Council. No infectious diseases were reported at the Home.

Trowbridge Isolation Hospital received all cases referred for Hospital treatment in spite of shortage of staff.

Great credit is due to the Matron and her staff for the loyal way in which they carried on under prolonged difficulties.

#### 5. General Hospitals.

Warminster Hospital has accommodation for 30 patients and includes some private wards. The acute shortage of staff was keenly felt in 1945, but in spite of this the Hospital maintained its high standard of efficiency. Credit for this is due to the unremitting efforts of the Matron and her staff.

#### 6. Ambulance Service.

Infectious Cases. The ambulance from Trowbridge Isolation Hospital was able to cope with the transport of all Warminster cases.

General Emergency. The Town ambulance was available in emergency but, on account of the age and condition of the vehicle, most of the work was undertaken by the B.R.C.S. (Warminster Division) Ambulance.

Lack of drivers and attendants for both vehicles was reported, and it was necessary to rely mainly on the B.R.C.S. It was not possible to guarantee a full 24 hours service, but there were always drivers and attendants for eve. night work and most cases were suitably dealt with

A few cases of difficulty were reported to me and one of these was a surgical emergency.

It is hoped that, with the return of personnel from the Forces, staff difficulties will be alleviated, but until a National or Regional Ambulance Service is started, it will be necessary to rely on the services of the B.R.C.S. A small charge is made for the use of this vehicle and it also has the support of the Council.

#### 7. Housing.

Housing was by far the biggest problem of the Public Health Department during the year.

Many houses are becoming overcrowded due to births or the return of relatives from the Forces.

In a garrison district such as this, there is always a considerable "floating" population, so that an accurate picture of the housing

accommodation is difficult to get from the estimated population.

Many of the houses are small, with too few bedrooms, inconvenient and old-fashioned. There are 1800 houses in the town, of which 1475 are of the working class (which includes 240 Council Houses).

A rapid survey of the District showed that about 80 houses were unfit for habitation and not repairable at reasonable cost. These should be demolished when there is sufficient better accommodation. In addition there were 70 "borderline" cases. There were no houses demolished during the year. It is apparent that it will be some time before these unsuitable properties can be dealt with. Once the great shortage of good houses has been abated, and not before, it will be possible to tackle unsuitable and sub-standard homes.

Lack of labour and materials has also held up the programme of improvements and it was only possible during the year to have the most urgent repairs carried out.

#### Requisitioned Properties.

Towards the latter half of the year, the Ministry of Health permitted the use of requisitioned properties for general letting. Previously these places had been available to the billetable classes only.

In view of the small numbers of properties concerned, it was decided to let these places to families having no separate homes. Even here, difficulties were met, as no fewer than 130 applicants for council houses fell into this category.

These requisitioned properties are, for the most part, below normal housing standards, and have therefore been subject to careful examination, special efforts being made to improve their amenities.

In all, 44 houses were in use as Requisitioned properties at the end of the year, and 157 Sanitary Inspections were made plus 60 examinations of works in progress.

#### Overcrowding.

Statutory action in cases of overcrowding was generally not possible though efforts were made to improve conditions by informal action.

Where, on investigation, it appeared that a house was statutorily overcrowded or where, although actual overcrowding did not exist the amenities and accommodation were insufficient or inconvenient, the case was brought before the Council to consider the question of priority for renting a Council House.

#### Priority Cases.

So many are the headings under which priority for renting Council Houses might be considered, and so frequent were the cases, that only the most urgent were granted priority.

Cases of special difficulty were the subject of investigation by the Councils Officers and the facts were reported to the Public Health & Housing Committee.

It was not considered practicable nor necessary in an Urban District of this size to adopt any special POINTS system in Council House allocation and the majority of cases were dealt with entirely in order of their application.

#### Re-housing Programme.

Proposals for a number of housing sites were considered by the Council and those chosen received provisional consideration by the Ministries concerned. Official approval of the Ministry of Health had not been received at the end of the year.

The programme suggested is to provide 260 Council Houses over a short period as possible - probably in about 5 years.

An indication of the need for Council Houses in the District was shown by the fact that 500 applications had been received by the end of the year. Permanent prefabricated houses were not considered suitable nor necessary for the town.

The Long-term Planning Report was also received and considered by the Council.

### 8. Water Supply.

As in previous years, the supply from Keeper's Well, Jersey Hill Well and Holywell gravitated to a collecting tank at Crockerton Pumping Station where it is chlorinated and treated with soda ash (sodium carbonate) solution. The treated water is then pumped to the reservoir at Botany and gravitates to the town.

<u>Date.</u>	<u>Source.</u>	<u>Pollution.</u>	<u>Residual Chlorine.</u> (Parts per million.)
19.1.45.	Main Supply.	None whatsoever.	-
6.2.45.	" "	" "	0.10 to 0.15
2.3.45.	Keeper's Well	Slight non-faecal	Before chlorination.
"	Jersey Hill.	" "	" "
"	Holywell	Minimal "	" "
6.3.45	Main supply.	None whatsoever.	0.05
15.5.45	" "	" "	-
26.6.45	" "	" "	0.05
13.7.45	Keeper's Well.	Gross faecal	Before treatment.
"	Jersey Hill.	Considerable non-faecal	Before treatment.
"	Holywell:	Gross Non-faecal.	" "
2.10.45	Main Supply.	None whatsoever	0.05
"	Keeper's Well.	Gross Non-faecal.	Before treatment.
2.10.45	Jersey Hill.	Gross surface	" "
"	Holywell.	Moderate faecal	" "
4.12.45	Main supply.	None whatsoever.	Nil.

Frequent tests for residual chlorine were made and the dosing was adjusted so as to produce, as far as possible, a constant reading of the smallest amount of residual chlorine detectable i.e. 0.05 parts per million.

#### Auxiliary Water Supply.

The new borehole was completed and pumping test was carried out, which showed a satisfactory yield. It will be recalled that in the Report of the Consulting Engineer dated 14th January 1943, it was found that pumping at 8,000 gallons 1 hour, practically no sand was discharged, but above this figure, cloudiness and sand were obtained.

A 9" delivery main was connected from Arn Hill to the town mains and the Pump House was built. No water was used from this source up to the end of the year. The site for the new reservoir was purchased, but it was not possible to commence on its construction.

Although there had been no evidence of serious pollution of this water, it was considered safer, in view of the chalky nature of the gathering ground and locality, to chlorinate the water when it was brought into use. Here it should not be difficult to arrange for a residuum of 0.05 parts chlorine per million which is practically tasteless.

#### Cannimore Supply.

Examination showed that this water supply was contaminated, but efforts to trace a specific origin of the contamination were unsuccessful. It is probable that, as most of the water channels and pipes are made of house-brick and ware pipes, that contamination occurs through these.

It is hoped that the main supply to the town will be extended to the houses depending on this source and to a nearby farm now drawing water from a well, and this matter is in hand.

Results of analyses are given :-

15.5.45.	Tap at Broadway.	Considerable faecal pollution.
4.5.45.	Tap at Broadway.	" "
4.6.45.	Cannimore Farm.	Appreciable " "

Reports indicate the water is not fit for drinking under normal circumstances.

#### 10. Sewerage and Sewage Disposal.

Disposal was, as in previous years, by screening, land irrigation sludge beds.

The effluent from the works was not of a very satisfactory nature, but this is not surprising when one considers that the irrigation land is often waterlogged and sewage sick.

Frequent changes of the land under irrigation were necessary to prevent almost crude sewage passing through the outfall into the river. One analysis of the outflow was reported as a reasonably satisfactory effluent (2.11.45). The Report of the Consulting Engineers (3.12.43) was the basis for making application to the Ministry of Health for loans to cover the cost of improvement to this Sewage Disposal Works.

Refuse Disposal.

There was no change from the system of tipping as in previous years. Rat nuisances at the Tip were dealt with by the Council's Rodent Officer and good results obtained. Efforts were made to prevent fly breeding by spraying the tipping surface with a larvicide. Such treatment is expensive and of temporary value and I am of the opinion that fly-trapping with open air traps (such as the Bruton trap) might be tried with advantage if the nuisance recurs.

Rats and Rodent Destruction.

A part-time Rodent Officer was appointed during the year, with the approval of the Ministry of Food.

This Officer's duties are shared between Warminster Urban District, Warminster & Westbury Rural District and Westbury Urban District.

Evacuation.

At the end of the year, the following evacuees were still officially billeted in the district.-2.

Civil Defence.

The closing of the various centres and disbanding of personnel involved the Control Centre Staff, Rescue-First Aid Parties, Ambulance and Decontamination Squads and Rest Centres. Appreciation of the fine work undertaken by the Civil Defence Services was expressed by the Ministry of Home Security and though Warminster itself had, fortunately, to call on their services only rarely, yet the sacrifice and work of these members of the community was very highly esteemed and will long be remembered.

Sanitary Inspections.

An analysis of the Sanitary Inspections of the District is appended.

D. F. MORGAN,  
Medical Officer of Health.  
June 1946.

Sanitary Inspections.

Table No. 1 - Complaints received.

Number of complaints received during 1945	-	63
Number of complaints outstanding at end of 1945	-	69
Number of complaints abated during 1945	-	100
Number of complaints outstanding at end of 1945	-	32

Table No. 2 - Routine Inspections, Tests, etc.

<u>Type of Premises or Inspections.</u>	<u>Details of Inspections.</u>	<u>No. of visits or Inspections</u>
Dwelling houses etc.	Inspected and details recorded	74
	Re-inspection after service of notice.	70
	Work in progress	39
	Requisitioned) Re-inspections	157
	premises ) Work in progress	60
	Overcrowding	4
	Tents, vans, sheds.	7
	Miscellaneous	17
	Other premises following complaints.	32
	Re-inspection after service of notice.	61
Factories	Work in progress	85
	With mechanical Power	13
	Without mechanical Power	2
	Other premises	1
Shops	Outworkers	-
	Routine Inspections	13
Offensive trades	Fat melting	15
	Knackers Yard	15
Schools	Routine inspections	1
	Milk premises	
	Cowsheds	125
	Dairies	133
	Samples of T.B. exam.	9
	Samples for Bact. exam.	11
	Ice-cream premises (Manufacture sale)	3
	Samples for Nat. Milk Testing Scheme	104

Table No. 2 (Continued).

Type of premises or inspections.	Details of Inspections.	No. of visits or inspections.	
Food Premises	Meat shops and stores	135	
	Manufactured of preserved food	10	
	Fried Fish Shops.	7	
	Bakehouses	9	
	Market.	25	
	Restaurants.	7	
	Other food shops and stores.	90	
	Infectious Disease	Routine enquiries.	11
		Rooms disinfected.	8
	Premises licensed for Public Entertainment.	Routine inspections.	7
Infested premises	Rodents - Survey treatment		
	Bugs		
	Other pests.	6	
Drainage	New drains and fittings.	52	
	Existing Drains and fittings	49	
	Smoke tests.	2	
	Water tests.	5	
	Colour tests.	7	
	Sewage Farm and works.	4	
	Minor Sewage Disposal plants.	-	
Water Supply	Public Supply	-	
	Private supply	8	
	Bact. samples taken.	-	
General	Public Conveniences	12	
	Conveniences of licences premises	11	
	River pollution	2	
	Miscellaneous	24	
Civil Defence etc.	Routine inspections or visits	51	
	Gas contaminated food scheme	-	
	Inspections in connection with premises damaged by enemy action	2	
	Licences.	72	
Total number of inspections etc.		1667	

Table No. 3 - Notices.

Notices.	Informal.	Statutory.
Outstanding at end of 1944.	31	2
Total served during 1945.	28	7
Total complied during 1945.	40	7
Outstanding at end of 1945.	19	2

Table No. 4 - Defects remedied or other improvements after service of notices.

Housing.	
Total number of dwellings improved ... ..	193
Provided with sufficient sanitary accommodation ... ..	4
Provided with sufficient water supply ... ..	2
Roofs repaired ... ..	13
Eaves gutter and rainwater pipes repaired or renewed .	7
Chimney stack repointed or repaired ... ..	5
External walls repaired ... ..	5
Windows repaired. ... ..	5
Floors. ... ..	3
Walls and ceilings plaster repaired ... ..	102
Handrails repaired.... ..	1
Doors repaired. ... ..	6
Staircases repaired. ... ..	22
Dangerous Buildings rendered safe. ... ..	15
Overcrowding. ... ..	-
Premises disinfected (flies) ... ..	3

Table No. 4 (Continued).

<u>Factories.</u>	
Sanitary conveniences cleansed and repaired	5
New sanitary conveniences provided	--
Ventilation	--
<u>Food Premises.</u>	
Preparation rooms cleaned	3
Preparation rooms - improved light and ventilation	--
Bakehouses cleansed and limewashed or painted	2
New W.C's provided	--
New wash-basins provided	--
<u>Clubs.</u>	
Ventilation	2
<u>Drainage.</u>	
Opened and examined	6
New drains laid	13
New manholes provided	4
Manholes repaired	3
Drains cleared and cleansed	21
Fresh air inlets repaired	2
<u>Sanitary Fittings (internal)</u>	
New w.c's provided (all cases)	14
W.c's and fittings repaired (all cases)	7
New sink and lavatory basins fitted (all cases)	6
Chemical closets provided	--
Waste-pipes etc. repaired	6
<u>Sewage Disposal Scheme.</u>	
New septic tanks, filter beds etc. provided	--
<u>Cowsheds and Dairies.</u>	
Cowsheds improved	2
<u>Miscellaneous.</u>	
Number of accumulations of refuse removed	2
Premises disinfested of rats - By Council	--
By Occupiers	--

Housing Statistics.

<u>Clearance Areas.</u>	
Number of Houses vacated	60
Number of Houses in clearance area	60
Number of houses demolished	26
Number of Houses where demolition has commenced	6
Number of Houses being used for emergency accommodation	22
Number of Houses void where demolition has not been commenced.	6
Number of Clearance Areas where all houses have been demolished	6

Table No. 5

	<u>Number of Retailers.</u>	<u>Number of Whole-salers &amp; Producers.</u>	<u>Number of Registered Premises.</u>
Application for registration	---	---	---
New registrations made	---	---	---
Cancelled registrations	---	---	---
Totals on Register 31/12/45	22	27	29

Table No. 6

Number of Tuberculin Tested milk producers in this district	1
Number of Accredited milk producers in this district	3

Table No. 7 - Foodstuffs Condemned as Unfit for Human Food.

Commodity.	Weight.			lbs
	cwt	qrs		
Fish	1	-		14
Meat		3	"	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Milk	1	"	2	15 $\frac{1}{2}$
Vegetables		1	"	25 $\frac{1}{2}$
Jam				14 $\frac{1}{2}$
Soup				20
Fruit (Dried)	1	"	2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Sugar		1	"	1
Beef		3	"	18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Bacon		1	"	14
Oats	13	"		
Oatmeal	1	"	1	-
Cheese		2	"	6
Butter				2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fruit (Fresh)		3	"	13 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fish (Tinned)		1	"	27
Rice		3	"	16
Chocolate				1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Potatoes	26	"	-	-
Picalillie		1	"	14 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ham				14
Miscellaneous		1	"	4

