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HENDON CIVIC NEWS

"A DECADE OF PROGRESS IN ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH" An article by Alderman A. A. Naar, M.B.E., Chairman of the Public Health Committee

It is interesting to look back during the past ten years and consider the extent to which public health has improved.

The statistics show some interesting changes—the population has dropped from 154,800 in 1954 to an estimate of 150,720 in 1962, but the number of inhabited houses has increased from 43,010 to 44,942, so that there has been a gradual decrease in the average number of persons per house.

The infant mortality rate, showing the death rate of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births, was 20.9 in 1954 and is now 18.7. In the same period there has been a change in the death rate from certain diseases—most noticeably a 50 per cent. increase in the number of deaths from lung cancer. There has been an increase in the deaths from diabetes from six in 1954 to 18 in 1962. Coronary disease and angina, the cause of 245 deaths in 1954, was the cause of 328 deaths in 1962.

During this ten-year period considerable progress has been made with immunisation; whooping cough immunisation was introduced in 1950 and poliomyelitis immunisation was introduced in 1956. The introduction of immunisation against these two serious diseases not only reduced the number of cases of disease but helped to eliminate the fear which parents of small children suffered from the risk of these diseases. Success with immunisation has eliminated much of the need for control by quarantine and isolation, once an important part of the Department's work.

The last great poliomyelitis epidemic was reported in Hendon in 1955, and was the worst since the disease had been made notifiable. Fifty-five cases occurred during that year, of these two were fatal and 30 suffered permanent damage from paralysis. The disease occurred at the end of a long hot summer, and was most serious in the age group five to nine.



Examination of food.

In the ten-year period there has been considerable improvement in housing conditions, which began with the Housing Repairs and Rents Act of 1954, which made provision for the landlord to increase the rent of the house, on condition that the house was in a good state of repair and reasonably suitable for occupation.

In 1955 a food poisoning outbreak occurred in a grammar school in the Borough, which affected over 400 pupils and staff. This outbreak was due to *Clostridium Welchii*, an infection spread through meat in the school canteen which had been subject to cooking and reheating on the following day. With the cessation of the practice of reheating meat in the school canteens there have been no further outbreaks of this kind.

The Food Hygiene Regulations in 1956 and 1960 gave the Department new powers to prevent the contamination of food in shops and canteens, and in 1956 the Clean Air Act also gave new powers for making smoke control areas.

In 1956 the Edgware Group Health Services Liaison Committee was set up, to improve the liaison between medical practitioners working in the three branches of the National Health Service.

During the same year The National Corporation for the Care of Old People made a grant to the Borough of Hendon Old People's Welfare Committee towards the cost of a Chiropody Service for a three-year period. The service was eventually taken over by the Middlesex County Council under new legislation which empowered them to do so.

The Food Hygiene Regulations were accepted with interest and enthusiasm by most of the food traders of the Borough, who co-operated with the Public Health Inspectors in order to achieve improvements in the public interest. The main items which were dealt with were the provision of sinks for washing food and the provision of personal washing facilities for the staff, with hot and cold water supplies in both cases; the protection of food from risk of contamination by the provision of suitable screening or covers etc.; the provision of storage accommodation for workers' outdoor clothing; the provision of first aid equipment and the general improvement of the older type of food premises.

The first smoke measuring station was set up in 1957, and comparisons with the figures obtained today leaves no doubt about the reduction of smoke in the atmosphere.

Continued on page two

Continued from page one

The nature of insect pests has changed over the ten-year period so that bugs, body lice, hair lice, fleas and flies have become less of a menace; in recent years people have complained of ants, cockroaches and wasps. As recently as 1958, however, fourteen premises were treated for bug infestation and five for fleas.

In the long dry summer of 1959 one of the Department's rodent operatives destroyed no fewer than 569 wasps' nests.

In 1960, in association with the Director of the Central Public Health Laboratory at Colindale, research was carried out into the possible sources of origin of food poisoning organisms, when it was found that organic garden fertilisers such as bone meal and dried blood and pet foods (dog and cat meat prepared and fresh) sometimes contained organisms which could cause food poisoning therefore particular attention should be paid to hand washing after using these substances.

The New Year 1965 finds the Public Health Department about to seek improvement in working conditions, through the application of the Offices, Shops and Railways Premises Act.

Bonfires

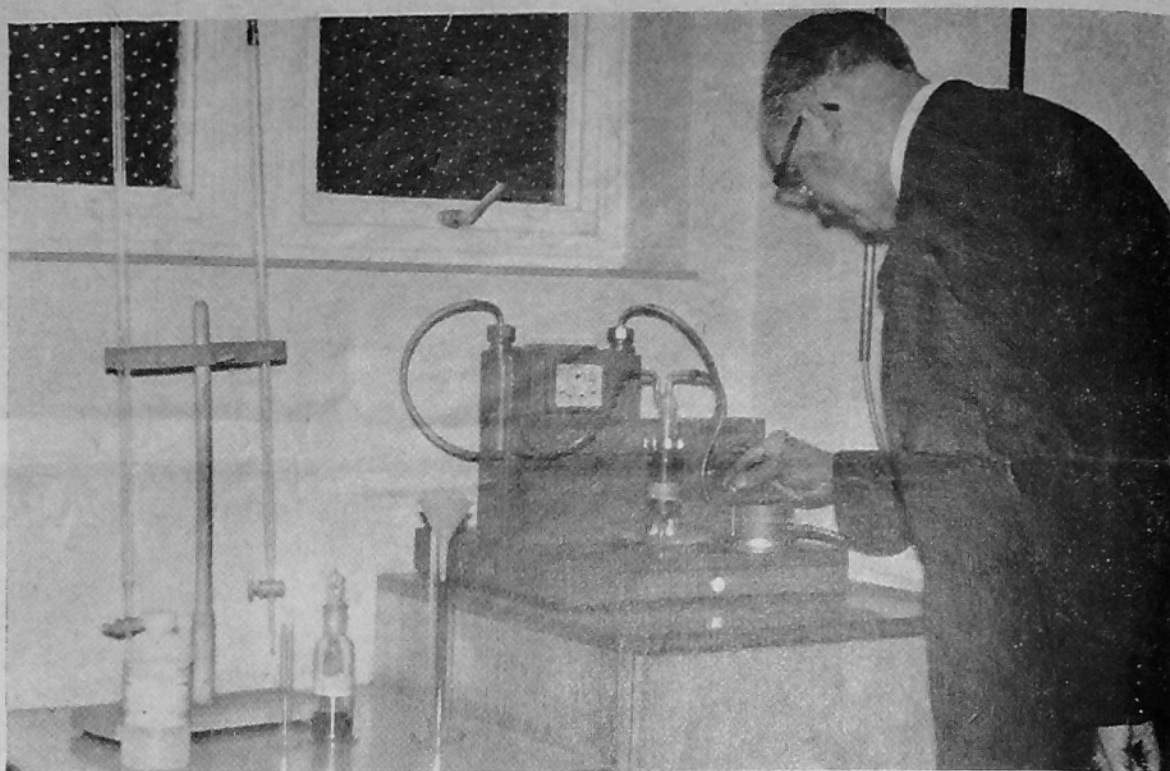
Numerous enquiries are received from householders regarding the burning of garden rubbish in Smoke Control Areas.

The position is that smoke from bonfires, if a nuisance to the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, is, by virtue of Section 16 of the Clean Air Act, 1956, a statutory nuisance liable to be dealt with under the Public Health Act, 1936, irrespective of whether the bonfire is in a Smoke Control area or not. It follows, therefore, that bonfires should never be lighted on calm or foggy days but only when there is a fairly strong wind blowing which will quickly disperse the smoke without blowing it into adjoining properties so as to be a nuisance to the occupants.

Materials should also be dried before burning so that the bonfire burns briskly and is not allowed to smoulder for prolonged periods. It is better to have small bonfires at more frequent intervals which are burned out quickly than large bonfires which might have a tendency to smoulder.

Wherever possible, of course, disposal should be by composting.

Several complaints were received regarding bonfires during the year. In all cases the offenders were interviewed by the Public Health Inspector of the district concerned and in no case was any recurrence noted which warranted reference of the case to the Town Clerk for proceedings.



Apparatus for the measurement of impurities in the air you breathe.

Atmospheric Pollution

Measurement of the smoke and sulphur dioxide content of the atmosphere is undertaken by most local authorities at various sites in their areas in conjunction with the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. Readings of the instruments are taken daily and the report submitted monthly to the Department. Published lists of the readings are then issued.

By this means, not only can a local authority note the progress it is making in its efforts to produce a cleaner atmosphere, but it can also make comparisons with local authorities of all types throughout the country. The relationship between air pollution and the incidence of respiratory and other diseases in an area can also be considered.

The dust and grit which is sometimes emitted from industrial chimneys, whilst it may be a serious nuisance to the occupiers of premises on which it falls, it is of no great significance to public health as the particles are too coarse to reach the human lung. The smoke, however, which is extracted from the atmosphere and measured in the smoke-measuring apparatus consists of very small particles, small enough to remain airborne indefinitely, and capable of passing the natural defence mechanisms of the nose and throat and reaching the lungs. These particles come principally from the smoke of domestic chimneys burning bituminous fuel.

For a period of 24 hours, air containing this smoke is drawn through a filter in the measuring apparatus upon which the particles are collected. The darkness of the stain on the filter pad is then measured in a reflectometer and from this reading is calculated the concentration of smoke in the air.

Sulphur Dioxide, which is derived from the sulphur present in solid fuels and in fuel oils, in an important gaseous pollutant and its measurement is recorded as, combined with smoke particles, it can seriously injure buildings and fabrics. There is, as yet, no known economical method available of removing sulphur from fuel or from flue gasses.

This Council operates three smoke measuring stations at sites approved by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, i.e. at Golders Green, Mill Hill and Edgware Branch Libraries.

PET ANIMALS

Applications are received annually for the renewal of licences to keep pet shops. The "animals" include puppies, kittens, hamsters, guinea-pigs, rabbits, birds, mice, fish and reptiles.

The premises are inspected for adequacy of means of ventilation, natural and artificial lighting, water supply, state of repair and cleanliness, arrangements for storage of food, hay and straw, disposal of excreta, adequacy of fire fighting equipment, and availability of some person with key to premises to be called in case of emergency when premises close, and exhibition of a suitable notice on door or window giving name and address of such person.

The majority of premises are found to be satisfactory, whilst at others, matters relating to the resiting of a fire extinguisher, display of notice of person holding key, cleansing, provision of hot water supply and general repairs, require attention.

THE ALDERMEN OF THE COUNCIL



Alderman C. H. Sheill, K.S.G.

Alderman Sheill has lived in Hendon since 1931, and has been Headmaster of St. Agnes' School, Cricklewood since 1945.

Elected as a Member of the Council of the Borough of Hendon for the Central Ward in 1946, he became an Alderman in 1949. He is present and a former Chairman of the General Purposes, twice Chairman of the Libraries and Museum, and former Chairman of Works and Estates Committees and several sub-committees of the Education Committee, serving also on the Establishment, Allotments, Public Health, Buildings and Town Planning, Housing, Civil Defence and Finance Committees, also on the Council and Joint Staff Committee.

Alderman Sheill was largely involved in the starting of the Burnt Oak and Edgware Branch Libraries, the Record Library, and a Members' Library; also the Flatted Factory and the Garage at Hendon Way Depot. He saw the laying down of the Copthall Running Track, the initiating of the forthcoming swimming pool, and was active in the Borough Show. Representing the Council on the Management Committee of St. Mary's R.C. School, he has been Whip and Secretary of the Conservative group on the Council since 1954.

Elected also an Alderman of the London Borough of Barnet Council, Alderman Sheill is Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, serving on the Establishment, Education, Libraries and Museum, Public Health, Allotments, Estates and Works Committees. He served on the joint negotiating committees for Borough No. 30 throughout the interim period, and is Whip and Secretary of Barnet Conservative group.

In 1952, he became Secretary of the Catholic Teachers Federation of England and Wales, has been Treasurer of the World Union of Catholic Teachers since 1954, and serves on the Executive Committee of the Catholic Education Council and the Council and Committee of Management of the Institute of Education of London University.

Alderman Sheill was made a Knight of the Order of St. Gregory the Great by His Holiness Pope Paul VI in 1964, and has a son who lives in Edgware and teaches at the Cardinal Manning School, Kensington.

SCAVENGING OF PRIVATE PASSAGES AND ACCOMMODATION ROADS

Last year it was necessary for 316 visits to be paid by the Public Health Inspectors to private passages running at the rear of houses, and to accommodation roads in connection with complaints as to their unscavenged condition.

Very few of these passages and roads have been taken over by the Council, paved and made highways maintainable at public expense. The scavenging of the great majority therefore remains the responsibility, under the Public Health Act, 1936, of the occupiers of the premises to which the passages, etc., afford access.

In certain instances the efforts of the Public Health Inspectors, to secure scavenging by verbal and written intimations, were unsuccessful and it became necessary for the Council to carry out the work in default and to proceed to recover the cost from the occupiers of the premises concerned.

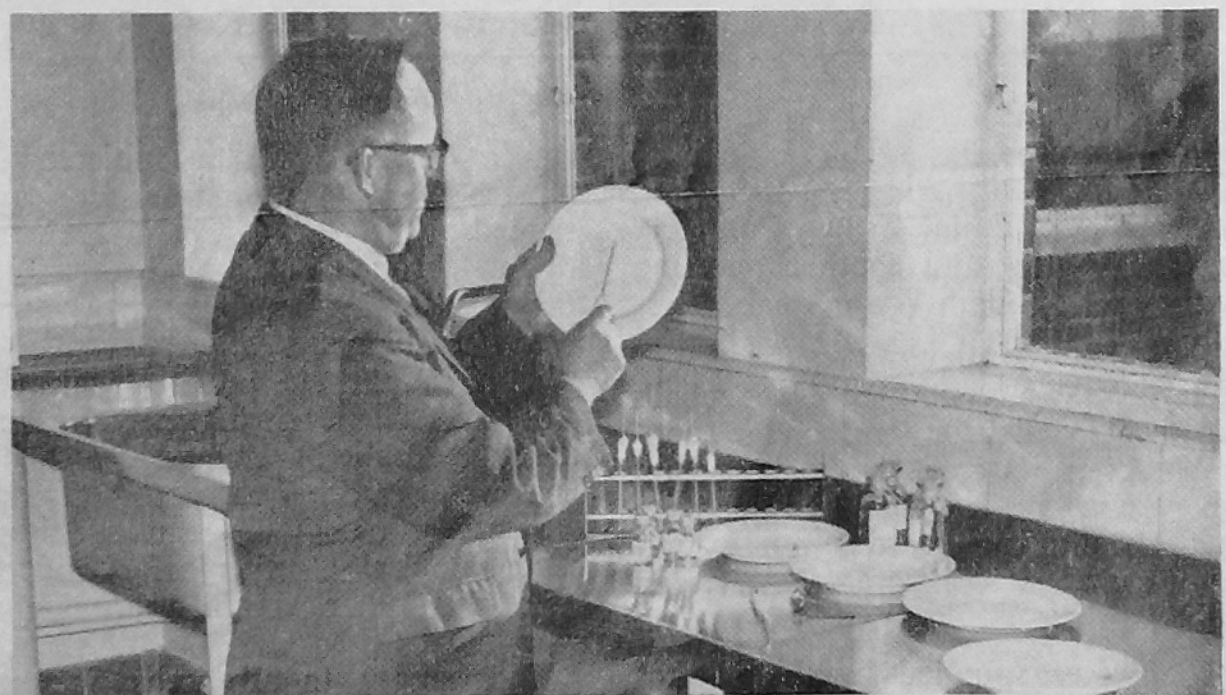
Difficulties arise in attempting to deal with obstructions which occur in the usually three feet wide passages between the rear gardens of houses which are used by the refuse collectors for the removal of refuse from the houses. Neglected fences are sometimes allowed to lean or collapse over the passages, or trees to overhang, so obstructing the refuse collectors in their work, sometimes to an extent that the use of the passage has to be discontinued and refuse collection made from the front of the houses, through which the full bins have to be carried by the householders. Much is done informally by the Public Health Inspectors to deal with the owners of the fences and trees.

SMOKE CONTROL AREAS

Work is proceeding steadily throughout the Borough of Hendon in connection with the formation of smoke control areas under the Clean Air Act, 1956.

The Council is empowered to pay seven-tenths of the approved cost of any necessary works of adaptation to enable fireplaces to burn fuel without smoke, and continues its policy of making one hundred per cent grants where applied for, of the approved cost of adaptation of fireplaces in the premises of Charitable and Religious organisations and to persons in receipt of retirement pensions or living on small fixed incomes, subject to the applications being approved by the Council.

The mobile exhibition unit of the Solid Smokeless Fuels Federation visits the new smoke control areas, and is sited at various positions in these areas over a period of a week, to demonstrate various types of solid smokeless fuel burning appliances in use. Technical specialists are in attendance to give advice on any problem relating to the use of these fuels.



Swabbing crockery in a school canteen to maintain hygienic conditions.

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES FOR THE PARK WARD



Councillor Keith Brown

Councillor Brown is in his early thirties and has been a resident of Hendon since 1957.

Educated at Lincoln Grammar School, he is a legal executive with the Head Office of an Insurance Company in the City of London and has been a member of the Liberal Party for a number of years.

Elected to represent Park Ward on the Hendon Borough Council in 1962, Councillor Brown has served on the Buildings and Town Planning, Finance, Establishment, Estates and Allotments Committees.

OVERSPILL BEER

The fate of overspill beer was investigated during the routine inspection of licensed premises, and in one instance it was found that overspill beer was collected for resale. This was stopped, and it can now be claimed that there is no risk of being served with overspill beer in Hendon.



Councillor (Mrs.) N. I. Cullinane

Councillor (Mrs.) Cullinane has been a resident of Hendon for 34 years, is married with one son, and is Co-Principal of a School in Park Ward.

Elected a Member of Hendon Borough Council in May, 1960, she serves on the following Committees and Sub-Committees: Libraries and Museum (Chairman 1963/64/65), Education (Chairman of Further Education Committee of the Education Committee 1963/64/65), Public Health, General Purposes, Civil Defence and Housing.

Also serving on the Governing Body of Hendon County, St. David's and Whitefield Schools. Councillor (Mrs.) Cullinane is a Member of the Youth, Old People's Welfare, Savings Group and Road Safety Committees and of Hendon and District Chamber of Commerce Executive Committee.

An active member of the Park Ward Conservative Association, she is Chairman of the Women's Committee.



**The Worshipful the Mayor of Hendon
Councillor J. W. Shock, J.P., M.A.,
F.C.A.**

Councillor Shock, aged 44 years, who moved to Hendon when he was married in 1946, was first elected in 1955 as a Member of the Council of the Borough of Hendon.

Educated at University College School, also Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, he was commissioned in the Royal Corps of Signals from 1939 to 1946, serving in the Far East, Persia and Iraq.

Councillor Shock has two sons, aged almost 17 and 14, is a Chartered Accountant by profession, and is supported by his wife, Mrs. Joan Shock, as Mayoress, during his period of office as Mayor, the last Mayor of Hendon.

He has served on most Committees of the Council of the Borough of Hendon, former Chairman of the Civil Defence, Finance and Highway Committees, and was elected in May, 1964, a Member for Park Ward on the Council of the London Borough of Barnet.

WATER SUPPLY

The Borough has a dual source of supply. The northern part is supplied by the Colne Valley Water Company and the central and southern portion by the Metropolitan Water Board.

The Colne Valley water is derived from deep wells sunk into the chalk and before distribution to the consumers the water is under constant supervision of a chemical and bacteriological staff which carries out examinations in modern laboratories situated at the works.

The water supplied by the Metropolitan Water Board is selected Thames

water which has been subjected to purification by storage in which time it is freed of the bulk of organisms. It is filtered through rapid and then slow filters, attaining a degree of purity which compares favourably with the general supplies in Great Britain, but as a further safeguard terminal chlorination is applied which ensures a first class water in every respect.

Samples of water are examined bacteriologically, chemically and for taste and other special purposes on every day.

The supply to all areas is satisfactory in quality and quantity.

Number of dwelling houses supplied from public water mains:—

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| (a) Direct to houses | 45,381 |
| (b) by means of standpipes | Nil |

Number of population supplied from public water mains:—

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| (a) Direct to houses | 150,200 |
| (b) by means of standpipes | Nil |

Natural fluoride content of water supplies:—

Colne Valley Water Company:
Fluoride content—less than 0.1 parts per million.

Metropolitan Water Board: Fluoride content—0.25 parts per million.