

Please Sir. Can I have some more? Poor Law Essex Workhouses
By Michael Holland Family History Federation
2.30pm Saturday 7th February at Trinity Methodist Church,
Chelmsford CM1 2XB. Visitors and prospective members warmly
welcomed – £5. Booking not required.

The talk's primary focus is on the workings of the New Poor Law in Essex from circa 1836, when the Poor Law Amendment Act commenced operations. The talk starts with an overview of poor relief from the beginning of the 17th century and moves through key elements up until the New Poor Law was enacted in 1834. This preamble provides context for the main body of the talk which then concentrates on the workings of the New Poor Law, Union workhouses, and overall administration of poor relief. The primary source for the talk is from the Guardian Minutes for various Unions across Essex. The talk concludes at the point at which the Poor Law was replaced by Assistance Boards in the late 1920s. A 'further reading list' will be made available for the benefit of anyone wishing to learn more about the Poor law.



Michael Holland is a local historian with an interest in various aspects of Essex local history. He has an honours degree in modern history from the Open University; A Master of Arts in local and regional history from the University of Brighton and then went on to undertake advanced historical research at the University of Essex. His main area of research is Rural Protest in the 18th and 19th centuries and the impact that the poor laws and other social pressures had on protest.

He was academic adviser to the Captain Swing research project run by the Family and Community Historical Research Society. This sought to establish the true extent of the Swing Riots of the early 1830s. He was also academic adviser to the Asiatic Cholera project, under the auspices of the Thackray Foundation which examined riots and unrest associated with the cholera pandemics of 1832 and 1849. Both projects led to the publication of books on the subject. He is currently working on an independent research project designed to investigate agricultural unrest from the start of the 18th century through to the latter part of the 19th century with links to acquisitive crime for the same period.

He has been involved in adult education since 1992 teaching for the University of Essex School of Continuing Education: Workers Educational Association, Southend Adult Community College, and the College-on-the-Net. At the latter he taught an on-line course on local and regional history research techniques