



## Source 4

## Task

**4a** In what ways are the complaints the same as those made in:

- i) the letter from Thomas Tatham
- ii) the first report
- iii) the dietary?

**4b** Look back at the first four sources, and write an account of what happened in the Huddersfield workhouse from 1847-8.



## Source 4

This is part of a second report made by the Overseers of the Workhouse in June 1848.

**SUPPLEMENT  
TO THE LEEDS MERCURY.**

**JUNE 10, 1848.**

**THE HUDDERSFIELD WORKHOUSE INQUIRY.**

**OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION.**

The following extract from the Overseers' report, will show the principal charges upon which the inquiry was instituted :—

With regard to the present condition of the sick poor at the workhouse, the Overseers have to report, that in the new hospital they have been but little better attended to than they were in the temporary fever hospital, as before detailed. They are now almost without clothing and bedding; beds for them have to be made up on the floor; their beds are but bags of straw, which when laid on bed stocks, do not keep the cords from cutting their bodies; on these bags of straw both male and female patients have to lie through all the rackings of fever and other painful diseases, from week end to week end, their persons sore and whaled with the hardness of their lying. That their covering is but old rags may be judged from the fact, that for twenty-three beds in that hospital, on the 27th of last April, there were but seven blankets, thirty sheets, twenty-one pillow-cases, and fifteen rugs. From the opening of that hospital to the present time, there have been none but pauper nurses to attend on the sick; at the present time there is but a male pauper to attend on both male and female patients; but still the practice obtains of placing two fever patients in one bed; that from the want of needful changes, the bed clothing, among which fever patients have died, is obliged to be used for other patients, without being washed.



## VICTORIAN BRITAIN

### A Caring Nation?

Of the general treatment of the poor in the workhouse, the Overseers have to report that the house is, and has been for a considerable period, crowded out with inmates; that there are forty children occupying one room eight yards by five; that these children sleep four, five, six, seven, and even ten, in one bed; that thirty females live in another room of similar size; and that fifty adult males have to cram into a room seven and a half yards long by six yards wide; that the diet of the establishment has been and still is, insufficient; that four shillings worth of shin of beef, or leg of mutton, with forty-two pounds of potatoes, have been made to serve for "soup" for 150 inmates; that the quantity, in gallons, required of this wash, for the household, is 27; that three gills of this "soup," with one fourth of an oaten cake, forms one of the dinners of the establishment; that ten gallons of old milk per day have been made to serve for two meals for an average number of 130 individuals, for a quarter of a year together,—being little more than one gill per head per day; that the old women are allowed  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a lb. of sugar and  $\frac{1}{2}$  an oz. of tea each, for a week's consumption; that the clothing of the establishment is miserably deficient; that there is no clothing in stock; that a great proportion of the inmates are obliged to wear their own clothes; that others have little better than rags to cover them; that instances have been known where the nakedness of even females has not been covered; that there are at present but 65 blankets fit for use in the establishment, to fit up 79 beds; that there are but 108 sheets for these 79 beds, being 50 short of a pair each; that there is in consequence *no change of bed linen whatever*; that when cleansed the beds have to be stripped, and the linen hurried through the wash-tub, dried, and on to the beds again for the same night; and that there are throughout the entire establishment the most unmistakable signs of bad arrangement, shortsightedness, real extravagance, waste of the rate-payers' money, and want of comfort, cleanliness, health, and satisfaction amongst the poor.

(PRO ref:MH 12/15070)