

Chichester Observer 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1914 page

**NATIONAL RELIEF FUND.**

THE FORMATION OF LOCAL COMMITTEES.

LETTERS FROM THE DUKE OF RICHMOND AND CLERK TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL.

We have received the following correspondence for publication on the subject of the Prince of Wales' National Relief Fund:—

SIR,—Enclosed I send you a copy of the appeal being made by the Chairman of the West Sussex County Council for the collecting of funds for H.R.H. the Prince of Wales' National Relief Fund throughout the county of West Sussex. This has been sent to all the boroughs, Urban District Councils, and parishes throughout the county.

I also send you a copy of a circular sent by me to the Town Clerks and Clerks of Urban and Rural District Councils throughout the county as to the steps taken by the county War Distress Committee to relieve any distress that may arise throughout the county.

Copies of both of the above circulars have been sent to all magistrates and members of the County Council for their information.

I shall be much obliged if you will kindly insert the above as items of news in your paper. It is hoped that the newspapers throughout the county will assist in this National matter and insert the above free of charge.—Yours sincerely,  
 S. THORNELY,  
 Clerk of the County Council.

To the Editor,  
 Chichester "Observer."  
 Enclosures.

SIR,—I wish to call your attention to the following resolutions passed at a meeting of the inhabitants of the county of Sussex, convened by his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, E.M., K.G., and held on the 19th inst., at The Dome, Brighton:—

"That this meeting pledges itself to do its utmost to encourage throughout the county of Sussex subscriptions to the National Relief Fund, such subscriptions to be collected through the Mayors of Boroughs and Chairmen of Local Government bodies."

"That the formation of separate funds (not branches of the National Relief Fund) be strongly deprecated as tending to lead to great inequalities in relief, and overlapping."

and to express a hope that you will use your utmost endeavours to comply with the request of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales to collect money to mitigate the distress arising from the war. All sums collected in this county will form part of a general contribution from the county of West Sussex, and the county will thus receive credit for all efforts made therein. I shall be glad if you will organize a collection to be made in your borough, Urban District, or parish, and will send all collections to Mr. W. T. Haines, County Treasurer, Chichester, who will acknowledge their receipt and forward them to the proper quarter.

A few cards on which contributions may be entered as received are sent herewith, and if required, further copies may be obtained from Mr. S. Thornely, Clerk of the County Council, East Street, Horsham, who will also, if desired, supply small collecting cards. Please acknowledge the receipt of this letter to Mr. Thornely.—Yours faithfully,  
 RICHMOND AND GORDON,  
 Chairman of the County Council.

SIR.—I am directed to inform you that steps are being taken by the County Council in accordance with a resolution passed at a meeting of the inhabitants of the county, called by the Lord Lieutenant of the county, his Grace the Duke of Norfolk, E.M., K.G., at the Dome, Brighton, on the 19th inst., to raise contributions for the above Fund from the county of West Sussex, to be collected in every borough, Urban District, and parish in the county, such sums when collected to be paid to the County Treasurer, Mr. W. T. Haines, Chichester, with a note of the places where collected, the idea being to obtain as much credit as possible for the local areas in the county of West Sussex for any sums collected.

2. At the county meeting at Brighton, on the 19th inst., resolutions were passed (as quoted in letter above).

3. On previous occasions the funds raised locally for the relief of distress have caused considerable overlapping, it is therefore being laid down by the Government that all relief funds should, in the first instance, be merged in the National Relief Fund, and that contributions for local relief will be sent from this Fund. The Local Government Board have prepared model cards upon which will be recorded the particulars of all applications for relief, and they will show the way the relief is to be given. These cards have been adopted in this county and are issued herewith to the Town Clerks and Clerks of Urban and Rural District Councils; and these bodies are asked to form, in their respective areas, Local Relief Committees, and they are asked to organize a system in their districts by which all cases of relief may be ascertained, the facts recorded on the cards and sent in to me. The cases will then be considered by the County Committee week by week and dealt with as occasion may arise, or earlier if necessary, all moneys being paid through the Clerks of these bodies by means of cheques to be paid out of the county fund available for relief of distress, which will be issued to the Treasurers of boroughs and urban and rural districts. Sums to enable the Local Committee to deal with urgent cases of distress will be placed in the hands of the Treasurer of each authority, but it is hoped that these cases will be very few, and that resort will not be made to these amounts unless there is absolute urgent necessity, and in all such cases a relief card is to be filled in and sent to me with an intimation of what sums have been paid, and with full reasons for the course adopted.

4. I am to ask that your Town Council, Urban District Council, or Rural District Council will take steps to call a special meeting with a view to forming a Local Committee.

5. The following suggestions are made as to who should be elected on this Committee, but you will understand they are simply suggestions, and your Council will take such steps as they may think proper in the matter. (In the first instance it may be desirable to keep the Local Committees as small as possible):—

6. In boroughs: The Mayor, members of the Corporation and all justices of the peace residing in the borough, the Guardians, the Overseers of the parishes, local representatives of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association and Soldiers' Help Society, any resident retired officers of the Navy, Army or Territorial Force, and any resident county Councillors; the Town Clerk to act as Hon. Secretary and the Borough Treasurer as Treasurer. All correspondence to pass through the Town Clerk.

7. In urban districts: The Chairman and members of the urban district council, all Guardians and Overseers, local representatives of Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, all justices of the peace, all ex-officers of the Navy, Army, or Territorial Force and County Councillors residing therein.

8. In rural districts: Members of the rural district council, Guardians and Overseers of parishes, local representatives of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Families' Association, all ex-officers of the Navy, Army, or Territorial Force residing in the rural district, justices of the peace and members of the county council residing therein.

9. All Committees to have power to co-opt such other persons as they may desire, particularly having regard to any local organizations for the relief of distress.

10. It may be considered desirable that representatives of the local working classes should also be appointed on the above Committees. If there is any distress, owing to local workmen being unemployed, it is requested that you will kindly at once intimate to the County Committee in what way this can be counteracted. With a view of finding work, the Road Board have asked the Roads and Bridges Committee of this County Council to prepare schemes for road improvement throughout the country and the Development Commissioners have sent a communication with a view to further assist the same object by reclaiming waste land, etc.

11. It will be observed that, although collections are intended to be made in parishes in rural districts, for the purpose of relief of distress, the parish is dealt with as a unit under the District Council. It seems, however, important that in every parish there should be a Sub-Committee of the District Council consisting of the Chairman and members of the Parish Council and any other persons whom it is thought desirable to elect thereon, having regard to the above list. A supply of distress cards is sent to you herewith for use in your respective areas. For general cases white cards for men and blue cards for women are to be used and for Navy and Army cases red cards. Please take steps to at once ascertain what, if any, cases of distress there are and fill up the cards and send them in to me with any suggestions you may have to offer. It seems important to consider if relief is given whether it cannot be given in suitable cases as payment for some work to be done.

12. The County Committee will meet every Thursday at Horsham and Chichester alternately, at 11.15 at Horsham and 12 noon at Chichester, the first meeting to be held at the Town Hall, Horsham, on Thursday, the 27th inst., at 11.15 a.m., and any suggestions you may have to offer will be most gratefully received.—Yours faithfully,

S. THORNELLY,  
Clerk of the County Council.