

## Twentieth Century

**Population** dropped during the century after 1851 from around 450 to 280 in the mid 20C (KC).

**Loddon Rural District Council** (set up in 1894 based on the area of the old Poor Law and rural sanitary districts) looked after our affairs until 1974 when it was abolished and replaced by the large South Norfolk District as a subdivision of Norfolk County Council a merger of Diss Urban District, Wymondham Urban District, Depwade Rural District, Forehoe and Henstead Rural District and Loddon Rural District.

One of the legacies of Loddon RDC were the terraces of rural housing designed by architects, Taylor & Green.

**Two world wars** - We lost many young men and women, and many returned damaged. The workforce replaced by landgirls. Rationing and other wartime restrictions. Building of defences, such as those to protect the fuel dump on the railway.

**Sharp rise in motor transport** and mechanical farm equipment. Gradual decline and failure of river transport and the railways. Car and home ownership. Some tourism. Mains sewage and electricity providing much improved health and hygiene. Creation of a free National Health Service.

Hales Hospital

**Agriculture** - Mechanisation, fewer farm labourers, destruction of hedges, bigger fields. Introduction of new crops: sugarbeet and rape.

Fewer dairy herds, more beef cattle. Fewer sheep. Less oats, more barley.

Rabbits became a plague, so myxomatosis was introduced in 1950 to kill them. It still does.

The fur farm escapes caused ecological problems in the countryside; coypu, mink and foreign introductions, signal Crayfish, in the Waveney. Fowl Pest, Swine Fever and Foot and Mouth disease spread from Europe and fowls; pigs and cattle slaughtered (and were often not replaced, changing our landscape).

**Education** - Compulsory from age 5, with hints of provision until age 18. School leaving age:

13 from 1899, then Grammar schools for those who could pay;

14 in 1918;

15 in 1944, two types of secondary school, Grammar (at Bungay or at Beccles) or Secondary Modern (at Loddon);

16 in 1971, Comprehensive system at Loddon.

We had a private school for overseas students at the old rectory (renamed Woodhill) in the 1980s. Grants helped clever, poor children into university.

**Entertainment:** Televisions kept people at home in the evenings. Cars took them out further than ever before, and tourist places grew.

The number of Public Houses diminished.

**Religion** - Parishes were amalgamated as congregations diminished.

