The lockdown measures introduced by Johnson have already been employed by governments internationally as a serious measure to combat coronavirus. But from day one this government has failed to act quickly enough to deal with the crisis.

As the editor-in-chief of the medical journal the Lancet said: “These dangers were clear from the very beginning. We have wasted seven weeks”. A government of big business, it has put profits before the health and welfare of working-class people. And with every measure announced there has been no detail on how it will be implemented.

Cuts and austerity have meant frontline health and social care workers risking their own health because of lack of masks and other personal protective equipment. A shortage of NHS test kits is putting lives in danger, while the rich can pay for testing (see p5).

44% of general and acute beds have been cut since 1987. With only 3,700 adult critical care beds and 8,000 ventilators in the NHS, medical staff could soon be faced with making terrible decisions about who should live or die, as is already happening in Italy.

Urgent action is needed. There must be an immediate massive injection of money and resources into the NHS and social care, to expand the supply of beds, equipment and staff. All private medical facilities must be seized and integrated into the NHS - and not a penny paid to the private profiteers.

Johnson and Sunak have eventually responded to growing public anger and agreed to pay 80% of wages (up to £2,500) for workers who are laid off because of the coronavirus. This will be welcomed by millions of workers who are desperately worried, not just about the virus, but how they are going to survive from day to day.

But this ‘wartime’ response by the government is far from the Blitz myth of ‘we’re all in it together’. On the contrary, it means workers taking a 20% hit on their wages while the bosses don’t have to pay anything!

And once again, it’s too little too late. Tens of thousands of mainly low-paid workers have already lost their jobs. They must all be reinstated immediately.

For workers already struggling to pay the bills, 80% of wages will not be enough to live on. Sunak has said there is “no limit” on what the government will spend. Then pay us 100% now!

And that money has to go to all workers. Millions of self-employed and workers in the gig economy will still only get statutory sick pay - a measly £94.25 a week, one of the lowest rates in Europe - or paltry state benefits.

We say full pay for all at work or not - with the money going directly to workers, not as a subsidy to the bosses. > Continued on p3
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State intervention shows what is possible

As workers fight for survival, the Government is acting to prevent the distribution of food, medical equipment and protective clothing from reaching those who need it. For that reason, the Socialist is trying out a food and medical equipment distribution directly to trade unions, consumers and community groups who will be able to decide what, when and how it is distributed to their members.

Coronavirus: Capitalist fallings exposed

It's good that the government has answered some limited illegal protest against summary evictions, but it is acting too slowly to prevent further evictions. Ban 'their' eviction law and the government will remove facial recognition on all homes in the UK.
Coronavirus and domestic violence: a double threat to women’s safety

When are you going to test bronchial lining? This has been the question across the board: "And is it any wonder? We feel we have personal protective equipment (PPE), but it’s being rationed."

Testing large numbers is critical to bringing outbreaks under control. All patients’ contacts and health care workers, need to know if they have tested positive, and are so labelled defensively - be they at home, or at work - they are passing the virus on. Says the Guardian: “The government’s tally of people who have tested positive is a mere 18,000. Some are even dead, but have not been included in the growing number of those who are being treated in intensive care. Small business companies, employing 500,000, are already pioneering, testing, more accurate tests. One sees too many patients and does not need the lab equipment, compared to two weeks ago when you could pay for a private test, though. So some are not evil, but have been treated and are not included in the "tally" of those who have. A source prevalently tells us, "They are abandoning to the "social distancing" and no one knows if they have Covid-19 or not. The private Harley Street Clinic was testing 160,000 a week. Now, they are carrying out 160,000 a week. The private firm In-Q-Tel, said it was a "dis 그러면?". "They are abandoning their "social distancing" for days - possibly needlessly."

We get the full gear - full sleeves, a thin surgical mask. A member of the coronary unit, says: “We have personal protective equipment (PPE), but it’s being rationed."

In reality, these are basic demands for the NHS and incorporated into the NHS. We need tests for all now!

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**Going viral**

The Covid-19 pandemic is a world social crisis which touches every aspect of life. The inequities and failings of the capitalist system are being exposed, and workers and communities are organising in response.

Send us your comments, reports, anecdotes and thoughts, in not more than 200 words, to editors@socialistparty.org.uk

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**Boris doesn’t speak for us**

When Boris makes his announcements, who has he spoken to apart from Domini Cummins? He announced food hampers for 1.5 million who have to stay at home for 12 weeks. Did he speak to local councils to see if they could prepare, produce and deliver them or was it Harrods? He said schools had to stay open for children of ‘critical workers’, but lost the list for a couple of days! Did he speak to anyone who ran a school or just to his old head at Eton? He announced all they have to stay inside - fair enough. But did he let the people delivering services to ‘critical workers’ know in advance he wasn’t talking about them? He can’t get tests ready, he can’t get PPE to health staff or critical workers, he can’t get ventilators to hospitals that need them for critically ill patients. This bumbling champion of the ‘private sector’ now has to rely on a tattered state to battle this epidemic. He’s paying billions to shore up private-sector provision - private hospitals, private rail companies, etc. and now he wants emergency powers.

**We won’t pay for this crisis**

Whether pay or no pay, house arrest, self-isolating or just working from home, Covid-19 has a lot to answer for. Yet it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Budgens supermarket has attracted media attention by hiking the price of a toilet roll by 60%. All the supermarkets are expanding their workforce in Boris’s trough has killing (no pun intended). Will their underpaid employees benefit from the largesse of the millionaires who own the supermarkets? This is not likely.

The government’s response to the Covid-19 virus has been to hand out money to the rich with the promise that some of it will trickle down to the working class. In the past, such schemes have always seen the money remain attached to the sticky fingers of the millionaires. They didn’t get where they are today by being generous to their employees. McDonald’s, before they were forced to close, was trying to get its employees to work without basic protection like hand sanitizer. You can bet the bosses were worried about their visitors. And the coronavirus surge is yet to come. The health service has been starved of funding for the last 12 years. Quick fixes now are not going to solve the problem.

For example, if intensive care wards generally are like Homerton Hospital, east London, then they rely heavily on agency nurses. Good as they are (and they are good), the nature of agency work pressures them to continue working. At the moment they are stretched to the limit. Before the Corona outbreak changed the situation, it appeared that certain people who already leech off the NHS were looking at the agency use as a prelude to further privatisation. This virus has dealt these ideas a blow. Alongside this, the government’s new policies on immigration post-Brexit are going to mean a drying-up of the trained nurses they were sucking in from other countries. This will leave a gaping hole. There is a big lack and time lag in the UK-trained nurses.

This is not a good situation when dealing with a virus like this. We need to demand an immediate, nationalisation of the pharmaceutical industry, and a health service free at the point of use for everyone.

The covers of capitalism have been thrown back by the coronavirus, giving people a glimpse of the idea that the current system can’t deliver. Only a mass workers’ party with system change at its core can satisfy those needs. Time for such a party to come forward to end this current system.

Mick Cotter
Hackney

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**Shafted by the suits**

There are over 4.7 million good people like me. Zero-hours, locum, agency, gig economy workers. People, who care, clean and provide valued services. People who want to call in sick as they didn’t get sick pay. Workers who were up to their necks in caring, but ‘social distancing’ impossible.

We are the people who have not been consulted. We are the people who now work. We are the people who have had to keep our heads down’ anyway, but I really don’t know what’s happened to my job.

When I was working, most of my colleagues were stressed out because of the uncertainty, and the lack of response from the government and from the unions. Some of them didn’t want to call in sick as they didn’t get paid and they couldn’t afford to lose money. People were so confused as to why we were still being asked to work.

Personally, it was frustrating to go to work. I expected the store to close temporarily, but I really don’t know what’s happened to my job.

J Roger Bannister
Lambeth, south London

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**We demand an end to privatisation, nationalise the banks, insurance companies and the National Health Service.**

Socialism would requisition private hospitals, private rail companies, private rail companies, etc. and now he wants emergency powers.

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**Essential - not low-skilled**

“Funny how all of these ‘low-skilled’ jobs (cleaners, delivery drivers, retail assistants) that so many look down upon are now on the frontline helping society to get us back to work. Those aren’t low-skilled, they’re essential and they should be paid as such.”

Seen on a London bus drivers’ WhatsApp group

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**Overcrowded buses**

Weekday buses in Leeds have moved to a Saturday service. Prior to the pandemic, Leeds buses were already at capacity and had issues with overcrowding.

I live on a route that’s heavily used by NHS workers (running past two hospitals) and several large supermarkets. As expected, there was a lot of overcrowding with the new bus timetable, making ‘social distancing’ impossible. Many key workers have said they had to rely on walking, cycling or taxis as a safer alternative. Many of these workers will already be working extra hours in this crisis. We need a planned transport industry that keeps these crucial bus routes running, even if it is not profitable to do so.

Tanis Belham-Wray
Leeds

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**Socialism for the rich**

A number of people are commenting that the coronavirus crisis is forcing Johnson into taking ‘socialist measures’. While this reaction is understandable, it is not correct.

The crisis is forcing Johnson to abandon elements of neoliberal capitalism, in favour of state intervention in the capitalist economy to overcome the problem that free market forces alone are wholly inadequate for solving the problems created by the crisis.

Johnson is still appealing for private industry to make ventilators; he initially called for pubs and restaurants to close, rather than enforcing such measures by law, in order to protect the insurance companies from the claims that would result from compulsory measures.

The funding made available today for wages to pay laid-off or self-isolating workers, while welcome, is none the less a taxpayers’ subsidy to the insurance companies.

Socialism would requisition private hospital beds, and bring the private hospitals into the NHS, not pay £300 per night per bed. Socialism would nationalise the banks, insurance companies and major industries, abolish the profit motive and plan production to meet human need, not private profit.

Socialism would not leave democracy at the factory gate/office door, or limit it to a five-yearly ballot, but extend to all areas of society, allowing ordinary people to use their talents, training, education and experience to control the politicians, the economy, industry and public administration for the general good.

This current crisis won’t be resolved by Johnson’s Tories. It will be resolved by ordinary working people, from all walks of working life, getting together and fighting the right things.

Roger Bannister
Liverpool

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**Laid-off in ten seconds**

I’ve been temporarily laid off until the virus is over. I was working as a sales assistant in a retail opticians. But no one wants to walk dogs. They don’t care about the virus is over. I was working as a sales assistant in a retail opticians. But no one wants to walk dogs. They don’t care about the virus is over. I was working as a sales assistant in a retail opticians. But no one wants to walk dogs. They don’t care about the

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**Social-distancing - who’s to blame?**

The media tried to demonstrate ordinary people going out on a sunny day. These ‘selfish’ people are supposedly to blame for the coronavirus crisis. The Tory NHS cuts, the shambolic lack of testing, the dysfunctional market are all let off the hook.

The media is silent about the greed of the PFI firms, the private medical firms, the profiteers and the Richard Bransons. The aim of Johnson’s campaign is to absolve the government of austerity and the capitalist system of mass carnage, and instead put the blame on to ordinary working people.

J Ammon Baron-Cohen

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Retail and the coronavirus outbreak organise to defend workers interests

Iain Dalton and Ryan Aldred
Socialist Party members in Usdaw shop workers’ union

Coronavirus is sending tremors through capitalist society. Many workers who have been enduring increasing casualised working conditions, such as zero or short-hour contracts, have had further cuts to sick pay and other contractual changes.

But workers in the food manufacturing, distribution and retail sectors, which Usdaw organises, are now like an ‘emergency service’. Given the bulk of Usdaw’s membership is concentrated in four large supermarket chains (Tescos, Sainsbury’s, Morrisons and Co-op) then this throws up huge questions for members and reps to deal with in ensuring our members health and safety to work.

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We welcome that Usdaw’s call for food supply chain, pharmacy and funeral workers to be classed as ‘key workers’ has been recognised, with schools helping to provide childcare for those workers. And we support the demands that National Education Union members are putting forward to ensure this is done as safely as possible.

The government should immediately introduce price controls on staple goods and supplies as well as rationing of items to ensure fair distribution. These measures, in addition to changes to opening hours to facilitate restocking, should be agreed in discussion with union representatives. Any proposals to move staff from their regular duties and shifts should be done under the control of the union to ensure those workers are capable of carrying out those new duties.

There are widespread reports of recruitment drives by retail companies, particularly to assist with expanding online deliveries. Retail union reps should have the opportunity to attend induction meetings and bring these workers into the union. We believe those jobs should be full-time ones, unless workers choose to work part-time.

The government has talked about wanting to work with trade unions to tackle this crisis. If the government is serious about this then it should bring in immediate measures such as compulsory collective bargaining throughout the retail sector to ensure full measures to protect workers and their interests. Usdaw should call on the government to increase the minimum wage immediately to at least the £10 an hour it currently demands, although it should be aiming higher.

Profits

Despite the talk of ‘working together’ in the joint statement by the major supermarket chains, for their managements its profits that ultimately come first.

Rather than simply going along with company directives, retail unions should be putting demands forward in workplaces where they has a presence. Where companies are claiming to struggle, unions should demand that they open their books to trade union scrutiny to ensure that they are not simply guarding profits.

Supermarket share prices are rising compared to most other retail companies who are struggling due to store closures and reduced customs. This indicates that the markets think they’re making a killing.

On 17 March, for example, shares in Sainsbury’s were up by 6.6%, Morrisons was up by 5% and Tesco was up by 1%.

The chaos and competition of the market has also been exposed, and competition laws have had to be relaxed to ensure companies can share supply chains and delivery vans. This shows the vital need for coordination and socialist planning of our food supply chain, rather than the chaos that the capitalist free market has created.

Ultimately the only way to guarantee that companies are run on the basis of social need rather than private profit is by bringing them into public ownership under democratic workers’ control and management.

Retail and distribution workers have a fundamental role in securing the safety and sustenance of the wider population. Usdaw must step up if it is to earn the authority among workers to call itself the campaigning union and other retail union’s must follow suit.

Health and safety

It is clear many retail workers will have to remain at work through this crisis to help ensure supplies of staple goods and supplies as well as rationing of items to ensure fair distribution. These measures, in addition to changes to opening hours to facilitate restocking, should be agreed in discussion with union representatives.

And, get this, Morrison’s has given workers seven days fully-paid leave for self-isolating but “given the government now says 14 days isolation that should be extended immediately”. “We had a shipment of hand sanitiser, and it was good that Sainsbury’s has been putting some of this aside for staff, ensuring that all checkout operators and the kiosk have access to it. However, there are no procedures in place for washing down door and trolley handles.

“The store has a sign-up sheet for people willing to do shopping for others who have to isolate - obviously that’s a help to those people, but I can’t help feeling that Sainsbury’s are doing it to protect their profits by making sure people shop here.”

A Morrisons café worker told us about the turmoil in their store: “We only started displaying coronavirus guidelines in the cafe about social distancing, which no one pays any attention to. The soap in the cafe that staff use is making my skin crack from washing and I have no idea if it even shifts. We haven’t been supplied any hand sanitiser because customers get priority, and the moment it’s put out it’s gone.

“We’ve had basically no staff in. I’ve had to shut the cafe down with only two people, one of whom had to take their shifts. We’ve had no one to cover my breaks because no one else can take over for a few. And, get this, Morrison’s has graciously set up a trolley for people to purchase and donate items to people in the hospital next door instead of just donating the stock for free!”

A food factory worker and Usdaw member says: “There have been changes in procedure - with staggered breaks, fewer tables in the canteen and further apart; tables sanitised after every use, extra hygiene with staff spraying ever 15 minutes, extra sanitiser on entering the building and by the clocking in machine.

“Some lines have been delisted, concentrating on products that are, or can be, frozen. People currently undergoing cancer treatment or with underlying conditions have been told to self-isolate. We seem to be taking more precautions for the staff than any of the stores.”

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Boris Johnson has said that non-urgent operations into the care of “community health providers”. According to Johnson, they will be released to as far away as 30 miles. “A small amount of cash, 2. An offer even have three points. It involves: 1. Matt Hancock has written to MPs on reforming funding, which crit-

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The lack of finding is not the Left. The government claims, and bad working conditions are, unioni-

1.5 million people work in adult so-
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care providers. There are also almost 150,000 jobs where care is directly employed by service users. However, virtually a third of care workers leave the social care profession each year. There are currently £12 billion vacan-
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One in eight care home has closed in the past decade, and the figure continues to rise. Over 1,000 no long-

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As support workers we understand the company has instructed us to not work, nor keeping the care time (which two-thirds of care workers don’t receive) and sleep-in

Good, committed and trained staff burn out fastest and move to better paid pastures - like their local supermarket.

There is no additional incentive for staff at this time - a case of work for pay. The social care sector is crying out for better funding, including under Johnson’s newLocal Authority

As support workers we understand that it is our duty to continue sup-

I work in a home with vulnerable children, many of whom fall into the category of being under a high risk of crime. As care work-

Underpaid, Overstretched, Leaving. Austerity has hit social care harder than most sectors. Spending on adult social care, particularly outside of lo-

But the major effect on social care workers is in stimulus. The people they care for are not just patients, they are human beings who have choice and control. And, therefore, they are put at the highest risk for just doing their job. This needs special consideration and extra demands.

All the disparity between council and non-
council care workers is being highlighted by the coronavirus pandemic. In the organised sec-

Councils to ensure private pro-

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Northampton care worker

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Organising in the workplace in the time of coronavirus

Bosss not workers for JCB shutdown

A JCB worker

This year is the 15th anniversary of the founding of the USW. The union was founded with the support of JCB in 2005, and the USW has since grown to represent thousands of JCB workers across the UK.

Support the working-class press in 2020

Taxation of small businesses

Robert Cuffe

Robert Cuffe

The USW has been at the forefront of the struggle against the JCB shutdown, which has affected around 500 workers at the company's plants in Stourbridge and Rugby.

Royal Mail dispute latest

Communications Workers Union members have been posting Royal Mail workers' wages, pay, pensions, workplace bullying and harassment, and work demands on social media.

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Coronavirus: What role could community support groups play?

Several councils and trade unions are calling for the creation of community support groups to help those affected by lost income.

The unions nationally should support groups to organise collectively and demand councils and the government forgive council tax and other charges for those affected by lost income. Local groups can demand all this as part of their NHS employer struggle.

Many neighbours are talking about the need to organise collectively and demand councils and the government forgive council tax and other charges for those affected by lost income. Local groups can demand all this as part of their NHS employer struggle.

Workers on their dinner break desperately tried to access supermarkets, but were turned away for lack of toilet roll. "You can’t tell me it’s sold out today, they didn’t release stock three hours ago I was told on Facebook".

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Many neighbours are talking about the need to organise collectively and demand councils and the government forgive council tax and other charges for those affected by lost income. Local groups can demand all this as part of their NHS employer struggle.

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The unions nationally should support groups to organise collectively and demand councils and the government forgive council tax and other charges for those affected by lost income. Local groups can demand all this as part of their NHS employer struggle.
Working-class warriors who took on Thatcher's hated poll tax - and won!

By the time the bailiffs turned up there was around 20 of us waiting for them. This embodied the woman. She answered the door holding a baseball bat, with all of us standing behind her by side. The bailiffs looked petrified!

To make everyone got along we set up coaches from the local housing estate. These buses never always travelled with stickers but they were always a gets a carries a emergency. Catches were organised in the court or pass. To this day no police is still in place of the court to handle with hundreds of us. They were completely overloaded. We become covering with the last. Some of us become McKean's friends is a lay person giving support to the court, one way we told the next person up as a McKean's friend would be allowed on the spot (the court was acting illegally then). I was the next up.

As the police moved forward to arrest me I was surrounded by others thus local APTF. They arrested me to arrest us all, but didn't come enough. The first wave would be "Getting on with it", and the second wave was the first full day in the police of the day and it was a victory for Thatcher. We stormed the court and was impressed. A Leeds-based stewards was beating the attack on the police. What could we do?

Military operation
Again it was Militant members who came up with a strategy. We put together a list of all the known leaders and a local Labour leader. A group of Militant members and during the South Rockies and the Defence Labour list and the Portland APTF list was agreed. The court was packed to the rafters. People who were getting arrested and were struggling to pay the poll tax. They were gaining the court showed us that the court had been wrong.

Maggie Out! Out! Out! When Thatcher opened a new Bangladesh and had to be managed by distributing the streets of central London. Thirty thousand had travelled hundreds of roles to join what was seen as a "test run". We had to make sure to enter the public - which was a public. We were from the South Rockies and the Defence Labour list and the Portland APTF list was agreed. The court was packed to the rafters.

As support grew for the campaign the police were driven by the streets to central London. The police were in the streets, police were driving the streets of central London. Thirty thousand had travelled hundreds of roles to join what was seen as a "test run". We had to make sure to enter the public - which was a public. We were from the South Rockies and the Defence Labour list and the Portland APTF list was agreed. The court was packed to the rafters.

There is now a large as recreation in the streets around Kennington Park. The march was led by Stan and Barbara. They were the leaders of the march. They were leading the attack against us. As support grew for the campaign the police were driven by the streets to central London. Thirty thousand had travelled hundreds of roles to join what was seen as a "test run". We had to make sure to enter the public - which was a public. We were from the South Rockies and the Defence Labour list and the Portland APTF list was agreed. The court was packed to the rafters.

It was a festival atmosphere that had made its point. Another feature, which would lead to more being jailed, was the Women's Alliance. If they gained enough support from the police to arrest us they would then find a new way of doing it. Phase two was when the police turned up.

Personally, I was impressed. A Leeds-based stewards was beating the attack on the police. What could we do?

To make everyone get along we set up coaches from the local housing estate. These buses never always travelled with stickers but they were always a gets a carries a emergency. Catches were organised in the court or pass. To this day no police is still in place of the court to handle with hundreds of us. They were completely overloaded. We become covering with the last. Some of us become McKean's friends is a lay person giving support to the court, one way we told the next person up as a McKean's friend would be allowed on the spot (the court was acting illegally then). I was the next up.
Full pay for all - at work or not
Take over private health and other necessary facilities. Not a penny to the profiteers
Socialist planning not capitalist chaos

National Health Service
- Emergency increase in funding for the NHS and social care
- Adequate protection for all frontline workers
- NJH to take over private healthcare facilities and staff, and any other private facilities necessary for care, quarantine, and supplies. No compensation to the private fat cats
- Emergency training of NHS staff to deal with the coronavirus crisis
- Resources to be mobilised from government and big business sources so that anyone with flu or cold-like symptoms has the right to a free coronavirus test with results available within hours, as has been the case in South Korea and some other countries.
- Requisition private testing and analysis facilities
- Increase production to meet the urgent need for more protective and medical equipment, including ventilators and virus testing. Convert production where necessary, under the democratic control of workers in those industries and in the wider workforce
- Reverse privatisation in the NHS, remove the privateers and cancel the estimated £50 billion annual PFI payments
- Nationalise the big pharmaceutical companies to guarantee research, production and supply of medicines, vaccines and treatments
- Suspend fees for overseas NHS patients - treat all patients for free without the charges
- Scrap prescription fees
- Take over private health and other necessary facilities
- Public services and housing
- Emergency funding to take on more workers in essential services. Resources to protect workers, patients, and service users
- Councils to coordinate a local response. Scrap existing cuts budgets. Councils to use reserves and borrowing powers to fund necessary jobs and services
- 24-hour, adequately staffed, local authority helpline for vulnerable and elderly people forced to self-isolate.
- Community and trade union control over local distribution of food, medicines and other supplies
- Workload demands must be reduced and time made available to prioritise protecting the health, safety and welfare of staff and service users. Workers asked to work from home must be supplied with adequate equipment, and performance monitoring should be scrapped
- Quality childcare for vulnerable families and children of essential workers must be organised under the democratic control of education and care workers, with adequate protection for all. Emergency local authority provision of meals to children normally in receipt of free school meals, under community and trade union control
- Nobody should lose their home because of coronavirus. Mortgage and rent payments should be suspended. Government funds for democratically controlled local authority hardship funds for landlords in genuine need
- Councils to take over empty homes to house the homeless and those in inadequate housing. Hotels to be used to provide emergency accommodation
- Funding for 24-hour helplines and emergency accommodation for victims of domestic violence
- No action to be taken for non-payment of utilities and broadband fees
- Increase benefits to the level of the national minimum wage. No delay in the payment of benefits
- Increase the minimum wage immediately to at least £12 an hour, £15 in London
- Workers who follow health advice to be absent from work to avoid potential spread should be excluded from any attendance-management procedures
- Open the books of any company threatening redundancies or closure to the inspection by the workforce and trade unions
- To defend workers’ jobs and incomes, industries should be nationalised under democratic workers’ control and management with compensation only on the basis of proven need
- Government funding for local authorities to help small businesses - hardship funds to be democratically controlled by a committee involving workers and community groups

Pay and benefits
- Work or full pay. Workers, especially those on low pay, can’t afford to lose 20% of their income. Any worker who has to self-isolate or cannot go to work should receive full pay from day one and not be forced to take annual leave. Pay should be paid directly to the worker not via the employer
- Self-employed, agency, zero-hour-contract and gig economy workers to be granted emergency benefits, at full pay, for the equivalent of at least a full working week of 37.5 hours, or more if they usually work longer
- Workers in receipt of in-work benefits such as Universal Credit, should be paid their full benefits and receive no sanction
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Trade unions and workers’ action
- Trade unions to establish an all-union health and safety committee in every workplace to agree joint actions required to guarantee safety
- For the Trade Union Congress and the unions, the biggest voluntary national organisation with over six million members across the country, to prepare to lead national coordinated strike action to protect people should necessary health and safety measures not be taken
- Democratic trade union oversight of any government or private sector emergency measures taken to contain the virus, such as restrictions on public assemblies or strikes and supermarket supply rationing
- No profiteering. Prices to be controlled by democratically elected committees of workers and consumers
- No erosion of workers’ right to organise, including the democratic functioning of trade unions and parties
- No trust in the Tories and other pro-capitalist politicians who are responsible for the crisis in the NHS and other public services to deal with the coronavirus crisis. For a mass workers’ party, drawing together workers, young people, socialists and activists from workplaces and community, environmental, anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting political alternative to the pro-big business parties
- The resources are there to deal with the crisis. Introduce an immediate 50% levy on the hoarded £750 billion lying idle in the bank accounts of big business
- The capitalist market system that prioritises profit and is based on competition cannot keep society safe. We need a democratic socialist plan of production and distribution to meet the needs of the majority in society
- Take into public ownership the banks, financial institutions and the top 150 companies that dominate the British economy and run them under the democratic control and management of working class people so that we can make the decisions about what is needed. Compensation to be paid only on the basis of proven need
- For international socialist cooperation