The number of coronavirus deaths in the UK is now well over 2,000. At least one person is dying every three minutes.

The situation will “get worse before it gets better,” says Boris Johnson. Thousands more people will die as the pandemic reaches its peak.

But let’s be clear - the enormity of the death toll will not be the fault of the individual actions of ordinary working people. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if the government had acted earlier; and if we hadn’t had to endure ten years of brutal austerity in the NHS, social care and other vital services.

Four years ago, a three-day exercise carried out by epidemiologists from Imperial College London - Exercise Cygnus - warned that the NHS would be overwhelmed by a future major flu pandemic; staff would be short of personal protective equipment (PPE), there wouldn’t be enough ventilators, and bodies would be overflowing in mortuaries. A nightmare scenario that is now being played out because the government refused to act. The report was never published.

The same Tory government also rejected expert medical advice to expand eye protection for healthcare professionals to cope with a pandemic - because it would “substantially increase” the costs of stockpiling (see also p4).

This and previous Tory governments have always put wealth before health. Hypocritical government ministers join in applauding the very NHS workers who have been denied adequate PPE because of their profit before safety policies.

A survey of medics by the Society of Acute Medicine found only 42% had the right, or enough, PPE. Desperate staff have been forced to buy their own equipment on eBay! Now frontline staff have already started to die from Covid-19. Others are terrified that lack of preparation means that they could be next.

To reduce the spread of coronavirus, isolation and social distancing measures must go alongside mass testing and contact tracing - and this still isn’t happening. Care homes are being asked to take in elderly people sent home from hospital to free up beds in the NHS. But these patients haven’t been tested for coronavirus, putting the lives of other residents at risk, and the safety of staff who don’t have adequate PPE.

Two weeks after the government promised to “ramp up” testing to 10,000 a day, only half that figure was being reached. Germany is testing 500,000 a week. Health officials say it could be weeks before antibody testing is available for NHS staff so that they can know whether it is safe for them to go to work.

25% of doctors are already self-isolating but most have no idea if they have Covid-19 or not. The priority is clearly health and social care staff, but everyone needs to have access to testing. How can it be possible to have an accurate picture of the spread of infection and know whether lockdown is working if testing is not taking place on a mass scale?

There are 44 labs in the UK which could have been taken over for diagnosing tests but that hasn’t happened. The government should have acted much sooner in buying test kits, expanding staff and lab capacity and requisitioning private health facilities. All of that now needs to be massively stepped up, and testing must be free for everyone.

Johnson has issued a “call to action” to manufacturing industry to design and build ventilators for the NHS. But that could take months and even years. A company in Cheshire claims its offer to secure 25,000 ventilators was completely ignored.

In this, and in other areas such as food distribution (see p8-9), the coronavirus crisis is exposing the anarchy of the capitalist market economy and the need for it to be replaced by public ownership and democratic working-class control and planning.

The rapid creation of a potential 4,000 bed hospital in London, and the invention of breathing apparatus which could limit the number of patients needing ventilators, give just a small glimpse of what could happen on a mass scale if the resources of society were not in the hands of a rich minority and could be rationally planned in a democratic way to meet need not profit...
Special coronavirus crisis financial appeal

HELP US CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR WORKERS AND SOCIALISM

The coronavirus crisis has led to the upheaval of every aspect of society. After it, nothing will remain the same.

It has laid bare the class character of society in numerous ways. It is has made clear to many that it is the working class - including NHS, transport, retail, and refuse workers - who are essential to keeping society running, not the CEOs of major corporations.

The results of austerity have been graphically demonstrated as public services strain to try and cope with the crisis. The number of hospital beds, for example, has more than halved over recent decades.

And as the economy plunges downwards, by a predicted unprecedented 15% in one quarter, it is primarily the working class that is paying the price, with almost half a million being forced to claim unemployment benefits, for example, has more than halved over recent decades.

In the period after corona there will be opportunities to win mass support for a fundamental socialist transformation of society.

Socialist programme

The Socialist has consistently put forward the need for such a transformation: arguing for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy under democratic workers’ control and management in order to begin to develop a rational socialist plan of production - as the only means to harness all the science and technique created by capitalism to meet the needs of all and protect the planet.

Throughout our history, first as the Militant newspaper and since as the Socialist, our paper - and our website running, not the CEOs of major corporations.

And, of course, you can read about the battles within the trade union movement to demand that the union leaders nationally take the same fighting approach.

The class battles on the agenda in the coming years, however, are set to dwarf all that we’ve experienced before, and will provide greater opportunities to put the case for socialism.

We therefore urgently appeal to all of our readers to donate to our special coronavirus appeal in order to make sure we come out of the lockdown ready for the stormy events ahead. Inevitably, the lock-down is preventing many of our normal means of selling the Socialist and raising funds.

Please give all you can to help compensate for those difficulties and to enable us to continue producing the Socialist throughout the lockdown.

This is vital not only for what is going to come after the lockdown, but also for the battles taking place during it. Tory ministers may be breaking the habits of a lifetime and praising workers, but - despite their claims to the contrary - they are not acting in the ‘national’ interest. There is not one single national interest but different class interests. Ultimately the Tories are acting for the capitalist class.

It is vital that the working class has an independent voice to defend its own class interests, just as much in times of crisis as at other times. Unfortunately, the majority of the leaders of the trade union and labour movement have made concessions to the pressure of the capitalist class to unite behind the government.

In contrast, on the ground a number of unions have reported increased membership, as workers look for a means to defend themselves during the crisis. They can find that in the Socialist by reading our ‘fighting coronavirus workers’ charter’, which sums up a programme to effectively combat the virus and protect workers’ living conditions.

As the crisis continues, the Socialist will continue to unite behind the government.

The Socialist has a vital role to play - please donate to help us do so.

Hannah Sell
Socialist Party general secretary

The corona crisis is not only a health crisis; it has triggered a profound crisis of the capitalist system. It has also demonstrated the central role of the working class in running society.

Armed with a socialist programme they are also the force capable of ending this sick capitalist system and building a new democratic socialist society that puts the health and needs of humanity before the profits of a few.

The Socialist has a vital role to play - please donate to help us do so.

Coronavirus appeal

Please indicate the donation is for this special finance appeal.

Visit socialistparty.org.uk/donate or call 020 8988 8777 or make cheques payable to Socialist Party.

Please indicate the donation is for this special finance appeal.

PD Box 1398, Enfield EN1 9G7

RMT transport union pickets reading the Socialist reports on their driver-only operation dispute with the private rail operators photo Elaine Brunskill
NHS workers speak out: the propaganda isn’t true, austerity has left us unprepared

We’ve known for weeks and still there’s not enough kit

We have had many weeks to get ready to deal with coronavirus. It’s a shame that only in the last couple of weeks things are actually happening.

I work in an East Midlands NHS hospital. From porter right up to consultant, we are concerned. There were a few days when almost all admitted patients were tested for Covid-19. Now there is just the odd couple that gets checked.

So we get people who are coughing all over everything and everyone in a four-bed bay. Some go home; suddenly, a few days on, some other patients from that bay are poorly with symptoms and get moved to side rooms.

I dread to think how many patients have been infected on the ward, and how many we have sent to their homes to infect other residents, family, the people who look after them. We only get a flimsy mask and apron to look after ‘awaiting results’ patients.

I think that we have been robbed of our lives. We have been called heroes in the media. It’s a lie. We are ordinary workers. We’re working hard. We’re being called heroes in the media.

Lucy, NHS worker

Austerity ambulance service filling gaps with non-clinical staff

We must remember, at the end of all this, that we are being subjected to cuts that we arrived at this point. Retired paramedics are being called back. Final-year paramedic students are being encouraged to finish their course early. They are supposed to have finished their placements first, but the universities don’t really care about that - they just are saying ‘go, go, go!’

At the ambulance trust I am doing my placement with, we have 3,500 workers, including people on the phones - but currently 1,000 of us are having to self-isolate. We are at the highest pressure point on the pressure scale, to the point that they are putting non-clinical people alongside clinical staff just to get more hands out there.

They say they can’t afford to give personal protective equipment (PPE) to students who are going to work. And now staff are not being allowed to wear PPE. They can only wear them for cardiac arrests, nothing else. And nothing is being said by the leadership of our union, Unison.

A paramedic student

Pandemic response is causing hidden damage

Over years of budget cuts in the NHS we have learnt to be hugely adaptable as we struggle to maintain services to our patients. From a hospital providing every specialism, we are now a Covid-19 treatment centre.

Other patients have been shipped out, and areas have gone from ‘duty to clean’ and back again at a moment’s notice. The hospital itself is on lockdown - no one gets in without their badge.

Unlike many other hospitals who are struggling for PPE, we have demanded and got masks for all patient-facing areas - although it’s been left to clinical staff to make sure maintenance and cleaners get theirs.

Of course, we are hugely worried about ventilators and intensive care provision. But what about other services, like cancer care? Breast screening is being shut down in many areas.

Much of our trauma services are being picked up by the private sector. This provision should be taken over and controlled by the National Health Service to prevent the usual profit-driven chaos we already get from Care UK and the like.

The damage this will do is entirely hidden. And we will have a hell of a fight to restore these services when this is all over!

An NHS health professional

Applause is touching - but bosses only call us heroes when it suits

As much as seeing the support for the NHS, and by extension myself and my colleagues, is quite touching and overwhelming - we’re not heroes, we’re ordinary workers. We’re no different to the builders, the engineers, the retail workers.

We’re being called heroes in the media now. Yet we weren’t heroes when the junior doctors were forced into strike action in 2016, or when management threatens to close emergency departments or whole hospitals, or when low pay forces nurses to foodbanks in order to feed their families.

We’re heroes when it suits the bosses and their media. But will we be heroes in five years when we’re asking for a wage rise? Or heroes when we ask for safe staffing levels?

We’re not heroes - we want simple things. A wage we can afford to live on, enough staff to deliver safe care, and an NHS we can be proud of. After this crisis, remember that, and fight for the NHS.

Matt Whale, NHS nurse

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Socialist Party fights for socialism - a democratic society run for the needs of all and not the profits of a few. We also oppose every cut, fighting in our day-to-day campaigning for every possible improvement for working-class people. The organised working class has the potential power to stop the cuts and transform society.

As capitalism dominates the globe, the struggle for genuine socialism must be international. The Socialist Party is part of the Committee for a Workers’ International (CWI) which organises across the world.

Our demands include...

PUBLIC SERVICES

No to ALL cuts in jobs, public services and benefits. Defend our pay.

No to privatisation and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). Renationalise all privatised utilities and services, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.

Fully fund all services and run them under accountable, democratic committees that include representatives of service workers and users.

Free, publicly run, good quality education, available to all. Abolish university tuition fees now and introduce a living grant. No to academies and ‘free schools’!

A socialist NHS for everyone’s health needs - free at the point of use and under democratic control. Kick out private contracts!

Keep council housing publicly owned. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

WORK AND INCOME

Trade union struggle for an immediate increase in the minimum wage to £12 an hour without exemptions as a step towards a real living wage of at least £15. For an annual increase in the minimum wage linked to average earnings. Scrap zero-hour contracts.

All workers, including part-timers, temps, casual and migrant workers to have trade union rates of pay, employment protection, and sickness and holiday rights from day one of employment.

An immediate 50% increase in the state retirement pension, as a step towards a living pension.

Scrap Universal Credit. For the right to decent benefits, education, training, or a job, without compulsion.

DONATE
socialistparty.org.uk/donate
to help fund the fightback

SUBSCRIBE
socialistparty.org.uk/subscribe
weekly newspaper: the Socialist. monthly magazine: Socialism Today

CWI - the podcast on all platforms
facebook.com/CWISocialistParty

Scrap the anti-trade union laws! For fighting trade unions, democratically controlled by their members. Full-time union officers to be regularly elected and receive no more than a worker’s wage. Support the National Shop Stewards Network.

A 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.

Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.

A democratically planned, low-fare, publicly owned transport system, as part of an overall plan against environmental pollution.

RIGHTS

Oppose discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age, and all other forms of prejudice.

Repeal all laws that trample over civil liberties. For the right to protest! End police harassment.

Defend abortion rights. For a woman’s right to choose when and whether to have children.

For the right to asylum. No to racist immigration laws.

For the right to vote at 16.

MASS WORKERS’ PARTY

For a mass workers’ party drawing together workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, real alternative to the pro-big business parties.

Fight for Labour to be transformed into such a party: deselect the Blairites.

SOCIALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM

No to imperialist wars and occupations.

Tax the super-rich! For a socialist programme of publicly owned housing, international (CWI) jobs.

Defend our hospitals. For a massive building programme of publicly owned housing, on an environmentally sustainable basis, to provide good quality homes with low rents.

For the right to vote at 16.

Workers, young people and activists from workplace, community, environmental and anti-racist and anti-cuts campaigns, to provide a fighting, real alternative to the pro-big business parties.

Major research and investment into replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy and into ending the problems of early obsolescence and un-recycled waste.

Public ownership of the energy generating industries. No to nuclear power. No to Trident.

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DEFEND OUR HOSPITALS

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Workers must not pay the price

Schools: union oversight needed to end chaos in provision under coronavirus

A School teacher in Newham, East London, writes:

Like many other teachers and down the country, I have been trying to

continue teaching the children of the school to ensure they are learning.

Non-teaching staff in schools have not been benefited from any of the

resources at their disposal now to save lives treating coronavirus. Why are

at work

teachers being ordered to come in, and if they are working from home,

subjected to indications accountable for their health, safety and in-

surance.

Mixed signals

Contrary to instructions from managers that staff can work from home to

continue delivering the curricula and teaching remotely, amid the ongoing

protection. Generations of our members have had to ensure their safety, and with no

mechanisms for pooling resources across the country.

Teachers and other education

staff are committed to the continuing education, wellbeing and safety of

all staff and resources needed to ensure their safety, and with no

mechanisms for pooling resources across the country.

Shouldn’t teachers be charging in on its up to us. But. It has dire

consequences for a shutdown, and whether workers in essential
domestic abuse households, which put profit above protection of

work in schools shut, could be used to

teaching remotely, amid the ongoing

protection. Generations of our

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Shouldn’t teachers be charging in on its up to us. But. It has dire

consequences for a shutdown, and whether workers in essential

domestic abuse households, which put profit above protection of

work in schools shut, could be used to

supplying NHS and main- tion of stock levels in the network, such as

those near the patient. We have this

extra hours plus in March, to try to

meet the extra demand. Quality has affected our

operations, as it has across the NHS. Cost-cutting has meant lose

money, but this is not the time to

lessen our impact on our premises.

The education unions should eschew

all unnecessary cuts in every
department. Redundancies and expens- ing in store moving stock across the

network. When I started working for

the NHS Supply Chain, I might add, setting down with a stock control of
goods, such as within hospitals, which

are crucial for hand hygiene and for

meals for children and others in need.

So when there’s a major outbreak,

must be made to meet the world’s needs. This is part of why the

NHS Supply Chain must be nationalised,

under democratic workers’ control

by the Department of Health and Social Care. But the divisions,

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Essential workers deserve more!

Workers are receiving some very welcome increases about their wages and the importance of their roles, but we have a long way to go before we do justice to the essential work of food and house distribution workers. Too many of us are still living in fear, never knowing what the next shift will bring. Many are providing care for others who are profoundly sick, as well as providing care for those grieving and seeking their support. To all these workers - they are keeping society fed, keeping it running, and protecting it from harm.

On the other hand, they are being hit with further cuts to the health and safety budget, no increase in pay, and no increase in support for their mental health. Workers who have been asked to work through the pandemic are being asked to work even harder over the next year, with more people becoming ill.

Essential workers are working harder than ever but without additional pay, without proper protection, and without the support they need to cope. It's time to raise their pay and make sure that the increases that have already been promised are delivered. This includes: commuting costs, food bank top-up, 10% pay rise, full access to sick pay, and pay rise in April.

Workers deserve better!
Capitalism means empty shelves, food insecurity, and soaring profits—the case for a socialist alternative

**Food supply and the coronavirus crisis**

*Photo: Daniel Caves CC*

**A new land army?**

**Food poverty - what councils should be doing**

Eating well will be a key means of surviving and staying healthy. The virus has highlighted the importance of a strong local economy and healthy local food systems, but the crisis has also exposed the structural failures of current food systems.

The war on poverty is about to be renewed, but in order for the different parts of our food system to function properly, there needs to be an immediate, comprehensive, national strategy for food security. This strategy needs to be backed by the investment of public money to bring the food system back under public control.

The current crisis has highlighted the fragility of the food system, and the need for local food systems that can provide a reliable, nutritious, and affordable food supply. This includes local food production, processing, and distribution, as well as access to healthy, affordable food for all.

It is clear that the food system is in crisis, and that we need to act now to ensure that food is accessible to all. The government should be taking a lead in this, and should be working with local councils and other organizations to ensure that food is available to all.

But the current crisis has also highlighted the need for a new approach to food policy, and the need for a new kind of land use. The government should be investing in new land uses, such as agroforestry, and in new forms of land ownership, such as community ownership.

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Self-isolation class divide: decent homes for all!

Labour must resist ‘Covid coalition’
Workers need their own voice and party

Emergency legislation
Trade unions must be on guard against attacks on workers’ interests

WHAT WE THINK

The tolerance for a Labour Party that is not challenging those who are concerned about the way they are used to control the way they are used. This is exposing the inability of rotten capitalist parties to control workers’ anger wouldn’t be consistent with a socialist programme. It is that no one should be afraid to speak up even if it means saying something unpopular. The tolerance for a Labour Party that is not challenging those who are concerned about the way they are used to control the way they are used. This is exposing the inability of rotten capitalist parties to control workers’ anger wouldn’t be consistent with a socialist programme. It is that no one should be afraid to speak up even if it means saying something unpopular. The tolerance for a Labour Party that is not challenging those who are concerned about the way they are used to control the way they are used. This is exposing the inability of rotten capitalist parties to control workers’ anger wouldn’t be consistent with a socialist programme. It is that no one should be afraid to speak up even if it means saying something unpopular.

Emergency legislation
Trade unions must be on guard against attacks on workers’ interests
More than ever, we need accountable union leaders

On 26 March, the leadership of the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) union, which represents civil servants and private sector workers employed by government agencies, suspended the union’s annual election. This move was made in order to ‘allow time for the union to concentrate on the emergency that we all face’. The union’s leadership is in good company. The recession, which was exacerbated by the coronavirus crisis, has seen many people lose their jobs. It is important to note that these people are more likely to be members of veterans, and that the elections that they would have been used to have been are not going to take place.

The PCS leadership’s decision is not the only one that has been taken in order to deal with the emergency. Many other organizations have also taken similar steps. For example, the Trades Union Congress (TUC) has called for a general election to be held as soon as possible. This is in order to give the people a chance to express their views on the current situation. The TUC has also called for the government to take action to help those who are struggling. This is in order to ensure that the situation does not get worse.

The PCS leadership has also announced that it will not hold any elections until the end of the year. This is in order to allow time for the union to focus on the emergency. The union’s leadership is also considering whether to suspend the elections indefinitely. This is in order to allow time for the union to concentrate on the emergency.

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The Covid-19 pandemic is a world social crisis which touches every aspect of life. The inequalities and failings of the capitalist system are being exposed, and workers and communities are organizing in response. Send us your comments, reports, anecdotes, and thoughts, in not more than 200 words, to editor@socialistparty.org.uk

**Chronic cuts and coronavirus**

an overwhelms NHS leaves patients in pain and anxiety

A few weeks ago, I was referred by my GP for an ultrasound scan which found a large ovarian cyst which needed to be removed.

It was a shock to find that I had to wait six months for an outpatient appointment and then a further six months for the scan itself.

I then found out that the hospital I had been sent to was a private hospital. If I had been referred to a hospital on the NHS, I would have been offered a scan within days.

When I raised this with my GP, they were extremely understanding and said they would do everything they could to help.

I was referred to another hospital and was offered an appointment within six weeks.

The NHS is facing unprecedented demand on its services due to the coronavirus pandemic. The healthcare system is already struggling to cope with the backlog of non-urgent procedures caused by the lockdown.

It is unfair that some patients have to wait months for essential medical treatments, while others can access them within days.

The government needs to prioritize the health and safety of all patients, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Only then can we ensure a fair and equitable healthcare system for everyone.

**Buried bad news**

Embedded in a planning committee meeting last week was the Secretary of State's decision that the government's neoliberal policies had finally run their course.

The decision was met with shock and disappointment by many attendees, who felt betrayed by the government's failure to address the deep-seated inequalities and social injustices that have persisted for decades.

However, it was quickly clarified that the government's policies would not be dismantled immediately. Instead, a series of measures would be implemented gradually, with a focus on gradual change and long-term solutions.

The decision was met with a mix of emotions, with some seeing it as a step towards progress, while others felt it was too little too late.

**Coronavirus, capitalism, and worldwide socialism**

Committee for Workers' International (CWI) - the socialist international organization - has released a new report on the impact of the pandemic on workers and the worldwide socialist movement.

The report highlights the role of the socialist movement in providing support to workers and their communities, and the need for continued solidarity in the face of global capitalist crisis.

The CWI is committed to building a socialist future, and its members are working tirelessly to organize and mobilize around the principles of a world without exploitation, inequality, and oppression.
Work or full pay. Workers, suspend fees for overseas NHS Nationalise the big “Reverse privatisation in the NHS, increase production to meet Emergency training of NHS staff to control the spread. Scrap free without the need to register patients - treat all patients for treatments guarantee research, production and pharmaceutical companies to PFI payments all the estimated £50 billion annual workforce. the democratic control of workers production where necessary, under ventilators and virus testing. Convert the case in S.Korea and some other countries, availability of hours, as has been the case in S.Korea and some other countries. Requisition private testing and analysis facilities increase production to meet urgent need of 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 all 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 free without the need to register to control the spread. Scrap prescription charges.

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.
- 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.

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. Free broadband for all.

Trade union 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 over 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.

This charter is for discussion and debate in workplaces and communities so that we can organise to defend our health, safety and rights during the crisis. Get in touch if you would like to join a Socialist Party online meeting.