Secretary’s Report: Informal: 05/07/2019

To Central Council Meeting: 06/07/2019

Dear Central Council members,

This is a quick informal report due to our time constraints at the meeting today (6/7/2019).

I have mostly been working on issues and policies to do with Social Care, which is becoming an increasingly worrying issue. I have 70 years expert by experience background and about 30 years of advocacy/carers work, also political input for decades, and attention on this is crucial or nothing will change except for the depth of the problem. This is also impacting on women’s issues/equalities. I am not sure of the figures on the impact on women but have asked our researcher. From the care perspective I have also asked my researcher to look at the costings split – it isn’t easy to find out.

I am also doing a lot of work on intergenerational fairness, both via the Pensioners Parliament and with academic institutions and Parliament. I attended a Parliamentary launch on work done on the welfare system, specifically for our ex-forces, but in fact it isn’t so very different for the disabled and long- term sick, especially with mental health issues. I used to deliver this sort of thing, so the direction of travel is very worrying.

I also attended the Health campaigns together North West Conference at Leeds.

I am working with HCT on two fringe meetings. We are awaiting paperwork, but it looks like Jon Ashworth may be a speaker for us. This gives us the capacity and funding for a third “stand alone” meeting possibly on inequalities. I am starting the research on this tomorrow, as we need to ensure we do not clash with other health meetings/fringes/conference issues. I am keen to get something on intergeneration fairness into a third meeting as it is, from recent experience, being weaponised to split the generations in both health and care issues and beyond.

On a more practical note, I did some training in building our audiences and enhancing our reach in Facebook and twitter. I hope to attend more sessions, and the training was free. I am pleased to say I now know the best methods of advertising our conferences and special meetings in Facebook, should we wish to do so. I am going to apply my notes to Twitter.

In addition, of course I have been talking to and liaising with members and speaking up on our behalf whenever and wherever I can.

I have been responding to communications and supporting branches and regions, and we have two areas, one of which would like to find out how to start a branch, and the other which might wish to consider how to go about it.

Please contact me if you would like any details, or support,

Jean Hardiman Smith (Hon Sec SHA)