

CHAIR'S REPORT

We are in the centre of a toxic storm. As we have emphasised in all our publications, the government's austerity and privatisations have left the UK, particularly England, poorly defended against the crisis. Despite all evidence and experience, they are using the pandemic to push privatisation of key health services and roll back rights and responsibilities with the Corona Virus Bill. Their arrogance and incompetence have left thousands dead.

The SHA has helped the fight against this government of the small state. We have produced insightful weekly bulletins tracking the sad progress of the pandemic globally and in the UK. We have disseminated Open Letters to Keir Starmer and to government, collaborating with KONP. The website has offered a new Covid tab with updates, articles and an interactive map. We have collaborated with WeOwnIt on a letter and petition on outsourcing testing and PPE. We plan to develop a campaign, jointly with KONP, for a National Care Service.

We have reopened dialogue with Unite and Unison and many other unions with whom we have not previously had dealings.

We now have a relationship and links with the whole Shadow Team in the Commons and Lords and Starmer's office. This is most helpful, and we will offer the Shadow Team as much support as we can. We are currently offering them guidance in public health issues that they have requested.

Internally, we have had one change in the Vice Chair Team: Norma has left to contribute directly to the NHS in the frontline. Vivien Walsh has smoothly stepped in and has already been contributing to blogs and decision-making. We have agreed, with CC's amendments, a new Media function which we hope will boost our impact – this to be a disseminated function and we hope branches will contribute and support. In the meantime, Jos Bell has been helping with her media expertise, experience and extensive contacts. We will build and support branches.

Our finances remain difficult. It has been difficult to get up-to-date data as we transition the bank account. We need to increase our membership and gain support from more organisations. We are working on this.

We are moving towards a Limited Company with Tony B's help. There will be many changes and we shall rely on CC's judgement for many decisions. We intend this to be completed this year, at an SGM.

We continue to work against a background of political manslaughter, trying to expose the callousness and carelessness. Thank you to all who have contributed to our progress.