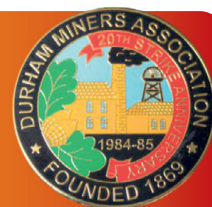


The **Durham Miners' Gala** is not taking place in 2020 due to risks posed by Covid-19 (see page 5), but we can still celebrate the big gathering. Online and off, greetings from your daily socialist paper!



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FIGHT BACK, OR THE TORIES WILL LEAVE THE NORTH TO ROT

Labour's Angela Rayner issues online Gala call to arms

by **Peter Lazenby**
Northern reporter

A CELEBRATION to mark the cancelled Durham Miners' Gala today will lead with a warning – that the threat of a Thatcher-style “managed decline” of northern communities is very real.

Labour Party deputy leader Angela Rayner will call for “workers’ unity” at the live online event, which has been organised by Durham Miners’ Association (DMA).

The virtual event is taking place in lieu of the association’s annual Durham gathering, a spectacular gala which attracts 200,000 people to the northern city.

DMA secretary Alan Mardghum made an appeal yesterday urging people not to descend on the city.

Ms Rayner, who represents the Greater Manchester constituency of Ashton-under-Lyne, will highlight the “human cost” of mass unemployment in northern communities under previous Conservative governments.

“Analysis from the Resolution Foundation this week found that the Chancellor’s stamp duty holiday for properties up to £500,000 will not benefit the average homebuyer in the north-east, while the average buyer in London will save over £14,000,” she will say.

“The north-south divide is continuing to grow, and we cannot afford for coronavirus to increase this gap even more. The Tories talk a good game on this issue but their record of turning their backs on the north speaks for itself.”

Labour says the government should focus on protecting and creating jobs in the aftermath of the virus.

And Ms Rayner will warn against a return to mass unemployment last seen in the 1980s under Margaret Thatcher.

“Our mining communities know about the human cost of mass unemployment.”

“We know how it feels to be abandoned by a Tory government and for entire generations to be consigned to what the Thatcher government called ‘managed decline’.”

Ms Rayner, who was a care worker and trade union official in the north-west before becoming an MP, will say that the coronavirus crisis has “shown the power of workers when we stand together,” calling on workers nationwide to unite in the face of the economic impact of coronavirus.

“This crisis has shown the power of workers when we stand together

united, and shown the importance of trade unions fighting to protect jobs and wages and defend workers’ rights.

“Together we are strong. And in the months ahead we will need our collective strength as we fight to make sure that every worker is safe at work, protect our communities and make sure the most vulnerable in our society don’t bear the burden of the economic impact of coronavirus.”

Highlighting the disproportionate impact of coronavirus on female workers and workers from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds, she will say: “Four in five key workers in health and social care are women. When we talk about the lack of PPE and low pay in the care sector then that is an issue that disproportionately affects women.”

➤ Turn to page 2

**IN YOUR
BUMPER
EDITION:**



**UNITE UNION LEADER
LEN MCCLUSKEY**

Today we honour those who have fought for us at work and beyond

Feature: P18

**DURHAM MINERS’
ALAN MARDGHUM**

We’ll be back to celebrate 150 years since our founding meet

Feature: P17



FBU'S MATT WRACK

Workers were forced to pay for 2008 bankers’ crisis in misery and death of austerity – it must not happen again

Feature: P20

**12 PAGES
OF UNION
ANALYSIS**



PAGE 37 | FOOTBALL: LIVERPOOL OPENS NEW COMMUNITY HUB

■ WAR ON THE POOR

11-week waits for universal credit predate coronavirus

by Ceren Sagir

UNIVERSAL CREDIT (UC) claimants were waiting up to 11 weeks for full payment even before demand rocketed during the coronavirus crisis, a report revealed yesterday.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had "significantly" improved the proportion of claims paid on time, from a woeful 55 per cent in January 2017 to 90 per cent in February 2020, according to the National Audit Office (NAO).

But as the number of people claiming UC has grown, the number of people paid late has also increased – from 113,000

in 2017 to 312,000 in 2019.

Last year, new claimants faced average delays of three weeks on top of the deliberate five-week wait for payment.

About 6 per cent of households, or 105,000 new claims, waited 11 weeks or more.

The report warns the DWP that it needs to better understand and address the needs of people with more complex claims, who may be more likely to struggle to make and maintain a claim.

Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC) member Linda Burnip told the Morning Star that even the "normal" waiting period for the first payment was too long.

"The government justifies

this by saying people can get a repayable loan, but this leaves people in ongoing poverty for many more months. UC is flawed and must be scrapped," Ms Burnip said.

Child Poverty Action Group chief executive Alison Garnham said that people on low incomes were often reluctant to take advance payments during the wait because "it's just more debt to pay off down the line."

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady called for a "strong safety net" for when people fall on hard times, and demanded an end to the five-week wait, which causes "needless stress and hardship."

The Joseph Rowntree Foun-

dation's policy manager, Iain Porter, said there was "nothing compassionate or just" about the five-week wait, and demanded that people are given much-needed support as unemployment levels grow.

Labour's shadow work and pensions secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, said: "Too often, when people need support from the social-security system, UC makes their problems worse, not better." He said Labour would replace UC with a new system that has "dignity and respect at its heart."

A DWP spokesman claimed that UC was "delivering in these unprecedented times."

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■ ENVIRONMENT

Extinction Rebellion targets Bank of England

CLIMATE-change activists protested outside the Bank of England (BoE) yesterday against its most recent carbon-intensive bailouts.

Fake oil was poured on the road outside the bank in the City of London by Extinction Rebellion activists displaying a banner reading: "No dirty bailouts."

Spokeswoman Clarissa Carlyon said: "By failing to attach green conditions to the nearly £18 billion Covid corporate financing facility loans recently handed out, the government and the BoE are condemning the future of the hard-working families they claim to support."

She argued that Chancellor Rishi Sunak's "green jobs" package had already been undermined, not just by the huge loans given to destructive industries but also by the bank's ongoing lending policies, which she called a "criminal contravention" of the Paris accord on climate change and a "death sentence" for the planet.

The loans include £1.6 billion to pesticide companies, £1.8bn to airlines, £1.3bn to oil and gas firms, £1.6bn to the fashion industry and £795 million to the car industry, Ms Carlyon noted.



■ GRENELL

Evacuation of disabled ignored by fire planners

GRENELL TOWER fire engineers gave no thought to evacuating disabled residents because it was not a legal requirement, the inquiry into the tragedy has heard.

At least 22 disabled people lived above the 10th floor of the 24-storey west London block when the fire broke out in June 2017.

One of the 72 people who died was a partially sighted grandmother, Sakineh Afrasiabi, who was housed on the 18th floor.

Her daughter, Nazanin Aghlani, has alleged that the council agreed in 2003 that she should not be housed above the fourth floor.

During proceedings this week, fire engineers suggested that the responsibility for plans to evacuate disabled residents lay with the arms-length Kensington and Chelsea Tenant Management Organisation.

Terry Ashton, senior consultant at materials testing firm Exova, said there are safety provisions for disabled people in commercial buildings, but none at all for residential ones.

He put this forward as the reason for the absence of a plan to evacuate disabled people.

Mr Ashton produced three outline fire-safety strategies for the block's refurbishment between September 2012 and November 2013, despite never visiting the site itself.

COMMEMORATION: The 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre was marked in Bradford yesterday outside the city hall.

There were speeches by community and religious leaders and a survivor of the Bosnian war who came to Barnsley as a child.

Pictured (from left) are ex-refugee Riad Terzic, councillor Saiya Khan and council chief executive Kersten England.



Pic: Neil Terry Photography

■ SOCIAL EXCLUSION

16 rough sleepers perish in three months of lockdown

by Bethany Rielly

SIXTEEN rough sleepers are known to have died with Covid-19 during the first three months of the lockdown, new figures show.

The deaths were registered between March 26 and June 26, the Office for National Statistics reported, though it cautioned that the figure could be higher.

Homelessness charities responded by urging the government to continue keeping people off the street and make it clear to councils that they should provide accommodation to everyone in need.

Of the homeless people identified, the majority were men, six lived in London and three in

the north-west. Shadow housing secretary Thangam Debbonaire argued that the deaths demonstrated "the need to help homeless people off the streets during the pandemic."

She said: "Local councils worked hard to give people emergency accommodation as part of the government's Everybody In policy."

"This was a good start, but the government has left out people who have found themselves on the streets since the start of lockdown."

About 15,000 people have been placed in emergency accommodation during the pandemic.

However, as reported by the Morning Star, hundreds have been left out of the scheme

due to their immigration status, a lack of support for the entrenched homeless and funds running dry before new rough sleepers could be housed.

The Crisis charity's chief executive, Jon Sparkes, said that efforts to move rough sleepers into safe accommodation had "undoubtedly saved lives," adding: "We must now build on this."

He called for "emergency homelessness legislation to guarantee everyone experiencing homelessness has the security of a safe and settled home."

"Without this, people risk being forced back on our streets or into crowded shelters, with the danger posed by the virus still very real."

bethanyrielly@peoples-press.com

■ FRONT PAGE

FIGHTBACK NEEDED OR THE NORTH WILL ROT

FROM PI: "Female workers and workers from BAME backgrounds are more likely to be key workers on the front line, and coronavirus is having a shockingly disproportionate impact on black Britons in particular."

"So fighting for our class means standing up for the working class in all its diversity."

For more than a century, the Gala was funded by the working miners of the Durham coalfield.

Following the closure of the collieries, the Friends of Durham Miners' Gala was established to ensure its survival.

Those who contribute through subscription are known as "Marras," a Durham miners' term for a workmate or friend who can be relied upon in times of need.

Join the Marras online via friendsfordurhamminersgala.org/join_us

by Bethany Rielly

MPs have joined calls for a probe into the deaths of two outsourced workers in an alleged coronavirus outbreak at the Ministry of Justice headquarters.

The United Voices of the World union alleges that cleaners at MoJ offices in Petty France, central London, were pressured to work despite having coronavirus symptoms because they could not live on statutory sick pay of £95.85 a week.

As reported by the Star, Emanuel Gomes, a worker employed by contractor OCS, died in April after working for five days with a high fever, cough and loss of appetite.

The cause of death was recorded officially as hypertensive heart disease, but it is unclear whether a coronavirus test was carried out, according to Mr Gomes's family.

Another worker, employed by Kier, another contractor, was confirmed to have died from coronavirus in the same month.

Shadow justice secretary David Lammy said that the deaths raise questions about



SLICK PRESENTATION:
 Climate activists in the
 City of London yesterday

WELFARE FOR THE WEALTHY

Labour slams £1bn 'bung' for owners of second homes

by Lamiat Sabin
 Parliamentary reporter

LABOUR called on the government yesterday to reverse an estimated £1.3 billion "bung" to second-home-owners and landlords.

The party accused the Treasury of trying to sneak the announcement through after Chancellor Rishi Sunak's summer economic update on Wednesday.

The update was blasted by Labour and trade unions for its poor targeting of financial support, leaving out many businesses and millions of people who are struggling financially during the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr Sunak announced that the majority of homebuyers in England will not pay stamp duty on the first £500,000 of purchases between July 15 and March 31.

But the Treasury later said that the reprieve would also apply to purchases of second homes – barring the additional higher rate which starts at 3 per cent.

In 2019-20, 34 per cent of homes purchased were second

properties, meaning that the new discount for second-home-owners could cost the taxpayer £1.3bn.

In a letter to Tory counterpart Robert Jenrick, shadow housing secretary Thangam Debbonaire argued that the money could fund the gap in local councils' finances, which the Local Government Association predicts will be £1.2bn by the end of the year.

"It is unacceptable that the Chancellor tried to sneak out this huge bung to second-home-owners and landlords while millions of people are desperate for support," Ms Debbonaire said.

"He should be targeting support to those who need it, not helping people invest in buy-to-let properties and holiday homes.

"An unnecessary subsidy for second-home-owners will only worsen the housing crisis by reducing the supply of homes overall.

"We need a credible plan from Tory ministers to build the homes our country needs and get people on to the housing ladder. We didn't see that this week."

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OUTSOURCING

MPs SEEK PROBE OF C-19 DEATHS AMONG MINISTRY CLEANERS

SUSPICIONS: Lammy demands answers after disease claims two lives

the cleaners' treatment "that the Ministry of Justice must answer."

"It is totally unacceptable to force front-line workers back to work without the proper protective equipment and then to deny them the support they need when they get ill," Mr Lammy told the Morning Star.

"There must now be a thorough investigation to assess what mistakes were made."

Labour MP Lyn Brown, who represents Mr Gomes's West Ham constituency, has called on Justice Secretary Robert Buckland to open an inquiry that "has the ability to estab-

lish evidence of any breaches of laws or guidance" and has powers to bring sanctions against OCS.

Earlier this week, an expose by Tortoise Media suggested that OCS and the ministry had been aware of a coronavirus outbreak among staff but failed to act.

"It is of great importance that public bodies do not avoid responsibility for workers by using intermediaries and the article implies that Ministry of Justice decisions were implicated in the course of events that led up to the tragic deaths," Ms Brown wrote in a letter to Mr Buckland.

On Wednesday, the MoJ and OCS announced that workers will receive full sick pay, but only during the Covid-19 crisis.

The ministry has denied that a coronavirus outbreak occurred at its offices, while OCS insists that it followed Public Health England guidelines during the crisis and provided staff with the necessary personal protective equipment.

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HAVE A STORY?

Email us: news@peoples-press.com

SCOTLAND

Labour begins jobs for good campaign

SCOTTISH Labour is launching a "jobs for good" summer campaign today to fight for guaranteed work north of the border.

The party wants the SNP government to commit to secure jobs in public services, energy, manufacturing, tourism and hospitality to save Scotland from mass unemployment

after the furlough scheme ends.

Scottish Labour leader Richard Leonard said: "We need jobs for good. It is crucial to target support towards young people, but the UK government's Kickstart scheme will offer low-paid, part-time jobs for six months only to workers under the age of 24."

Scottish Labour said such a scheme should provide jobs in growth industries that pay workers at the trade-union rate and no less than the real living wage, regardless of age.

Official figures revealed last month that Scotland's unemployment rate rose to the highest of the UK's four nations.

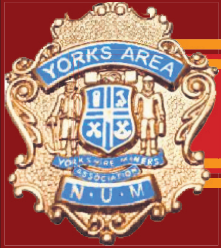
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It tells me about the issues I want to read about, the news I want to read about. It touches on issues the other papers don't.

MAXINE PEAKE
 MORNING STAR AMBASSADOR

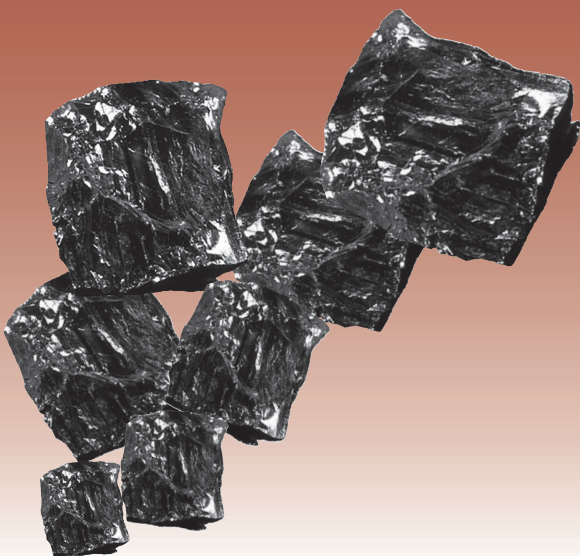
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**Fraternal greetings to those
participating in the
Durham Miners' Gala.**

**This year the Gala will not
be a physical get-together –
we hope that everyone stays
safe and we look forward to
meeting up in Durham
next year.**



National President
Nicky Wilson

National Vice-President
Wayne Thomas

National General Secretary &
NUM Yorkshire Area General Secretary
Chris Kitchen

NUM Yorkshire Area Chairman
Chris Skidmore

NUM Yorkshire Area Vice-Chairman
Keith Hartshorne



FAREWELL, VERA:
 Service personnel carry the coffin of forces sweetheart Dame Vera Lynn into the Brighton Crematorium, East Sussex yesterday

DURHAM MINERS' GALA

Keep away from city, organisers plead

DURHAM Miners' Association (DMA) is asking people not to flock to the city today on what would have been Gala day.

The event was cancelled by the DMA in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to relieve pressure on public services.

An online celebration will mark the day instead and people are being encouraged to enjoy the

Gala's digital delights at home.

DMA Secretary Alan Mardghum said: "We understand that people will be tempted, particularly with the reopening of pubs, to come into Durham with friends as they do each year.

"If people do so in large numbers it will put pressure on our public service workers at a time they most need our support.

"The Gala will be back next year for its 150th anniversary. We will do all we can to ensure that it is the biggest and best Gala to date. Until then, stay safe, and take care."

The gala will be marked online celebrating the spirit and values of the event.

The centrepiece of the day will be a live online event streamed to Facebook and YouTube at 1pm.

C-19 RECOVERY

Labour slams 'half-baked' Tory plan for beauty salons

by Lamiat Sabin
 Parliamentary reporter

LABOUR slammed the government's "half-baked" plans for reopening beauty salons yesterday, saying that they put at risk jobs that are held overwhelmingly by women from ethnic minorities.

Guidance for the sector stipulates that salons and spas must not to provide face treatments, such as facials, laser services, eyelash and eyebrow tinting or make-up application, when they reopen on Monday.

Only services away from the highest-risk zone – in front of the face – should be available, the Department for Business, Energy

and Industrial Strategy says.

The restrictions have been criticised, particularly because barbers have been told that they can trim facial hair under new guidance.

About 270,000 people work in the hair and beauty industry, often in small independent businesses.

Shadow women and equalities minister Marsha de Cordova said: "The government's half-baked plans for reopening beauty salons put at risk thousands of jobs overwhelmingly held by women, and black, Asian and minority-ethnic women in particular.

Ms de Cordova pointed out that Chancellor Rishi Sunak had ignored Labour's calls for an assessment of the impact

his summer statement would have on different groups.

"With the proposals as they stand, this government will make the crisis even worse for those who have already been disproportionately affected," she said.

"Yet again this government is failing to target its support at those who need it most."

Culture minister Caroline Dinenage said she wanted the beauty sector to be able to reopen "as soon as possible."

She told BBC Radio 4's Today programme: "This is not a decision that is ever taken lightly, but we need to take steps in the right direction and establish what is safe, and work to open up the rest."

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PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

END 'GROTESQUE' PRIVATISATION, RAIL UNIONS URGE

DODGY: Public could be saddled with private firms' debts, warns RMT

by Lamiat Sabin

TRANSPORT unions urged the government yesterday to end the "grotesque" privatisation of rail, as ministers pondered transferring privateers' debts to the public balance sheet.

Emergency measures agreements (EMAs) between the Department for Transport (DfT) and rail franchises have shifted all running costs onto the DfT, with revenue also going to the department.

EMAs were introduced in March as passenger numbers and revenues plummeted due to the coronavirus pandemic, giving franchisees a management fee of up to 2 per cent.

The agreements, which transfer liability onto the taxpayer, will stay in place until at least September 20.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is now assessing whether the train-operating

companies' debts should be deemed public.

Responding to the decision, rail union RMT called for an "end to the charade of privatisation" and the "grotesque waste of franchising."

The move comes days after FirstGroup, which runs South Western Railway and Transpennine Express, warned that there was "material uncertainty" over its ability to continue operating services over the next year.

RMT accused First Group of having "threatened to throw back the keys despite soaking up tens of millions in corporate welfare payments from the UK taxpayer and creating uncertainty on four crucial rail routes."

Assistant general secretary Mick Lynch said: "Rather than risking the chaos of further franchise collapses, and with the taxpayer already paying for services, underwriting debt

and wasting cash underpinning private operators' profits, there has never been a better opportunity to ditch the fragmentation and waste of franchising and bring the railway officially into full public ownership."

TSSA general secretary Manuel Cortes called on the government to "tell the truth" and make it clear that Britain's railways "are now in public ownership."

"The government must end the charade of trying to say this is not happening. Instead, ministers should tell the truth and act forcefully to defend the interests of our taxpayers by running these services directly through a wholly owned subsidiary.

"There is no room amid the Covid chaos to continue with any pretence that lining the pockets of private operators is acceptable. The era of privatisation is well and truly over."

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HOUSING

Continue ban on evictions, urges Khan

THE Mayor of London has warned of an "impending tsunami of evictions" if ministers don't implement urgent measures to protect renters as the temporary ban on evictions comes to a close at the end of next month.

Sadiq Khan is calling for renters who've accrued arrears due to Covid-19 to receive eviction protection until the

pandemic is over and to introduce legislation to make this happen.

In a letter to the Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick yesterday, the mayor said: "In a matter of weeks, local authority housing services could be overwhelmed, and we could see a flood of people onto the streets."

"Following the herculean effort to get rough sleepers off

the streets and into hotels to self-isolate, it would be a tragedy if thousands more people find themselves homeless due to being evicted."

The mayor also wants the government to introduce "triple lock" protections as well as ending the "discriminatory" right to rent policy.

The eviction ban is due to come to an end on August 23.



INDIAN WORKERS' ASSOCIATION (GB)

We join our brothers and sisters in celebrating the sacrifices and struggles of the miners under the leadership of the NUM.

We are proud to have supported the struggle to save jobs, our trade unions and communities.

DYAL BAGRI
 National President

MS JOGINDER KAUR BAINS
 General Secretary

MOHINDER FARMA
 President Leicester IWA

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the union
movement.**
**Organise
to build
back
better.**



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ALL ATTENDEES OF

**DURHAM MINERS
GALA**

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DAVE WARD
GENERAL SECRETARY

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PRESIDENT

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DURHAM MINERS GALA 2020

**To all our Marra friends,
see you at the Gala in 2021,
bigger and better than
ever before.**



Len McCluskey, General Secretary | Tony Woodhouse, Chair, Executive Council

[unitetheunion1](#) [@unitetheunion](#) [@unitetheunion](#) [Unitetheunion](#)



POOL RUNNINGS: General manager Graham Bleach cleans the lido at Woodgreen Leisure Centre in Banbury, Oxfordshire, yesterday, ahead of its reopening as the easing of coronavirus lockdown restrictions continues in England

SAUDI ARABIA

Arms sales killing Yemeni children, War Child warns

by Ceren Sagir

THE government's decision to continue licencing arms sales to Saudi Arabia is "tantamount to signing the death warrants" of thousands of children in Yemen, charity War Child said yesterday.

Despite a court ruling last year ordering the government to cease sales of weapons to Saudi Arabia, International Trade Secretary Liz Truss claimed there was no pattern of deliberate breaches of international humanitarian law involving British-made weaponry in Yemen.

The Saudi-led coalition was responsible for killing and injuring at least 3,481 children from 2015 to 2019, according to the UN.

Last year, the coalition was also responsible for killing and maiming 222 children in Yemen, four UN-verified attacks on schools and 186 cases of denying children access to humanitarian aid.

War Child head Rob Williams said: "By allowing these arms sales the UK will be complicit in the suffering and murder of children in what is already the world's worst humanitarian crisis."

"It is tantamount to signing

the death warrants of thousands of children in Yemen.

"In the wake of this week's announcement where the government has committed that it 'won't look the other way on human rights' it sends a clear message that being a 'force for good' means prioritising arms sales over children's lives."

Mr Williams called the decision "shameful and deadly" and said it must be reversed.

Labour's Lord Stevenson of Balmacara urged the government to reverse its decision, warning that Britain risks acting as an "apologist" for Saudi Arabia's human-rights abuses.

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TOWER HAMLETS COUNCIL

Workers set to strike over sacking plan

COUNCIL workers in east London are to take another three days of strike action next week after Tower Hamlets went through with plans to sack staff and rehire them on inferior contracts.

Unison members walked out last week in protest at the council's decision to force thousands of employees, including street cleaners, social workers and care staff, onto the new contracts.

The union claims the Tower Rewards scheme detrimentally

changes a wide range of terms, conditions and allowances and disproportionately affects women and black and ethnic-minority (BAME) workers.

Three days of strike action on July 3, 6 and 7 saw hundreds of Unison members picket sites across the borough.

Some two-thirds of the workforce refused to move voluntarily onto the scheme.

Unison convenor and social-care worker Amina Patel said: "It's an affront that the mayor

and council say that no-one will be worse off because of Tower Rewards and that it doesn't increase inequality.

"As a modestly paid BAME woman, I personally get no pay increase, but my allowance will be cut by £596 a year."

Tower Hamlets claims that the scheme increases annual leave and raises salaries for hard-to-fill posts.

The strike is planned for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

RIGHTS

Migrants deserve a life out of shadows, new campaign says

by Bethany Rielly

THE government must bring undocumented migrants into society by granting them status instead of condemning them to life in the shadows, a new campaign will demand today.

Hundreds of thousands of destitute and undocumented migrants are blocked from work and housing and often avoid seeking medical care for fear of data being shared with the Home Office.

These problems have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis, as the informal work, charities and grassroots groups they had previously relied on have disappeared.

Michael, an undocumented migrant from Zimbabwe who does not want his real name printed, told the Morning Star he had lost his job during the

lockdown and now lives "in a state of heightened fear and anxiety," partly because of barriers to health care.

"It's been a worry for the entire time I've been undocumented but now it's heightened even more. I wouldn't feel confident to go to a GP or to a hospital if I needed urgent care."

"We've heard some people have died because they are too scared to go."

The #statusnow4all campaign, launched by more than 60 rights charities and trade unions under the banner of the Status Now Network, is demanding an amnesty.

It comes after a letter to the PM, sent by the newly formed coalition, was ignored.

Migrant Voice is among the

organisations calling for an amnesty.

This would allow all migrants not only to access healthcare, housing and basic support, "but also to take part in testing, tracing and vaccination programmes," the charity's director, Nazek Ramadan, said.

"This is a humanitarian crisis and everyone – regardless of whether they have documents or not – must be treated as a human being in need. Everyone deserves the right to live a dignified life."

Remaining in Britain or being granted status has become increasingly difficult since former home secretary Theresa May introduced a raft of hostile environment policies from 2012.

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SAFETY

Labour MP: collapse of crane needs full inquiry

LABOUR MP Apsana Begum has called for a full investigation into the collapse of a crane which killed an 85-year-old woman in east London.

June Harvey died and a construction worker suffered critical injuries when the construction site crane collapsed onto two terraced houses in Bow on Wednesday.

Almost 100 people have been evacuated from their homes after the 20-metre crane fell at a site where flats were being built.

Ms Begum, local MP for Poplar and Limehouse, said: "I am very grateful to our emergency services who responded swiftly and supported constituents in the immediate aftermath of this incident."

She said that over 90 of her constituents affected by the collapse have been housed in hotels.

"There must be a full investigation into the reasons that led to this tragic incident. I will be working with the trade unions of workers that use cranes, and others, to follow up on this."

"It is absolutely vital that lessons are learnt from the findings of those investigations to prevent any future incident of this nature."

Radical Options for Scotland & Europe
Public Zoom meeting

'AFTER COVID THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT MUST HAVE POWER TO INTERVENE'

Speakers:

- Alex Neil MSP
- Pauline Bryan
- Cllr Matt Kerr
- Pat McIlvogue (Unite)
- Gordon Martin (RMT)

7pm
THURS
JULY 16



Join: zoom.us/j/81680481873
 Meeting ID: 816 8048 1873

Pellacraft sends greetings to all those who would be attending the Durham Miners' Gala

Stay safe and we look forward to your return in 2021

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 **The Official
Shrewsbury 24 Campaign**
To Overturn A Miscarriage Of Justice

The Shrewsbury 24 Campaign send greetings to the Durham Miners Gala

Thank you for supporting us over the years in our efforts to achieve justice for the Shrewsbury pickets.

We will never give up.


We look forward to meeting you all in 2021.

Eileen Turnbull
Secretary & Researcher

Harry Chadwick
Chairperson

www.shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk 24@shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk

London
Phoenix Branch

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TO THE SOURCE: 'Black Lives Matter' has been painted in front of Trump Tower in New York

■ CYPRUS

Peace Council warns against militarisation of the Med

by Our Foreign Desk

THE Cyprus Peace Council (CPC) warned against turning the Mediterranean island into an aircraft carrier of the imperialist powers yesterday after the US announced plans to expand military education and training.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday that the State Department had included Cyprus in its military education and training funding programme for 2020 as part of "our expanding security relationship."

"This is part of our efforts to enhance relationships with key regional partners to promote stability in the eastern

Mediterranean," he said.

The move, which comes just months after Washington ended an arms embargo imposed in 1987, was condemned as "a huge provocation of the Cypriot people" by the CPC.

It warned that it would lead to further militarisation and possible partition of the island which has been divided since Turkey's 1974 invasion and subsequent occupation of northern Cyprus.

"They are offering the same generous 'education' and 'training' today as they offered in 1974 to their then collaborators, the junta of Greece, EOKA B and the Turkish army, to execute the coup d'etat and subsequent invasion of 1974," the CPC said in a statement.

It said the US and other foreign powers, including Nato, have no place in Cyprus.

"Unfortunately, instead of protecting Cyprus, which has suffered so much and is on the verge of partition, the government is turning Cyprus into an unsinkable aircraft carrier of the imperialist powers and an aggressive launching pad," the statement added.

CPC pledged to continue the struggle against the militarisation of Cyprus and will fight for "liberation from the occupation and for the reunification of our homeland, turning Cyprus into a bridge of peace for the peoples."

Turkey's authoritarian President Recep Tayyip Erdogan also condemned the US plans.

international@peoples-press.com

■ CHINA

US SANCTIONS OFFICIALS OVER ABUSE ALLEGATIONS

HIGH STAKES: Secretary of State Pompeo acts on dubious claims made by far-right scholar

by Steve Sweeney

CHINA-US relations have deteriorated further after Washington's announcement of sanctions on Chinese officials for their alleged treatment of Uighur Muslims in the country's autonomous Xinjiang region.

Speaking on Thursday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo insisted: "The United States will not stand idly by as the [Chinese Communist Party] carries out human rights abuses targeting" the country's Uighur population.

He cited "forced labour, arbitrary mass detention and forced population control and attempts to erase their culture and Muslim faith."

Sanctions were announced on Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region party secretary Chen Quanguo and three other officials the US "believed to be responsible for, or complicit in, the unjust detention or abuse of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs and members of other minority groups in Xinjiang."

Mr Pompeo insisted the sanctions were authorised under a 2017 executive order signed by President Donald Trump.

The demands for action were led by anti-communist Republican Senator Marco Rubio, who co-signed a letter urging sanctions over the



WORLD POLICE: Pompeo's announcement is likely to increase tensions to dangerous levels

alleged treatment of Uighurs.

Washington has been accused of instigating a new cold war against China, both through a trade war and mobilising its naval and military might in a provocative show of strength.

It has also launched a propa-

ganda offensive against Beijing over the unrest in Hong Kong.

It has deployed similar tactics to claim that China has rounded up as many as three million Uighur Muslims in labour camps while promoting unsubstantiated horror stories of the forced

sterilisation of women.

Anti-China tropes have a long history going back for centuries, including accusations of organ theft that recently resurfaced from the CIA-backed Falun Gong cult.

The latest allegations, including those of forced sterilisation, are based on reports by Adrian Zenz, a far-right evangelical Christian whose speculative claims that 1.5 million Uighurs were held in internment camps have become mainstream.

But these claims came from just one source: the Istiqlal TV channel based in Turkey, which regularly hosts guests from the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), a separatist group that aims to establish an independent homeland in Xinjiang called East Turkestan.

The group, which is linked to al-Qaida, has carried out a string of terror attacks in the province in a bid to achieve its aims and also sent units to fight alongside jihadists in Syria.

Earlier this week Rushan Abbas, a woman posing as a Uighur "activist" on internet site Reddit, was exposed as a CIA asset who has worked for a long list of US regime change organisations including the US State Department, the Department of Justice, Radio Free Asia, Homeland Security and in Guantanamo Bay during the Bush administration.

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■ INDIA

Trade unionists demand action on in-work deaths

TRADE unions have urged the Indian government to improve safety at work after it reported at least 75 deaths in more than 30 industrial accidents since May.

The IndustriALL union federation has written urgently to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Indian workers have been dying at the horrifying rate of one every day since work resumed after the Covid-19 lockdown.

Indian National Metalworkers' Federation president Dr G Sandeep Reddy called on the government to establish an expert commission to address the safety crisis.

One of the worst incidents, to a toxic gas leak at the LG Polymers plant in Andhra Pradesh plant in May, was a reminder of

the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster, in which as many as 16,000 people are believed to have died.

IndustriALL warned that accidents are occurring in chemical plants, coal mines and power stations, with the widespread use of contract workers, lack of safety inspections and inadequate penalties for safety breaches among the major contributing factors.

IndustriALL assistant general secretary Kemal Ozkan expressed concern over "the incessant occurrence of avoidable fatal accidents."

"It is nothing but industrial homicide and the government of India should immediately sound a national alarm to impose proper safety measures and protocols to prevent accidents."

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Greetings to our comrades in trade unions across Britain who are fighting to keep workplaces safe and fair. The NEU Northern Region is proud to be an integral part of the fight for a national recovery plan for education and we look forward to seeing you all again next year bigger, better and stronger.

Our thoughts at this time are with those who have lost loved ones to the incompetence of this Government throughout this crisis. Stay safe.

UN

OPCW AT HEART OF ROW OVER SYRIA STATEMENT

CONTROVERSY: Watchdog's condemnation of gas attack exposes issues with its credibility

by Steve Sweeney

THE Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has found itself at the centre of a political row after it issued a statement condemning Syria for using sarin and chlorine bombs against its own people.

In a statement released late on Thursday the chemical watchdog said that it had "reasonable grounds to believe that the Syrian Arab Republic used chemical weapons in Idmanah ... in March 2017."

It claimed that the OPCW investigation and identification Team (IIT) had established that "the Syrian Arab Republic failed to declare and destroy all

of its chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities" despite claiming to have done so.

The OPCW executive council said it "expresses deep concern that the Syrian Arab Republic did not co-operate with, and provide access to, the IIT."

Damascus was given 90 days to tell the OPCW where "the facilities where the chemical weapons, including precursors, munitions, and devices, used in the March 24, 25, and 30 2017 attacks were developed, produced, stockpiled and operationally stored for delivery."

Failure by the Syrian government to comply with the OPCW demand could lead to further action, including a referral to

the UN security council.

But the decision exposed deep divisions within the controversial body. The statement was adopted by a vote of 29-3 in favour, with nine member states abstaining.

The credibility of the OPCW, which was established to monitor the 1997 chemical weapons convention, has been seriously damaged in recent years.

Both Russia and Syria have said that the OPCW is no longer fit for purpose, accusing it of being under the control of Western states including the US.

In 2018 it was granted powers to attribute blame for alleged attacks rather than simply establish whether or not chemical weapons had

been used.

It has been involved in a string of cover-ups after whistleblowers, including senior OPCW investigators, alleged that information had been deliberately withheld and manipulated to blame Syria for a chemical weapons attack in Douma.

Last October, the OPCW dropped an investigation into the alleged use of white phosphorus by Turkey in northern Syria, claiming that it fell outside its remit.

The announcement allegedly came after pressure from Nato member states and just days after Turkey made a €30,000 (£26,000) donation to the chemical watchdog.

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MIDDLE EAST

Russia welcomes talks between Syria and Kurds

RUSSIA has welcomed talks between Syrian Kurdish representatives and the Damascus government, stressing the importance of preserving traditions and cultures within a unified country.

At a press conference on Thursday, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova noted that different ethnic and religious groups had long co-existed peacefully in Syria.

"We are certain that such historical traditions must be preserved and fully pursued. We proceed in our position that the Syrian Kurds are an integral part of the people of Syria."

"Based on this principled position, Moscow supports the dialogue that is taking place between the Kurds and Damascus about the

future order of their common homeland," she said.

Earlier this week, the influential Syrian Tribal Council called on Kurdish forces to "unify the guns" for the liberation of Afrin and other areas under Turkish and US occupation.

Turkey's invasion and subsequent occupation of northern Syria has led to the displacement of 300,000 mainly Kurdish people in what has been branded "a genocide."

The Turkish military's actions in alliance with jihadist groups have led to accusations of war crimes, including the use of chemical weapons and extrajudicial killings.

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ISRAEL

Soldiers accused of 'cold-blooded murder' of a man



But Mayor of Kifl Hares Isam Abu Yaqoub insisted that the occupying forces shot the pair despite them posing no threat to life.

Governor of Salfit Abdullah Kmail held Israeli occupation authorities fully responsible for this "crime."

He said that the culture of impunity for Israeli soldiers encouraged the "cold-blooded murder of Palestinian civilians."

The killing of Iyad Hallak, a 32-year-old autistic man who was shot dead by Israeli police in Jerusalem while lying on the ground in May, sparked widespread condemnation.

But authorities have been accused of a potential cover-up after it appeared that there was no video footage presented to the investigation into his killing despite a report from Haaretz detailing at least 10 CCTV cameras in the vicinity.

Tensions have escalated in the West Bank ahead of Israeli plans to annex whole swathes of Palestinian territory in the occupied territories, which is home to around 2.5 million Palestinians.

The move has been branded illegal by the UN and condemned by the international community.

stevesweeney@peoples-press.com

by Steve Sweeney

ISRAELI soldiers have been accused of "cold-blooded murder" after they shot dead an unarmed Palestinian man and wounded another in the occupied West Bank yesterday.

Ibrahim Mustafa Abu received a bullet to the neck while entering the village of Kifl Hares west of the city of Salfit and was pronounced dead soon after arrival in hospital, the Ministry of Health said.

Mohammad Abdessalam Asaad was shot in the foot and received treatment at Salfit Public Hospital.

The Israeli Defence Force claimed they opened fire on the young men because they were throwing petrol bombs at them.



CORRUPT: An Israeli protester hold a sign during the 'Black Flag' protest against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, on Friday. Hundreds of Israelis protested outside Netanyahu's residency in Jerusalem demanding he resign his post because he is on trial for corruption charges

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Maggie Roberts
Secretary



Unite Irish Region

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occasion of the Durham
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Jackie Pollock
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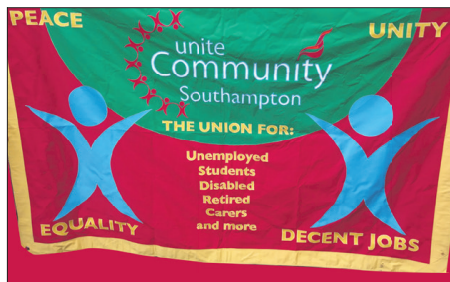
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'Annexation would be the final nail in the coffin for a Palestinian state. We have to stop it'

Please describe the backdrop to Israel's threat of annexation of the West Bank. What are the main factors currently at play?

The Zionist project has always been to create a "Greater State of Israel" step by step. In 1948, at the foundation of Israel, they occupied more than 26 per cent of the territories designated as the state of Palestine, once established, according to UN Resolution 181.

In 1967, Israel would have gone on to occupy the whole of Palestine if it could have done so. However, owing to the international situation and the demographics of these areas at the time – "the facts on the ground" – this was not sustainable for Israel. This does not mean that the vision completely died away, though the establishment of a Palestinian state would have put paid to such Israeli designs.

Fast forward to the present day and the administration of Benjamin Netanyahu has taken full advantage of the election of Donald Trump as US President. Trump has proceeded – with complete disregard for international agreements, protocols and even laws – to offer his full and unconditional support to Israel, whether by recognising Jerusalem as the sole capital of Israel and transferring the US embassy there from Tel Aviv and recognising Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is Syrian territory, or by his so-called "deal of the century," fully co-ordinated between his and Netanyahu's administrations. An additional exacerbating factor has been the change in position of several Arab countries, which, despite the rhetoric emanating from their capitals, would sooner co-operate with Israel against their common sworn enemy... Iran.

Please can you explain why the threatened annexation is so fundamental and urgent in respect of the Palestinian people?

I must be very clear and succinct here. Annexation would constitute the "final nail in the coffin" for the Palestinian people's dream of statehood and self-determination. It would essentially eradicate the possibility of a two-state solution. With the illegal settlements, practically, there is little space, but with annexation there is no space whatsoever for any state. Any Palestinian entity will be physically surrounded by Israel, cutting off the connection with Jordan, and signifying, in practical terms, perpetual occupation. No Palestinian could possibly countenance this.

Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity secretary **AQEL TAQAZ** will address a public Zoom meeting on Israel's threatened annexation of the West Bank hosted by Liberation this Wednesday July 15 at 6pm. Here he talks to the Morning Star about the grave situation facing the Palestinian people



Is the Israeli government wholly united in its intention to annex the West Bank?

In mainstream Israeli politics there are no significant differences on the principle of annexation itself. This is especially the case with regards to the current governing coalition and other generally right-wing politicians.

However, there are differences amongst them which might be referred to as "tactical." For example, some of them believe that, for security reasons, the issue of annexation should be approached more cautiously, gradually and without making a huge noise. Annexation and occupation by stealth! The only forces in Israeli politics with a clear, principled, and unequivocal position towards annexation are the Communist Party of Israel and the Joint List, which is majority-Palestinian. (Ofer Cassif is the only Jew on the Joint List.) Of course, there are other progressive elements comprised of pro-peace and left-oriented activists, though they lack serious influence.

What is the interest of the Trump administration in what is happening? What does the US seek to gain from it?

I believe that the US in general, and Trump in particular, are

supporting – and indeed have helped initiate this crisis – for two main reasons.

Firstly, Trump has his eye on the US presidential election in November, amidst an increasingly fraught situation for his political base. Thus, he is looking to shore-up support from the pro-Israel lobby and neoconservative camps in Washington.

Secondly, Israel is the only country in that entire region [the Middle East] where the government and large parts of the society it oversees are of a friendly disposition towards US interests – the only country with which the US can be said to have a real existential alliance. That is not to say that I believe that under a Democrat president or administration there would be any dramatic change in this regard – or any shift in the general policy of deference towards the state of Israel and silence on the crimes and injustices perpetrated in its name.

What forces at home or internationally can the Palestinian people turn to for support?

The situation in the Middle East, and especially in Palestine, is complicated to state the least, and it is abundantly clear that Palestinian aspirations and dreams cannot be realised through sheer force of will.

for support are the left, democratic and peace-loving forces; trade unions; and all those who respect human rights, and the right of a people for freedom, independence, and self-determination.

What can we do in Britain – as workers, trade unionists, citizens, consumers – to support the Palestinian people at this time?

In Britain – a country that bears huge responsibility for the situation in Palestine, despite the continual refusal of its government to own up to this – we believe that the people and groups that represent them, particularly in the trade union movement, can play a significant role in forcing their government to recognise the state of Palestine within the borders as they stood on June 4 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and the issue of the right of return for Palestinian refugees resolved in accordance with UN Resolution 194.

Awareness of the plight of the Palestinians should be continually maintained and the British government should be lobbied so that pressure is brought to bear on Israel to adhere to international law and UN resolutions. Trade unions can play a major role in this in many ways – through educa-

tion, training and awareness-raising amongst its activists and members; joint projects; solidarity work; and fully participating in projects of the international labour movement in support of the Palestinian cause.

At individual and community level, awareness-raising of the situation in Palestine should take place, together with promotion of these issues to as wide a base as possible. In such initiatives, the reality of the Palestinians should be made clear, along with myth-busting to counter the false narrative that is often put about.

People should be encouraged to support BDS activities. Solidarity with the Palestinian people along with consistent condemnation of the occupation and Israeli violations will help to bring about an end to this situation, which continually threatens world peace. Without a resolution of the Palestinian question, there can be no hope of peace or stability in that region or internationally. The brutal and illegal occupation of Palestine must be ended. This is an imperative.

■ Dr Agel Taqaz is the secretary of Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity and is a prominent figure in the left forces in Palestine.





Diane Abbott

MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington

The lack of a strict lockdown has cost our nation dearly

Despite the apparent return to 'business as usual' the coronavirus crisis is far from over, but neither is our resistance to deadly government policies, writes **DIANE ABBOTT**

THE coronavirus crisis always was a global crisis and remains so. It is comforting to believe that we are immune or at least shielded from these global trends – but that would be both dangerous and foolish.

The pandemic has spread globally and there is no reason to assume that we will escape further risks because we currently seem to be over the worst.

The global trend is clear. According to the latest World Health Organisation (WHO) report there were well over 5,500 deaths in a single day and well over 200,000 new cases. These are new highs and there are a now a series of regional epicentres of the pandemic. These include the mid-Western, Southern and West Coast US, a large number of countries in Latin America as well as a continuous rise in cases in a number of South Asian countries.

As the WHO says, the global situation is getting worse and we have doubled the total number of cases to 12 million in just six weeks.

It is true that many European countries are well below their peak level in cases, including this country, although we are now well behind many of them. But the Tory government is adopting a completely reckless approach, once again. This



time round it is treating this decline in cases and deaths as the goal and is removing lockdown measures which properly belong to risk levels much lower than where we currently are.

But the risk-level categories themselves have gone the way of the tracing app, a 24-hour turnaround time for tests, the protective ring around the care homes and 'doing whatever it takes' to support the economy.

In the rush to get ordinary people back to work all of these have been abandoned, along with Sage meetings, daily press conferences and fundamental government accountability.

This is the politics of "learning to live" with the virus, even though daily new cases remain in the hundreds and the death toll remains only on a very gradual decline. As the situation in Leicester shows, there is too the risk of localised upsurges in the virus.

The Leicester case clearly has some specific factors, including around the sweatshop conditions in the terrible exploitation of largely Asian women. But that is not unique to Leicester, unfortunately.

And Public Health England data shows sharp rises in the infection rate in a large number of areas in recent days, from Bury, to Southampton to

Cumbria. Hackney is also now on this very worrying list.

Against this background the government's Plan for Jobs is nothing of the kind. It is absolutely true that many businesses are in danger of going bankrupt without state support. But the government acts and thinks as if this is somehow disconnected to the pandemic itself.

The truth is that most people remain wary of resuming normal life, worried about their own safety and that of their loved ones. The opinion polls show that most people do not want easing until the

virus is properly suppressed. More importantly, this is how they are acting too.

Most children have not gone back to school, passenger numbers on public transport are way down, the shops report that 'footfall', the measure of how many people are back in the shops, is also massively below normal.

And, despite all the fanfare and the scenes in Soho, the same is true of the pubs and bars. People would like to return to normal, but they do not feel safe.

As a result, the government's measures to support consumer businesses are bound to fail. You cannot force people to go out and have a good time when they are worried about their safety, as well as being worried about their job and their financial security.

Defeating the virus is the key to a return to anything like normality. In this regard, the scientists of the Independent Sage group are completely correct. The government's strategy should not be based on containment but on elimination.

Ministers talk as if this cannot be done. This is completely untrue. A number of countries in the Asian Pacific, using a strict combination of lockdown and/or tracing, testing and isolation regimes have effectively managed to eliminate the virus. A number of countries have registered no new deaths for weeks.



Strikingly, these same countries are now in the best positions to revive their economies and return to something close to normality.

It is those countries that refused to learn from others and that have mismanaged the public-health crisis that will also face the worst consequences.

Countries such as the US and Brazil and, sorry to say, this country too under the Tories.

But there are reasons to be more hopeful about the future. This is because the politicians who have presided over such mayhem have met resistance to the terrible consequences of their policies. The global Black Lives Matter movement continues to inspire and continues to make headway with majority popular support.

Unions such as the teachers here, who have resisted government plans for premature easing, have done us all a great service, and others' insistence on proper health and safety measures at work is a wider public health good.

Most especially, the general public who refused to be cowed into being simple cannon fodder at work, or in their social lives, have done themselves, their loved ones and all of us a great service.

So, this crisis is very far from over. Globally, it has not even approached the peak. Despite what some would like to believe we cannot be immune from this global trend. And we continue to suffer from the depredations of this government.

But there is a fightback. And, as the old trade-union slogan goes: we can win if we fight, we can never win if we don't fight.

“

Against this background the government's Plan for Jobs is nothing of the kind



“

The global Black Lives Matter movement continues to inspire and continues to make headway with majority popular support

A plan to grow the economy and stop mass unemployment

A recovery based on investment and jobs is vital for workers in the North East, argues

BETH FARHAT, secretary of Northern region of the Trades Union Congress

THE Prime Minister pledged a "Rooseveltian moment." This is a reference to policies set out by Franklin D Roosevelt, the 32nd president of the US and the architect of the New Deal, which rescued millions of ordinary Americans from the despair of the Great Depression.

He used the power of government to directly employ millions. He regulated banks and the stock market and cracked down on corporate abuse. His National Recovery Administration formalised co-operation between unions, business and government, and regulated workplaces.

The best and fastest recoveries from economic crises in British history were based on investment for growth, not cuts to services, deregulation and tax breaks for bosses.

The pandemic alone did not cause this economic crisis. It has been made worse by a decade of austerity and failure to strengthen the British economy.

Choosing the wrong

approach to recovery now risks embedding low growth, long-term unemployment and all the social ills that go alongside.

Roosevelt knew that, in the 1930s as now, the price of mass unemployment was misery and destitution. As we face an economic crisis on the scale of the Great Depression again the TUC warns that there is a high risk of mass unemployment without a recovery plan centred on protecting and creating jobs, backed by major investment.

Workers who have required support from the Job Retention Scheme and self-employed income-support scheme are most likely to face unemployment risks in the months ahead.

In the area I represent in the North East, at least 349,500 workers have required support from these schemes.

Darlington, Northumberland, Sunderland, Gateshead and South Tyneside represent the local authorities in the region with the highest proportion of workers seeking support through these schemes. Over 30 per cent of people in employment in those areas are being supported through the Job Retention Scheme or the Self Employment Scheme.

On top of these figures, there will be many other people who have been laid off, or who entered the employment market during the crisis and have been unable to find work.

Economic uncertainty will affect all industries, so there will be pressure on the jobs of many workers who have not been furloughed, too.

A plan to get the economy growing out of the crisis and stop mass unemployment is essential.

An investment-for-growth approach must be resourced by central government, and will need action at regional level in three key areas:

Investing in jobs: combined authorities, local councils and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) should work together to secure investment for local infrastructure needs, leverage public-sector spending to support local jobs and enterprise, and develop a regional-level green industrial strategy that builds on the region's strengths

to meet climate targets.

We need decent work and a new way of doing business: combined authorities, local councils and LEPs should attach conditions to commissioning and procurement that will improve job quality, strengthen workers' voices, increase training opportunities and tackle discrimination and disadvantage in the workplace.

Rebuilding public services: combined authorities and local authorities should adopt a policy of managing all services in-house by default, so they can raise employment and delivery standards, and strengthen the resilience of essential services such as social care.

We need regional recovery panels with representation from unions, employers, Jobcentre Plus, relevant civic partners and local and regional government. These would work in tandem with a National Recovery Panel to turn headline objectives into tailored strategies for each region.

Regional structures with devolved powers are essential to achieving the best recovery possible, because the nature and scale of the challenge varies greatly across different parts of the country.

In the North East there is no one-size-fits-all approach to regional devolution with towns, rural communities and cities each needing a combination of investment in infrastructure, skills and public services.

Regional devolved bodies are already working together to improve the quality of jobs in the region, with the North of Tyne Mayor Jamie Driscoll and Councillor Joyce McCarthy leading the implementation of a Good Work Pledge, which is encouraging private-sector employers to adhere to certain standards on pay and conditions when creating jobs.

People are very worried about their jobs. Many have been laid off already. Losing your job is a dreadful experience – devastating for families. And if we allow mass unemployment to take hold, our economy will be smaller, and the recovery from the pandemic will be slower.

The second Saturday in July

PETER FROST on the details of this year's Gala

A FEW weeks ago my wife Ann and I were planning our annual visit to the Durham Miners' Gala – the greatest annual celebration of the power of the working class and the fight for socialism in this country.

We weren't sure if the lockdown would be over by then, but there was good news that Prime Minister Boris Johnson was allowing people to make the journey to Durham, however far it was.

Then came the bad news. You could only make the journey if you worked in the Cabinet Office and needed an eye test.

Then we heard that the Big Meeting was cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis.

In a splendid demonstration



of public responsibility, the Durham Miners Association (DMA) had called off their event to save putting any more strain and stress on already overloaded public-service workers.

The good news is that the 2020 Durham Miners' Gala, the 136th, will be celebrated online from 1pm on Saturday July 11.

The centrepiece of the day will be a live online event

entitled The Second Saturday in July, streamed to Facebook and YouTube.

There will be specially produced content celebrating the spirit and values of the Gala, which will feature in new videos including archive footage from its long history, brass band music and, of course, images of the colourful banners that are always such an important part of the great day.

Those banners, long before video, painted a colourful portrait of what and who Durham miners thought important. They present a colourful tapestry of working-class struggle.

My favourite banner comes from the village of Chopwell, once known as "Little Moscow."

It's a relatively new banner

WHILE the NUM has a long history, playing its part in gaining improvements in safety, terms and conditions for its members, it has also had to contend with what is nothing short of acts of industrial vandalism by successive Tory governments.

While many believe pit closures were a result of the 1984-85 strike, I believe it was also a retaliation for the successful strikes of 1972 and 1974.

There are many examples of how the coalmining industry and the people who worked in it have been victimised, and the circumstances prevailing at the time manipulated to bring about the demise of the industry and decimation of our mining communities.

One example which is relevant today is how the government has manipulated its response to the climate change issue.

Over 15 years ago the NUM was advocating the use of carbon capture and storage as a way to decarbonise the burning of coal for power generation which would reduce our nation's carbon emissions.

The government said it was unproven and expensive, choosing instead to opt for wind power.

This policy was the final nail in the coffin of the coal industry and the fact that the government now sees carbon capture and storage as a viable and essential technology to enable the continued burning of gas for electricity is the final insult.

While the NUM continues to have a traditional trade union role in representing its remaining members, there is a lot more focus on assisting former members and their families.

The NUM continues to assist former members and their families in accessing the compensation they are entitled to for injuries and diseases they suffer

The NUM is still here and still fighting

The work of the National Union of Mineworkers remains vital for former mineworkers and their communities, says

CHRIS KITCHEN

because of their employment in the mining industry.

Diseases such as pneumoconiosis continue to destroy the lives of the workers who provided the nation's energy.

While the service we offer is far from perfect and unfortunately not uniform throughout the former mining areas, we continue to do what we can for who we can and have a positive influence on people's lives.

There is also a recognition within the NUM that we need to protect and preserve our history for future generations.

The Durham Area of the NUM is a good example of this in the way it has preserved the tradition of the Durham Gala, the Big Meeting, a fantastic trade union and socialist event.

The work they have done to ensure a future for the Durham Area Offices Redhills, affectionately called the pitmen's parliament, is vitally important for the preservation of our history and our culture.

It is right that these buildings and events are preserved as they are a part not only of the history of the NUM but of society in general.

Durham miners pioneered the founding of social care decades before it was introduced after the 1945 election of a Labour government.

By looking to what happened in the past we can work towards a better future and avoid repeating previous mistakes.

This is something that the remaining Areas of the NUM are working towards.

The NUM continues to support campaigns for justice and fairness, an inquiry into what happened at Orgreave and on picket lines up and down the country in 1984-5.

We want fair arrangements in respect of the split of future surpluses from the Mineworkers Pension Scheme (MPS).

When the industry was privatised in 1994 the Tory gov-

“

Regional structures with devolved powers are essential to achieving the best recovery possible

painted only a few years ago to replace a well-worn and battle-scarred older one.

Red and glistening gold, this wonderful silk icon of working-class culture features Marx, Lenin and Keir Hardie.

Other banners have portraits of other great socialist leaders. No wonder they put the fear of God into Maggie Thatcher and her many lackeys.

The online Gala won't just deal with our proud history. Today's struggles will be featured too.

Leading public-service and NHS workers who've been dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, along with key labour-movement figures including trade-union leaders, will bring greetings, messages and speeches to the virtual Gala.

The live event will be screened from Redhills, the home of the DMA.

DMA secretary Alan Mardghum told the Morning Star: "The 200,000 people who usually attend the Gala will miss

their great day out.

"We want to mark the day as best we can and bring people together in a spirit of solidarity and celebration.

"The Gala has always provided a platform for working people, and this year we will hear from key workers across various sectors.

"Their efforts over recent months should have made clear to everyone the vital contribution they make to our country.

"We hope as many people as possible will join us for The Second Saturday in July."

Morning Star readers are encouraged to use social media to post their own solidarity messages.

Favourite photos from previous Galas or other working-class events will also be welcome. Use the hashtag #DurhamMinersGala.

Meanwhile, plans are going ahead for next year's Gala, which will mark the 150th anniversary of the first Gala held in 1871.

THE 136th Durham Miners' Gala was due to take place today.

Our great celebration of community, solidarity and working-class culture was cancelled in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

We took the decision in the early stages of the pandemic to relieve pressure on our public services.

The day will now be marked online with a series of new content celebrating the spirit and values of the event.

The centrepiece of the day will be a live online event streamed to Facebook and YouTube at 1pm.

It will feature new videos including archive footage from the Gala's long history, brass band music, messages from key workers who've been dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic and contributions from leading labour movement figures.

At 4pm, we'll host a live Facebook stream of the 1963 film Gala Day with an introduction from the director John Irvin who went on to great success in Hollywood.

The day is titled The Second Saturday in July – the day on which the Gala is held each year.

It will be my pleasure to host the event from Redhills, the magnificent home of the Durham Miners' Association.

The 200,000 people who attend the Gala will miss their great day of celebration but we want to mark the day as best we can and bring people together in a spirit of working-class solidarity and celebration.

We have a long history of fighting injustice and discrimination and this event is an opportunity to reinforce our beliefs.

I would like to take this opportunity to affirm our ongoing commitment to the important campaigns – the Orgreave Truth and Justice campaign, Justice for Grenfell and the Black Lives Matter campaign.

We must never forget that an injustice to one is an injustice to all.

The Gala has always provided a platform for working people, and this year we will hear from rank-and-file key workers across various sectors.

Their selfless efforts over recent months should have made clear to everyone the vital contribution they make to our country.

While it has been great to have their contributions recognised by clapping and singing on a Thursday evening, this does not pay for school uniforms, pay the rent or put food on the table.

It is now time to make a real difference to their lives by awarding them safer working environments with adequate personal protection and pay that truly reflects the value of their amazing work.

We hope as many people as possible will join us for The Second Saturday in July.

Supporters of the Gala are

Enjoy the Durham Miners' Gala in virtual form this year

The Big Meeting goes online today – but will be back next year bigger and stronger than ever, writes **ALAN MARDGHUM**, secretary of the Durham Miners' Association

Pic: Neil Terry Photography



PAST TENSE:
Two NUM men about to start a shift at the Kiverton Park colliery, pictured in 1984

ernment agreed to underwrite any future losses suffered by the scheme, in return for a 50 per cent share of the surpluses when there were any.

Since then there have been no losses, and the Treasury has creamed off around £10 billion from our pensions.

At the same time some former mineworkers receive a pension of less than £20 a week.

We want to see a split that will see pensioners and their families benefiting from the investment returns on the money they paid into the scheme.

We also want a fair system where former mineworkers no longer need assistance to claim the compensation they are entitled to for life-changing conditions they are suffering from as a result of working in the nation's coalmines.

There are other campaigns. They include the LS26 campaign in Leeds where residents in Oulton are fighting plans by a developer to evict them from their homes in order to redevelop their former pit estate.

The 70 or so houses used to be miners' homes, owned by the National Coal Board.

Privatisation saw them handed to the private sector. Some former miners still live there.

Now they are owned by a private developer who wants to evict the residents, demolish the house and build an estate of luxury homes which the residents could never afford.

What a classic case of putting profit before people!

But people are banding together to oppose the redevelopment of the estate and save not just their own homes but protect them for future generations as affordable homes.

The NUM is supporting them. The Morning Star has taken their campaign to a wider audience.

The NUM will continue to exist for as long as it is required to assist former members and preserve our history and the many benefits that the industry gave to former mining communities.

The past we inherit, the future we build. We are stronger together.

■ Chris Kitchen is general secretary of the NUM.



encouraged to use social media to post their own messages and favourite photos from attending the Gala throughout today, using the hashtag #DurhamMinersGala.

First held in 1871, the Gala will return to Durham next year for its 150th anniversary and we will ensure that this will be the biggest and best Gala for many years and we look forward to reuniting with our friends and comrades from the international labour

and trade union movement.

For more than a century, the Gala was funded by the working miners of the Durham coalfield. It is their gift to us all.

Following the closure of the collieries, the Friends of Durham Miners' Gala was established to ensure the survival of the event.

Those who contribute through subscription are known as "Marras," a Durham miners' term for a workmate or friend who can be

relied upon in times of need.

If it wasn't for our Marras, the Gala would simply no longer happen. I urge everyone who values the Gala to sign up, become our Marra, and help us ensure that our wonderful Gala returns bigger and better than ever in 2021 for its 150th anniversary.

Until then I send the best wishes and solidarity of the Durham Miners' Association to all Morning Star readers. Stay safe and take care.

A celebration of our heritage and political history

At this year's 'virtual Gala,' the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign will be premiering their Miners' Strike Stories film. **KATE FLANNERY** reports



ON THE day we celebrate the 136th Durham Miners' Gala, we are mindful that last month we commemorated the 36th anniversary of the police riot at the Orgreave coking plant during the 1984-5 miners' strike.

With the ongoing support and solidarity from the Durham Miners' Association (DMA), National Union of Mineworkers and the wider trade-union and labour movement, the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign (OTJC) sustains its work and activities and continues to campaign for truth and justice.

We were honoured that DMA president/secretary Alan Mardghum contributed to our online "virtual" Orgreave rally in June, along with many other eminent speakers and campaigners representing ex-miners, health workers, Hillsborough Justice, blacklisting, Justice4Grenfell, the Shrewsbury 24, Justice for Christopher Alder and JENGba (Joint Enterprise: Not Guilty by Association).

Music from the PCS samba band, Unite brass band and Joe Solo completed our event of hope and unity.

The event attracted an audience of thousands and we received many messages of support and solidarity from activists and supporters throughout Britain.

Naturally we were all looking forward to attending the Durham Miners' Gala again this year.

To be at the Big Meeting, the

largest annual gathering of trade unionists in Britain, is a fantastic opportunity to meet up with our wonderful comrades and friends, and make new contacts and friendships with people from across Britain and the world who gather in the beautiful city of Durham to celebrate the mining industry and communities and trade unionism.

Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic has made it impossible for us all to have our annual gatherings in person and parade our magnificent banners.

However, this has not deterred us and we have taken every opportunity to not only meet up online, but to interact, campaign and celebrate with people from parts of the country who have often found it difficult to attend events because of the distances they need to travel.

We are very aware that some Tory politicians and sections of the media are using our celebrations and commemorations of the strike to incite hatred and divisions and whip up racism in our communities.

We have had some Tory politicians, who claim to represent working-class communities, trying to get invitations to our events and posing with commemorative images and statues of miners.

Some Tories are also trying to undermine the credibility of current anti-racist and anti-fascist protests against slavery, racism and fascism and the symbols of British imperialism, by levelling accusations that the "left" is hypocritical and trying to suppress history

and free speech.

It was the Tories who decimated our mining industry, attacking, lying about and vilifying workers trying to protect jobs and communities.

It was a Tory government that turned down our request for a public inquiry into the police riot at Orgreave, and it was a Tory home secretary who declared that there would "be very few lessons for the policing system today to be learned from any review of the events and practices of three decades ago."

Formal invitations to our events should be to those who support us and the labour and trade-union movement, not those who have supported destroying our communities and livelihoods, have made no contribution to the events, and who form part of a system, political party and government that continue to persecute and abuse working-class people and our culture, stir up hatred and racism and facilitate the rise of fascism in this country.

This year we were proud to premiere our Miners' Strike Stories film.

The OTJC wanted to record some of the real stories from participants of the great strike to preserve on film the heroic struggles of our miners, families, Women Against Pit Closures and other supporters.

In moving accounts, with humour, pride and sometimes anger and sadness, people tell their personal stories.

We want these accounts to inspire future generations and

to encourage people to become involved in the trade-union movement today.

We have had years of cuts, austerity and a low-wage, zero-hours economy where workers are being denied basic human rights.

This film will hopefully inspire people to stand up for themselves and others, and to know that another world is possible.

Many people who took part in the strike and were deeply affected by it have died or are old.

It is so important for those of us who are still around to capture our social and political history and tell our stories to people who may not be aware of what we endured and how it still affects people's lives today.

In highlighting the role that women and many supporters played in the strike, we wanted to draw parallels of what is happening today and what a Conservative government is capable of doing to protect its own interests.

The film is now available for you to download from our OTJC web page (otjc.org.uk).

For many of you who have not been able to attend our rallies and the Durham Gala in person, this year we hope you take advantage of the online platform and we look forward to spending the day with you at the Big Meeting. Solidarity forever!

■ Kate Flannery is secretary of the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign.

A day to honour working people and community heroes

Celebrate our key workers as part of the Durham Miners' Gala – and then fight for them, says Unite general secretary **LEN MCCLUSKEY**

THE last four months have been unprecedented in so many ways affecting every aspect of our members' working lives and their families.

Unite, with our sister unions, have been in the forefront negotiating with the Chancellor and other secretaries of state to fight for financial support, safety and jobs at every turn of this pandemic.

We are now at a very distinctive crossroads – how do we manage our way through what we hope will be the tail end of this pandemic? And how do we rebuild?

We have suffered a catastrophic contraction of the British economy, with April 2020 being the bottom of the diving crash before a lengthy recovery.

This should be a loud awakening call. We need to rebuild a fairer society, remember our key workers – many on very low pay. They have kept our society going, sometimes at a great loss to themselves.

It is essential that we develop a new way of doing business and reflect, prepare and plan to recover and rebuild our manufacturing base – with built in collectivism, promoting all avenues of equality, diversity and fairness.

We need to fight for the future of Britain's industries – to recover, rebuild and transform. Unite has already laid out

our case that manufacturing must be at the heart of all recovery and rebuild strategies.

The government-led industrial strategy must directly intervene and provide support to the expansion of our manufacturing capability, capacity and resilience to reflect and reposition our economy for the challenges ahead.

Our public sectors and our NHS rightly demand effective financial investment and support, which can only come from a world-class, high value, innovative manufacturing sector – one million green jobs are needed to meet our wide social policy and climate change commitments, this will only come with a recovery plan with manufacturing at its core.

To meet the challenges of Covid-19, Brexit and climate change head on we must be brave.

We must have an interventionist government and political action to deliver a cross-departmental integrated industrial strategy – supporting the future of local communities, industry and our country.

We believe that the solution to these problems will only be found by putting well-paid, secure, highly skilled and unionised jobs at the heart of an economy which works for all of us.

Our aim must be to proactively shape and transition the world of work to protect and advance the interests of our

FOR a century-and-a-half the Durham Miners' Gala has been admired around the world, a carnival of community like no other.

The streets filled with music and songs, brass and banners are the very definition of solidarity.

But just because we won't be gathering this year it doesn't mean we will be silent.

We will still link arms as Marras and workers to celebrate our historic Gala online.

As trade unionists we have found many ways to stand shoulder to shoulder, across our nations as well as internationally, during this global pandemic.

Shoulder to shoulder we will continue to stand, because what working people do for our country, our economy and our communities has never been as clear as it is now.

Unite members have been on the front line throughout the crisis.

Our health and care workers, hospital porters, cleaners, refuse workers, public and road transport workers, crematorium staff, supermarket staff, food processing workers and so many more.

These are our overlooked and undervalued key workers, low-paid but not low-skilled, who have risked their own lives, working non-stop and long hours during the lockdown, committed to the services they provide.



They have kept us safe and our communities working. We thank them, and we owe them so much.

Covid-19 has reinforced why key workers deserve substantial pay rises. Over the last 10 years, the average wage of a council worker has fallen by 22 per cent, yet the national employer

has offered just a 2.75 per cent increase – not enough for a bus fare.

Not surprisingly, our local authority members call it an insult and demand more.

Our NHS workforce too needs to be shown respect through a decent wage. We and our sister health unions

have demanded pay talks start without delay in recognition of those who've put their lives on the line battling the virus.

On the 72nd anniversary of the NHS last weekend, Unite members shared their birthday wishes and hopes and fears for the service's future.

Rightly they called for the staff to be celebrated as much as the institution, not just in times of crisis but day in, day out.

Doing that must also mean abolishing zero-hours contracts, which in the health and social-care sectors leave so many forced to work while

they're sick, unable to qualify for statutory sick pay and having to choose between poverty and the lives they care for.

So today must be a day for the labour movement to honour all key workers and resolve to make sure that a reckoning will come from this crisis.

Neither will we let the government sit on its hands while decent jobs in our industrial heartlands – the heartlands first abandoned by Thatcher and now by Rishi Sunak – hang by a thread.

The Chancellor may consider that tens of thousands of skilled jobs are "dead weights" but we call them breadwinners and we are determined to win them a better future.

Just as we will stop the greedy bosses using the pandemic to slash jobs and pay.

The Durham Miners' Gala is a day we celebrate our trade-union history and values.

Fighting for fairness and human decency is in our DNA. And so my message to the Durham Miners' Association and to my Marra friends around the world, is celebrate today.

Celebrate working people and our community heroes, linking arms however we can.

Stay upbeat and stay determined, because when this crisis is over we will be back, bigger and better in 2021 – the Gala's 150th anniversary year.

There's nothing like the Durham Miners' Gala, and there is nothing that will ever, ever beat our great movement.

Unite's programme for manufacturing to help rebuild Britain

KAREN REAY, regional secretary of the North East, Yorkshire and Humber region of Unite, gives the union's blueprint for economic recovery

members, families and communities for the next five, 10 and 30 years.

Unite has developed a 10-point plan specifically for manufacturing.

Here are two examples:

Build local, buy British. The UK spends over £292 billion each year of taxpayers' money procuring goods and services.

New legislation must compel public bodies to prioritise social benefit and value/economic impact, not simply go with the lowest price when awarding contracts. We should

be maximising British content in procured goods and services.

Just transition to sustainable jobs and society. We must be leaders in transforming our industries, from steel to the electrification of automobiles and new forms of energy generation, from construction materials supply to advanced manufacturing. And we must be at the forefront of the green industrial revolution.

Standing still is not an option – Covid-19 has been a fundamental shot across our society. We need to take this

time to reflect and transform and diversify for the future generations.

The plan for manufacturing needs to be replicated across all different sectors within our society.

One initiative that we had already starting looking at prior to the intervention of Covid-19 in the north of England was the oncoming threat of Brexit – it was clearly evident that there would be a disproportionately negative affect on the lives of those in the north of England.

Therefore, with the support of the three regional TUCs in the north and our sister unions, we are building an initiative to develop A Voice for the North, working together to rebuild from the Humber across to Liverpool, from Newcastle to Cumbria.

We have the three largest ports in the world and a population of over 15 million – we need to take responsibility, and own our voices.

Unions worked closely with the Secretary of State and negotiated the present Job Reten-

tion Scheme – "the furlough system."

However, the scheme has been abused by some employers – bringing forward pending change plans and giving notification of redundancies.

This is while furlough payments are being claimed by employers.

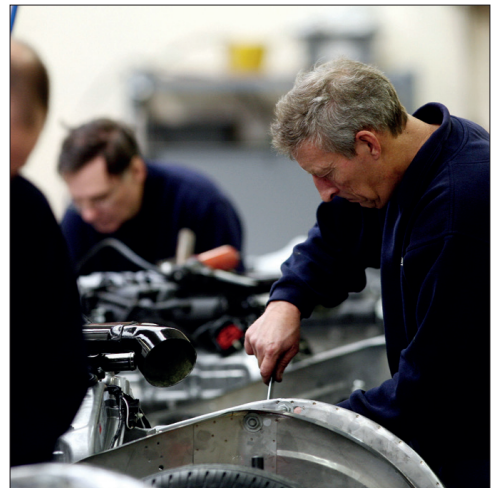
Ultimately government/taxpayers are paying the wages of workers. At the same time, employers are giving notification of redundancies.

Our job is to mitigate any redundancies. How is it fair

to use the terrible Covid-19 rationale to make our members redundant, yet still pay dividends to shareholders.

It is even more imperative that we all work together to develop a new way of doing business and making new opportunities in a changed world – putting all people and their futures first before individual profit margins.

Again, we need to be brave – to fight together to secure a stable, confident post Covid-19 economy and a just transition to a greener world.



Pic: Neil Terry Photography



Even in 2020 Durham reminds us of our power

Yorkshire and Humber TUC secretary **BILL ADAMS** says the future could be bright — if workers stick together

EARLY July each year always means a trip northward to the Durham Miners' Gala, the Big Meeting, the biggest working-class festival in Europe — a chance to spend a few nights in the great city of Durham taking part in what for me and many thousands from Yorkshire is always a celebration of working people coming together in solidarity to celebrate our collective mining past, and to look forward and organise for a better future for all workers.

However, 2020 sees a different Gala. As we all grapple with lockdown, illness and many deaths, social-distancing measures and the strain on public services, the Gala has taken on a new face.

We can now all attend and take part online — as we now have done with many things in our lives — with such events we have taken for granted and never missed are now enjoyed in a different way and by different means.

I have to confess that I will greatly miss the gathering of friends old and new in the city this weekend, the buzz of waking early Saturday morning to enjoy walking around listening to the bands practise, to see whole villages and the different trade unions preparing to march, and awaiting the arrival at the County Hotel, where all the bands stop and deliver a tune to those on the balcony and the thousands of others enjoying their big day out.

It is also a time when we hear from our trade union leaders, politicians and the activists and others who fight for justice, equality and the betterment of all workers.

This is to me very uplifting and renews the appetite to organise and fight for a better society. And as the weekend draws to a close and the crowds drift home across the region and further afield, you always

feel renewed and committed to everything the Gala represents.

That's why this year we must all pause and understand the need this time to join in online to enjoy the many events listed. The virus is still among us, and social distancing could never happen at the Gala.

This will give us a chance to turn our minds to the millions of workers in the NHS and care sectors, the public and private-sector workers who have kept us all going during the lockdown, something we have never seen in our lifetimes.

The nurses, doctors and care workers, shop workers, public transport staff, and all those vital support roles keeping society going — among them cleaners, delivery drivers, postal workers — some of them suffering low pay and working in very precarious jobs, with many on zero-hours contracts, have all put themselves on the line, some even dying on the front line to keep us safe.

As we begin to ease restrictions, many workers including those who risked their own well-being, are now unsure about their jobs, with thousands still furloughed and thousands more being made redundant, we cannot go back to the status quo.

Workers need a new deal, we need major investment especially into our regions to improve transport, rebuild our public services from the devastation of 10 years of Tory austerity, and invest in the green economy to provide decent, well-paid work, new skills opportunities for those displaced by the need for a zero carbon economy, and good opportunities for the next generation from Durham, Yorkshire and around the country.

Trade unions will be at the forefront of these demands and the public know that if they stand together in the spirit of the Durham Miners' Gala, we can change the world for the better.

No to another wave of austerity

FOR the first time since the second world war, the Durham Miners' Gala has been cancelled, due to the Covid-19 crisis.

But we cannot let this day pass without laying down a marker; if the events of recent months have proved anything, it is that our movement is more vital now than ever.

The coronavirus crisis has highlighted the reality of the injustices and inequalities that plague our society.

The wealthy and fortunate will come out of this crisis largely unscathed but, for others, it has been a time of stress, anxiety and great danger. In this crisis, as with all crises, it is workers who have borne the brunt.

From the start, our government was slow to respond to the Covid-19 outbreak, and we have paid with the highest death toll in Europe.

But this inaction cannot be viewed in isolation. It comes

Workers paid for the 2008 crisis — we can't let that happen again, says **MATT WRACK**, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union

after a decade of austerity that gutted public services and tore apart the very social fabric of this country.

More than 50,000 people have died. The coronavirus death rate in deprived areas of England has been twice that of wealthier areas.

Low-income and black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities have been disproportionately hit. And all too often, it has been the very workers seeing us through this crisis who have paid with their lives.

The risks of a major pandemic were well-known and understood in government, but it chose not to prepare.

Instead of ensuring that we

were ready for the emergency when it came, the government has spent a decade cutting the very services that we have relied on in this pandemic.

Those decisions have cost lives — and the buck stops with the Prime Minister.

This crisis has shown who really matters — who does the work that counts.

It's not the Tory ministers or their friends in the board rooms turning a quick profit for themselves or their company.

It's ordinary working people — in healthcare, in public services, in our supermarkets, in transport systems and in supply chains.

There will be kind words

from Tory ministers thanking those who saw us through the darkest days of this pandemic.

But we all know that the Tory politicians who clapped each Thursday are never going to repay their debt to key workers.

In 2008, when the reckless financial sector crashed the global economy, workers paid the price.

That's how modern capitalism works — and it's already starting to happen again.

We're seeing mass job losses, with worse still on the horizon.

After a decade of wage stagnation, many workers are seeing their pay packet cut again.

And, we're seeing the government shift blame for its

Why Usdaw is calling for a new deal for workers

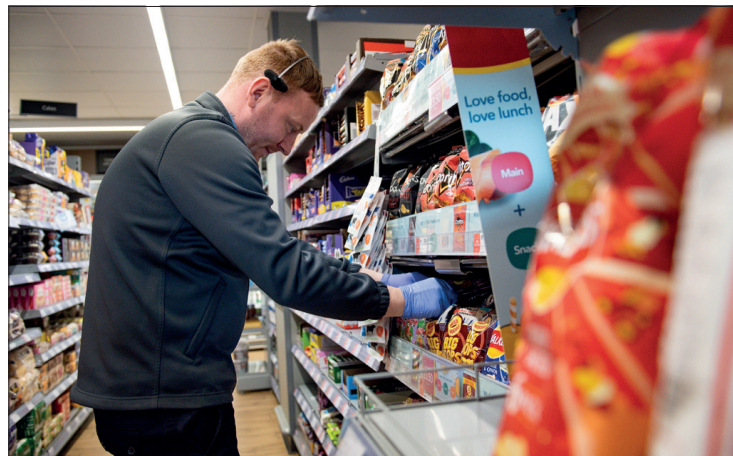
Shopworkers deserve more than warm words after their sterling efforts during the coronavirus crisis, says **PADDY LILLIS**, general secretary of their union Usdaw

AS WITH everything this year, the Durham Miners' Gala is going to be like no other and we send our fraternal greetings to all who will be participating in a virtual celebration of the trade union movement.

We look forward to the 2021 Gala returning, bigger and better than ever, in the 150th anniversary year.

Traditionally the Gala celebrates our achievements and looks to the battles ahead for working people and the trade union movement.

Unions have led the way in fighting for workers' safety and rights throughout the coronavirus emergency, now we need to fight for a new deal for workers.





mishandling of the coronavirus crisis to workers, such as those in our care homes.

It's highly likely as well that when this pandemic passes that the government will seek to unleash another wave of austerity for our public services.

We cannot let any of this pass unchallenged. We might not be able to meet in our hundreds of thousands in Durham today, but we can say with one

voice that we will not accept a "recovery" like the last one. We want to do things differently.

We want a world based on the principles of the labour movement – of solidarity and socialism – and this crisis has shown it is possible.

Despite the hatred that is used to divide us, the spirit of solidarity is alive and well.

We can create a society where we help one another, where

workers are at the heart of decision-making and where we all can have a fair stake in life.

We carry these principles in our hearts and our heads and they should be our guiding light for the post-Covid world.

So, while we cannot be in Durham today, we will still meet, talk, think and organise.

That's how we've won all that we have in the past – and it's how we will fight for our future.

This crisis has shown that millions of low-paid workers stepped up in the most difficult of circumstances to keep our country going.

Too many key workers are low-paid, with insecure hours and few employment rights.

Usdaw members in retail, manufacturing, distribution and home delivery have been working around the clock, keeping food on our tables and medicines in our cupboards.

They have adapted to huge change in an extremely short time, working under intense pressure and providing a lifeline to our communities.

As we look past this appalling coronavirus pandemic, it is time for the government, employers and the public to recognise that these workers have been undervalued for too long. They deserve a new deal.

Usdaw is calling for a new deal for workers based around: A minimum wage of £10 per hour for all workers.

Recognition of the value of our key workers and help to relieve the financial burden faced by too many low-paid working people.

Minimum contract of 16 hours per week: an end to the use of short-hours contracts that do not benefit the worker.

A minimum 16-hour contract, for those who want it, ensures that work is offered on a meaningful basis that can only be reduced through express agreement from the worker.

Contract based on normal hours of work: those regularly working over their contracted hours should have them guaranteed in their contract; regular hours enable workers to plan their lives and finances.

Protection of workers legislation. Abuse, threats and assaults should not be part of the job. The current law fails to protect retail staff and the government must ensure stiffer penalties for those who abuse workers.

Improved sick pay provisions: workers should not face significant debt because of sickness. Usdaw is calling for statutory sick pay to be paid from day one and to reflect average earnings for all workers.

A proper social security system: universal credit has been besieged by problems ever since it was launched. Usdaw is calling for the five-week wait to be scrapped and for the system as a whole to be overhauled.

A voice at work: the government needs to promote trade union recognition, remove the current hurdles around statutory recognition and include trade union representatives on all business review bodies.

Job security: we need stronger protections against redundancy and dismissal, from day one of employment. We also need proper consultation about new technology and investment in skills so that workers are able to keep up in a changing workplace.

Fair treatment and equality

for all workers: most underpaid front-line key workers are women. These essential roles have been undervalued and underpaid for too long. Female workers need equal pay and they need decent pay, along with new family friendly rights that support parents and carers to juggle work and family life.

■ Further information on Usdaw's New Deal for Workers campaign can be found at: www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/A-New-Deal-for-Workers.



Unions have led the way in fighting for workers' safety and rights throughout the coronavirus emergency

Unison will keep on supporting those who are supporting the country

Coronavirus has highlighted the value of public-sector workers, and it's time to reward them, says **CLARE WILLIAMS**, Northern regional secretary of Unison

WE'RE living in unprecedented times. Covid-19 has exposed the true damage of a decade of ideologically driven austerity measures and relentless privatisation.

We see the human impact of political policies, where so many people have insecure and exploitative employment, and of low wages, with many living in poverty.

As Northern regional secretary of Unison, I know the extraordinary effort and dedication that Unison members across the region are making, as they respond to the huge challenges posed by the pandemic.

They're delivering services in hospitals, schools, social care, police and justice, utilities, transport and community voluntary services day in, day out.

Years of austerity have meant unsustainable funding cuts to all our essential services, right across north-east England.

Some of the biggest reductions in local government funding have been at a time when demand for services is growing.

Local councils are increasingly having to make difficult choices and it will soon become impossible to meet the challenges of providing vital services without more money from government.

Everywhere communities are witnessing the consequences of a cut-to-the-bone public sector, and the catastrophic failings of privatising social care.

Unison has launched a campaign for a national care service, which would transform this fragmented and crisis-ridden part of the health and social care system.

The global health pandemic has shone a spotlight on cash-strapped and understaffed public services.

It's shown how undervalued care workers are, and that a model that puts profit before people is not one that can adequately respond at a time of crisis.

Improved regulation and government oversight, better staff pay, stringent UK-



wide professional standards, robust workers' rights, and strategic long-term investment could help create a resilient care system that mirrors the NHS.

Now is the perfect time too for the government to build on the huge public support shown for the NHS by giving health workers across Britain an early pay rise.

A fair wage increase would help staff feel valued and would boost the economy as health workers spend the extra money in their pockets on local high streets.

Wage increases would enable the NHS to hold onto experienced workers and recruit the new staff to fill its many vacancies.

It's clear to see who the key workers are – those people who continue to work tirelessly in the most challenging of circumstances.

But a very large number of these are the lowest paid in society. They're living with precarious employment, on zero-hours contracts and with little job security.

Despite this, they've displayed astonishing compassion and commitment to continue to provide care and support to

others at their time of need.

In contrast, what we see from central government is astonishing ineptitude.

Key workers shouldn't have to choose between going to work and looking after their families and their own safety because of a lack of personal protective equipment, such as face masks and gloves.

The pandemic has also highlighted the importance of unions committed to supporting workers and speaking up for them about the challenges they're facing.

In these uncertain times, it's no wonder people are flocking to join unions like Unison.

Unions play a vital role helping those worried about losing their jobs and supporting their families.

Unison will continue to applaud all key workers providing essential services and demand the government respect these essential and skilled staff who have kept our communities going.

We'll also keep on protecting public services, supporting the lowest paid and ensuring people earn a decent wage.

To quote the motto of the Durham miners: "The past we inherit, the future we build."

★ Star comment

Politics, community, class and the Gala – more important than ever

THE second Saturday in July usually sees the biggest of all labour movement festivals.

The Durham Miners' Gala – replaced this year by an online celebration because of the ongoing risk posed by Covid-19 – is unique, combining a celebration of the heritage and culture of the coalfield, the banners and the bands, with a forceful call to arms on behalf of the oppressed and exploited of today.

Besides attracting trade unionists and socialists from across Britain and beyond it is a local celebration of people and place, an event – too rare in a society atomised by Thatcherism, in which workplaces and communities are dissociated – which sees a whole city and county party together.

In recent years Jeremy Corbyn's annual address to the Big Meeting was an explicit signal that Labour again aspired to be the voice of the organised working class after years in which Tony Blair and Gordon Brown had snubbed it.

But December's election result showed that the alienation of working-class communities from the party could not be suddenly reversed by an attractive manifesto.

And it was attractive – poll after poll showed big majorities for extending public ownership to transport, energy and water, taxing corporations more and taking radical action on climate change.



But Labour's loss of support was a slow-motion car crash, recorded in the steady loss of thousands upon thousands of votes in "heartland" constituencies in successive elections from 1997. Its majorities were often so huge that it took more than two decades before the cumulative vote loss translated into a collapse in parliamentary representation, though this happened slightly earlier in Scotland.

As Alex Niven observed in Tribune magazine before the last election: "The Labour majority in Hartlepool sank from over 17,000 in 1997 to 14,000 in 2001, and then from 7,000 to 5,000 between 2005 and 2010 (in the same period, the South Shields majority dwindled from 22,000 to 11,000, Sedgefield from 25,000 to 8,000, and Darlington from 13,000 to 3,000)." Though it suits the Labour right to blame Corbyn for the 2019 defeat, the election merely followed a long-established pattern: it was 2017, when Labour significantly raised its vote, that was the outlier.

If the Big Meeting is a coming together of community, trade unionism and politics, it must provoke us to address the estrangement between the three. For most socialists the defeat of the Corbyn project has been the bitterest blow of recent years, but this newspaper was not alone in warning that an economy rigged in favour of the rich could not be fundamentally reformed by electing a socialist prime minister.

That struggle is one that must be fought on multiple fronts, in Parliament and local government, but first and foremost directly in the workplace and the neighbourhood, mobilising the collective strength of ordinary people to effect change.

As Labour's deputy leader Angela Rayner points out, Covid-19 presents a threat to working-class communities on a scale not seen since the Thatcher years. As then, millions stand to lose their jobs; as then, a Tory government stands ready to use mass unemployment to force down wages and rip up workplace rights, while letting whole regions slide into long-term poverty.

What a tragedy that would be when coronavirus has starkly shown us the value of some of the worst paid and most exploited workers in the country: when the case for a new deal is stronger than ever.

The labour movement's effectiveness will be brutally tested in the fight to protect these communities – to stop the closures and the job losses and the pay cuts. In the process, it can once again sink deep roots into working-class communities and rebuild its stature and strength. But it will be the fight of a lifetime.

We are living out the huge cost of austerity during a global pandemic

Former North West Durham MP **LAURA PIDCOCK** tells Ben Chacko why she doesn't think working people will fall for the government's latest tokenistic gestures

“THEIR ideology prevents a recovery.” Laura Pidcock is not convinced that Chancellor Rishi Sunak's six-month minimum wage placements or £10 eating out discounts are going to stop the scale of post-lock-down damage.

“I'm so sceptical,” the former North West Durham MP, now national secretary of the People's Assembly, says. “There is huge insecurity because the messages from the government and the schemes it puts in place don't correspond with the behaviour of employers.”

“And all the issues around PPE [personal protective equipment], the inadequate PPE, the inability to manufacture our own, the impact of privatisation meaning we just don't have the capacity to commission and deliver PPE.”

“We are living out the cost of austerity during a global health pandemic. And they come out with something like this week's eat out to help out gimmick – it's very difficult to live on people's wages, to feed a family when you've lost so much income, and then you're offered a tenner off a meal out. They should have a concerted plan around wage increases and the eradication of in-work poverty, a huge job creation scheme that raises people's confidence to spend, not these kind of tokenistic gestures, but their ideology prevents it.”

“Because of course they won't intervene on how much



people are paid apart from the basic minimum hourly pay and they wouldn't keep that if they thought they could get away with it. They're just not able to intervene in a way that will really help us recover. When we look back there will be an immense amount of rage, especially for those who have lost a loved one.”

That rage needs to be channelled into action to address the way Covid-19 looks set to impact on jobs and how it provides unscrupulous employers opportunity to fire and rehire staff on worse contracts –

meaning further downward pressure on wages that are already too low.

“This is the question of our day,” Pidcock says. “And if Labour is to reconnect with working-class communities it can't treat working-class people as an object it relates to. We are them, and we are in workplaces where these things are taking place.”

But can Labour reconnect with working-class communities without resolving the problem of being seen to oppose implementing the EU referendum result, when it is

led by the chief architect of the second referendum policy that did such damage?

“Brexit was certainly a huge factor on the doorstep,” Pidcock agrees, “but there were lots of other things going on too. People's perceptions of Labour local authorities, which had obviously battled with vastly reduced budgets and operated in a very restrictive environment that needed them to be creative about what a local democratic institution can do, especially when the government designed many cuts so it could pass the blame down.”

"And there was an anti-Establishment feeling that meant, for people who already had a very low regard for politics, adding another barrier to withdrawal from the European Union was a final straw. So in the run-up to the election it didn't matter how many surgeries I did, or how brilliant the team were on case work or how present I was at everything the community, at the end of the day people thought that."

Too many people are keen to portray Labour's base as divided by culture wars, she believes. "You know, people who think someone's not experienced exploitation because they drink a latte. Or that everyone in the north was only interested in sovereignty, or immigration."

"Living here you know there is a huge appetite for change, in Durham as much as Deptford, people care about affordable housing and decent wages, and how we are going to fund the NHS – people here want public services funded properly."

"And we are in love with the countryside. There's a real big green movement in Durham, because people appreciate that we live in such a beautiful place. So if Labour isn't fighting for those policies then it isn't representing our class."

"For me the biggest challenge is connecting the industrial with the political. How do we make the argument that this is actually a matter of control, of power, not over borders but over the workplace."

"That how much power you have in the workplace is directly related to how much money you have in the bank at the end of the week."

"And here I see a real synergy between the tasks of the Labour left, the extraparlimentary movement and the trade union movement. There's a crossover between all three, many of the same people are active in all three."

"There's been a weakening of the link between workplaces and communities, but this is about the movement being prepared to act in defence of workplaces, within communities."

"The movement needs to map workplaces under threat in different communities and organise around job losses. Put pressure on employers and government or join workers on picket lines if it gets to that stage."

"Organise meetings on behalf of workers, invite workers to come and speak and alert the community to what might be happening in that workplace."

Job losses being announced because of the coronavirus crisis are ripping the hearts out of entire areas, with towns such as Derby or Crawley facing economic collapse. Pidcock sees developing "a proper strategy where we are active in all communities" as the job of the People's Assembly and says it is working alongside people in political parties and the trade union movement towards a



day of action that would put the local fallout from the economic crisis centre stage.

This is the work she would urge on comrades who are thinking of leaving Labour. I put it to her that the stream of departures has become a torrent since Keir Starmer sacked Rebecca Long Bailey, relieving the Labour left of any shadow cabinet influence.

"When there's a change in leadership there's going to be a change in how you feel in your relationship to the party. But remember that Jeremy Corbyn constantly repeated that the leader isn't the whole party."

"There are thousands and thousands of socialist and left members in the Labour Party, many more than before Jeremy was leader, and the left is in a better place in Labour than it was a decade ago."

"I don't think people should be judged for having made the decision to leave, nor can we just sit and hope for them to return. It's about showing that this is a long, long project: we want a Labour government, and we want to organise to build as much influence as we can have over what policies the Labour Party stands on."

"If Labour's programme was pertinent in 2019, when we had 14 million people, 4.3 million children in poverty, then it is even more relevant now. We need an even more ambitious proposal given there is collapse

“

The government is just not able to intervene in a way that will really help us recover. When we look back there will be an immense amount of rage, especially for those who have lost a loved one



FUTURE CHALLENGES: (Top) The huge crowd at the Durham Miners' Gala last year and (above) Keir Starmer with Rebecca Long Bailey

in some parts of the economy, huge sectoral damage in others.

"There's a really uncertain future for work, a climate catastrophe, a health pandemic, and these are the issues that members want to organise on – around the Green New Deal, employment rights. So the idea that the right will be able to launch an all-out assault on these policies with no kick-back is misguided. We need to ensure we don't cede ground

on the climate targets, on the fiscal commitments such as to the Wasp women, on collective bargaining. That's the job of organisations like Don't Leave, Organise, which I'm involved in and is a coming together of lots of left groups."

Pidcock has been selected for the left slate of candidates endorsed for election to the party's national executive committee by the Centre-Left Grassroots Alliance, an umbrella

group including Momentum, the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy and others.

This weekend would usually see her speaking from platforms and rallying the troops at Europe's biggest labour movement festival, the Durham Miners' Gala, but lockdown means the Gala is cancelled and a series of online events are being put on instead.

Does she have a message for all the comrades she won't be able to catch up with this year?

"We'll miss the Gala. It's so special to the County Durham communities, even people who aren't so intensely connected to the labour movement, it brings everyone together."

"If you're wondering what you can do, I'd say, please become a marra" (as the Friends of Durham Miners' Gala are known). "The whole movement must continue to support the Gala."

"The consequences of coronavirus are going to be extremely challenging and when things are really difficult, personally and politically, the only thing we can draw on is solidarity from each other. That's what makes the Gala so powerful, the music, the art, the warmth of the whole day, but above all the human connection with other people who want to fight for a better world, so let's fight for the Gala to be bigger and better than ever in 2021."

SATURDAY August 1 2020 will mark 100 years since the foundation of the Communist Party.

Undeterred by the restriction placed on political activity by the Covid-19 pandemic, the party invites readers of the Morning Star, supporters, trade union and women's movement activists, to visit our website www.communistparty.org.uk/centenary.

How else would you expect Communists to mark their centenary other than by educating, agitating and organising for socialism? We want you to join us in the celebration too.

The CP invites you – on Saturday August 1 – to register for a number of our 13 Red Wedge live events. You can register now at www.communistparty.org.uk/centenary-red-wedge-events/

Please note that numbers are restricted for each event, so

13 Red Wedge Live events

The Communist Party centenary is going 'live and direct,' explains **PHIL KATZ**

you are urged to register early. Some of the events will also be broadcast live on Facebook.

Our Red Wedge events, led by well known and also some not so well known party and movement activist speakers, begin in the morning with two sessions. You can only attend one in each. 10am-11.30am Environment and capitalism | Opposing racism and fascism | Culture matters | LGBT | Science, Technology and the future of work

11.30am-1pm Women | Imperialism and militarism | EU imperialism and austerity

| NHS and public health | Housing and our communities | A future for youth

These are followed by a mass meeting for trade union activists and Morning Star readers and supporters.

1.30pm – 3pm A special invitation is extended to trade union activists for a live event, 'Take the Road,' which will focus on the role of activists and

unions in our programme, Britain's Road to Socialism.

3pm – 4.30pm Morning Star readers are invited to attend a rally to mark 90 Years of the workers' paper chaired by editor Ben Chacko with major labour movement speakers and some historic figures from the paper's past. Look out for special guests of honour including some of the London Recruits who fought apartheid and undertook clandestine operations against the racist regime.

Finally at 5pm, Communist Party general secretary Robert Griffiths will make a presentation on The Communist Party – 100 years for socialism.

On the site you will be able to check in on an amazing range of centenary events including: two major book launches, the premiere of a new film on the CP, interviews with veterans, sections on the London Recruits and the volunteers in the International Brigades, a collaboration between Marx

Library and the Working Class Movement Library to make rare CP historical artefacts available online, many for the first time, with pamphlets available to view in a digital reader. There will even be music to celebrate to.

On the day readers will be able to find out more about a new history book of the Communist Party edited by Prof Mary Davis, which will be available in the week when we celebrate the anniversary of the Great October Revolution.

Remembering black icon Olive Morris

SUNDAY July 12 is the 41st anniversary of our remembrance of Olive Elaine Morris, Brixton's iconic '70s black British activist.

Morris was born on June 26 1952, and arrived in Britain aged nine.

She grew up in an increasingly hostile atmosphere of racism and violence, from police SUS laws and legitimised brutality, organised National Front groups, systematic discrimination with black youth unemployment at 70 per cent, housing deprivation and an education system that branded black children from the Windrush generation as "educationally subnormal."

From the age of 16 in 1969 after leaving school Morris began to organise community action and resistance and was an active member of the Black Panthers Movement Youth Collective at 38 Shakespeare Road.

She went on to campaign for squatters' rights, organised protests in solidarity with black, Asian and white workers on picket lines and after a rooftop demonstration, she launched her printing press where she published The Squatters' Handbook, found Race Today a home and established

The Organisation of Women of African and Asian Descent (OWAAD), Brixton Black Workers' Group, Black Women's Group, Brixton Caribbean Centre and legal advice at Brixton Community Law Centre, among many of her illustrious achievements.

During her academic study at Manchester University, she was instrumental in building the local Moss Side community, establishing a much-needed supplementary

school after campaigning with local black parents for better education provision for their children.

Not only was Morris pivotal in shaping the race-equality agenda in Lambeth, she also influenced national and international politics, campaigning for Mozambique, Angela Davis and visiting China.

Lambeth Council commemorated Anti-Racism Year in 1985, and renamed the former housing benefit offices Olive Morris House to acknowledge the contribution she made to the lives of disadvantaged communities living in Lambeth.

It is poignant that since 2012 Lambeth Council has earmarked Olive Morris House, a community asset, for redevelopment by a private company in a bizarre deal that has cost the council over £1.2 million to keep it empty.

In April, during the height of Covid-19, bulldozers began to dismantle the building on Brixton Hill which stood as a reminder of past and present struggles during a period of mirrored social unrest against oppressive authoritarian policies that kill, harm and destroy the weakest in our societies, and that she vehemently fought against.

Lambeth workers and the community continue to campaign for a memorial community resource building which grassroots groups and local people can use as a development space. Olive Morris was 27 years old when sadly her life was cut short too soon on July 12 1979 by illness. She is missed dearly and she will never be forgotten.

■ Anyanna Ndukwé is women's officer for Liverpool West Derby Constituency Labour Party.

The anniversary of the death of a black activist and socialist will be marked this weekend, reports **ANYANNA NDUKWE**





Now is the time to join the growing Marx Memorial Library

MEIRIAN JUMP explains how the MML is continuing in the proud tradition of Marxist education and how supporters can benefit if they take out membership

THE Marx Memorial Library's reach has grown exponentially in the last three months as we have turned to digital delivery of our education and collections work.

Now we seek to build on this, launching a new eight-week membership drive over the summer.

Members have always been at the heart of what we do – financially supporting our core work, acting as ambassadors, linking us with communities across the country and assisting as volunteers.

In our first-ever bulletin, printed in November 1934, the year of our foundation, a 700-strong membership gets a mention.

The editor elaborates: "Already the members are realising that the lectures and classes are equipping them with an understanding of Marx's techniques of their correct application in the day-to-day struggle against capitalism."

This year, more than 85 years later, we've added to our offer to our members.

From August, Liverpool University Press (LUP) will ensure that digitised copies of all MML's previous bulletins and newsletters produced since 1934 are available free of charge for all members.

As a member you'll be free to delve into this unique historical resource, including articles by historians, Marxists and commentators including John Williamson, Andrew Rothstein,

Desmond Greaves, Yvonne Kapp, Ruth and Edmund Frow and Eric Hobsbawm.

This, on top of a new member pack, discount booking of our main hall and invitations to launch events.

Not forgetting Theory & Struggle, which for the past four years has been produced by LUP.

The 2020 edition includes pieces on artificial intelligence, the environment and the struggle for equal pay, from Leonardo Impett, Richard Clarke and Jennifer McCary.

Contributors Andrew Murray, Mary Davis and Maxine Peake – our vice-president – spoke at our online launch, streamed on Zoom and Facebook.

The current crisis has not meant a slowing down of our work. Far from it. Our energies have been channelled into the digital.

Our livestreamed lectures and events have brought in more than 100 a time across nation and globe.

These included discussions on historical memory 75 years since the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, and marking Lenin's 150th two months previously.

Subscriptions to our online courses have doubled. We now have 60 engaging on online forums discussing the role of the trade-union movement today.

We've mobilised digitised collections in innovative ways,

with three new online exhibitions: Banners for Spain, showcasing solidarity textiles from the Spanish civil war (1936-39), a News International Dispute Archive exhibition drawing on our Print Workers' Collection, and one on our newly catalogued peace collection: JD Bernal: Science, Peace and International Collaboration.

Our website has become a go-to for anyone with an interest in Marxism and the history of the working-class movement.

Now we have a library of 12 recorded recent events uploaded, plus new digital resources including copies of Justice, the organ of the first British socialist party, the Social Democratic Federation.

We've responded quickly to these unprecedented times doing what we do best: using a Marxist analysis to engage with the past through our collections, and with today's world as we look to the future.

We want to build on this. Three additional events are scheduled for the coming weeks – a discussion the impact of Covid-19 on workers' rights with Keith Ewing on July 23, a book launch on Lenin in London with author Robert Henderson on August 6 and a panel on race, class and

education with Claudia Webbe MP, Unison assistant general secretary Roger McKenzie and Alan Kunna of Newham Sixth Form College.

With your support we can do much more. Our plans are ambitious.

Following last September's flood we raised more than £50,000 to fund vital repair and remedial work. This work is under way and will be completed by the end of August.

Lockdown has enabled us to take stock and to plan further development work through fund-bidding.

This, twinned with policy development and the refining of our management of finance, membership and collection care, means we will hit the ground running when we are in a position to open our doors again this autumn.

The necessity of moving to online education has given us a real impetus to expand our offer, develop more online courses and aim to realise our ambition of being a national and international provider of Marxist education. Membership income will help us to ensure that we can reach all parts of the working-class movement.

■ Meirian Jump is archivist and library manager at the Marx Memorial Library.

■ Join the library's growing membership today. You can now sign up by direct debit here www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/support Membership is just £25/15 per annum.



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Now we have a library of 12 recorded recent events uploaded, plus new digital resources including copies of Justice, the organ of the first British socialist party

WEATHER OUTLOOK



TODAY

Most places dry with spells of sunshine and some patchy fair-weather cloud. Feeling quite warm in the south and west, but a few light showers falling across central and northern parts.

NEXT FEW DAYS

Mostly fine and dry tomorrow, though cloud and rain spreading into the north-west later. Rain spreading south-eastwards on Monday. Mostly dry with sunny spells on Tuesday, but rain into the north later.

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Tell us what you'd like to see more of in your paper! Email editorial@peoples-press.com

Fighting Fund with Keith Stoddart

YOU'VE RAISED: £7,354 **WE NEED: £10,646**



WE collect the mail weekly at present. It always gives the Fund a lift and this week's post-bag was no different, except that I've been excited not only by the cheques but also a couple more items.

Along with his usual £20 cheque, an older comrade in Stevenage sent an original order of service from Harry Pollitt's funeral, the 60th anniversary of which was last Thursday. We're not sure how many of them are left, so we're going to see whether the Marx Memorial Library has a copy and if it has, we'll need to think about what to do with this artefact.

With the paper's 90th and the Communist Party's 100th anniversaries imminent, it would be good to get it on view as part of the planned virtual

exhibitions. Thanks for gifting something of your history that is also the history of us all.

Another interesting item came with a cheque for £100 – an updated, non-sexist copy of the socialist 10 commandments, which joins various cards sent by this supporter on the Beachy Road mantlepiece. "Vive le Morning Star" accompanied £300 from a comrade in France who can't come "home" due to the Covid crisis.

Unite Brighton branch no SE/0140 donated £250 and Darlington CPB contributed £10, as did a comrade in Edinburgh.

With 12 cheques, 15 BACS transfers and 13 PayPal gifts added, yesterday's total was £2,227, taking July to £7,354.

Thanks all. There'll be more acknowledgements on Monday.

Give by BACS...

Sort code 08-90-33, account 50505115, name PPFF

online...

morningstaronline.co.uk/
page/support-us

by phone...

9am - 4pm,
0778 0220 391

...or by post

Cheques to PPFF, 52 Beachy Rd, Bow, London E3 2NS

Commie Chef

Vegetarian Pad Thai

PAD THAI is a popular street food in, as the name suggest, Thailand. It's usually made with some kind of meat, but vegetarian versions are also popular, with the addition of chopped omelette, scrambled egg or tofu adding the protein,

as of course do the peanuts. This example is also suitable for vegans, however. It's a new dish for me but very similar to the Vietnamese food which I often eat, as my daughter-in-law is from that beautiful country and a great cook.

Ingredients

- 50g/2oz fresh or frozen garden peas
- medium carrot, peeled and chopped lengthways into long fine slices
- small red pepper, chopped lengthways into long fine slices
- 100g/4oz mushrooms, thinly sliced
- dsp soy sauce
- dsp maple or agave syrup

- dsp rice vinegar, cider vinegar or white-wine vinegar
- dsp peanut or vegetable oil
- dsp sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp powdered ginger
- pinch chilli powder
- 100g/4oz rice tagliatelle
- 50g/2oz roasted peanuts, crushed

What to do

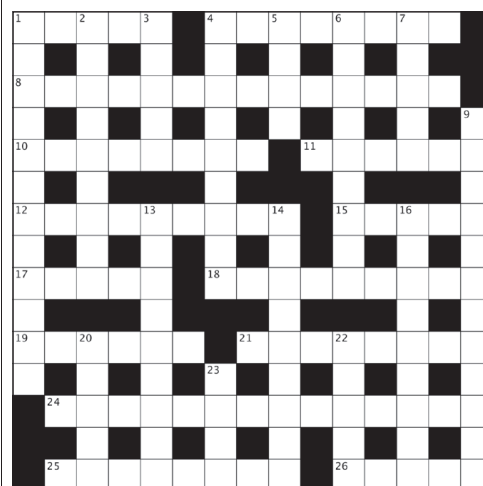
Cook the tagliatelle according to the instructions on the pack. Mix the vegetables together, heat the vegetable or peanut oil in a wide frying pan or wok and fry the veg for 3 minutes on a high light, stirring frequently.

Add the soy sauce, syrup, vinegar, sesame oil, ginger and chilli. Mix in the tagliatelle and taste to see whether the seasoning needs adjusting. Pour into a bowl, sprinkle with the crushed peanuts and serve.



Pic: Alpha, Ying Thai Richmond/Creative Commons

CROSSWORD 1,350 set by Alamet



ACROSS

- Modest sale starts at shopping centre (5)
- Asian fuel provided including drop sent back (8)
- Steal from foul pimp or parasite (14)
- Notice study of slander reverse attachment (8)
- Soaked Japanese ready to imbibe rum (6)
- Film pirate at city massacre (9)
- Speak of honour a month away (5)
- Is unsuccessful reducing head of prophet by 95% (5)
- Vulture, for example, mentioned by mathematician (9)
- Provide in a flexible way (6)
- Bitter spirit at no extra cost (8)
- Bum called during exercise intended to cancel a deal made earlier (14)
- Move piece of furniture about first (8)
- Damp model in two rivers (5)

DOWN

- Someone who walks while on a limb must stagger under shelter at first (12)
- Hardworking fool is holding pair for all to see (9)
- Fill up inadequate part of plant (5)
- Standard motor racing car starts... (9)
- ...circuits of city of Paris outskirts (4)
- When in France to love following formal second opera singer (5,4)
- Everyone apart from Ben Chacko is famous (5)
- Detective is great on TV I venture (12)
- Incense mix aids sleep (9)
- Deer went quickly over church barrier (9)
- Designer and chief computer equipment engineer beginning to court (9)
- Sound from Tom not right to get to end of cleaning out (5)
- We'd meet Ned regularly for change (5)
- Trouble following soak (4)

Solution on Monday...

QUIZMASTER with William Sitwell

TODAY'S QUESTIONS

- 'A British sailor is any man's equal' is a quote from which Gilbert and Sullivan opera?
- Is a barchan a type of hill, volcano or sand dune?
- True or false: the

sculpture of Karl Marx in the German city of Chemnitz is the world's largest bust



YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

- Who composed the scores of the films The Thing, The Mission and The Untouchables? **Ennio Morricone, who has just died aged 91**
- True or false: four-spot

orb weavers can be found in Britain. **True. They are large spiders**

3. What colour is the triangle on the flag of South Africa (pictured)? **Black, with a yellow edge**

DAILY SUDOKU (hard)

1			5	6				
			4		9			5
2	5		1					
		3	4				6	
	2	7				8	4	
6				1	3			
				2		8	3	
3			9		4			
				4	3			7

Solution on Monday...

BMW SE6250 Workplace Branch

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the Durham
Miners' Gala
during these
turbulent times.



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sending our
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Solidarity to all
involved in one
of the greatest
celebrations of our
movement's values!



Peter Kavanagh
Regional Secretary

Bronwen Handyside
Regional Vice-Chair

Jim Kelly
Regional Chair

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UNISON Northern is extremely proud to support the Miners' Gala and would encourage you get more involved by joining The Marras to ensure this fantastic labour movement event continues for many years to come.

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Email: northern@unison.co.uk
www.northern.unison.org.uk

UNISON
Northern

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Sending our greetings to all those who would be at the Durham Miners' Gala and to those participating online.



Solidarity to all.

Sarah Carpenter
Regional secretary

Gordon Lean
Regional chair



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North East, Yorkshire and Humber

Greetings to all on the Second Saturday as we celebrate the Durham Miners' Gala online.

We may be apart for now, but we will always be united.

Karen Reay
Regional Secretary

Dick Banks
Regional Chair

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What's top of the crops among late-season greens?

This is the perfect time to prepare your winter veg, says **MAT COWARD**

THERE'S a whole group of leafy vegetables which grow better when sown after the longest day, rather than before.

They are all brassicas, and therefore members of the mustard family, and so have, to varying degrees, hot or cabbagey flavours.

You'll usually find the seeds and young plants listed in catalogues and online under oriental greens, or as mustard greens.

Sometimes the words Chinese, Japanese or Vietnamese are added – more or less randomly, I suspect, and determined mostly by which cuisine is currently fashionable.

July and August are the main sowing times for many of these valuable vegetables, which will be ready for harvesting, variously, from late summer through to winter.

As allotment beds are cleared of early potatoes and onions, space becomes available which the mustards fill very nicely.

Pretty well all of the oriental greens can also be grown in pots. They don't need particularly large containers, but remember that the smaller the volume of compost in the pot, the more frequently it will dry out.

Big patio tubs, which take 30



TROUBLE-FREE: Mizuna seedlings are vigorous growers



or 50 litres of compost, won't need watering as often.

All of these seeds can be sown directly in the ground, and later thinned to the spacings given on the seed packet.

Most of them can also be started off in trays or modules to be planted out later.

There are a number of potential problems with growing leafy crops at this time of year, which

may or may not arise depending on the weather, your location, and your luck.

Caterpillars and tiny flea beetles will both want to eat the leaves. They can be defeated entirely by carefully covering the plants with horticultural fleece, but that does cost money. Some people use old net curtains to do a similar job.

The crucial thing with these

late summer vegetables is to keep them growing steadily and rapidly, and that means above all keeping them watered. Regular and moderate watering is the key.

Any check to growth, caused for example by a couple of days of drought, can be damaging or even fatal to mustard plants.

For that reason, too, they need to be grown in rich, moisture-retentive soil. Trying to squeeze them into a patch of dry, dusty ground would be a waste of seeds and time.

In case you're new to growing oriental greens, here are two types that I've found among the most trouble-free and useful.

Mizuna produces large numbers of dark, serrated leaves and grows in clumps which can be cut and left to regrow several times over a period of months.

It is tolerant of both high and low temperatures, a vigorous grower and good in salads and stir-fries. The taste is mildly mustardy.

Oriental Saladini is a seed mix of several oriental vegetables, which can be used to create a patch of cut-and-come-again leaves for salad and cooked dishes.

An autumn sowing, protected against frost, will provide greens through winter and into early spring.

TV Weekly Preview

with Ann Douglas



Tuesday

The Rise of the Murdoch Dynasty, 9pm BBC2
 Our media is balanced in favour of the rich to a degree that verges on the ridiculous.

Mega-wealthy oligarchs strut around the globe using their influence to bend corrupt and supine

politicians to their will. Rupert Murdoch is the best known example of how power is exerted over the heads of entire populations of sovereign nations. This documentary examines his rise to the top of his sordid empire.

Film

Every day
Schindler's List, any time
Netflix

Liam Neeson, Ben Kingsley and Ralph Fiennes star in Steven Spielberg's masterful story about the Holocaust. Many commentators have discussed the extent to which the film deals with the subject matter in a way that really gets to the heart of the matter. Whatever your view, if you have not seen it, be warned that some of the scenes are very shocking and deeply emotive.

Every day
Jurassic Park, any time
Netflix

Dinosaurs run amok when an overworked and loathsome

IT manager takes revenge on his employer by stealing dino DNA in order to hand it over to a business rival. His plan goes awry which results in the death of both himself and Samuel L Jackson, among other outcomes.

Documentary

Monday
Once upon a Time in Iraq, 9pm BBC2

A look at the 2003 invasion from the perspective of Iraqis who were witness to the greatest crime of the past century. We are shown interviews of how people viewed the occupation of their country by the imperialist occupiers. It is interesting to note that this programme is brought to you by the news station that served as the loyal cheerleader for the march to war.

Drama

Thursday
Stephen Lawrence: Has Britain Changed? 8pm ITV

In the wake of the killing of George Floyd and the explosion of world-wide protests against racism and police brutality, Rageh Omaar and Anushka Asthana host this live debate which focuses on the issue of racism in Britain.

Thursday
The Blacklist, 9pm Sky One

US crime thriller series starring James Spader as a former navy officer turned high-profile criminal. The Task Force investigates a series of attacks on data centres by a blacklister who is inflicted by an unusual condition.

What to miss

Wednesday: Location, Location! Location, 8pm Channel 4

Light entertainment programme which promotes selfish accumulation of capital to the detriment of wider society. Glorification of parasites. Disgraceful capitalist propaganda.

Yesterday's sudoku

7	4	2	9	1	6	5	8	3
3	5	8	4	7	2	6	1	9
1	9	6	3	8	5	2	4	7
4	6	3	8	5	1	7	9	2
5	2	9	6	4	7	1	3	8
8	1	7	2	9	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	8	9	7	1
6	7	5	1	3	9	8	2	4
9	8	1	7	2	4	3	6	5

ALBUM REVIEWS | WITH KEVIN BRYAN, TONY BURKE, MIK SABIERS



Swamp Dogg
Sorry You Couldn't Make It
(Joyful Noise Records)
★★★★★

R&B artists like Ray Charles, Solomon Burke and Percy Sledge all recorded brilliant country-soul albums. Now add Swamp Dogg to that list.

Jerry Williams Jr made his R&B debut aged 12 in 1954, recording soul in the 1960s and then worked as a songwriter/producer for Atlantic. He adopted a new persona in 1970 – Swamp Dogg – and released the killer album *Total Destruction Of Your Mind*.



Pic: Susan Melkethian/Creative Commons

Recorded in Nashville with Bon Iver's Justin Vernon, Policia's Ryan Olson and the late John Prine, standouts here include Freddie North's hit *She's All I Got*, which Williams penned with Gary U.S. Bonds, *I'd Rather Be Your Used To Be*,

Sleeping Without You Is a Drag – both great tearjerkers – plus *Memories and Please Let Me Go Round Again* with Prine.

Another veteran soul artist returning to make a great album.

TONY BURKE



Larkin Poe
Self Made Man
(Tricky-Woo Records)
★★★★★

IF YOUR thoughts turn to Shania Twain, the [ex-Dixie] Chicks or Dolly Parton when you think of women in country music then it's time to add southern gothic sisters Rebecca and Megan Lovell – AKA Larkin Poe – to your playlist.

The duo's fifth studio album, *Self Made Man*, drips with slide guitar, a southern drawl of sadness but also hope, and it's a pristine combination of blues, country rock, religion and riffs aplenty.



Pic: Justin Higuchi/Creative Commons

Holy Ghost Fire sparks from the off. *Keep Diggin'* is dirty blues, the kind of which Band of Skulls would kill for, while *Ex-Con* channels southern country-rock luminaries Lynryd Skynyrd.

Rebecca's lead vocals are honey-like with a timbre that

draws you in and the riffs are down and dirty, while Megan's slide guitar sits seductively on top of the mix.

This is pure, albeit slightly twisted, country that rocks in all the right ways.

MIK SABIERS



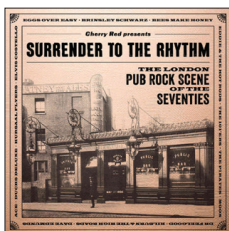
Mike Zito
Quarantine Blues
(Gulf Coast Records)
★★★★★

WHEN Royal Southern Brotherhood co-founder and Gulf Coast Records supremo Mike Zito found his recent European tour cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the highly regarded bluesman wrote, recorded, mixed and mastered an album during his enforced 14-day quarantine.

The various members of Zito's regular band were rapidly roped in to underpin the highly regarded singer and slide guitarist's sterling efforts, recording their individual contributions to the project from their own homes.

The finished product has now been released as *Quarantine Blues*, and this hastily assembled package is a surprisingly visceral and life-enhancing affair, with energised gems such as *Don't Let The World Get You Down*, *Dust Up and After The Storm* emerging as the cream of a uniformly excellent crop.

KEVIN BRYAN



Various Artists
Surrender To The Rhythm: The London Pub Rock Scene of the 1970s
(Grapefruit)
★★★★★

THE ANTIDOTE to stadium and prog rock, pub rock centred on London music venues including the Tally Ho!, The Kensington, Lord Nelson and The Nashville.

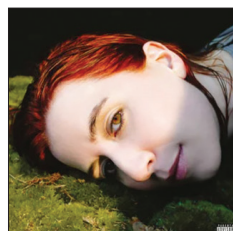
It featured bands like Eggs Over Easy, Bees Make Honey, Dr Feelgood, Ducks Deluxe, Ace and Graham Parker all playing country-rock, R&B, boogie and rock'n'roll to packed houses.

Brinsley Schwarz became the finest pub-rock band around, despite the farce created in 1970 by their management, who booked them a gig at New York's Fillmore East with 120 suitably refreshed journalists in tow.

This three-CD set charts the rise and music of these luminaries of the pub-rock scene, including lesser-known bands such as Brewers Droop, featuring a very young Mark Knopfler.

Four hours of music, a 48-page booklet – it's the definitive document on London pub-rock bands.

TB



Austra
HIRUDIN
(Domino)
★★★★★

WRITTEN following the end of a toxic relationship, Katie Stelmanis – effectively Austra – radiates self-realisation and personal change, built upon a unique voice, on this record.

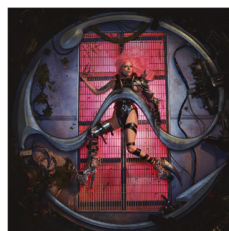
Stelmanis is classically trained and her vocals trip over everything, adding operatic interludes or church-like choruses.

Opener *Anyway* reveals the bleak reality of trying to save a doomed relationship as it switches from choral beats to haunting electro-pop. *Risk* It is a trip-hop Björk-infused breakup song that sees Austra's voice – and hope – soar sky high.

Mountain Baby sees Stelmanis sing with clarity while almost battling against a babbling children's choir, and the album ends with *Messiah*, which channels the best of Arcade Fire while remaining authentically Austra.

The combination of odd-pop, mixed beats, esoteric imagery and orchestral vocals delivers. This is personal, cathartic and somewhat strange but it all comes back to the voice which, siren-like, calls for repeated listens.

MS



Lady Gaga
Chromatica
(Interscope)
★★★★★

FEATURING string interludes, Eurodisco, Chicago house, bubblegum K-pop and even a bit of acid, *Chromatica* sees Lady Gaga return to her dance-pop roots.

Though charting her depression, loneliness and mental health, there's actually a lot that's uplifting.

Alice is classic Gaga, with uptempo electro-pop and rapid repeated lyrics, the robo-funk-like 911 is more autotune than vocals, while *Sour Candy* with K-pop superstars Blackpink is a deep-house stomper that will get even the stiffest statues moving.

It's heavy on the house and almost steals from Madonna – *Babylon* is Vogue in all but name but Gaga knows how to curate a tune.

Guest spots make the record. Ariana Grande takes *Rain on Me* to another level and as soon as Elton John kicks in on *Sine From Above*, the star quality shines through. *Chromatica* is a competent return, but a bit too infused with Gaga's influences.

MS



Dion
Blues With Friends
(Keeping The Blues Alive Records)
★★★★★

1950s teen idol Dion DiMucci, of *The Wanderer* and *Runaround Sue* fame, is now 80 but he looks good and still has a great voice.

He says this album is the fulfilment of a "lifelong vision" – a set of self-penned originals and blues numbers recorded with an impressive guest list.

On board are rock-blues hero Joe Bonamassa, rockabilly cat Brian Setzer, Jeff Beck, John Hammond Jr and Rory Block, bluesman Joe Louis Walker with Van Morrison, ZZ Top's Billy Gibbons, slide guitarist Sonny Landreth and Paul Simon on Dion's *Song For Sam Cooke* (Here in America).

There is also a strong Springsteen contingent, with E Street band member and Sopranos actor Stevie Van Zandt, vocalist Patti Scialfa and Bruce himself on the gospel number *Hymn to Him*.

A remarkable album, complete with intro-notes by Bob Dylan.

TB



Charlie Dore
Like Animals
(Black Ink Records)
★★★★★

ECLECTIC contemporary folkie Charlie Dore has followed a fairly singular career path since *Where To Now*, her well-received debut album for Island Records.

This first saw the light of day long ago in 1979, yielding a minor singles success, with the infectious *Pilot of the Airwaves*.

Dore has divided her attentions between the delights of music making and the tempting lure of a theatrical career in the interim, choosing to venture into the recording studio from time to time to assemble affecting collections such as *Like Animals*, part of her enduring creative partnership with her long-term musical soulmate Julian Littman, of *Steeleye Span* fame.

Terrible Lie, *A Hundred Miles of Nothing* and the haunting *Ordinary Names* are the most appealing of Dore's latest batch of poetic musings on the vagaries of the human condition.

KB



PICTURE THIS | GORDON PARKS: PART ONE

ALISON JACQUES GALERY LONDON

Groundbreaking images of Afro-American life from one of the great US photographers

IN THE wake of the protests that have erupted across the US after the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police and the global response to it by the Black Lives Matter movement, many activists have shared images taken by the photographer Gordon Parks (1912-2006).

In comparison with other documentary photographers of his generation, Parks has remained in the shadows, beyond being recognised as the first black photographer to break the colour bar in the US. He is, however, one of the great US photographers, black or white.

Though primarily self-

taught, Parks's education was influenced by other artists and mentors he encountered in the early part of his career. He would go on to achieve extraordinary success in his field, a major accomplishment for an Afro-American photographer during the 1940s.

As this exhibition at London's Alison Jacques Gallery demonstrates, his beautifully composed images incorporate an understated power. They reveal not only a deep understanding of racial discrimination and hardship in the US but, by implication, they demand action.

Parks's interest in taking photographs stemmed from a desire to create meaningful change. As



he said: "I saw that the camera could be a weapon against poverty, against racism, against all sorts of social wrongs."

Born into poverty and segregation in Fort Scott, Kansas, Parks had a life-long commitment to social justice. He rapidly developed a strong personal style, focusing on race relations, poverty, civil rights and urban life. He was also a writer, composer, and filmmaker, directing several feature films, including *Shaft* (1971).

He created some of his most pivotal pictures as the only black staff photographer on *Life* magazine during his two-decade tenure at the publication from 1948 onwards.

Gordon Parks: Part One – part two follows in September – focuses on two defining stories, Segregation in the South (1956) and Black Muslims (1963). It was a critical period in Parks's career, coinciding with the emergence of the civil rights movement.

His visionary images gave visibility to marginalised, anonymous families and misrepresented figures in US society.



OUT OF THE SHADOWS: (Left to right from top) Untitled, Alabama, 1956; Untitled, Alabama, 1956; Untitled, Mobile, Alabama, 1956; Untitled, Nashville, Tennessee, 1956; Untitled, Harlem, New York, 1963; Untitled, Shady Grove, Alabama, 1956. Pics: Courtesy of The Gordon Parks Foundation, New York and Alison Jacques Gallery, London. © The Gordon Parks Foundation



Segregation in the South chronicles racial division in 1950s Alabama. Standing apart from the civil-rights photography of this period, which often focused on violent confrontations, Parks chose to illustrate this time through affirmative images of community life.

Serene in tone, they focus on mundane activities. Parks wanted his work to inspire empathy because "I felt it is the heart, not the eye, that should determine the content of the photograph," he said.

In Black Muslims, Parks offered the world a multifaceted view of the Black Muslim movement that had started to gather momentum in the US at the beginning of the 1960s and Parks's depictions helped question preconceived and prejudiced attitudes towards the Black Power movement.

A timely exhibition, if ever there was one.

ANN DOUGLAS

■ Runs until August 1, opening times: alisonjacquesgallery.com

OPINION

Politically driven, socially relevant

SALLY FLINT looks forward to a new direction in poetry after the Covid-19 crisis is over

HISTORY shows that catastrophes, conflicts, traumas and protests provoke poets to write, and that the most insightful poems survive because they contain a universal truth connected to the human condition. So how are poets dealing with disease, death and often contradictory political rhetoric in a world that has suddenly and unexpectedly locked down our lives, a place where we're clearly not "all in this together?"

Liberty on hold, fears for the future escalating and access to online technology like never before provides a unique space for socially committed poets to write something ground breaking.

However, as the virus spreads there are multiple windows opening, especially related to online technology. But poets are used to connecting things in their heads, pinning down what Coleridge describes as a

poem being "the best words in the best order."

They are well practised in staying focused to search out and unravel the truth – there are poets taking purposeful walks to scrutinise nearby cemeteries, researching past flu epidemics, noticing signs in newly barricaded shops and empty public spaces.

Poets are asking what matters most to friends and families, what "isolation" means and what Covid-19 is doing to the poor and BAME communities, imagining alternatives and what happens next for humanity as a whole.

As riots spread across the US, and marches across other capital cities take off, it shows that while the proletariat can be contained by a life-threatening virus for the common good, they can't be by the horrific murder of a black man by a policeman on the side of a road in Minnesota, witnessed on screens in homes around the world.

Poets are always on the



INSPIRATION: Jeremy Corbyn used poems to great effect, reading Wilfred Owen's *Futility* on Remembrance Day in 2015 and often quoting Shelley's *The Masque of Anarchy* to drive home a political message

lookout to connect narrative threads. As storytellers, they are alert to "plot holes" and can capture injustice in a few words.

It's why Jeremy Corbyn used poems to great effect, reading Wilfred Owen's *Futility* on Remembrance Day in 2015 and often quoting Shelley's *The Masque of Anarchy* to drive home a political message – for us to "rise like lions."

Poet Laureates Simon Armitage and Carol Anne Duffy are also showing showing that poetry is not about privilege or elitism.

We stand united on a precipice. Unlike any other time, capitalism is exploiting but not providing for the many.

There are new voices and imaginations needing to be heard and brave new poetry editors who are poised to publish challenging writing.

Spiteful, confusing tweets and blogs may come and go but

meaningful poems that reflect the strengths and vulnerabilities of the human condition have the potential to drive positive change and endure.

Websites and publishers like Culture Matters can get key messages across quickly and effectively, just as a virus spreads.

Poets' imaginations will be fired up as more stories emerge out of this pandemic and political falsehoods will link in creative minds.

We will be watching to see if the homeless are back on to the streets this time next year, if health and social care workers receive a pay rise and whether the newly unemployed desperately chasing poorly paid and precarious jobs remain indebted to private landlords.

While politicians and the press turn blind eyes, poets will continue to write and scrutinise the "new normal" in a quest for the truth.

It seems few of us will see out this virus unscathed, but it's the workers, especially those struggling and less well-off, who need to be remembered and supported most by progressive politics and progressive political poetry.

Over a decade ago, in her poem *Indoors*, the late Eavan Boland writes, as if forecasting Covid 19:

"So it was above our neighbourhood, the world straightening under wings, the noise of discord clearly audible, the hinterland reaching to the sea, its skin a map of wounds, its history a treatise of infections."

In a "second wave" of Covid flooding the planet, poets will be peeling back that skin to see what lies beneath, to show, among other things, how politicians have handled this crisis – or washed their hands of it. As poet and activist June Jor-

dan said: "Poetry is a political act because it involves telling the truth."

A body of politically driven and socially relevant poetry will surely grow out of this pandemic.

It will continue to reach out in protest, anger, sadness and compassion and touch even the hardest of rich and powerful capitalist hearts, so we can all move towards a greener, kinder, safer and more equal, truthful future.

■ Sally Flint lectures in creative writing and co-edits *Riptide Journal* at the University of Exeter and is a tutor with *The Poetry School*. She has a special interest in socially committed poetry and is an associate editor of *Culture Matters*. This is the latest in the series of articles on culture after Covid-19, jointly published by the Morning Star and *Culture Matters*, culturematters.org.uk.

PICTURE THIS | GRAYSON PERRY: THE PRE-THERAPY YEARS

THE HOLBURN MUSEUM BATH

Subversive show from 'the transvestite potter'

HERE'S a silver lining to some Covid-19 clouds. The Holburne Museum in Bath will survive as a result of a cash injection from a successful crowdfunding campaign and it has cautiously reopened its doors to the public with the critically acclaimed exhibition Grayson Perry: *The Pre-Therapy Years*.

The space has been redesigned to allow for two-metres social distancing throughout and a safe new one-way system is in operation.

Perry was the first ceramicist to win the Turner Prize in 2003 and his earliest forays as "the transvestite potter" reintroduces the explosive and creative works he made between 1982 and 1994. A subversive by choice and nature – and a supporter of Corbyn's Labour – he compulsively scratches at British "prejudices, fashions and foibles."

His in-er-face approach caused one critic to call him "the social

worker from hell" – no doubt a badge of honour for an artist for whom social conscience is not a vacuous fad but a firm commitment.

In February, Perry won the highly prestigious Erasmus prize, previously given to Charlie Chaplin in 1965 and Henry Moore in 1968. The judges commented: "At a time when we are constantly bombarded with images, Perry has developed a unique visual language dem-

onstrating that art belongs to everybody and should not be an elitist affair."

Perry's response, not entirely tongue-in-cheek, was "my great overall skill is spontaneity and winging it."

May it never fail him.

MICHAL BONCZA

■ Runs until January 3. For more information, follow @Holburne on Twitter or visit holburne.org



WINGING IT: (Left to right from top) Now in Our Green and Pleasant Land (Ye Dear Olde Bugger), 1984; Saint Diana (Let Them Eat Shit), 1984; Armageddon Feels so Very Re-assuring, 1988; Self Portrait Cracked and Warped, 1985



LEO BOIX | LETTERS FROM LATIN AMERICA



Review of fiction by Argentinean writer Sergio Chejfec and Chilean Benjamin Labatut and poetry by Argentinean Alejandra Pizarnik and Chilean Vicente Huidobro

THE ARGENTINE Sergio Chejfec is one of those rare writers who defy categorisation and his essay *Notes Toward a Pamphlet* (Ugly Duckling Press, £8), skilfully translated by Whitney DeVos, is a good example of why.

Part essay, part short story, as well as a kind of philosophical treatise on poetry, this short text explores with wit and originality the life and creative process of Argentine poet Samich, who often travels by train from the provinces to the working-class outskirts of Buenos Aires.

There he lives in a humble house with a small garden with two trees, under which he often sits to compose his never-published verses. A poet-guru with a cult following, he puts into question the very act of writing, turning the quietness of his suburban life into a work of art.

The text is a profound meditation on the life and work of an introverted and intellectually agile poet very much rooted in the Conurbano – that vast expanse of working-class neighbourhoods that encircle the most affluent areas of Buenos Aires.

Chejfec, who has published numerous works of fiction, poetry and essays, has managed to create a little gem of a book. Filled with wonderful “notes” – luminous ideas and sharp reflections – it’s a memorable pamphlet from a Latin American poet.

When We Cease to Understand the World (Pushkin Press, £14.99) by Chilean writer Benjamin Labatut is a collection of short stories that deals with the limits of science and what lies beyond those limits.

From the story of Fritz Haber,

the German chemist and Nobel laureate who co-invented the process to secure food production for a large part of the global population and yet became responsible for the use of poison gas in WWI that killed thousands of people, to that of French mathematician Alexander Grothendieck, a leading figure in the creation of modern algebraic geometry but who later withdrew completely from public life, these fast-paced stories are a wonderful reminder of the troubled minds behind some of the most profound scientific explorations.

The book, part scientific exposition, part fiction, helps to understand the inner lives of people who made unparalleled discoveries in the 20th century, at the same time revealing that fine line between progress and destruction, genius and mad-

ness, order and total chaos.

Labatut’s brilliant fiction allows the reader to grasp some of the most complex and abstract debates in mathematics and modern physics which, the author explained in a recent interview, “allows you to have an intuitive understanding of their meaning.”

A captivating book, full of discoveries and scientific revelations, this marvellous work is very difficult to put down.

Very few poetry books have had so much influence and inspired so many young poets in Latin America as Diana’s Tree (Shearsman Books, £10.95) by Argentinean poet

Alejandra Pizarnik (1936-1972). The collection, written by Pizarnik in 1962 while she was living in Paris, comprises 38 exquisite and powerful short poems which are some of her most loved and better known, now beautifully translated from the Spanish by Anna Morales.

A child of Russian Jews who emigrated to Buenos Aires, Pizarnik spoke Yiddish at home and was a proficient translator in French, allowing her to permeate her dreamy and often dark poems with a sense of strangeness and displacement.

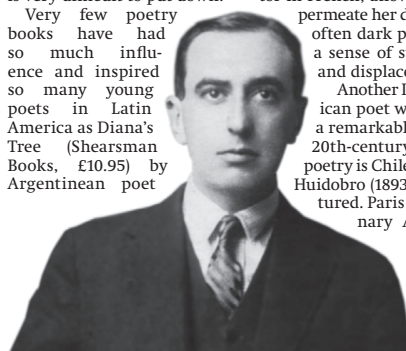
Another Latin American poet who has left a remarkable legacy in 20th-century Hispanic poetry is Chilean Vicente Huidobro (1893-1948), pictured. Paris 1925: Ordinary Autumn &

All of a Sudden (Shearsman Books, £12.95) is a compendium of two collections Huidobro wrote in Spanish and French while living in France.

These are poems that can be read as the seeds that later will develop into some of the most beautiful avant-garde poems ever written in Spanish. Translated by Tony Frazer with great care and love, this book reveals the deep influence Dada, surrealism and the visual language of modern painting had on the poet’s mind.

Among my favourites is *Funeral Poem*, dedicated by Huidobro to his fellow poet Guillaume Apollinaire, one of the most impassioned defenders of cubism and a forefather of surrealism.

“In the midst of this celestial humming/Everywhere you meet your aged hours/The wind is black and there are stalactites in my voice/Tell me Guillaume/ Have you lost the key to infinity/An impatient star was about to say it was cold/The sharp rain begins stitching the night.”



BOOKS | A PEOPLE’S HISTORY OF CLASSICS

EDITH HALL AND HENRY STEAD | ROUTLEDGE, £29.99

A classic, in every sense of the word

GORDON PARSONS recommends a revelatory account of how Latin and ancient Greek culture has influenced working-class consciousness in Britain

POTENTIAL readers of this splendid book are daunted by its subtitle – *Class and Greco-Roman Antiquities in Britain and Ireland 1689 to 1939* – they would sadly be missing out not only on a mine of information but also a riveting and entertaining read.

With 66 pages of references, this is the first detailed study of the use and influence of the ancient Greek and Latin languages and mythic histories on the British working classes from the 18th century onwards and its authors Edith Hall and Henry Stead have avoided a style that might alienate readers other than professional academics.

“Class” and “classic” are words derived from the same Latin root and the authors note that their modern usage, significantly the term “working class,” first gained currency around the time of the French Revolution.

This was a period when the developing bourgeois society’s wealthy merchants sought to have their sons acquire “the patina of gentlemanliness”

provided by an Oxbridge classical education.

Command of these subjects might be of little use in practical terms – as our present political elite demonstrate – but it broadcast the holders’ class status, quarantining them from the workers who provided their privileged lifestyle.

For the “plebeian hordes,” as one museum owner described his self-educating, lower-class visitors, the free-admission museums were just one of a number of ways in which those deprived of formal education, largely illiterate, met classical civilisation.

Even agricultural workers too distant from these facilities often found ancient remains revealing Roman artifacts.

The visual impact of the classical world continued and grew, informing working-class experience and, as heavy industries developed, the manufacturers used classical names such as Prometheus, Vulcan and Hercules to add prestige to their products, while the Chartists’ campaigns employed classical references widely and

trade union banners often depicted classical images carrying political messages.

By 1889, the 50,000 workers in Staffordshire’s potteries would have been very familiar with the stories of ancient mythical and historical figures depicted on the hugely popular, classically themed ceramics they produced, and Josiah Wedgwood even provided libraries for his workforce to understand and contribute to the “renaissance of the lost art of classical pottery.”

This is a book embellished by a rich tapestry of the social, political and the hitherto hidden intellectual working-class life of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The thirst for education was served by a growing variety of movements, including Dissenting – especially Methodist – schools, Mechanics Institutes and Working Men’s Colleges, leading in later years to university extension courses and the Workers’ Educational Association. Many of these,

STONE SPLENDOR: Roman copy of the statue of Herakles from a Greek original



unusually, included classical studies.

Particularly interesting in the book are the mini-biographies of a surprising number of male autodidacts – very rarely are they women – who were able to teach themselves Greek and Latin.

Joseph Wright, born in 1885, at five years of age worked as a donkey driver from 7am to 5pm daily. He taught himself to read and ended up teaching

Greek and Latin grammar at Oxford University, while Richard Robert Jones, the Welsh linguist from an impoverished background, taught himself Latin, Greek and Hebrew, was completely fluent in French and Italian and was reputed to have understood Biblical Aramaic, Arabic and Persian.

Theatrical performance, from the fairground drolls with the reputedly spectacular 1608 *The Siege of Troy*, to Joan Littlewood and Ewan MacColl’s 1938 production of *Aristophanes’s Lysistrata* – a forerunner in technique and spirit of Littlewood’s Theatre Workshop production of *Oh, What a Lovely War!* – has throughout used the classics, often subversively, for popular entertainment.

The book is full of fascinating gems of information about people and events.

Of the 33 warships of Nelson’s *Trafalgar* fleet, 16 had classical names, while among the entertainers providing “a narrative of eroticised female beauty in which proletarian sexual voyeurism was legitimised and lent an illusion of decorum by classical mythology” was Amy Lyon, daughter of a Cheshire blacksmith, who became Nelson’s Lady Hamilton, popularising her scantily-clad *tableaux vivants*.

This wide-ranging study throws light on working-class classics such as Robert Tressell’s *The Ragged Dicks* or *The Ragged Philanthropists*’ debt to Plato and the remarkable and largely neglected prose-poem *In Parenthesis* by David Jones, a “Herculean, craftsmanlike attempt to use words to evoke authentically the sustained extremes of trench warfare as experienced by its lowest-ranking combatants.”

There is an important chapter devoted to socialist and communist scholars of the first half of the 20th century – largely airbrushed from popular history – with special recognition of Christopher Caudwell and Jack Lindsay.

The authors recognise that the neglect of Lindsay in mainstream cultural history “offers one of the most spectacular examples of the absence of people’s Classics from our histories of the discipline.”

We have certainly moved on from the days when a 19th-century London street ballad could claim: “Tradesmen common English scorn to speak.../ For everything’s in Latin now, but what’s in Greek.”

Communist Party of Britain

Executive Committee



Britain's communists send solidarity greetings to all supporters of

'The Second Saturday in July'

#DurhamMinersGala

- ★ Back the campaign for an Orgreave public enquiry
- ★ Fight the anti-union laws
- ★ For a real Brexit – protect state aid for industry

Rob Griffiths
General Secretary

Andy Bain
Trade Union Organiser

Liz Payne
Chair

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Communist Party of Britain Newcastle & Gateshead



extends greetings to all supporters of and participants in 'The Second Saturday in July' #DurhamMinersGala. The spirit of the Gala lives! Congratulations to the Durham Miners' Association and to Marras, the Friends of the Durham Miners' Gala

Communist Party of Britain Northern District



Sends solidarity greetings to all supporters of the **DURHAM MINERS' GALA** and congratulates the DMA and Marras on a brilliant 'Second Saturday in July' #DurhamMinersGala

national education union
Stockport Solidarity
We celebrate the proud history of the trade union movement, which has improved the lives of working people and made workplaces safer and more productive.
We have so much more to do.

GMB
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Roy Dunnett
Secretary
Liam Pollard
President
WHITTINGTON SERVICES BRANCH
Standing firm with the socialists in the Labour Party Celebrating the Durham Miners' Gala

Communist Party of Britain Scottish Committee



*Solidarity with all comrades
Fighting the class enemy*

Durham Miners' Gala
*The Communist Party of Ireland sends greetings of solidarity to all supporters of the Durham Miners' Gala.
Red fly the banners, o!*

FIRE BRIGADES UNION
East Midlands
Standing in solidarity with those that would stand in solidarity with each other at Durham Miners' Gala
Ben Selby EC member
Adam Taylor Regional secretary
Marc Redford Regional chair
Clare Hudson Regional treasurer
[@fbueastmidlands](http://fbu.org.uk)



REPRIEVE

We mustn't forget about innocent people rotting in Guantanamo Bay

AHMED RABBANI was a taxi driver in Pakistan when he was kidnapped – mistaken for another man. Because of that mistake, Ahmed was tortured for over 540 days by the CIA.

He was then transferred to Guantanamo. He's been held there – without charge – since 2004.

The man Ahmed was mistaken for was caught in 2004.

The US later set him free. Yet Ahmed remains in Guantanamo without charge nearly 16 years later. Ahmed's is just one of the cases that Reprive takes

on when no-one else will, because Reprive operates on the belief that everyone deserves their chance at justice.

Together, the Reprive community has already helped get over 80 people out of Guantanamo – that stain on the US.

Support for Reprive has meant that we have been able to run investigations, legal work and campaigns that deliver justice to people who have no-one else to turn to for help.

B. McKENNA

Dumbarton (Reprive supporter)

EMPLOYMENT

Campaign for jobs, but organise the jobless too

YOUR front page supporting a call for "the biggest job creation drive ever" (June 28) should serve to rally the whole labour movement behind it.

For, as well as the disastrous consequences of the pandemic, technology and robotisation are increasingly replacing human labour.

As well as campaigning to save and create jobs, we should also be working to give the jobless support in engaging in forms of structured self-improvement, (physical and/or intellectual) which, combined with an acceptance of personal and civic responsibilities, improve the quality of life for the individual, thereby contributing toward the cultural, social and moral elements essential to a decent society.

Arts and crafts; music, literature, sport, DIY, voluntary work; anything in which the individual could engage that would give life purpose and



FORWARD THINKING: Unemployed workers need to get organised now more than ever as technology begins to dominate the workplace

dignity should be regarded as an "occupation" which they would be assisted to pursue, part-funded by a levy on industry. An occupation subsidy levy

(a proportion of increased profitability achieved through technical advances and reductions in staffing levels).

People without jobs would be

encouraged to meet together in groups at regular intervals to develop social skills, exchange views and ideas, and to be kept informed of current events as well as job opportunities.

This would also overcome the sense of isolation and loss of "comradeship" that unemployment brings... In addition to their own personal activities, they could work individually and collectively. In responding to requests for help or support from organisations, i.e. charities, local authorities or any other recognised and reputable bodies approved by a management committee representing their interests offering a 'Labour Supply Scheme,' with training and educational courses designed to enhance job prospects.

Let's campaign to protect and create jobs, but also organise the jobless to help themselves.

BILL BANNING

Birmingham

RACISM

It's not so easy to forgive Dickens

I AM a bit bemused by responses to the three letters I have had (generously) published in the paper on another side to Charles Dickens.

I have nowhere in my letters suggested a boycott of his works and yet this seems to be the primary concern of recent

rejoinders. However I remain at odds with Dickens's defenders on the issue of his approval of the Morant Bay massacre who seem to centre upon the argument that his active racism simply made him a man of his time.

This accompanies praise that he wrote about the conditions

of the British under-class and was recommended reading by Karl Marx. I think comrades are missing my point about having a comprehensive, realistic and revolutionary view of this key cultural figure of the Victorian era.

PAULA JAMES

East Sussex



HAVE YOUR SAY
 Email (up to 300 words) email
 letters@peoples-press.com



Cartoon: Martin Gollan

STATE FAILURE

The shocking state of Zimbabwe's hospitals

IT IS heart-breaking and pathetic that some patients in Zimbabwe are sleeping rough on the floors in Zimbabwe major hospitals.

The nurses are currently on strike and there is acute shortage of doctors particularly at this dangerous and difficult time of Covid-19.

There is no electricity, which is causing major operations to be cancelled.

The hospitals and healthcare systems in Zimbabwe are highly under-resourced, yet the former health minister allegedly illegally awarded a multimillion-dollar contract for Covid-19 testing kits, drugs and personal protective equipment to a shadowy company.

President Mnangagwa should be challenged by



international leaders to improve on management of hospitals and urgently improve the protection and promotion of health in Zimbabwe.

Zimbabweans should not seek medical assistance in South Africa and other foreign countries, as they will be straining the healthcare systems already under pressure from coronavirus.

KUDZAI CHIKOWORE
 Harare, Zimbabwe

VIETNAM WAR

'Hanoi Hannah's' key anti-US role

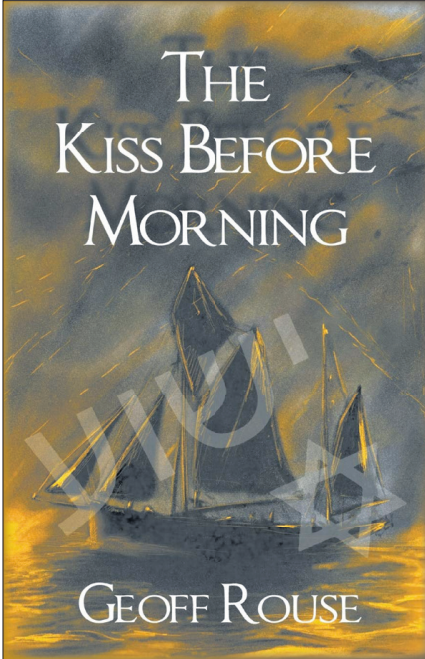
HAVE any readers heard of Hanoi Hannah? She was the North Vietnamese radio propagandist who made appeals to black US soldiers to question why they were fighting for a nation that treated them as second-class citizens.

I understand she made an appearance in the Spike Lee film *Da 5 Bloods* and is perhaps the only positive in a film that appears to sympathise with the invader.

According to *Empire* film magazine, she was a real life propagandist and played a key role in turning many black GIs against the war by making them realise the irony and contradiction that they were in. I have heard her on YouTube and she always spoke with a clear, cut-glass English accent. Given the rise of the BLM movement, a piece on her in the paper would be more than relevant.

PHIL BRAND

London SW17



THE KISS BEFORE MORNING

GEOFF ROUSE

Available from Amazon, Kindle and at all good bookshops

One step ahead of the greatest war in history and just out of reach of the horrors of fascism, two children enter young adulthood as refugees in southern England. One as a stowaway on the Kinder-transport, the other kicking his heels in the Kitchener refugee camp for Jews at Richborough. By chance, they meet a rag-tag gang of kids struggling through their own troubles of adolescence and of the threat of war. They find their escape by bringing back to life a derelict fishing smack that was waiting to die on a riverbank in east Kent, but this soon turns from dream to nightmare as Dunkirk crashes into their lives.

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Martin Levy Communist Party Executive

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Ben Chacko Editor of the Morning Star

Chaired by Mollie Brown People's Assembly and National Assembly of Women

Tuesday 14th July 2020, 7 - 8.30pm

FOUR years after City of Liverpool FC played their first game, the club have announced one of their biggest social and community projects to date, and one of the most significant of its kind to be run by a football club in Liverpool.

Yesterday, the club revealed that they have taken over the running of the King George V (KGV) sports complex and playing fields in Huyton, with the day-to-day operation being managed by the club's community arm, COLFC in the Community.

This will provide the City of Liverpool FC with another base for their community work – to be known as the PurpleHUB @ King George V.

This type of project is a key element in how the football club are run as a community-owned entity giving back to the areas in which they operate, contributing greatly to social movements in the region.

Following the general election in December 2019, it is important that the socialist Labour manifesto, which over 10 million people voted for, is continued and built upon, regardless of the direction the party itself takes in the coming years.

Mass social movements can begin with the development of local community assets around socialist principles, and support of the people in those communities. This is able to occur regardless of the actions and direction of the two main political parties.

A Morning Star editorial following the December 2019 election, written at a point when the result of the election was not known, called for this social movement to "mobilise material help for the vulnerable (through shelters and foodbanks) and organise for defence or extension of community assets."

Through initiatives such as the Purple Pantry, providing food and supplies for the most vulnerable, which has been especially important during the Covid-19 pandemic, and now through the PurpleHUB, City of Liverpool FC are doing just that.

The club, which currently share a home ground with Bootle FC, are constantly working on securing their own stadium and a place to call a football home, but this latest step very much secures a home within the community, and another place from which the club can carry out this side of their own manifesto.

"COLFC, as a Community Benefit Society and social enterprise, is committed to delivering social benefit," read a club statement.

"KGV will represent a major upshift in our capacity to achieve this. Our operating model for the site is focused upon maximising community use of the existing facilities and establishing new facilities and services that will benefit Huyton people."

For the club itself, the com-

plex will serve as a training ground for the first team as well as hosting home games for the community, junior, youth, veterans and legends teams, so in many ways, it is their first football home.

For the general public, of every age group and demographic, it will continue to provide facilities for recreation and leisure activities including the use of the sports hall, boxing gym, football pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens.

On top of this, it will provide a base for community activities, encouraging new uses for the facility and therefore attracting a wide range of new users. This fits with the club's dedication to inclusion through grassroots projects on both the football and community side.

Dr Alan Southern of the University of Liverpool's Heseltine Institute for Public Policy and Practice believes COLFC are perfectly placed to grow such a project.

"To maximise their economic and social impact, community hubs should have a multi-purpose although not be expected to exhaustive in their offer," he said.

"The ideas behind the COLFC initiative would appear to fit the general model of a community hub.

"COLFC are one of those potential growth social organisations that were identified in the Heseltine research as a priority for growth support."

The PurpleHUB, which is currently scheduled to open on July 25, will play a major part in the region's community development ahead of what will potentially be a tough time.

It will be a time when the country as a whole is looking to recover from the recent crisis, under a government that has already proved itself ill-prepared or unwilling to take the necessary steps at the right times.

This leaves it up to local social organisations to support themselves in an almost autonomous fashion, better positioned with the right mindset and intentions when it comes to supporting their neighbourhoods and the most vulnerable, looking for unity and togetherness following a period of isolation for many.

"As we enter our fifth year amid prevailing clouds of uncertainty, PurpleHUB @ King George V provides a reason to look forward with excitement and optimism to all associated with City of Liverpool FC," continued the club statement.

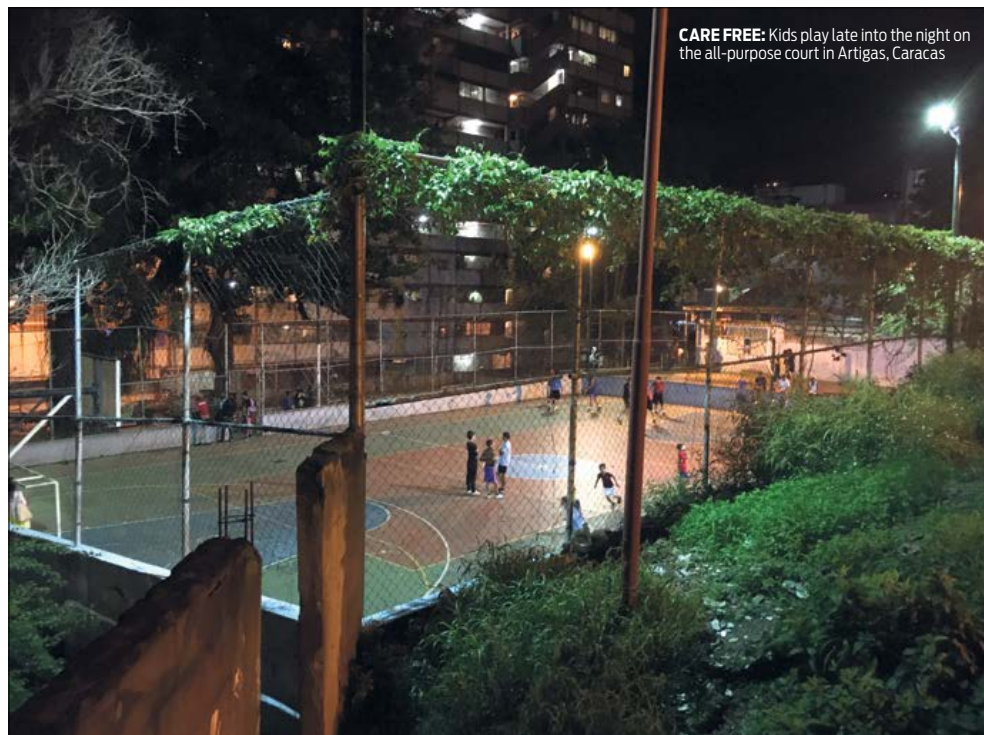
"Our club has never stood still or stopped looking for ways to develop and grow as a truly mutual community-owned entity. Today our club has grown significantly."



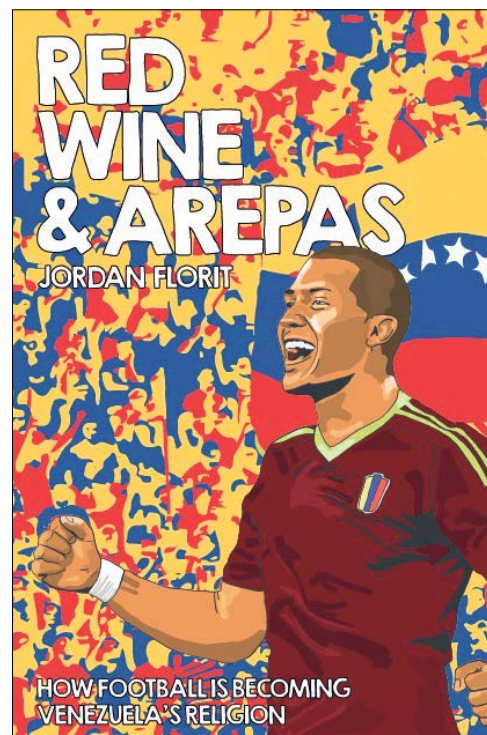
The PurpleHUB

City of Liverpool to run a sports complex and playing fields, open to the entire community, writes **JAMES NALTON**





CARE FREE: Kids play late into the night on the all-purpose court in Artigas, Caracas



Red Wine & Arepas: How Football is Becoming Venezuela's Religion

In this book extract, the first English language book on Venezuelan football, author **JORDAN FLORIT** takes a look at non-Venezuelans plying their trade in the country

LAST spring, I decided to write a book about Venezuela and its football, but I knew that to do such a complex country and society justice would require me to immerse myself fully in its ways of life and to learn its unique idiosyncrasies.

Most importantly, I knew I would have to travel to Venezuela and visit as much of its football heartlands as possible. In October 2019, I did so.

During my time in Venezuela, I met Dr Richard Paez, the manager responsible for the national team's dramatic turnaround between 2001 and 2007, which resulted in the side casting off its label of La Cenicienta (The Cinderella), as they were called in South America because they always

finished last, and becoming La Vinotinto (The Red Wine) because of the colour of their shirt; Noel Sanvicente, the most successful manager the Venezuelan league has ever seen; Adelis Chavez, brother of the former Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez and the current president of Zamora Futbol Club; Stalin Rivas, the first Venezuelan to play in Europe; and many more.

Unsurprisingly, there were people who advised me not to go, but there were also Venezuelans equal in number who encouraged me to persevere with the project and – across the political spectrum – assured me that not “all of what you read in the papers about [Venezuela] is true.”

I already had my heart set on going, so it was just confir-

mation that I was not crazy to think it was possible.

Across the 33 chapters of the book, I use football as the anthropological lens with which I examine and explore what it is like to be Venezuelan and live in Venezuela in the 21st century; from youth football to retired pros, the men's and the women's game, and the boardroom to the pitch, I aim to use football as a window into the society and culture of the country.

In the second chapter, for example, I investigate the motivations of non-Venezuelans for living and playing their football in Venezuela, and the realities of their decision:

“I was curious, given the perception of the country, how many foreigners – extranjeros

– were willing to play their football in Venezuela and how easy it was to sign them. By the end of the [2019/20] transfer window, during which 29 players left Venezuela (5.6 per cent), the number of non-Venezuelans in the league stood at 43 (8.3 per cent), with just four coming from outside of the Americas, and only one born in Europe – Metropolitano's Portuguese midfielder Francisco Palma.

The bulk of the imports came from Argentina, which supplied Liga FUTVE with 13 players ahead of the 2020 season, five of which were new to the league.

Aside from Liga FUTVE's many Latin Americans, in the capital are the only two African representatives: Ghanaian midfielders Adjin Livingstone (Atletico Venezuela) and Kwaku

Osei Bonsu (Caracas).

Kwaku is just 19 years old and joined Caracas ahead of the 2020 Apertura from Slovakian team FK Senica, thanks to the shared ownership of the two clubs.

Only leaving his native Ghana for the first time in February 2019, the right-winger is already well-travelled, having trialled for German third tier-side Eintracht Braunschweig, and, more impressively, Serie A's Bologna.

“I'm a professional and I need to adjust myself to every situation,” he told me over WhatsApp. “Slovakia was great, lovely, but the culture and the traditions of the two countries are different to one another and from Ghana.”

For Kwaku, it is just as fortunate that the only other Ghana-

ian footballer in Venezuela happens to play in the same city. “He is my big brother,” Kwaku said of Adjin Livingstone. “He's been advising me on what Venezuela is like, the way of the people – he has been very helpful.”

Moving to Venezuela for the first time in 2013, Adjin is now on his second stint in the country with spells at two Cypriot clubs in between. His first experience came in Puerto Ayacucho, on the border with Colombia.

There, he played one season for the now defunct Tucanes de Amazonas, signed after a Colombian agent spotted him in South Africa where he was playing for FK Azziz Kara, in Johannesburg.

“There are some great players out there in Africa,” Adjin

insists. "The FutVe scouts mostly concentrate on Latin America though."

His return to Venezuela in 2017 was prompted by a call from Horacio Matuszyck, his manager at Tucanes who was by then managing Trujillanos. "The respect I have for him, well, he is like a father to me. I could not turn him down, so I decided to come back to Venezuela."

As an outsider not just to the country but the continent, his insight was all the more intriguing. "A lot changed by the time I came back, but I was able to adjust quickly, thanks to God. The situation in the county is somewhat complicated, but for me, I had an ambition and I was concentrating on achieving that. I still am, no matter what the circumstances."

To have moved in the first place was perhaps a risk plenty of others would not take, yet Adjin is sure many more players worldwide would play in Venezuela given the chance. If the scouts cast their nets further, Adjin says, it "will boost the sponsorship and level of the league."

A preference for Latin Americans — deemed more suited to the style of play by coaches — is the main reason for the lack of diversity across the competition, he says, not the situation in the country nor financial restraints on scouting. Kwaku is a supporting case, although Caracas are benefiting from a pre-established link with Senica.

"I always visit him," he says of his countryman over 10 years his junior. "He is quickly adapting to the system here and I am amazed by him. He is very quick and skilful, which are good traits to have in this league, so I always tell him to keep working hard, to keep his body in good shape and to seize the opportunities he is given. He is a very good player and I am very happy for him."

It was an opinion shared by Kwaku's coaches and the Caracas club hierarchy too, but it seems his stay will only be fleeting, unlike that of his Ghanaian predecessor, Ibrahim Salisu. Joining in 1991 and spending nine years at the club, Salisu scored eight goals in 16 Copa Libertadores appearances and totalled 42 goals over 144 games.

While he wasn't the first Ghanaian at the club, he is still the greatest. Caracas' Director of Football, Miguel Mea Vitali, is confident in Kwaku's talent, and his manager, Noel Sanvicente, is clear-cut about his future.

"He has interesting qualities for me, he is going to succeed. The idea is to have him for a year and then sell him."

While Kwaku's Venezuelan experience may turn out to be short, Adjin is looking to extend his beyond his playing days. Married and a father, I was expecting his view to be in line with Cabezon's, who said that if he were to return, his family would stay in Argentina,

or Brignani's who did not bring them in the first place.

As I would learn on my travels, there are Venezuelans in professional football who are there in spite of the fact their partners and children live abroad and are biding their time to leave.

However, Adjin has plans to bring his family 5,000 miles across the Atlantic to be with him permanently.

"They will come at the appropriate time. At the moment, my wife works in Ghana and that is one reason why she cannot be here with me now. I am hoping to gain nationality here, so when that is achieved, I will decide. This is my second home."

"I have been here almost four years and I am used to the country. Here in Venezuela is beautiful, you cannot know it exactly without being here. Every country has its own economic problems, but time always changes."

Adjin wasn't saying these words with the rashness of youth or the inexperience of a short stay. He isn't just two months into a short-term contract. He is now playing for his fourth Venezuelan club between 2013 and 2020; a seven-year span during which he has played in Puerto Ayacucho (a city bordering Colombia along the Orinoco River), Valera (a city at the foot of the Andes), Ciudad Guayana (a city uniquely different to many in South America due to strong US influences prior to the nationalisation of Venezuela's steel industry), and only now, since 2020, has he lived and played in the capital.

Yes, he is a footballer, but one with wide-ranging and varied experiences of the country. To hear him speak so fondly of it was in juxtaposition to the narrative.

Red Wine & Arepas: How Football is Becoming Venezuela's Religion, by Jordan Florit is the first English language book on Venezuelan football. It is out on August 31. You can pre-order it through Florit's Twitter page — @TheFalseLibero.

WEEKEND FOOTBALL

Premier League

Norwich.....West Ham, 12.30pm
 Watford.....Newcastle, 12.30pm
 Liverpool.....Burnley
 Sheffield United.....Chelsea, 5.30pm
 Brighton.....Man City, 8pm
 Wolves.....Everton, 12pm*
 Aston Villa.....Crystal Palace, 2.15pm*

Tottenham.....Arsenal, 4.30pm*
 Burnmouth.....Leicester, 7pm*

Championship

Charlton.....Reading, 12.30pm
 Derby.....Brentford, 12.30pm
 Barnsley.....Wigan Athletic
 Blackburn.....West Brom
 Hull City.....Millwall
 Middlesbrough.....Bristol City
 Preston.....Nottingham Forest
 QPR.....Sheffield Wednesday
 Stoke.....Birmingham, 1.30pm*
 Swansea.....Leeds, 1.30pm*

All Kickoffs 3pm unless noted
 * denotes Sunday game



Racing Guide

with Farringdon

Newmarket set to host a spectacular card

ONCE again some tremendous racing this weekend as the sport continues to catch up with the big events of the season and the July Cup at Newmarket (3.35) leads the way.

I was going to plump for Richard Hannon's Threat, but the recent rains have literally put a dampener on things and even if the going dries out to good to soft I much prefer the

claims of Golden Jubilee winner **Hello Youmzain**.

That success at the Royal Ascot meeting arguably wasn't as good as his Sprint Cup win at Haydock Park, but there are still reasons to believe that he may well step up on those runs this season.

Firstly, we forget he is relatively lightly raced for a horse of his age with only the nine starts to date, all but one of them over this six furlongs trip, and secondly, from a physical point of view, the son of Kodiak was always going to improve with age given his rather gangly physique as a younger horse.

At the time of writing a top-price of 5/1 makes him almost an each-way bet to nothing and with several of his rivals much better suited to a sound surface, his Haydock win came on soft ground, it wouldn't surprise me if the older horse was pushing Golden Horde for market leadership come the start of this famous Group One event.

I fancy that the old boy Brando, form figures in this race of 327, will relish this more forgiving surface than the one he encountered in the Abernant Stakes and he could well be placed again at around 25/1, while the aforementioned Golden Horde is the more obvious danger to the selection and

is priced accordingly. Last year's Stewards cup hero, Khaadem, would have been in my tree but for the recent heavy rain.

Just 35 minutes later comes the hustle and bustle of the Bunbury Cup Handicap over seven furlongs where surprisingly older more exposed horses have a really good record in.

The weather forecast suggests we will get a dry Friday night and a warmer Saturday so there should be no excuses for any of the entries and I strongly fancy a huge run from the Clive Cox-trained **Wise Counsel**.

This four-year-old is only just reaching his peak with three wins from nine starts and looked to be crying out for a return to this trip when running strongly over six furlongs when third of nine to Lyzbeth in a Listed race at Goodwood.

With the sting taken out of the ground there is plenty in his favour here and he gets the nod over the likes of Motakhayyel, Mutamaasik and Sir Busker.

Elsewhere on the card, **Seventh Kingdom** looks a hugely exciting prospect and he can make it two from two in the Superlative Stakes at 3.00 and **Surf Dancer** is taken to defy top-weight in the Bet365 Mile Handicap at 1.50.

Similar to Newmarket, Ascot

dries out very quickly and I suspect we could have ground on the fast side of good come racing this afternoon.

That kind of surface will suit **Bless Him** down to the ground in the Summer Mile Stakes at 3.15. The 2017 Britannia Stakes hero, David Simcock's charge ended last year with wins off 92 and 97, in the latter contest beating no less a horse than Lord North and we all know what he has gone on to achieve this season.

The more the ground dries out the better for him and at a juicy double-figure price he may be able to turn over the likes of market leader and unlucky in running Queen Anne Seventh Mohaather and Duke of Hazzard.

Stag Horn looks one of the bankers of the day in the three-year-old two mile finale at 4.25, while I shall be investing each-way on ARECIBO in the five furlong cavalry charge due off at 3.50.

The Group Three Meld Stakes is the highlight at Leopardstown and affords a good chance to the very progressive **Patrick Sarsfield** to make it four career wins from six starts following a strong finishing handicap success off a mark of 101. He deserves this step up in class and any further rain would only enhance his chances here.

WEEKEND TIPS

Farringdon's Doubles

Saturday

STAG HORN
 Ascot 4:25 (nap)

PATRICK SARSFIELD
 Leopardstown 5:15

Sunday

BERGERAC
 Hamilton 1:20 (nap)

NEXT BEST NAME HERE
 Racecourse 00:00

Houseman's Choice

Saturday

SCOTS SONNET
 Hamilton 3:55

Sunday

FINERY
 Hamilton 3:25



ATHLETICS

BRITISH GYMNASTICS
DECRY ABUSE CLAIMS

Chief executive Allen 'ashamed' as allegations of bullying surface

by Our Sports Desk

BRITISH Gymnastics chief executive Jane Allen has admitted to feeling "appalled and ashamed" by escalating allegations of bullying and abuse within the domestic sport.

Allen has come under increasing pressure to resign after being accused of presiding over an organisation which has consistently failed to adequately address complaints.

The growing scandal reached the current world-class programme on Thursday with sisters Becky and Ellie Downie issuing a statement that described "an environment of fear and mental abuse," and an atmosphere in which abuse was "completely normalised."

In a letter issued to members, Allen saluted the "bravery" of those like the Downies who have spoken out, and vowed their words will prove a catalyst for real change.

Allen wrote: "Any mistreatment of gymnasts is inexcusable. It is vital that concerns are made public, whether that is through the media or our processes."

"I pay tribute to those who have spoken out – their bravery will help drive change within gymnastics."

"Personally, I am appalled and ashamed by the stories I have heard."

"We have worked hard to put in place a mandatory Positive Coaching Behaviours programme and an Integrity Unit to investigate allegations of emotional abuse and bullying."

"While those have been audited and accredited by leading experts in the field, most recently in May of this year, we clearly need to do more. And quickly."

British Gymnastics has committed to an independent review of its procedures, with the results expected in the autumn.

Allen added: "The right thing is to ensure that an independent eye looks at the complaints raised this week and the systems we have in place."

"To be clear, the review's conclusions and recommendations will be the QC's alone. You have my commitment that British Gymnastics will do everything needed to support the review but will not seek to influence it in any way."

"This is extremely important and will help us better understand barriers to reporting misconduct in our sport and where we need to provide greater guidance to our mem-

bers and the wider gymnastics community on what is acceptable and what is not."

"The experiences of gymnasts highlighted this week have described fundamental issues within the gymnast-coach relationship. I expect the review and recommendations that come from it to address this and help provide clarity that helps protect gymnasts at every level."

"We are determined to get to the bottom of these issues and change gymnastics for the better."

Allegations of bullying and abuse at all levels of the sport continue to mount, with one member of the Rio 2016 team, who wishes to remain anonymous, claiming a complaint that she made to the governing body eight months ago is yet to be addressed.

Meanwhile former British rhythmic champion Nathalie Moutia has accused the governing body of failing to consider the long-term impact on young athletes.

Moutia said the abuse she suffered as a young athlete "ruined my life," that her complaints to British Gymnastics were ignored, and added: "The fact it's still going on today – I just don't understand how it can continue."



Cartoon Network announced the suspension of its deal with British Gymnastics, which allows the governing body to use its "Powderpuff Girls" imagery.

The company said: "In light of the recent allegations and while investigations are ongoing, we have suspended our licensing agreement with British Gymnastics."

FOOTBALL

Fifa offers extra support to sexual abuse survivors

by Our Sports Desk

SURVIVORS of sexual abuse are to receive enhanced support from Fifa, it has been reported.

Football's world governing body has approved a "care package" system for abuse survivors, which can be accessed potentially as soon as an allegation is brought forward.

This package of support will be co-ordinated by a case-management officer, who will be responsible for ensuring the process is as simple and secure as possible.

Support could even extend to assisting an individual with relocating where there is concern about an increased risk of retaliation or reprisals as a result of their involvement in a Fifa ethics case.

Survivors will also be assisted in accessing counsel-



ling, medical and legal services and with reporting allegations to the police.

Support has always been available to abuse survivors but the intention of the new care packages is to make the

process more structured and simplified.

Article 23 of Fifa's ethics code calls for a minimum 10-year ban in cases of sexual exploitation or abuse, and Fifa states in documents regarding the care

packages that it takes a zero-tolerance approach.

Last year Fifa banned the former president of the Afghanistan football federation, Karamuddin Karim, for life and fined him one million Swiss francs (just under £843,000) for abusing female players between 2013 and 2018. Karim has appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

The president of the Haitian federation, Yves Jean-Bart, has been suspended while allegations that he coerced female players into having sex with him are investigated. He denies the claims.

In Colombia, the former coach of the country's under-17 women's team, Didier Luna, accepted charges of sexually harassing the team's physio, Carolina Rozo, but did not serve a custodial sentence after agreeing a deal with the prosecutor.

A Fifa document states: "Fifa recognises that survivors should receive basic assistance and support in accordance with their individual needs directly arising from the alleged sexual abuse."

"This assistance and support will comprise: counselling and psycho-social support; access to shelter services where existing; legal aid and support to deal with the psychological and social effects of the experience, as necessary, and on a case-by-case basis."

SPORT ON TV

Saturday

■ CRICKET: England v West Indies, First Test, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Cricket 10.30am

■ FOOTBALL: Premier League, Norwich v West Ham, BT Sport 1 12pm, Liverpool v Burnley, BT Sport 12.30pm, Sheffield United v Chelsea, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 5pm, Brighton v Manchester City, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 7.45pm

■ GOLF: PGA Tour, Workday Charity Open, Sky Sports Golf 12.45pm

■ HORSE RACING: From Newmarket, ITV4 1.25pm

■ MMA: UFC 251, BT Sport 13am (Sun)

■ MOTORSPORT: Formula One, Styrian Grand Prix, third practice, Sky Sports F1 10.45am, qualifying, Sky Sports F1 1.30pm

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: NRL, Cronulla Sharks v Penrith Panthers, Sky Sports Arena 6am, Brisbane Broncos v Canterbury Bulldogs, Sky Sports Arena 8.30am, Canberra Raiders v Melbourne Storm, Sky Sports Arena 10.35am

■ RUGBY UNION: Super Rugby, Crusaders v Blues, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Action 7.30am.

Sunday

■ CRICKET: England v West Indies, First Test, Sky Sports Cricket 10.30am

■ FOOTBALL: Premier League, Wolves v Everton, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 11.30am, Aston Villa v Crystal Palace, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 2pm, Tottenham v Arsenal, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 4.15pm, Bournemouth v Leicester, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Premier League 6.30pm

■ GOLF: PGA Tour, Workday Charity Open, Sky Sports Golf 12.45pm & Sky Sports Main Event 10pm

■ MOTORSPORT: Formula One, Styrian Grand Prix, Sky Sports F1 2.05pm

■ NETBALL: ANZ Premiership, Tactix v Mystics, Sky Sports Main Event 8am

■ RUGBY LEAGUE: NRL, Newcastle Knights v Parramatta Eels, Sky Sports Arena 7.05am, St George-Illawarra Dragons v Manly Sea Eagles, Sky Sports Arena 9.30am

■ RUGBY UNION: Super Rugby, Hurricanes v Highlanders, Sky Sports Main Event & Sky Sports Action 4am

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