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23 March 2020

To: All Affiliates
Regional Secretaries
EC
National Council
NPC Officers

Dear Member,

Re: Annual Convention, Southport

First of all, we hope everyone is keeping safe and well. We are most certainly in very different times to those we are used to. Please make sure that you follow the information and advice given by NHS and Public Health England.

We are making our concerns known to the authorities through interviews on TV and radio. Local radio and TV stations are crucial to keeping you informed of what is happening in your area, but also to ensure that you are getting the right information and advice. Most radio stations hold phone-ins at certain times of the day, so if you are in the least bit worried about something, they are a good source of support.

Secondly, it will not surprise you that Southport Theatre and Convention Centre is now closed and our Annual Convention booked for 2-4 June is cancelled. We are liaising with the venue to reschedule for next year. When we have dates to hand, we will contact you again.

Those of you who have already purchased tickets for the event will be reimbursed over the coming weeks. Please be patient with our staff – they are working flat out and under very difficult circumstances. Our office hours are now Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9.30 – 5.00. On Tuesday and Thursday staff will work from home with remote access to our telephone answering system. Please continue to contact us and we will do everything we can to assist you.

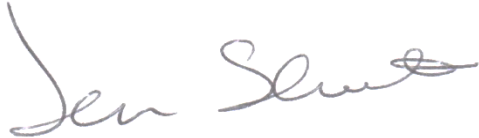
If you have booked accommodation in Southport without a deposit, then please cancel. Anyone who has paid a deposit can claim it back on the grounds of self-isolation advice from the government. For example, the Scarisbrook Hotel in Southport is now closed and is returning deposits or re-booking at a later date. It is most likely other hotels will follow suit this week.

In terms of travel, train/coach companies are, in the main, sympathetic to refunds. Please contact the station or booking office where you purchased your tickets.

Please circulate this information to members in your groups and regions to ensure that they know what to do and how to do it.

We take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support to NPC. It is frustrating that we lose our unique event this year, but we can get through this together by being vigilant, looking after ourselves and others and making sure we stay up to date, safe and well.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read "Jan Shortt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jan Shortt
General Secretary