

Who's regulating the regulators?

Enforcement matters

In May Johnson urged people to return to “Covid-19 secure workplaces”

HSE would be “having spot inspections to ensure businesses are keeping employees safe”

Pledged £14m of additional funding for HSE

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Some Realities #1

- Many workers had never stopped going to work
- They lost their lives as a result
- HSE and PHE were complicit in this

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Some Realities #2

Data released in April 2020 for HSE show:

- funding fell from £239m in 2009-10 to £135m in 2017-18 (£104m cut)
- total staff had fallen from 3,702 to 2,501 from 2009-10 to 2017-18
- the number of inspectors dropped from 1,495 to 978

March 2020, Martin Temple, then Chair of the HSE, revealed that the statistical likelihood of any one duty holder being inspected by the HSE in any one year is one in 275

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Some Realities #3

Local Authority regulatory capacities are even more diminished

- the absence of h&s EHOs
- formal barriers to enforcement, eg 'low-risk' and Primary Authority scheme
- privatisation of regulatory services

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Neither HSE nor LA regulation is fit for purpose

HSE have been complicit in their own demise

'Covid-19 secure workplaces' can only be secured by workers