

# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | JULY/AUGUST 2023

[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)



## THANKING RETAIL WORKERS

## citizens advice



- If you can't pay your bills.
- If you're struggling to pay your rent, want to end your tenancy or are worried about being evicted.
- If you have no money for food.
- Check what benefits you can get.

Citizens advice can advise you on benefits, money, housing, family, health and more.

You can contact via phone/email/live chat.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/  
contactus](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/contactus)

## SAMARITANS

- Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.
- 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Via phone or email.

[www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

**StepChange**  
Debt Charity

- Free, confidential and expert debt advice and money guidance.
- Find the best solution or service for your individual circumstances.
- Support while you deal with your money worries, for as long as you need their help.

[www.stepchange.org/  
contact-us](http://www.stepchange.org/contact-us)



Network is published bimonthly and distributed to Usdaw activists.



#### PUBLISHED BY:

Ushaw Head Office  
Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay,  
Salford Quays, Manchester,  
M50 3XZ  
t: 0161 224 2804  
e: network@usdaw.org.uk  
w: usdaw.org.uk

#### HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Mike Glover

#### EDITOR

Saiqa Khushnood

#### EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Paula Barke

#### OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Adam Kaczmarek, Rez Javied, Jo Bird,  
Liz Green, Tony Whelan,  
David Williams, Tom Foster and Debra Blow

#### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Lee Boswell; SWNS; Rez Javied; Rod Leon;  
Della Batchelor; Huw Evans Picture Agency;  
Via Getty Images:  
Morsa Images; steve631

#### ADVERTISING

Paul Heitzman t: 01727 739 196  
e: paul@centuryonepublishing.uk  
Century One Publishing, Alban Row,  
27-31 Verulam Road, St Albans, AL3 4DG

#### ©USDAW 2023

Reproduction in whole or part  
by any means without written permissions of  
the publishers is strictly forbidden.

This publisher accepts no responsibility for  
errors, omissions or the consequences thereof.



# WORKERS DEMAND A FAIRER SOCIETY

**T**he cost of living crisis continues to have a devastating impact on low-paid workers. Everyday essentials such as food, clothes, electricity, gas and transport continue to rise, while wages fail to keep pace with stubbornly high inflation. On top of this, the rising interest rates are pushing up mortgage payments and the cumulative effect is taking its toll on working people.

Ushaw's latest cost of living survey, of over 6,000 key workers, found that a staggering 81 per cent of workers said they felt worse off than they did 12 months ago and 70 per cent said their children are missing out because money is too tight.

These findings clearly show that those who are so essential to our economy are at significant risk of being left further behind.

Constructive discussions through Labour's National Policy Forum process led to some significant policy decisions to tackle insecure employment, poverty pay and poor mental health, as well as to protect workers from violence, threats and abuse. Usdaw will continue to engage with Labour on the shared policy platform in the approach to the next general election.

Some of the key agreed policies include a commitment to a New Deal for Workers, with an end to insecure employment



and the minimum wage to become a real living wage.

Labour also agreed to a standalone offence for assaulting a retail worker, action to make apprenticeships accessible to more workers and a commitment to provide more mental health professionals.

The Tories have clearly demonstrated they will not provide the change our members desperately need, it's time for a change, it's time for Labour.

*Ushaw General Secretary*

*Paddy Lewis*

**When you have finished with  
this magazine, give it to a workmate.**

# Usdaw Organising Awards 2023 Nominations Are Open

Usdaw is looking for its best activists to nominate themselves or a colleague for this year's prestigious Organising Awards.

The Usdaw Organising Awards recognises and celebrates the hard work of Usdaw reps nationwide and is a unique event in the trade union movement.

Any Usdaw member can make a nomination in each category.

Nominations must be received at your local Usdaw office by Friday 22 September 2023.

## There are nine award categories:

- Individual organising
- Individual recruitment
- Campaigns
- Health and safety rep
- Union learning rep
- Equalities rep
- Most promising new activist
- Outstanding achievement
- Team recruitment and organising

For more information about the different categories and to download the nomination form visit the Usdaw website

[www.usdaw.org.uk/nominate](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/nominate)



# INSIDE THIS ISSUE



12

## NATIONAL RETAIL WORKERS' DAY

10 | Members highlighted the importance of retail workers to our economy and our communities.

## PARENTS & CARERS SPOTLIGHT DAY

12 | June's Spotlight Day focussed on the difficulties around affordable childcare and work.

## TRADE UNION CONFERENCES

20 | Reps saw a flurry of conferences across the country debating what matters most to members.

## PENSIONS CONFERENCE

24 | Delegates heard from guest speakers and got up to speed with what's happening in the pension world.

## TESCO SATA BRANCH

30 | Activists have been working hard to get their North West Sata branch ready to go.

## TRADE UNION FESTIVALS

32 | Usdaw reps and members recognise and celebrate the work of trailblazing trade unionists.



20

## NORTH WEST YOUNG WORKERS'

36 | North West region held a two-day get-together, the first since before the pandemic.



30

## REGULARS

### 03 FOREWORD

### 06 NEWS

### 26 ACTIVIST-IN-DEPTH

### 28 RECRUITMENT & ORGANISING

### 34 LEGAL PLUS

### 38 HEALTH & SAFETY

### 42 MEMBER OFFERS

### 44 STAFF NEWS

### 46 PUBLICATIONS UPDATE



36

# IN THE NEWS

Don't forget to email the editor your view [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

## WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

**S**ainsbury's and Usdaw signed a new national agreement to improve trade union organising and representation within the business.

Usdaw and retail giant Sainsbury's launched a new partnership agreement to improve trade union representation for hourly-paid members working in supermarkets and convenience stores. The agreement marks a refreshed commitment to the long-standing union and employer relationship.

The new partnership agreement was signed by Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis and chief executive officer of Sainsbury's Simon Roberts. It defines the role of workplace reps, provides additional facilities to enable reps to carry out their duties, improves access to training and enhances problem-solving procedures.

Usdaw national officer Dave Gill said: "Usdaw has a longstanding relationship with Sainsbury's and we welcome this opportunity to improve our recognition agreement with the



business.

"Usdaw workplace reps are unpaid volunteers who do a brilliant job of providing our members with the advice, support and representation that they need.

"This new partnership agreement is full recognition from Usdaw and all of Sainsbury's management of the important role our workplace reps have in helping the business to grow and prosper.

"We look forward to a good relationship with

the company for many years to come, based on openness, honesty and constructive working, which the company are keen to promote.

"Usdaw this month launched a new blueprint for the future of retail work to ensure that shopworkers are valued and respected. That is best achieved through decent pay and secure contracts, fair treatment and equality, in safe and healthy working environments.

"Those issues will

be the cornerstone of our future discussions with Sainsbury's in our newly strengthened relationship."

[www.usdaw.org.uk/news](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/news)

### MEMBERSHIP

For week ended 29 July 2023

South Wales & Western	43,311
Eastern	51,573
Midlands	48,153
North Eastern	50,307
Scottish	37,141
Southern	50,590
North West	76,674
<b>Total</b>	<b>357,749</b>

## GRANT SCHEME

## DO YOU WORK IN FASHION?

The Fashion & Textile Children's Trust (FTCT) awards over £4,000 in grants to the children of nine Usdaw members.

The charity, which is promoted by Usdaw through its members and discount offers, has a long history of providing financial support to families in the UK fashion and textile industry, which includes supermarkets with a clothing range.

The charity receives applications from employees in John Lewis, Matalan, Next, Primark, Marks & Spencer, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Debenhams, Arcadia and Boden.

In the period between 1 July 2022 to 30th June 2023, the charity provided £4,320 to the children of nine Usdaw members who were struggling financially. The grants are a lifeline for many families and help fund children's essential items such as clothing, bedroom furniture, mobility equipment and sensory toys.

**fashion &  
textile  
children's  
trust**

The grants are available to:

- Parents of a child under 18.
- Work (or have worked) in the UK fashion and textile industry for at least one year within the last nine years.
- And experienced a sudden loss of income, an unexpected change in circumstances or a family event which is causing financial hardship. The financial hardship criteria is detailed here:

[www.ftct.org.uk/about-our-grants](http://www.ftct.org.uk/about-our-grants)

The FTCT is a confidential service so if you are struggling, get in touch to see if they can help.

For more information about the FTCT, their criteria and application process, please visit [ftct.org.uk](http://ftct.org.uk)

## Diary Dates

## SEPTEMBER

■ 10 - 13 September  
BTUC, Liverpool

## OCTOBER

■ 1 - 31 October  
Black History Month

■ 8 - 11 October  
Labour Party Conference

■ 10 October  
World Mental Health Day

■ 14 - 15 October  
Ushaw Retail Trades  
Conference

■ 18 October  
World Menopause Day

■ 14 - 21 October  
Hate Crime Awareness Week

■ 20 October  
Show Racism the Red Card

■ 28 - 29 October  
Ushaw Scottish Regional  
Conference

[www.usdaw.org.uk/events](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/events)

## BRANCH OFFICERS TRAINING



Ushaw activists at the branch officers training course at Ushaw head office in July.

## OBITUARY

### BOB COCKLE

Bob Cockle, former area organiser in the Eastern region, died in June at the age of 86.

Robert worked as a bus driver, factory worker and a lorry driver before joining Usdaw's staff in 1976. He also held a number of roles including the T&G branch secretary, vice-chairman of Essex and Suffolk Federation, chairman of his local Labour party branch and later, a Labour councillor in Bury St Edmunds.

He retired in 1996 after a successful 20-year career at Usdaw. Bob was known for his expertise in representing members in employment tribunals, as well as always having a smile and a joke for his colleagues.

General secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute: "Bob was a committed trade unionist and popular with both colleagues and members. Our condolences go out to his family and friends."

## EQUALITY FORUM NOMINATIONS

# GET INVOLVED IN THE FORUM

Are you interested in issues like disability rights, women's health, tackling racism and LGBT+ equality? Usdaw is looking for members to take up seats on their regional equalities forums, which are currently being re-formed ahead of the end of their three-year term of office this December.

There are seats on the forum for the following groups of members – women, Black, Asian and ethnic minority members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and non-binary members (LGBT+).

The reason why seats on the forum are limited to these four groups of members is because they are under-represented in the union's structures, at events and conferences and in lay roles, like shop steward and branch officer. The forums are there to find ways of encouraging these groups of members to get more involved.

If we can get more members to become reps, for instance, or

encourage more members to go to union events, that will help grow and strengthen the union.

Here are some of the practical things the forums do:

- Organise weekend schools on issues like the menopause, tackling racism and calling out sexual harassment.
- Take part in regional Pride events.
- Take the unions' equality campaigns out into workplaces.
- Visit workplaces to talk to members and non-members about things like maternity rights.

If you would like to be involved, fill in a nomination form at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/RegEqualForum](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/RegEqualForum) by Friday, 27 October 2023. Nominations for the forums will be considered by regional councils at their November meetings.

If you have questions about the union's equality work, please email [equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk) or ask to speak to a member of the equalities section by calling **0161 224 2804**.



**LABOUR RESEARCH RESOURCES FOR REPS**

To access the resources, please log in using the following details at: [www.lrdpublications.org.uk](http://www.lrdpublications.org.uk)  
Username: **usdaw** Password: **Usdaw1891**



WIN  
**£100**

    
**LOVE2SHOP**  
gift vouchers

 **LIGHTHOUSE**  
FINANCIAL ADVICE

at [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN)

Sponsored by Lighthouse Financial Advice. [www.usdaw.org.uk/lfa](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/lfa) Closing Date 26 September 2023. Terms apply.

## SCOTLAND, WALES &amp; NORTHERN IRELAND

## TESCO UNION LEARNING REP ELECTIONS

Union learning rep (ULR) elections are due to take place later this year.

Existing union learning reps will likely be aware that there have been changes to government funding in recent years, meaning that there is no longer a Union Learning Fund in England. The fund still exists in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The union, along with the TUC, continues to call for the fund to be reinstated in England.

Given the differences in funding, elections will look slightly different depending on where in the UK you are based.

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, there will be a normal election process, and the union will be encouraging existing ULRs to stand again, and any members

interested to put themselves forward to take on the role.

In England, despite the lack of funding, Tesco will continue to recognise the role of the ULRs. ULRs are an important part of the union, offering invaluable support to our members, and therefore we will be asking them to consider continuing in their roles.

The key elements of the ULR role are to:

- Advise and guide colleagues on a range of learning and skills opportunities.



- Participate in the forum process.
- Encourage and support learning.
- Signpost members to courses most suitable to their needs.

Usdaw already has lots of dedicated and talented ULRs across Tesco stores. We know that they find the role incredibly rewarding, and hope that existing reps will stand again to continue the hard work they do on behalf of members.

Look out for more details of elections in the next few weeks.

## SCOTTISH REGION: INDUCTION TRAINING



Some tremendous Tesco reps joined Usdaw in Glasgow in June for induction training. The session, tutored by deputy regional secretary Tony Doonan, lifelong learning project worker Caroline Baird and area organiser Gabriel Grigoras boosted reps' confidence and skills in trade union recruitment and building a strong union.



# COMMUNITY CENTRED

USDAW activists across the country held regional events in stores and shopping centres on 15 July, asking the public to show their support for shopworkers and share the message that 'retail workers are at the heart of our communities'.

Retail directly employs nearly 3 million, with around a further 1.5 million jobs reliant on the success of the industry. It is the biggest private sector employer in the country.

The staff are at the core of success in the retail industry, which is crucial to the UK economy and a vital part of high streets and communities. National Retail Workers' Day provided a great opportunity to thank all retail workers for the hard work they do, day in day out.

USDAW general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Today we are celebrating the role of retail workers, who undertake an essential role in our communities and our economy. On behalf of the union, I want to thank retail workers for the incredible role they do and invite the public to join with us on this inaugural National Retail Workers' Day. It is only right that retail workers are a part of this positive event and enjoy good relations with the communities they

serve. This day of appreciation adds to our year-round campaigning for the Government to deliver improved workers' rights and negotiating with employers for better terms and conditions.

"Retail work is 24/7, mentally and physically demanding, multi-skilled, high pressure, profit-driven, and target led. Retail workers have to be adaptable and dynamic, responding to rapid changes in a fast-moving consumer-driven industry. Despite the demands of the job, many retail workers and their families are facing impossible decisions just to make ends meet. While everyone has been affected by the rising cost of living, retail workers have been at the sharp end of it.

"The retail sector continues to be of fundamental importance to the UK economy and society as a whole. Despite this, retail jobs do not reflect their true value and significance. It is clear that more needs to be done by both employers and government to help shape the future of retail work and to ensure retail jobs provide people with the decent pay and hours they both need and deserve. In addition to decent pay and hours, staff should feel safe and valued at work."





Pictured clockwise from top: Yate Shopping Centre; Croydon; Lincoln Cornhill; Blackpool and Rutherglen.



# THE UK IS FAILING AT CHILDCARE

In June, Usdaw held its annual Parents and Carers Spotlight Day to highlight the difficulties Usdaw members face finding affordable childcare to fit their working hours.

The union has held a Spotlight Day every year for over 15 years. Each year the theme of the day changes and this year the theme was 'Overstretched'. This reflects both the pressures working parents in Usdaw are under and the fact that the UK's childcare system is in crisis.

Hundreds of reps got involved and held events in their stores by

setting up stalls in the canteen, theming their noticeboards, talking to members, non-members and the public, posting pictures on social media to raise awareness, asking colleagues to fill in Usdaw's survey and filling in pledge cards calling for a better deal for working parents.

## HELP US MAKE A CHANGE

To pledge your support for a change to childcare services and for more information on Usdaw's campaign visit:

[www.usdaw.org.uk/SPC](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/SPC)

## WHAT THE REPS SAID ABOUT SPOTLIGHT DAY

### Richard Lahan

*Tesco Southwark*

Lots of parents and carers struggle to get time off for their caring responsibilities, that's why this is a good campaign that raises awareness.

But we also need stronger legislation to support the rights of parents and carers.

### Glenn Merritt

*Argos Eastleigh*

Had a really good response to our Parents and Carers stand. The management team has been very helpful and encouraging.

### Helen Milford

*Sainsbury's Selsdon*

I was setting up for the campaign when several colleagues started reading

the materials and asking me questions. They were excited about the campaign and took leaflets away with them to read.

### Allison Black

*Sainsbury's East Kilbride*

The campaign day in our store was a great success. Spent the day talking to staff about flexible working, time off for family emergencies, pensions etc.

### Alex Irvine

*Tesco Livingston*

We had very positive interactions with our members about Spotlight Day and all the help that is available from the union. We had lots of members filling out the Overstretched survey.



Co-op Lea Green Distribution, St Helens





Argos LFC Changers Ford, Eastleigh

Morrisons, Congleton



# SHOWCASING USDAW BENEFITS

Reps and activists ran a full week of events, during the union's Membership Week in June, showcasing the wins Usdaw has had for its members and encouraging non-members to join. The events also served to remind existing members of the many benefits of Usdaw membership.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute to the reps who made the week a success. "I want to say a huge thank you to all the reps who took part in Membership Week," said Paddy. "Our strength is in numbers. The bigger our membership, the stronger and more powerful our voice will be."



Tesco Lea Valley



Tesco Lichfield



## WHAT THE REPS SAID

### Ian Beesley Co-op

“Despite the really challenging times we are all faced with, we have been able to retain density of almost 80 per cent membership in the depot. We’ve had a successful Membership Week and managed to recruit a number of members from core and agency staff. It’s been a great team effort. We will continue to support the existing membership and endeavour to recruit more new members into our Usdaw family.”

### Odet White Tesco

“I recruited a member of staff who has been working for a long period of time but never joined the union. She signed up today after learning about the different benefits she can enjoy by being a member.”

### Tracy Cannard Sainsbury’s

“Having a great time with our Academy rep and sharing all the fabulous benefits of being an Usdaw member, also have a new rep in the pipeline!”



Tesco West Bromwich Extra

# TACKLING RISING ABUSE IN CARDIFF

**F**ollowing a spate of shoplifting incidents, Usdaw rep and Tesco shift leader Raktima Sarkar held a Freedom From Fear event at her store to raise awareness of the challenges retail workers face every day.

Raktima described the Tesco express she works in as a 'seasonal' store which is extremely busy during the summer and school holidays. Located in the Mermaid Quay area, the store is surrounded by pubs and clubs and is open until midnight.

"Abuse and shoplifting are major issues in our store," said Raktima. "We've had people throw things at us, spit in our faces and threaten us by saying they'll be waiting for us outside."

"Asking for ID (for age-restricted sales) and self-service tills are now the biggest triggers for violence. People feel entitled to take their grudges and frustrations out on us because we're easy targets. They know nothing will happen to them if they abuse us."

She went on to say that the abuse and shoplifting have had a huge impact on her mental health. "When people steal so blatantly, it's almost like they're mocking you and it makes you feel angry," said Raktima.

"But you have to control your anger because you don't want to intervene and be attacked. As a team leader, I also have to support my colleagues who have been abused, as well as dealing with all the emotions that come with being abused myself. It can be very difficult especially when there's no end in sight."

Frustrated by what was going on in her store, Raktima decided that she would run a Freedom From Fear campaign day. "We set up a marquee and a table decorated with balloons. I had lots of Usdaw leaflets and freebies to hand out to customers and people passing by."

"On the day, we had a good turnout. Vaughan Gething, the Minister for the Economy of Wales, attended the event. He's been a long-time supporter of our campaign, so it was good to see him there. Two police officers also turned up to show their support. They talked us through the process of reporting incidents to the police. My store manager is very supportive of our campaign, he not only attended the event but also gave me the time I needed to run the event. I was also approached by a couple of Tesco managers (from different stores) who wanted me to run a similar campaign in their stores."

"All in all, it was a very positive day. We spoke to a lot of customers who were sympathetic to the plight of shopworkers. Getting them to do the ID scratch card illustrated just how difficult it was for shopworkers to determine the age of customers. We were also approached by people who work in the NHS and other retailers. They shared their experiences of abuse in their workplaces. Listening to their stories made me realise that this isn't just an issue in retail but a problem prevalent in almost all industries. It's something we need to urgently tackle by working together with employers, the police and policy makers."



Helen Couppleditch, Matthew Ashman, Vaughan Gething MS, Jason Stevens (Usdaw AO), Raktima Sarkar and Lianne Evans.



# SHAPING THE FUTURE: AUTOMATION AND SKILLS

**D**elegates from distribution, road transport, warehousing, food manufacturing and banking gathered at Cranage Hall in Cheshire for Usdaw's second Industrial Conference.

The event, held in July, was hosted by Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones. National Executive Council members Karl Lockley, Keith Jones, Simon Vincent and Susan Donaldson also attended the event. Guest speakers included Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis and Usdaw health and safety officer Tony Whelan. The focus of the event was Shaping the Future of Work, and health and safety.

## JANE JONES

Usdaw president Jane Jones opened conference by welcoming delegates and setting the agenda for the weekend. "Technology and automation could be the defining workplace issue of our time," said Jane. "It's the job of a union to protect jobs, to help equip our members with the skills and training they will need to meet these challenges, and to represent our members' views and concerns to employers and policy makers."

## PADDY LILLIS

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis talked about the cost of living

crisis and the need for a Labour government. "With the Tories out of fresh ideas," said Paddy, "we desperately need a Labour government, because only a Labour government has committed to delivering the New Deal for Working People within the first 100 days of coming into government.

"Labour will deliver what we have long been calling for: fairness at work, properly funded public services, and a better quality of life for our members and their families."

## DAVE MCCROSSEN

Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen highlighted the



results of Usdaw's survey on how technology and automation is impacting workers. Over 3,000 members responded to Usdaw's survey which highlighted that one in five workers were extremely concerned about their job security, nine in ten workers said their employer had failed to consult on the introduction of new technology and over half of workers did not believe they've been given adequate training on the use of technology at work.

"To address these concerns, Usdaw is calling for a new legal requirement for employers to consult with workers, and their representatives, on all decisions related to new technology," said Dave. "We will also be campaigning for a legal duty to conduct equality impact assessments of new technology in the workplace and a requirement to act on the findings, retraining and reskilling for workers affected by these changes, and stronger trade union rights to ensure our members' voices are heard by employers and legislators."

## HEALTH AND SAFETY - TWO MOST COMMON CONCERNS

Health and safety officer Tony Whelan talked to delegates about the two most common workplace health and safety concerns, Work Related Stress (WRS) and Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs).

"Over 372,000 workers suffered from a new cause of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in 2021-22, with 17 million working days lost due to this," said Tony. "The second most common is MSD with 139,000 workers suffering from a new case of work-related musculoskeletal disorder in 2021/22 and 7.3 million working days lost."

Delegates took part in workshops to identify specific occupational WRS and MSDs risks in their workplaces, how these could be prevented and formed an action plan to take back to their workplaces.

Tony went on to say that reps

were the last line of defence because the political landscape has hampered the Health and Safety Executive from doing their job. "They've had their budget cut in half over the last 10 years which has impacted their ability to do their enforcement action," said Tony. "Even if they do go to a workplace, they have to consider the impact on the business as part of their enforcement management model. In addition, as part of the HSE's 10-year strategy there is no mention of consultation with trade unions. And finally, there is also the threat of government reforms of the EU Bill, which will prioritise business over workplace protections.

"This is why we need to rely on organising, utilising the legal rights given to health and safety reps and maintaining good working relationships with management."



# REPRESENTING THE UNION

Summer saw a flurry of conferences taking place up and down the country. Usdaw delegates were at the forefront, eloquently representing the issues that matter most to their members.

## TUC LGBT+ CONFERENCE

Udaw delegates raised deep concerns about the disproportionately worse health outcomes experienced by LGBT+ people at the conference in June. LGBT+ people experience significant health inequalities in terms of health outcomes, healthcare service provision and health risk factors. Discrimination can lead to misdiagnosis, delayed diagnosis, inappropriate treatments, and can prevent LGBT+ people from seeking help.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: “We want to see more promotion of the specialist services available to LGBT+ people. The Government must be held to account for their failure to progress the recommendations of the 2018 national LGBT+ Action Plan.”

## STUC YOUTH CONFERENCE

Udaw sought to tackle sexual harassment and the impact of the cost of living crisis at the STUC in Glasgow at the beginning of July.

The union recognised the higher risk of sexual harassment young workers face due to the sectors they work in, and welcomed the STUC giving this issue a high profile with their ‘Silence is Compliance’ report.

Rising costs, such as transport and food, have a disproportionate impact

on young workers and their working lives. At the heart of the cost of living crisis are our weak employment rights, leaving workers vulnerable to economic headwinds.

Udaw regional secretary for Scotland Tracy Gilbert called for “a new deal for workers which would include targeted support for those impacted by the cost of living crisis, a fundamental overhaul of our social security system and further advances to Scotland’s Fair Work agenda.”

## ICTU BIENNIAL CONFERENCE

Udaw delegates raised concerns about the vast developments in workplace technology and automation in Kilkenny in July.

It is estimated that nine in 10 employees will need to retrain by 2030. Many jobs and workers have already been impacted and, as the rate of technological development increases, there will be a greater and greater impact on the workforce.

Yet, there is a lack of training from employers. Usdaw’s own research shows that over half of workers do not believe they have been given adequate training.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis called for “significant and long-term investment in skills funding, positive action to tackle under-representation, robust sectoral plans to support skills development to encourage greater digital literacy, a right to paid time-off for retraining and stronger legislation to prevent union busting tactics and the removal of practices that seek to undermine organising in the workplace.”



TUC LGBT+ Conference





# WORKING FOR A NEW DEAL

**U**sdaw's NEC statement sets out exactly what a New Deal for Workers should look like, and the practical steps that we can all take to organise for it. This article focuses on what reps can do to help Usdaw deliver a New Deal for Workers.

## WHAT IS USDAW'S NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS?

The cost of living crisis has hit working people hard. Workers who were on the frontline, keeping our country going during the pandemic, have seen their living standards squeezed and their families suffer as wages have failed to keep up with soaring bills and skyrocketing costs.

At the heart of the cost of living crisis is a crisis of employment rights. A lack of decent employment rights means that low paid workers are particularly vulnerable to having their hours, wages or terms and conditions cut. That is why we need urgent action on the campaign's demands, which include:

- An immediate increase in the minimum wage to £12 per hour, as a step towards £15 per hour, for all workers.
- A right to a 'normal hours' contract.
- A ban on zero-hours contracts.
- Proper enforcement of employment rights.
- Improved sick pay.
- Legal protection, making it a specific offence to abuse public-facing workers, with a sentence that fits the crime.
- Job security and stronger protection against redundancy and dismissal.
- Fair treatment and equality

for all workers.

- A stronger voice at work through strengthened trade union rights.

## What can reps do to help deliver a New Deal for Workers?

The New Deal for Workers campaign will only be delivered through having an organised army of well-trained and supported reps in workplaces up and down the country, the foundation of any union.

## Recruiting new reps

Usdaw has lost hundreds of reps since the pandemic with many of them retiring or leaving the sectors Usdaw organises in. We need our reps to identify those members with the potential skills and abilities to make a difference on behalf of their colleagues.

## Representative of the workforce

We need to ensure that the union's voice is representative of the workforce. A rep team, across the union, that understands the issues faced by young workers, older workers, women workers, Black workers, LGBT+ workers, disabled workers and other marginalised groups will be best placed to deal with the specific issues these workers face.

## A strong union presence

Developing a solid rep base enables the union to organise effectively in more workplaces. Not just organising in the sense of ensuring that all new starters are spoken to about joining the union, but also ensuring that issues are quickly



picked up and dealt with. The more reps we have, the better our ability to deliver improved hourly rates of pay, better sick pay and fair treatment and equality for all workers.

## Ensuring all inductions are covered

Ensuring all inductions are covered to give us the best possible chance of recruiting as many people face-to-face as possible, at the earliest opportunity.

## Promoting campaigns and key messages

Taking part in dedicated campaign activities, such as the Respect for Shopworkers Week or Spotlight Day, can help build the union's profile by engaging members, non-members and the general public on the work we do. These activities demonstrate that we are a campaigning union,



focusing on the issues that really matter to our members. They also aid recruitment and ensure we have high visibility in the workplace.

### **Making full use of all the facilities**

Read through your workplace agreement to check you are making full use of all the facilities available to you so that we are as effective as possible. This could include making sure the union noticeboard is kept updated with all the relevant information and is as engaging as possible. Utilise rep team meetings (if you have them) to keep the rep team active and informed.

### **Listening to members**

Make yourself available to speak to members for a certain amount of time each week or month. Actively listen to the views and concerns of members and feeding

back effectively from any site or committee meetings, so that members are kept informed.

### **Signing up for the political fund**

One of the quickest but most important ways reps can contribute to the union's political work is by ensuring they are signed up to the union's political fund and encourage all members to do the same.

### **Joining the Labour Party**

The union encourages members to join the Labour Party because we have a shared set of values and common aims, with the party being formed by trade unions to represent workers' interests in Parliament. As a result, Labour will deliver many of the goals of the New Deal for Workers campaign within the first 100 days of forming a government.

## **WHAT USDAW WILL DO TO DELIVER A NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS**

- Deliver strong recognition agreements, which are crucial to ensuring that reps and members are treated fairly.
- Make improvements to pay, hours, sick pay, job security etc. through collective bargaining.
- Rebuild its rep base by identifying and supporting new reps as well as offering continual development opportunities to existing reps.
- Relaunch the members' area of the website, to provide updates, information and materials.
- Provide bespoke materials for key campaign days and inductions.
- Build a diverse and inclusive pool of activists and reps, for instance through its Breaking Down Barriers Programme.
- Train the next generation of political activists, to advocate for and campaign for a New Deal for Workers locally and nationally, through its Political Activists Programme.
- Use every possible avenue to ensure that workers' rights and a New Deal for Workers are high on the agenda for the next Labour government.



# PENSIONS: SAVING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

**U**sdaw welcomed delegates to the AC Marriott hotel in Salford Quays for its 16th national pensions conference.

The triennial event remains an important fixture in the union's calendar and was hosted by Usdaw pensions officer Debra Blow, Usdaw pension advisor Neil Ashworth and was chaired by Usdaw president Jane Jones. Delegates also heard from guest speakers including senior financial advisor from Lighthouse Financial Mark Beddow, First Actuarial actuary Charlotte White and pensions administrator George Kennedy.

The aim of the conference was to get delegates up to speed with what's happening in the world of pensions, take what they've learned back to their workplaces and give

them the confidence to run their own pension awareness campaigns.

## **MARK BEDDOW** Lighthouse Financial

The first guest speaker, Mark, explained the important differences between the two main types of pension schemes that operate in the UK at present.

The first type is known as Defined Benefit (DB), otherwise known as Final Salary schemes or Career Average Revalued Earning (CARE). The second type is known as Defined Contribution (DC).

DB schemes have very much been in decline over the last 20 years, and many have now closed. The majority of, if not all, Usdaw members will now only have access to DC schemes.

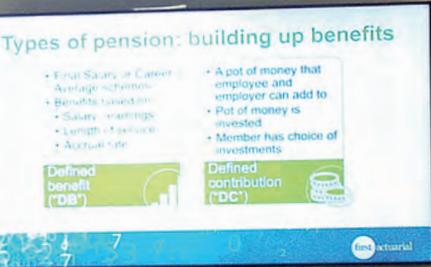
DC schemes are like savings plans but with generous tax advantages.

In 2015, George Osborne introduced new pension legislation specifically relating to DC pensions called 'Pension Freedoms'. This has given us a lot more choice and flexibility when we reach retirement.

Mark focused on the different choices that are available by sharing some case studies and he explained how important getting independent advice is in order to avoid making bad decisions that can affect your income when you stop working.

## **DEBRA BLOW** Usdaw pensions officer - Auto enrolment workshop

Usdaw pensions officer Debra Blow explored how auto enrolment has fared since its introduction 10 years



## CHARLOTTE WHITE & GEORGE KENNEDY

### First Actuarial

Charlotte and George focused on pension transfers and pension scams.

A pension scam usually involves the promise of high returns and low risk. Scammers target victims via phone, text messages, email, post and social media. Scammers can be articulate with credible websites and testimonials and are hard to distinguish from the real thing.

They outlined some of the signs of a pensions scam:

- Cold calling about pensions is illegal and likely a sign of a scam.
  - Offering a 'free pensions review'.
  - They use phrases like 'pensions liberation', 'loan', 'loophole', 'one-off investment' and 'cashback'.
  - Help to release cash from a pension before the age of 55, with no mention of the HMRC tax bill that can arise.
  - Unusual high-risk investments, which tend to be overseas, unregulated, with no consumer protections.
  - High pressure sales tactics – time limited offers to get the best deal; using couriers to send documents, who wait until they're signed.
- They advised, to protect yourself, reject unexpected offers, check who you are dealing with, don't be rushed into making a decision and consider getting impartial advice.

ago and shared her thoughts on whether this would solve pension issues for future generations.

"Over 10 million people have been auto enrolled, the number of women contributing has increased by 50 per cent and an additional £33 billion has been saved into pension pots since 2012," said Debra.

"However, there are still a number of issues that need to be tackled such as the millions who are excluded from auto enrolment due to age and earnings triggers; people not saving enough and the pensions gender gap which is caused by unequal pay, career breaks, divorce and women retiring early due to the menopause."

"Udaw will continue trying to influence government, keeping the issue of pensions on the ADM

agenda, giving feedback to the TUC and pension organisations, and raising awareness through our reps."

## NEIL ASHWORTH

### Udaw pensions advisor

Neil shared some pension basics around how the state pension works, including the triple lock. State Pension increases are calculated by the triple lock, which is the higher of:

- Annual earnings growth to July,
- Inflation as determined by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in October.
- And 2.5 per cent.

The Triple Lock was suspended in 2022/23 and State Pension increased by 3.1 per cent (CPI).

It was re-instated in April 2023/24 and therefore increased by 10.1 per cent (CPI).



## ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH MIHAI-ANDREI PUIU

**U**sdaw rep and AO.com team leader Mihai-Andrei Puiu stood to become a rep in 2019. Currently on Academy, he spoke to *Network* about the challenges of being a rep during lockdown and how he organised a site with over 800 people.

### **How did you become active?**

I was translating for my Romanian colleagues, who couldn't speak fluent English, in meetings. Someone in HR encouraged me to think about becoming a rep because I knew all the policies and procedures.

I was a bit hesitant at the start because I didn't want the company to start treating me differently, but thankfully the union has a good relationship with the company and nothing has changed in that sense.

### **What was it like being a rep during lockdown?**

It wasn't easy. The team of reps we had dwindled as people retired or left the business. Lockdown was a terrible time for many people. It was a lot to deal with as a new rep but I'm very grateful that I have a great area organiser, Carl Turner, who

supported me every time I called with a query.

### **How did you increase density to over 75 per cent post-lockdown?**

Organising the site took around two years and one of the things that helped was having a good relationship with the company, it just makes everything a lot easier. I was given time to do my rep duties, which included recruiting at inductions. Although I work days, I was going in to speak to the night staff about joining the union. We

have a lot of Romanian workers at our site and I was able to recruit them largely because I speak the language. I find the biggest selling point is explaining that union membership includes legal support.

### How do you find recruiting?

It can be up and down. I have noticed that a few years ago, it was relatively easy to recruit non-members but it's a lot harder now. The cost of living means people are looking at every penny they spend because they need money to pay for essentials like food and energy bills. The other thing I find is that recruiting one-to-one is a lot easier than trying to recruit in a group. In a group situation people are influenced by one another. If one person says they don't want to join or that they want time to think about it, then the others say the same thing.

### You are responsible for increasing the rep team at your site, how did you achieve this?

At the time, there were only a couple of reps at our site and it became apparent we couldn't look after 800 people. I started by trying to get a rep on every shift. It was important for me that our members had someone close to them that they could reach out to. I asked members who they thought would make a good rep because they would be the ones dealing with them. Once I had the names, I approached these people and asked them to consider standing. We had six candidates but only four rep positions. I spoke to the company and, after a little persuasion, they agreed that all six could become reps.

### Your work was recognised at this year's Organising Awards when you won the Individual Organising Award, how did you feel?

I was very shocked and honoured to win. I didn't expect to win as I'd not been a rep for that long. I want to thank the people who voted for me, as well as Mike Aylward and Amanda Bailey-Coll for making it a great evening. I'm going to carry on doing what I'm doing to ensure the union goes from strength to strength.

### How did you find Usdaw's training?

The training and support I've received from Usdaw has been fantastic. I've gained a lot of knowledge and skills and it has played a part in me being promoted to a team leader in my workplace. Sometimes, employers are too busy to talent spot but when you stand to become a rep, you're showcasing your skills to your employer. You are showing them that you know the policies and procedures, that you can speak confidently, mentor other reps and resolve complicated issues and problems. I want to take this opportunity to thank my employer for all the support and encouragement they've given me over the years.

### What made you apply for the Academy?

My AO had been asking me to go on the Academy for a couple of years but I kept saying no because I didn't think I was ready. And it was the right decision, because focusing solely on the rep role gave me the chance to develop my skills and build my knowledge around pay negotiations, ballot votes, restructures and supporting people in a redundancy situation. This experience gave me the confidence to apply. The support I'm getting on the Academy is fantastic, particularly from my area organiser Andy Firman and Michelle Fleming. I would encourage reps to think about applying.

### What's next for you?

After I finish the Academy, I'll go back to my site and spend time with my reps to make sure they're supported in the same way I was supported. I will also be running campaigns. Until I did the Academy, I didn't realise how important they were. Campaigns make the union visible; they show that you are active while promoting what the union can do for members. They also give you the opportunity to interact with members and non-members alike, and address any issues before they become bigger concerns.



Winner Mihai-Andrei with general secretary Paddy Lillis, president Jane Jones and deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen at the Organising Awards in January.

### WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing in your workplace.

[network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

# THEY'VE HAD THEIR WEETABIX!

Weetabix reps recognised at this year's prestigious Safety and Excellence Awards held in Birmingham

**U**sdaw health and safety reps at Weetabix, led by convenor Simon Archer and chair of the safety reps committee Nik Lazic, were part of a brilliant team that won the prestigious Safer Logistics award, as well as being commended in the Campaign of the Year award, for their Goal Zero initiative at this year's Safety and Health Excellence Awards.

The award, won by Weetabix, recognised the contribution Usdaw health and safety reps made towards delivering a vision of an accident-free workplace.

Simon and Nik make up a team of 22 reps who look after the manufacturing and head office sites, which employ around 1,100 people. They attended the award ceremony in Birmingham with their colleagues and spoke to *Network* about the various initiatives they've implemented in their workplaces to improve safety.

**Simon:** It was a tough competition, and we didn't expect to win as it was our first time entering. But it was a delightful surprise when we did. The award ceremony was great and we got to meet Tess Daly, who was the compère for the evening.

**Nik:** The company is very safety-orientated and we have a good relationship with them that stems back to 2012. Back then, we had a manager who had a vision to prioritise safety and work

collaboratively with the reps on site. Simon and I sat down with him and worked out how we were going to do this. Since then, we've had a shared vision and shared goals. We all want people to go home in the same condition they arrive in.

**Simon:** In 2012, we only had five or six reps, each one working independently, not knowing who the other reps were. We currently have 22 reps who are fully trained in what they do. They review risk assessments in their teams, challenge behavioural safety in the plant, do MAC and ART assessments, and take an active part in level 2 and level 3 assessments. The reps are pivotal to what happens at the site and their work has been rightly recognised by the company at their annual Weetastars awards.

**Nik:** Weetabix started the Goal Zero initiative about two years ago, the aim of which was to have zero accidents and environmental incidents. The company put together a steering group of all stakeholders, including operators, management, regular contractors, the safety team, support staff, and Simon and I (representing the union) to help deliver safety targets.

**Simon:** To achieve this, we divided the year into four quarters and had a theme per quarter, such as health and wellbeing, 360 hi-vis, Blue Monday in January etc.



*Pictured l-r: Kerry Bridgstock; Tracy Richards; Caitlyn Fran Simon Archer; Stephen Purdon; Molly Smith; Nik Lazic and*

With the help of an external agency, we developed safety materials, eye-catching animations and an extremely successful video advent calendar.

**Nik:** The calendar featured daily messages of safety advice and tips. We also had a separate video message from a Weetabix employee, who had a serious accident 15 years ago. He spoke about the lasting impact this had on his health and mental health. For the first time ever, we utilised our direct to the factory floor communication channel, Red Zone, to access operators directly with safety announcements.

**Simon:** We also used the Weetabix intranet homepage with a banner showing different safety messages,



...cis; Carey James; Paul Harvey; I Graham Martin.

promoted messages on the front page of Week-a-bix, the weekly newsletter, and had team huddles to ensure the safety messages were landing with our colleagues.

**Nik:** In an attempt to engage workers and their families, we ran a series of competitions and quizzes over the year. There was an internal poster competition, which was won by a colleague's daughter and another employee.

**Simon:** Back to Basics is part of Goal Zero, and is all about ensuring colleagues are doing the basics such as wearing their hi-vis and ear defenders, using the walkways and zebra crossings, not using their mobile phones while walking around the site, etc.



**Nik:** Going forwards, we will continue with Goal Zero. We'll also be taking part in World Safety Day, as well as creating another advent calendar. We've been inundated with people wanting to be involved!

**Simon:** For us, the safety of our colleagues is paramount. We will continue to work with the company

to ensure our colleagues are safe and well looked after.

**Nik:** We have a great team of reps and we couldn't do what we do without their help and support. Hopefully, after Simon and I retire, we will have lots of fantastic reps to carry on the work we started. That will be our legacy.



# A VOICE FOR SATA REPS

**T**hree Tesco Sata reps have been working hard to get their North West branch active so that managers have a forum where they can raise issues, share best practice and network.

## WHAT IS AN USDAW BRANCH?

Branches are the cornerstone of Usdaw and are integral to the democracy of the union. They allow members to connect with the union, whether that's just staying up to date on what's happening in their workplace or taking a more active role in the union by supporting events and campaigns. Branches also allow members to raise and discuss the issues that matter to them through the union's regional and annual conferences and have their say on policy matters.

Branches are run by an elected committee who work together for the effective running of the branch.

Branch committees plan activities for the branch and elect delegates to attend both regional and national conferences. Branches can submit propositions to ADM and may elect at least one delegate to attend and vote at ADM.

Branch meetings are held on a regular basis and are organised and run by the branch committee. Going to branch meetings enables reps and members not only to keep themselves informed of what is happening where they work, but also learn about the focus of the union at a local, regional and national level.

*Network* spoke to vice chair Karen Gallagher, branch secretary Natalie Campbell and branch chair Scott Johnson, to talk about their reasons for setting up the branch.

### **Karen Gallagher** **Tesco Bidston Moss**

"It all started when I attended a branch meeting and mentioned to

Usdaw's deputy regional secretary, Amanda Bailey-Coll, that the Sata branch was inactive so reps didn't have a network in place, which made it difficult to communicate with one another," said Karen, 47.

"On the back of this conversation, Amanda arranged a get-together at the Warrington office for Tesco Sata reps in the North West region. Around 16 reps attended this meeting and we spent the day discussing ways to get our branch active and electing the branch officers.

"Scott Johnson was voted in as the chair and I was elected as the vice chair. Since Natalie had already done some of the preparatory work on the branch she became the branch secretary.

"For me, getting the branch active has been a very positive experience. Managers are also employees which means, just like colleagues, they can have issues at work around



performance, sickness, pay etc. The branch allows us to discuss what's important to us and raise our issues and concerns as a collective.

"Since that get-together, we have had one Zoom meeting, with another scheduled in a couple of weeks' time. The plan is to have quarterly meetings via Zoom with one in-person meeting a year.

"We've also started a WhatsApp group with all the Sata reps in our branch, which has been great for running queries by one another, sharing information, discussing who will attend which conference and providing moral support.

"With Scott and Natalie, I feel like I have got a good team of people I can turn to for help and support."

### **Natalie Campbell** **Tesco Hattersley**

"Getting the branch going has been a huge win for us because it gives managers a collective voice and a

forum where they can raise their issues and concerns" said Natalie, 34. "A lot of managers feel that they're not seen as employees but rather as an extension of the company, which means they tend to get blamed for the decisions the company makes.

"But of course, managers are employees and just like colleagues they have issues around performance, structure changes, redundancies etc, and therefore need representation by reps who understand their terms and conditions and the different pressures they face.

"It was important for us to get the branch running because fellow Sata reps wanted a network in place that would allow them to communicate with one another, make collective decisions and have colleagues that they could turn to for help and support.

"Some of the issues that I would

like the branch to focus on include work/life balance for managers, transparency in pay, advancing racial equity both in the workplace and in the union, and mental health training for managers so that they can signpost colleagues who are struggling.

"Although the branch is in its infancy, I'm hoping that we will be able to make a positive contribution to both the union and Tesco."

### **Scott Johnson** **Tesco Hanley Express**

"I attended the first get-together in Warrington earlier this year and I got a lot out of it," said Scott, 46. "We had a number of guest speakers from the union who gave us an update on all the work the union was doing within Tesco, as well as the work they were doing behind the scenes such as campaigning and lobbying for improvements.

"During the meeting, we elected the branch committee. A couple of people asked me to stand as the branch chair, which I did. I was elected after I set out my priorities that included improving managers' pay as well as actively recruiting more Sata reps. This is a completely new role for me but the union is providing us with the training we need to help us get up to speed.

"The branch being active has meant that we now receive regular updates on what the union is doing, we get to communicate with fellow reps via our WhatsApp group and we get to talk about the issues that are important to us.

"News of the branch has spread and I've had a number of reps and colleagues reach out to me asking for advice and support.

"I originally stood to become a rep because I believe that people have the right to be treated fairly. The branch is just another way of helping colleagues both individually and collectively. I would encourage everyone to get involved in their branch as it's a great way of staying connected and informed."



# WOMEN & MARTYRS

**E**ach year the festival recognises and celebrates the women chainmakers of Cradley Heath, who won the right to a minimum wage after a 10-week dispute.

The festival was a family-friendly event and included a banner procession, music, theatre, re-enactments, comedy, children's activities, as well as stalls and speeches from leading female trade unionists.

Cradley Heath was a centre for chainmaking in Britain at the beginning of the 19th century. Although the bigger chains were made by men in factories, the smaller chains were hand-made by women at home. It was physically demanding work, with women

earning little more than 'starvation wages'.

In 1910, the Chainmaking Trade Board, which was set up to establish and enforce minimum rates of pay, announced a minimum wage of 2½ pence per hour for chainmakers, double the existing rate. When employers refused to pay the increase, the National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW), led by the charismatic Mary Macarthur, called a strike.

The strike attracted popular support from all sections of society thanks to Mary's innovative campaigning. Her experience as a journalist meant she was adept at using the media to promote the women's cause. She used the oldest and frailest looking

women and draped their chains around their necks. The pictures proved irresistible to journalists and featured in both the regional and national press. Mary also addressed mass gatherings to raise awareness of the women's situation and exposed the chainmasters' exploitative practices. She said, "Women are unorganised because they are badly paid, and poorly paid because they are unorganised."

The dispute ended 10 weeks later when all the employers agreed to pay the new rate.

Each year, the festival recognises and celebrates the contribution these women made to the trade union movement. And although the world is vastly different from the world of 1910, the struggles of the



Women Chainmakers' Festival

chainmakers remain relevant today, with people still working in unsafe conditions, not being able to make ends meet and working in sectors that remain unorganised and therefore vulnerable to exploitation.

People like Mary laid the foundations for organising and campaigning that have been strengthened and expanded by generations of trade unionists, whose focus has always been to improve the pay and working conditions of their members.

### Lisa Charlish

*Network* caught up with Usdaw rep Lisa Charlish to get her thoughts on the festival.

"It was my first time attending the Chainmakers' Festival," said Lisa. "I found the whole thing very interesting and hugely inspirational. Before I went, I didn't know much about Mary Macarthur but the



Durham Miners' Gala

more I heard about her, the more impressed I was.

"In a way, she set the precedent for how unions could fight for women's rights. She spearheaded the campaign for a minimum wage and then went on strike to get the rate applied, she improved the lives of thousands of women workers. We can all learn a lot from people like Mary Macarthur.

"It was a great day out. We heard speeches from Usdaw president Jane Jones, as well as reps and officials from other unions. We also got the opportunity to talk to members from different unions such as teachers and nurses. It was good to hear them talk about what's going on in their sectors and why they're striking. It was a lovely way of connecting with like-minded people.

"The more I listened, the more I realised that although things have improved since then, we have similar problems today with women still being paid less than men and the cost of living making it impossible for people to feed their families and

pay their energy bills. The festival re-energised me and inspired me to carry on fighting for our members."

### DURHAM MINERS' GALA

More than 200,000 people attended the Durham Miners' Gala on 8 July, including Usdaw reps, members and officials. They watched the proud display of miners' banners, processions, and brass bands.

The 137th gala, also known as 'the big meeting', celebrates the struggles of working-class people for dignity and justice at work and can be traced back to the strong mining heritage of the North East. It's the world's greatest celebration of trade union values, community spirit and working class life. The focal point of the gala was the County Hotel at Old Elvet where the two legs of the procession converged.

The event was attended by Labour deputy leader Angela Rayner, Paul Novak, general secretary of the TUC, and Stephen Guy, chairman of Durham Miners' Association.

# WINNING FOR MEMBERS THROUGH LEGAL PLUS

The union's free legal service delivers great results and has secured millions of pounds of compensation for members affected by illness and accidents

**D**elivering Legal Plus is about teamwork and it's important that reps ensure members and potential members know all about this great service.

## What is Legal Plus?

Legal Plus is one of the great benefits of being an Usdaw member and family members can benefit too. It has its own legal department with qualified professionals working for members backed up by a nationwide network of solicitors.

One of the main features of the service is FirstCall Usdaw – a free claim line service for accidents, injuries and diseases. This covers road traffic accidents, work-related diseases and conditions, slips and trips, injuries caused when involved in a crime of violence or armed robbery, any time and any place in the UK and in some cases while on package holiday outside of the UK\*.

The service has been extended to cover family for personal injury. Family members who reside with an Usdaw member are now covered for non-work related accidents in the UK, for accidents/illness whilst on a package holiday abroad\* and also for road traffic accidents.

Legal Plus also offers professional support with employment problems, pensions, health and safety, free will writing, assistance with probate, special conveyancing rates and advice for problems outside of work.

## Who can use Legal Plus?

All members are entitled to the legal

service from the day they join.

- To use FirstCall, members must be in membership when the accident or incident happens and be up to date with their contributions.
- Members must observe the rules of the Legal Plus service set out in the Legal Plus handbook.
- Family members living with you are covered for any non-work related accident, anywhere in the UK and on package holidays outside the UK\*.

## How to access Legal Plus

Making a claim through FirstCall is easy.

- The freephone line 0800 055 6333 is open 24/7 every day and gives members instant access to legal assistance for accident and injury.
- After a quick membership check, members and their family will be passed through to a solicitor.

The FirstCall Usdaw line should only be used to start a claim. It is not a general helpline, and should not be used to enquire about the progress of the case or to apply for legal assistance.

Ushaw reps should continue to keep on top of the accidents in their workplaces to ensure that the member is properly looked after at the time, health and safety issues are covered and the member knows they are fully supported.

The other legal services can be accessed by contacting the legal department on 0161 249 2473 or through the Usdaw website:

[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

## What is the role of the Usdaw rep?

Reps should ensure that members know about Usdaw's legal service, understand what is covered and are alerted to their legal rights. Reps should also ensure that members have easy access to the legal service, know how to use it and are offered support if it's required.

Reps are also required to represent the member on employment issues under the procedures with the aim of resolving them within the procedures. And finally, reps should promote Legal Plus when recruiting members.

## How can I organise around Legal Plus?

Getting organised means having a system which tells members about Legal Plus and how to access it, supports members through their claim and uses Legal Plus effectively to support recruitment.

- Make sure that other reps know the range of Legal Plus benefits and spread the word.
- Is your noticeboard up to date? Make sure it's showing the *FirstCall Usdaw poster* (R40), *Looking After You and Your Family* (leaflet 312 and poster R10) and members' letters of endorsement after using the service.

You can also pull out the Legal Plus member story pages in *Arena*

magazine.

- Regularly circulate the FirstCall card with up-to-date leaflets.
- Encourage members who have used the service to share their story in *Arena* magazine.

### How do I use Legal Plus as a recruitment tool?

Non-members should be aware why the Legal Plus service is such a good reason to join the union.

Legal Plus saves members thousands of pounds and there are no hidden charges – for example, in personal injury claims, Usdaw guarantees that the member will recover **100 per cent compensation**, where high street solicitors can take up to a 25 per cent cut.

Usdaw's solicitors specialise in industrial accident cases and know about Usdaw's companies. And with private solicitors charging over £100 an hour for their services, members won't find a better deal.

Consider organising a Legal Plus day where members and non-members can find out more about the service. You may even be able to invite a local Usdaw solicitor to talk to members. Ask your area organiser for help.

### Legal plus reps handbook

For everything you need to know about the union's legal service, including how to support members with legal issues, and how to use Legal Plus as a recruitment tool, see the Legal Plus Reps' Handbook:

**[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/  
LegalPlusRepsHandbook](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/LegalPlusRepsHandbook)**

\*Package holiday claims means accidents, injuries or other personal injury claims covered under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992.





# YOUNG WORKERS - THE FUTURE TRADE UNIONISTS

**U**sdaw's North West region recently held a successful two-day get-together for young reps and members in Blackpool, the first get-together since before the pandemic. The aim of the get-together was to share experiences, exchange ideas and foster a strong collective voice.

On the agenda was a talk from the TUC's regional secretary Jay McKenna, who spoke about his own union journey as a young PCS rep and how he sometimes had to fight to be heard in his workplace.

The workshops on effective social media campaigns and reaching out to young workers emphasised creativity and asked delegates to make videos on Usdaw's campaigns, as well as creating an eight-page mini-zine for young workers who may not have a clear understanding of trade unions.

Inspired by the Norwegian trade union Lo-Norway, the region organised a summer patrol, an initiative that sends trade union

activists into workplaces with young workers but without collective agreements. The aim is to sign up as many as possible to build up the trade union movement.

To give the committee members a taste of Usdaw's organising work some of them took part in a week of stand-down, where they visited both unionised and non-unionised workplaces to leaflet and talk to staff about the benefits of union membership. During the week, they recruited 30 new young members and identified three new reps.

*Network* spoke to two young delegates on how they found the event.

## MARIA LOPEZ

Maria Lopez, a 25-year-old rep at Tesco Allerton Road, is trying to improve the lives of young workers through her active involvement in the Young Workers' Committee.

Having previously worked in a non-unionised workplace, Maria saw first-hand the stark contrast

between unionised and non-unionised workplaces.

"It was my experience of being a young worker in a non-unionised workplace that prompted me to put myself forward and be a part of a movement that actively works towards improving the lives of young workers. In a non-unionised workplace there's very little training, people don't know their policies and even if they do, they're not always followed. That's when a union comes in, to make sure things are done right."

Maria is currently on four months of stand-down and is spending her time trying to recruit young workers. "Young people aren't averse to joining unions, they just don't know what they are. Once you break down what a union is and what they do, young workers are willing to join. An example that always has a big impact is that Usdaw abolished youth rates in its companies and without this, lots of young workers would be on a lower pay rate than



their older colleagues.”

Maria went on to say that the issues most affecting young workers are low pay, insecure work and low hour contracts. A big issue for young workers is that they feel like they get the short end of the stick when it comes to shift schedules. They're expected to work the unsociable shifts like lates, weekends, bank holidays, Christmas and Easter because there is an assumption that they don't have children. Maria firmly believes, regardless of age and childcare commitments, everyone deserves the opportunity to spend time with their families and friends.

Asked how she found the get-together, Maria replied that she was really pleased to see her region making significant efforts to engage young workers because young workers are the trade unionists of the future. “The workshops on running a social media campaign, mental health awareness and

creating zines to engage other young workers were fantastic. It was so good to meet other like-minded people to talk about what we can do to make a difference. I made some friends who I can turn to when I need advice or support.”

### JOANNE GUY

Joanne Guy, a 26-year-old delivery driver and Usdaw rep at Tesco Shrewsbury, spoke about the importance of educating young people on the trade union movement.

“I've only been a rep since January,” said Joanne. “I stood because there was only one other rep in the store and I'm not afraid of using my voice on behalf of people who don't have that confidence.

“I joined the union because my parents told me to join one as soon as I started work. Despite this, I didn't know much about unions until I stood as a rep and went on

the training courses. I don't think I'm alone in this. Lots of people my age aren't taught about the trade union movement in school so when we enter the workplace we don't automatically think about joining. This is something that should be remedied in schools and covered in the curriculum.

“The event in Blackpool was the first young workers event I have attended, and I found it very welcoming and informative. I don't use social media as a rep but after doing the social media workshop it is something I am now considering.

“I predominately work with people who are older than me, so it was good meeting reps and members my age and talking about issues that affect us. We all agreed that sometimes older colleagues don't take younger colleagues seriously even though they have the knowledge and experience.

“The get-together has inspired me to get more involved in the union. I'm hoping I can do some stand-down because there are a few stores near me that don't have reps, so I would like to go in and make contact with colleagues there.

“For me, personally, it's important Usdaw members have someone they can turn to for advice or support.”

## HOW YOUNG WORKERS CAN GET ACTIVE AND INVOLVED

If you're a young worker (under the age of 27) and you want to get more involved with your Young Workers' Committee, or you want the opportunity to learn about the issues facing

young workers, then the Young Workers' Weekend comes highly recommended. For more information, contact your local Usdaw office [www.usdaw.org.uk/Contact-Us/Usdaw-Offices](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Contact-Us/Usdaw-Offices)



# KEEPING YOUR COOL AT WORK

**M**ost of us welcome hot weather, but when it's too hot, there can be serious health risks. During heatwaves, far more people than usual get seriously ill. If hot weather hits this summer, make sure your employer is doing all they can to prevent harm in the workplace.

## Is it too hot to work?

Currently, there's no law for a maximum working temperature, or when it's too hot to work. Usdaw wants to see the law changed, so that employers and workers know when action must be taken to keep workers cooler and safer.

Udaw, along with other unions and the TUC, wants to see a legal maximum working temperature introduced of 30°C – or 27°C for those doing strenuous work – with

employers obliged to adopt cooling measures when the workplace temperature hits 24°C.

Experts say the comfort zone is normally in the region of 16°C to 24°C. As the temperature rises above this zone, heat exhaustion starts. People start to suffer loss of concentration, there are increases in accidents and loss of productivity. Symptoms include irritability, dizziness, headaches, nausea and fainting.

Reps can sign the Trades Union Congress (TUC) petition to recognise a maximum workplace temperature [www.megaphone.org.uk](http://www.megaphone.org.uk) search **Max Temperature**

## Who is most at risk?

Some workers are more vulnerable to the effects of extreme heat in the workplace. They may be older,

disabled, pregnant or experiencing the menopause. Workers on certain types of medication are also at greater risk.

## What is the employer's legal responsibility?

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations require employers to provide a 'reasonable' indoor temperature in the workplace. Additionally, under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers must assess the risks to workers and put controls in place to protect them.

Temperature in the workplace is one of the risks employers should assess, whether the work is being done indoors or outdoors. All workers are entitled to an environment where risks to their health and safety are properly



controlled. Heat is classed as a hazard and comes with legal obligations like any other hazard.

### What can reps do?

Reps should be consulted by management on the best ways to cope with high (or low) temperatures within their workplace.

Reps can also work alongside their employer and encourage them to use the Health and Safety Executives (HSE) Heat Stress Checklist

[www.hse.gov.uk search heat stress checklist](http://www.hse.gov.uk/search/heat-stress-checklist)

The checklist can be used as a questionnaire to evaluate whether there is a heat stress risk within your workplace.

If a heat stress risk is present within your workplace, employers must do all they can to control the risk. If they do not, reps should make

use of the Usdaw Health and Safety Rep Report Form (HS2) to raise their concerns to management in writing. Additional copies of the form are available through your local Usdaw office or by contacting Usdaw head office.

### What measures can be taken?

Some things you can do to make your workplace temperature more comfortable include:

- Adding or removing layers of clothing, depending on how hot or cold you are.
- Use a desk or pedestal fan to increase air movement.
- Use window blinds to reduce the heating effects of the sun.
- If you are too warm, drink plenty of water (avoid caffeinated or carbonated drinks).
- If possible, work away from direct sunlight or sources of heat, such as machinery.
- Take regular breaks to cool down in hot conditions.
- Talk to managers about relaxing the dress code.

Outdoor workers need sun and heat protection, some sort of shade, if possible, suitable clothing, sunscreen of factor 30 or above, water to prevent dehydration and frequent breaks.

### What further information is available?

The TUC has recently published a helpful resource for keeping cool at work. The resource includes an interactive guide for reps explaining the actions they can take to guard against extreme temperatures in the workplace and contribute to the fight against climate change:

[tinyurl.com/TUCHotCold](http://tinyurl.com/TUCHotCold)

The HSE's guidance on temperature in the workplace  
[www.hse.gov.uk search Temperature in the workplace](http://www.hse.gov.uk/search/temperature-in-the-workplace)

Ushaw's Keep Your Cool Tackling Heat Stress at Work leaflet  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/291](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/291)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Every month, Usdaw's health and safety section produces a newsletter covering a different topic.

The newsletter will be distributed via email to all Health and Safety Reps. To avoid missing out, ensure that your current email address is kept up to date on your personal details.

If there are any topics you would like us to cover, please get in touch with Usdaw's health and safety team.

The newsletters can be accessed at [www.usdaw.org.uk/HSNewsletter](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/HSNewsletter) or by scanning the QR code below.



### CONTACT

#### ■ Health & safety officer

Tony Whelan  
0161 249 2474

#### ■ Health & safety advisor

Charlie Dodd  
0161 249 2441

#### ■ General enquiries

healthandsafety  
@usdaw.org.uk

## SUMMER WORKING - REP FAQs

### WATER BOTTLES ON CHECKOUTS

Until recently, staff were allowed to keep a water bottle at the checkout. But now the manager has told us to remove our water bottles. Can he do this?

There is no obvious reason why workers should not be allowed to have bottled water on the checkouts. Some managers appear to have a mistaken belief that there are some 'health and safety' issues with allowing bottled water at checkouts but it is not at all clear what they could be. If the manager is concerned about spillages, then spill-resistant bottles are available. Employers have a legal duty to make drinking water 'readily accessible'. If they don't allow workers to have water at their workstation, then they must

provide water nearby and must allow all the workers to take breaks away from the checkout to get a drink. It would be much simpler to continue to allow staff to have bottled water with them.

### HAY FEVER

I have a couple of members who suffer from hay fever and sometimes can't work because of it, are they covered by the Equalities Act?

Hay fever (Allergic rhinitis) affects almost 1 in 4 people in the UK but is specifically excluded from the disability requirements of the Equalities Act, unless it triggers some other condition covered by the act such as severe asthma. Saying that, a reasonable employer should still make allowances for the condition when looking at any absences.

They should consider alternative duties if the condition is made worse by anything they are exposed to at work.

Clearly, hay fever is an allergy and is not infectious but, if your member is coughing and sneezing all the time, it may raise hygiene concerns and make them feel uncomfortable when dealing with customers. There are likely to be practical difficulties if they need to use tissues all the time and have to wash their hands every time they blow their nose. So, a customer-facing job on a deli counter or at the checkout may not be practical and you, your member and your employer may need to have a discussion to see if, temporarily, alternative work could be found for them.

[healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk)

## IMPORTANCE OF WORKERS HEALTH

# POST-PANDEMIC OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Professor Dame Carol Black gave a recent lecture on Work, Health, and Wellbeing Post-pandemic and to discuss the current state of the occupational health of the working population.

The lecturer spoke about nearly one million workers who are currently suffering from mental health conditions in the workplace, including work-related stress, and employers needing to consider treating mental health the same as physical health.

Reps will find this video helpful for providing an understanding of

the importance of tackling workers' health in the UK.

Please see the Thomas Ashton video:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfL0EzOqxMM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfL0EzOqxMM)



## HSE RISKS GUIDANCE

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) have updated their website to help reps find specific guidance on the risks within their workplaces.

The HSE have grouped together the most common causes of serious injury at work, such as slips and trips or working at height, providing detailed information and advice for each topic.

Reps can use this resource to assist them when working alongside their employer to try and make their workplaces safer. The guidance can be viewed here:

[www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk](https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk)

## THE DANGERS OF WORKPLACE ASBESTOS

## HSE LAUNCHES ASBESTOS &amp; YOU CAMPAIGN

Earlier this year the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) launched a new campaign to raise awareness of the risks associated with asbestos. The campaign, called Asbestos & You, targets all workers with a focus on the younger generation.

Within the UK, asbestos has been banned since 1999. The concern lies with the length of time it takes for symptoms to develop after asbestos exposure. There appears to be a perception among today's younger workers that it is something that only impacts older people who were working before the ban, however, this is far from the case.

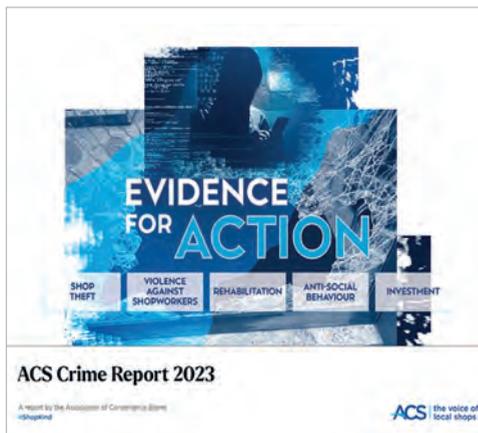
Five thousand people a year still die from asbestos-related illnesses and asbestos can still be found in buildings built or refurbished before the year 2000.

The campaign itself includes two useful guides and a quiz which reps can use to check and enhance their knowledge surrounding the dangers of asbestos within their workplace. The campaign materials can be accessed here:

[workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/asbestos/](https://workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/asbestos/)



## ACS CRIME REPORT



## THEFT AT RECORD HIGH

The Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) has recently published the findings from its 2023 Crime Report. The report shows that retail theft has reached record levels and the ACS has called upon police forces and the Government to do more to take retail crime seriously and support local businesses.

The guidance in the link below provides information

on topics such as training and communication, risk assessments, reporting and supporting, and lone working. Reps can use this guidance to work alongside employers to make improvements to workplace safety and reduce theft within their stores.

[https://cdn.acs.org.uk/public/acs\\_crime\\_guidance\\_2023.pdf](https://cdn.acs.org.uk/public/acs_crime_guidance_2023.pdf)

# MemberOffers

## CARS &

### TRANSPORT

Car Maintenance  
Car Parking: Q-Park  
Fiat  
Halfords  
Motorfinity  
Startrescue  
Vauxhall Cars

## INSURANCE

Accident Protection Cover  
Life Insurance  
50+ Personal Accident  
Cover  
Free £5,000 Accidental  
Death Cover

## MONEY & FINANCE

Debt Advice  
Financial Advice  
Mortgage Advice  
Pensions Advice  
Shepherds Friendly  
Savings  
The Co-op Credit Union

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

Comfort Insoles  
Fabyouless  
Gym Membership  
My Active Discounts  
Usdaw Health Plan  
Usdaw Dental Plan  
Vision Express

## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52  
Bookbeat  
Brewser Craft Beer  
Cinema at home: Chili.com  
Cinema Tickets  
Discount Card  
English Heritage  
Go Ape  
Golf Membership  
Magazine App: Readly  
Magazine Subscriptions  
National Trust Gift Cards  
Online Ticket Store  
Theme Parks & Attractions  
TodayTix: Theatre Tickets  
Virgin Experience Days

## HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges  
& Hotels  
Currensea: Travel Card  
Eurocamp  
Hotels.com  
James Villa Holidays  
Lost Luggage Protection  
Parkdean Resorts  
Pontins  
West Cliff Hotel  
Whitemead Forest Park  
Wightlink Ferries

## SHOPPING

Apple  
Charles Tyrwhitt  
Dell  
Discount Card  
Domestic Appliances  
Flowers  
Gift Card Savings  
Halfords  
Lifestyle Vouchers  
Magazine Subscriptions  
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback  
Card  
UsdawRewards Cashback  
Virgin Wines

## MISCELLANEOUS

Big Yellow Storage  
Child-safe SIM cards  
Mobile Phones  
TOTUM Pro Card  
International Student ID



Don't forget about the Union's free legal services such as free will writing and Legal Plus.  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/legal](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/legal)

# [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*

\*Terms and Conditions for individual offers on the website.

Find out more  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*

#### FABYOULESS

**Get 25% discount at thousands of hair, beauty and spa venues nationwide.**

Fabyouless is the UK's largest beauty, hair, spa and fitness discount card with thousands of local venues, mobile operators and even online services available at an 'always on' 25% discount for hairdressers, barbers, beauty salons, clinics, spas, tanning salons, nail bars, lash bars, gyms and personal trainers. Treat yourself today to a 90-day membership for only £1.

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



#### TODAYTIX

**Save 10% on theatre tickets.**

Usdaw members can access ticket deals, hot tickets and unique experiences through TodayTix.

TodayTix brings you the widest choice of theatre available, from West End classics to new productions. With shows such as Oklahoma!, Newsies, Jersey Boys, Tina - The Tina Turner Musical, and Mamma Mia, there is something that you are guaranteed to enjoy.

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



#### LIFESTYLE

**6% discount at over 150 of the UK's top retailers.**

Lifestyle vouchers offer the recipients a choice of everyday treats from the high-street, online, leisure and travel sectors - with over 150 of the UK's biggest brand names.

Lifestyle vouchers can be redeemed online, in-store or both dependant on the retailer. This gives you the full flexibility to choose your redemption method while also maximising your savings. Vouchers can be split and spent across multiple big brand names.

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



#### HOTELS.COM

**10% off on Hotels.com**

Hotels.com is a leading provider of hotel accommodation worldwide. Whether it's an apartment, boutique hotel, country escape, exotic resort or tree house you're after, Hotels.com have got just what you're looking for. Make your trip exactly what you want it to be with Hotels.com and concentrate on making some memories!

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



\*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. Fabyouless - your Fabyouless membership is an ongoing subscription service which automatically renews after the initial trial period at £2.99 each month unless cancelled. You can cancel your membership anytime on the Fabyouless web site. TodayTix Theatre Tickets - no restrictions on promo code usage. 10% off total booking available on all products advertised on website. Please note, you must follow the link provided to receive an additional 10% saving on already discounted tickets. Please note the 10% off code will only be valid on the website you are directed to, please do not leave this site. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd. Further benefits are organised directly by Usdaw Membership Services. See website for details. Neither Usdaw nor Parliament Hill are part of the same group as the providers.

# Staff Announcements

Usdaw welcomes a new deputy regional secretary in the South Wales and Western region, as well as four area organisers and a training officer

## MILAN PAVLIK

**Former area organiser Milan Pavlik takes up his new post as deputy regional secretary in the South Wales and Western region.**

In 2005, Milan moved to the UK from Slovakia and started working for Tesco Ipswich. His Usdaw journey began when he stood to become a rep in 2006. Two years later he completed Academy1 and in 2009, he was appointed as an area organiser for the Bristol office.

"Being an area organiser was an amazing experience because I got to work closely with our reps and learn about the different aspects of the union's work," said Milan, 39.

"I was thrilled when I found out I got the deputy regional secretary's role because I get to do more of what I love doing, which is mentoring and coaching people.

"I've only just started my new role so I'm getting my head around the new processes and procedures but my main priority will be recruitment and increasing the region's membership to 50,000 members.

"I believe the most important

people in the union are our reps, they're the heartbeat of our organisation. I want to make sure they have all the training and development they need to help us build a strong, innovative union that can navigate the challenges of the modern world."

## MIKE MALOCCO

**Former Tesco manager and Usdaw rep Mike Malocco is the latest area organiser to join the officials' team at Waltham Cross in the Eastern region.**

Mike, 37, worked for Tesco in Stevenage for 21 years and only became a rep two years ago.

"Standing to be a rep was one of the best decisions I made," said Mike. "From the very start I was given a lot of training and support by Usdaw. I passed the assessment for Academy1 but got this job before I could start the training.

As a Tesco manager and a political activist, I spent time talent spotting and putting people on a developmental journey therefore mentoring will play a big part in this

role too. I believe rep engagement and development is the key to success. If we have well-trained passionate reps, then recruitment and representation will take care of itself. My patch will cover a wide part of north London as well as parts of central London.

"Getting this job has been life changing. It's genuinely an honour to work for an organisation that I believe in and in a role where I can make a difference."

## APRIL HARRIS

**April Harris started her new role as area organiser in the Eastern region, joining the team at the Waltham Cross office.**

The former Tesco manager relocated from Great Yarmouth to Harlow, to take up her new post.

April, 39, worked at Tesco Belton express for 15 years and was an Usdaw rep for 12 years. She decided to stand as a rep after receiving support from the union and wanted to give something back.

"When I became a rep, I received a lot of training from Usdaw," said



Milan Pavlik



Mike Malocco



April Harris



Gabriel Grigoras

April. "The training courses were amazing and Academy1 gave me the tools and confidence to be where I am now. I was halfway through Academy2 when I got the job. I was so ecstatic I cried.

"The support I've had from Usdaw and area organisers from all over the country has blown me away.

I will be covering the central/west London area and my main priorities are recruitment, and rep development because reps are the face of the union. It's important that they're supported and trained so that they can help our members to the best of their abilities."

### GABRIEL GRIGORAS

**Gabriel Grigoras moves from Bathgate to Peterhead to take up his new role as area organiser. He will be based at the Aberdeen office in the Scottish region.**

The former Tesco distribution worker became a rep in 2019 and threw himself into the role so that he could help his colleagues at the Livingston site. He completed Academy1 last year and was due to go on Academy2 this year, when he got the call to say he had been appointed as an area organiser.

"When I found out I got the job I was delighted. I will be covering Aberdeenshire as well as the Orkney and Shetland Islands. It's a bit of a challenge because the area I'm

covering is so geographically large. However, the scenery is stunning and unlike most commutes, mine is quite enjoyable and relaxing.

"My priorities will focus on recruitment, encouraging members to stand as reps and talent spotting people for the Academy."

### STUART MCCONNELL

**Stuart McConnell started his role as the new training officer in the Eastern Region and will be based at the Waltham Cross office.**

Stuart worked in secondary education for 15 years, was a deputy head for 6 years and an assistant head teacher for 2 years prior to that. The 48-year-old is no stranger to the trade union movement having been a rep for the NUT/NEU for 9 years, as well as working as an information officer for his local NUT branch in Redbridge.

"I consider the position of training officer a great privilege," said Stuart. "I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues to provide first-class training that will help reps and members develop so that they can effectively champion the interests of their fellow workers."

### KATE MACLEOD

**Former NEC member Kate MacLeod joins the team as an area organiser at the Redditch office in the Midlands region.**

Kate started work at Primark in 2011 and shortly after stood to become a rep. She completed Academy 1 in 2012, Academy 2 in 2014, as well as several rounds of stand-down before being elected to the National Executive Council (NEC), Usdaw's governing body, in 2018.

"I've taken quite a convoluted route to get here," said Kate, 51. "Before this, the time was never right. I was working part-time to raise my children. But now that they've grown, I have the time and energy to fully commit myself to this role.

"My priorities will focus on building membership and rep training and development. I want to make sure our reps are supported and trained so that they can become self-sufficient and are able to organise and recruit, as well as providing the best support and advice to our members."

### JIM O'NEILL

**Udaw area organiser Jim O'Neill retires after 14 years.**

Jim, 59, a former Sainsbury's convenor, joined Usdaw staff in 2009 as an area organiser and was based in the Warrington office until his retirement.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis thanked Jim for his long and conscientious service and wished him a happy retirement.



Stuart McConnell



Kate MacLeod



Jim O'Neill

## NEW IN!

### Leaflets & Booklets

**Ten Good Reasons to Join Usdaw**  
(Leaflet 261)

**Join Usdaw Today**  
(Leaflet 299)

**Time off for Family Emergencies - Know Your Rights**  
(Leaflet 349)

**Worried about money? Know Your Rights**  
(Leaflet 385)

**Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family**  
(Leaflet 312)

**LGBT Rights at Work**  
(Leaflet 337)

**Flexible Working**  
(Leaflet 346)

### Posters & Flyers

**Ten good reasons to join Usdaw**  
(Poster R2)

**Supporting LGBT+ Workers and Tackling LGBT+ Harassment**  
(Poster R57)

**Legal Plus - Getting Advice for Non-Work Related Problems**  
(Poster R61)

**Disability isn't a Laughing Matter**  
(Poster R62)

**Join Usdaw Today - The Union for Argos Staff**  
(Poster R64)

**Me, Work and the Menopause**  
(Poster R73)

### Factsheets etc

**10 reasons not to opt out of a workplace Pension Scheme**

**Leaving Your Workplace Pension Scheme or Stopping Contributions Factsheet**

**Maternity Leave and Pensions Factsheet**

**The Menopause is Workplace Issue Survey**



# YOUR GUIDE TO WORKERS' RIGHTS

This guide equips reps with everything they need to know about statutory and contractual rights.

**A**s reps it's vital to stay updated with the latest rules and regulations surrounding workers' rights.

No matter where you work or where you're recruiting, our Workers' Rights Guide will help you stay informed.

Featuring comprehensive information on all aspects of statutory (basic) rights, contractual rights, protection from discrimination and family and maternity rights, the guide

is essential reading for both full and part-time workers. You could also use it to demonstrate the benefits of union membership, by pointing out the difference between basic rights and those Usdaw has negotiated at your workplace.

While you're organising and recruiting, make sure you're fully equipped and ready to answer potential questions from members and potential members.

Check out the guide at:  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/211](https://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/211)

For a complete list of Usdaw publications and to order visit:  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/PublicationsCatalogue](https://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/PublicationsCatalogue)

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:  
network@usdaw.org.uk

# OVER TO YOU



Protect the Right To Strike Rally in Parliament Square, London

## TAKING CHARITY TO NEW HEIGHTS



Help for Heroes campaign at Tesco Soilhull

I wanted to highlight the amazing achievement of my rep and members at OI GLASS in Alloa.

Usdaw member Alex McGillivray from Alloa Glass was diagnosed with prostate cancer in Jan 2023. Alex is a very popular guy, and always puts other people first. He worked all his days down the mines then came to work at Alloa Glass in 2009.

When his workmates were told the news about Alex they knew that they wanted to support him every way they could. They decided that they would do a charity climb up Ben Nevis. Seventeen men and one woman climbed to the summit, which is 4,411 feet above sea level, the day after celebrating Alex's birthday at

a local caravan site. Yes they are all hardcore!

A Just Giving page was also set up in aid of cancer research. The target was £3000 which has now been smashed and is currently sitting at just over £4000.

Alex is doing well with his treatment and his amazing sense of humour is definitely the best medicine.

I am extremely proud of rep Andy Sillars (in the yellow jacket) and the rest of the members that climbed their way through the elements, supporting their friend and colleague.

**Lorraine Barr**  
Area organiser  
Glasgow office



Menopause campaign, Tesco Linwood



Stock photography, posed by models.

# You're Twice As Safe With Usdaw

Independent research shows that trade union Health and Safety Reps do make a difference.

	Injury rate per 1,000 workers	Predicted injuries per year
Joint Union Management Committee	5.3	58,300
No Union, No Committee	10.9	181,500

Workplaces with trade union Health and Safety Reps are twice as safe as those where there is no employee consultation on safety.

Udaw Health and Safety Reps can investigate hazards, inspect the workplace and take up issues on behalf of the members.

By using the Health and Safety Reps' legal powers to work with management, your Health and Safety Rep can make your workplace safer and healthier.

Udaw Health and Safety Reps are backed by experienced officials and have access to expert advice and quality training.

If you have any concerns about health and safety where you work talk to your Usdaw Health and Safety Rep.

If you have a problem and need help and advice or want to join Usdaw, contact your Union rep or call the Helpline **0800 030 80 30** or visit our website: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

