

The magazine of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

arena

Autumn 2011

www.usdaw.org.uk



Union activist in the spotlight



YOUR GUIDE TO YOUR RIGHTS

[KNOW YOUR RIGHTS SPECIAL]



FLYING THE

FLAG FOR EQUALITY



Activists march with pride in Birmingham and beyond

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IN-STORE HERO

CHECK YOUR CONTRACT



Xmas working and how public holidays affect you

Looters put shopworkers

in fear of their lives



The continuing economic problems faced by the UK are making a real impact on our members with job losses, hours cut and job insecurity rife in every sector we organise in.

Some of our members have also had to face the terrifying prospect of their shops being attacked, looted and burnt down after riots mainly in the capital but in other cities as well.

This violent behaviour is totally unacceptable and **Usdaw** is calling on the Government, the police, local authorities and employers to do

everything they can to protect hard-working people from these disgraceful attacks.

The damage and terror inflicted by the mobs on hundreds, possibly thousands, of innocent shopworkers will live with them for a long time. No worker should have to endure such terrifying events. It's a miracle none of the staff were killed as the arsonists struck.

Since the looting the union has been in close contact with employers at a national and local level and urged them to review their security measures. I also want to remind members that they should never put themselves in physical danger to prevent shoplifting, looting or damage to property.

Retailers should seriously consider closing stores early if there is any threat or possibility of trouble and we have urged all employers to continue to pay

workers their contracted hours, even when they have been unable to open because of damage or as a precaution.

Usdaw unequivocally condemns the rioting and looting that has brought havoc and fear to many of our towns, cities and communities. We will continue to lobby for greater protection for our members.

John Hannett
General Secretary

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and Allied Workers*
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PRINT
Polestar UK Print.

Paper produced from ecologically sustainable sources.

Arena is the membership magazine of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (Usdaw). Published quarterly, Arena is distributed to Usdaw members.

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Contents

Inside this issue

Legal Plus & FirstCall Usdaw

20 FirstCall Usdaw Members tell their stories on how the union provided them with a first-class legal service.

24 Criminal Injuries Scheme Find out how Usdaw can help you if you are a victim of crime.

People like you

06 Phil Cook Security guard and published author on his fantasy novel.

33 Pam Stanton Welsh rep on her role as an activist and mother.

34 Patricia Page One woman's struggle to spread the union's message in Marks and Spencer.

41 Michael Hartley Talks about his involvement in the union and his other role as a charity fundraiser.

Features

07 Know Your Rights Special Information on redundancy, insolvency, dealing with debt, claiming benefits and much more.

28 Tax Credits How the Government plans to penalise parents who work part-time.

42 Understanding Diabetes Arena looks at the symptoms and treatments for this common condition.

Your health questions

26 Topical Issues Your questions answered on work-related health issues.

Regulars

18 Recruit a Friend Five prizes of £100 up for grabs if you sign up a colleague to Usdaw.

Letters

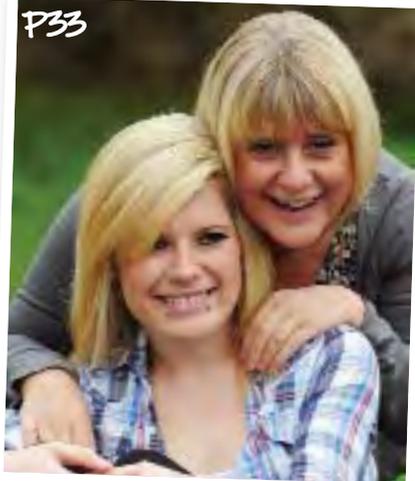
38 Have Your Say Arena's letters pages are open to all, let us know what you think.

P20



AUTUMN
2011

P33



P28



Retail staff under the hammer



Latest News . . .

The cost of the riots and looting in London and other towns and cities in August could cost more than £150m according to the insurance industry.

Shop staff had to take cover as chaos overtook parts of London and England with looters breaking into and ransacking shops and in some instances then torching them.

General secretary **John Hannett** said: "These looters have destroyed homes, jobs and livelihoods and tragically four people have lost their lives as a result of the disorder. There can be no excuse for it."



ore than 2,200 workers were made

redundant from T.J. Hughes in the summer after the administrators closed the company's distribution centre and pulled the shutters down on 42 shops.

The T.J. Hughes flagship store in Liverpool and the five stores in Newcastle, Widnes, Eastbourne, Glasgow and Sheffield were sold to Liverpool-based Lewis's Home Retail Limited, saving around 500 jobs.

The remaining eight stores were expected to continue trading as the administrators continued to look for prospective buyers.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Our members were **devastated** by the news and understandably extremely angry at the way

this has been handled.

"We will continue to do everything we can to represent our members through this very difficult time. We'll be making sure they receive all monies they are entitled to and we will also provide advice and support to help them find another job.

"We need an urgent Government review on the laws surrounding administration. Administrators are able to ignore workers' **legal protections** because they know it is the taxpayer who ultimately picks up the bill. It is wrong and we shall continue to campaign for a change in the law so that workers are better protected."

■ The store in Salford was closed prematurely after falling victim to looters.

More jobs go as shops close

The administrators of fashion and homewares chain Life & Style, announced the closure of a further 12 stores and another 181 redundancies in July. Since entering administration on 10 June, 34 stores have been closed and nearly 440 staff made redundant.

Earlier in July, **Usdaw** wrote to both the Government and the administrators to raise their concerns about the prospect of former Life & Style owner Elaine McPherson taking the company out of administration for an **unprecedented** third time. The union asked the administrators to ensure that any prospective purchaser

demonstrate an ability to run the business effectively and show they can provide a long term sustainable future for its employees.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Once again, stores have been closed and redundancies made with barely any notice and no consultation. We will be taking all necessary legal steps to protect our members' interests."

■ As **arena** went to press it was announced that the company had been sold to Ashloch Ltd, owned by Sue Townsend. The new business will retain 62 shops predominately in the North West and will see the retention of over 470 employees with a significantly streamlined head office operation.

[MORE INFORMATION:]
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/NEWS

CLOSING DOWN SALE

Co-op Group pension

The Co-operative Group has announced proposals to close their inherited final salary pension schemes by the end of September 2012 in order to consolidate staff pension provision into just two schemes.

The Group **proposes** to close eight final salary pension schemes inherited through recent acquisitions and instead offer staff membership of either their existing career average defined benefit scheme or a new money purchase defined contribution scheme. The schemes facing **closure** are the United Norwest, Leeds, Yorkshire, Sheffield, Lothian and Plymouth Co-operative Societies, and the Somerfield and Britannia Building Society schemes. More at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/news

Holiday merger

Usdaw will meet with management from the merged Thomas Cook and Co-op Travel business following clearance from the Competition Commission in August.

The joint venture will create the **largest travel business** on the UK high street with more than 1,200 stores.

National officer Sharon Ainsworth said: "I know that members will have lots of questions about what will happen next, so I have asked the Co-operative to meet with us so that we can start detailed consultations at the earliest opportunity.

"I have also asked them to advise us of their proposed timescales for implementing the joint venture.

"I know that there may be some uncertainty for members at this time but please be assured Usdaw will make every effort to keep members up to date with any developments as they arise."

PEOPLE LIKE YOU



Phil Cook with his first novel *The Gateway* Book One of the Search

The write stuff

Welshman Phil Cook talks to arena about his journey into the literary world of fantasy

Security guard Phil Cook is leading a double life combining full-time work with his real labour of love – writing – and in June he had his first novel published *The Gateway Book One of the Search* a fantasy story very much in the J R Tolkien mould.

The 63 year-old lives and works in Mid Glamorgan, Wales and started writing the book five years ago in between shifts at the Vion Foods site in nearby Merthyr Tydfil.

“I’ve always liked story telling and reading so I thought I’d give it a go,” said

father-of-four Phil. “I saw an article in a magazine about YouWriteOn.com a publishing site for aspiring writers so I joined and for a flat fee of less than £60 my book has been published and is now available online at Amazon, WH Smith, Waterstones and Barnes & Noble in America.

“The book is ultimately about right and wrong, good and evil and it’s the first of three – all going to plan. I’m already half way through the second instalment and the third one is beginning to take shape too.

“When I received the printed copy it gave me immense satisfaction. I couldn’t

believe it really. Family and friends have been very pleased for me and my twin daughters really enjoyed the book. It’s not my wife Kathy’s cup of tea but at least it proved I hadn’t been skiving while staring at the computer screen for hours on end!

“There’s a lot of research to do to create the settings so it takes up just about all of my spare time, but it’s all been worthwhile. I’ve really enjoyed it.”

**[FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.YOUWRITEON.COM]**

Usdaw – here to help



The recession has claimed thousands of jobs and there appears little sign of a let up after a new wave of companies bit the dust in the summer including TJ Hughes, Life&Style, Haldanes, Habitat and Homeform.

They followed closely on news of the closure of DIY Focus, job losses at Twinings and the announcements by Thorntons, Carpetright, Mothercare, Yodel, Co-operative Financial Services and HMV that they would be shedding jobs over the coming months and years.

General secretary John Hannett (above) said: “It is imperative that members have a basic understanding of their rights when faced with potential redundancy, that’s why **arena** is including a ten-page feature on your rights at work in this issue.

“While we do not have the

space to give you a definitive guide to every detail of the law and your contractual rights we can give you the basics and point you in the right direction to get more help either from your rep, official or from our website.

“Redundancy and the financial stress it causes is probably the biggest problem faced by members at present. Workers need to know their rights, what is available to them in terms of pay, future benefits and the professional and free help to deal with any debts.

“Most forecasters are predicting further contraction in

On the following pages you can find information on:

- Redundancy
- Dealing with debt
- Benefits
- Claiming back Payment Protection Insurance (PPI)
- The perils of social media networks

UK consumer spending so the economic outlook is grim for the majority of workers. We’ll be doing all we can to minimise job losses and protect members’ terms and conditions. Ordinary people shouldn’t have to pay for the mistakes of the international bankers.”

Looking after vulnerable workers



Home Study Unit 5 'Vulnerable Workers'

WIN!

To support our Fair Ground campaign we've launched a **NEW** Home Study telling you all you need to know about vulnerable workers and their employment rights!

We're also giving away a **1GB USB Stick** to the first 200 people who return the question booklet before the end of September 2011!

So if you haven't subscribed already phone **0161 224 2524** or visit

www.fair-ground.org.uk/site/home-study

today to order your copy.



Don't delay, request your copy now for a chance to win!

Redundancy – how to cope

arena looks at the complicated issue of redundancy and your rights

Redundancy and unfair dismissal

Redundancy is a potentially fair reason for dismissal. Where your employer has consulted and followed a reasonable procedure then dismissal will usually be fair.

If a site or section closes down completely and everyone is made redundant, dismissal is likely to be fair as there is no selection.

However you would need to look carefully at a situation where:

- The work is being moved elsewhere and you want the chance of following the work.
- The company has **alternative job opportunities** which you should have been offered.

Unfair dismissal is most likely to arise where there is redundancy selection i.e. where staff are being cut and some people are staying and others are being sacked.



Rights at a glance

Why am I facing redundancy?

If you face dismissal because of redundancy, this may be because:

- Your workplace moves or closes
- Your employer reduces the number of employees
- Your job no longer exists because of new technology, job design or restructuring

What are my rights?

If you are faced with redundancy you have the right to be:

- Consulted by your employer
- Selected fairly
- Considered for alternative work
- Paid redundancy pay; accrued holiday pay; wages etc
- Given paid time off to find other work

What should I do if I am facing redundancy?

If you are affected by redundancy and need further information:

- Check out Usdaw's advice at: www.usdaw.org.uk/redundancy
- Contact your Usdaw rep on site
- Contact your Usdaw local office

Payments on redundancy

What redundancy payments am I entitled to?

A. If you are dismissed for redundancy your entitlements include the following:

- Statutory redundancy pay
- Statutory notice pay
- Accrued holiday pay
- Wages (including Commission, bonus, overtime etc)
- Statutory sick pay/maternity pay/paternity pay etc
- Contractual payments due e.g. banked holidays, annualised hours reconciliation, contractual sick pay, contractual maternity/paternity pay etc



B. You may also be entitled to additional payments negotiated by Usdaw as part of the severance terms eg.

- Enhanced redundancy pay
- Loyalty bonus
- Notice pay
- Payments on redundancy are usually tax free up to £30,000.

When are my redundancy payments at risk?

- If your employer offers you a suitable alternative job which you unreasonably refuse you will lose your right to a redundancy payment.
- If you leave before your dismissal date you may lose your redundancy entitlements

What if my employer fails to pay me?

If your employer fails to pay the sums due contact your local Usdaw office for advice on how to enforce the payments.

This is normally through the **Employment Tribunal** where there are very strict time limits (usually three months less one day from the date of dismissal) so act fast.

If your company becomes insolvent then the payments in part A will be paid by the state, but payments in part B will depend on whether there is any money to pay unsecured creditors.

cope with losing your job

Insolvency

Insolvency is where your employer cannot meet its financial obligations and they have to take formal steps to sort out the financial problems by **selling or winding the business up**.

For insolvent companies the most common practice is the appointment of an administrator to try and sell the business as a going concern.

What happens when an administrator is appointed?

When an administrator takes over you can expect:

- Early redundancies to cut down the wage bill of staff the administrator considers to be non-essential.
- Business as usual for a period while attempts are made to sell the business or parts of it.
- Sale of the business, or part of it, as a going concern with some staff transferring.
- Redundancy for those not transferring with the business.

Co-operate with the administrator/insolvency practitioner

The State Insolvency Fund will protect certain payments due to you in an insolvency – pay; notice, redundancy; holidays.

Other payments due to you on termination will have to be met from the company funds and you will be an unsecured creditor. What you receive depends on the amount of money the administrator has to pay unsecured creditors.

The administrator will normally send you the necessary forms for claiming any money you are owed.

They should tell you how to claim payments from the Redundancy Payments Office and HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) and how to claim from the company.

Useful contact numbers

- Insolvency Service Helpline
Tel: 0845 602 9848 (calls are charged at local rates).
- Employees in Northern Ireland should contact the Redundancy Payments Service on freephone **0800 585 811**.



Redundancy consultation

When should redundancy consultation take place?

If your employer is planning to make more than 20 employees redundant at your workplace, they must consult:

- Usdaw (if Usdaw is recognised by the employer)
- The staff consultation body (if there is no recognised union)

Where Usdaw is recognised and/or has members we will demand consultation. The company must also consult you individually.

What should consultation cover?

The consultation should cover:

- Ways of avoiding the redundancy situation or dismissals.
- Ways of reducing the number of redundancies.
- Ways of mitigating the effects of the dismissals i.e. severance packages, support in finding work, method of selection.

Job Centre Plus Rapid Response Service may help you to find alternative work.

Alternative job offers

What if my employer offers me an alternative job?

Ushaw would expect your employer to offer you a suitable alternative job (if there is one). However, if your employer offers you a suitable alternative job and you unreasonably refuse it, you may lose your right to redundancy pay.

If your employer makes you a job offer, you should be given enough information about it. The offer should be made before your old job ends and you have the right to a trial period.

Unsuitable job offer

You will keep your right to statutory redundancy if the offer is not suitable. Even if your boss makes you a suitable offer you will retain your right to statutory redundancy pay if your refusal is reasonable.

How to manage debt w

arena looks at how to manage your cash after redundancy

Introduction

The sudden fall in your regular income can have a devastating effect on your finances. Don't panic but don't ignore the problems either. Follow our guidelines.

1

Face the facts

Don't bury your head in the sand

If you can't pay someone, tell them before the deadline and try to arrange something. It might be the opposite of what you want to do but it will nearly always make it much easier to sort out.

3

Sort out the important debts

Prioritise your debts:

Who is it most important to pay?

Don't pay people just because they send you the most letters or ring you up. Some payments are more important than others – simply because of what can happen if you do not make arrangements.

■ **Mortgage or Rent** – most mortgage lenders and social landlords do not want to throw you out. If you approach them in time and are honest about your problem, they will usually come to an arrangement with you that works for everyone.

■ **A secured loan** – is like another mortgage but the law is slightly different and you may want to get advice about that. Reputable lenders will want to work with you to find a reasonable solution.

■ **Council Tax** – contact your council tax office and try to come to an arrangement if you are in arrears.

■ **Utilities** – gas and electricity

supplies can be cut off if you cannot pay for them but: you may be able to get them cheaper by changing suppliers, see **UChange4better**.

- All companies must offer a range of ways to pay so you can pay smaller amounts regularly and avoid getting into arrears.
- If you do get into arrears, the companies must let you pay them off at a rate you can afford.

The rest can wait:

First sort out the above debts. Others like credit cards, money lenders, catalogues and most bank loans will have to wait their turn if you cannot pay them straight away. If you can't, write to them to explain your problem, tell them you are getting help and get advice to help you sort it all out. These people might take you to court but it is not a crime to owe money and the court will not order you to pay money you cannot afford to pay – get advice straight away if you get letters about going to court.

2

Get the right advice

Get good free advice:

■ The Citizens Advice Bureau.

Visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk

■ The National Debtline call the helpline on **0808 808 4000**.

■ The Consumer Credit Counselling Service. You can call the helpline free on **0800 138 1111**. Visit www.cccs.co.uk/usdaw

■ **Money Saving Expert** provides up-to-date information on reclaiming bank charges and Payment Protection Insurance (PPI): www.moneysavingexpert.com



When you're out of work

4 Stop digging

Don't run up more credit

Talk to the standard reputable sources first – your high street bank and building society and credit unions.

Do not take out more credit on cards. Keep away from high interest lenders and credit sharks. Be very careful about securing loans against your home.

5 make a plan

Manage your Money

You may find the following websites useful in budget planning.

- www.moneysavingexpert.com/budgetcalculator.phtml
- www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

Maximise your income

Make sure you have claimed all the benefits that you are entitled to.

Harassment

People who you owe are not allowed by law to harass you – or chase you in an unreasonable way – for example,

ringing you repeatedly at unreasonable times or making threats. If you feel this is happening, get advice (see no.2 above).



Benefits – could help you out

The more money you have coming in, the less likely you are to have trouble with your payments. Make sure that you are claiming all the benefits you are entitled to.

Benefits and Tax Credits

Get a full benefits check

Contact your local Jobcentre Plus office for benefits advice and ask them to do a full benefits check for you.

If you have lost your job the key benefits are Income Support and Job Seekers Allowance. You can make a telephone claim on **0800 055 6688**. You can also claim online. You can also claim these benefits if you are laid off in some circumstances.

If you are in work make sure that you are claiming all your Tax Credits:

- **Working Tax Credit** – people without children can claim and people with children can claim it – it is a benefits top up for people on low incomes.
www.usdaw.org.uk/334
- **Child Tax Credit** – income based benefit for people with children, who earn less than £40,000
- **Childcare Tax Credit** – income based help with childcare costs for working parents
- **Child Benefit** – universal non means tested
Call the Tax Credit Helpline for more advice **0845 300 3900** and to make a claim.
Further information can be found at:
www.turn2us.org.uk

Housing

Help with rent: If you pay rent you may be entitled to housing benefit. That is a means-tested benefit administered by your local council. Please contact your local authority housing benefit office for advice on how to make a claim.

Help with mortgages: The Government has schemes to help with mortgages. Further information can be found at:

- Mortgage Rescue Scheme:
www.communities.gov.uk/housing
- Homeowner Mortgage Support Scheme:
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk
- Direct Gov: www.direct.gov.uk

PPI – the latest financial

arena takes a look at how you can claim money back

Complain now!

If you've taken out a loan in the last six years and were mis-sold payment protection insurance (PPI) you could be eligible to hundreds, possibly thousands, of pounds in compensation.

The mis-selling of expensive PPI has seen many of the top banks face huge fines and ordered to repay their customers the cost of the loan insurance.

PPI is a form of insurance designed to cover your repayments for a year in the event of an accident, sickness or unemployment but it has been widely mis-sold with thousands of loans, leaving many paying hundreds for potentially worthless cover. If this applies to you, you may be able to reclaim what you've paid.

Generally, the amount you pay for loan PPI is about 15 per cent of your balance but could be up to 30 per cent. It doesn't sound much, but it quickly mounts up. On a £5,000 loan you'd pay around £750 PPI.

The key issue is what was said at the point you were sold the product.

If you were told it was compulsory **this is mis-selling**. If the salesperson:

- Didn't make it clear the policy was optional or tell you about any cooling off period.
- Implied or stated it would be more expensive if you didn't take the insurance.
- Implied or insisted you take out their policy to qualify for the product or help with your application.

al mis-selling scandal

- Was very pushy when selling the product, so that you felt you could not say no.
- Would not let you continue with the application if you did not sign the insurance agreement as well – **all of this is mis-selling.**

Most policies exclude existing medical conditions, meaning you're unlikely to be covered for any medical problems you've had in the past. You should've been asked about this, and informed the policy could be affected – if you weren't again the **PPI was mis-sold.**

Start the complaint

Most people with a decent claim get a payout, but very few get it after the first complaint. Companies will try to put people off with rejections. Yet if you follow the correct procedure you should improve your chances.

Reclaiming almost certainly means your insurance will be cancelled, as you're effectively saying it isn't suitable for your needs – only start the process if you definitely want your insurance to come to an end.

In the first instance contact the company that sold you the policy and ask for a refund. In March 2010 the banks and the Financial Ombudsman agreed on a questionnaire, covering all details on the sale of a policy, which consumers should use to make their initial complaint. It's quite simple to fill in.

A company's first reaction has often been to reject complaints. Yet this doesn't

mean you've no case – it's just a tactic. They've been rejecting all consumers' initial reclaim requests, even when they know that, if they get to the Ombudsman for some lenders, 90-100 per cent of cases are adjudicated in the consumer's favour. This is done as a way to prevent people who lack the determination to pursue the claims. So you must go into this expecting rejection at this stage, and understand it's just part of the process.

Don't give up

If you don't reach a satisfactory conclusion, then make a formal complaint to the **Financial Ombudsman Service**. This is the official independent service for settling disputes between financial companies and their customers. The Ombudsman is completely free to use, and will adjudicate on whether your claim should be paid out.

It'll decide whether your policy was sold unfairly or unreasonably. It can only do so once eight weeks have passed from the date of your first complaint letter.

While the process of using the Ombudsman is simple, and the amount of money you could receive is substantial, it's not usually quick. **Your case may take over a year to be settled so don't count on the cash now.**

Just contact the Ombudsman and ask it to

take on your case. You can either do this via the **Financial Ombudsman Service** website or by calling **0800 0234 567**. It will look at each case individually, so if yours is a matter of you saying one thing happened but the company disagrees, the Ombudsman will decide if it thinks the company acted fairly.

As the party with responsibility to provide full details of the insurance, the lender is expected to have more evidence on what happened to back up its case.

Currently, of the cases that need to go as far as the Ombudsman, two thirds are being awarded in consumers' favour.



**[MORE INFORMATION AT:
WWW.MONEYSAVINGEXPERT.COM]**

Warning: cyber space is

arena considers the dangers to your employment prospects if you mis-use social media networks



An increasing number of employees are making careless comments about their work, managers or customers on the popular social media network Facebook and finding out the hard way that employers take a very dim view of this type of activity.

However, while Facebook firings are on the rise and social media slipups have been regularly highlighted in the news over the past few years, the message does not appear to be getting through to unsuspecting staff. Companies guard their reputation vigorously and any criticism – however casual or light-hearted – could land you in very hot water. Similarly criticism of management, other workers or customers could all get you the sack at worst and a written, perhaps final, warning at best.

Don't fall in to the trap of thinking Facebook (or any other social media network) is private and

confidential – it isn't. Your thoughts and comments can easily be viewed and passed on by others and in some instances you could even be guilty of libel.

One expert said: "Although companies are already tightening up their social media policies, employees also need to take greater responsibility for their own actions when it comes to using these networks. Our research reveals that 14 per cent of workers know of somebody who has been disciplined for inappropriate social media activity. We expect this number to grow dramatically as companies tighten their policies."

While most companies now have a policy on internet use at work, potential problems go beyond the workplace. "It is very important that staff familiarise themselves with their company policy when they start a new job," said one expert. "Employers do have grounds for sacking

or disciplining employees who blatantly abuse the internet or email at work or who make damaging statements on social media sites.

"People need to be very careful about what sites they are looking at and what kind of emails they are sending because if they are caught sending or reading offensive material the consequences could be very serious."

General secretary John Hannett said: "The key to avoiding confusion is to have a clear and accessible social media policy that outlines employees' responsibilities both in and out of the office, and clearly outlines the consequences of inappropriate use. Examples of unacceptable posts should be given as a guide for employees. Companies should invest more time in working out sensible conduct guidelines, so that there won't be any nasty surprises for staff or employers."



It's not a virtual free-for-all



Image © rnz studio/Shutterstock

Never assume your comments will remain 'private & confidential'

Don't criticise or comment on

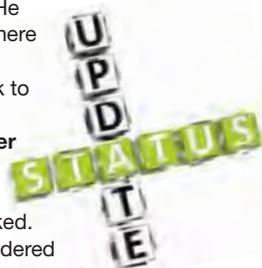
- Your **boss**
- Your **work colleagues**
- Your **customers**
- Your **workload/working conditions**
- Don't send **inappropriate emails**. If you receive such emails don't pass them on but take them up with your manager

Do

- **Speak to your rep** and/or raise a grievance if you have serious complaints about your boss, colleagues, customers or working conditions.
- **Familiarise** yourself with your company's internet and social media policy

Real-life sackings

- Thirteen **cabin crew were sacked** by an airline after they referred to passengers as 'chavs' on Facebook. The company said 'there was no justification for staff to criticise the very customers who pay their wages'.
- A **young office worker** who complained about her 'boring' job was fired when her boss discovered the comments.
- An **insurance worker** who rang in sick and said using the computer screen was giving her a migraine was sacked after she logged on to Facebook while off work.
- A **woman who insulted her boss** on Facebook lost her job after she forgot that she had added him as a friend and he could read her status update. He then told her right there on Facebook not to bother coming back to work.
- A **call centre worker** who insulted a fellow worker on Facebook was sacked. The company considered this bullying and harassment.



Know Your Rights!

This highly informative guide to your employment and benefit rights contains useful information for all Usdaw members.

Now's the time to get your hands on a copy and be in the know about your rights at work!

Download a copy now from our website
www.usdaw.org.uk/211

Or you can order a copy from your local office. Address details are on page 47.



USDAW

Cash benefits

Help for you

Usdaw really cares about you and your family and provides a range of cash benefits for times of need.

If you are ill, have an accident - or if the worst were to happen and you die - Usdaw's cash benefits will help ease financial worries for you and your family.

SICKNESS GRANT*

Scale	A	B	C
Payment after continuous period of 6 weeks	£30	£25	£15
*Payment after 20 weeks	£100	£40	£30
*Payment after 40 weeks	£75	£50	£35
*Payment after 52 weeks	£100	£55	£40

Please note each Sickness Grant is a 'one-off' payment for the period stated and is not payable weekly. *These further Sickness Grant payments do not need to be for a period of continuous sickness. Please contact your local office for further details.

PERMANENT DISABLEMENT GRANT

Scale	A	B	C
Total	£4,000	£1,000	£1,000
Partial	£2,000	£500	£500

MATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Grant	£30	£25	£20

PATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Grant	£30	£25	£20

DEATH GRANT

Scale	A	B	C
Funeral	£650	£210	£140
Industrial Accident	£6,000	£1,500	£1,500
Non-Industrial Accident	£2,000	£500	£500

DISPUTE BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Weekly Benefit	£50	£50	£50

The weekly contribution rates are as follows:

Scale	A	B	C
Weekly subs	£2.18	£1.91	£1.36

*Correct at 27 June 2011.

Conditions apply: Benefits can only be claimed (except dispute and victimisation benefit) after 12 months' continuous membership. Benefits are payable in accordance with the union rule book and any entitlement depends on paying your subscriptions regularly and not falling into arrears. Further information in connection with the claiming of these benefits can be obtained from your union representative.

Letters of thanks from relatives

"I'd like to thank you for the prompt and efficient way you have dealt with my application for the death grant. My husband was a union man through and through and would have appreciated what you have done."

"I wish to acknowledge receipt of the cheques from the union on the death of my husband and thank you for your attention in this matter. As you can imagine any help with funeral expenses is greatly appreciated."

"Thank you very much for the cheques. It was most kind of you to draw my attention to the fact that I was entitled to this money as I had no knowledge of it. I am also extremely impressed by the prompt payment."

RECRUIT A FRIEND

Sign up to cash in!

Five lucky members are celebrating after they each **won £100** in the new **Recruit A Friend** competition.

- **David Robson** who works at Robert Wiseman's in Liskeard recruited his son **Stuart**, working at The Co-operative in Looe, Cornwall.
- **Janice Langridge** signed up **Claire Oakden** at the Tesco Broadwater store in Stevenage.
- **George Chacko** recruited **Joeman Philip**, both from the Tesco Extra store in Aberdeen.
- **Donna Walters** recruited her colleague **Deborah James** at the Primark store in Chatham.
- **Judith Macphee** signed up Poundland colleague **Maree Allan** in Inverness.

By doing your bit for the recruitment drive you'll be building the union, helping your workmates get the many benefits of Usdaw membership and potentially putting some much needed cash into your own pocket.

The prize draw is open to all members and all you have to do is recruit a friend, relative or colleague using the form opposite and send it in to the address below. **The first five out of the hat will each win £100.**



David Robson and his son Stuart

Five lucky winners!!



Janice Langridge



George Chacko



Donna Walters



Judith Macphee

Enter the draw now

The weekly rates from June 27 are **£2.18 for Scale A** (applicable to full-time and part-time workers) and **£1.36 for Scale C** (applicable to part-time workers only)

There are **five chances** to win with Usdaw's **Recruit A Friend Competition** as arena is offering **FIVE PRIZES OF £100 EACH**. (Terms and conditions apply). So all you have to do is sign up a work colleague, family member or friend using the form opposite and send it to **Usdaw, Freepost NAT19525, Manchester M14 7DJ**. Closing date is **October 7, 2011**.

Much needed help

Thanks to FirstCall it's best foot forward for former warehouseman **Richard Wittam** after he had an accident at work. Not only did he receive a cheque for £4,000 but also much needed personal help and support.

"I can't speak highly enough of the union," said the 46 year-old from Scarborough in North Yorkshire. "They were with me all the way.

"I had a bad time dealing with my injury and eventually I lost my job. But my area organiser went the extra mile and helped to put me back on the right track."

The accident happened in 2007 when Richard worked for the Tesco Distribution site in Goole in Yorkshire. He broke a bone in his foot when it was caught in shrink-wrap on the warehouse floor.

"I had an x-ray and was told my foot was



only badly bruised. I tried to carry on working but the pain got worse and I was referred to a specialist and after a further two x-rays the broken bone was finally discovered.

"I would have probably given up if it hadn't been for my solicitor and my area organiser supporting me. I owe the union a lot."

Justice for Linda



Wsdaw ensured justice was done for assistant manager **Linda Mason** after she had her hours cut and then was made redundant by Klick Photopoint in Grantham, Lincolnshire.

"It was such a painful experience which left me feeling mentally and physically drained. Without the union's support I would have simply given up," said the 62 year-old.

Linda's troubles began in September 2008 when her hours were cut from 25 to 16. "I refused to sign the new contract and my life was made very difficult. I was even refused access to my workplace. I was advised to lodge a formal grievance. This was still ongoing when the company went into administration in December 2008 and I was made redundant.

"My redundancy claim was dealt with by the Insolvency Services. It was eventually resolved in November last year and I received almost all of the money owing to me.

"With the union's help I won a battle I would never have had the finances, strength, health or expertise to win by myself. I tell everyone to join Usdaw!"

ice every time

FirstCall  Usdaw

LEGAL ROUND-UP

When cleaner **Bernard Avis** had to retire early from work after he slipped and broke his wrist his world was turned upside down.

But thanks to Usdaw he received just over £50,000 in compensation for his injuries and some much needed financial security for the future.

"The last four and a half years have been hell," said the 63 year-old from Evesham in Worcestershire. "Thankfully I had the union fighting my corner."

The accident happened in 2006 when Bernard worked for Dawn Foods in Evesham. He broke his wrist when he slipped on an uneven floor in the bakery.

He had an operation on his wrist but couldn't return to work.

"Before the accident I was a happy-go-lucky kind of person, looking forward to working for the next six years, right up to my retirement. But now I'm a shadow of my former self, it's all been very stressful.

"I can't thank the union enough. They looked after everything, solicitors, medicals, and consultants.

"It was a massive relief when we won and I even received compensation for future loss of earnings. I felt justice had been done."



Julie Taylor

Age: 52

Employer: Morrison's, Bridlington

Injury: Thumb

Date of accident: November 2008

Case settled: June 2011

Award: £1,350

Quote: "I wouldn't be without the union."

David Langham

Age: 53

Employer: Sainsbury's, Sunderland

Injury: Dog bite

Date of accident: August 2010

Case settled: June 2011

Award: £1,750

Quote: "So easy – just a quick call to FirstCall."

Norma Stephens

Age: 55

Employer: Sainsbury's, Shrewsbury

Injury: Shoulder

Date of accident: December 2009

Case settled: January 2011

Award: £5,200

Quote: "FirstCall is a first-class service."

Kieran Patterson

Age: 35

Employer: GAP, Edinburgh

Injury: Back

Date of accident: August 2010

Case settled: June 2011

Award: £1,750

Quote: "I tell all my friends to join the union."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL**



All smiles for Stephen

Warehouse worker **Stephen Maidment** knew exactly what to do when he injured his back and leg in an accident at work.

He rang the union's free legal helpline, FirstCall who looked after his claim. Two years later his case was settled and he received a cheque for £6,000.

"I've had assistance from the union twice before so I always keep my card handy," said the 58 year-old from Winsford in Cheshire. "And again I had no complaints, the help and support I received was spot on."

The accident happened in 2009 when Stephen worked at the former Tesco distribution site in Middlewich in Cheshire. "I was driving a forklift truck unloading a wagon. The driver suddenly pulled away and I was thrown sideways off the ramp. I was off work for 18 weeks. It was a very stressful time for me and my family but FirstCall helped ease the pain, I had an excellent service."

Double win for Francis

Legal Plus came to the rescue not once but twice for warehouseman **Francis McGroarty** after he had two accidents at work. Usdaw's legal team handled both claims and he received a total of £85,000 in compensation.

"I had a great service all the way through, no problems at all. My solicitors were brilliant," said Francis, 61, from Sittingbourne in Kent.

The first accident happened in 2005 when Francis slipped on water at the Wincanton site in Snodland, Kent and injured his neck, back and left elbow. Two years later he was working in the warehouse when a colleague drove into him injuring his left shoulder and hip.

"It was a terrible time for me and my family. I was so pleased I was in the union, everything was dealt with very efficiently and that took away all the worry.

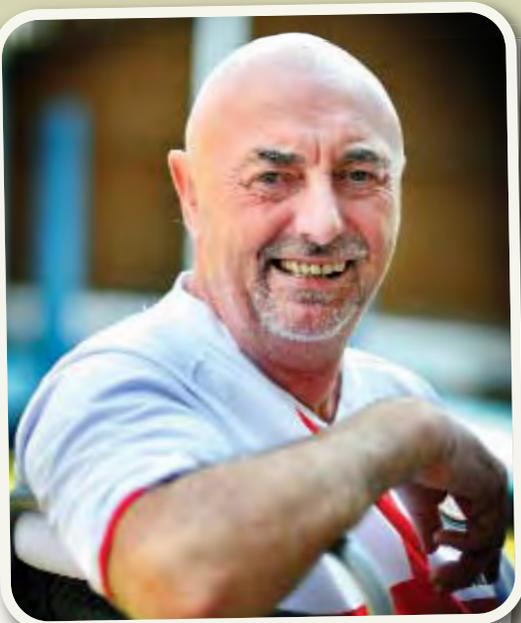
"You never think you'll have an accident at work let alone two like me.

"But each time I had total peace of mind knowing I had the full support and backing of a team of professionals looking after me – I tell everyone to join."



No worries for Steven

embers now



FirstCall helped put **Steven Ainscow** back on the road to a speedy recovery after he was injured at work. His claim progressed quickly after he contacted the free accident claims helpline.

"It was absolutely wonderful," said Steven from Farnworth in Bolton. "Within fifteen minutes I had an appointment with a local solicitor in Manchester and they literally took care of everything."

"I was kept informed every step of the way. It was such a comfort to know I didn't have to worry about a thing."

Steven was knocked down by a delivery van in the staff car park in October 2009 when he worked for Shop Direct in Bolton, Greater Manchester. He went to his local A&E department and was signed off work for three weeks with multiple injuries.

His case was settled within 12 months of the accident and he received a cheque for £2,500 in compensation. "When I recommend the union to colleagues, I always tell them about my experience and how the union helped me."

Take the pain out of personal injury

Legal Plus

Free Accident Claim Line for:

- Accidents any time and any place in the UK.
- Road traffic accidents.
- Work related diseases and conditions.
- Injuries caused by violent crime or armed robbery.
- Family members living with you, if they're injured in a road traffic accident.



No forms, no fuss, no delay

Fast, expert help is only a free call away

0800 055 6333*

* This is **NOT** a general Usdaw helpline. The call centre will only process applications for assistance in accident, disease and injury claims.

Ushaw solicitors – working on your behalf, nationwide

Victim of crime? First

Frightening attack

If you have sustained a physical or mental injury because of a criminal act the union can help you claim compensation, call 0800 055 6333

If you have been the innocent victim of a violent crime, you could be eligible to receive compensation from the **Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority (CICA)**. The CICA is funded by the Government and compensates anyone who has been physically or mentally injured as the innocent victim of a violent crime. It is however subject to strict regulations.

You may be eligible if:

- you have been injured seriously enough to qualify for at least the minimum award (£1,000)
- you were injured in an act of violence in England, Scotland or Wales – an offender does not necessarily have to have been convicted of, or even charged with

the crime. While there is a separate scheme for Northern Ireland, members should still use FirstCall Usdaw ■ you are making your application within two years of the incident that caused your injury – however, applications may still be accepted after two years if, in your particular case, it wasn't reasonable to expect an application to be made within this time.

If you think you have been a victim of violent crime call FirstCall Usdaw **0800 055 6333**. You can also learn more from the **Guide to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority** online at: www.usdaw.org.uk/cicaguide



Two thugs were jailed for assaulting **Gerald Mather** as he made his way to work at the Tesco Extra store in Warrington, Cheshire in January 2010.

The unprovoked attack happened at 5.45am just 50 yards from the store. He was pulled to the ground by the two robbers, who then made off with his bag containing personal items and medication for a heart condition.

"It was a wintery morning," said Gerald, 60. "As I neared the store I could hear someone behind me, but I thought nothing of it.

"The next thing I heard a man shout 'I've got a knife'. I started to run but I was jumped upon and bundled to the floor. A passer by came to my rescue. It was extremely frightening and I was left injured and badly shaken. I'm still very wary when I'm out and about on my own.

"The police were able to make a quick arrest as they followed the men's footprints in the snow to the place where they were hiding out." Usdaw made a claim to the CICA and 12 months after the incident it awarded Gerald £1,650 compensation.



Call Usdaw can help

Call for high quality cameras

Better CCTV is a must for the retail sector if violent shoplifters are to be prosecuted, according to **Graham Morris**, a man with 26 years experience in retailing.

“CCTV footage is vital so that incidents can be caught and recorded so it can then be used in court as evidence,” said Graham, 56, from St Ives in Cornwall.

Graham’s thoughts are based on his own experience and one incident in particular when he was assaulted by a shoplifter last March.

“I was working in the Truro store at the time and I noticed a shoplifter stealing alcohol. I kept an eye on him and when I challenged him, he head-butted me breaking my nose. It was all caught on camera.

“The man was arrested but the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to prosecute him because they said the CCTV footage

wasn’t good enough. It was sole destroying.”

After the incident Usdaw helped Graham make a claim to the CICA. His case was settled within three months he was awarded £1,500 compensation.

“I was very impressed with the help and support I had from the union, it was first-class. When people need help I always recommend the union because it has the expertise.”



Bravery rewarded

Courageous Co-op store manager **Simon Bailey** risked his own safety when he disarmed an axe-wielding man during an attempted robbery last October at his Abbey Hulton store in Stoke-on-Trent.

“I was called to the tills by a colleague,” said Simon, 33. “I then saw a man at the till waving an axe and shouting at the checkout assistant. As I went to grab the handle of the axe there was a bit of a tussle and it fell to the floor. I managed to kick it out of the way.

“Two customers came to my aid and we held him down until the police arrived. He became more aggressive and started lashing out and then he bit my leg.

“The man was arrested and when his case went to court he pleaded guilty and was detained indefinitely under the Mental Health Act.

“This was a very rare incident. It’s a safe store to work in.

“Usually we have a permanent security guard, but the attack happened on his day off.”

Usdaw helped Simon lodge a claim with the CICA. His case was settled within six months and he received £1,250 in compensation. Simon also received a Public Bravery Award from the local police force.



Water shortage

Q Our new manager has told us we cannot have a bottle of water when working on the check out, he says it's because of health and safety. This is to apply all year round even in hot weather. Is the manager right?

Your health and your safety at work is a vital part of Usdaw's service. For more advice visit www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety

Back pain worry

Q I work in a dairy loading milk containers onto lorries for deliveries. I am having problems with back pain due to pushing and pulling these heavy containers through the warehouse and loading bay – any suggestions?

The movement and loading of **Milk Roll Containers (MRCs)** results in about 25 per cent of injuries in the milk sector. A full MRC can weigh 225 kg so they can be difficult to move. Strain injuries can result from pushing/pulling, especially up slopes. Injuries can also be caused if a container falls over or if you trap your hands or legs against doors or walls. The condition of the castors is very important and any faults should be rectified immediately.

Dairy UK, the organisation that represents the milk industry has produced a guidance document 'Guidelines for the safe handling of Milk Roll Containers' http://www.dairyuk.org/component/docman/cat_view/110-publications

The guidance covers things such as; safe handling and moving of MRCs, safe picking into MRCs and loading and unloading them from vehicles.



Image © Shutterstock/Andreas Pilgass

Q A couple of the trolley staff who work at our store have complained about being in the hot sun most of the day and getting sunburn and being too hot and thirsty. What can be done to help them?

Just as they need protection in cold wet weather they also need it during periods of hot sunny weather.

There is a clear link between sun-exposure and skin cancer. If they have to work outside when the sun is strong, they should wear sunscreen. The HSE recommends **at least SPF15**, but other experts recommend SPF30. They should also wear long sleeves to protect their arms though these can be of a



No, there is no health and safety reason to refuse bottled water for checkout operators – quite the reverse. Keeping hydrated is good for your health and can be more important for all of us in hot weather to replace water lost through sweating. Employers do have a legal duty to make drinking water 'readily accessible'. If they don't allow workers to have water at their work station then they must provide water nearby and must allow you to take breaks away from the checkout to get a drink when you need it.

It's been suggested in the past that there is an electrical safety risk if workers were to spill the water. But if it's in a bottle with a lid the chance of a spillage is small and, even if there was a spillage, there is very little chance of serious damage.

If the manager continues to refuse to allow bottles on the check out, talk to your Usdaw rep and get it raised as a grievance.

Working in sunshine

lightweight material and hi-vis.

A hat should also be available to protect their heads and regular access to cold drinks will keep them hydrated.

Speak with the rep in store to make sure they get the protection they need.



Asbestos issue

Q According to the local newspaper, the store where I recently worked has been prosecuted for breaching asbestos laws during a refit three years ago. I remember the contractors coming into the store at the time. I am worried that I may have been exposed to asbestos. What can I do?

When asbestos dust in the air is breathed in it may cause cancer. Over 2,000 people a year are diagnosed with mesiothelioma, a cancer of the chest-lining caused by asbestos. Asbestos was widely used as a building material in the 20th century so there is a very small amount of asbestos fibres in the air we all breathe. Because of the cancer hazard it is important that precautions are taken to prevent any extra exposure when work is being done on buildings that still contain asbestos. The more a person is exposed to asbestos the greater the risk. As a result most of the new cases of asbestos cancer affect building workers such as electricians, plumbers and demolition workers. However, a small number of people who live or work in buildings that contain asbestos can develop cancer as a result of lower-level exposure.

If you worked in the shop at the time and proper precautions were not followed there is a chance that you were exposed to higher levels of asbestos dust. It can take 40 years for the cancer to develop from the date of initial exposure. There are no tests that can be done now to say whether you were exposed or if you could be at risk from asbestos cancer.

Our advice to employers in this situation is that they should write to all the employees who worked in the area at the time informing them that they may have been exposed, giving the details of the incident, explaining the slight increase in risk and advising them to keep the letter safe for future reference in the unlikely event they do develop an asbestos related cancer. We also suggest that any members who are concerned talk to their GP, so that the details of their exposure can be recorded in their medical record.

The increased risk from a one-off incident is very low. It is extremely unlikely that you will have suffered any ill-effect if you were exposed at the time.

Remember!

Usdaw has its own health and safety section full of useful information, advice and a reps' forum at: www.usdaw.org.uk/forum

If you have any questions for Arena's health experts write to: the editor, arena, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ or email: arena@usdaw.org.uk

CAMPAIGNS

Government punishes

The Tory-led Coalition wants working people to bear the brunt of its economic austerity measures as it plans to slash benefits for hard-pressed families

The Government's changes to tax credits are bad news for most Usdaw members as many rates are frozen or reduced. But, as **Arena** reveals, some groups will gain, while others will lose a lot next year.

Better Off: Over-60s now only have to work 16 hours to claim

From April this year, over 60s only have to work 16 hours a week to be able to claim Working Tax Credit. This includes many people who have cut their hours or who top up their pension with a part-time job.

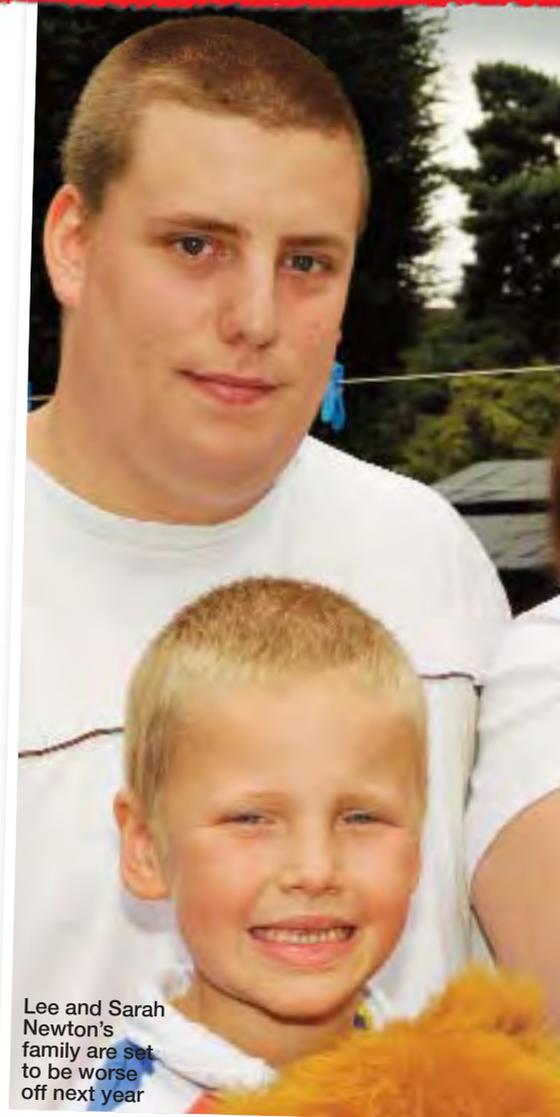
Andrew is 62 and his partner **Liz** is 58. Andrew retired with a pension of £150 a week. He now works for 16 hours for £112 a week – a total weekly income of £272. Andrew and Liz can claim £17.60 a week in tax credit – £916 a year. See leaflet 334 at: www.usdaw.org.uk/ 334

Worse Off: Couples with children working under 24 hours a week

Next April, the minimum that couples with children will have to work between them to claim Working Tax Credit will increase from 16 to 24 hours a week, even if one or both partners are carers or have a disability. (Lone parents are not affected).

Couples unable to find the extra hours will lose £3,840 a year Working Tax Credit, making it very difficult to make ends meet. Many Usdaw members facing cuts to hours and reductions in overtime are worried they may not meet the new target.

Lee Newton and his wife **Sarah** have two children, aged 5 and 1. Lee, 27, from Stoke-on-Trent works 18 hours a week in retail and has



Lee and Sarah Newton's family are set to be worse off next year

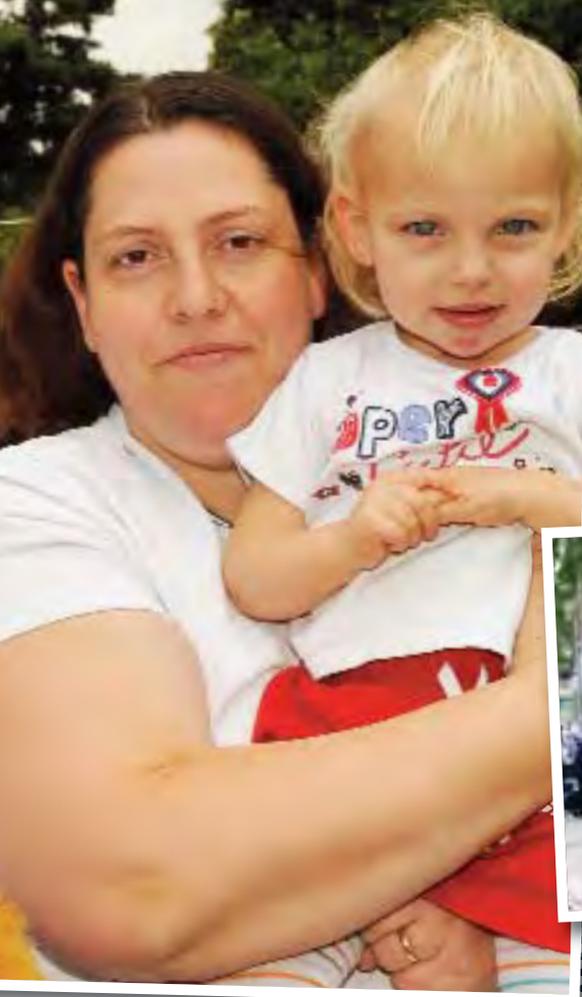
repeatedly asked if he can do extra hours, but has been told there are none available.

"I can't get any

extra working hours as my employer doesn't have any. There are no other jobs in our area

families on tax credits

[FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/RESOURCES]



Respect Week 2011

Usdaw's Freedom from Fear Campaign seeks to tackle violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers. Did you know that every minute of every day a shopworker is assaulted, threatened or verbally abused?

Usdaw organises a **Respect for Shopworkers Week** to highlight the problems our members face. This year Respect Week is **7-11 November** and the focus is on cuts to the police service.

Across England and Wales there are unprecedented cuts in frontline policing being imposed by the Government. We are very concerned that this will lead to an increase in crime and anti-social behaviour and our members on the frontline will suffer.

So we are asking reps to survey members about their concerns and experiences and we are launching a petition to ask MPs to reverse the very damaging cuts before crime increases.



but if I can't get the additional hours, we'll lose all our Working Tax Credit next April.

We really need this money and it's unfair what the Government is doing."

For the latest updates on our campaign please visit:
www.usdaw.org.uk/freedomfromfear
 or if you would like to know more about how you can get involved please e-mail
freedomfromfear@usdaw.org.uk
 More information at:
www.stoppolicecuts.co.uk

Workers stand united

June sees activists excel at recruitment

Despite the economic downturn Usdaw reps are going the extra mile to deliver the union's message to new recruits across all sectors



ard working activists made

sure the union's influence increased as they signed up hundreds of new members during Membership Week in June.

Reps held events in workplaces across the UK to spread the message that there has never been a better time to join Usdaw and with membership edging past the 406,000 mark it was clear new recruits were eager to get on board.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis was delighted with the results. "There has always been a high turnover of staff in our trades so we

have to keep repeating the message to new entrants that only Usdaw will look after you at work and try to improve your terms and conditions. UK workers need the protection that our expertise can deliver. Last year for example our legal service recovered more than £17m in compensation for members who were injured or treated unfairly at work. Usdaw also won pay rises above the national average in many companies and we helped thousands of members get access to learning for their own individual development and to increase their career prospects too. All of this explains why

Usdaw is the fastest

growing union in the UK."



Activists at the Sainsbury's store in Swansea part of the South Wales & Western division



In the Midlands division Oliver Bundy and Jordan Bond were involved at Tesco Stafford

If you know someone at work who isn't a member you can sign them up using the form on **page 19** and you will be entered into a cash draw and could win one of five **£100 prizes**.



It was all smiles at the Sainsbury's store, Darnley, in the Scottish division



Tara Bennett and Stuart Marshall at the Tesco Extra Barrhill store, Cambridge in Eastern division



Reps at the Tesco Broughton store in Chester part of the North Western division



Janina Barlow and Emma Pickersgill at Sainsbury's White Rose, Leeds in the North Eastern division



Lifelong learning was used at Sainsbury's in Whistable, part of the Southern division

Readers' survey

our survey said ...



undreds of readers responded to our survey in the summer issue, with two lucky members **winning £50 each**. Results are summarised below with some of your comments both positive and negative.



WINNERS:
Carol Eaton
from Redhill in Surrey, and
Marie Nicholas
from Camborne
in Cornwall.

- **82 per cent** of members read arena cover to cover.
- **Know your rights** was the most popular feature with legal plus, health and campaign news following closely behind.
- arena provides **useful information**, informs on issues and is interesting to read but some readers felt that the content wasn't always relevant to them.
- **A third** of readers were encouraged to find out how they could do more within the union after reading arena.
- More than half of readers haven't visited the **Usdaw website**, but 70 per cent use the internet – why not have a look right now at: www.usdaw.org.uk
- **Over 90 per cent** of you prefer the traditional magazine through your letterbox and love the smaller size.

Thumbs up

- “I find arena just right for my needs, the right information and not too heavy to digest.”
- “I like arena as it covers everything you need to know.”
- “The magazine lets you read everything about Usdaw.”
- “Easy to understand publication, to the point and interesting.”
- “I think you have the right balance because you have to please everyone.”

Thumbs down

- “More news in less of a silly dumbed-down magazine style, we're not all stupid and brainless just because we work in retail.”
- “Not so much on lifestyle – it's not a woman's weekly magazine – and I'm a woman.”

Click  Connect  Win

Sign up to our regular email updates and you could win a Digi Box courtesy of Usdaw's Health and Dental Plan



Win!

www.usdaw.org.uk/emailupdates

Sponsored by Usdaw Health and Dental Plan. To enter visit www.usdaw.org.uk Closing date 4 Oct 11. Terms apply.



In conversation with Pam Stanton

Welsh rep has a long history of standing up for fairness

Pam with daughter Tina



I joined Usdaw in 1984. Joining was a no brainer for me as I have always believed in unions. My father was a rep and I guess my sense of fair play came from my parents who encouraged me to think for myself and to voice my own opinion. I've done the same with my kids.

My belief is that we should support each other, be treated fairly and not be exploited. Often employers complain that wages cost them the most out of their costs and then make cuts in staffing levels. That doesn't make sense. If people don't work then they can't spend and add to their profits.

I have been a shop steward and health & safety rep for 14 years and after many years on my own we now have a great team of reps in my store. The union is strong, members know us and trust us to look after their best interests. Confidentiality is a very important part of being a rep.

It is also important to be honest with members about what they can and can't do. It is no good giving them false hopes or information. Our density has reached 81 per cent and still growing.

What I look for in a rep is someone who is helpful, cares about people, has a strong sense of right and wrong, believes in fairness and has the ability to learn new skills. Usdaw will take care of training, and a thick skin helps!

Looking back I was an activist early on. Aged 14 or 15, we organised a protest, against the ruling that girls could not wear trousers to school. We ended up negotiating a change in the policy!



Fact file

Pam Stanton

Customer service assistant for Tesco in Bridgend, Mid Glamorgan, Wales.

Part-time with 27 years' service

Three grown-up daughters

Interests: Reading, socialising, local pub quiz, music, watching TV.

PEOPLE LIKE YOU

[WANT TO BE A REP? VISIT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/BEAREP]



John Hannett with campaigners outside an M&S store

Active at M&S

Patricia Page on her mission to bring union membership to staff at Marks & Spencer



arks and Spencer sales advisor **Patricia Page** is on a one woman

mission to deliver the message that it doesn't matter where you work, anyone can join a trade union.

The 43 year-old is one of

millions of workers employed by companies across the UK who don't recognise trade unions. But along with a growing number of Usdaw activists, Patricia is determined to spread the word that the law protects workers who are members of the union from discrimination.

"It doesn't surprise me that Usdaw's membership has been growing steadily over the last couple of years," said Patricia from Cheshire.

"Workers are starting to realise that in these unpredictable times, nothing is safe and their jobs are at risk and by joining the union they will get a lot of protection and peace of mind,

especially around redundancy or sudden changes to their job terms and conditions."

Since Patricia joined Usdaw eight years ago, she has worked single-handedly to change the attitude of her colleagues and promote a greater understanding of the value of trade unions.

“Usdaw has done a great job for me and the staff at my store and we're grateful”

"When you work in a non-unionised workplace, people are frightened to join, they think they're not allowed to join or they'll get in trouble if the company find out or it might affect their chances of promotion.



Patricia Page loves her job and her union

PEOPLE LIKE YOU

"But members in my store know that's not the case and it's OK to join and they know the value of being in Usdaw and the benefits it brings.

"One of our colleagues used Legal Plus to recover thousands of pounds in compensation after a workplace accident.

"You only have to look down the high street where Usdaw has a massive well-established membership in other well known leading retailers like Tesco, Sainsbury, Morrisons and the Co-op, and see the improvements that have been made because management and the union are working together.

"And it gives out a very strong message when you see managers who work for these big four supermarkets actually

joining Usdaw themselves because they too realise it's a good thing.

"Udaw has done more for me and staff at my store than we ever believed possible, the training the union has given me has enabled me to help my colleagues and get results and for this I am truly grateful.

"I love my job, and just because I'm in a union it doesn't mean I'm not loyal to the company nor does it mean I'm out to cause trouble, quite the opposite in fact."

**TO RECRUIT A FRIEND
TURN TO PAGES 18&19**

John Hannett says:

"I couldn't agree more with Patricia, just because we're union members doesn't mean to say we're anti-company – we're not. With more than 160,000 members in Tesco – the UK's number one grocer – we can hardly be charged with disloyalty.

"Patricia, and the other activists at M&S who are taking the union's message onto the shopfloor, have built our membership. We now have thousands of members, which is a great achievement in a company which has never encouraged union membership.

"Patricia has put her neck on the block over the last few years and done a remarkable job.

"My message to M&S staff is the same as Patricia's – join Usdaw and make a difference in your store."

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www.usdaw.org.uk/offers



[MORE INFORMATION AT]
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/OFFERS

Unisaver: The union no longer offers the Unisaver savings product as advertised on the member services pages of previous arenas. Any members who have taken out a policy with Unisaver will not be affected by this change and existing policies will carry on as normal. If you have any queries please contact **Coventry Assurance Society** on 024 7622 3683.

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*Our lines are open 8am-8pm weekdays and 9am-12noon Saturdays. Calls may be recorded and/or monitored. Calls from landline phones are free however mobile providers may charge.
Britannia is the trading name of the Co-operative Bank plc.



DEBT REMEDY

Usdaw and **Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS)** have launched a new service providing debt advice and solutions for all Usdaw members

CCCS provides free and immediate debt advice and solutions to individuals and families in times of financial distress. In addition to its unique online counselling service, Debt Remedy, CCCS offers a free telephone counselling service available Monday to Friday.

If you are an individual struggling to repay your debts use the CCCS Debt Remedy on-line assessment of your financial circumstances: www.cccs.co.uk/usdaw

Telephone debt counselling
Freephone 0800 138 1111
Monday to Friday 8:00am-8:00pm



UK TOP ATTRACTIONS

Usdaw members can make great savings on the following UK attractions and theme parks:

Alton Towers Resort, Chessington World of Adventures, LEGOLAND Discovery Centre Manchester, LEGOLAND Windsor, Madame Tussauds London, SEA LIFE centres & Sanctuaries, the Dungeons, THORPE PARK and Warwick Castle.

To find out more or to book call **0871 222 4001** and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin



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Lines are open 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). For security and training purposes calls will be recorded and may be monitored.

ARENA Letters

You can now have your say on the arena letters page, please keep it brief and no longer than 150 words – £50 for the best letter *

Parental approval

T

he letter in your summer issue of

arena from Mike

Tucker regarding the sale of alcohol to underage buyers made me think about a similar problem.

As a part of my job, I sell electronic games, many of them with age restrictions clearly marked. Whilst I regularly turn away kids who want to buy them, these same kids often return a few minutes later with a parent who buys the games and immediately hands them over to the kids at the till. I will explain to the parents that the games are considered unsuitable, only to get a 'sniffy' reply concerning 'the nanny state'.

If it is illegal for me to sell these items to underage buyers, surely the parents must be breaking the law in supplying inappropriate material to minors.

If I saw a parent abusing their child, I would do something about it. Surely, these parents who buy inappropriate games and films for their kids are abusing their kids.

What would you suggest in these circumstances? My employers would take a very dim view if I refused to sell to these parents.

Ron Nicholson, Gt Yarmouth

Open all hours

H

aving read the summer arena issue I felt I had no choice but to email you in disgust at the proposed open all hours that the Government is thinking about.

Shopworkers are among the lowest paid workers in the country, we already are made to work bank holidays or at least some. Christmas and Easter are a time for family, not working behind a till or shelf stacking. It's unfair that office workers, council workers etc get bank holidays and weekends off and we retail workers are being denied the little time off we, at the moment, are allowed.

It is really unfair to pick on the lowest paid workers and I hope you as a union will fight this all the way. We need time off just has much, sometimes even more in busy periods, as the rest of the workers.

Tracey Senior,
Wakefield *

Cancer check

A

t the end of last year I was diagnosed with ductal

carcinoma in situ which is an early form of breast cancer. Reading the arena I noticed that I should claim Sickness Benefit while getting treatment. This came in very handy and helped with bills and a holiday. The staff at the Glasgow office have been great and my employer Morrisons has been good to me and I'm returning to work soon.

I would advise anyone that is called for a mammogram to go as I would never have known that I had breast cancer.

Janette Harold, Glasgow



Bank holidays

I

agree with Yvonne (summer arena) about bank holidays, often shopworkers don't get the chance to take their entitlement. And why should we lose a day's pay when the shop is closed? It is not the staff who cannot work if the shop is closed.

via email: Paul Scarborough



Sunday dilemma

I have been following the debate and feedback from members regarding Sunday trading and as most of the views expressed are negative, I think it is worth pointing out that we should live up to our opinions and not make it a habit to do our own shopping on a Sunday. I know from experience that Sunday can sometimes be the easiest day to do it but we are just feeding into the employers play that 'they open as there is a great demand for it'.

It may not be great to go shopping either in the evenings after work or in the early mornings before, but we can't have it both ways.

via email: Jackie Franklin

online opinions ...

I was nice to read arena online but I still like the magazine to take to work and show colleagues.

via email: Miss S Sampson



Remember

You can write or email your thoughts to; the editor, arena, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ or arena@usdaw.org.uk
Send all photos to: pictures@usdaw.org.uk

Tribute for reps

I would like to thank all the Shop Stewards at Tesco Fenny Lock NDC for their hard work and professionalism following initially a TUPE transfer for the transport section announcement then followed by a site closure notice affecting over 800 of our members.

online opinions ...

Digital arena – A fantastic idea.....now I can show some of my non Usdaw member friends the great work you are all doing.

via email: John Sinclair

online opinions ...

Digital arena . . very good however I felt that the print was on the small side.

via email: Thomas lennox

online opinions ...

This is just to say - it's FANTASTIC!!!!!!!

via email: Emmanuel Kotey



The branch C60 under the leadership of Bill Sillett, Keith Whitbread and Frank Gallagher have been a credit to themselves, to their members and to Usdaw during a very difficult and challenging time.

The site will be closing in September 2011.

Nigel Scully,
area organiser,
Eastern division

TRY OUR

CROSSWORD

Win £50!

Three lucky members will win £50 each if they answer correctly the crossword clues below. Closing date 14 October, 2011. (Not open to Usdaw staff)



Have fun with our puzzle page & you could win £50!

Send your completed crossword with your details to: the editor, Xword Comp, Arena, Usdaw 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ.

ACROSS

4. Long angry speech (6)
7. Intrude on, trespass (8)
8. Insect (6)
10. Closes noisily (5)
13. Food grain (4)
14. System of meditation and self-control (4)
15. Lima's country (4)
16. Hot drink (3)
17. Pace (4)
19. Handle clumsily, paw (4)
21. Physically bulky, fat (9)
23. Type of food fish (4)
24. Connect (4)
26. Chafe (3)
27. Price (4)



29. Heavy metal (4)
32. Hereditary unit (4)
33. Aquatic birds (5)
34. Foolish (6)
35. Nudist (8)
36. Censured, informally (6)

DOWN

1. Untidy (5)
2. Neck of mutton (5)
3. Bereavement (4)
4. Belonging to them (5)
5. Uncommon (4)
6. Nonsense (6)
9. Keen discernment, insight (6)
11. Lavatory, informally (3)
12. Worker in stone (5)
13. Fight off (7)
15. High spirits, vitality, etc. (3)
16. Sound of disapproval (3)
18. Vestiges (6)
20. Foot and leg joint (5)
21. Young fox (3)
22. Illuminated (3)
23. Underground passage (6)
25. Household fuel (3)
28. Upright (2,3)
30. Weird (5)
31. Dying (5)
32. General meaning, main point (4)
33. Sullen (4)

The winners of the Arena summer crossword were:

Sheila Triggs
Mid Cornwall A177
Thomas Wilson
Scotland Sata G144
Patricia O'Kane
Anglia Tesco C54

WANT TO BE A REP? VISIT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/BEAREP



Charity begins in-store for Tesco activist Michael

Every little helps

Michael Hartley outside his store in Redcar

Young Tesco rep Michael Hartley has grown in confidence so much since he became an activist that he now combines his union role with fund raising for services' charity Help For Heroes.

The 25 year-old is one of the thousands of ordinary people who have joined forces with the national charity founded in 2007 to help build specialist recovery centres for wounded servicemen and women returning from Afghanistan and Iraq.

"When you read the papers and see pictures of the hundreds of injured soldiers returning home, you can't praise them enough for the dangerous jobs they do and the sacrifices they make," said Michael, a part-time shop assistant from Redcar in the North East.

"I know when I watched the footage it hit home with me and I was eager to find out more about what I could do to help.

"I looked at the website where I read stories about people all over the country, who like me, were keen to do their bit to help support our troops who had sustained life-changing injuries.

"And as I found out you don't have to do a lot to get involved. You can raise funds on your own or as part of a group of friends or colleagues, it doesn't matter how much or how little you raise it will all be put to good use.

"I started by selling merchandise to workmates, family and friends and now I'm in training for a sponsored bike ride.

"I've also applied to be a part-time volunteer which will

allow me to spend more time promoting the charity through more specific fundraising events."

And thanks to Michael and others like him Help for Heroes broke through the £100m fundraising barrier in June, a fantastic feat in just four years.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.HELPPFORHEROES.ORG.UK



YOUR HEALTH

Raising awareness on t

A leading charity has called for urgent action on the increasing threat posed by diabetes, **arena** takes a closer look

The health service could face a 'diabetes time bomb' according to an audit of patients in England and Wales.

The report says 800,000 Type 1 and Type 2 patients have elevated blood sugar levels which could lead to kidney failure, limb amputation and stroke.

It warned that many of the patients were young or middle aged and could require 'substantial hospital care in a matter of years'.

Leading charity Diabetes UK said the findings highlighted the need for urgent action.

All forms of diabetes result in raised blood sugar levels. If this is not controlled then it can cause serious damage.

The NHS Information Centre report confirmed that the number of cases of diabetes, especially Type 2, is increasing – particularly in deprived communities.

When it came to controlling blood sugar

levels, around a third of more than two million patients had raised levels that placed them at risk of developing complications.

This was a greater problem for the under 55s. Nearly 300,000 people were at 'high risk' and 144,000 were at 'dangerously high risk' in that age category.

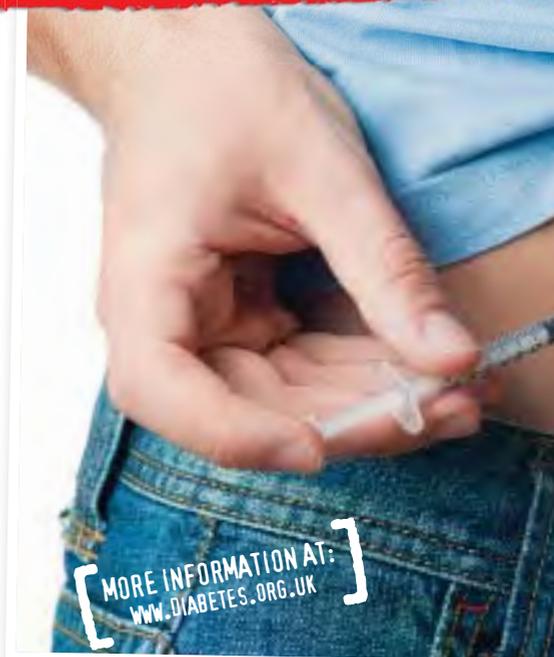
Barbara Young, Chief Executive at Diabetes UK, said: "This highlights the need for urgent action to ensure that people with diabetes start to receive all the basic care processes otherwise there will be more amputations, more people going blind, and more cases of kidney failure, heart disease and stroke."

What is Diabetes?

There are two types.

Type 1 diabetes

- The body is unable to produce any insulin.
- Usually starts in childhood or young adulthood.



[MORE INFORMATION AT:
WWW.DIABETES.ORG.UK]

- Treated with diet control and insulin injections.

Type 2 diabetes

- Not enough insulin is produced or body becomes resistant to it.
- Tends to affect people as they get older, usually appears after the age of 40.
- Increasingly seen in younger, overweight people.

Diabetes is a common life-long health condition. There are 2.8 million

people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK and an estimated 850,000 people who have the condition but don't know it.

Diabetes is a condition where the amount of glucose in your blood is too high because the body cannot use it properly. This is because your pancreas does not produce any insulin, or not enough, to help glucose enter your body's cells – or the insulin that is produced does not

The dangers of diabetes



Image © Alexander Hahn/Shutterstock

work properly (known as insulin resistance).

Insulin is the hormone produced by the pancreas that allows glucose to enter the body's cells, where it is used as fuel for energy so we can work, play and generally live our lives. It is vital for life.

If you have diabetes, your body cannot make proper use of this glucose so it builds up in the blood and isn't able to be used as fuel.

Symptoms occur because some or all of the glucose stays in the

blood and it isn't being used as fuel for energy. The body tries to reduce blood glucose levels by flushing the excess glucose out of the body in the urine.

The **main symptoms** of undiagnosed diabetes can include:

- passing urine more often than usual, especially at night
- increased thirst
- extreme tiredness
- unexplained weight loss
- genital itching or regular episodes of thrush

- slow healing of cuts and wounds

- blurred vision

In Type 1 diabetes the signs and symptoms are usually very obvious and develop very quickly, typically over a few weeks. The symptoms are quickly relieved once the diabetes is treated and under control.

In Type 2 diabetes the signs and symptoms may not be so obvious, as the condition develops slowly over a period of years and may only be picked up in a routine medical check up. Symptoms are quickly relieved once diabetes is treated and under control.

If you have any of the above symptoms contact your GP. Early diagnosis, treatment and good control of diabetes is vital to reduce the chances of developing serious diabetes complications.

Treating diabetes

Diabetes is serious and people with diabetes should have access to good, regular healthcare. However, at the same time, the decisions that are made by those with diabetes are central to the management of their

condition.

Although diabetes cannot yet be cured it can be managed very successfully. This is likely to involve lifestyle changes that will have enormous health benefits and allow a person to continue their normal day-to-day life. You may also be required to take diabetes medication or insulin, or a combination of the two.

Treatment with insulin

All people with Type 1 diabetes will require insulin and eventually, some people with Type 2 diabetes find that despite having their diabetes medication adjusted, their blood glucose levels remain too high and insulin treatment is recommended by their doctor.

Insulin can be given in different ways via an injection, using a syringe, pen device or via an insulin pump. The needle is small, as it only needs to be injected under the skin (subcutaneously), either in the stomach, buttocks, thighs or upper arms. The insulin is then absorbed into small blood vessels and in to the bloodstream.

GO ONLINE FOR THE . .

Latest digital Arena

You can now view arena online at:
www.usdaw.org.uk/e-arena

As part of the union's evolving communications strategy you can now view arena online at anytime via your computer, mobile or tablet.

Just click to flick through the issue and take yourself on your very own Usdaw journey.

The online version comes with additional

photographs, graphics and live links to other websites. It's a one-stop shop for your window on everything that is happening in Usdaw, how you can get involved and what's coming up.

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Usdawdrive

Marching with pride



nion members and activists who believe in equality had a busy summer when they joined the Pride marches in Edinburgh, Blackpool and Birmingham to promote equal treatment for lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender workers (LGBT).

Banners, flags, t-shirts and a range of merchandise was used to promote Usdaw's message of equal treatment, fairness and

solidarity with fellow workers. Additional marches have since been held in London, Manchester, Norwich, Cardiff, York and Leeds.

"This was the first time I'd actually taken part in a Pride parade. I hadn't realised before that Usdaw did this kind of thing," said Josh Halliwell from Market Rasen. "It felt good to be marching under the union's banner together with other lesbian, gay, bisexual and

straight activists."

Graham Newport from Irvine in Scotland joined the Edinburgh march. "There is still a lot of ignorance and prejudice out there so by supporting these events Usdaw is sending out a strong signal that it will tackle any harassment of its LGBT members."

**[MORE INFORMATION AT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/EQUALITIES]**



Activists on the march in Birmingham . . .



. . . enjoying the seafront at Blackpool . . .



. . . banner and flag waving in Birmingham . . .



. . . and raising the union's profile in Edinburgh

Festive dates

Check your contract now

Remember

The union's ability to deliver on this issue will depend on levels of Usdaw membership and organisation in the workplace. So, if workers aren't happy with the employer's Christmas working arrangements get them to [join Usdaw](#).



Understanding your contractual rights on public

holidays is never straightforward because there are a lot of myths and misunderstandings out there. That's why arena has been giving advice in the last couple of issues on how to keep yourself informed. Read on for further details.

Q. In my diary it says Monday, 26 December and Tuesday, 27 December are public holidays. Is that right? And if so, am I guaranteed both days off?

A. There is no legal right to take paid time off on a public holiday or to receive premium payments for working on such a holiday.

Your position in relation to working on a public/bank holiday will depend on what is outlined in your contract of employment, staff handbook and if there is a union/company agreement.

Q. Do the shops have to shut early on Christmas Eve?

A. No, they don't. In much of the retail sector Christmas Eve is a contractually normal working day and staff may be required to work their normal working hours.

Ushaw is urging retailers to finish early on Christmas Eve to allow workers to get home so they can spend the

evening with their families and friends. Finishing work after 4pm on Christmas Eve makes it difficult for many workers to get home as public transport transfers to holiday service. The union believes transport difficulties must be taken into account when retailers consider the hours employees are expected to start and finish work and should, if necessary, support staff who face problems getting to and from work.

Q. Do part-time workers get treated differently to full-time workers in relation to public holidays?

A. No. Part-time workers will get the same bank holiday entitlements, on a pro-rata basis, as their full-time colleagues.

Q. My company designates Monday, 26 December as a public holiday. I don't normally work Monday, do I get paid as if I had worked or do I miss out?

A. Not necessarily. There is no guarantee or automatic right

that you get paid and it will depend on what is outlined in your contract of employment, staff handbook or union/company agreement.

Q. I work full-time. In the week commencing Monday, 26 December, do full-time workers get paid overtime if they work more than four days?

A. Not necessarily. Again, this will depend on what is outlined in your contract of employment, staff handbook and if there is a union/company agreement.

Q. In the good old days if you worked a public holiday you would get double time and a day off. What is the situation now? Is there a statutory minimum?

A. There is no automatic right to an enhanced pay rate for working on a public holiday. It depends on what is in your contract of employment and union/company agreements. The pay rates for working on a public holiday are usually explained in the staff handbook or in other communications to staff.

Ushaw has been involved in many discussions with employers over premium pay for public holiday working. The union's aim is that staff receive premium pay for working unsocial hours, including public holidays.



COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

*From Aberdeen to Plymouth
Usdaw has offices across the UK*

Glasgow
Muirfield,
342 Albert Drive,
G41 5PG
T: 0141 427 6561
E: glasgow@usdaw.org.uk

Belfast
First Floor, Unit 2, 41
Stockmans Way, BT9 7ET
T: 028 9066 3773
E: belfast@usdaw.org.uk

Preston
First Floor, Units 6 & 7,
Eastway Business
Village, Olivers Place,
Fulwood, PR2 9WT
T: 01772 704003
E: preston@usdaw.org.uk

Liverpool
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Contacts

Always speak to your rep first if you need advice or support. If you don't have a rep at your workplace contact your local Usdaw office as shown on the map. Alternatively, you can ring our national helpline **0845 6060640*** to be connected to your local office. ***Calls charged at local rate.** The union's head office is:

**188 Wilmslow Road
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■ **Let us know if your details change**

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