

# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS – MARCH/APRIL 2020

Thank you

To all Usdaw reps who are doing a fantastic job on the frontline as well as providing vital support to our members during this national crisis.

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**Usdaw**  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
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**PUBLISHED BY:**

USDaw

188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ

t: 0161 224 2804

e: network@usdaw.org.uk

w: usdaw.org.uk

**HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS**

Mike Glover

**EDITOR**

Saiqa Khushnood

**REPORTER**

Sarah Sherborne

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT**

Paula Barke

**OTHER CONTRIBUTORS**

David Williams, Jo Bird, Liz Green, Adam Kaczmarek,  
Doug Russell, Tony Dale, Joanne Cairns

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Della Batchelor, Rob Finney,

Pete Hill, Tom Humble,

Ian Sadler, Janina Struk,

Alan Williams

Via Getty Images:

Chris Hepburn, SolStock,

photoman, solarseven

**ADVERTISING**

Century One Publishing

Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road,

St Albans, AL3 4DG

**ACCOUNT MANAGER**

Dominic Arnold

t: 01727 739 184

e: dominic@centurionepublishing.uk

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# BIG THANK YOU TO ALL USDaw REPS

I am writing this foreword during an unprecedented moment in our country that is affecting all of us.

Covid-19 (coronavirus) has upended 'normal life' and we have seen government intervention the likes of not seen since the second world war.

This has highlighted that in a national crisis retail workers, drivers and those working in warehouses, distribution centres and in associated industries are the backbone of keeping this country running.

After lobbying on behalf of our membership the Government recognised Usdaw members as 'essential workers' due to their crucial role in helping maintain the food supply chain. Many employers have paid a bonus in recognition of their staff working longer hours under extremely stressful conditions.

I understand that being on the frontline is not easy. This crisis is testing each and every one of us in ways that were unimaginable only a few weeks ago. That's why Usdaw has been working hard to ensure that the services we provide reps and members remain unaffected and that we are there when you reach out to us.

We have also been working with employers to introduce safety measures such as perspex screens, discouraging people from panic buying and reiterating the message that 'abuse is not part of the job' to ensure our members' safety.



Much of *Network* was written before this crisis however in light of what is happening a number of pages have been rewritten to ensure they are dedicated to the Covid-19 crisis. Government advice is changing daily so for up-to-date information on the virus please visit the Usdaw website.

Due to the disruption caused by the lockdown this edition of *Network* will only be available as a digital publication.

Finally, I want to thank each and every one of you for everything you are doing. We will ensure that once this is over the contribution you have made is not forgotten.

By pulling together and following Government advice we can get through this crisis.

*Usdaw General Secretary*

*Paddy Lillis*



**remember**  
to keep your  
**data safe**

## DATA PROTECTION

You may be a rep or branch official and have been in your role for many years or have just started.

No matter what your role or length of time you have been carrying it out, it is important that you understand the principles of data protection and what you need to do.



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# IN THE NEWS

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

## UK IN CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWN

**O**n Monday 23 March the Prime Minister Boris Johnson took the historic step of announcing a lockdown to force people to stay at home. People will only be allowed to leave home for the following reasons:

- Shopping for necessities, as infrequently as possible.
- One form of exercise a day, such as running or cycling, alone or with household members.
- For medical or care needs, for example to help a vulnerable person.
- Travelling to and from work, but only if you cannot work from home.
- Meeting friends, shopping for anything beyond essentials, and gathering in crowds are now banned.

### WILL THIS BE ENFORCED?

Police will be able to enforce the rules, and impose fines on people who do not abide by them.

### WHAT WILL CLOSE?

Authorities will force the closure of all shops selling non-essential goods such as food or medicine. Also closed will



be libraries, outdoor gyms and playgrounds, and churches or other places of worship. Hotels, B&Bs, campsites and caravan parks will also be closed, apart from to permanent residents or key workers.

### WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO PUBLIC GATHERINGS?

All public gatherings of more than two people will be banned, except if those people share a household. Also prohibited are all social events such as weddings and baptisms, although funerals will be permitted to take place.

### HOW LONG WILL THE LOCKDOWN LAST?

At least three weeks, after which point, the Government will review.

### WHAT IS THE POINT OF THE LOCKDOWN?

The aim is to severely

limit the scale of physical and social interaction and slow the spread of the coronavirus so that the growth in cases does not overwhelm the NHS and lead to mass deaths.

### HOW WILL WE KNOW IT HAS WORKED?

There is a time lag between infections and people becoming critically ill, it will be up to two weeks before any benefits are realised.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We now have clear instructions from the Government and we urge the public to listen and act accordingly.

"As a result, we are aware that some employers are laying staff off and asking them to go without pay. We urge the Government to act urgently to protect

the workforce and for employers to act sympathetically.

"Our members in supermarkets have had a torrid time over the last few weeks due to panic buying. However the Government has now made it absolutely clear that people can only leave home to buy essential items. We hope this brings an end to the misery that shopworkers have endured as this crisis unfolded.

"I would like to pay tribute to all the essential workers who will continue to leave their homes and work to help us through the coronavirus emergency."



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## COVID-19

# ADM CANCELLED DUE TO CORONAVIRUS CRISIS



Usdaw's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) which was due to take place in April at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool has been cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Coronavirus is now regarded as a pandemic by the World Health Organisation. The impact of the virus has been unprecedented in our lifetime and is changing on a daily basis.

"As one of the largest trade

unions representing members in retail trades, warehousing and distribution, we have a key role to play in responsibly supporting the national interest, local communities and the economy. All our members in these critical sectors are working hard to keep the supply of food, groceries and other goods flowing and available to the public.

"We have reviewed on a daily basis the latest medical and Government advice regarding the virus. I can now

confirm that having prioritised the wellbeing of members, reps and staff, we have taken the difficult decision to cancel this year's ADM.

"Retail workers are playing an essential role in helping communities to get through the coronavirus emergency and we welcome the recognition from the Government. They deserve our support, respect and appreciation for everything they are doing at this difficult time."

## COVID-19

# PRIMARK CLOSES STORES DUE TO COVID-19

Primark has taken the precautionary measure against the ongoing risk of Covid-19 by taking the unprecedented step of closing all stores to the public. At the time of writing it was unclear when they would re-open.

Primark joins a long list of retailers such as McDonalds, Nandos, Waterstones, Next, Costa Coffee, Subway, John Lewis, Topshop, New Look and Timpsons who have temporarily closed their outlets.

Usdaw national officer Dave Gill said: "This is a deeply worrying time for everyone, not least shopworkers. We understand that the company is considering the health and safety of customers and staff, but this is a major decision that is very concerning for our members.

"Primark is committed to retaining staff in employment and continuing to pay them during the shutdown and the Government's coronavirus jobs retention scheme

is a big help to employers in these circumstances. Usdaw is providing our members with the support and advice they need at this time of great uncertainty."

Following these closures the Government announced a strict lockdown to force people to stay at home. The police will be able to enforce the rules and fine people who do not abide by them. At this point it is unclear how long the lockdown will last.

## COVID-19

## SCOTLAND FAILS TO CLARIFY KEY WORKERS



Usdaw has written to the Scottish Government three times urging them to clarify that workers in the food and pharmaceutical supply chains are defined as key workers and therefore able to access school childcare provision.

The union has not received the necessary clarity, so has written to all Scottish local authority leaders directly, pleading with them to allow retail and pharmaceutical workers to make use of the much needed essential services schools offer, to enable them to go into work and provide the services we all rely on.

Usdaw divisional officer for Scotland Stewart Forrest said: "Usdaw is extremely disappointed with the guidance issued by the Scottish Government regarding school closures.

"In the rest of the UK, the essential role of food and pharmaceutical workers has been recognised, with these workers rightly prioritised for childcare provision. This has not been made clear in the guidance for Scotland.

"There is an extraordinary effort being undertaken by workers throughout the supply chain, to

keep Scotland fed. The supply of food and medicine is always an essential service, now more than ever.

"There should be no question whatsoever that our members in these roles are essential workers and that they need to be prioritised.

"It is very disappointing that we have been forced to write to local authority leaders directly, but we will not let this rest until our members, who are doing essential work in very difficult circumstances, have the correct support that they desperately need."

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## IN BRIEF

### SAINSBURY'S

The company will pay a 10 per cent bonus to staff in recognition of their hard work during the coronavirus outbreak.

### ASDA

Asda will give staff an extra week's pay in recognition for the essential work they are doing during the coronavirus emergency.

### TESCO

Tesco will pay a 10 per cent staff bonus (and improved colleague benefits) in recognition of the essential work and huge contribution staff are making during the coronavirus pandemic.

### CO-OP

The Co-op Group and Mid-Counties Co-op agreed a rewards package and additional pay for staff working in very difficult circumstances to provide an essential service during the coronavirus outbreak.

### MORRISONS

Morrisons agreed to pay their staff a colleague bonus in May. Following increasing concerns about the safety and welfare of staff in stores, Morrisons also agreed new safety measures, including perspex screens, to help protect checkout operators during the coronavirus emergency.

## COVID-19

# SUPERMARKETS PROVIDE ESSENTIAL SERVICE

Usdaw has welcomed the Government focussing on food retail and the crucial role supermarkets and their supply chains are playing in supporting the nation through the coronavirus emergency.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw members are at the forefront of providing essential services in the food supply chain and we welcome the recognition of this from the Government.

"We are pleased to hear the Government echo Usdaw's repeated calls for the public to respect staff, stay calm and under no circumstances abuse shopworkers. There is no need to panic, there is £1 billion of extra food in people's cupboards, please only go out to buy food if you need it.

"NHS workers need to eat and shopworkers are also finding empty shelves at the beginning and end of shifts. So we welcome retailers setting aside times for essential workers to do their shopping.

"Many of our members tell us that they are struggling to keep pace with the demand and stores are really busy, so we also welcome the thousands of additional workers being recruited by retailers, which will help to relieve the pressure.

"We have increasing concerns about the safety and welfare of staff working in retail. The scenes in some stores and behaviour of some customers mean that supermarkets need to go further to protect the health, safety and welfare of shopworkers.

"We are calling on retailers to continue to improve their stores and procedures to help protect staff. We also call on customers to stay calm, respect shopworkers and practice the necessary hygiene measures to help limit the spread of the virus. We all have to work together to get through this crisis."

Usdaw is calling on retailers to:

- Limit the number of customers in store at any one time.
- Increase security presence.
- Reiterate to staff not to put their own safety at risk in the event of abusive customers or shoplifters.
- Provide perspex shields around checkouts.
- Ensure staff are able to perform necessary hygiene procedures.
- Clearly tell customers they should shop alone if possible and only buy what they need.
- Enforce essential workers' and vulnerable people's shopping hours.

## SHOPPERS ASKED TO PROTECT AND RESPECT RETAIL STAFF

Usdaw is urging customers to please help retail workers by:

- Treating shopworkers with courtesy and respect.
- Washing your hands first.
- Only buying what you need.
- Maintaining physical distance.
- Paying with contactless if you can.
- Respecting 'golden' shopping hours for essential workers and vulnerable people.
- Shopping alone if possible.

## COVID-19

# GOVERNMENT PUBLISHES KEY WORKERS LIST



Usdaw welcomed the publication of the key worker list and the inclusion of workers in grocery stores, the retail supply chain, including food manufacturing, delivery drivers, those in pharmaceutical and funeral services as key workers. They will now be able to access childcare provisions during the school closures.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "As soon as the Government announced that all schools were closing, I wrote to the

Government calling for them to protect these workers.

"In compiling the list, the Government recognised what Usdaw always said – that retail and supply chain workers are absolutely essential. It is vital that these workers are able to continue delivering crucial services without suffering any financial detriment.

"The guidance says that every child who can be safely cared for at home should be, so we would ask employers to show

some flexibility and support our members' individual circumstances, while maintaining these essential services.

"For any members who are not covered by the list of key workers, we are also asking employers to make flexible arrangements to support you."

If you need any advice on this matter, please contact your Usdaw rep or local official. Contact details of your reps can be found on your Usdaw noticeboard.

## COVID-19

# 80 PER CENT OF WAGES WILL BE COVERED

Usdaw has welcomed the Chancellor's announcement to cover 80 per cent of the wages of workers who face being laid off. The union is calling for the calculation to be based on average income, rather than contractual pay, and urges employers to make up the 20 per cent shortfall.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "There are many workers, particularly in retail, who are contracted for very few hours each week, but regularly work many

more to make a weekly wage they can live on. These short-hours contract workers rely on this regular additional money, so for their income to be drastically reduced to 80 per cent of contracted pay will put them in real hardship.

"While we welcome the Government's substantial intervention, we want to hear that they understand the problems short-hours workers face and confirm that the assistance does apply to average income in the same

way that holiday pay does.

Statutory sick pay needs to be significantly increased to reflect a workers' average pay and universal credit should be increased preferably to the level of the real living wage, with an end to the five week waiting period.

"We also urge employers to stand by their staff, keep them employed and ensure that they and their families are not plunged into poverty. We all need to pull together to deal with this national crisis."

## COVID-19



# YOUR RESPONSE HAS BEEN NOTHING SHORT OF INCREDIBLE

In all of my years as a union rep and official, I have never known a situation that has had such a dramatic impact on Usdaw members in every single workplace across the country as the coronavirus crisis. Your response has been nothing short of incredible. I am always proud of Usdaw reps, but I have never been so proud of, and grateful to, you all as I have in these past few weeks.

You've been doing your own jobs under a great deal of pressure, while supporting our members who have been understandably very worried – whether that's because they are in the frontline serving customers, or because they're concerned about their pay and job security if their workplace is closing.

I know that Usdaw reps pride themselves on being able to answer members' questions and give them clear advice. In the last few weeks that has been difficult, sometimes impossible, because the situation is so fast moving and unprecedented. I understand how frustrating and difficult this can be.

Every day, we are getting more answers, and we are making more progress. There is a huge amount of work going on at every level, from nationally to in the workplace, to ensuring our members' voices are heard.

"The union's officials are in constant contact with employers, calling on them to protect our members' safety, jobs and incomes.

I have been in discussion with the TUC and Government about the action our members need on a whole range of issues, including:

- Social distancing at work
- Paid time off when isolating or unable to work
- Protection from violence and abuse
- Closure of non-essential workplaces where social distancing is not being applied
- Improvements to Statutory Sick Pay

- Support for pregnant workers
- Help for members with childcare issues

"The union is here to support and advise you, so that you can support our members in the workplace. Usdaw staff and officials are working and available to help you. If you can't get through on the phones, please email your local office, or [contactus@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:contactus@usdaw.org.uk).

Thank you for your patience as we have been adjusting to changes in our own working practices in response to the current crisis.

The union is working hard to keep the website updated on a daily basis with new information, including Frequently Asked Questions. If you have any questions that you think should be added to these, please contact: [research.enquiries@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:research.enquiries@usdaw.org.uk)

"We want to share some examples of best practice and important work that our reps have been doing in supporting members and of course the work that our members are doing to help the public. If there are stories from your workplace that you'd like to share, please contact us via [www.usdaw.org.uk/Shareyourstory](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Shareyourstory)

In this crisis, retail workers, delivery drivers and workers across the supply chain have finally been recognised as essential workers. Throughout this pandemic, and long after it is over, the union will not rest until that essential role is reflected in the way that those workers are treated by the Government, their employers and the public.

Best wishes, and stay safe.

*Usdaw General Secretary*

*Paddy Lewis*

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**CORONAVIRUS**



# ADVICE ON HOW TO STAY SAFE DURING THE CRISIS

It's a worrying time for Usdaw reps and members who are on the frontline of the Covid-19 pandemic. Here's what reps can do to keep their workplaces safe.

**U**sdaw recognises that reps will be concerned on how to keep themselves, their colleagues and their loved ones safe during this pandemic, especially those who have daily contact with members of the public in their jobs.

By now employers should have guidance and all procedures in place. Reps should ensure that they follow the procedures in their workplace and raise any queries with their manager.

Covid-19 is a new strain of coronavirus which can cause symptoms varying from mild to very serious. Coronaviruses are spread by:

- Direct contact with a person while they are infectious.
- Contact with droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, either directly or on surfaces or objects through particles known as aerosols, released from the lungs.

The advice on hygiene precautions are the same as those for flu:

- Frequent hand cleaning with soap and water or, where that is difficult, use of an alcohol-based hand sanitiser which contains at least 60 per cent alcohol.
- Using a tissue to catch coughs or sneezes and disposing of the tissue immediately when used.
- Where possible avoiding close contact with someone who is coughing and sneezing.

Wearing of masks is not recommended for most people as they do not provide much protection and can increase the risk of colds, flu

and other infections if not properly used.

For those working in home delivery, employers have been updating their procedures to reduce the risk of infection – these measures may include leaving goods at the doorstep and not requiring customer signatures.

Usdaw has also put out a statement urging the public to support retail and distribution workers.

If a rep develops symptoms or needs to self-isolate, they should tell their manager immediately, and ask them for information about the company's policy on this.

Your local Usdaw official will also be able to advise you on the procedures that the company should be following in this situation.

If reps are affected by school closures, Usdaw has called on employers to be flexible and make sure that reps have the support they need. Again, please speak to your local Usdaw official if you have any difficulties.

When the shops are busy and stocks are running low on certain products, this may be a flashpoint for abuse against shopworkers or delivery drivers.

Employers have a duty to keep their staff safe at work. Violence and abuse should never be tolerated and reps should report incidents using company procedures. Reps can also speak to their local Usdaw official.

[www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Coronavirus-Update/FAQs](https://www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Coronavirus-Update/FAQs)

## Usdaw is working with employers to ensure that members are protected at work. The union is calling on employers to ensure that:

- Hand washing facilities are accessible.
- Workplaces are kept clean.
- Hand sanitiser is available wherever possible to those who need it.
- Staff are properly paid and not penalised if they need to take time off.
- They limit the number of customers in store at any one time.
- There is an increased security presence.
- They reiterate to staff not to put their own safety at risk in the event of abusive customers or shoplifters.
- Perspex shields are provided for around checkouts.
- Staff can perform necessary hygiene routines.
- They clearly tell customers they should shop alone if possible and only buy what they need.
- They enforce essential workers' and vulnerable people's shopping hours.
- They enforce social distancing where possible.



# PREGNANT WOMEN AT WORK AND CORONAVIRUS

**B**eing pregnant during the coronavirus pandemic will be a worrying time for expectant mothers. *Network* answers some frequently asked questions.

## **I'm pregnant. Do I still have to go into work?**

As public health guidance strongly advises pregnant women and other vulnerable workers to work from home (see link below), your employer must allow you to work from home wherever possible. If this isn't possible your manager should discuss with you whether there is any other work they can give you (that is both suitable and appropriate) for you to do at home. [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults)

## **What if I can't do my job from home?**

Usdaw has been working with employers to ensure that the health and wellbeing of all members is protected. A number of the companies with whom the union has agreements have adjusted their policies and procedures and, in several instances, have gone above and beyond what is currently required of them by law.

It is therefore very important that you inform your manager of your pregnancy as soon as possible. Ask your manager for guidance and details of their policy on pregnancy and coronavirus and follow their procedures.

In the absence of written guidance or a specific policy on supporting pregnant women and other vulnerable workers, where your job puts you at an increased risk of exposure to coronavirus (for example if you are working in a customer facing role) during your

pregnancy, then your employer must follow the steps listed below, including offering you a suitable alternative job. Where this is not possible you have the right to be suspended from work with pay.

### **Step 1**

If it is reasonable and it avoids the risk of infection you have the right to have your working conditions or hours of work altered.

### **Step 2**

If these adjustments aren't possible, or they won't make a difference to your increased risk of exposure to infection, then your employer must offer you suitable, alternative work which is appropriate for you to do in all circumstances. It must be on terms and conditions that are not substantially different to those of your current role. Any alternative role the employer offers you must be safe and appropriate for you to do.

### Step 3

If your employer is unable to provide you with suitable, alternative work, then you have the right to be suspended with pay until they either find you a suitable, alternative role or for as long as it is necessary for you to avoid the increased risk of infection. This is known as 'maternity suspension'.

### What if my job doesn't expose me to an increased risk of infection but it still isn't practical for me to work from home?

Speak to your manager. Your employer should have guidance and procedures in place to protect and support pregnant workers. You should ensure that you follow the procedures in your workplace and raise any queries with your manager or Usdaw rep.

In the absence of a specific policy or procedure where it isn't practical for you to do your job from home and your job does not expose you to an increased risk of infection, you will need to consider the following options:

#### ■ **New Statutory Sick Pay**

Regulations say that you can be treated as being incapable of work (even if you are well enough to work) if you are isolating yourself in order to avoid coronavirus infection following guidance published by Public Health England, NHS Scotland or Public Health Wales and you are unable to work. This also applies if you are isolating yourself because of advice by your GP, midwife or NHS 111. You can get Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) from day one of your incapacity for work or any contractual sick pay that your employer provides.

#### ■ **Ask your employer if you can take annual leave**

#### ■ **Ask for unpaid leave**

If you are on SSP or unpaid leave during the qualifying period for Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP), approx. weeks 18 – 26 of your pregnancy, you may lose some or all of your SMP so try to take

annual leave during this period if possible, if paid leave isn't available.

### Can I be dismissed for refusing to come into work during the pandemic?

It is important to keep in touch with your employer so that they are aware of the reason for your absence and so that you are not regarded as absent without leave. Ask your employer for their policy on the action they are taking to protect pregnant and other vulnerable workers during the pandemic.

### Will I qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay?

In order to qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay you need to have average weekly earnings of at least £118 pw (£120 pw from 5 April 2020) in the eight weeks before the 15th week before your baby is due. If you are paid monthly, you need to look at your average weekly earnings in the two months before the 15th week before your baby is due. This period is when you are approximately 18 to 26 weeks pregnant.

In addition to earning above the lower earnings limit in the relevant eight weeks you must also:

- Have worked for your employer for at least 26 weeks by the end of the 15th week before the week in which your baby is due; and
- You need to be employed for at least one day in the 15th week before the week in which baby is due. If you are off sick, your workplace has temporarily closed or you are staying at home as per Government advice you will still be counted as being employed even though you are not actually in work.

You can use the online calculator to see if you qualify for SMP:

[www.gov.uk/pay-leave-for-parents](http://www.gov.uk/pay-leave-for-parents)

### Do I have to give my employer notice of when I want my maternity leave and pay to start?

You must give your employer, or agency, notice of when you want to start your maternity leave and pay by the 15th week before your baby is due. You will also need to give them your MATB1 maternity certificate which you can get once you're 20 weeks pregnant. In view of the pressure on NHS services you may need to telephone your midwife or GP and ask if they can send your MATB1 to you.

To find out more about maternity pay as well as your rights at work during pregnancy and other benefits take a look at Usdaw's comprehensive *Maternity and Parental Rights Guide* available at: [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/matpatrightsguide](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/matpatrightsguide)

### I don't qualify for Statutory Maternity Pay because my earnings are too low – what can I claim instead?

If you are on Statutory Sick Pay or your average contractual earnings are less than £118 per week when you are approximately 18 – 26 weeks pregnant don't worry, you can claim Maternity Allowance instead.

To qualify for Maternity Allowance you need to show that you have been employed or self-employed for at least 26 weeks out of the 66 weeks before your baby is due.

If you are employed, you will also be asked to send in payslips covering a 13 week period. It doesn't need to be 13 weeks in a row. It can be any 13 weeks in your 66 week test period. You should send in payslips with your highest earnings, not weeks in which you were paid Statutory Sick Pay or where you only worked your contractual hours.

You can claim Maternity Allowance at: [www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/how-to-claim](http://www.gov.uk/maternity-allowance/how-to-claim)

### Where can I go for advice?

You can speak to your Usdaw rep, contact details can be found on your Usdaw noticeboard. Alternatively you can contact your local Usdaw office, contacts on Usdaw's website.

# MemberOffers

## CARS & TRANSPORT

Car Hire  
Car Leasing  
Car Maintenance  
Fiat  
Startrescue  
Usdawdrive  
Vauxhall Cars

## INSURANCE

Accident Protection Cover  
Car/Home/Travel Insurance  
Life Insurance  
Pet Insurance  
50+ Personal Accident Cover  
Free £5,000 Accidental  
Death Cover

## MONEY & FINANCE

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

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

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

## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52  
Cinema Tickets  
Discount Card  
English Heritage  
Go Ape  
Golf Membership  
Magazine Subscriptions  
National Trust Gift Cards  
Online Ticket Store  
Theme Parks and  
Attractions  
Virgin Experience Days

## SHOPPING

Apple  
Crown Decorating Centres  
Discount Card  
Domestic Appliances  
Flowers  
Magazine Subscriptions  
TM Lewin  
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback  
Card  
UsdawRewards Cashback  
Virgin Wines

## HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges  
& Hotels  
Away Resorts  
Cottage Breaks  
DFDS Ferry Crossing  
Forest Holidays  
James Villa Holidays  
Lost Luggage Protection  
Parkdean Resorts  
Pontins  
Wightlink Ferries

★ Cinema at home  
**NEW** Chili.com  
**NEW** Rakuten TV

## MISCELLANEOUS

Funeral Planning  
Gas and Electric  
Mobile Phones  
TOTUM Pro/NUS Extra



[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)\*

Some of the offers are temporarily unavailable due to the coronavirus pandemic but remind your members to keep checking the website for regular updates.

last year...

THE **CINEMA** OFFER WAS USED OVER 20,000 TIMES

ALMOST 3,000 MEMBERS ACCESSED THE **GYM** OFFER

MEMBERS SAVED OVER £6,500 WITH **ONLINE TICKET STORE**

**AIRPORT EXTRAS** WAS USED OVER 1,800 TIMES

MEMBERS SAVED OVER £3,000 ON **VIRGIN EXPERIENCE DAYS**



## ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH ROBERT HORTON

**N**etwork interviews award-winning rep Robert Horton who has worked hard to establish a successful learning initiative at his workplace in Doncaster.

### Where do you work?

I work at the Next distribution centre in Doncaster as a warehouse operative. My job is to program the transport management system so the lorries know where to take the stock and I also carry out all the audits. I've been there for 11 years and always worked nights up until the last couple of years as I

wanted to become more involved with the union. A lot of my days now are taken up with union business with my different roles. Next management are very supportive of my union work.

### When did you become active?

I became a member in 2011 and signed up to be a learning rep in 2015. There were two of us who signed up at the same time and we set everything up from scratch including establishing the policies and agreements. Within the last two years we've opened a successful on-site learning centre and colleagues

can now access an extensive variety of learning opportunities.

I became more involved with the union last year when I signed up to be a rep and also joined my divisional equalities forum. I've been heavily involved in recruitment on site and I'm proud to say that over 90 per cent of staff are now members. There are 480 staff working on site so union business can get really busy at times.

### How did you establish the learning centre?

It was difficult at first. We had a bit of a fight on our hands to get

what was agreed, but eventually we established a room and raised funds to buy equipment. We've now got a functioning centre with computers where we run courses in maths, English, equalities, diversity, mental health, computer skills, sign language and much more. We have a lot of different ages and nationalities at Next including Polish, Lithuanian and Latvian and everyone is really keen to learn. I've also got 182 distance learners. The centre is always in constant use. It's been a tremendous success.

### How is the learning centre funded?

We get various donations and I do a lot of fundraising. In February I raised £150 through a Valentine's raffle with the staff. My niece works for Doncaster library and they are moving premises so she was able to donate lots of books to us recently which was fantastic. We've got plans to buy some tablets which learners will be able to borrow and use at home so that they can access the online courses. There are 60 good online courses that you can complete to achieve a GCSE qualification, so we need to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to access them.

### Have you done any courses?

You name it, I've done it! Level 2 English, Level 2 maths, team leader, supervisor awareness, challenging behaviours, autism awareness. The counselling course is my next venture.

### Where does your passion for lifelong learning come from?

Before Next, I used to teach catering in schools to students with learning difficulties, so I've always had a passion for education and teaching. I'm drawn to helping those who struggle, and want to ensure everyone has the opportunity to access learning at any point in their life no matter what their background or what challenges they face.

### How did you feel winning the national lifelong learning award?

It was a really big shock but I was absolutely thrilled to win. I knew about winning the regional award, but when they announced I had won the national award at the presentation evening I nearly collapsed under the table. There were a lot of worthy candidates in the running. Everything about the night was amazing. I met some really nice people including our general secretary Paddy Lillis.

### Why did you get involved with your divisional equality forum?

As soon as I knew about the union's equality work I wanted to be involved. The forums raise awareness to protect the rights of minorities and the vulnerable. They look at areas including disability rights, carers rights, women's health, tackling racism and LGBT equality. As a gay man and a carer I have faced challenges. There is a lot we can do to raise awareness and being on the forum gives me a platform to do that. A recent project I was involved in was tackling period poverty. I managed to collect seven big boxes full of sanitary products from Next staff which we were then able to distribute among schools. We're helping the homeless next with a shoe box appeal.

### What keeps you motivated?

I love it. I wouldn't do it if I didn't. I'm on my day off and I'm sat here with a briefcase full of paperwork but I'm happy to do it because I want members to get the best they can out of work. As long as the staff are being treated fairly and consistently, that's all I'm bothered about. I've got a very good mentor, Wendy Cotton, who is my senior rep, she's amazing and she's taught me so much.

### What's next for you?

At the minute it's all about deciding my next path. Whether that's to focus on lifelong learning, get involved with stand-down, the Academy or focus on my work on equalities. I'm also starting to look at getting more involved in politics. As much as I would like to, I can't do everything, and if I can't give 100 per cent to something I won't do it. I'm lucky that the lifelong learning side of things is up and running on site and takes care of itself, so I can focus on representing where I'm needed. If I was to carry on down the lifelong learning route it would hopefully be as a mobile union learning rep looking after the learning initiative at a group of Next sites – we've got six depots so that could keep me very busy. Whatever is next, I'm excited to have the opportunity to be a part of it.



Robert collecting his Organising Award at the ceremony in January

# HITTING THE HEADLINES

## Usdaw takes its campaign to the Scottish Parliament to support the Protection of Workers Bill

**U**sdaw and the British Retail Consortium find that violence against shopworkers is on the increase.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) annual retail crime survey released in March shows that violence and abuse against shopworkers continues to rise with 424 incidents per day during 2019.

Usdaw's findings are similar to the BRCs which show that over 400 shopworkers are assaulted every day.

The annual crime survey figures released by the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) show that over 50,000 convenience store workers were assaulted last year, with 25 per cent of incidents resulting in injury.

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign has raised awareness of the scourge of violence against shopworkers across the UK. Almost every day local papers are highlighting the issue, quoting the campaign slogan 'abuse is not part of the job' and using real life stories from members who have been attacked and assaulted.

The union has also been lobbying the Government on this issue for a number of years and in March took its Freedom From Fear campaign to the Scottish Parliament.

Usdaw along with the Law Society of Scotland; Police Scotland; Scottish Grocers' Federation; Scottish Retail Consortium; The Scottish Beer and Pub Association; Co-operative Group, and the GMB gave evidence

in support of the Protection of Workers Bill, which is being promoted by Labour MSP Daniel Johnson.

Usdaw's evidence focused on the results of the 2019 Freedom From Fear survey which found that out of 1,000 Scottish retail workers:

- More than six in 10 experienced verbal abuse.
- 32 per cent were threatened by a customer.
- 2.3 per cent were assaulted.

This amounts to more than 15 assaults every day across all of Scotland's shopworkers.

Usdaw's Scottish divisional officer Stewart Forrest said: "Violence, threats and abuse against workers is totally unacceptable and we welcome the opportunity to give evidence in support of Daniel Johnson's Bill.

"The statistics are shocking, showing that on average a Scottish shopworker can end up on the wrong side of a verbal or physical assault more than once every three weeks.

"Life on the frontline of retail can be pretty tough for many shopworkers and there is still a lot to do to help protect them. We launched our Freedom From Fear campaign in the face of growing concerns amongst retail staff about violence, threats and abuse. The campaign works with employers to promote respect."

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw's research has shown that over 400 shopworkers



across all sectors of retail are assaulted every day.

"When retail employers and the shopworkers' trade union jointly call for action to stem this growing epidemic of violence against shop staff, it's time for ministers to sit up and take notice.

"All too often criminals feel they can get away with assaulting shop staff and are not punished. That's why we need Government action to help protect staff through the creation of a simple stand-alone offence that is widely recognised and understood by the public, police, the judiciary and most importantly criminals.

"Retail staff have a crucial role in our communities and that role must be valued and respected, they deserve the protection of the law."

Please note that this article was written before the coronavirus crisis. See page 10 for retail workers being recognised as key workers.



## VOICES FROM THE SCOTTISH FRONTLINE

**Shoplifters** "Shoplifter tried to headbutt and kick me whilst he was being detained. Threatened to find my family using social media and slash their faces."

*Fife - Glasgow*

"Chasing shoplifters - threatened with knife and syringes." *Braehead*

**Sexual harassment** "Got flashed by a customer, have had customers grab me and comment on my breasts." *Fife - Glasgow*

**Belittling** "I have been called a fat cow and a jobsworth from shoplifters." *Wick - Glasgow*

"A customer once told me he wished I'd go away and kill myself for trying to do my job helping him."

*Dunfermline*

**Assault** "Was attacked and a fag stubbed out on my face." *Stirling*

"Shoplifter pushed me over dislocating shoulder." *Dingwall - Greenock*

**Age-restricted sales** "Customers get very aggressive when they are refused sale of age-restricted products, particularly alcohol. They think it's okay to shout, personally insult you and swear at you using language that is disgusting."

*Broxburn*

"I'd someone who looked about 19, called a 'ginger c\*\*t'." *Fife - Glasgow*

**Verbal abuse** "I have had customers shout at me if something doesn't go right and I've been called many names, such as b\*\*\*h and c\*\*t." *Dundee*

**After work** "Threat to be stabbed, have car smashed up, to be met when finished work, called names, spat at. The list goes on." *Glasgow*

**Alcohol** "Refused customer alcohol as they were drunk, they tried to grab my hair and my shirt."

*Aberdeenshire*

**Throwing goods** "Customer threw items of their shopping at me as they were unhappy about the price." *Inverurie*



# ARE YOU LOOKING AFTER YOUR MEMBERS' DETAILS?

Usdaw has produced a booklet to provide guidance for reps and branch officers on how to deal with members' data.

## Background

In 2018 the General Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018) outlined the way organisations, and people who work on behalf of the organisation, should deal with personal data.

## Reps and branch officers

Reps and branch officers are considered to be working on behalf of the union. While carrying out their duties reps and branch officers will come across personal data (personal information) relating to Usdaw members. Therefore, they will also be responsible for ensuring that they deal with members' personal data in accordance with the 2018 act.

## Data processing principles

Ushaw strictly abides by the data processing principles set out in the GDPR (DPA 2018).

This means that it will process data:

- Lawfully, fairly and transparently.

- For specific and legitimate purposes.
- Only in ways that are adequate, relevant and limited to what the organisation needs.
- Accurately.
- For no longer than necessary.
- Securely.

## What does this mean?

Whenever you deal with a member's data you should consider these principles and ensure that you act in a manner which is consistent with these overriding principles.

## What is personal data?

Personal data you may come across for members can include:

- Names, addresses (including email addresses) and telephone numbers.
- Whether they pay their Usdaw contribution by check-off or direct debit.
- Employment details (where they work, their job, their pay and bonuses, their hours worked, details of their pension etc).
- Equal opportunities information (age, gender, ethnic origin etc).
- Details relating to grievances or disciplinary proceedings,

accidents at work, personal injury claims, employment tribunal cases, or other legal matters.

## Keep data secure

Start to think now about where and how you store information about your members.

- How secure is your computer and is it left switched on for others to see?
- Is it password-protected?
- Can other people including members of your own family access union-related information?
- Do you have a secure, specific file where you can store Usdaw related information and which cannot be accessed by other users of the computer?
- Do you have somewhere either at home or in work where paper documents can be securely stored?
- Do you have secure storage facilities available? If not, insist that your employer complies with their obligations and provides you with a lockable filing cabinet or other secure storage facility in which to store union documents.
- Can you lock your briefcase, filing cabinet or storage boxes?



**IF YOU THINK THERE HAS BEEN A PERSONAL DATA BREACH, YOU SHOULD:**

- Inform the union's data protection officer at central office at [DPO@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:DPO@usdaw.org.uk)
- Inform your area organiser.



- Do you leave paperwork about members on your desk where they can be accessed by third parties?

**Sending emails**

When sending emails to multiple recipients please use the 'bcc' facility so that recipients cannot access each other's email addresses, unless they are part of a group that legitimately share information.

**Personal data breach**

A personal data breach is if a member's personal data is:

- Lost.
- Destroyed accidentally.
- Altered without the authority of the member.
- Disclosed to a third party without the authority of the member.
- Accessed by a third party without the authority of the member.

**Avoiding a breach**

- Ensure data is stored securely.
- Data should not be held for longer than necessary.
- Be vigilant when emailing or sharing data online.

For further information go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/gdprguide](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/gdprguide)

**HOW LONG CAN I KEEP INFORMATION OR DATA?**

The GDPR (DPA 2018) requires that personal data is not retained for any longer than is necessary. This means that once you no longer have a need to keep the data on any member then that data should be destroyed. You should only keep data if it will be necessary for you to use this information in the future.

**EXAMPLES:**

**Workplace or branch membership**

Workplace or branch membership can change almost weekly so shred the old list and get an up-to-date list from your local Usdaw office.

**Disciplinary and grievance hearings, and employment tribunal cases**

If the matter is resolved to the member's satisfaction, you should keep the material securely for six months before ensuring that the paperwork is destroyed.

If the matter is not resolved within your workplace then the member may have grounds to bring an employment tribunal case. Once you are satisfied

that all the relevant documents have been passed on to the area organiser or the union's legal department, any remaining documents or copies should be destroyed.

**Accident at work records and personal injury claims**

If a member has an accident at work, you should obtain a copy of the accident report, records of any investigation and witness statements and other evidence. These documents may well be requested by the union's solicitor who is instructed to advise and represent the injured member. Once you are satisfied that all the relevant documents have been passed on to the Usdaw solicitor, any remaining documents or copies should be destroyed.



# RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE UNION

**M**aking sure everyone in your workplace knows about the union, how it works and why it's important to be a member is a vital part of the role of the Usdaw rep. Members and non-members alike need to be able to see that the union has a presence in their workplace. If members have a work issue they should know who their union rep is and how they can help.

## Inductions

Many Usdaw agreements allow reps to recruit members at inductions. Inductions are a great way of introducing yourself to new colleagues and outlining what the union can do for them. For more information on how to

conduct inductions consult the *Reps' Handbook 2: Organising and Recruitment* at [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repsnb2](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repsnb2)

## Make yourself known

This may seem trivial but do members in your workplace know who you are and how to contact you? A really good way to make sure everyone knows who you are is to display a picture of yourself on your union noticeboard with a brief introduction and your contact details. If you're part of a team of reps then pin up a group photo.

## Union surgeries

Another good way to make yourself known is to arrange a frequent

'surgery' where members can pop along and meet you in person and talk to you about any issues or concerns they may have.

## Updating the union noticeboard

How often do you update your union noticeboard? Usdaw is frequently updating old publications and producing new ones so it's good practice to check that your noticeboard is up to date at least once a month.

If you are not sure what to pin up on your noticeboard why not start with the following:

- Your contact details.
- Promote the wins you've had in your workplace.
- Pages of *arena* magazine. You can

pin up stories from members who have used the legal service, or pin up the member offers page.

- Usdaw leaflets and posters.
- Details of upcoming campaign events in your workplace.

## Events and campaigns

Although the bulk of a rep's work will focus on dealing with matters in the workplace, holding a campaign event is a great way of showing members what issues the union is prioritising.

Usdaw prides itself on being the campaigning union. Our campaigns are rooted in members' experiences and focus on issues that matter to them such as violence at work, better pay, better rights for parents and saving the high street.

A campaign event will also give you the opportunity to talk to members and non-members alike. It's a good time to get a temperature check on issues of concern, engage with colleagues through surveys/petitions and raise awareness.

Running a campaign event doesn't need to be hard work – you can do as much or as little as you like. Campaign activity can include anything from putting up a poster on workplace noticeboards and handing out leaflets, to organising a campaign stand.

All of Usdaw's campaigns packs are designed to be user-friendly and will guide you through what

you need to do. Speak to your area organiser for support.

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

## The value of branch meetings

Attending branch meetings is one of the best ways for members to get involved in the union and keep up to date with what's happening in their workplace, their division and the wider union. Make sure your members are aware when and where branch meetings are taking place and let them know that they are welcome to attend. For more information see page 16 of the 2019 autumn edition of *arena*. Why not pin this up on your union noticeboard.

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/ArenaAutumn2019/index.html?page=16](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/ArenaAutumn2019/index.html?page=16)

## Sharing on Social Media

As an active Usdaw rep it's recommended that you follow UsdawUnion on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Flickr. It's a great way to keep up to date with news, campaigns, events, rights at work, competitions and offers exclusive to Usdaw members.

You could post pictures from union events in your workplace, highlight wins for members, promote leaflets you think are good or post a picture of your updated noticeboard.

Encourage your friends to share your posts and spread the message.

If you are unsure how to get online don't worry. Usdaw has lots of information on how you can get started. Check out the union's leaflet *Get Digital with Usdaw* at [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/GetDigitalWithUsdaw/](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/GetDigitalWithUsdaw/)

## The Usdaw website

To keep up to date with all the latest information from the union reps should make regular visits to the Usdaw website. Here you will find everything you need including sections on legal advice, workers' rights, health and safety, news, training opportunities, upcoming events and campaigns.

You can also sign up to receive newsletters to ensure the latest Usdaw news is delivered directly to your inbox. If you're in the know then you are in the best place to keep your members up to date too.

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

## Recruitment

The strength of Usdaw depends on our level of membership. Recruitment of members is central to the role of being a union rep. The more members we have the stronger our voice when we negotiate with employers.

For handy tips on how to recruit consult the *Reps Handbook 2: Organising and Recruitment* [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repsb2](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repsb2)

## CASE STUDY: PENSIONS AWARENESS DAY AT TESCO MOLD

Helen Roythorne and the team of reps at Tesco in Mold held a Pensions Awareness campaign in their store during January Membership Week to show staff the wealth of information, advice and support they have access to through the union.

"We decided to focus specifically on pensions because there are a lot of members in store who find the subject confusing and have questions about their own pensions," said Helen, who became a rep last year. "We wanted to provide an opportunity for staff to ask questions and have a look at all the information on offer.

"The campaign was really well received. We held a stall in the staff canteen and filled it with lots of Usdaw publications.

"We also themed the union noticeboard around pensions to draw attention to the event.

"I was really enthusiastic because it was my first campaign and it was good to have the experience of the other reps there who have done campaigns before. Staff didn't realise they had access to all the support and advice about pensions through the union. I think the campaign really raised the profile of the union in the workplace.

"I think the key to a successful campaign is making sure you have all the information you need, including lots of leaflets and materials. Usdaw freebies also help to entice people to the stall so that you can strike up a conversation."



# SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE AT WORK

Usdaw activists and officials visited local colleges and workplaces in March to speak to young workers about mental health and their rights at work

Usdaw increased its efforts to reach out to young workers in March by holding events across the country as part of the union's annual Young Workers' Week.

Reps, activists and officials set up stalls in workplaces and local colleges in a bid to raise awareness among young workers about the benefits of trade union membership, boost the number of young Usdaw members and to encourage existing young members to take a more active role in the union.

The theme of this year's campaign was mental health in the workplace and focused on the significant impact a job can have on a person's

mental health and wellbeing.

During the week activists approached young workers with a survey about mental health to enable the union to find out more about the issues facing young people at work.

"Being in work can provide greater financial security, more structure in our lives and an increased sense of purpose," said Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis. "Many jobs also give us an opportunity to socialise with colleagues, creating friendships that can continue outside of the workplace. As such, having a job can be a positive influence on our lives.

"However, the overall impact that any job has on our mental health is not straightforward and will depend on many factors. Work-related stress, insecure employment contracts or dealing with abusive customers are all workplace issues which can have a negative impact on our mental health.

"Trade unions like Usdaw understand how working practices can impact on young workers' mental health and we provide support for members in raising the issue with their employer. Through young workers coming together in a union, we can ensure that common risk factors are addressed."



Campaigning at Barnsley College

Southend College



# REPS INSPIRED BY UNION'S RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

Lively recruitment campaigns and events took place in workplaces across the UK in January in celebration of the union's first Membership Week of the year

**H**undreds of reps held events in their workplaces to raise the profile of the union during one of the biggest national recruitment campaigns in the union's calendar.

## SAINSBURY'S OAKLEY

Checkout and customer service assistant Agnieszka Wisniewska took part at Sainsbury's in Oakley.

"Our campaign was well received and appreciated by both staff and members," said Agnieszka, 42, a rep and health and safety rep. "January can be a quiet time as a lot of staff are on annual leave, but this was a good challenge for me and I enjoyed the experience.

"I set up a stall in the canteen displaying leaflets and union merchandise so staff could approach me and get information while they were on their breaks. I also walked around the shop floor to reach those who weren't able to get to the stall and visited the night shift to show that they're not forgotten.

"I believe it's important to spend time with existing members to show the union is visible and talk about the ongoing campaigns."

Agnieszka has been working for Sainsbury's since she moved to the UK from Poland in June 2005. "When I came to the UK I couldn't speak any English so working the night shift was the best option for me," said Agnieszka. "When I learned English I moved to the day shift and I am now part of the Sainsbury's customer service team.

"I became a rep in September 2018, I was happy to get involved

as it gave me the opportunity to payback the support given to me by the union, particularly during my early days at Sainsbury's.

"Since becoming a rep Usdaw's training has helped me to understand the problems raised by the members and has prepared me to represent and help others.

"I always enjoy campaigning and I use every opportunity to recruit. Other campaigns I have carried out have been very successful and I've particularly enjoyed visiting other stores and talking to staff.

"This year my manager has agreed to release me for stand-down for eight weeks so I'm excited to get started."

## BOOTS BURTON-ON-TRENT

Tracy Towers and Colin Levy took on their first Membership Week campaign at the Boots distribution centre in Burton-on-Trent. They were supported by experienced reps and fellow colleagues Julie Smith and Dawn Johnson from Burton's sister site in Nottingham.

"We had a fantastic week, I really enjoyed myself," said Tracy, 51, who has been with the company for seven years and works as both a trained pharmaceutical advisor and multi-skilled warehouse operative. "I loved chatting with the staff and telling them all about the union. I was particularly proud of the noticeboard I crafted at home to display the union's services – it definitely drew attention to the stall.

"We even managed to sign up 26 new members during the week and

have gained a few more since."

Tracy became a rep last year after experiencing some problems of her own at work. "Coming out the other side of that experience made me a stronger person," said Tracy. "And I then felt that I was in a position to help other people who might be experiencing problems at work and need support, or even just be a shoulder or ear, so I became a rep.

"Taking part in Membership Week has fuelled my passion to get more involved. I'm looking forward to doing more campaigns, particularly around health and safety."

Colin also became a rep and health and safety rep last year. "I'm about fairness and equality, plus I love learning so being a rep is the perfect role for me," said Colin, 37, who works at Boots as a RTITB (Road Transport Industry Training Board) instructor and also step-up dotcom manager when required.

"We've been working hard at Burton to raise the profile of the union over the past six months and it's going well. The recruitment campaign was a good opportunity to show the union's presence on site and speak to existing members about union benefits that they might not know about.

"In the future we're hoping to run more campaign days and follow the excellent work the reps do at the Nottingham site.

"You can tell that union awareness is building at Burton among the staff, more and more people are seeing the benefit of union membership, so I'm positive about the future."



Agnieszka Wisniewska (centre) at Sainsbury's Oakley

Tracy Towers, Dawn Johnson, Colin Levy and Julie Smith at Boots Industrial Burton-on-Trent



Membership for week ended 21 March 2020	
South Wales & Western	46,572
Eastern	58,367
Midlands	54,467
North Eastern	58,025
Scottish	41,326
Southern	59,902
North West	86,124
<b>Total</b>	<b>404,783</b>

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 Union of Shop, Distributive  
 and Allied Workers

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# MENOPAUSE IS HARD WORK

The stigma surrounding the menopause prevents women from accessing the help and support they need at work. Here's what reps can do to help.

**T**he menopause is a hormonal change that usually affects women aged between 45 and 55, although it can happen much earlier or much later. Even though it's a normal part of the ageing process it is still a taboo subject.

## Why is it a trade union issue?

At any one time around 3.5 million working women aged over 50 years are in work in the UK. At least eight out of every 10 women are affected by symptoms of their menopause in the course of their day-to-day work with around one in four women experiencing severe symptoms. More women than ever before are working through the menopause and often struggling to do so.

Women are the majority of Usdaw's members. That's why the union believes it is time we stopped dismissing the menopause as just a 'women's issue' and recognised that it is a workplace health concern that involves physical and emotional changes that many women find difficult and exhausting.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms range from hot flushes, night sweats, lack of sleep and headaches to tiredness, anxiety, low mood and aches and pains.

## How does this affect work?

There are a growing number of studies showing that up to two thirds of women find it difficult to manage life and work during the menopause.

Symptoms ranging from hot flushes, lack of sleep, anxiety, poor memory and concentration can

be made worse by the working environment. For women in Usdaw, late night and early morning working, interaction with customers, changes to shifts and lack of rest breaks can be a problem.

Menopause symptoms can have a significant impact on attendance and performance. Some women can be misdiagnosed as suffering from mental ill-health or other conditions, and the impact on their work can be wrongly identified as a performance issue.

## What should employers be doing?

Employers have a responsibility for the health and safety of all their employees but many have been slow to recognise that women of menopausal age may need specific considerations.

Often the support women need isn't high cost or disruptive, it can be as simple as adapting uniforms, giving access to cold drinking water, more regular rest breaks, access to a quiet room or temporary changes to shift patterns.

## Equality Act

It is unlikely that the majority of women going through the menopause will experience symptoms severe enough to fit the legal definition of disabled worker. However, it is worth bearing the Equality Act in mind for a woman who is experiencing severe symptoms and these are having a substantial effect on her ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

If she does fit the definition of a disabled worker her employer

will then have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments not only to the workplace, her job duties and working hours but also to their own policies and procedures, like absence and performance policies.

For more information please see Usdaw's leaflet *Supporting Disabled Members* [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/383](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/383)

## What can reps do to help?

Usdaw reps are a vital point of contact for women and one of the ways in which reps are supporting women is by finding out about the specific problems they face in their workplace.

Reps could also carry out a risk assessment which should look at issues like:

- Can women report menopause-related sickness to a female manager?
- Check the temperature and ventilation in the workplace.
- Are uniforms too hot or do they worsen skin irritation?
- Are there opportunities to switch to different duties?
- Is there somewhere suitable for the member to rest?
- Are toilet and washroom facilities easily available?
- Is cold drinking water easily available?
- Is there room to change working hours or swap shifts in cases where sleep is disturbed?

Reps could also use the Usdaw menopause survey to build a picture of the types of issues women are coping with at work.

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

## THE STIGMA AROUND THE MENOPAUSE

A recent Usdaw survey of over 2,000 women members found that many members felt that the stigma around the menopause prevented them from seeking information and support. Jokes about hot flushes had the effect of making women feel embarrassed and upset.

A study by Wales TUC found that three quarters of women did not discuss their symptoms with their manager because they felt embarrassed or because their line manager was a man.

## USDW MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

"Still keeping it hidden for fear of being made redundant."

"Lack of confidence and depression were symptoms I did not expect, the menopause triggered mental illness for me. It was trying to cope in silence that did it."

"None of my colleagues going through this would feel comfortable talking to HR or their line manager as they feel there is a lack of understanding and they would be viewed as being 'old'."

"I work with young people, mainly men in their twenties. They all think it's funny if I get hot sweats, but I have to stand on the till and serve customers. And be polite!"

"I have actually passed out a few times because I was getting very hot. I couldn't even go home because I wouldn't have been paid as it's not classed as an illness."

"The decline of strength as you age and go through the menopause should be considered in the physical aspects of supermarket work, bearing in mind the possibility of osteoporosis developing."



# FIGHTING FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

Usdaw's delegation represented the concerns of women members at the TUC conference in London

**U**sdaw delegates joined hundreds of trade union activists for the TUC Women's Conference at Congress House in March to promote equality and fight discrimination.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**Vivienne Leach** (E056) moved the motion on *Public Transport is a Women's Issue*.

"The way women use public transport differs from the way men use it," said Vivienne. "Women tend to make more local trips to schools, shops, day centres and work. We are less likely to have a car so we have to rely on public transport.

"When we travel we tend to travel with small children, with pushchairs, with heavy shopping, or with frail and elderly relatives. Poor lighting, unstaffed stations and overcrowding make us more vulnerable to assault and harassment.

"Women make up half the population and almost three quarters of us are in work. So, we need a transport system that provides for the whole community."

## VISIBLE WOMEN

**Lynn Goodwin** (K234) moved the motion on *Making Women Visible*.

"Having an online presence has become a necessary part of engaging in politics and public life," said Lynn. "Yet 'cyber space' has become unsafe and dangerous for women wanting to join in and express their views.

"Women are being silenced

by the overwhelming number of death threats and threats of sexual violence they receive when they speak out.

"Women are told to log off or ignore threats or change their behaviour. This advice is the 'virtual' equivalent of being told to avoid going into bars alone or wearing short skirts.

"We want the right to participate in public life whether in cyber space or real-life public spaces without being threatened, harassed, abused or shouted down. We have the right to express our political opinions and participate equally in our unions.

"This motion is an important one as it's about pushing back the rising tide of hatred against women. And giving us the freedom and the space to explore our ideas and express our opinions without the constant threat of abuse."

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

**Gail Murphy** (K008) moved the composite motion on *Sexual Harassment*.

"Tackling sexual harassment has been front page news recently," said Gail. "And February saw the successful conviction of Harvey Weinstein following decades of predatory behaviour. This is a landmark victory for survivors of sexual abuse by men in positions of power.

"Sexual harassment will affect almost all women during their working life, whether they work in Hollywood or in retail.



Gail Murphy (left) and fellow Usdaw delegates vote at conference

"In public facing roles like retail, women are exposed to abuse not only from colleagues but also from customers. The rise in insecure work and low and zero hours contracts, is leaving us at greater risk.

"Women are reluctant to raise issues with their employer. Not just because they think they will not be listened to or taken seriously. But because they are scared they may be penalised by losing vital overtime hours or pushed out of their job altogether.

"The importance of trade unions cannot be underestimated in tackling sexual harassment.

"We are uniquely placed to work together with employers to make workplaces safe.

"We call on the TUC Women's Committee to continue to ensure that sexual harassment remains a priority campaign issue. Together we can end sexual harassment at work."



## CONFERENCE NOTES: GAIL MURPHY

*Network* caught up with Gail Murphy to get her thoughts on the conference.

"Attending the conference was eye-opening because it made me realise that the problems women face in retail are nationwide," said Gail. "It doesn't matter who you work for or what role you do, we all face the same issues such as sexual harassment and the gender pay gap.

"Women have been fighting for their rights for decades. But we are having to fight the same battles over and over again. Take the Equal Pay Act. It's been 50 years since it came into force but we still have a gender pay gap. Our energy is taken up by constantly having to make the same arguments and

repeating ourselves. This means that we never really move forward.

"With the recent political upheavals, I feel like women's rights are moving backwards. We have a president in America who was elected despite dozens of allegations of sexual harassment. His election to one of the most powerful positions in the world shows women that if they do come forward they won't be believed. Due to the precarious nature of modern day working, women already find it almost impossible to come forward with allegations of sexual harassment. Many women are the sole breadwinners, they're terrified that they will lose their jobs so they keep quiet.

"However, on a more positive

note, I think his election and the uncertainty of what's going to happen after the Brexit transition period has re-energised the women's movement. I've never seen so many female reps fired up! It's made many of us think that the rights we had are not as safe as we thought they were.

"Austerity has already taken a huge toll on women. Many women are now concerned that in a bid to secure trade deals the UK will water down workers' rights and dismantle women's rights through the backdoor.

"I thoroughly enjoyed this conference and the opportunity to take an active part. I would encourage other reps to put themselves forward for it."



# TACKLING WORK-RELATED STRESS

*Network* guides health and safety reps through the issue of work-related stress, what it is and what they can do to try and minimise the risk in their workplaces

In the first of a series of articles on key workplace hazards for Usdaw members we focus on work-related stress.

It is an appropriate choice for the first article because HSE statistics show that stress is the main cause for absence in the UK and the levels are growing.

### According to HSE figures for 2019:

- Over 600,000 workers were suffering from stress-related ill health.
- 44 per cent of all cases of work-related ill health were caused by stress.
- Workers with stress-related illnesses often take longer to recover and get back to work.

### What should employers be doing?

Employers have a legal duty to manage the risks from stress just as they do for any other health or safety risk at work. Unfortunately, many employers prefer to focus on the worker rather than the problem. They will try to train workers on how to deal with stress rather than remove or reduce it.

The HSE Management Standards focus on six key factors that can contribute to stress in the workplace: demands, control, support, relationships, role and change.

They make it clear that employers must listen to their workers if they are to understand and control these factors.

In 2019, they produced a Talking Toolkit aimed at line managers so that they could start the discussion with workers. While it may not be practical for managers to use the toolkit in many large organisations, it does provide some useful ideas for union reps to raise with the employer.

[www.hse.gov.uk/stress](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress)

### What can Usdaw do?

The number of workers affected by stress-related illnesses is growing. Factors including low pay, insecure hours, fear of violence, harassment and bullying at work all contribute to the stress that workers suffer. These are all issues that Usdaw is campaigning hard on to raise awareness and rectify.



# STRESS

## Violence at Work

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign is clear that abuse is not part of the job but we know that members face a rising tide of violence and abuse. Shop theft and robbery are on the increase and fear of serious violence is a major cause of stress. The recent rise in hate crime has exposed some members to even more serious abuse and threats. As part of its campaign the union is currently working with retail employers to press Government for a change in the law to make it clear that it is a crime to assault or abuse shopworkers.

## Discrimination

Problems with racism, sexual harassment and hate crime can be an issue in any workplace. Usdaw campaigns against prejudice and hatred in all workplaces, through the 'Together Against Hate' campaign and the 'Call It Out' campaign on sexual harassment.

## Mental Health

Work-related stress causes a lot of mental health problems. The shame and secrecy around mental health can have devastating consequences. We want to change that while accepting that it is a complex and sensitive area. The union's campaign is designed to break down the stigma about mental health conditions and to encourage members to talk but it also recognises the need to tackle the pressures at work that can contribute to mental ill health.

## Improved job security

Low pay, uncertain hours of work and lack of job security all affect workers' physical and mental health. Usdaw's Time for Better Pay campaign aims to tackle low pay and poor working conditions. In the campaign survey of over 10,500 members, six in 10 said financial worries were affecting their mental health but this figure rose to nearly eight out of 10 for those who were dependent on insecure hours. Jobs which provide security and a decent standard of living will help to reduce work-related stress.

## What can health and safety reps do about stress at work?

All Usdaw reps can support the campaigns aimed at removing root causes of stress such as low pay, job insecurity, harassment and bullying. But even in the best employers there can be local conditions that cause work-related stress.

Usdaw health and safety reps can use their inspection powers to investigate stress among the workers they represent.

Usdaw was one of the first unions to develop a simple survey tool that reps can use to investigate stress. Using the survey, health and safety reps can quickly identify if there are members who are feeling stressed because of their work and which issues need to be taken up with management.

Any reps who want help in using the stress survey should contact the health and safety section at Usdaw's central office.



## NEW SAFETY REGULATOR

The new Building Safety Regulator, planned as part of the response to the Grenfell disaster, will operate from within HSE. It will be tasked with raising building safety and performance standards, including overseeing a more stringent regime for higher risk buildings.

While welcoming the proposal both the TUC and Prospect, the trade union for HSE staff, have warned that the new body must be backed up by appropriate levels of both funding and regulation to give it the 'teeth' and resources it needs to do a proper job.

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

## CONTACT

### Health and safety officer

Doug Russell  
0161 249 2441

### Health and safety assistant

Tony Whelan  
0161 249 2474

### General health and safety enquiries email:

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

REMEMBER THE DEAD: FIGHT FOR THE LIVING

# INTERNATIONAL WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY 28 APRIL 2020

**STOP THE PANDEMIC AT WORK**

Scientists have been warning of a new pandemic for years but were ignored by governments. Austerity has crippled medical research and damaged health systems. Erosion of workers' rights, health and safety and paid sick leave are driving the spread of infection. Lack of universal social protection means sick people have to work to survive.

**Governments must respond to urgent needs:**

- Economic stimulus to save jobs and lives - money must reach people.
- Paid sick leave for ALL workers.
- Income support and employment protection.
- Occupational Health and Safety must be a fundamental right.

The prevention of more deaths requires workers' rights to negotiate hygienic workplaces and work practices through their unions.

[www.ituc-csi.org/covid-19-responses](http://www.ituc-csi.org/covid-19-responses)

International Workers' Memorial Day • 28 April 2020 | #IWMD20 | [www.28april.org](http://www.28april.org)



## SAFETY REP EVENT

The National Hazards Conference will once again be held at Keele University, Stoke-on-Trent on the 31 July – 2 August 2020.

With upwards of 400 reps in attendance, this is the biggest safety rep conference in Britain. The conference gives delegates a choice of 18 workshops on a range of work-related hazards and organising topics as well as one of three plenary sessions. It provides excellent education and networking opportunities with reps and officials from sister unions.

Residential and non-residential delegates have access to all conference facilities.

The fees for delegates and the form are yet to be published but will need to be sourced from branch funds.

Usdaw will be emailing the form to reps when it becomes available.

As *Network* went to print it was announced that this event would be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. For up to date information log on to the Hazards website: [www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/hazards-conference](http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/hazards-conference)

Every year 28 April is International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD). This is the international trade union day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, injured or made unwell by their work.

The focus this year is the global Covid-19 pandemic. While everyone is affected by the crisis, many Usdaw workers are on the frontline.

For #IWMD20 Usdaw is highlighting the risks many frontline workers such as healthcare workers and those working in retail are taking to help keep the rest of us safe and healthy.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Shopworkers and their colleagues in the retail food supply chain are on the frontline of feeding the country during the current crisis. They are providing an essential service in very difficult circumstances, working long hours in busy stores, facing abuse from customers and of course concerned they may contract Covid-19.

"Today we should take time to recognise the heroic efforts they are making in very difficult circumstances, alongside many other frontline

workers. We particularly want to pay tribute to the brave healthcare workers and the extreme risks they have to deal with.

"Usdaw continues to work with employers to improve health and safety for staff, particularly those dealing directly with the public. We also call on customers to stay calm, respect shopworkers and practise the necessary hygiene measures to help limit the spread of the virus. We all have to work together to get through this crisis.

"Strong unions are the best protection for workers. Workplaces that have strong union representation typically have much lower fatality, injury and ill-health rates than those that do not. Research in this country and abroad has shown repeatedly that unions make a difference."

## Useful links:

[www.ituc-csi.org/28April2020](http://www.ituc-csi.org/28April2020)  
[tuc.org.uk/workers-memorial-day](http://tuc.org.uk/workers-memorial-day)  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/wmd](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/wmd)

# HEALTH AND SAFETY IS VITALLY IMPORTANT

*Network* speaks to Usdaw national health and safety rep award winner **Paul Cullen** about his work with the union at Arla Foods in Aylesbury

## Q. Where do you work?

I've worked for Arla in Aylesbury since it opened in 2013. Arla is the fourth biggest dairy company in the world. It is a genuine cooperative owned by the farmers. My job is driving a tanker to collect the milk. I arrive for work about 7.30am, collect my vehicle, complete the checks and then go to the farms and collect the milk. I've been collecting milk for 18 years. The basic job hasn't changed, it just runs at a quicker pace with bigger vehicles.

## Q. When did you become active?

Arla Aylesbury was a new site and needed a new rep team. My name was put forward and I was elected in 2014. I then became a health and safety rep in March 2018. I'm heavily involved with the welfare of the staff and union business. I'm chair of the Arla National Transport Forum which meets four times a year to discuss national issues. I'm also on both the National and European Works Councils. Here all sectors of Arla are represented including cheese, milk,

yogurt and logistics. The council meets twice a year and the senior reps discuss any significant changes with the business before they get rolled out.

Denmark, Poland, Germany, the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden all have seats on the European forum and we travel to these countries to discuss Arla with the global executive management team. This would be the forum to raise issues that have not been addressed at a national level in the relevant country. I'm off to Sweden in March.

With all the roles I have it can be hard to manage my time, but I have an amazing and supportive family.

## Q. What are the big health and safety wins you've achieved?

One win I'm particularly proud of is securing Bolle prescription safety glasses for all Arla drivers. It was an offer that I discovered was available to our Danish employees while I was on a trip there with the works council. Our members in the UK were not offered the same option,

we had to do with cheap plastic glasses which continuously distorted and steamed up. It took over a year to implement but I managed to get the offer rolled out nationally. Another big win was getting Arla drivers trained and supplied with a kit which allows us to be towed by farmers. We had meetings with the Road Haulage Association, insurance companies and independent heavy haulage contractors to work out safe ways of working procedures. It was a long process but now the site is one of the few, if not the only, logistic depots in the UK that has a programme to support members and colleagues in being towed safely and using the right kit.

## Q. How did you feel winning the national organising award?

It was really unexpected but very nice to be recognised for the hard work. The health and safety of my colleagues is vitally important to me. I just like things to be done right, I don't like bullies, I don't like people asking staff to take short cuts simply to make life easier for the managers. If there's something I can do to make a difference I will. Just knowing that you have helped a member is motivation enough.

## Q. Any future plans for health and safety on site?

We're currently working with the Quality Health and Safety Environment Team to improve the conditions for our members. I'm also included in a new health and safety forum which will sit on the first Thursday every month. The forum will be looking deeper into the root cause of some of the more serious accidents and see what if anything can be done over and above to prevent them happening again.



Usdaw health and safety rep Paul Cullen

# ACADEMY 2014: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

As this year's Academy1 intake prepare to get started, *Network* looks back with the class of 2014

**F**ifty-six activists successfully completed Academy1 in 2014 with a record number of 11 graduates joining the union's organising staff. *Network* caught up with some of the classmates...

## Liam Algor

### Area organiser, Leeds

I went on to complete Academy2 and became active with the national young workers' committee and the national political committee. I became an area organiser in 2017.

The Academy opened my eyes to different types of workplaces – it was interesting going into bigger stores and different companies after working in a convenience store. It enabled me to become comfortable with unfamiliar situations. The training was great, I learn by doing so it was good to get out there. I met a really great bunch of people and we've kept in touch. I would encourage all active reps to apply, but you've got to be committed.

## Jo Luckett

### Area organiser, London

After Academy1 I went back to my store and continued with stand-down. I applied for Academy2, however before it started I interviewed for the area organiser position in the London office and was successful.

Academy1 was a great learning experience. It gave me the confidence to believe I was good

enough to apply to become an organiser and I haven't looked back since.

## Shane Spitty

### Area organiser, Bury St Edmunds

I completed Academy2, became a union learning rep and went on to study for a TUC certificate and a diploma in employment law. I became an area organiser in 2017.

The Academy taught me about different companies, time management and prioritising workload. During Academy I was also diagnosed with dyslexia and dyspraxia which was a huge relief. Having it confirmed officially taught me a lot about myself. It gave me the knowledge to manage my conditions and helped me figure out how to progress through life and achieve. The Academy experience improved my confidence and self-belief.

## Bally Auluk

### Area organiser, Cardiff

I went on to complete Academy2, became chair of my branch, chair of my divisional equalities forum and served two terms on the standing orders committee at ADM. I became an area organiser in 2017.

The Academy gave me an invaluable insight into the role of an organiser and I firmly believe that the experience helped me in my application. The Academy taught me that no matter how experienced you are in aspects of work and life



there is always room for learning and improvement. I feel humbled and honoured to be in my position and will continue to organise and support the members as best I can.

## Carl Turner

### Area organiser, Warrington

The pinnacle of my Academy was raising the Morrisons Abattoir density in Colne from the lowest in the North West to the highest. This was almost on par with the amazing friends that I made along the way.

In 2015 I was awarded the divisional and national Individual Recruitment Awards. I was ecstatic to know that the North West and Usdaw had recognised my commitment to recruitment and the Trade Union Movement and to be chosen was amazing. It was one of the most enjoyable experiences of



**ACADEMY1 2014 STATS: 56 COMPLETED | 37 STILL MEMBERS | 11 AREA ORGANISERS | 16 STILL ACTIVE**

my working career. I became part of the organising staff in 2018. This is a role that brings so much benefit to other people's lives, and I couldn't imagine doing anything else.

**Nej Darej**  
**Area organiser, Bristol**

It was amazing to see different employers and their relationship with Usdaw while on Academy, some welcome you and make it enjoyable, some refuse you and some make it difficult so you don't come back. I learned how to handle those situations and build my confidence. I met some very good people and it was a very rewarding experience. I did Academy2 in 2015 where I spent more time working independently. I was successfully appointed as an area organiser in 2018.

**Naomi Tweddle**  
**Lincoln**

After the Academy I became an area organiser at UNISON. I was delighted to be carrying on my work in the movement but sad I was no longer a rep. I did retain my membership though! I am now a regional organiser at UNISON.

Academy was a big part of my development and made me realise that I wanted to work for a trade union. I studied law at undergraduate level and while I was on Academy I was also studying a legal course part-time too which was really challenging but I had fantastic support from the union.

In 2016 I was elected to be a city councillor in Lincoln. I'm now chair of both the planning committee and the Equality and Diversity Advisory panel.

**Liam English**  
**Belfast**

I absolutely loved Academy1. It was hard work but very enjoyable. After Academy1 I concentrated on raising the union's profile on stand-down in local workplaces including Tesco, Sainsbury's, B&M and Poundland.

I was elected as branch chair which is a role I still hold today. From here I applied for Academy2. I thought I would struggle but with help from my coach it was a really amazing experience. It boosted my organising and recruiting skills, it helped with my confidence and made me a better activist.

**Helen Coupleditch**  
**Bridgend**

I went on to do Academy2 which was a huge challenge as I'm dyslexic but the tutors were very supportive. By

the end of the programme I felt a huge sense of achievement. I always carry these skills with me in my role as union learning rep. I have to thank the union for recognising that I had dyslexia and encouraging me to overcome my fears. It's thanks to Usdaw that I am the person I am today. I'm still working for Tesco and the union is a big part of my life. I'm now a mobile union learning rep and find this role very rewarding.

**Joanne Shaw  
Minehead**

On Academy1 I had the most amazing time meeting new people and getting to learn more about myself and the union. It was hard work but rewarding. Academy2 was really hard work but with all the support from the group I got through it and made new friends along the way. Since then I have been on stand-down, I continue to work for Tesco, I'm also a health and safety rep and I'm still very active in the union. I feel more confident thanks to the Academy. It was a great achievement and I'm really proud of myself.

**Laurence Mager  
Grimsby**

After Academy1 I became branch

secretary and completed Academy2. I was elected to the divisional council in 2016. I'm still a rep. I have also been a CLP chair since 2017, and part of the Usdaw delegation for the Yorkshire and the Humber TUC since 2018. I also served time on my divisional political committee both as a member and councillor.

Academy1 boosted my confidence and encouraged me to get more involved. I made lifelong friends.

In 2018 I completed a Level 3 in Adult Education and Training and I am looking at working in community learning centres teaching functional skills to adults.

**Nicky Lowey  
Birkenhead**

When I finished Academy1 I worked in the North West lifelong learning department for Usdaw for a couple of days a week. A short while later I made the difficult decision to opt for redundancy at Tesco. I got another job as an administrator for a marine safety supplier and I have been there for nearly five years.

I used my union training to become the health and safety rep and mental health first aider.

Being on the Academy gave me the confidence and strength to go on to bigger and better things and

prove to myself what I have to offer. I know the training has definitely helped me progress within my career and with the union. I will always be grateful to Usdaw for all the help and support.

**Eli Williams  
Birmingham**

Since completing the Academy I've continued to be active within the union. I've done lots of stand-down, joined the political committee and taken on the role of divisional council vice chair. I'm still an active member of the divisional equalities forum. My wife and I have also become foster carers in the last couple of years which has been such an amazing experience.

The Academy was life changing for me. I spent a lot of time on my own, travelling between workplaces which gave me the opportunity to get know myself better and understand some of the challenges I had been facing in my personal life.

I learned so much from the Academy and it only further ignited my passion for the union. The support I received from my divisional office was monumental. It was an honour to be a part of the Academy.

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

**ACADEMY2 CLASS OF 2020 NEW RECRUITS CONTINUE THEIR ORGANISING JOURNEY WITH THE UNION**



*Thirty-five reps were excited to get started with their training in March as they embarked on the union's Academy2 programme. The group met at the Hallmark Hotel in Warrington for their first session. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the decision was recently made to cancel both this year's Academy1 and Academy2 programmes.*



# SUPPORTING DISABLED MEMBERS AT WORK

A useful resource for reps when it comes to dealing with reasonable adjustments in the workplace

**T**here are many ways that disabled workers can be put at a substantial disadvantage at work. Issues that would be minor for a non-disabled worker can be game-changing for someone with a disability. That's why the right to reasonable adjustments is so important – the law is clear that sometimes, disabled workers need favourable treatment to help them overcome additional barriers at work.

Our advice guide aims to help you get your members the

adjustments they need to stay in work. Containing straightforward, practical advice on negotiating adjustments, this leaflet is essential for all reps looking to boost their knowledge of what can be a complicated subject to broach with the employer.

Reasonable Adjustments (leaflet 439), part of our equalities series, is best read in conjunction with Supporting Disabled Members (leaflet 383) this, and all our leaflets, can be viewed online. [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/439](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/439)

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

## NEW IN!

### Leaflets

**Usdaw Publications Catalogue & Form**  
(Leaflet 116)

**Working Parents Know Your Rights**  
(Leaflet 381)

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

**Supporting Members with Mental Health Issues - an advice guide for Usdaw reps**  
(Leaflet 401)

**Social Media and Mental Health**  
(Leaflet 425)

**Men's Mental Health - It's OK to ask for help**  
(Leaflet 433)

**Depression**  
(Women's Health Series: 3)

**Urinary Incontinence**  
(Women's Health Series: 16)

**Members' Guide to the Annual Delegate Meeting**

### Posters and Surveys

**Maternity Rights Calendar**  
(Poster R67)

**Mental Health in the Workplace**  
(Survey)

**Equalities Calendar 2020**

### Online courses

**CV Writing - IT bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting)

**Mental health course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse)

**Pensions home study**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy)

**Shop 'til you Drop - Maths bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/maths](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/maths)

**Summertime Songbirds - English bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime)

# OVER TO YOU

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:

**network@usdaw.org.uk**

or write to:

**The Editor, Network, Usdaw,  
188 Wilmslow Road,  
Manchester, M14 6LJ**





**Pictured left:** Northern Federation hold a mental health in the workplace health in the workplace weekend; Getting ready for Maths assessments at Tesco CFC Croydon; and Membership Week at Co-op Broadford, Isle of Skye.



**Pictured L-R:** Quit smoking campaign at Boots Beeston; Legal Plus campaigning at Tesco CFC, Enfield; Celebrating LGBT history month at Tesco Bury.



**Pictured L-R:** NI equalities team supporting same sex marriage; Talking about mental health in Tesco West Bromwich; Promoting Usdaw at Next South Elmsall.

# It's good to talk

*Usdaw*

Campaigning  
For Equality

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

**Support if you are struggling  
with the news about coronavirus  
and it is affecting your  
mental health...**

## Mental health campaigning and support organisations

### ■ Mind

Providing advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem, and campaigning to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

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

[info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

0300 123 3393

Text 86463

### ■ The Samaritans

24-hour confidential, emotional support for anyone who needs someone to talk to.

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

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

116 123

### ■ CALM

The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM). Raising awareness of suicide in young men, and offering guidance and support for young men with mental health problems.

[www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

0800 58 58 58 (Nationwide)

0808 802 58 58 (London)

5pm-midnight, every day

### ■ Young Minds

Information and advice for anyone with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person.

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

0808 802 5544 (Parents Helpline)