

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

arena

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Winter 2019

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GENERAL SECRETARY PADDY LILLIS

Putting differences aside

The unprecedented situation we find ourselves in as a country means no one has any idea of what's going to happen next. This has affected the high street and online spending as consumers are reluctant to part with their money at a time of heightened political and economic uncertainty.

Instead of showing leadership the Government lurches from one crisis to the next. Against this turbulent background Usdaw continues to campaign and lobby for change. We're the ones taking the lead on issues such as saving the high street, asking the Government to implement a retail strategy, lobbying for a £10 per hour minimum wage and campaigning for tougher sentences for those who abuse and assault shopworkers.

Despite all the challenges we face the union will continue to provide you with the best possible services and support.

I wish you and your family a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Paddy Lillis, General Secretary

The team

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Protection of Workers Bill lodged with Scottish Parliament

Usdaw calls for the Scottish Government to act

Usdaw has called on the Scottish Government to back the Protection of Workers Bill promoted by Daniel Johnson MSP (Labour, Edinburgh Southern). The bill seeks to provide additional protections for retail staff, including those who sell age-restricted items. It is overwhelmingly backed by

shopworkers and supported by the Scottish Retail Consortium, Co-op and the Scottish Grocers' Federation.

Daniel Johnson MSP said: "I am delighted to see my bill officially introduced at the Scottish Parliament today after a meaningful consultation and drafting process. Abuse and

threatening behaviour should not be part of the job, and with the busy Christmas shopping season fast approaching it is now more important than ever that this is recognised."

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Violence, threats and abuse against workers is totally unacceptable and we want the Scottish Government to act by supporting Daniel Johnson's Bill.

"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.

"There needs to be 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."



RS Components and staff along with representatives of Usdaw and the TUC at the Dying for Work Charter

RS Components support workers by signing the TUC's Dying to Work Charter

Employers give terminally ill workers security and peace of mind

RS Components is the latest employer to sign up to the Dying to Work voluntary charter, following in the footsteps of employers such as Pladis, Rolls Royce, Royal Mail, Unilever and the Co-op.

The Charter is part of the TUC's wider Dying to Work campaign which is seeking greater security for terminally ill workers where they cannot be dismissed as a result of their condition.

Dying to Work was taken forward by the TUC following the case of Jacqui Woodcock, an area sales manager from Derbyshire who was forced out of her job after being diagnosed with terminal breast cancer. The TUC is asking employers to sign up

to its voluntary charter to stop cases like Jacqui's happening in the future.

Usdaw area organiser

Darren Matthews said: "UK workers in all sectors should be treated with dignity and respect by their employers. Even more so when the worst happens, like being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Their job should be the least of their worries.

That's why both Usdaw and the TUC are delighted that RS Components have agreed to sign up to the TUC's Dying to Work Charter."

RS president of Group Professional Services and People Ian Haslegrave said:

"RS Components is committed to supporting employees who become terminally ill, and have done so in the past. We have policies and services in place to support both physical and mental wellbeing in our workplaces across the UK."

TUC Midlands regional secretary Lee Barron said:

"RS Components has shown real leadership in this area, working with Usdaw to guarantee fair treatment for terminally ill workers.

"We now have a million workers being covered by the Dying to Work charter across the country, and we expect more employers to commit in the coming months."



David Hanson MP, Usdaw national officer John Gorle and the Society's Retail Chief Executive Jo Whitfield at Westminster

Usdaw and the Co-op working together

Research commissioned by the Co-op backs Usdaw's campaign

In September Usdaw was invited to Westminster for the launch of research commissioned by the Co-op.

The Co-op had noted with concern the unprecedented levels of violence against their staff and commissioned Dr Emmeline Taylor to look into the impact of violence on shopworkers and the motivation of offenders. The event was hosted by David Hanson MP

and Jo Whitfield, the Society's Retail Chief Executive, gave an introduction talking about the Co-op's Safer Colleagues Safer Communities campaign, the violent incidents Co-op colleagues are subjected to and how this research will assist in campaigning for reforms. Statistics from the union's Freedom From Fear campaign were highlighted in the report. The research and its

recommendations are reforms that Usdaw has long campaigned for to ensure shopworkers are better protected. Usdaw and the Co-op will continue to work together to campaign for legislative change to protect shopworkers.

'It's not part of the job': Violence and verbal abuse towards shop workers – A review of evidence and policy

<https://bit.ly/2BEyNw9>



World Mental Health Day

Usdaw joined thousands of organisations and individuals across the globe to support World Mental Health Day on 10 October

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Anyone can experience a mental health problem and there are many reasons why someone might. Our focus, as the UK's fifth largest trade union, is on how work affects our members' mental health and on whether members get the right support

at work when it does. Being able to have a say at work and some control over your working life are proven factors in maintaining good mental health. Trade unions are vital to promoting good mental health in work. By giving members a voice and letting them know they aren't on their own."

Want to learn more about mental health?

Sign up for one of our mental health awareness courses. The courses are available via the learning gateway on Usdaw's website. Visit www.usdaw.org.uk/onlinelearninggateway and click on the 'Health and Wellbeing' section for more detail about what's on offer.

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You can find out more about Summer School on the Usdaw website

www.usdaw.org.uk/summerschool

Usdaw's annual First Series Summer School took place in September and welcomed fifty new students keen to play a more active role in the union. The popular week-long residential course has been running for over 50 years at the impressive Wortley Hall in Sheffield. Members on the course had the chance to learn about the role and function of trade unions, organising in the workplace, presentations and equality.

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Usdaw Maternity and Parental Rights Guide 2019

Preparing for a new arrival is difficult enough, without having to worry about your work situation too. Maternity and parental rights can be complicated – it's easy to miss out on something you're entitled to. That's why Usdaw produces its award-winning Maternity and Parental Rights guide.

Inside the 2019 edition you'll find useful, practical advice on all aspects of maternity and parental rights. From antenatal appointments through to your return to work, this guide will be there to help you every step of the way. It also includes advice for members who are adopting or having a child through a surrogacy arrangement, as well as for fathers and partners of new mothers.

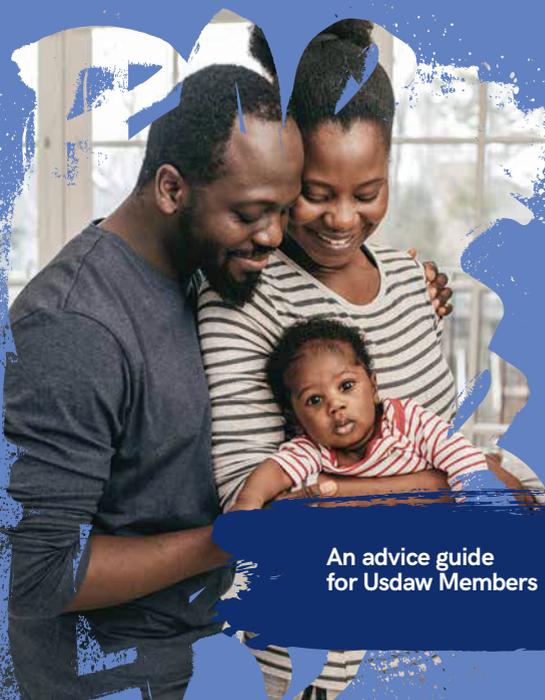
Ushaw publications at:

dtp.usdaw.co.uk

Parents and Carers Maternity and Parental Rights 2019

Ushaw

Campaigning
For Equality



An advice guide
for Usdaw Members

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Leaflets

Late-Night Working – Preventing Violence to Staff (Leaflet 294)

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

Pregnancy Risk Assessment – Know Your Rights (Leaflet 342)

Preventing under-age sales (Leaflet 351)

While you're looking after the shop, who's looking after you? (Leaflet 362)

Member Offers (Leaflet 398)

Pensions – Understanding Your State Pension (Leaflet 428)

Retail Workers – Abuse is not part of the job (Leaflet 429)

Time for Better Pay (Leaflet 435)

Together Against Hate Crime (Leaflet 445)

Legal Plus – Members' Handbook

Posters

Keep Your Cool (A4 Poster)

Together Against Hate (Poster R65)

Abuse is not Part of the Job for Retail Workers (Poster R66)

Factsheets and Surveys

LGBT Survey

Pensions – Answering the Doubters

Together Against Hate Crime Survey

Online Courses

CV Writing – IT bitesize course – www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting

Pensions Home Study – www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy

Shop 'til you Drop – bitesize maths course – www.usdaw.org.uk/maths

Staying Safe Online – Social Media and online safety course – www.usdaw.org.uk/SafeOnline

Summertime Songbirds – English bitesize course – www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime



Paddy
Lillis

Paddy Lillis

Usdaw's general secretary reflects on his first 12 months in post

Arena catches up with **Paddy Lillis** to talk about the work Usdaw has been doing to meet some of the challenges its members face, which have been exacerbated by an extremely turbulent political and industrial backdrop.

What is Usdaw doing to alleviate the crisis on the high street?

“The union’s Save Our Shops campaign is calling for action to breathe life back into the high street. Usdaw has developed an Industrial Strategy for Retail that asks the Government to invest in our high streets, to tackle high rents and rates, alongside car parking charges. Our strategy has been picked up by politicians, employers and retail organisations such as the British Retail Consortium and we are working together to put pressure on the Government to do something about the crisis on the high street.”

What successes has Usdaw had in the last 12 months?

“Our campaigns are making a big splash and getting the attention we need to lobby for real change. Our Freedom From Fear campaign has been instrumental in getting the Government to launch a ‘call for evidence’. Once again, we are working together with employers to push this up the Government’s agenda. Our Time For Better Pay petition collected over 50,000 signatures and we are pushing for a debate in Parliament. Following Jeremy Corbyn’s attendance at this year’s ADM the Labour Party has committed to £10 per hour minimum wage for all workers. We are shining a light on employers

who claim they are ethical retailers while refusing to recognise trade unions. Thanks to our campaign MPs are putting pressure on companies like Boohoo to talk to us.”

“We need people out there taking an interest and getting involved”

What has shocked you most in the last 12 months?

“Last November a report by a United Nations special rapporteur found that 14 million people in the UK live in poverty. Sixty per cent of those in poverty are in families where someone works. This is an appalling statistic for a country that has the fifth largest economy in the world and backs up our Time For Better Pay survey evidence.

“Conservative MPs then have the nerve to pose for grinning photos showing their support for foodbanks. It shows a complete lack of understanding at how their cruel policies have pushed people into poverty. That’s why we are looking to address the root causes of in-work poverty.”

What message do you have for your members?

“I understand that people are frustrated, they don’t see life improving. But we need to be careful that we don’t turn our anger against people the newspapers want us to blame; immigrants, the poor, the disabled, the most vulnerable people in our society. After all, it wasn’t these people who imposed a decade of austerity on the country. It was the Conservatives.

“The only way we can truly change things is by putting our differences aside, coming together and working collectively. We need people out there taking an interest and getting involved. And the best way to do this is through the union.”

Campaign update

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Activists saving the high street

Usdaw's Save Our Shops campaign has been gaining momentum since its launch earlier this year.

On 28 September Usdaw held its third national Save Our Shops campaign day which once again saw MPs, Labour Party activists and Usdaw reps and officials join forces in their local town centres to raise awareness about the current crisis on the high street. As with all Usdaw campaigns, grassroot action was combined with the lobbying of MPs.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Shoppers are very concerned about the future of our town and city centres.

"Usdaw's petition calls for the urgent action needed to save jobs and protect our high streets with a Government-led clear and coherent strategy for retail. The Government must address the growing crisis on our high streets, as we have called for through our Save Our Shops campaign.

"The retail industry is experiencing turbulent and challenging times. It directly employs



Christmas and New Year working

Earlier this year, Usdaw's ADM called for all shops to shut at 4pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve and to remain closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day, as well as 2 January in Scotland.

Following this, Usdaw is launching a campaign calling for our members to get a decent break over the festive period. This campaign will involve the union talking to employers about their Christmas trading hours as well as making the public aware of the challenges workers face in getting quality time off work.

At the beginning of 2019, Usdaw surveyed members on their experiences of working last year's festive period. We received over 18,000 responses to the surveys, and the results clearly show how difficult it is for many members to spend decent time with their friends and family over Christmas and New Year.

According to the survey:

- ◆ Only 4 per cent of people working on Boxing Day were happy to do so.
- ◆ 55 per cent of members reported that their store was either fairly or very quiet on Boxing Day.
- ◆ Over a third of members had to work on New Year's Day with some starting as early as 4am.
- ◆ Overall, over three quarters of members felt that working over the Christmas period affected their ability to enjoy Christmas and that they spent too little time with loved ones.

We know that people want to be able to spend both Christmas and Boxing Day with loved ones, recovering from the busy run-up to Christmas. Yet, all too often members are required to work even though stores are generally quiet.

Most members reported that Christmas Day was just a day off, not a holiday, as the pressure to work longer or additional hours in the build-up to the festive period left them too exhausted to enjoy Christmas.

You can read the strategy by going to:

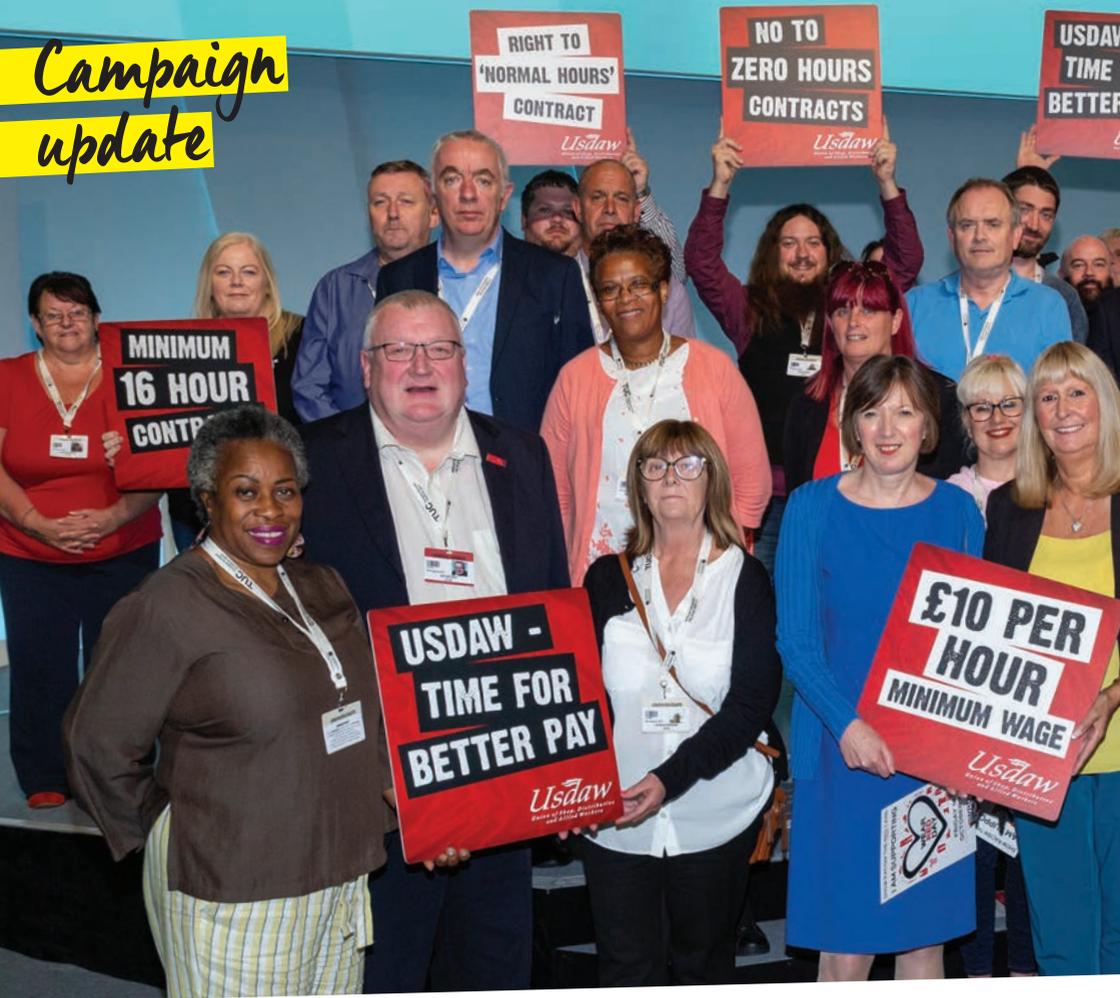
www.usdaw.org.uk/retailstrategy

around 3 million people across the UK, with many more in distribution and manufacturing reliant on thriving high streets in our towns and cities. Contributing 11 per cent of UK economic output, it is clear that the retail crisis has a huge knock-on effect, impacting the UK economy and a significant number of workers.

“The scale of store closures we have seen is devastating, not just for the workforce, but also for our communities and town centres.

“The Government needs to show that it takes retail jobs seriously by listening to and acting on workers' concerns.”

Campaign update



Usdaw is already talking to employers about Christmas. However the union will be launching this campaign in the run-up to Christmas, so look out for more information.

Time For Better Pay

Usdaw has long been committed to tackling the issue of low pay, the union was a major driving force behind the creation of the National Minimum Wage and has lobbied the Low Pay Commission for significant increases in the National Minimum Wage each year.

The UK is the world's fifth largest economy, but an endemic low pay problem means workers are relying on state in-work benefits

and insecure borrowing to make up the massive shortfall between wages and what is needed for a basic standard of living.

Survey

Usdaw conducted a survey of over **10,500** workers, one of the largest surveys of low-paid workers in recent times. This survey found that despite the high levels of employment, increasing numbers of workers are trapped in low-paid, short-hours, insecure work, unable to make ends meet.

Usdaw's Time for Better Pay campaign is calling on the Government to strengthen workers' rights by introducing:



Usdaw delegates at the TUC conference in Brighton

- ◆ A minimum wage rate of at least £10 per hour for all workers.
- ◆ Minimum contracts of 16 hours per week for everyone who wants one.
- ◆ Contracts based on an individual's normal hours of work.
- ◆ An end to zero-hours contracts.

Over 50,000 people agreed and signed Usdaw's petition to express deep concerns about the pay and rights of a growing number of workers who find themselves in increasingly insecure employment.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The imbalance of power in the labour market needs to be urgently redressed to guarantee workers better pay, meaningful hours, job

security, opportunities for progression and a decent standard of living. Going to work should mean a decent standard of living for all workers, including young workers.

"More than 50,000 people agreed and have backed our call to end job insecurity and help working people make ends meet. That should make the Government sit up and listen, yet we are still waiting for them to engage with us.

"So, we now think it is time for the issues to be debated in Parliament and we are exploring how we can achieve that. We need real and urgent improvements to workers' rights to deliver an economy that works for all working people."

Planning for your future

Know your pension rights

Occupational pensions are set up by employers to provide pension benefits to their employees. Usually both the company and the employee make contributions into the pension scheme. It is the company contribution that gives occupational pensions the advantage over personal pensions and other ways of saving.

It is also the reason why Usdaw believes that occupational pensions are the best way of achieving a decent retirement income on top of what you get from the state.

Know your rights outlines why you should join.

Pensions can seem complicated, which is often the reason why people put off doing anything about them. arena answers some of the most common questions asked about joining a pension scheme.

Know Your Rights

Q Why should I join a pension scheme?

Everybody needs money to live on when they retire. How much you've saved will make the difference between a secure and enjoyable retirement and a long, hard struggle to make ends meet. Financial experts say that the best investment for retirement income is joining a good pension scheme. Not only does a pension scheme qualify for a number of tax incentives, you will also potentially benefit from a contribution by your employer.

Since auto-enrolment was introduced in 2012 all Usdaw members will work for companies which will offer a pension scheme for them to join.

Q Why can't I just live on state benefits?

Relying on state benefits to provide you with income in retirement is a gamble. State benefits are means tested and discretionary. This means that somebody else decides whether to give you benefits and how much to give you. Also state benefits may be cut by future governments to save money.

Q I'm already struggling financially, I can't afford to pay in to a pension.

Think of how much of a struggle you will face in retirement if you don't start saving now.

Pension savings are free of tax. This means that every £10 that you contribute towards your pension will only cost you £8 of your net pay.

So, if your company pension scheme booklet tells you that you have to contribute 5 per cent of your pay, the tax saving means that you are really only giving up 4 per cent of your net pay.

If you are thinking of joining your company pension scheme, find out how much will be deducted from your pay in pounds and pence, from the payroll department.

Q What else is in it for me?

There's a good chance that your employer also pays a contribution into your company scheme on your behalf, so if you don't join then you are turning down free money. Joining a pension scheme might also make you eligible for life insurance and ill-health benefits.

Q I'm young and retirement is a long way off so I'll join when I'm older.

The sooner you join the better. A 25-year-old who starts paying 5 per cent of their pay into a pension scheme now (with their employer also paying 5 per cent) can expect a decent pension when they retire. A 35-year-old who is starting to save at the same time would need to contribute 12 per cent of their pay to get the same pension – quite a difference.

The longer you leave it the more it will impact on your income when you finally decide to do something about it.

Q I've made other investments for my retirement so I don't need a pension.

Some people will say that 'my house is my pension'. It's not always wise to put all your eggs in one basket by investing in property alone for example. Financial experts and trade unions agree that company pension schemes are the best investment for retirement.



Pension Credit

Almost 2 million people aged 65 and over are living in poverty in the UK today. Pension credit is the income-related benefit specifically designed to lift pensioners out of poverty. But it is estimated that more than four in 10 pensioner households (couples or single people) who are entitled to pension credit do not receive it. Every year, of those funds allocated to eradicating pensioner poverty, £3.5bn remains unspent and is simply returned to Government funds. There are as many as 1.3 million pensioner households who are entitled to, but not receiving it.



Q What is pension credit?

It is a means-tested benefit available to people who have reached state pension age. Introduced in 2003, it was created to make sure that all older people receive a minimum amount of income and it has played a major role in previous reductions in poverty for this age group.

Q How does pension credit work?

Pension credit is an income-related benefit made up of two parts:

- ◆ **Guaranteed credit** tops up your weekly income if its below **£167.25** (for single people) or **£255.25** (for couples).

- ◆ Savings credit is an extra payment for people who save some money towards their retirement, for example a pension. You may not be eligible for savings credit if you have reached state pension age on or after 6 April 2016.



To qualify for pension credit:

- ◆ you must live in England, Scotland or Wales.
- ◆ you or your partner must have reached state pension age.

Q What would I get?

Your circumstances	Guarantee credit per week	Savings credit per week
Single people	Top up to £167.25	Up to £13.73
Couples	Top up to £255.25	Up to £15.35

Q Do I have to pay tax on pension credit?

You will not have to pay tax on pension credit.

Q How do I claim pension credit?

The quickest way to apply for pension credit is by phone on **0800 99 1234**.

For further information go to:

www.usdaw.org.uk/Pensions

Colleague Carer

Julie's commitment to her friend and work colleague recognised by Boots

People
LIKE you

Usdaw rep **Julie Smith** is a warehouse operative at Boots.

Recently Julie won the Boots regional Colleague Care Award as well as the National Boots Best of the Best Colleague Care Award. The award celebrates people who have gone out of their way to support, listen to and show compassion to colleagues going through a really tough time.

Julie has worked for the company for 22 years and became a rep 10 years ago when she realised she wanted to help people and make a difference.

In her union role she covers three warehouses with around 2,000 people but she's not alone as she is supported by a fantastic team of reps.

"I received the Colleague Care Award because my friend at work, Wayne, was diagnosed with cancer," said Julie. "It was a really difficult time for Wayne and his family so I helped where I could. I was representing him in meetings, helping him fill out forms,

"Wayne and I were always working towards the goal that he would eventually come back"

visiting him in hospital and doing home visits. Wayne and I were always working towards the goal that he would eventually come back to work but sadly he passed away last November. I was just about to go and represent a member in a disciplinary meeting when I heard the news. I was so upset but



Julie Smith receiving the Colleague Care Award from Alan Penhale Boots Supply Chain Director

I had to put my professional head on and represent my member.

Recognition

"Winning the award was bittersweet. It was sad that Wayne wasn't there to see me win. He would have been over the moon for me. I was also glad that in those last remaining months I did what I could to help make Wayne's life as stress-free as possible.

"After winning the award, a lot of people came to congratulate me, which has been really lovely. It can be hard juggling work, your personal life and being a rep, so the company recognising the work you do can go a long way in helping you get through a difficult day. Thankfully, the union has a really positive relationship with the company and the managers are very supportive, which takes away some of the stress."

For more information on being a rep, visit the union's website:

www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep

Labour Party conference



Labour working for the many not the few

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis led a delegation of Usdaw members to the annual Labour Party Conference in Brighton. The conference takes place every autumn and is one of the largest and most high-profile political events in Europe. Usdaw delegates took part in debates to shape Labour's vision for Britain.

Save Our Shops

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis called on the Labour Party Conference to back Usdaw's Save Our Shops campaign and for the next Labour Government to take urgent action to tackle the crisis on the high street.

"The retail sector is facing one of the most challenging periods in its history, in the last 10 years, nearly one million jobs have been lost on the high street. If any other sector was facing this level of upheaval, there would quite rightly be a public outcry and Government action. That is not the case in retail.

"We want Government action that protects the high street. We want high streets that are community focal points within our towns and cities and we want shops that deliver high quality employment for the workforce. The biggest asset for any high street retailer is their staff and if the high street and shops are to survive they need to play to their strengths."



LABOUR POLICIES ANNOUNCED

Climate Change

Labour has emerged with a 'Green New Deal' which aims to reach net-zero carbon emissions by 2030.

The party has also pledged to nationalise the big six energy companies and guarantee 'good unionised green jobs'.

Health and Social Care

The party announced plans to scrap prescription charges in England - bringing the country into line with Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. They also plan to introduce free personal care for the elderly in England at an estimated cost of £8bn a year.

Justice

Within a hundred days of taking office a Labour Government would reverse the cuts to legal aid for housing, family law and welfare benefit appeals.

Brexit

Conference backed a motion pledging to negotiate a new Brexit deal and put it to the people in a referendum.

Economy

Pledges to introduce a four-day working week and to reduce the average working week to 32 hours, without loss of earnings, within a decade.

Eliminate in-work poverty within five years through measures such as strengthening trade union rights, introducing a real living wage of £10 an hour and by ending the roll out of universal credit.

Welfare

Labour promised to halve the use of food banks in its first year in government and end the need for food banks within three years. They will also announce plans for a Fair Food Act to ensure everyone in the UK has a legal 'right to food', similar to other human rights.

Ministry for Employment Rights

Usdaw backed Labour's Ministry for Employment Rights to tackle insecure work and poverty pay.

Usdaw's deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "The Tories' attacks on trade unions have led to a massive drop in the number of people covered by collective bargaining. This, in turn, has resulted in many workers not getting the pay increases they deserve, the working hours they need and the shifts and working patterns to fit with their caring responsibilities.

"We need a Labour Government and a Ministry for Employment Rights to turn the tide and give working people a real



Labour Party conference

voice in the workplace. Labour is proposing sector-wide collective bargaining to deal with the evil of poverty pay.”

Ending in-work poverty

Usdaw welcomed the shadow chancellor John McDonnell’s commitment to end in-work poverty within Labour’s first term in office.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: “Ending in-work poverty would be one of Labour’s greatest achievements, it is the scourge of modern society. The Government disgracefully failed to act on the evidence our Time For Better Pay campaign produced, so we are delighted that Labour has listened and taken on board our policy recommendations.

“Insecure low-paid work is causing many families a great deal of hardship as they struggle to make ends meet and have no guaranteed income from week to week. So, Labour’s promises of £10 per hour, and an end to zero-hour employment and contracts that reflects workers’ hours are very welcome. They will make a real difference to our members and millions of workers.”

Fringe Meeting

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis addressed a fringe meeting that was jointly organised by the Co-op Group and the Co-operative Party, looking at Safer Communities, Safer Shopworkers.

Paddy Lillis said: “This is the first entirely employer-led campaign to highlight the issue of violence against retail staff and a campaign which both Usdaw and the Co-op are completely committed to.

“Over the last 12 months, our joint campaigning work has ensured a Government consultation

on violence and abuse against shop staff; delivered a parliamentary debate on retail crime, and has overseen the implementation of advanced technologies so that Co-op employees feel more secure at work.

“Usdaw’s research, the Co-op’s work and recent research from the Association of Convenience Stores, show that shopworkers are not getting the protection they need. For this reason, Usdaw is committed to campaigning with the Co-op to deliver an Assaults on Retail Workers Bill.

“At the same time, we need to ensure that there are enough police officers on the streets to be able to enforce the law. All too often we hear comments that retail crime is no longer a police priority, or that police forces are simply far too stretched. Usdaw is clear that abuse is not part of the job for any workers.”



Paddy Lillis with Jo Whitfield Co-op Retail Chief Executive

TUC conference

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis led a delegation of Usdaw members to ask congress to back the union's biggest campaigns.

Save Our Shops

The union continued its commitment to tackle the crisis on the high street by launching a new online petition as part of its Save Our Shops campaign. Usdaw wants the Government to protect the 4.5 million jobs that rely on the sector. "Over 74,000 retail workers lost their jobs in 2018 and so far this year, the rate of store closures and job losses has increased dramatically," said Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis. "Usdaw's petition calls for urgent action to save jobs and protect our high streets with a government-led clear and coherent strategy for retail."

www.usdaw.org.uk/SignSOS

It's not festive

A motion submitted by Usdaw to give retail staff a decent break over Christmas and New Year was backed unanimously by congress. Last year the union surveyed over 18,000 members on festive working. Two-thirds said they are under pressure to work on Boxing Day and New Year's Day, 80 per cent found it difficult to get an early finish on Christmas Eve and three-quarters said that working these days meant spending too little time with family. "Everyone should be entitled to quality time off over the festive period but too often this isn't happening," said Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis. "We are calling for stores to close early on Christmas and New Year's Eve, and remain closed for Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day."



Paddy Lillis with Francis O'Grady

Future challenges

Usdaw joined the debate on the future world of work and identified underemployment and short-hours contracts as key issues to address. "In recent years, weak employment legislation has led to the growth of insecure work," said Usdaw president Amy Murphy. "Whether it's zero and short-hours contracts, bogus self-employment or the gig economy; working people have paid the price for the lack of robust employment legislation to protect workers. We must ensure that workers are guaranteed secure contracts on the minimum number of hours they want."

Usdaw takes best stand

The union's exhibition stand was awarded 'best in show' at this year's congress. The stand was themed on the union's flagship Save Our Shops campaign.

Free legal support

Usdaw's Legal Plus service is one of the many great benefits of being an Usdaw member – and it's completely free



Usdaw has its own legal department with qualified professionals working for you, backed up by a nationwide network of solicitors. With private solicitors charging over £100 an hour for their services and high street personal injury solicitors typically taking 25 per cent of your compensation you can't beat Usdaw's Legal Plus service.

As an Usdaw member you are entitled to...

- ◆ **FirstCall Usdaw** – Legal assistance for any accident, anywhere in the UK, and now for accidents/injuries outside of the UK while on a package holiday. †
- ◆ **Legal assistance** in all employment matters.*
- ◆ A **free will-writing** service for you and for your partner saving you up to £250.
- ◆ **Conveyancing** – Usdaw

solicitors will deal with all stages of your property transaction, professionally and efficiently, at favourable rates.

You will receive a written quotation at the outset so you won't have any unwelcome surprises.

◆ **Probate** – Sorting out probate when someone dies can be stressful. Union solicitors can provide sympathetic and professional advice at special rates.

◆ **Free initial legal advice** – Usdaw's Legal Plus service doesn't stop when you clock off work.

You are entitled to free advice and special follow-up rates about any non-work related legal problem.

Family who live with you can also benefit from the union's legal service...

◆ If you've got children living with you, who are under 18, they are fully covered for any accident,

anywhere in the UK and now also for accidents/injuries outside of the UK while on a package holiday. †

◆ **Full legal assistance** for road traffic accidents.*

◆ **Free** legal advice for any other accident and special follow-up terms.

◆ **Free** initial legal advice for any non-work related legal matter and special follow-up terms.

◆ **Free will-writing** service for partners.

◆ **Conveyancing and probate** – families benefit from special rates.

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

**Legal assistance in employment matters when we think you have reasonable prospects of success.*

Please note: *Usdaw Legal Plus is not an insurance policy.*

INJURED? REMEMBER YOU'RE A MEMBER

DON'T FORGET YOUR FREE LEGAL SUPPORT

FirstCall Usdaw 0800 055 6333

IF YOU HAVE AN ACCIDENT, HIGH STREET SOLICITORS CAN TAKE UP TO 25% OF YOUR COMPENSATION. WITH FIRSTCALL USDAW YOU KEEP 100% OF YOUR COMPENSATION.

Solicitors to look after you, your dependants and their children from the age of 18 any accident, wherever in the UK and on holidays outside the UK. We cover members living with you are covered for road traffic accidents.

Legal Plus

Usdaw
Union of Shop Distributors and Office Workers

The Personal Injury cover does not replace the need to obtain specialist holiday insurance, car insurance and home insurance.

FirstCall Usdaw

FirstCall Usdaw is the union's free accident and injury claim line. Thousands of members use the service every year for instant access to legal assistance for accident and injury cases. Making a claim is easy.

There are no complicated forms and you will be supported by Usdaw, every step of the way.

- ◆ You can use the service for road traffic accidents, slips and trips, and injuries caused by violent crime or armed robbery (CICA claims).
- ◆ Work-related diseases and conditions like repetitive strain injury, deafness, occupational asthma and dermatitis are also covered.
- ◆ If you win your case, you

keep all your compensation. Neither Usdaw or the solicitors take a cut of your damages, unlike high street solicitors who typically deduct 25 per cent.

- ◆ There are no hidden payments in accident cases. Unlike so-called 'no win, no fee' cases which can involve charges for insurance premiums or specialist's fees.
- ◆ Expert advice from lawyers committed to Usdaw who specialise in personal injury.
- ◆ The union's legal service works for members and not for profit – it puts people first.
- ◆ Call **0800 055 6333** to lodge a claim.

For more information about all of the union's legal services please call the legal department on 0161 249 2477 or visit the Usdaw website

www.usdaw.org.uk/legal

Turn the page to find out how FirstCall helped Usdaw member Rodney Rodriguez when he had an accident at work

Other legal advice services...

Pensions advice

Usdaw has a specialist pensions section, ready to help you with any questions about your pension. Where appropriate we will also support legal action to secure your pension rights.

To contact the Usdaw pensions section, call **0161 413 0920**.

Health and Safety advice

The union also has specialist advisors in all matters affecting health and safety in the workplace. You can contact the Usdaw health and safety section on **0161 413 0927** or email healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk

The Legal Plus service is offered subject to the rules of the scheme. A member must be fully paid up at the time of the problem and remain so. Legal assistance will not be granted to a family member if they should have been in Usdaw themselves. Legal assistance cannot be granted to bring proceedings against the union.



LEGAL PLUS



FirstCall proved a 'top-class' service for Rodney

*Ocado driver and Usdaw rep **Rodney Rodriguez** was unsure about using FirstCall after a crash, but Usdaw solicitors took the pain out of the claim and Rodney was awarded £3,300.*

Rodney was travelling along the M1 on the way back from a delivery when a car transporter crashed into the back of his LGV.

He was initially fine and both parties stopped at the next service station to exchange details. But later that day Rodney started to feel pain across his neck, shoulders and back which continued to get worse. His injury resulted in him having to take time off from work.

"I called the union about a week after the accident," said Rodney, who lives in Welwyn Garden City. "Usdaw's solicitors were brilliant. I wasn't really sure about making the claim at first but the solicitor put me at ease and reassured me that I was doing the right thing as the accident wasn't my fault and I had suffered a loss of earnings.

"The whole process was really easy from

start to finish. The solicitors sent out the forms and marked the areas where I needed to sign, and if ever I had any questions I just emailed and they would respond immediately.

"The accident happened in February this year and the claim was completed just five months later. It was a top-class service and I would thoroughly recommend it.

"As a union rep I'm always singing the praises of the union and the legal service, and after my experience I've been able to encourage even more colleagues to sign up.

"People pay extra for legal cover with their car insurance, but if you're a member of Usdaw there's no need to as you're already covered. It's a great benefit that all union members need to know about."

Darroch delighted with ‘valuable’ legal service

Usdaw rep **Darroch Logan** received £3,500 in compensation thanks to FirstCall Usdaw after a runaway wheel from a lorry caused a car crash that nearly cost him his life.

The accident happened while he was driving in the Scottish Highlands on a rainy day in May 2018. “I noticed that the rear left wheel of the lorry in front of me was coming loose,” said Darroch, 36, who was on the union’s Academy1 programme at the time. “I watched as it came off, rolled around the back of the lorry, hit an oncoming car and then came straight for me. It was terrifying.”

The wheel smashed into Darroch’s windscreen and dented his roof forcing the abrupt stop of his car on the road. The impact caused injuries to his hands, neck and shoulders and some temporary hearing loss but miraculously no permanent damage.

Darroch’s dashcam captured the full incident and Usdaw solicitors were able to use the footage as evidence in his case.

“I can’t fault the legal service,” said Darroch. “The solicitors were very supportive and

took care of everything. The lorry company admitted liability and the case was settled in just over a year.

“The police are now pursuing the lorry driver and the company for failure to maintain a vehicle as it was evident the bolts were disintegrating the wheel hub which caused the wheel to come loose.”

After the accident Darroch initially suffered with some travel anxiety but he was back on the road two days later eager to carry on with the Academy.

“As a keen motorcyclist I’ve still not found the courage to get back on my bike,” said Darroch. “I keep thinking if the accident had happened while I was riding on that it would be game over.

“I always tell members and potential members how valuable the legal service is, you just never know what’s around the corner.”





Kevin Brennan with his wife Joanne

Under impossible pressure

Store manager Kevin Brennan wins employment tribunal against former employer

Kevin Brennan worked for the Co-op as a store manager for over 36 years. Problems started to occur when he was transferred over to another high street retailer.

“I didn’t mind being TUPE’d over too much as I knew they were an up and coming company,” said Kevin. “But I quickly realised that there was never enough budget, I was running the shop with around 30 hours short. I raised it with my area manager time and time again but I was told I had to work within the budget. I ended up doing 12-hour days and not being able to sleep at all because I was so worried. After a few months of working like crazy I started getting chest pains.

Impossible to run the store

“I never had any problems working at the Co-op but at this place I started questioning my ability. I kept thinking what am I doing wrong? Maybe if I worked harder I could get the store to run properly. But no matter what I did it was impossible to run the store on the hours I had. I ended up going off sick with stress for 8 months. As part of my return to work it was agreed that I would temporarily work in a different store. Even though it was the run up to Christmas and one of the busiest times of the year, I was absolutely fine managing this store.

“After the new year I returned to my usual store. As soon as I returned it became apparent

that the changes we had agreed; more staff, more training and a manager to show me that it was possible to run that store, had not been implemented. I ended up going off sick again. This time the stress turned into depression. I began to suspect they were deliberately trying to get rid of me because I was TUPE’d over and my wage was almost double that of other managers. I felt like they wanted me to fail.

“Depression is a terrible illness it makes you feel so useless.”

Tribunal hearing

“In my disciplinary meeting my manager said that as far as she was concerned the changes had been implemented, even though they clearly hadn’t been. They did a risk assessment and a week later fired me because they didn’t see me coming back. I appealed. I had to wait nearly seven weeks to receive a reply that upheld the dismissal.

“At the tribunal I had two witnesses who confirmed that none of the changes had been made. The judge said ‘I proved my case in spades’.

“Depression is a terrible illness, it makes you feel so useless. But at the tribunal I felt like I had been vindicated. I got a £40,000 settlement and because I’m 55 I made the decision to take my Co-op pension, which means I can literally please myself!

“I’ve been a member of Usdaw since I was 18. The service Usdaw provided was absolutely brilliant and I can’t speak highly enough of the people I dealt with. Everyone should join a union because you never know when you might need help.”



Retail Trades Conference

Usdaw reps gathered in Manchester for the union's second biggest annual conference

In October delegates came together to put forward propositions, receive an update from general secretary Paddy Lillis, to discuss the challenges of organising and mental health in the workplace.

Paddy Lillis

In a wide-ranging speech general secretary Paddy Lillis covered the state of the retail sector, Usdaw's campaigns, the Conservatives' attacks on the trade union movement and the uncertainty caused by Brexit.

"Usdaw continues to put pressure on employers and MPs through its campaigns,"

said Paddy. "Our campaigns are rooted in members' experiences and demand better pay, secure contracts and a society where work gives you a decent standard of living. If for some reason an individual can't work because of sickness or circumstances beyond their control then we demand a humane welfare system that looks after the most vulnerable in society rather than a cruel system that punishes them as though they were criminals."

Dave McCrossen

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen led a workshop on organising. "There is more to



organising than recruitment,” said Dave. “It’s about representing members and giving them a voice. We need around 100,000 new members a year just to stand still. New members are crucial to the future of the union.”

Barbara Keely MP for Worsley and South Eccles

The Labour shadow cabinet minister for mental health and social care talked about the importance of mental health in the workplace.

“I’m very pleased that Usdaw is leading the way on this,” said Barbara. “Reps supporting workers and helping them access their rights is vital in fighting the stigma surrounding

this issue. However, we need to ensure that employers take accountability and after a decade of cuts the Government needs to properly fund mental health services.”

Propositions

Delegates were successful in passing all six propositions that included: ensuring there were enough staff to cover breaks; better protection against abuse and violence; improving the quality of risk assessments for pregnant women and disabled workers; a call for companies to put staff safety before profits; improving bereavement leave and the introduction of a domestic violence policy.

People
LIKE you

Christina is dedicated to giving young people a voice in society

Devoted union activist picks up top TUC award

Inspiring Usdaw rep **Christina Distefano** hit newspaper headlines in September when she won this year's TUC Youth Award for her work engaging young workers in the trade union movement.

The 26-year-old Tesco worker from Sheffield has quickly become a big asset to the union, both divisionally and nationally, successfully delivering campaigns, taking an active role in union training programmes, speaking out for young workers and advocating mental health awareness.

Over the past three years she's joined the divisional and national young workers' committees, the TUC young workers' forum, been elected as branch secretary, completed both Academy1 and Academy2 and recruited over 1,000 members.

Becoming active

"When I started working at Tesco I was apprehensive about joining Usdaw," said Christina. "Then I had a few problems at work and realised the true value of trade unions and I think it was that personal experience, and the encouragement of the other reps in store, that drove me to become active.

"I became a rep in 2014 and health and safety rep in 2015. After a couple of years I was keen to get more involved so I started recruiting and organising in different workplaces, attending ADM and other union conferences and increasingly getting involved with my branch. At this time I also became heavily involved with the young workers committee."

Christina has worked tirelessly to support members and raise the profile of the union since she became a rep and utilises all available

avenues to promote young workers' rights and support her peers. In May she gave an inspiring speech to delegates at Usdaw's retired members' conference about the value of supporting young activists, and one of her proudest moments is successfully organising and delivering six recruitment campaigns across the North East during young workers' week in March.

"Young workers are vulnerable and can often be undervalued and discriminated against," said Christina. "A lot of young people don't know what a union is. I didn't have a clue when I first started working and if it wasn't for someone telling me about unions and encouraging me to get involved I wouldn't be where I am today. It's vital that young workers join a trade union and take an active role to support their future."

Community spirit

Christina's passion for helping others was visible at just age 11 when she joined local public awareness campaign Action for Stannington. The group is made up of volunteers who work to create a cleaner, greener and safer community.

"I don't know where I would be without that structure and community spirit," said Christina. "Every day after school we were out cleaning graffiti, picking up litter and improving green spaces. I was one of the first young volunteers and the other children at school would pick on me for taking part, but even at a young age I was determined to change their mind. Before I knew it, I'd managed to recruit upwards of 50 young volunteers and the chairman made me team leader. I was really chuffed."

Christina is still very much involved with the group and takes a major role in organising projects, leading volunteers and assisting in day-to-day activities.

Mental Health

In her role as rep Christina has also spent a lot of time campaigning for mental health

awareness and has been the driving force behind positive changes in her own store.

"Mental health and health and safety are interlinked," said Christina. "If you're suffering mentally then you're probably not fully concentrating on your job role and that can lead to other problems at work.

"We're keen to support vulnerable workers in our store so we've dedicated a room where people can chat in private if they want to. The room has massively helped as it encourages people to open up. I'd love more workplaces to be able to do this for their employees."

TUC Award

"Winning the TUC award was a really big deal for me," said Christina. "It's not the praise or the recognition, in fact I feel really awkward when

people are congratulating me, it's about making a difference and seeing what you can achieve.

"It's not just down to me, there are so many other people that have had an

input into making me the person I am.

"I want people to have a better life, particularly young people at work, that's my motivation. I want to educate people about trade unions so they know how they can be a powerful force for change. It's definitely where my heart is"

"I don't know where I would be without that structure and community spirit."

For more information on being a rep, visit the union's website:

www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep

Christina with Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis at this year's TUC Congress in Brighton



Respect Week

Seasonal cheer not festive fear

In November the union runs its award-winning Freedom From Fear campaign annual Respect Week. This year's focus is urging customers to Keep Your Cool in the run up to Christmas. The campaign aims to raise awareness amongst shoppers and promote a culture of respect, helping workers stay safe and working with management to ensure that they are doing everything they can to improve health and safety.

Violence on the increase

Violence, threats and abuse are growing issues for retail staff. Earlier this year, as part of Usdaw's response to a Government consultation, the union surveyed over 3,000 shopworkers. This survey showed that 80 per cent of shopworkers believe that abuse and violence has increased in recent years. There were harrowing accounts of homophobic, racist and sexist abuse. Instances of members being stabbed, hospitalised and left with broken bones and reports of retail staff petrified of returning to their jobs. All of these reports came from frontline staff who were simply trying to do their job.

Returning to the threat

One issue that is clearly evident from the survey is the impact that abuse and violence is having on mental, as well as physical health. When workers are having to return to working at the same store, operating the



same tills, replenishing the same shelves, and sometimes even serving the same customers; this can have a devastating impact on an individual's mental health.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The Freedom From Fear campaign exists to tackle abuse and assaults against public facing workers. Each year during the run-up to the busy Christmas shopping period, the union runs a Respect for Shopworkers Week. The purpose of this week is to clearly get the message across that abuse is not part of the job. From talking to reps and looking at the results of our surveys, it is all too clear that abuse against shopworkers is starting to be seen as a normal part of work. That's why it's so important to deliver a highly visible campaign that can not only give shopworkers the confidence to report all instances of abuse but also educate the public on the need to keep their cool."



For more information about Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign go to:

www.usdaw.org.uk/fff

“Over the last 12 months there have been some successes. Usdaw’s campaigning secured a Government consultation on violence and abuse against shop staff and delivered a parliamentary debate on retail crime. However, there is still more to do. We will continue to lobby the Government for stiffer sentences for those who attack shopworkers. We want to see retailers, police and the courts working in partnership to ensure better protection for shopworkers. Retail staff are an important part of our communities; their role must be valued, respected and protected.”



WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE ABUSE:

- ◆ If you experience abuse make sure you report it to your manager and that it is logged in your accident/incident book.
- ◆ Speak to your Usdaw rep to see whether there is anything the company can do to help prevent another incident from taking place, for example banning an abusive customer.
- ◆ Usdaw's campaigns rely heavily on the evidence and experiences of our reps and members. So, make sure you fill in our survey or sign a petition.

The nightmare before Christmas

Shopworkers experience long hours and short tempers from customers stressed out in the run up to Christmas

arena spoke to Michelle Whitehead about what it's like working in a busy convenience store in the run up to Christmas.

"Over Christmas our workload doubles but we don't have more hours in the store," said Michelle. "It's supposed to be a festive season full of Christmas cheer and good will but I find that people are even more stressed and angrier than normal.

Abusive customers

"The best-case scenario is when people just huff and puff because there's a queue. But things can escalate quickly. We had one guy who threw his shopping basket at us because he had to wait a few minutes to be served. In another incident a man threw a cabbage at my colleague and walked out because we didn't have any bananas left.

"Working in a convenience store over the Christmas period can be quite horrific. Most of

take it out on us. Then they come back in like nothing's happened. We never get an apology, yet we have to continue serving them and being nice to them.

“When you work in retail people don't treat you like a real person. They have this view that you're a second-class citizen and it's your job to serve them and take the abuse. I've learnt so many swear words since I started working in retail! I can laugh at this because I've gotten so used to the abuse. But when I take a step back and really think about this, it's shocking that I have normalised being abused in my workplace.

“The company believes the 'customer is always right' and gives them a gift voucher”

A problem for retail and society

“There's a complete lack of respect for people in society and particularly for people who work in retail. It doesn't help that politicians around the world are shouting at one another and using language that is completely unacceptable. I think when people see powerful people behaving like this it sends the message that it's OK to act like this.

“Of course, me and my colleagues report the abuse but it feels like nothing ever comes of it. Abusive customers aren't always banned. And the police? Can you imagine what would happen if we reported every incident of abuse to the police? They wouldn't be able to do anything else.

“We need proper signage in stores that states abuse will not be tolerated and we need legislation that takes retail crime seriously by punishing those who abuse shopworkers.

“I've worked in retail for 18 years. I have stayed because I like my job and there are some really nice people out there. I also work with a lot of really great people and we have a good network in place. We always support one another and make sure everyone's alright.”

the time there's only two of us in the store and the queue goes all the way around the shop. By the time a customer gets to the till they are already irritated. Asking for ID tends to push them over the edge and that's when the abuse starts. For example, I was abused by a woman because I wouldn't sell her, clearly, under-age daughter cigarettes.

“There isn't a stereotypical person who is abusive. It can literally be anyone. We've even had really nice customers flip because they've had a bad day and feel they can



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INSURANCE

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

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www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

Find out more www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

*Terms and Conditions for individual offers on the website.

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Plan ahead to protect your loved ones with a fully guaranteed funeral plan from £3,120*

Exclusive offer for Usdaw members
£175 off a funeral plan†
When you quote code USDAW175

Call 0800 088 4881, visit www.coop.co.uk/usdaw or visit your local Co-op Funeralcare funeral home

†£175 discount taken from Simple funeral plan at £3,295. Discount is only valid for plans purchased between 1 November 2019 and 1 November 2020. The promotional code for this advert is USDAW175. A Co-op Member will not be eligible for exclusive member prices or earn community reward when purchasing funeral plan using this promotional code. The Promoter is Funeral Services Limited (30808R) trading as Co-op Funeralcare, with registered office at 1 Angel Square, Manchester, M60 0AG. Full terms and conditions at coop.co.uk/usdaw175.

*Co-op burial plans do not include the cost of buying a grave.



It's what we do

Did you know that Usdaw members can get £175* off a pre-paid funeral plan by quoting Usdaw175?

Furthermore when you buy a funeral plan and pay in instalments over 2-25 years, you'll have the reassurance of the Co-op Commitment – something no other provider offers. That means that if you pass away after the first 12 months of paying your plan, as long as your instalments have all been paid up to date, Co-op Funeralcare will still provide all the services within your plan with no more for your family to pay. So you can take a plan out over 25 years and not worry about what would happen if you die before you finish paying. To find out more visit www.usdaw.org.uk/offers

*Terms and conditions apply, see website for details

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articles. You'll also find a tasty snack for you to enjoy with your drink and your mag.

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and fun. It's a memory to make at your own convenience, packed stylishly in a Virgin gift pack so you know you're receiving quality.*

To take advantage of this and other fantastic deals visit www.usdaw.org.uk/offers today!



*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. Beer52 - Full terms at www.beer52.com/terms. Virgin Experience Days - Discount code cannot be used against their Excluded Range. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd.

arena health

Your health and your safety at work is a vital part of Usdaw's service. For more advice visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety

Bad weather driving

Q How can I prepare for driving in winter?

Drivers should be trained in winter driving and vans should be fully serviced and prepared for winter. Tyres should be in good condition and properly inflated (changing to winter tyres which give better grip in snow and ice may help). Windscreen wipers/washers, lights and heaters/demisters should all be checked.

In rural areas it is a good idea to carry a blanket, some food, a hot drink and a snow shovel to help dig the van out of drifts. Suitable boots and winter clothing should be provided. A charged mobile phone to warn the base if you do get stuck is also a good idea.

Management should make a decision about refusing deliveries to remote locations, or suspending deliveries altogether in really bad weather.

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) gives some useful

advice for anyone who drives in winter weather www.rospa.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/better-driving/winter-tips/

Colds and Flu

Q It's that time of year when I seem to be surrounded by people who are coughing and sneezing. What can I do to stop myself from getting ill?

The most important measures for preventing colds and flu are use of disposable

tissues to trap coughs and sneezes, and frequent hand washing. Hand washing by rubbing the hands with warm soapy water for at least

20 seconds helps to get germs off the skin. It is a good idea to stay off work when your symptoms are worst to reduce the risk of spreading infection.

If you are in a vulnerable group you may be able to get a free flu vaccine to protect against seasonal influenza. But employers should be aware that some people may catch the flu even if they have been

vaccinated and will still need some time off work.

Faulty Heating

Q The heating system at our warehouse always breaks down in winter so we are always cold, what can we do?

Your employers have a duty under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 to maintain a reasonable temperature in the workplace at all times.

The Approved Code of Practice to the regulations states that 16 degrees Celsius (or 13 degrees Celsius for physically strenuous work) is the minimum requirement. Your employer also has a legal duty to maintain equipment such as heating.

If temperatures inside the warehouse are regularly at or below the minimum or if the heating regularly breaks down, raise this with your Usdaw rep. If necessary the rep can raise a collective grievance. Where the employer still fails to deal with it, the grievance procedure ensures that the Usdaw area organiser gets involved. If negotiation through the procedure does not work, the union can help get the local health and



SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO ARENA'S HEALTH EXPERTS:

The Editor, arena, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester,
M14 6LJ or email:
arena@usdaw.org.uk

safety inspector involved to enforce the law.

Winter clothing

Q I work at the back door of a large store and it's always open. The uniform provided gives no protection against the cold, wet and snow. What clothing should we have in winter?

Working in varying temperatures can be problematic. If you are always rushing in and out of the yard having the correct clothing can make a big difference. Winter clothing is Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) which should be provided when the risk requires it and not at the whim of a manager.

Several layers are best so that you can adjust the clothing depending on the work you are doing and you can easily add or remove layers when you go from cold to warm areas. In extreme weather you may need thermal socks and underwear, warm boots, fleeces, gloves, scarfs and hats. The outer layer of clothing should be waterproof if going outside. Where safety shoes or boots are provided they should have slip-resistant soles.

If you feel the clothing supplied by your employer is not suitable or sufficient then speak with your Usdaw rep.

For further information on health and safety go to www.hse.gov.uk

Lone Worker

Q Last week there was an attempted robbery when a guy threatened one of my colleagues with a hammer and smashed the door in. I am worried sick about being left on my own on nights in the store but the manager says it is legal and we are not allowed to double up. What should I do?

The short answer to that is yes it is usually legal to work alone at night in a shop, or most other places come to that. However the employer has a legal duty to make sure that you are safe at work so far as is reasonably practicable. They should do a risk assessment to make sure that any problems are identified and the risk is minimised. For example, what would happen if the lone worker slips and is injured? What precautions

are there against the risk of violence – especially if the shop sells age-restricted products such as alcohol or cigarettes? Usdaw provides a useful checklist for the risks in our Guide to Lone Working at: www.usdaw.org.uk/Loneworking.doc

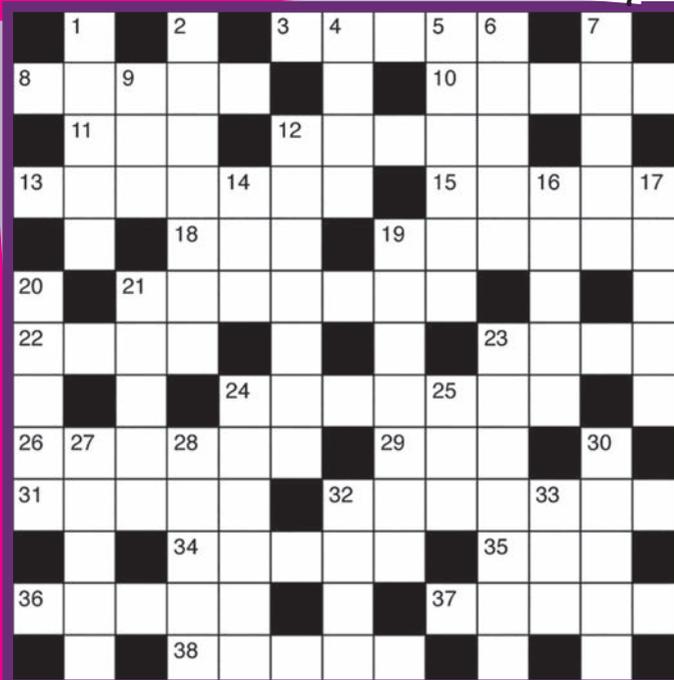
In your case your employer should be reviewing their risk assessments in view of the ordeal your friend suffered. Most of the retailers where the union is involved also have policies in place to provide extra support to the staff in the store following an incident of this kind.

Simply telling you to get on with business as usual is not an option. If there is no union rep in your store, contact the local union office and ask for your area organiser.

arena crossword

Correctly complete the grid and you
could win a £50 shopping voucher!
Closing date 18 December 2019

(Not open to Usdaw staff)



ACROSS

- 3. Roof edges (5)
- 8. Fluid made by bees (5)
- 10. Oak tree fruit (5)
- 11. Sweet roll (3)
- 12. Thick (5)
- 13. Referee (7)
- 15. Coastline opening (5)
- 18. Man's name (3)
- 19. Drowsy (6)
- 21. Woman's name (7)
- 22. Suffering (4)
- 23. Church recess (4)
- 24. Lends an ear (7)
- 26. Slanting type (6)
- 29. Shade of brown (3)

31. Italian port (5)

- 32. Replies sharply (7)
- 34. Alcoholic drink (5)
- 35. Still (3)
- 36. Book of maps (5)
- 37. Ague (5)
- 38. Citrus fruit (5)

DOWN

- 1. Hooded snake (5)
- 2. Deer meat (7)
- 4. Assert (4)
- 5. By far (6)
- 6. Play part (5)
- 7. Crawl (5)
- 9. The point or gist (3)

Win! £50

Word up!

Complete our prize crossword and you could be one of three members to win a £50 shopping voucher. The first three pulled out of the hat...win!

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

www.usdaw.org.uk/xword
Solutions available from 19 December 2019.

arena Autumn £50 winners:

**Andrew Thomas: F050
Wincanton Sherburn-in-Elmet**

**Terry Escott: A038 Bristol
West PT**

**Sandra Jeffrey: H102
West Surrey**

12. Fiendish (7)

- 14. Pitch (3)
- 16. Jumps (5)
- 17. Sorts (5)
- 19. Break (7)
- 20. Small twig (5)
- 21. Backless sofa (5)
- 23. Irritated (7)
- 24. Communicate and maintain contact (6)
- 25. Consume (3)
- 27. Tries out (5)
- 28. Provincial (5)
- 30. Complete (5)
- 32. Perform again (4)
- 33. Clergyman, abbrev. (3)

arena letters

**HAVE YOUR SAY –
SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO:**

The Editor, arena, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester,
M14 6LJ or email:
arena@usdaw.org.uk

Motivational members



Campaning outside M&S in Worcester



Pensions Awareness Day at Sainsbury's Merton, London



Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis catches up with reps in Tesco Dungannon to talk about the Save Our Shops campaign



Congratulations to Lynette MacNab (pictured right) from Tesco Stirling on 30 years membership with Usdaw



South East and South West Wales federation schools gather to learn about supporting members with cancer at work

Sign up a friend and you could win £250 of shopping vouchers!

Don't let your colleagues miss out on **Usdaw membership** – including **free legal help, representation and advice at work** and **member offers...** **sign them up now using the form opposite...**



david/via/Getty Images

TWO RECRUITERS WILL WIN SHOPPING VOUCHERS WORTH **£250** EACH IF THEY ARE THE **FIRST** TO BE PULLED OUT OF THE HAT!

USE THIS FORM TO SIGN UP A FRIEND AND ENTER THE PRIZE DRAW

Your chance to win!

You could **win £250** of shopping vouchers in this issue's prize draw. All you have to do is sign up a colleague or friend to Usdaw using the form opposite, and send it to **ARENA PRIZE DRAW**, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ.

The weekly rates (applicable from 1 July 2019) are **£2.48 for Scale A** (applicable to full-time and part-time workers) and **£1.61 for Scale C** (applicable to part-time workers only)

Four prize draws a year

You can also enter online:

www.usdaw.org.uk/recruitafriend

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the Rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. The home address I give is the address that Usdaw will use for balloting purposes.



Use **BLOCK LETTERS** and complete this form as fully as possible.

Please tick the appropriate box

Ms Miss Mrs Mr Mx Other _____ Female Male

Surname _____

Forename _____

Full Postal Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel. No. (inc. STD) _____ Mobile No. _____

Email _____

Date of Birth

D	D	M	M	Y	Y
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Age _____

Company Name _____ Occupation _____

Workplace Address _____

Postcode _____

Location Number _____ Employee No. _____

Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes No

Choose your membership rate. If you do not select a scale of contributions you will automatically be entered as Scale A in order to take advantage of the full range of benefits. For details of current membership rates and cash benefits visit www.usdaw.org.uk

The responsibility for keeping payments up-to-date rests with the member.

Please tick the appropriate box **Scale A** Full or Part-time workers **Scale C** Part-time workers only

Opt-in Notice I agree to contribute to the Union's political fund at the rate set out from time to time in the Rule Book, and I understand that this agreement constitutes an opt-in notice for the purposes of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended and the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. Every member may opt to contribute to a separate fund for the furtherance of the Union's political objects under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended) or, as appropriate, the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 by ticking this opt-in notice. A member who chooses not to contribute shall not, by that reason, be excluded from any benefits of the Union or be placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under a disability or at a disadvantage as compared with other members of the Union (except in relation to the control of the fund).

For Members Paying by Payroll

I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment. I consent to the Union sharing my personal data with my employers, or their representatives in order to process my deduction contributions. I also authorise my employers, or their representatives, to share my information with Usdaw in order to process and maintain my Union membership and where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members.

Privacy Notice

As a member of the Union, Usdaw will process your personal data as part of its legitimate activities in providing trade union services and benefits in accordance with the Union's Objects stated in the Rule Book and to perform its obligations to you under statute or contract. This involves processing of personal and sensitive personal data under the current data protection legislation. We will store your personal data only for the period necessary under law to enable us to fulfil our legal obligations. You have the right to request access to your personal data, and its rectification, erasure, restriction on processing, and portability. You have the right to withdraw consent for sharing of your personal data and to complain to the Information Commissioner. Usdaw and its Data Protection Officer may be contacted at 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.

Member's Signature _____ Date _____

Recruiter's Name _____

Recruiter's Membership No. _____

A Brief Guide to Usdaw

Udaw is the UK's fifth biggest and the fastest growing trade union with over 415,000 members. Most Usdaw members work in the retail sector, but the union also has members in other trades such as transport, distribution, food manufacturing and chemicals.

Udaw helps people at work by negotiating better pay and conditions. Being a member of the union also gives you the opportunity to have a say in issues that affect your working life. The more Usdaw members there are in the workplace, the stronger the union's voice when talking to your employer.



Udaw membership includes...

Representation in meetings

There are over 10,000 Usdaw reps in workplaces across the country. If you have a problem at work, or need advice on an issue, Usdaw reps are on hand to advise and represent you in grievance, disciplinary and sickness meetings. The union can also provide specialist advice on pensions, health and safety and legal queries.

Free accident cover

Workplaces with unions have far less accidents. With 4,000 health and safety reps, Usdaw makes sure that your safety at work is taken seriously. If you do have an accident your membership gives you free accident cover. If your claim is successful, you keep 100 per cent of your compensation. If you have an accident please contact our free claim line FirstCall Usdaw on **0800 055 6333**.

Member offers and discounts

Udaw partners with a number of organisations to give members deals and discounts on everything from cinema tickets, to home, car and travel insurance, to great discounts at high street shops and restaurants. For further information please see the member offers pages within the magazine or go to www.usdaw.org.uk/offers



Where to find information

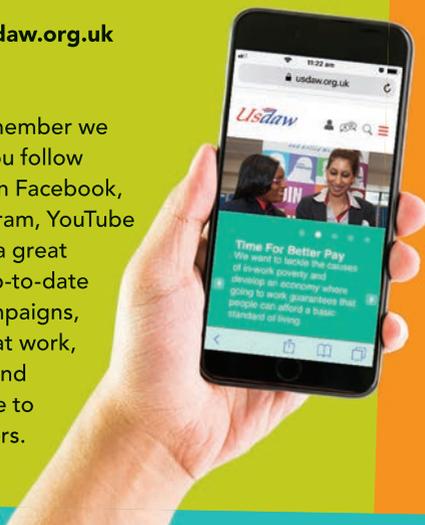
Usdaw Website and enews

For everything you need including sections on legal advice, workers' rights, health and safety, news, training opportunities, upcoming events and campaigns. You can also download informative leaflets and posters and sign up for email updates.

Visit: www.usdaw.org.uk

Social media

As an Usdaw member we recommend 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.



Branch meetings

The best way for members to get involved is to attend their branch meetings. These are regular union meetings run by reps and are a good way of finding out what is happening in your workplace, your division and the wider union.

Your branch number is printed on the wrapper of each issue of *arena* and will start with a letter A to K. To find out where and when your branch meeting is held, speak to your union rep or call your local office.

Become a rep

Usdaw is always looking for members to volunteer as reps. Becoming a rep gives members invaluable opportunities to develop personally and professionally. For further information visit www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep

Want to get more involved?

How to contact the union

Usdaw divisions and offices

Usdaw divides the UK into seven geographical divisions. There are a total of 20 Usdaw offices, including central office.

If you have a problem at work you should contact your Usdaw rep in the first instance. Contact details can be found on your union noticeboard.

If you cannot get hold of your rep call or email your local Usdaw office by using this link: www.usdaw.org.uk/contact

Update your details

You can update your contact details using this link www.usdaw.org.uk/update



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INSURING YOUR HOME



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of our customers
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[^] Research carried out by UIA (Insurance) Ltd, July 2019. ^{*} Lines are open 8.30am-8pm Mon-Fri. [†] Trustpilot rating correct as at 15 August 2019.

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