

NETWORK



SEP/OCT
2015

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw Activists

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LATEST NEWS

RESPECT WEEK

ACTIVIST IN DEPTH



Celebrating 15 years of lifelong learning

... CHANCE OF A LIFETIME ... SOCIAL MEDIA ... HEALTH AND SAFETY ...



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Comment

General secretary **John Hannett**

This year is turning out to be a momentous one for the retail sector with competition at its most intense in living memory.

The latest developments include: Tesco has announced changes to its pension, Morrisons has withdrawn from the convenience sector and sold its M Local chain to private equity. It is also planning to close 11 stores in England. Both companies have also cut back office staff, and reorganised managerial roles in recent months, although Tesco and Morrisons have increased shopfloor numbers.

Meanwhile, Sainsbury has increased pay by four per cent – the biggest rise in ten years, the Co-op will increase its staff pay by eight per cent over two years and Lidl and Ikea have committed to pay the official Living Wage.

However, while Marks and Spencers are closing nine stores discount companies are expanding. We can't ignore the rise of the discounters and we have been running a recruitment drive in both Lidl and Aldi over the summer.

This was met with hostility by both companies, but that didn't put off our teams of reps, Academy trainees and officials who did a great job in raising our profile and offering the benefits of membership to thousands of unorganised workers.

All of these changes present massive challenges to Usdaw and its reps. Our national officers have been arguing consistently and determinedly to protect our members' interests and have won significant concessions and improvements during the last few months.

But we know our members' working hours and shift patterns remain under pressure so our reps and officials are fighting constant battles to ensure that flexibility works for everyone.



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Urdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

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Shop at your-convenience

Half of households have given up the big weekly supermarket shop and are now as likely to visit their local convenience store more frequently.

Busy lifestyles and the growth and quality of convenience shopping helps explain the shift which sees shoppers buy less but more often.

The rise of internet shopping and the growth of the hard discounters is also part of the trend. Both Tesco and Sainsbury have expanded in to the sector although the Co-op has the highest number of stores. Meanwhile Morrisons looks set to exit the sector according to press speculation.



Record pay increase

Usdaw has welcomed Sainsbury's decision to increase pay by four per cent for the vast majority of its staff – the highest increase in a decade – from August 30 this year.

The company says 137,000 staff will see their pay rise from £7.08 an hour to £7.36 from October.

National officer Joanne McGuinness, who presents Usdaw's case for improvements in terms and conditions to the company on behalf of its members, said: "I'm pleased the company has listened to us as significant increases in retail pay is long overdue.

"We meet with the company every year and make a strong case for decent rewards for

staff, particularly around pay, and the new rate of £7.36 is a step in that direction."

Chancellor George Osborne announced in his July Budget a new minimum wage of £7.20 for workers aged 25 and over which will take effect in April 2016. Both Ikea and Lidl have since said they will pay more, while other retailers have warned of job losses.

Usdaw signs B&M Bargains



Workers at six B&M Bargains distribution centres are now covered by an agreement between Usdaw and the company after a lengthy campaign for recognition at the North West-based sites.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis joined divisional officer Mike Aylward and the team of reps to finalise the

details. "Our officials, reps and Academy trainees have worked hard to win this deal," said Paddy.

"We still have a lot of work to do but I'm confident with the training already delivered to the reps we can build on this success and make progress to increase membership across all six sites."

Union and Co-op agreement



Usdaw has signed a partnership agreement with East of England Co-op giving reps significantly improved facilities.

The deal is a result of lengthy negotiations and has been welcomed by divisional officer Dave McCrossen. "At a time when the Government is trying to weaken the trade union

movement this deal shows that enlightened employers can still work with unions to bring benefits to both their employees and the business.

"We are delighted with the agreement and the proactive way East of England have approached it. These are tough times but we are stronger together."



Corbyn is new leader

Veteran Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn is the Party's new leader after winning almost 60 per cent of the first preference votes under the new voting system.

The 66 year-old, an MP since 1983 for Islington North, beat fellow MPs Andy Burnham, Yvette Cooper and Liz Kendall winning 251,417 votes of the more than 422,000 votes cast.

The new deputy leader is Tom Watson, the MP for West Bromwich since 2001.

He beat MPs Stella Creasy, Caroline Flint, Angela Eagle and Ben Bradshaw after the third round of voting.

General Secretary John Hannett welcomed the two winners: "We congratulate Jeremy and Tom on their successful campaigns and look forward to working with them for a Labour victory in 2020.

"We must now build a broad based manifesto to attract support from voters across the political spectrum and Usdaw will play a full role in developing winning policies."

Labour's new top team is



pic courtesy of Sunday Mirror

(L-R) ANDY BURNHAM AND YVETTE COOPER CONGRATULATE JEREMY CORBYN WITH LIZ KENDALL (BELOW, TOM WATSON)

now: shadow chancellor John McDonnell, shadow home secretary Andy Burnham, shadow foreign secretary Hilary Benn, shadow business secretary Angela Eagle and shadow health secretary Heidi Alexander.

For more information on how you can get involved in local politics visit:

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Results in full

Leadership:

Jeremy Corbyn.....251,417 (59.5%)
Andy Burnham.....80,462 (19%)
Yvette Cooper.....71,928 (17%)
Liz Kendall.....18,857 (4.5%)

Deputy leadership:

Tom Watson.....198,962 (50.7%)
Stella Creasy.....103,746 (26.4%)
Caroline Flint.....89,538 (22.8%)

Ben Bradshaw was excluded in the first round and Angela Eagle in the second.



Diary dates

2015

- October 17&18
Retail Trades Conference
- Oct 31 & Nov 1
Transport conference
- November 7&8
National Young Workers' Weekend
- November 14-16
Black Members' Weekend

2016

- January 16
National Organising Awards
- April 24-27
Annual Delegate Meeting

Bill is vindictive attack on workers' rights

The Tory Government's plans to shackle the trade unions has attracted condemnation from across the labour and trade union movement but also from Conservative and Lib Dem MPs David Davis and Vince Cable, who described it as 'vindictive'.

TUC leader Frances O'Grady (right) said: "The Trade Union Bill is the biggest attack in 30 years, not just against trade unions, but against our best

chance of raising productivity, pay and demand. Because here is a simple truth: you can't create wealth without the workforce. And you can't spread that wealth around fairly without trade unions."

The Government wants to use agency workers to break strikes, restrict unions using social media, increase the role of the police and to reduce the unions' ability to fund political campaigns.



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Morrisons upheaval

Usdaw has pledged to protect staff at Morrisons after the chain announced it was planning to close 11 stores just days after selling its 140-strong convenience arm to a private equity firm.

The 11 stores employing around 900 staff are spread across England. The company also recently cut jobs at its head office and reorganised its store management structure.

The 140 smaller stores, which employ around 2,300 staff, were sold for £25m. Although the new owners said all staff would be kept on and 200 new jobs would be created by reopening ten stores that are currently closed.

The store closure programme was announced as the company reported a 47 per cent drop in pre-tax profits to £126m.

The company is locked into a fierce price war with its big



rivals Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury, which are all being squeezed by the hard-discounters Aldi and Lidl whose market share continues to rise.

National officer Joanne McGuinness said: "This is devastating news for the staff in the 11 stores that Morrisons intends to close.

"We will now enter into full and meaningful consultation,

where we will look closely at the company's business case.

"Our priority is to maximise employment within Morrisons, seek redeployment opportunities for members whose shop is closed and minimise compulsory redundancies.

"We will support, advise and represent our members throughout this period of uncertainty and will keep our reps fully informed."

Data theft auditor convicted



A Morrison's employee who posted details of staff's bank account details on the internet was jailed for eight years in July.

Internal auditor Andrew Skelton was convicted at Bradford Crown Court of fraud, abuse of position and disclosing personal data.

A Morrison spokesman said: "This guilty verdict and sentence helps bring closure to us and our employees who were offered identity theft protection following this crime." One report claimed the firm had incurred costs of almost £2m for dealing with the crime.

Lidl in Living Wage pay rise



Hard-discounter Lidl has announced it will increase its hourly rate in line with the Living Wage* to £8.20 (and £9.35 in London, although the pay rise will not apply in Northern Ireland) just weeks after Usdaw launched a recruitment drive in its stores.

The German-owned chain claimed this represented a 14 per cent pay rise for 9,000 of its UK workers.

This latest move exceeds the chancellor's introduction of the national living wage in his summer Budget which will see minimum rates for over 25s set at £7.20 an hour.

*The Living Wage Foundation's rate is an informal benchmark, not a legally enforceable minimum. It is calculated by academics at a rate that is estimated will give workers a basic standard of living.

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Tesco pension scheme

Tesco has decided to close its final salary (defined benefit) pension scheme in November this year and replace it with a defined contribution scheme.

Ushaw has been involved in the consultations during the last five months and won a number of important improvements to the new scheme. These include:

- Increasing the contribution from Tesco from 5 per cent to 7.5 per cent.
- Increased life cover from four to five times an individual's pay.
- Improved the pension on ill-health so if you retire and receive an ill-health pension from the existing scheme it won't be reduced for early payment.

- Protect those close to retirement by not changing the amount their pension is reduced when it is taken early – applicable to those members who retire from Tesco in the next three years.

- Pay a one-off extra contribution to recognise the closure of the final salary scheme so existing scheme members will receive an extra contribution of at least £100 up to a maximum of £500 (subject to individual circumstances).

Tesco has also said it will pay £270m, a year (for at least the next ten years) into the final salary scheme to address its current deficit.

Ushaw national officer Pauline

Foulkes said: "It's always very disappointing to see a final salary scheme close. However, we have worked hard to ensure Tesco's new pension scheme remains one of the best among its main competitors and we would urge all of our members to remain in the new scheme. Existing scheme members will be transferred automatically.

"I also want to reassure our members that any pension entitlement already built up in the final salary scheme is unaffected by the proposed changes. We expect more information to be available in October and will inform our members accordingly. They can also speak to our pension department for more information."

IN BRIEF...

Sainsbury's staff in transfer

Sainsbury's has sold its chain of 281 pharmacies to German company Celesio, owner of Lloyds Pharmacy the second largest pharmacy chain in the UK after Alliance Boots. Celesio will rebrand the stores and around 2,500 staff will transfer from Sainsbury.

M&S to close nine stores

Contrasting fortunes for Marks and Spencer who announced nine store closures affecting 430 jobs and discounter B&M which has opened 25 new stores as part of its expansion plans with more than 55 more in the pipeline.

Poundland in 99p takeover

Poundland's £55m takeover of rival 99p Stores has been given the go ahead from the Government's watchdog the Competition and Markets Authority following an initial inquiry into the deal.

Unemployment edges up

Unemployment increased by 10,000 in the three months to August 2015 to 1.82 million.

Hospital prices under fire

Both WH Smith and Marks and Spencer's have been widely criticised for charging higher prices in their hospital stores. Sandwiches, bottled water, cards, sweets and soft drinks were all found to be between 15 and 90 per cent more expensive than their high street stores.

Companies named and shamed on pay

The Government has published its 'name and shame' list of employers who failed to pay their staff the national minimum wage. Hair and beauty salons were among the worst offenders prompting the HMRC to launch an investigation into the sector.

Meanwhile, Amazon, widely criticised for its tax arrangements, has agreed a ten-year lease on a former Tesco warehouse in Weybridge, Surrey, prompting speculation that it is preparing to launch its own grocery offering in the UK.

Jobs under threat at North West call centres

More than 700 jobs in the North West are at risk after call centre firm Webhelp UK announced its intention to transfer work to South Africa and Cardiff from its Bolton and Liverpool sites.

Employees, previously employed by Littlewoods, Shop Direct and then Serco, have been left 'devastated' by the news. Divisional officer Mike Aylward said: "Our members are shocked and outraged by this decision. The staff have endured years of unrest and uncertainty and deserve much better. We will support our members during this difficult period as we fight for their jobs during the consultation process."

Celebrating 15 years of

Lifelong learning is one of the most successful Usdaw campaigns and has helped more than 100,000 members return to learning during the last 15 years.

When the Labour Government introduced the Union Learning Fund (ULF) to England in 2000, it recognised the unique role unions could play in engaging and supporting members in the workplace and offer them a 'second chance'.

The ULF has been enormously influential in helping Usdaw deliver its learning campaign. It helped Usdaw set up its national and divisional project team in 2005 and contributes essential funding to it today.

It also enabled the union and its teams of union learning reps to set up over 60 workplace learning centres and engage more than 350 retail stores in learning through its award-winning Checkout Learning Campaign.

In particular the ULF has helped Usdaw develop its network of 800 trained learning reps who work tirelessly to help members improve their skills, opportunities and life chances.

Lifelong learning is extremely important to members helping them:

- To gain skills and qualifications
- To feel more confident at work
- To get promoted
- To become more employable when faced with redeployment or redundancy.

National co-ordinator Ann Murphy said: "This campaign has made practical improvements to our members at work and at home. For



some it's meant improving their basic skills, reading to their children for the first time, getting online or learning a new language. It's broadened horizons and improved their quality of life.

Digital skills

"One of the biggest challenges facing our members today is 'digital skills'. Having adequate computer and online skills is essential in applying for new jobs or holding on to current ones.

"The introduction of the on-line benefits application process for example, or online shopping and banking means digital skills are a necessity not a luxury.

"So our learning campaign work is more important than ever and none of it would be possible without the work of our amazing learning reps.

"Ushaw was instrumental in getting statutory rights for learning reps and we are proud to have been at the vanguard of developing the learning agenda."

Betty Partridge: Tesco

Mobile union learning rep Betty Partridge has been promoting learning at her Tesco store in South Wigston, Leicestershire, and surrounding area for the last two years and has built up an excellent rapport with the workforce.

She has made a particular contribution to Usdaw's equality and diversity work, promoting the agenda and supporting staff. She has just completed a further education qualification and has been recommending these courses to staff via the educational charity the NCFE.

Betty's skills were used when her colleague Ramilla Mistry signed up to do the equality course, but found it very difficult. It was an upsetting and frustrating time for Ramilla who struggled to get into the course. Betty realised something was not quite right and offered her help and support.

"She is very proud and at first didn't want help and I understood that," said Betty. "But I persevered as I knew when I did the course it gave me an insight into the difficulties some people faced, so I suspected that something was wrong. I eventually persuaded Ramilla to talk about her problems. After further investigation we found out she was dyslexic – a common problem but often an issue many people are unaware of.

"It's not stopped Ramilla from doing the course but she has taken a break from it at present. Now she understands the condition it has helped her to start and move forward with what she wants to do."

Timeline

1998
Labour Government launches Union Learning Fund (ULF)

2000
First learning centres opened in Littlewoods Shop Direct home shopping sector



2002
Labour Government introduces statutory rights for union learning reps

2002
First mobile union learning rep appointed

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Lifelong Learning



Mick Power: Sainsbury

Mick Power is the Usdaw learning centre co-ordinator at the Sainsbury Rye Park distribution site in Hoddesdon, Hertfordshire, and during the last eight years has helped more than 100 members improve their practical maths skills.

He has also made rapid progress and is now a tutor and teaches maths by making it relevant for members to help them with DIY at home, recipes, gardening, travel, and helping their kids with homework.

"It's about making maths relevant to people," said Mick. "It's not about men in white coats writing complicated formulas on a blackboard. It's about practical skills and using maths in a way that makes sense to our members."

But despite his own enthusiasm for Maths, Mick always takes account of a member's other learning needs. "Sometimes it's best for people to concentrate on their reading and writing skills before tackling maths. In the early stages we had maths learners who couldn't really understand the materials we were using. They thought it was a maths problem but I could see it was their English skills that needed improving first."

There is still plenty of work to do on-site. "I have an agreement to make a presentation to the management team and show them what the learning centre has to offer and the potential benefits for the company. We'll see where we go from there."

Morrisons: Scotland

Lifelong learning and digital skills training were just what members in Scotland needed when Morrisons embarked on a major restructuring in its stores.

New manager positions involved taking online numeracy and literacy tests and some staff were unsure of their ability to complete the tasks so area organiser John Tonner and project worker Jill Little-Woodhouse teamed up to support members.

Jill looked at both the digital skills required and the English and maths content of the tests and helped to put together a number of short one-to-one training sessions. "We offered these to all staff and delivered 31 support sessions for those who asked for it," said Jill. "The majority, around 70 per cent of these staff were looking to practice all three aspects of the tests – verbal, numerical and online skills. We even put on night classes."

It was a huge success with nearly 90 per cent of those taking a session saying they really enjoyed it; 85 per cent learned new information with around half learning new skills. Overall 97 per cent said they felt confident about taking the tests.

"As we near the end of the current re-structuring programme, members who attended these sessions have reported to me how invaluable they found them in preparing for the tests," said John. "This brings to the fore what the union's learning agenda can do for our members."

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2003
Udaw
awarded
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ears from
ULF

2004
First National
Learning
Agreement
with
Sainsbury's
dist.



2006
15,000
learning
opportunities
delivered by
Udaw

2007
Launch of
Checkout
Learning
Campaign

2008
Checkout
Learning
campaign wins
first prize at
TUC
Communication
Awards



Mitch Pressnell

Project worker Mitch Pressnell has teamed up with the Prison Officers Association (POA) to reach out to potential learners in her Southern division.

The POA has a number of learning centres spread across the south of the country and it is keen to widen the range of people they support and work with in local communities.

“Providing sites with a 24/7 workforce is one of the many obstacles learning reps have to overcome but with the flexibility a number of learning centres and studying at home lifelong learning opportunities can still be provided,” said Mitch.

“Members would like to study to improve their English, maths and IT as well as ESOL to a higher level equivalents of GCSE or A level standards – all on line at home. This can then help those who need support with their apprenticeships or college courses or to improve themselves and give them more confidence.

“The POA provides distance learning courses and once completed results in a Level 2 qualification for the learner. Subjects can support people in their job role with customer services, team leading skills, equality and diversity or health issues like understanding diabetes, health and nutrition to helping support families dealing with dementia and understanding mental health.”

“With access to such a large and varied amount of options we can help support most of Usdaw’s campaigns, from parents and carers, legal help and freedom from fear along with lifelong learning.

“Working this way has been good for both sides, with high quality learning for my members, and the POA has broadened its links with the wider community and increased the footfall in its learning centres.”



Pam Stanton: Wales

Experienced rep Pam Stanton, and now Usdaw’s project worker in Wales, is an ideal example of how getting involved in the union and its learning agenda can turn your life around.

The former Tesco activist started her union journey in the late '90s at her Bridgend store, went through all the training courses and ended up on the union’s Academy programme – a more confident, knowledgeable and determined rep.

“My first experience of lifelong learning was through the Checkout Learning campaign which went down a storm at my store,” said Pam. “The sign language course was very popular and it was then I caught the ‘learning bug’.

“Not long after I went on the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector course which gave me the skills to deliver a mental health awareness workshop last year. I also signed up for the dementia friends training and can now deliver these sessions to our members in Wales.

“I was lucky enough to be appointed the project worker in Wales and I work closely with a great team of mobile and store-based learning reps to offer our members the benefit and opportunities lifelong learning can deliver.”

2010
50,000
learning
opportunities
delivered by
Usdaw



2010
Usdaw
Primark
member Bharti
Demachi wins
TUC national
award

2011
Usdaw
McVitie’s member
Jonathon
Waterhouse wins
TUC national
award



2012
15,000 English
& maths
courses
delivered

2013
Learning
agreement
signed with
Next Dist

Michelle Whitley: Argos

Michelle Whitley and her team at the Argos site in Widnes, Cheshire, have worked hard to deliver a thriving learning culture at their site during the last ten years.

However, when she and some of the other advisors noticed they were getting headaches, migraines and eye-strain after lengthy use of the screens Michelle decided to investigate.

Her research uncovered the little known problem of a visual-perceptual disorder variously called Meares-Irlen Syndrome or Scotopic Sensitivity. It's more simply known as Visual Stress.

"Once I found this out, I contacted The Dyslexia Shop and purchased a Visual Stress Test Kit," said Michelle. "The test uses different coloured overlays that help to diffuse the whiteness from the page or screen and reduce distortion of words. It allows people to read more quickly without the ill health results. Its aim is to help users be more productive because they can read faster and without stress for longer."

Helena Dougherty, one of the first people to take the test, suffered from chronic and progressive migraines. Michelle used various combinations of overlays until they found the right mix for Helena. "It really worked for me," said Helena. "I was amazed by the difference made between using the various overlays and reading without one."

The learning team and the company co-operated to purchase the equipment and further testing among staff is on-going.

"The cost to the company is minor but the benefit to both the advisor and the company is considerable," added Michelle. "The Learning Centre is now improving people's health as well as their skills and knowledge."

Tesco Bank: Newcastle

A hard-working team of learning reps have delivered a state-of-the-art learning centre to improve the skills and lives of members at the Tesco Bank site in Newcastle.

Garry Evans, Sarah Woodhouse, Diane Mion and Becky Matues have worked in partnership with the company and site manager Stuart Overend to provide a fully-equipped centre providing courses in IT, maths, English and other distance learning options.

"The centre called – The Learning Hub – provides a range of opportunities for members," said Sarah. "It's ideally situated, has a bank of computers and is already providing training and development opportunities across the site."

Stuart Overend added: "The Hub is a credit to the reps' team, demonstrating what can be achieved by the union and company working in partnership. It is a great place for colleagues to come along and gain additional skills."

Learning reps Rikki Allen and Kirsteen Cannon from the Glasgow site also came down to support their North Eastern colleagues as did North Eastern deputy divisional officer Cathy Godfrey. "The learning Hub looks fantastic and is a great way to broaden the offer to our members at Newcastle," she said.

"It was also great to have the reps here from Scotland as it is important to establish the network so they can support one another, they can see what has been achieved and look to replicate that for our Scottish members. A great job by the reps on site."

(ULR) Union Learning Rep – a lay rep who promotes learning in his/her store or site. Training is provided by Usdaw.

(MULR) Mobile Union Learning Rep – a lay rep who promotes learning across a number of sites and is seconded to the union for a fixed period.

Project workers – Employed by Usdaw to provide learning opportunities for members in the divisions and to support ULRs and MULRs. There is at least one in each of the union's seven divisions.

Checkout Learning (COL) campaign – courses aimed specifically at retail members.



To find out what's happening in your area contact your nearest project worker using the details below

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janine.cokayne@usdaw.org.uk **Wales** Pam Stanton: pam.stanton@usdaw.org.uk **Northern Ireland** Lorna Young: lornayoung68@hotmail.co.uk

Opportunities to study open doors and minds

Every year Usdaw offers activists who want to increase their knowledge the chance to study at one of five adult residential colleges that specialise in educating workers with few if any formal qualifications.

Students can choose to study a wide range of subjects from economics, industrial relations, politics, history, sociology, law and others as part of a further education qualification, lasting either 12 months full-time or 18 months part-time, which then allows the students to carry on studying towards a degree or return to the world of work.

Many former union and labour activists have passed through the colleges and have gone on to a variety of jobs in the trade union movement, or in education, the media or the legal profession.

Any member aged 20 or over can apply and should liaise with the union's education department prior to applying for a place.

Thomas Hemmings

Udaw's development, training and scholarship programme has helped Tesco's Thomas Hemmings think about his future and a new career.

The 22 year-old rep enrolled on a part-time degree course at Ruskin College in September thanks to the union's 'Chance of a Lifetime' scholarship scheme.

"The union's scholarship award will go a long way to providing some vital financial assistance"

"I'll be studying for a BA Hons degree in International Labour and Trade Union Studies," said Thomas who lives and works in Sandhurst, North Hampshire.

"It's a four and a half year part-time block residential undergraduate course which includes six weekends

attendance at the college during term time, which means I can continue working in my store.

"I was delighted when I found out I'd been selected for this year's chance of a lifetime award as it was the second time I'd applied.

"I found out about it from chatting to my divisional training officer Terry Louder when I was on the reps' training course.

"I then went on to complete a part-time diploma in Employment Law at Southampton College before applying to study for my degree.

"The union's scholarship award will go a long way to providing some vital financial assistance to help me complete the course and graduate with a recognised degree which I'm hoping will help me with a career in the trade union movement or the International Labour Organisation.

Philipine Akaba

Sainsbury's night shift worker Philipine Akaba joined Thomas at Ruskin College as the union's second recipient of this year's Chance of a Lifetime scholarship award.

She is also studying towards a BA Hons degree in International Labour and Trade Union Studies as part of the four and a half year part-time block residential undergraduate course.

"I'm studying to improve my knowledge of the trade union movement because I would like to get more involved with Usdaw and help develop other reps," said the 53 year-old from South West London.

"I enjoy learning and pushing myself, so being active in the union has given me the perfect platform to build on this.

"I've got more and more involved ever since I became a rep four years ago. I'm also a health and safety rep and union learning rep and a member of my divisional equalities forum.

"I've learned so much from attending all the training courses as well as summer school and ADM.

"My confidence has grown too and at times I've surprised myself.

"I'm very pleased and fortunate to have received the award from Usdaw. I'll continue to work nights at my store and try to study during the day as well as joining my fellow students at the residential weekends at Ruskin, which I'm really looking forward to.

"I hope this course will give me the knowledge to contribute more to Usdaw for many years to come."

Jenny Chilton

Morrisons café worker Jenny Chilton from Cannock in Staffordshire is in her second year of her degree at Ruskin. She won the Chance of a Lifetime Scholarship Award in 2013.

"I've been a union rep for ten years and had a lot of opportunities and encouragement to develop," said the 55 year-old.

"The support from tutors and other students is second to none"

"The union's training and my experiences as an activist gave me the confidence to think about further education.

"This, coupled with the fact that my four children were all grown up with children of their own, told me the time was right for me to do something for me.

"I haven't looked back. I travel down to Oxford every six weeks to start my class and stay over until we finish on the Sunday.

"From the very first moment I arrived at Ruskin I knew I wanted to stay. I just love being in a learning environment.

"Being in a place from which people before you have gone on to do extraordinary things is very inspiring to say the least.

"The support from tutors and other students is second to none and you're never afraid to ask for help if you need it. It's both challenging and very rewarding.

"I'm really grateful to the union for opening my mind and for helping me to believe in myself."



www.usdaw.org.uk/training



training@usdawunion.org.uk



#Udaw Training



THOMAS HEMMINGS



PHILIPINE AKABA



JENNY CHILTON

Life-changing experience...

Marie Hughes, South Wales and Western division, 1996 Ruskin College Oxford.

“It really changed my life. I was a single mum with a young daughter when I went to Ruskin. In 2001 I graduated from Bath University with a degree in Politics and Economics and I’m now the South West TUC regional education officer.”

Former CRS warehouseman Kevin Hall from North Eastern division, 1997 Northern College Barnsley.

“I was keen to get more involved with the union. I did the diploma course, the whole thing was fantastic from start to finish and I caught up with a lot of things I should have done at school. It was a great experience and the help from Usdaw was first-class.”

Available at the following colleges...

Coleg Harlech, Wales
harlech.ac.uk

Newbattle Abbey College, Scotland
newbattleabbeycollege.ac.uk

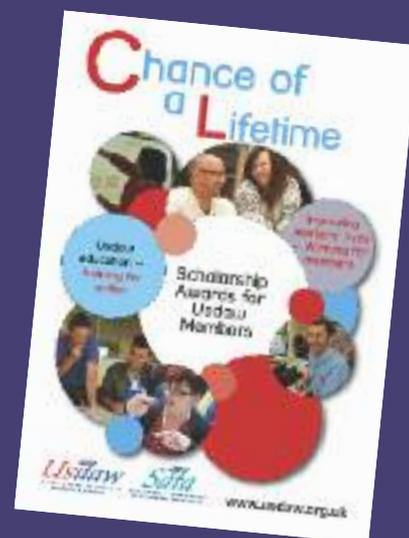
Ruskin College, Oxford
www.ruskin.ac.uk

Hillcroft College, Surrey (women Only)
www.hillcroft.ac.uk

Northern College, Barnsley
www.northern.ac.uk

More information...

The Chance of a Lifetime leaflet has more information and explains the financial help available from the scholarship award. It also gives details on the various courses on offer. You can view and download it at: www.usdaw.org.uk/chanceofalifetime



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Protecting workers from violence and abuse

Respect Week 2015 – 9 - 13 November



“ Usdaw’s Freedom From Fear Campaign seeks to prevent violence, threats and abuse against workers. This year we are organising a Respect for Shopworkers Week to highlight these important

issues and also, following serious concerns raised by members last year, the impact of the Black Friday sales on our members. Respect for Shopworkers Week continues to be a success because of the time and effort put in by reps. It’s a great opportunity to increase Usdaw’s visibility in the workplace, talk to colleagues and recruit new members. Your involvement can help make the campaign a success.

”

General secretary John Hannett

Abuse is NOT part of the job

Did you know...

- Every day more than 300 shopworkers are assaulted simply for doing their jobs.
- There were more than 55,000 incidents of verbal threats and physical abuse last year.

What Usdaw wants...

- To protect all workers from violence, threats and abuse.
- For all incidents to be reported to the police so action can be taken.
- A new law to protect people who serve the public and are assaulted while carrying out their job.
- We need to raise public awareness that this is a real issue to be addressed.



YOU CAN HELP TO SPREAD THE MESSAGE. FIND OUT HOW ON PAGE 18.



LIKE THE FACEBOOK PAGE AT WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/USDWFFF FOR ALL THE LATEST CAMPAIGN NEWS

WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FFF

Please display this poster on your Union noticeboard

#Respect15



**abuse is not
part of the job**
stand up for workers

Did you know that another showworker is attacked or

verbally abused every minute of the working day?

Source: British Retail Consortium Crime Survey

Please ask your rep for a postcard to send to politicians, calling on them to 'Stand Up for Shopworkers' and lobby the Government for support.

Did you know that every day more than 300 shopworkers are assaulted simply for doing their jobs?

Usdaw believes this situation is unacceptable. People who provide a service to the public deserve to be able to go about their jobs without the fear of abuse and violence.



Scan here**

to view the latest news and resources from our Freedom From Fear Campaign.



www.usdaw.org.uk/fff

**to scan the code, download a QR reader app from your app store. A charge may be applied by your network provider.



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How You Can Get Involved

🌟 ORGANISE A RESPECT WEEK 'LITE'

We've created a toolkit to help you promote the Freedom From Fear Campaign in your workplace and it can all be done in less than one hour.

More at: www.usdaw.org.uk/order

🌟 ORGANISE A STALL IN OR NEAR YOUR WORKPLACE

Setting up a stall is an excellent way of engaging the public in the campaign. Make sure you have all the materials you need. If you haven't done a stall before contact your area organiser or local office for advice on **0845 60 60 640**.

🌟 INVITE YOUR LOCAL LABOUR POLITICIAN TO JOIN YOUR CAMPAIGN

Inviting a local Labour politician helps to make the strongest case possible that the current situation is unacceptable and that shopworkers need extra protection. It also helps to strengthen the link between Usdaw and the Labour Party and gives you a chance to make sure that they understand the issues facing Usdaw members. To find out who your MP, MSPs and AMs are visit: www.writetothem.com and enter your postcode.

🌟 SURVEYS AND POSTCARDS

It is important to get the public to sign postcards telling their elected representative to do more to protect shopworkers. We also need workers to fill out the survey so we can gather evidence to be able to demonstrate the scale of the problem that Usdaw members face at work.



🌍 ONLINE CAMPAIGN

USDAW WEBSITE – All of the Respect Week materials are available on the Usdaw website at: www.usdaw.org.uk/fff

FACEBOOK – We want you to get involved by sharing Usdaw's Facebook posts and posting your own photos of your stalls and events. Make sure you 'Like' the page now at: www.facebook.com/usdawfff and encourage your members to do the same.

TWITTER – Share your support for Freedom From Fear and tweet photos and updates from your campaign. Just remember to include **@UsdawUnion** and the hashtag **#Respect15**

ORDER MATERIALS

All of the Respect Week materials and merchandise for your campaign can be ordered online at: www.usdaw.org.uk/order
The deadline for orders is **Friday 9 October**.



In the spotlight Eileen Allardyce



Scottish division's Eileen Allardyce talks to Network about her experiences as a rep...

I started to get active within Usdaw because...

I wanted to make a difference and give people a voice. I'm a loud and out there kind of person so I like to be the voice for the people who can't speak up for themselves.

The best thing... about being active is the campaigning, the freedom to voice issues and help people. I'm proud to be making a difference no matter how small it may be. Also meeting new people, gaining experience and knowledge outside of and within the company.

The downside... is sometimes having to deal with awkward managers and trying to manage time between work and union business. Also when members leave the union without consulting me or another rep to discuss why.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I recently went on a Morrisons get-together which was great and I met a lot of other reps who shared their experience and advice with me. This was useful information to take back to my own workplace.

Have you changed as a person since becoming a rep?

I'm certainly more confident and that's down to the help I've had and the resources available to me. Problem-solving is easier and in turn I'm enthusiastic about making things happen.

What law would you introduce if you were prime minister?

Free pet insurance for everyone as too many owners are abandoning pets or getting them put down because they can't afford the bills.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

Immigration issues and the plight of the people fleeing war-torn countries and the shootings in America of young black men by the police.

What's surprised you most about being an Usdaw rep?

The variety of issues that people come to you with that you didn't realise even existed before.

What would be your advice to an Usdaw member thinking about becoming a rep?

Do it! You won't regret it. It's one of the best experiences you will have. You'll gain lots of knowledge and start friendships that will last a lifetime.

What one change would you make to Usdaw to improve it?

More frequent training courses and more active union interaction within work, such as officials coming to visit us, especially when we struggle to get off our departments.

Looking back on your life is there anything you would change if you had the chance?

I wouldn't have hidden my sexuality for as long as I did and I would've been more open about who I am.

Any hobbies outside of work?

I like to play football and anything that involves sports really. I do charity work for the Multiple Sclerosis Society as it's an organisation close to my heart.

What's next for you?

I'm hoping to do some stand-down work in the future or lifelong learning but we shall see what happens.

We are looking for the next volunteer for our activist in-depth series, email Network to tell your story



Fact file & trivia

EMPLOYER *Morrisons*

OCCUPATION *Manager*

LIVES *Edinburgh*

AGE **23**

JOINED USDAW: **2010**
USDW ACTIVIST SINCE: **2014**

I SPEND MY SPARE TIME: *Watching sports, keeping up with the news and doing charity work.*

THE LAST FILM I SAW WAS... *Paper Towns, it's a must-see!*

MY FAVOURITE...

TV... *Grey's Anatomy*

MUSIC... *Paramore*

BOOK... *The Hunger Games Series*

THE BEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE SO FAR...

Meeting my girlfriend of five years.



Latest appointments



Jason Stevens



Linda Grant



Malinder Makh

Jason Stevens

Jason Stevens, 36, a former Tesco rep from Tetbury in Gloucestershire is based at the Cardiff office, South Wales and Western division.

"I'm delighted to have joined the team," said Jason. "It's been a steady progression since I became a rep five years ago. It's a role I enjoyed from day one and I couldn't wait to get more involved."

Jason was elected a rep and health and safety rep in 2010. A year later he was seconded to Academy1 and then Academy2 the following year and he was also branch chair and completed summer school1 and then summer school2 in 2012.

During this time he also completed a diploma in employment law with the TUC. And in 2014 he was joint winner of Usdaw's national individual organising award.

"It's been a long journey but finally I made it. I've gained a lot of valuable experience.

"Now I'm looking forward to supporting and working with my own teams of reps on my own patch and ensuring membership in the division grows."

Linda Grant

It's been a similar journey for 33 year-old Linda 'Li' Grant, a former Sainsbury's rep from Newton Abbot in Devon, who is based at the Plymouth office, South Wales and Western division.

Li was elected as a shop steward and health and safety rep six years ago.

In 2012 she spent time out on stand-down and in the same year was a first-time speaker and delegate at the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM).

In 2014 she was seconded to Academy1 and was elected branch chair earlier this year.

"I was ecstatic when I found out my application for an area organiser had been successful," said Li.

"I couldn't wait to get stuck in to my new role and face the many challenges ahead.

"I'm especially looking forward to getting to know and supporting the reps in my area.

"I aim to help them to achieve their goals in the same way I was encouraged and supported by many of our officials in the division. I'm looking forward to it."

Malinder Makh

Completing the trio is 29 year-old former Tesco rep, Malinder 'Sunny' Makh, who is based at the London office in Eastern division.

"It's been fast forward all the way since becoming a shop steward three years ago," said Sunny.

Sunny was elected shop steward in 2012 and started to increase membership almost immediately.

In 2014 he took on the role of health and safety rep and was also seconded to Academy1 and then Academy2 the following year. He has also completed many periods of stand-down and attended weekend and federation schools as well as representing his branch as a delegate at ADM.

"It would be an understatement to say I like a challenge. But in life and work there are many challenges and I feel very lucky to have both.

"Thanks to the help and support I've had, I've settled into my new role really well.

"I'm looking forward to helping and supporting our reps so that they too can go on and encourage their colleagues to join the union and get more involved."



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Zero hours contracts on the rise again

Around 744,000 people are employed on zero-hours contracts up from 624,000 for the same period last year, recent figures have shown.

Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) shows there has been a six per cent rise in the use of

zero-hours contracts by UK businesses in 12 months.

The ONS also said businesses used 1.5 million zero-hours contracts to employ staff in January this year, compared with 1.4 million in January 2014.

Of those working on zero-hours

contracts, 54 per cent were women, while 34 per cent were aged 16 to 24 and six per cent aged 65 and over. A further 20 per cent of people on zero-hours contracts were in full-time education. Fast food firms, pub chain Wetherspoons and Sports Direct use these contracts extensively.

Breastfeeding at work

Returning to work after maternity leave is often a difficult time for many women – it can be the first time they will have been separated from their baby for long periods of time, writes equality officer Jo Bird.

Whether or not a woman decides to continue to breastfeed or express milk after returning to work will depend on several factors including the mother's:

- Personal choice
- Hours of work
- Type of job
- Attitude of colleagues
- Attitude of manager

Research shows that not only are there real benefits for employers but that accommodating breastfeeding at work is simple, inexpensive and time limited. Despite this, breastfeeding mothers in the UK do not have a statutory right to paid time off to breastfeed or express milk. However, new mothers do have other important rights under health and safety and sex discrimination law.

Facilities

An employer is obliged by law to provide 'suitable facilities' to enable a breastfeeding mother to



rest under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This room could be used to enable a woman to breastfeed or express. The Health and Safety Executive recommends provision of washing facilities and a clean, secure fridge to store milk. Somewhere suitable does not mean the women's toilets.

Risk assessments

As long as a woman is breastfeeding her baby, her employer must consider whether her working conditions put her or her baby's health at risk. This is called a risk assessment. In practice this means where a new mother is unable to breastfeed or express milk because of her working conditions then her

health or her baby's might be put at risk.

Where a risk is identified then an employer must take steps to remove it or reduce it to a safe level. In practice this is likely to mean making temporary adjustments to working conditions or hours of work such as allowing additional or longer breaks, a shorter working day or changing her start and finish times.

ACAS guidance gives the following advice to employers when asked to consider additional breaks for breastfeeding:

- Employers should consider any short break from work reasonably and objectively against the likely impact it might have on the business.

■ Employers should be careful not to discriminate against breastfeeding employees.

If employers are unable to grant additional breaks, they could consider slightly extending normal breaks for the employee such as a mid-morning coffee break or leaving earlier in the day to minimise any disruption to the business.

Harassment and/or less favourable treatment

Women are also protected against sexual harassment which includes negative treatment or offensive teasing or remarks on the grounds of breastfeeding.

If an employer has a working practice which puts breastfeeding women at a disadvantage and they are not able to justify it then this might amount to indirect discrimination.

If you are a rep supporting a woman who intends to breastfeed or express milk on her return to work you might want to:

- Check whether your employer has a policy on breastfeeding or whether the maternity leave policy refers to accommodating breastfeeding.
- Encourage her to discuss this with her manager before her return to work.

An older workforce deserves respect too – says TUC

It's clear the workforce is getting older and workers, by choice or necessity, are working longer with 1.2 million workers over 50 in retail alone, says a recent report.

The TUC is currently taking part in a European-funded research project called 'Workage'. The three-year project is testing the theory that the engagement and retention of employees aged 50-plus will be improved by enhancing the employee's voice and empowering workplace practices for everyone.

There is long-established evidence that health, job satisfaction and engagement are

improved when employees are empowered and respected at work. Workage suggests that these factors also influence the retirement decisions of older workers.

The TUC has recognised the diversity within the older workforce – those that choose to delay retirement; those that have to work longer for financial reasons and others who want to continue working but can't for health reasons.

Workage is concerned with four areas of workplace practice – organisation, structures and systems, learning and reflection, and worker engagement. Although only currently half way through the project, benefits are already being identified:

- Front line workers now participate in monthly meetings with management.
- Multi-department team meetings taking place monthly improving participation and removing duplication.
- The introduction of greater participation of workers at all levels is resulting in improved morale and a sense of wellbeing.

It is also designed to develop workplace policy/practice solutions that can inform government policy on older workers and the workplace.

For detailed information about the project visit www.workage.eu or contact Roger Jeary on: rogerjeary@btinternet.com

Academy hits the campaign trail...

Reps make sure their patch is covered when it comes to campaign days – Usdaw isn't called the campaigning union for nothing!

Academy trainees boost membership

Morrisons **Kim Bowler** has taken multi-tasking to a new level since she took on the role of rep two years ago at the Elland store in Leeds.

The 53 year-old is also the store health and safety rep, union learning rep and has just completed six months with Academy1.

"I was looking forward to the challenge of the Academy and I wasn't disappointed. It was everything I thought it would be and more," said Kim.

"It tests your abilities but that's what you need, there are highs and lows but the feeling of achievement at the end of your six months is second to none.

"My patch covered a number of towns in North Yorkshire including Bradford, Skipton, Keighley, Ingleton and High Bentham.

"Having responsibility for both retail and distribution stretched my abilities and posed different problems.

"I had Morrisons stores as well as the M Locals, large Tesco and Express stores, Co-op, Sainsbury's, Argos, Primark, Poundland and the enormous Marks and Spencer distribution site in Bradford.

"I worked with new reps, established reps, stand-down reps and liaised with managers and personnel. It would be an understatement to say I surprised myself.

"And I was lucky enough to work with experienced reps like **Mandy Naylor** a graduate of both Academy1 and 2. I learned a lot from her.

"We ran a Legal Plus Day at the Morrisons store in Skipton, the free will service was very popular and one member spoke to the solicitor about updating her existing will.

"I'm keener than ever to get more

involved and I'm hoping to get some time out on stand-down and also apply for Academy2."

Legal Plus day at Sainsbury's, Rhyl

Reps at the Sainsbury's store in Rhyl, North Wales are hard at work planning their next Legal Plus Day after the success of their first event in June.

"Staff were really impressed with the legal service and all it offers members and their families," said store rep **Pat Dawson**, who is one of a team of five reps who have more than 39 years of union experience between them.

Debbie Pike and **John Kenny** are the other day reps and night reps **Teri Charnley** and **Shane Davies** complete the team. **Helena Roberts** also sits on the division's equalities committee.

"We set up in the staff canteen so we could catch people on their breaks throughout the day.

"And we had a private room available where members could make an appointment to speak to a union panel solicitor.

"It couldn't have gone any better as we were kept very busy all day, which is exactly what we wanted."

Academy2 organiser **Diane Howard** who helped the reps coordinate the day said: "With membership standing at just over 62 per cent the team have worked really hard to make sure it keeps moving in the right direction.

"I'm delighted to be involved with the Academy programme again working on a variety of projects across my division.

"And from my own experience both with Academy1 and 2, union events, like a Legal Plus Day, held in the workplace is the way to go as people can see for themselves the full benefits of union membership."

Recruitment at DHL, Bridgewater

Warehouse operative **Daniel Bell** has reaped the benefits of the union's training courses which have turned



LEGAL PLUS DAY AT SAINSBURY'S RHYL



MANDY NAYLOR AND KIM BOWLER (CENTRE) TESCO ELLAND, LEEDS

him into a positive, confident rep.

"Getting involved as a rep and going through the training courses has shown me that I'm capable of much more than I thought I was," said Daniel, 29, who has been a rep at the DHL Distribution site in Bridgwater in Somerset for 18 months.

"I became a rep because I knew it would take me out of my comfort zone and I'd better myself and improve my education.

"I'm keen to learn and I've learned a lot from every union activity I've been on.

"Most of all, I'm now more confident in my own ability and in knowing that I have the full support and backup from the rest of the team of reps and also the union.

"I'm one of a team of nine reps, between us we cover every shift



View the Recruitment and Organising gallery on the [UsdawUnion flickr page](#)



DANIEL BELL
DHL BRIDGEWATER



KAREN ALLISON
TESCO GAYWOOD, KINGS LYNN

including the night shift.

"We're a very supportive team and work well together. Most issues are resolved quickly and we have regular meetings.

"We worked really well together during Membership Week in April and it was great for me to actively get involved, again it was another confidence-booster.

"I'm also going to do some stand-down over the next few months, it's daunting but I know it's what I need.

"Obviously being a rep has its ups and downs but generally we get the respect of colleagues and managers alike.

"I also think my role as a rep will help my job prospects too.

"And an extra bonus is I'll feel more confident and relaxed about helping my daughter with her homework in the future.

Campaign days at Tesco, Kings Lynn

After six months' secondment with Academy1 **Karen Allison** has returned to her workplace a more confident and experienced rep.

"It's been a very fulfilling experience. I've enjoyed every minute and I'm looking forward to the opportunity to work with the union again," said 41 year-old Karen who is a Tesco team support leader at the Fakenham store in Norfolk.

"Throughout the six months I worked on a variety of projects helping and assisting reps to run campaigns and organise their own workplaces.

"In June I worked with reps **Nick Cheatle** and **Emma Smith** on a Parents and Carers Spotlight day at the Tesco Gaywood store in Kings Lynn.

"Nick and fellow rep **Katrina Speck** have worked hard over the last three years to build membership up to just under 60 per cent at the Peterborough store.

"**Emma Smith** works for Argos in Fakenham. She'd only been a rep for a couple of months when she came out on stand-down with me.

"Both Nick and Emma were totally committed to helping to organise and run the campaign and they worked extremely hard on the day to inform members of the help and support available.

Nick said: "It's such a practical campaign, every worker can relate to it.

"The Spotlight Day certainly made people think about the union and its benefits in a different light. It was a real success."



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...and Scottish reps show how it's done

Communication skills are key to signing up members and Scottish reps have it in abundance as Network has been finding out...

Aldi campaign arrives in Stirling

Academy1 trainees **Chris Polonis** and **Claire McKee** were thrown in at the deep end as they joined officials from the Scottish division on a special recruitment drive at the Aldi Stirling store in July.

"The store manager asked us to leave and then phoned the police who actually turned up," said Chris, who works for Tesco in Greenock.

"We have a national recruitment campaign going on in Aldi and Lidl at the moment so we'd heard that managers have been told not to let us into the store and to phone the police if a team from Usdaw turned up to try and speak to staff.

"We managed to hand out leaflets and carrier bags and speak to a lot of customers and some staff who thought it was ridiculous that Aldi workers were discouraged from joining a union.

"I know Claire was just as pleased as I was to have our officials **Stewart Forrest** and **Lorraine Barr** close at hand, their experience dealing with this kind of situation was invaluable.

"The Academy has certainly tested me and after six months I'm a better person for it, more confident and able to deal with all kinds of things.

"Good recruitment skills work, whether it be a Tesco convenience store or a Gregg's in Glasgow city centre, with a few tweaks you can apply your technique to a variety of situations.

"I've enjoyed getting to know the management and working with staff encouraging them to become shop stewards especially in the Tesco Express stores as there are a few vacancies for reps.

"It's been a fantastic experience and I'm enjoying being back in my store and passing on what I've learned to my fellow reps.

Active reps at Tesco Extra, Corstorphine

Membership at the Tesco Extra store in Corstorphine in Edinburgh was given a boost after a visit from an experienced team of reps during Membership Week in April.

Gerry Drummond was joined by fellow store reps **Karen Brown** and **Rafal Kowalski** and stand-down reps **Sheila Wilson** from the Hermiston store and **Keith Starkey** from nearby Colinton store.

Divisional officer **Lawrence Wason** and area organiser **Rab Donnelly** were also on hand to offer advice and support.

"Union events like this one show the benefit of a well organised and targeted in-store recruitment campaign," said Gerry.

"We have a full team of reps and have continually worked hard to build up membership. As this event went so well and was really well received by staff we're hoping to hold more union events in-store in the future

"It was also good to work with reps on stand-down from other stores. Everyone learns from each other.

"Staff were keen to ask about the union and take away the leaflets, we even had some who signed up on the day.

"People are still coming to me after the event to find out more information so it not only highlighted the union but also raised my profile as their store rep.

"I was lucky enough to be selected for Academy1 and I joined my fellow organisers for my first training session a couple of weeks after this event.

"I'm hoping my experience with Academy1 will help me to be a better rep in my own store."

Legal Plus Day at Tesco, Kilmarnock

Tesco general assistant **Jonathan McCartney** has returned to his store in Port Glasgow after completing six months with the union's Academy1 and said it's one of the best things he's ever done.

The 32 year-old has been a rep for



CHRIS POLONIS AND CLAIRE MCKEE RECRUITING AT ALDI STIRLING



GERRY DRUMMOND TESCO EXTRA CORSTORPHINE

six years and membership at his own store is just over 83 per cent.

"This is down to the hard work of our team of reps," said Jonathan.

"There are ten of us in all and we all have our role to play.

"Before the Academy I'd done stand-down and attended divisional conferences as well as the ADM where I spoke from the rostrum this year. As a result I felt confident enough to apply for the Academy.

"It can be tough at times but when you make even the slightest bit of progress in a workplace or with the reps you are working with, this



View the Recruitment and Organising gallery on the UsdawUnion flickr page



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JONATHAN McCARTNEY
LEGAL PLUS DAY AT TESCO KILMARNOCK

makes it all worthwhile.

“My patch covered workplaces in and around the Ayrshire area.

“In July I was involved with the reps at the Tesco Kilmarnock 2 store and helped them to organise a Legal Plus Day in their store.

“I enjoyed working with the reps and the feedback from staff was good and encouraging too which was very positive for the union.

“There’s a bit of work still to be done recruitment-wise in the store and I’m looking forward to working with the reps on this in the near future.”

In numbers...

Membership for week ended:
12 September 2015

| | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| South Wales & Western | 52,158 |
| Eastern | 67,228 |
| Midlands | 57,711 |
| North Eastern | 61,018 |
| Scottish | 46,653 |
| Southern | 62,392 |
| North West | 95,796 |
| Total: | 442,956 |



PARENTS AND CARERS SPOTLIGHT DAY
MORRISONS SWINTON, MANCHESTER, JUNE 2015

Bev Jamieson, Sainsbury's, Heaton Park, Manchester

Six months with Academy1 put **Bev Jamieson's** skills to the test and the 40 year-old Sainsbury's team leader came through it with flying colours.

Now she is looking forward to taking on more challenges at the Heaton Park store in Manchester.

“I can't believe how much I enjoyed it,” said Bev.

“I'm a different person now. I'm really proud of what I achieved with Academy1 because it took me out of my comfort zone.

“The Academy has been one of the best training grounds ever. I've worked with like-minded people who share the same goals.

“And I've had to communicate with all sorts of people from store reps to personnel managers.

“I've also had a lot of help and support from officials in my division.

“I can't thank them enough for helping me progress and further my ambitions with the union.”

Bev's own store is a well-organised, high membership store. At 85 per cent, it boasts one of the highest memberships of any Sainsbury's store in the UK. And as a result Bev won the North West nomination for Individual Recruitment Award and represented her division at the national event in Manchester last year.

“We have a team of four reps and we work very hard to regularly follow up with non-members and encourage them to look at the positive reasons for joining.

“Since I became a union rep two years ago I was keen to get more involved so I signed up as a political activist a year later and a union learning rep last year. I also did some stand-down.”

Let's get digital: Social Media at work – a guide

Over the past ten years social media has become a hugely popular method of communication for people of all ages.

Users of Facebook and Twitter are posting and tweeting on a daily basis from their phones, tablets and desktop computers to keep in touch with friends, share their thoughts and be the first to hear the latest news.

Social media can also be a great way for reps to help raise the profile of the union, organise events in the workplace and communicate with other members.

Getting Started

If you're not signed up to any social media websites and want to get involved then a good way to get started is to speak to your friends and colleagues and find out which social media websites they use. They can help to sign you up and set you on your way. Most social media websites make it easy for you to sign up with a step-by-step guide to help get you started. Visit the website of your chosen social network to sign up.

Facebook – the basics

Users of Facebook all have their own profile page where they can post a picture and details about themselves.

You can take anything you've seen on the internet and share it with your friends through your Facebook profile page.

If your settings allow, your friends on Facebook can comment on the things you post to your profile and you can reply to their comments. You, in turn, can comment on anything your friends post to their own profile pages.

Twitter – the basics

Twitter works on the principle of 'Followers'. When you choose to follow another Twitter user, that user's tweets appear on your own

Twitter page for you to see.

By choosing to follow people, companies and organisations that you're interested in you're creating your own customised newsfeed on your Twitter page.

As well as posting your own tweets you can comment on, 'favourite' and share the posts of the users you follow which will bring them to the attention of your own followers.

Social media for reps

Organising a campaign day

Facebook allows you to set up event pages and invite your friends to join.

You could post details about the campaign and ask your friends to share the page with their friends to spread the word. On your campaign day you could post pictures and encourage others to do the same.

You can also use Twitter to tweet pictures from your campaign day to your followers or tweet them to @UsdawUnion.

Recruiting new members

Posting and tweeting about the benefits of being a member of Usdaw is a great way to promote the union.

Encourage your friends to share your tweets, posts and photos from Usdaw events and get the message out there. The more a post is shared means more people will see it.

Communicating

Social media is a great tool for keeping in touch with friends, colleagues and fellow reps. It's also a good agent for group conversations. You can publically post about anything you want and start a conversation.

You can also have private one-to-one and group conversations on Twitter and Facebook to keep things confidential, just make sure they're Direct Messages (Twitter) or Private Messages (Facebook).



CAROLINE WILLIAMSON



GRAHAM NEWPORT



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Did you know:

Following @UsdawUnion on Twitter is a great way to stay up to date with the news from your union.

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear Facebook campaign page aims to share news and information from the campaign on a regular basis. Visit:

www.facebook.com/usdawfff to 'Like' the page and share its content with your friends to spread the message that 'abuse is not part of the job!'

Digital progress for reps

Activists Caroline Williamson and Graham Newport are both big fans of social media and use Facebook and Twitter on a daily basis.

"I use social media to promote any union campaigns I'm involved with. I also use it to promote branch meetings," Caroline told *Network*.

"For me, the main benefit of social media is being able to stay in touch with other reps who I've met on training courses and at union events. I can ask them questions and we can share support and advice," added the Morrison's worker.

"I'm on Academy1 right now so it's also a good way to stay in touch with members when I'm on the road and give them the advice as and when they need it.

"It's a great idea for reps to get familiar with social media, it opens up lots of possibilities and it's a free method of communication!"

Scottish division's Graham Newport uses Facebook on a regular

basis to communicate with other reps and members. He's also involved in running a Facebook group for LGBT members offering support, advice and the latest news.

"Social media is a great way to break down barriers," said Graham. "It allows people of all backgrounds to support and communicate with each other.

"My company also has a Facebook page so I have permission to use that to post news about upcoming events and campaign days. It's a good way of reaching people, especially those on night shifts that I might not get the chance to see very often. It allows me to keep everyone in the company in the loop on union matters," added Graham.

"One of the best functions of Facebook is private messaging. Members can reach me in an instant and I can respond to them quickly and confidentially. I check social media more than my emails so it's a good way to get hold of me when I'm needed."

Ten things to remember when using social media

1. Read your company's social media policy and be clear on it and the implications of ignoring it.
2. Privacy settings aren't always fully understood or as secure as you might think. There's nothing to stop a friend sharing your comments to their friends who you may not want to see them.
3. There's no place in the modern workplace for unacceptable or offensive behaviour wherever it occurs (on the shopfloor or online). Companies have duties under the Equality Act to not discriminate against their staff or customers – you can be dismissed for insulting staff or customers on social media.
4. Remember, anyone can be disciplined or sacked for the misuse of social media.
5. You can be sacked for lying and revealing your actions on social media eg if you're off sick you shouldn't be posting about being in the pub or going on holiday.
6. Don't put anything on social media you wouldn't say to someone's face and never post if you are angry, upset or drunk.
7. Don't post offensive material – we all have opinions but if they're racist, sexist or homophobic there are laws against that and rightly so. Be careful and think before you post – so-called 'banter' can be interpreted as offensive.
8. It's worth remembering that we're all ambassadors for our company in one way or another. Employers monitor any mention of their company and are alerted immediately to negative comments.
9. Companies also trawl social media to 'check out' potential employees' – consider your future employment prospects and the repercussions of your social media profile.
10. It's a good communication channel, but think about what you are posting as the evidence is there in writing forever. It's not like a private chat down the pub. So don't criticise your employer, your colleagues or customers.

WORKPLACE SAFETY IS PERSONAL

Enquiries from reps about members paying for their own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – especially safety shoes – are regularly received by the health and safety team at central office.

The Personal Protective Equipment Regulations require employers to provide suitable PPE as a last resort when there is no other way of controlling a risk. Where it is provided, workers have a legal duty to use it.

Under section 9 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, no charge can be made to the worker for the provision of PPE.

It is important to distinguish between clothing provided or

required as part of a uniform policy and PPE provided for health and safety purposes. In retail, for example, employers may require all staff to wear 'sensible' shoes as part of their uniform policy, but only certain groups of workers will be provided with safety shoes because there are particular risks associated with their job.

Where safety shoes are required the employer should provide them free of charge. If the standard shoes provided are not suitable for an individual then the employer should provide a suitable alternative.

Reps who need more advice on PPE in their workplace can check out Usdaw's leaflet: **Do you use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work?**



Local councils abandon safety inspections

Government funding cuts have driven local authorities to almost entirely abandon their statutory role as a workplace health and safety regulator, according to the Financial Times (FT).

The local authority is the health and safety regulator for most Usdaw members. The FT found that councils have faced £18bn in cuts in

real terms since 2010 – with at least another £9.5bn expected by the end of the decade.

As well as cuts to council services, councils have severely cut back on their role in protecting public safety, through local environmental regulation, food inspections and workplace health and safety checks.

In 2009-10, council inspectors in England made 56,175 visits to local workplaces to ensure health and safety rules were being followed.

Worryingly, for the period 2013-14, the number had been slashed by 91 per cent, to just 4,901 inspections, while 53 councils opted to abandon proactive inspections altogether.



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Night workers need fair work-life balance

Night shift working is on the increase and so are the damaging effects on workers' health, says a new report from the TUC, which is calling for better conditions for all shift workers.

The latest figures show the number of people working shifts rose by over 200,000 from 2007 to 2014 to a total of 3,168,000. More people are working night shift – with the biggest increase for women workers.

The TUC's report, 'A Hard Day's Night', explains there is growing evidence for the adverse health effects of shift work such as heart disease, diabetes and mental health problems. But less attention has

been paid to the effects on home life and on relationships.

The report makes a number of recommendations on the importance of negotiating shift-patterns, not forcing workers to work night shifts, making sure that night shift workers have access to the same facilities as their daytime colleagues including hot meals and drinks, giving workers sufficient notice of their shift patterns and avoiding short notice changes.

A copy of the report is available at: www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/AHardDaysNight.pdf





Q&A with...

General assistant Raymond Humphries who works the nightshift at Sainsbury's in Edinburgh. He's been a union rep for five years and health and safety rep for three. His store has 178 Usdaw members.

Q What made you become a health and safety rep?

We only had one health and safety rep in store for the day shift and nobody for the night shift so I took the job.

Q What are the regular health and safety issues you come across in your workplace?

The main one is safety footwear. Staff think they can use battery trucks and pallet trucks without wearing safety footwear. It's an ongoing issue which is high on my agenda.

Q Do you see the two roles of rep and health and safety rep going hand-in-hand?

The way I look at it, everything is health and safety, and I've got the advantage of being the shop steward as well. So if I go in as a shop steward, I've also got my health and safety head on so I can look at that side of it too. I think I've got the best of both worlds.

Q How do the two of you organise your workplace health and safety wise?

We meet now and again, and I'm lucky in a way too because he's actually my branch secretary. He's always there at the end of the phone if I need him. It may not be ideal because of our different working hours but it works for us. I also liaise with my area organiser and speak to the health and safety team at central office for advice.

Q Do you enjoy being a rep?

I get some grief but it doesn't bother me, I enjoy doing it. The only downside is sometimes the members don't seem to realise that I'm doing it for them. They don't realise that I get two nights off, which adds up to one day, and that's when I'm doing all my phoning around and I'm trying to find things out for them, but I want to do that. If I can make a positive change, I'm happy.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

European Health and Safety Week 2015 takes place from 19-23 October. Promoted by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, the theme for this year is the same as last year – 'Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress'.

According to the Agency, a quarter of workers across Europe say they suffer from work-related stress for all or most of their working time. Violence at work is an increasing concern, job insecurity and irregular work schedules have also increased as a result of the economic crisis.

Stress at work is usually (though not always) caused when excessive pressure is put on people for a number of reasons – too much work, too few staff, inadequate training and so on.

Good employers will already have measures in place to identify issues that lead to stress but they may not be applied in all workplaces.

As in previous years, the TUC has nominated the Wednesday of European Week as National Inspection Day. They are asking union safety reps to carry out a workplace inspection on or around that day.

Usdaw reps can use the week to highlight the issues that may affect members by conducting a Stress Survey using the Usdaw Stress Questionnaire.

Once completed reps can use the information from the survey to discuss with management the findings and any possible solution.

The Stress questionnaire can be downloaded at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/stressquestionnaire



Your Letters &

tweet deck

Our favourite tweets to @UsdawUnion...

@princesspeach *Just 1 more week of this year's academy2, I've had an amazing time, just the presentation to Paddy next Tuesday*

@agreenview *Another great learning day event thanks for the support @Sidsidhu7 @UsdawUnion 9 learner sign up's & 5 New members*



@JuliaHB34 *Digital Champions learning how to Tweet as professional Union Learning Reps*



Welsh chorus heads to London Pride



Thanks to everyone at Usdaw's LGBT get-together for their generous donation to help the South Wales Gay Men's Chorus attend London Pride alongside the Lesbians and Gay Men Support the Miners (LGSM) group as their invited guests.

The day was an outstanding success, not only for LGSM in commemoration of the Pride parade they took part in 30

years ago, but also from our perspective in bringing a touch of Welshness to the proceedings. We all certainly made our presence known!

Without your generosity we would not have been able to participate so once again, please accept our thanks.

Nick McNeill
Chair of the South Wales Gay Men's Chorus

30 Celebrations...



Yvonne Webster, Mal Sutton and Linda Allen from Tesco Chester City centre store on 30 years of Usdaw membership.



Jo Carleton from Primark Northern Ireland being presented with her 30 year award by national officer Dave Gill.



Branch secretary Jane Coventry (centre) being presented with her 30 year award by reps Julie Sarson (left) and Jane Ford (right). They all work at Tesco Extra Bedworth.

Stand-down reps campaign in Primark



A successful pensions awareness campaign day in Primark, Meadow Hall, Sheffield. The event, held in June, was run by stand-down rep Sharon Day (left) and Academy2 organising officer Liam Algor (right).

Reps picture round-up



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Pics

A dedicated space to share your news, views and achievements. Let us know what you have been up to and you could win £50! Please send letters/emails and photos to either of the addresses given above. We reserve the right to edit all letters published.

Reps and members in the picture

Team Maria shows racism the red card



Maria Barber (far right)

Area organiser Adam Skwierawski and I organised an anti-racism campaign day in store. We wanted members to know that the union takes racism seriously and that if they are being treated unfairly at work they will get the right support.

We set up tables in the staff canteen with materials from Usdaw and Show Racism the Red Card. We talked to staff about racism and why people

don't raise their concerns. We had a fantastic response.

The other reps in store, Alex Allen and Slawek Rajewski came in to help and make sure the night shift were included.

The managers welcomed and supported the campaign.

Hopefully staff can see that this is an issue we can work together on to make a difference.

Maria Barber, Academy2 organising officer

Successful Legal campaign for Martyn



Legal Plus campaign day at Tesco Neath Abbey, held by Academy1 organising officer Martyn Hall, area organiser Susan David, in-store rep Jacqueline Lewis and Debra James of Slater & Gordon Solicitors.

Birmingham hosts federation school



South and West Midlands federation school held in Birmingham recently. For more information on federation schools visit the Usdaw website: www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Training-Development/Federations

Durham Miners



Thanks to Chris Winwood for this great picture of the Durham Miners' Gala 2015.

Tolpuddle Martyrs



Ushaw members march at the Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival 2015. Taken by Sue Pryn.

Tales From The Hills by William Cawley

Historian, newspaper columnist and rep Bill Cawley's new collection brings together over 50 of his original articles. Its subject matter ranges from famous 19th century visitors to the Staffordshire Moorlands, its literary connections and witchcraft, through to its links with the American Civil War, Antarctic expeditions and even

James Bond. Available to buy on Amazon now.



Reps campaigning nationwide. From left: Spotlight Day at Tesco Extra Widnes, Spotlight Day at Morrisons Verwood, joint legal/pensions awareness day at Tesco Extra Llanelli and legal plus awareness day at Tesco Extra Salisbury.

Get the latest campaign news & updates straight to your news feed!

Campaign Highlights



Quizzes, Competitions & More!



RESPECT WEEK

9-13 NOVEMBER 2015

#Respect15



abuse is not part of the job

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