

# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | MAY/JUNE 2023



## ADM USDAW'S PARLIAMENT

DELEGATES SET THE PRIORITIES FOR 2023

## citizens advice



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

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

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[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/  
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- Find the best solution or service for your individual circumstances.
- Support while you deal with your money worries, for as long as you need their help.

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

# USDRAW

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# WE NEED A LABOUR GOVERNMENT NOW

**T**he most recent figures from the Office for National Statistics had inflation easing to 8.7 per cent, down from its 10.1 per cent peak. In a bid to curb inflation, the Bank of England could hike interest rates for the thirteenth consecutive time.

Such a move would increase mortgage repayments by hundreds of pounds and make things even more difficult for people struggling to make ends meet.

Apart from pledging to halve inflation by the end of the year, the prime minister Rishi Sunak has not taken any action to tackle the biggest issue facing our country, the cost of living crisis.

Tackling the cost of living crisis is key priority for the union. To do this we must eradicate in-work poverty by campaigning for an increase in minimum wage rates and stronger employment rights as part of a New Deal for Workers.

The Conservative's self-created cost of living crisis is affecting every part of our daily lives. Let's be clear, the government could help workers through this crisis.

They could help fund childcare, reverse the National Insurance increase, use a windfall tax on energy companies and restore the £20 uplift to Universal Credit.

But they are making a choice



not to implement these policies and a choice not to deliver for working people.

Labour has rightly recognised that good and well-paid jobs have to be at the core of renewing and transforming the UK economy.

Labour's New Deal for Workers will be delivered in the first 100 days of being in government, giving workers the dignity of fair pay and more secure contracts.

The time is up for the Tories, only a Labour Government will put the UK back on track.

Usdaw General Secretary

*Paddy Bellis*

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



# Getting Advice For Non-Work Related Problems



## Free Initial Advice Scheme

Usdaw's Legal Plus service doesn't stop when you clock off work. You're entitled to free initial advice about any non-work related legal problem. For example, you may have:

- Bought a car or a washing machine that simply isn't up to standard and the salesperson refuses to do anything about it.
- A dispute with your landlord, the council, or with nuisance neighbours.
- A matrimonial or other family problem at home, or want advice about debts.

If there's more legal work required after you've received our solicitors' advice, they'll offer you special discounted rates.

**For non-work related problems, complete our online form at [www.usdaw.org.uk/BL3](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/BL3)**

**You should use the scheme only if your problem is NOT connected with work.**

**If you have a work-related problem then you can apply for full legal assistance from the Union and you should seek help from your Union representative, Branch Secretary, Area Organiser or Usdaw's Legal Department immediately.**

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

## Probate

Sorting out probate matters when someone dies can be stressful. Our Usdaw solicitors can provide you with sympathetic and professional advice at discounted rates.

## Moving House

Buying a property is a long-term financial commitment and may be one of the most important steps in your life. Usdaw solicitors will deal with all stages of your property transaction professionally and efficiently, at discounted rates for Usdaw members. You'll receive a written quotation at the outset, so you won't have any unwelcome surprises.

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE



## ADM 2023

**10** | Lively debates and voting on the next year's priorities at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool.

## EQUALITIES

**20** | Voting opens for regional equality reps and the Breaking Down Barriers programme is launched.

## ROAD TRANSPORT

**22** | The impact of Clean Air Zones and Low Emission Zones on members and professional drivers.

## ACADEMY1

**24** | The new Academy1 recruits start their journey of organising and recruitment in their regions.

## DIABETES

**32** | Information and guidance on how to support diabetic members in the workplace.

## CONFERENCE ROUND UP

**34** | Coverage of the STUC LGBT+ conference and TUC Black Workers' conference.



## TUC YOUNG WORKERS' CONFERENCE

**36** | Usdaw's delegation highlighted the impact of sexual harassment on younger workers.



## REGULARS

### 03 FOREWORD

### 06 NEWS

### 26 ACTIVIST-IN-DEPTH

### 28 RECRUITMENT & ORGANISING

### 38 HEALTH & SAFETY

### 42 MEMBER OFFERS

### 44 STAFF NEWS

### 46 PUBLICATIONS UPDATE



# IN THE NEWS

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

## TORIES FAILING THE LOW-PAID

**U**sdaw has again called on the government to intervene further in tackling the cost of living crisis, which is severely impacting low-paid workers. Ofgem recently announced a reduction in the cap on the unit price of gas and electricity, which means that the average household, on a dual-fuel direct debit, will pay £2,047 in energy bills in the coming year.

Although the reduction is welcomed, the decrease in energy prices offers little comfort to many low-paid households. Even as average bills reduce to £2,047 per year that is still double the prices being paid before the energy crisis, with some analysts predicting that prices will hold or even go up slightly over the winter.

Usdaw conducted a survey of over 7,500 members, mainly key workers, and found that:

- Over three-quarters have struggled to pay an energy bill over the past twelve months.
- 45 per cent no longer use their household heating.
- Over four in ten have cut down on other essentials such as food.



The Government's energy bills support scheme ended in April and there is no indication yet that the Government will intervene with financial support again. Along with eye-watering food inflation, it is little wonder that too many low-paid workers are being forced to keep the heating off, avoid cooking meals and choose between eating and heating.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Short-term support with the ongoing cost of living pressures is not enough and the government needs to deliver lasting solutions with a new deal

for workers. A new deal that makes work pay with an immediate increase in the minimum wage to at least £12 per hour for all workers, regardless of age, as a step towards £15. Alongside this, we need an end to insecurity and one-sided flexibility, through contracts that reflect normal hours of work.

"The government is not offering the change our members need. Labour has pledged to deliver a new deal for workers within 100 days of coming into government. They will also reduce the country's reliance on expensive imported fossil fuels by investing

in cheap home-sourced green energy to reduce costs to consumers. The failures of thirteen years of the Conservatives in government are clear for everyone to see. Only a Labour government can put Britain back on track." [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

### MEMBERSHIP

For week ended 3 June 2023

South Wales & Western	42,272
Eastern	50,978
Midlands	47,469
North Eastern	50,256
Scottish	36,388
Southern	49,610
North West	75,844
<b>Total</b>	<b>352,817</b>

## TOGETHER FEST' 2023

# CHARITY FOCUSES ON WELLBEING

Usdaw welcomed this year's 'Together Fest', organised by the Retail Trust charity, which took place in London in May. Following on from Mental Health Awareness Week, the event celebrated the power of collaboration by bringing together retail colleagues to share tools and advice that will empower them to live happier, healthier lives.

The link between abuse from customers and staff mental health is clear. Usdaw's own annual survey of over 7,700 retail staff found

that nearly a third are considering changing their job and over four in ten feel anxious about work, all because of high levels of verbal abuse, threats and assaults.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "It is shocking that nearly three-quarters of our members working in retail are suffering abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. While Covid triggers for abuse, such as face masks and social distancing, have gone, the level of incidents

faced by retail workers is now higher than before the pandemic.

"Violence and abuse are not an acceptable part of the job and too many shopworkers suffer all too often. We still need better co-ordination to ensure that retail employers, police and the courts work together to make stores safer and give staff the support and confidence they need. Most of all, we ask the public to support our campaign by respecting shopworkers."

## NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2023

# CELEBRATING CARERS

Usdaw celebrates the contribution of working carers and calls on the government to provide more support.

Usdaw marked National Carers Week (5-11 June) by celebrating the crucial role carers have in families and communities, highlighting the difficulties of juggling work with caring for someone and calling on the government to do more to support the huge contribution made by 5.7 million carers across the UK.

The vast majority of care in the UK is provided by family and friends, who make up the UK's 5.7 million carers and without their willingness and ability to provide care, local authority social services and the NHS would collapse under the strain.

Last month, Parliament gave statutory recognition for unpaid carer's leave. However, any right to leave is only accessible for low-income workers if it is paid at their average income. That has always been the case, but particularly in

a cost of living crisis when most cannot afford to lose pay.

All too often carers feel life is a pressure cooker of competing demands, with worries about money, time off work, their own health and that of the person they are caring for. Now, with huge numbers of people providing care, the government must act to recognise and properly reward their enormous contribution.

Usdaw is campaigning for the government to lift the pressure on working carers by:

- Better enabling carers to balance work and care by introducing a statutory right to ten days paid Carer's Leave for all working carers from day one of employment.
- Improving protection from discrimination and redundancy for carers by strengthening the law.
- Raising the rate of Carer's Allowance and extending its reach.

## Diary Dates

### JULY

1 - 2 July

Usdaw Industrial Conference

1 July London Pride

1 July The Women Chainmakers' Festival

8 July Durham Miners' Gala

11 - 12 July TUC Disabled Workers' conference

14 - 16 July Tolpuddle Martyrs' Festival

15 July Glasgow Pride

21 - 30 July Belfast Pride

30 July Liverpool Pride

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

## LABOUR RESEARCH RESOURCES FOR REPS

News and information designed for reps on a whole range of workplace topics.

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

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**OBITUARY**

**GRAHAM HUGHES**

Graham Hughes, a former area organiser based in the North West region, died on 3 April at the age of 79.

He joined Usdaw in 1973 when he worked as a process worker for the CWS Preserves and Confectionery works in Stockport. He was appointed shop steward three years later and senior shop steward in 1982. His knowledge and experience led him to being appointed as an area organiser in November 1985, a role he excelled at until his retirement in 2004.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute. "Graham was a well-respected individual who was a great ambassador for Usdaw. Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this sad time."



Graham Hughes

**TAKING THE LEAD IN SAFETY**

**CO-OP'S NEW INITIATIVE**

May saw the launch of Co-op distribution's 'Ways of Working' initiative after nearly two years of planning. The aim of the initiative is to improve the culture around safety to ensure that the Co-op becomes a recognised leader in safety culture across the world.

Usdaw reps, safety teams and Co-op managers worked collaboratively to develop a national policy 'Ways of Working', which aims to create a safety culture through collaboration, consistency and common goals.

The policy defines what release a safety representative should be given and when, and how reps and managers should be working together to find the best solution. The policy will allow each rep and manager in each depot to have a consistent process to follow.

The approach will help managers and reps reduce risk collaboratively, create more consistent inspections and allow a move into level 4 of the HSE safety culture model.

The Co-op has made great strides since 2015, when there was no network of safety managers in place. Since then, the Co-op has recognised that leadership commitment is a vital component of changing safety culture. This allowed



the company to develop a robust safety structure which included safety managers in all of their main depots, invest over £3 million in safety projects and reduce accidents by over 50 per cent in 6 years. 'Ways of Working' is the latest initiative in their arsenal.

Usdaw national officer Jayne Allport said: "I'm really pleased that the Co-op is prioritising health and safety. The last couple of years have shown just how crucial effective health and safety is to every workplace. Reps play a crucial role in helping to develop and implement policy and it's good to see the company utilising their knowledge and skills to improve safety in their sites."

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at **WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN**

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## BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTE (BSI) TALKS MENOPAUSE

## WOMEN'S HEALTH STANDARD LAUNCHED

A new workplace standard for businesses has been launched to support employees experiencing menopause or menstruation. The British Standards Institute (BSI) has published new guidance to help organisations retain experienced and talented staff after a consultation with experts and the public.

The menstruation, menstrual health and menopause in the workplace standard (BS 30416), sets out practical recommendations for workplace adjustments, as well as strategies that can help employers meet the needs of those experiencing menopause or menstruation.

The recommendations include workplaces considering whether there is a general awareness of menstruation and menopause in its culture and whether employees have opportunities for open conversations or to request support. Suitable training for line managers

and HR managers, reviewing the workplace environment to include facilities such as quiet recovery spaces or discreet changing rooms and options for flexible working are also among the guidance.

Women make up more than half of Usdaw's members and activists and over half of the UK workforce. The majority of women have periods at some point in their lives, and not necessarily in their late forties or early fifties.

Younger women, trans and non-binary workers can also experience the menopause. It's far from a minority issue. Statistics show that around 1 in every 3 women has either experienced or is currently going through the menopause, with the majority experiencing noticeable symptoms. Of these, almost half experience symptoms they find hard to deal with and cause them difficulties both in and out of work.

Usdaw general secretary



Paddy Lillis said: "Despite a growing recognition among employers and policy makers that women's health is a workplace health and safety issue, too few women are receiving the right support at work. So, this British Standards Institute guidance is to be welcomed as a step in the right direction.

"Usdaw is calling for menopause-related absence to be counted separately and be discounted in disciplinary and other employment decisions. We continue to campaign in workplaces to support women members to recognise and feel able to discuss their menopause and period symptoms in the workplace and equip reps with the tools they need to open up conversations at work."

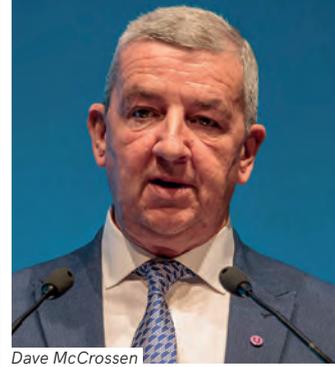
## BRANCH OFFICERS TRAINING



Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen joined Usdaw activists for the branch officers training course at Usdaw head office in May.



# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION



Dave McCrossen



Jane Jones



Paddy Lillis Kate McLeod

**D**elegates gathered in the Winter Gardens in Blackpool for the 76th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM). ADM is the biggest event in the union's calendar with over 1,000 delegates, visitors and officials attending from across the UK.

General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones hosted ADM while national executive council member Kate McLeod ensured the smooth running of ADM as the chair of the standing orders committee.

Over the four days, delegates took part in lively debates and voted on propositions to decide the union's

policies and priorities for the next 12 months. Wages, education, crime, housing, health and safety, benefits and the environment were all debated by passionate speakers, many of whom were first time speakers.

Delegates also heard from guest speakers Anas Sarwar, the leader of the Scottish Labour Party as well as Helen Dickinson, the head of the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

Speaking in the Empress Ballroom Usdaw president Jane Jones accused the Tory government of "failing time and time again, to take the urgent action that was needed; action to properly support low paid workers;

to support our struggling high streets, and to get the economy moving again. Instead, they spent their time and energy on in-fighting, lurching from one scandal to the next."

While "young members tell me they don't believe they will ever be able to buy their own home or raise a family." The older members "are terrified that they will never afford to retire" and "parents who skip meals to feed their kids – because the huge cost of childcare means they can't work the hours they need to get by."

Jane concluded her speech by issuing a rallying cry for a Labour government.

## NEC STATEMENT

# CALLING OUT SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Usdaw delegates passed the NEC statement *Call it Out – An End to Sexual Harassment*. The statement commits Usdaw to calling out sexual harassment in workplaces and right across the union movement.

## SARAH MCLAUGHLIN F101

"I work in a store with students. The young women who experience sexual harassment say this type of behaviour makes them feel belittled and makes their lives a misery. They feel if they complain, they won't get on. We need to speak up.

## DIANE HOWARD K219

"LGBT voices need to be heard in this debate. Me and my wife have had inappropriate comments made about our sex lives. Our sexual identity is fair game and people feel like they can ask us anything about bodies and our personal lives. It's not funny. And we need to call it out."

## DAMIEN GILL K215

"I don't get sexually harassed but because I'm a man people always assume I'm the manager instead of my female colleague, who is the manager. Sexism feeds sexual harassment. We need to speak up because an injury to one is an injury to all."

## DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE

"So many of the women who took part in Usdaw's survey into sexual harassment told us that the harassment left them feeling humiliated, profoundly upset and embarrassed, anxious about coming into work the next day," said Dave McCrossen. "But the vast majority of women did not report the abuse or harassment to their employer. If the majority of our women members are experiencing sexual harassment at work, and not reporting this; then we have a problem.

"We know that many organisations will assume they don't have a problem, because they don't have any complaints. But think about how difficult it is to speak out about harassment. Survivors know that all too often they won't be believed, that things will often get worse for them and they may lose overtime or additional hours.

"Women who talk to their rep, report a much better outcome than women who just tell their employer. This reminds us of what we already know. Reps make a difference. So I would strongly encourage reps to think about running this campaign in their workplaces."



Sarah McLaughlin



Diane Howard



Damien Gill

## SUPPORT FOR MILITARY VETERANS BACKED BY DELEGATES

### KAREN O'NEILL G406

"Veterans have PTSD or Complex PTSD due to the tragedies and horror they witnessed during service. Some even take their lives because there is little or no support offered during their service or after they leave. Veteran charities rely on donations while the governments who cause this trauma cut funding. We need to better support for these heroes."

### DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE

"Our veterans have the skills, experience and expertise to contribute to our country," said Dave. "The government must take immediate action to provide more support for those who have served and to ensure that they are able to lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives after their service to their country ends."

### SUBS INCREASE

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to increase membership rates.

This means that from 2 July:

#### Scale A

members will pay **£2.68** a week

#### Scale C

members will pay **£1.82** a week.

## HEALTH &amp; SAFETY DEBATE

## HEALTH &amp; SAFETY FIRST

Lone working, pregnancy risk assessments and workplace temperatures were some of the propositions that formed part of the health and safety debate.

**PHIL CROOKS C076**

“Lone working in petrol filling stations causes additional stress for our members who have to complete all processes on their own, monitor the forecourt, are unable to take comfort breaks, and are at a greater risk of abuse and potential sexual harassment. We must resist this push to normalise one on one working.”

**SYED NAQVI H017**

“Although companies have policies on risk assessments, many don't have time to train their managers, especially in convenience. Companies need to train their managers and ensure health and safety legislation is applied. As reps, we also need to play our part and hold them to account.”

**ELAINE DENNIS G436**

“We are always cold and have to wear fleeces. When we raise this, we are always given some excuse like they're waiting for parts or that the temperature is controlled by someone else. Being cold isn't just uncomfortable, it can affect your health. No-one should be cold at work. We need legal limits to make workplaces safer.”

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

“Health and Safety is a fundamental aspect of what trade unions do. It impacts every worker, in every workplace. It's our role to ensure employers are operating in line with health and safety legislation, that they have the right policies in place,

that those policies are followed and to robustly challenge them when they fail in their legal obligations.”

Referring to a proposition calling for an end to the practice of lone working in petrol filling stations, Paddy Lillis said: “Lone working can make people feel isolated and vulnerable. It can prevent them from taking their proper breaks and it can put workers at greater risk of sexual harassment. While there is no law against lone working, employers do have a duty of care to their staff. They should assess the risks involved in lone working and put measures in place to mitigate those risks, but as a union we do not believe that employers should be forcing staff to work alone at all, in petrol stations or indeed in any small outlets.”

Referring to a proposition addressing pregnancy risk assessments, Paddy said: “Health and Safety Executive guidance is clear on protecting pregnant workers and new mothers. Employers are responsible for providing a safe working environment. This includes carrying out an individual risk assessment. Pregnant women should not have to go through the grievance procedure, just to secure what is already their legal right. Employers must fully train their managers, so they are able to carry out full and meaningful risk assessments, to properly protect pregnant women and new mothers.”

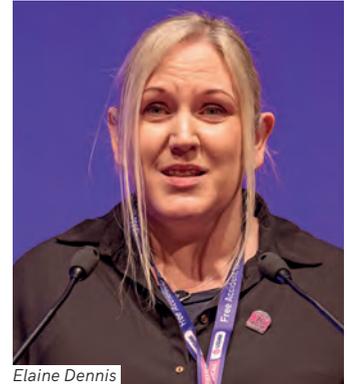
Referring to a proposition calling for the introduction of a legal maximum and minimum workplace temperature, Paddy said: “There is legal guidance on minimum temperatures. For working indoors, they should normally be at least six degrees Celsius, or 13 degrees if much of the work involves rigorous



Phil Crooks



Syed Naqvi



Elaine Dennis

physical effort. But there is currently no legal maximum temperature set in the workplace. The TUC wants a law that would require employers to take action when temperatures start to rise above 24 degrees and there should be an absolute maximum temperature of 30 degrees, or 27 degrees, if it's strenuous work. We support the TUC's campaign and we will continue to push employers for better working conditions too.”

## HEALTH &amp; SOCIAL CARE DEBATE

## ENDOMETRIOSIS SUPPORT



Marcus Raymond

Delegates called on the NHS and employers to support women affected by endometriosis during the health and social care debate, with many sharing their experiences or the experiences of their loved ones.

**MARCUS RAYMOND K021**

“Women living with this serious condition face other difficulties on top of their debilitating symptoms. They struggle to access medical care and are not fully supported by their workplaces. Sufferers are vulnerable to absence policies, poor statutory sick pay rules and struggle to hold down full-time work which in turn can cause their careers and workplace relationships to suffer as well.”

**KATHLEEN MORRISON K233**

“It took 15 years for me to be diagnosed, this has to change. Employers don’t understand and don’t listen to what impact it has on your life from fertility issues to unbearable pain. You end up having to leave work early and at other times you can’t even attend at all. Even now I’m still suffering. I’ve just got better at hiding it.”



Kathleen Morrison



Phillip Shaw

**PHILLIP SHAW F031**

“My daughter has it. It took 13 years to diagnose and by that time she was stage four. She’s had four operations but the pain is still so debilitating that she wants to end her life. It’s heart-breaking to see her like this.”

The proposition called for a range of support including endometriosis to be given due priority so that those living with the disease and waiting for care are not left behind, an overhaul of the way the NHS prioritises patients, reforms to statutory sick pay and to strengthen workers’ rights to flexible working and reasonable adjustments.

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY’S RESPONSE**

“It is estimated that 1.5 million UK women are currently living with endometriosis,” said Dave McCrossen. “A condition which can cause debilitating pain. And a condition which takes eight years on average from the onset of symptoms to get a diagnosis. The proposition outlines a range of support that the government can and should provide to those living with endometriosis.”

## ADVERSE WEATHER BREAKS FOR OUTDOOR WORKERS

**ANNE WILL G427**

“We need to ensure that all outdoor workers are kept as warm as possible during adverse weather. Employers should be automatically providing breaks instead of us having to remind them every year.”

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY’S RESPONSE**

“We would expect employers to carry out risk assessments for outside workers,” said Dave

McCrossen. “They are legally required to identify risks and take action to eliminate or control those risks. Providing PPE isn’t enough. People working outside need time indoors, to dry out and warm up in winter, or cool down in summer. They need to be able to get a drink and to rest. This is recommended by the HSE, as a simple action employers can take and it is something we will be raising with employers. Every worker must be kept safe.”



Anne Will

HELEN DICKINSON - CEO BRITISH RETAIL CONSORTIUM

# A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF RETAIL



Helen Dickinson

**"WE MUST DO MORE TO TRANSFORM OUR HIGH STREETS, RETRAINING AND UPSKILLING OUR WORKFORCE."**

We are making progress on many of these areas and my vision for the future sees a vibrant industry, delivering for customers, colleagues and society more broadly.

"It needs collective action and a strong response from the government. We need to see more meaningful business rates reform that ends the high fixed costs of running stores. Otherwise, we'll just see more stores closing.

"We need to see Police and Crime Commissioners prioritise tackling violence and abuse and an improved response to incidents by local police forces and the government to go further. Yes, we got the government to amend its Bill last year, creating tougher sentences for assaults on public facing workers. This fell short of what we wanted, a separate offence of assaulting a retail worker, which Usdaw championed and the Labour Party supported in parliament. We must keep fighting for that goal.

"I am hugely proud of our industry and positive about the future. I am also very proud of the work the BRC has done with Usdaw and hope this can continue. Sometimes we have different ideas about the best route to secure change, but that is more often the exception, not the rule. We are working to achieve the same outcomes. Advocating for change means all of us pulling together where we can."

Usdaw welcomed keynote speaker Helen Dickinson OBE, from the British Retail Consortium. Addressing delegates, Helen Dickinson said: "Retail is a people business and an intrinsic part of the social fabric of our country. The past year has been challenging. Costs for businesses are going up and this is inevitably flowing through to higher prices; because of that inflation the cost of living has been increasing.

"All this comes hot on the heels of the pandemic and that followed big shifts over the previous 10 years or so, as people's shopping habits changed with the rise of online and mobile shopping. This transformation is at the heart of many of the stresses we see today

around retail. In too many cases we're seeing this hurt high streets and town centres. Derelict shops and no government plan about what to do to revive these places. The nature of retail jobs is changing. I think technology and automation should be an opportunity for us all and part of the answer for our high streets.

"We must do more to transform our high streets, along with retraining and upskilling our workforce. We must do more on violence and abuse. Along with wellbeing, mental health and inclusion. Despite the challenging backdrop and despite these issues, I am still proud to work in retail. There are many reasons to be proud.

## ORGANISING FOR A NEW DEAL

## IMPROVE UNION RIGHTS

As part of the Organising for a New Deal Debate, delegates called for improved trade union rights.

**MARCUS RAYMOND K021**

"Since the Tories came into power thirteen years ago, they have deliberately attacked trade union rights from the incredibly restrictive requirements on running industrial action ballots to having to run a political fund ballot every 10 years. This needs to change and only a Labour government can deliver the changes we need to improve our members' lives."

**GILLIAN TROUGHTON F039**

"Post-pandemic some companies are still doing online inductions which makes it difficult for union reps to recruit new members. We cannot rest on our laurels as companies water down our rights."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"We need a new deal for workers that tackles the cost of living crisis head-on and ensures that going to work is not only a way out of poverty," said Paddy Lillis. "But something which guarantees people can afford to live comfortably."

"I'm proud we've secured a

Labour Party commitment to a new deal in the first 100 days of government but with a general election potentially 18 months away our members can't afford to wait. We need a new deal now and it's up to us to organise for one."



Gillian Troughton



Sarah Langton

## BANK HOLIDAY TO REMEMBER THE QUEEN

Delegates backed a proposition which called for an extra bank holiday to remember the Queen.

General secretary Paddy Lillis said: "In comparison to the European average of 12.8 public holidays, Northern Ireland recognises 10 bank holidays, in Scotland there are nine bank holidays and in England and Wales there are only eight bank holidays per year."

"We have longstanding union policy calling for additional bank holidays more generally. More public holidays would recognise the contribution that workers make and bring us more in line with other countries across the globe."

## FUNDING FOR MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES

Delegates called for funding to improve mental health facilities and waiting times

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "The Tories have chronically, and disgracefully, underfunded mental health services over the last 13 years. As a result of the Tories' decisions, the number of mental health beds has fallen by 25 per cent since 2010. This has resulted in a mental health crisis across the country."

"The statistics show why we need urgent funding for mental health services, and it is clear that without this funding, outcomes for our friends, family and loved ones will only get worse."

## AGE-RESTRICTED SALES

Delegates backed a call to change law and policy around the sale of age-restricted goods and bring in a culture of 'No ID - No Sale' to put the onus on customers to comply with the law.

**SARAH LANGTON C088**

"No ID - No Sale would reduce the abuse shopworkers receive.

It would take the pressure off the worker to do the discretionary age checks and would instead put the responsibility to prove age onto the customer.

"It would also take the threat of disciplinary action for failing the 'Think 25' policy with the possibility of dismissal, a fine and/or a criminal record."

## EQUALITY DEBATE

## DEVELOPMENT FOR BLACK MEMBERS

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis launched the new Breaking Down Barriers Programme at this year's ADM. The programme has been set up to tackle the under-representation of Black members in the union.

"Like most other unions, Black members in Usdaw are under-represented in union roles and at union events," said Paddy. "Around 17 per cent of our members are Black and they are not always as visible or as rooted in our structures as they could be. If Black members were accurately represented, we would expect them to occupy at least 17 per cent of roles and make up just under a fifth of members attending regional and national events. However, despite making progress over recent years we still have some way to go.

"Our Breaking Down Barriers Programme is designed to help address the under-representation of Black members in Usdaw's structures and at union events and conferences. The programme seeks to give Black members the support they need to become more involved in the union by developing their skills and understanding of Usdaw



*l-r: Janet Hankin, Roger Bourne, Lebo Phaoke, Paddy Lillis and Philip Arthur*

and the wider union movement; build a support network of Black activists to help build membership by encouraging and supporting Black members to be proactive in their workplaces.

"Therefore, we want to encourage more Black members to step forward so Usdaw properly reflects our wider membership. Improving the representation of Black members is not only the right thing to do, but also necessary to ensure that they have the same opportunities to develop and reach their full potential; and we reflect the

workers we are organising by being relevant, welcoming and taking up the issues that matter to Black workers.

"It is my personal hope that Black members will see this as a steppingstone for their greater involvement in the union. That it will help them develop skills to feel fully at home in the trade union movement and that this will contribute to building a support structure for Black activists in Usdaw."

**breakingdownbarriers@  
usdaw.org.uk**



*Conference's first time speakers*

## WELFARE AND BENEFITS DEBATE

## FIX UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Delegates backed calls for reform of universal credit so that it doesn't penalise workers who take on more hours, provides more assistance with childcare costs and properly supports workers through the ongoing cost of living.

**JEAN BRIDGER C048**

Universal credit was introduced by the Conservatives in 2010. It's a very flawed system that penalises those who work overtime or get a bonus. No matter what they cut back on people are struggling to make ends meet. Some are even using food banks to survive. We need to get the Tories out."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Universal credit is based on the income you received in the previous month," said Paddy Lillis. "Therefore, if a worker receives a one-off bonus payment, they are subject to fluctuations in their universal credit payment the following month. These changes can be significant. For some, a bonus payment earned over the period of a year, can mean their next month's payment is wiped out entirely and that their universal



Jean Bridger

credit claim is stopped altogether. It is simply unacceptable that workers are refusing hard earned bonuses, just because accepting the money they have rightly earned would actually leave them financially worse off.

"The union is campaigning for a system that acknowledges the issues facing low paid workers and enables them to keep more of the money they have rightly earned. Our New Deal for Workers campaign is calling for a proper social security system that treats people with dignity and we have secured commitments from the Labour Party to fix the current system."

**SHORT STAFFING IN RETAIL STORES****DANNY HOOK F099**

"Cuts to staffing leave our members picking up the slack as they don't want to let their colleagues down. A dramatically increased workload has an impact on our members health and mental wellbeing. The effects of overworking must be part of larger discussions with employers."

**ANTAR ZAKA E107**

"Employers continue to save money by cutting staff. Many workers have accepted that there aren't enough staff and get on with their work. We cannot accept this. We cannot normalise staff shortages."

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Staffing levels and members' workloads have always been a priority for this union so we will continue to raise this issue, whenever and however we can," said Dave McCrossen. "Where low staffing is impacting on our members' safety or wellbeing, we will challenge it. We won't accept the bare minimum as the norm. We expect better, and our members deserve better."

**PENSIONS DEBATE**

Usdaw delegates voted to amend the auto-enrolment legislation so that the age threshold is reduced from age 22 to 18, and the current minimum earnings trigger of £10,000 a year to be phased out.

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Auto-enrolment into workplace pensions has been a huge

success," said Dave McCrossen. "However, auto-enrolment only kicks in when people turn 22 and earn over £10,000 per year. Once people have been auto-enrolled, very few drop out.

"Yet, many people are missing out on the opportunity to save for retirement. This affects not just young and low paid workers, who do not qualify for the scheme,

but also temporary workers, those on zero-hours contracts, and workers with more than one part-time job. Taken together, this adds up to millions of workers missing out each year, and millions of workers who have a more precarious and insecure retirement as a result. The legislation needs to be reviewed to take this into account."

# ANAS SARWAR MSP

This year's ADM guest speaker Anas Sarwar, leader of Scottish Labour, outlined how Labour would deliver the change working people need

**A**nas Sarwar, leader of Scottish Labour received a standing ovation for his speech which took a swipe at the scandal-hit SNP and Tory governments.

Referring to the police investigation into the funding and finances of the SNP, Mr Sarwar told delegates that British shopworkers knew the importance of balancing the tills at the end of the shift. Perhaps they could help the SNP out with their missing £600,000, he joked to laughter and applause.

"The Labour movement not only shares a history but we share a vision for the future. You have my word that I will never lose sight of that. I will fight alongside you – from the picket lines to Parliament. The Scottish Labour Party I lead will always be on your side. On the side of trade unions; on the side of working people. And right now, that has never been more important.

"As a cost of living crisis causes destitution and public services fight for survival, Scotland is stuck with two failing governments. The SNP is unwilling to stand up for workers and the Tories have launched a deliberate and vicious attack on our hard-won rights.

"So, it falls to Labour to stand up for the cause of working people.

"But I know it's not enough just to show that the SNP and the Tories deserve to lose – we need to demonstrate why Labour deserve to win. We need to show that we can deliver the change Scotland needs; that we can deliver the change working people need.

**"I DON'T NEED TO TELL YOU THAT 13 YEARS OF THIS ECONOMICALLY ILLITERATE, MORALLY BANKRUPT TORY GOVERNMENT HAS LEFT US ALL POORER. THEY HAVE LET PRICES SOAR WHILE WAGES AND GROWTH STALL."**

"Conference, I don't need to tell you that 13 years of this economically illiterate, morally bankrupt Tory government has left us all poorer. They have let prices soar while wages and growth stall.

"They have built a low growth, low pay economy. Money has been robbed from the pockets of working people and drained from the very public services we rely on. And as is so often the case, women are paying the harshest price for government failure.

"Hit hardest by low pay and austerity, forced to carry added burdens and navigate needless barriers. And that's true across the board – whether it's women, disabled people, ethnic minorities, LGBT people. Historic inequalities are being entrenched and exacerbated by this divisive and damaging government. But trade unions are at the forefront of the fight for liberation and equality. Defending and advancing human rights for all.

"And let me say once again – no ifs, no buts, no maybes – the next UK Labour government will scrap the Tories' despicable anti-trade union legislation. We will undo the

damage done by over a decade of Tory misrule – of brutal cuts, low pay, and attacks on workers. We will put an end to their ideologically driven campaign to vandalise workers' rights and undermine the trade union movement.

"And that's just the start. Because it's not enough just to try and salvage what the Tories have trashed – we need to strengthen workers' rights at every opportunity.

"We need to respond to our changing economy and the new challenges workers face. We have the bold, radical policies needed in these desperate times.

"Look at Labour's Green Prosperity Plan. And a game-changing publicly owned GB Energy company. Our energy in our hands.

"I know that for too long people across the UK felt you've had to choose between the SNP and the Tories. Between continuity and separation. But that's not the choice anymore.

"You can choose a fresh start with Labour. You can put your trust in us to deliver the change we so desperately need."



# EQUALITIES

Keeping you up-to-date on Usdaw's equalities agenda

## STEP FORWARD FOR FORUMS

**D**ecember 2023 sees the end of the current, three-year term of office of Usdaw's regional equalities forums. In the face of extraordinary challenges presented by the pandemic and through the cost of living crisis the forums have found new ways to give a voice to and encourage the greater involvement of four groups of under-represented members: women, Black and minority ethnic members, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+) members and disabled members.

The forums' strong link with the wider organising and recruitment work of their regions produces great results. Below are some examples of the practical action the forums have taken over the last three years:

- Organised weekend schools on issues like the menopause, tackling racism and calling out sexual harassment.
- Raised the union's profile at regional Pride events.
- Taken the unions' national campaigns out into workplaces,

**There are seats on the forum for the following four groups of members only:**

- Women
  - Black and ethnic minority members
  - Disabled members
  - Lesbian, gay, bisexual transgender and non-binary members (LGBT+).
- All of these groups we know

face specific obstacles to getting involved in the Union and under-represented in its structures and at conference and events. The Forum's role is to address this and come up with practical ways to reach out to these groups of members.

organising activity on Supporting Parents & Carers Spotlight Day, the day of action on mental health, hidden disability and the menopause.

- Visited workplaces to talk to members and non-members about maternity rights, reasonable adjustments and tackling racism.
- Been at the forefront of supporting Show Racism the Red Card's 'Wear Red Day' raising vital funds for the football anti-racist charity.

The nomination process opens in

July. Usdaw is asking activists who are interested in being a part of their regional equalities forum to put their name forward to be considered by their regional council in October.

Nomination forms will be available online at the start of July.

If you want to find out more about what the forums do or you need a paper copy of the nomination form please contact the equalities section at [equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk) or by calling 0161 224 2804.



Eastern Equalities forum

**BLACK MEMBERS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

# BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS LAUNCHED

Right across the trade union movement, Black workers are underrepresented as union reps, branch officers, activists and more. This is why Usdaw has launched a new education and skills programme for Black members. The programme is called Breaking Down Barriers and it will support members with the knowledge, skills and networks they need to become more active and visible in Usdaw.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "If we want the trade union movement to fully reflect the workers it represents and to strengthen our unions, we need to remove the barriers that prevent Black members from becoming more active in Usdaw and in the wider movement."

So if you are, or if you know of, a Black member who has completed their Usdaw rep, health and safety or ULR training and you would like to broaden your skills and get more active then we encourage you to apply. Members can self-nominate to the programme or be nominated

## WHY IS THIS PROGRAMME NEEDED?

Experienced Usdaw Black activists told us why they think the Breaking Down Barriers programme is so important:

- 'We need Black issues on Usdaw's agenda. The union are aware there is an issue and this programme will support more Black members to get involved.'
- 'There can be many barriers: language, cultural differences,

problems with management, navigating branch structures and racism. They are different for each person and this programme aims to break them down. It could be life changing.'

- 'We want people to feel "It's not just me" there are people from the same background. If they can do it, I can do it also.'

by someone else.

By Black we mean anyone who is at risk of discrimination or racism because of the colour of their skin. This includes a wide range of members including Asian members, African and Caribbean members, Chinese members and members of mixed heritage or multiple ethnicity.

The programme will run for 12 months at a time and there will be around 20 days of classroom

and non-classroom activities. Members will be supported to secure release from work to take part in the programme. Where paid release is not possible the union will reimburse wages.

To download an application form visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/breakingdownbarriers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/breakingdownbarriers)  
For more information contact us at [breakingdownbarriers@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:breakingdownbarriers@usdaw.org.uk) or call 0161 224 2804

**17%** of Usdaw's members identify as Black.

But make up **only** **7%** of shop stewards & **5.8%** of H&S reps

Help us achieve the change we need to make your Union

**Fairer** **Stronger** & **More Representative**

**USDAW EQUALITIES**

**CONTACT USDAW EQUALITIES TEAM**

- 0161 224 2804
- [@equalitymatters](https://twitter.com/equalitymatters)  
[@usdaw.org.uk](https://twitter.com/usdaw.org.uk)
- [www.usdaw.org.uk/Equalities](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Equalities)

# CLEAN CUT

The impact of Low Emissions Zones and Clean Air Zones on professional drivers and Usdaw members

**A** growing number of Usdaw members will now live or work in areas which are covered by these government schemes.

## What is the National Road Transport Committee?

Ushaw is the UK's second largest road transport union, representing over 20,000 drivers across a range of industries. The National Road Transport Committee is a key way in which these members' views are represented within the union. The committee includes seven professional driver Usdaw lay members, with each of the seven Usdaw regions electing one representative.

## How does the National Road Transport Committee represent members?

The committee meets throughout the year to monitor what's going on in the road transport industry, considering how developments impact Usdaw's van driver and HGV driver members. Alongside this, it plays an active role, within the union, in promoting the issues drivers face, so that these can be raised with politicians where relevant. The committee also has responsibility for the union's Road Transport Distress Fund, an essential member benefit for all Usdaw driver members. The fund costs just £6 per year and protects driver members from the increased financial risk of fines as a result of their role. If you are interested in joining the fund, please contact:

**researchenquiries@usdaw.org.uk**

## How else are road transport members given a voice?

The union's road transport section also has a national officer who co-ordinates national transport activities as well as assisting in the committee's work. Furthermore, each of the union's seven regions has a regional transport co-ordinator, who oversees transport activities within their region. Please contact your local office if you'd like details for your regional transport co-ordinator.

## LOW EMISSIONS ZONES AND CLEAN AIR ZONES

Low Emissions Zones and Clean Air Zones are an increasingly important issue for Usdaw members

The number of cities with either a Clean Air Zone or a Low Emissions Zone has grown substantially in the past few years. Whilst local mayors and councils have a say in how these schemes are implemented their use is being driven by the National UK Government's Air Quality Plan.

It is common for plans around these zones to include significant investment in public transport. There are a significant number of Usdaw members who rely on public transport and are currently being let down by poor provisions across the country. As such, there is a need to scrutinise what is being offered within the schemes.

## Where is affected?

Cities which either have a Clean Air Zone or Low Emissions Zone in place or plan to introduce one now include: London, Bath, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Portsmouth, Bradford, Newcastle,



Oxford, Sheffield, Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow. Further cities are likely to look at introducing a scheme in the future.

## TYPES OF CLEAN AIR ZONES

There are four types of clean air zones, Class A to D, which vary in terms of which vehicles are covered. Class D is the broadest and includes cars, whereas the other three classes focus on larger vehicles



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such as buses and HGVs. For areas covered by a scheme, vehicles can be checked online to see if you have to pay the charge. Currently, there are five schemes in place which affect private vehicles:

### The London Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

The London ULEZ currently covers the areas within London's North and South Circular roads, operating

### CHECKING YOUR VEHICLE

In order to avoid penalty charge notices (PCN), drivers should check whether their vehicle complies with CAZ, LEZ, and ULEZ restrictions before travelling via:

[www.gov.uk/clean-air-zones](http://www.gov.uk/clean-air-zones)

The charge period runs from midnight to midnight and payments must be made by 11:59pm on the sixth day after driving into the zone or up to 6 days before you travel. Usdaw expects companies to pay any fees relating to work vehicles.

24 hours a day, every day except Christmas Day. The zone will be expanding from 29 August 2023, across all boroughs in London. From this date, drivers of vehicles that do not meet the minimum emissions standards, including cars, mopeds, and motorbikes, will be charged £12.50 a day to enter the enlarged zone, regardless of the length of their journey. Drivers will also still need to pay the £15 congestion charge if they enter the congestion zone. It is estimated that there are currently 200,000 non-compliant vehicles being driven regularly in London.

### The Glasgow Low Emission Zone (LEZ)

From 1 June 2023, all vehicles entering the Glasgow city centre zone area will need to meet emission standards or face a penalty charge of £60 (reducing to £30 if paid within 14 days). Repeated breaches will result in higher PCN charges. This includes private vehicles, but exemptions are in place for motorcycles and mopeds. The zone will be in effect 24 hours a day, every day. Zone residents who require a grace period until 31 May 2024 can apply for this online.

### The Birmingham and Bristol Clean Air Zones (CAZ)

Class D Clean Air Zones, which affect some private cars, are now operational in both Birmingham and Bristol. In Birmingham petrol/diesel cars that don't meet the required emissions standards must pay £8 per day, and in Bristol the charge is £9 per day. Both schemes operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### The Oxford Zero Emission Zone (ZEZ)

Oxford has launched a pilot zero emission zone which operates from 7am to 7pm each day, affecting all private vehicles except for zero emission vehicles. Different charges are in place for private cars with differing emissions standards.

### CONCERNS AROUND THE SCHEMES

The union supports a just transition to a net zero economy, and believes it is important that pollution is reduced, air quality is improved, and public transport is invested in. However, there are concerns regarding the schemes in their current form, particularly when they extend to private cars, both in terms of their effects on workers, and also their effects on businesses:

- Any private vehicle charges create another bill at a time where workers are struggling with the cost of living.
  - Public transport costs are too high and coverage is poor in many areas. Any scheme needs to ensure that public transport is a viable and affordable alternative.
  - The zones place additional costs on small businesses, and some costs likely to be passed on to consumers.
  - Traffic and pollution may be displaced to other areas as drivers attempt to avoid the zones.
- Udaw has been working to raise the impact on low-paid workers and is campaigning to deliver protections for low-income households.

# ORGANISING CHALLENGE

**U**sdaw reps attended their first training sessions as Academy1 gets underway. Fifty-six reps have embarked on their journey as organising officers after they successfully applied to take part in the Academy1 programme.

For the next six months the organising officers will work full time for the union and recruit and organise in all sectors across their region.

Working closely with area organisers and training officers, the reps have already shown a firm commitment to the work of Usdaw and have demonstrated they are capable of organising beyond their own workplace. The reps will receive on the job training supplemented by four weeks of classroom-based activities.

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen wished the reps well on their journey. "More than 700 reps have completed the Academy since it began and many of them have gone onto become area organisers," said Dave. "Academy1 can be challenging but the reps will be supported by our brilliant team of training officers and mentors.

"Usdaw is extremely proud of its Academy programme. There is nothing else quite like it in the trade union movement, and it plays an important part in strengthening our presence in sectors and workplaces across the country.

"I'd like to wish this year's intake organising officers the very best of luck on their Academy1 journey. I hope they find it enjoyable and rewarding."

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



**Scottish:** *l-r* Laurie Oliver, Rhiannon Yardley, Benjamin Hu, secretary Tracy Gilbert, Stephanie Queen, Lewis Wilson and



**Southern:** *back row* Marco Ourique, Neil Butchart, Martin Childs. *Middle row* Philine Akaba, Carol Wyatt, Richard training officer Martyn Warwick. *Front row* Brooke Boyer,



**Eastern:** *back row* Diane Harrington Goode, Sorin Gigel Mihaila, Iain Moreton, training officer Tracey Howton, Rob Jones. *Front row* Lisa Barry and Morgan Eckersley.



**North Eastern:** *l-r* Deputy regional secretary Cathy Godfre, officer Tracey Howton, Marie Duck, Ashley Whitworth, Jen Barnham, Hannah Hyde and regional secretary Joanne TH



ghes, Ben Ramsay, regional  
and training officer Craig Miller.



**Midlands:** *l-r* Liz Hickman, Sandra Webb, Luke  
Trowell, Amber Higginson and Helen Abraham.



Webb, deputy regional secretary Jamie Gull and Keith  
Adenrele Lahan, regional secretary Rab Donnelly and  
Angelika Zywocinska, Renata Burlingham and Kirsty Spiller.



**South Wales & Western:** *l-r* Pauline Burridge, Chris Bowkett,  
Agnieszka Wisniewska, Mark Holloway, Wendy Palmer, Stuart  
Wallis, Chris Evans and Lianne Evans.



ey, training  
emma Bell, Stuart  
omas.



**North West:** *Front row* Training officer Neil Dawson, Alan Letham, Mihai Puiu, Mark Malone, Mark Kelly,  
Leighann Davidson, Patrick Milligan, Charlotte Mann. *Back row* Ahmed Kassim, Dave Ambrose, Mike  
Kewin, Eleanor Boothroyd, Emma Smith, Yassar Mahmood and Liam Dourley.



## ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

# DANNY HOOK

**D**anny Hook, 38, has worked for Morrisons Byker for over 20 years and became an Usdaw rep in 2018. In a few short years, he has become the national rep for his region in the north east and won the Individual Recruitment Award at this year's Organising Awards.

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

I was approached by someone in a suit asking my name. I thought it was someone from the company and that I was in trouble. But it turned

out to be an Usdaw area organiser who talked to me about the benefits of being a union member and what being a rep entailed. I decided there and then to join the union and put myself forward as a rep.

### **How did you find Usdaw's training for reps?**

After I signed up to become a rep, things moved quickly. I did the Usdaw reps training, which was fantastic and within a couple of years I was the national rep for

Morrisons in my region and the chair for my branch. Standing to become a rep was the best thing I did and I'm really pleased I made that decision.

### **Do you come from a trade union background?**

I'm not aware of anyone in my family being involved in the trade union movement but my gran was very pro-Labour. She spent a lot of her younger days working in factories and would turn in her grave if she thought any of her children or

grandchildren voted Tory.

**What have you been focusing on recently?**

Before I became a rep, our site had been without a rep for over a year, so I wanted to avoid this happening again by putting in place a team of reps. I'm really pleased because I've managed to recruit two very promising new reps who've done a great job of organising themselves already.

**What qualities are you looking for when talent spotting potential reps?**

For me, it's someone who understands the retail industry and the reality of our members working lives. Someone who will listen and think things through before going on the attack. They will also need to have the confidence to raise issues with managers on behalf of their members.

**What did you focus on when you were on Academy 1?**

When you're on Academy, you are taken out of your workplace and seconded to Usdaw for six months. Last year, I was going into sites with low membership, sites with inactive reps or sites where reps had an expressed an interest to do more. It was my job to help them build membership and give them the tools and opportunities they needed to look after themselves.

**What are the challenges of being a rep?**

Being a rep can be very hard especially now because the cost of living crisis is having such a devastating impact on members lives as well as their mental health. As a rep, there is only so much you

can do when it comes to finances but I find a lot of the time people just want someone they can talk to.

**What's the best bit of being a rep?**

Helping people is a great feeling especially when you help a member keep their job.

I also love being part of a movement that actively works to make things better for working people through campaigning and lobbying. Before the local elections, I went canvassing with Usdaw on behalf of the Labour Party because I strongly believe that when we vote Tory, we harm ourselves. Just look at the state of our public services, the cost of living crisis and the way the Tories are trying to water down workers' rights. We desperately need a change and being part of a union makes you feel like you can bring about that change.

**You won the Individual Recruitment Award at this year's Organising Awards, can you tell us a little about that?**

I won the award for increasing membership year-on-year until density reached 70 per cent in my store, and for putting in place a team of reps to cover the store while I'm away for Academy 2. It was humbling

to win especially when the other nominees were so good. It was a great night but now it's back to helping our members and building membership.

**Do you have any recruitment or organising tips?**

When members say they don't need to join the union because they can represent themselves, I tell them that reps act like a second pair of eyes and ears in a meeting. A rep will pick things up that can easily be missed particularly when things get heated or emotive. No matter how confident you are, defending yourself in a serious meeting can be very intimidating.

It's important to cultivate a good working relationship with your managers. You don't want an adversarial relationship because it means every time you ask for something you will be banging your head against a brick wall. It's better to get on and work together to solve problems on behalf of your members.

Anything that can save members money is welcome so reps should familiarise themselves with the range of discounts Usdaw offers on cinema tickets, parking etc. What you spend on membership can easily be made back in discounts.



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

**WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**

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

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



# MAPPING YOUR WORKPLACE

It goes without saying that the union can only ever be as strong as its membership. The larger the membership, the greater Usdaw's influence with employers.

Even in the best organised workplaces, there are non-members who have not been spoken to, or have not had the many benefits of Usdaw membership explained to them. There are also far too many workplaces where membership levels need to be higher.

One of the main reasons why people say they aren't in a union is because they've never been asked, so recruiting new members is a very important part of the role of a rep.

It is important for Usdaw to maintain a strong membership base. A robust, healthy membership means the union is in a much stronger position to secure better terms and conditions for our members. With greater numbers of members in individual workplaces and across companies nationally,

Usdaw's influence in discussions and negotiations is improved.

The union understands that times are tough for many people up and down the country, particularly for those working in jobs which are far too often low paid, with insecure hours. It is therefore important that Usdaw reps are there to share with potential members the benefits of joining Usdaw, including the advice, support and representation available should a member have a problem at work. In addition, Usdaw members can count safer workplaces, improved pay and conditions and free legal advice as some of the many reasons they have joined Usdaw.

Usdaw's aim is for all workplaces, where it has agreements, to be well-organised, with high levels of membership.

## What can I do to increase membership in my workplace?

For a systematic approach to recruiting and organising you could look at mapping your workplace.

### What is Mapping?

Mapping will provide you with an accurate picture of your workplace to help you plan your organising and recruitment activity. Mapping will help you identify the members and non-members in your workplace as well as the issues they have. Once you have this information you can target your recruitment and organising activity on the areas that need the most attention.

### How do I map my workplace?

To map your workplace:

- Involve the other reps in your workplace and share out the work.
- Draw up a floor plan with the different departments or sections where people work.
- Identify the members and non-members.
- To identify the issues your



colleagues have you will need to speak to them and ask them to share their concerns.

- Record the information on your map.

### How do I identify the members and non-members?

Where Usdaw has a recognition agreement with the employer, we would expect the business to supply you with a list of everyone who works at your workplace. You will also need a list of members so you can cross-reference. You can get a membership list from your local Usdaw office. These lists will contain personal information and therefore you should treat the information with the utmost care.

### What information should I gather?

You should try to include the following information:

- The names of the people who work there.

## GDPR

Mapping your workplace will give you access to personal information on both members and non-members, therefore it is important that this information is handled in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The union has produced a booklet and an online short course that provides guidance for you to follow.

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

- What is their job?
- What is their working pattern? Are they full or part-time, permanent/contract/agency?
- Are they a member? Would they be interested in being more active?
- Are they a non-member? Do they want to join? If not, why not?
- What issues do they have? For example, change in hours, holidays, sickness, health and safety, bullying and harassment etc.

### What should I do with the information I have gathered?

Once you have collected the information and identified your members and non-members, there are a number of things you may want to do:

- Focus on identifying the areas where you have low membership, no reps, or where there are particular issues.
- You can also use the information you gathered to run a campaign on the issues you identified in the workplace.

### Recruiting new starters at inductions

Make sure you attend the inductions to let new starters know about what the union can do for them. Tell people that Usdaw members tend to get better pay and safer workplaces. They also get representation in a disciplinary/grievance meeting, legal cover and a host of other benefits. If you're unsure of what the benefits are, download Usdaw's leaflet, *10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw*

[www.usdaw.org.uk/261](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/261)

### Approach new starters again a couple of weeks after the induction

After a couple of weeks new starters may be more amenable to joining as they might have experienced abuse from a customer, found it difficult to take their breaks or been told off by a manager.

### Get Involved in Membership Week:

Usdaw runs two Membership Weeks a year, one in January and one in June. Membership Week is a good time to focus on recruitment. During Membership Week reps could:

- Have a recruitment drive in workplaces where the opportunity for growth is the largest.
- Coordinate a recruitment day where all reps can get involved in helping the union grow.
- Target large workplaces where there are no reps, or the team would appreciate additional support.
- Speak to your manager about time off to organise a stall in the canteen, or time off to talk to new starters/non-members.
- Order recruitment leaflets and promotional materials in advance.

### Run a campaign

The campaigns are a great recruitment tool, especially the Freedom From Fear campaign. Most shopworkers have unfortunately experienced abuse at some point in their careers so this campaign really resonates with them.



# USING YOUR SOCIAL SKILLS

**O**ver the past 15 years social media has become a hugely popular method of communication for people of all ages.

Users of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram are posting and tweeting on a daily basis from their phones, tablets and desktop computers to keep in touch with friends, share their pictures and 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.

## INSTAGRAM THE BASICS

Instagram emphasises the sharing of photos and videos via its mobile app. It works a bit like Twitter and works on the principle of 'followers'. When you choose to follow another Instagram user, that user's posts appear on your own Instagram feed for you to see. You can take, edit, and publish visual content for both

followers and non-followers, as long as your account is public. Users can interact with your content via likes, comments, shares, and saves.

## 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 publicly 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).

## TEN THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN USING SOCIAL MEDIA

- Most companies have a social media policy, make sure you read it, and understand the implications of ignoring it.
- 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.
- 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.
- Remember, anyone can be disciplined or sacked for the misuse of social media.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Companies also trawl social media to 'check out' potential employees' – consider your future employment prospects and the repercussions of your social media profile.
- 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 as they are likely to see it.



# DIABETES AND WORK

In the UK, diabetes affects approximately 4.9 million people. This includes around one million people with undiagnosed diabetes.

## What is diabetes?

The hormone insulin, produced by the pancreas, keeps the level of glucose in the blood within a fairly strict range. When the pancreas fails to produce the correct amount of insulin, this condition is called diabetes.

## Type 1 diabetes

Usually starts in childhood and is caused by a lack of insulin from damaged cells in the pancreas. In type 1 diabetes, the body's immune system attacks and destroys the cells that produce insulin. As no insulin is produced, glucose levels increase, which can seriously damage the body's organs.

Type 1 diabetes is often known as insulin-dependent diabetes.

Type 1 is less common than type

2 diabetes. About 10 per cent of all people with diabetes have type 1. A member diagnosed with type 1 diabetes will need insulin injections and to pay special attention to certain aspects of their lifestyle and health to ensure their blood glucose levels stay balanced – for example, by eating a healthy diet and carrying out regular blood tests.

## Type 2 diabetes

This is a serious condition that develops when the body cannot produce enough insulin or when the insulin produced does not work effectively.

It usually starts after the age of 40 as genetic and lifestyle influences take effect over time. Many people have type 2 diabetes for years without realising because early symptoms tend to be general. This is sometimes called insulin resistant diabetes.

A member may be able to control their symptoms by eating a healthy

diet and monitoring their blood glucose level. However as it is a progressive condition, they may eventually need medication.

## SUPPORTING DISABLED MEMBERS AT WORK

Someone who has diabetes may be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act (Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland). This can help them get the right support at work because the Equality Act gives members important legal rights.

Members with diabetes may need the support of their union rep. Their condition may affect their attendance or performance and this may lead to them being disciplined under capability procedures or absence management policies. They may also find that aspects of their job make their condition worse.

Unfortunately, managers sometimes do not realise that

## DIABETES SYMPTOMS

Common symptoms of both types of diabetes are:

- Feeling very thirsty.
- Urinating frequently, particularly at night.
- Feeling very tired.
- Weight loss and loss of muscle bulk.

### Does the member have a physical or mental impairment?

Diabetes is clearly a physical impairment so members with diabetes would normally meet this part of the definition.

### Is it more than a trivial condition?

Some members may not find their diabetes too much of a problem, but for others it could have a significant impact on their life. You would have to show that the impact on the member's life is more than trivial.

### Has the condition lasted or will it last for more than a year?

In most cases, diabetes lasts for more than a year. The member does not have to be constantly experiencing problems, so fluctuating conditions such as diabetes can be counted.

### What would happen if the member stopped taking medication?

This is a key issue.

Employers sometimes argue that the member is not disabled because their condition is controlled by medication.

However, in deciding whether or not someone is disabled they must be assessed as if they were not taking their medication.

A member with type 1 diabetes who stopped having insulin injections would be at risk of serious and/or fatal illness.

Even though a person's condition might be controlled by medication the member is still to be regarded as disabled

### Does the condition affect the member's everyday life?

If you can show that the member's diabetes has a substantial effect on how they carry out normal day-to-day activities, they should meet this definition. Go through the list of common symptoms and mark off which they experience. Then go through a typical day with them and ask how their symptoms affect their day-to-day activities. It does not matter if the effect is not there every day.

If you can show that the member meets these five criteria, they would be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act. The employer would then have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to take account of the member's diabetes. The member will be the best judge of what adjustments they need.

### REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Reasonable adjustments could include changing elements of the member's job such as changing their hours of work and/or changing their meal/break times to help keep their diabetes under control.

Footwear is an important issue in the management of diabetes. Protective footwear may not always be suitable for someone with diabetes therefore the employer should look at alternatives.

Adjusting sickness formulas so that absences related to diabetes are counted separately and not used to trigger disciplinary action.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information on Supporting members with diabetes: [dtp.usdaw.co.uk/449](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/449)

members with diabetes may have rights under the Equality Act.

### SUPPORTING MEMBERS WITH DIABETES

Members with diabetes may not think of themselves as disabled. However, people with long-term health conditions such as diabetes may have rights under the law that can help them stay in work.

A member with diabetes would be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act if they can meet the definition of a disabled person as set out in the Act. If you can show that the member meets this definition, you will have a much stronger case in arguing that the employer should support the member.

Members with diabetes could be covered by the Equality Act, if you can show that the member meets the definition of a disabled person by looking at the following:

# TUC BLACK WORKERS

Trade unions recognise that they need to challenge racial inequality as well as identifying and addressing under-representation in their own structures

**U**sdaw addresses the under-representation of Black workers to build an anti-racist movement.

In May, a delegation of Usdaw members, reps and officials attended the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Black Workers' conference in London.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I was proud to serve on the TUC Anti-Racism Taskforce, which worked to build the capacity of unions to effectively challenge racial inequality. As a result, as well as strengthening existing

programmes, unions are developing and resourcing initiatives to identify and advance Black activists, address under-representation and strengthen networks.

"This work must be accompanied by a broader programme to educate and involve all members in the struggle for racial equality. The fight for racial justice cannot be left to Black workers alone. There remains an ongoing need for senior leaders to be actively engaged with this work. Our challenge is to ensure that we keep the momentum going, we cannot risk failing Black workers

by allowing progress to unravel or by leaving Black activists to drive forward change.

"At this year's, ADM, I was able to announce that applications for our new Black Members' Development Programme are officially open. This is a new start for a continuing and hugely significant journey for our union, as we seek to overcome the obstacles that get in the way of Black members getting on in our movement.

"It is my personal hope that Black members will see this as a stepping stone for their greater



Usdaw's delegation at TUC Black Workers' conference

## CONFERENCE DATES

1-2 July

**Industrial conference**

4-6 July

**ICTU Biennial conference**

11-12 July

**TUC Disabled Workers' conference**

8-11 October

**Labour Party conference**

14-15 October

**Retail Trades conference**

30-31 October

**STUC Women's conference**

involvement in the union and will help to ensure that Usdaw accurately reflects the workers we represent. The TUC Black Workers' conference provides another important platform towards improving the visibility and representation of Black workers within our trade union structures."



## STUC LGBT+ CONFERENCE 2023

A delegation of Usdaw members, reps and officials attended the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Plus (LGBT+) conference in May in Glasgow.

The union is concerned by the unequal health outcomes experienced by LGBT+ people and that young women and LGBT+ workers continue to be at disproportionate risk of sexual harassment at work.

LGBT+ people in Scotland face health inequalities across every measure of wellbeing, with higher levels of exclusion, isolation, discrimination and depression.

While there are many positives in how LGBT+ people experience healthcare, there is still work to be done to improve LGBT+ access to and experience of healthcare. Many LGBT+ people continue to be 'outed' without their consent, treated with intrusive curiosity and subject to unequal treatment because of who they are.

Discrimination results in misdiagnosis, delayed diagnosis, inappropriate treatments and can prevent LGBT+ people from seeking help.

This increases their risk of developing 'chronic' physical and mental health problems which, amongst other things can have a negative impact on their working lives and result in disciplinary action and/or dismissal.

Udaw called for the Scottish government to implement the recommendations in the NHS and Public Health Scotland

'Health Needs Assessment' report in consultation with unions and LGBT+ led campaigning organisations.

Sexual harassment is not a new issue. It has been on employers' agendas for decades and since 2017 it has received increased attention in the wake of the #MeToo movement. While sexual harassment can happen to anyone, young women and LGBT+ workers are at particular risk.

For LGBT+ people it is very often linked to a perception that being lesbian, gay, bisexual or trans is an invitation to make sexualised comments or ask inappropriate questions their sex life, particularly if an individual is 'out'.

This is a hidden problem, with two thirds of LGBT+ workers who are harassed not reporting it and one in four of those who did not report the harassment being silenced by fear of 'outing' themselves at work.

Even where it is reported, most current approaches to preventing and addressing sexual harassment in the workplace are ineffective and often make things worse.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Unions are crucial to defending LGBT+ workers' rights and we acknowledge the vital role reps play supporting members to report sexual harassment, ensuring appropriate action is taken, and campaigning to create safe and inclusive workplaces for LGBT+ workers."

# YOUNG AND ACTIVE REPS

Young workers get a say on the issues that matter to them at this year's Young Workers' conference

**A**n Usdaw delegation of reps and officials attended this year's annual Trades Union Congress (TUC) Young Workers conference at Congress House in London.

Udaw highlighted the disproportionate impact of sexual harassment on younger workers and sought action to tackle it.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Young workers are at higher risk of sexual harassment because of their often precarious position in the labour market. Usdaw research shows that young women are more likely than older colleagues to experience sexual harassment at work and less likely to report incidents to their employer because of a well-founded fear of reprisal and further victimisation.

"There is an urgent need to tackle and prevent sexual harassment and the cultures that enable it in the workplace. We are calling for a commitment to tackle sexual harassment and the cultures that enable it; action plans to tackle and prevent harassment and a preventative duty to be incorporated into the Equality Act accompanied by a Statutory Code of Practice.

"Sexual harassment is not inevitable; it can be prevented. Addressing this is essential if we are going to tackle power imbalances and prevent harassment within workplaces."

Network spoke to two young reps about their experiences of the conference.

## Boriana Nacheva

Tesco worker and Usdaw rep Boriana Nacheva tells us about her experience of the Young Workers' conference. The 22-year-old is studying law at Oxford Brookes University and became a rep in 2021 to gain experience and help her colleagues.

"This was the second year I attended the Young Workers' conference and it was a little overwhelming because there were so many people there," said Boriana. "It was very exciting to meet young workers from other unions and get their points of view on certain issues.

"The issues that concern young workers are similar no matter where you work: pay, working unsociable hours and being taken advantage of because you don't know your rights were common themes.

"I spoke in support of the motion on sexual harassment because this is such a big issue for young workers especially young women. The harassment can come from customers, colleagues and even managers. Many young workers feel like if they complain about sexual harassment, it will either be brushed off or it could jeopardise their working relationships, that's why many stay quiet or laugh it off. It was good to see trade unions coming together to try and tackle this very serious issue."

## Brooke Boyer

IKEA worker and Usdaw rep Brooke



Udaw's delegation at TUC Young Workers' conference

Boyer shares her experience of the Young Workers' conference and the impact it had on her. The 27-year-old has only been a rep for 12 months and has already been selected for Academy 1.

"I became a rep because I was unofficially carrying out the role anyway," said Brooke. "It was great when I formally got elected because I then had access to Usdaw's training programme. This has been life-changing for me because I didn't do so well at school. I come from a deprived estate which affected me; I lacked confidence and didn't have a voice until I became an Usdaw rep.

"Attending the Young Workers' conference was amazing. For the

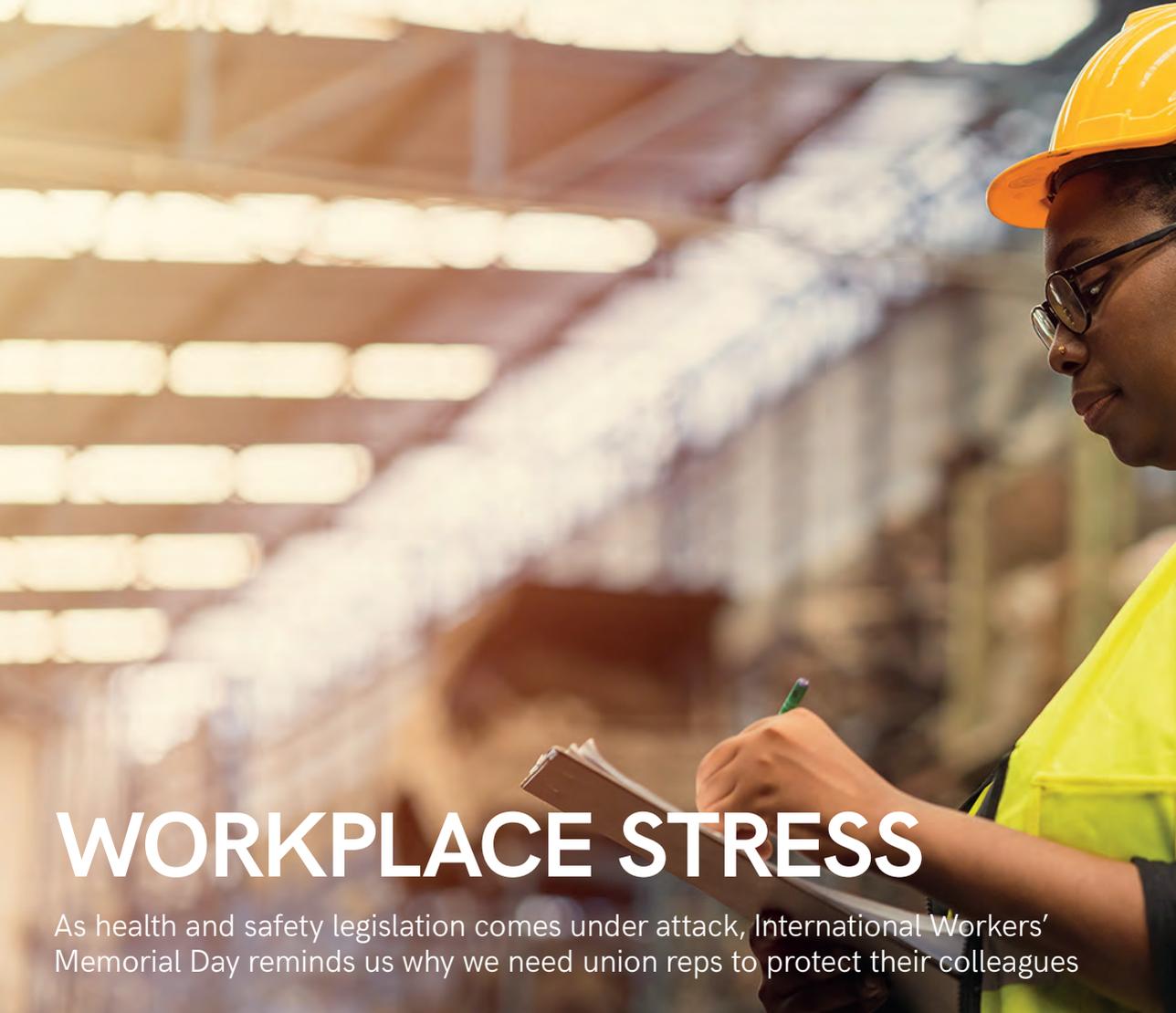


first time in my life, I felt like people were actually listening to me, I got a say on policy and I got a vote. I was buzzing when I got home after the conference. I was so enthused I stayed up most of the night learning my agreement!

“Going to the conference has made me focus on the needs of young workers and when I go on stand down, I’m going to challenge myself to recruit young workers. Joining the union and becoming a rep gave me a voice and belief in myself and I want other young workers to have the opportunities Usdaw gave me. After all, the young workers of today are the trade unionists of tomorrow.”



Young workers signed up colleagues during Young Workers’ Week at Tesco Bidston Moss Extra



# WORKPLACE STRESS

As health and safety legislation comes under attack, International Workers' Memorial Day reminds us why we need union reps to protect their colleagues

**H**alf of British workers say they feel stressed at work and a third say their work negatively impacts their outside lives.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) statistics show that work-related stress, depression or anxiety represented 50 per cent of all work-related illness in 2020/21, with incidences rising significantly over the last 20 years.

## What is stress?

The (HSE) defines stress as 'the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.'

Stress affects people differently – what stresses one person may not

affect another. Factors like skills and experience, age or disability may all affect whether a worker can cope.

## What is the employer's responsibility?

Your employer has a legal duty to assess the risks to your health from stress at work and share the results of any risk assessment with you.

## What can reps do?

Be sure to pay attention to those around you in the workplace, specifically in regard to any behavioural changes. Make yourself visible and available to be spoken to as it is not always obvious when a colleague is struggling.

Reps can take action using

Usdaw's stress questionnaire to gauge stress levels in the workplace. You can consult your employer on your findings from the questionnaire where they indicate work-related stress.

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

You could recommend to your employer that they consider using the HSE's work-related stress guidance to identify and manage the main causes of work-related stress using the HSE's Management Standards at: **[www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards)** and the HSE's Talking Toolkit at: **[www.hse.gov.uk/stress/talking-toolkit.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/talking-toolkit.htm)**

If employers aren't cooperative, reps can complete Usdaw's HS2



## HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Usdaw's health and safety section has recently produced a monthly newsletter, which will focus on a particular topic each month. The newsletter has primarily been developed as a resource to assist reps within their role and will be distributed via email to all health and safety reps. To avoid missing out, ensure that your current email address is kept up to date on your personal details.

If there are any topics reps would like the union to cover, please contact the health and safety section at head office.

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

or scan the code below



### Health and Safety Rep Report Form HS2



This report does not imply that the conditions are safe and healthy or that the arrangements for welfare at work are satisfactory in all other respects.

#### Instructions

- Health and Safety Rep
- Health and Safety Rep fills in date, name, description.
- Health and Safety Rep gives top two copies to manager.
- Health and Safety Rep and manager agree time allowed for reply.
- Health and Safety Rep retains 2nd copy for record, with note of time agreed for reply.
- If you come as individual person(s) in this report, make sure you obtain their permission beforehand. If you do not have their permission, then please do not refer to their name or other personal details and instead refer to them as a colleague or an employee.

#### Management

- Management are asked to reply within agreed time.
- Management fill in reply section and return top copy to Health and Safety Rep.
- Management keep 2nd copy for their record.
- Health and Safety Rep should check all reply.

#### Brief description of problem

#### Reply: Action taken or proposed (with date) or reason management consider no action necessary.

Date report submitted:

Name of Health and Safety Rep:

Name of manager to whom submitted:

Time agreed for reply:

Form HS2 (Rev 01/2018)

form to put their concerns in writing to their employer. This

should prompt the employer to take action and respond in writing by a certain date, outlining the action that they have taken. If you are not satisfied with their response, contact your senior rep or area organiser at your local Usdaw office.

### Using the Usdaw health and safety rep report form

Usdaw has a health and safety rep report form (form HS2). Copies are available through your branch secretary/area organiser. Alternatively, your employer may have their own reporting system.

The form has three copies. The top copy and second copy can be sent to the appropriate manager (supervisor, safety officer, etc), leaving you with a copy of the complaint and date. You should make it clear that you expect the second copy to be returned to you by management once they have filled in the 'reply' section. They should indicate what action they propose to take and when, or why they think no action is necessary. Use the information on the form to chase up the problem and make sure it is resolved.



### CONTACT

■ **Health & safety officer**

Tony Whelan  
0161 249 2474

■ **Health & safety advisor**

Charlie Dodd  
0161 249 2441

■ **General enquiries**

healthandsafety  
@usdaw.org.uk

**MENOPAUSE IS A WORK ISSUE**

# TALKING TOOLKIT

More needs to be done to tackle the taboo surrounding the menopause. It's traditionally been seen as a private matter or 'a women's issue', particularly in the workplace, where women feel they are unable to talk about it.

Menopause is a workplace health and safety issue. Reps can highlight the issue by placing the menopause poster on their union noticeboards. They can use the 'menopause talking toolkit' to better support members working through the menopause and enable them to make suggestions about workplace adjustments that will help improve their working lives.

- Menopause Talking Toolkit  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/MenopauseToolkit](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/MenopauseToolkit)
- Menopause and Perimenopause - An Advice Guide For Usdaw Members  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/WH06-Menopause/](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/WH06-Menopause/)
- Me, Work and The Menopause poster  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/R73](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/R73)

**Me, Work and the Menopause**

The menopause is often treated as a joke, something to make fun of. But many women find their symptoms really hard to manage, particularly when they are at work.

If you are struggling at work because of menopause symptoms you can speak to your Union Usdaw for help and support.

To find out more visit the website:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause)

Or email [equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk)

**USDRAW**  
EQUALITIES

Poster R73 February 2023  
Illustration by @molly\_brown

**HAZARDS CONFERENCE: 1 - 3 SEPTEMBER 2023**

# ORGANISING FOR SAFER WORK CONDITIONS

**THE 33<sup>RD</sup> NATIONAL HAZARDS CONFERENCE**

IT'S A DEADLY BUSINESS.  
DECENT WORK IS SAFE AND HEALTHY WORK.

29-31 July 2022 #HAZ2022

Hazards Conference is the UK's biggest and best educational and organising event for trade union safety reps with a mixture of plenary sessions, meetings and workshops.

Delegates will have the opportunity to share the experience with safety reps and activists from other unions and sectors.

This year the annual Hazards Conference will be focusing on 'Organising for safe and healthy working environments'.

The conference is being held at Keele University from the 1st - 3rd September 2023. There is also an option to attend online for those who may not be able to attend in

person. The fee for full residential in-person delegates is £320, whilst for non-residential in-person delegates or for online delegates the fee is £210.

Any rep who wishes to attend the conference should seek funding from their branch.

Applications can be made using the booking form by the closing date of the 11th August 2023 at: [www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/conference](http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/conference)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS IN JEOPARDY

## WORK RISK FROM RETAINED EU LAW BILL

Workers' safety standards are under threat with the impending approval of The Retained EU Law Bill (REUL). The REUL Bill has the possibility to alter the entire landscape of health and safety, with hard won, longstanding rights and regulations disappearing overnight.

If the Bill is adopted in its current form, most health and safety regulations will 'sunset' on 31 December 2023. This includes the 'six-pack' and the framework requirements around health and safety which reps may be familiar with:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 – including risk assessment and 'Competent Person' requirements
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 - amended 2022

The British Safety Council, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health have all expressed serious concerns about the Bill and urged the government to rethink its approach.

At this stage there is still a great deal of uncertainty about what will happen. Reps should continue as normal, and the union will inform reps when it has a clearer understanding of the potential implications.

#### Further reading can be found at:

- [iosh.com](https://www.iosh.com) search Retained EU Law Bill
- [shponline.co.uk](https://www.shponline.co.uk) search Retained EU Law Bill



## NEW HSE GUIDANCE ON AGGRESSION AT WORK

## ADVICE NOW COVERS PHONE &amp; ONLINE

The HSE has recently refreshed its guidance on violence and aggression at work. HSE now emphasises that their definition of violence includes aggression, such as verbal abuse or threats which can be face-to-face, online or over the phone.

The guidance can help reps work alongside employers to assess the risks, put the right controls in place to protect workers, and report incidents and learn from them. The updated guidance can be viewed here:

[www.hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk) search violence at work



# MemberOffers

## **CARS & TRANSPORT**

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

## **INSURANCE**

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

## **MONEY & FINANCE**

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

## **HEALTH & BEAUTY**

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

## **LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT**

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

## **HOLIDAYS**

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

## **SHOPPING**

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

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

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



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

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

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

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

## LIGHTHOUSE

### *Time to sort out your finances?*

Lighthouse Financial Advice can guide you through those times in life when you need to address financial issues and can help with all aspects of your financial planning. Call **08000 85 85 90** or email: **LFA@quilter.com** for your complimentary, no obligation initial consultation. Please quote **Usdawrep2306** in your email or when speaking to a member of the team on the phone.

\*Or to find out more go to:

**[www.lighthousefinancialsolutions.co.uk/affinity/usdaw](http://www.lighthousefinancialsolutions.co.uk/affinity/usdaw)**

Approver Lighthouse Advisory Services Limited. 25 April 2023.



## REWARD MOBILE

### *Latest handsets, best deals.*

Reward Mobile has great offers that let you enjoy endless hours of entertainment and practicality, combining the latest handsets with brilliant data plans. Exclusive phone deals and SIM-only contracts. Deals on handsets such as Samsung, Huawei, Apple and Google Pixel.

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



## ONLINE TICKET STORE

### *Save 10% on your booking!*

Online Ticket Store offer an unrivalled range of more than 5,000 theme parks, sightseeing tours, theatre shows, experience days and other activities in over 30 countries around the world.

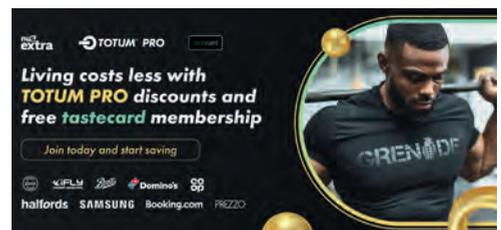
\*To find out more go to: **[www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)**

## TOTUM PRO CARD

**TOTUM PRO provides access to fantastic discounts on 350+ brands online and on the high street, such as 10% off at the Co-op\*, ASOS, Samsung and many more.**

If you become a one, two or three year TOTUM PRO member, you will also receive a free tastecard\* (worth up to £39.99 a year) for the duration of your membership. Enjoy the benefits of tastecard which include 2 for 1 dining at thousands of restaurants and 50% off pizza deliveries!

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



\*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. Reward Mobile - Reward terms <https://rewardmobile.co.uk/reward-mobile-terms-conditions/> / EE Terms <https://rewardmobile.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/EE-PAYM-BUSINESS-Terms-Only-v7-01062022.pdf>. Online Ticket Store - cancellation charges apply, please click here to see full terms and conditions. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd. Further benefits are organised directly by Usdaw Membership Services. See website for details. Neither Usdaw nor Parliament Hill are part of the same group as the providers.

# Staff Announcements

A long-serving regional secretary retires, while Usdaw welcomes a new regional secretary, two area organisers and a lifelong learning project worker

## NICK IRELAND

**The regional secretary for South Wales and Western retires in July after 24 years on the union's staff.**

Nick began his trade union journey in 1991 when he stood to become a rep at Smith & Nephew, a medical technology company, in Hull. He was a rep for more than seven years before being appointed as an area organiser in the Norwich office in 1999.

"I was an area organiser for almost six years before being appointed as the regional secretary for the South Wales and Western region in 2004," said Nick, 59. "It was a huge upheaval as I had to relocate to Newport in Gwent with two young children. But I have no regrets, I loved the role. I love working with people and a large part of my role included supporting, guiding and mentoring staff and reps.

"As part of my role, I was very proud to be the president of Wales TUC and vice chair of South West TUC. But the thing I'm most proud of is being the chair for Welsh Labour through the pandemic, as I got a

chance to represent our members' issues directly to the people who are at the very heart of government in Wales.

"After I retire, I'm looking forward to doing more mountain biking, going walking in the hills with my wife, who is also retiring at the same time, and reading more books. Our first grandchild is due in August so I'm looking forward to being around for her.

"Usdaw is full of some wonderful people and I'm going to miss my friends, colleagues and our reps.

"I want to wish my long time deputy and friend Mike Walker the best of luck in his new role, I'm sure he will do a great job of taking the region forward."

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Nick has been a great friend and colleague for many years and his enthusiasm will be missed by everyone in Usdaw. I want to thank Nick for the contribution he has made to his region and Usdaw as a whole. I wish him a happy and healthy retirement."

## MIKE WALKER

**Deputy regional secretary Mike Walker has succeeded Nick Ireland as the new regional secretary in the South Wales and Western region.**

Mike joined Usdaw as an area organiser in 1997 at the age of 25. Prior to that, he worked as a warehouse operative for Littlewoods Home Shopping in Oldham. He was a rep for six years before becoming area organiser in the Midlands region. In 2003, he moved to Bristol to take up his post as the deputy regional secretary, a role which he did for almost twenty-one years.

"I'm looking forward to starting the new job in July," said Mike, 51. "I'll be focusing on growing membership and getting the new crop of area organisers up to speed. With a possible general election coming up, I want to ensure that what we have learnt from working with a devolved Labour government in Wales can be used to ensure a Labour victory that will deliver for working people across the country.



Nick Ireland



Mike Walker



Kate Cummings

"Nick and I worked together for nineteen years and he's left the region in a very good place. It's been fantastic working with someone who was a mentor, a colleague, as well as a friend. I wish him the best in his retirement."

### KATE CUMMING

**Kate Cumming area organiser for the Scottish region retires after 9 years.**

Kate was appointed as an area organiser in 2014 after being a Sata rep in Morrisons for seven years.

"I've loved being an area organiser," said Kate, 67. "My colleagues in the Aberdeen office have been absolutely brilliant and the reps have been ever so supportive. I've also been fortunate enough to have a patch that includes Orkney and the Shetland Islands because the islands are stunning. "Usdaw has given me a lot of opportunities and I got to meet many wonderful people. I'm really going to miss everyone.

"I don't have any major retirement plans. The way I see it, when you're retired you can do whatever you want.

"Although I do have a new kitten, a whirlwind named Bob, who has brightened up the house. I'm looking forward to spending lots of time with him."

### CAROLINE BAIRD

**Former project worker Caroline Baird joins the team as the lifelong project worker for Scotland and will be based at the Glasgow Office.**

Caroline, who worked in Tesco retail for sixteen years, was a shop steward for seven years and union learning rep for five. She spent the last couple of years being seconded to Usdaw as a project worker before being appointed.

"I'm chuffed that I've officially joined the team," said Caroline, 45. "I will be focusing on learning and development based on the strategy set out by the Scottish government which includes mental health, digital skills, maths, english, ESOL and green skills. I will also be running learning campaigns, meeting new ULRs and conducting their inductions, and meeting with employers to see what support we can put in place for our members."

### EMMA WOODFINE

**Emma Woodfine is appointed as an area organiser for the South Wales and Western region and will be based in the Bristol Office.**

The former Ocado chargehand became a rep in 2020 and has not looked back since.

"It's been a bit of whirlwind," said Emma, 45. "I realised I wanted to become an area organiser when

I was coaching reps as part of my Academy training last year. The training I have received from Usdaw has been second to none and I wouldn't be here without all the support I have received.

"I'm going to focus on recruitment because I really enjoy doing it and if I'm going to coach reps, then I need to make sure I don't lose my touch. Recruiting, training and developing reps is also big priority for me."

### GEORGE FRY

**George Fry takes up his new role as area organiser in the South Wales and Western Region and will be based in the Plymouth office.**

The former Tesco manager became a Sata rep in 2020 and in a few short years completed two bouts of stand down and Academy 1, as well as winning the Most Promising New Activist award in his region.

"I had to relocate from Bristol to Exeter to take up my new role," said George, 28. "And have gone from living in a concrete jungle to an area of outstanding beauty!

"I will be covering Exeter and Devon, and my priorities will focus on recruitment, and developing our reps so that they can provide the best support to our members. I also want to talent spot and bring new reps on board as there's a lot of great people out there."



Caroline Baird



Emma Woodfine



George Fry

## NEW IN!

### Leaflets & Booklets

**Merchandise Order Form**  
(Leaflet 273)

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

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

**Flexible Working** (Leaflet 346)

**Member Offers** (Leaflet 398)

**Are YOU affected by Male Domestic Violence?** (Leaflet 405)

**Agency Workers** (Leaflet 407)

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

**Menopause is a Workplace Issue - An Advice Guide for Usdaw Reps**  
(Leaflet 454)

**Puzzled By Pensions? Could the Menopause Be Impacting Your Pension?** (Leaflet 455)

**Early Menopause - An Advice Guide For Members** (Leaflet 456)

**Talking About Men's Health - Male Cancers** (Leaflet 461)

**The Menopause and Perimenopause**  
(Women's Health Series: 6)

**Call It Out - Towards an End to Sexual Harassment**

**Lone Working in the Convenience Sector Booklet**

**Survey Results 2022: Campaign to End Violence and Abuse against Retail Workers**

**Ushaw For Labour: NEC Statement to the 2023 ADM**

### Posters & Flyers

**Is It Too Hot Where You Work?**  
(Poster R7)

**Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family** (Poster R10)



# TALKING ABOUT MALE CANCERS

This leaflet highlights the two most common male-specific cancers and how to spot the early signs

**M**en don't always look after their health as much as they should. They're less likely than women to use primary health care services and can be reluctant to seek help until their health declines noticeably. Of the 10 most common cancers to affect both men and women, it's men who are more likely not only to develop the illness, but die from it.

Our new leaflet aims to raise men's awareness of the importance

of maintaining physical health, especially when it comes to cancer. It gives basic advice on spotting the early signs of prostate and testicular cancer – the two most common male-specific forms of the disease.

As men are more reluctant to visit their GP than women, the workplace is a good way of getting men important information that could make a real difference to their health. Check out this leaflet at:

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/461](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/461)

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

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

# OVER TO YOU

## OBITUARY MICHAEL LEGGE

It is with much regret and sadness that we advise of the passing of Michael Legge on 14th February 2023.

Michael had been an Usdaw member for 27 years, a shop steward, ULR, and branch secretary. As a rep, Michael was involved in many committees and working parties within the Tesco distribution network and played a pivotal role in supporting his colleagues. He was known for his hard work and dedication and well-respected both regionally and nationally.

Ushaw national officer Joanne McGuinness said: "We have lost not only a colleague but a dear friend. He played a crucial role in wage negotiations for many years. The knowledge he had of the site history and detailed filing system is what we will endeavour to carry forward on his behalf. He has left a gap and a lasting legacy."

Our thoughts are with Michael's wife Kim, sons Christopher and Michael and grandchildren Carter and Rhys.

**Nicola Scarborough (AO),  
Willy and Stevie**

## ORGANISING AWARDS NOMINEES GET REWARDED



Top row l-r: **Bernadette Owens, Tesco St Rollox Glasgow Extra Individual Recruitment award**; **Derek Smith, Greggs, Clydesmill Bakery Outstanding Achievement award**; **The Greggs team, Clydesmill Bakery Recruitment and Organising award**;  
Middle row l-r: **Darren Oakley, Tesco West Brom individual recruitment award**; **Jamie Logan, Morrisons, Helensburgh Most Promising New Activist award**; **Chhaya Patel Tesco Dotcom, Croydon Individual Organising award**; **Martin Webb Tesco Dotcom, Croydon Individual Recruitment award**; **Syed Naqvi Most Tesco Dotcom, Croydon Most Promising New Activist & Outstanding Achievement award**; Bottom row: **Elizabeth Rainey, Tesco Maryhill Health and Safety Rep award**.



Pensions Awareness campaign in Sainsbury's Eastkilbride

## LEGAL PLUS HELPLINE THANKS

Just a few lines to thank you for the advice you gave me (via the U.S.D.A.W. scheme) relating to my problem with "The Trainline" refusing to refund when the amendable ticket for a journey in France/Italy proved not to be amendable.

It will interest you to know that, after following your advice, "The Trainline" issued a refund to my current account for £32: not quite the £35 I think they owe me, but enough to make court action seem unnecessary. I think we can call that a partial victory.

Thank you again for your help.



# Supporting Parents and Carers Overstretched

The Westminster, Welsh and Scottish Governments offer **free state funded** childcare to parents of children **aged 2, 3 and 4 years old**.

Although the schemes are similar, they have **different eligibility rules**.

Currently there isn't a free childcare scheme in Northern Ireland, however other support for working families is available.

Scan the code to find out  
which scheme is right for you  
or visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/spc](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/spc)



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

Contact us at [parentsandcarers@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:parentsandcarers@usdaw.org.uk)

or call **0161 224 2804** for more information.

#Overstretched

