

NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024



CELEBRATING STAR REPS

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**Politics affects
everyone.
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can have your say.**

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote



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PUBLISHED BY:

Urdaw Head Office
Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay,
Salford Quays, Manchester, M50 3XZ
t: 0161 224 2804
e: network@usdaw.org.uk
w: usdaw.org.uk

HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Mike Glover

EDITOR

Saiqa Khushnood

SENIOR REPORTER

Adam Kaczmarek

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Paula Barke

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Dave Williams, Laura Berisford, Jo Bird,
Charlie Dodd

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Lee Boswell; Rez Javied;
Via Getty Images:
rzelich; jacoblund; SDI Productions;
Highwaystarz-Photography; 9dreamstudio;

ADVERTISING

Paul Heitzman t: 01727 739 196
e: paul@centurypublishing.uk
Century One Publishing, Alban Row,
27-31 Verulam Road, St Albans, AL3 4DG

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THE COUNTRY NEEDS A BOLD PLAN OF ACTION

The ongoing cost of living crisis remains a key challenge for working people. The price of essential items like food continue to rise at twice the headline rate of inflation, which is still double the Government's target.

Urdaw continues to campaign for a genuine living wage and more secure contracts as a key method of tackling in-work poverty. Disgracefully, this Conservative Government has turned its back on working people. They have failed to tackle a cost of living crisis that has impacted working people for over two-and-a-half years. And despite promising to improve workers' rights they have attacked those workers seeking fair pay deals through deeply damaging anti-strike legislation.

The union will also continue to push for a law to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse. Conservative MPs repeatedly voted down a protection of workers law, which already exists in Scotland. However, Labour has made a commitment to deliver a protection of shopworkers law and 13,000 more neighbourhood police, which will make a real difference to our members' lives.

In 2024, Usdaw will continue to mobilise for a general election to get this Tory



Government out. Labour's five national missions address the real issues of working people. Higher growth and better jobs, safer streets with extra police, cheaper energy bills through clean power, break down barriers with more opportunities for children and our NHS back on its feet.

Politics affects all lives and we continue urge all of our members to make sure that they are registered to vote now, so that they have a say on the decisions that affect them.

Together we can win decent work, fair pay and dignity for all workers.

Paddy Lillis

Urdaw General Secretary

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





FOR YOUR
USDAW NOTICEBOARD

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.

You can contact via phone/email/live chat.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/
contactus](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/contactus)

SAMARITANS

- Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.
- 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Via phone or email.

www.samaritans.org

StepChange
Debt Charity

- Free, confidential and expert debt advice and money guidance.
- 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)

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IN THE NEWS

Don't forget to email the editor your view network@usdaw.org.uk

TORIES STRIKE-BREAKING BID



Usdaw responded to the Government's consultation on their draft regulations that would allow employers to engage agency workers to fill in for striking workers. The Government's original regulations were embarrassingly quashed by the High Court for a failure to consult.

Representing millions of workers in the UK, as well as Usdaw, the unions behind the successful legal action included: ASLEF, BFAWU, FDA, GMB, NEU, NUJ, POA, PCS, RMT and Unite. They were co-ordinated by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and represented by

Thompsons Solicitors LLP.

The proposals have been heavily criticised by unions, agencies, employers and parliamentarians. The TUC had warned these new laws would worsen industrial disputes, undermine the fundamental right to strike and could endanger public safety if agency staff are required to fill safety critical roles but haven't been fully trained.

Ushaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Our victory in the High Court was a huge embarrassment for the Government and demonstrated that ministers were prepared

to break the law to break a strike. It is now time for these divisive proposals to be dropped because they will create unnecessary tensions between employers and their employees, making it more difficult to resolve disputes.

"It beggars belief that, in the midst of a cost of living emergency, the Government is engaged in ideological attacks on workers' rights. Instead of undermining trade union members, the Government should be working with us on urgent plans to eliminate low pay and insecure work. Only Labour is committed to offering

a new deal for workers that will deliver a wage that people can live on, give people basic rights from day one and boost collective bargaining, to improve workers' pay and conditions."

MEMBERSHIP

For week ended 20 Jan 2024

South Wales & Western	43,181
Eastern	50,878
Midlands	47,885
North Eastern	49,369
Scottish	36,959
Southern	50,751
North West	76,313
Total	355,336

INFLATION BUSTING PAY INCREASE

SAINSBURY'S PAY REAL LIVING WAGE

Usdaw welcomed the 9 per cent boost that would see staff pay increase to at least £12 per hour across Sainsbury's and Argos. Effective from March, this increase means that Sainsbury's boosted pay by 50 per cent since 2018. £12 per hour and £13.15 for colleagues in London, makes Sainsbury's the largest supermarket to pay colleagues the Real Living Wage nationally and the London Living Wage. This will give staff an extra £1,910 a year nationally and £2,290 a year in London. The investment of £200 million brings the three-year total investment in pay to over £500 million.

In addition to the pay increases during recent years, Sainsbury's

has provided staff with free food during shifts and increased staff discount of 15 per cent at Sainsbury's every Friday and Saturday and 15 per cent at Argos every payday. This Christmas, all staff received a voucher to earn 4 times Nectar points on their big Christmas shop, as well as a 20 per cent discount at Sainsbury's during Christmas week.

Usdaw national officer Bally Auluk said: "The continuing strong working relationship between

Usdaw and Sainsbury's has resulted in an inflation busting pay award of over 9 per cent, despite inflation falling, and following on from the significant pay increases over the previous couple of years. The current cost of living is still on the rise which is why Usdaw is very pleased the business has taken this on board during our consultations and responded in such a positive manner, which includes continuing to offer free food and additional discount."

Sainsbury's

How much do British people really have in their savings?



The current economic climate has made saving money harder than usual, but how much of an impact has this had on our ability to put money aside, and where do Britain's best savers reside? Shepherds Friendly surveyed* people in the UK on personal finances to find out.

The survey revealed people in the UK have an average of £20,612 in their savings but almost one in seven individuals have nothing at all in their savings whilst around one in six have £500 or less.

Breaking this down by location, residents in the East of England have the most money in their

savings (£27,822 on average) with Norwich being the city that has the most saved up (£31,533 on average). Meanwhile, Glaswegians proved to have the lowest amount in their savings at £6,419.

Looking at how much each age group surveyed has in their savings on average, it might not come as a surprise that 18-24 year olds have the least (£12,756), whilst those aged 55+ have the most (£29,184).

Whether saving for a first home or setting aside money

for the future, finding the right ISA for your saving goals is a great way to encourage you to save each month. Plus, you'll also be able to save money without paying tax on any investment growth.

Remember: when you invest, your capital is at risk and returns aren't guaranteed.

If you'd like help to start investing, please visit shepherdsfriendly.co.uk today for more information.

*Shepherds Friendly surveyed 2,003 British adults across the UK in April 2023 on their spending and saving habits.

STAFF BENEFIT

NEW AGREEMENT FOR ASDA AND USDAW

Usdaw and supermarket giant Asda signed a new collective agreement in January. Usdaw is now able to recruit and represent hourly-paid staff employed in the convenience stores and Leon restaurants that Asda recently acquired from EG Group.

The agreement, which covers Euro Garages Ltd and Leon Restaurants Ltd, means that Usdaw will negotiate on pay, hours and holidays annually for hourly-paid colleagues employed in the 356

convenience stores and 77 Leon restaurant sites in the UK.

Usdaw has a track record of representing workers in convenience retail. The union already represents members in the 119 convenience stores Asda acquired from the Co-op in 2022, as part of an existing recognition agreement.

Usdaw national officer Jayne Allport said "We are pleased to have reached this agreement with Asda. It

is a positive step forward for Usdaw members within the EG group of stores and Leon restaurants who will now benefit from full representation and collective bargaining under this new agreement. This is in addition to the existing arrangements we already have in place with our membership within the ex-Co-op petrol filling stations and Asda Northern Ireland."

SPOTLIGHT ON THE CO-OP CREDIT UNION

A free member benefit available to all Usdaw members

January is a time when many of us are feeling the pinch on our finances and are looking for ways to get into better habits around money for the year ahead.

A great place to start is by checking out the free benefits available to Usdaw members from The Co-op Credit Union. The Co-op Credit Union offers a range of services from access to simple savings schemes, affordable rates on loans, member offers and help & free tools to support members with the rising cost of living.

WHY MONEY MATTERS AT WORK

Money worries are the single biggest source of stress to UK employees, ahead of relationships, parenting and caring, according to recent research published by the CIPD.

The research also shows that this not only affects mental health but also directly impacts performance at work and increases stress-related absence.

● A third of employees say cost-

of-living-related financial worries have negatively impacted their productivity at work.

● 59% of employees with money worries say they are not working at their best as a result.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT YOUR MEMBERS

The good news is that the credit union is here to help members improve their finances and develop peace of mind around money. Membership of the credit union is a great way to build savings members can fall back on in an emergency, or give access to affordable, safe credit to spread the cost of larger purchases or expenses.

And saving even a small amount each month is proven to go a long way to help build financial resilience, helping to ease money worries.

Want to help spread the word with your members? Get in touch to request a poster for your workplace via co-operativecreditunion.coop/usdaw

Find out more about the benefits of Co-op Credit Union membership for you & your members at co-operativecreditunion.coop/usdaw

For a complete list of Usdaw publications and to order visit:
dtp.usdaw.org.uk/PublicationsCatalogue

CHANGING GENDER AND THE WORKPLACE

A guide explaining what transgender means and how equality legislation protects trans people

It's estimated that between 300-500,000 people in the UK are transgender, meaning that they don't identify with the gender recorded on their birth certificate. Some of the terms associated with the subject can feel confusing to people who aren't familiar with the issues.

Usdaw's equalities section has produced an advice guide to help reps and members gain a better

understanding of the experiences of transgender people. Featuring useful information on what it means to be transgender, a glossary of terms and first-hand accounts of members' experiences, it will be a handy addition to every rep's union library. It will also help reps use the Equality Act to support their trans members at work.

Check out the guide online at:
dtp.usdaw.org.uk/424

NEW IN!

Usdaw Publications

Catalogue & Form
(Leaflet 116)

Merchandise Order Form
(Leaflet 273)

**Wanted - Union
Representatives** (Leaflet 279)

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

**Recruitment - the Things
They Say** (Leaflet 298)

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

Member Offers (Leaflet 398)

**Do you use Personal
Protective Equipment at
Work?** (Leaflet 402)

**Changing Gender -
Understanding the Issues**
(Leaflet 424)

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

**Autism - An advice guide for
Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 459)

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

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MISERY FOR MILLIONS

Usdaw is again calling on the Government to tackle the cost of living crisis after the cap on unit prices of household energy rose by 5 per cent, which is an increase of £94 for a typical household, on a dual-fuel direct debit. Many could pay more depending on usage.

Usdaw conducted a survey of over 6,000 members, mainly key workers, and found that:

- Nearly 70 per cent have struggled to pay energy bills in the past year, with 30 per cent struggling to pay them every single month.
- Around a third no longer use their household heating.
- Over four-in-ten have cut down on other essentials such as food.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Any cost increase in essential items like energy and food, put a huge strain on those already struggling to make ends meet. Both energy and food are rising at more than the headline rate of inflation

and these fundamentals of life account for a large proportion of low-paid workers income.

"Energy costs remain shockingly high and, without last year's energy support payments, many households could end up paying more than last winter. Typical bills are still nearly double the prices being paid in February 2020, which amounts to over two years of a cost of living crisis severely impacting our members.

"Along with eye-watering food inflation at 9.1 per cent, 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. 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.

"The Government is not offering the change our members need. Labour is pledged to deliver a much

needed and long overdue new deal for workers. The failures of nearly fourteen years of the Conservatives in government are clear for everyone to see. Only a Labour Government can put Britain back on track."

The next Labour Government will deliver a new deal that includes:

- Making work pay with a genuine living wage that people can actually live on.
- Banning zero-hours contracts.
- Ending fire and rehire.
- Giving workers basic rights from day one.
- Going further and faster in closing the gender pay gap.
- Making work more family friendly.
- Tackling sexual harassment.
- Ensuring that unions can stand up for their members.
- Boosting collective bargaining, to improve workers' pay, terms and conditions.

PROTECTION A PRIORITY

RETAIL CRIME EPIDEMIC ACTION NEEDED

Usdaw is calling for action to tackle the retail crime epidemic.

The union is deeply concerned by reports of vulnerable women and children being trafficked to the UK to shoplift for crime groups. Retailers Against Crime, a national not for profit anti-crime partnership, has told the BBC it was tracking shoplifting groups that are funding organised crime.

Over the summer convenience food retailer Co-op Group reported that nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of retail crime is driven by repeat and prolific offenders, with drug or alcohol addictions and local organised criminal gangs among the main drivers of offending. Official statistics show that shoplifting has increased by 25 per cent in England and Wales, with a 21 per cent uplift in Scotland.

The latest Usdaw annual survey of

shopworkers found that two-thirds of Usdaw members working in retail are suffering abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. Six in ten of these incidents were triggered by theft from shops. Having to deal with repeated and persistent shoplifters can cause issues beyond the theft itself like anxiety, fear and in some cases physical harm to retail workers.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Retail crime is on the increase and there appears to be further evidence of the involvement of organised crime gangs. It is very disturbing to hear that there is also a link to people trafficking. Shoplifting is not a victimless crime. Theft from shops has long been a major flashpoint for violence and abuse against shopworkers.

"Regrettably the Government is

not delivering the change we need to tackle retail crime. They are failing to change the perception that theft from shops has effectively been decriminalised. Issuing fixed penalty notices for shop thefts under £200 has led to fewer crimes being investigated and prosecuted. Fewer uniformed officers patrolling shopping areas gives criminals more confidence.

"Conservative MPs repeatedly voted down a protection of workers law, which already exists in Scotland. Labour will seek to amend the Government's Criminal Justice Bill to strengthen the law to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse. I hope Government ministers and Tory MPs will end their opposition, do the right thing and help our members secure the protection they deserve."

www.usdaw.org.uk

GET INVOLVED

USDRAW CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

In recent years, Usdaw's reputation has grown as a formidable and effective campaigning union. Our reps and members have embraced our campaigns, running them in workplaces across the country, fighting for our issues, inspiring and recruiting new members. Our negotiators have raised campaign issues with employers securing improved terms and conditions for our members. But we won't be resting on our laurels. We have a strong campaigning agenda for the year ahead. Keep an eye out for activities that are taking place. And if you're interested in any of these issues, speak to your area organiser/local office and get involved.

USDRAW'S CAMPAIGN CALENDAR FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS

February	LGBT+ History month
2 February	Time to Talk Day
12-18 February	HeartUnions Week
March	Cost of living crisis
Early March	Freedom From Fear
4-10 March	Young Workers' Week
8 March	Me, Work and the Menopause
April	New Deal for Workers
May	Cost of living crisis
17-23 June	Membership Week
26 June	Parents and Carers Spotlight Day
June	Pride Month
13 July	National Retail Workers' Day

A man with grey hair, wearing a blue pinstriped suit jacket, a white shirt, and a red tie, is standing outdoors. The background is a blurred green landscape with trees and a white building. The text "DELIVERING CHANGE IN 2024" is overlaid in the bottom right corner.

DELIVERING CHANGE IN 2024

The last few years have seen us all living through exceptionally uncertain and unstable times.

This has had an enormous impact on our members' lives, and on our union. Network spoke to Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis about the challenges facing the union and his priorities for 2024.

The retail sector crisis, the pandemic and the cost of living crisis have had a major impact on Usdaw's membership. What steps has Usdaw taken to re-build membership?

Any drop in membership weakens our voice in workplaces. To ensure we can deliver for our members, it is essential that our membership is as robust as possible. The nature of the membership we represent means we have to recruit around 90,000 members a year, just to stand still. A formidable challenge. To achieve this, we have been concentrating on ensuring all inductions are covered, that we have a network of well trained and supported reps, and are campaigning on issues that matter to our members such as lobbying for legislation to protect shopworkers from abuse and violence, and calling for a minimum wage of at least £12 per hour.

What is Usdaw doing to tackle the cost of living crisis?

Although the Government would like to have us believe the cost of living crisis is over, we know this is far from the truth. I have young members who tell me they don't believe they will ever be able to buy their own home or raise a family, older members are terrified that they will never afford to retire, and parents are having to choose between eating and heating. Although we are making the strongest case possible for better pay and conditions with employers, we cannot deliver these aspirations solely through negotiations. We need political change. We need a

government that is on the side of working people.

Why is Usdaw backing Labour in the general election?

I make no apology for saying that delivering a Labour Government must be a priority for this union. After 14 years of shambolic, Tory rule, we have seen workplace rights eroded, the welfare system undermined, austerity imposed on vital public services, and economic chaos and mismanagement.

Keir Starmer has set out an agenda of ambitions for the country that absolutely chimes with the concerns and hopes of our members and all working people. Labour's five national missions address the real issues of working people.

Higher growth and better jobs, safer streets with extra police, cheaper energy bills through clean power, breaking down barriers with more opportunities for children and our NHS back on its feet.

As trade unionists, Labour is on our side and has committed to delivering the New Deal for Working People within the first 100 days of coming into power. Labour's New

Deal for Workers has been written with us, step by step and includes a wage that people can actually live on. They have also pledged to deliver on the aims of Usdaw's long-running 'Freedom from Fear' campaign, including a standalone offence for assaulting a public facing worker.

Labour will also be focussing on other issues that affect working people including sustainable jobs, creation of green jobs, good quality childcare, affordable housing, reforming social care, providing a world class health service, investment in early years, ending violence against women and girls and making Brexit work.

Do you have a message for Usdaw members?

Politics affects all our lives and we continue to encourage our members to vote to secure the change the country desperately needs. So, if you're sick of not being able to make ends meet, not being able to get a doctor's appointment, the extortionate cost of public transport and childcare, and public services being run into the ground, then help us change this by registering to vote and voting Labour.

LABOUR IN GOVERNMENT WILL DELIVER A NEW DEAL FOR WORKERS THAT INCLUDES:

- Making work pay with a genuine living wage that people can actually live on.
- Making work more family friendly.
- Banning zero-hours contracts.
- Tackling sexual harassment.
- Ending fire and rehire.
- Ensuring that unions can stand up for their members.
- Giving workers basic rights from day one.
- Boosting collective bargaining, to improve workers' pay, terms and conditions.
- Going further and faster in closing the gender pay gap.

REPS SHINE AT AWARDS

Activists took centre stage at Usdaw's 18th annual Organising Awards in Manchester. The event is unique in the trade union movement and helps to properly recognise the outstanding contribution Usdaw reps make throughout the year.

The ever-popular event saw talented and committed reps from all seven regions attend a ceremony to celebrate the very best recruiters, organisers and campaigners in the union.

General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones played host and presented national awards to winners in nine categories.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "This event is all about recognising the hard work that our reps are putting in on a day-to-day basis. Without people like you, Usdaw would not have made the fantastic progress it has made over recent years. Obviously not all of Usdaw's activists are here tonight, so many thanks to the thousands of Usdaw reps who have not won awards but have worked incredibly hard on behalf of the union.

"Tonight, we celebrate the very best recruiters, organisers and campaigners who make sure our values remain alive and relevant to every Usdaw member."

MOST PROMISING NEW ACTIVIST AWARD

WHITNEY-LEA CAVELL NW Tesco Retail No.2 K139

After approaching her area organiser during a site visit, Tesco rep Whitney-Lea has immersed



National winners

(back row from left)

John Kalombo, Whitney-Lea Cavell, Mòrgan Largey, general secretary Paddy Lillis, Usdaw president Jane Jones, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen, Ann Lloyd, Simon Archer, Sandra Birt and Hadi Naqvi.

(front row from left) Zeshan Araf, Justin Donaghy, Peter Currie and Luke Ryan.

herself in Usdaw and become an influential voice in the North West Young Workers' Committee. She's turned out for campaign events from Burnley to Market Drayton, and spoke passionately at the TUC Equalities conference. Whitney-Lea also completed several periods of stand down where she did brilliant work recruiting young workers to the union. Her work and enthusiasm is inspiring and highly valued by everyone she works with.

"I was speechless when I won, honestly," said Whitney-Lea. "It was amazing to win the regional award

and the national award is like the icing on the cake, I didn't feel like I should be here because I just come in, do my job and try my best. To receive this recognition from my union, my area organiser and my peers is just unreal."

HEALTH & SAFETY REP AWARD SIMON ARCHER Weetabix E107

In conjunction with Weetabix, Simon has spearheaded an initiative that led to a 50 per cent reduction in site accidents compared to the previous year. He's built a team of 30 safety



reps, ensuring members on all shifts are looked after and giving Usdaw a strong voice when discussing health and safety issues with management. Simon also oversaw a new policy allowing members to come forward to put an immediate stop to any unsafe working practices. The results speak for themselves and demonstrate the ongoing commitment Simon and his team has to upholding safety standards.

"I was really surprised when I heard my name called," said Simon. "It's not just me that does the work – there's a team of 30 safety reps back

at Weetabix and this award is really for all of them and I'll share it with them when I get back."

EQUALITIES AWARD
LUKE RYAN
West Norfolk General C063

Tesco rep Luke leads the way in supporting members with disabilities in his workplace and organising regular campaign days. Winning a discrimination case proved to be a springboard for Luke to go the extra mile, working with the company at national level to advise on reasonable adjustments

for members that need them. He's also a regular at job fairs and has delivered over 50 disability work placements at Tesco. Inclusivity is a core value for Luke and members throughout his region know they can always turn to him for advice and support.

"I was completely shocked and overwhelmed to win this award," said Luke. "I don't look for praise or reward for what I do, but it's incredibly heart-warming to know my efforts are appreciated. Being disabled myself, I'm only too aware of the challenges faced by my



Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones present the Team Recruitment and Organising Award to the North West Regional Young Workers' Committee.

members. I hope I show others that there are no barriers with disability that can't be overcome."

UNION LEARNING REP AWARD
JOHN KALOMBO
NW Pladis K066

Following a restructure at John's United Biscuits site, the position of union learning co-ordinator became vacant. John took on the role and set about making it his own, working closely with management to ensure the continued delivery of important learning opportunities for the members. John's brilliant work has been noticed by the TUC, who have approached him to showcase his site to the wider trade union movement. He's been instrumental in ensuring that members at United Biscuits can continue to benefit from union learning.

"I wasn't expecting to win at all, I was really shocked," said John. "I love helping my members access learning opportunities so it's great to be recognised for it. I'm going to

carry on doing what I've been doing and make sure I'm always there for my members."

CAMPAIGNS AWARD
PETER CURRIE
Sainsbury's Northern F174

Sainsbury's rep Peter is truly committed to the campaigning agenda which has helped achieve 60 per cent membership in his store. Using the Usdaw campaigns calendar to ensure a consistent high Usdaw profile, Peter always pulls out all the stops to ensure his events are a big success. Management buy-in allows him a prime location on the shopfloor, and has arranged for the local mayor and the police to attend at Freedom From Fear events. Eager to communicate Usdaw's work to as many people as possible, Peter has also held events in Stockton town centre.

"I'm absolutely elated," said Peter. "You don't become a rep to win awards but I'm pleased the union recognises and appreciates the

hard work of reps. I want to say a big thank you to my area organiser Ciaran Pinkney and my members for all their support."

TEAM RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISING AWARD
REGIONAL YOUNG WORKERS' COMMITTEE
North West Region

The committee's ten young reps are proving that age is no barrier to playing an active role in the union. Taking their own initiative, they organised the first ever Usdaw Summer Patrol – a concerted effort to get young workers involved in their union, which gained 30 new members and three new young reps. They produce their own newsletter and also fully embraced the union's campaigns, holding a variety of events, as well as representing Usdaw at national level at the TUC Equalities conference. After such a strong 2023, the committee is targeting an even better 2024 and few would bet against them going

from strength to strength.

"We're over the moon. We were up against a lot of talented people so we're ecstatic that we won. The training we've received from Usdaw has been fantastic and we wouldn't be here without it. A big shout out to our co-ordinator Mick Murray for all his support."

INDIVIDUAL RECRUITMENT AWARD SANDRA BIRT

NW Tesco Retail No.4 K120

Sandra is a familiar face at workplaces throughout her region. A highly experienced stand down rep, Sandra continues to identify new reps and recruit hundreds of new members every year. Campaign days feature highly in Sandra's work and she's used Legal Plus, Freedom From Fear and Parents and Carers Spotlight Day to great effect. She's also careful to ensure her own Tesco store remains highly organised and has done brilliant work upskilling the newer reps onsite.

"It means the world to me to win this award," said Sandra. "The union wouldn't be anything without its members and it means a lot that I can help improve the membership

by going out recruiting. I want to keep active in the union for as long as I can."

INDIVIDUAL ORGANISING AWARD HADI NAQVI

Croydon Metropolitan H017

Hadi's enthusiasm for Usdaw knows no boundaries. He's overhauled the structure of rep meetings at his Tesco Dot Com site since becoming active, ensuring they're well organised and attended and that everyone knows they have an important part to play. A tireless campaigner, Hadi has had great success using Legal Plus days to boost membership density and puts in 100 per cent effort during each Membership Week. Thanks to Hadi's hard work, the 20 strong rep team at his site is certainly a force to be reckoned with.

"I'm still in shock and extremely honoured that people have put their faith in me," said Hadi. "It's a privilege to represent my members and I will continue to work hard for them. The union has supported me on my rep journey, and I will do my best to ensure it goes from strength to strength."

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD ANN LLOYD

West Midlands Sainsbury's E041

Midlands stalwart Ann continues to bring astonishing levels of energy to her work for the union. After many years as a highly effective rep in Sainsbury's, Ann remains a passionate advocate for Usdaw and is a familiar face in workplaces across her region, helping to organise and grow the union. She's also a keen political campaigner and has supported countless Labour candidates at local and general elections, in constituencies near and far from her Tamworth home. Ann is held in extremely high regard throughout the Midlands and is a model of outstanding commitment.

"I'm thrilled for my region and for my people to win this award," said Ann. "I'm so proud that I can go back and tell them. This union is wonderful to work for, they show you so much kindness.

"I love what I do, you can't beat it. I was thinking of maybe stopping when I reach 80 but I'm not sure I'll be able to!"

REGIONAL WINNERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



SOUTH WALES AND WESTERN REGION

STANDING (from left):
Antoniya Rusinova, Hero Marsden, Milan Pavlik (DRS), Nick May, Martin Black, Piotr Kuwalek and Barbara Wilson (NEC).

SEATED (from left):
Avril Minshall, Mervyn Sterry, Mike Walker (RS), Tracey Millard (RCC), Stuart Caron and Tracy Cannard (NEC)

Continued...



EASTERN REGION

STANDING (from left): Nigel Scully (RS), Stephen Peaty, Terry Monksfield, Gareth Davies, Greg Pamula, Brian Lewis (RCC) and Phil Waite (DRS).

SEATED (from left): Simon Vincent (NEC), Val Cooke (NEC), Shelley Crawford, Jean Wonnacott, Morgan Eckersley and Luke Ryan

NEC National Executive Council
RCC Regional Council Chair
RS Regional Secretary
DRS Deputy Regional Secretary



NORTH EASTERN REGION

STANDING (from left): Gordon Cutmore, Tomasz Kosiński, Angela Partington (RCC), Ashley Whitworth, Hannah Hyde, Michal Stempkowski and Michael Taylor-Ashworth.

SEATED (from left): Jo Crumplin (NEC), Peter Currie, Patricia Rainton, Cathy Godfrey (DRS), Marie Duck and Allan Ross.



SOUTHERN REGION

STANDING (from left): Jamie Gull (DRS), Keith Jones (NEC), Hadi Naqvi, Su Patel (RCC), Linda Maitland, Rab Donnelly (RS), Jonathan Lamb and Graham Omari.

SEATED (from left): Matthew Cooper-Teague, Wendy Lewis, Chrissie Shreeves, Debbie Edwards, Amanda Savage and John Barstow (NEC).



MIDLANDS REGION

STANDING (from left): Gareth Davies (DRS), Luke Harrison, Michelle Whitehead (RCC), Mark Pengelly and Karl Lockley (NEC).

SEATED (from left): Gavin Dadley (RS), Gary Soanes, Ann Lloyd, Tammy Caven, Kelvin Blake and Simon Archer.



SCOTTISH REGION

STANDING (from left): Tony Doonan (DRS), Tracy Gilbert (RS), Jim Glavin, Susan Donaldson (NEC) and Gary Hanvidge

SEATED (from left): Scott Redpath (RCC), Kimberley Timoney, Lillias Peden, Kristeen Anderson, Melanie Croucher and Robert Killin (NEC).



NORTH WEST REGION

STANDING (from left): Zeshan Araf, Jane Jones (President), Mike Aylward (RS), Amanda Bailey-Coll (DRS), Ian Beesley, Caroline Williamson and Martin Pryors.

SEATED (from left): Morgan Largey, Whitney-Lea Cavell, Janet Hankin (NEC), Terry Adair (RCC), Sandra Birt and John Kalombo.



MAPPING THE WORKPLACE TO TARGET RECRUITMENT

Usdaw's first Membership Week of the year took place in January with the union's army of dedicated activists and reps pulling out all the stops to boost recruitment in their workplaces.

Hundreds of promotional events were organised in a bid to encourage non-members to sign up and remind existing members of all the fantastic opportunities and benefits available through the union.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis was delighted that so many members took part. "I'm always impressed with the determination and sheer hard work of our activists all year round," said Paddy. "Our two national Membership Weeks remain central to maintaining and increasing our presence and influence in workplaces up and down the country."

Although Usdaw has two membership weeks per year, recruiting members is a crucial part

of the rep's role and a year-round activity. If you want to increase membership in your workplace but are unsure what to do, this article outlines how mapping the workplace can help with recruitment.

What is Mapping?

Mapping is an information tool that 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?

- Get the other reps in your workplace involved 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.

See p35 for more information.



WHAT HAVE TRADE UNIONS EVER DONE FOR US?

Unionised workplaces tend to be better paid, have better working conditions, are safer, fairer and have more job security.

TWO-DAY WEEKEND

Trade unions pushed for a five-day working week with a two-day weekend.

LIMIT ON WORKING HOURS

During the industrial revolution, it was common to work 12-16 hours per day. Trade unions campaigned for an eight-hour day.

MINIMUM WAGE

Trade unions lobbied for a minimum wage which was introduced by the Labour Government in April 1999.

EQUAL PAY

Equal pay for women was also

fought for by trade unions. The Equal Pay Act was introduced in 1970 and banned unequal pay and working conditions between men and women.

ANNUAL LEAVE

Trade unions pushed for more holidays and eventually in 1998 the new Labour Government implemented the EU working time directive, which resulted in six million people receiving more annual leave.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Unions fought for maternity and parental leave.

FURLOUGH DURING COVID

The trade union movement fought hard for a furlough scheme which helped workers keep their heads above water during Covid.

What information should I gather?

You should try to include the following information:

- The names of the people who work there.
- 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've gathered?

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

- You may want to focus on identifying the areas where you have lower membership, no reps, or where there are particular issues.
- When approaching colleagues who you believe are non-members, it is advisable to ask if they are in the union rather than telling them you understand that they are a non-member.
- You can also use the information you gathered in your mapping exercise to run a campaign on the issues you identified in the workplace.

Recruiting new starters

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

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 a break or been called in to see the manager. These are all issues that the union can help with.

Success Stories

Share your success stories. Have you secured flexible working for a colleague? Did a member win an accident injury claim using Usdaw's legal service? Have you won a grievance? Do you save money using the cinema discount? Give real life examples, without breaking confidentiality, so that new starters and non-members get a clear idea of what the union can do.

www.usdaw.org.uk

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Usdaw's Black Members' Development programme, called Breaking Down Barriers, is designed to support Black members wishing to become more active and involved in the union.

Right across the trade union movement Black members are underrepresented in positions of leadership and Usdaw, along with many other unions, is taking steps to put this right.

Members who are on the programme, which is in its first year, are spending time together both in and out of the classroom developing their skills and knowledge across a wide range of issues.

Members have already completed two classroom sessions which focussed on team building, creative problem solving, working collaboratively and addressing the barriers Black workers come up against within the trade union movement, employment and wider society.

In early January, reps travelled to London to spend a day in Parliament hosted by David Lammy, shadow secretary of state for foreign, commonwealth and development affairs. This included a meeting with Janet Daby MP and London Labour Black councillors who shared their journeys in the labour movement. It is hoped that this experience will help to inspire and encourage Black reps on the programme to think about broadening their involvement with the union and beyond.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw has campaigned against racism for many years and Breaking Down Barriers forms part of a wider programme of work in Usdaw to progress racial justice. Increasing the number of Black activists right across the union movement and within Usdaw will help to strengthen our movement and demonstrate to Black workers that we are serious about tackling racism and under representation."



WHAT THE MEMBERS SAID:

Janet Hankin

"All the speakers were inspirational and captivated the whole group. Everyone took something back from the visit. We were all inspired, impressed and grateful for this wonderful experience."

Garry Samuels

"The whole experience was fantastic and rewarding in equal measure, very fulfilling."

Rehana Kosar

"The experience at the Houses of Parliament was amazing and meeting David Lammy MP and Janet Daby MP was truly memorable."





MOBILISING TO WIN

Rishi Sunak, the prime minister, has confirmed that he will call a general election in 2024. Whether it's in spring or autumn remains to be seen. Some commentators believe he will let parliament carry out its five-year term because the Conservatives are trailing behind Labour by 20 points. Others predict the Government will announce further tax cuts in the spring budget to boost their popularity before calling an election in May.

Despite a double-digit lead, there are no guarantees when it comes to the ballot box. That's why the Labour Party is getting ready to fight a general election, whenever it's called.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Only Labour will deliver stronger workers' rights. Far too many are stuck on insecure contracts, struggling to make ends

meet and desperate to be safe in the knowledge that they can provide for themselves and their families. Good and secure jobs are a key ambition for Usdaw and Labour's new deal for working people will help deliver that.

"Usdaw has always been clear that the only way to change Britain is by voting. Politics affects all our lives. So, if you're tired of the never-ending political drama, the dysfunctional politics and the revolving door of prime ministers that have failed to tackle the issues that affect you, then help us kick the Tories out."

Delivering on the Ground: Usdaw's Key Seat Strategy

Knowing what is at stake during the general election is one thing, but we must also make an impact on the ground during the campaign, both individually through our members and collectively as an organisation. We need to make sure our efforts

directly affect the outcome.

To make sure that the union's activity and resources are put to the most effective use as part of the overall campaign with Labour and other trade unions, we need to be disciplined during the campaign, focussing our work as part of a clear strategy.

THE STRATEGY

Usdaw's Key Seat Strategy is built around four key principles:

- To deliver frequent campaign activity in each key seat and ensure that activity from Usdaw campaigns provide an opportunity for additional campaigning in the key seats.
- To deliver sustainable campaign activity in each key seat with activity locally organised, realistic expectations on levels of commitment and activity, and activists feeling valued and



LOCAL CAMPAIGNING STRATEGY

The strategy was designed to give members the support needed to be active campaigners and through that, deliver a campaign on the ground across the country that will lead to a Labour government.

As part of the strategy, Usdaw is supporting the following seats across the country:

A: South Wales & Western

Plymouth Moor View
Filton & Bradley Stoke
Bridgend

C: Eastern

Watford
Norwich North
Harlow

E: Midlands

Gedling
Tamworth
Corby & East Northamptonshire

F: North Eastern

Leeds North West
Stockton North
Cramlington & Killingworth

G: Scottish

Aberdeen South
Edinburgh North & Leith
Coatbridge & Bellshill

H: Southern

Hastings & Rye
Croydon South
Southampton Test

K: North West

Warrington South
Stoke Central
Clwyd East
Blackpool South

Head Office

Bolton North East

rewarded.

- To develop local links with candidates, Labour Parties and areas, ensuring that we have the relationships and contact details to organise effective campaigning and that our activists get to know the local Labour Party members they will be campaigning alongside.
- To develop our members' skills, knowledge and confidence, with the aim that Usdaw members are able and confident to take part in doorstep campaigning.

GETTING INVOLVED

No strategy can be successful without people playing their part, and this is where each and every Usdaw member can make a crucial difference.

Modern election campaigns are fought in many ways; on social media, by word of mouth, and on

television, but ultimately campaigns are still won on the ground with activists going door to door, delivering leaflets, speaking with people, and making the case for a Labour government.

Usdaw's Key Seat Coordinators and Regional Political Committees have been building campaign teams in each of the union's key seats and joining with the local candidates and Labour Party in their campaigns.

You can be part of these teams and get the latest updates on activity near you by signing up to Usdaw's Political Activist Programme:

www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Usdaw-and-Politics/Join-the-team

- You can also get involved in the campaign where you live and wider Labour Party activities by joining the Labour Party: join.labour.org.uk

(make sure you select the 'reduced' rate as a member of Usdaw).

- However else you support the campaign, make sure you are able to vote yourself. You can register to vote by visiting: www.gov.uk/register-to-vote
- If you are registered to vote, make sure that whatever shifts you're on, whatever caring commitments you have, or whatever the weather is like, you can use your vote by signing up for a postal vote: www.electoralcommission.org.uk/postalvote



ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH AMMAR IQBAL

Usdaw rep and Pladis employee Ammar Iqbal talks about his journey from member to convenor. Ammar, 36, has worked at the McVities site in Manchester for 12 years and became a rep at the end of 2019.

What prompted you to become a rep?

A rep approached me and asked whether I would be interested in putting myself forward for the role. He thought I would make a good rep because I was already helping my team members out. I refused because, at the time, I didn't have the confidence to take on the role. I don't come from a trade union background. Nobody in my family or circle of friends has been involved in the union and in my previous job we didn't have a union so this would be a new experience for me. The rep told me to think about it and if lack of confidence was the only thing stopping me, Usdaw's training would help me with that. I went away and thought about it. And after a while, I decided that I needed to do this. I needed to challenge myself and face up to my insecurities.

How did you find Usdaw's training?

I completed the shop stewards training course and that made a huge difference. The second part of the course helped with my confidence because I learnt how to deal with various scenarios, and I began to understand the

policies and procedures. Once I had confidence in myself people started approaching me for advice.

How did you become a convenor?

In 2022, the company went through a process of voluntary redundancy. We had quite a lot of people coming up to retirement age who took the opportunity to retire. The downside

to this was that we lost a lot of very skilled colleagues and reps. One of these was the convenor, Jason. He approached me to ask whether I would consider putting my name forward for the position. I was flattered that Jason thought I could do the role but the timing wasn't right for me. I had a lot going on at the time and I didn't want to take on a role with more responsibility



unless I could fully dedicate myself to the role. Once things calmed down for me, I decided to step up to the challenge. I was elected as convenor in 2023.

How are you finding being a convenor?

Communication and engaging with members and non-members are very important to me.

I decided to base myself in Usdaw's Learn 4 U room which is near our canteen area, rather than the office because the only time people go to the union office is when they have a problem. Whereas people pop in to the Learn 4 U room throughout the day so it's a bit more informal. They can come over and say hello without committing to anything. Basing myself here makes me visible and shows members that the union is active in their workplace.

I also do walk arounds on the factory floor (during various shifts) to make sure that everybody knows who I am. I check in with people to see if they have any issues or concerns. This has led to a number

of very positive conversations.

We have a union noticeboard that people have to walk past to get to the canteen. We try to make it as eye catching as possible. It's updated regularly with union posters and leaflets. It also has pictures of the reps and their numbers so members know who to contact if they have an issue.

I also want to focus on rebuilding our rep team by talent spotting and encouraging members to take up the role. Since I had a lot of support from the union when I became a rep, I'm keen to ensure that I can offer new reps the training, coaching and mentoring they need to excel in their roles.

You have an impressive 95 per cent density at your site, what's your secret?

The best way to recruit members is to have an organised workplace. If the union is active and achieving results, then people will want to join. So, you have to tell people about your successes. For example, we recently secured a really good pay rise, 7 per cent and it's important

to let members and non-members know that pay rises aren't a given. There's no automatic right to a yearly pay rise. Everything has to be negotiated and fought for. And to do that effectively we need to have high levels of membership because the stronger we are the more influence we have, and the more influence we have, the more we can achieve.

What's your favourite part of being a rep?

My favourite part is speaking to members and helping them with any issues they have. In most cases there's a solution to the problem and my role is to find that solution. Seeing the smile on a colleague's face when they get the result they want, gives me the lift I need to do my job passionately every day.

WE NEED YOU!
 Have you got an experience or advice that would inspire other reps? *Network* would love to hear about it.
 Email: network@usdaw.org.uk

IS YOUR NOTICEBOARD UP-TO-DATE?

Reps can keep their noticeboards up-to-date by using Usdaw's vast array of leaflets and posters.

You can order these from your local office or the Post and Despatch Section at Head Office. All resources can be viewed online.

You can also use the pages of *Arena* and *Network* to help refresh the look of the noticeboard by displaying appropriate pages from each issue. FirstCall cases are an obvious example, as are the Know Your Rights features.

Members should be able to view the contact details of their onsite rep(s) and the contact details of the local office should be displayed too.

www.usdaw.org.uk/noticeboard





PROMOTING WELLNESS

It's estimated that one in four people in the UK will experience a mental health issue during their lifetime. Usdaw reps do vital work supporting members who are struggling with their mental health, as well as running campaign events to raise awareness of mental health and help members feel comfortable having a conversation. You don't have to wait for a national event to run a mental health campaign – you can hold one at any time of the year.

The rep team at Tesco Braintree Marks Farm have put mental health at the forefront of their organising activity. They hold regular campaigns and recently arranged for the provision of a wellness room, to ensure all staff have somewhere to go when they need a moment of quiet or reflection. *Network* spoke to

Jason Martin, one of the site reps, about how it happened and the difference it has made.

How did you arrange for the wellness room?

At our forum meeting we discussed whether we could convert an unused meeting room into a wellness room. The whole rep team pitched in to get it furnished and decorated and we got it ready in around three weeks. We've also put some books in there as well as Usdaw's mental health leaflets.

How has it been received at the store?

It's gone down well and gets a fair amount of use. Anyone can go in there for a bit of quiet time if they need that space, rather than

sitting in their car or the canteen. The workplace is where a lot of people spend the majority of their time so it's important we're understanding of people's problems, and making sure they've got access to a comfortable space if they're feeling stressed or need some time to themselves. Management were really supportive of the idea too, and the store manager personally paid for a couple of chairs.

Has it improved the reputation of the union?

Yes, definitely. You get little pockets of negativity in any store where people ask 'What's the union done for us?', and in ours we can point to this as an example of what the union can achieve. We've got a good relationship with the management



team too - I've got our store manager on WhatsApp and if there's any problems, I'll let him know straightaway.

Does the mental health campaign help your recruitment?

Yes, it's always a good thing to have in your arsenal when you're out and about doing things like stand down. We work closely with the team at Tesco Braintree town centre - we hold joint rep team meetings and coordinate our campaigns. The whole team takes part so the campaign days are always well staffed in both stores. If you've got a spare space in your workplace, something like this is a great way to demonstrate that the union can affect change quickly.

THINKING OF HOLDING YOUR FIRST CAMPAIGN EVENT?

A busy campaign schedule should feature highly in every rep's organising activity.

Usdaw is known as the campaigning union for a reason - our reps run events in workplaces throughout the country, week in week out, fighting for the issues that matter to our members. Campaigns are a great way of making the union visible in the workplace, celebrating our successes and helping to increase our strength through recruiting new members. If you're new to the rep role or haven't had the chance to hold many campaign events, here are some things to consider when planning your activity.

USE THE USDAW CAMPAIGN CALENDAR

Usdaw's campaign calendar is a good starting point for planning activity in your own workplace. Nearly every month there are multiple events running - no-one expects you to get involved in all of them, but there's enough going on that most activists will find something they can get their teeth into.

LISTEN TO YOUR MEMBERS

It's important to understand the concerns that matter most to your members, and tailor your activity to suit. If you've got a high number of working parents and carers then you could focus on that, or maybe some of your members have approached you with concerns about their mental health. Whatever the issues in your workplace, there's a good chance Usdaw will have a relevant campaign.

GET OTHER PEOPLE INVOLVED

Campaigns can be a good way not only to boost membership, but to inspire members to become more active in the union. Why not see if any of your members want to help out with the planning and delivery of the event? It might just be the starting point for one of them to become an activist. You should also make your area organiser aware of your plans and they'll be happy to help if you need any guidance or support. You could also reach out to community figures - Labour Party councillors are often happy to lend their support, and police officers are regular attendees at Freedom From Fear campaign days.

PROMOTE IN ADVANCE

Make sure your members know what you're doing, and when and where you'll be doing it. Use your union noticeboard, talk to people, post on social media, and spread the word - you want to create a buzz ahead of the day and encourage people to come and check out your stand.

DEBRIEF AFTERWARDS

Get together after the event and have a chat about what went well and what you might have done differently. Every campaign is an opportunity to learn and become more effective at communicating the importance of Usdaw membership.

View the campaign calendar at:
www.usdaw.org.uk/UCamCal



OVERCOMING THE DOUBTERS

Most reps will have encountered someone at inductions who seems to have an objection to every point they raise. One vocal sceptic can plant seeds of doubt in the minds of others and thwart even the most seasoned recruiter, so it's a good idea to have prepared some answers to the more common questions. Read on for some pointers to help you bolster your recruitment toolkit.

I CAN LOOK AFTER MYSELF AND DON'T NEED THE UNION

Imagine you've got a problem at work. You raise it with management but they won't listen and tell you to go away. What would you do next? If you were facing the sack, who would represent you? Would you know your contractual and statutory rights? Could you afford a solicitor if you needed to go to court?

Strength of character and personality count for very little

when you're faced with the power of management's resources and you stand on your own, without union backing.

I NEVER SEE MY UNION OFFICIAL, WHY SHOULD I JOIN?

A well-organised workplace doesn't receive daily visits from officials - the strength of the union is determined by the number of members and reps at a workplace.

Union officials do come in when a grievance or a disciplinary reaches their stage in the procedure, and they are in regular contact with reps to plan union activity at each workplace.

I'M NOT INTERESTED IN GOING ON STRIKE

Going on strike is not what the union is there for. Unions resolve thousands of issues for thousands of workers day in, day out, without

going on strike.

Going on strike is usually the last resort for most workers. Even then, a strike can only take place if all the legal rules have been followed including balloting all affected members and at least 50 per cent of them voting for industrial action. The image of unions as interfering, trouble-causing, strike-obsessed organisations is a stereotype blown out of all proportion by hysterical media coverage.

I'M PART-TIME AND DON'T WORK ENOUGH HOURS TO JOIN THE UNION

Lots of Usdaw members work part time. Most retailers and many other companies are dependent on the contribution of their part-time staff, so your job is just as important as the next person's. Over the years, Usdaw has achieved equality of terms and conditions with full timers for part time workers.



Although the law has caught up in recent years, Usdaw always encourages part-time workers to come forward with issues specific to them that the union can raise. As a part-time worker, can you afford to be left to deal with a problem at work anymore than full time workers can?

I CAN'T AFFORD THE SUBSCRIPTIONS

No-one underestimates money worries but it's a question of priorities. Usdaw's subscription rate is less than the cost of a bus ride or a drink in a pub each week. You wouldn't drive your car without insurance or leave your house uninsured, so think of union subscriptions as insurance at work.

If you lost your job because you didn't have professional representation at work, the consequences would be far worse than a burglary or a bump in the car.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE UNION, I GET THE SAME BENEFITS ANYWAY?

No you don't! True, you get the same terms and conditions that the union negotiates for its members - but you wouldn't be entitled to union advice or representation and you would have to meet your own legal costs if you had a very serious problem or accident at work.

Remember - every person who doesn't join weakens the union and reduces the chances of getting a good deal at work for everyone.

I'M TOO YOUNG TO WORRY ABOUT JOINING THE UNION

In Usdaw's experience, young workers are more likely than anyone to have problems at work. They can suffer from sexual harassment, get lumped with the unsociable shifts and taken advantage of because they don't know their rights. If management want to make a

decision that someone won't like, they are far more likely to single out a recent, young starter than a long-serving, trusted employee.

If you have a disciplinary problem and you don't get it properly sorted out, then it could haunt you well into your working life.

WHY BOTHER AT MY AGE? I'M TOO OLD

Older workers are one group who definitely need their union. Age discrimination is a big problem and if you are on the receiving end, you'll want Usdaw to sort it out for you. And if you're due to retire, it's really important to get it right as far as your pension and holiday pay, etc are concerned.

www.usdaw.org.uk/Reps/Organising-Recruitment



WHEN LEARNING COMES TO LIFE

Usdaw works in partnership with employers, to build long term, sustainable learning cultures in the workplace because it benefits both the employee and the employer. For staff, it can boost their skills, knowledge and confidence, which can improve their career prospects and provide them with personal development. While employers benefit from a more motivated workforce, lower staff turnover and a boost in productivity and profitability.

The union has worked hard with employers and learning providers to widen access to all types of learning including job-related training and personal development.

Over 74,000 Usdaw members have returned to a form of learning since the launch of Usdaw's Lifelong Learning campaign in 1998. Now members can benefit from a vast array of online, distance and workplace-based learning

opportunities including:

- Brushing up on Maths or English.
- Gaining a nationally recognised qualification e.g. NVQ in warehousing.
- Accessing an apprenticeship programme.
- Building their confidence using computers with 'Get Online with Usdaw.'
- Learning more about mental health or sign language.
- Improving their job ready skills e.g. CV writing or interview techniques.
- Discovering a new language using online learning.
- Developing their qualifications through progression routes to degrees and masters courses.

CASE STUDY

Every year, Usdaw helps more than 15,000 members return to learning. Network spoke to Matthew Smith, a shop steward in Tesco Stirling,

who signed up for a two-day Mental Health First Aid course in April 2023. Little did Matthew know that his training could help save a stranger's life.

"I've been a rep for 10 years and noticed since Covid there has been an increase in people suffering from mental health issues," said Matthew, 59. "I put myself forward for the course because I wanted to get an understanding of mental health and how I could better support my members.

"It was a very supportive environment and people felt safe enough to share their experiences of dealing with mental health issues. The tutors then gave us pointers in what you, as a rep, could do in a particular situation. I learnt how to approach people, how to speak to them with confidence and where to signpost them. Although there was a lot of information to take in, the way the course was structured helped



the information stick to my brain.

"About a month later, it was my day off and I had popped into the local shop. As I was walking home, I noticed a man sitting at the bus stop. There was something about his body language that made me go over and speak to him.

"To break the ice, I told him that there wasn't a bus due for another hour. He responded by telling me he was waiting for the police because he'd taken pills to end his life."

With his training still fresh in his mind, Matthew knew exactly what to do. With the man's permission he dialled 999 and called for an ambulance. The ambulance would take 45 minutes to arrive, so Matthew sat and waited with the man. He made small talk in order to build a rapport with him and it worked as John (not his real name) began to open up.

"Without going into too many details, John's childhood was very

traumatic and he had turned to drugs as a coping mechanism. But recently things had gotten on top of him and he had tried to end his life. Since he had called the police to tell them what he'd done, this was a cry for help from a man who was very unwell.

"I stayed with him, talking to distract him until the emergency services arrived. Once they arrived, I left. The next day, I saw John at the pharmacy. Thankfully, he had survived. He remembered who I was and we had a chat.

"If it hadn't been for the MHFA course, I would never had the confidence to approach John and I certainly wouldn't have known what to say to him. Completing the course also made me more aware of people who may be suffering with their mental health, as well as equipping me with a range of skills that I can use to help. I'm very grateful to Usdaw for giving me the opportunity

to go on this course. Going forwards, I will be running more mental health awareness campaigns in my store."

SAMARITANS

SHUSH

listening tips

Top tips for becoming a better listener

Listening can save lives. Become a better listener with Samaritans' SHUSH listening tips.



Show you care

Focus on the other person, make eye contact, and put away your phone.



Have patience

It may take time and a few attempts before a person is ready to open up.



Use open questions

Use open questions that need more than a yes or no answer. Try 'how are you feeling today?' and follow up with 'tell me more...'



Say it back

Check you've understood, but don't interrupt or offer a solution.



Have courage

Try not to be put off by a negative response and remember, you don't have to fill every silence.

 [samaritans.org/tips](https://www.samaritans.org/tips)

A registered charity

USDW'S ONLINE LEARNING GATEWAY

With Usdaw's Learning Gateway you can start learning whatever subject you're interested in. You can find courses to improve your English and Maths, develop your digital skills or learn a language.

You can use the Gateway for personal and career development or just to learn for interest or fun. To get started, go to the Online Learning Gateway and click on the subject you are interested in.

www.usdaw.org.uk/LearningGateway

LGBT+ HISTORY MONTH

For a very long time LGBT+ people's history has been hidden and the contributions they made to UK society overlooked. LGBT+ History Month takes place every February and attempts to rectify this erasure by raising awareness of LGBT+ people, combatting prejudice and celebrating their contributions.

The theme of this year's history month is Medicine under the Scope, which celebrates the work and life of LGBT+ people that have made significant contributions to the field of medicine.

This article outlines the rights that LGBT+ members have to be treated equally and with dignity and respect at work.

Supporting LGBT+ members at work

As a result of many years of campaigning by LGBT+ organisations and trade unions, LGBT+ workers now enjoy the same rights at

work as their heterosexual (straight) colleagues. Trade unionists can be proud of the part they played in the struggle for LGBT+ legal equality but serious problems remain.

For instance, it is common for LGBT+ members to find themselves on the receiving end of verbal abuse, 'banter', excluded by colleagues, sexual harassment and even physical violence.

Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against (treat someone less favourably) or harass them for reasons relating to either their sexual orientation or their gender identity. Although the Equality Act has not been enacted in Northern Ireland, similar legislation applies protecting LGBT+ people from discrimination.

The law means an employer cannot treat a worker less favourably for reasons relating to their sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes but is not limited to:

- Refusing to employ, refusing access to training/promotion or dismissing someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Discriminating against someone because they 'associate' with an LGBT+ worker or because they are 'perceived' to be LGBT+ even though they aren't.
- Denying LGBT+ workers goods, facilities and services they offer to straight and non-transgender workers.

Harassment

Harassment is one of the biggest problems LGBT+ members face in the workplace. The law makes it clear that harassment, including so called 'jokes', is unlawful. It's not good enough for managers to dismiss homophobia, biphobia or transphobia as 'workplace banter'. That defence has been tested in employment tribunals, and it has repeatedly failed.

What can reps do?

As important as the law is, we know that on its own it won't stop harassment or discrimination from happening in our workplaces. Displaying Usdaw leaflets on tackling harassment and bullying, as well as LGBT+ literature, can send a strong signal to members and non-members alike that the union understands the issues facing LGBT+ members.

Visit our LGBT+ History Month webpage for ideas about how you can show your support for LGBT+ members:

www.usdaw.org.uk/LGBT

FURTHER INFORMATION

Usdaw's LGBT+ Rights at Work leaflet
www.usdaw.org.uk/337



THE DATA RULES



The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came in to force in May 2018.

The regulations govern the way companies collect, process, store and dispose of personal data.

DATA PROCESSING PRINCIPLES

Usdaw strictly abides by the data principles set out in the regulations by ensuring that it processes data fairly and transparently; for specific and legitimate purposes; only in ways that are adequate and limited to what is needed; accurately; for no longer than necessary and securely.

If an organisation, or people who work on behalf of an organisation, break the regulations on how personal details are collected, stored, processed and disposed of, they can be subject to legal penalties.

As an Usdaw activist you will come across some personal data relating to members such as name, address, contact details, information about their pension and employment details relating to grievances or disciplinarys, personal injury claims etc.

GDPR IN A NUTSHELL

You must store data on members securely and for no longer than necessary. After this, the data

should be destroyed.

FAQS

I keep all my papers safe in my Usdaw bag, is this ok?

No. All paperwork should be stored securely either on a password protected computer or in a locked filing cabinet. Most Usdaw agreements allow reps access to a secure locker to store their union paperwork.

I've kept all my notes from the grievance and disciplinarys I've done over the years. What should I do with this paperwork?

All correspondence and notes should be stored securely either on a password protected computer (where you lock the screen when you are away from it) or in a locked filing cabinet.

If the matter is not resolved and needs to go to an employment tribunal/personal injury claim, then you should store the materials securely until you have passed them on to your area organiser or Usdaw's legal department. After this you should shred any copies you have.

I have a stack of old branch membership, workplace membership and contact lists, what should I do with these?

Make sure you have an up-to-date

list. Shred any old lists and ensure the new list is stored securely either on a password protected computer (where you lock the screen when you are away from it) or in a locked filing cabinet.

I need to send an email to my members, can I email them all in one go?

You won't have permission to share your members' emails. The best way to send an email to a group of people is by 'blind copy'. Instead of putting their addresses in the 'to' box, you place them in the 'bcc' box. 'Blind copy' ensures that the email addresses aren't shared with the rest of the group.

I think I've breached the regulations, what should I do?

Don't panic. Contact your area organiser who will be able to advise you on what to do next.

Where can I get more information on GDPR?

GDPR isn't as complicated as you may think and Usdaw has produced a short online course and booklet that will help you better understand the regulations.

www.usdaw.org.uk/gdprguide



HELP FOR YOUR MEMBERS

When accidents happen, don't forget the free
accident claim cover for Usdaw members

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

Over the past few years, harsh reforms have been made to the personal injury sector. To justify implementing these changes, the government had argued that the number of personal injury claims were 'too high, pushing up insurance premiums for all.

However, in reality, the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers estimates that less than half of those who are injured, because of someone else's negligence, go on to claim compensation.

ACCIDENT CLAIMS

Figures from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that in 2022-23, 796,000 workers were injured at work and required at least seven days absence as a result. This was up 25 per cent on the figure from 2018-19.

Despite this huge number of workers being injured or becoming ill because of their work, the number of workplace injury claims fell by 51 per cent over this period.

ROAD TRAFFIC CLAIMS

A similar trend has emerged in road traffic injuries. Since the introduction of the 'whiplash reforms' in 2021 – changes which reduced compensation awards and abolished the chance to recover legal costs in the majority of road traffic accident claims – injuries sustained because of a road traffic accidents increased by 11 per cent, however claims fell by 20 per cent.

As a result, the number of claims was down 25 per cent in 2022 when compared to 2020, despite the number of injuries having increased over this period by almost 20 per cent.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

Not making a claim for their injury could mean that the injured person doesn't get answers on how or why their injury happened in the first place. There is also a wider impact on society if the negligent party is not held responsible. Particularly,

as a union, we find that employers are much more likely to improve workplace safety if a claim has been brought against them.

Without having the financial assistance a claim could offer them, the injured person may not be able to access services or equipment to help them recover.

There is a strict three-year limitation on personal injury claims, so those who wait longer face their claim being struck out completely.

WHAT IS FIRSTCALL USDAW?

FirstCall Usdaw is an important part of Usdaw's membership. It's a personal injury claim service for members and their families. It covers Usdaw members for any accident, anywhere in the UK and whilst on a package holiday abroad*. This also includes claims for members who have been the victim of violent crime. Family members who live with the member are also covered for any non-work related accidents, anywhere in the UK, plus whilst they are on package holidays abroad*. This means no legal costs, no fees, and no deductions from any compensation received.

It is vital that members know the service is available to them. If members go to a private solicitor for help with their claim, they will lose around a quarter of their compensation - in fees. With Usdaw they get to keep every penny, so using Usdaw could save members thousands of pounds.

WHAT CAN REPS DO TO SPREAD THE WORD?

Reps are the face of Usdaw in the workplace and their help for members is invaluable. Here are a few simple steps reps can take to make sure all Usdaw members are aware of this important benefit.

Talk about FirstCall Usdaw in inductions

When recruiting new members, make sure the induction includes an explanation of the legal services

available to members. This is outlined in the 10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw leaflet:

www.usdaw.org.uk/299

Make sure the Usdaw noticeboard is up-to-date

Many members hear about Usdaw services through their workplace noticeboard therefore make sure your noticeboard is up-to-date. Contact the personal injury team at head office to order a noticeboard pack, which contains posters about the important legal services Usdaw provides.

PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk

Use Arena magazine

Almost every edition of Arena contains a story about a member who has used the service. You can pin these stories on your noticeboard or use them in your inductions to promote the service.

Legal Plus Awareness Days

Hold a Legal Plus Awareness Day to promote the range of legal services available from the union. A stand/table somewhere visible in the workplace with Legal Plus literature and FirstCall Usdaw merchandise is a great way to draw attention and engage with both existing members and potential new members. Check out our Legal Plus Day guide which outlines everything you need to know to hold a successful awareness day.

www.usdaw.org.uk/LegalPlusDays

FirstCall Usdaw card

Hand out the FirstCall Usdaw card to members. These can be ordered from:

PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk





PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Reps can organise around the provision and suitability of PPE as a great way of promoting a safer workplace environment.

What Is Personal Protective Equipment?

The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Regulations define PPE as: 'All equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects the wearer against one or more risks to their health or safety, and any addition or accessory designed to meet that objective.'

PPE is a blanket term used to describe a variety of equipment ranging from protective boots and

gloves to specialised breathing apparatus, and everything in between.

Who provides my PPE?

Where a risk assessment has identified that PPE is required, the employer must provide that equipment to the employee free of charge. Additionally, the employer must also replace any worn or damaged PPE as and when needed, also free of charge.

If the PPE needs to be kept in the workplace the employer must provide a means of storage, including facilities to dry clothing used to protect from wet work.

Where necessary, employers also need to provide training and instruction in the use of PPE to all of their workers.

If you are ever unsure about the PPE requirements for a particular task or activity within your workplace, be sure to check over the risk assessment with your employer.

My PPE doesn't fit, what can I do?

The employer has an obligation to ensure that the PPE provided is suitable for the wearer to use. Using the example of safety shoes, if the standard issue shoes are not suitable – e.g. if the worker has an unusually broad foot or a medical condition which affects what they can wear – the employer must make special arrangements. Usually, safety footwear suppliers can provide a range of alternatives to meet most needs.



ACCESS TO INFORMATION

ACCIDENT BOOK RULES

The Health and Safety Executive's GDPR-compliant accident book confirms that safety representatives must have access to information on injuries that happen in the workplace.

The book states 'Employers must disclose the personal information and details of the accident to safety representatives, if the person ticks the tick box and signs. If the injured person does not consent to the disclosure of this personal information, you must anonymise the information before disclosing it to safety representatives.'

A TUC spokesperson has said 'It shows that there is no doubt that union health and safety representatives are entitled to details of any accidents recorded in the accident book, and that employees should be asked to consent to the information being

passed on (although they have the right to ask that their personal information is not revealed).'

There have been reports that some managers have used GDPR as an excuse for refusing to disclose accident information to safety reps. The HSE clarification that reps are still entitled to information is welcome. The TUC advises health and safety reps to check that the accident reporting system in their workplace is clear on this point.

It is worth remembering that employers are required by law to record and report details of specified work-related injuries and incidents. Without a functioning reporting system in place, employers may be in breach of their legal requirements.

The accident book can be purchased from the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk

Am I legally required to wear PPE?

Yes. Where a risk assessment shows that PPE is required, the individual worker has a legal duty to wear it, to take reasonable care of it, and get it replaced when it becomes unfit for purpose.

If the PPE provided to you is lost or becomes defective, it is your responsibility to report any issues to your employer.

If reps require any further advice or assistance on this matter, be sure to contact your area organiser or the health and safety section at head office.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Every month, Usdaw's health and safety section produces a newsletter covering a different topic.

The newsletter 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 in your personal details.

If there are any topics you would like us to cover, please get in touch with Usdaw's health and safety team.

The newsletters can be accessed at www.usdaw.org.uk/HSNewsletter or by scanning the QR code below.



BODY MAPPING TOOLKIT GUIDANCE

MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDER RISKS



Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) affect the muscles, bones, joints and associated tendons and ligaments.

How can reps tackle Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs)?

Identify the risks by talking to the workforce. Highlight any concerns in the workforce using the Usdaw Body Mapping Guide:

www.usdaw.org.uk/bodymapping

This involves asking workers to point out where it hurts on a map of a body to establish any links between the tasks they do and their health.

You can use the HSE's three toolkits to assess the risks for different types of high-risk tasks, although your employer will still be required to complete a full risk assessment. These are:

- The Mac tool – Manual handling assessment charts:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg383.pdf
- The Art tool – Assessment of repetitive tasks of the upper limbs:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg438.pdf
- The RAPP tool – Risk assessment of pushing and pulling:
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg478.pdf

For our retail reps, please see the HSE guidance on MSDs for checkout workers:

www.hse.gov.uk/pUbns/indg269.pdf

If employers aren't co-operative, reps can use Usdaw's HS2 form to put their concern in writing to the employer. This can cause the employer to take action and respond in writing by a certain date on what action they have taken. It will also provide an audit trail and evidence. If you are not satisfied with their response, you could raise a grievance and contact your rep or area organiser at your local Usdaw office. If you need any copies of the Usdaw H&S publications they can be ordered via our H&S publication order form:

www.usdaw.org.uk/HSOrderForm

HEALTH & SAFETY ACTIVIST **NICK BROWN**

Home delivery driver Nick Brown has been a health and safety rep at Morrisons in Cromer since June 2021 and has proved himself to be highly effective in the role, winning the regional Health and Safety Rep award at the 2022 Organising Awards. *Network* spoke to Nick, 52, about his work.

How did you become a safety rep?

The company actually asked me during my job interview if I'd be interested in taking on the role, and I accepted. I was a fire marshal in my previous job so they thought I'd be a suitable candidate. Standards were already good in my store, but it's important to keep an eye on things.

What do you do in the role day-to-day?

I'll walk around the store, see if anything needs doing, and report any issues to my ops manager who is always quick to resolve them. I'm the only safety rep at my store so I'll walk the whole site. I've got a good working relationship with management who know I'm looking out for the best interests of the company, my colleagues and customers.

What successes are you most proud of?

I arranged for new manual handling equipment for the delivery drivers and got some new chairs ordered for the checkout staff, they were important wins. I don't like to brag about anything in particular though because it's not about me, it's about the safety of my colleagues and the public. Health and safety has to be an ongoing thing and what keeps me wanting to do it is looking out for the safety of others.

What advice would you give to new safety reps?

It's all about the paper trail. No matter what you do, write it down and keep your notes and emails. That way you can prove you raised the issue at the earliest opportunity. If in doubt, get an HS2 form out!

MENTAL HEALTH TOPS LIST

HSE ACCIDENT AND ILL HEALTH STATS

The Health and Safety Executive is a UK public body responsible for the regulation and enforcement of workplace health, safety and welfare.

What are the HSE's national statistics?

They are a summary of the government's workplace accident and ill health statistics.

What are the key findings?

The statistics show that 135 workers were killed in work-related accidents and 35.2 million working days were lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury.

The most significant health and

safety concern was work-related mental ill health, with 875,000 workers reporting they were suffering from a mental health condition, which accounted for the loss of 17.1 million working days.

The second most significant health and safety concern was work related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) with 473,000 workers reporting they were injured with the condition, and this accounted for the loss of 6.6 million working days.

How can reps tackle work related stress?

Reps can take action using Usdaw's stress questionnaire to gauge stress levels in the workplace:

www.usdaw.org.uk/stressquestionnaire

You can consult your employer on your findings from the questionnaire where they indicate work-related stress. You could recommend 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: www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards and HSE's Talking Toolkit: www.hse.gov.uk/stress_search_talking_toolkit

You can view the statistics on their website by searching: **hssh2223**

Discounts & Offers

FASHION AND TEXTILE CHILDREN'S TRUST

Grants for parents and carers working for clothing, homeware or fabric companies.

The Fashion & Textile Children's Trust (FTCT) gives financial grants to parents and carers who work in the UK fashion and textile industry. Grants can ease the cost of living by funding essential items for children in the family, such as clothing, bedroom furniture and appliances.

*To find out more go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers

**fashion &
textile
children's
trust**

TRAVEL INSURANCE

New Travel Insurance Offer

Protect your trip and head off on holiday with added peace of mind. UsdawProtect is offering Usdaw members flexible and affordable travel insurance, with four levels of cover to choose from.

*To get your quote, visit: www.UsdawProtect.com/Travel



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BookBeat

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25% off English Heritage annual memberships

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*To find out more go to: 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. English Heritage - offers not in conjunction with any other offer. Only valid on new memberships paying by annual Direct Debit. Accompanying children must be under 18 and within the family group. BookBeat - the offer is valid for new BookBeat users and can be redeemed once per new user. After the free trial period you can continue to listen from £5.99/month. You can cancel your subscription anytime, no commitments. 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.

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

*Terms and conditions for individual offers on the website.

Insurance

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

Leisure & Entertainment

- Beer52
- Bookbeat
- Brewer 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
- Expedia
- Hotels.com
- Lost Luggage Protection
- Parkdean Resorts
- Pontins
- West Cliff Hotel
- Whitemead Forest Park
- Wightlink Ferries

Miscellaneous

- Big Yellow Storage
- Child-Safe SIM Cards
- Mobile Phones
- TOTUM Pro Card
- International Student ID Card

Health & Beauty

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

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

Cars & Transport

- Car Insurance
- Car Maintenance
- Car Parking: Q-Park
- Flexible Autos: Car Hire
- Halfords
- Motorfinity
- Seatfrog: Train Travel Upgrade
- Startrescue
- Vauxhall Cars

Money & Finance

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



Don't forget about the Union's legal services such as free will writing and Legal Plus.

Staff Announcements

Usdaw bids farewell to two national officers and an area organiser, and welcomes two new national officers and four area organisers

JOANNE MCGUINNESS

National officer Joanne McGuinness, 56, retires after 30 years of loyal service.

Joanne's involvement in the trade union movement began in 1984, when future regional secretary Mike Aylward persuaded her to stand as a rep in the Co-op. She was only 17 at the time. Following on from this, she held a number of lay roles including chair of North Western Co-operative Retail Services, regional councillor and a member of the women's committee. At the age of 27 she was appointed as an area organiser in the Midlands region and in 2003 she was promoted to national officer in the North West region.

"I became a rep because I wanted to stand up for my colleagues and give them a voice," said Joanne. "And this job gave me the opportunity to do that on a national level. I've been very fortunate to have a job that was also a vocation.

"Over the last 20 years we've had some wins such as negotiating the first £10 per hour pay rate and thwarting another company's attempt to fire and rehire our

members. But my favourite part of the job was always representing members.

"Usdaw has been a part of my life for over 40 years and I will of course miss it. I want to thank Mike Aylward and Pauline Foulkes (retired national officer) for being there right at the beginning, the regional and head office staff who've provided me with support, and all the area organisers and reps who've helped me along the way.

"Once I retire, I'm going to take the opportunity to see more of my family and friends. I'm also looking forward to finally having the time to do up my garden."

DAVE GILL

National Officer Dave Gill, 58, retires after 11 years in the role and over 30 years of dedicated service.

Dave became a full-time convenor in Littlewood's mail order distribution centre in Shaw, Greater Manchester, in the mid-eighties, aged just 19, and won the TUC Young Activist of the Year Award in 1990. Within three years he was appointed as an area

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said:

"Joanne and Dave have been friends and colleagues over many years and will be missed by everyone in Usdaw. Their loyalty and commitment to the union was second to none. I want to thank them both for their conscientious service and wish them a long and happy retirement."

organiser in the southern region. In 2006, he was promoted to deputy regional officer in the North West before becoming a national officer in 2013.

"I've always enjoyed the recruitment and organising side of the union ever since I became a rep," said Dave. "In my various roles I was able to do this both on a regional, as well as a national level.

"I've been a national officer for over a decade and in that time, I have managed to update and improve all the agreements for the companies I was responsible for. After improving the Sainsbury's



Joanne McGuinness



Dave Gill



Bally Auluk



Darren Matthews

agreement, it felt like it was the right time to go.

"It's been a privilege to work for the union. It has been very rewarding working with the reps and the companies at national level and seeing the negotiated improvements being implemented. I want to say a big thank you to all the reps I've worked with over the years.

"I'm looking forward to retiring and starting to plan the next chapter of my life."

BALLY AULUK

Former area organiser Bally Auluk is promoted to national officer and will be responsible for a number of companies including Sainsbury's, Ikea, Poundland, Home Bargains, Primark, Selfridges and Ocado.

Bally, 56, stood to become a Sainsbury's rep in 2012. Within a few short years he was the chair of his branch, chair of the regional equalities forum, as well as a graduate of Usdaw's organising academy. In 2017, he joined the staff in the South Wales and Western region as an area organiser.

"I can't wait to start working with the companies on a national level," said Bally. "My priorities will include building on the great work done by my predecessor Dave Gill; strengthening agreements and achieving substantial pay awards for our members. I haven't lost sight of

the fact that the decisions I make could have a huge impact on our members and I will always do what's right by them.

"I want to say a big thank you to all the reps I've worked with, my friends and colleagues in the Cardiff office and in the wider A region. I wouldn't be here without all the support and encouragement they gave me over the years."

DARREN MATTHEWS

Former area organiser Darren Matthews is promoted to national officer and will be responsible for Morrisons, B&M Bargains, Boots retail, Moto Services, Blakemores, as well as a number of pharmaceutical companies such as Phoenix Healthcare, AAH and Well Pharmacy.

Darren started his trade union journey at the age of 20 when his colleagues at Ashby Dairies nominated him to be firstly their health and safety rep and then shop steward. He quickly found himself getting involved in all areas of the union including becoming a branch secretary, regional councillor and the chair of the national youth committee. In 2000 he was appointed as an area organiser in the Midlands region.

"I was an area organiser for 23 years and I loved it, the trials, tribulations, the ups and downs," said Darren, 54. "My favourite part

was rep development. I got a real buzz from seeing reps who initially lacked self-confidence go on to the academy, address over 1,000 people at ADM and represent their colleagues in meetings as well as at pay negotiations.

"Throughout my career, I have never lost sight of how fortunate and honoured I was to be an area organiser of a trade union. I have been involved in pay negotiations and I wanted to do that on a national level. I'm still pinching myself that I got the job. As a national officer, I will be focussing on improving our agreements and trying to secure good pay deals.

"I want to say thank you to the reps and my colleagues in the region, past and present for all their support over the years."

ANGELIKA ZYWOCINSKA

Angelika Zywocinska will be relocating from Sittingbourne to start her position as area organiser at the Morden office.

Angelika, 39, was previously a health and safety rep and shop steward at Morrisons distribution, winning a regional Organising Award for health and safety in 2022.

"I'll be responsible for a variety of sites across south east London including retail and distribution," said Angelika. "I'm looking forward to working with my reps and growing the membership in my patch."



Angelika Zywocinska



Robert Francis



Ryan Piper

ROBERT FRANCIS

Robert Francis is a new area organiser based at the Morden office.

Robert, 40, was previously a shop steward at Tesco fulfilment in Crawley and completed both Academy programmes before being appointed to his new role, where he will cover a range of sites across the Guildford area.

"I'm really excited to get started," said Robert. "I'm looking forward to getting out and about across my patch, and engaging with and developing my reps."

RYAN PIPER

Former Tesco rep Ryan Piper took up his new position as area organiser at the union's Andover office.

A graduate of both Academy programmes, Ryan will be relocating from Royal Tunbridge Wells for his new role which covers Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

"It's amazing to be given this opportunity and I'm looking forward to getting my teeth into it," said Ryan, 37. "I'll be looking to increase membership density in the sites across my area and help my reps be the best they can be."

JASON HILL

Jason Hill is the new area organiser based at the Waltham Cross office. Jason, 53, became a rep in 2019 while working at



Jason Hill

Co-op Distribution and was also a branch secretary before being appointed to the union's staff.

"I was really pleased and excited to be offered this position as it's something I've been working towards for a long time," said Jason. "I'll be covering north west London, mainly retail. I want to get to know all my reps personally and help motivate them. I won't have to relocate to start the job, but I live on a narrowboat so I'll be sailing closer to the office!"

SUSAN COUTTS

Susan Coutts, area organiser in the Scottish region, retired in November after 10 years' service.

Susan, 59, joined Usdaw in 1994 while working for Tesco. She became a workplace rep in 2001 and went on to complete both Academy programmes, also serving a stint on the National Executive Council before being appointed to the position of area organiser in 2013.

"I'd like to thank all the reps I worked with over my time as an organiser," said Susan. "I never forget that they're giving up their time voluntarily. I'm proud of them, and it's been a pleasure helping them to develop.

"I'm looking forward to being able to relax after I retire. I want to embrace life and enjoy living for the moment. I'm going to enjoy Christmas, then after that - holidays, here I come!"



Susan Coutts

OBITUARIES

Usdaw was saddened to lose two former colleagues,

Christine Richardson

passed away on 11 October 2023 at the age of 76. Christine was an area organiser based in the Cardiff office and was employed by the union from 1983 until her retirement in 2006.

Edna Simms

passed away on 15 December 2023 at the age of 86. Edna was an area organiser based in the Eastern Region. She was employed by the union from 1977 until her retirement in 1999.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I am grateful to both Christine and Edna for their contribution to Usdaw and on behalf of the union I want to send my condolences to their family and friends."



CHRISTINE RICHARDSON



EDNA SIMMS



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



Menopause campaign at Sainsbury's Coleraine, NI

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF USDAM MEMBERSHIP



Caroline Sisson, Tesco Thirsk and Sally Davies, Co-op Midcounties Twigworth, Gloucester.



Membership Week at West Bromwich Tesco



FAREWELL THANKS

A big thank you to all the fantastic reps at the Wincanton Brockworth site.

It's been a challenging few months but the reps have been excellent throughout the process.

They went out of their way to support their members even though they themselves had to come to terms with the closure of the site.

I will miss working with them and wish them the best of luck in their new jobs.

Steve Newman
Area organiser,
Cardiff Office

Brand new benefits for Usdaw members!



As you know, Usdaw membership comes with access to great offers and savings from a variety of companies. As a trusted service provider, UsdawProtect is now offering three new insurance benefits for your branch members.

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