

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

# arena

Winter 2011

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[CLAUS FOR THOUGHT]

## FESTIVE WORKING RIGHTS EXPLAINED



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# Youth unemployment is a national disgrace



**T**his has been a turbulent year with working people still under the cosh three years after the banking crisis of 2008 threw the western world into recession.

To make matters worse the Tory-led Coalition has increased VAT, cut benefits, kept inflation high and watched as fuel and utility bills have gone through the roof.

We know all too well about the job losses in our sectors and the cuts in hours, which have piled even more pressure on our members. We now have unemployment at around 2.57

million and the Government's response to that is to make it easier for employers to sack people. If you ever needed an example of the reason trade unions oppose the Tories this is one of the most obvious.

The most alarming aspect of high unemployment is the impact it has on young adults. These are our sons and daughters who are struggling to get on to the career ladder, or who cannot afford the high fees to study.

There are always huge social and economic consequences to high unemployment and there is no indication that the Government even cares. It cut the education maintenance allowance for 16&17 year-olds and has cut employment schemes aimed at the young. It is a national disgrace.

In this issue you'll find a

special four page feature on employment rights for young workers and coverage of the national youth weekend.

Usdaw is determined to encourage and support our young members unlike this Government.

Finally on behalf of Usdaw can I wish all of our members a very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

**John Hannett**  
General Secretary

**Usdaw**  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*  
[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

**Usdaw Members' Helpline:**  
0845 6060640

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**USDW**

188 Wilmslow Road,  
Manchester M14 6LJ  
T 0161 224 2804  
F 0161 257 2566  
E [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)  
W [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

**HEAD OF MEDIA &  
COMMUNICATIONS**  
Mike Glover

**EDITOR**  
Peter Rees-Farrell  
E [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)

**REPORTER**  
Mairead Bradley

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT**  
Paula Barke

**ADVERTISING & DESIGN**  
Century One Publishing  
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road,  
St. Albans AL3 4DG  
T 01727 893 894  
F 01727 893 895  
E [enquiries@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk](mailto:enquiries@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk)  
W [www.centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk](http://www.centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk)

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
Dave Challenor  
T 01727 739 196  
E [dave@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk](mailto:dave@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk)

**DESIGN & PRODUCTION**  
Heena Gudka

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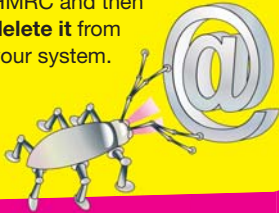


**Tax refund hoax alarm**

**U**sdaw members are being warned not to fall for **hoax emails** claiming to be from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and offering a tax refund. These so-called **'phishing' scams** could see victims' bank accounts emptied and/or their credit card details stolen.

There has been a massive increase in the number of 'phishing' scams in the last three years say the HMRC and these emails usually ask for bank or credit card details – something the HMRC never does. Any legitimate refund or enquiry from the HMRC is only ever done in writing and by post.

If you receive one of these hoax emails do not respond but forward it to HMRC and then **delete it** from your system.



**Government cuts workers' rights**

**T**he Tory-led Coalition continued its assault on workers' rights in October after it confirmed that the **qualifying period** for unfair dismissal claims will increase from one year to two next April and that a **fee system** will be introduced for employees who bring tribunal claims.

From **April 2013**, employees must pay £250 to apply for a tribunal, and must pay a further £1,000 if a hearing is granted. The money will be refunded if they are successful, but is forfeited if they lose. The Government has said that **'poor claimants'** will not have to pay, although there is currently no detail as to how a claimant qualifies as 'poor'.

General secretary John Hannett condemned the announcement. "This Tory-led Coalition think the best way to grow the economy is to make it easier to sack people," he said. "With more than **2.5m** people currently **unemployed** the last thing the UK needs is more people on the dole."

The move has also come

under **severe criticism** from legal and industrial relations experts. One said: "It is unlikely that raising the threshold from one to two years will reduce the number of employment tribunal claims because employees are increasingly bringing claims linking **unfair dismissal** with discrimination claims which can be made from day one of employment.

"The Government's own figures suggest that an extra 12 per cent of employees would potentially be denied the chance to claim unfair dismissal due to length of service as a result of the change – hardly likely to make much of a dent in overall **tribunal numbers** given that only a small proportion of these would make any claim."

While another analyst commented: "Presumably, the requirement to pay a fee will not be levied on claimants who are unemployed and cannot afford it. In which case relatively few claimants will actually have to pay the fee. That's the thing about people claiming unfair dismissal – they tend to be **unemployed.**"

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# Use your vote in union elections

## Brass in pocket

**T**he election process is underway to elect the union's **president** and **executive council** for the next three years. The president chairs the Annual Delegate Meeting and other conferences as well as presiding at the monthly executive council meetings. The executive council is drawn from each of the seven divisions and is made up of two lay members per division with the exception of the North West, which has three seats. The executive council's role is to oversee the business of the union in conjunction with the general secretary and other central officials.

**Nomination papers** were sent to branches in early October with the closing date at noon **Monday 14 November**

**2011.** Ballot papers and election addresses will be sent to all individual members on **Monday 23 January 2012.** The ballot will close on **Friday 17 February.** The Electoral Reform Services (The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London, N8 0NW) will act as the independent scrutineer.

Elections will also be held for divisional councils and for delegations to other national conferences. Voting papers will be sent out to branches on **Monday 23 January 2012** and should be returned by noon on **5 March 2012.**

■ **If you have changed your address recently please inform the records section at central office or call 0845 6060640 before December 15, 2011.**



**A**round 890,000 workers, two thirds of them women, have gained after the adult national minimum wage increased by 15p to **£6.08** per hour from October 1. The rate for 18-20 year-olds went up to **£4.98**, 16-17 year-olds are now entitled to **£3.68** and the apprentice rate is **£2.60** an hour.

The Low Pay Commission, which recommends the increases to government, calculates that this 2.5 per cent increase in the adult minimum wage should benefit the public finances by **£230 million** as tax and national insurance rates increase and the benefits bill falls.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This rise will put **extra cash** in the pockets of the UK's lowest-paid workers who are under intense pressure from increases in utilities bills, petrol, and cuts in hours.

"The minimum wage has already helped hundreds of thousands of families without causing significant job losses and its success has shown that – despite much scare-mongering from some employers – sensible labour market regulation is **good for business.**"

**[MORE INFORMATION:]**  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK)



# Keeping you informed

## Pensions

Still one off the most important issues for all workers and probably even more so since the economic upheavals of the last three years. The union's pensions section has trebled its efforts to inform members on the issue and has introduced a distance learning course, part of the union's comprehensive Home Study course, to put members in the picture.

Active reps are also using Pensions Awareness Days to educate members, raise the union's profile and recruit new members.

A Pensions Awareness Day was held at Morrisons in Edinburgh



## Legal Plus service and FirstCall Usdaw

**Uswdaw's** legal service went from strength to strength this year, recovering more than £17.1m in compensation, as it continued to protect workers treated unfairly or injured at work. **FirstCall**

**Uswdaw** – the dedicated claims helpline – has revolutionised the way members make a claim for personal injury and it has had great success in winning thousands of cases since its launch in 2008.

Reps have also used special **Legal Plus Awareness Days** to remind members of all the services on offer and this has significantly helped raise the profile of the union and recruit new members.



# on the important issues

## Agency workers

Hundreds of thousands of agency workers will enjoy improved rights and working conditions after the **Agency Workers Regulations** came into force on 1 October.

From the first day of an assignment, agency workers now have a right to use any facilities provided by the hirer to directly employed staff – such as a creche, canteen or transport services, and after **12 weeks** in the same role with the same hirer, agency workers will also be entitled to the same pay, holiday entitlement and working hours as permanent staff. They will also receive improved maternity rights.

**Usdaw believes** the ability of employers to treat agency workers differently has left many vulnerable workers open to exploitation and also provided a route for unscrupulous employers to undermine pay and working conditions of their own directly employed staff. Usdaw launched its **Fair Ground for Agency Workers** campaign in May this year to raise awareness of the new regulations and to help both agency and permanent staff get organised and make sure workers are not taken for a ride by bad employers.

General secretary John Hannett said: **“Protecting vulnerable workers** from being exploited benefits all workers, but it also helps good employers by preventing them from being undercut by the more unscrupulous.”



## Supporting Parents & Carers

Working families have come under intense pressure since the Tory-led Coalition began their programme of austerity with cuts in childcare payments, working tax credits, maternity grants, the abolition of education maintenance allowance and further cuts and freezes to benefits to come.

The union held its **Spotlight Day in March** to expose these cuts and to inform members of the in-work benefits that they can still claim. The Day was a huge success with publicity events held throughout the UK. Look out for future **Spotlight Days** next year.



## PEOPLE LIKE YOU



The store and apartment block were completely destroyed



# War zone

The August riots caused devastation and chaos for many workers who had their lives and livelihood threatened



# W

hen looters set fire to a carpet shop in Tottenham they also made 26 families homeless including Usdaw member Mehmet Asdooyuran.

The 36 year-old store manager found himself right in the middle of the disturbances in the early hours of Sunday August 7 as rioters smashed and burnt businesses and residential properties near to Tottenham Hotspur's football ground.

"I was awoken at around 1.30am by the sound of breaking glass. I went outside to have a look and the shop was already ablaze. There was chaos everywhere. No police, no fire brigade and hundreds of people running wild – it was like a war zone.

"Myself and my next door

neighbour decided to stay with friends, just in case. At the time we planned to return in the morning and expected the flats to have some smoke damage. As I watched the night unfold on the TV I witnessed the building being engulfed in flames – shop and flats – both completely gutted.

"It was a surreal experience. Thankfully we got out. If we'd stayed in and waited for the fire brigade we would've been killed. I just felt hollow, everything I owned went up in smoke that night. All I had was my phone and the clothes I was wearing.

"When I went back later that morning, there was just devastation everywhere. Unbelievable.

"I moved in with my parents initially and since then I've

rented a flat in Enfield, which the insurance is paying for. I'm still in limbo and there's a lot to sort out.

"I work for Topps Tiles and I have to say the company has been very good, very understanding and very supportive. I even had a sub on my salary.

"I've been told it'll take between two and three years to rebuild the property. The local area suffered massive damage. A lot of it is still boarded up.

"Looking back, at the time I didn't fear for my life, but on reflection anything could've happened that night. Like I said – it was like a war zone."

Calling members to action  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/bearpep](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/bearpep)



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# Understanding your Ch

**arena** reminds readers to find out now about festive hours

## Introduction

**R**etailers are publishing their Christmas and New Year trading hours, which always prove **controversial** especially when Christmas Day falls at the weekend.

Tough competition in the retail sector means that retailers will be looking to open shops, particularly convenience stores, for more days and trade for longer over the festive period. This year there will be increased pressure on shopworkers to work more days and longer hours during the traditional shopping spree.

Usdaw is lobbying and negotiating with employers to try and get the longest possible break for shopworkers, and other workers, over the festive period. The union wants shops to close early on Christmas Eve and for all shops to be closed on Christmas Day. The union would like to see any working on the Christmas/New Year public holidays to be voluntary and to be paid at premium rates, however this is covered by your contract of employment and not by legislation.

The union negotiates with employers against a backdrop of statutory rights that are more limited than many people think, with workers' rights to time off during the festive period largely dependent on their contract of employment and any **trade union/company agreement**. *Arena* takes a look at some of the most frequently asked questions on this difficult subject.



## Diary dates

DECEMBER 2

5	M	T	W	T
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

## Holiday terms

**Q** Bank holidays, public holidays, customary holidays – what's the difference?

Very little. Strictly speaking bank holidays refer only to bank workers who enjoy legal protection and statutory rights to have holidays on these days. However for the rest of the UK's workforce there is no statutory right and instead they have to refer to their contracts. The terms are **interchangeable** but refer to the eight days (New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Holiday, Summer Holiday, Christmas Day, and Boxing Day) we know as either bank/public/customary holidays.

## Premiums

**Q** Am I entitled to premium payments if I work on a bank holiday?

There is no automatic right to premium pay for working on a bank holiday. The pay rate for working these days **depends** on your contract of employment and union/company agreements. The pay rates and any days that attract premiums are usually explained in the staff handbook or in other communications to staff.

**Q** Will Saturday, 24 December be a normal working day?

## The night before . . .

**Yes. Christmas Eve is a normal working day and staff may be required to work their normal working hours. Usdaw is urging businesses to close their doors early to allow staff to get home to spend the evening with their family and friends.**

# Christmas working hours

**Q** In my 2011 diary Monday, 26 December and Tuesday, 27 December are identified as public holidays. Does my company have to adhere to these?

No. Bank holidays are the days the Government designates as public holidays under the Banking Act. When the traditional public holiday falls at the weekend the bank holiday is the substitute date for the weekend for **Monday-to-Friday** businesses. For workers in **Monday-to-Friday** businesses. For businesses that operate seven days a week, such as the retail and distribution sector, the customary holiday is sometimes kept to the traditional date. The arrangements for assigning the date of the customary holiday are different in each business.

## Volunteers

**Q** Is bank holiday working voluntary?

For some workers working on a designated public holiday is voluntary; for others working on some or all public holidays is part of your contract. The position on whether public holiday working is voluntary is usually explained in your contract, the **staff handbook** or outlined in agreements between the employer and the union.

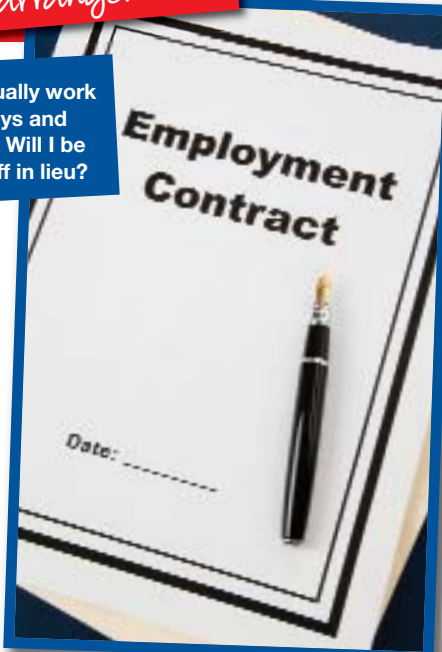
[ **MORE INFORMATION AT**  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK) ]

## Working arrangements

**Q** I don't usually work on Mondays and Tuesdays. Will I be entitled to time off in lieu?

Again, this depends on what is outlined in your **contract of employment**, staff handbook and if there is a union/company agreement. In many businesses individual worker's bank holidays are incorporated into the annual leave entitlement. The last Labour

Government increased the minimum statutory holiday entitlement from 20 days to 28 days to take into consideration the eight main public holidays.



## Festive time off

**Q** Have retail staff the legal right to three days off at Christmas and New Year?

There is no automatic legal right to paid time off on public holidays. Your right to time off will depend on what is in your contract of employment, the staff handbook and whether the union has been able to negotiate improvements with your employer.

# History in the baking at

Some of the world's most well-known biscuit brands including penguins and digestives are made by Usdaw members at the McVitie's factory in Manchester

**T**he site has been baking biscuits since 1914, and also manufactures the jaffa cake brand and is home to more than 500 union members under an agreement that can be traced back to 1921.

The branch is run by a dedicated team of reps, health and safety reps and union learning reps and convenor Kevin Dolan, who cover all shifts every day of the year except Christmas Day and Easter Sunday when the factory closes.

On the factory floor enormous mixing machines, industrial-sized ovens and miles of conveyor belts

ensure that the UK's biscuit demands are well and truly met. A variety of shift patterns make sure production never stops. The sweet smell of baking biscuits and liquid chocolate make this one of the most pleasant working environments in food manufacturing.

Relations between the reps and management run equally as smoothly with a no-nonsense approach to industrial relations and a strong partnership deal ensuring problems are dealt with quickly and fairly.



The McVitie's team

“We have regular meetings with the management team,” said Kevin Dolan. “And it’s fair to say over the last four years we have made real progress despite the ongoing need to modernise and adapt to the demands

of the sector. We get on well and the joint approach does work. Our team of reps has evolved over the same period and between us we have built up a mutual respect between us and the company.”

Human resources business partner Loretta Smith agrees. “We have to be flexible and over the years there have been lots of



# world famous factory



changes to meet customer demands. We have an agreement to modernise and, while this is not easy, with regular debate and consultation we do work our way forward."

The reps have negotiated a good set of terms and conditions on-site with competitive pay rates, shift allowances,

occupational pension, staff discount and good holiday provision.

"These have been built up over many years and I'm sure this explains why we have a lot of long serving staff on-site and turnover is low," said Kevin.

Health and safety understandably plays an important role with

comprehensive systems in place to ensure both employees and the products are looked after. "We have a safety manager on site who works with our reps on a regular basis," added Kevin. "Our accident rate is very low, and while we're always looking to improve, the site's record is excellent."

## McVitie's facts

- **1830** Robert McVitie opens his first bakery
- **1914** Manchester factory built
- **1948** Merges to form United Biscuits
- UB has sites across the UK and in Eire, Belgium, France, & Holland
- **Brands include;** All McVitie's biscuits, Jaffa Cakes, Penguin, Jacob's, Twiglets, Phileas Fogg, Hula Hoops, Mini Cheddars and KP brands.
- The Manchester factory produces **2.8 million** Jaffa cakes a day, that's **19.6 million** a week and **980 million** a year.
- The site uses **200,000** tonnes of flour a year, **103,000** tonnes of chocolate and **84,400** tonnes of sugar.
- **56,000 tonnes** of biscuits and Jaffa cakes are produced each year.
- You can pick up around **8,500 tonnes** of Penguins that are manufactured on site.

## Did you know?

**71m packets** of chocolate digestives are eaten each year in the UK that's **52 biscuits per second**

# Summer school for s



Calling members to action  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep)

**U**sdaw provides a wide variety of courses for its reps so they can communicate with and represent their members in all sorts of different situations.

One of the most popular courses is the annual summer school

for newly elected activists, which is held at Wortley Hall near Sheffield.

The five-day residential course attracted 40 reps in September who worked in three groups to look closely at how they can understand the union better, improve their skills,

and deliver a first-class service for members. They also spent a day campaigning in nearby Barnsley talking to the shopping public and raising awareness of the union.

General secretary John Hannett said: "As soon as reps are elected we provide introductory training

courses to give them the skills they need to do a good job. The summer schools are an extension of this and, while not all reps can be away from home for five days, this is an excellent way of supplementing those skills in a friendly, supportive and relaxed environment."

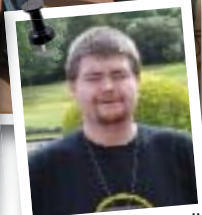
# kills for active reps



The class  
of 2011



Daniel Feakes



Adam Campbell



Elaine Curran



Adeola Fadipe

## What the reps said:

**Daniel Feakes**

23, warehouse operative, Hermes, Luton

"The week helped me to plug a number of gaps in my knowledge of how the union works and explained a lot about members' rights at work."

**Manpreet Sanghera**

32, general assistant Tesco, Twickenham

"I've learnt a lot and my confidence has definitely increased. I'm keen to apply what I've learnt this week in my store over the coming months."

**Adam Campbell**

27, customer assistant, Doncaster

"This was a big step for me but it was very enjoyable and I certainly increased my knowledge of the union."

**Elaine Curran**

55, team leader Tesco, Rochdale

"It was brilliant. Learning in small groups really helped and I can do everything better now than before I came to the school."

**Adeola Fadipe**

20, price controller Sainsbury's, Ladbroke Grove

"The tutors were very helpful. The school gives you new skills and sets you up to be a better rep. It really brought me out of my shell."

**Andrew Tyre**

42, driver Wiseman's, Midlands

"Fantastic. A lot of hard work but really enjoyable. We all learnt from each other in a friendly, relaxed environment."

**Christine Page**

50, supervisor, West Yorkshire Co-op

"Very interesting. A good mix of people and a lot of team work. This is a great confidence booster. I'd definitely recommend it."

# Have a **HAPPY** Christmas!

Christmas can be an exciting and busy time for shopworkers, but it can also be a stressful time for shoppers and lead to them becoming frustrated and angry. Usdaw's **Freedom From Fear** campaign aims to protect members from abuse, threats and violence.



## Usdaw's top tips to stay safe over the festive period:

**Be polite:** Remaining polite and helpful is the best way to calm down an abusive person.

**Be firm:** Politely tell an abusive customer that their behaviour is unacceptable.

**Be prepared:** Make sure you know what to do if an incident occurs.

**Report it:** Make sure all incidents are recorded.

**Don't be afraid to call for help:**

If you feel threatened call for help from your colleagues or line manager.

**Get to know the security measures:**

Familiarise yourself with security measures.

**Raise concerns:** If you have safety worries raise them with your Usdaw rep.

**Don't accept abuse as part of the job:**

Employers have legal duties to protect you from injury and abuse.

Download a copy now at:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/top10tips](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/top10tips)

Or you can order a copy from  
your local office. Address  
details are listed on page 47.







Jonathan Waterhouse in the award-winning learning centre

# Eyes on the prize

McVitie's rep has learning opportunities all wrapped up at the famous Manchester site

**H**ard working rep Jonathan Waterhouse has won national recognition for his part in delivering excellent learning opportunities for his members at his Manchester factory.

The Union Learning Rep (ULR) won the TUC award after he was instrumental in setting up a learning centre and delivering first-class courses for hundreds of workers. "I'm delighted to have won the award, not for myself, but for the team at McVitie's who have given our members a second chance of improving their

skills, building their confidence and improving their employment prospects," he said.

Launched in 2008, the on-site learning centre has also won awards for its commitment to staff. "We've put courses on covering English, maths, Spanish, IT and much more," added Jonathan. "The company have been very supportive and the members have made the most of the opportunities available to them.

"We have six PCs, internet access, and the centre is open 24 hours a day. A tutor comes in twice a week and more than 100 members have passed

their NVQ level 2 in a variety of subjects. Other courses have included plumbing, digital photography and we're also linked in to the food manufacturing training programme, so it's a win-win situation for staff and McVitie's.

"I've been on quite a few Usdaw training courses and these have given me the knowledge and skills I need to help encourage members back into learning and provide the courses which I've thoroughly enjoyed. The lifelong learning initiative gives our members a second chance and provides fantastic opportunities to readdress their skills level. I get a great buzz out of that."



## RECRUIT A FRIEND

# Sign up to cash in!

**F**ive lucky members are celebrating after they each won **£100** in the **Recruit a Friend** competition.

- **Jim Memmory** from Wroxham Road Tesco Express in Norwich recruited colleague **James Steer**.
- Poundland's **Emily Blower** recruited colleague **Gemma Harman** in Hastings.
- Sainsbury's **Roddy O'Shaughnessy** signed up his wife **Melanie** who works at Co-op Pharmacy in Swansea.
- **Julie Harris** recruited her husband **Brian**, both from Hendon Sainsbury's in North London.
- **Carole Gratton** from Carlisle Group signed up Tesco's **Robert Bell** in Leyland, Lancashire.

By doing your bit for the recruitment drive you'll be building the union, helping your workmates get the many benefits of Usdaw membership and potentially putting some much needed cash into your own pocket.

The prize draw is open to all members and all you have to do is recruit a friend, relative or colleague using the form opposite and send it in to the address below.

**The first five out of the hat will each win £100.**



*Gemma Harman and Emily Blower*



*Roddy and Melanie O'Shaughnessy*



*Jim Memmory and James Steer*



*Julie and Brian Harris*

**Five lucky winners!!**

**Enter the draw now**

The weekly rates are **£2.18 for Scale A** (applicable to full-time and part-time workers) and **£1.36 for Scale C** (applicable to part-time workers only)

There are **five chances** to win with Usdaw's **Recruit a Friend Competition** as arena is offering **FIVE PRIZES OF £100 EACH**. (Terms and conditions apply). So all you have to do is sign up a work colleague, family member or friend using the form opposite and send it to **Usdaw, Freepost NAT19525, Manchester M14 7DJ**. Closing date is **January 6, 2012**.

Please complete and return to

Arena Prize Draw, Usdaw, FREEPOST NAT:9525, Manchester M14 7JD

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Branch No. \_\_\_\_\_

Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please use **BLOCK LETTERS** and complete this form as fully as possible.

Please tick the appropriate box

MS  Miss  Mrs  Mr  Female  Male

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Forename \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Full Postal Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. No. (inc. STD) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Workplace Address \_\_\_\_\_

Location Number \_\_\_\_\_

Employee No. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE**

Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

Data Protection Act 1992

Usdaw collects and maintains personal information in order to carry out its functions as a trade union, provide membership services and comply with certain statutory obligations. All personal information is treated with the utmost confidentiality and with appropriate levels of security. By joining Usdaw you agree that we may use the information about you which we hold on our records for the purposes of the union's business as set out below; this is called processing and includes what is classed as sensitive personal information such as the fact that you are a trade union member. The personal data will be used for a range of union-based activities relating to the running of the union, including the maintenance of records, monitoring for equal opportunity purposes, assisting with employment disputes, ballots, injury claims, etc and other services and benefits. All information (updated as appropriate) will be kept throughout membership and, to the extent necessary, for such reasonable period after membership as may be necessary to enable the member to access any post-membership benefits. It will be available to our employees, officers and officials, both at headquaters and branch regional offices and other associations all associated with the union, including our strict instructions. From time to time we may wish to use the information together with any other for analysis and/or marketing purposes. In particular, this may benefit you as the union can use its collective bargaining strength to negotiate attractive terms and the provision of a wide range of additional member benefits and to contact you with details of any that we feel may be of particular interest. Members have the right to object to and stop direct marketing in any form by organisations contacting them on behalf of the union. If they wish to exercise their right to stop such direct marketing then they should write to Central Treasurer requesting that such mailings be stopped, or alternatively, write to the organisation in question direct. Please, however, understand that this may preclude you from receiving details of any of these additional member benefits and offers in the future. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 you also have the right to ask for a copy of your information (for which a small fee can be charged of £10) and to request correction of any incorrect information held. This notice will be amended from time to time and will be regularly published by the union in Arena, Network and the Usdaw website.

Recruiter's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter's Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick the appropriate box

Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes  No

Please tick the appropriate box

Have you been a member of any trade union before? Yes  No

If so please give details \_\_\_\_\_

Union \_\_\_\_\_

Date joined \_\_\_\_\_

Date Left \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution rate per week \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick the appropriate box

If you do not select a scale of contributions you will automatically be entered as Scale A in order to take advantage of the full range of benefits

Scale A

Full or Part-time workers

Amount per week \_\_\_\_\_

Scale C

Part-time workers only

Amount per week \_\_\_\_\_

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment and agree where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members. I give my explicit consent to the processing of data under the Data Protection Act 1998 as specified overleaf.

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

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment and agree where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members. I give my explicit consent to the processing of data under the Data Protection Act 1998 as specified overleaf.

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M&C Received

## Fast lane for Angela

**F**irstCall Usdaw helped **Angela Ford** recover more than £1,000 in compensation after she was injured in a car accident on her way home from work in October last year.

"I couldn't believe how easy it was to register my details," said the 47 year-old production operator who works for Alliance Healthcare in Exeter in Devon.

"I didn't even have to fill in a form. I simply called **0800 055 6333**, described the incident and I was told somebody would call me back. And that's exactly what happened. Within no time at all I had a call from a solicitor who said they would be handling my case and from that moment on they dealt with everything. It was all so professional."

The accident happened when Angela was a



back seat passenger in a car driven by a colleague. "We were sat in traffic when there was an almighty bang and we were hit by the car behind and we crashed into the vehicle in front and I was thrown forward. Accidents like this happen every day, thankfully I had Usdaw and FirstCall to help ease the pain."

## First-class service



**C**ustomer service advisor **Liz Hughes** was injured when a faulty microwave in the staff canteen blew up and electrocuted her. However, Usdaw stepped in and helped her pursue a claim and she was awarded £4,490.

"The union's legal team had helped me before when my daughter was injured in a car accident and were excellent, so I had no hesitation ringing FirstCall after my accident," said Liz, 53, who works for Littlewoods Shop Direct in Bolton, Lancashire.

"I had a very good service from Usdaw's legal team. Within five minutes of my call a solicitor rang and arranged to come out and go through it all with me. They looked after everything including medicals and I was kept fully up-to-date. It was such a relief.

"I tell everyone about my experience and about the help I got and how important it is to join the union."

The incident happened in August 2010 and her case was settled eight months later. When the microwave exploded Liz was jolted backwards. She sustained injury to her shoulder and fingers and minor injuries to her eyes.

# ing for injured members

## LEGAL ROUND-UP

[ FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL) ]

### Carole Lucas

**Age:** 64  
**Employer:** Tesco  
**Injury:** Fractured wrist  
**Date of accident:** April 2010  
**Case settled:** May 2011  
**Award:** £3,859  
**Quote:** "Its never too late to join."

### Susan Marsh

**Age:** 50  
**Employer:** Morrisons  
**Injury:** Head  
**Date of accident:** July 2010  
**Case settled:** February 2011  
**Award:** £1,750  
**Quote:** "The union is there for you 24/7."

### Sharon Forrest

**Age:** 42  
**Employer:** Sainsbury's  
**Injury:** Head  
**Date of accident:** September 2009  
**Case settled:** April 2011  
**Award:** £1,700  
**Quote:** "FirstCall was quick and easy."

### Sandra Samways

**Age:** 50  
**Employer:** Tesco  
**Injury:** Whiplash  
**Date of accident:** October 2009  
**Case settled:** September 2011  
**Award:** £4,500  
**Quote:** "I was very happy with my solicitors."

### Neil Jenkinson

**Age:** 27  
**Employer:** Morrisons  
**Injury:** Fractured elbow  
**Date of accident:** September 2010  
**Case settled:** April 2011  
**Award:** £3,750  
**Quote:** "My advice is – join the union."

### Jenny Frost

**Age:** 62  
**Employer:** Morrisons  
**Injury:** Leg  
**Date of accident:** March 2008  
**Case settled:** January 2011  
**Award:** £3,700  
**Quote:** "I had a fantastic service."

### Maureen Nicholson

**Age:** 77  
**Employer:** Morrisons  
**Injury:** Thumb  
**Date of accident:** May 2010  
**Case settled:** Aug 2011  
**Award:** £3,500  
**Quote:** "The service I had was spot on."

### Christine Reid

**Age:** 50  
**Employer:** Morrisons  
**Injury:** Cracked ribs  
**Date of accident:** October 2009  
**Case settled:** October 2011  
**Award:** £2,200  
**Quote:** "The union took care of everything for me."

Remember

You can write or email your thoughts to; the editor, arena, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ or [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk) Send all photos to: [pictures@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:pictures@usdaw.org.uk)

You can have your say on the arena letters page, please keep it brief and no longer than 150 words – £50 for the best letter \*

## Diabetes focus

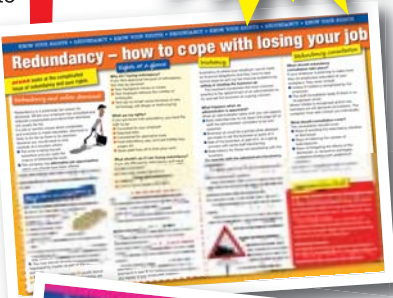
I just wanted to say how pleased I was to see the two page spread on diabetes

As someone who has had it for the past four years I now realise how important it is that our members recognise the symptoms. If left alone it can cause a heart attack. When I was first diagnosed my nurse sent me to hospital on a six-week course called the X pert plan. Each week they explained how to look after yourself and to live the rest of your life. This was a really worthwhile course and I'd recommend it.

Every three months I visit the nurse for blood tests, weight check, and the blood flow in my feet is monitored as I'm at a very high risk of losing them or even my legs. Once a year I have my eyes photographed as I'm also at risk of going blind.

You're also offered counselling as people who have life long illness often get very depressed. Once again a great article, which I hope raises awareness among the readers.

**Hayley Pickles,**  
North East division \*



## Know your rights

I enjoyed reading the Autumn 2011 edition of arena. I particularly liked your features on redundancy and the dangers of mis-using social media. Many of our members also found the autumn edition extremely useful. So, I pass our sincere thanks to you and your team. I also enjoyed reading the People Like You feature on page six about Phil Cook.  
**Samuel Daram,**  
Eastern division

## Mental health

Stress and depression with bipolar disorder seems to be on the increase so staff with it need to be able to talk more openly about the problems they come up against.

Has the union thought of running a training course or a home study on the subject and how the equality act could help them and others with disabilities? It would give reps a better understanding of the condition to help their members, as companies do not seem to want to help staff with bipolar.

I have bought the books recommended by the hospital to lend out at no charge to help staff understand the condition.

**Brian Smith,**  
Eastern division



# Police cuts slammed



Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis led the delegation to Westminster while (inset) John Hannett enlisted the support of Yvette Cooper MP

**U**sdaw has launched a campaign against the police cuts in England and Wales and has branded the Tory-led Coalition's attack on police budgets 'a threat to the safety of all public-facing workers'.

The campaign was initially launched at the Labour Party conference in September and later showcased at a special Westminster event in October. It has already won the support of hundreds of Labour MPs, including shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper, and gathered

more momentum during the union's annual Respect For Shopworkers Week in early November.

General Secretary John Hannett said: "Every minute of every day a shopworker is assaulted, threatened or abused by either angry customers, shoplifters or someone who has been refused a sale of alcohol or age restricted goods.

"The fear of violence, threats and verbal abuse should never be accepted as just a part of the job.

"But it isn't only shopworkers that face

these problems. NHS staff, teachers, the police and all public-facing workers have the same concerns.

"It is Government's first duty to keep all of us safe. That is where this Tory-led Coalition will fail us, with a predicted loss of 16,000 frontline police officers, 1,800 PCSOs and over 16,000 support staff.

"Does anyone really believe that by cutting frontline policing crime will continue to fall? That is not the logical conclusion I draw.

"I fear that when these cuts bite we will be left with a much less effective police force that will be grossly under-staffed and demoralised.

"I fear that Britain will return to the dark days of high unemployment, high crime and little hope. Yvette Cooper and Labour MPs up and down the country have done a first rate job opposing the police cuts in Parliament and our reps will be doing all they can to take our message to the public."

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:**  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/POLICECUTS](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/POLICECUTS)

## CAMPAIGNS

# National Youth Week

**Usdaw is determined to get as many young members as possible involved in the union and the national youth weekend offers an ideal starting point**

**G**etting more young workers to join Usdaw, supporting young reps and having a good time were top of the agenda at the 2011 National Youth Weekend held in Warrington in November.

Young activists came from across the divisions to take part in discussions and workshops and meet up with like-minded reps, and for first timers it was also a chance to make new friends, network, and learn more about how the union works.

General secretary John Hannett stressed the importance of recruiting more young members and encouraged the activists to give their opinion on how the union can involve more young workers.

"This is an opportunity for me to get your views and experiences of how the union meets its

commitments in terms of young reps and potential young members," he said. "I want you all to tell me what it is that we do now that you think we could do better? Or what do you expect us to do that we aren't doing?"

Deputy General Secretary Paddy Lillis opened the conference with a question and answer session allowing the young reps to speak up. "The youth weekend is a real key part of our calendar," he said.

"It gives young reps the opportunity to come along, learn, meet up with each other and realise that you're not on your own. Young reps are the union's best ambassadors to get their colleagues to join the trade union movement."

Paddy also pledged to bring young reps to the forefront of the union's priorities. "A sign of a strong organisation is the ability to listen, and that's what I intend to do as we start a new young workers campaign."

### What happened:

- **Q and A sessions** with the general and deputy general secretaries
- **Workshops** - coming up with ideas for a youth e-bulletin
- How to **promote Usdaw** in the workplace
- **Action plan** for 2012



Danielle Thurgood

**Danielle Thurgood, 20, Tesco**

"I've learnt a lot that will help me in my workplace. There's lots more that I want to do now. I'll be back again next year definitely. The weekend has been really good for socialising."



# nd 2011

## Reps' ideas

- Raise Usdaw's profile within the TUC
- Trade unions should have a bigger presence in education in schools
- Put more effort into the divisional youth committees
- Raise more money for youth charities
- More support for young reps
- More youth get-togethers
- More youth publications
- Profiling and publicising of youth co-ordinators and the National Youth Committee

[FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT  
[WWW.USDAW.CO.UK/YOUTH](http://WWW.USDAW.CO.UK/YOUTH)]



Activists at the Warrington training centre



Ewelina Sochacka, 25,  
Robert Wiseman's Dairies

"The weekend's been great. I came last year and hopefully I'll come again next year. It's really interesting and fun too."

Ewelina Sochacka



Julian Emsley, 20, Tesco

"The Youth Weekend makes you feel valued as a rep, it's inspiring. It makes you want to get out and go spread the word and make a difference for the youth of today."

Julian Emsley

# Standing up for young

**arena** takes a quick look at rights for young workers

## Introduction

**W**

ith youth unemployment at its highest for many years

the pressures on young workers are tougher than ever, and with many companies taking on seasonal workers for the festive period, arena takes a look at what young workers need to know about their employment rights.



## Remember:

Your employer has a duty of care to protect you at work. That includes protection from: accidents, work-related illness, bullying, harassment, violence and threats. If you feel you are not protected at work, contact your Usdaw rep.

## It's all about the money

**A**

ll employers are obliged by law to pay the National Minimum Wage. The hourly rates are: £6.08 for 21 year-olds and over, £4.98 for 18-20 year-olds, and £3.68 for 16-17 year-olds. There is also an apprentice hourly rate of £2.60.

These are the basic legal minimum rates and **Uzdaw** is constantly working to improve the amount young workers are paid. The union has successfully negotiated the ending of youth rates (16&17) at a number of big companies including Tesco, the Co-op Group, Sainsbury's and Shop Direct, and the payment of the full adult rate at 18. Usdaw believes if you do the same job as your older colleague you should get the same pay regardless of age.

**Uzdaw** continues to campaign for the full minimum wage to be paid at 18. If you are paid less for doing the same job as colleagues,

ask your **Uzdaw rep** about making a claim. We work with companies to abolish low student and youth rates so everyone gets the same rate for the job.

The only money that can be taken out of your wages is tax and National Insurance. Anything else can only be deducted with your agreement, unless authorised by your **contract of employment** or a court.

No matter how much or how often you get paid, you must receive a written pay statement every time you receive your wages. This will tell you: how much you've been paid,

how much tax and National Insurance has been deducted, your tax code and your employee number.

Keep every pay slip in a safe place somewhere at home.

If you have paid too much tax, you will need these details to

claim it back. If you don't get a pay slip, tell your union rep.



# workers all year round

## Part-time Workers

**P**art-time workers must be treated no less favourably (on a pro rata basis) than full-time workers in all matters including rates of pay, overtime, contractual sick pay, contractual maternity pay, company pensions, access to training, holidays and parental leave, redundancy and access to pensions.

You are entitled to a **written statement** of your terms and conditions of employment within two months of starting work.

This should include your rate of pay, payment intervals, hours of work, holidays and holiday pay, sickness and sick pay.

## Your contract is important

You should receive a written statement of employment within two months of your start date if you are an employee.

This will detail things like: your rate of pay, holiday entitlement, hours of work, the amount of notice time you have to give if you want to leave, and the amount of notice time your employer must give you if they want to end your employment

If you don't get one, ask your employer about it. You may find that this information is given out in the **staff handbook**.

Your employer can only change your contract if you agree. If you do not accept changes, you must immediately lodge a grievance and notify your **Usdaw rep**. Your employer must provide written notice of the changes. Check any such notice carefully.



## Minimum rights

**Most people have the following statutory minimum rights:**

- 5.6 weeks paid holiday a year.
- 20 minutes break when working longer than six hours.
- 11 hours rest between working days.
- Average maximum of eight hours night work in every 24 hours.
- Free health check for night workers.
- 24 hours rest twice every fortnight.
- 48 hour maximum average working week.

**Remember 16 and 17 year old workers are also entitled to:**

- 30 minutes rest break when working more than 4.5 hours.
- 12 hours rest between working days.
- Two days rest every week.
- 40 hours maximum working week.
- Eight hours maximum working day.
- A ban on working at night.



# Protection, advice and

**arena** takes a look at the issues facing young workers

*Heavy or difficult work*

**I**n many workplaces **Usdaw**

has negotiated time off for students to study for exams. Ask for Usdaw's support if you are making a reasonable request for time off.



Make sure that your employer is giving you your right to paid time off of **28 days a year**, or the pro rata equivalent for part-time workers.

If you went straight into work after leaving school at 16 ask your employer about the training courses available both in-house and if there is any funding available for night classes or vocational courses related to your job.

**I**f you feel that the work you are being asked to do may give you an injury, tell your manager and ask for advice from your **Usdaw Health and Safety Rep**. You are less likely to be asked to do something 'risky' if your manager thinks you may take out an injury claim against the company.



**[MORE INFORMATION AT: [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK)]**

**I**f you feel that your employer is putting you in a dangerous situation, tell your manager that you should be better

protected. Ask your **Usdaw health and safety rep** to assess the risk and work with the manager to find a solution. Your employer has a duty of care towards you which they must fulfil.



*Trade Union Rights*

**Trade unions support and protect their members at work. Everyone has the right to:**

- Join a trade union.
- Take advice from their trade union.
- Be active in their trade union.
- Be accompanied by their trade union representative to a disciplinary or grievance hearing.

# representation at work

## Sundays

**A**ll UK shopworkers (except Sunday only workers), irrespective of their age or length of service, have the right to opt out of Sunday working. Ask your **Usdaw rep** for details. If you are unhappy with your hours of work, ask your **Usdaw rep** for support to request a change of hours. You can also check that your employer is keeping to the Working Time Directive by giving you proper breaks and rest periods.

## Bullying

**U**sdaw has negotiated anti-bullying and harassment policies with most companies it organises in. If you have been bullied or harassed ask your Usdaw rep for advice on reporting the incident and support in dealing with the situation.

**Usdaw is on your side, and is here to:**

- Stand up for your rights at work.
- Represent members who have a problem at work.
- Negotiate with employers to protect and improve terms and conditions of employment, including pay.
- Provide our members with **free legal cover**.
- Ensure you are treated with respect and dignity at work.



## CAMPAIGNS

# Safety first for memb

**E**nsuring members feel safe travelling to and from work is the focus of Usdaw's latest campaign – Have A Safe Journey – following extensive research by the union, which showed how members, particularly women, can feel vulnerable in certain situations and at certain times.

The campaign was launched at the Retail Trades conference, the union's second biggest gathering, in October, and won overwhelming support from the delegates. A resource

pack has also been

sent to all reps, which includes a survey form, leaflets and a poster.

"Our members have told us loudly and clearly that they can feel vulnerable when travelling to and from work," said general secretary John Hannett. "So we are determined to take that further by listening to our members and identifying ways where we can make a significant impact on the safety of all workers."

"Now the winter is upon us, it's important our members feel safe and we will support reps who want to take this issue up in their workplace."

Paddy Lillis

John Hannett

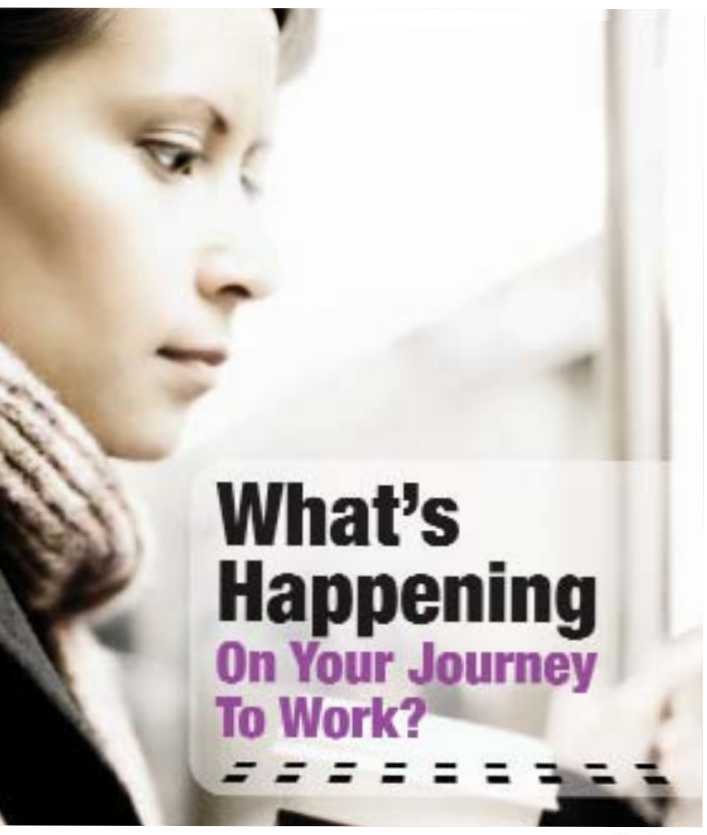
Other important issues...

Delegates also discussed discrimination in the workplace, till check procedures, induction DVDs, the menopause, visually impaired shoppers, staffing levels, supporting staff and premium payments



Delegates at the conference

# Members travelling to work



## What's Happening On Your Journey To Work?

### What's worrying members?

- **Badly lit car parks**, especially after the last customer has left and lights are switched off.
- Having to park far way from the store so the walk, at night, to the car is unnerving and **staff feel vulnerable**.
- Concealed and/or **isolated staff entrances**, often around the back of the premises, and badly lit.
- Having to wait **outside in the dark** until the staff entrance is open.
- **Locking up** the shop late at night in areas where gangs of youths hang around.
- Shifts over-running so staff **miss the last bus/train home**.

Do you feel safe travelling to and from work? Let Usdaw know your experiences at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/safejourney](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/safejourney)

### Safety tips

- **Check** departure times, especially for the last bus and keep on top of any changes in the timetable.
- Carry **extra money** just in case you miss the last bus or it is cancelled.
- Only **use licensed taxis**, preferably a company you know.
- If walking, keep to **well-lit paths** if possible, never use dimly lit or secluded short cuts.
- **Be alert** to your surroundings, using an ipod may not be a good idea late at night.
- Use your **mobile phone to call for help** if you suspect something is wrong.
- When driving keep your **doors locked** and valuables out of sight.
- Don't leave the **keys in the ignition**, even for a short period of time.
- Where possible always let someone know what **time** you are expected at home.

### What some reps have done

- Pressed management to **improve lighting** in the car parks and around staff entrances.
- Organised **car-share** schemes among members.
- Ensured shift finish times **do not clash** with local transport timetables.
- **Inform** the local police of any concerns regarding gangs.
- Where applicable arrange for security guards to **escort female workers** to their cars.
- Allow **night shift workers** to park their cars nearer the store.

# Health

**Q** The store where I work is notorious for being very cold as soon as the snow falls. Is the company legally obliged to give us warm clothing during the winter months?

Your health and your safety at work is a vital part of Usdaw's service. For more advice visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety)

Strictly speaking the company is obliged to maintain a **reasonable temperature** in all indoor workplaces. The Approved Code of Practice to the regulations makes it clear that this normally means at least 16 degrees Celsius in most workplaces or 13 degrees Celsius where physically strenuous work is involved. Where such temperatures can't be maintained (e.g. when working inside chillers or freezers) other measures should be taken to protect the worker.

So, if temperatures in your store regularly fall below **16 Celsius** in the winter, the first thing they should be looking at is raising the temperature – by improving the heating, draught-proofing the store, etc. Last year one fashion store in Carlisle was successfully prosecuted because the temperature inside the store was well below the minimum standard as a result of faulty heating and an open-door policy even in very cold weather.

It may take some time to make these improvements. If so, as a short term measure, providing **suitable clothing**, more frequent breaks and access to hot drinks during cold spells should be considered. When it comes to clothing to protect against the cold, **several thin layers**

are usually better than one bulky over-jacket.

Wearing a t-shirt or thermal vest under the normal uniform blouse or shirt and wearing a fleece over, is likely to be warmer (and more practical) than wearing a bulky anorak.



Winter warmers

**Q** At Christmas working on the checkouts is even more difficult given the massive amounts of goods we're putting through. My back always plays up and I'm sure it's down to the long hours on the till. What can I do?

Christmas is a hectic time in busy stores. It is more important than ever that the checkouts are **set up properly** and clear of clutter. The seat must be in good working order and adjusted to suit you. It is a good idea to change between **sitting and standing** if you are on the checkout for a few hours. Don't handle heavy items whilst seated and take your rest breaks

**Q** Our depot is massive and stores both frozen and non-frozen goods. At one end of the site it's really cold but at the other it's OK. Should we have thermometers at both ends of the depot?

## Frozen out

According to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 'a **sufficient number of thermometers**' must be provided to let workers measure the temperature in their workplace. The Approved Code of Practice also says:

"Thermometers should be available at a convenient distance from every part of the workplace to persons at work to enable **temperatures** to be measured throughout the workplace, but need not be provided in each workroom."

There would be no need for a thermometer in the freezer, as that is set at a predetermined temperature, but there should be thermometers to measure the temperature at other locations where people work. This does not mean there have to be loads of wall-mounted thermometers everywhere but it does mean there should be some way to measure the temperature.



## Remember

Usdaw has its own health and safety section full of useful information, advice and a reps' forum at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/forum](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/forum)

If you have any questions for *arena's* health experts write to: the editor, arena, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ or email: [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)

when you should. It is also a good idea to rotate jobs so that you can get a break from checkout work and do something else that allows you to stretch your legs (e.g. shelf-filling). If you are suffering serious back pain it would also be a good idea to talk to your GP about the work that you do.

Ask your colleagues if they are getting aches and pains as well. If they are, your Usdaw health and safety rep can **investigate** and take up any problems and suggest solutions with management.

## Weighty issue



For example, if the rep has use of a **portable digital thermometer**, he or she could measure the temperature at various times and locations to produce a temperature map of the workplace. If it showed there were some areas that were too cold when people were working there, the problems could then be raised with management.

**Q** I'm a delivery driver and during previous wintry weather me and my colleagues often get stuck in traffic for hours because of the snow and/or accidents. How long can we legally be van-bound?

## Stuck in traffic



There is **no legal limit** on how long you can be stuck in a van in such bad weather. Delivery van drivers are covered by British 'domestic drivers' hours' legislation. This says you should not drive more than 10 hours in a day and you should not work more than 11 hours in a day on which you are driving. Your normal schedule should be set to allow you to comply with these rules.

Your employer should make allowances for the weather and the general road conditions when **scheduling** deliveries. However it is not possible for them to predict just how bad things might get. There may be occasions where drivers could be stuck for several hours.

It is a good idea to make sure that drivers are **trained** in winter driving and that the vans are fully serviced and prepared for winter. Tyres should be in good condition and properly inflated (many organisations are finding it helps to change to winter tyres which give better grip in snow and ice). On rural rounds it is a good idea to carry a blanket, some food and a hot drink and a snow shovel to help dig the van out of drifts. It is also useful to carry a **mobile phone** to let the depot know if you are stuck (but not to use it when actually driving).


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

# What a year!

Academy1 graduate is looking for more life-changing experiences



Tracy McKie outside her Tesco store in Dumfries

ix months on Academy1 has given Scotland's Tracy McKie a whole new outlook on life.

"It has to be one of the best experiences I've ever had," said Tracy who works for Tesco Peel Centre in Dumfries. "And that's saying a lot as I got married right in the middle of it and that was pretty special too.

"In fact becoming a rep two years ago was the start of an incredible journey for me."

The 45 year-old, originally from the North East, moved over the border from her native Newcastle three years ago with her long-term partner.

"I started working in

Woolworths just before I left school at 15 and I've worked in retail practically ever since. So when we moved up to Scotland my local Tesco store was the obvious job choice and I became a rep simply because I enjoy helping people.

"I'd say, my organisational skills have always been pretty good, having brought up three children of my own while juggling a home and a job.

"But my training with the union and a superb six months with the Academy, meeting a variety of people and working on a range of different projects, have only enhanced them even more.

"I'm more independent than

ever and more confident and assertive, and I know exactly how and where to ask for help and advice, it's been the best learning curve ever. I'd recommend it to other reps.

"And what's next for me? "A place on Academy2 I hope!"

Not only has Tracy been stacking up new members over the past six months she's also been counting the calories and has lost three and half stone in weight as well. "Yes, I can honestly say, I feel like a new woman."

Calling members to action  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep)

# High street cull

NEWS DESK



More than 20,000 high street jobs have disappeared in the past year as the downturn in consumer spending sees desperate retailers cut posts, reduce part-time workers' hours and close stores, according to grim figures published by trade body the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

"With consumer spending now in recession and retail sales volumes declining, this is the biggest drop in overall retail employment in the two years since we began this survey," said a BRC spokesman.

Retailers of furniture and home furnishings have been hardest hit as rising food and fuel bills force

Britons to cut back on spending on all but the essentials.

Mothercare and Thorntons have already announced plans to scale back their high street presence. The austere trading environment means that fewer retailers than last year are looking to hire extra staff in the run up to Christmas.

Struggling catalogue chain Argos, which reported a 94 per cent drop in first half profits, said it planned to offer the extra hours to existing staff who had lost out during the year. The BRC also said uncertainty and fears about Christmas trading may also be leading retailers to delay taking on this year's seasonal staff.



## The **co-operative** funeralcare is pleased to support Usdaw

*Usdaw members and their immediate families are entitled to...*

- £25 discount on our funeral Pre-Payment Plans
- 10% discount on professional services fees on funeral arrangements

For more information, contact your local The Co-operative Funeralcare (Quote reference – MKT/11/018)

Or visit our website at

[www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk](http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk)

10% discount applies to funeral director professional services fees only (as detailed on price list and estimate form provided at the time of arranging a funeral) and excludes discounts on supplementary services, coffin/casket selection, additional services and payments made on your behalf (e.g. clergy, doctors fees, crematorium/burial charges). The funeral plan offer applies to new cremation and burial plans purchased through a Co-operative Funeralcare home. The offer does not apply to funeral plans paid for by the fixed monthly payment option. Offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer and are valid until Friday 29th June 2012. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.



# Member services

Members can check out the latest deals from our team of affinity partners who provide a range of special offers. Find out now if your union membership can save you and your family money.



**Usdaw** provides a range of services and benefits for members, from savings and tax refunds to insurance and mortgages.

More special offers, including prize draws, can be found on the Usdaw website at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



**[ MORE INFORMATION AT: ]**  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/OFFERS](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/OFFERS)

**Unisaver:** The union no longer offers the Unisaver savings product as advertised on the member services pages of previous arenas. Any members who have taken out a policy with Unisaver will not be affected by this change and existing policies will carry on as normal. If you have any queries please contact **Coventry Assurance Society** on **024 7622 3683**.

## UK TOP ATTRACTIONS

Usdaw members can make great savings on the following UK attractions and theme parks:  
Alton Towers Resort, Chessington World of Adventures, LEGOLAND Discovery Centre Manchester, LEGOLAND Windsor, Madame Tussauds London, SEA LIFE centres & Sanctuaries, the Dungeons, THORPE PARK and Warwick Castle.  
To find out more or to book call **0871 222 4001** and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin)



## HOME, MOTOR & TRAVEL INSURANCE

**Usdaw**  
Insurance

As an Usdaw member, you are entitled to great value, low cost insurance from UIA.

For a quote call **0800 376 0300** or visit: [www.usdawinsurance.co.uk](http://www.usdawinsurance.co.uk) to receive up to **15% online discount**

Usdaw is an Introducer Appointed Representative of UIA Insurance Ltd. UIA is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

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Risk free, hassle free car purchase scheme for Usdaw members and their families.

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## SAVE ON GAS AND ELECTRIC

Uchange4better can help you save on your gas and electricity bills. Try our free and unique **100% impartial energy search engine** which allows you to compare the prices of all gas and electricity suppliers and find the very best deal for your home. You can compare by savings alone, CO<sub>2</sub> savings, customer service standards or a combination of all three.

Simply key in your postcode, your current supplier and charges and the site will do the rest for you. **It couldn't be easier.**

To see how much money you can save  
visit: [usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk](http://usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk)  
or call 0845 652 1683



## THE CO-OPERATIVE FUNERALCARE

Our caring staff are on hand to give you individual support, care and reassurance when it matters most. Usdaw members and their families are entitled to a £25 discount off our funeral plans and 10% discount on professional services fees on funeral arrangements.

For more cooperative funerals Visit [www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk](http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk)  
for your nearest Co-operative Funeralcare or call 0800 083 6301

Terms and conditions: 10% discount applies to Funeral Director professional services fees only (as detailed on the price list and estimate form provided at the time of arranging a funeral) and excludes discounts on supplementary services, coffin/casket selection, additional services and payments made on your behalf (e.g. clergy, doctors fees, crematorium/ burial charges). 10% discount is not applicable on funeral plans. Both offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offers valid to Usdaw members and their families until 31 December 2011. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.

## TAX REFUND SERVICE

Over 85,000 members have used this service and so far received tax refunds in excess of **£2.6 million**. Refunds average **£167.94** each!

**TAXrefundCo.**  
...No Refund - No Fee

To find out if you are due a refund, go to  
[www.taxrebates.com/ref/usdaw](http://www.taxrebates.com/ref/usdaw),  
call the application information line 0845 058 2288  
or send a SAE for an application form to:

The Tax Refund Co. 43-47 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3DG.

## BRITANNIA

With Britannia, Usdaw members benefit from a great range of mortgage products and an exclusive instant access savings account.

YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT  
KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON YOUR MORTGAGE

To find out more call free on **0800 156 2838\***,  
Visit [britannia.co.uk/usdaw](http://britannia.co.uk/usdaw) or visit your local Britannia Branch.

\*Our lines are open 8am-8pm weekdays and 9am-12noon Saturdays. Calls may be recorded and/or monitored. Calls from landline phones are free however mobile providers may charge.  
Britannia is the trading name of the Co-operative Bank plc.

**Britannia**  
part of The Co-operative bank

## DEBT REMEDY

Usdaw and **Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS)** have launched a new service providing debt advice and solutions for all Usdaw members

CCCS provides free and immediate debt advice and solutions to individuals and families in times of financial distress. In addition to its unique online counselling service, Debt Remedy, CCCS offers a free telephone counselling service available Monday to Friday.

If you are an individual struggling to repay your debts use the CCCS Debt Remedy on-line assessment of your financial circumstances: [www.cccs.co.uk/usdaw](http://www.cccs.co.uk/usdaw)

Telephone debt counselling  
Freephone 0800 138 1111  
Monday to Friday 8:00am-8:00pm

## BRITANNIA RESCUE



We've been providing breakdown recovery since 1983 so we know what's important to you when it comes to your car breakdown cover

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Call free on **0800 591 563**  
Apply online: [www.britanniarescue.com/usdaw](http://www.britanniarescue.com/usdaw)

Lines open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat-Sun 8am-5pm calls may be recorded. Britannia Rescue is a registered trademark and is a trading style of the Liverpool Victoria Group of companies. 21017636 12/10

## GYMSTASTIC OFFERS

Discounted rates on Gym Membership  
exclusive to Usdaw Members  
Save up to 30%

Visit the following Usdaw websites for more information:

Fitness First: [www.usdaw.org.uk/fitnessfirst](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/fitnessfirst)  
LA Fitness: [www.usdaw.org.uk/lafitness](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/lafitness)  
Nuffield Health: [www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield)

**Fitness First**

You're better off with  
**LA Fitness**

**Nuffield Health**

## USDRAW HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

### Usdaw Health Plan

Low cost alternative to private medical insurance. Get 100% of your money back on optical, dental, therapist and specialist treatments. To apply online visit: [www.usdawhealth.co.uk](http://www.usdawhealth.co.uk) or call 0800 037 2094

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\*Money back may differ on NHS dental plans in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

# Union forces Coalition r

The Tory-led Coalition's decision to extend the state pension reitment age even further was set to penalise hundreds of thousands of workers in their late 50s – union members were at the heart of the fightback

**A** massive campaign by Usdaw members affected by the Tory-led Coalition's proposals to rapidly increase the state pension age has helped to win a small concession from the Coalition which has reduced the age threshold by six months.

As Usdaw highlighted earlier this year, the Government's Pensions Bill rapidly increases the age at which both men and women can receive the state pension up to 66 by 2020. Men will have to work for up to a year longer, losing over **£5,000** of state pension. Some women such as Usdaw campaigner Barbara Bates were set to have to wait two years longer and lose out on over **£10,000** of state pension.

Usdaw wrote to inform our 12,000 members, who would be directly affected by the Bill, and the vast majority

responded by sending letters to their MPs, setting out how much state pension they would lose and how much longer they would have to wait for retirement.

All the letters from constituents persuaded dozens of Tory and Lib Dem MPs to join Labour's protest against the rapid state pension age increase.

At the last minute, ministers were forced to change the Bill. They capped the maximum extra wait for women to 18 months instead of two years.

However, **Elaine Gibson** from Northwich, who will have her state pension delayed by 18 months, is still angry. "I read in the paper that this is a victory. Well not from where I am standing," she said. "I wrote to my MP George Osborne on three occasions. Has he listened? No. I feel I have been **robbed** because I have worked hard

for my pension – I started work at 15.

I am not going to thank a robber just because he gives me back a quarter of what he took!"

General

secretary John Hannett said: "Although it is very hard on all the men and women affected by the state pension age increase to have to wait up to 18 months longer for their pension, the Government's concession was **hard-won** by all the members who wrote letters to their MPs and local papers and campaigned so determinedly. It shows that even with a Tory-led Coalition, it is still worth fighting. But if we want fairness from government, the fight we really have to win is for a Labour government at the next general election."



To find out how the amended Pensions Bill will affect your State Pension Age visit the union's website

**[ MORE INFORMATION AT: [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/PENSIONS](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/PENSIONS) ]**

# Retreat on state pension

Campaigners . . . (l-r)  
Rachel Reeves MP,  
Yvonne Swinger and  
Barbara Bates



## Sunday hours

**Usdaw's** campaigning prowess scored another victory this time in Northern Ireland after the Assembly decided against extending **Sunday trading** hours. This followed pressure from members who highlighted the threat to their family lives and convinced ministers there was no economic justification nor strong appetite for deregulation among the electorate.

## Jobs threat

**Usdaw** has entered into negotiations with the management of the new joint venture between the **Co-operative Group Travel, Midlands Co-op Travel** and **Thomas Cook** who announced the start of consultations on 300 potential redundancies involving the Peterborough, Burslem, Manchester, Ilkeston and Lichfield sites.

**Consultations** have also begun with distribution firm Yodel/HDNL following the company's announcement that it is looking to close up to 49 sites with the potential loss of more than 1,800 jobs, including almost 800 Usdaw members.

**HANDS OFF  
OUR PENSIONS!**

We are calling on the Government to **STOP** their unfair plan to speed up the increase in the state pension age, breaking the Coalition Agreement.

The Government's plan means 5 million people will have to wait longer for their state pension. Half a million women will have to wait over a year longer for their pension, including 33,000 who will have to wait two years - losing around £10,000 in pension income they have worked hard for.

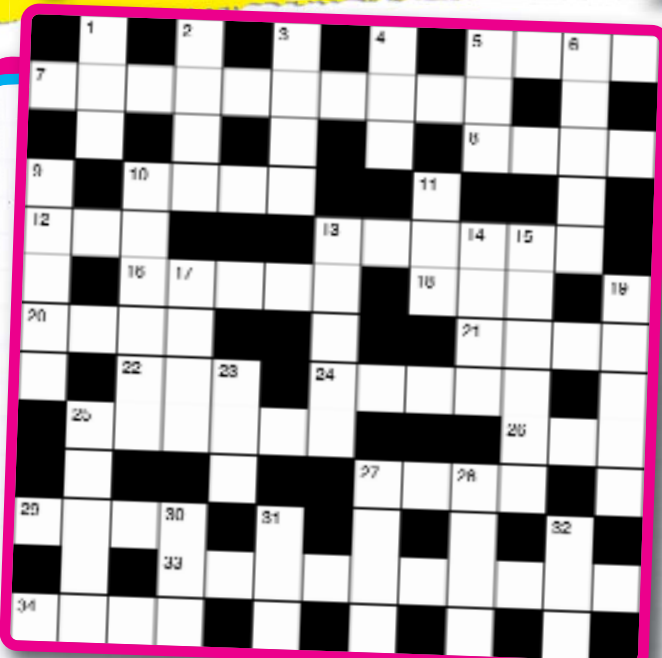
These pension changes are **unfair, unnecessary and unacceptable** - and they **break a promise** made in the Coalition Agreement. We urge the Government to think again.

TRY OUR

# CROSSWORD

Win £50!

Three lucky members will win £50 each if they answer correctly the crossword clues below. Closing date 27 January 2012. (Not open to Usdaw staff)



Have fun with our puzzle page & you could win £50!

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

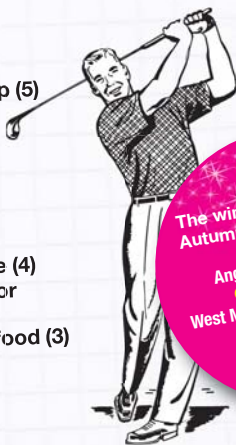
## ACROSS

5. Shoe part (4)
7. Logger (10)
8. Slang word for an American (4)
10. Lighting gas (4)
12. Chopping tool (3)
13. Sandy Lyle, e.g. (6)
16. Extremely bad or unpleasant (5)
18. Spoil or impair (3)
20. Roster (4)
21. News or information (4)
22. Biblical woman (3)
24. Circular (5)
25. Anxious, apprehensive (6)
26. Flightless bird (3)
27. Ado (4)
29. Untamed (4)
33. Absurd (10)
34. Extremely (4)

## DOWN

1. Belonging to us (3)
2. Woodwind instrument (4)
3. Sifted husks of corn (4)
4. A bloke (3)
5. Heavens (3)
6. Large passenger ship (5)
9. Curved sword (5)
10. To tidy (6)
11. Type of tree (3)
13. Triumph or exult (5)
14. Young deer (4)
15. Wears away (6)
17. Breaker, for example (4)
19. Widespread hatred or disgust (5)
23. Chew and swallow food (3)
25. Unify (5)
27. Visage (4)
28. Brood sullenly (4)

30. Not damp or wet (3)
31. Peculiar (3)
32. Pair of performers (3)



The winners of the Arena Autumn crossword were:  
**Janice Coe**  
 Anglia Co-op No.1 E60  
**Gay McCallum**  
 West Midlands Morrisons E100  
**Pamela Hutter**  
 Bristol A34



# In conversation with Tania Lambert

Fundraiser extraordinaire



Tania braved the frozen conditions on Ben Nevis to raise money for charity

As the Winter edition went to press it came as no surprise to the Arena team to learn that Tania had been nominated for a 'South London Press' Our Heroes Award.



**I joined Usdaw...** when I started working for Sainsbury's in 2005 and within four months I was nominated and elected shop steward and health and safety rep. My training and my experience as a rep have helped me get better organised.

**As well as my union role...** I just like helping people and raising money for good causes. I regularly run charity stalls and fancy dress events in my own store, including the ever-popular annual Red Nose Day, every event is always well supported by colleagues and management.

**I started volunteering...** after my eldest daughter, 16 at the time, inspired me when she won an award for her fundraising for an animal charity in 2006. I was so proud of her efforts that I decided to join her and since then I've used my spare time working and building up contacts with local charities in the South London area and raised tens of thousands of pounds for a variety of worthy causes.

**Since then...** we've worked closely with the Jimmy Mizen Foundation, an anti-youth violence charity. I trekked up Ben Nevis in the Scottish Highlands with members of the Mizen family in May and managed to complete the challenge despite suffering from a kidney infection at the time.

**I also...** help out twice a month at the Street Souls charity in Lee with the Friday night soup run to feed the homeless in Central London and raised much needed cash for new sports equipment for Watergate School in Bellingham, a primary school for children with severe learning difficulties.



## Fact file

**Tania Lambert**

Age 49:

**Job:** Works part-time at Sainsburys in Lewisham, South London

Single mum with two daughters aged 21 and 13

**Interests:** Volunteering and fundraising for a number of charities

Reading: Favourite author is Lesley Pearce

# Getting everyone involv

John Hannett (Centre) with delegates at the Black Members' weekend

**Usdaw puts equality at the heart of its agenda and wants to see more members become active and give Usdaw more influence at work**

**I**n October black and Asian members met in Manchester to talk about the issues that matter to them at their annual get-together, an event which acts as a springboard for many members to get more active in Usdaw.

Black and Asian members are still under-involved and Usdaw is keen to encourage as many members as possible to get active so that the union genuinely reflects the diversity of its membership.

"More than half of those that attended the annual weekend workshop had never been to the event before and that is exactly what the weekend is about - encouraging members to become more active and get closer to the union," said general secretary John Hannett.

"Much of the discussion focused on

the pressures working parents and carers find themselves under at the moment. Money worries as well as the difficulty of getting hours of work to fit around family life came out top of the list.

"Extended leave arrangements were identified as being of particular help to members whose close family live overseas and time off for family emergencies emerged as another crucial right for members with family overseas.

"Usdaw prides itself on being an open and inclusive union and by bringing on board members from all backgrounds we can ensure unity is our strength. Our divisional equality forums are an ideal way for members to play a bigger part."

**What the members said**



Edna Young

"This was my first time at the weekend but it certainly won't be my last," said Edna Young, 46, a part-time customer advisor for Argos in Watford.

"I was a bit apprehensive beforehand because I wasn't quite sure what to expect but as soon as I arrived I was made to feel very welcome and I soon settled in. The hotel and the food were excellent. I learned a lot and made some good friends."

# ed for a stronger union



Mayank Patel

"It was a very good experience for me and very enlightening to meet and learn about other people's experiences and how the union can help," said 38 year-old Mayank Patel who is a part-time till operator for Poundland in Newcastle.

"The guest speakers and people from the union were very interesting and like every other union event I've been on it was very well organised. I'll certainly be recommending it to others."



Ku Baiden

"I fully enjoyed the weekend, it was very inspiring," said 31 year-old Ku Baiden who works as a part-time general assistant for Asda in Northern Ireland.

"Everyone was friendly and the tutors were very helpful and supportive.

"I was pleased I had the confidence to talk in front of the group, and I feel that my confidence is growing the more I take myself out of my comfort zone."

## Cuts

**T**he Tory-led Coalition has heaped the pain onto hard-working families with cuts in benefits and tax credits, and the increase in VAT to 20 per cent, as it seeks to cut the deficit and reverse the damage done by the banking crisis. It is also cutting tens of thousands of public sector jobs which means fewer tax revenues and a reduction in consumer spending which has already had a negative impact on the economy.

The Tory-led Coalition's dogmatic policies are dragging the country into a downward spiral putting even more jobs at risk and putting huge pressure on families. Youth unemployment is at an all-time high.



Image © Andy Jones/Shutterstock

## Closures

**T**he retail sector has been hammered this year with the disappearance of TJ Hughes, Haldanes, Focus DIY, Life & Style and store closures at Ethel Austin, Habitat, Mothercare, Thorntons, Carpetright, HMV, and many others with the loss of thousands of jobs.

This has had a knock-on effect in the distribution sector where jobs have also been shed in their thousands. In fact it's difficult to find a sector untouched by job losses, cuts in hours, and site closures. And with inflation at around five per cent all workers have seen a decline in their spending power and standard of living during the last 12 months.



Image © Richard Bowden/Shutterstock

# ures, cuts and job losses

## Membership

**D**espite all the economic gloom Usdaw's reps continue to buck the trend of declining union membership and have ensured we are still the fastest growing union in the UK. Our membership grew this year by 11,000 from 397,000 early this year to more than 408,000 in November. This is a fantastic achievement and all of our reps and officials and staff should feel proud of their contribution. I want to place on record my thanks and the appreciation of the executive council for all of your hard work this year. We will undoubtedly have our work cut out in 2012 but I'm sure with your support we can continue to grow both in number and in influence.



## Looking ahead



**W**

Most commentators agree it's looking bleak for the next few months at least and probably well into next year before things even threaten to improve. However, our aims are clear and they are:

- to continue to defend our members' terms and conditions
- to recruit non-members so our influence is greater and more workers can reap the benefits of being members
- to support our reps by providing first-class training and expert advice from our full-time officials and
- to campaign on the important issues for our members – like protecting them from violence and abuse, pressing the Government to stop its attacks on workers' rights and cutting in-work benefits, supporting parents and carers and promoting learning opportunities at work for all of our members.

GO ONLINE FOR THE . .

# Latest digital Arena

You can now view arena online at:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/e-arena](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/e-arena)

**A**s part of the union's evolving communications strategy you can now view arena online at anytime via your computer, mobile or tablet.

Just click to flick through the issue and take yourself on your very own Usdaw journey. The online version comes with additional photographs,

graphics and live links to other websites. It's a one-stop shop for your window on everything that is happening in Usdaw, how you can get involved and what's coming up.

■ Sign up to our regular email updates and you could win £100 in Argos vouchers courtesy of the Consumer Credit Counselling Service. Visit: [usdaw.org.uk/emailupdates](http://usdaw.org.uk/emailupdates)

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## Feedback

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