

Arena

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS
QUESTIONS ABOUT NIGHT WORKING



THE 2022 ORGANISING AWARDS

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MEMBER STORIES
SETTING UP WARM BANKS

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The Team

Arena is the membership magazine for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

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Welcome

There's no doubt that the pandemic, Brexit and the war in Ukraine have impacted the UK economy but the cost of living crisis has been made far worse by an incompetent Tory government. Distracted by scandals and infighting they've failed to provide anything like the level of help and support needed to help the lowest income families. And they've made things much worse. Liz Truss's disastrous mini-budget saw interest rates shoot up, increasing the cost of rents, mortgages and credit. Now on their third prime minister in six months, the Tories still have no credible policies or strategy to turn things around.

At the moment the polls show a strong lead for Labour but we can't take anything for granted. If we want a Labour government, working in the interests of our members and their families, we have to campaign for it. And to do that we need the funds so we can campaign for change. That's why it's so important for everyone to vote **YES** in our political fund ballot which is taking place right now.

Usdaw reps and members can play a huge role in helping Usdaw kick the Tories out of office and replace them with a Labour government. A government ready and able to tackle the economic crisis and introduce policies that will make a real difference to our members' lives.

Whether implementing the goals of our New Deal for Workers campaign, providing effective childcare support for working parents or tackling the energy crisis, the country needs a Labour government as soon as possible.

Paddy Lillis, General Secretary



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Childcare challenge

Usdaw has welcomed the **Single Parent Employment Challenge** report from the leading national charity **Gingerbread** about the significant employment barriers holding back single parents. The report identifies four key areas and their recommendations include:

- Flexible working should be a day-one right and the Government needs to help employers to provide flexible jobs and recruit single parents.
- Childcare must be more affordable, particularly for single parents, costing a household no more than 5 per cent of their income.
- Back to work support including specialist coaches for single parents, particularly helping to find flexible roles.
- Cost of living crisis support, targeted at single parents in a way that helps them stay or progress in work.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "We welcome this report from Gingerbread, which throws a spotlight on the much higher underemployment rates of single parents. Around a quarter of our members with children are single parents, the majority of them women, and we know that most want to access and progress

in work. However, single parents are much more likely to be working part-time because of the barriers they face.

"The lack of affordable childcare is a huge challenge in balancing work with parental responsibilities. Tory inaction means many low-income parents simply cannot afford formal childcare and we have called on the Chancellor to address this in next month's Budget, including the funding of breakfast clubs in every primary school. We also need urgent and wide-ranging reform of Universal Credit, particularly the removal of upfront childcare costs for claimants and uprating the childcare cost caps.

"Workers need urgent and substantial reform to address the long-running childcare challenge. The cost of living crisis has been particularly difficult for families with children, who are less able to cushion the impact of the rise in prices, squeeze on wages and cuts to social security benefits. We welcome Labour's commitment to a new system to give children the best start in life and parental choice, including introducing breakfast clubs in every primary school in England. This will enable parents to get back into work or to increase their hours, giving our economy the growth we need."

Stronger redundancy protections for pregnant women and new parents

Usdaw welcomes the Protection from Redundancy (Pregnancy and Family Leave) Bill that aims to boost workplace protection for pregnant women and new parents.

The Bill aims to strengthen employment rights for new parents and mothers-to-be by protecting them against redundancy for longer. It protects women from redundancy during and after pregnancy, and amends existing regulations to protect parents from redundancy on return to work from maternity, adoption or shared parental leave.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "Usdaw has long campaigned for stronger protections against redundancy for pregnant women and new parents, the current rights are simply not adequate. We are grateful to Dan Jarvis MP for successfully bringing this measure to Parliament and we urge members of the House of Lords to also back the Bill.

"Strong employment and equality rights

during pregnancy and maternity leave are absolutely necessary; pregnancy discrimination at work and in the labour market remains widespread, ranging from being denied paid time off for antenatal appointments to inadequate rest breaks and lack of a proper risk assessments. Women in unorganised workplaces face particular problems and are often too afraid or vulnerable to assert their rights. So trade unions and strong workplace organisation are crucial to defending and furthering women's rights at work.

"One of the most effective ways to deliver better pay, decent work and fairness for women at work is for employers to recognise and work with trade unions. So we welcome new employment rights, but they must be part of a wide-ranging new deal for workers that makes work pay, ends insecure employment, provides a proper social security safety net and gives workers a voice through their trade union."



Proposed carers leave needs to be paid

Usdaw has welcomed MPs passing the Carers Leave Bill, which would give people with caring responsibilities a right to unpaid leave from work. It received an unopposed third reading in the House of Commons and will now undergo further scrutiny in the House of Lords.

Under the Bill, unpaid working carers will be able to take up to one week's leave per year flexibly in small amounts. The entitlement applies to all employees regardless of length of service and starting from day one of employment. The Bill also aims to minimise the pressure on individuals who have both work and caring commitments and help employers maximise the retention and wellbeing of their staff.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "We welcome the proposal to give carers leave statutory recognition and we hope Peers will support this once it reaches the House of Lords. However, any right to leave is really only accessible for low-paid workers if it is paid leave at their average income. That has always been the case, but particularly in a cost of living crisis when most cannot afford to lose income.

"The vast majority of care in the UK is provided by family and friends, who make



up the UK's 6.5 million carers and without their willingness and ability to provide care, local authority social services and the NHS would collapse under the strain. All too often carers feel life is a pressure cooker of competing demands, with worries about money, time off work, their own health and that of the person they are caring for.

"Udaw has long campaigned for measures to lift the pressure on working carers with a statutory right to paid carers leave, protection from discrimination and redundancy, along with raising the rate of Carers Allowance and extending its reach to the lowest paid workers. Carers deserve to have their enormous contribution properly rewarded and recognised."

'Fire and rehire' should be banned

'Fire and rehire' refers to when an employer dismisses an employee and offers to re-engage them on a new contract with less-favourable terms.

Rather than end 'fire and rehire', the Government's proposed statutory code of practice sets out how employers can change contractual terms and conditions of employment.

The proposed code relies on employers acting reasonably, but it can never be reasonable to fire someone one day and hire them back for their old job on worse terms and conditions the next day.

The TUC have condemned the code, saying "A statutory code of practice is not going to stop another P&O-style scandal from

happening and it won't deter bad bosses from treating staff like disposable labour."

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "Too many businesses are resorting to 'fire and rehire' tactics to unfairly slash employees' terms and conditions. This outrageous practice must be banned and workers need the full protection of the law.

"Ministers could choose to make 'fire and rehire' illegal. By swerving the issue, we can clearly see where the Government's priorities lie and it's not on the side of working people. They're threatening a bonfire of employment rights derived from the EU and trying to rush through anti-union legislation which is unfair, unworkable and almost certainly illegal."



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Tesco restructure puts more than 2,000 jobs at risk


Usdaw has been notified by Tesco of their plans to close their remaining in-store counter services, along with restructuring store management roles and some head office functions. The union will now enter into consultation talks with the company on their proposals.

The in-store managerial restructure proposes the removal of 1,750 lead and team managers, alongside the introduction of more than 1,800 shift leader roles. The company is also proposing some localised changes across the business including pharmacy closures, post office restructures and removal of night shifts, which could also lead to redundancies. The removal of counters follows on from the closure of the majority of their

counter services in recent years.

Within Head Office, Tesco is proposing to make changes to several functions, which could lead to a number of redundancies.

Usdaw national officer Daniel Adams says: "Clearly there is no good time to receive news like this, but it is especially difficult in the midst of a cost of living crisis and will be devastating for those who may be affected. Usdaw will be entering into collective consultation with Tesco immediately to interrogate these proposals. We will be doing all we can to support members throughout the process with a view to protecting jobs and, where this is not possible, securing the best possible deal for those affected."







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Social media *and* mental health



Technology and social media have revolutionised the way we connect with each other. It's been great for helping us keep in touch with people we don't see often, but it can also be a risk to our mental health.

Research has shown that the most popular social media apps can lead to higher levels of anxiety and depression and have a detrimental effect on our body image – as well as being used to spread abuse and other harmful content. It's important to take steps to manage these risks while still enjoying all the positive aspects of social media.

Our advice guide will help you use social media in a healthier way. It lays out simple, practical steps to protect your mental health and wellbeing, and also contains a list of organisations who can offer support if you're struggling with your mental health. Read the guide online at dtp.usdaw.co.uk/425.

■ Leaflets

- **Call Centre Workers - Abuse is not part of the job** (Leaflet 414)

- **Fibromyalgia - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 436)
- **Disability - Reasonable Adjustments** (Leaflet 439)
- **Hearing Loss and Deaf Awareness - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 442)
- **Disability - Multiple Sclerosis** (Leaflet 444)
- **Hidden Disabilities - An advice guide for Usdaw Reps** (Leaflet 446)
- **Diabetes - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 449)
- **Migraine - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 457)
- **Asthma - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 458)
- **Autism - An advice guide for Usdaw reps** (Leaflet 459)
- **When Someone Dies - Guidance for Usdaw Members**

■ Posters and Factsheets

- **Not All Disability Is Visible** (Poster R72)
- **Tesco Retirement Savings Pension Plan** (Factsheet)

New deal for workers and a retail recovery plan



Childcare

The lack of affordable childcare is a huge challenge facing working parents, especially women, in balancing work with caring responsibilities. Workers need urgent and substantial reform to address the long-running childcare challenge.

Universal Credit

Universal Credit remains

Usdaw has made a formal representation to HM Treasury for measures to be included in the 2023 Spring Budget on 15 March.

Following consultation with members, both directly and through their representatives in Usdaw, the union has developed policy suggestions to improve the lives of working people covering the following key areas:

New Deal for Workers

The ongoing cost of living crisis is a key challenge for the Spring Budget, particularly in light of grim economic forecasts. Skyrocketing prices, along with huge increases in energy and fuel costs, leave too many workers struggling to make ends meet. Average household energy costs are set to rise by £500 per year in April, which amounts to a near trebling since last winter.

Short-term support with current cost of living pressures is crucial, but the Chancellor needs to look at lasting solutions with a new deal for workers. A new deal that makes work pay: with an immediate £12 per hour minimum wage for all workers, regardless of age, as a step towards £15.

universally discredited. Usdaw has consistently called for a fundamental overhaul of the Universal Credit system and how the Government supports the incomes of working people. We need social security that genuinely supports families and provides a proper safety net.

Retail Recovery Plan

For many years the retail sector, particularly the high street, has experienced significant and fundamental challenges. Covid and the cost of living crisis have both intensified these systemic problems. Usdaw was deeply disappointed that the Government rejected an online sales tax, which was also supported by many major retailers, and could have been used to fund a reduction in business rates. That terrible decision should be reversed in this upcoming Budget.

Ushaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "This Budget is a last chance for the Sunak Government to show that they are listening, but we are not confident that this sleaze-ridden and incompetent government will offer the change our members need. Usdaw will continue to mobilise for a general election because only Labour has the policies and ideas that can put the country back on track."



Menopause leave

Usdaw is deeply disappointed that the Government has rejected calls for large scale pilot of menopause leave and recommendation from the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee to make menopause a 'protected characteristic' under the Equalities Act.

Udaw has vowed to continue their campaign to raise awareness of the menopause, for better workplace rights, along with supporting improved health and well-being for women in mid-life and beyond. The union plans to launch a new campaign on International Women's Day, 8 March 2023.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "It is deeply disappointing that the Government wouldn't even take the initial step of agreeing to a pilot to test the effectiveness of menopause leave, but instead appears to have predetermined it as 'counterproductive'. They have missed a significant opportunity to make a real difference to the working lives of so many women. We note that the Government wants to encourage employers to agree new menopause policies, but those are best implemented with statutory rights. Udaw has been successful in negotiating such facilities with many major employers and we are working with others for improvements, but putting into law minimum standards helps ensure that many more workers are covered."

Protect the right to strike!

Usdaw supports the right to strike and is focussed on opposing the Government's Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "It was deeply disappointing the Government railroaded their anti-union legislation through the House of Commons. Arrogantly, they did not accept a single amendment, despite the Bill being badly drafted and containing little detail or proper consideration of its impact.

"As the Bill goes through the House of Lords, we urge peers to vote against the Bill because this anti-union legislation means that when workers democratically vote to strike, they could be forced to work and sacked if they don't. That is undemocratic, unworkable and almost certainly illegal."



Vote YES to keep your voice

Every 10 years Usdaw has to ballot its members on whether it continues to have a Political Fund and that time is now

What is the Political Fund?

Most trade unions have a Political Fund that is separate from industrial funds. It is a legal requirement that our political work is paid for out of this fund. The Political Fund is used to campaign and lobby the Government, no matter who is in power, on behalf of the members. Without the Political Fund we wouldn't be able to deliver on our key campaigns.

Why are we being balloted?

In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government introduced laws that were intended to make it as hard as possible for trade unions to campaign on behalf of their members. One of these laws was that every 10 years, there would have to be a ballot on whether members kept their Political Fund.

Why should I vote yes?

The Political Fund gives Usdaw members a voice in politics. Usdaw has used the Political Fund to lobby politicians on the issues that matter to Usdaw members and has delivered on Sunday trading laws and laws protecting shopworkers against violence and abuse.

Usdaw is currently lobbying government



to take action on raising the minimum wage, guarantees on working hours, better sick pay, reforming and replacing Universal Credit, better quality affordable childcare, and measures to help members through the cost of living crisis.

The Political Fund is used to campaign and lobby the Government, no matter who is in power.

Employers are aware of political debates and pressure around certain key issues. Our political campaign work around workers' rights, youth rates, safety in the workplace and many other things has influenced employers and strengthened the hands of union



negotiators supporting a number of industrial gains.

Our political campaigns encourage new members to join Usdaw by showing that we can deliver on the issues that matter to them. They also give existing members opportunities to get involved and develop new skills. The Political Fund also directly supports those members who want to represent their communities by standing for election.

Result of previous review ballot

In the last review ballot in 2013, 93 per cent of Usdaw members voted in favour of keeping the Political Fund.

How much do members contribute to the Political Fund?

Members do not have to pay anything extra. The Political Fund contribution is 10p per week and is taken out of the normal Usdaw subscription through what is known as the 'Political Levy'.

When is the voting period?

The voting period runs from 6 - 31 March 2023.

What do I need to do?

Vote **YES** and return the ballot paper in the stamped addressed envelope provided before the 31 March 2023.

What members said...



"As an Usdaw member, I think being involved in politics is really important. Local services and our rights at work can only be improved through political activity. That's why it's so important that Usdaw has a political fund. I'm urging everyone to vote yes."

Lebo Phakoe, Usdaw member London



"With the passing of the Protection of Workers Act put forward by Daniel Johnson MSP, I felt my voice had finally been heard by politicians. As retail workers we've been campaigning with Usdaw for nearly 20 years to get our concerns on violence at work taken seriously, and with this law I knew we were. It's thanks to the Political Fund we had this voice, and I'll be voting yes to make sure we keep it."

Darroch Logan, Usdaw member Scotland



"It's important that trade unionists have a loud voice in politics. Politics affects all of our lives so why wouldn't we want to influence it. I'm going to be voting yes in the ballot so that we keep our voice."

Pat Gibbons, Usdaw member North West

Workers desperately need a pay rise

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis sets out his priorities for 2023 and talks about some of the challenges facing Usdaw

In his first interview of 2023, Paddy Lillis talks to Arena about the importance of recruitment, what Usdaw is doing to address the cost of living crisis, and why we need a general election.

Q Following the challenges brought on by the pandemic, is Usdaw membership back on track?

Last year was very challenging for our organisation. Although the number of new members recruited is close to pre-pandemic levels, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of leavers.

Falling membership can impact us in a number of ways, it can reduce our bargaining strength, make negotiations more difficult and reduce our influence politically.

I know times are tough for many people up and down the country, particularly for those working in jobs which are far too often low paid, with insecure hours. But with everything that's going on, it's more important than ever to make sure people are in the union and protected.

Q The cost of living crisis shows no signs of easing, what is Usdaw doing to help its members?

Everyone is affected by the rising cost of living, but the lowest paid workers are at the sharp end, and our call for a New Deal for Workers has become even more important. We are calling for a minimum wage of at least £12 per hour immediately, as a step toward £15, an end to insecure employment, respect for shopworkers and action to ensure that retail jobs are no longer underpaid and undervalued.

Our response to the cost of living crisis hasn't just been about political campaigning – we're using our agreements to win the best possible deal for our members through collective bargaining too, and a number of employers made extra pay increases outside the normal retail negotiations.

Q Is the cost of living affecting people's mental health?

In an Usdaw survey of thousands of low paid workers, nearly three-quarters told us that financial worries are affecting their mental health. In household after household up and down the country, workers are worrying that they are not going to get enough hours, that they are not paid enough, or that their job is not secure enough for them to keep paying their bills.



"Nearly three-quarters surveyed told us that financial worries are affecting their mental health."



Usdaw has been campaigning on mental health for over a decade now. We were one of the first unions to take up mental health as a health and safety issue. Our It's Good to Talk campaign provides resources for reps to organise and campaign on mental health at work. Labour shadow minister for mental

health Rosena Allin-Khan, came to our head office to speak to Usdaw members about their experiences and Usdaw held an extremely successful Day of Action to raise awareness on how the union can support members who are struggling with their mental health at work.

"We need a government that works with trade unions to deliver a better life for our members."

Q After securing legal protections for shopworkers, what's next for the Freedom From Fear campaign?

It is shocking that over seven in 10 of our members working in retail are suffering abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. Worryingly one in five who suffered a physical assault did not report the incident.

Despite securing protection of workers laws in Holyrood and Westminster, there's still more work to do. Through our 'Report it to Sort It' campaign we are encouraging shopworkers to report incidents and employers to improve responses to incidents. But this is an issue that cannot be solved by the retail industry alone and that's why we will continue to engage with politicians and the police to press for action on retail crime prevention, detection and access to justice.

Q What is the next big challenge facing Usdaw?

In the 1980s, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government introduced laws that were intended to make it as hard as

possible for trade unions to campaign on behalf of their members. One of these laws was that every 10 years, there would have to be a ballot on whether members kept their Political Fund. That review is this year.

Employers spend millions lobbying government to protect their interests. Trade union political funds try to

redress that balance. Usdaw has used the Political Fund to lobby politicians on the issues that matter to Usdaw members and has delivered on Sunday trading laws and laws protecting shopworkers against violence and abuse. That's why we need Usdaw members to vote YES in the ballot.

Q Do we need a general election?

The UK is facing a series of profound economic and social challenges. Over a decade of austerity has meant that nurses and teachers are having to use food banks and hard-working families are having to choose between eating and heating. Virtually every public service is on strike: nurses, ambulance workers, postal workers, border staff, civil servants and teachers. On top of this we are still dealing with the consequences of Brexit, Covid and the war in Ukraine.

Instead of focusing on these issues, the Conservative Government is undermining the right of trade union members to strike and a bonfire of EU laws will be rushed through this year, potentially removing essential protections for workers.

We need a general election now. We need a government that will transfer wealth from the richest to the poorest in society. We need a government that will invest in our schools, our NHS and our communities. And we need a government that works with trade unions to deliver a better life for our members.



The Usdaw Organising Awards 2022

A ctivists took centre stage at Usdaw's 17th 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 in the year.

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

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. It is a real achievement to be nominated by your region and when I looked through the nominations, I was once again very impressed by the exceptionally high standard in all nine categories.

"Without people like you, Usdaw would



not have made the fantastic progress it has made over recent years. Not all of Usdaw's activists are here tonight, so many thanks to the thousands of reps who have not won awards but have worked incredibly hard for the union.

"Tonight, we celebrate the very best recruiters, organisers and campaigners. I congratulate every nominee and wish each of you the very best of luck with your nomination. Many thanks to you all for your hard work, dedication and commitment to Usdaw."

What the Winners Said

Most Promising New Activist Award

**Joint winners Lewis Wheatley and Charlie Gough
Lewis Wheatley, Darlington (S) F172**

"I'm ecstatic that I won. I can't thank people enough for all the support they have given me. Becoming a rep was the best thing I ever did."

Charlie Gough, NW Tesco Retail No.6 K219

"I'm over the moon. I've only been involved in the union for about 13 months so to be here and win is a massive surprise."

Health and Safety Rep Award

Michael John French, Yale and District A229

"I've been nominated a couple of times before so I wasn't expecting to win. When I go back, I will build on some of the work I have already done. It's been a great evening."

Equalities Award

Paula Campbell, Orkney and Shetland G448

"I've been dealing with the equality agenda for a number of years as well as dealing with my own challenges and I'm honoured that I've won such a prestigious award."

Union Learning Rep Award

**Joint winners Laura Murphy and Denise Bartram
Laura Murphy, Dundee Tesco Call Centre Sata G451**

"I'm shocked and feel extremely privileged. I have an amazing mentor in Caroline Baird (project worker) and I honestly couldn't have done it without her."

Denise Bartram, Sussex No.1 H042

"I never dreamed I would actually win, so I am gobsmacked to be honest! I'm really happy that the union recognises and appreciates the work reps do every day."

Campaigns Award

Nicola Fitzsimmons, West Midlands Co-op and Tesco E038

"I'm elated because I try so hard to raise awareness of all our campaigns. It's so important to let our members know about the wide range of support we can offer them."

Team Recruitment and Organising Award

**2 Sisters Thetford Rep Team, 2 Sisters Suffolk C082
Krzysztof Adamek and Roberta Liobyte**

"We weren't expecting it. It's a great feeling to have won. The ceremony has been fantastic and it's nice to see fellow reps also winning."

Individual Recruitment Award

Danny Hook, Northern Morrisons F099

"I'm honoured to have won. The people I work with are amazing. I've known some for 20 years so they're not just members but also friends. It's a privilege to represent them."

Individual organising Award

Mihai-Andrei Puiu, NW AO.Com K241

"I didn't expect it as I've not been a rep for that long. I became a rep before Covid so it was tough but luckily, I had a lot of support from my area organiser."

Outstanding Achievement Award

Geoff Page, Waltham Point Sainsbury's Distribution C028

"I feel very humbled to have won. I really appreciate the members and Usdaw staff who have supported me over many, many years."



Out of the cold

Former Tesco rep and Labour councillor Carole Jackson talks to *Arena* about how her community is setting up warm banks to plug the gaps left by the Government's failure to deal with the cost of living crisis.

Was a Tesco rep for 26 years and when I retired, I stood to become a Labour councillor," said Carole.

"Being a rep gave me the grounding I needed to become a councillor. Talking to people, having empathy and problem solving are all skills you develop when you become an Usdaw rep. Even though Faversham was a Tory stronghold with a 22,000 majority, I managed to get elected in 2019.

"There is an assumption that because Faversham is a Tory stronghold people are well off. Don't get me wrong, Faversham is a charming old market town with cobbled lanes, historic buildings, and some very well-off people, but it also has its share of deprived areas where people struggle to make ends meet. And my ward has one of

the most deprived streets in Faversham.

"A recent report from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that over three million low-income families can't afford to heat their homes. This coupled with the fact that winter was fast approaching meant there was an urgent need for us to set up warm banks.

"We now have three up and running in Faversham Community Hall, Physic Community Gardens and at the Umbrella Club where people can go to get warm. We also offer a hot drink and a bowl of soup automatically, so people don't have to ask.

"I recently went to a meeting and found out that the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is setting up a food bank in Canterbury Hospital because they're

"In one of the world's richest countries, food and warm banks should be a source of national shame."



concerned that healthcare professionals are struggling to feed themselves. The same health care professionals who got us through the pandemic and who we used to stand on our doorsteps and clap for.

"More and more working people are having to turn to food and warm banks because wages haven't kept pace with inflation. I've been on so many picket lines, and everyone is asking for the same thing, a pay rise to help them pay their bills. But the Government is refusing to budge.

"In one of the world's richest countries, food and warm banks should be a source of national shame. Instead, we see photos of Tory politicians 'helping out' at food banks as though their policies had nothing to do with the rise of food poverty. This normalisation

of food and warm banks means the Government has outsourced looking after its own citizens to the charity sector.

"Faversham has a fantastic community spirit, and we're lucky that we have lots of amazing volunteers who give up their time to do this important work as well as all the individuals and businesses who make donations. Over the last few years, our community has come together and shown incredible resilience in facing the challenges thrown at us, first by the Tories' decade of austerity, then the pandemic and now by the cost of living crisis.

"However, charity should never replace the social safety net. It's the job of government to ensure that its citizens have the basics such as food, shelter and warmth."



Night working

There are 3.2 million workers who regularly work nights, that's around 10 per cent of the UK workforce. Night shift workers are an essential part of our society and play an increasingly important role in today's economy. While some benefits for workers can include flexibility, a quieter commute and increased productivity, nightshift working can be challenging, and isn't for everyone. Arena answers your questions...

What is a night worker?

A night worker is a member of staff working at least three hours during the 'night period'. Typically, this is between 11pm and 6am, but employers may agree their own night period times, provided the window is a seven-hour period and includes midnight to 5am.

Are there limits on hours for night workers?

Under the Working Time regulations there are some restrictions on night working. For most work the regulations require that night work should not exceed eight hours when averaged over a reference period (normally 17 weeks). So you could work three or four 12-hour night shifts in a week and still meet the eight-hour average



provided you get enough rest days in between. Lots of factories implement 12-hour shifts and this is perfectly legal.

Is there an age restriction for night workers?

Staff aged 16 or 17 cannot work between midnight and 4am. They usually cannot work between 10pm and 6am (this can be changed to not working between 11pm and 7am, by contract) but there are exceptions if they work in:

- Agriculture
- Cultural, sporting, artistic or advertising activities



- A hospital
- A hotel or catering
- Retail
- Post or newspaper delivery

In exceptional circumstances they can work at night if there's no adult to do the work and they're needed to either:

- Handle a sudden increase in demand
- Maintain the continuity of a service or production - for example, filming.

The employer must give the young person a rest period of the same length as the extended shift. There are other restrictions on employing young people.

www.gov.uk/child-employment

Is night working bad for your health?

Yes, it can be. Our bodies follow a natural daily rhythm which means that hormone levels and body functions have regular peaks and troughs over 24 hours. Shift work which involves working very early in the morning or late into the night disrupts those rhythms. Workers who do regular night shifts are more at risk of digestive problems such as ulcers and type-2 diabetes, heart disease and mental ill health. Shift work can also put a strain on family life. Most people are at their lowest ebb in the early hours of the morning, shift workers can suffer from fatigue and sleep-disruption. Loss of concentration means that there are more accidents on night shifts as well.

Does the employer have to assess and monitor the health of night workers?

Yes, the employer must offer the employee an assessment, free of charge, in relation to the effects, if any, on their health because of night working. This assessment must be offered before he/she employs a person as a night worker, and at regular intervals during the period that the person is employed as such a worker. The employer must offer suitable other work where possible if a worker has health problems that a doctor says are related to night work.

www.gov.uk/night-working-hours/health-assessments

I've worked nights for many years, and at different companies, and have noticed health and safety seems more lax. What can be done?

The risk of accidents is higher on night shift because of fatigue and the dip in concentration in the early hours of the morning. Often there is less supervision on nights. In shops night shifts are often short-staffed but are under pressure to take in deliveries and get the shelves stocked for the morning. There is all



the more reason to try to maintain higher safety standards on nights than on days, but in practice the night shift is often the 'forgotten' shift. It is an employer's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees on all shifts and other people who might be affected by their work activities. Employers must do whatever is reasonably practicable to achieve this. If you have concerns over safety, speak to your manager and/or the union.

Is it best to do permanent nights rather than alternate your shifts between days/twilight and night shifts?

There is no easy answer to this question. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

published guidance on shift work and fatigue in 2006. Their view is that permanent night shifts should be avoided where possible. Even though many night workers find it suits them because of their domestic arrangements and because they feel able to cope, night work is still likely to cause long-term health problems. It can take three or four nights for the body clock to adjust to night work. If you revert back to day-time activity on your days off the clock quickly resets, so it takes a few days to adjust when you go back to work the next week. The HSE advice is that rotating shifts every two or three days and allowing 48 hours between nights and days is probably better. However, despite lots of research, there does not appear to be a strong consensus.

On day shifts there's a canteen to use, but not on nights, is this fair and is it legal?

Generally, there is no legal requirement to provide a canteen. There is a duty to provide facilities where workers can eat meals at work, and to provide a means of heating food where hot food cannot be obtained in or near the workplace. On a night shift it may be difficult to leave the workplace at break time and there are less likely to be cafes or shops open nearby. But provided the employer provides a microwave or similar facility to heat food they will comply with the law. Usdaw believes the same high-quality welfare facilities should be provided for night shift as for day shift workers.

Is it dangerous to take stimulants to stay awake during a shift?

Some people do use these to help them stay awake at work but it is not a good idea. Even excessive use of mild stimulants such as caffeine drinks can be harmful. Use of illegal drugs at work is dangerous as they can affect concentration and judgement.

Driving home after a shift, I find myself nodding off, what should I do?

If you are very tired while driving you are a danger to yourself and to other road users. There are 'emergency first aid' steps you can take if you start feeling drowsy – pull over where it is safe to do so, get out of the car for fresh air, drink a caffeine drink, take a short nap. But these are just short-term solutions. In the longer term you need to avoid driving tired. That could mean looking at your sleep regime to make sure you do rest between shifts or even negotiating some changes to your working hours and shifts.

I'm pregnant, can I carry on working nights?

Pregnant workers and new mothers can work nights, provided the work involved

presents no risk to the health and safety of you or your child. However, you should be offered suitable alternative day work, on the same terms and conditions, when:

- Your individual risk assessment has identified a risk from night work
- Your doctor or midwife has provided a medical certificate stating you should not work nights

If it is not possible to provide alternative day work, your employer must suspend you from work on paid leave for as long as necessary to protect your health and safety and that of your child.

View and download Usdaw's Maternity and Parental Rights Guide for more information www.usdaw.org.uk/baby

What can workers do to cope better with night shift work?

The HSE suggests a variety of measures that night shift workers can take to help them cope better with night shift work:

- Exercise before your shift starts
- Take a nap of 1-4 hours before the first night shift
- Keep to a regular sleeping pattern
- Have your largest meal after your day-time sleep, before starting the night shift
- After your last night shift, have a short sleep and then go to bed early that night
- Eat balanced and regular meals
- Only have a light meal in the middle of a night shift; choose small portions
- Avoid fatty foods entirely during your shift
- Only have caffeinated drinks before or early during your shift
- Avoid alcohol and smoking before bed
- Take short breaks during your shift
- Try to do some exercise during breaks
- If possible, do the lightest/easiest tasks between 4-6am

More information

www.gov.uk/night-working-hours

www.acas.org.uk search night work



Usdaw branches

Branches are the cornerstone of Usdaw and are integral to the democracy of the union. They allow members to connect with the union, whether that's just staying up to date on what's happening in their workplace, or taking a more active role in the union by supporting events and campaigns. Branches also allow members to raise and discuss the issues that matter to them through the union's regional and annual conferences and have their say on policy matters.

All members of Usdaw are divided into around 400 branches across seven geographic regions of the UK. Your branch may be based on where you work and who you work for, or your branch may be part of a geographical branch including workers from various companies.

Branch committee

Branches are run by an elected committee and include the role of branch president, secretary and chair. The committee work together for the effective running of the branch. Branch committees plan activities for the branch and elect delegates to attend both regional and national conferences. Branches attend local events like Pride and anti-austerity marches. They support local and national charities



through fundraising and donations. They also help reps to promote the union and union campaigns in the workplace such as wellness initiatives and policy changes.

Branch meetings

Branch meetings are held on a regular basis and are organised and run by the branch committee. Going to branch meetings enables members not only to keep themselves informed of what is happening where they work, but also learn about the focus of the union at a local, regional and national level. Some branches arrange for guest speakers to attend their meetings such as local politicians. By attending branch meetings, members can be nominated to attend union events such as regional conferences, ADM and TUC conferences where they can raise the issues that matter to them.

Democracy

Usdaw is a democratic organisation and ADM is the union's democracy in action. Once a year delegates from branches meet at Usdaw's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) to decide Usdaw's policies and priorities on a variety of issues such as part-time work, health and safety, unsocial hours,



maternity rights, and international issues to name but a few. In this way everyone has a right to take part in union activities and have a say in what the union does.

Branches can submit propositions to ADM and may elect at least one delegate to attend and vote at ADM.

How do I get involved with my branch?

Usdaw strongly recommends that members link up with their branches. The best way to find out more about your branch is to attend a branch meeting. Speak to your Usdaw rep for more information. If you are unsure which branch you belong to, have a look at your Usdaw membership card or speak to your local Usdaw office.

Interview with a branch secretary – Emma Padden

Emma is the branch secretary of C045 East Suffolk branch which has around 1,000 members.

“Branches are principle to how the union is run,” said Emma, who has been involved with her branch for about four years and is also on the regional council. “Branches allow members to shape the union by giving them an outlet to have their say and be involved in decision making.



By attending branch meetings, members can also stay informed and find out what’s happening with the union locally, regionally and nationally. Branches support reps and vice versa. We help the reps in our branch deliver campaigns and support them in the workplace, and activists who are involved with their branch also have the opportunity to attend regional conferences, ADM, training opportunities and TUC events.

“Our meetings are held once a month over Zoom. That works really well for us as we’re quite spread out geographically so it makes it easier for members to attend the meetings around other commitments. We also invite our area organiser. It’s a good opportunity for members to discuss any issues with them. The minutes from the meeting are made available for branch members to read.

“Our last branch meeting was held at the Mayor’s Parlour, thanks to an invite from branch member John Cook who is mayor of Ipswich.”



Preying on the vulnerable

Loan sharks are exploiting the cost of living crisis to prey on households struggling to cope with the rising cost of food, fuel and energy bills.

According to the Centre for Social Justice, the number of people borrowing from illegal money lenders has trebled over the last decade to an estimated 1.08 million people in England alone. Data from the Illegal Money Lending Team for England shows that over half of victims were borrowing to pay for food and fuel.

What is a loan shark?

Loan sharks are lenders of money who are not authorised to do so by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Therefore, they are running illegal money-lending operations, often from homes, and charge extremely high rates of interest for repayments.

How high are the interest rates?

Interest rates vary from loan shark to loan shark but a typical figure is between 300 – 400 per cent. Arrangements are not covered by legal paperwork and the terms of repayment can be changed without warning.

Which groups are likely to borrow from loan sharks?

People who borrow from loan sharks tend to be people with an income below £20,000, on benefits, have a long-term health condition or those who would struggle to borrow money from elsewhere because of bad credit ratings.

How do they target vulnerable groups?

There are a number of ways that loan sharks target vulnerable groups. Loan sharks will go door knocking and offer on the spot loans to people experiencing severe financial difficulties. Some will use social media to entice people to take out loans. And others snare victims by

posing as friends who simply want to help out with cash loans before ramping up extortionate and arbitrary interest rates.

What happens when you borrow money from a loan shark?

Borrowing from a loan shark is likely to lead to a spiral of debt and extreme misery. Loan sharks are unscrupulous money lenders who will trap people in a cycle of debt by charging extortionate interest rates that most will be unable to pay back.

What happens if you can't pay?

Loan sharks are extremely dangerous and will resort to intimidating tactics to collect money from people they lend to. Customers are often threatened with violence at their own homes if they cannot make repayments. People may also have their credit cards or valuables taken away if they are unable to provide cash payments, while others may be forced into drug-dealing or prostitution to pay off their debt.

What is the impact of borrowing from a loan shark?

Borrowing from loan sharks can have a devastating impact on a person's life. Crippled by ever increasing debt and the daily threats of violence take a huge psychological toll leaving victims feeling trapped and helpless. Many are too scared and ashamed to report their experiences and even contemplate suicide.

I've already borrowed from a loan shark, where can I get help?

The first thing to remember is that you haven't broken the law and there is help available.

Stop Loan Sharks investigates and prosecutes illegal money lenders and provides support for borrowers. You can contact them on their 24/7 helpline on **0300 555 2222** or via their website **www.stoploansharks.co.uk**

Cost of living support

Crisis expected to deepen in 2023

The cost of living crisis is expected to continue into next year, leaving millions of people struggling to make ends meet. The Government has offered some support but fails to recognise that 12 years of Conservative stagnation, austerity policies and last year's disastrous mini-budget left many having to choose between eating and heating.

What is the cost of living crisis?

The UK is experiencing a cost of living crisis because costs are rising faster than wages. This means the weekly shop and energy bills take up a larger proportion of the household budget.

WHAT SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE IN 2023?

Cost of living payment

The £900 Cost of Living payment was announced in the Autumn Statement in November 2022 and will apply across the UK, with the Government stating that eight million households will be eligible. This includes anyone receiving the following benefits:

- Universal credit

- Income-based jobseeker's allowance
- Income-related employment and support allowance
- Income support
- Pension credit
- Working tax credit
- Child tax credit

The money will be paid in three separate payments over the course of the year with the first payment being made during spring 2023, the second during autumn 2023 and the third in spring 2024.

Claimants who are eligible for any of the payments and receive tax credits, and no other means-tested benefits, will receive payment from HMRC shortly after DWP payments are issued, as was the case with the previous £650 grant.

The payments will be tax-free, will not count towards the benefit cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards.

Disability cost of living payment

There will also be a further £150 disability cost of living payment in 2023-24, to help with the extra costs faced by vulnerable households. It will cover everyone eligible for:

- Disability living allowance
- Personal independence payment



- Attendance allowance
- Scottish disability benefits
- Armed forces independence payment
- Constant attendance allowance
- War pension mobility supplement

The payment will be made in summer 2023.

The payments will be tax-free, will not count towards the benefit cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards.

Cost of living payment for pensioners

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) is extending the £300 boost to the winter fuel payment that was issued in 2022. It will be paid in winter 2023-24.

Anyone who is eligible normally receives £100-£300 each year. The amount you get depends on when you were born, your living situation and the type of benefits you receive.

You don't typically have to apply for the winter fuel payment if you are eligible. You should receive the money automatically.

The energy bills discount

The £400 discount on energy bills is being paid to consumers in six monthly instalments from October 2022 to March 2023.

For those on a prepayment meter, redeemable vouchers will be sent by SMS text, email or post to the bill payer in the first week of each month.

Cold weather payment

A cold weather payment of £25 is triggered when the temperature falls below zero for seven consecutive days.

This scheme runs from 1 November to 31 March each year and is designed to help people claiming certain benefits with their bills when temperatures fall.

Fuel vouchers

If you're on a prepayment meter you might be able to get a one-off voucher (up to £50) to top up.

The fuel voucher scheme comes via the Fuel Bank Foundation charity, and it's offered through a range of organisations, like food banks and Citizens Advice. The best place to start to find somewhere which can offer you a fuel voucher is by asking your local council.

Some energy companies may also issue their own vouchers, so ask your supplier directly.



Retired HGV driver **Christopher Lunt** sustained a painful back injury when he was in work due to health and safety failings. Thanks to his union membership he was able to pursue his case through FirstCall Usdaw and secure £5,000 in compensation.

The accident happened in June 2020. Christopher was unloading roll cages from his trailer when he tried to stop a faulty one collapsing.

"The cages were really heavy because they were filled with bottles and cans," said Christopher. "As I pulled one cage it started to collapse. I should've let it go but my instinct was to push it back. Then I noticed that one of the wheels was bent under - I managed to straighten it with my steel toe cap and then I was able to move it. I felt ok that this point. Later I was driving and I went over a speed bump, suddenly, what felt like 250,000 volts of electric went through my back and I was in real agony. I pulled over to have a break and I just couldn't get out of the cab.

"I went back to the depot to report the injury to my manager but he told me I didn't have time and I had to go out on my next job. I was in terrible pain and needed medical attention but he said there was no choice, I had to go. Luckily I managed to drive and had help at the destination with unloading the cages.

"After that I was off work for 12 weeks. It was difficult as everything had shut down due to covid. I struggled to get a face-to-face appointment with my GP and couldn't



get an x-ray. Even my appointments with the physio were over the phone. When I returned to work I was put on a care package on the advice of occupational health. My work was limited and that's how it stayed until I retired in July 2022.

"I wanted to have a meeting with the company's health and safety team to help them avoid the same thing happening to someone else but my manager wouldn't allow it. I was supposed to be provided with a safe work environment and the company failed to do that. I wanted justice so I contacted the union.

"The legal service was excellent from the start. We settled out of court and I was happy with the outcome - it wasn't about the money, it was about getting the company to take health and safety seriously. In a way it's a shame we didn't get to court because I would've liked to meet my solicitor in person, he's been brilliant all the way through.

"Your union membership is vital. I used to be a rep with T&G many years ago so I know the importance of good health and safety. I'm looking into becoming a more active member of Usdaw now I'm in my retirement."

When Oak Furnitureland failed to take responsibility for an injury sustained by customer **Barbara Lee** due to a fault in one of their products, Barbara looked to FirstCall Usdaw for some much-needed support and justice.

Barbara had ordered a table with the company, but had problems with delivery and missing parts. She eventually received it in March 2021.

"Because it was real wood, the instructions were to wax it to make sure it was protected," said Barbara, a manager at Tesco who has been a member since 1994. "I was polishing one of the legs when I felt a sharp pain. I looked down and saw a large splint of wood that had gone so far into my finger that I could feel it under the skin on the other side. I started to pull it out but only a little bit came. I went to my local clinic and the doctor and nurses tried to pull at it to get it out but it wouldn't come. They sent me to hospital where it had to be

surgically removed followed with stitches and a tetanus vaccine. I'm a diabetic so I also had to have antibiotics. When I got home my hand looked like I had been in a fight, my finger was very swollen. I've still got a scar now and it can be sensitive.

"I contacted the company but all they offered me was some money off the delivery charge. I was furious. I just felt like they weren't taking the situation seriously.

Barbara decided to contact Usdaw for some advice and her case was passed over to a union solicitor.

"The lady I dealt with was wonderful, kept me informed and sent me everything I needed to see and sign. The company offered to settle outside of court but my solicitor agreed my case was worth more and I had really suffered so I wanted them to take responsibility. We took the case to court and won - I finally got that justice.

"I always promote the union to my team at work. I've pinned the FirstCall card up so everyone knows who to call if they have an accident. It's such a great service."



"We took the case to court and won - I finally got that justice"



Free USDAW LEGAL PLUS legal support

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

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

As an Usdaw member you are entitled to...

- **FirstCall Usdaw** – Legal assistance for any accident, anywhere in the UK, and now for accidents/injuries outside the UK while on a package holiday. †
- **Legal assistance** in all employment matters.*
- **A free Will writing service** for you and your partner saving you up to £250.
- **Conveyancing** – Usdaw solicitors will deal with all stages of your property transaction, professionally and efficiently, at favourable rates. You will receive a written quotation at the outset so you won't have any unwelcome surprises.
- **Probate** – Sorting out probate when someone dies can be stressful. Union solicitors can provide sympathetic and professional advice at special rates.
- **Free initial legal advice** – Usdaw's Legal Plus service doesn't stop when you clock off work. You are entitled to free initial advice and special follow-up rates for any non-work-related legal problem.

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

- If you've got children living with you who are under 18, they are fully covered for any accident, anywhere in the UK, and now also for accidents/injuries outside the UK while on a package holiday. †
- **Full legal assistance** for road traffic accidents.



- **Free legal advice** for any other accident and special follow-up terms.
- **Free initial legal advice** for any non-work-related legal matter and special follow-up terms.
- **Free Will writing service** for partners.
- **Conveyancing and probate** – families benefit from special rates.

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

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

Please note: Usdaw Legal Plus is not an insurance policy. The personal injury cover does not replace the need to obtain specialist holiday insurance, car insurance and home insurance.



If you have an accident, high street solicitors can take up to 25% of your compensation. With FirstCall Usdaw you keep 100% of your compensation.

- Expert solicitors to look after you.
- For members and their children under the age of 18 any accident, anytime, anywhere in the UK and for package holidays outside the UK.
- And family members living with you are also covered for road traffic accidents.

FIRSTCALL **USDAW**
Free Accident Claims Line
0800 055 6333
www.usdaw.org.uk/firstcall

FirstCall Usdaw

FirstCall Usdaw is the union's free accident and injury claim line. Thousands of members use the service every year for instant access to legal assistance for accident and injury cases. Making a claim is easy. There are no complicated forms to fill out and you will be supported by Usdaw every step of the way.

- You can use the service for road traffic accidents, slips and trips, and injuries caused by violent crime or armed robbery (CICA claims).
- Work-related diseases and conditions like repetitive strain injury, deafness, occupational asthma and dermatitis are also covered.
- If you win your case, you keep all your compensation. Neither Usdaw nor the solicitors take a cut of your damages, unlike high street solicitors who typically deduct 25 per cent.
- There are no hidden payments in accident cases, unlike so-called 'no win, no fee' cases which can involve charges for insurance premiums or specialist's fees.
- You will receive expert advice from lawyers committed to Usdaw who specialise in personal injury.
- The union's legal service works for members and not for profit - it puts people first.
- Call **0800 055 6333** to lodge a claim.

Other legal advice services for members

● Pensions advice

Udaw has a specialist pensions section, ready to help you with any questions about your pension. Where appropriate we will also support legal action to secure your pension rights. To contact the Usdaw pensions section, call **0161 413 0920**.



● Health and safety advice

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



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

For more information about all of the union's legal services please call the legal department on 0161 249 2473 or visit the Usdaw website

www.usdaw.org.uk/legal

Turn the page to find out how FirstCall Usdaw has helped members.

MemberOffers

CARS & TRANSPORT

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

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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

HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges & Hotels
Currensea: Travel Card
Eurocamp
James Villa Holidays
Lost Luggage Protection
Parkdean Resorts
Pontins
Wightlink Ferries

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

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

INSURANCE

Accident Protection Cover
Home/Motor/Travel Insurance
Gadget Insurance
Home Emergency Cover
Life Insurance
Pet Insurance
50+ Personal Accident Cover
Free £5,000 Accidental Death Cover

MONEY & FINANCE

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

SHOPPING

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

MISCELLANEOUS

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

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



www.usdaw.org.uk/legal

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

*Terms and conditions for individual offers on the website.

USDAW PROTECT

Apply for free £5,000 Accidental Death Cover

Thousands die every year in the UK due to accidents, which is why Usdaw has negotiated £5,000 of FREE Accidental Death Cover for every Usdaw member, aged 18-69 and a UK resident. The cover is free of charge and lasts 12 months, after which you can renew it again for free. The money can be used for any purpose, such as paying off debts, bills or funeral expenses and can provide financial support to your loved ones at a difficult time.

*To find out more go to: www.UsdawProtect.com/offers

The Free £5,000 Accidental Death Cover is underwritten by Stonebridge International Insurance Ltd.



HOLIDAY EXTRAS

The UK market leader for holiday add-ons

Holiday Extras are offering Usdaw members an exclusive discount. They specialise in the essential extras that every traveller needs. With savings of up to 13% on Airport Parking, 10% off Airport Hotels, 10% off UK Airport Lounges, and 10% off Airport Transfers.

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



GO APE

10% off Go Ape outdoor experiences and activities

Go Ape offer outdoor experiences and activities across 34 locations UK wide. From zip wires to super-springy trampoline nets in the trees, to off-road Segways and axe throwing! Live life more adventurously with a day full of unforgettable action, laughter, and all-round high fives.

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



LIFESTYLE VOUCHERS

6% Discount at over 150 of the UK's top retailers

Lifestyle vouchers offer you a choice of everyday treats from the high-street, online, leisure and travel sectors - with over 140 of the UK's biggest brand names. This includes John Lewis, M&S, Xbox, Currys, Argos, ASOS, Halfords, Sky Store, Just Eat, Deliveroo, plus many more.

*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. Go Ape - excludes Saturdays, Bank Holidays, Gift Vouchers and Corporate Bookings. Axe Throwing is currently only available at Coventry, Matfen, Bracknell and Southampton. Holiday Extras - see website for exclusions. 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.

Follow your dreams

Denislav Yosifov shares his experience of moving from Bulgaria to the UK at the age of 28 and then finding the courage to come out

"Moving to the UK was my childhood dream," said Denislav, 35. "I grew up watching English films. They showed me a world that was so different to what I was used to, and I fell in love with it. Ever since then, I had this burning desire to move to the UK."

"I come from Bulgaria which is an Orthodox Christian country and is very conservative. The religious establishment still sees being gay as a sin and you're surrounded by anti-LGBT rhetoric. Because of this, I had to hide I was gay from everyone including my family and friends. It was incredibly stressful living this double life and was part of the reason I wanted to move to the UK."

"I moved here in 2016. The only person I knew was a KFC manager who I had previously worked with in Bulgaria. She gave me my first job. I now work at Tesco in Stafford and am an Usdaw rep, a role which I thoroughly enjoy. I also work part-time in a Thai restaurant because I love cooking. Even though I'm a waiter,





"Living here gave me the courage to come out and it's been a transformative experience."

I'm always sneaking into the kitchen to see how they cook so that I can recreate the dishes at home.

"The first few years of living in the UK were a huge culture shock. My English wasn't great because I learned it from watching films. And I wasn't used to strangers smiling at me on the street and randomly asking me if I was 'alright'. In Bulgaria, if you behaved like this people would think you were very weird.

"The rules for dating are also very different here. Bulgarians are very passionate people and when they're in a relationship they are all in and spend a lot of time together. Over here, people play it very cool and I'm still getting used to that.

"Living here also gave me the courage to come out and it's been such a transformative experience. I've made a lot of great friends and attended my first Pride event in Manchester. I've never seen anything like it before. It was amazing to see hundreds of people lining up to show their support.

"I love living in the UK and have gotten used to the British way of life. But I'm still a proud Bulgarian and miss many things about my country including my mother's cooking, the mountains, the Black Sea and Baba Marta which is a very old tradition that celebrates the first day of spring.

"I'm looking forward to travelling around the UK and seeing more of the country. I particularly want to go to Wales because the mountains, the greenery and the fresh air remind me of home. I'm currently single so I would love to meet someone that I can do these things with.

"I wanted to do this interview to raise awareness about the struggle gay people have in coming out. I want them to know that they're not alone. There are a lot of LGBT organisations that can help so reach out to them for advice and support. Stay positive and stay hopeful because my own experience shows me that anything is possible."



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

www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety



Q Plasters

I work in a small convenience store with four other people. Last week I cut my hand and we didn't even have a plaster to put on it. The manager said we aren't required to have one, but I thought there were laws covering first aid in work?

Yes, there are laws covering first aid provision in the workplace, the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981. Employers have a legal duty to provide first aid. The minimum requirements in most workplaces are a suitable First Aid box and basic arrangements to provide assistance if a worker is injured or falls ill at work.

That does not mean there has to be a qualified first aider in a small store such as yours. But it does mean that there should be an 'appointed person' who takes care

of the First Aid box and who would take charge if one of you was injured or fell ill.

There is no mandatory list of contents of a First Aid box. It may be different in some workplaces, depending on the risk assessment. But HSE guidance suggests that it should include things like individually wrapped sterile plasters, sterile eyes pads and wound dressings and disposable gloves. More information can be found in HSE's free leaflet 'First Aid at Work - your questions answered' - www.hse.gov.uk/firstaid/index.htm.

Q Thermometers

Our depot is massive and stores both frozen and non-frozen goods. It also has doors that are opened regularly for deliveries. At one end of the site it's really cold but at the other it gets even colder when the factory doors are opened. Should we have thermometers at both ends of the depot?

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 to

the regulations add: "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.



SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO ARENA'S HEALTH EXPERTS:
arena@usdaw.org.uk

Q Equipment

I work on the loading bay and the equipment we use is showing more and more sign of wear and tear. They're not broken but just look like they're an accident waiting to happen. Can we pre-empt this by insisting on new equipment?

Just because something shows signs of wear and tear it does not necessarily mean they have to be replaced. However all workplace equipment is covered by the Provision and Use of Workplace Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER) and must be subject to regular inspection and maintenance.

Your employer has to work out a maintenance schedule based on the use of the equipment. If you use lifting equipment such as a scissor lift the Lifting

Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations also apply and set strict requirements for lifts to be inspected every 6 months. There should be records of maintenance and inspection.

Talk to your Usdaw safety rep. They can check the maintenance records and raise a grievance if necessary to get faulty equipment replaced.



Q Lighting

I am a shelf-filler in a large supermarket. To save energy management have started to turn down the lighting at work on the night shift. It is difficult to see the small detail on the shelf-edging and barcodes and I have started getting headaches. Can they do this?

We all agree that we must save energy but not at the risk of workers health or safety. Regulation 8 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulation 1999 states:

(1) Every workplace shall have suitable and sufficient lighting.

The Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) to the regulations says: 'Lighting should be sufficient to

enable people to work, use facilities and move from place to place safely and without experiencing eye-strain.

HSE guidance recommends minimum levels of light for particular tasks. Speak with your Usdaw rep in your store or your area organiser and they will discuss the issue with management who can get a lighting risk assessment done to see if it is too low.



Q Seating

I work on a checkout and am provided with a seat. My employer is now saying that I do not need a seat. Is this right?

The law is fairly clear about provision of seating in any workplace. Regulation 11 of the Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 says that a suitable seat shall be provided if the job, or a substantial part of it, can be done seated. That is why most retailers still provide chairs at

their main-bank checkouts.

That being said, it is not always clear cut whether a seat should be provided and it will depend on all the circumstances. For example, in convenience stores or small shops where chairs are often not provided behind the counter, the employers say that it is not a job that can be done sitting because you need to move around all the time to get cigarettes from the gantry, to use the lottery machine and to stock shelves.

If you need further advice please contact your rep in store or the health and safety section at Usdaw head office.



Arena



Win! £50

Correctly complete the grid and you could win a **£50** shopping voucher!

Closing date 1 May 2023

(Not open to Usdaw staff)

Word up!

Complete our prize crossword to spell out the hidden word in the yellow squares and you could be one of three members to win a £50 shopping voucher.

Email your answer along with your name and address to: arena@usdaw.org.uk
Please put 'xword' in the subject box.

www.usdaw.org.uk/xword

Solutions available from 2 May 2023.

Winter1 winners:

Kathleen Lane, Gloucestershire
Graham Partington, Lancashire
John Maloney, Cambridgeshire



ACROSS

1. Large bearlike mammal (5)
6. Small island (5)
9. Give a job to (7)
10. Representative (5)
11. Thick sweet liquid (5)
12. Fry quickly (5)
13. Idle chatter (7)
15. Permit (3)
17. Facility (4)
18. Exile (6)
19. Hoodwinked (5)
20. Regain (6)
22. Wheat spikes (4)
24. Owing (3)
25. Engaged woman (7)

26. Soup server (5)

27. Iron, say (5)
28. Conceals (5)
29. Amphibious rodent (7)
30. Perhaps (5)
31. Wheel surrounds (5)

DOWN

2. African country (6)
3. European river (6)
4. Appropriate (3)
5. Underwater detection system (5)
6. As an alternative (7)
7. Eyelid inflammation (4)
8. Oozes out (6)

12. Antitoxin (5)
13. Facial hair (5)
14. Stage whisper (5)
15. Pale mauve colour (8)
16. Not these! (5)
18. Contradict (5)
19. Lower the worth of (7)
21. Exclamation of discovery (6)
22. Antagonism (6)
23. Venerate (6)
25. Particle of snow (5)
26. Young sheep (4)
28. Fedora, say (3)

Arena Our members

Have your say -

SEND YOUR THOUGHTS OR PICTURES TO:
Usdaw Head Office, Voyager Building,
2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays,
Manchester M50 3XZ
arena@usdaw.org.uk



Anti-Racism



Jean Piechota has retired from her employment with Boots Industrial, Nottingham after 40 years of loyal service and 35 as an Usdaw member. Best wishes for the future Jean!



Fighting for rights



Keeping you updated



Supporting Parents and carers




Mental Health



Cost of Living Crisis



Respect for workers



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

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

Your chance to win!

You could **win £250** of shopping vouchers in this issue's prize draw. All you have to do is sign up a colleague or friend to Usdaw using the form opposite, and return it to Usdaw. Just put **FREEPOST USDAW** on the envelope and put it in the post.

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

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

4 prize draws a year



You can also enter online:

www.usdaw.org.uk/recruitafriend

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the Rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. The home address I give is the address that Usdaw will use for balloting purposes. Members joining from 1 July 2021 are automatically entered at Scale A. For details of current membership rates and cash benefits visit www.usdaw.org.uk. **Responsibility of keeping payments up-to-date rests with the member.**

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

Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes No

Please tick the appropriate box

Ms Miss Mrs Mr Mx Other _____ Female Male

Surname

Forename

Email

Full Postal Address

Postcode

Tel. No. (Inc. STD) Mobile No.

Date of Birth Age

Company Name _____ Occupation _____

Workplace Address

Postcode

Location No. _____ Employee No. _____

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

For Members Paying by Payroll

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

Privacy Notice

As a member of the Union, Usdaw will process your personal data as part of its legitimate activities in providing trade union services and benefits in accordance with the Union's Objects stated in the Rule Book and to perform its obligations to you under statute or contract. This involves processing of personal and sensitive personal data under the current data protection legislation. We will store your personal data only for the period necessary under law to enable us to fulfil our legal obligations. You have the right to request access to your personal data, and its rectification, erasure, restriction on processing, and portability. You have the right to withdraw consent for sharing of your personal data and to complain to the Information Commissioner. Usdaw and its Data Protection Officer may be contacted at Usdaw, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays, Manchester M50 3XZ.

Member's Signature _____ Date _____

Recruiter's Name _____

Recruiter's Membership No. _____



A brief guide to Usdaw

Usdaw is the UK's fifth biggest trade union with around 360,000 members. Most Usdaw members work in the retail sector, but the union also has members in other trades such as transport, distribution, food manufacturing and chemicals.

Usdaw helps people at work by

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

Usdaw membership includes...

Representation in meetings

There are over 7,000 Usdaw reps in workplaces across the country. If you have a problem at work, or need advice on an issue, Usdaw reps are on hand to advise and represent you in grievance, disciplinary and sickness meetings. The union can also provide specialist advice on pensions, health and safety and legal queries.

Free accident cover

Workplaces with unions have far fewer accidents. With 4,000 health and safety reps, Usdaw makes sure that your safety at work is taken seriously. If you do have

an accident, your membership gives you free accident cover. If your claim is successful, you keep 100 per cent of your compensation. If you have an accident please contact our free claim line

FirstCall Usdaw on **0800 055 6333**.



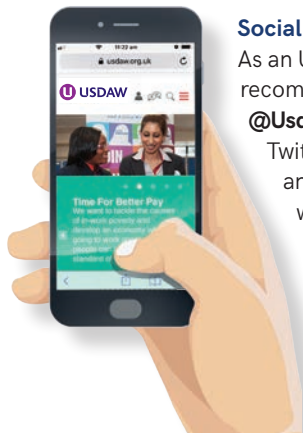
Member offers and discounts

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

Where to find information

Usdaw website and enews

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



Social media

As an Usdaw member we recommend that you follow **@UsdawUnion** on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Flickr. It's a great way to keep up to date with news, campaigns, events, rights at work, competitions and offers exclusive to Usdaw members.

Want to get more involved?

Branch meetings

The best way for members to get involved and stay informed is to attend their branch meetings. These are regular union meetings run by reps and are a good way of finding out what is happening in your workplace, your region and the wider union. Your branch number is printed on the wrapper of each issue of *Arena* and will start with a letter from A to K. To find out where and when your branch meeting is held, speak to your union rep or call your local office.

Become a rep

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

How to contact the union

Usdaw regions and offices

Usdaw divides the UK into seven geographical regions. If you have a problem at work always contact your Usdaw rep in the first instance (details can be found on your union noticeboard) or contact your local Usdaw office:
www.usdaw.org.uk/contact
Update your details:
www.usdaw.org.uk/update



A South Wales and Western Region

Bristol 0117 931 9730
Cardiff 029 2073 1131
Plymouth 01752 765930

C Eastern Region

Bury St Edmunds 01284 775700
Waltham Cross 01992 709280

E Midlands Region

Redditch 01527 406290
Kegworth 01509 686900

F North Eastern Region

Leeds 0113 232 1320
Newcastle 0191 296 5330

G Scottish Region

Edinburgh 0131 556 5242
Aberdeen 01224 652820
Glasgow 0141 427 6561

H Southern Region

Faversham 01795 532637
Andover 01264 321460
Morden 020 8687 5950

K North West Region

Preston 01772 704003
Belfast 028 9066 3773
Warrington 01925 578050

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NHS DENTAL PLAN

Do you have a NHS Dentist?



The Usdaw NHS Dental Plan gives you money back each time you visit your NHS dentist, so no more costly treatment bills.

What's more, as a special offer:

Join today and get immediate cover!

Get covered for £500 per year towards:

- ✓ Examinations, scale & polish and x-rays
- ✓ Fillings, root canals & extractions
- ✓ Crowns, bridges, dentures & repairs
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Each policyholder also gets cover for:

- ✓ Oral cancer (upto £6,500)
- ✓ Accidental impact injury (upto £750)
- ✓ Hospitalisation, dental related (£25 a night)

Monthly premium, £11.50 per person

Join today on freephone **0800 037 2092**
or online at **www.usdawdental.co.uk**