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SUMMER 2016

## Q&A

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



## General Secretary John Hannett We need to know why BHS failed

**T**he collapse of the high street stalwart BHS has rightly brought the issue of corporate governance into sharp focus. More than 11,000 jobs are now at risk and the company's pension scheme has a deficit of around £570m. This looks likely to be taken on by the state-backed Pension Protect Fund, a rescue scheme set up by the Labour government. It is a very worrying time for all concerned.

So I welcome the Government's fast-track investigation into what went wrong at BHS. We need to know how and why large sums of money were taken out of the company, where it went and what impact this had on the future viability of the company. This is the biggest retail collapse since Woolworths in 2008 and again it looks like the state will have to pick up the bill unless a buyer is found for the ailing chain.

In 1989, 96 Liverpool fans were killed at the Hillsborough stadium in Sheffield – the biggest sporting tragedy on British soil. In the immediate aftermath the fans themselves were blamed and vilified by both the police and sections of the press.

In April the independent inquiry finally found that the 96 were 'unlawfully killed' and there had been a widespread and sustained attempt at a cover up by some in the South Yorkshire police force.

I want to salute the families of the deceased who have fought tirelessly to uncover the truth during these last 27 years. Their strength, dedication and belief, despite many set-backs along the way, deserves the recognition and respect of all us.

John Hannett, General Secretary



# arena

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## Sundays are saved

Union wins a stunning victory against all the odds



Usdaw officials and activists lobbied the Houses of Parliament in April prior to the vote

Usdaw's campaign to stop deregulation of Sunday trading won a tremendous victory in the House of Commons when MPs voted by 317 to 286 against allowing local councils to have the power to let big stores open all hours.

The victory on 9 March followed a lobby of parliament on February 29 by senior officials, activists and members who met Labour MPs to put the case against extended Sunday trading.

The debate in the House heard MPs from across the political divide quote Usdaw's survey – a first for any union – showing its members' opposition to total deregulation.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This is a fantastic victory and stops our members from coming under more pressure to work longer

hours on Sundays. It wouldn't have been just Sunday workers who would've been affected either as staff scheduling across the week would've been restructured causing chaos in-store.

"Our members contacted their local MPs in their thousands, the figure was in excess of 11,000, to support our campaign against a Sunday trading free-for-all.

“More than 11,000 members emailed their MP to support Usdaw

"I want to thank those members, those MPs and members of the shopping public who stood up for shopworkers and employees in other sectors who faced a massive shift in their employment patterns.

"This victory ranks as one of Usdaw's biggest wins in this our 125th anniversary year.

"Our evidence-based campaign persuaded a majority of MPs to do the right thing and vote down these ill-thought out proposals.

"Many thanks too to those activists who joined us at the Houses of Parliament to put our case to the many Labour MPs who

turned out to support us. We couldn't have done it without them.

"Thankfully common sense won the day – again – and as Angela Eagle MP said I hope the Tories now abandon these tawdry plans to deregulate Sunday trading hours." More at: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

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# BHS may disappear

## Thousands of jobs at risk as famous retail chain calls in administrators



High street retailer BHS went into administration in April putting 11,000 jobs at risk at its 164 stores – the second biggest retail casualty since Woolworths went bust in 2008.

Current bosses, and former owner Philip Green, have come under widespread criticism for their handling of the business, which Green sold to private equity company Retail Acquisitions for £1 last year.

Shadow business secretary Angela Eagle welcomed a government investigation into the running of the business. “During Sir Philip Green’s stewardship of BHS, the pension fund went from a surplus to a black hole of £571m,” she said.

General secretary John Hannett said: “We will be co-operating with the parliamentary select committee as they investigate

the circumstances surrounding the company’s collapse.”

Green, and other shareholders, had taken £580m in dividends from the company soon after he bought the firm in 2000. It has been struggling to make a profit for a number of years and has debts totalling £1.3 billion according to reports.

Udswal officials have met with the administrators. “We would welcome a serious buyer that wants to run the business as a going concern and secure jobs. We don’t want a repeat of the asset stripping that happened at Ethel Austin and Kwik Save,” said national officer Dave Gill.

“We will continue to provide the advice, support and representation that our members require at this difficult and worrying time.”

As **arena** went to press a number of retailers had emerged as potential buyers.

## October increases to come for minimum wage

The national minimum wage rates will increase in October as follows: For 21 to 24-year-olds it will rise from £6.70 to £6.95 an hour, while 18 to 20-year-olds will see it go up from £5.30 to £5.55 an hour.

For 16 to 17-year-olds it will increase from £3.87

to £4 an hour, while apprentices will receive a 10p increase to £3.40 an hour.

Under the chancellor’s national living wage, for workers over 25, the hourly rate went up to a minimum of £7.20 from April 2016.



# Help offer

## Union announces link with leading charity

Usdaw has teamed up with learning disability charity Mencap to help promote awareness and help people find work in the retail and distributive sectors.

At this year's annual conference Mencap representative Zoey Purdy (pictured) outlined the charity's work. "Our two organisations have lot in common," she said. "We exist to stand up for people who may not be treated fairly.

"The Royal Mencap Society supports people with a learning disability, their parents and carers, on a range of issues

including work, housing and much more.

"There are around 900,000 people in the UK with a learning disability, able to work but unable to find a job. We want to change that. We want to help employers understand more about learning disability. We offer support and training

For more information on the work of Mencap: T. 0808 808 1111  
E. [help@mencap.org.uk](mailto:help@mencap.org.uk)

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

to employers – free – to show how they can match the right client with the right job.

"I want Usdaw to help spread the word to your HR managers, your colleagues and families. I truly believe what we do makes a difference to those people we support, their families and their employer."



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**People**  
like you

Bradley Rowland with  
Peter Evans

Usdaw proved once again it's the union for young workers when it won a victory for Bradley Rowland

# Tribunal win

It was smiles all the way for part-time customer assistant **Bradley Rowland** when the union won his case for disability discrimination after he was forced to resign from his job.

Usdaw won his Employment Tribunal case and Bradley was awarded substantial compensation. He was also reinstated and the tribunal ruled that his employer should make reasonable adjustments for him to be trained at his store.

"It was an amazing victory," said Bradley, 21, from Llansamlet in Swansea. "My area organiser Peter Evans was beside me every step of the way. I couldn't have done it without him and the support from Usdaw's legal department, together they helped me through the whole ordeal.

"I was delighted I was

reinstated, and the level of compensation was surprisingly high."

Bradley's problems started in November 2014 when he worked for Timpson's at the Llansamlet Tesco Extra store in Swansea. He was transferred to Max Spielman under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (TUPE).

His new role required specialist training and his manager wanted to send him to a store seven miles away for training. However, Bradley has a condition called Gilbert's Syndrome, which makes him very sick if he travels long distances.

"I told them about my medical condition when I started my job, so when my manager said I had to travel to the Port Talbot store I

said I couldn't do it and asked if I could have the training in my own store.

"He said this wasn't possible and if I couldn't do the training at Port Talbot I would have to leave. I felt I had no alternative but to resign.

"I contacted the union and thankfully Peter explained I had a case for constructive dismissal on disability grounds.

"I can't stress enough how important it is for every worker to join the union, especially younger workers as we don't know our rights and can be easily exploited.

"I would hate for any other worker to go through what I went through without Usdaw's backing."

For more information  
on being a rep, visit the  
union's website:

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



# Time travel

# News

## Usdaw has come along way since it began its epic journey in 1891

Members can take a quick trip down memory lane to trace Usdaw's 125 years' history with the specially commissioned booklet **Celebrating 125 Years of Service**.

From the early beginnings and the campaign against the Living-in system, through the war years, industrial unrest and political struggle right up to the 21st century and the union's place as the campaigning union and the remarkable turn around in its membership growth.

With features on shopping trends, training and education, equality, the fight against



Members can order the booklet (cost £2.50) from the stationery department at central office 0161 224 2804



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

Sunday trading and much more the booklet offers a quick and easy-to read summary of Usdaw's quest to win for members.

The new booklet builds

on the union's previous publication **A Century of Service** published in 1991 to commemorate the union's centenary.

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23 June, 2016

## The EU Referendum

# A Europe for all of us



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

Alan Johnson MP, and leader of the Labour In For Britain campaign, talks to arena about the EU Referendum...

**T**his is the biggest vote in post-war history, says Alan Johnson, who wants voters to choose peace, security and prosperity and stay in Europe.

**Q. Following the recent attacks on mainland Europe the question everyone is asking – Is the UK safer, more secure, in the EU?**

Yes. People instinctively understand that crime doesn't recognise borders. Neither does terrorism or organised crime and they will move around and look for the point where it is safest to carry out their criminal activities and terrorism does that too.

People also instinctively understand that through co-operation with the other 27 EU countries this helps us tackle organised crime and terrorism.

The Leave camp say we do that anyway, yes we would try to do that but we wouldn't have the framework to do it.

Let me give you an example: Say a British copper recognises a number plate, checks it, and finds the driver/owner is wanted in say the Netherlands. Information is exchanged. The driver is arrested, using the European Arrest Warrant – available only in the EU – and that driver is dealt with accordingly, in a matter of days. If we are outside the EU that can't happen. Nor would we have the vital structures and access to information for tackling terrorism. Warm words from the Leave campaign just won't do it. Before we had the European Arrest Warrant system it could take up to 13 years to deal with this sort of criminality.

**Q. What are the economic benefits of staying in the EU?**

This issue is very difficult for the Leave side to explain when you consider the

Governor of the Bank of England has warned inflation and interest rates will rise and the pound will fall if we leave. Both the employers' group the CBI and the TUC has warned about the impact on jobs.

I understand Usdaw members lead busy lives and don't follow these things closely but we have to explain to everyone just how serious the threat to the UK is if we leave.

Access to the single market, with its 550m consumers, is the biggest commercial market in the world – bigger than China and bigger than the USA.



[www.labour.org.uk/inforbritain](http://www.labour.org.uk/inforbritain)

## FACT FILE

- Born: 17 May 1950
- Postman: 1968-87
- National Official for the Communication Workers Union (CWU): 1987-93
- General secretary CWU: 1993-95
- Joint general secretary: 1995-97
- MP Hull West & Hessle: 1997-2010 (following boundary changes) MP Kingston Upon Hull West and Hessle since 2010
- Held a number of ministerial posts culminating in Home Secretary 2009-10
- The first two books of his three volume autobiography *This Boy (A Memoir of a Childhood)*, and *Please, Mister Postman* were critically acclaimed with the third volume expected later this year.



Our businesses access that market for free whether that's for services or manufacturing goods. That's a huge economic benefit.

If we're outside of the EU it's highly likely we'll see the return of tariffs on our exports.

Let's be very clear, for example, on food: Even the National Farmers Union recognise if we're outside the EU, French and German farmers will want to re-impose food tariffs so they can sell more of their own produce. That's a simple fact of life.

The Leave side say, (people like Nigel Farage and Boris Johnson) the economic hit is worth it and the job losses

a price worth paying. They imagine, years down the line, we will be in a happy sunny place recreating the old British Empire. Their economic case for leaving is wrapped in optimism but nothing else.

In reality, we export more to Ireland than the whole 53 countries in the Commonwealth. The fact is the EU takes 50 per cent of our exports.

If we turn our back on the EU after 41 years we will have to renegotiate around 70 trade agreements all at the same time, which will take years and create massive uncertainty.

In short: The economic case for leaving the EU doesn't exist.

**Q. UK workers enjoy rights which originated in the EU, could these be lost if we leave?**

Yes they could.

Remember it was the Labour Government that signed up to the EU Social Chapter which delivered a raft of measures on, for example, four weeks paid holidays, equal pay for part-timers, improved protection for contract workers, maternity/paternity leave and pay. The previous Tory Governments had opted out.

This shows how hostile Conservative governments are to workers' rights. You only have to look at what they are trying to do in the Trade Union





Bill to realise nothing has changed in the Tory Party.

Unfortunately we haven't a Labour government at present and we can't take the risk that these rights will be protected if we leave the EU.

Many of the leave campaign quote red tape but this is often a cover for wanting to do away with workers' rights but they haven't the courage or honesty to admit it.

The EU has rules to protect workers, to protect consumers and to protect the environment; those in the Leave campaign don't want those rules.

Anyone who believes the Tories will give us these rights in domestic law doesn't know their history or understand the Conservative's hostile approach to workers' rights.

**Q. Immigration played a big part in the 2015 election and it's a subject that will feature highly in the Referendum, do you agree?**

Yes it was an issue at the last general election and people voted Tory to bring it down, but net migration is now at record levels and much higher than when I was Home Secretary and most of it from outside the EU.

For those who will vote based purely on the issue of immigration I have to say to them it is clear the UK will be worse off if we leave the EU.

At present we are in the happy position of being in the Dublin Accord but outside the Schengen Agreement. This means asylum seekers need to register in the first European



country they arrive in. The UK deports around 1,000 people a year for that reason. If we are outside the Accord we couldn't do that. Because we're not part of Schengen you need a visa to get here and we check people even from the EU. In fact we have more controls on free movement after Cameron's renegotiation.

Another reason why we will be worse off is because our most vulnerable point is the Calais to Dover area. Anyone who has driven over there will see it's the UK Border Force. We moved our Border Force to Calais from Dover (with French agreement, although not universally popular in France), if we leave it is inconceivable that there will be sufficient goodwill to keep that going and we will have more people coming in.

Our access to the single market depends on free movement, and it gives us so much prosperity. We can't build a wall around Britain. Being in the EU is all about co-operation.

**Q. But EU migrants have impacted on the terms and conditions of the UK workforce haven't they?**

People have very understandable concerns about exploitation and fairness, and we can tackle that and Usdaw, along with other unions, is doing that to protect migrants.

The Swedish Derogation, part of the Agency Workers Directive, allows agencies to employ staff direct and pay less than the going rate, that has to be closed and unions are aiming to do that. That wasn't on Cameron's agenda but it would be on ours.

The idea that leaving will somehow improve things for workers, just like the argument on immigration, is misguided. Immediately you will lose the ability to work with other countries to tackle this issue. If any section of society is going to benefit from leaving I'd expect workers and their rights to be at the back of the queue. We have to work



with other countries to close these loopholes but we can't do it if we're outside the EU.

Many in the Leave campaign don't want to stop free movement they want to enhance it and want Britain to be an offshore version of Singapore, a race to the bottom, an 'anything goes' economy.

**Q. Isn't the problem in the UK this – we've had years of anti-EU sentiment drip fed to us by a hostile tabloid press?** Yes that's undoubtedly true.

We, politicians and trade unions in general, stopped making the pro-European argument, probably after the single currency issue was settled, and left the field open for all these Little Englanders and those who peddled all these myths, for instance: the EU takes all our money, it makes all our laws, its accounts have not been signed off, – all ludicrous and all wrong. We've also had the nonsense about

straight bananas, flavoured crisps, and conkers, so yes we're rowing against that tide.

But now we're putting the information out there, making the arguments, giving the people the information which they are hungry for, we are changing minds, and painting a different picture portrayed by the tabloid detractors.

**Q. Isn't membership of the EU just like being in an expensive club?**

Don't believe the figures you hear bandied about.

Annually the net cost is £6bn. And you have to look at where the money goes – often to the poorest areas. Its aim is to raise all these regions up so they can contribute and reach a level of prosperity, just look at Wales, Yorkshire and the Humber, and Cornwall, all have had capital investment which was just not there in the '80s, so we gained from that trading bloc.

Analysis says that we get back between 3-28 times what we put in because of that EU single market and the jobs and the prosperity that provides.

The CBI estimates that on average a UK family is £3,000

better off a year because of our EU membership.

**Q. If you look at the polls the Referendum has divided the nation and split the Tories in half, can either side win convincingly?**

Yes we can.

But what's remarkable is the Tory split, and Labour's unity. The unions are on board too. Labour voters are crucial, only they can win it.

If we counter the negative myths, get the right information out there, strike the right tone, I'm convinced all the arguments are on our side.

We are not like the leave campaigners, many of whom are fanatical, even extreme some of them.

I believe UK people will vote on balance, not for love of the political institutions, but after taking everything on board, and they will rightly reject the idea of splendid isolation. They will realise the EU offers us a better framework for our future in an increasingly inter-dependent world.



John Hannett, Alan Johnson and Paddy Lillis

## The Conservative Government pushed ahead with its aim to shackle trade unions but some concessions were won...

The Government's Trade Union Bill will go ahead despite unions winning important changes to the proposals in the House of Lords in April.

"The Tory's plans threatened our ability to run campaigns using our political fund," said general secretary John Hannett. "Our campaigns give working people a collective voice in Parliament, allowing trade unions to stand up for their members in the face of Government attacks and to promote new and improved rights for working people.

"An excellent example of this was our campaign on Sunday trading. Having a political fund allowed us to run a full and active campaign to win support from MPs from all parties to defeat a Government proposal opposed by more than 90 percent of our members. Such campaigns by trade unions are



an important part of democracy and it would have been wrong for the Government to neuter them with over-burdensome bureaucracy.

"However, this Bill remains an ideological attack on how unions operate and it is an unnecessary and vindictive attack on our political affiliations."

Government amendments to the Trade Union Bill include:

- Opt-in to political funds will only apply to new members.

- Political levy payers will not be required to renew their opt-in.

- A 12-month transition period for unions to prepare for the new system.

- Opt-in or opt-out will be able to be done on paper or using electronic means, including online forms, emails and potentially texts.

- Unions will be required to remind members annually about their right to opt-out.



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**People  
like you**

Georgie at her  
Douglas Co-op store

**Georgie Bruton looks  
after ten Co-op stores  
on the Isle of Man**

# Leading rep

**Y**oung rep Georgie Bruton is flying the flag for workers at the Co-op on the Isle of Man where she works as an acting team leader.

The 26 year-old, who works at the Douglas store, is a cluster rep looking after the ten stores that make up the Manx Co-operative Society.

Georgie has lived on the island for 13 years and has worked for the Co-op for ten months and took up her rep's role ten months ago.

*Arena* caught up with her at her first training course at the national training centre in Warrington in April while she was at a three-day reps' training course.

"I really enjoyed it," said

Georgie. "I learned a lot about the union and how it works and my union role and I also made many new friends with reps from the mainland. I

**“ I care about fairness and I care about treating people right**

think being a rep sits well with me.

"Deep down I'm quite a shy person but I'm passionate about the things I believe in. I care about fairness and people being treated right.

"I came home from the mainland really fired up and keen. I didn't realise there was so much to get involved with. I feel more confident about

my role and want to encourage more workers to join, especially younger workers.

"There are around 200 Co-op employees on the island and I have 50 per cent membership in my store and overall we have 100 members, so there's plenty for me to build on.

"The more experience and challenges I have the better.

"I'd love to find out more to see how everything fits together and I've also considered the Academy. I'm looking forward to more training courses."

**For more information  
on being a rep, visit the  
union's website:**

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



# Understanding the new state pension changes

No matter how young or old you are, you need to know what's going on with the state pension and how you can prepare for your retirement

## The state pension changed on **6 April 2016**

The state pension is a regular payment from the Government, which you can claim when you reach your state pension age.

Not everyone has the same state pension age and not everyone will receive the same amount of state pension.

Your state pension age depends on when you were born and how much you receive will depend on your National Insurance (NI) record.

## **Q** Will this affect me?

You will be affected by the changes if you are:

■ **Female** – born on or after 6 April 1953

■ **Male** – born on or after 6 April 1951

If you were born before these dates you will not be affected and will continue to receive your state pension under the current scheme rules.



**PENSION**

The rules and regulations around pensions have been transformed in recent years, here arena takes a look at the latest changes to the state pension, what it means and how you will be affected.

# know your Rights

## Q How much will I get?

### Existing pensioners

If you have already reached your state pension age and in receipt of your state pension you will continue to receive this under the present rules. You will continue to get both your basic state pension and any additional state pension (this could be state graduated pension, SERPS or state 2nd pension) you are entitled to. This will also apply to anyone who reaches their state pension age on or before 6 April 2016.

Furthermore, if your current pension entitlement is more than the new full single tier pension, your pension will NOT be reduced.

### New pensioners

For any man born on or after 6 April 1951 and any woman born on or after 6 April 1953 you will be affected by the reforms and your pension will be calculated in accordance with the new rules.

The full level of the new state pension will be **£155.65** each week however, not everyone will automatically qualify for this amount.

The amount you receive will be based on your NI record.

Your new state pension will be based on how many 'qualifying years' you have on your NI record and whether you have previously been 'contracted-out' of the additional state pension at any time prior to 6 April 2016.

If you do not have the maximum amount of qualifying years and you were contracted out of the additional state pension prior

to 6 April 2016 (or both), your 'starting amount' will be less than the full new state pension.

Pensions are too important to ignore – your future income begins here

### Starting amount from April 2016

From April 2016 the Government will look at how many existing qualifying years you have and if you have a contracting out record, which will determine your 'starting amount'.

If your starting amount is less than the new full state pension of £155.65 a week, each qualifying year you add to your NI record, after April 2016, will start to build up an additional amount up until you reach the full level of the new state pension or when you reach your state pension age – whichever happens first.

If your starting amount is more than the full state pension you will receive this higher amount when you reach state pension age. This will occur if you have built up a certain amount previously in the additional state pension.



To find out your State Pension age visit:

[www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension](http://www.gov.uk/calculate-state-pension)







## Q Can I delay taking it?

You don't have to claim your state pension as soon as you reach state pension age.

You can delay (or defer) claiming your state pension, which means that you will get extra State Pension when you do claim it. The extra amount will be paid as extra pension (not as a lump sum) but remember it may be taxable.

How much extra pension depends on how long you delay claiming it. The longer you leave it the more you will get.

You will need to delay at least nine weeks - your state pension will increase by 1 per cent for every nine weeks that you put off claiming. This works out at just under 5.8 per cent for every full year that you put off claiming.

After you claim, the extra amount you receive will usually increase each year in line with inflation.

## Q Can I claim from my spouse/civil partner

If you reach state pension age on or after 6 April 2016, your state pension will be based on your NI record only.

There is one exception to this - if you are a married woman or widow who has opted to pay reduced rate NI contributions. This is called a reduced rate election (or perhaps most commonly known as the 'married women's stamp').

If you made this choice in the past you may get a new state pension based on different rules, if these will give you more than the amount of the new state pension that you would have otherwise have got from your own NI record.

If these rules do apply to you, you will not need the qualifying 10 years of your own in order to get any state pension.

### If you re-marry or form a new civil partnership

If you are under state pension age you won't be able to inherit anything from your deceased spouse or civil partner if you re-marry or form a new civil partnership before you reach state pension age.

### If you get divorced or dissolve your civil partnership

The courts can make a 'pension sharing order' if you get divorced or dissolve your civil partnership. If this happens the court can decide if you must share your additional state pension or protected payment with your former husband, wife or civil partner.

Your state pension will be reduced accordingly and your former husband, wife or civil partner will get this amount as an extra payment on top of their state pension.

For further information visit: [www.gov.uk/state-pension-through-partner](http://www.gov.uk/state-pension-through-partner)

For more on Married Women's and Widow's reduced rate visit: [www.gov.uk/reduced-national-insurance-married-women](http://www.gov.uk/reduced-national-insurance-married-women)




[www.gov.uk/pension-credit](http://www.gov.uk/pension-credit)

# know your Rights

## Q What if I don't get the full pension?

The new state pension won't be the same for everyone. What you get will be based on your NI record.

From 6 April 2016 you will also need at least 10 qualifying years to be eligible to receive any state pension.

If you are aged 55 or over and will reach your state pension age on or after 6 April 2016 you can get a new state pension statement at: [www.gov.uk/state-pension-statement](http://www.gov.uk/state-pension-statement). This will estimate what your new state pension will be, based on your NI contributions to date. This will be your starting amount in the new system.

In most cases this is the lowest amount you could expect to receive at your state pension age.

If you do not qualify for the new full state pension there are ways in which you can increase it up to the full amount.

■ You can continue to work and pay NI contributions up to your state pension age and this will boost your starting amount from 6 April 2016.

■ You may find that you have gaps in your NI record and you may be eligible to claim credits for these.

■ You may be able to elect to pay voluntary NI contributions to increase your state pension.

■ If you have already reached your state pension age you can delay claiming your pension and over a period of time your state pension will increase in value.

## Q What if I get no state pension?

If you only qualify for a small amount of state pension or no state pension at all, you may be eligible to claim pension credit.

Pension credit is an income related benefit that tops up your weekly income to a guaranteed minimum amount if you have reached the pension credit qualifying age. If you are a couple, the amount you get will depend on your joint income and capital (this will include your savings and investments).

## Q Will my pension increase?

Every year your new state pension should go up in line with the triple lock guarantee (this means, state pension payments are guaranteed to rise in line with whichever is the highest of earnings, inflation or 2.5 per cent) until 2020, and at least with the growth in average earnings thereafter.

If you have extra state pension or a protected payment (over the full state pension entitlement of £155.65) it will not increase at the same rate. This part of your state pension will increase in line with inflation (Consumer Prices Index-CPI).

More information available at:



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



[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

*On tour*

*with the Usdaw bus*

# All aboard as the union drives ahead

Coming to a town, city or site near you the campaigning union tour bus marks the 125th anniversary in motoring style...

**U**nion members are being urged to step on board the specially-commissioned Usdaw bus when it visits a town near them over the summer months.

As part of Usdaw's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations the fully-equipped vehicle will tour the UK calling at cities and towns along the way to bring the union's message to as many high streets, retail parks and industrial sites as possible.

Its first stop was in Blackpool in April where delegates and visitors to the Annual Delegate Meeting had the chance to check out the merchandise, leaflets and promotional material on the single decker.

"This is an important addition to our profile, and

will let the Great British public see what we do, why we do it, and how they can get involved," said general secretary John Hannett. "Usdaw has a remarkable story to tell. We mark our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year since our predecessor unions were formed in 1891. We've also commissioned a booklet looking back at our 125 years, the struggles our forebears fought, the campaigns we've run and the changing face of retail and the distributive trades.

"Usdaw is a strong, growing union with a great team of reps and officials eager to build on our history and ensure we're around for another 125 years."

Members should contact their local office or visit the union's website to find out where the bus will be stopping in their area over the coming months.











# Legal Plus

*– looking after you  
and your family*

*Trust Usdaw to win for you*

**Laura Wager** was awarded £45,000 to settle both her personal injury claims thanks to Usdaw's expert solicitors.

Former Tesco worker Laura would have lost more than £11,500 of her award in legal costs if she had used a high street or TV advertised firm to take up her case.

"I didn't hesitate to contact the union because it had helped me in the past," said Laura, 63, from Bridgwater in Somerset. "Yet again I had excellent support and guidance and the same solicitor looked after both my claims."

The first accident happened in December 2010 when Laura injured her back, hand and knee after she slipped in the staff restaurant at the Tesco store in Wells, Somerset.

While this case was being pursued Laura

had another accident in October 2011 when her knee gave way and she fractured her ankle.

"It all started to get a bit complicated because I was convinced my knee gave way because of the previous accident but Tesco's solicitors would not accept this.

"My solicitor Bill Wilcox backed me all the way and had to fight very hard to win my case for me. I can't praise him enough, he wouldn't give up. My case was even listed for court and a barrister was consulted.

"It took three years to complete. I had to be patient and put my trust in my solicitor and that's what I did. Without the union's professional support fighting my corner I would never have won. Thanks to Usdaw, justice was done."

## ***Paul has high praise for FirstCall***

Tesco driver **Paul Gould** kept every penny of his £3,200 compensation after he was injured in a road traffic accident.

The accident happened in 2014. Paul suffered a back and whiplash injury when a car crashed into his van. His case was settled 12 months later. If he'd used a high street solicitor he would have lost up to £800, 25 per cent of his award.

"I always advise my colleagues to use the union, it makes sense," said Paul, 44, from Eastbourne. "Why would you want to go to one of these so called 'no win no fee' solicitors that you see on the TV? You have to pay them an insurance premium to take on your case and you would have to pay their upfront costs too?"

"And they wouldn't even take your case if they were not certain to win it. So if your case is not straightforward or needs money upfront say for medicals, they don't want to know."

"That's why FirstCall is such an excellent service and completely free and you keep 100 per cent of your settlement."

"I was off work for five weeks. I'm so grateful to my rep Julie Hart who advised me to make a claim. It was fantastic advice."



## ***Support for car crash victim***

Morrisons rep **Alan Ruston** knew exactly what to do when his vehicle was hit by a car with an uninsured driver – he rang FirstCall Usdaw and his solicitor put a claim in with the Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB).

The MIB is a not-for-profit body funded by the insurance industry and was set up to compensate victims of uninsured and untraced drivers. Alan's claim was settled last year and he received £2,500

"After the accident happened I rang FirstCall Usdaw," said Alan, 59, who has been a rep for eight years.

"It couldn't have been more straightforward. Although it might have been a lot different as the driver was drunk and uninsured but I had expert advice from my solicitor all the way."

The accident happened at 4.45 am in December 2014 when Alan sustained whiplash and shoulder and back injuries.

"My solicitor was relentless in trying to get the best outcome for me. I was offered a low sum initially but my solicitor held out and won me a bigger settlement."





### ***FirstCall – always there for you***

Thanks to FirstCall, Morrisons cashier **Sue Todd** was awarded £65,000 when she injured her elbow after she fell near her daughter's house.

As an Usdaw member Sue kept 100 per cent of her award, she would have lost over £16,000 if she'd signed up with a high street legal firm.

"I read about members' stories in arena and called the freephone number," said Sue, 50, from Waterlooville in Hampshire.

"I was really surprised when my call was put straight through to a solicitor who said they would support my case even though the accident didn't happen at work."

The accident happened in June 2013. Sue

fractured and dislocated her right elbow when she fell down some steps while walking along a badly lit alleyway.

"I was in a plaster cast for eight weeks and had operations and metal pins inserted in my arm and lots of physiotherapy.

The union were with me every step of the way, I really don't know what I'd have done if I hadn't been a member.

"I certainly wouldn't have been able to afford to pay for legal help to claim against the company responsible for the steps and alleyway. I was absolutely thrilled with the award.

"I always advise people to join the union, it doesn't cost a lot, the union is there for you anytime, anyplace, anywhere."



## Expert advice wins the day

A request for help to lodge a grievance led to Usdaw winning £5,190 in compensation for charity worker **Garry Corbett**.

He had time off after an accident at work and his employer refused to pay his wages so he contacted the union for advice. Soon after Usdaw's solicitors took up a claim for personal injury and won his case.

"The union's advice was invaluable," said Garry, 66, from Cannock in Staffordshire. "I couldn't believe it when they said I may have a personal injury claim and my call was transferred immediately to a union solicitor who looked after my claim throughout the six-months it took to complete."

Garry's accident happened in June 2015 when he worked as a hardware processor for the charity Newlife Trading. He injured his shoulder, back and leg when the stool he was sitting on broke and he was thrown across the room.

"I have epilepsy so I needed to sit down. But the company didn't carry out a risk assessment to provide a safe chair for me and I was given a high plastic stool. I always said it wasn't suitable for me but the company wouldn't listen.

"The professional support and guidance from my solicitors throughout my claim was superb.

"I tell everyone to join the union for security and peace of mind, and for the legal service alone it's worth every penny."



## LEGAL ROUND-UP

### Patricia Richardson

- Age: 64
- Employer: Morrisons
- Injury: Thumb
- Date of accident: June 2015
- Case settled: Jan 2016
- Award: £1,800
- Quote: "My claim was settled in seven months. Excellent service."

### Mark Anthony

- Age: 32
- Employer: Sainsbury's
- Injury: Foot
- Date of accident: May 2013
- Case settled: Sept 2015
- Award: £600
- Quote: "FirstCall took my case whereas a high street solicitor won't take anything for less than £1,000."

### Peter Fraser

- Age: 52
- Employer: Tesco
- Injury: Leg
- Date of accident: July 2015
- Case settled: Sept 2015
- Award: £1,500
- Quote: "My claim was settled in just two months! I highly recommend the legal service."

### Catherine Parry

- Age: 57
- Employer: Sainsbury's
- Injury: Head
- Date of accident: Feb 2014
- Case settled: Nov 2015
- Award: £1,000
- Quote: "FirstCall was ace. My solicitor was brilliant."





### ***Double win for Valerie and John***

FirstCall took care of both **Valerie Thompson** and her husband John after they were injured in a road traffic accident in April last year.

A union solicitor looked after both of their cases and they were awarded £3,200 between them.

"I'd read in the magazine that FirstCall covered family members too even when they are not a member of Usdaw," said 66 year-old Tesco worker Valerie from Bognor Regis in West Sussex.

"We were delighted when the union's solicitor said they would look after John's case as well as mine.

"We were sat in a queue of traffic when the accident happened. We felt a loud thud as we were hit from behind and shunted forward. It was a real shock.

"We went to the hospital and were both diagnosed with whiplash injuries.

"I keep the FirstCall fob on my car keys so I rang the number gave a few details and a union solicitor picked up our claim. Everything was taken care of for me and John.

"It was all very quick and efficient and our claims were settled eight months later.

"I always tell people to keep their FirstCall number handy and to remember that the union is there for you and your family 24/7."

# AVOID ING STUNG



**IF YOU HAVE AN ACCIDENT HIGH STREET SOLICITORS  
CAN TAKE UP TO 25% OF YOUR COMPENSATION**

**KEEP 100% OF YOUR COMPENSATION WITH FIRSTCALL USDAW**

- ✓ Keep 100% of your compensation – no 25% reduction.
- ✓ Any accident, anytime, anywhere in the UK.
- ✓ Expert solicitors to look after you.
- ✓ And family members living with you are also covered for road traffic accidents.

**First Call *Usdaw* 0800 055 6333**  
**VISIT [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL)**



*Usdaw*  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers



# Your union, your votes, your say

One of the few union's to have an annual delegate meeting, activists took the chance to put democracy into action in April...

**M**ore than 1,200 activists descended on Blackpool for four days in April for the union's biggest event – the Annual Delegate Meeting – to decide Usdaw's policies for the next 12 months.

Everything from pay to premium payments, holidays to health and safety, and housing to health was debated. Delegates also agreed to support a Remain vote for the forthcoming EU Referendum.

It was a packed agenda with president **Jeff Broome** in the chair, general secretary **John Hannett** and deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** replying to the debates on behalf of the executive council, and executive councillor **Barbara Wilson** responsible for the smooth running of the conference as chair of standing orders.

Delegates also gave a warm welcome to guest speakers Labour leader **Jeremy**

**Corbyn, Alan Johnson** MP, chair of Labour In For Britain campaign and **Zoey Purdey** a representative from MENCAP – Usdaw's adopted charity for its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

## Tax avoidance

Well-known multi-national companies both here and abroad should be forced to pay their taxes in the countries they do business in and the monies used to help fund health care provision, **Ray Taylor** (Sainsbury's Northern F174) told conference.

Google, Amazon, Apple, HSBC and others were all named as having

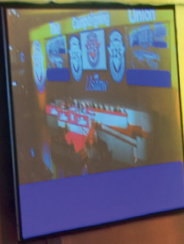


The Winter Gardens, Blackpool venue for the ADM, 2016





# Campaigning Union



Usdaw

- Delegates agreed to a small 2p increase in contributions taking Scale A to £2.34 a week and Scale C to £1.47.
- Delegates also agreed to support the executive council statement on Europe and support a Remain vote in the Referendum.

## CORBYN'S PLEA FOR UNION INPUT

The Conservative Government has given tax cut after tax cut and tax break after tax break to the very richest and big corporations, yet they want to balance the books on the backs of the low paid, Labour leader **Jeremy Corbyn** told conference.

However, the campaign against Tory tax credit cuts succeeded because the labour movement came together, in the country and in Parliament, to defeat their plans to cut more than one thousand pounds a year from three million families, he added, but there was more to do.

“This summer we are launching *Workplace 2020*, which is a discussion and a consultation process on how we build positive rights for workers, so that we get better rights in the workplace when a Labour Government comes around in 2020,” he said. “I am very keen that our Party’s policies should organically grow from the members of our Party, the members of unions and supporters of our Party so that all of the wonderful creative ideas we have can be fed in, to secure our victory in 2020. Please join in that conversation.”

He attacked the Government for its treatment of the junior doctors, for the under-funding of the NHS and called for more resources for mental health care.





convoluted tax affairs. "Their actions may not be illegal but they are immoral," said Ray. "Finding out information about these companies is very difficult.

"The scale of the problem is massive with one estimate claiming around 21-31 trillion dollars are sheltered in tax havens worldwide, which if taxed would raise between 190-200 billion dollars.

"Meanwhile in the UK the Government is closing down HMRC offices. It should be putting more resources into HMRC to collect evaded tax. Tax avoidance should be punished severely. The UK should take action unilaterally if necessary. These parasites are bleeding this country dry."

## National Living Wage

The Tories' so-called living wage is a 'fake' and should be paid at 18 and not 25, **Ernest Mainza** (Stroud Cotswold and District A184) told conference.

"They have created a further minimum wage tier," he said. "We need a £10 an hour minimum rate for all workers aged 18 and over ensuring equal pay for equally trained staff. One job – one pay rate."

**Terry Brown** (St Merryn Cornwall A186) seconded the proposition. "Workers have been exploited for too long," he said.

"But even with this new minimum wage other benefits have been cut. We need a Labour Government to ensure a fair rate of pay for all."

## Lifelong Learning

Usdaw's negotiating officials should put lifelong learning on their agenda so employees can improve their skills and promotional and career opportunities, **Chrissy Carter** (North Yorks Next F44) told conference.

"Lifelong learning improves workers' confidence but too many do not have access to a learning centre," she said. "We have to put lifelong learning at the heart of our organising strategy, and improve members' digital skills so that they are not disadvantaged by the technically changing world."

Delegates also agreed two other propositions calling for the union to press the Co-op Group to facilitate Checkout Learning and for the union to provide more support into the Gateway programme which promotes digital skills.

## Mental Health

More than 70m working days are lost because of mental illness, costing the UK economy around £100 billion, **Wendy Lewis** (East Cornwall A73) told conference.

"Around 75 per cent of people get no treatment," she said. "So it would make sense for companies to provide access to counselling services, and provide support for staff.

"Workers are being unfairly penalised because of mental health

Delegates at the union's Annual Delegate Meeting



problems. We need managers to be well-trained in how to deal with employees with issues like depression, anxiety and stress."

**Edwina Fairbrass** (South West London H88) seconded the proposition. "One in four are affected by mental health during their lifetime," she said. "The Equality Act offers some protection but everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Training is available from charity MIND. We need to get rid of the stigma around mental health and companies need to take these issues seriously."





## JUSTICE-AT LAST- FOR THE 96

Conference rose as one and broke into loud spontaneous applause when the general secretary John Hannett announced news of the decision by the Hillsborough inquest that the 96 Liverpool fans, who died at the stadium in 1989, had been ‘unlawfully killed’.

The report was also highly critical of South Yorkshire Police Force and its attempt to blame the fans for the tragedy, infamously repeated by the Sun newspaper at the time. The jury found the then match commander, Ch Supt David Duckenfield, was ‘responsible for manslaughter by gross negligence’ due to a breach of his duty of care.

“We can’t imagine the trauma and the difficulties the families have faced in their fight for justice,” said **John Hannett**. “Don’t forget the Sun did everything to demean and demonise the fans, what a disgraceful piece of journalism.”

“I’d urge everyone to read the report of what went on during that tragic day. We join with the families who applauded the jury following its verdict.”

As a mark of respect to the deceased and their families, who have campaigned tirelessly for more than 25 years to reveal the truth, delegates, visitors and officials sang the Liverpool anthem *You’ll Never Walk Alone* at the end of conference.

## STAY AT EUROPE’S HEART

The EU referendum on June 23rd is every bit as important as the post-war election in 1945 because the outcome will decide what kind of country we are and what kind of society we want to be, **Alan Johnson** MP and leader of the Labour In For Britain campaign told conference.

By voting to remain in the EU, he said: “We can ensure that the great post-war vision of our predecessors is not diminished and undermined by those whose vision of Britain is as an offshore, regulation-free, anything goes, race to the bottom.

“The Leave campaign want us to build a wall or pull up a drawbridge, to wander off into self-imposed isolation, hankering after some misty-eyed version of the past. They hope that somehow the torrents of change will leave them untouched as they sip their Ovaltine and listen to Vera Lynn.

Nostalgia can be a powerful force in politics. I remember the 1950s, the poverty, the racism, and the slums. Nigel Farage and his cronies are welcome to it.”

He said the Brexiteers want ‘isolation’, ‘to go it alone’ and to abandon the biggest market in the world – the EU – with its 500 million citizens. “That’s not an option.

Our alternative is to do what Britain does best, to rise to the challenges of the modern world, like the generation of 1945 to deliver a better Britain, a better Europe and a better world.”



# First-class deliverers

Shoppers at 160 Sainsbury stores rely on Usdaw members at the DHL site in Stoke for their regular supplies, *arena* called in...

**T**eamwork, more than 600 members, a fully-equipped learning centre and an award-winning safety record puts this flagship operation at the very top of the warehouse sector.

The site, with 15 hard working reps, has the Sainsbury contract and supplies stores across the UK from the state-of-the-art facility in Staffordshire.

The cavernous site houses miles of racking and conveyor belts, automated and manual picking cranes, has a huge storage capacity and a computer controlled system co-ordinating and monitoring every case, pallet, cage and tote.

Learning rep **John Goodwin** has worked at the site since it opened in 2002 and is proud of the difference the learning centre has made. "We've had members brush up on their English, maths, and study towards City & Guilds and apprenticeships. It's been a great success," he said.

"We have 12 PCs here and we work closely with the

local college to offer as many courses and opportunities to learn as we can. It's very popular.

"The learning centre has also been used more specifically to help individual workers with dyslexia or numeracy issues. We've seen people struggle with their picking rates and rather than go down the disciplinary route we look to help them with these issues and get them up to speed. It's worked and we've saved people's jobs."

The branch is K183 and the activists are regulars at the Annual Delegate Meeting and divisional and national trade conferences. On-site monthly reps' meetings are held and the team meet management every six weeks. "Everything is discussed and we work together to sort out any issues. We conduct our pay negotiations on-site and while we have our differences we have a good relationship with the management team," said long-serving rep **Mick Deakes**. "All of our reps are Usdaw trained and getting



Millions of units pass through the busy site

time off for that is not a problem."

Night shift rep **Andy Firman** added: "We deal with a range of issues from absence to safety issues. Sometimes it can be quiet but when something comes up it gets sorted straightaway. Any incidents are investigated fully."





## DHL STOKE IN NUMBERS

- The site covers **527,000** square feet the equivalent of around **7** football pitches
- An average week will see **1,100** deliveries to **160** stores
- An average week will see **2** million cases enter/exit the site
- The site supplies more than **13,600** products
- It recycles **90** per cent of all its waste with **0** going to landfill

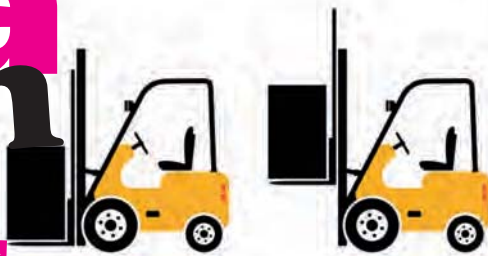
The Usdaw team at DHL in Stoke, Staffordshire





# arena Health

Send your health questions to the  
arena team at: [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)



## Shift breaks

**Q** I work in a bakery. When I change from late shifts to the early shift I finish at 9pm and start the next day at 5am. Management say an eight-hour break is legal, but by the time I get home, have some tea and eventually get to bed, you're talking a few hours' sleep. To me it's dangerous as I'm using machinery the next morning and doing these shifts allows very little rest in between.

Under the Working Time Regulations the normal daily rest break should be 11 hours. However, this can be reduced when you are changing shifts or where employees collectively

agree to a change. The law says you are entitled to the difference back as 'Compensatory Rest' later on – usually when you have a day or two days off together. Travel time to and from work does not count as working time so your eight-hour break on the change from late to early shift is legal. If it does cause you problems because of your own circumstances, raise it with your manager and speak to your Usdaw rep.

## Chemical fear

**Q** The skin on my hands cracks and becomes very sore when I am working. I am a cleaner in a café, so my hands are in hot soapy water a lot of the time. Is there anything I can do?

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has recently highlighted cleaning as one of the jobs that can carry a high risk of dermatitis. Wet work generally can cause irritation and in cleaning the problem can be worse because detergents remove the protective oils from the skin.

Sometimes more serious skin irritation can be caused if you become allergic to the chemicals you use. And some types of rubber gloves can also cause allergic reactions.

Your employer has a legal duty to try to control damage to your health from the materials you work with. If contact with cleaning products can't be avoided this might mean providing appropriate gloves and skin creams that are safe to use. Don't ignore the problem as the irritation might result in permanent damage.

The HSE has a very good guide on preventing work-related skin disease. It can be downloaded free from its website at: [www.hse.gov.uk/skin/index.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/index.htm)

## Drugs test

**Q** At the warehouse where I work, the management have just introduced a drug and alcohol policy. It says if I have an accident driving my fork-lift truck then I will have to take a test for drugs or alcohol. I don't drink and don't approve of drugs, but I resent the fact that I might be tested. Can I refuse to take the test?

Yes, you can refuse to take a test, but you could face consequences if you do. Your employer cannot force you to take a test. But if your behaviour was a cause of the accident and gave reasonable grounds for them to think that you may have been acting under the influence of drugs or alcohol, then you



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)





could face serious disciplinary action.

Government advice is that all employers should have a policy on drugs and alcohol that is welfare-based and offers help to workers who may have a problem. At the same time, no employer could condone someone turning up for work when drunk or under the influence of drugs.

Testing is only one part of an overall policy and is not a legal requirement, apart from some specific occupations such as train-drivers. In fact experts advise that random testing is unlikely to be effective and should only be considered when it can be justified on safety grounds.

As a result many policies do include provision for 'for cause' testing. That is testing when a person's behaviour gives reasonable grounds for suspicion.

Testing for alcohol is usually done by a breath test, similar to that used by the police, and is a reasonable indicator of impairment. Testing for drugs usually involves a urine or saliva sample. It does not measure impairment but simply shows that the drug had been used recently. In the case of cannabis, urine samples can detect use many days after the last exposure. So it is vital that

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**



the employer consults with staff and the union before any policy is introduced. If testing is to be part of the policy it must be justified by the risk and the consequences of testing must be fully explained to all employees.

## Summer heat

**Q I work as a trolley collector. I don't mind the job in the winter because I can cover up when it's wet, but I burn very easily when I am in the sun and I've been told that too much sun is bad for you. With summer coming what can I do?**

Exposure to UV from the sun is a major cause of skin cancer. Malignant melanoma rates in the UK have increased alarmingly in the last 25 years, more than for any other major cancer.

More than 1,000 men a year in the UK die from malignant melanoma, a 31 per cent increase in the last decade. Malignant melanoma is the second most common cancer in people aged 20-39. Those most

at risk have fair skin that tends to burn, lots of moles or freckles and/or a family or personal history of skin cancer.

Employers have a legal duty to protect the health and safety of their employees, (Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999).

For members who work outdoors employers can make arrangements for workers to avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun during the hottest part of the day. They should ensure that workers:

- Take shade where possible between 11am and 3pm and spend breaks out of the sun
- Are provided with and wear protective clothing i.e. hats, long sleeves etc
- Are provided with and wear effective sunscreen (factor 30+)
- Wear sunglasses (with UV protection)
- Are aware of dangers and consequences of exposure to the sun.

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# Bigger and stronger

As part of Usdaw's 125th anniversary celebrations we look back on the last 25 years and how the union fought back...

In 1991 Usdaw faced a hostile Tory government, economic recession and falling membership, what happened next?

### Membership

In 1991 the union's membership totalled 341,000 and by 1994 this had fallen to a low point of 282,000, despite recruiting more than 60,000 new members a year.

However, Usdaw has enjoyed unprecedented levels of growth in the last 22 years from 341,000 to 435,000 members – a near 30 per cent increase. This is no accident as the union has overhauled and revamped its recruitment and organising methods and launched its own Academies.

It also introduced its own modernising programme in 2006 that restructured its finances and revolutionised how it operated.

### Campaigns

While Usdaw had successfully led the campaign to stop Margaret Thatcher introducing a Sunday trading free-for-all on

Sundays in 1985, some major employers started to open illegally in the early '90s.

Despite Usdaw urging its members not to work on Sunday it was clear many were taking advantage of the premium pay available at the time. This led to the union changing its stance, controversial at the time, and agreeing a compromise arrangement which led to the Sunday Trading Act 1994. This limited stores bigger than 3,000 square feet to a maximum of six hours trading, the Act also allowed shopworkers to opt out of compulsory Sunday working.

Twenty years later in 2016 Usdaw won a stunning victory as once again it was instrumental in defeating Tory government attempts to introduce complete deregulation of Sunday trading.

Usdaw's other successful



A political voice, membership growth and FirstCall Usdaw



and award-winning campaigns

include Freedom From Fear, which aims to protect workers from violence and abuse, and Supporting Parents and Carers, which promotes the rights for workers with caring responsibilities.

### Legal services

Another outstanding success for the union has been its ability to win compensation for injured members, successfully represent them at employment



tribunals and offer a range of additional services to members and their families.

Since 1991 Usdaw's Legal Plus service has recovered more than £255m for members either injured or treated unfairly at work. In addition it has offered members legal

representation for family members accidentally injured, and legal advice on issues outside of work and access to a free will writing service with local solicitors for members. Expert advice on health and safety

and pensions is also available and thousands of members have made the most of this excellent facility.

In 2008 Usdaw launched its free direct claims line – FirstCall Usdaw – which streamlined the application process for members injured regardless of the place or time of the accident. It has been a resounding success and has turned once potentially lengthy, frustrating and time consuming processes into a fast-track method of settling claims quickly and efficiently.



**Award-winning campaigns**



# All change

## Co-op sells stores as another high street chain falters



Further upheaval in the retail sector continues after the Co-operative Group announced it is selling a portfolio of former Somerfield properties – including ten in Scotland – as it seeks to focus its efforts on the convenience market.

The firm said the sites, comprising 36 stores and a number of ‘non-trading’ properties, were being bought by The Food Retailer Group.

National officer John Gorle said: “We have started the formal consultations with the owners about the transfer of the business. Our officials will deal with any issues on a store-by-store basis and will support and advise members during these uncertain times.”

The branches will be rebranded as Budgens as part of the deal, which is expected to be completed by July. A spokesman for The Food Retailer Group added: “All employees will transfer with the business, and there are no planned redundancies.”

Meanwhile, Austin Reed went into receivership in April putting 1,184 jobs at more than 100 standalone stores and 50 concessions in jeopardy. The administrators said the business will continue to trade while exploring a sale of all or parts of the business. In the past 12 months, the 116-year-old retailer has shuttered 31 of its stores and is selling its 35,000 sq ft Regent Street flagship site.

# Credit crunch

The Government’s roll out of the Universal Credit system continues to threaten the livelihoods of workers. Three million families entitled to support in the tax credit system will no longer be entitled to any in-work support, leaving them £42 a week worse off on average, according to the latest research.

A further 1.2 million set to receive Universal Credit, will be an average of £41 a week worse off. This echoes Usdaw’s own analysis that revealed that a parent couple, both working in retail, earning just above the so-called national living wage, one working full-time and one part-time, would be £1,866 worse off a year on Universal Credit.

General secretary, John Hannett, said: “The Government has allowed severe cost cutting to turn the initial intentions of Universal Credit to simplify benefits and improve incentives to work, which we support in principle, into a real threat to the incomes of low-paid working families.”

**Usdaw Insurance, in partnership with UIA, has negotiated a new and competitively priced travel insurance product.**



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Cover for Usdaw members and their family is available for single trip or annual cover.



Davy with Naomi at their Belfast store

People like you



Davy Moore is a fairness champion in his workplace and his local community

# Equality focus

**T**esco rep **Davy Moore** is a big player in promoting equality both in his workplace and his community where he puts others at the heart of everything he does.

"My belief is we can change things if we work together," said Davy, 49, who works at the Ballygomartin store in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

"I was brought up with working class values

so I'm all for looking out for people. I want to raise awareness of disabled workers' rights, carers' rights and mental health.

"My local official helped me with a problem and said I'd make a good rep so I signed up alongside fellow rep June Cannell.

"I'm not one for the classroom but the union's education and training was good for me. You also learn a lot from the other reps and the tutors.

"My people skills have improved as well as my knowledge and understanding of workers' rights and employment law.

**“ I'm all for looking after people and working together achieves that**

"A few years ago membership was around 20 per cent, it now stands at over 80 per cent.

"Running legal plus days and other campaigns in-store and dealing with issues as and when they arise has helped to demonstrate first-hand

the real benefits of joining the union."

Naomi Ross is the latest to join the team, she said: "Davy helped me with a problem at work and I was so impressed with how he dealt with it that I wanted to give something back and signed up to be a rep.

"I wanted to make a difference because of the difference Davy has made in our store. He's always there to help and offer support, he listens and always tries to find a solution.

"We were delighted he won the unions' National Equalities Award, thoroughly deserved and the first person to win in Northern Ireland too.

"We're all very proud of him."

For more information on being a rep, visit the union's website:

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



# arena Letters

Members can have their say right here

via email or post — but keep it brief!



## Loyalty award for Helen

Congratulations to Helen Smith who has worked for Sainsbury's Blackpole in Worcester for the past 34 years. Activists from West Midlands Retail Food No.1 E41 branch presented Helen with her certificate at a special meeting earlier this year.

Reps and friends within Usdaw would like to express their best wishes to Helen on

reaching such a significant milestone.

**Sarah Hughes, area organiser, Redditch office**

## ★ Sign up the workers

Now with some shopworkers getting over £8 an hour we have to make sure companies do not start cutting costs in other ways or start bringing in 'cheap' outside labour 'to balance the books' so to speak.

The need for unions is now more necessary than ever, to protect our rights inside and outside work. We must not let our guard down because of these pay rises.

Young workers need to be convinced of all this otherwise they will take everything for granted. That is when the members

around them need to put them right and get them in the union.

And if they are ambitious enough to become reps then they can fulfil their potential and serve ordinary workers in this great union.

**Joseph Coleman, East Midlands Morrisons No.1 E8**

## Contract call on hours

It's great news that the Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled last year that holiday pay must be paid based on workers' average earnings and not just contracted hours as this interpretation of the law did not reward hard work and was a deterrent to workers taking their holiday pay as it often meant it was unaffordable to take entitlement.

However, what is the union doing to help members who regularly work overtime to obtain contracts that reflect these hours? It would provide a great deal of peace of mind.

I, for example, work on what was a 16 hour contract (now 15) but work between 39 and 43 hours per week. I understand Usdaw successfully negotiated on this issue for Sainsbury's staff last year, but what about the rest of us?

**Tim Bluck, West Midlands Morrisons E100**

## Mental health in focus

We are all becoming increasingly aware of the mental health crisis that is sweeping the country.

I have just completed a mental health first aid course, it is a two-day course which has given me the tools to support someone who needs help. I believe that as a forward thinking trade union, it would be only right that our reps and

HAVE  
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SAY

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staff have the opportunity to do this course.

I believe that every workplace should have not only a physical first aider, but a mental health first aider too. Let's give our reps the training to further support our members.

**Debbie Newman, Chelmsford and Colchester Retail C37**

## Organ donation vital

As a member of Usdaw and a union rep I enjoy reading the magazine and its articles. I noticed the spring issue and the article about blood donating.

As a follow up would it be possible in a forthcoming issue to do an article about the national transplant register and how people cope with working while awaiting a transplant?

I am aware of three people who, like me, work for Tesco who are on haemodialysis, and another member of staff who is on peritoneal dialysis and someone who has had a transplant.

**Kevin Blackmore  
West Sussex PT H96**



## Flowers for Coral

Coral Scowen was the toast of C21 branch after being presented with her 30 year award at her Tesco store, in

Southend by myself on behalf of all her colleagues. We said it with flowers.

**Freddy West,  
Tesco Retail C21**

## Excellent legal victories

A big thank you to the legal team at Usdaw who won me £3,000 after I had an injury at work.

The team was first-class.  
**Harold Sherd  
Muller Wiseman Dairies K97**

I was very happy with the legal service that Usdaw provided.

Karen Cummings, the rep for the site where I work, was very helpful. I cannot thank her and the legal team enough for their support.

Everyone should join the union as you have legal and accident cover, you never know when you will call on the union. I would say to everyone don't take a chance join.

**Olu Ogunleye  
Capital Retail C12**

## Brand Usdaw

Freedom From Fear merchandise is always well received with shoppers who understand why we do it. The packs are very good, and it's clear somebody puts a lot of thought into them. Air fresheners were a good idea too – another reminder of what our message is.

**Bob Conaty,  
Aberavon General A1**

## Membership boost

After 14 years of being a rep in my Morrisons store recruiting members and fighting to maintain numbers something unexpected happened during January's national Membership Week.

We have finally reached

an all time high taking union membership to 86 per cent! That's something myself and fellow Rep Caroline Kimi are extremely excited about. Even our colleagues were pleased at this news. It was a great start to the year.

**Tracey Lowther,  
Somerset General A230**

## Campaign success

During Membership Week I held events at Sainsbury's in Chippenham, Melksham, Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon and over the days visiting the stores at different times of day managed to create a lot of interest around the union and gain a lot of members from each store.

The event was very useful because it was also a good time to catch up with members and have a chat and make sure that they were happy with everything and didn't have any concerns that they needed the union to raise on their behalf.

Overall it was a really good week in raising the profile of the union and gaining lots of new members. I'm looking forward to the next stand-down week.

**Mark Atkinson  
West Wiltshire A24**

## Rep's help invaluable

Just to tell you how pleased I was with Usdaw's James Taylor at Ocado, Knowsley, representing me earlier this year.

Even though the results of the meeting were bad for me, James did an excellent job in his role and deserves great recognition for this.

He is a credit to the union. Kind regards and all the best.

**Peter Dean,  
NW Industrial No.1 K231**

# Election result

Christopher Winwood, a warehouse operative at the Co-op distribution site in St Helens, Merseyside, is the new executive council member for the North West division following a by-election earlier this year

## The result in full:

Christopher Winwood (elected)	1,026
Amanda Owens	946
Lynda Carter	777
Rob Bell	728
Stephen McLaughlin	517
Lee Challenger	344
Number of eligible voters	94,332
Total number of votes cast	4,366
Turnout	4.6 per cent
Number of votes found to be invalid	28
Total number of valid votes to be counted	4,338



New executive council member Chris Winwood

## Legal statement

As Scrutineers appointed in accordance with Section 49 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended), we are satisfied as to each of the matters specified in subsection 52(2) with regard to the election. The following points should be noted:

- a) The person appointed under section 51A to carry out the storage and counting of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.
- b) The person appointed under section 51A to carry out the distribution of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.
- c) A copy of the register of voters (as at the relevant date) was examined in accordance with section 49(3). The examination took place at our

own instance and did not reveal any matter that should be brought to the attention of the trade union.

We would draw your attention to sections 52(4), 52(5), and 52(6). Section 52(4) requires that a copy of this report be published and made available to all members of the union within a three month period. This does not, however, mean that every member has to be notified individually.

Yours sincerely,

**Alex Lonie**

*Associate Director and Manager of Trade Union Sector, Electoral Reform Services*

# Communication

From **Aberdeen**  
to **Plymouth**,  
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## Your Contacts

Always speak to your rep first if you need advice or support. If you don't have a rep at your workplace contact your local Usdaw office as shown on the map. Alternatively, you can ring our national helpline **0845 6060640** to be connected to your local office.

### The union's head office is:

188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ  
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**Know your Branch!** The number of your Usdaw branch is printed on the plastic wrapper of each issue of arena above your name. Some members change branches during the year, so check this to make sure you attend the right branch meeting. You are only entitled to take part in Usdaw elections at meetings of your own branch. If you need further information, contact your local Usdaw office.

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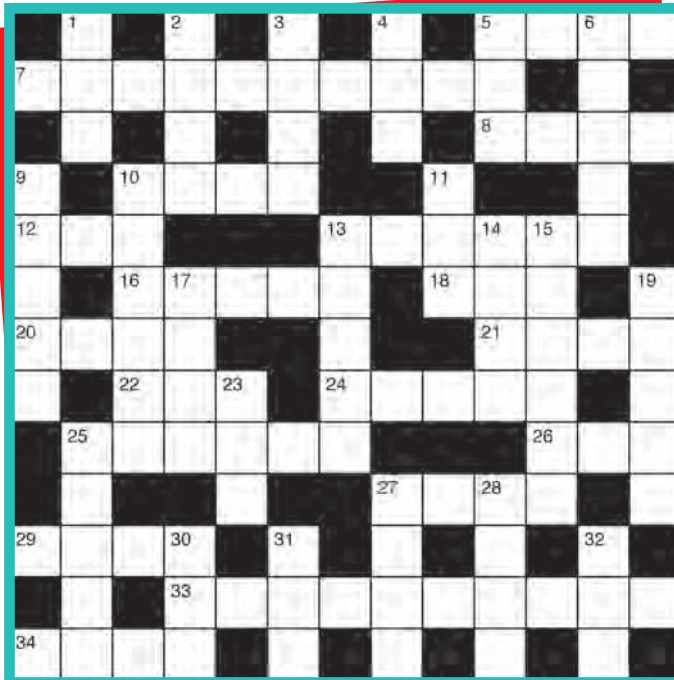


# arena Crossword

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(Not open to Usdaw staff)



## Word up!

Complete our prize crossword and you could be one of three members to win £50. The first three pulled out of the hat...win!

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

### arena Spring £50 winners:

**Lauren Swann,**  
Norfolk Area Tesco C97  
**Carmel Carlin,**  
NI Tesco Retail No.3 K226  
**Carol Lloyd,** Worcester Area  
Co-op and Tesco E93

### ACROSS

- 5. Young deer (4)
- 7. Behead (10)
- 8. Horses (4)
- 10. Brief satirical sketch (4)
- 12. Bleat (3)
- 13. Bomb hole (6)
- 16. Conflict (5)
- 18. Pitch (3)
- 20. Line in darts (4)
- 21. Labyrinth (4)
- 22. Finish (3)
- 24. Relocates (5)
- 25. Dress (6)
- 26. Newt (3)

- 27. Prejudice (4)

- 29. Red meat (4)
- 33. Pachyderm (10)
- 34. Remain (4)

### DOWN

- 1. Tasselled cap (3)
- 2. Dog's cry (4)
- 3. Slimming plan (4)
- 4. Month (3)
- 5. Marshy land (3)
- 6. Bet (5)
- 9. Senior monk (5)
- 10. Sealed envelope holding shampoo (6)

- 11. Floor covering (3)
- 13. Bell (5)
- 14. Domesticated (4)
- 15. Deletes (6)
- 17. Period before Easter (4)
- 19. Fourth Greek letter (6)
- 23. Slope downwards (3)
- 25. Representative (5)
- 27. Group of countries (4)
- 28. Prayer ending (4)
- 30. Cook in oil (3)
- 31. Petty lie (3)
- 32. Young male (3)

Please complete, write **FREEPOST USDAW** on the envelope and put it in the post.

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

Location Number \_\_\_\_\_ Employee No. \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTICE**  
Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

Every member of the Union who does not object to contribute to the separate fund for payments in furtherance of political objects within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, will contribute to that fund. Every member of the Union has the right to be exempt from contributing to it. A form of exemption notice may be obtained by or on behalf of any member either by application at, or by post from, the Central Office or any branch office of the Union. Copies may also be obtained on request from the Certification Office for Trade Union's and Employer's Associations. Such form, when filled in, should be handed or sent to the secretary of the branch to which the member belongs. An exemption notice given within one month after the date on which a new member is admitted to the Union will take effect as from the date on which it is given. Should a notice be given AFTER one month from that date it will operate as from the following 1st January.

**COVERED BY THE DATA PROTECTION ACT**

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.**

# Sign up a friend and **£500 CASH!** could be in your pocket

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



More members make Usdaw stronger

THERE'S A MASSIVE **£500** UP FOR GRABS FOR THE FIRST LUCKY WINNERS PULLED OUT OF THE HAT!

## Last issue's winner!

The winner of the Spring issue's bumper recruitment prize of **£500** is **Sean Sigwsorth** who recruited colleague **Charles Black**. They both work at Trade Point (part of B&Q) in Chesterfield, in the North Eastern division, and have worked together for two years. Sean was elated to hear the news of his win. "I didn't expect it at all and I'm really glad that I sent Charles' recruitment form in now," he said. "I'm going to split the money with Charles as it's thanks to him I'm a winner! I'd encourage everyone to enter the competition."

You could **win £500** in this issue's **Recruit A Friend** competition. All you have to do is sign up a colleague at work using the form overleaf place it in an envelope and write: **Usdaw Freepost** on it and put it in the post.

The first one out of the hat will **win £500**. With an average of 50 entries each issue you've a great chance of scooping this fantastic prize.

The new weekly rates (applicable from 2 July 2016) are **£2.34 for Scale A** (applicable to full-time and part-time workers) and **£1.47 for Scale C** (applicable to part-time workers only)

**Closing date is 15/07/2016**

Sean and Charles

