

# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS – JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2020



## CELEBRATING GREAT REPS

ORGANISING AWARDS  
WINNERS TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT

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

# REPS' HANDBOOKS

**Legal Plus Reps' Handbook**

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

**Health and Safety Reps' Handbook**

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

**Union Learning Reps' Handbook**

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

**Reps' Handbook: Getting started - the role of the rep**

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb1](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb1)

**Reps' Handbook: Organising and Recruitment**

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb2](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb2)

**Reps' Handbook: Representing Members**

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb3](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/repshb3)

Stock photography. Posed by model.



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

**VIEW  
DOWNLOAD  
ORDER**

**Usdaw**  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*



Network is published bimonthly and distributed to Usdaw activists.

**PUBLISHED BY:**

USDAW

188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ

t: 0161 224 2804

e: network@usdaw.org.uk

w: usdaw.org.uk

**HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS**

Mike Glover

**EDITOR**

Saiqa Khushnood

**REPORTER**

Sarah Sherborne

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT**

Paula Barke

**OTHER CONTRIBUTORS**

Joanne Cairns, Tony Dale, Liz Green, Adam Kaczmarek, Steve Mitchell, Emily Rowles, Doug Russell, Michael Wheeler, David Williams.

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**

Della Batchelor, Peter Brown, Andrew Davies, David Finch, Pete Hill, Matt Link, Mike Silva, Studio 87, SWNS  
Via Getty Images:  
Halfpoint, Xavier Arnau & FG Trade

**ADVERTISING**

Century One Publishing  
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road,  
St Albans, AL3 4DG

**ACCOUNT MANAGER**

Dominic Arnold

t: 01727 739 184

e: dominic@centurionepublishing.uk

**PRINTED BY:**

Buxton Press

Paper is sourced from sustainable forests.

©Usdaw 2020 reproduction in whole or part by any means without written permissions of the publishers is strictly forbidden.

This publisher accepts no responsibility for errors, omissions or the consequences thereof.



# WORKING FOR A BETTER FUTURE

**W**elcome to the first issue of *Network* for 2020, which is packed full of news and updates.

Last year was a busy year for Usdaw with our campaigns making a big splash and getting the attention we need to lobby for real change. Our campaigns are rooted in our members' experiences and therefore can make a very real difference to their lives.

We will build on last year's successes by continuing to focus on our campaigns. Our Save Our Shops campaign is calling for action to breathe life back into the high street and our Industrial Strategy for Retail will continue to ask the Government to invest in our high streets, to tackle high rents and rates, as well as car parking charges.

Through our Time for Better Pay campaign we will push for a £10 minimum wage rate for all workers regardless of age and our Freedom From Fear campaign will work towards securing legislation that will protect shopworkers from violence and abuse.



The reason we have been so successful at campaigning is largely down to the fantastic reps we have. I can't thank them enough for that they do.

Usdaw will continue to invest in its reps through its training, Academies and Summer Schools. We will continue to provide our members with the encouragement they need to become more active in the union.

By coming together and working collectively we can implement real change in the workplace and in society.

*Usdaw General Secretary*

*Paddy Lillis*



*Paddy Lillis, Dave McCrossen, Amy Murphy and John Douglas with the winners of the Organising Awards.*



# YOUNG WORKERS



**Supporting Young Workers**  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/396](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/396)

**Young Workers Pocket Guide**  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/397](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/397)

**Workers' Rights**  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/211](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/211)

**Supporting Young Workers Poster**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/R54](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/R54)



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

**VIEW  
DOWNLOAD  
ORDER**



**Usdaw**  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE



## CONTRIBUTION RATE CHANGES

**12** | A rep's guide to the single contribution rate proposal to be discussed at this year's ADM.

## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

**14** | Supporting Parents and Carers, Save Our Shops and Justice for Injured Workers all feature.

## RECRUIT WITH MEMBER OFFERS

**17** | Make the most out of the union's 40 plus offers and services exclusively for Usdaw members.

## ORGANISING AWARDS 2019

**22** | Usdaw's 15th annual Organising Awards took place in January. *Network* celebrates with the winners.

## RS COMPONENTS SITE VISIT

**28** | *Network* visited the active team of reps at the electrical components site in Corby.

## RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISING

**32** | Reps were out in force for Respect Week, spreading the message that abuse is not ok.

## BLACK MEMBERS' WEEKEND

**34** | Making minority voices heard in wider society was top of the agenda at this popular annual event.

## MAPPING TOOLKIT

**42** | A key toolkit for reps wanting to improve recruitment and organising in their workplace.

## REGULARS

**03** WELCOME

**06** NEWS

**18** MEMBER OFFERS

**20** ACTIVIST-IN-DEPTH

**38** HEALTH & SAFETY

**44** STAFF UPDATE

**45** PUBLICATIONS UPDATE

**46** OVER TO YOU



# IN THE NEWS

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

## RETAILERS FEEL THE PINCH IN 2020

**T**he retail sector was delivered another fresh blow in January with Debenhams announcing the closure of 19 stores that will result in 660 job losses. This was the first wave of shutdowns as the retailer intends to close 50 of its worst-performing stores.

The beleaguered retailer is not alone, as department stores such as John Lewis and House of Fraser struggle to adapt to new shopping habits.

Last year the UK high streets shed more than 140,000 jobs due to a consumer shift to online shopping. Analysts predict further turbulence for the sector with 7,000 store closures costing 125,000 jobs.

In addition, the British Retail Consortium says 2019 was the worst year on record for the retail sector, with total sales falling 0.1 per cent compared with 1.2 per cent growth.

**John Lewis** revealed a big fall in profits for the second consecutive year leaving the company to decide whether or not to ditch its annual bonus.

Shares in **Marks and Spencer** fell more than 10 per cent after it reported a 1.7 per cent drop in like-



for-like clothing and home sales.

**Sainsbury's/Argos** Poor sales of toys and video games at its Argos chain offset better trading at Sainsbury's where grocery sales were up 0.4 per cent and clothing sales rose 4.4 per cent.

**Morrisons** decision to dial down Black Friday promotions backfired which led to a 1.7 per cent slide in sales in the 22 weeks to 5 January.

There have been calls for government intervention before the closures send high streets and shopping centres into an irreversible spiral of decline.

Urdaw general

secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We are calling for a number of key measures to tackle the crisis on our high streets, including a reform of business rates to help level the playing field between online and 'bricks and mortar' retailers. This is not about favours from Government, it's about fairness across all forms of retailing.

"With the scale of job losses we cannot pretend this isn't happening. The retail sector is experiencing turbulent and challenging times. Employing around 3 million people it contributes 11 per cent to the UK economic output; so it is clear that the

challenges affecting the retail sector have a huge knock on effect, impacting the UK economy and a significant number of workers.

"The Government has so far failed to provide any clear or coherent strategy for the retail sector, or to address the worries and concerns of retail workers. We urge the Government to engage with us."

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



@UrdawUnion



UrdawUnion



UrdawUnion

## BREXIT

# UK ENTERS NEW ERA AS IT LEAVES THE EU

The UK is set to leave the European Union on Friday 31 January at 11pm. After three years of bitter fighting and recriminations between friends, family and Parliament the 31 will see the Government deliver the result of the 2016 referendum.

Although the UK will cease to be a member of the EU, the arduous process of negotiating our future relationship with the EU will begin. During this 11-month transition period everything will remain the same until December 2020. Trade will carry on as normal as the UK will remain in the customs union and the single market. It will continue to obey EU rules even though it will be outside the political institutions and have no say in making them. EU citizens will continue to be able to travel and work in the UK and British citizens can do the same in another member state and the European Court of Justice will still have powers during this period.

## HOLDING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCOUNT

Days after winning the December



2019 general election the Conservative Government published a revised Withdrawal Agreement Bill (WAB) which no longer contained clauses on the protection of EU-derived workers' rights.

This is significant for workers because a large part of UK employment law comes from EU law including working time, holiday pay, maternity pay and discrimination rights. Currently, as a member of the EU the UK cannot reduce these rights below the minimum

standard set by EU law. However, it is unclear how the Government intends to protect workers' rights following the UK's departure from the EU. What we do know is that the Conservatives have a long history of attacking and diluting workers' rights. Therefore, trade unions will need to be vigilant to ensure that in the name of 'getting Brexit done' the Government doesn't erode workers' rights, food standards, consumer rights and environmental protections.

## DISTRIBUTION CENTRE

# B&M PROPOSALS PUT 128 JOBS AT RISK

In December B&M informed staff of their proposal to close the Blackpool distribution centre, citing the unsuitability of the site and impact of an extended distribution network.

Usdaw area organiser Nick Gerrard said: "This was clearly a devastating announcement for staff, particularly in the run-up to Christmas. Blackpool was B&M's first distribution centre, so there are many long-serving and loyal staff

who will be impacted.

"Usdaw is now in the middle of meaningful consultation talks, which will run for at least 45 days, where we are evaluating the business case and seeking the best possible outcome for our members.

"In the meantime, we are providing Usdaw members with the support, advice and representation they need at this difficult time."



## LABOUR LEADERSHIP

## USDAW BACKS KEIR STARMER FOR LEADER

Usdaw's elected executive council has backed Keir Starmer for Labour leader and Angela Rayner for deputy leader at their January meeting.

Keir Starmer is well known as the MP for Holborn and St Pancras, and has held a crucial role as shadow Brexit secretary, holding the Tories to account over their plans for Brexit and how it will affect our livelihoods and workers' rights.

Starmer had a long career before becoming an MP in 2015, as a defence barrister. He specialised in human rights issues, providing support to those challenging the establishment and giving a voice to workers.

His background of fighting against injustice, and of tackling difficult challenges that face the nation, means that he has already demonstrated the skills to bring the Labour Party back together as a united, campaigning force to hold the Tories to account.

If elected as Labour leader he has promised to take the fight to the Tories. He wants to win back former Labour supporters who might have voted for the Conservatives recently. Starmer also plans to tackle low pay, insecure work, and the climate emergency as well as rebuilding public services.

Usdaw nominated Angela



Rayner, the MP for Ashton-under-Lyne as deputy leader. She was elected in 2015 and has served as shadow education secretary since 2016 where she has championed a National Education Service modelled along the lines of the NHS. A qualified social worker and union rep, she credits the trade union movement with encouraging her to go back to education after dropping out to raise her son.

Rayner has proven herself as a hard-working and dedicated voice for the Labour Party. She has taken the Tories to task many times in Parliament, and has a track record of fighting for workers' rights and for

the communities that turned away from Labour at the last election.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw believes that Keir Starmer and Angela Rayner are the right leadership team to unite and rebuild Labour after a devastating election loss. Our members cannot afford another decade of Conservative governments attacking workers' rights, incomes and public services.

"The Labour Party must be led by someone who can persuade voters that they have what it takes to be a Prime Minister and we are a government in waiting. That is at the heart of Usdaw's decision."

WIN

£100

LOVE2SHOP  
gift vouchers

at [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN)

Sponsored by Usdaw Insurance. [www.usdaw.org.uk/uia](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/uia) Closing date 25 February 2020. Terms apply.



## IN BRIEF

### HOUSE OF FRASER

Mike Ashley has warned that more store closures are on the horizon unless the Government changes the current business rates system.

### IKEA

Ikea has unveiled plans to open a new smaller store concept as part of its plans to make the homeware giant more accessible. The new city centre store is due to open in Hammersmith, London, in spring 2021 as part of a £170m investment.

### THE CO-OP

The Co-op has spent more than £25 million opening 30 new stores in the UK across November and December. The company has focused new locations at transport hubs and residential apartments, creating 500 jobs in the process.

### PRIMARK

Primark has announced plans to open five new stores in the UK in 2020. The new stores will be located in Belfast, Hastings, Milton Keynes and Manchester's Trafford Centre.

### BOOTS

Boots has recorded a decline in first-quarter sales as parent group Walgreens Boots Alliance reiterated its full-year profit guidance despite a slump in operating income.

## NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

# SALARY INCREASE FALLS FLAT

The Government announced that the so-called National Living Wage will rise to £8.72 per hour on 1 April 2020. Young workers will continue to receive the lower National Minimum Wage: 21-24 year olds will be entitled to at least £8.20 an hour; £6.45 for 18-20 year olds; £4.55 for Under 18s and £4.15 for apprentices.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Any increase in minimum wage rates is welcome, but this uprating falls

way short of the £10 per hour Usdaw called for and goes nowhere near the 'real' Living Wage rate, (£9.30 or £10.75 in London) which takes account of the cost of living.

"Usdaw provided detailed evidence demonstrating the need for a £10 minimum and an end to rip-off youth rates. It is disappointing that the Government has not listened, despite the promises the Tories made during the election."



## MENTAL HEALTH

# 6 FEBRUARY TIME TO TALK DAY

Mental health problems are on the rise and lots of Usdaw reps and officials are supporting members with anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions.

Usdaw's It's Good to Talk campaign, launched in 2018, is a practical way of helping reps and members tackle stigma and break down barriers to talk about mental health at work. The campaign materials are designed to help reps open up conversations with colleagues and encourage them to speak up.

For too long mental health has been a taboo subject and individuals were often, and unfairly, blamed for their condition. The shame and secrecy around mental health can have devastating consequences. Usdaw wants to change that while accepting that it is a complex and sensitive area.

On Thursday 6 February Usdaw is encouraging everyone to take part in Time to Talk Day by having a conversation about mental health. The event is run by Time To Change – a national organisation campaigning to end the stigma surrounding mental health.

With one in four people now expected to experience a mental health problem every year, speaking out about mental health and wellbeing has never been more important.

There are many different ways to talk about mental health and you don't have to be an expert to ask someone how they're doing. So however you decide to check in with your friends, family or colleagues, it's starting the conversation that counts.

[www.usdaw.org.uk/About-Us/Events/Time-to-Talk-Day](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/About-Us/Events/Time-to-Talk-Day)

**YOUNG WORKERS WEEK 2020**

# REACHING OUT TO YOUNG USDAW COLLEAGUES

The next Young Workers Week will take place from 9 to 15 March 2020 and will be themed around mental health in the workplace.

The week will provide an opportunity to promote trade unions to young workers and demonstrate how being a member of Usdaw can improve their working lives.

This is a great opportunity for union reps and activists to reach out to young workers and share the campaigning work that Usdaw does on issues that are important to them. Events will be taking place all week, such as outside a local college or a street stall, recruiting young workers to Usdaw and encouraging



them to play an active role in the union. In addition, Usdaw's younger reps are being encouraged to talk to non-members in their store about the campaign.

If you would like to get involved in activities within your division, please contact your local Usdaw office. [www.usdaw.org.uk/Contact-Us/Usdaw-Offices](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Contact-Us/Usdaw-Offices)

**SUMMER SCHOOL**

# A CLASS ACT IN TRADE UNION LEARNING

Activists looking to play a bigger role in the union are now invited to apply for Summer School 2020 which will take place in September at the impressive Wortley Hall in Sheffield.

**First Series Summer School 5-12 September**

This week-long residential course is very popular among reps looking to learn more about the union, boost their confidence and network with other like-minded activists.

**Second Series Summer School 19-26 September**

Reps who have already completed Summer School1 are invited to apply for the next instalment. Summer School2 takes a more in-depth look at trade unions, organising, politics, equality and

health and safety.

The union pays board and accommodation fees for both Summer Schools and members awarded a place will be entitled to claim travelling fares and any appropriate allowances.

Application forms must be signed off by your branch and received by

your divisional officer no later than Thursday 26 March. Successful nominees will be selected by the executive council from the shortlist submitted by each divisional council.

For more information visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/summerschool](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/summerschool)



ADM 2020

# MEMBERS HAVE THEIR SAY ON USDAW POLICY



Usdaw is a democratic organisation and gives its members the right to take part in union activities and have a say in what the union does. One of the ways is through an annual conference.

Every year activists meet at the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) to decide the union's rules and policies.

This year's conference will take place at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool from 26-29 April 2020.

At the conference delegates

debate and vote on a wide range of topics including wages, crime, health, safety, housing, pensions, transport, welfare and benefits.

The conference is chaired by the president. The general secretary and deputy general secretary, acting on behalf of the executive council, speak on propositions and policy documents and reply to debates.

The conference is known to attract high profile speakers. In the past, guest speakers have included Tony Blair, Gordon Brown, Andy

Burnham, Tom Watson and Jeremy Corbyn.

## PROGRAMME OF DATES:

**3 April** Last date for return of credential form

**3 April** Last date for return of creche circular

**6 April** Issue of interim agenda papers

**6 April** Issue of annual report

**6 April** Issue of EC statement

**13 April** Despatch of conference credentials and voting cards.

## NEW YEAR'S DAY HONOURS LIST

# FORMER GS RECEIVES OBE

Former Usdaw general secretary John Hannett was recognised in the new year's honours list for his work with Usdaw and the Low Pay Commission.

John was general secretary for 14 years and had a number of high-profile roles including that of low pay commissioner.

After stepping down John has continued being active in the trade union movement.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy

Lillis said: "Congratulations to John on his OBE.

"As the longest-ever serving commissioner of the Low Pay Commission he played a pivotal role in mediating between various groups and ensuring consensus.

"John has always been a good friend and colleague, therefore I am delighted that his hard work and commitment to the trade union movement has been recognised in this year's honours list."



# A MODERN MEMBERSHIP

*Network* gives a guide to the single contribution proposal that will be discussed at ADM in April

**T**he executive council is proposing to the union's Annual Delegate Meeting that the union moves to a single membership contribution rate for new members from July 2020.

The executive council has been discussing this for some time and is proposing it goes ahead for a number of reasons.

The union is in a strong position but we are facing some big challenges:

- Last year, Usdaw's overall membership fell by 20,000. More than 84,000 new members joined the union in 2019 but membership actually fell back as we saw huge job losses as a result of problems in the economy especially the crisis in the retail sector.
- Over the last number of years we have seen a greater proportion of new members opting to pay the lower Scale C rate – last year a majority of new members joined on the lower rate. In the longer term this is unsustainable as the lower Scale C is effectively subsidised by members paying the higher Scale A rate.
- The union is increasingly organising workers who work less than traditional full-time hours. Many workers are working hours that change from week to week relying on additional hours to make ends meet. The part-time/full-time membership subs split no longer reflects the reality of today's workforce. All Usdaw members, whatever hours they

work, get a first rate service from the union.

## INCOME IS FALLING IN REAL TERMS

For the last few years, Usdaw membership has been growing, but money coming in to the union has not grown. At the same time, costs are going up in line with inflation. That means the union's income has fallen by 13 per cent in real terms compared to five years ago. The reason for this is that far more members are now joining on the lower Scale C rate.

In 1999, just 34 per cent of Usdaw members were on the lower Scale C rate. This has now increased to 53 per cent. Scale C members get exactly the same service as those on Scale A, the only difference is in the level of cash benefits they can claim. So, the costs of providing that service are exactly the same.

## WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

This means the gap between Usdaw's income and spending is closing. If this trend continues, the union could go into the red in the next two years, which could result in spending cuts that would impact on the support provided for reps and members such as training, conferences or important campaigning work.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DO NOTHING?

Many unions who did not take



prompt action have been forced to merge and lose their identity in order to survive. Others have faced financial crisis and been forced to take drastic cost-cutting measures. For Usdaw to avoid a similar fate we need to act now, so that we can avoid crisis and cost cutting tomorrow. If more members joined on Scale A, then the union finances can remain healthy.

## THE PROPOSAL

The proposal is to move to a single contribution rate for new members from July 2020. The single contribution rate would be Scale A.



Existing Scale C members would continue on Scale C.

Usdaw recognises that members are under financial pressure but the Scale A rate of £2.48 a week offers good value for money. For comparison, the full-time rate for Unite is £3.75 and for GMB it is £3.16.

Going forward, the union will be reviewing the current package of benefits to make it even better value for money. There are proposals to increase significantly some of the membership benefits and grants including increases to maternity/paternity/adoption

benefits, sickness grants, dispute benefits, funeral and industrial accident payments, and permanent disablement grants.

A single scale contribution rate will help keep the union finances healthy in the long-term. Usdaw can continue to build a stronger union and keep improving the service offered to members and reps.

### **FUTURE PROOFING OUR UNION**

Usdaw has a duty to its members, and the members of the future, to build a stronger union and protect it for the long term. Usdaw predecessors have made

difficult decisions that have kept the union on a steady course. Acting now means the union will be acting from a position of strength to ensure the union isn't forced into making drastic cuts that will have a detrimental impact on future service.

### **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

The proposition for a single contribution rate will be discussed at this year's ADM. All reps are urged to familiarise themselves with the proposals to ensure they can take part in an informed debate.

# CAMPAIGNS

Keeping you up-to-date on Usdaw's priorities

## PUTTING PARENTS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**S**potlight Day is the biggest equality event in Usdaw's campaigning calendar. Every year Usdaw reps and activists enthusiastically take the campaign message into their workplaces and town centres all around the UK.

This year's Spotlight Day will take place on Wednesday 13 May 2020 and will focus on parents having to cut short their time with a new baby because either the leave isn't long enough or the pay is too low.

Everyone should have the right to quality time off to spend with their new baby without worrying about how they are going to afford it. But in the UK maternity and paternity pay are too low, leaving low paid families struggling financially at a time when they least need the stress.

At the end of last year Usdaw surveyed members who had recently taken maternity or paternity leave to find out more about their experiences. The results confirmed, beyond doubt, that the low rates of statutory pay together with too short a period of paternity leave are of real concern to the



overwhelming majority of Usdaw members who are new parents:

- Nine out of 10 women had to cut their maternity leave short because they ran out of money.
- And 95 per cent of fathers and partners said they didn't get enough time in their child's first year to spend with their new family.

So this Spotlight Day Usdaw is raising awareness of the issues facing low paid parents and calling for better maternity pay and better and longer paternity pay and leave.

Over the years, Usdaw's Supporting Parents and

Carers campaign has been key to making sure the issues that matter to parents and carers appear on the negotiating table.

The union has had considerable success working with employers to increase maternity and paternity pay above statutory minimums. Now we want to campaign for more improvements.

Last year was our most successful year to date and this year we are encouraging even more reps to take part!

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

You could put up a poster, ask members to fill in a pledge card or a survey or organise a campaign stall in your workplace,

complete with lots of leaflets and giveaways to help engage people and start conversations. There are smaller packs for convenience stores where space is limited and bigger packs for larger workplaces. You can do as much or as little as you like, the important thing is getting the message out there and talking to members about the union can help.

Look out for the campaign pack towards the end of February which contains everything you need to know and how to organise campaign activity in your workplace. [www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Supporting-Parents-Carers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Supporting-Parents-Carers)

## SAVE OUR SHOPS

## HELP USDAW SAVE YOUR LOCAL HIGH STREET



Usdaw's Save Our Shops campaign has been gaining momentum since its launch earlier this year.

On 28 March 2020 Usdaw will hold another national Save Our Shops campaign day which will once again see MPs, Labour party activists and Usdaw reps and officials join forces in their local town centres to raise awareness about the current crisis on the high street.

As with all of Usdaw campaigns, grassroots campaigning will be combined with the lobbying of people who make the decisions in this country, the MPs.

Last year Usdaw held a parliamentary event at Westminster to launch its Industrial Strategy for Retail. The event was attended by 38 MPs, several major employers and representatives from organisations including the Living Wage Foundation and the Institute for the Future of Work.

### INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis introduced the document and talked through the three strands of the

strategy – Economy and Community, People and Productivity, and Changing Perceptions.

“Usdaw has a unique insight into the challenges facing the retail sector,” said Paddy.

“Our members know first-hand how changes are impacting on the way they work and the way customers shop.

“Our high streets are in crisis, with shops closing, retailers folding and businesses engaging in significant restructuring to survive.

“Last year the UK high streets shed more than 140,000 jobs due to a consumer shift to online shopping. Analysts predict further turbulence for the sector with 7,000 store closures costing 125,000 jobs.

“That impacts communities, shoppers and staff, so Usdaw activists are on the streets engaging the public in the Save Our Shops campaign.

“Usdaw has developed an Industrial Strategy for Retail and we urgently need the Government to consider and adopt the measures contained in it. Retail and our high

### USDRAW'S STRATEGY FOCUSED ON THREE KEY AREAS:

#### Economy and Community

Changing the economic framework on everything from car parking to rates, rents and reforming the tax system that supports both the UK-wide economy and local communities, to include a level playing field between online and 'bricks and mortar' retailers.

#### People and Productivity

Improving productivity by addressing low pay and insecure work to help drive productivity in the sector – including a minimum wage of £10 per hour, while giving staff a say in the future of the business they work for and on the introduction of technology.

#### Challenging Perceptions

Challenging perceptions about retail work and promoting the idea that retail jobs are 'real jobs'. Seeking a greater focus from Government on the retail industry and ensuring shopworkers are valued.

streets are at the heart of our communities and every job lost is a blow. I call on the Government to engage with us to find a solution to the retail crisis we are facing.”

If you are interested in taking part in Usdaw's Save Our Shops action day please contact your local Usdaw office for details.

## JUSTICE FOR INJURED WORKERS

# NEW PROPOSALS WILL UNDERMINE JUSTICE

Usdaw is disappointed that the Government is ploughing ahead with proposals that will double the threshold for cases taken in the small claims court to £2,000.

This would mean that any personal injury claim worth less than £2,000 will go through a small claims court. Claimants in the small claims court cannot reclaim the cost of legal support and will have to represent themselves as litigants in person. Workplace injuries and diseases are often complicated cases that cannot easily be taken by individuals without proper legal representation and expert reports. The proposals will therefore pit unrepresented workers directly against the person who pays their wages, including multi-national insurers with unlimited resources.

### CONSEQUENCES OF INCREASE TO £2000

With the removal of specialist legal advice Usdaw believes that there

will be the following undesirable and unintended consequences of these proposals:

- Injured employees with meritorious claims will be unable to enforce their legal rights.
- There will be an increase in the under settlement of claims where the injured employee in the absence of legal representation is persuaded into accepting a lower sum than would properly compensate them for their injuries and associated losses.

### IMPACT ON HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK

An unintended consequence of restricting access to justice for workplace injury victims would be the erosion of health and safety at workplaces in England and Wales. The threat of litigation is now the main driver in maintaining health and safety in the workplace. If this threat was diminished then this will inevitably encourage unscrupulous

employers to place less emphasis on ensuring a safe workplace for their staff.

### OPPOSITION

The proposed increase is opposed by all the parties involved in this sector including the insurance industry, trade unions and organisations promoting health and safety issues in the workplace.

In Scotland the new Simple Procedure specifically excludes personal injury actions. This means that victims of injury in England and Wales will have fewer rights and more restricted access to justice than their fellow citizens in Scotland. Usdaw therefore calls for the Government to exclude employer's liability cases from the proposed increase in the small claims limit and to treat injured employees in the same way as it has already chosen to treat other vulnerable claimants involved in the court process.

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

## CHRISTMAS ISN'T WORKING

# NEW CAMPAIGN MAKES NATIONAL HEADLINES

The Christmas isn't Working campaign was launched after the general election, with an email to all members asking them to show their support and share Usdaw's social media content.

The social media campaign was the widest reaching of any of Usdaw's campaigns to date:

- Facebook content reached 650,000 people.
- What Christmas Means to Us video resulted in 111,000 views.
- The Megaphone petition gathered over 19,000 signatures in just

two weeks.

The campaign also gained good press coverage, with national newspapers, local radio and *LBC*.

This level of engagement shows that this campaign clearly resonates with Usdaw members.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw members deserve a decent break at Christmas having worked extremely hard in the run up including having to work longer hours."

"Usdaw will continue to make the case to employers for a longer break

over the Christmas and New Year period, with particular emphasis on Boxing Day closures."







# PROMOTING MEMBER OFFERS TO RECRUIT

**W**e don't want to get away from the main reasons to join Usdaw – representation at work, improving pay and conditions, campaigning against low pay, health and safety, equality, plus our fantastic legal service. But it is clear that nowadays members expect even more for their weekly subscription.

That's why Usdaw is continually developing its discounts and offers to make sure our members are getting a wide range of competitive deals and offers.

So don't forget to let potential members know, in addition to the core union services, that being an Usdaw member will also give them access to a wide range of discounts and offers. Do make sure they are

aware some of these may incur an additional charge.

Usdaw has over 40 different offers/services ranging from insurances to airport parking. Our most popular offers are: Discounted cinema tickets, Merlin theme parks and attractions, gyms and Hotpoint. We always try to make sure the offers are competitive, good value, suitable and have longevity.

The member offers leaflet (398) is a great recruitment tool but we can only include a limited amount of information. Therefore the best place to view the full range of offers is on the Usdaw website where you will find further information.

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

## TOP OF THE SHOPS

Usdaw members are certainly getting the most out of their membership, just look at these figures over the last 12 months.\*

### Cinema Offer

Used almost 20,000 times\*

### Airport Extras for your airport parking, lounges and hotels

Used over 1,800 times\*

### Discounted Gym Membership

Used over 2,700 times\*

### Free £5K Accidental Death Cover

Over 2,000 policies issued\*

### NHS Dental Plan

Over 2,000 policyholders

### Online Ticket Store

Members saved almost £7,000\*

### Virgin Experience Days

Members saved over £2,500\*

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

\*October 2018 to September 2019 inclusive

# MemberOffers

## CARS & TRANSPORT

Car Hire  
Car Leasing  
Fiat  
Startrescue  
Usdawdrive  
Vauxhall Cars

## INSURANCE

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

## MONEY & FINANCE

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

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

Comfort Insoles  
Groom Razors &  
Skincare  
Gym Membership  
My Active Discounts  
Usdaw Health Plan  
Usdaw Dental Plan  
Vision Express

## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52  
Cinema Tickets  
Discount Card  
English Heritage  
Golf Membership  
Magazine Subscriptions  
National Trust Gift Cards  
Online Ticket Store  
Theme Parks and  
Attractions  
Virgin Experience Days

## SHOPPING

Apple  
Crown Decorating Centres  
Discount Card  
Domestic Appliances  
Flowers  
Magazine Subscriptions  
TM Lewin  
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback  
Card  
UsdawRewards Cashback  
Virgin Wines

## HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges  
& Hotels  
Cottage Breaks  
DFDS Ferry Crossing  
Forest Holidays  
James Villa Holidays  
Lost Luggage Protection  
Parkdean Resorts  
Pontins

## MISCELLANEOUS

Funeral Planning  
Gas and Electric  
Mobile Phones  
TOTUM Pro/NUS Extra



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

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

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

## BOOKING YOUR HOLIDAYS FOR 2020?



### Save up to 10% with James Villas

With villas across six value-packed collections, you'll find one perfect for your pocket. Top it off with full ABTA and ATOL protection and seamless James service, and you've found a villa holiday that's really worth writing home about.

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



### Travel to Europe in style with the world's leading ferry operator

Whether you are looking to relax, dance the night away or spend time with friends and family over a delicious dinner, DFDS ships offer it all.

Usdaw members can save up to 25% on Dover to Calais crossings and up to 23% on Newcastle to Amsterdam mini cruises, plus free breakfast both ways. With limited availability, book early to avoid disappointment. [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*



### Discounts on airport parking, hotels, lounges and transfers

Holiday Extras, the UK market leader for holiday add-ons, are offering Usdaw members an exclusive discount! With savings of up to 13%\* on Airport Parking, 10% off Airport Hotels, 10% off UK Airport Lounges, and 10% off Airport Transfers, Holiday Extras are dedicated to helping you have less hassle and more holiday.

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



### Booking your 2020 holiday?

Don't forget your travel insurance! As an Usdaw member you will get a 10% discount when you buy online from Usdaw Insurance. With single trip and annual multi trip cover available, 24-hour worldwide assistance and optional extras such as golf, cruise and ski cover, you'll have holiday peace of mind.

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

\*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. Holiday Extras - Airport Parking offer: Save 13% on all airport parking products excluding APH special offer products, Leeds Bradford Mid or Short Stay, NCP Edinburgh and airport owned products at Aberdeen, Belfast International, Birmingham, Exeter, Glasgow International, Glasgow Prestwick, Heathrow, Luton and Southampton (other discounted products are available). Discounts are subject to change and availability. Discounts will be unavailable at Gatwick and Airparks products during selected stay dates. Airport Hotel offer: 10% discount automatically applied when booking via the dedicated link. Airport Lounge offer: 10% discount available on all UK lounges. Discounts are not obtainable on International lounges. Airport Transfers offer: 10% discount automatically applied when booking via the dedicated link. DFDS - You must remember to bring your booking confirmation with you when checking in. Failure to do so could mean you may be unable to board the ship. Book online or by telephone. Telephone bookings incur a £10 booking fee. James Villas - Up to 10% discount. Discount cannot be added retrospectively. Discount applies to flights, accommodation, car hire and transfer options for the whole party travelling. This discount can be used in conjunction with certain other discounts available at the time, subject to availability. Discounts are varied depending on departure date, up to a maximum of 10% off. A number of Usdaw Discounts and Offers are arranged and managed on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd. Further benefits are organised directly by Usdaw Membership Services.



# ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH FINNOLA TZAGKARAKI

**M**eet Academy1 graduate Finnola Tzagkaraki, an active rep from Brentford who loves a Sunday roast.

## Where do you work?

I've worked at Tesco in Isleworth for five years. My role is team support on checkouts which involves coordinating rotas, breaks, and generally supporting staff. It's quite a high-pressure job and stressful at times but I really enjoy it. Before Tesco, I worked at Selfridges in London but the commute was nearly two hours each way. Before that I lived in Greece for 20 years.

## Tell us more about Greece

My husband is Greek and we moved to Rhodes after our first child was born 23 years ago. It was a hard decision at the time because I'm from a big family and I knew it would be difficult to leave them, but love conquers all in the end! While out there I worked in the hotel and tourist industry and loved it. The people are so friendly, family means everything and the food is amazing.

## When did you become active?

I joined Usdaw as soon as I started working at Tesco. Before I became a rep my colleagues would approach

me for support and advice, I think because of the type of person I am, and I helped them where I could. I officially became a rep about three years ago. There's just two of us and there are over 300 staff to look after so it can be challenging but management are very supportive. More recently I've been going out on stand-down and just last year I completed Academy1.

## What was Academy1 like?

It was amazing and I learned so many skills. It also helped me with my confidence, particularly with inductions. I learned that

you need to read your audience because everyone is different, and if someone doesn't look interested you need to involve them. It's about giving people the knowledge to make their own decisions.

One of the highlights was when I attended the graduation dinner in Manchester and I was delighted to be sat next to our general secretary Paddy Lillis. We had such an interesting conversation, it really made my day. He is so passionate about what he does, and I was motivated by just speaking with him.

**You're also a political activist?**

Yes. I support the work of the Labour Party. People don't realise that the Labour Party was born out of the trade union movement and my aim is to educate people about that. I did a big piece of work about it while on the Academy and it's fascinating. I've also been involved in a few Save Our Shops campaign days with the political committee which I've really enjoyed, I love getting out there and talking to the public.

**Your thoughts on the election?**

I was upset by the result. I think a lot of Labour voters voted Conservative because of Brexit, and if that's not the reason then we've got a problem. We're now in a situation where we're going to elect somebody new, so let's see what happens. I watched Jeremy Corbyn's speech at ADM last year and he smashed it, particularly on supporting workers' rights, that's what the Labour Party is all about and people need to know it.

**Tell us about your charity work**

I'm passionate about trying to help those who are struggling. I was once in a situation where I found myself homeless and if it wasn't for my family I don't know where I would be. Before Christmas I collected coats and hats for the homeless and people are still bringing them in to work.

I also help with the local food bank. As a parent I do sometimes struggle but I have a roof over my head and can put food on the table so I need to help those who can't.

**Highlights of being a rep?**

It has to be just representing staff members and getting a good outcome. I once helped a member win an unfair dismissal case which was a big win, but most of my success stories come from getting the smaller things resolved in informal meetings. It makes such a difference when you've got a good working relationship with your management team and they are

committed to the wellbeing of the staff.

**Any advice for other reps?**

My best advice is do stand-down. When you're in your own store that is your only focus, but you need to develop your knowledge to become a better rep. Also, use the support of your area organiser, I don't know where I would be without mine. Don't be afraid to question things, it's better to get it right. I also have a motto that I live by – give, care, love and help. It's always at the back of my mind, even if I have an argument with someone, I know it will be ok, because I live by my motto.

**ALL ABOUT FINNOLA**

**Favourite hobby?**

I love cooking, I can't help myself. If I see something I've got to try it.

**Favourite food?**

Probably Greek food, but you can't beat a Sunday roast.

**Last film you watched?**

Miracle on 34th Street with my daughter Mary.

**Favourite book?**

The first book that I read was Jayne Eyre by Charlotte Bronte. There's a rose that I keep in the pages and it's been there for over 30 years.

**Favourite TV Programme?**

I'm a Londoner... EastEnders.

**Favourite animal?**

I love dogs but don't have one. My sister has two cats, Joey and Louis, who I look after when she goes away and I love them to death. One's horribly moody and the other is delightfully friendly.

**Favourite clothing?**

Relaxing in my PJs, dressing gown and woolly socks at home.

**Where else in the world would you love to live?**

Greece, of course.



IF YOU WANT TO BE THE NEXT ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH EMAIL: [NETWORK@USDAW.ORG.UK](mailto:NETWORK@USDAW.ORG.UK)

# CELEBRATING REP EXCELLENCE

Exceptional activists gathered in Manchester for the annual Organising Awards ceremony

**A**ctivists took centre stage at Usdaw's 15th 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.

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

General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Amy Murphy played host with special guest John Douglas the general secretary of the Irish retail union, Mandate. Together they presented national awards to 12 winners in nine categories.

"The Organising Awards are our chance of recognising and thanking the reps for their hard work," said Paddy. "The exceptionally high standard of nominations confirms that we have some of the best reps in the trade union movement.

"I want to congratulate every nominee and take this opportunity to thank our reps for all their hard work, dedication and commitment to Usdaw."

## **MOST PROMISING NEW ACTIVIST MARIOLA STANISLAWSKA**

When Mariola became a rep she was one of only two Co-op reps in an area covering over 80 miles and 30 stores. She's transformed the Usdaw

presence in her area, helping to boost membership density and recruiting new reps in the process.

"I was shocked I was nominated, let alone having won," said Mariola. "I've only been a rep for a year-and-a-half so I never expected this. I put myself forward when our area organiser came to see us because I wanted to help my colleagues. I will be sharing this prize with my team and my baby."

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY REP AWARD JOINT WINNER PAUL CULLEN**

Paul has revolutionised health and safety practices at the Arla Aylesbury dairy since he became a rep in 2018. Thanks to his efforts, his members now have vastly improved personal protective equipment options and better lighting on their tractors and trailers.

"The health and safety of my colleagues is vitally important to me," said Paul. "I strongly believe that all workers, in all industries deserve a working environment that is safe and injury-free. This is what drives me. Having my work recognised is an added bonus. I'm delighted I won."

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY REP AWARD JOINT WINNER JAMES SMITH**

A collective grievance initiated by James and his colleagues resulted in a multi-million-pound investment to turn the site





**THE NATIONAL WINNERS**  
STANDING (l-r): Paul Cullen, Stuart William Lloyd, Kevin Shimell, James Smith, Robert Horton, Alan Humphries, Ian Gwynn and Norman Donaldson.  
SEATED (l-r): Mariola Stanislawska, Donald Alexander Wilkie, Jackie McNeill, Kay Timbrell and Tracey Davies.



General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen, Joint Individual Organising award winners Norman Donaldson and Alan Humphries, president Amy Murphy and Mandate general secretary John Douglas

around. James ensured the money was spent wisely on repairing the roof, replacing unsafe racking, improving the air quality and a new cleaning contract.

"I'm blown away," said James. "Things like this don't happen to people like me. The work done on site has been a team effort. I couldn't have done it without them and my area organiser. Everyone has been so fantastic and I'm still getting a lot of calls congratulating me."

### **EQUALITIES AWARD** **JACKIE MCNEILL**

With over 10 years' experience on the North West equalities forum, Jackie has built up an impressive network of contacts meaning her campaign work is always well-supported. Jackie has had a strong influence over the TUC and NICTU equality policy. Her dedication and passion make her the driving force behind the equality work in her division.

"I'm absolutely gobsmacked," said Jackie. "When they read my name out I was shaking. I couldn't believe

I'd won. I want to thank everyone from the bottom of my heart for this award. I've been a rep since 1995 so it's really fantastic to be recognised for my union work."

### **UNION LEARNING REP AWARD** **ROBERT HORTON**

Robert is the driving force behind the Lifelong Learning offer at the Next Redhouse distribution centre. Thanks to his persistence, hundreds of members enjoy a learning centre packed with resources, offering a wide range of learning opportunities.

"Thanks to all my lifelong learning colleagues," said Robert. "I've had amazing support from my team and my colleague Sharon Waddington. My aims for 2020 are to push the learning forward and get more staff through their learning."

### **CAMPAIGNS AWARD JOINT WINNER** **TRACEY DAVIES**

Tesco rep Tracey is a passionate advocate of women's health and mental health issues. Thanks to her work Tesco are trialing a menopause

uniform in seven stores. Tracey also proactively organised mental health and other campaign days in stores across her area, providing members with advice and support and helping to grow the membership.

"I'm humbled by this win," said Tracey. "I honestly didn't see it coming, not by a long shot. I've been a rep for 14 years so I didn't expect to be nominated. I don't feel like I'm doing anything different from other reps. I feel privileged to be singled out like this."

### **CAMPAIGNS AWARD JOINT WINNER** **STUART WILLIAM LLOYD**

Stuart and the team at Tesco Deysbrook have built their campaign activity into a sustained, effective voice to raise the profile and awareness of Usdaw. The rep team negotiated paid time for members to attend solicitor consultations and the local MP was also invited to give advice on specific issues.

"To be honest I was happy just to be nominated," said Stuart. "I never thought I would win, especially at my age! I'm over the moon and I



wouldn't be here today without the support of the union and my fantastic area organiser."

### TEAM RECRUITMENT AND ORGANISING AWARD SAINSBURY'S WALTHAM POINT REP TEAM IAN GWYNN AND KEVIN SHIMELL

The imposition of a new unfair absence policy drove the membership at Sainsbury's Waltham Point to the first industrial action since the 1970s. The rep team showed great courage and leadership through this difficult period and inspired the members to remain strong. Their resilience forced the company back to the negotiating table to agree a fairer policy.

"We are absolutely ecstatic. Getting the company to do a u-turn shows what you can achieve if you stick together," said Ian. "We want to thank our reps team, area organiser and divisional officer as we wouldn't be here without their help and support," said Kevin.

### INDIVIDUAL RECRUITMENT AWARD DONALD ALEXANDER WILKIE

Donald's Wick store is almost five hours away from the nearest Usdaw office, and he has led the

charge in recruiting in such a rural area. Always eager to take on new challenges, Donald regularly carries out stand down and recruitment weeks.

"I'm totally overwhelmed at winning the award," said Donald. "After seeing the other nominees, I didn't expect to win. It's fantastic to know that the union recognises and appreciates the work you do."

### INDIVIDUAL ORGANISING AWARD JOINT WINNER NORMAN DONALDSON

Norman has been instrumental in increasing membership density and recruiting new reps in multiple sites across the division. Away from his own workplace he has successfully organised eight Greggs stores in his area, achieving almost 100 per cent membership density in every store.

"I love the work I do," said Norman. "It's what drives me. Watching the videos of the nominees I was convinced that someone more deserving would win. So, when they called out my name I was stunned."

### INDIVIDUAL ORGANISING AWARD JOINT WINNER ALAN HUMPHRIES

Alan is the driving force behind the rep team at the Tesco Distribution

site in Reading. Mentoring and developing other reps while empowering them to be self-sufficient, Alan and his team have achieved a membership density of 92 per cent.

"I'm in complete shock," said Alan. "I do what I do because I want to help and support my colleagues. You never expect to win an award for it. I want to thank everyone who has made it possible for me to be here today."

### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD KAY TIMBRELL

Kay heads up a strong rep team at the Tesco Stroud store but her influence is felt throughout her division. She's an Usdaw divisional councillor and represents the union on the TUC South West regional executive. Kay spends a lot of time mentoring the next generation of Usdaw reps and has been selected for Usdaw's pilot lay tutor programme.

"I'm absolutely stunned and humbled," said Kay. "It hasn't really sunk in yet. I go in and do my job to the best of my abilities. I never thought of getting an award for what I do but being recognised in this way makes it all worth it."

## DIVISIONAL WINNERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT



### SOUTH WALES AND WESTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left):  
Elliot Osborne (EC), Dale Duddridge, Kevin Perryman, Mark Boswell (DCC) and Michael Austin.

SEATED (from left): Si Crockett, Debbie Wilson (EC), Sandra Mock, Nick Ireland (DO), Kay Timbrell, Tracey Davies and Phil Birkett.

Continued...



## **EASTERN DIVISION**

**STANDING** (from left): Kevin Shimell, Ian Gwynn, Nigel Scully (DO), Abu Sultan and Paul Cullen.

**SEATED** (from left): Jacqui Cross (DCC), Charlie Parker, Deena Litchfield, Zarina Saleem, Barry Dickinson, Simon Vincent (EC) and Jacqui Thurgood (EC).

**EC** Executive Council  
**DCC** Divisional Council Chair  
**DO** Divisional Officer  
**DDO** Deputy Divisional Officer



## **NORTH EASTERN DIVISION**

**STANDING** (from left): Robert Horton, Angela Partington (DCC), Brian Loughhead (EC), Mike Dixon (EC), James Smith, Kevin Ward, Joanne Thomas (DO) and Paul Garland.

**SEATED** (from left): Angela Harding-Rennie, Sue Hallam, Harriet Spurr, Janine Bowler, Sharon Day, Angela Kulvinska and Cathy Godfrey (DDO).



## **SOUTHERN DIVISION**

**STANDING** (from left): Stuart Fraser, Andrew Coley, Frank Dunaway, John Barstow (EC), Daniel Hooper and Paul Aluwalia.

**SEATED** (from left): Matthew Cooper-Teague, Sujata Patel (DCC), Vanessa Louise Kirk, Sue Merrell (DO), Sue Prynn (DDO), Michelle Jarvis and Alan Humphries.



## MIDLANDS DIVISION

**STANDING** (from left): Andrea Watts (EC), Sue Kenny (DCC), Gavin Dadley (DO), Gareth Davies (DDO), Michelle Whitehead, Kate MacLeod (EC) and Julie Haycraft.

**SEATED** (from left): Ann Lloyd, Tammy Caven, Samantha Crawford, Pete Colclough, Amar Suchak, Ian McLuckie and Andrew Green.



## SCOTTISH DIVISION

**STANDING** (from left): Stewart Forrest (DO), Tracy Gilbert (DDO), Norman Donaldson, Jean Hession (EC), John McLean (DCC), Ivan Fotheringhame and Richie Venton (EC).

**SEATED** (from left): Christine Mitchell, David Leslie, James Murphy, Mariola Stanislawska, Leanne McAdie, Hugh McCartney McCreadie and Donald Alexander Wilkie.



## NORTH WEST DIVISION

**STANDING** (from left): Farooq Hussain-Dad, Amanda Bailey-Coll (DDO), Stuart William Lloyd, Grant Cathcart, Chris Winwood (EC), Jane Jones (EC), Mike Aylward (DO), Richard Ward-Kong and Tony Clare (DDO).

**SEATED** (from left): Therese Maria Holden, Susan Burnett, Patrick Milligan, Terry Adair (nominee and DCC), Michelle Griffiths, Brenda Shaw (EC) and Jackie McNeill.



# BRIGHT SPARKS AT RS COMPONENTS IN CORBY

**R**S Components is a leading multi-channel industrial and electronics distributor based in Corby in Northamptonshire. Usdaw has had a relationship with the company since 1984.

*Network* was invited to spend an afternoon with the Usdaw team of reps to talk about the work they've been doing on site.

Corby is a well organised site with a great team of reps, led by the convenor Mark Halfpenny. A progressive new management team has ensured that there's been a positive cultural shift.

It's clear from the way the reps interact with the management team that there is trust and respect between the parties which not only allows them to resolve issues but also helps facilitate a proactive approach that enables them to come up with innovative new

policies such as the Dying to Work charter. This gives greater security to terminally ill workers so that they cannot be dismissed because of their condition.

## **Mark Halfpenny**

"We've worked hard to build a young, diverse team of reps. We've done this by getting people involved, encouraging them to attend branch meetings and pushing people out of their comfort zones. I made sure my deputy Kirsty was given some of the more challenging issues on site so that she could gain in experience and confidence. And to be fair to her, she wholeheartedly threw herself into it. If you don't give reps an opportunity to learn how will they ever get better at what they do.

"To get the reps committee to where it is has taken a huge amount of work. We've had to make a lot of

tough decisions. Back in 1999 the company had to make redundancies. It wasn't easy for the committee but we worked hard to ensure that redundancies were voluntary and anyone who left got an enhanced redundancy package. On top of this, the people who remained had to accept a pay freeze. Those were challenging times but we got through them."

## **Kirsty Taylor**

"The advantage of having Mark as the convenor at a site with over 1,000 workers is that if a major issue comes up we can normally get it resolved within a week or two, instead of things dragging on for months. Mark's been here for over 35 years so he knows the company better than anyone else. We've only had one employment tribunal claim since 1999. This is an amazing



Usdaw reps at the RS Components site in Corby

achievement considering Corby is an industrial site."

### Roger Ward

"Regarding health and safety we've got a brilliant relationship with the company's safety team. Pre-1999 we would have around 30 claims on the go. Now our health and safety record speaks for itself. Working together has virtually eliminated claims. When I speak to reps from different sites I realise that in a lot of places the shop stewards and the health and safety reps are two separate entities who never talk to each other. Here we all work together."

### Moises Rodrigues

"Our predecessors did an enormous amount of work to ensure that Usdaw was embedded in to this site. Thanks to them and my colleagues

### RS IN BRIEF

RS Components is a global trading brand of Electrocomponents. It supplies electronic components and engineering tools via e-commerce, catalogues and trade counters. The group distributes more than 500,000 products to over one million customers.

The business was founded in 1937 in London under the name Radiospares. By 1954 the company expanded its focus from shops and home users to



the industrial sector and began selling electronic components to manufacturers. The company rebranded as RS Components in 1971 and now operates in countries all over the world.

here the union has a good reputation, to the point that people who want to join come to us."

### Danijela Bastajic

"We have also been working closely with the company to increase the number of agency staff who are given a proper RS Components contract. It's been difficult to do this en masse quickly due to cost. However 260 workers have already been taken on and this issue remains high on all our agendas."

### Andrew Burr

"We've also had a number of other wins. The company now allows staff to buy five days holidays, which has 70 per cent uptake. We have set up a European Works Council and our first meeting has been confirmed. As part of our learning agreement we will be getting two learning pods. The apprenticeship programme is being launched again where staff can gain a nationally recognised Level 2 qualification."

### Dionne Murray

"Some of the reps here have also helped other companies set up their union structures, mentored their reps and supported them when they

had to deal with difficult issues in their sites."

### Darren Matthews Area Organiser

"One of my proudest achievements is serving as an official for the Corby site. This committee is absolutely fantastic. They work together and stick together. They are engaged, active and have a lot of influence with their colleagues, the union and within the company. Some of these reps will go on to be shining stars in the trade union movement. They are a really great example of what you can achieve when you work together."

### Irene Hoile Operations Manager

"I have been fortunate enough to forge a strong relationship with the Usdaw team. We have been through some challenging times and have not always agreed.

"However, due to our relationship with Usdaw being pragmatic and collaborative, we generally find a way of resolving our differences to ensure good industrial relations, doing the right thing for our people, and balancing business needs to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of operations, and future job security."

# A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

**M**ark Halfpenny is the convenor at RS Components. Mark's worked for the company for over 35 years and been a rep since 1999.

## What made you become a rep?

I always had an interest in politics, especially left-wing politics. I'm not sure where this interest came from as I don't come from a family of trade unionists. I think I was heavily influenced by the reps who came before me. I saw what they were doing and how they helped improve the lives of their colleagues on a daily basis. I wanted to do that. So, I started going to branch meetings and federation schools. The more I learnt about the union the more I wanted to get involved.

## What has changed over the last 20 years?

Back then we were coming towards the end of 17 years of Thatcher's government. Those were dark days for trade unionists which really affected the way you dealt with employers. Thatcher's attacks ended up making trade unionists more hard-line so we were a lot more confrontational in our approach. I am definitely a lot less confrontational now! But this is also mirrored by having a management team that is very supportive of trade unions.

## What's your secret to running such a well organised site?

The austerity imposed by the Conservatives has taken the fight out of working people. A lot of workers have forgotten the power of trade unions. That's why we work hard to show our colleagues what trade unions can do. We have a good team of reps who deal with issues raised by members and then we work with the management team to resolve them.

I also think we need to teach trade unionism in schools to counter the anti-trade union rhetoric you see in the press.

## Does the Usdaw training prepare reps for their role?

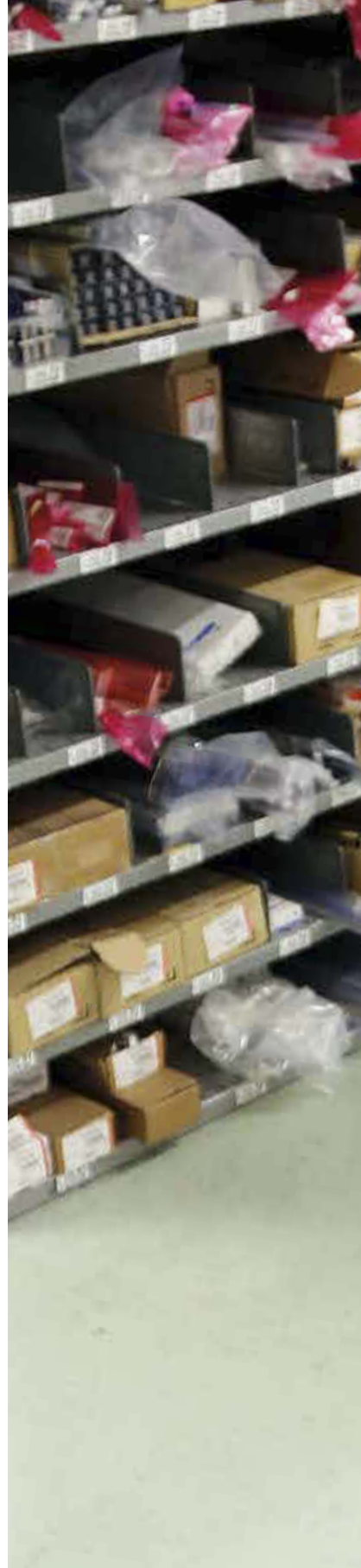
Ushaw's training is excellent. When any of my reps go on a training course I make sure that I do a follow up to see if they are putting that training into practice. It's up to the more experienced reps to talent spot potential reps and then mentor and nurture newer reps.

## You have a very diverse team of reps. How did you ensure your rep team reflected your workplace?

I'm very proud that our team of reps reflect the age, gender and ethnic balance of our workplace. A lot of the people on this team were approached because they had something about them and I knew with a little bit of training they would make great reps. The diversity of the team means everyone brings different skills and perspectives to the table. Hopefully, seeing such an enthusiastic team will encourage members and non-members to consider getting involved in the union.

## What's the best thing about being involved in Usdaw and the trade union movement?

It has to be the camaraderie. I've met some fantastic people over the years. Also, I feel like I have really grown as a person. I've learnt so much about people and about myself that sometimes I feel like a lay psychologist! Being a rep can be demanding but it's not all work. We all get on pretty well so we always make the effort to go out and socialise when we can.





# THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

The union's annual Respect Week in November saw activists take part in events right across the country to show their commitment to this vital Usdaw campaign

Every year during Respect Week hundreds of Usdaw reps take the union's Freedom From Fear campaign to the public, running stalls up and down the country, to spread the message that abuse is not part of the job.

## TESCO ESTON

Academy1 graduate and in-store rep John Tyreman arranged the Respect Week campaign at Tesco Eston along with fellow rep Simon Galloway.

"We've done a few Respect Weeks and they're always popular amongst staff and customers," said John who's been a rep for nearly five years. "Normally we just have a stall in the foyer but this year we had one in the staff respite area too. It's good to show staff that the union isn't just there for when things go wrong.

"The 'can you guess the age' scratch cards were very popular. The staff on the cigarette kiosk have to deal with age-related sales frequently and said they proved just how difficult it can be.

"We do face violence and abuse in our store. We need more security and that's why we tell staff to report all incidents so that the company know exactly what is going on.

"Campaigns do help to raise awareness, particularly for those who don't realise what shopworkers have to deal with on a daily basis."

## WOKING TOWN CENTRE

Trevor Downes joined the team in Woking town centre for his first high street campaign. "We set up our stall on Mercia Walk which is in one of the

main shopping centres in Woking," said Trevor, who has just completed Academy1 and works at Sainsbury's in Godalming. "Most of the public were really friendly and stopped to have a chat to find out what we were doing. We must've worked hard because we ran out of freebies.

"There were about eight activists involved, a mixture of old and new reps so a good wealth of campaigning experience. Some reps had travelled up from Kent to take part which was fantastic.

"Campaigning really helps to raise awareness. Shoppers that I spoke to were shocked to find out about the violence and abuse in retail."

## TESCO BRENT CROSS

Usdaw reps at Tesco in Brent Cross take part in Respect Week every year. Sandra Moss, a rep at the store since 2011, said November's event was a big success. "As retail workers we know all too well about violence and abuse in the workplace, so as reps, we need to raise awareness with customers," said Sandra. "This year we were joined by local actor and novelist Leroy Smith, an ex-offender who has reformed his life after 25 years in prison. He now spends his time working with the local community and mentoring."

Trish Derby is a rep and charity coordinator for the store and has been working closely with Leroy in the local community. "Leroy is very supportive of the campaign and it was useful to have him there to speak about his experience, particularly with young customers,"

said Trish. "He's a good friend to the store and has also recently been helping us with a collection for our local food bank."

## MORRISONS SWANSEA

Respect Week was the ideal opportunity for Liam Morgan to take part in his first campaign day at Morrisons in Swansea.

"November is the perfect time of year to highlight the union's Freedom From Fear campaign as customers are starting to get stressed in the run up to Christmas," said the 42-year-old who became a rep in 2016. "We set up stall in the foyer so shoppers had to walk past us, and we made ourselves extra visible by wearing Santa hats and displaying campaign posters. It went really well, customers stopped to have a chat and were interested to hear about the campaign.

"Staff are often on the receiving end of verbal abuse, particularly those on the food counters in customer-facing roles. There's no excuse for it, not even at Christmas. Hopefully the campaign will raise awareness and make customers think twice about their attitude."

### Membership for week ended 18 January 2020

South Wales & Western	46,834
Eastern	58,645
Midlands	54,626
North Eastern	58,459
Scottish	41,533
Southern	60,341
North West	86,584
<b>Total</b>	<b>407,022</b>





Tesco, Eston Middlesbrough



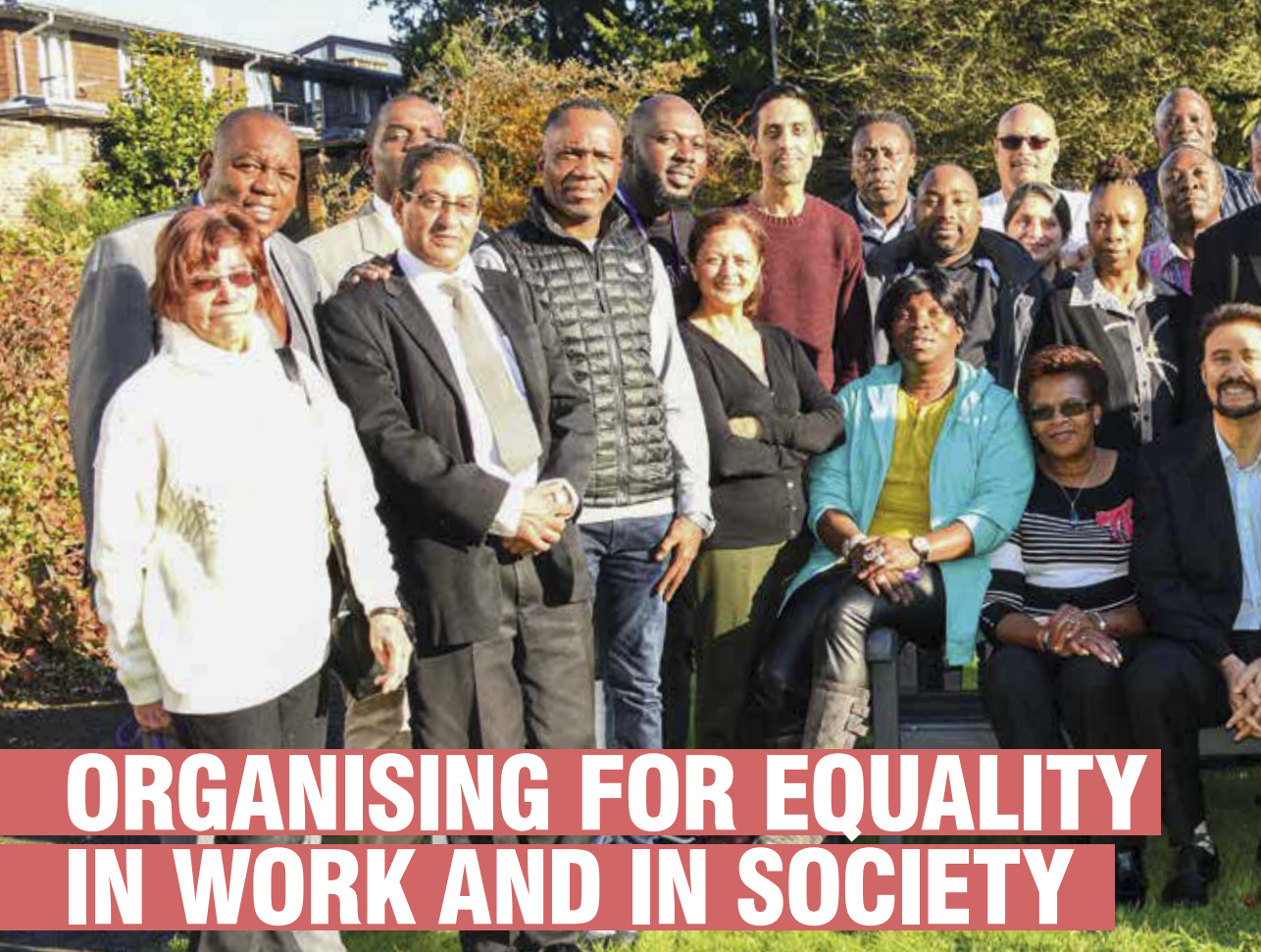
Morrisons, Swansea



Woking High Street



Tesco Brent Cross, London



# ORGANISING FOR EQUALITY IN WORK AND IN SOCIETY

In November the popular annual Black Members' Weekend Workshop celebrated its 26th birthday at the Chancellors Hotel in Manchester.

Forty activists from workplaces across the UK attended the event, organised by the union's equalities section and coordinated by Usdaw training officer Jenni White.

Discussions, key speeches and workshops over the three-day event included effective techniques for making the voices of Black and Asian people heard and how politics changes lives and the world.

Delegates were also joined by special guest speakers; Labour MP and shadow immigration minister Afzal Khan and director of Migrant Voice Nazek Ramadan.

## A SAFE AND OPEN SPACE

Udaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen opened this year's

event and welcomed the delegates.

"This weekend gives the union a chance to learn more about the specific challenges that Black and Asian members face," said Dave. "This has never been more important. The current political climate and the toxicity of public debate has made it acceptable for racist discourse to flourish in the media, in our society and hence in our workplaces.

"It is vital that our Black and Asian members have a safe space to share their concerns. We know that their voice can struggle to be heard in a debate largely shaped by politicians, journalists and commentators who have never experienced racism themselves. This narrative then filters down to the rest of society making it difficult for our members to honestly share their feelings.

"The weekend enables members to come together, in a friendly and

informal setting, to identify the issues that matter most and have an open debate about how we face those issues and improve the working lives of our members.

"It's also a great opportunity for newer and less active members to get more involved in the union and build relationships with more experienced reps. We need the union to reflect the diversity of the sectors in which we organise and the society we live in."

## CHALLENGING THE MEDIA

Nazek Ramadan, founder and director of the migrant-led charity Migrant Voice, came to the UK in 1986 after she and her family fled Lebanon. She set up Migrant Voice to fight back against anti-immigrant narrative in the run up to the 2010 general election.

Today the charity, led by migrants, aims to develop the skills, capacity



Reps at the weekend held a raffle and successfully managed to raise £202 for the Black Elders' Day Centre in Gloucester who provide day care and social activities for older Black people in the community.

---

## JUST TELL YOUR STORY AND LET OTHERS MAKE THEIR OWN MIND UP

---

and confidence of members in migrant communities including asylum seekers and refugees. They work to amplify migrant voices in the media and public life to counter xenophobia and build support for migrant rights.

"We set up at a time when the attitude towards migration was negative," said Nazek. "Migration was presented in the media as one of the top three concerns for the country alongside the financial crisis and the NHS. Migrants were blamed for everything to the extent where we were concerned about the safety of our children at school. Everyone

was talking about migrants except migrants. So it was up to us to challenge these negative portrayals.

"Our research showed that only 12 per cent of migrant stories in the media had a migrant speaking in them, and that's why we established Migrant Voice.

"We set up to reach out to people and to engage in the debate. We also bring people together to talk about how their lives are affected by policies and media coverage, and find ways to raise those issues. We say to migrants, just tell your story and let others make their own mind up. The media are finally engaging with us and journalists now ask if we have anyone who can speak to them.

"We want to raise awareness and understanding about the migrants who come to this country. These are people fleeing wars and persecution, risking their lives because there is no legal route for them to seek safety."



Dave McCrossen



Nazek Ramadan



Manpreet Sanghera



Laila Hasan

Network met some of the delegates during the weekend and spoke to two active reps who are pushing hard for equality in the workplace and society.

### MANPREET SANGHERA

It was Usdaw rep Manpreet's first time at the Black Members' Weekend Workshop after successfully completing the union's Academy 1 training programme last year.

"I was really pleased to see how politically motivated and active the other delegates were," said the Tesco shift leader who has been a rep for over 10 years. "The people I met were very passionate about the work they do for the union. I learned a lot from them and left feeling very motivated and inspired. It was a great networking opportunity and a chance to share stories and ideas. Most of us have kept in touch too so we can keep information flowing around and generally just be there to support each other.

"I also enjoyed the speech from the shadow immigration minister and MP Afzal Khan. We're both from the same region of India so we had a nice chat."

Manpreet was born and raised in India. She moved to the UK in 1997 and now lives with her husband and

children in Leicester.

"I became a rep at a time when staff in store weren't being treated fairly," said Manpreet. "I could see the injustice and I thought I can't stand by and do nothing. I wanted to stand up for my colleagues and establish some equality.

"I have seen an improvement since then and a more positive attitude from the company. You can see how much difference a union presence makes in a workplace, and I noticed this while visiting other

---

## I COULD SEE THE INJUSTICE AND I THOUGHT I CAN'T STAND BY AND DO NOTHING

---

workplaces when I was on Academy.

"There's a lot of unfairness, inequality and suffering in this country at the moment. Changes in the political climate, changes in society, talking about Brexit for three years, and the general election result makes me want to do what I can to improve society and make a difference to people's lives. I believe it's about educating people and giving them the information to make

their own decisions. Don't just take what the media is showing as the last word, do your own research and know your own mind. When I leave this planet, I want to leave a better place for future generations, I might not be able to but I'll die trying. That's what keeps me motivated."

### LAILA HASAN

Ushaw rep and political activist Laila was also attending her first Black Members' Weekend Workshop. Laila is a sales advisor at Debenhams in Manchester and has been a union rep for two years.

"The workplace can be a difficult place for ethnic minorities," said Laila. "We're more likely to be disciplined, to get dismissed and have complaints made against us. We get abuse from customers but also bullied from managers and face racism from colleagues.

"As a trade unionist you are trying to build unity, but at the same time you yourself are a target being made to feel like you don't belong. It's a massive battle that zaps your confidence, and that's why events like the Black Members' Weekend Workshop are so amazing. It brought us all together. When you talk to other reps about these experiences you realise that you are not alone and we can all support each other.

"It's hard being an ethnic minority anywhere in the world in the current climate because there are far right politicians and racist organisations that will try and spread hatred. Various Tory ministers in the past have singled out the Muslim community as either not integrating into society or being a threat, and government legislation has created a climate of fear and suspicion, so it's no wonder that racist hate crimes have spiked. Every time a Tory politician makes a comment, like Boris Johnson saying that Muslim women wearing the hijab look like letterboxes, it has an impact. As a direct result of that comment there was a spike in hate crimes against Muslim women who wore the hijab. They have created a climate where intolerance is being promoted and I think that far right organisations have utilised it to grow.

"A valuable part of the weekend was the opportunity to debate issues like this with shadow immigration minister Afzal Khan MP. It was interesting to hear his take on the Tory rhetoric that blames migrants and immigration levels for problems in society, when really it's austerity, cuts and privatisation that are to blame. We have to continually challenge policy which allows the one per cent in the country to keep getting richer while the rest of us are made homeless and forced to use food banks.

"The general election result means that we just have to keep fighting and we mustn't back down on the idea that anti-racist is too radical or too left, it's not. We can build anti-racist initiatives that will pull the whole of society together and in doing so build the trade union movement as well.

"In today's world we all have our part to play to challenge inequality. We are stronger together in an organised trade union movement, made of working-class people with the strength and power to dramatically shake up and change the situation."

## EQUALITY AT WORK

Usdaw is determined to promote equality for all sections of society both at work and in the community. The union has equality forums in each division made up of women and members from the Black and Asian, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and disabled communities. Members can volunteer to get involved in their divisional equality forum by contacting their local office. This forms part of the union's work to increase the participation of these groups of members in the union, all of whom are currently under-represented.

### CAMPAIGNING

Anti-racism campaigns are a good way to demonstrate the union's zero tolerance approach, challenge racist behaviour, educate members and bring different sections of

the workforce together. They are a good opportunity to work together with the employer to show that racism is not acceptable in the workplace. Usdaw's 'No Room for Racism' campaign was developed in response to a growing demand from reps who wanted to run workplace anti-racism campaigns.

While discrimination is illegal it can be very difficult to prove. However, Usdaw reps work tirelessly to support members both to promote equality and end discrimination. Legislation does exist to protect individuals from discrimination and Usdaw's reps, officials and legal department can be called upon to support members. Usdaw has successfully represented many Black and Asian members to win justice at work.

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





Reps can work to achieve a safer and healthier workplace for their members by identifying common problems and hazards through the technique of mapping

**M**apping is a great tool for health and safety reps. It can help you to organise your time more effectively, to identify colleagues who can help and to plan your inspections in the workplace.

**WORKPLACE MAPPING**

The starting point is to draw a rough map of the workplace. In a large store for example, there will be many different areas including the delivery yard, the warehouse, freezer, various departments on the shopfloor, car park, meeting rooms /staff rest rooms. For each area think about the health and safety issues for example, on checkouts that may include manual handling, checkout chairs, staffing levels and breaks, temperature, abuse from customers or other issues. Also

think about the people who work there. Are there any members who show more interest in health and safety or who have raised issues with you as the rep? It helps to identify who your friends are around the workplace. They may not want to be a rep themselves but they will be supportive and they can tell you if there are any problems.

Keep the workplace map safe and add to it as you get to know more about the different areas. When you are doing a workplace inspection it can help to remind you of the issues to look out for and the people to talk to as you go round. It can also show you what progress you are making on the issues as some get removed and new ones get added.

If there are several reps in a larger workplace it is a good idea to draw up the workplace map together –

for example at a rep team meeting. Sharing views and experience will give you a better picture of the workplace. It can also help to identify which areas each rep covers and to identify any gaps.

**USDAW SLIPS AND TRIPS RISK MAPPING TOOL**

One of the biggest causes of serious injuries in most workplaces is slipping on wet or contaminated floors or tripping over obstacles on the floor. The slips and trips risk mapping tool has been designed to help reps to spot where the risks are highest and to identify underlying causes.

On a basic map of the workplace, mark the spots where there has been a slip or trip accident reported over the last couple of years. Talk to the workers and ask them about

Date: 12th Nov 68

Hazard	Control Measure
FAULTY MATS	CHANGE - REPAIR
RAILING CABLE	COVER REMOVE
WATER LEAK	REPAIR LEAK FIT DRAIN TRAYS
SPLILT MILK	CLEAN - CHECK OFFER MAY REQUIRE NON SLIP MATTING
BOISH - CARBON	REQ GOODS MKEEPING - SAFE SYSTEM - WXX
WATER INGRESS BELOW DOOR	CHECK DOOR SEAL INSTALL MATS
ON FLOOR	FIND SOURCE REPAIR ETC

near misses where there was no injury to report but they did slip or trip. Mark those on the map as well. Ask them about the incidents – what did they slip on or trip over?

From the evidence you should be able to identify the hot spots for slips or trips and the underlying causes.

### BODY MAPPING

The basic idea behind body mapping is simple. Workers are given a chart with a front and back view of the body and asked to mark on it which bits hurt when they are working and why. Using body mapping with a group of workers who do the same job or work in the same area quickly identifies potential issues that may need further investigation. It is a very powerful tool for investigating musculoskeletal disorders like back pain or repetitive strain injury, but it can also reveal other issues such as exposure to dust or fumes or headaches from working in areas with poor lighting.

Usdaw has developed a simple body mapping questionnaire that reps can use. As the rep you can give copies of the questionnaire form out to a group of workers and ask them to fill in and return to you. Then it is simply a matter of counting the numbers who have aches and pains in common. Or who identify common issues.

The health and safety team at central office can supply copies of body mapping materials and can also help with analysing the results

### MAPPING OTHER RISKS

Reps can use the mapping approach to tackle other common health or safety issues. For example, temperatures can vary widely in larger workplaces, even when the average temperature is within reasonable limits. Doing a temperature map of the workplace can reveal areas where workers have to work in extreme temperatures and identify where extra adjustments may be needed to protect the workers concerned. Similarly mapping a distribution centre or a factory for noise can identify areas where extra precautions may be needed to protect workers' hearing.

### WHY HEALTH AND SAFETY MAPPING WORKS

Mapping takes a more systematic and methodical look at the workplace. It can identify problem areas or jobs which carry higher risk and need more attention from the employer. And, as problems get resolved, it can be a powerful way of measuring success.

But above all, mapping techniques depend on good communication. It is only by listening to the workers that the rep can draw on their experience and knowledge. And by feeding back their findings, reps can help members to understand what the issues are. Often individuals will suffer in silence. But when they see that there are others who suffer the same pain for the same reasons they will be more interested in getting something done to reduce the risk and make work safer.

Visit the following website to get more info in Hazards Magazine:

[www.hazards.org/organise](http://www.hazards.org/organise)



### DANGEROUS DIESEL EXHAUST

The Institution for Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) has produced a new resource to protect workers from dangerous diesel engine exhaust emissions (DEEEs).

DEEEs can cause lung cancer, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. The resource advises people working with or around diesel-powered equipment or vehicles to turn off engines if not needed; use exhaust extraction systems or workplace air extraction; wear a mask and get trained. This guide is particularly important for occupational drivers.

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

### CONTACT

#### Health and safety officer

Doug Russell  
0161 249 2441

#### Health and safety assistant

Tony Whelan  
0161 249 2474

#### General health and safety enquiries email:

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

## INJURY RATES RISE

The HSE's reduced effectiveness in prosecuting cases has coincided with a rise in the number of workplace injuries.

HSE prosecutions have been falling steadily from 660 convictions in 2015/16 to 394 in 2018/19. Over the same period workplace non-fatal injuries have increased to 581,000 workers in 2018/2019, from around 550,000 in 2017/18.

TUC head of safety Laurie Heselden said: "Fatalities and reported injuries are up, and work-related ill-health remains at 1.4 million affected workers, up from 1.3 million two years ago.

"While the human price of employer safety negligence has increased, convictions, fines and days lost to workplace injury and ill-health have plummeted. The statistics expose a don't care government that has stripped HSE of the resources to do its job and left increasing numbers of workers insecure and at risk in the workplace."

He added: "The next government must reverse funding cuts."

[www.tuc.org.uk/news](http://www.tuc.org.uk/news)

# CALL FOR HSE TO ADDRESS WORK-RELATED SUICIDES



An international panel of experts have renewed pressure on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to take action to recognise, record and prevent work-related suicides. Currently death by suicide is explicitly excluded from work-related fatalities that have to be reported under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations).

There have been a number of cases in the UK where work has caused individuals to commit suicide.

The inquest into Leona Goddard's death found that Leona was a dedicated NHS nurse who had 'nightmares about work'. She killed herself after the stress of working 12-hour shifts left her unable to lead a normal life. Although her work colleagues rated her as "outstanding" the coroner stated that "it was clear from the evidence that the job role was causing Leona stress".

In 2019 three members of the East England Ambulance Service (EEAS) died in suspected suicides in an 11-day period in November. An anonymous whistleblower had earlier described the organisation as a "toxic" workplace presenting "a risk of suicide".

The experts from 16 universities

and occupational and public health research agencies in seven countries have challenged the regulator to "rectify this blind-spot" in the UK regulations. They refer to research which shows clear causal connections between work, working conditions, work-related stress and suicide ideation and point to other countries including France and the US where work-related suicides are reportable and organisations are investigated by regulators. They call for an explicit reference to work-related suicide to be made in HSE's stress management standards and related guidance.

The journal for trade union health and safety reps, Hazards Magazine, has been campaigning for a change in approach. It urges the HSE to take heed of the expert submission: "HSE's convoluted case against action on work-related suicide sits uneasily alongside the evidence presented by the global experts' panel. It also appears to contradict the regulator's stated line on work-related mental health". It concludes: "For HSE to discount the most tragic outcomes of work-related stress, depression and despair is arbitrary and cruel."

[www.hazards.org/suicide](http://www.hazards.org/suicide)



# HAVING A PASSION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

*Network* speaks to Usdaw activist and health and safety rep **Julie Sarson** about supporting members and improving safety in her workplace

## Q. What's your job role?

I'm currently a dotcom picker at Tesco Extra in Bedworth where I've worked for 15 years.

## Q. When did you become active?

I became a rep in 2009, then branch secretary in 2014, health and safety rep in 2015 and last year I became a mobile union learning rep. There are just two health and safety reps, myself and my colleague John who is fairly new to the role and we're looking after 300 staff. I'm quite active outside my store too taking part in campaigns, doing stand-down and fulfilling my mobile union learning rep role.

## Q. What is currently the biggest health and safety concern?

Roll cages are a big challenge. Both staff and management use them incorrectly and it's been difficult to change behaviour. Now we challenge anyone using them and it's working well. Staff are using the appropriate trucks to pull multiple cages rather than just by hand, so that's an achievement. Getting staff to use PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) like safety shoes, equipment and high vis jackets is also a problem. I recently had a security guard who was refusing to wear a high vis jacket outside because he didn't have his own. I ordered him a personal one and now he wears it. Good health and safety is achieved through small steps.

## Q. Is it easy to get health and safety issues sorted?

We've got a great relationship with management and we go directly to them with problems so more often than not things get sorted straight away. For example, last week a staff member tripped over a vent that



had fallen down and she hurt her hand. We were called and were able to get maintenance to repair the vent immediately. We're pretty good at keeping on top of situations so they don't escalate. We also have the store forum every quarter where we can raise issues and I attend the store director forums where I can touch base with our regional people safety manager. He'll bring an update from all the stores which is really useful and shows a commitment that Tesco are taking health and safety seriously.

We also do monthly walk arounds, on our own and with the managers. We'll identify any problems and give an update on any resolutions. Before John and I became health and safety reps we had a colleague whose sole responsibility was in-store health and safety so a lot of the great processes we have in place already are thanks to her.

## Q. Is there anything that you're currently working on?

With it being January, we've decided to do a big health and safety kick and

---

REMIND PEOPLE THAT WE ALL HAVE OUR PART TO PLAY WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH AND SAFETY.

---

make sure that it's at the forefront of people's minds as we enter the new year. We've got a health and safety noticeboard where we can post lots of information and hopefully just get staff thinking more about it and taking it seriously.

## Q. How do you stay up to date with health and safety?

I've done all the health and safety training courses and Usdaw health and safety officer Doug Russell often carries out workshops at federation weekends which are really helpful. He knows his stuff. I'll also contact Doug and the health and safety team at central office if there's something I'm not sure about. There's lots of help and information out there, particularly on the Usdaw and the HSE websites.

## Q. Have you got any advice for new reps?

I think firstly you need to have a bit of a passion for health and safety to be a good health and safety rep. Build a good rapport with your staff so that they feel comfortable approaching you, if you don't have that people will just brush things aside and you'll never get anything sorted. You also need to develop a good relationship with management if you can as it will make life so much easier. Try to remind people that we all have our part to play when it comes to health and safety.

# ORGANISING FOR SUCCESS

Mapping your workplace is a great way to identify some of the main issues facing members and the areas where you need to focus on recruitment

**U**sdaw reps play a pivotal role in their workplaces to ensure that the union continues to grow and be influential in protecting workers and their rights.

Mapping is a systematic approach to recruiting and organising used by many Usdaw reps to provide a picture of the areas in their workplace where they need to focus their attention. The map highlights any issues that members are having and helps to identify potential members and activists. With this information reps can then begin to develop a step-by-step approach to building the strength of the union in their workplace.

## HOW TO MAP YOUR WORKPLACE

There are a number of different ways you can map your workplace and you should do what works best for you. What is most important is that you do the mapping exercise with the intention of developing an accurate picture of the workplace to help you plan your organising and recruitment work.

One method is to draw a floor plan showing the different departments or sections where people work. Then identify the members and non-members and the different issues that workers have and record these on your map.

Remember that mapping is essentially something that can only be done by being active and talking to workers. If you are part of a team of reps you should do this together.

## WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I GATHER?

Your map should reflect your

workplace and the finished product will depend on what is going on at your location. Key information which you will find useful includes:

- The different departments and the names of those who work there (you may want to include gender, race, age).
  - Job roles and working patterns (Are they full or part-time, permanent/contract/agency)
- Find out if workers are:
- A member – are they active or potentially active, ie would they be interested in distributing union information in their department/section for you?
  - A non-member – what is their attitude towards the union, ie are they hostile or just not interested?
  - A rep/potential rep.
  - Finally – what issues do workers have? For example, change in hours or contract, holidays, health and safety, bullying and harassment.

## HOW DO I START TO GATHER THE INFORMATION?

You will find a list of employees useful and the union would expect the business to supply you with this if there is a recognition agreement. You will also need a list of members so you can cross-reference. Speak to your area organiser or local office. These lists will contain personal information which should be treated with the utmost care. Please read the orange box on the opposite page regarding data protection.

## LOOKING AT THE INFORMATION

Once you have collected the information on your workplace and identified your members and non-

members there are a number of things you may want to do:

- Focus on identifying the areas where you have lower membership, no reps, or where there are particular issues.
  - You can also use the information you have gathered to run a campaign on the issues you identified in the workplace.
- Usdaw is a campaigning union and campaigns on behalf of members on many issues surrounding workers' rights including respect in the workplace, supporting parents and carers, improving wages and learning at work. If you are interested in running a campaign speak to your area organiser.

## SUCCESSFUL MAPPING

Remember that there are many ways to map your workplace and you should find what works best for you. By following the tips below you will be off to a good start.

### Be creative

Draw a basic map of your workplace, include the different departments or sections where the workers are.

### Find the non-members

Know who it is you have to recruit before you begin. Use Usdaw membership lists and staff lists to identify where the members and non-members are – remember data protection.

### Gather information

What are the issues that non-members are particularly unhappy about? Have non-members been asked to join the union? Put this information on your map.

### Put together a team of helpers

Remember the value of teamwork. All reps should work as a team. If you have a large workplace find out if other reps have recently mapped their section.

### Evaluation

Get your team together for a full report back and gather your findings. Who joined? Who didn't join and why? Record all this information on your map.

### Plan your next move

Using the information gathered and your evaluation, draw up an action plan to target non-members and specific issues. Or ask your area organiser about running a campaign in your workplace. Remember – the union runs plenty of training courses where these techniques can be practiced and refined. Speak to your area organiser for more information.

### ONCE THE EXERCISE IS COMPLETED

Once you have finished the mapping exercise and developed your next steps, you must securely destroy all of the personal information you have collected. A successful mapping exercise will quickly result in information becoming out of date as individuals leave the workplace and new starters are taken on.

To read more about successful recruitment and organising visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/reps/organising-recruitment](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/reps/organising-recruitment)



Stock Photography. Posed by models.

### DATA PROTECTION *Treat any information as if it's your own*

As a rep you will regularly come across personal data and information. Data Protection is therefore an important aspect of the rep's role and you will need to deal with personal data fairly, securely and confidentially. Mapping involves dealing with personal information which should be treated with the greatest care at all times and handled confidentially between you and the other reps. Your facilities agreement should provide you with a lockable cabinet for storing personal information. The union has produced a booklet and a short online course that provides guidance when dealing with personal information. For more details go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/gdprguide](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/gdprguide)

# STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS



Karen Whitefield

## KAREN WHITEFIELD

**Usdaw's new deputy head of education is former MSP and union training officer Karen Whitefield.**

Karen first joined the union's staff in January 2013 as campaigns officer following 12 years working as MSP for the Airdrie & Shotts constituency – she was elected in 1999, the first year of the Scottish parliament, and served until 2011. Prior to that she had worked for the former Labour MP Rachel Squire.

In April 2017 Karen was appointed Usdaw training officer for the Scottish division. "For the last few years I have been based in Glasgow from where I have been responsible for planning and delivering the Scottish division's training programme, as well as working with colleagues to deliver the union's national training," said Karen. "It was a job I really enjoyed and I'm going to miss working with our fantastic reps on a daily basis.

"I'm really excited about this new opportunity. I'm looking forward to working with others to ensure Usdaw training continues to equip our reps for the important job they do in their workplaces and continues to be widely regarded as the best training and development offered by the trade union movement. I particularly look forward to delivering Academy2, national training programmes and area organiser training, because it will give me the chance to work directly with our reps and officials, keeping me in touch with the issues that matter to them."

## MARK BIBBY

**Usdaw training officer Mark Bibby is set to retire in April after 16 years' working in the union's education and training department.**

Mark started his working life as a shipbuilder in Barrow-in-Furness where he was an active member of the shipyard joint negotiating committee and senior rep. He went on to study

economics at Ruskin College and spent time teaching in India and Sri Lanka.

In 2003 Mark graduated from the University of Central Lancashire with a teaching degree. Before joining Usdaw, Mark was a training officer in the Trade Union and Labour Studies department at Preston College.

"I've really enjoyed working for Usdaw, in particular working with the reps who do an incredible job standing up for colleagues simply because that's the sort of people they are," said Mark, 59. "I'm most proud of all the friends I've made with the reps too, friendships which I hope will last a lifetime.

"In my retirement I'm hoping to do lots of travelling abroad."

## ANDREW SADLER

**Former Tesco driver and Usdaw rep Andy Sadler is the new area organiser in the Midlands division.**

Andy, who started the role in November, has completed both Academies and was also the in-store health and safety rep and union learning rep.

"My background is in engineering and when I left school trade unions were extremely prevalent so I've been involved with the movement for a long time," said Andy, 56, who will be based out of the Redditch office. "I joined Usdaw on the first day that I started working at Tesco 11 years ago. I was appalled at the lack of health and safety, especially around vehicles and manual handling, so I decided to become the health and safety rep and then increasingly became more active.

"I'm already really enjoying the position of area organiser. I've been shadowing other organisers, going into workplaces and chatting with the reps. It's been a good way to get started.

"I'm most looking forward to developing my own relationships and getting out there to support and help the members and reps."



Mark Bibby



Andrew Sadler



# SUPPORTING MEMBERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH

A useful resource for reps when it comes to dealing with mental health issues in the workplace

**O**ne in four people will experience a mental health issue at some point in their lives. So as a rep, it's highly likely that at some point you'll be called upon to help a member who's struggling with depression, anxiety or stress – particularly if their condition starts to affect their performance at work.

It can be difficult for members to speak up about a mental health problem due to a fear of being judged, so a well-informed rep can make a real difference.

Usdaw's guide *Supporting Members with Mental Health Issues* is an invaluable resource for all Usdaw reps. You'll find an overview of the most common mental health conditions, and guidance for talking to members who might be affected by them.

It also contains a guide to mental health and the Equality Act (DDA in Northern Ireland) and a list of support organisations to help members get more expert help.

**Visit:**  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/401](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/401)

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

## NEW IN!

### Leaflets

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

**Together Against Hate**  
(Leaflet 447)

**10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw**  
(Leaflet 261)

### Factsheets

**Leaving Your Workplace Pension Scheme or Stopping Contributions**  
(Pensions Factsheet PS LWPSA4)

**Maternity Leave and Pensions**  
(Pensions Factsheet PS MATA4)

### Online courses

**CV Writing - IT bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting)

**Mental health course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse)

**Pensions home study**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy)

**Shop 'til you Drop - Maths bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/maths](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/maths)

**Summertime Songbirds - English bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime)

**Vulnerable Workers Home Study**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy5](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy5)

**Staying Safe Online course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/SafeOnline](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/SafeOnline)

# OVER TO YOU

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:  
**network@usdaw.org.uk**  
or write to:  
**The Editor, Network, Usdaw,  
188 Wilmslow Road,  
Manchester, M14 6LJ**





**Pictured left:** Usdaw Cardiff office staff raise £115 for the Cardiff City Hospice by holding a quiz and tombola; North Eastern deputy divisional officer Cathy Godfrey celebrates 30 years Usdaw membership; and Usdaw Central Office collect donations for local charity The Wood Street Mission.



**Pictured L-R:** Mental health first aid course for reps in South Wales and Western division; Tim Dark being presented with the Frank Soan award for his exceptional recruitment and organising skills by Southern divisional officer Sue Merrell; and a festive noticeboard at Sainsbury's/Argos RFC Purleyway, Croydon.



**Pictured L-R:** Promoting pensions at Tesco Walsall; Croydon Tesco Express and Sainsbury's Local students celebrate passing their English course; and Paddy Lillis campaigning to Save Our Shops in Bradley Stoke with Labour Councillor Mhairi Threlfall.

save the date

# Parents & Carers SPOTLIGHT DAY 13 May 2020

**Cut  
Short?**

Support Usdaw's call for an  
increase in statutory maternity,  
paternity and adoption pay

#SPC2020

*Usdaw*

Campaigning  
For Equality