

Politics in Action

Making Change Happen



**Executive Council Statement to the
2002 Annual Delegate Meeting**

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At the Labour Party Conference 2001, Usdaw received the prestigious 'Best Practice Award' for the best General Election Campaign of any trade union in 2001.

Foreword by Bill Connor, General Secretary

2001 has been a good year for Labour and a good year for Usdaw's political profile.

The Labour Party have been elected for a full second term in office, for the first time ever, and with hardly any seats lost from the historic landslide in 1997.

Usdaw have had a high profile in the Party – we helped 26 MPs in marginal seats to election victory, saw two of our members stand for Parliament, one of them (Parmjit Dhanda) being successfully elected, we saw our Christmas Day Trading Bill pass all of its stages in the House of Lords and receive massive support from MPs in the House of Commons and local newspapers around the country, we have successfully lobbied for improvements to paid Paternity and Adoption Leave in the Employment Bill and we saw our election materials – carrier bags, balloons, posters and stickers bearing the message of Usdaw and Labour in almost every constituency in the country, and many national papers as well. **Thank you to all of our members and officials who worked so hard to make all that happen.**

Now we need to make sure that we continue to influence the political process at every level, and to do that we need even more of our members and activists to get involved in campaigns, and to make Usdaw's voice heard throughout the Labour Party.

That's what this Statement is about – it contains a series of campaigns based on issues that our members have asked us to act on. In this booklet are the information and the materials – the standard letters, the petitions, the order forms and the know-how for every activist and every branch to help us to campaign for the issues that are important to our members, to raise Usdaw's profile and to make change happen.

Introduction

Politics is an important part of Usdaw's service to our members. Often there are changes needed that cannot be done by negotiation with an employer, but require a change in law or government policy.

An important part of Usdaw's politics is that the issues that the Union campaigns on reflect the concerns and aspirations of our members. Usdaw also works in an inclusive manner, aiming to include as many members as possible in our political campaigning.

This Executive Council Statement sets out our political campaigning priorities for the coming year. It explains how Usdaw members can easily become involved in political campaigning and pursue issues of concern.

The Statement also identifies practical activities that members can do to take their first steps into political campaigning. It could be writing to your MP asking him or her to support the Christmas Day (Trading) Bill, or sending information to Central Office about someone you know who is discriminated against because of the Lower Earnings Limit. All these activities will make a real difference to Usdaw's political campaigning.

This document is a resource for the coming year. As a members' representative at the Annual Delegate Meeting, please take it back to your branch and ensure that as many of your colleagues as possible are given the opportunity to participate in Usdaw's political campaigns.

By the strength of our common endeavour we achieve more than we achieve alone.

General Election Report 2001: The Usdaw Campaign

Introduction

Udaw ran the most comprehensive and wide-ranging campaign of any trade union in a General Election, with the specific aims of:

- Campaigning on the issues of most concern to our members.
- Encouraging our members to engage in the political process by voting and helping Labour to victory.
- Supporting the campaigns of the MPs in the Usdaw group and the campaigns of our 26 target seats.
- Raising awareness of Usdaw within the Labour Movement, and promoting understanding of the issues of importance to our members.

Achievements

Notable successes are:

- We assisted in 26 Key Seats, the greatest number of any trade union.
- All of Usdaw's 26 Key Seats were won by Labour with many achieving a further swing to Labour.
- All Usdaw MPs were returned to Parliament.
- Usdaw's profile was raised massively all over the country by the information leaflets and the election materials, which were used in almost every seat in the country.
- Although Workplace Visits were slow to start, many MPs visited Usdaw workplaces during the campaign, meeting reps and members, and improving their understanding of Usdaw and the issues affecting our members.
- Many of our members engaged with the campaign, and with Usdaw, through the all-member mailings, which received an overwhelmingly positive response from members.

Udaw was recognised as having run the best General Election campaign of any of the affiliated trade unions. For this Usdaw was given the prestigious 'Best Practice Award' at the 2001 Labour Party Annual Conference.

Detailed below are the different aspects of the campaign.

All-Member Mailing 1: March 2001

This mailing was sent to all members over 18 years old and paying the political levy. The intention of the mailing was to encourage members to vote at the General Election by talking about issues.

From this mailing we received over 3,000 applications for postal votes and over 800 requests for information on becoming an Usdaw activist. All those asking about becoming activists received further information and a telephone call from the appropriate Area Organiser.

All-Member Mailing 2: April 2001

This went out after the election had been called. The mailing included:

A leaflet explaining the differences in policies between Labour and the Tories, focussing on workplace issues, a further postal vote form, an Usdaw *Vote Labour* poster, a *Your Say* form and a leaflet encouraging members to recruit a friend to the Union.

From this mailing we received over 3,000 responses with members' views and around 300 offers of help in the election which were passed on to the relevant Labour candidate.

Endorsers: February – March 2001

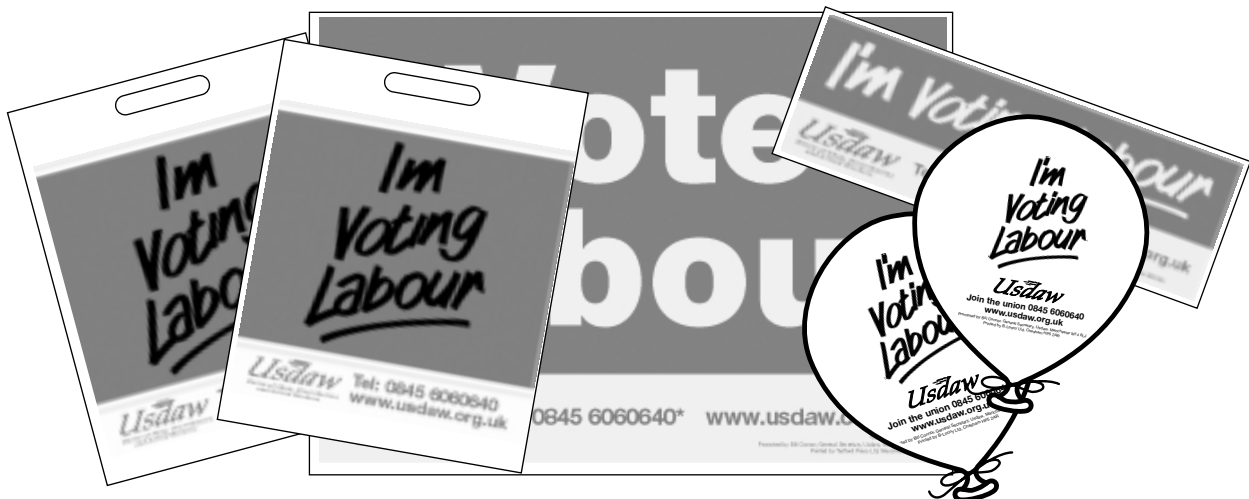
From assessing the new rights and benefits for people in work introduced by Labour it became clear that the vast majority of our members would have benefited in one way or another. We then set about finding members who would be prepared to endorse Labour on the basis of what the Government had done for them.



On 14 March 2001 we took 16 Usdaw endorsers down to the House of Commons to meet Tony Blair. All 16 had benefited from different measures introduced by Labour. Endorsers were then found for MPs to use in their election leaflets and videos.

Election Materials

We produced materials to aid campaigning that were branded with the Usdaw logo, telephone number and web site, and carried the message *I'm Voting Labour*. The materials were carrier bags, balloons, car stickers, lapel stickers and window posters. These materials proved to be very popular with the candidates and featured many times in national and local newspaper coverage.



Issue Leaflets: Rights at Work and Pensioners

Two leaflets were produced, *Labour – Helping Pensioners* and *Your New Rights At Work*. Both leaflets were aimed at trumpeting the gains made under Labour, providing practical information on how to claim these new rights and encouraging an awareness of trade unions and the role that they play in helping people gain rights at work and pension rights. The leaflets proved to be very popular with candidates, who used them on street stalls and whilst canvassing.

Social Events for Usdaw Members to meet their MP

In all Usdaw Key Seats MPs were offered the opportunity to arrange a social event and invite all Usdaw members. The invitations also included a response form for members to give their views to their local MP.

Workplace Visits

Many workplace visits took place after the date of the election had been announced. We had tried to get the message over to candidates that it is much better visiting workplaces before the full-blown campaign starts. This helps in building a relationship with our members, overcomes many problems with the employers about electioneering and stops people being cynical about politicians only being around at election time. However, MPs' diary commitments and time commitments on Area Organisers before the campaign did place limits.

Telephone Canvassing

A number of Usdaw offices organised a telephone bank and some members went to work in Labour Party telephone banks.

Postal Vote Campaign

All our activists received a pack encouraging them to sign-up colleagues at work for a postal vote, this included forms, a briefing paper and a poster to display on the Union noticeboard. The combined efforts of this campaign produced over 3,000 postal vote applications, which is more than twice that achieved by any other affiliated Union.



"The General Election was very hard work but very worthwhile. Usdaw was able to give a lot of support to the campaign in Thanet South and our efforts were very much appreciated. In fact the MP, Stephen Ladyman, has now joined Usdaw and sits on our Parliamentary Group".

Dennis Hart, Usdaw Key Seat Co-ordinator in Thanet South Constituency.



"This was my first time as a parliamentary candidate and I count myself fortunate to have the backing of my Union, Usdaw. I had a tremendous amount of help from Usdaw, not least with all the campaign materials they supplied".

John McKay, Usdaw Parliamentary Candidate for Labour in Torbay Constituency.



"I am new to political work and I thoroughly enjoyed helping out in Chester constituency with an Usdaw team. The best bit was when we found out that we had held the seat despite it being very marginal, that's when you know that the work you did was worth it".

Lynette McDermott, Usdaw volunteer helper in the City of Chester Constituency.

Local Government Elections: 2 May 2002

On Thursday, 2 May 2002, there will be Council elections in England in:

- All 32 London Boroughs.
- All 36 Metropolitan Districts.
- 88 of the 238 Shire Districts.
- 18 of the 46 unitary authorities.

Please see *page 11* for a full list of authorities holding elections. There are no ordinary local elections in Scotland or Wales this year, although some Councils may have by-elections.

What Councils Do

Councils affect all our lives. They are responsible for delivering important services, including:

- Education (pre-school education and schools).
- Housing.
- Social Services.
- Local transport.
- Police and fire brigade (via the local police and fire authorities).

Councils are mainly funded by Central Government, but they also levy a Council Tax payable by all householders. Councils set their own level of Council Tax, within government guidelines, depending on what services they provide.

Councillors

Each council area is split into wards, which are represented by one or more councillors. Their job is to represent the ward and its residents on Council Committees. Councillors, collectively decide:

- What services the council provides.
- How much money is needed to fund the services.
- How much householders will have to pay each year in Council Tax.

Councillors are usually elected for a four-year term, unless there is a by-election. If your council doesn't have ordinary elections, there may be a by-election in your electoral ward. Check your local press for details.

Make sure you are Registered to Vote

All residents over 18 can vote in local elections as long as they are a United Kingdom, Commonwealth, Irish or EU citizen.

However, you **must** be on the electoral register before you can vote. You can check if you are on the electoral register by contacting your local council.

Voting

In general there are two ways to vote:

- Going to your local polling station.
- By post.

This year there are also some experiments with internet, digital television and mobile phone voting in Liverpool and Sheffield.

Going to a Polling Station

Polling stations are open on Thursday, 2 May 2002, between 8.00 am and 9.00 pm. A polling card will be delivered to your home a few days before polling day, telling you where the polling station is. When you arrive to vote at the polling station you simply give the polling clerk your name and address and she/he will give you a ballot paper and tell you what to do. (You do not need the polling card to vote.)

Voting by Post

Postal voting is by far the easiest way to vote. You need to apply for a postal vote by sending a completed application form to your local council, to arrive before **5.00 pm on Wednesday, 24 April 2002**. You can use the form on *page 10*. Once you have applied, a ballot paper will be sent to your home, with a reply paid envelope and instructions on how to cast your vote.

Having a postal vote means that you don't have to go to the polling station between 8.00 am and 9.00 pm on polling day. It is especially useful for people who:

- Work long or variable hours.
- Have caring responsibilities.
- Work away from home or travel long distances to get to work.
- Have trouble getting out.

Anyone who is on the electoral register can apply for a postal vote, however, if you apply for one and don't need it, you can still deliver your vote at the polling station.

Helping Labour to Win

Labour Party candidates are always grateful for help from Usdaw members with their election campaigns. You do not need to be a member of the Labour Party and you can give as much or as little time as you can afford. It is rewarding work (especially if your candidate wins) and it is fun to do particularly as part of a group of Usdaw members.

There are a number of activities that need to be done including leafleting door-to-door, talking to voters on the doorstep or by telephone, helping with street stalls, clerical work and data inputting into computers. No experience is necessary and training is available for all activities.

If you would like to help Labour to victory please telephone 08705 900 200 and they will put you in touch with your local Labour Party campaign team.

Action Checklist

- Make sure you are registered to vote.
- Apply for a postal vote (by Wednesday, 24 April 2002).
- Use your vote on 2 May 2002.
- Help Labour to win.

Application for a Postal Vote

Yes, I want to vote by post rather than at the polling station

About yourself

Full name _____

Address on register _____

Postcode _____

Present address if different from above _____

Postcode _____

Telephone number (if any) _____

Please give here the address to which your ballot paper should be sent

Postcode _____

My application is for all parliamentary and local government elections for an indefinite period

Alternatively: I would like my application to be for the election(s) held on: / / (insert date)

Or: for the period from / / (insert date) to / / (insert date)

Postal votes can be cancelled at any time

Return the completed application to the electoral registration officer for the constituency in which you are registered

Your signature _____

Date _____

Local Elections 2002

Shire District Councils Electing by Thirds In 2002

Adur, Amber Valley, Barrow, Basildon, Basingstoke and Deane, Bassetlaw, Bedford, Brentwood, Broadland, Broxbourne, Burnley, Cambridge, Cannock Chase, Carlisle, Cheltenham, Cherwell, Chester, Chorley, Colchester, Congleton, Craven, Crawley, Crewe and Nantwich, Daventry, Eastbourne, Eastleigh, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Elmbridge, Epping Forest, Exeter, Fareham, Gloucester, Gosport, Great Yarmouth, Harlow, Harrogate, Hart, Hastings, Havant, Hertsmere, Huntingdonshire, Hyndburn, Ipswich, Lincoln, Macclesfield, Maidstone, Mole Valley, Newcastle-under-Lyme, North Hertfordshire, Norwich, Nuneaton and Bedworth, Oxford, Pendle, Penwith, Preston, Purbeck, Redditch, Reigate and Banstead, Rochford, Rossendale, Rugby, Runnymede, Rushmoor, St Albans, Shrewsbury and Atcham, South Bedfordshire, South Cambridgeshire, South Lakeland, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Swale, Tamworth, Tandridge, Three Rivers, Tunbridge Wells, Watford, Waveney, Welwyn Hatfield, West Lancashire, West Lindsey, West Oxfordshire, Weymouth and Portland, Winchester, Woking, Worcester, Worthing, Wyre Forest.

Unitary Councils Electing by Thirds in 2002

Blackburn with Darwen, Bristol, Derby, Halton, Hartlepool, Hull, Milton Keynes, Peterborough, Portsmouth, Reading, Slough, Southampton, Southend, Stoke, Swindon, Thurrock, Warrington, Wokingham, Westminster.

London Boroughs Electing by Whole Council in 2002

Barking and Dagenham, Barnet, Bexley, Brent, Bromley, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Enfield, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harringey, Harrow, Havering, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston-upon-Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames, Southwark, Sutton, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Wandsworth.

Metropolitan District Councils Electing by Thirds in 2002

Barnsley, Birmingham, Bolton, Bradford, Bury, Calderdale, Coventry, Doncaster, Dudley, Gateshead, Kirklees, Knowsley, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North Tyneside, Oldham, Rochdale, Rotherham, Salford, Sandwell, Sefton, Sheffield, Solihull, South Tyneside, St Helens, Stockport, Sunderland, Tameside, Trafford, Wakefield, Walsall, Wigan, Wirral, Wolverhampton.

The Protect Christmas Day Campaign

Introduction

Usdaw is seeking to address an anomaly in the Sunday Trading Act 1994. Currently shops larger than 280 square metres are allowed to open on Christmas Day, unless it falls on a Sunday. We want trading on Christmas Day for large stores to be outlawed regardless of the day of the week it falls on.

The Campaign

The Christmas Day (Trading) Bill has now passed all its stages in the House of Lords and has been sent to the House of Commons for consideration. Gwyneth Dunwoody MP will be in charge of the Bill whilst it is in the Commons.

The main problem with getting the Bill passed is there being enough time in the House of Commons for it to be debated and voted on.

Petition

To date there have been two petitions attracting over 250,000 signatures from members of the public and shopworkers alike.

The first petition was to the House of Commons calling for the introduction of legislation to outlaw Christmas Day trading. It was presented in January 2001.

The second petition is to the Department of Trade and Industry and is reproduced in this Statement on *page 15*. Please photocopy this petition and get as many signatures as you can.

Letter Writing

This campaign has been very well received by Members of Parliament and we have a lot of support for our campaign. However it is important that we keep reminding MPs that we need the Christmas Day (Trading) Bill to become law.

The best way to lobby an MP is by individual letters from their constituents. In this Statement on *page 13* you will find a standard letter to send to your own MP. Please feel free to copy this letter to your colleagues, friends and relatives so that they can support our campaign to protect Christmas Day by writing to their MP.

If you don't know who your MP is you can find out by:

- Contacting or visiting your local library or council offices.
- Ringing the House of Commons on 020-7219 3000 and asking for Public Information.
- Visiting the House of Commons Constituency Locata service on the internet at: www.locata.co.uk/commons

Action Checklist

- Use the petition to get as many signatures as possible from colleagues, friends and relatives.
- Write to your local Member of Parliament asking him or her to support the Christmas Day (Trading) Bill.

To: _____ MP

Date as Postmark

House of Commons

London

SW1A 0AA

Dear _____ MP

Christmas Day (Trading) Bill

I write as one of your constituents and as a member of Usdaw, the Shopworkers' Union, to urge you to support the above Bill when it comes before the House of Commons.

You will be aware that Usdaw has been running a high profile campaign to protect Christmas Day for Britain's 2.6 million shopworkers. This House of Lords Private Member's Bill will ensure that large stores are not able to open on Christmas Day. The Bill has almost completed its stages in the House of Lords and will soon come to the House of Commons.

As my MP, I would like you to sign Early Day Motion 167 indicating your support for our campaign.

This is an issue of great importance to a large number of your constituents. On average there are 4,000 shopworkers in a parliamentary constituency.

I would welcome your views on this matter and an indication of whether, in principle, you would vote for the Bill when it comes before the House of Commons.

Yours sincerely

Name: _____

Address: _____

PS: I would be grateful if you could copy your reply to my General Secretary, Bill Connor, at Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ.

MPs Supporting Early Day Motion 167 to Protect Christmas Day

EDM 167: Christmas Day

That this House cherishes Christmas Day as a special day, particularly for families and children, and welcomes the campaign by Usdaw, the Shopworkers' Union, on behalf of the 2.6 million shopworkers of the United Kingdom; regrets that many shops remain open on Christmas Day because employers put undue pressure on shopworkers to abandon their family responsibilities on this important religious and public holiday; notes that the vast majority of shopworkers are parents who should be able to spend Christmas with their children; also notes that current law offers no protection to such workers when Christmas Day does not fall on a Sunday; further notes that Christmas is an extremely busy and stressful period for shopworkers and believes that they deserve at least one day off; and calls on the Government to protect shopworkers on Christmas Day.

Gwyneth Dunwoody

Diane Abbott	Irene Adams	Donald Anderson
Candy Atherton	Norman Baker	Harry Barnes
John Barrett	John Battle	Anne Begg
Roy Beggs	AJ Beith	Joe Benton
Roger Berry	Harold Best	Peter Bottomley
Virginia Bottomley	Colin Breed	Russell Brown
Colin Burgon	Vincent Cable	Ronnie Campbell
Martin Caton	David Chaytor	Michael Clapham
Helen Clark	Tony Clarke	David Clelland
Ian Coleman	Jeremy Corbyn	Brian Cotter
Jim Cousins	Ross Cranston	David Crausby
Jon Cruddas	Ann Cryer	John Cummings
Jim Cunningham	Tony Cunningham	Valerie Davey
Ian Davidson	Denzil Davies	Geraint Davies
Terry Davis	Janet Dean	Andrew Dismore
David Drew	Huw Edwards	Bill Etherington
Paul Farrelly	Frank Field	George Galloway
Andrew George	Neil Gerrard	Dr Ian Gibson
Sandra Gidley	Roger Godsiff	Win Griffiths
John Grogan	Stephen Hepburn	Lady Hermon
Kate Hoey	Kelvin Hopkins	Simon Hughes
Joan Humble	Dr Brian Iddon	Eric Illsley
Glenda Jackson	Helen Jones	Jon Owen Jones
Lynne Jones	Nigel Jones	David Kidney
Jackie Lawrence	David Lepper	Elfyn Llwyd
Ian Lucas	John Mann	Rob Marris
Eric Martlew	John McDonnell	Kevin McNamara
Tony McWalter	John McWilliam	Laura Moffatt
Julie Morgan	Dr Doug Naysmith	Edward O'Hara
Dr Nick Palmer	Linda Perham	Colin Pickthall
Peter L Pike	Chris Pond	Gordon Prentice
Joyce Quinn	Andrew Rosindell	Joan Ruddock
Bob Russell	Mohammad Sarwar	Andrew Selous
Jonathan R Shaw	Alan Simpson	Dennis Skinner
Bob Spink	David Stewart	Andrew Stunell
Mark Tami	David Taylor	Simon Thomas
Mark Todd	Jenny Tonge	Desmond Turner
Rudi Vis	Robert N Wareing	Tom Watson
Steve Webb	Brian White	Betty Williams
David Wilshire	Ann Winterton	Nicholas Winterton
Tony Worthington	David Wright	

Protect Christmas Day and New Year's Day in Scotland Campaign

Introduction

When the Sunday Trading Act 1994 was passed in Westminster, it was not believed necessary to protect shopworkers on Sundays, Christmas Day or New Year's Day in Scotland. This effectively brought in total deregulation of trading hours in Scotland.

Shopworkers in England and Wales, and subsequently Northern Ireland, enjoy restricted trading hours, for shops over 280 square metres (sqm), on all Sundays with a complete ban on opening on Easter Sunday and Christmas Day when it falls on a Sunday. In Scotland shops are allowed to open 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Usdaw's Proposal

We are seeking for the Scottish Parliament to legislate so that shops larger than 280 sqm (3,000 square feet) will not be allowed to trade on Christmas Day or New Year's Day.

The Campaign

Usdaw is seeking support from MSPs for a Private Member's Bill, which is currently being drafted, to be presented to the Scottish Parliament. The Bill will outlaw trading in shops over 280 sqm on Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Usdaw is also seeking to enlist the support of the people of Scotland by running a petition to be presented to the Scottish Parliament. A copy of the petition is reproduced in this Statement on page 17. Please photocopy this petition and get as many signatures as you can.

Action Checklist

- Use the petition to get as many signatures as possible from colleagues, friends and relatives.

Workplace Visits

Inviting Labour Representatives to your Branch or Workplace

Labour Representatives – MPs, MEPs, and Members of the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly are often only too keen to visit workplaces and it's much easier for them to do so when there isn't an election going on.

It can also be very useful for Usdaw members for several reasons:

- They can discuss issues of importance to them, and local issues which the representatives may be able to help with. (It's much easier for them to help when they're not involved in an election).
- The politicians may be able to inform members about policies that will help us, for example, the statutory recognition for Union Learning Reps or the new Tax Credits that are available to all low paid workers, not just parents.
- You can also invite them to meet your management to discuss ways in which they may be able to harness help for the company, this gives us more respect in the workplace.

Many Usdaw members have invited their local Labour representatives to their workplace and have found it very useful for engaging with members and building a relationship with the local politician, who can then be contacted again if specific issues come up.

Many managers welcome a visit from the local political representatives and even those who are sceptical don't tend to mind, as long as they are consulted, the visit doesn't interfere with work and there is no party political campaigning.

The best visits aren't about overt campaigning, but about Labour politicians meeting with our reps and members in an informal way, often in the staff canteen during a break.

Who can I invite?

Members of Parliament (MPs)

Every area has an MP. MPs can tell you about most legislation affecting workplaces, including workplace rights, in-work benefits and tax credits and local issues, although they may have to refer to a local council to get local issues actioned.

Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

MEPs are elected by region, so every region has some Labour MEPs. In most regions, the Labour MEPs divide up the vast area that they cover so there will be one that covers the area where your workplace is.

MEPs can tell you about legislation that started in Europe, such as the Working Time Directive, the Parental Leave Directive and the Information and Consultation Directive. They can also be very helpful on regional issues such as transport or on helping to access European funding.

Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs)

MSPs are elected by constituency and by region, so almost all areas of Scotland have an MSP representative. MSPs deal with issues of health, education (including lifelong learning), trading hours, transport and business issues in Scotland.

Members of the Welsh Assembly (AMs)

AMs are also elected by constituency and by region and most areas of Wales have a constituency or regional Labour AM. AMs deal with health, education (including lifelong learning) and transport issues.

To Find Out who your Labour Representative is and to Contact Them

Call Usdaw's Political Office on 0161-249 2452. If you give us the postcode of your workplace, we can tell you who your Labour representative is and how to contact them.

Most representatives work at Parliament (at Westminster, Brussels or Edinburgh) or the Assembly in Cardiff from Monday to Thursday and have Fridays and weekends for constituency work. The best time to invite them is therefore usually Fridays, but if this is difficult at your workplace, most have September for further constituency work and are available in the constituency throughout that month.

Checklist for Arranging a Visit for your Labour Representative

1. For a Workplace Visit, check that your manager agrees first. If they don't, you could consider inviting the Labour representative to a branch meeting at or near the workplace, or to a Federation School.
2. Ring Usdaw's Political Office on 0161-249 2452 to find out who would be the best Labour representative to invite from your area and to get their contact details.
3. Contact their office to arrange a date and time. They may not be free for several weeks, but this isn't because they don't want to come along, just that they do get lots of invitations and their diaries become full for some time.
4. Make a schedule for the visit of what will be happening and when and send copies to your manager and the Labour representative's office. For example:

9.30 am	Meet at reception.
9.35 am	Meet the manager.
9.50 am	Tour of the site with the manager and reps.
10.10 am	Meet members and reps in the canteen during their break.
11.00 am	End of visit.
5. Put up a poster a week before to let everyone know the visit is happening and so they can prepare any questions they may want to ask.
6. On the day, meet them and accompany them throughout the visit.
7. Afterwards, write to thank them for coming and to ask if they will follow up any questions or issues that members raised with them during the visit.

Campaigning Against the Exclusion of Part-Time Workers from Benefits

The Issue

Currently 2.4 million working people are excluded from many basic benefits simply because they earn, on average, less than £72.00 per week.

This means that unlike higher paid workers, they cannot claim:

- Statutory Sick Pay if they become ill.
- Incapacity Benefit if they have a long-term illness.
- Job-Seekers' Allowance if they lose their job.
- State Pension entitlement for when they retire.

Who is affected?

This limit (called the Lower Earnings Limit) affects thousands of Usdaw members, including many who:

- Have more than one job. (For National Insurance contribution purposes, each job is counted separately and you need to earn more than £72.00 per week from one job to qualify).
- Work 16 hours a week and claim Working Families' Tax Credit or Disabled Person's Tax Credit.
- Are young people, working for less than the full minimum wage.
- Having varying hours, if they earn less than £72.00 per week over an 8 week period, as many of our members on flexible hours contracts do at slack times.

What is Usdaw doing?

Udaw is campaigning for those currently excluded from benefits to be entitled to them if they earn more than £30.00 per week, but without them having to pay extra contributions. The Labour Government have already given benefit entitlement to thousands of people who earn between £72.00 and £85.00 per week (the level at which the Lower Earnings Limit used to be set). These people do not have to pay contributions.

How can you help?

Personal stories and examples of people affected make our campaigning much more powerful.

Is there anyone in your workplace or who you know who has not been able to claim benefits such as Sick Pay, Incapacity Benefit or Job Seekers' Allowance, or who ended up with a very low state pension entitlement because they had more than one job, or they did not earn enough?

If so, please fill in the details on the form on the next page. (All examples used to show the government the effect of this exclusion will be used anonymously (with no names) unless the person concerned gives their permission).

People Excluded from Benefits by Earning Less than the Lower Earnings Limit

Your Name: _____

Your Workplace: _____

Phone Number: _____

Who was affected? _____

When was this (roughly)? Month _____ Year _____

Which benefit did they not get? _____

Why didn't they qualify? (eg had 2 jobs/hours were cut) _____

How did this affect them? _____

Many thanks for taking the time to complete these details.

Please return this to: Ruth Stoney, Political Officer, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ or Fax to 0161-257 2566.

If you need more forms, please photocopy this one or request more from the Political Office on 0161-249 2452.

Helping to Make Labour Party Policy

The Labour Party's system of making policy has been devised so that as many Labour Party and union members as possible can get involved.

Policies on each subject area take two years of consultation and debate before they are finalised and it is important for us to make sure that as Usdaw members, we have our say.

The Labour Party are producing Policy Papers on the ten main policy areas, five this year and five next year. The Policy Papers are about 10 pages long, but they include summaries of the key points and questions for groups to debate and respond to.

Labour's Policy Making Process

- A 'First Year Policy Paper' is produced on which local Labour Parties and trade unions have the opportunity to consult and send responses.
- These responses are then discussed by members of Labour's National Policy Forum (on which Usdaw have four representatives).
- Areas on which there is general agreement are included in the second version of the Policy Paper on which there is a final round of consultation.
- The National Policy Forum is then able to vote on amendments.
- The final papers are voted on at Labour Party Conference and used as the basis for the Party's next manifesto.

Whilst Usdaw will be producing responses at a national level, based on policies passed at ADM, many branches may also wish to discuss particular papers or issues and make their own responses based on issues that are particularly important to them.

Getting your branch Involved

- Branches or Federations can request copies of the Policy Papers and questions by using the form opposite.
- You can then hold a discussion at your next branch meeting or federation school.
- You could invite your local Labour MP to introduce the policy area. (Contact them at the House of Commons on 020-7219 3000).
- Make a note of the points raised by members and send them to Ruth Stoney, Political Officer at Central Office. If several branches raise the same issue, it can be incorporated into Usdaw's main response.

The more our members get involved, the more seriously Usdaw's responses will be taken. So if you're stuck for a subject for your next branch meeting or federation school, look no further!

Order Form: Labour Party Policy Papers

Please tick the box for the papers on areas that your Branch are most interested in discussing. These will be sent to you with some guidelines on how to make your response. Papers on other policy areas will be available in 2003.

Trade and Industry

Includes:

- Building a fair and flexible labour market
- Boosting competition and empowering consumers
- Promoting innovation and enterprise
- Building a green economy
- Prosperity for all regions

Welfare Reform

Includes:

- Tackling unemployment through welfare to work
- Making work pay
- Easing the return to work
- Tackling child poverty
- Tackling pensioner poverty
- Helping tomorrow's pensioners

Health

Includes:

- Creating a healthy Britain and reducing inequalities
- Reform of health services (making the NHS more responsive)
- Investment to increase the capacity of the NHS
- Social care, including more support for carers

Democracy, Citizenship & Political Engagement

Includes:

- Empowering people to take part in their communities
- Strengthening democracy and encouraging involvement
- Promoting more cohesive communities, equality and tolerance

Britain in the World

Includes:

- Tackling world poverty and promoting global justice
- Working for peace and security in an uncertain world
- A stronger Britain in a stronger Europe
- Helping the international community to tackle global issues

Name: _____ Branch: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____ E-mail: _____

Please send to: Ruth Stoney, Political Officer, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ or Fax on 0161-257 2566.

Recruiting Labour Party Members

Joining the Labour Party

There is no doubt that the more Usdaw members who are also individual Labour Party members the better placed we are to influence policy.

Individual Labour Party members are able to:

- Put points of view over at meetings with MPs and elected officials and at policy forums that help decide Labour's policy.
- Help Usdaw campaign for policies that our members need, such as higher minimum wage, better rates for young workers, paid parental leave and to protect Christmas Day.
- Join in debates, social events and help at elections, and have a good time.
- Vote in the selection of all Labour candidates or stand as a Labour candidate themselves (after one year's membership).

On *page 25* is a membership application form. Usdaw members, who pay the political levy, are able to join at a special rate of £7.00 per year and get their first year's membership free if they pay by Direct Debit.

Please make use of this form, photocopy it and pass it on to other members to encourage them to join the Labour Party.

Affiliating your Usdaw branch to the Labour Party

Every Usdaw branch is entitled to affiliate to any Constituency Labour Party where they have at least one member living there. By affiliating the branch is entitled to:

- Participate in local Labour Party campaigns.
- Receive regular information on what the local Labour Party, MPs and Councillors are doing.
- Take part in deciding who Labour's candidate will be at the General Election.

On *page 26* is an affiliation application form. Usdaw branches are able to affiliate at a rate of £6.00 per year.

Usdaw Delegates

Each Usdaw branch that affiliates to a Constituency Labour Party is entitled to send at least one delegate to the constituency meetings. This entitles them to:


- Send resolutions to the Constituency Labour Party promoting the branch's views and Usdaw's policies.
- Have a say in how the constituency conducts its business and help choose its political campaigning priorities.
- Hear a report from the Member of Parliament (if she/he is Labour), usually every month, and have the opportunity to ask questions.

Once your branch is affiliated to the Constituency Labour Party you don't have to pay anything extra to appoint delegates. Simply use the form on *page 26* to notify the Constituency Labour Party of who you have appointed.

Application Form to Join the Labour Party

Join Labour today


I wish to become a member of The Labour Party. Usdaw members paying the political levy can join at special rate of £7 per year.



BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE and ✓ the box where appropriate.

Surname	Title
Forename(s)	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
Branch/Workplace	
Address	
	Town
County	Postcode (in full)
Date of Birth	Tel No.
Signed	Date

Complete the Direct Debit to get your first year's membership FREE

Name and full postal address of your Bank or Building Society Branch							
To: The Manager							
Bank or Building Society							
Address	Originator's Identification Number						
Postcode	<table border="1" style="border-collapse: collapse; width: 100px; height: 20px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">9</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="width: 20px; text-align: center;">0</td> </tr> </table>	9	7	1	4	1	0
9	7	1	4	1	0		
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Branch sort code	<p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">Instruction to your Bank or Building Society. Please pay the Labour Party Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction, subject to the safeguards assured by The Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with the Labour Party and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.</p>						
Signature(s)	Date						

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions for some types of account.

Other methods of payment

I would like to pay my membership by continuous credit card mandate for this year and on my annual renewal date until further notice and have filled in my credit card details below.	or	I would like to pay my membership by credit/debit card for this year only.								
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Labour Visa Card <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard		<input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Labour Visa Card <input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard <input type="checkbox"/> Switch								
Card number		Expiry date Issue no. (Switch only)								
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Name of cardholder as it appears on your card		<input type="checkbox"/> by cheque payable to The Labour Party or <input type="checkbox"/> Cash								
<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>										

Recruited by: Name
Ushaw Branch No. (See membership card)

On completion please send this form to: Ushaw, FREEPOST, Manchester M14 7DJ

Published by Ushaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6LJ

Application for Constituency Labour Party Affiliation Fees

Central Office Form AY

Application for Constituency Labour Party Affiliation Fees



Please fill in all the white boxes on this form in **BLOCK LETTERS** and send it to:
Accounts Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.

Branch Name	Branch No.
-------------	------------

Labour Party correspondence should be sent to:

Name of Branch Official _____

Position in Branch _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone No. _____

1

Name of GC Delegate _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone No. _____

e-mail _____

2

Name of GC Delegate _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone No. _____

e-mail _____

Calendar year covered by affiliation fee	<input type="text"/>	Number of members to be affiliated (minimum 100)	<input type="text"/>	Total fee claimed @ 6p per member (minimum £6)	£ <input type="text"/>
--	----------------------	--	----------------------	--	------------------------

Signed

Please give the following details of the Constituency Labour Party to which the Branch wishes to affiliate.
Payment will be made direct from Central Office.

Name of Constituency Labour Party

CLP Code (For Office use only)

Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

January 2002

Conclusion

Conclusion

Whilst most of the campaigns outlined in this document are promoting solutions to issues of concern to our members, there is another element to Usdaw's political work. That is promoting and assisting the Labour Party.

There is no doubt that the gains we have made under Labour in Government have been significant to a lot of our members. Policies like the National Minimum Wage, Working Families' Tax Credit and all the new rights at work would be no more than pipedreams had the Tories stayed in power. If the Tories ever returned to power, rest assured all these gains would be taken away.

It is in our interest to ensure that Labour stays in power because it is the only party that can and does deliver on our priorities. That does not mean that Usdaw simply follows Labour Party policy, quite the opposite. As a stakeholder in the Labour Party, we help to formulate the Party's policies. Usdaw is a critical friend.

We hope that this document helps you to involve more of your fellow members in politics and that they become more active in Usdaw's campaigns.



Usdaw
188 Wilmslow Road
Manchester
M14 6LJ
www.usdaw.org.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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