

# NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for *Usdaw* activists – September/October 2017

Brexit - what you need to know

Parental rights guide



## PRIDE CELEBRATIONS



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# Comment

General secretary John Hannett

Over the last couple of months there have been a number of important wins for the trade union movement as a whole.

The Supreme Court unanimously ruled that employment tribunal fees were unconstitutional and unlawful. This is a spectacular win for all workers whose access to justice had been hindered by these extortionate fees.

We also, tentatively, welcomed the findings of the Taylor Review which identified a whole series of problems with the gig economy, zero-hour and short-hour contracts. However, we believe it missed the opportunity to tackle the growth of bogus employment and failed to adequately deal with the issue of zero-hour contracts.

The autumn months are a busy time in Usdaw's calendar as there are a number of important conferences and events that take place.

In September, Usdaw sent a delegation to the TUC conference where we highlighted issues that are important to our members such as, insecure work and underemployment, the impact of universal credit and the need for greater awareness around mental health issues.

The Labour Party conference and Usdaw's Retail Trades, Road Transport and Young Workers' conferences will be reported on in future editions of *Network*.

I'm also delighted to report that Usdaw's *Network* magazine won the TUC award for best communication for reps and activists.

Respect for shopworkers week is coming up in November. This event is part of our Freedom From Fear campaign which aims to prevent abuse and threats to staff who deal with the public.

No worker should have to tolerate verbal abuse, threatening behaviour or physical attack simply for doing their job. That's why I'm calling on all of our members and reps to support the campaign. Even if you only have an hour to spare our campaign pack can show you how you can get involved to help ensure every worker is treated with respect and dignity.



*John Hannett*



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

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**LET'S GET SOCIAL**

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## IN BRIEF...

### Pay rise for Sainsbury's staff

Sainsbury's has increased the pay of 135,000 workers by 4.4 per cent.

The rise came into effect on 27 August and will take pay to £8 an hour. This is the third successive year Sainsbury's have awarded a pay rise of 4 per cent or more.

### Poundland look to Europe

Poundland hopes to double its stores to more than 1,000 in the next decade.

The group plans to open more stores in Spain later this year and is eyeing the markets in two other countries in mainland Europe.

### Modern slavery trials hit big brands

Sports Direct has been named in three separate modern slavery trials relating to Polish migrants being sent to work through recruitment agencies. Although the company nor the agencies were accused of any wrongdoings the trial highlighted how big-brand companies had become unwitting users of slave labour.

### Job losses and cutbacks at Asda

Thousands of Asda workers are facing the threat of redundancy or a dramatic cut in their hours as the supermarket looks to reducing costs. Accounts filed at Companies House showed that sales fell from 22.3bn to 21.6bn as shoppers snubbed Asda for cheaper rivals.

# Network wins at TUC

**Usdaw has won the prestigious TUC best communication for reps and activists award for the union's *Network* magazine.**

In declaring Usdaw's *Network* magazine the winner, the judges said: "A very impressive magazine with high-quality

briefing for activists.

"We liked that it celebrated reps and gave a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction in representing fellow workers. Well produced and written, *Network* is both an interesting read and a vital source of information."

Usdaw general secretary John Hannett said: "We are delighted that the judges have voted Usdaw the winner of this award and for the commendations they gave us for our *arena* members magazine and our Organising Awards night that recognises outstanding work by lay-reps."



TUC president Mary Boustead presents the award to Usdaw head of media Mike Glover



## Record Party donations for election

**Statistics produced by the Electoral Commission recorded that UK political parties received a record £40.1 million in donations in the run-up to this year's general election.**

Nearly £25 million went to the Conservative Party compared to almost £9.5 million for Labour. Despite receiving almost £15 million more than Labour, the Conservatives lost 13 seats while Labour gained 30.

Party	Funding Received
Conservatives	£24,840,627
Labour	£9,492,519
Liberal Democrats	£4,358,410
SNP	£596,000
Women's Equality Party	£282,931
Green Party	£176,363
UKIP	£156,455
Co-operative Party	£150,980
BNP	£100,000
Socialist Party of Britain	£26,000
Plaid Cymru	£26,333



General secretary John Hannett and deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis are joined by members and reps from the Southern division at their biannual conference in July. The event took place at the Hallmark Carlton Hotel in Bournemouth.



# BHS PENSIONS FIASCO CONTINUES

**Usdaw welcomed a report that suggests Sir Philip Green sold British Home Stores to avoid liability for the pension scheme. The company collapsed last year and affected 11,000 jobs and around 19,000 pension scheme members.**

Sir Philip owned BHS for 15 years before selling it for £1 to the bankrupt businessman Dominic Chappell in 2015. In February Sir Philip agreed to pay £363 million in an attempt to rescue the pension scheme.

In further developments Mr Chappell has been summoned to appear at Brighton Magistrates' Court in September to face three charges of neglecting or refusing to provide information and documents without a reasonable excuse.

Usdaw National Officer Dave Gill said: "It is frankly quite shocking that Mr Chappell has apparently not made the requested information available. We would expect all involved in the BHS scandal to co-operate fully with all investigations.

"The knock-on effect of the actions of Sir Philip and Mr Chappell have had a huge impact on the hard working and loyal employees who lost their jobs and now most of the pension scheme members will not receive the retirement income they were promised.

"While the pension regulator has been successful in striking a deal with Sir Philip Green, the fact remains that the full buy out cost to secure 100 per cent of members' benefits has not been met. There is still a lot of uncertainty for members and



*Usdaw general secretary John Hannett outside the headquarters of the Arcadia Group in London*

hopefully this will be addressed over the coming months when they receive more information about their options.

"It is important that the regulator continues to review and improve its processes to

prevent this situation arising again, however, this will be of little comfort to the thousands of BHS workers who have lost their livelihoods and are facing a reduction to their income in their retirement."

## Union elections in progress

**The elections for Usdaw's general secretary, president and executive council (the union's ruling body) are now underway.**

Nomination forms will be sent out to branches in early October and have to be returned by Monday 13 November 2017.

Postal ballot papers and election addresses will be sent to all members from Monday 15 January 2018 and these have to be returned by Friday 9 February 2018.

The elections will be conducted by the independent Electoral Reform Services.

### Update your details

Any member who has changed address recently should notify the union's records section at central office as soon as possible to ensure they receive their ballot papers.

email: [records@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:records@usdaw.org.uk)

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## IN BRIEF...

### Sainsbury's head office cuts

Sainsbury's is axing more than 1,000 jobs at its head office as part of a £500m cost-cutting drive. A further 4,000 members of staff face changes to their working hours as part of the shakeup.

### Sainsbury's and Co-op in Nisa bid

Sainsbury's has put its £130m bid for convenience store chain Nisa on hold until the Competition Markets Authority makes a decision on Tesco's proposed takeover of Bookers. However, as Sainsbury's waits, the Co-op has entered exclusive talks with Nisa and is thought to have tabled a £140 million bid.

# Taylor Review findings

**The Taylor Review has identified a whole series of problems in the labour market that leave millions of low paid workers in insecure employment in the gig economy and highlights issues for zero-hour and short-hour contract workers.**

Usdaw welcomes the review's proposal to end the loophole in the Agency Worker Regulations – known as the Swedish Derogation – that allows agencies to avoid equal pay for agency workers.

However, even with a new 'dependent contractor' employment status the review missed an opportunity to sufficiently tackle the growth of bogus employment.

Usdaw general secretary John Hannett said: "The Government must tackle

employers who exploit precarious employment practices to drive down wages, circumvent basic employment rights and avoid paying national insurance contributions.

"Strong industrial relations are at the core of delivering

good work and trade unions have a crucial role to play. Therefore, we expect to see the Government adopt a more positive attitude towards the work of trade unions and end their legislative attacks on the way we operate."



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## North Eastern reps excel



Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis visited to the Sainsbury's distribution centre in Sherburn in Elmet earlier this year to thank reps who have worked hard to build and retain membership at the site over the past few years.



Officials from the North Eastern division and deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis went on a tour of the well-organised Next distribution centres in Doncaster, South Elmsall and Toftsure in August to visit the on-site reps.

# Tesco campaign success

**During 2017, the union has been running a campaign to encourage Tesco reps to sign up non-members in their store.**

At the start of the year, every Tesco rep received new recruitment materials, including a recruitment leaflet targeted at Tesco retail employees, a *Know Your Rights at Tesco* booklet, Usdaw membership forms and a letter for reps to circulate to non-members in their store.

Paddy Lillis, the union's deputy general secretary, wrote to reps to encourage them to take part:

"The union would not exist without the hard work of reps recruiting, campaigning and

representing in their workplace. "Most non-members haven't joined the union just because no one has asked them. People are most likely to be convinced to join the union by a work colleague. As one of the local Usdaw reps, you are the best person to persuade non-members in your store to join the union."

Udaw reps in stores talking on a one-to-one basis with any work colleagues who haven't already joined the union has resulted in thousands of non-members joining. By the end of August over 6,000 more Tesco retail workers have signed up to the union compared to the same period last year.

Paddy Lillis said: "The efforts of reps in stores alongside the ongoing hard work of stand-down reps, the Academy and officials has delivered membership growth in Tesco stores in the first eight months of the year that is really impressive.

"This is very important as a bigger union will give us a stronger voice in negotiations with the employer. Increasing our workplace presence means the union can keep delivering, locally and nationally, for our members.

"I'd like to thank every Tesco rep who has approached and recruited colleagues to the union."

## Don't believe everything you read....

**It has been accused of ruining careers, inciting civil unrest and even influencing elections – but what is fake news and how can you recognise it?**

Fake news often refers to completely fictional stories, but this isn't always the case. Fake news could contain elements of truth that have been distorted to suit an agenda, a hoax reported in good faith, or it could be a joke taken at face value.

Here are two examples of fake news:

- A photo appearing to show a man wearing an anti-fascist

action jacket beating a police officer in the US was widely shared on social media, and used as evidence of the alleged violence among anti-fascist protesters. The image was actually taken in Greece in 2009 and in the original image the man has no logo on his jacket.

- Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn was accused of showing disrespect to the Queen by not bowing to her at the state opening of Parliament in June earlier this year. Although the essence of the story is correct, what was less widely

reported is that he was following correct protocol for the ceremony.

So the key is don't believe everything you read. If you come across any stories relating to your workplace, don't assume them to be true without checking them out first. You wouldn't want to refer to something incorrectly when, for example, representing a member.

If the information refers to a policy or procedure check your agreement, staff handbook and policies first. If you are still unsure contact the union.

## IN BRIEF...

### Wilko to axe jobs

Wilko is the latest retailer to axe jobs amid rising costs and a tough trading environment.

Wilko recorded an 80 per cent drop in full-year profits and is consulting over job losses with 3,900 supervisors and managers.

The retailer will be removing a level of supervision roles across its UK stores but would create 1,000 new senior roles and a significant amount of customer service roles as part of the changes.

### Tories dilute pledge

The Conservative Party's manifesto promised workers that they would get to sit on company boards in an attempt to crackdown on excessive pay. However, firms will now only have to show they have listened to employees' concerns either by assigning a non-executive director to represent staff or creating a workers' advisory council.

The pledge to give shareholders more frequent votes on executive pay was also dropped.

### Supermarket ranks

The combined market share of Tesco, Sainsbury's Morrisons and the Co-op dropped by 1.1 per cent to 60.5 per cent. Meanwhile, the market share of Aldi and Lidl increased by 1.4 per cent to 11.9 per cent. Lidl also overtook Waitrose to become Britain's seventh-biggest supermarket.

## How to spot a fake news story

- **Check the source of the story.** If it is a website you don't know, search it on Google.
- **Check the author.** Look at other stories they've written. Are any of them hard to believe?

- **Read beyond the headline.** What seems legitimate at first glance may seem less so the further into the story you go.
- **Look at the supporting information.** If the story

refers to a survey of people, check out the survey for yourself.

- **Consider your own bias.** It helps to get your news from a variety of sources, so you get a wide spread of angles on the story.



## IN BRIEF...

### Tesco rolls out same-day delivery

Tesco has become the first retailer to offer same-day online deliveries.

Customers will be able to order by 1pm to have their shopping delivered from 7pm onwards.

The service stretches from the Shetland Islands to Cornwall and covers 99 per cent of UK households.

Meanwhile Sainsbury's offer same day delivery from 30 stores and Amazon has plans to roll out its same day delivery nationwide.

# State pension changes

The state pension was reformed on 6 April 2016.

**If you are a man born on or after 6 April 1951 or a woman born on or after 6 April 1953 you will be affected by the changes.**

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



Not everyone has the same state pension age and not

everyone will receive the same amount of state pension.

Your state pension age depends on when you were born and how much you will actually receive will depend on your national insurance record.

The Government commissioned a review of the state pension age last year and has recently announced that the state pension age will be increased to 68 for everyone from 2037 onwards (this has been brought forward 7 years from 2044).

If you were born between 1970 and 1978 you will now have to wait an extra year, until

you are 68, to claim your state pension.

For more information about the state pension changes you can request a copy of Usdaw's *Pensions Guide* booklet, which has a dedicated section regarding the state pension. Speak to a member of the Usdaw pension's section on **0161 224 2804**.

Alternatively you can visit the Usdaw website where there are links to the Government Pension Service, which will enable you find out your state pension age and how to obtain a forecast of what your state pension will be.

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

## Global values

Representatives from the South African Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (Saccawu) met general secretary John Hannett and deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis in July when they visited Usdaw's Central Office in Manchester during an educational tour of the UK.

The group, who are part of the negotiating team for Africa's largest food retailer Shoprite Checkers, were on tour with Saccawu to gain a better understanding of the role played by trade unions in the retail sector.



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# Tribunal fees ruled unlawful

**The Government recently suffered a defeat as the Supreme Court ruled that it was acting unlawfully and unconstitutionally when it introduced employment tribunal fees four years ago.**

Usdaw responded to the Government's consultation at the time and warned that tribunal fees were unfair; discriminatory against women; and would restrict access to justice. However the Government ignored our concerns, which were shared by other organisations, and introduced the fees regardless.

In July 2013 two levels of tribunal fees were introduced, £390 for a Type A claim (eg unlawful deductions of wages) and £1200 for a Type B claim (eg unfair dismissal and discrimination).

The Supreme Court ruled that tribunal fees were unlawful for three reasons:

- Tribunal fees hindered the common law right of access to justice.

- The fees breached article 47 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU which states that everyone 'has the right to an effective remedy before a tribunal.'

- The fees were indirectly discriminatory because the higher level of fees for Type B claims (which included discrimination) put women at a particular disadvantage as they were more likely to bring those type of claims.

The Government has accepted the decision and all previous fees that have been issued will now be reimbursed. Estimates suggest the repayment costs will reach £32 million.

This decision has been widely welcomed as since employment tribunal fees were introduced there had been a 70 per cent reduction in tribunal claims.

Usdaw general secretary John Hannett said: "This is a major victory for working people who should now be able to access justice free of charge for employment tribunals and

not face the prospect of paying up to £1,200 in upfront fees to lodge a case.

"We have always argued that money should not be a determining factor in being able to access justice because it hits low paid working people the hardest.

"We now call on the Government to act swiftly and scrap Tribunal Fees and reimburse everyone who has had to pay them."



## What's next?

- Employment Tribunal fees are no longer payable with immediate effect.
- The practicalities around the reimbursement of fees are unknown at this stage. However, we expect further guidance to be issued.
- There is a possibility that the Government will look to introduce a new fees regime at lower levels proportionate to the amount of money claimed. If so, it could be argued that they are not

discriminatory and do not prevent access to justice. It is likely that if they decide to do this there will be a further consultation asking for comments on the proposals.

- Usdaw members do not have to do anything as Usdaw paid their tribunal fees.

## Getting serious about online hate crime

**The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) will seek stiffer penalties for abuse on social media and is committed to treating online hate crimes just as seriously as those experienced face to face.**

Police believe the nature of the debate around last year's EU referendum played a part in causing a surge in hate crime, directed mainly against ethnic minorities. This claim was recently backed by a report produced by a group of cross party politicians, called *Integration not Demonisation*, which accused the Government of fuelling 'toxic' anti-immigrant feeling. The Government's

discredited target of cutting net migration to under 100,000 was particularly to blame for 'stoking anxiety' that has accompanied unprecedented hate crime following the vote.

The report stated that rather than defusing public concerns the Government 'unnecessarily stoked anxiety over immigration and encouraged the growth of populist anti-immigrant sentiment.'

The report also called on politicians to tone down their language. The group warned the rhetoric used during the EU referendum led some people to feel 'they could act on racist attitudes which had previously

gone unexpressed'.

Although hate crime is under reported, official figures show a 20 per cent rise in all forms of hate crime in the first quarter of this year. An increasing proportion of hate crime is now online.

Online abuse disproportionately affects women, ethnic minorities, LGBT and disabled people. Recently, more and more female MPs and journalists have been speaking out about the scale of abuse they receive including death and rape threats. Survivors of Grenfell Tower have also reported receiving torrents of racist abuse online.

Most employers now have social media policies in place that outline what they expect from staff. These policies usually include a duty not to bring the company into disrepute and to avoid posting comments that are offensive or discriminatory. Social media policies apply when using social media outside of work.

Breaching these policies can lead to disciplinary action or dismissal therefore we would always encourage our reps and members to think carefully before posting.

# Usdaw member offers

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



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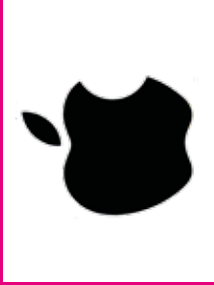
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# In the SPOTLIGHT



**North Eastern division's Agnese Antipina-Lejniece is originally from Latvia. She moved to England in 2009 and now lives in Bradford with her husband and their three year-old daughter...**

### Why did you become active?

I like to make a difference and help people. I can speak Latvian, Russian and English so I am able to help a diverse group of members and provide translation when required.

### What's involved?

I represent members at disciplinaries and grievances and provide advice and support when issues arise in the workplace. A big part of my role is campaigning and recruiting new members. It's a really strong team of reps at our site and we have more than 850 members with 97 per cent density. We always encourage staff to join the union so that we can provide them with the best support.

### Have you been on any of the union's training courses?

I've completed several rep training courses and Usdaw's Home Study modules including Unity is Strength, Democracy in Usdaw and Collective Bargaining. All the courses were really great and helpful for my role as union rep. I'm currently on Academy1 which

is challenging but really enjoyable. I'm managing my own time, organising campaigns, recruiting new members and experiencing different opportunities. The area organisers, tutors and my teammates are amazing and very supportive. The Academy is definitely a great experience for any rep.

### Have you changed since becoming active?

I'm definitely more confident and I've gained a lot of knowledge from the union's training courses and other reps in my workplace.

### Best moment as a rep so far?

Being accepted onto Academy1. I am so grateful to Usdaw for this unique opportunity.

### Which news items have caught your attention?

The terror attack in Barcelona. It is so sad when things like that happen in the world.

### Advice to a member thinking about becoming a rep?

Just do it, you will not regret it! There will be tough times and good times, but at the end of the day you will be proud that you helped somebody. That is the best feeling ever.

### Any tips for your fellow reps?

Remember to help and support members.

## What is the Academy?

Usdaw's Academy1 is a specialist six-month training programme that equips active reps to recruit and organise across all sectors and all companies in their division.

It has been running for 15 years and has trained hundreds of reps, many of whom have gone on to work for the union as area organisers.

Academy1 runs from May to November with the recruitment process starting in early January each year. It is open to reps who have shown a firm commitment to the work of the union and have shown they are capable of, or have the potential of, recruiting and organising beyond their own workplace.

Reps who are selected for Academy1 work for the union for six months, on secondment from their employer, and are mentored by an Usdaw official. They also receive four weeks of classroom-based training to supplement their on-the-job role.

After completing Academy1 reps return to their employer.

Find out how to apply in the November/December issue of *Network*.

## Fact File & trivia

### EMPLOYER...

**Next Distribution**

### JOB...

**Warehouse operative**

**AGE... 38**

### Joined Usdaw in...

**October 2011**

### Been an activist since...

**October 2013**

### Union positions held...

**Rep and organising officer (Academy1)**

### LAST FILM YOU SAW...

**Going in Style** a comedy/crime film about three men that decide to rob the bank that absconded with their pension

money. The chemistry between the actors was amazing.

### MY FAVOURITE TV...

**Naked and Afraid.**

### MY FAVOURITE BOOK...

**The Little Prince** by Antoine de Saint-Exupery.

### MY FAVOURITE FOOD...

**Chocolate.**

### MY FAVOURITE ANIMAL...

**Decorative fishes** are so relaxing.

### MY SPARE TIME...

is spent with my family, reading books, travelling, listening to good music, socialising with friends and shopping with my daughter.





# Your Maternity and Parental Rights

**In April Usdaw launched its updated Maternity and Parental Rights booklet. It provides easy to understand information on maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and adoption rights. It also covers parental leave, time off for dependants and the right to request flexible working.**

**Q. I told my employer I'm pregnant. What should happen next?**

Once you inform your employer you are pregnant they should carry out a risk assessment with you. If this risk assessment identifies any hazards that could pose a risk to you or your baby, then your employer must do all they can to eliminate the risk or reduce it to safe levels.

**Q. Do I still accrue holidays while on maternity leave?**

You will continue to accrue entitlement to both statutory and contractual holidays. You can take these holidays at the beginning or end of your maternity leave. Unfortunately, there is no legal right to carry unused holiday over into a new year. Therefore, you need to check your staff handbook/contract to find out what arrangements apply in your workplace.

**Q. How much time can I take off for antenatal appointments?**

You are entitled to take as much time off as you need. This includes the time it takes you to travel to and from your appointment or class. Your employer does not have the right to require you to take annual leave or to make up for lost time. They cannot change your hours so that an antenatal appointment falls outside them.

View and download the *Maternity and Parental Rights 2017* book from the Usdaw website: [www.usdaw.org.uk/baby](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/baby)



**You must tell your employer of your pregnancy no later than the 15th week before the week in which your baby is due**

**Q. Am I entitled to statutory maternity pay?**

To qualify for statutory maternity pay you must have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks by the end of the qualifying week and have average earnings of at least £113 (before tax) per week in the eight weeks (if paid weekly) or two months (if paid monthly) before the end of the qualifying week. To help you calculate whether or not you are entitled to statutory maternity pay the Maternity and Parental Rights booklet contains calculation guides on pages 35-38.

**Q. Am I entitled to contractual maternity pay?**

The amount of contractual maternity pay you are entitled to will depend on your contract. Therefore, you must check your contract or your employer's maternity policy.

**Q. How much maternity leave am I entitled to?**

All women regardless of their length of service are entitled to 52 weeks of maternity leave – the first 26 weeks is known as Ordinary Maternity Leave and the second 26 weeks is known as Additional Maternity Leave.

**Q. Am I entitled to paternity leave?**

Two weeks' paternity leave is available to fathers and partners (including same sex partners) who have continuously worked for their employer for 26 weeks leading into the 15th week before the baby is due.

**Q. Am I entitled to statutory paternity pay?**

You will be entitled to statutory paternity pay if you have continuously worked for your

employer for 26 weeks leading into the 15th week before the baby is due. Also, you will need to have average earnings of more than £113 per week in the eight weeks before the 15th week before your baby is due.

**Q. What is shared parental leave?**

Shared parental leave and pay gives parents the right to convert maternity leave and pay to shared parental leave and pay from the third week after the baby's birth.

To qualify, mothers and fathers (or partners) must:

- have 26 weeks' service with the same employer by the 15 weeks before the week in which their baby is due,
- be entitled to maternity leave or statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance.

The mother must take the first two weeks of leave. After this, parents (or partners) can decide between them who takes up the remaining 50 weeks' leave.

**Q. Am I entitled to any extra money or benefits?**

There are many benefits available from tax credits to free prescriptions and food vouchers. These will depend on your individual circumstances.

For more information visit the following website and search *maternity*.  
[www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk](http://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk)

**Q. What is 'time off for dependants leave'?**

Time off for dependants is a right to take reasonable amounts of unpaid leave from work in order to deal with emergencies involving others that rely on you.

A dependant is someone who relies on you and usually means a relative or close family member such as your spouse/partner, parent, child or someone else that lives with you.

**Q. In what circumstances can I take dependants leave?**

You can take time off:

- If a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured and needs your assistance.
- If you need to make arrangements for the care of a dependant who is

either ill or injured.

- If there is a sudden disruption of arrangements for the care of the dependant.
- If your dependant dies.

**Q. Will I be paid for any time I take off under this?**

There is no legal right to be paid for the time you take off. However, it is worth checking your contract or staff handbook to see what arrangements apply in your workplace. If your employer does not pay you then speak to your manager to see if you can swap your shifts or use your holidays in order to minimise loss of pay.

**Q. What is the right to request flexible working?**

Employees who have at least 26 weeks continuous service with their employer have the right to request flexible working. The employer must consider your request carefully.

**Q. How do I make an application?**

You must make your request in writing. You can download a standard application form from the Usdaw website at [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

**Q. How long will this take?**

Your employer must deal with requests in a 'timely manner'. They must decide on a request, including any appeal, within three months.

**Q. Can my employer turn down my request?**

Yes, if they have a business reason such as additional costs, inability to reorganise work or recruit additional staff, impact on quality, performance or detrimental effect on customer demand.

*For more resources go to the Usdaw website and search parents and carers*



# New challenges ahead

**Three new appointments and one retirement make up this issue's staff news.**

## New editor

**Saiqa Khushnood** has taken up her new role as editorial and information officer, with responsibility for producing Usdaw's *Network* and *arena* magazines.

Starting her Usdaw career in the legal department she later moved to the research and economics department. As a research assistant, she worked with various companies and sectors, including a year-long stint in the equalities section. From there she took up her post in the Tesco support team and was later promoted to team leader in 2010.

Saiqa brings with her over a decade of knowledge and experience of Usdaw's various sectors and industrial relations. She has a thorough understanding of political and equality issues, and her hands-on role in the Tesco support team means that she has good insight into the issues affecting reps and members.

Having completed her MA in creative writing last year, this role gives her the perfect opportunity to combine her knowledge of Usdaw with her writing skills.

"Now more than ever we need publications that are well written, informative and truthful," said Saiqa. "I look forward to working on Usdaw's award winning magazines and promoting the great work of our reps and members."

"So far, the best part has been meeting and interviewing our reps, whose enthusiasm is infectious. I aim to build on the success of the magazines by trying to increase engagement and readership online."



KAY WINTERS

## Kay Winters

Former night shift rep, Kay is the newest member of the team at the Edinburgh office after being appointed area organiser in July.

"I started working at Tesco Dunfermline as a wage clerk in 2000," said the 52 year-old. "It was a brand new store so we all became members of Usdaw at the same time after our inductions. Signing the membership form was one of the best things I ever did. It was great to have the support of the union in our workplace."

Kay's involvement with Usdaw grew and she later became a union rep as well as a rep on the store and SD forums. She went on to complete the Academy in 2011.

"I went on all the training courses that were available and took every opportunity that came my way."

"The job is going very well so far. I've been shadowing other organisers and introducing myself to activists in my patch. I'm looking forward to identifying new reps and increasing and revitalising the membership."



SHANE SPITTY

## Shane Spitty

Shane has been appointed area organiser at the Bury St Edmunds office in the Eastern division. The 29 year-old joined the team in August after 10 years as an Usdaw rep working on the night shift at Sainsbury's Ferndown.

"Thanks to Usdaw's great training programme I was well-developed as a rep. I started by attending a health and safety course and my involvement grew from there. I spent a lot of time working as a stand-down rep and then went on to complete the union's Academy programme in 2015."

"I'm very excited about my new role. Alongside the other area organisers in the division, I'll be responsible for ensuring the day to day running of the patch is met, not only in terms of providing an excellent service to our members but also by developing and supporting the reps and helping them on their journey."

"I'm looking forward to having the chance to implement my ideas and hopefully watching the union go from strength to strength."



PAUL ADAMS

## Paul Adams

South Wales and Western division's Paul Adams is retiring in October after 17 years on the union's staff.

The 62 year-old was appointed as area organiser working out of the Cardiff office in May 2000. Before joining Usdaw Paul worked at AAH Pharmaceuticals where he was a rep, branch secretary, federation secretary and divisional councillor.

"My favourite part of the role has been helping people and hopefully making a difference," said Paul. "I will miss my colleagues and friends most and wish them all the best for the future."

"My plan for retirement is to hopefully do some travelling and a bit of fishing. Most of all I am looking forward to spending more time with my family who have been a big support over the years."

General secretary John Hannett said: "I would like to put on record my thanks to Paul for his long and conscientious service to the union and wish him all the best in his retirement."

# Respect Week is coming

Freedom From Fear is one of Usdaw's key campaigns and seeks to prevent violence, threats and abuse against workers. Each year, as part of the Freedom From Fear campaign, the union holds a Respect for Shopworkers Week allowing members and reps to play an active role in supporting the campaign.

The aim of Respect for Shopworkers Week is to make

sure that the message 'Abuse is not part of the job' is heard loud and clear during the busy Christmas shopping period and that we promote practical ways of tackling the issue in our workplaces.

You can take part in the campaign by either:

- Giving one hour to use our Respect Week 'Lite' campaign pack in your workplace or
- Organising a stall during



Week, 13-19 November 2017 and getting the local media and Labour politicians involved.

## Running a Respect for Shopworkers Week event



### Organising a stall

The best way to take part is to hold a stall at the front of your store during Respect Week. This is an excellent way to engage the public with the campaign.

### Canteen event

Sometimes it isn't possible because of space or time to run a stall at the front of your store. If this is the case, think about running a campaign event in your canteen. Don't forget to promote the campaign through your union noticeboard if you have one.

### Respect Week 'Lite'

The Respect Week 'Lite' pack helps you to take part in the campaign in a short amount of time, if you can't run

a full stall, but you can spare an hour during Respect Week,

### Inviting a local Labour politician

Everyone should try to invite their local Labour politicians to take part in the campaign. This helps them to understand the issues at the heart of the campaign and builds the links that make it easier to deliver the improved protection shopworkers need.

### Using the petition and survey

The petition is an excellent way to not only engage your colleagues in the campaign, but also to use as a conversation starter with members of the public so that you can discuss the campaign.



[www.facebook.com/UsdawFFF](http://www.facebook.com/UsdawFFF)

Like and share, make more people aware...



To order materials for your event:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/order](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/order)

Please display this poster on your Union noticeboard



KEEP YOUR  
FOOD GOOD

RESPECT SHOPWORKERS

#Respect17



COOL

RESPECT SHOPWORKERS



Respect Week  
13-19 NOV 2017

Did you know that another shopworker is  
attacked or verbally abused every minute  
of the working day?

Source: British Retail Consortium Crime Survey

0800 030 80 30

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



*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*



# CITIZENS' RIGHTS

**Citizens' rights are one of the issues high up on the agenda of Brexit negotiations. This will affect European Union (EU) citizens currently living and working in the UK as well as UK citizens who have left their home country to move to other EU countries.**

Many Usdaw members have come to the UK from across the EU, making valuable contributions to their workplaces as well as being active in Usdaw. At the same time, many Usdaw members have decided to retire abroad to countries such as Spain or Bulgaria.

These people moved for a better life as part of the rules in place at the time. Following the vote to leave the EU, that better life is now uncertain. Usdaw is supporting calls for

prime minister Theresa May to immediately look to end the negotiating deadlock by offering EU citizens in the UK a guarantee that their rights will not be impacted by Brexit.

There is anecdotal evidence that EU citizens are now facing discrimination over jobs and housing. Usdaw has heard examples of people being turned down for employment or a private rental housing contract as their continued citizens' rights are unclear.

Equally, British citizens living in the EU are worried about their pensions and their rights in respect of property they may own.

Brexit negotiations are complicated - this includes negotiations on citizens' rights. So what do we know so far?

## ***What are EU citizens and British citizens in Europe asking for?***

EU citizens living in the UK and British citizens in Europe want to safeguard and guarantee that, once the UK has left the EU, they will continue to enjoy exactly the same rights and provisions as were available when they decided to emigrate.

## ***What is the UK proposing?***

The Government is proposing:

- EU citizens who have resided in the UK for five years and continue to be in the UK will be entitled to so-called 'settled status' which means, subject to some rules around criminality, they can stay indefinitely. All EU nationals including those who already have permanent

residence documents will have to apply.

- EU citizens who arrived and became resident before a so-called 'specified date' (which will be no earlier than 29 March 2017 and no later than the date of the UK's withdrawal from the EU), but have not accrued five years' continuous residence will be able to apply for temporary status to remain resident in the UK until they have accumulated five years. After this point they will be eligible to apply for settled status.
- EU citizens who arrived in the UK after the 'specified date' will be allowed to remain for at least a temporary period. They may become eligible to settle permanently, depending on their circumstances. This group should have no

# BREXIT NEWS IN BRIEF

## Negotiations

★ Thanks to the two month delay with the snap election and Conservative ministers having to make a deal with the DUP, Brexit negotiations didn't begin until 19 June 2017.

The two years' negotiating time will be up on 29 March 2019.

Negotiations will first focus on citizens' rights, the 'divorce bill' for financial commitments to the other 27 EU states and the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Republic of Ireland will remain an EU country but Northern Ireland will not. The UK intends to leave the EU customs union, meaning a physical border could be imposed for customs checks to be completed.

This is a clear example of the negotiating challenges. While both sides want to avoid a physical border, there is no current solution.

The UK's chief negotiator David Davis' most recent suggestion was for an electronic tagging system that automatically transferred customs dues to the EU. He withdrew this acknowledging it was a 'blue sky idea' not based on any technology that exists.

## Progress

★ Until progress has been made on the primary negotiating issues, the UK cannot move to trade talks. If a deal is not reached by 29 March 2019 this could mean the UK leaves with no trade deal in place.

While some progress has been made on issues such as healthcare for UK pensioners who have retired to places such as Spain, there is still lots to discuss before negotiations can move onto other areas.

## EU withdrawal bill

★ MPs backed the bill by 326 votes to 290 despite critics warning that it represented a 'power grab' by ministers.

While the bill will ensure that there is no gap in legislation from 29 March 2019, it will not cover important areas such as a trade deal or access to the European Arrest Warrant Scheme.

However, the bill is controversial. Written by the Conservatives, it gives ministers powers to act without parliamentary scrutiny.

Labour respects the referendum result as a call for greater political accountability to the British people and therefore opposed this aspect of the bill as undemocratic. The SNP had concerns that powers over devolved issues would be seized by Westminster as they were returned from Brussels.

Lib Dem Brexit spokesman Tom Brake said that MPs who backed the bill should feel 'ashamed' and that 'this is a dark day for the mother of parliaments.'

Having cleared the second reading stage, the bill will now face line-by-line scrutiny. MPs, including several senior Conservative backbenchers, have tabled a number of amendments.

## The Tories at war

★ The EU referendum was called by the previous Prime Minister David Cameron to try and fend off challenges, both from UKIP and the highly eurosceptic Conservative backbenches.

This has caused huge rifts in the party, as some backbench MPs believe leaving the EU at any cost is preferable to compromise through negotiation.

This puts these MPs at odds with the pro-business approach usually associated with the Conservatives. A lack of a trade deal, agreed produce standards, or agreement on the movement of EU Citizens to the UK will seriously impact UK industry.

High profile Conservatives, such as Anna Soubry and Ken Clarke, have spoken out for stronger relationships with the EU, and faced criticism and attack from their own party.

Recent leaked documents outlined the Tories controversial plans to deter all but highly-skilled workers. These plans have caused further divisions between cabinet ministers trying to balance the demands of British businesses wanting to retain free movement and the views of hardline Brexiters.

expectation of guaranteed settled status.

- EU citizens who lived in the UK as self-sufficient will not need to show that they had comprehensive health insurance in order to qualify for the new settled status.

## Would they be entitled to the same rights they currently enjoy?

No. While not guaranteed, those with settled status may well be treated the same way as UK nationals in terms of some benefits, pension, social security and access to public services. They would not get the same family or legal rights they currently enjoy. For example, citizens' rights will no longer be guaranteed by the European Court of Justice and income tests are likely to be applied to those who want to bring non-EU family members to the UK.

## What is the EU proposing?

Under the new proposals, EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens in Europe would eventually enjoy roughly identical rights to current provisions. However, the EU has refused to sign off any proposals until all negotiations on Brexit have concluded. Therefore the EU proposals do not address the current uncertainty and offer no guarantees for those people affected.

## What is Labour's stand on Brexit?

Labour respects the outcome of the referendum. However, it does not believe anyone voted to make themselves poorer. Therefore, to limit the damage Brexit may well cause to the economy, in August, Labour announced that it was backing transitional continued membership of the EU single market beyond leaving the EU in March 2019.

Labour will support full participation in the single market and customs union during a 'transitional period'. This would mean the UK would provide certainty for businesses and individuals, whilst at the same time lessening the shock of leaving, while negotiations take place on replacement trade deals.

## Labour wants any Brexit deal the Government negotiates to satisfy the following six tests:

- Fair migration system for UK business and communities.
- Retaining strong, collaborative relationship with EU.
- Protecting national security and tackling cross-border crime.
- Delivering for all nations and regions of the UK.
- Protecting workers' rights and employment protections.
- Ensuring same benefits currently enjoyed within single market.

# Assistance dogs - transform lives

**Several thousand disabled people rely on an assistance dog to help them with day to day activities that most non-disabled people take for granted.**

Gone are the days when only blind and partially sighted people were helped by assistance dogs. Dogs are now also trained to help people with hearing difficulties, autism, epilepsy, diabetes and mobility problems.

Assistance dogs can help carry out a wide range of practical tasks for disabled people as well as supporting their independence and confidence.

## Colour code

Assistance dogs are not pets. They are highly trained and most of them are instantly recognisable by the harness or identifying coat they wear.

### ■ Red

Medical detection dogs can detect when a person's blood sugar levels are low.

### ■ Purple

Support dogs help with practical tasks such as picking up post,

shopping, unloading washing machines and opening and closing doors.

### ■ Blue

Seizure alert dogs are able to sense and warn their owner of an epileptic seizure up to 50 minutes before it happens. 'Autism' dogs also wear blue and they provide comfort, reassurance and can contribute to sensory and physical development.

### ■ Burgundy

Hearing dogs can hear sounds and danger signals like fire alarms, car horns, sirens or doorbells.

### ■ Fluorescent

Guide dogs usually wear fluorescent yellow strips around a white harness. They help blind and partially sighted people negotiate obstacles like kerbs, steps, uneven surfaces, vehicles and other pedestrians.

## Access allowed

The Equality Act (the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland) guarantees the right of a disabled person accompanied by an assistance dog access to

public services such as shops, restaurants, hotels, libraries, pubs, banks and taxis. Refusing to allow a disabled person with an assistance dog access to premises (other than in very exceptional circumstances such as certain hospital wards) is very likely to be unlawful.

Service providers are required by law to make reasonable adjustments to policies and premises enabling disabled people access. In almost all cases it will be reasonable to adjust 'no dogs' or 'no pets' policies to enable people accompanied by an assistance dog to use the service or to enter the premises to buy goods.

Assistance dogs are highly trained, have regular veterinary treatments and are tested on a regular basis to make sure they don't present a health risk. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health has determined that they are unlikely to present a risk to hygiene and should be allowed access to cafes, hotels, food shops and other food premises.

Drivers of taxi's and minicabs can only refuse to carry a person accompanied by their assistance dog where the driver has a GP certificate showing medical exemption.

Dogs which help people with anxiety and other mental health problems, sometimes known as psychiatric service dogs, are currently not covered by either the Equality Act (DDA in Northern Ireland) or recognised by Assistance Dogs UK who oversee seven assistance dog charities although many are campaigning for this to change.

### For more information:

*The Equality & Human Rights Commission*

search: Assistance dogs

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

*The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland*

search: Assistance dogs

[www.equalityni.org](http://www.equalityni.org)

[caninepartners.org.uk](http://caninepartners.org.uk)

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





**LONDON**

**Over the summer Usdaw members took to the streets to take part in Pride events across the country to celebrate the achievements of LGBT campaigners and their allies in the last half century.**

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Sexual Offences Act 1967 - a significant moment in the struggle for LGBT equality in the UK. Up until that date homosexuality was illegal and technically punishable by life imprisonment.

From an equal age of consent to protection from discrimination at work much has been won but many challenges remain. LGBT people are more than twice as likely to be the victims of abuse and assault on our streets and over a third have been harassed or discriminated against at work. In practice many LGBT people do not feel able to be 'out' to everyone in the workplace or to walk down the street holding their partner's hand.

Across the world many LGBT people live in fear of imprisonment and death. Pride events are a very visible way of celebrating how far we've come in the struggle for LGBT equality both in law and in everyday life. They can also be an effective way of reminding ourselves of how far we still have to go.

# PRIDE



**BIRMINGHAM**



**BOURNEMOUTH**



**NEWCASTLE**

# ACTIVISTS UNITED

**Usdaw sent a delegation of reps and senior officials to the TUC conference in September where they spoke about a number of issues important to Usdaw members.**

## Mental health

Usdaw called for raised awareness amongst all workers and employers to reduce stigma and normalise conversations about mental health.

Addressing conference, Usdaw general secretary John Hannett said: "Usdaw's experience has shown that mental health is an issue of growing importance to union members. In the UK, around 12 million people see their GP about a mental health problem every year, but mental health continues to be a hidden disability that is rarely spoken about. Therefore, it should be no surprise that recent TUC research on this subject has shown that 75 per cent of people with a long-term mental health condition are not in work.

"Usdaw has embarked on running significant campaign activity around mental health awareness. Our campaign aims to remove the stigma surrounding

mental health, signpost people to relevant services and normalise conversations with managers around the issue."

## Welfare reforms

Households receiving working tax credits will face a 'significant loss of income' when they transition to universal credit.

The Local Government Association found that of the 2.14 million working-age households set to lose more than £50 a week by 2020, the majority (1.34 million) are in work.

Usdaw's own analysis reveals that a couple with children, both working in retail, earning just above the so-called national living wage, one working full-time and one part-time, would be £1,866 a year worse off on universal credit.

John Hannett said: "We supported the initial intentions of universal credit, to simplify benefits and improve incentives to work. However, severe cost cutting has turned universal credit into a ticking time bomb that will leave millions of working families thousands of pounds worse-off when they are transferred onto it.

"The Government now needs to restore the original purpose of universal credit, to encourage entry to and progression in work."

## Child poverty

Official annual poverty statistics released in March showed an increase in child poverty for the second year running. Around 100,000 more children fell into relative poverty last year, taking the total to 4 million.

Usdaw president Jeff Broome said: "It is simply unacceptable that in one of the richest countries on the planet we have children living in poverty. Clearly, for thousands of families, work is not providing a route out of poverty. This is, in part, caused by the Government's refusal to tackle poor employment practices, such as zero and short hours' contracts, agency work and bogus self-employment.

"Families in this type of precarious work need the additional support of in work benefits. However, as a result of Conservative cuts, just as these working practices are becoming more prominent, the financial safety net is being removed."

## Insecure work

Statistics show that 15 per cent of the workforce do not have secure employment. This figure is made up of 2.6 million part-time workers wanting longer hours and the 1.7 million workers on zero hours contracts.

Speaking to delegates at the conference, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We hear so much in the press about the 'strong' jobs market and record low unemployment but it is clear that for too many people this work does not pay.

"We know from talking to our members, hearing the stories of workers forced to rely on food banks, witnessing the rise of child poverty and seeing people holding down multiple jobs and still being unable to make ends meet that the system is broken.

"It is our duty to tackle this injustice and that's why we wholeheartedly support the call for the TUC to drive forward these issues."

## Racism at work

Usdaw called on the TUC to lead campaigns against racism in workplaces and our communities.

Jeff Broome said: "Whatever your position on Britain's membership of the EU, I am sure we can agree that the campaign leading up to the referendum was one of the most divisive, hostile, negative and fear provoking campaigns we've seen.

"The imagery and language used by some was deliberately inflammatory and resulted in a





USDAW DELEGATION

41 per cent rise in reported hate crime.

“The referendum campaign, set against the background of wider government policies specifically designed to create a ‘hostile’ environment for migrants, has once again unleashed forces of hate and division.

“Trade unions must speak out against racism and bigotry. That’s why Usdaw’s campaign has involved hundreds of reps running workplace campaigns that stand up for people and engage members, non-members and employers with our anti-racist message - not in my name, not in my workplace.”



RAKTIMA SARKAR AND TUC RACE EQUALITY OFFICER WILF SULLIVAN

### *The fight against insecure work*

Usdaw rep Raktima Sarkar spoke at the TUC fringe meeting to describe the problems insecure workers face and the efforts the union is making to get a better deal.

Raktima said: “Insecure work in the convenience store sector is about short hours, and being asked to work lates, earlies or weekends at the last minute.

“If you can’t comply with the changes then all too often you are told ‘take it or

leave it’, and leave it means just that - having to leave your job.

“This way of working also presents real challenges for reps in terms of recruitment and organising. So Usdaw has come up with cluster reps elected to look after 5 to 10 small stores, supported by their full-time official and it works.

“I’m proud to say that Usdaw is coming up with creative ways of rising to meet those challenges.”

### *Usdaw safety rep wins TUC award*

John Hannett congratulated Usdaw activist Anthony Lampey on winning the TUC health and safety rep award.

John Hannett said: “I was delighted to present Anthony with the Usdaw national award earlier this year. We are all extremely proud that he now gone on to secure the national TUC award.”

“Lay reps are fundamentally crucial to the union and Anthony

is a shining example of what can be achieved.

“His Tesco dotcom site at Crawley is a much safer place thanks to the efforts of Anthony and his team. Anthony has ensured staff play a full role in the safety agenda, that changes are made, procedures followed and safety is well and truly embedded into the culture of the site.”



ANTHONY LAMPEY AND JOHN HANNETT

# TOP TIPS FROM ACADEMY REPS

***Lifelong Learning, Freedom From Fear and Legal Plus campaign days helped four Academy reps take their training to the shop floor...***

## ***Olga Fiuta***

*Usdaw rep Olga, 29, works at the Tesco distribution centre in Lichfield. She became active two years ago and is currently on Academy1. Olga recently organised and ran a campaign at Tesco Extra in Lichfield.*

“ The Academy is an amazing experience. Every day is different and I've met some great people. It's also challenging and tests my emotions on a daily basis.

I see the Academy as a journey and at the moment I don't know where it's going to take me. I would of course like to do Academy2 in the future but for now, my plan is to get back to work. I'm keen to put into practice what I've learnt and share my knowledge with the other reps.

I'd encourage every single rep to apply for the Academy. It's a fantastic opportunity to not only develop the skills you already have but also learn new ones. The whole process will help you gain confidence and make you a stronger and happier person.

I know the thought of taking part in an intense training course like this can be daunting but I've had lots of support from my area organiser and my fellow organising officers.

Tesco Lichfield is one of my project stores on Academy and with the help of fellow union reps, and my area organiser Darren Matthews, we organised a campaign on Usdaw benefits and offers during Membership Week.

We chose to focus on this topic because often colleagues ask what benefits they can get from being an Usdaw member. Usdaw has a lot of great services to offer and everyone should know about them.

Our stall was stocked with leaflets and the freebies proved to be very popular. We also spent some time on the shop floor so that we could speak to staff who might not have a had chance to come to the stall.

The campaign went really well. We got some very positive feedback from existing members, raised the profile of Usdaw and increased membership.



### ***Olga's top tips for holding a campaign day***

- To ensure success every campaign should be planned in advance.
- Get as many people involved as you can.
- Organise activities - it helps grab people's attention.
- Advertise it well. People need to know what you're doing.

### ***Olga's top tips for new reps***

- Being a new rep can be challenging at times. Make sure you learn as much as you can.
- Don't be afraid to ask other reps and your area organiser for help.



***OLGA FIUTA (RIGHT) TELLS STAFF ABOUT THE UNION'S LEGAL SERVICE AT TESCO LICHFIELD***



View the Recruitment and Organising Gallery on the [UsdawUnion Flickr page](#)

## **Membership for week ended 16 September 2017**

South Wales and Western	51,026
Eastern	65,082
Midlands	57,142
North Eastern	60,030
Scottish	45,209
Southern	64,690
North West	93,944
Total	437,123





## Paul Deane

Ocado driver **Paul**, 57, is also an organising officer on Academy1. He lives in Wakefield and became a union rep in 2016. Paul recently coordinated a Parents and Carers and Legal Plus day at the Primark store in Meadowhall.

“ Four months into the Academy I feel it’s going well. It is a steep learning curve but a very rewarding experience.

I’ve gained a huge amount of knowledge about the union and some very useful communication skills.

Two weeks before the campaign at Primark I carried out a staff survey which highlighted areas of concern. This prompted us to focus on the subject of Supporting Parents and Carers.

Primark has been difficult when it comes to recruitment so I felt a campaign would help to raise the profile of Usdaw in the company and boost membership.

In preparation I carried out a smaller campaign at the Primark store in Moor. This dry run helped to ensure the event at Meadowhall ran smoothly.

Lots of staff got involved to help with the campaign including my area organiser Liam Algor and stand-down rep Tonya Jones. Tonya has a huge amount of experience as a rep and the support she gave me was fantastic. She spent the day speaking to staff on the stall and also brought in some lovely cakes for the occasion.

We also used the campaign day to highlight other union benefits such as Legal Plus. We invited along a solicitor from Slater and Gordon who chatted to members about any legal concerns.

The day was a great success. We managed to sign up two new members and promoted the great benefits of union membership to all the staff. Consequently, on my follow up visits to both Primark Moor and Meadowhall I have managed to sign up 13 new members.

When Academy1 comes to an end I plan to take some time to reflect on my experience, what I have learned, what I achieved and how I can apply that knowledge back in my workplace. I’ll then consider applying for Academy2.

I would highly recommend the Academy to any rep who wants to better themselves, work as a team and learn more about what the union does.



PAUL DEANE (MIDDLE BACK) COORDINATED THE CAMPAIGN AT PRIMARK MEADOWHALL

### Paul’s top tips for holding a campaign day

- If you want to run a successful campaign, you must do your homework to find out about the issues and concerns affecting that particular workplace. You can do this by carrying out surveys or by simply talking to members and non-members.
- On the day, you need to interact with the employees. Don’t just sit on the stall eating cakes!

### Top tips for new reps

- Don’t run before you can walk. Try a very small campaign first, see how it goes.
- Usdaw has a very supportive network. If you’re not sure about something ask your area organiser or other reps.

**Norman Donaldson**

*Tesco rep Norman, 48, became an activist six years ago and has just completed Academy2. Network caught up with him after his Freedom From Fear day at Tesco in Danestone.*

“ There is no doubt that taking on the role of an Academy organising officer is challenging, but it is a challenge that I have thoroughly enjoyed.

The opportunity to have my own area to organise and the privilege of being allocated reps to mentor with the skills and knowledge I am gaining all the time has been a very rewarding experience.



**Norman's top tips for holding a campaign day:**

- Do your research and find out beforehand what issues are affecting your members and which campaign best addresses their concerns.
- Establish the aims of your campaign and what you wish to achieve from it.
- Don't try to do it all yourself. A campaign day is very much a team effort so make sure as many people as possible are involved, with everyone having tasks to complete.
- Keep the management up to date with your activities.
- Finally, once you have held your campaign day evaluate, with the rest of your team, the results of your campaign.
- Celebrate any successes and plan your next one!

The Academy programme is definitely one I would recommend to fellow reps. It is a fantastic learning opportunity with first class tutoring. The support I have received from my area organiser, Kate Cummings has been tremendous, I can't praise her enough for the way in which she has helped me.

The experience enables you to grow so much in confidence and certainly gives you a real sense of achievement.

As with any Usdaw training programme you meet an amazing group of people. Your fellow reps are such a source of support and inspiration and become your friends for life.

I took part in the campaign at Tesco Aberdeen earlier this year as it was one of my allocated target stores during Academy2.

We chose to base the day around Freedom From Fear because staff had highlighted instances which had occurred in the workplace regarding physical and verbal abuse. It was apparent that this was an issue which needed addressing.

During the course of the day everybody involved worked as part of the team, talking to the public, along with the staff, to get petitions signed for improved protection for shopworkers.

We were also lucky enough to be joined by a local police officer and Labour MSP Lewis MacDonald who both openly chatted with the public to answer questions and to help promote the campaign.

The event proved a success with over 200 people signing the petition, new members being recruited and great feedback from the public who were very supportive of the campaign. The store staff also said they appreciated the efforts the union was making on their behalf.

My plan now is to use the skills I have gained from being on the Academy and continue to organise within my own workplace for the benefit of our members and fellow reps.

I'd like to do as much stand down recruitment as possible, mentor other reps and continue to play an active role within my branch, of which I am chair. Hopefully at some point in the



NORMAN DONALDSON (BACK) ASSISTS A FREEDOM FROM FEAR CAMPAIGN DAY AT TESCO DANESTONE



BEV JAMIESON (CENTRE) DURING ACADEMY2 AT TESCO IN SALFORD

future my experience may allow me to be able to apply to take on a full time union position.

My advice to new reps is to get yourself involved, there are so many opportunities within the union to learn and become more active.

Being a rep is a very rewarding role and there is no limit to what you can achieve. It has taught me so much about myself and it can do the same for you.



Email the Network team: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)



Visit the Usdaw website at: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)



## Beth Jamieson

Sainsbury's shopworker and Usdaw rep **Bev**, 47, recently took an active role overseeing a campaign day at Tesco in Salford during her stint on Academy2. Bev, who lives in Manchester, became active with Usdaw four years ago.

“ Having previously completed Academy1 in 2015 I was keen to progress onto Academy2. It's been a great experience, challenging at times, but I've had lots of fun. I particularly enjoyed spending time with and mentoring other reps.

I would definitely recommend the Academy to reps who are looking to further their development and want to progress within the union. It is a good opportunity for those who particularly enjoy recruiting. It can be intense at times but it is an extremely valuable and worthwhile experience.

I decided to hold a Lifelong Learning campaign day at Tesco Salford, with the help of mobile union learning rep Sue Sowe, because we felt the store needed some extra support and to be energised. The staff in-store had also expressed an interest in learning and we wanted to show how the union could help.

The event was held in the canteen and was a great success. Thirty new courses were booked on the day, we recruited one member and we now have two new union learning reps.

The whole day was upbeat. The store manager was very supportive and invited us back for future campaigns. All in all, it was a really good day and helped us lay the foundations for future learning at the store.

As always there is still more work to do and we are currently in the process of sorting out the Level 2 courses.



### Bev's top tips for holding a campaign day

- Preparation is key. So, make sure you do plenty of planning and organising before the event.
- Communicate with the reps and management team in the workplace to keep them informed and to get them onboard.
- Encourage the reps to get involved.

### Bev's top tips for new reps

- My number one tip is to just be yourself.
- It's important to try to shadow experienced reps so that you can learn from them.
- Take every opportunity and challenge that comes your way and learn from them. Look at what you can do better next time.

# SAFETY AT WORK TURNS 40

The TUC is commemorating the 40th anniversary of the health and safety at work regulations by promoting the importance of union health and safety reps and safety committees.

Events and initiatives to celebrate the success of safety reps in the past and to promote organising around safety and health for the future will take place from October until International Workers Memorial day in April.

Usdaw reps will feature on a new website, launched in October, with 40 case studies where union safety reps made a difference over the last 40 years.

There is also an update and re-launch of the TUC's guide on the *Trade Union Effect* which



explains why union safety reps are so important and gathers evidence from independent research which shows that they are effective.

Research published by the HSE this year, looked at leadership and worker

involvement in ports and docks and concluded that health and safety reps played an important role in increasing attention to health and safety and were generally supported in their role.

TUC regions will be asked to organise events to bring safety

reps together and to promote the campaign locally. The HSE has promised support and planning is under way for a joint event in April 2018.

Further details will be sent to Usdaw activists by email and in future issues of *Network*.

## The key features of safety reps and committees

Health and safety reps elected by the union are given specific legal functions to:

- Investigate complaints from members and potential hazards.
- Investigate accidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Take up health and safety problems with management.
- Carry out regular health and safety inspections of the workplace.
- Represent members in discussions with visiting inspectors from the enforcing authorities.
- Take part in safety committee meetings where one exists.

### The employer has legal duties to:

- Consult with reps in good time on any matters affecting the health and safety of members.
- Provide reps with reasonable facilities and assistance.
- Form a safety committee if the reps request one.
- Give reps paid time during working hours to carry out their functions in the workplace and to attend trade union training.



### This legal framework has stood the test of time:

- Where reps use their functions they provide a 'reality check' to make sure that policies and procedures intended to protect workers are actually working and to pick up on hazards that might go unnoticed.

- Reps have access to high-quality trade union training and to independent expert advice.
- Where issues can't be resolved between a rep and local manager, experienced union officials can get involved to help negotiate a conclusion.
- Reps can make sure that the experience and knowledge of workers is shared so that solutions to health and safety issues are more practical and achievable.

### But the union needs to organise to make sure that the regulations are working:

- Have all the safety reps in your workplace been on union training courses?
- Do they carry out regular inspections of the workplace?
- Do they investigate accidents?
- Do members know how to get hold of their rep if they have any issues?
- Do safety reps attend safety committee meetings?
- Do the safety reps work closely with other union reps at work?

## Safety breach fines increase

**The TUC has welcomed the fact that the total amount of fines imposed for breaches of health and safety law has increased substantially.**

The total for the period February 2016 to February 2017 was £73.2 million – up from £35.4 in the previous year. This is mainly the result of the stiffer



sentencing guidelines which were introduced last year.

However, TUC head of health and safety, Hugh Robertson has expressed concern that there were far fewer actual prosecutions. In 2015-2016 the HSE took 696 cases to court but last year this fell to 547 - a 21 per cent reduction. His worry is that, as the HSE is no longer carrying out proactive inspections in many sectors, employers may be dodging prosecution unless something very serious goes wrong. Strong enforcement action is needed as a deterrent.

You can read his blog in full at [strongerunions.org](http://strongerunions.org) and search: **prosecutions**

## Standing up raises risks

**Canadian researchers have found evidence that workers who stand for prolonged periods are at greater risk of heart disease than those who sit at work.**

The study, published in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, followed 7,300 workers aged 35-74 for 12 years. Even after adjusting for a wide range of factors - personal, health conditions and health behaviours - the risk of heart disease was twice as high among people who primarily stood on the job compared to those who primarily sat.

Dr. Peter Smith from the Institute for Work and Health in Toronto who led the research



said: "A combination of sitting, standing and moving on the job is likely to have the greatest benefits for heart health. 'Workplaces need to apply this message not just to workers who predominantly sit, but also - in fact, especially - to workers who predominantly stand.'"

Read the full report at: [academic.oup.com](http://academic.oup.com) search: **kwx298**

## Andy Sadler: The safety rep interview



**Dotcom driver Andrew is part of a team of five reps at his Tesco Extra store in Coventry. He became active in 2009 and has just completed Academy2.**

### **Why did you become a health and safety rep?**

As a dotcom driver I was concerned with safety, especially around vehicle movements and manual handling. I decided to take a more active role to improve safety.

### **What is involved in the role?**

The most important thing is workplace inspections every three months. I report my findings to our store manager and we always try to resolve problems quickly. My members know they can come to me with any health and safety issue and if necessary I represent them on health and safety grievances.

### **How do you keep on top of health and safety news?**

I regularly research the internet for updates and check the Usdaw Tesco reps newsletter. Health and safety issues that are recorded in the press are always useful too.

### **What are the main health and safety concerns for your members?**

Manual handling (roll cages especially), temperature issues in cold weather and slips and trips.

### **Did you keep a check on health and safety at your own store while on Academy2?**

I was in regular contact with the reps in Coventry and they kept me updated. It's helpful that both my wife and daughter work at the same store too.

## Andy's top tips...

- You have a legal right to conduct workplace inspections every three months, so make sure you do. Record your findings on the HS2 forms and let your store manager have a copy.
- Get to know your in-store technician or maintenance team and let them know of anything they could address before it becomes a problem.
- Get on the store forum, if your store has one, so problems can be dealt with or escalated to a higher level if necessary.
- Do your research. The HSE website is a great source of information. Also check the Usdaw website, keep in touch with other health and safety reps and remember health and safety is much more than just physical. Problems that can affect someone's mental health are also health and safety issues.



# Your Pictures



**PICTURED L-R First row:** Boots Norwich campaign on Spotlight Day; Scottish divisional young workers' committee recruiting in Tesco Maryhill; Tesco Newtownbreda promoting Check Out Learning; **Second row:** The reps at Karro Food Group in Cookstown recruited over 25 members during membership week; Tesco Inverurie Extra promote Legal Plus; Academy1's Louise Sherpherd holding a Legal Plus event in Tesco Renfrew; **Third row:** Union learning reps from Tesco in Northern Ireland completed their stage one training in July; Barbara Green (E041 West Midlands Sainsbury's) retired from Sainsbury's Blackpole in Worcester; Campaigning for Parents and Carers at Morrisons Morfa Swansea; **Fourth row:** H065 branch promoting Usdaw at the Isle of Wight garlic festival; Campaigning outside Lidl in Slough; and M&S in Bluewater shopping centre, Kent; **Fifth row:** Academy reps campaigning at M&S in Glasgow.





A dedicated space to share your news, views and achievements. Let us know what you have been up to and you could win £50! Please send letters/emails and photos to either of the addresses given above. We reserve the right to edit all letters.

# Your Letters

## Store's first campaign day

Shop steward Shirley Webster, health and safety rep Pauline McFarlane and myself held a Freedom From Fear campaign recently and had a great day. We managed to get over five pages of signatures for the petition from staff and customers and it really raised the awareness of the union and what shopworkers have to deal with, even from a small town in Scotland. The store has been open for nine years now and never done anything like this before. I have spoken to my area organiser and manager about the possibility of doing another campaign later in the year for the staff, like a pension awareness day or a Legal Plus day.

**Perry Saunders**  
G090 North West Scotland Tesco

## This is a shout out to young reps

Whilst working for Tesco South Shields, rep Kayleigh Peel has been studying Employment Law and I am proud to say she has passed her exams with honours.

She is now looking to carve out a future for herself in the legal profession.

This is a bit of a shout out for inspirational young workers who work hard in their day job but also do well studying for another career.

**Lisa Hesse**  
area organiser, Newcastle office



## Raising money in memory of Jayne

Staff from the Usdaw Warrington office have climbed up Snowdon - the UK's second biggest mountain - to raise money for The Christie cancer centre in memory of colleague Jayne Rigby.

She died in December at the age of 42 after a battle with ovarian cancer.

Friend Stacey Talent said: "We wanted to do it for Jayne because she was so brave and so grateful for the level of care she got from The Christie and how hard the staff there work."

Jayne's husband Darren who joined her colleagues for the hike has set up a JustGiving page, which has already raised more than £4,000.

Make a donation at: [justgiving.com/fundraising/darren-rigby4](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/darren-rigby4)



**RYDE ISLE OF WIGHT**



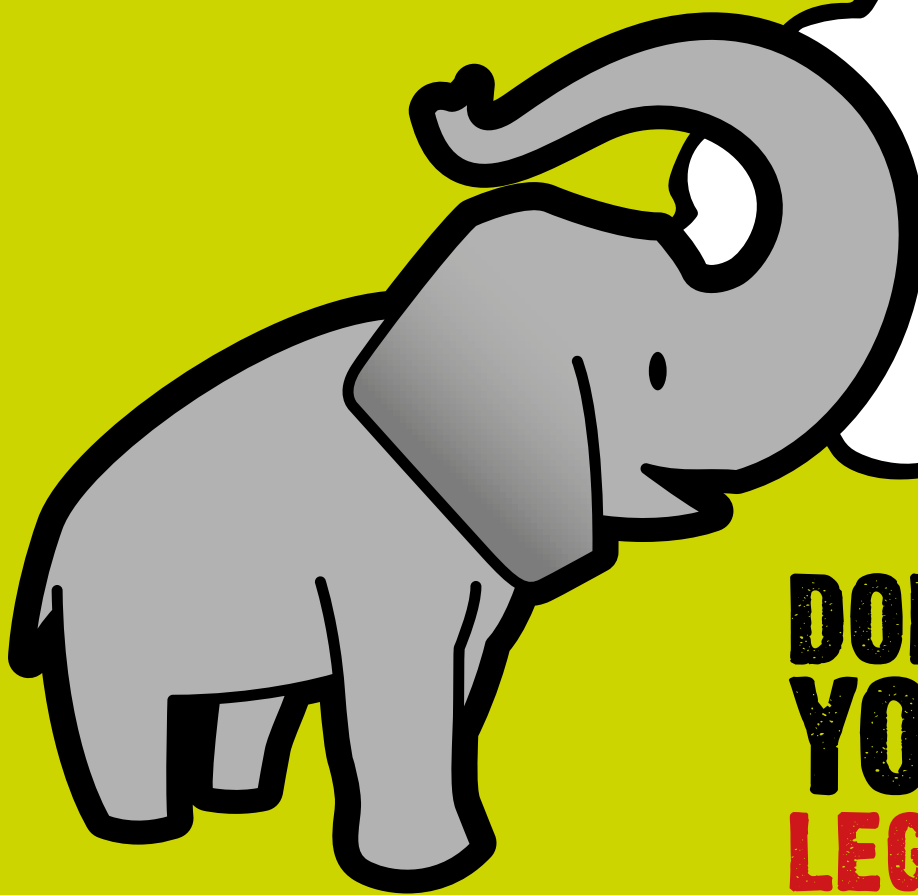
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