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ACTIVISTS ARE  
UNION STARS

Top reps in focus



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



## General secretary John Hannett Still waiting for the recovery

**W**elcome to this first issue of *arena* 2014, our quarterly magazine sent out to all members. Members may have seen the coverage in the media about how the economy is now meant to be growing and wages are increasing. If you don't recognise this scenario or are still waiting for the so-called recovery you are not alone.

Let's remember recent statistics showing rising wages failed to take into account the cuts in Tax Credits, which many of our members have to rely on to help them make ends meet. Nor do the figures reflect the freeze on child benefit introduced by the Coalition. That's before we look at the hikes in fuel, gas and electricity.

Our members know they are facing a cost of living crisis. Many have had their hours cut, many want to work more hours. And we know that inflation has out-stripped pay in each of the last five years – so there is a lot of catching up to do.

We can expect more of the selective use of statistics by the Coalition ahead of the 2015 general election, but it's your finances that will tell you if you are better off or not. Everyone wants to see a sustained economic recovery, but we want it to be for the majority not the minority.

Finally, looking ahead Usdaw has a busy schedule, but we are always looking for members to take the next step and get more involved. I'd urge our readers to think seriously about becoming a rep, getting trained, and making a difference in your workplace.

John Hannett  
General Secretary



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follow us @UsdawUnion

You'll find more information on our website at: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk) or call the helpline on 0845 6060640

## arena

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Reps in action for Respect Week

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Tell arena what you think?



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

# Exploitation to end says Ed

## Agency workers will not be allowed to be used as cheap labour to undercut wages of core staff

Labour leader Ed Miliband has pledged to clamp down on British businesses using cheap foreign labour by closing the loophole which allows companies to undercut staff by legally paying agency workers lower wages.

Writing in *The Independent* he said: "When millions of workers already have low pay and poor job security in Britain and we add high levels of low skilled migration, mostly from within the EU, some benefit but some lose out.

"Unless we act to change our economy, low-skill immigration risks making the problems of the cost of living crisis worse for those at the sharp end. It isn't prejudiced to believe that."

He pledged that if Labour won the next general election in 2015, it would amend the loophole – called the Swedish Derogation (part of the Agency Workers Directive of 2011) – so agency workers would not be used to undercut directly employed staff.

# Disappearing wages pain

Workers have suffered a huge squeeze on their incomes in the last five years, with average pay falling by 6.3 per cent in real terms – a loss of £30.30 in the pay packets of employees working a 40-hour week, according to research published by the TUC as part of its Britain Needs a Pay Rise campaign.



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

# Keep your paperwork

Members are being urged to keep pay slips and any other official employment-related forms such as their P45 or P60. These are essential reference documents when dealing with the tax office and can ensure any pay enquiries, rebates or over-payments can be sorted out quickly.

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# 100 cheers for union stalwart

Lifelong trade unionist Bill Nicholas has seen it all and done it all during his remarkable 85 year career

Centenarian Bill Nicholas may be the only union member in the UK with 85 years' membership, reflecting a lifelong commitment to the labour and trade union movement.

The South Wales and Western division held a special event to mark Bill's 100th birthday in January and to celebrate his extraordinary service stretching back to 1928.

"Bill is a remarkable individual and an inspiration to

all of us," said general secretary John Hannett. "What a fantastic achievement. We all owe Bill a huge debt of gratitude for the hard work he's put in over the years to improve the working conditions of our members.

"Bill has rightly won the respect of generations of union members in the division over many years. We all wish him the very best for the future."



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# Legal fight to Europe

## Key redundancy case referred to European Court for final decision

Usdaw's fight to win compensation for members at Woolworths and Ethel Austin who missed out on a cash payment because they worked in smaller stores has been referred to the European courts.

Workers at stores with fewer than 20 staff were initially denied compensation, but after Usdaw won a landmark legal argument at tribunal in May 2013 the fight appeared won. However, the Government appealed and now a decision will be made by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU).

General secretary John Hannett said: "We are disappointed that the Government chose not to accept the decision of the Employment Appeal Tribunal, but we are pleased that this case is going to be heard at the highest level.

"We are confident of our case, which is morally and logically robust. It makes no sense that workers in stores with fewer than 20 employees were denied compensation, whereas their colleagues in larger stores did qualify for the award. These were mass redundancy situations where thousands of workers lost their jobs. How can anyone suggest that the redundancies should be treated on a store-by-



“ Our case is both morally and logically robust

store basis when the whole company was closing down?

"We hope that this referral to the CJEU will ensure that justice can be done for former Woolies and Ethel Austin workers, who have now waited more than five years."

When Woolworths and Ethel Austin went bust the administrators failed to consult with Usdaw. The union went to tribunal and won tens of millions of pounds in compensation for around 25,000 employees who worked in stores with more than 20 staff.

However, around 4,400 workers in both companies who worked in smaller stores missed out because of the interpretation of the existing law, which said consultation was limited to situations where 20 or more employees were to be made redundant at one establishment. In effect each store was treated as 'one establishment' – an interpretation roundly condemned by Usdaw, politicians and the media.





# Jayne aims to be Euro star

## Union official has the European Parliament in her sights for the forthcoming elections in May

Usdaw area organiser Jayne Shotton is looking to combine her political and trade union principles when she stands as a Labour Party candidate in the European elections on 22nd May.

“The European Parliament operates differently to our Westminster Parliament in that many of the decisions are made within committees through negotiations and debate,” said Jayne.

“The skills acquired as a trade union negotiator are ideally suited to the role of an MEP.

“Labour MEPs have fought for and won many of the workers’ rights which we now take for granted; rights such as extended maternity leave, paid holidays, equal rights for part-time workers and health and safety protection.

“All these and more are under attack from the Tories and UKIP.

“Many people just don’t realise how important the European elections are, but just as working people need Labour MPs representing them in Westminster, we need Labour MEPs representing us in Europe.”

### ■ What has the European Union ever done for you?

For a Q&A with Labour MEP Glenis Willmott turn to pages 18&19.

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**People  
like you**

Cheltenham store is a top breeding ground for young activists like Danny Jovicic

# Team work

**Y**oung rep **Danny Jovicic** says being involved with the union is like following his football club – there’s a sense of belonging and a feeling of family among the members and the supporters. “There is a real similarity,”

said Danny, a 22 year-old trainee baker who supports Liverpool FC and works at the Tesco Cheltenham store in Gloucestershire.

been influential in his development.

“I’ve learned a lot since Steve took me under his wing a year ago, he has a lot of experience and as a rep I want to be the best I can. Steve’s always encouraging me and telling me

“**Signing up new members gives you a great feeling**”

“You feel like you’re part of something and made to feel welcome and that you’re all working together as a team for the same goal.”

Danny has been a rep for four months. He’s keen to learn and senior rep Steve Newman has

about the many opportunities and training courses for reps and how this can help me in the future.

“The last four months have been really exciting. I’d only been a rep for a week when I did my first campaign for Respect Week last November.

“I’ve been on my reps’ training course and attended a couple of events in my division, but one of the best feelings was signing up two new members at my first induction. There’s more to come from me.”



**Chilled out...Danny played his part during Respect Week**



# TV shop theft is criminal

Retail crime is not victimless says Usdaw as *Benefits Street* is widely criticised



Image © Shutterstock/ Ivonne Wierink

Usdaw has condemned Channel 4's controversial reality TV show *Benefits Street* for its portrayal of shop theft.

With more than 120,000 shopworkers assaulted last year in incidents often linked with shoplifting, general secretary John Hannett slammed the show for glamourising crime. "Shop theft is not a victimless crime," he said. "It's often our members who are attacked while trying to apprehend thieves. Broadcasters

should treat this crime with the seriousness it deserves and not seek to trivialise it."

## Government blocks safety law

Meanwhile, the Coalition has blocked a move in parliament to give public-facing workers more protection from attack.

In January the Government blocked an amendment to the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill, promoted by Lord Foulkes of Cumnock, which

would have introduced a specific offence of assaulting a worker serving the public. The amendment was lost by 195 to 137 votes, a Government majority of 58.

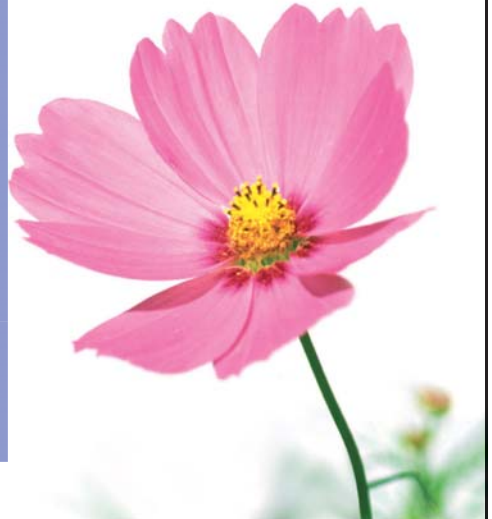
John Hannett said: "We will continue to campaign for a change in the law to ensure that proper punishments are given out and to give a clear message, that assaulting workers who are serving the public is totally unacceptable."

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The Co-operative Funeralcare is a trading name of Funeral Services Ltd, part of Co-operative Group Limited.

# Don't ignore accident injuries



Many workers do not think about making a claim if they are involved in an accident

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0800 055 6333

## Trust Usdaw

Usdaw's Legal Plus service recovered more than £23m for members last year and every one of them received 100 per cent of their compensation – no hidden fees, no deductions.

However, many workers do not make a claim when they are injured, through no fault of their own and are missing out on important payments. The reasons given for not claiming can include: 'I didn't know I could make a claim', 'these things happen', 'I'll be alright', or 'I can't be bothered'. Many workers later regret not pursuing a claim especially when an injury sustained means they are off work and lose money or worse it turns out to be far more serious than they thought.

If you are injured in an accident – anytime, anyplace – and it's not your fault – you should follow our advice to make sure you don't miss out.

### What you should do:

- Call FirstCall Usdaw on 0800 055 6333
- Write down the name and address of everyone involved including witnesses
- Take photographs of the scene of the accident and if appropriate prepare a sketch plan
- Keep details of where you receive medical treatment
- Keep a record of your symptoms and how they affect your everyday life
- Make a detailed note of any help given to you by friends or family – what exactly they did for you, when and for how long
- Keep a record of all your losses and expenses including the date of and the reason for any car journeys as well as the mileage involved

## Gay name calling is getting

**Q** I wonder whether I have a discrimination claim? At work my colleagues rib me constantly about being gay because I have long hair and I live in the gay village in Manchester. The management is aware of this and even sometimes join in. They all know I am not gay, in fact I'm married. I am getting sick of this is there anything I can do?

### But remember:

- Don't go to a high street solicitor or use a company advertised on TV – you could lose at least 25 per cent of your compensation
- Don't make any admissions to the 'other side' – that is the company or organisation you are making the claim against.
- Don't incur any unreasonable expenses e.g. don't hire out a more glamorous vehicle than your own while yours is being repaired and don't incur storage charges for a written off vehicle for any longer than is necessary
- Don't throw away receipts for medication, treatment, travel on public transport or in taxis, damaged clothing and any personal possessions damaged in the accident
- Don't settle your claim or any part of it without talking it through with your FirstCall solicitor

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# know your Rights

## ing me down Please help

**Yes.** You could bring a complaint of perceived sexual orientation discrimination. You are being discriminated on the grounds of sexual orientation – it does not matter that it is not your actual sexual orientation. In the first instance raise a grievance as soon as possible, but be aware that you have to lodge a tribunal claim within three months of the start of the discrimination complained about. Contact your area organiser for further advice.



Image © Samy2

## Image rights and wrongs

**Q** I am really upset that my wife and I were not allowed to attend the work's Christmas party. My wife is a wheelchair user and the chief executive took me to one side and said that as there would be some of the firm's clients at the party it would not convey the 'right image' of the business to have a wheelchair user present. We were both shocked and upset by this. Is there anything we can do?

**Yes.** You are being subject to associative discrimination. This is because you are being discriminated against

by your employer because of your association with your wife who is a disabled person. You should speak to your area organiser about bringing a discrimination claim to the tribunal.



## Your safety matters

**Q** I have been in my job as a fork lift truck driver for 14 months and I have been sacked for complaining that the whole site's fleet of fork lift trucks are not properly maintained and are dangerous because all the brakes have an intermittent problem which means they do not always stop. There have been at least three near misses because of this problem. I know there is now a two year qualifying period to bring an unfair dismissal claim, but is there a different rule for when you are sacked for making a health and safety complaint?

**Yes** you are correct, as health and safety in the workplace is so important there is a special rule that if you are dismissed for raising significant health and safety concerns there is no two year limit and it is a day one right. Therefore, speak to your area organiser for advice.



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



# It's all about the money

Too many workers are missing out because of zero or short hours contracts – it's time to stop the abuse and pay fair wages

**M**any members want to work more hours and have these written into their contracts – that is one of the key issues for workers in Usdaw organised companies, a new survey has found.

More than 2,200 members responded to the union's website questionnaire on the use of zero hours and short hours contracts at work with the results revealing that:

- Less than 5 per cent of those surveyed are employed on zero-hours contracts, but of those who are the vast majority (96 per cent) would prefer contracts with regular hours.
- Almost 33 per cent of respondents are employed on contracts of more than 17 hours per week.
- With a third of respondents on contracts of more than 30 hours.
- Just under nine per cent of respondents are contracted for between six and ten hours per week.

- Over half of respondents regularly work additional hours above their contracted hours. Of these, three in every four would like to have these additional hours guaranteed.
- A third of those who work additional hours work a large number of additional hours (9 to 16 hours). A small but still sizeable group of members (17 per cent) regularly work a very large number of extra hours (more than 16 hours) each week.
- Nearly a third of members, who indicated that they do not currently work any additional hours, said they would like to have more hours.

### HOLIDAY HELL

One of the most common complaints from Usdaw members on short hours contracts, but regularly working extra hours, is that they only get paid their contracted hours when they go on holiday and therefore miss out on their 'usual' week's pay.



John Hannett said Usdaw would work with Labour to end contract abuse

## LABOUR'S PLEDGE ON ZERO HOURS

Labour leader Ed Miliband has pledged to 'end zero-hours contracts where workers are working regular hours but are denied a regular contract'. He also said that a Labour government would tackle the abuse of zero-hours contracts by taking action to:

- Ban employers from being able to require zero-hours workers to work exclusively for them;
- Ban the use of zero-hours contracts where employees are in practice working regular hours, unless employees specifically request it; and
- Introduce a new Code of Practice, providing clarity for employers and employees about their rights and responsibilities.

## USDAW WANTS END TO ABUSE

Commenting on the Usdaw survey results, **General secretary John Hannett said:**

*"This has been a very worthwhile and illuminating survey and I thank all of the members who took the time to reply.*

*"Udaw will continue to highlight the views and experiences of our members and we will continue to make the case for effective policies to tackle the misuse of zero-hours and short hours contracts.*

*"We want employers to be under a legal obligation to offer workers a contract reflecting the employee's normal working hours, which could be averaged out maybe over a 12-week period.*

*"This proposal would benefit not just zero-hours workers but would also extend the rights of short-hours and part-time workers who regularly work longer hours.*

*"What is clear is that if we are going to make significant progress on zero-hours contracts we need a strong commitment in Labour's next manifesto and we need to get a Labour government elected at the next general election. It's clear the Coalition isn't listening."*

**OVER 90%**  
of respondents have said that the issues of zero-hours contracts and short-hours working should be a campaigning priority for Usdaw

# How I'm dealing with breast cancer

Cheryl Bates wants to remind women, and men, to make sure they regularly self-check for early signs of cancer

A chance playful nudge from her pet dog Lilly alerted telesales trainer Cheryl Bates to a tiny lump in her right breast, which prompted the otherwise healthy 47 year-old to investigate further.

The keen swimmer who regularly checks herself and has no history of cancer in the family also noticed a slight brown/pink discharge from her nipple.

## Shocked but ready

After a quick chat with partner Andy, the two sought medical attention and within weeks Cheryl was told she had breast cancer. "From the moment the dog nudged me I knew something wasn't right and when the specialist told me the news I half expected it," said Cheryl who works full-time at NVS Patterson in Stoke.

"I was shocked but immediately asked the doctor – right, what can you do for me? I knew I wanted whatever was inside me – out. I suppose I was ready for it in my own mind."

Meanwhile Andy, who works at the nearby DHL depot and is a union rep, remembers the moment vividly. "When we were told, Cheryl squeezed my hand with a strength I don't think she realised she had, and then suddenly went into another gear while I was left behind with the shock of the devastating news. I was playing catch up from that moment as Cheryl moved into another sphere."

As the couple left the hospital Andy was still coming to terms with the news while Cheryl's thoughts turned to making sure there was enough food in the house! She also called into work to let her manager know.

Events moved very quickly thanks to first-class treatment from the team at University Hospital North Staffordshire. Within seven weeks she had had a mastectomy and breast reconstruction and by early January had begun the initial stages of her chemotherapy treatment.

"I couldn't have had better medical care," said Cheryl. "Doctors, consultants, nurses



Coping together ... Cheryl with Andy


have all been absolutely fantastic. Andy has been brilliant and all of my family and friends have rallied round. In fact I think it's been easier for me to deal with the cancer than for family and friends."

## Chemotherapy

Cheryl has endured the surgery, the pain, needles, drugs and all the complications that go with cancer treatment with a remarkable toughness and a hugely positive attitude. Her and Andy have laughed and cried their way through the last five months reassured by the medical staff and support of family, friends and work colleagues.

"My employer has been very supportive and so has Andy's," said Cheryl, who was itching to get back to work as soon as possible. "I'll have to see how the chemotherapy goes but hopefully I'll be fine."





“ I couldn't have  
had better  
medical care

Cheryl with woman's best friend  
Lilly. . . arena will be following  
Cheryl in the months ahead



# CHERYL BATES' CANCER DIARY

- **Monday September 16 – 9pm:** Lilly my Bichon Frise nudged me in my right breast which alerted me to a very small pea-size lump – and I noticed a pinky/brown discharge too.
- **Tuesday September 17:** Went to the doctor, who referred me.
- **Tuesday September 24:** Saw the breast specialist, again not over concerned, said it could be an infection or cyst, but he would send me for a mammogram to be sure.
- **Tuesday October 1:** Had the mammogram, ultrasound scan and 12 deep core biopsies.
- **Tuesday October 8:** Andy and I went to see the specialist who wasted no time in telling me it was breast cancer and it was in two places in my right breast.
- **Wednesday 9 October:** Appointment with the oncologist and specialist in reconstructive surgery.
- **Friday 18 October:** Pre-op assessment.
- **Monday 4 November:** Blood test, went OK but very painful.
- **Tuesday 5 November:** Final tests before operation. Wheeled down to theatre, marked up for the op with a black marker! Seven hours later and back to the ward.
- **Friday 8 November:** Feeling much better.
- **Sunday 10 November:** Allowed to go home. Yippee!
- **Friday 22 November:** Healing process continues, still under constant medical care.
- **Tuesday 10 December:** First visit to wig salon for initial fitting.
- **Thursday 12 December:** Visit from district nurse.
- **Tuesday December 17:** Specialist explains I'll need chemotherapy, six treatments in total.
- **Monday December 30:** Start chemotherapy.



Self-examination is highly recommended by cancer charities . . .

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

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

# Know the signs

## Your guide to breast cancer

**B**reast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK.

Around 50,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year in the UK, including around 4,500 in Scotland.

Breast cancer survival is improving. An estimated five out of six women diagnosed with breast cancer in England and Wales survive for at least

five years yet there are still around 1,000 UK women who die of breast cancer every month.

One in eight women in the UK will develop breast cancer at some point in their lifetime.

Around 400 men are diagnosed with breast cancer every year in the UK,

including around 25 in Scotland.

The earlier breast cancer is found, the better the chance of beating it.

Most cases of breast cancer are found by women noticing unusual changes, taking the initiative and visiting their doctor.

## BREAKTHROUGH BREAST CANCER

**Charity – Breakthrough Breast Cancer – encourages all women to be breast aware through its Touch Look Check campaign. It also encourages women aged 50 and over to attend free NHS breast screening.**

### TOUCH

- **Can you feel a lump?** Either in the breast, upper chest or armpits.
- **Is there a lumpy area?** Or unusual thickening of the breast tissue that doesn't go away?
- **Is there any unusual pain?** Either in part of the breast or the armpit.

### LOOK

- **Any change in size or shape?** For example, one breast might become larger or lower than the other.
- **Any change in skin texture?** Such as puckering or dimpling of the skin of the breast.
- **Any change in colour?** For example the breast may look red or inflamed.
- **What about the appearance or direction of the nipple?** For example, one might become inverted (turned in) when it normally points out.
- **Any unusual discharge?** One or both nipples might have a discharge.

- **Any rash or crusting?** Of the nipple or surrounding area.

### CHECK

- **Is anything unusual?** If so, get it checked out by your doctor as soon as possible. Bear in mind that most lumps turn out not to be cancer. If your doctor is unable to rule out the possibility of breast cancer, you will be referred for an assessment at a breast clinic at a hospital near you. You should be seen as soon as possible. In England this will be within two weeks.

### TREATMENT

**There are many types of early breast cancer and different treatments work best for different types.** Each treatment has benefits but also side effects. Therefore, each woman's treatment is carefully tailored to best match her cancer and situation.

Most women with early breast cancer will have more than one treatment and options may include surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormone therapy and targeted therapy. The order in which these are given can differ.

Your own circumstances and preferences are important in helping to determine the best treatment options for you. Medical staff will discuss with you the results of your tests and their recommendations for your treatment. Staff will talk you through the options for your care and can help you to make these decisions.



# What has the European Union ever done for you?

UK voters will get the chance to cast their vote in the European Union (EU) elections on May 22, *arena* takes a closer look . . .

**A**s the Bill paving the way for a 2017 referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union (EU) heads back to the House of Commons, and elections for the European Parliament approach in May this year, *arena* asks Labour's leader in the European Parliament and MEP for the East Midlands, **Glenis Willmott** to put the case for the EU.

## **Q. Am I financially better off in Europe?**

Those arguing that the UK should leave the EU are fond of telling us how much it costs us to be a member. It's true that we pay more money into the EU budget than we receive in the form of EU spending. But these costs are far outweighed by the increased trade and affluence that being a member of the Single Market

brings. A recent Confederation of British Industry (CBI) report puts the net benefit resulting from EU membership at nearly £3,000 a year per household – with every individual in the UK around £1,225 better off.

## **Q. Is being a member of the European Union good for my job security?**

As part of an EU of 28 countries, Britain is part of the world's biggest trading block – a single market of more than 500 million people. Nearly 3.5 million UK jobs currently rely on EU membership, accounting for 10 per cent of the workforce. Japan warned the Government that if the UK were to leave the EU, 1,300 Japanese companies could relocate. Car manufacturer Nissan says that leaving the EU could create barriers to foreign investment.



MEP Glenis Willmott wants you to use your vote on 22 May 2014

## **Q. I hear lots of complaints about red tape and Brussels bureaucracy, but how does it affect me?**

David Cameron calls European rules 'Red Tape'. I call them workers' rights and health and safety protection. The right to guaranteed paid holidays and a limit on the hours you can be expected to work come from European law. So do rights for mums – including the right not to be sacked for being pregnant, protection when coming back to work after maternity leave, the right to time off for ante-natal appointments and health and safety protection for pregnant women and new and breastfeeding mums.



**Q. Does Europe improve my rights as a consumer?**

Yes. For example plans to scrap mobile phone roaming charges across Europe will cut costs for consumers. Under these plans, mobile providers will be banned from charging for incoming calls from July, with all other roaming charges scrapped by 2016.

An EU code of online rights protects consumers while internet shopping.

And new rules due to come into force this year [2014] will ensure that when you buy meat labelled as 'British', you can be sure it really is British and not just imported for slaughter here in the UK.

British farmers and customers have been calling for

this for years and I put forward an amendment in the European Parliament when the law was being passed to make sure that this information is included in food labelling.

**Q. Why can't we be more like Norway, which has remained outside the EU?**

Norway is not an EU member and has no seat at the table when the laws for the single market are made.

But Norway still has to comply with those laws in order to trade and has to pay almost 80 per cent of the UK contribution to the EU (per head of population).

Standing alone would weaken Britain's voice and limit our influence in the EU.

**Q. So the EU is perfect is it?**

No the EU is not perfect and Labour MEPs have been leading the campaign for reform. For example, I have called for an end to the 'travelling circus' of the European Parliament meeting in two different places. This expensive farce every month sees the staff of the parliament 'decamp' from Brussels to Strasbourg costing more than €200 million.

If we want Labour MEPs who want to reform the EU not leave it, who will invest in jobs and growth, and who will work alongside trade unions to defend workers' rights and fight back against austerity, we need Usdaw members to get them elected on 22 May 2014. **So please use your vote.**

## WARNING

USE A HIGH STREET FIRM AND  
**YOU COULD LOSE 25%**  
OF YOUR COMPENSATION

**With FirstCall you  
keep 100%**  
**0800 055 6333**

# Legal Plus

*– looking after you  
and your family*

### **Car park calamity** **Non-work accident**

When **Jenny Saunders** fractured her tibia after she was knocked over in the company car park she rang FirstCall, the union's FREE accident claim line. An Usdaw panel solicitor took up her case and she received 100 per cent of her £25,000 compensation.

"I was delighted with my settlement," said Jenny, 56, from Weston-Super-Mare. "I had an excellent service."

The accident happened in 2010 when Jenny worked for

Homebase. She was knocked down on a zebra crossing in the car park outside work as she left.

"I waited for the cars to stop and I stepped out on to the crossing. The next thing I knew I was lying on the floor in agony.

"An ambulance took me to hospital and I had an operation and screws inserted in my leg. I was in plaster for 14 weeks and off work for four months.

"I found out later the driver

was an 87 year-old man who put his foot on the accelerator instead of the brake.

"I'd read in *arena* that members can claim for accidents that happen outside of work so I rang FirstCall. I couldn't believe it when I had a callback an hour later and a solicitor said they would take care of everything for me.

"All my colleagues in Homebase have joined the union, they know like me they will benefit from a professional service 24/7."



## Holiday hell

### Non-work accident

#### A relaxing fishing trip turned into the holiday from hell for **Fiona Graham**

when she was struck by a horse and knocked to the ground in 2009.

Her visit to the local hospital for x-rays confirmed she had sustained damage to the muscles in her back and it would take time to heal.

Luckily Fiona contacted FirstCall and a solicitor took up her claim, which was settled for more than £31,000, four years later, although she had to pay £12,000 back for benefits she

received while she was off work.

"I couldn't have asked for a better service, Usdaw fought hard for me," said the 49 year-old agency worker from Coalville in Leicestershire.

"When it first happened I would have settled for around £300, just the cost of my holiday, as some kind of compensation.

"But once the union's legal experts took on my case they were very thorough. The settlement has helped change my life.

"I always knew I could rely on Usdaw. The union helped me out a few months after I joined in 2009 when

I worked for One Stop convenience stores and injured my ankle.

"Since then I've changed jobs a couple of times but I've remained an Usdaw member. There's no way I'll ever change my union."

#### **DON'T FORGET:**

- Usdaw's Legal Service provides you with legal advice on all accidents – anytime, anywhere.
- You could lose more than 25 per cent of your compensation if you use a high street solicitor or a company advertised on TV.

**“** I couldn't have had a better service from FirstCall Usdaw



follow us @UsdawUnion

Had an accident?  
Not your fault? Call  
FirstCall Usdaw on ...



**0800 055 6333**



## WARNING

USE A HIGH STREET FIRM AND  
**YOU COULD LOSE 25%**  
OF YOUR COMPENSATION

**With FirstCall you  
keep 100%**  
**0800 055 6333**



“ Having Usdaw behind me took away all the stress

### **Don't fall for TV Ads**

**Non-work accident**

A family celebration turned sour for **Susan Loftus** after she tripped and injured her ankle in a pothole on her way home from a local restaurant.

Susan was advised to contact Usdaw and a union solicitor dealt with her claim. Her case was settled 18 months later and she received a cheque for £7,500 in compensation.

“It was such a relief knowing I had a team of

professionals looking after my claim, it took all the stress out of it for me,” said Susan, a 62 year-old retired Co-op funeral arranger from Manchester.

After the accident in 2011 Susan was examined at her local hospital. She had torn ligaments in her left foot and was given painkillers and crutches and told to rest. She was off work for ten weeks.

“My solicitor was marvellous and prepared my case perfectly. The local council, who was responsible for the condition of the

pavement, admitted liability straightaway.

“After the accident I didn't think about putting a claim in but my son and his friend went back to have a look at the pothole. It hadn't been repaired and they were worried someone else would be injured and advised me to contact Usdaw.

“It's one of the easiest phonecalls I've ever made. After the first-class service I've had, my first port of call will always be FirstCall. I'd recommend it.”

## High street woe

### Non-work accident

McDonalds' customer service assistant **Jill Murray** thought she was doing the right thing when she signed up with a high street solicitor after she was hit by a car on her way home from work.

She soon realised she'd made a big mistake and contacted FirstCall. Usdaw's panel of solicitors took on her case and she received a cheque for £5,000 when it was settled 18 months later.

"You see all the adverts on TV offering their services, I thought this was what I should do," said 66 year-old Jill from Harwich in Essex.

"They were terrible. I had no communication and I had to contact them frequently only to

be told each time they were no further on.

"I didn't realise Usdaw could help me with a legal claim for an accident outside of work, but I'd had help from the union over a tax issue when I joined two years ago, so I decided to give them a call.

"I'm so pleased I did, the stress and frustration disappeared from the moment I made the call, it was all very efficient. I was kept informed every step of the way and I kept every penny of my compensation. Very professional.

"I try to encourage the young workers in McDonalds to join. I tell them I only work three hours a week and I wouldn't be without my union membership. It's money well spent."



“ I didn't realise Usdaw helps with non-work accidents

## LEGAL ROUND-UP

### Clifford Morris

- Age: 55
- Employer: Tesco
- Injury: Wrist
- Date of accident: Sept 2011
- Case settled: Oct 2013
- Award: £4,000
- Quote: "My advice is; talk to the union, they'll help"

### Claire Green

- Age: 43
- Employer: Sainsbury's
- Injury: Facial
- Date of accident: Feb 2011
- Case settled: Nov 2013
- Award: £5,300
- Quote: "A fantastic service. FirstCall took care of it all."

### John Grimley

- Age: 56
- Employer: Tesco
- Injury: Knocked off bicycle
- Date of accident: June 2010
- Case settled: Jan 2013
- Award: £6,750
- Quote: "My union solicitors were excellent."

### Steve Clinton

- Age: 48
- Employer: Morrisons
- Injury: Back
- Date of accident: Apr 2011
- Case settled: Aug 2013
- Award: £8,565
- Quote: "Udaw is there for you 24/7."

“ I know for a fact –  
you’re better off  
with Usdaw



## WARNING

USE A HIGH STREET FIRM AND  
**YOU COULD LOSE 25%**  
OF YOUR COMPENSATION

**With FirstCall you  
keep 100%**

**0800 055 6333**

### **Driving success**

**At work accident**

FirstCall came to agency driver **Peter Miller's** rescue after he was involved in a road traffic accident. A union solicitor dealt with his case and eight months later he received a cheque for £2,500 in compensation.

“As always I had a first-class service,” said Peter, 66, from Swindon. “I joined Usdaw 18 years ago when I

worked for Tesco. I’ve had a number of driving jobs since but I always take my membership with me.

“I wouldn’t be without it. It’s proved to be a good friend over the years. I’ve used the services of the legal department twice before and they were brilliant on both occasions and it didn’t cost me a penny. I’ve had more than my money’s worth.”

The accident happened in 2012 when his truck hit a cow

that had jumped over a barrier into the road. He was badly shaken up and sustained a whiplash injury.

“I tell everyone, especially young workers, you’re better off with Usdaw, especially the superb legal service members get when they join the union.

“If I’d have gone to a solicitor in the town they would have taken a big chunk out of my settlement and that is if they decided to take my case on in the first place.”



# Take the pain out of personal injury

**Legal**  
Plus

The Union's Free Accident Claim Line for:

- Accidents any time and any place in the UK.
- Work related diseases and conditions.
- Road traffic accidents.
- Injuries caused by violent crime or armed robbery.
- Family members living with you, if they're injured in a road traffic accident.
- No forms, no fuss, no delay.



**Fast, expert help is only a free call away**

**0800 055 6333\***

\*This is **NOT** a general Usdaw helpline. The call centre will only process applications for assistance in accident, disease and injury claims.

**Usdaw LegalPlus – working on your behalf, nationwide**

# Sign up a friend

## Cash in

WIN £100!  
ENTER  
THE DRAW  
NOW



### Last issue's winners

Five lucky members are celebrating after they each won £100 in the Recruit A Friend competition.

- Vanessa Greenaway from Suffolk recruited daughter-in-law Charlotte – both work for Anglia Co-op.
- Martin Wisely signed-up Susan Smith from Tesco in Fraserburgh.
- Norfolk's Lee Johnson recruited friend and colleague Karen Roberts.
- Trifon Pehliuanski signed-up fellow Sainsbury worker Lee Jones in Leeds.
- Penny Carlton from Tesco in Market Rasen recruited colleague Clare East.

By doing your bit for the recruitment drive you'll be **building the union**, helping your workmates get the many benefits of **Usdaw membership** and potentially putting some much needed cash into your own pocket.

The prize draw is **open to all members** and all you have to do is **recruit a friend, relative or colleague** using the form opposite and send it in to: **Arena, Prize Draw, Usdaw, Freepost NAT19525, Manchester M14 7DJ**. The first five out of the hat will each **win £100** (terms and conditions apply).

The weekly rates are **£2.25 for Scale A** (applicable to full-time and part-time workers) and **£1.41 for Scale C** (applicable to part-time workers only)

**Closing date is 11 April 2014**



**Please complete and return to  
Aena Prize Draw, Usdaw, FREEPOST NAT19525, Manchester M14 7DJ**

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

Branch No. \_\_\_\_\_ Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Recruiter's Membership No. \_\_\_\_\_



**Please use BLOCK LETTERS and complete this form as fully as possible.**

Please tick the appropriate box  
 Ms  Miss  Mrs  Mr  Female  Male

Surname \_\_\_\_\_  
 Forename \_\_\_\_\_

Member's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Full Postal Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No. \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Please tick the appropriate box  
 Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes  No

Please tick the appropriate box  
 Have you been a member of any trade union before? Yes  No

If so please give details \_\_\_\_\_

Union \_\_\_\_\_

Date Joined \_\_\_\_\_ Date Left \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution rate per week \_\_\_\_\_

Please tick the appropriate box  
 If you do not select a scale of contributions you will automatically be entered as Scale A in order to take advantage of the full range of benefits

**Scale A**  
 Full or Part-time workers Amount per week \_\_\_\_\_  
 **Scale C**  
 Part-time workers only Amount per week \_\_\_\_\_

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment and agree where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members. I give my explicit consent to the processing of data under the Data Protection Act 1998 as specified overleaf.

**The responsibility for keeping payments up to date rests with the member.**

**DATA PROTECTION ACT** (see overleaf)

M&C Received

**Feature**

# National Awards

## Winning reps show Usdaw at its best

Now in its ninth year the National Organising Awards is a showcase event that celebrates and recognises the drive, commitment and hard-work of active reps

**U**sdaw paid tribute to its dedicated army of reps at the annual National Awards Night in January when more than 100 activists and senior officials gathered at a top Manchester hotel.

**“I genuinely believe we have the best reps in the UK**

Master of ceremonies was general secretary John Hannett flanked by deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, president Jeff Broome and special guest TUC assistant general secretary Paul Novak.

“More than 600 nominations were received for the eight categories – a reflection of the huge pool of talent Usdaw has in its ranks,” said John.

28 arena

“The union’s continued growth is all down to the hard work of our activists. Every rep in the room is a winner but we have more than 10,000 activists and for me they are all winners. Winning for our members in the stores, warehouses and factories across the UK.

“If I could fit all 10,000 into this event

I would, but unfortunately that’s not possible.

“This night is all about celebrating the work our reps do on a voluntary basis. It’s a tough job but a rewarding one and our continued growth is down to the hard work of all of our reps.

“I genuinely believe we have the best reps in the union movement. Congratulations and thank you to every rep.”



Ceri Davies



Jenny Bishop



Laura McLean



Dawn Uytendhal



## WHAT THE NATIONAL WINNERS SAID:

“It’s great to be appreciated for what we do...this night boosts morale and encourages

reps even further...”

**Ceri Davies, South Wales and Western division**

“A very friendly and enjoyable event....lovely to win, didn’t expect it but I’m ecstatic...”

**Susan Heath, Eastern division**

“I was absolutely gobsmacked to win...there was so much talent in the room I’m amazed...speechless...”

**Jenny Bishop, North Eastern division**

“I didn’t think I could win...it’s a big surprise...I was genuinely shocked, but very excited also...”

**Monika Paczkowska, North Eastern division**

“This is fantastic for the members of the Scottish Equalities Forum...delighted to accept it on their behalf...brilliant night...”

**Laura McLean, Scottish division**

“A huge shock when our branch was called out....so proud to have won and it will inspire us to do more...”

**Mid Counties Co-op reps, Midlands division**

“Delighted to be nominated and to win the national award absolutely wonderful...it’s great the reps’ work is recognised and appreciated...”

**Dawn Uytendhal, North West division**

“Very impressed with the event...great facilities, great venue...it shows how much the reps are valued...”

**Bally Auluk, South Wales and Western division**

View the awards night picture gallery at:

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



Susan Heath



Monika Paczkowska



Mid Counties



Bally Auluk

*Feature*

# National Awards

## ROLL OF HONOUR

All the divisional nominations with national winners in **red** (divisional letter in brackets).

### Most Promising New Activist

**Ceri Davies (A)**, Izzy Johnson (C), Elizabeth Williams (E), Liam Algor (F), Yvonne Scott (G), Jessica Mathurin (H), Sean Barnes (K)

### Health and Safety Rep

Leonard Stow (A), **Susan Heath (C)**, Matt Magee (E), Les Springham (F), Linda MacFarlane (G), Mark Stevens (H), Alan Hopson & Andrew Stott (K)

### Equalities

Tracy Cannard (A), Abu Sultan (C), Gee Kahlon (E), **Jenny Bishop (F)**, Robert McQuade McLeary (G), Isaac Gidudu (H), Jan Jervis (K)

### Union Learning Rep

Jackie Gray (A), William Waite (C), Sarah Gee (E) **Monika Paczkowska (F)**, Anne Soloman (G), Jason Braine (H), James Fowler (K)

### Campaigns

Weston-Super-Mare A216, Tesco Reps Aylesbury C48, Dennis Nash E95, Debbie Beavis F109, **Scottish Equalities Forum**, Rob Coleman & Alexa Clarke H42, Tesco Reps Newtownbreda K15

### Team Recruitment & Organising

DHL Reps Bridgewater A230, Tesco Dotcom Reps Enfield C1, **Mid Counties Co-op Reps E70**, Tesco Reps Beverley F19, Tesco Bank Reps, Glasgow G372, Tesco Reps Bromley H86, United Biscuit Reps K66

### Individual Recruitment

Terry Brown (A), Sue Perridge (C), Lee Challenger (E) Jackie Gray (F), Christine Mitchell (G), Joan Gale (H), **Dawn Uytendhal (K)**

### Individual Organising

**Bally Auluk (A)**, Vaishali Patel (C), Mohammed Yasin (E), Jonathan Lumley (F), John McLean (G), Peter Millward (H), Jason Carroll (K)



Eastern division



Southern division







Winner of the prize draw of a weekend break Joan Gale, with (l-r) Jeff Broome, John Hannett, Paddy Lillis and the TUC's Paul Novak



South Wales & Western division



Midlands division



North Eastern division



Scottish division



North West division



**Campaign**

**Respect Week 2013**

# Abuse is not part of the job – says Usdaw

Members are being urged to report all incidents of in-store abuse so action can be taken to keep you safe at work

**A**ctivists were keen to promote the award-winning Freedom From Fear campaign last year as they took the union's anti-abuse message to the stores of the UK.

The national Respect Week saw national events at Westminster, Scotland's Holyrood and the Welsh Assembly to lobby politicians to support shopworkers who are often subject to verbal abuse, threats and assault.

Reps also took the Keep Your Cool message to customers ahead of the festive rush making good use of the vast array of promotional



materials including leaflets, toy penguins and balloons.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Too many of our members are subject to rude and aggressive behaviour from people who think it's acceptable to abuse shopworkers. Our message is clear – abuse is not part of the job and never should be.

"Our message to the workforce is – if you don't report it, we can't sort it. So we also want our members to report any incident to their employer so this can be logged, dealt with and solutions found."

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



Sainsbury's Hayes, Middlesex



Scottish political committee at Holyrood



Tesco Callington, Cornwall





Serpentine shopping centre, Peterborough

**[ MORE PICTURES AT:  
[WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/GALLERY](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/GALLERY) ]**



Tesco Banbury, Oxfordshire



Co-op Mold, Clwyd



Morrisons Warrington, Cheshire

# arena Health

Send your health questions to the

arena team at: [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)

## Lone Working

**Q My daughter who is 19 often ends up working alone in the evenings at a local store where she works part-time. Is it legal to allow this?**

The short answer to that is yes, it is usually legal to work alone at night in a shop.

However her employer has a legal duty to make sure that members of staff are safe at work so far as is reasonably practicable. They should do a risk assessment to make sure

that any problems are identified and the risk is minimised. For example, what would happen if the lone worker slips and is injured? What precautions are there against the risk of violence – especially if the shop sells age-restricted products such as alcohol or cigarettes?

Usdaw provides a useful checklist for the risks in our 'Guide to Lone Working' at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/advice/resources/healthandsafety/hazards/loneworking.aspx](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/advice/resources/healthandsafety/hazards/loneworking.aspx)

This is covered in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulation 1992 which can be found at:

[www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l24.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l24.pdf)

## Ill at work

**Q I was ill at work recently and wanted to go home but my manager said I couldn't and that I had to finish my shift, is he allowed to do this?**

Your employer has no power to force you to stay at work when you are unwell.

However, if you choose to leave work before your shift finishes you need to be aware of the consequences.

If you go home sick you should make it clear that is why you are leaving early and follow the reporting procedures for telling your employer you are sick.

You may lose pay for the hours you miss and (depending on your sick pay agreement) for the next three days if you are off that long.

If your manager does not believe that you were sick or if there is an attendance management policy, you may have to face an interview or even a disciplinary hearing on your return.

However, if you genuinely feel ill you should not let this stop you from going home.

## Toilet trouble

**Q There are ten of us working in a small warehouse (six women four men) and there is only one toilet for us to use. Surely there should be more and separate as well?**

Your employer has to provide 'adequate' toilet and washing facilities. If they are being shared by men and women they should be in separate rooms that are lockable.

For ten people there should be a minimum of two toilets and two wash basins where they are mixed use or women only. For men only, there would need to be one toilet and one urinal as well as a wash basin.



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

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



Usdaw has its own health and safety section full of useful information, advice and a reps' forum at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/forum](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/forum)

If you have any questions for arena's health experts write to: **the editor, arena, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester, M14 6LJ** or email: [arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)

Depending on the nature of your illness there may be certain jobs that you should not be doing. For example, if you are feeling faint, you should not be doing safety critical work such as operating dangerous machinery. Or, if you are vomiting or suffering from diarrhoea, then work with fresh food or serving the public will not be suitable.

Speak with your Usdaw rep and get their advice on how to proceed.

## Water hazard

**Q I drive to work and then drive a delivery van all day. We have missed most of the bad flooding but what can I do if we get really hit.**

Driving on flooded roads can be quite dangerous and should be avoided where possible. Only make journeys that are essential and discuss all journeys with your employer.

Flash floods can come rapidly and unexpectedly. In the UK they are usually caused when rivers break their banks.

Never attempt to drive through a flood that you couldn't walk through and be aware that water hides dips in the road. Worse still, there may be no road at all under the water. Flooding can wash away the entire road surface and a significant amount of ground beneath.

Image © gemphoto/Shutterstock



“ If the journey isn't essential - don't make it

Just six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars; this depth can cause loss of control or possible stalling as water is sucked into the exhaust or washes into the air intake. If negotiating a flooded section of road, drive in the middle where the water will be at its shallowest.

Many cars will start to float in as little as one foot of water - this can be extremely dangerous because as the wheels lose grip, you lose control. Two feet of flowing water can sweep away most vehicles — including large four-wheel drive cars.

Remember, if the journey is not essential don't make it.



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# Wiser!

**F**ifty was meant to be the new 40, but not if you are looking for a job with a recent survey revealing widespread discrimination against workers over 50, despite legislation outlawing it.

It is a revelation Usdaw member **Lorraine Coull** wholeheartedly agrees with and the unemployed 55 year-old can speak from bitter experience.

"I noticed it in my old job where the more experienced workers were gradually eased out of the business to be replaced by younger workers on worse terms and conditions," she said. "I ended up being one of those 'eased out'.

"Women don't stop thinking when we reach 50. We don't lose all those years of experience, which seem to count for nothing these days. I remember, say 10, 20 years ago, workers were

**Don't dismiss women over 50 – treat us with dignity, says Scotland's Lorraine Coull**

treated with dignity regardless of age and were valued for the job they did. Not now.

"It's as if women over 50 don't fit the 'corporate image'. Well we may have added a few

**“ Women don't all of a sudden stop thinking when we reach 50!**

pounds here and there, but that doesn't affect our decision-making capabilities.

"I've applied for many jobs. Some employers don't even acknowledge your application, some send you the standard 'thanks but no thanks'.

However, I can't help thinking when I put my age

down, or go to an interview, I'll get passed over invariably for a

younger or better looking person.

"Women like me have built up important people skills – tact, diplomacy, empathy – and the ability to make judgement calls. You can't teach new starters

these skills on a computer.

"However, I'm not ready to give in and I'm determined to carry on job

hunting. In the meantime I've started a free college course to stay busy and to prove to everyone I still have a brain!"

**What do you think? Are women over 50 discriminated against in the jobs market? Are men? Email your comments to:**



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

**People  
like you**

**Simon Eggleton is keen to fly the flag for equality at work and in the union**

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

# Proud

**A**ctivist **Simon Eggleton**, 30, who works for the Co-operative Food in Peterborough, is a firm believer in equality and is closely involved with Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) events within Usdaw and with the Co-operative's LGBT Network Group.

**Q: What's your role on the Co-operative LGBT Respect Network steering group?**

My role is events co-ordinator. I'm hoping I can help to get the network involved in more local Pride events, as well as festivals and street stalls. I'd like to see more Co-op staff get involved.

**Q: Which Pride events have you attended and what do you enjoy about them?**

I went to three Pride events last year: Birmingham, London and

Manchester. I also went to the LGBT TUC conference as part of the Usdaw delegation. I enjoy the atmosphere and meeting new people and also the big crowds that gather to watch the parades. I see these events as a very important part of the whole community.

**Q: What's the best thing about being a rep?**

It's an all round great experience, working with people to help them resolve problems at work. It's important members raise equality issues with their reps so we can give them the support they need.

**Q: Have you changed since you became an activist?**

Personally I'm much more confident, my colleagues at work have noticed too.



**Campaigner... Midlands division's Simon Eggleton**

Being on the Usdaw Academy1 in 2012 helped. I think a main factor is the knowledge I've gained through my experiences of being a rep and getting involved in the equality side of things.

**Q: What's next for you?**

My main focus this year will be my union work and my involvement with our divisional equalities forum as well as supporting and working with the Co-operative Respect Network steering group to raise awareness.

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



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# arena Letters

Members can have their say right

here via email or post – but keep it brief!

Follow Usdaw campaigns at:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

The screenshot shows the Usdaw website homepage. At the top, there's a navigation menu with 'About Us', 'Our Campaigns', 'News & Events', 'Advice & Resources', 'My Union', and 'Join'. Below this is a 'What's New' section featuring a 'Know Your Rights' article with a 'Find out more' button. To the right is a 'Freedom From Fear' article with a 'Find out more' button. Below these are several smaller articles and a search bar. A social media banner for '@UsdawUnion' is overlaid on the bottom right of the screenshot.

## ★ Pay living wage

Recently in the news and on the Usdaw website I've heard so much about giving companies

**HAVE YOUR SAY**

You can have your say on the arena letters page, please keep it brief and no longer than 100 words

**£50 for the best letter**

the option to pay their employees the new Living Wage which is a great idea, however I assume this is only voluntary. I think this should be made a compulsory standard wage for low paid workers such as retail workers as myself. I'm currently on a rate of £6.67 per hour, which is just above the minimum wage. However, this has been incredibly difficult to live on. Is there anything Usdaw can do to encourage profitable employers to share their millions of pounds profits and be good enough to pay their staff a Living Wage.

Matthew Parker  
South Herts C57

## Pressure on staff

I'm a store manager with a big retailer, and in recent months the store has been given fewer and fewer hours in which to run, but there is still the same amount of work to complete, and the same levels of standards and service are expected as before.

To what extent can the company continue to reduce operating hours without reducing expectations? I have voiced my concerns but to no avail. The situation is causing a lot of stress for myself and my colleagues.

Members of the management team often go without breaks because there simply isn't enough cover to have one – making unpaid breaks an absolute joke as there isn't any cover at all in the current management structure to be able to leave the store for 30 minutes. Name & address supplied via email

## Late opening slammed

I want to register my disgust at the Co-op Food for opening till 10pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve last year. Giving staff only five weeks' notice.

I'm sure I'm not the only one who is really annoyed. The reasons the Co-op gave was to compete with Tesco and Sainsbury's.

I feel 8pm is late enough to allow staff to get home and put their kids to bed on this all important night. The Co-op is meant to be a family business. New Year's Eve is a family and party night, and by the time you finish at 10 and get home it's pointless. Also most public transport finished between 6-8pm, leaving staff possibly having to walk home. That can't be very safe.

Via email

## Learning bonus

I just thought I would let other members know of the positive experience that I have had returning to learning after almost 30 years. It began with the Usdaw home study booklets. From there I have enrolled at the Open University through the access to success pathway at a huge discount. I am working towards my degree while working full-time and finding the things I study transfer into my work. Usdaw has also allowed me to claim from the Usdaw grant scheme, which has helped with £150 back per 60 point course. I would recommend anyone interested to give it a go.  
**Mancel Wood**  
Boots Industrial E192

## Unpaid extra time!

I understand the problems around zero and short hours contracts but shouldn't the union do a similar survey on unpaid extra time? I am currently fighting with my employer over the practice where staff start earlier and finish later than their shifts - yet this time is unpaid (between 15–30 minutes per shift). My area organiser has been really good in helping me with this issue (John Allen, Edinburgh Office). When I look through the Usdaw Forums online it appears that many retail workers are now expected to work extra

time unpaid! I think now more than ever there is a need for the great work unions do as employers still use the recession as an excuse to grind away at retail workers and abuse terms and conditions  
**Kevin Currie via email**  
Scottish division

## Flexibility first please

The problem is not zero hours in themselves, but the exploitation to the disadvantage of the worker. While working, I requested a zero hours contract during a seasonal work position. In this way, I was able to come and go as needed in order to provide care and arrange medical appointments without seeking leave. The arrangement suited both parties. I would be sorry to see this flexibility disappear from working arrangements.  
**Patricia Britton (retired),**  
Scottish division

## Thanks to activists

I want to say a big 'thank you' to the reps at Morrisons for all of their efforts during the union's annual Respect Week, which highlights the issue of abuse against shopworkers.  
Reps



**Morrisons reps win respect at the store in Leek**

You can write or email your thoughts to:  
the editor, arena, Usdaw,  
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ or  
[arena@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:arena@usdaw.org.uk)  
Send all photos to: [pictures@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:pictures@usdaw.org.uk)

Gail Wildman and William Cawley at the Leek store, Russell Stanley at Nantwich, Pat Sproson and Deb Lambert at Goose Street and Jeanette Smith and Hayley Simpson at the Festival Park store did a great job in promoting the union and this very important issue.  
**Ellen Shaw, Warrington office**

## Credit to carers

My husband Byron works at the Co-op warehouse in Coventry full-time and he is also my carer. I have colon cancer, heart problems and a lot of secondary problems that leave me very weak and unable to do a lot of things we all normally take for granted.

Byron never complains and goes out of his way to make sure that I have the best life he can give me.

People do not realise just how hard it can be for people like my husband who have ill and/or disabled family members. Nor do they realise just how selfless and caring they are.

I just wanted to say to my husband – thank you, and I love you.

I also hope it makes other people give a second thought to all the other carers like my husband.

**Mrs Susan Cliffe**  
Midlands division

# Membership Week

## Reaching out to new recruits – everywhere!

Usdaw continues to grow despite all of the difficulties faced by the UK economy – it's all down to the hard-working activists

**T**he first Membership Week of 2014 burst into life in January as reps and officials devoted their time to signing up new recruits and reminding existing members just what the union has to offer.

Campaigns played an important part in raising the profile of Usdaw with Freedom From Fear, Supporting Parents and Carers, Pensions and Legal Plus all encouraging new recruits to join.

General secretary John Hannett said: "With such a high turnover of staff in our sectors we have to be constantly looking to sign up new members.

"I'm always impressed with the determination and sheer hard work of our activists not just during Membership Week but all year round.

"Usdaw has a lot to offer. Our Legal Plus and FirstCall Usdaw service recovered more than £23m in compensation for members injured in accidents or

treated unfairly at work.

"We've continued to fight hard for decent pay rises and have negotiated better than average settlements compared to the national average.

"We've also invested heavily in our reps. If anyone is interested in taking the step up from member to rep I can assure them of first-class training and support. They will also get a lot of satisfaction from making a difference at work."

Sainsbury's/DHL, Bedford

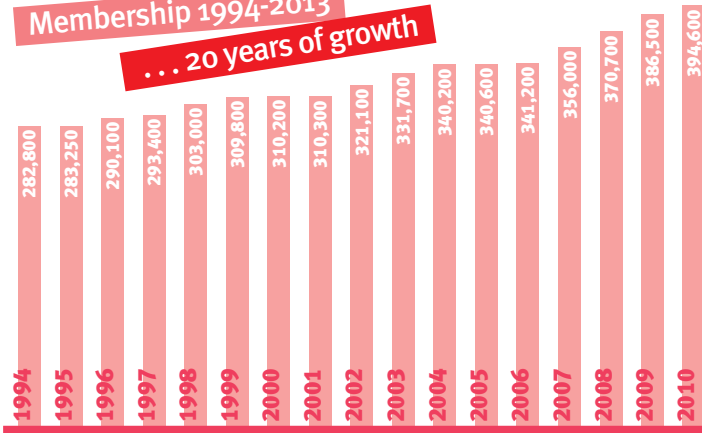


Morrisons, Stockton-on-Tees



Membership 1994-2013

... 20 years of growth







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Tesco, Amersham



Makro, Stoke



Sainsbury's/DHL, Dartford



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Tesco, Long Eaton

# arena Crossword

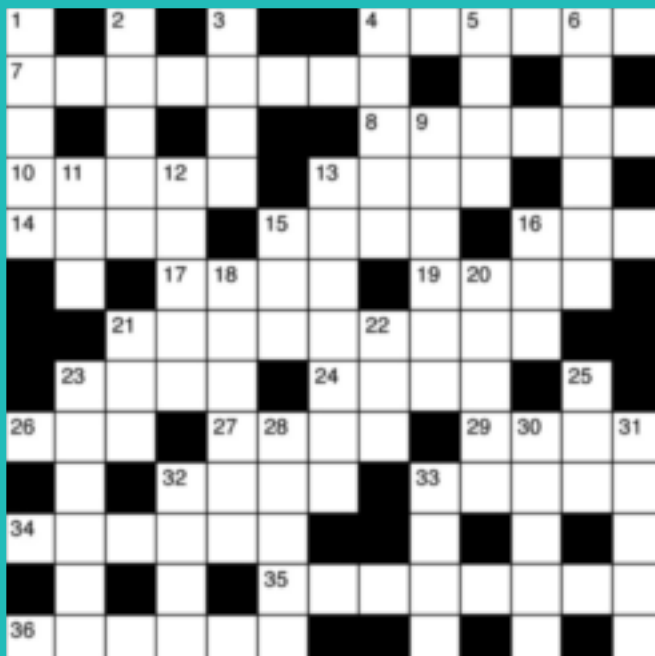
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**Carolyn Zak**, Chelmsford & Colchester Retail C37

**Susan Heneghan**, North & East of Scotland Co-op G269

**Graham Swann**,

Norfolk Area Tesco C97

## Have fun

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

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

### ACROSS

- 4. Chewy sweet (6)
- 7. Strong coffee (8)
- 8. Japanese singing and dancing girl (6)
- 10. Tired out, informally (3,2)
- 13. Coarse file (4)
- 14. Observed (4)
- 15. Compass point (4)
- 16. Nevertheless, still (3)
- 17. Watch face (4)
- 19. Female sheep (4)
- 21. Suit of workman's overalls (9)
- 23. Done on a large scale (4)
- 24. Large book (4)
- 26. A male cat (3)
- 27. Bound (4)
- 29. Fall in drops (4)
- 32. Repair (4)
- 33. Escort (5)
- 34. Cooking instructions (6)
- 35. Free from physical desire (8)
- 36. Road (6)

### DOWN

- 1. American state (5)
- 2. Type of fruit (5)
- 3. Eager, enthusiastic (4)
- 4. Roman gowns (5)
- 5. Flick (4)
- 6. Resounds (6)
- 9. Respect (6)
- 11. Zodiac sign (3)
- 12. Asian river (5)
- 13. Connected (7)
- 15. Humorous or jocular person (3)
- 16. Opposite of no (3)
- 18. Foot part (6)
- 20. Unwelcome plants (5)
- 21. Weir (3)
- 22. Stick or shaft (3)
- 23. Instant (6)
- 25. Falsehood (3)
- 28. Incompetent (5)
- 30. Large animal, in short (5)
- 31. Pierce slightly (5)
- 32. Belonging to me (4)
- 33. As far as (2,2)

# Communication

From Aberdeen  
to Plymouth  
Usdaw has  
offices across  
the UK

## Channels

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**Andover**  
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Hampshire SP10 1DN T: 01264 321460  
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## Your contacts

Always speak to your rep first if you need advice or support.

If you don't have a rep at your workplace contact your local Usdaw office as shown on the map. Alternatively, you can ring our national helpline **0845 6060640\*** to be connected to your local office.

\*Calls charged at local rate.

**The union's head office is:**

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Tel: 0161 224 2804/249 2400

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

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