

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for *Usdaw* activists – January/February 2017

YOUNG REPS IN FOCUS

PENSIONS Q&A



NATIONAL WINNERS 

... RECRUITMENT ... HEALTH AND SAFETY ... EQUALITIES ... NEWS ...

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Comment

General secretary John Hannett

Welcome to the first issue of *Network*, which is packed with great examples of reps building the union in workplaces up and down the country. Our annual national awards night is also featured and is a testament to just how committed our activists are in their defence of our members.

Usdaw enters 2017 in a strong position and it's because of the hard work of our reps that we can look ahead to building the union both in our existing strongholds and beyond into new companies. We are well-established in Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons and the Co-op but we still face recognition challenges with the likes of Aldi, Lidl and Marks and Spencer.

Similarly in transport, distribution and food manufacturing, we have some strongly organised sites but we have others which need a sustained campaign to reinvigorate union activity.

Economy depends on EU negotiations

Unsurprisingly, Brexit continues to dominate the headlines and as the date for triggering Article 50 and the start of the negotiations for Britain's exit get nearer, securing the best possible deal for the UK in terms of jobs and the economy becomes even more important. We are entering one of the most unprecedented periods of political and economic uncertainty in post-war history.

It's impossible to predict what the UK will look like in 2-3 years time. However, what is clear is that the NHS will still need the tens of thousands of overseas workers it currently employs, the agricultural and food manufacturing sectors are in a similar position and as a net importer of goods, trade deals and the strength of the pound will be critical. Agreement on the movement of labour, workers' rights, and citizens' rights have to be thrashed out – not easy when the negotiating numbers are 27:1 against the UK.

Usdaw's position is clear, we will continue to press for safeguards to workers' rights and living standards in the workplace, in parliament and in society.

John Hannett



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Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

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LET'S GET SOCIAL

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May outlines Brexit strategy

The UK will leave both the single market and the customs union, restrict EU migration and withdraw from the European Court of Justice, prime minister Theresa May announced in January.

In her most telling speech on the UK's negotiating position following the referendum vote to leave the EU last June, she also said the final deal that is agreed between the UK and the EU will be put to a vote in both Houses of Parliament

The Government had already set itself a Brexit deadline and will trigger Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty before the end of March. This allows two years for the negotiations to be completed before the UK leaves.

The prime minister's comments put the UK on track

for a 'hard' Brexit, which critics say could lead to job losses and Britain becoming the bargain-basement low pay economy of Western Europe. Unions have expressed fears that workers' rights will be lost or weakened.

Two major banks have already announced they will transfer thousands of jobs out of London, while a number of companies have warned of price rises following the pound's fall against other currencies since the June vote. Inflation hit its highest point since July 2014 of 1.6 per cent last December.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Theresa May's tough talking has clearly gone down well with the right wing of her Party but people's jobs and livelihoods are far more important than scoring political points in the press.

"Her priorities have to be



securing the best deal for British workers and our economy. We don't want to see workers' rights attacked even further – the Tories have done enough of that since 2010 – and we don't want to see corporation tax cut for companies while in-work benefits are reduced and household incomes are put under even more pressure.

"She promised to rule for the majority of people against the elitist few so let's see if she's true to her word."

■ As *Network* went to press the Supreme Court ruled that the Government must get the approval of parliament before it can start the Brexit process. The decision upheld last year's High Court ruling and is a blow to May's administration although it is unlikely to interfere with the timetable to trigger Article 50. The Government introduced a Bill within days, which when passed, will give it the authority to start negotiations.

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By-election call from Labour

Usdaw activists are being urged to help Labour fight two crucial parliamentary by-elections in Copeland in Cumbria and Stoke-on-Trent Central.

The vote for the two seats will take place on February 23 with Labour defending both with a majority of around 5,000 in Stoke and 2,500 in Copeland making them key marginals.

General secretary John Hannett said: "These are two vital tests for Labour that we cannot afford to lose. "I want to see as many Usdaw members and



activists helping out the local constituency parties to make sure we get Labour supporters to turn out either on the day or by using the postal voting option.

"We only have a few weeks to get involved and make Labour's case on jobs, workers' rights, the economy and the NHS."

To get involved call the politics section at central office on 0161 249 2452.

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Depot job losses

Usdaw is in talks with Tesco after it announced plans to close two of its distribution centres at Welham Green in Hertfordshire and Chesterfield in Derbyshire with the potential loss of around 650 jobs.

A new management structure will also be rolled out across the distribution network, which could see an additional 364 jobs disappear.

However, Tesco also intends to create 533 jobs at its Reading, Middlesbrough and Daventry sites.

National officer Joanne McGuinness said: "These two closures are devastating news for the staff and our officials and senior reps were on-site immediately to support and advise members of their rights



at this difficult time.

"We will now enter into consultation with the company where we will look closely at the business case for these proposed closures. Our priority is to save jobs and keep as many staff employed in the business as possible.

"The proposed management restructure in all Tesco distribution centres will result

in jobs being put at risk; again Usdaw will be consulted on the business case for the company's proposal and we will be seeking to get the best deal for any of our members who will be affected."

As *Network* went to press, Tesco announced upbeat trading figures for the crucial festive period with like-for-like sales up by 0.7 per cent.

Thousands back BHS pension call

Usdaw kept up the pressure on retail billionaire and former owner of BHS Sir Philip Green when a union delegation delivered a 100,000+ petition to the headquarters of his Arcadia group in London just before Christmas.

The petition calls on Green to honour his pledge to 'sort' the BHS staff pension scheme, which faced a deficit of £571m when it collapsed last year with the loss of around 10,000 jobs.

General secretary John Hannett led the delegation and said: "We are calling on Sir Philip to deliver on his promise. We agree with the pensions regulator that the initial offers of £250m are nowhere near enough to restore the damage done by his stewardship.

"Months have already passed since the last BHS store closed. Now BHS pensioners are worried it might be years before



they get the result they need and deserve.

"If Sir Philip wants to recover any reputational credibility he must not haggle his way out of his responsibilities, he must make a full contribution and do it quickly. This is the least he can do for former staff, many of whom spent their entire working

life at BHS."

The 107,547 petition signatures were gathered by Usdaw, working with Care2 and the TUC.

The administrators for BHS, Duff and Phelps and FRP Advisory, have also come under heavy criticism after details of their £4m fees were revealed.

IN BRIEF...

Wages growth lags way behind prices

Britons face more than a decade of lost wage growth, the influential think-tank the Institute for Fiscal Studies has warned.

Workers will be earning no more by 2021 than they were in 2008 as the workforce endures the worst period for pay in at least 70 years.

It also said average earnings fell nine per cent between 2008-2013 as wages failed to keep pace with inflation, and following the Brexit vote and the fall in the value of the pound, it expects the cost of living will rise again.

Companies free to flout NMW law

Only three out of 700 firms have been prosecuted for paying below the national minimum wage since 2014, despite more than 13,000 workers being underpaid by more than £3.5bn, new figures have shown.

The Government has launched an awareness campaign to encourage workers to check their pay and report their employers to the HMRC, the department that regulates the law on the minimum wage.

Excuses cited by rogue employers, revealed by the HMRC, show agency/casual workers, female employees, and students were most likely to miss out. Treating workers as self-employed was also a common ruse to avoid paying the legal minimum wage.

More information at: www.gov.uk/am-i-getting-minimum-wage



IN BRIEF...

Massive rise in household debt

Consumer credit is rapidly approaching pre-2008 crash levels, debt charities have warned.

The latest figures show unsecured debt, which includes credit cards and car loans, grew by 10.8 per cent in the year to November to £192bn, the fastest growth rate in 11 years. In September 2008, the month that Lehman Brothers collapsed and the banking crash triggered a worldwide recession, the level of UK consumer credit debt hit a peak of £208bn.

Head of policy at debt charity StepChange Peter Tutton said: "Such levels of borrowing should set alarms bells ringing. These increases could leave households over-indebted and vulnerable to sudden changes in circumstances and drops in income that could pitch them into hardship."

Unemployment level continues to fall

UK unemployment fell to its lowest level in almost nine years, figures from the Labour Force Survey show. In the three months from September to November 2016, the overall number of unemployed fell by 52,000 to 1.6m compared with the previous three-months' figure of 1.66m.

The number of unemployed people under this count was last lower in the December period 2007, just before the economic crash. At 4.8 per cent, the unemployment rate is at its lowest level since the three months to September 2005 when it was 4.7 per cent.

PRESSURE ON M&S



Usdaw stepped up its campaign for recognition at Marks and Spencer after the company pushed ahead with contract changes and probable store closures towards the end of last year.

A specially commissioned ad van drove around the firm's flagship store near Marble Arch in London, with a supporting cast of activists talking to staff and shoppers outside.

Meanwhile Usdaw activists were also campaigning outside an M&S store in every region

across the country with future initiatives planned to bring pressure on the company.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis (inset) is leading the campaign: "Marks and Spencer have long resisted recognising an independent union for its staff, despite Usdaw representing thousands of members in the business," he said.

"With the company in a state of upheaval and uncertain times ahead, now more than ever M&S staff need a strong

independent trade union voice, ensuring they are treated fairly. At present the axe hangs over every M&S worker and leaves them uncertain of the future. Consequently staff morale is on a downward spiral. If the biggest retailers in the UK have an agreement with Usdaw there's no reason why M&S can't."



Reps in boost for Mencap



Well done to Diane Howard who raised £700 for Mencap by walking up Mount Snowdon last year. An additional £300 was also raised by Ian Hughes. Pictured l-r: Mencap's Kate Adams, Diane Howard and Angela Eagle MP.

ADM reminders...

- Branch officials should be aware any amendments to the Preliminary Agenda, which was sent out on January 23, have to be returned to central office no later than Friday February 24.
- Any delegates or visitors to this year's Annual Delegate Meeting who need to book a place at the creche facility, provided free by the union, should complete the registration form, which was sent to branches on January 23, and return it as soon as possible to central office. Applications will be dealt with on a first-come first-served basis and places are limited.

Co-op in shop sale

Convenience chain McColl's has been given clearance by the competition watchdog to buy nearly 300 stores from the Co-op Group.

The Competition and Markets Authority decision follows the deal worth £117m for 298 stores and agreed in July last year between the two companies.

It will take McColl's total convenience and newsagents

store count to 1,375.

Meanwhile, the Co-op Group also sold its remaining 30 per cent stake in the joint travel venture it set up with Thomas Cook in 2011.

The pair had 764 branches, 208 under the Co-op Travel fascia, which will be rebranded over the next two years. The deal was worth £58m and follows the Group's



move away from its non-core retail business. It sold its 780-store pharmacy chain in 2014 to the Bestway Group for £620m.

IN BRIEF...

Brexit could add to inflation pressures

Food prices will rise unless the Government ensures EU workers have access to Britain following the Brexit vote last June, a number of food and drink industry groups have said.

In an open letter to Theresa May's government the British Retail Consortium, The Food and Drink Federation and the National Farmers Union said: "Workers from the EU play a significant role in delivering affordable and high-quality food and drink and are an essential reservoir of skilled, semi-skilled and un-skilled labour." The trade groups want their industries to have the same importance as the financial services and automotive sectors.

Wilko fined for 'shocking' work practices

Retail chain Wilko has been fined £2.2 million after a worker was crushed and left paralysed just over a year after it was fined over the death of a worker.

Corisande Collins, 23, was working at the Beaumont branch, Leicester in 2013 when

the roll cage she was pulling toppled over on her.

The court heard the roll cage was overloaded with 507lb of paint, there had been no risk assessment, and there was 'inadequate training and supervision'.

Health and safety inspectors

said they were 'shocked' by practices at the store, and described the systems as 'unsafe'.

Last January Wilko was ordered to pay almost £400,000 in fines after a worker was killed when he was crushed between two forklift trucks at its Worksop distribution centre.

Workers' job fears at Boots' plan

Usdaw is in consultations with wholesale distributor Alliance Healthcare, part of Walgreens Boots Alliance, after it announced a restructuring of its health and beauty operations.

The move could see a possible significant reduction in headcount at the company's South Normanton site, impact on staff working hours in all service centres, and a temporary relocation of work for the Nottingham service centre.

National officer Daniel Adams said: "This announcement from Alliance Healthcare is a shock for staff across the company.

"Undoubtedly the most significant impact will be on the

South Normanton site where the company is proposing up to 300 job losses. Usdaw will now examine the company's proposals and interrogate the business case for their plans.

"Our priorities are to save as many jobs as possible, minimise compulsory job losses and ensure members are treated fairly and compassionately throughout.

"In the meantime Usdaw's reps and officials are providing the support, advice and assistance our members require throughout this difficult period of uncertainty."



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New GENERATION REPS

Usdaw has hundreds of reps aged under 27 who are working hard across the UK to support Usdaw members. Network caught up with some of the most promising young activists of 2016 at the union's National Organising Awards in January...

Ricky Brown Southern Division

Branch secretary Ricky works at the B&Q distribution centre in Swindon. He has been a member for five years and a rep for three.

"Most of the members on our site are in their early twenties," said Ricky. "They seem to identify better with the younger reps, myself included."

The 26 year-old has been involved with the divisional young workers' committee since 2015. "Being part of Usdaw has increased my confidence. It's opened lots of doors and now I'm excited about the future.

"It's essential that young workers become members and get active because they'll be the next generation of the union.

"I take a personal responsibility in my own site to build the young membership, and I'd urge other young workers to get involved in Usdaw wherever they work."

Tom Hemmings Southern Division

Delivery driver Tom works for Tesco in Sandhurst, where he is the youngest rep in a team of six who look after 500 members.

"I find the best method of recruitment is word of mouth," said Tom, 23. "If you're a good rep then news spreads like wildfire.

"I became active in 2013. I was trying to get on an engineering course but it was cancelled due to funding. I became a rep and

enjoyed it so much that I lost interest in my original career plans."

Tom is a member of the Southern divisional young workers' committee who recently won the divisional Team Recruitment and Organising Award nomination. "There's a lot of obstacles facing young people and we want to break those barriers down.

"The committee has spoken at divisional conferences and workshops to publicise the issues faced by young workers.

"I'm currently studying for a degree in International Labour and Trade Union Studies thanks to Usdaw's 'Chance of a Lifetime' scholarship scheme. Eventually I'd like to work for the trade union movement, but as long as I can wake up each morning and make a difference to someone's life then I'm happy."

Russ Jones Midlands Division

Shopworker Russ is one of a team of three reps at Morrisons in Bromsgrove. He has been a rep for two and a half years and graduated from Academy1 last year. "I really enjoyed it," said Russ, 25. "I was the newest and youngest organiser from the Midlands so I learned a lot from everyone else and it made me want to get more involved. I've applied for Academy2 this year so fingers crossed."

Russ became a rep to

complement his degree in Politics. He is also branch secretary and a member of his divisional young workers' committee. "We recently ran a campaign to make the public aware of the issues faced by young workers," said Russ. "We were also able to link it in with the Freedom From Fear campaign which worked out well.

"Being a rep is a great boost to your confidence and skill set and I think promoting this fact to young workers is a good way to get them involved. It's a great role to have on your CV or on a university application."

Jade Rutherford Scottish Division

Call centre worker Jade is part of a team of 10 reps looking after 1,000 staff at the Tesco site in Dundee. She is also the branch secretary and a member of the Scottish divisional young workers' committee.

"We're busy all day every day with union duties," said Jade. "I rarely get to do my day-to-day role."

Jade has worked for Tesco for eight years and was elected a rep in 2011. "I was inspired by another rep to get involved," said the 25 year-old. "I get a great deal of satisfaction from being able to support others. Sometimes it's just the simple things like letting people know their rights and entitlements.

"We're very privileged in the call centre because we can reach all of our members by email so it's easier to set up campaign days and recruit new members.

"I think it's important for young members to settle in before becoming a rep. I think members should get involved in branch activities first.

"I love being a rep. In the future I'd like to complete the Academy."

Graham Menzies Scottish Division

Nightshift worker Graham has worked for Tesco for eight years and been a rep for a year.

"I became active because I wanted to protect young workers' rights," said Graham, who lives in Dundee. "I also come from a trade union family, my dad is a rep for the Communication Workers' Union."

The 26 year-old is the youngest rep in a team of six. "I feel quite lucky as we have a good mix of old and new reps.

"There's no doubt that young workers should be in Usdaw. I know people say 'we don't need it, we can fight for ourselves' but it's not just about representation, they need to know what else we can do for them."

Graham recently won the divisional organising award nomination for Most Promising New Activist. "The Organising

*Six of the best...(l-r):
Graham Menzies, Russ Jones, Jade Rutherford,
Leanne McAdie, Ricky Brown and Tom Hemmings.*



Awards is an absolute positive for everyone," added Graham. "It's great to celebrate the work that reps do, it's all about supporting each other.

"In terms of my future, I've applied for Academy1 so I'm just waiting to hear about that."

Leanne McAdie Scottish Division

Tesco rep Leanne is part of a team of four reps looking after 130 members in the Orkney store. She was elected in 2015.

"When I started work I was quite shy," said Leanne, 26. "In my role as a rep I've had to speak to people so it's forced me out of my comfort zone and increased my confidence.

"It's amazing how much the union can do for you, which I wouldn't have known if I didn't become a rep. Although I think we need to work harder at getting the information out there.

"I'm biased because I just automatically think you should

be in a union, my mum's always been a member. It's your insurance at work and there's always going to come a time when you need a little bit of support and help.

"As reps people come to us with anything, it doesn't matter if we can help them or not, members usually just need someone to listen to them and give them a bit of guidance, and that's what it's all about."



WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN 2017?



The National Young Workers' Weekend

If you're looking for an opportunity to learn more about Usdaw, discuss the issues facing young workers and meet other young reps from around the country then the National Young Workers' Weekend in November comes highly recommended. Contact your local Usdaw office for details.

Divisional young workers' committee

If you're interested in representing young workers in your division and campaigning for their rights then get in touch with your divisional young workers committee. Contact your young workers' coordinator or local Usdaw office for more information.

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In the SPOTLIGHT



North West division's Nikki Whatmough answers Network's questions...

Why did you become active?

I became an activist as I wanted to be involved in decisions made on behalf of our members to ensure that we were being treated fairly, and that the benefits were maintained at current levels or above.

What do you enjoy the most?

Getting to meet members from all across the site and help them with any issues and feeling like I can make a difference.

Is there a downside? It can be a thankless task where sometimes people don't see what you have secured for them and only see what you haven't managed to achieve rather than what you have.

What's been your stand out moment? The best moment I have had as a rep is to be part of a successful wage negotiation when the country was not in a good financial position, where I felt we secured a really good outcome in the circumstances.

...and the worst? Worst moment as a rep was during pension negotiations when a meeting was arranged to inform members what had been discussed and gather opinions before the final

negotiations and a really low attendance was seen from members, which is disappointing for such a critical issue which can effect members' futures.

Is recruitment easy at your site?

We have a very high percentage of uptake for the union. The majority of the few people who are not currently members are temporary staff who I do find it is hard to encourage to join. As we do not represent temps and even with all the other benefits the union offers I do feel this is our hardest challenge in regards to recruitment.

What are the most important issues for your members?

The most important issues for members currently I believe are changes to terms and conditions of employment due to a recent change in ownership of the business – the protected period ends later this year. It will be of the upmost importance for myself, and fellow reps Andy and Adam to ensure that members do not have a loss or reduction in their current terms and conditions.

Have you changed as a person since you became an activist?

I have always been very organised and confident but I have gained more experience meeting with staff at all different levels of the business in union related meetings.

Would you recommend being a rep?

Yes, I would encourage anyone interested in becoming a rep to make the leap and talk to a current rep about the best way to achieve this.

What did you think of the training courses?

I enjoyed the training courses and felt they gave you all the tools and information to go away and become an excellent rep.

What one change to Usdaw do you think would help it improve?

I would split training classes into retail and production so that all members gain more from the training using relevant examples of their industry.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The news item that caught my attention happened during the festive period. It was the shooting in the nightclub in Istanbul, Turkey. I have many friends in Turkey and my heart goes out to all the Turkish people at this time.

What's next for you?

Next is to own a house and carry on doing my union work and hopefully progress from a level 3 Microbiologist to a level 4 Microbiologist within the next six months.

If you want to be the next *activist in-depth* email: network@usdaw.org.uk

Fact File & trivia

EMPLOYER... *Seqirus* **AGE...** 37
(formally Novartis Vaccines)

Job... *Microbiologist*

LIVES... *Warrington*

JOINED USDAW IN... 2005

BEEN AN ACTIVIST SINCE... 2014

UNION POSITIONS HELD...

Rep, health and safety rep, branch secretary

SPARE TIME...

is spent with my dogs and family and friends

MY FAVOURITE TV...

Elementary

MY FAVOURITE MUSIC...

I like hard dance music and attend music festivals in Europe

FAVOURITE BOOK...

Anything by Martina Cole

BEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE SO FAR...

Meeting my favourite DJ in the Netherlands

Active reps strike gold at national awards

Usdaw's annual national awards night, now in its 12th year, brought together some of the most talented, committed and hard-working activists from across the union's seven divisions.

Nine awards were up for grabs with the prizes presented by general secretary John Hannett, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis and president Jeff Broome.

"This event is now one of the most high profile dates in the union's calendar," said John Hannett. "We have hundreds of nominations each year, which in itself is a mark of just how many excellent activists we have.

"The divisional councils then choose their nominations for each of the nine categories who then come up to the national ceremony, which is held in Manchester in January.

"It's a fantastic night. We have a room packed full with winners with nine exceptional activists picking up the national awards.

"It's how the union says a big 'thank you' to its reps. Of course not everyone can be here but this night demonstrates that we value and appreciate the work our reps do in very difficult circumstances.

"We'll do it all again next year, so my message to reps who haven't been here is – you can nominate yourself or a colleague later in the year for the 2017 awards night, which will be held in January 2018. So look out for information later in the year."

Focus on the national winners

Most Promising New Activist Oskars Krasnikovs

Latvian born Oskars has used his multi-lingual skills to win over members at his Morrisons factory and has firmly established Usdaw's presence in this tough industrial environment. It has been a struggle but with support from his local area organiser and excellent Usdaw training courses the 34-year old has made remarkable progress.

"I can speak my native language Latvian obviously, but also Russian, a little German and I'm self-taught in English," said Oskars, who has been in the UK for eight years. "I'm a fork-lift truck driver on-site. When my organiser asked me to volunteer to be a rep I didn't hesitate as I believe in fairness and sometimes I just can't keep my mouth shut and have to say what's right and what's wrong!

"I enjoyed the awards night and was surprised to win the national award. I didn't expect it at all."

Individual Organising Leanne McGregor

Sales assistant Leanne has worked wonders to get membership in her Primark store up from six to 65 per cent since she became a rep three years ago. Campaign days have helped build the union's profile but it was summer school that really made a difference for the 45 year-old. "My confidence

and capabilities had a massive boost after my week at Wortley Hall," said Leanne. "It made everything so much clearer and has prompted me to get even more involved. I'll be doing stand-down next month for four weeks so I'm looking forward to that. It's going to be another busy year.

"The awards night is a brilliant way of giving something back to the reps and it was great to see

all of their hard work recognised. I was genuinely shocked to have won the national prize."

Equalities Callum Harrison

Former young workers' committee member at divisional and national level Callum, who works at Poundland, has spent the last six years promoting the union's work among young members.

Winners... (standing l-r): Anthony Lampey, George Petrie, Jan Jervis, Leanne McGregor, Callum Harrison and Clive Phillips. (kneeling l-r): Oskars Krasnikovs, Diane Howard and Thomas Beattie.



Roll of Honour

(Divisional letter in brackets and national winners in **bold**)



Most Promising New Activist

Michael French (A)
Adam Turner (C)
Russ Jones (E)

Oskars Krasnikovs (F)

Graham Menzies (G)
Lisa Branch (H)
Sam Davies (K)

Health and Safety Rep

Elaine Arberry (A)
Andrews Asante (C)
Jon McEwan (E)
Dionne Chapman (F)
Kim Elsegood (G)

Anthony Lampey (H)

Mike Faulkner (K)

Equalities

Gerrie Messer (A)
Maurina Joseph-James (C)
Joan Samuels (E)
Garry Evans (F)
Graham Burns (G)
Foluke Moses (H)

Callum Harrison (K)

Union Learning Rep

George Petrie (A)
Jacob Haughey (C)
Anita Adamczyk (E)
Faye Forster (F)
Donald Paterson (G)
Chhaya Patel (H)
Kevin Callow (K)

Campaigns

Linda Connor (A)
Donna Genius (C)
Simon Willmott (E)
Rebecca Blades (F)
Jade Rutherford (G)
Lesley Jarvis (H)
Diane Howard (K)

Team Recruitment and Organising

Morrisons Reps
Bridgwater (A)
Phoenix Healthcare
Distribution Reps
Norwich (C)
Tesco Depot Reps
Lichfield (E)

Co-op Distribution Reps Birtley (F)

Tesco Reps Kirkwall (G)
Young Workers
Committee (H)
B&M Distribution Reps
Speke (K)

Individual Recruitment

Phil Birkett (A)
Tommy Ryan (C)
Gareth Coates (E)
David Landall (F)
Peter Leslie (G)
Michelle Harris (H)
Louise Murdock (K)

Individual Organising

Donna Morris (A)
Leanne McGregor (C)
Julie Haycraft (E)
Richard Todd (F)
Steven Frew (G)
Mitzi Bent (H)
Patricia Mary Edwards (K)

Outstanding Achievement

Anne Meacock (A)
Eddie Beaufoy (C)
Mark Halfpenny (E)
Lisa Grainge (F)
Neil Ford (G)
Sonia Foster (H)
Jan Jervis (K)

The 28 year-old now plans to use his experience to bring on the next generation of young activists and to revitalise the divisional young workers committee. "Getting involved in Usdaw was one of the best decisions I've made," said Callum.

"It's taken me out of my comfort zone and made me push myself that much harder. It's been a great learning curve.



Usdaw's finest take a bow



SOUTH WALES & WESTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Donna Morris, Karen Bennett, Mike Walker (deputy divisional officer), Linda Connor, Elaine Arberry, Phil Birkett and Barbara Wilson (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** Tracey Lowther, Michael French, Anne Meacock, George Petrie, Tracy Cannard (divisional council chair), Nick Ireland (divisional officer) and Gerrie Messer.



EASTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Simon Vincent (executive councillor), Adam Turner, Andrews Asante, Dave McCrossen (divisional officer), Robert Boulter and John Bond (divisional council chair). **SEATED (from left):** Jacob Haughey, Christine Henry (deputy divisional officer), Maurina Joseph-James, Donna Genius, Leanne McGregor, Barbara Woolford (executive councillor) and Tommy Ryan.



MIDLANDS DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Mark Halfpenny, Gareth Davies (deputy divisional officer), Russ Jones, Andrea Watts (executive councillor), Jon McEwan and Gavin Dudley (divisional officer). **SEATED (from left):** Joan Samuels, Anita Adamczyk, Simon Willmott, Julie Haycraft, Gareth Coates, Andy Shepherd, and Kate MacLeod (divisional council chair).

“The awards ceremony was great, not too long, a chance to network and time for reps to let their hair down. I couldn’t believe I’d won. It was such a privilege and honour to win this prestigious ward.”

Team Recruitment and Organising Co-op Distribution Reps Birtley

Experienced HGV drivers Clive Phillips and Thomas Beattie accepted the award on behalf of the hard-working team of ten reps at their distribution site.

The transport and warehouse workers are looked after by the team who have built a 90 per cent membership density.

It is a self-sufficient depot with little need for the reps to call in their local officials. The sign-up rate at inductions is almost 100 per cent.

“It’s all about team work for us,” said Clive, 63. “All shifts are covered and we all watch each others’ backs. It’s been a tough few years with all the changes at the Co-op but we’ve come through. It’s great to get the recognition for that.”

Fellow rep Thomas agreed. “We keep on top of everything and are always looking to improve,” said the 58 year-old.

“When our name was called as the national winners we were over the moon. All of the candidates were top quality so to win in such company was an even bigger honour.”

Health and Safety Anthony Lampey

Tesco dotcom driver Anthony Lampey has succeeded in embedding health and safety firmly into the culture of his depot and it now takes centre stage with issues dealt with quickly and co-operatively.

The 61 year-old was

instrumental in setting up the safety committee and is a well-respected figure on-site.

“It’s all about getting everyone to buy into the safety agenda,” he said. “And it’s worked. Let’s face it no-one wants to get injured at work and that’s what it’s all about for me. You have to be proactive. Safety has to be central to what we do and not just an optional extra.

“I was delighted to get the divisional nomination so to win the national award just blew me away. This has been an excellent event and a very proud moment for me.”

Union Learning Rep George Petrie

Mobile union learning rep George has brought a passion and commitment to his role in the South Wales area despite having other additional responsibilities as Mayor for Ebbw Vale and store rep at his Tesco Abertillery store.

He also finds time to be a Dementia friends Champion in his locality. “I love doing the job,” said the 61 year-old. “Providing courses, working with the local colleges and seeing members progress gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

“To win this award is a great honour for me. There were so many excellent nominees listed in the awards brochure I didn’t think I had a chance.

“It was nerve-racking going up to accept the prize but I dedicate it to all the members who have helped put me here.”

Campaigns Diane Howard

Tesco rep Diane is no stranger to the awards night having been a divisional nominee in 2014. Since then she has kept up her campaigning work particularly in the equalities field and scooped the national title.



NORTH EASTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Mike Dixon (executive councillor), Angela Partington (divisional council chair), Joanne Thomas (divisional officer), Lisa Grainge, Cathy Godfrey (deputy divisional officer) and Brian Loughhead (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** Dionne Chapman, Rebecca Blades, David Landall, Clive Phillips, Faye Forster, Oskars Krasnikovs and Thomas Beattie.

From her Bidston Moss store on Merseyside the 58 year-old has taken her talents on to the divisional and national stage with great success. "I get a lot of satisfaction out of what I do, especially on LGBT rights and hate crime," she said.

"However, when I look back I realise it was my decision to get involved in the union that really spurred me on, until then I was the quiet type.

"This has been a wonderful night, everyone is buzzing, and it's a massive bonus for the reps to be recognised like this."

Outstanding Achievement Jan Jervis

Few activists can trace their membership back almost 40 years and their activism 20 years but that is the history of Tesco rep Jan

Jervis who took this award and became only the second recipient of it since the special category was introduced in 2015.

The 61 year-old has an impressive record of building strong membership at her Tesco store and branch and has served on the union's governing body, the executive council, for 14 years.

"It feels like we've come full circle as when I joined, and later became active, the Tories were in power and here we are again," she said. "The Tories hate us and will try and annihilate us so we have our work cut out.

"As for the national award, it was a massive shock and totally unexpected. I'm delighted it's gone to our division because I know many of our hard-working reps do a great job with little thanks, so this is for them."



Unfortunately the winner of the Individual Recruitment award Louise Murdock (Ladbrokes Northern Ireland, North West division) could not make it to the event.



SCOTTISH DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Jenny Roberts, Donald Paterson, Graham Burns, Jean Hession (executive councillor), Stewart Forrest (divisional officer), Peter Devine (executive councillor) and Isabel Fyfe (divisional council chair). **SEATED (from left):** Steven Frew, Peter Leslie, Graham Menzies, Leanne McAdie, Kim Elsegood, Jade Rutherford and Neil Ford.



SOUTHERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Tom Hemmings, Mitzi Bent, Chhaya Patel, Ricky Brown, Anthony Lampey, Lisa Branch, Michelle Harris and John Barstow (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** Foluke Moses, Sujata Patel (divisional council chair), Sue Prynne (deputy divisional officer), Sue Merrell (divisional officer), Sonia Foster, Amy Murphy (executive councillor) and Lesley Jarvis.



NORTH WEST DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Tony Clare (deputy divisional officer), Amanda Bailey-Coll (deputy divisional officer), Jan Jervis (executive councillor), Mike Aylward (divisional officer), William Smith, Michelle Fury (divisional council chair) and Chris Winwood (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** Diane Howard, Patricia Mary Edwards, Callum Harrison, Kevin Callow, Sam Davies, Peter Usher and Mike Faulkner.

...and the winner of the raffle for a luxury spa break was Joan Samuels from Midlands division.



Your questions on pensions answered

Q. My two children are now young adults and starting out in their first jobs. I'm trying to encourage them to join a pension scheme but they're reluctant to do so saying they can't afford it. Any advice?

Yes, it's understandable many young adults can't imagine they'll be pensioners one day themselves. The reality is that it will be a difficult financial balancing act especially if your grown-up children are on low wages and/or trying to save for a rental/mortgage deposit.

However, it is a fact that people are living longer and a decent standard of living will greatly improve the quality of your retirement. So, the earlier you can join a pension scheme and the more you can save the better.

This is perhaps better explained by giving you an example. If a 25 year old started to pay 5 per cent of their pay into a pension scheme now, with 5 per cent also being paid from their company, it's highly likely they would have a good chance of receiving a decent sized pension pot when they retire.

If the same individual delayed paying into a pension pot until they were 35 they would need to pay 12 per cent of their pay also (in addition to the employer's contribution of 5 per cent) to achieve the same outcome.

The message is simple: if you are financially able to do so, early pension saving is critical, the sooner your children join their company's scheme the better.

Q. I've worked in a large retail company for 20+ years and my pension has been changed from final salary or career average to defined contribution, can I get my hands on any of this as I'm struggling at the moment to make ends meet?

Irrespective of whether your workplace pension is a Defined Benefit (DB) or Defined Contribution (DC) arrangement, the normal retirement age will be determined by the scheme rules for that specific scheme.

Generally the 'normal' retirement age will be 65 (but could be higher or lower) and it is not normally linked to your state pension age.

If you are 55 or older you can apply to the pension scheme to start drawing your benefits early. Most schemes will allow you to do this, but not all so you will need to check.

Please note: Pensions paid early are generally reduced because they are going to be paid for longer and you may not leave yourself with enough income to see you through retirement-so think carefully before you decide what to do.

The new rules from April 2015 also mean you have more choices about how you can access your DC pension pot so make sure you consider all your options. Contact the Usdaw pensions section for more information on your pension choices at retirement.

Q. I have received some text messages from a company saying they can give me 'cash back' and 'unlock' my pension. Is this legitimate and what does it mean?

If you're 55 or over you can legally access the money in your pension scheme(s).

If you are under age 55 however and take cash from your pension pot this is deemed to be an unauthorised tax payment and HMRC could apply a tax charge of 55 per cent or more to the total value of your pension pot if you take cash from this.

The only exception to this is if you are applying for a serious ill health pension.

Any cold call phone or text message are likely to be scams, so here are some things to look out for:

- being approached out of the blue over the phone or via text message
- pushy advisers saying they can help you access your pension before age 55
- companies that offer a 'loan', 'saving advance' or 'cashback' from your pension
- any reference to 'loopholes', overseas investments or creative or new investment techniques
- guaranteed returns of 8 per cent each year on your investments if you transfer your pension

Don't get caught out by unlocking your pension before you're allowed to, which in most cases applies to everyone under 55.

If you are approached by someone to transfer your pension pot and you have concerns, contact the pensions section on 0161 224 2804 or email your enquiry to pensions@usdaw.org.uk

Q. I've worked all my life in part-time jobs to coincide with bringing my kids up. I'm 50 now and I'm working more hours and paying NI, but previously didn't earn enough to pay NI, what if any state pension will I get?

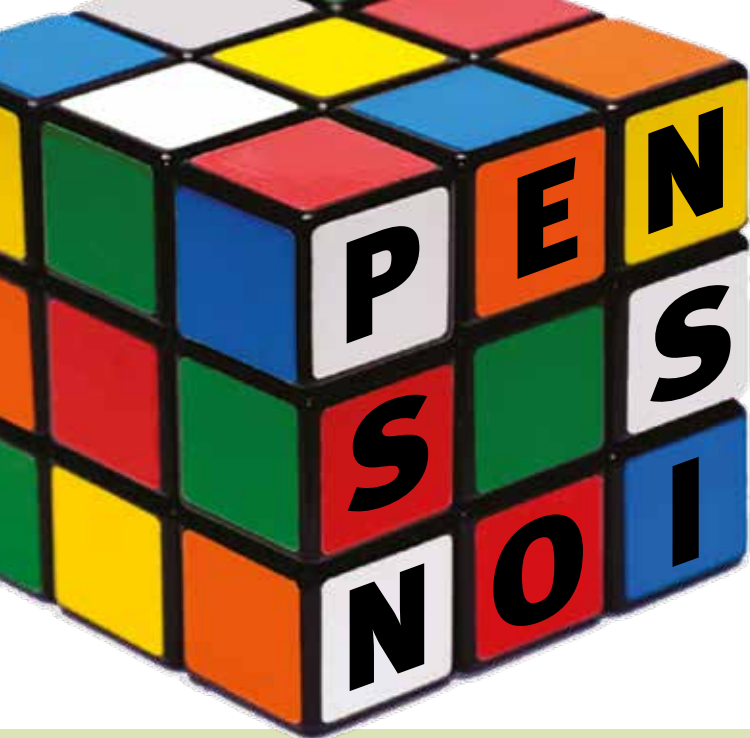
The full level of the new state pension is currently £155.65 each week, however, not everyone will automatically qualify for this amount. The amount you receive will be based on your own personal NI record.

If you didn't work while looking after your children you should still have received NI credits towards your state pension.

We would recommend you obtain a forecast of your state pension, which will also identify whether you have any gaps in your NI record. Sometimes mistakes are made so it is a good idea to ensure you will receive what you are entitled to.

If there are legitimate gaps in your NI contribution record you can pay voluntary NI contributions to make up the shortfall.

For more information about the new state pension please visit the Usdaw website.



Q. I'm 60 and worked on and off all my life. How do I find out about my state pension and how much I might get when I reach retirement age, and what age can I claim it?

For any man born on or after 6 April 1951 and any woman born on or after 6 April 1953 you will be affected by the reforms to the state pension introduced in April 2016.

The full level of the new state pension is currently £155.65 each week, however, not everyone will automatically qualify for this amount. The amount you receive will be based on your own personal National Insurance record.

To get a quick forecast of your state pension, you can access a new online service called 'Check your State Pension'. This will confirm your entitlement and when you can get it.

To access this link and for more information about how the new state pension will affect you please visit the Usdaw website.

Q. I've always saved into a private pension as the companies I've worked for were too small to have their own pension. How can I find out about the fees I'm charged by my pension provider?

If you have a personal pension, charges will be applied by the pension provider. The main charge is known as the Annual Management Charge (AMC).

This represents the pension provider's fee to cover the cost of administering your pension pot and investing contributions to build up your retirement pot.

The AMC will differ depending on where your money is invested, you will need to check with your pension provider what these charges are.

If charges are too high this could have a detrimental effect on the growth of your pension pot, however, a good fund manager may justify higher charges by achieving greater returns on the contributions you make.

Workplace pension schemes also have charges, but these are generally lower than individual personal pensions.

It's important that you understand the charges that apply to your pension pot and how they could impact on the amount you have when you come to retire.

Q. I'm in my early 40s, always worked and always paid my National Insurance (NI) contributions, but the state retirement age keeps getting pushed higher and higher. What's the point of paying in if you don't get it until you're over 68, or whatever it is for people my age?

Consecutive governments have looked closely at the pensions sector for a number of years. The statistics clearly show that *on average* people are living longer and it is anticipated that by 2050 the average life expectancy of a man will be 91 and 93 for a woman.

In 2014 the Pension Act was introduced and it made provision for state pension ages to be increased to age 67 from 2028 and a further increase is scheduled in 2046 to age 68.

The present Government has announced that it will regularly review the state pension age. The first review is currently underway and is being carried out by John Cridland. It is anticipated his findings will be published before May 2017.

Your NI contributions do not just fund your state pension however. The NI Scheme is a social scheme designed to meet current claims for benefit from all those covered by the National Insurance scheme. Class 1 National Insurance contributions count also for bereavement benefits, Maternity Allowance, contribution-based jobseeker's allowance and contribution-based employment and support allowance.

To find out your state pension age and for more information about the new state pension please visit the Usdaw website.

Q. I'm 55 this year, still working and paying into a workplace pension. I have no plans to retire just yet but in previous jobs I was also in a pension, how do I find out what they are worth?

There are basically two types of pension scheme in the UK at present- Defined Contribution (DC) and Defined Benefit (DB)

If your previous workplace scheme was a DC scheme, you will automatically receive a statement telling you the value of your pension pot once a year.

If your previous workplace scheme was a DB scheme (e.g. final salary or career average) the rules are different. Your previous scheme doesn't have to automatically send you an annual statement. When you left your previous company, you should have received a "closing" statement confirming the amount of pension you had built up while being a member.

If you cannot find this, you have the right to ask for a further statement free of charge in any 12 month period, and the scheme must give it to you within two months of your request.

So, write to your previous companies and ask for a pension statement. If one or more of these are no longer trading contact the Pension Tracing Service on 0345 6002 537.

Remember it is your responsibility to inform any previous scheme administrators of any changes to your address or contact details.

For more information go to: usdaw.org.uk/pensions



Northern Irish Asda reps in conference

Asda reps in Northern Ireland met up for their annual seminar in November and were joined by deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis.

“These are important events in the union’s calendar for both reps and officials,” he said “Membership in Northern Ireland and especially within Asda has grown steadily over the years and continues to rise, it’s a real success story.

“And it’s all credit to the hard work and commitment of our team of reps who juggle their home lives with their union role. And with the support of our officials in the Belfast office, they deliver a first-class service.”

Alan Irwin, 25, a rep for 18 months at the Ballyclare store, enjoyed the event. “I’d



recommend the seminar, it was a great opportunity to meet reps from other Asda stores as well as union officials in a relaxed environment,” he said.

“The whole thing was very well organised and we even had the opportunity to discuss issues with our head of HR Charlotte Elliot.”

Fellow rep Amanda Thompson, 43, from the

Dundonald store was at her first big union meeting. “I came away very motivated, and there was an extremely good vibe among the reps,” she said.

“It was very positive. Each rep has different issues that they are dealing with and we were all happy to help out and listen and learn from each other. I’ll certainly go again. I’d recommend it.”

Newtonards store rep Liz Davidson, 53, shared her Academy1 secondment with the group. “It was such a positive experience and brought me on so much in those six months,” she said. “I’m now really confident in my role as a rep.

“Before my Academy training I couldn’t have stood up at this seminar and addressed a room full of reps.”

No place for racism in modern society

A Show Racism the Red Card themed weekend attracted more than 60 members to the North Eastern division’s federation school held in November last year.

It coincided with the nationwide campaign and the union’s drive to eradicate racial discrimination at work and in society.

Dorothy Woodhouse, 44, who works for Sainsbury’s in Bishopsgarth, Stockton, spoke from first-hand experience on the

issue. “People make comments all the time and don’t realise they are being racist until it’s pointed out to them,” she said. “I’ve experienced it myself when I was younger as my mum is Maltese and comments were made towards me so I know when someone is being racist.

“I think everyone took something away from the weekend. It was a good subject to cover, especially in this day and age as we work with more migrant workers.”

Driver David Landall, 60, who works for Ocado in Sheffield agreed. “I thought the guest speaker from the Show Racism the Red Card campaign was brilliant,” he said. “The debates got a bit heated at times as people were passionate about their experiences.”

Divisional officer Joanne Thomas was delighted with the feedback from the activists. “The weekend got everyone talking and thinking about how the union rep can help too,” she said.

“It was an excellent opportunity for our reps to discuss and plan how to tackle the rise of hate crime in both the workplace and the community.

“We shared experiences and best practices around how to approach some common scenarios in the workplace that could cause offence. Giving the reps the information and knowledge on how to tackle these issues, which can be really difficult, was at the heart of the weekend.”





CYBER BULLYING AT WORK

As more and more people fall victim to cyber bullying Usdaw is urging its reps to encourage members to come forward, report the abuse, and support their colleagues to take whatever steps are necessary to stop it.

The term – cyber bullying – means abusive, intimidatory or insulting comments or pictures posted on social network sites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or email or text messages. It is often done in a way, which keeps the perpetrator ‘hidden’ but its impact can be no less hurtful or distressing than face-to-face bullying.

Where offensive or intimidating messages were once written on toilet walls for example, they can now be sent via mobile phone or the internet.

Harassment is often linked to a person’s gender, race and ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation religion/belief or age so equality

policies may also be relevant.

The bullying may be the result of relationship breakdown, workplace rivalries or personality clashes but it can also be completely random. However, whatever the reason it is completely unacceptable.

Reps can use their company’s policy on bullying and harassment and its social media use procedures to deal with cyber bullying if appropriate.

Most of the employers that Usdaw deals with will develop and maintain those policies in consultation with the union. Policies will usually include a clear statement that bullying will not be tolerated, along with a commitment to preventing bullying, for example through training for its employees. Even if the policy does not specifically mention cyber bullying the procedure outlined in the bullying policy should still apply.

Sending abuse by email or posting it on social media sites can result in a person breaching their employer’s policies and is likely to result in disciplinary action and possibly dismissal.

Threatening messages or images may also amount to a criminal offence. As cyber bullying is a relatively new thing, the UK courts are still trying to adapt to it and sentence offenders effectively. Though no legislation specifically applies to cyber bullying alone, there are several laws, which can be applied in cyber bullying cases, these include:

- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994
- Malicious Communications Act 1988
- Communications Act 2003
- Breach of the Peace (Scotland)
- Defamation Act 2013



Reps should advise their members to:

- Treat cases of cyber bullying seriously and offer their support to the person being bullied during the investigation and afterwards. (It is not advisable to respond to anything that has been said or retaliate by doing the same thing back. This is likely to make matters worse).
- Ask the member to screenshot anything they think is cyber bullying and keep a record of it. This will help if the member decides to make a formal complaint. If the member isn’t sure that what they have experienced is in fact bullying this will help if they later decide to make a complaint.
- Talk about it. Discuss with the member what they want to do about the cyber bullying and how to use the bullying and harassment procedure. Offer to represent and support the member at all stages of the investigation.
- Report it. Encourage the member to report the bullying to management and to the appropriate social media platform. Support the member in this process. Importantly, if somebody is threatening the member, giving out their personal information or making them fear for their safety, advise them to contact the police.

TUC Racism at work Survey

The TUC has launched an online survey to expose the everyday reality of racism. Usdaw is encouraging all members to take part in the survey to reveal the extent of racism in the workplace.

Whether it is blatant racial harassment or being denied access to promotion or training, whatever form racism takes it is unacceptable.

The survey is open to anyone who has experienced or witnessed racial harassment at work.

The TUC will treat the information provided in confidence and the survey can be completed anonymously.

Please complete the survey online at: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RacismAtWork by 27 February 2017.

Spotlight Day – Difficult Balancing Act?

This year, Parents and Carers ‘Spotlight Day’ will be taking place on Wednesday 17 May, with the theme ‘Difficult Balancing Act?’

The campaign day will highlight the difficulties members have balancing work with caring responsibilities. It will also give reps and members practical advice about their rights at work.

The day can’t take place without the hard work and support of reps, so we hope that you are able to take part this year

More information about how to get involved will be sent out to all reps in March, or you can check out the website for further details.



Usdaw is ready for the big challenges ahead

Confident but not complacent, strong but capable of being stronger, the general secretary reflects on 2016 and looks ahead to 2017...

Last year saw massive upheaval in the retail sector, how did that impact on Usdaw's membership?

JH It was probably the toughest 12 months in recent years, no doubt about it. The retail sector is well-known for permanent change and reinventing itself and it's clear the move to online shopping has accelerated this trend, but 2016 was something else.

All of the Big 4, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Morrisons and the Co-op, saw restructuring in one form or another on an unprecedented scale. Jobs were lost, some premiums were cut and many workers lost hours through shift cutbacks. Yes there were above inflation increases on hourly rates to offset these changes but the result was still deeply upsetting and unsettling for many members.

One of the positives to come out of this tough phase was the

response of our reps and officials who did not shrink from their responsibilities and did a great job representing members who bore the brunt of these cuts. Hopefully we've seen the last of these upheavals and rather than fire-fighting we can all get back to improving the terms and conditions for our members.

Membership numbers have stalled recently, how concerned are you by that?

JH In 2015 total membership was 440,603 in late December 2016 it was 435,927, so yes there was a slight fall, around 5,000 or around 1 per cent.

But let's not forget in 2006 we were at 341,291 so in ten years we have seen a net increase of more than 100,000 – no other union in the UK can boast that kind of growth. Therefore, when we consider the difficulties faced last year we, and by that I mean all the reps and officials, put in a remarkable performance.

Last year saw one of our biggest and best recruitment years – 80,000 new members were signed up – but because of the turnover in the sectors where we operate we saw a small

decline in total membership. If we repeat that recruitment success again this year, and job losses are minimal, we look set to grow again.

Supporting reps and cutting the drop out rate has been a recurrent theme, has that paid off?

JH Yes, it's beginning to but we still have some way to go. We spend a lot of money on training reps and it's clear around one in five, down from around one in four, still stop being a rep within the first two years. Now, there are many reasons for that, some out of our control, for example, caring responsibilities may change or people move jobs.

However, what we want to do is ensure reps don't drop out because they feel overloaded with information, or not supported, or not given training quickly enough, in other words issues that we control.

So during the last few years deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis has led the drive to rethink how we develop our reps, who after all are volunteers, unpaid, but the lifeblood of the union. Now all new reps are contacted

by their local area organiser, signed up for their introductory training courses as soon as possible and given the support they need as they find their feet in this important role. Big improvements have been made but we are always striving to do even better.

The result to leave the EU rocked the political establishment, prime minister Cameron resigned, but just how much of an impact will the Brexit vote have on Usdaw members?

JH Yes it was a seismic shock, not many people saw it coming but the electorate voted, yes albeit by a narrow margin of 52:48, but we have to respect the result just as we would have had to if it had gone the other way.

Seven months later however, it's still too early to say what impact it will have. My worries before the vote on workers' rights being lost still stand. We've seen what successive Tory governments have done in the UK in the last seven years so our fears are well-founded, they are no friends of working people.

We know Article 50 will be



triggered soon so we have to ensure as events unfold we continue to lobby for our members' interests both inside parliament and with employers.

In the short term we've seen the pound fall significantly so the cost of imports and foreign holidays have gone up and inflation is expected to follow suit.

We are in uncharted waters so it's just too early to have an understanding of any implications on our membership. But as events unfold over the coming year we will be making our voice heard and keeping a watchful eye on all the developments.

The UK has a new premier, what do you make of Theresa May's comments about helping those who are 'just about managing'?

JH I hope she fulfils her promise to help those who are 'just about managing' but we will have to wait and see what specific policies she delivers.

I welcome her aim to improve mental health provision, that's a long overdue step. But the NHS is under-resourced and needs more than warm words to provide the services we all need at some stage in our lives.

Whoever the prime minister is, our job remains the same – speaking up for our members and their families. We will continue to present evidence-based arguments on the need for better pay, legal protection

at work, a fully funded NHS, investment in our transport infrastructure, an end to tax evasion by the mega-rich and a society that works for the majority.

Despite the political shocks the Labour Party still trails in the polls, can that be turned around?

JH Yes, but we have a lot of work to do before that happens. On the plus side we have seen Party membership reach around half a million, that makes Labour one of the biggest Parties not just in the UK but in Europe. But the reality is we have to win in the country not just among our own supporters.

I've been involved in Labour politics a long time and we've been out of power far more than we've been in government, that has to change. If it doesn't we will continue to be on the sidelines, with no influence, in a sense in the political wilderness. Opposition is a cold place as we all discovered in the '80s and '90s and again since 2010.

How important is it for Usdaw members to be part of the growth in Labour Party membership?

JH It is crucial because not only is it important for members to be in there raising their concerns, it's the first step in getting more politically involved and hopefully playing a bigger role in their communities. I'm keen to see more Usdaw members standing

in local council elections and then step up to county council elections and even thinking about being an MP.

For many years we have seen the decline in the number of working class candidates standing for parliament. So I'd urge our members to think about their political involvement and seriously consider taking that first step and join the Party, go to the constituency meetings and make their voice heard.

I know we have the talent in our ranks to have more Usdaw councillors and potential MPs, our challenge is to persuade our members that they are more than capable of making an important contribution in their locality.

What was the stand-out moment for you in 2016?

JH Without doubt the parliamentary victory to stop complete deregulation of Sunday trading, which the Tory Government tried to sneak in through the back-door.

Thanks to the efforts of members who emailed their MPs in their thousands, reps, officials and support from Labour politicians we were the only union to defeat the Tories.

We famously defeated Thatcher in 1986 when her administration tried it and, against all the odds, we did it again 30 years later, what a fantastic achievement.

This was all down to our evidence-based campaigning, great team work, and a

determination to ensure shopworkers, and the distribution and transport staff who would have been affected too, did not face even more disruption to their working lives. Once again a big thank you to everyone who backed our winning campaign.

What hopes do you have for the New Year?

JH I'm confident and optimistic, not because of some blind wishful thinking but because I know the changes we have made to how Usdaw operates, how it manages its staff, how it supports its reps, and how it delivers for members that we are fit for purpose.

I know we have the best reps in the trade union movement. Our officials too go the extra mile and our clerical staff are committed to being the best we can be.

Usdaw wants fairness and equality. Our award-winning campaigns are all about delivering just that and they will continue again this year.

I'd say to any members who are thinking about becoming a rep – do it.

Speak to your fellow reps or local official and join us. We'll support you to be the best rep you can be. It's a rewarding role, yes it can be tough, but it's worth it and the more you put in the more you will get out.

Usdaw is in a good place and I'm sure by the end of 2017, with our fantastic teams of reps and officials, we will be in a better one.



(l-r) John leads the campaign to restore BHS pensions outside Philip Green's Arcadia HQ in London; supporting Mencap in 2016 with Zoe Purdy and Paddy Lillis at ADM; with the Usdaw delegation at the Labour Party conference; celebrating with the 2016 winners at the Organising Awards, and commemorating 125 years of the union with the Usdaw bus on its tour around the UK.

The latest staff appointments



Stewart Forrest

It's been a busy couple of months with promotions, new appointments and retirements...

Stewart Forrest

Former Scottish deputy divisional officer Stewart Forrest has succeeded Lawrence Wason as the divisional officer north of the border and took up his new role in December last year.

Stewart, 59, joined the union's staff as an area organiser in 2000 having been the convenor at the Grampian Country Pork site where he worked as a butcher. His Usdaw membership stretches back over 40 years and he held a number of senior lay positions in his branch.

"I've had ten great years as the deputy divisional officer," he said. "I've thoroughly enjoyed working with our team in Scotland and looking after our Academy reps too. It's been both a challenging and rewarding decade.

"Everyone's worked hard to grow the membership by more than 10,000 since 2007 and I'll be looking to build on this and all the hard work put in by my former colleague and good friend Lawrence.

"These are tough times but I'm determined to continue our success and ensure Usdaw's campaigning profile remains high both industrially and politically. There's a lot of work to do on both fronts.

"I'm confident that with the teams of reps, officials and staff we have, we can deliver a professional and first class service to our members.

"Usdaw has always been part of my working life and I'm delighted to be taking on new challenges and extra responsibilities."

Mark Todd

Usdaw's newest national officer is Mark Todd who took over responsibility for the transport and distribution sectors in December last year.

The 46 year-old made the step up from his role as an area organiser at the Leeds office in the North Eastern division seven years after joining the union's staff.

"I'm delighted to have joined the team at central office," said Mark, 46. "I'm looking forward to meeting our reps on the negotiating committees, and working with them to improve the agreements we have with

some of the biggest companies in the sector.

"I previously worked on national bargaining committees when I was an organiser so I'm familiar with the demands and difficulties involved.

"I'm looking to build on the great work by my predecessor Irene Radigan. It's early days but things are going really well so far and I'm relishing the challenge."

A lifelong trade union member Mark started his Usdaw involvement when he worked at the Unilever site in Leeds where he worked for five years. He was a rep when he worked on the production line and went on to complete Academy1 in 2007.

Before that he had worked in various roles including; the licensed sector as a pub manager and club steward, retail, the building trade and he also spent time as a DJ and at a Jaguar dealership in his earlier days after leaving school.

Sue Jarrett

Sue Jarrett is the new training officer for Eastern division and took up her post at the Waltham Cross office in November last year.

She previously worked for Unison as an area organiser and before that as a TUC lecturer.

Sue was also an Usdaw member and later rep throughout the 90s when she worked for the Co-op and Safeway.

"My family were all trade unionists so I've been involved in the movement from an early age," said Sue, 60, who lives in Kent.

"But it was in 1995 while working on the night shift at the Co-op Superstore in Welling, Kent, we had a visit from area organiser Dave Gill, who is now a national officer.

"Dave told us all about Usdaw and asked who the 'gobby' one was and I put my hand up!

"I was keen to learn about the union and immediately signed up for the Usdaw home study courses. I then completed my shop steward and health and safety training and took on the role of union learning rep.

"I haven't looked back. I've worked in many different learning roles for many different organisations.

"Teaching is my first love and I'm delighted to be working for Usdaw. I'm looking forward to working with all the reps in Eastern division, most of them will be new to me but some I'll have met back in the 90s when I first became involved."



Mark Todd



Sue Jarrett

ments and promotions



Kelly Hyde

Kelly Hyde

Former Academy graduate Kelly Hyde took up her new area organiser role in the North East division in August last year.

The 35 year-old, who previously worked as a team leader for the Co-op in Durham, is based at the Newcastle office.

“I’d been a rep for around ten years before my appointment,” she said. “I did Academy1 in 2009 and then Academy2 the following year. Both were great learning experiences and confidence builders.

“After Academy2 I became more involved in other recruitment activity in my division

and was seconded for long periods of stand-down. I worked closely with my area organisers and did a number of site visits.

“I also supported my members during a difficult period, which saw a lot of changes introduced across the Co-op.

“I’m getting to know my patch and I’m thoroughly enjoying working with a fantastic team of reps and officials.

“I feel very privileged to be working for Usdaw. I’m enjoying it and looking forward to working with all my colleagues in the division, supporting the reps, and growing the union.”

Retirement for budding poet and organiser Mick



Mick Soper

North Eastern division’s Mick Soper retired in January after eight years as an area organiser at the Leeds Office.

Mick, 60, was appointed to the organising staff in 2008 covering the Sheffield and Chesterfield areas.

He joined Usdaw in 1987 when he worked for Home Delivery Network and soon became an activist and then the senior rep at the Scunthorpe depot.

Before joining the union’s staff Mick was a stand-down rep and a graduate of the 2006 Organising Academy.

“I was lucky enough to be selected for the union’s Academy which has proved to be the springboard for many careers with the union

over recent years,” said Mick.

“The Academy came highly recommended and helped me tremendously and I’ve always encouraged my reps to apply as it could help them further their careers too.”

Mick chose to sign off with this little ditty: *Working for Usdaw has been a pleasure, but now it’s time to have more leisure, I will miss my colleagues and my reps, but now it’s time to take the next steps.*

For now my next plan, will be to spend more time in my caravan, my friends though would have you believe, I’ll spend all my time in the spa at 38 degrees!

I expect I will keep busy, but also taking it a bit more easy.

Obituary: Don McKinlay remembered

Udaw was deeply saddened to hear the news of the death of former North West division’s area organiser Don McKinlay, he was 60.

Born in Glasgow Don moved south of the border in 1972 and would make the North West his home.

He joined Usdaw in 1982 when he worked for Tesco in Blackburn. After years of activism, including time on the divisional council and seven years as a Labour councillor, he was appointed an area organiser in 1987.

He was initially based at the old Birmingham office before transferring back to the then Manchester divisional office in 1992. He would later move to the Preston office when plans were

announced to merge the two North Western and Manchester divisions in 2001. After almost 25 years on the union’s staff Don took early retirement in 2011.

General secretary John Hannett paid tribute to his former colleague and friend. “This was tragic news especially coming so soon after his retirement.

“I knew Don for many years and he was a loyal and conscientious member of staff. He did an excellent job looking after members in all of our sectors and was a well-respected figure with both reps and colleagues.

“Our condolences go out to his family and friends at this very sad time.”



Activists in action building the union

Usdaw's campaigns always attract attention, build the union's profile and help connect the reps with members and potential new recruits...

Tesco, Bognor Regis

It's teamwork all the way for the reps at the Tesco store in Bognor Regis who have been running regular in-store campaigns for the past ten years.

The West Sussex team is made up of husband and wife duo Roy and Rosie Walters who have clocked up 25 years of union activism between them.

They are joined by Barbara Walkey, who has been a rep for 15 years, Susan Wightwick-Hotson, a rep for eight years and the newest member of the team Paul Spencer who came on-board in January last year.

"Campaign days, including our latest Freedom From Fear event during Respect Week last November are very well received in the store by both staff and management," said Roy, who is also branch chair of West Sussex PT branch and Rosie is branch secretary.

"We've run Legal Plus, Supporting Parents and Carers and Lifelong Learning campaign days and they've all gone well.

"Membership has grown too and colleagues have a better understanding of the real benefits of joining the union. Everyone knows

who their union reps are around the store.

"As a group we are really committed to our roles. It also helps the team to have stand-down and Academy reps along to events as well as regular visits from our area organiser Joan Gale from the Andover office.

"We're busy planning our campaigns for this year and looking forward to another successful 12 months."

Tesco Chesterfield, Freedom from Fear

Reps at the Chesterfield Tesco store had the backing of local Labour MP Toby Perkins for the Freedom From Fear campaign at their Respect Week event last November.

"We were delighted when we heard Toby was going to visit our store and support our campaign day," said Pat Wojnicz, who has been a rep for six years and is one of seven reps at the Derbyshire store.

"The local press covered his visit and explained what our campaign is about, so his presence helped to raise more awareness of the verbal abuse, threatening behaviour and the other issues shopworkers have to endure.

"Although we've held other campaign days in our store the Freedom From Fear campaign always seems to get everyone's attention, staff and customers alike.

"This event gives the reps the opportunity to speak directly to customers when they visit the store.

"Abuse aimed at shopworkers, especially at this busy time of the year, is an issue we can all relate to.

"Customers are genuinely surprised when they see the statistics and the union's survey results showing the levels of both verbal and physical abuse faced by staff.

"And they are also surprised to hear about the problems we have to put up with when customers are asked



TESCO BOGNOR REGIS



TESCO DOTCOM CROYDON

for ID when purchasing items such as alcohol and cigarettes.

"Overall the feedback from customers was positive and this campaign was perfectly timed just ahead of the busy festive season."

Tesco dotcom, Croydon

Reminding new and existing members of the great service provided by the union's Legal Plus and FirstCall is top of the agenda for the reps at the Tesco Dotcom warehouse in Croydon.

Campaign days play a vital role to promote the variety of support on offer including; representation for accidents both inside and outside of work, the will writing service, road traffic accidents (including family members in the same household) and much more.

Chhaya Patel and the team of 11 reps organised and planned their campaign day well in advance of their event held in November last year. "I'm amazed at how many members



View the Recruitment and Organising Gallery on the UsdawUnion Flickr page

Membership for week ended 21 January 2017

South Wales and Western	50,399
Eastern	64,372
Midlands	55,751
North Eastern	59,205
Scottish	45,240
Southern	62,250
North West	94,411
Total	431,628



TESCO CHESTERFIELD



TESCO EXTRA DUDLEY

still don't really understand that the Legal Plus service is one of the great benefits of being a union member," said Chhaya, 54, who has been a rep for 13 years and a Union Learning Rep for ten years.

"We highlight Legal Plus and FirstCall at every opportunity in our workplace, and it's there in the magazines and on the website for all to see but there are still people who are unaware of the free service.

"Holding a Legal Plus day helps to remind our 850 members it's there and also not to use a local high street solicitor because with Usdaw's solicitors, not only is it completely free but they get to keep 100 per cent of their compensation for personal injury claims.

"Members also have the benefit of being able to book a free session with a union solicitor to discuss any legal queries they may have. Many members don't realise they can get advice or help on any subject – it could be property related, matrimonial, or a

dispute with a neighbour to give a few examples.

"Both myself and fellow rep Mike Smith had some really positive feedback from staff and we are keen to hold another day especially to accommodate those members who couldn't make it to this one."

Tesco Extra, Dudley

After six months with the Academy Morrisons rep Russ Jones is keen to put his new skills to the test back at his own store in Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.

"I know it's a bit of a cliché but the Academy genuinely changed me as a person," said 25 year-old Russ who has been a rep for two years, a branch secretary for a year and he is also a member of the Midlands division young workers committee.

"The Academy gave me plenty of opportunities to test myself. I learned through running campaigns and organising recruitment events in a variety of workplaces, which took me

out of my comfort zone.

"As a result I'm much smarter, more confident and definitely more determined.

"To a certain extent I think the Academy programme is the ultimate test for a rep. But I think it should be like that. It was thoroughly enjoyable and, despite many moments of panic and doubt, I felt it went very well for me.

"I'd only been an Usdaw rep for two years before starting on Academy1, so I had very little experience of the union generally, whereas others on the programme had a lot more. Back in my own store I'm using everything I learned with the Academy.

"It was a massive learning curve and I've applied for Academy2 because I want to get more involved and gain more experience.

"I held a Legal Plus Day in January and I've set up a Facebook page for members and colleagues who now know I'm the union rep so I'm hoping more will want to sign up too. It's all positive at the moment."

Campaigns add extra members

Tesco Extra, New Maldon

The in-store team of reps at New Maldon Tesco Extra were joined by Academy organiser William Akadi, and mobile union learning rep Chhaya Patel to help deliver a Checkout Learning day to more than 320 members at the South West London store last year.

“The event got off to a good start and was welcomed by everyone including management and staff,” said William. “Members were really keen and showed an interest in a number of subjects particularly IT, maths and English as well as a variety of lifestyle courses.

“There was a great team spirit amongst the reps all working towards a common goal. We were delighted when new members signed up saying the event helped them make their minds up about joining as before the day they didn’t know the union offered so many benefits to its members.”

Completing the Academy topped off a great year for William who has since returned to his own Brooklands Tesco Extra store in Weybridge, Surrey.

“The Academy has been one of the best experiences I’ve had since becoming a rep six years ago,” said the 53 year-old. “The six months were full of new challenges and I enjoyed every single one of them. Both my knowledge and confidence increased massively.

“As an activist I’ve learned so much through doing stand-down, handling inductions and also from working on my own or as part of a team with other reps and officials.

“I particularly enjoyed being involved with the Lifelong Learning campaign and getting involved in different events in a variety of stores and seeing what a difference the opportunity to learn something new can make to people’s lives.”

Kay Green Co-op, Rhyl

Former Morrisons rep Kay Green swapped jobs last September and is now putting her union skills to good use with the Co-op.

“I’d been a rep for four years in my previous job and thoroughly enjoyed it,” said Kay, 47, from Rhyl in North Wales.

“When I started at the new Co-op store in Bodelwyddan I applied for the vacancy for union rep and I was delighted when I was elected.

“I’m looking forward to taking on the different challenges that come with smaller retail stores.

“I have a lot of experience to share with my new colleagues and although it’s completely different coming from a large store to a smaller store I think the principle role of the job is the same.

“I’m here to help and advise my members and my aim is for 100 per cent membership, I’ve changed companies but my union commitment remains the same.

“I’m also looking forward to meeting and encouraging other local Co-op reps to get more involved in their workplaces and within the division.

“I’ve had tremendous help from my area organisers over the years and I’ve learned a lot from other reps along the way and made some great lifelong friends too.

“I’m excited about my new role and plan to organise union campaign days over the coming months.”

Tesco Glasgow, Legal Plus

Tesco reps Ryan Turner and Donnie Temple were on a mission to prove Usdaw offers value for money when they completed a very successful week of stand-down last November.

The duo, who work at the Metro in Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, visited stores in their local area and also



TESCO EXTRA NEW MALDON



TESCO GLASGOW

arranged a Legal Plus day in their own store. “It was a good day!” said Ryan, 24, who has been a rep for 18 months.

“We wanted to dispel the feeling of apathy in our store towards the union and we also wanted to show that the union had other benefits other than reps representing members at disciplinaries.

“We spoke with our area organiser, Alan McVie, who suggested we promote the FirstCall and Legal Plus service.

“Alan helped set everything up, and Courtney McQuiston from union solicitors Thompsons joined us on the day.

“When we set up the event in



Email the Network team: network@usdaw.org.uk



Visit the Usdaw website at: www.usdaw.org.uk



CO-OP RHYL



TESCO FRATTON

the canteen everyone could see just what their subscriptions can deliver. Members were pleased to have access to the solicitor in works time – it was a real winner and highlighted the legal service in a very positive way.

”Throughout the rest of the week, we went from store-to-store signing up people who hadn’t seen a rep for a while or had just started working and had not been asked to join.

“We managed to get two stores above 50 per cent membership and we were pleased we ended the week with our own store knowing a little more about where their money goes.

“We were pleased it was so successful.”

Tesco Fratton, Portsmouth

A new team of reps at the Tesco Extra store in Fratton Way, Portsmouth held their first Legal Plus day in-store in November.

“We hope it was the first of many,” said Liz Fenton, who has been a rep for a year. She organised the day with fellow rep Sarah Webb, a rep for seven months, with new rep Jackson Batchelor completing the team.

“Paul Noakes our area organiser arranged for solicitor Rachel Griffiths from Slater and Gordon to come in and appointments were made for staff to meet with her during their break times.

“There was a good response from staff, some asked questions about the union in general and others asked for information about the legal services, everyone took leaflets away with them.

“Members were really impressed with the legal benefits, especially the free will-writing provision. Having the opportunity to speak to a solicitor face-to-face in work was very popular.

“We’re keen to run another Legal Plus day, to not only raise the union’s profile and increase membership but also to encourage more colleagues to approach myself, Sarah and Jackson and find out more about the union.”

■ **Are you planning a campaign day?**
Let Network know: network@usdaw.org.uk

Pregnancy risks not assessed

Too many employers are failing to do proper risk assessments for pregnant workers, research by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has revealed.

Its report showed that two in five mothers felt there was a risk, which impacted on their health or welfare at work and four per cent of women left their jobs because the risks were not addressed.

In response the HSE has committed to working with EHRC to raise awareness of the law and has revamped its core guidance aimed at new and expectant mothers to stress the need for regular discussions between management and the worker as the pregnancy progresses.

The guidance can be downloaded free of charge from the HSE website www.hse.gov.uk **search** new mothers.

Meanwhile, pressure group and charity Maternity Action has launched a series of videos to inform pregnant women of their rights at work.

These form part of a nationwide media campaign, which also takes in health and safety rights and maternity leave. To view the videos and other resources go to: www.maternityaction.co.uk



MAKE 2017 SAFE

This year is the 40th anniversary of the Safety Representative and Safety Committee Regulations.

Look out for messages and advice from the TUC throughout the year explaining why union safety reps play such a valuable role. In the meantime here are four steps health and safety reps can take to make sure they are organised for the year ahead.

Set the dates for your workplace inspections for the year

- Under the Safety

Representative and Safety Committee Regulations, reps should inspect the workplace regularly – normally at least once every 3 months.

- Talk to your manager and agree the dates for inspections in your workplace for the year ahead.
- If there are other reps where you work, get together to make sure the whole workplace is covered.
- In the weeks running up to the inspection, use noticeboards and other internal communications

systems to let workers know when you will be coming round.

- Talk to workers as you are doing the inspection to see if they have any concerns.

Put any other important dates in your diary

- If there is a safety committee or other forum where health and safety is on the agenda, put the meeting dates in your diary.
- Do the same for any rep team meetings or branch meetings and other union events such as membership weeks.

Your New Year checklist

Be active

Active health and safety reps are one of the best ways to show members (and potential members) the value of being in the union. As a safety rep, you have legal rights to inspect the workplace and to investigate causes of accidents and potential hazards.

Talk to your colleagues

Your primary function is to represent the workers. You need to talk to them to make sure they know who you are and to find out their concerns. There is nothing wrong with talking to non-members as well as members. Safety problems don't discriminate between the two. But when talking to non-members have some membership forms handy!

Work with your managers

A lot of the time the rep's role means working with managers to make sure that procedures are being followed and risks are eliminated. Of course, you

may not always agree and there may be times when you need to use the procedures to sort out problems. But in general, health and safety works best where there is mutual respect between managers and reps, and the best way to gain respect from managers is to be a hard-working, well-informed and well-organised rep.

Attend meetings

Make sure you attend rep safety committees/meetings, store forums, colleague councils when you are entitled to do so. Other people may have other priorities but it's your job as the safety rep to make sure that your concerns get on the agenda.

Inspect your workplace

Inspection of the workplace is one of the fundamental legal functions of union safety reps. Routine inspections on a regular basis are a great way to check that things are running properly and that your employer's policies and procedures are working. They

also give you an opportunity to talk to the workers you represent to pick up on any concerns they may have. Make sure to follow up your inspections with a report that identifies any outstanding issues.

Keep records

It helps to be methodical in your work. Keeping your paperwork in an organised way helps maximise the use of your time. Keep copies of checklists you use for workplace inspections. When you report any hazards or investigate accidents keep emails or documents for future reference and retain minutes of safety committees and notes of meetings with management on safety issues.

Stay up-to-date

The world of health and safety is changing all the time. Make sure that all the reps you know are getting their own copies of Network, are signed up for email alerts from the union and use the Usdaw website.

AND SOUND

- If you do not attend every one yourself, talk to the other Union reps before a meeting to make sure any issues of concern are covered.
- Two important dates for health and safety reps are International Workers Memorial Day on 28 April and European Week for Safety and Health at Work from 23 to 29 October. Watch for Usdaw materials for both events which you can use in your workplace.

Sign up for the TUC's weekly online newsletter 'Risks'

Sign up for free weekly e-news from the TUC to keep in touch with the wider world of occupational safety

and health. Go to: www.tuc.org.uk and click on the 'Email Alerts' link.

Let Usdaw know what you are doing

We know that reps make a difference, but we need to make sure we share examples of good practice to encourage others. So if you do something in your workplace to improve safety or health at work, let us know.

Contact us

Contact the health and safety section in central office with your story – email: healtandsafety@usdaw.org.uk or phone 0161 249 2441.



Also ensure new reps get on the relevant training courses as soon as possible. Share information with your fellow reps whenever you can.

Communicate with your fellow reps

If there are other union reps in your workplace, keep in touch. Work together as a team. All union reps need to work together on recruitment to encourage potential members to join. If you are the only union rep in your workplace keep in touch with other reps in your union branch or in your employer to share support and experience.

Use the union noticeboard

Use the noticeboard to make sure that workers know who you are, which department you work in and how they can contact you. Pin up all the safety leaflets and post advance notice of campaign days eg Respect Week.



In conversation with Dale Robinson...

... who works as a loader at the Wincanton site at Sherburn-in-Elmet in North Yorkshire. The 44 year-old has been a rep for eight years and was elected branch chair last year.



“When I was first elected as a rep it was a dual role with health and safety. I volunteered for the position because making a difference in the workplace is important to me.

“I’ve done the Usdaw safety courses level 1 and the advanced follow-up, which I found very informative. I took a lot from these courses, built up my knowledge and my interest in the safety issue was reinforced. These have been supplemented by company safety courses too.

“Ours is a busy site and we have regular safety meetings. On a day-to-basis we’re always on the look out for dangerous behaviour and challenge it when necessary.

“We work together with management at our monthly meetings to make sure the site is as safe as possible.

“It’s keeping on top of things and making small differences or changes, which make a big impact on site, that are important.

“Some people think we have enough, even too much, safety legislation in the UK but for me that’s not the case. In fact the Government is eroding many of the safety regulations, which we have won over the years, so that has to stop.

“If there is an accident we always make sure the member knows about the union’s FirstCall Usdaw service.





Your Pictures



TWEET DECK

Some of Network's favourite tweets to @UsdawUnion

@bethgranter

At Arcadia ready to deliver 100,000 @Care2, @TUCnews & @UsdawUnion signatures demanding billionaire Phillip Green pay for #BHS pension loss!



@val_cooke

Got to love @UsdawUnion members discounts. I have just saved myself £71 off a new Hotpoint Cooker so happy days.



@Christi67000025

@UsdawUnion thank you usdaw my certificate (NCFE Level 2 in Equality and Diversity). Came yesterday, union learning is the best.

Co-op guest tops reps' agenda

Nick Crofts, President of the Co-op National Members' Council came along to our branch reps' meeting in November.

We chatted about a wide range of topics including management attitudes to the union at various levels from senior management to line managers, differences between businesses (e.g. Funeralcare and Food), the Co-op Party and other things.

It was great that Nick wanted to come along and spend time getting an Usdaw perspective on

working here. He took a real interest in what we had to say about current issues, representing members, management relations, consultation on structure changes and the pension scheme, and how we work with union officials.

It was a very warm and friendly meeting and he impressed all of us with his enthusiasm and understanding of the Co-op.

Steve Ratcliff,
Co-op head office
branch secretary K57



Pictured l-r: Tara Deane, Nick Crofts; Tim Whiston, Oliver Sergeant, Steve Ratcliff and Denise Butler.

Politics in Northern Ireland

In December a group of Union Learning Reps from Usdaw went on a Stormont Training Seminar to learn 'How the Northern Ireland Assembly Works'.

Delivered by the Committee Clerk, Peter Hall, the training gave an insight into the workings of the Committee, information on the Committee's work to date and its forward work programme. The reps learnt the best way to communicate with the Committee and input into the Committee's processes.

Following the training the ULRs enjoyed a tour of Parliament buildings and met with leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Mike Nesbitt MLA for a question and answer session. The UUP leader explained

opposition and spoke about his party's commitment to adult education and tackling Mental Health issues as a result of the legacy of the troubles.

The training session and tour was provided by Assembly Community Connect (ACC). For further information visit: www.niassembly.gov.uk



Lorna Morton,
mobile union
learning rep,
Belfast office

Rainbow challenge update

Phillip Green (NW Stoke K183) spent a year changing his beard colour to raise money for Macmillan cancer support. He has raised £500 and his employer DHL Stoke have agreed to match this.

Well done Phillip!



This isn't just any campaign..



Usdaw officials in Scotland take the Marks and Spencer campaign to the streets of Edinburgh and 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 published.

Picture round-up of Respect Week Freedom From Fear November 2016



Top row: Tesco Extra Slough; Tesco Fraserburgh; Midcounties Co-op Stourport; Primark Kings Lynn. Middle row: Sainsbury's Shirley, Southampton; Fleet Shopping Centre; Tesco Llansamlet in Swansea. Bottom row: Tesco Henley; Tesco Kingsbridge; Tesco Caernarfon.

Activists on the campaign trail across the divisions



Clockwise from top left: North East division campaigning at Aldi Goldthorpe; Showing racism the red card at Boots Logistics Nottingham; Kenny Bell (right) from Cavaghan & Gray, Carlisle being presented with his 30 year membership award; and South Wales and Western division's DEF seminar weekend, with the theme Hidden Disabilities and Supporting our members.

MEMBERSHIP WEEK

SEE MORE MEMBERSHIP WEEK PICTURES AT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/GALLERY



TESCO SHOREHAM BY-THE-SEA
Southern division



TESCO EDINBURGH
Scottish division



EXPRESS GIFTS ACCRINGTON
North West division



MORRISONS LONDON
Eastern division



SAINSBURY'S NEWTON ABBOTT
South Wales and Western division



TESCO DISTRIBUTION GOOLE
North Eastern division



TESCO NOTTINGHAM
Midlands division