

NETWORK



The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | March/April 2013



Reps were out in force to press for paid time off for parents & carers

SPOTLIGHT DAY

■ Activist in depth North West's Karen Creaser

Busy rep and local Labour councillor Karen answers *Network's* questions on her role as a rep [page 19](#)



■ Recruitment and organising in focus

Reps are using all of their communication skills to sign up new recruits and build the union [page 22](#)



■ Usdaw women join rally against Coalition austerity

Activists in London made sure Usdaw's voice was heard at a pre-Budget rally against the Coalition's cuts [page 04](#)



Budget blues

General secretary John Hannett's comment



The Coalition's fourth Budget in March offered absolutely nothing for hard-working people who have had to struggle to make ends meet for nearly three years now.

Wage freezes or only small pay increases, cuts or freezes to in-work tax credits and benefits, and massive hikes in the cost of fuel, gas and electric bills have seen the vast majority of workers face a fall in their living standards since the Coalition came to power.

Just as chancellor George Osborne announced further cuts in the public sector and the arrival of the already infamous 'bedroom tax', around 13,000 millionaires have just been given a £100,000 a year tax cut.

If anyone was expecting fairness, equality or justice under this Government they were sadly mistaken. Both the prime minister and the chancellor are so far removed from the lives of our members they could never understand the difficulties of having to make ends meet under the self-imposed austerity of the Coalition's policies.

There will be a general election in 2015 and I hope that will be fought on fairness for the majority not favours for the elite.

Usdaw's parliament

Looking ahead more than 1,300 delegates and visitors will gather in Blackpool at the end of this month to decide the future direction of the union at the Annual Delegate Meeting – the union's own parliament.

All of the important issues affecting our members both in work and in the community will be debated. Wages, terms and conditions, health and safety, pensions, the NHS, education and housing will feature prominently.

It's always great to see new delegates make their first speech and make a direct contribution to the union's policies. I'm looking forward to it and hope to see as many of our reps there as possible. Usdaw is a democracy and it's vital delegates take their chance to represent their members at the biggest event in the union's calendar.

Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

“The vast majority of workers have seen a fall in their living standards since the Coalition came to power while millionaires have had a £100,000 tax cut”

USDAW

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Spotlight Day

ACTIVISTS SHOW THEY HAVE TIME TO CARE

This year's annual Supporting Parents & Carers Spotlight Day was called – Time To Care – with the emphasis on improving workers' rights to paid time off for workers to look after family members who are unexpectedly taken ill or who face unforeseen family emergencies.

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04 In the news

Thousands of jobs are at risk at Tesco distribution sites, Serco call centres and Thomas Cook/Co-op Travel as the economic downturn and company restructuring continues apace.

08 Weetabix safety experts

The famous Weetabix site in Burton Latimer is pulling out all the stops to improve health and safety on-site and it's paying off thanks to hard-working reps.

20 Young activists in focus

Usdaw has more than 1,000 reps and more than 88,000 members aged under 27, *Network* caught up with four up-and-coming youth activists.

12 Academy 2007 – where are they now?

Six years on *Network* takes a look back on what the graduates of the 2007 Academy have done since their potentially life-changing six month secondment with Usdaw.

15 Prepare for Membership Week now

The second annual Membership Week will run from June 17-23 and reps are being urged to plan their activities now to boost recruitment at their workplaces.

22 Recruitment & organising

Usdaw's training courses and Academy is opening doors for active reps who are using their talents to recruit new members, become better organised and improve their communication skills.

25 Lifelong learning in the home shopping sector

Usdaw reps at JD Williams in the North West division have been instrumental in setting up two new learning centres to help members improve their skills.

26 Social housing tenants face 'bedroom tax'

The Coalition's 'bedroom tax' which will penalise families who are adjudged to have too many bedrooms will see thousands of families worse off after April.

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28 Health and safety How to be a top H&S rep

30 Letters What reps are saying about work & life

IN BRIEF



High street store closures soar in 2012

The UK high street saw an average of 20 shops a day close last year, a new report shows.

While card shops and clothes stores bore the brunt, payday loan companies, pound shops and bookmakers saw an increase.



Recession hits retail for £23 billion

The economic crisis has cost the retail sector £23 billion in terms of lost growth, a recent report showed. The electricals market was hardest hit with a £6.4 billion gap in spending while the furniture and flooring market came close behind, with £5.9 billion less spent than would have been the case in the absence of the recession.

Tax avoidance angers consumers

Upto a third of Britons are shunning companies who they consider are avoiding paying their tax obligations, a survey has revealed. It also showed two out of three people thought tax avoidance to be morally wrong and want action taken against multi-national companies.

Usdaw women rally against cuts

AUSTERITY JUST NOT WORKING

The Coalition's programme of cuts and the devastating impact they are having on household incomes dominated the agenda at this year's TUC Women's Conference in March.

Usdaw members spoke up in defence of Tax Credits and Child Benefit and against the introduction of the benefit cap calling it 'unjust, and ill thought out'. The 'bedroom tax' was also roundly condemned.

After the close of conference hundreds of delegates made their way to Westminster for a pre-budget rally organised by the TUC.

Equalities officer Ruth Cross addressed the rally: "By attacking services and benefits for women, this Government is not only making women's lives more difficult, it is putting whole families under pressure and undermining economic recovery. The Coalition has slashed both benefits and vital public services."



Campaigning against austerity... (above) Activists at the TUC rally and (below) Usdaw's delegation to the Women's TUC



Campaigner Karen joins Usdaw

Former MSP Karen Whitefield is the union's new campaigns officer and is based in the Glasgow office.

Karen joined the staff in January and is no stranger to Usdaw's campaigns having enthusiastically supported them while she served in the Scottish parliament. She was instrumental in getting the Christmas and New Year's Trading Bill on to the statute book.

"I am really enjoying working for Usdaw and I am delighted to be able to contribute to its fantastic reputation as the

campaigning union," said Karen, 43.

"I've already been involved in a number of campaigns on tax credits, benefits up rating and the bedroom tax.

"With an out-of-touch Government at Westminster and a Nationalist Government in Scotland, more interested in the constitution, than protecting Scotland, from Coalition cuts – making sure members are able to speak out about the issues that matter, has never been more important."

Karen was elected an MSP in 1999 – the first year of the



Scottish parliament – for the Airdrie & Shotts constituency and served until 2011. Prior to that she had worked for the former Labour MP Rachel Squire.

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NORRIE SLATER – A MASSIVE LOSS

DIVISIONAL OFFICER REMEMBERED FOR HIS TENACITY, COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION

Usdaw was shocked following the sudden death in early February of Eastern divisional officer Norrie Slater. He was 54.

Originally from Scotland, Norrie moved to Corby in Northamptonshire in the late '70s and started work at the Weetabix factory where he started his involvement with Usdaw.

After being elected as a rep in 1982 he became full-time convenor at the 900-strong branch and joined the union's staff in 1992 as an area organiser based in the Hitchen office.

He was promoted to deputy divisional officer in 1998 and 12 months later moved up again to divisional officer.

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute: "We were all devastated to hear the news of Norrie. The union has lost a fantastic and passionate trade union and labour man. He was committed to his members



and reps and was instrumental in turning the division around over the last 20 years.

"Norrie's leadership qualities paid off in the division which has seen the biggest growth period in its

history while he was at the helm.

"But more than that, in Norrie we have lost a thoroughly decent human being. I knew him for many years and he was the type of person who always looked for the best in people, generous and supportive.

"And what a fighter he was. He fought a ten-year battle against kidney disease, he had two transplants, and a heart attack, but he never gave in. Always looking to get back to work at the earliest opportunity, always looking to do his best for members, reps and his staff.

"He was an inspiration to us all and will be sadly missed by members, reps and his many friends and colleagues.

"Norrie's death is a terrible, massive loss not only for Usdaw but for the wider trade union and labour movement.

"Our deepest condolences go out to his family and friends."

Preston call centre faces closure

Staff were left shell shocked in early March at the news their call centre on London Road, Preston will close in the summer putting 476 jobs under threat.

The call centre (locally still known as the Littlewoods Call Centre) is operated by Serco on behalf of home shopping company Shop Direct and was transferred from Shop Direct to Serco only last June.

Around 476 staff are affected at all levels and the company plans a phased closure as job roles are moved out.

The company says the closure is due to a reduction in call volumes because of changing shopping habits and a shift to online sales, the increasing use of mobile devices like smart phones, and tablets, cost reduction and a need for greater flexibility.

The closure programme will commence in early June and end by early August.

National officer David Johnson said: "While the staff were made aware last year of the possible closure of the site it is still devastating news for

them, their families and the local community. It's the end of an era.

"We are focusing on the support that can be given to staff to find alternative jobs.

"We will do all we can to support our members at this difficult time and we will be ensuring the company does all it can to find alternative work both within Serco and with other local businesses."

The company is also planning to close its call centre in Worcester with the loss of around 306 jobs.

IN BRIEF



■ Morrisons snaps up high street stores

Morrisons has bought 49 former Blockbuster stores to expand its convenience sector presence. It has also bought six former HMV stores and seven Jessops sites which when converted will trade as Morrisons M local branches. HMV, Jessops and Blockbuster UK went into administration in January.

■ Discrimination on maternity rife

Around 40 per cent of women returning from maternity leave claim that their jobs had changed by the time they returned to work, with half stating a cut in hours or even demotion, research has found. According to the survey of 1,000 women more than half of those said that they 'suffered in silence' for fear that it would damage their career if they spoke up. Maternity Action said the number of new mothers seeking advice over discrimination had doubled every year since the economic downturn.

■ Horse not on the menu as firms react

Tesco will shorten its supply chain and use more British meat suppliers following the horse-meat scandal. Across the sector sales of burgers and frozen ready-made meals have also tumbled after horse and pork DNA were found in the supply chain. The international scandal has affected leading companies across Europe.

IN BRIEF

■ **2 Sisters acquires three sites in Wales**

Birmingham-based 2 Sisters Food Group bought three poultry and meat processing plants in Wales from Dutch-owned food group Vion in early March. The sites in Llangefni, Sandycroft and Merthyr employ almost 3,000 workers.

■ **Pregnant workers face discrimination**

Maternity discrimination in the workplace is a growing problem with employers' attitudes 'hardening' against pregnant women, says new research by the charity Working Families. It revealed that nearly ten per cent of calls to its advice line were on maternity issues, reinforcing recent research that discrimination is rife. Its report also suggested that some employers were 'unpicking' flexible working arrangements, with little consideration of the impact on family life.



■ **New deal is child's play for Usdaw**

Usdaw has signed an agreement with Langley's a small independent toy shop in Norwich. Acting divisional officer Dave McCrossen, centre, was joined by activist Tony Budden, left, when he put pen to paper with manager Chris Gouding in February.

THOUSANDS HIT BY CLOSURE PLAN

Usdaw will meet with holiday firm Thomas Cook after the company announced proposals to further reorganise its UK business, putting more than 1,000 high street jobs at risk along with with an additional 1,500 call centre and managerial jobs.

Usdaw represents more than 1,200 members in the former Co-operative Travel and Midlands Co-op Travel businesses, which joined with Thomas Cook to create a Joint Venture in 2010.

The business is proposing to close 119 of the Co-operative stores, as well as 76 Thomas Cook stores.

They are also proposing to close their call centre in Accrington, and cutting jobs at Preston and the Peterborough

2,500

The number of jobs at risk

195

The number of stores facing closure



HQ. Management structures will also be reorganised.

National Officer Sharon Ainsworth said: "We were well aware of the challenges that Thomas Cook has been facing in turning their UK business around, but the scale and severity of these redundancies will come as a real shock to our members.

"We will be using the 90-day consultation period to urge the business to look at every

possible alternative to redundancy for these hardworking staff.

"Even those who are not at risk of redundancy are facing the prospect of cuts to their benefits packages, following a number of cost-cutting proposals which the business has put forward. We will be examining these proposals closely and will defend our members' interests throughout this uncertain time."

Officers get a national outlook

Two groups of new activists took the opportunity to increase their knowledge of how the union works on a local, divisional and national level when they attended the tailor-made course for branch officers held in Warrington in February and March.

The popular five-day residential course also sees lay officials meet up with senior members of the union from central office for a first-hand account of how the departments at union HQ work.

North West division's Helen Laverick was at the February course. "I really enjoyed it, learnt a lot and it was very informative," she said. "I'm quite an experienced rep, but there was plenty of new stuff for me to take on. A lovely group of people, we all got on and meeting officials from head office was very helpful too. I'd certainly recommend the course."

For more information on the comprehensive training courses available to reps visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/training



JOBS THREAT AT TESCO DC SITES

MAJOR REORGANISATION

Usdaw is meeting with Tesco after the company announced proposals to further reorganise its distribution network with the potential loss of 1,600 staff at five of its distribution centres.

National officer Joanne McGuinness said: "This is devastating news for our members and we will be examining very closely the business case for these proposed changes.

"We will be using the 90-day consultation period to consult with the company on behalf of our members who are now facing an uncertain future. While the company's review of its distribution network has been going on for some time now, the proposed closures of the Chesterfield, Harlow and Weybridge sites has still come



as a great shock to our members. Further proposed job cuts at the Magor and Welham Green sites will also cast a huge shadow over the workforces there.

"While we understand the retail sector never stands still the human cost in these upheavals has impacted massively on the UK's warehouse and distribution workforce.

"Usdaw will be doing all it can to support our members

during the difficult months ahead."

The proposed changes to the Tesco distribution network include:

- Closure of Harlow affecting 562 staff
- Closure of Chesterfield affecting 343 staff
- Closure of Weybridge affecting 562 staff
- Reduction in staff numbers at Magor by 146
- Reduction in staff numbers at Welham Green by 70

IN BRIEF

■ New agreement at Wincanton Bradford



Usdaw has signed a new agreement at the Wincanton distribution site in Bradford, part of the North East division. Divisional officer Joanne Thomas was joined by general secretary John Hannett and Wincanton's John Smith to confirm the deal.

"Recruitment is going well on-site and we're looking to get reps elected and trained very soon," said Joanne. "The site employs around 300 staff in total so this is a good chance to extend our membership even further."

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MANUFACTURING REE

Health and safety is top of the agenda at Weetabix as *Network* recently discovered on a visit to

Next time you tuck into your morning Weetabix you can rest assured it's been produced at one of the best organised sites in the UK and one that's constantly working towards improving health and safety.

That's all thanks to the team of reps at the Burton Latimer site in Northamptonshire, and their two sister sites in Corby, where a new culture of health and safety has become embedded over the last few years as the company has responded to the changing world of work.

The well-trained safety team now number 30 when not that long ago it was only 13. The company has also provided training time and facilities during the last six years following the sale of the business to private equity firm Lion Capital in 2004.

Convenor Tony Beeby has led the union's side during that modernisation period and believes both sides have profited from it. "New structures were introduced, with more flexibility and a commitment to improve all three sites," he said.

"Over the years we have built up a mutual trust between us. In the past it was 'them and us', but time moves on and so have we. Structures are in place to ensure health and safety isn't an 'add on' but an integral part of what we do. Meetings are held regularly and well-attended."

The 75-acre Burton Latimer site has everything you would expect from a modern professional food manufacturer with extensive cleaning facilities on entry and exit from each production unit, strict pedestrian walkways and thorough safety procedures.

Massive investment in



machinery has seen the workforce shrink in terms of numbers but the employment package has grown. This is reflected in the high number of long-serving staff across the company and is also testimony to its importance as a key employer in the area.

There are around 140 first-aiders on site, covering all shifts with plans in place for fully equipped medical rooms. Safety surveys are carried out regularly.

Throughout the site the emphasis is on prevention with 'near-misses' or potential accidents reported on a card and acted upon with the action taken recorded for everyone to see. "No one sits round waiting for accidents to

happen," said Simon Archer. "Everyone is encouraged to take on board the safety agenda. It's everybody's responsibility and we have seen incidents decrease gradually over the years."

The branch E107 Weetabix, originally formed in 1964, plays a full part in the union's divisional and national events and has already won two awards for team recruitment and organising and for health and safety.

General secretary John Hannett was full of praise for the on-site reps. "It's clear that the activists have kept up with changing times, evolving work practices and ensured new procedures meet the challenges and demands of

the job," he said. "Health and safety is everyone's responsibility but we know that where unions are well-organised then members are better-protected and statistically safer at work."

"Full credit to the safety reps who have shown that by working with management improvements can be made and accidents avoided."



Weetabix safety rep Rob Shrimpton represented the rep's team at the union's national Organising Awards in January

PS IN ACTION

the home of one of the nation's favourite breakfast cereals



USDAW PUTS WORKING PARENTS AND CARERS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Usdaw activists were out in force in March to support the union's annual Parents & Carers Spotlight Day to highlight the problems faced by workers who need emergency time off to care for their children and, or family members who are ill.

Spotlight Day – this year called Time To Care – focused on reminding workers of their existing rights and promoting the union's campaign to lobby MPs to improve these rights, in particular introducing paid family leave.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Three quarters of our members are parents and/or carers and many struggle to juggle work with their family commitments – especially when unexpected family emergencies put added pressure on parents and carers.

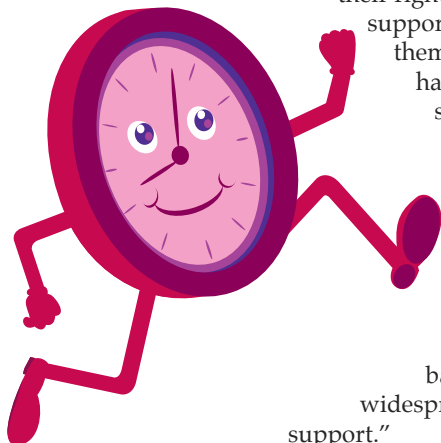
"Usdaw has already negotiated improved family-friendly policies with some employers with improved flexibility around time off to care, but we'd like to see more support, and recognition for working parents and carers.

"At some point in our working lives we all need time off to care for someone close to us. Money worries are a growing concern for many thousands of our members. The legal rights available to members for time off are unpaid, putting parents and carers under greater pressure at a time when they may already be feeling anxious.

"This Government's shake up of the welfare state is hitting our members particularly hard and many are uncertain about the future of social security support and services for carers, parents and disabled workers.

"Trade unions have an important role to play to raise awareness of the support available and we have published a number of leaflets to help

our members understand their rights and the support available to them. We also have the support of many politicians proving that the issue of providing a decent work-life balance has widespread support."



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION...

- 1 Tesco Stockton, North Eastern division
- 2 Tesco Metro Belfast, North West division
- 3 Tesco Extra Corby, Midlands division
- 4 Tesco Llanelli, South Wales & Western division
- 5 Croydon high street, Southern division
- 6 Tesco Homeplus Edinburgh, Scottish division
- 7 Tesco Homeplus Edinburgh, Scottish division
- 8 Tesco Llanelli, South Wales & Western division
- 9 Tesco Extra, Eastern division
- 10 Warrington, North West division

BIG PARENTS SPOTLIGHT



1



4



7

“ At some point in our working lives we all need time off to care for someone close to us. ”



6



8

9



10

THE CLASS OF 2007 – W

Six years ago, 24 reps graduated from the Organising Academy, *Network* caught up with them to find

The Organising Academy selected 24 activists for the class of 2007 for a six-month secondment with the union. Six years later, five are now on the union's staff as area organisers, *Network* caught up with them and tracked down their Academy colleagues to find out what they did next.

Angie Walsh Area organiser, Waltham Cross office

"The Academy gave me some of the skills needed and the confidence to apply for a job with the union," said Tesco's Angie Walsh who went on to be selected for Academy2 in 2008 and then eight months later was appointed to the union's staff in the Eastern division.

"I enjoy my job. I've been an organiser for four years and I'm still learning!"

Mark Todd Area organiser, Leeds office

Mark Todd is an area organiser based at the Leeds office. He said: "The Academy is the best six months ever for developing your skills, there really is nothing better.

"After the Academy1, I returned to my workplace, Unilever in Leeds, and remained active. The Academy not only gives you the knowledge but the confidence to deliver that knowledge.

"I was delighted when I joined the staff in June 2009, it couldn't have been better."

Paul Thomas Area organiser, Warrington office

Former Tesco distribution warehouse worker Paul Thomas's time with the



Class of 2007 ... (back row, l-r) Peter Jarvis (training officer) Helen Grindley, Angela Bethell, Yarna Palmer, Phil Gander, Sharon Newson, Mark Jackie Martin, Peter Devine, Angie Walsh, Trish Deeny (training officer), (front row, l-r) Michael Holton, Tom Offeh, Catherine Wilson, Tracy Millard

Academy was cut short after he was appointed area organiser at the Glasgow office in July 2007 and later in January 2010 he transferred to the Warrington office.

"If you are serious about wanting to progress then it's a fantastic opportunity. I'd strongly recommend it."

Peter Evans Area organiser, Cardiff office

Before spending time on the Academy and out on stand-down Peter Evans had been a rep for seven years at the Unichem depot in Swansea where he worked as a driver.

In June 2008 he was appointed area organiser. "The job's great," he said. "I'd recommend the Academy to any rep who wants to learn more."

Lorraine Forrester Area organiser, Newcastle office

Former Co-op Travel Agent Lorraine Forrester was appointed area organiser at the Newcastle office in November 2008.

Peter Devine Executive councillor, Scottish division

Bakery worker Peter Devine from Scotland said: "The following year I was selected for Academy2 and then I returned to work. The Academy taught me a lot about the union and I've been on the executive council since 2012."

Phil Gander Retired lifelong learning project worker, Eastern division

Former Tesco worker Phil Gander said: "The Academy

taught me new skills and brought out ones I didn't even know I had.

"I was very lucky when I finished as I was seconded for the lifelong learning project worker's role in the Eastern division for six months. And then after an interview I was selected for the full-time role and I did that up until my retirement last November. It's been a fantastic journey."

Tracy Millard Political activist South Wales and Western division

"The Academy was great and opened my eyes to the importance of politics," said Tesco rep Tracy Millard from Gloucestershire. "I joined the Labour Party and started to get active and now I find myself standing as a candidate for my local county council elections this year."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Find out how the experience had changed their lives and, more importantly, what happened next . . .



Todd, Ellen Shaw, Paul Thomas, Jackie Chadkirk, Gary Booth, Nilesh Vithlani, Lorraine Forrester, Stacey-Jane Keyse, Kay Bond, and Peter Evans. (Inset: Hussain Pazir and Jackie McNeill)

In numbers

Of the 24 reps who graduated from the Academy...

19 ARE STILL MEMBERS

13 ARE STILL ACTIVE

05 WORK FOR USDAW

01 IS ON THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

02 HAVE RETIRED

04 HAVE LEFT THE UNION

Jackie McNeill

Activist
North West division

"The experience, knowledge and training with the Academy and then Academy2 encouraged me to get more active within the union," said Jackie who works for the Co-op in Northern Ireland.

"Not only am I a cluster rep I'm also a divisional councillor, branch chair as well as vice-chair of the divisional equalities forum. "I've just been elected onto the national negotiating committee for the Co-operative. And I'm a delegate to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). Unbelievable!"

Tom Offeh
Senior shop steward
Eastern division

"The Academy was a fantastic

experience and gave me the confidence and the skills to get more involved," said NFT Distribution worker Tom Offeh. "When I finished I did some stand-down and I was elected senior shop steward. I'm also involved with the Equalities Forum and lifelong learning in my workplace."

Ellen Shaw
Stand-down rep
North West division

Tesco Extra's Ellen Shaw has continued to develop her skills. Two years later she was chosen for Academy2. She was active in her own store in Longton in Stoke-on-Trent and has done lengthy spells as a stand-down rep.

"I'm loving it, ever since getting active it's been a real learning curve. I'd recommend the Academy."

Jacqueline Martin

Activist
Scottish division

Tesco's Jacqueline Martin from Edinburgh said: "I've been on lots of excellent training courses with Usdaw but Academy1 and then 2 stand out as the best. The knowledge and experience I gained was second to none. It also gave me the confidence to progress and get more involved in the union and politics."

The other graduates

Helen Grindley from the Tesco Prescott Extra store in Merseyside and Northern Ireland's Kay Bond from the Asda store in Strabane are both still active in their workplaces.

Tesco's Nilesh Vithlani from Leicester, Catherine Wilson from Tesco, Preston and Sainsbury's Hussain Pazir

from Staffordshire are still members but no longer reps.

Morrison's Jackie Chadkirk remained active in her store in Newcastle-upon-Tyne until she retired in 2009, she is still a member.

Former DHL worker Gary Booth now works for a heating company in Norfolk, he is no longer active but is still a member.

Stacey-Jane Keyse, Yarna Palmer, Angela Bethell and Michael Holton have now left the union. And Sharon Newson from Eastern division sadly died last year.

Finally, training officer Peter Jarvis retired in 2011 and Trish Deeny, who went on to become head of the education department, will retire in July.



For more information visit:
www.usdaw.org.uk/academy

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Our caring staff are on hand to give you individual support, care and reassurance when it matters most.

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*Our lines are open 8am-8pm weekdays and 9am-12noon Saturdays. Calls may be recorded and/or monitored. Calls from landline phones are free however mobile providers may charge. Britannia is the trading name of the Co-operative Bank plc. Registered office: PO Box 101, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP. Registered in England and Wales No. 990937.

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Over 94,000 members have used this service and so far received tax refunds in excess of **£3.2million**. Refunds average **£160.51** each!



To find out if you are due a refund, go to www.taxrebates.com/ref/usdaw, or apply by calling freephone 0800 093 2995 or send a SAE for an application form to:

Tax Refund Service, Grosvenor House, St Thomas Place, Stockport, SK1 3TZ

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Free debt advice has a new name

StepChange Debt Charity is the new name for the Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS). They continue to offer the best in free debt advice and solutions to Usdaw members.

You don't have to face debt problems on your own. With the help of the UK's leading debt charity, you can get your finances back on track. For free and impartial debt advice, call now, or use their unique online Debt Remedy tool.

Call: 0800 980 8271
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FRANKIE & BENNY'S

Enjoy 20% off your food bill!

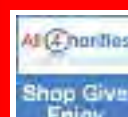


Usdaw members are entitled to 20% off their total food bill when 2 main courses are purchased from the main menu on production of your membership card.

www.frankieandbennys.com

Excludes airport locations. Valid every day except for Mondays from 5pm-11pm and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer including lunch/set menus.

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For more information go to www.all4charities.co.uk

It is free to register and will not cost you a penny more than the advertised price of the item that you are buying. The charity you nominate will earn 100% commission from all the retail sites when you shop through All4Charities.co.uk

Make sure no one misses out in June

June's Membership Week is a key event in the Usdaw calendar and a great opportunity for reps to sign up new recruits. Here's a reminder of what Usdaw can do for your members . . .

BETTER PAY

On average, union members receive 12.5 per cent more pay per hour than non-members.

Udaw negotiates pay on behalf of hundreds of thousands of workers and getting the best possible deal is our number one aim.

SAFER WORKPLACE

You are twice as likely to have an accident at a workplace where there isn't a union.

With 5,000 health and safety reps, Usdaw makes sure that your safety at work is taken seriously.

ADVICE & SUPPORT

Our network of 10,000 workplace reps advise and support you at work and are backed up by a network of highly trained union officials. Specialists in the field of pensions, health and safety, education, management, wages and employment law are all on hand.

BETTER CONDITIONS

On average union members have better holiday entitlement, better pension provision and better arrangements for time off work.

By negotiating with employers Usdaw is able to make your life at work better. Negotiations aren't just about pay as we aim to improve the other things that matter at work such as holidays,

pensions, shift arrangements, etc.

PROTECTION AT WORK

Union members are half as likely to be sacked as non-members.

By ensuring that union members have strong and effective representation unions are able to protect people at work and help resolve issues before they become major problems.

Udaw ensures that members are aware of their rights in the workplace.

FAIRNESS AT WORK

Union workplaces are fairer workplaces and are much more likely to have family friendly policies. By negotiating with employers, unions are able to secure better deals for members on issues such as career opportunities, flexible working arrangements and general support for family responsibilities. In short, unions help you achieve a work-life balance without being penalised for it.

JOB SECURITY

Udaw works to ensure your job is safe and union companies also tend to be more productive and innovative.

Udaw is also able to ensure that employers have a sound reason for making changes at

work which also protects jobs. Without a union you are on your own if faced with change at work or redundancy.

LEGAL COVER

Udaw's legal service won £21,860,204 compensation for members in 2012. As an Usdaw member the legal service is entirely free – you don't pay a penny.

No one plans to have an accident – but if you do Usdaw will help you with your claim for any accident, anywhere. Usdaw also provides free legal advice on any issue.

YOUR VOICE

With over 10,000 workplace reps, Usdaw gives you a voice at work. Without a union you are much less likely to have a say in your terms and conditions and how your employer operates.

Pull-out poster



Don't forget to pin up your free Membership Week pull-out poster on your union noticeboard. You'll find it in the centre of this issue of *Network*. Make sure your details are on your union noticeboard too so people know how and when they can contact you.



Display on your union noticeboard

YOUR SERVICES | YOUR SUPPORT | YOUR PROTECTION | YOUR VOICE | YOUR

MEMBERSHIP WEEK

17-23 JUNE 2013



**ADVICE &
SUPPORT**

**SAFER
WORKPLACE**

**YOUR
VOICE**

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and Allied Workers*

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YOUR SERVICES | YOUR SUPPORT | YOUR PROTECTION | YOUR VOICE | YOUR UNION

INDUCTIONS WORK

Inductions are a rep's best opportunity to recruit new members with workers more likely to join the union. The following tips will help you to have successful inductions and raise membership

BE PREPARED

- Ask your Personnel/HR Manager if there are any new starters. Make sure you know the date, time, venue, numbers attending etc.
- Remember to arrange time off with management so you can attend staff inductions. Your Company/Usdaw Agreement will tell you how long you have to talk to new starters.
- Collect your materials – you will need union leaflets, recent communications and membership forms to present the union to new starters. You can get these from your local Usdaw office or order them online at: www.usdaw.org.uk/resources
- Be clear on what you are going to say before you attend the induction. Shadow a more experienced rep or your area organiser if you have never attended an induction before.
- Use success stories in your presentation. Tell new starters about the achievements the union has had in the workplace.

AT THE INDUCTION

- Introduce yourself and be friendly. Give the names of any other reps that are in your workplace and the departments or sections where you all work.
- Make it clear that what affects them in the workplace – also affects you.
- Stress the importance that the more Usdaw members we have in the

workplace – the stronger the union's influence will be.

- Talk about the benefits of being in a union.
- Use success stories. Tell them what the union has done for the members.
- State clearly that the company recommends new starters to join Usdaw – you will find reference to this in your Company/Usdaw Agreement if this is the case.

THE SIGN UP

- Leave enough time in the induction for people to fill in membership forms.
- Talk them through filling in the membership form.
- Explain the cost of joining.
- Provide everyone with a membership form and a pen to fill it in.
- Collect the completed membership forms.

FOLLOW UP

- Return the completed membership forms to your local Usdaw office as soon as possible.
- Make a note of those who didn't join the union and see them at a later date.
- Let your area organiser know if you had any problems or if there is anything else you think they can help with for the next time.

The things non-members say. . . .

I CAN'T AFFORD TO JOIN.

It's a question of priorities – you wouldn't drive your car without insurance or leave your house uninsured, so think of Union contributions as your workplace insurance. If you lost your job because you didn't have representation at work, the consequences would be far worse than a burglary or bump in the car.

I'M TOO YOUNG TO JOIN A UNION.

The Union's experience is that young workers are more likely than anyone to have problems at work. Over recent years, Usdaw has helped young workers enforce their rights. Usdaw has also been able to secure rates of pay that do not discriminate on grounds of age.

I'M PART-TIME AND DON'T WORK ENOUGH HOURS TO JOIN THE UNION.

One in three Usdaw members work part-time. Part-time workers get all the same benefits as full-time workers. The terms and conditions of most part-time workers have been won by Unions negotiating for them.

WHY SHOULD I JOIN THE UNION, I GET ALL THE SAME BENEFITS ANYWAY?

No you don't! True, you get the same terms and conditions that the Union negotiates for its members. However, you wouldn't get Union advice or representation and you would have to meet your own legal costs if you had a very serious problem or accident at work.

In some workplaces members will have a vote on things like their pay. Non-members do not get a vote.

Need more. . . .

For all your recruitment needs, including application forms, leaflets, booklets and posters visit:



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





ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

North West division's **Karen Creaser** answers our questions on her experiences as a rep

“ I could quite happily spend all day chatting to people about the benefits of the union and how it can help them ”

FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Tesco
- **Occupation** Customer assistant and local councillor
- **Age** 48
- **Lives** Waterfoot in Rossendale
- **Branch** Northwest Tesco K227
- **Usdaw Activist** Since November 2006
- **Union positions** Shop steward, health and safety rep, union learning rep

MY FAVOURITE...

- **Music...** Lighthouse Family
- **Book...** Vampire Diaries and The Black Magician Trilogy
- **TV...** Documentaries and medical programmes
- **The best moment of my life so far...**
The birth of my children and being elected councillor for Whitewell Ward



Want to be the next activist in-depth?

✉ network@usdaw.org.uk

Why did you become an Usdaw rep?

I wanted to make people aware of just what the union could do for them. I was a health and safety rep first and then my thirst for knowledge grew and I wanted to get more involved. I love to help people and learn new things.

What's the best thing about being a rep?

The knowledge you gain and your network of friends. Letting people know their rights and how changes may affect their lives in and outside work.

...any downsides?

Not having enough time, I could quite happily spend all day chatting to people about the benefits of the union and how it can help them.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I've been on health and safety courses and a shop steward course. They were both great. The information I gained was very useful and I was able to apply it to help with issues back at work.

Have you changed as a person since you became active?

Yes, definitely. I've gained more confidence. As a rep you are taught that you are equal with managers so you shouldn't feel undermined. This gives you the strength to put your case forward. You also have to be organised.

What's surprised you about being an Usdaw rep?

All the benefits that the union offers and the support you get when you're campaigning.

How's recruitment at your workplace?

We have 76 per cent membership in our workplace so we're doing well. It helps when you have the chance to recruit at staff inductions. It's harder to recruit staff who've been there a while.

Have you been to ADM?

Yes, I went as a visitor last year. It was a fantastic experience. There was lots of energy in the room when delegates got up to speak. I'm going this year and looking forward to having the chance to voice my opinion on the proposals being brought to the floor.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The bedroom tax, the people trying to make a better life for their families are being hit time after time while the rich are getting a tax cut.

What law would you introduce if you were prime minister?

Ensure companies give help and support to working parents/carers, by having a facility on site for children to be looked after by trained staff. This would help parents with problems during school holidays, would cut down travel-time for the parents/carers to get to and from home.

What would be your advice to an Usdaw member thinking about becoming a rep?

Go for it. It's the best experience you will have. The knowledge, support and network of friends will help you in your journey and it's a great feeling when you help your colleagues.

How would you improve Usdaw?

I'd like an annual workshop to keep reps motivated because sometimes you can lose the connections if you don't attend branch meetings etc.

What's next for you?

Firstly the ADM. I have also been accepted onto the Academy this year so I'm very much looking forward to that.

Any other comments?

I would like to say a huge thank you to Usdaw, without it I wouldn't be where I am today, and I wouldn't have had the confidence to become a local councillor.

YOUNG BLOOD

With more than 1,000 active young reps Usdaw is the ideal place for young workers to learn new skills and speak up for their fellow members

Callum Harrison

Sales assistant Callum Harrison is a chip off the old block after he followed in his father's footsteps and took on the role of rep in his store.

"My dad's been an Usdaw rep at Duerrs, the jam makers in Manchester, for as long as I can remember," said 23 year-old Callum, who started work at Poundland, Wythenshawe, at 17 and joined the union in 2009.

"He's been a big influence on me throughout my life and definitely inspired me to get involved with the union. He's always there to

help and advise me."

Callum became a shop steward at the age of 20 and a health and safety rep three years later. He is also a member of the North West division's youth committee. He is the only rep in-store and has signed up 13 out of his 18 colleagues.

"I think knowledge is the key and definitely the way forward. The union's education department has been excellent for me.

There are lots of courses on offer," he said.

"For me being a rep is a bit like being a policeman, nobody really likes you until they need your help.

So you have to be prepared for the variety of issues you'll be called upon to deal with and the more you know the better you are equipped to help.

"So far I've done all the home study courses apart from the pensions unit. I've completed the reps training and the advanced health and safety course. I've done summer school and I've applied for the second school in September.

"I'd like to keep progressing and learning new things so that I can do my job as a rep to the best of my ability. Maybe next year I'll look at applying for the Academy."



Did you know?

Usdaw has: 88,141 members aged under 27 (20% of the membership) and 1,070 reps under the age of 27 (15% of workplace reps)

Naomi Tweddle



Law graduate Naomi Tweddle's talent for being a trade unionist was spotted by her teacher when she was just 14. Now 24, the Tesco Express worker from Lincoln has been a rep for 18 months.

"I became a rep soon after I joined the union, I think it was my destiny" said Naomi. "I come from a long line of trade unionists so it was inevitable probably. I grew up in a big family where I developed a passion for justice and a belief that everyone should be treated fairly and with respect.

"I also remember my history teacher at school, who was also a big trade

union supporter, saying that I'd make a great trade unionist. And ten years later here I am.

"It's something I genuinely enjoy doing. Members come to me for advice and support and managers respect me.

"Being a rep makes my job at Tesco really interesting too. I have a great relationship with my colleagues and I've created a strong union feel in our small, but very busy store.

"The managers communicate with me on a daily basis and together we keep colleagues informed.

"We don't have too many problems as generally we talk things through and

make sure things don't blow out of proportion. People are treated fairly here.

"Although I have the motivation I've also had great support from the union. I've completed my basic training courses with more to follow and I went to the TUC Youth conference in London in March.

"I studied law at Leicester University and I'm starting my legal practice course in September. Combined with my union work this has given me the tools to hopefully, make a difference in the world.

"In the future I'd like to work closely with unions as a solicitor and then one day maybe I'll get to be an MP!"

Get involved!

If you're aged under 27 and need information, advice or support, or you want to get more involved then visit the youth section on the website or contact your divisional youth committee co-ordinator:

www.usdaw.org.uk

Divisional Youth Committee
Co-ordinators:

South Wales and Western Division

Milan Pavlik
Bristol Office
01176 916 061
kegworth@usdaw.org.uk

Eastern Division

Adam Skwierawski
Bury St Edmunds Office
01248 775 700
burystedmunds@usdaw.org.uk

Midlands Division

Jan Hind
Kegworth Office
02476 741 232
kegworth@usdaw.org.uk

North Eastern Division

Garry Gibson
Leeds Office
0113 232 1320
leeds@usdaw.org.uk

Scottish Division

Stewart Forrest
Glasgow Office
0141 427 6561
glasgow@usdaw.org.uk

Southern Division

Danny Knowles
Andover Office
01264 321 460
andover@usdaw.org.uk

North West Division

Jo-Anne Welbourne
Warrington Office
01925 578 050
warrington@usdaw.org.uk

Sue Thomas

Getting involved with the union has helped Sue Thomas develop into a more determined and confident person able to speak up for the things she believes both at work and in her local community.

"Becoming a rep and being part of a team with the backing and support of the union has helped me find my voice. So when my colleagues have a problem or a query I can advise them," said the 25 year-old stock control assistant from York in North Yorkshire, who has been a rep for 20 months and a union learning rep for 16 months.

"We have a very supportive team of reps in our store, and some in particular have been monumental in helping me.

"As a team we represented successfully our dotcom pickers when hours changes were proposed. It was a great victory. There really is no feeling like it when a member gets a result and they are happy with your help.

"Being a rep is fantastic, but it's hard work too. It's not uncommon to be contacted on your day off, or to stay late for a meeting, but I believe that also gains me the respect of my members because they appreciate that I go that extra mile for them. I think if you do a good job in-store you get respect from managers too.



"This union experience has given me the confidence to do so much more including getting involved in different groups. In my spare time I give out food to the homeless in town and try to spark up conversations to motivate and help them where I can.

"I recently represented the union at the TUC Youth conference at Congress House in London and I've just been selected as a delegate to the Annual Delegate Meeting in April – I'm really looking forward to it."

Jeyda Besim



huge difference to me. I'm growing in confidence with every new experience and it's very rewarding," said Jeyda.

"Knowing that I've helped my colleagues gives me a massive boost. I first realised this when I supported someone from another store. He actually got very emotional when he saw how passionate I was about helping him.

"Also when a colleague was refused a transfer to another store and I had the decision overturned. It cut down their journey time to work by two hours.

"The training I've had has been excellent. It's very professional and also helped me towards my career goals. The training Tesco offer me while I'm working towards being a manager is very similar.

"Which makes me believe that one day I will be able to be a fair and understanding manager, and a better union rep.

"My management team understand union reps have a significant role in the workplace. And I've seen improvements in the way individuals are treated.

"It hit home to me that I must be doing a good job when I won the divisional award for Most Promising New Activist last year.

"I was invited along to the national awards evening in Manchester in January, not only was it a great honour, but I felt proud to be part of such a huge organisation."

Usdaw training courses have left trainee customer service manager Jeyda Besim more confident and enthusiastic about her role as a rep.

The 22 year-old, who works at the Tesco Superstore in Bromley, South East London, joined the union two years ago and is also a health and safety rep.

"Being involved with the union has made a

Marilyn Taylor



New rep Marilyn Taylor enlisted the help of experienced reps Mandy Davies and Anne Meacock to help organize a Legal Plus Awareness Day for more than 200 colleagues at the Tesco Superstore in Pontardawe, Swansea in January.

"I'd only been a rep for a few months and this was the first union event I'd been involved with. It was pretty daunting, so having Mandy and Anne's support was superb," said 60 year-old Marilyn, (pictured top right) who is one of three reps at the store.

"We agreed a date and arranged with management that we could set up an area in the canteen.

"We also had a local union-appointed solicitor along for the day and advertised the details on

the union noticeboard.

"The comments from staff were very positive with the free will-writing benefit for members very popular. It surprised me how many people were not aware of the many benefits of the Legal Plus service for themselves and their families, so this made the day even more important.

"We signed up four new members in no time. A lot of people said it was worth joining for the legal cover alone and many saying they'd like to see more awareness sessions in the future. Membership now stands at 63 per cent."

Mandy Davies, centre, who has six years of union activity under her belt said: "It's great to support new reps like Marilyn who are getting involved for the first time and to see them getting so much out of it.

"The help and support I've had from the union including the Academy, my division and my branch have been invaluable in helping me develop into the experienced rep I am now.

"It's great to have been involved and see membership at the store increase and raise the profile of the union and promote the benefits of joining."

IN NUMBERS

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 25 MARCH 2013

South Wales & Western.....	50,901
Eastern.....	62,974
Midlands.....	57,297
North Eastern.....	58,157
Scottish.....	44,977
Southern.....	58,631
North West.....	94,580
TOTAL.....	427,517

SUPPORT

Active reps are making the most of the training and everything they've learned to make the most of their work.

Amanda Bott

Six months with Academy1 has given customer service adviser Amanda Bott the opportunity to gain more experience and she has surprised herself with her own progress.

"I've been a rep for four years and gained a lot of experience in my own workplace handling disciplinarys and wage negotiations and I'm also the lifelong learning co-ordinator," said 49 year-old Amanda (pictured right) who works for Home Retail in Widnes, Cheshire.

"I also did a stint as a stand-down rep and I recruited 60 new members, it was a great feeling. From there I joined the Academy.

"It was just the challenge I needed. It's given me the chance to visit many different workplaces.

"I was learning something new all the time. I visited Morrisons' Farmers Boy site in Deeside in January, and did a Legal Plus Awareness Day in Tesco in Burnley. I've also visited Co-op stores and lots of Tesco stores big and small.

"My best moment with the Academy has to

James Smith and Sidonie McShane



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T NETWORKS

training courses and the Academy and putting into practice the benefits of union membership obvious to their workmates



be balloting week in Morrisons when I recruited 32 new members and five new reps in two stores.

"I also went to summer school in Sheffield and did a presentation in front of 80 people. If someone had asked me to do that six months ago

I'd have said 'no way'. 'Everyone's noticed the difference in me.

"And it just gets better and better. I've just found out I've been selected for Academy2 which will give me the opportunity to develop even more."

me

Co-op cluster reps Sidonie McShane and James Smith are proving teamwork brings success after they completed their second stint out on stand-down together during Membership Week in January.

James used a Legal Plus Awareness Day at the store's Walderslade store in Kent to promote the union's services. "The event went well despite the severe weather and snow," said 24 year-old James, who has been a rep for three years. "The store was affected because of the snow but we still managed to give advice and sign up new members."

"I've completed many stand-down activities with good results and started to build up good relationships with some managers. It's not always easy but the challenges have tested me as a rep.

"I'm also branch secretary, health and safety rep and a learning rep."

James has established a good partnership with fellow rep Sidonie McShane. The 49 year-old said: "I've known James for about four years as we did our training together. And when we are out on stand-down we work well together.

"We've had fantastic support and guidance throughout and we also have our own little support system of four or five reps, not all Co-op, so there's always someone to give advice or bounce ideas off.

"We've been to divisional conferences, the Annual Delegate Meeting twice and the last two weekend federation schools.

"The last one was about the grievance and disciplinary procedure and the Tribunal process, so hopefully we'll be able to support our reps better because we have a much deeper understanding ourselves.

"We've done two periods of stand-down mostly around the Medway area.

"I know we both enjoy our roles and the support we give each other. We also relish the challenges ahead and would love to progress with the union."

Lawrence Miller

Union training has helped Lawrence Miller and the team of reps at the Wincanton distribution site in Snodland, Kent, develop their skills and organise their workplace.

"Over the past year we have run the Freedom From Fear campaign and I organised a recruitment drive week in January. This is the first time we have run a union event on-site in 23 years, so two in six months is amazing," said Lawrence (pictured below right), who has been a shop steward for three years and a health and safety rep for five.

"Fourteen new members signed up during the event bringing membership at the site up to 81 per cent, a real achievement for a distribution site.

"We also reached agreement with management to do inductions with the Staffline Agency on-site. I'd like to thank our senior managers for allowing us the time to hold these events.

"We have a dedicated team of eight shop stewards and ten health and safety reps. Our joint consultative committee works well and we hold regular meetings.

"In the past reps would have only stayed for a couple of years but now we are getting a better quality of rep, people who are switched on to learning, enjoy the training as well as the experience of being a rep and the support from the union.

"We have two dedicated learning reps and our own training room where we have held some great courses, the biggest being English language, also photography, sign language and conversational Spanish.

"The union has supported my development and encouraged me all the way. I learned a lot at Summer Schools 1&2 and I've just applied for Academy1.

"I recently attended the union's political conference in Manchester, which was excellent. And I've joined the Labour Party and attend my local meetings. I've even put my name down to become a Labour councillor."



LOYAL TRIO CALL TIME

Sharon Ainsworth, Jim Carty and Mike Parsonage will take with them more than 85 years of service and more than 120 years of union membership between them when they retire in 2013

National officer Sharon Ainsworth retired in March after almost 24 years on the union's staff and 38 years after she first signed up with Usdaw when she started work for Littlewoods Mail Order in Oldham, Lancashire.

Sharon quickly became active and in 1979 was elected to full-time convenor. In 1989 she was appointed an area organiser and spent ten years at the Leeds office until her promotion to national officer at central office, Manchester in early 2000.

"I've had a wonderful time, I've been very privileged," said the 55 year-old. "I've spent most of my time as national officer looking after the Co-op sector and what a roller-coaster ride that's been. It feels like the Co-op movement has been through a 100 years of change during the last ten.

"I can't praise our Co-op reps enough because they have had to cope with these massive changes. It's been great to have worked with the reps and been part of that transformation. When I first took over, getting reps wasn't easy, not so now, and we are in a much healthier position.

"I'll be keeping a watching-brief on Usdaw. I'll always be a member – it's in my DNA, but I'm ready to retire and looking forward to it."

Now Bulgaria beckons as Sharon, with partner Billy, plans to spend some of her time near the Black Sea resort of Burgas where she has a holiday home, which she and Billy have lovingly restored over the last seven years.

"I'm trying to get my head round the Cyrillic alphabet as well so I can try and learn the language – not easy – believe me!"



Sharon Ainsworth

Southern divisional officer and lifelong union man Jim Carty will retire just before this year's Annual Delegate Meeting bringing to a close just over 30 years on the union's staff and a near 40-year membership of Usdaw.

Jim first joined Usdaw in the early '70s when he worked for Tesco and quickly became active in his local branch. He went on to study at Ruskin College Oxford on a union scholarship in 1980 and was appointed to the organising staff in 1982.

He was promoted to deputy divisional officer in 2003 and to his current role in 2010. He had stints at the Basingstoke, Andover, Faversham, and Croydon offices and later moved to Morden.

"I've been a lucky man and it's been a privilege to have worked for the union all these years," said Jim, 57. "I've met thousands of good people who have carried the banner for the working class. Our reps – unpaid volunteers – despite having to look after themselves and their family, still find time to help their fellow workers. When I see members – once shy people – develop into confident energetic reps it's great to see. "Usdaw has also changed dramatically too. We're more



Jim Carty

efficient, better organised and the Academy has made a huge difference – it's been fantastic and played a vital role in developing reps into tomorrow's organisers.

"Looking ahead, I'll be spending time with my family, especially my grandson. I like cycling, gardening and travelling and I'll also be looking to do some work in the voluntary sector possibly with young offenders.

"I'll be keeping in touch with Usdaw and my former colleagues and wish new divisional officer Sue Merrell all the best in her new role."

Southern division's Mike Parsonage would 'do it all again' as he contemplates life beyond Usdaw after nearly 31 years as an area organiser and almost 44 years as a member.

Stockport-born Mike moved to the Portsmouth office in 1982 after a decade of activism while he worked for Manchester Equitable Co-op as a clerk and driver in the funeral department, and later transferring to the NorWest Co-op.

"It's all gone very quickly," said Mike, 59. "I remember colleagues retiring when I first started and before I know it – it's happening to me!

"It's been a great job, yes it has its ups and downs, but



Mike Parsonage

I've had the chance to help and support people often in very difficult circumstances and it's been very rewarding. Problem solving, keeping members in a job, getting a good result and seeing happy members – it's a great feeling.

"I've seen many big companies come and go, new ways of working, new technology and a number of reps go on to bigger and better things. I've met many, many great colleagues and that's what makes the job. I've had some excellent times.

"I'm going to visit my brother in Australia later in the year and, at the same time, will be travelling around Vietnam, Hong Kong and other places while in the Far East.

"Back home, I'll also be looking after my allotment, growing my own fruit and veg and enjoying retirement. I'm looking forward to it."

General secretary John Hannett paid tribute to the trio: "Sharon, Jim and Mike have done a great job for the union and they take with them the best wishes of their many colleagues and friends.

"They'll be a hard act to follow and Usdaw will miss their dedication, commitment and loyalty.

"Good health and good luck to the three of them."

Learning back on the agenda at JD Williams

Three years of hard work came to fruition in March as two new learning centres were opened at home shopping firm JD Williams' sites in Shaw and Hadfield.

Members can now sign up for courses in English, Maths, NVQs and apprenticeships after the team of learning reps worked with management and two local colleges in Manchester and Tameside to deliver the fully-equipped centres.

Learning co-ordinator and union convenor Martin Kemp is keen to keep the momentum going after a similar venture failed to get off the ground a few years ago. "We did have a learning centre in Shaw in 1999, but it never really took off," he said. "So this time we're determined to get it right."

"Early indications are that the facilities are very popular and we're already over-subscribed for some courses. There's lots of enthusiasm among the near 600 members across both sites."

Lifelong learning divisional co-

ordinator Denise Gordon also has high hopes for the two new centres. "There's 12 PCs, printers and other resource materials on-site," she said. "We have a good team of union learning reps across both sites and the two opening days created a real buzz with the members."

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis joined the reps' team and senior management at the opening events. "We know offering members learning opportunities at work is very popular and I'm delighted JD Williams' members now have the chance to improve their skills, boost their confidence and improve their employment prospects," he said.

HR business manager Mike Suban added: "JD Williams is keen to invest in our people, both for their own personal enrichment and to enhance their career prospects."

"This has been a true joint venture with everyone working in partnership and we're really proud of what we've achieved."



On course to learn at JD Williams... (above) the team at Hadfield and (below) the site at Shaw is officially opened



Müller-Wiseman reps at national seminar

Health and safety and employment rights were top of the agenda when reps from Müller Wiseman Dairies met in Blackpool in March for their annual training seminar.

The two-day event held in Blackpool also saw a business update presentation and a briefing on health and safety from senior company management.

National officer John Gorle sees the event as an important part of the company/union set up. "Last year saw the takeover of Robert Wiseman Dairies by the German dairy firm Müller,

which further consolidated Wiseman's strong position in the UK market," he said.

"The sector has seen massive consolidation over the years and it's been a very difficult period for members and reps.

"Our reps have a massive role to play in maintaining our membership levels, currently at a very healthy 61 per cent in Wiseman's.

"We have had a very progressive relationship with Wiseman's for many years now and I'm confident that will continue to flourish.

"It was useful to have an



update from the company on the current state of play in the sector and I know the reps took a lot from the training sessions too.

"These are turbulent times for the dairy sector but we are well placed to meet the challenges. Many thanks to the reps for their input during the seminar."

BUDGET OFFERS LITTLE HOPE FOR WORKERS

The chancellor George Osborne's fourth Budget has done nothing to help the millions of working families who have been made thousands of pounds worse off by the Government's measures.

Usdaw has been calling for measures to alleviate the financial strain placed on families working for low pay and to halt the increase in child poverty among working families.

New figures from the Union show that typical families, working for the minimum wage, have lost far more from the Government's cuts than they receive from tax and national insurance savings and from the Child Tax Credit rise in 2011.

The figures set out below show that when the cuts to Working Tax Credit and Child Benefit are taken into account, together with the rise in VAT, families are far worse off, even before other cuts such as Childcare Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Statutory Maternity Pay and Education Maintenance Allowance are taken into account.

Usdaw's figures show that by April 2015:

- A single person working full-time on the minimum wage will have lost £785
- A couple or lone parent with one child and one parent working full-time on the minimum wage will have lost £1,286
- A couple with two children, where one parent works full-time and the other

parent for 20 hours a week on the minimum wage, will have lost £1,703

General secretary John Hannett said: "These figures show how much this Government will have taken from working people on low pay by the end of this Parliament, causing millions of families hardship and suffering.

"They show clearly that the increase in the personal tax allowance is worth far less than these families have lost from the cuts to tax credits and child benefit and from the unfair rise in VAT.

"The Government has tried to con working families that it is helping them, when it has simply given with one hand but taken far more with the other. At a time when inflation



General secretary John Hannett continues to rise faster than wages, the Government needs to recognise the strain they have placed on working people and the impact these cuts have had right across the country."

How workers will miss out following Coalition's austerity cuts

1. Single Person, works Full Time (35 hours a week) on Minimum Wage					
Year	Tax Saving	NIC Saving	Working Tax Credit Cut	VAT	Total
2011-12	+140	+100	-212	-235	-207
2012-13	+190	+107	-378	-235	-316
2013-14	+420	+107	-475	-235	-183
2014-15	+494	+112	-450	-235	-79
Total	+£1,244	+£426	-£1,515	-£940	-£785

3. Couple with 2 children. One Parent works full-time (35 hours), one works part-time (20 hours) on Minimum Wage							
Year	Tax Saving	NIC Saving	Child Tax Credit Rise	Working Tax Credit Cut	Child Benefit Freeze	VAT	Total
2011-12	+140	+129	+300	-365	-81	-284	-161
2012-13	+190	+117	+300	-643	-185	-284	-505
2013-14	+420	+113	+220	-763	-237	-284	-531
2014-15	+494	+112	+130	-689	-269	-284	-506
Total	+£1,244	+£471	+£950	-£2,460	-£772	-£1,136	-£1,703

2. Couple or Lone Parent with 1 Child & 1 Earner, Full-Time on Minimum Wage							
Year	Tax Saving	NIC Saving	Child Tax Credit Rise	Working Tax Credit Cut	Child Benefit Freeze	VAT	Total
2011-12	+140	+100	+150	-237	-49	-249	-145
2012-13	+190	+107	+150	-517	-112	-249	-431
2013-14	+420	+107	+110	-660	-143	-249	-415
2014-15	+494	+112	+65	-555	-162	-249	-295
Total	+£1,244	+£426	+£475	-£1,969	-£466	-£996	-£1,286

Other Cuts

These examples do not take into account the following cuts, which also affect most families working full-time on the minimum wage:

- Child Tax Credit for babies under one cut from April 2011 – £545 cut
- Child Trust Fund cut from January 2011 – £250 cut
- Health in Pregnancy Grant cut from January 2011 – £190 cut
- EMA abolished in January 2011 – for children of minimum wage families it was a cut of £1,170, plus bonuses for attendance and progress.

- Childcare Tax Credit – cut from 80 per cent to 70 per cent in April 2011, average cut of £457 per child.
- Housing Benefit capped at 30 per cent of market rates from October 2011 – average cut of £468.
- Bedroom tax in April 2013 – average loss of £728.
- Cuts to Council Tax Benefit with localisation in April 2013.
- Statutory Maternity, Paternity and Adoption leave capped at 1 per cent increase for 3 years from April 2013 – mothers will lose £180 from Maternity Pay.

Families to be hit by 'bedroom tax'



The rules about how much Housing Benefit some people receive changed from 1 April 2013. It's been dubbed the 'bedroom tax'.

If you rent your home from a 'social landlord' and you are deemed to have more bedrooms than you need, your rent that is paid by Housing Benefit will reduce by:

- 14 per cent if your home has one bedroom, which is considered to be under-occupied – an average reduction of £12 per week (£52 a month)
- 25 per cent if you have two or more bedrooms that are considered under-occupied – an average reduction of £22 per week (£95 a month).

You will be affected if all the following apply:

- You receive Housing Benefit
- You rent your home from a local council, housing association or housing co-op
- You are of working age (you and your partner are born after 5th October 1951)
- And you are deemed to have one or more spare bedrooms

Bedroom Occupancy Rules:

You will receive Housing Benefit for:

- One bedroom per couple or single adult
 - One bedroom per two children of the same sex until they reach 16
 - One bedroom per two children of the opposite sex who are both under 10
- Children who have a main residence elsewhere (for example, because their parents live apart) cannot be counted as needing a bedroom at the secondary address. Bedrooms used at the secondary address will be counted as unoccupied.

The only exemptions are if:

- You rent your home from a private landlord, or
- You or your partner were born before 5th Oct 1951, or
- You have a shared ownership property, or
- You have recently been bereaved. You will be exempt for 12 months after your bereavement and your Housing Benefit will not be affected until then.
- You are a foster carer who has fostered a child or been approved in the last year
- You are parent to an adult child in the armed forces who continues to live with you

Use the benefits calculator:
www.gov.uk/benefits-adviser

I'm not happy.... What can I do?

1. Tell your local council if you feel that the number of bedrooms in your house, or the bedrooms that you need has not been calculated correctly. For example, if someone in the house has a disability, or a bedroom is too small for two children.

2. Apply to your local council for a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP).

While DHPs are not expected to be long term, they are supposed to help families affected by the bedroom tax who are experiencing financial hardship.

3. Consider taking a lodger. The Government is encouraging social landlords to allow this. However, check the online Benefits Adviser or seek advice about how the extra income would affect your Housing Benefit and other benefits.

4. Consider moving to a smaller property. Ask your local council and housing associations if they have any smaller properties available and what grants you could

claim to help with the costs of moving and re-decoration.

5. Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or welfare rights advisor and seek advice about how best to manage your finances and any debts you may have.

6. Tell your local MP make sure your MP knows the damage and upheaval this 'bedroom tax' is making to you and your family and insist they take it up in parliament.

Cuts to Council Tax Benefits

Around 700,000 working people receive help with their Council Tax because they are on a low income. From 1 April the Government is cutting the amount they pay Councils to cover Council Tax Benefit by 10 per cent.

Households will have to pay between £100 and £600 a year extra in Council Tax.

How are the cuts affecting you?

Usdaw is constantly lobbying Government about the impact of their cuts on working people. To help Usdaw make the case, please let us know how the cuts are affecting you – email campaigns officer Karen Whitefield – Karen.whitefield@usdaw.org.uk

Help for disabled housing falls £100m short

Government help for the most vulnerable people hit by the bedroom tax is falling so far short it will leave hundreds of thousands of disabled people struggling to make ends meet says research from the National Housing Federation (NHF).

The campaign group says despite the £30m boost to Discretionary Housing

Payments (DHPs) the Coalition has left a staggering gap of over £100m in benefits being taken away from disabled people.

Research by the NHF found that if the £30m of DHP funding was divided equally among every claimant of Disability Living Allowance hit by the tax, they would each receive just £2.51 per week – compared to the average £14

a week loss in housing benefit from the bedroom tax. There are about 230,000 disabled people receiving DLA who will lose an average of £728 each per year in housing benefit. With 100,000 disabled people hit by the tax living in specially adapted homes, if they do move to new homes they would have to be adapted at a huge cost to the public purse.

TIME FOR A CHANGE

The Coalition is putting your health and safety at risk as it cuts back on inspections and resources, here the TUC outlines its response to reclaim the agenda

The TUC has launched a 10-point manifesto to reclaim occupational health and safety from the Coalition's recent deregulatory attacks.

In the introduction, the TUC explains its concern that the consensus on health and safety that has existed almost unbroken since the 1937 Factories Act has begun to break down. Rather than seeing health and safety legislation as a necessary protection for workers, many politicians now claim that it is a 'burden on business'.

At a time when 20,000 people a year die from work-related illness and injuries, and nearly two million suffer some form of occupational ill health at a cost of billions to the national economy, the TUC is calling for a sea

change in attitudes to secure cross-party support for health and safety. 'Health and Safety – Time for Change' outlines the following ten simple measures the TUC wants from any future Government:

- All workplaces should be regularly inspected by the enforcing authority
- Regulations on safety reps and safety committees should be revised to increase coverage and effectiveness
- Occupational health should have the same priority as injury prevention
- There should be a new, legally binding dust standard
- Workers should not be exposed to carcinogens
- There should be a legal maximum temperature in the workplace
- There should be increased protection for vulnerable and atypical workers
- There should be a legal duty on directors
- Health and safety should be a significant factor in all public sector procurement
- The UK Government should adopt, and comply with, all health and safety conventions of the International Labour Organisation

The manifesto has already had support from health and safety professionals and from shadow ministers.

Over the next few months the TUC will be publishing a series of Time for Change bulletins with more detailed briefings on each of the ten points. The first bulletin explaining why all workplaces



need regular inspection is already available on the TUC website.

To see the manifesto and the first Time for Change bulletin visit: www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-21902-f0.cfm

Healthier workplaces deliver healthier workers



Employers who create healthy workplaces can reduce employee absence and boost productivity, according to a new TUC guide. 'Work and well-being' aims to promote healthier working and help union safety reps identify what is making staff ill in their workplaces.

The guide explains that the best method for improving the

general well-being of a workforce is to change the way that work is organised and managed. Additionally any suggestion on lifestyle changes - diet, exercise, smoking or alcohol use - must be made available in a completely non-judgmental manner.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "Healthier lifestyles are something we should all be aspiring to, and given the amount of time we spend at work, the workplace is a good place to start.

"Work can create a lot of health issues such as back problems, and it can also be a cause of stress which is linked to the

increased use of tobacco and alcohol.

"Similarly, if employees are sitting down all day and only have access to junk food during their lunch break then they have more chance of developing heart disease or diabetes in later life. Far too many days a year are being lost through ill-health. Sensible employers who are able to identify problems at an early stage, and who introduce changes to prevent ill-health and promote well-being will reduce sickness absence and increase productivity."

To see a copy of the TUC guide visit: www.tuc.org.uk/wellbeingguide

In conversation with safety rep Allison Black

What advice would you give to someone who's interested in being a H&S rep?

Education is paramount so get on the training courses. Always use a proactive approach and attend meetings as it's the best way to share experiences with other reps.

Have you had any Usdaw H&S training? If yes, which ones?

I have attended many short courses, with the encouragement and support from my area organiser. I was able to attend Stow college

Scotland's Allison Black has been a union rep and health and safety (H&S) rep since 1996. In 2008 she was elected branch chair for West of Scotland Sainsbury's G148. She works in the floral department at the Kingsgate store in East Kilbride and works 27 hours a week and has worked for Sainsbury's for 19 years.

and further my education which benefits myself, the workplace, members and other reps. I've completed the National Open College Network (NOCN) level 2 trade union and safety reps, NOCN level 3 diploma for trade union health and safety I've also completed the NOCN level 3 diploma in employment law.

Some people say that the world has gone H&S mad – do you agree?

No. Many newspaper articles have often

been proven untrue and usually always exaggerated. Often the media create H&S 'stories' purely for entertainment, stories you read are rarely related to the workplace.

What practical measures do you undertake in your store to improve H&S or keep it at the forefront of members' minds?

My store has just completed a re-build. There was an information portacabin set up answering all staff and customer questions

REMEMBER THE DEAD: FIGHT FOR THE LIVING

Workers' Memorial Day: Sunday 28 April

Workers' Memorial Day is the day when the international labour movement remembers those who have been killed or injured in workplace accidents and those who have died from occupational diseases.

This year, Workers' Memorial Day falls on the Sunday of the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) and the event will be marked at conference. For those reps who are not attending ADM, the union has produced a leaflet and poster that can be used at work to raise awareness and encourage members to take some action.

This year, Usdaw's main focus is on the cuts to Local Authority enforcement of health and safety. HSE figures show that Local Authorities (LAs) inspections have plummeted by 86 per cent over the last three years. In 2012/13 there will be only 16,000 inspections by LAs who have enforcement responsibility for well over one million workplaces.

What You Can Do for Workers' Memorial Day

- Give out or display copies of the Usdaw Workers' Memorial Day leaflet to members at work on the day
- Wear a purple 'forget me knot' ribbon. Available from: www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/wmd/ribbonsorderform.pdf

Email Doug Russell on:
healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk
www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety

■ Greater Manchester Hazards Centre can also supply posters and car stickers.

■ Find out if there are any events in your area. Contact your local trades council or log on to the TUC Workers' Memorial Day web page for details of events – www.tuc.org.uk/wmd

Contact your local MP to tell them why the Government is wrong. To find your local MP visit: theyworkforyou.com

Contact your local councillor to find out what your local authority is doing to enforce health and safety law. Health and safety in shops, offices and warehouses is covered by Local Authority inspectors. LAs are facing massive cuts.

We need Usdaw members to tell councillors that health and safety is an important issue for them. You can find contact details for your local councillor on your council website or in local newspapers and libraries.

You can order copies of the Usdaw Workers' Memorial Day leaflet and poster from the health and safety Section at central office. Email: healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk



regarding health and safety. Union safety reps were fully involved as each change was about to happen, and regular safety walks were given to all colleagues throughout.

I also attend regional and national meetings where health and safety is always on the agenda, and information is cascaded to reps and members quickly. I carry out regular Usdaw inspections in my store and all new reps are invited to

accompany me during these. I always try to find time to mentor and support new reps.

What has been your proudest achievement as a H&S rep so far?

I was delighted to be nominated for the divisional organising awards health and safety rep in 2010 and again in 2011, and I finally won the divisional national nomination for 2012.

■ Allison, pictured left, at the Organising Awards in January.

IN BRIEF

■ Petition launched to protect staff

An e-petition has been tabled on the Government's petition site calling for the retention of the Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) to the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

The Government is planning to remove the ACoP and replace it with guidance as part of its review of health and safety law – despite the fact that a majority of respondents to their consultation rejected the proposal.

Now Gerard Hand, president of the health and safety professional body Institution of Occupational Safety & Health, has launched the e-petition headed - *Save the 'code' to protect workers, businesses and the economy.*

The petition states: "Employers rely on the authoritative 'special legal' status and assurance of the ACoP to ensure they are legally compliant. Removal could cause confusion and uncertainty." It urges the Government: "to improve and retain the 'Management of Health and Safety at Work Approved Code of Practice' for the benefit of all concerned".

To sign the petition visit:
epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/46262

■ Crushed by roll cage

Sainsbury's has been fined almost £10,000 after an employee was crushed by a delivery roll cage weighing 266kg (almost 42 stone).

The accident happened in June 2010, at a Sainsbury's Local supermarket in Hull, when a cage fell from the elevated tail lift of a Wincanton delivery lorry and landed on the worker, who sustained major injuries including multiple fractures and spinal trauma.

Hull City Council's health and safety team prosecuted after an investigation revealed a new delivery procedure was in use at the time of the incident. Training was given to store managers at the stores, who should have passed on the training to their employees.

At the time there was no manager at the store involved. The deputy manager had received the training but had gone on leave. Staff had not received any training. Sainsbury's and Wincanton Group pleaded guilty at Hull Magistrates Court. The case was referred to Crown Court for sentencing and both businesses received a fine of £4,500 for each offence and both ordered to pay costs of £5,000 each and a £15 victim surcharge.

FACTORY ON BREAKFAST TV



Congratulations to the reps at the McVitie's site in Manchester after their factory was featured on the BBC's Breakfast show as part of its focus on maths champions. The on-site learning centre is one of the best and the team of reps led by Jonathan Waterhouse has provided some excellent opportunities for the membership.

KEVIN DOLAN
 Convenor United Biscuits K66

COALITION'S CRUEL CUTS

Bedroom tax bombshell



I am particularly worried about this 'bedroom tax'. My husband (57) has become ill and can no longer work and for the first time in our working lives we are having to ask the state for help by claiming benefits. We rent a three-bedroom house from a housing association and until recently my son lived at home.

We were asked if we would be prepared to move to somewhere more suitable. We intimated that we would consider moving but not move from the village we live in, where all our friends live and my husband grew up in and where most importantly our support networks are. However, it became clear that there wasn't anywhere for us to move to that would meet my husband's needs.

And this is the crux of the matter. Where

houses have been built over the last two years they have not taken into account the needs of the elderly and infirm or single people.

I am a parish councillor and we have fought developers over the years for 1&2 bedroom houses and those fit for the infirm, but to no avail, as they were not profitable, so every house that has been built has had three bedrooms.

Now we find we are being penalized for the lack of smaller housing stock. I can fully understand people's fears because we ourselves feel that fear.

If there is anything I can do to help your campaign please count me in.

JANETTE PARKER
 Newton Abbot

OBITUARY: JANE ROGERS

Sad loss of doughty fighter for fairness and justice

I want to pay tribute to one of our well-known, well-respected and best-loved activists Jane Rogers who sadly died in January. She was 65.

Jane worked tirelessly for Usdaw after becoming active while working at Boots The Chemist in Blackpool. She was also involved in her local Labour Party and campaigned tirelessly and successfully against the British National Party. Jane took a keen interest

in politics and was often found pounding the streets during General Election campaigns.

Jane was held in high esteem across Usdaw in the North West Division and was known as a fighter for working people and the under privileged.

Jane was an active member of our divisional council, and political committee, playing a full role as someone who could be challenging but greatly supportive at the same time.

She also served as secretary of the Blackpool Fylde and Wyre Trades Council addressing our Annual Delegate Meeting on two occasions.

Her commitment to the trade union movement was evident to all who knew her and all her friends and colleagues will miss her warmth and friendship.

MIKE AYLWARD
 Divisional officer,
 North West division



PICTURE ROUND-UP



ON LOCATION...

1. Activists at the branch officers course in February had a collection for colleague Diane Copestick whose wedding was the day after the course finished. General secretary John Hannett made the presentation.
2. Well done to Billy Turton who recruited five new members while on stand-down in Morrisons in Consett Co. Durham despite the horrendous weather conditions.
3. North West division Tesco activists on a reps course at Warrington, in February.

CELEBRATIONS AT HALF-CENTURY MEMBERSHIP AWARD

Fifty years on and still counting for Brian

On Wednesday 6th February 2013 Brian Lamb, formerly of Evesham Foods was presented with his 50 Year Award by Marjorie Davis, secretary of South Midlands General branch E61.

Members, reps and friends gathered for a celebratory meal to mark the occasion. Brian was presented with his certificate and gifts and it was great to see such a loyal member recognised for his fantastic loyalty to Usdaw. A good night was had by all.

On behalf of the branch, we wish Brian many more years in the union and look forward to his continued support.



EVE BALLINGER
Area organiser, Redditch office

50
YEARS OF
USDAW
MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP BOOST

Legal Plus day pays off



Tesco Martlesham Heath, Ipswich held a very successful Legal Plus event recently attended by union solicitors, stand-down reps Debbie Newman, Zoe Wolfe, Sally Tilley and Jenny Smith, and activists Sam King and Scott Howard – what a team effort!

The day was a huge success providing staff with information and guidance on legal matters and raising awareness about the benefits of being an Usdaw member. Free health checks and advice were also on offer courtesy of the pharmacy. We even managed to recruit 20 new members who are joining a predominantly union organised workplace taking the percentage to a noteworthy 70 per cent.

Well done to everyone involved and a big thank you for the co-operation of the store manager Peter Hope.

HELEN KING
Eastern division

LEARNING ON THE JOB

On course to success

Recently our team decided it was time to get things moving for 2013 and decided to run an open day.

Our regional mobile union learning rep Julie Day and in-store learning rep Betty Partridge did a fantastic job organising the event and our new learning provider, South Leicestershire College (SLC) were present to give us a helping hand.

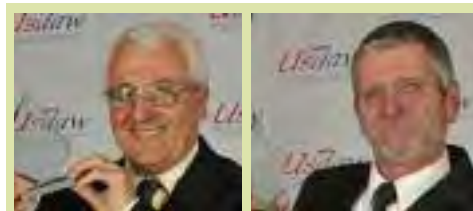
We are now recruiting colleagues to our new courses for the spring such as Spanish for Beginners, Basic IT, Deaf Awareness and Signing for Beginners. Also, a special course with our new friends at SLC, cake baking and decorating for novices. This should prove to be very popular.

Here's looking forward to an exciting 2013!

JEROME EATOUGH
Anglia Tesco C54

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED!

Organising Awards



Apologies to activists Anthony Kent (left) and John Barron who were incorrectly identified in the January / February issue of *Network* as part of our coverage of the national Organising Awards.

THE NETWORK TEAM

BEDROOM TAX CHAOS

Help Labour to stop the unfair bedroom tax

Labour has launched a major campaign to highlight the incompetent, unfair and out of touch 'bedroom tax' David Cameron's Government will introduce in April.

I need you to share the campaign with your friends, family, neighbours and colleagues.

The 'bedroom tax' tells you everything you need to know about David Cameron and his government.

Meanwhile 13,000 millionaires will get a tax cut worth £100,000 a year on average.

Two thirds of the households hit are home to someone who is disabled. Divorced parents and grandparents will be charged more if they want to keep a spare room for when their children or grandchildren come to stay.

To add to the chaos, the department for work and pensions has admitted that there are not enough smaller properties for families to move to, yet the 'bedroom tax' will still hit households that don't have the option to move.

Our campaign will put relentless pressure on David Cameron until he sees sense, admits this policy is totally unfair, and thinks again.

You can help the campaign by visiting: www.labour.org.uk/bedroomtaxshare

Thank you for your support.

LIAM BYRNE MP
SHADOW SECRETARY FOR
WORK & PENSIONS

SEND YOUR LETTERS AND PICTURES TO:

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Manchester M14 6LJ

network@usdaw.org.uk



Do You Know Your Rights at Work?



Workers' Rights (Leaflet 211)

This highly informative guide to your employment and benefit rights contains useful information for all Usdaw members including:

- ✓ Basic rights for everyone
- ✓ Discrimination
- ✓ Maternity and parental rights
- ✓ Family friendly rights
- ✓ Fixed term contracts
- ✓ Sunday working
- ✓ State benefits

It's a must-have publication for Usdaw reps and members.

Visit www.usdaw.org.uk/211 or scan the QR code at the bottom of the page to download **Workers' Rights***

Alternatively you can order a copy from your local Usdaw office. For details ring **0845 60 60 640****.



Scan here



*to scan the code with your smartphone, download a QR reader app from your app store. A charge may be applied by your network provider.
**calls charged at local rate.