

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | March/April 2011



USD AW ON THE MARCH

Hundreds of activists made the journey to London to join the TUC's March For The Alternative

■ Activist-in-depth puts Jenny in focus

Next rep Jenny Bishop on her role as a branch official and her role within Usdaw
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■ Young reps are getting stuck into recruitment

Network talks to four young activists on how they look after their members in-store
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■ How will the Budget affect your income?

Most members will be worse off as cuts in tax credits begin to bite
pages 24-25



Workers united

General secretary John Hannett's comment



I was proud to lead the Usdaw delegation at the TUC's March for the Alternative which brought together more than 250,000 ordinary working people, sending a powerful message to the Tory-led Coalition that their cuts are both unfair and unnecessary.

Usdaw members travelled from all over the country to join the march, many leaving home in the very early hours of the morning and I want to thank them for the solidarity they have shown with the public sector unions.

The march showed the determination of the British public to fight back against the cuts that will hit the poorest and most vulnerable in society. Working people, united in their belief that they should not be forced to bear the brunt of the Government's austerity plans through higher taxes and cuts in benefits and services.

Usdaw will continue to campaign against these cuts that penalise the majority while the very wealthy minority are allowed to get away with paying far less than their fair share.

Budget pain

Chancellor George Osborne reminded everyone how out of touch he and his Tory-led Coalition are with a Budget which continued to heap misery on working people. Cuts in Tax Credits, help for new mothers abolished and the freezing of child benefit will see most of our members' standard of living continue to fall in the coming years. There was nothing in it for the 2.5 million unemployed and in turn this will put pressure on wage settlements as the economy struggles on.

Looking ahead

Usdaw's premier event – the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) – will take place in April and I'm looking forward to meeting and listening to our active reps who have made this union the growing and influential organisation it is. We have a great feeling of camaraderie in our ranks and ADM is a great forum to see that in action. We also have our Membership Week in June which hopefully will see us break through the 400,000 figure for the first time since 1991. All of our reps have a crucial role to play in the coming months and I urge every one of you to join me in making Usdaw the most professional union in the UK and living up to our mission of – **Improving workers' lives – Winning for members.**

Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

“Usdaw will continue to campaign against these cuts that penalise the majority while the very wealthy minority are allowed to get away with paying far less than their fair share”

USDAW

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The first of the union's two Membership Weeks was held in January and *Network* speaks to young active reps doing their bit to make sure Usdaw remains the fastest growing UK union.

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Twenty three activists made up the 2005 Academy intake, then in its third year. You can find out what happened next, and what they thought of their six months' secondment.

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IN BRIEF

■ New site for green reps takes off

The TUC has launched the first UK online network for green union reps.

The website –

www.tuc.org.uk/green_workplaces_network

– allows environmental reps in workplaces across the UK to keep up to date with union and community-based events and training courses, share ideas and best practice, and find out the latest developments on green issues at work.

■ Discounter reports tough trading in 2011

Discount retailer Primark has revealed a 'noticeable' slowing of demand in the UK since the start of 2011. Owner Associated British Foods said Primark performed well before Christmas despite the bad weather.

But January's rise in VAT and soaring cotton prices had helped contribute to the slowdown since then.

■ Unpaid overtime on the rise says TUC

A record 5.26 million people worked unpaid overtime last year – the highest since records began in 1992 – a TUC analysis of official figures has revealed.

The TUC also found that over one in five workers (21 per cent) regularly worked unpaid overtime last year, an increase of 0.7 percentage points since 2009 and the highest proportion since 1997.

Tough economic conditions and rising unemployment, with staff having to pick up new work as well as the work left over by colleagues who have been made redundant, explains the increase says the TUC.

New guidance to cut alcohol sales

UNDERAGE SALES

Usdaw has welcomed new government guidance on spotting counterfeit or false proof of age ID.

The new guidance is designed to make it easier for those selling alcohol to understand the law, know what proof of age ID is acceptable and advises how to spot fake ID. The guidance also provides practical examples of best practice from around the country.

However, Usdaw remains concerned at the numerous forms of proof of age ID that remain acceptable and which can create confusion for both customers and licensees.

The union would like to see a single and voluntary national proof-



of-age card for young people to eradicate potential conflict.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This new guidance is very comprehensive and a welcome addition to the fight against under-age sales of alcohol, but it does itself illustrate the number of proof of age cards that exist.

"We'd like to see the Government introduce a

single and voluntary national entitlement card for young people to show proof of age. This would make it much easier to check a person's age.

"This is an important area for our members and we will continue to make the case that employees should not face prosecution if they make a genuine mistake."

An Usdaw survey released last year revealed that over 75 per cent of shopworkers had experienced problems asking for proof of age ID from customers and that most were worried about facing criminal prosecution or disciplinary action if they made a wrong decision about a sale.

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Jobs boost could follow restructure

CO-OP GROUP CHANGES

The Co-operative Group has announced an overhaul of the management structures in its retail food stores to create a common staffing system across the business that could create up to 1,700 new management jobs.

The Group intends to sweep away the 100 or more different job titles and roles that are the legacy of its numerous mergers and acquisitions of recent years.

In future, every one of the Group's 2,900 food stores will have a store manager and at least one team manager and team leader and there will be additional team managers and leaders depending on the size of the store. All other staff will be called customer team members.



However, because only a handful of stores have a management structure that currently fits the new arrangement, it may not be possible to slot every manager and supervisor into matching roles in their own or a nearby store. As a result, redundancies among a minority of affected staff cannot be ruled out.

National officer Sharon Ainsworth said: "This sensible and long overdue restructure will benefit the business as a whole and will address many of the issues of concern our members have raised in the past about senior staffing levels in some stores.

"However, although the vast majority of staff will see no change to either their job or pay, the restructure will cause uncertainty and worry for many members and unfortunately may even leave some at risk of redundancy.

"Usdaw has been fully consulted on the changes and we have negotiated a process that we believe is both fair and equitable and will protect jobs and earnings. We will continue to represent our members throughout this potentially difficult process and our overriding aim will be to keep the number of redundancies to an absolute minimum."

IN BRIEF

Co-operative push for more members

Usdaw held two Co-operative Food Spotlight Days on 30 and 31 March. A letter was sent out to every Co-operative Group Food employee inviting them to join and/or recruit a friend. The Co-op Group were fully supportive and donated a TV and other prizes for the recruit a friend prize draw.

Record number of young out of work

Youth unemployment rose to a fresh record high in the three months to the end of December, with more than one in five 16 to 24-year-olds out of work after a rise of 66,000 to 965,000, the Office for National Statistics has announced. The UK unemployment rate is now 7.9 per cent, with youth unemployment running at 20.5 per cent.

Struggling JJB appeals to landlords

Retailer JJB Sports has asked the landlords of its struggling shops to agree to a plan to try to prevent it from going into administration. Up to 89 stores could close under the proposed changes to the property portfolio, JJB said. In a statement, the sportswear firm said 43 stores would close over the next year. It will also review the performance of 46 more, which could close if they do not improve by April 2013.

No kidding as medicines rise 20p

The cost of prescriptions in England will rise by 20p to £7.40 per item from 1 April, the Government has said.

Labour victory batters LibDems

Labour won the Barnsley Central by-election in March, while the Lib Dems slipped to sixth in the South Yorkshire seat.

Labour's Dan Jarvis won 14,724 votes in the by-election, extending the Party's majority slightly to 11,771, but the turnout fell to 36.5 per cent, compared with 56.4 per cent at the last general election.

UKIP, the Conservatives, the BNP and an independent all finished ahead of the Lib Dems.

In May last year, Eric Illsley held Barnsley Central with a majority of just over 11,000 and 47 per cent of the vote, with the Liberal Democrats in second place. But the MP resigned his seat after pleading guilty to falsely claiming £14,000 in parliamentary expenses. He was later jailed for a year.

Women in majority

Usdaw celebrated International Women's Day by revealing that more than half of the union's 8,000 shop stewards and 12,000 activists are women – a first for the union.

Usdaw also highlighted some of the recent gains it has made for its women members which include:

- An average pay increase of 2.33 per cent compared to a whole economy average of 1.6 per cent.
- A pay increase of over 20 per cent for young women working in Tesco and Sainsbury's, after the union negotiated the abolition of youth rates in both companies.
- Securing more than £8m in personal injury compensation for around 1,200 women members and more than £1m for 248 women members in employment claims through the union's free legal service.
- Around 300 women members a month returning to learning through one of the many Usdaw organised workplace based learning programmes.



IN BRIEF

■ Food discounters prosper again

Discount grocers Aldi and LIDL enjoyed bumper sales in the three months after Christmas while the big chains struggled. Analysts believe this is down to consumers being extra cautious ahead of the Government's spending cuts, rising inflation and continued job insecurity. The discounters also enjoyed increased sales at the height of the recession in 2008/09.

■ Supermarkets' jobs claim under fire

Sainsbury's and Tesco have been criticised by the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS) for their claim they have created thousands of jobs over the last two years. The ACS cited the two companies' annual reports which showed that the total number of employees at Sainsbury's had fallen by 1,600 since 2009, while the job count at Tesco had risen by a mere 874 over the same period. Both companies maintained they had created thousands of new jobs.

■ High Street under pressure as sales fall

Retail sales fell 0.4 per cent in February against a year ago, according to employers' group the British Retail Consortium. February's fall was the weakest sales performance since last April when like-for-like sales fell by 2.3 per cent due to the difference in timing of the Easter holiday. The group also downgraded its forecast for UK GDP growth in 2011 to 1.4 per cent from a December forecast of 1.9 per cent.

Union will reach out to exploited

VULNERABLE WORKERS CALL

Usdaw is set to launch a groundbreaking e-campaign to engage vulnerable workers in union membership and activity.

The campaign, funded by a government grant, will help Usdaw investigate the plight of vulnerable workers and connect them with the union to protect them from exploitation.

The Government defines a vulnerable worker as **'someone working in an environment where the risk of being denied employment rights is high and who does not have the capacity or means to protect themselves from that abuse'**.

There are an estimated two million vulnerable workers in the UK who may, due to a lack of awareness of their basic rights, be open to exploitation from employers.

Some examples of vulnerable worker groups are young workers who may be taken advantage of due to their age and relative inexperience, and agency workers who may have worse terms and conditions than permanent staff working next to them.



General secretary John Hannett said: "These workers need our support to help enforce their rights. As part of the campaign Usdaw is taking the lead in trialling social media – Facebook, Twitter – to reach out to vulnerable workers, get them into membership and represent them in the workplace.

"It's in our interests and theirs to organise all workers regardless of their background. We want to stop these workers being exploited because if we don't their exploitation will undermine our members' terms and conditions.

"Reps have a key role to play in this campaign and we'll be doing all we can to equip them with the resources and knowledge to make it a success."

■ If you are at ADM, visit the stall for full details.

2m

The number of vulnerable workers in the UK who may be missing out on employment rights

Branch officers on five-day course

The union's bespoke course for newly elected branch officers was held in February with 16 activists making the trip to the national training centre in Warrington for the five-day residential course.

The week is tutored by training officer Jenni Murray and deals with how to run a branch and the local, divisional and national connections between it and central and divisional office.

The group also gets to speak to the general and deputy general secretaries and also hears how the different departments at central office operate. All-in-all the activists are given a comprehensive overview of how Usdaw works.



For more information on the wide range of training opportunities available to you visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/myunion/trainingeducation/coursesavailable.aspx

Closure may cost 800 Tesco jobs

FENNY LOCK FACES AXE

Usdaw entered urgent talks with Tesco in early March after the retailer announced plans to close its National Distribution Centre at Fenny Lock in Milton Keynes putting more than 800 jobs at risk.

The company says the closure is the result of their decision to open a new national grocery distribution centre at the Daventry International Rail Freight Terminal, adjacent to their existing national clothing depot.

Tesco claims the new site will be 60 per cent bigger than Fenny Lock and will allow it to transport a much greater volume of product by rail.

The company plans a phased reduction of activity at Fenny Lock from June this year, with final closure proposed in August or September 2011.



National officer Joanne McGuinness said: "This is absolutely devastating news for our members, their families and for the economy of Milton Keynes. There are entire families affected by this decision and with five people already chasing every vacancy in the town, it really couldn't have come at a worse time.

"During the consultation period with Tesco we will be examining its business case in detail.

"Our number one priority will

be to save jobs and we'll be trying to secure as many opportunities as possible at the new depot in Daventry and at other Tesco sites in the area.

"Tesco has a hardworking and loyal workforce and we will also expect the company to do everything it can to help secure alternative employment for the workforce.

"Usdaw will certainly be doing all we can to represent and support our members through this very difficult and worrying time."

Older workers grow in decade

Double the number of people aged 65 and over are working in the UK compared with a ten years ago, official statistics show.

A growing number of older people are working either full-time or part-time and make up

a rising proportion of the total UK workforce.

The trend is revealed in the Office for National Statistics' data on older workers at the end of 2010. Youth unemployment was at a record high during the same period.

In October to December 2010, there were 270,000 full-time workers in the UK aged over 65. This accounted for 2.7 per cent of the total population in that age group, compared with 106,000 (1.2 per cent) in January to March 2001.

IN BRIEF

2011 Forthcoming events for your diary

April

17 – 20 April
Annual Delegate Meeting – Blackpool

May

14 – 20 May
Adult Learners Week

June

04 – 05 June
North West divisional conference

18 – 19 June
Midlands divisional conference

20 – 26 June
Membership Week

July

02 – 03 July
Southern divisional conference

15 – 17 July
Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival

August

26 – 29 August
Manchester Pride Festival

September

03 – 10 September
First series summer school
www.usdaw.org.uk/events

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In the news

■ **State pension to hit £100 a week mark**

From April 2011 the basic State Pension will top £100 a week for the first time in its history. For a single pensioner claiming a full State Pension, their weekly payment will increase by £4.50 from £97.65 to £102.15 in line with a 4.6 per cent rise in the retail price index.

The means-tested Pension Credit is also set to rise from £132.60 a week to £137.35 a week for a single pensioner. For more information go to: www.direct.gov.uk

■ **Default retirement age to be scrapped**

The Government is going ahead with plans to scrap the default retirement age, which allows employers to compulsorily retire workers once they reach age 65. The last date for employers to give workers notice that they are to be compulsorily retired will be 5 April 2011 and notice can only be given to workers who will be age 65 or older on or before 30 September 2011.

From 1 October 2011 no worker can be compulsorily retired by their employer on the grounds of age.

■ **European court rules on annuities**

The European Court of Justice has ruled that insurance companies will no longer be able to use gender as a factor when calculating premiums and benefits. At the moment insurers will typically award a woman a smaller annuity than they would to a man who is the same age as her – this is because on average women live longer than men and so the annuity will be paid for longer. The new ruling means that this will no longer be allowed for any annuities sold from December 2012.



Usdaw member Barbara Bates tells us why we should petition against the Government's decision to increase women's state pension age



Barbara Bates

CAMPAIGNING WITH USDAW

Usdaw member Barbara Bates is making a stand for all those women who will have to work up to two years longer before they are eligible for the state pension.

Following the Tory-led Coalition's decision to delay the state pension for women who are now aged 56 and 57, Barbara has set up a petition against the changes. "To reach retirement it feels like a mountain I have to climb which keeps getting higher," said Barbara, who works as an administrator for Co-op Funeralcare in County Durham.

"It is so unfair on people like us. We have worked hard all our lives and never asked for anything. Just as we start to see light at the end of the tunnel it is snatched away."

General secretary John Hannett is urging union members to back her campaign. "Most of the women – and men – who will be affected by these proposals have no idea that the Pensions Bill will impact so hard and so soon on their own retirement plans," he said.

"Women in their fifties such as Barbara have already seen a leap in their expected date of retirement as women's State Pension Age is increased up to 65, in line with men's, by 2020.

"Now the Tory-led Coalition has chosen to break its promise not to start to increase women's State Pension Age further before 2020. Men and women in manual jobs find it much harder to continue working later in their lives. Those whose work involves heavy lifting or repetitive movements suffer increasingly from ill health in later life.

"Those who have done manual work all their lives are also likely to have earned less and to have less in pension

savings. So they cannot afford to retire until they can receive their state pension – even if they will struggle to continue in work.

"This broken promise is unfair, unnecessary and unacceptable. Almost five million people will be affected by the Tory-led Coalition's new plans; in particular 500,000 women will now have to work for a year or longer, 33,000 will have to work for two years longer before they can claim their state pension. These women have very little time to prepare for losing over £10,000 of the state pension income that they have worked hard for."

Barbara is also being supported by **unions together**, the campaigning voice of the 15 trade unions that are part of the Labour Party, you can sign her petition at:

www.unionstogether.org.uk/page/signup/handsoff

More information at: www.usdaw.org.uk/brokenpromises



Want to know more about Pensions?

The best way to improve your knowledge and build up your confidence when dealing with pensions is to sign up now to Usdaw's Understanding Pensions Home Study Course.

To find out more and apply visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/adviceresources/pensions/pensionshomestudy.aspx





ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

North Eastern division's **Jenny Bishop** answers our questions on her experiences as a rep at Next

“ADM's like a bug, once you've done it you can't wait to speak again”

FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Next
- **Occupation** Warehouse operative
- **Age** 53
- **Lives** Bradford
- **Married** Yes with two children
- **Union positions** Rep, branch secretary, political rep and disability champion
- **Branch** Yorkshire Next F144
- **Usdaw Activist** Since 1998

MY FAVOURITE...

- **TV programme is...**
Coronation Street
- **I spend my spare time...**
Enjoying caravanning holidays and going to my local church
- **The best moment of my life so far...**
My daughter's wedding



Why did you become an Usdaw rep?

Next would not recognise the union or the staff so we as a group contacted Usdaw. We sent membership forms down the conveyor belt until we got enough membership to be recognised, stand up for ourselves and get better terms and conditions.

What's it like being active?

The best thing is being able to help change working conditions and to be looked upon as an equal. Also going to divisional conferences and ADM to make changes that affect everyone, not just the Next staff.

The downside is that it is time consuming and sometimes a thankless task so you must be committed. But I wouldn't change a thing.

Have you been on any union training courses?

It seems like I've been on all courses known to man and I've enjoyed every one of them. The knowledge is priceless.

Have you been to ADM?

I went last year and supported two propositions. It's like a bug, once you've done it and you can't wait to speak again. The organised events are a great place for networking with other branches and finding out how they work.

What have been your highs and lows?

Meeting Jorge Gamboa from the Columbian TUC at a disability conference was inspirational. He spoke of the troubles he was up against and of how he still had the strength to stand up for his beliefs even after three assassination attempts against him in a period

of five months.

My first disciplinary dismissal was a bit of a low as you wonder if you have done enough.

Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

Yes! I'm definitely more confident and assertive. I'm not afraid of saying my thoughts and I don't feel out of my depth in conversation with my seniors anymore.

And what's surprised you?

How good the training is and how helpful everyone was towards me.

What are the most important issues for your members at present?

The new attendance policy that has just been put in place.

How would you improve Usdaw?

I would like to see Usdaw on Facebook and Twitter. I think this is the way forward and will reach our members quicker and more easily.

What's next for you?

I want to try and push on with my political side and hopefully with the help of Usdaw become a Labour councillor.

The last word...

Without Usdaw I wouldn't have met the wonderful friends I now have. I feel I have a lot to offer to the members and will continue to lobby for the rights of workers and disabled members. I owe a lot of this to my senior rep Delores Leeming as she is so inspiring.

watch this space...

Do you want to volunteer to be Network's next activist in-depth? Email: network@usdaw.org.uk

SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR BENEFITS



Usdaw's award winning Supporting Parents and Carers campaign was used to expose the Tory-led Coalition's hidden cuts to family budgets in March.

Usdaw activists were out in force to alert parents to the tax and benefit changes already imposed by the Government, changes that will start hitting families hard from early April.

"The reduction in Childcare Tax Credit and the freezing of Child Benefit and Working Tax Credit will leave many hard working families hundreds of pounds worse off at a time when family budgets are already being squeezed by rising prices and the increase in VAT," said general secretary John Hannett.

"Our campaign is to shine a light on the biggest shake-up of tax and benefits for over fifty years. These are the Government's hidden cuts because so many people are still in the dark about what the changes will mean for their family's income.

"Most Usdaw members are extremely worried about money and rising prices so it is vital we give them advice and support to understand what the changes will mean for them and their family.

"Labour's package of support for working parents was crucial for many of our members. Unfortunately, that support is now being systematically dismantled. The cuts to welfare spending are massive and working parents on low incomes, disabled people and women are about to feel the brunt, making a complete mockery of the Government's claim that we are 'all in this together'."



1



3

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION...

- 1 Tesco Brookfield Farm, Cheshunt
- 2 Farmers Boy, Morrisons, Bradford
- 3 Whitgift shopping centre, Croydon
- 4 Usdaw members at the Westminster event
- 5 Morrisons, Airdrie
- 6 Warrington town centre
- 7 Sainsbury's, Oldbury
- 8 Tesco Quedgeley, Gloucester
- 9 Usdaw members in Westminster with deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis (first left) and shadow chancellor Ed Balls MP (third from right)



2

“ These cuts will leave many hard working families hundreds of pounds worse off so it's vital Usdaw gives its members advice on what it all means ”



4



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5



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8



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The Usdaw Unisaver is a safe way to save for the future. Starting from just **£10 per month**, you and your family can save tax exempt, and at the end receive a **TAX FREE** payout. It includes Life Cover and no medical is required.

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Over **85,000 members** have used this service and so far received tax refunds in excess of **£2.6million**. Refunds average **£167.94** each!



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The Tax Refund Co. 43-47 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3DG.

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Finance available



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Usdaw and Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) have launched a new service providing debt advice and solutions for all Usdaw members

CCCS provides free and immediate telephone debt advice to individuals and families in times of financial distress. In addition to its unique online counselling service, Debt Remedy, CCCS offers a free telephone counselling service available Monday to Friday.

If you are an individual struggling to repay your debts use the CCCS Debt Remedy online assessment of your financial circumstances: <http://www.cccs.co.uk/usdaw>

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Mon to Fri 8:00am-8:00pm



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Fitness First: www.usdaw.org.uk/fitnessfirst
LA Fitness: www.usdaw.org.uk/lafitness
Nuffield Health: www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield



The main event

Activists at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM), to be held in Blackpool, will have plenty to occupy them as they seek to decide the union's priorities and policies for the next 12 months

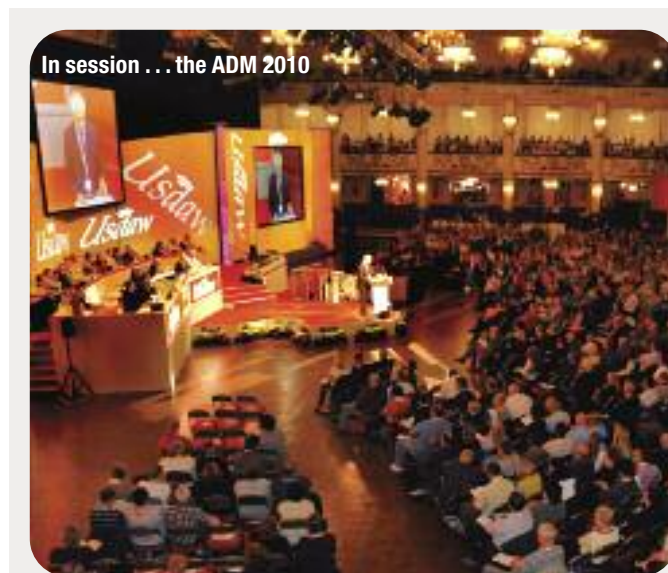
With 105 propositions on the Preliminary Agenda Paper debates will take in everything from wages and working conditions to pensions, health and safety and the NHS.

The ADM will take place at the Winter Gardens, Blackpool from Sunday 17 until Wednesday 20 April and will cover debates on discrimination, equal pay, Sunday and Christmas trading hours, flexible working, education and training, transport, underage sales and the criminal justice system plus much more.

The executive council will also be seeking a small increase in the subscription rates of 4p, 3p and 2p for Scale A, B and C respectively.

"The ADM is all about democracy in action," said general secretary John Hannett (pictured below). "I'm delighted so many branches have taken the time and trouble to submit propositions, which in turn will be subject to amendment by other branches and then will go forward, via the Interim Agenda Paper, to the Final Agenda Paper which governs the debates at ADM.

"Each branch is eligible to send at least one delegate to the ADM and if the branch has sufficient funds, it can also send additional visitors who



“ADM is not only the main event in the union's calendar it is also a unique way for experienced and new reps to meet up, share ideas and forge friendships which often can last a lifetime”

can watch proceedings from the balconies above the main floor of the conference. Being a visitor is a great way of finding out how ADM works in terms of procedures and the timetable. I'd strongly recommend it to our new reps in particular.

"ADM is not only the main event in the union's calendar, it is also a unique way for experienced and new reps to meet up, share ideas and forge friendships which

often can last a lifetime.

"The conference reflects the union's desire to invest in its organising agenda, our Academies and to continue to provide a first-class service to our members. It's the ideal window to see what Usdaw is all about."

If your branch has not made its arrangements for ADM and you are interested in attending speak to your local rep or ring the national helpline on 0845 6060640.



ADM in brief

OTHER EVENTS

Fringe meetings and social evenings will also be held outside of conference hours and include; the equalities and politics meetings, the Civic Reception, the North Eastern Karaoke, the Youth Disco and Welsh Night. Details of these will be available at the conference.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL STATEMENTS

Three executive council statements will be presented to ADM they are; *Usdaw and Labour – Standing Up For Our Members, Organising Against Racism, and Underage Sales*. These statements, along with the Interim Agenda Paper and the Annual Report, were sent out to branches on 28 March.

GUIDE TO ADM

Delegates and visitors are reminded of the union's *Guide to ADM* available from the stationery department or you can download it at: www.usdaw.org.uk/adviceresources

EXHIBITION AREA

In the exhibition area the union's affinity partners and various sections of the union, including transport, youth, legal, equalities and education departments, will have stalls which delegates and visitors can visit before and after conference.

LEARNING DISTRIBUTED

Distribution members are making the most of the many learning opportunities on offer on-site

ON TARGET AT GOOLE

Staff at the Tesco Distribution centre in Goole in Yorkshire are on course to take up new learning opportunities and broaden their skills thanks to the opening of a brand new learning centre earlier this year.

Tesco and Usdaw have been working in partnership over the last

six months along with local learning provider Selby College to provide on-site learning for more than 600 staff at the centre.

The new learning centre is named the Salt and Pepper Spot, after the twin water towers, a well-known local landmark. It is fully equipped with laptops, PCs and separate internet access and will operate as a multi-



The learning team at the Tesco Distribution Centre, Goole



Polish is one of the courses available to learners at Goole

function room offering a full range of IT training including ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence) and computer courses for beginners as well as other classroom based courses.

"It's been a lot of hard work and perseverance by the reps to get the centre off the ground

but we are there now," said learning rep Paul Town

"It's a very exciting time for all of us with our first courses in Maths and English about to start followed by some IT courses, health and well-being and a Polish course.

"Having access to learning and courses

and the ability to develop and learn new things is great for everyone.

"The learning centre gives us as reps the chance to give our members something back and shows the union in a positive way when we are recruiting and trying to retain members."

New learning agreement for DHL in Castleford

DEVELOPING STAFF

Lifelong learning is helping reps to raise the union's profile and increase membership over at the DHL site in Castleford, West Yorkshire.

Ushaw put pen to paper on a new learning agreement in January pushing lifelong learning to the top of the agenda and creating more opportunities for staff development and training.

The site already has a fully operational learning centre which opened in October last

year, and has a full range of IT equipment including PCs and internet access.

With more than 80 courses already up and running, staff can choose to study for a variety of courses including vocational qualifications such as NVQs, Skills For Life and ITQ and Open University as well as more recreational courses such as Spanish, computer skills and creative writing.

"Learning is proving to be very popular indeed," said Union Learning Rep (ULR) Chris West, one of a team of six learning



The learning centre was officially opened by local author Ian Clayton

reps at the site.

"I'm enjoying my role and involvement with lifelong learning. It's very rewarding helping others like myself who

may have the potential but don't realise it."

The ULR team have been working hard to show the benefits of learning to everyone

and raise the profile of the union and the benefits of union membership to staff, particularly the agency workers on site.

"It's been a real team effort," said rep John Bingley. "We worked with management, who were more than willing to offer help and support, and our area organiser and put together a campaign to promote the union through learning at special promotional days and inductions.

"It's going very well indeed and hopefully over the coming months we'll see a significant rise in learners and membership."

Union members get a better deal on royal wedding day

GOVERNMENT IS NO HELP

Many people assumed that on the day of the royal wedding, 29 April 2011 they would be entitled to an additional day's paid leave. However, this may not be the case.

Despite declaring the day as a public holiday, the Tory-led Coalition has not increased the statutory holiday entitlement which would have given staff a legal right to an extra day off.

As a result, employees' rights to additional paid time off will depend on their contract of employment, staff handbooks and workplace agreements.

Usdaw has been urging employers to give all employees an extra day's paid leave. Usdaw has also been making the case that staff

scheduled to work on 29 April should be given the option of taking paid time off and anyone choosing to work should get bank holiday premium pay.

The majority of employers Usdaw has agreements with have announced their plans:

■ **Tesco** – staff contracted to work will be able to have the day off with pay. Any staff who agree to work on the day will receive premium rates of pay.

■ **Morrisons and Sainsbury's** – will treat the day as a normal bank holiday and will follow their usual arrangements.

■ **Co-op Group** – treats the day as a Group 2 public holiday which means that those who work will get single time and a day off in lieu; those who don't work will get a paid day off or an alternative day's holiday.

■ **Shop Direct Group** – will recognise the day as an additional bank holiday for all colleagues, including those who have not got an automatic right to this extra bank holiday.

■ **Booker** – will recognise the day as an additional bank holiday. Normal mid-year bank holiday procedures apply.

■ **HDNL/Yodel, Ikea, Dairy Crest, Argos, Vion** – recognise the day as an additional bank holiday. Normal bank holiday procedures apply.

Usdaw has been able to secure additional time off and premium payments in many Usdaw agreements. While in contrast, many non-union organised workplaces will have no extra paid time off and workers will be expected to work for single time.



NEWS IN BRIEF ● NEWS IN BRIEF

■ Argos under pressure as shoppers stay at home

A drop in sales at Argos has prompted the chain's owner Home Retail Group to lower its profit forecast for the year. The group said it now expected pre-tax profit to be between £250m and £255m. Argos blamed pressures on consumer spending, and the challenging economic environment.

■ Household incomes being squeezed to the max

Private sector pay at UK listed companies has risen at the slowest rate on record, a survey suggests. Earnings rose at an annualised rate of just 0.5 per cent in the three months to February well below Consumer Prices Index inflation, which is currently running at four per cent. Households are currently being subjected to the most prolonged squeeze on real incomes since the 1920s, said one analyst.

■ Economic downturn sees Oddbins on the brink

Struggling off-licence chain Oddbins is set to go into administration after it failed to win approval from its creditors to change its payment terms. In March the company announced it would close almost a third of its stores from 128 to 89 after calling in restructuring specialists to review its strategy and find outside investors. The move reflects a tough period for the UK's independent wine trade, which has seen Threshers owner First Quench Retailing collapse in 2009 and the Unwins chain fold in 2005.

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JOBS, GROWTH AND JUSTICE THE TUC'S ALTERNATIVE

More than 250,000 people joined the TUC's march against the Tory-led Coalition's cuts in London last month in what was the biggest anti-Government demonstration in years.



Trade unionists, community groups and students enjoyed a carnival atmosphere with live bands and entertainment, which culminated with a rally in Hyde Park where general secretary John Hannett was one of a number of trade union leaders to address the marchers. "This march shows the strength of feeling throughout the UK against these cuts which affect us all," said John.

"There is an alternative and we all share a determination to fight the cuts. Today is a massive show of solidarity. While Usdaw members work in the private sector we want to show our support to the public sector workers who will bear the brunt of the cuts.

"I remember the recessions of the '80s and '90s when there was no hope and mass unemployment. We won't let that happen again. There is no going back to poverty pay and cuts in welfare.

"The politicians at the top of the Government have no idea of the problems we face. We have to win the arguments locally and nationally and I hope this march is the beginning of the fightback.

"Many thanks to all of the Usdaw members who made the effort to join the march today."



Brendan Barber

TUC GENERAL SECRETARY

“The NHS stands for something different – care, compassion, social solidarity – and let us pledge today to do everything in our power to fight to defend it. We will not let the Tory-led Coalition destroy it. Our NHS is not for sale.

And while the Government is planning this destruction on such a massive scale, down the road in the City they're paying themselves £7 billion in bonuses. And ministers

have the nerve to tell us we are all in this together.

These brutal cuts are going to hammer the crucial services that bind our communities together. And they're going to hit the poorest and the most vulnerable hardest. The Government claims there is no alternative. But there is. Let's keep people in work and get our economy growing. Let's tackle the tax cheats. And let's have a Robin Hood Tax so the banks pay us back for the mess they caused.



JUSTICE – LIVE

“ While Usdaw members work in the private sector we want to show our support to the public sector workers who will bear the brunt of the cuts. Today is a massive show of solidarity ”



Ed Milliband

LABOUR PARTY LEADER

“ Our struggle is to fight to preserve, protect and defend the best of the services we cherish because they represent the best of the country we love. ”

This march is the big society united against what Cameron’s government is doing to our country. We stand today not as the minority, but as the voice of the mainstream majority in this country. ”

YOUNG ACTIVISTS

Network talks to young Usdaw reps Ross Haslett, David Owens, Shawney Hind and Sarah Ch...

With more than 83,000 members aged 26 and below Usdaw has one of the biggest youth sections in the TUC, and with youth unemployment rocketing there's never been a better time for young workers to join the union and stay protected at work. Usdaw also has more than 1,100 union reps aged 26 and below who do a fantastic job recruiting and supporting other young workers, Network caught up with four young reps to see how they get the union message across.

Ross Haslett

Lifelong learning is helping 25 year-old Union Learning Rep (ULR) Ross Haslett give members new skills, improve their job prospects and raise the profile of the union.

"I've been a member for five years and was never really interested in getting involved with the union until I found out about the Checkout Learning campaign and the opportunities available," said Ross, a sales assistant at the Asda store in Bangor, Northern Ireland.

"I've been a learning rep for a year and I enjoy helping and encouraging my colleagues to take up a course and return to learning.

"At the moment we're working on getting a range of courses up and running in English, maths, IT, Spanish and sign language.

"It's a good, positive initiative and gets people interested to find out a bit more. They are surprised to find out it's a union campaign and want to find out what's available which then makes them more curious about what other benefits they get from the union.

"We held a very successful campaign day in-store during Membership Week and signed up new members and a new ULR."

David Owens

Cleaner David Owens already has seven years membership having joined as a 16 year-old in 2004 when he worked for Kwik Save.

The 23 year-old has been a rep for two years. "When I'm talking to people I tell them I see the union as a necessity and money well spent," he said.

"When I left school and started work in Sunderland I had no hesitation in joining.

"I'm working for a cleaning company now and I pay my subs by direct debit.

"When people tell me they can't afford to join I tell them they can't afford not to. Young workers in particular are vulnerable at the best of times but more so now. It's a very uncertain time for young workers but what is certain is that the union will always help and support every member.

"I can speak from personal experience. I was suspended from work and facing a disciplinary, although I knew I wasn't in the wrong. However, if I didn't have union backing I would have certainly lost my job. We won and no further action was taken.

"I'm involved in my divisional and the national youth committee and also the



Shawney Hind (second from left) and David Owens (third from right) at the National Youth Weekend in November 2010

STEPS IN ACTION

Channon about how they go about raising union awareness among today's young workers



Sarah Channon promoting Checkout Learning with colleagues in ASDA, Bangor, Northern Ireland



FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/
GETACTIVE

“As a rep you have to keep getting the message across and continuously highlight all the benefits of being in the union on a regular basis”



Sarah Channon signs up her latest recruit

divisional political committee.

“I’ve also joined the Labour Party and I’m standing as a Labour candidate in the local elections in May against a sitting Tory councillor, wish me luck.”

Shawney Hind

Weekend awareness campaigns aimed at young workers pay dividends for 20 year-old Shawney Hind at her Tesco store in Hamilton in Leicester.

“I’ve been a rep for three years and I enjoy the responsibility,” said Shawney, a dot.com personal shopper.

“Mainly I’m a student studying for a degree at university and I work part-time on a Saturday and Sunday.

“I enjoy my role with the union and raising awareness with other workers so they can also, like me, see the real benefits of joining.

“Weekends are good as there are a lot of young workers. I always make sure my noticeboard is up-to-date with the latest union news and advice.

“I highlight the union website where you can visit at any time for help and download union literature.

“It’s amazing what a difference it makes when you update information on a regular basis, people are interested, they take notice and stop and read it and come to you to find out more.

“My skills and knowledge are growing all the time. I’ve had excellent training from Usdaw and I’ve been to a lot of weekend events including summer school and the national youth weekend.

“I’d like to put my skills to the test outside my own workplace in the future and try some time as a stand-down rep.”

Sarah Channon

Young workers are more likely to be treated unfairly because of their inexperience and lack of knowledge about their workplace rights says 24 year-old Sarah Channon

“I think it’s extremely important that young people are part of a trade union,” said Sarah, who lives in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland.

“Simply because it’s generally the under-25s who tend to get taken advantage of. They don’t know their rights and are easily intimidated. But as a union

member they are fully protected.”

Sarah started working for the Co-op at 16, joined the union at 19 and took on the role of shop steward two years later. In 2010 she was elected branch secretary and she is also vice-chair of the Western Isles Trades Union Council.

“Membership in my store stands at just over 60 per cent at the moment and about a third are under 30.

“Students are difficult to recruit as a lot of them only work the holidays and they don’t think they’ll stay.

“As a rep you have to keep getting the message across and continuously highlight all the benefits of being in the union on a regular basis. For example reminding people about the benefits of Legal Plus and FirstCall Usdaw.

“We also hold an event whenever the chance comes up, whether it’s Freedom From Fear or the Supporting Parents and Carers Claim It campaigns, there’s always a lot of interest.

“You have to remind people that Usdaw campaigns on many issues especially to improve the rights and pay of young workers.”

CAMPAIGNS HOLD RECRUITMENT KEY

Young Tesco rep Gemma Stolweather talks up all of Usdaw's campaigns to encourage colleagues to join so they can reap the security and many benefits of union membership

Tesco Express rep Gemma Stolweather had her first taste of stand-down during January's Membership Week. After signing up 36 new members she is very keen to get out and give it another go.

"I set myself quite a tough target of 50 and although I just fell short of this I have to say I was



very happy with my overall tally and the whole experience of stand-down," said the 24 year-old who works at the Dixons Bank store in Middlesbrough.

"I find it very easy to talk to people about the union because it's something I really believe in so all I have to be is honest.

"It gives me a great feeling of achievement going into other stores telling potential members about the benefits of joining and seeing them sign up.

"You get a lot for your money from Usdaw not just a wide range of benefits and support at work, but also out of work as well as help for your family.

"Things like FirstCall and Legal Plus and also the Freedom From Fear and Parents and Carers campaigns, all the things that are good about the union.

It gives you a real sense of satisfaction when they realise joining is the right thing to do.

"On the other hand you get people who say 'why should I join? Or 'we never had a union in my last job so I don't need one' or 'I can't afford to

join'.

"So I say to them 'can you afford to lose your job?'

'What if you are blamed for something that's not your fault?' 'If you are not in the union who will help save your job?' And I remind them they can't afford not to join."



Gemma signs up David Sharpe and Nancy Allday two of her in-store colleagues

“The union is something I really believe in and watching people sign up is a great feeling”

IN NUMBERS

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 19 MARCH 2011

South Wales & Western	46,363
Eastern	57,677
Midlands	53,992
North Eastern	54,479
Scottish	43,105
Southern	53,700
North West	90,043
TOTAL	399,359

ACADEMY REWARD FOR NEWCOMER REP CHRIS

Morrison's rep Chris Crawley has already seen his store membership increase and now he's preparing to get organised further afield as part of this year's intake of Usdaw's Academy1

It's fast forward for Morrison's rep Chris Crawley as he prepares to put his skills to the test and spend six months with Usdaw's elite Organising Academy from May.

Even though Chris has only been a rep since August last year he has shown a real flair for recruitment and has increased membership at his store in Doncaster in South Yorkshire by almost ten per cent.

"I'm really enjoying my role as a rep, I get a lot of satisfaction out of helping people. It's a job well worth doing," said Chris, 24, who has worked for Morrison's for almost nine years.

"It's great to see membership growing especially when it's mostly down to word of mouth. Once people have heard I've helped get a positive result for one of their colleagues they approach me to sign up.

"Attitudes are changing, both with staff and management and that's a great boost to everyone's morale.

"There's lots to take on board and I'm learning all the time. I did my health and safety rep's three-day training course with Usdaw

and I've been carrying out inspections since. I'm delighted to say there's been a noticeable reduction in accidents already.

"I want to keep progressing with the union so I can continue to make a difference and support my colleagues. I also want to encourage other workers that they too need to join the union.

"I'm excited about the Academy because I'll be working in different workplaces and thrown into situations I've never been in before and for me that's the best way to learn. I can't wait to get started."

“I enjoy being a rep and get a lot of satisfaction out of helping people”



You can keep up-to-date with all recruitment and organising info at www.usdaw.org.uk/myunion

Don't forget Membership Week 20 – 26 June 2011

For more information on what you can do visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/membershipweek



HOW DO YOU DO IT?

Usdaw wants to share the best advice reps have for their colleagues in other workplaces and wants to know what works for you and your team of activists.

Let *Network* know your top tips for:

- Recruiting
- Organising
- Getting members involved
- Running a branch
- Representing members
- Setting up a campaign day event
- Investigating health and safety incidents

We'll feature the best ones in the next issue so get writing or email: network@usdaw.org.uk

WHAT HAPPENS AF

The union's very own Academy has put many activists on the road to a career with Usdaw. Six ye



Twenty-three reps made up the 2005 Organising Academy, then in its third year, when they signed up for six months secondment with the union.

Six years on five are now full-time officials with Usdaw, one is an official with another union, ten are still Usdaw activists, one is now working where Usdaw is not recognised, one is still in membership and five have left the union.

Declan Byrne, 47, was appointed area organiser at the Warrington office in 2009. The former Parcelnet Logistics driver said: "The Academy gave me the opportunity to organise in the retail sector. It was challenging and rewarding and developed and enhanced the skills I already had. The experience played a significant part in my successful application to become an area organiser."

Former Sainsbury's rep **Adrian Collins, 50**, was

appointed an area organiser almost immediately after he completed his stint on the Academy. "I really enjoyed it. It was a fabulous experience and gave me an insight into what the union was doing across the UK.

"I soon realised the more you put into it the more you get out. I was lucky a vacancy came up in my area and I got the job based at the Bristol office. I'm still in touch with many of the lovely people I met on the Academy."

Forty-five year-old **Tracey Low** was appointed area organiser at the Waltham Cross office in 2007. She said: "When I left the Academy I returned to my workplace, Tesco Kesgrave in Ipswich, and enjoyed a long period of stand-down, which like the Academy was a great experience.

"I enjoyed my time on the Academy, I met so many different people from all walks of life. It boosted my confidence and changed my

FTER THE ACADEMY

ars on five of the 2005 intake are now area organisers, *Network* caught up with the class of 2005



1. Declan Byrne
2. David Seaber
3. David Dawson
4. John Yeo
5. Andy Hearn
6. Peter Millward
7. Kieron Murphy
8. Adrian Collins
9. Grant Cathcart
10. Mark Ellis
11. Sandra Cooper
12. Brett Crane
13. Ronnie Thompson
14. Tracey Low
15. Heidi Trowers
16. Mary Harker
17. Carole Hall
18. Amanda Burgess
19. Kate Hill
20. Sarah France
21. Steve Ainscow
22. Anthony Andrews
23. Mark Thomas

Academy
class of
2005

life. I'd say to anyone who is considering applying, just do it."

Former Sainsbury's distribution worker **Kieron Murphy**, 50, was appointed area organiser at the London office in 2007 and transferred to the Morden Office last year.

While his Academy colleague Tesco warehouse worker **Andy Hearn**, 37, joined the staff at the Waltham Cross office in March last year when he was

appointed area organiser. **This is what the ten Academy trainees who are still activists had to say:**

"The Academy was a big learning curve and has helped me in many ways," said Twinings convenor **Peter Millward**, 45, from Andover in Hampshire.

"It was great for my personal development," added **Steve Ainscow**, 51, who works for Shop Direct in Bolton, Greater Manchester.

Warehouseman **John Yeo**

The Academy 2005 In Numbers

5	10	1	2	5
work for Usdaw	are still activists	works for another union	are still members	have left the union

didn't get through the first time he applied but he wasn't put off and was successful in 2005. He said: "Working in retail was a great experience and coming from a distribution background it was a massive culture change."

"It was a brilliant experience, I was a different person and much better organised when I returned to work," said 47 year-old **Carole Hall** who works for Tesco, Newtonabbey in Northern Ireland. Carole also completed Academy2 last year.

"It's a great experience for everyone and don't be put off if you don't drive," said Morrisons **Mary Harker**, 56, from County Durham. "I planned ahead and got myself around on foot and public transport and recruited more than 700 new members, I was very proud of myself."

Kate Hill (Bate), 48, from Manchester is still very active as a Tesco rep and branch secretary, she said: "It taught me how to deal with different situations and not to be afraid to ask questions. I'm glad I did it and it's great to see my other colleagues progress, especially Declan who's now my area organiser."

Warehouseman **Mark Ellis** returned to his workplace Capper & Co in Talbot Green in Wales and has remained very active. "I really grew. I came away a different person and determined to remain active. I'm a rep,

branch secretary and I've since done time as a stand-down rep."

Former Safeway worker **Brett Crane**, 46, from Tiverton in Devon is now working for Nuffield Health Group but is still a very active Usdaw member as branch secretary both divisionally and nationally. "The Academy was a brilliant experience for me and I made a lot of good friends."

Heidi Trowers, 44, is an activist at her Tesco store in Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

Grant Cathcart works for the Milk Link cheese packing plant in Oswestry. He is still very active and was the North West division's health & safety rep nomination for the 2010 Organising Awards. "The Academy showed me just how big and professional the union is. It was a real-eye opener."

Former Co-op worker **Sarah France**, 29, went on to work for the Community trade union.

Amanda Burgess, 37, is still an Usdaw member, although not active, and now works for Premier, a local store in Moffat, Dumfriesshire.

Former Exel worker **Mark Thomas**, 32, now works for an IT Company, he said: "I'll remember the Academy and the people I met for the rest of my days. Thank you Usdaw for the opportunity."

Network was unable to contact **David Dawson** who is still in membership, while **David Seaber**, **Sandra Cooper**, **Anthony Andrews**, and **Ronnie Thompson** have all left the union.

THE SNP HAS FAILED PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND

Voters in Scotland and Wales go to the polls in May and Labour is looking to make big gains



Iain Gray, left, with Scottish divisional officer Lawrence Wason

“Now the Tories are back, Scotland needs a government that will fight for what really matters. Labour will make sure you don't pay the price of Tory cuts.”

**Iain Gray,
Scottish Labour Leader**

Usdaw is urging its members to support the Labour Party candidates in the forthcoming elections in Scotland.

General secretary John Hannett said: “This is a very important election for Usdaw members, the result will make a real difference to our members' lives.

“Labour listened to our members when they were in Government and the Labour MSPs in Holyrood support all our campaigns including Freedom From Fear, Parents

and Carers and Protect Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

“Unfortunately the same cannot be said of the SNP. As soon as they came into power they scrapped the proposed ban on large stores opening on January 1st.

“Just last December the SNP let us down again by not backing an excellent proposal that would have helped protect workers from violent assault.

“We are a campaigning union that delivers for our

members. If, like me, you want to see our elected representatives standing up for working people then you only have one choice at this election, to vote Labour.”

Labour has compiled a list of the 100 promises that the SNP made to Scotland at the last election but they haven't delivered on. To see the full list please visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/brokenpromises

**VOTE
LABOUR
ON 5 MAY**

IF ELECTED LABOUR WILL

- Guarantee apprenticeships for qualified youngsters and a real job opportunity for those unemployed more than six months.
- Jail knife-carrying criminals and put victims first.
- Freeze council tax for two years, helping families in tough times.
- Halve cancer waiting times and end the postcode lottery for elderly care.
- Put literacy teachers in classrooms and have no price tag on university education.

Labour offers to protect Wales from Coalition cuts

Electors in Wales can give the Labour Party the majority it needs to protect its citizens from the worst of the Tory-led Coalition cuts when they cast their vote on May 5.

Sixty seats are up for grabs and at present Labour holds 26 of these made up of 24 constituency Assembly Members (AM) and two regional AMs. (More at: www.welshlabour.org.uk)

Labour in Wales will help working people...

- 500 extra Community Support Officers to help keep us safe at work and at home
- Support for 4,000 jobs fund placements a year to combat long-term and youth unemployment and extend apprenticeships

- Offering annual health checks to over-50s
- Making it easier to see a GP – ensuring surgeries open evenings and Saturday mornings

...and our families

- Keeping the free bus passes for the over-60s, disabled people and their carers
- Keeping free school breakfasts, school milk for the under-7s and increasing education funding
- Keeping Education Maintenance Allowances to help young people in low income households go to college

In the face of Tory and Lib Dem cuts

- Welsh Tories want to scrap free school breakfasts and cut 20 per cent from



education funding

- The Tories and Lib Dems axed Labour's Future Jobs Fund that was giving 11,000 young people in Wales a vital first step into work
- Cuts to police funding from Westminster will mean 1,600 fewer police and support staff – undermining the fight against crime in Wales
- NHS spending cuts across the UK mean Primary Care Trusts in Wales will have to cut services and staff – 1,600 jobs will go in one Primary Care Trust alone
- Cuts to tax credits, benefits and pensions and the VAT hike will make ordinary working people in Wales worse off

Budget strips families of much needed cash help

Chancellor George Osborne offered little help or hope to the majority of hard-working voters

Usdaw has accused the Tory-led Coalition of delivering a budget for misery and despair that will make it harder and harder for low income families to make ends meet.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Usdaw members are facing the biggest squeeze on their family incomes for nearly twenty years and this Budget will do absolutely nothing to alleviate their money worries or offer them hope of some future respite.

"The changes to tax credits and benefits announced last year will start to hit our members hard from April this year and giving a few pennies back next year is scant

compensation for the many pounds of support the Government is taking away from low income families now. The Government's refusal to change course means making ends meet is just going to get harder and harder.

"The increase in personal tax allowance is more than wiped out by the freeze of Working Tax Credit and the increase in Child Tax Credit is wiped out by the freeze of Child Benefit. The Chancellor peddles the myth that 'we are all in this together' even while trumpeting the temporary nature of the 50p top rate of tax. Meanwhile, the marginal tax rate for families on tax credits is going to hit 73 per cent this April and will rise to

THE TORY-LED COALITION HAS:

- Abolished the Child Trust Fund worth £250
- Increased VAT permanently to 20 per cent
- Frozen child benefit for three years
- Abolished Tax Credits for babies worth £545
- Frozen Working Tax Credit for three years
- Cut the Sure Start Maternity Grant of £500
- Abolished the Health in Pregnancy Grant worth £190

76 per cent in 2013 when they are put onto Universal Credit.

"Despite all this pain, the chancellor admitted that the prospects for jobs and growth are continuing to worsen. Instead of a budget for jobs and growth, the Tory-led

Coalition has delivered a budget for misery and despair. Hard-working families will lose hundreds of pounds over the coming two years."

As Labour leader Ed Milliband said: "The Budget is hurting but it isn't working."



Lesley Marsden had her first baby, Taliesin, last year and has since returned to work.

“ I think it's disgraceful the way the Government is cutting support to new mums such as the Health in Pregnancy Grant which was a real help. I relied on it to help

buy a cot and pushchair. Luckily Taliesin just received the £250 Child Trust Fund just before the Government cut and then abolished it. I feel sorry for mums-to-be who'll miss out. ”

Tania Lambert, is a single mum to 12 year-old Emma.

“ I'm really worried about the freeze in Child Benefit and changes to Tax Credits. As a single parent I rely on in-work benefits to make ends meet – they're a real necessity. Just like hundreds of thousands of working parents, I'm really beginning to feel the squeeze. ”



Yvette Roberts-Booth and husband Leonard's son Kai was born last year.

“ Having a baby and raising a family costs a lot and I don't think it's fair that working parents are paying the price for reducing the deficit. Now I wonder how we'll survive financially. ”



Maureen Morgan, is a single parent to son, Corey, aged 11.

“ I'm worried about the future. Freezing Child Benefit is a big concern. I stand to lose £150 over the next three years and that's a lot of money for me. I use it to buy important things for my son. I really don't think cutting benefits for those that can least afford it is the right way to tackle the country's debt. ”



NEW APPOINTMENTS

Jamie Gull and Maryann Matthews have joined the staff as area organisers in London and Kegworth respectively while Plymouth area organiser Nigel Barber is planning his retirement

Former Co-op Retail Logistics worker Jamie Gull was appointed area organiser at the London office in December last year.

Jamie joined the union in 2006 and was elected shop steward in 2007 at the Harlow depot. He became a union learning rep the following year and spent six months seconded to the union as part of the 2008 Academy1 intake. In 2009 he did the same with Academy2. He also took part in one of the Westminster events for the Supporting Parents and Carers campaign.

"My feet have hardly touched the ground since I joined the union," said Jamie, 33. "I'm really excited about my new role and I'm enjoying getting stuck into the new challenge."

"After only a few weeks in the job it soon became clear how lucky I was to have inherited some really



talented and keen activists.

"I've enjoyed working with them so far and I'm looking forward to supporting and developing them in their roles."

"All my colleagues have been incredibly supportive and made me feel very welcome. I want to learn as much as I can."

"When I look around it's easy to see why the union has been so successful over recent years."

Midlands' rep Maryann Matthews was appointed area organiser at the Kegworth office in June last year.

The 43 year-old joined the union in 2000 when she worked as a sales advisor for Midlands Co-op Society in Leicester. She soon became active in her division as a rep and spent time as a stand-down rep and went on the union's prestigious Academy1 in 2006 and Academy2 in 2008. She also served as a divisional councillor and branch secretary.

"My experience with the union especially with the Academies, and as the division's lifelong learning project worker, has helped me grow in confidence," she said.

"The job is everything I thought it would be and more. Usdaw is in my heart and I feel very satisfied when I come home from a day's work."



"Being an area organiser is probably the best job I could have."

"Everyone in the division is supportive and I couldn't wish for a better group of work colleagues."

"I would like to thank Usdaw for giving me the opportunity. Without all the training I wouldn't be the person I am today doing the job that I love."

Nigel Barber set to retire

South Wales and Western division's area organiser Nigel Barber will retire in early May after more than 28 years service with the union and 37 years membership.

Nigel was appointed in 1982 and worked from the Cardiff office until January 1983 when he moved to Plymouth taking him closer to his Cornish roots.

He joined Usdaw in 1974 when he worked as a storeman for the old Milk Marketing Board. He went on to be branch secretary of Cornwall Milk and Private Trade, and he was also secretary of Cornwall Federation.

"I can't help thinking that things have come full circle," said Nigel, 60. "When I was appointed, the Tory government was cutting spending and overseeing closures and redundancies. Now we have a new Coalition government doing exactly the same."

"However, our focus back then was on membership retention whereas now it's about membership growth."

"I have been a magistrate for 25 years and I will continue with this and I'll also



be involved with the appointment of new magistrates.

"I am also going to mix my love of both rugby, I'm secretary of one of the local adult leagues, and travel and go to New Zealand for the Rugby World Cup in October with three friends who have also recently retired."

"I don't intend to be actively involved with Usdaw after my retirement, but I will continue to support my wife, executive council member Barbara Wilson, in her role, so I am sure I will regularly meet old friends and colleagues."

General secretary John Hannett said: "Nigel has been a very loyal and conscientious organiser for almost 30 years and, on behalf of the executive council, I want to thank him for that service and wish him all the very best for his retirement. He deserves it."

CUTTING CONCERN

A range of issues were on the agenda at this year's TUC Women's Conference, including maternity rights, breast cancer and how the Government's cuts will hit women the hardest

Government cuts to jobs, services and the welfare state dominated the agenda of the

TUC Women's Conference, held in Eastbourne in March.

This was the first women's conference to be held under a Tory-led government since 1996 and there were strong concerns about the impact of the cuts on women.

Research shows that lone parents and single pensioners will suffer most from the cuts and the majority of these are women.

The range of issues discussed at the conference reflects the many challenges there are in winning equality for women workers. Violence against women, the need for women to be more visible in unions, maternity rights, breast cancer and reaching out to young women were all on the agenda.

Women need the support of unions now more than ever but they will only join if they think unions are taking up the issues that they care about.

Usdaw's delegation of 11 women, made up of lay members and officials, ensured the voice of our



Usdaw's delegation spoke up for women members on a variety of topical issues

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■ equalities@usdaw.org.uk ■ www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities

women members was heard in most of the conference debates. Our delegates made passionate speeches in support of the NHS, stronger maternity rights, decent pay, the need for the National Minimum Wage and support for breast cancer survivors.

Usdaw member Jacqui Thurgood went to the

conference for the first time. "I really enjoyed it and was surprised how many different unions were there. It was good to see so many young women and watch them getting involved and speaking out. I would definitely encourage other women to put their names forward."



First time delegate Jacqui Thurgood (first left) gets involved

IN BRIEF

■ Updated leaflets

Many of our most popular leaflets are being updated following the introduction of the Equality Act. This includes Supporting Disabled Members and the ever popular Maternity Rights Pack. The pack includes a brand new leaflet on maternity rights for agency workers. Updates will be on the equality stand at ADM.

■ Email newsletter

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has a new monthly email newsletter you can sign up for. It has up to date news on equality, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, transgender and human rights. Go to: www.equalityhumanrights.com and click on the link to sign up.

IN BRIEF

■ Asbestos law in UK is not up to standard

UK asbestos law derived from EU legislation is not up to standard and must be amended according to the European Commission (EC). The EC has ruled that the UK misinterpreted requirements on 'sporadic and low intensity exposure to asbestos' to justify the exclusion of considerable amounts of asbestos work from asbestos licensing, health assessments and exposure recording requirements in the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. When the law was introduced TUC representatives on the Health and Safety Commission argued that the UK law was inadequate but they were over-ruled.

■ Online risk assessment seriously flawed

Usdaw has condemned the proposed online risk assessment for shops saying the whole concept is seriously flawed. The online assessment:

www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/risk-assessment/shop.htm is a result of Lord Young's review of health and safety.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This attempt to develop an online assessment tool for so called 'small, low risk shops' reduces safety to a simple 'one size fits all' box-ticking exercise. By giving the impression that spending 20 minutes going through the online questions an employer will have met their legal obligation to do a risk assessment, the HSE could end up encouraging a dangerously complacent approach to health and safety management."

Copies of Usdaw's detailed response are available from the health and safety section at central office.

Campaign support

Freedom From Fear wins widespread backing from industry

The union's leading role in preventing violence and abuse in the workplace was further strengthened when it held its second Freedom From Fear summit in March.

The event, held in Manchester, brought together senior managers from the larger employers, and representatives from the British Retail Consortium (BRC), the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Home Office, the HSE and local authorities. Minister for crime prevention at the home office James Brokenshire MP was one of the main speakers.

General secretary John Hannett thanked everyone for their commitment and support for Usdaw's campaign. "Our positive and constructive approach has been very important in making the campaign a success. Similarly our audit of good practice

among the larger employers will also improve safety for our members."

The minister made clear his continued personal support for Usdaw's Freedom from Fear campaign. "Although the Government is changing the approach to crime – with the introduction of locally-elected Police and Crime Commissioners and changes to anti-social rules – I am keen to keep the National Retail Crime Strategy group going," he said.

However, it was clear that the Government would not be issuing edicts to tell police forces and local authorities what to do. Retailers and their staff would need to speak up at the local level to make sure that their concerns are heeded.

Health and safety officer Doug Russell said: "While the number of serious assaults on shopworkers have

been dropping since the campaign was launched, we all agreed that there is no room for complacency. The economic downturn and the effects of funding cuts on the police and on local authorities are seen as serious threats."

Since last year's summit important progress has been made. The BRC has now set up its own working party on prevention of violence to staff and is working with Usdaw on best practice guidance. It is also using Usdaw's audit tool with its other members and is setting up a website with the Association of Convenience Stores.

The meeting agreed on the need to work on the under-reporting problem, ensuring that local staff are consulted regularly on store risk assessments and that there is effective national consultation on the issues as well.



Freedom From Fear Summit . . . (l-r) Doug Russell, Kate O'Neill, James Brokenshire MP and John Hannett

Government curbs slips and trips campaign

BEWARE COMMON INJURY

Latest figures from the HSE show that slips and trips are still one of the highest causes of injury in the workplace.

In 2008/9 they caused nearly 24,000 over-three-day injuries and over 10,000 major injuries. According to the HSE, slips and trips cause a third of all

reported injuries and kill two people every year.

Despite the suffering caused to victims and the serious costs to business from these incidents, promotion of the HSE's award winning Shattered Lives campaign – www.hse.gov.uk/shatteredlives/index.htm – is hampered by the current Government's

restrictions on campaigning by government bodies.

Slips and trips are a high risk for Usdaw members in many sectors like retail, distribution and food manufacturing. Health and safety reps can use Usdaw's *Slips and Trips Risk Mapping Tool* to help reduce the number of injuries to our members.

Safety profile critical as cuts start to take hold

Usdaw wants its reps to lobby their local councillors on international Workers' Memorial Day (WMD) on 28 April to ensure safety is not a victim of the Tory-led Coalition's cuts.

According to the International TUC: **On 28 April 2011 trade unions will be highlighting the crucial role played by trade unions, strong regulation and effective enforcement in securing safer workplaces.**

In the UK the TUC will be using the day to campaign against the cuts in HSE and local authority funding and enforcement activity.

Usdaw is issuing a leaflet with information about the day and advice to members on how to lobby their local councillors on health and safety enforcement.

For most Usdaw members, it is not the HSE that enforces health and safety but the Local Authority. Shops, offices and warehouses are covered by Local Authority inspectors (usually based in the Environmental Health Department).

While the HSE covers

884,000 workplaces, Local Authorities deal with more than 1.1m workplaces.

Local authorities have a lot of competing priorities and elected officials will usually try to protect those that their electorate raise with them most often, such as education or housing.

Because health and safety only becomes an issue when things go wrong, most councillors do not see it as a problem, so are less likely to fight to retain the current level of inspection and enforcement.

There is clear evidence that resources for health and safety enforcement are being lost as a result of public spending cuts.

"Reps have to make it clear to their councillors that health and safety is an important issue for them," said general secretary John Hannett.

"When you contact them ask what their council is doing to meet its duty to enforce health and safety. How many inspectors do they have? Are they running any inspection campaigns – e.g. on violence to staff? Do their inspectors contact union health and safety reps when they do inspections?"

Workers under threat

REPORTING RULES RISK

An HSE consultation on proposals to reduce injury reporting requirements on firms 'makes no sense' and only considers the cost implications for business, not the impact on injured workers and safety, the TUC has claimed.

The proposal is to change the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) so that employers would only have to report injuries that result in over seven days off work instead of the

current three days. The TUC has further concerns that the proposal could be unlawful under both EU and UK law. Responses must be submitted before 29 April. A copy of the proposal can be seen at:

www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/cd233.htm

Usdaw has produced a new guidance note on the accident reporting rules under RIDDOR. It includes a simple checklist on what reps should do when a member is injured at work. Download it at:

www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety

Spotlight on Jane Pakes

Employer: Tesco, Dunstable, Bedfordshire

Job: Clothing warehouse assistant

Branch: Home Counties Tesco Retail No.2 C48

Union: Health & safety rep for two years

Joined: 2002

Age: 28

Married: To Richard for eight years and we have two boys, William aged nine and Alfie aged seven.

My job involves....

working in the clothing warehouse where

I strip the delivery and prep it ready to go on the shop floor and also prepare sale items and bag any waste. And if needed I cover the shopfloor tidying stock and hanging returns. I've worked for Tesco for 12 years, five years in my current job

I'm a health and safety rep.... because I'm very interested in health and safety and we didn't have a store rep. I wanted to change people's attitudes and the culture towards safety in my store so members would feel safe at work.

My role..... has made me more confident in investigating and dealing with issues when correct procedures are not followed. My union training along with my experiences at store level means I'm learning all the time about health and safety and how to deal with issues correctly.

Our safety committee.... should be up and running very soon as we now have another rep and she's doing her training. At the moment I do inspections and brief the shop stewards at our in-house meetings.

What progress have you made? It was hard at first. We hadn't had a rep for a while and people didn't want to approach management about safety issues. We've come a long way over the last two years and things are changing. Members know they can come to me and raise issues and they know I will follow them through.

What does the future hold? If the

Government keeps going the way it is and companies have to make cuts to save money one of the first

things I think will be cut is health and safety. Staff will be asked to do more without proper training, faulty machinery won't be replaced and buildings won't be repaired, all to save money but the price will be more accidents for the staff.



Jane Pakes at the Organising Awards night in January

Contact for health and safety information

Email Doug Russell on healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk

or visit the website: www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety

£50 UP FOR GRABS!
Write to the editor of *Network* and you could win £50 if your letter is chosen as the star letter. This issue's winner is **Ellen Jane Shaw**

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

Network Editor, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road,
Manchester M14 6LJ

Email: network@usdaw.org.uk



PRESENTATION

Spain comes to Tesco Preston



Members of staff at **Tesco, Preston** were overjoyed to be presented with certificates last September for completing a Spanish course held in store – the first of its kind at Tesco, Preston.

The union learning reps present at the presentation were Maria Sterling and Linda Norman. The course was provided by Knowsley Council and Family and Community Learning.

JO CAHILL,
mobile union learning rep,
NW Tesco Retail No.6, K219

FREEDOM FROM FEAR

Respect success

We had a fantastic and successful time at our Respect day held on Friday 12 November last year. Lots of petitions were signed.

Cathy Jamieson MP came along and was really impressed with our stall. She says Usdaw's campaigns are really close to her heart and she has supported us for years. She also brought along Matt McLaughlin, candidate for Labour in this year's election.

Kirsty Bell, store personnel, and Paul Nally also supported the campaign releasing Martin Richmond (Equalities member) all day to participate.

The rest of the Equalities team did a sterling job as always.

LORRAINE BARR,
area organiser, Scottish division

STAR LETTER

2010 ORGANISING AWARDS

Everyone's a winner

What a fantastic night I had at the national organising awards. The whole night was so well organised and it was obvious that so much hard work had gone into making it a great event. It was a great chance to meet other activists from other branches and everyone is a winner from start to finish.

It's a big achievement to be nominated and we as reps should make sure we make the effort to nominate reps from each of our branches. Being active is what helps to build our union and there are a lot of reps who are dedicated, committed and work very hard.

So next time you get your nomination form, take it to your branch meeting or your reps' meeting and nominate the person that you think has gone that extra



mile and deserves the recognition that this night brings them. Send that rep's name in and make that rep feel how I did when I saw my name on a lovely plaque – very proud.

ELLEN JANE SHAW,
branch secretary,
NW Tesco Retail No.4, K120

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Phil reaches thirty



Congratulations to **Philip Parsons** (pictured above) of A168 who works at Tesco in Wells. He was recently presented with his 30 year membership award.

DEBORAH TOWNER, stand-down rep, North East Somerset, A168

ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY

A Welsh well done



South Wales and Western Division raised £1,320 for the Alzheimer's Society at last year's ADM

LIFELONG LEARNING

Happy in Hertfordshire



Usdaw's Checkout Learning campaign was in the heart of beautiful Hertfordshire recently at **Tesco Extra, Royston**. The store held a lifelong learning campaign day introducing staff to new courses available such as holiday Spanish, IT, floristry, digital photography, life skills, and much more.

Nigel Baxter and Liz Gumble, from the organising Academy came along to give their support and expertise, along with myself,

lifelong learning project worker Phil Gander and Unionlearn's Mick Hadgraft.

The day was very successful and many surveys were completed by staff. Potential students looked into taking on new and exciting challenges and showed a keen interest in the courses available with Hertford Regional College.

HELEN KING,
mobile union learning rep, Anglia Tesco, C54

ADULT LEARNERS WEEK

Educating Old Swan



Learners at **Tesco Old Swan** are top of the shops when it comes to education. They are pictured above being awarded with

qualifications in numeracy and literacy during Adult Learners Week.

The staff have been supported by managers at Old Swan and tutors from Liverpool Community College. Keep up the good work Tesco Old Swan.

JO CAHILL,
mobile union learning
rep, NW Tesco Retail
No.6, K219

NETWORK MAGAZINE

An excellent issue

I read the Nov/Dec issue of *Network* last year and I thought I'd get in touch to say... It's fabulous

I couldn't think of a better way of profiling young members and the activities they're involved in than having it on the front page and then a double spread inside!

In both *Arena* and *Network* the first pages I flick to are the ones about youth activity and they're always great profiles of young reps activity and union involvement.

I really do think that things like this catch young people's attention and stop them for a little while to think about what the union does outside of their own workplace as well as for them.

I also think it encourages other



young members to become more active when they see what other people are getting up to and what they're achieving. Keep it up *Network!*

SAM BELL, National Youth
Committee, NW Tesco Retail
No.7, K227

SPONSORSHIP

A cheque to cheer on the champions



Claremont FC was the lucky recipient of a generous sponsorship donation recently courtesy of G173 Alloa No.2. Branch secretary Gerry Tobin presented the cheque to Paul Devanny who runs the club. Both Gerry and Paul work for glass manufacturers, Owens Illinois in Alloa. Claremont FC are currently

Forth Valley Champions and cup holders. The money will ensure that the team will survive the season allowing them to purchase training kits and other sundries. We wish Claremont FC all the best.

IAN FRASER,
area organiser, Scottish division

ACADEMY

Onwards and upwards

The Academy was the hardest yet most rewarding work I've ever done.

I enjoyed both watching the density of stores in my area develop and finding new reps for stores that didn't have any before.

My confidence grew so much that I put myself forward for the Divisional Council and was voted in. I wouldn't have done this without the confidence I gained from the Academy.

The support from my coach, my tutor (Marci Wilson) and my division was second to none, but the support from the other organising officers was the

most appreciated.

A personal achievement for me was to drive on the motorway, something I have never attempted in my 23 years of driving.

I am still doing stand-down and lucky enough to be visiting the stores from the area I covered on the Academy.

If anyone out there is thinking of doing the Academy, I say go for it. It will be the most rewarding work you've ever done.

MANDY DAVIES,
stand-down rep,
Swansea West, A194

PHOTO GALLERY

Legal Plus Awareness Days are taking place across the country

Left to right: Organising Officer Heidi Herlihy and rep Carla Woodley campaigning at Morrisons in Chelmsford. Solicitor Julie Roberts and reps Ella Jarman, Jason Stevens and Penny Smith were all working hard to promote Legal Plus at Tesco in Tetbury



Know Your Rights

Are you missing out on important rights and benefits?

These four leaflets will tell you all you need to know about your rights at work. Order them today using the form below.



Workers' Rights – A guide for full-time and part-time workers (leaflet 211) This is a guide to your employment and benefit rights. The rights contained in this booklet are the basic state minimums.

Flexible Working – Your right to have a say in the hours you work (leaflet 346) Juggling the demands of work with raising a family is not easy at the best of times. This leaflet tells you about your right to have a say in the hours you work.

Working Parents – Know your rights (leaflet 381) This leaflet explains the rights parents have at work and the key benefits available to them.

Work – what you need to know (leaflet 360) A mini-guide aimed at young workers to provide help and advice about rights and benefits at work.

These leaflets are also available to download at: www.usdaw.org.uk



Please send me the following know your rights leaflets:

	Quantity:	1	5	10	25	50
Workers' Rights (Lft 211)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Flexible Working (Lft 346)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working Parents (Lft 381)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work – what you need to know (Lft 360)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

My contact details are:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Branch: _____ Mobile No: _____

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