

NETWORK



The bimonthly magazine for activists – January/February 2016

YOUNG WORKERS

ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

BLACK MEMBERS' WEEKEND



Reps sparkle at Awards Night

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



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Comment

General secretary John Hannett

Welcome to the first issue of *Network* for 2016 and many thanks for your continued support and all of your efforts last year to deliver a first-class service to our members.

Our campaigns helped shape the political and industrial debates with protection for our members claiming tax credits and our reasoned and evidence-based arguments against Sunday trading gaining a lot of support.

However, the Government has shown with the Trade Union Bill that it is determined to shift the balance of power even further away from the workforce, limit our ability to run political campaigns, and financially bankrupt the Labour Party – the only Party to stand up for trade unionists in recent times.

We have an almighty fight on our hands, but again the Government's blatant partisan move to financially cripple the opposition has been challenged, and rightly so, by the House of Lords. Its decision to force further scrutiny of the Bill is welcome.

Trade unions have the most open and democratically accountable funds in politics. The Lords are also right that reform of party political funding should be done on a consensual basis. It is wrong for the Conservative Government to act in such a partisan way, turning their backs on the convention of cross-party agreement on these matters, which Labour abided by in Government.

The Conservatives don't understand trade unions, they never have. They cannot comprehend that unions are problem solvers not problem causers. Our agreements with companies are based on trust, mutual respect, and an understanding of each other's roles. There is no need for the Government to get involved. So this is a fight we haven't asked for but we won't walk away from it and will challenge it at every stage.

Finally, we all know it can be tough being a rep but helping our fellow workers and winning those day-to-day victories is a great feeling. We have to do it all again this year but I'm sure working together, reps, officials and staff we can have another successful year.



John Hannett



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Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers

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Store jobs at risk

Usdaw is in consultations with Morrisons after the retailer announced it plans to close seven loss-making stores, threatening 680 jobs.

The news came in January as the company revealed sales had edged up over the crucial Christmas period.

National Officer Joanne McGuinness said: "This is

devastating news for the staff in these stores. We will look closely at the company's business case.

"Our priority is to maximise employment via redeployment opportunities if a shop has to close and minimise compulsory redundancies. We will support, advise and represent our members throughout this

difficult period of uncertainty."

In 2015 Morrisons closed 21 stores employing 1,300 workers and cut 720 head office roles. It also sold its convenience chain to a private equity group.

Last year members voted in a substantial pay rise taking the hourly rate up to £8.20 from March 2016.

Debt level is dangerous

Rising household debt will see more and more people financially vulnerable, leading debt charities have predicted.

Slow wage growth, rising rental costs, and increased consumer spending has seen consumer credit, in particular on expensive personal loans, rising rapidly and are fast approaching pre-crash levels, warned one report.

Analysis by the TUC showed total unsecured debt (including consumer credit and student loans, but excluding mortgages) rose to £319bn in the third quarter of 2015 – a record high, and well above the £290bn peak in 2008 ahead of the financial crisis. It said that unsecured debt as a share of household income is now 26.5 per cent – the highest in five years.

New partnership at DHL



Eastern divisional officer Dave McCrossen (seated left) was joined by senior management from DHL to sign a new partnership agreement covering the Harlow depot, which is part of the NISA supply chain.

Local reps Dave Hammond and Keith Pamment joined area organiser Phil Waite and DHL's Andy Dear and Paul

Willis to complete the deal at the union's Waltham Cross office in November last year.

"This is great news for our membership at the site," said Dave. "We'll be working hard to recruit more new members and build the on-site reps' team. This is one of a number of new deals we've signed during the last 12 months with hopefully more to follow."

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WAGES FALTER

Conflicting economic data made for more bad news for the UK workforce with some experts warning of even tougher times ahead.

Wage growth in the UK has stalled despite unemployment falling, the latest figures have shown.

Unemployment stands at just over 5 per cent at 1.68 million, its lowest since 2006. However, pay increases slowed and fell from a high of 3 per cent in summer last year to 2 per cent by the end of the year.

The number of people in work was at a record high of 31.39 million, around 74 per cent of the workforce, while average



weekly earnings fell to below the 2007 level.

The number of jobless young people fell by 136,000 to 628,000 in the year to November, the unemployment rate for this group of workers was still more than 13 per cent – only slightly lower than the pre-

recession figure of 13.8 per cent.

Independent research body, the Resolution Foundation predicted wage growth of only 1 per cent in real terms this year, and warned it could be even less if inflation rises beyond the Government's 2 per cent target.

Taskforce looks to save jobs at threatened seafood site in Scotland

Discussions to save jobs at Young's Seafoods in Fraserburgh Scotland continued as *Network* went to press.

The Fraserburgh Task Force was set up to help workers and communities affected by the company's decision to reduce its operations in the town, and includes representatives

of Young's, Usdaw, Scottish Enterprise, Skills Development Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council and industry bodies.

The Task Force's remit is to develop an Economic Recovery Plan to:

■ Provide support and advice for the individuals, and/or to secure alternative employment,



should this be required

■ Provide support to the communities impacted by the current uncertainty and potential future job losses

■ Consider the economic infrastructure of the local area, to identify how to create sustainable employment in the longer term.

Pension cash concern Little festive cheer

Workers aged over 55 are cashing in their pensions following changes to the rules announced by the chancellor last year.

The main reason cited by people for accessing their pensions was to pay towards current living expenses. Other reasons included, paying off mortgages or credit cards, or buying a holiday or a car. Most withdrawals are between the £10,000 – £30,000 range.

Experts have expressed concern that only 17 per cent of customers had used the Government's free Pension Advisory Service and have warned that workers may run out of money sooner than they think.

Shoppers were thin on the ground during the post-Christmas sales period with figures 3 per cent down on 2014 despite the record-breaking discounts on offer.

The mild weather saw winter clothing remain on the shelves while torrential rain also deterred shoppers from venturing out.

However, online figures continued to climb and the popularity of click-and-collect also saw high street footfall decline.

Tesco, Debenhams, John Lewis, Morrisons were among the better performers while Marks and Spencer, Next, Sainsbury, Sports Direct and Argos revealed disappointing figures.

IN BRIEF...

Job losses at Berwick factory

General Mills, owners of the Jus-Rol pastry factory in Berwick, Northumberland, has confirmed its decision to close the site with the loss of around 250 jobs. Despite exhaustive consultations Usdaw was unable to persuade the company to keep the site operational and it will end production later this year.

New stores as Aldi growth continues

Hard discounter Aldi plans to open 80 new stores this year, 23 per cent more than last year and its fastest ever rate of growth in the UK, giving the chain more than 700 stores nationwide. Rival Lidl also plans to open 40 more stores this year, with the two combined looking set to increase their 10 per cent share of the UK grocery market by around 1.4 per cent according to one retail analyst.

'Fat Cat Tuesday' dwarfs average pay

By the end of the first Tuesday of 2016, January 5, Britain's top bosses had made more money in 2016 than the average UK worker earns in an entire year, according to the High Pay Centre's calculations. Its figures show that earnings for company executives, who returned to work in the New Year, passed the UK average salary of £27,645 by late afternoon on what has been dubbed 'Fat Cat Tuesday'. Top executives are paid an average £4.96 million a year.



IN BRIEF...

Workers' rights in 17 languages

TUC International have produced an employment rights online resource guide in 17 languages to help inform people of their working rights in the UK. This resource is a good organising and recruitment tool for reps. The employment rights online resource guide can be found at: www.tuc.org.uk/workingintheuk Out of the 17 languages, TUC have some free paper booklet copies in seven of the languages: Bulgarian, English, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian and Spanish.

Union cash grant will help studies

If you are studying with the Open University you could be eligible for the union's cash grant. Usdaw pays between £75-£150 for 60 and 30 point OU modules. More details from the education department at central office or visit the website at: www.usdaw.org.uk/367

Union scholarship on offer for 2016

Union members who want to return to learning and study towards a degree qualification should take a look at the Usdaw scholarship scheme available at five adult colleges. More details at: www.usdaw.org.uk/chanceofalifetime



Argos the target

Supermarket group Sainsbury's shocked the retail sector when it revealed it had made a bid approach for Argos and Homebase owner Home Retail Group in November, but the offer was rejected.

Home Retail Group said the bid 'undervalued Home Retail Group and its long-term prospects'. Meanwhile, Sainsbury's said it was 'considering its position' with most analysts believing a further

offer will follow.

Under UK takeover rules, Sainsbury's has until early February to decide whether to make a formal offer. Analysts have predicted as many as 200 Argos stores could close if the deal does go through.

Over the past year, Sainsbury's has been trialling Argos concessions in some of its stores. Sainsbury's has about 1,200 supermarkets and convenience stores and employs about 161,000 people.

Home Retail Group, which is valued at around £1bn, issued a profit warning in October. It has 1,051 stores across the UK and employs 47,000 staff.

Sainsbury's originally co-founded the Homebase chain, but sold it in 2000 in a deal worth £969m. As *Network* went to press Australian firm Wesfarmers confirmed it was to buy the Homebase DIY chain for £340m, potentially making a deal for Argos more straightforward.

Obituary: Ron Williams



Former North West division area organiser Ron Williams died in December, he was 93.

A lifelong trade unionist and Labour Party activist, Ron's union membership started

when he was 14 and worked for Eccles Co-op. His union involvement increased and promotion followed later and after spending two years as a branch manager in Salisbury he returned to his native Lancashire in 1955 as an official in the Preston office.

Ron was a passionate defender against extending Sunday trading throughout his 32 years on the staff while also finding time to serve 18 years as a magistrate.

He retired in 1987 with 51

years of union membership under his belt.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Ron gave his life to the labour and trade union movement and served with great distinction for many years.

"He looked after members across most of the trades we organise in and also found time to serve his local community in a number of ways.

"We have lost a real stalwart and a loyal and hard-working official. Our condolences go to his family and friends."



Campaign fund under attack

Proposals in the Trade Union Bill could see Usdaw's ability to run political campaigns weakened and fundamentally change how it affiliates to the Labour Party, a new report has shown.

Under the Bill trade union members would have to 'opt in' to pay the political levy, instead of 'opting out' as the current system dictates. The Labour Party could face a £6m shortfall.

The Government is also cutting the amount of state funding opposition Parties receive with Labour likely to lose a further £1.3m.

A report in *The Guardian* said the fall in funding would make it impossible for Labour to maintain its current structure, staffing or offices.



General secretary John Hannett condemned the Bill. "This is a vindictive attack aimed at undermining the ability of the Labour Party to fulfil its legitimate role as parliamentary opposition to the Government.

"It's an unashamed attempt to weaken Labour while donations to the Conservative Party will continue with hedge funds and other massive contributions

from big business almost completely unregulated.

"The Bill will also seriously compromise our ability to run political campaigns on issues like the National Minimum Wage, protection for staff, pension rights and much more.

"I'd urge all of our members to lobby their local MP to oppose the Bill and to join the Labour Party to make their voice heard."

IN BRIEF...

Court rules emails can be checked

Workers have been warned their employers can legally monitor their emails, social media and internet use while at work, following a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights. The ruling related to personal use of company systems and devices and could extend to work done even outside of work hours. Both the TUC and its European counterpart have condemned the ruling.

Tax credits and Universal Credit

Reps are being urged to remind members to check to see if they are entitled to claim tax credits before the new Universal Credit (UC) scheme starts. Members who are claiming tax credits now will be protected from some of the damaging rules of UC. www.usdaw.org.uk

State pension changes age split

At least 16m people under 43 will be worse off following changes to the state pension while workers in their 50s and 60s are the biggest winners. However, only half of retirees in the next five years will get the full state pension.

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Young, gifted and active



YOUNG MEMBERS IN WARRINGTON AT USDAW'S NATIONAL YOUNG WORKERS' WEEKEND AND JOINED BY EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEMBERS AMY MURPHY AND JEAN HESSION



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the weekend on the
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The annual Urdaw national young workers' weekend took place in Warrington back in November 2015 where a new influx of delegates gathered to discuss the issues currently facing young workers.

The weekend, now in its 22nd year, is always a popular event in the union's calendar giving members aged under 27 the opportunity to exchange advice, expand their knowledge and make new friends.

It was a packed agenda with guest speakers, workshops and delegates looking at both industrial and political issues.

The impact of benefit cuts

On the Saturday **Warren Scott**, training officer in the Midlands division, ran a session looking at Government cuts to benefits and the impact on young workers. The session also considered the link between financial pressures and

mental health issues.

"Three out of four people with money issues say that it impacts on their health," said Warren. "And the Government's answer to this is to cut benefits!

"Our members are at the sharp end, and not just financially," he added. "Change is affecting all aspects of our lives.

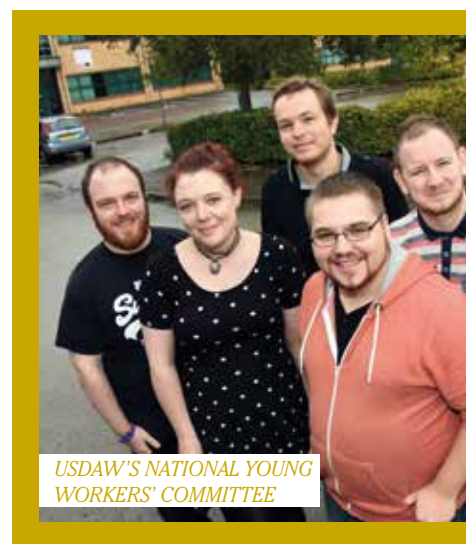
"The group became really involved in the session and hopefully learned a lot. We used a quiz to bust some common myths surrounding benefits, who can claim them and more importantly who can't. We also looked at how the Government deals with benefit fraud compared to how it treats tax evasion."

TUC propositions

Dean Wilson, an Urdaw rep and member of the national young workers' committee, co-ordinated a workshop giving delegates the opportunity to write draft propositions for the TUC young workers' conference due to take place in London this April.

"We had suggestions for a living wage, housing problems and education to name a few," said Dean who is also vice-chair of the TUC young workers' forum. "It was a very good session and an opportunity to work together and come up with some great ideas."

For more information on the TUC young workers' conference visit: www.tuc.org.uk/events/2016-tuc-young-workers-conference



USDAW'S NATIONAL YOUNG WORKERS' COMMITTEE

In conversation with...



Daniel Forrest...

Daniel has been a rep at Tesco Bank Glasgow for 18 months and found his first young workers' weekend 'insightful' and 'inspiring'.

"The most interesting part was getting to meet, and network with, reps from across the UK, relating my own experiences in my sector (financial services) to what other young members have faced in their roles," said the 24 year-old.

"It's a great opportunity for new young workers and reps to help them meet with other young activists as early as possible.

"Joining the union and becoming a rep has allowed me to branch out, form new connections with other reps and members alike and start to find meaning in the work that I do and the environment I do it in."

Russ Jones...

Russ became a rep at Morrisons in Bromsgrove because he was keen to sign up more young members to the union and ensure their voices are heard.

"Being an Usdaw rep is really as good as what you make it," said the 24 year-old.

"There are always plenty of opportunities to learn and expand your knowledge and to increase your involvement with the union.

"This was my first time at the young workers' weekend," said Russ. "Everyone was accepted as part of the group and included in the discussions during the weekend.

"I believe that I now have a better skill set to use as I aim to recruit new and more younger members to Usdaw within my branch."

Bethany Stewart...

Bethany, who works at Tesco in Edinburgh, has been a rep and a member of the young workers' committee for three years.

"I first went to the weekend in 2012 and met a lot of new people who became friends I'd meet up with at other conferences," said the 26 year-old.

"This year we had a number of eye-opening talks; first-hand experience from an activist who started out at a very young age, a speech on the dangers of austerity, and some inspiring workshops.

"This conference is a fantastic experience for young workers who want to become active or even just learn more about the union.

"It's crucial to engage with workers at a young age, to set a trend for the next generation who could be facing some of the hardest challenges under this Government."

and Ryan Quick

Ryan works at Sainsbury's in Bolton and believes the main issue affecting young workers is how they are perceived in society.

"It's important to recognise the value and contribution that every generation, every demographic and every individual person makes to society, no matter how small, and we could start by putting faith in young people," said the 25 year-old.

Ryan has been a rep for four years. This was his first young workers' weekend. "It's inspiring to hear other young people talk about how they feel regarding the issues that we face in work and in our daily lives," he said.

"It's been a rewarding and informative weekend from which I can take lots of positives and use these to good effect in my role as a rep."



WARREN SCOTT

DEAN WILSON

How can I get more involved?

Contact your local office to be put in touch with your divisional young workers' committee and find out what's going on in your area.

You can also find a range of leaflets and posters aimed at young workers available to download on the website at: www.usdaw.org.uk/youngworkers



Top reps celebrate award win

The 11th awards night celebrated the outstanding achievements of reps across nine different categories at the Radisson Blu hotel at Manchester airport in January.

National awards were presented to the winners by general secretary John Hannett, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis and president Jeff Broome (below) as activists and their guests enjoyed the VIP treatment during the sparkling event.

"This is what our reps deserve," said John. "I wish they could all be here but clearly that's not possible. But what the awards night does is bring together a cross section of our reps from all divisions, all occupations, all age groups and every ethnic community.

"All of these have gone the extra mile and showed great skill, determination and commitment to their members and the union's cause during 2015.

"Everyone in the room is a winner in their own right so many congratulations to them

and of course a special mention to the national winners who are great examples of what the 'perfect' rep looks like.

"This is an annual event and one which rightly puts our reps centre stage. It's unique in the trade union movement and shows just how valued our reps are. Being a rep is a tough task and our reps deserve all the recognition they get."

What the national winners said:

**Dolores Collins
Tesco Express,
Rainham, Essex**

“ Becoming involved in the union is one of the best things I've ever done. I'm a cluster rep and I've been on summer school and completed stints on stand-down. I'm hoping to do Academy1 in the future.

I've certainly changed. I'm more confident and more willing to speak up. I really enjoy the role.

The awards night is great, it's a pleasure to be here. I've met some lovely people and the venue was special. I was amazed I won.



THE 2015 NATIONAL AWARD WINNERS

**Carl Turner
XPO Logistics,
Merseyside**

“ I've recruited upwards of 2,000 new members while on the Academies and stand-down over the last 18 months. I've never looked back since becoming a rep just over two years ago.

Everyone on my site is a member including the management team, we've moved from 20 to 100 per cent density. I think you have to listen to

non-members when recruiting because nine times out of ten they'll give you the reasons why they should join a union. They will talk about job security, pay, hours and they need someone who will stand up for them.

I love being a rep but we have to keep showing the members what we're doing for them and work towards getting recognition whenever we can.

I really enjoyed the night. I was happy with the divisional award,





but to get the national one was the icing on the cake.

Jayne Knight Morrisons, Leeds

“ I’m a lone rep and look after nearly 300 members. I’ve been active for around 15 years and although we’ve had a tough time of late you have to keep plugging away and stay positive. I have a good rapport with the management and that’s vital.

(continued on page 12)

Roll of Honour

(Divisional letter in brackets and national winners in bold)

Most Promising New Activist

Caroline Kimi (A)
Joshua Pilborough (C)
Julie Haycraft (E)
Corrina Pett (F)
Daniel Forrest (G)
Mike Lyons (H)
Chantal Willems (K)

Health and Safety Rep

Peter Donoghue (A)
Paul Rodwell (C)
Linda Gray (E)
Donald Briggs (F)
Susan Jackson (G)
Pawel Stanczuk (H)
Brian Judge (K)

Equalities

Justyna Kownacka (A)
Peni Bee (C)
Paul White (E)
Karen Heppell (F)
Wendy Miller (G)
Jackie Gilmore (H)
Davy Moore (K)

Union Learning Rep

Kay Timbrell (A)
Val Cooke (C)
Claire Marie Poole (E)
Michele Jones (F)
Geraldine Downs (G)
Trevor Howson (H)
Julienne Nicklin (K)

Campaigns

Ray Brunnock (A)
Mansong Dambell (C)
Nicola Hitch (E)
Peter Currie (F)
Joseph Gribben (G)
Philipine Akaba (H)
Brenda Shaw (K)

Team Recruitment and Organising

Tesco Reps Launceston (A)
Tesco Reps
Dagenham DC (C)
Tesco Reps Market
Harborough (E)
Tesco Reps Hornsea (F)
Tesco Reps
Port Glasgow (G)
Tesco Reps
Dotcom Erith (H)
Serco Reps
Martin House (K)

Individual Recruitment

Mark Atkinson (A)
Lee Bracey (C)
Joshua Halliwell (E)
Mandy Naylor (F)
Mary Hughes (G)
Agnes Bamodu (H)
Carl Turner (K)

Individual Organising

Deborah Towner (A)
Dolores Collins (C)
Claire Marie Poole (E)
Paul Huish (F)
Shirley Marshall (G)
Edwina Fairbrass (H)
Patricia Elder (K)

Outstanding Achievement

Anne Meacock (A)
Sarah Langton (C)
Leslie Roulstone (E)
Jayne Knight (F)
Tony Sneddon (G)
Carole Jackson (H)
Linda Craven (K)



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Reps get the recognition



SOUTH WALES & WESTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Mike Walker (deputy divisional officer), Dennis Stinchcombe, Caroline Kimi, Peter Robson, Barbara Wilson (executive councillor), Nick Ireland (divisional officer) and Janet Beer.

SEATED (from left): Kay Timbrell, Mark Atkinson, Anne Meacock, Ray Brunnock, Deborah Towner and Keith Lewis.



EASTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): John Bond, Christine Henry (deputy divisional officer), Paul Rodwell, Mansong Dambell, Dave McCrossen (divisional officer), Lee Bracey, Barbara Woolford and Simon Vincent (executive councillors).

SEATED (from left): Peni Bee, Val Cooke, Sarah Langton, Dolores Collins, Fraser McMillan, Gareth Hilton and (inset) Joshua Pilborough.



MIDLANDS DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Leslie Roulstone, Paul White, Gareth Davies (deputy divisional officer), Gavin Dadley (divisional officer), Shaun Horton and Mark Hurn.

SEATED (from left): Claire Marie Poole, Julie Haycraft, Andrea Watts and Maureen Bowen (executive councillors), Nicola Hitch and Ian Bateman.

(continued from page 11)

I'm also active in my local Labour party and regularly go out campaigning. I've done both Academies and summer schools, in fact all of the union's training courses.

This is a phenomenal event. I couldn't believe I'd won, I was shaking. This will go down well in-store. There's highs and lows being a rep but the highs outweigh the lows and tonight has been fantastic.

**Kay Timbrell
Tesco, Stroud**

“ The union has helped me rediscover myself and I've been able to pursue my passion for further education and improve our members' lives.

Being a rep makes work that much more interesting. It's also transformed me. A few years ago I would never have stood up in front of a group of people and spoken, or given a presentation – now I do it on a regular basis.

As a learning rep you get to push the positive side of the union and prove to members we're not just about grievances and disciplinaries, we can make a huge impact. That's very rewarding.

This night makes you feel part of the union and that your work is valued. It's a special occasion.

It's very humbling to win a divisional nomination but to win the national award was off the scale. It was a complete shock.

**Julienne Nicklin
Tesco, Stoke**

“ We've run a number of campaign days at our store on mental health awareness, Checkout Learning and Adult learners week, they always get people talking.

We've also set up themed days around English, maths and IT courses which have encouraged many people to do distance learning. Learning is popular among the membership.

I was gobsmacked to win. There was a lot of talent in the room so it was completely unexpected. I really enjoyed the night. I was nervous at first and found it a little daunting. But I was made to feel very welcome and it's nice to be appreciated.

“It's a well-organised event, a lovely hotel and I met some new friends. An excellent night.

**Mansong Dambell
Primark, London**

“ I'm very humbled and honoured to win. I've had great support from my divisional officer, area organiser and training officer who believed in me and supported me.

To me Usdaw is a big family and I will continue to live and breath the union and look to serve the members and stand up for the voiceless and under-privileged.

I've been active for 15 years and believe in fighting for justice. I enjoy it and want to see more people involved.





NORTH EASTERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Mike Dixon and Brian Loughead (executive councillors), Mark Thompson, Paul Huish, Joanne Thomas (divisional officer), Angela Partington and Karen Heppell.
SEATED (from left): Corrina Pett, Peter Currie, Michele Jones, Jayne Knight, Mandy Naylor and Cathy Godfrey (deputy divisional officer)



SCOTTISH DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Tony Sneddon, David Livingston, Jonathan McCartney, Daniel Forrest, Lawrence Wason (divisional officer), Jean Hession (executive councillor), Stewart Forrest (deputy divisional officer) and Peter Devine (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** Shirley Marshall, Wendy Miller, Geraldine Downs, Susan Jackson, Isabel Fyfe and Joseph Gribben.

The awards night is wonderful. I couldn't believe Usdaw could organise something so big and impressive. When my name was called out I couldn't move, I was in shock. It's great to recognise the reps, it's just like the Oscars!

**Fraser McMillan and Gareth Hilton
Tesco DC Dagenham**

“ We are two of nine reps who look after around 800 members and we're very proud to accept this award on behalf of our hard-working team. It's good to get the recognition for all the work we've put in during 2015.

It was a tough year but this makes it worthwhile when you get the respect of the union both at divisional and national level.

Getting good results for the members is key. When you save someone's job that makes it all worthwhile. We have about 80 per cent density at our site, it's hard work but we cover all shifts, recruit among agency staff too, and negotiate wages.

This is a very friendly evening, we thought we'd be outsiders but it's not like that. We've been pleasantly surprised.

**Daniel Forrest
Tesco Bank, Glasgow**

“ It was a privilege and an honour to be at the awards night. I expected a routine conference set-up but it's nothing like that – it's very glamorous.

It's inspiring to hear what everyone has achieved, I was impressed.

When I heard my name called out I had an out-of-body experience, it was as if I was watching myself on the screen and it didn't really sink in at first. It was amazing. I'll remember it for the rest of my life.

As reps we're problem solvers and that is very rewarding. The training courses and opportunities to develop as a rep are many and I'll be looking to make the most of those over the coming years. This award means a lot to me.



SOUTHERN DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Sue Prynne (deputy divisional officer), Sujata Patel, Trevor Howson, Carole Jackson, Mike Lyons, Amy Murphy (executive councillor), Perri Hudson, Dawn Harding, John Barstow (executive councillor) and Sue Merrell (divisional officer). **SEATED (from left):** Steve Ford, Jackie Gilmore, Michael Marsh, Agnes Bamodu, Edwina Fairbrass and Philipine Akaba, (inset) Pawel Stanczuk.



NORTH WEST DIVISION

STANDING (from left): Amanda Bailey-Coll and Tony Clare (deputy divisional officers), Jan Jervis (executive councillor), Mike Aylward (divisional officer) and Kevin Dolan (executive councillor). **SEATED (from left):** George Cunliffe, Brenda Shaw, Carl Turner, Patricia Elder, Michelle Griffiths, (inset) Julienne Nicklin.



Unfortunately national Equalities winner Davy Moore, national Health and Safety winner Brian Judge and joint national Individual Recruitment winner Joshua Halliwell were unable to be at the ceremony.

Open forum for black and Asian activists

Thirty members from a variety of workplaces across the UK joined officials and guest speakers for a two-day national get-together for black and Asian workers held in Manchester in November last year.

The annual residential Black Members' Weekend Workshop focused on organising and campaigning against racism (and its history), the refugee crisis, as well as how to encourage more black and Asian workers to become active with the union.

"This Weekend Workshop is a very effective way of encouraging newer and less active black members to get involved in the union," said Usdaw equalities officer, Ruth Cross.

"Every year members come along and get the confidence, skills and knowledge to get more active with experienced members running

the workshops and chairing the sessions.

"Our black members tell us this is a special event as it gives them the confidence to know everyone there will understand the pressures and challenges of living and working with racism.

"We want to make sure that our workplaces, the union and our communities are welcoming to our black members and to people newly arrived in the UK who are fleeing persecution."

Workgroups looked at how refugees, asylum seekers and migrant workers are treated, and the impact of immigration controls and the high risk of homelessness and destitution faced by these groups.

Each workgroup was given a different country to research, which included Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan and Kosovo – they then reported back in the style of a TV news report on their country.

Groups also discussed racism in the workplace, by exploring if it is still an issue, and why might members be reluctant to complain about racism?

Delegates also heard special guest speaker Wilf Sullivan, TUC race equality officer, on the history of racism and the media's role in framing the debate.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, who held a Q&A session with the delegates, said: "The union is committed to this popular annual event, once again well attended by many first-time delegates.

"It's important that we have a specific weekend to discuss the challenges facing black and Asian members in particular.

"And for members to go back to their workplaces with more knowledge, confidence and better skills to inform and support black and Asian colleagues and encourage them to join and become active."



www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities





Over the weekend members raised more than £100 for the Manchester Refugee Support Network.

DELEGATES AT THE BLACK AND ASIAN MEMBERS' WEEKEND IN NOVEMBER 2015

Tayo Ogunmoroti

Tesco team leader Tayo Ogunmoroti, 35, from Salford in Greater Manchester is no stranger to the Weekend and was keen to attend again.

“I think it’s important for black and Asian members to feel free to speak about issues they can’t talk about in their workplace,” he said.

“It is very well-organised from start to finish and the workshops certainly get people thinking and talking, but more importantly

people are given the opportunity to express themselves.

“I really enjoyed it, I met some good people.

“When I returned to work I was eager to share my experiences and make my colleagues aware of what the union does for all its members.

“I will be encouraging as many of my black and Asian colleagues to get more involved in Usdaw so they too can have the opportunity to discuss issues that affect them.”

Nejmeddine Darej

Tesco assistant Nej Darej from Bristol, a rep for six years, was at his first Weekend Workshop.

“I’ve been a delegate at many other union events and conferences and as always this one was very informative and extremely well-organised,” said the 34 year-old.

“I’ll definitely be recommending it to other members who haven’t been, it’s a must.

“I enjoyed the workshops. We discussed current issues such

as the refugee crisis and the myths around racism and how the union campaigns for and supports its members.

“All the guest speakers were very interesting, especially Wilf Sullivan from the TUC Race Equality section, I learned a lot.

“I became a union rep because I like helping people. As a result of the training and support I’ve had as a rep I’ve learned a lot about workplace rights.

“I feel more confident and better informed to help my members.”

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Why does Usdaw organise a weekend workshop for black and Asian members’?

Black and Asian members are under-involved in the union and have been for many years, and especially at union events and conferences. So Usdaw, through its democratic structures, decided to hold this event to encourage black and Asian members to get more involved. The first one was held in 1993.

Why is it only open to black and Asian Members’?

Black and Asian members regularly tell the union that as

well as experiencing racism both in the workplace and in society they frequently feel uncomfortable or isolated because of their skin colour. Everyone knows that going to a union event for the first time can be daunting. The weekend workshop is an effective way of tackling that isolation and boosting black and Asian members’ confidence to get more involved. The weekend remains unique in that it is the only event in the union’s calendar where black and Asian members are in a majority. This weekend allows black and Asian members to

raise and debate the issues that are important to them.

Are black and Asian members under-involved’?

Yes. We would expect around 12 per cent of our activists to be black or Asian. However, the statistics show only 4.5 per cent of branch officers, 5 per cent of ADM delegates and 7.2 per cent of reps/activists are black or Asian. Although progress has been made that is in no small part down to the effectiveness of the black and Asian weekend workshop.

How do we ensure white reps understand the issues affecting black members’?

It is important all reps understand the problems black and Asian members face. The Divisional Equality Forums run weekend schools for both black and white activists on tackling racism in the workplace. The union’s race equality literature and materials from campaigns such as Show Racism the Red Card and Freedom From Fear help to promote the equality agenda and tackle racism in workplaces and society.

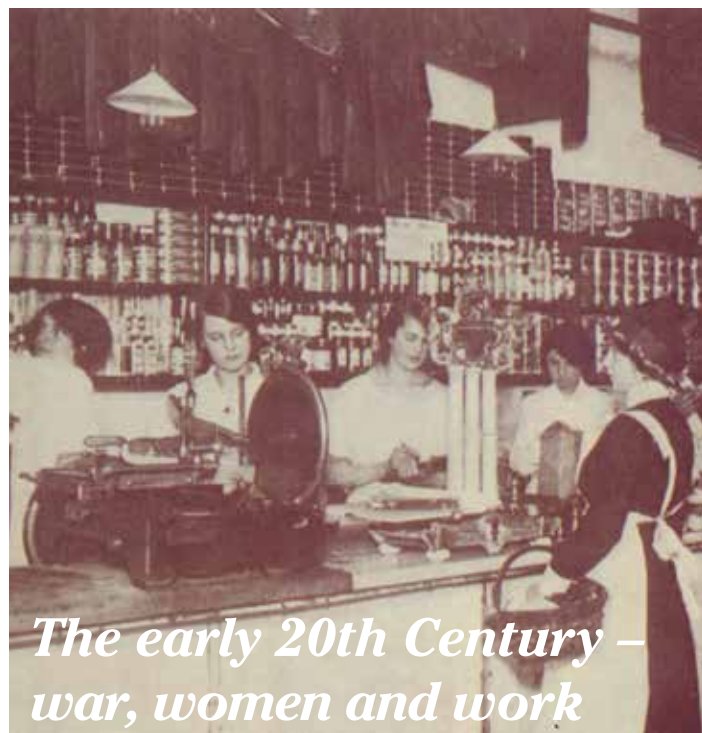
125 years in the making



Usdaw can trace its history back to 1891 and in particular to Manchester and the Co-operative Movement. Other similar unions originated during the late 19th Century and into the early years of the twentieth.

After the Second World War these unions came together to form Usdaw in 1947.

Network looks back at some of the key periods over the last 125 years...



The early 20th Century – war, women and work

The new Century saw the first serious attempts to end the living-in system with strikes and demonstrations against the dehumanising practice. However, it wasn't until the 1920s when it eventually disappeared. At the same time protests against long working hours and low pay surfaced.

However the onset of World War I in 1914 brought to an end the industrial unrest seen throughout the UK. It was a pivotal period as women entered the job market in vast numbers to replace the men who volunteered for war. It was here when the issue of equal pay first became a major issue for the union.

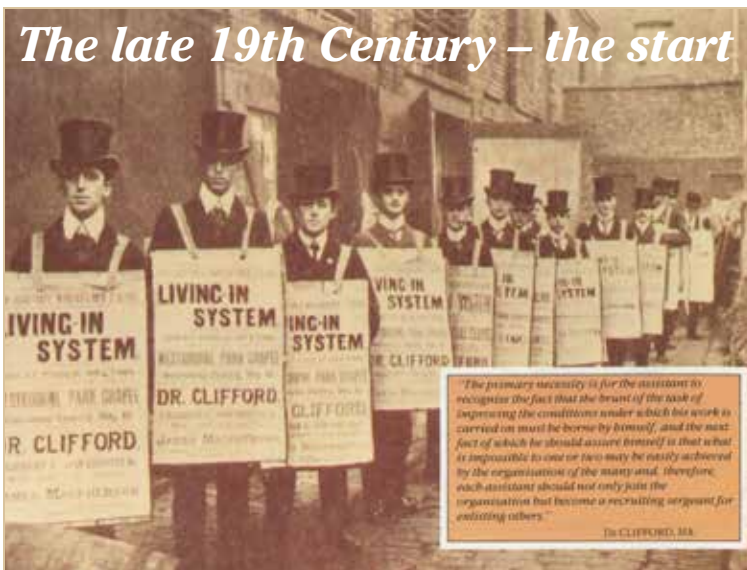
The inter-war years saw recession, mass unemployment and wage cuts for many workers. The General Strike of 1926 saw thousands of shopworkers involved. One of the most famous was National Union of Distributive and Allied Workers (NUDAW) member Ellen Wilkinson MP, who later led the Jarrow hunger marchers in 1936.

During the Second World War women once again returned to the employment market and to the union's ranks. Although their place in the trade union and labour movement would once again have to wait.



Ellen Wilkinson MP

The late 19th Century – the start



Retailing employed around 750,000 workers, mainly men, with around two thirds of these subject to the 'Living-in' system.

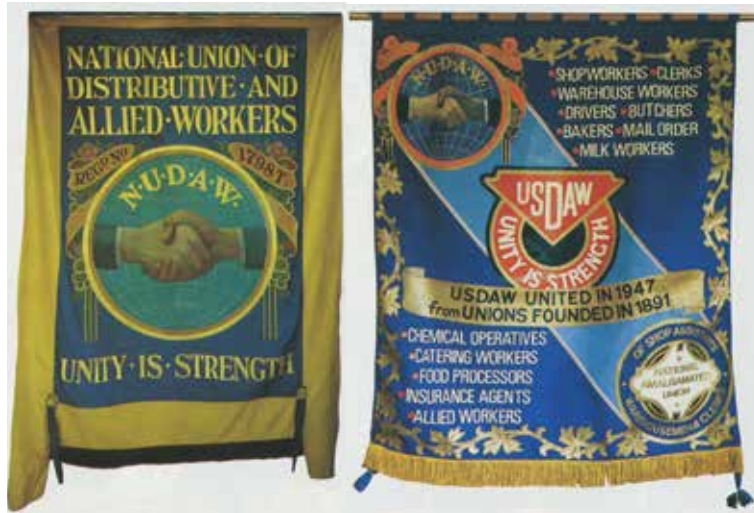
This meant workers were housed by the employer, usually in cramped, dirty and often dangerous conditions, and paid in cash after board and lodgings were deducted.

The working week was at least 70 hours with 80 or 90 not uncommon. Attempts to introduce a legal maximum working week of 74 hours was

defeated in 1891, the same year the National Union of Shop Assistants (NUSA) was born. It went on to merge with another union to form the National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks (NAUSAW&C).

In Manchester two Co-operative employees groups formed the Amalgamated Union of Co-operative Employees (AUCE). Their paths would cross again after 1945.





The mid 20th Century – a united union emerges – Usdaw

After the election of the post-war Labour Government, merger talks continued and agreement was reached in 1947 between NUDAW and the NAUSA&C... Usdaw was born.

In retail self-service had been imported from America by the Co-op first, and this quickly caught on with other big retailers.

Some restrictions on trading hours had been introduced in the 1950 Shops Act but late night opening up until 8pm was allowed, although Sunday trading was banned.

By the early '60s Usdaw had some success in cutting the working week (its target was 40 hours) and improving wages.

Within a decade the union's membership

had soared from 316,000 to 470,000 by the late '70s although its success was faced with the anti-union agenda of the UK's first woman Conservative prime minister Margaret Thatcher.

A prolonged period of industrial unrest, job losses and recession followed. Membership also declined.



The late 20th Century – conflict and cuts

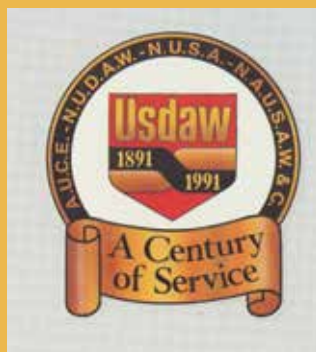
Industrial conflict, mass unemployment and anti-union legislation dominated the early '80s. Sunday trading was back on the agenda and the union began a campaign to save the doorstep pinta.

By the '90s the campaign to protect jobs in the football pools industry against the threat of the national lottery was also launched and the union's drive to involve more women

members saw the introduction of women's committees which led to a noticeable increase in the participation of female activists.

Usdaw also celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1991. However, anti-union laws, large scale unemployment and the increase of part-time working saw Usdaw membership decline rapidly reaching a low of 282,000 in 1994.

Politically the situation had improved as 1997 saw the election of a Labour Government for the first time since 1979.



The 21st Century

Buoyed by the 1997 election of a Labour Government with a massive majority and a more positive approach to trade unions, Usdaw

set about modernising itself, how it operated, how it managed its finances and most importantly how it supported and trained its network of reps.

As a result the union embarked on an unbroken 20 year period of growth with membership reaching 442,000 by the end of 2015.

Campaigns played a major part with Freedom From Fear, Supporting Parents and Carers and Save Our Sundays giving the union a national profile and cementing its place as the UK's fourth biggest and still the fastest growing union in the UK.



Usdaw will be updating its Century of Service 1891-1991 booklet to commemorate its 125th anniversary. Look out for more information in the next issue of Network.

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In the spotlight Julienne Nicklin



North West division's Julienne Nicklin answers our questions...

Why did you become active?

One of the other learning reps was leaving and I've always wanted to be involved with training in Tesco and never had the opportunity, so when the chance came along I jumped at it.

Do you use campaign days?

Yes, we took part in Adult Learners Week. We focused on different subjects each day including music, media, maths and English. I held quizzes in the canteen with chocolates as prizes – everyone had a go. Lots of people signed up for a mental health awareness distance-learning course. Even the personnel manager joined in and said she wants every manager in the business to do the course.

What's the best thing about being active?

Helping people in whatever way I can. I like finding easier ways to help people to understand things and look at things differently. I'm definitely the mother and the agony aunt at work too. I think you have to be of that nature to do the role.

Any downsides?

There's a lot to do and sometimes I feel guilty leaving my department to carry out union

work and attend training courses. If the role was any bigger I think it would need to be a full-time separate job in store.

Are there other reps in your store or is it just you?

We have reps on days and reps on nights, but we need more learning reps really. I've always involved night workers in everything I've done, but sometimes they feel like they miss out on things. So a night learning rep would be good.

How do you fit everything in?

It's a struggle sometimes and the more you take on, the less time you've got to do your work. But I try to make the most out of everything, and I think, if I want to do something I need to go and do it now.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I'm training to be a shop steward. Usdaw training courses are fantastic. I did the learning rep's course and I've done some distance learning courses including mental health. Anything that I can do that gives me a bit more knowledge I'll do it.

Is recruitment easy at work?

We've got about 88 per cent membership at our store. The reps try and sign people up in the inductions and that's fairly successful.

A lot of students don't join because they think they won't need the union because they're only planning to work there for a short time. They don't think about the fact that you can take the union with you when you move on.

Would you recommend becoming a rep?

Yes I would, if you're interested in helping people and getting more involved in that side of things then I think it's the best thing you can do.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The junior doctors strike, because I don't think it should even get to that point. They do an important job and surely any politician can see that the hours that they work impact the decisions that they make. In no other job is decision making so important that it could end someone's life.

What's next for you?

I'd like to progress with the shop steward training so I can see the other side of things, the roles cross over quite a bit so it will be very useful. Ideally I'd like to go part time with Tesco and then devote a bit more time to the union, but that will have to wait until I can afford to juggle things around. I'd definitely like to get more involved though and attend more union conferences.

Fact File & trivia

EMPLOYER... *Tesco*

JOB... *Pharmacy and stock control assistant*

LIVES... *Stoke-on-Trent*

AGE... *51*

JOINED USDAW IN... *1995*
BEEN AN ACTIVIST SINCE... *for about two years*

UNION POSITIONS HELD... *union learning rep and training to be a shop steward*

I SPEND MY SPARE TIME... *socialising with my friends*

MY FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME

IS... *Emmerdale*

MY FAVOURITE SINGER IS...

Michael Bublé

IF MY HOUSE WAS BURNING DOWN I'D SAVE... *apart from my husband, I'd save my photographs*
BEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE SO FAR... *my 50th birthday, because it was also my 30th wedding anniversary. I celebrated for as long as I could. It was nice to reach an age where I was happy with everything I'd achieved and all my friends were there.*





LATEST APPOINTMENTS

Three promotions and a former rep has joined the organising staff...

Daniel Adams

Former area organiser Daniel Adams is the new national officer and switched from his Warrington base to the Manchester central office in early December last year.

Dan joined the union's staff as a research assistant in 2005 before being promoted to Tesco team leader in the research department in 2007. He was appointed an area organiser in July 2010 and was initially based at the Kegworth office before moving back to the North West division in January 2012.

Originally from Essex, Dan had previously graduated from Manchester University in 2000 and went on to complete his doctorate in British Trade Unionism in 2008. He also spent time as a rep when he worked in the IT and teaching sectors.

As a national officer he will look after members in the chemicals, pharmaceuticals and dairy sectors. "I'm looking forward to the new challenges, meeting the reps and making sure the union continues to grow its presence, profile and influence in these sectors," said the 36 year-old.

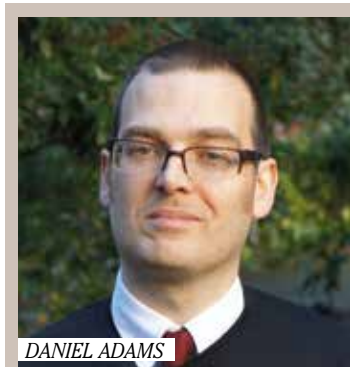
"Companies include, Unilever, AAH, Alliance Healthcare and Boots, Arla, Muller-Wiseman, Dairy Crest and Ocado.

"I'm lucky to have spent five years at central office and five years as an organiser so I've seen both sides of the organisation and enjoy working with the members, reps and officials."

Darren Miller

The new head of the legal department is Darren Miller who was promoted from his deputy head role in November last year.

Darren joined Usdaw in 2003 as a legal assistant on the



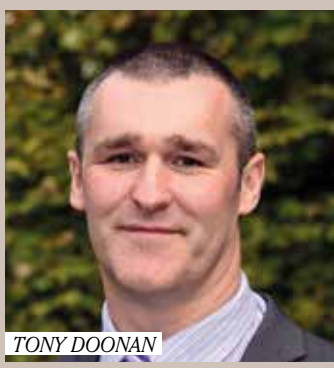
DANIEL ADAMS



DARREN MILLER



PAUL GREGORY



TONY DOONAN

employment team, he completed his solicitor qualifications four years later, and was promoted to deputy head in spring 2012.

Prior to joining Usdaw Darren worked for a Manchester-based solicitors' firm. He had previously graduated from Newcastle University with an honours degree in law and went on to receive a commendation on the legal practice course at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Darren also spent three years on Sainsbury's graduate trainee scheme in the early '90s and found himself stacking shelves in the Lancaster store, shifting boxes in the distribution depot in Haydock and working in the London-based head office – giving him a comprehensive insight into Usdaw's members' working conditions.

"I'm delighted to be leading the legal team," said the 42 year-old. "Our FirstCall and Legal Plus service continue to deliver with members keeping 100 per cent of their compensation unlike

the 25 per cent cut taken by the companies advertised on TV.

"We have also continued to represent our members at tribunal despite prohibitive fees being introduced and in fact are recovering more compensation than ever for members at tribunal.

"We face many challenges, not least of all the Trade Union Bill, but I'm looking forward to meeting those and supporting our members, reps and officials over the coming years."

Paul Gregory

Paul Gregory is the new deputy head of the computer services department and took up his new role in January.

The 44 year-old joined Usdaw's staff at central office in 2005 as network and support officer in the computer department.

He had previously worked in Oldham council's IT section for eight years after completing his computing qualifications at the University of Bolton.

"The use of IT across the union has grown significantly in the last ten years with more and more of the union's IT services being provided by the in-house team," he said. "All of our systems have been updated and improved in the last decade.

"I'll be helping to develop our overall approach to the IT systems we use and ensuring we have a strategy to take the union forward. It's a fast moving environment and I'm looking forward to keeping Usdaw ahead of the game. It's important we use the latest technology to support our members, reps, and staff."

Tony Doonan

Northern Ireland's Tony Doonan is the new area organiser at the North Shields office in the North Eastern division.

The former Tesco activist from the Glengormley store, Newtonabbey in County Antrim, took up his post in October 2015.

Tony joined Usdaw in 2011 and immediately became active. He was elected shop steward in 2012 and, after completing time out on stand-down, he was one of the 2014 Academy1 intake.

"I'm delighted to have joined the staff," said 39 year-old Tony.

"I've had to move to Newcastle but I'm used to relocating – I've previously lived in Australia.

"I've been in the job just over three months and I'm enjoying it.

"As you can imagine an organiser is kept really busy and no two days are the same, but I feel really fortunate to be in a position where I get to help people on a daily basis.

"All my new work colleagues have been terrific, welcoming and supportive and that's helped me settle in really quickly.

"The reps are great and I'm aiming to play my part to ensure the union continues to grow in the coming years."



Hidden disability



Supporting members with a disability is a key issue for Usdaw but when that disability is 'hidden' this can lead to more difficulties.

When people think of disability they usually picture someone with a guide dog or a wheelchair user. But in reality people with visible disabilities are in the minority, the vast majority of disabled people have hidden disabilities.

A hidden or non-visible disability is one that might not be immediately obvious to someone who is not aware of that person's circumstances. This could be,

for example, a learning disability, autism, diabetes, epilepsy, many cancers, MS, stress/depression or asthma.

Equalities officer Ruth Cross said: "You can't always tell by looking at someone whether they have a disability.

"This can lead to problems at work if a member with a hidden disability needs support. Managers may reply that the member 'doesn't look disabled', and use that as a reason not to support them.

"Workers with a hidden disability are entitled to the same protection against discrimination and rights to reasonable adjustments and our reps can support and advise them in exactly the same way they would for a

member with 'visible' disabilities."

The Equality Act (the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland) gives disabled people a number of important rights and protection at work. If a member is classified as disabled under the Act, they are entitled to protection, irrespective of their disability.

For more information about the Equality Act and reasonable adjustments at work, see the union's 'Supporting Disabled Members' guide at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities

The TUC has also produced advice for reps on supporting members with hidden disabilities.

Visit: www.tuc.org.uk and search 'you don't look disabled'.

News in brief...

The TUC has launched its Manifesto for Disability Equality as part of its campaign to win support for policies aimed at reversing the Government's changes that are impacting on disabled people. Visit: www.tuc.org.uk/disabilitymanifesto

Black workers are under-represented at every management level in the workplace, the recent Race at Work Report, commissioned by Race for Opportunity, has found. Despite one in eight of the working age population coming from an ethnic minority background, only one in 16 top management positions are held by a black person. Visit: race.bitc.org.uk and search **race work report**.

The TUC has produced a new guide to tackling HIV discrimination at work with facts about HIV and rights under the Equality Act. Visit: www.tuc.org.uk and search **HIV discrimination**.

New research has shown that women are significantly less likely to receive training at work than their male counterparts. Men are also significantly more likely to receive a pay rise as a result of their training than women.

The Government has announced plans to extend Shared Parental Leave (SPL) to include grandparents from 2018. While this may be of help to some families, it is expected that many grandparents will not qualify. The TUC has also questioned whether the move is at odds with the original intention of SPL to encourage fathers to play a bigger role in childcare.

Reps support Show Racism the Red Card Day

Usdaw activists played their part in last year's first Wear Red to Work Day organised by the anti-racism football charity Show Racism the Red Card, despite only two weeks' notice.

Members and reps donned red clothes, hats, noses and even red beards and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

"Thirteen workplaces joined in and raised £650. This is a fantastic achievement and is testament to the hard work and dedication of Usdaw reps," said general secretary John Hannett.

What the reps said:

“I've not done anything like this before, it was fantastic. Managers and shop floor staff



TESCO, EASTERN DIVISION

worked together. We had people on checkouts wearing red and the night shift manager dyed his hair and beard red. The public were very supportive too.

“All the reps were really enthusiastic and it made a difference to how people think about the issue of racism. It

gave us the opportunity to talk to members and non-members about such an important issue.

“It was really enjoyable doing something different. It helped to show that we are here for more than just problems at work.

More pictures from 'wear it Red' day on page 31.

Active reps will keep Usd



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

John Hannett has been general secretary since 2004, prior to that he was deputy general secretary, national officer, and an area organiser. He is a member of the Low Pay Commission, and president of Union Network International Europa Commerce, an international union organisation with affiliates from across the world.

How do you reflect on 2015 – a difficult year industrially and politically?

Without doubt it was an extremely challenging 12 months. Store closures, job losses, and pension changes at some companies just some of the major issues we had to deal with on behalf of our members.

Last year undoubtedly saw a massive shake up among the big retailers as they faced stiff competition from the no-frills discounters Aldi and Lidl, two companies, by the way, who refuse to recognise trade unions in general and are unwilling to talk to us directly.

Companies continued to take costs out of the business and the workers were at the sharp end of that economy drive. However, our reps and officials stood up to the challenges and worked hard to mitigate detrimental changes, helped get people redeployed in the business and secure the best possible severance deal if every other avenue was unavailable.

We also lost our legal fight to have workers facing redundancy treated fairly when the European Court of Justice rejected our claim on behalf of ex-Woolworths workers, working in small stores who missed out on compensation.

Yes a tough year, but we wouldn't be doing our job if we weren't in there fighting for our members. Retail and all the other sectors we organise in never stand still, that's the nature of the business, so we can't afford to stand still either.

Usdaw has modernised itself over the last few years, is this 'phase' complete now?

No. We have to keep innovating, and our modernisation agenda remains at our core.

Why? Because we have to be fit for purpose and give the best

possible service all of the time. Our ways of working are under constant review.

We continue to invest. Last year saw a revamped website, and a new membership system at central office, at some considerable cost, but it was necessary so we did it.

We have to innovate, invest, and consider new ideas whether that's from members, reps or staff. I want to tap into everyone's suggestions. We are always looking to improve our methods to increase membership levels and improve our organising agenda.

Has Usdaw reached a ceiling in terms of its membership levels?

Definitely not. We have massive potential in all of our sectors. Yes, we've seen 20 years of year-on-year growth and ended the year around the 442,000 mark, which was fantastic.

Membership levels reflect our organising success, it isn't accidental. We have a strategy and we execute it very well. We support our reps, provide excellent training courses and value our small army of unpaid volunteers.

I'm positive 2016 can see a further increase but we have to work as a team – staff, officials, reps and members pulling together, using our campaigns, talking to workers and delivering for the workforce.

Were you surprised the Conservatives won an overall majority?

I think everyone was! The polls, normally accurate, certainly didn't see that coming and it was a huge disappointment to see the Tories win.

They have wasted no time in attacking our members' income, shackling our ability to run political campaigns, restricting trade union rights and threatening the Labour Party's very existence as part of its

Law strong

vindictive and unnecessary Trade Union Bill. They also want to deregulate Sunday trading, so we have a fight on our hands on a number of fronts.

I can't over-emphasise how important it is for Usdaw to have a national political voice but just as importantly we need our members to get involved in local politics, stand as councillors, campaign in their community and to make sure their voice is heard. If we leave it to others we can't complain when decisions don't go our way.

What do you think of George Osborne's so-called 'living wage'?

I welcome any move to put more money into the pockets of workers but this isn't fair, it complicates the issue and could lead to widespread discrimination against younger workers.

Firstly, it only applies to over 25 year-olds, which is wrong. (It is set at £7.20 an hour payable from this April). We have campaigned for years to get the National Minimum Wage paid at 18, not 21 as it currently stands and now we have this artificial threshold imposed.

We believe in equal pay, regardless of age or gender.

Secondly, it muddies the water because this isn't the more well-known Living Wage, the campaign for an hourly rate of £8.25 for all workers (£9.40 in London). It's worth remembering pay, on average, still hovers around its pre-crash levels when inflation is taken into account.

Don't forget, we were also instrumental in agreeing substantial pay rises at the Co-op, Morrisons and Sainsbury's, with Ikea and others announcing big pay rises during the year. So our role in negotiating good pay deals remains central to our work.

A general election defeat, a new leader, where next for Labour?

Politically we always support the Labour leadership and we will continue to do so.

The challenge now for the Labour Party is to be seen as a government-in-waiting. We can't allow the Tories to claim they are the natural party of government, and have the right to rule.

The Labour Party can't afford to become a debating society, or a protest group, and the leadership has to play a big part in turning our fire on the Government and all of the hostile policies it's pushing through. Labour wins when it is a united Party and one that inspires both members and voters in general.

What's next for Usdaw?

We've already seen the power of our evidence-based campaigning, for example, on the Government's U-turn on tax credit cuts and its stumbling over its Sunday trading deregulation plans. However, let's not get carried away. Universal Credit is still a massive threat to our members' income and Sunday deregulation is still on the Government's agenda as is the Trade Union Bill.

So we still have plenty of work to do. Nationally, we can lobby parliament, but equally important is getting our members and reps to talk directly to their local MPs and councillors and put our arguments against the Sunday deregulation plans and the impact of Universal Credit. We all have a role to play.

We are a strong confident union, with a talented and committed army of activists and staff. We are financially sound and our organising agenda means we are well-placed to meet the challenges of the coming year.



JOHN WITH REPS PATRICIA ELDER AND KATE HILL AT THE ORGANISING AWARDS 2015...



...CAMPAIGNING AT WESTMINSTER...



...ON A VISIT TO MORRISONS...



...AT THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 2015

Busy reps build membership

The Freedom From Fear campaign took centre stage in November...

Tesco Spalding

Dealing with rude customers is an issue for many retail staff and this was highlighted during Usdaw's Respect Week at the Spalding Tesco Superstore in Lincolnshire.

"The campaign went well and we had some good feedback from staff about their own experiences," said Academy rep **Carol Taylor**, 45, who has been a rep for three years and is also a union learning rep.

"Many staff said that it didn't take much to set some customers off on a tirade of verbal abuse.

"The main flashpoint was asking for ID and more recently having to charge for carrier bags which sends some customers over the edge.

"Colleagues told me that they mostly just dealt with it themselves, and tried to keep smiling and get on with it!

"They also said that they welcomed the union's campaign as it shows the union knows staff need more support.

"These events in-store are extremely valuable for me as a rep as they give me the opportunity to speak one-on-one with colleagues, members and non-members alike. This helps to build up trust and awareness that the union is here to help them.

"I recruited two new members and persuaded a few members who were thinking of leaving to continue with their membership."

East of England Co-op

East of England Co-op Society has joined forces with reps and officials in the Eastern division to help fight anti-social behaviour in their stores across the region.

"The society has thrown itself right behind the Freedom From Fear campaign and has been working closely with us for the past two years,"

said area organiser Angie Dewing.

"This year we've worked on new initiatives to raise awareness of the issues staff have to deal with.

"As a result we ran a very successful, well-organised and highly visible event at Norwich along with our brilliant team of reps.

"Co-op rep **Tracey-Anna Clarke** spoke with BBC reporters and area organiser Stuart Sharman did a radio interview about the additional problems staff now face as a result of the introduction of Black Friday.

"The Co-op produced interactive videos showing a selection of incidents of abuse and assaults which the public watched and gave their feedback.

"There was full support for the campaign from the public who were astounded at what they saw and hadn't realised the level and frequency of abuse shopworkers have to deal with.

"Forty surveys were filled out and all of the literature was handed out.

"The reps were tremendous and really well informed about the campaign, the whole event was a huge success.

"We're planning more joint ventures with East of England Co-op next year."

Morrisons Eastwood

Ashfield MP Gloria De Piero gave her support to the Freedom From Fear campaign when she joined staff for Respect Day at the Morrisons store in Eastwood, Nottingham.

"It's great to have such a high profile local figure like Gloria backing our campaign again this year," said Academy rep **Shelly Middleton** who joined forces with night shift rep **Ken Glenn** and area organiser Alex Fraser.

"All credit to Ken, who is the only rep in the store, for organising the Respect Day and raising the profile of the union and the work it is doing through the Freedom From Fear campaign to help shopworkers."



EAST OF ENGLAND CO-OP SOCIETY REPS CAMPAIGN ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACROSS STORES IN THE



A SUCCESSFUL RESPECT DAY AT TESCO SPALDING

Ken, 56, who has been a rep for three years, said: "Not many of the staff really look forward to Christmas, it can be stressful as some customers get very abusive in the run up to the festive season.

"Customers will complain that you are not serving quickly enough or you've given them the wrong change.

"Some staff feel abuse is part of the job and they just have to put up with it.

"That's why this campaign is so important, especially for raising awareness with customers, most of whom are great but at busy times like Christmas they are under stress and behave in a totally different way to how they would normally."



View the Recruitment and Organising Gallery on the UsdawUnion Flickr page



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IGN AGAINST
REGION



MARK GUEST AND GILLIAN BROWN DURING
RESPECT DAY AT TESCO RAWTENSTALL



G



STAFF CAMPAIGN FOR FREEDOM FROM FEAR AT MORRISONS EASTWOOD

Tesco Rawtenstall

Respect Day at the Rawtenstall Tesco store in Lancashire had the backing of customers and the local police.

"We set up at the front of the store so we could catch shoppers on their way in and out," said experienced rep **Mark Guest**, 29, who organised the event with 63 year-old **Gillian Brown** who has been a rep for 18 months.

"We wanted to highlight the campaign and get the message across to customers by making our stall as visual as we could using the balloons and stickers and all the campaign materials.

"And we were delighted that we managed to secure the support of our local police officers who were

more than happy to chat to staff and promote the campaign.

"Customers were genuinely shocked by the campaign's statistics and to learn that shopworkers are verbally abused on a regular basis.

"We have a good membership of just over 74 per cent but we're always looking to improve on this and holding union events like this have proved very successful.

"The events are also a good training exercise for myself and Gillian as they put our skills to the test.

"We held a Legal Plus Day last year which was so popular that we're already planning another one and we've also enlisted the support of new rep **Ian Ashworth**."

In numbers...

Membership for week ended

16 January 2016

South Wales and Western	51,356
Eastern	66,712
Midlands	57,074
North Eastern	61,083
Scottish	46,359
Southern	61,755
North West	96,730
Total	441,069

Campaigns see more recruits

Tesco dotcom Enfield

The reps at the Tesco dotcom store in Waltham Cross, Enfield are proving that union workplace events are helping to raise the union's profile and grow membership.

They held a successful Legal Plus Awareness day in September to help build on an earlier event in April when they recruited 19 new members.

"We have more than 640 members," said **Stephen Peaty**, 60, a rep for three years. "Some of them missed our successful April event and many were asking when were we going to hold the next one.

"So Membership Week presented the perfect opportunity to organise another day and once again invite one of our solicitors to come in and speak to members about any legal issues they have.

"It also gave the reps some quality time to speak to non-members and explain the legal support available for themselves and their families if they joined the union.

"Once again the free will-writing service was extremely popular and the feedback about the day was great.

"Members also said it felt a lot easier speaking to a solicitor in their own workplace.

"I've learned a lot from organising these events. And recently I went out on stand-down for three months, recruiting in stores, which was new to me, as well as my own area of distribution and I signed up 150 new members, I was delighted."

Tesco Petersfield

New rep **Chris Mason** and experienced rep **Sarah O'Connor** signed up five new members during a well-organised Legal Plus Day at the Petersfield Tesco superstore, Hampshire, in November.

"It was the first campaign day we've run in our store, we hope it's the first of many, I really enjoyed being

involved," said Chris, 36, who has been a rep for 11 months.

"It was a big success with new members joining on the day and others asking questions about the union in general and for information about the legal services, everyone took leaflets away with them.

"Members were really impressed with the legal benefits, especially the free will-writing provision and to have the opportunity to speak to a solicitor in work.

"It was great working together with Sarah who has seven years experience under her belt. We were both enthusiastic about planning and preparing for the day beforehand to make sure it ran like clockwork.

"We're keen to run another Legal Plus Day and to encourage more colleagues to approach myself and Sarah and find out more about the union and maybe get involved themselves."

Tesco Chesterfield

Union awareness days are helping members reconnect with the union, according to dotcom driver **Mike Newton** after he joined the team of reps at the Tesco Extra store in Chesterfield, Derbyshire during Respect Week last November.

"As a dotcom driver I don't get as much time as I'd like to spend with members in-store so I really look forward to events like these," said Mike, 57, who has been a rep for six years.

"You can't beat a face-to-face chat with a member especially when it's not over a disciplinary issue.

"My first union day in-store was a Legal Plus session and the feedback from staff was superb.

"It's always a good feeling when you're able to help members.

"The days are also a good training ground for reps too as you never know what questions will be asked.



LEGAL PLUS DAY AT TESCO DOTCOM ENFIELD



LEGAL PLUS DAY AT TESCO PETERSFIELD IN NOV

"I'm part of a great team with **James Dietsch**, 27, **Patricia Wojnicz**, 59 and **Catherine Wright**, 55.

"We all have varying lengths of experience but we work very well together.

"I'm always keen to keep staff up-to-date with all the union offers and services and once a member has had a good experience they'll recommend the union to colleagues.

"I'm looking forward to our next in-store day, they make a big difference.

"I've also signed up for the union's workers' rights course which will help improve my knowledge further. It's going to be a busy few months."



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



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



DOTCOM DRIVER MIKE NEWTON RECRUITING AT TESCO CHESTERFIELD



EMBER



CAMPAIGNING DURING RESPECT WEEK IN ALDERSHOT

Council keen to work with Usdaw to promote safety in Southern division

Reps and officials in the Southern division are working closely with Hampshire's Rushmoor District Council's health and safety officers who have pledged their support for the Freedom From Fear campaign to make workplaces in Farnborough and Aldershot safer for staff and customers.

"We've been working together with the council for some time," said Southern divisional officer Sue Merrill.

"It's a real credit to the success of the

campaign and the hard work of our officials and reps to enlist the support of the council who are fully behind us in helping to spread the message that abuse is not part of the job.

"Before last year's annual Respect Week in November the council sent a mailshot to 500 retail premises and produced laminated signs for them to put beside their tills saying violence and abuse will not be tolerated.

"The mailshot included copies of our leaflets 'While you're looking after

the shop, who's looking after you?' and also mentions the fact that they are working with Usdaw.

"They also provided us with two free city centre prime locations; the Princes Mead Shopping centre in Farnborough and The Wellington centre in Aldershot, for our team of reps to set up their campaign stalls during Respect Week in November.

"We're looking forward to working together in the future to highlight the aims of our campaign even more."



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

Make safety your top New Year's resolution

Set the dates for your workplace inspections for the year

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

Talk to your manager and agree the dates for inspections in your workplace for the year ahead. If there are other reps where you work, get together to make sure the whole workplace is covered.

In the weeks running up to the inspection, use notice boards and other internal communication systems to let workers know when you will be coming round. Talk to workers as you are doing the inspection to see if they have any concerns.

Put any other important dates in your diary

If there is a safety committee or other forum where health and safety is on the agenda, get the dates for meetings in your diary. If you do not attend every one yourself, talk to the other union reps before a meeting to make sure any issues of concern are covered.

Your employer may run other health and safety campaigns or events during the year. Two important dates for the union are International Workers Memorial Day on 28 April and European Week for Safety and Health at Work on 24 to 28 October. Watch for Usdaw materials for both events which you can use in your workplace.

Make sure that workers know how to contact you

As the union health and safety rep, it is important that workers can get in touch with you to raise any concerns they may have. Both members and non-members need to know who you are and how to get hold of you.

Posters on notice boards, leaflets in the canteen, messages in staff



newsletters or on your company intranet system can all help to get the message across.

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

Usdaw keeps reps informed on health and safety through *Network* magazine and the regular reps' emails. But you can also sign up for a free, weekly e-zine from the TUC which keeps you in touch with the wider world of occupational safety and health.

Go to the TUC home page: www.tuc.org.uk and click on the 'Email Alerts' link and fill in the online form.

Let Usdaw know what you are doing

At a time when the Government is driving forward its de-regulation agenda and its attack on trade unions, it is more important than ever to have active health and safety reps in as many workplaces as possible.

We know that reps make a difference, but we need to make sure we share examples of good practice to encourage others.

So if you do something in your workplace to improve safety or health at work, let us know. Contact the health and safety section with your story.



email healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk or phone 0161 249 2441



www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety



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Dealing with the aftermath

The TUC has produced some timely guidance on safety and health at work for people who are affected by the floods.

It looks at the risks of travelling to work in flooded areas and also gives advice on how to protect workers' health and safety once the water has subsided and the clean-up begins.

Aimed at union health and safety reps, the guidance covers the need for a full risk-assessment before buildings can be re-occupied.

It also explains what needs to be done if staff are involved in cleaning up after the flood. Flood water is likely to be contaminated with sewage so workers need proper protective



equipment. Electrical safety is paramount. Employers need to provide adequate sanitation and fresh drinking water. Where oil or gas-fired heaters are used to dry premises out, adequate ventilation is essential to prevent carbon monoxide build-up.

The guidance also covers the need for employers to support workers whose homes may have been flooded. Copies of the guidance are available at:

www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-flooded-areas

Well-being at work – is it a gimmick or a godsend?

The word 'well-being' has become common parlance in some workplaces even though its exact meaning is ill-defined and like much business jargon can mean different things to different people.

Many employers have introduced well-being at work schemes in recent years (these can range from yoga and pilates to holistic therapies and training on how to deal with stress), but there are concerns about their effectiveness.

To help, the TUC has produced a guide, 'Work and well-being – A Trade Union Resource', which explains some of the problems and how union reps can support positive initiatives.

The TUC argues that the most important thing that employers can do to support workers health is to make sure that they get paid a decent wage and have reasonable working conditions. They point out that there are 1.2 million people in work suffering from work-related ill health and a further 700,000 who have left work in the last year with work-related illnesses.

Health and safety officer Doug Russell agrees: "It is important to remember that the legal duty on employers is to make sure that they do not damage the health of their workers so far as is reasonably practicable. Anything else they can do to promote better health is an added extra. There are obvious benefits for the employer as well as the

workers from improving overall health. To be effective, well-being schemes need to be developed in consultation with the workers and with union reps."

Usdaw itself produces lots of useful guidance on general health issues, including mental health, which can be found on the website: www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Health-Wellbeing and the TUC guide can be found at: www.tuc.org.uk



TUC calls for improved reporting of violence at work

In December, the TUC made a plea for improved reporting of violence to staff. According to their briefing note 'Without a strong and well-used reporting system, employers cannot respond to incidents or identify

potential hotspots and trends'.

The TUC argue that union health and safety reps should make sure there are effective reporting systems in place where they work. This means that the report forms must be

accessible to all workers and must be simple to use and there should be a system for giving feedback to workers when they do report incidents. The TUC briefing is available at: www.tuc.org.uk/node/124108



In conversation with...Paul Rodwell

Paul, 60, is the health and safety rep and shop steward at Makro in Enfield. He's been a member since 2002 and an activist since 2005. He recently won the divisional Organising Award for health and safety.

Why did you become a health and safety rep?

The health and safety rep left the company and I was concerned that standards would fall so I took on the role. I'm really glad I did, I thoroughly enjoy it.

How many members do you look after in your workplace?

There's about 27 and I'm the only in-store rep.

Have you been on any Usdaw training courses?

I've been on a shop stewards' introductory course, shop stewards' advanced course and a health and safety reps' introductory course. They were all very enjoyable and helpful.

What type of health and safety responsibilities do you get involved with?

Everything and anything to do with health and safety. I attend quarterly meetings in store and two regional meetings a year.

Have you made any big changes in your workplace?

Making the workplace temperature more comfortable for staff and customers by changing some unsuitable entrance doors.

What's next for you?

I will continue to monitor and uphold high standards of health and safety for as long as I can.



Your Letters & Pi

TWEET DECK

Some of *Network's* favourite tweets to @UsdawUnion

@Jasmin_Beckett
@UsdawUnion again doing fantastic work with the #freedomfromfear campaign - be respectful of shop workers today!

@JaneHutt
I met @UsdawUnion staff reps at Barry @Tesco supporting @TrussellTrust @valefoodbank Collection - thank you all!



@JuliaHB34
Checkout leaning campaign day going well at Kidsgrove. Well done Michelle and Chris @UsdawUnion @unionlearn



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International aid



Retired area organiser Bryn Rowlands (above right) recently presented a cheque for £754 to Dr Steven Rhodes, chairman of the Swindon Ocotal Link.

The money had been collected by Usdaw members to provide medical assistance for the people of Nicaragua. Swindon is linked with the town of Ocotal in the north west of Nicaragua and the Link organisation will see that the money is used for the provision of medical facilities and care for the elderly over there.

Bryn Rowlands,
South Wales and Western division

Solidarity shown in Greek capital



I was in Athens in November as a guest speaker at the ILGA Conference (European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association). Before my return flight I joined these bookshop workers protesting against longer Sunday working hours being forced on them.

Mike Jackson,
Eastern division

Carol Creed remembered



It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of Carol Creed, a former executive council member for the Eastern division.

Carol was a divisional, and executive councillor, for a number of years and was well known to everyone for the forthright manner in which she expressed her views.

She first came to be a member of Usdaw when she started working for Sainsbury's in East London and quickly found herself being called to the position of shop steward. Carol fought injustice wherever she saw it and our division, indeed our whole movement, is a poorer place for her passing.

We remember a good and loyal friend who made a positive difference to so many.

Dave McCrossen,
Eastern divisional officer

Primark progress



I would like to share the success of Primark in Kings Lynn.

Leanne McGregor is a shop steward in the store and has held the position for two years and just recently became a health and safety rep.

When Leanne first became a rep there were only six members in store. With support from the managers and working alongside her fellow rep Donna English they now have a amazing 70 union members out of 100 staff.

The picture shows Jess Large, Emma Nesbitt and Megan Heaphy taking part in Respect Week.

Karen Allison,
Eastern division

Learning success



Aurora Soledad (second right) is a pharmacy manager at Tesco Stroud. She wants to progress with further pharmaceutical qualifications, through British universities, however, she only has Spanish education qualifications and needed her English Level 2 to achieve her goal.

So as an Usdaw member, she enrolled onto a distance learning course through our provider New College, Swindon. Aurora said that



MORRISONS, HAVERFORDWEST



ictures

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the whole experience had been fantastic, with great support from the tutor and Usdaw learning reps. She was thrilled when presented with her certificate of qualification.

Photo from left to right: Helen Skinner, people manager Tesco Stroud. Kay Timbrell, Aurora Soledad, learner and Damien Seager, learning rep.

Kay Timbrell,
South Wales and Western division

Legal Plus Day



Rep Lorraine Haves and area organiser Declan Byrne hold a Legal Plus awareness day at Tesco Burnage.

Help for homeless



The North West Equalities forum, led by Brenda Shaw and supported by members in the division, have launched a help the homeless campaign by filling up Usdaw bags with hats, gloves, scarves and toiletries and giving them out to the homeless right across the North West.

Amanda Bailey-Coll,
deputy divisional officer,
North West division

Best branch is A230 Somerset General!



Congratulations to A230 Somerset General branch winners of UIA Insurance's 'Community Branch of the Year' award, which recognises the achievements of members and activists for their inspiring contributions to their locality – the cash prize will go to local charities.

Top recruiters win prizes in division



Julie Hart, Tony Havill and Debby Randall are presented with cheques by Sue Pryn, deputy divisional officer, Southern division, for recruiting most members in Tesco as part of a three month divisional campaign.

Reps Wear it Red to tackle racism



The Eastern division definitely knows how to 'wear it red' with members even dyeing their beards for the occasion last October.

Support for disabled members seminar



Thirty delegates attended a seminar on Supporting Disabled Members in the Workplace held at the Grand Hotel in Torquay in November.

Everyone found the weekend

thoroughly enjoyable and left with a better understanding of some of the issues that disabled members can face.

Bipin Pitrola, area organiser,
South Wales and Western division



MORRISONS, LLANELLI



SAINSBURY'S, LAMPETER



TESCO, CARMARTHEN



TESCO, IRLAM, MANCHESTER

Our Services and Benefits Package Cannot be Beaten

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Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

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and Technical Association

Usdaw's services and benefits package offers fantastic value for money and ranks amongst the very best of all Britain's trade unions while ensuring the subscription rate you pay remains one of the lowest.

Professional services from a modern union

- **FREE** professional assistance and advice on all employment matters including grievance and disciplinary hearings.
- **FREE** cash benefits.
- Health and safety/pension advice.
- Union education and training.
- Special member offers and discounts from well-known companies.

Our legal services can make a real difference

Legal Plus offers you and your family a wide range of legal services. In 2015 more than £18 million was won in compensation for our members. Key aspects of the Legal Plus service include:

- **FirstCall Usdaw** – 0800 055 6333 – **FREE** Accident Claim Line.
- Advice from lawyers who specialise in accident or work-related disease and injury cases.
- You are covered for any accident in the UK, any time, any place.
- If you win, you keep all your compensation and Usdaw meets all your costs.
- **FREE** will-writing service for you and your partner.
- **LOW COST** probate and conveyancing service for you and your partner.
- Your immediate family are fully covered for road traffic claims.
- **FREE** initial legal advice on any matter not connected to work and follow-up assistance at competitive rates.



Full details of Usdaw's benefits and professional services are available from your Union rep or visit our website www.usdaw.org.uk or call the Usdaw helpline on 0845 60 60 640*

*calls charged at local rate

Scan here**

To view the latest news, information and resources on your mobile.



www.usdaw.org.uk

**To scan the code, download a QR reader app from your app store. A charge may be applied by your network provider.

The Legal Plus service is offered subject to the Rules of the Scheme. A member must be fully paid up at the time of the problem and remain so. Legal assistance will not be granted to a family member if they should have been in Usdaw themselves. Legal assistance cannot be granted to bring proceedings against the Union.

WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION RATES

Scale	A	B	C
Weekly Subscription	£2.32	£2.02	£1.45

SICKNESS GRANT*

Scale	A	B	C
Payment after continuous period of 6 weeks	£30	£25	£15
Payment after 20 weeks	£100	£40	£30
Payment after 40 weeks	£75	£50	£35
Payment after 52 weeks	£100	£55	£40

*Please note each Sickness Grant is a 'one-off' payment for the period stated and is not payable weekly.

PERMANENT DISABLEMENT GRANT

Scale	A	B	C
Total	£4,000	£1,000	£1,000
Partial	£2,000	£500	£500

MATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Grant	£30	£25	£20

PATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Grant	£30	£25	£20

DEATH GRANT

Scale	A	B	C
Funeral	£650	£210	£140
Industrial Accident	£6,000	£1,500	£1,500
Non-Industrial Accident	£2,000	£500	£500

DISPUTE BENEFIT

Scale	A	B	C
Weekly Benefit	£50	£50	£50

Benefits are payable in accordance with the Union rule book and any entitlement depends on paying your contributions regularly and not falling into arrears. Benefits can only be claimed (except dispute and victimisation benefit) after 12 months' continuous membership. All rates effective from 29 June 2015.