

# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS – MAY/JUNE 2019



CAMPAIGNING FOR THE  
FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET

# SAVE OUR SHOPS

*Usdaw*

Usdaw

Campaigning  
For Equality

Discrimination

# Sexual Harassment ...

8 out of 10 young women in Usdaw have experienced sexual harassment in the last 12 months ...

*"I haven't worked there that long and I don't feel able to stand up for myself – other people may think I don't have a sense of humour and I want to get along with everyone.."*



Stock image posed by model.

... it's **NOT** ok!

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Usdaw  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers





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# CAMPAIGNING FOR MEMBERS

The May/June edition of *Network*, is packed full of news and updates on Usdaw campaigns.

In May Usdaw hosted its 73rd ADM and *Network* gives reps in-depth coverage of some of the main debates including Time For Better Pay and automation.

I am pleased to announce that 13 specially-selected reps started on the union's first Lay Tutor Training and Development programme. The accredited pilot scheme is designed to give the reps the essential skills and confidence they need to teach in adult education.

In June Usdaw successfully launched its Industrial Strategy for Retail to MPs and retailers at Westminster. The strategy, which has been welcomed by the British Retail Consortium and John McDonnell the shadow chancellor of the exchequer, urges the Government and employers to work together and take action to save the high street.

Hundreds of Usdaw activists were out in force in May to take part in the union's annual Supporting Parents and Carers



Spotlight Day to highlight the campaign theme Not Enough Hours in the Day.

*Network* also includes a feature on hearing loss and the Equality Act, as well as regular features on activist in depth, recruitment and organising and health and safety.

The coverage included in *Network* demonstrates that it's been an extremely busy couple of months for Usdaw. With the union doing what it's best at; campaigning on behalf of members, working hard to collate evidence to back up our claims and looking at new ways to develop and support reps.

*Usdaw General Secretary*

*Paddy Lewis*



*Usdaw launches its Industrial Strategy for Retail at Westminster*

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*Usdaw*  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers

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# IN THE NEWS

Don't forget to email the editor your view [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

## LABOUR CALL FOR £10 AN HOUR

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has called for a baseline £10 an hour for all workers. This would deliver a key aim of Usdaw's Time For Better Pay campaign.

The Resolution Foundation recently reported that the proportion of low-paid workers in Britain has fallen to its lowest level since 1980 and suggested the introduction of the National Living Wage had reduced low pay. If the National Living Wage continued to rise at a faster pace after 2020 then Britain would be on course to eliminate low pay in the middle of the 2020s.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Going to work should mean a decent standard of living for all workers. Labour's commitment is very much in line with what we've been able to achieve in trade union organised



workplaces. It is only right there is a level playing field across all employers and that can only be achieved through minimum wage regulations.

"This report from the Resolution Foundation

highlights that taking steps towards fair pay for all workers is having a positive effect on the country's economy and we urge the Government to continue this trajectory – it's Time For Better Pay!"



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### USDRAW'S TIME FOR BETTER PAY CAMPAIGN AIMS:

- Young workers to be paid the full adult rate.
- At least £10 per hour minimum wage rate.
- Tackling zero and short hours contracts through a statutory minimum contract of 16 hours per week, for those who want it.
- A statutory right to an employment contract that reflects an individual's normal hours of work.

## NEW TUC WORKPLACE REPORT

## TUC LIFTS LID ON LGBT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The TUC and Usdaw are calling for a new duty on employers to properly protect their staff from sexual harassment at work.

This was following a TUC report about the sexual harassment of LGBT people at work. The report found:

- Nearly 7 in 10 (68 per cent) LGBT people admit to being sexually harassed at work.
- 1 in 5 LGBT women report that they have been sexually assaulted at work.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Harassment is one of the biggest problems LGBT members face in the workplace. The Equality Act makes it clear that harassment, including so called 'jokes', is unlawful. Employers must deal with any incidents quickly and effectively and take reasonable steps to prevent any such incidents from arising in the first place.

"We welcome the work of the TUC in lifting the lid on sexual harassment of LGBT workers, because it is a trade union issue. Sexual harassment creates an atmosphere and environment in the workplace that harms everyone.



Udaw believes that everyone has a right to work in a situation which is safe and supportive, free from fear of harassment or discrimination.

"Udaw is here to make sure that there is no place for sexual harassment in our workplaces. Prevention is better than taking action after the event.

Udaw works with members and reps to raise awareness and to support and encourage members to report it. We also work with employers and negotiate workplace policies and procedures that prevent harassment from arising in the first

place and ensure incidents are dealt with fairly, quickly and confidentially.

"We campaign all year round to raise awareness of sexual harassment and encourage our members to 'call it out'.

During the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOTB), we put the spotlight on homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, standing together with our LGBT colleagues, as we do every day."

The full report is available at: [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) search **LGBT sexual harassment**

## OCADO ANDOVER

## STAFF DEVASTATED BY JOB CUTS AFTER FIRE

Following a huge fire which destroyed the Ocado warehouse in Andover in February the company have now announced redundancies.

The online shopping fulfilment provider has proposed making job cuts after failing to find an alternative site in the Andover area.

Udaw national officer Daniel Adams said: "Clearly the staff are devastated by this development,

particularly as they have spent the last three months helping to keep the business going after a fire gutted the Andover site.

"The company tell us that they have been trying to find a suitable alternative site in the Andover area, without success, and they now face a two-year rebuild to replace the burnt-out facility, so they are proposing to place a significant

number of the customer fulfilment centre staff at risk of redundancy.

"Full and meaningful consultations are ongoing with the company, with a view to minimising redundancies and mitigating their impact. In the meantime, we will continue to provide our members with the support, advice and representation they need at this very difficult time."

**ARCADIA GROUP**

**STAFF DESERVE TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT**

The Arcadia Group has announced plans to shut 23 stores, putting 520 jobs at risk, as part of a company voluntary arrangement including Dorothy Perkins, Burton, Topshop and Topman.

Unfortunately, the pursuit of a company voluntary arrangement is all too common in modern retailing, as the high street crisis continues to blight town centres.

It is a distressing time for staff, who are often not kept informed by the company and left on the sidelines waiting to hear their fate through media reports.

Usdaw national officer Dave Gill said: "Arcadia staff deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, with a seat at the table where the future of their jobs will be decided.

"That did not happen in BHS, where the 11,000 staff were treated appallingly by the employer and it was only when the administrator got involved that a line of



communication was opened with the union, but by then it was too late.

"Usdaw is the trade union for Arcadia staff and we urge Philip Green to end his refusal to speak to us. The staff have a lot of experience and expertise to offer to help turn

the business around.

"The best retailers do engage with their employees through an independent trade union.

"Let's not have another BHS style scandal that would further damage Philip Green's reputation and question his integrity."

**WALGREENS BOOTS ALLIANCE**

**USDW URGES BOOTS TO GIVE STAFF A VOICE**



Boots announced it was reviewing the future of 200 stores leaving hundreds of retail workers worried that their job was at risk.

Usdaw has urged the American owner, Walgreens Boots Alliance, to properly engage with the union for retail staff working in stores.

Usdaw national officer Daniel Adams said: "Boots staff deserve to have their voices heard. That is best achieved through the involvement of a recognised trade union and Usdaw is the trade union for Boots retail staff.

"Let's make sure Boots retail staff are treated with dignity and respect through this difficult period of uncertainty."



## IN BRIEF

### BARGAIN WORLD

The new discounter has opened the first of its 25 planned stores. The company is aiming to open up to 80 stores in the coming years.

### CO-OP

The Co-op has secured planning permission for a new distribution centre in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire. The site will create up to 1,200 new jobs once it opens in 2022.

### AMAZON

Amazon has announced a new fulfilment centre in Kegworth, East Midlands. The site will create 500 new jobs initially and up to 1,000 in the future. It will be Amazon's fifth site in the East Midlands, with the company already running sites at Coalville, Daventry, Rugeley, and Rugby.

### LIDL

Lidl will be opening its biggest UK warehouse later this year in Motherwell, Scotland. The new warehouse will provide 600 jobs, however the firm will be relocating operations from its current Livingston warehouse.

### PRIMARK

Primark has created 500 new jobs by opening its new flagship store in Birmingham. The store is the biggest in its global estate, employing more than 1,000 people in total.

## MARKS & SPENCER

# USDAW CALLS FOR RECOGNITION



Marks and Spencer chief executive Steve Rowe confirmed 85 more store closures, following the 35 already closed. All M&S employees were put under the threat of redundancy in November 2016 when the company announced a restructure affecting more than 100 shops over five years.

Usdaw national officer Dave Gill said: "This piecemeal approach to reorganising the business is extremely distressing for the staff. The threat of redundancy hangs over every M&S shopworker. It offers no comfort when a company spokesperson was reported saying no decision has been made over which shops will close and

that 'staff will be the first to know'.

"Usdaw has thousands of members working for M&S and the staff now need the representation and support of an independent trade union; an experienced and knowledgeable trade union to interrogate the company's business case for reorganisation.

"We urge M&S to abandon their long-held resistance to allowing Usdaw to represent their staff. It is simply unjust that the company have decided not to engage with a trade union. Staff are telling us they want Usdaw to represent them not the in-house staff association. It should be their choice."

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## BOOHOO BURNLEY AND MANCHESTER

## CRYING OUT FOR USDAW

Usdaw's campaign to get union recognition for Boohoo workers stepped up a gear in June with a joint action day outside the Boohoo headquarters in Manchester and operations centre in Burnley.

Union activists at both venues rallied public support for the campaign and spoke directly to Boohoo staff about joining the union.

The online clothes retailer has so far refused to meet with Usdaw despite the company's joint chief executive Carol Kane agreeing to allow union recognition 'if the workers would like it' at an environmental audit committee meeting with chair Mary Creagh MP last November.

Mary has now written to Boohoo for a progress report on the steps they've taken to engage with Usdaw to meet key ethical trading standards.



Usdaw North West divisional officer Mike Aylward led the action day. "Boohoo want to convince Parliament that they are an ethical trader, but when it comes to giving staff a voice through an independent trade union they are found wanting," said Mike. "Ethical trading isn't just about checking the terms and conditions of workers in the supply chain, it's also about ensuring Boohoo's directly employed staff are treated with dignity and respect.

"MPs listened to Usdaw's evidence

that countered Boohoo's assertion that there was no demand for union recognition and we welcomed the recommendation for the company to engage with us as a priority, but the company continues to decline. Maybe Boohoo thought MPs would forget about their recommendations following the publication of their report.

"Usdaw's campaign will continue until Boohoo listens to reason, to our members and to the cross-party committee of MPs."

## IN MEMORY OF CHARLIE THOMAS

## A LIFELONG TRADE UNIONIST



Usdaw was saddened to hear of the death of one of its longest serving members Charlie Thomas who died in May aged 95.

Charlie was born in 1924 and left school in 1938 to work at the Co-op as a trainee butcher. He went to his first union meeting in 1938 when membership subs were tuppence a week.

In his 51-year working career and 80 years of membership Charlie remained an active member of the union. He set-up the Haywards Heath branch in the 50s, which at its peak had 1,400 members. Charlie served on the divisional council

from 1972-1985. From 1990 he was a member of the British Pensioners Trade Union and Action Association, a member of both the South East Region of the TUC retired members and the Southern divisional retired members' committee.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute: "Charlie was a living history of both the 20th and 21st century trade union movement.

"His commitment and enthusiasm for the movement cannot be understated and he will be sorely missed by all his friends in Usdaw.

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

## IN BRIEF

### H&M

H&M have announced plans to open a new warehouse in Milton Keynes, creating 800 jobs. The site will service stores across the UK and Ireland, as well as processing online customer orders, making it H&M's first omnichannel distribution centre.

### ZERO-HOURS

From October to December 2018, there were 844,000 workers on zero-hours contracts, down from 902,000 a year earlier. 2.6 per cent of those in employment were on zero-hours contracts, down from 2.8 per cent this time last year.

### RETAIL JOB LOSSES

New research for PwC shows that an estimated 14 shops are closing every day as UK high streets face their toughest trading climate in five years. The data showed that a net 1,123 stores disappeared from Britain's top 500 high streets in the first six months of the year.

### FRANKIE & BENNY'S

We're sorry to announce that Frankie & Benny's has recently withdrawn the discount for Usdaw members. This is disappointing as it has been one of our most popular member offers over the last few years.

## A TRIBUTE TO PAT JONES

# THE TRADE UNION STALWART WHO LAUNCHED A NEW DAWN



Hot off the press: Pat (right) holds the first copy of *Usdaw Today* in January 1990

Former publicity and public relations officer Pat Jones passed away in May at the age of 88.

Pat was employed by the union from 1973 until his retirement in 1994. He was the union's press and public relations officer for almost 20 years at central office in Manchester.

Pat's journalistic career began with Home Counties Newspapers in his home town of Stevenage, where he trained and eventually became chief reporter. He was also active in the Labour Party and served as a local councillor at Wallasey.

His move to Usdaw in 1973 gave him the opportunity to combine his journalistic career with two equally important areas of his life – the trade union movement and politics.

At Usdaw he headed a busy department fully involved with all

Usdaw's campaigns, producing publicity material and promoting media interest. He also changed the format of the union's magazine to a newspaper, Dawn, in his role as editor.

His time at Usdaw coincided with the Thatcher Government and major attacks against trade unions and attempts to deregulate the Sunday Trading law.

General secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I was saddened to hear the loss of our former colleague Pat. At the time of Pat's appointment companies and organisations were starting to embrace the importance of good communications. Pat's commitment and dedication to Usdaw laid the foundations that have helped shape the Union's communications over the years. Our deepest condolences go out to his family and friends."

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# USDAW TELLS MPS 'SAVE OUR SHOPS'

Usdaw launches its groundbreaking retail strategy to MPs, retailers and the Living Wage Foundation

**M**Ps and leading retail figures attended the parliamentary launch of Usdaw's Industrial Strategy for Retail in June.

The retail sector is facing one of the most challenging periods in its history. Developments in technology, changes in consumer spending patterns and growing uncertainty around Brexit have all contributed towards the brutal trading environment.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) estimated that 74,000 retail jobs were lost over the course of 2018 and reported that town centre vacancy rates in the UK hit 10.2 per cent in April 2019, their highest level for four years.

With store closures and job losses expected to accelerate in the coming months and years, the crisis in retail is reaching breaking point; Government action needs to be equally significant.

The retail sector is a fundamental part of the UK economy, directly employing three million people, with a further 1.5 million jobs reliant on the success of the industry; every store that closes impacts negatively not just on local communities and town centres but on the wider UK economy.

## LAUNCH

The parliamentary launch was attended by 80 people, including 38 MPs, several major employers, and representatives from organisations including the Living Wage Foundation and the Institute for

the Future of Work. The panel was chaired by Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis. Members of the panel were Helen Dickinson, the CEO of the British Retail Consortium, Alison Phillips, the editor of the Daily Mirror, Bill Grimsey, a retail expert, and John McDonnell MP, the shadow chancellor of the exchequer.

## STRATEGY

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis introduced the strategy document, explaining that the difficulties facing retail have been ignored for too long, and if it was any other industry in this situation there would be much more pressure for action from the Government. Paddy talked through the three strands of the strategy – Economy and Community, People and Productivity, and Changing Perceptions. Each panelist gave an overview of their thoughts on Usdaw's Industrial Strategy for Retail which was followed by a question and answer session.

## PADDY LILLIS USDAW GENERAL SECRETARY

"Usdaw has a unique insight into the challenges facing the retail sector. Our members know first-hand how changes are impacting on the way they work and the way customers shop.

"Consumers see job losses, shop closures, automation in stores on the TV news each night, but Usdaw members are living this every day.

"Retail is a consumer facing industry, and the industry needs to

invest in the people who are dealing with the consumers. That means decent pay and secure work for retail workers. The shops and the high street have one big advantage over online and that is the face to face interaction. The shopping public like to speak to a shop assistant, they want advice and they like the conversation. If the high street and shops are to survive they need to play to their strengths. So why not invest in the biggest asset – the shop floor workforce?

“Retail provides real jobs to hard-working people. We need to challenge the negative perceptions to make it clear that retail jobs are real jobs. We want to work together with everyone who wants to save our shops and see a bright future for retail. Everyone in this room has a shared interest in the retail sector surviving and thriving. We need to work together to make sure the high street survives and our communities have good quality shops in their locality.”

**DAVID HANSON MP**

“We recognise that the people who work in retail are working valuable jobs, they’re committing to their communities, they are part of a key industrial sector employing hundreds of thousands of people across the country.

“This has been a really important meeting, we’ve brought together members of Usdaw, businesses, employers, interested groups and MPs. We’ve raised the key issues of how we support our high street, generate jobs, and help support the retail sector across the UK. I hope that from today we’ll be able to press Government hard on what measures are needed to improve the retail offer in our high street.”

**HELEN DICKINSON  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE BRC**

“There is no doubt there is a perfect storm of technology fundamentally affecting the way that we shop. Online will continue to grow, non-

food online sales 15 years ago were less than 1 per cent, today they are 20 per cent.

“If there will be fewer shops, it’s pretty likely that there will be fewer people who work in retail in the future, and if there are going to be fewer jobs, we need to make sure that they are better jobs.

“I would encourage everyone to read this document. It is a quality and comprehensive piece of work which covers all the bases on the issues we’re dealing with.”

**ALISON PHILLIPS  
EDITOR DAILY MIRROR**

“Eighteen months ago, the Mirror launched the High Street Fightback campaign’ because I was tired of continuously putting stories in the paper about another shop going down.

“There’s all sorts of financial reasons why this sector has to be safeguarded, but there’s something else that’s very important. A high street creates a sense of belonging, it creates a sense of community and a sense of home.

“So, we need greater support for town centres; we need people to have more money in their pockets, public transport needs to be looked at. So do rip off parking charges and business rates. The list is endless, all of which is covered in the retail strategy.

“Our High Streets aren’t just dying, they have been slaughtered. If we believe in society, we believe in shops.”

**BILL GRIMSEY RETAIL EXPERT**

“I have read Usdaw’s Industrial Strategy for Retail from cover to cover. It is excellent and I agree with much of it.

“Town centres need to be reinvented as community hubs based on health, education, entertainment, leisure, experiences. When you do that you’ll have lots of people there and you’ll get more shops.

“We then have to deal with some



*Pictured l-r: Alison Phillips, Bill Grimsey, David Hanson, Pe*

of the barriers. First business rates which are not fit for purpose. It has to go and could be replaced by a sales tax which could level the playing field. We need to invest in this country, because this lack of investment over the last 10 years has caused the problem we have today.

**JOHN MCDONNELL  
SHADOW CHANCELLOR  
OF THE EXCHEQUER**

“There are a lot of MPs here because we are all, in our individual constituencies, facing the problems of what’s happening in our town centres.

“In all the discussions we’ve been having we’ve been trying to look at a comprehensive approach to all



*Eddy Lillis, John McDonnell and Helen Dickinson*

of this in order to develop a proper retail strategy, and basically Usdaw has written it for us.

“What the report does, in detail, in a way that others haven’t, it gives us a step-by-step approach, to make sure the retail industry thrives, to make sure that customers get good service, but importantly as well it tries to make sure that the workers themselves have a long-term future based upon skills, training, good wages and decent conditions, including workers having a stake in the decision making process as well as a living wage of at least £10 per hour.

“This is a thorough piece of work, which the union should be proud of, and we will take it forward into Government.”

### THE UNION PROPOSED DETAILED AND EVIDENCE LED POLICIES, CENTRED ON THREE KEY AREAS:

- **Economy and community**  
 Changing the economic framework on everything from car parking to rates, rents and reforming the tax system to create a new framework that supports both the UK-wide economy and local communities, to include a level playing field between online and ‘bricks and mortar’ retailers.
- **People and productivity**  
 Improving productivity by addressing low pay and insecure work to help drive

productivity in the sector – including a minimum wage of £10 per hour, while giving staff a say in the future of the business they work for and on the introduction of new technology.

- **Retail jobs are ‘real jobs’**  
 Challenging perceptions about retail work and promoting the idea that retail jobs are ‘real jobs’. Seeking a greater focus from Government on the retail industry and ensuring shopworkers are valued.

# FAMILY MATTERS

Usdaw activists and officials across the country put the spotlight on parents' and carers' rights

**H**undreds of Usdaw activists were out in force in May to take part in the union's annual Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day.

Campaigners organised events in workplaces and town centres across the UK to highlight the campaign theme 'Not Enough Hours in the Day' and the fact that short hours put parents and carers under pressure. Members are often left without the hours they want and need to get by, which makes the already difficult task of juggling work with caring for someone that much harder.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Most members are juggling their jobs with caring for someone. We understand this can be hard at the best of times, so all year round we campaign and negotiate for improved rights at work for parents and carers.

"Usdaw is campaigning for improved employment rights such as a minimum 16-hour contract for those who want it and better family-friendly employment rights from day one.

"Our reps bring Usdaw's campaigns to life and I'm extremely grateful for the voluntary work they do."



Tesco, Savile Street, Sheffield

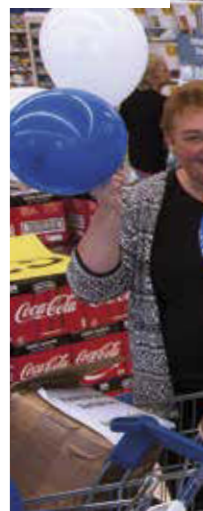
Warrington town centre with DGS Dave McCrossen



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buy your insurance from your holiday company! Do your research and get yourself a good deal, not only in terms of price but in terms of cover too.

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With Usdaw Insurance you'll get a **10% discount** when you buy online. Plus 24-hour worldwide assistance, single trip and annual multi trip cover options and golf and cruise cover available as optional extras.

To find out more about travel insurance for Usdaw members visit  
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Win 1 of 6  
Annual Cinema Passes\*

THE CINEMA SOCIETY

\* Terms and Conditions apply

## THE CINEMA SOCIETY competition - have you entered yet?

We've teamed up with the Cinema Society to offer members the chance to win one of six annual cinema passes for either Cineworld or Odeon cinemas.

**The competition ends on the 30th June** so make sure you and your members enter.

For more information and to enter go to:

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

\*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice. Groom (Unisex Shaving Brand) - New customers only. One per person. Delivery to UK/NI addresses only. Delivery charge of £3.95 applies. You will need to create an account with groom to access this offer. Interflora - Code must be entered at the checkout to redeem discount. Code cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. All products are subject to Interflora standard delivery unless otherwise stated. Standard delivery is next day at £6.00. Free Delivery is next day via courier. Other delivery options available. At certain times of the year delivery prices may vary. Some delivery services are subject to availability and may be withdrawn without notice during busy periods. Some restrictions may also apply to certain delivery locations. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd.



## Ten minutes with... **TRACY JANE WHITE**

**N**etwork speaks to award-winning Tesco rep Tracy about her passion for supporting others through Lifelong Learning...

### **Where do you work?**

I work full-time at Tesco Extra in Askham Bar, York. I've been there nearly 17 Years. I've worked in many departments during that time including the bakery, coffee shop, customer food orders and meet and greet. I'm currently in the grocery department looking after stock.

### **How did you become involved with Usdaw?**

I worked for a catering company

prior to Tesco. I used to act as a rep of sorts, standing up for my colleagues' rights where I saw them being treated unfairly and liaising with management. When I started working at Tesco in Clifton Moor I was really pleased when an Usdaw rep came to talk about the union and its benefits during my induction, I signed up there and then.

### **Tell us about your union journey?**

Two years later I moved to Tesco Askham Bar where I was elected as in-store rep. I went on my first union training course and I was hooked. I was put at ease straight away, particularly with my own concerns

about my reading and writing skills as I'm dyslexic. The experience gave me a massive confidence boost. I wanted to learn more about the union so went to my first divisional conference which turned out to be politically themed. The more I got involved with the union, the more political I became. Since then I have been on many rallies and demonstrations, helped out in elections and stood twice in York council elections – I missed out in 2011 by just 20 votes. I'm currently general council member for Usdaw Labour in York, branch chair and sit on Usdaw's North Eastern divisional council.

**How has your role as union learning rep developed?**

I became a union learning rep shortly after becoming a rep. I wanted to give something back to the union and help others like myself who might struggle with learning difficulties. A couple of years into the role the project worker asked if I would become a mobile union learning rep and of course I agreed. It's enabled me to help lots of other members access learning who work for different companies in the area. Over the years I've completed many courses myself, so I can tell people what they are like first-hand, if I can do it, anyone can.

I'm very pleased with how far we've come, from staff having to complete courses in their own time to now getting paid release, and full support from management at all levels who can now see the benefits of Lifelong Learning in the workplace.

**How did it feel to win an organising award for your Lifelong Learning work?**

It was an honour to be nominated by colleagues in the division and an even greater honour to be selected as divisional winner and attend the national awards. There were many worthy winners and not for one moment did I think that I would win. When it happened, my friend tapped me on the shoulder and said 'congratulations you've won!'. I was so overwhelmed and shocked.

**What keeps you motivated?**

Just doing something that I love. Seeing learners travel through their learning journey lights up my day. Seeing their confidence and enthusiasm as they progress and believing in themselves that they can achieve anything is a privilege and honour.

I believe we all need to up-skill ourselves. Keeping your brain active gives you motivation in your work and your home life. A new course gives you a buzz and something to focus on. You are never too old or

too young to learn whatever you want to.

**What's been the highlight of your work with the union so far?**

Seeing one of my fellow union learning reps, Trish Baldwin, win the TUC digital award last year. I've seen her progress through her learning journey and I'm really proud of what she has achieved. Thanks to the union I've also done many unbelievable and exciting things. I've spoken about Lifelong Learning at the Houses

of Parliament, at the Labour Party conference and twice to Norwegian ULRs at their UK conference where I spoke about the role of a ULR in the UK.

**What is next for you?**

Hopefully I'll just be able to continue doing what I love to do – helping members access Lifelong Learning and supporting them as they progress, also supporting the Labour Party and promoting Usdaw at as many campaigns and events as I can.

**ALL ABOUT TRACY**

**Where do you live?**

I live in York with my husband of 26 years.

**Do you have any pets?**

Not anymore, our dog passed away over 10 years ago and we can't bring ourselves to get another. I dog sit for others.

**Favourite food?** My husband's Sunday dinner, he does a mean roast!

**Favourite book?** Our Billie by Ian Clayton. A very sad and true story and I have worked with Ian in creative writing workshops.

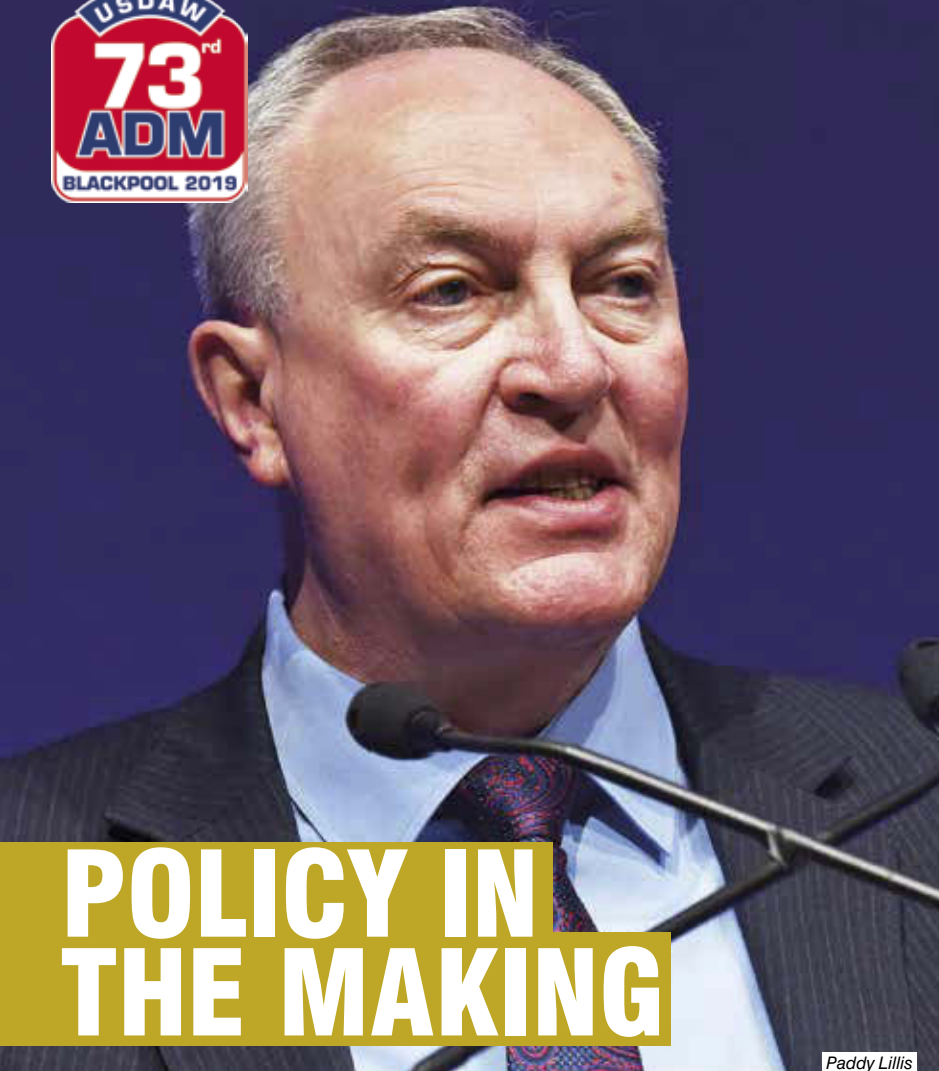
**Favourite place?** Tobago. We went there last year for a special holiday. It's unspoilt and not at all touristy.

**How do you like to spend your spare time?** I like to read and I'm really into my netball and running. I also support a local walking netball team for the more mature ladies. I'm also a qualified umpire and umpire netball for all ages and abilities.

**Something interesting about you that we don't know?** I have done a race for life every year since it started in York from 5k to 10k.



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# POLICY IN THE MAKING



Dave McCrossen



Amy Murphy



Paddy Lillis

Chris Winwood

**U**sdaw activists and officials gathered in the Winter Gardens in Blackpool for the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM). ADM is the biggest event in Usdaw's calendar, bringing activists together from across the UK and giving them the chance to meet fellow reps.

General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Amy Murphy hosted their first ADM as the new leadership team, while executive council member Chris Winwood ensured the smooth running of his first ADM as chair of the standing orders committee.

Over 800 delegates voted on propositions to decide the union's

policies and priorities for the next 12 months.

Wages, education, crime, housing, health and safety, benefits and the environment were all debated by passionate speakers, many of whom were first time delegates.

Socially conscious delegates raised propositions on better pay, affordable housing and better health care provisions for all members of society.

Delegates also heard from two guest speakers, leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn and the general secretary of the ICTU, Patricia King.

In a wide-ranging speech Jeremy outlined what a Labour government

would do for Usdaw workers and gave his support to a £10 minimum wage, better employment laws and more protection to prevent attacks against shopworkers.

Patricia spoke about how the retail industry in Ireland faced similar challenges to those being experienced here in Britain. She told delegates that with a lot of hard work the Irish trade union movement had recently managed to outlaw zero-hours contracts.

Activists were also kept busy during lunchtimes with a Save Our Shops rally, a march against the far-right extremist Tommy Robinson and the equality fringe meeting on universal credit.

## TIME FOR BETTER PAY DEBATE

## DELEGATES BACK CAMPAIGN

Introducing the Time For Better Pay debate Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Our survey of over 10,500 workers found that over half of people paid at or close to minimum wage rates are missing meals, just to pay the essential bills, and three out of four are struggling to pay for the energy to heat their homes.

"Unfortunately, the Conservative Government refuses to acknowledge the realities of day-to-day life for low paid workers on insecure contracts. Usdaw launched a petition on the Government website, calling for immediate action to tackle in-work poverty. Thanks to the hard work of our reps, by the end of that week, we had secured 10,000 signatures and the Government was required to formally respond.

"We hoped they would, at the very least, acknowledge the overwhelming evidence of how their policies are hurting working people, but they avoided the issue.

"It's clear that the Government has not listened to our members, so we are still pushing for 100,000 signatures

to get the debate in Parliament that would force them to listen."

**PAUL WATSON G372**

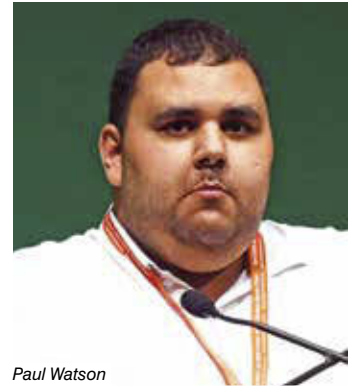
"Under-25s will be the first generation to be worse off than their parents. Paying them a different rate tells them that their labour isn't worth that of an older worker doing the same job. Usdaw has been on the forefront of abolishing age based pay rates in many retailers. This campaign goes further and asks for a £10 minimum for all workers."

**PAUL WHITE K145**

"A minimum of 16 hours will give us the dignity that we have been crying out for. A campaign for the dignity of its members is a campaign that will be fully supported."

**KIRAN SHERI K021**

"Working people should not have to claim benefits. Until this Government increases the minimum wage to £10 per hour people will need support. Universal credit has been universally discredited. Millions of families,



Paul Watson



Paul White

including those that are working have been plunged into poverty and having to use food banks. This is a national scandal. The system is broken and a roll out needs to be halted immediately."

Conference backs the Time For Better Pay campaign



MENTAL HEALTH DEBATE

# MAKE MENTAL HEALTH A PRIORITY

Opening the debate on mental health Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "We can all be extremely proud of the work this union is doing on the issue of mental health. It's no exaggeration to say that we have led the way in the trade union



Jean Bridger



Norman Donaldson



Paul Holland

movement, helping to ensure that mental health at work is seen as a trade union issue.

"Mental health has been a taboo subject for far too long, but our 'It's Good To Talk' campaign, run by reps, has made it possible for members to open up about the problems they are facing, to get the right support at work and where necessary, to be signposted to specialist services outside of the workplace.

"The majority of us will at some point in our lives experience a mental health problem. The chances are, that every single one of us has been affected in some way. If not personally, then through supporting a family member, a friend, or a work colleague and if you have been touched by this issue in any way, you will know that talking about mental health; listening to someone, giving them the time to talk, can make all the difference. It can literally be lifesaving.

"The work the union is doing on mental health, is so important. If we can give members who might be experiencing problems, a sense that the union understands the issue, they are more likely to open up and in turn get the support they need at work.

"Mental health continues to be a huge issue for this union. We are committed to keeping this conversation going.

"I want to thank those reps who have run a workplace mental health campaign and those who have supported a member with depression or anxiety, the work you are doing is of the utmost importance."

**JEAN BRIDGER C048**

"Mental health services have been devastated by cuts in funding. My daughter is 25 and has suffered

from mental health issues from a young age. I had to fight to get her support. I lost count of how many times I started crying on the phone because I felt like no one was listening to me. It should not be like this. Help should be available on a need-by-need basis."

**NORMAN DONALDSON G154**

"Mental health is real. It's not a choice. It doesn't just affect the sufferer. It has ramifications on family, friends and colleagues. The Tory Government has ignored mental illness. They have inflicted austerity and other damaging policies that have affected mental health."

**PAUL HOLLAND E054**

"I would like to see more information on conditions that aren't obvious. Around one in every 1,000 people in the UK have borderline personality disorder and schizotypal affects around 65,000 people yet they are rarely mentioned. To help raise awareness of personality disorders we need leaflets and information posted on the website."

**POLICE FUNDING CUTS**

Delegates expressed concern about the 14 per cent increase in offences and believe this is the effect of a reduction in police officers. They were keen to point out that this was not the fault of police officers but the results of eight years of austerity. The debate took place against the background of a near 30 per cent increase in police reported incidents of shoplifting and Usdaw's annual survey showing significant increases in violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers since 2016.



## POLITICS &amp; YOUNG WORKERS

## DELEGATES WANT FAIRNESS

## POLITICS DEBATE

ADM endorsed the union's future political strategy.

Introducing the strategy to the delegates Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We still have a Government that refuses to listen to our concerns around the growth of in-work poverty and the plight of working people in this country.

"We need a new, joined up approach to campaigning, bringing together the industrial and the political, increasing the engagement and activism of our entire membership.

"Over the next year, you will see the development of a serious, targeted and resourced programme of political activism and engagement. Linking up with the Labour Party and our key seats. Taking Usdaw members with us. Explaining how politics affects their lives. Encouraging them to get involved and breaking down the barriers to allow them to do so. To highlight the national scourge of in-work poverty and the crisis enveloping our high streets and at the same time prepare the groundwork for a general election and the election of a Labour government."

## IAN DOYLE K164

"Those MPs that leave the Labour Party to join Change UK should face immediate re-election. Waiting years for a re-election is wrong. It brings politics into disrepute when we need integrity. They endorse a referendum but don't endorse a referendum on themselves."

## HARASSMENT OF YOUNG WORKERS

Usdaw backed calls for action to stop a rising tide of harassment against young workers.

Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "No one should be subject to harassment, abuse or violence simply as a result of trying to do their job. Usdaw's research and that of the TUC shows that young workers are disproportionately impacted by harassment and abuse at work and this harassment can take many forms.

"This Conservative Government has systematically weakened and dismantled the UK's existing equality framework and it has removed the third-party harassment protection that was previously in the Equality Act. As a union we take a zero-tolerance



Ian Doyle



Kiran Sheri

approach to all forms of harassment and abuse."

## KIRAN SHERI K021

"Third-party harassment provisions provided protection for workers against harassment. Repealing this was another attack on workers, as the Government continues to erode our rights at work. It's only right these protections are reinstated."

## ECONOMY AND FINANCE DEBATE

During the economy and finance debate delegates backed calls to regulate the rent-to-own and payday lending sectors.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The UK is the fifth largest economy in the world, but working people are having to rely on in-work benefits and unsecured loans to make ends meet.

"At the beginning of April the

Financial Conduct Authority introduced a price cap for the rent-to-own sector, set at 100 per cent, saving consumers nearly £22.5 million a year in total.

"This is a welcome step but it still means that people who are already struggling to buy certain items could end up paying double the price.

"The growth of this industry is hugely concerning. Driven by years of austerity, pay day loan

companies target low paid workers and with interest rates set at ridiculous levels, even the smallest of debts can spiral out of control.

"This is an industry where some firms are making millions of pounds off people struggling to get by financially.

"Government efforts to curb payday loan companies have been minimal. Regulators need to introduce lower caps to tackle these rip-off charges."

WELFARE, HOUSING & TRADING

# SUPPORT FOR THE VULNERABLE IN SOCIETY

## WELFARE AND BENEFITS

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "Social security is a vital support net, but this Tory Government is intent on dismantling it and we are hearing more and more from members struggling to make ends meet because the support they rely on is being stripped away.

"This Government has a disgraceful record when it comes to disability rights. In a decade we have gone from one of the best performing, progressive countries on disability equality to being condemned by the United Nations for, in their words, 'systematic violations' of the rights of disabled people; a report and recommendations this Government has refused to accept or act upon.

"This Government should be removing the barriers disabled people face, not putting more in the way. Tackling this requires a joined-up approach: Reversing benefit cuts; reforming universal credit; raising payments to a level that really meets their needs, and tackling the financial penalties disabled people face when accessing goods and services."

### SAMANTHA THORNHILL K235

"There's a disability price tag on goods and services. The extra cost for a disabled person is £570 per month. We need action on two fronts to tackle this. We need a welfare system that supports disabled people and we need to cut down costs for these services. Access to goods and services should be free of discrimination."

## HOUSING

Delegates backed a call on the Government to redefine 'affordable housing' so that it's actually affordable for people on modest incomes. Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The price of a house is now on average eight times more than the annual wage. So, it's no surprise home ownership has fallen in recent years. With the lack of social housing people have become trapped in an overpriced and poor quality private rental sector.

"Usdaw is calling on the Government to rebalance their housing budget and priorities to build more affordable homes that normal working people can afford."

### KEVIN LOWE E056

"Redefine 'affordable housing' so that it is actually housing of a reasonable quality that is affordable to people on modest incomes, and legislate so that a 30 per cent building target is a minimum with no loopholes that

councils and contractors can exploit to reduce it. This would help free young people and families from the 'rent trap' and provide them with starter homes with which they can build their futures."

## CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TRADING

Usdaw calls for a proper break for shopworkers. Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "No one knows better than our reps, just how hard retail staff work all year round, doubly so in the run up to the festive period. With stressed-out customers at the tills, and extra deliveries constantly coming in – it's a frantic time.

"Everyone should have quality time off over Christmas and New Year but extended opening times and the pressure to work additional hours are leaving workers burnt out. And of course longer store opening hours have an impact on our members in distribution too.

"The union wants the longest possible break for retail workers and no worker should have to lose pay or make up hours when their store is closed."

## SUBS INCREASE

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to increase membership rates by **6p a week**.

This means that from 1 July **Scale A** members will pay **£2.48** a week and **Scale C** members will pay **£1.61** a week.



Samantha Thornhill



Kevin Lowe

## WORKPLACE AUTOMATION DEBATE

## THE FUTURE OF WORK

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw is campaigning for a new legal right, a right to collective consultation on the introduction of new technology into workplaces. This would provide the opportunity for negotiators to protect jobs, looking at alternatives like redeployment, upskilling and training.

"It is unacceptable for companies to introduce new technology as a way to reduce costs, with no thought for the impact on their workforce. Without consultation, the most likely outcome of automation is a widening of inequality. Inequality of wealth, inequality of income and inequality of power.

"This is something the trade union movement cannot allow to happen. We need to be actively involved in shaping the future of work. We need to make sure that those workers affected by automation have the skills they need to progress into the jobs of the future and we need a robust strategy – with Government, business and trade unions all working together."

**PHILIP CROOKS C076**

"I'm not a Luddite. I like technology. It makes my life so much easier from keeping in touch with my family to keeping on top of my finances. Technology gives us the means to reshape our world and we are

going to need all the help we can get to solve the problems of the world. This resolution is not against technology. It's about how do we support ourselves when millions of jobs become automated. How do we ensure that people aren't left behind in destitution? Whatever solution is reached will need a radical reshaping of the economic consensus that has prevailed for decades."

**ALEX WRIGHT H009**

"I have seen technology become a fact of life. Yet, customer service and a human face remain an important part of the shop environment. Every day I see signs of how important human interactions are; a lonely person enjoying a joke with a colleague. Customers expect and value service."

**MICHAEL ORR G111**

"Britons work 42.3 hours per week, some of the longest hours in the whole of Europe. That's two hours more than the EU average and 4.5 hours more than a worker in Denmark. Long hours can have a detrimental effect on physical and mental health and family life. Automation need not be a curse. It could be a blessing. That's why we need to campaign for a maximum working week of 35 hours, without loss of pay. And a rapid progress to a four-day week, without loss of pay."



Phil Crooks



Alex Wright



Michael Orr

**ACCESS TO UNION LIFELONG LEARNING SERVICES**

Conference called for wider access for workers to union Lifelong Learning services in the workplace and for employers to recognise the right to learn in employment contracts.

Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "Trade unions play a pivotal role in giving

members access to Lifelong Learning. Where a union is recognised within a workplace, all members should have access to union learning facilities.

"If non-members in non-recognised workplaces requested access to union Lifelong Learning, it would give the union access to this workplace.

"Trade union Lifelong Learning

is an important way for workers to access education. Lifelong Learning is an important benefit for employees. It helps to build a skilled and educated workforce.

"It promotes and profiles the positive contribution trade unions can make to a workplace. "Usdaw has a long, proud history of supporting the Lifelong Learning agenda."

HEALTH AND SAFETY DEBATE

# BETTER PROTECTION FOR SHOPWORKERS

Delegates supported calls for the Government to legislate on shop security staff wearing stab vests and greater control on the sale of knives.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Knife crime in the UK has seen a drastic increase in recent years and we support the call for stab vests to be provided by law, to all security guards and other public facing employees who are at an increased risk of violence at work.

"Nobody should have to risk serious physical assault as part of their everyday job, this is something we as a union are very clear on. Stab vests won't solve the problem of violence against our members, but they may offer some extra protection when the worst happens.

"We would always advocate for the tightening of the law around the sale of knives. Knives should not be left on shelves, but should be behind counters, so that they are more difficult to steal.

"As part of our Freedom From Fear Campaign we have lobbied the Government on the Offensive Weapons Bill, calling for better protection for shopworkers who are enforcing the law. In November, Usdaw MP, David Hanson, put forward an amendment to the Offensive Weapons Bill, that would

make it a specific offence to assault a shopworker who is enforcing the law. That amendment was supported by the Co-op Party, the Co-op Group, the British Retail Consortium and the Association of Convenience Stores.

"The Government opposed the amendment, arguing that there was no gap in the law, but they did agree to a discussion. This was a big step forward and as a result the Government has launched a 'call for evidence' on violence and abuse towards shop staff. I encourage all shopworkers to tell their story."

**ALAN BUTCHER F103**

"Smaller shops are deliberately targeted because they have one to one working. I have been abused, threatened and sworn at just for doing my job. Employers have a duty of care to protect the health and safety of their staff."

**KIRAN SHERI K021**

"This country is currently in the midst of a knife crime epidemic. In the last 12 months there were nearly forty thousand recorded knife crime offences.

Knives are readily available to buy in shops up and down the high street. This is why we're calling

for knives to be sold in the same manner as fireworks – in locked cabinets that can't be accessed by customers. And packaged so that they can't be used immediately."

**ENVIRONMENT DEBATE**

"It's estimated that 20 billion pounds worth of food is thrown away each year," said general secretary Paddy Lillis. "The Government, the food production supply chain, the supermarkets, consumers and workers need to join forces to reduce waste and ensure leftover food is redistributed to help those struggling to make ends meet.

"Plastic waste dumped in the sea is having a devastating impact on marine life. We need strategies to reduce the use of plastic. We need to move beyond a piecemeal approach and instead adopt meaningful, systematic policies on how we manage plastics, waste and recycling. We need business to contribute more to delivering a sustainable economy and be held fully accountable for the irreparable damage being done to our planet."



Delegates speaking for the first time gather together

## ICTU GENERAL SECRETARY

# BOUND TOGETHER BY A COMMON PURPOSE

Addressing this year's conference was the general secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) Patricia King.

"ICTU has always stood for a plurality and diversity as the largest civil society organisation on the island and also as the largest truly cross-community representative body in Northern Ireland.

"Just like Usdaw in Northern Ireland, representing members from both communities and our international community, we are proud to represent workers who have different identities and perspectives but who are bound together by a common and universal purpose, to protect and improve their conditions at work and to enhance their place in society at large.

"ICTU fully support the USDAW Time For Better Pay campaign which calls for a minimum wage of £10 pounds per hour and the right to a normal hours contract.

"In Ireland the retail industry faces similar challenges to those being experienced here in Britain. The decline of the high street, the expansion of online shopping, job displacement through the introduction of new technological systems are all features of the Irish retail sector.

"Zero-hour contracts and precarious work contracts with a predominance of women workers in receipt of low pay are commonplace. However, following a long and concerted campaign by the trade union movement in the Republic of Ireland, since 1 March this year, zero-hour contracts are now outlawed in most circumstances, three hours pay at minimum rate at least, must be paid where no work is provided.

"Workers must also receive an



ICTU general secretary Patricia King

accurate written outline of their terms and conditions of work, including the number of contract hours, within five working days of starting work.

## BREXIT

"We appreciate that for the UK Brexit has been an incredibly divisive issue. Irrespective of how people across the UK voted, they clearly didn't vote to become poorer or for an uncertain future for themselves and their families.

"In Ireland, we have grave concerns about what Brexit will mean for the rights of workers. The negative impact on trade and jobs, the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and indeed citizens' rights, particularly in circumstances of a hard Brexit, which has the potential to do serious damage to our island economically, socially and politically.

"We are very concerned about the possibility of the reinstatement of the

border on the island of Ireland but we are equally concerned that we must also avoid a border within the UK, between Britain and Northern Ireland and any economic border between these islands.

"It is for these reasons that the Irish Congress executive, albeit with some reluctance supports the draft Withdrawal Agreement. We know that no new arrangement will, in our view, be as good as the current arrangement.

"The negotiation of the future relationship is key and we intend to seek to use whatever influence we have to seek to ensure the closest possible relationship into the future.

"We are very clear that however Brexit plays out, the relationships between the ICTU and the TUC will remain close and special as we go forward because, as you know delegates our collective mission is a global and universal one and is one that is beyond all borders."

# LABOUR FOR WORKERS

At this year's ADM the guest speaker was Jeremy Corbyn, leader of the Labour Party. In a wide-ranging speech Jeremy outlined what a Labour government would do for Us

**A**ddressing delegates, Rt Hon Jeremy Corbyn MP said: "The mission of the next Labour government will be to shift the balance of wealth and power in favour of the many and away from the few. Because workers in the retail sector, in distribution, in warehousing, in food manufacturing and in all the other sectors where this union organises often face the worst job insecurity and the hardest impacts of austerity.

"You are the people who paid the price of the 2008 banking crisis with falling real wages and cuts to public services, while those who caused the crash got off scot-free and have been allowed to hoard an even greater share of the wealth in the years since.

"Millions of workers are struggling to make ends meet, exhausted from doing too many hours or anxious about not having enough. We live in a country where more than four million children live in poverty and where 1.6 million food parcels were handed out by food banks in the Trussell Trust network last year. Yet most people in poverty are actually in work. It couldn't be clearer that the rules of the game just aren't working for the overwhelming majority of people.

"The rules of the game need to change. That begins in the workplace. The first step is to end insecurity at work. No one can feel secure on poverty wages. When you're constantly on the edge, when you're stressed about affording

rent and food, you're in no position to assert your rights. Labour will introduce a £10 per hour real living wage. For the UK's lowest-paid workers that will mean a pay rise of more than £2,600 a year.

## A RADICAL LABOUR GOVERNMENT WORKING TOGETHER WITH EMPOWERED TRADE UNIONS WILL SECURE THAT SHIFT IN WEALTH AND POWER THAT IS SO DESPERATELY NEEDED

"Usdaw has been pushing ahead on this issue with your Time For Better Pay Campaign and I commend you for it. A £10 real living wage would begin to address the appalling gender pay gap we see in too many companies particularly in retail where you commonly find women staffing the shops and men in the boardroom. Labour will ban zero-hours contracts. Every employee deserves to have a guaranteed number of hours each week and we'll make sure all workers have equal rights from day one. Whether they're part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent, every worker is entitled to sick pay, holiday pay, maternity and paternity rights, and protection from unfair dismissal. If they're doing the job they're entitled to the rights.

"Labour will reinstate the law giving employers a duty to protect staff from harassment by customers, which I know is very important to shopworkers. Any abuse, threats, or physical violence against workers is completely unacceptable. It's not part of the job.

"Another source of insecurity for workers is what happens when a company is taken over. I can't imagine how worrying it must be to work for a business that gets bought by Mike Ashley and it's always the concerns of the workforce that come bottom of the pile. Labour will change that. We'll amend the takeover code so that the interests of workers and pensioners are protected.

"Make no mistake, Labour is proposing a bold programme to transform our economy and our country, but it's no more than the situation demands.

"A radical Labour government working together with empowered trade unions will secure that shift in wealth and power that is so desperately needed.

"By working collectively, democratically, the economy will become a tool in our hands rather than the master of our fate. Workers will have more security and more say over their lives and we will forge a more caring, less stressed society, where everyone is supported. That is what we mean when we say we will rebuild Britain for the many, not the few."

daw workers.



# YOUNG WORKERS DESERVE A DECENT DEAL TOO

The union's army of young reps hit the campaign trail to make sure their fellow young workers know why it's so important to be a member of Usdaw

It was time for Usdaw's annual young workers' week in March, and the perfect opportunity for the union's youngest activists to take to their local high streets and workplace canteens in a bid to encourage their fellow young workers to join the union.

Fifty campaign events took place across the country, all focused on the union's Time For Better Pay Campaign which aims to tackle low pay and job insecurity – issues which particularly affect young workers.

After surveying 2,000 workers under the age of 27 Usdaw found:

- 44 per cent of young workers have seen no improvement in their financial situation in five years.
- In the past 12 months, 85 per cent of young workers have had to borrow money to pay bills.
- Young workers are 50 per cent more likely to rely on insecure hours than their older colleagues.
- 72 per cent of young workers believe that financial worries have an impact on their mental health.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Going to work should mean a decent standard of living for all workers. Usdaw rejects the view that retail work is just a 'stop gap' for young people and is campaigning to ensure that young workers are treated properly.

"Udaw has campaigned for years to abolish youth rates. As a result of our hard work, youth rates no longer exist in companies like Tesco, Sainsbury's, Co-op and Morrisons. Usdaw is now campaigning for a National Minimum Wage of £10 per

hour for all ages and also calling on the Government to tackle insecure employment contracts."

## SCOTLAND

In Scotland, the young workers' committee organised six campaigns in the Edinburgh and Perth area.

Rowan Martin, a member of the committee who works at Tesco Corstorphine, spoke to *Network*. "We visited Tesco South Queensferry, Morrisons in the Gyle Shopping Centre, Tesco Hermiston Gait and my own store Tesco Corstorphine," said Rowan, 23. "Other members of the committee also went to Tesco and Morrisons in Perth.

"Our deputy divisional officer Tracy Gilbert and area organiser Daniel Reid were involved in the planning and were very supportive. They also arranged for supplies such as leaflets, pens and join forms.

"This was the first time I've done any external campaigning, as it's usually in my own store. It's definitely easier to approach your own colleagues but it's good for personal development to talk to new people.

"I think in a lot of stores it is difficult to recruit young workers, particularly students, because they are on a lower income and may want to avoid spending their wages on things like union membership. Many people think unions are unnecessary, so it's our job as reps to tell people how valuable they are."

## THE NORTH WEST

The North West young workers' committee were well received in

Warrington for their campaign.

It was a first for committee member Gareth Edwards who had never campaigned in a town centre before. "I'm usually taking part in campaigns in workplaces so it was very interesting and a completely different experience to get out there and speak to the public," said Gareth, 26, who works at JD Williams in Oldham. "We must've talked to 500 people about the union, our campaigns and how they can get involved. We also asked lots of people to complete our young workers' survey and sign the Time For Better Pay petition.

"Lots of people just came over to speak to us as we had a welcoming stall. It was particularly interesting to chat to older members of the public about their experiences with trade unions.

"It can be difficult to get young workers interested in the trade union movement, mainly because they don't know what trade unions are or what their purpose is. Once you explain their value, and what they've done in the past to give us the rights we have today, people become more interested. That's why it's so important to go out and talk to the public about them."

## GET INVOLVED

If you are a young worker aged under 27 and want to become more involved with campaigns in your division speak to your divisional coordinator. Details can be found at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns/young-workers/contacts](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns/young-workers/contacts)





IT'S OUR JOB AS  
REPS TO TELL PEOPLE  
HOW VALUABLE  
UNIONS ARE

Rowan Martin (second from right) at Tesco Hermiston Gait



IT'S SO IMPORTANT  
TO GET OUT ON THE  
STREETS AND TALK  
TO THE PUBLIC

Gareth Edwards (third from right) in Warrington

# CLASS OF 2019 READY FOR THE ORGANISING CHALLENGE

Usdaw reps attended their first training sessions as organising officers as their six-month secondment on Academy1 begins...

**F**ifty-six reps are taking on the ultimate organising challenge this Summer after they successfully made it onto the union's Academy1 programme.

The organising officers, as they will be known during the six-month secondment, will swap their day jobs for organising and recruiting in their seven respective divisions, working closely with area organisers and training officers.

Academy1 runs from May to November with the recruitment process starting in early January each year. It is open to reps who have shown a firm commitment to the work of the union and have shown they are capable of, or

have the potential of, recruiting and organising beyond their own workplace.

Reps who are selected for Academy1 work for the union for six months, on secondment from their employer, and are mentored by an Usdaw official. They also receive four weeks of classroom-based training to supplement their on-the-job role.

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen welcomed the reps. "The union's Academy1 programme has already provided an excellent opportunity and learning experience for the 724 reps who have taken on the challenge over the past 16 years," said Dave.

"We're very proud of the

programme which is unique in the trade union movement and allows reps to play a bigger part in strengthening the union's presence across all sectors.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to wish this year's organising officers the very best of luck. It's going to be a challenging six months but we have a great training and mentoring system in place and hopefully they'll find the experience enjoyable and rewarding."

The application process for next year's Academy1 starts in November. Speak to your area organiser or local office for more information.

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



Eastern and Southern divisions



Midlands division



Scottish division



North West division



North Eastern division



South Wales and Western division

## ACADEMY1 ORGANISING OFFICERS

**Pictured (l-r) Eastern and Southern divisions:** Janet Nicholson, Alan Quinn, Adrian Welch, Andrew Coley, Steven Avery, Trevor Downes, Lawrence McClymont, Wendy Lewis, Finnola Tzagkaraki and Paul Bint.

**Midlands division:** Lisa Peat, Tammy Caven, Manpreet Sanghera, Bradley Higgins, Adrian Clarke, Mark Jeffery, Peter Farrant, Ian Shelton, Paul Woodbine and Andrew Gilchrist.

**Scottish division:** Stephen McConaghy, Colin Anderson, Alan Harper, Kelly Burr, Mandy Flynn-Scott and Derek Mitchell.

**North West division:** Michael Murray, Donna Barton, Peyman Goodarzi, Elaine Cole, Menna Roberts, Alex Whitehead, Sandra Birt, Whaeed Shah, Cheryl Jackson and Mark Parr.

**North Eastern division:** Allan Ross, Lisa Smith, Joanne Crumplin, John Tyreman, Robert Fleming, Charlotte Johnson, Beverley McKeown, Alexander King, Angela Shaw, Ryan Crossley, Debra Wren and Mark Hinchliffe.

**South Wales and Western division:** Paul Rickerby, David Hughes, Gemma Apthorpe, Jameson Spargo, Sarah Davies, Michael McKnight and Mark White.



## Usdaw welcomes a group of excited reps who are ready to start studying on the union's first Lay Tutor Training and Development Programme

**A** group of 13 specially-selected reps are making Usdaw history as they embark on the union's first Lay Tutor Training and Development Programme.

The pilot scheme is designed to give the reps the essential skills and confidence they need to teach in an adult education environment and additionally, award them with a recognised qualification.

The course will consist of 14 days training, which began in June at the Ruskin College in Oxford who are also accrediting the programme, and 20 days observing and assisting the union's excellent team of training officers in their respective divisions.

The reps will be required to complete homework and a portfolio consisting of three key sections;

understanding roles, responsibilities and relationships in education and teaching, facilitating learning and development in groups and understanding assessments in education and training.

If the reps successfully pass the programme they will be awarded a Level 3 in education and training which is the equivalent of an A level, and the first part of a teacher training certificate.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis helped devise the programme and is excited to see how the reps progress. "This is a fantastic opportunity for the reps and I'm delighted that we are able to offer it," said Paddy. "The programme will give the reps important and essential skills that will not only

be useful for them back in their workplaces, and in their roles as reps, but also allow them to progress towards a teaching qualification.

"However, it is by no means an easy programme and the reps will be working hard to complete the course, closely monitored and supported by our training officers."

The lucky 13 have come from all seven divisions and were chosen from a larger group of reps who were put through their paces at a development and training assessment centre in April.

For more information on training available to reps visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/training](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/training)



An advice leaflet  
for parents and carers

## WORRIED ABOUT MONEY? KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

This useful guide will help parents and carers understand more about benefits and pensions

**U**sdaw's Time For Better Pay survey revealed that almost two thirds of our members feel worse off now than they did five years ago – and that three quarters of respondents turn to loans and borrowing to pay essential bills.

Many Usdaw members are also in receipt of in-work benefits. £37 billion has been cut from the welfare budget since 2010, leaving those affected in a precarious financial position.

The rollout of universal credit

has made matters worse for the majority of recipients.

Our newly updated leaflet aims to help our members who might be struggling financially.

You'll find straightforward information on the different benefits available to working people, plus pensions and debt advice and a list of Usdaw approved advice services.

You can download the leaflet from the website or contact your local office for a copy.

[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/385](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/385)

For a complete list of Usdaw publications and to order visit:  
[dtp.usdaw.co.uk/PublicationsCatalogue](http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/PublicationsCatalogue)

## NEW IN!

### Leaflets, Booklets, Posters & Postcards

Hearing Loss and Deaf Awareness - A guide for Usdaw reps (Leaflet 442)

Member Offers (Leaflet 398)

Men's Mental Health (Leaflet 433)

Mental Health – Where to go for help and support at work (Leaflet 400)

Parents & Carers – Not Enough Hours in the Day? (Leaflet 437)

Understanding Your State Pension (Leaflet 428)

Men's Health – Depression (Leaflet 441)

Usdaw Drivers' Handbook

Usdaw Pensions Guide 2019/20 edition

Wanted – Union Reps (Leaflet 279)

Working Parents Know Your Rights (Leaflet 381)

National Young Workers' Weekend

Divisional Young Workers' Committee – Get involved (Postcard)

Puzzled By Pensions? Money Purchase Annual Allowance Explained

Puzzled By Pensions? Salary Exchange Explained

Usdaw's Divisional Political Activists Programme – Join the Team

### Online Courses

'A Play on Words' – English bitesize  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/english](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/english)

CV Writing – IT bitesize  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting)

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

Pensions Home Study  
[usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy](http://usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy)

Shop 'til you Drop – bitesize maths  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/maths](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/maths)

Vulnerable Workers Home Study  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy5](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy5)

# THE STARK REALITY OF VIOLENCE IN RETAIL

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear survey reveals the shocking extent of violence, threats and abuse aimed at shopworkers, with 288 assaults a day.

**O**n average a UK shopworker was abused, threatened or assaulted over 20 times last year, which is nearly once a fortnight.

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear survey shows that during 2018:

- 64 per cent of UK shopworkers experienced verbal abuse.
- 40 per cent were threatened by a customer.
- 288 were assaulted every day.

The Government has opened a 'call for evidence' on this growing issue, following pressure from Usdaw and employers like the Co-op.

Usdaw has called on the Scottish Government to back a protection of workers bill. Daniel Johnson MSP (Labour, Edinburgh Southern) is seeking to provide additional protections for retail staff, including those who sell age-restricted items. His member's bill has been through an initial consultation and overwhelmingly backed by shopworkers. It is also supported

**"I HAD LASSES WAITING FOR ME OUTSIDE THE SHOP AND LADS FOLLOWING ME TO MY HOUSE."**

by Asda, Co-op and the Scottish Grocers' Federation. The bill is currently in the drafting stage.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "Violence, threats and abuse against workers are amongst the great scourges of our society. The statistics are shocking and show that urgent action is required. On average a UK shopworker can end up on the wrong side of a verbal or physical assault nearly once a fortnight. Our message is clear, abuse is not a part of the job.

"Life on the frontline of retail

can be pretty tough for many shopworkers and there is still a lot to do to help protect them. We launched our Freedom From Fear Campaign in the face of growing concerns amongst retail staff about violence, threats and abuse.

"The campaign works with employers to promote respect and make shops safer for staff and customers alike.

"So there needs to be action to help protect staff. We want the Government and Scottish Government to provide stiffer penalties for those who assault workers; a simple stand-alone offence that is widely recognised and understood by the public, police, CPS, the judiciary and most importantly criminals.

"Usdaw welcomes the Government opening a 'call for evidence' and we encourage everyone concerned with this issue to make their voices heard by contributing to the Home Office online consultation or visiting the Usdaw website to complete our survey, which we will submit to the Government.

"In Scotland we hope that MSPs from all parties and the Scottish Government are listening and they will back Daniel Johnson's much-needed bill when it comes before Holyrood.

"Retail staff have a crucial role in our communities and that role must be valued and respected, they deserve the protection of the law."



Usdaw delegation campaigning at Westminster



Daniel Johnson MSP at Scotmid Co-op Edinburgh

## VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE

As part of Usdaw's survey of violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers, respondents have the opportunity to feed back their experiences, here are some examples.

### THEFT

- "Black eye, as a result of detaining a shoplifter who was violent when stopped for the theft."
- "Shoplifter, told me to get out of the way or get stabbed with a syringe."
- "Shoplifter broke my wrist."

### THROWING GOODS

- "Customer throwing card machines."
- "Didn't have enough money, threw product at me and stormed off."

### CHRISTMAS

- "Customer not being happy about Christmas crowds took it out on me."
- "A frozen gammon was thrown at me by an irate customer at Christmas."
- "On the customer service desk I was told to 'cheer up it's nearly Christmas, you miserable bitch'."

### WEAPONS

- "Held up three times. Hammer, blade, scissors."
- "Racist and sexist comments and drunks threatening to beat people up with a bat!"
- "Threatened with a needle, threatened to be punched in the face and pushed into a wall."

### ASSAULTS

- "I have had a customer ram a trolley into my leg as he said I was in the way!"
- "Punched in the face by shoplifter I was stopping from leaving the store with stolen goods."
- "Aggressive customers thinking it's okay to shout, scream and hitting me on the arm."

### AGE RESTRICTED SALES

- "It's always to do with Think 25. It had calmed down but now that the energy drinks are Think 25 too, people get annoyed when I have to ask them for ID."
- "I was called a cow because I refused to serve alcohol to a customer who had no ID."
- "I refused to sell a tin of spray glue to a man I believed to be under 18 years old so he threw it at me."

### ALCOHOL

- "Called names and swore at by a customer whom I'd just refused a sale because they were intoxicated. Pointing her finger in my face and making threats."
- "Didn't have enough money, wanted alcohol. I refused sale and the customer was abusive."
- "Customer ranting when refused alcohol sale when drunk and after 10pm."

### VERBAL ABUSE

- "Customer came to checkout and was in a rush. Told me to f\*\*\*ing hurry up."
- "Customers can be really rude, whistling for attention or clicking fingers."
- "Customer told me to stick the receipt up my arse. I just ignored him."

### THREATS

- "A guy threatened to smash my face in with a bottle of alcohol."
- "Angry customers ranting. One man even threatened to wait outside for me."
- "I had lasses waiting for me outside the shop and lads following me to my house."



# INVESTIGATING ACCIDENTS

Usdaw welcomes the HSE's new toolkit to tackle work-related stress but says the toolkit alone is not enough, there also needs to be organisational change

**C**ontinuing our series of articles on union health and safety reps we look at the valuable role of the rep in investigating accidents.

## WHY INVESTIGATE ACCIDENTS?

The law gives safety reps the right to investigate the causes of all accidents and to carry out an independent inspection following a reportable accident.

Accidents and near misses are the most obvious sign that something is wrong with health and safety in the workplace. It is essential that health and safety reps use their legal functions to investigate them to make the workplace safer for everyone.

## PREVENTION

Accidents are rarely purely random events. All too often it is assumed that the worker involved was just careless. But there are

usually underlying causes for an accident such as unsafe systems of work, faulty equipment, poor housekeeping, etc. By investigating the causes and negotiating for improvements the health and safety rep can prevent similar incidents happening in the future.

## COMPENSATION

If a member is injured in an accident at work they may be entitled to compensation. Evidence from the health and safety rep investigation can be vitally important for the union solicitor pursuing the member's claim.

## WHAT ABOUT NEAR MISSES?

A near miss is simply an accident where fortunately nobody was injured. Health and safety reps should encourage workers to tell them about any near misses and should ask about them when doing their regular workplace inspections.

It's far better to spot a danger and sort it out before someone is injured. Today's near miss could be tomorrow's serious accident.

## WHAT SHOULD THE HEALTH AND SAFETY REP DO IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS?

### First point of contact:

- Get management to agree to call you in as a matter of routine.
- Make sure members know how to get hold of you and call you in.
- Get involved as soon as possible after the incident.

### At the scene:

- **Safety:** The first priority is to ensure that anyone injured is being cared for and that no one else is at immediate risk.
- **Don't move anything:** Unless it is necessary for rescue or to prevent further danger nothing should be moved until you have made your investigation.



## FAQS

### CAN I SEE COPIES OF ALL ACCIDENT REPORTS?

As the union health and safety rep you have a right to see copies of all accident reports. Even if the worker involved has not consented to share their personal information you should still be given anonymised details. By looking through previous accident reports you can spot the most common accidents and where they occur as a way of identifying problem areas that need your attention.

### WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A MANAGER REFUSES TO RECORD AN ACCIDENT?

Sometimes managers may try to refuse to record an accident because they do not agree that there has been an accident or because the member did not report it right away. They should not do this. If the manager does

not agree with the member's version of events, they should still record it and then add their own comments at the end.

If the manager does refuse to record a member's accident, write a letter to the employer objecting to the refusal and including the details the member wanted to put in the report. Keep a copy of the letter.

### WHAT IF A MEMBER DOESN'T WANT TO PURSUE A CLAIM?

Some members may be reluctant to pursue a claim because they don't want to make a fuss or they don't appear to have been badly injured. However, it is important that they do consult a union solicitor even for a minor injury. They have a legal right to claim where there is evidence to show that the employer was negligent.

■ **Don't throw away anything:** keep faulty equipment in case it needs to be inspected again later.

■ **HS3 Form:** Use the HS3 form to help your investigation and to record your findings. If possible, take photographs of the scene or make a sketch of it to add to your form. The HS3 form is self-copying so you can keep one copy for your own use and, if a union member was injured, you can give a copy to the member to show to their solicitor if they make a claim.

■ **Interview:** Interview witnesses as soon as possible after the event and keep their statements safely with your report.

#### After the incident:

■ **Record in accident book:** Make sure that the accident is recorded. Many workplaces still use an Accident Book to record details but increasingly employers now use electronic systems instead. Whatever the system in your

workplace, make sure that members know how to get an accident recorded and advise them to ask for a copy of the accident report.

■ **Ring FirstCall Usdaw:** If a member is injured in an accident they should call FirstCall on 0800 055 6333 to find out if they have a claim. If they do have a valid claim the union's solicitor will pursue it on their behalf. As long as they maintain their membership this service is entirely free.

■ **Prevention:** Look at your report and decide how the accident happened and what can be done to prevent another incident. Remember to look for the underlying causes of the accident. Talk to the workers in the area to get their view on what caused it and what could be done to prevent it happening again. Where you identify things that can be improved, take the matter up with management using the appropriate procedures.



## HAZARDS CONFERENCE 2019

The national Hazards Conference, 'Cleaning Up Toxic Work' is at Keele University from 26 to the 28 July.

The conference is the UK's biggest and best educational and organising event for trade union safety reps, with a mixture of plenary sessions, meetings and a comprehensive workshop programme. Delegates have the opportunity to share experience with safety reps and activists from other unions and sectors.

If you would like to attend please look to obtain funding from your branch and apply using the booking form by 5 July 2019 at: [www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/hazards-conference](http://www.hazardscampaign.org.uk/hazards-conference)

## CONTACT

### Health and safety officer

Doug Russell  
0161 249 2441

### Health and safety assistant

Tony Whelan  
0161 249 2474

### General health and safety enquiries email:

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



## KARRO FOODS FINED

# MPS CALL FOR ACTION TO PROTECT WORKERS AT HEIGHT



### HSE UPDATE ON OLDER WORKERS

The HSE has updated their online guidance on older workers.

Changes to retirement age and demographic changes mean that the average age of the workforce is increasing. The HSE argues that older workers bring value to the workforce because they have a broad range of skills and experience and often have better judgement and job knowledge, so looking after their health and safety makes good business sense.

[www.hse.gov.uk/vulnerable-workers/older-workers.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/vulnerable-workers/older-workers.htm)

### ILO LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Inspired by its 100th anniversary, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has produced a report Safety and Health at the Heart of the Future of Work.

It takes stock of the improvements they have made in the last 100 years and looks at factors that will affect future changes such as climate change, the ageing workforce and technology.

[www.ilo.org/safework/events/safeday/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/safework/events/safeday/lang--en/index.htm)

Karro Foods was recently fined £1.8 million after two workers were seriously injured when they fell through a roof light at the Malton bacon factory.

The case highlights the importance of work at height – which is the main cause of accidental death at work.

In February, the All-Party

Parliamentary Group (APPG) on work at height published a report calling on the Government and the industry to act together to reduce the number of incidents.

HSE report on the Karro Foods case: [press.hse.gov.uk](http://press.hse.gov.uk) and search Karro Work at Height APPG report: <https://workingatheight.info>

## NEW TUC GUIDANCE FOR REPS

# TUC ASKS EMPLOYERS TO NEGOTIATE DRUG POLICY

The TUC has produced new guidance for union reps on drug and alcohol policies and on drug testing at work.

The TUC guides explain that employers should seek to negotiate a policy that addresses these issues in a fair, open and welfare-based way.

There may be workplaces where some form of drug testing can have a part to play but testing should never be the first line of protection.

If testing is to be part of a policy, there should be a clear safety case to justify it and staff should be aware of their rights.

For the guidance on drug and alcohol policies: [www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/drugsalcoholinworkplace.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/drugsalcoholinworkplace.pdf)  
For the drug testing guidance: [www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/DrugTestingintheWorkplace.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/DrugTestingintheWorkplace.pdf)

# IT'S ABOUT RESOLVING EVERYDAY PROBLEMS

*Network* speaks to national award-winning health and safety rep Ray Stuart who works at Tesco in Waltham Cross...

## Q. TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR JOB ROLE AT TESCO?

I joined in 2005 as a customer assistant working part-time in the fresh food department. I now work full-time covering all sections of fresh food including reductions.

## Q. WHEN AND WHY DID YOU BECOME A REP?

There had not been any reps in our store for some time and Usdaw membership was in decline. I was asked by the people manager to become a rep, and along with another colleague we both became reps, this was in 2016 and a year later I became the health and safety rep. We set about updating the noticeboard and recruiting new members and soon membership was up to 75 per cent.

## Q. WHAT'S INVOLVED AS HEALTH AND SAFETY REP?

It's about resolving everyday problems. I deal with any hazards that come to my attention immediately but I also do a quarterly

walk around the store just before the forum.

## Q. DO YOU WORK WITH ANY OTHER REPS?

I am now the only rep and health and safety rep in store. My colleague who was the other rep lost her job in the latest round of redundancies, she was a tremendous colleague who worked hard at being a rep and she will be missed. So, it's a case of buckling down and doing both jobs.

## Q. HOW DO YOU FIND TIME TO CARRY OUT YOUR ROLES?

I spend at least one day a week of my own time either reading policies and going online to websites such as the health and safety executive, Usdaw, basically any sites in my quest for knowledge.

## Q. WHAT ARE THE EVERYDAY PROBLEMS AT YOUR STORE?

Slips, trips and falls are always a problem and I think the reporting procedure is long winded and certainly a problem for managers.

## Q. DO YOU ENJOY BEING HEALTH AND SAFETY REP?

Yes, throughout the years I have always been health and safety aware, I am particularly interested in first aid and have previously set up a first aid committee in store, myself being a first aider for 15 years. I have also qualified as a manual handling instructor. I just want to help make the store a safer place to work.

## Q. WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED?

I recently attended both the national organising awards and the Eastern division conference, both inspired me so much and it was great learning from other reps who attended. Usdaw as a trade union should be proud of itself, and everybody who is a part of it that gives so much of their own time, it makes me proud to be there amongst them as a member.

## Q. WHAT'S BEEN YOUR BEST MOMENT AS A REP SO FAR?

I was delighted to win the national Usdaw health and safety rep award in January. My thanks go to all the training officers at Usdaw, in particular to my area organiser Ku Baiden who has been instrumental in getting me where I am in such a short period of time, also my store manager who gives me so much support. It's just great to see a reduction in accidents in the workplace.

## Q. ANY TIPS FOR OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS?

Be committed and enjoy the role. If you don't know the answer to the question, don't be afraid to ask someone who does. Make sure health and safety is at the top of the agenda.



Ray won Usdaw's national health and safety rep award in January

Reproduced with permission from Action On Hearing Loss. Photograph: Steve Best



Comedian and Action on Hearing Loss ambassador, Samantha Baines, who has hearing loss.

# SUPPORTING MEMBERS WITH HEARING LOSS

**H**earing loss is an incredibly common condition affecting 11 million people in the UK.

Network looks at how reps can support members in the workplace who might be struggling with a hearing condition.

## WHAT IS HEARING LOSS?

The term hearing loss covers a wide range of conditions, from people who are profoundly deaf – who would need to lipread or use sign language – to those with mild hearing loss, for whom following speech in a noisy environment may be difficult.

The most common cause of

hearing loss is age – damage to the hearing organs happens naturally as we age. However, it can also be caused by other types of damage, for example exposure to loud noises. Some people have hearing loss from birth.

**Mild hearing loss** - Can sometimes make following speech difficult, particularly in noisy situations or for long periods of time. People may start avoiding social situations.

**Moderate hearing loss** - Often have difficulty following speech without hearing aids and are likely to avoid most or all social situations.

**Severe hearing loss** - Usually

need to lipread or use sign language, even with hearing aids. May be eligible for cochlear implants.

**Profound deafness** - Usually need to lipread or use sign language. Hearing aids often not helpful, may benefit from cochlear implants.

## HOW CAN THE EQUALITY ACT HELP?

Many members with hearing loss will be covered by the Equality Act, though not all. Very few conditions are automatically covered under the Act and hearing loss is not one of them. Instead, you have to show that a member meets the definition of a disabled person as set out in

the Act. If you can show that the member meets this definition, you will have a much stronger case in arguing that the employer should support the member.

When deciding if a member is covered by the Equality Act (DDA in Northern Ireland), it might help to discuss the following with the member you are supporting:

***Does the member have a physical or mental impairment?***

Hearing loss is clearly a physical impairment so members with hearing loss would normally meet this part of the definition. Hearing loss is a hidden disability and therefore, it is not always obvious that someone is disabled. Nonetheless they can be covered by the Equality Act or the DDA in Northern Ireland.

***Is it more than a trivial condition?***

Trivial simply means more than minor. Those with a very mild hearing loss may be able to communicate and hear without too much difficulty. However, the

## HEARING LOSS IS A HIDDEN DISABILITY AND THEREFORE, IT IS NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS THAT SOMEONE IS DISABLED

more severe the hearing loss, the more difficulty people will have communicating, especially in noisy areas such as the shopfloor. If a member finds it difficult to hear conversation that someone without hearing loss has no trouble with – then they would meet this part of the definition.

***Has the condition lasted or will it last for more than a year?***

Hearing loss is usually permanent (unless it is linked to a build-up of ear wax for example), therefore most types of hearing loss will meet this part of the definition.

***What would happen if the member stopped taking medication/using hearing aids?***

This is a key issue for someone with hearing loss, as hearing aids can often help to improve their hearing. Employers may argue that the member is not disabled because with their hearing aid they can hear almost as well as a hearing person. However, in deciding whether or not someone is disabled they must be assessed as if they were not taking medication or using a medical aid (such as hearing aids). So in terms of deciding whether or not a person's hearing loss has a substantial impact on their day-to-day activities consider how they are or would be without their hearing aid.

***Does the condition affect the member's everyday life?***

If you can show that the member's hearing loss has a substantial effect on how they carry out normal day-to-day activities, they should

meet this definition. Speak to the member about how their hearing loss affects them, for example, do they have difficulty hearing customers? Talk through a typical day with them and ask how their hearing loss affects their day-to-day activities.

### REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

If you can show that the member meets these five criteria they would be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act. The employer would then have a duty to make what are called reasonable adjustments to take account of the member's hearing loss. These could include:

- Visual alerts in place of sound alerts. For example, where age-restricted products are passed through the till, a visual prompt will be more useful to a member with hearing loss than a sound.
- Changing elements of a member's job which their hearing loss makes particularly difficult. For example, if they are working in a noisy area, this could make communication much more difficult.
- Schedule shifts during quieter periods.
- Educating staff to ensure they are aware of a member's hearing loss and know how to communicate effectively with them.

### ACCESS TO WORK

Access to Work is a Government scheme which can provide practical advice and financial support for individuals whose health or disability affects the way they do their job. It does not replace the duty an employer has under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments. Instead it provides support that is over and above that which is a reasonable adjustment. [www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview)

### LIPREADING

- Always ask, even if someone's wearing a hearing aid, if they need to lipread you.
- Make sure you have the person's attention before you start speaking.
- Find a place to talk that has good lighting, away from noise and distractions.
- Turn your face towards them so they can easily see your lip movements.
- Speak clearly, not too slowly, and use normal lip movements, facial expressions and gestures.
- Keep your voice down: it's uncomfortable for a hearing aid user if you shout, and it looks aggressive.

For more information and help about hearing loss visit: [www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk](http://www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk)

# OVER TO YOU

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:  
[network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

or write to:  
**The Editor, Network, Usdaw,  
188 Wilmslow Road,  
Manchester, M14 6LJ**





**Pictured L-R:**  
North West Morrisons Seminar; Celebrating recruitment and organising in the North Eastern division with general secretary Paddy Lillis and divisional officer Joanne Thomas.



**Pictured L-R:**  
East Midlands Federation School learn about the Chainmakers of Cradley Heath, the Suffragettes and Usdaw campaigns; Campaigning at Tesco Dingwall and Lifelong Learning at Tesco CFC, Croydon.



**Pictured L-R:**  
Getting Usdaw noticed at Sainsbury's Upper Norwood, London; Campaigning at Tesco Bournemouth and Young Workers' Week at Booker Swansea.



**Pictured L-R:**  
Young Workers' Week (YWW) Tesco Bank, Glasgow; President Amy Murphy at YWW Tesco Crowborough; YWW Tesco Inverness Ness Side and YWW Tesco Inverurie.

# Our Services and Benefits Package Cannot be Beaten

**Usdaw**  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers



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

At our recent Annual Conference, Usdaw delegates, representing the Union's membership, voted overwhelmingly for an increase in the weekly subscription from 1 July 2019. This increase will ensure that the Union retains a sound financial base and can continue to offer you a comprehensive range of professional services.

## OUR LEGAL SERVICES CAN MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE

Legal Plus offers you and your family a wide range of legal services. In 2018 more than £13 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.
- You are covered for accidents abroad.†
- Your children are covered for accidents in the UK and abroad.†
- Your immediate family are fully covered for road traffic claims.
- 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.
- **FREE** initial legal advice on any matter not connected to work and follow-up assistance at competitive rates.

## 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.

Full details of Usdaw's benefits and professional services are available from your Union rep or visit our website at [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk) or call the Usdaw Freephone Helpline on **0800 030 80 30**.

*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.*

†If covered by the Package Holiday Regulations.

### WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION RATES

Scale	A	C
Weekly Subscription	£2.48	£1.61

### SICKNESS GRANT\*

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

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

### PERMANENT DISABILITY GRANT

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

### MATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	C
Grant	£30	£20

### PATERNITY/ADOPTION BENEFIT

Scale	A	C
Grant	£30	£20

### DEATH GRANT

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

### DISPUTE BENEFIT

Scale	A	C
Weekly Benefit	£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 benefit) after 12 months' continuous membership. All rates effective from 1 July 2019.