

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | November/December 2011



EXPERT RECRUITERS

Academy organisers and reps have made a huge impact on membership this year

■ Respect week

The annual Respect For Shopworkers Week made a big impression again this year
page 18



■ Youth weekend

Young activists met up for their annual get-together for two days of debate and discussion
page 8



■ Lifelong learning

Giving members the chance to improve their skills is very popular
page 14



Fighting back

General secretary John Hannett's comment



As we approach the closure of 2011 we are all aware of the continuing difficulties and challenges we will face in 2012. Unemployment is now at its highest since the early 1990s, youth unemployment is more than one million and threatening to consign a whole generation to years of misery and hopelessness.

The Coalition's view is that the private sector will be the growth area for employment and of course I hope this is the case but at this point in time given that the economy is extremely sluggish with low growth forecast, it is concerning that many people will face long periods of unemployment. Of course, we are all aware from the news programmes of what is happening in the Eurozone and many workers in many countries are facing similar difficulties. We need the UK Government to demonstrate economic competence in tackling the deficit, but also a Government which has an empathy with hard working families, and does not punish them with severe cuts to their standard of living, for example, by increasing VAT to 20 per cent. Our members are being hammered by this and the huge rises in fuel and other household bills. To counteract this we are looking to reinvigorate our political campaigning. A stronger political voice has never been more important, but to do that we have to engage with our reps and members even more than we currently do. Sometimes only a political solution can deliver for our members – see page 24.

Success stories

Despite facing massive legal hurdles we won £1.5m for workers made redundant from Ethel Austin although many staff did lose out because of a legal loophole – one which hopefully we can challenge in the future. Our Academies have also completed a very successful year as our growing membership figures prove. Congratulations to everyone involved.

The challenges to come

Another tough and challenging year lies ahead, but we enter it a growing, well-organised and confident union. I say that because I know we have a wealth of talent in our ranks. People like you who believe in fairness, justice and equality not for the few but for the many. I want to thank all of our reps and activists for their efforts this year, which has ensured our members have had a first-class service and are fully supported in times of need. We will face the challenges of 2012 head on and we won't shrink in doing our best for our members. Finally, let me send you and your families best wishes for a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

“A stronger political voice has never been more important, but to do that we have to engage with our reps and members even more than we currently do”

USDAW

www.usdaw.org.uk

© Usdaw 2011

Reproduction in whole or part by any means without written permission of the publisher is strictly forbidden. The publisher accepts no responsibility for errors, omissions or the consequences thereof.

**Network is published
bimonthly and distributed to
Usdaw activists.**

Published by:

Usdaw

188 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M14 6LJ

T 0161 224 2804

F 0161 257 2566

E network@usdaw.org.uk

W www.usdaw.org.uk

HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Mike Glover

EDITOR

Peter Rees-Farrell

REPORTER

Mairead Bradley

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS

Sarah Bailey & Paula Barke

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Sarah Bailey, Jo Bird, Ruth George,
Tony Larkin, Doug Russell and
David Williams.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Della Batchelor, Geoff Bennett, Fraser Bond, R. Brown, Design Team, Andy Doherty, Cate Gillion, Pete Hill, Martin Howells, In-Press, Ian Jackson, Anthony Jarrett, Rez Javied, Roger Keyse, Warren King, Phil Mahoney, Bill Miller, Martin O'Neill, Ross Parry, Richardsons Photographers, Paul Sanders, and Stewart Turkington.

For circulation enquiries contact your divisional office. Paper is sourced from sustainable forests

ADVERTISING

Century One Publishing Ltd

T 01727 893 894 F 01727 893 895

E enquiries@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk

W www.centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Dave Challenor

T 01727 739 193

E dave@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk

PRINTED BY: Buxton Press



Contents

REPS GET RESULTS DESPITE RECESSION

The union's membership has continued to grow despite one of the longest economic downturns since the 1930s. *Network* looks at how activists and Academy organisers are spreading the word in shops and warehouses across the UK. **20-23**.



04 In the news

The recession continues to wreak havoc on the high street with the Arcadia group the latest firm to announce future store closures, but there has been good news for young Co-op retail workers.

08 National youth weekend

Young activists gathered at the national training centre in Warrington for their annual get-together.

10 Summer school 2

Experienced reps were at Wortley Hall in Sheffield for the popular six-day residential training course – often a launch-pad for reps to increase their involvement in Usdaw.

14 Lifelong learning case studies

Union learning reps are delivering a vast array of learning opportunities for members across the UK helping them to improve their employment skills and build their confidence.

16 Retail Trades Conference 2011

The union's second biggest conference was the launch pad for the new campaign Safe Journeys to Work and the news that Usdaw will launch an investigation into why some reps leave the union.

18 Respect Week 2011 in pictures

Activists were out in force to promote this year's Freedom From Fear Respect Week which campaigned against police cuts and reminded customers to Keep their Cool at Christmas.

24 Political campaign

Udaw is looking to increase its political profile locally and nationally with the launch of a network of dedicated activists early next year.

26 Black members' weekend

This annual event brings together black and Asian activists who might otherwise not get the chance to have their voices heard. The weekend also encourages activists to get more involved.

Regulars

12 Member services Find out if Usdaw can save you money

15 Staff news Six of the best take up their new organiser's role

28 Health and safety All the latest issues in focus

30 Letters What's happening in your division

IN BRIEF

■ Unemployment soars to 17 year high

UK unemployment rose by 129,000 in the three months to September to 2.62 million, as youth unemployment also rose above a million.

The jobless total for 16 to 24-year-olds hit a record high of 1.02 million in the quarter.

The Office for National Statistics said the unemployment rate increased to 8.3 per cent. The number of people out of work and claiming Jobseeker's Allowance rose by 5,300 to 1.6 million in October.

The unemployment rate of 8.3 per cent is the highest since 1996 and the total number of unemployed people the highest since 1994.

■ Pay settlement for Morrisons Sata

Members covered by the Morrisons Sata agreement have overwhelmingly accepted a 2.5 per cent pay increase from October. This follows on from the pay award negotiated in April and now moves the annual pay review to October each year.

■ Doctors call for smoking in cars ban

All smoking in cars should be banned across the UK to protect people from second-hand smoke, doctors say.

The British Medical Association called for the extension of the current ban on smoking in public places after reviewing evidence of the dangers.

It highlighted research showing the levels of toxins in a car can be up to 23 times higher than in a smoky bar.

Recession to cull high street stores

MORE RETAIL JOBS AT RISK

Arcadia, one of the biggest operators on the high street, reported a 38 per cent fall in annual profits to £133m and says it expects to close up to 260 stores in the next few years.

Arcadia boss Sir Philip Green said the closures would come as store leases came up for renewal.

The group, which owns Topshop, Topman, Miss Selfridge, BhS, Dorothy Perkins, Wallis, Burtons and Evans, said it expected heavy discounts on the high street this Christmas.

It also reported same-store UK sales down by 1.8 per cent. Total sales at its 3,100 outlets worldwide were down by 3.4 per cent and sales have worsened, falling 4.4 per cent since the start of the new financial year.

Sir Philip Green said: "We have around 450 or 460 stores where leases expire in the next



Under threat . . . one of the brands that make up the Arcadia portfolio

three years. And I think on our latest summary we will close more than half of those on lease expiry. So I would say, I would expect us to close 250, 260.

He claimed the warm weather had made trading difficult for many retailers: "It's been the hottest October and November in history. Nobody can deal with that. Winter goods are tough.

"Trading conditions remain extremely challenging, with style, quality and value at the top of our agenda and more

important than ever." He said the economic climate had heightened people's value of money: "I do believe everybody is more financially aware than they've ever been in their life."

He added that the firm had decided not to pass on certain higher business costs and this had squeezed its profit margin by 1.8 percentage points, costing it £52.4m.

The billionaire's Arcadia group is one of the biggest private employers in Britain, with over 44,000 staff in its 2,500 UK stores.

Reps queue up for new course

Usdaw's latest Home Study Course, 'Vulnerable Workers' has proved to be quite popular, so popular that there is a backlog of answer books waiting to be marked.

More than 450 of you are still waiting for your certificate but Usdaw is doing its very best to get them out to you soon.

The union has received lots of positive feedback about this course and many of you have found it interesting and informative.

If you would like to learn more about vulnerable workers, and get a qualification, why not request a copy from the education



department (0161 224 2804) or register online at: www.fair-ground.org.uk/site/home-study

If you can't find the time but still want to learn, why not try one of the first online learning modules. If you are finding the

new Agency Workers' Regulations too complex to take in, this 10 minute video and short quiz will give you an audiovisual overview and help you test your knowledge. Visit: www.fair-ground.org.uk/site/learning-on-line

JOY AND ANGER AFTER BIG COMPENSATION WIN

SOME STAFF STILL LOSE OUT

Usdaw has won compensation worth up to £1.5 million for over 500 former employees of Ethel Austin who were made redundant by administrators in 2010.

Ethel Austin went into administration on 8 February 2010 and Usdaw made a claim on behalf of its members for a protective award after administrators MCR failed to consult with the union before making 1,700 staff redundant.

The employment tribunal in Liverpool found MCR had failed in their legal obligations to consult with Usdaw and awarded its members compensation of eight weeks pay, capped at £380 a week, the maximum payable in these circumstances.

The compensation is limited to those employees made redundant from Ethel Austin's former head office and distribution centre in Knowsley and the company's store in Edgware London. In a judgment the union may appeal, the tribunal decided that MCR was not obliged to consult about workplaces where less than 20 redundancies were being made, thus ruling out all but one of the 186 Ethel Austin stores that were closed.



General secretary John Hannett said: "While the award can never fully compensate for staff losing their jobs, I'm sure our members will welcome the money and appreciate the effort Usdaw has made to secure this compensation for them. Cases like these really demonstrate the value of Usdaw.

"However, I'm bitterly disappointed the tribunal limited the scope of the award. The fact that many of our members won't be compensated just because their store had less than 20 staff is plainly wrong and shows the gaping loophole and injustice of the current legislation.

"Usdaw believes that the UK's current interpretation of the law on collective redundancies is both unfair and possibly a breach of the European Directive which seeks to protect workers in large scale redundancy situations. We are taking further expert legal advice and if we can appeal against the judgment we will do so." More at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/news

Union elections 2012

The election process is underway to elect the union's president and executive council for the next three years.

The president chairs the Annual Delegate Meeting and other conferences as well as presiding at the monthly executive council meetings.

The executive council is drawn from each of the seven divisions and is made up of two lay members per division with the exception of the North West, which has three seats. The executive council's role is to oversee the business of the union in conjunction with the general secretary and other central officials.

Nomination papers were sent to branches in early October with the closing date at noon Monday

14 November 2011. Ballot papers and election addresses will be sent to all individual members on Monday 23 January 2012. The ballot will close on Friday 17 February. The Electoral Reform Services (The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, London, N8 0NW) will act as the independent scrutineer.

Elections will also be held for divisional councils and for delegations to other national conferences. Voting papers will be sent out to branches on Monday 23 January 2012 and should be returned by noon on 5 March 2012.

■ If you have changed your address recently please inform the records section at central office or call 0845 6060640 before 15 December 2011.

The co-operative funeralcare is pleased to support Usdaw

We promise to give you individual support, care and reassurance when it matters most. Our caring staff are here to listen and advise you, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Usdaw members and their immediate families are entitled to...

- £25 discount on our funeral Pre-Payment Plans

- 10% discount on professional services fees on funeral arrangements

For more information, contact your local The Co-operative Funeralcare (Quote reference – MKT/11/006)

Or visit our website at

www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk



10% discount applies to funeral director professional services fees only (as detailed on price list and estimate form provided at the time of arranging a funeral) and excludes discounts on supplementary services, coffin/casket selection, additional services and payments made on your behalf (e.g. clergy, doctors fees, crematorium/burial charges). The funeral plan offer applies to new cremation and burial plans purchased through a Co-operative Funeralcare home. The offer does not apply to funeral plans paid for by the fixed monthly payment option. Offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer and are valid until 30th June 2012. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.



CHECK YOUR ENERGY COSTS

Helping You To Cope With Tough Times. The cost of fuel and everyday shopping seems to increase every week. This makes it more important than ever to budget and control household

expenses. Fortunately Usdaw Energy a service set up by Usdaw can help. Using our service you can compare all the

energy suppliers in the UK and potentially save £227 or more. Indeed some members of Usdaw have saved £300 or

more per year by using this comparison service. **So try it!**

You could save yourself some money!

Visit:

usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk
or call: 0845 652 1683.



IN BRIEF

■ **Iceland chain on big retailers' radar**

Morrisons and Asda, as well as private equity firms, are queuing up to buy frozen food retailer Iceland as its owner, the Icelandic bank Landsbanki, seeks to offload it. The chain employs around 22,000 staff at its 700 stores.

■ **Further evidence of high street gloom**

High street fashion chain Primark has posted its first fall in profits for more than a decade as the economic gloom envelops even the discounters.

The company, owned by Associated British Foods said operating profits fell by eight per cent to £309m.

■ **Mothercare stores struggle in downturn**

Babycare retailer Mothercare has posted a pre-tax loss of £81.4 million compared to a pre-tax profit of 0.3 million last year. The retailer said the loss illustrated the extent of the challenges facing its UK operations in a weak economic and consumer environment.

Total UK sales fell 4.3 per cent while like-for-like UK sales fell 7 per cent in the six months to 8 October as customers reduced their spending on higher value items.

■ **Pay deals trail way behind inflation**

Earnings rose at far below the level of inflation in the year to April, although the pay gap between men and women narrowed slightly, official statistics show. There was no change in median average gross weekly earnings for all UK workers in April 2011 compared with 2010.

Boardroom pay – ‘a deep malaise’

TOP BOSSES' PAY ROCKETS

The high salaries of UK executives are ‘corrosive’ to the economy, an influential pressure group has argued.

The High Pay Commission – set up by pressure group Compass – says the disparity between what top executives and average workers earn has been building for 30 years.

Its study lists a 12-point plan to stop ‘high pay creating inequalities last seen in the Victorian era’.

These include forcing companies to publish a pay ratio between the highest paid

executive and the company median.

The High Pay Commission was set up with backing from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, to investigate boardroom pay.

Its year-long inquiry found that the pay of top executives at a number of FTSE firms had risen by more than 4,000 per cent on average in the last 30 years. Although the figures have been disputed by some companies.

High Pay Commission chairwoman Deborah Hargreaves said: “There’s a crisis at the top of British

business and it is deeply corrosive to our economy.

“When pay for senior executives is set behind closed doors, does not reflect company success and is fuelling massive inequality, it represents a deep malaise at the very top of our society.

“The British people believe in fairness and, at a time of unparalleled austerity, one tiny section of society – the top 0.1 per cent – continues to enjoy huge annual increases in pay awards. Everyone, including the main political parties, recognises there is a need to tackle top pay.”

National meeting for Hermes activists

KEEPING EVERYONE IN THE LOOP

Activists of parcel carrier Hermes met up at the national training centre for their quarterly meeting with the national officer David Johnson and members of the joint national committee. “These meetings allow us to bring reps from across the UK to discuss issues within the business affecting members and help us to keep on top of any emerging issues,” said David Johnson. “It’s a tough sector to be in at present but our reps are doing a great job.”



Hermes reps outside the national training centre in Warrington

Training officer John Goode

Former Leeds-based North Eastern divisional training officer John Goode died in November, he was 72.



John was appointed in 1978 and retired 16 years later on health grounds. He was

instrumental in developing hundreds of reps during the difficult Thatcher years.

A life-long trade unionist he went to Ruskin College and then East Anglia University in the early '70s. Prior to his appointment he worked as a teacher in Norfolk. After his retirement he moved to Cornwall where he lived with his partner Sadie.

He was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1997 and helped to highlight Usdaw's

awareness of the disease by agreeing to feature in *Arena* in later years.

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute: “John was a very popular man in the division and his commitment and dedication to the cause always shone through.

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

GOOD NEWS FOR CO-OP WORKERS

YOUNG MEMBERS' VICTORY

Usdaw has negotiated a huge 28 per cent pay rise for around 1,000 young workers employed by retail Co-operative Societies.

As part of this year's pay deal, the Co-operative Employers Association has agreed to Usdaw's longstanding claim for the abolition of youth rates of pay which means all 16 and 17 year olds will now receive a minimum adult rate of £6.25 an hour.

The increase is part of an overall pay settlement of 2.5 per cent agreed by the union's members at retail Co-operative Societies and was effective

from 1 October 2011.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This is great news for our young Co-op members and a really positive step forward for retail Co-operative Societies. Usdaw members of all ages have been pressing for equality for young workers for a number of years and I'm extremely pleased we have achieved it."

"Usdaw has one of the largest youth memberships of any trade union and one of our key industrial and political aims is the abolition of youth rates of pay. Our success at the Co-op follows the abolition of youth rates of pay at Tesco which we achieved last year and we continue to press for the adult

rate of the National Minimum Wage to be paid to every worker aged 16 and over."

www.usdaw.org.uk/news



Branching out for more education

Active reps who have recently been elected as branch officials met up at the national training centre in Warrington for the tailor-made five-day residential course.

Eleven lay officials made up the November intake for an in-depth look at how union branches operate and how they fit in locally, divisionally and nationally with Usdaw's structure.

Senior officials and representatives from central office departments also provide information on how the union supports its members and reps.

More at: www.usdaw.org.uk/training

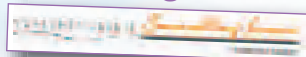


The national training centre at Warrington hosts the popular branch officer's course

Click Connect Win



Sign up to our email updates and you could win £100 in Argos Vouchers courtesy of Consumer Credit Counselling Service



www.usdaw.org.uk/emailupdates

Sponsored by CCCS. Tel 0800 980 8271 www.ccs.co.uk/usdaw Closing date 6 January 2012. Terms apply.

WEB NWK 1111

IN BRIEF

2012 Forthcoming events for your diary

January

14 January
National Organising Awards

23-29 January
Membership Week

February

11-12 February
National Political Conference

April

22-25 April
Annual Delegate Meeting

June

02-03 June
North West divisional conference

18-24 June
Membership Week

September

01-08 September
First Series Summer School

10-13 September
TUC Conference

15-22 September
Second Series Summer School

October

30 September -
04 October
Labour Party Annual Conference

13-14 October
Retail Trades Conference

November

03-04 November
National Youth Weekend

December

01-02 December
North West Divisional Conference

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

YOUNG ACTIVISTS MAKE THEIR MARK

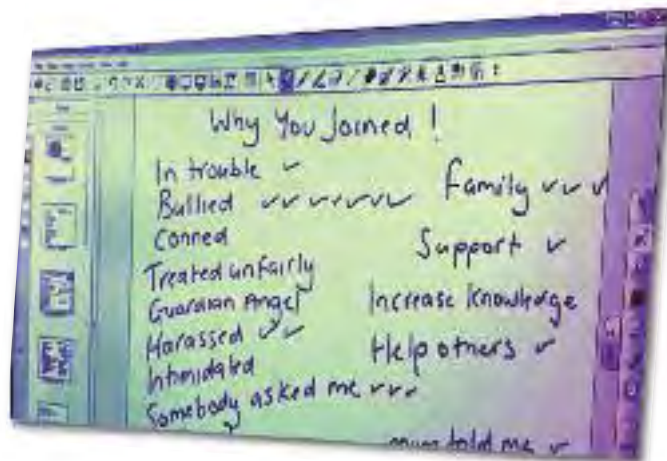
Supporting young reps, getting more young workers involved in Usdaw and having a good time were top of the agenda at the 2011 national youth weekend in November.

Twenty-eight activists aged 27 and under came from across the divisions to meet at the national training centre in Warrington for a weekend to exchange ideas and socialise with like-minded reps in a relaxed and informal environment.

For first timers it was also a chance to make new friends, network, and learn more about how the union works.

The weekend was opened by deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis and president Jeff Broome. Paddy gave delegates the opportunity to speak up, offer opinions and ask questions. He was also keen to hear how the union could improve its processes to support young reps and how the union could focus on recruiting more young workers.

The reps' suggestions included; raising Usdaw's profile within the trade



union movement, arranging more youth get-togethers, organising more support for the divisional youth committees and developing more youth publications.

General secretary John Hannett invited delegates to share their experiences of being young reps. The delegates spoke to John about needing more young and active reps in their divisions to help strengthen the national and divisional committees so that they in turn can support young members and reps and increase overall

delegates also considered what they felt was important to young people in the workplace and would use these ideas when recruiting. The groups agreed that young workers want protection, support, advice, solutions, a voice, knowledge and understanding, representation and someone to talk to.

However, it wasn't all heads down and hard work during the weekend. The activists also held their very own 'Youth's Got Talent' competition where the delegates, in groups of four, produced and performed mock television adverts to show young workers why they need to be in the union and encouraging them to join.

Once the votes were counted the winning team were crowned champions and awarded Usdaw-themed prizes.

membership.

The weekend involved workshops and the reps in their divisions were asked to discuss and deliver ideas about creating a young reps e-bulletin that would support and encourage young members and reps. The reps came up with a variety of ideas for articles including case studies, interviews, photo galleries, divisional reports, employment law and competitions.

The





In conversation with young reps . . .

Damien Wiltshire, 25, works for Morrisons at Stratford in the Eastern division. He's been a rep for 18 months. He also recently became a member of the national youth committee.

"I became a rep because I like helping people enjoy work," he said. "I think an online booklet would be a good tool for recruiting young workers to the union, listing all the benefits of being a member of Usdaw with specific sections for young workers."

"The youth weekend has been great. I've had the chance to meet lots of interesting people and friends I can go to if I need advice in my rep's role. I'll recommend this weekend to all the young reps. I'm definitely looking forward to meeting up with everyone again."

Lesley Marsden, 22, from the Southern division works for the Co-operative in Brighton. She's been a rep for more than three years.

"I became a rep because I love learning new things and helping people," she said.

Lesley thinks that young reps hold the key to recruiting young workers. "I believe Usdaw can recruit more young workers by using their young reps. We have more to say to young workers because we're on their level. I think we also need to raise the union's profile so young workers are more aware that the union exists."

"It's my first time at the national youth weekend and

I'd definitely come back, I've had a great time. It was nice to see John and Paddy here too and hear them speak to a smaller group as opposed to a large group such as at ADM.

"It was also very useful to have the chance to ask them questions."

Kayleigh Soper, 25, from the North Eastern division, works at Tesco, Humberside and has been an activist for 30 months.

"My family are big trade unionists so that's how I got involved," she said. "I love being a rep, especially the satisfaction of helping people and knowing that you're there if people need you."

Kayleigh has been to the youth weekend twice. "I think it is very important for young reps. It's important people get involved, like John Hannett said, 'if you don't have young members then you end up with an ageing union'" she said.

"I always go back home after the weekend and recommend it to people. It's well organised and useful for finding out more information about the union and a good place to meet new friends."

"I think seeing John and Paddy here as well shows that young reps are valued by the union too."

Ali Abbas, 24, works for Tesco at Oldham in the North West Division. He has been a rep for two years.

"We needed someone to raise their voice and I realised that I could speak up and represent others and so I became a rep."

He believes recruiting more young members lies with the young reps. "We need the younger generation of union reps to talk to the youth," he said. "Many don't know Usdaw is there or what is on offer, we need to publicise it more."

This year was Ali's first time at the youth weekend. "It has been really fantastic. The training has been easy-to-follow and everything has been really interesting," he said. "I was expecting it to be dull, but I was wrong."

To hear more from the delegates and find out about the youth weekend visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/youth



Pictured (l-r) Damien Wiltshire, Kayleigh Soper, Lesley Marsden, and Ali Abbas

Get Involved!

If you're under 27 and need advice and support, or you want to get more involved then contact your divisional youth committee co-ordinator:

South Wales & Western

Milan Pavlik
Bristol 0117 691 6061
bristol@usdaw.org.uk

Eastern

Adam Skwierawski
Bury St Edmunds
01284 775700
burystedmunds@usdaw.org.uk

Midlands

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

North Eastern

Gary Gibson
Leeds 0113 232 1320
leeds@usdaw.org.uk

Scottish

Craig Smith
Glasgow 0141 427 65611
glasgow@usdaw.org.uk

Southern

Danny Knowles
Andover 01264 321460
andover@usdaw.org.uk

North West

Jo-Anne Welbourne
Warrington 01925 578050
warrington@usdaw.org.uk

“It's important young people get involved. If you don't have young members then you end up with an ageing union”

EXPERIENCED REPS T

Usdaw's Summer Schools have been the springboard for many reps to increase their involvement making the most of the excellent training opportunities, superb facilities and the chance to network

Active reps from across the union's seven divisions descended on Wortley Hall near Sheffield for second summer school, a residential week of in-depth training. Reps could choose from Politics, Women and Organising, or Organising in the workplace and with places open to activists who had been to first summer school or the branch officer's course, places were in great demand. *Network* dropped in on one of the busy days to find out how the reps had coped with such a demanding schedule.

 www.usdaw.org.uk/training

“It's opened my eyes to all sorts of things and given me plenty of ideas to take back to my store”

Lynda Mitchell



Asif Chadat

Asif Chadat

Sata rep Asif Chadat from Littlewoods Shop Direct in Bolton soon overcame his nerves to learn more about women and organising. “This course covered everything about equal opportunities including maternity rights and equal pay,” said the branch secretary who has been a rep for two years. “The highlight for me was doing the street campaign where we asked members of the public about equal pay as part of our survey. That was really enjoyable. Summer school is hard work but I found it very rewarding.”



Andy Kelly

Andy Kelly

Andy Kelly travelled all the way from his Tesco store in Stornaway on the Isle of Lewis to attend his second summer school in two years. “I know from my work on the local trades council that many other unions don't offer this type of in-depth residential course, so I feel very lucky to be here,” he said. “You have a great mix of people from across the UK from different occupations and so you have a wealth of expertise in the room. It's easy to build up a really useful network of contacts. You're learning something new every day. It's hard work but there's so much to get out



TAKE THE NEXT STEP

in the union and this year's Second Series Summer School was no exception with activists
rk and meet up with old and new friends from previous courses, *Network* dropped in too

of it. The tutors are excellent and make things very easy to understand. I've made a network of friends for life and that's what the union is all about."

"A great bunch of people who all had different experiences and ideas to share so even in our time out of class we discussed issues that came up during the day. Wortley Hall is such an inspiring place you cannot fail to be impressed by its beauty and tranquility."

Lynda Mitchell

Checkout worker Lynda Mitchell from Morrisons in Yeovil, Somerset, particularly enjoyed the team-work aspect of the week. "You're never left on your own and everyone helps each other," she said. "There's a lot of hard work and a great deal to take in but it's fascinating and the teaching is excellent. It's opened my eyes to all sorts of things and given me plenty of ideas to take back to my store."

"I thoroughly enjoyed the week and will look at applying for the Academy next year."

Jade Sheldon

Young rep Jade Sheldon went to the first summer school last year and was keen to repeat the exercise on summer school two. "I was in the women and organising group and it was brilliant, very informative," said the 24 year-old warehouse operative from Co-operative Retail Logistics in Alfreton. "It was a big step up from first summer school because you look more in-depth at the issues. I'm certainly better informed now. We looked at women's working experiences both now and in the past and we also looked at pay inequality. It was a lot of hard work but well worth it."

Vivian Anderson

Tesco rep Vivian Anderson from Hammersmith in London was allocated the politics group because of her background as an Academy1&2 graduate. "I wasn't sure at first but the longer the course went on the more I got into it and enjoyed it," she said. "I learnt so much about the connections between the union and politics and the importance of using MPs to get our message across in parliament."

"I didn't want the course to end so for me

it was a great experience, I learnt so much. It really does help your confidence to grow. I'd certainly recommend it."

Des Murphy

Factory rep Des Murphy from United Biscuits in Manchester immersed himself in the politics course for the week and believes the week is a must for all reps. "Politics is tied up with everything we do as trade unionists and individuals," he said. "It affects all of us just about all of the time and this week has underlined that for me and the rest of the group who are all Labour Party members. We looked at the structure of government, local councils and the link with the union. It was all very interesting."

Chris McDermott

Tesco rep Chris McDermott from Liverpool chose the women and organising course because most of his members are female. "It certainly delivered for me," said the 24 year-old. "We looked at pensions, health and safety and the added pressures on women at work in particular their caring responsibilities."

"You always learn as much from each other as you do on the course because of the vast experiences among the other reps so that is really helpful. We did an Usdaw's Got Talent presentation, which was aimed at promoting the union with mock adverts and the like – it was a great laugh. I went to first summer school last year and second summer school is more intense which I enjoyed. It's a tiring week but I've no regrets, it was fantastic. I'll think about the Academy for next year that seems like the most obvious next step for me."



Lynda Mitchell



Jade Sheldon



Vivian Anderson



Des Murphy



Chris McDermott

MEMBER SERVICES



Usdaw works with all of its affinity partners to get you and your family the best deals available. Find out now if your union membership can save you money.

For more information visit:

 www.usdaw.org.uk/offers

Unisaver: The union no longer offers the Unisaver savings product as advertised on the member services pages of previous Networks.

Any members who have taken out a policy with Unisaver will not be affected by this change and existing policies will carry on as normal. If you have any queries please contact **Coventry Assurance Society on 024 7622 3683.**

HOME, MOTOR & TRAVEL INSURANCE

 As an Usdaw member, you are entitled to great value, low cost insurance from UIA.

For a quote call **0800 376 0300** or visit: www.usdawinsurance.co.uk to receive up to **15% online discount**

Usdaw is an Introducer Appointed Representative of UIA Insurance Ltd. UIA is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

UK TOP ATTRACTIONS

Usdaw members can make great savings on the following UK attractions and theme parks:

Alton Towers Resort, Chessington World of Adventures, LEGOLAND Discovery Centre Manchester, LEGOLAND Windsor, Madame Tussauds London, SEA LIFE centres & Sanctuaries, the Dungeons, THORPE PARK and Warwick Castle.

To find out more or to book call **0871 222 4001** and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin




SAVE WITH USDAW ENERGY

Usdaw Energy can help you save on your gas and electricity bills. Try our free and unique **100% impartial energy search engine** which allows you to compare the prices of all gas and electricity suppliers and find the very best deal for your home.

You can compare by savings alone, CO₂ savings, customer service standards or a combination of all three. Simply key in your postcode, your current supplier and charges and the site will do the rest for you. **It couldn't be easier.**

To see how much money you can save visit: www.usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk or call **0845 652 1683**



USDAW HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

Usdaw Health Plan
Low cost alternative to private medical insurance. Get 100% of your money back on optical, dental, therapist and specialist treatments. To apply online visit: www.usdawhealth.co.uk or call **0800 037 2094**

Usdaw Dental Plan
Get 100% of your money back on the cost of your dental treatment. NHS and Private plans available. White fillings and crowns covered. To apply online visit: www.usdawdental.co.uk or call **0800 037 2092**

Designed and administered by Protego Group Ltd. Registered Office: 260-268 Chapel Street, Manchester, M3 5JZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority (registration number 304363)
*Money back may differ on NHS dental plans in Scotland and Northern Ireland

THE CO-OPERATIVE FUNERALCARE

Our caring staff are on hand to give you individual support, care and reassurance when it matters most. Usdaw members and their families are entitled to a £25 discount on our funeral plans and 10% discount on professional services fees on funeral arrangements.

Visit www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk for your nearest Co-operative Funeralcare or call **0800 083 6301**

Terms and conditions: 10% discount applies to Funeral Director professional services fees only (as detailed on the price list and estimate form provided at the time of arranging a funeral) and excludes discounts on supplementary services, coffin/casket selection, additional services and payments made on your behalf (e.g. clergy, doctors fees, crematorium/burial charges). 10% discount is not applicable on funeral plans. Both offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offers valid to Usdaw members and their families until 31 December 2012. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.

BRITANNIA

With Britannia, Usdaw members benefit from a great range of mortgage products and an exclusive instant access savings account.

YOUR HOME MAY BE REPOSSESSED IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON YOUR MORTGAGE

To find out more call free on **0808 156 2838***. Visit your local branch or britannia.co.uk/usdaw

*Our lines are open 8am-8pm weekdays and 9am-12noon Saturdays. Calls may be recorded and/or monitored. Calls from landline phones are free however mobile providers may charge. Britannia is the trading name of the Co-operative Bank plc.



TAX REFUND SERVICE

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

To find out if you are due a refund, go to www.taxrebates.com/ref/usdaw, call the application information line **0845 058 2288** or send a SAE for an application form to: The Tax Refund Co. 43-47 Middle Hillgate, Stockport, SK1 3DG.



NEW AND USED CARS

Risk free, hassle free car purchase scheme for Usdaw members and their families.

- Massive choice
- Save ££££s
- Total peace of mind
- Convenience
- Nationwide delivery

Part exchange welcome
Finance available 

To enquire online visit: www.usdawdrive.co.uk or call **0845 122 6916**

FREE DEBT ADVICE

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

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

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

Telephone debt counselling
Freephone **0800 980 8271**
Mon to Fri 8:00am-8:00pm



BRITANNIA RESCUE

We've been providing breakdown recovery since 1983 so we know what's important to you when it comes to your car breakdown cover

- 24/7 response across UK and Republic of Ireland
- National network of more than 3000 breakdown professionals
- 15 per cent discount to all Usdaw members
- New members get a further £5 off by applying online

Call free on **08000 22 39 52**
Apply online: www.britanniarescue.com/usdaw

Lines open Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat-Sun 8am-5pm calls may be recorded. Britannia Rescue is a registered trademark and is a trading style of the Liverpool Victoria Group of companies. 21017636 12/10



GYMTASTIC OFFERS

Discounted rates on Gym Membership exclusive to Usdaw Members

Visit the following Usdaw websites for more information:

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






ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Scottish division's **Laura McLean** answers our questions on her experiences as a rep

“I was inspired to get up and join in a debate at ADM completely unprompted. I would never have done that before joining Usdaw!”

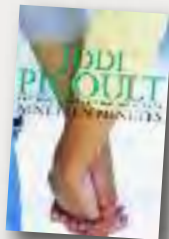
FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Age** 33
- **Employer** Sainsbury's Dundee
- **Occupation** Merchandiser
- **Lives** in a small town outside Perth called Coupar Angus
- **Union positions** Shop steward, branch secretary, equality forum member and federation committee member
- **Branch** Dundee PT G319
- **Ushaw Activist** Since 2003

MY FAVOURITE...

- **Book..** is anything by Jodi Picoult
- **TV programme..** dependant on what kind of day I've had, sometimes I like hard hitting drama, and sometimes I need to chill out to something frothy and silly, but if Gok is on I'm there!



TRIVIA

- **In my spare time...** I like to socialise and keep fit
- **The best moment of my life so far...** was cuddling my new baby nephew for the first time

Why did you become an Ushaw rep?

I had a bad manager and wanted to help those who felt they couldn't speak up for themselves, especially as our reps were all male and the female staff were sometimes reluctant to talk to them about some issues.

What's the best thing about being a rep?

All the new contacts and friends you meet and the support you get from other reps, tutors and officials.

The best moments have been negotiating change of hours for members who would otherwise have had to leave due to childcare problems.

...and the worst?

The negative comments from non-members who can't or won't understand the benefits of the union or being involved in a dismissal, no matter how it comes about.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I've been on almost every training course going! I think they are all very well organised whether it's an informal federation event or the awesome experience of the Academy! The tutors are fantastic and they know what it's like for you on the shopfloor as they've been there.

Have you been to an ADM?

I have been to five ADMs, delivered propositions at two of them and was inspired to get up and join a debate last year completely unprompted. I would never have done that before joining Usdaw!

Is recruitment easy at your workplace?

It's quite easy. We already have a high membership, we attend every induction and after a member has a successful representation, they inevitably encourage their friends to join.

Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

I am definitely more organised, I have a lot more confidence and self belief, no one makes me feel intimidated now!

What's your advice to a member thinking about becoming a rep?

Talk to other reps, your AO and your family about it, remember you can be as involved outside of your workplace as you want, but some reps are happiest just at work.

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

Budget cuts, fuel prices and child friendly working arrangements.

How would you improve Ushaw?

More advertising, ie in the press, internet etc.

What's next for you?

I'm just about to start a second term on the equality forum, then hopefully Academy2. But mostly representing members and doing the best I can for them.

Want to be the next activist in-depth?



network@usdaw.org.uk

CHANGING LIVES

Giving hard-working union members the chance to improve their skills, their confidence and their employability lies at the heart of what lifelong learning is all about, *Network* takes a closer look

Thanks to mobile union learning rep Phil Gander and his team, night-shift workers at the Tesco store in North Finchley, Greater London won't be left in the dark when it comes to learning.

The team organised a two-day Check Out Learning event in the store in September, which included night-shift and weekend workers.

"Academy organisers Jeremy Hearn and Patrick Gyamfi and mobile union learning rep, Vicky Nelson worked with the reps. Management were very supportive and they agreed to brief all of the staff before the event," said Phil Gander.

"Night-shift manager Darrell Lewis allowed us to spend time with the night workers before they started their shift.

"All in all it was very successful. Sixty-four members filled in surveys for literacy, basic IT and Spanish and twenty-one signed up for online learning. And we recruited ten new members and two new union learning reps.

"I think it shows what we can achieve with teamwork. And it was important that we were able to organise a visit to staff on the late shift and show them that the campaign is there for all workers, we had a fantastic response from them."



Academy organiser Patrick Gyamfi signs up Tamara Gabb

Susan spells success

Susan Manson, a cleaner at Morrisons in Airdrie in Lanarkshire has been named the first Learner of the Year by Scottish Union Learning.

"I always wanted to learn about computers, but I didn't have the confidence," said Susan, 44, who signed up for a basic IT course at an Usdaw Check Out Learning campaign day.

"The course was run in-store, which made

it easier. However, I'm dyslexic although I had kept it secret for many years. I spoke to my ULR who advised me to speak to my tutor about it."

Susan's tutor helped her access special software for dyslexia, which helped her a lot during the course.

"For years I relied on my husband and son to read things for me. Now I just scan my mail and deal with it myself. It's so nice not having to rely on anyone else – what I've learned with the support of my union has completely changed my life."

"I was shocked to hear I'd won the Learner of the Year, but I was so pleased and just hope that other learners out there are encouraged to take a chance like I did – it's worth it!"



Glynis shines a light

Tesco canteen assistant Glynis Nock won the Sunderland Colleges' Learner of the Year Award at a gala ceremony at the City's Stadium of Light last month.

The 60 year-old from Redcar in Cleveland stepped back into the classroom earlier this year for the first time in more than 40 years.

With the support of tutors and union learning reps along with her own determination she completed basic skills courses in maths and English.

"At first I was very hesitant," said Glynis. "But my tutor was brilliant, he encouraged me all the way.

"By the time I sat down to sit my exam I was petrified, I thought I was going to fail. I was so chuffed when I passed. Especially maths, I can't believe after so long I did it.

"My personnel manager wants to put a photograph of me with my certificate on the noticeboard to show and encourage others to sign up to learning.

"Winning the award came as a big surprise. I still can't believe it's happened to me. I had a fantastic night at the stadium. I'd like to thank everyone who has helped me become more confident, without that help I would never have won. I am very grateful."



NEW APPOINTMENTS

The union's Academy, now in its eighth year, is proving to be the ideal training ground for new area organisers, five of whom have taken up their new roles in the last few months

Daniel Adams made the switch from central office to area organiser at Kegworth in July 2010 and will move again this time to Warrington in the New Year. The 32-year-old joined Usdaw as a research assistant in 2005 before being promoted to Tesco team leader in the research department in 2007.

Daniel had previously graduated from Manchester University and went on to complete his doctorate in British Trade Unionism in 2008. Originally from Essex, Daniel is now a fully paid up Northerner. "I enjoyed working in the Midlands but I'll be glad to get back to the North West," he said. "It's a challenging job being an organiser but I'm enjoying it, it's everything I expected and more."

Jo-Anne Welbourne

Warrington-based Jo-Anne Welbourne has swapped her rep's role at the Home Retail Argos call centre in nearby Widnes to look after retail workers in the North West division.

The former Academy1 graduate last year was in the middle of Academy2 this year

when she was appointed in July. "The Academy was the perfect preparation for being an organiser," said the 32 year-old. "Without it I wouldn't have been ready for the organiser's role and responsibilities. I'm looking after retail members in both food and non-food at the moment. It's stressful sometimes, but I'm loving it, it's brilliant."

Rose Bevan

Former MidCounties Co-op rep Rose Bevan has found her perfect job after being appointed in July this year. "I get such a buzz out of helping people and winning their cases I wish I'd done this years ago," said the 54 year-old, who is based at the Cardiff office.

"I did Academy1 in 2010 and was part way through Academy2 this year when I got the job. I love organising the campaigns as well. The last four or five years have been crucial in my development. It was then I took up the senior rep's role even though I've been a rep for nearly 20 years in the Gloucester and Oxfordshire areas. I really enjoy helping people so it's a very rewarding role, perfect for me."

Rob Donnelly

Scotsman Rob Donnelly has moved to the Southern division following his appointment to the Morden office. The 38 year-old started his new position in February this year following three years of hectic union activity. "I was a rep at Robert Wiseman's Dairies and once I became involved I did Academy1 in 2009 and Academy2 in 2010 and this really opened my eyes," he said. "I'd worked in retail for 18 years prior to this and didn't get involved so it's been a dramatic change for me. The job is fantastic, every day is different and I'm really enjoying it."

Sharon Langham

Another Academy graduate is Sharon Langham who took up her appointment at Kegworth in July after seven busy years as an activist. The former Tesco team leader from Ilkeston in Derbyshire is loving her new job. "I'm now delivering for members on a much bigger scale and reaching out to more people," said the 44 year-old.

"It's a big step but the support I've had has been fantastic. All of my experiences have helped me make the step

up – the Academy1 in 2009, Academy2 in 2010, and I've spent a lot of time as a stand-down rep. I was also a mobile union learning rep. The more I became involved the more I wanted to do. I'm loving it."

Ian Irvine

Former DHL rep Ian Irvine completes the team after he was appointed to the Faversham office in early November. The 36 year-old has made the switch from the North West to the Southern division. "This is a job I've always wanted so I wasn't put off by the move," said Ian, who was a fork lift truck driver and warehouse operative from Preston Brook in Cheshire prior to his appointment.

"I'm still getting to know the area and the reps, so I'm spending long days sorting everything out. I'm settling in nicely. My responsibilities include a lot of industrial sites, which I'm used to, and also some of the big retailers.

"I was on Academy1 in 2010 and just finished Academy2 in time to take up my new role, early days so far but it's going well."

■ To keep up with vacancies at Usdaw keep an eye on the website: www.usdaw.org.uk

Daniel Adams



Jo-Anne Welbourne



Rose Bevan



Rob Donnelly



Sharon Langham



Ian Irvine



REPS ARE AT THE HE

Too many reps are slipping through the union's net in the first two years of service and Usdaw is

U sdaw is determined to address the quit rate among reps with a thoroughgoing review of how the union trains and retains its most precious resource, deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** told conference.

"So far this year, over 2,500 members have agreed to become reps, but the overall numbers of reps have increased by only 150 so far this year because each year there is a turnover of 27 per cent among our activists," he said.

"That means that each year one in four gives up the role of being a rep. And we know from our own research that two thirds of the reps who quit their role were people who continued their membership and continued to work for the same employer.

"So we aren't just

talking about the natural turnover that happens when people retire or change employer. We are talking about hundreds of reps every year making an active decision not to stay active. This is something that we urgently need to address.

"We also know that of the reps who give up the role, 60 per cent give up the role in the first two years of being a rep. We must ensure that every one of you feels valued and supported, from the very first day you step forward to take up the challenge of representing your colleagues.

"Because there is no doubt that being a rep is truly a challenge. It can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also be tough. Fitting in union work alongside your job, your home and family life can sometimes seem impossible.

"As a union, we have a big responsibility to our reps that's why next year we are planning to launch a project around Supporting and Developing Reps.

We are currently reviewing the support that we give to

reps from day one. We are looking at the early interaction between the union and the new reps to see how we can make it better. We are looking at everything.

"We need to ensure that all new reps – in fact all reps – have positive experiences, get the support they need, and have the opportunity to develop into the experienced reps who stick with the union for years and who successfully organise their workplaces.

"I can't overstate how important good reps in the workplace are. We all know they are crucial to the success of the union. And we know we have thousands of good reps that's why Usdaw currently has over 409,000 members. At the end of 2006 we had 341,000 members. That is an increase in overall membership of over 68,000 in five years. So we are doing many things right. But we can do better and we will look closely at how we can better support our activists."



Coalition's policies are making matters worse



The Retail Trades Conference is one of the most important conferences in Usdaw's calendar because

75 per cent of our members work in the retail sector which means the issues that matter to them matter to us, general

secretary **John Hannett** told delegates.

"It's clear we are in a severe recession with no end in sight. However, the Tory-led Coalition Government's efforts to tackle the recession seem to focus on making things even more difficult for ordinary, hard working people like you and our members and their families.

"The Coalition has attacked benefits, cut tax credits, frozen public sector wages and are now attacking pensions. But its approach is not working, the economy is not growing. Instead

ART OF THIS UNION

out to turn this around and build on the successes its reps have enjoyed in the last ten years



Varied debates put activists in the spotlight

Delegates agreed to support eight propositions on a variety of subjects.

Kay Timbrell from South Wales & Western division called on companies to work closely with Usdaw to monitor and review their discrimination policies to ensure they retain the confidence of employees. "Discrimination should not be tolerated and it's up to all of us to make sure our members are safe in their workplaces," she said.

Ken Sharpe from Eastern division wants the executive council to consider the viability of a generic style induction video so that every new starter can see what the union can do for them at the earliest opportunity. "This would be particularly aimed at companies where there is no induction material to assist the reps and could be shown within any company," he said.

Women who are going through the menopause should not be victimised by employers' absence policies, **Anne Watkins** told conference. "The menopause affects 99.9 per cent of women in many different ways, both mentally and physically and we feel this

should be classed as 'mitigating circumstances' under the Supporting Your Attendance policy."

Southern division's **Amy Murphy** spoke up against the widespread practice of employers cutting staff numbers and hours back even further. "Staffing levels in retail are seeing low morale and more staff going off sick because of too much pressure. Staff are having to do their own job plus that of absent colleagues. Enough is enough our members are at breaking point," she said.

Companies should support and protect their staff from customers who become abusive just to get round the returns policy in-store, Southern division's **Lesley Jarvis** told delegates. "You often see this with underage sales refusals as well," she said. "A customer becomes angry, causes a scene

and the manager lets the sale proceed. Our members deserve to be protected."

Other propositions on till checks, help for the partially sighted, and premium payments were also debated and supported.

Pictured above (l-r) deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, Lesley Jarvis, Amy Murphy, Kay Timbrell, Ken Sharpe and Anne Watkins



inflation has rocketed, job insecurity is high and wages have stagnated. The cuts in public services will have and will continue to have a huge impact on Usdaw members and the retail sector.

"The ramifications are being felt in all sectors and in all industries; no-one has been immune, not even retail food because shoppers are now even cutting back on groceries. This new austerity was reflected in results released by the supermarkets recently. Retailers described current trading conditions as the 'toughest in a generation.'

"As a result negotiations in this economic climate are especially difficult. No union is achieving inflation or anywhere

near inflation deals, in fact many workers are facing pay freezes – particularly in the public sector.

"However, Usdaw is achieving settlements of around 2.5 per cent which is in line with, if not slightly above, average settlements across the economy. It's obvious being a member of a trade union has never been more important.

"The Tory-led Coalition is intent on attacking workers' rights so we will be vigorously opposing any changes to worsen employment legislation. And we will continue to represent members at work and we will lobby for members' wider interests in society."

Visit: www.usdaw.org.uk

RESPECT WEEK HITS THE SHOPS

Welsh Assembly



2

Reps from across the UK took the union's Freedom From Fear campaign to shoppers

The union's annual Respect For Shopworkers Week was held in November and attracted a record number of reps and members to help spread the union's message.

This year the week had a double message. Firstly a reminder to all customers to Keep Their Cool ahead of the festive season and secondly a campaign against the Tory-led Coalition's plans to cut the number of police officers.

There were also high profile events at Westminster, Holyrood and the Welsh Assembly where activists and officials received a warm welcome from Labour MPs, MSPs and AMs.

Politicians also appeared at events on the high street in shopping malls and at individual stores to lend their support to the high profile campaign.

General secretary John Hannett was delighted with the reps' response. "Once again our activists have pulled out all the stops to take our respect agenda on to the high street," he said. "Many thanks to those reps and members who took part. We know the festive season can get very fraught for customers but there is no excuse for abuse aimed at our members."



8



1



LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION...

- 1 Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis joins Usdaw members and MPs at Westminster
- 2 Welsh Assembly, Cardiff
- 3 Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh
- 4 Morrisons, Reading
- 5 Tesco, Solhull
- 6 Tesco Extra, Beccles
- 7 Tesco, Bradford,
- 8 Co-op North Shields with Alan Campbell MP
- 9 One-Stop, Llandudno
- 10 Tesco, Barrow-in-Furness
- 11 Tesco, Swansea
- 12 Tesco, Dundee
- 13 Morrisons, Livingston



11





SIGNING UP POTENT

Holding a campaign day is always popular with existing and potential new members as it raises the profile of that's Freedom From Fear, Supporting Parents and Carers, Young Workers or Vulnerable Workers. H

Six months training with last year's Academy paid off immediately for Tesco Extra rep Anas Ghaffar (pictured third left) after he returned to his store and organised a Legal Plus Awareness day and signed up 24 new members.

"The Academy was fantastic, I had a lot of different experiences and I learned so much," said Anas, 26, from Slough in Berkshire, who recruited 300 new members during his time with the Academy.

"I was keen to get back to my store and get working on some of my ideas.

"I spoke to my personnel manager, Yvette Borowiec, who is also a union member, about organising a Legal Plus Awareness campaign. She was very supportive and agreed to provide all the facilities in-store including a private room for consultations with the solicitor.

"I had help and support from my area organiser Mike Parsonage and I was also

given three days stand-down.

"I briefed the reps about how to run the day. We put up posters and I contacted local Usdaw solicitors Walker Smith who agreed to send Laura Cooper along to deal with members' legal queries.

"In the week leading up to the event, fellow rep Laxi Kaur informed staff about the range of things they could get advice on and ten

members of staff booked a consultation in advance to speak to the solicitor about domestic issues.

"It went down extremely well. The whole event was very well organised and made the union look very professional. It surprised me, despite all the information the union puts out, how many members were still unaware about the many

benefits of Legal Plus both for themselves and their families.

"It was a great feeling when three colleagues signed up immediately and then another 21 joined over the next three days leaving membership at a healthy 65 per cent.

"And because of its success we're keen to run similar campaign days in the future."



IN NUMBERS

MEMBERSHIP BY DIVISION FOR WEEK ENDED: 19 NOVEMBER 2011

South Wales & Western.....	47,738
Eastern.....	59,006
Midlands.....	56,369
North Eastern.....	56,423
Scottish.....	44,226
Southern.....	55,275
North West.....	91,978
TOTAL.....	411,015

Keep telling your members about Legal Plus

You can never tell members too often about the benefits of Legal Plus and FirstCall Usdaw. Remember there is also a high turnover of staff in Usdaw trades so reps have to repeat the message on a regular basis for new starters. Don't forget to make sure that the noticeboard is up to date and contains the:

- FirstCall Usdaw poster R46 and the Looking

After You and Your Family leaflet and poster.

- Member's letters of endorsement after having used FirstCall Usdaw.
- Make sure that all your members have the FirstCall Usdaw card.
- Circulate regularly the FirstCall Usdaw leaflets and cards.
- Circulate the Legal Plus materials to new

members and existing members.

- Ensure all the reps and activists know the scope of Legal Plus and can spread the word.
- Ensure all the reps and activists know about FirstCall Usdaw and can spread the word.
- Check that your leaflets are up to date – the website will tell you what the latest leaflets are.

IAL NEW MEMBERS

profile of the union and shows how Usdaw is speaking up on all of the important issues whether here we look at two reps who organised Pensions and Legal Plus Awareness Days in their stores

Morrison's rep Keith Kivelehan from Edinburgh organised a Pensions Awareness Day in his store in August and it was a huge success.

"Not only did we raise the profile of Usdaw and the pension issue, we signed up new members to the union and to the company pension scheme," said Keith.

"We set up the stall in the staff canteen and every member who came in that day visited the stall, even the store personnel manager.

"The store general manager was also very supportive and said he would speak to the night shift and supply them with any materials I could leave for them.

"Several members commented on recent press coverage concerning pensions and made the decision to visit personnel and sign up to the Morrison's pension scheme. The deciding factors were that Morrison's also contributes to the scheme and the uncertainty over future state provision.

"Teamwork involving John Sharp and Mike Peat from the Academy has seen

membership now standing at around 60 per cent.

"We're hoping to improve on this extending the campaign by leaving some leaflets in the staff canteen and by speaking to the night shift and shop floor to keep the issue fresh in their minds.

"One comment from a member stands out, he said: 'I don't want to retire and find my pension can only buy me a cappuccino'.

"To any rep out there thinking of holding a Pensions Awareness Day, I say do it. The pensions team at central office offered me every support. The information they supplied was clear, concise and not as complicated as I feared it would be, so a big thank you to them."

(l-r) Mike Peat, John Sharp, Craig Daniel and Keith Kivelehan

Hold Pensions Awareness Days

Everything you need is contained in the Pensions Awareness Reps' Toolkit. It contains:

- a rep's briefing
- a pensions survey
- a campaign poster
- a home study course application form
- a pensions leaflet
- a state pension forecast application form. (If you don't already have the Reps' Toolkit you can order it from the stationery department at central office).
- Discuss holding the day with the relevant manager, agree a suitable date, time and venue – remember you are helping

your employer to promote a valuable company benefit, so it's in the company's interest too.

- Contact Usdaw's pension section in the legal department at central office and you will be sent any additional promotional merchandise.
- Usdaw's pension team can also help you liaise with your company's pension department to get specific information, which will help you interest staff at your workplace.
- Remember you don't have to be a pension expert to hold an awareness day.



ACADEMY TAKES RE

This year's Academies finished in November after another successful six months secondment for many reps a rich and rewarding experience which will better equip them for their future involvement in the

Mandy earns plenty of respect



Academy2 organiser Mandy Davies (left) supported reps during Respect Week at the Tesco store in Fforestfach in Swansea.

"I enlisted the help of experienced reps Anne Meacock and Paul Wiemers who joined forces with young reps Dane Davies and James Hookway and we took the campaign to the public," said Mandy, a graduate of last year's Academy1.

"Speaking to customers face to face helped them to

understand the aims of the campaign. We told them that as shoppers ourselves we feel the same frustrations.

"We know what it feels like when an item isn't on the shelf, or a store is too busy, or the customer in front is too slow.

"Dane and James explained the idea behind the scratch cards on 'Think 25' and it went down very well. It made customers more aware of how difficult it is for staff just like Dane and James to ID someone who may or may not be over 18."

Paul rose to the new challenge



If you like a challenge the Academy is the perfect experience, said Paul Jackson (right).

"Working with the union away from your own workplace for six months teaches you so much," said the Sainsbury's night shift worker.

"It takes you out of your comfort zone and you have to learn to think outside the box. You have to be very organised and plan ahead. It also helped me with my reading and writing.

"I put all I learned into practice in October when I ran my first campaign event at the Sainsbury's Crayford store in Dartford.

"I had two tables with information about all the union's campaigns at the front of the store.

"There was a great response from staff and the public and I recruited four new members which brought my tally at the time up to 220. I was delighted.

"I also managed to get over 50 signatures on the 'Stop the Police Cuts' petition, which was great."



Elaine's experience pays off

Midlands Academy organiser Elaine Selway (centre) is looking forward to taking her Academy experiences back into her own workplace at the Morrisons store in Rubery.

"It's been a fantastic six months. I'd recommend it to every rep who wants to advance and progress. I learned so much about myself and the union," said Elaine.

"Membership in my store is currently around 40 per cent and I want to

use my new skills to work together with the other reps to improve on this.

"I've already had some fantastic training with the union and learned a lot about maternity rights, disability, discrimination and vulnerable workers. I've also been to weekend conferences and federation schools.

"When you are out there with the Academy visiting different workplaces you can see where this advice and training can help with a variety of different problems and situations."

Feel inspired?

If you are interested in taking part in a future Academy you will need to be available for the full six-months of the programme.

■ The 2012 programme starts on 14 May 2012 and **application forms must be received by 27 January 2012.**

■ You can register for any future intakes of the Academy by e-mailing academy@usdaw.org.uk or for further information and to apply online visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/academy

PS TO NEW HEIGHTS

more than 70 activists. *Network* talks to five reps from this year's intake. It's clear the Academies give union. Applications are now being sought for 2012's intake. Visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/academy

Tracy puts campaigns to the fore



The Academy is the perfect platform for any rep to develop their organising skills says Scotland's Tracy McKie (centre).

"Over the last six months I've been working with teams of reps in a variety of stores in my division helping them liaise with their managers and organise and run their own campaigns. It's been a steep learning curve for everyone but a really enjoyable one too.

"We ran very successful Freedom From Fear events at the Co-op in Castle Douglas

and at the Tesco stores in Annan, Lockerbie and in my own store in the Peel Centre in Dumfries where we also enlisted the support of local MSP Russell Brown.

"And we highlighted the many benefits of Legal Plus with a special awareness event at the Tesco store in Castle Douglas.

"We recruited new members and reps and showed the union in a very positive way. And it's a great feeling when the reps come back to you and say they can't wait to organise their next event."

Henry broadens his horizons



Tesco's Henry Dawodu (centre) knew from day one he had made the right decision to apply for the Academy.

"When I turned up on my first day back in May it was all a bit daunting, but I couldn't wait to get started," said Henry from Chatham in Kent.

"I met my area organiser Sue Pryn outside Morrisons in Canterbury for my first visit to a store I wasn't familiar with.

"I found the whole day very

enlightening and met up with the store manager and staff. It also showed me how Usdaw operates in a workplace with a different agreement to the Tesco Partnership we have.

"From there on it was full speed ahead, no two days were the same. It's been very satisfying to have the chance to put all I've learned to the test and run my own campaigns, such as the one I ran during Respect Week at the Sainsbury's Local in Ashford in Kent.

"Thanks to the Academy I've come a long way."

Top team

This year's Academy1 intake met up in Manchester for their final get-together and to receive their certificates and engraved pen from the deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis. "It's been another great year for our reps on the Academy," he said. "Congratulations and well done to all of the reps for their dedication, hard-work and commitment. I'm sure they will return to their workplaces better equipped to deliver for their members."



TIME TO STAND UP

A new national campaign network is to be set up to give members a stronger political voice w

The Tory-led Coalition poses such a dangerous threat to Usdaw members' living standards that the union is determined to make its political voice even louder by reinvigorating its campaigning profile.

One of the first

initiatives will be to host a huge conference in February to co-ordinate the campaign and set up a network of Labour-supporting activists.

General secretary John Hannett explained. "Usdaw is a campaigning union, we exist to improve workers' lives and win for our members. In the main we do that through negotiation with employers, but sometimes there are issues that cannot be resolved in the workplace and we need a legislative solution. That is

why Usdaw has always sought a political voice, but it is crucially important that we are politically active in our workplaces and communities.

"Last year, when Labour lost power, our political campaigning changed significantly. It is clear from the first 500 days of this Government that they do not have the best interests of our members at heart.

"Cutting police numbers, taking money from working parents, weakening health and safety legislation, removing workplace rights, cutting the education maintenance allowance, trebling tuition fees and much more, are all policies that adversely affect our members.

"To tackle this we are looking to reinvigorate our political campaigning and that means we need activists on the ground doing a little bit to help our campaigns. Even with the current Government, we have seen successes in campaigns to stop the deregulation of Sunday trading hours and to reduce the impact of the unfair increase in state pension age.

"Those successes came about

because significant numbers of our members helped to do something simple, like make comments on a website, write to or email their MP, or sign a petition.

"We are now looking to build a network of Labour-supporting members who are prepared to do such small campaign actions from time-to-time and want to be contacted when there is an issue on which they could help to make a real difference for our members.

"Next February we will 'launch' this network and an ongoing programme of political campaigns at a much bigger National Political Conference that will include delegates who are Labour supporters, members of the Labour Party or on our divisional political committee.

"This will help ensure that our political work reaches many more of our members and activists.

"You can help make this happen by signing up as a Labour supporter. All reps were invited to apply to go to the February National Political Conference."

For more on the Labour Party visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/usdaw4labour



Contact the politics section on: **0161 249 2452**

[✉ political.section@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:political.section@usdaw.org.uk) [🌐 www.usdaw.org.uk/usdaw4labour](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/usdaw4labour)

Usdaw backing Ken Macintosh and Anas

Usdaw is supporting Ken Macintosh and Anas Sarwar for the positions of leader and deputy leader of the Scottish Labour Party in the forthcoming elections. Here's why:

Ken Macintosh

People say there isn't a difference between the parties in Scotland – there is - and you don't need to look far to see

that the SNP have let down Scottish workers and Usdaw members in particular on some key issues.

Scottish Labour agreed to consult on New Year's Day trading to stop the exploitation of workers over the festive period. The SNP dropped this consultation within weeks of entering office – I will ensure the Scottish Labour Party brings it back to Parliament so the concerns of shopworkers are addressed.

Neither did the SNP support Usdaw-backed proposals on the protection of workers in the last session of Parliament. I will work with Usdaw and across the Scottish trade union movement to ensure legislation is debated in the Scottish Parliament to provide workers who serve the public with more protection.

I am committed to working with Usdaw members to bring forward real change in the workplace and to make sure the union has a growing voice in and



AGAINST THE CUTS

While Usdaw continues to call on the Government to stop cutting the number of police officers

Usdaw members could be at risk of more violence if the Tory-led Coalition get away with

their plans to cut thousands of police officers, general secretary John Hannett told the Labour Party conference in September.

"Does anyone really believe that by cutting frontline policing, crime will continue to fall?" he asked. "That is not the logical conclusion I draw. I fear that when these cuts bite we will be left with a much less effective police force, which will be grossly under-staffed and terribly demoralised.

"We know that every minute of every day another shopworker is assaulted, threatened or abused. Cutting police numbers – with a predicted loss of 16,000 frontline police officers and 1,800 PCSOs, and over 16,000 policing staff who do vital work to keep police officers on the frontline – will put our members at a greater risk"

"Don't just take my word for it, the Police Federation is saying '20 per cent cuts to policing are criminal'.

"Let's not forget that crime fell by 43 per cent under Labour because it put thousands of extra officers on the street,

created the PCSOs to give a higher profile to street policing, and formed neighbourhood police teams.

"And that reduction in crime was replicated for our members with the British Retail Consortium's Annual Retail Crime Survey showing that violent incidents against shopworkers halved since 2004.

"Under the Tory-led Coalition Britain could easily return to the dark days of Thatcher, with high unemployment, high crime and little hope."



Usdaw's delegation and (above) John Hannett with shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper MP

Sarwar in Scottish Labour elections

around the Scottish Parliament. I believe that by working together we can make a difference here in Scotland.

I hope you can support me to be the next leader of Scottish Labour so we can place a renewed emphasis on improving the lives of union members and their families across Scotland.

Anas Sarwar

This has been one of the most difficult times in our

movement's history.

In May the Scottish people gave us a warning, that to regain their support we must change.

I am standing for Deputy Leader because I recognise that a failure to radically transform the way we engage with the public, to assert our positive vision for Scotland, and to define our values and principles will mean that we have let Scotland down.

I love Scotland but I will

never define my politics by my allegiance to a flag but rather to the values of the Labour movement, a global movement rooted in fairness, equality and justice.

I care deeply about the future of our Party and our country. I have the energy and determination to bring our movement together and working with you regain the trust of the people and help build a fairer and more prosperous Scotland.



BLACK MEMBERS IN ACTION AT WEEKEND

Firmly established in the union's calendar, this annual event brings together members and activists keen to play a bigger part in the union's anti-racist agenda, *Network* dropped in

Usdaw's black and Asian members met up in early October for their annual weekend workshop.

This year the weekend was spent exploring the pressures black and Asian families are currently under, particularly in light of the Tory-led Coalition cuts to public services and financial support for working parents.

General secretary John Hannett said "Usdaw recognises that our members are really feeling the pressure in the current economic climate.

"Working parents have lost much needed financial support over the last two years. They've seen cuts to help with childcare costs and Housing Benefit, the loss of the Child Trust Fund, the removal of the Health in Pregnancy Grant and the freezing of Child Benefit.

"I was pleased to see that almost half of those members that attended this weekend were new to union activity. This weekend gives us the perfect opportunity to raise

awareness of workers' rights.

"It also gives us the chance to hear about the distinct

concerns our black and Asian members have. We know that theirs is a voice that sometimes struggles to be heard at work and in the union, especially where they are in the minority.

"It's important the union listens to all the different sections of its membership to find out more about the issues that specifically affect them and to ensure that our national campaigns address those issues."

The weekend was spent discussing key rights at work in particular the right to request flexible working and the right to emergency time off for dependents. Delegates confirmed how important these rights are but felt that too often managers fail to recognise that not all parents or carers have family members living nearby who can step in to help out during an emergency.

As Sonia Foster, Usdaw rep at Sainsbury's in Dulwich explained. "Not that long ago we had quite a few members in my store

that had close family members living overseas," she said.

"This meant that they struggled to put in place contingency plans for the care of their child when they become ill for example and so can't go to the child minder, nursery or school.

"I know this causes problems for all parents but where you don't have a network of family support nearby who can help it can be really difficult. In these cases, and every case is different, it might be that you simply need more time off to make alternative care arrangements."

If you want to get involved in the union's equality agenda contact your local office 0845 6060640 or the equalities section at central office

0161 224 2804

equalities@usdaw.org.uk

www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities



Listening to what the members have to say...

Checkout supervisor Terica Powell, from Peckham in South London thought the weekend was 'awesome'.

"I'd heard other reps say it was good and I was eager to try it out for myself," said the 25 year-old.

"I enjoyed meeting all the other members from different companies because I found out what things were like in their workplaces and I even exchanged email addresses with some of them before I came home.

"I learned a lot especially about workers who have students visa's and the pressure put upon them to produce and show their passports and documents at work.

"When I returned to work my colleagues were eager to find out about the weekend.

"In my workplace a lot of members think the union is only there for when they have a problem.

"I left the weekend determined to encourage members in my store to get more involved and attend union events like this in the division.

"And then next year I'd like to see more of them attend this national weekend."

For 48 year-old Ernest Mainza who works for Tesco in Cirencester, the weekend was 'excellent'. "It was very educational, the tutors were wonderful and I learned a lot about a variety of union issues," he said.

"It was also a great opportunity to

share experiences with members from different workplaces and jobs and learn from each other.

"I was surprised at the number of people who attended and from how far, including Scotland. We all got on really well. Everyone was so helpful and friendly.

"I even had the opportunity to chat with John Hannett which I enjoyed.

"The whole weekend was first-class, including the hotel and meals.

"After the weekend when I returned to work I felt upbeat, more confident and understood my role as a rep better."

Asda rep Ku Baiden from Northern Ireland 'fully enjoyed the weekend'.

"The guest speakers, especially black educationalist Gus John, were very interesting," said the 31 year-old. "His talk supported all the things I already do with my children with regards to respect, manners and direction. It was very inspiring.

"We had an interesting session on stereotyping versus reality. I found this a bit difficult at times because it's hard to think like a racist when you are not one.

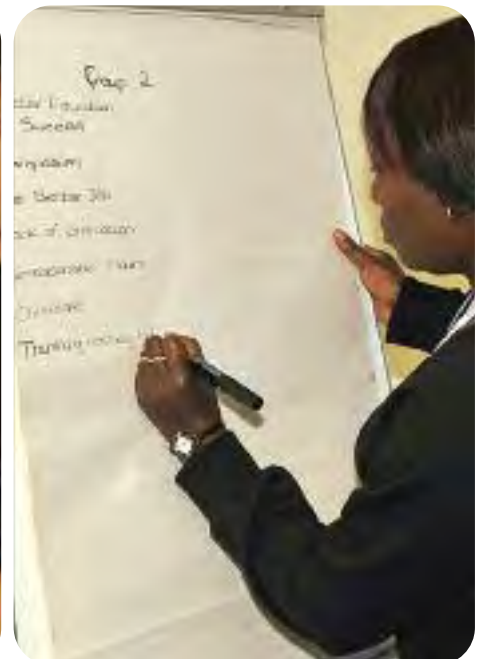
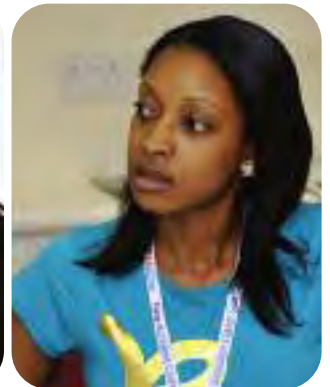
"It made me realise people need to be educated, not just about black and Asian members, but also about the effect their words can have on others whether they are meant in a hurtful way or not.

"I was pleased I had the confidence to talk in front of the group, and feel that my self-belief is growing the more I take myself out of my comfort zone.

"I'd like to be more involved in the union, and I've applied to be on the equalities forum and I'm thinking about the divisional council.

"I just want to keep learning and challenging myself, and continue to do my best for those who rely on me."

(top l-r) Ernest Mainza, Ku Baiden and Terica Powell
(below) members during one of the workshops



Be prepared for winter

UK winters have become more unpredictable but one thing is certain – snow

Winter is on its way. So with snow and ice likely to cause problems up and down the country, employers should have plans in place to deal with the problem before it happens. Check out our winter advice.

Heating systems should have been serviced before the cold weather hits. Employers have a duty to maintain a reasonable temperature in indoor workplaces at all times. The workplace regulations state that 16 degrees Celsius (or 13 degrees Celsius for physically strenuous work) is normally the minimum requirement.

There will be some indoor workplaces where this cannot be done. In such cases employers should try to minimise the time spent in the cold. They should also take other steps such as providing suitable protective clothing.

For outside workers, minimising exposure, protective clothing and access to somewhere warm for rest breaks are required.

If the heating breaks down or if it can't cope in

exceptional cold spells, then the employer should have a back-up policy in place. Hiring temporary heating, providing free hot drinks, relaxing uniform and dress codes, and giving more frequent breaks may all be appropriate depending on the circumstances.



Employers should:

- Stock up on salt and grit so that yards, delivery areas, points of access etc are kept as clear of ice as possible to ensure the safety of people using them.
- Repair and clear any leaking pipes and spillages to stop ice forming and creating slip hazards.
- Ensure there is good lighting in and around the workplace, which can reduce the risk of an accident.
- Be aware of the importance of warm clothing when working in cold conditions outside or even indoors where it is difficult to maintain a

reasonable minimum temperature. This should be issued as personal protective equipment if a risk assessment dictates and should not be left to the whim of a manager.

- Where members drive for their job, employers should provide refresher training on defensive driving in winter e.g. checking lights, wipers, etc. before going out; checking the weather forecast; carry a mobile phone, shovel, flask of hot tea/coffee and have a blanket on board. And it should be clear that the driver can abandon a journey if it isn't safe.

Usdaw reps should:

- Regularly inspect the workplace and ensure control measures are implemented to minimise the risk to members during cold periods.

Should I stay or should I go? Getting to work in bad weather

Travel to and from work can be a problem when snow and ice is around. People are advised to follow government advice on whether it is safe to travel. If you drive your own car to work there is useful government advice on driving in winter conditions. Check out the Highways Agency advice at: www.highways.gov.uk

If you don't think it is safe to attempt the journey, follow any procedures set by

your employer about contacting work to say you won't be in.

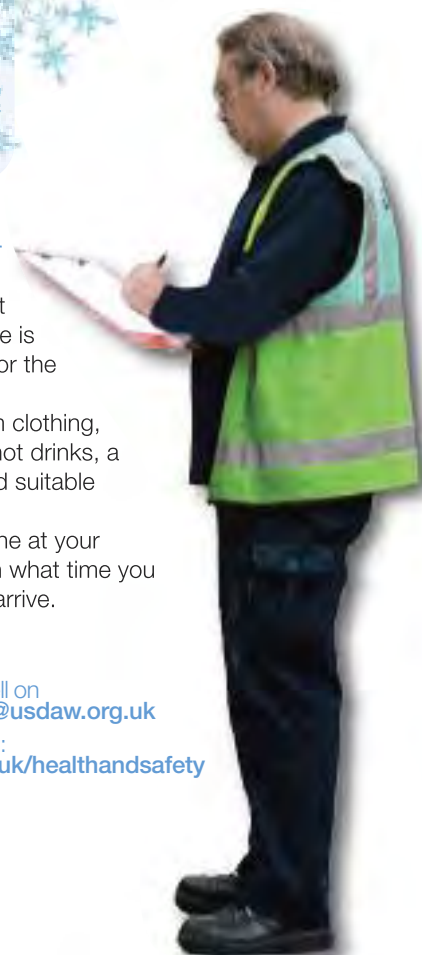
Even if you do decide to travel remember the journey will take longer and take basic precautions in case there are further delays. For example:

- check the weather forecast and road conditions
- consider other routes
- consider other types of transport
- allow extra time for your journey

- ensure that your vehicle is prepared for the journey
- carry warm clothing, blankets, hot drinks, a shovel, and suitable footwear
- tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive.



Email Doug Russell on healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk
or visit the website: www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety



HSE to charge fees for lawbreakers in new 'Fee for Fault' enforcement

FEE PLANS SET FOR 2012

Plans for the HSE to charge a fee to duty-holders who are found to be in breach of health and safety laws are well advanced and should come into use early in 2012.

The 'Fee for Fault' is intended to allow the HSE to recover the formal enforcement costs when there has been a 'material' breach of the law.

The HSE is facing massive cuts in public funding of around £80million per year. It has estimated that the Fee for Fault system could recover £43.6 million to fill some of that gap. Without a cost-recovery

scheme, they argue its ability to inspect and enforce even in serious cases will be greatly reduced.

The TUC has reluctantly accepted the case for cost recovery, but only under the following terms; 'if it is linked to prevention; it does not influence HSE's inspection strategy and all the net proceeds are retained by HSE.'

The main concerns about the scheme are around the way in which it may affect the relationship between the inspectors and business.

There is uncertainty over the definition of a 'material' breach as opposed to a 'technical'

breach (for which no charge can be imposed).

There is a worry that some employers may view legitimate enforcement action as solely a money-raising exercise, and the relationship may become even more adversarial than it already is.

The scheme will only apply to HSE-enforced businesses and not to retail and distribution where Local Authorities are responsible for enforcement, so most Usdaw members will not be affected by the change.

For members in the manufacturing sector, however, it could have a significant impact.

Change in dog law needed

Udaw is giving its support to a campaign aiming to tighten up the law on dangerous dogs in England. The campaign calls for more responsibility to be put on owners rather than the breed of dog and for the law to be extended to cover private homes as well as public spaces

This is especially important to Usdaw members who deliver to people's homes. At present a dog attack is only subject to criminal law if it happens in a public place. Any redress for attacks in private homes must be pursued through the civil courts.

The campaign is supported by major animal welfare charities, the police and the trade unions. The Scottish Government has already moved to introduce tighter laws in line with the campaign.

A petition is on the Government's e-petition site calling for the necessary changes to the law. Please sign the petition and encourage members to do so as well: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/22631>

Safety strategy update

Trade unions have agreed to sign up to a new common strategy to continue the improvement of health and safety in food and manufacturing alongside employers' organisations and the HSE.

The Recipe for Safety campaign which all three stakeholder groups have been supporting since the early 1990s, has seen a 50 per cent reduction in accident rates over the last 20 years. However, the rate still remains higher than the manufacturing average.

The new strategy identifies what else HSE, employers and unions will do to continue to drive down accidents and reduce health risks. The commitment from the HSE to continue support despite its reduced resources was welcomed by employers and unions.

Although HSE is being forced to reduce proactive inspections in many

sections of the food industry, meat processing and dairy have been identified as two sectors which will still be subject to inspection because of their higher risks.

Reps in food manufacture and dairy can find out more about the common strategy and the Recipe for Safety campaign on the HSE website: www.hse.gov.uk/food



IN BRIEF

RIDDOR changes not due until April 2012

In the last edition of *Network* we referred to the Government's plan to change the accident reporting regulations. When the law is changed employers will only have to report accidents which result in seven days off work rather than the current three day rule.

The proposed change is causing some confusion. So, to be clear, the current rule still applies at present – any injury that results in more than three days off normal duties should still be reported. The change is not likely to come in before 6 April 2012.

Even when the change does come in, employers will still have a legal duty to record over-three day incidents even though they will only have to report over-seven day incidents.

If any reps are being told by managers that the change is already in force please contact the health and safety section at central office.

Injuries down but worrying rise in fatalities

The latest statistics from the HSE show a six per cent decline in reported injuries. However there is an alarming 16 per cent increase in the number of workers killed at work – up from 147 deaths to 171 deaths.

Several health and safety organisations have criticised the HSE's claim that the figures show a continued fall in workplace injury and ill health.

They argue that the sharp rise in fatalities at a time of economic stagnation should ring alarm bells. Critics also point to a levelling out of work-related ill health problems. More at:

www.hse.gov.uk/statistics

Celebrating 30 years membership with Usdaw

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

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



✉ network@usdaw.org.uk



1. Twins Julie Sawrey (left) and Karen McCleary from Tesco's city centre store in Chester 2. Anne Daly (right) and Kay Bateman from 5. Ricky Anastasiades from Tesco, Weston Favell in Northampton with area organiser Dave Thom 6. Ann Sutcliffe and Mary Watson from

STAR LETTER

CITY PARADE

Usdaw at Durham Miners Gala

While we are often seen as a quiet union, we are a very strong one that supports the local communities and their people, so when the North Eastern division joined the Durham Miners Gala it was in part a solidarity march, but for many of us it was a throwback to our past.

I speak from my perspective of being brought up in a mining community decimated and destroyed by the Tory party in the 1980s.

We had a very long day, setting off at 5am to be in Durham before seven, as the streets were cordoned off for traffic.

We then slowly progressed down the streets over several hours getting, as all the banners do, a smile and a wave and lots of applause and cheers. We walked the length of the town to the village cricket ground, with stalls, and the day ended with speeches and rallying calls against the Tory-led Coalition.

We went from searing heat and blue skies to downpours every few hours but that could not dampen the feeling we had. It was reported 130,000 marchers made the event and many old

mining banners were carried to the parade, and lots of memories were shared.

After the event we retired to an evening meal with strong debates on the march, political-fuelled rants and lots of friendship.

The following day we did a walkabout leafleting for the local MP.

Many thanks must be given to Jayne Shotton for the day's events, and we are currently seeking with the political committee, to make this a yearly event as this is a North Eastern tradition that we truly want to adopt and make part of our calendar.

BARRY WIGGINS
Branch secretary
F187



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

Federation dedication

Manchester and District Federation held a workshop in September on the ADM. This weekend school was excellent and we would like to thank the tutor John Gorle who delivered the workshop in a very informal manner.

All who attended, new and experienced reps, played a part ensuring its success.

BRENDA BELL
NW Tesco Retail No.7 K227

Snap happy

The article in the July / August *Network* magazine regarding recruitment week at Sainsbury's Blackpole in Worcester was received enthusiastically by the members who were very pleased they have featured in the magazine. They wish to thank Usdaw and Gavin for such a good write up.

SARAH HUGHES,
Area organiser,
Redditch office





Shop Direct, Thynne Street in Bolton 3. John Duncan and Gary Hughes from BakeMark in Bromborough 4. Graham Jervis (right) from the Burton Latimer Weetabix with convenor Tony Beeby. Victoria Morrisons in Bradford with branch secretary David Chadwick. Also celebrating 30 years are Veronica Lyness from Tesco in Weston Favell and Andy Sawrey from Chester Tesco.

MEETING OF MINDS

Scottish divisional conference

The theme of October's Scottish divisional conference was 'Defending health and safety – protecting members' with Usdaw health and safety officer Doug Russell as the guest speaker.

Over the weekend members of Academy1 made a presentation to conference each giving an overview of a part of their training, and the Divisional Youth Committee presented their co-ordinator, area organiser Craig

Smith, with a framed collage made up of the flag that was used at T in the Park and thanked him for all the work he has done with them this year.

A big thank you to everyone who attended the weekend for making it another successful event.

LAWRENCE WASON
Divisional officer
Scottish division



Academy1 with divisional officials

CEREAL ACTIVISTS

End of the line for two Weetabix stalwarts

Two of our long-serving reps at the Weetabix site in Burton Latimer were recently presented with a certificate and a wee dram by the their divisional officer Gary Holz to mark their retirement.

Steve Napier was the full time convenor on site. He had been a rep and convenor for many years and had led the branch committee in very challenging times, due mainly to a change in working practices and payments.

Throughout his time as both a health and safety rep and convenor, Steve always had the best interests of the

members at heart and was a worthy and well deserved recipient of this award.

Also commended was Barney McGuinness, a shop steward and branch official, active for well over 22 years. Barney was a very loyal and committed activist in Weetabix and always a great support to the official overseeing the branch.

Well done and thank you.

GAVIN DADLEY
Deputy divisional officer,
Midlands division

School of thought

Just back from summer school and it was great. A big thank you to all who nominated me, it was an experience I won't forget. I went feeling scared and unsure, but I am back full of confidence and made some wonderful friends.

Thank you. Big thanks to my tutor, Marci too!

CHRISTINE PAGE
West Yorkshire Co-op F115

Meat and greet

Myself and area organiser Kieran Smyth recently organised a Legal Plus campaign at Vion meats in Northern Ireland.

We arranged release for the reps, set up our equipment and fully engaged with the staff. It was very challenging as we were dealing with several different nationalities but the reps were fantastic.

Together we recruited over 130 new members, what a result!

RAYMOND NEAL
NI Tesco Retail K226



Usdaw members and their families joined more than 35,000 people for the Manchester March For the Alternative in October. It was organised by the TUC to coincide with the Tory Party conference in the city and to demonstrate opposition to the Tory-led Coalition's economic and social policies.

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON YOUR Journey to Work

Workers, in particular women, are feeling vulnerable on their journeys to and from work. **Usdaw** wants to ensure that members **feel safe** inside and outside of work.

Dark car parks, bushes and trees near the staff entrance, missing the last bus home can all make women feel less safe.

If you are worried about these or any other issues concerning your or your colleagues' journeys to work, we can help. We've created a few simple, easy to use campaign materials:

■ **What's happening on your journey to work?**

A5 Leaflet for members

Give this to your colleagues so they know Usdaw is working on the issue

■ **What's happening on your journey to work?**

A4 Poster

Put this up on your union noticeboard

■ **What's happening on your journey to work?**

Survey Form

Ask your colleagues to fill out the form so you are aware of any problems

■ **Safe journey to work A5 Leaflet for Reps**

Look at this leaflet for ideas of how to help members who are worried

Visit www.usdaw.org.uk/safejourney to download the campaign materials and find out more about our Safe Journeys Campaign. Alternatively you can phone **0161 224 2804** or use the form below to place an order.



I would like to order the following:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>What's happening on your journey to work? A5 Leaflet for members (SJ001)</i> | Qty _____ |
| <i>What's happening on your journey to work? A4 Poster (SJ002)</i> | _____ |
| <i>What's happening on your journey to work? Survey Form (SJ003)</i> | _____ |
| <i>Safe journey to work A5 Leaflet for Reps (SJ004)</i> | _____ |



Name: _____

Delivery Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Branch: _____

Mobile No: _____

Email: _____

Please return this form to The Stationery Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.