

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | May/June 2010



DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Delegates decided policies at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting

■ **Activist-in-depth** **Dennis Nash**

HGV driver
Dennis answers
our questions on
his role as an
activist in the
transport sector
page 09



■ **Lifelong learning is at** **the heart of Usdaw**

Reps in distribution
are giving their
members the
chance to improve
their skills and
career prospects
page 12



■ **Christmas working –** **your rights explained**

Working
public
holidays
always cause
headaches
for staff
pages 6-7



Pressure is on

General secretary John Hannett's comment



The Coalition Government has wasted no time in piling the pressure back on to ordinary working people by its recent Budget decisions.

VAT will increase in January to 20 per cent hitting our members hard and further threatening the economic recession we had just begun to work our way out of. Now we have the spectre of a double-dip recession with higher unemployment, cuts in frontline services and a reduction in the tax credit system.

As a union we will continue to defend our members' interests and if we have to criticise the government we will do so in a robust yet reasoned and intelligent way. We won't look for cheap headlines but we will not shrink from protecting jobs and our members' hard fought terms and conditions.

Wages

The Coalition Government has also accepted the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission (LPC) on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) which will see hourly rates rise to £5.93 for over 21 year-olds, £4.92 for 18-20 year-olds and £33.64 for 16-17 year-olds from October 1 this year. The introduction of the NMW was one of Labour's great achievements and I am pleased that the new Coalition Government has agreed the remit for the Low Pay Commission's 2011 report. We will obviously monitor the situation regarding the Government's attitude to the Low Pay Commission.

It appears the least well-off will have to bear the brunt of the cuts while the very rich have escaped any of the responsibilities for digging the country out of the economic recession caused by hugely irresponsible banking practices which put us in this economic mess in the first place.

Successful ADM

Our yearly parliament – the Annual Delegate Meeting – was a huge success with more first-time speakers than ever making their maiden speech from the rostrum. Not an easy thing to do in front of more than 1,000 people however it didn't deter the activists who participated in a wide range of debates and showed the union has a wealth of talent. I'm confident our activists will ensure the union continues to prosper and maintain our goals of improving workers' lives and winning for members.



“ We have the spectre of a double-dip recession with the least well-off having to pay for the hugely irresponsible banking practices which put us in this economic mess in the first place ”

USDAW

www.usdaw.org.uk

**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 ASSISTANT

Sarah Bailey

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Daniel Adams, Jo Bird, Ruth Cross,

Tony Larkin, Doug Russell, and

Nick Walker

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Della Batchelor, Bob Bowen, Andy

Doherty, Peter Hill, In-press, Ian

Jackson, John James, Rod Leon,

Ross Parry, Simon Ridgeway and

John Snowdon

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

Oliver Kirkman

T 01727 893 894

E ollie@centuryonepublishing.ltd.uk

PRINTED BY

Buxton Press

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

© Usdaw 2010

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.



Contents

THE UNION'S PARLIAMENT IN SESSION

More than 1,200 delegates, visitors and officials met in the Winter Gardens Blackpool in April for the Annual Delegate Meeting. The four-day event allows reps to decide the union's policies and priorities for the coming year. There was a wide range of debates including wages and economic policy, health and safety, trading hours and much more. **15-20.**



05 In the news

Usdaw's executive council have agreed to back David Miliband MP in the election for the leader of the Labour Party following former premier Gordon Brown's decision to stand down after the general election.

06 Bank holiday working – questions & answers

When Christmas Day and Boxing Day fall on a weekend it always causes problems for staff. Find out your contractual rights and Usdaw's policy on festive working.

09 Activist-in-depth

Midlands division's Dennis Nash answers our questions on his life as an activist and a HGV driver at Wincanton/Morrisons in Northampton.

10 Pensions Conference 2010

This annual event is firmly established in the union's calendar and gives activists the chance to meet pensions experts and participate in workshops at the national training centre in Warrington.

12 Lifelong Learning

Hundreds of union members in the distribution sector are getting involved in learning as busy reps, working in partnership with employers and colleges, and bringing opportunities to the workplace.

22 Recruitment & Organising

Academy1 and 2 are already up and running this year and, coupled with Usdaw's army of active reps, means the union is in a strong position to build its membership even further.

Regulars

14 Membership services Find out Usdaw's latest offers

26 Equalities Catch up with the latest developments

27 Staff news Three long-serving officials retired in May

28 Health and safety All the latest issues in focus

30 Letters What's happening in your division

IN BRIEF

Jobs threat at home shopping firm

Usdaw is in talks with internet and catalogue company Shop Direct Group after it announced plans to outsource 160 IT jobs at its Speke site in Merseyside.

Administration for Vergo Retail

Hundreds of staff have lost their jobs at Vergo Retail after it went into administration in May. Closing down sales at the 19 department stores have also begun, while the administrators seek a buyer. Consultations with Usdaw are ongoing.

Acas role for Usdaw leader

General secretary John Hannett has been appointed to the highly-respected industrial relations body Acas. John will serve as an Employee Representative Member and will hold the post for three years.

More news stories at: www.usdaw.org.uk

Budget to hit poor



RECOVERY AT RISK

The coalition government's first budget has already failed the fairness test, says Usdaw.

Responding to the Chancellor's post-election Budget Statement general secretary John Hannett said:

"While we need to study the small print of the budget in further detail, this looks like a budget that has failed the fairness test and is going to hit our members and their families hard.

"Despite attempts to dress the budget in progressive clothes, the increase in VAT, the freezing of child benefit and the abolition and restrictions being applied to a range of other benefits will far

outweigh any gains low paid workers might make from the increase in personal tax allowance.

"The coalition government said all sections of society would share some of the pain but there was little mention of pain for the very rich other than adjustments to the rate of capital gains tax.

"The increase in VAT is not just a huge tax hike for low paid workers but a tax hike that everyone, pensioners, the unemployed and even children will pay.

"Usdaw is seriously concerned that the depth and speed of the cuts, coupled with the rise in VAT could be a double whammy for the high street, reducing consumer confidence and spending.

"Increasing unemployment and shrinking incomes does not strike me as a progressive way to tackle the deficit or to maintain the UK's fragile economic recovery."

New education head in place

PROMOTION FOR TRISH

Former senior training officer Trish Deeny is the new head of the education and training department at central office.

Trish took up her role in March and brings with her a wealth of experience.

The 53 year-old was appointed senior training officer in May 2008 and before that was the training officer initially covering the North East and then later the Midlands division for a total of 13 years.

Trish, who began her career with Usdaw as the editorial and information officer in 1992, said: "I'm looking forward to continuing the work of the department in support of the organising aims of the union – both in terms of training and developing reps and by improving access to education for our members through Lifelong Learning."



Trish Deeny

Usdaw Healthcare

Health & Dental care

Helping protect you and your family

Being a member of Usdaw gives some really great benefits. We continually search the market for the very best products for our members and we're delighted to introduce a range of plans which give exceptional value and service. Our Usdaw Dental, Family, and 50s+ Healthcare Plans have been specially designed for Usdaw members. A really great benefit for both new and existing members.

The Usdaw Dental Plan provides outstanding levels of cover for you and all the family. You can choose NHS only or private treatment, with premiums to suit your budget – and the benefits are exceptional.

Unlike other plans, Usdaw Dental Plan refunds 100% of the cost of individual



treatments, subject to a generous annual maximum. Members and their families can be covered for examinations, hygienist services, X-rays, fillings and extractions, root canal treatment, dentures and repairs – even crowns, bridges and white fillings. Add to that prescription charges, in-patient benefits, accidental damage, dental emergencies and oral cancer cover too.

■ To order leaflets for your members or for more information, call the Usdaw Dental Plan Customer Service Team – Freephone 0800 037 2092.

The Family & 50+ Healthcare Plans are low cost alternatives to private medical insurance and they will save our members' money on ongoing trips to the dentist, optician, specialist & therapy treatments and lots more.



With affordable monthly premiums the benefits are exceptional. There's cover for pre-existing conditions and there are no medical questions to answer; acceptance is guaranteed. Unlike competitor plans, 100% of all bills are paid in full, up to generous yearly maximums. What's more members can get their specialists or therapy bills paid direct, avoiding laying out large sums of cash. You can claim for your prescriptions too; we'll even add up to 5 dependant children – free of charge.

■ To order leaflets for your members or for more information, call the Usdaw Health Plan Customer Service Team – Freephone 0800 037 2094.

Usdaw backs David Miliband for leader

Usdaw is backing David Miliband in the race for the Labour Party leadership.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Usdaw is backing David because we believe he is the best choice for our members, the best choice for Labour and the best choice for Britain.

"David is a long-time friend of Usdaw and is someone who really understands the needs and aspirations of our members. He supports our campaigns against violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers and for the

extension of workplace rights to help working parents."

David Miliband, shadow foreign secretary, said: "I am honoured and delighted to have secured the support of Usdaw – a modern, forward looking union that campaigns on key issues of concern for its members and is increasing its membership as a result.

Five Labour MPs are standing – David Miliband, Ed Miliband, Andy Burnham, Diane Abbot and Ed Balls.

Ballot papers will be sent to all Usdaw members who



David Miliband MP speaking at this year's ADM

pay the political levy in early September.

The ballot will run from 1st September to 22nd September. The result will be announced on 25th September.

IN BRIEF

Unemployment at 16 year high

The number of people unemployed in the UK rose by 53,000 to 2.51 million during the three months to March, official figures have shown.

The unemployment total is now at its highest level since December 1994.

However, the total number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell in April by 27,100 to 1.52 million – a sharper fall than expected.

The rate of unemployment remained at eight per cent, the Office for National Statistics said.

Higher prices see inflation increase

UK inflation accelerated again in April to hit its highest rate in 17 months, official figures show.

On the Consumer Prices Index measure, inflation hit 3.7 per cent – well above the target of two per cent and the highest rate since November 2008.

On the Retail Prices Index measure, which includes housing costs, inflation was up to 5.3 per cent.

The Office for National Statistics said food prices in particular had seen sharp rises.

Profits rise at Sainsbury's

Supermarket group Sainsbury has reported higher sales and profits. The UK's third biggest supermarket chain said pre-tax profits rose to £671m. Around 127,000 staff will share a record bonus pot of £80m. It has also opened 51 new convenience stores and 38 supermarkets to its near-900 store portfolio.

RESIDENTIAL COURSE FOR BRANCH OFFICERS AT WARRINGTON TRAINING CENTRE



Usdaw's popular branch officers' course played host to 28 activists in February and March this year. The five-day residential course is open to all branch officers. More information at: www.usdaw.org.uk

Tributes paid to former organiser Kim Murphy

Sadly former Eastern division area organiser Kim Murphy lost her battle with cancer in May, she was 53.

Kim was elected national forum rep in 1998 when she worked at the Tesco store in Princes Road in Chelmsford, Essex.

She quickly progressed and in 1999 took on the role of trainee organiser with the TUC Academy. Two years later she was appointed a recruitment and development officer. In 2003 she was promoted to area organiser. Kim retired due to ill-health in 2008.

Eastern divisional officer Norrie Slater paid this tribute: "Kim was a very bubbly and charismatic rep who quickly progressed.

"Once on the staff it is very true to say that she was the architect of the division's organising programme and played a prominent role in the division's rep development programme.

"In truth, all our lives were more enhanced because we knew Kim. She was a true champion of the division and will never be forgotten. Kim will be remembered as one of



Kim Murphy

the best organisers this division has ever had.

"Our condolences and deepest sympathy go to all Kim's family and friends."

GIVE US A BREAK ...AT CHRISTMAS

Workers' rights to time off during the festive holiday period will depend on the contract of employment and trade union/company agreements. When Christmas or Boxing Day falls at the weekend the time off and pay arrangements can become even more confusing. Here we answer some of the most frequently asked questions relating to working at Christmas.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Am I entitled to a paid day off on a Public Holiday?

A. There is no automatic legal right to paid time off on a Public Holiday or to receive premium payments for working on such a holiday.

Your position in relation to working/time off on a Bank/Public Holiday will depend on what is outlined in your contract of employment, staff handbook and if there is a union/company agreement.

Q. In my 2010 diary the two Bank Holidays for Christmas are Monday, 27 December and Tuesday, 28 December. Surely these are the Public Holidays in my workplace?

A. Not necessarily. Bank Holidays are the days the Government designates as Public Holidays under the Banking Act. When the traditional Public Holiday falls at the weekend the Bank Holiday is the substitute date for workers in Monday-to-Friday businesses. For others such as the retail and distribution sectors, that operate seven days a week, the customary holiday is sometimes kept to the traditional date. The arrangements for assigning the date of the customary holiday are different in each business.

Q. Is working on a Public Holiday voluntary?

A. For some workers working on a designated Public Holiday is voluntary; for others working on some or all Public Holidays is part of your contract. The position on whether Public Holiday working is



voluntary is usually explained in your contract, the staff handbook or outlined in agreements between the employer and the Trade Union.

Q. Will I get additional premium pay for working on a Public Holiday?

A. There is no automatic right to an enhanced pay rate for working on a Public Holiday. The pay rate for working these days depends on your contract of employment and union/company agreements. The pay rates and any days that attract premiums are usually explained in

“Shopworkers deserve a decent break over the Christmas holiday period”

the staff handbook or in other communications to staff.

Q. Most businesses will be closed on Christmas Day. What if my workplace opens on Boxing Day (Sunday 26 December) do I have to work?

A. It depends on your contract and which days have been designated in your company as the customary holidays. Your normal working hours also come into it, for example if you don't usually work on Sundays it's unlikely you will

be expected to (unless your contract enables your employer to vary your days and hours).

Q. The shop I work in is opening on Boxing Day, as it falls on a Sunday how many hours can it open for?

A. On Sundays, larger shops are restricted to trading for a maximum of six hours between 10am and 6pm. Some retailers are lobbying to be allowed longer trading hours this Boxing Day. The union will oppose any such de-regulation of Sunday trading rules for Boxing Day. Usdaw would like to see shops closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day to allow all retail and distribution workers a two-day break over Christmas.

Q. Do I have to work on Monday 27 December?

A. In many Usdaw-organised workplaces Sunday is not viewed as a normal working day and Monday 27 December will be designated as a customary holiday. In these workplaces, there may be agreements that working this day will be voluntary and any hours worked will be paid at premium pay.

Q. Tuesday 28 December is a Bank Holiday but I'm being expected to work my normal hours at normal pay, is this correct?

A. Many businesses that operate seven days a week will designate Saturday 25 December and Monday 27 December as the two Christmas customary holidays. As a result, in these businesses Tuesday 28 December may be treated as a normal working day.

Q. I want to finish early on Christmas Eve but my manager says I have to work my normal hours. Is this right?

A. Christmas Eve is a normal working day and staff may be required to work their normal working hours. However, many businesses allow staff to finish early on Christmas Eve. Usdaw is urging businesses to close their doors early to allow staff to get home to spend Christmas Eve with their family and friends.

Boxing Day 2010 – No to open all hours

Topshop, Debenhams, New Look, House of Fraser, Selfridges, Hamleys, Boots and Burton have written to the Government to lobby for a relaxation in Sunday trading laws for this year's Boxing Day.

The Sunday Trading Act restricts larger shops to trading for six hours if Boxing Day falls on a Sunday as it does this year.

A recent opinion poll carried out by GfK NOP for the Association of Convenience Stores found that 85 per cent of the public were not in favour of further de-regulation if Boxing Day falls on a Sunday.

Evidence shows that the shopping public accept that shopworkers deserve a decent break over the Christmas holiday period.

What Usdaw would like to see

Usdaw wants to see members in the retail and distribution sectors getting a break of at least a couple of days at Christmas.

Usdaw negotiators are in discussions with employers to get the best deal on paid time off arrangements for workers but this is difficult when there is pressure to keep shops open for as long as possible.

There is a need for business and the shopping public to accept that shop and distribution workers have earned the right to a decent break over the Christmas period.

An Early Finish on Christmas Eve

Usdaw is urging retailers to finish trading early on Christmas Eve. There is no need for shops to remain open after 4pm or at the very latest 6pm.

Close the shops on Christmas Day

The Christmas Day (Trading) Act prevents all stores, except for small convenience stores, from trading on 25 December. The union believes that employees of large retailers should be able to have Christmas Day off.

Keep the stores closed on Boxing Day

Usdaw would like to see shops staying closed on Boxing Day to ensure all shopworkers have two days off work. This year Boxing Day falls on a Sunday so larger shops are restricted to trading for a maximum of six hours. If stores open on Boxing Day the pressure is on shopworkers, the distribution network and the supply chain to work late Christmas Eve and even Christmas Day to ensure that there are goods on the shelves. Usdaw is making the case that shops close for Christmas Day and Boxing Day to allow all retail and distribution workers a two-day break over Christmas.

Christmas Bank Holidays

Monday 27 and Tuesday 28 December are designated Bank Holidays. When a public holiday falls at the weekend substitute days, usually on Monday and /or Tuesday, are declared as Bank Holidays. These days mainly affect businesses that operate a Monday to Friday working week. Some retailers will designate Monday 27 December as a customary holiday as Boxing Day falls on a Sunday. Many are likely to treat Tuesday 28 as a normal working day and pay staff single time. The union believes employers should consider premium pay to workers working either of these Bank Holidays.

Early Finish on New Year's Eve

Usdaw is calling for shops to finish trading early on New Year's Eve to allow staff to go home at a reasonable time.

Close the shops on New Year's Day

Usdaw is urging retailers to close stores on New Year's Day. In Scotland, the situation is different as 2 January is also a public holiday and Usdaw is calling for shops in Scotland not to trade on New Year's Day and 2 January.

A break for all workers over Christmas

Christmas and New Year is a special family holiday in Britain whether you are religious or not. Many workplaces across the UK will be closed for an extended holiday. Usdaw believes shop and distribution workers should also be able to enjoy a decent break during the festive period and the union is calling on shops not to trade on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.



and **FirstCall Usdaw** – looking after you and your family

Take



I would like to order the following :

	Qty
Looking After You and Your Family (Lft 312)	_____
Free Will Writing Service (Lft BL4)	_____
Workers' Rights Guide (Lft 211)	_____
Take the pain out of personal injury	_____
Looking After You and Your Family (Poster R10)	_____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

email: _____

Membership No: _____ Branch No: _____

Legal Plus is FREE for all members

Ushaw Legal Plus is one of the great benefits of being an Usdaw member. Check out these publications to find out how you and your family can benefit:

- **Looking After You and Your Family Leaflet**– Gives a comprehensive run down of how Legal Plus works and the services it provides.
- **Free Will Writing Service** – Explains this important and free service to you and your partner.
- **Workers' Rights** – A must-have publication for all members with vital information on employment protection.
- **Take the pain out of personal injury** – Details of what you and your family are covered for under the Firstcall Usdaw accident claim line service.
- **Looking After You and Your Family Poster** – Lists the cover and benefits provided by Usdaw Legal Plus.

To place an order: Simply complete the slip opposite and return to **The Stationery Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.**

You can also telephone on 0161 224 2804 or download from www.usdaw.org.uk



ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Eastern division's Dennis Nash answers our questions on his experiences as an Usdaw rep

“Usdaw's education and training programs are the best I've ever come across”

Why did you decide to become an activist?

I've always played an active part in whichever union I've been in, so after a period of not being involved, I missed it. A vacancy for a shop steward appeared in my workplace, I was elected and here I am.

What do you like the most about being a union rep?

Helping people and making a difference in the workplace.

Have you been on any union training courses?

Lots, including Shop Stewards courses and a Branch Officers course. I've also completed the Usdaw Home study which I would recommend. All courses were of an excellent standard.

Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

I don't believe I have changed at all. I am a naturally confident person who relishes a challenge.

Is recruitment easy at your workplace?

Yes because we are given time to speak to all new starters during their induction.

What's surprised you if anything about being an Usdaw rep?

Usdaw's education and training programs have surprised me the most. I have found them to be the best I have ever come across.

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

Absence monitoring procedures and worries about the new coalition Government between the Conservatives and Liberals.

What advice would you give to a member thinking about becoming a rep?

Think about it carefully and be aware you can't be everything to all people. Make use of your area organisers etc, I get excellent help from mine (Darren Matthews).

What changes to Usdaw do you think would help it improve?

More emphasis to be placed on the importance of being active within your branch.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The new Government and the constant rise in fuel prices.

What law would you introduce if you were prime minister?

I would renationalise all the utility companies and railways and ensure a law to stop the oil companies from taking such obscene profits.

Looking back on your life is there anything you would change if you had the chance?

Having been a lorry driver all my life I would've liked to have spent more quality time at home.

What's next for you?

I'm looking forward to going on a holiday to Egypt in the summer.

FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Wincanton Morrisons
- **Occupation** HGV Driver
- **Age** 52
- **Lives** Northampton
- **Children** Two sons (aged 28 and 30)
- **Joined Usdaw in** 2003
- **Union positions** Shop Steward, Branch Secretary, Rep on National Transport Committee, European Works Council and Rep on Wincanton Pensions Forum
- **Branch** Wincanton Logistics Midlands E161
- **Activist** Since 2007

MY FAVOURITE...

- **Band/singer** Tony Bennett, the Rat Pack, anything Jazz and good live bands
- **Book** anything historical
- **The last film I saw was...**
Knowing starring Nicholas Cage

watch this space...

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

Planning for the future cannot start too early

Delegates gathered in Warrington in June for Usdaw's 6th National Pensions Conference

PENSIONS CONFERENCE

Only half of UK workers are in their employer's pension scheme according to new figures released by the Office of National Statistics, president **Jeff Broome** told conference.

"Workers are passing up the opportunity to get a contribution from their employer towards their retirement and are also missing out on other valuable benefits like life insurance and ill health cover," he said. "So clearly it's more important than ever to try to get our messages about the value of joining the company pension scheme out to as many of our members as possible."

The president's concerns were echoed by the general secretary **John Hannett**. "Following the outcome of the

general election, there is a lot of uncertainty about the future – and this includes pensions," he said.

"One serious concern is what will happen to the state pension age and when you're eligible to start claiming it.

Labour's plan was for both women's and men's state pension age to rise from 65 to 66 by 2026 and to rise again to 68 by 2046. The Tories have said that they want to bring the rise in state pension age forward a lot faster – raising it to 66 for men by 2016 and for women by 2020. We strongly oppose this proposal.

"Why? Because increases to the state pension age unfairly disadvantages people living in the more deprived areas of the country. Areas where the improvements in life expectancy trail behind the rest of the country and where quite often people don't live to

reach age 65 – never mind age 66, 67 or 68. And by bringing the increase to state pension age forward so much faster means that people who are 60 years old today who have already put plans in place for their impending retirement will suddenly and unexpectedly face the prospect of having to work for an extra year longer before they can claim their state pension – this just isn't right.

"We have a lot of work to do to ensure our colleagues put plans in place for a prosperous and enjoyable retirement. We have to encourage them to – build up their knowledge and confidence by signing up for our pensions home study course, take full advantage of the valuable benefits on offer through their employer's pension scheme and put proper plans in place now to save for a retirement that they

can look forward to."

Meanwhile, **Rob Hammond** and **Andrew Thompson** from First Actuarial ran workshops for delegates who are trustees – and delegates who are interested in becoming trustees – of their employers' pension funds. They covered the valuation of pension schemes and the negotiations that take place between the trustees and the employer on putting plans in place to pay off a deficit in the fund.

Christina Barnes from the Equalities & Human Rights Commission discussed pensions as an issue of equality with women, black and minority ethnic people and disabled people all sharing similar characteristics – low pay, part-time work, broken employment patterns – that put them at risk of not building up an adequate pension.



Tracy White



Brenda Bell

Reps make their mark on members

CASE STUDIES

Three active reps **Tracy White**, **Roger Anderson** and **Brenda Bell** reported on their experiences of using Pensions Awareness Days.

Tracey organised an event at her Tesco Tadcaster Road store



Roger Anderson

in York. "I read through the toolkit and ordered the materials," she said. "We set the date for our pensions day and it was a great success with more than 100 people asking for information. The campaign is a great way to promote Usdaw and raise awareness of occupational pensions. I'd recommend trying a pension awareness day to any rep."

Roger Anderson, who works at Tesco Midsomer Norton, agreed: "We managed to sign up 13 new members on the day and there was also a lot of interest in the state pension forecast forms. Overall it raised the profile of the union – mainly because it

was through face-to-face contact with people rather than just something pinned on the notice board, which people don't always look at."

Mobile learning rep Brenda Bell discovered some of her young members did not know they could join the company pension scheme. "Until we spoke to them they had no idea," she said. "The day generated lots of interest in pensions and Usdaw."

web...
You can keep up-to-date with all Usdaw's pensions news at www.usdaw.org.uk/pensions/



John Hannett



Paddy Lillis



Jeff Broome



Delegates from across the UK were at the conference and heard expert speakers and also participated in workshop sessions

GET ACTIVE

Hold a Pension Awareness Day in your workplace

Pensions officer **Nick Walker** carried out brainstorming sessions with reps about how to go about using the toolkit activities to hold a successful Pensions Awareness Day in the workplace.

"If you want to join the growing list of Usdaw reps who are getting pensions awareness campaign activity started where they work, it couldn't be easier," he said. "Simply follow the recommendations below."

- Discuss holding a Pensions Awareness Day with your relevant manager and agree a suitable date – remember that you're helping your employer to promote a valuable company benefit so it's in their interest too.

- Get in touch with Usdaw's pensions section, tell us where you work and the date you want to hold a Pensions Awareness Day and we'll arrange to send you a supply of pensions booklets, leaflets and other materials to help get you started.

- Usdaw's pensions team can also help you liaise with your company's own pensions department to get company-specific pensions information that will get the people in your workplace interested in what you have to show them.

Call the pensions section on 0161 249 2440 or email pensions@usdaw.org.uk.

Use campaign to aid union's profile

PENSIONS AWARENESS

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** commended the pensions initiative to delegates. "It is a hugely impressive campaign with many strands," he said.

"Our pensions home study course is unique within the union movement and is an invaluable way for members to become more knowledgeable and confident about pensions. There is the pension's website – continually updated with news and relevant information and members can sign up for the regular monthly email pensions news bulletins. And there are specific training courses for National Committees – designed so that the National Committee members can get an in-depth knowledge of their own company pension scheme

which can help them in their overall role of being an expert on the terms and conditions of their company. Over the last two years we have done this with the national committees of many of the top companies in a number of sectors.

"The Pensions Toolkit also supports our Organising Agenda. This will be especially so now that there has been a change of Government. The challenge facing us is a difficult one, that of increasing membership and building the union's reps structure at a time of weak economic performance.

"Yet we have a commitment to do this reflected in things such as: The setting aside of an annual recruitment and development fund which this year we have done so to the tune of over one and a half million pounds. Investing heavily in training activities around organising, and

targeting selected companies at both a local and national level for specific organising projects.

"Pensions Awareness Days are essential and we have now reached 27 of these days set up by Usdaw and supported by employers. Although these are predominately with Tesco we are getting more and more companies to agree to them including Sainsbury's, Morrison's and Booker.

"So where do we go from here? Firstly, the best possible company pension scheme on top of a decent state pension should continue to be actively pursued.

"Secondly, we need to step up our campaign. Ignorance of pensions is still far too high and we need to do all we can to combat it. We have made huge strides, but need to keep up the momentum, through more practical and direct involvement with members."

KEEN AT KEYSTONE

Usdaw members at the Keystone Distribution site in Hemel Hempstead in Hertfordshire are right on course to reach their own personal learning goals and improve and add to their skills

NEVER TOO OLD TO LEARN

Union learning rep Alun Jackson (right) has been instrumental in promoting learning and supporting members at his depot – one of Keystone’s three distribution sites that manage the supply chain for McDonald’s UK restaurants.

“It’s fantastic,” said Alun. “The learning agenda has taken off in a big way. Everyone is keen to sign up for courses from IT to basic Spanish. Things have moved at a fast pace and there’s a real buzz around the place.

“We’ve had full backing from management. Staff are actively encouraged to take up courses and are also given matched time off to attend.

“And it’s a great feeling when you see how much members enjoy it. Such as a 65 year-old



semi-retired colleague who’d never used a computer before in his life and enrolled on a basic English and computer course – he says it’s given him a new lease of life, he’s whizzing along now.

“And I’ve also signed up for a few courses myself. I get a tremendous feeling now that I’m able to help my grandchildren with their homework.”



Winning team at the Keystone Hemel Hempstead distribution site

Celebrations and new training centre for Boots

COPING WITH CHANGE

A joint learning initiative between Usdaw and Boots won special recognition and a national award at a celebration in Congress House in London earlier this year.

Usdaw and Boots agreed a strategy to support and train staff who were involved in the company’s large-scale restructuring of its national network of distribution centres which began two years ago.

Boots invested in learning and provided £300 for each employee and ‘matched time’ of an hour off for every two hours of training to help members prepare for change. Over two thirds of the staff were involved and in some distribution centres as many as 90 per cent.

Usdaw President and Boots convenor Jeff Broome said: “In terms of learning it was a win-win situation for both the company and



Usdaw’s Maryann Matthews with Colin Brown, Boots Logistics Training Centre Manager

the union. Signing a partnership agreement made it much easier.

“I was very pleased to accept the award on behalf of Usdaw and Boots but the greatest joy has been creating the opportunity for people to change their lives forever.”

Changing places for Boots staff

A change of venue will provide the perfect learning environment for staff at the Boots site in Thane Road, Nottingham. Staff have signed up for hundreds of courses over the years at the previously popular Phoenix Centre, but the new Logistics Training Centre, which benefits from natural lighting and the latest state-of-the-art IT equipment will prove more conducive to learning.

web...

For more Lifelong Learning information visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/lifelong_learning

Certified success for members at Tesco depot

NURSING DISTRIBUTION SOUTHAMPTON

Learners at the Tesco Nursling Distribution site in Southampton got their reward for a year of hard work when new Divisional Officer Jim Carty presented them with their certificates at a special celebration in May.

"It's a great way to start the job," said Jim. "I hope everything else will be this enjoyable!"

The learners, a mixture of drivers, warehouse operatives and administration staff, were part of a lifelong learning initiative set up by Union Learning Reps (ULR) Heidi Swanborough and Magda Tomczyk.

"We had a lot of interest in a computing course early on," said Heidi. "And people jumped at the chance of getting a nationally recognised qualification." Heidi and Magda negotiated free learning with local provider Totton College. Tesco played their part by providing a dedicated learning room and funding for internet access.

Rep and learner, Chris Heath said: "Like others I didn't do well at school, but course tutor, Margaret Girdwood, made learning fun and involved everyone and that helped all of us to get the most out of the course and stay the duration.



We can't thank her enough."

Heidi added. "Our new DC manager Ian Amor has been very supportive and wants to encourage more learning so we'll be looking at where we go from here."

Jim Carty with
Tesco Nursling
staff and their
learning
certificates

New deal at Wincanton



Wincanton and
Usdaw sign the
learning
agreement

AGREEMENT HERALDS NEW ERA

More than 750 staff at Wincanton Logistics in Doncaster will have access to learning thanks to a new agreement signed with Usdaw.

The site opened in 2007 and is the national distribution centre for supermarket chain Asda.

Learning co-ordinator Malc Costello has played a key role working with management to develop and promote learning at the Doncaster site. "This is a

major step forward," he said,

"The next step is to get our on-site learning centre fitted out and ready to open so we can provide quality learning at work.

"We've already run courses in Maths and English which were very popular. Language courses are very much in demand, especially Polish, which would be a great help with communications between both our English and Polish speaking colleagues."

Opportunity knocks at DHL

FRESH START FOR MEMBERS

A new state-of-the-art learning centre at the BP DHL national distribution site at Lutterworth, Leicestershire will deliver skills for its 230 staff.

DHL signed a multi-million pound deal with BP two years ago to deliver fresh produce to 350 UK retail forecourts. The centre opened in March and has already started running courses in computing and literacy.

"Learning is proving extremely popular with staff with the first courses filling up within no time," said divisional learning project worker Maryann Matthews. "We have a great relationship with management who were very proactive and keen to see a learning agenda working and benefitting staff at Lutterworth.

"The next step is to identify and train a team of union learning reps to manage and develop future learning at the site."



Union reps and officials with management at the Lutterworth site

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
- Free nationwide delivery

Part exchange welcome
Finance available



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

HOME, MOTOR & TRAVEL INSURANCE

As a member of Usdaw, you are entitled to great value, low cost insurance from UIA. Members can choose from home, motor, travel or pet insurance.



Call UIA free on 0800 376 0300 quoting reference USDG or visit www.usdawinsurance.co.uk to buy and receive up to 15% online discount on home and travel insurance.

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

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)

TAX REFUND SERVICE

Over 71,000 members have used this service and so far received tax refunds in excess of £1.7million. Refunds average £167.94 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.

25 YEARS WITH BRITANNIA RESCUE

Britannia Rescue has been looking after its members' needs for 25 years this year! In fact, Britannia Rescue has achieved 'Best Buy' status by Britain's leading independent consumer magazine Which?

Call free on 0800 591 563 (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat & Sun 8am-5pm) or visit: www.britanniarescue.com/Usdaw and find out how you and your family members can take advantage of a 15% discount with Usdaw's official road rescue provider.

Britannia Rescue is a registered trademark and trading style of the Liverpool Victoria group of companies. Liverpool Victoria Insurance Company Limited (LVIC), registered in England and Wales No. 3232514 is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority, register number 202965. Registered address for both companies: County Gates, Bournemouth BH1 2NF. Tel: 01202 292333. Calls may be recorded or monitored.



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 britannia.co.uk/usdaw or visit your local Britannia Branch.

*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.



£25,000 WOMEN'S CANCER COVER

- Covers 7 female-specific cancers (including breast, ovarian, cervical)
- £25,000 cash sum paid directly to you on diagnosis to help with bills, childcare, private drugs etc.
- Or £1,000 for cancers usually treatable by day surgery
- Advice and support from the Care Advisory Service
- £10 Boots voucher (sent within 28 days of receipt of first premium)
- The WellWoman Plan from Usdaw approved partner UNAT Direct



For an information pack, call 0800 072 6178

Lines are open 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). For security and training purposes calls will be recorded and may be monitored.

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 off our funeral plans and 10% discount on professional services fees on funeral arrangements.

The co-operative funeralcare: 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 2010. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.

SAVE ON GAS AND ELECTRIC

Uchange4better 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:
usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk
or call 0845 652 1683



TAX FREE SAVINGS

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

To find out more call: FREE on 0808 1 444 288 or visit www.usdaw-unisaver.co.uk

Unisaver is underwritten by Coventry Assurance Society. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority. All information and prices are correct at the time of printing



DELEGATES DECIDE AT ANNUAL FORUM

The union's parliament – the Annual Delegate Meeting – was held in April to decide the policies and priorities for the coming year. On the following pages we look at the variety of debates and the decisions made by more than 500 elected activists



Delegates at the Empress Ballroom, Winter Gardens, Blackpool



Leading men ... John Hannett, Paddy Lillis and Jeff Broome

The biggest and most important event in the union's calendar – the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) – saw a record breaking number of propositions and the largest number of first-time speakers for many years.

The packed agenda saw delegates debate their way through everything from wages and conditions to transport and from criminal justice to the health service.

Political policy and industrial policy featured heavily as did health and safety and rights for reps.

General secretary **John Hannett** and deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** delivered speeches on the executive council's stance on all of the propositions.

"This was another great ADM," said John Hannett. "I was delighted to see so many new faces at the rostrum making their first ever speeches. The quality of debate was excellent and delegates listened and participated in the varied discussions with passion and mutual respect.

"As usual there were some very important decisions made in terms of the future direction of

the union and it's only right our activists play such a big part in that process.

"Planning for the next ADM has already started and I'd urge any of our activists who haven't been before to think seriously now about going next year."

This was the union's 64th Annual Delegate Meeting and there were 535 delegates, 370 visitors and 179 executive, divisional councillors and officials present during the four day event.

In all 93 propositions appeared on the final agenda paper, and two propositions on the

Special Delegate Meeting final agenda. All propositions carried are then referred to the appropriate body usually the relevant Government minister or senior officials of the union.

President **Jeff Broome** chaired the conference and the Standing Orders Committee, which ensures the smooth running of the ADM, was chaired by executive council member **Dennis Hart**.

There were also three executive council statements, and the high profile guest speaker was the then foreign secretary **David Miliband** MP.

You can order DVD coverage of the ADM on a session-by-session basis, contact your branch secretary

Improving rights for union activists



Patricia Page



Tracy White



Alex Davis



Stephanie Risk



Kevin Dolan

Workers will never get their full rights at work or be adequately represented unless a trade union is recognised, deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** told conference as he opened the debate on rights for reps.

He presented the executive council statement *Workplace Rights For Usdaw Reps* which gives a comprehensive overview of the law and the codes of practice affecting the role of the union rep.

Despite the significant obstacles to recognition he said the union was determined to press ahead at a number of sites. "We won recognition at Ladbrokes in Northern Ireland and we are campaigning in Ocado, Hatfield, Avon Cosmetics in the Midlands and Mackenzie Hall a call centre in

Scotland," he said. "We have also won voluntary agreements at Robert Wisemans, Palmer Harvey McLane and Poundland.

"We are also committed to providing our reps with the best training, giving them the best facilities and keeping them informed of any changes in the law.

"It's a fact that unionised workplaces have higher pay, better holiday entitlement, good health and safety and fairer terms and conditions than non-unionised workplaces. That's why the role of the rep is so important."

Patricia Page (NW Marks & Spencer) spoke up for staff who are unfairly treated at work under grievance and disciplinary procedures. "At our workplace your salary review, bonus and promotion can be taken away if you fall

foul of the disciplinary procedure," she said. "This causes a lot of stress. The procedures should be about correction not punishment and companies should have to follow the Acas code as an absolute minimum."

Patricia Page also went on to highlight the difficulties faced by reps to win recognition in national companies. "The statutory requirements at present are far too high," she said. "Winning is virtually impossible. We also need protection from recriminations for being an active rep."

Tracy White (North Yorkshire Tesco) supported her. "We were shown the door when we tried to campaign at Marks & Spencer," she said. "People at their head office won't speak to me."

Training on the agenda for reps

Usdaw should carry out a fundamental review of how it trains and develops its reps said **Alex Davis** (North Sussex). "While spending on recruitment we should not forget reps' training and development where there is a wealth of talent," she said.

"The union should consider online courses, extra home study courses and even divisional summer schools. Reps should also get training in representing members in workplaces other than their own."

Meanwhile **Stephanie Risk** (NW Tesco retail No.8) wants all reps to get paid release to

attend courses specifically on disability discrimination training. "This would help our reps understand the Disability Discrimination Act better. Having to take holidays or unpaid leave puts people off going on training courses."

Meanwhile in the following debate green issues were to the fore.

The union should be promoting and encouraging the role of environmental reps said **Kevin Dolan** (NW United Biscuits). "Other unions are going down this route and I believe reps can work with companies to promote green issues," he said. "With the right training

and guidance green reps can make a huge difference in the workplace."

Janette Parker (Newton Abbot) supported the call and explained she was a green rep in her area. "We did a car-matching survey to encourage car-sharing at our workplace," she said.



Janette Parker

Protection for disabled

The number of UK public toilets suitable for severely disabled people is far too low said **Barry Wiggins** (South Yorkshire Tesco).

"We call on the union to lobby the Government to introduce a Changing Places toilet facility in all town centres and shopping malls as campaigned for by disability charity Mencap," he said. "There are only 147 of these toilets in the UK – that's a disgusting figure."

As part of the disability debate **James Cook** (East of Scotland General) called for more protection for disabled people from bullying, assault and violence. "Disability hate crime is on the increase," he

said. "The Government, police and local authorities should take tough action against the perpetrators. I support wholeheartedly disabled people's quest for dignity and their right to be free from fear and assault."

He was supported by a number of delegates including **Pat Lynch** (London Metropolitan) who said: "These are odious crimes and we have to show these bullies up for the cowards they are."

Alan Woodhouse (Yorkshire Morrisons), who has cerebral palsy, said: "Any coward should be punished for crimes against vulnerable people."

"I'm motivated to look after people that's why I'm a rep."

No excuse for low pay

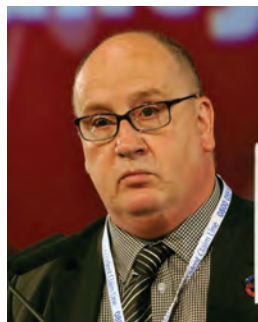
Having three separate pay bands for the National Minimum Wage (NMW) is discriminatory and unfair **Kevin Sneddon** (Midland Dairies), a first-time speaker, told delegates at the conference.

"The Government has outlawed age discrimination but the NMW does just that," he said. "You can do the same job, same performance but get a different rate based on how old you are."

"Food petrol and clothes all cost the same so you should get the adult rate. Let's have a level playing field and let's have British fair play on the NMW."

During the rest of the wages debates delegates agreed to support the Living Wage Campaign, seek increased payments for unsocial hours and the minimum wage, and to improve the statutory rights on redundancy to protect young workers and long-serving employees.

Staff who are genuinely ill should not be put under further stress by the threat of disciplinary action, **Jacqui Thurgood** (Chelmsford and Colchester retail) told conference. She wants employers to use any medical certificate as 'mitigating circumstances'. "Employers think they know more than doctors and press staff to come back early," she said. "Most people prefer to be at work and don't want to be hassled at home. Going back to work too soon is wrong and can cause even more problems."



Barry Wiggins



James Cook



Alan Woodhouse



Sachin Patel



Jacqui Thurgood

ADM IN BRIEF

Tory threat to Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning could fall victim to Tory cuts **Christopher Cunningham** (East Suffolk) warned delegates. "We need a national campaign to fight against any attack on lifelong learning," he said. "It has given thousands of our members a second chance and raised the profile of the union. The new Government could scrap it and the union learning fund."

No more political correctness

Sachin Patel (West Surrey) won a standing ovation when he railed against 'political correctness' groups who claim people are offended by some nursery rhymes and other cultural traditions. "I'm fed up of these narrow minded people taking offence and pretending to talk on my behalf," he said. "I am not offended by Christmas decorations, Baa Baa Black Sheep or gingerbread men. I don't want to hear about rainbow sheep either. Stop talking on my behalf and let us have the freedom to live our lives how we want."

Plastic bags in the firing line

Delegates agreed to lobby the Government to introduce a tax on plastic bags. **Pauline Markham** (Yorkshire Morrisons) said: "Hundreds of thousands of these bags are still being used by the big supermarkets which take more than 100 years to break down. We need to do our bit for the planet."

ADM IN BRIEF

■ Celebrating St George's Day

England, Scotland and Wales should have public holidays on their respective patron saint's day argued **Jenette Williams** (West Surrey).

"We all celebrate St Patrick's Day so let's all celebrate St George's, St David's and St Andrew's Days in our own countries," she said. "We need to embrace our saints with the same passion as the Irish."

■ Young members welcome pack

Usdaw should produce an age-specific welcome pack to encourage young workers to join and get active, said **Donna Braithwaite** (East Cornwall).

"For many of our younger members cheaper car or travel insurance is of little interest but cheaper rail travel or music downloads would be," she said. "It's hard to recruit young workers they're on low wages and few hours. We don't have any reps under 30 so a welcome pack would help at inductions and during recruitment campaigns."

■ Accommodation improvements call

Christine Hicks (Plymouth PT) led the call for improvements to the accommodation for service personnel. "Some of it is disgusting," she said. "My son has been staying in one which was built in 1919. These bases have to be modernised as a matter of urgency. Military personnel and their families should be respected and looked after."



Darren Pedley



Terry Gilder



Jenette Williams



Donna Braithwaite



Christine Hicks

Crime and punishment

One of the most lively debates centred on a proposition moved by **Darren Pedley** (NW General No.1) on the sentencing policy particularly for child killers and abusers.

"The current system is flawed," he said. "Child murderers or abusers should have no early release option for 'good behaviour'. A 12 year sentence should mean 12 years in jail. Parole should not be available. This would help restore faith in the judicial system and send a clear message that child killers and abusers will be punished."

"Sentences imposed on murderers and rapists are too lenient and do not act as a deterrent. We should build more prisons to ease overcrowding and remove the pressure on courts to hand out lighter sentences. We should also end the practice of automatic release half way through the sentence."

Terry Gilder seconded the proposition. "Some prisoners often re-offend," he said. "Society is getting more violent and there are more drug-fuelled problems. We all rely on the law."

While some delegates were against most supported the call. **Kally Aniston** (Kerrier) said: "Child abusers inflict a lifetime sentence on their victims." **Patricia Darby** (North London Tesco) detailed how her daughter had been attacked. "She is not the outgoing person she was and has to take sleeping tablets and is under medical supervision," she said. "That attacker has ruined my daughter's life. We need tougher sentencing and punishment." Other delegates who spoke in favour were; **Neil Ford** and **Neil MacDonald** (Scottish divisional councillors), **Soo Roch** (NW Tesco Retail No.2), **Edie Hebditch** (Bournemouth & South Dorset) and **Steven Charlwood** (Irvine).

Specialist teams call

There should be separate police investigation teams for rape cases said **Michael Green** (Northern Morrisons). "At present only London has one of these. There was a trial in Portsmouth and while this was a success it still needs rolling out across the country," he said.

Gill Morley (Basingstoke) supported him as did **Paul Stothard** (NI Co-op Group) and **Sarah Channon** (Stornaway SB) who said: "Women have to come

forward to report these crimes. So do men even though male rape is seen as less of an issue. We do need specialist staff."



Sarah Channon



Sally Neale



Steve Ratcliff



Pauline Markham



Terry Johnson



Kay Perry

New rules agreed for leadership vote

Candidates for the next general secretary election will have to secure 25 branch nominations and fulfil other selection criteria before they can appear on the ballot paper conference agreed.

The rule change, proposed by the executive council, which won the support of more than 88 per cent of the vote also requires potential candidates to have been a member for five continuous years and to have attended at least 50 per cent of their branch meetings.

While some delegates opposed the 25 threshold as too high most supported the move. **Sally Neale** (North

East Kent) said: "We need an experienced general secretary who can show diligence. Twenty five nominations isn't a lot." **Steve Ratcliff** (N West Co-op Group Head Office) agreed. "Usdaw is a multi-million pound organisation with more than 400 staff," he said. "A security guard couldn't run the Co-op. The threshold is an honest safeguard."

Pauline Markham (Yorkshire Morrisons) said she wanted the union to get stronger. "I find it bizarre that virtually any member can stand for general secretary," she said, "with all the responsibilities that entails. The new rule will ensure good candidates and

members will still decide."

Terry Johnson (Thames North West Retail) said: "Companies also need to have confidence in our leader. The general secretary has to manage policy and people, be involved with government and have a range of skills. And we still have the chance to pass a vote of no confidence if we want to."

Loretta Traynor (NW SD Logistics) said the last election cost the union £175,000. "You could have someone with no experience of negotiating, or managing or political respect," she said. "Don't put the union at risk, other unions have this type of rule, so let's not throw money down the drain."

Hands up for small subs increase

Delegates voted overwhelmingly for a modest increase in subscriptions for the coming year with Scale A rising 4p to £2.14 a week, Scale B up 3p to £1.88 and Scale C up 2p to £1.34.

General secretary **John Hannett** said the executive council wanted to strike the right balance between empathy with the membership during the recession and the need for sound financial management for the union. "The union has not been unaffected by the economic downturn," he said. "We also face pressures on costs from potential changes to the legal system which could see us lose around £5m a year. We are the fastest growing union in the UK but we need a reliable



Rule changes require a majority vote of more than two thirds at ADM

income to continue our investment in our organising strategy."

Steven Charlwood (Irvine) supported the proposition. "We need the money to support our campaigns, for training, for the Academies, for the legal service and to improve our website," he said.

Kay Perry (Hull) a first-

time delegate was happy to see the subs increase by such a small amount. "I work for Makro and the union has been very supportive of us while the company have been making redundancies. This is a minimal increase with significant benefits," she said.

After a card vote more than 85 per cent of the vote was in favour of the subs increase.

web...
For further images
from the conference
please visit
www.usdaw.org.uk/gallery

Activists in the picture at Blackpool



ADM 2011 – BE THERE!

Start thinking now about going to next year's Annual Delegate Meeting which runs from April 17-20 and will be held in Blackpool.

It is imperative that activists plan ahead and follow the timetable for seeking election via their branch.



B&Q restructure threatens jobs

A THOUSAND WORKERS AT RISK

Usdaw is in talks with DHL and Wincanton after more than 1,000 warehouse jobs were put at risk in England and Wales after a distribution shake-up by DIY firm B&Q.

Redeployment, retraining and minimising redundancies will be the union's focus following B&Q's decision to pull out of centres run by third-parties in Runcorn, Coventry, Chepstow and Swindon, Middleton and Milton Keynes.

A £77m distribution centre will open in Swindon, creating 550 jobs. Another 250 jobs will be created at B&Q's site in Worksop, Notts.

The changes are expected to come into force from January 2012.

B&Q said the re-organisation followed a review of its distribution



strategy. General secretary John Hannett said: "This is obviously shocking and extremely distressing news for our members who B&Q acknowledge have been a committed and loyal workforce.

"Consultation on the proposals will start immediately and we will be working hard to try to mitigate the scale of any job losses."

07

The number of sites affected by B&Q's decision to restructure its distribution network

Pay deal boost for young workers

TESCO ABOLISHES YOUTH RATES

The annual pay review at the UK's biggest retailer Tesco will see a minimum increase of 2.3 per cent with youth rates abolished from the end of August meaning a 19.76 percentage increase for 16 and 17 year-olds.

The Tesco National Forum agreed the deal in June which gives an hourly

rate of £6.811 for the adult established C grade at Extra, Superstore and Metro formats. In Express stores the rate will be £6.47.

Night premiums will also increase by 2.3 per cent.

The new rates are effective from the 4 July 2010.

Discussions on improvements to maternity pay are also planned.

19

The percentage increase from August 29 for under 18 year-olds at Tesco stores

Tesco reps claim national award

HARLOW DEPOT CLEANS UP

An innovative scheme to recycle store waste has won Tesco reps at Harlow national recognition. Derek Byham and his team at the depot took part in a pioneering scheme to redirect store waste, destined for landfill, to an industrial compactor which turns it into gas or electricity saving money and resources.

Pictured (l-r): Derek Byham, site manager Mark Lockwood, Phil White and Tony Edwards.



IN BRIEF

Every little helps for Tesco staff

Supermarket giant Tesco had its 'best ever year' as it reported a ten per cent increase in profits.

Staff will share a bonus pot of £1.05m. Everyone from checkout operators to drivers and managers is eligible to receive a bonus of 3.6 per cent of salary, up to a limit of £3,000.

Huge tax hangover at off licence chain

First Quench Retailing, owner of the Threshers off-licence chain, crashed into administration last autumn owing HM Revenue & Customs £24.7m in unpaid VAT, excise duty and National Insurance arrears, new documents reveal. Meanwhile, KPMG, the retailer's administrator, has clocked up costs of £9.5m for its work on First Quench's administration. More than 6,000 staff have lost their jobs since the retailer's collapse began last October.

Cash boost for Co-op Travel workers

Members at The Co-operative Travel have voted to accept a two per cent pay increase and performance-related rewards.

National officer Sharon Ainsworth said: "The harmonisation programme has been a long process, involving a regrading exercise, however, I am delighted that it is now complete.

"The new scheme rewards personal performance which will increase pay. "I look forward to continuing to work with the company to evaluate the success of the scheme over the next few years."

POSITIVE PROGRESSION

When reps take a professional approach to organising their workplace the results are outstanding. Activist Neil Chapman told *Network* about his success in the Midlands

Proven activist Neil Chapman is using his own experience to help develop and mentor new and potential reps and build membership in Co-op stores across the Midlands.

Neil, 45, is a product of the union's successful Organising Academy and has been working closely with Usdaw and the Midlands Co-operative Society to develop a sustainable recruitment and organising structure across the division.

"I teamed up with my organiser Gareth Davies from the Kegworth office and we looked at the geographical spread of stores and the reps we had available on our patch.

"We then looked at their specific training and development needs. Reps looked at the agreement and what their rights were and highlighted gaps in their knowledge in areas such as maternity rights and parental leave.



Neil Chapman, (above) is a product of Usdaw's Organising Academy

"Then, along with the Society, we organised courses to meet the demand. Reps returned to their stores more confident and better informed.

"As a result we've recruited new reps and increased membership significantly. New and existing reps are networking together and

many have taken on responsibility for a number of cluster stores in their area to support members who have no rep.

"Having spent six months with each of the union's academies, I know only too well how important good quality training and support is to our reps and to their progress."



Richard Rowe on the campaign trail

Team leader Richard

Tesco Team Leader Richard Rowe is part of a top team of reps who have worked wonders over the last 12 months to increase membership by more than 20 per cent at his store in Hertford, Hertfordshire.

"We're very pleased with our progress and want to push on and do even better," said Richard. "It's important to flag up the many benefits available to members because people want to know what they'll get for their money.

"Legal Plus goes down very well as does the opportunities to study and improve skills through the lifelong learning initiative."

Richard has been a rep for 14

months and has already put his skills to the test recruiting in other stores in the area.

"I'm enjoying every minute. I've had lots of help and support from the rest of the team and officials in my division and I just want to get more involved.

"My time out on stand-down was a great experience. I'm looking forward to doing it again. It's a brilliant feeling when you sign up new members especially when it's not in your store

"If you map the store before your visit and do your homework properly you can be very successful and people will look forward to your follow up visits."

Spreading the message

Campaign days help activists raise awareness of the many union benefits available to their members, they also encourage non-members to sign up and help reps grow in confidence



LEGAL AWARENESS DAY

South Wales and Western's Maureen Williams and the team from the Tesco store in Quedgeley in Gloucestershire held a Legal Plus Awareness Day and invited local Usdaw solicitors Thompson Bancks.

"My manager allowed us to set up in the staff canteen and Thompsons sent a solicitor along for a few hours," said Maureen.

"We've never held an event like this before in our store and it went very well, there was a huge interest.

"Members were keen to sit down with the legal expert and discuss any issues they needed help with. Everyone was surprised at the scope of the legal advice available to them and their families.

"Not everyone knows that as a member legal help from the union is free and it covers issues outside the workplace such as consumer and domestic problems and a free will making service.

"The awareness days do exactly that and inform members of the full extent of the Legal Plus service.

"I signed up new members and there was interest from staff who weren't keen on joining before."

Maureen Williams (third from right) and the team at Tesco Quedgeley

PENSION AWARENESS DAY

Stand-down rep Cheryl Powell gave a helping hand to the team at the Colchester Road Sainsbury's store in Cardiff when they held a special Pension Awareness Campaign Day in May.

"I can't think of many people who actually understand or enjoy discussing pensions, so these days are absolutely necessary," said Cheryl, who works at the Bridgend store and is also part of South Wales and Western's specialist divisional recruitment team.

"The campaign spells out a lot of important messages including the importance of early planning for retirement. If it wasn't for the pension campaign and informative events like this then more Usdaw members would be left in the dark and miss out on vital financial security when they retire.

"Members had the opportunity to speak to pension experts from head office and representatives from Legal & General, who run the company pension scheme, and find out more about how it works and how they can join the scheme if they haven't done so already.

"And in terms of recruitment and as a stand-down rep it was an excellent opportunity for me to raise mine and the union's profile in that store. I actually had people coming up to me and asking if they could join the union. All in all it was a very successful day."



Cheryl Powell in action

IN NUMBERS

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 19 JUNE 2010

South Wales & Western.....	44,721
Eastern.....	54,264
Midlands.....	52,687
North Eastern.....	52,949
Scottish.....	41,439
Southern.....	52,197
North West.....	88,569
TOTAL.....	386,826

LABOUR OF LOVE FOR PAULINE AND JAYNE

Being an active rep is hectic enough and combining it with being a councillor makes life even more interesting. *Network* caught up with two reps who were elected to their local councils in May

Standing for election and actually winning came as a complete surprise to Morrison's rep Pauline Markham.

"I've been a rep for six years and it was this experience which led me to join the Labour Party four years ago," said Pauline, 57.

"I couldn't believe it when earlier this year I was asked to stand as the candidate for Darfield ward. I didn't hold out much hope of winning as it was a safe seat for a local independent candidate.

"When the votes were announced I'd won by a majority of 600 and secured one of five new Labour seats on Barnsley Council. I was very surprised and I couldn't hide my delight!

"I fell into my union role by accident. We didn't have a rep but colleagues would always come to me for advice and support and if they weren't in the union the first thing I told them to do was join.

"Before long membership started to grow and my organiser asked if I'd take on the role as I was basically doing it already.

"Things just took off from there. I went on every course I could and attended divisional conferences, ADM, branch meetings, any event I could get elected to or attend.

"As my knowledge grew so did my self-belief and I felt much more confident, signing up new members in my store became a way of life. We went from 50 members to more than 300 in no time.

"I'm on Academy1 at present and really enjoying it."

Tesco's Jayne Wilkinson took her place on Sandwell County Council in the Midlands when she clinched the Labour seat for Tividale beating the far right's BNP candidate into fourth.

Jayne, 42, has been a rep at the Metro store in West Bromwich for five years and is the Black Country Tesco branch chair. "My role with the union fits in perfectly with my political activity," she said.

"However it wasn't planned. I turned up at a local Labour Party meeting thinking it would benefit the community organisation I was involved with and found out it was a selection meeting for the election candidate. I ended up getting selected and the rest as they say is history."

Jayne's combined role with the union and her involvement with the Rood End Community Association in Oldbury in the centre of Sandwell prompted her to ask her branch to affiliate to the local Labour Party.

"The affiliation meant branch members could sign up to the Labour Party for free and get back to engaging in local politics where they can actually make a real difference.

"It also gets members talking about politics and feeling part of it. We have a strong membership, around 95 per cent and a good branch set up, it works really well.

"And whether I'm out on stand-down or in my council role – the message is the same – by joining and working together we can help to change things."



Pauline Markham



Jayne Wilkinson

You can find out more about getting involved in Labour politics at www.usdaw.org.uk or call the politics office on 0161 224 2804.

Mission possible for Sharon

Academy2 will give experienced rep Sharon Langham the chance to put her skills to the test helping develop new and up and coming reps in workplaces across the Midlands division.

"It's a fantastic opportunity and just the challenge I need," said Sharon, who works for Tesco Extra in Ilkeston, Derbyshire.

"Academy1 opened up a whole new world and my confidence and self-belief grew enormously.

“The set up and level of union activity is different in every store you have to be prepared for everything”

"The training, support and advice I've had from Usdaw over the past 12-18 months has been first-class and I want to use my skills and experience to help other reps develop in the same way.

"I've also done stand-down which again helped with my development.

"Recruiting and organising in stores like Morrisons, Argos, Co-ops and Boots as well as other



Tesco stores tested my abilities.

"The set up and level of union activity is different in every store so I had to be prepared for anything and everything. This is where all I'd learned and my experience came into play.

"No two days are the same. You can sign everyone up at an

induction one day and then nobody at all the next. Every situation is different.

"I remember my first visit to the Morrisons in Burton. I was tidying up the union noticeboard when two members of staff came over to ask about the union, they both signed up. It was a great feeling."

**Academy2
organiser Sharon
Langham
recruiting and
organising in
Tesco**

USDAW ORGANISING AWARDS 2010 – IT'S NOMINATION TIME AGAIN!

Nominations are now being sought for Usdaw's sixth national Organising Awards ceremony to be held in Manchester in January 2011.

There are eight different categories including: individual recruitment award, team recruiting award, individual organising award, campaigns award, health and safety rep award, union learning rep award, equalities award and most promising new activist award.

Any Usdaw member can nominate a colleague or themselves but the forms need to be returned to your divisional officer by **Friday 1st October 2010**.

Each divisional council will nominate a winner in each category who will then be invited to the national awards ceremony held at a top Manchester hotel in January.

The eight national award winners will be determined by a vote of the executive council and the winners will not be announced until the night of the awards ceremony. "It's a great night which rightly puts our hard-working reps centre stage," said John Hannett.

All activists will receive a separate mailing to their home address about the awards procedure, nominations and the national event. You can also find out more by visiting: www.usdaw.org.uk



National Winners at the 2009 Organising Awards

IN BRIEF

■ **Fifty per cent not claiming Sure Start Maternity Grant**

Latest government figures on benefit take up show that half of eligible parents are not claiming the Sure Start Maternity Grant. Usdaw's Claim It campaign has raised awareness of the Grant, which helps with the costs of a new baby.

■ **Government figures show recruitment racism**

Research shows that black people still face discrimination when applying for jobs. Applicants with a white sounding name are more likely to get an interview than those with an ethnic minority name. It was also shown that the pay of black workers is often lower than their white counterparts even where both groups had the same qualifications, age and occupation.

■ **LGBT Network**

The Co-op has a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender network called 'Respect'. If you work for The Co-op and are LGBT, or involved in representing LGBT members, 'Respect' is keen to hear from you. Add your name to the distribution list for regular updates and tell them what you think the network should be doing including LGBT activities or events. For information email: respectLGBT@co-operative.coop or Respect's Communications Leader: thomas.anderson@co-operative.coop

Contact equalities

For more information on the work of the equalities section contact Ruth Cross or Jo Bird on:

- 0161 224 2804
- equalities@usdaw.org.uk
- www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities

YOUR RIGHTS

Labour introduced a new right that will give men and same sex partners the chance to spend more time with their young children

Parents with babies born after 1st April 2011 will be able to transfer some or all of the last six months of a mother's maternity leave to their partner.

The new right is called Additional Statutory Paternity Leave. The first 13 weeks will be paid at £124.88 per week and the rest

unpaid. Partners can only use this right where the mother has ended her maternity leave.

However the mother does not have to

have physically returned to work and could be on holiday or off sick.

Parents who take 26 weeks will have the right to return to the same job. If they take longer than this they may only be able to return to a suitable alternative job but there would have to be a good reason why the employer could not give them their old job back.

Udaw welcomes the new right, part of Labour's package of support for working parents.

Udaw took part in the consultation on the new right and made a strong case for a period of overlap between the mothers and fathers leave. We will be monitoring take up of the new right so that we can do everything possible to make sure it works for our members.



Contact us for more information about parents and carers rights: equalities@usdaw.org.uk

Conference call for black activists



At the end of April, Usdaw once again sent a full delegation of black activists to the TUC Black Workers Conference in Liverpool.

The conference is an important one as it enables black trade union activists from across all sectors of the economy to come together to discuss those issues that specifically affect them.

Under-involvement in the movement, black workers and the recession and kicking racism out of football were all debated.

Maureen Williams, Usdaw's representative on the TUC Race

Delegates at the Black Workers Conference in Liverpool last April

Relations Committee, moved the union's proposition on Black Workers and Mental Health, pointing to research published by the department of health that despite the fact that black workers are no more likely to experience mental ill health than other group, they are more likely to be misdiagnosed, wrongly medicated and denied access to counselling.

New delegate Isaac Gidudu spoke in support of a proposition encouraging black members to get more involved in their trade unions and political life.

Veterans begin a new era

Divisional officer Dennis Beddoe and area organisers John Whale and Alun Williams, three of Usdaw's longest serving officials, retired recently with more than 90 years service between them



DENNIS BEDDOE

Former divisional officer Dennis Beddoe, 59, retired from the Southern division after 25 years' service.

He joined Usdaw in 1975 when he worked at the Royal Arsenal Co-op dairy in Brixton as a milk roundsman. Within a year Dennis was elected shop steward and then became the first ever full-time Usdaw convener for all of the society's shop stewards.

After serving on the divisional council and then

the Executive Council he was appointed area organiser in 1985 based at the old Croydon office. In 1993 he was appointed divisional officer.

"It's been an absolute pleasure to have worked with such a first-class, supportive, bunch of staff," said Dennis. "And it's a delight to leave the division in such a healthy condition with 22,000 more members than we had eight years ago when I took on the role of divisional officer.

"Back then I set myself a personal goal of 50,000

members before I retired and working together we have far exceeded that.

"I've enjoyed my time working with people who over the years have not only been colleagues but have become an extension of my own family.

"But it's now time to move on. I'm going to spend the summer chilling with my three daughters and five grandchildren and then with the new football season I'll be following the fortunes of my team – QPR."

JOHN WHALE

Meanwhile Eastern division's John Whale has clocked up 31 years with the union after his appointment as area organiser in 1978, aged 24.

John is well known throughout the division having worked out of many of the union's former and current offices including Stratford, Enfield, Waltham Cross and Dilke House. Prior to working for Usdaw John was a full-time official with the Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA).

"I've had a varied career and met a lot of nice people," said the 56 year-old. "I've worked with members and reps from Harrods to Selfridges, Tesco to Threshers and enjoyed every minute.

"When I first joined the union the workplace was very different. The advancement of new technology over the years has brought with it many changes.

"Self-scanners, mobiles, computerisation along with improved communications has led to a change in attitudes in the world of work and thrown up many new challenges for the union over the years.

"I've been very fortunate to have had an enjoyable and interesting life working for Usdaw and I'm hoping to keep my hand in over the coming years.

"I'm also going to get involved with some voluntary work but the first thing on my list is a long extended holiday in Bulgaria."



ALUN WILLIAMS

The longest serving of the trio, South Wales and Western's area organiser Alun Williams clocked up 35 years in the division before retiring at the end of May. He joined the staff in 1975, aged 25, when he was appointed area organiser at the Swansea office after graduating from Leeds University with a degree in economics. In 1985 he moved to the Cardiff office.

Working for Usdaw was a natural progression for Alun having come from a family of trade unionists, his father

served on the union's Executive Council for 31 years.

"I've seen a lot of changes over the years," said Alun, 59. "Membership has increased dramatically which is very satisfying considering the damage that was done under the Tories during the '80s.

"I've enjoyed my work immensely. I've pretty much covered every sector from retail to distribution and for eight years had responsibility for all of the division's

employment tribunal cases.

"I'll stay involved with the union's divisional activity as much as I can and I'll offer my services to my local Citizens Advice Bureau. I'm also hoping to fit in a bike ride or two and plenty of hill walking.

"I can't speak highly enough of my colleagues in the division and I'm very fortunate to be taking their friendship with me into my retirement."

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute: "All three officials have consistently shown a commitment beyond the call of duty over their many years. I thank Dennis, John and Alun for their loyalty and dedication and wish them a long, happy and healthy retirement."

New tool will manage risks

The HSE has developed a new tool for safety reps to help assess risks from repetitive work



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The new Assessment of Repetitive Tasks (ART) tool looks at risks such as frequent movement, application of force, awkward postures, pace of work and rest breaks.

Repetitive tasks are typically found in jobs that contain tasks such as assembly, production, processing, packaging, packing and sorting work, as well as work involving regular use of hand tools.

The ART tool is similar in design to the Manual Handling Assessment Chart (MAC), a tool that some reps may already be familiar with, for assessing risks from lifting and carrying. Both the MAC tool and the ART tool use a numerical score and a traffic light approach to indicate the level of risk in a task.

However, unlike the MAC tool, the ART tool requires the user to consult with the worker doing the repetitive task. The ART tool is also not intended for Display Screen Equipment (VDU) assessments.

The tool is supported by a guide providing instruction on how to

score the assessment and it is also accompanied by a worksheet to record the details of the task being observed.

Safety reps can use the tool to carry out assessments on repetitive work and investigate how changes such as improvements to the work-station, job rotation or rest breaks might reduce the risks.

To help users understand how to use the ART tool there is a training section on the HSE website. This includes a 'walkthrough' demonstration of the tool and the opportunity to test it out on five different video clips of repetitive tasks before applying it to a real job in your own workplace.

The tool will hopefully prove to be useful for Usdaw health and safety reps in a wide variety of workplaces from shops to factories.

To find out more about the Assessment of Repetitive Tasks tool contact the H&S section at central office (details on the opposite page) or visit the HSE web pages:

www.hse.gov.uk/msd/uld/art/index.htm

Behavioural safety schemes can be bad news

A BRIEFING FOR REPS

The TUC has issued a briefing document for union reps on the subject of behavioural safety. It is intended to help reps respond to behavioural safety initiatives within their workplace.

The short guide gives an outline about behavioural safety and explains that most existing schemes are based on the assumption that 'unsafe acts' by workers are the main cause of accidents and injuries in the workplace.

The TUC argues that this is a false premise and that it is important to look at management failures and not just the 'unsafe behaviours' of individual workers.

Many schemes punish 'bad' behaviour and reward 'good' behaviour and can promote a blame culture.

The brief also provides a useful checklist for reps to use if their employer introduces a behavioural safety programme in the workplace.

The TUC recognises the need to reinforce safe ways of working and to change behaviour through training and informing workers but argues that it is not a substitute for removing hazards or controlling risks. It points to the clear legal requirement to eliminate or control risks under UK law.

More information about the brief can be found at: www.tuc.org.uk/h_and_s/tuc-17940-f0.cfm



More bite to dangerous dog laws

The Scottish Parliament has voted unanimously to support new laws which tighten up on the control of dangerous dogs.

The new law gives courts, police, and councils more power to impose penalties on the owners including Dog Control Orders, sometimes referred to as dog 'ASBOs'. Crucially, the powers extend to cover control of dogs even in the owner's own home where previously they were only

applied to dogs in public places.

The new law follows a CWU-led campaign supported by Usdaw to give more protection to workers entering private premises as part of their job.

Postal workers, supermarket home delivery drivers and many others have been attacked by dogs when working on customers' properties. The campaign now wants to see similar changes to the law in other parts of the UK.



Stores playing with fire

Recent inspections carried out at a Tesco and Co-op highlighted stores unable to maintain good fire safety standards.

A Southampton Co-op was fined £210,00 following an investigation carried out by fire and rescue officers that discovered that the store had failed to keep emergency exit doors unlocked and had also fitted a lock to a door that required a security code for a quick exit.

Additionally it was found that the fire call point was being obstructed, the store's fire alarm was not being tested regularly and management were not clearly instructed in fire safety.

Similarly a London Tesco has

been fined £119,000 for offences following an inspection. It was discovered that emergency exits and routes were blocked, fire doors were wedged open and flammable materials had been stored under an emergency stairwell.

These events are reminders of the need to maintain good fire safety standards in stores at all times with health and safety reps and management working together.



web...
For further information on any of the points below please visit:
www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety

IN BRIEF

■ Hazards Journal fighting for your life

Following the General Election, Hazards Magazine is actively promoting its campaign to defend workplace safety from a retreat from regulation and enforcement.

Hazards journal points out that UK workplaces have seen a devastating reduction in the level of safety cover provided by the HSE and highlights that unions are the best guarantee of safety at work.

There is a pointed reminder on the back cover of the journal to the Conservatives and Lib Dems, who have recently called for deregulation, which warns: 'We didn't vote to die at work'.

■ Campaign for workplace maintenance

A new campaign for safe workplace maintenance has been launched by the European Occupational Safety and Health Agency. This follows their last two-year campaign in risk assessment.

Although maintenance of the workplace and equipment is essential for health and safety, workers who carry out this care can themselves be exposed to extra risks or even create risks to others. Simple things such as failure to maintain checkout chairs in a shop can increase injury risk while at the extreme results can be very serious.

Health and safety reps can find out more at <http://osha.europa.eu/en/campaigns/hw2010/>

Contact for health and safety information

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

Food Industry Conference 2010

The annual health and safety conference for the food and drink manufacturing industry is being held on 28-29 September at the Oxford Belfry Hotel in Thame.

The event is organised by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) and the Food and Drink Industry Forum which involves HSE, unions and employers from the industry.

The conference will focus on delivering health and safety solutions on hot topics such as machinery safety, behavioural safety, work at height, workplace transport and slips and trips.

As in previous years the organisers have agreed to give a

25 per cent reduction in ticket prices for union health and safety reps working in the industry to encourage employers to send their reps to the event.

For details of the final programme visit: www.hse.gov.uk/food/events.htm

21st National Hazards Conference
Hazards 2010 Supporting life-saving safety reps whatever the Government
9 to 11 July 2010
Keele University, Staffordshire

ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING 2010

A toga-riffic time at the Youth Disco

With an Olympics theme the youth disco raised more than £1,200 for the Haiti appeal and Sport Relief. A special thanks to all who turned up in fancy dress and to the branches that donated £50 to the event.

A huge thank you for all the work that the youth committee put in, it was a fabulous night as always.

SAM BELL,
National Youth Committee Rep



A CREDIT TO THE UNION

A big thank you

I'd like to thank the union for help with a recent issue at work. My union rep, Allan Kell, was fantastic. I felt he not only listened to what I had to say but was very good at looking at all points of view. He helped steady my nerves and gave me hope and direction throughout this time. Without a doubt I would not have coped without Allan's guidance through this matter. He's a credit to Usdaw and I can't thank him enough.

GARY BLENKIRON,
Northern Tesco F101

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Reps gather in Redditch

Reps from Tesco, Morrisons and Sainsburys attended a Health and Safety course recently in Redditch. We all shared our experience and knowledge and learnt lots from our great lecturer Amanda Edmonds from the TUC. A great time was had by all.

RADMILA LUKIC, Northampton Area Tesco E47

ARENA MAGAZINE

Arena design gets Allan's vote...

I was very impressed with the new style *Arena* magazine. The members I've spoken to genuinely thought it was a fantastic move and they can barely put their copy down. We also thought that having the FirstCall card on the cover was a winning move.

Can I suggest that to improve the magazine you could include a list of the solicitors per division and ideally what they specialise in. Also one or two members didn't realise it was the union magazine when they first saw it, so would it be possible to put the logo on the polywrap to make it easily identifiable?

ALLAN KELL,
Branch Secretary,
Northern Tesco F101

...but new style not for everyone

Thank you for the Spring edition of *Arena* magazine. Unfortunately I was disappointed to discover that the size had been changed from A4 to A5. I personally do not like the smaller size. I am registered partially sighted so reading print is a tall order in itself, especially when it's smaller and I am not one of those who believe in the smaller the better. I hope that you rethink your presentation plans, and consider the visually impaired in your future designs.

K.M.COX,
Mid Sussex H23

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Lillian hits fifty

Lillian Sperring has been a member of Usdaw for 50 years and was recently presented with her 50 year membership award.

Lillian worked from age 14 up until retirement as a Sales Assistant at the Co-op in Blaina Wales and was overwhelmed when presented with her award. She said the certificate and pen were for her grandchildren so that they have something to remember her in the future.

PAUL ADAMS, area organiser, Cardiff Office

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS ACROSS THE DIVISIONS

Members celebrate their 30 years with Usdaw

Pictured from left; Isabelle Cochrane G5, Val Rossetti and Barbara Spoor E47, Victor Powell and Pamela Philpotts E94, and Jim Cadger G242,



£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 winners are **Stephanie Barnes** and **Brian Smith**. They'll each get **£25**

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

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

Email: network@usdaw.org.uk



LONDON RALLY

Campaigning for our rights

Myself and a few other friends recently attended the Defending the Welfare State and Public Services march and rally in Trafalgar Square. I thought it would be of interest to readers that events like this show the union leaves the door open for retired members like myself and others to make our presence felt in the various campaigns for rights of pensioners and others.

CHARLIE FRIELL,
Cumbernauld CWS G7



STAR LETTER

MENTAL ILLNESS

Raising awareness

After reading your Supporting Disabled Members Guide and an article in Nov/Dec *Network* about mental health protection, I realised this information would have been very useful a few years ago when I was treated unfairly and ultimately dismissed because of my illness.

I suffer with depression and I believe there should be more done to stop the stigma attached to mental health problems. People don't take it seriously because it's not a physical disability. For me, each day is a challenge to lead a normal life and you are forever masking how you truly feel to fit into society.

It took me two years to get another job because when I mentioned my mental illness on application forms or in interviews it always resulted in marks against me. What people like myself need is support and understanding from employers and stuff.

Maybe the union can have a Mental Health Campaign to help companies understand the realities of mental health and remove the fear and stigma. After all, people with mental health problems are human beings too.

STEPHANIE BARNES,
Co-op Group K19

I read a letter in Spring *Arena* on depression with interest due to the work I have been doing to remove the stigma attached to mental illness.

Companies do not take the Disability Discrimination Act into account when dealing with mental illness and dismiss sufferers through ignorance without trying to help or support them.

I'm working alongside my MP who is campaigning to raise the awareness of mental illness, in particular Dementia and Alzheimer's, and inform people about their rights.

I have also been in touch with Peter Jarvis, Usdaw Training Officer to organise a course on the subject to inform reps so that they can help other members.

Additionally I have been conversing with the TUC to see what can be done nationwide to bring depression into the open and help people to feel like they can talk about mental illness as if it were the common cold.

Usdaw needs to be a leader and show others the way forward with this.

BRIAN SMITH,
Chelmsford and Colchester C37

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS AT FALLOWFIELD BRANCH

Branch members celebrate big fifty

Congratulations to Geoff Martin and Les Horsfield (pictured far left and second from right) who were presented with awards for their 50 year membership with Usdaw. Also celebrating their 30 year year awards were Kath Hume, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis and national officer Irene Radigan. The members of Fallowfield branch were presented with their awards by general secretary John Hannett in January.

MICHAEL WHEELER, Fallowfield K21



SUPPORTING PARENTS AND CARERS SPOTLIGHT DAY: CAMPAIGN PICTURE GALLERY

Reps promote the 'Easter bunny says claim your money' slogan

Pictured from left; activists at NW JD Williams K200, Co-op Walderslade H52, Morrisons Bude A147 and East of Scotland Morrisons G12

