

NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS – MARCH/APRIL 2019



NEW HOPE AFTER DEVASTATING FIRE

THE STORY OF PRIMARK BELFAST

Usdaw

MEMBERSHIP WEEK

17 to 23
JUNE 2019



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SAFER WORKPLACE



PROTECTION AT WORK



LEGAL & ACCIDENT COVER



MEMBER OFFERS & DISCOUNTS



MORE JOB SECURITY



BETTER PAY



BETTER CONDITIONS



FAIRNESS AT WORK



MEMBERSHIP WEEK CHECKLIST

- ||| Speak to your manager about time off to organise an event
- ||| Order recruitment leaflets and promotional materials in advance
- ||| Identify areas/departments in your workplace where membership is low
- ||| Arrange your team of reps on a rota to cover all shifts
- ||| Contact your area organiser or local office for help
- ||| Send pictures of your membership week events to the *Network* team at: network@usdaw.org.uk



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JUSTICE FOR P&H MEMBERS

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

Usdaw won justice for its Palmer and Harvey members who were sacked just before Christmas 2017 when the company suddenly went into administration. The employment tribunal granted a protective award because staff were not properly consulted about their redundancy, as required by law. Once again this shows that we cannot rely on companies to do the right thing and why union membership is crucial for every worker.

The crisis in retail is ongoing with Marks & Spencer, HMV, Debenhams and Mothercare announcing a programme of store closures. As part of Usdaw's retail industrial strategy the Save Our Shops action day took place in March in 25 towns across the UK with great engagement from the public. Following its success, the union will be arranging similar action days in the future.

Usdaw's Time for Better Pay campaign petition has continued to attract interest



and currently stands at over 25,000 signatures. As part of the overall campaign, Usdaw has called for the roll-out of universal credit to be halted and the system fundamentally overhauled.

This Government has made it abundantly clear that it is not interested in protecting or promoting the rights of working people. That's why campaigning is a vital part of being a union activist. It is only with grassroot engagement and activity that we can forcefully make our point to Government about a living wage, decent contracts and secure work.

Usdaw General Secretary

Paddy Lewis



Campaigning to 'Save Our Shops' on the streets of Northwich

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15 MAY 2019

Campaigning for family
and carer-friendly
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be available to ALL
workers, from
day one of employment.

Usdaw

Campaigning
For Equality



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HOURS
IN THE DAY

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email: parentsandcarers@usdaw.org.uk

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USDAW WINS PROTECTIVE AWARD

Just before Christmas 2017, over 4,000 Palmer & Harvey staff were sacked when the company suddenly went into administration.

Usdaw has won justice for members at the UK-based wholesaler after the Manchester Employment Tribunal granted a protective award because the staff were not properly consulted about their redundancy, as required by law.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Yet again the taxpayer will have to pick up the bill for what is owed to sacked staff because administrators deliberately flouted the law. It's absolutely disgraceful that companies can get away with this sort of tactic in the 21st century.

"The former staff at Palmer & Harvey have had to wait well over a year for this decision, having already been through the trauma of losing their job and being forced to seek justice through a lengthy tribunal process. The company and administrators made no attempt to consult or treat staff with dignity and respect as they were



immediately removed from their workplace with no notice.

"Not only were the staff treated very badly, they have suffered a long wait for justice. The complete failure of the company to consult with the union when it clearly knew it was in difficulties is reflected in the tribunal's decision to make a maximum award to the former staff.

"This area of law requires review because it is riddled with injustices for both workers and taxpayers as liability to

pay the protective awards when companies are in administration falls to the Government's insolvency fund. The Government needs to end the perverse financial incentive for employers and Administrators not to comply with legal obligations on collective redundancy consultation.

"Once again, this case highlights the failures of the system and that the only way workers can protect themselves is through trade union membership."



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OBITUARY

USDAW MOURNS GARFIELD DAVIES

Former general secretary Garfield Davies passed away in March, aged 83. He was Usdaw's general secretary during one of the most tumultuous and difficult times experienced by the trade union movement; a time when the Conservatives were ruthlessly attacking trade union and employment rights.

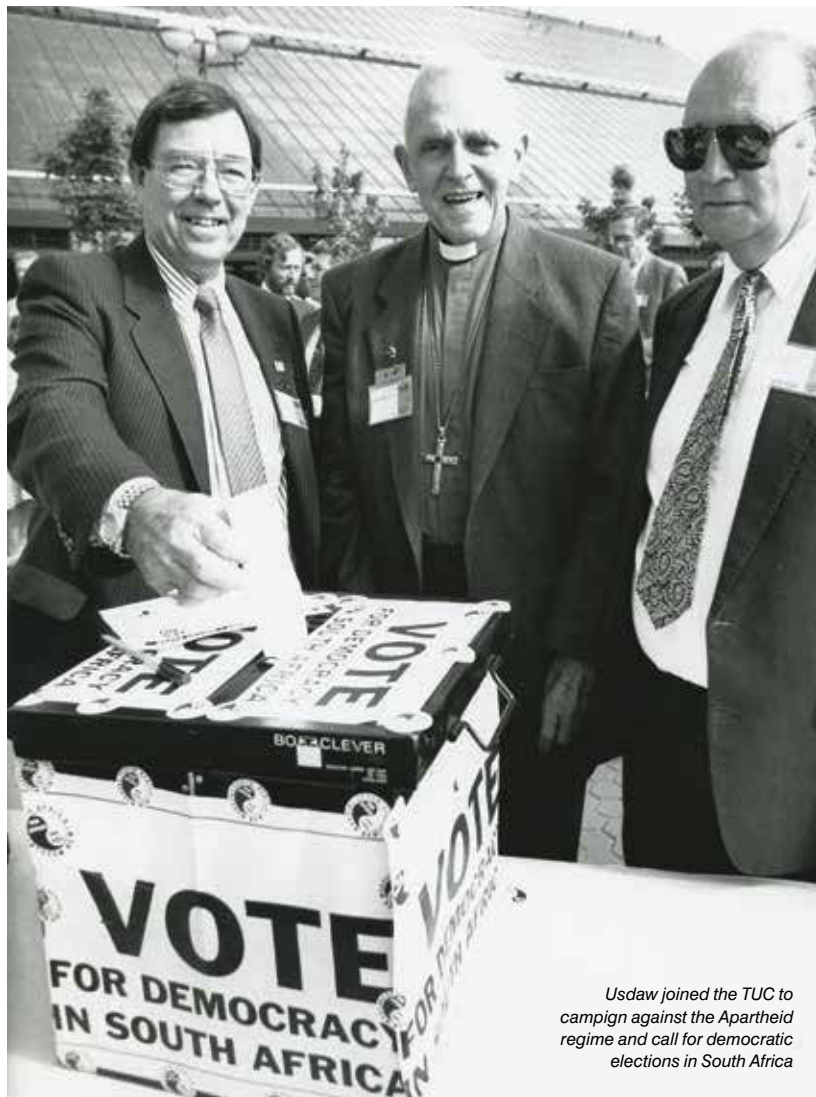
Garfield's rise in Usdaw was meteoric. He started off as a shop steward in the steel industry before becoming an area organiser in 1969. From there he was promoted to deputy divisional officer and in 1978 he moved to Manchester to take up his role as national officer.

In 1986 he was elected as Usdaw's general secretary and served for over a decade. After retiring he was awarded the CBE in 1996 for services to industrial relations and later made a life peer entering the House of Lords in 1997 as Lord Davies of Coity.

Under Garfield's leadership Usdaw won a number of notable victories, including the Sunday trading campaign which was Thatcher's only defeat in the House of Commons.

Garfield believed in a just, fair and equal society for everyone and as a TUC spokesman for International Affairs, campaigned passionately on behalf of South African trade unionists against apartheid. He was also a vocal supporter of the National Minimum Wage at a time when other unions were opposed to it.

General secretary Paddy Lillis said: "It is with great sadness that we hear of the loss of our former general secretary Garfield.



Usdaw joined the TUC to campaign against the Apartheid regime and call for democratic elections in South Africa

"I was first appointed to Usdaw's staff by Garfield. He was an energetic and enthusiastic trade union leader who steered Usdaw through some very difficult times, countering the anti-trade union fervour of the Thatcher Government.

"He was a great Labour man and

played a key role in modernising the Party and securing a landslide victory in 1997 after 18 long years of opposition.

"Garfield always put our members at the forefront of everything he did and he took that into the House of Lords where he robustly defended workers' rights."

SAINSBURY'S AND ASDA MERGER

CMA PROVISIONAL FINDINGS PUT SAINSBURY'S AND ASDA MERGER IN DOUBT

Last year Sainsbury's announced a planned merger with rival supermarket Asda which would overtake the number one player in the sector, Tesco.

For the merger to go ahead it would have to be approved by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

In February 2019, the CMA released its provisional findings and concluded, that on the balance of probabilities, it would result in substantial lessening of competition.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Given the issues currently affecting the retail sector, it is surprising that the CMA has found there to be such significant concerns over competition. With the retail sector already struggling, Usdaw's priority is to prevent store closures, protect jobs and ensure a vibrant high street.

"Today's recommendations have come about without adequate



consideration of the impact of the CMA's decision on the workforce. I urge the Government to listen to the concerns of employees by extending the role and the function of the CMA to include consultation with trade unions, appoint trade union representatives onto the CMA and conduct a full review of UK takeover laws to ensure the impact on workers is taken seriously in all

decisions.

"The retail sector is facing one of the most challenging periods in its history. To tackle the crisis on our high streets Usdaw is proposing a comprehensive industrial retail strategy for the retail sector. We urge the Government to engage with us and support our strategy to ensure that shopworkers have a voice in the future of retail."

A CELEBRATION OF LIFELONG LEARNING

EDUCATION AND TRAINING AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

This Summer sees two big events that will celebrate and promote adult learning in and beyond the workplace.

The annual **Learning at Work Week** takes place between 14-19 May and this year's theme is shaping the future. The event is organised by the charity Campaign for Learning and aims to put a spotlight on the importance and benefits of learning and development in the workplace.

The **Festival of Learning**, formerly known as Adult Learners

Week, will take place between 17-23 June. This annual nationwide event aims to promote Lifelong Learning in England and celebrate the achievements of adults who have used learning to transform their lives.

Usdaw provides lots of educational and training opportunities, including an online learning gateway where members can access and complete hundreds of courses in their own time from the comfort of their own home.

More information about what's available can be found on the Usdaw website at www.usdaw.org.uk/LifelongLearning

Usdaw reps are encouraged to organise their own workplace events during both weeks to promote all the learning opportunities available to members, in particular the many courses available through the online learning gateway. Reps who want to get involved should make contact with their Lifelong Learning project worker at their local Usdaw office.

IN BRIEF

CLOSURES

New research compiled for PwC UK estimates that 14 shops are closing every day. The data showed that a net of 1,123 stores disappeared from Britain's top 500 high streets in the first six months of the year. London was the worst hit region while Wales had the lowest number of closures.

ODDBINS RISK

Oddbins has been put into administration, in a move that puts 550 jobs at risk at the off-licence chain and its sister businesses Whittalls Wine Merchants and Wine Cellar Trading.

HMV SAVED

Canadian firm Sunrise Records has emerged as the buyer of collapsed music chain HMV, beating competition including Sports Direct owner Mike Ashley. The firm will buy 100 stores out of administration, securing 1,487 jobs. But 27 stores will close, resulting in 455 redundancies.

IKEA RENTALS

Ikea is to start renting out furniture as part of attempts to build a more environmentally friendly business. The leasing strategy is part of Ikea's wider effort to design and sell goods that can be repaired, reused, recycled or resold and promote services that prolong the life of a product.

GIVING TRADE UNIONS A VOICE

USDAW BACKS MORNING STAR



Usdaw became the 10th trade union to back the Morning Star by becoming a shareholder with a place on the management committee.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The British press is not an impartial disseminator of information. It is owned by rich media moguls who ruthlessly defend the economic order of deregulation, privatisation and low taxes because it directly benefits them. They throw their weight behind the Conservatives who uphold these values and anyone who challenges the status quo is demonised.

"According to the non-profit

organisation Reporters Without Borders the UK dropped a staggering 18 places to become one of the worst countries in Western Europe for press freedom. In addition, a YouGov poll found that despite their own political leanings Britons believe that five out of eight national newspapers are right-wing.

"The Morning Star is a left-wing paper that prides itself on covering trade union issues. That's why I'm delighted that Usdaw will be working with the paper in ensuring that the voices of working people and the labour movement are heard."

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1.5 dCi Acenta 5dr,
White, 91K
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TDI Ultra SE 4dr,
White, 33K
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THE SPRING STATEMENT

CHANCELLOR IGNORES THE RETAIL CRISIS AND OFFERS LITTLE TO LOW-PAID WORKERS

The Chancellor's Spring Statement released in March failed to address the deepening crisis in retail and provide substantial help for workers in low-paid insecure work, who are struggling to make ends meet.

Usdaw had called on the Chancellor to:

- Save our shops with an industrial strategy for a retail sector in crisis.
- Recognise its 'time for better pay' with at least £10 per hour and more secure contracts.
- Immediately halt the roll-out of universal credit.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "It is deeply disappointing that the Chancellor made no mention of the 'Armageddon' on our high streets, as the British Retail Consortium describes the current state of the retail sector.

"With footfall in long-term decline, 20,000 store closures since 2015 and 93,000 jobs lost last year, we needed action from the Government to help turn it around, not silence.

"Restating the commitment to increase the so-called 'national living wage' to 60 per cent of median earnings is some reassurance, but the Office of Budget Responsibility



now predicts that will result in only £8.72 per hour, a long way short of the original promise of over £9.

"We need a long-term strategy that delivers decent pay, secure jobs and changes attitudes towards retail work; giving shopworkers the respect they deserve. That means good pay of at least £10 per hour, a proper contract that reflects the normal hours worked and enough hours every week to make a living.

"Working families have also suffered from benefit freezes, which the Chancellor confirmed will not be ended early as he was urged to ditch £1.4 billion of welfare cuts due

to come in next month, and they are set to be worse off still when transferred onto universal credit.

"Today the Chancellor did not address this continuing issue impacting so many low-paid workers.

"Usdaw continues to believe this can only be sorted with a halt to the rollout of universal credit and a fundamental rethink of the policy.

"These are significant issues that our members face and need substantial interventions from the Government. It appears the Chancellor is not listening."

SHEPHERDS FRIENDLY MUTUAL SOCIETY

ACCESSIBLE SAVING SOLUTIONS

Usdaw has partnered with savings provider, Shepherds Friendly to bring members a variety of tax-efficient savings plans.

Shepherds Friendly is a mutual society, wholly owned and run by its membership. It has been providing financial security to members since its foundation in 1826. Their savings plans are flexible and accessible; you

can start saving into an ISA from £30 a month, or you can open a Junior ISA for your children from just £10 a month.

As part of the launch of the partnership, Shepherds Friendly will also be offering an exclusive offer of a Loveshop voucher code, worth up to £35, when you open a savings plan through Usdaw Offers and

Discounts. Just visit www.usdaw.org.uk/offers

As with any investment your capital is at risk. All references to taxation are to UK taxation and are based on Shepherds Friendly Society's understanding of current legislation and HM Revenue and Customs practice which may change in the future.

IN BRIEF

LIDL

Lidl has opened a new regional distribution centre in Doncaster creating 400 jobs. The company's thirteenth warehouse in the UK will service 53 stores.

OCADO AND M&S

Ocado shares rose as much as 6.7 per cent after a report suggested it may agree a deal with Marks & Spencer to deliver its food and drink. Marks & Spencer has been exploring options for food delivery online in a bid to catch up with rivals such as Sainsbury's.

AMAZON

Amazon, formed 25 years ago, has eclipsed Microsoft to become the world's most valuable listed company. The online giant is worth £634bn.

ARCADIA GROUP

Sir Philip Green is working on a restructuring of his Arcadia Group retail empire that includes Topshop and Miss Selfridge. The company is exploring several options which could include job cuts and store closures.

GENDER PAY GAP

The current gender pay gap for all employees stands at 17.9 per cent. This means that women effectively work for free for the first 65 days of the year, until they begin to get paid on Women's Pay Day — 6 March.

RESOLUTION FOUNDATION'S REPORT ON RETAIL

'SORRY WE'RE CLOSED' – THE DECLINE IN RETAIL



A new report published by the Resolution Foundation 'Sorry we're closed' highlights the decline in retail and the impact on shopworkers.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Retail is going through a really tough time with job losses and shops closing. Usdaw is calling for an industrial strategy for the sector to level the playing field between online retail and the high street.

"We need to invest in our high streets to create thriving community hubs and while we recognise diversification is an option, we still believe that retail and shopworkers have a key role to play. We need to tackle high rents and rates, alongside car parking charges that discourage shoppers. We also need to value shopworkers and the customer service they provide with better pay, secure hours and give them a say in the business through their trade union.

"The report's findings on the re-employment of redundant shopworkers should be a wake-up call. When the worst happens, Usdaw is there to challenge the business case for redundancies, seek redeployment

opportunities and help our members find work with other employers or through union training, reskilling and Lifelong Learning.

It is time for those retailers who refuse to engage with trade unions to change their attitude and treat their staff with dignity and respect."

Usdaw's strategy for the future of retail is based on three key strands:

- A new economic framework to support and develop the sector, including a comprehensive review of commercial rents and business rates; reform of tax laws, and closing the gap between CEO pay and workers.
- Tackling the issues affecting workers including minimum pay of £10 per hour; minimum contract of 16 hours (for those who want it), and the right to an employment contract that reflects actual hours of work.
- Ensure retail jobs are viewed as 'real jobs' by getting a commitment from employers and government to invest in skills within the retail sector; a robust strategy on how to deal with automation, and a seat for Usdaw on the Expert Advisory Panel on High Streets.



FIGHT FOR OUR HIGH

MPs, Labour party activists and Usdaw reps and officials joined forces in their local town centres in March to raise awareness about the current crisis on the high street as part of the union's Save Our Shops campaign.

UNDER THREAT

The retail sector is facing serious difficulties with shops closing and workers experiencing short hours, low pay and job insecurity. A continued increase in the move to online shopping and the rise of automation are additional challenges for retailers. Last year

shops were closing at a rate of 14 per day. Usdaw is calling for the Government to act now and breathe life back into the high street – benefiting retail workers, shoppers, the local community and retailers. The union has launched an industrial strategy and is calling for:

- Economic measures to create a more level playing field between the high street and online retailing.
- Fair pay and job security for retail workers – a minimum wage of £10 per hour, tackling zero-hours and short-hours contracts, investment in skills and training.

- Government action to protect jobs in the retail sector. Retail jobs are real jobs – retail is a key part of the economy providing jobs and income for millions of families.

NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Outdoor events with street stalls were organised in 23 town centres across the country.

Activists spoke to local shopkeepers, retail workers and the passing public about the campaign and upwards of 10,000 people signed a petition campaigning for the Government to take action.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy



H STREETS

Lillis joined Mike Amesbury MP and union activists at the campaign day in Northwich town centre.

"Three million people are employed directly in the retail sector and another 1.5 million jobs rely on the success of shops," said Paddy.

**OVER 10,000 PEOPLE
SIGNED A PETITION
CAMPAIGNING FOR
THE GOVERNMENT
TO TAKE ACTION**

"In recent years, hundreds of thousands of jobs have been lost in retail, with large and small retailers alike closing their doors.

"The Government is only offering warm words with little action to tackle the crisis on the high street and in our local communities. Every shop that closes impacts negatively on local communities and our town centres.

"Retail has got a future, but if nobody is going to sit down and look at the potential problems going forward, then it's going to decline. And we are saying that is not good enough. Our members, their families

and the communities in which we live deserve better.

"The Save Our Shops campaign is about highlighting this to the politicians, local authorities, to the employers and anyone who will listen – there needs to be a long-term strategy for our town centres, to protect jobs and ensure communities can thrive."

For more information about Usdaw's Save Our Shops campaign and how you can get involved visit www.usdaw.org.uk/saveourshops





Mike Amesbury MP (centre) talks with Paddy Lillis



The Aberdeen campaigners made it into their local paper

Supporting Save Our Shops in Putney with Helen Hayes MP and Labour parliamentary candidate Fleur Anderson



Mike Amesbury, Labour MP for Weaver Vale and shadow minister for employment, joined Usdaw general secretary **Paddy Lillis** in Northwich to discuss what needs to be done to tackle the decline of the high street.

PADDY: Mike, I want to say thanks to you as a local MP for coming along today to support Usdaw's national Save Our Shops campaign. We're outside the Marks & Spencer store in Northwich, which is under threat of closure. What ongoing conversations have you been having given our campaign today is about raising awareness of the decline in high streets across the UK?

MIKE: There are a number of Marks & Spencer stores earmarked for closure right across the country which is reflective of the situation and the pressures on our high streets. Northwich Marks & Spencer has been here for over 100 years, it's an anchor retailer for us but more importantly 60 people could lose their jobs. I've spoken to the senior management team and there's been a big community campaign against the closure. The local council have also been involved and we are trying to look for a solution.

PADDY: Woolworths was another iconic chain that went under 10 years ago after 100 years on the high street – 800 stores gone, 27,000 jobs lost – and since then we've seen hundreds of thousands of jobs lost in retail. Marks & Spencer, along with other companies including Aldi and Lidl, have continuously fended off trade

union recognition and denied their workers a voice.

MIKE: I've worked together with Usdaw as a Labour councillor and as an MP, to ensure that we have union recognition for staff across the retail sector. It's good for employers, it's good for employees and it's great for the economy. I obviously look forward to that relationship continuing and want to reassure trade unionists that a Labour government would be committed to extending collective bargaining.

PADDY: Usdaw continues to grow, even with the difficulties on the high street and in the retail sector, but we need to work with the Government on the future of retail. What do the jobs of the future look like? How can we work collectively with employers, the parliamentarians, the local authorities and local communities to ensure no-one's left behind? We need to look for long-term solutions to ensure that our communities are thriving and that our people have got good secure employment opportunities.

MIKE: Of course, that's really important. During the campaign this weekend we've heard a lot of passion from the people of Northwich for their high street, and of course it will be a similar story for towns up and down the country. We not only want to save high streets and major brands such as Marks & Spencer we want to ensure that they thrive. We need an active Government on the people's side.

PADDY: As you know Mike, we launched our Time For Better Pay campaign at the Labour Party and the TUC conferences last year. £10 an hour is the minimum we're asking for employees to be able to go to

work and keep a roof over their head, and a minimum of 16-hour contract, unless the employee wants a shorter contract, to ensure people get the hours that they need. These are all really important issues for the trade union and labour movement that you and I have been brought up in.

MIKE: Absolutely, we need a government that intervenes on the side of the workers, shoppers and the local community. Labour would certainly be an active government. We would reform business rates and raise the minimum wage to £10 an hour.

PADDY: When big branded employers pull out of a high street, they take away so much footfall from the smaller shops and that causes a downward spiral. There's a responsibility for these large employers to have a commitment to the local community. We need to collaborate with the employers, the local authorities, the MPs, other trade unions and community groups to make a change. If we all work together, there can be a good future for our town centres and high streets.

MIKE: I definitely agree. It's important that we harness the energy that's in the local community. The people of Northwich and in my constituency of Weaver Vale are determined to have a good shopping centre where they can come and enjoy themselves and have a day out.

Usdaw's activists are doing a great job campaigning and raising awareness both in the workplace and out in the community. We need to continue working together to make a difference and save our high streets for future generations.

WE NEED A GOVERNMENT THAT INTERVENES ON THE SIDE OF THE WORKERS, SHOPPERS AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

POLITICAL CAMPAIGNING

Reps and members have been getting involved in Usdaw campaigns to make sure their voices are heard by employers and the Government

Political campaigning is an essential part of Usdaw's remit. As well as negotiating with employers for improvements the union also lobbies MPs for changes in legislation that will benefit Usdaw members.

PETITIONING FOR BETTER PAY

Usdaw's Time for Better Pay petition has already secured the signatures of over 25,000 people who share the union's deep concerns about pay and rights of a growing number of workers who find themselves in increasingly insecure employment.

In 2018 Usdaw conducted a survey of over 10,500 workers in retail and associated sectors which laid bare the issues that working people are facing as a result of low pay, short and zero hours contracts and insecure work.

Usdaw's survey found:

- Over the past five years, 92 per cent of those surveyed have seen no improvement in their financial situation.
- Over the past 12 months, 76 per cent of low-paid workers have had to rely on unsecured borrowing to pay everyday bills.
- 63 per cent of people believe that financial worries are having an impact on their mental health.

Based on this Usdaw launched its Time for Better Pay campaign. The campaign aims to tackle the causes of in-work poverty and develop an economy where going to work guarantees that people can afford a basic standard of living.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The Time for Better Pay petition was launched to end job insecurity and help working

people make ends meet. Having reached the first milestone of 10,000 signatures, we were deeply disappointed by the Government's woefully inadequate response.

"They failed to engage with the evidence we provided and snubbed the petition. Usdaw's research has shown that the so called 'National Living Wage' does not live up to its name. Our survey identified that 54 per cent of low paid workers are regularly having to miss meals just to pay the bills. The Conservatives need to understand they have created a perfect storm of low pay, insecurity and working poverty.

"So it was clear that we have to push on for the 100,000 signatures that would provide the opportunity for the petition to be debated in the House of Commons."

TIME FOR BETTER PAY AIMS

- A minimum wage rate of at least £10 per hour for all workers.
- A minimum contract of 16 hours per week for everyone who wants it.
- A contract based on an individual's normal hours of work.
- An end to zero-hours contracts.

OFFENSIVE WEAPONS BILL

Following the increase in acid and knives being used as offensive weapons the Government is looking at tightening the laws on the sale of these items.

Usdaw supports the strengthening of the law but there is no protection for shopworkers who will be responsible for enforcing the sale of these items.

David Hanson MP tabled an amendment that would create a new offence if a person attempting to buy corrosive substances or knives then abuses, threatens or assaults the retail worker who is enforcing the law.

Despite cross party support from peers and positive discussions with the home office, the amendment did not gain enough support to put it to a vote.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "One major achievement from this campaign is that, for the first time, a Conservative Government accepts there is an issue to be tackled, that now needs to be backed up with urgent action. Following a roundtable meeting we have now secured a 'call for evidence' and investigation into what can be done to provide better protections for shopworkers, we are still pushing for a timetable.

"I note that the Minister accepted that legislation may be necessary and if so the Government would provide time in Parliament. We intend to hold the Minister to that and the Government can be assured that we will be providing extensive evidence of the need for legal protections to tackle the scourge of violence against shopworkers."

PLEASE SIGN
THE PETITION
AND SHARE IT WITH
FRIENDS, FAMILY AND
COLLEAGUES.

WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/T4BP

JUSTICE FOR INJURED WORKERS

Usdaw will continue its Justice for Injured Workers campaign. The union is disappointed that the Government is ploughing ahead with proposals that will double the threshold for cases taken in the small claims court to £2,000.

Usdaw believes that an increase to £2,000 in the small claims threshold will:

- Leave tens of thousands of injured workers without legal representation, because those costs cannot be awarded against negligent employers when the case is heard in the small claims court.
- Put people off bringing valid claims before the courts and create an imbalance in legal representation between claimants and defendants.
- Worsen workplace health and safety standards by making it less likely that negligent employers will be penalised, increasing the risk of an employee being injured while also restricting their ability to seek redress.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We are very disappointed that MPs approved unfair and unnecessary measures that will significantly restrict access to justice for injured workers.

"The Government say that the bill will tackle a whiplash epidemic but they fail to mention that insurers will receive an annual gift of £1.3bn.

"Our campaign continues, because the threshold increase for employer liability cases has yet to be adopted through the statutory instrument process.

"We are anticipating that the statutory instrument will be dealt with in the autumn.

"Therefore, I urge our reps and members to email their MPs and ask them to oppose these proposals."

www.usdaw.org.uk/justiceforinjuredworkers



Campaigning at the Welsh Assembly



David Hanson MP (centre) supporting The Offensive Weapons Bill



Usdaw activists want Justice for Injured Workers



WITHIN 20 MINUTES
THE FIRE HAD GOTTEN
OUT OF CONTROL; THE
TOP OF THE ROOF WAS
COMPLETELY ENGULFED
AND FLAMES WERE
COMING OUT OF THE
WINDOWS.

The Bank Building in Belfast after the fire in August 2018

PRIMARK GUTTED

Network meets the reps who looked after their colleagues following a devastating fire.

In August last year a huge fire destroyed the iconic bank building where Primark was based. The building had been part of Belfast's shopping district since 1787 and had recently undergone an extension and refurbishment at an estimated cost of £30m.

It took the fire service three days to extinguish the blaze and despite the speed and ferocity of the fire no-one was hurt. Due to safety reasons a part of Belfast city centre was cordoned off which resulted in a number of big retailers as well as small businesses having to close.

Although the majority of Primark staff started to return to work by the beginning of December many local businesses have been unable to reopen. The months of uncertainty, damaged stock and lost business meant they were unable to absorb these losses.

Network met two reps from the fantastic Primark Reps Team, to talk about what happened that day and the work they did in supporting their colleagues which led them to winning Usdaw's National Team Recruitment and Organising Award 2018.

THE DAY OF THE FIRE

Primark rep Jo Carleton was there on the day of the fire and said: "I finished my shift at 11am I was actually on the fifth floor heading towards the locker room on the fourth floor when the fire alarm went off. Everybody was following the fire protocol. It was all eerily calm and orderly. Staff were helping customers with prams to get out.

"At first, I thought it was a drill because I couldn't smell smoke or

see anything. But as we went down towards the lower floors we started to smell smoke, it was coming out the vents in the ceiling. Luckily, we managed get out and onto Castle Street within a couple of minutes.

"As we were walking down the street I heard the fire brigade siren. Once we turned to the front of the building we could clearly see the roof was on fire. Within 20 minutes the fire had gotten out of control; the top of the roof was completely engulfed and flames were coming out of the windows."

THE AFTERMATH

Primary rep Jeanette McKnight who was also there on the day said: "We later heard that 1,500 people were evacuated in those few minutes; 100 staff members and the rest were customers. Mornings are a really busy time for us because people not only shop here but they also arrange to meet here. Primark was the heart of the city and it's absolutely devastating what's happened.

"After the initial shock there was a lot of uncertainty about what was going to happen next. We had no idea how we were going to get home as we had left everything in our lockers. We didn't have keys, purses, phones or coats. We didn't know if we had a job to come back to. The people of Belfast were absolutely brilliant. They did everything they could to help. Debenhams took staff in and gave them cups of tea. We had taxi drivers offering free lifts to staff and the company organised locksmiths to help us get into our homes."

Jo and Jeanette explain in their own words what happened next



Jo: We met quite soon after that, as a union team to work out what to do next. For the first week we managed to agree that staff would get their contracted hours and then we would see where we were. The same arrangement was agreed for the following week. After this it was important we got an arrangement that was a bit more long term. People had bills and mortgages to pay so we couldn't have them living from week to week.

Following another meeting with the company it was agreed that staff would be paid their contracted hours up until New Year's Eve. Most of the staff worked overtime so this wasn't an ideal situation.

But the important thing to remember here is that the Primark contract allows them to lay people off when there's no work. In light of what had happened, the company agreed that staff would continue to be paid.

Jeanette: We also managed to get everyone, who wanted it, to be redeployed. Through negotiations we managed to redeploy staff to nearby stores and with similar shift patterns to what they had before. To enable this to happen staff in the redeployment stores also lost their overtime to accommodate the staff affected by the fire. Their overtime feeds into their productivity bonus. But our colleagues were absolutely brilliant. There wasn't a word of complaint. They were really supportive and everyone came together.

Jo: On top of that we agreed travel time and paid full travel costs so that no-one was out of pocket. And everyone was reimbursed for the belongings that were damaged in the fire. During this time our phones never stopped ringing!

Jeanette: We've been back in this store since the beginning of December and I'm really grateful to be working back in the city centre

again. It's going to take three years for the old building to be repaired as it will be restored brick by brick. Things aren't the same. Footfall has been flattened in the city centre. McDonalds and Tesco have only just reopened but Zara's still shut.

Jo: Where Primark was situated there was a walkway with lots of little independent shops. They've all shut or relocated. Many of them couldn't get to their stock. The council offered grants and subsidies and a fund was set up to support the businesses around here. Primark contributed £500k. Belfast council lobbied for £1.5m and relaxed rates to help businesses survive. Unfortunately, not all of them did.

On behalf of the reps' team I want to thank our area organiser Michala Lafferty who was absolutely fantastic. Thanks to her efforts we received huge support from the political parties and the Lord Mayor even gave us the use of city hall for our meetings.

Jeanette: The union also organised for members to be able to access advice on benefits, universal credit and housing support. In the run up to Christmas Michala worked with local hotels and bars to put them in touch with members who were free to take on work. There were also contingency plans to hold dances and festivals to raise money, so that we could get people through Christmas but thankfully it didn't come to this.

USDAW'S RESPONSE

Udsway area organiser Michala Lafferty spent the weeks after the fire working with the company to ensure members' interests were represented and protected.

"It's important to remember that there have been other stores in Northern Ireland that have suffered from bombings and floods yet there's never been this kind of response," said Michala.

"People love Primark. If you go



Jo Carleton (left) and Jeannette Mcknight (right) with Us

back 20 or 30 years Belfast didn't have a range of shops like other cities. So, we were all dressed in Primark. We all had the same clothes because people didn't have the money to do anything different.

"We got the response we did because of the levels of membership we have in Primark and because the reps did a fantastic job of making representations on behalf of their colleagues.

"I have never seen a bunch of reps work so hard to support their members."

RECOGNITION

The Primark Reps Team won Udsway's National Team Recruitment and Organising Award 2018 in



Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis

The Primark Bank Building before the fire

recognition of the work they did in supporting their members. Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I want to congratulate the reps on the great work they did supporting their members despite being affected themselves.

"They have shown that trade union membership works. The high levels of membership ensured that the voice of the employees was heard and taken seriously. Thanks to their excellent representation the response from Primark was fantastic who went above and beyond to do the right thing by their staff.

"Primark have set the bar high on how a big employer can look after their staff during an incredibly difficult time."



LADBROKES

A DIFFERENT SIDE OF RETAIL

Since signing a trade union recognition agreement in 2009 both Usdaw and Ladbrokes have developed a good working relationship. Three reps cover 77 shops across Northern Ireland and thanks to their hard work they have managed to increase membership levels to over 75 per cent.

Network spoke to rep Helen McConnell, 60, about some of the challenges facing Ladbrokes workers.

"Although I've been an Usdaw member for many years this is my first year as a rep," said Helen. "I'm really enjoying it so far. I've completed the shop stewards training and found it very informative.

"As a manager I move from shop to shop which gives me the perfect

opportunity to talk to my colleagues. People are pretty receptive to joining the union. It's not because they are particularly union minded but rather having high density means non-members quickly realise almost all their colleagues are members so this helps a lot.

"We have high levels of membership in Ladbrokes because fellow rep Louise Murdock, has steadily been building up union membership. She has worked for Ladbrokes for years so she knows many of the staff and people trust her. We also have a really good working relationship with the company and that helps when recruiting as people feel they can join a union.

"Talking to other reps has made me realise that the issues

for retailers whether you're a betting shop or a supermarket are very similar. Where you have single staffing, health and safety is an issue. Other issues include cash handling, time keeping and disciplinaries.

"Going forward, I think the legislation around fixed odds betting, which will cut the stake from £100 to £2, is anticipated to have an enormous effect. In Northern Ireland we will feel the impact, however we will move over the counter business so it might not be as severe as those shops that are heavily reliant on betting machines.

"Currently, I'm happy being a rep and helping members with their queries. If in the future there's an opportunity to get more involved in the union then I would take this up."

ASDA

MERGERS AND BORDERS IN NI

Uzdaw signed a recognition agreement with Asda (Northern Ireland) in 2010. Asda has 17 stores with around 50 reps looking after over 3,500 staff. The good working relationship between the company and the reps means they are notified of all inductions and membership density stands at over 87 per cent.

Lauren Elliot, 38, Thomas O'Brien, 37, and Liz Davidson, 55, took time out of their busy schedules to talk about two of the biggest issues affecting Usdaw members in Asda Northern Ireland; the Asda/Sainsbury's merger and Brexit.

SAINSBURY'S MERGER

When *Network* met the Asda reps the Competition Market Authority (CMA) had recently announced, that on the balance of probabilities, a

merger would result in a substantial lessening of competition.

Liz: Up until the CMA announcement there was a quiet acknowledgment that the merger would go ahead. But the CMA announcement has left people feeling very nervous and uncertain.

Thomas: In some stores you've got four generations of the same family working there. So, any change could potentially impact whole families.

Lauren: Retail jobs are not 'pin money'. People rely on these jobs for a wage that pays the bills and feeds their children. The next couple of months will be really testing for everyone.

THE IRISH BORDER

The reps expressed real concern about the possibility that Brexit would mean a hard border going up

between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Thomas: We have two stores that are essentially border stores. If a border was put up then it would make it harder for our colleagues to get to and from work.

Lauren: A whole generation of people have grown up without a border. People live, shop and work across the border. Moving freely across the border is part of our daily lives. To think there could be a barrier, checkpoints and even tariffs is pretty frightening.

Liz: The border has a violent history. It's something we got rid of and we don't want it back. It might not be there for security like it was before but it would still be there. Sustaining peace is a complex process and a change like this could potentially jeopardise it.

Ladbrokes



Helen McConnell Ladbrokes Belfast

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis and area organiser Michala Lafferty with the Belfast Asda rep team



MemberOffers

CARS & TRANSPORT

Car Hire
Fiat
Startrescue
Usdawdrive
Vauxhall Cars
Vehicle Servicing

INSURANCE

Accident Protection Cover
Female Cancer Cover
Car/Home/Travel Insurance
Life Insurance
Pet Insurance
50+ Personal Accident Cover
Free £5,000 Accidental
Death Cover

MONEY & FINANCE

Debt Advice
Financial Advice
Mortgage Advice
Pensions Advice
Pensions Annuity Service
Shepherds Friendly Savings
The Co-op Credit Union

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Comfort Insoles
Groom Razors &
Skincare
Gym Membership
Usdaw Health Plan
Usdaw Dental Plan
Vision Express

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52
Cinema Tickets
English Heritage
Frankie & Benny's
Golf Membership
Magazine Subscriptions
National Trust Gift Cards
Online Ticket Store
Theme Parks and
Attractions
Virgin Experience Days

SHOPPING

Apple
Crown Decorating
Centres
Domestic Appliances
Flowers
Magazine Subscriptions
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback
Card
UsdawRewards Cashback
Virgin Wines

HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges
& Hotels
Cottage Breaks
Forest Holidays
James Villa Holidays
Mini-holidays
Novasol Holiday Homes
Parkdean Resorts
Pontins

MISCELLANEOUS

Funeral Planning
Gas and Electric
NUS Extra
Voice Mobile



www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

*Terms and Conditions for individual offers on the website.

Find out more
www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

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Our endorsed savings partner, Shepherds Friendly, is offering an exclusive Love2shop voucher code worth up to £35* when you open a savings plan with them, if you are a member of Usdaw.

Shepherds Friendly are an award-winning savings provider with over 200 years' experience. They offer savings plans for the whole family, ranging from an ISA for yourself, and a Junior ISA savings plan for your child. Please remember, when investing your capital is at risk. *Terms and conditions apply.



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Visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers

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

CHURN AND LEARN

Network visited Müller, Milk and Ingredients in Trafford Park for the official opening of their new learning hub.

Food processing company Müller is a multinational producer of dairy products and the seventh biggest food and drink brand in the UK. Each year the company processes enough milk to fill Lake Windermere!

There are 2,598 Usdaw members working at Müller in the UK and thanks to a new learning agreement, members will be able to access more learning opportunities at work.

EDUCATION FOR ALL

The learning agreement was established in late 2018 following discussions about how the union and the company could work together to ensure members have access to various courses, training opportunities and company apprenticeship schemes.

Müller have committed to establishing learning centres in almost all of their sites to ensure employees have access to learning facilities. The union has also been recruiting on-site learning reps who will support their colleagues who want to access the various courses.

Müller are also supporting Usdaw's new online learning platform which offers members access to a variety of recreational and job specific courses. Members can use their on-site learning facilities to access the platform and gain recognised qualifications.

Usdaw national officer Daniel Adams, who looks after members at Müller, is excited about the new agreement: "The union's Lifelong Learning team have done a fantastic job working with the company to set up the learning platform, identifying and recruiting union learning reps

and supporting our members with their learning and development. It clearly demonstrates the value the union can bring to the learning agenda for members."

TRAFFORD PARK

Network visited the Müller, Milk and Ingredients site at Trafford Park, where 700 people are employed, for a tour of their new learning hub and to meet the reps.

The full milk production process takes place on site, from collecting the milk from the farms, to processing, bottling and dispatching and then on to delivering to shops and other distribution centres.

Their new learning hub is located in the distribution centre and two union learning reps have been recruited to support colleagues wanting to access learning.

THE LEARNING HUB

Transport team leader Jacqui Hill has worked at Müller for 14 years. Her job is to make sure all the drivers and their vehicles leave the depot safely and that all legal compliances are adhered to. She's recently been recruited as union learning rep, along with her colleague Karen Wilkinson, to support members at the site.

"The learning hub will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week and all staff will be free to come in and use the facilities," said Jacqui, 57. "I work the day shift and Karen works nights, so there will always be one of us around to support the learners.

"I think we were asked to become ULRs because of the nature of our jobs, staff already feel comfortable coming to us with any issues and we



do our best to help people.

"My hope is that staff understand that the company and the union have made an investment in them and this is their chance to take part."

Karen Wilkinson is team leader on the night shift. She's had previous experience supporting her colleagues through workplace training and is keen to make sure Lifelong Learning at the site is a success. "I've been really pleased by the amount of people that have already registered an interest in further education, not just for what Müller is offering vocationally but also the union courses that will enhance your life," said Karen, 51.

"I think it'll be successful, it's going to take some hard work but thankfully we've got the full backing of management.

"It's a fantastic joint effort between Müller and the union and I



The new learning hub at Müller, Milk and Ingredients in Trafford Park

hope staff take the opportunities."

HGV driver Andrew Bailey has been the senior rep on site since 2015. "Membership Week was the perfect opportunity to launch the learning hub," said Andrew, 52, who is also branch chair. "We've had a lot of interest so far, people want to enhance their knowledge and learn new skills, and it's great that the union can help them with that."

Drivers Adrian Hill and Matt Gibson make up the team of five reps in distribution at Trafford. It's a well-organised site with 75 per cent of staff signed up as members.

"The strong membership will definitely help when it comes to promoting the learning hub," said Andrew. "Members are happy to share their stories if they've had a good experience, and that in turn encourages others to have a go. We're all really excited."

A MÜLLER HISTORY

Müller UK and Ireland is owned by a company called the Unternehmensgruppe and consists of the three business units including *Müller Yogurt and Desserts*, *Müller Milk and Ingredients* and *Milk and More*.

The company was created back in 1971 in the Bavarian town of Aretsried when Theobald Alfons Müller took over his father's small dairy, which at the time had just four employees.

Today, the Müller Group has around 24,000 employees working in more than 10 countries throughout Europe and the UK.

Müller has operated in the UK since 1987 and the first plant outside of Germany was opened

in 1992 at Market Drayton.

Müller Dairy became the UK market leader in the yogurt sector shortly afterwards.

In 2012, Müller took over Robert Wiseman Dairies and in December 2015 the company acquired the dairy operations and distribution businesses of Dairy Crest Group plc which was brought together as *Müller, Milk and Ingredients*.

Müller Milk and Ingredients is Britain's largest producer of branded and private label fresh milk, cream, butter and ingredients products, with a network of dairies and depots servicing customers throughout the country.

UPSKILLING FOR ACTIVISTS

Usdaw provides a variety of easy-access training and educational opportunities for reps who want to expand their knowledge and progress in their union roles

Usdaw reps are the lifeblood of the union and vital when it comes to supporting members. It's essential that they have access to the education and training opportunities that will help them develop and feel supported in their roles.

ACADEMY2 WARRINGTON

The Academy2 class of 2019 met up for the first time in March ahead of an intense six-month secondment working for the union.

The 34 reps from companies including Tesco, Ikea, Co-op, Sainsbury's, Wincanton, Next, Müller, Morrisons and Primark met at the Hallmark Hotel in Warrington to start their training as organising officers.

Academy2 is the specialist follow-on training programme for reps who have completed Academy1. It involves recruitment, organising and supporting reps and Academy1 trainees.

Usdaw deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen welcomed the new recruits: "Our Academy organising officers are central to our success as an effective, strong, campaigning union. I want to wish them all the very best of luck on their exciting journey over the next six months."

ORGANISING SEMINAR HARROGATE

Forty reps from the North Eastern division were invited to a two-day residential organising seminar at the Cedar Court Hotel in Harrogate in January. The course is specifically designed for new reps who have completed their initial training.

The delegates from Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and the Co-op, spent the weekend discussing organising techniques and fine-tuning their recruitment skills in a bid to help them improve membership in their own workplaces.

The event was overseen by North Eastern divisional officer Joanne Thomas, deputy divisional officer Cathy Godfrey and area organisers Lisa Collins and Sharon Hargrave. Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and national officer Joanne McGuinness were guest speakers.

Store assistant Paul Brunt attended the seminar. "The event was well planned, very informative and everyone was friendly, I really enjoyed it," said Paul, 55, who became a rep at Sainsbury's last August. "The guest speakers were full of passion and gave us the opportunity to ask questions. We took part in small workshops where we discussed case studies which was a great way to interact with each other and learn about different workplaces. I've exchanged numbers with a few people and look forward to seeing them at future events.

"I feel I'm already an approachable person but following the seminar I feel even more confident about supporting my work colleagues. It's also good to know that there's plenty of support and advice available for reps through Usdaw's officials, the website and the many publications that the union produces."

BRANCH OFFICERS' COURSE WARRINGTON

The latest group of newly elected branch officers were invited to Usdaw's national training centre in Warrington in February for a five-day, tailor-made residential course looking at every aspect of the union.

Understanding how to run a union branch and how it fits into the local, divisional and national structures within Usdaw is the focus of the branch officers' course which is held four times a year.

The group were joined by speakers from key central office departments, general secretary Paddy Lillis and deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen.

LEGAL WORKSHOP EXETER

Reps in the South Wales and Western division travelled to the Whipton and Pinhoe Labour Club in Exeter in March for a special one-day Legal Workshop.

Guest speakers from union solicitors Slater and Gordon spoke about unfair dismissals and accidents at work and how reps can support their members.

Tesco rep Sue Hooper was there. "It was a great event, the speakers were very informative and it was interesting to learn more about the legal benefits of the union," said Sue. "After your rep training you don't often get the chance to meet up with other reps so it's good to have the opportunity to get out in the division, link up and compare notes."

If you'd like to read more about training and development opportunities for Usdaw members and reps visit:
www.usdaw.org.uk/Reps/Training-Development



Academy2



Branch Officers' Course



Legal Workshop



Organising Seminar



PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE WITH AUTO-ENROLMENT

Minimum Pension Contributions are increasing in April 2019. Find out if you are affected.

WHAT IS CHANGING?

From April 2019 a minimum of 8 per cent must be paid into your pension pot with the minimum an employee must contribute set at 5 per cent and an employer 3 per cent.

WILL I BE AFFECTED?

If the total amount being paid into your pension pot is below 8 per cent your contributions will increase from April 2019.

If a total amount of 8 per cent or more is already being paid into your pension pot you will see no changes.

WHY ARE MINIMUM CONTRIBUTIONS INCREASING TO 8 PER CENT?

The auto-enrolment legislation has been designed to get more people saving and to gradually increase overall contributions so that you have a better chance of receiving a decent pension pot when you retire.

HOW DO I TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INCREASED RATES?

If your contributions are due to

increase to meet the legal minimum requirements in April 2019, you will not need to take any action as your employer should automatically adjust the increase in your contributions and their own.

It is worth noting that some employers already offer a more generous structure than 8 per cent, so if you can afford to pay more this might be a good opportunity for you to pay a little extra, especially if your employer will match or pay a higher rate than you.

If you would like to find out more about your own workplace arrangement we would recommend

you approach either the Pension Administrator or Pension Provider, in the first instance to see what is on offer.

WHAT IF I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MORE?

We would encourage you to find out how much any additional increase might cost you in pounds and pence as an increase may not be as costly as you might at first think.

SAVING FOR YOUR RETIREMENT VIA A PENSION CAN WORK TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Employers pay a contribution for you.

If you qualify for auto-enrolment your employer must make a contribution for you by law and from April 2019 this must be at least 3 per cent of your salary. At Usdaw we consider this to be 'deferred pay' for when you retire. This is free money you are turning down if you are not in your workplace pension scheme.

Salary Exchange

Many employers also offer what is known as 'salary exchange'

This allows your employer to pay your pension contributions into your pension pot, which reduces the amount of National Insurance you are required to pay.

There are certain eligibility conditions but as a general rule if your employer operates salary exchange and you earn above the Minimum/Living Wage and you are not claiming any state benefits, you should qualify for these National Insurance savings if you are contributing to your workplace pension scheme. If you'd like to learn more about this please contact the pension section at

Usdaw for a factsheet on this topic.

Tax Relief

Most people will qualify for a tax top up from government known as 'tax relief', so if you are a basic rate tax payer, for every £8.00 you pay government will also contribute £2.00 on your behalf.

Example

- Salary: **£15,000 a year**
- Employee contribution: **5 per cent**
- Employer contribution: **3 per cent**
- You pay: **£15,000 x 5 per cent = £750**

However because you receive the tax top up from government you only pay £600 and they will pay the rest.

- Employer pays: **£15,000 x 3 per cent = £450**
- Total invested into your pot: **= £1,200**

Your money is doubled because of the contribution your employer must pay and the tax top up available from government.

WHY DOES USDAW SUPPORT AUTO-ENROLMENT?

Auto-enrolment is an undoubted success, with over 10 million workers enrolled. Nine out of 10 workers have chosen to remain in their workplace schemes.

Usdaw believes that all members have the right to a decent pension and auto-enrolment has helped our members to understand the advantages of saving for retirement via a workplace pension scheme.

CONTACT USDAW

For more information and advice please call the Usdaw Pension section on:

0161 224 2804 or email us at pensions@usdaw.org.uk

PENSION 'COLD CALLING' IS NOW BANNED!

Be Smart

It is now an offence to contact pension holders, randomly and out-of-the-blue.

You can still be contacted if you have given someone consent, for example by your existing pension scheme administrators. However, if you are approached over the phone unexpectedly about your pension and you are in any doubt, hang up!

Be Sure

To find out more about how you can spot a scam and who you are dealing with contact:

fca.org.uk/scamsmart

Be Safe

Follow four simple steps...

1. Reject any unexpected offers made by phone, text or email.
2. Check who you are dealing with. Contact the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to make sure whoever has contacted you is authorised.
3. Don't feel rushed or pressured; take your time to make all the checks you need.
4. Get impartial information or advice. Speak to Usdaw's pension section in the first instance and they can connect you with Usdaw's affinity partners, Lighthouse Financial.

Worried you may have been scammed already?

Act immediately!

- Call Usdaw's pension section.
- Contact your workplace pension department or pension company — they may be able to stop a transfer that hasn't taken place yet.
- Report it to **Action Fraud: 0300 123 2040.**

www.actionfraud.police.co.uk

If you are considering opting out before taking any action please take the time to read our leaflet 10 Reasons not to opt out:

www.usdaw.org.uk/reasonsnottooptout

STAND-DOWN SUCCESS FOR REPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

January Membership Week gave Usdaw reps the perfect opportunity to step outside of their own workplaces and support other activists in their division

Two of Usdaw's impressive stand-down reps are going the extra mile to support members in the retail sector.

NICK LEWIS SAINSBURY'S

Sainsbury's Local rep Nick Lewis is currently on stand-down in Cardiff and has spent the last few months visiting convenience stores across the region and looking after members in Sainsbury's, Tesco and the Co-op.

During January Membership Week he supported a campaign day at Sainsbury's Thornhill which was attended by local MP Anna McMorrin. The theme of the event was Usdaw's Time For Better Pay campaign which is aimed at tackling the causes of in-work poverty and developing an economy where going to work guarantees that people can afford a basic standard of living.

"Lots of people in retail are worried about their job security at the minute, and there's also the scaremongering about what will happen with Brexit" said Nick, 53, who is a shopfloor colleague at his store in Rumney. "That's why campaigning for a better deal for low paid workers is more important than ever. Shopworkers need to know that someone is fighting for their rights and parliamentary support from local MPs is really important."

Nick became a rep in June 2017 after being encouraged to get more involved by another rep who visited his store. "My workplace needed a rep, and I wanted fair-play for my

colleagues, so I signed up," said Nick. "I managed to double the membership on my first day.

"A year later I became health and safety rep, and shortly after that I did my first period of stand-down.

"My hope for the future is to recruit more reps and health and safety reps across the Sainsbury's Locals in the area so that we can build up a bigger network and work together to support the members."

LOUISE MURDOCK LADBROKES

Part-time customer service manager Louise Murdock is a well-known face in Ladbrokes across Northern Ireland since becoming a rep in 2015. Over the past four years she's worked hard to build up good contacts with the local managers, raised the union's profile, increased membership and transformed the union/company relationship.

"I was a member of the Ladbrokes colleague's forum, a group which met monthly with management to discuss issues concerning staff," said Louise, 46, who is also the health and safety rep and branch secretary. "My area organiser Raymond Neal noticed that I wasn't afraid to stand up for my colleagues so he asked me

to be rep. It was a no-brainer really, I believe in the union and was keen to make sure that our rights at work were protected."

Louise started working at the betting shop in Newtown Abbey 27 years ago when it was known as Eastwood bookmakers. In 2008 Ladbrokes bought all Eastwood shops to become Northern Ireland's largest gambling outlet.

"Initially I was just looking after the members in my store and then about a year later I went on stand-down and visited some of the other stores in the area," said Louise. "In my first week I recruited 103 members in 23 hours. I now look after 280 members across 77 stores.

"Up until last year I was the only rep but thankfully two other reps have come on board which will definitely help as membership continues to grow.

"The support from Usdaw makes the job a lot easier. My area organiser is always there if I need him. Also, the encouragement from the other activists when you go to events like ADM is incredible.

"This year I've got plans to go further afield with stand-down and visit different companies."

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED 16 MARCH 2019

South Wales & Western	49,034	Scottish	43,438
Eastern	60,631	Southern	62,804
Midlands	56,201	North West	90,039
North Eastern	59,415	Total	421,562



CAMPAIGNING FOR
A BETTER DEAL
FOR LOW PAID
WORKERS IS
MORE IMPORTANT
THAN EVER

Nick Lewis



IN MY FIRST WEEK
I RECRUITED 103
MEMBERS IN
23 HOURS

Louise Murdock

WHAT IS ADHD?



Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurobiological disorder. It is estimated that it affects around 5 per cent of children and 2.5 per cent of adults. The disorder is characterised by three symptoms: inattentiveness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness and can have a considerable and sometimes disabling effect on daily life at home, work or in social settings.

The exact cause of ADHD is unknown but genetics, biology, premature birth and substance abuse during pregnancy could be potential factors.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

The symptoms tend to be noticed at an early age and most cases are diagnosed when children are 6 to 12 years old. If the ADHD was not diagnosed in childhood then a GP will assess the symptoms and may refer the individual to a specialist.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

The symptoms of ADHD can be categorised into two types of behavioural problems:

Inattentiveness – having a short attention span, carelessness and lack of attention to detail; continually starting tasks before finishing old ones, poor organisational skills, inability to focus or prioritise; forgetfulness or losing things.

Hyperactivity and impulsiveness – restlessness and edginess, difficulty keeping quiet, speaking out of turn; mood swings, irritability and a quick temper; inability to deal with stress, extreme impatience and taking part in risky activities with little or no regard for personal safety or safety of others.

Related conditions – ADHD in adults can occur alongside several related conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, dyslexia and autism.

HOW IS ADHD TREATED?

There is no cure for ADHD but it can be managed with medication and psychological therapies such as cognitive behavioural therapy.

ADHD AND THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act 2010 (England, Scotland and Wales) and the Disability Discrimination Act (Northern Ireland) gives thousands of disabled Usdaw members

Tip! To assess the impact of ADHD ask the individual to work through a typical day from getting up in the morning, leaving the house to traveling on public transport and interacting with people in a work and social situation.

important employment rights and protection at work.

ADHD is not automatically covered under the Act. Therefore, to be covered the condition will need to fit the following definition:

A person is disabled if they 'have a physical or a mental impairment which has a substantial, long term, adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.'

To decide whether ADHD or any other condition is covered by the Act the rep will need to ask the individual the following questions:

- Do I have a physical or mental impairment?
- Is it more than a trivial condition?
- Has it/will it last a year or more?
- What would happen if I stopped taking medication? In deciding whether someone is disabled the effect of any medication or treatment is ignored.
- Does it affect my everyday life? For instance, does it affect your: mobility, manual dexterity, lifting everyday things, co-ordination, speech, memory, hearing, concentration, eyesight, learning/ understanding.

If the answers are yes, then the individual will be covered by the act.

WHAT ARE REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS?

Once an individual is covered by the Act their employer is under a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to policies and procedures and working conditions as well as to the physical workplace environment.

ADHD AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

The lack of awareness and support from employers can make it difficult for someone with ADHD to remain in work. However, with a little understanding and some small

changes employers can support an individual to stay in work.

There is no 'one size fits all' approach, so what adjustments an individual needs will depend on how their ADHD affects them, what job they do and their own abilities and coping strategies. Therefore, reps should always speak to the individual about what changes they think would help.

Bearing this in mind reasonable adjustments could look at the following:

Raising awareness

Given the stigma surrounding ADHD many people may not want to reveal they have it. However, if an individual is happy to share this with their manager and colleagues then it is important for the employer to raise awareness about the condition. Colleagues maybe more supportive and understanding if they know why an individual is getting some flexibility around start times, taking different breaks or wearing headphones.

Some people with ADHD suffer from sleep problems which can have a knock-on impact on getting up in time for work.

- Try to agree a more flexible start and finish time window.
- Instead of disciplining the individual for lateness allow them to make up the time.

Forgetfulness is a symptom of ADHD

- Agree to the use of visual prompts such as wall charts for routines, visible clocks, checklists and post-it notes for reminders.

An individual with ADHD can get easily distracted

- Operate a buddy system to help maintain focus.
- Allow headphones with music or ear plugs to block out distracting sounds.

Struggling to complete tasks or meet deadlines

- The workday should be structured with tasks broken down into clear, bite size steps.
- Offer increased supervision, check-ins and regular feedback sessions.

Poor organisational skills

- An individual with ADHD may benefit from regular coaching sessions which can help them develop their organisational and time management skills and strategies.

Restlessness

- Allow the individual to move around and/or have flexible break arrangements.

Play to the individual's strengths

- Individual's with ADHD can have the ability to hyperfocus on things they are interested in. They can be spontaneous, flexible and creative. Therefore, avoid monotonous and repetitive tasks, long periods working in isolation and tasks that need high levels of concentration.

Use technology

- Encourage the individual to use reminder apps, to do lists and apps designed specifically for people with ADHD.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Disability and Reasonable Adjustments leaflet
www.usdaw.org.uk/do10
 Supporting Disabled Members leaflet www.usdaw.org.uk/383

CONTACTS

ADHD Foundation
www.adhdfoundation.org.uk
 UKAAN
www.ukaan.org
 ADDISS
www.addiss.co.uk
 Usdaw's equalities section
equalities@usdaw.org.uk
 0161 224 2804

FIGHTING FOR FAMILIES

This year's Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day will be campaigning for better family friendly rights for all workers from day one of employment.

The union's annual Supporting Parents and Carers Campaign Spotlight Day is to take place on May 15. This year the campaign is focusing on the particular difficulties short hours contracts and unpredictable hours of work pose for members who are juggling work with raising children or caring for friends or family.

Juggling paid work with caring has never been easy but in recent years it has become increasingly difficult for members to balance the two.

Across all sectors of the economy there has been a growing demand for flexibility from employers. For members this means that hours of work can change at short notice and short hours' contracts are becoming increasingly common.

On top of this, legal rights to family friendly hours at work or to time off work to care no longer reflect the reality of members'



working lives. Many family friendly rights such as maternity and paternity pay contain a requirement to have average earnings over the lower earnings limit (currently £116 a week rising to £118 in April) and a continuous service condition of at least 26 weeks. Others such

as the right to time off for family emergencies or parental leave are unpaid and as such are inaccessible to many Usdaw members.

Usdaw is using Spotlight Day this year to campaign for better family friendly rights for all workers, from day one of employment.

GET INVOLVED IN USDAW'S NOT ENOUGH HOURS IN THE DAY CAMPAIGN

Every year hundreds of reps get involved in organising workplace activity on Spotlight Day. You can do as much or as little as you like:

- Let members know about their rights by handing out leaflets and displaying campaign posters on your workplace noticeboard.
- Press for improvements to legal rights by asking everyone to sign a pledge card.
- Find out about members' views by asking them to fill in the survey.
- Speak to your manager about organising a campaign stand.

By now you should have received a campaign pack which tells you everything you need to know about how to get involved on Spotlight Day and includes an order form for you to order leaflets and merchandise free of charge.

To order materials online visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/spcorder

Don't delay as the deadline for placing your order is just around the corner - Friday 5 April*.

*Please note that the union cannot guarantee to fulfil any orders received after this date.

EQUALITIES STALWART CELEBRATED

ACTIVIST MO RECIEVES MBE HONOUR

It isn't often that taking up the role of Usdaw rep leads you to Buckingham Palace but for Maureen Loxley that's exactly what happened.

In February Maureen was awarded an MBE in recognition of her outstanding contribution to Usdaw and the trade union movement. She is one of only a handful of trade union lay activists to have ever received an MBE.

Maureen who has been an Usdaw rep for 30 years and works for Tesco, received the award from Prince Charles at a ceremony at the Palace on 21 February. Maureen spoke to *Network* following the ceremony and said: "I still can't quite believe it. I had no idea I had even been nominated. It came as quite a shock. I don't see myself as doing anything differently from the thousands of other Usdaw reps who are supporting members in the workplace.

"This wouldn't have happened were it not for the exceptional training, development and support I've received from Usdaw over many years."

General secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I am delighted that Maureen's contribution to the union has been recognised in this way. In her capacity as Usdaw's representative on the TUC Race Relations Committee she is a strong voice for Usdaw members.

"She is and always has been a passionate advocate for equality and has spoken up about racism and the isolation faced by many Black workers in several settings which hasn't always been easy. Maureen has achieved this honour entirely by her own efforts. We congratulate her on her achievement and thank her for the years of service she has given to Usdaw and our members."



TUC WOMEN'S CONFERENCE LONDON

USDAW DELEGATES SHOWING SOLIDARITY



'Sisters in Solidarity' was the theme of the 2019 TUC Women's Conference in March. Women members on the delegation spoke from the platform on several issues including universal credit, pregnancy at work, women's poverty and the crisis in the retail sector.

KEEPING YOUR WORKPLACE SAFE

A short guide on how to conduct an effective health and safety inspection in the workplace

In the second of our series of articles on union health and safety reps we focus on workplace inspections and how reps can make them effective.

WHY ARE HEALTH AND SAFETY REP INSPECTIONS IMPORTANT?

Under the regulations, union health and safety reps are entitled to carry out formal workplace inspections normally at least once every three months. They are also entitled to inspect following a significant change at work or after a reportable incident or accident which results in someone being off work for more than three days.

Formal inspections are important because they give the rep a chance to check that hazards are under control. They also mean that workers can see that the union rep is busy on their behalf and give workers an opportunity to raise any concerns.

The HSE suggests that there are advantages if formal inspections are done jointly with management but point out that, even where this is the case, the employer must still provide the rep with facilities for independent investigations or private discussion with employees.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO BEFORE AN INSPECTION?

It is important to set a schedule for inspections in advance. If there is more than one rep where you work talk to the other reps to develop an inspection plan that ensures that reps are covering all the areas where

people work. Agree the dates with management. In the week before you do an inspection use the noticeboard and any other communication channels at work to let people know when you will be coming round.

WHAT DOES A GOOD INSPECTION LOOK LIKE?

It helps to be as methodical as possible. It is a good idea to develop your own inspection checklist. If managers have a checklist or audit form you can use that as a starting point (although you may still want to add other items to your own checklist). Or you could do a quick map of the different areas you inspect and list the things you want to check in each area before you start the inspection. Once you have written your checklist down, file it safely so the next time you do the inspection you will have less work to do.

HSE guidance suggests that it may be a good idea to vary the formal inspections from time to time. For example, you may just do a general safety tour of the workplace on one inspection but on another occasion, you may want to focus on particular risks or processes and do some safety sampling or a survey on a particular issue. For example, if you are focussing on fire safety you may want to speak to a sample of the workers to check that they are aware of the fire precautions in their area. Or if you are focussing on manual handling you may want to



do a simple survey to see if workers are suffering aches and pains when working on particular tasks.

Talk to workers as you go round. You are there as their representative so it is important to get their views and listen to any health or safety concerns they may have.

If you are doing a safety survey you may even want to give them a short questionnaire on the topic concerned. The health and safety section at central office can help you to develop a survey form. Keep a note of any issues you find.

HOW DO I FOLLOW UP AFTER THE INSPECTION?

If you are doing a joint inspection with management there may be some things that you were able to sort as you go round. However, it is still important to keep a note of what they were. If, for example, it



turns out that the blocked fire exit that you got cleared is not a one-off but a regular occurrence, having the evidence is useful.

There may be other things that are more difficult to sort or require a detailed discussion with management. It is a good idea to put any major issues in writing

The Usdaw HS2 form has been developed to help reps to report hazards in writing. It is designed so that the rep can keep a copy themselves and ask the manager to return a copy once they have filled in the box stating what they are doing to deal with the hazard. This means that you have a record of what you said and what management agreed to do about it. If you are not satisfied with the management response or they fail to do what they said they would, you can use the grievance procedure to get it sorted.

If any workers did raise specific issues when you were doing the inspection, be sure to get back to them and explain what happened as a result.

INSPECTION SUMMARY

- Carry out a formal inspection every three months.
- Agree the dates with management.
- Carry out the inspection with a manager.
- Let people know you're conducting an inspection.
- Use a checklist.
- Talk to members.
- Vary the formal inspections.
- If there are issues that you can't sort out write them down and carry out a follow-up inspection.
- Keep copies of all paperwork.
- Make sure you report back and update to the members who raised issues or concerns.

**Health
& Safety**

HSE REVIEW HEAD

The TUC has welcomed the publication of a 'tailored review of the Health and Safety Executive' (HSE). It is generally positive but does raise concerns about Government-led moves to cut preventive inspections, and to take on more difficult prosecutions on important issues like work-related stress. The review calls for the tripartite structure of the HSE Board to be retained. You can read the tailored review at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-executive-tailored-review

CONTACT

Health and safety officer

Doug Russell
0161 249 2441

Health and safety assistant

Tony Whelan
0161 249 2474

General health and safety enquiries email:
healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk

Usdaw Website
www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety



HAZARDS CAMPAIGN LAUNCH MANIFESTO

The national Hazards Campaign has published a new 'Manifesto for a health and safety system fit for workers: Decent Jobs and Decent Lives' According to the campaign, work contributes to a huge amount of public ill-health, to health inequality, lower life expectancy, kills over 50,000 people in the UK each year, makes millions ill, injures over half a million and the quality of jobs contributes to poverty and ill-health. But all of this is preventable with the right framework of strong laws, strict enforcement and support for active worker and union participation. Their manifesto demands include:

- End deregulation.
- Develop a health and safety system based on prevention, precaution and participation of strong active unions.
- Provide real enforceable employment and safety rights.

For more details go to www.hazardscampaign.org.uk

SUNDAY 28 APRIL 2019

TAKE ACTION ON WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

Work shouldn't be hell, it shouldn't hurt and it certainly shouldn't kill. Work should be fulfilling, safe and worthwhile. Union organisation can make this happen.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC general secretary

Sunday 28 April is International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD). All over the world workers, international trade unions and the labour movement conduct events, demonstrations, vigils and a whole host of other activities to mark the day and commemorate all those who are killed by workplace accidents and disease with the slogan 'Remember the Dead: Fight for the Living'. Usdaw has been supporting IWMD since 1995.

This year the theme for IWMD chosen by the International TUC is 'Taking control - removing dangerous substances from the workplace.'

In the UK, according to the HSE, exposure to dust and fumes at work causes 8,000 plus deaths from work-related cancers and 4,000 deaths from lung disease every year according to HSE figures. 5,000 of those cancer deaths are from exposure to asbestos. Many experts believe that these figures grossly underestimate the full scale of

work diseases.

Usdaw is producing a leaflet and poster on some of the more significant hazards for our members such as asbestos and diesel engine exhaust fumes along with details of what members can do to support IWMD.

Details of local events will be available on the TUC website www.tuc.org.uk/wmd

A range of materials including purple knotted ribbons, car stickers, t-shirts and posters can be ordered from Greater Manchester Hazards Centre www.gmhazards.org.uk/events or email mailgmhazards.org.uk for more details

If any reps want more Usdaw materials please contact the health and safety section in central office.



STAND BACK AND LOOK AT THE BIGGER PICTURE

Network speaks to health and safety rep **David Catterall** who has worked at Alliance Healthcare (AH) in Preston for 30 years.

Q. WHAT'S YOUR JOB ROLE?

I'm currently a class 2 driver. I deliver pharmaceutical products to link points across the North West where up to 10 van drivers are waiting to collect their orders. They then deliver on to hospitals, chemists and dispensing doctors in their area.

Q. WHEN DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK?

I became a health and safety rep about five years ago. I had been attending health and safety committee meetings in my role as workplace rep since March 2011. The business was expanding and the way we worked and delivered products was changing too. I spoke to my area organiser at my rep development meeting about becoming a health and safety rep and the journey began!

Q. WHAT ARE YOU REQUIRED TO DO IN YOUR ROLE AS REP?

I attend regular health and safety meetings and look out for



David Catterall

problems that could arise in a busy multi-functional building. We have automated machines in the warehouse, and there are staff and forklift drivers operating in the same space alongside approximately 50 vehicles driving in and out of the depot, so safety is key.

I answer all members' concerns and raise any incidents or near misses with management.

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

I have an effective working relationship with all managers at AH, and they understand the importance of Usdaw, and its reps, as a point of contact for staff who are too shy to raise issues themselves. I get released for union duties when required, although I do complete admin work in my own time.

Q. WHAT ARE THE EVERYDAY HEALTH AND SAFETY PROBLEMS ON SITE?

Day to day it is mainly answering members questions regarding health and safety issues. Thanks to my union training I'm able to use my knowledge and experience to help, failing that it's the Usdaw website or www.hse.gov.uk for advice! It's a great resource for information.

Q. HAVE YOU MADE ANY CHANGES AT YOUR SITE SINCE BECOMING A REP?

I used a collective grievance to resolve the high risk of accidents with vehicles in the transport department. As a result, the company increased the size of the transport yard allowing more space for safe manoeuvring of vehicles.

Forklift truck drivers also raised concerns about safe working in the warehouse including issues such as the placement of pallets, staff crossing the barriers used to protect the aisles and blind spots on the forklifts. This was resolved by several meetings and reiterating health and safety best practice around forklift trucks.

Thankfully, I've resolved issues raised by members as a concern and not after an accident.

Q. YOU WERE ON THE ACADEMY IN 2018. DID THAT INVOLVE HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK?

Not specifically but it was very helpful to use my knowledge and experience when visiting stores to recruit more health and safety reps.

Q. HAVE YOU GOT PLANS FOR YOUR WORK OR ANYTHING YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE?

I would like to continue to increase the number of days since the last accident and encourage members to take responsibility for everyone's health and safety.

Q. HAVE YOU GOT ANY WORDS OF WISDOM FOR OTHER HEALTH AND SAFETY REPS?

Stand back and look at the bigger picture and you will see the problems more clearly. Think about health and safety issues when changes are being planned and try to predict the problems. Liaise with management at the earliest opportunity to resolve matters.

Q. WHAT KEEPS YOU MOTIVATED?

For me, it's to make sure that every member of staff ends their shift as they started it.



Ten minutes with... **MICHAEL ANDERSON**

Network speaks to customer delivery assistant Michael, a committed union activist who's just won Usdaw's 2018 national organising award for equalities...

Where do you work?

I've worked at Tesco Extra Riverside in Dundee for 29 years. I initially started as a general assistant and then changed roles to customer delivery assistant. I joined the union in 1996.

What's your union journey so far?

I was health and safety rep for approximately 10 years, in which time I received the divisional health

and safety rep organising award, but I decided to give up the role because my driving duties meant I didn't spend enough time in the workplace. I became a rep in 2007 and shortly after was elected branch secretary which progressed to becoming an active rep and a delegate at conferences and ADMs where I've moved a lot of propositions. I became active in the equality side of the union in 2013, I was elected on to the Scottish divisional equalities forum and attended events including the union's Black Members' Weekend Workshop and TUC and STUC Black Workers' Conferences.

You're also on the STUC Black Workers' Committee, what does that role involve?

I was the first Usdaw member to be elected to the Scottish Trade Union Congress committee and I've held the post for three consecutive years during which time I acted as vice-chair and chair. The primary work of the STUC Committee is the organisation of the annual STUC anti-racism march and Black Workers Conference. We're required to submit motions to the STUC congress ahead of the conference and act as a general advisory body to the STUC General Council.

What interests you in the equality aspect of the trade union movement?

On a personal level, I am a liberal, a socialist and identify as politically Black which compels me to rebel against the injustice of inequality and discrimination: of specific relevance to class, LGBT+, gender and race discrimination within the trade union movement and in society in general. This is reinforced by my realisation that the distribution of power and wealth in combination with race and ethnicity are the forces which shape society and how societies interact. Brexit and Trump are exemplary examples of this – a combination of the toxic ideas of neoliberalism and xenophobia.

Do you feel you are making a difference?

Yes, I do. I believe that any effort to fight the injustice of inequality is inherently worthwhile and that if I influence or inspire other members to fight it makes my efforts even more worthwhile.

You recently won a national organising award for your work. How do you feel?

I was shocked but it was a good surprise and I'm very humbled. It validates my equality activities which in turn has bolstered my confidence and motivation. The award reinforces my personal commitment to the idea of Enlightenment: Sapere aude (meaning Dare to know) – have courage to use your own understanding.

You also support your local Labour party, what does this involve?

Supporting the Labour Party is vital because it is the only party which has a realistic potential to form a government that seeks to advance the values and interests of trade unionism. My activism involves attendance at all-member meetings and participation in local

campaigning activities. Additionally, I have volunteered to steward at the Scottish Labour Party Conference in Dundee in March.

Have you done any other volunteer work?

I used to volunteer as a Citizen Advice Bureau generalist advisor. This was essentially, the provision of a 'drop-in' advice service for any matter, but the majority of the advice centred upon benefits, employment, debt, housing, relationship breakdown and food bank referrals.

How do you balance work, home and union activities?

It's a difficult balancing act which requires me to be very ruthless with my commitments – a 'less is

more' philosophy. I constantly seek to concentrate upon what is vital: Usdaw in general and its equality structure specifically.

Is there one part of your volunteer work that you enjoy more than the rest?

At the end of the day, I am a shop steward, consequently, I find it most satisfying representing individual members at work.

What is next for you?

I've got a lot planned this year, I'll be attending the TUC Black Workers Conference, Usdaw ADM, Edinburgh Pride, two divisional equalities weekends, Black Members Weekend Workshop, STUC Anti-Racism March and drafting an equality rule change for ADM 2020.

ALL ABOUT MICHAEL

Where do you live?

Dundee.

Do you have any pets?

Two cats: Suzy and Charlie.

How do you like to spend your spare time?

Reading while listening to music and drinking coffee, watching a movie or entertaining the cats.

Favourite book? Impossible to answer as I have a library of nearly 500 books centred around history, sociology and economics and also lots of novels.

Favourite film? I have many favourites but Blade Runner, The Wild Bunch, 2001, The Mission, The Right Stuff and Dr. Strangelove are up there.

Favourite music? I'm developing an appreciation for classical music.

Favourite place?

Book and coffee shops, especially ones which serve cream cakes.

Something interesting about you that we don't know?

I'm allergic to cats! I adopted my first cat and then a few years later I decided to adopt a second cat which triggered allergies. However, I adore my cats and have no choice but to take three anti-allergy treatments.

One thing you wish you could instantly be an expert in?

Anyone who knows me for the briefest of time soon realises that I am food orientated. So the answer is easy, a chef.



IF YOU WANT TO BE THE NEXT ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH EMAIL: NETWORK@USDRAW.ORG.UK



GET DIGITAL GET INVOLVED

Usdaw's digital presence is growing all the time – it's never been easier to contact and get involved with the union. Outlined below are a number of ways you can digitally interact with Usdaw.

WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK

Our website is full of information on all aspects of union activity for you to view, download and print. You can also update your personal details, view all our member offers and get company-specific documents in the reps-only area. With new pages and content being added all the time, every rep should have our website bookmarked.

DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS LIBRARY

Our ebook library is packed with enhanced versions of Usdaw's literature. The weblinks, email addresses and telephone numbers in the publications are fully interactive, so if there's something you want to check out you can do it instantly. If you're looking to update your Usdaw noticeboard, this is a great way to browse the latest publications.

Find the library at dtp.usdaw.co.uk

UPDATE YOUR DETAILS ONLINE

It's vital that we hold our members' current contact details. The address in our membership database is the address we use for company ballots, union elections and other important communications – so if your members don't let us know they've moved, they can't participate fully in Usdaw activities. The quickest way to tell us about a change of details is via our website - make sure your members are aware of this.

www.usdaw.org.uk/update

ONLINE LEARNING GATEWAY

If you or your members are looking to learn, our learning gateway is a great place to start. You'll find a vast array of courses, tutorials and materials on a wide range of subjects. Most of the resources are free and where charges do apply, you'll be clearly advised.

The gateway is also useful to ULRs looking to mix up their learning offering. Check it out at

www.usdaw.org.uk/learninggateway

SOCIAL MEDIA

Do you follow Usdaw on social media? We're active on Facebook,

Twitter and Instagram. It's a great way to keep up with union news, campaigns and other activities. We're always keen to see what our reps are up to, so if you're active on social media we'd love to see pictures of your events and campaigns.

You can find us on:

www.facebook.com/usdawunion
www.twitter.com/usdawunion
www.instagram.com/usdawunion

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PICTURE?

We understand that not everyone is a professional photographer, but there are a few things you can do to make your photos really stand out. Make sure your photos are well-lit, in focus, and that the subject is in the centre of the image. Also, make sure no personal details are visible, such as addresses on a petition.

YOUR NETWORK

At *Network* we're always happy to hear from you. If you've got a story to tell, pictures to share or an event to promote just send us an email and we'll be in touch to find out more.

network@usdaw.org.uk

NEW IN!

Leaflets and booklets

The Usdaw Home Study
(Leaflet 130)

Courses for Usdaw Reps
(Leaflet 292)

Pensions - Understanding Your State Pension (Leaflet 428)

Time for Better Pay (Leaflet 435)

Fibromyalgia - An advice guide for Usdaw reps (Leaflet 436)

Puzzled By Pensions? Protect Your Pension From Scammers
(Leaflet 438)

Getting on with Maths and English
(LLL RS3)

Depression (Women's Health Series 3)

Members' Guide to the Annual Delegate Meeting

Pensions Contributions Must Increase in 2019 - Are You Affected?

Puzzled By Pensions? - A Guide to Auto-enrolment

Posters

Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family (Poster R10)

Work for Poundland? Join Usdaw Today! (Poster R63)

Online courses

Fit for Maths
usd.aw/fitformaths


Mental health course
www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse

'A Play on Words' - English bitesize course
www.usdaw.org.uk/english

Pensions home study
www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy

CV Writing - IT bitesize course
www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting

Shop 'til you Drop - bitesize maths course
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Fibromyalgia is a long-term health condition where people experience chronic, widespread pain all over their body

FIBROMYALGIA AND THE EQUALITY ACT

This brand new guide explains how reps can help and support members with fibromyalgia

As many as 1 in 20 people could be affected by fibromyalgia. This debilitating condition is often difficult to diagnose and presents as a variety of symptoms, all of which can leave affected members struggling to function at work – so it's crucial that as a rep, you're able to provide the support they need.

That's why Usdaw's Equalities section have produced a new advice guide.

Inside, you'll find practical, straightforward information on the symptoms of fibromyalgia and

a step-by-step plan to determine whether the member would be covered under the Equality Act (Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland).

You'll also get examples of adjustments that reps have previously negotiated on behalf of their members, to help them stay in work.

Read the guide online at: **dtp.usdaw.co.uk/436** or order from the Post and Despatch Department at Central Office: **0161 413 0905** or email at: **postroom@usdaw.org.uk**

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OVER TO YOU

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:
network@usdaw.org.uk
or write to:
**The Editor, Network, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road,
Manchester, M14 6LJ**





Pictured L-R:
Supporting T4BP at Morrisons Acton; Tesco Hove with their period poverty donations for two local senior schools; Promoting Membership week at Ikea Ashton Under Lyne.



Pictured L-R:
Campaigning outside Aldi in Dundee; Devon/ Cornwall Co-op reps training day at Usdaw's Plymouth office; Tesco Thornton Heath, Croydon computer course.



Pictured L-R
Paddy Lillis celebrates LGBT History Month with Tesco National Forum reps; Tesco shop steward course reps support LGBT History Month in Redditch.

Usdaw has set up a petition calling for the Government to introduce better pay and rights for all workers.

We need your help to reach 100,000 signatures and guarantee a debate in Parliament.

**REMEMBER TO SIGN
AND SHARE THE**

**TIME FOR
BETTER PAY
PETITION**

**BEFORE
10 JUNE 2019**

www.usdaw.org.uk/T4BP

THANK YOU