

# NETWORK



The bimonthly magazine for activists – September/October 2016

**SUMMER SCHOOL1 IN FOCUS**

**NW MORRISONS SEMINAR**



## PENSIONS AWARENESS

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

Facebook YouTube Twitter Flickr Instagram





# Comment

**General secretary John Hannett**

The autumn season always brings with it a number of conferences including the TUC, the Labour Party and our own Retail Trades and Transport weekends. These are key events in the union's calendar and show our commitment to democracy on a national and sectoral level.

*Network* went to press just before the Labour leadership election result was announced, but whoever wins, Usdaw remains wedded to its commitment to having a campaigning political voice and we will use every opportunity to speak up for our members, who have faced massive changes during 2016, in local, regional and national political forums.

I am proud of this union's role in the political arena, it's here we won our battle against the Tories repeated attempts to completely deregulate Sunday trading. It's also where we won the fight to have a national minimum wage introduced to protect the most vulnerable groups of workers – often outside of the union movement's reaches.

## Support Respect Week – for all workers

So our campaigns continue, in particular our Freedom From Fear initiative which aims to prevent abuse and threats to staff who deal with the public.

This award-winning campaign which initially started just for shopworkers, has now rightly been extended, following decisions made at our Annual Delegate Meeting, to cover other workers for example, delivery drivers and call centre workers.

No worker should have to tolerate verbal abuse, threatening behaviour or physical attack while they go about their daily responsibilities. That's why I'm calling on all of our members and reps to support the campaign, get involved, lobby your local councillors and MPs and ensure every worker is treated with respect and dignity every day of the week.



*John Hannett*



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

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

**Published by:**  
USDRAW

**188 Wilmslow Road,  
Manchester M14 6LJ**

**T: 0161 224 2804**

**E: network  
@usdaw.org.uk**

**W: www.usdaw.org.uk**

**HEAD OF MEDIA &  
COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mike Glover**  
EDITOR

**Peter Rees-Farrell**  
REPORTER

**Mairead Bradley**  
EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS  
**Paula Barke**

**OTHER CONTRIBUTORS**  
Jo Bird, Ruth Cross, Tom Foster, and Doug Russell.

**PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Fraser Band, Della Batchelor, James Chapeland, David Finch, Pete Hill, Amy Law, Joe Newman, Kevin Nobin, Martin O'Neill, Lucinda Price, Bill Stephenson, SWNS, and Alan Williams

**ADVERTISING**  
Century One Publishing  
Alban Row,  
27-31 Verulam Road  
St Albans, AL3 4DG

**T: 01727 893 894**  
**F: 01727 893 895**  
**E: enquiries@centuryone  
publishing.uk**  
**W: www.centuryone  
publishing.uk**

**ADVERTISING MANAGER**  
Jonathan Knight  
**T: 01727 739 182**  
**E: jonathan@centuryone  
publishing.uk**

**PRINTED BY**  
**Buxton Press**  
For circulation enquiries  
contact your divisional office.

**Paper is sourced from  
sustainable forests.**

© Usdaw 2016  
Reproduction in whole  
or part by any means  
without written permission  
of the publisher is strictly  
forbidden.

The publisher accepts no  
responsibility for errors,  
omissions or the  
consequences thereof.



24

LET'S GET SOCIAL

**/UsdawUnion** Watch interviews with reps, officials and MPs



**@UsdawUnion** If you're talking about *Network* remember **#NetworkMag**



**@UsdawUnion** All the latest photos and videos on Instagram



**UsdawUnion** Browse the union's photo galleries.



Follow **UsdawUnion** on Facebook



## 04 LATEST NEWS

Millions of UK families are in serious debt, company news, unemployment figures fall and the rise in financial fraud all feature in this issue.

## 07 NOVEMBER'S RESPECT WEEK

Reps should start preparing now for the union's award winning Freedom From Fear campaign's annual Respect Week, which runs from November 14-20.

## 09 ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Eastern division's Peni Bee, who works for Ocado, answers *Network's* questions on her role as a rep and why she became involved in the union.

## 10 SUMMER SCHOOL 1

New and experienced reps met up at Wortley Hall in September for this residential week which provides a comprehensive understanding of the union.

## 13 NW MORRISONS SEMINAR

Sixty reps representing more than 9,000 members met in Blackpool to plan the union's recruitment and organising campaign in September.

## 16 RESPECT WEEK POSTER

Use this specially designed poster to put on your noticeboard to remind members of the forthcoming Respect Week from November 14-20.

## 18 PENSIONS AWARENESS DAYS

More than 100 pensions awareness days have been held already this year, read *Network's* guide on how you can organise one in your workplace.

## 20 EQUALITIES

The TUC's hard-hitting report on sexual harassment in the workplace and a guide on how reps can help members facing domestic abuse.

## 24 RECRUITMENT & ORGANISING

Signing up new members, organising the workplace and using campaign days all feature in our round-up of what active reps have been doing this summer.

Regulars

10 **MEMBER SERVICES**

12 **STAFF**

22 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

28 **YOUR LETTERS & PICS**





# TUC Disabled workers conference



Usdaw's delegation to the TUC's Disabled Workers Conference in May spoke out against poverty and the pressures piled on workers by the Tory Government.

Rep Lynda Carter said: "Disabled people now find themselves at a 'tipping point'. With many disabled people feeling that they are living on the edge and future cuts will push them over the edge into poverty, dependence and insecurity."

Disabled people and their families have been at the sharp end of the cuts losing an average of £6,500 a year per household.

The introduction of Personal Independence Payments and Universal Credit will see further cuts to disabled people's benefits.

## "EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE,"

John Kenway TRUSTPILOT

63 REG

CHEVROLET SPARK  
1.0i LS 5DR SILVER 31K

OUR PRICE  
**£4169**



60 REG  
CITROEN C4 GRAND PICASSO  
1.6 HDI VTR+ 5DR GREY 65K

ONLY **£7160**



63 REG  
VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.4i  
16V ENERGY WHITE 30K

ONLY **£7195**



61 REG  
FORD MONDEO 2.0 TDCI  
163 ZETEC 5DR ESTATE BLUE 38K

ONLY **£9091**



UP TO 4,000 USED CARS PRICE CHECKED DAILY, COMPREHENSIVELY CHECKED & FULLY GUARANTEED

*Usdawdrive*

Call **0333 130 0290**  
[usdawdrive.co.uk](http://usdawdrive.co.uk)

Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee/indemnity may be required. We can introduce you to a limited number of carefully selected finance providers. We may receive a commission from them for the introduction.

## Unemployment figures fall



**The UK unemployment total fell by 52,000 to 1.64 million between April and June, official figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) show.**

The UK's unemployment rate remained at 4.9 per cent.

According to the ONS, the number of people on the claimant count in July, the first month since the Brexit vote, was 763,600, down 8,600 from June.

Wages excluding bonuses rose 2.3 per cent in the three months to June compared with a year earlier, the ONS said.

Meanwhile, youth unemployment remains high in certain regions and sectors

across the UK, a new report has found.

It revealed large disparities across the UK's regions and cities in the numbers of young people out of work with Bradford, Middlesbrough, Swansea and Wolverhampton having the highest youth unemployment rates in the UK at more than 25 per cent.

"It's vital that co-ordinated action is taken by business and government to invest in the development of young people to avoid a widening of the UK's skills gap, particularly as the demand for low-skilled workers starts to decline in some sectors," the report's author said.



# Debt laden Brits

## IN BRIEF...

**More than a million families with a household income below £30,000 are in extreme debt, with ongoing wage stagnation making the problem worse, according to a new report by the TUC.**

The report, *Britain in the Red*, finds that total unsecured debt (which excludes mortgages) for UK households rose by £48bn between 2012 and 2015 to reach £353bn.

The report found that millions of households are struggling with high repayment rates relative to their income.



### Sports Direct faces hefty pay out

Thousands of workers at discounter Sports Direct are set to share a million pound payout after the under-fire retailer failed to pay them the national minimum wage.

The payments relate to the company's Shirebrook warehouse complex in Derbyshire where workers were forced to wait in lengthy queues for security checks before leaving the building. This saw their hourly rate fall to below the national minimum wage.

The payments will be shared by both directly employed staff and thousands of agency workers.

A parliamentary committee described the site, which has a high number of safety incidents, as a 'Victorian workhouse' in a damning report on the company in July.

### Pensioners more likely to be in work

More and more people are working beyond the age of 65 new figures from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have shown.

There were 1.2m over-65s in employment in the first half of 2016 that's around ten per cent of the total age group.

Many workers are choosing to take some of their pension but continue to work part-time while for many others, who cannot afford to retire, they have no choice but to keep working.

The latest figures contrast sharply with 1992 when just 5.5 per cent of this age group, around 478,000, were in employment.

Many low-income households are under particularly severe pressure. Of the 1.6 million households in extreme problem debt, it is estimated that 1.2 million have a household income below £30,000.

For low-income households in employment, extreme problem debt is growing fast. In 2015, 9 per cent of low-income households in employment were in extreme problem debt, nearly doubling from 5 per cent in 2014.

The TUC is concerned that the numbers affected by problem debt are set to continue increasing.

Bank of England figures show that consumer credit, which makes up the main part of unsecured debt, is now growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent. This is the highest growth rate for more than a decade.

The mountain of unsecured household debt has been fuelled by a collapse in the value of wages. Official figures show UK real wages declined by 10.4 per cent between 2007 and 2015. This means that, even

though household debt has not grown every year since the crash, and has not yet reached pre-crash rates, the fall in the real value of wages has made it harder for families to service existing debt.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "Families can't continue relying on credit cards and loans to get by. But with the average weekly wage still worth £40 less than before the 2008 crash, lots of families have little choice.

"Higher wages must be at the heart of the government's economic plan. We need a return to proper year-on-year pay rises, and a higher national minimum wage.

"And we need public investment in major infrastructure projects to create more well-paid jobs and build a stronger economy.

"The Government must also do more to help low-income families struggling with problem debt in getting access to debt restructuring and insolvency support."

More at: [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)  
**Free confidential debt advice available on: 0800 138 1111.**

**3.2 million households are in 'PROBLEM DEBT'**

**Defined as paying out more than 25 per cent of their gross household income on unsecured debt repayments - equivalent to 1 in 8 households**

**1.6 million households are in 'EXTREME PROBLEM DEBT'**

**Defined as paying out more than 40 per cent of their gross household income on unsecured debt repayments - equivalent to 1 in 16 households**





## IN BRIEF...

### Discounters eat into market share

German discount chains Lidl and Aldi continue to grab market share from the big four supermarkets, which all reported a drop in sales, according to market data.

Lidl and Aldi recorded like-for-like sales growth of 12.2 per cent and 10.4 per cent while Tesco had a sales drop of 0.4 per cent compared with 2015.

Asda remained at the bottom, with sales down 5.5 per cent. In August, Asda reported its worst quarterly performance on record. Sainsbury's saw sales fall 0.6 per cent and Morrisons by 1.8 per cent.

Research showed there was an overall growth of 0.3 per cent in the 12 weeks to 14 August, boosted by the warm weather.

### Shift workers have more health risks

Shift workers may be more prone to infections and chronic diseases due to disruptions to their body clocks, new research suggests.

Workers are more susceptible to catching infections at certain times of the day, according to research that found that the body clock affects the ability of viruses to replicate and spread between cells.

Those with disrupted body clocks – also known as 'circadian rhythms' which control functions such as sleep patterns, body temperature, and immune systems and the release of hormones – were more likely to be susceptible to illness.

# Financial fraud loss

**Customers lost around £6m in just three months as part of elaborate frauds in the financial services sector, the latest figures have shown.**

The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) says scammers are getting customers to reveal their financial information by pretending to be from the ombudsman, with this tactic used in several cases.

The FOS cites Citizens Advice statistics that show £5.9m was stolen between October and December 2015 with an average of £2,620 lost per victim.

The FOS warns technology intended to make financial



services easier for customers is being increasingly compromised by scammers.

It cites a 2015 survey that showed 63 per cent of people in the UK had received a suspicious call over a 12-month period and that 7 per cent of the UK population were victims of phone fraud between 2010 and 2015.

Telephone scams accounted for 44 per cent of cons reported to the Citizens Advice consumer service while online scams made up 33 per cent of those reported.

Mail and doorstep scams made up 11 per cent and 8 per cent of scams reported to the service, respectively.

## Referendum campaign 'dire'



**The EU Referendum campaign, for both Remain and Leave camps, was 'dire', according to the Electoral Reform Society's report on the UK's first referendum since 1975.**

In its report, It's good to talk: doing referendums differently after the EU vote, into the conduct of the referendum and how to improve matters in future referendums.

The report found that there were glaring democratic deficiencies in the run-up to the

vote, with previously unreleased polling showing that far too many people felt they were ill-informed about the issues; and that the 'big beast' personalities did not appear to engage or convince voters.

The polling also showed that voters viewed both sides as increasingly negative as the campaign wore on. Meanwhile, the top-down, personality-based nature of the debate failed to address major policies and subjects, leaving the public in the dark.

## Illness concern

**Around one in eight men and women are forced to stop working before state pension age due to ill-health or disability, according to TUC research.**

The TUC report – *Postponing the pension: are we all working longer?* – finds that nearly half a million workers who are within five years of state pension age have had to leave the workplace for medical reasons.

The analysis also reveals a stark North-South divide. In the South West of England, sickness and disability is cited by just 1 in 13 of those who have left work in the run-up to state pension age. But this rises to 1 in 7 in Yorkshire and the Humber, the North East, the North West, Wales and Scotland and 1 in 4 in Northern Ireland, reflecting wider health inequalities across the regions and nations of the UK.

The report also finds that those working in the lowest paid jobs are twice as likely to stop work before retirement age than managers or professionals.

# RESPECT WEEK 2016

**November sees the union's award-winning Freedom From Fear campaign's annual Respect Week take place with this year's focus on urging customers to 'Keep Your Cool' in the run up to Christmas.**

The week will run from November 14-20 and relies on the commitment and energy of reps to organise campaign days using the extensive range of materials supplied by the union. These include: A campaign pack sent out to every rep, advice on how to set up and run a Respect Week stall, involving your local politicians and media, organising a survey of members and asking the shopping public to sign a petition calling on the Government to give greater legal protection to workers who deal with the public.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Our message is simple – abuse is not part of the job. We know thousands of our members are verbally abused, threatened and sometimes physically attacked just for going about their daily work, this is totally unacceptable.

"We know the festive period is

hectic and customers can get irate but we urge shoppers to keep their cool, respect the staff and if there is a genuine problem speak to the manager to resolve the issue and not just take it out on the nearest shopworker.

"Companies have a responsibility too and over the years we have worked closely with them to introduce practical solutions to any in-store issues. For example last year's chaos during what is called 'black Friday' was largely avoided this year because either changes were made and/or the event was cancelled. As a result we didn't see the mayhem we saw in 2015.

"Key to the success of the Respect Week are our reps who keep this issue in the public domain, raise it with their employers and advise staff on what they can do to prevent situations escalating.

"I'd urge all of our reps to get involved and it doesn't just affect retail staff. We know drivers, call centre workers and others also face abuse from customers so the campaign is about much more than just our retail members."



**For more information visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns)**

## RESPECT WEEK 14 - 20 NOVEMBER 2016



Win a Samsung Tablet with Usdaw Insurance when you sign up at [www.usdaw.org.uk/win](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/win)



Sponsored by Usdaw Insurance. Closing Date 20 November 2016. Terms apply. Website: [www.usdaw.org.uk/ua](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/ua)

WEB NWK 0916



# Usdaw member offers

Find out more  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/offers\\*](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*)

\*See Terms and Conditions for individual offers on the website.



## SHOPPING

- Apple
- Crown Decorating Centres
- Domestic Appliances
- Flowers
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Usdaw Prepaid Cashback Card
- Usdaw Rewards Cashback



## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

- Cinema Tickets
- Frankie & Benny's
- Golf Membership
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Naked Wines
- National Trust Gift Cards
- Online Ticket Store
- Theme Parks and Attractions



## INSURANCE

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



## MONEY & FINANCE

- Debt Advice
- Financial Advice
- Pensions Annuity Service
- SureSave Savings Plan
- The Co-operative Credit Union



## MISCELLANEOUS

- Funeral Planning
- Gas and Electric
- NUS Extra
- Voice Mobile



## HOLIDAYS

- Airport Parking/Lounges/Hotels
- Cottage Breaks
- Hotels and Short Breaks
- Mini-holidays
- Park Resorts
- Pontins



## HEALTH & BEAUTY

- Gym Membership
- Spa Gift Cards and Vouchers
- Usdaw Health Plan
- Usdaw Dental Plan
- Vision Express



## CARS & TRANSPORT

- Car Hire
- Commuter Club
- Usdawdrive
- Vauxhall Cars
- Vehicle Servicing



## SPECIAL OFFERS



Save up to

**40%**

on cinema tickets\*

Save **17% off**  
**WORLDWIDE ATTRACTIONS**  
in over **50 countries\***

Discounted  
gym membership at  
**OVER 2,900 GYMS**  
nationwide\*







# In the SPOTLIGHT



## Eastern division's Peni Bee answers our questions...

### Why did you become active?

In my work I feel that the workforce are unable to voice their opinions on important issues such as wages and changes in hours and shift times. This has been overlooked and allowed to go on for too long and I hope to make a change and a difference so the members are heard.

### ..and what do you like best about it?

I still get a buzz from helping the members even if it's just filling in a form. Of course if I have represented them and saved their job then the sense of achievement is amazing.

I have found the more meetings I have attended the more people are asking to sign up as they have heard how I have helped existing members. This has given them the final push to join and realise just what the union and its reps do for its members on a daily basis and what Usdaw as a union stands for.

### What's been your stand out moment?

There are a few. Receiving my Equalities Award was great and I was very proud. Getting the Usdaw message across and promoting the union in a positive light at inductions in my workplace. Representing the members on a daily basis in meetings and being able to pass on my knowledge, which I like to think is growing all the time with the experience I'm gaining.

### What one change to Usdaw would help to improve it?

More area organisers so they are more accessible to the reps and they will be able to build better relations with the management.

### Have you been on any courses?

I have attended the introductory and advanced rep courses and also been to two LGBT get-togethers.

The courses were very well organised and the tutors are excellent. It was very beneficial to meet other reps from different employers and see how they operate.

The get-togethers I thoroughly enjoyed as I met some wonderful people and discussed some difficult and hidden topics. I felt at ease with all off the other reps there. The topics were very broad and diverse and the guest speakers I found very empowering.

I attended this year's TUC LGBT conference as well.

### Have you changed since becoming a rep?

I think my multi-tasking skills have improved. Juggling meetings with my normal work duties.

As a person I am more assertive and driven to achieve what I know is right and fair for my members and colleagues as a whole.

Also I find I am being accepted and acknowledged more by my colleagues. My sexuality is not such an issue working in a predominately male environment. It's good to be able to answer any questions they want to ask on equalities and LGBT issues and it not be an awkward conversation.

### Is recruitment easy in your workplace?

Recruitment is very hard and holding recruitment weeks and any union based campaigns are not easy and I am constantly fighting our corner.

I was permitted to attend inductions on the fourth day of the new recruits training. After a lot of negotiation I have got this changed so I can meet them on their first day of training so hopefully this will increase my sign up rate.

### Would you recommend becoming a rep?

Yes! I do not regret one moment of it. Help spread the word and get the same satisfaction that I do from representing members and developing yourself at the same time. The training available from Usdaw is second to none.

### Have you been to ADM?

I've been as a visitor and a delegate. Both experiences were very different. As a delegate this year it was good to be able to meet more of my division and also vote on behalf of my branch members on some very good propositions, yes some were controversial but I believe they had the right to be debated.

And finally... Becoming a rep has made a huge change not only to me as a person but also to my work ethic and how I approach situations.

And I am very grateful for the chance to do this, I have had the opportunity to meet some amazing people and their help and guidance has proved invaluable to me.

## Fact File & trivia

EMPLOYER... *Ocado, Hatfield*

JOB... *Marshall*

AGE... *41*

LIVES... *Stevenage, Hertfordshire*

JOINED USDAW IN... *2014*  
BEEN AN ACTIVIST SINCE... *2014*  
UNION POSITIONS HELD...

**Union rep and equalities spokesperson for my branch. Waiting for my reps health and safety course in November.**

**FAMILY... Fiancée Sammie and step son Jake**

**SPARE TIME... I spend it with my family and my two staffies Zeus and Yoda. When I do get any down**

**time I love carp fishing it's total escapism for me – phone off and sit and wait!**

**MY FAVOURITE BOOK...**

**The Chamber by John Grisham**  
**MY FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME IS... Game of Thrones. And any animal programmes or documentaries.**

**BEST MOMENT OF MY LIFE SO FAR... Meeting Sammie and Jake and being at the birth of my niece.**

# EDUCATION IN ACTION

**Network called in at this year's summer school1 to talk to a cross-section of activists and the head of education Claire Simpson...**

**What do you want your students to take from the week?**

A sense of collectivism and working together and supporting each other. To get an understanding of the organising agenda and to give them more knowledge of what the union does, what it can do, and how activists can develop their participation further.

**What type of activist does the school attract?**

It varies widely from the interested member to the new inexperienced rep, and from experienced reps to former Academy organisers who, for one reason or another, didn't get around to coming to the school.

**How does that mix work?**

Very well. What we find is that the more experienced reps help out the less experienced and we often 'buddy up' the two types for additional support. Experience isn't essential because every one brings

something to the table, we all have life experiences and we can all learn from each other and that's an important part of the week. Similarly none of us are the 'finished article' so we are all learning every day.

**What do the students do in class?**

We focus on communication skills in particular, how to talk to people, preparation, how to conduct a meeting and reps practise speaking in front of their group. We also look at how to make the most of the Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM), its procedures, how to write a proposition, speech writing and public speaking. At the end of the week we have our own 'mini ADM'. We also look at practical day-to-day issues like workplace organisation, getting others involved and improving branch communications.

**You have reps from across the UK and all Usdaw sectors how does that work?**

Very well. Students share experiences, ideas, ways of working and learn from each other. The school is mixed in terms of gender, occupation, age, sexuality and ethnicity so

it's a representative selection of Usdaw.

**What would you say to a rep who's considering applying but may be unsure?**

Well, I can understand that and people might be nervous but I'd reassure them that coming to summer school is relaxed, informal, friendly and the tutors go out of their way to support each student. It's not like being at school as we might remember it.

Don't get me wrong, there's a lot of work to do and it can be quite intense but we all help each other and no one is left on their own.

There's a great spirit and camaraderie in the school.

**What's the most rewarding aspect of summer school for you?**

Seeing reps get up to speak at the following ADM and seeing how their confidence and development has soared. All of the tutors get a great sense of pride seeing that, it's great.



## IT'S A FACT... SUMMER SCHOOL1

- Is open to reps (regardless of experience) and members
- Is held in early September for one week
- Runs from Saturday to Saturday
- Activists stay at Wortley Hall (a former stately home), near Barnsley
- Accommodation and food is provided
- Travel expenses are reimbursed
- Class sizes are between 10-15
- Activists also get some individual tuition and support

More information and details of the application process at:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/education](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/education)





## Eileen Allardyce



Eileen Allardyce, 24, works for Morrisons in Edinburgh and was encouraged to apply for summer school by her fellow reps.

"I was nervous when I arrived but as soon as the course started everything fell into place," she said. "I've taken in a massive amount of information, which I can use back at work to help me as a rep.

"I've also learned how ADM works and have already written a proposition for next year. My first attempt at speaking to the group reduced me to tears but by my third presentation the class couldn't shut me up! My confidence has gone through the roof.

"The whole experience has been fantastic. Great support, lovely venue, relaxed atmosphere, I didn't want it to end."



## Jagbir Singh

It was a week to remember for Tesco worker Jagbir Singh, 60, who went over on his ankle damaging the ligaments and resulting in a hospital visit, X-ray and surgical boot being fitted.

"We were walking back from the local village when it happened," he said. "At first I didn't think it was too bad and hobbled on but by the

next morning the pain was excruciating," he said. "The tutors took me to hospital and everything was eventually sorted.

"I was a rep with the communication workers union for 16 years so I was interested to see how Usdaw compares with the CWU. Of course they are very different but Usdaw's training courses are much better, very

professional, the tutors are great and everyone works together.

"I've enjoyed it immensely, despite the accident, for me it manages to combine learning with a sense of fun and that's a great way to learn. I'm a great believer in the idea that you never stop learning."



## Julie Haycraft

Julie Haycraft, 45, works for Lincolnshire Co-op in Lincoln and is part of a team of three reps who look after members across almost 200 sites in the county.

"Since getting involved in the union four years ago I had a light bulb moment and thought – I've found my niche – and I'm determined to get as much out of it as possible," she said.

"I knew one or two people here as I've been to a couple of LGBT national get-togethers and went to the National Awards night in January this year.

"It's an intense week, really full on. That surprised me, but once we had a break on the Tuesday I felt I'd coped with the pressure and I've picked up a huge amount along the way. I'm already

looking to book for summer school next year so that shows how much I've enjoyed it.

"I'd encourage everyone to do it, you get a lot out of it."



## Callum Affleck

Callum Affleck, 26, is a night shift worker at Tesco in Durham. He has been a rep for three years.

"I signed up for the school because other reps I know have been transformed by their time here so I thought I'd give it a go," he said.

"It's great to be in a place with so many like-minded people and while we all work for different companies or do different jobs our issues are similar. So there was a lot of information being swapped and you learn a great deal from each other.

"I also found out about how the union operates in terms of procedures and the practical exercises you do

certainly help you to prepare better and speak more clearly. Each day is different and I particularly enjoyed the equalities session – that was very informative.

"I'd certainly recommend it, there's lots going on here."



# Latest appointments...

**Two new area organisers have joined the union's team and Usdaw remembers its first female training officer...**

## Tony Sneddon

Well-known Scottish activist Tony Sneddon is the new area organiser in the Edinburgh office.

Prior to joining the staff Tony was the convenor at the Kettle Produce site in Fife and was also secretary of branch G48 where he looked after a team

of reps and more than 300 members.

The 58 year-old, who lives in Leven, Fife, took up his appointment in June and can call on 15 years' experience as an Usdaw rep.

"I'm enjoying the job, it's great," he said. "I love helping others and recruiting new members telling them what Usdaw is all about. How it can help and that it's there for all the members who need support both in and out of the workplace."

Tony has made the most of the union's education system, which has included completing both Academies, summer school2, the branch officers' residential course and all of the introductory courses for reps.

He has also been the division's nomination for the National Organising Awards night on three occasions – in 2015 he was up for the Outstanding Achievement Award, and in 2005 and 2007 was put forward for the Individual Organising Award category.



## Vaishali Patel

It has been a whirlwind five years for former rep and Academy graduate Vaishali Patel, who is the newest member of the Eastern division's organising team and is based at the Waltham Cross office. She took up her new role in July.

The 37 year-old joined the union in 2011 and soon became active when she worked for

Tesco as a member of Capital Retail branch. She lives in Feltham, London.

Vaishali made rapid progress through her introductory and home study courses before being selected for both Academies. She also studied for TUC certificates in equality and employment law.

In 2013 she was the division's nomination at the National Organising awards in the

Individual Organising category.

"I've had great support from my colleagues in the division who have helped me settle in to the organiser's position," she said. "I'm very proud to have this job, my family are fully supportive too, and I'm determined to work hard to achieve the best I can.

"It's a great feeling when you are helping members day-in day-out."

## Union's first woman training officer Betty Sallis remembered

Former South Wales and Western training officer Elizabeth 'Betty' Sallis, died in July, she was 86.

Betty worked for Usdaw from 1978 until 1984 when she took early retirement to take up part-time teaching for the wider labour and trade union movement.

Betty first joined Usdaw when she worked at Parke Davis pharmaceutical manufacturers in Pontypool South Wales and quickly became active.

Her involvement culminated in her winning a union scholarship to study industrial relations at Coleg Harlech in 1976.

She was the first woman to be appointed to the training officer role and was based initially at the Bristol office moving later to Cardiff where she taught reps throughout the division as well as at the union's residential summer schools.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Betty was

a product of the union's education system and deservedly went on to play an important role in its development and delivery in her own division.

"She was very member/rep focused and was very popular with activists and colleagues alike.

"On behalf of everyone in the union, especially the many reps who were taught by Betty, we send our condolences to her family and friends."





# MORRISONS IN FOCUS

Sixty reps representing more than 9,000 Morrisons members in the North West division met up for a two day seminar as part of the two week national campaign in the stores.

It was a packed agenda with guest speakers, workshops and Q&A sessions, *Network* was there too...

Reps are the backbone of the union and these two days are all about how area organisers support our in-store activists to better organise and recruit in their workplaces, *deputy*

*divisional officer Amanda Bailey-Coll* explained.

"Nationally we have around 49,000 members in Morrisons that's 47 per cent of the workforce, and divisionally we have around 62 per cent membership density," she said.

"Our aim over the coming weeks and months is to get the national figure over 50 per cent, but equally important it's to improve our organisation in the shops, better support the activists and fill the 80 vacancies we have for reps at the moment.

"This get-together is also about our team of area organisers

listening to their reps and developing an action plan to take us forward and improve our service to the members.

"Morrisons, like every retail company, has been through massive changes over the last few years. Firms are responding to the challenges in the sector and changes have been coming thick and fast from the very top to the shop floor.

"Our reps are at the forefront of dealing with these issues and they're doing a great job. However, because of the vacancies some activists are being over-burdened so we need

more reps to share the workload. "Many members think our reps get paid – they don't. They give the union their time and energy and that's vital to our success.

"Our training for reps is excellent but we still have work to do to ensure every rep gets on the courses as soon as possible and that they are supported by their fellow reps and the union's officials. It's all about teamwork.

"Some stores have their full complement of reps and a high membership density others may have just one or, occasionally no reps, with a lower density. So we have to turn that around."



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.5 K214



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.3 K195



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.2 K149



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.1 K148



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.6 K230

*Pictured from top left:*

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 5 K214**  
(back l-r) Neil Burkett, Diane Speller, Ian Frazer (front l-r) Charlene King-Maghee, Valerie Bates, Keith Griffiths

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 3 K195**  
(back) Reginald Bickerton, Curtis Butler, Sandrene Wright, (front) Christopher Sawrey, Philip Slack, Bill Cawley

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 2 K149**  
(back) Donna Low, Kim Pearce, (front), Elaine Lewis, Geraldine Smith, Jacqueline Barrett

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 1 K148**  
(back) Richard Hopkins, Neil Anderson, Carl Burton, Karl Asson, Tracy Smith, (front) Dorothy Wilson, Susan Swainbank, Pauline Hillam, Eileen Mather

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 6 K230**  
(back) Faiyaz Solkar, Marguerite Jones Harwood (front) Martin Yuill, Samantha Sproston, Lynn Burrige

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 7 K237**  
(back) Peter Carroll, Kay Green, Meirion Griffiths, Ernest Jones (K236), Jessica Jones, (front) Brendan Gleeson, Vanessa Morrison, Carol Kenny, Ann Howson,

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 4 K213**  
(back) Sarah Pitt, Samantha Davies, Tanya Gillies (front) John Grimstone, Tracy Millington, Joan Markowicz

**NW MORRISONS RETAIL No. 8 K238**

*Pictured on page 14*

(back) Louise Weston, Susan James, Catherine Walsh, Gillian Bowers, Dawn Wood, (front) Adam Holford, Philip Daker, Mark Kelly, Sandra Scriven



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.7 K237



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.4 K213

# A national perspective

The new hourly rate of £8.20 negotiated by Usdaw with Morrisons puts the company among the highest payers in the retail food sector, national officer Joanne McGuinness told reps.

“Ninety per cent are better off with two and a half years protection for those adversely affected by the new deal, which was voted in by 75 per cent,” she said.

“The national negotiating team have worked hard to make our voice heard and while we don’t win all the arguments I can assure you our presence makes a fundamental difference during our meetings with the company.

“We know we have to tighten up what we agree nationally with what happens locally because there is clearly a variation in delivery at store level. That’s why reps need to be vigilant and work with their manager and area organiser.

“We also know staffing levels are an issue. As a union we have been telling all retailers that cutting staff was a false economy, customers don’t like it, and finally companies are listening to us. Changing hours is also a problem but as reps we have to ensure this is done in a reasonable way with compromise on both sides if necessary.

“Looking ahead on Christmas trading it’s a good idea if you approach management now to find out what’s likely to happen so plans can be put in place well ahead of December and there’s no mad scramble to staff the store.

“Finally, be aware that stuff you see on the internet or social media isn’t always accurate or helpful and can often create a negative mood in-store when the reality is completely different. So if you do see something which is just plain wrong challenge it or pass it up to your official so we can address it.”



JOANNE MCGUINNESS



NW MORRISONS RETAIL NO.8 K238

### Usdaw’s plan

- Continue to equip reps to support their members
- To improve communications between officials and reps
- To encourage more branch activity
- To use more than 400 hours of stand-down to boost the campaign
- To fill the 80 rep vacancies as soon as possible
- To ensure all reps get their training courses as quickly as possible
- To promote campaign days in-store on Checkout Learning, Supporting Parents and Carers, Freedom From Fear and Legal Plus

### What the reps want

- Increased area organiser visits
- More meetings with local management
- More information from the company when changes are imminent
- More campaigns in-store run by Academy organisers

### In-store issues

- Inadequate staffing levels
- Lack of information on new policies
- Uneven roll out of new company initiatives
- Changes to shifts or work schedules
- Short notice for weekly rota

## An insight in to the retail business

**Morrisons newly appointed people manager Pete Monaghan gave a presentation and took questions from reps on day one of the seminar.**

Pete, who spent 30 years with conciliation service Acas before joining the company, had recently designed the training for those taking part in the new Your Say forums and he encouraged reps to get involved. These have replaced the joint consultative committee structure. “These forums are more informal and

give the workforce the chance to discuss and resolve local issues with their managers,” he said. “There will be opportunities to filter items with a wider significance to regional or national forums in due course.

“It’s early days, all local forums are up and running and we’ve seen great examples of real benefits in terms of improved communication and teamwork.

“Yes you can bring problems to these meetings but we want you to be part of the solution



PETE MONAGHAN

too” Pete also fielded questions on the new attendance policy, procedures, staffing levels, self-scan checkouts, occupational health and many others.





## Legal route offers little

**Reps also heard from experienced lawyer Mike Keenan from Slater and Gordon when he explained how employment tribunals work in relation to conduct dismissals. His message was ‘don’t rely on the law to protect your workers – reps can do a better job in-store’.**

“My heart sinks when I hear someone say ‘I want my day in court’,” he said. “Because the truth of the matter is – I don’t want that and nor does the judge – because we both know it’s better to settle a case well before the trial and preferably in the workplace.

“Many people think a tribunal is a rerun of the disciplinary procedure – it isn’t. It’s about the application of legal principles, not fairness. In fact even if you win, in more than 50 per cent of cases no compensation is awarded.

“Tribunals work on the idea of ‘reasonable belief’ which means the employer only has to prove they acted, not on what actually happened, but what they ‘reasonably’ thought did happen.” Mike gave examples of cases where employees lost but looked to the outside observer that they should have won.

He said the introduction of fees had seen tribunal cases fall by 80 per cent and only claims brought by trade

unions were keeping the system going.

“Again, even if you win, reinstatement is very unlikely and because recent governments have introduced caps on the amount you can be awarded the level of compensation is likely to be very low (especially in terms of pension loss). In fact if a company is fined for maltreatment of an employee the Government gets the money not the worker.

“My advice to reps is this; always follow procedure and ensure the company follows it too.”

When asked if it was okay for workers to covertly record proceedings or interviews Mike’s emphatic reply was: “No, don’t do it. It’s gross misconduct and dismissal would follow.”



MIKE KEENAN

## Academy rep on her ‘journey’

**To raise awareness of the union’s Academy programme Susan Hulse, currently on Academy1, spoke to the reps.**



SUSAN HULSE

“Prior to the six month secondment to the Academy I was a rep in a warehouse where I was a fork lift truck driver,” she said. “My organiser suggested I apply so I did, not expecting to get on after just my first application but here I am!

“I went to the development centre, passed, and started earlier this year. I was a bag of nerves and was taken out of my comfort zone and put in the unfamiliar surroundings of retail. What a shock to the system that was!

“But almost six months later I’m more confident, better organised, have more skills, more knowledge, I’ve had some great training and support, and I can now walk into a store, any store, and talk to members, non-members, reps and management as if I’d been doing it all my life!

“Yes you have your ups and downs but I’ve come on leaps and bounds and my confidence has rocketed. Early on in the selection process two officials said to me ‘sometimes others see in you what you don’t see in yourself’ and that’s very true.

“I’ve had a great time so if I can do it, so can you. My advice would be – give it a go, you might surprise yourself.”



## “The hard work starts now...”

Closing the two-day event Amanda Bailey-Coll said: “Many thanks to the reps for their time and input. It’s important we give our activists the chance to network, share best practice, ask questions, and put forward their own ideas. We all take something

away from these events – even the most experienced officials.

“The hard work starts now. We have non-members to sign up, stores to organise, communications to improve and branches to energise. Our reps are vital, they are the

problem solvers in-store and save the business a lot of time and effort.

“Thanks too to the company for giving the reps the time off and for their co-operation during what has been a difficult time for everyone in the retail sector.”



AMANDA BAILEY-COLL

Please display this poster on your Union noticeboard



# KEEP IT REAL

**RESPECT SHOPWORKERS**

**#Respect16**





**Respect Week**  
**14-20 NOV 2016**

**Did you know that another shopworker is  
attacked or verbally abused every minute  
of the working day?**

Source: British Retail Consortium Crime Survey

**0845 60 60 640**  
**[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)**

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

# Pensions awareness days

Reminding members and non-members of the importance of good pension provision has been a key campaign aim of Usdaw for many years.

Reps have an important role to reinforce this message in workplaces up and down the country by holding a pensions awareness day in their shop, warehouse, factory or office.

*Network* takes a look at what's involved, the support available from central office, and the thoughts of one rep who has held his own pensions campaign days.

**Pensions Awareness Campaign days aim:**

To give our members the facts about pensions in a straightforward and easy to understand way

To increase the confidence and know-how of members, reps and officials

To encourage more workers to take advantage of good company pension schemes



“No one wants to face poverty in retirement so planning for it should begin at the start of a worker's career not midway through or near the end of their working life. Experts agree the sooner you start saving for retirement the better.

“Workers may think that joining the pension scheme still isn't right for them but if they've been given the facts then at least they can make an informed choice.

“Don't be put off by the jargon – yes it can be confusing – but we all need to know the basics about pensions, after all it's our members' future that's at stake.

**John Hannett**

For more information email: [pensions@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:pensions@usdaw.org.uk)





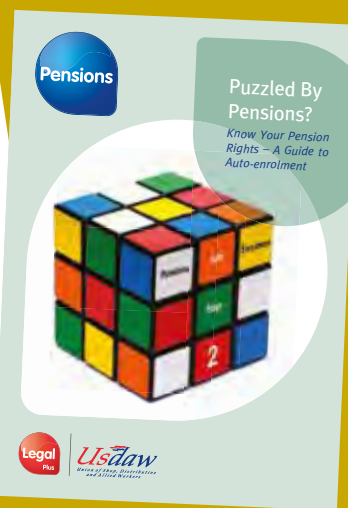
## What does holding a pensions awareness day involve?

- Promoting the awareness day at your workplace using posters on staff noticeboards in advance of the day
- Setting up a stall in the staff area
- Making information available about pensions (such as leaflets and factsheets from Usdaw)
- Encouraging union members to sign up for our *Understanding Pensions* home study course
- Giving people the facts about their own company pension scheme

You don't have to be a pensions expert to run a successful campaign day

All you have to do is give your colleagues basic facts on:

- How much it costs to join the company pension scheme
- How much the company pays into the pension for you
- What benefits you may get on death in service or ill-health retirement
  - How to join the scheme



## What is the rep's role?

- You act as co-ordinator/facilitator of the event
- Order materials
- Arrange the day
- Send questions/feedback forms to the pensions team after the event

What support does Usdaw provide?

Usdaw's pensions section, based at central office, will provide a range of materials including:

- Factsheets - containing general pensions information
- Factsheets - which are company specific (when available)
- Factsheets or posters on how to avoid pension scammers
- Promotion materials - eg pens, piggy banks, bags
- Pension booklets
- Pension guides
- State pension information



Activist Trevor Howson has held pensions awareness days and told *Network* about their impact.

“Feedback from members and non-members was very positive and they were grateful for the opportunity to get more information and shed some light on the issues

around pensions.

It gave them the chance to talk over their own thoughts and fears for the future and to learn about current/future pension trends.

“The type of enquires varied from fairly simple ones to more in-depth questions on both their occupational and state pension.

“There was a huge interest in the union's handouts and the information provided about the changes to the state pension.

Members wanted to see us repeat the pensions awareness day to give more members the chance to increase their knowledge.



# Still just a bit of banter?

**More than half of women, and nearly two-thirds of women aged 18-24 years old, said they have experienced sexual harassment at work, according to new research from the TUC.**

In the vast majority of cases (88 per cent), the perpetrator of the sexual harassment was male, and nearly one in five (17 per cent) women reported that it was their line manager, or someone with direct authority over them.

The survey, called *Still just a bit of banter?*, also finds that around four out of five (79 per cent) women who said they experienced sexual harassment at work did not tell their employer about what was happening.

Of this group, some thought reporting it would damage their relationships at work or harm their career prospects, while others were too embarrassed to talk about it or felt they would not be believed or taken seriously.

The study is the largest of its kind for a generation and one of the most extensive pieces of research on sexual harassment at work in Europe.

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said: "How many times do we still hear that sexual harassment in the workplace is just a bit of 'banter'?"

"Let's be clear – sexual harassment is undermining, humiliating and can have a huge effect on mental health. Victims are often left feeling ashamed and frightened. It has no place in a modern workplace, or in wider society.

"Employers must be clear they have a zero tolerance attitude to sexual harassment and treat any complaint seriously. It's a scandal that so few women feel their bosses are dealing with the issue properly.

"Anyone worried about inappropriate behaviour at work should join a union to make sure they are protected and respected at work."

## THE SURVEY ALSO REVEALED:

**nearly one in three (32 per cent) of women have been subject to unwelcome jokes of a sexual nature while at work**

**nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of women have experienced unwanted touching – like a hand on the knee or lower back at work**

**a fifth (20 per cent) of women have experienced unwanted verbal sexual advances at work**

**more than one in four (28 per cent) women have been the subject of comments of a sexual nature about their body or clothes at work**

**around one in eight (12 per cent) women have experienced unwanted sexual touching or attempts to kiss them at work**

***Still just a bit of banter?* is available at: [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)**

The TUC has also published a Know Your Rights leaflet about sexual harassment and a guide for union reps.

## Mothers face 'shocking' treatment at work

New mothers continue to face discrimination in the workplace says a new report from Citizens Advice who recorded a 60 per cent rise in calls on this issue.

It says the introduction of tribunal fees, the rise of zero-hours contracts, agency work and multiple part-time jobs make employees more vulnerable.

Bad bosses are getting away with it as enforcing workers' rights have become more difficult, said a spokesperson.

**A new report by MPs say UK women should have protections similar to those in Germany after a 'shocking' rise in workplace pregnancy discrimination over the past decade.**

It said: "It is shocking that the number of new and expectant mothers feeling forced out of their job has nearly doubled in the past decade".

**Meanwhile, women earn a third less than men even 12 years after giving birth, a new report by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), has shown.**

The report underlines how the wage gap is far smaller when women are young, but opens up after the birth of a first child.

It suggests that time taken off and the move to part-time working could mean mothers miss out on promotions, experience and effectively receive what it calls a 'wage penalty'.





# STOPPING DOMESTIC ABUSE

## **Usdaw has updated and revised its advice to reps so they can support members experiencing domestic abuse.**

The new leaflets address what domestic violence is, outline the signs that someone might be experiencing domestic abuse, and explain what rights survivors have at work.

There is also a new poster designed for workplace noticeboards encouraging members who might be experiencing domestic abuse or violence to speak in confidence to their Usdaw rep or contact the national charity, Women's Aid for expert, tailored advice and support.

Equalities officer Jo Bird said:

"For many years Usdaw reps and activists have been supporting survivors of domestic violence at work. We want to ensure reps have the right tools to carry on this work.

"These new materials can also help to raise awareness of the fact that domestic abuse and violence is a workplace issue and encourage members to speak to the union sooner rather than later.

"We know from the crime statistics that the overwhelming majority of domestic violence and abuse is carried out by men against women.

"However, the union recognises that some men do experience violence and abuse and that they have a right to expect exactly the same support and advice. For this reason

Usdaw also publishes a specific leaflet aimed at supporting male survivors.

"Most workplaces will employ someone who has either experienced domestic abuse or knows someone that has. Therefore there is a strong chance that most Usdaw reps will come across this issue at some point because it is well-documented that the effects of abuse often spill over into the workplace and members' working lives."

- For copies of the new leaflets contact either the equalities section or the stationery department at central office on 0161 224 2804 or email: [equalities@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalities@usdaw.org.uk) or [postroom@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:postroom@usdaw.org.uk)

## **SAFETY FOR WOMEN THREAT**

Planned welfare reforms threaten to devastate the funding for women's refuges, a leading charity has predicted.

If the cap to housing benefit goes ahead, Women's Aid predict that:

- 67 per cent of refuges will close down
- 87 per cent of refuges would not be able to continue with their current level of provision

Women's Aid is calling for refuges to be immediately exempt from the 'housing benefit cap', and other welfare reforms, which will have devastating consequences.

For more information, visit: [www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning-and-influencing/campaign-with-us/sos/](http://www.womensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/campaigning-and-influencing/campaign-with-us/sos/)

## **Did you know, in the UK...**

- Domestic violence claims the lives of two women every single week in the UK. These are women who are killed by men with whom they are or have been in a relationship with.
- Domestic violence has more repeat victims than any other crime – on average there will have been 35 assaults before a woman calls the police.
- It is estimated (and this is a conservative estimate) that 80,000 women are raped or suffer attempted rape each year.
- Domestic violence and abuse is so widespread it affects 1 in 4 women a week

## **How reps can help**

Domestic violence and abuse can impact on performance, attendance, punctuality, health and safety, productivity and the ability to agree requests to hours of work. All of these could result in disciplinary action, threaten job prospects, security and career development.

There are several ways union reps can help a member who is experiencing abuse at home. Depending on the circumstances these may include:

- Arranging a transfer to another workplace
- Negotiating a change in your working hours if this would help
- Discuss a change in job role e.g. away from front line services (if this is a risk factor)
- Support to keep your current hours of work where you are under pressure to change them, and when changing them would worsen the situation
- Negotiating adjustments to your start and finish times or the days you work
- Arrange time off work to attend appointments with domestic violence agencies, lawyers, housing departments etc.
- Ensure sickness absence is discounted from warnings or penalties
- Giving an option for a period of time off or special leave
- Consideration of revised performance targets or objectives



# Occupational welfare

Healthy Workplaces for All Ages is the theme for the European Week for Safety and Health 2016, which runs from 24 to 30 October and is promoted by the EU Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA).

Its aim is to promote sustainable working lives for all workers, from their first entry into the job market until retirement – an issue of increasing relevance given Europe's ageing population and the various

challenges and opportunities this presents.

The Agency points to the fact that older workers will make up a greater proportion of the workforce and, in many countries, retirement ages are being increased. This means workers will be exposed to risks for longer and older workers may have health issues which affect their work – some of which may have been caused by the work itself. It also means that age

discrimination must be avoided.

In support of the campaign the Agency has produced a 'Healthy Workplace for All Ages' e-guide and supporting advice for employers and workers. The HSE promotes the EU OSHA campaign in the UK and is encouraging employers and unions to get involved in the week. For further details go to: [www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en/healthy-workplaces-all-ages-e-guide](http://www.healthy-workplaces.eu/en/healthy-workplaces-all-ages-e-guide)



## Get Involved in TUC National Inspection Day 26 October

As in previous years, the TUC has designated the Wednesday of the European Week for Safety and Health as National Inspection Day.

The TUC will be asking trade union health and safety reps to carry out a workplace inspection on or around that date. To tie in with the theme of the Week, reps could do a simple survey of workers as part of their inspection – asking about their age

and any aches and pains or other issues they have with the work they do.

[www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/health-and-safety](http://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace-issues/health-and-safety)

Usdaw has a simple body-mapping questionnaire, which can be used for this purpose. Reps should contact the health and safety section at central office for copies of the questionnaire: [Health&Safety@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:Health&Safety@usdaw.org.uk)

## Fatigue at work warning

The TUC has produced a short guide for union health and safety reps on fatigue at work.

According to the guide, fatigue is the decline in mental and/or physical performance that results from prolonged exertion, sleep loss or disruption of the internal clock.

The consequences of fatigue can be serious. For drivers, one in five road accidents is thought to be caused by fatigue. But the TUC points out that it can be a problem with any sector where there are long hours, high demands, monotonous work, shift work or where low pay forces workers to take on additional part-time work. It can lead to accidents, poor production and considerable health problems.

The guide describes the causes of fatigue at work and outlines what employers should do to control the risk.

[www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) and *search* fatigue



## Preventing vehicle runaways guide



Every year people are seriously injured or killed when a lorry or trailer moves unexpectedly while they are being coupled or uncoupled. These vehicle runaways usually happen because the parking brakes on the trailer and on the lorry cab are not used properly.

The HSE is promoting updated guidance, which outlines the safe procedure to follow when coupling or uncoupling these lorries. The guidance has been developed by a working party of the HSE Logistics Forum and is published by the Freight Transport Association.

The guide describes how braking systems operate on trailers and cabs and outlines the safe way to manage standard semi-trailers. Advice is also given on close coupled trailers, central axle and turntable drawbar trailers.

Failure to follow the safe procedure can be very serious. In one incident at a road construction site in Kent this year, a worker was killed when he was crushed between a runaway trailer and

### Safe coupling and uncoupling GUIDE



another vehicle. The driver was given a 12-month suspended prison sentence and a 12-month driving ban.

The free guide is available at: [www.fta.co.uk/export/sites/fta/\\_galleries/downloads/health\\_and\\_safety/safe-coupling-guide.pdf](http://www.fta.co.uk/export/sites/fta/_galleries/downloads/health_and_safety/safe-coupling-guide.pdf)

## UK Stress Network Conference

The UK Stress Network is an informal network for trade union reps and others interested in the prevention of work-related stress. Their annual conference is being held

on 29 and 30 November at Hillscourt Conference Centre in Birmingham on the theme of Mental Health at Work.

For further details go to: [www.workstress.net](http://www.workstress.net)



## In conversation with... Mark Kelly

Mark Kelly, 58, who works at the Morrisons store in Bredbury, Cheshire, has been a rep for four years and has previously been a corporal in the army, a HGV driver and a tool-setter.



### Why did you become a safety rep?

*I wanted to make a contribution to making the workplace safer. Some people can take a relaxed attitude to safety and I wanted to put this right so I volunteered to find out more.*

*After I became a union rep it opened my eyes to issues at work and once I'd done the health and safety training, which was excellent, this gave me an added insight into how to improve things.*

### What sort of issues do you deal with?

*It varies. From making sure pallets are not stood on their ends to keeping the floor clear of litter. In particular making sure there are no slip or trip hazards. Or if there are any leaks from the freezers, that sort of thing. My colleagues know to report anything they find to me or to my other two rep colleagues Charlie and Margaret.*

### What happens then?

*We'll report it to the management and nine times out of ten it's sorted straight away. My approach is to work co-operatively. It's not 'them and us' we're all working together to make our working environment as safe as possible. If it's just 'us and them' you end up at loggerheads and nothing gets done. I prefer to sort things out on an informal basis, that's the best way.*

### Is your workplace safer now?

*I think so. We've managed to change the attitude towards safety and I think it's paid off for everyone. Many people don't realise they have an individual responsibility for health and safety and could get into trouble for causing an accident or behaving in a dangerous or unsafe way. Yes the company is ultimately responsible but we all have an important role to play. We don't have many serious accidents or incidents in-store so that's positive.*

### How do you keep up-to-date with safety issues?

*I get regular updates from the safety section at central office and the publications Usdaw sends out are very good. I'm branch secretary so I get to see all of these. There are plenty of resources. I find the whole issue of health and safety fascinating, some people find it boring, not me.*

# Building a bigger, stronger union

**Network caught up with teams of reps at their workplaces...**

## Morrisons, Colwyn Bay

Running campaign days have been central to Morrisons' Carol Kenny's success, a rep for only nine months at her store in Colwyn Bay

"When I took on the role I was keen to bring the union more into the workplace so staff could see the full benefits of their membership," said Carol, 56.

"I ran a very successful Parents and Carers Day in May with the help of my area organiser Jo Welbourne.

"Members said they were surprised and didn't know the union could help with work issues for parents and carers.

"And we signed up some new members, which is always a good feeling.

"We held a Pensions Awareness Day in June. Again the feedback was really positive.

"As we all know pensions are not straightforward so once again it was great having my area organiser Jo along with Academy organiser Nia Williams joining us too.

"The Usdaw leaflets and resource materials and the freebies all went down very well.

"We explained that none of us were pensions experts and staff didn't expect that but they appreciated the opportunity to ask questions and that we could point them in the right

direction and give them some basic information.

"We promised to get back to them on any difficult and complex questions.

"They were also keen to find out more about the union's pensions department and were impressed that the union had its own experts.

"My aim is to keep staff informed on all the benefits like FirstCall and the free will-writing benefits for members too.

"I'm pleased with the membership level which is just over 80 per cent at the moment. As a rep I want to do the best job I can and make sure members get the best from their membership.

"They elected me so I want to reward their faith in me.

"There are a few concerns at the moment with changes to the store's opening times and again I have to use my role to reassure staff that the union will make sure that everything is done correctly."

## Tesco, Dumfries

Dedicated duo Neil Rae and Nicola Tweedie organised a special union awareness day at their Tesco store in Dumfries, South West Scotland during Membership Week in June.

"This was the first union event we've run in-store, staff were happy that we were on hand to speak about their issues," said 28 year-old Neil, who has been a rep for 12 months.

"This was a golden opportunity to chat to staff both members and non-members who felt confident enough to voice their concerns.

"It came at a time when staff were having to deal with many changes in-store and with the business, so there were plenty of concerns raised and questions asked.

"Our aim was to let members know that the union, and we as their reps, will stand by them in the tough times.

"We're very passionate about the work we do and we wanted members to know we will always be available to



MORRISONS COLWYN BAY



TESCO EXTRA STEVENAGE

deal with any issues.

"The life of a rep can be tough at times but we both know we're very well supported by the union and especially our area organiser Stephen Muir.

"I've been a rep for a year and had terrific training and support.

"I've done stand-down twice, which was a great opportunity to connect with members and to gain a greater insight into how the union works.

"I'd like to increase my knowledge and experience. I'm keen to sign up for the union's Home Study Course and I'm looking at the role of a health and safety rep.

"But the main target at the moment is to work alongside Nicola to support our members and encourage others to join the union."

## Next, Elmsall

Academy organiser Janine Bowler caught up with the Usdaw campaign bus on the North Eastern leg of its nationwide tour at the Next Distribution site in Elmsall, West Yorkshire.

"The bus was eye-catching and created a lot of interest," said Janine, who works for Tesco Extra in Wath



View the Recruitment and Organising Gallery on the UsdawUnion Flickr page

### Membership for week ended 17 September 2016

South Wales and Western	51,226
Eastern	65,320
Midlands	56,487
North Eastern	60,068
Scottish	45,772
Southern	63,223
North West	94,457
Total	436,553





TESCO DUMFRIES



NEXT ELSALL

Upon Dearn in Rotherham.

“Divisional officer Joanne Thomas, area organiser Shelley Vaughan and the site reps made up the team onboard the bus.

“And we had union solicitors on hand to explain our Legal Plus service and all its benefits.

“We spoke to many members and non-members over the day and explained all the benefits of joining.

“The bus was a great advert for Usdaw and a novel way of highlighting the union to workers.

“Quite a few distribution staff signed up on the day and we had a number of members who were interested in becoming reps.”

The 46 year-old is enjoying her stint on the Academy. “This has been an incredible journey and a brilliant opportunity for me.

“Even though I’ve had to deal with one or two new challenges I’m enjoying the whole experience. I’ve grown as a person and so has my confidence.

“It soon struck me how different retail is, no two stores even with the same company are the same and small and large stores have different issues.

“The Academy has taught me a lot.

Better time management, how to think on my feet, and deal with different scenarios.

“As well as how to break down barriers when dealing with different managers and also that I can work well within a team or with an individual.

“And the support network has been brilliant.

“It’s hard to believe I’ve only been a rep for three years and done so much.

“I’m very proud of my achievements and excited about my onward journey with the union.”

### **Tesco Extra, Stevenage**

Stand-down rep Hugh Bonnick was on hand to support new rep Chris Teague when he organised his first union day at the Stevenage Tesco Extra store, Hertfordshire, in June.

“My area organiser Paul Walker teamed me up with Chris and we sat down to organise a Legal Plus Day,” said warehouse worker Hugh, 62, a shop steward, health and safety rep and branch secretary, who works for Ocado in Hatfield.

“Chris prepared well, advertised it on the noticeboard and spoke to members

face-to-face.

“He also encouraged them to use the free legal service and get advice from the Union’s solicitor who was present throughout the day.

“A fair number of members booked legal appointments in advance and it was arranged with management for them to have time out of their shifts to speak with the solicitor.

“I was on hand on the day to support Chris and hand out the legal literature and explain the benefits as well as encouraging non-members to sign up. “It was very successful.”

Chris, 44, who has been a rep for a year and a health and safety rep for eight months, added: “I really enjoyed the event and felt I’d grown a couple of inches by the end of the day.

“It was a bit daunting but I knew if I pushed myself I’d get a lot out of it and I certainly did. It was really helpful having Hugh and my area organiser Paul for support. I learned a lot from their approach to organising.

“I’m looking forward to interacting with reps from other workplaces, as well as running more union days in my store.

“For me the only way to learn is to take on as many new challenges as you can.”

# Usdaw takes centre stage

## Morrisons, Diss

Experienced Morrisons rep Nathan Coidan, 30, joined new rep, 19 year-old Nick Zachariades in June to run their first union campaign at the Diss store in Norfolk.

“We held a Legal Plus Day and invited a local union panel solicitor along,” said Nathan, a rep for six years.

“We were lucky enough to have help and guidance from Academy organiser Duggie Zachariades, who happens to be Nick’s Dad, and fellow organiser Brian Lewis as well as our area organiser Stuart Sharman.

“Overall the feedback was better than we expected.

“And the day did exactly what we wanted it to do, which was to highlight the benefits of the free legal service.

“Members could see for themselves how good it is and their comments were really positive.

“Most people agreed it was great to have a union solicitor in our store and get free advice but it was a real bonus not having to take time out of work.

“It’s been a tough few years especially as I’ve been riding solo as the only rep here.

“Diss was previously a Safeway store and was taken over by Morrisons 11 years ago.

“It’s always been a difficult store to organise and hard to engage with staff as they feel they don’t need the union’s help.

“This negative attitude has never put me off. I’ve always been keen to keep going.

“I think Nick and I will make a great team. I want to pass on what I’ve learnt. My advice is that the life of a rep isn’t always an easy one.

“The experience of the Legal Plus Day has encouraged me to get more involved, possibly do some stand-down and later the Academy.

“But for now my main focus is our

store and working to improve on membership.”

## Tesco Extra, Mansfield

A well-drilled team of reps and distribution rep and Academy1 organiser Sean Gamble joined forces with reps at the Tesco Extra Jubilee Way store in South Mansfield to help deliver Checkout Learning during Membership Week in June.

“I worked with Union Learning Rep (ULR) Chantay Speed and store rep Jane Baranski to organise the day and highlight learning opportunities for the 370 members we have in the store,” said Sean, 52, who works at the Co-op Distribution Castlewood Depot in South Normanton.

“They were all enthusiastic and committed to making the day a success. We all worked very well together before, during and after the event.

“And it was an interesting learning curve for me too as I come from a distribution and warehousing background.

“Being an Academy organiser has given me many opportunities to work with retail reps like Chantay and Jane, which has helped to broaden my knowledge and improve my skills.

“I’d certainly recommend the Academy to everyone but especially non-retail reps as the role offers variety and a lot of challenges that will take you out of your comfort zone, which will ultimately improve your skills and experience.”

Chantay, 56, who is one of eight reps in-store has been a ULR for four years, appreciated the support. “It was really helpful having Sean involved because he’s had a lot of experience organising campaigns in his own workplace,” she said.

“It was also an event where all kinds of members, of all ages and from various departments were interested



MORRISONS DISS



TESCO EXTRA WIDNES

in some form of learning, people who wouldn’t normally be interested in a ‘union led’ initiative.

“And judging by the massive interest on the day I don’t think it will be long before our members are urging us to hold our next Checkout Learning Day.”

## Tesco, Toton

Elle Jacob’s first in-store union campaign day was a recipe for success as the canteen worker signed up five new members and raised the union’s profile with many more staff showing an interest in joining.

“I was very pleased with how the day went, I was obviously a bit nervous to begin with but soon settled into it,” said 50 year-old Elle, who works for Tesco Extra in Norwich.

“I organised a Legal Plus Day in the staff canteen as I’d read about how successful and relevant they have proved to be when other reps have run them in their workplaces.

“Overall it was a good day, we had



Email the Network team: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)



Visit the Usdaw website at: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)





TESCO TOTON



TESCO EXTRA MANSFIELD

our own solicitor in and 15 members signed up for the free will signings and five new members joined and brought membership up to over 66 per cent.

“Plus a few drivers signed up to the drivers distress fund.

“I’ve been a rep for seven years, its been good for me, I’ve changed a lot.

“I’ve gained confidence and knowledge and I enjoy being there to help, advise and support my members.

“The support and training I’ve had from the union has been superb and its helped me to feel more comfortable in my role.

“Along with all my reps training which is brilliant, I’ve also completed the union’s own Home Study courses which were excellent.

“I’d recommend the course to every rep as you learn so much about the structure of the union and you also end up with a nationally accredited qualification at the end of it too.

“I’m one of seven reps who all understand our role in supporting our

members and keeping them informed of the benefits of joining the union.

“Workplace union awareness days help us to show what the union can do for members. We’re already planning our next event.”

### **Tesco Extra, Widnes**

Members of the North West Divisional Tesco Committee held a special day at the Tesco Extra store in Widnes, Cheshire to raise awareness of rights for parents and carers.

“This is a well organised store with a great team of reps and a membership of 97 per cent,” said committee member Tayo Ogunmoroti, 35, who works at Tesco Express in Manchester City Centre.

“Both members and management at the store were really happy to see us and to learn more about the campaign and how it could help them as parents and carers and also employers.

“I’ve been a rep for over nine years and enjoy getting involved. I’ve been fortunate and have had many

opportunities to not only develop and improve myself but also my knowledge of workers rights and employment law.

“I enjoy getting out to different stores and spreading the message about all the good things the union does.

“My role as an activist helps me fulfill my passion for helping people.”

Fellow committee member Rosemary Lazonby, 50, from the Tesco Express store in Cheadle, Cheshire echoed Tayo’s thoughts. She said: “Being part of the divisional committee gives me the opportunity to get more involved with the union’s campaigns and get out and about to other stores promoting the union.

“I’ve been a rep for six years and enjoy helping my colleagues and advising them on employment issues.

“I’ve also thoroughly enjoyed my training with the union.

“I know from working in a smaller store how important it is to have a rep and the union involved, I’d urge other union members in smaller Tesco stores to put themselves forward for the role.”





# Your Letters & Pi

## Obituary: Ray Spriggs North West divisional stalwart



Tributes have been paid to lifelong Usdaw activist Ray Spriggs who died in July he was 78.

Well known in the Liverpool area and the North West division, and at the Annual Delegate Meeting, Ray began his union involvement at the Kraft Foods site in Merseyside and went on to amass 57 years of Usdaw membership. He held a number of positions during his long career and also served as branch secretary of NW Retail No.1 branch for 17 years from around

1999-2016.

Divisional officer Mike Aylward said: "Ray was a very proud Usdaw member for nearly 60 years and was well respected by all who knew him.

"Ray was a great support to me personally and I was honoured to call him a friend."

General secretary John Hannett added: "I echo Mike's tribute. Usdaw has lost a loyal servant in Ray. A big figure in the division, well known and well liked. Our condolences go out to his family and friends."

## Safety star in print

After you interviewed me in the May/June issue of *Network*, Usdaw's health and safety officer Doug Russell asked if I would do an interview with a journalist writing for the British Safety Council's magazine *Britsafe*. And here it is!

**Jon McEwan, safety rep  
Ashby (United Biscuits)E53**



## Courses to suit everyone



Pictured from top: Reps introductory course, union learning reps course and Primark reps meeting at the National Training Centre in Warrington.

## Isle of White Garlic Festival



## M&S in the NW

North West divisional activists campaign for recognition at M&S. Clockwise from top left: Bootle; Derry and Liverpool







# ictures

A dedicated space to share your news, views and achievements. Let us know what you have been up to and you could win £50! Please send letters/emails and photos to either of the addresses given above. We reserve the right to edit all letters published.

## Charity champion



Paul Alcock (known as Popsy) has worked at Cavaghan & Gray, Carlisle for 30 years. A few years ago he had to give up playing rugby after a bad injury, not one to just sat back, he started doing Triathlons to keep fit.

Popsy came to a union meeting and asked if they could help him out to buy a wetsuit which is needed when doing the swim and Usdaw was happy to help.

From this he has taken part in Triathlons all round the World, from America, Australia, Holland, Hungry to name just a few, with a lot of charities benefiting from this.

Last month he did the *Lakesman Iron Distance Triathlon* which was a 2.4 mile swim, cycling 112 miles and then running 26.2 miles. Popsy's time at the event means he qualified for the Great Britain Team.

**Carol Gill, branch chair, Carlisle Cavour F24**

## Reps and officials out and about across the UK



*Clockwise from top left: Usdaw Bus Tour, Belfast; Recruitment event at Sainsbury's Tamworth; Academy1's Selina Creasy recruits staff at Wortley Hall while on training; Lifelong Learning at Tesco Extra Hastings; ULR day Tesco Ryde IOW; Academy1's Maureen Dawe out recruiting; and the Freedom From Fear campaign at Tesco Macclesfield.*



## Membership awards



*Clockwise from top left: Alma Cracknell, Dunmow; Neil Durrant, Swadlincote; Francis Murray, Gateshead and Tom Defty, Jarrow.*





# Your Letters & Pi

## TWEET DECK

Some of Network's favourite tweets to @UsdawUnion

**@JohnRHWilliams**  
Got my @UsdawUnion membership card & pack today! I'd urge others to join a union too, they're an important part of a democratic society

**@Cdmp1983**  
@usdawontour I must be only rep who hasn't been on the Usdaw bus

## Deborah brings a much needed boost during Membership Week

Summer 2016 was my first time doing stand-down in my own store Willenhall and also Express stores in the area.

The Express store visits were really beneficial, I recruited six new members and left them feeling great about the union as they didn't have a rep in-store.

It helped them to fully understand the union and its benefits. They said they were really pleased they had now got access to a rep, it was a

really great feeling being able to help.

I also got quite a few new members in my own store. In total I recruited 17 new members so I feel it was a very worthwhile opportunity to get new members but also getting to speak to existing members who were feeling a little out of touch.

Hope everybody else was successful. #unitedwestand

**Deborah Thompson**  
E45 Black Country Area Tesco

## Campaigning



Campaign day in Pontypridd Tesco Extra.



Mark Atkinson promoting Legal Plus at Trowbridge Sainsbury's.

## 125 years of Usdaw equals £125 for union charity Mencap

I write with regard to the union's 125th Anniversary and, in particular, the charity for which we are raising money, Mencap.

For the past 20 plus years, I ran the Glasgow office national lottery syndicate with the majority of staff being members. Any 'winnings' (never been very successful in all those years!) we

secure, are saved until Christmas and then paid out. At the moment we have the grand sum of £125 in our 'winnings'.

As I have been promoted and will now be working from the Edinburgh office, I have decided not to continue running the lottery. After some discussion and with everyone's

agreement, we agreed to donate our 'winnings' of £125 towards Mencap.

I wanted to let you know of the generosity of the Glasgow office staff who have very kindly given up their lottery winnings to go towards such a good cause.

**Katherine Allan,**  
Usdaw Glasgow office



Legal Plus campaigning at Macraes Livingston.



PRIDE Birmingham



South Wales & Western Federation School





You can't be without...

# Your Rights at Work

5th Edition



*Your Rights at Work* is a comprehensive, jargon-free guide to your legal rights and your employer's responsibilities.

Easy-to-read and reliable, it offers solutions to the problems and issues that everyone can face at work. Topics include:

- Starting a job
- Parental leave and maternity rights
- Discrimination and bullying
- Health and safety
- Dismissal and redundancy
- Pay and holiday rights
- Enforcing your rights

*"Every worker has something to gain from dipping into this simply written guide."*

The Observer

**TUC**

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

## Order Form

Please send me  copies of *Your Rights at Work*

Price: 1-9 copies @£8 each  
10 copies or more @ £7.50 each  
(all prices include p&p)

£

Name

Delivery address

Postcode

Branch  Signed

(by the Branch Secretary, if necessary, see below)

Mobile no.

email

Please enclose correct remittance. Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to Usdaw. Any orders on behalf of a branch must be signed by the Branch Secretary and payment does not need to be included as this will be debited from branch funds. Orders without postcodes will not be processed. Please send your order to: **Stationery Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.** Please allow 28 days for delivery.