

# NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk) | May/June 2012

## ADM 2012

All the major debates and decisions taken at the 66th Annual Delegate Meeting held in Blackpool in April



### ■ Women activists step up to TUC national conference

The Coalition's cuts are having a disproportionate impact on women workers **page 06**



### ■ Eastern division rep on his life on the frontline

Distribution worker Warren Shimell on why he's a rep and why other members should get more involved **page 19**



### ■ More jobs under threat across the UK economy

Home shopping group Shop Direct have announced plans to sell off some its call centres **page 04**



# Voters' verdict

General secretary John Hannett's comment



**J**ob losses continue across the UK with the collapse of Clinton Cards and the Game Group, between them putting potentially more than 14,000 jobs at risk.

In our home shopping sector Shop Direct Group has signalled its intention to sell off parts of the business with thousands of workers now facing an uncertain future. All-in-all it's a grim scenario for the UK economy following job losses at Dairy Crest, Thomas Cook, Peacocks, TJ Hughes and many other companies. Unemployment is still 2.6 million.

It was no surprise that when voters had the chance to give their opinion on the Coalition in the local May elections the Tories and Lib Dems lost more than 740 seats between them. Labour won in excess of 820 seats – an encouraging indication that its anti-austerity message is beginning to get through.

## ADM 2012

However, our reps continue to do a remarkable job in their pursuit of fairness in the workplace. No more was this in evidence than at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) in Blackpool in April.

I was amazed and delighted to see so many first-time delegates get up and speak on all of the important issues for our members. There were a number of young reps who also made their first contribution and that is good news for the union's future.

Ushaw is one of the few unions that holds an annual national conference on such a large scale and it's a reflection of our commitment to democracy and making sure the reps have the opportunity to have their say and more importantly shape policy. Reps from across the UK from all of our sectors were represented and we had some great debates conducted in a thoroughly professional and friendly manner.

I will be taking these policies, along with ideas from our national political conference held in February, to this year's Labour and TUC national conferences giving further weight to our reps' opinions.

That's the beauty of a democratic organisation, members can take their concerns to the branch meeting and, if followed through correctly, can have a major impact on the union's national policy. You can read about the major debates on pages 7–14.

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

“Labour won in excess of 820 seats – an encouraging indication that its anti-austerity message is beginning to get through”

**USDAW**

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# Democracy

## ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING 2012

Delegates and visitors packed the Winter Gardens in Blackpool for this year's Annual Delegate Meeting where the union's policies and priorities for the coming 12 months were debated and decided. You can read coverage of the major debates as part of *Network's* eight-page special.

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Reps were in action at both the TUC national conferences for women and black and Asian members. Elsewhere home shopping company Shop Direct Group announced restructuring plans for its contact centres.

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IN BRIEF

**Sainsbury's grows despite recession**

Sainsbury's has reported an increase in sales and market share but a small dip in profits. Pre-tax profit for the year to 17 March fell to £799m, down from the £827m last year. However, underlying profit rose by 7 per cent to £712m. Total sales were up 6.8 per cent to £24.5bn. The company said market share had hit 16.6 per cent, its highest in ten years.

**Part-time increase**

While unemployment stands at 2.6m, hundreds of thousands of workers are trapped in part-time jobs because they are unable to find full-time work, a new TUC report has revealed.

**Is business cover for union business driving up the cost of your motor insurance?**

If you have or take out a motor policy with Usdaw Insurance you can get you this additional cover for free!



If you are an Usdaw trade union / stand-down representative you may be required to use your own vehicle on union business. For this, you will need to ensure that you have business use added to your motor policy.

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(UIA motor insurance is arranged and administered by Gallagher Heath Ltd, who are regulated and authorised by the FSA. Usdaw Insurance is a trading name of UIA Insurance Ltd.)

# Jobs bombshell at home shopping

**CALL CENTRES TRANSFER**

Home shopping retailer Shop Direct Group has announced it intends to outsource its customer contact centres and part of its financial services business to Serco, threatening the future of nearly 1,000 jobs and creating uncertainty for another 800.

The company announced in May it had reached an agreement with Serco and intended to transfer 1,800 staff based at Aintree, Bolton, Preston and Worcester to Serco on 1 July this year.

The company also revealed that Serco intend to close Shop Direct's contact centres in Preston and Worcester and that it also proposes to off-shore some work to India and South Africa. Shop Direct said both the Preston and Worcester contact centres would remain open for at least



a year and that no final decision on closure had been made.

Shop Direct Group blames falling call volumes, resulting from increased online sales.

Any transfer of staff will take place under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) which require a statutory period of consultation with staff and their union.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This is shocking news for all Shop Direct's loyal and hardworking staff and potentially devastating news for

everyone who works at the Preston and Worcester contact centres.

"Udaw has requested an urgent meeting with both Shop Direct Group and Serco and we will use the full statutory consultation process to examine the business case for the proposed transfer of staff and any subsequent contact centre closures in detail.

"We will also consult our members before making any further decisions on how we respond to the announcement."

## Walk this way... in Scotland

Four young Scottish activists put their best foot forward in May as they embarked on a 96 mile charity walk in aid of Cancer Research UK.

Udaw's divisional youth co-ordinator and area organiser Craig Smith also joined the four reps as they were piped on their way from the Tesco store in Milngavie, East Dumbartonshire.

Cold and wet weather did not dampen their spirits as they set off along the West Highland Way on May 17 – destination Fort William in the Scottish Highlands, nine days later.

"It was raining when we set off but the weather did improve after that," said Craig.

"We've been staying overnight on camp sites and the temperature at night and early



Scottish send off.....a ceremonial piper sends (l-r) Chris Gilmour, Dex Miller, Owen Speed and Craig Smith (inset Rona Montgomery) on their 96 mile trek in aid of charity

morning has been very cold. "The highlight so far has been waving our Usdaw flag at 2,500ft above sea level.

"So far we have raised

around £1,000."

Donations can be given at the 'just giving' page:

[www.justgiving.com/usdaw-scottish-youth-committee](http://www.justgiving.com/usdaw-scottish-youth-committee)

# BLACK AND ASIAN REPS STAND UP FOR EQUALITY

## NATIONAL TUC CONFERENCE

The current economic climate has seen an increase in harassment of black and Asian workers, Usdaw's delegation pointed out to the TUC black workers conference in April.

The range of issues discussed at conference reflected the many challenges ahead in terms of winning equality for black and minority ethnic workers.

The debates included unequal access to training, career opportunities and apprenticeships and the threat posed by the racist English Defence League.

"While workers from all ethnic backgrounds are feeling the pressure at work at the moment, black and Asian members often

have to deal with the added stress of racism," said equalities officer Jo Bird.

"We also know from our own research that black and Asian members sometimes find it more difficult to speak out for fear of being disbelieved or being told that they are over-sensitive."

Conference also heard from Doreen Lawrence, the mother of Stephen Lawrence who was killed in a racist attack in London in 1993. Eighteen years later two of Stephen's killers were brought to justice but the struggle for equality for black and Asian workers goes on, as Doreen pointed out.

To get involved in Usdaw's equalities work contact your local office or email: [equalities@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalities@usdaw.org.uk)



## The **co-operative** funeralcare is pleased to support Usdaw

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## IN BRIEF

### 2012 Forthcoming events for your diary

18–24 June  
Membership Week

23–24 June  
North West Divisional  
Conference

#### July

12 July  
National Pensions  
Conference

13–15 July  
Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival

#### September

01–08 September  
First Series  
Summer School

10–13 September  
TUC Conference

15–22 September  
Second Series  
Summer School

30 September –  
04 October  
Labour Party Annual  
Conference

October  
13–14 October  
Retail Trades Conference

#### November

03–04 November  
National Youth Weekend

10–11 November  
Eastern Divisional  
Conference

#### December

01–02 December  
Southern Divisional  
Conference

01–02 December  
North West Divisional  
Conference

### 2013

ADM 2013

April 28 - May 1

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

# Active women on national stage

## WOMEN'S TUC CONFERENCE

The Coalition's cuts are having a major impact on women's access to health and maternity services, family incomes and pensions, the women's TUC conference heard.

Usdaw's delegation were at the forefront of the debates and expressed concern that many of the Coalition's decisions are turning the clock back – with decisions to freeze Child Benefit, change entitlement rules to Tax Credits and cut help with the costs of childcare – and all are disproportionately affecting



women's income. At the same time access to vital services such as specialist maternity support and domestic violence services is becoming more difficult as funding is

withdrawn.

For more information about this and all other equality issues contact the equality section at central office via email: [equalities@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalities@usdaw.org.uk)

## Officer class

It was quality not quantity when six branch officers took part in the five-day residential course tailor-made for lay reps at the national training centre in Warrington in March.

The activists took an in-depth look at how the union works locally, divisionally and nationally. They also heard from both the general secretary and deputy general secretary and other senior departmental members based at central office.

All newly elected branch officers are eligible to go on the course with expenses paid from branch and central office funds. For more information visit:

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



Six of the best.....Hayley Warren, Edward Hollinsworth, Dennis Roe, Christopher Edmonds, Timothy Keagle and Michael Heppenstall

## Michelle Hollick remembered

Usdaw was deeply saddened to hear the news of Recruitment and Development Officer (RDO) Michelle Hollick who died in April, she was 51.

Michelle joined the staff in 2002 having spent 2001 on the TUC's Academy. Prior to that she was an activist at the Redcats site in West Yorkshire.

Divisional officer Joanne Thomas paid this tribute. "Michelle was a committed and enthusiastic RDO, who always

strived for equality. She organised many workplaces and increased membership and her passionate personality was both dynamic and infectious.

"Over the last few years her positivity under adverse circumstances has been immense and admired. She will be greatly missed by her friends across the union movement and she will never be forgotten. Our thoughts are with her family at this very sad time."



# DEMOCRACY RULES IN BLACKPOOL 2012

The biggest event in the union's calendar – the Annual Delegate Meeting – was held in April at the Winter Gardens where around 1,200 activists decided the union's policies for 2012/13

**D**elegates to the union's 66th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) – the union's very own parliament – took their chance to speak up as they debated 85 propositions, four executive statements, the annual report and the financial statement over four intense days in the Empress Ballroom.

No subject was left untouched as delegates had their say on everything from wages to working conditions, the health service to housing, and from transport to trading hours.

There was also an address by shadow home secretary Yvette Cooper MP as part of a wide-ranging politics debate and an international dimension was added by Bones Skulu from the South African union SACCAWU.

This year was marked by the absence of a request from the executive council for an increase in union subscriptions. General secretary John Hannett explained the

background to that decision: "We know how tough it is for our members out there," he said.

"Low wage increases, sometimes no wage increase. Rising fuel and utilities bills, food inflation and cuts to in-work benefits, these have all had a massive and detrimental impact on our members.

"So while this year will probably prove the exception to the rule, we thought it appropriate not to heap anymore pressure on our members during these difficult times.

"The union is in a strong position, still investing heavily in our reps' training and support and looking to build on our organising success again this year.

"We had a great ADM. If you haven't been before start thinking now about how you can get involved.

"It's a crucial, and unique, part of the union's business and allows delegates and visitors to network, learn from each other and have a direct input into the union's policies."



## The four executive council statements

- Tackling Violence and Abuse – Promoting Dignity at Work
- Your New Pension Rights: Auto-enrolment and Workplace Pension Reform 2012
- Supporting and Developing Reps: Modernising the Union for the 21st Century Workplace
- Engaging Members in Political Campaigning

Download them at:  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/ECstat](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/ECstat)

Top... general secretary John Hannett, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, president Jeff Broome, chair of standing orders Barbara McAllister, and international speaker Bones Skulu



# Transport debate calls for more rest



Aidan McCarthy



David Mason



Darren Bussey



Gwen Jones



Ann Lloyd

**H**GV drivers should get a legally enforceable daily minimum rest of 12 hours, **Aidan McCarthy** from Wincanton Sherburn-in-Elmet told conference.

"At present drivers can be forced to work up to 15 hours three times a week consecutively," he said.

"This is despite the fact that the driver may be tired and may also have to commute to and from work. This is putting the health and safety of the driver and the general public at risk.

"I've been a driver for 29 years and it's never been as hard. I don't know what time I'll get home because of any

eventualities on the road. Tired drivers are dangerous and are having to work ridiculous hours at present. We need legislation to stop the abuse of HGV drivers. It's not all about the 'needs of the business'."

**David Mason** of Midland Dairies agreed. "Driving is one of the most legislated professions," he said. "Long hours are not fair and drivers deserve and need 12 hours rest."

**Darren Bussey** from Leeds PT also supported the proposition. "Rest is paramount as HGV drivers are in charge of potentially a lethal weapon."

The debate also included

discussions on motor insurance, and roadside adverts.

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** replied to the debate. "The transport sector is important and the process whereby drivers are forced to work 15 hour shifts is both wrong and dangerous," he said.

"Health and safety failings in this industry can have severe repercussions so we need to ensure our drivers are adequately protected."

## Scandal of social housing market

The Government should rethink its housing policy as there are not enough houses being built especially those available to rent, **Ann Lloyd** from West Midlands Sainsbury's told ADM.

"Social housing is very important but there just isn't enough for sale or to rent," she said. "There

are too many homeless people and too many young adults having to live at home because they can't afford to rent or buy. Everyone should have a home.

"The social housing sector should be redesigned to provide a real alternative choice to home ownership thereby bringing down and stabilising the house prices."

North Eastern divisional councillor **Pat Buttle** supported the proposition. "The lack of decent housing in the UK is absolutely scandalous," she said.

"Private landlords are exploiting and ripping off their tenants. The banks are making money out of housing and too many people are facing the awful prospect of having their homes repossessed. We should give MPs hell over housing!"

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** agreed. "Social housing should be a right – an option – for all," he said. "There is a chronic housing shortage in the UK and an enhanced role for social housing offers a solution to this."



Pat Buttle



# Workers to lose rights

**G**overnment plans to increase the qualifying period for protection against unfair dismissal from one to two years, and to bring in fees for tribunal applications will mean access to justice for workers will be severely limited, Fallowfield's **Emily Rowles** warned conference.

"Vulnerable workers are the most likely to miss out," she said. "Young workers, temporary staff and ethnic minorities will be at the mercy of this 'hire and fire' culture.

"More than 2.7million people could miss out on the right to go to tribunal and coupled with the introduction of fees this is a horrifying situation. It has nothing to do with promoting growth but is ideologically driven and exposes the Tories' attitude to basic employment rights. This will rob our members of

justice and is a charter for rogue employers."

**Neil Allen** from Nottingham Food Trades seconded the proposition. "These are Tory values which offer our members no justice," he said. "It will encourage unscrupulous employers and with the average tribunal settlement of £3,500 few solicitors would take these on."

**Jayne Wilkinson** from Black Country Area Tesco also supported the call. "Many people won't be able to afford the fees," she said. "So it's up to us to keep access to justice free."

General secretary **John Hannett** said: "This is history repeating itself because previous Tory governments had done exactly the same. This Coalition is determined to have a 'bonfire of employment rights'.

"It will encourage rogue bosses to exploit workers but it will also encourage us to campaign even harder to protect workers from these attacks on their rights."

## Food poverty spreads in UK

The percentage of the UK population experiencing food poverty is expanding rapidly at a time when tonnes of food are being discarded by the big supermarkets **Rona Montgomery** of West of Scotland Morrisons told conference.

"With around four million people affected

by food poverty in the UK this is a shocking reflection of the state of society," she said. "Companies should follow Sainsbury's lead and join food bank schemes such as Fareshare. However these schemes are only making a small dent in a problem that has gone way beyond the very poor."



Neil Allen



Jayne Wilkinson



Diane Lynch



Laura Mclean



Rona Montgomery

## ADM IN BRIEF

### Discounts

Usdaw should aim to get members more and better discounts to help offset these harsh economic times, **Diane Lynch** from Mid Sussex told conference. She said her branch had successfully won local discounts in shops, which other branches should try to copy.

### Charity collectors

Door-to-door charity collectors should not be allowed to ask for direct debit donations as it leaves the way open for criminals to prey on the vulnerable said **Laura Mclean** from Dundee PT. They also put pressure on people to sign, who often don't fully understand what they are committing to.

### Disability

The Government should revisit the 1995 law covering disability access said **Gwen Jones** from NW Tesco Retail No. 1. Getting around many shops and hotels is impossible and even when disabled stickers are displayed buildings are still not suitable.

### Energy prices

Energy companies should be limited by law as to how much they can increase their prices said **Mark Boswell** from Cardiff Central. Fuel poverty is a real and serious issue and there is no excuse for unfair standing charges and mixed pricing. Our dependence on expensive foreign imports has to be addressed.

## ADM IN BRIEF

## ■ LGBT

Regional events for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members have been so successful the time is now right for a national event said **Peter Wolfe** from NW Tesco Retail No.7. Although it was tried nine years ago and didn't take off, times have changed. Conference agreed.

## ■ Labour Party

Training courses and other union events should be used to promote membership of the Labour Party and its importance to the trade union movement among members said **Barry Wiggins** from South Yorkshire Tesco. We currently have less than four per cent of our members in the Labour Party.

## ■ Cash machines

Customers should not be charged for using Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) and charges should be abolished **Gordon Goff** of Pembrokeshire told conference. These charges vary but act as a tax on our members' money to pay the bankers their bonuses.

## ■ Media

Having a stronger media profile would help recruit more members. **Martin Hickey** from Wincanton Sherburn-in-Elmet claimed. We hear about other unions a lot but not enough of the successes of Usdaw and we should use all forms of media more aggressively he said.

# Cut bank holiday trading hours call



Helen Laverick



Gordon Goff



Rob Bell



Martin Hickey

**S**tores should only be allowed to open for six hours, with no browsing time, on bank holidays **Helen Laverick** of NW Morrisons Retail No.4 proposed.

"Customers have plenty of time to do their shopping," she said. "Years ago bank holidays were for days out with the family but you can't do that now. By the time you finish work you haven't any energy to go out. Public transport is also often unavailable.

"The shops are empty most of the day on bank holidays so let's have our time to spend with our families."

**Gordon Goff** from Pembrokeshire seconded the proposition, which was also

supported by **Rob Bell** from NW Tesco Retail No.7. "There's no need for browsing time," he said. "It puts pressure on staff, particularly young members, and six hours trading is more than enough, please support."

General secretary **John Hannett** said: "Udaw members should have the right to enjoy bank holidays with their friends and families but we know they are put under pressure to work.

"Bank holidays should not just be another working day, as many employers want to see, but with a hostile government intent on further deregulation we have to fight a tactical battle to protect our members."

## High temperature dangers

UK workplaces need a legally enforceable maximum working temperature to help avoid accidents and cut the risks to staff, **Rona Montgomery** of West of Scotland Morrisons told conference.

"I work in a bakery and it gets very hot," she said. "It can be very uncomfortable and if the extractors are struggling to cope it does put our members at risk.

"We need something similar to the minimum working temperature because currently there is no comfortable working

temperature at the higher end of the scale."

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** agreed. "Every year we receive hundreds of complaints from members who are struggling to cope with intense heat at work," he said.

"It's clearly a concern as it is extremely dangerous. Usdaw has been at the forefront of the campaign. Without legislation it is difficult to progress this issue but we will continue to argue for its implementation."



# Childcare out of reach for workers

The union should lobby the Government to provide good quality, affordable childcare for all families, **Emily Rowles** from Fallowfield told ADM.

"UK families spend on average a third of their salaries on childcare – the highest rate in the world," she said. "They need and deserve good quality affordable childcare but for too many it's not available. We need to get this issue to the top of the agenda."

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** said: "This is one of the most important issues for working families. We know the Tory-led Coalition is making it more difficult by withdrawing and cutting benefits for families

and so making it more difficult to juggle work and family commitments. More and more parents are being forced to give up work because they simply cannot afford childcare. The best way out of child poverty is to help parents into work but the Coalition is making it more difficult for working families."

As part of the parental debate delegates also agreed to lobby the Government to introduce legal rights for grandparents to allow them access to their grandchildren after the break up of the parents' marriage.

Parental rights for fathers was also on the agenda and ADM agreed that the Government should protect the visiting rights of fathers following divorce.



Emily Rowles



Carl Sutcliffe

## Tories out of touch – Cooper tells ADM

Taking hundreds, sometimes, thousands of pounds from working families to give millionaires a £40,000 tax cut is a disgrace, the Rt Hon

Shadow home secretary **Yvette Cooper** MP

Yvette Cooper, shadow home secretary told conference.

"That's more than four years' pay for many Usdaw members and it is truly shocking. It shows clearly just how uncaring and out-of-touch this Coalition is.

"Cuts in police numbers are also making shopworkers feeling threatened and vulnerable. The treasury does not

understand the retail sector that's why it wants complete deregulation of

trading hours. The Olympics is just a cover, the thin end of the wedge.

"The Tories and the Liberal Democrats, who are keeping them in power, believe in the end that to make the rich work harder you give them more money, but to make the poor work harder you take it away. We believe in a fair deal for everyone. They believe people should be left to sink or swim. We believe that we are stronger together, standing together, than we are alone."

### ADM IN BRIEF

#### Insurance

Holidaymakers should be given more information by insurance companies about the possible pitfalls contained in the small print of policies said **Maggie Hughes** from Croydon Metropolitan. When claims are made the insurance companies are hiding behind these 'get out' clauses and too often, not paying what the policy holder expected.

#### ESOL courses

Costs associated with English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses are a major barrier to learning **Carl Sutcliffe** of NW SD Logistics told conference. Providing funding for these courses will help both an individual's personal and professional development and the country as a whole.

#### Fire alarms

All new and refurbished stores should have automatic fire detection equipment fitted said **Wendy Miller** from North and East of Scotland Co-op. Automatic doors and CCTV are fitted as standard, so should fire alarms as noxious fumes can knock you unconscious in seconds.



Kevin Dolan



Richard McDermid



Jon-Paul McEwan



Angela Thomas



Maureen Bowen

# Loophole allows staff exploitation

**E**mployers should not be allowed to undermine the Agency Workers Regulations (AWR) by using the 'Swedish derogation' as it dilutes both agency staff and core workers' rights, **Kevin Dolan** of NW United Biscuits told conference.

"We have to challenge employers who use this 'get out clause'," he said. "The Swedish derogation means staff are employed directly by the agency and fall outside of the AWR which affords them some important rights. This is widespread among

employers and it allows the agencies to pay their workers less and this does have an impact on the core workforce. We have to take up the fight."

**Richard McDermid** from Sata Regional West agreed. "This is a disgraceful situation given that we are now in 2012," he said. "It's atrocious that employers are using it but workers cannot afford not to sign-up and then face short-notice of extra hours."

The call was also supported by **Jon-Paul McEwan** of Ashby (United Biscuits). "We have to get rid of this

loophole," he said. "It undermines all the hard work that was put in to getting the AWR."

Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** said Usdaw has and will continue to oppose this loophole. "We are backing the TUC's possible legal challenge on how the AWR has been implemented," he said.

"These things inevitably take time but we know the misuse of agency workers breeds a two-tier workforce and undermines the collective strength of the permanent workforce."

## Elderly patients deserve dignity

Delegates were keen to stand up for the rights of elderly patients to receive decent care while in hospital with two propositions on the final agenda.

"Unannounced checks by the authorities should be carried out to ensure basic care and welfare provision is in place and any failure to do so should attract penalties," **Angela Thomas** of Swansea General said.

"There has been a catalogue of failures in the

NHS detailed by the ombudsman showing how OAPs have been neglected and left unwashed. This lack of care is indefensible as is the 'casual indifference' to dignity uncovered by a recent investigation. Hospitals should be made accountable."

Meanwhile **Maureen Bowen** of West Midlands Sainsbury's called for nutritional care to be given top priority for patients. "Some meals are untouched by patients because they need help to feed themselves," she said.

"We need more nurses and while volunteers do a good job they are no replacement for well-trained staff. We need to help both vulnerable patients and the staff to prevent the sick going

needlessly hungry."

In what was a wide ranging debate, delegates also called on the union to publish information leaflets on Hepatitis C and mental health.

Conference also agreed that patients and close family should have their expenses paid when they are forced to travel long distances to receive specialist medical treatment. **Lorraine Haves** from Tesco Retail No. 8 said: "The social fund is available but only after the treatment. Families often struggle to scrape the money together so having the money paid up front would relieve the stress of this financial burden when families have enough to worry about."



Lorraine Haves



# Ban legal loan sharks

**P**ay day loan companies should be banned from charging interest rates of up to

3,000 per cent as it is totally unacceptable and 'legalised loan sharking', said **Andrew Stott** of NW Morrisons Produce.

"The Government has to step in as people just can't make these repayments. The banks are reluctant to provide loans and these pay day companies are cashing in and need tighter regulation," he said.

**Kenneth Kenny** from Plymouth & South West Co-op meanwhile called for these companies to have restricted advertising opportunities. "For some a pay day option is the only one and lots of people are tempted by them," he said. "They are no more than back street money lenders, hammer-head sharks who

hammer their customers. There are plenty of horror stories out there. A £400 loan can soon turn into a £700 debt. Ban the adverts and ban the high interest rates. They are greedy loan sharks."

Swansea General's **Angela Thomas** agreed. "More and more people are in a desperate situation and these companies are preying on them," she said. "The increase in the numbers using pay day loans has quadrupled."

Southern divisional councillor **Amy Murphy** said many members were too proud or embarrassed to own up to using these 'blood sucking' companies. "It's no coincidence as poverty has risen so too has the incidence of these companies. I would urge all of our members to use the Consumer Council Credit Services for free advice on debt," she said.



Andrew Stott



Kenneth Kenny



Amy Murphy



Pia Sands



Tina Holliman-Frewin

## More safe houses needed

There should be more places available for people who have to escape from abusive partners, **Pia Sands** from Sussex No.1 told conference.

"Around five people a day are being turned away because there are not enough safe refuges," she said. "We have to help people get away from domestic violence and the Government and local councils should fund these. Safe houses are being cut back because of the economic climate."

**Michael Green** from Northern Morrisons agreed. "This is about providing safe houses for both women and men," he said. "Its aim is to help vulnerable people."

First time speaker **Tina Holliman-Frewin** from West Thames Tesco also supported the call. "When me and my mother moved to a safe house to escape from physical and mental abuse it was the best day of my life," she said.

## ADM IN BRIEF

### ■ Blood donation

Companies should grant paid time-off for staff to give blood to meet the shortages of stocks, said **Elizabeth Peacock** from Mid Sussex. Union officials should lobby companies to change their policies to meet this urgent demand for blood.

### ■ Hospital TV fees

Hospital patients should have free access to the five main channels **Barry Wiggins** from South Yorkshire Tesco told ADM. The costs for watching TV in hospital are particularly expensive for the unemployed and elderly.

### ■ Green belt land

**Andrew Stott** from NW Morrisons Produce called on the union to lobby government to protect green belt areas. He said that no development should be allowed on green belt areas until all brownfield sites have been utilised.

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# AUTO-ENROLMENT GETS THUMBS UP

Usdaw is backing the new pension reforms set to come into force this October

**S**upport for the new auto-enrolment rules was at the centre of the pension debate at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) in Blackpool, writes pensions officer Nick Walker.

The executive council moved a statement backing the reforms, which will require employers to automatically enter eligible workers into a workplace pension scheme starting October this year.

Usdaw members at the Co-op, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco will be among the first workers to go into the new system.

General secretary John Hannett spoke in favour of the reforms at the ADM. "We believe that investing in a pension is the best way to save for retirement," he said. "But we also know that for many Usdaw members, saving for retirement can be an

added financial burden. That's why we support any reforms that make it easier for our members to save for a pension.

"We believe auto-enrolment works because an employee who has been automatically placed in a pension scheme is likely to stay in that scheme. We worked closely with the previous Labour Government to help develop the legislation around auto-enrolment, which will give millions more workers the opportunity to save for retirement in a workplace pension scheme with contributions from their employer."

## Calling all reps – get active

John Hannett also called on Usdaw reps to promote auto-enrolment and help members understand it. He said: "Our activists will play a vital role in making sure that auto-enrolment is a success. Reps can help our members understand

the importance of saving for retirement, giving them the facts about auto-enrolment and explain why we're supporting it. We need to encourage members to take full advantage of their new pension rights by not opting out.

"Pension awareness campaign days are an effective way for reps to inform members of their new pension rights. You don't need to be an expert on pensions to run a campaign at work – you just need to give people the basic facts about pensions."



## What reps should do next

Get your own pension awareness campaign up and running where you work by contacting the pensions team at Usdaw's central office in Manchester on 0161 224 2804.

Tell us where you work and when you are planning on starting your pensions campaign. We will send you all the materials you will need to run a successful campaign, including:

- The reps' pension awareness campaign toolkit, which contains a number of straightforward activities for you to carry out at work.
- Copies of our brand new guidebook and factsheet about auto-enrolment for you to make

available to the people you work with.

- Copies of our other booklets, leaflets and factsheets which contain a wealth of information about pensions.
- Information about the company pension scheme where you work including how much it costs to join, how much your employer offers to pay into it and the other benefits on offer.

**Get campaigning to help Usdaw make auto-enrolment a success and get Britain saving for retirement.**



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# Looking After You and Your Family

Usdaw Legal Plus is one of the great benefits of being an Usdaw member and covers:

- Accidents, injuries and diseases. FirstCall Usdaw – Free Accident Claim Line 0800 055 6333.
- Employment problems.
- Pensions.
- Health and safety.
- Prosecutions.
- Free Wills and probate.
- Moving house.
- Legal advice not related to work.

## Legal Plus Benefits:

- Usdaw Legal Plus helps members and their families and is free from the day you join. It works for people and not profits.
- If you win your case you keep all the compensation and there are no hidden charges.
- Usdaw Legal Plus is delivered through the Usdaw team of reps, officials and professionals in Usdaw's Legal Department backed by a nationwide network of Solicitors.
- Usdaw's Solicitors are experts in work-related accident and disease cases.

If you have a problem and need help and advice or want to join the Union, contact your Union Rep or ring the Union helpline

# 0845 60 60 640\*

or visit the Union's website [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

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*Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers*

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\*Calls charged at local rate



## MEMBER SERVICES

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



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

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

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

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## UK TOP ATTRACTIONS

Usdaw members can make great savings on the following UK attractions and theme parks: Alton Towers Resort, Chessington World of Adventures, LEGOLAND Discovery Centre Manchester, LEGOLAND Windsor, Madame Tussauds London, SEA LIFE centres & Sanctuaries, the Dungeons, THORPE PARK and Warwick Castle. To find out more or to book call 0871 222 4001 and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin)



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\*Money back may differ on NHS dental plans in Scotland and Northern Ireland

## THE CO-OPERATIVE FUNERALCARE

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

Visit [www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk](http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk) for your nearest Co-operative Funeralcare or call 0800 083 6301

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

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To find out more call free on 0808 156 2838\*

Visit your local branch or [britannia.co.uk/usdaw](http://britannia.co.uk/usdaw)

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



## TAX REFUND SERVICE

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

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

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

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

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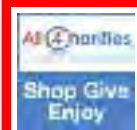
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# ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Eastern division's **Warren Shimell** answers our questions on his experiences as a rep



“The high was being voted back in by members, knowing that they trust my ability to represent them”

## FACT FILE & TRIVIA

### FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Sainsbury's
- **Age** 48
- **Lives** North Hertfordshire
- **Married** for 25 years with 2 children
- **Union positions** Shop steward and health and safety rep
- **Branch** Waltham Point Sainsbury's Distribution C28
- **Usdaw Activist** Since 2005

### MY FAVOURITE...

- **TV programme...**  
Celebrity Juice
- **I spend my spare time...**  
Running a girls football team, coaching a boys football team, football refereeing and as a part-time driving instructor.
- **The best moment of my life so far...**  
Apart from the usual answer of seeing my children being born and getting married, the best moment in my life was while serving as a special constable with Herts Police. I pulled two people from burning vehicles, thus receiving a bravery award from the then prime minister Tony Blair at 10 Downing Street in 2001.



### Why did you become an Usdaw rep?

I had an accident at work and felt that I was unfairly treated. It seems that anyone who has an accident at work is almost always blamed for the accident so I wanted to do something positive for my colleagues. Becoming a health and safety rep gave me the opportunity to ensure that accidents were investigated properly and were not always just blamed on the injured person. I can now speak to managers with some authority about safety and I'm taken more seriously when issues arise.

### What's it like being active?

I like having the opportunity to try and resolve problems that colleagues may have.

### And what's surprised you?

The negative attitude towards the union reps by some managers. I didn't realise there was such a divide sometimes between managers and the union.

### What have been your highs and lows?

The high was being voted back in by members, knowing that the members trust my ability to represent them. The lows are being in a disciplinary meeting and not being able to stop a member being disciplined.

### Have you been on any union training courses?

When I first became a steward and safety rep I attended courses. The courses gave all who attended the opportunity to share experiences and insight into how other companies treat their Usdaw reps. While on the courses there did

seem to be a great deal of time spent on how to recruit colleagues into joining the union, possibly too much time.

### Have you been to ADM?

No I haven't been to ADM but it's something I intend to do in the coming few years.

### Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

Not really, I've always been confident and only assertive when needed. I think you need to be confident and assertive to become a rep, but I'll never be totally organised, it's just not me.

### What is important to your members?

Wage negotiations are currently being sorted.

### What's your advice to a prospective rep?

Make sure you are confident verbally and are not afraid to communicate with all levels of management.

### How would you improve Usdaw?

Social networking is the in-thing at present so maybe a 24 hour online site so union activists working nights can contact someone (via a live online Q&A site) to get advice when needed.

### What's next for you?

I have no idea what's next, I tend to live each day as it comes.

**Final word...** I'm 48 years old, have been a special constable, and I'm a football referee.

I have gained the skills to communicate with people at every level and all walks of life, this helps when carrying out my union duties.

Want to be the next activist in-depth?

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



# SUNDAY TRADING HO

Reps need to be in the know to give members advice about extended trading hours during the ei

**T**he Tory led-Coalition recently used the forthcoming Olympics to push through the deregulation of Sunday trading for this Summer.

The union strongly opposed this deregulation of Sunday trading. **Usdaw fully supports the Olympics but there is no need for longer trading hours.**

Usdaw is continuing to make the case to retailers not

to extend opening hours on Sundays during the Olympics. To expect shopworkers to work longer hours on a Sunday during the Olympics is unfair.

**The union also does not believe there is widespread customer demand for these longer shopping hours.**

In the event that retailers do choose to open for longer hours, the union is urging retailers to limit these longer trading hours to stores near

Olympic venues. The union is also urging retailers to give assurances that any extended hours will only be covered by staff who volunteer to work the additional hours – and **Usdaw wants to see shopworkers receive premium pay for these extra hours.**

Usdaw hopes that any proposals to change staff hours during the Olympic period will be fully discussed with staff and their reps. We

would expect employers to respect staff views especially as Sunday is one of the few days of the week when families can share quality time together. Any member who feels under pressure to work longer hours on Sundays should contact their rep.

**The Olympics will have a major impact on retail distribution** in terms of longer delivery times to stores close to Olympic venues. Discussions among the

**22 July – 9 September**

**The Sunday opt-out – your q**

**Q. Will I have a right to opt out of working on Olympic Sundays?**

Shopworkers who work in large stores (over 280sqm) in England and Wales will have the right to opt out of working on Olympic Sundays.

You cannot opt out if you are a Sunday-only worker or if you are required to work in a shop on a Sunday when it isn't open to customers.

**Q. How do I opt out of working on Olympic Sundays?**

You must give written notice, signed and dated to your employer, two months before the first Sunday you do not wish to work, saying that you do not want to work on the Sundays between 22 July and 9 September.

The normal notice period is three months, but it has been reduced for the Olympic period to two months.

**Q. What if I'm unhappy with my work arrangements for Olympic Sundays?**

If you are being asked to work longer hours on a Sunday and you are unhappy with management's proposals you should speak to your rep and try to resolve the matter with your manager informally at first.

If you don't currently work Sundays and management are proposing some of your hours be switched to Sundays, again get advice from your rep or local official.

If you are contracted to work on Sundays and your contract does not specify your hours of work on a Sunday it will be more difficult to refuse to work the hours requested unless you opt out of working on Olympic Sundays.

**Q. Is this opt-out just for the Olympics?**

Yes. If you state it is for the Olympics only in your written notice letter. You will need to agree with your employer new Sunday working arrangements after that period.

**Q. I have already opted out of Sunday working, do I need to do anything for Olympic Sundays?**

No. Your existing Sunday working opt out covers you for the period of the Olympics.

**Q. Will I be penalised if I opt out of Sunday working?**

Opting out offers shopworkers protection on Sunday working. It means that:

■ You can refuse to do Sunday work, but there is no duty on the employer to offer you alternative hours. That is a matter of negotiation and you should seek advice from your rep or official.

\* If you opt out of Sunday working just for the period of the Olympics, you will need to agree with your employer new Sunday working arrangements after that period.

They may not be the same as they were before.

■ You cannot be dismissed, disciplined or treated less favourably, if the reason for such treatment is your refusal to work on a Sunday.

■ If you are treated less favourably, you can complain to an employment tribunal whatever your length of service. A grievance should be lodged and you should discuss the matter with your official.

**Q. How do I enforce my rights?**

You should firstly try to resolve them informally with your employer with the help of your rep and local official if necessary.

If matters cannot be sorted out informally, then you should raise a formal grievance in writing with your employer.



# OURS



## Eight 'Olympic' Sundays

authorities are considering possible relaxing of current restrictions on night-time deliveries. Extending trading hours on Sundays will mean added complications for retail distribution.

**Shop workers have a statutory right to opt out of Sunday trading.** The recent legislation has reduced the notice period for the opt out to two months during the Olympics. The union recommends that members

opt out of Sunday working only as a last resort. Remember, many members have access to trade union agreed policies that are better than the basic statutory rights.

The legal right to opt-out will be especially important for members who work for retailers who refuse to recognise trade unions.

■ Let *Network* know what your employer is doing for the eight Olympic Sundays. email: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

## Questions answered

### Q. Will working different Sunday hours affect my tax credits?

You will need to make sure that you still work enough weekly hours to qualify for your tax credits. To check call 0345 300 3900.



## IN BRIEF

### ■ Struggling card retailer folds

Retailer Clinton Cards, which is in administration, is to close almost half its stores across the UK, leading to the loss of 2,800 jobs.

Administrators Zolfo Cooper said that it has 'regrettably' decided to close about 350 stores of its total of 784. The closures include all of its Birthdays-branded stores.

### ■ Profits down at Marks and Spencer

Marks and Spencer has reported a fall in annual profits in what the retailer describes as a tough environment. Pre-tax profits for the year to the end of March were £658m, down 16 per cent from the previous year's £781m.

The company said it would be cutting investment in UK stores by £200m.

### ■ Inflation edges down to a two-year low

The UK inflation rate fell last month to its lowest since February 2010 owing to a slowdown in transport price rises and the timing of Easter.

The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) measure fell to 3 per cent from 3.5 per cent in March, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. The Retail Prices Index (RPI) measure fell to 3.5 per cent from 3.6 per cent in March.

### ■ Shake up will see massive dairy combine

The Arla Foods and Milk Link cooperatives have agreed to merge, creating the country's biggest dairy firm. The combined group will process over three billion litres of milk every year and have a turnover of more than £2bn.

Arla uses the dairy brands Cravendale, Lurpak and Anchor in the UK.

Milk Link, is based in Bristol, Arla Foods is a co-operative owned by Danish, Swedish and German dairy farmers, operating in 13 countries and employing 17,000 people.

### ■ Consumers feeling the pain as sales fall

Retail sales volumes fell by 2.3 per cent in April, largely because of a record fall in petrol sales, according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

The ONS said April's sales values in predominantly food stores increased by just 0.1 per cent compared with the year before, the smallest year-on-year growth since records began in January 1989.

The ONS added food price inflation was 3.7 per cent in April compared with a year ago while sales of clothing and footwear were also affected by April's record rainfall.

April's fall comes after sales had risen by two per cent in March.



# EXPERT REPS ARE MA

While all stores can share common issues, reps are using a variety of ways to sign up new members

## Recruiting members not a problem at Tesco Havant

**T**here doesn't have to be problems in-store to recruit members as the team of reps at Tesco Extra Havant, in Hampshire, can prove.

Rep and checkout operator Jackie Chandler (centre) was the lone rep for five years before being joined by Terry Whelan four years ago and now the store boasts a seven-strong team made up with Joyce Hallam, Luke Beeson, Louise Sykes, Sarah Turner-Trevett and nightshift worker Dan Thomas.

"We meet with our area organiser Paul Noakes once a month so everyone is up-to-date," said Jackie. "We don't have many problems in-store so that's good. We also have a good working relationship with the management team.

"We had a very good year recruitment-wise last year

and we now have around 70 per cent membership here."

Butcher Terry Whelan (left) agreed. "We have a good reputation and a good profile in-store," he said. "We have reps throughout the store including Dan on nights, so it seems to be working very well."

Paul Noakes was full of praise for the team. "The reason this store is problem-free is because the reps listen and talk to the membership on a regular basis," he said. "They then very professionally take up any issues with the management on an informal basis initially, so everyone knows what's going on in-store. It's about dealing proactively with issues rather than reactively. It clearly works and the reps are doing a great job."



## Good organisation a sure bet at Ladbroke Grove

**T**he team of reps at Sainsbury's Ladbroke Grove store in London W10 have made great strides with membership currently at the 66 per cent mark.

Rep and branch secretary Karen Cummings (right) along with Adeola Fadipe and Chris Altrudo and Brian Moriarty on nights, look after around 250 members in-store.

"All inductions are covered," said Karen, who works in HR as admin support. "If I can't do it one of the other reps does. We also talk regularly to staff on the shopfloor and have a well-stocked noticeboard so everyone is kept informed.

"The store management here is very supportive and we communicate regularly. Any issues are dealt with informally most of the time and we usually get things sorted out without having to go through lengthy procedures.

"Often issues come up all at once and then other weeks it can be really quiet."

The reps, part of Capital Retail C12 branch, are also active in the union with both Karen and Adeola having been on summer school1 and Karen is set to go to summer school2 later this year.

"I also did Academy1 last year," said Karen.

"It's very interesting visiting different stores and I learnt a lot during the six months secondment.

"I think the union should look at getting into companies like

Argos and Primark where there is huge potential. I'm sure workers there will benefit from our organising skills."



# MAKING A DIFFERENCE

...ers from learning opportunities to raising the union's profile or just good old-fashioned persuasion

## The only way is learning at Essex Tesco stores

**L**earning has really taken off at a trio of Tesco stores in Essex thanks to a concerted effort from reps and officials.

More than 60 members have signed up for literacy and numeracy courses available online and in association with provider Learning Curve.

Experienced rep and now union learning rep (ULR) Jenny Lunn (far right) from the Braintree Marks Farm store, has been instrumental in delivering the opportunities along with ULR Merle Morris. "We held an awareness day and that

allowed interested members to gauge which course and what level would suit them best," said Jenny. "The response was great and so the initiative was rolled out at the stores at Great Notley and Maldon.

"Store management have been very supportive as have area organisers Chris Henry and Tracey Low. Former mobile learning rep Helen King also helped to get the ball rolling. So it's been a big team effort and a very successful one."

Lifelong learning project worker Phil Gander completes the team. "This just shows what can be achieved

in a well organised store," he said. "Congratulations and well done to the reps, they've done a great job. We're also hoping to roll this out to more Tesco stores in the division."



## 2012 Academy2

**Pictured l-r standing:** Jason Stevens, Dave Warwick, Laura McLean, William Waite, Chris Crawley, Graham Cromar, Andrew Wilson, Ian Frazer, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, Paul White, Brenda Shaw, Warren Scott, Jeremy Hearn, Bryan Watt, Dolores Leeming and Eamonn Flynn.

**Kneeling:** Mark Ellis, Mark Kelly, Angelique Audas, Kim West, Edie Hebditch, Mike Smith, Sue Perridge, Karen Shone, Nick Freeman and Jim Postings.

## Partnership on display at Tesco Cheshunt awareness day

**R**eps at Tesco Cheshunt gave the partnership agreement a new dimension when they teamed up with the company to hold a joint awareness day of the benefits of belonging to both organisations.

The team of reps were joined by Academy2 organiser William Waite, area organiser Andy Hearn, and lifelong learning project

worker Phil Gander.

"The day was a great success," said William. "We had all of our advice leaflets on show, campaign material and

Usdaw merchandise. We spoke to existing members and reminded them about FirstCall Usdaw and Legal

Plus. We asked if there were any issues members wanted us to

take up on their behalf and answered any other queries which came our way. We also made sure non-members were aware of what they could be missing out on in terms of representation, advice and other benefits.

"Meanwhile the company also displayed its various consumer offers it has for staff.

"So all-in-all it was a very worthwhile day and a big thank you to the reps and officials who made it happen."





# DISTRIBUTION SITE

A well-trained team of reps has established a strong branch set up after just four years of



Organising a massive distribution site, which is open 24/7, 364 days a year, isn't easy but the dedicated team at the Sherburn-in-Elmet site have done just that.

It has taken the best part of four years since the former Somerfield site was reopened by Wincanton as part of the Sainsbury's contract and the 15-strong team of reps has slowly but surely built the membership and established a well-trained team to look after its 700 plus members.

Driver Aidan McCarthy is the recently elected convenor at the site. He is also branch chair, shop steward, health and safety rep and a union learning rep. "We've worked hard to up the profile of the union here," he

said. "The last two years have been particularly rewarding in terms of membership growth, training for reps and the re-launch of the learning centre.

**“ We have a very good working relationship with the senior management here and that's very important ”**

"All the reps have been on as many training courses as possible, and although that has depleted the branch funds, it's money well spent. The role for the reps has expanded and it has paid off.

"The union learning reps deal

with the learning centre and provide advice on courses while the shop stewards deal with the employment-related issues and many double up as health and safety reps too. Reps are upskilled on a regular basis and fair play to the company it has been very supportive of that as well.

"We sort out most issues on site and credit to the reps who soak up a lot of the problems and deal with them effectively. We also have our own website which keeps members informed and they can use it to contact the reps and/or link in to the national Usdaw website.

"As a branch we get involved as much as possible with the union on a divisional and national basis. We had two delegates at this year's annual

delegate meeting and we also put forward a couple of propositions

"We have a very good working relationship with the senior management here and that's very important. Again that's been built up over the last few years. Don't get me wrong there's always more work to do and we have to spread that positive relationship throughout the site.

"We have reps on all shifts and in all departments and we communicate regularly with each other. It's a constant challenge to keep membership up but all inductions are covered and we pick up the majority of the new starters here.

"There is also a significant number of agency staff on site

# E LEADS THE WAY

of the Wincanton site opening, *Network* dropped in to find the secret of their success



Top team... (l-r), Kerry Wilson\*, Steven Carr\*, Aidan McCarthy\*, Andrew Frank\*, and Nathan Ward\*, (other reps not pictured, Martin Hickey\*\*, Adrian Spurgeon\*\*, Gary Oliver\*\*, Rob Sykes, Robin Gledhill, Chris Herbert, Colin Phillis, Paul Barnes, Dale Robinson and Nick Leach (all warehouse reps) \*ULRs \*\*Transport reps \*Convenor

## Lift off at 'new' learning centre

The recently re-launched learning centre has tapped into a gap in the learning agenda after it targeted admin staff with apprenticeship courses on team leading and management and business.

Union learning reps Kerry Wilson and Steven Carr have been instrumental in signing up around 70 people to the courses since the beginning of the year. "It's given the place a new lease of life," said Steven. "We teamed up with Qube Learning to provide the courses and they have proved to be really popular. The interest shown was unprecedented.

"The drivers and warehouse staff had already been covered for NVQs relevant to them, but not the admin staff, so we held an awareness day in February and it took off from there.

"The company has been very supportive and along with Usdaw has provided the know-how to get things moving. We're also planning IT, maths and English courses in partnership with a local college.

"The centre is popular and has reinvigorated the working lives of staff."

### GETTING ORGANISED ON SITE:

- Regular reps' meetings
- Regular meetings with management
- Recruit new starters at inductions
- Reps fully trained on Usdaw courses
- Reps in every department
- Reps on all shifts
- Good working relationship with management
- Popular learning centre
- Quarterly branch meetings
- Noticeboards in all areas

and we do our best to pick up them as well."

The site, which services Sainsbury's convenience and supermarkets in the North, provides a vital boost to the local economy and is one of the biggest employers in the area, which has been hard hit by the recession. Rates for staff are at the top end of the sector scales. The team have just completed negotiating a two-year deal giving a near three per cent increase for both years.

■ Do you want your site to be the next one featured in *Network*? If so then contact the editor via email on: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk) Don't forget you will have to get the agreement of your site manager/company.



# SPEAK UP ON LABOUR

Members have come up with a whole host of good ideas – based on fairness, equality and

**U**sdaw is working to make sure our members issues and concerns are heard. Members up and down the country have already been discussing what the next Labour Government should be doing when it gets back into power.

On this page you will see some of the great ideas that members have come up with at ADM, the national political conference, divisional conferences, summer school, federation schools, branch officers courses and in local branch meetings. These ideas are being submitted to Labour's national policy forum in June, but the debate must continue as the Party draws together its manifesto for the 2015 General Election, our first opportunity to get rid of this deeply damaging Coalition.



## We want to hear from you!

Tell us your policy ideas and your experiences.

- You can make your comments direct to the Labour Party at:

[www.labour.org.uk/have\\_your\\_say](http://www.labour.org.uk/have_your_say)

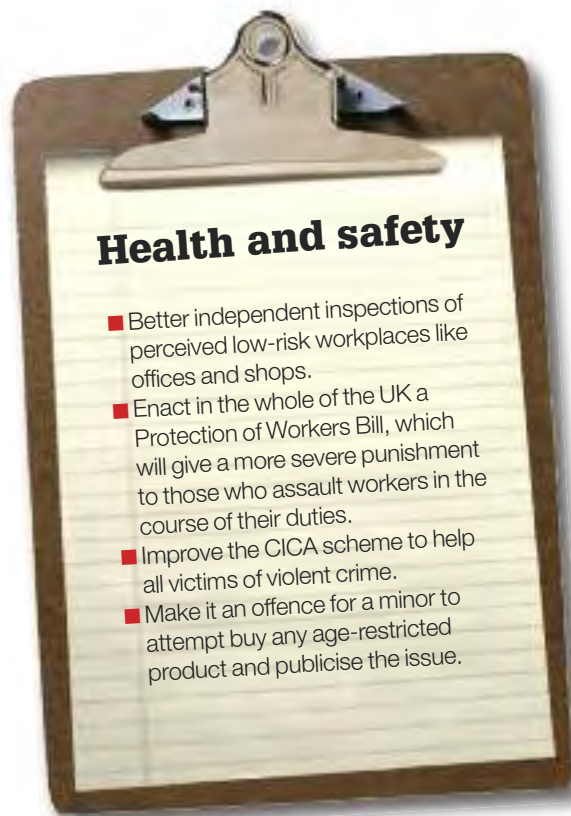
- Or be a part of Usdaw's campaign and email your thoughts, experiences and ideas to:

[usdaw4labour@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:usdaw4labour@usdaw.org.uk)



## Family incomes

- Reducing the marginal deduction rate on earnings within the universal credit scheme, which under government plans will take over from tax credits. The deduction rate for taxpayers should be reduced from 76 per cent, ideally to a maximum 70 per cent.
- Merge national insurance into income tax to simplify the system, increase the rate of payment for the higher paid and end loopholes for avoiding national insurance. There would have to be an increase in the threshold for the higher rate tax band and protection or an additional allowance for pensioners.
- Funding for informal childcare arrangements for low paid workers to include paying relatives and friends.
- School holiday childcare provision available for all.
- Parental Leave paid at maternity pay rates.
- Regulate pay-day loans and loan sharks.
- Extend Labour's Bill on A Fair Deal on Energy, which offers reduced tariffs for pensioners and to low paid families.



## Health and safety

- Better independent inspections of perceived low-risk workplaces like offices and shops.
- Enact in the whole of the UK a Protection of Workers Bill, which will give a more severe punishment to those who assault workers in the course of their duties.
- Improve the CICA scheme to help all victims of violent crime.
- Make it an offence for a minor to attempt buy any age-restricted product and publicise the issue.

## Fairness at work

- Review fees and access to employment tribunals.
- Right to unfair dismissal after completion of probationary period which should be no longer than 6 months.
- Greater TUPE protections and better redundancy consultation.
- Campaign for the living wage.
- Improve the right to recognition, particularly in multi-site companies.
- More protection for workers in collective redundancy, administration and insolvency situations.
- Statutory redundancy pay to be a day one right.
- Extend the Agency Workers Regulations to provide day one rights and close the Swedish Derogation loophole.
- Policy for fairness in flexible working to include notice of changes to make it easier to balance work and life.
- The right to have short hours contracts increased, at the instigation of the employee not the employer, where the number of hours worked is generally higher than contracted.

## Housing

- Rent regulation to stop private landlords profiteering and control the costs of housing benefit, plus controls on the quality of rented accommodation.
- Build lots of good quality council houses.

# R'S POLICIES

opportunity – to feed into Labour’s next Manifesto

## Prioritise jobs for the young

- Reintroduce Labour’s Young Person’s Guarantee (YPG), which guarantees a job, apprenticeship, education place or community project work for all under-18s, and extend to 21 years old.
- Fund a robust careers advisory service to help young people not in employment, education or training and ensure the YPG is meeting individuals’ needs and expectations.
- Help low-income families to fund their children’s post-16 education.
- Tackle workfare and fake apprenticeships to ensure that work pays for young people and they are not being exploited as cheap labour.
- Voting at age 16.



## Lifelong Learning

- Provide funding for all workers to achieve level two qualifications in basic skills, including ESOL.



## IN BRIEF

### ■ Milk jobs go as Dairy Crest cuts costs

Dairy Crest announced in April it intends to close its milk bottling dairy in Aintree, Merseyside putting 220 jobs at risk as it aims to reduce costs and sustain profitability in what it says is an ‘extremely challenging’ milk market.

Dairy Crest also said it intended to close its dairy at Fenstanton, Cambridgeshire, putting a further 250 jobs at risk. The company’s proposals are subject to a consultation period of 90 days.

General secretary John Hannett said: “This announcement came as a complete shock to our members. It is potentially devastating news for everyone who works at Aintree and for the local economy where more than 9,000 people are registered unemployed.

“While we are under no illusion about the challenges facing the milk industry, we will use the consultation process to explore every possible alternative to closure and do everything we can to support our members at this very difficult time.”

### ■ Poorest families hardest hit – TUC

The cost of living for the poorest 10 per cent of households increased by 4.1 per cent in March, eight times faster than average weekly earnings, according to the TUC.

The TUC, which tracks the cost of living for different households against average weekly earnings, shows that CPI inflation for the poorest ten per cent of households was 4.1 per cent in March, compared to 3.3 per cent for the richest households.

With average weekly earnings rising by just 0.5 per cent over the same period, wages fell in real terms by 3.6 per cent for the poorest households, the joint sharpest fall in pay for over two years. The poorest ten per cent of households have been experiencing higher inflation over the last year because they spend a larger proportion of their income on food and utility bills which have rocketed over the last few years.

## IN NUMBERS

South Wales & Western.....	48,499
Eastern.....	60,474
Midlands.....	56,480
North Eastern.....	56,370
Scottish.....	44,886
Southern.....	55,891
North West.....	92,059
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>414,659</b>



# Companies count the cost

Serious injuries sustained by shopworkers have not stopped the Government from classifying retail as 'low risk', however in reality the sector is dangerous and everyone is paying the price

National newsagent chain Martin McColl Ltd has been prosecuted for the second time in 18 months for serious safety offences.

The company, which has 1,200 stores across the country, was last week fined £25,000 and ordered to pay £14,299 costs after admitting a catalogue of criminal safety breaches at stores in Cornwall.

Magistrates heard the company had put staff and customers at a number of stores at risk from asbestos, electrical hazards, slips and poorly maintained premises with inadequate welfare facilities.

In September 2010, the firm was fined £5,000 after the branch manager of a shop in the Martin McColl chain was seriously assaulted in an early morning robbery.

IKEA have recently been prosecuted for safety offences involving fork-lift trucks in their stores. At its Bristol store, the truck driver suffered a broken arm and dislocated shoulder when the mast of his truck hit an overhead racking beam.

Meanwhile, B&Q were fined for two incidents at stores in Exeter. In the first, a worker helping to move stock was hit on the head by a pallet bearing bags of topsoil when the truck struck the racking. In the second, a visiting driver suffered serious injuries to his foot when a truck reversed into him as his lorry was being unloaded.

And Dixons has also been in court after a wire clip became lodged in one of its worker's eyes as he loaded a lorry at their Newark depot. The clips were used to secure curtain sided trailers but Dixons had failed to provide a safe method of removing them.

These are the latest incidents to raise questions about the Government stipulation that 'low risk' workplaces, including retail premises, should be exempt from routine preventive health and safety inspections by regulators.



## The Government is intent on weakening health and safety legislation

### Deregulation danger

A law intended to push forward the Government's plans to strip employment regulation and further limit or even abolish regulators will form part a key part of its plans for the next session of parliament.

The Department for Business (BIS) said the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill, trailed in the 9 May Queen's Speech, would include measures to 'reduce inspection burdens on business and strengthen the legal framework for sunset

clauses on regulation' and 'repeal unnecessary legislation, cutting the burden on business and citizens.'

A TUC spokesperson said: "Despite all the evidence, the Government retains its obsession that businesses are over-inspected.

"Changes introduced last year mean that most employers will never have the benefit of a health and safety inspection unless they report a death or serious injury. This will mean employers will be both

less likely to report injuries, and also will be less likely to take adequate measures to protect their workforce.

"We are already seeing evidence that fatalities seem to be rising in many industries as businesses cut back on health and safety. If the Government continues to give the message that good health and safety is a burden then this can only increase."

### Ideology drives policy

Chris Grayling, the minister responsible for workplace safety

has told employers he believes 'unneeded' workplace safety regulations 'stifle' economic growth.

He said "Of course we have to protect people against death and serious injury in the workplace and we won't do anything to risk this, but if we stifle their employers with unneeded rules and regulations those people won't have a job in the first place."

Families Against Corporate Killers (FACK) co-ordinator Hilda Palmer called Mr Grayling's

# Welcome for new guidelines



Usdaw has welcomed the latest move by the country's top retailers to ensure the best possible measures are in place to protect shop staff from violence and abuse.

The British Retail Consortium (BRC) has published a new best practice guide for employers, which aims to increase awareness of the impact that violence against staff has on employees and to challenge the perception that abuse of shopworkers is acceptable.

The guidelines called *Tackling Violence Against Staff*\* are endorsed by Usdaw and show

the extent of the action being taken by retailers to keep their staff safe.

These include having clear policies against violence and abuse, robust store based risk assessments, appropriate store layout, security and preventative measures, good staff training and reporting procedures and providing support for staff after incidents.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Usdaw shares the BRC's concern about the response of the police and the criminal justice system to retail crime, particularly in view of the 20 per cent cut to police budgets

which will take 16,000 police officers and 1,800 PCSOs off our streets."

BRC's head of crime, Catherine Bowen, said: "The question that remains is whether the police and criminal justice system are doing all within their power to protect the country's three million retail employees.

"Those who are violent or threatening towards our staff are as guilty of a crime as anyone who behaves that way on the street. The police response needs to reflect that."

\**Tackling Violence Against Staff* is available online at: [www.brc.org.uk/brc\\_home.asp](http://www.brc.org.uk/brc_home.asp)

## IN BRIEF

### ■ TUC reps' survey wants the view from shopfloor

The ninth biennial TUC survey of safety reps is now underway and is designed to provide the TUC and individual unions with information about what safety reps do and what their experiences and needs are.

The information is needed so that the TUC and unions can do more to help safety reps.

It also gives the TUC the ammunition it needs to ensure that safety reps' views and experiences are better reflected in public policy debates and in the work of the Health and Safety Executive.

It is vitally important that as many Usdaw reps as possible take part so that the results of the survey reflect the issues that matter in the sectors where Usdaw members work.

Copies are being circulated to divisions and branches.

The link to the online form will be emailed to reps on the email circulation list or contact the health and safety section at central office for a copy.

You can also complete the survey online at:

[www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-20893f0.cfm/formbuilder/154/p/1](http://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-20893f0.cfm/formbuilder/154/p/1)

The deadline for the return of completed forms is Friday 29 June.

### ■ Call to H&S reps to visit the Usdaw website

The site is packed with information and resources. The safety reps' forum is a great place to exchange information and ideas.

Recent threads include problems with faulty check out chairs and how to persuade managers to let reps use their legal rights. To register for the forum go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/myunion/getinvolved/forums/registration.aspx](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/myunion/getinvolved/forums/registration.aspx).

## and putting workers at even more risk – TUC warns

comments 'ideological claptrap' based on 'no evidence whatsoever'. She said: "Too many regulations don't kill people, too few regulations do and the Government is failing to protect workers from serious safety risks."

Critics refuted government claims about safety regulation being a job killer pointing out that good safety enforcement makes business sense. Each 'accidental' death at work costs over £1 million. Each occupational cancer death - and TUC estimates there are over 15,000 each year - comes at a cost to society of over £2.5m.

### Reporting rules change

From 6 April 2012 the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) are changing.

Following a recommendation from Lord Young's report, intended to reduce the 'burden' on business, the trigger point for reporting will increase from over-three-days to over-seven-days incapacitation (not counting the day on which the accident happened).

'Incapacitation' means that the worker is absent or is unable to do work that they would normally do. The deadline by

which the over-seven-day injury must be reported will increase to 15 days from the day of the accident.

Employers must still keep a record of all over three day injuries. The HSE has advised that the accident book record will be enough to meet this recording duty. But there is some confusion as there is no requirement on the standard accident book form to record the length of absence.

New guidance that explains the change is available to download from the HSE website at: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/173.pdf](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/173.pdf)



**SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:**

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✉ network@usdaw.org.uk



**DEDICATION**

**Honouring Harry**

It gave me great pleasure to present retiring executive council member Harry McAllister with this year's Exceptional Service award at the Scottish divisional conference in March.

Harry has been active for 37 years, from shop steward, health and safety rep and convenor at Greggs bakery through to his official roles as chair of the divisional council (the longest serving in the division), and executive council member.

I first met Harry at a union course in Treesbank back in the early '80s, and we have remained good friends ever since. We also sat on the divisional council at the same time, and have had many good times together over the years.

Harry is a very worthy recipient of this award. I would like to congratulate and also thank him on behalf of the union, the Scottish division and myself for all the excellent work and service he has given over the years. I wish Harry and wife Mary all the very best for their future.

**LAWRENCE WASON**  
Divisional officer  
Scottish division



**STAR LETTER**

**GIVING THEIR ALL**

**Charity begins at ADM**

A big thank you from the national youth committee to everyone at ADM who donated their hard earned pennies to the this year's charity, the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA).

A total of £2,187.33 was donated including £207 raised by president Jeff Broome.

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

If you weren't at ADM or didn't get to give any money, why not visit the MNDA website where you can find out more about the work they do and donate.

[www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

**NATIONAL YOUTH COMMITTEE**



Fund raisers....(l-r) Chris Gilmour, Sachin Patel, David Owens and Damien Wiltshire

**Plus**  
£50 will be donated from Network as the national youth committee's letter is this issue's winner

**YOUNG GUNS**

**Youth delegates make future bright for Usdaw**

I recently had the pleasure of attending the TUC Youth Conference as support for our youth delegates.

I must say that our delegates were an absolute credit to Usdaw. They all participated well in the debates and workshops, and if they are the future of the union then Usdaw is in very good hands.

Particular praise must go to Jade Sheldon and Rachel Goodwin, both were first time

conference speakers and yet dealt with it as if they were established public orators.

So thank you once again to a great group, Daniel Thurgood, Jade Sheldon, Michael Hartley, Dex Miller and Rachel Goodwin for what I can only describe as an inspiring conference.

**JAMIE GULL**  
Area organiser, London office



**30**  
YEARS OF USDAW MEMBERSHIP

**A TOTAL OF 320**  
YEARS OF USDAW MEMBERSHIP

Loyal service providers.....1. Matthew Clarke from East Midlands Tesco E32 celebrates 30 years  
2. Members of the former Llangadog Creamery receiving their 30 and 50 year awards.

## Many hands make Spotlight Day work: campaign picture round-up



1. Maghull town centre 2. Wembley Park Tesco Extra 3. Preston city centre 4. Redditch Tesco  
5. Irlam Tesco 6. Gravesend Tesco Metro 7. Truro Tesco 8. Boroughbridge Morrisons

## Learning centre opening a success

Here is the opening of the new learning centre at Morrisons distribution depot in Sittingbourne, Kent.

This is the first learning centre within Morrisons nationally and hopes to cover education in English, maths, digital photography, and more.

It was a very successful day with support from Peter Chalklin, Jim Carty, Usdaw reps and store management.

**SUE PRYNN**  
Area Organiser  
Faversham office



## Duo do their division proud

During recruitment week fellow rep Kate Ashby and myself recruited seven new members and density in-store at Cheltenham Tesco is now 75 per cent.

I am a Tesco national forum rep, health and safety, branch chair, shop steward. Kate is branch secretary, shop steward and health & safety rep. I have been a rep since 2007 and Kate since 2003.

The density in store is one of the highest in South Wales and Western division.

**STEVE NEWMAN**  
Cheltenham and  
Tewkesbury A69



### SUCCESS

## Campaign coup

The rep team at Tesco Seacroft ran a campaign week on safe journeys to work in March including a spotlight day.

This campaign saw ten new members join Usdaw. Another win to the campaign is that the store took the decision to allow staff to walk through the store to attend and leave work, rather than use the backdoor, as it was a very secluded area and a long walk around the outside of the building where many members have had previous bad experiences with groups of youths.

**ANGELIQUE AUDAS**  
North East division, Academy2

### COURSE OF ACTION

## Preparing to pass on their passion for learning



I recently finished a 'union learning representative 5-day introductory course' in Nottingham with other union members from various Tesco and Co-op stores.

Tutors Paul and Colin made the course very successful and friendly. We also had a

visit and a nice welcome from lifelong learning project worker Neil Chapman and mobile union learning rep Julie Day.

**RADMILA LUKIC**  
Northamptonshire Area Tesco E47



Youth unemployment hits 1,000,000

Eurozone break-up 'could trigger new Great Depression'

Austerity blamed for Britain's double-dip

ONS figures report 0.3%

# YOU'D THINK THE GOVERNMENT HAD BETTER THINGS TO DO THAN ATTACK YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK.

Elderly 'losing out by £500m a year in the funding of care'

Longest slump in peacetime as Britain slides into recession

KIDS' MISERY AS 1M JOBS AXED IN CRUNCH

IT'S NOT AS IF THIS COUNTRY was exactly short of issues. We face urgent problems like a stricken economy, record youth unemployment and the gap between the super-rich and everyone else. Yet the government is devoting precious time and energy to attack, of all things, rights at work.

A stealthy series of changes that add up to a wholesale assault.

*Already an extra year to wait for protection against unfair sackings, with reduced maternity rights and more dangerous workplaces in the pipeline.*

These sly attacks have nothing to do with getting the economy moving. They

come from the same people who fought the minimum wage and paid holidays.

By slicing away a bit at a time, they hope no-one will notice. But we have, and you should too.

Visit the website to find out more, and tell ministers they've been rumbled.



VISIT [WWW.STOPEMPLOYMENTWRONGS.ORG.UK](http://WWW.STOPEMPLOYMENTWRONGS.ORG.UK) TO FIND OUT MORE

