

NETWORK



NOV/DEC
2014

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw Activists

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Young activists

HEALTH AND SAFETY

RECRUITMENT DRIVE

TRANSPORT FOCUS

All Young Workers
Have a Legal Right
to Paid Holiday

... SUMMER SCHOOL2 ... RETAIL TRADES ... RESPECT WEEK ...



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Comment

General secretary John Hannett

Usdaw reps and activists can look back on 2014 with a great deal of pride and satisfaction.

Why? Because despite the many challenges faced across all sectors; rescheduling, underemployment, downward pressure on pay increases to name just a few, Usdaw reps have stood up for our members.

Everyone has played their part from area organisers, activists on the two Academies, to stand-down reps, branch officials, union learning reps, safety reps and the delegates who attended one of the many trade and divisional conferences held this year.

I want to remind our activists that there are plenty of opportunities to get more involved in Usdaw beyond the workplace. Usdaw holds more trade conferences than any other union. In addition to our Annual Delegate Meeting we hold weekend national conferences in transport, retail and warehouse and distribution, with biennial events for Sata, food manufacturing and home shopping. We also send delegations to the Labour Party and TUC. There are get-togethers for black members, young workers and members from the LGBT community too.

Add all this to the divisional conferences held twice a year in all divisions (not to mention Federation weekends) and you can see the chances to participate and make a further impression in the union are many.

It was also great to see such a great turnout at the TUC rallies in London, Belfast and Glasgow this year and see Usdaw activists involved in the Pride marches throughout the UK.

So if you are a new rep or an experienced one who has not taken the chance to get more involved, speak to your local area organiser to find out the opportunities available to you. You won't be disappointed, in fact I'm sure you'll feel energised by meeting up with more like-minded people who share your passion for fairness, equality and justice.

Once again many thanks to all of our activists for their hard work this year and we can now look forward to 2015. On behalf of the executive council, have a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



Watch

John reflects on 2014 and looks ahead to 2015



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Usdaw
FOR THE RETAIL AND
DISTRIBUTION SECTOR

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Google **Flickr/UsdawUnion** to browse pages of union photos from conferences to campaigns and recruitment.

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Reps' opinions revealed

The majority of Usdaw reps are positive about their role and the support they receive from the union, a new independent survey has shown.

More than 5,000 questionnaires were sent out by post and 5,000 by email during the summer by

research company Insight.

This is the fourth reps' survey in the last eight years and the replies from the union's activists continue to paint Usdaw in a positive light and flag up possible areas of improvement.

Some of the key indicators show:

- 93 per cent are proud to be an Usdaw rep and 88 per

cent find their work as a rep varied and interesting.

- 80 per cent believe they make a difference to the lives of their members and 84 per cent say they are able to resolve issues with management in their workplace on behalf of members.
- 76 per cent feel part of the bigger Usdaw team and 65

per cent believe the union's profile and image in their workplace is good.

- 70 per cent of reps say they receive the support they need and 74 per cent say they get good support from their area organiser. Additionally 71 per cent say other people in the division or at central office provide support.

Your views...

Development

The survey also looked closely at the Rep Development Pack launched within the last two years and specifically aimed at reducing the drop-out rate among newly elected reps. Once again the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Some of the key indicators show:

- 89 per cent said the Quick Start Guide provided them with the information they needed about their new role
- 87 per cent had their induction within 59 per cent within four weeks of becoming a rep
- Contact between new reps and area organisers in the crucial early stages was very high at 89 per cent and 84 per cent of reps received early access to training courses
- 93 per cent of new reps said they have a good understanding of their role with 71 per cent saying their training/development helped them focus on their role.
- Overall reps remain confident that the training and development they receive helps them to build the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to be effective
- 84 per cent believe their training has helped them represent members, inform

members of the benefits of union membership and raise issues with managers on behalf of their members.

Participation

Reps who attended national, trade and divisional conferences were asked what they thought of these events, the survey said:

- 87 per cent who went to ADM said it helped them understand Usdaw's purpose and direction with 82 per cent agreeing attending ADM helped them do a good job for their members
- 86 per cent who went to a trade or divisional conference said it focused on the relevant issues to their members

Campaigns

The Freedom From Fear, Supporting Parents and Carers and Promoting Legal Plus campaigns all scored above 70 per cent when reps were asked about their knowledge of them.

However, Checkout Learning, Pensions Awareness and the Cost of Living campaigns were less well known scoring below 50 per cent.

Suggestions for future campaigns included the Living Wage and Health and Safety.

Your ideas...

When asked for their own suggestions on what 'Udaw can do more of?'

The replies included:

- more workplace visits from area organisers,
- more training,
- better provision of up-to-date information.

John Hannett says:

"As part of our ongoing national action plan we will continue to build on the Rep Development Programme, improve our communications strategy and engage with social media as part of our campaigning work."

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The music of protest and liberty – free

Fans of traditional folk music inspired by workers' struggles can indulge themselves with a compilation offering from the General Federation of Trade Unions in association with Topic Records.

Voice and Vision – songs of resistance, democracy and peace is a double CD with 29 tracks featuring classic performers and up-and-coming artists.

Network has free copies to give away to the first ten activists who email: network@usdaw.org.uk or call 0161 249 2444.

More folk offerings from Topic Records at: www.topicrecords.co.uk

Academy call for reps



ACADEMY ORGANISERS AT THEIR END OF TERM GET-TOGETHER

Active reps could improve their skills, increase their confidence, and enhance their career prospects by signing up for next year's Academy1.

While this year's trainees completed their secondment in November the application process and timetable is already in place for 2015.

Since 2003 Usdaw has trained more than 470 reps as part of its Academy programme – a groundbreaking initiative that sees reps spend six months with Usdaw recruiting and organising in different

workplaces in their divisions.

All Academy trainees are looked after by area organisers and also receive on-the-job training giving them a recognised qualification at the end of the programme.

Application forms and an information pack are now available by email from academy@usdaw.org.uk or by calling 0161 224 2804. Completed applications should be returned no later than 30 January 2015.

Successful applicants will then be invited to an

assessment centre during March with the final decision being notified to candidates by the end of March.

The Academy runs from May – November 2015 and successful applicants will be with Usdaw for the six months and then return to their respective workplaces.

Many former Academy trainees have gone on to be selected for area organiser jobs with Usdaw and other unions.

You can view interviews with previous Academy organisers at: www.usdaw.org.uk

Dairy Crest in milk sale

Usdaw is concerned following reports Muller-Wiseman is set to buy Dairy Crest's liquid milk business in an £80m deal, subject to the approval of the competition authorities.

Usdaw represents members employed as milk round staff, and at the dairies at Foston in Derbyshire and Severnside near Gloucester.

"Our priority will be to safeguard jobs, maximise employment and protect terms and conditions of employment," said national officer David Johnson.

Scotland to elect leaders

Usdaw's ruling body – the executive council – has decided to nominate Jim Murphy MP as leader and Kezia Dugdale MSP as deputy leader of the Labour Party in Scotland.

The elections follow the resignations of Johann Lamont and Anas Sarwar.

"Jim is an Usdaw member and has a long history of working closely with us to further our campaigns and deliver on the issues that matter to our members," said John Hannett.

Usdaw calls for £7 NMW

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) should be at least £7 an hour from October next year, Usdaw has said as part of its evidence to the Low Pay Commission – the body that recommends increases to the Government.

Usdaw has also reiterated its call for the adult rate to be paid at 18 and not 21 as the current rules allow. In October 2014 the adult rate went up to £6.50.

The union also wants to see a significant increase in the apprentice rate, currently £2.73.

New holiday pay ruling

Overtime, shift premiums and bonuses should be used in the calculation of holiday pay, says John Hannett, following a decision by the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) in November.

"Many workers regularly work extra hours on top of their contractual hours and holiday pay should be based on their average and not their basic pay. We will study the decision of the EAT and advise and represent members who may have been underpaid holiday pay."

Expert advice on offer in fast moving sector

Transport specialists joined up with activists to debate the big issues in the industry including special emphasis on the dotcom sector.

Professional drivers

The transport conference represents the views of all Usdaw members who drive for a living, national officer **Irene Radigan** told delegates.

"Usdaw's transport section has experience of dealing with issues important to all professional drivers including; graduated fixed penalty fees, moving and shifting loads and driver health and wellbeing," she said.

"I want to emphasise that dotcom drivers are an integral part of the growing transport sector and share similar problems to their counterparts in the LGV sector. I was delighted with the attendance and participation in the special dotcom workshop held this year for the first time,"

"We know safety is a key issue along with pressure on delivery times.

"I also want all of our drivers to be

Internet fuels dotcom rise

In a special workshop 17 delegates (around a third of the conference) looked at the important issues for the dotcom sector, the following featured highly:

- Driver safety
- Route scheduling
- Working time
- Evening and late night deliveries
- The low profile of the industry

Look out for updates on the website and future issues of *Network* and *arena*.

in Usdaw's Transport Distress Fund which protects members who incur penalties while driving at work," she said.

Safety risks

Driver conduct on alcohol and drug abuse, mobile phone abuse, stress and tiredness are the key contributing factors to road safety risks, transport expert **Beverley Bell** told conference.

The senior traffic commissioner warned delegates that the slightest of errors could have devastating consequences for drivers and other road-users.

"We're expected to use smartphones and tablets in our work environment so as the technology advances we need to be clear about what is an offence," she said.

"There's also a huge amount of ignorance as to how long it takes for alcohol to leave your system.

"The issue is how do we, as responsible road users, manage our alcohol and that's something we need to think about as an industry.

"It's really important that organisations have an occupational road risk policy. Employers have a duty of care to their employees, but we know some people take risks.

"As union officials you need to ask



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CONFERENCE DELEGATION



IRENE RADIGAN



BEVERLEY BELL



DOUG RUSSELL



RICHARD BURDEN MP

your employers to provide you with proper processes and procedures to carry out that duty of care.

“The industry that we all work in is a fabulous industry, it provides an essential service but has an undeserved poor public image. We need to put this right.”

Drug policies

The number of people killed in drink-drive related accidents has decreased significantly over 50 years from about 1,600 a year to just under 250, underlining the success of the campaign, explained Usdaw’s safety officer **Doug Russell** as he ran a special workshop on drug and alcohol policies.

Doug was keen to stress the importance of the responsibility of professional drivers and the importance of workplace policies regarding the issue.

“A good drug and alcohol policy should be welfare based, focusing on looking after people, rehabilitation,

and educating workers about the risks. Undoubtedly there will be occasions where someone’s actions warrant a disciplinary procedure but that should be considered a separate issue.”

“If policies are going to be successful they’ve got to be developed in consultation with the workers they’re going to apply to.

“That’s why it’s important that the union is involved right from the outset so that we can advise what’s sensible and what’s fair, so the reps can feedback the information to the members that they represent.”

Career opportunities

The industry is facing a crisis with many LGV drivers reaching retirement and not enough young people willing to enter the sector, Labour’s shadow transport minister **Richard Burden** MP told delegates.

“Often professional driving isn’t seen as an inviting job or even a career. So it remains a huge challenge

as to how we can get more young people excited about the profession. We need to ensure the proper quality of apprenticeships in retail and logistics with a focus on continuous training.

“That’s why the work of Usdaw is so important, protecting the members, standing up for better health and safety standards, promoting the industry, and that’s why I see it as an essential part of the road minister’s role to support Usdaw to do that.

“We know there’s been a huge rise in internet shopping, it’s expected to be a third of all sales by 2025, and the infrastructure is struggling to keep up with the demand.

“We need to consider the demands of growth, technological change, population shift and behavioural change.

“The need for effective and reliable transport has never been more important. You and the people you represent are crucial to that.”



Carlyann Hampson

Carlyann is a driver for Erith dotcom Tesco and combines her part-time job with her studies. She became a health and safety rep earlier this year.

“The more I get involved with the union the more I’m enjoying it. I have a good relationship with my employer; they’re supportive of my union responsibilities and efficient at sorting out issues.

“Lone working can be a problem within dotcom, especially in some parts of London. We’ve had a couple of drivers threatened at knifepoint. Drivers have had their windows punched. Last

week we had a driver robbed. It’s definitely something that we’re trying to address, particularly regarding the higher risk areas.

“It’s good to come to events like the transport conference to understand exactly what’s going on within other companies in comparison with your own. It’s been very good and I’ve picked up lots of useful information that I’m looking forward to taking back to my dotcom centre.”



Expertise on offer for summer school2 reps

Activists spent an intense week at Wortley Hall, Yorkshire, as part of this year's summer school2 where they choose to study in one of three groups – Unions and Organising, Women and Organising or Unions and Politics.

The eight-day residential school is open to reps who have been to summer school1 or completed the Academy1 programme. It is held every September.

Network caught up with four reps to hear what they had to say about their week...

Dave Hammond

Warehouse worker Dave Hammond followed his stint at summer school1 last year with a week studying in the Unions and Organising group.

Dave has been a rep for more than three years and combines it with his health and safety role at the Nisa/DHL site. "Summer school1 is an ideal building block for understanding the union and summer school2 is the perfect follow on," said the 58 year-old, who originates from California but settled in Harlow, Essex in 2000 after marrying his British wife.

"We looked at organising vulnerable workers, mapping the workplace and building an on-site structure that uses the expertise and the passion of all the reps. It's all about good organisation, leadership, and making things happen.

"We had a good mix of reps from different companies, a variety of jobs and across the divisions and we all got on well together. It's a fantastic learning experience, picking up new ideas and deepening our knowledge. It's hard work but great fun too."

Jayne Longstaff

Morrisons café assistant Jayne Longstaff has really 'come out of her shell' since becoming a rep five years ago and is now confident speaking up whatever the circumstances.

Jayne's progress is all the more remarkable as she was diagnosed

with dyslexia quite late on in her school days and had struggled up until then.

"Usdaw training courses are very supportive and have made me the person I am now – confident, willing to express my opinion and eager to help others," said the 34 year-old.

"In my Unions and Organising group we looked at equalities, health and safety and the history of unions which I found very interesting. We also ran a campaign day on saving the NHS and that was great.

"Meeting reps from other workplaces with different jobs makes you understand their issues too and encourages you to look at the bigger picture.

"I used to be as quiet as a mouse but not anymore, being involved in Usdaw has opened my mind."

Caroline Williamson

It has been a similar story for Morrisons code checker Caroline Williamson whose four years as a rep has transformed her life.

"I was a young mum, didn't have much of a social life and was low in confidence, but with the union's help I'm now much more knowledgeable.

"I can advise members on a range of issues – especially maternity rights," said the 39 year-old, who now works at the Warrington store having transferred from her native Glasgow.

"I was in the Women and Organising group and found it all fascinating.

"We had a talk on pensions, which was excellent, and it was great to meet and listen to reps from different companies and learn about their

procedures and ways of dealing with issues.

"Being at summer school isn't like going 'back to school', the tutors are very supportive, everyone learns together and at your own pace and it's a relaxed and informal way to study. Don't get me wrong it's not easy but it is very enjoyable."

Alan Woodhouse

Morrisons cleaner Alan Woodhouse had a 'great week' in the Unions and Politics group, ideal for a man who is passionate about getting more disabled people involved in politics and encouraging democratic debate.

"I have cerebral palsy and dyslexia but it doesn't stop me being involved," said the 54 year-old, who has been a rep for nine years in the North East division.

"I wanted to look at the history of the union and politics, how the system works and the philosophy and economics behind it.

"I'm also interested in the equalities debate especially the attacks on disabled students by the Coalition and the bigotry of the far-right Parties.

"I'm a firm believer in open, healthy and constructive debate, argument leads to knowledge.

I've been impressed with MPs like Jack Ashley and David Blunkett and would love to see more disabled people, whether their disability is visible or not, involved in politics. After all there's no disability in passion.

"We have to avoid apathy at all cost and get people out to vote, hopefully for Labour. I've had a brilliant week and would do it all over again."



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SUMMER SCHOOL2 2014



DAVE HAMMOND



JAYNE LONGSTAFF



CAROLINE WILLIAMSON



ALAN WOODHOUSE



Big changes challenge reps in tough sector

Despite riding out the 2008 recession the retail sector faces its toughest phase for decades with restructuring at Morrisons, Co-op, Tesco, Asda and Sainsbury's – with Usdaw reps in the firing line...

Paddy Lillis

That was the message from deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** to delegates at the union's second biggest national event the Retail Trades conference, held in Manchester in October.

"Our members have the problem of low hours and under-employment and in the last year all of the big retailers have announced major restructuring as they respond to lower growth and the challenge of the hard-discounters, and anti-trade union, companies like Aldi and Lidl.

"These are tough times; job losses, hours cuts, profits fall, slower store openings and the financial scandals at the Co-op bank and Tesco.

"But beyond the hype around Aldi and Lidl, Tesco is still a formidable force with around 28 per cent of the grocery market, Sainsbury's has 16, Morrisons 11 and the Co-op with six per cent still has a bigger market share than Aldi.

"So the big four are still our main focus but we have to remain committed and ensure we are as well-organised as we can be and systematic in our approach to non-members in the sector.

"Looking ahead, we will be targeting Aldi and Lidl distribution centres in the first instance but make no mistake we face a tough battle to make inroads in to these anti-union companies.

"Whatever the Tories say we know the recovery is very weak," he said. "Inflation and unemployment may be falling but an average worker is still £50 a week worse off."

What the reps said...

Members should be paid holiday pay based on their average working hours

not their contractual ones, said **Bryony Hamblin** (South Wales and Western). "Workers constantly work over their low hours contracts and this should be reflected in their holiday pay. For example, paying average earnings for all holidays, this would be calculated on average hours worked for the 12 weeks up to the first day of their holiday."

Staff are not workhorses and inadequate staffing levels leads to a demoralised workforce, said **Allan Kell** (North Eastern). "Employers have to recognise this otherwise sickness goes up and mental health issues too. Our members are the backbone and engine room of retail."

Barry Wiggins (North Eastern) backed Allan's call for better staffing levels, as did **Wendy Miller** and **Roseann McAllister** (Scottish) **Douglas Pearce** (South Wales and Western) and **Graham Brooks** (North West).

Delegates also backed Scottish division **Janet Thompson's** call to challenge Sainsbury's over their labour matching programme, New Year's Day opening and night shift closure plan. Scotland's **Linda MacFarlane** successfully called for the renegotiation of the policy and procedure when an in-store rep is derecognised at Morrisons.

A call for more prominent displays of Freedom From Fear campaign material was also carried.

The proposition on a separate conference for van/dotcom drivers was lost and the proposition on reformulating the Tesco national pay team was referred to the executive council for consideration.

John Hannett

Low pay, job insecurity and safety at work were the biggest issues facing retail members, general secretary **John Hannett** told conference as he took part in a wide-ranging Q&A with delegates.

"We know it's tough for our members and reps. We know the Coalition has attacked our rights at work, cut benefits and added to the cost of living crisis.

"That's why Usdaw will continue to invest in its reps with the best training and support. We are all aware of the problems at the Co-op and Tesco, in fact at all of the big retailers. But what we can't do is let the anti-union companies take their place."

Delegates asked questions on the Scottish Referendum, the Living Wage, UKIP, partnership agreements, the Co-op and communications.

"Many thanks to all of our reps for their hard work this year. We may not agree with each other on everything but we respect each other's right to be heard and voice our opinions. Don't forget Usdaw holds more conferences than any other union – giving reps the ideal forums for debate."



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BIG ISSUES *Talking points*

...for retail

- Hours rescheduling
- Hours cuts
- Longer trading hours
- Fewer staff
- Safety in-store
- Short hours contracts and holiday pay
- Low pay and the benefit system
- Hostile management
- Work/life balance

...for society

- Cost of living crisis
- Fall in wages
- Housing shortage
- Rise in energy bills
- The NHS
- Clamping down on tax avoiding companies like Amazon, Google, Starbucks and Vodafone



WENDY MILLER

“Workers constantly work over their low hours contracts and this should be reflected in their holiday pay.”

Bryony Hamblin: South Wales & Western



ALLAN KELL



JANET THOMPSON



BRYONY HAMBLIN



“Inadequate staffing levels lead to a demoralised workforce and higher absenteeism. We’re not workhorses”

Allan Kell: North Eastern



EDNA YOUNG

“Looking ahead, make no mistake we face a tough battle to make inroads in to anti-union companies like Aldi and Lidl.”

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis



GRAHAM BROOKS



BARRY WIGGINS



ROSEANN MCALLISTER



JULIE HART

“Many thanks to all of our reps for their hard work this year. We will continue to invest in our reps with the best training and support.”

General secretary John Hannett



JOHN HANNETT



PADDY LILLIS



JEFF BROOME



PAULINE FOULKES



JOANNE MCGUINNESS



JOHN GORLE

All eyes on May 2015 as union gets ready



USDW LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE DELEGATION 2014



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Watch John Hannett on this year's conference.

Usdaw's Labour Party delegation spoke up for members on pay, zero-hours and safety at work.

Zero-hours

After almost five years of Tory-led Coalition Government the scandal of zero-hours and short-hours contracts is getting worse, general secretary John Hannett told the Labour Party conference.

"There are 1.4 million people on zero-hours contracts, 1.5 million agency workers and 3.4 million workers under-employed," he said. "The lives of too many working people are being blighted by poverty with no security of earnings, no guaranteed hours, or the chance to get on the housing ladder.

"The Tories boast of creating one million new jobs – but these so-called jobs are low paid, short-hours and insecure – that's nothing to be proud of.

"We believe workers on zero hours

contracts who are working regular hours should have the right to a contract reflecting their normal working hours. Employers should be under an obligation to offer a worker a contract reflecting an employee's regular normal hours. The starting point for assessing regular normal working hours should be a reference period of 12 weeks.

"Only Labour is committed to decency and fairness and to provide prosperity for everyone. Only Labour has said it will tackle zero-hours contracts, end the abuse of agency workers and build an economy for us all to enjoy."

Call to members to get involved

Usdaw members cannot afford another five years of Tory-led Government, John Hannett warned delegates at a fringe meeting, and went on to urge activists to join the campaign to elect Labour.

"We need our members and reps

to get out and support Labour candidates especially in the marginal seats," he said. "Time is short, it's less than six months to the general election.

"We need strong, active and inclusive Labour campaigns in our communities.

"The strength of these local campaigns rely on two things: How well rooted they are in the local community tackling people's concerns, alongside lots of enthusiastic people engaged and participating.

"Part of the answer is for local working people to be central to the effort, particularly trade unionists. They know the issues, care about where they live and are well placed to get across Labour's message to their colleagues, friends, families and neighbours.

"Working people need a Labour Government in order to make real progress on the issues important to them, like tackling the cost of living

THE TORIES PROMISED THEY'D CHANGED AND THEN GAVE US THE BEDROOM TAX
NHS PRIVATISATION
 AND A TAX CUT FOR MILLIONAIRES

WE'LL UNDO THE DAMAGE

Rachel Reeves
Health Secretary, Shadow Health and Pensions

WE WANT TO SEE THE NEXT GENERATION HAVING
GREATER OPPORTUNITIES THAN THE LAST
 BUT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN LIVING MEMORY
THIS IS AT RISK
 THAT'S NOT SOMETHING WE CAN ACCEPT

Chuka Umunna
Shadow Secretary for Business, Innovation and Skills



ED MILIBAND



OUR CHALLENGE
 IS TO EARN OUR WAY OUT OF THE
 TORIES' COST OF LIVING CRISIS

OUR PLAN
 IS TO CREATE MORE GOOD JOBS, BOOST SKILLS
 AND RESTORE THE BROKEN LINK BETWEEN THE
 WEALTH OF THE NATION AND FAMILY FINANCES

Ed Balls
Shadow Secretary for Education



JOHN HANNETT



LABOUR CREATED THE NHS
IT HAS SERVED OUR COUNTRY WELL FOR 65 YEARS
 BUT NOW IT'S UNDER THREAT

LABOUR WILL LEAD THE FIGHT TO PROTECT AN NHS
 THAT PUTS PEOPLE BEFORE PROFITS

Andy Burnham
Shadow Secretary of State for Health

UNDER DAVID CAMERON, THE COST
 OF EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS
HAS SOARED
 BUT PAY HAS FLATLINED

WE'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE THAT
PEOPLE CAN AFFORD TO LIVE ON THE WAGE THEY EARN

Gloria De Piero
Shadow Secretary for Women and Equalities



PADDY LILLIS

crisis, having a properly funded health service, building houses for low-paid workers and much more."

Labour's plans

Usdaw is backing Ed Miliband's plans to build 200,000 houses a year if Labour are elected at the next general election.

Labour's plan for Britain's future sets out details on New Homes Corporations which aims to:

- Provide assurances to landowners and house builders that land will be developed.
- Give certainty to the public on the delivery of additional infrastructure.
- Provide more competition in house building.

The Lyons Commission on house building and planning estimates that New Homes Corporations could increase and accelerate the delivery of up to 500,000 homes.

John Hannett said: "There is no doubt that we have a shortage of affordable housing in this country

and that problem particularly affects low-paid workers.

"For many, home ownership is just a dream, because they cannot afford the necessary deposit to get a mortgage, and the private rental sector is consequently very expensive, with too many of our members being ripped off by landlords. For our members this poses significant problems. So it is very welcome that a future Labour government is committed to addressing the issue."

Protecting workers

The Coalition must do more to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse, campaigns officer Karen Whitefield told a fringe meeting sponsored by the Citizen Card organisation.

"More than 300 shopworkers are assaulted every day while simply doing their job," she said. "Often those assaults are caused by age identification and underage people

illegally attempting to buy restricted products, like alcohol and cigarettes.

"So we very much support the Citizen Card, which provides a robust age identification card that helps take the guesswork out of applying the law.

"We are very concerned that the current Government has rejected, on five occasions, a Protection of Workers Bill that will provide stiffer penalties for those who assault shopworkers.

"It is only right that when parliament expects shopworkers to enforce the law on age-restricted sales, parliament should provide robust protections for those on the frontline."

Paddy Lillis

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis was elected vice-chair of the Labour Party's national executive committee and will serve a 12 month term which will end after the 2015 Labour conference next September.

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REPS' CHECKLIST

SPEAK TO YOUR
MANAGER ABOUT
TIME OFF TO
ORGANISE AN
EVENT

IDENTIFY AREAS
IN YOUR
WORKPLACE
WHERE
MEMBERSHIP
IS LOW

ORDER
RECRUITMENT
LEAFLETS AND
PROMOTIONAL
MATERIALS

CONTACT YOUR
AREA ORGANISER
OR LOCAL OFFICE
FOR MORE
DETAILS

MORE MEMBERS
MEAN MORE
INFLUENCE
IN YOUR
WORKPLACE

ARRANGE YOUR
TEAM OF REPS
ON A ROTA TO
COVER ALL
SHIFTS

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Usdaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers



“ Membership Week is all about activists and officials working together to make sure we sign up as many non-members as possible. It's not just about the numbers, although they are important, it's about having more influence both at work with employers and in society with politicians who are making decisions day-in-day-out on issues that affect our members. Start planning now how you can get involved. ”

General secretary John Hannett

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In the spotlight **Matthew Price**

Midlands division's Matthew Price talks to Network about his experiences as a rep...

I became active because I saw some of the work that the reps were doing and was intrigued. Having never needed one, I was surprised at what they did for staff on the shopfloor. So I decided that I wanted to help others who were unable to help themselves.

The best thing about being active in Usdaw is I get to help people and I get to meet new people within the union. I am given the opportunity to increase my knowledge in ways that benefit Usdaw, but more importantly the members that are in the workplace.

The downside would be that other people feel that I am slacking off from my work duties when I am involved with union activities. Also not being able to get the decision that the member wants to get from a meeting with management.

The most important issue for my members is that their working hours are constantly changing through the ideal schedules process. Plus many members always ask about the Living Wage within the workplace.

Since I became an activist

I believe I am more organised than before I started with the union. I am now more analytical when solving problems. Looking at both sides of the story.

The advice I would give to a member thinking about becoming a rep is that it's voluntary and takes up your time but is very rewarding on an emotional level. You have to remember that people will talk to you in confidence. There is always help and tutoring for you and that you are never on your own. You will belong to a huge team.

The Tory-led Coalition's policy on the bedroom tax has raised concerns in my workplace. However, not many members talk about politics, they tend to talk more about their work-related problems.

If I was prime minister I would introduce a law that would make it possible for our children's children's children to have a future that is safe sustainable and happy.

Recruitment has been difficult in the past two years. The reason for this is due to our store having a high density of members. We have the same list of non-members each recruitment drive. Each will always give the same reason for not wanting to join. Even though this is the case I never tire in

trying to get their signature.

If I could change anything at Usdaw, I would ask stand-down recruiters to collate a list of problems that members have within their stores. Then use this information and go back to the employers stating that certain problems are occurring on a larger scale. Members and non-members would then see that we are looking after the workers.

I hope to participate in a four week stint of stand-down for the union. If this is enjoyable and I overcome my fear of driving past my street, I hope to try for Academy1.

And finally... I feel that I have helped many people within my workplace. Whether it be giving advice, representing someone, or just being a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen. I hope to continue to offer my services to my members and to Usdaw.

We are looking for the next volunteer for our activist in-depth series, email Network to tell your story



network@
usdaw.org.uk

Fact file & trivia

EMPLOYER *Tesco*

OCCUPATION *Stock Control*

LIVES *Leicester*

AGE **38**

JOINED USDAW:
2000

USDW ACTIVIST SINCE:
2010

UNION POSITIONS HELD:
Shop steward

I SPEND MY SPARE TIME:
Following Leicester City Football Club, reading books, fishing, and spending time with family.

MY PROUDEST MOMENT IS...

Being the first in my family to go to university.

MY FAVOURITE...

TV.. *I Watch a multitude of American TV shows. Game of Thrones would be my favourite or 24.*

BOOK..
Lord of the Rings.



Stand up for shopworkers

Around 16 per cent of shopworkers assaulted at work did not report the attack to their employer, Usdaw's latest survey has revealed.

The alarming figures were released just ahead of the union's annual Respect Week in November when hundreds of reps promoted the anti-abuse message across the UK.

General secretary John Hannett said: "All too often shopworkers encounter violence, threats and abuse for simply doing their job, with over 300 retail staff assaulted every day. So it is very concerning that one in six do not report a violent attack to their employer.

"Anecdotally we are told that sometimes staff don't feel it would make any difference if they do report incidents or that it's just a part of being in a frontline job, dealing with the public and the problems that sometimes throws up.

"My message to shopworkers is very clear, abuse is not a part of the job.

"We are talking to employers to ensure that reporting systems are easily accessible and will make a real difference to the protection of staff. However, it is really important that shopworkers do tell their manager when they are victims of violence, threats or abuse. If they report it we can help to sort it."



View the gallery on the [UdawUnion flickr page](#)



Watch [John Hannett talks Respect 2014](#)



Westminster campaign launch



WHO? And Where?

- 1 Sainsbury's, Reading
- 2 Tesco, Irlam
- 3 Sainsbury's, Dundee
- 4 Tesco, Failsworth
- 5 Tesco, Stroud
- 6 Tesco Extra, North Sheilds
- 7 Tesco, Portadown, NI
- 8 Tesco, Finchley, London
- 9 Morrisons, Worksop



Campaign days pay off for reps

More and more Usdaw reps are running in-store campaigns and special awareness days to profile the union by reaching out to current members and connecting with thousands of potential new members.

Morrisons, Leek

Reps at the Morrisons store in Leek, Staffordshire held a Freedom From Fear event in September to remind staff that the union's highly successful campaign can help them.

"The event went well. We set up in the canteen so it would have a big impact. Staff come and go during the day and as always there was a lot of interest," said **Gail Wildman**, 60, who has been a rep for seven years. She is one of a team of three reps along with **Bill Cawley**, 59, and 26 year-old **Tom Burnett**.

"Even though we haven't had a major incident it's important to remind staff and customers of the flash points especially with Christmas just around the corner.

"We want to remind all staff, not just the cashiers, that they should report abusive customers to management .

"Holding a campaign day also gave us the opportunity to show the union in a positive way.

"There's a lot of changes ahead of us and it's important to get the message across that we are here to support our members."

Ikea, Manchester

One-man band **John Burns** has worked alone for the last 12 months building membership to an impressive 43 per cent at his Ikea store in Manchester.

"John is an excellent rep and this is a massive achievement in a company like Ikea," said Michelle Byrne, an area organiser based at the Preston Office.

"I've been working with him since he became a rep last year.

"We've built up a fantastic relationship with both HR and management at the company and this

coupled with John's natural abilities as a rep is working very well."

John, 59, said: "I wanted to run something that would appeal to everyone right across the store and show firsthand what the union had to offer its members.

"Legal Plus was perfect. Not only did I sign up five new members but everyone in the store knows about Usdaw now.

"Staff, especially some of the younger workers, now feel more comfortable sitting and chatting with me about the union and my role and responsibilities as a rep,

"And due to popular demand I'm now working on a Pension Awareness Day which I'm hoping will be just as successful in promoting the union, raising its profile and recruiting new members."

Booker, Farnworth

A hard-working team of eight Academy organisers increased membership to more than 50 per cent during a well-organised two-week recruitment campaign at Booker Cash and Carry sites across the North-West.

Deputy divisional officer Tony Clare co-ordinated the event. He arranged a meeting with the company who provided him with a complete list of employees, site by site.

"For two-weeks the Academy organisers worked in pairs visiting the 25 sites speaking to staff and raising the profile of the union and signing up new members," said Tony.

"It's been a positive campaign, we received a good reception and management were helpful.

"And as a result membership has increased from 388 to 522 out of 1,013 staff across the 25 sites.

"I'm confident we've laid down good foundations to build on.

"We also collected the mapping used by the Academy organisers and passed it on to area organiser Jim O'Neill who has taken responsibility for Bookers from next year.

"He will be working to further develop the reps and increase the influence of the union at each of the sites."



MORRISONS, LEEK

Sainsbury's, Denton

A double campaign day paid dividends for the team of reps, officials and one of the Academy2 organiser's at the Sainsbury's store in Denton Greater Manchester.

"The team took on a big task organising a Checkout Learning and a Legal Plus event at the same time," said Academy2 organiser **Lorraine Haves**, 44. "Their enthusiasm and commitment was superb."

Lorraine worked with the reps, area organiser Declan Byrne and mobile union learning rep **Don Cuthbert**, to co-ordinate the day.

The team, made up of store reps **Susan Vickers**, 60 and Peter Worthington, 51, were joined by keen activists **Julie Johnson**, 50 and 27 year-old **Rob Burrows**.

"It was a great team effort. We worked hard to plan and organise the day and staff went away with a renewed interest in the union," said Susan.

"Members were keen to speak to the solicitor and 20 signed up for a free will writing session. There was also a lot of interest in learning especially maths, English and IT.

"We were pleased with the response to the two campaigns and delighted that we persuaded **Philip Hammersley** to come on-board and sign up as a new rep. All-in-all a very rewarding day."



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IKEA, MANCHESTER



BOOKER, FARNWORTH



SAINSBURY'S, DENTON

Plan, organise and deliver – it works!

Tesco Walsall, Lifelong Learning

Preparation was the key for reps at the Tesco Extra store in Walsall when they signed up 12 new members during a Checkout Learning Awareness Day.

“I worked closely with the store reps and the divisional lifelong learning team prior to the event to make sure it was well organised,” said Academy organiser **Michelle Whitehead**, 41, who is on secondment from Midlands Co-op.

“We knew there was an induction being held for new starters in September so we organised a Checkout Learning Day to coincide with it.

“We saw this as an ideal opportunity for new staff to see for themselves the extra benefits of lifelong learning available to them if they join.”

Union learning rep **Claire Thomas**, 32, said: “We were delighted with Michelle’s support throughout and the interest from staff who filled out a lot of our questionnaires.

“They showed a keen interest in courses such as maths, English, basic IT and languages too.

“The union’s own excellent home study courses on subjects such as pensions and the courses on offer at nearby Hinckley and Nuneaton Colleges were popular too.”

Tesco Coatbridge, Legal Plus

Academy organiser **Kirsty Nimmo** and the reps from the Tesco Extra store in Coatbridge organised a Legal Plus Awareness Day in October and signed up ten new members.

“It was a great team effort,” said 26 year-old Kirsty.

“We’d never run a Legal Plus campaign in the Coatbridge store before. I discussed it with the reps and my Academy coach area organiser John Tonner. We agreed Legal Plus would be ideal and if well organised we were confident we’d get a lot of interest.



TESCO, WALSALL



TESCO, COATBRIDGE

“We arranged stand-down time for the reps with the store manager who was fully supportive. Thompsons solicitors also agreed to come into the store.

“I wrote to members and we put posters up to inform staff.

“On the day I arrived early to set up

with the reps and to encourage staff to visit the solicitor and in particular take advantage of the free will-writing facility available for members.

“We obviously did a good job as 77 will applications were filled in on the day and more have been completed since.”



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HOW TO...

Bring Usdaw to your workplace

- 1** Run a special **campaign awareness day** in your workplace and join the hundreds of reps across the UK who are helping to raise the union's profile by bringing Usdaw to work.
- 2** Decide **which campaign** would have the most impact with your colleagues? There are lots to choose from; Legal Plus, Lifelong Learning, Pensions, Freedom From Fear, Membership Benefits.
- 3** Speak to your reps and activists and decide whether you want to run a day-long event or a shorter hour session over the lunchtime. **Decide where** – canteen, store entrance/foyer. Order campaign-specific information, leaflets, surveys, stickers and publications in advance.
- 4** Enlist the help of your area organiser, decide on a date and speak to your manager. Make arrangements to invite the union's **specialist experts** along to your workplace union day eg a union solicitor, a member of the pensions department or a mobile union learning rep.
- 5** Use your noticeboard to **advertise your union day** and explain what staff can get out of it, eg time out to speak to a union solicitor in your workplace, including free will-writing. Also pensions advice, an opportunity to learn new skills. Order leaflets and publications in advance.
- 6** Contact the magazine team at network@usdaw.org.uk with your workplace union day event details with a view to arranging photographic coverage of your campaign for inclusion in *Arena* and *Network*.
- 7** Take notes of any comments or questions from staff during the event, it's good to use real things people say in the report in the magazines. **Send a short report/feedback** to the magazine team at *Arena/Network*.

Company events prove popular with activists



Argos reps look closely at new agreement

Argos reps from stores across the UK attended a two-day get-together in the Midlands in September.

The 26 reps were joined by national officer Dave Gill and Mark Bibby from the union's education department as well as representatives from Argos' HR department.

Reps took part in workshops, group discussions and question and answer sessions.

They were also briefed on the national recruitment campaign, the new Argos agreement signed in March

as well as an overview on the company's new format digital stores.

"It was an excellent, informative and refreshing couple of days," said 46 year-old **Christian Bell** from the Speke store in Liverpool.

"It's the first Argos get-together I've been to so it was interesting meeting reps from other stores.

"We went through the improvements in the new agreement and I was able to feed this information back to my members when I returned to work."



In-depth discussions for Morrisons reps

Meanwhile 57 Morrisons reps from the Scottish division attended a two-day get-together in Glasgow in September.

They were joined by deputy divisional officer Stewart Forrest, area organiser John Tonner and divisional lifelong learning project worker Jill Little-Woodhouse.

Reps had the opportunity to discuss the annual pay offer and the ballot procedures as well as recruitment following the ballot. The potential

redundancies of managers was also discussed.

"It was a great opportunity to spend quality time with reps from other stores in Scotland and talk about issues that are important to us," said **Elaine Clydesdale**, 40, from the Baillieston store in Glasgow.

"Also to have the chance to listen and chat to officials from the union. I learned a lot over the two days. I'd definitely recommend it."

Communications push to connect all workers

Reps and activists aged 26 or below gathered for the popular National Young Workers' weekend in Warrington in early November. Network was there too...

Digital drive

Hashtags, tweets and blogs were top of the agenda at Usdaw's 21st young workers conference as delegates explored using the internet and social media to engage with young workers.

The action-packed event saw the young reps discuss the most popular channels of social media and finding out about Usdaw's current digital strategies.

Delegates talked about the @UsdawUnion Twitter channel, the recent Freedom From Fear Facebook Campaign page and plans for the new union website. They also looked at new ways to reach potential members and how to connect more closely with the high

percentage of young workers already in the union.

Lifelong learning project worker **Julia Baldwin** ran an informative session on Digital

Champions – a new learning initiative to support new users of computers and the internet. She encouraged the young activists to use their skills and experience to help friends, colleagues and members of their community to take those first steps to get online.

"Digital Champions is a peer-to-peer mentoring and coaching project that enables people to help support others to get to grips with the internet. With technology moving so fast we really are relying on our young members to tell us what is important to their needs and how we can engage more people in the workplace."

General secretary **John Hannett** and deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** visited the conference on Sunday for a lively question and answer session. John was keen to thank the reps for their hard work to help grow the union in difficult times. He also stressed the importance of getting politically active with the forthcoming general election only six months away.

"If people want to connect to politics now is the time," he said. "Politicians are making decisions every day that are affecting each and every one of us. You can't avoid politics and you can't ignore politicians. You don't have to agree with them but you have to engage with them."

"I don't accept that young people

aren't interested in politics – they're as interested in their future as everybody else, the question is, why are they disillusioned with politicians? We've got a job to do to connect people young and old to politics!"

WANT MORE?

Young workers can get involved in their divisional committee by contacting their local office.

- Usdaw has an area organiser in each of its seven divisions who acts as a co-ordinator for its young activists.

- There are also a range of leaflets and posters aimed at young workers available from your local office.

- Young activists should also start to think about going to the Annual Delegate Meeting – the union's parliament – to be held in Blackpool in April over four days. For more details contact your branch secretary or local office.



Follow @UsdawUnion on Twitter

"I focus on recruiting the younger workers as I think it's easier for them to hear what it's all about from someone their own age."

Bryony Hamblin





NATIONAL YOUNG WORKERS COMMITTEE

Talking to young activists...

Emma Cunningham

Emma Cunningham, 22, joined Usdaw the first day she started working for Tesco six years ago.

“Unions have been a massive part of my life, they’re one of the best things you can be involved with. They support you, not only with issues in work, but with things like further education too. I always encourage new starters at work to join Usdaw.”

Emma recently became the Union Learning Rep for her store in Belfast. “It’s hard work but it’s great. Being a member of the divisional young workers’ committee I’m keen to help our younger members who want to work on their maths and English qualifications. We’re also helping young people with financial planning skills.

“It was great to hear more about the Digital Champions initiative, this is something we’re implementing in our store – helping members get online, teaching them how to do things like

send emails, bank online and shop.

“The young workers’ weekend is brilliant. Everyone is really friendly and you learn a lot. I’ve picked up lots of useful information to take back to my store.”

Luca Raimo

Luca Raimo, 19, from Stockport has been a member of Usdaw for two years and works for Marks and Spencer.

“I know Usdaw is campaigning to get recognition here and I think that’s great.”

Luca attended the Labour Party conference with Usdaw in September. “Being politically minded, it was a great opportunity for me.

“I particularly enjoyed listening to Ed Milliband’s speech. Opportunities like this are another good reason to be a member of Usdaw.

“The young workers’ weekend is a great idea and an ideal place to meet new people.”

Bryony Hamblin

Bryony Hamblin, 22, works for Tesco in Pentre, Mid Glamorgan and joined Usdaw two years ago.

“I’m really enjoying it. The main issue for young workers is part-time contracts. People are finding it difficult to get full-time contracts and as a result are struggling financially.

“When I’m out on stand-down I focus on recruiting the younger workers as I think it’s easier for them to hear what it’s all about from someone their age. I enjoyed the activities around social media and Digital Champions and it’s interesting to find out what Usdaw is doing to connect with its younger members.

“I’d definitely recommend the weekend to other young workers – it’s been fantastic.”

“This weekend is brilliant. Everyone is friendly and you learn a lot. I’ve picked up loads of information to take back to my workplace.”

Emma Cunningham

National young workers committee, pictured above (l-r) Dean Wilson, Naomi Tweedle, Esther Pearson, David Owens, Callum Harrison and Shane Spitty



EMMA CUNNINGHAM



LUCA RAIMO



BRYONY HAMBLIN



Watch
Hear from Emma, Luca and Bryony on the UsdawUnion Youtube channel

How to survive the chill-factor!

At this time of year Usdaw's health and safety team are often asked about cold temperatures at work. Here is a reminder of the basic points for health and safety reps.



Q. What does the law say on this issue?

Health and safety regulations state that: 'During working hours, the temperature in all workplaces inside buildings shall be reasonable,' and 'A sufficient number of thermometers shall be provided to enable persons at work to determine the temperature in any workplace inside a building.'

The minimum 'reasonable' temperature is normally 16 degrees Celsius (or 13 degrees C for heavy physical work). If the minimum temperature cannot be achieved, employers must take other steps to protect the health and welfare of the workers who have to work in the cold.

Q. What do I do if members complain that it's too cold?

The first thing to do is to measure the temperature. Draw up a temperature map of the areas where members regularly work. Even in stores or workplaces where the average temperature is above the minimum, there may be cold spots such as checkouts by the doors, which the employer needs to address. Protecting workers in such areas from cold draughts can help.



Q. What other measures should my employer take when it is too cold?

If it is a temporary problem because the heating is broken or the weather is exceptionally cold, then they should consider hiring temporary heaters, providing extra breaks and relaxing dress codes to let workers wear warmer clothing.

If the heating has broken, the employer should keep workers informed about what is being done to repair the problem and how long it may take. People can put up with temporary discomfort if they know that something is being done to sort it out.

Q. What about members who work outside?

The Workplace Regulations only apply to indoor workplaces so members who work outdoors such as trolley collectors, backdoor staff and delivery drivers are not covered.

However, employers still have a duty to protect outdoor workers under their general health and safety responsibilities. Proper protective clothing, access to warm areas for rest breaks and hot drinks to warm up are basic measures that can help.



Q. What do I do if my manager doesn't respond to members' concerns?

A good manager will listen to complaints from staff and will act on them. If local managers are not responding, then it may be necessary to raise a formal health and safety grievance.

This will mean that your area organiser and more senior managers will be involved. In most cases, once senior management are aware of the problem, they will react.

However, if you have exhausted

the grievance procedure and the problem remains, the union can call in the enforcing authority for health and safety law in your workplace. For members in manufacturing that will be the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and there is now a special form on the HSE website which union health and safety reps can use to alert them to a problem.

For members in shops, offices and warehouses it will be the Environmental Health Department at the local council. In either case your area organiser can advise you on the appropriate

steps to take.

Remember...

Don't let members suffer. If they do complain about the cold use this advice to deal with the problem.

Make sure that all the workers in your workplace know their rights. The Usdaw leaflet 'Too Cold for Comfort – An Usdaw guide to working in the cold' can help to get the message across. And when you do get the problem sorted, make sure the members (and non-members) at work know about it!



Download at www.usdaw.org.uk/399

Stiffer controls on workplace carcinogens are essential

Stricter control of common cancer agents such as asbestos and diesel exhaust fumes is the aim of the 'No Time to Lose' campaign launched in November by the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health, to get the message across that occupational exposure is a leading cause of

cancer and can be prevented.

For many years, the TUC and international trade unions have campaigned about work-related cancer risks and the need to prevent exposure to carcinogens to protect workers in the future.

www.notimetolose.org.uk





Years after its ban asbestos still kills

The HSE has launched its 'Beware Asbestos' campaign using B&Q Trade Point counters and a mobile phone app to raise awareness about the risk to trades people and others who work alongside them.

Twenty trades people (plumbers, electricians, shop-fitters, etc.) are estimated to die every week from asbestos exposure even though new use of asbestos was banned many years ago.

While the campaign has been welcomed, concerns have been raised that it misses the target. Many workers are aware of the risks but can't object because of fears of losing their work.

The HSE's award-winning 'Killer Dust' campaign was stopped in 2010 when the current Government came to power.

www.beware-asbestos.info/

H&S results are in

This year's TUC health and safety reps' survey results have shown the top five hazards are stress, bullying and harassment, overwork, back strains and slips/trips.

Reps also reported less contact with enforcement officers as a result of the cuts and the present Government's attack on health and safety.

The survey has been carried out every second year for the last 22 years and is a vital barometer highlighting the issues that safety reps face.



The report 'Focus on Health and Safety - Trade union trends survey' is available at www.tuc.org.uk

Work injuries on rise

The number of people being injured or made ill through work is now rising, reversing a long-term downward trend.

The TUC is demanding stronger regulation and enforcement. General secretary Frances O'Grady said: "The rise in illness and injury should be a wake-up call demanding stronger regulation and enforcement for rogue bosses

who put their staff at risk."

At the same time enforcement action has fallen, especially in Local Authority-enforced sectors where illnesses such as back pain and stress are more common.

To see the HSE statistics for 2013/14 go to www.hse.gov.uk/statistics



Q&A with...

Shaun Horton, 47, who works for Tesco Metro, Market Harborough has been a rep for nine years and a safety rep for three.

Q What sort of issues do you deal with?

It varies. I work on the backdoor and in the warehouse so it can be anything from floor surfaces, cages, lift doors, lorries, and shelving in the store. So it's a combination of different things.

Q How do you deal with any safety problems?

I always speak to the department or store manager, who are very approachable, and we try to sort it out as quickly as possible, in most instances this works. Staff know to tell me of any potential problems.

Q Why did you add health and safety to your rep responsibilities?

To me the two compliment each other. I'm also a forum rep. I often liaise with local and regional reps and even pop into my local store when not working just to make sure everything is OK. Up until recently I've been a one-man-band but I've just recruited another rep so hopefully once he is trained up we can share the workload.

Q Do you enjoy your work as a safety rep?

Very much so. It's very interesting. I've learned a lot and it's brought me out of myself. I've done the introductory course and I'm on the waiting list to do the follow-on course.

Q Does being a safety rep help you recruit?

Yes I think it does. Membership was low when I started but now it's up to around 75 per cent. FirstCall Usdaw is a great recruitment tool as many workers don't realise how much it offers. I always make sure I keep the noticeboard up-to-date with all the different leaflets and posters.

Usdaw – all inclusive!

Usdaw has made impressive strides to reach out and involve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) members.

Prior to 2006 the union did not have a way of getting LGBT members involved and we were not always sure what issues our LGBT members were facing at work, writes equalities officer Jo Bird.

That is why Usdaw set up a divisional equality forum in all seven divisions.

The forums have reserved seats for LGBT members (as well as seats for women, black and disabled members). Their role is to find practical ways to encourage LGBT members to become involved.



www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities

FORUMS Changing how it's done

The forums have transformed the union's approach to LGBT issues. Here are just some of the things Usdaw has achieved so far:

- A full delegation, including a LGBT activist from every one of the Union's seven divisions, attends the TUC LGBT Conference every year.
- Usdaw sends delegates to the STUC LGBT Conference and has a representative, Graham Newport, on the STUC LGBT Committee.
- Usdaw is represented on the TUC LGBT Committee by Neil Smale.
- Since the first local LGBT get-together was held in Cardiff around ten years ago, get-togethers have been held in

Manchester, Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, Blackpool, Belfast and Glasgow.

- Each year every divisional equality forum takes part in at least one Pride festival. This includes the national event in London. Usdaw members have also marched and held stalls in Cardiff, Bristol, Belfast, Manchester, Blackpool, Leeds, Liverpool, Oxford, Norwich and Brighton Pride to name just a few.
- The union has produced a range of literature and merchandise on LGBT issues including leaflets, briefings for reps, articles in *Network* and *Arena*, giveaways at stalls, posters, banners, badges and T-shirts.



TUC LGBT DELEGATION



USDRAW LGBT GET-TOGETHER



OUT AT TESCO

Employee networks aid LGBT involvement

However, as well as encouraging LGBT members to get involved in the union, Usdaw is also keen to encourage members to become involved in their company LGBT employee networks.

Both Tesco and the Co-op have dedicated structures for LGBT staff. These networks play a valuable role in ensuring employees feel welcome and able to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity at work. The networks also ensure that LGBT members are visible at all levels of the business, able to get on at work and provide a safe space for employees to come together to raise issues that matter to them.

The networks sponsor and support LGBT events including

Pride parades. The Respect network in the Co-op regularly publishes a magazine that is available online and both Respect and Out at Tesco have a presence on Twitter and Facebook.

While the networks are not a substitute for being in the union, they do enable LGBT employees to make their voices heard. Usdaw activists are well placed to become involved as they are used to speaking up for people, they know what the issues are and they are not afraid to raise concerns on behalf of members.

Steve Ratcliff, Usdaw activist and active member of the Co-op's Respect Network explains why he believes the network is important: "Having an employee network

enables people to feel that they're not alone. Having colleagues who are open about their sexuality (or gender transition) makes people see that their workplace is a safe place to be themselves without fear of being 'outed'. Having senior management champions supporting the network shows that the employer values diversity and inclusivity."

To find out more about 'Respect' the LGBT network for Co-op employees visit:

www.cooperative.coop/corporate/RespectLGBT
or email: RespectLGBT@co-operative.coop.

To find out more about 'Out at Tesco' the LGBT Network for Tesco employees visit

www.outattesco.com
or email: out@uk.tesco.com



Your Letters & Pictures

Obituary Dani Macdonald



Dani Macdonald pictured at the union's national awards ceremony in January 2010

It is with great regret that I write with the sad news that our great friend and dedicated trade unionist Daniella 'Dani' Macdonald died in September after her fight against cancer. She was 47.

Dani served with distinction on both the Safeway national committee and for many years on the Tesco national committee. She was fierce in pursuing what she believed was right – the youth rate at Tesco being one of her pet projects. She was never scared to speak up for something she believed in.

Everyone at the North Shields office and her colleagues both past and present recognised her as someone who was not about making grand speeches – but an activist who just believed in what was right.

I think her passing was best summed up in the minutes of her branch which simply said: "Dani was an amazing person whose passion for the union and what Usdaw stands for was second to none. Her knowledge and experience alongside her willingness to help others will be greatly missed by all."

Our thoughts are with her many friends and especially Ian and Holly her family.

**George Cain, area organiser
Newcastle office**

Retirement beckons for Anne

After more than 30 years at the Portrack Lane distribution centre in Stockton, stalwart Anne Walters, who worked for Presto, Safeway and Morrisons all under the same roof, has decided to retire, at least for a while!

Anne has been a valuable member of the union team and was never afraid to say it exactly as it was, not only to management and her union colleagues, but especially to any area organiser who she thought maybe needed reminding who they worked for!

Anne has been a regular conference-goer but not one for making speeches. However, she was most definitely the type that has the interests of the membership at heart and for who she has worked tirelessly and earned the respect of everyone who knows her.

We would like to wish her a long, happy and healthy retirement.

Members from branch F81

Reps and members in the picture



North Eastern division reps' survey winners (1) Ian Wilson, (2) Bozena Aleksandrowicz, and (3) Janet Haggis



Usdaw political committee canvassing in key Redditch seat with Rebecca Blake PPC



Sainsbury's Haywards Heath

Learning cuts will block opportunities

Last year a lot of Union Learning Reps (ULR) across the country had a busy time trying to get their members onto the last places of a level 3 qualification in management before the funding was cut.

The reps worked against the clock to get the enrolments completed and submitted.

For Miles Bentley (pictured)



from Tesco in Cleckheaton the reps work has paid off as he's now received his level 3 certificates in Management.

Miles said "I feel proud and I got a real sense of achievement from doing this course. It's given me a greater understanding about management and working relationships."

Hopefully the funding for the courses will return soon and we'll be able to see more members given the opportunity to achieve level 3 qualifications.

In the meantime, please see your site's ULR for more information about funded distance learning courses and other learning opportunities. If you don't have a ULR on site please contact your local office for more information.

**Jonathan Charnock, mobile ULR,
North Eastern division**

Pension push

I held a pensions awareness day at Sainsbury's Scunthorpe. I was helped on the day by store rep Michael Baker Revill. Local Labour MP Nic Dakin also came to the store to talk to members about the campaign and the store in general. On the day we recruited a new shop steward and a new member.

The event helped raise both the profile of Usdaw and also relations with Sainsbury's in the local community because the store manager said he would be happy for Nic Dakin to carry out surgeries at that store in the future.

Laurence Mager, Academy1



THE BENEFITS OF BEING AN *Usdaw* MEMBER

**PENSIONS
ADVICE**

**TRAINING, EDUCATION
AND LIFELONG
LEARNING**

**PROTECTION
FROM BULLYING
AND HARASSMENT**

**REPRESENTATION
OVER CONTRACT
CHANGES**

**HELP AND SUPPORT
WITH PROBLEMS
AT WORK**

**HEALTH
AND SAFETY
ADVICE**

**PROTECTION
FROM UNFAIR
TREATMENT**

**FREE ADVICE
AND REPRESENTATION
ON PAY AND
CONDITIONS
OF EMPLOYMENT**

**LEGAL PLUS
FREE LEGAL
ASSISTANCE
FOR ANY ACCIDENT IN
THE UK - WHENEVER
AND WHEREVER IT
HAPPENS**

**IMPROVED
JOB SECURITY**

**LEGAL PLUS
FREE INITIAL ADVICE
SCHEME ABOUT ANY
NON WORK-RELATED
PROBLEM**

**REPRESENTATION
FOR GRIEVANCES
AND DISCIPLINARIES**

**A STRONGER
VOICE AND MORE
INFLUENCE**

**CASH BENEFITS
IN TIMES OF NEED**

**LEGAL PLUS
100% OF
COMPENSATION IS
YOURS WITH
NO DEDUCTIONS**

**LEGAL PLUS
EXPERT ADVICE
FROM
UNION SOLICITORS**

**LEGAL PLUS
FREE WILL WRITING
SERVICE FOR YOU
AND YOUR PARTNER**

**PROTECTION
FROM UNLAWFUL
DISCRIMINATION**

**UNITY IS STRENGTH
YOU'RE NOT ON
YOUR OWN**