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**Arena** is the membership magazine for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

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# Welcome

**T**he last few months have been busy for Usdaw as we continue to focus on providing our members with the best support and advice they need if things go wrong at work.

Although representing our members is a huge part of our remit the work of the union is varied and covers not only providing representation at work and legal advice, but also ensuring that our members interests are taken into account by politicians and Parliament.

Campaigning works, it works because hundreds and thousands of members like you get involved. You sign petitions and fill in our surveys that give us the evidence we need to lobby for change.

Last year over 180,000 members signed our Freedom From Fear petition which triggered a debate in Parliament. In January, the Scottish Parliament unanimously voted for a ground-breaking new law to protect shopworkers.

That's why I'm encouraging our members to think about putting themselves forward either to be a rep in their workplace or to think about getting politically involved. Being a rep is a great way of helping your colleagues and gaining new knowledge and skills. It can also give you the confidence you need to try your hand at politics and make a vital contribution to your local communities. You can find details on how to get politically active on page 22.

I know many of you are already making a huge contribution to your workplaces and local communities and I want to thank you for everything you are doing. By working together we can achieve great things and make a real difference.

**Paddy Lillis, General Secretary**



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# News for you



## SHOPWORKERS DESERVE A PROPER BREAK AT CHRISTMAS

### Morrisons to close supermarkets on Boxing Day

**U**sdaw welcomed the announcement that Morrisons will close their supermarkets on Boxing Day to say thank you to their staff.

Udaw's 'Christmas is not Working' campaign has been lobbying employers to give their employees the longest possible break over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

For too many people working in retail, Christmas isn't a proper holiday. This year has been an extremely difficult year for retail and distribution workers, who have had to work in extremely challenging conditions to keep the country going.

In a 2019 survey of more than 18,000 Udaw members, more than three-quarters said that working over the Christmas period means that they spend too little time at

Christmas with their loved ones. The union believes that everyone should be entitled to quality time off over the festive period.

Udaw national officer Joanne McGuinness said: "The last year-and-a-half has been unlike any other. The pandemic meant shopworkers stepped up and kept essential services running. We welcome Morrisons doing the right thing by their staff with the closure of supermarkets on Boxing Day.

"Key workers have done so much this year and we are asking retailers to give their staff the longest possible break over the festive season to provide them with a well-deserved breather. We don't think this is too much to ask for."

**Udaw's calling on retailers to put their hardworking staff first by:**

- Closing shops by 4pm on Christmas Eve.
- Staying closed on Christmas Day and Boxing Day.
- Ensuring that workers don't lose out on pay when shops are closed.

# Self-isolation removed for double jabbed from 16 August



**A**dults and children will be free to return to work, attend school, and meet friends and family as the protection from vaccines replaces the need for contact isolation from 16 August.

Instead of self-isolating, those who are double jabbed and under 18s identified as close contacts of positive Covid-19 cases are advised to get a free PCR test as soon as possible.

The Government believes that 75 per cent of people have received both doses of the vaccine and therefore they will no longer need to self-isolate if they are identified as close contacts. Instead, NHS Test and Trace will advise them to take a PCR test as soon as possible. People can order a PCR home test online or by calling 119 or going to a test site.

As double jabbed people identified as close contacts are still at risk of being infected, people are advised to consider other precautions such as wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces, and limit contact with other people, especially with anyone who is clinically extremely vulnerable. They will not be required to self-isolate while they wait for the results of the PCR test.

Anyone who tests positive following the PCR test will still be legally required to self-isolate, irrespective of their vaccination status or age in order to break onwards chains of transmission. Meanwhile anyone who develops Covid-19 symptoms should self-isolate and get a PCR test and remain in isolation until the result comes back.



*"Usdaw is extremely concerned that removing the requirement or guidance for workers to self-isolate is likely to further spread the virus."*

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw is extremely concerned that removing the requirement or guidance for workers to self-isolate is likely to further spread the virus. The Government's primary focus should be on driving down infection rates.

"It is deeply concerning that the Government has sought to create a scheme to exempt workers from self-isolation without consulting with worker representatives."



"Millions of low-paid workers have provided essential services to help ensure the country is fed, healthy and safe throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Usdaw members employed in supermarkets, the food supply chain, pharmaceutical distribution and the funeral industry welcomed their key worker status, but that respect and appreciation must not fade into the background when this national crisis passes.

"We are backing the TUC petition to guarantee decent sick pay for every worker and I'm urging our members to sign up to the campaign. "There must be lasting and fundamental change to the way society views all workers. We need a New Deal for Workers: a minimum wage of at least £10 per hour and an end to insecure employment." TUC petition [#SickPayForAll](#): Guarantee decent sick pay for every worker: [www.megaphone.org.uk/petitions/sickpayforall-guarantee-decent-sick-pay-for-every-worker](#)

## Government U-turn on reform of Statutory Sick Pay

**Usdaw is appalled that the Government has reneged on their promise to reform Statutory Sick Pay (SSP), after they claimed it is not the right time.**

Usdaw renews its call for a New Deal for Workers and urges the Government to improve SSP so it reflects average pay, pays SSP to low paid workers and commits to paying SSP from day one for all absences, removing any reference to three waiting days.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw has

long called for significant improvements to SSP and the Government acknowledged the need in 2019. Their claim that now is not the right time begs the question - when would be the right time? The coronavirus crisis has highlighted that SSP is too low, meaning that workers are plunged into poverty or forced to attend work whilst ill. Workers not being able to afford to self-isolate is hampering efforts to defeat this appalling virus.

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## Industrial Action

**O**ver the last few months Usdaw has been taking industrial action against employers who cynically attempt to use 'fire and re-hire' tactics.

Fire and re-hire tactics, to enforce contractual changes by sacking and then re-engaging workers, is legally controversial. Instead of outlawing this practice, the Government backtracked on their manifesto promise and failed to bring forward a bill that could have banned 'fire and re-hire'.

In the absence of legal restraints on employers, Usdaw has been forced to challenge the practice at Tesco through the High Court, having won a temporary interdict in the Scottish Court.

Ushaw members at BCM Fareva took part in their fourth stoppage in August because the company refused to engage with the trade union and gave members an arbitrary deadline to accept the changes or potentially face dismissal.

Members at Weetabix AP4 plant in Kettering have taken industrial action over changes to their shift pay.

Although industrial action is very much a last resort, Usdaw has found itself in a position where strike action is the only way to try and prevent contractual changes being enforced on to its members.



## Is your Car Insurance due for renewal soon?

Here are the reasons why getting Car Insurance over the phone can be cheaper than online.

**P**urchasing your Car Insurance online is a popular way to do what is for many, a yearly exercise. Most insurance brokers have websites where you can get an online quote but using these websites may not guarantee you the best price.

Here we explain the benefits behind making a phone call when your car insurance is due:

### Online quotes use set questions to generate a quote

- They don't get to know the real you because they can't ask you additional questions to build a greater understanding of you as a driver
- A phone conversation may enable insurers to offer a more favourable policy, for example with a lower excess or a cheaper premium, because of the extra information you're able to share with them.
- It may well be that your circumstances fit perfectly within the question sets online but, we sometimes find that customers using broker websites to obtain car insurance quotes, could have obtained a cheaper price by speaking to us over the phone.

For the very best rates, call the dedicated USDAW car insurance quote line on **0344 381 7844\*** and let us show you how much you could save.

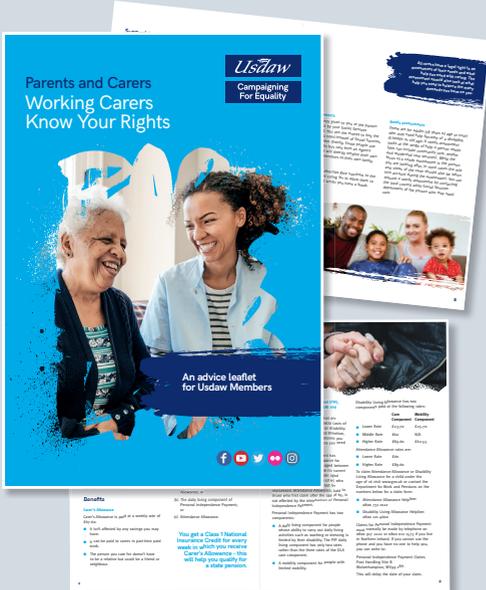
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**\*Lines open Mon-Fri 9am to 7pm, Sat 9am to 3pm, Sun 10am to 3pm**

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# Working Carers

## Know Your Rights



### ■ Leaflets

- **Join Usdaw Today** (Leaflet 261)
- **Working Carers Know Your Rights** (Leaflet 343)
- **Working Parents Know Your Rights** (Leaflet 381)
- **Workers' Rights - a guide for full-time and part-time workers** (Leaflet 211)

### ■ Online Courses

- **ABCs of ICT - IT bitesize course**  
<https://www.usdaw.org.uk/ABCsofIT>
- **CV Writing - IT bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting)
- **Helping with Homework - Maths bitesize course**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/mathshomework](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/mathshomework)
- **Home Study 1 - Unity is Strength**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy)
- **Home Study 2 - Democracy in Usdaw**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy)
- **Looking After Your Mental Health**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/yourmentalhealth](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/yourmentalhealth)
- **Maths and Money Matters - Maths bitesize course** - [www.usdaw.org.uk/mathsmatters](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/mathsmatters)
- **Mind your Head - Mental Health bitesize course** - [www.usdaw.org.uk/mindyourhead](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/mindyourhead)
- **More than Words - English Bitesize course** [www.usdaw.org.uk/morethanwords](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/morethanwords)
- **Pensions Home Study**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/pensionshomestudy)
- **Quirks of the English Language - English bitesize course** - [www.usdaw.org.uk/quirksofenglish](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/quirksofenglish)
- **Summertime Song Birds - English Bitesize course** - [www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/summertime)
- **Staying Safe Online - Social Media and online safety course** - [www.usdaw.org.uk/SafeOnline](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/SafeOnline)

Since the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, more people than ever are juggling paid work with caring responsibilities. According to a 2020 survey by the Office for National Statistics, 48 per cent of adults now report providing help or support to someone from outside their own household – a huge increase from 2018 when the figure was just 11 per cent.

We're keen to ensure Usdaw members receive all the help and support they need. It contains straightforward information on the benefits and support available to working carers and guidance on your rights at work. If you're struggling, Usdaw is here to help – talk to your workplace rep or your local office.

Read the leaflet online at [dtp.usdaw.org.uk/343](http://dtp.usdaw.org.uk/343) and check out [www.usdaw.org.uk/parentsandcarers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/parentsandcarers) for more information.

# Tesco – Sata and Usdaw Rep Elections

When you become a rep you can help your colleagues and make a real difference

**R**ep elections will be taking place in Tesco stores for Usdaw reps, and across Tesco for Sata reps in September/October. We are encouraging as many members as possible to come forward for these roles when nominations open. Tesco also encourage their colleagues to take on the role.

Here we focus on Sata reps this year as the Sata agreement was recently renewed, and we need as many salaried staff in Tesco to come forward for the role as possible. Three Sata reps explain what the role means to them.

**Darren Vickery**, Sata rep in distribution/office

"I work nights in the Daventry Support Office and have been a rep for 7 years now. I try to bring a human element to the support I provide. If I feel people are being treated unfairly then I call this out and support them through the process and emotion surrounding this. Over the last year mental health issues have been heightened. My manager is very supportive of my Sata duties. I feel really positive about the new agreement and the benefits this will bring to salaried staff."

**Susan Donaldson**, Sata rep in the Customer Engagement Centre (CEC)

"Becoming a Sata rep has given me the opportunity to be a better manager, due to the training and experience I have received. Tesco support me in my role as my manager sees how much we can resolve informally when we work together. This in turn helps improve the working environment for everyone. The best thing about being a rep is getting results for my members, they stretch me as I'm always looking to make improvements and trying to ensure there is fairness in our workplace."

IF YOU WORK IN TESCO PLEASE SEE THE INSERT FOR MORE DETAILS.

**Nanita Malhotra**, Sata rep in stores

"I have been a rep for over 15 years. My reason for being a rep was solely to help and support my colleagues. Being a rep is very rewarding as you get to help lots of people every day. You also gain knowledge about employment practices, policies and procedures. And there's lots of self-development. I did Usdaw's stand down programme which helped me improve my recruiting skills as well as my confidence. When you take on the role you're not alone. I have always been supported by my area organiser, fellow reps and my manager."

# Organising Awards 2021



**D**o you know of an Usdaw rep or a team of reps in your workplace who have gone the extra mile? Have they supported you or your colleagues through a grievance/disciplinary, helped you change your hours to accommodate your caring commitments, implemented safety measures during covid, ran a campaign to raise awareness, got you to sign a petition about a cause you feel passionate about or listened to you when had a problem and weren't sure what to do?

## If you do, then why not nominate them for an organising award?

Ushaw's Organising Awards recognises and celebrates the hard work of Usdaw reps nationwide and is a unique event in the trade union calendar.

You can nominate reps for one or more of the following nine categories:

- Outstanding Achievement Award
- Health and Safety Rep Award
- Individual Organising Award

- Individual Recruitment Award
- The Campaigns Award
- Most Promising New Activist Award
- Team Recruitment and Organising Award
- Union Learning Rep Award
- The Equalities Award

Ushaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "I have always recognised Usdaw has fantastic reps doing amazing things in their workplaces all over the country. The pandemic has shone a light on the key role our members play in the economy and our reps have selflessly battled to support members, their families and the union during these unprecedented times.

"So I would encourage members to look around and think about which category they could nominate the rep or team of reps in their workplace."

The deadline for receipt of nominations is on Friday 24 September 2021.

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

# Usdaw urges shopworkers to 'report it to sort it'

**O**ver 90 per cent of retail staff have been assaulted, threatened or abused.

Usdaw launched its Freedom from Fear summer campaign with shocking statistics from their annual survey. Preliminary results from nearly 2,000 retail staff show that in the last twelve months:

- 92 per cent have experienced verbal abuse
- 70 per cent were threatened by a customer
- 14 per cent were assaulted
- One in five victims have never reported an incident to their employer, including 5 per cent who had been assaulted

The scale of the problem prompted Usdaw to organise an additional campaign week from 22-29 August. During the week, Usdaw members, reps and activists raised awareness of the year-round Freedom From Fear campaign, talking to the public at street stalls to promote a message of 'respect for shopworkers' and running campaigns in workplaces.

The UK-wide campaign coincided with a new protection of workers law coming into force in Scotland on 24 August. Usdaw promoted this ground-breaking legislation, by urging shopworkers to 'report it to sort it'. The union also continues to urge the Government to pass a similar law that extends those protections to shopworkers

***"This is a hugely important issue for our members. Shopworkers are saying loud and clear that enough is enough."***

in Northern Ireland, Wales and England.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Once again our members are telling us that some people have responded to this appalling pandemic by abusing shopworkers. At a time when we should all be working together to get through this national crisis, it is a disgrace that staff working to keep food on the shelves are being abused.

"The number of staff who do not report incidents is very worrying. I totally understand why they may feel it won't make a difference, but my message to shopworkers is incredibly clear, abuse is not a part of the job. It is really important that staff do tell their manager when they experience





violence, threats or abuse. If they do report it we can help to sort it.

"Government action to protect shopworkers is needed. So, we welcome the new law in Scotland, but are deeply disappointed that the UK Government has continued to resist a similar measure in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Retail staff across the UK have a crucial role in our communities and that role must be valued and respected, they deserve the protection of the law.

"This is a hugely important issue for our members. Shopworkers are saying loud and clear that enough is enough. The Government has promised they would bring forward an amendment to their flagship policing bill in the House of Lords and we urge them to keep their word. Whatever they propose must be substantial and deliver much needed protections."

## Comments from shopworkers responding to this year's annual survey:

"We get daily verbal abuse from people attempting to shoplift, people not following social distancing measures, intoxicated people and people who have been asked to provide proof of age or refused service for intoxication."

**"A shoplifter attempted to headbutt me."**

"A smoke grenade set off in store one evening causing fear and disruption."

**"Customer started mocking me and my name. She called me 'Fatty' and giggled."**

"Had stuff thrown at me, sworn at, screamed at."

**"Two guys came up saying that I'm afraid of the virus just because I was wearing a mask and calling me the 'P' word. I felt embarrassed and humiliated."**

"I've even had incidents where the same customer has returned multiple times in the same day to give more abuse, directed to customers as well as staff."

**"Stabbed by a needle, threats to be jumped after work, spat on."**

"Customer walked me into a corner and threatened my life for not stopping a maskless customer entering the store."

**"Threats, verbal abuse, someone driving a van at me in the delivery area."**

"I've been threatened that people will be set on me and I have even been threatened with rape."

**"Shoplifters threatening colleagues with bottles of alcohol."**

"Verbal abuse when doing think 25."



## New Deal for Workers

**U**sdaw members give evidence at the Low Pay Commission as the Labour Party calls for a 'new deal for workers'

In August, Usdaw members gave evidence at the Low Pay Commission (LPC) on

minimum wage rates.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We very much welcome the opportunity for a few of our members to speak directly to commissioners about living on or near minimum wage rates. At the beginning of the current consultation in June this year, Usdaw provided evidence of why we need a new deal for workers that includes at least £10 per hour, an end to youth rates and more secure employment.

"The impact of the coronavirus crisis continues to be felt across our economy and society. Workers in retail, distribution and many other low-paid industries have shown just how vital they are to keeping the UK economy going during a time of extreme pressure. As we emerge from the pandemic, these key workers must not be forgotten and it can only be right that their contribution is recognised with a wage they can live on.

"Recently the Labour Party launched a 'new deal for working people' which pledges to fundamentally change our economy and make Britain the best place to work.

"The new campaign sets out how Labour's

## Continuing growth of empty shops further demonstrates the need for an industrial strategy for retail says Usdaw

**U**sdaw expressed deep concern about the latest British Retail Consortium (BRC) and Local Data Company (LDC) shop vacancy monitor. The figures reveal that the vacancy rate across the country increased to 14.5 per cent in the last quarter from 14.1 per cent, with one-in-five shopping centre units now sitting empty.

Udaw continues to call for the



new deal for working people is based on five principles of good work which include security at work, quality jobs, a fairer economy, opportunity for all, work that pays.

“Usdaw welcomes this new deal as we have been calling for a minimum of at least £10 per hour for all workers, job security, an end to zero-hour contracts and better sick pay for a number of years. As the country tries to recover from the pandemic, the best way to thank key workers is to ensure decent pay and fairness at work.”



## Usdaw's New Deal for Workers calls for:

- A minimum wage of at least £10 per hour for all workers, ending rip-off youth rates and providing a living wage.
- Minimum contract of 16 hours per week, for everyone who wants it, that reflects normal hours worked and a ban on zero-hour contracts.
- Better sick pay for all workers, from day one, at average earnings.
- Protection at work – respect for shopworkers, abuse is not a part of the job.
- A proper social security system, Universal Credit does not provide a safety net.
- Job security, with day one employment rights for unfair dismissal and redundancy.
- Fair treatment and equality for all workers, including equal pay.
- Voice at work, stop employers refusing to engage with trade unions and end 'fire and rehire'.

Government to work with them and employers to develop an industrial strategy for retail. The union has long campaigned for action to support the struggling retail sector.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: “The UK retail sector has been impacted by the coronavirus pandemic on an unprecedented scale. For an industry already facing significant challenges, the long-term impact will be severe.

“With over 180,000 jobs lost across the industry last year and 200,000 predicted for this year, we need immediate action from the Government to reduce rents and rates for high street retailers, alongside levelling the playing field with an online sales tax. The coronavirus pandemic has pushed many retailers and retail workers to breaking point, so we need Government measures to

be equally significant.

“Retailers need urgent measures to deal with the immediate crisis and a longer-term strategy to deal with some of the more fundamental structural issues facing the industry. Usdaw is calling for the Government to adopt an urgent recovery plan for the retail sector.”

### **Usdaw calls on the Government to immediately:**

- Extend the business rates holiday at 100 per cent until the end of the financial year.
  - Fundamentally reform business rates.
- Despite the recent interim report, the Government is yet to take the clear and decisive action that retailers need to reform/reduce commercial property tax. The call for some form of online sales tax is getting stronger, particularly in light of the rapid growth in online shopping.

# Arena Know your Rights

## TAILORED SUPPORT

The coronavirus pandemic has left millions of people in debt or struggling with their finances. Payment holidays that were put in place came to an end in March. However, the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has set out a series of rules for lenders to follow to help customers who are struggling to make repayments. This is called 'Tailored Support' and is based on individual circumstances.

## MORTGAGE

**Q** I'm struggling with mortgage repayments, what help can I get?

If you're struggling to pay your mortgage, or you're coming off a payment holiday and you're still in financial difficulty, then your lender has to offer you 'tailored support'.

What that means for you will depend on your financial circumstances. How settled your finances are will also have an impact. The following are some of the help measures you may be offered, though lenders are free to offer other solutions if something else works better for your particular circumstances:

- A (further) payment deferral. This is likely



to be a short-term measure only and may be offered if your circumstances are still changing, and you're not able to commit to a longer-term measure such as changing your mortgage type or length.

- A (further) period of reduced payments. If you can pay something towards your mortgage, but can't make the full contractual repayment, your lender may agree to you making reduced payments. Again, this measure is likely to be for the short-term only.
- An extension to your mortgage term. This is essentially like a remortgage, and means you'll pay less each month (but as you're



borrowing over a longer period, you'll pay more overall).

- **A change to your mortgage type.** For example, this could be switching you to an interest-only mortgage or changing to a product with a different interest rate.

### **Will Tailored Support go on my credit report?**

Yes, this will go on your credit report.

### **How do I apply for Tailored Support?**

If you're already on a payment holiday, your lender should contact you before it comes to an end to find out if you can resume normal

payments. If you can't, then let your lender know. It's best to do this as soon as possible before your next payment if you know you won't be able to make that payment.

### **RENT**

#### **Q I'm in private housing and can't pay my rent, what should I do?**

Speak to your landlord as soon as possible to let them know your situation and work out a repayment plan.

Also check you are receiving all the financial help you're entitled to, including universal credit. [www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)



### How much notice am I entitled to?

There's a strict process landlords need to follow to evict you. The first part is to serve you notice of eviction. But the notice they need to give you varies:

- In England they usually need to give you four months' notice (unless you owe more than four months of rent, in which case the notice period's just four weeks).
- In Wales and Scotland they usually need to give you six months' notice.
- In Northern Ireland they usually need to give you 12 weeks' notice.

### What happens if I don't leave by the time the notice period is up?

If you've not left by the time the notice period is up, your landlord can then choose to start court proceedings (or tribunal proceedings in Scotland) to evict you.

If the court agrees you can be evicted, then your landlord can appoint bailiffs who can gain entry to the property to take possession of it, or to remove your belongings and change the locks. You could also be expected to pay towards your landlord's legal fees. However, it can take weeks or months for the eviction to happen after the court allows it.

### Further advice and support

Shelter (in England, Scotland or Wales)

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

Housing Advice NI [www.housingadviceni.org/](http://www.housingadviceni.org/)



### CREDIT CARDS, DEBTS OR LOAN PAYMENTS

**Q** I'm struggling to pay my credit card bill, what help is there for me?

If it's the first time you're getting into difficulty with your cards or loans since the start of the pandemic, or you're coming off a payment holiday and you're still struggling, then your lender will offer you Tailored Support. This could include a payment deferral, a period of reduced payments, waiving or reducing interest, agreeing a repayment plan or refinancing your credit agreement. Contact the lender and see what they can offer you. Tailored support will go on your credit report.



## OVERDRAFT INTEREST

### **Q** I'm paying interest on my overdraft, can I get this waived?

The temporary rules that were put in place by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) to help those struggling with overdraft cost came to an end last October. Instead, your bank should provide you with 'Tailored Support' which could include reducing or waiving your overdraft interest, transferring the overdraft debt to a cheaper credit product or agreeing to reduce the overdraft limit in stages as you pay the balance off. If the bank agrees to reduce or waive interest, for example, this wouldn't be shown on your credit report.

Further information can be found at:

[www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/cut-overdraft-costs/](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/cut-overdraft-costs/)

## BROADBAND

### **Q** I can't afford my broadband bill, what can I do?

Ofcom, the broadband regulator, has told firms not to disconnect people who can't pay: "We expect providers to keep customers connected even where they are struggling to pay. We'll be asking them to suspend all disconnections, except those requested by the customer."

Check with your broadband provider to see what has been agreed between them and Ofcom.

## UTILITIES

### **Q** I can't pay my gas/electric bill, will I be cut off?

If you're on credit meter your supply won't be cut off - disconnections of standard credit meters have been completely suspended. All energy suppliers have agreed to provide support to anyone in financial distress so contact your energy provider.

Ofcom has written to all suppliers saying it expects them to take proactive measure to support prepayment meter customers. Therefore, contact your provider to see what help they can offer you.

### Further Advice or Support

**This information was correct at the time of writing however due to the ever-changing situation it is best to double check to make sure this applies.**

Step Change offer free debt advice and help.

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

Money Saving Expert

[www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2020/03/uk-coronavirus-help-and-your-rights/](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/news/2020/03/uk-coronavirus-help-and-your-rights/)

# Drivers' Shortage

Workers' rights are at the heart of the driver shortage and the Government must act

**O**n the 7 July the Government announced a temporary relaxation of the retained EU drivers' rules. This relaxation initially applied from 12 July 2021 to 8 August 2021, however the Government launched a consultation to extend this to 3 October 2021.

Estimates suggest that there is now a shortage of more than 100,000 drivers in the UK. Significant disruption is being caused across a range of sectors, with gaps appearing on food shelves and building projects having to be delayed. The crisis is expected to deepen in the coming months, because of increasing demand as the economy reopens.

The Government claimed relaxation of the rules would increase flexibility and enable drivers to take longer trips, which would reduce the current pressure on local and national supply chains, which are being caused by the national shortage of HGV drivers. It was feared that many companies were heading towards a situation whereby they could no longer guarantee all deliveries.

## Safety Concerns

At the time, the changes were met with widespread concern over driver safety.

In July, Usdaw responded to the Government's call for evidence on the current shortage of drivers with a long list

*"For too long, workers' rights have been eroded across the transport sector, along with increasing use of 'fire and rehire' to slash terms and conditions."*

of issues arising out of years of decline in terms and conditions of employment.

**Udaw identified the following areas of concern:**

- Lower pay and rights, sometimes forced on staff through 'fire and rehire'.
- Declining trade union recognition and collective bargaining.
- Greater use of flexible shift patterns replacing settled working hours.





- Lack of driver facilities contributing to health and safety concerns.
  - Extended driver hours resulting in more fatigue.
  - Fear of contracting Covid-19.
  - Expensive training with costs often falling on individuals.
  - Brexit has resulted in the loss of an estimated 25,000 EU truckers.
- Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis

said: "Drivers are key workers who have helped keep the country going through this appalling pandemic. So, we are pleased to contribute to the Government's call for evidence on the current driver shortage, but disappointed that it took a crisis for them to realise there are long-term structural issues that need to be addressed.

"For too long, workers' rights have been eroded across the transport sector, along with increasing use of 'fire and rehire' to slash terms and conditions. These tactics have driven long-serving employees away from the industry and discouraged new starters from entering the industry. Recently some employers have increased contractual terms to those on newer contracts to boost retention, but this is too little too late.

### **Improve Terms and Conditions**

"One clear way to improve terms and conditions across the sector would be to increase the coverage of trade union collective bargaining. As has previously been outlined by the Government's former director of labour market enforcement, the decline of trade union collective bargaining coverage has clearly correlated with workers getting a declining share of national income. The Government has a key role in promoting trade union recognition across all industries and they should improve the statutory recognition procedure to achieve that.

"There are many other issues to address, as we have set out in our response. We hope this initial consultation will lead to further engagement and Usdaw stands ready to work with the Government and employers to overcome this growing problem that will severely impact our ability to recover from the pandemic."

# Politics & You



If you are someone who wants to make a difference and play a part in improving your local community, why not get into politics?

**A**s trade union members, we're all working together to try to make our working and personal lives better. We recognise that speaking with one voice makes us stronger, and sends a powerful message to those who make the decisions that affect us.

Whether or not we as individuals pay close attention to politics, decisions are being taken every day that impact our lives in a very real way. This is something that particularly affects us as trade unionists, as our employment laws and protections come from Westminster and the devolved parliaments. A strong political voice is crucial for the union to be able to have an effect on these decisions.

As an Usdaw member, you'll know that the union campaigns on issues that are important to you, your colleagues and your family. We use our collective voice to speak up for members when things have gone wrong, or when there is something that needs putting right.

As an individual member, you can play

your part in the union in many ways, from encouraging your friends and family to sign our petitions, to becoming an activist or rep. You can also play a part directly in the union's political work.

## Making Your Voice Heard in The Labour Party

The Labour Party was formed by trade unions over 100 years ago, with the explicit aim of improving life for working people and their families and doing this through gaining political power.

As a trade union that's involved in the Labour Party, Usdaw sends a group of members to Labour's annual conference. These members are elected by you and will have a direct say on the key issues that the Labour Party will campaign on.

Usdaw uses its presence at the conference to promote the union's campaigns, and to engage with Labour Party members and politicians on the policies that matter to you.

For more information contact [politics@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:politics@usdaw.org.uk)



*Whether or not we as individuals pay close attention to politics, decisions are being taken every day that impact on our lives in a very real way.*

## What You Can Do

Usdaw's political work relies on members like you, and there's never been a better time to get involved. Here's how you can play your part.

### ***Be Part of Usdaw's Political Activists Programme***

Usdaw is building up a network of political activists so that we can influence political decisions, promote our campaigns, and support Labour to win elections. Whether you would just like to get involved in politics, or would like to stand for election yourself someday, the Political Activists Programme is for you. You can register by going to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Usdaw-and-Politics/Join-the-team](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Usdaw-and-Politics/Join-the-team)

### ***Sign Up as an Affiliated Supporter***

By signing up as an affiliated supporter, you will receive updates about Labour's campaigns and also have a right to vote in various elections to choose who leads Labour in the UK, Scotland and Wales. You can sign up by going to: [support.labour.org.uk](http://support.labour.org.uk)

### ***Join The Labour Party***

As a Labour member you can get involved directly with Labour in your area where you can raise issues that are important to you and other Usdaw members.

You can join by going to: [join.labour.org.uk](http://join.labour.org.uk)

### ***Represent Usdaw***

If you're a Labour member, you can also represent Usdaw by being a delegate at local Labour Party meetings, at Labour Conferences, and on various committees in the Labour Party.

### ***Regional Political Committee***

The Regional Political Committees help co-ordinate Usdaw members to take part in local political campaigns, organise regional political work, and support Usdaw members get involved in politics.

New committees will take office from January 2022 so is a great time for you to get involved. Look out for communications about how you can get involved in this or contact your local office for more information

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

# Loneliness

## rises by 40 per cent during the pandemic

**The last 15 months of on and off lockdowns and not being able to see family and friends has left millions of people struggling to cope with a global pandemic alone.**

It comes as no surprise that research conducted by the Office for National Statistics found almost one in 14 people aged 16 or over say they are lonely.

Loneliness can be as bad for someone's health as having diabetes or high blood pressure. That's why in December last year the UK Government announced a £7.5m fund to tackle the epidemic of loneliness in England.

### What is loneliness?

Loneliness is a subjective, unwelcome feeling of the gap between a person's desired levels of social contact and their actual level of social contact.

### Different types of loneliness

Loneliness can be a transient feeling that comes and goes. It can be situational; for example only occurring at certain times like Sundays, bank holidays or Christmas. Or loneliness can be chronic; this means someone feels lonely all or most of the time.

### Who is affected by loneliness?

As people get older the risk factors that might lead to loneliness begin to increase. Getting divorced, bereavements, poor health, living alone, retirement and loss of mobility can all contribute to feeling lonely.

However, loneliness doesn't just affect older people. Young people are also

reporting feelings of loneliness for a number of reasons including not being at school/college due to lockdowns and not fitting in with their peers. Although social media can help individuals connect it can also exacerbate feelings of loneliness as people compare themselves to unrealistic versions of people online.

### What to do if you're feeling lonely

National lockdowns have meant that we need to adapt to connect with people and find new ways of participating in social activities.

#### *Stay Connected*

Staying connected to family and friends is vital in protecting our mental health. Usdaw has a number of bitesize courses that can help you get online including how to use Zoom. [www.usdaw.org.uk/learninggateway](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/learninggateway)

#### *Stay Active*

Research shows that a lack of exercise can have a detrimental impact on our mental health. Going for a walk, gardening or doing a low impact workout at home can contribute to feeling better.

#### *Online Learning*

Learning can help boost a person's confidence and self-esteem. Usdaw members can access courses in a whole range of subjects including English, maths, ICT, languages, CV writing and much more via [www.usdaw.org.uk/learninggateway](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/learninggateway)



### *Participate Online*

If you have a special interest or a hobby, why not join online groups or forums so that you can talk to like-minded people.

### *Distract Yourself*

Having a healthy distraction that engages the mind like reading a book, watching a film, listening to music or doing a crossword can boost mental health.

### *Treat Yourself*

Doing something nice for yourself can make you feel better. It can be as simple as taking a long bath, cooking healthy food or lighting a scented candle.

### *Helping Others*

Volunteering for a good cause not only helps you make a big difference to your local community but it can also help you meet people.

[www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/volunteer](http://www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/volunteer)

### *Age UK*

Age UK offers a telephone friendship service that allows over-60s with a volunteer for a weekly chat.

To sign up for a weekly call go to [www.ageuk.org.uk/services/befriending-services/sign-up-for-telephone-befriending/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/befriending-services/sign-up-for-telephone-befriending/)

# How to ensure you pass on pension benefits to your dependants

**S**ince the start of the Covid-19 crisis there has been a large increase in people wanting to write or amend their wills, but many people neglect to think about where their pension money will go if they die. In most cases your pension funds are held outside of your estate and will not be covered by your will.

After your home, your pension could be your largest asset, and if your pension is classed as a Defined Contribution scheme then, with the introduction of pension freedoms in April 2015, you are able to nominate to whom the money goes.

## Complete an Expression of Wish Form (Nomination Form)

Specifying your pension beneficiaries is even easier than making a will. No solicitor needs to be involved. All you need to do is complete an 'Expression of wish' form (sometimes called a nomination form) which you can obtain from your pension provider. If you have more than one pension scheme make sure you do it for each one.

By completing the form you can nominate who you would like to receive your pension benefits if you die. This doesn't have to be your spouse or children as you can nominate whoever you wish to benefit from your pension money. Please note the pension plan trustees will usually follow your wishes - they're not bound by them but will use your completed form as a guide.

If you don't complete a form, or if you have completed a form and it is out of

date, then the pension scheme trustees will have to decide where the money goes, and this may not be paid to whom you would wish. Therefore, it is important you keep your expression of wishes forms up to date.

## Don't Retire from Usdaw

Just because you are retiring from work doesn't mean you have to retire from the union. You can keep your union membership and play a vital role in your branch's recruitment and campaigning activities.



## Free Life Member or Superannuated Member?

If you take early retirement and carry on paying full contributions then you are still entitled to the full range of union benefits. However, from the age of 55, if you are retired, you can remain in membership as either:

- **Free Life Member** – you must have 30 years' membership at a full rate of contributions and you pay no further contributions.
- **Superannuated Member** – you must have at least five years' membership at a full rate of contributions which means you have to pay a small fixed weekly contribution. The rate you pay depends on your contribution scale before retiring.

## Funeral Grants

Free Life Members and Superannuated Members are entitled to a union funeral grant. The size of the grant relates to the

contribution scale paid and the current levels at the date of death.

## Benefits and Services

A variety of services and benefits are provided for retired members. This includes cash benefits, pension advice, accident cover, work-related conditions or diseases, slipping, tripping, injuries caused by violent crime, free will writing service, competitive home and motor insurance, shopping discounts and special member offers.

## Retired Members' Committees

Every region has a consultative committee for retired members of the union. They are nominated by branches and serve for a term of three years.

More details can be found on the website at [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk) or by contacting the pension section on **0161 224 2804** or [pensions@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:pensions@usdaw.org.uk)



# Not so Easy rider

Usdaw member Jim Hughes is in the middle of an epic bike ride which will see him cycle 800 miles from Llanelli to Hadrian's Wall to raise money for veterans of the armed forces.

**J**im, who is 70, works at Tesco in Llanelli, has been an avid cyclist since his twenties and done a number of gruelling challenges both in Australia and Germany. The challenge will take him 18 days to complete and will see him riding through north Wales, Liverpool, Cumbria and finishing up in Newcastle. Jim started his journey a few days ago and arena caught up with him as he took a much-needed break near the A485 on his way to north Wales.

"I grew up in Australia but moved to Wales in the seventies to join the British Army," said Jim. "Back then we were on a four-day week and there were no jobs except in the mining industry. I joined the army because I knew they would give me a job, somewhere to live and provide me with food and clothing.

## Adjusting to civilian life

"I'm doing this bike ride because I want to raise awareness about the way soldiers are treated after they have finished serving in the army. When I left the army in 1986, I felt abandoned and a little bit lost. I was lucky that I found a job quite quickly which helped me adjust to life in the outside world. But that's not always the case, especially these days. It can take two to three years to settle into civvy life. That's because when you're in the army everything is done for you. You are told when to wake up, when to go to sleep, your meals are cooked for you and your accommodation is paid for. A lot





# Rider



of the thinking is done for you. So, when you come out 10, 15 years later you have no idea how to do normal things like finding a place to live or what forms you need to fill to get a job.

"That's why we need to provide support for these veterans. Many veterans also have post-traumatic stress, depression and other mental illnesses because of what they have seen in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of them rely heavily on drugs and alcohol to help them cope.

"When they come out, they must be given accommodation or there is a danger they will end up homeless. They should also have access to mental health services and drug and alcohol rehabilitation programmes, as well as a place where they can meet other veterans. Providing this ongoing support is crucial for being able to adjust back into society.

## The finishing line

"I get through the long hours by using techniques I learnt in the army, namely how to separate your body from your mind. I have blisters, aching legs and an aching back, if I focused on these I would never finish. That's why when I'm cycling, I slip into somewhere else and before you know it, 20 miles have flown by.

"So far I have raised over £1,100. My colleagues at Dotcom Llanelli have been fantastic and donated very generously, they have been very supportive of my efforts. Tesco also donated and they run an Armed Forces Network which includes hosting a Heroes' Breakfast in their stores for service personnel from local barracks.

"When the challenge is over, I'm really looking forward to having a soak in the bath and then a nice cold beer."



# *Pride is Political: Win for Unions on Harassment at Work*

**E**very June, Pride month is celebrated in the UK. While celebrations may have looked a little different this year, reps up and down the country have found creative ways to hold workplace events, show solidarity and raise awareness of issues facing LGBT people.

As Pride parades and events start to take place again, there is another reason to celebrate, because following years of campaigning by unions and LGBT activists, the Government finally committed to action to stamp out sexual harassment at work.

In July, the Government Equalities Office announced a legal duty on employers to protect their staff from harassment, including sexual harassment. This is something Usdaw have been seeking through its 'Call it Out' sexual harassment campaign, and together with other unions and organisations as part of the #ThisIsNotWorkingAlliance.

We know from our own research that women and LGBT members are more vulnerable to harassment at work. Women, and particularly young women, are



much more likely to experience sexual harassment. However LGBT members are also vulnerable and harassment takes a specific form of intrusive and offensive remarks about their sex lives and bodies.

A 2019 survey by the TUC shone a light on the shockingly high levels of sexual harassment and assault experienced by LGBT workers. Around seven out of ten LGBT people have experienced sexual harassment at work and one in eight LGBT women reported serious sexual assault or rape. But this is often a hidden problem. Two thirds of those harassed did not report it; and one in four of those felt unable to report harassment because of the fear of 'outing' themselves at work.

### **Impact on mental health**

No worker should have to experience abuse just because of who they are and it should not be down to individuals to prevent and manage their harassment alone. That's why

strengthening the law to prevent sexual harassment at work before it happens is so important.

At the recent Usdaw LGBT online get together we asked members what they think are the issues that matter most to LGBT members in their workplace. The responses highlighted mental health (60 per cent) and harassment at work (20 per cent) as the most important - and the two issues are linked. TUC figures show 1 in 6 LGBT people say harassment has a negative effect on their mental health - so tackling harassment and feeling safe and supported at work can help to improve mental health.

The proactive duties announced by the Government Equalities Office in July mean employers must take steps to protect employees from harassment by customers and clients as well as from other colleagues. For Usdaw members in public facing roles this is particularly welcome. Incidents of harassment and abuse towards retail staff have increased over recent years and worsened during the pandemic. And for LGBT members much of this is rooted in prejudice.

### **Major step to safer workplaces**

Details of the legislation will be subject to further consultation but Usdaw will be calling for the duty to be introduced as soon as possible, with clear guidance on the steps employers are expected to take, and proper support for enforcement.

The new law is a victory for every member who made the difficult choice to speak up about their experiences, held workplace campaigns, filled in surveys, challenged their employer and wrote to their MP to bring about change.

It is a major step towards safer workplaces and one that we hope will make a real difference to LGBT member's lives at work.

There is always more work to do, but unions will continue to keep pride political and keep fighting for safety, dignity and equality for LGBT workers.

# Free Legal Support for Members

**T**ake the pain out of personal injury and keep 100 per cent of your compensation with Usdaw's FREE claim line for members.

If you've had an accident that wasn't your fault contact FirstCall Usdaw, the union's FREE accident and injury claim line. Making a claim is easy. There are no complicated forms to fill in and you will be supported by Usdaw and the union's solicitors every step of the way.

## What does FirstCall cover?

Any accident, anywhere in the UK - including road traffic accidents, work-related conditions or diseases, slipping and tripping, and injuries caused by violent crime or armed robbery (CICA claims).

Accidents/injuries to members, and their children under the age of 18, while outside the UK on a package holiday\*

Family members living with you are also fully covered if they're injured in a road traffic accident.

## How do I make a claim?

Call FirstCall Usdaw free on 0800 055 6333 to start your claim. You will be asked to provide some personal details and information about your claim. Your details will be checked and your claim will be logged - have a pen and paper ready to take down your case number.

## How do I qualify?

To qualify for Usdaw legal assistance the accident must not pre-date your membership



and you must be a fully paid-up member. You must also be making a claim within three years of the accident (two years if it is a criminal injury claim).

## What legal fees do I need to pay?

None. FirstCall is a FREE service for Usdaw members. There are no legal costs whether you win or lose your case (the only exception is if the member has knowingly made a fraudulent claim).

## Do I keep all of my compensation?

Yes. If the claim is successful you will keep 100 per cent of your compensation, unlike many private solicitors who can deduct up to 25 per cent to cover the legal costs.

## Can I use FirstCall Usdaw to contact the solicitor for a claim I have already registered?

No. FirstCall Usdaw is only the number to ring to start a new claim. Please use the number provided to you by the union solicitors if you have a query about an ongoing case. Call the Legal Department on 0161 249 2438 if you have mislaid the solicitor's number.

\*Package holiday claims means accidents, injuries or other personal injury claims covered under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Members are advised to take out adequate holiday insurance at the time of booking their holiday. Usdaw Legal Plus does not cover members for any personal liability that might arise from their actions; cancelled flights or accommodation; lost baggage; or up front medical expenses.

Please note: Usdaw Legal Plus is not an insurance policy. The Personal Injury cover does not replace the need to obtain specialist holiday insurance, car insurance and home insurance.

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



*"I bandaged my hand but found it difficult to sleep because of the pain."*

Usdaw member **R Fernandes** was awarded over £5,400 after a cup of tea from Greggs left his hand badly burned.

**"I** always pop into Greggs on my way to work to grab a drink and sandwich," said Mr Fernandes.

**"This morning they had a trainee working there. After she made my tea, she pushed it towards me which caused the cup to tip over and the boiling tea spilled onto my left hand.**

"The trainee and the supervisor offered me tissues to clean up the spill but they didn't have a first aid kit. When I asked them for an accident reporting

form the supervisor was hesitant about letting me complete one, although eventually he did. I work as a manager at a supermarket so I knew there should be a proper process in place for dealing with accidents.

"I had to go into work straight after. As my shift progressed, two huge blisters appeared on my hand, despite this I somehow managed to finish my shift. When I got home, I bandaged my hand but found it difficult to sleep because of the pain. I contacted my GP who was unable to see me as it was March 2020 and we had just gone into the first lockdown. He advised me to take painkillers.



"I didn't hear anything from Greggs so I contacted their head office, who had no record of an accident report being forwarded to them. They asked me to send them details and photos, which I did. Even then nobody got back to me. After chasing them a number of times they reluctantly offered me a £10 voucher, when I turned it down, they offered me a £30 voucher.

"At this point I was struggling to use my left hand at work and my employer

*"At this point I was struggling to use my left hand at work."*

had to bring someone in to help me. This wasn't an ideal situation at all. I decided to call Usdaw as I was annoyed because I was in pain, my hand was scarred and it was having an impact on my work, yet Greggs didn't even offer me an apology.

"I'd been a member of Usdaw for six years but never used the Legal Plus service. After contacting Usdaw I was very quickly put in touch with Hannah, the solicitor from Bates Wells & Braithwaite.

Hannah was absolutely fantastic, she dealt with everything and kept me updated every step of the way.

"In the end, Greggs decided to settle the case before it went to court. All in all, I was very happy with the service I received. A year on the scarring has almost gone and I'm no longer in pain. I still go to

Greggs every morning. I understand that accidents can happen. I just wanted them to apologise and deal with the accident properly rather than fobbing me off with a voucher."

## Ushaw free Will writing service for members and their partners.

**W**e will put you in contact with one of our Solicitors who will guide you through the steps and draw up a Will to meet the wishes of you and your partner.

If you do not make a Will, the law dictates who will inherit your estate. It is important your Will is prepared by a skilled professional who can give you accurate and informed advice.

### In your Will you can:

- Leave your estate to anyone you wish. This will normally be family members with a named substitute should they die before you.

- Leave gifts to any individual or to a charity.
- Choose your executors to administer your estate.
- Appoint guardians for your infant children to look after their interests until the children reach 18.
- In appropriate cases, set up a trust which will allow infant children access to funds before they reach 18.

*Use Ushaw's free Will writing service to make sure your wishes are followed and to give you peace of mind.*

Apply online at  
[www.ushaw.org.uk/BL4form](http://www.ushaw.org.uk/BL4form)



**INJURED?  
REMEMBER  
YOU'RE A  
MEMBER**

**DON'T FORGET  
YOUR FREE  
LEGAL SUPPORT**

- ✓ Expert solicitors to look after you.
- ✓ For members and their children under the age of 18 any accident, anytime, anywhere in the UK and for package holidays outside the UK.
- ✓ And family members living with you are also covered for road traffic accidents.

**IF YOU HAVE AN ACCIDENT,  
HIGH STREET SOLICITORS  
CAN TAKE UP TO 25% OF  
YOUR COMPENSATION  
WITH FIRSTCALL USDAW  
YOU KEEP 100% OF  
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**USDAW**

**0800 055 6333**

**VISIT [WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL](http://WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FIRSTCALL)**

# MemberOffers

## CARS & TRANSPORT

Car Hire  
Car Maintenance  
Car Parking: Q-Park  
Fiat  
Startrescue  
Vauxhall Cars

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

Comfort Insoles  
Gym Membership  
My Active Discounts  
Usdaw Health Plan  
Usdaw Dental Plan  
Vision Express

## INSURANCE

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

## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52  
Cinema at Home: Chili.com  
Cinema Tickets  
Discount Card  
English Heritage  
Go Ape  
Golf Membership  
Magazine App: Readly  
Magazine Subscriptions  
National Trust Gift Cards  
Online Ticket Store  
SAA Art Membership  
Theme Parks &  
Attractions  
Virgin Experience Days

## HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges &  
Hotels  
Away Resorts  
Cottage Breaks  
James Villa Holidays  
Lost Luggage Protection  
Parkdean Resorts  
Pontins  
Wightlink Ferries

## MONEY & FINANCE

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

## SHOPPING

Apple  
Charles Tyrwhitt  
Crown Decorating Centres  
Dell  
Discount Card  
Domestic Appliances  
Gift Card Savings  
Magazine Subscriptions  
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback  
Card  
UsdawRewards Cashback  
Virgin Wines

## MISCELLANEOUS

Funeral Planning  
Gas and Electric  
Mobile Phones  
TOTUM Pro Card  
International Student ID Card

**Don't forget about the  
Union's legal services  
such as free will writing  
and Legal Plus**

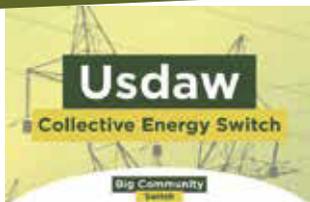
[www.usdaw.org.uk/legal](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/legal)



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

\*Terms and conditions for individual offers on the website.

## STICK OR SWITCH?



**Beat Energy Price Rises.** Since launching Usdaw Collective Energy Switch in 2018, Usdaw members have saved over £130,000 by grouping together to get a better deal on their gas and electricity. It's quick and easy with no obligation to switch. See if you can save money by joining the next auction – just in time for winter! **How it works:** Register your interest for free before 12th October 2021. Our partner iChoosr holds an auction where energy suppliers compete for your custom. You will receive a personal offer detailing your potential savings. Decide – stick or switch. If you switch our partner iChoosr takes care of the entire process. To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/switch](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/switch)\*

## SHOP AND SAVE



### **Totum Pro Discount Card.**

Take advantage of TOTUM PRO, a discount card and app that gives you access to discounts and offers from 350 UK retailers available in-store, online and via the TOTUM app. To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*

## DISCOUNTS ON TECH



### **Reward Mobile.**

Reward Mobile are a multi-award winning, premier partner of EE, offering Usdaw members discounts on the latest mobile phones, tablets and EE Home Broadband. Through their partnership with EE, Reward are able to provide you with the best deals they can find. That means you can make big savings, and still be part of RootMetrics, the UK's number one network for the past seven years in a row. To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*

## ORAL HEALTH COVER



**Usdaw NHS  
Dental Plan**

### **Usdaw Dental Plan.**

Do you have an NHS dentist? Get up to £500 of NHS cover with this simple and straightforward member benefit exclusively available to Usdaw members. It costs £11.50 per month and you get money back each time you visit your NHS dentist, meaning no more costly treatment bills, plus you're covered immediately as soon as you join the plan. To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*



Your health and your safety at work is a vital part of Usdaw's service. For more advice visit:

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



## **Q** Cleaning after flood

Following recent heavy rain, our warehouse, toilets and part of the main shop were flooded with a couple of inches of water. The manager has told us to come in and clean up the mess. Can they order us to do this and is it safe?

It will depend on the scale of the problem and whether the instruction to clean up is 'reasonable'.

If you are expected to clean, your manager needs to make sure you have appropriate protective equipment - boots, overalls, gloves and possibly masks or face protection if there is a risk of splashing. Employers should also make sure that the cleaning chemicals are safe to use and proper instruction is given on how to dilute concentrated cleaners or

disinfectants and how to use them safely.

People should cover any cuts with waterproof plasters and should have access to water to wash their hands when they've finished.

If any electrics have been in contact with the flood water, it should be checked by a competent electrician before workers move back into the area.

If there is serious contamination or a really major clean-up operation is needed then specialist cleaners may be required.

## **Q** Seating at work

I work on a checkout and am provided with a seat. My employer is now saying that I do not need a seat. Is this right?

The law is fairly clear about provision of seating in any workplace. Regulation 11 of the Workplace (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 says that a suitable seat shall be provided if the job, or a substantial

part of it, can be done seated. That is why most retailers still provide chairs at their main-bank checkouts.

That being said, it is not always clear cut whether a seat should be provided and it will depend on all the circumstances. For example, in convenience stores or small shops where chairs are often not provided behind the counter, the employers say that it is not a job that can be done sitting because you need to move around all the time to get cigarettes from the gantry, to use the lottery machine and to stock shelves.

If you need further advice, please contact your rep in store or the health and safety section at head office.



SEND YOUR  
QUESTIONS TO  
ARENA'S HEALTH  
EXPERTS:  
arena@usdaw.org.uk

## **Q** Water bottles on checkout

**I use a water bottle at the checkout to keep hydrated. Recently my manager has refused us having bottled water to drink on the checkout. Can they do this?**

There is no obvious reason why workers should not be allowed to have bottled water on the checkouts. Employers have a legal duty to make drinking water 'readily accessible'. If they don't allow workers to have water at their work station then they must provide water nearby and

must allow all the workers to take breaks away from the check out to get a drink when they need it. It would be much simpler to continue to allow you to have bottled water with you.

If they do insist on banning water bottles, raise it with your Usdaw rep.

## **Q** Draughts and ventilation for coronavirus

**In the office where I work, my desk is right by the window. The manager says we have to have the windows open because of Covid. It wasn't too bad in the summer but now it is getting cooler there is a cold draught and I get a stiff shoulder. I am dreading the winter. What can I do?**

Ventilation is one of the most important control measures to reduce the risk of workplace transmission of the virus. If people are stuck in an enclosed space for some time without ventilation the concentration of the virus builds up in the air and the risk of infection increases. Good ventilation is also important to prevent the transmission of other airborne infections such as colds and flu and to keep the air fresh. Stale air is bad for your health even if there are no viruses around.

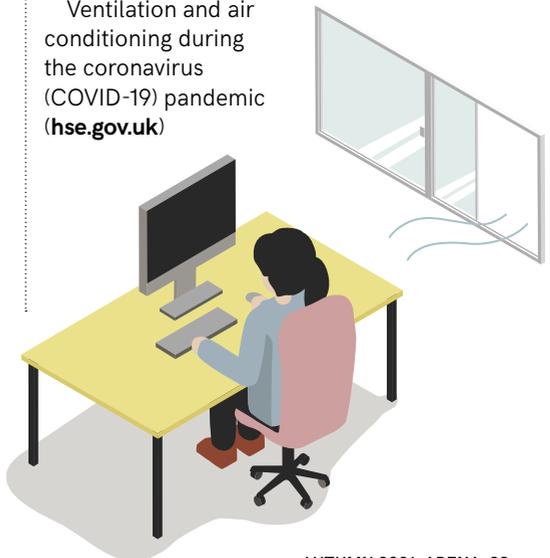
However, that doesn't mean all the windows have to be wide open all the time. Employers had a duty to ensure good ventilation long before the pandemic but they also have a duty to maintain a reasonable temperature and to avoid harmful exposure to cold draughts. As the HSE guidance on ventilation for Covid points out cooler, windier weather increases natural ventilation so you don't need to open windows so wide. They also suggest that opening higher windows may

create fewer draughts while still providing natural ventilation.

Many members will work in areas where opening windows are not an option so they will be reliant on mechanical ventilation. But again, the ventilation system should not expose people to excessive cold or to draughts.

In your case your employer needs to consider what can be done to protect you from the draught. Keeping the window beside you closed or narrowly open and using other windows to maintain ventilation may be an option. Moving your desk may be another. Tell your manager about the problem and talk to your Usdaw rep if they don't sort it.

Ventilation and air conditioning during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic ([hse.gov.uk](https://www.hse.gov.uk))





**Q** **New way of working**  
I work for a call centre. We were all moved on to home working during the pandemic and I have been working with my computer perched on a cupboard in the front room. It hasn't been ideal, especially when the kids are off school. Now my employer is talking about making us work from home to cut down on office space. As it is no longer temporary what responsibility does my employer have to ensure my safety?

A HSE say a risk assessment will be needed if an employer introduces longer term working from home. Your employer will need to consider whether the home environment is suitable to allow you to work from home - is there the physical space to set up a proper workstation, do you have a good broadband connection, what work equipment do they need to provide, can you get privacy when at work. Are you mentally suited to the isolation of home work, are there other pressures such as carer responsibilities or relationship problems or even domestic violence issues.

Employers of DSE workers at home still

need to provide eye and eyesight testing and suitable equipment such as an office chair, separate keyboard and stand for the laptop. They need to be clear about how they communicate with home workers and how they monitor work to allow for frequent breaks. Employers also have a duty to provide information, instruction and training which should cover things like setting up the workstation and separating work from domestic activities.

Keeping in touch with your colleagues and your union rep is very important if you are working mostly from home. Some employers arrange on-line meetings to help with this but you and your colleagues may also want to arrange your own social media networks.

If you need any assistance, please contact your rep or the health and safety section at head office.

*For further information on health and safety go to:*  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)



## Menopause at work

**I am suffering from menopausal hot flushes and am finding it very difficult to concentrate at work. Should I inform my manager?**

Yes. Menopause is a workplace issue and you do not need suffer in silence. Women tend to feel that they need to cope alone, for example because they don't want their manager or colleagues to think their performance is being affected or because they find the prospect of disclosure embarrassing.

The law requires employers to consider the risks to their employees and introduce reasonable measures to take into account the difficulties that women may experience during the menopause. Informing your manager will let them know what symptoms you are suffering so that they can introduce reasonable measures that will help. Even simple steps like providing cold drinks or breaks to get away to a cooler place can help. In May this year the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development produced a guide for managers that explains how employers can meet their obligations under equalities and health and safety law. [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/line-manager-guide-to-menopause\\_tcm18-95174.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/line-manager-guide-to-menopause_tcm18-95174.pdf)

If you need any assistance, please contact your workplace rep or your local Usdaw office.



## Sleepy driver

**I am a delivery driver and recently found that as the day wears on I have started to nod off at the wheel. My mate has said it could be something called 'sleep apnoea' and if it is I will be stopped from driving, can you advise me please?**

There could be all sorts of reasons why you are not getting enough sleep or rest. But the commonest medical condition that causes day-time sleepiness is Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA).

OSA stops your breathing while you are asleep. The interruptions can last 10 seconds or longer and occur when the muscles around the throat relax too much during sleep. This causes loud snoring, but if the airway narrows more than normal, it actually stops you breathing. Fortunately, the brain briefly wakes you enough to re-start breathing, but the process can become a continuous cycle that can go on hundreds of times a night, every night. You may not be aware of what is happening but will feel unrefreshed when you get up. Partners may be more aware of it happening because of the loud snoring and interrupted breathing.

This chronic sleep deprivation results in daytime sleepiness, slow reflexes, poor concentration, and an increased risk of accidents. OSA can also increase the risk of serious health problems over time such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.

Ushaw has produced a OSA leaflet that explains that drivers who are concerned with their sleep need to have it diagnosed as driving with this condition can be a serious cause for concern. If you are diagnosed with OSA you must inform DVLA. The DVLA are not concerned if you have OSA more the tiredness the condition causes and you are receiving treatment. Please see the Usdaw leaflet at: <http://dtp.usdaw.co.uk/443/>



# Arena



# Win! £50

Correctly complete the grid and you could win a **£50** shopping voucher!  
**Closing date 13 October 2021**  
 (Not open to Usdaw staff)

## Word up!

Complete our prize crossword to spell out the hidden word in the yellow squares and you could be one of three members to win a £50 shopping voucher. The first three pulled out of the hat will be the winners.

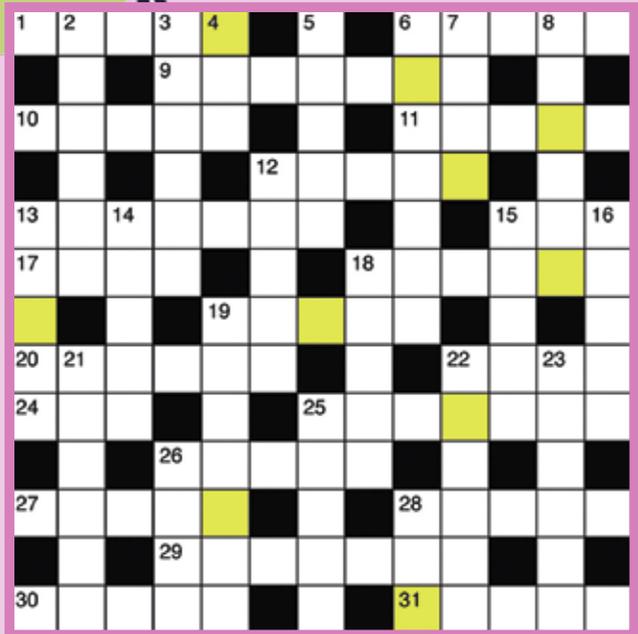
Email your answer along with your name and address to:

**arena@usdaw.org.uk**

Please put 'xword' in the subject box.

**www.usdaw.org.uk/xword**

Solutions available from 14 October 2021.



### ACROSS

1. Legendary king (5)
6. Greek letter (5)
9. Face cloth (7)
10. Suitably (5)
11. Complains (5)
12. Fruit (5)
13. Perplex or bewilder (7)
15. Weep (3)
17. Country road (4)
18. Evening meal (6)
19. Seraglio (5)
20. Cream cake (6)
22. Type of house (4)
24. Golfer's peg (3)

25. Capital of Iraq (7)
26. Started (5)
27. Paris underground (5)
28. Feathered friends (5)
29. Public sale (7)
30. Coagulates (5)
31. Small coin (5)

### DOWN

2. Type of antelope (6)
3. Ablaze (6)
4. Cunning (3)
5. Alphabetical list (5)
6. Seemly behaviour (7)
7. Vivacity, vigour (4)

8. Walk softly (6)
12. Type of tooth (5)
13. Armada (5)
14. Male relative (5)
15. Rapidity (5)
16. Plait (5)
18. Carrying chair (5)
19. Extremely ugly (7)
21. Breakfast food (6)
22. Place of worship (6)
23. Girl (6)
25. Spicy Indian dish (5)
26. Unruly child (4)
28. Dance, informally (3)

# Arena Our members

## Have your say -

SEND YOUR THOUGHTS OR PICTURES TO:  
Usdaw Head Office, Voyager Building,  
2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays,  
Manchester M50 3XZ  
arena@usdaw.org.uk



### Celebrating 30 years of Usdaw membership

Rep **Fatima Hassim** (centre) thanks **Uruashi Gattar** (left) and **Jay Turohit** from AAH Pharmaceuticals in South Ruislip for their loyalty and hard work.



### Rest in Peace Mo

I was absolutely devastated to learn that our very own **Mary Smith** suddenly passed away on 14 May 2021. Mo was such a wonderful human being because she always wanted to do the right thing for everyone around her. We will all miss her badly as she was a great colleague, friend and also fantastic Ambassador for Usdaw. The campaigns in Morrisons Bath will never be the same.

**Milan Pavlik**  
(Area Organiser, South Wales and Western Region)



@UsdawSthEssex  
Solid support from the nightshift @BCM  
Fareva in Nottingham fighting back against  
the unacceptable threat of FireAndRehire.



### Tom Dunlop

Congratulations to Tom Dunlop on becoming the new Mayor of Crewe Town Council. Tom has been an Usdaw member for 42 years and during that time he's been a very active political committee member.



Don't let your colleagues miss out on **Usdaw membership** - including **free legal help, representation and advice at work and member offers...sign them up now using the form opposite...**

Sign up a friend and you could win **£250** of shopping vouchers!

## Your chance to win!

You could **win £250** of shopping vouchers in this issue's prize draw. All you have to do is sign up a colleague or friend to Usdaw using the form opposite, and send it to **ARENA PRIZE DRAW**, Usdaw Head Office, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays, Manchester, M50 3XZ

TWO RECRUITERS WILL WIN SHOPPING VOUCHERS WORTH **£250** EACH IF THEY ARE THE **FIRST** TO BE PULLED OUT OF THE HAT!

USE THIS FORM TO SIGN UP A FRIEND AND ENTER THE PRIZE DRAW

**4** prize draws a year



The weekly rate (applicable from 1 July 2021) is **£2.54**.

You can also enter online:

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

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the Rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. The home address I give is the address that Usdaw will use for balloting purposes. Members joining from 1 July 2021 are automatically entered at Scale A. For details of current membership rates and cash benefits visit [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk). **Responsibility of keeping payments up-to-date rests with the member.**

**Use BLOCK LETTERS and complete this form as fully as possible.**

Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes  No

Please tick the appropriate box  
 Ms  Miss  Mrs  Mr  Mx  Other \_\_\_\_\_ Female  Male

Surname

Forename

Email

Full Postal Address

Postcode

Tel. No. (Inc. STD)  Mobile No.

Date of Birth         Age

Company Name  Occupation

Workplace Address

Postcode

Location No.  Employee No.

**Opt-in Notice** I agree to contribute to the Union's political fund at the rate set out from time to time in the Rule Book, and I understand that this agreement constitutes an opt-in notice for the purposes of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended and the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. Every member may opt to contribute to a separate fund for the furtherance of the Union's political objects under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended) or, as appropriate, the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 by ticking this opt-in notice. A member who chooses not to contribute shall not, by that reason, be excluded from any benefits of the Union or be placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under a disability or at a disadvantage as compared with other members of the Union (except in relation to the control of the fund).

**For Members Paying by Payroll**  
 I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment. I consent to the Union sharing my personal data with my employers, or their representatives in order to process my deduction contributions. I also authorise my employers, or their representatives, to share my information with Usdaw in order to process and maintain my Union membership and where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address and email to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members.

**Privacy Notice**  
 As a member of the Union, Usdaw will process your personal data as part of its legitimate activities in providing trade union services and benefits in accordance with the Union's Objects stated in the Rule Book and to perform its obligations to you under statute or contract. This involves processing of personal and sensitive personal data under the current data protection legislation. We will store your personal data only for the period necessary under law to enable us to fulfil our legal obligations. You have the right to request access to your personal data, and its rectification, erasure, restriction on processing, and portability. You have the right to withdraw consent for sharing of your personal data and to complain to the Information Commissioner. Usdaw and its Data Protection Officer may be contacted at Usdaw, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays, Manchester M50 3XZ.

Member's Signature  Date

Recruiter's Name  Recruiter's Membership No.



# A brief guide to Usdaw

**U**sdaw is the UK's fifth biggest trade union with almost 400,000 members. Most Usdaw members work in the retail sector, but the union also has members in other trades such as transport, distribution, food manufacturing and chemicals.

Usdaw helps people at work by

negotiating better pay and conditions. Being a member of the union also gives you the opportunity to have a say in issues that affect your working life. The more Usdaw members there are in the workplace, the stronger the union's voice when talking to your employer.

## Usdaw membership includes...

### Representation in meetings

There are over 9,000 Usdaw reps in workplaces across the country. If you have a problem at work, or need advice on an issue, Usdaw reps are on hand to advise and represent you in grievance, disciplinary and sickness meetings. The union can also provide specialist advice on pensions, health and safety and legal queries.

### Free accident cover

Workplaces with unions have far fewer accidents. With 4,000 health and safety reps, Usdaw makes sure that your safety at work is taken seriously. If you do have an accident, your membership gives you free accident

cover. If your claim is successful, you keep 100 per cent of your compensation. If you have an accident please contact our free claim line FirstCall Usdaw on **0800 055 6333**.

### Member offers and discounts

Usdaw partners with a number of organisations to give members deals and discounts on everything from cinema tickets to home, car and travel insurance and great discounts at high street shops and restaurants. For further information please see the member offers pages

within the magazine or go to:

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



# Where to find information

## Usdaw website and enews

For everything you need including sections on legal advice, workers' rights, health and safety, news, training opportunities, upcoming events and campaigns. You can also download informative leaflets and posters, and sign up for email updates. Visit [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

## Social media

As an Usdaw member we recommend you follow **@UsdawUnion** on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and Flickr. It's a great way to keep up to date with news, campaigns, events, rights at work, competitions and offers exclusive to Usdaw members.



# Want to get more involved?

## Branch meetings

The best way for members to get involved and stay informed is to attend their branch meetings. These are regular union meetings run by reps and are a good way of finding out what is happening in your workplace, your region and the wider union. Your branch number is printed on the wrapper of each issue of Arena and will start with a letter from A to K. To find out where and when your branch meeting is held, speak to your union rep or call your local office.

## Become a rep

Usdaw is always looking for members to volunteer as reps. Becoming a rep gives members invaluable opportunities to develop personally and professionally. For further information visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/bearep)

# How to contact the union

## Usdaw regions and offices

Usdaw divides the UK into seven geographical regions. If you have a problem at work always contact your Usdaw rep in the first instance (details can be found on your union noticeboard) or contact your local Usdaw office:

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

**Update your details:**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/update](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/update)



## A South Wales and Western Region

Bristol 0117 931 9730  
Cardiff 029 2073 1131  
Plymouth 01752 765930

## C Eastern Region

Bury St Edmunds 01284 775700  
London 020 7323 5550  
Waltham Cross 01992 709280

## E Midlands Region

Redditch 01527 406290  
Kegworth 01509 686900

## F North Eastern Region

Leeds 0113 232 1320  
Newcastle 0191 296 5333

## G Scottish Region

Edinburgh 0131 556 5242  
Aberdeen 01224 652820  
Glasgow 0141 427 6561

## H Southern Region

Faversham 01795 532637  
Andover 01264 321460  
Morden 020 8687 5950

## K North West Region

Preston 01772 704003  
Belfast 028 9066 3773  
Warrington 01925 578050

## Privacy Notice

As a member of the union, Usdaw will process your personal data as part of its legitimate activities in providing trade union services and benefits in accordance with the union's Objects stated in the Rule Book and to perform its obligations to you under statute or contract. This involves processing of personal and sensitive data under the current data protection legislation. We will store your personal data only for the period necessary under law to enable us to fulfil our legal obligations. You have the right to request access to your personal data and its rectification, erasure, restriction on processing, and portability. You have the right to withdraw consent for sharing your personal data and to complain to the Information Commissioner. Usdaw and its Data Protection Officer may be contacted at Usdaw Head Office, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays, M50 3XZ.

# HOME INSURANCE WITH A TRIPLE PROMISE



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REVIEW PRICES TO  
KEEP THEM LOW.



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PLUS OPTIONS  
TO TAILOR COVER.



ALL OUR  
CLAIMS HANDLERS  
ARE BASED  
IN THE UK.



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£20

Over 1,600 Usdaw members already  
choose us for their Home Insurance. If you  
decide to join them, we will send you a **£20  
M&S e-gift card** when you **buy by phone**.‡

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NEW

Ushaw members get an exclusive 12% off  
Gadget Insurance with code **UNION53**.  
Visit [cover.uia.co.uk/usdaw/](https://cover.uia.co.uk/usdaw/)

Get your quote today

Call **0800 376 0300\***  
Visit [usdawinsurance.co.uk/arena321](https://usdawinsurance.co.uk/arena321)



Scan  
me

\* Lines are open 9am-6pm Mon-Fri (subject to change due to Covid-19 restrictions). ‡ Closing date 12th November 2021. For terms and conditions of this offer please visit [uia.co.uk/terms-conditions/](https://uia.co.uk/terms-conditions/) Gift card will normally be fulfilled up to 28 days after policy start date.

UIA Mutual is a trading name of UIA (Insurance) Ltd. Cover is provided by UIA (Insurance) Ltd, a member of The Association of British Insurers and a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014. Principal Office in England at Kings Court, London Road, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2TP. Usdaw is an Introducer Appointed Representative of UIA (Insurance) Ltd, which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority.