

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | September/October 2011



GET INVOLVED IN RESPECT WEEK

The Freedom From Fear campaign has been a great success because of Usdaw's army of activists – now's your chance to make a mark

■ Academy reps on their secondment

Hear what Academy1 reps thought of their six month stint recruiting and organising
page 22



■ Young activists in action at Scot's music festival

Reps went to the T in the Park festival in Scotland to connect with new members
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■ An eye witness account of the August riots

Mehmet Asdoyuran lost his home and all of his belongings in August
page 4



A fairer Britain

General secretary John Hannett's comment



How refreshing it was to hear at the Labour Party conference Ed Miliband's call for a fairer Britain that rewards real hard work and job creation and gets the economy growing again. Compare that to David Cameron who can only talk about cuts, austerity and ordinary hard-working families having to feel the pain of the economic downturn.

Ushaw members are the absolute epitome of what Ed called 'the grafters who do the right thing' – hardworking people trying to do the best for themselves and their families but who are now finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet.

Our members will welcome Ed's vision and commitment to a fairer society and a fairer economy, one that rewards those who make a real contribution to the country rather than those who are ripping us all off.

Ushaw members will also welcome Ed's call for the Tory-led Coalition to change course to an economic strategy that promotes growth, creates jobs and gets the country moving again.

Our members are being squeezed both ways by the Government's reckless austerity policies; the cuts to tax credits, child benefit and childcare support means that for many of them their income is going down at the same time as rising prices and the increase in VAT means they need to spend more just to get by.

A cut in VAT would be a good first step to get economy going again and would also provide some welcome respite for hard pressed families. We also agree with Ed that action and investment is desperately needed to get our young people into work.

Ed once again showed he has the vision and values to regain the trust of the British people and the strength of purpose to stand up against the deeply unfair and damaging policies of the Tory-led Coalition.

Looking ahead

We have a busy conference season ahead of us with retail and transport members meeting up for their annual conference. The Black Members' Weekend and Youth Weekend will also take place – both to encourage activism among members who are under-represented in our ranks.

Our national Respect Week is also coming up and I would urge all reps to get involved in the campaign because we have to keep repeating the message that any type of abuse at work is totally unacceptable. You will find all the information you need inside this issue of *Network*.

Ushaw
Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers

“Ushaw members are ‘the grafters who do the right thing’ – hardworking people trying to do the best for themselves and their families but who are now finding it increasingly difficult to make ends meet”

USDAW

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The union's award winning Freedom From Fear campaign will hold its annual Respect Week from November 7-11 with reps being urged to get involved, hold awareness days in-store and contact their local MP to make sure shopworkers are safe at work. **15-18.**



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The August riots wrecked businesses and properties, *Network* spoke to store manager Mehmet Asdooyuran who was left homeless after his flat was burnt to the ground.

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Young activists went to the T in the park festival in Scotland in July to enjoy the music and take the union's message to other young workers.

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Some of the UK's most famous biscuit brands are manufactured at the McVitie's site in Manchester, which also has an award winning learning centre, *Network* paid a visit.

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New reps made the most of the summer when they went to the union's popular residential school held in the picturesque setting of Wortley Hall, near Sheffield.

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Union learning reps are doing their best to provide members with valuable opportunities to enhance their skills and increase their confidence.

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Usdaw's delegation to this year's TUC conference made their voices heard on employment rights, Government cuts, and vulnerable workers.

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Activists on Academy1 will complete their six month stint in November and once again they have made a significant contribution to the growth of the union.

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Thousands of workers may be missing out on vital cash help because they don't claim Housing Benefit. Find out how you can check out your eligibility.

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London's burning

Store manager Mehmet Asdooyuran could only watch as his flat was razed to the ground during the August riots

When looters set fire to a carpet shop in Tottenham they also made 26 families homeless including Usdaw member Mehmet Asdooyuran.

The 36 year-old store manager found himself right in the middle of the disturbances in the early hours of Sunday August 7 as rioters smashed and burnt businesses and residential properties near to Tottenham Hotspur's football ground.

"I was awoken at around 1.30am by the sound of breaking glass. I looked out from my flat window on to the street and saw the council building opposite being attacked and then set on fire. I knew straight away this was very serious. Shortly after I felt the building vibrate as the store below had its windows smashed in.

"I went outside to have a look and the shop was already ablaze. There was chaos everywhere. No police, no fire brigade and hundreds of people running wild – it was like a war zone.

"I rang my next door neighbour to make sure he wasn't in the flat and, if he was, to get out straightaway. He came down and we decided to stay with friends, just in case. At the time we planned to return in the morning and expected the flats to have some smoke damage. As I watched the night unfold on the TV I witnessed the building being engulfed in flames – shop and flats – both completely gutted.

"It was a surreal experience. Thankfully we got out. If we'd stayed in and waited for the fire brigade we would've been killed. I just felt hollow everything I owned went up in smoke that

night. All I had was my phone and the clothes I was wearing.

"When I went back later that morning, there was just devastation everywhere. Unbelievable.

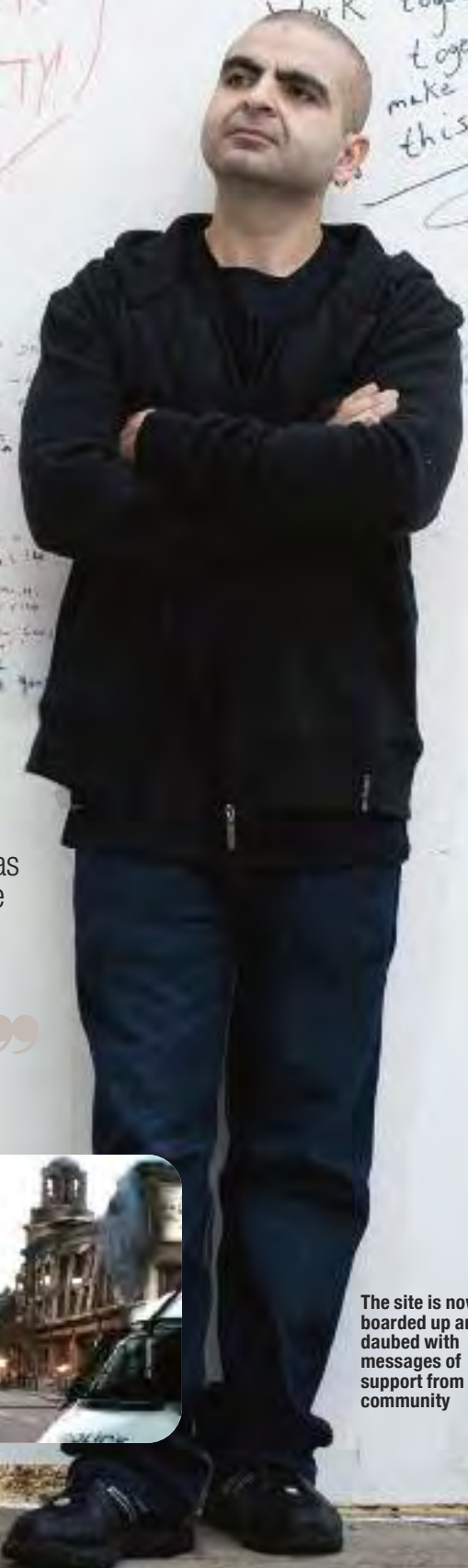
"All of the residents then met up with Labour MP David Lammy. Accommodation was arranged in hotels, although I moved in with my parents initially and since then I've rented a flat in Enfield, which the insurance is paying for. I'm still in limbo and there's a lot to sort out.

"I work for Topps Tiles and I have to say the company has been very good, very understanding and very supportive. I even had a sub on my salary.

"I've been told it'll take between two and three years to rebuild the property. The local area suffered massive damage. A lot of it is still boarded up.

"It is such a huge shame because for the past ten years the area has been regenerated and improved but I know many of the professionals living in the flats said they won't be coming back. This will only lead to further degeneration.

"Looking back, at the time I didn't fear for my life, but on reflection anything could've happened that night. It was like a war zone."



“The shop was on fire, there was chaos everywhere. It was like a war-zone”



The site is now boarded up and daubed with messages of support from the community

DOUBLE AWARD AT TUC FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS



(l-r) Anas Ghaffar, John Hannett and Jonathan Waterhouse at the TUC in September

NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Two Usdaw reps won first prize in the prestigious national TUC awards in the Union Learning Rep and Organising categories beating off stiff competition from around the UK and across all unions.

The dynamic duo were presented with their awards by TUC general secretary Brendan Barber and president Michael Leahy at the national congress in London in September.

McVitie's rep Jonathan Waterhouse won the Union Learning Rep award after he was instrumental in setting up a learning centre and delivering first-class learning opportunities for hundreds of members at his Manchester site.

"I'm delighted to have won the award, not for myself, but for the team at McVitie's who have delivered opportunities for our members to have a second chance of improving their skills, building their confidence and improving their employment prospects", said Jonathan.

While Tesco's Anas Ghaffar won the Organising award after he recruited more than 300

members during a six month period, raising awareness of the union and co-ordinating a team of 12 reps at his store in Slough, Berkshire.

"This is a great boost for the team at Tesco Slough," said Anas. "My time on the union's Academy played an important part in my development and I've put a lot of what I learnt during those six months in to practice in my store. It's clearly paid off."

General secretary John Hannett said: "This is fantastic news for Jonathan and Anas who richly deserve their awards after all the hard work they've put in."

"Congratulations to the two of them and their teams of reps who have done a great job. Committed reps like these are making a real difference to working people's lives on a daily basis and I'm delighted they have received the recognition they deserve."

"Trade union reps in general don't get enough credit for the work they do on a daily basis to improve workers' lives so this is great news for Jonathan, Anas and Usdaw."

NEWS IN BRIEF ... NEWS IN BRIEF

Co-operative retail members vote in pay deal

Members covered by the Co-operative Retail agreement have voted overwhelmingly in favour of a 2.5 per cent pay increase. The deal also includes the abolition of the youth rate meaning all 16 & 17 year-olds now receive at least £6.25 an hour.

Toffee manufacturer goes into administration

The makers of one of Scotland's oldest sweets have gone into administration, putting 103 jobs at risk. New McCowans Ltd, which produces the Highland Toffee bar, has been losing money despite selling more than 140 million bars a year.

Festive season started in September

Christmas products have appeared earlier than ever as Britain's high streets struggle to cope with a flatlining economy and collapsing demand from shoppers. Usually retailers would not start their festive promotions until late October, but this year festive goods are already on the shelves.

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The Co-operative Funeralcare is pleased to support Usdaw members and their immediate families. This support is provided through the Co-operative Funeralcare Pre-Payment Plans. The Co-operative Funeralcare is a member of The Co-operative Group. For more information contact your local The Co-operative Funeralcare (Costs reference - MFT/1/006) or visit our website at www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk. The Co-operative Funeralcare is a member of The Co-operative Group.

More news at: www.usdaw.org.uk/news

IN BRIEF

■ Morrisons to fund in-house graduates

Bradford-based retailer Morrisons will fund the degree studies of 1,000 A-level students as it seeks to recruit tomorrow's senior managers straight from school.

Young people with 'the right drive and attitude' will get the chance to get management education from one of the top UK business schools without incurring student fees.

■ Seasonal staff lined up by Sainsbury's

Top four retailer Sainsbury's will take on around 15,000 extra staff to cover the Christmas period. Around one in seven seasonal staff were kept on last year.

■ Apprenticeships in fashion at Next

High street fashion chain Next is looking to recruit around 1,000 young people for its ground-breaking apprenticeship scheme. Five hundred are expected to be taken on within the first six months for a career in retail. The company said it will double that figure if there are enough suitable candidates. "We hope to show that someone training from the age of 17 without a degree can succeed," said a spokesman.

■ Retail sector still under huge pressure

Fashion chain Alexon – which has 990 outlets in the UK and Europe – is the latest retailer to issue a profits warning as the sector continues to be battered by falling consumer spending, higher taxes and economic uncertainty.

Workers deserve better pensions

REPORT URGES CHANGE

Private sector workers need to get a much better deal from their pensions if they are going to have enough money to live on in retirement, according to the final report of the Workplace Retirement Income Commission (WRIC).

The WRIC, which was set up earlier this year to review private sector pensions, uncovered widespread concern about the charges, risks and complexity of private sector pensions. Their final report describes the UK pension system as 'complex, costly and inefficient'.

With 14 million workers

currently not saving for retirement and 10 million due to be automatically enrolled into a workplace pension from 2012, the WRIC believes there is an urgent need to improve private sector pensions.

Commission chair Lord McFall said: "Too many people are stuck in a complex, costly and inefficient system that relegates the consumer's interest to second place.

"People need to get more bang for their buck, or they're not going to bother saving. Instead they'll end up spending today, ignoring tomorrow, and scraping by in poverty on the state pension. We cannot stand by and let that happen."

General Secretary John Hannett, a member of the Commission, added: "It is crucial that government, employers, unions and other interested groups come together to address the weaknesses in private sector pensions.

"Auto-enrolment is a big step on the way to a better pension system but on its own it won't be enough. If people are going to put more of their hard-earned wages into a pension then we need schemes that are good value for money and that take some of the risks of pension saving off the individual member's shoulders."

■ www.usdaw.org.uk/news

Unilever members to consider action

Members at multi-national firm Unilever will be balloted on industrial action after the company announced plans to close its final salary pension scheme.

The company's proposals were overwhelmingly rejected by members across the UK with only 22 voting in favour and 1,459 against. Workers will now vote on whether to go on strike over the coming months. Members of Unite and GMB are also involved.



Usdaw activists took their protest to London in the summer to protest against planned changes to the Unilever pension scheme

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WEB/NWK/09/11

FREE FLU JABS AT THE CO-OP GROUP

PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE

The Co-operative Group is offering a free flu vaccination to all staff as part of its drive to provide preventative health care to its employees and the initiative will make it the largest business in the UK to offer such a benefit.

National officer Sharon Ainsworth welcomed the announcement. "This is good news for our members," she said. "We have had some severe winters lately and a disproportionate amount of strong viruses have caused havoc in many households, so hopefully this will lead to less misery for our members and a healthier workforce all round."

Group director of HR Richard Bide said: "This year we want to make a significant contribution to the health and well-being of our colleagues by making it as easy as possible, for those who wish to, to protect themselves against seasonal flu viruses.

"The service will be provided by The Co-operative Pharmacy, from the autumn with on-site clinics at any Group location with more than 100 employees. The business would be responsible for allowing all employees to have the time off for the vaccination.

"Any employee will be able to go to a participating Co-operative Pharmacy and have the flu vaccination at no

cost. We will be increasing the number of branches providing this service.

"This decision will demonstrate to colleagues our commitment to employee well-being and a responsible and pro-active attitude to the operation of our business.

"We also believe that the Group overall will benefit significantly from having a healthier workforce, protected from flu-related illness. Consequently, this is a clear 'win-win' for the Group and its employees.

"In 2010 UK businesses reported a dramatic increase in absence from work caused by flu or caring for close relatives with flu."

Officers branch out to learn more

Finding out how the union operates on a local, divisional and national level makes up part of the branch officer's course – a five day residential training scheme for newly elected branch officers.

Held at the national training centre in Warrington, the course gives a comprehensive overview of all aspects of running a branch, servicing members and getting involved in the activities beyond the individual's workplace.

Accommodation is provided at a nearby hotel.

More at: www.usdaw.org.uk/training



Ten newly elected branch officers attended the five-day residential course in August

IN BRIEF

2011 Forthcoming events for your diary

October

08 – 10 October
Black Members' Weekend

15 & 16 October
Retail Trades Conference

November

05 & 06 November
National Youth Weekend

07 – 11 November
National Respect for Shopworkers Week

12 & 13 November
Eastern Divisional Conference

14 & 15 November
Scottish TUC Women's Conference

26 & 27 November
Southern Divisional Conference

26 & 27 November
Midlands Divisional Conference

December

03 & 04 December
North West Divisional Conference

January 2012

14 January
National Organising Awards

More information at:
www.usdaw.org.uk/events

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Joining young reps for T

Activists in Scotland were at the centre of the action at the country's biggest music festival

Scotland's youth activists made certain Usdaw took centre stage at July's T in the Park festival as the first ever trade union to have a stall at Scotland's premier annual music event.

"We had ten of the division's young activists profiling Usdaw and they did a fantastic job," said Scotland's youth co-ordinator Craig Smith. "They set up our stall in a prime position inbetween the two main stages and highlighted the union's Freedom From Fear campaign.

"They even managed to put Usdaw firmly on the map with national television exposure to thousands of viewers during the headline act on Sunday evening when the Usdaw flag was captured on the BBC cameras on numerous occasions during the Foo Fighters' set.

"They are a real credit to the division."

Twenty-one year-old Morrison's café supervisor Sonya Sukis from Edinburgh helped organise the event, she said: "It was a fantastic experience, the sheer number of people was breathtaking.

"Over the three days we had more than three thousand visitors to the stall and collected more than 2,800 signatures on our petition.

"We also handed out hundreds of membership forms and leaflets and 64 new membership forms were completed at the event and another 59 people asked for forms to be sent out to them.

"The Freedom From Fear campaign struck home because it affects everyone's day-to-day lives, especially shopworkers and their families and we can all relate to that.

"All of the youth committee put in a lot of hard work and we thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it even when the stall almost collapsed because of the rain!

"It was an experience I'd love to take part in again as the team building and working together to profile the union at such a big event made for a great weekend."

Contact your local youth co-ordinator for information on what's going on in your area and how to get involved

South Wales & Western

Milan Pavlik
Bristol 0117 691 6061

Eastern

Adam Skwierawski
Bury St Edmunds
01284 775700

North Eastern

Gary Gibson
Leeds 0113 232 1320

Scottish

Craig Smith
Glasgow 0141 427 65611

Southern

Danny Knowles
Morden 0208 687 5950

Midlands

Jan Hind
Redditch 01527 406290

North West

Paul McKenna
Warrington 01925 578050





ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

North West division's **Adam Fletcher** answers our questions on his experiences as a rep

“The reward of changing people's working lives for the better makes the hard work more than worth it”

FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Age** 21
- **Employer** Co-op
- **Occupation** Team leader
- **Lives** Astley, Manchester
- **Union positions** Shop steward, branch secretary and a member of the Co-op National Negotiating Committee
- **Branch** K115
- **Usdaw Activist** Since September 2010

MY FAVOURITE...

- **Music...** is Lady GaGa. Most of my circle of friends are unique and different so any singer that stands up for the rights of minorities has my support, plus she makes some fantastic tunes.
- **I spend my spare time...** with friends and family when I'm not working or doing union business. I am an avid fan of Manchester United and have been a season ticket holder for three seasons.
- **The best moment of my life so far...** has been my 21st birthday, me and my closest friends went to Royal Ascot and had an absolute ball. I love to dress up and so the excuse to wear top hat and tails was not to be missed!



Why did you become an Usdaw rep?

I strongly agreed with what the union stood for. I saw corners being cut in my own workplace in terms of employment rights and wanted to learn all I could to help put these things right. I have a degree in politics and modern history and the trade union movement was an area I actively pursued in my studies, so the opportunity to help further the movement was one which I have tried to grasp with both hands.

What's the best thing about being a rep?

The ability to help those who most need it. It's not just about being someone with a wealth of employment law knowledge, it's about being a person who people can trust and can confide in, who can ultimately help in any situation.

...and the worst?

Is the open hostility that some managers have towards the union, rather than seeing the union as a force for good, they often view reps as trouble causers when the truth is far from it.

What are the most important issues for your members at present?

As a Co-op employee, my members are currently confused and frustrated by the new management structure. Nearly 90 per cent of my phone calls are all related to questions about the new management structure.

Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

Immensely. I have changed from being the least organised person I know, to someone who actually knows where everything is. The friendliness of the organisation has

helped increase my confidence and put me at ease when talking to new people.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I have done all the basic courses along with the branch officer's course and the three day pension course. All were very interesting and have helped me when dealing with questions. They prepared me for the role I was undertaking, and provided me with a network of contacts to draw upon if I needed extra support.

How would you improve Usdaw?

The support it gives new reps. Many of us often feel a bit abandoned and isolated, the introduction of a stronger support network, especially amongst reps would help to make those new reps more confident and would probably help to retain them.

What's your advice to a member thinking about becoming a rep?

Take the plunge. It's very challenging and sometimes difficult, but the reward of actually changing peoples working lives for the better added to the networking and ability to further one's self makes the hard work more than worth it.

What's next for you?

I don't really know. I have a good degree in my pocket now and I'm going to see where it leads. I have always had a passion for teaching, so if you ask me where I see myself in ten years I would say at the front of a classroom.

Want to be the next activist in-depth?



network@usdaw.org.uk

REPS TAKE THE BISCUIT

Teamwork has paid off for reps and members at the famous biscuit maker McVitie's in Manchester and the sweet smell of baking biscuits including Digestives, Jaffa Cakes, and Penguins to help sta

Some of the world's most famous biscuit brands including penguins and digestives are made by Usdaw members at the famous McVitie's factory in Manchester.

The site, built in 1914, also manufactures the McVitie's Jaffa Cake brand and is home to more than 500 union members in K6 branch under an agreement that can be traced back to 1921.

The branch is run by a dedicated team of reps, health and safety reps and union learning reps and convenor Kevin Dolan, who cover all shifts every day of the year except Christmas Day and Easter Sunday when the factory closes.

On the factory floor enormous mixing machines, industrial-sized ovens and miles of conveyor belts ensure that the UK's biscuit demands are well and truly met. The sweet smell of baking biscuits and liquid chocolate make this one of the most pleasant working environments in food manufacturing. A variety of shift patterns make sure production never stops.

Relations between the reps and management run equally as smoothly with a no-nonsense approach to industrial relations and a strong partnership deal ensuring problems are dealt with quickly and fairly.

"We have regular meetings with the management team," said Kevin Dolan. "And it's fair to say over the last four years we have made real progress despite the ongoing need to modernise and adapt to the demands of the sector. We get on well and the joint



“The joint approach works, we have built up a mutual respect between us and the company”

Winning team ... (l-r) Jonathan Wate, Kevin Dolan, Sharon Louth, Des Murph

approach does work.

"Our team of reps has evolved over the same period and between us we have built up a mutual respect between us and the company."

Human resources business partner Loretta Smith agrees. "We have to be flexible and over the years there have been lots of changes to meet customer demands. We have an agreement to modernise and, while this is not easy, with regular debate and consultation we do work our way forward."

The reps have negotiated a good set of terms and conditions on-site with competitive pay rates, shift allowances, occupational pension, staff

discount and good holiday provision.

"These have been built up over many years and I'm sure this explains why we have a lot of long serving staff on-site and turnover is low," said Kevin.

Health and safety understandably plays an important role with comprehensive systems in place to ensure both employees and the products are looked after. "We have a safety manager on site who works with our reps on a regular basis," added Kevin.

"Our accident rate is very low, and while we're always looking to improve, the site's record is excellent."



Did you know?
71m packets of chocolate digestives are eaten each year in the UK that's 52 biscuits per second.

T AT McVITIE'S

er, with good terms and conditions, an excellent learning centre
ff get through their working day or night – *Network* paid a visit



house, Dawn Allan,
hy, and Peter Daley

Learning in demand

The Manchester factory has also reaped the benefits of the launch in 2008 of the on-site learning centre, which has already won awards for its commitment to delivering for staff.

"We've put courses on covering English, maths, Spanish, IT and much more," said Union Learning Rep (ULR) Jonathan Waterhouse. "The company have been very supportive and the members have made the most of the opportunities available to them.

"We have six PCs, internet access, and the centre is open 24 hours a day. A tutor comes in twice a week and more than 100 members have passed their NVQ level 2 in a variety of subjects. Other courses have included plumbing, digital photography

and we're also linked in to the food manufacturing training programme, so it's a win-win situation for staff and the company.

"Personally I've been on quite a few Usdaw training courses and these have given me the knowledge and skills I need to help encourage members back into learning and provide the course which I've thoroughly enjoyed.

"The lifelong learning initiative plays a unique role in that it gives our members a second chance and provides fantastic opportunities to readdress their skills level. I get a great buzz out of that.

"We have linked up with the local colleges and library to hold the six book challenge and other

initiatives to encourage adults to return to learning. We have also set up a book swap option for staff and their children. It's amazing to know just how many members get involved in learning so they can help their kids and grandchildren with their homework.

"For me getting members back into learning should be a core union activity – it works at our site and it is very rewarding for all concerned the ULRs, the members and the company."



FROM HUMBLE BAKERS TO MULTI-NATIONAL BUSINESS



McVitie's timeline

- 1830 Robert McVitie opens his first bakery
- 1888 Following expansion begins trading as McVitie & Price
- 1914 Manchester factory built
- 1948 Merges with MacFarlane Lang & Co to form United Biscuits
- In 2000 UB was bought by Finalrealm taking the company private.
- In 2006 private equity groups Blackstone and PAI Partners bought UB for £1.6bn
- UB has sites across the UK and in Eire, Belgium, France, & Holland
- Brands include; All McVitie's biscuits, Jaffa Cakes, Penguin, Jacob's, Twiglets, Phileas Fogg, Hula Hoops, Mini Cheddars and KP brands.

Baker's dozen but Manchester's millions

- The Manchester factory produces 2.8 million Jaffa cakes a day, that's 19.6 million a week and 980 million a year.
- The site uses 200,000 tonnes of flour a year, 103,000 tonnes of chocolate and 84,400 tonnes of sugar.
- 56,000 tonnes of biscuits and Jaffa cakes are produced each year.
- You can pick up around 8,500 tonnes of Penguins that are manufactured on site.



SCHOOL FOR SKILLS

Usdaw's popular summer school for new reps brought together 40 activists for a busy week of training, campaigning and education, a week later they left more confident and committed

Twenty three year-old warehouse operative at Hermes in Luton **Daniel Feakes** was just four months into his new rep's role when he went to summer school. "The week helped to plug the gaps in my knowledge which will help me advise my members in a more informed way," he said. "I've learnt a lot from the other reps too. The structure of the union is explained and you're given some great resource materials like the *Know Your Rights* booklet. I'm looking to get involved with

the youth section and maybe go to the ADM next year."

Manpreet Sanghera was glad she signed up for the school. "I've learnt a lot and my confidence has really increased," said the Tesco general assistant from Twickenham.

"I never thought I would be capable of making a presentation to the class but I did and I enjoyed it. There's a range of experience and expertise in the class so we all brought something to the table. I'd definitely recommend it to other reps and I'm looking at applying

for the Academy next year and/or summer school two. I'm keen to apply what I've learnt this week in my store over the coming months."

Tesco customer assistant **Adam Campbell** had an 'eye-opening' week during his stay at Wortley Hall. "This was a big step up for me but I felt more confident and more clued-up by the end of the week," said the 27 year-old from Doncaster.

"It was very enjoyable and certainly increased my knowledge of the union. Wortley Hall is a lovely place, the accommodation is good,

the food is gorgeous - too much in fact, and a great setting for a summer school."

Tesco rep **Elaine Curran** enjoyed her first summer school so much she's already planning to go to next year's. "It was brilliant," said the team leader from Rochdale, Greater Manchester.

"I'm really pleased I came because I have turned it down in the past. The small groups help, I learnt so much and I can do everything better now than before I arrived. I made a lot of friends too."

Price controller **Adeola Fadipe** learnt new skills at the



Daniel Feakes



Adam Campbell



Elaine Curran



Adeola Fadipe



Christine Page

New deputy head of training takes up her role



Claire Simpson, 39, is the new deputy head of training and education.

The former prison officer joined the union's staff in 2009 when she was appointed training officer in the Midlands division.

She became involved with the trade union movement during her 13 years in the prison service where she was a branch rep for the Prison

Officers Association. She was also a learning rep and won the Northern TUC ULR award in 2006. She left the service in 2007 to work as a TUC lecturer at Sunderland College.

Originally from Yorkshire, Claire will be moving closer to her roots and will be based at central office in Manchester. "I'm delighted with my new appointment although I'm sad

to be leaving the Midlands division after two wonderful years," she said.

"Training and developing reps and new activists has been a key part of my working life both as a teacher and branch official.

"I am keen to continue the development of training for our great team of reps in order to meet the organising needs of Usdaw."



First Summer School 2011 Wortley Hall

school and is determined to put them into practice in her Ladbroke Grove store in London. "I was shy at first but I've grown since I came here and I know I've more to do in my Sainsbury's store to engage more workers with the union.

“I never thought I would be capable of making a presentation to the class but I did and I enjoyed it”

"The tutors are very helpful and passionate about what they do. The school gives you new skills and sets you up to be a better rep. If summer school two is like summer school one then put my name down now because I'd love to go."

Wiseman's driver **Andrew Tyre** particularly enjoyed the insight into the union's structure and the equalities work at summer school. "Fantastic. A lot of hard work but really enjoyable," said the Midlands rep. "We all face similar problems and we

learnt from each other. The tutors put you at ease and it's a nice friendly environment."

Every day brought a new challenge for **Christine Page** from West Yorkshire Co-op branch. "I really enjoyed it," she said.

"Very interesting, a good mix of people and a lot of team work going on. It was fun too but we didn't get a lot of spare time because you're always thinking about the next assignment.

"The week is a great confidence booster. It's a must for all new reps."

On the agenda at Summer School 1

- Understanding the union's aims, policies and campaigns
- Communication skills including how to prepare and deliver a presentation.
- How the union works locally, divisionally and nationally
- Improving organising and recruitment skills
- Increasing knowledge and building confidence.

TUC's Pauline Cameron joins the Usdaw team



Pauline Cameron is the new training officer in Eastern division based at the Waltham Cross office.

Pauline is no stranger to Usdaw having spent much of the last five years delivering training courses to Usdaw reps as a TUC tutor.

The former union activist's roles include shop steward and women's rep. Through her union activity she became

involved in in-house training as a lay tutor and was a TUC trade union education lecturer for ten years.

"I'm enjoying my new and challenging role," said Pauline. "Everyone's been so supportive. It's a pleasure to be part of such an outstanding organisation. Watching reps' development and progress imparts my role and makes this job such a

rewarding one.

"I'm excited about working with those who already know me and equally looking forward to meeting new reps.

"Like many throughout the union and specifically Eastern division I'd like to thank my predecessor Peter Jarvis for the work he's done for the education department over the last ten years. He's a hard act to follow!"

MEMBER SERVICES



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

For more information visit:

 www.usdaw.org.uk/memberservices

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

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

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Usdaw members can make great savings on the following UK attractions and theme parks:
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To find out more or to book call **0871 222 4001** and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin




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To see how much money you can save visit: usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk or call **0845 652 1683**



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Usdaw Health Plan
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Usdaw Dental Plan
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*Money back may differ on NHS dental plans in Scotland and Northern Ireland

THE CO-OPERATIVE FUNERALCARE

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

Visit www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk for your nearest Co-operative Funeralcare or call **0800 083 6301**

Terms and conditions: 10% discount applies to Funeral Director professional services fees only (as detailed on the price list and estimate form provided at the time of arranging a funeral) and excludes discounts on supplementary services, coffin/casket selection, additional services and payments made on your behalf (e.g. clergy, doctors fees, crematorium/ burial charges). 10% discount is not applicable on funeral plans. Both offers cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Offers valid to Usdaw members and their families until 31 December 2011. All offers are not retrospective. Our business terms and conditions apply. This does not affect your statutory rights.

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With Britannia, Usdaw members benefit from a great range of mortgage products and an exclusive instant access savings account.

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To find out more call free on **0808 156 2838***. Visit your local branch or britannia.co.uk/usdaw

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



TAX REFUND SERVICE

Over **85,000 members** have used this service and so far received tax refunds in excess of **£2.6million**. Refunds average **£167.94** each!

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



NEW AND USED CARS

Risk free, hassle free car purchase scheme for Usdaw members and their families.

- Massive choice
- Save ££££s
- Total peace of mind
- Convenience
- Nationwide delivery

Part exchange welcome
Finance available 

To enquire online visit: www.usdawdrive.co.uk or call **0845 122 6916**

FREE DEBT ADVICE

Usdaw and Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) have launched a new service providing debt advice and solutions for all Usdaw members

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

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

Telephone debt counselling
Freephone **0800 980 8271**
Mon to Fri 8:00am-8:00pm



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- National network of more than 3000 breakdown professionals
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Call free on **08000 22 39 52**
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Visit the following Usdaw websites for more information:

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Nuffield Health: www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield






GET INVOLVED

The union's annual Respect Week takes place from November 7–11 and activists are essential to the success of this very important week

Usdaw's award-winning Freedom From Fear campaign seeks to prevent violence, threats and abuse against members and once again we are organising a Respect for Shopworkers Week to highlight these important issues and raise awareness amongst retail staff, customers, employers and politicians, *writes general secretary John Hannett.*

Our campaign highlights the problems in the run-up to

Christmas. Lots of members have told me that incidents of verbal abuse increase dramatically during the festive period. Customers are stressed, stores are really busy and sometimes things can boil over. So our campaign asks shoppers to: **Keep Your Cool at Christmas – Respect Shopworkers**

We are also focusing on the unprecedented government cuts in police force funding across the UK, which will result in the loss of thousands of uniformed police

officers on the streets. I am particularly worried about the effect this will have on our members and levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in high streets and shopping areas.

There is no doubt that high visibility policing works, under Labour there were 12,000 extra police officers on the streets and crime went down by 43 per cent. So I am asking you to petition colleagues, friends and family and ask your local politicians to stand up for policing in your area.

The Freedom From Fear campaign has so far delivered many gains for our members. These achievements were only possible because of the tremendous support the campaign has received from reps, activists and members across the country.

I urge you to get involved this year and help deliver a high-profile campaign in your area. You can spend as little as an hour or you can devote a full day to the event.

Here is how you can help:

- Give one hour to use our Respect Week 'Lite' Campaign Pack in your workplace.
- Use your noticeboard to display the union's vast array of publications.
- Talk to your current members about the campaign and ask them to sign the petition urging the Government to make shops safer.
- Hand out campaign material.
- Use the survey forms to find out what your members feel about the issue and send these into central office.

Or

- Organise a Stall during Respect Week 7-11 November 2011, perhaps involving the media and your local MP, and use the campaign materials.

An important part of the Freedom From Fear campaign is raising public awareness. Let's face it, if we can persuade customers to respect shopworkers in the first place, much of the problem will be solved.

Setting up a stall in or near your store is an excellent way of engaging the public in our campaign. If you haven't organised a stall before you can contact your local office on 0845 60 60 640 for advice.

Invite Your local MP

We are encouraging MPs to get involved in a local Usdaw event. Their support is very helpful because they can generate media interest and encourage local police and councils to take action. Once your store manager has agreed to a stall during Respect Week, you can invite your MP:

- Write to them at House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.
- Or telephone them on 020 7219 3000.

To find out who your MP is, please phone: 0207 219 4272 and give them your store's postcode or go online at:

<http://findyourMP.parliament.uk>

What you will achieve:

- Show members that Usdaw is campaigning on an issue important to them
- Lobby your MP for action to help make the workplace safer
- Recruit new members



RESPECT WEEK 7-11 NOVEMBER 2011

REMEMBER - ABUSE IS NOT PART OF THE JOB

USDAW'S FREEDOM FROM FEAR CAMPAIGN SEEKS TO
PREVENT VIOLENCE, THREATS AND ABUSE AGAINST
SHOPWORKERS. MAKE SURE YOU GET INVOLVED IN

RESPECT FOR SHOPWORKERS WEEK
AND HELP US TO KEEP YOU SAFE AT WORK.



PLEASE
DISPLAY ON YOUR
UNION NOTICEBOARD



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED VISIT
WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/FREEDOMFROMFEAR

SHOW YOUR RESPECT

Every retail activist should have received a mailing with comprehensive details of how they can spread the word on the Freedom From Fear campaign – it's an important issue no rep can ignore

Since the campaign was launched in 2002 there have been significant breakthroughs in key areas to help prevent violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers, as set out below. Overall the campaign has succeeded in raising the profile of the issue and has forced employers, government, police and others to take action to tackle this problem.

Campaign successes

All of the major retailers, that we have agreements with, support the Freedom From Fear campaign, as do the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the Association of

- Convenience Stores.
- Most of them now display signs in public areas asking customers to respect staff and have reviewed security measures and staff training on violence and abuse.
- Some have run joint campaigns with the union to communicate the Freedom From Fear message to all their employees.
- Employers attended a high-level summit meeting called by Usdaw. The

meeting was also attended by a home office minister and by representatives from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), police and local authorities.

- Usdaw carried out an audit of employers to identify examples of good practice. National officers are now discussing the findings with the employers.
- The BRC has formed its own working party on violence to staff to spread the audit process to other retailers and to promote good practice.
- Local Authorities and police are developing retail crime initiatives with Usdaw's support and advice.

Schemes involve police crime prevention officers and council environmental health officers working together to persuade retailers to improve safety standards in stores.

- The HSE has put a violence toolkit on its website for retail and licensed premises: www.hse.gov.uk/violence/toolkit. Usdaw contributed to the toolkit which contains a lot of the advice from our Freedom From Fear campaign.



Political Gains under Labour

- Labour put an extra 10,000 police officers on the streets, leading to a one third reduction in crime.
- Labour set up the National Retail Crime Strategy Group on which Usdaw is represented. This gives the union a voice at the heart of Government, helping to make policy that will improve our members' lives.
- Following Usdaw's lobbying through the Labour Party's National Policy Forum the Government committed additional funds to the 'No ID – No Sale' advertising campaign.
- Labour amended magistrates' guidance following Usdaw campaigning, to state that where violence is used in the course of shop theft, it should be treated as aggravation of the offence and dealt with accordingly, possibly with a custodial sentence.
- Labour committed to monthly 'beat' meetings between police and retailers in shopping areas where there is anti-social behaviour.

Campaign materials available from central office

- Petition against police cuts
- Retail staff survey
- Usdaw's guide – Preventing violence to retail staff

Leaflets

- Abuse is not part of the job
- Don't be a victim of violent crime
- Preventing under-age sales
- Late-night working
- Top 10 tips for a safer workplace
- Keep Your Cool – Respect Shopworkers (A4)

Merchandise

- Freedom From Fear stickers
- Stressball snowman
- Button badges
- Carrier bags
- Balloons
- T-shirts

Order your campaign materials online at:
www.usdaw.org.uk/respectorders



Did you know?

- Every minute of every working day another shopworker is assaulted, threatened or abused.
- Although the number of reported incidents has halved since 2003, there is still much to do
- The Tory-led Coalition is imposing cuts that will lead to the loss of more than 16,000 police officers

Get involved

- For more details on how to get involved in these activities please do not hesitate to contact Ruth George or David Williams in the politics office on 0161 249 2452.

politics@usdaw.org.uk

Improving skills at work

Lifelong learning is branching out into the community as active reps involve workers, customers and families in their drive to offer courses, boost confidence and update skills

Partnership provides an open-door to learning

Union Learning Reps in the Southern division are working in partnership with Usdaw and Tesco on a new pilot scheme designed to help staff with little or no confidence in using computers develop their skills.

Thirteen staff have just completed the free course being trialled at three stores: Hastings Extra, Swindon Extra and Kennington Superstore.

ULRs Maura Winchester and Sandy Crowhurst from the Hastings Extra store launched the beginners course as part of their Adult Learners Week promotions in May.

"Lots of staff want to make use of the benefits of using a computer but don't know how to get started," said Maura.

"This course is very

practical and built around the Tesco staff benefits and Usdaw website.

"Learners work through step-by-step guides to basic activities such as logging on, site navigation, using links, accessing and understanding information and searching.

"All the activities are linked to a range of benefits on the sites such as pay, health, Tesco shares, Legal plus etc."

Sandy added:

"Management can see the benefits too and have fully supported the pilot giving ULRs time-off to promote and support staff.

"They've also provided prizes such as Tesco vouchers to encourage staff to complete the course.

"It's been a big success for everyone involved."

Customer assistant Kim gets logged on to learning



Community initiative in Folkestone a hit with all the family

ULRs Jane Harman and Nicki Milton joined forces with local Kent

Community Learning Services to promote learning for all to staff and customers at the Tesco store in Folkestone in September.

"The day was a huge success," said Jane. "We had a great response from staff who visited the stand at the front of the store and I also took information into the staff restaurant during break times.

"Computer, volunteering and childcare courses were very popular."

Nicki, who is also the store community champion, said:

"The day showed people that both Tesco and Usdaw recognise community involvement is important.

"Kids were entertained while their parents talked to tutors and there was lots of interest from retired customers."

Ushaw learning project worker Peter Chalkin helped plan and organise the event, he said: "It was a fabulous day, the reps did a superb job with 42 people signing up for learning.

"I also invited ULR and community champion Amy Murphy along from the nearby Tesco store in Crowborough so she could learn how to run a similar event in her own store."

Union Learning Rep Jane Harman (left) putting her community champion skills to the test



WORKERS PAY THE PRICE

Ordinary hard-working families are bearing the brunt of the Coalition Government's savage cuts, and its attack on the public sector will further damage Usdaw members in the private sector

Women are bearing the brunt of the Government's reckless economic policy with cuts to benefits, tax credits and childcare support, Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary told the TUC Congress.

"More than a year ago, David Cameron pledged to cut the deficit in a way that was fair, open and responsible," he said. "We know the cuts have been none of these things.

"What's fair about over a million women unemployed? The latest figures show that female unemployment is at a 23-year high.

"In addition, tax credits have been cut, Disability Living Allowance torn apart, child benefit frozen and housing benefit capped.

"What's fair about working mothers losing almost £3,000 of their family income? Or forcing disabled people off

benefits into a shrinking, often inaccessible job market?

"What's fair about cutting maternity grants, closing Sure Start centres and freezing child benefit? Childcare support has also been badly hit by the cuts.

"There is very clear evidence that women are paying the highest price for the spending cuts, and the impact of the cuts are falling most heavily on those in our society who can least afford them.

"The Government's reckless economic strategy threatens greater inequality and its cuts agenda is hitting the most disadvantaged groups the hardest.

"It puts at risk the income and job security of millions of working families across the UK and puts thousands more children at risk of falling into poverty.

"The scale and pace of the cuts is relentless and it is the disadvantaged in society who



are paying the highest price.

"We will highlight the unfair and unequal impact of the cuts. We will campaign to promote an alternative to their cuts.

"We will reach out to low-income working families, to women workers, to disabled people, to black workers to ensure that their voice is heard in the trade union campaigns against the cuts."

“The scale and pace of the cuts is relentless and it is the disadvantaged who are paying the highest price”

Employees' rights under Government attack

Usdaw is determined to fight any attack on workers' rights by the Tory-led Coalition, deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis told TUC Congress.

"The Tory-led coalition is starting to make the case for sweeping changes to individual and collective employment rights," he said.

"The Government says it wants to tackle over-regulation, reduce bureaucracy and cut red tape. But in reality it is an attack on workers' employment rights.

"It's about reducing the rules and regulations that employers have to comply with. What the Tories mean by red tape is the existence of basic rights for people at work.

"The Government seems to blame basic employment rights as being in some way responsible for the slow economic recovery. They are wrong.

"The economic downturn was not caused by excess regulation, but by unregulated financial markets.

"Fair regulation should be an essential part of a modern economy, a key element of a modern labour market.

"Scrapping employment laws will do great damage to UK workplaces and the rights and safety of workers.

"Those workers who will suffer the most will be the low paid and the most vulnerable workers. The UK has one of the least regulated labour markets among the developed economies.

"Deregulation is a major threat and we have to respond to that challenge. We need to mobilise trade union members to get involved and, if necessary, bombard Government online consultation.

"We need to get the message across loud and clear that workers want more employment rights and we want strong regulation in the workplace. We need to make the case for rules and regulations in the workplace.

"We need to lobby for workers' rights. We need to campaign for employment rights. And we need to rise to the challenge when the Tories and their Lib-Dem friends start making the case for deregulation. Usdaw will be at the forefront of that fight."



TUC delegation 2011

Public sector cuts will damage economy

Government cuts in the public sector will have a catastrophic effect in the private sector, warned Usdaw president, Jeff Broome at the TUC.

"Public services are at the heart of our communities and the Tory-led Coalition cuts to public services affect us all. They destroy lives, cripple communities and strangle growth," he said.

"Public sector job losses lead to fewer customers shopping in the retail sector resulting in more job losses in the private sector - in shops, in distribution and in manufacturing.

"Already this year a number of high profile retailers, including TJ Hughes, Oddbins, Focus DIY, Habitat and Jane Norman have gone into administration.

"It's no surprise customers' confidence is low as their income is squeezed, through the VAT rise, high unemployment, and job insecurity.

"We all depend and rely on public services. Usdaw believes that public sector cuts have a big impact on all workers, including those we represent in the retail, distribution and food manufacturing sectors.

"That is why we - the trade unions who organise in the private sector - will oppose cuts in public services and why we will support public sector trade unions in their efforts to protect the jobs and livelihoods of public sector workers."

Exploitation

Meanwhile, Jeff Broome also spoke up for agency and other vulnerable workers who needed trade unions now more than ever to protect them from exploitation.

"As trade unionists, protecting vulnerable workers is at the heart of what we do," he said. "We believe in fairness and we believe in giving everyone a voice at work.

"The forthcoming Agency

Workers Regulations are important and will help deliver key new rights to many vulnerable workers. However, we need to ensure there is effective enforcement, trade union representation for agency workers and trade union organisation.

"Without enforcement, representation and organisation, the new rights to equal treatment will fail to deliver for agency workers.

"This also has big implications for the core workforce, because the continuing exploitation of vulnerable workers will undermine and erode the terms and conditions of the permanent workforce.

"Udaw has launched its own Agency Workers Campaign. Our aim is to ensure that agency staff know their rights and to organise agency workers to get equal treatment. We need to work together to extend this work and in particular to organise vulnerable workers."

“Public sector job losses lead to fewer customers shopping in the retail sector resulting in more job losses in the private sector”



Jeff Broome

ACADEMY VERDICT

This year's Academy1 will finish in November, *Network* caught up with reps in three divisions to find out if it had lived up to their expectations and what they had achieved in the six months



Grace Tipton

Grace Tipton

Twenty-eight year-old Co-op worker Grace Tipton has had six months with the Academy to improve her skills and it's worked.

"I became a rep 18 months ago because I wanted to help others," said Grace from Blackpool.

"I wanted my time with the Academy to give me the training and experience to deal with different situations and also increase my knowledge of the union and make me more confident as a rep.



North West Division Academy1

"I've surprised myself. I've been visiting stores around Blackpool and the Fylde coast, Preston and Lancaster.

"I never thought I'd be able to go into a store on my own for the first time and chat about the union with people I've never met before and actually encourage them to join. It's been a great experience."

Nasir Iqbal

Co-op worker Naz Iqbal from Clitheroe in Lancashire has endured the ups and downs of being an Academy rep over

the last six months.

"My patch involves visiting a lot of the small Co-op, Tesco, One Stop stores around Southport, Burnley, Nelson, Preston and Colne," said the 29 year-old.

"You can go into a store one day and people welcome you with open arms but on another day it can be the complete opposite.

"Working with the Academy teaches you to take the good with the bad and not to get too down about the bad days because you know tomorrow things will be



Nasir Iqbal

different again.

"I've enjoyed the whole Academy experience especially the classroom work and the opportunity to spend a training week learning with the other organisers from my division and swap notes.

"I'm surprised how much I've learned about the union and the help and support available for reps like myself.

"I'm going to apply for more training courses and I'm going to sign up to the union's excellent home study courses and find out more about lifelong learning."

Tell me: What is the Academy?

- Usdaw runs two Academies 1&2.
- Academy1 is for active reps, Academy2 is for reps who have completed Academy1.
- Both Academies are of six months duration and involve time off from your employer on secondment. Usdaw will pay your wages.
- Successful candidates spend the six months in their divisions on recruitment and organising activities, visiting workplaces, organising campaign days, supporting reps, and recruiting new members. It's hard work but very rewarding.
- Expert training is also given and additional support is provided by an area organiser.
- Both Academies run from May until October/November.
- The application process starts in early January.
- After the Academy reps return to work.
- While there is no guarantee of a future job with Usdaw a number of Academy graduates have gone on to work for Usdaw.
- Interested? For more information visit: www.usdaw.org.uk

IN NUMBERS

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 24 SEPTEMBER 2011

South Wales & Westen.....	46,937
Eastern.....	58,581
Midlands.....	55,890
North Eastern.....	55,681
Scottish.....	44,122
Southern.....	54,820
North West.....	90,980
TOTAL.....	407,011



Sue Kenny

Sue Kenny

Sue Kenny, 50, works part-time for Makro Cash and Carry in Halesowen. "Over the last eight years I've had superb support and training from the union and I've put this into practice in my own workplace gradually increasing membership and keeping all my members up-to-date with any new union matters," she said.

"I applied for the Academy because I wanted a challenge that would improve my skills as a rep. And that's exactly what it's done.



Midlands Division Academy1

"I spent time at a Bookers site which I'd been to before as a rep but had had very little success so I didn't hold out much hope.

"But I recruited nine new members and a new rep.

"Staff said they liked what I said and felt they could trust me. It was a real high.

"And in total contrast I was made most unwelcome by one manager at a large store on my first visit, I left upset and dejected, it was soul destroying. But I had a word with him and it was fine the next time I went."

Gee Khalon

The Academy is helping HGV driver Gee Khalon deliver the union message to hundreds of workers across the Midlands division.

The fifty year-old father-of-three works for Wincanton in Coventry and has been a union rep and branch chair for three years.

"I'd heard a lot of people talk about the Academy and how it was a really good training programme with hands-on experience. So I applied because I wanted to find out firsthand what it was



Gee Khalon

all about.

"I haven't been disappointed, it's living up to all my expectations. The work is really varied and challenging, no two days are the same.

"Having to deal with several types of workers, in different workplaces to my own, has made me better prepared and organised. It re-emphasised the reasons why people should join Usdaw.

"I know I'm already a better rep for the experience. I'd certainly recommend it to other reps."



Flo Boardman

Flo Boardman

After helping to build a solid team of reps in her own store in Cardiff and watching membership steadily grow, Flo Boardman decided it was time to branch out and apply for the Academy.

"I became a rep four years ago. At the time we had three other reps, 600 staff and around 40 per cent membership.

"We worked hard to get better organised and recruited another two reps to the team



and soon pushed membership over the 56 per cent mark.

"We were pleased because a lot of the new recruits were students who don't usually feel the need to join.

"Working with the Academy I've visited workplaces in and around Cardiff and Newport and I've had excellent training sessions with my divisional training officer.

"I know a lot more about the union and I'm much more confident in my role as a rep."

Jason Stevens

It didn't take long for fishmonger Jason Stevens to catch the union bug. He joined Usdaw two years ago when he worked at the Tesco store in Tetbury in Gloucestershire and took on the role of store rep 12 months later.

"I was over the moon when I found out I had a place on the Academy," said the 32 year-old father of two.

"Becoming a rep was the best decision I have made. I've had excellent training and



Jason Stevens

been involved in lots of recruitment activity. The Academy seemed the natural next step for me.

"It's varied and interesting, you meet so many different people on a day-to-day basis.

"My skills have increased because of the Academy and other people have noticed it too.

"I just want to keep improving and push myself as much as I can. I'd like to get a place on Academy2 and then see what happens after that."

ACADEMY IN ACTION

Campaign days are a fantastic way to raise the profile of Usdaw, recruit new members and engage with the shopping public – Academy organisers made the most of their opportunities

**Southern
division**

Southern division's Academy organisers joined forces for a fun day out to speak to shoppers in Crawley town centre in West Sussex to highlight the union and its **Supporting Parents and Carers** campaign.



Kate Cummings

Kate Cummings and the reps at the Sainsbury's store in Aberdeen took the **Freedom From Fear** campaign to the media and contacted local radio and TV to highlight their event.

REGISTER FOR FUTURE ACADEMY INTAKES:

 academy@usdaw.org.uk



Debby Hudson

Debby Hudson and the reps at the Tesco store in Tidworth, Wiltshire, enlisted the support of local Garrison Commander Colonel Paddy Tabor to highlight the **Freedom From Fear** campaign to the local community.

Nic Dakin MP

Nic Dakin MP for Scunthorpe joined the team at the 2Sisters Food site to support the **Fair Ground** campaign to help agency workers understand their rights at work.



Mike Peat

Mike Peat and the team at Tesco Extra in Dundee spoke to night shift workers to highlight the union's work with employers to minimise the risks associated with **late-night working** such as travelling to and from work.

**Gee Kahlon**

Gee Kahlon and the team at the Tesco Extra store in Redditch in Worcestershire encouraged new and existing members to sign up to Usdaw and improve their skills through the **Check Out Learning** campaign.

North East division

Academy organisers in the North East took to the streets and handed out leaflets to shoppers in Barnsley to help raise awareness of the rights available for **workers with parental and caring responsibilities**.

**Jon McEwan**

Jon McEwan and Polish rep Sebastian Rejkiewicz ran a successful recruitment day using the unions' full range of **specialist language leaflets** at the Morrisons Abattoir in Spalding in Lincolnshire.

**Angelique Audas**

Academy2 organiser Angelique Audas and the reps at Tesco Extra in Hull ran a weeklong **Supporting Parents and Carers** campaign and local MP Diana Johnson dropped by to give her support.

“ Well done to all of the Academy organisers. They have done a great job and I know they will return to their workplaces fired up to make Usdaw even stronger. ”

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis

PAT HUNTER : MR. ADM

Scottish division's long-serving executive council member and union stalwart remembered

One of the most recognisable faces at the Annual Delegate Meeting for 25 years, Pat Hunter, died in July, he was 68.

Pat played a pivotal role at conference as chair of the standing orders committee from 1980 to 2005 – a record-breaking stint – serving under four general secretaries and three presidents.

Born in Scotland, Pat joined Usdaw in 1959 when he worked for the Co-op and went on to be a manager for the Co-operative Wholesale Society. His union activity saw him elected to the executive council in 1975 a position he was regularly re-elected to until his retirement in 2006.

In 1991 he was elected as the first full-time convenor for the Scottish Co-op, representing thousands of members in more than 200 stores. He also served on the Co-op national negotiating committee for many years.

He was an active member of the Labour Party, served on Usdaw's

national political committee for many years, and was also a member of the employment tribunal panel.

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute: "Anyone who went to ADM when Pat was chair of standing orders will remember his authoritative presence and his in-depth knowledge and expertise at keeping the ADM show on the road. His commitment to Usdaw was total and he played a massive part in the success of the conference on a national level.

"In his native Scottish division he represented members for 31 years on the executive council, which may be another record, and did a great job looking after reps in the co-operative sector.

"I don't think we will see the likes of Pat again, which will be a shame, but he left a lasting legacy on the union and deserves to be remembered as one of its great stalwarts.

"Our deepest condolences go to his wife Jeanette and all their family and friends."



Tribute to Fred

Former Midlands division area organiser Fred Beney died in June, he was 89.

Fred joined the staff in 1952 as a collector/canvasser in his native London having been active in the South London branch and in his local trades council.

In 1962 he moved to the Birmingham office to take up his new role as an area organiser, a position he held for 24 years, and covered all Usdaw sectors, before retiring in 1986.

A life-long socialist Fred was very active in the Labour Party, serving on the management committee of the Solihull Labour Party for many years. He was also

involved in the National Insurance Appeals Tribunal and the Careers Advisory Committee.

John Hannett said: "Fred served the union loyally and conscientiously for 34 years and will be fondly remembered in the Midlands division for his commitment and dedication.

"Our thoughts are with his family and friends."



Course completed for Peter

School is officially out for training officer Peter Jarvis who retired in September, aged 65, after ten years with the union's education department.

Peter was appointed training officer at Eastern division's Waltham Cross office in 2001. Five years later he became acting senior training officer at central office in Manchester. Previously he worked as a freelance tutor for the TUC.

The lifelong trade unionist started work 50 years ago in the printing industry and left 25 years later after the Wapping dispute. He enrolled in North London University and graduated in

1992 with a degree in history.

"It's never too late to learn," said Peter. "I've had the privilege to work with many new reps of all ages and abilities and watched their transformation as they progress through training courses, on to summer school and the Organising Academy, and for some, onto the union's staff.

"It's been wonderful. I'd like to thank everyone for their many kind words and nice presents."

General secretary John Hannett said: "Peter's been an invaluable member of our dedicated team of training officers delivering first-class training to thousands of activists. We wish him all the best for his retirement."



Workers can claim vital cash help with housing

Thousands of people lose out by not claiming Housing Benefit, find out if you're eligible now



The Tory-led Coalition Government are reducing Housing Benefit, but it's still worth claiming.

If you live in rented accommodation, either with a social or a private landlord, and you are on a low income, check if you can claim.

Lots of working people receive Housing Benefit – 40 per cent of recipients are in work.

Yet it has one of the lowest benefit take-up rates and millions of pounds goes unclaimed each year, mostly from people who work but who do not realise they could claim.

You can use the Government's online **Benefits Advisor** to input your details and see if you qualify for Housing Benefit and up to 30 other benefits that often go unclaimed at:

www.direct.gov.uk/benefitsadvisor

or you can ring your local council who can give advice about whether you would be eligible and how much you could claim.

Child Benefit is no longer counted towards an assessment for Housing Benefit, so if you have children, it is worth checking to see if you are now eligible.

General secretary John Hannett's advice to members is to check it out: "In these difficult financial times, our members and their families need all the help they can get," he said. "If members are approaching you as a rep because they are worried about making ends meet, it's worth suggesting the online Benefits Advisor or a call to the local council to see what help they could be eligible for."

Cuts are on the way

If you receive Housing Benefit already, the amount is likely to be

cut when Local Housing Allowance rates (on which Housing Benefit is based) are reduced to the 30th percentile of average local rents.

The Government has estimated that it will reduce each household's Housing Benefit by an average of £9 a week, or £468 a year, causing real hardship for many families.

Changes to Housing Benefit will be made nine months after your next review following April

For example:

Suzie is a lone parent with two children. She works 36 hours a week for £214.60. She receives:

- £27.20 in Housing Benefit,
- £51.10 in Working Tax Credit, plus
- £129.40 of Child Tax Credit and Child Benefit a week.

2011. The earliest changes will therefore be made in January 2012.

If your Housing Benefit is being reduced, make sure you seek advice from your local council, welfare rights advisor or CAB before you sign a new tenancy agreement.

Usdaw are monitoring how the Government's cuts are affecting our members so that we can campaign against the cuts that are causing most problems.

If you or a member in your workplace is being particularly affected by Housing Benefit or other cuts, please let us know. You can email **Network** at: network@usdaw.org.uk

Contact the politics section on:
political.section@usdaw.org.uk
0161 224 2804
or visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/usdawforlabour

IN BRIEF

■ Morrisons slip up after fitting smooth tiles

Morrisons has been fined £17,500 after a worker fractured her elbow when she slipped at a store in Ipswich. She had to undergo three operations to repair the damage.

In June 2008, Ipswich Borough Council's EHO warned Morrisons management about a potential slip hazard behind one of the food counters, where smooth terrazzo tiles had been installed. The store's risk assessment had identified the issue but had failed to introduce any control measures. On 4 December 2008, the employee slipped on some tiles after there was a spillage of grease.

Ipswich Borough Council issued three Improvement Notices to the supermarket for failing to take action to protect workers from slipping on the tiles in three separate areas at the store. It was also revealed that slip risks were present in other Morrisons stores across the country where the same tiles had been installed.

Advice line closed

Government cuts have pulled the plug on a popular safety helpline

The HSE's Infoline telephone service, which received 239,000 enquiries last year, closed at the end of September.

The phone line, which provided basic advice on health and safety, also provided a quick way for callers to complain if they were worried about poor health and safety standards.

People who need information and official guidance or who wish to report a concern will be directed to the HSE's website where they can access information or use an online form.

Incidents, other than a fatality or the most serious of injuries, will also need to be reported online where employers will have access to one of seven different online forms. The HSE says the system has been changed to make statutory reporting quick and easy.

HSE has also announced changes to the reporting of accidents. Currently regulations state that incidents which result in a worker being off from their

normal work for more than three days should be reported. This will be changed to seven days but employers will still be obliged to record over-three-day injuries even though they won't have to report them to the authorities.

Only 50 per cent of

incidents that should be reported were under the previous system and critics expect the change in the law and the reporting will reduce that figure even further.



And, by the way ...

In March this year Chris Grayling, the minister for health and safety, announced a new approach to inspection. He instructed the HSE to stop proactive inspection of all but a few high-hazard premises. Instead inspectors should only visit premises when they receive notification of an accident or when there is a complaint.

Drivers' safety survey launched

DRIVERS - TELL USDAW YOUR EXPERIENCES OF ABUSE

The union wants to hear from all drivers – whether they drive LGVs or smaller vans and whether they do home deliveries or deliver to depots or stores.

Usdaw is committed to ensuring that all members can work free from the fear of violence or abuse.

At last year's transport section conference, workshops on the risks for drivers identified several problems; members drive vans or lorries carrying valuable cargo which can be a target for criminals; aggression from other road users and

attempted theft when they have to deliver in public places, were also identified as points of conflict.

The transport section has been running a drivers' safety survey to collect evidence from members about the scale of the problem.

If there are members in your branch who drive for a living please encourage them to respond to the survey. Copies can be completed online at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/surveys

Or you can download copies to pass on to members who



Usdaw safety survey rolled out at Co-op

STAFF SAFETY PARAMOUNT

As part of the development of the Freedom From Fear campaign, Usdaw has been working with the main retail employers to develop a simple survey tool which health and safety reps can use to check that protective measures are working in their store.

The Co-op Group have been so impressed with the tool that they have agreed to use it in a co-ordinated project in their food retail stores.

From September the Co-op's area loss prevention and health and safety managers will be meeting locally with Usdaw reps to go through a version of the survey tool which has been tailored to their business.

In October, Co-op reps will be



using the tool to carry out surveys asking their fellow workers ten simple questions designed to identify if they are aware of the security procedures in their store and to ask if they have any other concerns. The reps will then report back on their findings to colleagues and to the area managers.

In early 2012 the area loss prevention and health and safety managers will meet again with the reps in their area to discuss the findings from the survey and the results will be collated nationally.

This will give the Co-op detailed feedback on the effectiveness of their protective policies in stores and information on any other concerns which workers may have.

Following the Co-op exercise a more generic version of the survey tool will be available for all Usdaw health and safety reps to use in their workplace.

Safety lessons on-site

A number of recent prosecutions for serious health and safety breaches serve as a reminder that food manufacturing can be a dangerous business.

Who: Tulip

What happened: A worker lost two fingers at the Lincolnshire factory. The incident happened as he reached into the mixing bowl to remove a piece of blue plastic he had spotted as he was adding seasoning to the mixture. The HSE investigation found that the mixing machine was not guarded, unlike others on the site. The court heard that Tulip had identified the risk ten months earlier but did nothing about it.

Fine: £16,000 with £4,076 costs

What the HSE inspector said: This case shows that risk assessments are not just about producing pieces of paper. Employers have a duty to act on their findings. If Tulip had taken prompt action at the time, this incident would not have happened.

Who: Tangerine Confectionery

What happened: A worker lost the tip of his finger. He had removed a guard to clear a blockage but the machinery continued to run and dragged his finger in.

What the HSE inspector said: The risk of injury from these types of machines is well known in the industry and Tangerine Confectionery has since installed a new guard over the machine which cuts the power as soon as it is lifted.

Who: Vion

What happened: An Usdaw member was killed when he was run over by a lift truck in the yard of the factory. The vehicle routinely carried empty containers piled too high to the hygiene area for cleaning. The driver could not see over the load and there was no separation between pedestrians and the lift trucks.

Fine: £100,000

What the HSE inspector said: The company should have taken steps to make sure the containers were being moved in a safe way, and managed the traffic in the yard so that people and vehicles were not sharing the same space.

All of these incidents could have been avoided if employers had implemented basic safety standards to segregate pedestrians from vehicles and to fit interlocked guarding to dangerous machinery.

European Safety Week

REGULAR REPAIRS VITAL

The TUC is calling on trade union health and safety reps to carry out one of their statutory inspections on or around National Inspection Day on Wednesday 26 October as part of a European safety and health at work week.

Usdaw reps who want to get involved could focus on inspecting around the issue of maintenance of the workplace, work equipment and safe working procedures.

Regular maintenance of the workplace and equipment is important to protect the health and safety of workers.

Maintenance covers everything from major work on the fabric of a building to keep it weatherproof to repairs and cleaning of individual pieces of equipment such as checkout chairs or ladders, roll cages or mechanical handling equipment.

The European Agency argues there are five key steps to safe maintenance:

- Planning in advance
- Keeping the work area safe
- Using the correct equipment
- Following the plan
- Making final checks after the work is done

For further information:

- <http://osha.europa.eu/en>
- www.tuc.org.uk

Contact for more information



Email Doug Russell on
healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk



or visit the website:
www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety

£50 UP FOR GRABS!

Write to the editor of *Network* and you could win £50 if your letter is chosen as the star letter. This issue's winner is **Mike Tucker**

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

Network Editor, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road,
Manchester M14 6LJ

 network@usdaw.org.uk 

FEDERATION EDUCATION

Weekend study

I was privileged to attend the Cumbria Federation weekend school held in Keswick in July and wish to express my thanks and appreciation to both Martin Warwick who tutored the course and Dave Beattie, federation secretary, who organised the weekend.

The topic was lifelong learning and was attended by 26 delegates from Cumbria and Tyneside as well as the divisional officer Joanne Thomas.

Some delegates like myself had little experience of the subject, however Martin put us all at ease and gave us our tasks and by the end of the day we certainly had a wider knowledge of lifelong learning.

I would encourage all members if they have the opportunity to sign up and find out how lifelong learning can benefit everyone.

Once again congratulations on a splendid weekend.

SHEILA LEWTHWAITE
Cumbrian Tesco F39

STAR LETTER

SPEED LIMIT

Too much pressure on the till

As a rep I am often approached by our younger checkout colleagues who are concerned that they are being hassled by supervisory staff about their scan rates and through put times.

All I can do is assure them that, as far as I am aware, no person has actually been disciplined over their scan rate because when dealing with members of the public this is largely out of their control.

Pressure for improved scan rates is directed solely at the checkout operator who unless they are prepared to cause a major offence among customers, cannot influence the speed at which a customer packs and pays for shopping.

If supermarket directors really wish to improve rates at which customers go through checkouts they can assist in the following ways:

1. Ensure all barcodes are clearly printed on a flat and not a curved surface.
2. Ensure all barcodes are on the outside of the item and not tucked under the wrapping.
3. Ensure all product

databases are up to date including all product offers and actually match the presented barcodes.

4. Ensure all money off coupons are printed boldly and clearly showing product size and the use by date and not tucked away in the small print.
5. Ensure no elderly, infirm or disabled people go through checkouts as they tend to be slower than our more fitter customers and sometimes ask for an operators help.
6. Ensure all customers are not allowed to change their mind on items whilst at checkouts or go to get a forgotten item as this delays people in the queue.

Can you imagine the controversy and bad publicity that would surround trying to enforce these last two points. I am sure supermarket directors can.

Let's hope it doesn't come to this and that checkout operators are allowed to continue to do the excellent and sometimes difficult and thankfully occasionally outright dangerous job they are doing without this extra and unreasonable pressure they get from employers.

MIKE TUCKER
North East Somerset
A168



MEDICINE MAN

Three decades of union membership

I recently had the pleasure of presenting Paul Windley

(pictured right) with his certificate, pen and badge for being in Usdaw 30 years.

Paul has worked for Reckitt Benckiser in Nottingham for 35 years and is an important part of the team producing Strepsils for the worldwide market.

Congratulations and well done Paul.

SHAUN ASH
Chief shop steward,
Reckitt Benckiser
Boots Industrial
(Nottingham) E192



TESCO TWO

30 years of loyalty rewarded

Robert Donnelly, area organiser at Morden, and I recently had the pleasure alongside Tesco managers Hugh Magee and Robin Vernon, of presenting 30

year award certificates to Jerry Digweed who is a skilled baker at Tesco in Lewisham and Mavis Barker who is a cashier and also the shop steward at Tesco in Catford.



JANETTE THOMAS
Branch chair
South
East
London
General
H86

GOING DUTCH

Netherlands check out Usdaw learning success

In June I was invited along with Bob Livings our full time co-ordinator and union learning rep at Tesco Welham Green to give a presentation on lifelong learning and our Check Out Learning campaign in retail, to a group of Dutch trade union officials who are looking to introduce lifelong learning across the Netherlands.

This was a great opportunity to promote the work that Usdaw does around lifelong learning and our award winning Check Out Learning campaign.

Bob and I had been invited to give a more grass roots approach to how we introduced learning into the retail workplace.

Marc Van Bruggen and Hilde ter Doest two of the

Dutch officials, were very impressed with our Check Out Learning surveys and that we linked in stores to distribution sites. They were very interested to see how Bob visited stores close to Tesco Welham Green and offered learning both on site or online. Bob supplied them with his latest course programme, covering both formal and informal learning.

Barry Francis from Unionlearn SERTUC said that they have worked in partnership with Usdaw to help provide training and learning to workers in the retail sector, a group that can be difficult to reach.

He added that Unionlearn had also been pleased to support the Check Out Learning campaign which

has reached out to all members in the shops.

As ever praise must also go to the union learning reps who are the stars of the union movement and whose enthusiasm and hard work has made all the difference to their colleagues and workmates

All the officials from the Dutch FNV union, which represents members in the retail sector, were impressed with the Usdaw model on lifelong learning and it was something they hoped to replicate in the Netherlands later in the year.

PHIL GANDER
Lifelong learning
project worker,
Waltham Cross office

CLASS ACT

Glory for Glynis

NE Tesco South F109 extended warm congratulations at their branch meeting to Glynis Nock, Tesco Redcar on winning the Best Learner Award at Sunderland College.

I was proud to express our thanks and appreciation to Glynis for all her hard work and achievements gained within the trade union movement, and for flying the flag not only for her branch but for Usdaw.

LISA HESSE
Area organiser, Newcastle office

TASTE FOR LEARNING

Skills assessment encourages staff

McVitie's in Manchester celebrated Adult Learner week in May, holding a number of events, that ran across 24 hours, covering all shift patterns and engaging over 300 staff in some kind of learning.

The theme of the day was 'Bridging the skills 4 life gap with English and Maths'. The ULRs thought long and hard on how best to attract workers to these subjects as this is often a difficult group to reach.

To encourage interest, everyone who took part in an initial assessment to check their skills

was entered into a draw to win a laptop. The ULRs wanted to show that no matter how old you are, all employees are vital and should be given the same opportunities.

We recognised that learning is much more than maths and English, so looking after yourself and reducing stress in the workplace were also a focus, with advice on relaxation.

Tips on reading to children were also given, and a children's book swap area has now been created for staff.

The event took many weeks of planning with support from Stockport Library, Manufacturing Solutions, Aspirt College and the hard work of our dedicated team of union learner reps.

**JONATHAN
WATERHOUSE,**
ULR co-ordinator,
McVitie's
Manchester



PRIDE AND JOY

Campaigning for equality

Myself and Olwen Jones attended Bristol Pride in July as foot soldiers on behalf of the divisional equalities forum.

We leafleted the town centre and continued on to the celebrations where we also handed out stickers and balloons to profile Usdaw and its work in equalities.

We spoke to several young people who were very pleased with the work the union does.

ANNE MEACOCK
South Wales and Western
divisional equalities forum

Happy couple

Congratulations to branch secretary of Yorkshire Morrisons F061 David Chadwick (left) and his partner Terry Taylor pictured here at their civil ceremony in May.



NOW'S THE TIME TO PREPARE FOR **RESPECT WEEK**

7 – 11 NOVEMBER 2011

Usdaw leaflets – helping to protect shopworkers from violence and abuse

- **While you're looking after the shop, who's looking after you?** – Highlights the growing risk that shopworkers face on a daily basis. Also contains an Usdaw membership form to recruit new members.
- **Preventing Violence to Retail Staff – An Usdaw Guide** – A guide designed to help Usdaw representatives improve member protection, look after members affected, raise awareness of the issue and raise awareness of the Union.
- **Preventing under-age sales** – Provides details on age-restricted products and what retail staff should do when selling these goods.
- **Late Night Working – Preventing Violence to Staff** – Shows how extended trading hours have increased the exposure to risk and lists what employers should do to reduce these risks.
- **Don't be a Victim of Violent Crime** – Lists 10 'pointers' to a safer workplace and explains Usdaw's Legal Plus scheme which gives assistance to members who are injured in criminal attacks.



To place an order:

Complete the slip below and return to
The Stationery Department, Usdaw,
188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ.
 You can also telephone on **0161 224 2804** or
 download from www.usdaw.org.uk/freedomfromfear



I would like to order the following:

- While you're looking after the shop who's looking after you? (Leaflet 362)*
- Preventing under-age sales (Leaflet 351)*
- Late Night Working – Preventing Violence to Staff (Leaflet 294)*
- Don't be a Victim of Violent Crime (Leaflet 313)*
- Preventing Violence to Retail Staff – An Usdaw Guide*

Qty



Name: _____

Delivery Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Branch: _____

Mobile No: _____

Email: _____