

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for *Usdaw* activists – May/June 2017



Parents and Carers
in the Spotlight

THE CAMPAIGNING UNION

USDAW IS BACKING LABOUR ON 8 JUNE • USDAW IS BACKING LABOUR ON 8 JUNE

Comment

General secretary John Hannett

As we approach the general election on June 8, the decision our members will make in determining how they cast their vote will be crucial.

It's about choosing a government that will look after the majority and not the privileged few. It's about choosing a government that wants to invest; in our communities, in our NHS and in the economic infrastructure of the UK.

Usdaw's affiliation to the Labour Party is long-standing and at this election there is a real stark choice between which Party in government will best serve the interests of our members and their families.

The executive council decision to endorse Labour is based on the historical policy differences between the two Parties. Consider, for example, what was achieved under the last Labour Government compared to what is being taken away by this Tory Government.

For example, the introduction of tribunal fees which hit the most vulnerable, the evidence shows clearly fewer cases are going to tribunal as many cannot afford to lodge a claim; in addition the threshold to claim unfair dismissal was extended to two years and the list goes on.

So workers' rights will be at the centre of this election for all trade unions, as will the major issues such as the NHS, education and social care.

In endorsing Labour we do so because we feel the policies reflect the very people we represent and, therefore, turning out and voting for Labour on June 8 is vital.

Also, we do, of course, have the implications of Brexit which are still not fully understood but what is clear is that it will be a difficult set of negotiations, and we must ensure that workers' rights are not downgraded as a part of the decision to leave the European Union.

Choose carefully on June 8. Think of yourself, your family and your community and vote Labour.





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**IN BRIEF...****UK way behind on maternity leave pay**

New mothers are being forced back to work earlier than they would wish because of poor maternity pay, according to a new survey.

The UK ranks 22 out of 24 European countries that offer statutory maternity leave, a report from the TUC shows.

Only Ireland and Slovakia fare worse than the UK where new mums receive only six weeks well-paid maternity leave.

In Italy, Spain and France this pay period rises to more than three months and in Poland and Hungary to more than four months.

"Too many mums can't afford to stay at home with their new baby," a spokesperson from Maternity Action said.

Top bosses' pay under fire from MPs

Excessive executive pay in recent years, at a time of stagnant wage growth for many workers, has been heavily criticised in a Commons select committee report.

The report called for businesses to simplify the structure of executive pay. Iain Wright MP, chair of the committee, said: "Executive pay has been ratcheted up so high that it is impossible to see a credible link between remuneration and performance.

"Pay must be reformed and simplified to incentivise decision-making and to pursue wider company objectives than share value."

**election
2017**

Workers' rights

The Labour Party has pledged to bring in improved rights for security and equality at work, which include plans to:

- ✓ **Raise the minimum wage** to the level of the living wage (expected to be at least £10 per hour by 2020) – so that no one in work is on poverty pay.
- ✓ **Give all workers equal rights** from day one, whether part-time or full-time, temporary or permanent – so that all workers have the same rights and protections whatever kind of job they have.
- ✓ **Strengthen protections for women** against unfair redundancy – because no one should be penalised for having children.
- ✓ **Ban zero-hours contracts** – and give every worker the right to a contract reflecting their regular hours.
- ✓ **Ensure that any employer wishing to recruit labour**

from abroad does not undercut workers at home

– because it causes divisions when one workforce is used against another.

- ✓ **Guarantee trade unions a right to access workplaces** – so that unions can speak to members and potential members.
- ✓ **Introduce four new Bank Holidays** – we'll bring our country together with new holidays to mark our four national patron saints' days, so that workers in Britain get the same proper breaks as in other countries.
- ✓ **Double paid paternity leave to four weeks** to give new dads more time with their partner and baby.
- ✓ **Enforce all workers' rights** to trade union representation at work – so that all workers can be supported when negotiating with their employer.
- ✓ **Abolish employment tribunal fees** – so that people have access to justice.

✓ **Close the Swedish Derogation loophole** to tackle the exploitation and overuse of agency workers.

✓ **Amend the takeover code to ensure protection for workers and pensioners** – because workers shouldn't suffer when a company is sold.

✓ **Repeal the Trade Union Act** – because the most effective way to maintain good rights at work is through a trade union.

More at:

www.unionstogether.org.uk



Consultations at Tesco

Major changes continue at Tesco after it announced in early April it was moving another 69 stores to day-time from night-time replenishment.

National officer Pauline Foulkes said: "We are now in consultations with Tesco. Our priority is to protect jobs and keep staff employed within the business in suitable alternative roles."

At the end of April Tesco also announced it was to sell its in-store opticians to Vision Express, which could see 206 stores and 1,500 staff transferred.

Pauline Foulkes added: "We

have been briefed by Tesco about the sale of its in-store opticians business to Vision Express.

"The sale will be referred to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) for approval, so there will be no immediate changes. If approval is given we will enter into consultation with Tesco about the proposal and we are seeking an early meeting with Vision Express to ensure a smooth transition under TUPE protections.

"Usdaw reps and officials are providing our members with the support, advice and representation they require throughout the process."





LABOUR'S PROMISE TO YOU

**election
2017**

This country is a place of dynamic, generous and creative people with massive potential, but there is a growing sense of anxiety and frustration.

Faced with falling living standards, growing job insecurity and shrinking public services, people are under increasing strain. Young people are held back by debt and the cost of housing and working families are faced with more pressures in the workplace. Workers are held back by falling real pay and job insecurity.

At this election you can choose more of the same: the rich getting richer, more children in poverty, our NHS failing and our schools and social care in crisis.

Or you can vote for the Party that has a plan to change all of

this – the Labour Party.

Britain is the fifth richest country in the world. But that means little when many people don't share in that wealth. Many feel the system is rigged against them. Our manifesto sets out exactly what can be done about it.

Labour will invest in the cutting-edge jobs and industries of the future that can improve everybody's lives. Which is why the manifesto outlines a fully costed programme to upgrade our economy. From childcare to transport, housing to lifelong learning, Labour understands how a successful economy depends on services that support us all.

So yes, this election is about what sort of country we want to be after Brexit. Is it one where

the majority are held back by the sheer struggle of getting by? That isn't the Britain Labour is determined to create.

So let's build a fairer Britain where no one is held back. A country where everybody is able to get on in life, to have security at work and at home, to be decently paid for the work they do, and to live their lives with the dignity they deserve.

Let's build a country where we invest our wealth to give everyone the best chance. That means building the homes we need to rent and buy, keeping our communities safe with more police officers, giving our children's schools the funding they badly need, and restoring the NHS to its place as the envy of the world.

For Labour's manifesto visit: labour.org.uk/manifesto

Don't let the Conservatives hold Britain back. Let's build a Britain that works for the many, not the few.

**Jeremy Corbyn
Leader of the Labour Party**



Shake up at Sainsbury's

In March Sainsbury's announced further significant changes to its in-store night shift operations and commercial departments with an additional 140 stores being affected. This follows similar restructuring at 250 stores last year.

National officer Joanne McGuinness said: "Usdaw is in consultation meetings with the company about these proposals, where we will be looking at the business case for these changes.

"Our priorities are to protect jobs, keep staff in employment and get the best deal for our members. Our reps and



officials are providing members with the support, advice and representation they need at this time of uncertainty."

Meanwhile, Sainsbury's is closing all 38 of its in-store phone shops, putting 160 jobs at risk. The company closed its 'Mobile by Sainsbury's' service over a year ago and plans to sell 16 of the shops to mobile phone group EE.

Pressure on living standards

UK wages have grown at their weakest pace in seven months, raising concerns that households are already facing a squeeze on their living standards as inflation climbs to three-year highs.

Despite making impressive employment gains since the financial crisis, Britain's wage growth has remained subdued over the last eight years.

This disappointing performance is expected to come into sharper relief as inflation has accelerated quickly in the aftermath of the referendum and should breach 3 per cent over the next 12 months, according to the Bank

of England. A weak pound and climbing food prices pushed up annual consumer price growth to 2.7 per cent in April – the highest inflation rate since September 2013.

Economists expect the climbing cost of living, coupled with slipping earnings growth, to pinch the consumer spending that has helped drive the UK economy since the Brexit vote.



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IN BRIEF...

Morrisons pay deal wins approval

Members at Morrisons voted overwhelmingly in March to accept a pay deal, which will see the new basic hourly rate increase from £8.20 to £8.50. The starter rate will also go up from £7.80 to £8.10. Meanwhile, Sata members also voted by a small majority to accept their new pay offer.

Marks set to close stores after review

Usdaw has called on Marks and Spencer to immediately talk to the union to ensure staff are properly represented, after the company announced the first batch of store closures.

Deputy John Flood



Usdaw was saddened to hear of the recent death of former deputy general secretary John Flood, he was 90.

John retired in 1989 after nearly 30 years working for Usdaw, 11 of them in the role of deputy where he served under three general secretaries.

John first joined Usdaw's predecessor union NUDAW in 1942 as a 15 year-old

apprentice greengrocer for Greenock Co-op. His involvement in the union grew and he became secretary of Renfrewshire Federation and was eventually elected to the Scottish divisional council.

During this time he was also an active member of the Labour Party and a leading figure in the local Co-op Party, serving as an election agent for the local MP Hector McNeil.

In 1959 John joined Usdaw's staff as area organiser, initially based at the Newcastle Office and then two years later in his native Glasgow.

He made the move to Manchester in 1970 after being promoted to national officer with responsibility for retail private trade.

John was appointed deputy general secretary in 1978 where

he had special responsibility for co-ordinating recruitment campaigns and the fight against seven day/24-hour shopping. He also led the campaigns to retain and strengthen the Wages Councils and to promote industrial training.

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute: "John was a loyal and hard-working member of staff committed to workers' rights and the trade union and Labour movement.

"He will be remembered for his tireless work at the forefront of Usdaw's campaign against unlimited Sunday trading and the time he devoted to building the alliance which defeated the Tories' 1986 Shops Bill in the Commons in an historic victory.

"Our condolences go out to his family and friends at this very sad time."

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Divisional officer Alf Slater



Former divisional officer for the Manchester division Alf Slater died in March, he was 86.

Alf retired from the union in 1992 after almost 30 years on the union's staff, the last three spent as divisional officer.

Before that he had been the deputy divisional officer since 1984. He was originally appointed to the staff in 1963 as a collector canvasser, having spent five years as an activist at United Co-op Dairies in the North West.

He later applied for an area organiser's job in the South

East and went on to spend six years at the Hemel Hempstead office before moving back to his native Manchester in 1975. He was particularly involved in building the membership during the growth in both the home shopping and the burgeoning retail supermarket sectors.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Alf was a main player in the old Manchester division for more than three decades and his rise through the ranks was a testimony to his hard work and commitment.

"He was a well-respected figure among reps and his colleagues and left a lasting impression on the union. He also served the local community in his role as a magistrate in the '80s for nearly a decade.

"Usdaw has lost a loyal and committed servant, our thoughts are with his family and friends."

**election
2017**

Labour's pledges

Workers will be guaranteed at least £10 an hour by 2020 and the very wealthy will pay more tax if Labour win the general election.

There are also pledges to invest heavily in the NHS and the education system and recruit more police officers with many policies chiming with decisions made at the union's Annual Delegate Meeting.

Those are the main messages in the Party's manifesto as the country gears up for the vote on 8 June.

Here are some of the other main policy announcements in the manifesto:

- ✓ Build over one million more homes with at least half for social rent.
- ✓ NHS will receive more than £30bn in extra funding over the next parliament.



- ✓ Mental health budgets will be ring-fenced, and Labour will ensure all children in secondary schools have access to a counselling service.
- ✓ Deliver safe NHS staffing levels and reduce waiting lists.
- ✓ End hospital car parking charges.
- ✓ Reintroduce maintenance grants for university students and abolish university tuition fees.
- ✓ Promise to reduce class sizes to 'less than 30' for five, six, and seven year-olds.



- ✓ More free childcare, extending 30 hours of free childcare to two year-olds.
 - ✓ Hire 10,000 new police officers, 3,000 new fire-fighters
 - ✓ Income tax rate of 45p on earnings of £80,000 and above - and 50p to be reintroduced on earnings above £123,000.
 - ✓ Bring the railways back into public ownership as franchises expire.
 - ✓ Nationalise England's nine water companies.
- More at: usdaw.org.uk/labour

IN BRIEF...

More retail job losses at shoe chain

Shoe retailer Brantano went into administration again in March, just over a year after being rescued by Alteri. The latest development puts more than 1,000 jobs at risk at the company's 73 outlets and 64 concessions. Slow sales, competition and the fall in sterling were blamed for the retailer's demise.

Empty BHS stores show harsh legacy

One year after its collapse more than 100 BHS stores remain empty with many in a shocking state of repair. Primark has taken the biggest slice, 15, of the 164 former BHS stores.

Academy2 reps gear up for another busy year



The latest batch of Academy2 organising officers started their six month secondment with the union in April.

More than 30 former Academy1 graduates were chosen for the intense

programme of organising and recruitment across their respective divisions.

The Academy2 initiative is a key part of the union's organising strategy and will see the activists link up with their colleagues on Academy1 to support reps in workplaces

across the UK and break new ground at previously unorganised sites.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis welcomed the new team. "Our Academy officers are central to our success as an effective, strong and campaigning union."



Six young reps joined activists from unions across the UK at the TUC young workers' conference in March to speak out against the housing crisis...

The lack of affordable social housing is leaving many young workers with no option but to rent privately, Usdaw activist **Daniel Forrest** told delegates at the two-day event held at Congress House in London.

"There are now more than nine million people in private rented accommodation, a sector characterised by high rents, hidden fees, short-term tenancies and the constant worry of a potential eviction," said the 25 year-old, who works at Tesco Bank in Glasgow.

"The housing shortage has seen house prices at more than seven times average incomes and it is becoming more difficult for young people to save up for a deposit or to cover the cost of a mortgage.

"A catastrophic result of the crisis is the rising level of homelessness. Young people are the most likely group to be living in poverty, nearly half of those living in homeless accommodation are aged 16-24."

Udaw called for the building

of over one million new homes, more affordable social housing, rent controls and improved security of tenure in the private sector and an end to the housing benefit rules that discriminate under-35s.

"I'm very fortunate as I own my own home," said Daniel. "I inherited some money a few years ago and that allowed me to afford a deposit. But I know not everyone has that opportunity.

"I'd like to see more investment in deprived areas and affordable housing built in those towns and cities."

Activist **Ryan Quick** shares Daniel's concerns. "Housing is a big worry for me," said the 26 year-old who works at Sainsbury's in Westhoughton, Lancashire. "I'm currently renting but would love to own my own house. However, it's not even remotely feasible to save money for a deposit for a mortgage while paying rent."

Matthew Wright, who works at Tesco in Rugeley, would also like to own his own house but

like Ryan can't afford it.

"I strongly believe that housing is a problem around the UK for young people," said the 23 year-old. "I've looked at both buying and renting and mortgage payments would be cheaper but it's raising the money to get that mortgage in the first place. I'd love to move out and own my own house but it won't be any time soon."

Catherine Bates, from Tesco Aylesbury, agreed that trying to get onto the housing ladder is difficult. "I still live with my parents but I have been looking for a house with my boyfriend," said the 22 year-old checkout team support worker. "I can't afford to rent or save for a deposit on my wages so for now we'll have to wait."

It is a slightly different situation for Cardiff's **Bryony Hamblin** who rents her parents' house.

"I'm in a fortunate position really," said the 24 year-old from Tesco Cardiff. "My parents have relocated to London so I live in their house and pay them rent.

I have a two year-old son so I work part-time. I can't work full-time because I wouldn't be able to afford childcare and pay rent. I'm lucky though, it would be impossible for me if I didn't have the help of my parents."

Fellow mum and customer service representative **Rebecca Barlow** agrees that housing is a big issue for young people today. "I've been privately renting for years," said the 25 year-old from Salisbury. "But with rent prices rising along with childcare costs it makes it impossible for young parents to get on the property ladder.

"Generations before have been able to get on the ladder from a young age but I don't think people like me or future young workers will have the same opportunities. It's very sad."

PICTURED ABOVE L-R: REBECCA BARLOW, DANIEL FORREST, RYAN QUICK, CATHERINE BATES, MATTHEW WRIGHT AND BRYONY HAMBLIN

HOUSING CRISIS: IN NUMBERS...

£217,502 is the average price of a property in the UK.

Private rental prices rose by 2.6 per cent in the last year. The average price of renting a one bedroomed property in London is **£1,500** a month, **£630** in Manchester, **£595** in Cardiff and **£450** in Glasgow.

69 per cent of private tenants cannot afford to buy their own home.

1 in 4 people in their twenties and thirties are living with their parents due to high housing costs.

On average, house prices have increased by **7 per cent** each year since 1980, while average wages have gone up by around **2.5-3 per cent** each year.

In 1991 **67 per cent** of the 25-34 age group were homeowners, by 2014 this had fallen to **36 per cent**. For the 16-24 age group it fell from **36 per cent** in 1991 to **9 per cent** in 2014.

The average age of a first-time buyer in the UK is **30 (32 in London)**.

Private sector renting more than doubled between 1980-2014.

The decade from 2001-2011 marked the first fall in home ownership from around **69 per cent** to **64 per cent**.

Homelessness in England has increased by **9 per cent** since 2014.

Figures from: the Office of National Statistics, Department for Communities and Local Government, gov.uk and home.co.uk



LABOUR'S POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR HOUSING CRISIS

If Labour wins the next general election they have pledged to build over one million new homes in five years, with at least half a million council homes through their public investment strategy.



Labour will also introduce rent controls, secure tenancies and a charter of private tenants' rights, and increase access to affordable home ownership.

For more information visit usdaw.org.uk/labour

GET INVOLVED Divisional Young Workers' Committees

- Every division has a Young Workers' Committee, exclusively for members aged 26 and under...
- ...who speak up for young workers and campaign for their rights...
- and help you meet like-minded young people in your local area.
- Contact your local Usdaw office for more information.

What the reps thought of the conference...



"Overall it was a great conference to attend, it really did give me more energy and ideas to take what I learned back into my workplace."

Bryony Hamblin

"It was a very well run conference, I took a lot of useful information away from it and made some new friends in the process."

Matthew Wright

"I'm very glad I went, it was really interesting to hear the different views of people from different unions and a good learning experience."

Catherine Bates

"I'm glad I had the chance to go and it left me feeling very motivated about the trade union movement."

Rebecca Barlow

"The most interesting part was simply hearing the experiences of other young workers in such a range of industries. It lets you get out of that bubble of your own organising ways."

Daniel Forrest

"It is important that young workers involve themselves in all structures of our movement to ensure we are adequately represented."

Ryan Quick

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In the **SPOTLIGHT**



Midlands division's Gareth Coates answers Network's questions...

Why did you become active?

I was asked by another rep if it was something I would be interested in. I said yes and it went from there. I like helping people and being a voice for my colleagues. Some workers can be afraid to speak up because they worry about the potential repercussions, so I'm happy to speak for them.

Are you part of a team of reps?

I'm part of a team of 11 reps working over three shifts on-site and looking after 330 members. There are three of us, including me, working on the day shift. We have a good working relationship with management and they let us have the time off we need to do our union work.

Is there a downside?

You can't really switch off, which can sometimes be a downside, especially with social media as members can reach you

instantly. But this can also be a positive as I'm happy that members can get hold of me when they need to and I can get back to them quickly.

How is recruitment at your site, easy or difficult?

I do a walk around once a week to talk to members and try and recruit new ones. The best recruitment tool for me is word of mouth. Non-members hear how their colleagues have benefitted from being in the union and then they want to sign up too.

Have you changed since becoming active?

Being a rep has definitely increased my confidence and my knowledge and it continues to do so. I'm constantly looking up information so that I'm in the best possible position to help members.

What did you think of the union's training courses?

I've been on all the shop steward training courses and an organising course. I've enjoyed them all and I only wished that they were longer.

Have you been to ADM?

This ADM was my second. I was a delegate last year and a visitor this year. It's really interesting to see the wide spectrum of propositions put forward and the various topics that are covered.

Any advice for a prospective rep?

If you're not sure then definitely find out more about it. In my opinion it will change your life for the better. Most importantly you need to enjoy it, there's no point doing something if it doesn't make you happy.

You won a national nomination for your work in the division last year, how did that feel?

It was a great achievement to be nominated in the Individual Recruitment category. I've only been a rep for three years so really didn't expect it at this stage. The evening was amazing and a real highlight for me.

What's next for you?

I'm really excited to be starting Academy1 in May.

Fact File & trivia

EMPLOYER... *Co-op Food Logistics*

JOB... *Warehouse operative*

AGE... *34* **LIVES...** *Tamworth, Staffs*

JOINED USDAW IN... *2014*

BEEN AN ACTIVIST SINCE... *2014*

UNION POSITIONS HELD...

Shop steward

INTERESTING FACT...

I was a zoo-keeper for 11 years and spent time working with Steve Irwin in Australia.

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Triple X

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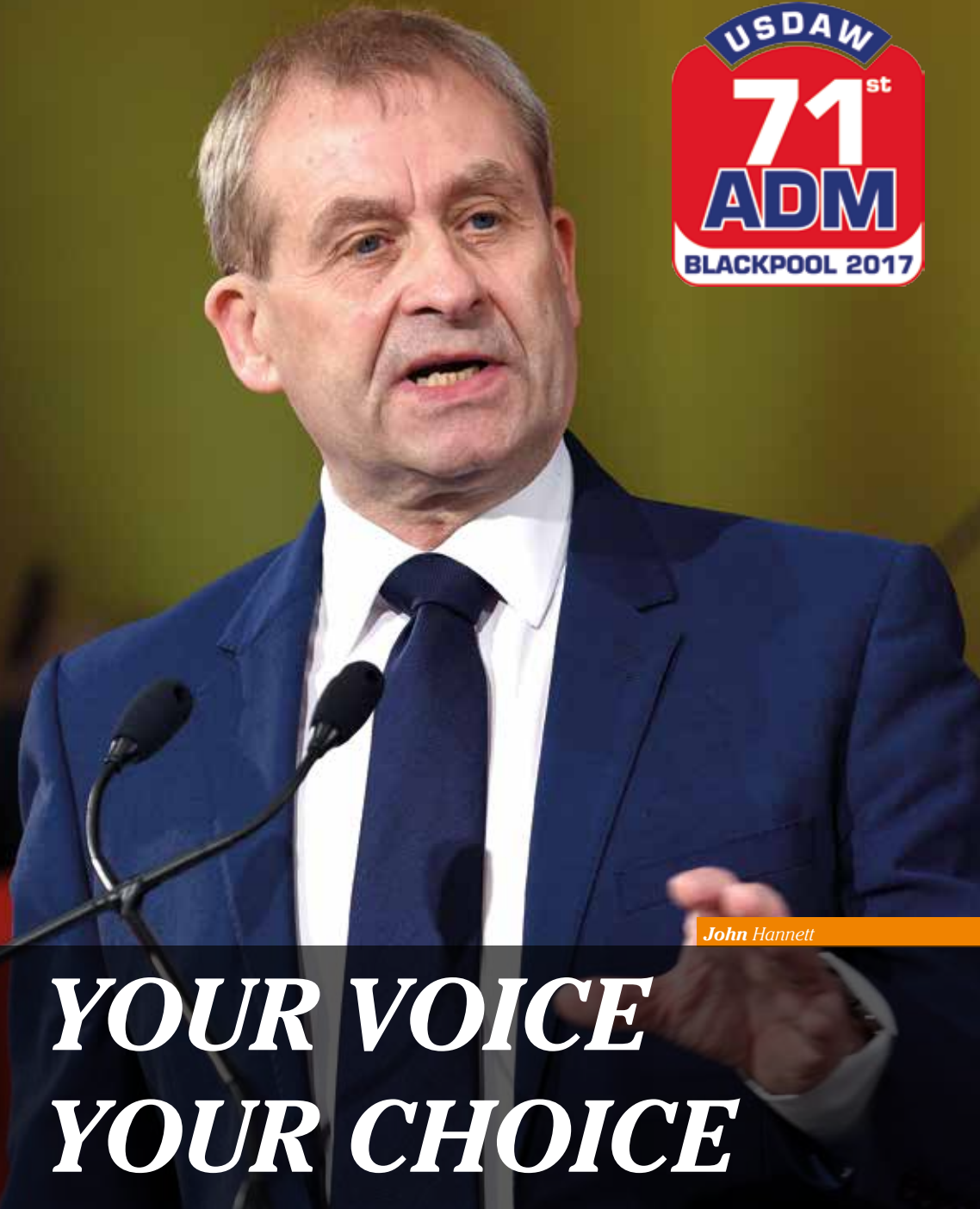
Swedish House Mafia

CURRENTLY READING...

The Wreck of the Titan

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SPEND

YOUR SPARE TIME? ...I've got two young daughters so they keep me busy. I also like watching sport.



John Hannett



Paddy Lillis



Jeff Broome



Barbara Wilson

YOUR VOICE YOUR CHOICE

Wages, working conditions and equality were all debated at the union's 71st Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM), held in Blackpool from 30 April to 3 May.

More than 1,000 delegates, visitors and officials gathered in the Winter Gardens for the four-day event, which also saw additional debates on transport, racism, pensions, education, the NHS and politics.

In the chair was president **Jeff Broome** with general secretary **John Hannett** and deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** opening and closing the debates

on behalf of the executive council. Chair of standing orders **Barbara Wilson** ensured the conference ran smoothly.

The guest speaker this year was the deputy Labour leader **Tom Watson** who urged Usdaw members to judge the Conservative government's record in office and vote for a Labour Party that would tackle low pay, the housing crisis and invest in the NHS.

"Usdaw is one of the few unions that has an annual national conference giving its activists the chance to decide the policies and priorities of the

union for the coming year," said John Hannett.

"It's the biggest event in our calendar, bringing activists together from across the UK and giving them the chance to meet up with fellow reps from the same companies who might be at opposite ends of the country but who share common problems and concerns.

"It was great to see and hear so many new delegates get up and speak, in front of more than a thousand people, which is a very daunting experience. We also had two excellent fringe meetings on racism and the

general election – the next few weeks are critical.

"It's important Usdaw members judge the Conservative government on its record over the last seven years. Remember it was the Tories who cut in-work benefits while cutting taxes for the very rich, raised VAT to 20 per cent, cut funding for schools and under-invested in the NHS, cut health and safety inspections and attacked workers' rights.

"We need a government that at its heart has the interests of the many not the few, only a Labour government can deliver that, so for me it's Labour on 8 June."

Campaign to end racism continues

Usdaw's campaign against discrimination in all its forms continues, John Hannett told conference as he moved the executive council's statement *Campaigning Against Racism and Prejudice*.

As part of the debate **Michael Anderson** (East of Scotland Tesco) spoke up for migrant workers who, he said, had faced increased hostility since the EU Referendum last year.

"The trade union movement must remain true to its values on human rights, solidarity with all workers and its commitment to internationalism," he said.

"Migrant workers are not to blame for low pay, zero-hours contracts, or cuts to in-work tax credits. They work and contribute to the UK's economy. We have to stop the exploitation of these workers by organising them into our union.

Migrant myth

His call was backed by delegates including **Richie Venton** (Glasgow No.1 Misc Trades), who said: "We have to nail the myths around migrant workers who contribute around £20bn to the UK economy.

"When the bankers caused the 2008 crash, immigration went down and so did wages so you can't blame migrant workers for low pay, blame the bosses."

Juraj Zilik (DHL Logistics

Dartford), who came to the UK 12 years ago from Slovakia, also supported the proposition. "I have always worked since I came to the UK, then I only knew ten English words!" he said. "But I learned the language straight away at night classes and graduated from University too.

"I love this country and the people who have been very supportive of me and my family, but I have noticed more recently migrant workers are not treated the same way.

"We know hate crimes are on the increase, many go unreported, racists seem more confident. I blame the Government who want to divide and conquer us. No one should face harassment because of their skin colour, race, or nationality."

Prejudice

Maureen Loxley (Gloucester General) joined the debate and was keen to promote the union's No Room For Racism campaign. "This is an important part of our fight against racism," she said. "We know there is prejudice in education, in employment and in the criminal justice system.

"But we have to focus on what unites us, not what divides us. We all have to stand up to racism."

Foluke Moses (South West London) also promoted the union's campaign. "It's easy to set up an awareness day

because the union provides leaflets, posters, t-shirts, bags, in fact everything you need to help you start a conversation about racism, which isn't easy for many people to talk about.

"A racism-free workplace is better for everyone and we have to remind people we will not tolerate abuse of any kind."

More to do

John Hannett opened and closed the debate and while he believed progress had been made there was still some way to go.

"Trade unions stand for fairness both economically and socially," he said. "There is never an excuse to treat people differently whether that's because of their race, colour or nationality.

"We know parts of the press distort the impact of migrant workers and hate-crime undermines us all.

"We still have a lot of work to do to combat racism. Never forget the lessons of history, for example the extreme racism faced by Afro-Caribbeans and the Irish in the '50s and '60s, then Indian and Pakistani workers in the '70s and '80s and now Muslims and Eastern Europeans often face the same hostile treatment.

"We as trade unionists are all about solidarity, so we all have a role to play in fighting racism."



Michael Anderson



Juraj Zilik



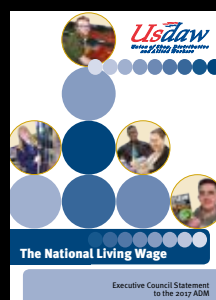
Maureen Loxley



Foluke Moses

EC statements approved

Conference agreed to support three executive council statements on *The National Living Wage*; *Campaigning Against Racism and Prejudice*; and *Usdaw & Politics - The Political Campaigning Union*. All three are available to download from the union's website at: usdaw.org.uk



Labour of love

Labour's deputy leader Tom Watson answers Network's questions on the forthcoming general election and tells Usdaw reps there is everything to play for on 8 June...

Q. What is Labour's main message to Usdaw members in this election?

TW: Usdaw has always put working people and their families at the heart of its policy agenda and that's at the centre of Labour's manifesto for the June election. When you think that the Institute of Fiscal Studies have recently revealed that under the Tory Government and its cuts working families are on average £2,500 a year worse off. I think it's these bread and butter issues at the heart of this election, how do we support low-paid workers, how do we give them new rights and how can we have an economy that works for the many not the few.

Q. The statistics also show there's more people in work and fewer people unemployed, what's your response to those figures?

TW: Under the Tories the economy is run to benefit the few not the many. Look at the tax cuts for billionaires and the cuts to working tax credits for working parents. We now have more people in in-work poverty than ever. That's inappropriate in a civilised society and it doesn't have to be this way. So our message is – if you are a worker you need a government that is on your side not on the side of the billionaires.

Q. Speaking of billionaires....what lessons have been learned from the BHS collapse?

TW: First of all, credit to Usdaw for fighting for the BHS workers and pensioners but it shouldn't be down to the unions to make sure that workers' pensions are protected.

We have to ensure that there is a framework on corporate governance where workers aren't left worrying about their future while multi-millionaires are sat on their yachts. We need a government that is on the side of workers and we need to ensure situations like this just can't happen again.



There's not just one Philip Green. There are now more billionaires than ever living in London and more corporations that are avoiding paying their fair share of tax and voters want a government that makes sure this stops.

Q. Is this election all about Brexit?

TW: Not for Labour. This is not a single-issue election. When you have a NHS in crisis, wages stagnating, when you have crime going up and police numbers being cut, the pound going through the floor and inflation targets being missed, the election is about much more than just Brexit.

It's about bread and butter issues; how we supply enough decent houses – Labour will build one million new homes; how we support workers during economic uncertainty, give them new rights and introduce a £10 an hour minimum wage. Don't let the media run this election as a second referendum on Brexit. It's about Theresa May and the Tories' management of the economy.

For example, Theresa May was home secretary for six years and under her, police numbers were cut and for shopworkers that's important because we know they are abused or attacked every minute of the working day and they need a police service that's on their side too.

Q. Was Theresa May right to call a snap election?

TW: Theresa May has traded on the idea that she has more integrity than her predecessor and on eight occasions she said, in fact promised, she wouldn't call an early election because it wasn't in the natural interest.

This is an opportunistic move

and she has called this election because she thinks she can win a massive majority.

Don't forget these Brexit negotiations are time-limited we only have two years to conclude them and get the best deal possible. So by calling an election she has reduced the amount of negotiating time by three months that's not acceptable and people will know that's not right.

Q. In the last seven years we've seen cuts to workers' rights and tribunal fees introduced, yet the Tories claim to be the Party of working people, are they?

TW: The most frustrating thing about Theresa May is that she can look into a camera and say that the Conservatives are on the side of working people and not even crack a smile! It must take a lot of practice to do that because when you look at their record since 2010 they've introduced the Trade Union Act, one of the most savage attacks on organised labour, they've cut in-work benefits which affected the lowest paid the most, and their introduction of tribunal fees has priced out some of the most vulnerable workers from getting access to justice.

Labour will get rid of those fees and make sure workers have proper rights. These are things worth fighting for and I hope we can expose Theresa May and show that her rhetoric doesn't match her actions when in office.

Q. The Tories have introduced the national living wage, have they stolen one of Labour's big policy ideas?

TW: Don't forget when Labour introduced the National Minimum Wage the Tories were against

it and predicted there would be widespread job losses and it would bankrupt business. Of course it didn't do that, but what it meant was the worst employers had to catch up with the best employers and workers were protected and could pay their bills. More recently its value has fallen back so if the Tories did care about low pay they'd come out and say what rate they think it should be. Labour has said it must be £10 an hour, let's see if the Tories will put a figure to it over the coming weeks.

Q. How important a role will Labour supporters play in the campaign?

TW: Unlike the Tories, Labour cannot rely on huge donations from city financiers. We rely on all of our members – all 500,000 of them, who want to see a socially just society, and a more equal society.

So I want to encourage everyone of them to join us in our fight for fairness, to work with their local candidate so we can take our message to the voters before 8 June.

Q. But won't the campaign be won on the TV and radio?

TW: General elections are won on the doorsteps but yes you also need the TV studios, the newspapers, Facebook and social media. The great thing about the digital age is that we can all publish what we think and I'd urge our supporters to use every platform at their disposal to spread Labour's message.

Join us on the doorsteps, in the high streets, ring your local radio station and get on their phone-ins and if you get a camera put in front of you make sure you remind viewers of the Tory betrayal over the last seven years.

Q. Around three in ten people don't vote, how can you encourage people back to the ballot box?

TW: We have to remind people there is a choice at this election. The Tories want people to stay at home and not vote for change. We have to inspire the electorate to get behind Labour otherwise the Tories get back in. It's tough but we need our members to work hard to get people to vote. Only a Labour government will give the people the rights they deserve.

Q. The polls look disastrous, can Labour win?

TW: It's tough out there and that's why Theresa May has called an early election. But we are going to give everything we can to win.

Do Usdaw members really want to give Theresa May the type of majority Margaret Thatcher had in the '80s? Our communities need a strong Labour government with Labour MPs who will stand up for their interests and not the interests of the few very rich people at the top.

Q. If you had a minute to persuade an undecided voter why they should vote Labour what would you say?

TW: First of all I'd listen to them and find out the issues they are worried about.

I'd guess this involved their young adult children not being able to get on the housing ladder, or families in insecure work, or high food prices, or low pay.

Labour will address all of these issues. We have to have an economy and political system that works for the many not the few. Vote Labour on 8 June.

Domestic abuse – ‘society’s scourge’



Philip Crooks

Supporting members experiencing domestic abuse remains a key policy area for Usdaw. An emotionally charged debate brought home to delegates the true horror of the crime and the need for a legislative framework to support individuals.

Philip Crooks (Home Counties Tesco Retail No.1) called on the Government to introduce greater workplace support for victims of domestic abuse. “Home Office figures reveal domestic abuse accounts for 16 per cent of all crime,” he said.

“It leads to on average two women being killed each week and 30 men a year dying because of domestic abuse.

“It affects all walks of life, all ages, all races, all genders and robs people of a normal life. It is a scourge on our society, which we have a duty to fight. Early intervention is key and I believe the employer has a legal duty

of care, and a moral obligation, to provide help and support for victims.

“Training staff to spot the early signs and offering victims more flexibility at work can help. If employers and government work together it could help save lives.”

Emotional abuse

Jean Bridger (Home Counties Tesco Retail No.2) was given a standing ovation for telling her personal story of how she escaped an abusive relationship.

“I’m not a victim, I’m a survivor,” she said. “If legislation had been in place four years ago when I was being controlled and emotionally abused by my second husband things may have been different.

“Even after leaving he found out where I lived and I was threatened. The police and domestic violence team helped me.”

David Landall (Yorkshire Transport) told conference of his

ordeal at the hands of his violent ex-wife. “I left her after months of abuse, the stress was taking its toll,” he said. “But she followed me to my new flat. In one incident I had to defend myself against her but it was me who ended up in court for GBH.

“I could have lost my job. I didn’t know what to do. At the end of the trial the judge said, ‘you can leave this court a free man’.

“I’m ex-army and would never dream of raising my hand to a woman, so it was very hard for me. You rarely hear from men who’ve been abused so I want everyone to support this proposition.”

Paddy Lillis paid tribute to the bravery of the speakers and said: “The impact of domestic abuse does not end at the doorstep but follows victims to work, it affects their mental health, their absence and their productivity so we do need legislation to ensure greater workplace support.”



Jean Bridger



David Landall



Sharon Day



Gordon Goff

Transport in focus

The transport debate saw six propositions on the Final Agenda paper with two branches keen to speak up for disabled drivers.

Sharon Day (South Yorkshire Tesco) called on the Government to introduce fines for non-disabled drivers parking in disabled bays in supermarket car parks, while **James Smith** (East of Scotland Food) said holders of the disabled Blue Badge should not have to pay parking fees.

Gordon Goff (Pembrokeshire) said parking spaces should be redrawn to

reflect the increase in the size of cars and vans while **John Warwick** (Central England Co-operative No.1) called on local councils not to turn off street lighting during the night.

Ceri Davies (Cardiff Central) called on local councils to spend more money on designated cycle lanes to protect both pedestrians and cyclists.

Chris Longhurst (Portsmouth and Wight PT) called on the executive council to lobby the Government to regulate prices on the Isle of Wight ferries, which he said can rocket at peak times.

ADM IN BRIEF

In other debates delegates called for the increased availability of defibrillators, additional investment in critical care departments and a ban on the sale of energy drinks to under 16s.

In the equal rights debate propositions for the provision of Braille on food packaging, better rights for disabled people, a reduction in the cost of disability writing aids, protecting women’s rights and improving transgender rights were all supported by conference.

Pensions must cover everyone

Auto-enrolment criteria for pensions is leaving many retail workers without access to an occupational pension, Russell Ireland (East of Scotland General) told conference.

“Currently if you are under 22 and earn less than £10,000 you are not eligible for the auto-enrolment scheme,” he said. “Companies are saving billions because they are not having to make their contributions. And because there are so many part-time workers in retail many of our members are missing out.

“Similarly for young workers, those who are 17, they are missing out on five years of contributions and these are the very people who may end up working until they’re 70.

“Our children and grandchildren need decent pension provision.”

In the same debate **Soo Roch** (NW Tesco Retail No.2) called for greater protection for workers in companies, which are failing or about to collapse, citing the recent BHS fiasco as a prime example.

“Employers are allowed to suck the wealth out of companies leaving our members’ jobs and pensions destroyed,” she said. “The BHS collapse, on the back of serial mismanagement, was a scandal and that from a man honoured by the system!

“There is an overwhelming need for a just and robust framework of corporate governance and taxation legislation that insists on financial integrity and gives guarantees to workers.

“We’ve had enough of these powerful leeches. We should consider democratic nationalisation of these firms.”

Seconding the proposition **Pamela Bryan** (Leeds PT) said: “Owners have to be held to account. Too many of them have sucked money out of firms.

“Members at BHS were thrown on the scrapheap. The Government’s role is vital here, they bailed out the bankers, why can’t they save retail jobs?”

Replying to the debate **John Hannett** said: “Usdaw has demanded justice and fairness

on pensions for many years. Employees who provide the success of the companies who employ them deserve to enjoy a financially secure and healthy retirement.

“We know more than half of part-time workers are excluded from auto-enrolment, the majority of these are women. By scrapping the age and earnings thresholds we can begin to ensure those members face a more secure future.

“On BHS, we cautiously welcomed Green’s £363m injection but only time will tell if the BHS pensioners get a better deal than the one provided by the Pension Protection Fund.

“Clearly better legislation is needed to protect workers and we will continue to campaign for that in the coming years.”

Both propositions were backed by the executive council and delegates with **Tony Lampey** (North Sussex), **Calum Affleck** (NE Tesco North), **Zaleem Rahiman** (West Thames Tesco) and **Liat Norris** (NW Marks and Spencer) all joining the debate.



Russell Ireland



Soo Roch



Pamela Bryan



View the ADM Gallery on the [Ushaw Union Flickr page](#)

First time speakers at conference





Michelle Griffiths



Ray Taylor



Stephen McKean



Ian Hughes

Safety concerns raised by reps

Five propositions made it on to the Final Agenda Paper for the health and safety debate ranging from food hygiene to toilet breaks.

Michelle Griffiths (JD Williams) called on the Government to end what she described as the 'loopy loo loophole', which allows the legal provision of accessible toilets but does not give employees any clear rights to use them.

"Employers believe workers should use the facilities in their own time," she said. "They frown upon staff when they go to the toilet. This is humiliating and takes away the dignity of the staff.

"If workers can't use the toilets when they need to this can lead

to a number of health problems, especially for workers on medication or pregnant women for example.

"Call centre workers in particular need water to ease the strain on their voice, but pressure on sales and limited access to toilet breaks can often lead to stress which in turn leads to absence.

"The TUC have highlighted this issue so it is important workers have the protection of the Health, Safety and Welfare Regulations and should not have to discuss using the toilet with anyone else."

Ray Taylor (Sainsbury's Northern) warned conference of the dangers posed by the Food

Standards Agency's decision to stop independent meat inspections.

"If these changes go through, food poisoning will increase and more people, especially children, will face additional risks," he said.

"Cost cutting is behind this move but all unions need to challenge this decision. How many more people will fall ill or possibly die before adequate resources are put in to protecting the public on food safety and hygiene?"

Other propositions included; health and safety committees, mental health-focused first aiders, and security in the convenience sector.

Education makes a difference

Lifelong learning improves the career opportunities for workers but needs more funding from employers and government, Stephen McKean (West of Scotland Morrisons) told conference.

"Lifelong learning creates a positive attitude in the workforce and gives them both personal and professional development," he said.

"It also leads to a better quality of life and this can include health benefits.

"Good education is vital but

some workers missed out when they were at school. Lifelong learning can help deliver transferable skills on digital training for example, it can help people with dyslexia and overall is an asset for both employee and employer.

"But this government sees it as a cost when in fact it should be seen as an investment. We have to lobby parliament and the national assemblies for more money for lifelong learning."

Ian Hughes (NW Tesco Retail No.6) seconded the proposition

and highlighted the impact the Checkout Learning campaign had in his area.

"I've witnessed how important learning opportunities are for both members and future members," he said.

"Courses on ICT, English, maths and others have been accessed by more than 11,000 members so far thanks to the hard work of union learning reps who are now widely recognised in Tesco.

"Let's make these opportunities available to all of our members."

ADM IN BRIEF

Union subs

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to increase the subs by 2p a week on both Scale A and Scale C. This will mean from week commencing July 3, Scale A

subs will be **£2.36** and Scale C **£1.49** a week. The debate was part of the Special Delegate Meeting, which considers rule changes.

Charity funds

Activists showed their charitable

side with thousands of pounds raised for local and national charities at various events during the conference. The North East division's event raised **£2,525** for four local charities. A joint May Day event between Eastern and Southern divisions in aid

of Prostate Cancer UK and Women's Aid raised **£2,500**. North West division's Irish Night raised **£2,085** for the Christie Cancer charity while South Wales and Western's Welsh Night raised **£2,000** for the UK Sepsis Trust charity.

More full-time jobs in demand

There has never been a greater need for more full-time jobs, **Catherine Prior** (Edinburgh and District Tesco) told delegates as she moved a proposition calling for the union to press for more contracts guaranteeing at least 30 hours a week.

"In-work benefit cuts, coupled with the costs of rents and mortgages mean people need full-time hours to be able to pay their bills," she said.

"Too many 12-18 hours contracts with the promise of overtime are given out, so why not give permanent hours contracts. Banks don't accept overtime when considering applications for mortgages so workers are at a disadvantage."

Liaqat Ali (Home Counties Tesco Retail No.3) and **Linda Roberts** (Norwich and Mid Norfolk) supported her. "I've been on a 16-hour contract for six years," said Linda. "But with changes in-store I've had to find a second job to pay the bills. So I'm now fully-flexed and available to work seven days a week."

In reply **John Hannett** said: "The number of people working part-time has grown to more than 8.5 million, and of these 1.5 million only work part-time because they cannot get full-time jobs.

"Even the Government's figures show 2.6 million workers are underemployed – that's people who cannot get enough hours to support themselves and their families.

"We need more full-time jobs to help people make ends meet. And we know staff who get the hours they need will stay with the business and will commit to the job. They will stay longer, gaining knowledge and experience and

in turn won't have to worry about getting a second job. All of this makes them less likely to leave."

Dress code rules
Companies need to update their dress codes to reflect modern society, **Laura McLean** (Dundee PT) told conference when she moved a proposition on staff appearance policies.

"Tattoos and piercings are commonplace nowadays," she said.

"But company policies stifle this with rules on visible tattoos and the numbers of piercings allowed. The rules are also subject to different interpretation between stores and managers. I want Usdaw to work with companies to clarify and modernise these policies. Yes health and safety is an issue but employees should be free to express their individuality."

Jenette Williams (West Surrey) agreed. "Company policies are badly worded and confusing," she said. "I had problems in-store with earrings and nail varnish so this needs clarifying."

Paddy Lillis replied to the debate. "Dress codes can be judgemental and border on being discriminatory," he said. "Social trends are constantly changing and policies are often out-of-date. Harmless, inoffensive fashions do not reflect badly on business. A common-sense approach is needed and the union is working to ensure that staff appearance policies are modern and up-to-date."

Call for canteens
The importance of canteens to workers' morale, well-

being and productivity were highlighted in a comprehensive proposition moved by **Graham Menzies** (East of Scotland Tesco).

"Too many canteens have fallen victim to cost cutting by companies with many closed, allowed to become run down or only open for restricted hours," he said. "Staff need canteens to rest, congregate and to maintain their basic health and welfare."

Seconder **Darren Bussey** (Leeds PT) agreed. "The number of workplaces offering canteen facilities has fallen from 88 to 47 per cent in the last 20 years," he said. "Many have been contracted out too. Good quality affordable canteens can make a difference for busy workers juggling family and work life. Usdaw should launch a public campaign to get more canteens back in the workplace."

The proposition was popular with delegates. **William Akadi** (Guildford), **Russell Bayliss** (North Midlands Area Tesco), **Richard McDermid** (West Midlands Sata), **Thomas Hemmings** (North Hampshire), **Val Cooke** (North Herts Tesco Retail) and **Caroline Nash** (Solent) all joined the debate.

Paddy Lillis added: "Canteens are invaluable, especially when they provide hot and subsidised food in a pleasant environment. A healthy, well-looked after workforce is a more productive workforce. The removal of these facilities can have a damaging impact on staff."



Catherine Prior



Linda Roberts



Laura McLean



Graham Menzies



Darren Bussey



Spotlight Day

Activists were out in force in May to promote Usdaw's Supporting Parents and Carers campaign and its annual Spotlight Day.

Stalls were set up in shops, warehouses and town centres across the country to highlight the vital role that grandparents play in providing childcare and the issues they face when balancing work with caring responsibilities.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Two-thirds of grandparents are regularly looking after grandchildren aged under 16,

providing 1.7 billion hours of childcare.

"Their contribution is overlooked too often by the Government. Parents might need to change their hours of work to enable them to better balance paid work with childcare commitments and so too do grandparents.

"Thanks to all members and reps who played their part in this year's Spotlight Day. It's thanks to them that we can spread the message far and wide and improve the rights of our working carers who face a difficult balancing act."

Diff Bala Act



Reps promoting the Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day across the country: 1. Sainsbury's Distribution Enfield; 2. Tesco Seacroft Leeds; 3. Warrington town centre; 4. Tesco Coventry Arena; 5. The Malls shopping centre, Basingstoke; 6. Tesco Eastville Bristol; 7. Tesco Metro, Nightswood Shopping Centre, Glasgow.

Difficult Balancing Act?

#SPC2017



First Morrisons forum

Reps from Morrisons stores and food manufacturing sites across the North West met at the union's national training centre in Warrington for their first divisional Usdaw forum.

The one-day event, which took place in April, marked the start of a new organising structure within the company that will replace the existing joint consultative committees.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, right, joined the reps and highlighted the importance of the new set-up: "This is a very significant development between Usdaw and Morrisons.

"We have a great team of reps on the ground and we hope that

the new forum structure will give them the support to better organise in their own stores and warehouses."

Divisional forums will meet throughout the year ahead of biennial national forum meetings. The seven divisions will also elect their own reps and deputy reps to sit on the national forum every two years.

National officer Joanne McGuinness was delighted with the new system: "The divisional and national forums put Usdaw's reps in control of the consultative structures in Morrisons.

"Reps can easily raise issues from divisional to national level, and they allow our national forum reps to report back on the

discussions. Most importantly, the forums will be organised by Usdaw, exclusively for our reps, ensuring our members' voices will be heard."

Sam Davies, 38, from Morrisons in Failsworth, was elected national forum rep for retail. She will represent the North West division alongside fellow rep Dawn Uytendhal who was elected as national forum rep for manufacturing.

"I was delighted and honoured to be chosen," said Dawn, 55, from the Deeside site.

"I think it's great that Morrisons manufacturing will have a place and a voice at the table.

"I'm excited to be involved at such a high level of negotiations.



"It is so important for colleagues to have their say and I firmly believe the forum will benefit all members in the company."

Other divisions will hold their forums in the coming months.



NORTH WEST DIVISION MORRISONS FORUM

Long-awaited learning centre opens in Avonmouth

A new learning centre at Co-op distribution in Avonmouth, Bristol was opened by deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis in April.

Ryan Glanville is one of three union learning reps at the site. "It's been two and a half years in the planning but it's been worth it," said the 23 year-old. "We've already had a big increase in members interested in learning through the union and hopefully it will go from

strength to strength."

Paddy Lillis congratulated the reps on their hard work: "Lifelong learning is a big part of Usdaw's organising agenda and we know access to education makes a big difference to the lives of our members.

"The reps at Avonmouth have worked hard to get the learning centre off the ground and we look forward to hearing about its success in the future."



REPS AND OFFICIALS AT THE LEARNING CENTRE

Black workers centre stage

The rise in reported racism since the EU referendum campaign was top of the agenda at the annual TUC black workers' conference in April, which brings together activists from unions across the UK and is the biggest of its kind in Europe.

The results of an extensive survey into the experiences of black and minority ethnic workers, which included responses from more than 5,000 people, many of them Usdaw members, showed:

- Almost half of all respondents have heard racist remarks or opinions at work. A similar number have seen racist material online and around a quarter have come across racist graffiti, posters or leaflets at work.
- A very small number, just over a quarter, of those who have experienced racism at work reported it to their employer.
- Only one in five who have experienced a racist incident



USDRAW'S DELEGATION AT THE TUC

at work and reported it to their employer felt that their complaint was taken seriously. Almost half of those who raised it said that their complaint was either ignored or they were singled out as a troublemaker.

Usdaw's delegation played a full part in the conference with veteran activist Maureen Loxley (pictured far right) from South Wales and Western division re-elected to the TUC national

Race Relations Committee.

"I congratulate the TUC for its research exposing the ongoing, everyday reality of racism faced by black and minority ethnic workers," she said.

"In Usdaw our reps have embraced the 'No Room For Racism' campaign. Over the last 12 months this initiative has shown the vast majority of activists see tackling racism as an important part of their role. Hundreds of reps and activists

have been running workplace campaigns to promote a message of 'unity is strength'.

"Reps have displayed posters on noticeboards, handed out wristbands and leaflets, wore the badges and t-shirts in a visible show of solidarity – making it clear that Usdaw organised workplaces take a zero tolerance approach to racism or any other form of abuse or harassment."

View the full survey at: tuc.org.uk

Women at the heart of the debates

Pay inequality between men and women – the gender pay gap – violence against women, pregnancy discrimination and cuts to social security were just some of the issues discussed at the TUC's national women's conference in March.

Usdaw's delegation added to the debates with contributions on journeys to work, mental health, and issues faced by older women workers.

The conference provides working women with an important opportunity for their voice to be heard and to learn from women in a wide range of jobs and sectors about the challenges they face with delegates drawn from across all unions and all parts of the UK.



USDRAW'S DELEGATION AT THE TUC

Equality officer Jo Bird (pictured second left) spoke at a fringe meeting organised by Maternity Action to highlight the union's ongoing work on

pregnancy and maternity rights.

"Usdaw's own research shows that the majority of our members don't get a risk assessment when pregnant at work," she said.

"Usdaw is pressing for a legal right to ensure an individual risk assessment for pregnant women to help address this."

More at: usdaw.org.uk

Reps excel during Membership Week

Effective unions depend on hard working activists to recruit, represent and retain members, Network caught up with a number of reps during January's Membership Week...

Express Gifts Accrington

Stephen Harker and Chris Nix spent a membership fortnight promoting a new learning agreement at Express Gifts in Accrington during a campaign covering sites in Clayton-le-Moors and Church in Lancashire.

"We currently have two reps at the call centre in Clayton and one rep at the warehouse in Church," said Stephen, 33, who became a rep in 2014. "We managed to raise interest in the union and recruit a few new members.

"We are hoping to get a new learning centre up and running in the near future so we're currently recruiting union learning reps."

Chris, who works in the IT department at the Clayton site, sees these campaigns as vital to the success of the union. "These events are great to get members thinking about the benefits of being a member," said the 52 year-old. "With pay negotiations coming up it's more important than ever that staff are in the union."

Lifelong learning project worker Jonathan Charnock was also on hand to support the event. "We've just signed a learning agreement with the

company so we're working to make progress on the learning agenda," said Jonathan who covers the North West division. "During Membership Week we were able to talk to lots of members about upcoming learning opportunities alongside all the other benefits of joining Usdaw."

Tesco Extra Cheshunt

Tesco reps Carmel Graffato and Denise Wanless joined forces with their area organiser Ku Baiden and stand-down rep Tommy Ryan to hold a Legal Plus day at their store in Cheshunt.

"I've been a rep since 2010 and I really enjoy it," said dotcom worker Denise, 59. "I'm also a health and safety rep and a union learning rep so I'm kept quite busy."

Denise and Carmel are part of a team of seven reps at the Extra store in Cheshunt and look after a total of 300 members between them.

"The greatest challenge is getting everyone enthusiastic and interested in the union," said Denise. "Colleagues don't realise what the benefits are, so campaign days like the Legal Plus day are great for getting the message out there.

"We also held a Freedom From Fear campaign day during Respect Week last year, which went down really well with customers and staff alike."

Carmel, who has recruited two reps since the event in January, agreed. "It was a big help having Ku and Tommy there to support us," said the 47 year-old. "There's 300 potential members in store so it's all hands on deck when it comes to campaigning. "Now we've got more reps we're hoping to take part in bigger campaigns in the future."

Tesco Superstore Hertford

It was a case of first-time lucky for new reps Kathryn Stonebridge, Vicky Townsend and Dave Gray



EXPRESS GIFTS ACCRINGTON



TESCO SUPERSTORE HERTFORD

who successfully recruited 21 new members during their first Membership Week at their Tesco Superstore in Hertford.

"Vicky and I ran a stall during the day and Dave ran his own campaign on nights," said Kathryn, 23.

"It isn't something that has been done in our store recently and I think people responded really well to having the union come to them rather than the other way around."

The three reps, who were all elected last September, held a Legal Plus day during the week with the help of solicitor Chris Mason from Bates Wells and Braithwaite. Stand-down rep Tommy Ryan and area organiser Ku



View the Recruitment and Organising Gallery on the UsdawUnion Flickr page

Membership for week ended 15 May 2017

South Wales and Western	50,239
Eastern	64,686
Midlands	56,403
North Eastern	58,612
Scottish	44,958
Southern	62,532
North West	93,892
Total	431,322



TESCO EXTRA CHESHUNT



TESCO EXTRA BULWELL

Baiden were also there to offer their support.

“The Legal Plus day was a success and especially useful to some of our existing members who might not have realised all the benefits available to them,” said Kathryn.

“Colleagues found the information about will writing very valuable and have already started the process.”

Vicky agrees that campaign days are a great idea. “They remind members of the numerous services and benefits available to them through the union,” said the 46 year-old.

“We will be looking to support the Parents and Carers Spotlight Day in May.”

Tesco Extra Bulwell

Stock controller and Academy1 graduate Melanie Darby spent Membership Week connecting with her existing members and raising the profile of the union at her Tesco Extra store in Bulwell.

The Nottingham store has a keen team of five reps looking after a total of 117 members.

“We recruited ten new members and two new health and safety reps over the course of the campaign,” said Melanie, 44, who was taking part in her fourth Membership Week.

“We didn’t recruit as many people as we have done in previous campaigns but it was a good opportunity to catch

up with existing members around the store and promote the union and its campaigning work.”

Melanie became a rep in 2011 and a union learning rep (ULR) in 2014. “My role as a ULR is to encourage members to get back in to some kind of learning. I am hoping to join forces with a nearby store to get some courses off the ground.

“I absolutely love being a rep. I completed Academy1 last year and it was absolutely fantastic. I learned so much and it was a massive confidence booster.

“I’m hoping to do Summer School this year and Academy2 at some point in the future.

“Supporting the Parents and Carers Spotlight Day is our next event.”

Tesco teams join forces

Tesco Extra Top Valley

It's all in a week's work for reps Janine Meakin and Carol Brown who managed to recruit 40 new members during Membership Week at their Tesco store in Top Valley, Nottingham.

"I've done three of these recruitment weeks before, one on my own and two with Carol," said Janine, 61, who has been a rep for over ten years.

"It works much better if there are two people running the campaign as between you it is easier to cover the different shift patterns in store.

"During the week we put up posters and set up a table in the staff canteen with information about the union.

"We also had the opportunity to speak to staff on the shopfloor and make contact with existing members.

Janine and Carol were also joined by area organiser Mark Wheatley who came along to offer his support.

"There are ten reps at the store, including two learning reps and three health and safety reps," said Janine. "Between us we look after around 260 members.

"I think holding campaigns in store is of great value as it gives reps like us the chance to talk to the staff about the benefits of being in the union without feeling like you are getting behind with your work."

Tesco Extra Scunthorpe

Active reps Paul Huish, Corrina Pett and the rest of the team at Tesco Extra Scunthorpe, picked Membership Week to hold their Legal Plus day.

"A big successful campaign and some new faces in the division has helped raise Usdaw's profile after a difficult year of changes within Tesco," said Paul, 48, who completed Academy2 last year.

"We already have an 80 per cent membership density in our store so the campaign was a good opportunity to remind existing members of all the union benefits available to them."

The team of eight reps, who look after around 300 members, were joined by their area organiser Aidan McCarthy and first-time stand-down reps Roxanne Dean and Sharon Waddington. Beecham Peacock solicitor Charlotte Talbot was also on hand to offer members professional advice on legal matters.

"There was lots of interest in the free will writing service available from the union so Charlotte was kept busy," said Paul.

"The campaign also helped us highlight the amount of interest in union learning, and in particular e-learning, so we're planning our next campaign around that."

Paul is currently putting his Academy experience to the test as he organises a new group of reps in his store. He is also hoping to attend Summer School2 later this year.

Tesco Superstore Hermiston Gait

Customer assistant Marek Niedbala successfully recruited ten new members during a stint on stand-down at his Tesco Superstore in Hermiston Gait, Edinburgh.

Marek, who has been a rep for a year and a health and safety rep for six months, was joined by fellow stand-down reps Rafal Kowalski, Alison Gow and Helen MacDonald during Usdaw's Membership Week back in January. Recruitment and development rep Jackie Martin was also there to help with the campaign.

"It was my third time on stand-down," said Marek, 54. "I enjoy it very much. I like spending time talking to people and helping them sort out their problems at work. I'm hoping to do more stand-down later in the year.

"During Membership Week we caught up with the 330 colleagues who are already members and spoke to non-members about the benefits of joining the union.

"We also mapped the workplace to identify potential members.

"Membership Week is the perfect time to showcase the union and a great opportunity to help members and non members recognise Usdaw as a fantastic and powerful organisation.

"We were assisted during the week by our area organiser Rab Donnelly. He's very supportive and always makes time for us."

Tesco Extra Shoreham-by-Sea

Stand-down reps Julie Boucher and Tony Lampey joined in-store rep Julie Grover at Tesco Extra in Shoreham-by-sea to host a successful recruitment campaign.

"Membership Week was very positive," said dotcom worker Julie Grover, 49, who is also a health and safety rep and union learning rep at her store on the south coast.

"There was a lot of interest and we managed to recruit nine new members and one new rep.

"It was also very useful having the support of stand-down reps Julie and Tony. They came along with everything we needed for the campaign, including posters and leaflets, and created an eye-catching display.

"We're looking forward to holding bigger and better campaigns in the near future."

Branch chair Tony Lampey and branch secretary Julie Boucher are out on stand-down from their Tesco dotcom store in Crawley until June.

"We both really enjoy stand-down," said Julie, 50, who graduated from Usdaw's Academy2 last year. "It's a great opportunity to talk to colleagues about the work of the union and how they can get more involved.

"It's also a great experience for reps to see how other reps recruit and organise their members in different workplaces.

"We were happy to assist with the campaign at Shoreham and it was a good experience for us both with lots of members and non-members showing an interest in the union."



Email the Network team: network@usdaw.org.uk



Visit the Usdaw website at: www.usdaw.org.uk



TESCO EXTRA TOP VALLEY



TESCO HERMISTON GAIT



TESCO EXTRA SHOREHAM-BY-SEA



TESCO EXTRA SCUNTHORPE

SHARING THE WORKLOAD



Being a health and safety rep in a large store or warehouse where there are hundreds of people working all sorts of shifts over 24 hours can be hard work especially if there are only a handful of reps. How can you keep in touch with everybody?

TUC tutor Dave Smith, writing in the latest edition of *Hazards* magazine, has some practical advice. "When it comes to organising in big stores or warehouses around workplace health and safety," he says, "the key to success is recognising that unions are collective organisations. That means individual reps can't do it all on their own, you need support."

He describes a mapping technique he

has been using on Usdaw courses. The rep is asked to draw a simple map of the store identifying the different areas – aisles, fresh counters, bakery, tills, warehouse, canteen, loading bay etc.

Then the rep should ask two basic questions: What are the issues? And do I have any friends?

The rep may be familiar with the issues in their own work area, but may not know about the other concerns in other areas of the store. Once they have filled in what they can they will see where there are gaps.

To fill in the gaps the rep needs to visit the parts of the store concerned and talk to the workers there. This helps to raise the profile of the union but it also helps the rep to

identify any members who show a particular interest in health and safety in their area.

This informal network of allies can be very helpful for the reps. These members can be the eyes and ears of the union at times when the rep is not around. They provide a useful group to discuss ideas with and they can make sure that the reps know the issues that really matter when talking to management.

It is a good tip for health and safety organising in any workplace – whether it is a shop, a warehouse, call centre or factory. So if you haven't done a mates' mapping exercise yet, give it a go.

To see the *Hazards* article go to: www.hazards.org/organise/findafriend



Labour's pledge on workplace standards

The TUC has welcomed a commitment from the Labour Party to match European Union improvements in employment and environmental standards after Brexit.

Labour's shadow secretary for Brexit Sir Keir Starmer said: "Instead of going ahead with the Tories' Great Repeal Bill we will introduce new legislation – an EU Rights and Protections Bill.

"This will make sure that all EU-derived laws – including workplace laws, consumer rights and environmental protections – are fully protected without qualifications, limitations or sunset clauses.

"We will work with trade unions, businesses and stakeholders to ensure there is a consensus on this vital issue.

A Labour approach to Brexit will ensure there can be no rolling back of key rights and protections. And we will go further, because protecting existing rights can never be the summit of our ambition.

"A Labour government will work with

EU partners, trade unions and businesses to ensure that, outside the EU, the UK does not lag behind Europe in workplace protections or environmental standards in future."

More at: press.labour.org.uk



New initiative in manufacturing aims to cut workplace accidents

A new Common Strategy to cut the accident rate in the food and drink manufacturing sector has been launched by the HSE-led industry forum.

The forum brings together the main trade associations in the industry and the four trade unions (Usdaw, Unite, GMB and BFAWU). The new Common Strategy builds on previous agreements and the work that has been done under the Recipe for Safety campaign.

Despite the successes of that campaign, the accident rate for the industry remains at twice the manufacturing industry average. There are also major occupational health issues including musculoskeletal disorders, stress, lung diseases, dermatitis and noise-induced hearing loss.

The new strategy sets out four key objectives:

1. To reduce HSE RIDDOR reportable ill health and injury by 10 per cent per year over the next 5 years.
2. To reduce musculoskeletal disorders from manual handling and repetitive work.
3. To reduce slipping and tripping injuries.
4. To control work-related ill health through proper occupational health management.

The Common Strategy sets out in more detail what will be expected of companies in the industry in order to meet these targets.



The individual member organisations of the Forum are pledged to support the strategy and to promote it among their members and to promote the current version of Recipe for Safety.

The revised Common Strategy provides a great opportunity for Usdaw health and safety reps in food and drink manufacturing to review how their own employer is performing across the four key objectives and to refresh the approach to health and safety where they work.

Copies of the Common Strategy document can be downloaded from: hse.gov.uk/food/common-strategy.pdf

The Recipe for Safety Guidance can be found at: www.hse.gov.uk

If you are a health and safety rep in the food industry or the dairy industry ask for the strategy to be an agenda item at your health and safety committee.

Serious health failures see food companies hit with big fines

Thousands of pounds in fines have been handed to food manufacturing companies after serious safety breaches, once again demonstrating the importance of machinery safety, writes health and safety officer Doug Russell.

A bakery in Penrith was fined £70,000 for two incidents last year. In one, a worker lost the tip of his finger in a dough divider. In the second incident, a worker suffered damage to his left index finger when his hand was pulled into a wrapping machine.

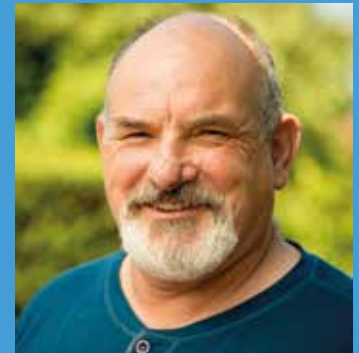
Meanwhile, a bacon processor in Coventry was fined £366,666 plus £10,978 costs after a worker had his hand crushed in a meat separating machine.

Elsewhere a noodle manufacturer was fined £30,000 after a worker suffered 'life-changing' injuries after attempting to clear a blockage on the production line – both the middle and index fingers on his right hand were severed.

In each case the employer was criticised for inadequate risk assessment and failure to provide sufficient guarding to keep workers' hands away from dangerous parts of the machines.

It is vitally important that proper risk assessments are in place on all machinery, conveyors and production lines and that proper guarding is in place to prevent serious injury.

In conversation with Tony Lampey



Customer delivery driver and keen Usdaw activist Tony Lampey has been a health and safety rep since July 2015.

In January he won the National Health and Safety Rep Award at the Usdaw Organising Awards in Manchester. Although currently on stand-down, Tony keeps in regular contact with his workplace and attends the monthly safety committee meetings at his Tesco dotcom site in Crawley.

"I'm passionate about health and safety and getting things sorted to make working life better for my colleagues," said the 62 year-old, who's due to start Academy1 in May. "I've seen the problems that poor health and safety can cause at work, I've suffered myself, and I've seen the knock on effect that incidents can have on families.

"Everyone has to go to work because they need to and so everyone should have the right to work in an environment that is safe."

Tony was instrumental in ensuring the safety of delivery drivers at the Crawley site when he implemented the risk assessment of potentially dangerous addresses. "We visit the property in question with a senior manager," he said. "If it's deemed a risk then we can set up delivery straight from the van or refuse delivery all together."

"Although I won the organising award earlier this year as an individual, health and safety in my workplace is a joint effort and I couldn't do it without the support of the rest of the team at Crawley."



Your Pictures



ADM MESSAGE WALL



Learning is the name of the game

My name is Sue Marcantonio and I've just completed the Equalities Diploma with the TUC. The course is mainly online but you have a base college and tutor, they vary in length but this was



a one year course and was quite intense, but still very interesting, and best of all it's free!

Jeremy Corbyn presented us with our certificates as the course was based in his constituency.

I've done many courses with Usdaw and the TUC and I've been a rep, safety rep and ULR for quite a few years, and I recently became branch chair.

I work for Tesco in Hove, and I am proof that you're never too old to learn!

Sue Marcantonio,
Mid Sussex H23

Campaigning, awards



REPS AT THE BRANCH OFFICERS' COURSE IN APRIL AT THE WARRINGTON TRAINING CENTRE



Maureen Kerr G269
North and East of
Scotland Co-op

30
years

Executive council welcomes new member

The North West division has a new executive council member following the recent by-election.

She is Jane Jones, who works as checkout team support for Tesco in Mold. The results in full:

Jane Jones	1,049 (elected)
Ryan Quick.....	760
Amanda Owens.....	742
Jackie McNeill.....	722
Robert Bell.....	499
Stephen McLaughlin.....	323
Martin Kirkby.....	265
Number of eligible voters	92,735
Total number of votes cast	4,386
Turnout	4.7 per cent
Number of votes found to be invalid	26
Total number of valid votes to be counted	4,360



In the right frame



Paul Jackson

Sean Gamble

Correction:
Network March/April p18:
In the last issue we used a picture of Sean Gamble instead of Paul Jackson. Sorry Paul. Sorry Sean.



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

and Usdaw loyalty all feature in our picture round-up



Pictured l-r: Campaigning at Sainsbury's Swansea; Tesco Hove campaign with colleagues from Crawley dotcom (top); George Cowie was the toast of his Teesside PT F47 branch as he celebrated 30 years' membership with colleagues and senior officials (bottom); Ashby (United Biscuits) E35 branch presented Les Roulstone and Karl Lockley with their Organising awards certificates while Karl also celebrated 30 years' membership; Faye Amos from Tesco Faversham with her Most Promising New Activist Award; Danny Barnes from Tesco Tunbridge Wells with his award for Individual Organising.

NORTH WEST SAFETY REPS ON THE ADVANCED COURSE AT THE NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE IN APRIL



Divisional conferences in Scotland and South Wales and Western



Spring 2017 conferences

Pictured from left: deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis with Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale and Scottish divisional officer Stewart Forrest at the Scottish conference; while Paddy Lillis joined officials and activists at the South Wales and Western divisional conference.

vote



Labour

Usdaw
*Union of Shop, Distributive
and Allied Workers*

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