

NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | www.usdaw.org.uk | November/December 2010



ENERGETIC ACTIVISTS

Young reps are making their mark across all divisions in the union

■ Scottish rep on why she's in the union

Jackie Martin answers our questions on her role as a union and political activist
page 09



■ Spotlight on Academy1 organisers 2010

Fifty reps started out on this year's Academy1 *Network* caught up with three of them
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■ National transport conference in session

Drivers met up in Warrington to discuss all the topical issues
pages 24-25



Moving on up

General secretary John Hannett's comment



Usdaw has had a good 2010 and we were particularly successful on the campaigns front with Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day, and Freedom From Fear's National Respect Week both attracting new members and getting the union lots of positive headlines in the local, regional and national press.

These will continue next year and we will in particular be going out of our way to inform members of how the Coalition's cuts will affect their in-work benefits. Once again the success of our campaigns depends on the participation of our reps so please do all you can to get involved. There are plenty of challenges to come in 2011 but by working together we can overcome them.

Membership matters

Membership was tantalisingly close to the 400,000 mark at the end of November, a total last seen in 1988 when all trade unions were faced with both tough economic and political challenges.

I want to congratulate our hard-working reps and officials on getting us so close to this milestone. It is a great achievement and everyone who has contributed, no matter in how small a way, can feel proud of themselves. Your commitment has helped thousands of members improve their working lives and have the protection they need from a professional, modern union.

However, we can't be complacent as we know next year is going to be very tough. The cuts planned by the Coalition Government have yet to be fully realised in terms of jobs cuts, a reduction in consumer spending and loss of confidence among the electorate.

We have to keep working hard, telling non-members about how the union can help them and making sure we continue to organise our existing members to get the best deal for them from employers.

Looking ahead

We've had six months of the Coalition Government and their first big decision – to raise VAT to 20 per cent in January – will be the beginning of their austerity measures – a price we will all have to pay. Thousands of public sector jobs will also go which will undoubtedly have an impact on the private sector. So there are plenty of challenges to come but we are a strong, confident, financially sound union with a fantastic network of reps. Combine all of these qualities with our organising strategy and I believe we can continue to grow next year.

On behalf of the executive council can I wish you and your family all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.



“I want to congratulate our reps on their hard work and commitment which has helped thousands of members improve their working lives and made Usdaw a modern and professional union”

USDAW

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**Network is published
bimonthly and distributed to
Usdaw activists.**

Published by:

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For circulation enquiries contact your
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PRINTED BY: Buxton Press



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NATIONAL YOUTH WEEKEND

Active reps, aged under 27, from all seven divisions gathered at the national training centre in Warrington for the annual Youth Conference in November. This popular event is the ideal opportunity for young activists to share experiences, meet like-minded people and find out just how much the union has to offer. Pages **14-15**.



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Politicians in Northern Ireland have taken Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign to heart and have been keen to show their support following a union survey which showed violence and abuse was worse there than in the rest of the UK.

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Activists at the Tesco distribution centre in Harlow, Essex, where Usdaw has around 700 members, have been busy raising the profile of this important issue.

12 Employment cases

Usdaw has changed the way members apply for assistance from the union in employment cases making it quicker and more professional – it's important reps know the new procedure.

16 Retail Trades Conference

The union's second biggest national conference saw more than 100 delegates and officials meet in Warrington to discuss important issues for members in the retail sector.

18 National Respect Week

Usdaw reps turned out in force during November 8–12 for the annual Freedom From Fear Respect Week which attracted widespread support from MPs and shoppers alike.

20 Black Members' Weekend

The union is keen to increase the involvement of black and Asian members in the union and this annual get-together gives activists the ideal opportunity to meet up and discuss all the important issues.

24 National Transport Conference

Drivers from across the UK gathered in Warrington in October and discussed the forthcoming agency workers regulations and safety issues in the sector.

27 Sata Conference

The union's white collar section Sata (the Supervisory, Administrative and Technical Association) met up in Warrington for their biennial conference where job cuts and sickness absence policies topped the agenda.

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NI politicians turn out for Freedom From Fear

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS DANGERS

Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) in Northern Ireland (NI) were keen to show their support for Respect Week after a survey showed the number of assaults reported by union members there were more than twice the amount reported in the rest of the UK.

The union's NI survey showed 26 per cent of shopworkers had been physically assaulted at work and that in the past 12 months alone, 29 per cent had been threatened and 43 per cent verbally abused.

Over a quarter of all incidents resulted from shopworkers asking customers for proof of age ID or refusing a sale of an age-restricted product such as alcohol or cigarettes.

Belfast area organiser Michala Lafferty said: "Incidents of violence



and abuse are all too common in NI and there is a real personal cost. Two thirds of our reps know of someone who is taking sickness absence because of an incident and a third know of someone who has actually left their job because of violence,

threats and abuse from customers.

"The cross-party consensus and support from MLAs for our members will make a real difference. It will remind the public that violence and abuse of shopworkers is totally unacceptable."

Six MLAs joined activists and officials at the Asda store in Dundonald, Northern Ireland to support Respect Week

The co-operative funeralcare Funeral Plans for complete peace of mind.



When we look to the future we realise the importance of preparing for the time when we are no longer here. Many of us want the reassurance that our funeral will be taken care of when the time comes, and we want to do everything we can to reduce the burden on our friends and family.

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that dates back over 150 years. Backed by this strength, the Funeral Plans offer both flexibility and security.

“Most people choose to pre-arrange a funeral to make it easier for their family and friends”

You can buy a plan for yourself or for someone close to you and there are a number of payment options available, including the opportunity to spread the cost over a period of time.

As an USDAW member, you and your immediate family are entitled to £25 OFF our Funeral Plans. For more information, please contact your local Co-operative Funeralcare (Quote reference – MKT/10/069), or visit our website at www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk



Social networking sites could spell P45

BEWARE ONLINE POSTS

Workers are being warned about the potential legal repercussions of using social networking sites after a bank worker was sacked by the Royal Bank of Scotland after boasting on Facebook about her redundancy payout.

Katie Furlong, who had told her online friends she would collect a £6,000 payout from the Edinburgh-based bank now plans to take the firm to an employment tribunal after she was dismissed without receiving a penny of her

severance cash.

The 23-year-old had posted on the social networking site about the size of her settlement just moments after RBS announced they were to axe 3,500 back-office jobs after 318 of its branches were bought by Spanish bank giant Santander.

However, the bank claimed she breached the company's 'declaration of secrecy' which amounted to gross misconduct, and sacked her without paying her any redundancy.

"All businesses should have a well documented policy that

should clearly set out the employer's position on social media so that all employees know exactly where they stand if they do post material deemed to be inappropriate," said general secretary John Hannett. "It should outline what actions constitute a breach of the policy and exactly what the penalties are."

One law firm reported an increasing number of cases concerning inappropriate use of social networking sites working their way through the tribunal system.

Branch officers on the right course

The union's popular residential course for newly elected branch officers attracted 20 activists to the national training centre in Warrington in November.

The five-day course gives officers a comprehensive understanding of how the union operates on a local, divisional and national level. You can find more information at:

www.usdaw.org.uk



Safe journeys under the spotlight

Activists in Scotland were the first to try out a pilot training course on Women Workers and Safe Journeys to and From Work.

Seventeen reps and training officer Esther Quinn used the executive council statement, passed at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting, as the basis of the course and discussed how to keep their members safe when faced with difficult travel arrangements. Copies of the statement are available to download from:

www.usdaw.org.uk



Scottish reps outside the Glasgow venue for the pilot course on safe journeys for women to and from work

IN BRIEF

■ Morrison to offer hope for the homeless

Supermarket chain Morrison will actively recruit 'vulnerable' people as part of its latest recruitment drive.

The retailer said it will work with the Salvation Army and charity Create to allocate around 1,000 jobs, of the total 10,000 new positions on offer at its new stores, to the disadvantaged including the homeless and those battling addictions.

■ Free debt advice for members at CCCS

National debt charity Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) has launched a dedicated helpline for Usdaw members who are worried about their debts. By calling 0800 980 8271, members will be able to receive free, confidential and independent advice on how to deal with their debts. More specialist advice includes mortgage counselling, bankruptcy support and a welfare benefits check.

Redundancy advice provides information on workers' rights following redundancy, how to use any redundancy payments and how to deal with any debts.

This new service builds on Usdaw's partnership with CCCS, with online debt counselling already available through the Usdaw website at:

www.usdaw.org.uk

■ TUC set March 26, 2011 for cuts protest

Trade unionists are being urged to back the TUC's demonstration in March next year against the Coalition Government's planned cuts. More at:

www.tuc.org.uk/events

IN BRIEF

2011 Forthcoming events for your diary

January

24 – 30 January
Membership Week

February

12 – 13 February
National Political conference, Warrington

March

12 – 13 March
South Wales & Western divisional conference

19 – 20 March
North Eastern divisional conference

19 – 20 March
Scottish divisional conference

26 March
TUC anti-cuts march, London

April

17 – 20 April
Annual Delegate Meeting – Blackpool

May

14 – 20 May
Adult Learners Week

June

20 – 26 June
Membership Week

October

01– 02 October
North Eastern divisional conference

Other events to be announced in future issues of Network.

Visit: www.usdaw.org.uk

Leading the way



UNION FLOURISHES AT UNILEVER

One of the best organised sites in the UK – Unilever at Leeds – had plenty to celebrate recently when the branch celebrated a number of long service awards and the continued success of the company’s long-standing agreement with Usdaw.

General secretary John Hannett returned to the site to check on developments and present the membership certificates. “This is one

of the best examples of how a progressive company and a modern trade union work together bringing positive results for both the business and our members,” he said.

“This site has for many years led the way in the industrial relations field and I’m delighted to see how our reps have played a vital role in its development. I’m sure other companies and other trade unions could learn many lessons from the Unilever site.”

04

The number of 50 year membership awards presented at the site in October

400k within reach

Total membership was just 1,934 short of the 400,000 mark at the end of November.

The last time Usdaw had more than 400,000 members was 1988. Visit the union’s website for further updates during December. www.usdaw.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 29 NOVEMBER 2010

South Wales & Western	45,824
Eastern	56,746
Midlands	53,070
North Eastern	54,981
Scottish	43,067
Southern	53,512
North West	90,866
TOTAL	398,066

Jobs boost

Supermarket chain Sainsbury said it will recruit 500 extra staff for its food counters and cafes over the next 12 months.

The company will also open six food colleges to train staff in food preparation skills, product knowledge and customer service.

Meanwhile discounter Poundland has announced plans to open 50 new stores next year as it continues to defy the recession and attract more affluent customers.

The chain currently has 320 UK stores and aims to eventually have around 800.

It has also said it will develop an online presence to aid its expansion and increase the range of goods it sells.

Fined for fire risks

NO DISCOUNT ON SAFETY

Huddersfield based budget retailer Poundstretcher Ltd has been fined a total of £51,500 and ordered to pay costs of £3,449.75 at Leeds Crown Court.

The court heard how a fire safety inspector uncovered a catalogue of failings inside the retailer's store in Castleford, West Yorkshire, putting the lives of staff and shoppers at risk.

The inspector found that people could have exited the shop through a fire door into the stairwell, but that the door would have locked behind them and they could have become trapped and unable to exit the next fire door.

The store can hold a total of 420 people but only one fire escape out of six was available to use, and large amounts of combustible material blocked routes to the exits.

Poundstretcher pleaded

guilty to seven charges of breaching fire safety regulations, relating to general fire precautions, a risk assessment review, emergency routes and exits and training.

This highlights the dangers of locked or inaccessible fire exits and escape routes. Usdaw reps need to be vigilant and raise any concerns about fire safety with their management. More safety information at: www.usdaw.org.uk

Marchers protest at NI cuts plans

Activists and officials in Northern Ireland turned out in force, despite torrential rain, in October for a march against the Coalition Government's planned cuts.

Ushaw reps with their flags and banners joined other unions to march through the streets of Belfast against the attack on their living standards, and cuts in working tax credits and other in-work benefits.

Divisional officer Mike Aylward said: "This was a fantastic event and I was proud of the commitment shown by our activists."



IN BRIEF

Retail Co-operative Pay Review 2010

Members covered by the Retail Co-operative Agreement have voted overwhelmingly to accept a 2.25 per cent pay increase with effect from October 1. Other changes to the sick pay policy, Christmas trading hours and premium payments were also agreed.

Tesco depot to transfer to Stobart

Ushaw is in talks with Tesco after the company announced its intention to transfer its Fenny Lock depot in Milton Keynes to UK haulier Eddie Stobart. "We will be doing all we can to support our members through the 30 day consultation process," said national officer Joanne McGuinness.

Employers tighten up on sickness policy

Against a background of recession and looming widespread job cuts many employers are tightening up their sickness absence procedures, according to a new survey by the Labour Research Department (LRD).

It also found sick workers were increasingly reluctant to take time off for fear of being sacked or made redundant.

Many of the changes reported to the LRD were designed to make sickness procedures tighter and in some instances, potentially harsher in operation.

Companies nervous for next year

Retail sales rose in November, according to a CBI survey, but retailers are more concerned about the 2011 outlook.

See how much you can save

As you may be aware **Uchange4better** offer an energy price comparison and switching service and we have been reviewing the use of our service by **Ushaw** members over the last six months. The average saving on a combined change of gas and electric suppliers has resulted in an average saving for **Ushaw** members of **£223**, the largest saving was **£326** even the smallest saving was **£148**.

We have had a fairly stable market price for both gas and electricity. However, there are signs prices are beginning to rise. As real savings have been made by Usdaw members you might like to try our comparison site at www.usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk/ to see whether you would make a saving by changing supplier.

Ushaw members could be better off



You can find the **Uchange4better** service from the Usdaw website, click on the *My Union* tab and then select *members services* then click on *membership discounts and offers*.

You might also want to consider the possibility of locking in current prices for a fixed term period up to 2015, there is inevitably a premium to be paid for this privilege but you will not have to pay any price increases in future that may apply to those on a variable rate tariff.

LIFELONG UNION WOMEN BOW OUT

Scottish divisional training officer Esther Quinn and North Eastern division area organiser Linda McFadden have called time on their Usdaw careers after more than 55 years' service

Scotland's training officer Esther Quinn, who has trained generations of reps, retired in December after 30 years of service.

Esther was appointed in 1980, and was based at the Glasgow office. Before working for Usdaw she was a union activist.

During this time she began to get more involved with Usdaw and politics. She was delegate to the STUC, British TUC, Scottish Labour Party and British Labour Party conference.

"It's been a marvellous job", said Esther, 64. "Having the opportunity to work with skilled and talented lay reps and learn from them has been an inspiration. They deserve recognition for what they've brought and will continue to bring to the division in the future.

"I have seen over the years, the union adapt to changing circumstances in delivering for members from the women structures to greater political involvement to lifelong learning. And, just as they say 'you're



never too old to learn', it'll be continuing my own development at the University of Glasgow next year and the theme of the thesis is Usdaw and the rise and fall of the women's structures.

"I'm also planning trips to Vienna, Cuba and Vietnam and I will be devoting more of my time to teaching English to refugees and asylum seekers."

General secretary John Hannett said: "Esther will be a hard act to follow. I think every single member across the whole of the division will join with me in thanking Esther for her drive, enthusiasm and commitment. She has been instrumental in helping the division grow. We all wish her a happy retirement."

North Eastern area organiser Linda McFadden retired in December after 25 years with the union.

The 55 year-old, originally from Merseyside, was appointed organiser at the former Sheffield office in 1985 and later moved to Leeds in 2001.

Trade unionism was in the family and when in 1974 she started work at Littlewoods JM Centre in Liverpool she joined Usdaw. Within three years she was elected shop steward, health and safety rep, branch committee member and became a Labour Party activist. In 1983 she was appointed senior shop steward and branch secretary.

"It's been an absolute privilege to represent the members of Usdaw," said Linda. "The servicing side of the job has paid dividends. I couldn't have done the job without the reps.

"I've worked with people who are friends for life. I've thoroughly enjoyed my time.

"But now it's time for me to chill and get on with some of the



things you overlook while doing the job.

"I have a number of projects in mind such as getting back to a healthy regime with my swimming, I want to seriously research my family history and go on holiday to our favourite destination – Northern Cyprus.

"Long term I'd like to put my skills to good use and get involved in employment tribunal work."

General secretary John Hannett said: "Linda grew up, like a lot of Merseysiders, with her roots firmly in the trade union movement. She always did the best possible job for her members. We wish her a very happy retirement."

Tributes paid to Pat Callinan MBE

Former Eastern divisional officer Pat Callinan MBE died in November aged 91.

Pat retired in 1984 after 50 years' service with the union. He joined the staff straight from school in 1934 when he was appointed junior clerk in the Nottingham Office and worked his way up to office supervisor.

In 1953 he was appointed area organiser at Dilke House in London and he moved the family home to St Albans in Hertfordshire.

He was appointed divisional officer for London in 1963 where he oversaw a period of reorganisation and restructuring as the old London division was split in two to what we know today as Eastern and Southern divisions.

In 1970 he took control of the new Eastern division serving the membership in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire until his retirement.

In 1981 he was awarded the MBE for his services to

industrial relations. Pat was also a Labour Party activist.

"Pat will be remembered by staff and thousands of members throughout the union, especially in the Eastern, Southern and Midlands divisions," said general secretary John Hannett. "He gave his life to the trade union and labour movement and was a well-respected and popular man.

"Our deepest condolences go to his family and friends."



Pat Callinan MBE



ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Scottish division's **Jackie Martin** answers our questions on her experiences as an Usdaw rep

“It's always great to represent someone to the best of your ability and get a fair and just outcome to a problem”

Why did you decide to become an activist?

The male rep in our store kept asking me to support him as we had a lot of female members who didn't feel comfortable talking to a male rep about certain issues.

What do you like the most about being a union rep?

Being able to help and support the members. It's always great to represent someone to the best of your ability and get a fair and just outcome to a problem. Then you feel good about your own abilities.

The downside of being a rep is?

Undisciplined members who always think the manager is wrong and expect you to be able to work miracles.

Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

I'm definitely more organised and assertive now. I've also gained the confidence to enable me to sit on committees within Usdaw and the Scottish Labour Party.

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

Tesco's SYA policy, heating within the store and the new system of online booking of overtime.

Is recruitment easy at your workplace?

No it hasn't been as previous managers were unsupportive. Hopefully that's changing now.

Have you been on any union training courses?

I've attended lots and they've all been excellent but Academy1 and 2 stand out as the best. The knowledge and experience

I gained was second to none. The tutors had lots of time for us and helped us all the way through.

Have you been to ADM? What did you think of it?

I attend ADM every year as a divisional councillor. I enjoy listening to the variety of propositions and seeing new faces speak for the first time.

What law would you introduce if you were prime minister?

I would make laws to benefit our members. I would create a living wage to replace the minimum wage and extend Sunday trading laws to Scotland. I would fund the building of more social housing through the country. I could go on and on.....

What advice would you give to a member thinking about becoming a rep?

Go for it! The training is excellent and there is always help available. Never try and answer things you are not sure of, it's always best to be honest with the members.

What changes to Usdaw do you think would help it improve?

We need to use new technology to communicate with members such as texting and Facebook.

Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The budget and its effects.

What's next for you?

Hopefully work for Usdaw.

FACT FILE & TRIVIA

FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Tesco
- **Occupation** Team Leader (checkouts)
- **Age** 50
- **Lives** Edinburgh
- **Married** Yes with three children
- **Union positions** Branch secretary, divisional councillor, chair of divisional political committee, national political committee and Tesco divisional committee and Usdaw delegate on the Scottish Labour Party executive committee
- **Branch** Edinburgh and district Tesco G15
- **Activist** Since 2001

MY FAVOURITE...

- **TV programme...**
CSI (Miami, New York and LA)
- **I spend my spare time...**
Making beaded and sterling silver jewellery
- **The best moment of my life so far...**
Being a mum and a gran



watch this space...
Do you want to volunteer to be Network's next activist in-depth? Email: network@usdaw.org.uk

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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.

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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 1111**
Mon to Fri 8:00am-8:00pm



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Call free on **0800 591 563** (Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat & Sun 8am-5pm) or visit: www.britanniarescue.com/Usdaw and find out how you and your family members can take advantage of a 15% discount with Usdaw's official road rescue provider.

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Visit the following Usdaw websites for more information:

Fitness First: www.usdaw.org.uk/fitnessfirst
LA Fitness: www.usdaw.org.uk/lafitness
Nuffield Health: www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield



Pensions on the agenda at Harlow

Reps at the Tesco Distribution site in Harlow held a very successful Pension Awareness Day in September to help almost 700 members gain a greater understanding of how to plan for their retirement.

"The day helped take the myth out of pensions," said site rep Simon Vincent. "All the comments were very positive.

"The whole area of pensions is complicated so we relied heavily on the union's pensions department for advice and Usdaw's Pensions Toolkit for guidance.

"Most of our members have worked here for more than 20 years so their pension scheme is important and they were keen to find out how it worked. There was a genuine interest from members to know more about Additional Voluntary Contributions, state pension forecasts and Expression of Wish forms."



Planning ahead . . . Simon Vincent (left) and Phil Waite at the Tesco distribution centre in Harlow, Essex

IN BRIEF

■ New male cancer leaflet out now



Usdaw has published a leaflet to raise awareness of the most common forms of cancer in men – testicular and prostate.

Copies can be downloaded from www.usdaw.org.uk or ordered free of charge from the stationery department at central office.

■ Job cuts at holiday firm Thomas Cook

Fewer travellers, the volcanic ash cloud and the weakness of sterling was blamed by Thomas Cook after it announced 350 job cuts among its back office staff.

The company, which merged with Co-op Travel earlier this year, will also cancel 150 vacancies until the outlook improves.

■ Check out the new Equality Act 2010

Reps are reminded of two important new resources that explain the changes to the former Disability Discrimination Act and its replacement by the Equality Act. There is a briefing for reps and a leaflet (No.380). Both can be downloaded from the Usdaw website or ordered from the stationery department at central office

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NWK 11/10

NEW PROCESS FOR LEGAL HELP IN EMPLOYMENT CASES

Usdaw has changed the way members apply for assistance from the union in employment cases making it quicker and more professional – it's important reps know the new procedure

What reps need to know

The blue form BL2 – Application for assistance in employment cases is being scrapped.

From 1 January 2011 members must complete a new Members Pack to apply for Usdaw advice and assistance in employment cases.

There is a new Advice Card to give to the members you represent in disciplinary and grievance procedure hearings where the member's problem is not resolved.

There is an updated Legal Plus Reps' Handbook which explains the new system and the rep's role. There is a new Members' Handbook which will be sent to the member when assistance is granted to guide them through the process.

What reps should do

- Scrap any supplies of blue form BL2.
- Get a supply of Advice Cards from your area organiser or your local office.
- Put the new Member Pack Process on the agenda of your reps team meetings and make sure that all your reps have the updated Reps' Handbook and a postcard supply.
- Give members a copy of the card when you represent them at a hearing under the disciplinary and grievance procedures and the matter is not resolved.
- Give members the Advice Card if they ask you how to apply for assistance from Usdaw in a Tribunal claim.
- Help a member complete the Member Pack if she/he has difficulty with the form.
- Tell your area organiser if you think a member wants to apply for assistance to make a tribunal claim.



THE ADVICE CARD

The Advice Card is a simple postcard that tells the member about tribunal time limits and how to get a Members' Pack and apply to Usdaw for help with a tribunal claim.

The card will make your job as a rep easier and ensure that the members are given the right advice at the right time and you can't be criticised by a member for not telling them about the very strict tribunal time limits.

It should be given to the members you represent at disciplinary and grievance hearings where the member's problem is



not resolved or they remain unhappy with the outcome and where internal proceedings drag on and the tribunal time limits are coming up.

How the new system will work

Rep gives member the Advice Card



Member contacts the local Usdaw Office for a Member Pack – employment



Ushaw Office sends member the Pack



Member completes Pack and sends it with key documents to their area organiser at the Usdaw local office



Area organiser checks the Pack and sends it to the legal department



Legal department assess the case and informs the member whether Usdaw can support the case and who will represent the member



Our aim is to tell members within 20 days of receipt of the Members' Pack at the local office whether Usdaw will represent them. Until the Member Pack process has been completed and the legal department has confirmed that assistance is granted the member has personal responsibility for their case and must ensure that a claim is made to tribunal within the time limits



Once assistance is granted the Usdaw case representative will contact the member and help them through the case

The message to members

- We will be telling members about the new application system through *Arena* and the website.
- There is no need for reps to make any general announcements to members about the Member Pack Process at this stage. There is no change to the service offered to members; the only changes are to the method of applying for assistance from Usdaw.
- In practice members will only need to know about the new Member Pack Process when they have a problem and if you give the member the Advice Card during the procedures they will know what steps to take to get Usdaw assistance and they will be given this information exactly when they need to know it.

A better service to members

These new developments will improve our service to members and provide:

- Clear guidance to members about tribunal time limits and how to apply for assistance from Usdaw when they need it.
- A clearly defined and consistent process for all members to follow in seeking help from Usdaw in employment cases.
- Better case preparation and assembly of the facts and documents by members at an earlier stage.
- More information to enable the Legal department to give stronger advice sooner and make early decisions on representation.
- More information and support to members through the new Members' Handbook which contains lots of information and advice on employment tribunal cases.

Supporting our reps

Our aim is to resolve employment problems through the procedures and our reps do a fantastic job every day looking after our members and finding effective solutions to issues.

At a tribunal there is no room for compromise, at a trial someone wins and someone loses and the risks of losing at tribunal are high. The tribunal has really only one answer to fixing a problem - compensation and money awards are also pretty low.

Under the procedures reps have more opportunities of finding a way through the problems and coming up with creative solutions.

As reps you are not alone and your area organisers and the legal department are on hand to help and advise you.

In 2011 we plan to produce some webinars and DVDs to support the new Member Pack process. The webinar will be available to view as a short video, on the Usdaw website.

 **Log on...**

For more information, advice and resources visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/legalplus



TAKE YOUR CHANCE TO GET MORE INVOLVED

Usdaw holds a National Youth Weekend to encourage reps aged under-27 to be more active

YOUNG, GIFTED AND ACTIVE

Twenty-seven young members attended the National Youth Weekend in November at the unions' training centre in Warrington. The popular annual event is the ideal get-together for young people from workplaces across the UK to meet and socialise in a relaxed, informal atmosphere and discuss issues and problems affecting young workers like themselves.



Here's what the activists had to say:

Campbell Clark, 21

"It was excellent. The first opportunity I've had away from Scotland to mix and get the views of other young reps," said the Tesco customer assistant from Lanarkshire.

"I thought it was going to be in a conference hall with lots of note taking but it was very relaxed and well organised.

"The tutors and guest speakers were superb as was the Saturday social where people talked about work and the union on a different level and this made for a better session the next day.

"I've attended divisional conference and a Scottish youth weekend this year and I've also done stand-down in my own store, which has been great for my development.

"And now after the weekend I have young people

in other workplaces and division's who I can keep in contact with and ask for advice."

Kayleigh Soper, 24

"It was a great weekend," said Kayleigh who works in the merchandising department at Tesco in Scunthorpe.

"It was very well run, just like the summer school I attended for the first time this year. The people were great and the activities were fun, especially the speed-dating session where people got the chance to get to know each other and the Saturday night social where we had a quiz and my team won!

"I was very nervous before I went but I was really looking forward to it because I knew I'd meet up with some of the other young people I'd met at summer school in September.

"I surprised myself. My confidence grows with every

union activity I get involved in.

"I'd definitely go again. As soon as I got back I was telling people I know to go and try to get on it next year."

Stephen Leonard, 21

"Fantastic! It was well-organised with lots of fun and challenging things to do. I'd advise any young rep or member to attend," said the Tesco dairy team leader from South Wales.

"Most of the time I only speak to older reps and members so it was great to meet with people my own age and talk to them about their experiences and challenges.

"I was an activist before I was a rep advising young workers and I organised campaigns and recruitment sessions.

"They would tell me they often get treated unfairly, I said that's discrimination and

you need to be in the union so the union can help you.

"At the weekend I learned things I thought would take years of experience to learn, like being able to speak to people from other workplaces about how they recruit, or how they handle managers when they don't see you as equal.

"After spending time with people I've never met before I came away confident and enthusiastic.

"So don't be put off going to the next weekend because you lack confidence don't worry, everyone's in the same boat, and you'll feel like you've known them all your life, and that's a massive confidence booster."





Active reps gain experience

SAM BELL, 24, ACADEMY1 ORGANISER 2010

"The organising academy was absolutely brilliant," said Sam from the North West division. "I had six months out of my workplace on secondment to the union recruiting and organising in lots of different workplaces in my division."



"I'll be honest it was hard work at times. There were days when you felt like you were getting nowhere and then the next day everything goes really well and you're on a high again."

"I think this has been my best union learning curve so far and I just want to keep getting more involved and keep developing."

BECKY DAVIES, 20, FIRST SUMMER SCHOOL 2010

"It was an amazing experience; I met loads of new friends and learned so many new things. It was hard work, but everyone helps each other and at the end of the day the more you put in the more you get out."



"The key to learning is to ask questions, everyone found it funny because I was always asking different questions, but to be honest if you don't ask you will never know."

"I've taken the things I learned and other people's experiences back to my own workplace."

"It changed me. I'm more confident. I'd recommend it to everyone, it's an opportunity and a half!"

A stepping stone

The national youth weekend has been the launch pad for many union activists, some have even gone on to work for the union:

- **Joanne Thomas, 31**, attended the 1998 youth weekend. She is now divisional officer for the North Eastern division.
- **Adrian Grabarski, 28**, attended the 2008 youth weekend. He is now area organiser at the London office.
- **Milan Pavlik, 26**, attended the 2007 youth weekend and is now area organiser at the Bristol office.

Money savers

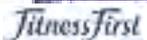
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Check out these and all the latest offers and discounts at: www.usdaw.org.uk/memberservices

National Youth Committee



Each division has its own youth co-ordinator and youth committee made up of young members aged under-27. One representative from each divisional committee make up the National Youth Committee who meet regularly.

Members of the national and divisional youth committees help organise the national youth weekend in Warrington. They also organise youth events at ADM including the ever-popular Youth Disco and also get involved in a variety of divisional campaigns and events.



UNDER-AGE SALES THEM WAY AT RETAIL TRADES

The annual National Retail Trades Conference took place in October and delegates from across

JOHN HANNETT



Usdaw reps have done a fantastic job in recruiting more than one million new members in the last 13 years with a net increase of 91,000, but there is still a potential of 2-3 million more in the private retail sector alone, general secretary **John Hannett** told delegates.

"We only have around 15 per cent of the retail sector in total organised," he said. "We also have a hostile Government and the fear of a double-dip recession and a return to the mass unemployment of the 1980s and '90s.

"Faced with these challenges we will continue to invest in the union, raise our profile, link campaigns with recruitment and provide our reps with the best training available.

"We accept many branch meetings don't happen, for a variety of reasons, so we have to use *Arena*, *Network*, the website and even Facebook to connect and inform our activists.

"There is no magic formula, just a joined up strategy encompassing both of our Academies, in-depth surveys, training, the use of stand-down reps and officials all working together to ensure Usdaw remains the fastest growing union in the UK. We can be bigger and more influential and get shopworkers the recognition they deserve."

CONFERENCE TALKING POINTS

Usdaw will continue to lobby the Government to look again at the legislation, particularly the pressure put on staff, covering the sale of age-restricted goods, deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis** told conference.

"There are 18 bits of legislation on this issue," he said. "It needs clarification. We want employers to display more posters to warn customers, we want more support for employees, and we want to see a code of practice developed between the main players – Government, trading standards and companies – to ensure the would-be law-breaker is prosecuted. Yes serial offenders should be targeted but it isn't right for honest hard-working shopworkers to be disciplined and possibly prosecuted for going about their business."

Labour MP **Ann Coffey** (and a member of the union's parliamentary group) pledged her support for Usdaw members who are faced with policing the sale of age-restricted goods. "Working people need a political voice more than ever now," she said. "I'm conscious of the alcohol-related problems for communities and in particular with young people. JPs often don't realise the harm done to individuals and they need to know what lies behind what may seem a trivial situation.

"We do need better advertising, we need more from the Crime Partnerships and more support from the Government. If I get the chance I'll raise all of these issues in the House."

Richard Lindley from Trading Standards outlined the work of his department.

"We do not operate on a random or ad hoc basis we always respond to local problems, I want to make



that clear," he said. "It's not entrapment either the law says so. If we didn't do it this way how could we prove retailers are breaking the law? We do use people who look their age but they are allowed to dress as if they were going out or to buy alcohol.

"We have had some success most notably on the sale of fireworks which 10 years ago was a common problem but we've almost eradicated it now. Another success has been in supermarkets where the failure rate on sale of alcohol was 35 per cent now it is less than 10 per cent. The Challenge21 and Challenge25 have helped but most of all it's down to the shopworkers themselves so well done to you."

Co-op Group employee relations manager **Tim Knowles** was also on the panel.

"We need a clear policy, which is communicated to staff and we need to look at the consequences if that policy is breached," he said. "Training at the Co-op Group is

Above: Retail Trades Conference in session



THE LEADS THE CONFERENCE



the UK gathered to discuss under-age sales, recruitment and organising and health and safety



PADDY LILLIS

The burgeoning convenience sector is a huge challenge for Usdaw, said deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis**.

"It is one of the biggest recruitment and organising challenges we have faced," he said. "We have set up a task group to look at the particular challenges we face and how we meet them. We have to consider what can we do differently in this sector. We will look at establishing cluster reps where one rep has responsibility for a number of nearby stores as well as his/her own. There will obviously be potential problems with this in terms of mobility, time off and local circumstances. We need to map and understand these workplaces – more than 5,000 of them alone in the Co-op, Tesco and Sainsbury."

Delegates split into workshops to identify firstly problems of organising in the sector and secondly potential solutions to these. Shift patterns, the high proportion of part-time workers and students, and familiarity with the store were listed as barriers. Ideas to solve these included; establish reps who will become 'the familiar face' of the union, distribute leaflets to raise the union's profile, hold more get-togethers for reps in this sector, and send out a targeted mail-shot to members to encourage them to get active.

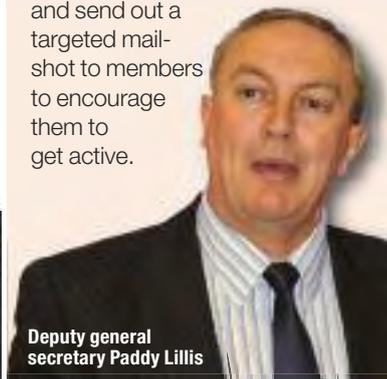
good I think with manuals, an interactive DVD and training cards, although I accept it is difficult to make a snap-decision at the till. That's why we have adopted the Think 25 campaign."

The issue produced a lively debate and a Q&A session. Delegates agreed that the Government should do more to prosecute the buyer or at least do more to discourage attempts to buy. If staff follow rules but make a genuine mistake they should not be disciplined or prosecuted.

Delegates also wanted to see more support from line management. The complex issue of delivery drivers and when and to whom they can deliver age-restricted goods was also raised.

■ Propositions on workplace health and safety, mental health, excessive trading hours over the festive period, and pay awards, which were moved by **Donna Williams, Wendy Subhan, Bernadette Connor, Michael Green** and **Jackie McNeill** were also debated.

Below: (L-R) Speakers **Tim Knowles, Ann Coffey and Richard Lindley**. Delegates **Bernadette Connor and Wendy Subhan**



Deputy general secretary **Paddy Lillis**

REPS KEEP THEIR COOL

Active reps turned out in force for the annual National Respect Week in November and this year combined the campaign's themes 'Keep Your Cool' and 'No ID No Sale'.

Many MPs also showed their support and joined activists in their local stores to promote Usdaw's Christmas message to stressed out shoppers.

The campaign was also backed by employers group the Association of Convenience Stores (ACS). General secretary John Hannett said: "Usdaw welcomes and appreciates the support of the ACS for Respect for Shopworkers Week.

"Our Freedom From Fear campaign, working in partnership with organisations such as the ACS, retailers, police and government has made a real difference in improving the lives of many shopworkers but there is still much to do.

"Last year, over a million shopworkers were verbally abused, threatened with violence or physically attacked while doing their jobs, a truly shocking and unacceptable figure."

ACS chief executive James Lowman said: "Violence against shopworkers is unacceptable and the Freedom From Fear campaign is an excellent way to raise awareness of this problem."



COOL AT CHRISTMAS



RESPECT WEEK IN PICTURES

1. Tesco Irvine, Scottish Division
2. Tesco Extra Swindon, Southern Division
3. Tesco Goodmayes, Essex, Eastern Division
4. Morrisons Llanelli, South Wales & Western Division
5. Morrisons Bilston, Midlands Division
6. Co-operative Mid Counties, Midlands Division
7. Tesco Carlisle, North Eastern Division
8. Tesco Chester, North West Division
9. Tesco Gateshead, North Eastern Division
10. Tesco Goodmayes, Eastern Division
11. Tesco Irvine, Scottish Division
12. Tesco Irvine, Scottish Division
13. Tesco Redditch, Midlands Division



Listening and learning from black and Asian activists

The union holds an annual weekend to encourage black and Asian members to speak up



Usdaw Black Members Speaking Up was the theme of this year's Black Members' Weekend held in October when black and Asian members from across the UK met up for their annual weekend workshop at the national training centre in Warrington.

Delegates were asked to look back at the progress the union has made in tackling racism and then to look forward to identify Usdaw's priorities in the future.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Black Members' Weekend Workshop is an important event in the Usdaw calendar. It enables the union to hear directly from black members about what they see as current campaigning priorities. We know that theirs is a voice that sometimes struggles to be heard at work and in the union, especially where black and Asian staff are in the minority."

Racism emerged as the number one issue for reps and members. The vast majority of black reps and members and their families have

Delegates and John Hannett at the Black Members Weekend

experienced racism either at work or in the community. This mirrors the research the union undertook just three years ago into the experience of black and Asian members where we found that over half had experienced racism at work.

The union's 'Racism is no Joke' DVD remains an important tool for reps, both black and white. It sends out a strong signal that racism won't be tolerated in Usdaw organised workplaces and challenges the view that racism is a thing of the past.

For over a decade Usdaw reps have been at the forefront of tackling racism in the workplace.

Whether that's running weekend schools, organising against the racist British National Party or making sure Usdaw gets involved in regional anti-racist festivals, or supporting members' facing deportation the union has a strong track record of supporting black members and promoting race equality.

"Usdaw reps see tackling racism as an important part of their role and are taking positive steps to ensure Usdaw workplaces are free from harassment and bullying," said John Hannett.

Another priority identified by delegates was for the union to continue to take steps to ensure





“I came away confident and keen to get more involved. I learned a lot and it was great fun”



What you said about the weekend

that Usdaw structures reflect the diversity of the membership.

Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis emphasised this point in his address. “The union recognises that its strength lies in making sure we listen to and act upon the concerns of all our members,” he said. “We now have record numbers of black members active and visible in the union structures, taking up places on the Organising Academies, sitting on divisional equality forums and attending summer schools.

“This didn’t just happen by accident, but has come about through a sustained programme of positive action designed to reach out to black and Asian members who remain under-involved in all lay roles. This isn’t about political correctness, it delivers real results helping to grow and strengthen the union.”

Delegates later turned their attention to the issue of mental health, an issue that cuts across all groups of members, regardless of race or gender. However, as Marcel Vige, guest speaker from the national campaigning organisation Mind pointed out: “There is still inequality in the way in which black and Asian patients are treated by the mental health system. They are more likely, for example, to be misdiagnosed and held in secure units and less likely to be referred for treatments like counselling.”



Sandrene Maynard, 45, has been a rep for 18 months. She works in the HR department at Morrisons in Crewe and this was her first Black Members’ Weekend. “I really enjoyed it,” she said. “I came away confident and keen to get more involved. I learned a lot, it was great fun.

“I moved up to Cheshire from London twenty years ago and was starting to feel like I’d lost my identity and as if I was the only black person living in the area. But having spent time with like minded people at the weekend I began to feel like my old self again.

“So when I got back to work I had a look at how I could build my branch and encourage more people to attend and get involved. It’s a big project but I’m ready for it.”

Sainsbury’s **Jason Logan** attended his first Weekend three years ago and this year he was one of the group leaders. “I always enjoy it because I get so much out of it,” said the 30 year-old from Leeds in Yorkshire.

“I was delighted to be asked to run a workshop and do my bit to help others feel more confident and enthusiastic about what the union can do for them.

“It’s a well structured event and there’s also an opportunity to meet and speak with the union’s top officials. I had a good discussion with Paddy Lillis about getting more involved in equality issues in my division and the difficulties some people face in getting involved.”



Tesco’s **Debbie Newman** took a break from the unions’ Organising Academy to be at the Weekend. “It’s been an incredible journey since my first Black Members’ Weekend last year which, like this one, was well organised, informative and thought provoking.

“Last year I came away feeling really enthusiastic and wanted to get more involved and that’s exactly what I did. I applied for the union’s Organising Academy and was delighted to get a place, it’s been the most fantastic experience.

“It’s up to us as reps to go back into our workplaces and spread the word that the union is there for everyone and let our colleagues know about the many opportunities available to them.”

Getting involved in Usdaw made 37 year-old **Nicky Cheema** a different person. “I’ve been a rep for 18 months and I’m growing all the time,” said Nicky who works for Sainsbury’s Local in Leeds.

“There’s so much on offer, I’ve been to union courses, weekends and get-togethers as well as TUC conferences. I’ve learned so much and met so many different people from different workplaces.

“I’m also dyslexic which can cause problems at times but there is lots of support from union officials and the training officers.

“It took me a while to find the courage to say anything but when I did I surprised myself and took another big step. Even my workmates tell me I’ve really changed since I got involved with the union.”



Get Active

If you want to get more involved in the union or find out more about union events then contact your area organiser through your local office.

You can also visit the website for contacts and more information
www.usdaw.org.uk

THE ACADEMY OF LIFE

Three talented reps on how Usdaw's Organising Academy1 changed their lives

Confidence booster

Julie Day improved her skills and experience supporting reps and activists in a variety of stores across the East Midlands during her six months with Academy1.

"It was a wonderful experience," said the 49 year-old who works for Tesco in Heanor in Derbyshire.

"I know lots of people say it's life changing but for me it really was.

"Although I enjoy being a rep I had no self-belief and very little self-confidence when I started out and now I say – bring on the challenge, what's next?

"I think my most used words were 'I can't do that!' but with the help, support and encouragement of my coach Jan Hind – I started to believe 'yes' I can and

I proved it to myself.

"There's so much variety. No two stores or days, for that matter are the same, there are good and bad days so you stretch yourself and you are learning all the time.

"When you organise an event in a store where the reps haven't been too organised or active in the past it gives you a major boost to see them motivated and getting involved.

"The reps at the Mansfield and Long Eaton stores inspired me with their commitment and enthusiasm to put on a good event and we learned from each other.

"My advice to anyone thinking about it is to go for it. If you take your role as a rep seriously and you want to progress then the Academy is perfect for your development."



Julie Day



Stephen Lord



Julie and the team of reps at the Long Eaton store

The road to success

Stephen Lord put eight young apprentices on the road to Usdaw when he visited the Farnell Land Rover showroom in Guiseley, Leeds during his time with Academy1.

"Before my visit we had six members at the site, which is part of the Co-operative Motor Group, and when I left we had 14 – to say I was delighted is an understatement," said on-line driver Stephen, 44, who is on secondment from Sainsbury's, White Rose in Leeds.

"I was particularly pleased because they were all trainee technicians aged between 18 and 21.

"Academy1 was brilliant and full of challenges.

"I'd spoken to previous Academy1 organisers before I applied and they all said it would change my life.

"And I have to say they were right. It's taught me a lot.

"Especially how crucial it is to have time to spend speaking to staff face-to-face, finding out the issues and advising how the union can help – and then seeing them sign up.

"Also I learned how important it is to have reps in every workplace so that members don't feel isolated.

"Thanks to Usdaw and my coach Sharon Hargraves after six months with Academy1, I returned to work with new skills, new confidence and determined to get more involved."



Stephen with members at Farnell Land Rover in Guiseley

**Calling all activists –
Don't forget
Membership Week
January 24 – 30, 2011**

Let Network know what you're planning and you could feature in the next issue.
Email: network@usdaw.org.uk

Robert spreads the word on Academy1

Academy1 organiser Robert Siejka has persuaded Sainsbury's rep Tina Martin to think about applying for next year's Academy1.

The two joined forces for a campaign awareness day at her Halifax store in West Yorkshire last month.

"The campaign events go down really well because they do actually raise awareness and help staff realise what the union does and can do for them when they join," said Tina, 38, who has been a rep at the store for four years.

"Bob Thompson and night

rep Abigail Lord and myself are always looking for new ways to get staff interested in the union, the campaigns have something for everyone so we're very keen to promote these events.

"Membership is growing steadily and every time we run an event around one of the campaigns we always sign up at least a couple of new members.

"It was a great team effort, as we also had area organisers Mark Todd and Shelley Vaughan on hand to offer their advice and support. Academy1 does look like a good opportunity."



Robert with (l-r) Tina Martin, Mark Todd and Shelley Vaughan

Now's the time to apply for the Organising Academy

This year saw record numbers taking part in Usdaw's Organising Academy1.

Fifty reps started the programme in May and finished six-months later in November. Everyone was keen to celebrate the success of Academy1 at a dinner hosted by deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis.

"These Academy organisers recruited nearly 12,000 members and they also identified over 800 new shop stewards," said Paddy.

"Academy1 is a fantastic opportunity for our reps to develop their organising skills where the training, support and encouragement they receive is second to none. When I was a rep I would have jumped at the chance.

"Reps are seconded to Usdaw from their normal work and spend six-months working alongside Usdaw officials while participating in a tough but rewarding training and development programme.

"I'd urge all reps to think about applying."



Academy1 2010 graduates at their end of term event

To find out more about Academy1 you can:

- Visit the Academy pages at www.usdaw.org.uk/academy where you can find more information about the programme and also see what some of our reps have to say
- Request an application pack by phoning Brenda Robinson on 0161 224 2804 or emailing: academy@usdaw.org.uk
- Talk to your area organiser or any reps who may have taken part already

The Academy for 2011 starts on 9th May and finishes on 4th November. If you are interested in taking part you will need to be available for the full six-months of the programme. The deadline for applications is Friday 28th January 2011.

PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS PUT YOUR SAFETY FIRST

European regulation and the forthcoming Agency Workers Regulations topped the agenda



DRIVING AHEAD WITH USDAW

The transport sector has always been and will remain an important part of Usdaw, general secretary **John Hannett** told conference.

"We all face difficult times ahead," he said. "The Coalition Government's cuts have yet to be fully realised so we know the economic and industrial environment is going to get worse."

"The employers' organisation the CBI has already said it wants to restrict even further the ability of trade unions to protect its members' interests. While strike action is always a last resort for Usdaw the CBI wants to erect more barriers to strike action and favours putting up obstacles in terms of time limits, ballot data, thresholds and voting

coverage. All of these will make our role more difficult and could have severe financial implications for all unions. It's in the dark days ahead we will find out how strong we are, the next 24-48 months will be crucial.

"We can't afford to ignore the political climate and we will act accordingly in a responsible and professional manner."

"We will also be looking into the kind of training we give to our driver reps which will form part of our ongoing review into our training and education offer to all activists."

Brian Simpson

We need to professionalise the transport industry across Europe, make it an attractive career option with good pay, and reasonable working hours that allow drivers a social life,

Brian Simpson MEP told delegates.

"Yes the UK enforces more than most other EU countries but I say we're right and they're wrong," he said. "We know in places like Romania and Bulgaria there is very little enforcement of the Working Time Regulations and this is a major problem. We need consistent levels of enforcement so UK drivers aren't penalised."

Another problem is the exclusion of self-employed drivers from the regulations. Tired drivers are dangerous drivers, hence the need to include self-employed to protect themselves from themselves and protect other road users.

"We also need improved secure parking and rest facilities across the EU. The sector is in better shape now than 10-15 years ago but there

is still much to do. As chair of the EU Transport Committee I'm keen to work with Usdaw and employers to make your working life safer. However with the rise in the number of right wing MEPs our job is going to be much harder."

Doug Russell

Thefts, violence and robberies are very real issues for drivers, health and safety officer Doug





Above: general secretary John Hannett, health and safety officer Doug Russell, Brian Simpson MEP, chair Tony Threlfall, national officer Irene Radigan, research assistant Chris Morris



Russell told conference as he kicked off his safety workshop.

"Drivers of LGVs, pharmacy vans, home delivery and cash-in-transit vehicles are all at risk because of the contents and /or value of their loads," he said.

"In a recent survey by Truckpol, a police backed monitoring initiative, it reported 1,604 thefts of LGVs, 1,103 thefts from vehicles, and

27 violent attacks last year.

"There is a problem of lack of secure parking but local authorities are reluctant to build them because residents don't like the noise associated with them."

Other safety issues identified included getting close enough to stores to deliver 'at risk' goods such as pharmacy, cigarettes and alcohol; obstructed loading bays, unhelpful traffic wardens, and aggressive road users.

Doug's advice on potential danger was 'don't put yourself at risk'. "It's important our members, if they feel threatened, phone the police, and stay in the cab if appropriate.

"Driver safety training is vital and employers can help by introducing systems which, for example, log unsafe delivery addresses, use tracker systems, provide secure parking and have good links with police."

Chris Morris

A special session on the forthcoming Agency Workers Regulations was run by research assistant Chris Morris who outlined the main points to delegates.

"The Regulations will be implemented on 1 October 2011 and they allow for a 12-

week qualifying period after which the principles of equal treatment apply for agency workers," he said.

"Equal treatment covers: Basic pay, overtime rates, shift allowances and unsocial hours premiums, holidays, access to any canteen or child care facilities but excludes profit sharing schemes and occupational pension and sick pay schemes.

"In addition, employers will not be allowed to use regular 11-week contracts to deny agency workers equal status. However the Regulations do not apply to the self-employed."

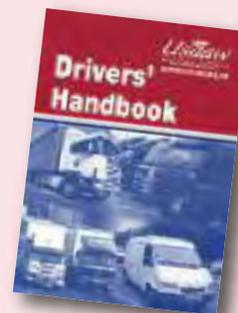
Delegates reported that quite often agency drivers were earning more than the permanent core-staff so there was an urgent need to address this along with the problem of using self-employed drivers and overseas drivers when the language barrier prevented reps from getting them into the union.

Delegates agreed that the best way forward was to recruit the agency drivers both into Usdaw and get them on to the company payroll to ensure equal treatment across the sector.

"More detailed information will be made available to all reps next year," said Chris.

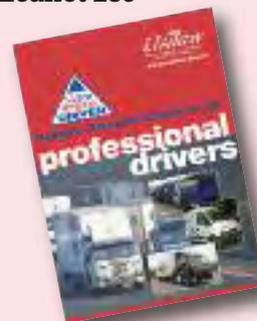
Resources

Drivers' Handbook



A no nonsense, easy to read handbook that gives good advice about today's road transport laws and good driving practices.

Professional Drivers Leaflet 289



Explains Usdaw's transport section and discusses the benefits of being an Usdaw member. The leaflet also contains an application form to join the Road Transport Distress Fund.

These publications can be ordered from the stationery department by phoning **0161 224 2804** or by emailing stationery@usdaw.org.uk They can also be downloaded from our website, just visit: www.usdaw.org.uk



MPs turn out in force to support union campaign

From Westminster to the Welsh Assembly, and via Stormont, MPs from across the UK joined reps and officials on the 'Keep Your Cool' at Christmas and the No ID No Sale campaigns

The Freedom From Fear campaign not only energised members, reps and officials but also captured the imagination of hundreds of MPs, Assembly Members in Wales, Members of the Legislative Assembly in Northern Ireland and Members of the Scottish Parliament.

Politicians were keen to show their backing for Usdaw on both the issue of abuse and violence against shopworkers and the pressures faced by staff who have to police the sale of age-restricted goods.

General secretary John Hannett was delighted with the response. "It's clear we are hitting on important issues for our members and this is recognised across the political divide.

"Involving your local MP is an ideal way to draw attention

to all of our campaigns as once the MP is involved you're almost guaranteed coverage in the local press.

"We also held events in Westminster, the Welsh Assembly, Stormont and Holyrood all of which were widely supported.

To find out more about getting involved in politics locally visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk
[/usdaw4labour](http://usdaw4labour)



■ Pictured clockwise from the top, reps and officials at the Welsh Assembly, Lillian Greenwood MP at the Alfreton Express store and right Gavin Shuker MP at the Caddington Co-op store



Northern Ireland Assembly backs the union

Usdaw has secured cross-party backing for their Freedom From Fear campaign from Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly (MLAs).

Following a presentation from Usdaw, the Assembly's Employment and Learning Committee unanimously agreed to adopt the union's campaign and to promote it both within the Assembly and across Northern Ireland.

Figures recently released from Usdaw's annual Freedom From Fear survey revealed that in the last 12 months six per cent of shopworkers were subjected to violent attack, 37 per cent were threatened with harm and a huge 70 per cent had suffered verbal abuse.

SDLP Foyle MLA Pat Ramsey has long



Show of support (l-r) SDLP Foyle MLA Pat Ramsey, area organiser Michala Lafferty, rep Danielle McCusker and political officer David Williams

championed Usdaw's campaign and was instrumental in securing the opportunity

for Usdaw to meet the Employment and Learning Committee.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This is great news and I'd like to thank Pat Ramsey and all MLAs on the Committee for the support they have given to our members. Usdaw will continue to work closely with MLAs and other agencies in Northern Ireland to build upon the progress made today and to try and stamp out a blight that sadly affects the lives of far too many of our members."

Activist Danielle McCusker said: "Verbal abuse is all too common and we all live in fear of such incidents. We can face aggressive shoplifters, armed robbers and even sectarian threats because shops are often seen as easy targets."

SATA IS IN SESSION

Usdaw's Supervisory, Administrative and Technical Association (Sata) held its biennial conference in November and brought together reps to discuss a number of topical issues

Raising the profile of the union's white collar section Sata (the Supervisory Administrative and Technical Association) and dealing with absence management policies topped the agenda at the Sata biennial conference held in Warrington in November.

National officer **David Johnson** said that the economic recession had hit Sata members particularly badly with whole swathes of middle management being made redundant.

"We also have the threat of a double dip recession and coupled with cuts in the public sector this will see spending and confidence slump," he said. "Obviously this will have an impact on wage settlements and potentially on terms and conditions in our sectors.

"However the Sata section is fully supported by Usdaw and offers real benefits to its members across all companies in the UK.

"Our own survey identified a number of recommendations to take us forward. These included: New agreements, promote Sata in *Arena/Network* and on the website, appoint divisional co-ordinators, review the branches and to produce targeted literature. We'll be looking at all of these

with the aim of strengthening and growing the Sata section."

Deputy head of research **Tony Dale** led a session on the pros and cons of companies absence management policies. "The CBI survey estimated there were 180 million days lost to sickness and cost the economy almost £17 billion," he said. "Absence averages 6.3 days per employee with short-term absence accounting for 95 per cent of these. Almost every company has an absence management policy. Since their widespread introduction since the late '80s absence levels have fallen from 8.2 days per employee. So clearly these policies are here to stay."

Delegates went on to

itemise the good and the bad aspects of these policies.

Positives:

- Stops abuse of sick pay system
- Identifies where/when an employer can help the employee
- Saves money by controlling absence levels
- Handled consistently and fairly it builds trust
- Reduces businesses' costs

Negatives:

- Puts pressure on people who then turn up for work still ill
- Doesn't discriminate between serious and less serious illnesses
- Often too rigid with little or no flexibility

- Handled badly or inconsistently it causes resentment

- Trigger points often seen as harsh
- "It's clear where unions are involved they can play a key role in delivering fair absence management policies," added Tony.

During a question and answer session the issue of specific training for Sata reps came up with both availability and content discussed between the delegates.

"We do need to look at this issue," said David Johnson. "I'll be talking to the education department about it and what we can offer and how quickly this can be made available.

"We know in at least one division getting enough reps to fill the course was a problem so we may have to look at cross-divisional training courses. This and raising the profile of Sata is very important going forward."



■ David Johnson (far right) and president Jeff Broome (centre) with delegates at the Sata Conference



web...
For more information on Sata and resources, visit our website: www.usdaw.org.uk

HSE FACES CUTS IN FUNDING

Government cuts could put your health and safety at risk so Usdaw wants its reps to speak up

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

The TUC is calling on union reps to lobby their MPs and their local councils on the planned cuts to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Local Authorities (LAs).

The HSE is facing a cut of 35 per cent in funding over the next four years and local authorities are being cut by 28 per cent, under Government spending plans.

The TUC wants workers to contact their MP and explain that these cuts will have a real effect on levels of injury and illness at work.

Union members, especially those who are living with the consequences of an injury or illness from work, have a vital role to play.

You can let your MP know your concerns by writing to him/her or by visiting one of his/her local surgeries. Check your MP's website or contact their office for info. To find your MP visit:

www.theyworkforyou.com/mp

Ask your MP to be proactive



and write to the secretary of state for work and pensions or the prime minister to show they share your concern.

Lobby your local council

For most members, it's not the HSE that enforces health and safety but the LA. Shops, warehouses and offices are covered by LA inspectors. While HSE covers 884,000 workplaces, LAs deal with over 1,100,000.

LAs have a lot of competing priorities and will try to protect

those that their electorate raise like education or housing.

Most councillors don't see health and safety as a problem – until something goes wrong – so they have to be persuaded to retain the current level of inspection and enforcement.

Many councils have already cut resources for health and safety enforcement because of the current freeze on LA spending.

We need Usdaw members to

make it clear to councillors that health and safety is an important issue. For example ask them:

- What the council is doing to meet its duty to enforce health and safety?
- How many inspectors do they have?
- Are they running any campaigns – e.g. on violence to staff?

Councillors will normally run ward surgeries locally too.

More information is available

Rep's question of the month

Q

MY EMPLOYER CAN'T CONTROL THE WEATHER, BUT JUST WHAT IS THEIR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT ME AS THE TEMPERATURE DROPS?

A

Employers have a duty to maintain a reasonable temperature in indoor workplaces at all times. The Approved Code of Practice to the regulations states that 16 degrees Celsius (or 13 degrees Celsius for physically strenuous work) is normally the minimum requirement. There will be some indoor workplaces where this cannot be done. In such cases employers should try to minimise the time spent in the cold. They should also take other steps such as providing suitable protective clothing.

For outside workers, minimising exposure, protective clothing and access to somewhere warm for rest breaks are required.

If the heating breaks down or if it can't cope in exceptional cold spells, then the employer should have a back-up policy in place. Hiring temporary heating, providing free hot drinks, relaxing uniform and dress codes, giving more frequent breaks may all be appropriate depending on the circumstances.

Young report slammed

SAFETY UNDER ATTACK

Lord Young's review of health and safety and the so-called 'compensation culture' published in October has been widely criticised by Usdaw and other trade unions.

As expected, the report *Common Sense, Common Safety* calls for the removal of health and safety 'burdens' for low-risk businesses such as offices and shops.

It also calls for major changes to the personal injury system which could make it more difficult for workers to claim against their employer.

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "The review's recommendations are a grave disappointment and

contains not a single proposal that will reduce the high levels of workplace death, injuries and illness.

"Health and safety is just as much an issue for offices and shops – workplaces that Lord Young dismisses as low risk, despite the evidence of high levels of work-related ill-health in these sectors."

If you disagree with Lord Young's view that shops are 'low risk' workplaces, perhaps as a result of an incident that happened to you personally, let him know by emailing:

loryoungreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Lord Young's full report can be read on the Cabinet Office website:

www.number10.gov.uk

Spotlight on Health & Safety rep Jim McKay

Name: Jim McKay.

Employer: O-I Manufacturing, Alloa, Scotland.

Job: Machine operator until April this year and now my main responsibilities are health and safety.

Branch: Alloa No.2, G173.

Union: Shop steward, health & safety rep.

Joined: 1985.

Age: 60.

Married: To Margaret, four sons.



The company I work for.... is one of the biggest suppliers of glass containers for the wines and spirit industry with factories throughout the world.

My job involves.... Health and safety, fire systems and training, first aider and also security within the factory.

I'm a health and safety rep....because it interested me. Most people don't like putting themselves in the 'limelight' by reporting safety issues so as their rep I'm their voice.

Our safety committee....meet every five weeks following the completion of the safety audit reports for this period. As we work a four group, 12 hour shift system this allows reps from all groups to attend. All points raised are prioritised and dealt with according to their severity.

Workers are encouraged....to raise concerns with their safety rep at any time and not just wait until safety audit time.

Management are....fully supportive of the safety committee and are all too aware of the need to address problems before they escalate. Someone once said - If you think health and safety is expensive - wait until you have an accident!

In the past few years.... health and safety has had a much higher profile within the factory which has been helped by having a factory manager who is a former health and safety manager.

Reality is....with more than 500 workers on site there are always going to be health and safety issues to be addressed. But it's encouraging that the number of safety concerns decrease with each safety audit return.

Progress....following the tragic accident of one of our colleagues in Sao Paolo, Brazil, the dangers of 'lone working' were highlighted and as a result machinery guarding was intensified. And we've brought in a 'Standing Operating Procedure' (SOP) on lone workers. This could apply not only to our factory, but to many more businesses, including stores, where people have to work on their own.

Contact for health and safety information

Email Doug Russell on healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk or visit the website: www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety

Remember last year? Plan ahead for winter weather



The severe weather last winter was certainly a test of businesses' ability to cope with the snow and ice in the long cold spell causing serious risks for pedestrians and drivers.

Generally employers ought to be preparing now for the winter ahead e.g. servicing heating systems before the cold weather hits and making sure that the systems and equipment are in place.

If we do get more severe weather, yards, delivery areas, points of access etc should be gritted and kept as clear of ice as possible.

Leaking pipes and spillages should be repaired and cleared to stop ice forming and creating slip hazards. Good lighting in and around the workplace can also reduce the risk of an accident.

Warm clothing is also important. This should be issued as Personal Protective Equipment if a risk assessment dictates and should not be left to the whim of a manager.

Usdaw reps should regularly inspect the workplace and ensure control measures are implemented to minimise the risk to members during cold periods.

Where members drive for their job, employers should provide refresher training on defensive driving in winter e.g. telling drivers to check the weather forecast before doing deliveries, carry a mobile phone, know their route, carry a shovel, take a flask of hot tea/coffee and have a blanket on board. It should be clear that the driver can abandon a journey if it isn't safe.

Top five workplace hazards identified

Overwork has appeared for the first time in the TUC's 2010 health and safety rep survey putting it in the top five hazards identified.

The table below shows the results from the last three surveys.

Hazard	2006	2008	2010
Stress	61%	60%	62%
Bullying/Harassment	15%	20%	37%
Back strains	28%	31%	33%
Slips, trips and falls	27%	33%	32%
Overwork	-	-	29%

It was also found that it has been three years since a workplace inspection for 10 per cent of reps and only 27 per cent have had their workplace inspected in the last 12 months.

TUC general secretary Brendan Barber said: "Knowing that an inspector is likely to visit is the key driver to changing employers' behaviour and making the workplace safer and healthier."

The full survey report can be found at:

www.tuc.org.uk/extras/safetyrepssurvey2010.pdf

£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 **Anthony Berry** and we'll be sending £50 to **Forces Charity Cards**

SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:

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

Email: network@usdaw.org.uk

CAMPAIGN AWARENESS DAY

Salford JD Williams promote pensions



Following the success of our recent Pensions themed branch meeting with guest speaker, Head of Pensions at Usdaw, Nick Walker we decided to hold a Pensions Awareness Day. We had a stall in the main area of JD Williams call centre in Salford on which we presented leaflets and promotional materials. It turned out to be the most visited event we've ever had! Lots of people called to see us for advice and to our big surprise, the majority of them were under 30.

I'd like to thank Nick Walker for his time and suggestion to hold an awareness day. I'd also like to urge all reps to complete the Pensions Home Study Course, it's a great and very informative course.

LINDA CRAVEN
branch secretary,
NW JD Williams, K200

STAR LETTER

CHARITY WORK

Calling crafty cardmakers

If you enjoy making your own greeting cards then why not do something amazing and donate them to the Forces.

I've been running a charity since 2004 called Forces Charity Cards and our work involves sending handmade cards out to the men and women serving their country abroad. Most of the troops cannot buy cards where they are based and we give them the opportunity to send cards home to the delight of their families. We're always in need of cards so if you have any that you've made to spare or you have time to devote

to making some then please think about contributing your efforts. We're currently funding ourselves, so if you're not very creative and would prefer to make a donation then that would be equally fantastic. Thank you for your support.

For more information, to make a donation or to get the address for sending your cards to then please contact me on 02392 264321 or at berry464@btinternet.com

ANTHONY BERRY, shop steward,
Portsmouth and Wight PT, H65

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Outstanding young trade unionist gets award

Congratulations to John Rexter of The Co-op group in the Cumbernauld Warehouse who was presented with the STUC Jimmy Waugh Memorial Award, given to individuals who have made an outstanding contribution to the trade union movement. John is a member of the divisional youth committee and was presented with the award by John Hannett at

the Scottish divisional conference recently. John beat off stiff competition from both Unison and Unite and this is an outstanding achievement and deserved recognition for his work within Usdaw in his capacity as divisional youth committee chair. Well done John.

CRAIG SMITH, area organiser, Glasgow office



HEALTH AND SAFETY

Staff presented with attack alarms in Oldham



Tesco Oldham held a campaign recently on *Women's Journeys To And From Work*. They managed to complete 64 questionnaires and using the information identified 25 staff they considered as most

vulnerable and gave them personal panic alarms. The photo shows rep Lorna Lotchskj giving staff their alarms.

BRENDA BELL, branch chair, NW Tesco Retail No.7 K227

TESCO TASTER SESSIONS

Lifelong learners from Harwich to Marks Farm and Notley



Morrison's in Harwich were in full bloom when they tried their hands at floristry recently. Local florist Lisa Overton came and provided advice on preparation, and design arrangements. Staff were delighted with their work and are looking forward to a session in Christmas Cake Decorating and a Christmas Wreath Course.



Not too far away colleagues at Tesco Marks Farm and Notley had great fun learning Sign Language. Store Manager John Bale was delighted with the event. The session was tutored by Sister Marika Rebicsek. Her dog Amos also came along to enjoy the fun.
HELEN KING, mobile union learning rep, Anglia Tesco, C54

GETTING ACTIVE LOCALLY WITH USDAW

Federations in full swing

If you're interested in becoming active, learning about your union, socialising with members in your area or building membership then join your nearest Federation.

Federations are made up of Usdaw branches within a reasonable distance of each other. The aim of a Federation is to encourage as many members as possible to play an active role in Usdaw.

Manchester and District Federation (pictured above) meet every two months with an average attendance of 20 members. We encourage less experienced members to speak out and avoid discussion being

dominated by a few. We have a speaker at every meeting and recently invited an Environmental Health Officer from Bury Council to talk about the Greater Manchester Retail Violence Initiative; a partnership between all the Greater Manchester Councils, the HSE, Police and Usdaw aimed at reducing violent crime in the retail sector which it is hoped could be a model to be adopted elsewhere.

Speak to your area organiser for information about your Federation and how to get involved.

PETER HARTT,
Manchester and District
Federation secretary

RETIREMENTS

A toast to Tony

We would like to say a big thank you to Tony Threlfall who retired after working at Shop Direct for 32 years. Tony has had a lot of involvement in the union and put a lot of hard work into his local Usdaw branches. He was the representative for drivers in Manchester D50 and became the convenor for Blackrod and Earl Mill Sortation centres. Tony eventually transferred to Shaw DC and became the first on site appointed convenor. Tony has also played an active role in the National Transport Committee and is now the Chairman.

It has been a great privilege and pleasure working with Tony, and on behalf of NWSD Logistics and K101 branch we wish Tony a long, happy and healthy retirement.

MANDY OWENS, convenor,
NW SD Logistics, K101



CAMPAIGN AWARENESS DAY

Dereham checkout lifelong learning

A successful Checkout Learning campaign day hosted by store reps Ben Baldwin and Donna Trill was held recently at Tesco Dereham supported by lifelong learning project worker Phil Gander.

The Workers Educational Association (WEA) came along to offer information about a variety of courses ranging from Skills for Life to Astronomy.

Eager staff filled in surveys and discussed establishing an IT course. New members were recruited along with two new shop stewards and two new union learning reps making the day even more of a success. Many thanks go to everyone who participated.

**HELEN KING, mobile union
learning rep,**
Anglia Tesco, C54

CHECKOUT LEARNING

Cheers to Oldham

Congratulations to staff at Tesco Oldham who recently completed courses in English Level 1 and Basic IT. Six members of staff in total were presented with certificates and they're all now excited about embarking on a sign language course. We wish them all the best of luck.

BRENDA BELL, branch chair,
NW Tesco Retail No.7, K227

MEMBERSHIP AWARDS

Loyal members celebrate

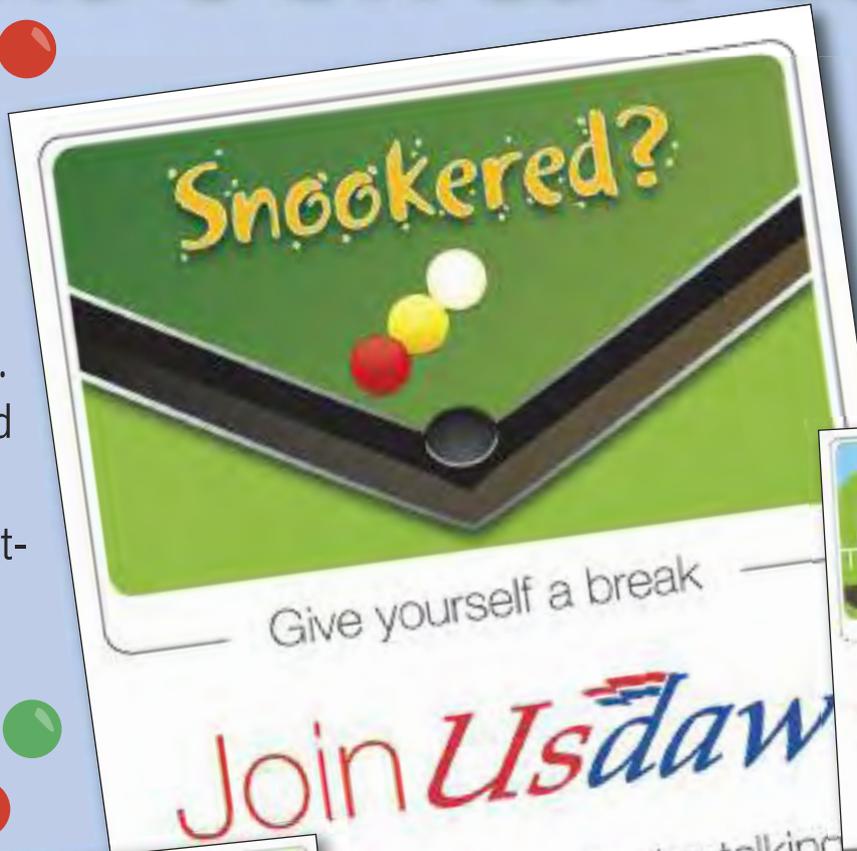
Right (L-R): John Dovaston (K140) pictured with branch secretary **Ady Maddocks,** **Jane Robertson (H59)** and **Mary Timms (A18)** pictured with branch chairman **Tony Strudwick** receiving their 30 year membership awards. Below (L-R): **Brian Galloway,** **Leslie Kay,** **Benjamin Derek Venning** and **Frank Warren Hall (F149)** all celebrate 50 years with Usdaw



Congratulations also go to **Mrs I Severs (A18), Mr P Mueller (A18)** who also received their 30 year awards recently

Order your Sports Series Posters NOW!

A series of five sports-themed posters are now available for you to display on your union noticeboard. Available in A3 and A4 sizes, these posters are a must-have recruitment tool so make sure you order your copies today!



To place an order: Complete this slip and return to **The Stationery Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ**. You can also telephone **0161 224 2804** or download from **www.usdaw.org.uk**

I would like to order the following:

	Qty and size(tick):	1 copy	2 copies	3 copies
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Sports Poster 2 <i>Stumped</i>	A4 <input type="checkbox"/> A3 <input type="checkbox"/>			
Sports Poster 3 <i>Bankered</i>	A4 <input type="checkbox"/> A3 <input type="checkbox"/>			

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Branch: _____ Mobile No: _____

Email: _____