

# NETWORK

The bimonthly magazine for Usdaw activists | [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk) | January/February 2011



## CREAM OF THE CROP

The Usdaw Oscars celebrated the hard-work, commitment and dedication of activists

### ■ Reps use Legal Plus and FirstCall at work

How to run a successful Legal Awareness Day in your workplace  
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### ■ Lifelong learning can change lives

Activists are making all the difference in persuading members to return to learning  
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### ■ Recruitment specialists make rapid progress

Reps push membership closer and closer to the 400,000 mark  
pages 20-23



# Join the march

General secretary John Hannett's comment



**W**elcome to the first issue of *Network* in 2011, a year that will present the union, its reps and members with a number of challenges both at work and home. We've all been hit by the VAT rise in January and most of our members will see their level of in-work benefits fall in real terms as Working Tax Credit is frozen and help towards childcare is reduced in April. Add to this the downward pressure on wages, the rise in unemployment – especially among the young – and higher than expected inflation and it all means it will be a long hard slog for the UK's working families.

## Stand up for justice

However, despite the Tory-led Government's claim that 'we're all in it together', it's clear already that the people who will be the hardest hit are people like our members on lower than average pay and who rely on public services the most. That's why our response as a union must be to stand up for our members and challenge the Government on its ideologically driven policies and explain that there is an alternative. We want jobs, growth and justice not wage cuts, unemployment and austerity.

Part of this fight back will be to support the TUC's march against the cuts on Saturday March 26 in London. Trade unionists, community groups, Labour supporters and individuals who may have been taken in by the Tories but who didn't vote for these extreme austerity measures, will gather in London for the march and rally and send out a powerful message to the Coalition that the low paid, the young and hard-working families should not have to pay for the excesses of the international bankers.

I hope thousands of Usdaw reps and members will make the effort to get there with their banners and flags and be an important part of what promises to be a massive demonstration against the cuts. Usdaw will be working with the TUC to support our members and we will be co-ordinating our involvement in the divisions. For more information you should call 0845 6060640 or visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/march](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/march)

## Campaigns continue

Usdaw will also be holding its Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day on March 23, the Freedom From Fear's Respect Week will also be held again this year and we will continue our campaign to protect young workers. All of this will cement our position as the UK's campaigning union.

**Usdaw**  
Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers

“ We will stand up for our members and challenge the Government on its ideologically driven policies. We want jobs, growth and justice not wage cuts, unemployment and austerity ”

**USDAW**

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## NATIONAL ORGANISING AWARDS

The pick of the union's activists were at a top Manchester hotel in January to compete for the eight national prizes on offer. The glittering event, now in its sixth year, recognises the dedication, hard-work and commitment of Usdaw's reps across all sectors and all seven divisions. You can find out who the eight national winners were on pages **15-18**.



### 04 In the news

Shopworkers in Scotland lose out on added protection while members in Northern Ireland are opposing changes to the Sunday trading arrangements. Elsewhere a new survey has revealed that the level of retail crime fell last year.

### 08 Education & Training

Usdaw provides a range of different courses for both new and experienced reps and they are available locally and nationally – check out what's on offer in your area.

### 09 Activist in depth

Warehouse section manager Alan Higgins from the Southern division answers *Network's* questions on being a Sata rep, his motivation and his interests outside of work.

### 10 Question Time

General secretary John Hannett reflects on how the union continued to grow last year and considers the challenges facing members in 2011.

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Usdaw is backing the TUC's call to join the National March Against Cuts in London on March 26. Find out how you can get involved and fly the union's flag.

### 21 Recruitment and Organising

The first of the union's two Membership Weeks was held in January which Usdaw hopes will see it break through the 400,000 membership mark for the first time since 1988. *Network* speaks to active reps doing their bit to make it happen.

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The Tory-led Coalition Government has increased VAT and will introduce cuts in benefits for workers which will hit the poorest hardest, find out how you can make a difference.

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Reps are being urged to get involved in the Supporting Parents & Carers Spotlight Day which will be held on March 23 and will focus on how to claim in-work benefits.

## Regulars

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## IN BRIEF

### Customers frozen out at snow-hit Tesco

Supermarket giant Tesco has reported modest UK sales growth over Christmas, saying it had been 'hindered' by the severe winter weather. Like-for-like sales excluding petrol, which strip out the effect of sales from new stores, rose 0.6 per cent in the six weeks to 8 January from a year earlier. The firm reported strong like-for-like sales of food in the UK, while its online business, Tesco Direct saw sales grow by 18 per cent. Non-food sales had been 'subdued' as snow and ice disrupted customers getting to larger stores, it said.

### Retailers nervous as sales fall in 2011

Some of the best-known retailers in the UK have reported falling sales and warned of tough trading conditions. Dixons, Halfords and Argos-owner Home Retail Group all saw sales slide over the Christmas trading period. Dixons said it was 'cautious' about the economic outlook while Argos reported 'challenging and volatile' trading conditions. Both Dixons and Halfords said full-year profits would be at the lower end of expectations.

### Co-op hit by weather and refits

Co-operative Group said that like-for-like sales fell 3.2 per cent in its food division for the 13 weeks to January 1, another victim of the severe weather. The closure of around 200 Somerfield stores for full refits also had a negative impact. Despite this, its core convenience estate reported like-for-likes up two per cent.

# Shopworkers 'let down' by SNP

Usdaw slammed the decision of the Scottish Parliament to vote down the Protection of Workers (Scotland) Bill and launched a scathing attack on the Scottish National Party (SNP) Government's failure to support progress of the Bill.

The Bill, which was being steered through the Scottish Parliament by Labour MSP Hugh Henry, would have given shopworkers and other public facing staff the same level of protection given to emergency workers who are assaulted while doing their jobs.

MSPs voted by a margin of 75 to 42 against allowing further discussion on the Bill, despite a Parliamentary Committee accepting that action was urgently needed to address



violence against public facing workers.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Scotland's shopworkers have been very badly let down by the SNP. They legislated to put staff on the frontline of preventing under-age sales, yet have now blocked any further discussion about protecting those same shopworkers from the

violence and abuse they face when doing their jobs.

"Scotland's shopworkers needed action from the SNP Government and instead all they received were warm words and sympathy. That isn't going to stop or deter the thug that attacks one of our members for refusing to sell them alcohol late at night."

**Political lobby ... (l-r) Roland MacPake rep, Keith Kivelehan rep, Trish Godman MSP, Hugh Henry MSP and Neil Douglas Usdaw member at the Scottish Parliament Holyrood ahead of the vote in December which refused to back Hugh Henry's Bill to protect shopworkers**



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# Longer Sundays unwelcome in NI

## WORK/LIFE BALANCE VITAL

Northern Ireland's shopworkers overwhelmingly oppose plans to extend Sunday opening hours a new survey by Usdaw has revealed.

The union surveyed more than 1,000 members shortly before Christmas and a massive 73 per cent said they were opposed to shops being allowed to open on a Sunday for more than the currently allowed five hours.

Over half of shopworkers who currently work on a Sunday said they were put under pressure by their employer to do so and 71 per cent said that they would be put under even more pressure to work on Sundays if opening hours were longer. Only 54 per



cent of those who currently work on Sundays said they received any additional pay for doing so.

Concern for family life, maintaining a work/life balance and the need to attend religious services were the main reasons shopworkers said they opposed an increase in Sunday opening hours.

The union's survey coincided with the publication of a consultation paper setting out a number of options to change

Northern Ireland's Sunday trading laws by social development minister Alex Attwood MLA.

General secretary John Hannett said: "Udaw will be making a formal written response to the consultation launched in early January, but our members in Northern Ireland have made it very clear to us that they oppose any increase in Sunday opening hours.

"Shopworkers have an increasingly difficult time trying to balance work and family life and for many of our members, Sundays are the only day of the week they get any quality time to spend with their families. Any extension of Sunday opening hours is just going to make that situation worse."

## IN BRIEF

### Weather blows retail a chill wind

UK retail sales fell in December as snow and concerns about job security hit consumer spending, the British Retail Consortium (BRC) has said.

The BRC's data shows that sales declined 0.3 per cent on a like-for-like basis – which excludes store openings and closures – compared with December 2009.

"The unusually early winter weather made a difficult Christmas worse for retailers," added the BRC.

### Sainsbury plans additional growth

The UK's third-biggest supermarket group, Sainsbury's, says it is to create 20,000 jobs in the next three years.

The firm had already said it would create 6,500 jobs in 2011.

Sainsbury chief executive Justin King said the new posts would be a mix of full and part time jobs.

The company has close to 900 stores across the UK and currently employs 150,000 people.

The new jobs, which come on top of 13,000 positions created in the last two years, will be at supermarkets and convenience stores across the UK.

### New stores and new jobs at Waitrose

Upmarket supermarket chain Waitrose is to roll out 39 new stores in the UK this year, creating 3,000 new jobs.

Some 27 of the new openings will be convenience stores - a smaller format launched by the company last year.

## By-election win boosts Labour

Labour comfortably won the Oldham East and Saddleworth by-election with a majority of more than 3,500 in January.

Labour's Debbie Abrahams held off the challenge of Lib Dem Elwyn Watkins, while the Conservatives' vote fell by more than 7,000 as they came a distant third.

Labour said the result - a boost for party leader Ed Miliband - was a 'wake-up call' for the Tory-led Coalition Government.

Eight months ago, Labour won the seat by just 103 votes from the Lib Dems but, this time, it secured a much clearer victory – finishing 3,558 votes ahead of their closest rivals with 14,718 votes. The party's share of the vote increased from 31.9 per cent to 42 per cent.

However, the Tories' share of the vote fell from 26.4 per cent in May to 12.8 per cent.

## Royal approval for NI Coca-Cola factory



The Queen officially opened the Visitors' Centre at the £93m Coca-Cola site in Northern Ireland last October

Members at the massive Coca-Cola site in Northern Ireland (NI) had the chance to meet the Queen when she paid a royal visit last October to open the Visitors' Centre at the Lisburn site.

The factory which opened early last year is home to around 600 staff

almost 80 per cent of whom are Usdaw members.

Senior rep Rab Martin leads a team of 16 reps who cover industrial relations and health and safety issues on-site.

The Centre outlines the company's history and explains to visitors the production process.

## IN BRIEF

■ 2011 Forthcoming events for your diary

**March**

09 – 11 March

TUC Women's Conference

12 – 13 March

South Wales & Western divisional conference

19 – 20 March

North Eastern divisional conference

19 – 20 March

Scottish divisional conference

23 March

Supporting Parents and Carers Campaign Spotlight Day

26 March

TUC anti-cuts march, London

**April**

17 – 20 April

Annual Delegate Meeting – Blackpool

**May**

14 – 20 May

Adult Learners Week

**June**

04 – 05 June

North West divisional conference

18 – 19 June

Midlands divisional conference

20 – 26 June

Membership Week

**July**

02 – 03 July

Southern divisional conference

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

# Welcome fall in violent assaults

## RETAIL CRIME FELL LAST YEAR

Usdaw has welcomed the overall fall in shop crime and the rise in investment by retailers in crime prevention recorded by the British Retail Consortium's (BRC) annual survey of retail crime published in January.

The BRC reported an 11 per cent reduction in the number of criminal offences in the retail sector in 2010, with reported incidents of violence, threats and abuse against shop staff down by 50 per cent and incidents of shoplifting down by 10.6 per cent.

However, despite the fall in recorded incidents and a year on year downward trend, the BRC says there is still a massive problem of under-reporting of offences in the sector. Only 12 per cent of incidents of shoplifting were reported to the police and the BRC believe that shopworkers increasingly regard violence and abuse as 'part of the job', letting many incidents go unreported.

According to the survey, retailers spent over £210 million on crime prevention measures last year, a 10 per cent increase on 2009. While this investment appears to have reduced the number of incidents, the BRC



estimates that the annual cost of retail crime remains at more than £1 billion.

General secretary John Hannett said: "There remains a significant problem of under-reporting which is driven by the myth that shop crime is 'victimless' and the belief shared by many shopworkers that little if any effective action will be taken against perpetrators.

"While shoplifting is a major flashpoint for violence, our members suffer most abuse when asking for proof of age ID from customers buying age-restricted products such as alcohol. Many customers simply don't know or won't accept that staff have to ask for ID to avoid fines, criminal prosecution and even losing their jobs."

11

The percentage fall in the number of recorded criminal offences in retail last year

## Safety recall for hand heat packs

Reps are being asked to return any FirstCall heat packs to their local office after concerns about their safety were raised. All stocks are being recalled with immediate effect.

General secretary John Hannett said: "We've had a couple of reports of heat packs bursting causing minor burns and damage to clothing. It would appear that there is a possibility that



there are a small number of faulty ones in circulation.

"While the heat packs do conform to the appropriate health and safety standards we cannot compromise the health and welfare of our reps and members under any circumstances."

## Jobs shift

Talks are continuing with the Co-op Group after it announced it will open a new super Distribution Centre (DC) in Nottinghamshire or Derbyshire and close three more depots during the next 18 months.

The new DC will create 900 jobs, but the closure of Thetford, Halesowen and Peterborough depots will affect 500 jobs. Workers at two further depots already earmarked for closure in Alfreton and Nottingham will be offered jobs at the new DC which will be operational in 2012.

The latest announcement marks the end of the review of the Co-op's distribution network.

# Doors open wide for reps at Co-op

## NEW DEAL IS A BIG DEAL

Usdaw signed a ground-breaking new Facilities Agreement with the Co-operative Group Food Retail in December last year which will provide reps with everything they need to increase membership.

The agreement will provide unprecedented facilities for Usdaw reps, including:

- Access to new starters for a 30 minute slot at inductions.
- Paid time off for reps' training and union duties, including joint training with managers on new initiatives and policies.
- The creation of a new role of 'cluster rep' who will be able to represent members across a small group of stores.
- Time off for reps to 'stand down' from their normal duties to carry out union recruitment and organising work.



**Deal makers . . . (l-r) Deputy general secretary Paddy Lillis, general secretary John Hannett, national officer Sharon Ainsworth with Co-op Group HR director Richard Bide**

■ A new consultative structure so that issues can be raised by members from local to national level.

General secretary John Hannett said: "The new agreement is a key aspect of our three year recruitment campaign in the Co-operative

Group and will help to build on the already positive relationship that we have with the Co-op.

"This new structure is much better suited to the small convenience store model and it will help us to build a stronger network of reps across the UK."

## Coping with winter weather chaos

Usdaw members battled through some of the worst weather conditions in years in December to get to work and as a result many shops, distribution centres and other sites were able to operate a close to normal service.

However, in some areas the snow and ice prevented staff getting to work or completing a full shift.

Following last winter's snow, many employers have bad weather policies in place that offer staff a number of options if they cannot make it into work due to the bad weather.

Although there is no statutory legal right to payment if employees cannot get into work, Usdaw has negotiated with many businesses to



ensure a sensible and pragmatic approach offering a variety of options, including:

- Taking time off as holiday.
- Making the time up at a later date.
- Swapping shifts.
- Working from a site closer to home.
- Taking unpaid time off.

Usdaw has urged employers to agree that any such authorised unpaid absences should be excluded from absence management calculations.

On occasions, bad weather means that businesses temporarily close. In these circumstances, workers should continue to be paid even though they are unable to work because their site is closed.

The best policies allow local managers the discretion to judge each individual's situation. When members make every effort to get to work employers need to fully support them through this and any future periods of adverse weather.

## IN BRIEF

### ■ Mixed festive results for retailers

The UK's fourth biggest grocer, Morrisons, saw festive sales rise despite the icy weather.

The Bradford-based firm said like-for-like sales excluding petrol and VAT in the six-week period over Christmas and New Year grew by one per cent on the year before.

Morrisons' chief executive Dalton Phillips said it had been "a good performance in a tough market".

However, retailer Debenhams said the weather conditions had cut its like-for-like sales by 2.5-3 per cent.

### ■ Snow fall cost Next millions in sales

UK clothes retailer Next has said the December snow cost it £22m in Christmas sales, but profits remain on target.

Online sales enjoyed an initial boost from Christmas shoppers stranded at home, but then slumped amid fears the snow would delay deliveries.

Overall, store sales for the five months up to Christmas Eve were down 3.1 per cent versus last year, the firm said, while online sales were up 8.7 per cent.

That left the firm on course for annual profits of £540m-£555m.

### ■ HMV in trouble as New Year begins

Music and books retailer HMV Group will close 60 UK stores in the next 12 months in response to declining sales.

Christmas sales at the firm - which also owns Waterstone's bookshops - were down 10 per cent, and it warned profits would be at the lower end of forecasts.



# GET-TOGETHERS WORK

Company specific weekends are an ideal training ground as Morrisons and Tesco reps discover



Morrisons's reps from the Scottish division

**M**ore than sixty Morrison's reps gathered at the Fishers Hotel in Pitlochry in Perthshire last October for the increasingly popular annual weekend get-together for Scottish activists.

Morrison's senior management and divisional and national union officials joined reps from stores across the country as they worked their way through a packed agenda.

Bill McNaught, 57, from the Lindsayfield store in Kincardineshire said: "The main topic was about dealing with disciplinary issues and everyone seemed to get something from this."

"Even if you have no experience yourself of having to deal with a disciplinary

these two-day events are great for throwing up examples from other reps and from union officials on how to use the procedures in the right way."

“ It made me feel part of the Usdaw team ”

Yvonne Brooks, 40, from the Alness store in Ross-shire in the Highlands said: "It was great to see so many Morrison's reps all together at one time."

"Even though I didn't know any of the other reps it didn't take me long to settle in. I learned a lot chatting and sharing experiences with reps from other stores. It made me feel part of the Usdaw team."

"The workshops and all the discussions were very informative and it was good to get an update from the company and to have the chance to speak to officials from Usdaw. And I think I'm right in saying the Saturday night social was a big hit with everyone."



Tesco reps from the South Wales and Western division

**M**eanwhile more than 70 Tesco reps from stores across the South Wales and Western division attended the annual two-day get-together at the Hilton Hotel in Bradley Stoke, Bristol in January.

Angie Poyner, 41, who is a rep at the Hereford store, said: "It was very good. I'd certainly go again."

"The discussion groups were very relevant to everyone there. We split into small groups and looked at the issue of

age-restricted sales and the problems associated with it. We gave our report back afterwards to the whole group, it worked very well and was very constructive."

"It was also interesting listening to the guest speaker from the trading standards institute talking about under-age sales and for us to have the opportunity to ask him questions."

Anne Pengelly, who is a rep at the Wadebridge store in Cornwall, said: "It was a great couple of

days. It was the first time I've attended anything like this and I got a lot out of it."

"Meeting reps from other stores made me realise the issues are the same in most stores. And you learn from other reps who have dealt with situations you haven't had to deal with yet."

"I also made some good friends with reps from other Tesco stores across the division, so we'll be able to keep in touch and up-to-date with what's happening in their stores in the future."

**web...**

For further information on courses in your region contact your local office or visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/training](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/training)





# ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

Southern division's **Alan Higgins** answers our questions on his experiences as a Sata rep

“Retirement is beckoning in 2013, but that will not detract in my involvement in our trade union, it's part of my life”

## What have been your best and worst moments as a rep?

The best was negotiating the first recognition agreement for Sata members in Wincanton Logistics. The worst was a member being dismissed despite efforts to save his job.

## Have you changed at all since becoming a rep?

I feel that taking on different roles within the union can only improve you as a person. I am certainly more confident, more knowledgeable and a more determined individual.

## Is recruitment easy at your workplace?

I have a high percentage of Sata members within the M1 grade managers at my depot although increasing membership is not easy.

## Have you been on any union training courses?

Yes, on the reps and health and safety courses. They are good courses, well worth doing and very informative.

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

Yes, I've been three times so far and I'm known to get up to the rostrum to debate for and against motions.

## What law would you introduce if you were prime minister?

Pensions would automatically be raised by one per cent over inflation. Also, like German legislation, companies who make staff redundant would have to provide funding for retraining or courses to help staff find employment.

## What's surprised you if anything about being an Usdaw rep?

The commitment of fellow reps within my division, and the availability of so much information and advice for reps.

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

Be fully prepared when going into disciplinary situations representing a member, always take advice when you meet a situation you are not fully conversant with, remember to make adjournments to assess situations and points raised.

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

Loss of jobs, members expected to work long hours and equality.

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

I believe that more advertisements in retail trade publications about Usdaw may increase membership figures, especially in the recruitment of Sata members.

## Which news items have caught your attention recently?

The rescue of the miners in Ecuador was an amazing feat.

## What's next for you?

Retirement is beckoning in 2013, but that will not detract in my involvement in our trade union, it's part of my life.

## FACT FILE & TRIVIA

### FAST FACTS

- **Employer** Wincanton for Tesco Logistics
- **Occupation** Warehouse Section Manager
- **Age** 62
- **Lives** Kent
- **Married** Yes with four grown up children and seven grandchildren
- **Union positions** Senior Sata rep, branch secretary, Southern divisional representative on Sata National Committee
- **Branch** Southern Faversham Sata H108
- **Ushaw Activist** Since 2002

### MY FAVOURITE...

- **Singer/group...**  
Phil Collins and Genesis
- **I spend my spare time...**  
Playing golf and watching sport (I was a class one football referee for 20 years)
- **The best moment of my life so far...**  
Renewing my wedding vows in 2005



**watch this space...**

Do you want to volunteer to be Network's next activist in-depth? Email: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

# READY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES

General secretary John Hannett, now in his eighth year, talks to *Network* about how Usdaw met the challenges of last year and how the union will deal with even bigger ones in 2011

**Q. Last year was another tough year for the trade union movement with a net decrease in membership for most unions. Usdaw bucked this trend, why?**

There are a number of reasons for this but it was mainly down to Usdaw having an organising strategy, which puts our hard-working reps and officials at the centre of that strategy.

We recruited around 75,700 members last year growing our membership by more than 12,000 and we should break through the 400,000 membership mark within the next few weeks. We have also increased our membership density in all of the big four retailers.

Clearly developing and training our organising academy participants and stand-down reps is key to our success and we have the strongest programme for engaging, supporting and motivating our reps whose dedication and commitment as unpaid volunteers is fantastic. The results speak for themselves – last year they recruited almost 32,000 members, a total of 42 per cent of all new members.

**Q. So is it all good news?**

No. It's been a very tough year for many of our members especially in non-retail and in particular transport and distribution, where reorganisation in most of the networks of the big companies has seen massive disruption, including job losses, transfers and relocation – never easy in economic good times never mind during the recession we're still struggling to escape.

We have also conducted an audit of non-retail sites across the UK to help with targeting our recruitment activity and this has identified significant gaps to be filled.

So there is still plenty of hard work to do.



**Q. The union embarked on a major overhaul of how it operates as an organisation five years ago. Has that been a success?**

Yes but it's an ongoing process not one which has an end. We are always looking for better ways to recruit, organise and manage the union but we have made really good progress since it started.

We are much more aware of how, why, and where we spend our members' contributions. We control our costs at national level and divisions and departments are exercising better cost control at local level. We have a responsibility to manage our members' contributions professionally and invest them to guarantee a long-term future for Usdaw.

We are in a healthy financial position and our wise investments in education and training for our reps and our Academies1&2 have paid dividends.

Reps have had access to more than 5,000 training places providing core and specialist training including Branch Officer

**Pictured above:** John chatting with delegates at last year's Black Members' Weekend

Courses, Summer Schools and the Academy1&2.

It was particularly pleasing to see an increase in Summer School attendance including a major increase in young reps attending the First Series last year.

Because our membership income has increased by almost five per cent we are on target to secure a strong financial base from which to grow even further.

**Q. There's also been an ongoing review of our communications strategy, how has that progressed?**

Very well but again it's permanent evolution rather than revolution.

We launched our new website and the new members and reps e-newsletters.

We redesigned *Arena* and won the top prize in the TUC Press and PR Awards for *Arena* magazine. Our IT systems have improved immeasurably and our communications between members, reps, area organisers, and senior officials have improved dramatically. I'm delighted with



the improvements but it's still work in progress and probably always will be.

**Q. The union's slogan is 'Improving Workers' Lives - Winning For Members'. Has Usdaw delivered?**

Undoubtedly yes. During 2010, our members covered by an Usdaw agreement received an average pay award of 2.33 per cent compared to an average pay settlement of 1.6 per cent for the whole economy.

FirstCall Usdaw – our dedicated streamlined claims system launched in 2008 – continues to be the best personal injury system of any trade union with around 5,400 new cases, and including employment cases, more than £17 million was recovered in compensation for our members in 2010.

We have also delivered several very successful campaigns during 2010. Our Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day saw record levels of rep involvement. The Checkout Learning Campaign continues to be a very popular campaign and has been integrated more with the work of the Academy.

Respect Week in November attracted record numbers of members, reps and politicians participating with the campaign also attracting coverage in the Daily Mirror. The focus on underage sales reflects a major concern of our members regarding problems with asking for ID and this was one of the major themes of the Retail Trades Conference last year.

**Q. The general election result was obviously a massive disappointment, how will Usdaw deal with the new political climate?**

Yes we were disappointed, but we have to adapt and carry on doing what we do best – lobby for change by using well-researched and evidence-backed campaigns. So not only will we be defending our members' interests but also campaigning to improve their rights in the workplace and beyond.

Don't forget over the last 50 years Usdaw has had to operate under both Tory and Labour Governments and we survived and under the last Labour administration prospered.

I suppose the only change now is that this supposedly Coalition Government is rapidly being dominated by a very right wing Tory leadership. It won't be easy, but I'm confident we can cope with the challenges ahead.

**Q. Looking ahead, what's on the horizon?**

As we move into 2011 it's steady as she goes with our core work.

We will be looking to expand our Academy programme with the pilot held in Eastern division last year of one Academy participant per area organiser being extended to the Midlands and North Eastern divisions.

To help pay for this, we will be once again seeking a very modest increase in contribution income, at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting, to take account of the economic pressures facing our members.

I believe small regular increases are better than ad hoc large

increases and help the union plan its financial strategy much better than relying on irregular increases.

All our big four retail companies have plans to expand their workforce particularly in the convenience and distribution areas and so while some parts of the economy will be looking at job cuts, we could be looking at job creation in some of Usdaw's key companies. And we need to make sure that we turn those new jobs in the retail sector into new members for the union.

We will also be building on the non-retail audit to identify and target our recruitment efforts in major employers.

**Q. Usdaw is known as the Campaigning Union, will that continue?**

We will certainly continue with our campaigns on Freedom From Fear, Retail Checkout Learning and Protecting Vulnerable Workers as well as spotlight days for Parents and Carers and Respect for Shopworkers.

During 2011 we will be targeting our campaign activity at government initiatives that stand to harm our members' interests along with campaigning in the Scottish and Welsh General Elections.

We undoubtedly have our work cut out but it's an area we can't ignore.

We have all played our part in Usdaw's success during 2010 and, if we all stick together and use the one team approach, I believe we can face 2011 with the confidence and that we will continue to improve workers' lives and win for our members.

**Pictured below (l-r): John checks out the learning facilities at Shop Direct, Salford; speaking at ADM last year and with Labour leader Ed Miliband**



## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Usdaw works with all of its affinity partners to get you and your family the best deals available.

Find out now if your union membership can save you money.

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

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To find out more or to book call **0871 222 4001** and quote **REWARDS** for your special discount or visit [www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/merlin)



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- The WellWoman Plan from Usdaw approved partner UNAT Direct

For an information pack, call 0800 072 6178



Lines are open 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). For security and training purposes calls will be recorded and may be monitored.

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As a member of Usdaw, you are entitled to great value, low cost insurance from UIA. Members can choose from home, motor, travel or pet insurance.



Call UIA free on **0800 376 0300** quoting reference USDG or visit [www.usdawinsurance.co.uk](http://www.usdawinsurance.co.uk) to buy and receive up to **15% online discount** on home and travel insurance.

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

Visit [www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk](http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk) for your nearest Co-operative Funeralcare or call **0800 083 6301**

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

## SAVE ON GAS AND ELECTRIC

Uchange4better can help you save on your gas and electricity bills. Try our free and unique **100% impartial energy search engine** which allows you to compare the prices of all gas and electricity suppliers and find the very best deal for your home.

You can compare by savings alone, CO<sub>2</sub> savings, customer service standards or a combination of all three. Simply key in your postcode, your current supplier and charges and the site will do the rest for you. **It couldn't be easier.**

To see how much money you can save visit [usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk](http://usdaw.uchange4better.co.uk) or call **0845 652 1683**



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Visit your local branch or [britannia.co.uk/usdaw](http://britannia.co.uk/usdaw)

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



## TAX REFUND SERVICE

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

To find out if you are due a refund, go to [www.taxrebates.com/ref/usdaw](http://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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Finance available



To enquire online visit: [www.usdawdrive.co.uk](http://www.usdawdrive.co.uk) or call **0845 122 6916**

## FREE DEBT ADVICE

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

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

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

Telephone debt counselling

Freephone **0800 980 1111**

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



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Discounted rates on Gym Membership exclusive to Usdaw Members

Visit the following Usdaw websites for more information:

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Nuffield Health: [www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/nuffield)





# A GRAND OPENING

Celebrations at Tesco distribution at Harlow, Essex and reps meet up in Northern Ireland

## TESCO DISTRIBUTION

After almost a year of planning and hard work, the Tesco Distribution Centre in Harlow in Essex has its own on-site learning centre where staff will have access to a host of courses.

Thanks to the commitment of the team of learning reps the new lifelong learning study centre had its grand opening in November last year and had an immediate impact, with members queuing up to sign up for classes in computers and Spanish.

"It's all down to the team of reps and site management who've made lifelong learning a reality at Harlow. It's a great achievement," said project worker Phil Gander. "Earlier in 2010 the reps arranged open days covering all the shifts – including nights – and asked staff to fill in survey forms to see what kind of courses they were interested in. After an excellent response they then discussed with management to see



The team of reps at the Tesco distribution centre, Harlow, Essex

**Web**  
If you're  
interested in  
Lifelong Learning  
[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

how they could develop learning at the site.

"In the meantime the reps managed to raise money to buy equipment including

reconditioned desks, computer chairs and noticeboards. They also networked all the computers themselves and the learning centre was up and running.

"It was wonderful to

see their hard work rewarded when the centre was opened late last year. The members who have signed up have already said how much they've enjoyed the courses."

## Equality at issue for learning reps in Belfast

Union Learning Reps (ULRs) from a variety of workplaces across Northern Ireland attended a special two-day get-together in Belfast last year.

They focused on how they could encourage members in their workplace, especially those from diverse backgrounds, different nationalities or beliefs, to get involved with learning.

Darren McElvogue, 40, has been a ULR at the Vion pig processing site in Cookstown for two



Learning reps at the Farset International Conference Centre, Belfast

and a half years. He said: "This was my first weekend away with other ULRs and it was great craic.

"It was good to mix with reps from retail and get their feedback. Everyone participated in the

discussions with a full and frank exchange of views around the table on everything from racism, sectarianism and equality.

"It was of particular interest to me as I work closely with

migrant workers. At our site we're already well on the way with a number of courses including ESOL up and running.

"I personally took a lot away and the feedback from other reps was very

positive.

"And it was great to hear that you're not the only ULR with challenges to deal with. I came home with loads of new friends, a few tips and revitalised to get stuck into it."

# PLAN YOUR LEGAL AWARENESS DAY NOW

Legal Plus Awareness Days are helping reps to promote the benefits of being part of Usdaw, follow *Network's* brief guide and you could be signing up new members in your workplace

**T**he Legal Plus Reps' Toolkit\* is helping activists up and down the country to run special awareness days in their workplaces to promote the benefits of the free Legal service available for members and their families.

The events help reps explain to members how to access the different legal services including **FirstCall Usdaw**, the freephone accident and injury claim line, and are also excellent opportunities to sign up new members.

Follow this brief guide to running your own awareness day (\*the Legal Plus Reps' Toolkit is free and is available from the stationery department at central office).

## Plan ahead

- **Decide** the date, time and venue of the day.
- **Consider** the shift patterns and breaks on site, and choose an accessible room or area.

## Involve all reps

- **Build** a team – ideally you will need a team of reps to share in the preparation work and to run the event. You may need to request facility time for them to do this from your manager. If you can, involve members who have used Legal Plus and FirstCall who are happy to recommend it to others.
- **Ushaw solicitor** – you may want to request that an Ushaw solicitor attends – if so please ensure that your manager has agreed to this. Contact the legal department at central office who will arrange it. But remember the solicitor is not there to give detailed individual advice – they are simply on hand to give a couple of minutes general advice.

## Materials

- **Make sure** that you have plenty of materials and that you order them from the stationery department at central office in good time – use the order form in the Toolkit.
- **Legal Plus banner** – each division has a pop up banner, which you may be able to borrow for the day – contact your divisional office.
- **Promote** the event – use the **Noticeboard Display Pack** available from the stationery department at central office.

## On the day

- **Remind** colleagues of the event, hand out flyers and announce it on the PA system if possible.
- **Talk** to members and non-members and tell them about the benefits of Legal Plus and FirstCall Usdaw. Make a note of their comments and feedback.

## Follow-up activity

- **Follow up** any members with a potential claim and make sure that they have called FirstCall.
- **Persuade** any non-members to join.
- **Take** some photos of the event and send them to Usdaw's media department.
- If the Legal Plus Awareness Day has gone well then other events may be arranged.



For more information on holding a Legal Awareness Day or on the Legal Plus Reps' Toolkit visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/legalplus](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/legalplus)



# RECOGNITION FOR FIRST CLASS REPS

Reps were out in force in January for the sixth national Organising Awards, an annual event held in Manchester which celebrates the hard work and dedication of Usdaw activists

Some of the union's most dedicated reps were at a top Manchester hotel in January as they were given the VIP treatment as part of the National Organising Awards now in its sixth year.

More than 70 divisional nominees battled it out to win one of the eight national categories up for grabs. General secretary John Hannett was master of ceremonies and was impressed with the high calibre of activist.

"This is all about recognising the hard work that our reps are putting in on a day-to-day basis," he said. "It is a big achievement to be nominated by your division and when I looked through the nominations, I was struck by the exceptionally high standard.

"Without our activists Usdaw would not have made the fantastic progress it has made over the last few years. Obviously not everyone can be at the Awards Night, so many thanks to all of the reps who haven't won awards but have worked so hard.

"Usdaw had a very successful 2010. Not only have we achieved record growth, we have done it in a sustainable manner. I was delighted to see that divisional winners were not just recruiting new members, they were also signing up new reps.

"On Awards Night we celebrate the very best recruiters, organisers and campaigners and I congratulate every nominee and many thanks to everyone for their hard work, dedication and commitment."

## And the winner was...

Winner of the Individual Organising Award **Terry Hamp** doubled membership at his CRL site in Alfreton and recruited 20 new reps. He also helped set up a



National winners at the Usdaw Organising Awards



Above (l-r):  
John Hannett  
Paddy Lillis  
Jeff Broome

learning centre and was instrumental in shaping the company's disability policy. "It was very humbling to win the national award," said the now retired warehouseman.

"I was nominated in 2007 for the Equalities award so I knew what to expect. It's a great night from beginning to end.

"Looking around the room

everyone deserved to win and when my name was read out I was very surprised."

Morrisons checkout operator **Mohammed Rizwan** used the Freedom From Fear campaign in his Blackburn store to combat racist abuse and it won him the National Campaigns Award.

"We gave out leaflets and ran a

(Continued on page 16)

# USDAW'S EXCEPTIONAL



**South Wales and Western Division (A)**  
Back row (l-r): Mike Walker, David Clift, Nick Ireland, Alan Loy, Rodney Vincent and Dennis Stinchcombe  
Front row (l-r): Mandy Davies, Anne Meacock, Debbie Wilson and Barbara Wilson



**Eastern Division (C)**  
Back row (l-r): Norrie Slater, Simon Vincent, Eddie Cotton, Kirti Shah, Mark Conteh, Stuart Ross, Dave McCrossen, Simon Holloway and Geoff Page  
Front row (l-r): Barbara Woolford, Liz Gumble, Marion Leverett, Jane Pakes and Julie Adams



**Midlands Division (E)**  
Back row (l-r): Richard Meek, Simon Quinton, Phil Monaghan, Nash Kumar, Terence Hamp, Stephen Francis and Gavin Dadley  
Front row (l-r): Richard Cook, Gary Holz, Grace Wilkes and Dennis Nash

(Continued from page 15)  
high profile campaign in-store to target those customers who were causing problems and it worked," said the 31 year-old. "The company was very supportive and so were the customers who gave us their backing.

"I was really happy to win and it's good recognition for the store and everyone who is involved at the local level."

Top recruiter **Kirti Shah** from Tesco Harrow won the National Individual Recruitment Award after he signed up more than 500 members and 40 reps – many from the Asian community.

The team leader has been a rep for more than three years and was on the Academy1 last year. "This is a great way to thank activists for the work we do," said the 50 year-old.

"The evening is very professional and the venue is very impressive."

Driver **Anthony Berry** won the National Health and Safety Award after he made significant

improvements over the last few years and 'couldn't believe it' when his name was in the winning envelope. "The list of other candidates was so impressive I never expected to win," said the 62 year-old who works for Palmer and Harvey in Fareham.

"It was a really friendly event, everyone congratulated me on the night. The senior officials all made time to talk to the nominees which was good. I think all of the activists felt appreciated."

It was an 'absolutely brilliant' night for National Union Learning Rep Award winner **Michael Clee**. He and his team of reps had set up a learning centre at the Shop Direct site in Salford and have been very successful in providing numeracy and literacy courses and NVQs in warehousing for members.

"It was great to be in a room packed with like-minded people, all very supportive of each other and all capable of winning the top prize," said the 46 year-

## Roll of Honour winners

### Most Promising New Activist

Debbie Wilson (A)  
Stuart Ross (C)  
**Phil Monaghan (E)**  
David Owens (F)  
Sarah Channon (G)  
Sachin Patel (H)  
Alison Roberts (K)

### Health and Safety Rep

Ann Marie Terry (A)  
Jane Pakes (C)  
Grace Wilkes (E)  
Jens Strain (F)  
John Scott (G)  
**Anthony Berry (H)**  
Grant Cathcart (K)

### Equalities Rep

Ann Meacock (A)  
Mark Conteh (C)  
Nash Kumar (E)  
Peter Golding (F)  
**Graham Newport (G)**  
Imraan Molvi (H)  
Jackie McNeill (K)

### Union Learning Rep

Sharon Mason (A)  
Julie Adams (C)  
Richard Cook (E)  
Bharti Dhamecha (F)  
Kate Cumming (G)  
Anthony Connelly (H)  
**Michael Clee (K)**



# NATIONAL ACTIVISTS



old. "All of the reps have gone that extra mile and deserve the recognition this night gives them. Everyone at work is made up for me and the award reflects the hard work done by the reps on site. What a great night."

Tesco manager **Phil Monaghan** has packed more union activity into the last 18 months than many do in ten years and was the proud winner of the National Most Promising New Activist Award.

The 34 year-old from Hinckley was on Academy1 last year and is set to start Academy2 this year. While on stand-down in 2010 he recruited more than 350 new members. "I thought I'd done well to get the divisional nomination, but to win the national award against such strong competition gave me a really special feeling," he said. "I think I'm the first Sata member to win a national award so that's an added extra.

"It was a fantastic night, very glam and glitzy."

Warehousemen **Alan Loy**

and **Rodney Vincent** accepted the National Team Recruitment and Organising Award on behalf of their team of reps at the Tesco Distribution centre in Bristol. The site opened in February last year and the hard-working reps have built membership up to 70 per cent through team-work and dedication. "We really enjoyed it," said Rodney. "Didn't expect to win but it was a massive bonus when we did. We were overjoyed."

Stock control assistant **Graham Newport** was 'totally shocked' when he picked up the National Equalities Award. The 47 year-old has been extensively involved in promoting rights for LGBT members and has increased membership at his Tesco Irvine store during his three years as a rep. "A brilliant night and I felt honoured to be there.

"The general secretary thanked all of the partners of the nominees and that was right because they have to put up with a lot and give us vital support."



#### North Eastern Division (F)

Back row (l-r): Malcolm Colbeck, Jens Strain, David Owens, Joanne Thomas, James Postings, Michael Dixon and Brian Loughhead

Front row (l-r): Cathy Godfrey, Bharti Dhamecha, Jayne Knight, Kelly Hyde and Pat Fitzgerald



#### Southern Division (H)

Back row (l-r): Anthony Berry, Anthony Connelly, Imraan Molvi, Mark Irvine, Debbie Hudson, Kevin Brett, Dennis Hart, Sachin Patel and Jim Carty

Front row (l-r): Sujata Patel, Angela Croft, Rosaria Sansone and Sue Merrell

## in red (divisions in brackets)

### Campaigns

Morrisons Reps Bodmin (A)  
Marion Leverett (C)  
Avon Cosmetics Reps Corby (E)  
Kelly Hyde (F)  
Keith Kivelehan (G)  
Angela Croft (H)  
**Mohammed Rizwan (K)**

### Team Recruitment and Organising

**Tesco Distribution reps Bristol (A)**  
Tesco Extra reps Bedford (C)  
Wincanton reps Northampton (E)  
Co-op Retail Logistics reps Birtley (F)  
Tesco Extra reps Galashiels (G)  
Tesco Dotcom reps Aylesford (H)  
JD Williams reps Salford (K)

### Individual Recruitment

Dee Solomon (A)  
**Kirti Shah (C)**  
Richard Meek (E)  
James Postings (F)  
Stephen Murphy (G)  
Rosaria Sansone (H)  
Ellen Jane Shaw (K)

### Individual Organising

Mandy Davies (A)  
Liz Gumble (C)  
**Terence Hamp (E)**  
Jayne Knight (F)  
Susan Coutts (G)  
Debby Hudson (H)  
Kevin Dolan (K)



#### North West Division (K)

Back row (l-r): David Gill, Kevin Dolan, Mike Aylward, Jan Jervis, Mohammed Rizwan, Michael Clee and Grant Cathcart

Front row (l-r): Beryl Collier, Jackie McNeill, Ellen Jane Shaw and Linda Craven



# Organising Awards Gallery



**Scottish Division (G)**  
Back row (l-r): Stuart Forrest, John Scott, Isabel Fyfe, Harry McAllister, Keith Kivelehan, Graham Newport, Stephen Murphy and Lawrence Wason  
Front row (l-r): Susan Coutts, Kate Cumming, Sarah Channon, Emma Bagan and Anne-Marie Wilson



**Web**  
More pictures from the awards can be seen online at [www.usdaw.org.uk/gallery](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/gallery)



# TUC march for jobs growth and justice

Activists are being urged to join the TUC march against the Tory-led Coalition Government's spending cuts on March 26 in London.

The event, which promises to be one of the biggest of its kind in recent history, will bring together workers from across the UK and Europe to

say no to the Government's unfair and unnecessary spending cuts.

General secretary John Hannett said: "This will be a massive event and we want as many Usdaw members there as possible."

■ Call **0845 6060640** or visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/march](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/march)



## IN BRIEF

### ■ Jobless figures will continue to rise

UK unemployment rose by 49,000 to 2.5 million in the three months to the end of November, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) revealed in January.

One in five 16 to 24-year-olds are now out of work, after a rise of 32,000 to 951,000 without jobs, the highest figure since records began in 1992. Despite the rise, the unemployment rate in the UK remained unchanged at 7.9 per cent.

The number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance in December fell by 4,100 to 1.46 million, the ONS said. Other data from the ONS showed that average earnings had risen by 2.1 per cent in the year to November.

Most analysts, as well as the Government, expect the unemployment total to continue rising, in large part due to the public sector spending cuts designed to cut the budget deficit.

## Kids are boxing clever



Members of Hull branch in the North Eastern division teamed up with a local boxing club to highlight the union's Supporting Parents and Carers campaign.

The branch sponsored a local junior amateur boxing competition and reps and officials handed out leaflets to parents at the event.

"The branch has a long association with the club which

is based at the Hull Trades and Labour Club," said Leeds area organiser Garry Gibson. "It serves the community well and has a fantastic reputation for supporting parents and helping young people in the area develop their fitness and self-discipline.

"It's a very positive way to link the union with working parents and their children."

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For more information, contact your local The Co-operative Funeralcare. (Bucks reference: MKT111006)

Or visit our website at [www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk](http://www.co-operativefuneralcare.co.uk)



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## Be prepared to recruit

As a rep you will be challenged to justify to non-members why they should join. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions and some suggested responses. If you have any suggestions of your own or any special recruitment tips you want to share with *Network* let us know : [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

### Q.I can look after myself, why do I need the union?

You've got a problem. You raise it with management but they won't listen and tell you to go away. What would you do next? If you were facing the sack, who would represent you? Would you know your contractual and statutory rights? Could you afford a solicitor if you needed to go to court? Strength of character and personality count for very little when you're faced with the power of managements' resources and you stand on your own, without the union's backing.

### Q.I get all the same benefits anyway so why should I join?

No you don't! True, you get the same terms and conditions that the union negotiates for its members. But you wouldn't be entitled to union advice on representation and you would have to meet your own legal costs if you had a very serious problem or accident at work.

Anyway, are you happy for your work colleagues to pay their union subscriptions and for you to benefit while paying nothing?

And remember, every person who doesn't join, weakens the union and reduces the chances of getting a good deal at work for everyone.

### Q.I'm part-time and only work eight hours, why should I join?

One in three Usdaw members work part-time. Most retailers and many other companies are dependant on the contribution of their part-time staff, so your job is just as important as the next person's.

Over the years, Usdaw has achieved equality of terms and conditions with full-timers for its part-time members.

Part-timers can get all the same benefits from the union as full-timers. Can part-time staff afford to be left alone to face a problem at work any more than full-timers can?

### Q.Times are hard how can I afford the subs?

Your union subs are less than the cost of a bus ride or a drink in a pub each week.

You wouldn't drive your car without insurance or leave your house uninsured, so think of union subs as work insurance.

If you lost your job because you didn't have professional representation at work, the consequences would be far worse than a burglary or a bump in the car. Free legal service for you and your family – you can't afford not to join!

# FRONT LINE



(top) Co-op reps Don Vincent, Jamie Gull and Mariusz Lugowski and round the table the team of on-site reps

**R**eps at the Co-op Retail Logistics depot at West Thurrock in Essex held a well-organised and successful pensions awareness day last September to encourage members to find out more about their company pension scheme and ways to plan for their retirement.

"Staff were genuinely interested throughout the day, it went very well," said rep Mariusz Lugowski.

"We did a lot of preparation beforehand to make sure we made contact with as many staff as possible on the day.

"The reps toolkit helped to get us organised. We had reps available to cover all three shifts over the 24-hour period.

"Our stall in the canteen was well stocked with all the excellent leaflets, publications

and information sheets produced by the union's specialist pensions department.

"Staff were happy to pick up the leaflets, read them and then sit down and discuss specific aspects with us.

"We also had reps speaking to staff in the warehouse and filling in survey forms and also explained how staff can access the company website to find out more about the Co-op's pension scheme and sign up.

"It was a very popular event and we've had lots of follow up enquiries not only about pensions but also about the union in general.

"It was very satisfying for all the reps to see staff make their first steps to ask questions about pensions and find out more about what is to many people not exactly the most exciting subject."



# E REPS DELIVER



Robert Wiseman's **David Mason** has proved he's the cream of the crop when it comes to signing up new members. The 55 year-old driver has recruited more than 80 dairy workers and four new activists in the last three months and is keen to get out again and round up even more.

"I had two very good weeks on stand-down and picked up 45 new members and two new activists, I was delighted," said David who works at the Droitwich site in Worcestershire.

"I've been a rep for 14 months and decided to get more involved after I went to summer school last year. It was a great experience and I came home really motivated.

"I spoke to my area organiser and he arranged for me to have time out to recruit at my own site and other local Wiseman sites. It was a fantastic learning curve.

"As a driver I spend a lot of my time out on the road. But I always attend to any union queries before I set off in the morning and members know how to get hold of me even if it's out of hours – I'm always available.

"It's a bonus being out on stand-down and being able to sit down in a relaxed environment and actually have time to speak to workers about the union and how it can benefit them. And it gives you a real feeling of achievement when people take on board what you have said and join up.

"You can imagine my delight when my 18 year-old son Andrew, who has just been taken on at Wiseman's' came to me and said – Dad I want to join the union.

"We're making good progress within Wiseman's and I'm very keen to get more involved and help build on this."

**Above: David Mason (right) explaining the benefits of Usdaw membership to colleagues**

**Below: Usdaw membership by division**

## IN NUMBERS

### MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED: 29 JANUARY 2011

South Wales & Western .....	45,817
Eastern .....	57,001
Midlands .....	53,128
North Eastern .....	54,084
Scottish .....	42,644
Southern .....	52,823
North West .....	90,178
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>395,675</b>

## Be professional

Organising your workplace effectively is a lot easier with the co-operation of your management. Building a good working relationship will lead to respect from the management team and will help you represent your members even better. Here are a few tips from *Network*.

### Copy management in on union communications

Be courteous and let management know what literature the union is circulating at the workplace.

### Stick to procedures

Grievance and disciplinary procedures are designed so everyone knows where they stand and issues can be dealt with effectively. Don't expect to sort the problems out by accosting a member of management informally when they are busy with something else.

### Keep up a regular dialogue

Arrange a regular meeting with your management so that reps can keep them in touch with what they see as issues in the workplace and, similarly, management can keep the union informed of issues in the business.

### Always be courteous and polite

Some issues that you have to deal with as reps can be very emotive. But it rarely works to your advantage to lose your temper. If people around you are losing their heads, you will serve the members more effectively by keeping your cool.

### Share as much information as possible

Try and develop a culture of shared information with your management. If there is a management briefing document relevant to the issue you are dealing with, ask for a copy. If possible, arrange to receive relevant management materials automatically.

### Make the most of induction facilities

It is vital that you make the most of this important facility by making sure that you know about every induction session and all new starters are asked to join.

# REPS UNITE FOR MEM

As *Network* went to press details of the numbers of new members signed up during Members is just round the corner as active reps turned out in force from January 24-28 and hopefully then

Usdaw is confident it will move closer to breaking the 400,000 membership barrier once the details are in following the first Membership Week of the year.

General secretary John Hannett was keen to praise the commitment and dedication of the activists who made such a massive effort to sign up new recruits. "Usdaw is as good as its reps and I know we have a wealth of talent in our volunteer ranks," he said.

"The reps consistently go the extra mile for the union and its members and that's why we are the fastest growing union in the UK. I'm very hopeful once we get all the new membership forms in we can edge closer to the 400,000 mark which we haven't done since 1988.

"Everyone knows we have to keep recruiting just to stand still given the turnover of staff in our sectors, but given 2010 was our 14th year-on year increase we have proven that we can go beyond this and build a sustainable union built on solid foundations. Once again a

big thank you and well done to all of our reps."

**What the reps said . . .**

Ikea's **David Dunkley** from the Bristol store said: "Management here are fantastic, both myself and **Luke Thompson** were released for the whole week.

"We were delighted because it helped us recruit new members every day bringing membership up to the 50 per cent mark."

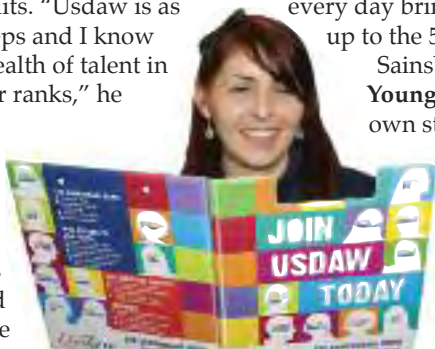
Sainsbury's **Tracey Young** spent time in her own store as well as other

retail stores in and around Scarborough. "I did quite well really considering people were saying they didn't have much money just

after Christmas.

"I was particularly pleased with Boots and Poundland where I signed up new members and new reps."

Union learning reps **Lorna Young** and **Ross Haslet** took the Checkout Learning campaign to the Asda store in Bangor, Northern Ireland. "There was a lot of interest from staff keen to know what was on offer for members and this helped to raise the union's profile."





# MEMBERSHIP WEEK

Membership Week were not available but it looks like another success story as there will be a surge in total membership once the forms are counted



## MEMBERSHIP WEEK IN PICTURES

1. Morrisons, Beccles, Eastern division
2. Sainsburys, Scarborough, North Eastern division
3. ASDA, Bangor NI, North West division
4. Morrisons, Beccles, Eastern division
5. Tesco House, Cardiff, South Wales and Western division
6. Ikea, Bristol, South Wales & Western division
7. Sainsburys, Scarborough, North Eastern division
8. Morrisons Johnstone, Scottish division
9. Tesco, New Milton, Southern division
10. Morrisons Johnstone, Scottish division
11. Sainsburys, Scarborough, North Eastern division
12. Tesco House, Cardiff, South Wales and Western division

 **Web**  
More membership week pictures online at [www.usdaw.org.uk/gallery](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/gallery)



**IN BRIEF**

**■ Usdaw members tell their stories**

Barbara Bates from County Durham will have to retire two years later due to the increase in the state pension age. "This Government has robbed me of two years of freedom and £10,000 of pension, which I have been working for since I was 15. It is so unfair on working people," she said.



Timothy and Alison Morris (above) from Manchester are expecting their first baby in April, but will receive much less support than they would have done a year ago. "Our baby will not receive the £250 Child Trust Fund payment from the Government, or the baby element of tax credit which was worth £545," said Timothy. "That would have made a lot of difference in helping Alison to take as much maternity leave as she can."

Margaret Fielden from Chorley feels that the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) helped her son to go to college. He went on to a career in the Royal Engineers. "EMA made my son feel it was worthwhile going to college and I think it's an absolute crime that it's now being abolished," said Margaret.

# GOVERNMENT CUTS CRISIS

How the Coalition Government's cuts will affect you and your family

**LESS CASH IN POCKET**

**T**he cuts will hit ordinary working people where it hurts – in the pocket. Usdaw members will suffer from a wide range of cuts that will affect everyone in all areas of life.

**Working people**

Everyone will have to pay more VAT – on average at least £275 a year. Lower-paid workers who receive Working Tax Credit to top up their wages will see rates frozen for the next three years, costing them up to £372 a year by 2013. Many members will cease to qualify. With 40 per cent of housing benefit claimants in work, housing benefit will be cut by an average of £9 a week, or £468 a year.

**Families**

People with children will feel the pinch too, losing up to £1,500 in baby benefits, £30 a week (£1,500 a year) in



childcare tax credit and £255 a year by 2013 from the freeze in child benefit. In 2012 many middle income families will cease to qualify for any tax credits and will lose an extra £545 a year.

**Young people**

The abolition of Education Maintenance Allowances will stop young people from low and middle income families receiving up to £30 a week to stay on in education (and cost young learner's families up to £1,260 a year). And if they want to go to university next

year, tuition fees will rise up to £9,000 a year.

**Pensioners**

Winter Fuel Payments will be cut from £250 to £200 for the under 80s, and from £400 to £300 for those over 80. Many private sector pensions will be hit by the change in increases to the lower Consumer Price Index rather than Retail Price Index. And the increase in the State Pension Age to 66 in 2016 will cost everyone under 65 at least a year's state pension – over £5,000 in most cases.

## Scotland deserves better than the SNP

**LABOUR PLANS FOR POWER**

**S**cottish Labour Leader Iain Gray has launched a strong attack on SNP broken promises and insisted that Scotland deserved better.

Mr Gray said: "My message is that Scotland deserves better.

"Older people deserve better as they struggle with soaring fuel bills and worry about their care.

"Shopworkers deserve better than the SNP's warm words and no action on

violence at work. Labour will deliver.

"And families working long hours to make ends meet deserve a government that works for them.

"Soon Labour will publish our detailed plans for Scotland – plans for jobs and growth, plans to make sure Scotland can withstand the Tory threat to jobs.

"Labour is taking nothing for granted and will be fighting for every vote to win the trust of Scots again. To those who left Labour four years ago but still stand for Labour's values, I say this: we learnt, we



Labour Leader for Scotland Iain Gray and divisional officer Lawrence Wason

listened and we are ready to work hard for you again."

View the SNP's 100 broken promises at:

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



# Six good reasons to join the TUC's march for jobs, justice and growth

## 1 Abolishing NHS targets and ordering £20bn savings

Key NHS targets have been abolished, including the right to a GP appointment within 48 hours and a hospital appointment within 18 weeks. These will impact on services for patients, with most NHS Trusts already cutting jobs.



## 2 Reducing spending on police

Police funding is reducing by 20 per cent. Frontline officers are being axed by up to 25

per cent. Community Support Officers, who do some of the most valuable work in protecting shopworkers from persistent offenders, are likely to be drastically cut too. Labour increased police numbers and crime fell by 43 per cent. Police cuts may well see crime rise again.

## 3 Trebling of university tuition fees up to £9,000 pa

The dramatic increase in tuition fees in 2012 will put many off going to university, especially from lower income families. Universities will again become the preserve of the privileged.

## 4 Abolition of 'train to gain'

Many employers benefit from Labour's 'train to gain' programme, which will be abolished. The union is urging employers to continue to provide training and development opportunities for all staff.

## 5 Cutting schools for the future

One of the Coalition's first acts was to cut 700 planned school re-building projects, providing our kids with first class learning environments.

## 6 Cuts of 27 per cent to local councils

These massive funding cuts will affect the whole range of council services including: Fire & rescue; care and respite services for the disabled and elderly; transport; bin collection; education; youth services; careers and benefits advice; housing repairs; leisure facilities; nurseries; school breakfast clubs; public toilets; libraries; art galleries; community safety, and much more.

Please see page 19 for details of how to get involved in the TUC's march on 26 March 2011

## It's only Labour that delivers for Usdaw members in Wales

### LABOUR'S GUARANTEE

Labour in Wales are on the side of ordinary working people and doing their best to protect the Welsh people from the worst excesses of the Coalition Government.

- Protecting Welsh students from tuition fee rises.
- Keeping Education Maintenance Allowances for the worst off to help students stay in learning.
- Protecting the NHS in Wales and rejecting Tory health reforms.

- Keeping free bus passes, free prescriptions and free school breakfasts.

Labour's members in the Welsh Assembly have always supported Usdaw, especially the Freedom From Fear campaign.

Carwyn Jones, (right) the Labour First Minister for Wales, is a former shopworker and is particularly supportive. He said: "Usdaw was the first union that I joined when I was a trolley pusher in Tesco in Bridgend. It is exceptionally important that people in all walks of life, and shopworkers in particular, get the respect



that they deserve, and should not be subject to any form of abuse."

### IN BRIEF

#### ■ Have more of a say – join Labour today

As an Usdaw member you can join the Labour Party for FREE for the first year and only £1.71 per month thereafter. For an application form please call **0161 249 2452** or download one from [www.usdaw.org.uk/ourcampaigns/usdawforlabour.aspx](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/ourcampaigns/usdawforlabour.aspx)

#### ■ Postal voting makes life easier



Anyone can have a postal vote and it ensures that you don't miss out on polling day. To vote by post in this year's elections in May you must have submitted your application form by 5pm on Thursday 14 April. To get an application form please telephone your local council or visit: [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk)

#### ■ Help Labour win in your area

We need to send a clear message that the cuts are unfair and it is wrong to hit the poorest hardest. The best way to send that message is to help Labour win. If you can spare an hour to stuff some envelopes, deliver some leaflets or talk to voters then please call Ruth or David in our politics office on **0161 249 2452** or e-mail them at [usdaw4labour@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:usdaw4labour@usdaw.org.uk)

# Experience at the double

Two former recruitment and development officers Sharon Hargrave and Lisa Hesse have been appointed as area organisers in the Leeds and Newcastle offices respectively

Newly appointed area organiser **Sharon Hargrave** has put her 11 years' experience as a recruitment and development officer to good use when she started her new role in November last year.

The Leeds-based 41 year-old also spent a year on the TUC's Academy in 1998 and was seconded to Usdaw where she worked from the Faversham office. "I spent all week in the Southern division and travelled home at weekends, my husband gave up work to look after our two sons," she said. "It was a fantastic time for me and in 1999 I joined Usdaw permanently as a recruitment and development officer."

Before that Sharon was an activist for eight years at the Morrisons stores in Wakefield and Leeds where she worked



in the cash office.

"Because of my background I could hit the ground running and I'm really enjoying it," she said. "I'm busy with the Tesco reps' elections at the minute. The job is varied, no two calls are the same. I have responsibility for all the big four retailers stretching from North Yorkshire to the East coast to Barnsley and central York which takes in a lot of convenience stores. I'm looking forward to really getting stuck in to my new role."

New area organiser **Lisa Hesse** can trace her union involvement back to 1998 when she was elected shop steward aged 18 when she worked for Makro in Washington, Tyne and Wear.

She then went on to become a youth activist and her involvement grew from there. At the age of 21 she joined the union's staff as a recruitment officer for 12 months. She then spent a year with the TUC's Academy organising and recruiting in a variety of non-unionised workplaces before returning to Usdaw as a recruitment and development officer in 2002.

"My first proper union activity was the National Youth Weekend. I remember it well," said Lisa, 31, who will continue to be based at the Newcastle office. "I came away fired up and determined



to get more involved and with fantastic support and encouragement from everyone in the North Eastern division, that's exactly what I did.

"I'm ecstatic about the new appointment and I'm looking forward to the challenges ahead. I can't wait to get out and get started developing my patch so that the union is strong and sustainable. Workers need Usdaw to protect their terms and conditions in these uncertain economic times."

## Loyal servant Viv Lowe remembered

Usdaw was saddened to hear the news of the death of former management services officer **Viv Lowe** who died in January aged 64.

Viv spent 26 years on the union's staff based at central office and retired in October 2002. He joined Usdaw in 1976 from Oldham Metropolitan Council when he was appointed organisation and methods officer.

Ten years later he was promoted to head of administration services and ten years after that he took on his final role as management services officer. His responsibilities covered every aspect of the union's



Viv Lowe speaking at the 2002 ADM

work behind the scenes at conferences and he provided expert advice for many national negotiating committees and senior officials. Viv spent 16 years as secretary to the standing orders committee at the Annual Delegate Meeting

(ADM) and was instrumental in the smooth running of the union's biggest conference during his time.

General secretary John Hannett paid this tribute. "We were devastated to hear the news. Viv had many friends at central office and across the divisions because of his long service and his commitment to the union. He served the union loyally and conscientiously for many years and will be greatly missed. His expertise crossed a number of areas and the union was lucky to have him on board.

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

### Get Online

To keep up-to-date with all of the union's national vacancies make sure that you keep checking the Usdaw website.



**WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/JOBS**



# GET INVOLVED

Activists are being urged to join the award-winning Supporting Parents and Carers campaign for the annual Spotlight Day on 23 March 2011

Usdaw will be using this year's Parents and Carers Spotlight Day on Wednesday 23 March to make sure members know about the changes to benefits set to be introduced by the Tory-led Coalition.

From April this year, many of our members will see changes in their family income following the Coalition Government's decision to introduce big changes to tax and benefits. It is likely that the majority of our members will be affected. Some of the biggest changes are around benefits paid to families and children.

Spotlight Day gives reps the chance to organise activity in their workplace, helping to make the union visible and giving members and non-members the chance to see



Reps and members getting involved in Spotlight Day last year

**Spotlight Day  
23 March  
2011**

Usdaw in action.

By now all reps

should have received a campaign pack through the post. This will tell you everything you need to know about how to get involved on the day.

Getting involved doesn't have to be hard work – reps can do as much or as little as they like. You could put the campaign poster up on your

union noticeboard, give out leaflets, ask members to fill out the campaign survey or get your team of reps to talk to members and non members about the union's campaign.

The changes being made to benefits and tax credits are far reaching. The majority of our members with children are entitled to benefits and it is vital they find out what's going on.

## Safe journeys to and from work

Usdaw's extensive survey of the difficulties faced by members travelling to and from work has revealed three major concerns.

### Car Parks

While women members are far more likely to use public transport than men, large numbers are still travelling to work by car.

Not surprisingly, women have highlighted car parks as their number one worry. Poorly lit car parks and having to park far away from staff entrances have repeatedly emerged as key concerns.

### Shift Times

Shifts not finishing on time or

having to wait outside entrances early in the morning or late at night to be let in are common areas of concern for women members.

### Staff entrances

Problems with poorly lit or isolated staff entrances or entrances obscured by trees or bushes are causing women members to feel less safe than they might otherwise.

Usdaw reps are already tackling these problems, often coming up with imaginative solutions.

Reps in several large workplaces have set up car share schemes so that women are not travelling alone.

They have also successfully agreed with managers some

of the following measures:

- Hours of work that fit in with members' public transport arrangements
- Car park lighting to be left on for longer
- Clearance of obstructions to staff entrances
- Arrangements for members to move their cars nearer to staff entrances

Divisional get-togethers are to continue throughout the early months of the year and Usdaw will be responding by exploring how best to support reps where this is a workplace issue. Watch this space for more news.

The survey was carried out last year and attracted more than 1,500 replies.

## IN BRIEF

### ■ The gender pay gap to stay hidden

The Tory-led Coalition Government has decided it will not make employers carry out gender pay audits, despite the fact that there are still big gaps between men's and women's pay. Pay audits would mean employers have to look at whether they pay men and women fairly and equally. Instead, employers will be encouraged to publish the differences between men's and women's pay but this will be on a voluntary basis.

### ■ Maternity Leave plan shelved by UK

EU plans to give women 20 weeks maternity leave on full pay have been shelved following opposition by a number of governments including the UK.

The UK still has one of the shortest periods of fully paid leave in the EU and extending it to 20 weeks would have benefited millions of families who struggle financially when having a baby. Usdaw's own research shows that almost two thirds of our women members return to work before the end of their maternity leave because of money worries.

### Contact equalities

For more information on the work of the equalities section contact Ruth Cross or Jo Bird on:

■ 0161 224 2804

■ [equalities@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:equalities@usdaw.org.uk)

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

## IN BRIEF

### Temperature fine for fashion retailer

Carlisle Council has prosecuted fashion chain Internationale for putting profits ahead of staff and failing to maintain a reasonable temperature in one of its stores. An inspector visited the shop in January and found staff working without heating and with the doors open in a temperature of 7.6 degrees Celsius – well below the legal minimum. The Workplace Regulations 1992 require that the temperature inside a workplace should be at least 16 degrees Celsius. The company admitted breaching the regulations and were fined £2,000.

### Asbestos prosecution for Co-op and contractor

The Co-op Group has been fined £30,000 following serious health and safety failures which left workers exposed to asbestos. The presence of asbestos in the store at Royton in Oldham (no longer owned by Co-op) was recorded by the previous owners, United Co-op. While fitting a fire alarm, a contractor had smashed into brown asbestos roof tiles. Two female shop workers cleaned the mess and left the debris in an open bag in the store for two weeks. Asbestos debris was found on top of a food cabinet and inside a freezer three months later. The sub-contractor was fined more than £19,000 after admitting to two offences under the same Act.

### Contact for health and safety information

Email Doug Russell on [healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk) or visit the website: [www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/healthandsafety)

# REPS SPEAK UP!

## Usdaw to respond to HSE low risk workplace assessments

The HSE is developing a number of on-line risk assessments following a recommendation from Lord Young's review of health and safety.

He called for the HSE to develop these risk assessments for 'low risk' workplaces such as offices, shops and schools.

At the time Usdaw raised concerns about the idea of such pro-forma risk assessments. It is wrong to class shops and offices as 'low risk'. They may not have the obvious dangers of large factory, but there are still risks.

Violence to staff is a major hazard for shop workers and there are others such as slips and falls, manual handling injuries, various health hazards from products and the environment and welfare issues such as temperature and access to toilets.

We also argued that trying to produce a 'one size fits all' risk assessment form would be impractical and could turn health and safety management into a tick-box exercise.



Health and safety officer Doug Russell said: "The on-line risk assessment form confirms our fears, although it does mention some common risks that can affect shop workers. The questions it asks are very limited and it does not allow for the wide variety of types of shop and their location.

"According to the HSE this should allow the employer to produce a tailored assessment by selecting relevant issues, and it should only take them 20 minutes or so to do so. But because the questions are so vague there is a real danger that an employer could do the

assessment and miss some major issues in their workplace."

Usdaw will be submitting a detailed response to the consultation and union reps can do the same. Log on to the HSE website:

[www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/risk-assessment/shop.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/risk-assessment/shop.htm)

to look at the assessment.

If, as a rep, you have had to deal with an issue that isn't properly covered or you know of members who were injured by something that is missing from the assessment, let the HSE know.

## Join our on-line forum

- Do you have problems getting members to treat health and safety seriously?
- Do nightshift workers in your workplace have access to decent meals?
- Have you used your mobile phone to take photos of hazards in your workplace?

These are just a few of the recent discussion threads on Usdaw's on-line health and safety forum.

The forum is the place



where reps can share experiences and ask each other for help with issues in their workplace. You can register to join by going to

the health and safety pages of the Usdaw website – [www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety](http://www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety) – and clicking on 'Health and Safety Forum'.



## Workers' Memorial Day



Workers Memorial Day Parade Manchester (Pic: courtesy of GM Hazards Centre)

### REMEMBERING FRIENDS

April 28 is International Workers' Memorial Day (WMD) – the day when the international labour movement remembers those who have been killed or injured in workplace accidents and those who have died from occupational diseases.

The event started in Canada and the US in 1986 and has been supported by Usdaw since 1995. In 2010 the Government gave official recognition to WMD.

Last year the International Trades Union Congress (TUC) used the event to promote the valuable role that unions play in health and safety. This year the focus will be on the need for strong enforcement of health

and safety laws.

There are a number of things that activists can do to mark WMD and get involved.

The TUC is calling on employers to organise a minute's silence in workplaces on the day and local trade unions are organising various events across the country.

Usdaw will issue a leaflet that reps can use in their workplace to raise awareness of the day and get others involved.

Purple knotted ribbons are worn as the symbol for the day. You can buy the ribbons and car stickers from Greater Manchester Hazards Centre - [www.gmhazards.org.uk/](http://www.gmhazards.org.uk/)

*Hazards* magazine also has information about events being held in the UK and abroad - [www.hazards.org/wmd/](http://www.hazards.org/wmd/)

## Government attack on safety to continue

### EXIT FOR LORD YOUNG

The Tory-led Coalition Government has made it clear that it is committed to implementing the recommendations made by Lord Young's review of health and safety and the so-called 'compensation culture'.

A short time after the report was published Lord Young was forced to retire after saying that despite the effects of the recession 'some people had

never had it so good'.

Despite his departure the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) pressed ahead with its simple risk assessments for 'low risk' workplaces such as offices, shops and schools. This includes a consultation document from HSE on Young's suggestion that accident reporting should be changed so that accidents only become reportable after seven days instead of the current over-three-days rule, which is expected in early February.

## Spotlight on Jason Stevens

**Name:** Jason Stevens

**Employer:** Tesco, Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

**Job:** Fishmonger.

**Branch:** Stroud A184.

**Union:** Health & safety rep, shop steward.

**Joined:** 2009.

**Age:** 32.

**Married:** Yes, for five years and we have two beautiful daughters aged three and seven.

**The company I work for....** I've worked for Tesco as a fishmonger for nearly two years. I enjoy my work and my role with the union. Towards the end of last year I signed up to Options, the trainee management programme and I'm hoping my union training will help me become a good manager.

**My job involves....** I am the store's fishmonger. My job is to set up my fish counter so it looks impressive and inviting. I have to be knowledgeable and give advice to customers and provide a good quality service.

**I'm a health and safety rep....** because I wanted to take on the role and make our store a better and safer place to work and my organiser and fellow reps supported me.

**How does it work with management.....** we have a good working relationship with our store manager and personnel manager and we work well on certain things like 'fire audits' for example. Because of the work of the health and safety reps many problems are nipped in the bud quickly and don't escalate into anything more serious.

**Having health and safety reps has....** made my workplace a safer place to work. Backdoor/deliveries was a bit of a problem area. We did a health and safety check on the ramps, made a few adjustments and now it's a safer place to work.

Also in the bakery department we had problems with blades on the bakery bread slicer snapping. I looked into it and found out that the slicer was still in use after blades had broken endangering the baker's safety. As soon as I had this information I spoke to our store manager and we instantly had the slicer put out of action for a couple of weeks until replacement blades had been fitted.



Contact for health and safety information

Email Doug Russell on [healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk) or visit the website: [www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety](http://www.usdaw.org/healthandsafety)

**£50 UP FOR GRABS!**  
Write to the editor of *Network* and you could win £50 if your letter is chosen as the star letter. This issue's winner is **Simon Benyon**

**SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:**

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

Email: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

**LIFELONG LEARNING**

**Inspirational**



Staff at Tesco Chelmsford were inspired when Sister Marika Rebicsek OCV came to teach sign language with her friend Meg and Hearing Dog Amos.

Reps Jackie Perry and Carla Woodley joined colleagues on the session and learnt lots of signs from the alphabet to their job roles.

Staff were pleasantly surprised by how interesting and informative the session was and now want to do a further five week course with Marika in the hope of gaining a BSL Level 1 qualification.

Marika has an amazing background, and along with her own disability still manages to encourage students around the counties. She's an inspiration.

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

**MEMBERSHIP AWARDS**

**Dedication**

Congratulations to **Alf Roberts** of K143 who celebrated 50 years of Usdaw membership recently and also to **Bernadette Smith** of F187 who celebrated her 30 year membership award last October.

**STAR LETTER**

**LIFELONG LEARNING**

**From shopfloor to university**

I'm a former employee of Marks and Spencer and have been an Usdaw member since 2003.

In 2006 I was awarded Usdaw's 'Chance of a Lifetime' Scholarship and in July 2007 after taking a career sabbatical to attend Ruskin College in Oxford I was awarded a Certificate of Higher Education with Distinction in Labour Relations and Law.

On briefly returning to M&S I decided that my future lay elsewhere and I resumed full-time study at Ruskin, graduating with a B.A. (Hons) First Class in International Labour and Trade Union Studies in July 2009.

In September this year I successfully graduated from the University of Keele and was awarded a Master of Arts in Environmental Politics with Distinction.

I couldn't have achieved any of this without the help and support of Usdaw, and my time in higher education has



enriched my life beyond measure. Therefore I join the ranks of all those seeking to win a fairer and more sustainable world thanks to the opportunity afforded to me by Usdaw.

**SIMON BENYON,**  
NW Marks and Spencer, K193

**CAMPAIGNING FOR USDAW**

**Promoting Legal Plus**

When I was on Academy1 up here in Scotland I ran some very successful Legal Plus campaign days in Tesco Greenock Extra, Salcoats Metro and Kilbirnie Superstore.

The campaign days were supported by local solicitors Thompsons. They sent representatives to the stores to talk to members about some of the benefits of Legal Plus. Dozens of members came along to the events to get

advice, and be reminded about all the benefits the union provides.

The campaigns have also been great recruitment tools with many new members signing up, and contacts and new reps being identified. I would highly recommend holding a campaign day yourself.

**GRAHAM NEWPORT,**  
branch sec, Ayrshire and South West Scotland, G3

**MEMBERSHIP AWARDS**

**Jenny's big day**



I was honoured to present activist and former Usdaw clerical member of staff Jenny Cole with her 30 year Membership Award recently. Congratulations Jenny!

**NORRIE SLATER,** Eastern divisional officer

**PHOTO GALLERY**

**More pictures from Respect Week 8-12 November 2010**

Pictures from left:  
Tesco Crowborough,  
Co-op Troon,  
Tesco Corstophine,  
Edinburgh





## GETTING ACTIVE LOCALLY WITH USDAW

**Chainmakers' Festival**

This year the Midlands division took part in the Cradley Women Chainmakers' Festival to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the 1910 strike.

The event was held on Saturday 18 September at the Black Country Living Museum, Dudley. The event celebrated the achievements of the Cradley Heath Women Chainmakers who in 1910 went on strike for ten weeks and fought to establish their right to a minimum wage for their industrial sector.

As well as celebrating the importance of trade union history and women at work, the Women Chainmaker's Festival recreated the famous 1910 victory march that saw women make history within the trade union movement.

The march was led by local performers who play

the parts of the Women Chainmakers and the strike leader Mary Macarthur.

This year, the Midlands Divisional banner had its first outing. We marched through the Museum carrying our Usdaw banner showing strength and solidarity to the visiting crowds.

I would like to say a big thanks to all the Usdaw activists and their families who attended and stood shoulder to shoulder with other trade unionists and helped raise the Usdaw profile.

We will be attending this event again this year therefore, if you would like to take part, please contact Claire Simpson at the Redditch office or email [claire.simpson@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:claire.simpson@usdaw.org.uk)

**KATIE BATCHELOR,**  
West Midlands General  
No.2, E131

## LUTON FEDERATION

**Excellent show**

Many thanks to the activists who attended the Luton Federation Weekend School held in Stevenage old town at the Cromwell Hotel in late November last year.

It was good to see so many new faces among the 35 members who attended for the workshops on Stress in the Workplace. We looked at the causes the symptoms and how reps can deal with stress. We also considered how to negotiate an agreement with your employer on stress.

Thanks also to the Federation committee members who did a great job in pulling everything together.

**GEOFF PAGE, Eastern divisional council chair.**

## TRIO OF LOYAL MEMBERS

**Award winners**

Neath A130 branch members celebrated 30 years with Usdaw in style recently at an event in their honour held at the Castle Hotel in Neath. Executive councillor Dennis Stinchcombe was on hand to present members Shirley Thomas, Jacqueline Lewis and Stephen Thomas with their awards.

**SUSAN DAVID, area organiser,**  
South Wales and Western Division

## CHECKOUT LEARNING

**Digital Dereham**

At long last in a cold training room at Tesco Dereham, computer classes were able to take place. The classes were organised following on from a Checkout Learning day that we held in store.

TUC studies at City College Norwich supplied the laptops so that the students were able to access the Internet which was great. The members who attended were very positive about the course and now want to learn more. Hopefully we will be able to oblige this year. We're also going to look into establishing a learning centre in-store.

**BEN BALDWIN, union learning rep, C97 Norfolk Area Tesco**

## TRIBUTE

**Linda McFadden**

May I pay tribute to Linda McFadden who retired as an area organiser last December. I was chairman at Sheffield Branch while Linda was the organiser there. She looked at both sides of any problem and was very successful. Can I wish Linda a healthy, happy and long retirement.

**JOHN ROUND,**  
South Yorkshire Co-op, F7

## PHOTO GALLERY

**More pictures from Respect Week 8-12 November 2010**

Pictures from left:  
Sainsburys Nutall  
Road, Nottingham,  
Sainsburys  
Market Square,  
Stafford,  
Tesco  
Corstorphine  
Edinburgh  
Tesco Bishop's  
Stortford



# Understanding Usdaw

Learn more about Usdaw in your own time and in the comfort of your own home



Usdaw's home study course is based on booklets which you complete in your own time at home. It's not about tests or lots of writing – but aims to help you find out more about Usdaw.

**Unit one is the foundation unit** and is called Unity is Strength. It looks at the advantages of joining a trade union and the benefits and services provided by Usdaw.

**The other units are:**

**Unit two** Democracy in Usdaw

**Unit three** Collective Bargaining

**Unit four** Understanding Pensions Part one

**Unit four** Understanding Pensions Part two

If you'd like to know more about the Usdaw Home Study then either complete the slip below or visit:

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



**Please send me more information about the Usdaw Home Study**

**My contact details are:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postcode:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Branch:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mobile No:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete and return this slip to: The Education Department, Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road, Manchester M14 6LJ