

NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021



RETAIL WORKERS DESERVE RESPECT

GOVERNMENT FINALLY AGREES
SHOPWORKERS DESERVE PROTECTION



save the date 17-23 January

Membership Week

www.usdaw.org.uk/mwjn





Network is published bimonthly and distributed to Usdaw activists.

PUBLISHED BY:

Usdaw Head Office
Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay,
Salford Quays, Manchester,
M50 3XZ
t: 0161 224 2804
e: network@usdaw.org.uk
w: usdaw.org.uk

HEAD OF MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Mike Glover

EDITOR

Saiqa Khushnood

REPORTER

Adam Kaczmarek

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Paula Barke

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Ruth Cross, Neil Ashworth,
Doug Russell, David Williams

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Michael Silve; Paul Burrows; Della Batchelor;
Lee Boswell; Brian Jarrett; Rob Finney;
Warren King; Richard Walker.

Via Getty Images:

Halfpoint; danr13; Juanmonino; SolStock;
Duncan_Andison; Sarsmsis;

ADVERTISING

Century One Publishing
Alban Row, 27-31 Verulam Road,
St Albans, AL3 4DG

ACCOUNT MANAGER

Paul Heitzman
t: 01727 739 196

e: paul@centuryonepublishing.uk

©Usdaw 2021 reproduction in whole or part by any means without written permissions of the publishers is strictly forbidden.

This publisher accepts no responsibility for errors, omissions or the consequences thereof.



FINALLY A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

As we head into Christmas, a new Coronavirus variant (Omicron) has been detected and has thrown everything up in the air again. At the time of writing, it was unclear how serious the variant is but as a precautionary measure the Government has brought in compulsory face coverings, a measure we have welcomed and have urged the public to comply with.

Contradictory messages are coming from the Government about whether or not further restrictions will come in and once again we are all left not knowing what Christmas will look like this year.

Despite the disruptions caused by the virus, Usdaw has been working hard fighting for its members. After years of campaigning and years of Government opposition, the Government has announced they will amend the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill in the House of Lords, to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse. We are currently looking at the wording of the amendment and are keen to work with the Government and members of the House of Lords to ensure that the draft provisions deliver the protections retail workers deserve. A protection of workers law is long overdue and this could be a step in the right direction.

None of our successes would be possible without our army of fantastic reps. Reps who have



not only worked throughout the pandemic but also supported members through this extremely difficult time. I know many of you had your phones on 24/7 and picked up, even in the middle of the night, because you knew your members needed you.

I want to once again thank you all for your hard work. You have really made a difference to the lives of people you represent.

The next few months will be challenging as millions will struggle to keep pace with basic living costs. That's why we will continue to fight for a new deal for workers, one that includes job security and an income that people can live on.

I wish you and your family a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.

Usdaw General Secretary

Paddy Lillis

When you have finished with this magazine, give it to a workmate.

Usdaw's website is full of great resources on mental health including details of:

- the 'It's Good to Talk' campaign,
- mental health awareness bingo card,
- mental health at work during the pandemic,
- supporting your child's emotional wellbeing,
- social media and mental health,
- bitesize courses designed to help members look after their mental health,
- leaflets on depression.

Mind

www.mind.org.uk

Providing advice and support to anyone experiencing a mental health problem.

The Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

24-hour confidential, emotional support for anyone who is feeling troubled.

CALM

www.thecalmzone.net

Raising awareness of suicide in young men and offering guidance and support.

Childline

www.childline.org.uk

FREE national helpline for children and young people in trouble or danger.

LGBT+ Switchboard

www.switchboard.lgbt

A one-stop listening service for LGBT+ people.

Refuge

www.refuge.org.uk

Accommodation and support for women and families experiencing domestic violence.

Citizens Advice

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Free confidential information and advice on legal issues, debt, consumer, housing, money and benefits.

StepChange

www.stepchange.org

A registered debt charity who offer free, confidential debt advice.

Shelter

www.shelter.org.uk

Provides free, confidential advice to people with all kinds of housing problems.

Bereavement UK

www.bereavement.co.uk

Offering information about death, dying, bereavement, funerals and counselling.

Refugee Council

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Services and support for refugees and asylum seekers.

Carers UK

www.carersuk.org

Information, advice and support for carers.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



12

ACADEMY

10 | Looking forward to the 2022 Academy and catching up with past graduates.

RESPECT WEEK ROUND-UP

12 | From Bathgate to Bristol, Usdaw activists held campaign days during November's Respect Week.

SUMMER SCHOOL 2

20 | Usdaw reps gathered at the union's head office in September for the popular Summer School 2.

YOUNG WORKERS

22 | *Network* examines the issue of mental health in young workers and speaks to a young activist.

PENSIONS

24 | Could you be one of thousands who have paid too much tax on lump sums from your pension pot?

ISLAMOPHOBIA

26 | November was Islamophobia Awareness Month. What can we do help eradicate it from our society?

UNDERAGE SALES: A REPS GUIDE

34 | Advice on supporting members to make sure they follow policies on age-restricted sales.

EQUALITIES

36 | Violence against women and girls is all too common and 2021 has been no different.

REGULARS

03 FOREWORD

06 NEWS

16 CAMPAIGN NEWS

18 PUBLICATIONS UPDATE

28 RECRUITMENT & ORGANISING

38 HEALTH & SAFETY

42 MEMBER OFFERS

44 STAFF UPDATE



20



28



30

IN THE NEWS

Don't forget to email the editor your view network@usdaw.org.uk

FACE COVERINGS RETURN TO ENGLAND

At the end of November, reports started emerging that a new variant of Coronavirus was detected in South Africa. Within days the variant was found in multiple countries across the world including the UK. Although the Omicron variant could have come from anywhere, countries started to ban flights to and from South Africa. South African officials took issue with the fact that South Africa was the only country to face punitive travel restrictions.

As a precautionary measure, while more information is gathered, the Government also decided that from Tuesday 30th November until the end of Monday 22 December 2021, people in England will be required by law to wear face coverings in certain places such as shops and on public transport. However, hospitality was excluded from the rules.

Those caught flouting the restrictions will be fined £200, rising to £400 for the second such offence, and to £800 for the third, up to a maximum of £6,400



THE NEW RULES APPLY TO

Public transport, taxis, shops, supermarkets, premises providing personal care such as hair, beauty and nail salons, post offices, bank and building societies, estate agents and travel agents, pharmacies and during driving lessons.

THE NEW RULES DON'T APPLY TO

All hospitality venues, including pubs, restaurants, cafes, gyms, theatres or cinemas.

in the case of sixth and subsequent fixed penalty notices.

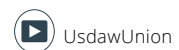
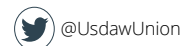
Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "There is no reason why, when lifting other covid restrictions in England, the Government could not have kept the requirement to wear a face covering in busy public places, like shops and public transport. This flip-flopping on basic and sensible covid measures and the different rules across the UK create confusion, reduce compliance and can lead to conflict.

"Retail staff working

with the public every day are deeply worried about catching Covid-19 and the arrival of the Omicron variant is a further concern. Wearing a face covering protects others, it should not be a personal preference, but a personal responsibility. The Government must be clear and consistent on it being mandatory and that shopworkers are not expected to enforce the law on face coverings.

"Usdaw is urging the shopping public to wear face coverings, along with necessary hand sanitisation and maintaining social

distancing to help make shops safer and limit the spread of Covid-19. We ask the public to follow the rules and respect shopworkers, abuse is not a part of their job. We continue to call on retail employers to maintain appropriate safety measures, ensuring they are followed consistently in every store."



NINE CENTRES REJECT OFFER

INDUSTRIAL ACTION BALLOTS AT TESCO DC



Usdaw started two formal industrial action ballots covering nine Tesco distribution sites after members overwhelmingly rejected the company's latest offers.

The two disputes involve nine Tesco distribution centres at: Daventry, Goole, Hinckley, Lichfield, Livingston, Magor (both trunk and main site), Peterborough and Southampton. The ballots will run between 22 November and 6 December. If members vote in favour it is intended that, unless the company makes an improved offer, strike

action will take place in the week of 20 December.

Usdaw national officer Joanne McGuinness says: "Our members in nine distribution centres have rejected Tesco's latest pay offers, so we are balloting them on industrial action."

"Retail distribution workers are key workers who delivered essential services throughout the pandemic, which in turn delivered a 16.5 per cent increase in profit to Tesco for the first half of the year.

"These workers deserve a decent

pay rise as their reward for what they have done and continue to do day in day out; couple that with the rising cost of living and inflation currently running at 6 per cent, the company needs to do better.

"The potential of industrial action and possible stock shortages in stores in the week before Christmas can be avoided, if the company comes back to the table with a better offer that is acceptable to our members."

www.usdaw.org.uk

www.usdaw.org.uk/news

DIFFERENT RULES FOR DIFFERENT NATIONS

MASK WEARING RULES AROUND THE UK

The reintroduction of masks in shops and public transport brings England in line with other UK nations. Here are the rules for the different nations:

ENGLAND

The new rules apply to public transport, taxis, shops, supermarkets, premises providing personal care such as hair, beauty and nail salons, post offices, bank and building societies, estate agents and travel agents, pharmacies and during driving lessons.

The new rules don't apply to all hospitality venues, including pubs, restaurants, cafes, gyms, theatres or cinemas.

WALES

Masks are legally required on public transport and in all public indoor areas apart from pubs and restaurants. Secondary school pupils are asked to wear masks in class.

SCOTLAND

In Scotland, masks must be worn

in shops, on public transport and in pubs and restaurants when not seated. They are compulsory for all school staff as well as secondary school pupils and are required in indoor public spaces in universities.

NORTHERN IRELAND

In Northern Ireland, post-primary pupils must wear face coverings inside school buildings, as must staff if they can't socially distance, and masks must also be worn on public transport, in shops and hospitality venues.

STRUGGLING RETAILERS NEED HELP

USDAW WANTS RATE CUT FOR SCOTS SHOPS

Usdaw, along with industry bodies, have jointly written to the Scottish Finance Secretary asking her to introduce a business rates discount for retail premises in the coming financial year.

The retail industry in Scotland employs 230,000 people and traditionally accounts for over a fifth of business rates. The thirteen organisations represent retailers, trade unions and others with a stake in the vitality of Scottish high streets and retail destinations.

The collective call comes ahead of the unveiling of the Scottish Government's Budget on 9 December, which is expected to set the business rate and associated reliefs for the 2022-23 financial year.

Usdaw regional secretary for Scotland Tracy Gilbert said: "The retail sector has been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic on an unprecedented scale. For an industry already facing significant challenges, the long-term impact will be severe. Aside from the direct

impact on jobs, the crisis is leaving gaping holes in high streets that sit at the heart of our town centres and communities.

"So there needs to be further government action to help struggling retailers and retail workers. Usdaw has joined with leading retail industry bodies to call for support for retailers with a discounted business rate. The Scottish Government has the opportunity to make a difference and we hope they're listening."

USDAW SEEK ASSURANCES FOR STAFF

AAH PHARMACEUTICALS AND LLOYDS SALE

Usdaw has called for urgent discussions with the business and new owners Aurelius, the pan-European asset management group, after the confirmation that they have agreed to buy the following McKesson owned UK businesses: Lloyds Pharmacy brands, AAH Pharmaceuticals, MASTA and John Bell & Croyden.

The transaction is expected to be completed in 2022 subject to

conditions, including receipt of the required regulatory approvals. The agreement follows McKesson's recently announced sale of European businesses.

Usdaw national officer Daniel Adams said: "Following the news of this major upheaval, we have contacted the business for urgent meetings to better understand the implications for our members.

"While we welcome the initial

indication that the sale will lead to investment and growth in each of the business divisions, this will remain an unsettling time for our members, who have been on the frontline in the battle against Coronavirus. Usdaw will therefore be seeking assurances on future plans and in relation to jobs, along with members' terms and conditions."

www.usdaw.org.uk/news

WIN

£100



LOVE2SHOP
gift vouchers



USDAW

Health and Dental Plan

at **WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN**

Sponsored by Usdaw Health and Dental Plan. www.usdaw.org.uk/healthplan Closing date 15 Jan 2022. Terms apply.

IN BRIEF

SAINSBURY'S

Sainsbury's has opened a checkout free store in Holborn, central London. The store, which uses Amazon's 'just walk out' technology, is the chain's second attempt at automation after it abandoned its first effort in 2019 because customers 'were not ready' for the change.

LIDL

Lidl has announced plans to open another 100 stores in Britain by the end of 2025, taking the total to 1,100. Around 4,000 jobs will be created as the German grocer continues to focus on bricks-and-mortar retail rather than home deliveries.

CLARKS

Members of the Community union at footwear firm Clarks have reached an agreement to end a two-month strike over fire-and-rehire tactics at their Somerset distribution centre.

MEMBERSHIP

FOR WEEK ENDED 27 NOVEMBER 2021

South Wales & Western	43,778
Eastern	53,356
Midlands	50,281
North Eastern	52,349
Scottish	38,449
Southern	53,831
North West	81,411
Total	373,455

FUNDING AND UPSKILLING CRUCIAL

MPS MUST BACK MENOPAUSE BILL

Usdaw is calling on MPs to support Carolyn Harris MP's Menopause (Support and Services) Bill.

A central plank of the Bill is to exempt Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) from NHS prescription charges in England, as is already the case in Wales and Scotland. However, it also addresses broader issues including the need to raise awareness amongst employers of the menopause as a workplace and occupational health issue.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We welcome Carolyn Harris' Bill. This is a significant issue in our sectors where women are doing difficult and demanding jobs with little control over their working environment or hours of work.

"Working in customer facing roles, working nights, wearing uniforms made of polyester and short notice changes to hours as well as negative attitudes towards older women and a lack of awareness of the menopause

can aggravate symptoms of the menopause and make it more difficult for them to raise the issue and ask for workplace adjustments.

"Usdaw believes it is time we stopped dismissing the menopause as a 'women's issue' and recognise that it is a workplace health concern that involves physical and emotional changes that many women find difficult and exhausting."

Carolyn Harris, Labour MP for Swansea East says: "The menopause remains one of the last great taboos – badly funded and rarely discussed in public. It is also poorly understood in the workplace, in society at large and far too often, even in the doctor's surgery.

"It is crucial we get this Bill over the line today. HRT is a lifeline for so many women going through menopause. Menopause is not a choice – half the population go through it, so it is essential that everyone can access the treatment they need."

KINDNESS IS KEY

NEW #SHOPKIND CAMPAIGN

November saw the launch of the national #Shopkind campaign, which encourages shoppers to treat staff with respect when they visit the high street.

New polling reveals that over one third of shoppers (38 percent) have witnessed violence and abuse against shopworkers. The #ShopKind campaign emphasises that workers should be treated with respect, kindness and gratitude.

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign is calling for shopworkers to be treated with respect and for changes in the law. www.usdaw.org.uk/freedomfromfear





ACADEMY OPENS ITS DOORS

The Organising Academy returns next year for the first full programme since 2019. Usdaw is looking for dedicated, committed reps to work full-time for the union – on secondment from their employer – for an intensive six month programme where they will become more confident, effective organisers and recruiters.

Over 700 reps have passed through the Academy since it began and many graduates, further down the line, become area organisers. There is nothing else in the trade union movement quite like it in terms of the time and resources dedicated to training and developing reps.

Successful applicants will receive intensive classroom-based training as well as learning on the job. Reps who are selected to take

part will find themselves in many new situations and have lots of challenges to overcome, but they will be supported every step of the way by an Usdaw official.

This is the first full Academy programme since 2019 so demand for places will be high. To be considered, reps need to show a firm commitment to the work of the union and have demonstrated they are capable of organising and recruiting beyond their own workplace. The programme is demanding but extremely rewarding and reps who have completed it speak fondly of their time there.

ACADEMY 1 GRADUATES SHARE THEIR STORIES

WHAEDD SHAH Academy 2019 NW INDUSTRIAL NO.1

“I was initially quite apprehensive about the Academy but my area organiser convinced me to apply, and it was great to pass the interview and assessments.

“We spent some time in the classroom, with a training officer to help us, but most of the time was spent on the road putting into practice what I’d learned. I visited

For more information and to find out how to apply, go to www.usdaw.org.uk/academy. Applications must be received at Head Office by Friday 21st January 2022.



2019 Academy 1 graduates

lots of different workplaces to recruit new members and hold campaign days, where I learned a lot about what conditions are like in other sectors. It was a real eye-opener for me as I work in a call centre where things work differently.

"It was amazing how much all the Academy students supported each other. We set up a WhatsApp group to share our stories, celebrate our successes and pick each other up when we were feeling low. My area organiser was great too, he was always at the end of the phone if I needed him. The whole experience made me realise just how important it is to keep working for our members."

MICK MURRAY Academy 2019
AREA ORGANISER
NORTH WEST REGION

"I'd done some stand down before the Academy and I felt ready to take the next step. The application process was a bit like the X Factor in

parts! When I was accepted, we were assigned mentors and the education department provided some great training.

"I really enjoyed my time on the Academy. It was great to meet new reps and build lasting relationships with them, and I learned a lot about how the union works in different sectors and companies. I was working for B&M at the time and what I learned during Academy was very helpful for organising our site and helping me train new reps.

"The Usdaw officials are there to support you if you need any advice or guidance – they all want you to have the best possible experience from it. The Academy helped me become a better public speaker and made me believe in myself more. I don't think I'd have had the confidence to apply for an area organiser role if I hadn't gone through the Academy first.

"If you feel you're ready to take on the challenge, I'd highly

recommend applying."

ANDY FIRMAN Academy 2016
AREA ORGANISER
NORTH WEST REGION

"Being accepted onto the Academy programme was mind blowing. I learned so much in my time there, not just about organising and recruitment but about the inner workings of the union. It was a bit of a rollercoaster ride at times but it was thoroughly enjoyable and it was great to meet so many other reps and activists.

"It's a six month programme but the time absolutely flew by. At the end I had to deliver a presentation to the regional and deputy regional secretary about what I'd achieved and when I was working on it, I couldn't believe how much I'd done.

"It really gave me the bug and made me want to do more for the union. I went on to complete Academy 2 and would have done Academy 3, if there was one!"



Tesco Brent Cross, London

TOTAL RESPECT

Respect for Shopworkers Week returned to workplaces in November. From Bathgate to Bristol, Usdaw activists held campaign days encouraging the public to treat retail workers with respect and dignity.

"I want to thank everyone who got involved in this year's Respect Week," said Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis. "Thanks to your hard work, we held over 1,000 campaign events and got the message out across the media that abuse is not part of the job."

"Our reps and activists have again surpassed all expectations and made the campaign a big success."





Tesco Rugeley, Staffordshire



Morrisons St Helens, Merseyside





Ikea Greenwich, London



Tesco Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire



Tesco Newport





NEW YEAR NEW MEMBERS

Membership Week is an important part of the union's calendar, and vital to the success of this initiative is our dedicated team of reps, activists and area organisers who will be pulling out all the stops to give the union a massive membership boost.

It promises to be an exciting week with a determination to make a real difference in workplaces across the UK.

Working Together

We will only be successful if we work as a team to strengthen our membership where we already have members and reach out to those potential members at unorganised sites.

Benefits of union membership

We need to identify the thousands of new members who are within our grasp and explain to them how Usdaw can improve their working lives. This could include

talking about how union members tend to get better pay and safer workplaces, representation in disciplinary/grievance meetings, legal cover and a host of other benefits. It's also important to outline how during the pandemic, Usdaw lobbied the Government and employers to ensure that the needs of Usdaw members were taken into consideration, which resulted in bonuses as well as enhanced health and safety measures.

Speak to your manager

Speak to your manager now about time off to organise a stall in the canteen, or time off to talk to new starters/non-members. Arrange your team of reps on a rota so everyone spends some time focused on this recruitment initiative.

Start planning now: checklist

- Speak to your manager about time off to organise an event.
- Order recruitment leaflets and

promotional materials in advance.

- Identify areas/departments in your workplace where membership is low.
- Arrange your team of reps on a rota to cover all shifts.
- Contact your area organiser or local office for help.
- Contact the Network/Arena team to talk about possible coverage in the magazines.

MEMBERSHIP WEEK 17-23 JANUARY 2022

Send your pictures to: network@usdaw.org.uk but please make sure there are no personal details visible in your photos such as newly completed membership forms.

If you're on Twitter or Instagram you can follow us @UsdawUnion or use #JoinUshaw

CAMPAIGNS

Keeping you up-to-date on Usdaw's priorities

PROTECTION FOR SHOPWORKERS?

In November, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill was debated in the House of Lords and despite cross-party support from peers the Government refused to back two protection of shopworkers amendments. After years of opposition the Government did a late night U-turn and will now seek to amend the Bill.

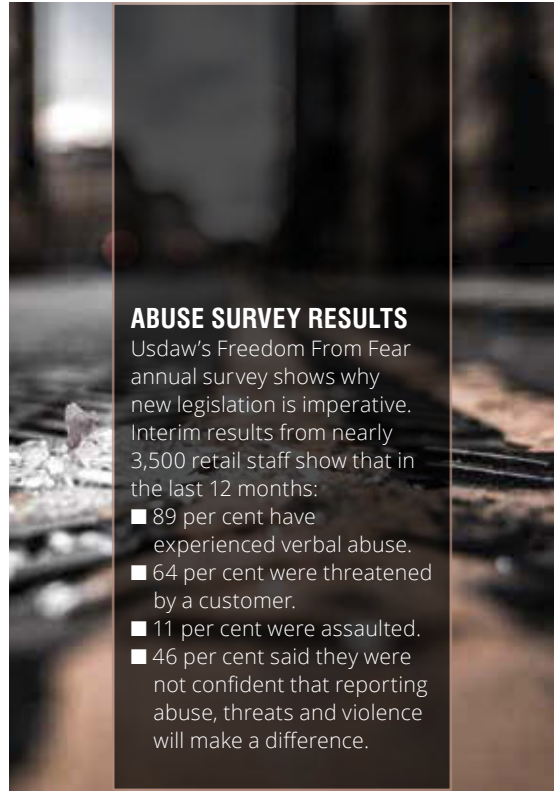
Usdaw welcomes the Government accepting the need for retail workers to have specific legal protection from violence at work.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "After years of campaigning we are pleased to have secured movement from the Government and that they have finally accepted

the need to legislate to protect shopworkers from violence at work. We are studying the amendment to the Policing Bill and are keen to engage with the Government and politicians from all parties so that our members can be absolutely clear that the provisions in the Bill will deliver the protections they deserve.

"Usdaw members working in retail have for too long been in the firing line of appalling behaviour from a significant minority of customers. Nine in ten shopworkers have faced abuse in the last year, with far too many also suffering threats and violence. A protection of workers law is long overdue and this could be a step in the right direction."

www.usdaw.org.uk



ABUSE SURVEY RESULTS

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear annual survey shows why new legislation is imperative. Interim results from nearly 3,500 retail staff show that in the last 12 months:

- 89 per cent have experienced verbal abuse.
- 64 per cent were threatened by a customer.
- 11 per cent were assaulted.
- 46 per cent said they were not confident that reporting abuse, threats and violence will make a difference.

THE REAL-ITY OF LOW PAY

REAL LIVING WAGE UPDATING WELCOMED

In November, the Living Wage Foundation announced new rates for the real Living Wage of £9.90 per hour and a higher rate of £11.05 in London. The Government's so-called 'National Living Wage' is currently £8.91, which is set to rise to £9.50 in April, with lower National Minimum Wage rates for younger workers.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Many of the key workers who have helped us through the pandemic earn less than the real Living Wage.

"Usdaw has consistently campaigned for at least £10 per hour immediately for all workers over 16, which would abolish rip-off youth rates. If you're old enough to

do the job, you're old enough to be paid the rate for the job.

"However, improving hourly pay alone is not enough. We need to look at security of employment, availability of hours and guaranteed contracts, to ensure workers have a weekly income that they can live on. That is why Usdaw is campaigning for a New Deal for Workers."

BOXING CLEVER

WORKING TO SECURE A LONGER FESTIVE BREAK

Usdaw's 'Christmas is Not Working' campaign calls on retailers to give their staff a proper Christmas break and allow them some much-needed family time. The union is asking shops to close at 4pm on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve and stay shuttered over Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day (and 2 January in Scotland). When shops are open on public holidays, trading should be kept to a maximum of six hours and staff should be paid premium rates.

Retail staff work incredibly hard over the festive period and this means that for too many shopworkers, Christmas is not a proper holiday.

An Usdaw survey of over 12,000 retail workers found that:

- 97 per cent think shops should be closed on Boxing Day.
- 98 per cent want stores to close early on Christmas Eve.
- Over three quarters of staff say the demands of work affect their ability to enjoy Christmas and the same amount feel pressured to work on Boxing Day, even if it is supposedly voluntary.
- Just 4 per cent of respondents are happy to work on Boxing Day.

CAMPAIGN SUCCESSES

Usdaw has been working hard throughout the year to secure a longer Christmas break for our members. This year, more retailers than ever before have agreed to stay closed on Boxing Day:

- **Sainsbury's** will be closing all their stores on Boxing Day, including convenience stores and petrol stations along with **Argos** and **Habitat** stores. As a result of the decision, which followed discussions with Usdaw, around 170,000 members of staff will be able to enjoy a longer break.
- **Morrisons** have agreed with the union that all their stores will be closed on Boxing Day, a move that will give 111,000 workers more time with their families.
- Our members in **Poundland** can again enjoy Boxing Day and New Year's Day at home after the company agreed to close on those days.
- After discussions with Usdaw, **Central England Co-operative** have announced that all their stores will close on Boxing Day.



NEGOTIATING TIME OFF

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Usdaw national officers have done a fantastic job in negotiating these closures. Giving staff time off on Boxing Day and/or New Year's Day means staff get a proper break over Christmas.

"The pandemic showed just how important shopworkers are to our society and communities, as they stepped up and kept essential

services running throughout. Key workers have done so much this year and we don't think it is too much to ask to give them the longest possible break over the festive season. We now hope that other retailers will follow suit by closing their stores on 26 December to help workers enjoy their Christmas, give them a well-deserved breather and make Boxing Day special again."

WORKERS DESERVE A NEW DEAL

MAKING WORKPLACE FAIRNESS A PRIORITY

Security of employment, availability of hours and guaranteed contracts are needed to ensure workers have a weekly income that they can live on. As recognised by the Living Wage Foundation's 'Living Hours' campaign, improving hourly pay alone is not enough. Usdaw is campaigning for a 'New

Deal for Workers' to help ensure that the coronavirus recovery delivers workplace fairness.

USDRAW'S NEW DEAL WANTS:

- A minimum wage of at least £10 per hour for all workers.
- Minimum contract of 16 hours per week, for everyone who wants it.

- Ban on zero-hour contracts.
- Better sick pay for all workers.
- Protection from abuse at work.
- A proper social security system.
- Job security.
- Fair treatment and equality for all workers.
- A voice at work - and end 'fire and rehire'.

www.usdaw.org.uk/newdeal

NEW IN!

Leaflets & Booklets

Usdaw Publications Catalogue & Form (Leaflet 116)

Ten Good Reasons to Join Usdaw (Leaflet 261)

Don't retire from the Union (Leaflet 269)

Wanted – Union Representatives (Leaflet 279)

Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family (Leaflet 312)

Work in Warehouse or Distribution? Join Usdaw Today (Leaflet 384)

Member Offers (Leaflet 398)

Pensions - Understanding Your State Pension (Leaflet 428)

Retail Workers - Abuse is not part of the job (Leaflet 429)

Delivery Drivers - Abuse is not Part of the Job (Leaflet 430)

Pensions and Redundancy Guide (Leaflet 440)

Puzzled by Pensions? Guide to Pensions & Tax 2020/21 (Leaflet 451)

Free Will Writing Service for Usdaw Members and their Partners (Form BL4)

COVID Mental Health Survey Results

Puzzled By Pensions - Pensions Jargon Buster Guide

Usdaw Pensions Guide – 2021/22 edition

Posters and Handouts

Mental Health Issues (Poster R50)

Abuse is not Part of the Job for Retail Workers (Poster R66)

Injured Whilst Cycling? FirstCall Usdaw (Poster R68)

Keep Your Cool (A4 Poster)



LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW USDAW WORKS

The Usdaw Home Study is the perfect starting point to learn more about Usdaw online.

The Home Study consists of several modules and covers all aspects of the structure and function of the union. It's made up of five distinct units:

- **Unity is Strength** looks at the advantages of joining a trade union.
- **Democracy in Usdaw** examines the union's structure and how decisions are made.
- **Collective Bargaining** looks at the ways in which Usdaw takes up problems and negotiates with

employers.

- **Pensions Home Study** covers occupational and state pensions.
- **Vulnerable Workers** helps members understand what we mean by 'vulnerable work' and how we can tackle its effects. The Home Study isn't about tests or writing – it's about boosting members' understanding of the union and giving them the confidence to get more involved. Sign up now at: www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy

For a complete list of Usdaw publications and to order visit:
dtp.usdaw.co.uk/PublicationsCatalogue

THE PANDEMIC WITHIN THE PANDEMIC

For someone experiencing domestic abuse, work can often provide respite from the abuse and a safe space where they can find allies and ask for help.

Last year, as the lockdown took effect around the world, domestic violence surged. Governments were completely unprepared for how lockdown measures provided abusers with more opportunities to terrorise their victims.

Support networks were broken by lockdown and victims found themselves imprisoned with their abusers with no respite and no hope of escape. Organisations which did provide services for survivors of domestic violence were overwhelmed with calls at a time when they had to reduce or suspend services due to the strict lockdown rules.

Figures released from Refuge, the country's largest provider of

domestic abuse services, found that between April 2020 and February 2021, calls to their national helpline were up by an average of 61 per cent.

What has this got to do with work?

For those experiencing domestic violence, work can often be a safe space where they might have some respite from the abuse. It can also be one of the very few avenues they can use to find allies and ask for help.

Abusers can target their partners workplace because they know work can provide independence and a financial route out of the abuse. This can lead to the abuser causing trouble at their partner's workplace,

preventing them from getting into work on time or using other tactics to sabotage their partner's career. The partner experiencing the abuse can find themselves having to take time off sick, they can suffer from anxiety or depression and struggle to concentrate, which can in turn affect their performance.

Why have a domestic violence policy?

Public Health England estimate domestic abuse costs businesses £1.9 billion every year through lost productivity and absence. Therefore, a domestic violence workplace policy is not only the right thing to do but it also makes good business sense too.

www.usdaw.org/uk/417

PLADIS (MCVITIES) PLEDGE TO SUPPORT COLLEAGUES WITH NEW DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

Usdaw has been campaigning on this issue for a number of years and has developed a domestic violence policy with Pladis (McVities).

Usdaw national officer Dave Gill said: "After a proposition was supported at the Retail Trades Conference in 2019, we placed the issue of domestic violence on the company's agenda. The company was very responsive and I'm proud to say that we worked together to develop a workable policy. The policy aims to provide a working environment where individuals feel safe when seeking help and

advice. It includes assessing the risks posed to the individual and making adjustments where required. The company will also explore all opportunities including requests for flexible working and five days paid leave to address issues such as attending court, medical or legal appointments or to seek safer accommodation.

"I believe that this is one of the best domestic violence policies in the field."

Head of HR UK Supply Chain Neil Smith said: "In September last year, via our Trade Union Consultation Forum, Usdaw asked us to explore

creating a domestic abuse policy. Working collaboratively enabled us to launch our #YouAreNotAlone domestic abuse campaign in January 2021, supported by 37 domestic abuse champions.

"As part of the campaign, we pledged to continue raising awareness of domestic abuse, support colleagues who may be victims of domestic abuse and encourage perpetrators to actively seek help. Throughout, Usdaw has been key to the launch of this vital initiative, from helping formulate the policy to proactively supporting its implementation."



SUMMER SCHOOL 2 RETURNS TO

Usdaw's ever-popular Summer School 2 took place in September at Usdaw's head office in Salford Quays.

The course is designed for experienced reps who have completed Summer School 1 and deals with different aspects of industrial relations. During the course of the week reps were divided into two groups based on which subject they chose to study: Politics and Organising or Women and Organising.

POLITICS AND ORGANISING

The Politics and Organising seminar is primarily concerned with strengthening the connection between the union's industrial objectives and its political affiliation.

The School considers how workplace campaigning can be extended into the political arena, and the role that Usdaw has to play in the formation of Labour Party policy.

Tammy Caven E076

"I've been a rep for about seven years and have been on lots of Usdaw training but Summer School has to be my favourite. It's one of the best things Usdaw does.

"I did the politics course and it completely re-energised me. Before doing this course, the only thing I did was to go door knocking in the run up to an election. Since completing the course, I have been making an effort to be politically active throughout the year and I'm now the Usdaw delegate on the general

committee for my local constituency.

"I also enjoyed the media training we did. We learnt how to conduct a radio interview. I was nervous about the role-playing side but the more I learnt, the better I felt about giving it a go. Now I feel confident enough to speak to the press and have put my name down if Usdaw need a spokesperson for the Respect Shopworkers campaign.

"If you're interested in politics then I would definitely recommend this course."

WOMEN AND ORGANISING

The Women and Organising course aims to build knowledge and skills to organise women in the workplace. It explores subjects such as fair pay, equality and family friendly policies.

HOW TO APPLY FOR SUMMER SCHOOL 2022

Next year's Summer School 2 will be held on 11-16 September in Birmingham.

Each branch can nominate up to two members for each Summer School. Branches receive information and application forms in January and applications must be submitted to their regional secretaries by approximately late March. Nominations go before the

National Executive Council at their June meeting.

Usdaw provides accommodation, food, and transport costs.

For more information, please go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/About-Us/Events/Usdaw-Second-Series-Summer-School



USDAW

The course entails looking at how reps can use Usdaw resources as well as others to organise and promote fair treatment.

Dave Matthews K183

"I did the Women and Organising course and found it to be an eye-opening experience.

"We learnt that women end up with a significantly smaller pension pot than men because they have to take maternity leave to bring up children, and in later life they tend to shoulder the responsibility of looking after their elderly parents. I couldn't believe how much this impacted the pension pot they got at the end of their career.

"Where I work it used to be a predominately male environment but now it's 60/40 with more women than men. After completing Summer School 2, I feel I'm better equipped at supporting my female colleagues.

"As always, the Usdaw tutors were brilliant. I reconnected with some familiar faces and also made new friends. All in all, it was a fantastic week and I would recommend Summer School to anyone who's looking for a challenge."

ONLINE BITESIZE COURSES

Check out Usdaw's bitesize online courses for members and reps. They can be accessed from a computer, tablet or mobile and take just 30 minutes to complete.

ABCs of ICT – IT bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/ABCsofIT

CV Writing – IT bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/cvwriting

Fit for Maths – Maths bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/fitformaths

Getting Started: The Role of the Rep:
www.usdaw.org.uk/gettingstarted

Health and Safety during Covid-19:
www.usdaw.org.uk/Covid19course

Health and Safety Reps Handbook Part 1:
www.usdaw.org.uk/HSReps1

Health and Safety Reps Handbook Part 2:
www.usdaw.org.uk/HSReps2

Health and Safety Reps Handbook Part 3:
www.usdaw.org.uk/HSReps3

Home Study 1 – Unity is Strength:
www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy

Home Study 2 – Democracy in Usdaw:
www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy

Home Study 3 – Collective Bargaining Part 1:
www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy

Home Study 3 – Collective Bargaining Part 2:
www.usdaw.org.uk/homestudy

Helping with Homework – Maths bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/mathshomework

The Impact of Covid-19 on Domestic Violence:
www.usdaw.org.uk/CovidandDV

Looking After Your Mental Health:
www.usdaw.org.uk/yourmentalhealth

Maths and Money Matters – Maths bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/mathsmatters

Mental Health Course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/MHcourse

Mind your Head – Bitesize Mental Health course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/mindyourhead

More than Words – English bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/morethanwords

Organising and Recruitment Part 1:
www.usdaw.org.uk/RecruitOrg1

Organising and Recruitment Part 2:
www.usdaw.org.uk/RecruitOrg2

A Play on Words – English bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/English

Quirks of the English Language – English bitesize course:
www.usdaw.org.uk/quirksenglish



MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES RIFE AMONG YOUNG WORKERS

Young workers make up around 11 per cent of the workforce in the UK and are heavily concentrated in precarious private sector work. The three most common sectors of employment for young people are hospitality, recreation and retail.

Young workers are far more likely to be working weekends and late nights and to be employed on so-called 'flexible' contracts – a practice which, according to a report by the Resolution Foundation, increased by 66 per cent from 2000-2019. They are also first in the firing line when redundancies are announced; when the pandemic struck, the Resolution Foundation report found that young workers were almost five times more likely to be affected by job losses than workers aged over 25. Government statistics report that the youth unemployment rate is currently around 11.7 per cent, compared to 4.3 per cent for the workforce as a whole.

There is a widespread assumption that young workers are only going out to work to earn enough money for socialising. But one in three young workers in sectors like retail and social care are parents, and have the same financial responsibilities as their older colleagues. This reality is not reflected in the minimum wage laws, which don't mandate the full rate until the age of 23.

Mental Health

It's no surprise, given the above statistics, that a recent Usdaw survey found 80 per cent of young members reported feeling anxious

about going into work. The leading cause of anxiety among young workers is abusive customers, followed by fear of catching Coronavirus, money worries and working hours. These levels of stress and anxiety are more than a reflection of the times we are all in. They stem from the pressures young workers face as a result of being disproportionately affected by insecure working conditions and being given an unfair share of late night and weekend shifts.

Young workers are far less likely to raise their concerns with their manager, their GP or their trade union. This is concerning as not only can a small conversation make a big difference to someone who is struggling with their mental health, it means too many young Usdaw members are missing out on the support a trade union can provide.

How reps can help

Around 80,000 Usdaw members are aged under 27 so it's vital that reps understand their concerns and provide the necessary support. If you've got a lot of young members

at your workplace, there are some simple measures you can take to help them:

- Make the union's mental health resources visible. If they know we can help, they're more likely to approach us.
- Look out for changes in behaviour. This can be an early sign that something's wrong. If someone who previously performed well at work starts encountering difficulties, don't be afraid to start a conversation.
- Reassure the member that you and the union will support them as much as you can. Encourage them, with your support, to talk to their manager. Mental health issues can be covered by the Equality Act, but the employer does need to know about the problem.
- Remember that you don't have to have all the answers. Your area organiser and the equalities section at Head Office will be able to help, and can point you to organisations that are dedicated to mental health support. equitymatters@usdaw.org.uk

USEFUL RESOURCES TO HELP SUPPORT YOUNG WORKERS

Disability – Reasonable adjustments:

www.usdaw.org.uk/439

Men's health – Depression:

www.usdaw.org.uk/442

Men's mental health – It's

OK to ask for help:

www.usdaw.org.uk/433

Mental health guide for reps:

www.usdaw.org.uk/401

Rights for young workers:

www.usdaw.org.uk/397

Mental health guide for members:

www.usdaw.org.uk/400

Supporting young workers' mental health:

www.usdaw.org.uk/450

Women's Health - Depression:

www.usdaw.org.uk/wh3



YOUNG REP IN THE SPOTLIGHT JACK STACEY

Network spoke to Co-op rep Jack Stacey, 26, about his union work and the pressures facing young workers. Jack is currently a shop steward, a health and safety rep and also the chair of the Young Workers' Committee in the Southern Region.

When did you get involved in the union?

I joined Usdaw when I started as a customer team member at the Co-op in Southampton in 2018, and became a rep soon afterwards. I got involved because I'd heard about trade unions and I wanted to learn more about how they worked and

what they could do for members and the wider community.

What would you say are the main issues that affect young workers?

There's a perception that because we're young, we don't mind working all the late nights and weekend shifts. But when you finish work at 11pm every night you don't get much sleep, you don't eat properly and it ends up really bringing you down. It definitely has a knock-on effect on your mental health and it also exposes you to more abusive customers. Some workplace are fairer and make sure everyone has a

mix of shifts, but too many places don't.

Why should young Usdaw members become more active in the union?

We always need fresh blood in Usdaw, people to bring new ideas and viewpoints on how the union works and what it should be doing for the members. Young workers are going to face a lot of tough challenges in the future. We're going to be in work for longer, competing against automation technology for jobs, and we'll have a smaller pension when we do eventually retire. It's already impossible for young people to get on the housing ladder and this will only get worse unless we do something to change things. That's why we need young workers to step up and get involved in organising to try and make things better.

What do you enjoy most about being a rep?

Getting the chance to meet so many different people. I've had some really interesting discussions with people from all over the UK, from all ages and backgrounds. A lot of them have viewpoints and opinions that might be different to my own but when you sit down and talk to people, you get to see the world through their eyes and it gives you – and them – the chance to consider different perspectives on things. It feels sometimes like people are becoming more and more polarised, so it's really important to be able to sit down and listen to the other side. And of course, getting members the help and support they need at work is really satisfying.

JOIN YOUR COMMITTEE

If you're aged under 27 and want to get involved in your regional Young Workers' Committee, visit www.usdaw.org.uk/YWContacts to find the contact for your region.

HAS YOUR PENSION LUMP SUM BEEN OVERTAXED?

Following the Pension Schemes Act 2015, thousands of people have taken their entire pension pot as cash and as a result many have been overtaxed. Are you one of them?



The new Act promised to give individuals more flexibility but inadvertently left thousands paying tax at a higher tax code.

Pension Schemes Act 2015

The Pension Act introduced major changes to the way individual pension savers could access their defined contribution pensions. The Act changes the requirement that a pension pot must generally be used to provide an income for the rest of an individual's life and introduced more choice and flexibility.

Many pension savers welcomed these changes as the necessity to purchase a fixed annual pension

income, known as a lifetime annuity, was seen as too rigid and the annuity rates at that time were regarded as not providing good value for money.

Lump sum overtaxed

One of the choices introduced allows individuals to have their entire 'pot' paid as cash in one lump sum. Whilst 25 per cent of the pot is paid tax free the remainder is liable for income tax. One consequence of doing this is that many people are overpaying the amount of tax due on the sum paid to them by their pension provider.

Between January and March 2020

HMRC reported around 300,000 individuals took their entire pension pot as cash, but in doing so many of them may have been overtaxed.

HMRC rules stipulate that until your tax code is provided by HMRC to the pension scheme an emergency tax code must be applied to the payment. If the payment made is relatively small in pension terms, the application of an emergency tax code can result in tax being paid at 40 per cent on part of the payment.

Reclaim overpaid tax

If this happens you can reclaim overpaid tax from HMRC by

Disclaimer The content of this publication is intended solely for educational and general information purposes. It does not constitute any form of advice or recommendation relied upon by users making (or refraining from making) any specific financial or other decisions. Usdaw has used its reasonable endeavours to ensure the information is error-free. However, Usdaw cannot warrant that the information does not contain inaccuracies or typographical errors. Usdaw cannot provide members with individual advice. This document should not be relied on for tax, legal or accounting advice.

PENSION NEWS

SMALL POTS CONSOLIDATION

Auto enrolment (AE) was introduced in October 2012 and requires companies to opt their qualifying employees into a workplace pension arrangement. According to the Office for National Statistics, 78 per cent of UK employees now have a workplace pension, compared to less than 50 per cent before AE was introduced.

However, frequent job changes have resulted in a large increase in the amount of small pension pots. There are believed to be over 3 million pots that are worth less than £100 and it is estimated that there will be over 27 million pots worth less than £2,000 by 2035 if no action is taken.

A 'Small Pots Co-ordination Group', was set up by the Pensions and Lifetime Savings Association (PLSA) and the Association of British Insurers (ABI) to find solutions to this issue and published their first report at the end of September.

UK STATE PENSION TO RISE BY 3.1 PER CENT IN 2022

The UK state pension is set to increase by 3.1 per cent in 2022/23, in line with September's Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation figure.

The state pension payment is protected by a 'double lock'. This means next April it would rise by whichever is higher out of September's rate of inflation or a minimum of 2.5 per cent.

The 'triple lock' which the Conservative party pledged to uphold in their 2019 General Election manifesto has been temporarily suspended because of 'high earnings growth following the pandemic'.

BUDGET 2021: GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES NET PAY TAX RELIEF TOP-UP

Currently, some employees are not receiving the tax top-up known as 'tax relief' from the Government, in their pension pots.

If an individual contributes via a

relief at source arrangement, they will automatically receive a top-up at 20 per cent on their pension contributions (even if they do not pay or have a lower rate of income tax). In contrast, if they contribute via a net pay arrangement they will receive tax relief at their marginal rate, which for those with taxable earnings at or below the personal allowance (£12,570) is 0 per cent.

Individuals making pension contributions to net pay schemes who do not receive tax relief on their contributions will be eligible to claim a top-up from 2024-25.

CRIMINAL OFFENCES POLICY

The Pensions Regulator (TPR) has published a policy on how it will use its new criminal powers to prosecute those who put savers' pensions at risk.

The new criminal offences are 'avoidance of employer debt' and 'conduct risking accrued scheme benefits'. In simple terms, the Regulator will prosecute a person if that person:

- Carried out an act (which includes failing to act) that avoided an employer debt or risked accrued scheme benefits.
- Knew that the act (or failure to act) would do this.
- Did not have a reasonable excuse.

DELAY TO SIMPLER BENEFIT STATEMENTS

The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) published a consultation document in May 2021 asking for comments on its suggestions for simpler benefit statements for defined contribution pension arrangements (used for auto-enrolment amongst other arrangements). The DWP published its response to the consultation in October with the key change being a delay in the introduction of simpler statements until October 2022. The original target date was April 2022.



submitting a form before the end of the tax year. Alternatively, you can wait until the end of the tax year when HMRC should assess each individual for tax due on the amount received and automatically refund any excess tax paid.

Claim a tax refund when you've taken a small pension lump sum:

www.gov.uk search **P53** or **P53Z**.

Further information can also be found on the Usdaw website: www.usdaw.org.uk/pensions

THE P-WORD IS NOT BANTER

November was Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM) and organisations stepped up to educate more people on how to tackle Islamophobia.

The month-long campaign aims to raise awareness of Islamophobia, to encourage better reporting of hate incidents to the police, and to highlight the contributions of Muslim communities to the UK.

What is Islamophobia?

In 2019, after taking evidence from Muslim organisations, legal experts and academics, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), called on the Government to use the following definition, 'Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.'

The definition put forward by APPG, was adopted by the Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, Plaid Cymru and the London mayor's office. However, the Conservative Government rejected this definition and said it would commission independent experts to draw up a different definition. Two years later, the Conservative Government has failed to produce a working definition.

Why is a definition needed?

The Government's statistics on hate crime (2020-2021) show that almost half of all religious hate crimes were directed towards Muslims.

In the last few years, there have been some horrific attacks on Muslims:

- In 2017, Darren Osborne drove his vehicle into pedestrians near Finsbury Mosque, killing one person and injuring 12.
- In 2018, John Tomlin launched an unprovoked acid attack on Resham Khan and her cousin Jameel Mukhtar in East London.
- In 2018, David Parnham distributed a 'Punish a Muslim Day' Letter calling on the public to commit violence against Muslims.

The report from the APPG said: "From hate crimes motivated by anti-Muslim feeling, buttressed by stereotypes and racist caricatures prevalent in social and media discourse, to policies which perpetuate discriminatory outcomes for Muslims, a definition of Islamophobia is vital."

Islamophobia and racism

For many, Islamophobia is inextricably entwined with racism. This was recently highlighted when the former England cricket player Azeem Rafiq spoke about the racism he faced in the sport. Rafiq who is Pakistani and a Muslim experienced Islamophobia when he had wine forced down his throat (alcohol is forbidden in Islam) and racism when he was subjected to the constant use of the P-word.

A formal investigation was launched and despite accepting that Rafiq was the victim of racial harassment and bullying, Yorkshire County Cricket Club decided that no one would face any disciplinary action. The investigation also concluded that the repeated use of the P-word was just friendly banter.

The P-word is NOT banter

Banter is defined as 'the playful and friendly exchange of teasing remarks'.

The P-word is rooted in a history of hatred and violence and many Pakistani immigrants were subjected to this racist slur when they first arrived in the UK and still are today. It was the word the far-right used when they went P-bashing. A word loaded with this kind of history can never be banter and reducing it to banter is a way of excusing the perpetrator.

Islamophobia in the workplace

In 2017, a report from the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) found that young Muslims were being 'held back from reaching their full potential at every stage of their lives'.

Studies over the years have

THE MEDIA'S ROLE

According to the Muslim Council of Britain, most coverage of Muslims in British news outlets has a negative slant, which is contributing to Islamophobia. For every one 'moderate' Muslim mentioned, 21 examples of 'extremist' Muslims are mentioned in the media.

It isn't just the news and newspapers. Think about films and shows that have Muslim characters, how are they portrayed? Would they pass the Riz Ahmed Test?

What is the Riz Ahmed Test?

Riz Ahmed is an Emmy-winning British Pakistani actor, rapper and activist. Taking inspiration from Riz's 2017 speech in the House of Commons on diversity on screen, the Riz Test sets five criteria to measure how Muslims are portrayed on film and TV. If the film or show has a Muslim character, ask the following five questions:

Are the characters:

- Talking about, the victim of, or the perpetrator of terrorism?
 - Presented as irrationally angry?
 - Presented as superstitious, culturally backwards or anti-modern?
 - Presented as a threat to a Western way of life?
 - If the character is male, is he presented as misogynistic? Or if female, is she presented as oppressed by her male counterparts?
- If the answer for any of the above is yes, then the Film/ TV show fails the test.

Data analyst Shaf Choudry, who created the Riz Test, studied more than 1,000 movies released in the last 100 years, and found nine out of 10 failed the test. He also noted that these trends had worsened since 9/11.

The test highlights the need for film and TV to portray Muslim characters that are complex and nuanced.

reported similar findings:

- People submitting CVs with 'Muslim-sounding' names are three times less likely to get a job interview.
- Nearly two-thirds of British Muslims feel they have been treated differently in the workplace because they are Muslim.
- More than one in five have experienced or witnessed racist harassment or bullying from managers or customers in the last five years.

How to fight Islamophobia?

The Equality Act

Under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful to discriminate against someone because they are Muslim. This includes treating them less favourably or harassing them on grounds of their religion.

Recognising Islamophobia

Islamophobia can take many different forms from using racist slurs as banter to assuming that anyone with a headscarf is a terrorist sympathiser.

Raise awareness in your store

You can raise awareness in your store. Mend, a not-for-profit organisation, has lots of resources to help you do this.

Reporting Islamophobia

Make sure you report Islamophobic attacks and harassment from customers or staff to the manager, Tell MAMA or the police.

Further Help and Support

Tell MAMA supports victims of anti-Muslim hate tellmamauk.org
Mend seeks to tackle Islamophobia across the UK www.mend.org.uk



Mark Parr campaigning in October

MEMBERSHIP WEEK JAN 2022

During the pandemic, trade unions around the world successfully protected workers' jobs and safety. In the UK, trade unions were involved in discussions with the chancellor which culminated in a package of support to help workers through the crisis. To avoid mass redundancies a Job Retention Scheme (furlough) was created which provided 80 per cent support for employees who were temporarily laid off.

The pandemic has shown the true value of being in a trade union. That's why it's more important than ever that reps continue to recruit new members so that they have access to the benefits of Usdaw membership. Also, it's vital that we maintain our membership levels so that we can continue to be a strong and influential voice for our members.

MEMBERSHIP WEEK

Membership Week is an important part of the union's calendar. Usdaw officials and reps will be pulling out all the stops to give the union a massive membership boost.

Start planning for membership week with this checklist:

- Speak to your manager about time off to organise an event.
- Order recruitment leaflets and promotional materials in advance.
- Identify areas/departments in your workplace where membership is low.
- Arrange your team of reps on a rota to cover all shifts.
- Contact your area organiser or local office for help.
- Take lots of photos and send them to Usdaw's magazine team at:

network@usdaw.org.uk

MARK PARR MORRISONS

Network spoke to Usdaw rep Mark Parr, who ran a fantastic campaign at Morrisons Cheadle during membership week in October. Mark, who works on produce and has worked at a number of Morrisons' sites across the northwest, became a rep in 2008. He's an active rep who completed Academy 1 in 2019 and has done several bouts of stand down.

"Over the years, I have become more and more involved in the union. My area organiser liked what I was doing and put me forward for Academy 1. When I first went to the Academy, I didn't have the confidence to speak but as the weeks went by, I gained more and more confidence. By the end of it, I even addressed 200 reps about my experience of taking part in the Academy! Thanks to the Academy,

"MAKE IT TOPICAL. FOR THE LAST MEMBERSHIP WEEK, I RAN A SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD CAMPAIGN IN STORE AND WE HAD A BRILLIANT RESPONSE. "FOLLOWING EURO 2020 THE ISSUE OF RACISM IN FOOTBALL DOMINATED HEADLINES DURING THE SUMMER. WE HAD A LOT OF ENGAGEMENT FROM MANAGERS, STAFF AND CUSTOMERS BECAUSE IT WAS CURRENT AND FRESH IN PEOPLE'S MINDS."

Mark Parr

I became a better rep and doing stand down has helped me hone my recruitment skills."

MARK'S TIPS FOR RECRUITING

Let people know who you are

In your workplace you need to be visible. Use your noticeboard to let people know who you are and regularly update it.

Build good working relationships

Build a good working relationship with management. There is no point being confrontational as that gets you nowhere. It is better to work with them to find the right outcome for your members. Once your colleagues see you winning for members, they will want to join the union.

The Value of inductions

Many Usdaw agreements give reps time off to recruit at inductions. If you are unsure what you are entitled to, speak to your manager/area organiser to clarify the process.

Know your stuff

Make sure you have a rough idea of what you're going to say. At first you might need to jot down a couple of points but you'll soon get the hang of it.

Make it personal

Tell people who you are and how you got involved in the union. Did you get involved because your parents were involved in the trade union movement? Did you get involved because you or your colleagues were treated badly at work? Or are you someone who just likes helping people? Whatever the reason let people know.

Union membership is a form of insurance

I always ask, would you drive a car without insurance? I then point out that union membership is like insurance because it protects you when things go wrong.

Outline reasons to join Usdaw

Tell people that Usdaw members tend to get better pay and safer workplaces. They also get representation in a disciplinary/grievance meeting, legal cover and a host of other benefits. If you're unsure of what the benefits are, download Usdaw's leaflet 10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw www.usdaw.org.uk/261

Success stories

It's worth thinking about what you've done for members. Have you secured flexible working for a colleague? Did a member win an accident injury claim using Usdaw's legal service? Have you won a grievance? Do you save money using the cinema discount? Give real life examples so that new starters get a clear idea of what the union can do.

Covid wins

Outline the wins Usdaw achieved by lobbying employers during the pandemic including 10 per cent pay bonuses, getting sick pay from day

one, enhanced colleague discounts, and improved health and safety measures with enhanced social distancing, plastic screens and limiting the number of customers.

Talk about the campaigns

I find talking about the Freedom From Fear campaign helps. From Fear campaign helps because lots of people have experienced abuse from customers. People will sign up when you tell them that the union is campaigning for a law to protect shopworkers. You can target your campaign, if you have a lot of parents at your workplace, you could talk about the Supporting Parents and Carers campaign. If people are struggling for money pick the New Deal for Workers campaign.

Approach people a couple of weeks after their induction

I find a lot of people join up after they've done the job for a couple of weeks. They might experience abuse from customers, find it difficult to take their breaks or been told off by their manager. Talking to their colleagues is also a clincher. If their colleagues are in the union, then they are more likely to sign up. So, it's always worth approaching them again at a later date.

For more information go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/mwjan

JOINING ONLINE

Employees at Tesco, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Argos, the Co-op and many other employers are now able to join online through the Usdaw website and have their monthly contributions deducted from their wages rather than having to complete a direct debit form.

For reps, this makes recruiting members at these workplaces easier and quicker than ever before and eliminates the use of paper forms.

Join online at: www.usdaw.org.uk/joinnow

BOOKER REPS DO A STERLING JOB DURING THE PANDEMIC

Booker reps at the Didcot site have done an amazing job of organising their workplace since the agreement was signed in 2016. Carl Wooster, Didcot's very first rep, was instrumental in getting the agreement off the ground and conducting the inductions. Thanks to Carl's stellar efforts membership went from 20 per cent to over 63 per cent. **Network** caught up with Carl Wooster and new rep Cristian-Lonut Macluca to talk about the work they have been doing at the site.

CARL WOOSTER

Carl Wooster has been a rep at the Booker Didcot site since the agreement was set up in 2016. Carl, 44, is the senior trainer and is responsible for all the training and inductions at the site.

"I was the first rep on site. I stood because my manager said I had the right attributes to become a rep and encouraged me to put myself forward.

"When we're fully staffed there's about 350 people on site and at the time, I was responsible for them all. It was pretty scary but luckily, I got loads of support from my area organiser. I did a lot of learning on the job and if I got stuck, I would ring up my area organiser who would talk me through the issue. I also developed a good working relationship with the reps at the other Booker sites who were brilliant and always on hand if I needed to run something by them.

"When I first started, I was on nights. I would approach everyone and try to sign them up but it was really tough. Membership was around 20 per cent so it was hard

to convince people to join. Their comeback was, there was no point joining the union because no-one else was doing it. But I kept chipping away at it and telling them about everything that comes with union membership such as the discounts and offers. I would pull up the website and go through some of the offers available on insurance, mobiles and cinema tickets. This usually did the trick!

"Slowly the membership increased and I'm proud to say we now have just over 63 per cent density. Now my argument is that almost everyone's a member at the site so why wouldn't you join.

"It also helps that we have a good working relationship with the company, which makes it so much easier to work things through. We tend to do this through weekly and monthly meetings which means things get sorted out before they become bigger issues.

"The last 18 months have been really tough. Our biggest challenge on site was dealing with mental health issues. I was overwhelmed with calls 24 hours a day. People were calling me at 2am, they'd be very wound up or agitated. I would end up talking them down and because I only live five minutes from the site, I would even go in.

"In the end, it also affected my mental health. At the time, I was recovering from a spinal injury, looking after parents who were also seriously ill and then trying to be there for our members. When I realised how awful I was feeling I sat down with HR and told them what was going on with me. The company and the union bent over backwards

WHO ARE BOOKER?

Booker Group Limited is a British food wholesale operator. It became a subsidiary of Tesco in 2018, when Tesco completed its acquisition of the company for £3.7 billion.

The company was founded by George and Richard Booker in 1835, who started off in shipping goods but later diversified into distribution. By 1978 the company had over a hundred warehouses across the UK and was trading as Booker McConnell Ltd.

In 1968, the company also founded and sponsored the Booker McConnell Prize for literature. This later became known as the Booker Prize and is one of the most prestigious awards in literature.

to support me.

"Since the restrictions have eased, things have calmed down. People are less stressed and a lot happier. This has taken the pressure off me and I'm feeling a lot better now.

"I want to thank all the reps on the site for the amazing work they did over the last 18 months.

"In the coming months, I'm looking forward to working with a couple of new reps that have joined the team, recruiting for the union and concluding this year's pay negotiations."

CRISTIAN-LONUT MACLUCA

Cristian-Lonut Macluca joined the Booker reps' team as the health and safety rep six months ago.

Cristian, 31, came to the UK from



Carl Wooster



Cristian-Lonut Macluca

Romania in 2018 and decided to become a rep when he saw the great work the reps did supporting members during the pandemic.

"Back in Romania, it's really hard to make a living. You struggle to live from one month to the next. I decided to come to the UK because I had a basic grasp of English so I wanted to make a go of living and working here.

"I started off as a warehouse operative, but the company gave me lots of opportunities to develop. When the trainer role came up, my managers were very supportive of

me applying for the role, which I was successful in getting.

"Since I came to the UK, my English has improved a lot and I was ready for a new challenge. I decided to become a health and safety rep because over the last three years I learned about health and safety on the job. I know how things are meant to work and I'm familiar with the issues and concerns.

"I've only been a rep for six months, so I'm still learning. I've done the online health and safety courses but I'm old-fashioned, I like learning face-to-face in a classroom.

"Being a rep is extremely challenging but I'm always up for a challenge. I'm not a quitter so I knew I would stick this out no matter how hard it got. My favourite part about being rep is helping people and I've had a couple of wins recently which I'm very happy about.

"In the next few years, I would love to go on the Academy. Although I already have a degree in Economic Science it's not recognised here because I completed it back in Romania. So, I would like to do a degree in business management here in the UK."

EPILEPSY CARE AND SUPPORT

Epilepsy is one of the oldest-known medical conditions and is surrounded by superstition and stigma. In the past, those who suffered from epilepsy were thought to be possessed by the devil or divine inspiration, depending on where and what time period they lived in. Up until recently, people with epilepsy were treated appallingly and many were sent to asylums.

Thankfully, things have changed and it is now understood that epilepsy is a common neurological condition that affects the brain and causes frequent seizures. Around 600,000 people live with epilepsy in the UK, that's almost one in every 100 people. Famous people with epilepsy include Vincent Van Gogh, Charles Dickens, Agatha Christie, Neil Young, Elton John and Danny Glover.

Epilepsy can start at any age, but usually starts either in childhood or in people over 60. For some people epilepsy is a lifelong condition, for others it can get better over time.

There are around 60 different types of seizures that vary depending where in the brain they are happening. For some, seizures can be life threatening and figures from Public Health England found that 70 per cent of people with the condition now die on average eight years earlier than the rest of the population.

WHAT ARE EPILEPTIC SEIZURES?

A seizure happens when there is a sudden burst of intense electrical activity in the brain. This causes a temporary disruption to the way the brain normally works which results in an epileptic seizure.

Seizures can affect people in different ways, depending on which part of the brain is involved. A person may remain alert and aware of what's going on around them or they may lose awareness. They may experience strange sensations, unusual smells or tastes. They may feel tingling in their arms and legs, go stiff, fall to the floor and jerk.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS WITH EPILEPSY

Epilepsy may limit someone's ability to work at the time of a seizure itself and during recovery. There could also be an impact on memory and concentration and the unpredictability of seizures could affect their attendance. This could lead to them being disciplined under capability procedures or absence management policies. They may also find that aspects of the job make their condition worse.

EQUALITY ACT

A person with epilepsy may be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act (Disability

A person with epilepsy may be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act which will give them important legal rights at work such as reasonable adjustments.

Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland). This can help them get the right support at work because the Equality Act gives members important legal rights.

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Once a member is classed as disabled under the Act, then their employer has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments in the workplace that take account of the member's condition to ensure they are not at a disadvantage.

There isn't 'a one size fits all' approach, therefore it's best to speak to the member about their condition when discussing any changes. They will be the expert on how their condition affects them and what support would help them at work.

CHANGES COULD INCLUDE

- Avoid lone working, so that someone is there to help if they have a seizure.
- If the seizures are unpredictable avoid having the person work near dangerous equipment or machinery.
- Changing elements of the job that trigger seizures.
- Give written instructions if someone struggles with their memory.
- Changing shift times if seizures are triggered in the morning or evenings.
- Avoid night work if seizures are triggered by irregular sleep patterns.
- If they have lost their license, moving to a workplace closer to their home, if that is what they want.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Usdaw's Guide to Supporting Disabled Members
www.usdaw.org.uk/383
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/epilepsy
- Epilepsy Action
www.epilepsy.org.uk
- Epilepsy Society
epilepsysociety.org.uk

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO COVER A MEMBER UNDER THE EQUALITY ACT

The only conditions automatically covered under the Act are MS, cancer, HIV/AIDS or registered blind/ partially sighted. For all other conditions it needs to be demonstrated that a member meets the definition of a disabled person as set out in the Act. To meet the definition look at:

Does the member have a physical or mental impairment?

Is their condition physical, mental or both?

Is it more than a trivial condition?

The impact on the member's life needs to be more than trivial. Keeping a diary can help to document the effects.

Has it/will it last a year or more?

The member does not have to be constantly in pain or experiencing symptoms. People may feel better or worse at certain times, therefore conditions that fluctuate can be counted.

What would happen if they stopped taking medication?

In deciding whether someone is disabled the effect of any medication or treatment is ignored.

Does it affect their everyday life?

It is important to ask the member to outline how the condition affects them at work and in their daily life. Go through a typical day with them and ask how their symptoms affect their day-to-day activities such as getting out of bed, bathing, getting dressed, eating, travelling to work etc.

You can look at: mobility, manual dexterity, lifting everyday things, co-ordination, speech, memory, hearing, concentration, eyesight and learning/ understanding.

If you can show that the member meets each of the five criteria listed, then they will be entitled to the protection of the Equality Act (DDA in Northern Ireland).



PREVENTING UNDER-AGE SALES

Network looks how to minimise the risk posed to shopworkers when they ask for ID or refuse a sale.

As we head into the festive period, many shopworkers will be dealing with an increase in demand for age-restricted products such as alcohol. It's illegal to sell age-restricted products to under-age customers. The law places the onus on the seller to 'take all reasonable steps' to avoid serving under-age customers. If in doubt, they must ask for proof of age from the purchaser.

Most retailers expect customers to prove their age if they appear to be under 25. A valid ID will include a photo ID with the PASS hologram logo or a picture driving license, passports or a local card scheme, if it is supported by the Trading Standards Department. If there is no valid ID, they must refuse the sale.

Selling age-restricted products, even by mistake, can result in shopworkers being sent to court and given a large fine. Trading standards officers are encouraged to conduct 'sting' operations to try to catch out shopworkers making under-age sales. The penalties are severe.

WHAT CAN REPS DO TO SUPPORT MEMBERS?

Raise Awareness

You could hold a raising awareness day that makes the policy on under-age sales very clear to both staff and customers.

Signage, Posters, Notices

Ask your employer to display 'No ID, No Sale' notices. Notices like these

back up our members when they ask customers for ID.

It is also important for retailers to make it clear in their signage that those purchasing alcohol under-age are breaking the law themselves.

General signs which make it clear that abuse of shopworkers will not be tolerated can help reinforce the message.

Training

Make sure your workplace is providing staff with the right training including any refreshers.

Refusals Register

Check whether your workplace keeps a register which logs the incidences where a sale has been refused.

General Security Measures

Check to see whether Usdaw has negotiated measures such as CCTV, security guards and properly staffed stores late at night and whether these have been implemented.

Supporting Staff

Look at what happens when a member of staff refuses a sale. Do managers support their staff or do they undermine their decision? Is there a policy on this and are managers aware of it?

Genuine Mistakes

How does your employer deal with staff who make a genuine mistake during a sale or a test purchase?

Rather than disciplining the member, can they use further training as an alternative?

Reporting Abusive or Violent Incidents

There should be a clear process for staff to log any resulting violence or abuse. Make sure you know this process and report all incidents of abuse, threats or violence and keep a record. This could be used to ban the person from the store, or as evidence for the police.

Logging the incidences can also help you to identify patterns that could be addressed e.g. more security on Friday and Saturday nights.

Risk Assessments

Your company also has a duty of care to protect their staff from violence and threats at work. If a colleague is suffering from intimidation and abuse, ask for support and a risk assessment. You





Minimum Age	Restricted Item
18	Knives, blades and similar items
18	Alcohol
18	Cigarettes, tobacco and e-cigarettes (if contain nicotine)
18	Lottery tickets and scratch cards
18	Crossbows and air guns
18	Fireworks
18	Solvents (if you have reason to believe that they will not be used for their intended purpose and will instead be used for inhaling)
16	Butane gas lighter refills
16	Petrol
16	Party poppers and caps
16	Aerosol paints
12, 15 and 18	Video, DVD, Blu-ray, cinema and computer games
12	Christmas crackers

PENALTIES FOR MAKING AN UNDER-AGE SALE

Tobacco and aerosol paints

- Maximum fine £2,500.

Other products

- Maximum fine £5,000 and/or six months in prison.

Alcohol

- £90 penalty notice for disorder (on-the-spot fine).
- Court appearance and/or fine of up to £5,000.
- Removal of alcohol licence.
- These penalties apply to shopworkers and workers delivering alcohol to under 18s.

can involve your area organiser to ensure practical measures are taken to protect staff.

Members Facing Prosecution

What is your employer doing to support staff facing prosecution? Support could include paid time off to attend a court hearing or being accompanied by a member of management to provide moral support at the hearing.

Legal Support for 'sting' operations

Usdaw in no way condones under-age sales but it does support members who are subject to 'sting' operations.

Make sure Usdaw members, who've been subject to a 'sting' operation, know they can contact Usdaw's Legal Department on 0161 224 2804.

Legal Support for Victims of Violence

Members who suffer serious injury may be able to claim compensation from the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority, a state funded scheme. Encourage members to call **FirstCall Usdaw** on **0800 055 6333** to see if they have a claim.

Get Involved

Usdaw's Freedom From Fear campaign is an award winning campaign against abuse, intimidation and violence against shopworkers. Thanks to Usdaw's campaigning, in Scotland, it is now a specific offence to abuse, threaten or assault a retail worker, with an increased sentence if the offence relates to age-restricted sales. Usdaw continues to campaign for similar legislation to come into force

in the rest of the UK.

Usdaw is also campaigning for a national 'Proof of Age' scheme for young people and a compulsory 'No ID, No Sale' policy to cut the number of attempted sales and help protect shopworkers.

To help our campaign, or for support, advice and practical measures you can take to make your store safer, visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/fff

Retail Staff Survey

Usdaw's campaigning is evidence-based and rooted in our members' experiences.

The retail staff survey helps Usdaw make a better case to employers and politicians to secure stronger protections. Encourage your members to share their experiences online at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/fffsurvey

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN & GIRLS

Governments across the world fail to prevent violence against women and girls during lockdown

Every year sees mounting evidence of the devastating impact of violence against women and girls but 2021 has been particularly difficult. During lockdowns, which extended to all parts of the UK and Ireland, many women were stuck at home with the perpetrator of violence, unable to escape to, what for many women, is the safety of their workplace.

Violence against women and girls is incredibly common with sexual assault, domestic violence, harassment and many other forms of abuse affecting between a quarter and a third of all women during their lifetime.

This isn't just an issue for women; all Usdaw members will have mothers, daughters, partners, wives and other women in their lives they care about. If we make workplaces and communities safer for women and girls, we make them safer for everyone.

- Almost one in three women aged 16-59 will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime.
- A woman is killed by a man every three days and two women every week are killed by a current or ex-partner and other close relative.
- 97 per cent of women aged 18-24 have experienced some form of harassment in public.
- Only 15 per cent of serious sexual offences and 21 per cent of partner abuse incidents are reported to the police.

Violence against women and girls

is part of what is stopping women achieving equality.

This widespread experience of violence limits women's freedom and choices and forces them to make calculations about what is and is not safe for them to do.

It is violence which is directed at women and girls because they are women and girls. It includes sexual violence, domestic violence, stalking and harassment, FGM (Female Genital Mutilation), forced marriage and so-called 'honour-based violence', trafficking and prostitution, and abuse of women and girls in online spaces.

All these forms of abuse are committed disproportionately against women and girls, and the perpetrators are usually men. Violence against women and girls occurs in every society around the world and has a profound impact on women not just at home but at work as well.

Why is this a trade union issue?

Udaw has always been clear that violence against women is a trade union issue. We have national campaigns tackling sexual harassment and domestic violence. Our Safe Journeys to Work campaign aims to help women feel safe when travelling to and from work. And Usdaw reps and officers are continuing to work hard to negotiate agreements with employers that both support women facing violence and create workplaces free from abuse and harassment.



What can you do?

Udaw reps are often best placed to spot the signs that a member may be experiencing domestic abuse and if this is the case can do the following.

Spot abuse: If you think someone's behaviour is unusual, it is better to ask than to assume. Consider the use of closed questions (questions to which they can answer 'yes' or 'no') in case someone else may be listening.

Remember: domestic abuse isn't always physical. It's a pattern of controlling and intimidating behaviour that can be emotional, economic, psychological or sexual. It can happen in same-sex and heterosexual relationships.



USDAW RESOURCES

Domestic abuse leaflets
www.usdaw.org.uk/416
www.usdaw.org.uk/417

Help to Stay Safe leaflet
www.usdaw.org.uk/373

Are you affected by male
 domestic violence?
www.usdaw.org.uk/405

[www.usdaw.org.uk/
 Campaigns/Sexual-Harassment](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Sexual-Harassment)

[www.usdaw.org.uk/
 Campaigns/Safe-Journey](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Safe-Journey)

Support: The most important thing you can do is listen and believe. Keep in touch. This could be through regular video or phone calls, or if it is safer via emails or text messages. Be careful and sensitive. Keep checking in with them, even if they don't want to seek help yet.

Stop abuse: Encourage them to call the **National Domestic Abuse Helpline** on **0808 2000 247**. The helpline will put them in touch with local services who can help them make a plan to get safe.

What about men?

The question 'What about men?' is often raised during discussions on issues that are predominantly experienced by women. It rarely

helps to shed light on these equally important topics and instead tends to shift the focus away from women.

No-one is denying that men experience violence and abuse too. Every incidence of violence and abuse should be taken seriously and everyone should be able to access appropriate support.

However, it is important to understand and be specific about the different experiences and concerns men and women have.

There are charities and organisations that recognise the different needs of men and women and offer specialist advice to support them. These are listed in the union's leaflets.

www.usdaw.org.uk

WORLD AIDS DAY

Today an estimated 105,200 people live with HIV in the UK. Yet recent research by the National Aids Trust found 63 per cent of the public do not remember seeing or hearing about HIV in the past six months. Only a third said they have sympathy for people living with HIV regardless of how they acquired it.

Their survey also found one in five people think you can acquire HIV through kissing. Only 16 per cent knew if someone is on effective treatment, they can't pass HIV on and can expect to live a long and healthy life.

Because of the stigma surrounding HIV, employment law (specifically the Equality Act or the Disability Discrimination Act in Northern Ireland) lists HIV as one of only five conditions that is considered a disability from the point of diagnosis. This means that employers who are aware of a worker's HIV positive status must make reasonable adjustments to the workplace environment, to job duties and to policies and procedures to prevent them being disadvantaged at work. People living with HIV are also protected from harassment and victimisation at work, or from being treated unfavourably because of something arising in consequence of their HIV status.



For more information visit the National Aids Trust website
nat.org.uk

Or see Usdaw leaflets:

www.usdaw.org.uk/383
www.usdaw.org.uk/410
www.usdaw.org.uk/439
www.usdaw.org.uk/wh9

STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

Employers have a legal duty to minimise risk from maintaining vehicles to managing driver fatigue

The HSE has recently updated its web-based guidance on occupational road risk. Driving for work is one of the most dangerous jobs workers do. Every week there are around 200 deaths and serious injuries involving people using the road for work and it is estimated that 40,000 people working in occupations such as sales, deliveries or taxi-driving are involved in road traffic collisions every year.

Employers have a duty to manage health and safety risks for workers who drive a vehicle on the road as part of their work. Health and safety law applies to work activities on the road in the same way as it does on a fixed site.

What the HSE guidance does cover

The HSE guidance covers many, but not all, of the issues that employers should consider when their workers do drive as part of their work. They emphasise that employers should consider the risks to lone workers and other vulnerable workers. A lone worker is 'someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision', including those who work away from a fixed base, such as delivery drivers or couriers. They also remind employers that they should consult with workers and their safety reps on the risks.

Commuting isn't covered

However, the HSE states that commuting to work is not generally

classified as driving for work, except when workers are driving to a work location that is not their normal place of work.

Reps may be able to use the Usdaw Journey to Work campaign materials to persuade employers to make the journey safer by changing shift times, providing their own transport or persuading local authorities to improve local bus timetables.

www.usdaw.org.uk/Campaigns/Safe-Journey

Planning journeys

The employer is responsible for planning journeys so that they can be done safely by drivers.

This includes:

- Scheduling the journey to enable the driver to drive within the law, taking account of weather, road conditions and other traffic.
- Timing journeys should also allow sufficient time for safe loading and unloading at delivery points and planning should include details of safety and welfare for drivers at delivery points.
- HSE reminds customer businesses that they have a legal duty to provide access to toilets and washing facilities for delivery drivers and other visiting workers.
- Employers should have regular contact with sites to which their drivers deliver to make sure that safety and welfare are covered.
- Employers should have a system for reporting accidents and monitoring performance to make

sure that there are no serious accident hot spots or problems with the journey planning system. They argue that telematics can play an important part in developing safe driving and monitoring performance but do warn that systems should not cause distraction while driving and should be backed up by effective management and coaching rather than relying on the in-vehicle information on its own.

Safe and healthy drivers

A separate section covers the driver. It has some obvious advice on competence and training. But it also covers lone worker risks and the importance of drivers being able to keep in contact. In addition, there is advice on the risk of violence and aggression from other road users.

Employers should have a clear





policy on phone use. Obviously use of a handheld phone while driving is an offence but the policy needs to also cover hands-free use as this can be a significant distraction when driving. Distractions from other devices such as PDAs and in-cab driver monitoring equipment also needs to be considered.

The guidance also covers the need to manage driver fatigue and work-related stress and emphasises the importance of ergonomic cab design to allow the driver to maintain a good posture when driving.

Safe and healthy vehicles

The section on vehicle safety stresses the importance of having the right vehicle for the job and the need for regular maintenance to make sure that vehicles are roadworthy and safe to use.

As part of vehicle maintenance HSE says that drivers should do daily safety checks before taking vehicles out on the road and there should be a clear policy that unsafe vehicles will not be used.

The revised HSE guidance is detailed and covers many of the risks for Usdaw members who drive cars, vans or lorries as part of their work. However there are other issues which the HSE do not cover in this guidance such as good cab ventilation, maintaining a reasonable temperature or safe access to the vehicle.

Most importantly there is no mention of the need for drivers to be able to do their own 'dynamic' risk assessment when road conditions deteriorate or when there is an unforeseen hazard at a delivery site. The policy should be

CONTACT

- **Health and safety officer**
Doug Russell
0161 249 2441
- **Health and safety assistant**
Tony Whelan
0161 249 2474
- **General health and safety enquiries email:**
healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk

clear that the driver has the choice to refuse a delivery or change their route when safety demands it.

The guidance is useful for health and safety reps who represent drivers and can be found at www.hse.gov.uk/roadsafety

STAYING SAFE AND HEALTHY ON THE ROAD

BE PREPARED FOR DRIVING IN WINTER



Weather conditions in winter can pose a particular problem for drivers. Whether it is snow and ice, strong winds, heavy rain and flooding or foggy conditions, the hazards can be serious.

Members who drive lorries or delivery vans can really struggle in winter weather.

Here are some useful pointers for drivers' health and safety reps.

Drivers and managers should:

- Check the weather forecast and road conditions.
- Consider other routes in bad weather.
- Allow extra time for the journey.
- Employers should provide refresher training on defensive driving in winter.
- It should be clear that the final decision to travel or to attempt to deliver at any location lies with the driver. If the weather deteriorates once they have left the depot or if a delivery location is unsafe, there should be a clear procedure for the driver to follow.
- Pre-shift checks on tyres, windscreen washers, brakes, lights, etc. are even more

important in winter.

- Winter tyres can make a big difference to driving on snow and ice or on wet roads when the temperature is close to freezing.
- Spare warm clothing, a blanket, hot drinks, a torch, a shovel and suitable footwear are all essential survival kit for winter weather.
- Uniform jackets, trousers etc. should be suitable for winter conditions. If hi-vis jackets are worn over other clothing they should be big enough to fit over bulkier winter wear.
- There should be a system to alert the depot if a driver fails to arrive at expected delivery points and to check that all drivers do return to base.

For all of us, travel to and from work can be a problem in winter weather. If you don't think it is safe to attempt the journey, follow any procedures set by your employer about contacting work to say you won't be in.

Members are advised to follow Government advice on whether it is safe to travel at:

www.gov.uk search **Driving in adverse weather conditions**

DRIVERS ACCESS TO SANITARY FACILITIES

Usdaw is calling for all drivers to be provided with safe and easy access to toilets and other welfare facilities.

Drivers have faced a lack of appropriate facilities for many years, both at the roadside and when making deliveries. Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic this issue has been significantly exacerbated, causing a further erosion of drivers' working conditions.

Usdaw is clear that sites should meet their legal obligations and ensure that all drivers are provided with safe and easy access to welfare facilities such as toilets and handwashing facilities. Alongside this, the Government must provide clear instructions to all locations accepting deliveries from drivers about their requirement to provide welfare facilities and must develop clear best practice guidance.

HSE ONLINE TOOLS

FREE MANUAL HANDLING ASSESSMENT

Image courtesy of HSE books.hse.gov.uk



The HSE has now made its online manual handling assessment tools publicly available. Organisations that need several assessments can pay a licence for a 'premium' version of the tools which allows them to keep track of all their assessments and prioritise control measures. But the assessment tools are also available

for free for managers or safety reps to use for one-off assessments of single tasks.

There are three tools – the Manual Handling Assessment Charts (MAC) tool for lifting and carrying, the Risk Assessment for Pushing and Pulling (RAPP) for loads such as roll cages and the Assessment of Repetitive

Tasks (ART) tool for rapid repetitive work such as assembly line work.

For each one there is a helpful introductory video explaining briefly how to use the tool.

To see the tools and try them out go to:

books.hse.gov.uk/MSD-Assessment-Tool/?DI=654426

ONLINE CHECKLIST NOW AVAILABLE

SCORE YOUR WORKPLACE VENTILATION



The British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) have created a simple online tool that can be used to get an indication of whether the ventilation is adequate in a workplace.

Good ventilation is important in the workplace as it provides a layer of protection to reduce the airborne transmission of Covid-19 and other respiratory diseases. But there is also a legal requirement

on employers to provide adequate supplies of fresh air in indoor workplaces. The BOHS tool has been developed in collaboration with the HSE.

The tool asks some basic questions about the size of the workspace, the number of people who use it and the types of ventilation it has.

It produces an overall score that will give an indication of

how effective the ventilation is at reducing the risk of coronavirus transmission.

Using this tool can help ensure that employers are meeting their legal requirement to provide adequate ventilation and reduce the exposure of workers to COVID-19.

Please see the BOHS ventilation tool at:

breathefreely.org.uk/ventilation-tool

MemberOffers

CARS & TRANSPORT

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

INSURANCE

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

MONEY & FINANCE

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

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

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

HOLIDAYS

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

SHOPPING

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

MISCELLANEOUS

Gas and Electric
Mobile Phones
TOTUM Pro Card
International Student ID



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

www.usdaw.org.uk/legal

www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

*Terms and Conditions for individual offers on the website.

Find out more
www.usdaw.org.uk/offers*

ENJOY CHRISTMAS FOR LESS

It's the most wonderful time of the year, but with Usdaw Discounts & Offers, we're about to make it even better. We've compiled the discounts available to help you save on everything from Christmas shopping to party season entertainment.

SHOPPING SPREES FOR LESS

There's no need to search the internet for hours looking for deals...

- Choose the ultimate tech from **Apple***
- Get an extra year free **TOTUM Pro** membership*. You get access to discounts and offers from 350 UK retailers available in-store, online and via the TOTUM app
- Get 15% off a wide range of menswear with **Charles Tyrwhitt***

CLASSIC GIFTS

Whether you're buying for him or her, these offers for Usdaw members make perfect presents.

- Save 10% on magazine and newspaper subscriptions with **isubscribe***
- 75% discount on **Open Fairways Golf Card***
- 20% discount on **Virgin Experience Days***

FOR THE PERSON WHO HAS EVERYTHING

Still stuck for ideas? Here are some unique and memorable gifts for that special someone.

- Save on the biggest sport, fitness and wellness brands through **MyActiveDiscounts***

Merry
Christmas

ENTERTAINING

We're all looking forward to spending time and hosting dinners and parties with our loved ones this year. Make sure you've got your turkey in the oven and stocked up on festive treats!

- Save 50% on 12 luxury wines with **Virgin Wines***, plus FREE express delivery & 2 Schott Zwiesel wine glasses
- FREE Case of Craft Beers from **Beer52***
- Get preferential rates on Cinema tickets with **The Cinema Society***
- 17.5% off home movie streaming plus a £10 gift voucher code for £8.25 from **Chili.com***
- Save on your Christmas food and drink shop with **Blackhawk Network***

FOR KIDS

Tick off their list to Father Christmas with the gift they've been waiting for.

- 10% off outdoor experiences and activities with **Go Ape***

FOR THE TECHNOLOGY LOVERS

Gadgets, gaming and appliances are the perfect present for those who are always after the latest tech!

- Discounts on mobile phone deals with **Reward Mobile***
- Discounts on laptops, desktops and accessories from **Dell Technologies***

*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. isubscribe - please note that the promotion code and the 10% discount are only applicable to debit/credit card and PayPal orders. Apple - discounts are subject to availability and subject to change without notice. Use the discounts for you and your nearest and dearest. Each year you can purchase: 3 x iPad, 3 x iPhone, 3 x Mac, 3 x Apple Watch, 10 x iPod unlimited accessories. Currently the following products are not discounted: AppleCare +, iPhone 12, iPhone 12 Pro, Apple Watch Hermes and Apple Watch Edition, Apple Watch Studio. Virgin Experience Days - discount code cannot be used against their Excluded Range: <https://www.virginexperiencedays.co.uk/excluded-products>. Beer52 - full terms at www.beer52.com/terms. The Cinema Society - discounts vary between cinema venues. Please check when purchasing vouchers. registration to The Cinema Society required to access discount. Go Ape - excludes Saturdays, bank holidays, Nets Kingdom, gift vouchers and corporate bookings. Axe Throwing is currently only available at the Coventry and Matfen sites. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd. Further benefits are organised directly by Usdaw Membership Services. Neither Usdaw nor Parliament Hill are part of the same group as the providers.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Six new area organisers bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to their new roles and one area organiser says goodbye as he retires after 19 years of service.

MICHAEL ADAMSON

Former Co-op rep Michael Adamson has started his new role as Usdaw area organiser and will be based at the Morden office.

Michael, 57, worked for the Co-op for 15 years as a store manager. He became a rep in 2016 and successfully completed both academies.

"There were a lot of changes happening in the Co-op and my area organiser prompted me to become a rep," said Michael. "He thought it would be good to have a rep who was also a store manager as I would be familiar with all the processes and procedures.

"I really enjoyed representing members and I learnt a lot from sitting on the other side of the table! Being a store manager also helped with recruitment because when staff saw that I was a rep they felt that it was ok to join the union.

"Things snowballed after I did my first bout of stand down in 2016. I completed Academy 1 in 2017 and

Academy 2 in 2019. Both academies were brilliant, and I did a lot of recruiting and organising in the convenience sector.

"I've been in my role for about two months and my patch is a mixture of the convenience sector, large stores and logistics. I'm really looking forward to getting out there and getting things off the ground."

JULIA BALDWIN

Julia Baldwin, former lifelong learning project worker for the North-West region, started her new role as an area organiser at the Warrington office in September.

Julia joined Usdaw in 2001 while working at an Argos call centre in Widnes. She became active within the union in 2003 as a shop steward and a learning rep, before joining the Lifelong Learning team in 2006.

"I really enjoyed my time as a project worker but I did miss being a shop steward," said Julia.

"I learned a lot while working in

the lifelong learning team and I want to transfer that knowledge into my new role as area organiser. I'm also looking forward to going back to my roots, representing members and getting involved in collective bargaining processes."

"I'm mainly covering food retail within the M60 ring road but I've also got four industrial sites plus a call centre, due to my background with Argos. My priority will be to develop and support new reps, I've got quite a few Morrisons stores without any shop stewards so I'll be looking to fill those vacancies. I also want to raise the profile of Usdaw across the whole of my patch, especially within Home Shopping."

ANDY FIRMAN

Andy Firman, former rep at DHL, has started his new role as area organiser based at the Warrington office.

Andy worked nights at DHL's Stoke-on-Trent depot for 15 years and became a union learning rep in



Michael Adamson



Julia Baldwin



Andy Firman

2010, before being elected as shop steward in 2012 and safety rep in 2015. He completed both Academy programmes and undertook successful periods of stand down, and was elected to the National Executive Council in April 2021 before vacating that position when appointed as an area organiser.

"I was the first ULR on the night shift at my site, so it was great to be able to provide that support," said Andy, 56. "I was then approached by the existing shop stewards who asked me to stand for election as a rep. I'd never considered being a shop steward, but the rep team explained about the great support and training available. Once I was voted in, I never looked back.

"I've got quite a big patch covering Stoke, Shrewsbury, Telford and also parts of Wales and the Peak District. I'm covering a mix of food and non-food retail, as well as a pharmaceutical warehouse. My priorities are to grow the membership in my patch, develop my current reps and identify new ones. I'm looking forward to helping my reps along their union journey.

"I'm finding my role really enjoyable so far. My new colleagues do an amazing job and I feel privileged to be working with them."

MATT JOHNSON

Former research assistant Matt



Matt Johnson

Johnson was promoted to area organiser in September and transferred from the union's head office to the Warrington office.

Matt joined Usdaw in 2001 while working at Tesco in Stoke-on-Trent, becoming a rep in 2012 and a learning rep in 2013. He joined Usdaw's staff in 2015 as a clerical assistant in the Lifelong Learning team, before being promoted to research assistant in 2016.

"I first became a rep because I wanted to help and support my colleagues," said Matt, 39. "I enjoyed working in the research department but I missed having a more hands-on role, organising and helping people with workplace problems.

"My patch covers Salford, Eccles, Walkden and other parts of north Manchester, as well as Manchester City Centre and parts of Cheshire. I look after a range of food and non-food retailers plus a few industrial sites. I'm also the Co-op co-ordinator for the North-West of England, as I was previously the assistant to the national officer for the Co-op.

"I'm really looking forward to growing my patch and developing up and coming reps.

"Young reps are really important for the union's future so I want to get them them involved in our training programmes. This will allow them to develop their skills and knowledge and become more confident."



Patrick Laughland

PATRICK LAUGHLAND

Patrick Laughland worked for the pharmaceutical company AAH for 20 years before becoming an area organiser for Usdaw's Edinburgh office.

Patrick, 38, joined the union in 2006 and put himself forward to become a rep in 2011 when a vacancy became available at his workplace. He was also the health and safety rep and union learning rep.

"Being a rep in that environment was pretty daunting," said Patrick. "I was relatively young back then and there were a lot of big personalities at our site. I was worried that I wouldn't be taken seriously.

"My dad, who worked for the railways, always told me to get involved in the union and it was after a conversation with him, that I finally took the plunge. I have to say, the training I got from Usdaw was brilliant and I soon gained the confidence I needed to take on the challenge of being a rep.

"For a number of years, I was the only rep on a site of around 250 people, which was tough. But little by little, things improved, membership increased and I got a number of wins for members which raised the profile of the union.

"Although I didn't do stand down or go on the academies, my area organiser Lisa Willis and national officer Daniel Adams gave me the



Mick Murray

push I needed to apply for the role. My patch covers West Lothian and is a mixture of stores and distribution. One of the things I would like to focus on is learning. I was recruited as a learning rep by Caroline Baird, the project worker in Scotland, and she was instrumental in showing me that learning can change people's lives. I want to continue promoting the learning agenda and show our members the amazing opportunities that are available to them."

MICK MURRAY

Former B&M rep Mick Murray starts his new role as area organiser and will be based at Usdaw's Warrington office.

Mick, 38, became a rep in 2015 and in six short years was elected to the national executive council, the union's governing body.

"I first started working for B&M when it was non-unionised," said Mick. "I put myself forward to become a rep after we secured an agreement with the company. As a Liverpoolian, I have friends who were involved in the dock disputes of '95 and my grandad was an ardent believer of trade unions.

"It was hard work building an agreement from the ground up but it was worth it. I saw first-hand the difference a unionised workplace can make to the working lives of people. I'm proud to say that by the time I left we had a robust induction process in place, around 1,700 members and a good working relationship with the company.

"I really enjoyed supporting people and giving them a voice when they felt like they didn't have one.

"I've only been in the role for a couple of months and my patch includes the Wirral, Chester, Shrewsbury and Telford. I'll be predominantly dealing with retail with a bit of manufacturing and distribution. I'll be focusing on developing reps and doing my best to bring in young workers as they are the next generation of reps and area organisers."

RETIREMENT: CHRIS SKILTON

Chris Skilton, 65, retires in December, after serving as an area organiser for 19 years at Usdaw's Morden office.

Chris worked on the meat counter of Sainsbury's for 12 years and was an Usdaw rep for three years before becoming an area organiser.

"Back then there was no Academy, said Chris. "I applied for the area organiser position because my area organiser pushed me into it and as they say, 'the rest is history'.

"During the last 19 years, I have worked with pretty much every company and every area in my region. I have seen governments, CEOs and work practices come and go. No matter who's in charge, what never changes is the fact that workers still need a union to look after their interests. It's been a privilege working side-by-side with our fantastic reps and my Usdaw colleagues to help serve the needs of our members.

"I've enjoyed all aspects of the job, recruiting, organising, representing, but my favourite has to be helping reps develop and



Chris Skilton

grow. I'm proud to say, three of my reps went on to become area organisers.

"I recently moved to Pagham and we're five minutes from the sea. I'll have plenty of decorating to do! When I'm not doing that, I'll take up sea fishing and spending more time with the grandkids.

"I also have a new bike so I'm looking forward to doing a bit more cycling.

HELPING YOU IN YOUR ROLE AS AN USDAW REP

Where to find information

Usdaw website and news

For everything you need to help you in your role as a rep including sections on legal advice, workers' rights, health and safety, training opportunities, events and campaigns. You can also download informative leaflets and posters for your noticeboard. Visit www.usdaw.org.uk

Social media

As an Usdaw rep we recommend that you follow **UsdawUnion** on **Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube**. It's a great way to keep up to date. You can also share pictures of your campaigns and events.

Local office

If you need support or guidance in your role as rep, then don't hesitate to contact your local Usdaw office where the union's staff will be happy to help.

We want to hear from you

Here at *Network* magazine we love hearing about what reps and members have been up to in and outside of their workplaces – if you've got pictures to share even better! We want to hear about campaigns and events, wins for your members, your top tips and who is going the extra mile.

Email us at: network@usdaw.org.uk



CONTACT USDAW

Head Office

Usdaw Head Office
Voyager Building,
2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays,
Manchester M50 3XZ

Local Offices

A South Wales and Western Region

Bristol@usdaw.org.uk
Cardiff@usdaw.org.uk
Plymouth@usdaw.org.uk

C Eastern Region

Burystedmunds@usdaw.org.uk
London@usdaw.org.uk
Walthamx@usdaw.org.uk

E Midlands Region

Redditch@usdaw.org.uk
Kegworth@usdaw.org.uk

F North Eastern Region

Leeds@usdaw.org.uk
Newcastle@usdaw.org.uk

G Scottish Region

Edinburgh@usdaw.org.uk
Aberdeen@usdaw.org.uk
Glasgow@usdaw.org.uk

H Southern Region

Faversham@usdaw.org.uk
Andover@usdaw.org.uk
Morden@usdaw.org.uk

K North West Region

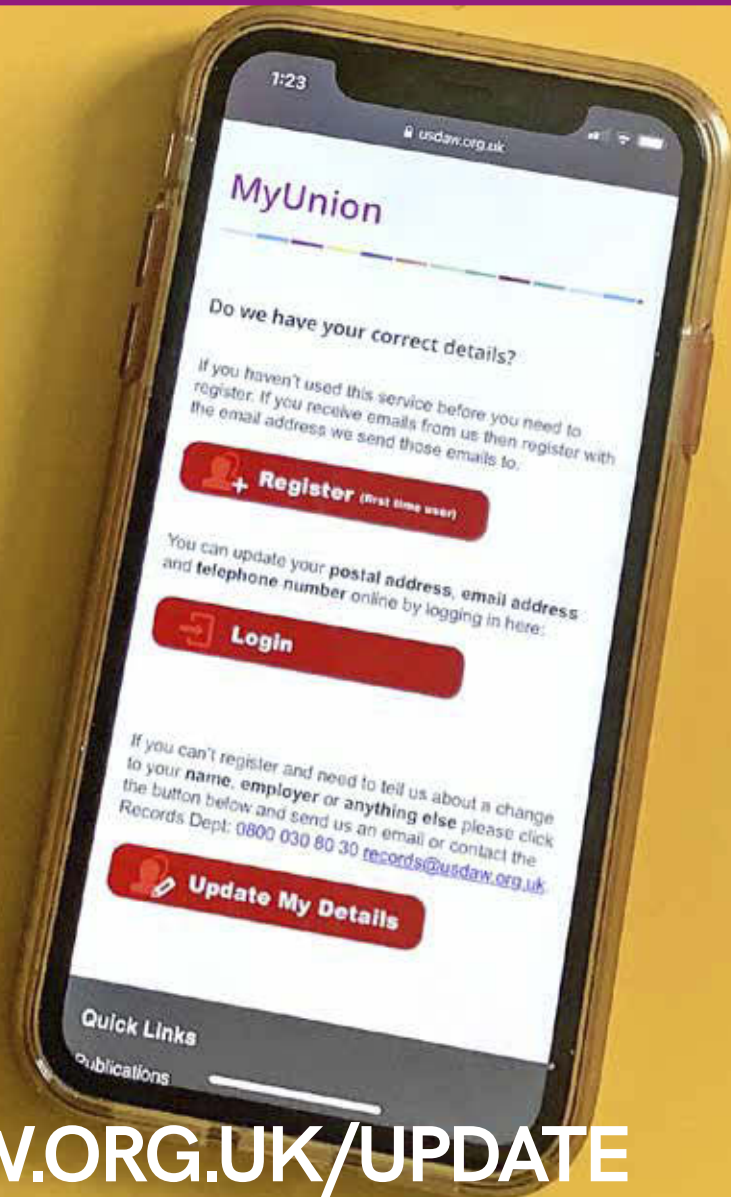
Preston@usdaw.org.uk
Belfast@usdaw.org.uk
Warrington@usdaw.org.uk

UPDATING YOUR DETAILS JUST GOT EASIER

GIVING YOU CONTROL

You can now access your membership record through the Usdaw website and make changes to your contact details including:

- U POSTAL ADDRESS
- U EMAIL ADDRESS
- U PHONE NUMBER
- U SELECT YOUR MAILING PREFERENCES



WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/UPDATE