

NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | MARCH/APRIL 2023



**READY
FOR
CHANGE**

TAKING LABOUR'S POLICIES TO THE DOORSTEP



Stock photography, posed by models.

Me, Work and the Menopause

The menopause is often treated as a joke, something to make fun of.

But many women find their symptoms really hard to manage, particularly when they are at work.

If you are struggling at work because of menopause symptoms you can speak to your Union Usdaw for help and support.

To find out more visit the website:

www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause

Or email equalitymatters@usdaw.org.uk



USDAW

Network is published bimonthly and distributed to Usdaw activists.

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TORIES ALL OUT OF INNOVATIVE IDEAS

The Spring Budget, delivered by a multi-millionaire chancellor, failed to lift the living standards of anyone who wasn't already wealthy and demonstrated why the UK desperately needs a change of government.

The country is in the grip of a cost of living crisis with food and fuel prices spiralling. It is estimated that more than two million households have fallen into fuel poverty with no respite in sight.

Although the Budget was focussed on getting the UK 'back to work' it profoundly misunderstood the complex and varied reasons why people may have left the job market in the first place, including poor physical and mental health.

The Budget failed on so many levels. It failed to address public sector pay. It failed to invest in services that could help people get better. It failed to tackle insecure and low-paid employment. And it failed to address the challenges faced by the retail sector.

The Budget demonstrated that after 12 years in power, the Tories are out of fresh ideas. Once again, they delivered a Budget that was nowhere close to tackling the cost of living crisis.

Workers desperately need a new deal that makes work pay: with an immediate £12 per hour minimum wage for all workers,



regardless of age, as a step towards £15. Alongside this, we need an end to one-sided flexibility, along with tackling insecure forms of employment such as zero and short hours contracts to provide workers with financial security.

Usdaw will continue to mobilise and campaign for a Labour government, because only a Labour government can put the UK back on track and grow the economy for the benefit of working people.

Usdaw General Secretary

Paddy Beavis

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



citizens advice



- If you can't pay your bills.
- If you're struggling to pay your rent, want to end your tenancy or are worried about being evicted.
- If you have no money for food.
- Check what benefits you can get.

Citizens advice can advise you on benefits, money, housing, family, health and more.

You can contact via phone/email/live chat.

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/
contactus](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/contactus)

SAMARITANS

- Whatever you're going through, a Samaritan will face it with you.
- 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
- Via phone or email.

www.samaritans.org

StepChange Debt Charity

- Free, confidential and expert debt advice and money guidance.
- Find the best solution or service for your individual circumstances.
- Support while you deal with your money worries, for as long as you need their help.

[www.stepchange.org/
contact-us](http://www.stepchange.org/contact-us)

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BUDGET WAS MISSED CHANCE

In March, the chancellor Jeremy Hunt unveiled a budget that failed to deliver a new deal for workers or a retail recovery plan.

Usdaw had called on the chancellor to deliver a retail recovery plan to help our high streets get back on their feet after Covid and compete effectively with online retail; along with a new deal for workers to make work pay and end the insecure employment that leaves too many struggling with the cost of living.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The Spring budget was a missed opportunity to tackle insecure and low-paid employment, along with addressing the challenges the retail industry faces, having already lost thousands of jobs this year. Regrettably the chancellor made no mention of either crucial issue for our members.

"Workers desperately need a new deal on employment rights and incomes. A new deal that makes work pay: with an immediate £12 per hour minimum wage for all workers, regardless of age, as a step towards £15.

We also need an end to



one-sided flexibility, along with tackling insecure forms of employment such as zero and short hours contracts to provide workers with financial security. Labour will deliver a new deal for workers within the first 100 days of coming into government.

"For many years the retail sector, particularly the high street, has experienced significant and fundamental challenges. Covid and the cost of living crisis have both intensified these systemic problems. The chancellor could have reversed the terrible decision to reject an online sales tax, which was

also supported by many major retailers and could have been used to fund a reduction in business rates.

"This Budget shows that the government is not listening and will not offer the change our members

desperately need.

"Usdaw will continue to mobilise for a general election, because only a Labour government can put the UK back on track and grow the economy for the benefit of everyone."

www.usdaw.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED 18 MARCH 2023

South Wales & Western	42,069
Eastern	51,179
Midlands	47,247
North Eastern	50,081
Scottish	36,248
Southern	49,373
North West	75,543
Total	351,740

23 - 26 APRIL

THE ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING 2023



The Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) is the biggest and most important event in the union's calendar.

The four-day conference will take place on 23 to 26 April at the Winter Gardens in Blackpool.

Over 1,000 delegates, visitors and officials from across the UK will be attending to debate and vote on propositions from lay-member branches and statements from Usdaw's National Executive Council

on key issues including education, health and safety, health and social care, housing, pensions, transport, benefits, campaigning to deliver a Labour government, tackling sexual harassment and organising for a New Deal.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Our Annual Delegate Meeting is effectively the union's parliament and provides members with the opportunity to raise their

issues of concern and make our policy. We have a packed agenda and it is clear that members are very concerned about the cost of living crisis and a Conservative government that is continually failing to help the lowest paid workers make ends meet.

"I look forward to a lively and informed debate on the core issues affecting the lives of working people and their families."

STAND UP TO RACISM

SENDING MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

On 18 March, Usdaw, the TUC and many more joined the Stand Up to Racism march on United Nations anti-racism day. Marches took place in Cardiff, Glasgow and London, promoting the message 'Refugees welcome – stop the ban on asylum'.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "In Britain the Tory government is attempting to use racism to generate the politics of divide and rule in our communities

and make ordinary people pay for the cost of living crisis.

"Their rhetoric of an 'invasion' of southern England and the Rwanda plan to deport asylum seekers is designed to create a hostile environment for refugees and migrants.

"It is targeting the most vulnerable and costing many lives. More deaths in the Channel and the attack on accommodation housing asylum

seekers in Knowsley has shown us once again the reality of these policies in practice.

"Never has it been more important for trade union activists to stand together against the forces in our society and workplaces that seek to divide us. It's the Conservative government's austerity policies that are responsible for the attack on our living standards – not migrant workers or refugees."

Diary Dates

APRIL

17 - 19 Apr

STUC Conference

23 - 26 Apr

Usdaw's 76th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM)

28 Apr

International Workers' Memorial Day

MAY

15 - 21 May

Mental Health Awareness Week

15 - 21 May

Learning at Work Week

17 May

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia (IDAHOT)

17 May

National Numeracy Day

26 - 28 May

TUC Black Workers' Conference

27 - 28 May

STUC LGBT+ Conference

27 - 28 May

Birmingham Pride Weekend

www.usdaw.org.uk/events

POLITICAL FUND BALLOT

RESOUNDING YES VOTE



Usdaw members have voted overwhelmingly to retain the union's political fund with more than 96 per cent voting yes in the political fund review ballot.

This is the fifth 10-yearly review ballot Usdaw has conducted under the legal requirements introduced by the Thatcher Government in 1984. The legislation was deliberately designed to make it as hard as possible for unions to campaign on behalf of their members.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We are delighted to get this overwhelming vote of confidence in Usdaw keeping a political voice.

"We pride ourselves on being the campaigning union and our members have recognised the importance of this, particularly in the face of attacks on our members' rights from the Tory Government.

"It is crucial that our members have retained their political voice because we cannot deliver on all their aspirations by negotiation alone. The political fund will allow us to continue campaigning and lobbying the government, no matter who is in power. Usdaw is currently focussed on campaigns for a new deal for workers, action on the cost of living crisis and protection of workers from abuse, along with many other important issues."

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Health and
Dental Plan

at WWW.USDAW.ORG.UK/WIN

Sponsored by Usdaw Health and Dental Plan. www.usdaw.org.uk/healthplan Closing Date 8 June 2023. Terms apply.

ACADEMY 2



In March, Usdaw welcomed reps to its head office in Salford Quays to begin the second part of their academy journey. Academy2 gives dedicated reps the unique opportunity to spend six months out of their workplace working with Usdaw on specific recruitment and organising projects in their region. The reps will receive full training to manage their own patch, organise in key workplaces and train and develop new reps.

SCOTTISH LABOUR



Ushaw called on Scottish Labour for a new deal for workers on the introduction of new technology and automation in their workplaces and better access to learning. The conference was chaired by Ushaw's deputy head of education Karen Whitefield.

Labour Research resources for reps

A first-rate service that publishes very useful news and information designed specifically for reps on a whole range of workplace topics. LRD's newly designed website includes free to read content, an LRD blog, a section on products and services, structured access to main areas of expertise and weekly trade union news e-letter.

To access the resources, please log in using the following details at:

www.lrdpublications.org.uk

Username: **usdaw**

Password: **Ushaw1891**

RISING ABUSE

Usdaw launched shocking statistics from its annual survey of over 7,700 retail staff showing that nearly a third (30 per cent) are considering changing their job and over four in ten (41 per cent) feel anxious about work, all because of high levels of verbal abuse, threats and assaults.

At a time of labour shortages, and across an industry with high staff turnover rates, it is clear that abuse, threats and violence are having an economic impact and holding the sector back. The cost of recruitment, induction and training often runs into thousands of pounds per individual, so any mass exodus would have a significant impact on businesses.

The survey also found the number of incidents has come down since the exceptionally high levels during the pandemic but remain higher than pre-Covid levels in 2019. In the last twelve months (pre-pandemic levels in brackets, from the 2019 survey):

- 74 per cent (68 per cent) have experienced verbal abuse.
- 49 per cent (43 per cent) were threatened by a customer.
- 8 per cent (5 per cent) were assaulted.

The full report can be found at: www.usdaw.org.uk/FFFReport2022

These findings followed the same trend as the annual retail crime survey published by the British Retail Consortium in March. The trade association for retail also found that violence and abuse against shopworkers is now higher than pre-pandemic levels. The survey also revealed the total cost of retail crime stood at £1.76 billion

in 2021/22.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "No-one should feel afraid to go to work, but our evidence shows that too many retail workers are. It is shocking that nearly three-quarters of our members working in retail are suffering abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. While Covid triggers for abuse, such as face masks and social distancing, have gone the level of incidents faced by retail workers is now higher than before the pandemic.

"Faced with such high levels of aggression from customers, it is of little surprise that so many are considering changing their job to escape the abuse. The potential cost for retail employers to recruit, train and induct new staff adds to the astronomical price they already pay for theft from shops and security measures. That will have an inevitable impact on prices in the middle of a cost of living crisis and should be a concern to us all.

"Violence and abuse is not an acceptable part of the job and too many shopworkers suffer all too often. We still need better co-ordination to ensure that retail employers, police and the courts work together to make stores safer and give staff the support and confidence they need. Most of all, we ask the public to support our campaign by respecting shopworkers."

Usdaw's Freedom from Fear campaign seeks to prevent violence, threats and abuse against workers by engaging the public, shopworkers and the government. www.usdaw.org.uk/fff



SHARE YOUR STORIES

We're always keen to hear from members to help us build our campaigns. If you've been affected by the issues mentioned in this article, or if you have an interesting story to tell, get in touch. network@usdaw.org.uk

VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE:

These are some of the comments shopworkers shared when responding to Usdaw's survey:

"Spat at by an unhappy customer and verbally abused. Called the 'c word' for not opening an extra till. Called names, told to 'f' off."

"Kettle thrust in my face. Curling tongs hurled at me. Can of Red Bull thrown over my head. Called every profanity known."

"Customer tried to punch me in the face but there was a screen between us so he cut his hand."

"Shoplifter threatens to put a bottle of wine over my head if I stop him going out with a basket of meat."

"Incidents of physical abuse or threats of violence have been from thieves stopped as they pass through the checkouts."

"Been called stupid and said I need to be better at my job. Hit with a walking stick. Threats to come back after shifts."

"Customer became violent and aggressive when I asked for ID and refused the sale as he couldn't provide valid ID for buying alcohol."

"Hit with trolley. Sworn at. Knife was put on my throat to open till. I was threatened with a needle."

*"Refused petrol, was called a fat pr**k. Tried to stop my colleague being assaulted, got punched in my face."*

*"Sexual harrassment from a customer. Shouting, swearing and vile name calling e.g. 'b**ch' and 'slut'."*

CAMPAIGNS

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

UNIVERSAL CREDIT FLAWED

Usdaw says the government's proposals on Universal Credit fall well-short of the fundamental overhaul needed to fix the childcare crisis and support working people.

Government changes to Universal Credit recently announced included:

- Paying parents on Universal Credit childcare support up-front, when they are moving into work or increasing their hours, rather than in arrears.
- Increasing the maximum amount parents on Universal Credit can receive in childcare support.
- A stiffer conditionality regime and greater sanctions forcing working parents to increase their hours

if they currently work under 18 hours a week.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Yet again, the Government missed the point and failed to recognise that Universal Credit is fundamentally flawed. The system they created has repeatedly been shown to provide significant disincentives for working parents to increase their working hours.

"The lack of affordable childcare is a huge challenge facing working parents, especially women. The changes proposed for Universal Credit are only a small step in the right direction, but much more is needed to help working parents with the cost of living crisis and

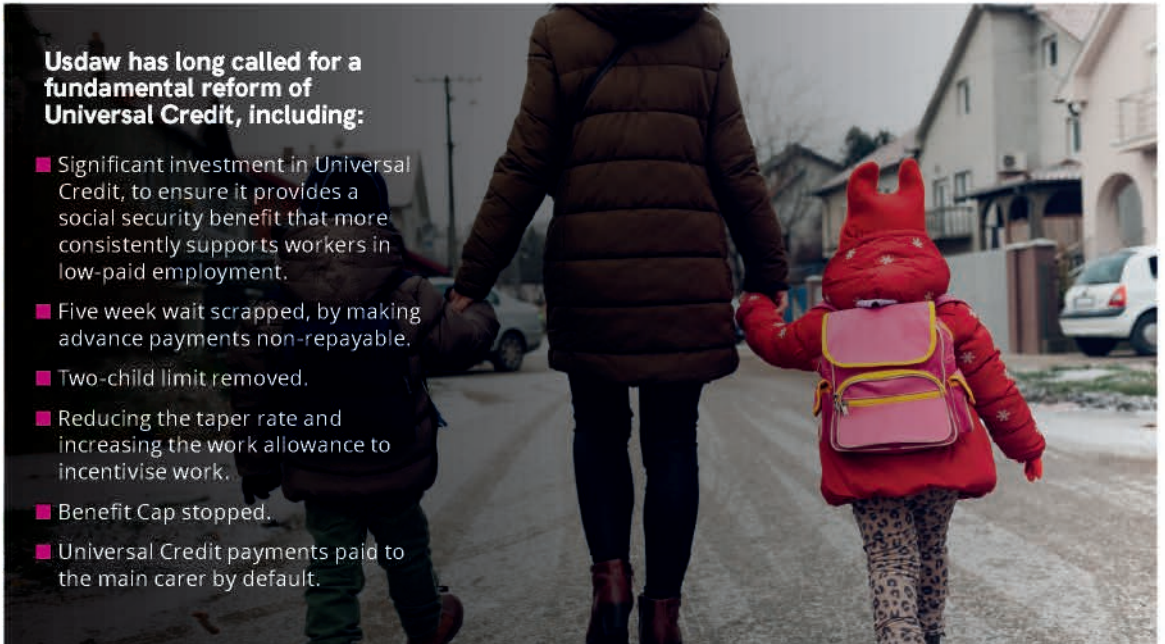
encourage more parents into work or extend their hours.

"Universal Credit remains universally discredited. Usdaw has consistently called for a fundamental overhaul of the Universal Credit system and how the government supports the incomes of working people. We need a proper social security system that supports families and provides a proper safety net.

"We also need a new deal for workers to end low-paid and insecure work. That would not only give working people the dignity of properly paid and secure employment, but also reduce the need for Universal Credit payments."

Usdaw has long called for a fundamental reform of Universal Credit, including:

- Significant investment in Universal Credit, to ensure it provides a social security benefit that more consistently supports workers in low-paid employment.
- Five week wait scrapped, by making advance payments non-repayable.
- Two-child limit removed.
- Reducing the taper rate and increasing the work allowance to incentivise work.
- Benefit Cap stopped.
- Universal Credit payments paid to the main carer by default.



TIME'S UP FOR THE TORIES

LABOUR'S NEW DEAL

Usdaw welcomed Keir Starmer setting out the details of Labour's mission to secure the highest sustained growth in the G7. The Labour leader identified the need for growth to improve living standards and reduce poverty, which includes the creation of more and better-paying jobs.

Labour set out five national missions that they will build their manifesto around and, if elected, drive everything they do in government. Labour will be focussed on outcomes that matter: making sure people are better off, live in safe communities and have the opportunities they need to succeed wherever they live and whatever their background.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Keir Starmer has rightly recognised that good and well-

paid jobs have to be at the core of renewing and transforming the UK economy.

"Labour has also recognised the need to revive our high streets and save our shops. They understand that better paid jobs across the economy mean that people can help to support their local high street and build stronger, safer communities. Usdaw has long called for an industrial strategy for retail to recreate vibrant high streets, to promote new businesses, while saving existing stores and jobs.

"Labour's New Deal for Workers will be delivered in the first 100 days of being in government, giving workers the dignity of fair pay and more secure contracts. The time is up for the Tories, only a Labour government will put the UK back on track."

MOTHERHOOD PENALTY

GENDER PAY GAP WIDENS

The UK's gender pay gap has widened by 2.4 percentage points to 14.4 per cent in 2021, according to accountancy giant PwC in its Women in Work index. The report finds that the cost of childcare, with wage growth slowing, has worsened a 'motherhood penalty', pricing many women out of work altogether. Average nursery costs per week rose by more than a fifth between 2015 and 2022, while average weekly earnings rose by just 14 per cent.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The lack of affordable childcare is a huge challenge in balancing work with parental responsibilities. Tory inaction means many low-income parents simply cannot afford formal childcare and we have called on the government to

address this, including the funding of breakfast clubs in every primary school."

Usdaw is calling for:

- Flexible working to be a day-one right and the government to help employers provide flexible jobs to recruit parents back into work.
- Childcare to be more affordable, costing a household no more than 5 per cent of their income.
- A new deal for workers to make work pay and end the insecure employment that leaves too many struggling with the cost of living.
- Universal credit and social security to provide the safety net that many need and stop being a disincentive to earn more.

www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns

CAMPAIGN DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

15-21 May
Mental Health Awareness Week

15-21 May
Learning at Work Week

12-18 June
Membership Week

28 June
Parents & Carers Spotlight Day

15 July
National Retail Workers Day

2-8 October
South Wales & Western
Regional Membership Week

2-8 October
Midlands
Regional Membership Week

2-15 October
Eastern
Regional Membership Week

9-15 October
North Eastern
Regional Membership Week

9-15 October
Southern
Regional Membership Week

9-15 October
North West
Regional Membership Week

10 October
Usdaw Day of Action on Mental
Health/World Mental Health Day

16-22 October
Scottish Regional
Membership Week

18 October
World Menopause Day

20 October
Wear Red Day

www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns

EQUALITIES

Keeping you up-to-date on the equalities news

ME, WORK AND THE MENOPAUSE

The union has been working with a group of Usdaw women activists to develop a workplace campaign raising awareness of the menopause as a workplace issue.

More women than ever are working through the menopause, and, as women make up over half of Usdaw members, it's far from a minority issue. The campaign aims to ground the menopause as an occupational health and safety issue and encourage members to speak to the union if they are having issues at work.

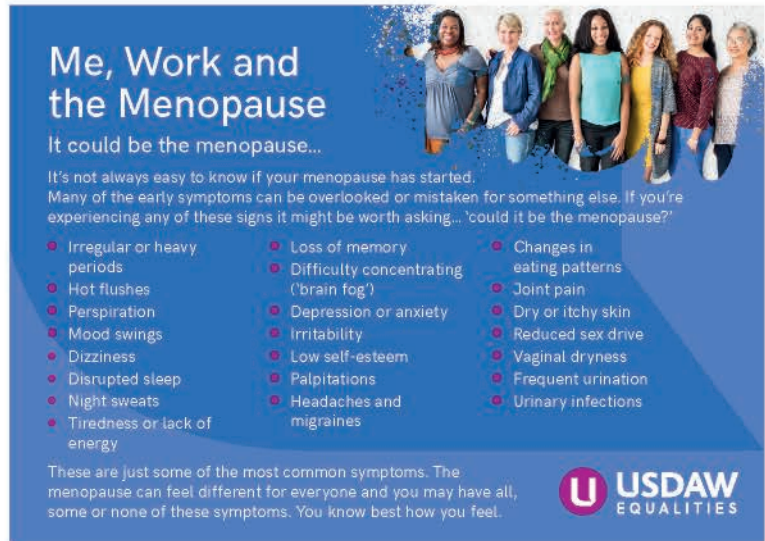
The Me, Work and The Menopause campaign launched on the 8 March 2023 to coincide with International Women's Day.

International Women's Day is a global celebration of women's achievements and continues to take action towards women's equality.

The menopause starts when a woman stops having periods due to a drop in hormones. For most women the menopause happens between the ages of 45–55 years old. Symptoms can start up to 10 years before your period stops altogether and this is called the perimenopause.

Younger women can also experience an early menopause either naturally or as a side effect of other conditions or medical treatments. Many trans and non-binary workers will also experience the menopause and may experience particular barriers accessing appropriate support.

One of the biggest issues for members is that it's not easy to know if your menopause has



Me, Work and the Menopause

It could be the menopause...

It's not always easy to know if your menopause has started. Many of the early symptoms can be overlooked or mistaken for something else. If you're experiencing any of these signs it might be worth asking... 'could it be the menopause?'

- Irregular or heavy periods
- Hot flushes
- Perspiration
- Mood swings
- Dizziness
- Disrupted sleep
- Night sweats
- Tiredness or lack of energy
- Loss of memory
- Difficulty concentrating ('brain fog')
- Depression or anxiety
- Irritability
- Low self-esteem
- Palpitations
- Headaches and migraines
- Changes in eating patterns
- Joint pain
- Dry or itchy skin
- Reduced sex drive
- Vaginal dryness
- Frequent urination
- Urinary infections

These are just some of the most common symptoms. The menopause can feel different for everyone and you may have all, some or none of these symptoms. You know best how you feel.

USDW EQUALITIES

started. Many of the early symptoms of menopause and perimenopause can easily be overlooked or mistaken for something else. Low levels of awareness mean many women say they feel like they are going 'mad' or 'losing it' because they don't know the issues they are experiencing are linked to the menopause.

Menopause and perimenopause symptoms can have a big impact on women while they are at work. Uncomfortable uniforms, lack of fresh air, working in customer facing roles and unpredictable shift patterns can all exacerbate symptoms.

It's not just the physical and psychological symptoms that can make women's lives difficult. Continued stigma around women's health can make women feel uncomfortable about opening up, particularly to younger, male managers. And in many workplaces

the menopause is still treated like a joke, making women feel embarrassed, humiliated and upset.

So creating menopause-friendly workplaces, where women are able to speak openly about how they are feeling and get the right support early, can make a big difference. This support isn't usually costly or disruptive. Simple measures like ensuring access to water, more frequent toilet breaks, relaxing uniform rules or temporarily adjusting hours are relatively easy to make.

Campaign packs include everything you need to run a stand in your workplace, including leaflets, a poster, postcard, survey and giveaways to draw attention to your stall. There is also a noticeboard option for smaller workplaces. To find out more about the menopause or to order a campaign pack visit: www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause

SAVE THE DATE: WEDNESDAY 28 JUNE

PARENTS AND CARERS SPOTLIGHT DAY

This year on Wednesday 28 June, Usdaw is once again organising a Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day. Established in 2006, the campaign reflects the fact that over eight out of 10 Usdaw members are juggling work with caring for children and/or an adult.

Although each year the focus of Spotlight Day changes the aims remain the same, namely to raise awareness of parents and carers' rights at work and to work with employers to press for improvements.

This year's Spotlight Day theme is 'Overstretched' and the focus is to highlight the difficulties Usdaw members face finding affordable childcare to fit their working hours.

A very recent Usdaw survey illustrates the scale of the problem.

Of the two thousand members caring for children who responded:

- A quarter use paid nurseries.
- A third also use school holiday, breakfast and afterschool clubs.
- The majority, two thirds (67 per cent), do not receive any help towards the cost of childcare.
- 86 per cent consider the costs to be too high.

The survey response also confirmed the crucial role grandparents play in plugging the gaps in formal childcare.

Two thirds of members who responded to the survey said that they rely on grandparents and other family members for childcare. Those most likely to rely on the help of grandparents are single parents and parents of disabled children.

Many members relying on grandparents may be eligible for free childcare offers but there are very low levels of awareness with between half to a third of members



unaware of free entitlements. In view of this, Usdaw aims to use Spotlight Day this year to:

- Highlight the failures of the current system of support to meet members' needs.
- Raise awareness of existing childcare entitlements and parental rights at work.
- Signal that many members are juggling work with caring for grandchildren.

Every year hundreds of reps get involved on Spotlight Day. Getting involved doesn't have to be hard work – you can do as much or as little as you like. You could put the Spotlight Day poster up on your union noticeboard, give out the campaign leaflets, ask members to fill out the campaign survey or you can pull out all the stops and organise a workplace campaign stand.

Look out for your Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day campaign pack which you should receive in early April. This will tell you everything you need to know about how to get involved on the day.

www.usdaw.org.uk/campaigns

GRANDPARENTS

Comments from members illustrate just how vital grandparents/great-grandparents are in providing childcare. They enable new mothers and parents to remain in work:

"My partner and I are on opposite shift patterns. If it wasn't for grandparents/relatives, we would have to fork out a fortune on childcare."

"Grandparents are helping as we cannot afford childcare. I am considering leaving work to care for baby."

"Couldn't afford to work full-time if grandparents didn't have the youngest child two days a week."

"My three year old son is non-verbal autistic and finding childcare for him has proven difficult. We have relied on his grandparents but it's now hard work for them as they're in their 70s."



VOTE FOR A BETTER BRITAIN

Delegates from the National Political Conference go canvassing in South Manchester to understand the local and national issues bothering voters

Usdaw's National Political Conference took place in Manchester over a weekend in March. The conference brought together around 70 members of the national and regional political committees along with Usdaw president Jane Jones, general secretary Paddy Lillis and deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen. The regional secretaries from each of the seven regions also attended.

The theme was How to Win a General Election and included an address by Paddy Lillis and guest speaker, shadow secretary of state for business & industrial strategy Jonny Reynolds MP. Delegates took part in a lively question and answer session with Paddy and Jonny and covered issues like, what Labour can do for Usdaw members, New Deal

for Workers, the importance of trade union members getting involved in politics, saving the high street, housing, police reforms and public sector pay.

Staff from the Labour Party also delivered the most up to date training on campaigning and canvassing which delegates put into practice on the streets of Manchester on Sunday morning.

PADDY LILLIS

"Since 2010, Usdaw members have faced an unprecedented attack on their rights at work, austerity measures, and political and financial chaos caused by the Conservative Party," said Paddy. "We are in the midst of a cost of living crisis that's showing no signs of abating and we desperately need a Labour

government that will implement an agenda of change that puts workers and growth at the heart of its policies.

"We all have a crucial role to play in delivering this, from registering to vote to talking to family and friends about what Labour has to offer. If we organise and work together, we can make a difference and see the Labour Party form the next government of the United Kingdom."

JONNY REYNOLDS MP

"Tory MPs say that the public needs to be protected from trade unions," said Jonny. "This shows that they don't know what trade unions do. Trade unions are made up of ordinary people standing up for their rights together."

"There are no shortages of



General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones join conference delegates canvassing in South Manchester.

challenges in Britain. We will be the first generation of people who will be less well off than their parents, and at times it feels like there's no light at the end of the tunnel. To fix this is the defining issue of the Labour government.

"After 13 years of a Conservative government, we need to make sure that when voters go to the polls, they ask themselves: Are you well off? Are you more secure? Do you feel things are better? If the answer is no, then we need a Labour government, who will prioritise a New Deal for Workers, safety, security and communities."

Rebecca Ruddick Delegate

The Political Conference was absolutely fantastic," said Rebecca. "I really enjoyed the training session on campaigning. I'm standing as a councillor for the Coxford ward in Southampton so I spend a lot of time listening to people on the doorstep.

The issues people were raising in Manchester were the same as the issues being raised in Southampton: anti-social behaviour, fly tipping, roads and pavements in disrepair. If we work together, do the leg work and deliver positive messages for change, then we have a good chance of winning. But I'm not taking anything for granted, we've had too many surprises in the last few years."

Paul Horwood Delegate

"Attending the conference made me feel like I was part of a bigger movement fighting for the same goal," said Paul. "We got a positive response from people on the doorstep who clearly felt that the Tories didn't care about local issues. I left feeling enthused and hopeful about the upcoming elections. I would encourage everyone to get involved. It's the only way we can make positive changes to our workplaces and communities."





THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

In March, Usdaw launched its Young Workers' Week, which gave reps the opportunity to reach out to young workers to promote trade unions and demonstrate how being a member of Usdaw can improve their working lives.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "This year's Young Workers' Week was themed around the important and growing issue of mental health in the workplace. Our jobs can have a significant impact on our mental health. Being in work can be positive but other aspects of work, such as short and unpredictable hours, low pay and dealing with abusive customers, can take a toll on mental health."

"Our reps play a crucial role in supporting members and promoting good mental health."

MORGAN LARGEY TESCO REP

Network spoke to Morgan Largey,

a 25-year-old Tesco rep from Carrickfergus, about the Young Workers' Week event she attended at Sainsbury's Ballymena.

"I'm interested in the rights of young workers because when I was younger, I worked in non-unionised workplaces and later found that I was being taken advantage of because I didn't know what I was entitled to," said Morgan. "I had to learn about my rights the hard way and I want to pass this onto other young workers."

"I've only been a rep for six months and Young Workers' Week was my first union event. It was the perfect opportunity to engage with other young workers and talk about the issues that were concerning them. Young workers were saying that they're treated differently from older colleagues especially when it comes to working hours. There's an expectation that young workers will cover bank holidays and do the

overtime because they don't have children. This means they have very little time away from work which can leave them feeling tired and stressed."

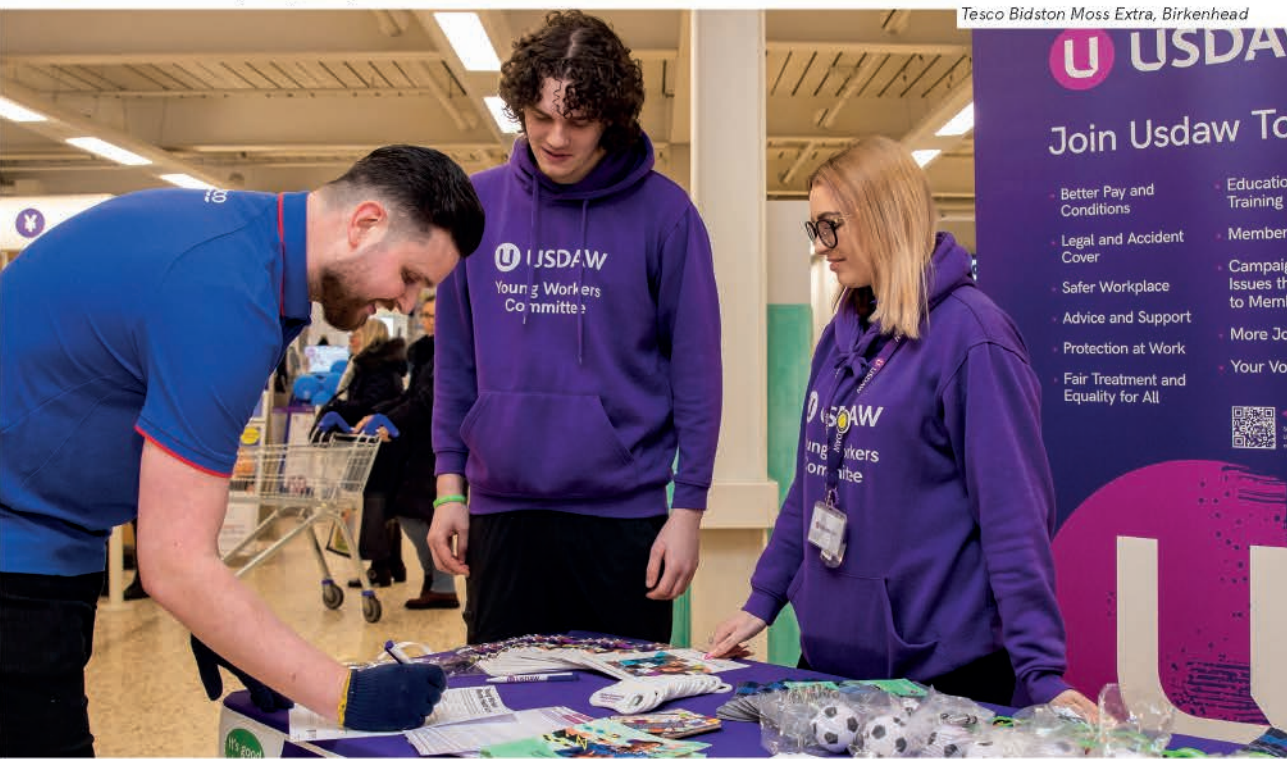
"The other big issue for young workers is mental health. Northern Ireland has some of the worst rates of mental health in the UK due to the legacy of the Troubles. There are huge waiting lists for services, particularly services for young people and this is further hampered by the lack of a functioning government at Stormont, which has not sat since January 2017."

"As a society we are more open to having conversations about mental health. But it's still difficult for young people to talk about their mental health at work because they fear being judged or treated differently. Focussing on mental health during Young Workers' Week goes towards removing the stigma surrounding mental health in the workplace."



Very Group, Derby

IKEA Greenwich, London



Tesco Bidston Moss Extra, Birkenhead

U USDAW
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- Better Pay and Conditions
- Legal and Accident Cover
- Safer Workplace
- Advice and Support
- Protection at Work
- Fair Treatment and Equality for All
- Educational Training
- Member
- Campaign Issues that matter to Members
- More Jobs
- Your Voice

YOUR RIGHTS AT WORK



Network has produced this handy guide for reps outlining workers' rights. This article will outline the basic contractual rights. Please note that many workers will also have contractual rights in addition to these statutory rights. These contractual rights may be better than the state minimums and provide better cover because of the agreements Usdaw has negotiated with employers.

Therefore, reps should always check employment contracts or staff handbooks for rights specific to their workplaces.

WORKING TIME, BREAKS AND HOLIDAYS

Most people have the following statutory minimum rights to time-off, rest breaks and paid holiday:

- 5.6 weeks' paid holiday a year (28 days for someone working a five day week).
- Part-time workers are entitled to the same level of holiday pro-rata (so 5.6 x your normal working week).
- A 20-minute break when the working day is more than six hours.
- A rest period of 11 hours between working days.
- A ceiling of an average of eight hours' night work in every 24 hours.
- Free health assessment for night workers.
- A rest period of 24 hours in a seven-day period.
- A ceiling of 48 hours on the maximum average working week.

In many workplaces Usdaw will have negotiated better rights than the statutory minimum, therefore always check employment contracts or staff handbooks for rights specific to individual workplaces.

Special rules apply to Road Transport. Please refer to the Usdaw Drivers' Handbook.

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

PAID HOLIDAYS

- Everyone at work is entitled to at least 5.6 weeks paid leave each year.
- Full-time employees receive 28 days leave.
- Part-time employees will receive 5.6 x working week.
- If contractual hours or pay varies, weekly holiday pay is the average weekly pay over the previous 12 weeks, including compulsory overtime, shift pay and contractual bonuses. Agency workers are also entitled to paid leave.
- Employers can choose to include bank and public holidays as part of the statutory minimum holiday entitlement.
- New starters are entitled to paid leave from day one, although employers can make employees build it up by allowing one twelfth of the total due at the start of each month.

When can you take your holiday?

Employees do not have the legal right to choose when they take their holidays. However, most companies do have holiday policies that are a bit more flexible. Check the agreement/staff handbook for the holiday process in individual workplaces.

LEAVING A JOB

Employees should receive holiday pay for any unused statutory holiday. If they have taken too much holiday, they will have to pay back their holiday pay.

In many workplaces Usdaw will have negotiated better rights than the statutory minimum, therefore always check employment contracts or staff handbooks for rights specific to individual workplaces.

MAXIMUM 48-HOUR WEEK

The average working week should be 48 hours or less. Working time includes: training, travelling as part of work and being 'on call'. The

average is normally worked out over 17 weeks, however there are some exceptions where the average is worked out over 26 weeks.

Opting out

Employees can work more than 48 hours a week by signing an agreement to opt out. However, the employer cannot force employees to opt out if they do not want to. It is unlawful for them to dismiss employees or treat them less favourably for refusing to sign an opt out.

An opt out can be cancelled at any time, with an agreed notice period of up to three months. If no notice period has been agreed, then the employee will need to give a minimum of seven days' notice to cancel an opt out.

NIGHT WORKERS

Night workers also have limits on their hours as well as free medical checks.

Limits on Night Working

Employees should work no more than an average of eight hours in every 24.

The average nightly working time is calculated over 17 weeks. It includes overtime where it is part of the normal hours of work.

Health Checks for Night Workers

An employer should provide a free medical check before an employee starts working nights, and on a regular basis at least once a year. Where possible, they should allow an employee to switch to day shifts on medical advice.

PART-TIME WORKERS

The Part-time Workers' Regulations prohibit discrimination against part-time workers.

Part-time workers must be treated no less favourably (on a pro-rata basis) than full-time workers in all matters including:

- Rates of pay.

- Overtime.
- Contractual sick pay.
- Contractual maternity pay.
- Company pensions.
- Access to training.
- Holidays and parental leave.
- Redundancy.

WORKERS UNDER 18

There are more stringent rules for young workers:

- A maximum working week of 40 hours (with no opt out).
- A maximum working day of eight hours.
- A ban on night working (working no later than midnight and starting no earlier than 4am).
- A rest period of 12 hours between working days.
- Two days weekly rest.
- A 30-minute daily rest if working more than four-and-a-half hours.

Study Time

Udaw has negotiated time off for study leave with many employers, therefore it is worth checking the staff handbook. Even if there is no specific scheme in place reps should speak to the manager to see what can be agreed.

SUNDAY WORKING RIGHTS

All UK shopworkers have the right to opt out of Sunday working, unless they only work on Sundays.

How to opt out of Sunday shopwork

Any employee can opt out of Sunday working, for any reason, as long as they give their employer a signed and dated written notice saying that they no longer wish to work on Sunday. The employee must give three months' notice in order to opt out unless Usdaw has negotiated a shorter notice period.

If the employee chooses to opt out of Sunday working the employer cannot:

- Dismiss the employee for refusing to do shopwork on Sundays.
- Select the employee for redundancy for refusing to do



shopwork on Sundays.

- Make them suffer any other detriment for refusing to do shopwork on Sundays, for example denial of overtime, promotion or training opportunities.

Alternative Hours

If an employee opts out of Sunday working, the employer is under no obligation to provide alternative hours of work on different days. Opting out may therefore result in a decrease in weekly wage.

Protected Shopworkers

Employees who have been continuously employed as shopworkers in England or Wales by their current employer since before 26 August 1994 (or in Scotland since 6 April 2004), are automatically 'protected' from being required to work Sundays.

They can refuse to do Sunday work whatever their contract says and whether or not they have

done Sunday work in the past. In addition, they cannot be dismissed, disciplined or treated less favourably because they refuse to work on Sunday.

Opting back in

An employee can opt back into Sunday working but the employer is under no obligation to give the employee Sunday work.

CHANGES TO CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

Every worker has the right to have their main contract terms written down in a statement of terms and conditions within two months of starting work.

Terms and conditions can be changed with agreement from the employee. Change cannot be forced upon the employee.

Changes which have not been agreed by the employee, which result in a cut in pay, may mean an unlawful deduction from wages. Changes in hours or shift patterns

which are particularly hard for women with families to manage may be indirect sex discrimination.

If an employer tries to force new terms onto an employee, then the rep must take immediate steps to protect the employee by lodging a grievance with the employer. They can also contact their area organiser for further support.

MATERNITY LEAVE

All women are entitled to Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) of 26 weeks and Additional Maternity Leave (AML) of 26 weeks. It does not matter how many hours the employee works or the length of service they have.

To take advantage of OML and AML, the employee must notify their employer no later than the end of the 15th week before the week their baby is due that they are pregnant, when the expected week of childbirth will be and when they intend to start their maternity leave. Additional maternity leave begins



when ordinary maternity leave ends, and it runs for a further 26 weeks (giving 52 weeks' maternity leave altogether).

An employee can return to work before the end of AML but must give eight weeks' notice.

Right to Return after Maternity Leave

If an employee takes only 26 weeks of maternity leave, then she is entitled to return to the same job on the same terms and conditions.

If she returns after taking AML and there is some reason why it is not reasonably practical for her employer to take her back in her original job, she is entitled to be offered suitable alternative work.

Statutory Maternity Pay

An employee is entitled to a maximum 39 weeks Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) if:

- She has worked for her employer for a continuous period of at least 26 weeks ending with the

qualifying week – that is the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

- Her average pay in the eight weeks up to and including the qualifying week has been not less than the lower earnings limit for National Insurance Contributions, which is currently £123.
- She has properly notified her employer of the start date of her maternity leave with medical evidence of pregnancy (for example, a medical certificate).
If she qualifies, then the first six weeks of SMP are paid at 90 per cent of her average weekly earnings; the remaining weeks are paid at 90 per cent of her average weekly earnings or the 'standard rate' currently £156.66 per week, whichever is lower.

PATERNITY LEAVE

Fathers or the partner of the mother of a new baby who has worked for the same employer for 26 weeks (by the 15th week before the baby

is due) has the right to two weeks of paternity leave. This is also available to same sex parents.

Statutory Paternity Pay

Ordinary Statutory Paternity Pay is paid for two weeks at a flat rate of £156.66 per week.

If the father/partner earns less than the flat rate, they will be paid 90 per cent of their average earnings instead.

To qualify they must have worked for the same employer for 26 weeks by the 15th week before the baby is due (or if adopting by the week they are matched with the child); and have average earnings of £123 before tax.

Further information

Further information can be found at www.usdaw.org.uk

[www.usdaw.org.uk/
Help-Advice/Workers-Rights](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Workers-Rights)

NEW RULES FOR VOTING

As the May local elections approach, Usdaw is reminding members that they will need photo ID to vote, or alternatively, they can sign up for a postal vote

Under new rules brought in by the Conservatives, voters across the UK will be required to show photographic ID to vote in person at polling stations in some elections.

The government claims that the new rules have been brought in to prevent voter impersonation, despite statistics showing voter impersonation is not an issue in the UK. During the last general election in 2019, there were just 33 cases and only one resulted in a conviction. In contrast, it's estimated that 2.1m people lack the necessary identification.

The Electoral Reform Society said that the plan was deeply flawed

and was a calculated effort by the government to make voting harder for some citizens. Two cross-party parliamentary committees – one on human rights and another on constitutional affairs – have also raised serious concerns about the scheme and campaigners have called it voter suppression because it risks disenfranchising groups such as older voters, the unemployed and those from poorer and marginalised communities.

What to do if you don't have photo ID?

Those who do not have the approved photo ID (listed opposite), can apply for a Voter Authority

Certificate in advance from: www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate
Or alternatively, they can get a postal vote.

Postal Votes

Sometimes it can be difficult to get to the polling station to vote in person for a number of reasons. These can include work commitments, childcare arrangements, or sudden changes in plans which mean that getting to the polling station isn't possible, despite best intentions.

For these reasons, it's a good idea to sign up for a postal vote to vote early, vote safely, and vote from home. Postal votes are free and

Voting in person?
remember your ID

REGISTER TO VOTE

All residents on the electoral register are eligible to vote in these elections, except for British citizens living overseas.

If you are not registered to vote, then you can register online. It only takes a few minutes. The deadline to register to vote in these elections is *Monday 17 April*.

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

even come in a stamped addressed envelope.

It's helpful to know that anyone on the electoral roll can request a postal vote, you don't need a special reason and you don't need photo ID. However, you must sign up by **5pm on Tuesday 18 April 2023** and your postal vote needs to be with your local authority by 10pm on polling day to be counted.

By signing up for a postal vote, you can make sure that whatever else happens, you'll get to have your say in the 2023 elections in a safe and secure way.

When are the local elections?

Local elections are scheduled to be held on 4 May in England and the local council elections in Northern Ireland will be held on 18 May.

What do local councils do?

Local councils are responsible for providing public services including care for the elderly and disabled, fixing potholes, collecting rubbish and providing libraries and leisure centres. When you vote in a local election you have a say on who runs public services in your area. So, make sure you use your vote.

Why voting matters

Voting allows you to make a difference. It's an important way of having your say on the issues you care about such as the NHS, education, taxation, childcare, social security and transport. By voting

RULES AROUND THE UK

From 4 May 2023, voters in **England** will need to show photo ID to vote at polling stations in local elections, Police and Crime Commissioner elections, UK parliamentary by-elections and recall petitions.

From the same date, voters in **Scotland** will need to show photo ID at UK parliamentary by-elections and recall petitions, and in **Wales** at Police and Crime Commissioner elections, UK parliamentary by-elections and recall petitions.

From October 2023, the requirement to show photo ID will also apply to **UK General elections**.

In **Northern Ireland**, voters have been required to show ID since 1985, and photo ID since 2003.

you are also deciding who will take decisions on issues affecting your everyday life.

Although local elections are supposed to be about electing representatives who will make decisions around local services, they have also become a way of giving the government of the day a bloody nose. So, if you are fed up with the spiralling food, fuel and energy costs, not being able to get a GP appointment or sewage being pumped into the sea, then use the upcoming elections to show the government exactly how you feel.

What can reps do to help?

Encouraging members to register and apply for a postal vote is an important way of ensuring they can exercise their democratic right to vote. Members can go to this website to find out if they are registered to vote, how to apply for a postal vote and find further information on photo ID.

www.yourvotematters.co.uk

ACCEPTED FORMS OF PHOTO ID

You will only need to show one form of ID, but it needs to be the original version and not a photocopy. You can use any of the following accepted forms of photo ID when voting at a polling station:

- Passport or driving licence issued by the UK, any of the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, a British Overseas Territory, an EEA state or a Commonwealth country
- A Blue Badge, Older Person's Bus Pass, Disabled Person's Bus Pass, Oyster 60+ Card, Freedom Pass
- Scottish National Entitlement Card
- 60 and Over Welsh Concessionary Travel Card, Disabled Person's Welsh Concessionary Travel Card
- Senior SmartPass, Registered Blind SmartPass or Blind Person's SmartPass, War Disablement SmartPass, 60+ SmartPass issued, Half Fare SmartPass – all issued in Northern Ireland
- Identity card bearing the Proof of Age Standards Scheme hologram (a PASS card)
- Biometric immigration document
- Ministry of Defence Form 90 (Defence Identity Card)
- National identity card issued by an EEA state
- Electoral Identity Card issued in Northern Ireland
- Voter Authority Certificate
- Anonymous Elector's Document



ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH GEOFF PAGE

G Geoff has been an active member of Usdaw since he signed up to become a member in 1974. He was the full-time convenor in Sainsbury's until he retired in 2004. Instead of putting his feet up, Geoff has dedicated almost 50 years to trade union activism which has made him one of the most popular and respected reps in the union.

How did you feel winning the Outstanding Achievement Award at this year's Organising Awards?

I felt very humbled and gobsmacked to have won, especially when the

other nominees were so good. I couldn't have done it without the support I received from my members and Usdaw staff over the years.

How did you get involved in the union?

I joined the Merchant Navy when I was 16 and became a member of the National Union of Seamen. After that, I went to work in Sainsbury's distribution and signed up to Usdaw in 1974, when I was 27. My mum was a staunch Labour supporter and a socialist, so I think trade unionism was in my blood. When the opportunity arose, I didn't think

twice about signing up to become an Usdaw rep.

How did you find being a rep?

It was challenging and high pressured at times but I didn't mind because I felt like I was making a difference. Representing people when they were going through one of the most difficult times in their lives was an honour and it was also very rewarding especially when you got the result you wanted. I also loved being part of the negotiating team and had dealings with John Sainsbury as well as the board of directors. There was something very empowering about being able to

have your say in front of the people who run your company.

What were your priorities as a rep?

When I became a branch chair it was apparent that our committee was wholly made up of men. I spent a lot of time trying to get the reps team and the branch committee to reflect its membership. Eventually, I managed to get a good mix of committee members and reps that included some of my female colleagues and colleagues from different ethnicities. I also worked hard at revitalising our branch and trying to get our colleagues to take more of an interest in the union. I did manage to secure branch meetings during company time, which helped encourage attendance and participation.

What was it like being a rep during the 'closed shop' era?

When I first became a rep, it was a 'closed shop' which meant everyone was a member. But when this came to an end, we had to ballot every member to see whether they wanted Usdaw to continue representing them in Sainsbury's. This was a monumental challenge as we had around 700 members in our branch. We had to do a lot of work beforehand to make sure people understood the importance of trade unions and what we could do for them. I'm pleased to say the hard work paid off and we got 100 per cent of our membership voting yes.

What are you most proud of?

When I became a rep there wasn't any training, you learnt on the job. I didn't do my first course until I became the branch chair, which made me realise that for reps to function effectively they needed

training. When I became a convenor in 1981, I made sure my reps took up the training that was offered to them. Back then, learning reps were quite a new thing but I managed to get them introduced in Sainsbury's. We also got funding for a learning centre as well as a week-long conference, twice a year, for all the convenors.

How can we encourage young people to join trade unions?

In its heyday, trade union membership was about 12 million and now this has halved to around 6 million. I think some of this decline is because people no longer understand what unions stand for and what they can do for them.

As a rep, I used to give talks in schools and to college students, who were about to enter the workplace, about trade unions. Once I explained what we did, I found a lot of young people were receptive to the idea of joining unions. I still believe it's important to reach out to young people as they will be the trade unionists of the future.

What have you been doing since you retired?

I retired in 2004. I would have gone sooner but Sainsbury's asked me to stay on as the convenor for three years to organise their new depots. Once I finally retired, the TUC approached me and asked whether I would be interested in qualifying as a TUC tutor, which I agreed to. I

tutored reps from various unions but eventually I came full circle and started tutoring Usdaw reps. Tutoring was something I thoroughly enjoyed and only stopped a few years ago.

I still organise the eastern region Federation weekends and I'm the co-ordinator for the retired members committee. When I'm not volunteering for Usdaw, I'm involved in our local swimming and football clubs. I also volunteer for a dog charity that trains dogs to work with people with disabilities. It's amazing to see what these dogs can do after their training, they can help people get dressed, pick up the phone and even load the washing machine.

What's next for you?

I'm 76, and without a doubt, the union has been a huge part of my life and has even shaped my life with the opportunities it has provided me with. I've been very fortunate to work with some of the best people in the movement and had the privilege of seeing members I have tutored go on to hold senior positions within Usdaw as well as in other unions.

Saying that, I will be stepping aside when the time is right for me but until then I will continue doing my best for this union. I'm very lucky that my wonderful and very patient wife, Sue, who I've been married to for 54 years, continues to be supportive of my work because I couldn't have done any of this without her.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?
Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing in your workplace.
network@usdaw.org.uk



Geoff with delegates at last year's Retired Members' Conference



RECRUITMENT IS VITAL

Usdaw's ability to be influential as a union depends on how many members we have and how well organised they are, therefore having the ability and the tools to successfully recruit new members is vital. Reps need to talk to workers, listen to what they say and persuade them that being in Usdaw will make a difference for them and, importantly, everyone in the workplace.

Below are some of the more common responses reps might get when they are trying to recruit members, with some guidance on how to respond. This is just a guide. The key is to prepare and be ready for additional questions that potential members might ask. Keep up to date with the current state of play on matters in your company such as pay and give examples of what the union has achieved at your workplace.

To ensure you are up to date with all of the latest information visit the

union's website and sign up for email newsletters, follow the union on social media and read *Network* and *Arena* magazines when they come through your letterbox.

What can Usdaw do for me?

- Negotiate better pay and conditions.
- Look after your health and safety at work.
- Offer you advice and support and ensure you are being treated fairly.
- Represent you at grievances and disciplinarys, with a professional union official when necessary.
- Give you access to a variety of learning opportunities to learn new skills.
- Free legal and accident cover and you keep 100 per cent of the compensation.
- Discounts and offers exclusively for Usdaw members for insurance, holidays, cinemas, restaurants and much more.

I can look after myself and don't need the union

- If you've got a problem and you raise it with management, what will you do if they won't listen and they tell you to go away?
- If you were facing dismissal, who would represent you? Would you know your contractual and statutory rights?
- Could you afford a solicitor if you needed to go to court?
- Over 7,000 Usdaw workplace reps advise and support you at work and are backed up by highly trained Usdaw officials. Specialists in the fields of pensions, health and safety, education, management, wages and employment law are all on hand to help.

What difference would it make if I joined?

- Reps are trying to build up the strength of the union in the workplace and having more



members is the only way the union can become stronger. People joining is the first step to giving the union profile and influence in the workplace.

- Ask what issues people would like the union to deal with in the workplace and report them to your area organiser so that they can take the appropriate action.

I am not interested in going on strike

- Going on strike is not what the union is there for. Unions resolve thousands of issues for thousands of workers day in, day out, without going on strike. If unions do go on strike, it is over a very serious issue and only after a fully democratic ballot of all the members affected.
- Usdaw has a strong campaigning agenda and lobbies government about the issues that matter most to its members including better pay, saving the high

street, supporting working parents and carers and ending violence and abuse against shopworkers.

I'm part-time and don't work enough hours to join the union

- One in three Usdaw members work part-time. Most retailers and many other companies are dependent on the contribution of their part-time staff, so your job is just as important as the next person's.
- The terms and conditions of most part-time workers have been won by unions negotiating for them.
- Part-time workers get all the same union benefits as full-time workers.
- The union always encourages part-time workers to come forward with issues specific to them that the union can raise.

I can't afford to join

- No-one underestimates money worries but it's a question of priorities – you wouldn't drive your car without insurance or leave your house uninsured, so think of union contributions as your workplace insurance.
- If you lost your job because you didn't have professional representation at work, the consequences would be far worse than a burglary or a bump in the car.
- Usdaw has successfully won millions of pounds of compensation for its members – you can't afford not to join!

Why should I join the union, I get the same benefits anyway?

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

or accident at work.

- In some workplaces members will have a vote on things like their pay. Non-members do not get a vote.
- Remember, every person who doesn't join weakens the union and reduces the chances of getting a good deal at work for everyone.

I'm too young to worry about joining a union

- Usdaw's experience is that young workers are more likely than anyone to have problems at work. Young workers are a vital part of the workforce but are often undervalued, underpaid and discriminated against.
- Over recent years, Usdaw has helped young workers enforce their rights.
- Usdaw has negotiated the removal of youth rates in big companies such as Tesco, the Co-operative, Sainsbury's, Morrisons and Shop Direct. Many employers we deal with now pay the adult rate to all employees, irrespective of age.
- Whether you're planning on making a career in your current workplace or not, you still need to be protected at work. Usdaw will stand up for its young members providing advice, support and representation when required.

Why bother at my age – I'm too old

- Older workers are one group who definitely need the union. Age discrimination is a big problem in the workplace and if you are on the receiving end, the union can support you and help sort it out.
- If you're due to retire, it's really important to get it right as far as your pension and holiday pay etc. are concerned and the union has a specialist pension team that are on hand to offer you expert advice.

www.usdaw.org.uk/Reps/Organising-Recruitment

SUPPORTING MEMBERS IN EMPLOYMENT CASES

It is vital that the proper procedures and timescales are adhered to in a dispute, here's a guide for reps on how to access legal assistance for members

The union's aim is to try and resolve most employment disputes through workplace procedures, but unfortunately that's not always possible, and in some cases, further advice and representation may be needed. When this happens, it can be a harrowing experience for the member and it is part of a rep's role to support them and advise them on how to access legal assistance from the union.

The following toolkit outlines how reps can help members apply for legal assistance in employment or discrimination cases and signposts to where reps can read more detailed information.

Reps should know that they are not on their own. Help, advice and support is always on hand from their area organiser, local office and the union's legal department should they need it.

The Advice Card

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

The card will make your job as a rep easier and ensure that the members are given the right advice at the right time.

It should be given to the members you represent at disciplinary and grievance hearings where the member's problem is not resolved, or they remain unhappy with the outcome, and where internal proceedings drag on and the

tribunal time limits are coming up. The Advice Card is also available to download as a PDF at www.usdaw.org.uk/PcardLPAdvice2mem

What Reps should do

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

If a member requires legal assistance from the union in an employment case they must:

- Seek advice from their area organiser as soon as possible.
- Complete the Member Pack.
- Contact Acas within the time limits to obtain an Early Conciliation

Certificate.

- Remember they are personally responsible for lodging the ET1 (the Employment Tribunal Claim Form) to protect their position under the time limits even if there is an ongoing appeal or investigation. Make sure that your member keeps a close watch on the tribunal time limits. The tribunal has very strict time limits and if your member intends to go to tribunal they must submit their Tribunal Claim Form (ET1) within three months less one day of the date of dismissal or the date of the event which is the subject of their grievance. Your member must be very careful if the grievance procedure takes a long time or if the appeal stages drag on. They must not let the time limit run out because they are waiting until the end of the procedural stages.

Before an ET1 will be accepted by the tribunal:

- The member must contact Acas (either online at www.acas.org.uk or by telephoning 0300 123 1100) to obtain an Early Conciliation Certificate reference number which must be quoted on the ET1. Make sure that you give your member the Advice Card well before the expiry of the time limits.

How the system works

- Rep gives member the Advice Card.
- Member contacts the local Usdaw office for a Member Pack.



USEFUL RESOURCES

- The *Legal Plus Reps' Handbook* explains in detail how reps can help members apply for advice and assistance in employment cases.
dtp.usdaw.co.uk/legalplusrepshandbook
- There is a useful webinar on the Usdaw website that will guide reps through the Member Pack application process.
www.usdaw.org.uk/Reps/Representing-Members/Legal-Advice
- Usdaw's legal department:
0161 224 2804 or enquiries@usdaw.org.uk

- Usdaw office sends member the Members' Pack.
- Member completes pack and sends it with key documents to their area organiser at their Usdaw local office. The member may need support from the rep to complete the pack and source key documents.
- Area organiser checks the pack and sends it to the legal department.
- Legal department assess the case and informs the member whether Usdaw can support the case and who will represent the member.
- The union's aim is to tell members within 20 days of receipt of the Members' Pack at the local office

whether Usdaw will represent them. Until the Member Pack process has been completed and the legal department has confirmed that assistance is granted the member has personal responsibility for their case and must ensure that a claim is made to tribunal within the time limits.

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

Supporting reps

The union's aim is to resolve employment problems through the procedures and reps do a fantastic job every day looking after our

members and finding effective solutions to issues.

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

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

Always speak to your area organiser if you need support.

Further Information

www.usdaw.org.uk/legal

SOCIAL MEDIA AND MENTAL HEALTH

As the number of social media users grows to over 4.6 billion, research is beginning to show the detrimental impact it can have on mental health

Technology and social media have revolutionised the way we connect with each other, from our interactions at work, to our social lives to how we consume and share information.

Social media is great for keeping in touch, networking and raising awareness about important issues.

Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok have become daily fixtures in the lives of adults and children. And many of us find it almost impossible to switch off even though it may be negatively impacting our health and wellbeing.

WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

In recent years, several potentially damaging impacts of social media have been identified.

Anxiety and Depression

Recent research has also shown that four out of the five most used social media platforms can actually make anxiety and depression worse. Seeing friends constantly on holiday or enjoying nights out may leave us with feelings of self-consciousness, low self-esteem and a pursuit of perfectionism which can manifest as anxiety disorders.

Sleep

There is a strong link between sleep and mental health. A lack of sleep can be detrimental to mental health and poor mental health can be damaging to sleep. Poor sleep is linked to a number of conditions

including high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and depression. Several studies have shown that increased use of social media, as well as the light from phone and tablet screens, can interfere with the body's natural sleeping process. The addictive nature of social media leads to many people waking up during the night to go online which can bring about a number of subsequent issues.

Body Image

For many years, society has pushed unobtainable perceptions of body image. As technology has developed, the use of filters and editing apps make it easier to achieve the perfect face and body. Estimates suggest that 75 per cent of selfies are edited, meaning that we are comparing ourselves to millions of filtered photos.

Online Abuse

Social media sites are increasingly being used to spread online abuse and harmful content. Women, children, Black and LGBTQ+ people are particularly vulnerable. Abuse can have a devastating impact on people's mental health and everyday life. Hostile environments on social media, as in other spaces, lead to people modifying their behaviour or interactions, not feeling safe to be themselves, or feeling pushed off social media altogether. Online platforms should be a safe place for everyone. Social media companies and government need to do much

more to tackle illegal content and protect users from harm.

IT'S NOT ALL BAD

There are many positive aspects to social media. Through providing emotional support or evidence of other people's health and experiences, the various platforms can offer a beneficial environment. Many users of social media have commented upon the significant benefit of someone sharing their personal experiences along with practical strategies and coping mechanisms. Furthermore, by joining specific groups or pages, people can surround themselves with others who have similar thoughts or are experiencing similar difficulties.

TIPS TO MANAGE THE RISKS

Social media is not going away and therefore, whilst we must acknowledge the risks it presents, we cannot pretend that the only solution is to stop using it. Some widely shared tips to deal with and manage the risks include:

Accept That it's Not Reality

The photos that many of us see online may be heavily edited, filtered or staged. By simply accepting that social media rarely depicts real life, we can remove a lot of the pressure to live up to other people's experiences. The truth is that only the happiest occasions or the short moments of triumph get shared. The rest of life, the struggles and

worries, continue to exist in the real world.

Allocate Set Times for Social Media

Social media platforms are engineered for us to continue scrolling down or clicking on the next link. As a result, we can end up effectively wandering round the online world with no goal or end point. Through spending unrestrained hours online, we are unlikely to focus on or actively engage with those we're attempting to connect with. Allocating specific time slots can prevent us endlessly scrolling, so that we use social media as a tool to engage positively with the world around us.

Don't Neglect your Offline Life

Many people use social media simply as a way to fill the time. Through developing and maintaining relationships and hobbies offline, we will automatically cut out excessive use of social media. Face-to-face interactions and socialising can offer a more complete experience of the world and should not be neglected in favour of digital interactions alone.

FURTHER ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Udswal reps can provide advice and support if you are experiencing workplace difficulties. Speak to your GP if you think you may be suffering from poor mental health.

CALM www.thecalmzone.net

Mind www.mind.org.uk

Rethink Mental Illness

www.rethink.org

GLITCH www.glitchcharity.co.uk

The Samaritans www.samaritans.org



THE IMPORTANCE OF USDAW BRANCHES

Playing an active part in your local branch can help reps and members stay connected to the union, *Network* explains what they are and how they work

Branches are the cornerstone of Usdaw and integral to the democracy of the union. They allow reps and members to connect with the union, whether that's just staying up-to-date on what's happening in their workplace or taking a more active role in the union by supporting events and campaigns.

Branches also allow reps and members to raise and discuss the issues that matter to them through the union's regional and annual conferences and have their say on policy matters.

All members of Usdaw are divided

into around 400 branches across seven geographic regions of the UK. Your branch may be based on where you work and who you work for, or your branch may be part of a geographical branch including workers from various companies.

BRANCH COMMITTEE

Branches are run by an elected committee and include the role of branch president, secretary and chair. The committee work together for the effective running of the branch. Branch committees plan activities for the branch and elect delegates to attend both regional

and national conferences. Branches attend local events like Pride and anti-austerity marches. They support local and national charities through fundraising and donations. They also help reps to promote the union and union campaigns in the workplace, such as wellness initiatives and policy changes.

BRANCH MEETINGS

Branch meetings are held on a regular basis and are organised and run by the branch committee. Going to branch meetings enables reps and members not only to keep themselves informed of what is



February's branch officers course at Usdaw's head office

happening where they work, but also learn about the focus of the union at a local, regional and national level. Some branches arrange for guest speakers to attend their meetings such as local politicians.

By attending branch meetings, members can be nominated to attend union events such as regional conferences, ADM and TUC conferences where they can raise the issues that matter to them.

DEMOCRACY

Usdaw is a democratic organisation and ADM is the union's democracy in action. Once a year delegates from branches meet at Usdaw's Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM) to decide Usdaw's policies and priorities on a variety of issues such as part-time work, health and safety, unsocial hours, maternity rights, and international issues to name but a few. Branches can also submit propositions to ADM and may elect at least one delegate to attend and vote at ADM. In this way everyone has a right to take part in union activities and have a say in what the union does.



HOW A BRANCH MADE THE COMMUNITY SAFER FOR MEMBERS



Network spoke to Matthew Cooper-Teague from the Southampton and Wessex branch (H082) about how they successfully lobbied their local council to amend the proposed policy on street lighting.

"In a bid to reduce energy costs, the council wanted to turn off street lighting in residential areas between midnight and 5.30am," said Matthew.

"It became obvious to us they hadn't considered the impact on low-paid workers like our members who finish after midnight or start their shifts before 6am.

"Luckily, we have some experience of this issue because our branch has been actively involved in Usdaw's Safe Journey campaign as well as working with local bus companies to move bus stops into well-lit areas. So, we knew that this measure could make journeys to and from work unsafe for our members, especially for our female colleagues who already have legitimate fears about their personal safety and security.

"The first thing we did was to publicise these proposed

changes to our members and then encouraged them to fill in the online consultation. I also lobbied the council by writing to our councillors, all 24 of them, to explain why turning off the lights would have a detrimental impact on our members.

"I made my arguments around the fact that turning off the lights was a health and safety issue because our members would be travelling to and from work in complete darkness which could expose them to violence. Many of our members don't have cars and the prohibitive cost of taxis means that they would be solely reliant on public transport.

"Our concerns were also backed by the emergency services who believed that there could be a rise in crime and accidents.

"After much debate, the council agreed to amend the times and now the lights will be off from 1am until 4am. In addition, they also agreed to maintain street lighting in areas surrounding smaller, vulnerable stores, which would give employees adequate time to make their journeys on lit streets.

"We were really pleased with this outcome and so were our members. It highlights the importance of trade union members being actively involved in their branches. Branches allow members not only to shape union policy but also direct the issues and causes their branch gets involved in.

"If you're a member and you are worried about something in your community, then go to your branch to see if they can help. Collective action by branch members can affect local politics and bring positive change for members."

TIME TO VALUE WOMEN



Usdaw's TUC Women's Conference delegation

A delegation of Usdaw reps and officials attended the annual Trades Union Congress (TUC) Women's Conference in London, on 8 March, which was also International Women's Day.

The union called for action to end sexual harassment and highlighted how the cost of living crisis has impacted women.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "In recent years the scale and extent of sexual harassment has been thrown into sharp focus. The TUC's own research exposed just how persistent and widespread sexual harassment is in the workplace and the role of misogyny and sexism in enabling it.

"Unions are crucial to defending women's rights and acknowledges the vital role reps play in encouraging women to report harassment; ensuring appropriate

action is taken when women do speak out; and campaigning on the issue in the workplace.

"We called on the TUC to support the work trade unions are doing with employers to address sexual harassment and press government for the implementation of a preventative duty and a Statutory Code of Practice."

"Women are facing a major cost of living crisis, although some of this is because of energy price rises and the unequal impact of the pandemic, this is also a crisis of incomes. Over a decade of austerity and cuts to social security have left many women in poverty. Wages have stagnated, with women's wages increasing at a slower rate than men's. Women remain over-represented in low-paid, insecure employment and are at the sharp end of increases in food, fuel,

childcare, housing and transport costs.

"Usdaw urged the TUC to continue playing a leading role in co-ordinating the trade union response and build a movement of protest against the crisis. Also press the government to exercise their statutory duty to assess the disproportionate impact of the crisis on women, taking into account the full range of women's identities and roles into the gendered nature of the crisis and specifically how it is impacting on women at work."

Now is the time to value women's work. Usdaw is campaigning for:

- Access to affordable and flexible childcare.
- Paid parental leave entitlements.
- Minimum hours contracts.
- Proper flexible working rights for all workers.

www.usdaw.org.uk/equalities



Nikki (pictured centre) with colleagues at IWD Brunch held at Tesco Springhill, Birmingham

Celebrating Usdaw Reps

Usdaw marked International Women's Day by pledging to continue its campaign for equality and to keep women's equality high on the union's negotiating, organising and political agendas.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "This year we are focussed on the impact the workplace has on women's health, from low pay and insecure contracts to the health and safety hazards that can damage physical and mental health.

"We need strong employment and equality rights during pregnancy and maternity leave, affordable and available childcare, new family friendly rights that give parents and carers real choices to support juggling work and family life.

"One of the most effective ways to deliver this is through a new deal for workers that makes work pay, ends insecure employment, provides a proper social security safety net and gives workers a voice through their trade union."

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BRUNCH

Network caught up with Tesco

worker and Usdaw rep Nikki (known as Nikki) Fitzsimmons to talk about how she brought her colleagues together by throwing a brunch for International Women's Day. Nikki, who won the Campaigns Award at this year's Organising Awards, is the driving force behind many of the campaigns in her region.

"On International Women's Day, I wanted to celebrate what we've achieved as reps in the last five years," said Nikki. "Reps do a lot of work which often goes unnoticed, so I wanted to take this opportunity and say thank you to the reps in my branch. I also wanted to celebrate equality and diversity and the strides we've made towards these.

"When I first became a rep, it quickly became apparent that our reps didn't reflect the diversity of our stores. Over the years, we've done a lot of work around encouraging members from different backgrounds to come forward as reps and I'm proud to say we now have female reps, reps from the LGBT community, disabled reps as well as Black and Asian reps.

"The managers at Tesco were

very supportive when I suggested the brunch, they even gave reps time off to attend as well as paying for the food and drinks. The event was open to everyone, and we had a great turnout with 14 (male and female) reps attending from various stores as well as Tesco store directors and managers, and our regional secretary Gavin Dadley.

"The reps got the chance to get to know one another and share best practice. They also discussed the issue of childcare and several women highlighted how they miss out on certain opportunities due to the lack of affordable childcare. It just goes to show that despite all the strides women have made in the last 50 years, we still need to do a lot more around childcare so that women can fully participate in our society.

"It was a really fantastic event which brought everyone together and let our reps know how much they were appreciated. I want to say thank you to Julie Sarsons and Gayle Barker who came from Bedworth to attend the event. I'm looking forward to helping them with their menopause day."

UNIONS MAKE WORK SAFE

Remember the dead,
fight for the living



28 APRIL

Workers' Memorial Day

TUC

Changing the world
of work for good

REMEMBER THE DEAD: FIGHT FOR THE LIVING

As health and safety legislation comes under attack, International Workers' Memorial Day reminds us why we need union reps to protect their colleagues

International Workers' Memorial Day (IWMD) is the day when the international labour movement remembers those who have been killed or injured in workplace accidents and those who have died from occupational diseases. The event started in Canada and the US in 1986 and has been supported by Usdaw since 1995. Since then, it has been taken up by the TUC and is supported by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and by the British government.

This year the theme for IWMD chosen by the International TUC is 'Organising health and safety within the workplace'. That theme is more relevant than ever, in a year in which health and safety law has come under attack.

The proposed Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill has produced a significant cause for concern. The Bill puts a whole raft of hard-fought EU-derived health and safety regulations under serious threat of being completely eradicated at the turn of the new year.

Regulations under fire include the 'six pack' regulations, which cover the management of health and safety at work; manual handling operations; the use of display screen equipment; health, safety and welfare at work; the provision and use of work equipment; and the provision and use of personal protective equipment.

In such uncertain times, it is important, now more than ever, to organise and protect one another in the workplace.

Through an organised union structure, reps and members alike should be able to access any tools or resources they may require to uphold a safe working environment.

A key message for IWMD is that union workplaces are safer and healthier workplaces because they:

ORGANISE

Unions must recruit health and safety reps and provide them with the tools they need for their work.

INSPECT

Health and safety reps need to use

their legal functions to inspect the workplace, investigate incidents and consult with the workers they represent.

PROTECT

Unions must use their bargaining strength at work to make sure that health and safety policies are working properly. Unions can also use their wider political campaigns to make sure that workers are heard, the law does recognise their universal right to safe and healthy work, and their safety is prioritised over corporate interests.

WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY?

- Display the poster on your union noticeboard and hand out our leaflet. Usdaw is producing a leaflet and poster to highlight the importance of reps using their legal powers to deliver in the workplace on IWMD. Details of local events will be available on the TUC website:

www.tuc.org.uk/workers-memorial-day-0

- A range of materials including purple knotted ribbons, car stickers, t-shirts and posters can be ordered from Greater Manchester Hazards Centre. www.gmhazards.org.uk or email mail@gmhazards.org.uk for more details.

If reps want more Usdaw materials, please contact the health and safety section at head office.

- Find out if there are any ceremonies or events in your area. www.tuc.org.uk/iwmd-events

- Use the hashtag #IWMD on social media channels to help spread the word.

IWMD is one of the biggest events in the international trade union movement calendar. To keep track of international developments check out the ITUC 28 April webpage: www.28april.org

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

HOW TO BE SAFETY WEAR AWARE

In this article, *Network* looks at some frequently asked questions on Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

What is PPE?

PPE is defined in the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992 (PPER) as 'all equipment (including clothing affording protection against the weather) which is intended to be worn or held by a person at work and which protects the person against one or more risks to that person's health or safety, and any addition or accessory designed to meet that objective'. PPE can include items such as safety helmets, gloves, eye protection, high-visibility clothing, ear defenders, and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE).

When should I use PPE?

PPE should only be provided as the last resort to protect against risks to health and safety under the hierarchy of controls, depicted in graphic above.

There are several reasons for making PPE the last resort:

- PPE only protects the person wearing it, whereas controlling the risk at source can protect everyone in the workplace.
- Maximum levels of protection with PPE are seldom achieved in practice, and the actual level of protection is difficult to assess.
- Effective protection is only achieved by proper use of suitable PPE, correctly fitted and maintained.
- PPE may restrict the wearer to some extent by limiting movement or visibility.

Reps can ensure that the employer has considered whether a hazard can be eliminated or substituted, or if any engineering and/or



administrative controls can be implemented to reduce the risk and even the requirement for wearing PPE. If an employer's risk assessment determines any residual risk remains, they should only then consider providing PPE.

It is important that union safety reps are involved and consulted on the process of the risk assessment, and they should always be asked to comment on assessments, although the responsibility for doing a risk assessment lies fully with management.

Should I have to pay for PPE?

No, you should not. Employers must protect their employees from health and safety risks in the workplace. This means they must provide PPE free of charge if their risk assessment shows it is needed. Employers also need to provide training and instruction in its use to all their workers.

My PPE is broken, what should I do?

Employers are required to ensure that any personal protective equipment provided to their workers is maintained (including replaced or cleaned as appropriate) and in good repair.

If the PPE provided to the worker is lost or becomes defective, it is

their responsibility to report it to the employer.

What can I do as a rep?

As a rep it is important to be aware of what types of PPE are required for different processes and procedures within your workplace. Should you deem a workplace activity unsafe, you are well within your rights to question and consult with your employer to look at the risk assessment together.

Support and assist members, checking that their PPE is fit for purpose. Should this not be the case ensure that the issue has been raised with management, reminding them of their responsibilities. If your employer is unwilling to cooperate on your concerns, be sure to make use of our HS2 resource to assist with any written complaint.

FURTHER INFO

www.shponline.co.uk/ppe-personal-protective-equipment/

www.hse.gov.uk/ppe/overview.htm

www.hse.gov.uk/ppe/ppe-regulations-2022.htm

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/l25.pdf

HEALTH SURVEY SHOWS STARK RESULTS

WELLBEING WITHIN THE WORKPLACE



Nuffield Health has recently published the findings from its annual Healthier Nation Index which provides insights into wellbeing in the workplace, how people feel about what their employer has to offer and the kinds of things they'd like to see implemented at work.

The Index explores attitudes towards key topics and provides a unique and detailed barometer of health and wellbeing across workplaces in the UK. From the

impact of the pandemic on physical and mental wellbeing to barriers to accessing healthcare, the findings are useful and will help show reps how to improve workplace wellbeing throughout their organisation.

Conducted in February 2022 by polling company Censuswide on behalf of Nuffield Health, 8,000 adults (aged 16+) in the UK were asked 30 key questions, with answers split by region, age, gender, ethnicity, household

income and more.

The findings provide a stark insight into many workplaces throughout the country, and in particular workers' mental wellbeing. Sixty-six percent of respondents stated they would not feel comfortable raising a mental health or emotional wellbeing issue with their employer. In addition, over a third (34 per cent) of respondents have said that their mental health has gotten worse in the last 12 months.

The Index provides a broad range of statistics covering a variety of work-related topics such as financial health, workplace resources, and sleep. Reps can use the information contained within the Index to gain a better understanding of workplace issues and how best to tackle them.

The Healthier Nation Index can be downloaded at: www.nuffieldhealth.com/healthiernation

NO TIME TO LOSE

OCCUPATIONAL CANCERS

The Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) have recently published updated information surrounding occupational cancers as part of their No Time to Lose campaign.

Worldwide, over 742,000 lives are claimed by work-related cancers each year, devastating families and communities.

Through this campaign IOSH aims to get carcinogenic exposure issues more widely understood and help businesses take action.

The No Time to Lose campaign provides an overview of a variety

of common workplace hazards associated with occupational cancers including exposure to asbestos, diesel fumes, and silica dust.

Each listed hazard is supplemented by a detailed overview which explains what the issue is, how it can be managed, and real-life case studies.

Reps can use this information to gain a better understanding of the issues faced, and how best to combat them within their workplace.

More information can be found here: www.notimetolose.org.uk/



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0161 249 2474

■ Health & safety advisor

Charlie Dodd
0161 249 2441

■ General enquiries

healthandsafety
@usdaw.org.uk

MemberOffers

CARS & TRANSPORT

Car Maintenance
Car Parking: Q-Park
Electric Vehicle Charging
Fiat
Halfords
Startrescue
Vauxhall Cars

HEALTH & BEAUTY

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

SHOPPING

Apple
Charles Tyrwhitt
Dell
Discount Card
Domestic Appliances
Flowers
Gift Card Savings
Halfords
Lifestyle Vouchers
Magazine Subscriptions
Usdaw Prepaid Cashback Card
UsdawRewards Cashback
Virgin Wines

INSURANCE

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

LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52
Brewser Craft Beer
Cinema at home: Chili.com
Cinema Tickets
Discount Card
English Heritage
Go Ape
Golf Membership
Magazine App: Readly
Magazine Subscriptions
National Trust Gift Cards
Theme Parks & Attractions
TodayTix: Theatre Tickets
Virgin Experience Days

MONEY & FINANCE

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

HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking, Lounges & Hotels
Currensea: Travel Card
Eurocamp
James Villa Holidays
Lost Luggage Protection
Parkdean Resorts
Pontins
Wightlink Ferries

MISCELLANEOUS

Big Yellow Storage
Child-safe SIM cards
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*

PARKDEAN RESORTS



Great savings on your 2023 holiday with Parkdean Resorts

Usdaw members can save on a holiday at one of over 65 holiday parks with fantastic coastal, lakeside, rural or woodland locations. Save 10% (excluding school and bank holidays) and 5% during all school and bank holiday periods.

*To find out more go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers and don't forget to quote **USDAW76** for your special discount.

GIFT CARD SAVINGS

Save on your favourite retailers through Gift Card Savings

Usdaw members can buy a range of Gift Cards and eGifts at discounted rates. It's a great way for you to save hundreds of pounds annually. From everyday essentials like your weekly supermarket shop to luxuries such as dining out. *To find out more go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers



PARENTSHIELD

Get 15% off child-safe SIM cards

Introducing ParentShield, the only mobile network designed for children. Usdaw members can save 15% on 30-day rolling SIM-only contracts. With monitoring capabilities that are not available on any other network, you can teach responsible phone usage from day one. In addition to the 15% discount, new customers get Super-Roaming for free (RRP £2.99 per month), meaning your child should never have issues with a mobile signal again.

*To find out more go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers



HALFORDS

As a valued Usdaw member, you can save 8% in store and online at Halfords

Save on the latest driving accessories, bikes and camping supplies from the UK's leading provider of cycling and motoring services.

*To find out more go to: www.usdaw.org.uk/offers



*Terms and conditions apply to all benefits. See website for details. Offers subject to change without notice and correct at time of print. ParentShield - offer not available on Safe Stage 1 plan. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Halfords - see website for current exclusions. Usdaw Discounts & Offers is managed and run on behalf of Usdaw by Parliament Hill Ltd. Further benefits are organised directly by Usdaw Membership Services. See website for details. Neither Usdaw nor Parliament Hill are part of the same group as the providers.

Staff Announcements

Area organisers Shelley Vaughan and Sarah Hughes and training officer Sue Langworthy retire and Usdaw welcomes two recruits to the North Eastern region



Shelley Vaughan

SHELLEY VAUGHAN

Usdaw area organiser Shelley Vaughan retires after 17 years.

"I worked for the Co-op for 11 years before becoming an area organiser in the Leeds office in 2005," said Shelley, 55. "It was Pat Frost that started me as a rep and from there I went on to become the branch secretary, health and safety rep, and divisional councillor in the North West. I was also involved in the Co-op negotiating committee and spent a lot of time on stand down.

"Being an area organiser has been fantastic. I never thought I would end up working for the union because I don't come from a trade union background, and I trained as a chef at college. As an area organiser no day is ever the same. You could be recruiting, running campaigns, representing or even negotiating. I've worked with some brilliant reps and had the privilege of seeing them accomplish great things such as becoming local councillors, and one of them even became a mayor.

"I will miss everyone but it's the right time to go. My husband is the primary carer for our foster kids and once I retire, he can take a break and go fishing. Our house got flooded in 2016, so I'm looking forward to redecorating it from top to bottom. Being an area organiser has given me a lot of legal knowledge so I would like to put all that experience to use by volunteering to be a magistrate. All in all, it's going to be quite a busy retirement."

SARAH HUGHES

Usdaw area organiser Sarah Hughes retires after more than 16 years.

Sarah, 55, worked for Tesco for 19 years before being appointed as

an area organiser in the Midlands region in 2006.

"I left school at 16, worked for a company who sacked you on the spot if you even mentioned the word trade union," said Sarah. "I then went to work for Tesco and was badgered by two managers into becoming a rep. They wanted me to do it because they said I could see both sides of the coin and I wasn't afraid to challenge people in authority. I didn't see myself like this at all but after months of pestering, I agreed, even though I didn't quite know what trade unions did. My initial thoughts were that I had to know at least as much as my managers if I was to represent my members effectively.

"I became an area organiser in 2006 and never looked back. I've loved every minute of it, especially standing up for our members and making sure they're being treated fairly and justly. I only wish I had become an area organiser sooner.

"A lot has changed in the 16 years I've been an official. When I first started, we didn't have emails or mobile phones. We had to phone the office every day to pick up our messages and we had to communicate with reps and members by post. Sometimes I look back and wonder how I managed without smartphones and emails.

"I'm really going to miss interacting with the reps, we've got some brilliant reps out there. I'm going to miss my fellow comrades and the support I got from my colleagues in not just my region alone, which has been second to none. I can honestly say, without them and key officials I would have fallen flat on my face.

"I'm going to take the next few months to really chill out. I'm going on a cruise to the Canaries in July



Sarah Hughes



Sue Langworthy

and then to Mexico next year to mention but a few. I'm also looking forward to welcoming my fifth grandchild later this year."

SUE LANGWORTHY

Training officer Sue Langworthy retires in the Eastern region.

"I've been involved in the movement from a young age, said Sue. "My aunt was a shop steward in the 60s and I went on my very first march when I was only 10 years old. We were protesting against the closure of a factory that would see lots of people being made redundant. That experience must have stayed with me because when Usdaw came looking for reps in my Co-op store in 1995, I signed up.

"After completing my shop steward training, I also became a union learning rep. I ended up doing a lot of work on the learning agenda and was later approached by the TUC to take up the project worker role. One of my colleagues advised me that the funding for my role could run out any time so it might be best to do my teacher training, which I did.

"Later I was a regional organiser for Unison before becoming an Usdaw training officer in 2017.

"Coming back to Usdaw was like coming home. It's been brilliant. My favourite part of the job was teaching reps about the trade union movement and going out to sites so we could put into practice what we've learned.

"After I retire, I'm going to do moderation work for the Open College Network.

"I'm lucky enough to have four daughters and eight grandchildren, with another on the way so I'm looking forward to spending more time with them. I'm also hoping to go to Cuba which has been on my bucket list for a few years.

"I will miss everyone at Usdaw, particularly the clerical staff at Waltham Cross who have been fantastic in their support."

LEWIS WHEATLEY

Former DHL rep Lewis Wheatley will be joining the area organiser team at the Leeds office.

Lewis, 26, worked for DHL distribution (Sainsbury's/Argos) contract for almost seven years and became a rep in June 2020. He threw himself into his role and his commitment was recognised when he was the joint winner of the Most Promising New Activist Award at this year's Organising Awards.

"I decided to become a rep during the pandemic because we didn't have a rep on my shift," said Lewis.

"I was also having some difficulty with various issues on site and I wanted to make sure that there was someone representing our members' concerns and ensuring they were protected.

"I loved being a rep and wanted to learn as much as I could to represent my members to the best of my abilities. I did all the training courses, attended branch meetings and went on stand down.

"My patch will cover North Yorkshire and will include Weatherby, Scarborough and Northallerton. My main focus as an area organiser will be recruitment and trying to build back what we lost during the pandemic. Developing reps is another priority for me. They're the ones who are on the beat every single day so it's important they're supported and trained to the highest possible standard."

MICHAELA PARSONS

Former Tesco rep Michaela Parsons is the latest area organiser to join the officials' team at the Leeds office.

Michaela, 44, worked at Tesco for 23 years and was a rep in the Sheffield store for 9 years.

"I don't come from a trade union background and was never interested in politics," said Michaela. "That's until I started working in retail. I don't like injustice and I'm not shy about calling it out. My manager



Lewis Wheatley



Michaela Parsons

noticed this in me and said I should consider standing as a rep.

"I became a rep in 2015 and was lucky enough to join a fantastic team of reps who go out of their way to look after their members. I received all the training and development I could ask for and went on several bouts of stand down, which I loved. I also completed Academy1 last year which gave me the knowledge and skills I needed to apply for the area organiser position.

"I'll be responsible for the Sheffield area, which has a big student population who also work in retail, either when they're students or after they graduate. I'm keen to get my reps trained and on stand down so that they can go into colleges and universities to promote the benefits of Usdaw membership."

NEW IN!

Leaflets & Booklets

Hearing Loss and Deaf Awareness - An advice guide for Usdaw reps
(Leaflet 442)

Multiple Sclerosis
(Leaflet 444)

Hidden Disabilities - An advice guide for Usdaw Reps
(Leaflet 446)

Diabetes - An advice guide for Usdaw reps
(Leaflet 449)

Migraine - An advice guide for Usdaw reps
(Leaflet 457)

Asthma - An advice guide for Usdaw reps
(Leaflet 458)

Autism - An advice guide for Usdaw reps
(Leaflet 459)

Posters & Flyers

Not All Disability Is Visible
(Poster R72)

Equalities Calendar 2023

Respect Week 2023 Retail Staff Survey

Tesco Retirement Savings Pension Plan
(Factsheet)

Online bitesize courses

Data Protection Online course
www.usdaw.org.uk/ProtectionOnline

Maths and Money Matters
www.usdaw.org.uk/mathsmatters

Mind Your Head – Mental Health course
www.usdaw.org.uk/mindyourhead

More Than Words – English course
www.usdaw.org.uk/MoreThanWords

Pensions Home Study
www.usdaw.org.uk/PensionsHomeStudy



ADJUSTMENTS TO HELP STAY IN WORK

Practical information for reps on supporting disabled members in the workplace

A valuable resource for reps to help deal with reasonable adjustments in the workplace.

There are many ways that disabled workers can be put at a substantial disadvantage at work. Issues that would be minor for a non-disabled worker can be game-changing for someone with a disability. That's why the right to reasonable adjustments is so important – the law is clear that sometimes, disabled workers need favourable treatment to help them overcome additional barriers at work.

Our newly updated advice guide aims to help you get your members the adjustments they need to stay in work. Containing straightforward, practical advice on negotiating adjustments, this leaflet is essential for all reps looking to boost their knowledge and become more confident when discussing this subject with an employer.

To make the most of our Reasonable Adjustments (leaflet 439) guide, it should be read alongside our guide to supporting disabled members (leaflet 383).
dtp.usdaw.co.uk/439
dtp.usdaw.co.uk/383

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

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:
network@usdaw.org.uk

OVER TO YOU



Midlands Region Morrisons Reps Forum



Myself and five union learning reps attended the 15th Annual Scottish Union Learning Everyday Skills event (in person which was great). The theme was health and wellbeing in the workplace.

All who attended gave great feedback and said they will be using everything they learned at the workshops to support members in their workplaces.

Caroline Baird
Lifelong Learning Project Worker



Can we please thank Paddy Lillis for coming along and supporting the Corby CLP Burns supper. The feedback was really positive with people saying how his speech was spot on, loved how he spent time talking to many CLP members. We made just over £1000 for the CLP which is great for fighting the next election. Thank you Paddy and Usdaw for your continued support, and all those who attended.

Mark Pengelly Corby CLP TULO and fundraiser



U USDAW FOR

Labour

Voting in the May Local Elections?

**Remember your ID or
Apply for a Postal Vote**

Voting by Post

To request a postal vote you must sign up by 5pm on Tuesday 18 April 2023.

Voting in Person

Under new rules brought in by the Conservatives, voters across the UK will be required to show photographic ID to vote in person at polling stations in some elections.

For more details visit:
www.electoralcommission.org.uk

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