

# Arena

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OF LOVE  
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**ROBERT FLEMING  
TALKS ABOUT HIS  
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## The Team

**Arena** is the membership magazine for the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers.

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## Welcome

**A**fter 13 years of a Conservative government, we have seen workplace rights eroded, the welfare system undermined, austerity imposed on vital public services and economic chaos and mismanagement. This has taken its toll on working people and many showed their displeasure at the recent local elections, which resulted in the Conservatives losing around 1,000 seats.

But we can't be complacent. There's still more work to do if we are to secure a Labour victory. A victory we desperately need because only Labour has committed to delivering the New Deal for Working People within the first 100 days of coming into government. It contains day one rights for workers, including protection from unfair dismissal; the right to a contract that guarantees the hours you normally work; increased Statutory Sick Pay; a commitment to put mental health on par with physical health; paid family and carers' leave, and so much more.

The next general election will be crucial. Not just in ending the 13 years of this incompetent Tory government but also because it gives us a chance to finally deliver what we have long been calling for: fairness at work, properly funded public services, and a better quality of life for our members, their families and working people right across our country.

**Paddy Lillis, General Secretary**



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# Looking After You and Your Family

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- Accidents, injuries and disease claims, including accidents outside of work.
- Accidents/illness whilst on a package holiday abroad.
- Road traffic accidents.
- Injuries caused by violent crime or robbery.
- Family members living with you for any non-work related accident in the UK or whilst on a package holiday abroad.
- Call FirstCall Usdaw or complete the form on the Usdaw website at: [www.usdaw.org.uk/firstcall](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/firstcall)

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- Employment problems.
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- Prosecutions.
- Free Wills.
- Free initial advice on non-work matters.

If you have a problem and need help and advice or want to join Usdaw, contact your Union rep or call the Helpline **0800 030 80 30** or visit our website: [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)



# Regatta workers secure a trade union voice

**A**lmost 340 workers at Regatta, the outdoor retail chain, are now covered by an agreement between Usdaw and the company after a lengthy campaign for recognition at the Ellesmere Port site.

Regional secretary Mike Aylward said: "We are delighted to formalise and develop our existing relationship with Regatta, which significantly improves facilities. Our reps and officials have worked extremely hard to win the hearts and minds of both company and staff which have resulted in this deal.

"At a time when the government is trying to weaken the trade union movement this deal shows that enlightened employers can still work with unions to bring benefits to both their employees and the



business. The company's positive attitude to industrial relations is one that other companies, who are resistant to unions, could learn from.

"Good industrial relations are founded on workers knowing that an experienced and knowledgeable trade union is ensuring they are treated with dignity, fairness and respect at work."

"Our efforts are now turning to recruiting members and establishing an effective network of reps so that we can best support out members."

## Co-op Group Food Retail Rep Elections 2023

**U**sdaw rep elections will be taking place across all Co-op Group Food stores in July and we want to encourage members to stand for election.

All Usdaw reps will be up for election. We hope that existing reps will stand again to carry out the great work they do and we also need new reps to come forward to take on the role. You'll receive training and lots of support to help you in the role.

The rep role is open to customer team members, team leaders, team managers and store managers. If you are interested



in becoming a rep, please look out for the nomination form in your store in July or contact your local Usdaw office for more information.

# Trade unions challenge strike-breaking agency worker regulations

**U**sdaw is one of eleven trade unions who launched a judicial review of the Government's new regulations, which allows agency workers to fill in for striking workers and break strikes.

The challenge has been coordinated by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and includes: ASLEF, BFAWU, FDA, GMB, NEU, NUJ, POA, PCS, RMT and Unite.

The unions argue that the regulations are unlawful because:

- The then Secretary of State for business failed to consult unions, as required by the Employment Agencies Act 1973.
- They violate fundamental trade union rights protected by Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

The government's changes have been heavily criticised by unions, agency employers and parliamentarians. The TUC has warned these new laws will worsen industrial disputes, undermine the fundamental right to strike and could endanger public safety if agency staff are required to fill safety critical roles but haven't been fully trained.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "It beggars belief that, in the midst of a cost of living emergency, the government has chosen to launch an ideological attack on workers' rights. Instead of undermining trade union members, the government should be working with us on urgent plans to eliminate low-pay and insecure work and they would do well to adopt Labour's New Deal for Workers. With millions of households facing fuel poverty, the



British public will look on in disbelief that ministers are prioritising attacks on trade unions over tackling spiralling prices and delivering fair pay awards."

TUC General Secretary Paul Nowak said: "This government is brazenly attacking the right to strike. First by cynically changing the law to allow employers to hire agency workers to fill in for striking workers, and now with the draconian anti-strikes Bill. Bringing in less qualified agency staff to deliver important services could endanger public safety, worsen disputes and poison industrial relations. And these strike-breaking agency regulations are likely illegal.

"Ministers failed to consult with unions, as the law requires, and restricting the freedom to strike is a breach of international law. That's why unions are coming together to fight these attacks all the way, including in the courts, on the Strikes Bill and further attacks on the right to strike."

# Wincanton commits to the TUC's 'Dying to Work' charter

**W**incanton is the latest employer to sign up to the 'Dying to Work' voluntary charter, following in the footsteps of employers such as Unilever, Pladis and the Co-op. The charter is part of the TUC's wider 'Dying to Work' campaign which is seeking greater security for terminally ill workers, so they cannot be dismissed as a result of their condition.

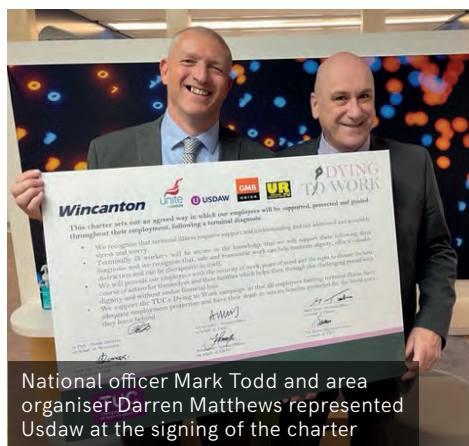
'Dying to Work' was taken forward by the TUC following the case of Jacci Woodcock, an area sales manager from Derbyshire, who was forced out of her job after being diagnosed with terminal breast cancer. The TUC is asking employers to sign up to its voluntary charter to stop cases like Jacci's happening in the future.

Usdaw national officer Mark Todd said: "Workers should always be treated with dignity and respect by their employer."

Signing the charter reassures our members that, should the worst happen, they will be treated properly by their employer."

Jo Pick from Wincanton said: "As a people-focused business, signing the charter was a sure thing. It's the right thing to do and demonstrates our commitment and support to our colleagues and their families when they need us most."

TUC Midlands Secretary Lee Barron said: "Your job should be the least of your worries when you get a terminal diagnosis. I'm delighted that Wincanton have shown real leadership in this area, working with unions to guarantee fair treatment for terminally ill workers. Over 1.5 million workers are now covered by the 'Dying to Work' charter across the country and we expect more employers to follow suit in the months to come."



National officer Mark Todd and area organiser Darren Matthews represented Usdaw at the signing of the charter

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# Notice: Political Fund Ballot Result 2023

The Independent Scrutineer's report of voting in the above ballot, which closed at 5pm Friday 31 March 2023, is as follows:

- Number of voting papers distributed for the purposes of the ballot..... **328,171**
- Number of voting papers returned to the Scrutineer.....**32,762**
- Turnout.....**10%**
- Number of votes found to be spoiled or otherwise invalid.....**42**
- Total number of valid voting papers to be counted.....**32,720**

THE RESOLUTION is that the political objects set out in section 72 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 be approved as an object of the Union.

## Result

- Number of valid votes cast for the resolution .....**31,653 (96.7%)**
- Number of valid votes cast against the resolution .....**1,067 (3.3%)**

The ballot papers will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended by the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993).

As Scrutineers appointed in accordance with Section 75 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended by Schedule 1 of the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993), we are satisfied as to each of the matters specified in subsection 78(2) with regard to the ballot. The following points should also be noted:

1. The person appointed under section 77A to carry out the storage and counting of voting papers was Civica Election Services.
2. The person appointed under section 77A to carry out the distribution of the voting papers was Civica Election Services.

3. A copy of the register of voters (as at the relevant date) was examined in accordance with section 78(2A)(i). The examination took place at our own instance and did not reveal any matter that should be brought to the attention of the trade union.

We draw your attention to sections 78(4), 78(5) and 78(6). 78(4) requires that a copy of this report be published and made available to all members of USDAW within a three-month period from today. This, however, does not mean that every member has to be notified individually.

## CIVICA ELECTION SERVICES

Please note that the Union will, on request to the Administration Office at Head Office, supply any member with a copy of this Scrutineer's report free of charge.

## Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended)

A resolution approving the furtherance of political objects within the meaning of the above Act as an object of the Union has been adopted by a ballot under the Act. Any payments in the furtherance of any of those objects will be made out of a separate fund (the "Political Fund") of the Union, but each member of the Union has a right to be exempt from contributing to that fund. A form of exemption notice can be obtained by or on behalf of any member either by application at, or by post from, the Head Office or any branch office of the Union or from the office of the Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, 8th Floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL.

This form, when filled in, or a written request to the like effect, should be handed or sent to the General Secretary.

It is not necessary for a member to hand or send in such a form if they are already exempt from contributing to the political fund or have recently submitted such a form. An existing exemption from contributing to the political fund will continue automatically.

**Paddy Lillis**  
**General Secretary**





# Usdaw members vote yes to keeping their political voice

**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.**

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 campaign and lobby the government, no matter who is in power.

"Usdaw is currently focused on campaigns for a new deal for workers, lobbying for action on the cost of living crisis, protection of workers from abuse, along with many other important issues."



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Approver Lighthouse Advisory Services Limited. 24 April 2023.

# Annual Delegate Meeting

**D**elegates gathered in the Winter Gardens in Blackpool for the 76th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM). ADM is the biggest event in the union's calendar with over 1,000 delegates, visitors and officials attending from across the UK.

General secretary Paddy Lillis, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen and president Jane Jones hosted ADM while national executive council member Kate McLeod ensured the smooth running of ADM as the chair of the standing orders committee.

Over the four days, delegates took part in lively debates and voted on propositions to decide the union's policies and priorities for the next 12 months.

Delegates also heard from guest speakers Anas Sarwar, the leader of the Scottish Labour Party, as well as Helen Dickinson, the head of the British Retail Consortium (BRC).

*Arena* reports on a cross section of the main propositions and debates.

## Economy and Finance Debate

Delegates called for the government to take action on energy costs that would relieve the burden on businesses to help them stay afloat.

## Health and Safety debate

Lone working, pregnancy risk assessments and workplace temperatures were some of the propositions that formed part of the health and safety debate. Usdaw supported the propositions





## Subs Increase

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to increase membership rates. This means from 2nd July 2023, Scale A members will pay £2.68 a week and Scale C members will pay £1.82.

and reiterated that it's the role of trade unions to ensure employers operate in line with health and safety legislation and robustly challenge them when they fail in their legal obligations.

## Health and Social Care Debate

Delegates called on the NHS and employers to support women affected by endometriosis during the health and social care debate, with many sharing their experiences or the experiences of their loved ones. The proposition called for a range of support including endometriosis to be given due priority so that those living with the disease and waiting for care are not left behind, an overhaul of the way the NHS prioritises patients, reforms to statutory sick pay and to strengthen workers' rights to flexible working and reasonable adjustments.

## Organising for a New Deal Debate

As part of the Organising for a New Deal debate, delegates called for improved trade union rights which included giving union reps adequate time off for union duties, giving unions the right to access workplaces, simplifying the law around statutory recognition thresholds and allowing unions to utilise secure electronic voting.

## Pensions Debate

Udaw delegates voted to amend the auto-enrolment legislation so that the age threshold is reduced from age 22 to 18 and the current minimum earnings trigger of £10,000 a year to be phased out.





## Welfare and Benefits Debate

Delegates backed calls for reform of universal credit so that it doesn't penalise workers who take on more hours, provides more assistance with childcare costs and properly supports workers through the ongoing cost of living crisis.

## Black Members Development Programme

General secretary Paddy Lillis launched the new Black Members Development Programme. The programme has been set up to tackle the under-representation of Black members in the union and seeks to give Black members the support they need to become active in the union and in their workplaces.

## Call It Out – Sexual Harassment

Delegates endorsed a National Executive Council (NEC) statement which commits Usdaw to calling out sexual harassment in workplaces and right across the union movement.

## Age-Restricted Sales

Delegates backed a call to change law and

policy around the sale of age-restricted goods and bring in a culture of 'No ID - No Sale' to put the onus on customers to comply with the law.

## Additional Bank Holiday

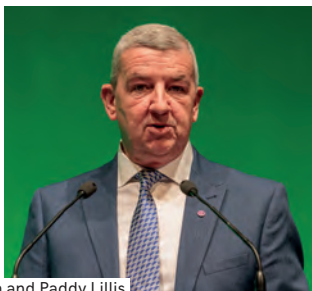
Delegates backed the call for an additional bank holiday to remember the Queen.

## Support for military veterans

Delegates agreed that the government should invest in services that support veterans after they leave the military so that they can lead healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives.

## Helen Dickinson British Retail Consortium

"We must do more to transform our high streets, along with retraining and upskilling our workforce. We must do more on violence and abuse, along with wellbeing, mental health and inclusion. We are making progress on many of these areas and my vision for the future sees a vibrant industry, delivering for customers, colleagues and society more broadly."



Pictured L-R: Jane Jones, Dave McCrossen and Paddy Lillis

## Usdaw for Labour

Anas Sarwar, leader of Scottish Labour, received a standing ovation for his speech which promised to undo the damage done by the Tories and be on the side of working people.

"Conference, I don't need to tell you that 13 years of this economically illiterate, morally bankrupt Tory government has left us all poorer. They have let prices soar while wages and growth stall.

"They have built a low growth, low pay economy. Money has been robbed from the pockets of working people and drained from the very public services we rely on. And as is so often the case, women are paying the harshest price for government failure.

"Hit hardest by low pay and austerity, forced to carry added burdens and navigate needless barriers. And that's true across the board - whether it's women, disabled people, ethnic minorities, LGBT people. Historic inequalities are being entrenched and exacerbated by this divisive and damaging government. But trade unions are at the forefront of the fight for liberation and equality. Defending and advancing human rights for all.

"And let me say once again - no ifs, no buts, no maybes - the next UK Labour government will scrap the Tories' despicable anti-trade union legislation. We will undo the damage done by over a decade of Tory misrule - of brutal cuts, low pay, and attacks on workers. We will put an end to their ideologically driven campaign to vandalise workers' rights and



undermine the trade union movement.

"And that's just the start. Because it's not enough just to try and salvage what the Tories have trashed - we need to strengthen workers' rights at every opportunity. We need to respond to our changing economy and the new challenges workers face.

"We have the bold, radical policies needed in these desperate times. Look at Labour's Green Prosperity Plan. And a game-changing publicly owned GB Energy company.

"I know that for too long people across Scotland felt they've had to choose between the SNP and the Tories. Between continuity and separation. But that's not the choice anymore.

"You can choose a fresh start with Labour. You can put your trust in us to deliver the change we so desperately need."



## Nearly a third of shopworkers are thinking of quitting because of violence, threats and abuse

**U**sdaw 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.

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.
- 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. 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."

### **Michelle Whitehead, a convenience store worker from the West Midlands, talks to Arena about her experience**

"It's really bad!" said Michelle. "We had an armed robbery last night. The poor lad on duty went through hell because the bloke had a hammer which he brought down right in front of him to smash the till open. We have a Post Office counter in our store which means we get more robberies and more serious incidents of violence.

"Shoplifting is increasing and some of that is down to the cost of living crisis, with people struggling to make ends meet, but some of it's organised crime. We have a prolific shoplifting gang coming in who are violent and threatening. They're brazen, they laugh in our faces when they're

filling their bags and walk out without paying. The police did catch one shoplifter recently, he left court at 1pm and was back thieving from the shop that afternoon.

"Turnover is high, and we are seeing staff leave because of these problems. Morale has gone down because you're on edge waiting for someone to kick off with you. My colleague is looking for another job because she's been caught up in two armed robberies. Another is leaving after three years because he's had enough and has found a job with the ambulance service.

"It's no surprise that the Usdaw survey showed such high levels of abuse. The pandemic normalised this kind of abusive behaviour. But violence and abuse is not an acceptable part of the job. We need to keep spreading the message of respect for shopworkers and we need better co-ordination to ensure that retail employers, police and the courts work together to make our stores safer."

**The full report can be found at:**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/FFFReport2022](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/FFFReport2022)



## Grandparents

**The lack of affordable childcare has been hitting the headlines recently with the average price of a full-time nursery place for a toddler (under two) costing a staggering £14,836 per year. Coupled with the cost of living crisis, it's no surprise that many parents are looking at grandparents to help the with childcare so that they can return to work.**

It's estimated that grandparents provide more than 1.7 billion hours of childcare each year and one in four families in the UK rely on grandparents to look after their children. Many Usdaw members provide childcare for their grandchildren whilst also juggling work. Arena answers your questions on what rights (if any) grandparents are entitled to.

**My employer wants to change my hours to a day when I look after my grandchildren. Can I refuse to change my hours because of my childcare commitments?**

Unfortunately, the rights grandparents have at work to take time off to spend time caring for grandchildren or to rearrange their working hours to fit around their caring commitments are very limited. We would expect employers to take these

commitments into consideration when looking at changes to working hours. Speak to an Usdaw rep if you feel the company refuses to take your childcare commitments seriously.

**My grandson has fallen sick at school and I've been asked to pick him up as my daughter can't get away from work. Can I take time off under the Time off for Dependants legislation?**

This legislation gives workers the right to a reasonable amount of time off work to deal with emergencies involving their dependants. The definition of who the law considers 'a dependant' is complex and more commonly covers grandparents who live in the same household as their grandchild(ren). If you do live in the same household as your grandchild(ren) and you need to take time off in an emergency because your grandchild is injured or ill or because the usual care arrangements for them break down, then you should be entitled to 'time off for dependants'. Any time taken off is usually unpaid but check your workplace agreement/policy.

[www.usdaw.org.uk/349](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/349)

**I don't live in the same household as my grandchildren, am I entitled to take time off under the Time off for Dependants legislation?**

Even if you do not live in the same household as your grandchild(ren) you should be able to take a reasonable amount of time if you are the only person who is available to help in any one of the following specific circumstances:

- Where your grandchild falls ill or is injured or assaulted.
- To make alternative care arrangements in the event your grandchild is ill or assaulted.
- To make alternative care arrangements where existing ones (such as being looked after at school or nursery)





*One in four families  
in the UK rely on  
grandparents to look  
after their children.*

are unexpectedly disrupted.

Any time taken off is usually unpaid but check your workplace agreement/policy.

### **Can I ask my employer to give me flexible hours so that I can help look after my grandchildren?**

Anyone who has worked in the same job for 26 weeks or more can submit a formal written request to their employer to ask for a change in their working

arrangements. However, the right to request flexible working is just that, it only gives you the right to ask. Your employer must seriously consider your request and can only refuse where there are clear business reasons for doing so.

**[www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Parents-Carers/Flexible-Working-and-Time-Off](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Parents-Carers/Flexible-Working-and-Time-Off)**

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**Know  
your  
Rights**





## **My employer has refused my request for flexible working and says I can't appeal, is this true?**

Whilst the legislation does not compel an employer to allow an internal appeal process, the ACAS code of practice on handling requests in a reasonable manner encourages employers to do so.

## **Can grandparents take unpaid parental leave?**

No. Parents who have worked for the same employer for one year and have a child under the age of 18 years old are entitled to take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave for each child. Unfortunately, most grandparents are excluded from this right. Only grandparents who have legal parental responsibility for the child (for example, who have a Residence Order or Special Guardianship Order) have the right to take unpaid parental leave.

## **Looking after my grandkids is expensive, is there anything I can claim to help towards the costs?**

Working age grandparents (under state pension age) can claim specified adult childcare credits for caring for children up to 12 years old whose parents or main carers are working. This is known as the Specified Adult Childcare Credit and is worth about £275 a year and helps top up the state pension payable to grandparents on retirement.

Parents and grandparents have to apply to transfer the credits. Signing over the National Insurance credit costs nothing to the parent who is going out to work and making their own contributions as this credit is technically going spare. The credit is only available for each child benefit recipient, not for each child for whom they care.

It can be claimed by filling in form CA9176 which can be found on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website

## **Further information and support**

**Kinship** 0300 123 7015 or [kinship.org.uk](https://www.kinship.org.uk)

**Age UK** 0800 678 1174 or [www.ageuk.org.uk](https://www.ageuk.org.uk)

**Carers UK** 0808 808 7777 or [www.carersuk.org](https://www.carersuk.org)



# Money woes

**T**he average interest rate charged by mortgage lenders is now much higher than it used to be thanks to the disastrous mini-Budget announced last year by the then prime minister Liz Truss and her chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng. The ideologically-driven Budget, which prioritised giving the rich £45 billion of unfunded tax cuts, had real-life consequences which left millions of people with higher mortgage repayments.

*Arena* covers common questions on mortgages, cost of living payments, energy and cost of living scams.

## What happens if I miss a mortgage payment?

A shortfall equivalent to two or more

months' repayments means you are officially in arrears. If you are struggling to make repayments, then you must contact your lender as soon as possible. Trained and experienced staff must be on hand to help. And your lender must make reasonable attempts to reach an agreement with you.

## What can I expect from my lender?

Within 15 working days of falling into arrears, your lender must tell you how much your arrears add up to, list the missed payments, explain how much is outstanding on the mortgage and outline any charges.

Your lender must then treat you fairly by considering any requests about changing how you pay, such as lower repayments for a short period, extending the term of the



mortgage or let you pay just the interest for a certain period of time.

### **Will this affect my ability to borrow money in the future?**

Any arrangement you come to will be reflected on your credit file and could affect your ability to borrow money in the future.

### **Can I take a mortgage holiday?**

A mortgage payment holiday enables customers to delay repayments but not indefinitely. Again, this will show on your credit file.

### **Could I lose my home?**

Some people may decide to sell their home and - in extreme circumstances - the lender could take court action to

repossess it. Repossessions are far rarer than they used to be.

There are lots of stages before a lender can take such action and the whole process takes about two years.

### **I'm struggling to pay my rent, can my landlord evict me?**

There's a strict process landlords need to follow to evict you. The first part is to serve you notice of eviction. But the notice they need to give you varies depending on where you live.

If you've not left by the time the notice period is up, your landlord can then choose to start court proceedings (or tribunal proceedings in Scotland) to evict you. If the court agrees you can be evicted, then your landlord can appoint bailiffs

who can gain entry to the property to take possession of it, or to remove your belongings and change the locks. However, it can take weeks or months for the eviction to happen after the court allows it.

If your landlord's trying to evict you, contact Shelter [www.shelter.org.uk](http://www.shelter.org.uk)

## Cost of Living Payment

A £900 cost of living payment will be paid to households who receive the following benefits:

- Universal Credit
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income Support
- Working tax credit
- Child tax credit
- Pension credit

The £900 payment will be paid in three instalments:

- £301 – first payment during spring 2023
- £300 – second payment during autumn 2023
- £299 – third payment during spring 2024

If you think you should receive the help but don't, you can report it here:

<https://secure.dwp.gov.uk/report-a-missing-cost-of-living-payment/welcome>

## £150 disability payment

A £150 disability payment will be awarded to people who receive any of the following:

- Disability living allowance
- Personal independence payment
- Attendance allowance
- Scottish disability benefits
- Armed Forces independence payment
- Constant attendance allowance
- War pension mobility supplement

The payment will be made in summer 2023. The payment will be tax-free, will not count towards the benefits cap, and will not have any impact on existing benefit awards.

## £300 Pensioner Payment

The Department for Work and Pensions



is extending the £300 boost to the winter fuel payment that was issued in 2022. It will be paid in winter 2023-24. Anyone who is eligible normally receives £100-£300 each year.

The amount you get depends on when you were born, your living situation and the type of benefits you receive. The £300 comes on top of this.

## When does the £67 energy payment stop?

The Energy Bills Support Scheme gave households £400 off their energy bills



and was paid in six monthly instalments of £66 or £67. The scheme came to an end in March 2023.

## What is the Energy Price Guarantee?

The government launched an energy price guarantee, which limits a typical dual-fuel household's annual energy bill to £2,500.

The energy price cap set a maximum price that energy suppliers can charge consumers for each kilowatt hour (kwh) of energy they use. How much you pay depends on how much energy you use.

This was due to come to an end in April but has been extended until July 2023.

## Cost of Living Payment Scams

Millions of people in the UK have been warned to look out for scams as the dates for the latest cost of living payments were announced. According to Citizens Advice, 40 million people were targeted by scammers last year as the cost of living crisis gripped the UK.

## Most Common Scams

Citizens Advice said the most common scams were deliveries, postal or courier services, someone pretending to be from the government or HMRC, a scammer offering a fake investment or 'get rich quick' scheme, followed by rebates and refunds, banking scams, online shopping, health or medical scams and energy scams.

The Department for Work and Pensions warned those who were eligible for the cost of living payments with the following message, 'You do not need to apply for the payment. You do not need to call us. Payment to you is automatic. We will never ask for personal details by SMS or email.'

Therefore, do not give out private information such as bank details or passwords, reply to text messages, download attachments or click on any links in emails if you're not sure they're genuine.

If you think you've been scammed, here's what to do:

- If you've already responded to a scam, end all further communication immediately.
- Call your bank and cancel any recurring payments.
- Report the scam to the police through Action Fraud (The UK's national reporting centre for fraud) 0300 123 2040 [www.actionfraud.police.uk](http://www.actionfraud.police.uk) or 0808 164 6000 (Scotland).
- Email scams can be forwarded to [report@phishing.gov.uk](mailto:report@phishing.gov.uk) and text scams can be sent to the number 7726.



"Writing poetry was a way of letting myself know I was good at something."



# The poet writing about retail life

Usdaw rep Robert Fleming has worked in retail for thirty years and found he had a talent for writing poetry after completing a shift at his then workplace, SavaCentre in Sheffield

**R**obert, 52, who now works at the Co-op as a customer team member said, "Even though it was 30 years ago, I still remember it clearly. I finished my shift and was waiting at the bus stop. It was a dark and rainy day and out of nowhere a poem came to me. When I got home, I scribbled it down and read it out to my colleagues a few days later. They were all very complimentary about it and ever since then, the words and ideas have just flowed."

"The way I write poems is a little odd because I always start with the ending first, then the middle and the beginning last. I also write words the way they sound to me rather than how they're spelt. I tend to write about my experiences, my family and friends, and sometimes I even write my own versions of famous songs like My Way by Frank Sinatra. I handwrite all my poems and keep the finished poems in a bag. I do have one rule, if I write a poem about a person, they get to keep the handwritten version."

"I became an Usdaw rep in 2011 and went to Summer School in 2015. It was such a supportive environment that I spent the week writing a poem to capture the experience. I was asked to close the session with my poem and the reaction I got from my colleagues was unbelievable, for a moment I felt like a rockstar!

"In 2019, I was selected to go on Usdaw's Academy 1. At the end of the first session, I handed my paper to my tutor. She came back to me and told me (in private) that I had dyslexia. I had no idea.

I was 46 and nobody had ever told me this before. Suddenly it all made sense. It made sense why I struggled at school, why I couldn't process information the way other people did and why my spelling was so different to everyone else's.

"Dyslexia is a hidden disability and I think my teachers just assumed I wasn't smart or that I wasn't trying hard enough. Since no-one at school spotted my dyslexia, I never got any additional help or support. When I fell behind in my lessons, I was made to feel like it was my fault and that I wasn't good enough. This affected my ability to do well in school and had an impact on my confidence and self-esteem. I ended up leaving after sixth form because people were always putting me down.

"The learning environment Usdaw provided was so different to what I had experienced at school. For the first time, I felt properly supported and encouraged. The tutors and the other reps were fantastic. We worked together to make sure no-one was left behind. Thanks to this, I not only completed Summer School 1 but also Academy 1 in 2019. It was such a great feeling to be able to do this.

"I realise now, that writing poetry was a way of letting myself know that I was good at something. I even had a couple of poems published in a Sunday paper which I am extremely proud of. Poetry helps me release emotions and understand what I'm experiencing. As long as people enjoy what I write, then I'm happy."



# Me, work and the menopause

**U**sdaw launched its **Me, Work and the Menopause** campaign on the **8 March 2023** to coincide with **International Women's Day**. The campaign was developed with a group of women activists and aims to highlight that the menopause is a workplace issue and encourages members to speak to the union if they are having problems at work.

The menopause starts when a woman

stops having a period 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 periods stop altogether and this is called the perimenopause. Younger women can also experience an early menopause either naturally or a side effect of other conditions or medical treatments.

Menopause and perimenopause

# 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.



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

It's not just the physical and psychological symptoms that can make women's lives difficult. Continued stigma around women's health issues 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.

If the workplace is making your menopause symptoms worse or your symptoms are making it difficult for you to function at work, then please talk to your Usdaw rep or local office for support. Usually, the support women need at work to manage their symptoms isn't high cost 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.

**To find out more go to:**  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause)

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.

One of the biggest issues for members is that it's not easy to know if the menopause has started. Many of the early symptoms of menopause and



# Retired Members' Conference

**U**sdaw welcomed delegates to its head office in May for the 32nd Retired Members' Conference. Organised by the union's pensions section and chaired by Usdaw president Jane Jones, the agenda covered auto-enrolment, the services offered by Age UK and advanced care planning.

## Auto enrolment

Usdaw pensions officer Debra Blow explored how auto enrolment has fared since its introduction 10 years ago and shared her thoughts on whether this would solve pension issues for future generations.

"Over 10 million people have been auto enrolled, the number of women

contributing has increased by 50 per cent and an additional £33 billion has been saved into pension pots since 2012," said Debra. "However, there are still a number of issues that need to be tackled such as the millions who are excluded from auto enrolment, people not saving enough and the pensions gender gap. Usdaw will continue trying to influence government, keeping the issue of pensions on the ADM agenda, giving feedback to the TUC and pension organisations and raising awareness through our reps."

## Cost of Living

Age UK marketing and communication manager Jane Bevan outlined the range



*"The cost of living is a concern for many older people. But there are things you can do."*

of services offered by the charity and focused on the ones that could help with the cost of living. "The cost of living is a concern for many older people," said Jane. "But there are things you can do such as making sure you carry out a benefits review to find out if you're entitled to any additional help. The review can also include asking about Pension Credit which tops up your weekly income and opens the door to other benefits such as TV license

concessions. An Attendance Allowance is available for those over state pension age who need help with personal care or supervision because of an illness or disabilities. With soaring energy prices, it's worth checking whether you're entitled to the Winter Fuel Payment."

## **Advanced Care Planning**

Age UK project facilitator Amanda Barrell addressed delegates on the importance of advanced care planning, the growing issue of funeral poverty and how to cope with bereavement.

"We are all entitled to good end of life care and a dignified death," said Amanda. "Advance care planning offers us the opportunity to plan our own future care and support, including medical treatment, while we still have the capacity to do so. It gives us the opportunity to share our wishes with our loved ones. Not everyone will want to make an advanced care plan but it may be especially relevant for people at risk of losing their mental capacity through an illness."

### **You might be retiring from work – but that doesn't mean you have to retire from Usdaw membership.**

Many retired members stay active in the union after retirement. If you remain a member, then you can play an important role in your union branch, helping to recruit new members and getting involved in Usdaw's campaigns. You could also join your region's Retired Members' Committee. Retired members also benefit from a range of Usdaw services including pension advice, financial services and our Legal Plus service. What's more, if you've been in paid Usdaw membership for at least 30 years you can apply to become a free life member and pay no further union fees. Find out more by reading our factsheet [www.usdaw.org.uk/269](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/269)



# Living and working with Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Lynn Palmer, who works at Tesco in Burnley, talks to *Arena* about her condition and how she manages to continue working

**“I was diagnosed with MS about six years ago,” said Lynn, 55. “But I’d been having symptoms well before that. The first give away was when I turned my head to cross the road, I would lose my balance but it didn’t enter my head that something was wrong.**

“It wasn’t until 2006, that I went to see a doctor. I was moving house when I had such a terrible headache that I fell to the floor and couldn’t get up. At the time, the doctor put it down to an ear problem. But the headaches carried on and the room

would spin making me feel queasy. I was finally diagnosed with MS in 2017 and I was shocked. I couldn’t take it in because I’m stubborn and I was convinced that if I ignored the problem hard enough it would go away. Of course, it didn’t go away.

“MS is one of those conditions that people don’t know anything about. My friends and family had to look it up because none of us had come across it before. It’s when the immune system attacks healthy parts of the body, in my case the spinal cord. Consequently, I suffer from fatigue,

have problems with my balance and coordination, muscle spasms and difficulty walking. And there's no cure. All I can do is to try to manage my symptoms with medication. I'm on two types of pills and take 12 tablets a day, six of each, every morning and every afternoon. The medication helps stop the nerves from twitching. Even with the medication, I can have a relapse where my left leg goes into spasm, or the muscles in my thigh tighten and it starts jerking.

"I've worked for Tesco for 27 years and they've been very supportive. They got occupational health involved and took on board the adjustments that were recommended. I've been given a walking trolley to help me get around the store and if I need a hand with anything else, they're always ready to help. I love decorating my walker for different seasons and events like Christmas, Easter etc. which always makes my colleagues and customers smile. These small changes and the positive attitude of the company have helped me stay in work and I want to stay in work for as long as I can because I love my job.

"I also want to continue being active in the union. I've been an Usdaw rep for almost 20 years and my rep's role has provided me with a lifeline. When I'm helping others and problem solving it means I don't have time to think about my condition.

"MS has changed my life and there's a lot of things I struggle to do. I can no longer go on long walks and when I'm having a bad day it takes me ages to do normal things like cooking. It can be so frustrating. But I'm also a fighter and I don't let things get me down. I still have my independence, I can drive a car (if it's an automatic and I don't have to use my left leg), I'm mobile enough to get around my house, I can still take the dog for a walk and go on holidays. I'm very grateful that I have a great family, friends and colleagues who have given me a lot of support over the years."



*"I love decorating my walker ... it makes my colleagues and customers smile."*



# Free Usdaw LEGAL PLUS

## Injury cover for all Usdaw members and their family

**U**sdaw's Legal Plus service is one of the many great benefits of being an Usdaw member – and it's completely free. The service has got better and better over the years and has now been extended to cover family for personal injury.

Family members (who live with the member) are now covered for more than just road traffic accidents. They can now make personal injury claims for any non-work related accidents.

The service is free and you get to keep 100 per cent of your compensation - a private solicitor will typically take 25 per cent of your compensation.

### Legal Plus Covers All Accidents:

- At work.
- Outside of work.
- Unrelated to work.
- Injuries caused by violent crime and robbery.
- Work-related conditions or disease claims.
- Road traffic accidents; whether you were in a car, cycling or a pedestrian.
- Injury whilst on a package holiday abroad.\*

### Family Members

Family members that reside with an Usdaw member are covered for non-work related accidents anywhere in the UK, and also for accidents/illness whilst on a package holiday abroad\*.

*\*Package holiday claims means accidents, injuries or other personal injury claims covered under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992.*

### What to do

To qualify, the member must have been in membership at the time of the accident and fully paid up with their contributions. They must maintain their membership whilst the claim is ongoing.

To register a claim ring FirstCall Usdaw 0800 055 6333 or complete the form on the Usdaw website. The call is free and lines are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Legal Plus provides a great range of other services which include:

- Accidents, injuries and diseases
- Violent Crime (CICA)
- Employment
- Prosecutions
- Probate and free wills
- Moving House
- Legal Advice not related to work
- Help for your family
- Pensions
- Health and Safety

**For more information on what Legal Plus covers and the rules governing the service please go to:**

- [www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Legal-Advice/What-Legal-Plus-Covers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Legal-Advice/What-Legal-Plus-Covers)
- [www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Legal-Advice/Legal-Plus-Rules](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice/Legal-Advice/Legal-Plus-Rules)





# Family Cover For Personal Injury

**Usdaw doesn't just cover you –  
We cover your family too!**

- Members' children and family are covered.
- Any non-work related accidents.
- Free, no obligation advice from a trusted union solicitor.
- Keep 100% of your compensation – a private solicitor will take 25%.
- FirstCall Usdaw is available 24/7.



[www.usdaw.org.uk/firstcall](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/firstcall)  
Contact your Usdaw rep  
or call our helpline **0800 055 6333**





Usdaw member **J**, who wishes to remain anonymous, works as a floor manager for a value retailer in Stoke-on-Trent and was attacked by a shoplifter last year. He received £500 under the union's Assault at Work Grant, which provides financial support to members who sustain a crime related injury.

**“I was attacked in the run up to last Christmas,” said J, 61. “I was on my way to the office to input some invoices when a female member of staff came looking for me. She said a lad who’d been barred last week for attempted theft had just walked into the store.**

“I knew I had to go and deal with this because our security guard was off that day. We have security five days a week, so shoplifters always target us when he

isn’t around. They work with a girl called Tracy, who sits opposite the store, and lets them know when there’s no-one protecting the store.

“By the time I got to the shopfloor, the shoplifter had already selected four electrical items worth about £120. He was heading towards the exit when one of my female colleagues took a swipe at the goods and a couple of items fell to the floor. He kept hold of the other two and when he saw me approaching, he shouted, “I’m f\*\*\*ing having these.” He hit me on the right-hand side of my face and knocked out a tooth, which I accidentally swallowed.

“Luckily, I had the radio on me and I notified the police straight away. I must have been in shock because I carried on working even though I was feeling quite shaky. The police arrived and took my statement, and we also had footage of him hitting me and leaving the store.

“The police found him and arrested him.



They couldn't interview him for 48 hours because he was on a drug called monkey dust and completely out of it. Stoke has a terrible problem with monkey dust. It's blighting our community and driving a lot of the shoplifting and violence in our store.

"I continued to come in to work but as the days went by, I felt worse and worse. I couldn't cope and felt like I was going to have a breakdown. It wasn't just because of this attack.

In my 22-year career, I have been attacked around 15 times and this has taken a terrible toll on my mental and physical health. One time, a woman bit me and then told me she had HIV. Another time, I was beaten very badly which led me to stepping down from my store manager role. I gave up the money, the perks and the prestige to avoid this kind of situation but when it happened

*"In my 22-year career, I have been attacked around 15 times and this has taken it's toll"*

again, it pushed me over the edge.

"I went to see my doctor who diagnosed me with PTSD, anxiety and depression, and signed me off sick. While I was off sick, my case went to court and I attended to give evidence. Because of my medical

history, I was allowed to give evidence in a closed court so that my attacker wouldn't be in the same room as me. He had been out 'on license' and had committed a number of offences so he was sent straight back to prison.

"Even though I got injured in the course of my work, I was only getting statutory sick pay which is barely enough to live on. The £500 grant helped relieve some of the financial pressure I was under. The Assault at Work Grant is another fantastic benefit offered by a union that has always supported me."

# MemberOffers

## CARS & TRANSPORT

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

## HEALTH & BEAUTY

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

## HOLIDAYS

Airport Parking,  
Lounges & Hotels  
Currensea: Travel  
Card  
Eurocamp  
James Villa Holidays  
Lost Luggage  
Protection  
Parkdean Resorts  
Pontins  
West Cliff Hotel  
Whitemead Forest  
Park  
Wightlink Ferries

## LEISURE & ENTERTAINMENT

Beer52  
Bookbeat  
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  
Online Ticket Store  
TodayTix: Theatre Tickets  
Theme Parks &  
Attractions  
Virgin Experience Days

## INSURANCE

Accident Protection Cover  
Life Insurance  
50+ Personal Accident  
Cover  
Free £5,000 Accidental  
Death Cover

## MONEY & FINANCE

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

## 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

## MISCELLANEOUS

Big Yellow Storage  
Child-Safe SIM Cards  
Mobile Phones  
TOTUM Pro Card  
International Student ID  
Card

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



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

Find out more

[www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)\*

\*Terms and conditions for individual offers on the website.

## PARKDEAN

### Fantastic savings on UK family holidays 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](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers) and don't forget to quote **USDAW76** for your special discount.



## ENGLISH HERITAGE

### 25% off English Heritage annual memberships\*

Enjoy unlimited entry to over 400 historic places across England with 25% off English Heritage annual memberships. From legendary and iconic sites such as Stonehenge to the country's most beautiful historic castles, there's so much to explore, and what's more, up to 6 children can go for free with every adult member.

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



## MYACTIVE DISCOUNTS

### Get moving and save with MyActiveDiscounts

MyActiveDiscounts offers Usdaw members great savings on things that get you active and healthy such as footwear, sportswear and nutrition. You can also save money on adventure days, travel, spa breaks and more!

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/offers)



## GO APE


### 10% off Go Ape outdoor experiences and activities\*

Looking to discover some seriously adventurous things to do outdoors? Go Ape offer outdoor experiences and activities across 34 locations UK wide. From zip wires to super-springy trampoline nets in the trees, to off-road Segways and axe throwing, Go Ape has an adventure for everyone to enjoy.

\*To find out more go to: [www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://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. English Heritage - offers not in conjunction with any other offer. Only valid on new memberships paying by annual Direct Debit. Accompanying children must be under 18 and within the family group. Go Ape - excludes Saturdays, Gift Vouchers and Corporate Bookings. Axe Throwing is currently only available at Coventry, Matfen, Bracknell and Southampton. 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.



Don't let your colleagues miss out on **Usdaw membership** - including **free legal help, representation and advice at work and member offers...sign them up now using the form opposite...**

Sign up a friend and you could win **£250** of shopping vouchers!

**Your chance to win!**

You could **win £250** of shopping vouchers in this issue's prize draw. All you have to do is sign up a colleague or friend to Usdaw using the form opposite, and return it to Usdaw. Just put **FREEPOST USDAW** on the envelope and put it in the post.

A prize draw each issue



TWO RECRUITERS WILL WIN SHOPPING VOUCHERS WORTH **£250** EACH IF THEY ARE THE **FIRST** TO BE PULLED OUT OF THE HAT!

USE THIS FORM TO SIGN UP A FRIEND AND ENTER THE PRIZE DRAW

The weekly rate (applicable from 2 July 2023) is **£2.68**

You can also enter online:

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

I apply to join Usdaw. As a member of Usdaw I undertake to abide by the Rules and regulations of the Union and to pay contributions regularly. The home address I give is the address that Usdaw will use for balloting purposes. Members joining from 1 July 2021 are automatically entered at Scale A. For details of current membership rates and cash benefits visit [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk). **Responsibility of keeping payments up-to-date rests with the member.**

Use **BLOCK LETTERS** and complete this form as fully as possible.

Have you been a member of Usdaw before? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please tick the appropriate box	
Ms <input type="checkbox"/>	Miss <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs <input type="checkbox"/> Mr <input type="checkbox"/> Mx <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/>
Surname	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Forename	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Email	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Full Postal Address	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
	Postcode <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Tel. No. (Inc. STD)	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Mobile No. <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Date of Birth	<input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/> Age <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Company Name	Occupation
Workplace Address	
	Postcode <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/>
Location No.	Employee No.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Opt-in Notice</b> I agree to contribute to the Union's political fund at the rate set out from time to time in the Rule Book, and I understand that this agreement constitutes an opt-in notice for the purposes of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended and the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995. Every member may opt to contribute to a separate fund for the furtherance of the Union's political objects under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended) or, as appropriate, the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 by ticking this opt-in notice. A member who chooses not to contribute shall not, by that reason, be excluded from any benefits of the Union or be placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under a disability or at a disadvantage as compared with other members of the Union (except in relation to the control of the fund).	
<b>For Members Paying by Payroll</b> I hereby authorise my employers for the time being, or their representatives, to deduct from my salary or wages the amount of contributions payable by me under the Union's Rules, as amended from time to time. I also authorise the deduction of any arrears which may accrue during my employment. I consent to the Union sharing my personal data with my employers, or their representatives in order to process my deduction contributions. I also authorise my employers, or their representatives, to share my information with Usdaw in order to process and maintain my Union membership and where appropriate that my employers, or their representatives, shall notify the Union of any future changes in my home address and email to enable the Union to maintain a register of the names and proper addresses of its members.	
<b>Privacy Notice</b> As a member of the Union, Usdaw will process your personal data as part of its legitimate activities in providing trade union services and benefits in accordance with the Union's Objects stated in the Rule Book and to perform its obligations to you under statute or contract. This involves processing of personal and sensitive personal data under the current data protection legislation. We will store your personal data only for the period necessary under law to enable us to fulfil our legal obligations. You have the right to request access to your personal data, and its rectification, erasure, restriction on processing, and portability. You have the right to withdraw consent for sharing of your personal data and to complain to the Information Commissioner. Usdaw and its Data Protection Officer may be contacted at Usdaw, Voyager Building, 2 Furness Quay, Salford Quays, Manchester M50 3XZ.	
Member's Signature	Date
Recruiter's Name	Recruiter's Membership No.



Your health and your safety at work is a vital part of Usdaw's service. For more advice visit:

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



## Q Sunburn

I work as a trolley collector and burn very easily when I am in the sun. With summer coming what can I expect from my employer?

Exposure to UV from the sun is a major cause of skin cancer. Malignant melanoma rates in the UK have increased alarmingly in the last 25 years, more than for any other major cancer. More than 1,000 men a year in the UK die from malignant melanoma, a 31 per cent increase in the last decade. Malignant melanoma is the second most common cancer in people aged 20-39. Those most at risk have fair skin that tends to burn, lots of moles or freckles and/or a family or personal history of skin cancer.

Employers have a legal duty to protect the health and safety of their employees according to the: Health and

Safety at Work Act (1974)  
Management of Health and  
Safety at Work Regulations (1999)  
and should look at the following:

- Reschedule work to cooler times of the day.
- Provide more frequent rest breaks.
- Introduce shading to rest areas.
- Provide free access to cool drinking water.
- Provide free sunscreen.
- Relax the uniform policy.
- Issue lightweight-long sleeved protective clothing that allows heat to escape as well as lightweight brimmed hats if safety helmets are not needed.

## Q Hydration

I usually have a water bottle on the checkouts to keep me hydrated. Recently, it's been very hot but my manager has said we can no longer have bottled water to drink on the checkout. Can they do this?

There is no obvious reason why workers should not be allowed to have bottled water on the checkouts. Some managers appear to have a mistaken belief that there are some 'health and safety' issues with allowing bottled water at checkouts but it is not at all clear what they could be. If the manager is

concerned about spillages, then spill-resistant bottles are available.

Employers have a legal duty to make drinking water 'readily accessible' under the Workplace (Health Safety and welfare) Regulations. If they don't allow workers to have water at their workstation then they must provide water nearby and must allow all the workers to take breaks away from the checkout to get a drink when they need it. It would be much simpler to continue to allow you to have bottled water with you.

If they do insist on banning water bottles, raise it with your Usdaw rep.





SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO ARENA'S HEALTH EXPERTS:  
arena@usdaw.org.uk

## Q Home delivery driver's manual handling

As a home delivery driver, I have to stack and lift trays on and off the van and some are stacked above my head. This means I have to twist and stretch to move some of the heavy trays in the van. I struggle with this, and I get muscle aches and pains, should I inform my manager?

Yes. You should inform your manager and you should also talk to your Usdaw rep. Under the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, your employer must reduce the risk of injury from manual handling to the lowest reasonably practicable level.

HSE guidance says that lifting any object from above head height carries a risk of injury. So even if the trays are not



particularly heavy, your employer should have done a risk assessment and provided a safe way of lifting them down.

For example, looking at how orders are loaded into the van to reduce lifting heavier trays at height. They should also provide handling aids such as sack trolleys. Workers should have been trained in the safe way of working and made aware of the risks.

## Q Hay fever

I suffer from hay fever and sometimes can't work because of it, are there any medical rules to help me?

Hay fever (Allergic rhinitis) affects almost 1 in 4 people in the UK but is specifically excluded from the disability requirements of the Equalities Act unless it triggers some other condition covered by the act such as severe asthma.

A reasonable employer should still make allowances for your condition when looking at any absences. They should consider alternative duties if your

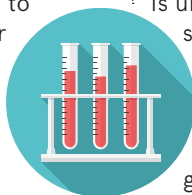


condition is made worse by anything you are exposed to at work. If you are coughing and sneezing all the time it may raise hygiene concerns. There are likely to be practical difficulties if you need to use tissues all the time and you have to wash your hands every time you have to blow your nose. So a customer-facing job on a deli counter may not be practical and your employer may need to find you other work.

## Q Drug and alcohol policies

At the factory where I work, they have just introduced a drug and alcohol policy. It says if I have an accident in the workplace then I will have to take a test for drugs or alcohol. Can I refuse to take a test?

Your employer cannot force you to take a test. But if your behaviour was thought to be a cause of the accident and gave reasonable grounds for them to think that you may have been acting under the influence



of drugs or alcohol, then you could face serious disciplinary action.

Government advice is that all employers should have a policy on drugs and alcohol that is welfare-based and offers help to workers who may have a problem.

Experts advise that random testing is unlikely to be effective and testing should only be considered when it can be justified on safety grounds. As a result, many policies do include provision for 'for cause' testing. That is testing when a person's behaviour gives reasonable grounds for suspicion.

# Arena



# Win! £50

Correctly complete the grid and you could win a **£50** shopping voucher!

**Closing date 31 July 2023**

(Not open to Usdaw staff)

## Word up!

Complete our prize crossword to spell out the hidden word in the yellow squares and you could be one of three members to win a £50 shopping voucher.

Email your answer along with your name and address to:

**arena@usdaw.org.uk**

Please put 'xword' in the subject box.

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

Solutions available from 1 August 2023.

### Spring winners:

Dorian Evans, Lampeter  
Lisa Ambridge, Mablethorpe  
Kai Wright, Grimsby



### ACROSS

1. Window shades (6)
7. Broolly (8)
8. Difficult (4)
10. To be precise (4,2)
11. Not rough (6)
14. Mr Danson, actor (3)
16. Pulped fruit or vegetables (5)
17. Not closed (4)
19. Ignored or despised person (5)
21. Celestial body (5)
22. Bode (5)
23. Set of actors (4)
26. Native New Zealander (5)
28. Cooking vessel (3)

29. Not moving (2,4)
30. Religious festival (6)
31. Puzzle-solving aid (4)
32. Cliquish (8)
33. Recently (2,4)

### DOWN

1. Small restaurant (6)
2. To tidy (6)
3. Lather (4)
4. Toasted snack (7)
5. Storey (5)
6. Hidden store (5)
8. Detest (4)
9. To free (3)
12. Belonging to us (3)

13. American state (5)
15. Thighbone (5)
18. Fold in clothing (5)
19. Keep a record of (3)
20. For every (3)
21. Style of cooking (7)
22. Land measure (3)
23. Occasional worker (6)
24. Poker stake (4)
25. Long angry speech (6)
26. Game (5)
27. Keyboard instrument (5)
28. Close friend (3)
30. Resound (4)



# Don't Retire from the Union

**You might be retiring from work – but that doesn't mean you have to retire from Usdaw membership.**

Many retired members stay active in the union after retirement. If you remain a member, then you can play an important role in your union branch, helping to recruit new members and getting involved in Usdaw's campaigns. You could also join your region's Retired Members' Committee. Retired members also benefit from a range of Usdaw services including pension advice, financial services and our Legal Plus service.

What's more, if you've been in paid Usdaw membership for at least 30 years you can apply to become a free life member and pay no further union fees. There is also a heavily discounted rate available for members with five or more years contributions. But everyone can, of course, choose to pay their usual rate and keep their entitlement to the full range of Usdaw benefits.

To find out more, read our factsheet online at [www.usdaw.org.uk/269](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/269)

## ■ Leaflets

- Don't Retire from the Union (Leaflet 269)
- Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family (Leaflet 312)
- Menopause is a Workplace Issue - An Advice Guide for Usdaw Reps (Leaflet 454)
- Puzzled By Pensions? Could the Menopause Be Impacting Your Pension? (Leaflet 455)
- Early Menopause - An Advice Guide For Members (Leaflet 456)
- The Menopause and Perimenopause (Women's Health Series: 6)
- Call It Out - Towards an End to Sexual Harassment
- Survey Results 2022: Campaign to End Violence and Abuse against Retail Workers
- Usdaw For Labour

## ■ Postcards, surveys and flyers

- Join Usdaw Today - The Union for Argos Staff (Poster R64)
- Legal Plus - Looking After You and Your Family (Poster R10)
- The Menopause is a Workplace Issue Survey
- Me, Work and the Menopause FAQs
- Me, Work and the Menopause (A5 Postcard)
- The Menopause is a Workplace Issue Survey
- Spotlight Day - Overstretched (Survey)
- Spotlight Day - Overstretched (Poster)
- Spotlight Day - Overstretched (Postcard)

The total income of the Union for the period was £64,504k, which included actuarial gains on the defined benefit pension scheme of £25,476k. This amount also included payments of £37,707k in respect of membership income of the union. The Union's total expenditure for the period was £39,235k. In respect of the Union's political fund, its total income was £1,571k and total expenditure was £1,303k. The General Secretary of the Union was paid £117,009 in respect of salary and £50,355 in respect of benefits including employer pension contributions and the provision of a car.

### **Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers**

#### **Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Union's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its result for the year then ended;
  - have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
  - have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.
- We have audited the financial statements of the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers (the 'Union') for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, the Balance Sheet, the Statement of Changes in Equity, the Cash Flow Statement and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework

that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

#### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the Union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### **Independence**

We are independent of the Union in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

#### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Executive Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the

financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Union's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Executive Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### **Other information**

The Executive Council is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of

the following matters to which the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- proper accounting records have not been kept in accordance with the requirements; or
- the Union has not maintained a satisfactory system of controls over its transactions in accordance with the requirements; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of the Executive Council**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Executive Council's, the Executive Council is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Executive Council determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Executive Council is responsible for assessing the Union's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Executive Council either intend to liquidate the Union or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from

material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

**Extent to which the audit was capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud**

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

As part of designing our audit, we determined materiality and assessed the risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, including how fraud may occur by enquiring of management of its own consideration of fraud. In particular, we looked at where management made subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates that involved making assumptions and considering future events that are inherently uncertain. We also considered potential financial or other pressures, opportunity and motivations for fraud. As part of this discussion we identified the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations and

how management monitor these processes.

We gained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Union and the industry in which it operates, drawing on our broad sector experience, and considered the risk of acts by the Union that were contrary to these laws and regulations, including fraud. We focused on laws and regulations that could give rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements, including, but not limited to, the Trade Union & Labour Relations Act 1992, UK tax legislation and equivalent local laws and regulations.

**We also completed the following procedures:**

- Made enquires with management regarding known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud, as well as around actual and potential litigation and claims;
- Assessed the design and operating effectiveness of controls and procedures relevant to the preparation of the financial statements and the detection and prevention of irregularities and fraud;
- Reviewed financial statement disclosures and agreed to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- Assessed the appropriateness of key estimates and judgements made by management and challenged the assumptions used in accounting estimates. We considered the key estimates to be the valuation of the defined benefit pension scheme liability and the valuation of unquoted investments;
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested

journal entries and other adjustments for inappropriate or unusual journals outside of our expectations, as well as for any significant transactions outside the normal course of business, taking into consideration the scope for management to manipulate financial results.

Our audit procedures were designed to respond to risks of material misstatement in the financial statements, recognising that the risk of not detecting a material misstatement due to fraud is higher than the risk of not detecting one resulting from error, as fraud may involve deliberate concealment by, for example, forgery, misrepresentations or through collusion. There are inherent limitations in the audit procedures performed and the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely we are to become aware of it.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Councils website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers, as a body, in accordance with the provisions of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the Union those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Union as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

BDO LLP, Statutory Auditor, London, UK

### **Irregularity statement**

A member who is concerned that some irregularity may be occurring, or have occurred, in the conduct of the financial affairs of the Union may take steps with a view to investigating further, obtaining clarification and, if necessary, securing regularisation of that conduct.

The member may raise any such concern with such one or more of the following as it seems appropriate to raise it with: the officials of the union, the trustees of the property of the Union, the auditor or auditors of the Union, the Certification Officer (who is an independent officer appointed by the Secretary of State) and the police.

Where a member believes that the financial affairs of the Union have been or are being conducted in breach of the law or in breach of the rules of the Union and contemplates bringing civil proceedings against the Union or responsible officials or trustees, he should consider obtaining independent legal advice.

### **Political Fund Notice**

Every member of the Union has a right to be exempt from contributing to the Union's Political Fund or, for those members joining on or after 1 March 2018, the right to withdraw their opt-in to the Political Fund. A form of exemption notice can be obtained by or on behalf of any member either by application at, or by post or email from, the head office of the Union or from the Certification Office for Trade Unions and Employers' Associations, 8th floor, Windsor House, 50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL. This form, when filled in, or a written request to the like effect, should be sent to the Central Treasurer at the Union's head office or emailed to [politicalfundnotification@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:politicalfundnotification@usdaw.org.uk)

# NHS DENTAL PLAN

## Do you have a NHS Dentist?



The Usdaw NHS Dental Plan gives you money back each time you visit your NHS dentist, so no more costly treatment bills.

What's more, as a special offer:

**Join today and get immediate cover!**

**Get covered for £500 per year towards:**

- ✓ Examinations, scale & polish and x-rays
- ✓ Fillings, root canals & extractions
- ✓ Crowns, bridges, dentures & repairs
- ✓ Dental-related prescriptions

**Each policyholder also gets cover for:**

- ✓ Oral cancer (upto £6,500)
- ✓ Accidental impact injury (upto £750)
- ✓ Hospitalisation, dental related (£25 a night)

**Monthly premium, £11.50 per person**

Join today on freephone **0800 037 2092**  
or online at **[www.usdawdental.co.uk](http://www.usdawdental.co.uk)**