

NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | MARCH/APRIL 2024



CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

A young woman with dark hair and a black beanie is looking at a smartphone. The background is a blurred city street at night with bokeh lights.

www.usdaw.org.uk/Help-Advice

**Here for you
and your
members
when you need
to know a little
bit more...**

**Workers' Rights
Firstcall Usdaw
Equalities
Pensions
Money & Benefits
Health & Wellbeing
Health & Safety
Legal Help & Advice
Parents & Carers
Retired Members
Road Transport
Contact Us**



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CAMPAIGNING TO GET BRITAIN'S FUTURE BACK

The reckless and irresponsible actions that we've seen from successive Conservative prime ministers has been nothing short of shameful. From their ideologically driven imposition of economic austerity, through to Partygate and the PPE scandal, to crashing the economy through Trussonomics. Fourteen years of a Tory government has left the UK economy in turmoil, workers' rights weakened, and pay and conditions eroded.

The next general election will be our chance to put this right.

Usdaw has worked with Labour and other unions to develop a range of policy pledges which will deliver significant improvements to our members' rights at work.

These pledges are outlined in Labour's New Deal for Working People and will deliver on many of Usdaw's campaigning priorities. Strengthening our rights at work and making work pay. Labour will tackle workplace discrimination, put mental health on a par with physical health and ban exploitative zero hours contracts.

Labour has been listening to working people and we can be sure they will continue to listen to working people.

Our members need a Labour government, only by winning the next general can we deliver on our shared



priorities and improve the lives of our members and working people across the country.

Despite what the polls say, we cannot take anything for granted. We must speak with people and make the case that we're not just asking them to vote against the Tories, but give them the reasons to vote for a Labour Government. A vote for the Conservatives is not a vote for working people, their families or their communities. It is only the Labour Party that will bring the changes that working people need.

Usdaw General Secretary

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



International Workers' Memorial Day **28 April 2024**

Remember The Dead: Fight For The Living

**Climate Risks for Workers – High Workplace
Temperatures are a Health and Safety Issue**

Organise

Health and Safety Reps, using the power of the collective voice of the membership, can organise and act where they work to achieve improved working conditions around high temperatures.



Consult

Usdaw Health and Safety Reps can use their legal functions to listen to the members, take temperature readings in their workplace, and consult their employer to introduce measures.

Protect

Usdaw can use its bargaining strength to make sure that workplace health and safety risk assessments for high temperatures are in place and continue to push the Government for a strengthening of the law, by introducing a maximum workplace temperature.

Strong laws – Strong enforcement – Strong unions

Visit www.28april.org for more information.

Contact your Usdaw rep or call our
helpline 0800 030 80 30



USDRAW
HEALTH & SAFETY

#IWMD24

www.usdaw.org.uk

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

BUDGET IGNORES WORKERS

Usdaw condemned the chancellor for failing to listen to the union and its members by not delivering on their priorities in the Spring Budget.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The ongoing cost of living crisis remains a key challenge. Rising prices, along with still very high energy costs, leave too many workers struggling to make ends meet. The chancellor didn't deliver lasting solutions to cost of living pressures with a new deal for workers. A new deal that makes work pay with a real living wage.

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

"Parents also need better and cheaper access to childcare, with the existing provision being largely unavailable and unaffordable for most low-paid workers. This Budget was a missed opportunity to support working parents.



"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. At the core of these issues is the uneven playing field between online and in-store retail, particularly regarding business rates. We needed a commitment to a fundamental reform of business taxation affecting the retail sector, it was not forthcoming.

"This Budget was

a chance for the Conservative Government to finally show that after 14 years of mismanaging the country, they are

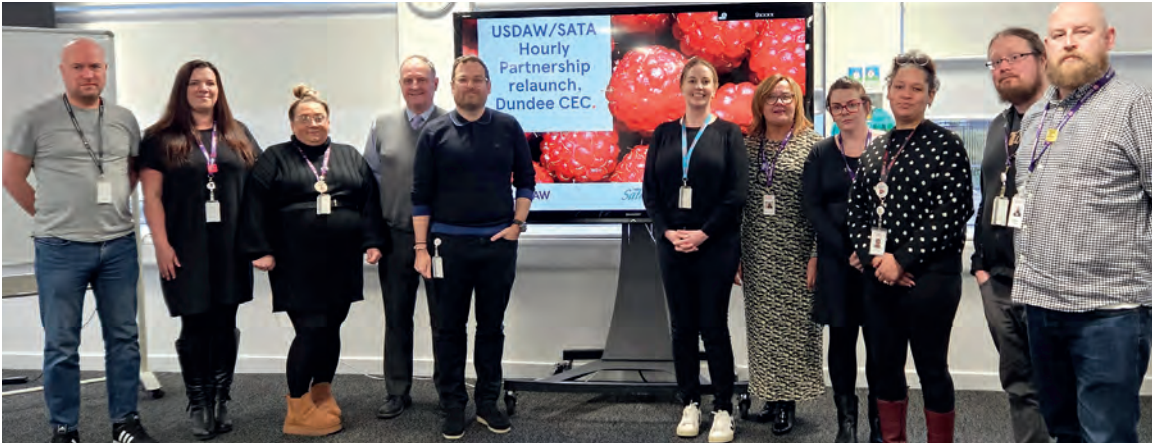
listening. Instead, they failed to offer the change our members so desperately need. It's clear that it is time for change."

MEMBERSHIP FOR WEEK ENDED 9 MARCH 2024

South Wales & Western	43,494
Eastern	51,527
Midlands	48,286
North Eastern	49,697
Scottish	37,000
Southern	51,189
North West	76,242
Total	357,435

TESCO

IMPROVED AGREEMENT WITH DUNDEE CEC



A new and improved recognition agreement, covering hourly paid staff in Tesco's Customer Engagement Centre (CEC) in Dundee, was signed in January, following several months of discussions. Negotiations over the improved agreement were led by Daniel Adams, national officer, with

support from the local official and the negotiating committee reps.

The updated agreement delivers a number of improvements to reps' facility time, recruitment and organising opportunities, and reaffirms the business's ongoing encouragement of union membership.

It has also formally embedded the CEC into the wider Tesco Group consultative body known as the CAD.

This will ensure that Usdaw members in the CEC continue to be represented in discussions about policies and procedures.

www.usdaw.org.uk

BRANCH OFFICERS COURSE



Ushaw activists at the branch officers training course at Usdaw head office in March.

ELECTION RESULTS

NEW EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ELECTED

Following elections for Usdaw’s National Executive Council (NEC), fifteen councillors were elected and will take up their posts following the upcoming Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM).

The NEC is the governing body of the union and consists of the president, the general secretary and members elected from each of the union’s seven regions, who are elected every three years.

Jane Jones was re-elected unopposed to serve a second term as the president of Usdaw, after being the only candidate to be nominated for this position.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis congratulated the elected councillors and said: “Their first-hand knowledge of the issues affecting workers means they will be a strong voice for our membership, helping Usdaw shape its policies and

campaigns.

“I look forward to working with them to tackle the challenges facing Usdaw members such as the cost of living crisis and the epidemic of retail crime. We will also work towards securing a Labour Government that will work with trade unions to deliver a better life for our members.”

The full results were published in the Spring 2024 edition of Arena: dtp.usdaw.org.uk/ArenaSpring2024



A Region Mervyn Sterry



A Region Debbie Wilson



C Region Simon Vincent



C Region Val Cooke



K Region Robert Bell



E Region Michelle Whitehead



E Region Julie Haycraft



F Region Jo Crumplin



F Region Tracy White



K Region Janet Hankin



G Region Susan Donaldson



G Region Paul Watson



H Region John Barstow



H Region Keith Jones



K Region Caroline Williamson

Tune in to Financial Wellbeing Support for you & your members

▶ Webinar by The Co-op Credit Union for Usdaw reps now available



Last month, Usdaw reps from around the country gathered online for an informative webinar on financial wellbeing. Hosted by The Co-op Credit Union, this session delved deeper into the issue and the free support available to Usdaw members.

Mel Phillips from the credit union said: "We know that the rising cost of living is placing so much extra stress on household budgets, and research shows that money worries are now the biggest sources of stress in the workplace*. We want to let everyone know about the support we offer, and to spread the word about the benefits of saving and borrowing with the credit union.

"Joining is free and members are supported to save regularly from £10/month. If members wish to borrow, a minimum of £10/month is still added to their savings, leaving them with a savings pot they can access

when the loan is repaid. What's more, as a co-op, we're set up for the benefit of members – not for profit, which means we offer the most competitive rates we can and act in the best interests of our members.

"Saving even a small amount each month is shown to be a huge factor in improving financial wellbeing," says Mel. "We'd encourage everyone to invest 15 minutes to watch the webinar and find out more about how we can support Usdaw members."

**Spread the word
with your members
about this free benefit**

Visit the website to watch the webinar recording and request some free posters for your colleague noticeboard

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

*Source: www.fincap.org.uk/en/articles/employers

Diary Dates

APRIL/MAY

- 6 - 7 April
Usdaw Midlands regional Conference
- 15 - 17 April
STUC Women's Conference
- 15 - 17 April
STUC Conference
- 26 - 28 April
TUC Black Workers' Conference
- 28 April - 1 May
Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM)

MAY

- 17 May
Usdaw Retired Members' Conference
- 21 - 23 May
WTUC Biennial Conference
- 23 - 24 May
TUC Disabled Workers' Conference

www.usdaw.org.uk/events

OBITUARY SYLVIA TRAVIS

Usdaw was saddened to lose former colleague Sylvia Travis, who died on 7 February 2024 at the age of 82. Sylvia was a shorthand typist based at the Sheffield office, being employed by the union from 1958 until her retirement in 1999.

Usdaw general Paddy Lillis said: "Sylvia was a popular and respected member of staff who will be fondly remembered by her colleagues. Our condolences go out to her family and friends."

WOMEN'S TUC CONFERENCE

EQUALITY IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE



An Usdaw delegation of members, reps and officials attended the annual Trade Union Congress (TUC) Women Workers' Conference, which took place in London in March.

The union submitted two motions for the conference agenda on 'Supporting Women Carers' and 'Women's Under-Representation in Policy and Decision Making'.

Usdaw equalities officer Ruth

Cross said: "Women remain under-represented in political spaces and peace processes. This sets back gender equality and global peace. Sexism, misogyny, and violence violate women's right to participate equally in political and public life.

"' Census data confirms that women continue to provide unpaid care in every age group and are often compelled to reduce hours of

work, take unpaid sick leave, or give up work altogether. This has a knock-on effect on income.

"While we welcome the Carer's Leave Act as a step in the right direction and acknowledge that it gives us a base from which to negotiate improvements, without pay it will make little practical difference to low paid women carers."

HOUSE OF LORDS

FORMER USDAW GS ELECTED TO LORDS

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis congratulated his predecessor John Hannett OBE, former general secretary of Usdaw, on his elevation to the House of Lords. He is one of 13 new peers announced by the Government.

John Hannett is a lifelong trade unionist, having been an Usdaw workplace rep, area organiser, national officer, deputy general secretary and retired in 2018 as general secretary after fourteen years at the head of the union. He served on the Trade Union Congress (TUC) General Council and Executive

Committee, Low Pay Commission representing employees, the Labour Party's National Executive Committee and the national committee of the Trade Union and Labour Party Liaison Organisation (TULO), the ACAS Council and as President of UNI Europa Commerce.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "John spent his working life representing Usdaw members and campaigning for improved workers' rights. I congratulate John on his elevation and look forward to working with him on Usdaw's future parliamentary campaigns."





dtp.usdaw.org.uk

Usdaw produces a huge range of publications covering every aspect of workers' rights – and they're freely accessible to all our members through our online catalogue.

Usdaw's most popular publications

- Member Offers (Leaflet 398)
- Your Rights to Breaks and Paid Holidays (Leaflet 352)
- Workers' Rights (Leaflet 211)
- Legal Plus Looking After You and Your Family (Leaflet 312)
- Guide to Maternity and Parental Rights
- Flexible Working (Leaflet 346)
- Mental Health – Where to go for help and support (Leaflet 400)
- Delivery Drivers – Abuse is Not Part of the Job (Leaflet 430)
- 10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw (Leaflet 261)

Have fantastic resources available at a tap of your phone, anytime and anywhere. Bookmark: **dtp.usdaw.org.uk**

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

Sponsored by UsdawProtect. www.usdaw.org.uk/usdawprotect Closing date: 5 June 2024. Terms apply.

RISE IN ABUSE OF RETAIL WORKERS

Usdaw launched shocking statistics from its annual survey of over 5,500 retail staff showing that 18 per cent of shopworkers suffered a violent attack last year, compared to 8 per cent in 2022.

The increase in assaults comes during an epidemic of retail crime with official statistics and reports from retailers showing significant increases in theft from shops. 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):

- 70 per cent (68 per cent) have experienced verbal abuse.

- 46 per cent (43 per cent) were threatened by a customer.

- 18 per cent (5 per cent) were assaulted.

These findings follow similar trends to recent reports from the British Retail Consortium and the Association of Convenience Stores. Both retail trade associations found significant increases in violence and abuse against shopworkers alongside much higher levels of shoplifting, which is costing the industry £3 billion in lost stock and security measures.

Udsway 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 a fifth of our members working in retail are being assaulted for simply doing

their job and serving the community.

“Our members have reported that they are often faced with hardened career criminals and we know that retail workers are much more likely to be abused by those who are stealing to sell goods on. Our latest survey results show that 7 in 10 retail workers suffered abuse from customers, with far too many experiencing threats and violence. Theft from shops and armed robbery were triggers for 61 per cent of these incidents.

“Violence and abuse is not an acceptable part of the job and much more needs to be done to protect shopworkers. The UK Government has repeatedly failed to act in the face of an epidemic of retail crime, rising theft from shops and assaults against retail workers.



ORKERS

It is disappointing that they have no measures in their legislative programme to tackle this issue. We support opposition attempts to amend the Government's Criminal Justice Bill, so that the law is strengthened to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse.

"A protection of shopworkers law is also supported by many retailers. It already exists in Scotland and has secured over 500 convictions. We also need more neighbourhood police with patrols in town centres, respect orders to ban repeat offenders and an end to the £200 threshold for investigating and prosecuting shop theft. Most of all, we ask the public to support our campaign by respecting shopworkers."



EXPERIENCE OF RETAIL WORKERS

Retail worker *Swadlincote*

When I started seven years ago, you used to get the odd person stealing nappies or baby formula. Now it's more organised. Now shoplifters try to get a basket full of stolen goods past you. In our store, we have people stealing meat, cheese and coffee to sell in the pub. We have one bloke who comes in about 23 times a day to steal meal deals and pork scratchings because he wants the police to lock him up so that he can get a bed and a hot meal. The police don't bother to respond because it's under £200. The only way we can stop this epidemic is if there were consequences for shoplifting. Currently there's none and that's why things are getting worse and worse.

Retail worker *Ebbw Vale*

A few years back, I had a nasty experience with a young woman. She was 15, inebriated and shoplifting. We tried to stop her, something we wouldn't do now. She

proceeded to kick me, spat in my face and accused me of making her have a miscarriage. I later found out she wasn't even pregnant. She got sent down to a young offenders' unit and was ordered to pay me £25 compensation, £5 a month out of her pocket money.

Retail worker *Covent Garden*

People get offended when you ask them for ID. I've had people swear at me and threaten me that they'll be waiting outside or that they'll be back with other people. There are so many instances every day. We live in fear and the only source of protection we have is other members of staff. If we hear someone kicking off at one of our colleagues, we go and stand near them to give them moral support. We literally have a police station across the street from us but that doesn't make us feel any safer because we know that if we called them, they wouldn't bother to come out.

GETTING THE MESSAGE OUT THERE....

Usdaw's Freedom from Fear campaign aims to protect shopworkers from violence and abuse. To bring the campaign to life, Usdaw relies on reps and members sharing their stories about the abuse they've experienced and the affect this has had on their mental and physical health.

Usdaw rep Michelle Whitehead did just that when

she joined GMTV's Ed Balls and Susanna Reid on 13 March to talk about her experiences of abusive customers. She received a very sympathetic reception from the presenters who had also witnessed incidents of abuse in their local supermarkets.

If you have a story to share please contact us at: network@usdaw.org.uk



Usdaw activists joined forces with sister trade unions to attend the TUC march and rally in Cheltenham.

Thousands of protestors brought parts of Cheltenham to a standstill as they made a case against the Government's minimum service levels legislation, which came into force in July 2023.

The march was particularly significant because it was held on the 40th anniversary of the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) trade union ban. In 1984, Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government gave union members an ultimatum, resign their membership or be sacked. As a result, 14 members were sacked.

For more than 13 years, they campaigned for the right to belong to a union, commanding huge

support throughout the labour movement. Marches regularly took place in Cheltenham, where many GCHQ staff were based, between 1984 and 1997. Their persistence paid off when, in 1997, the newly elected Labour Government lifted the ban and they were able to return to work.

Forty years on, a different Conservative Government has passed legislation that allows ministers, by regulation, to impose minimum service levels on services within six sectors, including schools, the NHS, fire and rail and transport, that would apply during periods of strike action. A work notice issued by the employer would then name those individuals required to work and the duties to be undertaken. Those workers deemed to have breached a work notice would lose the legal

protection usually given to strikers and could be sacked.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The labour and trade union movement came together to celebrate our history and protest the current Tory Government's determination to undermine workers' rights. Whatever the Government says, we know that these laws have not been introduced to protect public services. They've been introduced to attack trade unions by creating unworkable, draconian, and entirely unnecessary red tape, to weaken us and to undermine our members' fundamental rights. Usdaw will continue to fight for this legislation to be repealed and welcomes a solid commitment from the Labour Party to do just that."

Usdaw reps who attended the event said:



Charlie Johnson

“There was a fantastic atmosphere of solidarity and comradeship which highlighted the strength of the trade union movement. We were all there to tell this Government that the right to strike is a fundamental right and we won't give it up without a fight. We have won before, and we will win again.”

Tracy White

“It was great to see all the unions come together and speak with one voice. The right to withdraw your labour is the only leverage most workers have to improve their pay and conditions. Without it, workers would be at the complete mercy of unscrupulous employers who put profits before the wellbeing of their staff. I'm proud to march in solidarity with workers across the UK.”

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON 2 MAY

On 2 May 2024, there will be local elections in England to decide who runs our essential local public services, such as libraries, schools, and recycling. In both England and Wales, there will also be elections for Police and Crime Commissioners.

Local elections are your chance to send a message to the Conservatives that enough is enough, and that the country needs change.

It is only the Labour Party that will deliver for Usdaw members. Labour councils work to make sure we have the services we need and protect them from central government funding cuts. Labour Police and Crime Commissioners hold the local police to account, making sure that community policing represents the needs of the people, and addresses violence against shopworkers, and theft.

Delivering a strong campaign for these elections helps us to prepare for the general election, whenever it comes.

You can do your bit by following this checklist:

REGISTER TO VOTE

However strongly you feel about the election, if you aren't registered, you can't vote. Take a minute to make sure you have a vote on 2 May by visiting www.gov.uk/register-to-vote. You must register by midnight on Tuesday 16 April.

SIGN UP FOR A POSTAL VOTE

Despite our best intentions to vote in person, we all lead busy lives. Work, childcare or unexpected commitments can all get in the way on polling day. You can make sure your vote is cast by signing up for a postal

vote. You don't need a special reason to request one, as anyone on the electoral roll can request a postal vote. You must sign up by 5pm on Wednesday 17 April. Your postal vote needs to be with your local authority by 10pm on polling day to be counted – and you can even drop it off at the polling station on the day. Sign up here: www.gov.uk/apply-postal-vote

PHOTO ID

If you do intend to vote in person, make sure that you take a valid photo ID with you. If you do not have a valid form of photo ID, you can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate from your local authority. The deadline for this is 5pm on Wednesday 24 April. You don't need photo ID if you vote by post. For more information on accepted forms of ID and to apply for a Voter Authority Certificate visit www.gov.uk/apply-for-photo-id-voter-authority-certificate

GET INVOLVED

Making sure you vote Labour on 2 May is key to getting the changes that Usdaw members need. If you want to get more involved in the political work of the union, you can sign up to get regular updates on the political work happening in your region.

Usdaw has a Key Seat Strategy to deliver our campaigns on the ground, and activists from across the nation are making calls, knocking on doors, and talking to friends and family about voting Labour at the next election. You can sign up for our Political Activist Programme here:

www.usdaw.org.uk/join-the-team

WEEKEND WARRIORS

Udsaw activists joined hundreds of fellow trade unionists and Labour Party members in their communities to make the case for Labour's New Deal for Working People. The campaigning event took place on 3 and 4 February and saw events up and down the country as the labour movement united to promote the plan.

Within the first 100 days of entering office, Labour will deliver their New Deal for Working People. Drawn up in partnership with Labour's affiliated trade unions, it's a comprehensive plan to improve the lives of working people by strengthening individual and collective rights, raising wages and improving working conditions.



Somerset



Ipswich



Cramlington and Killingworth



Hastings



Wales' Economy Minister Vaughan Gething listens to people's concerns



Vaughan Gething with members at the Mold Tesco

The Welsh Labour Member of the Senedd (MS) met with Usdaw members and reps to listen to their concerns around the cost of living crisis and the abuse of retail workers.

Vaughan attended a union-led event at Tesco Mold and met with Usdaw president Jane Jones, as well as reps and members. Usdaw rep Tina Davies, who was at the event, found it to be such a positive experience that she wanted to host something similar in her store in Chester Broughton. Tina explains why she thought it was important for Vaughan, who is running for the role of first minister, to listen to the concerns of colleagues in her store. "After listening to Vaughan speak, I went back to my store and proposed the idea to my store manager, who agreed straightaway," said Tina, 46. "Things are difficult for many retail workers. It's important people who want to represent us in the Senedd know what concerns us and how we feel."

"Colleagues from the shopfloor to managers attended the session

to voice their concerns. We talked about the cost of living crisis and how this was affecting everyone across the board, the prohibitive costs of childcare and how shoplifting in stores was making life extremely difficult for retail workers and exposing them to danger.

"I found Vaughan to be very down to earth and receptive to what we were saying. His experience as the current economy minister and his trade union background as a rep, Wales TUC president, and an employment lawyer, meant he immediately understood the issues we were raising. It was a two-way conversation and colleagues left feeling reassured that Vaughan would work with Usdaw to improve workers' rights. Living standards have fallen under the Tories and it's about time we had a government on the side of working people."

As *Network* went to print, Vaughan was elected as the next leader of the Welsh Labour Party, replacing Mark Drakeford.

BUILD A BETTER BRITAIN

Usdaw's National Political Conference took place in Manchester over a weekend in March. The conference brought together around 100 members of the national and regional political committees and political activists, 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 conference focussed on 'What's at Stake at the General Election and How to Win it'. There were addresses from Paddy Lillis and guest speaker Justin Madders, shadow minister for employment rights. On Saturday afternoon, delegates enthusiastically took part in a door knocking session on the streets of Warrington South with Sarah Hall, Labour's Prospective

Parliamentary Candidate (PPC) for the constituency. There was a lively panel discussion with Paddy Lillis, Justin Madders, Sarah Hall, Helena Dollimore (Hastings & Rye PPC) and Michael Payne (Gedling PPC).

PADDY LILLIS

Usdaw general secretary

We cannot take anything for granted. We must speak with people and make the case that we're not just asking them to vote against the Tories but give them the reasons to vote for a Labour Government. A vote for the Conservatives is not a vote for working people, their families or their communities. Only the Labour Party will bring the changes that working people need.

JUSTIN MADDERS

Shadow Minister for Employment Rights

We've got cast iron commitments from the leader Keir Starmer to implement the New Deal for Working People and it will be a first 100-day priority. The transformative policies in Labour's New Deal for Working People, will include: banning zero-hours contracts, ending fire and rehire, extending employment rights to day one in a job, stopping employers cancelling shifts at short notice, giving trade unions better access to workplaces and ending the scourge of low pay by making the minimum wage a real living wage.

SARAH HALL

Warrington South Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

Doorstep conversations are the most important and powerful things we can do, direct conversations with voters outlining Labour's vision for the future. The election will be won



through the hard work of thousands of volunteers up and down the country.

No-one wants to wake up to another five years of the Tories. Only when we come together can we create the change that our country desperately needs.

HELENA DOLLIMORE

Hastings & Rye Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

People say they have lost hope and trust in politics. Labour is going into the general election with a fully costed and fully funded manifesto. We're not making promises that we can't keep as it further erodes people's trust in politics.

We're going to scrap the tax break for private schools and put that money into state schools to pay for breakfast clubs, an extra hour of childcare in the morning, mental health specialists and hire thousands more teachers to take some of the pressure off.

MICHAEL PAYNE

Gedling Prospective Parliamentary Candidate

LABOUR'S NEW DEAL FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Make Work Pay

- Raise the minimum wage so it's a genuine living wage you can actually live on.
- Strengthen sick pay and make it available to everyone.
- More say at work so unions can raise pay and improve conditions.

Security at Work:

- Crack down on bad employers with tough enforcement of rights at work.
- Ban zero hours contracts and fire and rehire.
- Full employment rights from

day one for all workers, including sick pay, parental leave and workplace protections.

Work Life Balance:

- Paid family and carers' leave, review and improve maternity, paternity and shared parental leave.
- Flexible working and family-friendly hours as a right from day one at work.
- A new 'right to switch off' outside working hours so work stays at work.

Without a vote in Parliament, the Tories have increased the amount you can spend in a general election to £36m. The Tories will always have deeper pockets than the Labour Party, but they will never have the people power we have.

And in a few weeks or months, in spite of the gerrymandering, in spite of the dirty tactics, we are going to show people what it means when working people come together with the hope and aspiration to change this country for the better.





PAY CHECK

This year marks 25 years since the National Minimum Wage (NMW) came into force on 1 April 1999. The 1997-2010 Labour Government implemented the National Minimum Wage Act, establishing a floor on wages and delivering an instant pay increase for hundreds of thousands of workers. Since then, regular increases have ensured that wage growth for the UK's lowest-paid workers has outpaced the workforce as a whole and taken the full rate from £3.60 per hour in 1999, to £11.44 per hour today.

YEARS IN THE MAKING

A minimum wage had been TUC and Labour Party policy since the 1980s. Prior to the implementation of the Act, workers who were not covered by collective bargaining agreements

or wages councils had nothing regulating their rate of pay. This led to widespread exploitation of workers; in one instance, a job was advertised for a night watchman paying £1 an hour for a 100-hour week - and the employee had to bring their own dog.

Labour included a commitment to a legally-mandated minimum wage in their 1992 general election manifesto, which was met with opposition from business groups and scaremongering attacks from the Tories who claimed it would lead to millions of job losses. Not for the first - or last - time, this tactic paid off and stoking these fears helped John Major's Government win an unexpected majority at that year's election. However, prevailing opinions changed in the following years and by the time Labour

implemented the Act after winning the 1997 general election, even the Confederation of British Industry supported the NMW.

HOW THE RATES ARE SET

An independent body called the Low Pay Commission makes recommendations to the Government about how much the NMW should increase in the following year. The commission is made up of representatives from employers' groups, trade unions and academic backgrounds. It considers evidence from a range of organisations, including Usdaw, when making its recommendations.

The NMW has, over time, risen faster than the rate of inflation. Had NMW increases been linked to inflation, today's full rate would be £6.60 per hour rather than £11.44.



YOUTH RATES

Differing rates based on age have been a feature of the NMW since its inception. The initial full rate of £3.60 per hour applied only to workers aged 22 and over, with a lower rate of £3 per hour for workers aged 18-21 and no minimum for those aged under 18. Additional tiers were added over the years, although the structure has been slightly simplified as of April 2024 with the current full rate applying to all workers aged over 21.

Usdaw's position on youth rates is clear – if you're old enough to do the job, you're old enough to be paid the full rate. Youth rates do not exist in any of our major recognition agreements and the union continues to campaign for the full rate to apply to all workers.

MINIMUM WAGE VS LIVING WAGE

The full rate of the NMW has been referred to as the National Living Wage by the Conservatives since 2016. This is not the same as the Real Living Wage, which is a recommendation made by the Living Wage Foundation and is calculated based on what employees need to meet their everyday basic costs. The Real Living Wage is currently £12 per hour, or £13.15 per hour in Greater London. A number of employers have pledged to pay the Real Living Wage and have been accredited as such by the Living Wage Foundation.

Whatever terminology the Government chooses to use, if it is illegal to pay less than a set amount, then that amount is the minimum

wage. The next Labour Government has pledged to deliver a genuine living wage, that people can actually live on, as part of the New Deal for Working People.

2024 NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE RATES

The current rates of the National Minimum Wage, applicable from 1 April 2024, are as follows:

- **£11.44** for workers aged 21 and over
- **£8.60** for workers aged between 18 and 20
- **£6.40** for workers aged under 18 and apprentices



Tesco, Chester



Tesco Extra, Salford



Tesco, Cheltenham



YOUNG WORKERS

Usdaw's annual Young Workers' Week, held from 4-10 March, was an important opportunity to showcase the benefits of union membership to workers aged under 27. Activists across the country took to workplaces and high streets to talk to young workers about how Usdaw membership can improve their working lives.

The theme of this year's week, as decided by delegates at the Young Workers Weekend held last November, was the union's Freedom From Fear campaign. Many young Usdaw members will have personal experience of abuse, threats and violence in their workplace. An Usdaw survey in 2021 found this was a major cause of mental health issues among workers aged under 27. By joining the union, they strengthen our campaign for increased legal protection for retail staff.

General Secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute to the union's young members. "Young workers deserve far more respect than they receive," said Paddy. "While violence, threats and abuse impacts workers of all ages, there is no doubt that the young shopworkers face particular issues. They often work late shifts and weekends, when they are more likely to have to deal with drunk customers and suffer higher levels of abuse. They are often belittled because of their age and customers feel they can bully them. Young women particularly suffer appalling sexual harassment, physical abuse and unwelcome sexualised comments.

"Much more needs to be done to protect shopworkers. We support Labour's attempts to amend the Government's Criminal Justice Bill, so that the law is strengthened to protect retail workers from violence, threats and abuse."



YOUNG VOICES FROM THE FRONTLINE

"I've been told I'd be stabbed after my shift, threatened to be followed home etc."

"Ageist comments towards me, regarding my competence just due to my age. Abusive language that is sexually explicit."

"Being touched inappropriately by a drunk customer. Having a man joke about stalking me."

"Comments about my weight, swearing and general rudeness. A regular makes me feel uncomfortable, he comments

about my looks eg beautiful."

"Opinions about my sexual preference and my appearance. Constantly told I am stupid, can't do my job, They are going to get me fired."

"Screamed at and verbally abused by so many customers and so often. I have anxiety and nightmares about going to work. I feel scared when I'm working."

"Customer said inappropriate things to me, said they liked my hair then pulled it."



PLEASE MIND THE GAP

Usdaw campaigns on behalf of all its members, but more than half of its membership is female.

The gender pensions gap has been well documented for some time.

Women continue to trail behind men in terms of both state and occupational pension provision across all working age bands. On average, a pension pot for a female tends to be typically around 50 per cent less than that of their male counterparts.

The gender pension gap is often directly linked to the gender pay gap. Women typically have career breaks, for instance if they go on maternity leave, when looking after their children and increasingly caring for sick or elderly relatives.

Auto enrolment has been incredibly successful as it has helped millions of women to get on the first rung of the ladder to save for their retirement, and millions more will be captured if the extension to the Auto Enrolment Act is brought into force.

The new legislation, when introduced, will not only allow workers from the age of 18 to be auto-enrolled into their workplace pension schemes, but contributions will have to be applied from the first pound of pay, rather than a portion of someone's pay as employers have been allowed to consider in the past.

The new Act will allow significantly more younger women, and men, to be included automatically as soon as they start work, and more money will be available for investment in their pension pots.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

However, pay is not the only contributing factor to the gender pension gap.

When couples divorce, pension pots can be one of the biggest assets, after the family home, so it's important to divide them up fairly. It has been reported however, that just 12 per cent of 50-plus divorcees have taken pensions into account when dividing their assets.

This can create some big

problems for women as they can see their annual income fall by almost twice as much as men after a divorce, making it harder for them to save into their own pensions.

Menopause is a factor that has also been widely unregistered when discussing women's retirement savings.

Menopausal symptoms have forced thousands of women to reduce their hours or worse still, leave work altogether.

As a result, these women are missing out on important pension savings at a key stage in their life.

Single mothers are also considered a financially vulnerable group of women when it comes to retirement savings.

There is no one easy solution to the issues facing women in their retirement planning and right now the adverse economic conditions are making it even harder for women to close the gap.

If you are an Usdaw member and would like to find out more visit:

www.usdaw.org.uk/pensions

MENOPAUSE SUPPORT

One in every three women has either experienced or is currently going through the menopause. Usdaw's campaign encourages open and frank conversations

Usdaw's menopause campaign, which was launched in March 2023, raises awareness and seeks better workplace rights for women in midlife and beyond.

Women make up more than half of Usdaw's members and activists, so the union has developed a workplace campaign to enable more women to recognise and feel able to discuss their menopause symptoms in the workplace and equip reps with the tools they need to open up conversations about the menopause at work.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

Usdaw rep and Tesco worker Trish Elder has been doing just that by holding afternoon teas to empower her female colleagues to talk about their experiences.

"I was keen to do something on the menopause because I've been through it myself," said Trish, 60. "I thought I was going mad. My memory was gone, I became very self-conscious and paranoid, and I

kept thinking people were judging me, which led me to becoming an introvert. At the time, I didn't understand what was happening to me because although most of us are aware of the physical symptoms like hot flushes, we are less aware of the impact it can have on your mental health such as anxiety, loss of confidence, mood swings and even depression. I went through the menopause six years ago, which isn't that long ago but back then no-one really talked about it, which left me feeling quite isolated.

"When Tesco introduced their new menopause policy, I wanted to highlight it to my colleagues and tell them that they're not alone. To do this, I organised an afternoon tea, during lunchtime, for a dozen colleagues. I started by briefing them about Tesco's policy and then asked them to draw a picture of themselves going through the menopause. Women drew themselves with hot flushes, putting on weight, not being able to sleep, brain fog and fatigue. The exercise

was a great little icebreaker and it helped create a safe space for people to share their experiences, bond and have a laugh. The feedback was so positive that I ran another session a few months later.

"The Tesco menopause policy is a great example of the union and Tesco working together to bring in a policy that will significantly improve the lives of thousands of women. Now women can take a breather outside if they're having a hot flush, if they're off sick, the absence isn't included in their sickness and we also have a menopause uniform, made from a breathable fabric. Since the policy came in last year, the company has been very supportive towards women going through the menopause.

"I'm really pleased that employers are finally taking this issue seriously and recognising it as a workplace issue. With a little bit of support and understanding, it is possible to keep experienced and valued members of staff in the workplace."

www.usdaw.org.uk/menopause





ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

LUKE RYAN

Usdaw rep and Tesco worker Luke Ryan has a proud record of advocating for the rights of disabled workers. An Usdaw member since 2006 and a rep for over a decade, Luke, 35, also won the national Equalities Award at the 2023 Organising Awards in recognition of his achievements.

What prompted you to become active in the union?

I'm someone who's not afraid to share an opinion on a subject, and neither do I shy away from challenging conversations. I wanted to use these qualities to help other colleagues that don't necessarily have the confidence or

the knowledge to do it themselves. I've been active from a young age, I started out as a learning rep initially before being elected as shop steward.

How did you get involved in supporting colleagues with a disability?

It started through my own experiences of being deaf. The company introduced listening sessions for disabled workers, which gave five of us the chance to share our lived experience of working at Tesco with a disability. I became a regular at the listening sessions and following on from that, I was approached to help Tesco's

occupational health team develop their training for managers on issues such as reasonable adjustments. I also help test any new software and apps to make sure they're inclusive and accommodate a wide variety of disabilities.

How does your disability affect your work as a rep?

I can lipread to an extent, but I also use an app on my iPad that converts speech into text. I take my iPad with me when I'm representing members so I can follow everything that's being said. Sometimes people think they need to shout so the iPad picks them up, but they really don't need to. I'm as capable as any other



General secretary Paddy Lillis, president Jane Jones and deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen present Luke with his national Equalities Award.

rep, I just facilitate meetings in a slightly different way. I don't see my deafness as a hindrance – I'll always find a way around any barriers I might face.

Is there anything you've achieved that you're especially proud of?

I'd say my biggest success is that when colleagues use the internal helpdesk system, they now receive an automatic response asking if they have a disability and if any adjustments need to be made when the company sends a response, such as a written message rather than a phone call, or larger font size. I've also provided a lot of information to the company about the apps I use to communicate and as a result, Tesco are looking at developing an app of their own so that all deaf colleagues can be supported at work.

Can you tell us about the work you've done to deliver disability work placements?

I've worked with the Prince's Trust, the Shaw Trust and adult social

services to deliver placement for individuals who are regarded as at severe risk of unemployment due to their disability. The placements offer coaching and support, as well as the chance to gain work experience. The worker is invited to apply for any vacancies when their placement ends and I'm pleased that many of them have found stable, long-term employment through it. I use my own experiences to show the candidates that you can still find work – sometimes employers see the disability rather than the candidate, but everyone deserves a chance and these placements give them that chance.

What would your advice be to other reps who are supporting disabled members?

If your member has a sensory impairment, ask them straightaway how they'd like you to communicate with them. Never be afraid to ask a question, beating around the bush can cause more offence than it

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing in your workplace.

network@usdaw.org.uk

avoids. And remember that there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach to disability – you might have two members in your workplace who have the same disability but it could affect them in different ways.

What's next for you?

I've just become a health and safety rep and I'm currently working through my training for that role. I'm extremely appreciative that I won the national Equalities Award, and I'll continue to champion fairness and equal treatment for our disabled members. I love being a rep and getting to help members resolve issues at work, and also seeing the appreciation from them when you're there to provide support during their tough times.

NEW CHAPTER AT BOOKER

Booker reps from across the country gathered at Usdaw's head office in February for the first ever Booker reps' get-together. The two-day event marked the signing of a new and updated recognition agreement and was an important opportunity for reps to connect with each other, and learn how to put the new agreement to good use.

The new agreement contains many improved provisions for Booker reps, and will make it easier to recruit and organise within the company. Key improvements include:

- Wider commitments to consultation and negotiation with Usdaw.
- Regular meetings between reps and management at site and regional levels.
- Greater involvement for Usdaw reps in health and safety matters.
- More time for reps to speak to non-members, and release time for non-members for inductions.
- New noticeboard packs to be issued to all sites, including a new bespoke poster aimed at raising the profile of the union.

Usdaw's national officer for Booker, Daniel Adams, along with members of the union's education department, delivered a comprehensive overview of the new agreement. Workshops and group sessions helped reps return to their workplaces with a better understanding of how to maximise the agreement and organise their sites. Attendees also heard an update from Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis on the issues facing the country as a whole.

"Britain is the sixth richest country in the world but you wouldn't think that with people sleeping rough, food banks in every town, an NHS on its knees and crumbling schools," said Paddy. "The UK is experiencing a severe cost of living crisis that has left children going to bed hungry and people unable to pay rent, and families forced to choose between eating or heating while energy companies rake in record profits. The Tories have no solutions yet they continue to put party before country, limping along until they're forced to call an election.

"I am a proud member of Labour, a party that was formed to protect working people. As a trade unionist I will be campaigning for a Labour victory at the next general election because I believe their policies will benefit working people. From a genuine living wage to security in the workplace, Labour will put workers' rights at the front and centre of their agenda."

Network spoke to Sue Kenny, rep at Booker in Halesowen in the West Midlands, about the get-together, the new agreement and her work as a long-serving activist.

How did you first get involved in the union?

I spoke to my area organiser during a site visit and they encouraged me to step up and become a rep. That was around 20 years ago and I've not looked back; since then I've done every training course Usdaw has to offer, I've done both Academy programmes and completed periods of stand-down. I'm also a safety rep as well as being a shop steward,



General secretary Paddy Lillis and national officer Daniel Adams

and I'm on the national negotiating committee for Booker.

How do you find recruiting and organising?

I'm the only rep in my branch and I'm also responsible for two other branches in my area so between that and my job role, I'm kept busy. I'm fortunate to have a good relationship with my manager and he doesn't have a problem with letting me be released to go to a different branch. We can usually resolve issues at an early stage, because if anything comes up we'll



Adams with Sue Kenny (front row second from right) and fellow Booker reps.

sit down, have a chat and together we can get a good result for the members.

What do you think of the new agreement?

It's brilliant. It's the best agreement we've had, and I thank our national officer Daniel Adams for that. As part of my role on the national committee I had the chance to look at it before it was finalised, and there wasn't anything in it that I wanted to change. It's not drastically different from the previous agreement but it's firmed up a lot of things and

made clear what we as reps are entitled to while we carry out our union duties.

How was the reps' get-together?

It was a great event to be part of. It was the first time anything like it had happened in Booker, and it was good to meet a lot of the other reps for the first time. I spoke to some of the less experienced reps and gave them my contact number in case they need any guidance on anything that's going on in their store. It was really nice to speak to them, we're all

in the same boat and as reps we gain a lot of knowledge from listening to other people's experiences.

What's next for you?

I'm going to work on growing the membership in our branch. We're on around 60 per cent and I'd like to get that up to 80-90 per cent. It's not always been easy for me to speak to the drivers but the new recognition agreement will guarantee that I get time with those workers that aren't in the union. I'd also like to identify some members that could potentially become reps.



AWARD WINNING ARGOS REPS

Usdaw rep Graham Omari, 43, Linda Maitland, 46 and Marsha Bienaime, 50 have been reps for less than a year, but in that short time they've doubled membership at their Argos fulfilment centre in Croydon. Their work was recognised at this year's Organising Awards when they won the Team Recruitment and Organising Award for the Southern region. The award-winning trio have been working hard to organise their site. *Network* spoke to Graham and Linda about what inspired them to get active.

How did you become active in the union?

Graham: Lots of workplaces don't have a strong voice because people don't like confrontation and they're not willing to stand up to management. I'm from Toxteth, Liverpool 8, that's not the case with me! I'm from a politically active place and people from an ethnic background know their history around the slave trade. This has given me a social consciousness and a strong moral compass. If I feel like something's wrong, then I'm going to tell you until you listen.

You won the Team Recruitment and Organising Award for the Southern region, can you tell us about this?

Graham: There's only three of us in our rep team and we look after around 200 workers. We had a recruitment drive and several successful campaign days to build the profile of the union which doubled our density within about six months.

The stronger the membership, the more bargaining power we have. That is always my focus. As part of this is visibility, I wear my Usdaw high-vis so people know that the union is in their workplace. It sends the message that I'm here if they need to turn to me for advice and support. If people see an active rep, then they're more likely to sign up.

Do you have any tips on how to recruit drivers?

Linda: It can be challenging recruiting drivers because they're not on site all the time like other colleagues. You have to know what time their shifts start and finish. The best time to capture them is when the morning shift finishes and the afternoon shift starts.

I'm a driver myself and I know it can get quite hectic around this time so you only have a few minutes to get your message across. Be prepared. Make sure you look the part, wear your hi-vis so people know who you are. Know what you're going to say and how to answer common questions around membership. Have your recruitment pack, posters and balloons to make it look professional.

Any tips on the best way to organise a site?

Linda: The campaign calendar the union provides is a very handy tool which tells you what's coming up over the next few months. We use it to plan what we're going to focus on each month.

What is your relationship like with the management team?

Graham: Relations with the management team are good. Our site manager knows the business inside out and is supportive of the union which makes it a lot easier to resolve issues.

Do you have any plans for the next few months?

Linda: We are looking into ways members can approach us, for example campaign surveys and rep surgeries and we are putting into action as much of the campaigns calendar as possible.

Graham: Campaigns is a big one for me. It's a good way of raising awareness and the profile of the union. I would also like to go on stand down and enrol onto Summer School. I want to get all the training I

can to ensure I'm doing the best job I possibly can for our members.

Are there any other big issues at your site?

Graham: This isn't specific to our site or company but the cost of living is affecting everyone. It doesn't matter how much you earn; we're all being hit with increasing costs. The pay rise we got was a step in the right direction but it doesn't help the cost of living go away.

Any advice for someone thinking about becoming a rep?

Graham: I feel privileged to be a part of the union and the responsibility that comes with it. Anybody who's thinking about becoming a rep, just do it, jump in with both feet. It's a great role because you get to make things better for your colleagues while also getting lots of training and self-development.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Linda: Both of us want to thank Marsha Bienaime, she's an integral part of our rep team but couldn't join us for the interview. She deserves equal thanks and recognition.

Graham: We would also like to thank Usdaw rep Chaya Patel. She recruited us and motivated us to get involved by showing us we were capable of so much more.

BECOME A REP

Help improve things in your workplace by becoming an Usdaw rep.

Find out more by visiting:

[www.usdaw.org.uk/
Members/
Become-a-Rep](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Become-a-Rep)



ACADEMY: CLASS OF 2017

Back in 2017, 68 committed Usdaw reps took on the ultimate organising challenge when they joined the Academy1 programme. For six months, they worked full-time for the union on secondment from their employer, helping to boost membership and strengthen the union in their region. Many of the graduates are still active within Usdaw – *Network* spoke to some of them to hear about how their union journey has continued since 2017.

Michael Adamson

Area Organiser, Morden

After I graduated from Academy1, I had a year of stand-down before completing Academy2 in 2019, and was appointed to the position of area organiser in September 2021.

I thoroughly enjoyed my time on the Academy. It boosted my knowledge of the union, helped my self-confidence and empowered me to believe in myself.

Julie Haycraft

Lincolnshire

After completing Academy1, I completed Academy2 in 2019, served two terms on my regional council and from May 2024 I'll be a national executive council member. Academy helped me develop the confidence to jump into different situations and push myself into doing things rather than hanging back. The support I received helped me not only with union activity, but also in getting involved with my local parish councils.

Paul Watson

Glasgow

I'm still an active Usdaw rep. After Academy1 I went on to do Academy2 and also served on my regional council, chairing our regional conference in 2022. I'm proud to say I was recently elected to the national executive council and will take my position after the next annual delegate meeting. The Academy was tough but extremely rewarding, it gave me confidence and helped me develop leadership skills. If you put the work in, you'll gain so much from it.

Shirley Smith

North Yorkshire

I've remained active in the union since completing Academy1. I completed Academy2 in 2018, and became a branch secretary and



union learning rep that year too. In 2020 I was proud to win an award from the TUC for my work as a ULR, and this was followed by the national ULR award at the 2022 Usdaw Organising Awards. I'm still at the same workplace, although in a different job role, and I'm regularly out on stand-down helping to organise across my patch.

Julie Sarson
Coventry

I loved my time on Academy1, it was an amazing life experience. It gave me the chance to meet lots of new people and I made some good friends through it. After Academy1, I completed Academy2 and I'm still active within the union to this day. As well as being a workplace rep, I'm a branch secretary and I support the union's campaigns whenever I can.

Melanie Glenwright
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

After graduating both Academy courses, I qualified as a tutor and I now deliver training courses for new reps. It gives me a great sense of achievement when I see some of them graduate from Academy1 and 2, knowing that I helped get them started. I had some amazing support from my area organiser while on the Academy which helped me not only in my union work, but helped me progress to a supervisory role in my workplace. I'm still an active rep and am forever grateful for everything that Usdaw allowed me to learn and take with me.

Rachel Birdsall
Lincolnshire

The Academy programmes offer a great deal of experience and

understanding. It opens your eyes to sites and situations you wouldn't normally get to see, and it helps you make contacts and relationships with other reps. Since completing the Academy I've stayed active within the union – I'm a branch secretary and I also make it a priority to build relationships with new reps. Two of the reps I've supported have gone on to do the Academy themselves, which I'm immensely proud of. The organising model that was taught to me on the Academy is a big part of my work and it's something I continue to use.

Steve Tribe
Ipswich

The Academy was a great experience and something I'd always recommend to other reps. It wasn't something I was planning

to do until my area organiser encouraged me to apply, but I'm glad I got the opportunity. I completed both Academies and although I've changed jobs since then, I'm still active as a shop steward. The Academy programme gave me more confidence when speaking to large audiences, which has helped me speak at conferences and ADM, helped me run union campaigns and away from work, gave me the confidence to deliver a father of the bride speech at my daughter's wedding.

Norma Robinson
Derry/Londonderry

Completing the Academy gave me a lot of other opportunities within the union. I do a lot of stand-down, which I really enjoy as it gives me an insight into what goes on within other workplaces. Since last year, I've been a national forum rep within Tesco so I've made connections with reps from all over the country. In my own store, I'm in the same job role as when I was on the Academy and I'm now a health and safety rep alongside my duties as a shop steward.

Roger Bourne
Kent

I'm still very active within Usdaw. Since completing Academy1 I've spent a lot of time on stand-down, I'm the chair of my branch – a role I enjoy very much, as it's important to have an active branch to help shape the wider union – and I'm involved with the Black members' development programme, both as a mentor and as a member of the steering group. I've also completed Academy2, attended both summer schools and been a delegate at the annual delegate meeting. The Academy helped me understand more about how different retailers operate and taught me how to be an effective organiser and recruiter. If you have the opportunity to join the Academy, you should grab it with both hands.



Scottish region



Eastern region



North West region

SAFE SPACE AT WORK

USdaw membership gives reps and members access to a whole range of learning opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge, as well as their career prospects. Every year, the union helps more than 15,000 members return to learning. *Network* spoke to David Buik, a shop steward in Tesco in Dundee, who signed up for the Mental Health First Aid course.

Inspired by what he learned, the 38-year-old decided to set up a wellbeing room when he found out a colleague had been using the toilets as a safe space to gather his thoughts and try to escape his anxiety.

"The idea of the room was to give

colleagues a safe environment to relax, get help and find support, said David. "I spoke to my manager who agreed to me setting up the wellbeing room in the store."

The management team at the store also agreed to hold return-to-work meetings in this room, where possible, so colleagues affected by a health or mental health issue can easily find leaflets, support numbers or websites, and therapies to help them de-stress and relax.

WELLBEING

"I have also been in touch with the British Heart Foundation and Andy's Man Club to get some extra leaflets to put into the room," continued David.

"Although far from finished, the vision is for the room to become a one-stop shop for any health or mental health-related support, resources and therapies to help colleagues. We have puzzle books, colouring therapy books, self-help books and a scrapbook to help colleagues relax.

"The room is decorated in pastel colours with calm lighting, and we're even going to have a mural on the wall.

"Our store's wellbeing champion, store manager and myself are going to record a short video to post to our store's Facebook page to promote the room to our colleagues and convey the message that it's safe to talk."





THE REALITY OF CARING

Many Usdaw members will be juggling their paid jobs with caring for a friend or family member and while this can be a rewarding experience, it can also be hugely demanding.

Unpaid carers often receive little recognition or support and yet make a huge contribution to the NHS, social care and to the lives of those they care for.

There are two million carers in paid work but many are struggling to balance the demands of their job with their caring commitments. Trying to fit caring and work together can be a real source of stress and worry especially where carers don't feel understood or supported at work.

Many carers can find themselves having to reduce their hours of work or give up work altogether. As well as struggling to get the hours of work to fit around their care commitments or time off work when they need it, caring often comes with additional costs. This can have a significant impact on carers' finances and research shows that many carers experience financial hardship as a direct result of the care they provide.

Usdaw wants unpaid carers to get the support they need to be able to juggle work and caring without feeling they are at breaking point.

On 26 June this year, Usdaw will be shining a spotlight on the incredible work done by unpaid carers and highlighting our campaign for better rights and support. Hundreds of reps will be taking part in our Stand Up for Carers campaign on this day and you can find out more about how to get involved at:

www.usdaw.org.uk/spc

Network spoke to retired member and Usdaw activist Sarah Langton about the importance of improving carers' rights. Sarah, 53, is a single

parent and sole carer for her son Brandon who was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) when he was 5, high functioning autism, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and dyslexia at the age of 11 and at 16, he was diagnosed with Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA).

CARERS NEED SUPPORT

"Brandon needs a lot of care," said Sarah. "Even though he's 22, I still have to do everything for him, cook his meals, do his washing, take him to the doctor, make phone calls on his behalf and sort out his bills and his benefits. I have to drive him to wherever he needs to go because he's scared of strangers and struggles to use public transport. He left school with no qualifications and no confidence, and will never be able to work or live independently.

"When he was younger, it was even harder. I worked part-time for a supermarket while my mother looked after him. There was this one time when he was rushed to the hospital in an ambulance. My manager wouldn't let me leave until I finished my shift. Thankfully a colleague offered to cover for me and I could go to the hospital. In the end, I took a career break because I couldn't get the flexibility I needed to take care of my son.

In 2016, when Sarah had been working for an insurance company for a year, Brandon lost his dad. He was 16 at this point but could barely cross the road on his own. "Brandon was having a terrible time because he didn't know how to deal with the loss of his father," said Sarah. "He was having meltdowns, running away from school and even threatening to hurt himself."

Sarah's employer refused to allow her to work from home even

though this option was available to her colleagues. "I had no choice then but to take time off to support my son," said Sarah. "My employer kept pestering me for a return date and when I couldn't give them one, they sacked me, that was in 2018.

"I signed up to become a rep in my first workplace largely because of the way I had been treated. Once I became a rep, I started fighting back and winning for members."

Sarah admitted that before she got involved in the union, she wasn't interested in politics whatsoever. But the more active she became, the more she realised how decisions made by the Government were affecting her day-to-day life.

"Carers do an estimated £162 billion of unpaid care a year. But look at the way the Government and employers treat us," said Sarah. "I had to drop my hours to care for my son which affected my earnings and will also affect my pension, yet Carer's Allowance is only £76 a week. If you get Carer's Allowance, you cannot earn more than £139 per week."

Sarah wants the earnings limit to be increased, so that carers could earn a little more to help with the additional costs that come with caring such as food, petrol and energy bills.

"Paid carer's leave, a few days that could be taken to deal with an emergency without worrying about having to use a food bank that month, would also help," said Sarah. "Employers expect flexibility from their employees but rarely is this flexibility granted to employees. A little bit of flexibility would go a long way in helping carers stay in work."

Usdaw's Stand Up For Carers day
Wednesday 26 June
www.usdaw.org.uk/spc



WORKPLACE TRANSPORT

In this issue, Usdaw will provide an overview of the law that applies, and the approach to risk control, for workplace transport. The risk of injury from moving vehicles is present in almost every workplace and workplace transport causes a significant number of injuries and fatalities each year.

What is workplace transport?

Workplace transport is any activity involving vehicles used in a workplace. Vehicles driven on public roads are excluded, except where the vehicle is being loaded or unloaded on a public road adjacent to a workplace. Some of the most common workplace vehicles our members are likely to encounter range from private cars in a staff car park, forklift trucks, to vans or HGVs.

What are the employer's legal duties?

The employer has the general duty to ensure safety under sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. There is a duty under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 to ensure the use of safe work equipment.

Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 apply where there is lifting or lowering equipment used on the vehicle.

Regulation 17 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 will also apply. This requires the workplace to be organised so that pedestrians and vehicles can circulate in a safe manner. This is an absolute duty – and so must be done (except for traffic routes that were in existence prior to 1993).

What are the risks from workplace transport?

There are various ways in which people can be injured by vehicles. The main is a worker being struck by a moving vehicle – and this often results in serious injury or death. Drivers can also be injured in a

collision. Slightly less common are injuries from vehicles overturning, objects falling onto vehicles, and during maintenance.

What is the approach to workplace transport control?

The causes of workplace transport accidents can be broken down into three areas:

- **Issues relating to the safety of the site** – A well designed workplace will allow vehicles and pedestrians to circulate safely. The ideal method of controlling risks to pedestrians is by avoiding proximity to vehicles wherever possible. This is best achieved through segregation. Focus on the pinch points – at pedestrian crossings, doorways, and gates.
- **Issues relating to the safety of the vehicle** – has the vehicle been selected for the task most suitable? Are there routine checks, maintenance and services conducted? Is there a checklist of safety critical items that are checked each day before use?

- **Issues relating to the actions of the driver** – are they adequately trained and do they have the appropriate fitness?

Workplaces which are permanent sites, such as an industrial site or delivery yard for a store, can be designed to avoid vehicles and pedestrians coming into contact, which may address many of the risk factors.

Where vehicles and pedestrians must work in proximity in a workplace, such as in a warehouse, there will be a greater reliance on ensuring that the vehicle is safe, and the driver has received a good level of training.

What can reps do?

Reps can assess workplace transport as part of their inspection and consider the site, vehicle, and driver when they do accident investigations or are looking at any accident reports.

Please see the HSE's guidance for more information:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg199.htm
www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg136.pdf

HEALTH AND SAFETY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Every month, Usdaw's health and safety section produces a newsletter covering a different topic.

The newsletter is distributed via email to all health and safety reps. To avoid missing out, ensure that your current email address is kept up to date in your personal details.

If there are any topics you would like the union to cover, please get in touch with Usdaw's health and safety team.

The newsletters can be

accessed at www.usdaw.org.uk/HSNewsletter or by scanning the QR code below.



- **Health & safety officer** Tony Whelan 0161 249 2474
- **Health & safety advisor** Charlie Dodd 0161 249 2441
- **General enquiries** healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk

NEW STATS FROM HSE

MENTAL HEALTH & MSDs TOP LIST

In this issue we will highlight the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) latest statistics on accidents and ill health and how reps can make a difference.

What are the key findings?

135 workers were killed in work-related accidents and 35.2 million working days were lost due to work-related illness and workplace injury in 2022/2023.

The most significant health and safety concern was work-related mental ill health, with 875,000 workers reporting they were suffering from the condition, and this accounted for the loss of 17.1 million working days.

The second most significant health and safety concern was work-related musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) with 473,000 workers reporting they were injured with the condition, and this accounted for the loss of 6.6 million working days.

How can reps tackle MSDs?

Identify the risks by talking to the workforce. Highlight any concerns in the workforce using the Usdaw Body Mapping Guide. This involves asking workers to point out where it hurts on a map of a body to establish any links between the tasks they do and their health.

You can use the HSE's three toolkits to assess the risks for different types of high-risk tasks, although your employer will still be required to complete a full risk assessment. These are: The MAC Tool (Manual handling assessment charts), The Art Tool (Assessment of repetitive tasks of the upper limbs) and the RAPP Tool (Risk assessment of pushing and pulling), all of which can be found on the HSE's website.

For retail reps, please see the HSE guidance on MSD's for checkout workers: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg269.pdf

How can reps tackle work related stress?

Reps can take action using Usdaw's

stress questionnaire to gauge stress levels in the workplace. You can consult your employer on your findings from the questionnaire where they indicate work-related stress.

You could also recommend that they consider using the HSE's work-related stress guidance to identify and manage the main causes of work-related stress using the HSE's Management Standards and HSE's Talking Toolkit, which can be found on their website.

www.hse.gov.uk

If employers aren't cooperative, reps can use Usdaw's HS2 form to put their concerns in writing to the employer. This can cause the employer to take action and respond in writing by a certain date on what action they have taken. It will also provide an audit trail and evidence. If you are not satisfied with their response, you could raise a grievance and contact your senior rep or area organiser at your local Usdaw office.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

What is a risk assessment and what does the law say?

A risk assessment is a physical or virtual document created by an employer to abide by the legal requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR).

Under the MHSWR, the minimum an employer must do is: identify what could cause injury or illness; decide how likely it is that someone could be harmed and how seriously; and take action to eliminate the hazard, or if this isn't possible, control the risk.

My employer refuses to allow me to view the risk assessment, what can I do?

In this event of this happening, our advice for health and safety reps is to refer to the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (SRSC). Regulation 7 explains that provided that the employer is given sufficient notice, the safety rep is entitled to: 'Inspect and take copies of any document relevant to the workplace or to the employees the safety representatives represent'.

I don't agree with the contents of the risk assessment, what can I do?

A risk assessment is a live document and should be reviewed by the employer when new work processes or machinery are introduced, or if a rep identifies additional risk control measures. An insufficient risk assessment can be just as problematic as any other workplace issue. Reps should raise any risk assessment concerns in the same manner as they usually would for any other workplace issue.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIVIST INTERVIEW

HEALTH & SAFETY REP
SHELLEY CRAWFORD

Network speaks to Morrisons community champion and award-winning health and safety rep Shelley Crawford about the importance of safety reps in workplaces.

How did you become a safety rep?

I believe health and safety is paramount in the workplace. I don't want colleagues or customers having accidents. I was already a shop steward but being an elected health and safety rep gave me additional rights such as the legal right to investigate potential hazards and carry out inspections.

You won the regional health and safety award, can you tell us about the work you did to win the award?

I was nominated for the health and safety award in the Eastern region

because I helped resolve a very serious issue. There was flooding in the store and water was pouring through the ceiling and the electrics. It was a major hazard to colleagues and customers which I resolved satisfactorily.

How do you resolve issues in your workplace?

My managers understand that I am trying to keep the store hazard-free which not only protects my colleagues but also helps the business to run safely and efficiently. Having good communication between us also helps us solve problems together.

Can you give an example of where good practice in your workplace has paid off?

I've been working hard to make sure everyone knows what the procedures are around certain health and safety situations. Recently, we

had a customer collapse on the shopfloor and we all knew exactly what to do. We screened off the area to give him privacy and gave him a blanket to keep him comfortable until the ambulance arrived. We also looked after his wife. After the event, we received a letter from the wife thanking us for our service and attentiveness. It made me so proud that I could help in an emergency like this.

Does health and safety help with recruitment?

Absolutely. When your colleagues see you getting results in the workplace then that's the best advertisement for the union. I've been approached by a several colleagues who wanted to join on the back of wins I've had in the store. I've also managed to recruit a new rep.

What makes a good health and safety rep?

Assertiveness, because sometimes you have to fight for your members. You also have to be observant at all times. Keep your eyes and ears open to what is happening around you. If you see something wrong, sort it out straightaway.

What tips would you give to other health and safety reps?

The most important thing is to build a relationship with your members. Introduce yourself so people know who you are. Talk to them on a regular basis to see how they are and if anything's bothering them. Once you've built trust, they will seek you out when they have problem.

You also have to change the culture in the workplace by reiterating the message that health and safety is everyone's responsibility and if colleagues see something that's not quite right, then they must report it.

Being passionate and taking pride in what you do also helps.

Discounts & Offers

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 and don't forget to quote **USDW76** for your special discount.



WIGHTLINK FERRIES

Great savings on travel to the Isle of Wight.

As a member of Usdaw take advantage of your exclusive discount on Wightlink, your fast and frequent link to the Isle of Wight. Save 15% on car travel and 20% on foot travel on Wightlink's three routes.

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



HOLIDAY EXTRAS

Airport savings.

Holiday Extras, the UK market leader for holiday add-ons, is offering Usdaw members the following discounts: up to 13% off airport parking, 10% off airport hotels, 10% off airport lounges and 10% off airport transfers.

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



MY ACTIVE DISCOUNTS

Get moving and save with MyActiveDiscounts.

MyActiveDiscounts offers Usdaw members great savings on things that get you active and healthy such as 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



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

*Terms and conditions for individual offers on the website.

Insurance

- Accident Protection Cover
- Car Insurance
- Home Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Travel Insurance
- 50+ Personal Accident Cover
- Free £5,000 Accidental Death Cover

Leisure & Entertainment

- Beer52
- Bookbeat
- Brewer 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
- Theme Parks & Attractions
- TodayTix: Theatre Tickets
- Virgin Experience Days

Holidays

- Airport Parking, Lounges & Hotels
- Currensea: Travel Card
- Eurocamp
- Expedia
- Hotels.com
- Lost Luggage Protection
- Parkdean Resorts
- Pontins
- West Cliff Hotel
- Whitemead Forest Park
- Wightlink Ferries

Miscellaneous

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

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
- Usdaw Rewards Cashback
- Virgin Wines

Cars & Transport

- Car Insurance
- Car Maintenance
- Car Parking: Q-Park
- Flexible Autos: Car Hire
- Halfords
- Motorfinity
- Startrescue
- Vauxhall Cars

Money & Finance

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



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

Staff Announcements

Usdaw bids farewell to a long serving regional and deputy regional secretary, and welcomes on board a new team of officials across the union's regions

MIKE AYLWARD

North West regional secretary
Mike Aylward retires after leading the union's biggest region for 19 years.

Prior to joining the union's staff, Mike worked as a butcher for Co-operative Retail Services (CRS) and became a union rep at 18. He quickly found himself stepping up to become branch secretary and an elected member of the Co-operative National Negotiating Committee. After serving on the National Executive Council for three years, he was appointed as an area organiser in 1991 at the age of 27.

In 2005, when the union was in a period of change and modernisation, Mike was appointed as regional secretary and found himself in charge of two recently merged regions, more than 25 area organisers and 20 admin staff, a huge remit by anyone's standards.

"It's been a privilege working for the union," said Mike, 59. "Usdaw has been a part of my life for over 40 years and of course I will miss it but it's time to pass the baton. I'm very proud that the campaign for

securing recognition in B&M was started in the North West region and we now have over 10,000 members. I also played my part in helping secure agreements with Bestway, Regatta and Asda (staff working in the former EG Group convenience stores and restaurants). They have been crucial in ensuring the region continues to thrive and grow.

"I want to thank my team of area organisers, admin staff and all the reps and officials I've worked with over the years, and especially my successor Amanda Bailey-Coll. I wish her and Matt Johnson a fantastic future. I'm sure, under their leadership, the region will go from strength to strength.

"I have spent the last 32 years planning my days and weekends so I'm looking forward to not having a plan, except spending more time with my family."

CATHY GODFREY

Deputy regional secretary for the North Eastern region
Cathy Godfrey retires after 20 years of committed service.

Cathy became active in 1989 as a rep at mail order company Empire Stores at the age of 31. She went on to become a full-time convenor, served as a regional and executive councillor and sat as a lay member on an employment tribunal panel. In 2004, she joined the team at Usdaw as an area organiser and was promoted to deputy regional secretary in 2010.

"I got involved in the trade union movement because I was good at sticking up for myself," said Cathy, 66. "I was bullied at school for having a congenital heart defect. The experience toughened me up and gave me a strong desire to fight for the underdog.

"My favourite part of the job has been watching reps come through the ranks and then become area organisers. Training new area organisers and helping them develop the confidence they need to excel in the job has been the highlight of my role.

"I want to thank all the reps, the officials and clerical staff who have supported me through the years but particularly Joanne Thomas, who I



Mike Aylward



Cathy Godfrey



Amanda Bailey-Coll



Kelly Pinkney

have a fantastic working relationship with, and Paddy Lillis. I also wish Kelly Pinkney all the best in her new role as deputy. I know I'm leaving the region in capable hands.

"Although I will miss it, it's now time to give back to my family. My husband Pete has been so supportive of my career and I can't thank him enough for that. I don't have any big retirement plans except to decorate the house from top to bottom. Although, I do have five grandkids who, I'm sure, will keep me on my toes."

AMANDA BAILEY-COLL
Former deputy regional secretary Amanda Bailey-Coll is promoted to regional secretary of the North West and brings 20 years of experience to her new role.

Amanda became active when she stood to become an Ethel Austin rep in 1999. She became heavily involved in the union and held many roles including branch secretary, divisional councillor, a member of the women's committee, as well as the first mobile union learning rep. She was appointed as an area organiser in 2004 and deputy regional secretary in 2013.

"I've loved being a deputy regional secretary," said Amanda, 56. "It's challenging but enjoyable. Being able to lead on the Academy programme and work closely

with reps is a privilege. It's hugely rewarding to see reps you've helped develop go on to achieve so much.

"I'm delighted I got the job. I've got big shoes to fill. I've learned so much from Mike Aylward, who's been so supportive throughout my 20 years with Usdaw. He's left the region in a very good place, and I will build on the great work he's done. There's been a lot of change in the region so my priority will be to build a strong new team that can face the future head on."

KELLY PINKNEY
Former area organiser Kelly Pinkney is promoted to deputy regional secretary for the North Eastern region.

The 41-year-old started her career as a team leader in the Co-op. She became a rep in 2007 and within a couple of years had completed both academies. Following this, she was seconded for long periods of stand down, and in 2016, joined the Usdaw team as an area organiser.

"I've loved being an area organiser," said Kelly. "You're doing something different every day. Developing reps is a huge part of the remit and it was very rewarding watching reps I recruited and mentored develop and grow.

"In my new role, I'll be mentoring area organisers as well as being responsible for the academy programme. Focusing

on membership is also a priority to ensure the region is in the strongest possible position. I'm looking forward to working with our fantastic rep teams in the North East."

MATT JOHNSON
Former area organiser Matt Johnson is promoted to deputy regional secretary for the North West region.

Matt joined Usdaw in 2001 while working at Tesco in Stoke-on-Trent, becoming a rep in 2012 and a learning rep in 2013. He joined Usdaw's staff in 2015, initially as a clerical assistant before being promoted to research assistant in 2016. In 2021, he was appointed as an area organiser.

"Being an area organiser is tough but very fulfilling," said Matt, 41. "I've always enjoyed it because it's a hands-on role that keeps you in regular contact with reps and members.

"I'm over the moon that I'll be leading the organising agenda in the North West. My key priorities will focus on working with the regional secretary and our team of officials to bring the region back into growth, and rep development to ensure that reps are supported and empowered enough to recruit and organise their own workplaces. I will also be playing my part towards securing a Labour government that



Matt Johnson



Mark Malone



Rhiannon Yardley

will deliver meaningful change for our members."

MARK MALONE

Former Academy graduate Mark Malone takes up his new role as area organiser in the North West region.

Before joining the team, Mark was a Tesco manager for 18 years in various roles and formats. His most current role was as Dotcom manager which he held for 5 years. Although he joined Usdaw when he started at Tesco, it wasn't until 2021 that he decided to further challenge himself by becoming a SATA rep.

"I spent six months doing Academy1 and as soon as that finished, the vacancy for the role came up," said Mark, 39. "I applied and a few weeks later I started as an area organiser.

"It's been a bit of a whirlwind but I'm looking forward to getting stuck in. My patch will include Tesco, Co-op, Bookers, Well (pharmacy) and One Stop in the north Manchester area. I will be focusing on growing my patch, developing and supporting current reps, finding new reps, and hopefully becoming a successful AO."

RHIANNON YARDLEY

Former Tesco rep Rhiannon Yardley has started her new role as area organiser at the Glasgow office.

Rhiannon, 25, became active in 2022

and completed Academy1 as well as chairing her regional young workers' committee before being appointed as an official.

"I was over the moon when I was offered the area organiser position," said Rhiannon. "I'm looking forward to getting to know my patch, engaging with my reps and members and building the necessary relationships for a strong union."

ROSS STEWART

Ross Stewart began work as an area organiser at the Glasgow office in January.

Ross' appointment follows four years as a rep at Co-op Food, during which he completed both Academy programmes and won the 2021 regional Individual Organising Award.

"I'm delighted to be given this opportunity. When I got my appointment letter I couldn't believe it, I had to double-check it to be sure," said Ross, 31. "I want to start by networking and putting names to faces across my patch, as well as recruiting new members and helping the union to grow. I'll be making sure members have the best possible advice, support and representation at work."

KEVIN HART

Kevin Hart has left his role as driver at AAH Pharmaceuticals to become an area organiser.

Double Academy graduate Kevin,

49, will be based at the Glasgow office and was a rep for five years prior to his appointment, winning the regional Individual Recruitment Award at the 2023 organising awards and also serving as branch secretary.

"I felt sheer joy when I got the area organiser job," said Kevin. "My first priorities are to make sure the branches are operating properly and increase engagement within the branch structures, to build membership and to meet all the reps across my patch."

SHIRLEY SAVAGE

Shirley Savage retired in March after 10 years as an area organiser based at the Leeds office.

Shirley, 67, joined Usdaw in 1994 while working at the Co-op and became a rep soon afterwards. She completed the Academy1 programme and also served as a safety rep, branch secretary and regional councillor before being appointed as an organiser in 2014.

"I've loved my time as an official," said Shirley. "I've had a brilliant relationship with my reps and the support from Joanne Thomas and my colleagues in the Leeds office has been second to none.

"It was a really hard decision to retire but it felt like the right time. I'm looking forward to spending more time with my family, taking some holidays and relaxing."



Ross Stewart



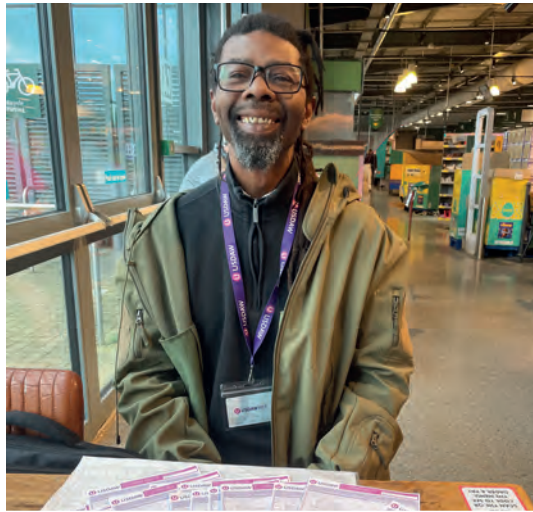
Kevin Hart



Shirley Savage



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



STAND & DELIVER

Neville Campbell (Morrisons Newtown, Powys) is coming to the end of his first time on stand-down and has recruited 25 new members. Really great effort and very much appreciated.

Andy Firman
Area organiser
Warrington office



Menopause campaign on International Women's Day by the Southern Equalities Forum at Tesco Aylesford




Menopause campaign on International Women's Day by the Eastern Equalities Forum at Tesco Bishop's Stortford



LGBT+ campaign, Sainsbury's Aberdeen

are you registered to vote?



**Politics affects
everyone.
Make sure you
can have your say.**

www.gov.uk/register-to-vote