


# NETWORK

THE BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE FOR USDAW ACTIVISTS | MAY/JUNE 2024



## VOTE LABOUR FOR CHANGE

STANDING TOGETHER FOR A BETTER FUTURE



**General Election  
4 July**

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# VOTE LABOUR FOR A FAIRER FUTURE

After months of speculation, the Government has finally set a date for the general election, and I am urging Usdaw members to vote Labour on Thursday 4 July.

Under the Tories, working people are suffering. Stagnant wages, attacks on employment rights, brutal cuts to social security, punitive sanctions and slashed funding for public services have increased pressure on workers.

City bonuses are at an all-time high, banks and energy giants are registering record profits, whilst the number of people experiencing destitution in the UK has more than doubled in the last five years. Food banks have become an established fixture of British society, there are now 4.2 million children living in poverty and the NHS is on its knees.

The next Labour Government has committed to undoing the damage inflicted by the Tories and creating a fairer and more equal future for workers. As well as introducing a new deal for working people within 100 days, their key equality commitments include: creating a modern childcare system; tackling child poverty; reforming social security; tackling workplace sexual harassment; introducing stronger family friendly rights; better rights for carers;



strengthening flexible working and putting mental health on a par with physical health.

The Labour Party's commitment to building a fairer, more equal society should be judged not by what Labour say but by what they have previously achieved: from introducing the National Minimum Wage, tax credits and the Equality Act, to expanding childcare and school places; the last Labour Government gave millions of children and families the best start in life and helped to make work pay.

On 4 July, vote Labour for a fairer, more equal future.

*Paddy Lillis*

Udaw General Secretary

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

A close-up photograph of a young woman with dark hair and a black beanie, looking intently at a smartphone held in her hands. The background is softly blurred with bokeh light effects.

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# IN THE NEWS

Don't forget to email the editor your view [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

## GENERAL ELECTION 2024



# LABOUR'S PATH TO CHANGE

In May, the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak finally set the date for the general election. The country will go to the polls on 4 July 2024, which will give voters the chance to kick out the Tories for good.

Even before the election was called, Labour had announced the first six steps it would take in government. These, alongside Labour's new deal for working people and their high street plan, set out a clear vision for a better country.

### Labour's first steps for change:

- Deliver economic stability with tough spending rules, to grow the economy and keep taxes, inflation and mortgages as low as possible.
- Cut NHS waiting times with 40,000 more

evening and weekend appointments each week, paid for by cracking down on tax avoidance and non-doms.

- Launch a new Border Security Command with hundreds of new specialist investigators and counter-terror powers to smash criminal gangs and strengthen our borders.
- Set up Great British Energy, a publicly owned clean power company, to cut bills for good and boost energy security, paid for by a windfall tax on oil and gas giants.
- Crack down on antisocial behaviour, with more neighbourhood police paid for by ending wasteful contracts, tough new penalties for offenders, and a new network of youth hubs.

- Recruit 6,500 new teachers in key subjects to set children up for life, work and the future, paid for by ending tax breaks for private schools.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis says: "It is only the Labour Party that will deliver the new deal for working people, strengthening rights at work, making work pay and making work fairer. Labour will tackle workplace discrimination, put mental health on a par with physical health and tackle the retail sector crisis. It is a new deal that tackles insecure employment and makes sure work provides the dignity of decent pay.

"Labour show that only they in government will deliver the much needed and long overdue help the retail industry needs. Action on business rates,

tackling retail crime and a new deal for working people are at the top of our list of priorities. Only by working together can we help to deliver better retail jobs, while also securing the future viability of the industry for the benefit of workers and the economy.

"After 14 years of austerity and a cost of living crisis, it is clear that only Labour has the plan for change that our members so desperately need."

### MEMBERSHIP

For week ended 25 May 2024

South Wales & Western	43,589
Eastern	52,010
Midlands	48,442
North Eastern	49,941
Scottish	37,154
Southern	51,357
North West	76,262
<b>Total</b>	<b>358,755</b>

## SHOPWORKER SAFETY

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE BILL DROPPED

Usdaw criticised Tory ministers for failing to follow through on their promise to create a standalone offence of assaulting a shopworker.

The Government did table an amendment to the Criminal Justice Bill, which was weaker than the law that already exists in Scotland, but it fell when a general election was called and didn't get through Parliament's so-called wash-up.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Last month the Government U-turned on the need to legislate to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse, by announcing they would create a standalone offence in their Criminal Justice Bill. This turned out to be a political stunt trying to undermine Labour's commitment on this. I am now not convinced that they ever intended to follow through on this promise, after failing to support the Labour amendment, delaying the passage of the Bill and then allowing it to fall before Parliament closed for a general election.

"The dither and delay of this Government on this issue, over



many years, has led to thousands of shopworkers needlessly suffering physical and mental injury. It is an absolute disgrace to play games with the lives of shopworkers, key workers in every community, on the front line suffering unprecedented violence, abuse and threats in a retail crime epidemic. The Tory record is one of effectively decriminalising theft from shops.

"This, among many reasons, is why we need a Labour Government. Labour is committed to deliver for retail staff in England and Wales the protection of shopworkers law that has existed in Scotland for three years.

"Labour will end the perverse £200 threshold for prosecuting shoplifters, which has effectively become an open invitation to retail criminals. Labour will provide more uniformed officers patrolling shopping areas and introduce town centre banning orders for repeat offenders.

"We hope that 14 years of Tory failure are about to come to an end, so that our members can secure the change they desperately need on this and many other issues. Shopworkers need the respect that they have long deserved and, regrettably, too often do not receive. We need Labour to deliver this."

## WELSH TUC

## CALLS FOR ACTION TO 'SAVE OUR SHOPS'

An Usdaw delegation of reps and officials attended the 2024 conference of the Welsh Trades Union Congress (TUC), which took place in Llandudno in May. Usdaw called for action to address the challenges facing retail and the high street.

Usdaw called on the Welsh TUC to campaign for:

- Sustained investment in skills for retail workers to help meet the challenges of new

technology and automation, including lobbying Westminster for fundamental reform of the Apprenticeship Levy.

- A comprehensive review of rents and lease arrangements to ensure the right measures are in place to support a collaborative relationship between landlords and retailers.
- Urgent government action to help address the challenges facing the sector, including

fundamental reform of business rates to level the playing field between online and bricks and mortar retailers.

- Consistent and sustainable funding for local authorities so they can invest in their local economy, transport networks and high streets.
- A new deal for workers so that retail jobs are treated as proper jobs.

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

## IDAHOBIT 2024

## SPOTLIGHT ON WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

Usdaw marked the annual International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia (IDAHOBIT) in May, with a call for action to tackle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Plus (LGBT+) harassment in workplaces, and welcomed the 2024 theme of 'no one left behind: equality, freedom and justice for all'.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "Harassment is one of the biggest problems our LGBT+ members face in the workplace. The Equality Act makes it clear that harassment, including so called 'jokes', is unlawful. Employers must deal with any incidents quickly and effectively and take reasonable steps to prevent them happening in the first place.

"Too many LGBT+ workers still don't feel safe enough to be out about their sexual orientation or gender identity at work. We very much welcome this year's theme of unity and solidarity. Trade unions operate on the principle of an 'injury to one is an injury to all'. We know that harassment creates dangerous workplaces that harm everyone. Usdaw believes that everyone has a right to a safe and supportive working environment free from fear of harassment or



discrimination.

"We campaign all year round to tackle harassment at work, encouraging activists and members to 'call it out'. We also work with employers to negotiate workplace policies and procedures that aim to prevent harassment

and ensure incidents are dealt with fairly, quickly and confidentially. Today, on IDAHOBIT, we put the spotlight on homophobia, transphobia and biphobia, standing together with our LGBT+ colleagues speaking out against harassment at work."

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## USDAW V TESCO

## SUPREME COURT CHALLENGE



Usdaw's legal team at the Supreme Court in London

Usdaw and leading law firm Thompsons challenged supermarket giant Tesco on their use of 'fire and rehire' in the Supreme Court. The case was heard on Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 April 2024. This was the final stage of a long running legal battle. A similar case involving workers at the Livingston site has stayed in the Scottish courts until proceedings have concluded in England.

Usdaw members employed by Tesco in its Daventry and Lichfield distribution centres won a landmark legal victory against Tesco, after the company proposed to remove 'retained pay', dismissing staff and offering to re-engage them on inferior terms and conditions. Tesco chose to pursue the case further to the Court of Appeal, where the original judgement was overturned.

The High Court had originally found that, as the parties had agreed this payment was

'permanent' and 'guaranteed for life', the employer was not entitled to serve notice on the contract when its sole purpose for doing so was to remove the term in question.

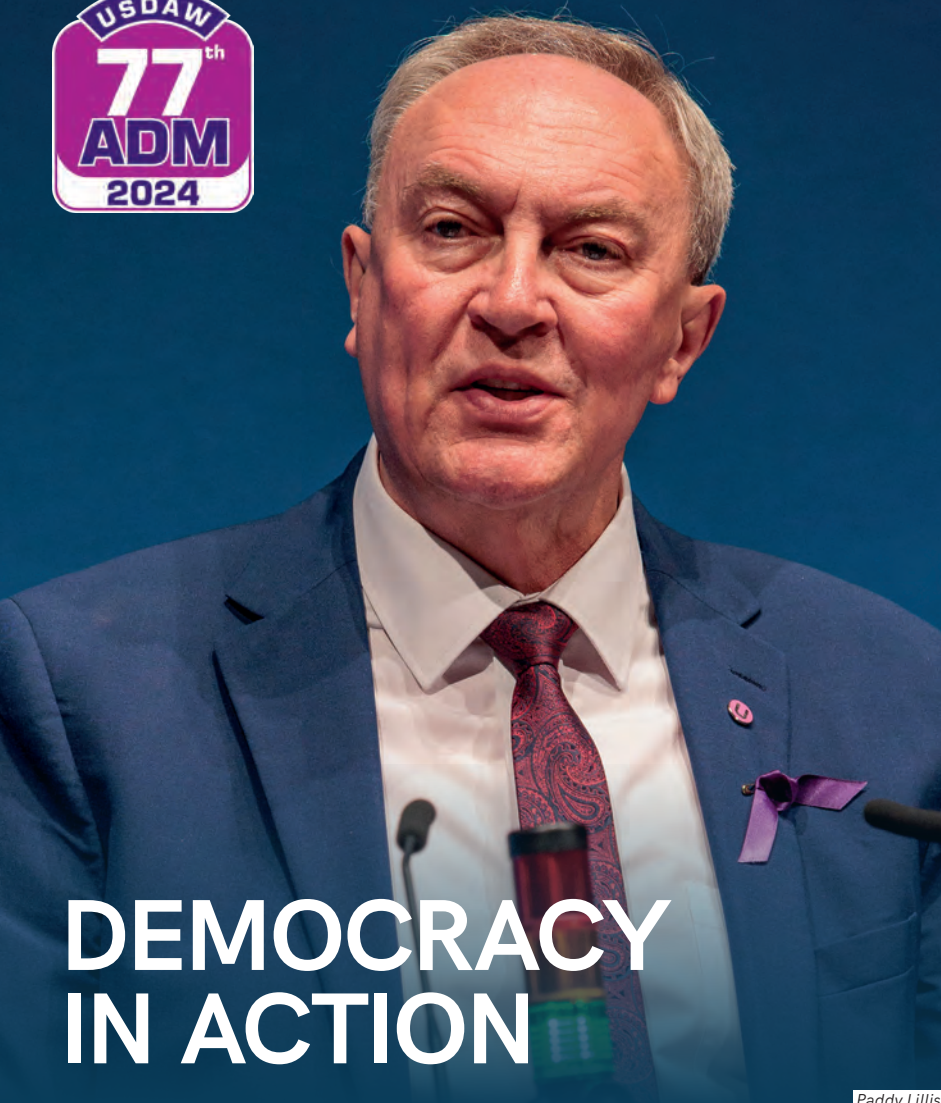
However, in a deeply disappointing decision, the Court of Appeal was unable to accept that the phrases 'permanent' and 'guaranteed for life' showed a mutual intention on behalf of both parties that the right to "retained pay" would continue as long as the employee in question performed the role in which they were currently employed to undertake. This was despite the very clear wording in joint statements issued by Tesco and Usdaw at the time.

Following on from this, the Court decided to remove the injunction currently in place preventing Tesco from dismissing these workers. However, Usdaw, on behalf of the members concerned, remained determined to fight on against these shameful 'fire and rehire'

tactics and secured leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

Usdaw national officer Mark Todd said: "It has always been clear to us what we agreed with Tesco in respect of our members in receipt of 'retained pay'. That is that they would have a right to this payment for as long as they remained employed by Tesco in their current role. The agreement was reached at a time when the company needed these individuals to remain in post as it could not have been operationally effective if they had chosen to leave. The workers agreed to remain in the business and relocate on the basis of the guarantee of these payments when they otherwise may have taken redundancy.

"We were therefore shocked when Tesco adopted 'fire and rehire' tactics to try and strip this right away and then chose to pursue a small number of employees through every court in the land to deny them wages."



# DEMOCRACY IN ACTION



Dave McCrossen



Jane Jones



Paddy Lillis Jo Crumplin

**D**elegates gathered in the Winter Gardens in Blackpool for Usdaw's 77th Annual Delegate Meeting (ADM). ADM is the biggest event in the union's calendar with over 1,000 delegates, visitors and officials attending from across the UK.

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

Over the four days, delegates took part in lively debates and voted on

propositions to decide the union's policies and priorities for the next 12 months.

Delegates also heard from guest speakers Keir Starmer, leader of the Labour Party, and Paul Nowak, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress (TUC).

Ushaw president Jane Jones addressed the delegates and lamented 14 years of Conservative governments. She looked towards a general election that could deliver a Labour Government and the change Ushaw members need.

"It is obscene that in 2024, working people are having to go to food banks to survive," said Jane.

"It is disgraceful that a quarter of children in this country are in absolute poverty. And it is terrifying that record numbers of people are falling into debt."

Jane called out the Tories for not understanding ordinary people's lives and ripping the heart out of the country. "Decision after decision, delay after delay, disaster after disaster. Bringing us crumbling schools, an NHS on its knees and falling living standards," she added.

Jane concluded her speech by encouraging delegates to push for a better future for the country by helping Labour win the next general election.

## PREVENTION OF ABUSE

## ABUSE AGAINST CALL HANDLERS

Delegates overwhelmingly backed a proposition calling for employers of smaller stores to address the spiralling instances of abuse, as well as introducing a message advising callers that any form of verbal abuse targeted against call handlers will not be tolerated.

**STEPHEN SMITH G451**

"The abuse against call handlers is the worst that I've ever seen it and I've done this job for 27 years. It leaves you scared of coming to work. It takes a toll on your mental health and your self-esteem. A message at the beginning of the call will make customers think twice."

**FINN MARSHALL G437**

"Where abuse is directed against someone on the shopfloor or someone on the end of a line, it should be made clear that it will not be tolerated. Call handlers should also be able to end the call to take themselves away from the abuse."

**KAREN O'NEILL G406**

"We receive thousands of calls from customers and I get verbally abused all the time.

"Handlers don't know what to do if they get abused. We need policies to support us."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"For over 20 years, Usdaw has been at the forefront of the fight to protect shopworkers from violence, threats and abuse. And we have recently forced the Tory Government to implement legislation to protect our retail members.

"The scale of assaults, abuse and threats towards shopworkers and extent of the retail crime epidemic have been a disgrace for many years. This has been made worse by police cuts and a failure to legislate to protect retail staff.

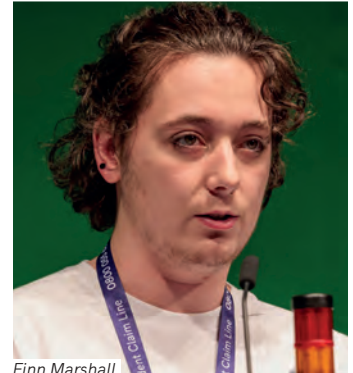
"A long overdue U-turn by the Government was recently performed as they finally accepted the need to legislate. This is the culmination of many years of sustained campaigning by Usdaw and others.

"The Government's dither and delay on this issue, over many years, has led to thousands of shopworkers needlessly suffering physical and mental injury.

"We hope that whatever the Government is proposing will be substantial and effective in giving shopworkers, key workers in every community, the respect that they have long deserved and regrettably too often do not receive."



Stephen Smith



Finn Marshall



Karen O'Neill

**BETTER CARER'S LEAVE SUPPORTED BY USDW DELEGATES**

During the Workplace Policy Debate, delegates voted for better paid leave arrangements for working carers that go beyond statutory minimum rights.

Udaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "While Usdaw welcomes carer's leave as an important step in the right direction, without pay, low-paid workers are going to struggle to use it. This is made more acute by the ongoing cost of living crisis

because carers already face huge additional costs relating to caring that are difficult enough to meet.

"Udaw is already campaigning, and having those conversations with employers, about the importance of building on the statutory right. This will be a focus of our Supporting Parents and Carers Spotlight Day in June and we will continue to negotiate and push employers for paid carer's leave."

**SUBS INCREASE**

Delegates voted overwhelmingly to increase membership rates.

This means that from 30 June:

**Scale A**

members will pay **£2.78** a week

**Scale C**

members will pay **£1.92** a week.

EQUALITIES DEBATE

# LABOUR FOR EQUALITY

Usdaw delegates put equality at the heart of the union's agenda and overwhelmingly backed propositions calling for better disabled access, outlawing gay conversion therapy and facilities for prayer rooms.

**FRANK DUNAWAY H067**

"People in wheelchairs can't get to the shelves. It can be a stressful time for disabled people and many leave without being able to do their shopping. This needs to change."

**PAUL FOOT C200**

"Gay conversion therapy is usually done without consent and under duress. It can include counselling, hypnotherapy, electrical shocks and even surgery. But scientific evidence shows that it's ineffective and can cause psychological problems. We simply ask to be legally protected from attempts to change who we are."

**DAMIEN GILL K215**

"Praying is mandatory for many

religions and prayer rooms should be available, where possible. Let's lead on creating more inclusive and diverse workplaces."

**NEC STATEMENT:  
LABOUR FOR EQUALITY**

Deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen moved the national executive council statement 'Labour for Equality' and outlined the inequality that has infested the UK under the Tory Government. He also spoke about Labour's proven track record of legislating for equality and their commitments to introducing measures to bring about stronger family friendly leave and pay rights; tackling workplace harassment; giving carers greater protections; closing gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps; putting mental health on a par with physical health; delivering a social security system that provides a safety net for all and boosting the power of unions to tackle inequality in the workplace.



Frank Dunaway



Paul Foot



Jayne Trueman



Noreen Daghli

**MAINTAIN STATE PENSION AGE AND TRIPLE LOCK**

Delegates voted on motions to stop further rises in the state pension age and maintain the triple lock.

**JAYNE TRUEMAN F187**

"There is no way I can stay in my job until 67; neither can people who work in physically demanding jobs. Many of us will be forced to retire early and miss out on our pensions."

**NOREEN DAGGLISH G430**

"The triple lock effectively raises the living standards of pensioners. As costs rise, millions are struggling to live on their pensions. We need to maintain the triple lock to avoid people falling into poverty. Yet no party has committed to it."

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"The UK has one of the lowest state pensions in the developed world and the withdrawal of the triple lock guarantee would push many pensioners below the poverty line.

"A less generous state pension would have a knock-on effect for our members, who are the pensioners of tomorrow. Low-paid workers, who struggle to afford their pension contributions already, would be left even further behind.

"It would also disproportionately affect women. We must defend and protect the triple lock guarantee to prevent pensioner poverty in the future."

## ENVIRONMENT DEBATE

## CLIMATE IS A UNION ISSUE



Michelle Dennis

Delegates passionately debated fly tipping, net zero and the introduction of sustainability reps during the environment debate.

**MICHELLE DENNIS E093**

"Fly tipping costs local authorities millions of pounds each year. We need councils to take tougher action because fixed penalty notices are not a deterrent. We can also play a part by going on litter picks and making sure we do our research when we hire people to take away our rubbish."

**TOM DUNLOP K164**

"We need any future government to invest in the green industrial revolution. Clean affordable energy will help us build a better future for our children."

Extreme weather events and pollution will affect workers health and safety. Sustainability reps will keep us green, safe and accountable."

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"These are issues that concern each and every one of us. I'm proud to see important environmental issues being raised by our branches in these propositions. We know how important they are. But the reality is, as the cost of living soars and council budgets have been cut to the bare bones, we have seen environmental issues fall further and further down the agenda."

"Whether it's clean, safe streets in our communities, carbon reduction or green energy, it is vital that we keep pushing to make our country and our world cleaner and safer, for us now and for future generations."



Tom Dunlop

**THOMAS SHOTT E115**

"Climate change is a trade union issue."



Thomas Shott

## IMPACT OF PTSD ON ASSAULTED SHOPWORKERS

**BOB SALISBURY K114**

First time speaker Bob Salisbury highlighted the impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) on shopworkers who have been victims of violence or abuse by sharing two incidents that left him with the debilitating condition. Both involved robbery with weapons.

"In 2012, I was threatened with a screwdriver and then, 18 months later, by a man in a Halloween mask carrying a kitchen knife. I began to suffer from panic attacks, especially when I heard the sound of a door opening. This went on for months and I had to have cognitive behavioural therapy to help me overcome my panic attacks."

**DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"It is simply unacceptable that nearly one in five retail members were physically assaulted last year, and this union remains committed to providing full support to all members who are attacked. We have already changed the law in Scotland. We have left the Tories with no choice but to change the law in England and Wales and we have introduced the Assaults at Work Grant for those members who are injured at work. But there is more we can do to tackle the stigma of PTSD, to signpost members to sources of advice and support, and negotiate better policies with employers."



Bob Salisbury

## TUC GENERAL SECRETARY PAUL NOWAK

## SETTING OUT SHARED PRIORITIES



Usdaw warmly welcomed Paul Nowak, Trades Union Congress (TUC) general secretary. In his keynote address, Paul congratulated Usdaw on securing the promise of legislation to tackle abuse of shopworkers, while highlighting shared priorities of winning a Labour Government, securing a new deal for working people and continuing to build the trade union movement.

Addressing delegates, Paul Nowak said: "You should be incredibly proud that, thanks to your long-running Freedom from Fear campaign, the Government has been forced to introduce a new protection of shopworkers law. You kept up the pressure despite years of Tory dither and delay, during which thousands

of shopworkers were assaulted.

"Shoplifting is not a victimless crime. The victims are your members who face horrendous abuse and physical assaults in the course of their work. Spat at. Punched. Threatened with knives. Our job isn't just to call out this shocking abuse. It's to stamp it out, once and for all. Everyone has the right to work free from fear – no ifs, no buts, no exceptions, and thanks to Usdaw they will.

"I want to focus my remarks on the TUC's key priorities for the year ahead: the need to secure political change, why we need a new deal for workers and what we can do to rebuild our movement. Last year was a momentous year for all of us.

We had a cost-of-living crisis that hammered families, with one in five of your members skipping meals to make ends meet. Public services on the brink of collapse and a Tory Government attacking our right to strike. But in the face of that we fought back, hundreds of thousands of workers stood together and we won together.

"If 2023 was momentous, then 2024 will be even more important. A general election is coming. As polling day approaches, the Tories will descend even further into the gutter. Demonising migrants, attacking trade unions, targeting trans people, scapegoating benefit claimants, using their culture wars to divide workers. So, in the face of that division, let us be clear – we stand with all workers and we stand for decency, for unity and solidarity with all working people. The values that hold our movement together.

"Whenever the election takes place, we need to be ready. Ready to organise and help get the vote out. Ready to fight for jobs, wages, rights and services. Now we shouldn't take anything for granted. Labour may be way ahead in the polls and the prize is very real: a Labour Government that will deliver a new deal for working people. The biggest expansion of workers' rights and trade union rights in a generation.

"These have been, and still are, tough times for working people, but they are also hopeful times, because change is within our grasp. Not just the prospect of political change, but the possibility of economic and social change too. The chance to build a fairer, greener, more equal country.

"A country where workers get decent pay and a secure job. Where everyone has access to great public services and strong unions."

## POLITICS DEBATE

## YOUNG VOTERS

Delegates backed propositions to repeal voter ID laws and to lower the voting age from 18 to 16.

**PETER FAHY K213**

"Voter ID laws unfairly target those who already feel marginalised and disenfranchised such as young people, Black and Asian communities, people who are disabled and those who can't afford to pay for a passport or driving licence."

**MOHAMMED HUSSAIN C153**

"Sixteen-year-olds are considered adults in so many ways. They can get a full-time job, have consensual sex, get married (with their parents' permission) and even join the Army. Lowering the age from 18 to 16 could ignite a movement and give young people the opportunity to vote on their futures."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Any attempt to restrict people's right, and ability, to vote should be firmly opposed and repealed. There is no evidence of widespread voter fraud. Voter ID is unnecessary. The right to vote was hard won and anything that makes it more difficult to exercise that right is a slippery slope. We should be making

voting easier and more accessible.

"There is no evidence that 16-and 17-year-olds using their vote are any less engaged than older voters.

"Usdaw will continue to fight for equality for young members."



Peter Fahy



Mohammed Hussain

**CARER'S ALLOWANCE INCREASE**

Delegates demanded an uplift in Carer's Allowance to reflect the valuable work of carers.

**KRISTEEN ANDERSON G451**

"None of us choose to be carers but sometimes it's the best option for our loved ones. People don't see our pain of not being able to make ends meet, of having to

put our lives on hold. And we're expected to do this for £2.34 an hour."

**GILLIAN TROUGHTON F039**

"Carers save the Government billions every year. Yet many of them can barely make ends meet. We need to recognise and reward them for their contribution."

**SOCIAL TARIFF**

Usdaw delegates backed a social tariff for household energy and a price cap on essential food items.

**SAM DAVIES K021**

"Too many are struggling with energy costs, as demonstrated by the Usdaw Cost of Living Survey which found that nearly 70 per cent of members were struggling to pay energy bills in the past year, a third no longer used their heating and over four in ten had cut down on their essentials such as food. We need action now."

**KAREN PETRIE G405**

"Energy companies are making billions in profits while ordinary people are having to choose between heating or eating. We need a social tariff to ensure cheaper bills for everyone."

**KATHRYN WEST A230**

"Food prices keep going up, with low-income families bearing the brunt. Some European countries have introduced price caps to help families reduce their food bills. We need a price cap to ensure families can provide basic meals even when food prices increase."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"A cost of living crisis brought about not by chance but a political choice made by the Tories. It is clear we need a Labour Government committed to rebuilding the UK economy, to help tackle the issues facing Usdaw members and to deliver the economic growth and security we need."

**CALLS FOR MORE LIFELONG LEARNING AGREEMENTS**

Responding to a proposition calling for more lifelong learning agreements to be negotiated with employers, deputy general secretary Dave McCrossen said: "Education and training are a core part of Usdaw that we promote through our many courses and training weekends. As a union, we can be proud of the way we have offered members access to foundational skills in areas such as English, Maths and ICT, as well as CV writing and apprenticeships.

"All of this work has been delivered as a result of our lifelong learning reps and agreements, which have previously been unpinned by the Union Learning Fund, which the Tories dismantled in 2021 in England. Members in England cannot have the same access to lifelong learning opportunities as colleagues in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

"So, not only is this union backing the call for more lifelong learning agreements, we are also campaigning to ensure the Union Learning Fund is reinstated in full."

**NEC STATEMENT: LABOUR FOR A NEW DEAL**

**VOTE FOR A BETTER DEAL**

General secretary Paddy Lillis moved the national executive council statement 'Labour for a New Deal' and reiterated that the only way to secure real change was to vote for a Labour Government.

"Since the Conservatives came to power in 2010, life for working people and their families has significantly worsened by almost every measure we have," said Paddy. "The Conservatives have caused unnecessary hardship through their choices. The crisis in our public services, worsening child poverty rates and an unstable economy are all outcomes of their political decisions.

"The only way to secure real change is to vote for a Labour Government that is on our side, fighting to deliver the policies, pledges and commitments that will make our members' lives better.

"Labour will remove the Conservatives' punitive restrictions on trade union activity, such as the Trade Union Act 2016, and make it easier for unions to be recognised to negotiate with employers on behalf of their members. Underpinning workers' rights will be a new single enforcement body with the powers

to undertake targeted and proactive enforcement work and bring civil proceedings upholding employment rights.

"The next Labour Government will introduce day one workers' rights to strengthen the rules on unfair dismissal, sick pay and parental leave; make the minimum wage a real living wage; ban exploitative zero-hours contracts; ensure anyone working regular hours for 12 weeks or more receives a fair contract which reflects these hours; end the practice of fire and rehire; ensure everyone can benefit from flexible working rights; strengthen protections against redundancy; require employers to compensate workers when not enough notice is given for cancelled or changed shifts; remove punitive restrictions on trade union activity; take action to close the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps; and put mental health on par with physical health in our workplaces."

"Labour's new deal for working people will be transformative for Usdaw members. We must take responsibility for delivering it, through delivering a Labour Government."



Conference's first-time speakers



## CHRISTMAS EVE

## EARLY CLOSING PRIORITY

Usdaw delegates backed a call for early closing on Christmas Eve to allow workers to be at home at a reasonable time.

**REBECCA ROSS G401**

"Every year shopworkers are being asked to stay later and later. Late finishes impact on our members' lives. It's difficult to get home because there's no public transport and they miss out on spending time with their children. Many are expected to be back in on Boxing Day. We need early finishes so that our members get a proper break."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Each year, the union engages employers in discussions over their festive working arrangements and each year, amongst other things, we impress on retailers the importance of closing early on Christmas Eve, and when we talk about early



Rebecca Ross

closure, we mean just that.

"We have for many years said that retailers should close by 4pm at the latest. We believe this is a reasonable and fair ask and, importantly, it gives our members the ability to get home and prepare for the festivities, without having to worry whether their bus will still be running, or if the last presents are wrapped."

**CALL FOR UNIVERSAL CREDIT REFORM****CHARLOTTE MANN K008**

"Low paid workers, who are paid four weekly, two weekly or weekly, will receive more payments than usual in one of their assessment periods, dramatically reducing their Universal Credit payment and causing havoc for workers trying to budget for essentials."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"Labour has committed to look at assessment periods in government and we welcome this, but there is a role for employers here too, because after all it's employers who decide when and how staff will be paid. Given the point-blank refusal of the current Tory Government to act, employers need to take some responsibility to support employees who are in a difficult position.

"We will continue to push employers to do the right thing by their staff."

## DELEGATES BACK MOTION ON ASSISTED DYING

**MICHELLE PEARCE A168**

"As someone who used to work in healthcare, I've seen people suffer at the end of their lives and it's cruel. I believe there's a place in our healthcare system for assisted suicide."

**REYES SANTACRUZ H039**

"We need to make sure there are safeguards to ensure people are not pressured into ending their lives prematurely."

**SUSAN KING C043**

"When people are in unimaginable pain, who are we to say that they can't make a choice

to end their life? We should let our loved ones decide what is best for them and let them keep their dignity."

**VANESSA HANLEY H082**

"There's a danger that instead of funding social care and housing, we will encourage people to end their lives to avoid being a burden."

**GENERAL SECRETARY'S RESPONSE**

"This is clearly a topic with a variety of different views. Under current UK law, it is illegal to assist in the death of another person

and the fear of prosecution is very real in the minds of those affected by this issue.

"Letting people suffer may feel wrong to many people. However, we must clearly accept that there are significant risks over allowing assisted suicide, and for many people, the creation of such a provision would be an incredibly uncomfortable step.

"It is for this reason that we are supporting this proposition with a qualification. And that qualification is that any provisions must contain significant safeguards to protect terminally ill people."

A photograph of Keir Starmer, the Labour Party leader, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a white shirt, and a patterned tie. He has short, grey hair and is wearing glasses. He is gesturing with his right hand, which is raised and clenched into a fist. The background is a dark red wall with a purple light strip running horizontally across it. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his face and suit.

"WE WILL EMBARK  
ON THE BIGGEST  
LEVELLING-UP OF  
WORKERS' RIGHTS THIS  
COUNTRY HAS SEEN  
FOR A GENERATION."

LABOUR LEADER KEIR STARMER

# VOTE LABOUR FOR CHANGE

Labour leader Keir Starmer puts working people at the heart of his policies and promises higher living standards for every family and every community

**K**eir Starmer outlined his vision of change that will provide Usdaw members and all workers with dignity, respect and prosperity.

Keir received a standing ovation after his keynote speech which thanked Usdaw members for their contribution as key workers and set out plans to tackle retail crime, rejuvenate high streets, deliver a new deal for working people and ensure that a growing economy delivers prosperity for workers.

Addressing delegates, Keir Starmer said: "Nobody in Britain should be in any doubt about the scale of the crime wave on our high streets at the moment. The epidemic levels of shoplifting and the persistent plague of antisocial behaviour. You know, some people tell me this is 'petty'. 'Petty crime' they say, 'low-level' crime and perhaps for them it is, but they don't work in your shop, they don't walk in your shoes. Don't see the damage this does to your community.

"So, today I am putting shoplifters on notice. You might get away with this under a weak Tory Government, but if Labour takes power we won't stand by while crime takes over our streets. We'll put 13,000 extra neighbourhood police on the beat. We'll scrap the Shoplifter's Charter, the £200 rule that stops the police investigating theft in your workplace, and we will legislate to make sure assaulting and abusing shopworkers is a standalone criminal offence, because you deserve to feel safe at work."

Turning to Labour's new deal

for working people, Keir Starmer continued: "We will embark on the biggest levelling-up of workers' rights this country has seen for a generation. That's what our new deal for working people will achieve and I should take this opportunity to thank Paddy for being such a strong advocate for our new deal, because Paddy understands, as you all do, that it's about dignity and respect. Everyone deserves that at work.

"It should be a given that hard work is fairly rewarded. It should be a given that whoever you are, whatever your circumstances, however you contribute, you are treated with respect and dignity at work. That's why we will end fire and rehire, make parental leave a day one right, scrap zero-hour contracts, strengthen statutory sick pay, boost collective bargaining and make work pay with a real Living Wage."

Reflecting on the Usdaw battle for justice for Woolworths workers, Keir Starmer added: "Where large organisations with numerous stores try to implement redundancy proceedings without collective consultation rights, because, as they argue, the individual stores are below the 20-staff threshold, Labour will stop that. Of course, we hope that your employer never needs such powers, but if they do, if your employer does get in trouble, with a Labour Government you would be protected by new collective redundancy rights. That is a Labour pledge."

On Labour's growth mission, Keir Starmer pledged: "Working people

have been told that fair pay, good work and dignity are barriers to growth, but they're not and we will prove it. Labour will make work pay, Labour will get Britain building again, Labour will hold out the hand of partnership to business and together we'll invest in our future. A new direction on growth, from working people, for working people. Higher living standards for every family and community. That is our mission on growth.

Focussing on Labour's plans for high streets, Keir Starmer added: "I haven't visited a single community that has no ambition for their high street. All they need is a government that matches their ambition with a credible plan that sees the pride and potential we could unlock together. So let's take back our streets from anti-social behaviour, let's keep our tax rates competitive, reform and rebalance business rates. Level the playing field between the online tech giants and the high street businesses in your town."

Keir Starmer concluded: "If you want a new deal for working people. If you want tougher action on the crime that blights your workplace. If you want a rejuvenated high street or even just a government you can trust to always put the country first, then use your vote and show Britain is ready for change with Labour."

Responding, general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "After 14 years of austerity and a cost of living crisis that is hurting working people, it is clear that only Labour has the plan for change that our members so desperately need."

# GET THE VOTE OUT

**T**he date for the general election has been set for 4 July 2024. After 14 years of austerity, Tory chaos and a cost of living crisis that have left Usdaw members feeling worse off, we have the chance to change our country for the better.

As the general election draws closer, it sometimes feels like we are being overloaded with politics, but it's important to battle through the politics fatigue and keep focussed on the change a new government could bring.

The results of the local elections in England and Wales were decisive. People are fed up with Tory incompetence, while seeing their finances stretched further and further, seeing public services on their knees, and increasing industrial unrest as workers are ignored and marginalised.

In the local elections, people used

their votes, for councillors, for metro mayors and for police and crime commissioners, to overwhelmingly support the optimism being offered by Labour.

Labour has promised to make some decisive changes if elected to government at the general election.

Unions like Usdaw have worked with Labour to help develop the policy that the party will deliver in government. Labour's new deal for working people addresses the decades of Tory neglect and managed decline of public services and working conditions.

The plan they are proposing is broad and ambitious.

## MINIMUM WAGE

Labour in government will change the Low Pay Commission's remit so that the minimum wage properly covers the cost of living. They will also make sure all adult workers

receive the full rate, ending the unfair rates for younger adults, and they will crack down on avoidance.

## DAY ONE RIGHTS

Labour will strengthen the protections afforded to all workers by scrapping the qualifying time for basic rights, such as unfair dismissal, sick pay and parental leave.

## ZERO AND SHORT HOURS CONTRACTS

Labour will ban exploitative zero-hours contracts and ensure all workers get reasonable notice of any change in shifts or working time.

## FIRE AND REHIRE

Labour opposes 'fire and rehire' and a Labour Government will act to end it.

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY RIGHTS

Labour will introduce the right to



bereavement leave and strengthen protections for pregnant women. Labour will also review the parental leave system to make sure it best supports working families.

### FLEXIBLE WORKING

Labour will make work more family friendly by ensuring all workers have the opportunity to benefit from flexible working, including part-time, term-time and flexi-hours.

### WORKPLACE HEALTH

Labour will put mental health on a par with physical health in our workplaces. They will review provision for stress, mental health and the impact of new technology, and will raise awareness of neurodiversity.

### CLOSING PAY GAPS

Labour will act to close gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps. The publication of ethnicity pay gaps will be made mandatory for firms with more than 250 staff.

### TRADE UNION LEGISLATION

Labour will update union legislation so it's fit for a modern economy.

As well as the new deal, Labour have set out a whole host of policy pledges aimed at making Britain a better place to live in, to work in, to be educated in, to be cared for in and to raise a family in.



### A LABOUR GOVERNMENT WILL...

- Provide free breakfast clubs for all primary school children, to give children a healthy start to their day and help working parents.
  - Cut waiting times by giving the NHS the staff and technology it needs.
  - Guarantee town centre police patrols in every community to tackle gangs, drug dealers and fly tippers – paid for by cutting outside contractors and waste.
  - Put 13,000 more neighbourhood police and PCSOs on our streets.
  - Halve violence against women and girls within a decade – because everyone has the right to live free from fear.
  - Introduce new 'Respect Orders', with criminal sanctions for antisocial behaviour.
- Usdaw is working hard to secure a Labour Government that will deliver this for our members; hundreds of Usdaw's activists have been campaigning hard for a Labour win. If you would like to join your local Campaign Team, you can sign up here!
- [www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Usdaw-and-Politics/Join-the-team](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/Members/Usdaw-and-Politics/Join-the-team)





# STANDING UP FOR PARENTS & CARERS

**O**n 6 April 2024, a new workplace right came into force that gives working carers the right to take unpaid time off work to care for someone.

The right is particularly welcome as Usdaw's own research shows that half of all members who are caring for an adult find it very difficult to take time off.

However, it's an unpaid right and, without pay, many Usdaw members may not be able to afford to take up the leave that is now on offer to them.

## Who has the right?

The Carer's Leave Act gives employees who provide care for a sick or disabled family member, or friend, a new legal right to a week's unpaid leave from work every 12 months.

## Is it a day one right?

Yes, employees have the right from day one of their employment.

## Does it apply across the UK?

The new right applies to working carers in England, Wales and Scotland but unfortunately it has not taken effect in Northern Ireland because employment law is devolved to the Stormont Executive.

## How do I qualify for carer's leave?

The unpaid leave must be used for the purposes of giving or arranging care for someone who has either:

- a physical or mental illness or injury that means they're expected to need care for more than three months; or
- a disability (as defined in the Equality Act 2010); or
- care needs related to old age.

## Does it have to be a family member?

The person you are giving care to does not have to be a family member. It can be anyone who reasonably relies on you for care.

## Can I use this leave to care for my child?

If your child doesn't have care needs that are likely to last for more than three months and/or they are not disabled, then you cannot take carer's leave.

## What type of care can the leave be taken for?

The law doesn't specify but it is intended to cover a wide range of caring situations including (but not limited to) things like taking someone to a medical appointment, supporting someone with personal care, arranging visits with health professionals or arranging future care.

## How much time off can I take?

You can take up to one week of leave every 12 months. A 'week' means the length of time you usually work over seven days. For example, if you usually work three days a week,



### SPOTLIGHT DAY

On Wednesday 26 June Usdaw is organising a campaign day to highlight the pressures that working carers are under, recognise the huge contribution that unpaid carers make to society and to lobby for the new right to be paid. For more information about the campaign visit: [www.usdaw.org.uk/spc](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/spc)

you can take three days of carer's leave. You can either take a whole week off, individual days or half days throughout the year.

#### **My hours of work vary from week to week – how many days of carer's leave am I entitled to?**

If you don't have a regular working pattern, then the amount of unpaid carer's leave you will be entitled to is calculated by adding up the total number of hours that you've worked in the previous 12 months, and then dividing that total by 52 (or however many weeks since you started your job, if you've been in the job for less than a year).

#### **How do I request leave?**

You do not have to put your request for carer's leave in writing but you can if you want to.

However, you must give your employer notice of your intention to take carer's leave.

- If you are requesting a half day, or single day, of leave you must give at least three days' notice.
- If you are requesting two or more consecutive days' leave you have to give at least twice as many days as your requested leave period. For example, if your request is for two days' leave, you will need to give four days' notice.

The notice period needs to be in full days, even if your request includes half day amounts.

#### **Can my employer refuse my request for carer's leave?**

Your employer can postpone your request for leave but they cannot refuse it.

They can only postpone your request if they can show that your absence would cause a serious disruption to the running of the business.

If they do postpone/delay it, they must:

- agree another date with you that

- falls within one month of the requested date for the leave; and
- put the reason for the delay and new date in writing to you within seven days of receiving your original request, and before the date you asked for your leave to start.

#### **What if I care for more than one person?**

If you care for more than one person, you can only take a maximum of one week every 12 months but you don't have to use this one week of leave to care for the same person. You can use it to care for different people.

#### **Do I have to prove I am a carer and, if so, how?**

No. The law is clear. Your employer cannot ask you to supply evidence that you are caring.

Currently there is no official register of carers or national carer card scheme in the UK.

# SMASHING BARRIERS

In 2023, Usdaw set up the Breaking Down Barriers programme to support Black members to become more active and visible in the union.

The union set up Breaking Down Barriers because all unions, including Usdaw, have a problem with the under-representation of Black members in union roles and at union events.

We know that around 17 per cent of Usdaw members are Black and yet only around 7 per cent of reps and branch officials are Black. This tells us we need to do more to reach out to and support Black members to become more active.

In this way, we not only enable more Black members to become more active, but we also build union power in the workplace and make Usdaw more effective and more visible.

Breaking Down Barriers is an education and skills programme which gives Black reps the chance to develop their skills and knowledge about Usdaw and the wider Labour movement.

It combines sessions in the classroom at Usdaw head office with time spent outside the classroom in team building activities. This year's programme has included a two-day visit to Parliament to meet with Black Labour politicians including the shadow foreign secretary David Lammy, who joined reps for an evening meal in London.

Members on the programme have also collaborated to write, produce and star in a short film promoting Breaking Down Barriers. The film is a fantastic showcase for the programme and really brings home how enjoyable and rewarding it is. You can watch the film here:

[youtu.be/qaOYGd6wLFW](https://youtu.be/qaOYGd6wLFW)

In March, reps took part in the annual United Nations Anti Racism Day demonstration in London. For some, this was the first time they had done anything like this. Visiting the TUC Black Workers' Conference for a day was another opportunity to learn more about the wider trade union movement and the role Black workers are playing in shaping its future.

The programme is all about giving reps new experiences to support them to grow their confidence and union activism.

This year there are 17 reps on the programme and the majority have already become more active in the union and wider labour movement. This includes becoming a Labour town councillor, being elected to the Tesco National Forum and taking part in stand down for the first time.





**APPLICATIONS OPEN**

Applications for this year's intake opened at ADM in April and will run until **15 July 2024**.

If you are a Black rep or know someone who is, please either think about applying or encouraging someone else to do so. There is a short application form reps need to fill in, which can be found here.

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

If you have any questions at all about the programme, feel free to contact the equalities section at Usdaw head office on 0161 224 2804 or by emailing [breakingdownbarriers@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:breakingdownbarriers@usdaw.org.uk)

By Black, we mean any member who is at risk of racism and of being treated less favourably because of their skin colour. This term includes a wide range of members including Asian members, African and Caribbean members and Chinese members.

**REPS ON THE PROGRAMME SAID:**

**Eulyn Brown**

Right across the trade union movement, Black workers are under-represented in decision-making roles. About 17 per cent of Usdaw members are Black, but if you look at the representation of Black activists in key roles in the union it is only between 5 and 7 per cent.

Usdaw's new education and skills programme aims to break down the barriers that stand in the way of Black members getting involved.

**Holly Olaitan**

We need to tackle the under-representation of Black members in a structured way and this is what this ground-breaking

programme does. It gives us insight and helps us develop the confidence and motivation we need to get involved in Usdaw, rise to challenges and achieve our goals.

**Phillip Sasu Arthur**

On the programme, I've learned not to give up, how to be a better communicator, how to present issues, how to debate and how to be bold and confident.

**Hadi Naqvi**

We need more people in programmes like this to develop their leadership skills and inspire them to become better trade unionists.

**Paddy Lillis**

Under-representation of Black workers is a problem right across the trade union movement. This programme is just one of the initiatives that Usdaw has introduced to address this. I'm proud of the work we're doing and I look forward to seeing more Black members become more active and more visible across our union in the coming years.





## ACTIVIST IN-DEPTH

# PETER CURRIE

**S**ainsbury's rep Peter Currie is a staunch supporter of Usdaw's campaign agenda. Members at his store in Stockton-on-Tees benefit from a strong union presence and regular campaign events, work that was recognised when Peter won the national Campaigns Award at the 2023 Organising Awards. *Network* spoke to Peter about his union activities.

### What got you started as a rep?

There was a vacancy in our store at the time and my colleagues encouraged me to put myself forward. I agreed to give it a go as

I was someone who didn't mind talking to management on behalf of my colleagues, and I've been a rep for nearly 20 years now.

### When did you start to get involved in running campaigns?

I was looking for ways to promote the union in the store and help me build not only the membership density and the strength of the union, but also my own self-confidence. Our store hadn't held any campaign days before I became a rep, but from reading about them in the union magazines and talking to other reps, I thought they would

be a great way of raising Usdaw's profile.

### How do you plan for your campaign days?

I use Usdaw's campaigns calendar, which helps the union have a constant presence in the store. As soon as the next event is coming up, I start to make my preparations. As well as ordering all my materials and making arrangements with my manager and area organiser, I'll engage with the customers too. Ahead of the day I'll hand out some merchandise to them and get talking about the different things the union is involved in.



Peter Currie at his Freedom From Fear event last November

**Have campaigns helped you boost membership in store?**

Yes, definitely. When I became a rep, our membership density was around 15-20 per cent. It's now grown to around 60 per cent, and a lot of that is because of the increased visibility of the union due to the campaigns. It's a great way of showcasing just how much work the union does that people might not be aware of, such as the mental health and hidden disabilities campaigns.

**Which campaign has been particularly successful?**

I held a Freedom From Fear event and was joined by the Lord Mayor of Stockton, two police officers and some local councillors. It went really well and was a great illustration of how committed the union is to getting increased protection for retail workers, and it showed the members how much support is out there for the Freedom From Fear

campaign. Inviting third parties along is something I'd recommend to anyone who's holding a campaign event, whether that's in their workplace or a public-facing event in their town centre.

**You won the national Campaigns Award earlier this year, how did that feel?**

I was ecstatic when my name was called out. It was great to win the regional award, but I didn't think I was in with a chance of winning the national trophy. When it was announced and the cheers went up from my region, it was such a great feeling.

**What advice would you give to new reps wanting to run their first campaign event?**

Make sure you've got all your materials ordered well in advance of the event, and make your colleagues aware of what's happening. If you've

invited any third parties to join you, explain to them clearly what the event is about so they're prepared as well. And talk to customers too – anything that creates a buzz in the store is useful.

**What's next for you?**

I'm going to keep promoting the campaigns and holding as many events as I can, starting with a mental health awareness campaign in May, then a Spotlight Day event in June. My union noticeboard has already been updated with the relevant posters and I'll be ordering my campaign pack at the earliest opportunity.

**WHAT'S YOUR STORY?**  
 Get in touch and tell us what you've been doing in your workplace.  
[network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)

# MAPPING THE WORKPLACE

It goes without saying that the union can only ever be as strong as its membership. The larger the membership, the greater Usdaw's influence with employers.

Even in the best organised workplaces, there are non-members who have not had a rep speak to them about the benefits of Usdaw membership. There are too many workplaces where membership levels need to be higher.

One of the main reasons why people say they aren't in a union is because they've never been asked, so recruiting new members is a very important part of the role of a rep.

It is important for Usdaw to maintain a strong membership base. A robust, healthy membership means the union is in a much stronger position to secure better terms and conditions for our members. With greater numbers of members in individual workplaces and across companies nationally, Usdaw's influence in discussions and negotiations is improved.

The union understands that times are tough for many people up and down the country, particularly for those working in jobs which are far too often low-paid, with insecure hours. It is therefore important that Usdaw reps are there to share with potential members the benefits of joining Usdaw, including the advice, support and representation available should a member have a problem at work. In addition, Usdaw members can count safer workplaces, improved pay and conditions and free legal advice as some of the many reasons they have

joined Usdaw.

Usdaw's aim is for all workplaces, where they have agreements to be well organised, with high levels of membership.

## What can I do to increase membership in my workplace?

For a systematic approach to recruiting and organising, you could look at mapping your workplace.

## Why map my workplace?

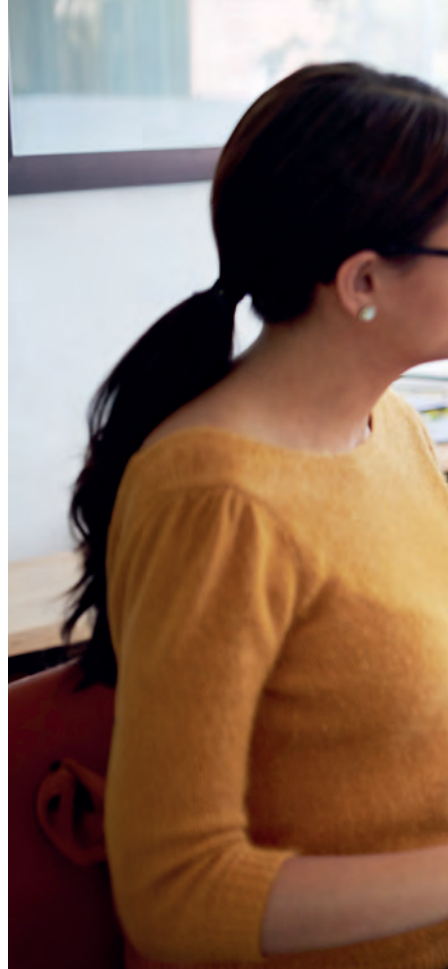
Mapping will provide you with an accurate picture of your workplace to help you plan your organising and recruitment activity. Mapping will help you identify the members and non-members in your workplace as well as the issues they have. Once you have this information, you can target your recruitment and organising activity on the areas that need the most attention.

## How do I map my workplace?

To map your workplace:

- Involve the other reps in your workplace and share out the work.
- Draw up a floor plan with the different departments or sections where people work.
- Identify the members and non-members.
- Identify the issues your colleagues have (you will need to speak to them and ask them to share their concerns).
- Record the information on your map.

## How do I identify the members and non-members?



Where Usdaw has a recognition agreement with the employer, we would expect the business to supply you with a list of everyone who works at your workplace. You will also need a list of members so you can cross-reference. You can get a membership list from your local Usdaw office. These lists will contain personal information and therefore you should treat the information with the utmost care.

## What information should I gather?

You should try to include the following information:

- The names of the people who work there.
- What is their job?
- What is their working pattern? Are they full or part-time, permanent/contract/agency?
- Are they a member? Would they be interested in being more



active?

- Are they a non-member?  
Do they want to join? If not, why not?
- What issues do they have? For example, change in hours, holidays, sickness, health and safety, bullying and harassment etc.

### **What should I do with the information I have gathered?**

Once you have collected the information and identified your members and non-members, there are a number of things you may want to do:

- Focus on identifying the areas where you have low membership, no reps, or where there are particular issues.
- You can also use the information you gathered to run a campaign on the issues you identified in the workplace.

### **GDPR**

Mapping your workplace will give you access to personal information on both members and non-members, therefore it is important that this information is handled in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The union has produced a booklet and an online short course that provides guidance for you to follow.

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

### **Recruiting new starters at inductions**

Make sure you attend the inductions to let new starters know about what the union can do for them. Tell people that Usdaw members tend to get better pay and safer workplaces. They also get representation in a disciplinary/grievance meeting, legal cover and a host of other benefits. If you're unsure of what the benefits

are, download Usdaw's leaflet, 10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw  
[www.usdaw.org.uk/261](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/261)

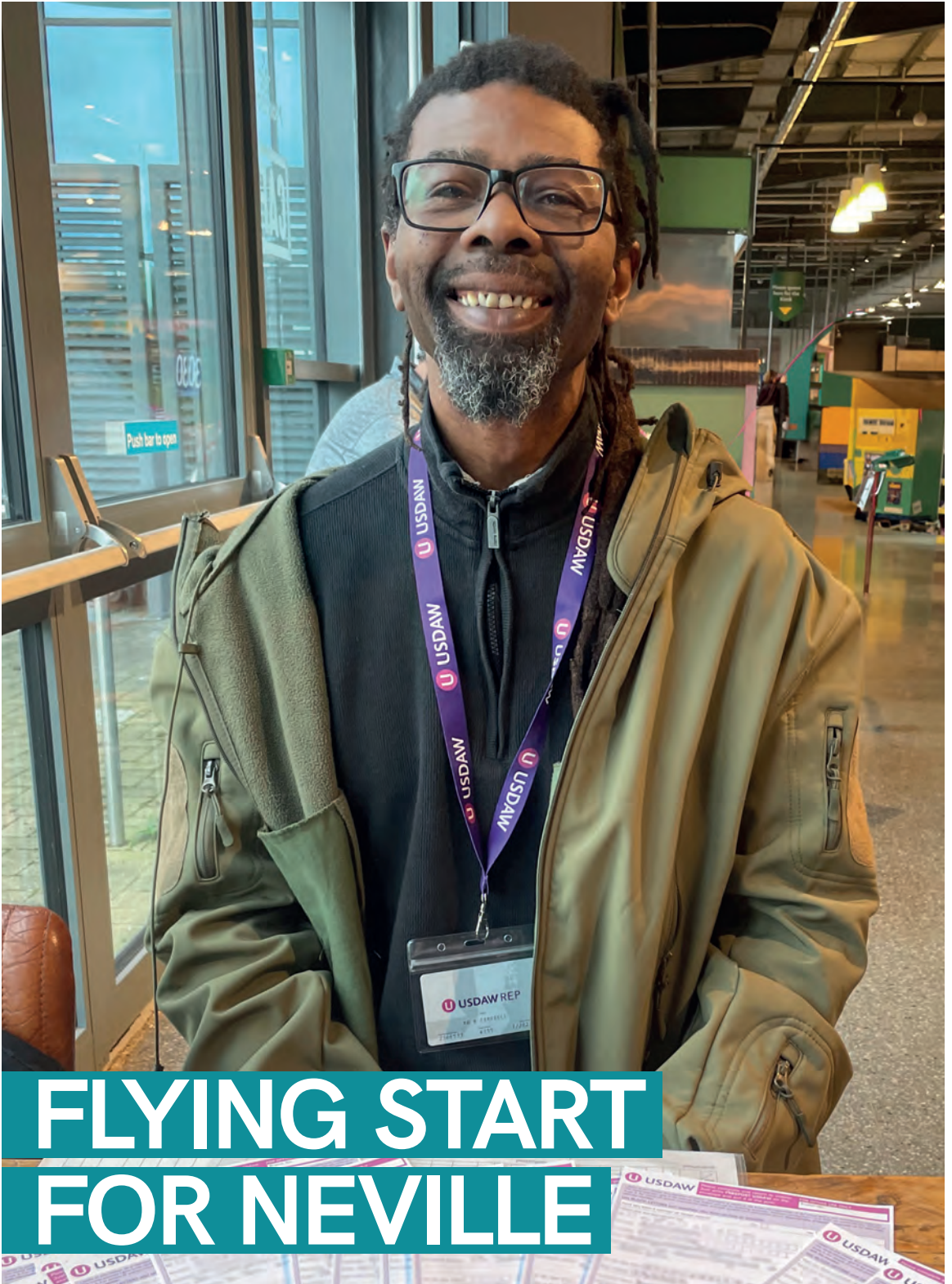
### **Approach new starters again a couple of weeks after the induction**

After a couple of weeks, new starters may be more amenable to joining as they might have experienced abuse from a customer, found it difficult to take their breaks or been told off by a manager.

### **Run a campaign**

The campaigns are a great recruitment tool, especially the Freedom From Fear campaign. Most shopworkers have unfortunately experienced abuse at some point in their careers so this campaign really resonates with them.

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



**N**eville Campbell has made a big impact in a short time as an Usdaw rep. *Network* spoke to Neville, a driver at Morrisons in Newtown, Wales, about his work for the union so far and what's coming up next.

### When did you join Usdaw?

It was pretty much as soon as I started at Morrisons, and I became a rep not long after that. I'd been active in my previous workplaces, including a period as a senior shop steward in a factory, so it was an easy step for me to take. I've done the first two Usdaw shop steward training courses so far and they've been great – tiring days but well worth it.

### What did you do when you got started as a rep?

I tried to recruit as many people as possible within my own store. There's quite a high turnover of staff and

it can be difficult to get to speak to everyone, particularly the drivers who spend most of their time off site, but people tend to be quite receptive. I've also represented a few members in meetings.

### You completed your first period of stand-down in February, how did it go?

I really enjoyed it. It was interesting to talk to people who hadn't previously had a union presence in their workplace and explaining to them what Usdaw is about and the benefits of joining.

I found the non-members to be quite engaged; everyone came in with their eyes open and were quite happy to hear me out.

I was also careful to stay on good terms with those people who chose not to join, because at some point another rep will come along and I don't want them to face any lingering

negativity among the people they're trying to recruit.

### What would you say to anyone who's thinking of becoming a rep in their workplace?

I'd tell them it's very rewarding to be in a position where you can get people the help they need when they're in a tough situation at work. Whether you're representing a member, giving them information or just being someone they can talk things over with, I personally find that very satisfying.

### What's next for you?

I definitely want to do more stand-down. I don't currently have any more booked in because I've changed my hours at work and I need to settle into my new working pattern. But I've spoken to my area organiser, and he's going to find some dates that I can do.

## GET READY FOR MEMBERSHIP WEEK

JUNE

17-23

Usdaw's second Membership Week of 2024 runs from **17-23 June**. The union has had a strong start to the year in terms of recruitment, but there's a long way to go if we are to build back to our pre-pandemic levels – so Membership Week remains as important as ever.

The aim of Membership Week is to help focus efforts on recruitment. During these weeks, all reps are encouraged to have a big push on recruiting new members. The June Membership Week is very important as it provides Usdaw with a strong foundation to build on in the second half of the year.

It goes without saying that the union can only ever be as strong as its membership. The larger the membership, the greater Usdaw's influence with employers.

Even in the best organised

workplaces, there are non-members who have not been spoken to, or have not had the many benefits of Usdaw membership explained to them. There are also far too many workplaces where membership levels need to be higher.

If you haven't quite decided how to approach this Membership Week, here are some tips to help you get the best out of your activity:

- Have a recruitment drive in workplaces where the opportunity for growth is the largest.
- Coordinate a recruitment day (or days) where all reps can get involved in helping the union grow.
- Target large workplaces where there are no reps, or where the team would appreciate additional support.

- Arrange your team of reps on to a rota so everyone spends some time focussed on this recruitment initiative. With careful planning, we can deliver a massive boost to our membership across all Usdaw sectors and have the most successful Membership Week ever.

### SEND US YOUR PHOTOS

If you're running an event, send us your pictures to: [network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk) Remember to tag us on Twitter or Instagram @UsdawUnion using #JoinUsdaw

*\*Please make sure there are no personal details visible in your photos such as newly completed membership forms.*

A person with long dark hair, wearing a grey long-sleeved top, is holding a large, orange-colored cutout of a human kidney. The cutout shows the internal structure of the kidney, including the renal cortex, medulla, and renal pelvis. The person's hands are visible, holding the cutout from the sides. The background is a plain, light grey color.

# KIDNEY TRANSPLANTS

**C**hronic kidney disease (CKD) is a long-term condition where the kidneys do not work as well as they should. It can get worse over time and eventually the kidneys may stop working and are unable to keep up with waste and fluid clearance on their own. People with end-stage kidney disease will need dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Dialysis is a procedure that removes waste products and excess fluid from the blood. It's carried out three times a week, with each session lasting around four hours. A kidney transplant involves an operation to replace the damaged kidney with a kidney from a living or deceased donor. After the transplant, the recipient will need to take medication for the rest of their life to keep the body from rejecting the new organ.

In the UK, 5,865 people, including over 100 children, are currently waiting to receive a kidney transplant, with the average waiting

time being around two or three years.

Kidney recipients and donors are matched by blood type to reduce the chance of the body rejecting the kidney. Organ matching is also better when the donor and recipient are from the same ethnic background. Black and Asian recipients tend to wait longer due to the lack of donors from ethnic minorities. However, the number is rising since the UK introduced the opt-out system, where all adults are considered to have agreed to donate when they die, unless they have said otherwise.

A successful kidney transplant from a living donor lasts about 20 to 25 years, and from a deceased donor, 15 to 20 years. Although a kidney transplant doesn't 'cure' kidney disease, it does allow people with transplants to live longer than those who stay on dialysis, with a better quality of life. Recipients have increased strength, stamina and energy, enabling them to live

a more normal lifestyle which will include being able to work, travel and spend time with family and friends, with fewer restrictions on what they can eat and drink.

## REHANA KOSAR

Usdaw rep Rehana Kosar celebrated 10 years since a successful kidney transplant. The 52-year-old suffered from kidney infections from a young age and was diagnosed with glomerulonephritis (a type of kidney disease) in 2013. Rehana spent a gruelling nine months undergoing dialysis before she found a suitable donor.

"I was lucky that I didn't have to wait as long as a lot of other people," said Rehana. "A suitable kidney became available in October 2013 when a young girl tragically died in a car accident. I think about her every day and I'm so grateful to her and her family for giving me this second chance at life.

"Although a kidney transplant means I don't have to go in for





dialysis, it isn't a cure. I'm in and out of hospital every two or three months with an infection. Last year I had seven admissions and so far this year, I've had three. I have to take medication every day to stop my body rejecting the kidney. Other side effects include getting extremely cold, especially in the winter, tiredness, cramps in my legs, migraines and gout (an inflammatory form of arthritis). When I first had my transplant, my kidney was functioning at 63 per cent. Ten years on, it's down to 43 per cent. It's worrying that it could get worse."

Being diagnosed with the disease was particularly traumatic for Rehana, who lost her father in 1993 due to kidney failure. But Rehana has made significant changes to her lifestyle such as going to the gym and eating healthily to limit the chances of her new kidney failing.

Rehana hasn't let her condition get in the way of her participating fully in life. She's an ambassador

for Kidney Research UK and works with the Bradford renal team to raise awareness, as well as funds. Rehana has spoken out about the stigma of organ donation in the Asian community and encourages everyone to have open and frank conversations about their wishes with their loved ones. She's also active in the union as an Usdaw rep and is currently in the process of completing Usdaw's flagship Breaking Down Barriers programme.

"Being ill did affect my mental health but I'm lucky that I have a very good support network which includes my family, friends and colleagues. They keep me positive when things get tough," said Rehana. "At work, I have a very understanding manager and my support plan is always followed which keeps me in work."

"It's important to me to give something back and being a rep allows me to do my bit by helping people who need support."



Rehana Kosar

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

- [www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/kidney-disease/)
- [www.kidneycareuk.org](http://www.kidneycareuk.org)
- [www.kidneyresearchuk.org](http://www.kidneyresearchuk.org)
- [www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor/donating-your-kidney/](http://www.organdonation.nhs.uk/become-a-living-donor/donating-your-kidney/)

# ROUND-UP: TUC CONFERENCES

**S**pring saw the beginning of the TUC conference season with Usdaw delegates attending to raise issues such as housing, childcare and equality on behalf of their members.

## STUC

A delegation of Usdaw members, reps and officials attended the annual conference of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) in Dundee in April.

## Housing Crisis

Delegates backed a motion to tackle the housing crisis in Scotland. Usdaw regional secretary Tracy Gilbert said: "As a country we cannot allow housing to be seen as just another commodity, to be bought and sold for profit. Housing is an essential necessity for everyone. It's not much to ask for hard working people to be able to afford a decent place to live."

## Childcare

Delegates also called for action to tackle the growing lack of affordable, flexible and accessible childcare. Moving the composite motion about childcare, Usdaw delegate Elaine Dennis said: "A successful childcare system should enable parents to work the jobs and the hours that they choose to. Instead, it is a barrier to work for those in lower-paid jobs. It prevents women from progressing, trapping families in poverty and ingraining inequality. We desperately need a childcare system that supports working parents and grandparents, valuing these dedicated workers and supporting

families in Scotland."

## STUC LGBT+

An Usdaw delegation of reps and officials attended the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Plus (LGBT+) annual conference in Glasgow in May.

Usdaw raised the impact of discrimination, specifically on the mental health of LGBT+ workers and those living with HIV.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "In the workplace, HIV discrimination manifests itself in multiple ways including breaches of confidentiality, isolation, harassment and not having contracts or offers of employment renewed. Raising awareness of the facts about HIV tackles stigma and removes the fear that often surrounds the virus. It enables those living with HIV to be treated equally and with dignity and respect."

Paddy Lillis continued: "For many LGBT+ people, discrimination and abuse at work continue to be commonplace and create workplaces where LGBT+ people feel excluded and unable to be themselves. It is vital in their work on these issues that unions continue to seek to address the social and workplace factors that increase the risk of LGBT+ workers developing mental distress."

## TUC YOUNG WORKERS' CONFERENCE

An Usdaw delegation of young members and reps attended the Trades Union Congress (TUC) annual Young Workers' Conference in



TUC Black Workers' delegates

London in March.

The union was seeking to engage young workers in the upcoming general election to get a better deal on employment rights and pay, along with calling for action to tackle violence, threats and abuse against shopworkers.

Usdaw general secretary Paddy Lillis said: "The best way to ensure young workers are fairly represented is to ensure they get involved in politics, register to vote and play an active part in political discussions. The forthcoming general election is an ideal opportunity for more of our young members to engage in politics through the trade union and labour movement. The choice couldn't be starker. Labour's New Deal for Working People will have a transformative effect on the lives of young workers."

## TUC BLACK WORKERS' CONFERENCE 2024

In April, a full delegation of Usdaw



reps participated in this year's TUC Black Workers' Conference which took place in London. Members of the Breaking Down Barriers programme joined for part of the conference as visitors. The theme of Conference was 'Here to stay, here to fight' and there was a strong focus on pay inequality including in retirement; race discrimination at work and in the labour market; racial violence and harassment and how the struggle against racism has the power to unite workers and strengthen the union and labour movement in the UK and across the world.

Members of Usdaw's delegation took to the stage to speak about the impact of sexual harassment on Black workers, particularly Black women, health inequalities, how the experience of racism and discrimination puts Black workers at greater risk, and the disproportionate impact of stop and search on young Black people.



TUC LGBT+ delegates



# FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

When accidents happen, don't forget the free accident claim cover for Usdaw members and their family

Over the past few years, harsh reforms have been made to the personal injury sector. To justify implementing these changes, the Government had argued that the number of personal injury claims was 'too high', pushing up insurance premiums for all.

However, in reality, the Association of Personal Injury Lawyers estimates that less than half of those who are injured because of someone else's negligence go on to claim compensation.

## ACCIDENT CLAIMS

Figures from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that in 2022-23, 796,000 workers were injured at work and required at least seven days absence as a result. This was up 25 per cent on the figure from 2018-19.

Despite this huge number of workers being injured or becoming ill because of their work, the number of workplace injury claims fell by 51 per cent over this period.

## ROAD TRAFFIC CLAIMS

A similar trend has emerged in road traffic injuries. Since the introduction of the 'whiplash reforms' in 2021 – changes which reduced compensation awards and abolished the chance to recover legal costs in the majority of road traffic accident claims – injuries sustained because of road traffic accidents increased by 11 per cent, however claims fell by 20 per cent.

As a result, the number of claims was down 25 per cent in 2022 when compared to 2020, despite the number of injuries having increased over this period by almost 20 per cent.

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

Not making a claim for their injury could mean that the injured person doesn't get answers on how or why their injury happened in the first place. There is also a wider impact on society if the negligent party is not held responsible, as they should meet the cost of the NHS treatment

the injured person received.

Particularly, as a union, we find that employers are much more likely to improve workplace safety if a claim has been brought against them.

Without having the financial assistance a claim could offer them, the injured person may not be able to access services or equipment to help them recover.

There is a strict three-year limitation on personal injury claims, so those who wait longer face their claim being struck out completely.

## WHAT IS FIRSTCALL USDAW?

FirstCall Usdaw is free as part of Usdaw's membership. It's a personal injury claim service for members and their families. It covers Usdaw members for any accident, anywhere in the UK or whilst on a package holiday abroad\*. This also includes claims for members who have been the victim of violent crime. Family members who live with the member are also covered for any non-work related accidents,



anywhere in the UK, plus whilst they are on package holidays abroad\*. This means no legal costs, no fees, and no deductions from any compensation received.

It is vital that members know the service is available to them. If members go to a private solicitor for help with their claim, they will lose around a quarter of their compensation in fees. With Usdaw, they get to keep every penny, so using Usdaw could save members thousands of pounds.

### WHAT CAN REPS DO TO SPREAD THE WORD?

Reps are the face of Usdaw in the workplace and their help for members is invaluable. Here are a few simple steps reps can take to make sure all Usdaw members are aware of this important benefit.

#### Talk about FirstCall Usdaw in inductions

When recruiting new members, make sure the induction includes

an explanation of the legal services available to members. This is outlined in the *10 Good Reasons to Join Usdaw* leaflet: [www.usdaw.org.uk/299](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/299)

#### Make sure the Usdaw noticeboard is up-to-date

Many members hear about Usdaw services through their workplace noticeboards therefore, make sure your noticeboard is up-to-date. Contact the personal injury team at head office to order a noticeboard pack, which contains posters about the important legal services Usdaw provides.

[PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk)

#### Use Arena magazine

Almost every edition of *Arena* contains a story about a member who has used the service. You can pin these stories on your noticeboard or use them in your inductions to promote the service.

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



#### FirstCall Usdaw card

Hand out the FirstCall Usdaw card to members. These can be ordered from: [PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:PersonallInjuryTeam@usdaw.org.uk)

#### Legal Plus Awareness Days

Hold a Legal Plus Awareness Day to promote the range of legal services available from the union. A stand/table somewhere visible in the workplace, with Legal Plus literature and FirstCall Usdaw merchandise, is a great way to draw attention and engage with both existing members and potential new members. Check out our Legal Plus Day guide which outlines everything you need to know to hold a successful awareness day.

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



# INSPECT TO PROTECT

In this article, we focus on workplace inspections and how reps can make them effective.

## Why are health and safety rep inspections important?

Under the regulations, union health and safety reps are entitled to carry out formal workplace inspections normally at least once every three months. They are also entitled to inspect following a significant change at work or after a reportable incident or accident which results in someone being off work for more than three days.

Formal inspections are important because they give the rep a chance

to check that workplace hazards are under control. They also mean that workers can see that the union rep is busy on their behalf and give workers an opportunity to raise any concerns. The HSE suggests that there are advantages if formal inspections are done jointly with management but point out that, even where this is the case, the employer must still provide the rep with facilities for independent investigations or private discussion with employees.

## What do I need to do before an inspection?

It is important to set a schedule for

inspections in advance. If there is more than one rep where you work, talk to the other reps to develop an inspection plan that ensures that reps are covering all the areas where people work. Agree the dates with management. In the week before you do an inspection, use the noticeboard and any other communication channels at work to let people know when you will be coming round.

## How can I make the best use of the time?

It helps to be as methodical as possible. It is a good idea to develop your own inspection checklist. If



managers have a checklist or audit form you can use that as a starting point (although you may still want to add other items to your own checklist). Or you could draw up a quick map of the different areas you inspect and list the things you want to check in each area before you start the inspection. Once you have written down your checklist, file it safely so the next time you do the inspection you will have less work to do.

HSE guidance suggests that it may be a good idea to vary the formal inspections from time to time. You may just do a general safety tour of the workplace on one inspection

## 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](http://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](mailto:healthandsafety@usdaw.org.uk)

but on another occasion, you may want to focus on particular risks or processes and do some safety sampling or a survey on a particular issue. For example, if you are focussing on fire safety, you may want to speak to a sample of the workers to check that they are aware of the fire precautions in their area. Or if you are focussing on manual handling, you may want to produce a simple survey to see if workers are suffering aches and pains when working on particular tasks.

Talk to workers as you go round. You are there as their representative so it is important to get their views and listen to any health or safety concerns they may have. If you are doing a safety survey, you may even want to give them a short questionnaire on the topic concerned.

Keep a note of any issues you find as you go round.

### How do I follow up after the inspection?

If you are doing a joint inspection with management, there may be some things that you were able to

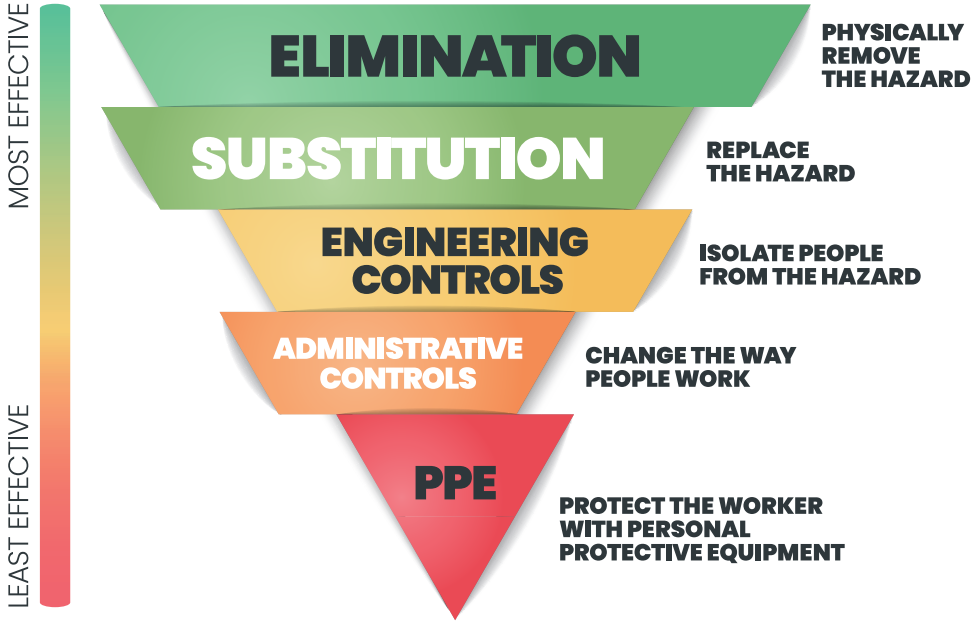
sort as you go round. However, it is still important to keep a note of what they were. If, for example, it turns out that the blocked fire exit that you got cleared is not a one-off but a regular occurrence, having the evidence is useful.

There may be other things that are more difficult to sort. It is a good idea to put any major issues in writing. The Usdaw HS2 form has been developed to help reps to report hazards in writing. It is designed so that the rep can keep a copy themselves and ask the manager to return a copy once they have filled in the box stating what they are doing to deal with the hazard. This means that you have a record of what you said and what management agreed to do about it. If you are not satisfied with the management response, or they fail to do what they said they would, you can use the grievance procedure to get it sorted.

If any workers did raise specific issues when you were doing the inspection, be sure to get back to them and explain what happened as a result.

GUIDE TO HOC

# HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS



Health and safety reps need to be aware of the Hierarchy of Controls (HOC), which outlines the best course of action to take when it comes to effectively dealing with safety issues.

### What Is the HOC?

HOC is a step-by-step approach to eliminating or reducing risks. It ranks risk controls from the highest level of protection and effectiveness through to the lowest and least effective protection.

### What Does the Law Say?

Regulation 4 of the Management of Health and Safety Regulations states that where an employer implements any preventative measures, they shall do so based on the principles specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations:

- avoiding risks;
- evaluating the risks which cannot be avoided;
- combating the risks at source;

- adapting the work to the individual, especially as regards the design of workplaces, the choice of work equipment and the choice of working and production methods, with a view to alleviating monotonous work and work at a predetermined work rate and to reducing their effect on health;
- adapting to technical progress;
- replacing the dangerous by the non-dangerous or the less dangerous;
- developing a coherent overall prevention policy which covers technology, organisation of work, working conditions, social relationships and the influence of factors relating to the working environment;
- giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures; and
- giving appropriate instructions to employees.

This Schedule goes further than the simple HOC and it mentions the

need to adapt work to the individual and to alleviate monotonous work.

### How Can Reps Use the HOC?

Some employers rely on inferior control measures from the HOC because they seem like the easier option. Reps can consult their employer to ensure they have followed the HOC headings in the order shown and have not simply jumped to the easiest control measure.

For example, where dust or fumes are an issue and you have been provided with PPE in the form of low-grade masks, you could consult them on considering a substitution, enclosure, or ventilation. Where manual handling causes risk of injury, and the staff have been provided with manual training, you can consult them if it would be possible to remove the need to handle or developing safer systems by providing suitable manual handling equipment.



## HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIVIST INTERVIEW



**N**etwork spoke to Tomasz Kosiński, shop floor operator and health and safety rep at Tesco's distribution centre in Teesside, about his work keeping his members safe.

### How long have you been a safety rep?

Around three years now. There were a couple of vacancies on my shift and I thought I could make a difference, so I put my name forward.

### Do you work closely with the wider rep team?

Yes, we have regular forums where we all get together and discuss the issues affecting the warehouse. We've got two safety reps on each shift and there are nine shop stewards in total.

Between us we make sure that whenever and wherever an issue crops up, someone is there to step in. I work particularly well with Paul, the other safety rep on my shift. We were elected at the same time, we've both recently been re-elected and he has some great ideas about how to keep standards high.

### Are there any successes you're especially proud of?

There's no one big thing, but the combination of all the minor issues we've sorted does make me feel good. It wins the respect and trust of the members too – they know that they can bring something to us, leave

it with us, and we'll solve it. We've also built a strong relationship with the site management who co-operate with us, help us do our job as safety reps and are always quick to act on any issues we bring to them.

### What advice would you give a new safety rep?

Don't think that you have to become a different person once you're elected. Just be a colleague, act the same as you did before. And don't try to push dramatic changes through straightaway on the shop floor – start by having conversations about safer ways of working.

### What's next on the agenda for you?

I want to spend some time with the forklift truck drivers and make sure they're all aware of the best and safest ways of working. Other than that, I'll keep trying every day to make my workplace a little bit safer.

## RISK ASSESSMENTS FAQs

A risk assessment is the process of identifying what hazards exist, or may appear, in the workplace, how they may cause harm and taking steps to minimise harm.

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

Health and safety reps are afforded special legal entitlements as part of their role under the Safety Representatives & Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (SRSC). Regulation 7 explains that if 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.'

### Who is most at risk?

Risk assessing should not be a generic process and instead should be specific to the individual doing the task. Unfortunately, this is not always realistic, and it may be common to find an employer attempting a one-size-fits-all approach to risk assessing.

Certain groups, such as young workers (under the age of 18), new and expectant mothers, and people with disabilities, will have additional needs and requirements which may demand extra attention from the employer.

### 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.

Udward's HS2 form can be used for assistance.

Employers should make a habit of consulting with employees when creating or amending a risk assessment, as they are best placed to understand the role and give suggestions for improvements.

# Discounts & Offers

## CO-OP CREDIT UNION

### Make your money go further this year.

As an Usdaw member, you can benefit from free membership of the Co-op Credit Union for low-interest loans and access to savings plans. Membership comes with a wide range of member benefits, offers and free tools to support your financial wellbeing and help with the rising cost of living.

\*To find out more go to:

[www.co-operativecreditunion.coop/usdaw](http://www.co-operativecreditunion.coop/usdaw)



## ONLINE TICKET STORE

### Save 10% off global attractions and experiences.

Choose from hundreds of hand-picked experiences worldwide.

Online Ticket Store offers an unrivalled range of more than 5,000 theme parks, sightseeing tours, theatre shows, experience days and other activities in over 30 countries around the world.

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



## EUROCAMP

### Discounts on holidays with Eurocamp.

With hundreds of parcs from Brittany to Croatia, Eurocamp offers the freedom of the outdoors with all the comforts of your own holiday home. Dive into world-class pool complexes, soothe your senses in a blissful spa, or enjoy freshly prepared local seafood and a show in our immaculate and spacious parcs. Find us tucked alongside a sandy beach, nestled in peaceful countryside, or close to one of Europe's most sizzling cities.

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



## CAR HIRE

### 20% off worldwide car hire.

Save 20% on your worldwide car hire with Flexible Autos.

Flexible Autos are an award-winning car rental broker who have been established for over 15 years. Offering car hire in over 23,000 worldwide locations, working with over 130 different trusted suppliers - you can be sure to get a high-quality service at a low cost.

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



Find out more



[www.usdaw.org.uk/offers](http://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
- 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
- Canopey
- Charles Tyrwhitt
- Dell
- Discount Card
- Domestic Appliances
- Flowers
- Gift Card Savings
- Halfords
- Lifestyle Vouchers
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Philips Home Appliances
- Usdaw Prepaid Cashback Card
- UsdawRewards 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 mourns the loss of Jay Zilik, who died in service, says farewell to a long-serving area organiser and work study officer, and welcomes a new official

## DECLAN BYRNE

**Area organiser in the North West region retires after 16 years' service.**

Declan, 60, joined the team at Usdaw in 2008. His involvement in the union began in 1992, when the previous rep at Parcelnet retired and Declan's father, who was a shop steward, encouraged him to take up the mantle. Within a couple of years, he was a national rep involved in pay negotiations and in later years was involved in difficult national negotiations involving contract changes which coincided with the implementation of the Working Time Directive. He completed Academy 1 in 2005 and within a few years was appointed as an Usdaw official.

"The most pleasing part of the job for me has always been winning for members," said Declan. "Getting someone reinstated or winning a tribunal gave me a real buzz.

"Making the decision to retire wasn't easy for me but now is the right time for me to go.

"I will miss the daily routine of representing members and the camaraderie of the people I've gotten to know over the years. My

involvement in the union was an education. It made me the person I am today and I hope that sticks with me for the rest of my life.

"I'm looking forward to spending time with my grandchildren, doing a bit of travelling, getting fitter and helping my local Labour Party. And if that isn't enough to occupy me, I will probably find some part-time work, but it's not something I'm going to rush into."

## AMANDA CADWALLADER

**Work Study officer retires after 37 years of service.**

Amanda, 55, joined Usdaw's records and benefits section in 1987 at the age of 18. She moved to the computer department in 1996 and was promoted to work study officer in 2013.

"My job has developed over the years and I've loved the variety of it," said Amanda. "I've had the opportunity to conduct work studies, manage the internal phone system, deal with job evaluation, as well as ad hoc projects.

"I always wanted to work with members and this job gave me the opportunity to meet some fantastic members and reps. My favourite

part of the job has been working with the reps to try and make things better and fairer for our members.

"I'm going to miss Usdaw, it's been a huge part of my life for almost four decades and I'm really going to miss the people I've worked with over the years.

"Once my partner retires, we're going to spend more time abroad, get married and do all the jobs that need doing around the house."

## TOM BERGER

**Double Academy graduate and former Tesco rep Tom Berger is the new area organiser for the Midlands region and joins the team at the Redditch office.**

The 34-year-old worked at Tesco Cannock for 14 years and became active in the union in 2018 when he was elected as a rep for his workplace. He completed Academy 2 in 2023 and was appointed as an area organiser in March 2024.

"I was ecstatic when I found out I got the job," said Tom. "I'll be covering Tesco, Argos, Central England Coop, Poundland and IKEA. My main focus will be on organising the patch, increasing membership and developing my reps."



Declan Byrne



Amanda Cadwallader



Tom Berger

## OBITUARIES



## JAY ZILIK

**Usdaw area organiser Juraj Zilik died in April, at the age of 43, following a short illness.**

Juraj, fondly known as Jay, joined the team at Waltham Cross in 2018 after completing Usdaw's Academy programme.

Originally from Slovakia, Jay moved to England in 2014. Prior to joining the staff at Usdaw, he worked at a Sainsbury's third-party site for DHL in Dartford as a warehouse worker. He immediately became involved in the union, quickly becoming the senior shop steward.

Highly motivated and focussed, he juggled work with studying for two degrees, in two countries, at the same time - international

business management in Nottingham and economics finance in the Czech Republic.

Outside of work, Jay was a deeply religious man and even gave sermons at his church as a lay preacher. He was also involved with his local Labour Party as TULO officer, and the proud father of five children.

General secretary Paddy Lillis said: "We were deeply saddened to learn about the untimely loss of our friend and colleague. Jay was a strong believer in fighting for justice and speaking up for others. His passing is a deep loss to the Eastern region.

"Our condolences go out to his family and friends."

## DON ANDERSON

**William Donald Adamson (Don) passed away on 11 April 2024 at the age of 93.**

Don worked in the research and policy department based at head office, being employed by the union from 1953 until his retirement in 1989.

General secretary Paddy Lillis paid tribute: "Don was a well-respected individual who made a valuable contribution to the union's work.

"Our thoughts are with his family and friends at this sad time."



**Labour  
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Department**

## Access to Labour Research online resources for Usdaw Reps

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

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

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**Labour  
Research  
Department**

# OVER TO U

Email your thoughts and pictures to us at:  
[network@usdaw.org.uk](mailto:network@usdaw.org.uk)



Usdaw ULRs attending their Annual ICTU Union Learning Conference in March



Equalities campaigning in Coventry



Certificate presentation at Karro/Sofina Cookstown. for E Entry 1, Essential Skills ICT and OCN Level 2 Customer Service



Freedom From Fear campaigning at Tesco Fire Station, Dunfermline



Sata Branch K199 get-together in March



Campaigning in Tesco St Rollax



Warrington South Labour candidate Sarah Hall (second left), visited staff at Co-op Kingsway South in Warrington to talk about retail crime



Retail Workers at  
the  of our  
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# National Retail Workers' Day

13 July 2024

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You can also contact your Usdaw rep  
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