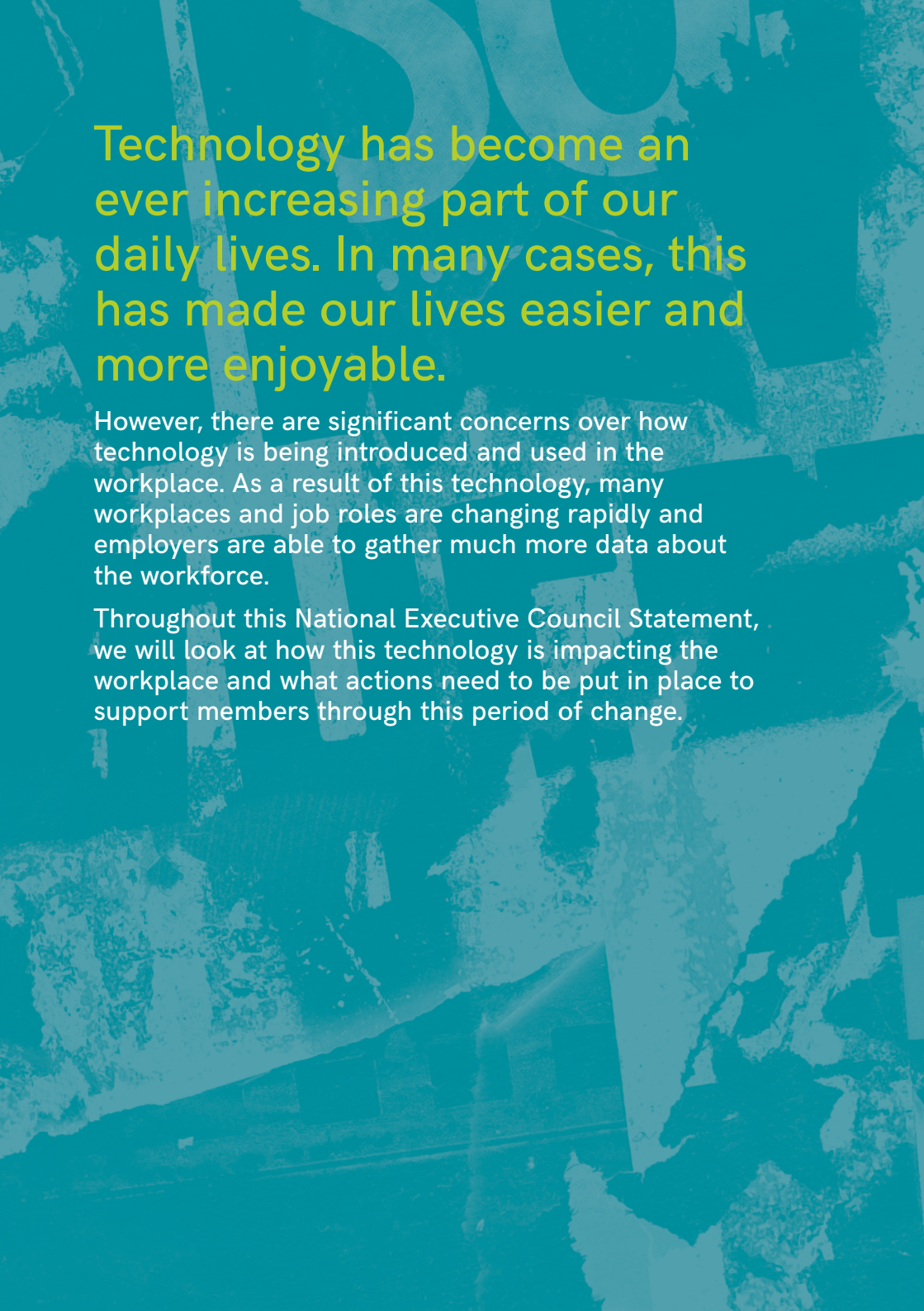




Understanding Technology and Automation: Shaping the Future of Work

National Executive
Council Statement
to 2022 ADM





Technology has become an ever increasing part of our daily lives. In many cases, this has made our lives easier and more enjoyable.

However, there are significant concerns over how technology is being introduced and used in the workplace. As a result of this technology, many workplaces and job roles are changing rapidly and employers are able to gather much more data about the workforce.

Throughout this National Executive Council Statement, we will look at how this technology is impacting the workplace and what actions need to be put in place to support members through this period of change.

General Secretary's Foreword



The expansion of new technology and automation is an important and urgent issue for the Trade Union Movement.

It is estimated that nine in ten UK employees will need to retrain by 2030, resulting in massive changes across the workplace. New technology is likely to affect how we do our jobs, what we do and how we are managed.

This National Executive Council Statement looks at how technology is already impacting on our members, what the future impact is likely to be, what protections need to be put in place for workers and how we can ensure that everyone shares in the benefits of this new technology.

The Union surveyed over 3,000 members on new technology and automation. This has given us really detailed information on members' experiences which underpin this statement, and I am grateful to all those who participated.

Too many employers are introducing new ways of working without consulting their workforce. As well as negatively affecting our members, this is also resulting in employers, all too often, wasting money on technology that does not work properly.

Many employers are not offering the training required to ensure that workers can use technology as it is introduced.

The statement sets out Usdaw's priorities to ensure that members are best placed to benefit from future changes in the workplace.

The Union wants:

- Workers' representation in discussions with the Government and employers over new technology.
- Protections so that already disadvantaged groups do not face further negative impacts as a result of changes in the workplace.
- A New Deal for Workers that provides job security and a genuine living wage.

This statement outlines various challenges Usdaw and our members face in the changing world of work. Only through understanding these challenges will the Union be best placed to shape the future of work and get the best possible deal for members.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Paddy Lillis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Paddy Lillis
General Secretary

Section One – What Is Technology and Automation?

Automation is generally about using machines to complete tasks. Automation can take many forms and has had both positive and negative impacts for workers. For example, barcodes and computers are now used to process the prices of goods whereas at one time checkout staff were required to input the price of each item into the till.

This has made some aspects of checkout work easier, but in many workplaces has led to increased workloads as managers expect checkout staff to be able to serve customers more quickly.

Automation, if not implemented properly, has the potential to make work harder and even damage job security. However, if the workforce has an adequate say in how technology is implemented, and the correct training is given on how to use this technology, this change in the workplace has the potential to make working lives easier.

Technology and automation have already had a vast impact on Usdaw sectors. We might think of automation in terms of self-service tills and automated warehouses, but it goes much further than that. When applying for jobs, before we even sit in front of a human in an interview, many employers now use automatic tests or keyword searches to create a shortlist.

When we start a new job, computers will use automatic processes to set shift patterns, order new stock and calculate how much work we are expected to do. Increasingly some managers are relying entirely on automatic processes through computers to determine whether staff are working hard enough, taking away any human discretion.



Section Two – Key Terms

The rapid growth of technology is bringing with it a whole new set of terminology. While these words can often seem confusing, the ideas behind them can be easily explained.

- **Artificial Intelligence** – Technology that enables a computer to think or act in a more 'human' way. It does this by taking in information from its surroundings, and deciding its response based on what it learns or senses. As a result of artificial intelligence, computers can carry out tasks that you would usually expect to be completed by a human. For example, making decisions or recognising objects, speech and sounds.
- **Automation** – The process of using machines to carry out tasks. This has an impact in the workplace when automation partially or entirely replaces the role of a worker.
- **Machine Learning** – When a computer programme can learn and adapt to new data without further human input or guidance.
- **Algorithm** – A set of rules or instructions to carry out a task. In technology this is often a set of rules that a computer applies to make a decision.
- **Training Data** – The data used to train a machine learning algorithm or model. Training data requires some human involvement to analyse or process the data for machine learning use.



Section Three – The Impact on Jobs

Rapid changes in technology and increasing consumer demands, as well as economic challenges, have all resulted in employers increasingly looking at automation. Many jobs will have already been impacted by the introduction of new technology. As the rate of technological development increases, there will be a greater and greater impact on the workforce.

The Institute of Labour Organisation (ILO) has identified four key methods of change which are already taking place within workplaces across the globe:

- **New Job Creation Across Many Sectors of the Economy** – This has been seen through the creation of dotcom delivery roles in retail and engineering roles in distribution and food manufacturing.
- **Job Substitution** – As a result of structural issues affecting the high street, as well as the impact of the pandemic, significant levels of retail sales have moved online. As part of this change, roles within the retail sector have been replaced with warehouse and distribution roles.
- **Job Elimination** – With the modern prevalence of apps for things such as banking and gambling, roles in high street banks and betting shops have disappeared.



- **Job Transformation** – This is a continual process which potentially impacts all job roles. Previously, workers in warehouses carried a clipboard and a paper list to show them what items needed picking. This has now generally been replaced by wearable devices.

Job Security and the Changing Nature of Work

Usdaw members work in some of the sectors which are likely to be most impacted by automation. As such, job security is a key concern.

In the past we have often seen job substitution within Usdaw's sectors. For example, online shopping has resulted in fewer hours allocated to working on checkouts, whilst at the same time brought about an increased need for staff to pick orders.

As technology continues to develop, there is a growing concern that many of the workers at risk through automation will not necessarily be in a position to take advantage of new roles created. It is clear that the Government and employers need to provide training opportunities to ensure workers can take advantage of new roles.

Usdaw Industries

Automation in retail has already impacted the roles of many shopworkers, with maybe the most visible example being self-service checkouts, which a number of customers have grown comfortable in using. This has resulted in a reduction of checkout tasks, in some part replaced by supervision of the self-checkouts.

Following on from this, we are now beginning to see the introduction of check out free technology in shops where customers can pick the items they want from the shelves and then are charged for the items as they leave the door, without having to scan the items at all.

In distribution, the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift towards online retail, consequently increasing the demand for staff in warehouse and transport. Automation and robotics has grown in many warehouse operations, using high tech machinery to help process thousands of goods.

In 2017, the UK Government announced £100 million investment into the testing and development of driverless technology. Driverless vehicles will need extremely rigorous testing before we see them on our roads. However, if the HGV Driver shortage continues to disrupt supply chains this could encourage further investment into driverless solutions.

Automation in the workplace is not a brand new concept - work has always been changing. The difference this time is the pace at which these changes are happening as a result of highly sophisticated technology, and this is causing real concern for many workers.

Section Four – Survey Results

At the end of 2021, over 3,300 Usdaw members completed a survey on the impact of technology and automation in their working lives.

Job Security

- **One in five workers are extremely concerned about their job security over the next five years.**

A third of those responding to the survey reported that, since the start of the pandemic, technology has significantly changed their job role. Social distancing, the economic pressure for higher productivity and the ongoing move to online retail has resulted in faster implementation of technology at work.

Our survey suggests the expansion of technology at work looks set to continue. Around two-thirds of workers expect technology and automation to significantly change their jobs over the next five years.

Consultation

- **Nine in ten workers reported that their employer had failed to consult on the implementation of new technology.**

Worryingly, our results show that the vast majority of employers are not talking to, and listening to, their workforce about the introduction of technology and its impacts.

This is despite the fact that workers are clear that the lack of consultation leads to an inefficient implementation of technology and automation. Three quarters of workers believe that better consultation would make technology more effective in their workplace.

Collecting Data

- **Six in ten workers do not understand what data their employer is collecting on them.**

The expansion of new technology and automation at work increases opportunities for employers to collect data on employees. Our results show that there is often a lack of worker awareness on data collection. This data can be used to track the exact location of employees, monitor performance and in some cases select individuals for potential redundancies.



Access to Training

- **Over half of workers do not believe they have been given adequate training on the use of technology at work.**

Ensuring that workers receive the correct training will be crucial moving forward as technology becomes a bigger part of job roles. Employers cannot assume that workers already have the skills required to operate new technology effectively.

The lack of training provided by employers is concerning as many workers do not believe they have the skills to cope with any new technologies that are introduced into the workplace in the next five years. A quarter of those surveyed were not confident they had the skills necessary to deal with new technology, with a further third being unsure.

Doubts are commonplace within the workforce on whether employers will deliver adequate training in the next five years. Over a third of workers reported being not at all confident that their employer will provide adequate training on new technology and changes in their role.

Campaign Objectives

- **Over 90% of members agree that Usdaw should campaign for a right to consultation over the introduction of new workplace technology.**

Usdaw members are strongly in favour of the Union campaigning for a legal right to collective consultation on the implementation of technology in the workplace. Workers are also demanding a right to designated paid time off for study/training to support the development of lifetime skills, with 93% of respondents saying they believe Usdaw should campaign on this issue.

Section Five – Key Concerns

As previously highlighted, automation has the potential to bring about both positive and negative impacts to workers. To ensure the Union is in the best place to respond to these challenges, we need to understand what the potential consequences are.

Increased Monitoring

A key concern around technology is that some workers are now having their every move tracked. The introduction of wearable devices, often supposedly for 'helping workers know what items to pick', means that employers are constantly aware of where workers are and what their 'productivity rate' is. All too often, this information is then used to performance manage individuals with no allowance for individual circumstances or issues that may be affecting the job.

Job Satisfaction

As machines increasingly determine how work should be performed, workers in many industries are losing the ability to have any say over their jobs. This can remove workers' dignity and the loss of control can reduce their job satisfaction. This has the potential to have a significant impact on members' mental health.

Skills and Development

New technologies are already significantly changing many job roles. As a result, it is essential that employees are provided with appropriate training and support. Technological solutions, such as e-learning modules, are generally no substitute for on-the-job training. If employers do not invest in their staffs' skillset many workers will be left behind.

Communication

Traditional communication channels are being replaced by workplace technologies, reducing the opportunity for constructive dialogue at work. For instance, both remote management and management apps remove physical support and make accessing management more difficult. Across retail and other sectors we have seen a significant reduction in the number of HR personnel over recent years, often as a result of technology taking on roles such as devising shift patterns and assessing performance. This change has made it more difficult to informally resolve issues in the workplace or design individual plans for colleague development.

Equality

The rise of technology has many worrying implications for equality at work. Different groups of workers are affected by technology's shortcomings to differing degrees, with some impacted more than others. Employers' use of computer-based programmes to set targets has severe limitations and does not consider the individual situations of each worker. Targets may not allow for reasonable adjustments, failing to account for disabilities and therefore resulting in workers being allocated unsuitable duties. Apps which allocate shifts without employee input will adversely affect parents and carers who are likely to have different availability to other colleagues.

Mental Health

Workers' mental health may worsen as a result of workplace technologies. Wearable devices intensify work, leading to unmanageable pressures and increased stress. The continuous monitoring of workers erodes basic privacies, causing anxiety and fear of disciplinary action. Further issues arise from the use of management apps which allocate shift patterns. Apps which notify workers of future shifts whilst they are not at work stop employees from being able to switch off, blurring the boundaries between work and non-work.



Section Six – Inequality and Discrimination

The Role of Technology is Increasing Existing Divides and Inequalities

While there are a number of potential problems with technology and automation, quite often these issues are not created by the technology itself but by how the technology is implemented.

If technology is introduced purely to make businesses more efficient, this is likely to have a significant and negative impact on our members. In these circumstances, automation may increase barriers to opportunity and progression at work for already disadvantaged groups contributing to greater inequality and more entrenched occupational segregation.

Women, Black and Minority Ethnic workers, disabled people and young workers are at particular risk. These groups are over-represented in low paid and insecure work and in sectors more at risk of automation, putting their jobs at disproportionate risk. They are also less likely to have the digital skills needed to take advantage of new roles created.

The groups most at risk of automation are the same groups hit hardest by the pandemic. The retail sector saw a huge shift towards online food shopping and expansion of self-service checkouts, with women predominantly occupying key roles at the highest risk.



Understanding Digital Equality

For new technology to transform work for everyone it must be accessible and flexible.

The Equality Act legally protects people from discrimination at work and in society. Employers need to understand how the Equality Act applies to new technology to avoid digital discrimination of workers with protected characteristics and embed fair treatment. Legislation and guidance should protect against detrimental treatment arising from the introduction or use of new technologies.

A new legal requirement for employers to conduct and publish Equality Impact Assessments on the introduction of new technology at work is critical to identify and mitigate disproportionate impacts.

The voices of workers affected by automation must be included in consultation on how new technology is introduced at work, to understand what adjustments are needed and to ensure workers benefit equally from the advantages of new technology.

This would enable businesses to develop equality aware policies that meet the needs of different groups of employees. Practically this could include adapting technology to meet the need of disabled workers or targeting upskilling and training towards workers whose roles are at risk.

Key Areas of Concern

- **Remote management** – In some workplaces, automated systems have largely replaced HR managers with promise of greater control over work and hours. However for many Usdaw members the opposite is true. Workers have less control than ever over the way they work. Automatic scheduling allocates shifts without taking into account childcare or disability, and individuals struggle to speak to managers for support. Workers need a right to human connection where decisions about them and their job are being made.
- **Unfair decision making** – Computer programmes are increasingly used in hiring, selection and to track and monitor performance, but bias built into systems can lead to unfair decisions and unnecessary disciplinarys. For example, where machines measure performance against targets that do not take into account adjustments for age, disability or other health conditions.
- **Rise in insecure work** – Many examples of technology have been built on poor working conditions. So called 'gig economy' platforms have reduced the quality of work by eating away at secure, regular employment. Negative impacts are amplified for women in low paid and insecure work. Poor work comes with weaker maternity and parental rights and even less ability to request decent and stable hours that fit around care.
- **Abuse at work** – In public-facing roles, customers who struggle to use new technology are taking their frustrations out on staff. For workers with protected characteristics, in particular young women, Black and LGBT workers, this abuse can also be sexist, racist or homophobic in nature.

Section Seven – Education and Training

As already highlighted, automation and technology is likely to significantly change the world of work for Usdaw members. As a result, there are a number of steps to be taken to ensure workers are not abandoned by the Government or employers.

A key priority must be to ensure everyone can access the skills and qualifications required to adapt to the changing world of work. High quality training provisions should be the foundation of any plan to respond to automation and technology. Unfortunately, the Conservative Government is already letting members down through removing funding for the majority of practical qualifications such as BTECs, something which many Usdaw members have previously relied on.

Furthermore, the Government's decision to scrap the Union Learning Fund in England has taken away a key opportunity for many people to return to formal learning.

Apprenticeship Levy: Urgent Review and Reform

The Government's Apprenticeship Levy Scheme was established in an attempt to ensure workers had access to formal training in the workplace. The scheme works by 'taxing' large employers and then allowing companies to use this money to provide certain types of training. If the money is not used within a certain period of time, it gets given to the Treasury.

Unfortunately, the scheme has been a complete failure and has resulted in one-third fewer people starting an apprenticeship programme.

A report has shown that almost £2 billion of employers' levy funds expired and were returned to the Treasury between May 2019 and March 2021 as they were unable to use them on apprenticeships. As such, the levy has simply provided increased tax revenue to the Government whilst reducing the training opportunities for workers.

Udaw wants to see an urgent review of the Levy to ensure it enables workers to retrain and reskill.

Reskilling and Retraining

A report by the Confederation of British Industry found that nine in ten UK employees will need to reskill by 2030, at an additional cost of £13 billion per year.

As well as acknowledging the scale of the challenge ahead, it is also essential that the Government, businesses and trade unions work together to identify where additional skills are required and how these skills can be achieved by the workforce.

As a result of the Government scrapping the Union Learning Fund in England, it has become much more difficult for workers to have their say on the courses that should be provided. Employers and the Government must urgently recognise the incredible contribution that unions can make, as continues to happen in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Unless this happens, it is likely that retraining and reskilling provisions will be developed which do not respond to the needs of the workforce.

Usdaw Believes the Government Should:

- Work with trade unions to ensure we can all engage with those who are most likely to be impacted by automation.
- Give a clear commitment to boost investment in skills over the long-term.
- Introduce a right to designated paid time off for studying/training to support the development of lifetime skills.
- Identify and develop a fully costed educational programme to give future workers the vocational skills needed for green, high-skilled, well-paid jobs.

Usdaw Believes Employers Should:

- Work closely with trade unions in identifying and responding to the training needs of their workforce.
- Recognise the essential role of union reps in encouraging and supporting workers to access education and training.
- Through appropriate consultation, ensure that all training needs are met prior to the introduction of technology.



Section Eight – The Role of Trade Unions

Trade unions are crucial in minimising the impact of automation on workers. If we are to tackle the challenges of automation then it is vital that the Government, businesses and unions work together. Usdaw organises in many of the sectors that are most at risk, therefore we have a unique insight into many of the issues workers may face.

New Technology Agreements

On a local level, a strong union presence is essential to protecting the job security of our members and to delivering the future of work. Both the challenges and the opportunities presented by new technology require good, effective relationships between unions and employers. One of the ways in which unions and businesses can work together around technology and automation is through better consultation and a standalone Technology/Change Agreement. We have negotiated such agreements with a number of employers, including Arla Foods and Genus Breeding, covering topics including a series of principles for the introduction of new technology, the protection of jobs, ensuring proper training, compensation for new skills and fair use of monitoring and surveillance.

Stronger Trade Union Rights

On a national level, legislative changes should be introduced in order to protect the jobs of Usdaw members, to help mitigate the impact of automation and to harness the benefits of new technology. The Union is therefore calling for:

- A legal right to collective consultation on the implementation of new technology in the workplace. New technology should only be introduced following agreement with the recognised trade union.
- Improved trade union rights so it is easier for unions to gain recognition in a workplace. This will allow unions to more easily work alongside employers to help staff adapt to new technology through consultation and the appropriate training, whilst simultaneously acknowledging the positive role that unions can play in shaping the future of work.

The overriding feedback from members on the introduction of new technology is that they need to be involved and listened to. This is why Usdaw is strongly in favour of the introduction of a legal right to collective consultation on the implementation of new technology in the workplace.



Equality Impact Assessments

Employers should be required to conduct and publish Equality Impact Assessments on the introduction of new technology at work so that they can identify where some groups will be impacted more than others and take action to reduce the impact.

A New Deal for Workers

In addition to the rights outlined above, we need to deliver a framework of wider employment law changes, which taken collectively would provide an adequate safety net for workers at risk from automation through a New Deal for Workers:

- **A real living wage for all workers:** All workers deserve a genuine living wage and youth rates should be scrapped, so workers of all ages doing the same job get the same pay.
- **Minimum contract of 16 hours per week for everyone who wants it:** Many workers are on short-hours contracts that do not ensure enough hours to get by. This leaves them unable to earn a decent living.
- **A 'normal hours' contract:** One-sided flexibility must end, with too many workers regularly relying on non-contractual hours to make ends meet. Workers' contracts should reflect the hours that they normally work, providing guarantees that hours will not be drastically cut from one week to the next.
- **A ban on zero-hours contracts:** Despite their hugely damaging effect on workers' mental health, the use of zero-hours contracts has reached a record high. These exploitative contracts cannot be allowed to spread further and should be banned.
- **Improved sick pay:** Statutory Sick Pay is not enough to live on, meaning many workers cannot afford to miss work when ill. Forcing ill workers into work is dangerous and benefits no-one. All workers should be eligible for sick pay from day one at their normal pay rate.

- **A proper social security system:** We need a proper social security system that provides us all with a real safety net, not the unfit for purpose Universal Credit system. Universal Credit needs to be fundamentally overhauled, with the disastrous five week wait abolished. As an immediate measure, the £20 temporary uplift should be extended indefinitely.
- **Job security:** Many key workers find themselves under a never ending cloud of uncertainty, facing wave after wave of job cuts. To combat this, we need day one employment rights for unfair dismissal and redundancy.
- **Fair treatment and equality for all workers:** The majority of workers on the frontline are women who deserve equal pay and decent pay. We need new family-friendly rights to help parents and carers juggling work and family life.
- **A voice at work:** Throughout this pandemic unions have shown why they are so important for workers, promoting their interests with the Government and employers. Trade union rights should be strengthened and union membership encouraged.

Stronger Protections Against Redundancy

At the moment it is too easy and too cheap for employers to make redundancies. Delivering substantial improvements to redundancy provisions will not only help protect those workers who find themselves in this situation, it will also encourage employers to look at alternatives. Usdaw is calling for redundancy rights to be strengthened through the following measures:

- A 90 day statutory period of redundancy consultation where more than 100 individuals are at risk of redundancy.
- A personal retraining budget for all workers to ensure the best chance of re-entering the workplace as soon as possible.
- A significant increase in Statutory Redundancy Pay so that all workers are entitled to three weeks' pay for each year of service.
- Closing the loophole where in locations with less than 20 employees, employees are not entitled to redundancy consultation even where the decision affects more than 20 people.
- Strengthening protection against redundancy and health and safety rights for pregnant women and new mothers.
- Any new positions or roles arising from the introduction of new technology should first be made available to those workers directly affected by the change.

Listening to The Voice of the Workforce

Usdaw wants businesses to utilise trade union experience. This includes recognising the importance of a collective voice in the workplace, with a strengthening of consultation frameworks and collective bargaining rights so we can help to ensure that staff are fully trained and prepared for new roles. There is clear evidence that consultation, employee engagement and decent pay and conditions all contribute towards an effective and productive workplace and this is likely to be of increasing importance as automation is rolled out across the economy.

The role of reps in workplaces will be crucial in mitigating the negative impacts of technological advances, both through recruitment and organising, any collective consultation processes and by shaping the training and skills agenda to ensure it meets the needs of employees. Only by striving for organised workplaces can we utilise our collective strength at a local level to protect the jobs and rights of our members.



Section Nine – Delivering the Workplace of the Future

Automation and technology is going to have an increasing impact on the workplace and Usdaw members.

From a New Deal for Workers, to increased opportunities for retraining and a right to be consulted on new technology being implemented in the workplace, there are a range of key measures required to protect working people throughout these changes.

Tackling Insecure Work

The current Conservative Government has continually failed to take the action necessary to protect members' interests. In 2018, the Government asked the Low Pay Commission to look at how best to tackle insecure work. Following an in-depth review, the Low Pay Commission recommended introducing a right for workers to switch to a contract that reflects the hours they normally work. This would be a huge help to our members on short-hours contracts. The Conservatives have so far ignored the recommendations of the review they set up.

In 2019, the Conservatives promised to urgently introduce an Employment Bill to 'protect and enhance workers' rights'. However, this has now been delayed for over two years.

Udaw's campaigning work with the Labour Party has helped to secure commitments on a wide range of issues which would significantly improve job security for our members. This includes delivering a New Deal for Workers, tackling insecure employment and increasing redundancy pay, so that redundancies are no longer seen as the 'cheap and easy' option.





Delivering Training Needs

The Conservatives' 2019 manifesto promised to 'invest in Britain's people by giving them the tools and training to flourish in the economy of the 21st century.' However, despite this promise, the Conservatives quickly moved to scrap the Union Learning Fund (ULF) in England. As it still does across Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, in England, the ULF previously helped employers and unions to jointly identify what training needs were required and then identify funding to provide appropriate training to the workforce.

In addition to Union Learning, apprenticeships offer a key method of delivering improved skills in the workplace. However, the Conservatives' flagship policy in this area, the Apprenticeship Levy, has completely failed working people. When the Levy was launched, the Government set a target of three million people starting an apprenticeship by 2020. By 2020, the Conservatives had managed to miss their target by nearly one million.

In an effort to address the failures of the Conservatives, Labour has identified funding which could be used to part subsidise wages while people learn additional skills.

Ensuring That Workers Have A Voice

As highlighted in our member survey, it is essential that workers have a voice over the implementation of new technology in the workplace. In addition to protecting jobs and ensuring that the correct training is provided, consultation is also essential in ensuring that new technology is used effectively. As reported in our survey, three quarters of members believe that better consultation would make technology more effective in the workplace.

In 2017, the Conservative Government introduced the Trade Union Act in an effort to silence the voice of working people. Labour stands committed to repealing this Act and ensuring that politicians listen to the concerns of workers.

While we will continue to press the current Government for reform, it is clear that only Labour is committed to tackling the issues raised in this document. This is one of the reasons Usdaw will be campaigning for a Labour Government in the next general election.



Usdaw's Manifesto on Automation and Technology

The Union is committed to addressing the issues and concerns raised by our members:

- Proper workplace consultation on the implementation of new technology in the workplace is essential. We are campaigning for a legal right to this and have already secured support from both the TUC and the Labour Party.
- Through our agreements with employers, we will raise the issue of new technology and make it clear that our members' views should be a key part of the decision making process. Usdaw has already held discussions with a range of employers and secured New Technology Agreements where appropriate. We will continue to ensure that the topic remains high on the agenda.
- Automation has the potential to disproportionately impact some groups of workers. We will call on the Government for a legal duty to conduct Equality Impact Assessments of new technology and act on the findings of these assessments.
- There are too many examples of computers making decisions without being able to show any discretion for real life situations. We will campaign for workers to have a right to human connection when decisions about them and their job are being made.
- Workers need access to retraining and reskilling as technology is introduced. Usdaw will continue to press the Government and employers for action to ensure that workers are best placed to adapt to the changing world of work.
- The right to secure, decent work becomes even more critical as new technology expands. Achieving the goals of our 'New Deal for Workers' Campaign will be an ongoing priority for the Union.

Our goals are ambitious and will only be fully achieved through effective workplace organising, high union density and delivering a Government which listens to the needs of working people.



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