

Women Workers and Safe Journeys to Work Factsheet



Usdaw wants to find out more about the problems women are having travelling to and from work.

We are focusing on women because we know they face particular problems in this area.

Research shows that women feel significantly less safe on their journeys outside the home than men.

Women rely on public transport far more than men. This is partly because far fewer women drive.

We also know that women are more likely to be travelling when it's dark. This is because women make up the majority of part time workers. Part time workers are far more likely to be working anti-social hours such as late at night or very early in the morning.

But we don't believe this is just an issue for women. If we make journeys to work safer for women everyone benefits. Men in Usdaw have wives, girlfriends, daughters, sisters and mothers and many of them may feel at risk when travelling to work. It is in everyone's interests that we win women and thereby men, a better deal.

Over the next few months Usdaw will be listening to women to find out what problems they face when making their journeys to work. We are also keen to hear from reps and activists about what they are doing to win a better deal for their members around journeys to work.

This listening exercise has already started and so far women have told us they would like to see action on the following issues to help them feel safer when making their journeys to work.

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Car parks

Car park lighting is often switched off once a store closes, leaving staff to walk across a dark car park at the end of their shift. Staff are often not allowed to park near the store entrance as these spaces are reserved for customers.

Shift changes

Women have told us that last minute requests to work overtime or shifts not finishing on time can make them feel vulnerable. This can mean missing the last bus home or having a long wait in a badly lit bus station.

Public transport

Women tell us they can feel vulnerable at certain times of the day or night. Being alone in a train carriage or on a bus at night can be intimidating.

Usdaw wants employers and government to do more to help make journeys to work safer. Reps have a key role too and part of our work will be to better support them in taking these issues up with the employer.

For now though we want to hear what the problems are, and what action women would like us to take, to help them feel safer when travelling to and from work.

To find out more about the work of the Divisional Equalities Forums and Usdaw's equality work, or about joining Usdaw contact:

**The Equalities Section
Usdaw, 188 Wilmslow Road
Manchester M14 6LJ**

**Tel: 0161 224 2804
email: womenandequalities@usdaw.org.uk
website: www.usdaw.org.uk**

