TRUSTEE ELECTIONS 2017
CANDIDATE STATEMENT

MICHAEL GOLDSWELL
PRESIDENT
GROWING A VIBRANT COMMUNITY
A MANIFESTO FOR PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE
Michael Goldstein – June 2017

The United Synagogue
The United Synagogue (“US”) was created on 14th July 1870. The leadership of those first five central London congregations recognised that more than local organisations was needed, if Anglo Jewry was to have a coherent plan for its development and the ability to finance and build places of worship in the new areas of Jewish population. That central organisation took responsibility for the Chief Rabbinate, London Beth Din, Burial, University Jewish Chaplaincy and much more.

Fundamental to the formation was the obligation that the US would be open to the whole Jewish people, not any one part of it. This raison d’etre was the formation of a community whose principles of Torah are potentially inclusive of every Jew.

Almost 150 years since its inception we, the lay leaders of today, have the same responsibilities of our forebears; the desire to maintain and grow the US as the centre of inclusive modern orthodoxy.

My priorities
As President, I would seek to continue the excellent work of Stephen Pack as well as the recommendations of the strategic review of 2015 (ably lead by Marc Meyer). My principal priorities are as follows.

Supporting our Communities
Whilst the speed of decline in US membership has decreased, it is still falling. In the last national census, 26% of those who responded that they are Jewish, are not members of any synagogue.
I care deeply about Jewish life in a modern orthodox setting. It is vital that this decline is reversed to ensure the continuity of our people’s history and traditions.

We are blessed with many diverse communities, who each face differing challenges, ranging from declining membership to difficult personnel issues. As a former chair of a synagogue, I am aware of many of the issues faced on a day-to-day basis. My principal aim, as President, will be to use my experience to support them more effectively.

The US head office does a good job in providing support, but more needs be done, specifically:

a. Reduction of the local pay-over to the Centre. This is covered further under finance below.
b. Development of clusters of communities with the intention to:
   o Enable them to meet regularly with Trustees/senior US staff to discuss issues of the day.
   o Provide better coordination of resource and activities locally.
   o Consider the pooling of administrative resource and the possibility of employing multi-site Community Directors/Rabbis.

c. Closer work with communities to provide assistance. Chairs should be able to call on the Trustees to help them with difficult decisions and ensure that appropriate resource is made available.
d. Research of best practice at other membership organisations to understand how we make the US more relevant.
e. Review of the level of membership fees for young people and provision for young couples.
f. Provision of additional support to communities to carry out important developments. I have direct knowledge of the positive benefits that a building project can have on a community.
g. Initiatives to develop new communities are vital to grow our membership so a review is needed of the philanthropic and financial ways in which these new communities are funded.
h. Better communications and more best-practice sharing between communities.
Finance

We are fortunate that the US is in a strong financial position. This has not always been the case. Under my leadership I will seek to reduce the pay-over by synagogues while maintaining this strong financial position by:

- a. Continuing to ensure the organisation is run as efficiently as possible.
- b. Involving the US in any central communal initiative to save costs by pooling resources.
- c. Looking at ways in which the US can raise philanthropic funds for specific activities such as Tribe.

Women

We should be proud of the progress that has been made with the role of women within the US. The Chief Rabbi’s recent introduction of the Ma’ayan programme is ground-breaking. Women are Trustees of the US and chairs of congregations. If I am elected President, it is my stated desire that that my successor could be a woman.

We need to maximise the opportunities available to all who wish to participate in our services that are within Halachah. Equally we must ensure that all those areas where there are currently inconsistencies e.g. differing forms of Bat Mitzvah celebration and women’s education initiatives, are practised consistently across our communities.

Communal Challenges

The US must, first and foremost, be at the centre of inclusive orthodoxy. To this end, I am keen that we work even more closely with organisations such as The Office of the Chief Rabbi, LSJS and University Jewish Chaplaincy. Forming alliances with other educationally based organisations is also important.

My experience of communal mergers makes me believe that they are vital and, if executed in the right way and consistent with the agreed strategy, can be extremely positive.

Schools

Since my time as a pupil at Ilford Jewish Primary School in the 1970s and my later involvement in the creation of King Solomon High School in the 1990s, the Jewish school system has grown beyond anyone’s dream. The US has direct responsibility for 10 schools. We are very privileged to be living in a country where our schools are funded through the government.

In the current uncertain political environment, our schools strategy must be flexible to ensure that our schools continue to excel.

Rabbis

I agree with the statement in the strategic review that Rabbis are seen as the key deliverers in US communities. While we are blessed with an excellent Rabbinic community, improvement is possible. In order to achieve this, we need to work with the Chief Rabbi to:

- a. Assess the current communal Rabbinic talent pool along metrics of satisfaction.
- b. Create opportunities for Rabbinic growth through development and leadership opportunities.
- c. Change the current model by promoting opportunities for rabbinic “mobility”.

Tribe and Young People

Tribe has made considerable progress over the last few years under the guidance of Claire Lemer. I have seen, in my own community, the significant impact of a vibrant Tribe Rabbinic couple. To continue this progress, I believe we should:

- a. Ensure that there is a stronger pipeline of inspirational young people who wish to work in our communities.
- b. Explore the possibility of raising funds for Tribe so that it is not included in the perceived pay-over.
- c. Increase the activities for those young people after graduation from universities.
Why me?

I am proud to be a product of the United Synagogue. My formative years were spent attending both Ilford Synagogue and Ilford Jewish Primary School.

Lara and I were married in Western Marble Arch and the first 13 years of married life were spent in Chigwell, where I served on the Board of Management.

Since moving to Mill Hill in 2003, I have served on the board and was Vice Chairman and Chairman for seven years. During this period, I led the redevelopment of the Community building and oversaw the growth in membership. I was able to draw a large number of young leaders into the community and that has continued to date.

My family have deep and strong roots in the United Synagogue Community, my father and maternal grandfather were Honorary Officers of Ilford Synagogue. My four daughters were all educated in Jewish schools and my eldest daughter is on the board at Alei Tzion. My wife and one of my daughters teach in a Jewish school and my mother is now on the Board of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue.

I am a passionate and energetic leader with extensive leadership experience both in the business world and in the community. This is a vital time for the United Synagogue as we seek to broaden our membership and strengthen Modern Orthodoxy. I have a deep understanding of the US and believe that, as President, I can lead the organisation through the various challenges that will be faced both today and in the future.

Michael Howard Goldstein
Born: 7 July 1963. Married to Lara with four daughters
Contact: Mobile – 07831 483365  Email – michaelgoldstein77@gmail.com

Professional - Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Position</th>
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<tr>
<td>2016 – present</td>
<td>Chief Executive of a large private property company</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003-2016</td>
<td>Partner at BDO LLP. Senior audit partner. Management responsibility for the national audit business comprising over 1,300 staff</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990-2003</td>
<td>Partner at Blick Rothenberg. Advised numerous USA owned business on establishing a presence in the UK.</td>
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Communal

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>2013-2017</td>
<td>Chairman of JW3. Lead this organisation through the early stages of development. Organised the merger with the London Jewish Cultural Centre creating over £2m of annualised cost savings.</td>
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<td>2013-present</td>
<td>Trustee and Treasurer of the Covenant and Conversation Trust. Established on the retirement of Rabbi Lord Sacks to promote his teachings.</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>Brokered the merger of Waltham Forest Hebrew Congregation (Boundary Road Synagogue) and Wanstead and Woodford Synagogue and forming the Woodford Forest United Synagogue.</td>
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<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>Member of the United Synagogue Strategic Review</td>
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<td>2010-2014</td>
<td>Chairman of Mill Hill Synagogue</td>
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<td>2007-2010</td>
<td>Vice Chairman of Mill Hill Synagogue</td>
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<td>2000-2012</td>
<td>UJIA. Trustee and Vice Chairman. Had lay leadership responsibility for the renewal programme in the UK. In 2008 was asked to lead Israel strategy focussed all of the organisations activities in Galil.</td>
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<td>1993-2000</td>
<td>Jewish Continuity. Involved in the creation of this organisation with Chief Rabbi Sacks, was responsible for the youth and student funding. Lead the monitoring and funding of the youth movements and UJIA. On the merger with UJIA was one of the Jewish Continuity’s nominated trustees.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1992-2004</td>
<td>King Solomon High School – Redbridge</td>
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<td>Founding Governor, Vice Chairman and treasurer of the US secondary school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990-1993</td>
<td>Member of the Executive of the Jewish Educational Development Trust (JEDT) the charity created by Chief Rabbi Jacobovits z”l”. I was bought in to assist in the development of Immanuel College.</td>
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