



February 2017

Dear members

I wanted to draw your attention to an issue that we at the United Synagogue take extremely seriously. It is a tragic fact of life that today child abuse occurs across all parts of society. None of us, including in faith communities, can afford to be complacent. Indeed, all of us have a part to play in addressing these issues.

As an organisation, the US has an obligation to safeguard all children involved in our activities. Our staff and volunteers aim to provide a safe environment for children to actively participate in everything our communities have to offer and, as individuals, we should all be prepared to act in the appropriate way should the need arise.

I therefore want to update you on a significant project we have been working on over the last 18 months to develop robust procedures in this area and ensure that the United Synagogue is an example of best practice across the faith communities.

In addition to our central child protection team, we have now created a trained network of individuals across many of our shuls who will act as local Community Safeguarding Coordinators. These dedicated volunteers will be the first port of call for any concerns that you may have within your shul setting. Many of them have significant professional experience in this area and I am enormously grateful for their commitment to this important role. Please ensure that you know who the Community Safeguarding Coordinator is for your shul, although if you have any urgent concerns about a child's safety you should always contact 999.

We are also in the process of ensuring that all our volunteers who come into contact with children have a basic level of awareness of child abuse and child protection. We have created a short video for that purpose and I would urge all our members to take the time to watch it so that we can all be vigilant.

With best wishes

Steven Wilson
Chief Executive