



**NOTICES**  
**MARCH 2009**

**‘AUTISM, THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY’**  
**OPENING THE DOORS WIDER**

**Day Conference to be held at St Andrew’s church, Histon  
on Saturday 6 June 2009**

Thousands of children and adults with autism across our region are isolated from everyday life. It is believed that more one in every hundred people has some form of autism and this inhibits the way they communicate and relate to other people. Little understanding and a lack of suitable services often means they find it difficult to fit into the community and are unable to fulfil their true potential.

As part of our Ely 900 celebrations, the Diocese is staging a conference aimed at raising awareness of this challenge. The conference will adopt a friendly approach bringing families with autism together with church and community leaders to explore how to make events more accessible to those who feel vulnerable. It will be organised and sponsored by the Board for Church in Society.

**Our speakers include:**

- Simon Baron-Cohen, who is one of the foremost authorities on autism, Professor of Developmental Psychopathology at the University of Cambridge and Director of the Autism Research Centre
- Dr David Thomson, Bishop of Huntingdon
- Dr Jeremy Morris, Graduate Mentor and Dean of Trinity Hall, Cambridge
- Yvonne Quirk, Diocesan Child Protection Officer.

Much has already been done to make church and community events more accessible to people with physical disabilities. However, when people cannot see a condition, such as autism or Asperger’s Syndrome, it is easy to misunderstand this condition and dismiss someone’s behaviour as simply withdrawn, bizarre or deliberately difficult.

Since autism was first understood 65 years ago, research and clinical work has led to a broadening of the concept and today professionals speak of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The spectrum is wide ranging and so too is the level of disability.

Our church communities are taking seriously the need to adopt a welcoming approach and more understanding to people with autism and also their families and carers.

The conference, which will be held at Histon Parish Church by kind invitation of their Vicar James Blandford-Baker, on Saturday 6th June from 10.00 am until 3.30 pm, will be of particular interest to Church and local leaders who wish to extend a welcome to people who, in the past, may have felt alienated from community activities. A generous buffet lunch will be provided and the cost for the day will be £15.

More details from:

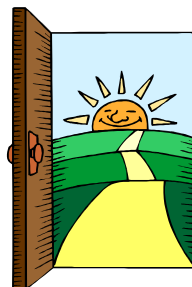
Hilary Lavis [bsr@office.ely.anglican.org](mailto:bsr@office.ely.anglican.org) 01353 652701/ 652720

Owen Spencer-Thomas [owenst@btinternet.com](mailto:owenst@btinternet.com) 01223 358448

- **PLACES MUST BE BOOKED AND A BOOKING FORM IS ATTACHED**
- **THESE DETAILS AND BOOKING FORM ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE**
  - [www.ely.anglican.org/900/events/autism-conf.html](http://www.ely.anglican.org/900/events/autism-conf.html)

**PLEASE CAN YOU DRAW THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF YOUR PARISH AND CONGREGATION, AND ANYONE ELSE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED.**

**THANK YOU**



Hilary Lavis

Board for Church in Society, Bishop Woodford House, Barton Rd, Ely, CB7 4DX  
[bsr@ely.anglican.org](mailto:bsr@ely.anglican.org) 01353 652701 or 652720

# ELY DIOCESAN BOARD FOR CHURCH IN SOCIETY



## 'AUTISM , THE CHURCH AND THE COMMUNITY' - OPENING THE DOORS WIDER

DAY CONFERENCE

AT ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, HISTON, CAMBRIDGE

SATURDAY 6 JUNE 2009, 10.00-3.30 (Registration from  
9.30)

### BOOKING FORM

Name (s).....

Organisation.....

Contact details.....

.....

Email if available.....

Special dietary or access requirements.....

.....

Cost £15 per head to include lunch and refreshments

I enclose a cheque for .....payable to EDBF(Autism)

Signed.....Date.....

Please return to Board for Church in Society (Autism), Bishop Woodford House, Barton Rd, Ely, Cambs, CB7 4DX.

Further particulars will be sent by end May 2009, by email where possible. Enquiries to [bsr@ely.anglican.org](mailto:bsr@ely.anglican.org) or 01353 652701 and Owen Spencer-Thomas [owenst@btinternet.com](mailto:owenst@btinternet.com) or 01223 358448. This form is also downloadable from [www.ely.anglican.org/900/events/autism-conf.html](http://www.ely.anglican.org/900/events/autism-conf.html)