



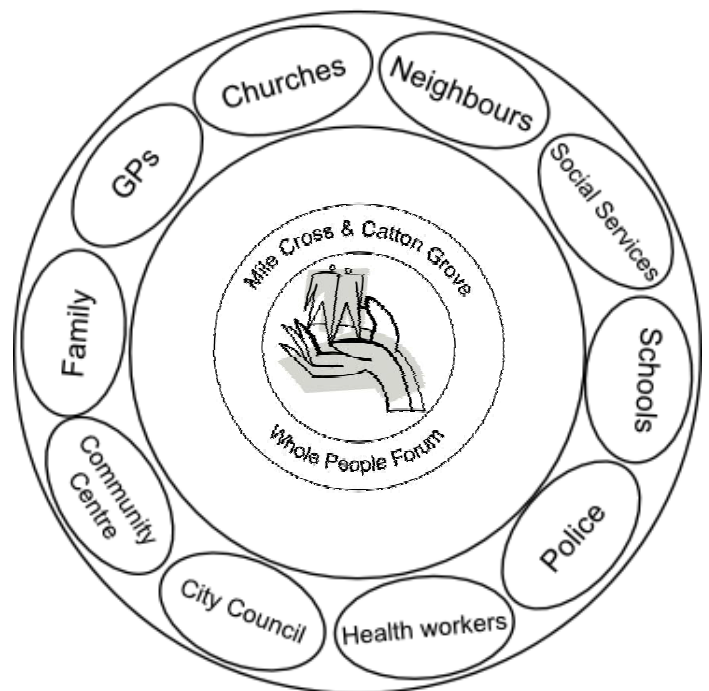
# Whole People Forum St Catherine's Church, Mile Cross & Catton Grove

The aims of the Whole People Forum are to

- **Help those who care to work more closely together in caring.**
- **Promote the role of faith communities as partners in mental health care and recovery.**
- **Reduce the stigma attached to religion in mental health.**
- **Reduce the stigma attached to mental illness in faith communities.**
- **Promote the health of our community**



April 2005 Meeting with Interact and Essex County Mind & Spirit Steering Group at Moulsham Mill in Chelmsford



## The Whole People Forum - Where it began

The group was started in 2005 following some research undertaken on the role of religion in the new NHS (Bazely, 2005). The many changes in health and social care policy in recent years may have left many feeling confused but have also encouraged greater participation in creating a healthier society. The government recognises the important place that faith groups can have in helping to build communities. However, there can also be unhelpful stigma attached to religion, which is one of the issues the Whole People Forum seeks to address. Another issue on the Forum's agenda is the stigma which relates to mental health problems. This is present in society generally and also exists in faith groups, often fuelled by ignorance and a reluctance to engage with people with mental health problems.

One aim of the Forum is to provide ways in which individuals and people from different groups and agencies who provide care for people in Mile Cross and Catton Grove can work together more effectively. The Steering Group has organised a number of public meetings at which workers from mental health services have been able to talk about different health problems and care services available. We have also held a training day for members of St Catherine's Church in listening skills. One in four people is likely to experience a mental health problem during their lifetime, so it makes sense to be as aware as possible of how we can be affected by different health issues and of the help available.

The members of the Steering Group of the Whole People Forum are people who themselves have experienced mental health problems and/ or provide care for people with mental health problems. We have learnt a great deal from each other as we've committed to working together. We've been encouraged by the growing openness within the church congregation to talk about mental health issues and hope that can spread to the wider community in which we live and work.

### **The Steering Group - Working for Health**

Since the purpose of the group is to promote healthy living, the Steering Group decided it needed to work in a healthy way itself. The members therefore committed themselves to the following way of working.

**Being** (*Aware, Supportive, Enabling, Health promoting, Accepting*) **Real** (*Honest, Open*) **with each other.**  
**Learning** (*from each other*) **how to work** (*together and with others*) **in love and be a Model for others** (*Brave, Acting when we can, Resting when we can't be doing, Reflective, Sensitive, Non Judgemental*). **Growing** (*individually and together*) **in the ways God shows us** (*Biblical study, Theological reflection, Prayerful discussion, Fellowship*).

### **Any Ideas to share?**

If you have any ideas about issues you would like to see tackled by the Forum or suggestions for ways of building a healthy community in Mile Cross and Catton Grove then do let us know. If you would like to be involved in the Whole People Forum, or would like to create links between the Forum and your own organisation, then do contact any of the people listed below.

### **How to contact the Whole People Forum**

If you are interested in learning more about the work of the Whole People Forum the following people will be pleased to hear from you.



Annette Knowles is the Chair of the Whole People Forum. She can be contacted by e-mail, [annette.knowles@ntlworld.com](mailto:annette.knowles@ntlworld.com)



Paul Mackay is the Vicar of St Catherine's Church. Paul can be contacted by telephone on 01603 426767 or by e-mail, [vicar@stcatherinesmilecross.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stcatherinesmilecross.org.uk)



Bill Bazely is Chaplain to Norfolk & Waveney Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust. Bill can be contacted by telephone on 01603 421203, or by e-mail, [bill.bazely@nwmhp.nhs.uk](mailto:bill.bazely@nwmhp.nhs.uk)

