

## Engaging with our Community

### Leadership Team member



**Hans Gutmann**

#### **Responsible for:**

Engaging and building links with our local community.

#### **Highlights from 2015:**

As a focus for the year, we had set two objectives:

#### **Continue ongoing outreach activities**

- Again we joined community events in the village.
- We had a prayer tent at the Donkey Derby, and invited people to write prayers on a wall and offered to pray with them. This was taken up by a good number of people with or without a Christian background. We also handed out free bottles of water, with Bible verses on them, something a lot of people were delighted about given the warm weather.
- We also continued supporting the Twyford Fun Run, organised by the Twyford Village Partnership, by being responsible for the finish line. Similar to the Donkey Derby, we shared a little gospel message with "fruit of the spirit" stickers on the bottles every runner got after the race.
- The Living Advent Calendar, again organised jointly with the TVP, happened for the third time and continues to be well received by the community.
- And, finally, Last Night of the Proms was again a big event organised by us. Bringing together local artists and the official concert at the Royal Albert hall, it attracted a lot of people again.

#### **Seek out new ways of developing links with the community**

- These cannot really be planned, as we have to listen to God for any guidance on what He wants us to do. Accordingly, two new things appeared which we could not predict.
- After a series of suicides at or near Twyford station in spring, a group of Christians in Twyford got together to pray at the station every Sunday. It attracted some publicity from local newspapers.
- For the village Christmas Fayre (a regular event in the village calendar), we not only had a stall at the Fayre itself, but we also organised "Get in the Picture". People can dress up as part of the nativity scene and have a photo taken, which is a relaxed way of engaging with them. This is an

idea we learned from Woodley Baptist Church, and we could coordinate our event with theirs. Something to be repeated.

**Plans for 2016 include:**

- We maintain our presence at key village events like the Donkey Derby and organise some activities ourselves. Especially, a celebration of the Queen's 90th birthday is planned. Also, the Christmas Tree Festival will be back.
- Being open to new ideas is important, and we will continue listening to God for guidance.