



## Community centre sees usage soar

St Denys Community Centre has seen its bookings and usage increase year-on-year since it was refitted in 2006, with new activities such as junior club, salsa fit, and netball making it one of the best regarded facilities in Southampton.

The Centre is regularly booked for functions and parties at weekends, with long-term activities including an over 50's club, arts and crafts, and Pilates catering to all ages and tastes.

Vincenzo Capozzoli, Conservative councillor for the



Portswood Ward, says that there has never been a more exciting time to be involved with the centre. "Since the St Denys Community Centre was reopened after a large rebuild it has gone from strength to strength. The centre is literally bursting with activity."

A Sports Week held in the February half-term showcased the pursuits already taking place on the site and gave residents the chance to try something new. The sessions that proved to be most popular may be adopted and become long-term activities.

To find out more or make a booking, enquiries@stdenyscommunitycentre.org.uk, 07949 127294

- Residents are invited to an open meeting to receive an update on the progress the centre has made and the Asset Transfer (see lead story, page 2), suggestions and ideas are welcome. To be held on the 15th April, further details on the meeting will be published on the Centre website, which is: [www.stdenyscommunitycentre.org.uk](http://www.stdenyscommunitycentre.org.uk).

## "This is St Denys radio"

After a successful pilot podcast last summer, St Denys Community Radio has won funding of £9600 which will help fulfil the aim of producing a monthly show.

The magazine-style broadcast will focus on activities in St Denys, Bitterne Park and Portswood. Based at the community centre, the station is offering residents the chance to get involved, and will help teach skills around presenting, editing and marketing.



If you would like to get involved producing or promoting the station, St. Denys Community Radio can be contacted on 07514 457 720 and at [info@stdenyscommunityradio.org.uk](mailto:info@stdenyscommunityradio.org.uk)

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# St Denys takes lead

Following nearly 18 months of hard work, plans for St Denys Community Centre to become a social enterprise with extended facilities are progressing well.

Vincenzo Capozzoli, Conservative councillor for the Portswood Ward, explains the plans. "Currently the representatives of the centre are in discussions with the city council

Association, hopes the plans will result in the already enviable facilities improving further. "This is an excellent community centre, one of the best in the city, and the additional funding and control the Asset Transfer would provide gives us the opportunity to make it even better."

The Centre has benefitted from the drive and hard work of the Community Association but more volunteers are desperately needed to help achieve its plans of becoming a landmark facility. If you or your family use the centre and could contribute to its success, please get in touch: 02380 834542.

A mini conference to discuss options will be held at 1400 on Thursday 15th April, please come along and have your say.



Several plans are being considered, including a 'wrap-around' extension to the existing building. This would allow new facilities which could include a nursery, a fitness area with crèche, a dedicated IT suite, meeting rooms, offices, and a sprung dance and exercise floor.

on how we can further improve our building, and one option would be to transfer the building to the local community. This would not only allow more independence but also the ability to access new pots of funding."

Karen Costin, Chair of St Denys Community

# Youth football thrives

**St Denys youth football continues to excel, allowing boys and girls of all ages to enjoy the beautiful game, with teams near the top of their respective leagues at the time of writing.**

Since the club's inception in 2006, it has quickly expanded to include six teams. The under 10's, 9's and 8's mixed teams all play in a non-competitive Eastleigh-based mini soccer league. The older teams feature in the Southampton Tyro League and have already carved a fearsome reputation in the 11-a-side format.

Martin Gentry, chairman St Denys FC, is delighted with the efforts of all involved with the teams. "This is a fantastic achievement. In four years, so much has been done and for this our thanks must go to the volunteer coaches who devote their spare time."

Should anyone want more details on joining St Denys FC please call George Bowring on: 02380 321815.

# Local website finishes runner up

A thriving website about St Denys and the surrounding areas has been commended by an award that recognises good design, content and usability.

The site, [www.bitternepark.info](http://www.bitternepark.info)

was chosen from 101 entrants for the 7th HantsWeb Awards. Chosen in the category Best Pride of Place, Bitterne Park was beaten by Hayling Island, finishing runner up along with Basingstoke.



# Free coaching qualifications

Residents who offer time to help teach sport at the community centre will be offered free training which could lead to them becoming professional coaches.

Paul Roberts (pictured), sports officer for the centre, says knowledge of table tennis, basketball, multi-skills and aerobics are highly prized, but adds that anyone able to offer some time to help coach young people would be supported with training for a professional qualification.

Roberts, a sports coaching graduate from University of Central Lancashire who has taught football in California, joined the community centre last year to expand the range of activities offered to residents of St Denys.

"The goal is to make an already busy centre



even more active. I want it to be a central hub for the community and I'm open to hearing ideas about what activities people would welcome."

Roberts has organised holiday 'taster' sessions and set up regular activities such as netball and table tennis, while welcoming a Pilates group taught by Marcia, a Brazilian studying

for a Masters in Pilates, which promises to deliver the definitive South American experience (see What's On, back cover).

If you are interested in becoming a coach, or want to talk about any activities at the centre, please contact Paul: 07500 991366 paul.roberts@southampton.gov.uk

# On ya bikes St Denys

A series of events and new facilities are planned for 2010 which will encourage St Denys residents to enjoy the simple pleasures and health benefits of cycling.

StreetTread, a local authority-backed activity project for Southampton, has helped install a container at the community centre, which will house family-orientated bike maintenance sessions.

Further information and updates on upcoming activities can be found at: [www.activetravel.org.uk/southampton](http://www.activetravel.org.uk/southampton)



This newsletter is produced by the St Denys Community Association, a volunteer run organisation dedicated to improving the local area and the community centre.

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## notice board

Free training in first aid, computing for beginners, costume making and face painting is being offered at the Community Centre. Contact TWICS (Training for Work In the Community). [admin@twicsorg.uk](mailto:admin@twicsorg.uk) 02380 671111.

## Can you lend a hand?

St Denys community centre is looking for volunteers to help continue its success. All skills are welcomed, but those people with experience building a business/social enterprise are highly coveted, as are secretarial, office admin and treasury/finance skills. There is also scope for a caretaker to join who would help run and maintain the centre.

If you are interested in offering some time and have any of the skills above, please contact 02380 834542 or [enquiries@stdenyscommunitycentre.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@stdenyscommunitycentre.org.uk)

A volunteer group is seeking local people to help improve St Denys train station. Tasks include looking after flowers and helping with passenger surveys, to reporting damage or anti-social behaviour. Please check [www.threeriversrail.com](http://www.threeriversrail.com) or contact Mark Miller on 07900 103296.

# Walkway to begin in spring

Construction of the boardwalk which will connect St Denys to the city centre and form part of a transport spine running from the airport to the docks, is due to commence in April.

The 12-week project, delayed by a technical problem regarding land ownership which has now been resolved, will see the creation of a wide cycle and pedestrian walkway. The route, which starts at the top of Horseshoe Bridge, and follows the riverbank until arriving in Northam, is currently used by locals as a short cut to town, but the boardwalk will create a permanent, safe and



attractive route.

The boardwalk is part of a wider development designed to provide a cycle and footpath route from the top of town to the waterfront.

The project is being developed jointly by Southampton City Council and Sustrans' Connect2, using money from the National Lottery and is part of a regional development to allow people to travel by foot or bike for everyday journeys.

Other schemes, starting at Reading and ending in Cornwall could eventually create a single cycle and walking route from the home counties to the south west coast.

## Brain, not brawn, best form of defence

St Denys residents are being welcomed to train with one of the UK's



leading proponents of Wing Chun, a martial art that places skill and intelligence above brute force.

The classes, which take place on Tuesday and Thursday between 2000-2130 at the community centre, are run by Alan Gibson, who teaches around the world and

has written a number of books on the subject.

Wing Chun uses technique rather than physical strength to repel attacks, which makes it appealing to women, but is equally suited to men and children of all ages.

Contact Alan: alan@wingchun.org.uk

## What's On

### Monday

#### Over 50's club

1400 - 1600

02380 942545

#### Youth club, ages 12-16

1800 - 2100

### Tuesday

#### Art group

1230 - 1430

02380 559063

#### Salsa fit

1800 - 1845

#### Woodcraft group

1845 - 2015

### Wednesday

#### Junior club

1730 - 1900

#### Ladies netball, over 15's

1830 - 1930

#### Table tennis, ages 5-10

1630 - 1715

### Thursday

#### Baby clinic

Health visitor in attendance

1000 - 1130

#### Street dance / hip hop

(over 8's)

1700 - 1745

#### Wing chun

1800 - 1900

#### Marcia Pilates

1800 - 1900

### Friday

#### Art group

1230 - 1430

02380 559063

### Saturday

#### Chinese brush painting

(every second Saturday)

1300-1500

**Call Paul for details of any of the events**

07500 991 366