

Centre opens

ANGMERING'S new community centre opens its doors to the public for the first time tomorrow (Friday).

Two open days tomorrow (10am-7.30pm) and Saturday (10am-1pm) will give villagers and others an opportunity to look around the £900,000-plus facility.

A wide range of activities have been lined up for the centre, and the first hiring will be on Saturday evening, when Jill and Roger Stevens launch their Simply Sequence dance club.

During both open days trustees and people running groups at the centre will be on hand to talk about what is already available, and to listen to ideas of other activities which could be added.

Those already booked in include ballroom, line and sequence dancing, fitness classes, short mat bowls, yoga, Choi Kwang Do, craft clubs and baby clinics. The centre will also be open during the day for people to call in for a cup of tea or coffee and see the programme of what's on.

Volunteers are being recruited. Telephone trustees' chairman Val Jerram on 01903 774247, or see manager Carole Arnese at the centre.

The official opening takes place next month.

Big Al has 'got his life back'

A WICK man with a big heart is glad he no longer has the body weight to match.

Alan White, or Big Al to his friends, has lost nine stone since undergoing a gastric bypass operation in May, filmed by television show Fat Doctor.

He is now looking forward to seeing the operation screened on the Discovery Home and Health satellite channel.

Sixty-year-old Alan, who ran the Littlehampton Boys' Club as a volunteer for 27 years, until it became the Keystone Centre in 2006, said that he started piling on the pounds when he gave up smoking 20 years ago.

"I had always been an active person. I was in the Army for 15-years, and even tried to join the SAS, that's how fit I was.

"But I went from 18 stone to 28 stone in 10 years. It had such an effect on me, I was depressed and very unhappy. I would not have got through it if it wasn't for the support from my wife, Kate."

The impact on his health was dramatic. He developed diabetes, hypertension and thyroid problems, and the pressure the weight was putting on his knees meant that he had to use a wheelchair.

"I couldn't even walk from the house to the car, that's how bad it got. Table tennis has always been part of my life, as a soldier I played all over the world. But now I had to



L39229H9

■ **ALAN WHITE:** Before and after the op

play sitting down in a wheelchair."

Alan, who teaches table tennis to students at the Littlehampton Academy, first applied to have the operation, which is effectively a stomach staple, seven years ago, but was told that he was too overweight to survive surgery.

"When I lay down for them to test my heart, I stopped breathing, my body just could not take it. I was told to lose weight, but I couldn't. I would diet, but it would soon start going back on again."

At the start of this year, his doctor told him that he had no choice.

"Basically, the risk of dying during the operation was balanced against the risk of dying because I was morbidly obese. I was referred to Dr Shaw Somers, or Fat Doctor, and he decided to do it."



Alan's stomach has gone from the size of a melon, to that of a medium size egg. "I can only manage half a Weetabix for breakfast, where I used to have six! Food was everything, but I do not miss it. I have got my life back, I am only sad that I went down that road in the first place."

■ Alan's story will be shown as part of new series of Fat Doctor, which will start on Discovery Home and Health on October 13.

Knife attack

A WOMAN was robbed at knifepoint as she walked along a Littlehampton street on Monday evening.

The victim was walking north along St Flora's Road when a man jumped in front of her at the junction with Parkside Avenue, grabbed her handbag and pointed the knife at her, before running off.

He headed down Parkside Avenue and got into a dark-coloured saloon car of a similar size and shape to a Ford Mondeo. The vehicle then drove east, away from the victim.

The suspect is described as white, aged around 20, clean-shaven and wearing dark clothing with a hood that was up. The handbag was a grey, fake leather shoulder bag with a pattern of three brown circles on the side.

The victim, in her late 40s, was treated by ambulance personnel for a bruised wrist. The robber used the knife's handle to prise her hand from the bag.

Detective Constable Bob Rollins said: "This was a nasty incident and we are obviously very keen to locate this man. If anyone witnessed the attack or saw the man or the car in the area at around 8.45pm on Monday, please contact me at Littlehampton CID on 0845 60 70 999, extension 86243."

Epic journey for friend

AN ANGMERING woman has taken on a challenge of epic proportions, in a bid to raise £10,000 for charity.

Television producer Alison Driver left Hull last week on the first leg the Clipper Round the World Race, as part of the Hull and Humber team.

By the time she arrives back in the UK, in July, she hopes to have raised the fantastic sum for Sussex Air Ambulance, which she credits for saving the life of close friend Tina Cook after a riding accident.

Alison, 43, said: "Without the help of Sussex Air Ambulance, I don't like to contemplate how different Tina's story may have been. It's made me realise how special the opportunity I have is.

"Like Tina, I have my own horse and am very aware of how many 'near misses' we have with our beloved equines. I'm also amazed that the Sussex Air Ambulance is funded largely by donations."

The accident happened in January last year, when Tina was leading her two horses into their Horsham stables.

A spokesman for the ambulance charity said: "Something had startled one of the horses, and Tina was forced to let go of the lead rope and



■ **SETTING SAIL:** Alison Driver is on the first leg of the Clipper Round the World Race as part of the Hull and Humber team

may have lost her balance. "The exact details of what happened next are unknown, but it appears that the other horse then started to run and Tina was struck a blow to the head by the horse's hoof, resulting in her falling face first into the grass."

Her injuries were so serious, and her location so remote, that the air ambulance was needed to get her to the Royal London Hospital, where

she stayed for almost a month. She needed facial reconstruction surgery, and lost the sight in one eye.

Alison and her team are due to arrive in Rio in mid-October, and during the voyage will take in Cape Town, Western Australia, Singapore, China, California, Jamaica, New York and Canada.

Log on to the website www.justgiving.com/Alison-Driver to sponsor Alison.

QUALITY PRODUCTS FACTORY DIRECT PRICES

AUTUMN OFFERS



PREMIER WINDOWS
Doors & Conservatories

WORTHING 01903 211234
BRIGHTON 01273 889900
FREEPHONE
0800 0961696
www.premier4windows.co.uk

