



Service with a smile – Jean Newnham and Ian Hollands with customer Peter Herbert. Below: the building on the move. (CO34671_03)

Space for pre-school: 'it will be fantastic'

CHILDREN at Langham Pre-school will be able to enjoy new premises as a result of the extension.

The pre-school secured a £160,000 grant from Sure Start to pay for its part of the extension – and it can't wait to move in.

Eve Oxley, who is secretary of the charity-based committee which runs the pre-school, said it currently operates from a small club room at the community centre.

But staff have to pack up after every session as the room is also used by other groups.

Mrs Oxley said: "The new extension means we will be getting a much bigger area, which has been purpose-built, and we will have our own facilities. It is going to be fantastic."

The pre-school currently has 46 children on its books, aged between two and five, and runs sessions every morning and two afternoons a week.

However, Mrs Oxley said it was likely the pre-school would expand.

"We have not been able to do any more sessions because the room is used for other activities."

"Once we have our own premises, we will have the opportunity to open more afternoons and we think there is the demand to do so," she added.

The pre-school hopes to move into the new premises in the new year.

It will also link up with the children's centre Cherry Blossom, in East Bergholt, as part of the Sure Start agreement.

Villagers give shop lift to new premises

by Wendy Brading
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TRAILBLAZING community scheme is looking forward to the new year – and new premises. Langham Community Shop opened six years ago after the village lost its post office service. The shop, which is manned by volunteers, has gone from strength to strength, and now it is looking to move into a new extension of the community centre in the new year.

A giant crane was needed to move the current temporary building to another part of the village's car park to make way for work to begin on the new extension. When complete, it will provide a new base for the shop and for the village's pre-school. Bill Flack, chairman of the management committee of Langham Community Shop,



said an army of volunteers had rallied to empty the shop premises in advance of its move.

She said: "There were so many people there, it was brilliant."

"Removals firm Schofields also sent along some burly men to help move the fridges and freezers for us."

The shop is currently open for business in the community centre, in School Road, but

will move back into its relocated premises next week.

Work has started on building the new extension, and it is hoped it will be completed by the end of the year.

The joint venture has been co-ordinated by the parish council, the community council, the pre-school and the village shop.

Gill said the shop's part of the extension cost in the region of £90,000. Of that, £20,000

came from the Plunkett Foundation, and the shop had to take a further £20,000 loan from the foundation.

Other contributions were made by the parish council, the community council and the shop itself.

Gill said the shop was still hoping to secure more grants to allow it to fit out the interior.

And it is hoped the new building will make it possible to increase the post office hours.

Gill said: "This has been a huge project by all parties, and volunteers have given an enormous amount of time to it."

"Our volunteers are so wonderful and it is so good for the village to have these facilities on our doorstep."

"The nearest shops are probably in Dedham, and there are no bus services to speak of taking villagers there."

"The shop really is the focus for the village."