



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Empty retail unit transformed into a living studio thanks to Northampton Town Centre BID**

*Northampton, 24th March 2014*

An empty shop in Northampton's Market Walk will soon be buzzing with art, thanks to support from the Northampton Town Centre Business Improvement District (BID).

From April 2nd through to April 25th a formerly empty shop, Unit 9 in Market Walk, will be turned into a living studio.

Members of SeeNN, also known as NN's Youth Arts Collective, will be working on solo and collaborative projects as well as running workshops for the public. SeeNN is made up of 16–24 year olds and is currently chaired by Luke Knight, a student at The University of Northampton.

Catherine Hemelryk, Artistic Director of NN, said: "This is a great opportunity for the members of SeeNN to work in a different environment and for everyone visiting Market Walk to see the next generation of talent coming through. Open studios can give a fascinating insight to just how different artists work and I for one am looking forward to seeing what they create as it unfolds."

BID director Brendan Bruder, who manages the Inspired Northampton project along with fellow BID director Alan Harland, said: "The occupation of retail units is crucial to the success of a town centre and the BID's Inspired Northampton project targets regeneration, the occupation of empty units and helps create sustainable businesses.

"When NN approached the BID seeking our support we were delighted to help as it means we can fill a vacant unit with a creativity and innovation, as well as giving young people a unique opportunity to set-up and operate a shop in a busy town centre."

Before the living studio opens Unit 9 will be turned into a very different kind of pop up shop. It is being run by a team of 35 fashion marketing students from The University of Northampton for one week only, who are calling their pop up shop Array.

Array will be open until Saturday, March 29<sup>th</sup> and will showcase and stock work from University students, along with a mix of British brands and designers. All of the shop's products have been made in the UK or locally sourced from Northampton and the experienced is designed to equip students with the practical skills needed to pursue a career in fashion.

- For more information on Northampton BID visit [www.northamptonbid.co.uk](http://www.northamptonbid.co.uk)

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### **About Northampton Town Centre BID**

The Northampton Town Centre BID was set up in 2011, when Northampton businesses joined forces to vote on their priorities and pay a levy fee to make a real difference to the town centre. The BID aims to improve the town centre so that it excels as a place to work, a place to do business, a place to shop and a place to visit.

Its three key aims are:

- **MANAGEMENT:** Improved daily management of the town centre, with a focus on cleanliness and safety.
- **PROMOTION:** To raise our town centre's profile through coordinated marketing and promotion.
- **VALUE FOR MONEY:** To develop and procure services to deliver cost and carbon savings.