



## ALB GROUP PLAYS 'WINNING HAND' IN WELCOMING GEEK RETREAT TO UNITS

An empty town centre shop has been transformed to give gaming fans somewhere to indulge in their passions for everything from board games, to sci-fi and superheroes.

Geek Retreat has taken up the last remaining vacant space on Moxon Island, in Hanley town centre, Stoke-on-Trent.

The venture has created a dozen jobs and a vibrant environment featuring a shop, gaming cafe and events hub rolled into one.

Occupying the site of the former Greenwood's Menswear shop, which had been vacant since 2017, and the neighbouring 4 Miles Bank, Geek Retreat takes up 1,800 sq ft of ground floor space.

The store is scheduled to open on December 18<sup>th</sup>, amid the Christmas rush - one of 100 branches the national chain plans to launch by the end of 2021.

Robert Mole, franchise owner for Geek Retreat, said:

*"We are creating about a dozen jobs in opening up the branch. I have lived in Stoke for 18 years and Stoke needs people to come together and set up these independent businesses, otherwise the town is going to go further downhill.*

*It's great to be able to get things going in Hanley to regenerate the area."*

Geek Retreat stocks geek culture merchandise like comics, posters, clothing, figures and memorabilia as well as games and trading cards. Fans of everything from Marvel and sci-fi, to Warhammer and Pokémon, and even traditional board games, are welcome.

Robert added: *"There are tons of gaming communities locally, and there is geek culture all around Stoke and Newcastle-under-Lyme, especially with two universities on our doorstep.*

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*People who have been through Covid are all discovering these new hidden hobbies they didn't realise they were into, and they had nowhere to go and do it. But that's what we are going to provide. We are very excited to open and to see people coming in to start building communities."*

The future looks bright for units on Moxon Island, which are owned by Nottingham-based property developer ALB Group.

The lease has been renewed on the Shuropody shop, The Works, Rowfers, while the lease has been extended for Forbidden Planet, and the newsagent lease is about to reach completion.

ALB has also started work to turn the top floor into residential accommodation.

Arran Bailey, Managing Director of ALB Group, said:

*"We are delighted to welcome Geek Retreat to Moxon Island. It is the perfect addition to this part of Hanley and opens up a whole world of leisure pursuits for people from near and far, especially those who are into alternative culture."*

Commercial estate agents FHP acted on ALB's behalf to market the units. Oliver Marshall, FHP associate director, said:

*"It's been great working with ALB on regearing and renewing the existing leases within the building, and this is an excellent result for the remaining vacant space. It's the ideal space for Geek Retreat, sitting alongside Forbidden Planet and Rowfers."*

For further information please contact Oliver Marshall on 07887 787 885 or email [oliver@fhp.co.uk](mailto:oliver@fhp.co.uk)

Oliver Marshall  
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