

PRESS RELEASE - Pop-Up Fingal!

Revitalising Town Centres and Helping Small Businesses.

Fingal County Council announces a new Pop-Up Shop initiative, aimed at offering support to start-up retail businesses at a time when our retail sector is being affected by the economic downturn. Fingal County Council wishes to establish Pop-Up Shops, whereby the Council will make innovative use of an empty commercial property, offering a temporary (usually up to 4 weeks) low-cost retail space to local entrepreneurs, artists and community groups who wish to test out the market to see if establishing their business on a permanent basis is viable.

With the increase in vacant commercial properties caused by the economic downturn, this initiative offers an opportunity to revitalise shopping areas, main streets and town centres, and enables new businesses and start-ups to test their markets without any substantial financial commitment or capital layout.

Stewart Logan, Senior Executive Planner with Fingal County Council explains "The sharp downturn caused by the recession has impacted severely on retailers, and particularly on the smaller start-ups, and although it is accepted that a time of recession is the very time for new opportunities, many people who would love to start their own business or move from online sales to retail space simply cannot because of the financial climate. Here in Fingal County Council we looked for examples of new creative ways to help retail business flourish, and saw that Pop-Up Shops are a simple and very imaginative way to provide well located space for small retailers and at the same time, help drive investment and new business in our towns".

As the first step Fingal County Council is calling on landlords of vacant retail units, as well as small-scale retailers, local entrepreneurs, community groups and artists to contact us in order to gauge the likely level of interest and feasibility of this initiative. Prospective businesses will be vetted by the Council to ensure that the venture offers a retail element with attractive display area; the retail use proposed complements adjoining established retailers; the proposal is a high quality business/artistic/community initiative; and that the proposal is not in conflict with planning and licensing regulations.

It is hoped that pilot Pop-Up Shops would be in place in the lead up to Christmas to exploit the increased retail activity at this time of the year. 2011 is the Year of the Craft, and the growing interest nationally in all types of crafted products makes this an ideal time for budding artists, designers, jewellery makers etc to test out a bigger market for their products. New businesses which are successful will be encouraged to set up permanently in the New Year.

For further information, please see www.fingalcoco.ie, or email popupshop@fingalcoco.ie or call 01-890 5708 or 01-890 5687.

ENDS 19/10/11

Notes to Editors

The benefits of a Pop-Up Shop initiative include:

- support for small scale business interests who, having successfully tested the retail market through a temporary pop-up shop, may move their business idea/online-business into the town centre and to permanent retail units, thereby reducing vacancy
- positive publicity for the town in question and improvement of the image of the town centre
- an increased footfall to an area of town with increasing vacancy through the attraction and draw which such a unit has. Given its temporary nature, people feel an urgency to visit a pop-up shop and will return in the future knowing something new will be there
- improved business to adjoining retailers through increased footfall and
- support and encouragement for local artists and community/social groups, thereby encouraging greater community spirit and local support for local projects