

# ART SUPPORTS DIGBETH SOCIAL ENTERPRISE QUARTER

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ART Loans Manager Andy King attended the launch of Birmingham's new social enterprise quarter in Digbeth today. As ART's specialist in loans for social enterprises, Andy was keen to offer his support for the initiative, which is designed to strengthen the sector in Birmingham.

Sir Albert Bore, Leader of Birmingham City Council, gave an opening address at the launch event, which included a social enterprise Christmas market in Moseley Street and a number of organised walks to showcase the variety of social enterprises – engaged in activities from the creative industries to healthcare – that are already based in Digbeth.

“As a result of today's public recognition of their efforts, we hope to see many more social enterprises setting up or moving in to the area in the next five years,” Sir Albert said. “This city has built itself time and time again through individuals and entrepreneurs whose vision and ideas have spread not only around the UK but across the world. We have already achieved national recognition for the Digbeth Social Enterprise Quarter from Social Enterprise UK, which has awarded us Social Enterprise ‘Place’ status. This initiative is part of Birmingham's long history of social activism and reform.”

ART, which itself is a social enterprise, was a pioneer of its kind of finance in the UK. Its model has since been copied across the UK and its expertise has been shared with visitors from around the world.

“We welcome the Digbeth social enterprise initiative,” says Andy King, “as a means of helping the sector to achieve greater impact and recognition. ART has supported a diverse range of social enterprises in Birmingham during its 16 year history, helping them to access the finance they needed to support cashflow, match funding, invest in new premises, staff or equipment. We look forward to helping many more in the years ahead in Digbeth and beyond.”

More information about the Digbeth Social Enterprise Quarter can be found at <http://bssec.org.uk/about-social-enterprise/the-digbeth-social-enterprise-quarter/>.

More information about ART loans for social enterprises can be found at <http://reinvest.co.uk/art-for-borrowers>.

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