

# Be More Geek pop culture chain opens fifth North East store amid rapid retail expansion

A growing North East retail chain has opened its fifth store at a shopping centre as it continues to rail against challenges within the retail sector.

Be More Geek has opened its latest store in Washington Galleries Shopping Centre, specialising in movie, TV and anime merchandise and collectables – the third new opening since the easing of restrictions.

The Washington store, which has created five new jobs, continues its ambitious expansion plans and founder James Gee is confident the new store – taking a prime pitch in the Galleries next to Sports Direct and opposite McDonalds – will prove just as popular as existing branches around the region.

Be More Geek opened its first store in Newcastle in 2018 and also has sites in Middlesbrough, and at the Gateshead Metrocentre, and the new site opening comes week after the launch of a store in Sunderland's Bridges shopping centre, as well as the relocation of its original shop to Eldon Square shopping centre in Newcastle.

Mr Gee, the firm's CEO, first launched the business following the collapse of Grainger Games. He was among the hundreds of employees who were made redundant when the video games business folded, having been with the firm from the very start at its first shop in the Grainger Market.

He had run the firm's merchandise offshoot Be More Geek until its collapse. Registering the company name, he brought the

company to the high street in October 2018, opening a shop on Clayton Street that was soon full to bursting with popular culture goodies, [prompting the need to expand](#).



The mural inside Washington's Be More Geek – every store has a bespoke mural created by Creative Ginger  
(Image: Be More Geek)

Despite the widely publicised problems of the high street, Be More Geek has targeted bricks-and-mortar stores across the North East to help drive its growth, and Mr Gee believes the customers are the driving force of its success.

He said: “From the moment we opened our first store, service and developing relationships with our customers was our key priority and I’m proud to see that ethos has continued as the business continues to expand. Our customers are the lifeforce

of our business and have supported us through our journey all the way to our fifth store.

“We now employ over 30 staff, have a dedicated senior management team in place and work with a multitude of suppliers to deliver a range of exciting products for our customers with our wall of POP! Vinyl’s presenting as a key feature in each store alongside our murals.”

The Washington store also features one of the company’s signature murals from local artist Creative Ginger, which have become talking points among fans.

Mr Gee added: “The Galleries is a vibrant and busy destination shopping centre with a huge range of stores. We are delighted to be here and are confident that the store will be a huge success as we continue to progress with our three-year growth plan. We would also to thank the centre management team in the Galleries for making the fit such a smooth process and look forward to working with them in delivering an exciting new store for customers of the Galleries.”

Ian McGregor, centre manager of the Galleries, said: “We’re pleased to welcome Be More Geek to the centre. Retailers can see the attraction of locating themselves here because The Galleries is a busy shopping destination that has so much to offer the community. We look forward to working with them and wish them every success as they open their doors to the public.”

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