

# Third branch of vintage clothes shop to open doors in city centre



**EXPANDING:** Alison Townsend and Jo Harbour outside their new Sassy & Boo shop in Milsom Place which is opening in September PICTURE: Kevin Bates

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A vintage clothes shop is expanding with a second store in Bath.

Sassy & Boo, which was launched at Margaret's Buildings in 2006, has become the latest name to sign up for a unit at the £13 million Milsom Place development.

It opened its second shop in Tetbury last year and its third outlet is due to begin trading from the shopping centre off Milsom Street in September.

Sassy & Boo joins fashion retailers such as Phase Eight and Hobbs at the development which is also home to a 250-seater Italian restaurant owned by celebrity chef Jamie Oliver.

Founder Alison Townsend had been an estate agent in Bath for 10 years but felt stuck in a rut and decided to follow her passion for shopping.

Her daughter Poppy and her partner Stuart, who is now her husband, encouraged her to open her own boutique and when a shop premises at Margaret's Buildings became vacant she took the opportunity.

She said: "It was the best decision I've ever made. I just love every minute of it and it is just so rewarding doing something you love doing - and making a living from it."

Her original store attracted clients from London as well customers closer to home.

Mrs Townsend said: "Vintage accessories and clothing has been such a huge success for us that we are bursting out of the premises at Margaret's Buildings."

The new shop will complement the existing premises with sales of items from jewellery and accessories to perfume bottles and furnishings.

Sassy & Boo, which is named after the nicknames given to its founder's friends at boarding school, will move into a unit opposite former Bath independent fashion retailer AH Moda which closed in May after 25 years in the city.

Mrs Townsend said: "We are moving into Unit 13 but I'm not superstitious. We felt that, despite the recession, there is a growing market for vintage and vintage-inspired labels."

"I think Bath has a certain amount of immunity from the recession. I don't mean to be offensive to anyone who is struggling but I do think we have got a niche market with vintage and that has been so successful for us and that is what I want to grow."

● London-based clothes store Traffic People will also be opening a shop in Milsom Place in September.

The retailer runs outlets in Carnaby Street and Spitalfields.

Co-founder Mark Readman said there were similarities between Bath and its existing markets.

He said: "The mix of fashion uses proposed for Milsom Place, along with the unique styling and configuration of the premises, makes this location perfect for our brand."