

# MUSIC



**B**anquet Records, (formerly Beggars Banquet) on Eden Street, Kingston, has long been a popular indie record store-come-mini gig venue and is also an independent record label. The small, crowded shop just down the road from Primark sells every type of music under the sun, with loads on vinyl format, and gives lots of support to local and upcoming bands by playing regular free 'instores' – which have recently included Jack Peñate, Scouting For Girls and Hadouken! – and also hosts indie club night New Slang at The Works. That's a lot of work for one little shop, so we had a chat with shop manager [Jon Tolley](#) to find out how and why he manages...

### How long has Banquet been a part of Kingston and what was its original aim?

The shop's been here over 30 years but its changed ownership a number of times. Originally filling a niche at the time of the birth of punk it's always been an alternative to the bigger record shops over the years (Tower, HMV, Virgin, Our Price etc).

Ultimately its aim is to make enough cash to cover our costs and keep afloat. However, the staff here often have other motives involving music scenes of various types. Under our present ownership we've made supporting all aspects of music part of the complete business ethos.

### What makes Banquet different (and arguably better) than all the big chain music stores?

We can react quicker to what's going on, and all the staff are completely involved in music in different ways. We definitely don't do this job for the money. So we pick up on trends and get what our customers want quicker than others. We don't need to justify anything to shareholders and people like that, so we do what we want. Obviously there's some stuff we're not as good at, but the things we do well, we do not only better than the chains but maybe also better than any other shop in the country. We do it for music and not for the money.

### Which upcoming bands would you particularly recommend?