

**VOL.1 2022 PROJECT REVIEW IMPACT REPORT**

# BEATKNOTS



Evaluation methods included mid-stage and end of project interviews with participants and project staff, Youth Music scales, short documentary-style videos and Arts Award portfolios.

This evaluation was compiled

by

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## FOREWORD

Education in Electronic music production needs to be addressed, updated and become more prominent in mainstream music education. Not only is this where an expansion of future careers are going to be within the music industry, but also it is relevant and contemporary for the students being taught.

The music education syllabus in mainstream secondary schools continues to teach outdated content of Classical music and the Baroque Period - pushing students to learn this rich cultural history of music but failing to offer the tuition and access to instruments to even begin to learn and engage with the music they are studying.

With library music, soundtracking and original music production for content creators and social media marketing being in high demand, the amount of future jobs and work within the creative industries is stacked in Electronic music-making's favour. Then if we begin to include and highlight the wider roles and areas connected to music production such as events promotion, sound for film and TV, artist management, videography, photography and radio production - the offer of bringing music education into the 21st century becomes so much broader.

Students can continue to create music on freeware software at home on their laptops. They can collaborate with fellow pupils on projects online in real time without expensive equipment and music studios. Championing the production of Electronic music and its incorporation within mainstream music education has got to be looked at.

## THE NEED

Nottingham C.A.N works with a diverse range of the community from across the City and the County. Both areas face a number of different challenges and obstacles in terms of their access to music-making and creative enrichment.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) figures show that Nottingham as a whole has the UK's lowest gross disposable household income. Unemployment rates have risen by nearly 80% compared to last year and In the City, unemployment currently stands at 8.1% with 18,707 people unemployed. This percentage rises to 10.4%, when students are excluded from the data. The implications of this mean that many young people from low-household incomes struggle to access the social, economic, and cultural privileges that young people receive in comparison to other areas in the UK. As a consequence they have less chance of accessing the same resources, mentorship and support needed from them to achieve the same aspirations as other young people in the UK.

A further effect of low-household income and lack of opportunity, especially in deprived, isolated areas within our Country Districts, is mental health. In Nottinghamshire, it is estimated around 10,215 young people between the ages of 5-to-16 have 'any mental health disorder' and 87,191 people between the ages of 16-to-74 experience CMD such as depression and anxiety. Leading UK psychiatrists predict that post lockdown, as many as 10million people (1.5million children) in the U.K. are thought to need new or additional mental health support as a direct result of the Covid-19 crisis. These alarming statistics show the need for extra support, championing togetherness, and community outreach in areas that need it most.



Music-making allows us to tell our stories, learn other people's stories, and make sense of the world around us. However, in an impact report titled 'How can we engage more young people in arts and culture' commissioned by The Mohn Westlake Foundation, the key findings were that 'these benefits of the arts are not enjoyed equally'. People from poorer backgrounds continue to be less likely to engage with the arts, and the same is true for people of Black, Asian, or other minority ethnic heritage. To ensure that we are tackling this issue and contributing positively towards enriching the participants who need access most, we will promote our project to key partnering organisations that work with these demographics, ensuring that these groups are placed at the heart of our project.

We consulted with various Pupil Referral Units and youth and community clubs who expressed concern that many 16-to-18-year-olds are heavily at risk of feeling demotivated and isolated, especially coming out of lockdown and the pandemic, where at a crucial time for their social development, their GCSE exams being impacted, routes to further education disrupted, and creative enrichment taking a back seat over STEM subjects. Both reported that their Year 11 students did little to no creative arts over the course of the last academic year, and both organisations are keen to signpost and make referrals to our project. Taking part in music-making activity has a profound effect on our positive wellbeing, community cohesion, and mental health. Our project will support both creative/technical enrichment, whilst also offering mental health mentoring at a time when so many young people need it most.



Delivering 20-week programs at each location the project explored a wide spectrum of activities such as the history and evolution of Electronic music and its genre and sub-genres as well as practical music-making approaches and techniques such as sampling, synthesis, composing, recording, mixing and mastering. The course also facilitated a series of online industry masterclasses where participants interacted with a host of industry specialists who covered topics such as Social Media Marketing, Live Events, Sync for T.V. & Film, Composing to Film & Radio Broadcast. The masterclasses also facilitated a number of sessions that took a more holistic approach to mental health and well-being and the safe usage of social media.

For some participants this was their first experience of Electronic music-making and all young producers brought something individual and unique to the groups. Some participants had previous experience in singing and playing instruments, and for some it was their first time using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and producing music. The Beatknots participants worked alongside Trekkah Benjamin, Liati, Zoutr, Jimmy Power and Gadzz - all experienced Electronic music producers who collectively have a wealth of accolades around their work such as national radio play on BBC Radio 1 and 1XTRA, music syncs on T.V. shows for BBC, Channel 4 and Sky TV.

## THE BEATKNOTS PROJECT

Delivered by Nottingham C.A.N and Funded by Youth Music, the Beatknots project facilitated an exciting opportunity for young music-makers to work alongside industry professionals, establishing multiple Electronic music making programs across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. The outcome of which would be the production of a collaborative album released on leading Nottingham independent record label Phlexx Records. The project aimed to enable young people from different areas around the chance to collaborate together, learn about Electronic music production and also to collaborate with professional music producers in professional music-making environments.

Through a series of practical one-to-one sessions, masterclasses and music production workshops, the project worked in partnership with three studios;

- Unit 03 Music (Long Eaton)
- The Old Library (Mansfield)
- The Elementz studio (Nottingham City)



## THE PROJECT

STONKNOTS  
BEATKNOTS

# THE ELEMENTZ STUDIOS



**NOTTINGHAM**

## THE ELEMENTZ NOTTINGHAM CITY

The Elementz Studio's team includes world-renowned record producers, sound engineers, songwriters, mix engineers, artist developers, and DJ's. With a passion for forward-thinking music spanning many genres, the Elementz Studios is based at the heart of Nottingham's city centre . With production and engineering credits include Lil Wayne, Wretch 32, Young T & Bugsey, Tuff Gong Records, Sony ATV, Alexandra Burke, General Levy, Dawn Penn. Offering regular sessions for our participants in Nottingham's number one professional music production studio is an opportunity that will exponentially impact our participants. The Elementz bring a state-of-the-art production studio for our participants to use and the opportunity to work alongside established music-producers. The Elementz are keen to develop community-based music leadership and mentoring into their work and we see this project as a perfect opportunity for us to support this journey.

## PARTNERS

## UNIT 03 MUSIC LONG EATON

Unit 03 Music is a community organisation established in 2016 and based in Long Eaton. They have experience delivering community sessions for the National Lottery Awards for All, Derby County Community Trust, Nottingham County Council, and the Nottingham Forest Community Fund. Unit 03 provide a professional studio that is located in an area highlighted for its lack of music provision. With the closure of community centres and ever-shrinking youth programs, their work and connection within the rural communities will ensure our projects reach young people in the area who need it most. The project will be important for the development of cultivating a legacy of music leadership and music-making for young people in the area. We know that mental health issues are on the rise in rural, isolated areas, so coming out of lockdown is the perfect time for our partnership and project.



**LONG EATON**

STONK  
BEAT



**MANSFIELD**

# THE OLD LIBRARY MANSFIELD

Inspire Youth Arts is an award-winning team with over 20 years of experience and have developed their own unique approach to delivering the arts. All their work is delivered with professional artists and support staff. With Young people at the heart of everything they do, their ethos is that all young people should have the opportunity to access the highest quality arts, explore their own capabilities and have the chance to make the unimaginable happen. Based at the Old Library in Mansfield, the Beatknots Project will work alongside Jimmy Power, a Producer who specialises in electronic dance music and won the Youth Music award for Dance Producer.

# PHLEXX RECORDS

As one of the leading independent record and events labels in Nottingham, Phlexx Records has a wealth of contacts within the industry who can offer guidance and knowledge to our participants through our masterclass series. Phlexx will further support our partnership by offering inkind support with the release of our album. This includes the registering and releasing of the album on all digital platforms and with their tv sync agency, where our young participant's work will feature on the database for tv/film sync opportunities with Sky, BBC, and Channel 4. They will create a marketing campaign that will include a press release that will be pitched to all of their industry contacts and they will also setup our participants with their own Spotify profile. The final element they will bring to the project is the management, equipment, promotion and engineering of our celebration event. Featuring headline performances from artists on their label, the event will give our participants a chance to perform their work and network within the Nottingham music scene

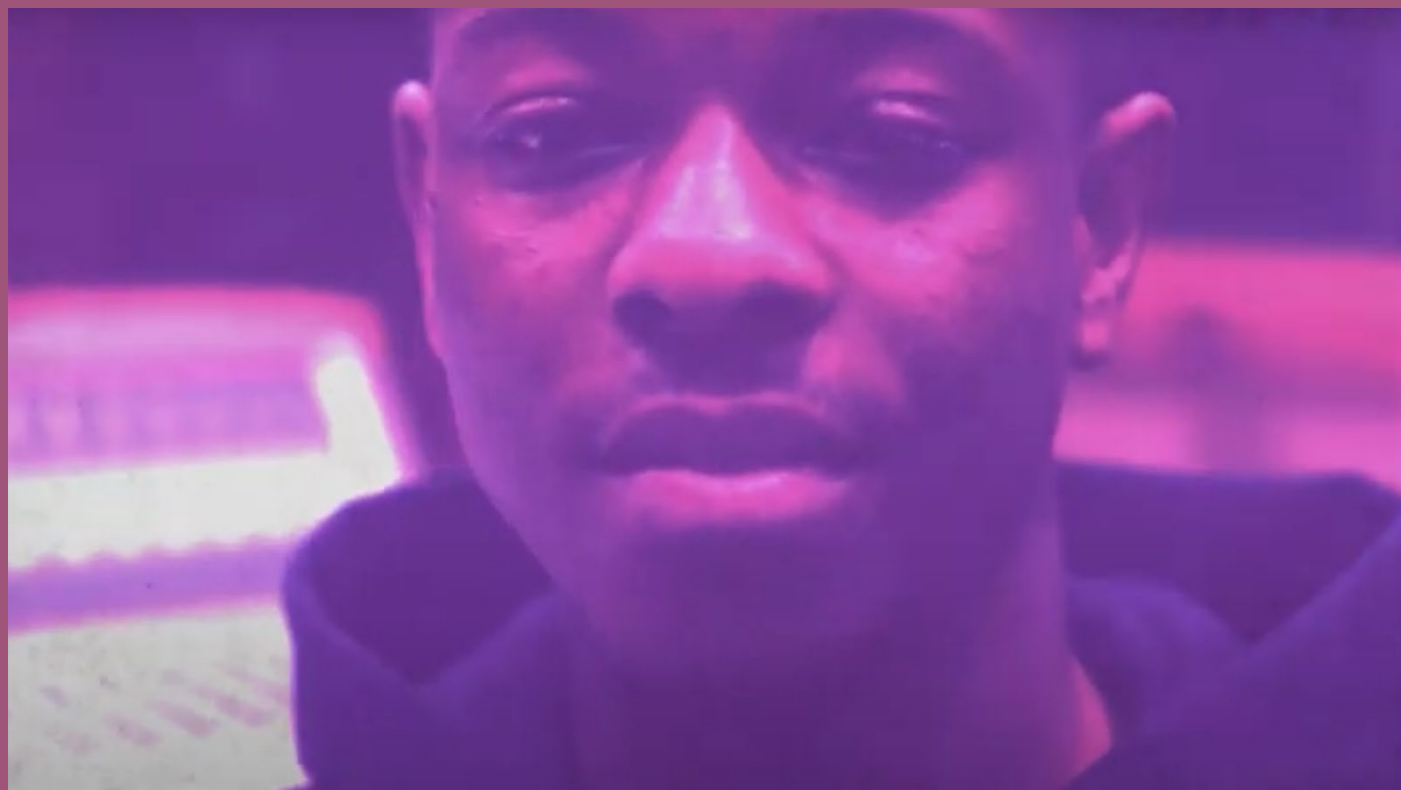


# PARTNERS

STONEX  
BEATKNOTS



# INTRODUCING THE BEATKNOTS PARTICIPANTS AND DELIVERY STAFF



Shot by Nottingham C.A.N Videographer Raphael Achache, we held an 'Introducing the Beatknots Team' video session that gave our young participants and delivery staff the chance to talk about the project and their involvement.

For some participants this was their first experience being filmed on camera and the film was beautifully edited together including snippets of our participants music as the soundtrack.

The video was used across social media platforms of Nottingham C.A.N, Phlexx Records, the three studio partners and our young participants. It acted as a great piece of content to promote the project, to begin to build up following for our young participants and also to promote the album release and celebration event.



**PARTICIPANTS**



BEATKNOTS

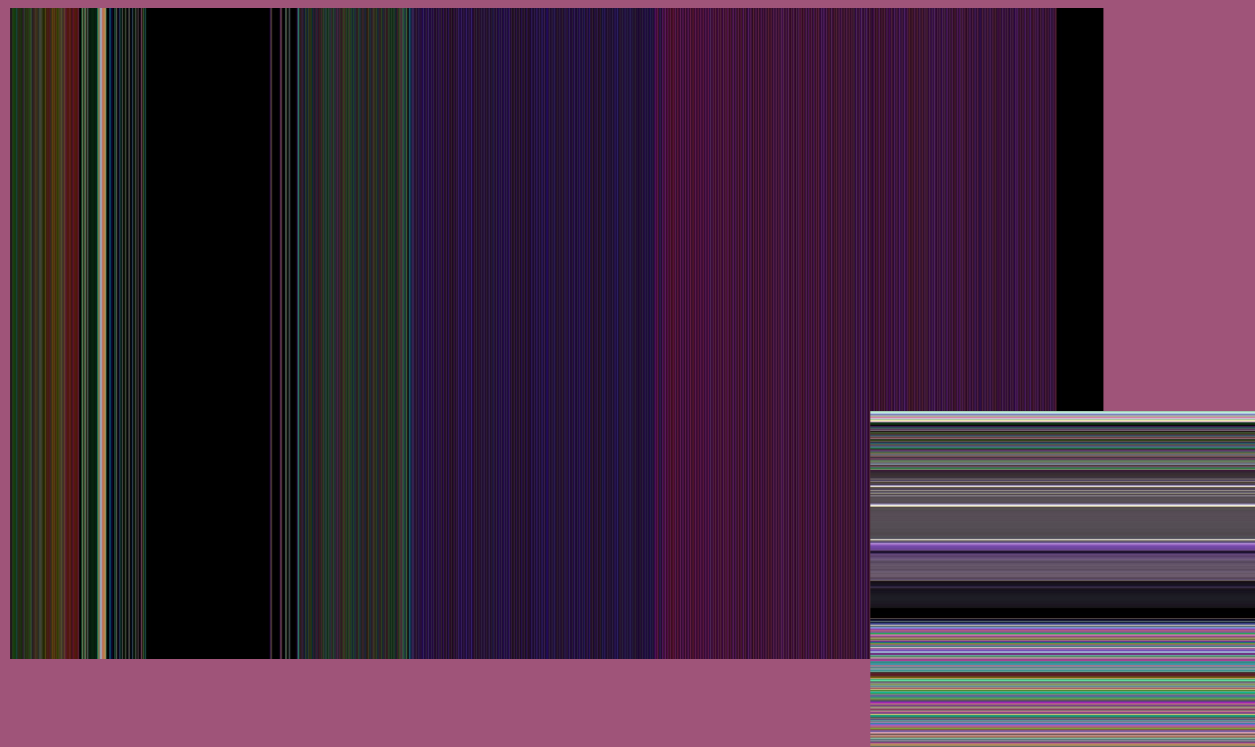
# USING THE ARTS AWARD AS A MECHANISM TO STRUCTURE SESSIONS AND ENHANCE OUR PARTICIPANTS EXPERIENCE

All young people worked towards an Arts Award, with 18 young people completing the Discover award and 10 young people completing their Bronze award.

Part A - Arts Diary offered a brilliant way for us to track our participants journeys within music-making, documenting their progression through weekly blogs and interviews.

Part C - Arts Inspiration was used as a mechanism for the young people in the group to learn about each others' music tastes. Each participant did a presentation at the start of each session on their favourite artist and from that a Spotify playlist was created that everyone had access to as a way of sharing different genres of music.

Part B - exploring the arts as an audience member, was a good way to get the three different studio group together and for some this was their first experience of going to a gig. Young people attended four different live music events: two at Rough Trade seeing both M Huncho where the group were able to take part in a meet and greet and one where the group watched a range of local Nottingham artist for the Raw Talent Showcase. The group also took part in helping out at Hockley Hustle for the Phlexx Records stages held at the Angel Microbrewery, where the label ran two stages, with participants meeting and watching 30 performances from the likes of George Gretton, Major Ruse, Bubbalicious and more.

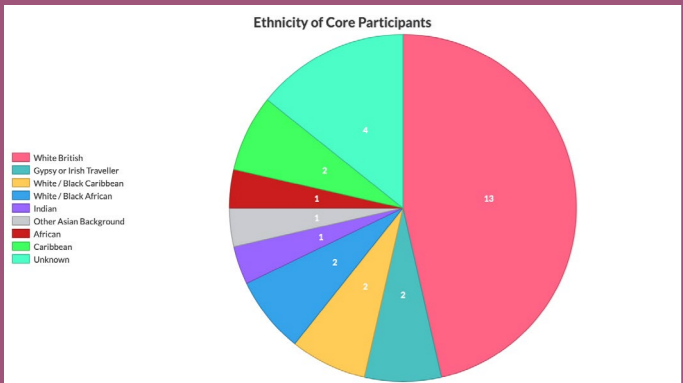


**ARTS AWARD**

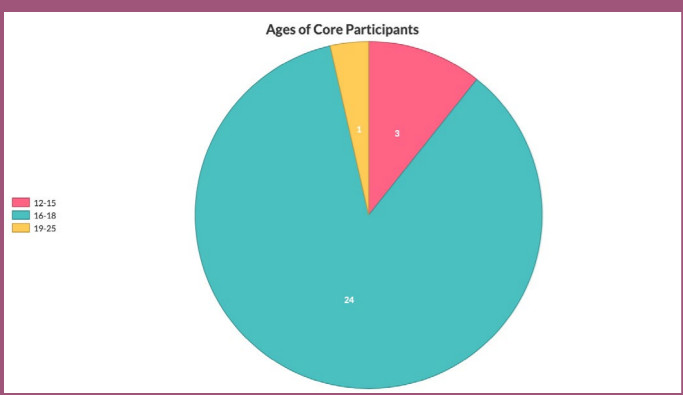
BEATBOXNOTES



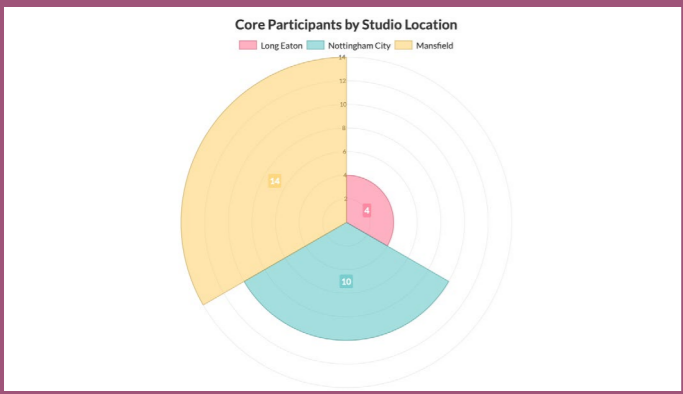
# PARTICIPANT DATA



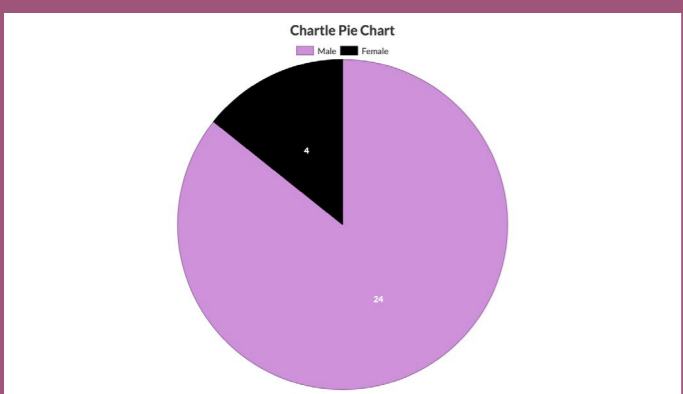
We were delighted with the ethnic diversity of our participants that took part within our project, and we believe this to be due to our networking and promotion of the project with local community groups, schools and colleges, reaching wider communities and connecting with participants from a range of locations and ethnicities



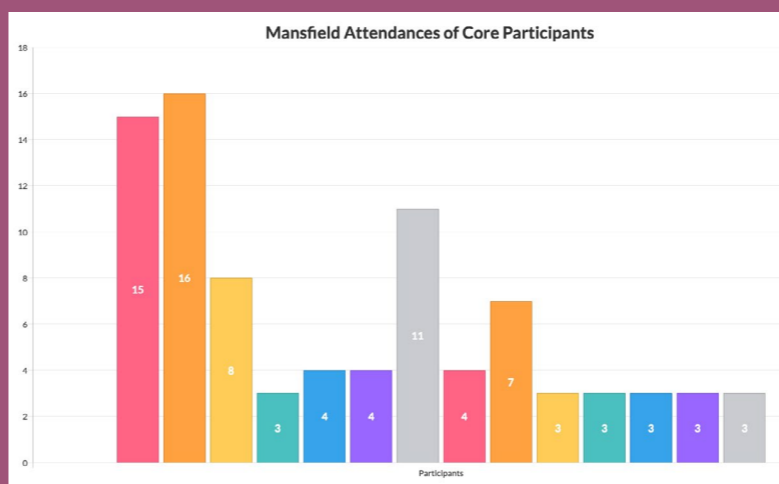
Despite being targetted at participants aged 6-18 years old we did not want to exclude any participation. We had 3 young producers join the project that were in the age bracket of 12-15 and also extended the project to 18-25 for any participants with a disability



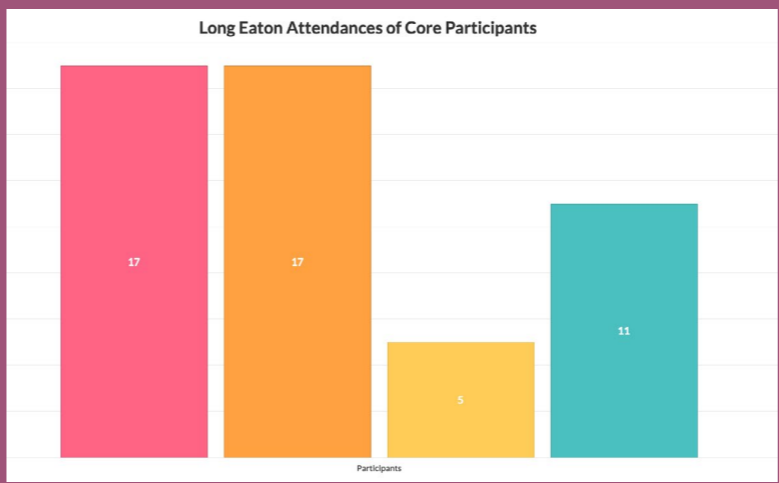
We had contrasting ranges of participant numbers from each studio location. Our Mansfield location had a high number of participants in comparison as it is an established young centre that has been deliver music-making opportunities for a number of years. Long Eaton was a new location for our delivery and we did not reach the numbers we initially anticipated.



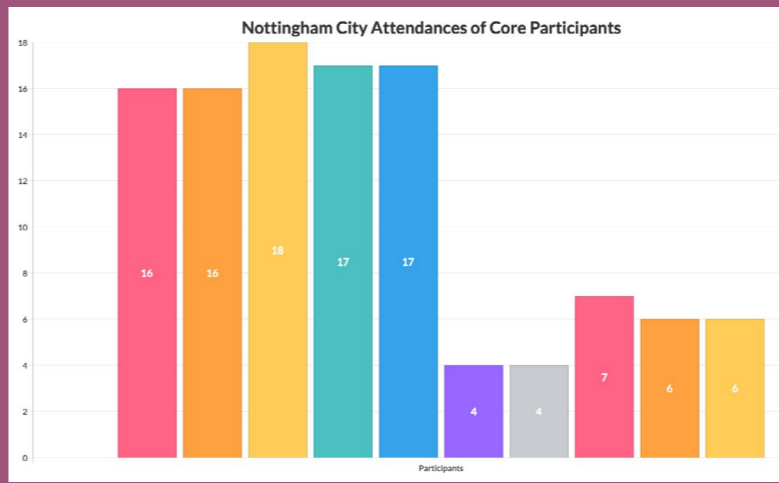
We had hoped for more female representation within our project with females making up only 14.29% of our participation. Initially this was even lower until we promoted that we were looking for singers and songwriters to work on vocalling our productions. We also had alot more female participants join our taster sessions but they were searching for more instrument/vocal based sessions



Although our Mansfield location had a high number of participants attend, their ongoing attendance of individual participants was the lowest



Our Long Eaton overall participation was the lowest, but the participants who committed to the course had high individual attendances. The lower rate of participants did mean we had alot more time for one-to-one working with the participants



Our Nottingham City was our most popular session in terms of number of participants and individual session attendances



## RECRUITMENT

**6** TASTER SESSIONS

**52** TASTER ATTENDANCES

## BEATKNOTS DELIVERY

**54** STUDIO MUSIC MAKING SESSIONS

**28** CORE PARTICIPANTS

**228** SESSION ATTENDANCES

## MASTERCLASSES

**10** MUSIC INDUSTRY MASTERCLASSES DELIVERED

**89** MASTERCLASS ATTENDANCES

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**5** MUSIC LEADER TRAINING SESSIONS

**6** STUDIO PARTNER MEETS

The taster sessions provided a great opportunity for participants to see the studio locations and learn about the project. Delivered during Covid-19 restrictions we were careful to manage the taster sessions with government guidelines in mind.

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Overall we were happy with the number of core participants and session attendances. Although each location had contrasting stats, we tailored the session plans to suit our group sizes. Sessions included a range of workshops, group sessions and one-to-ones

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Our masterclass series was really successful and gave participants a wider view of the music industry and also provided activities and workshp around wellbeing and safe social media usage. We also opened up the opportunity for other young people to join the sessions for a network of community groups and we uploaded the masterclasses to our website for people to enage with and for us to use as a resource in future sessions

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Upon speaking with our grant manager we decided to offer the music leader opportunity to 1 individual as opposed to three. The training sessions and evaluation of our music leader trainee is expanded on later in the report

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## DELIVERY STATS

STUDIO  
BEATKNOTS





**PHOTOS**



# BEATKNOTS



### SOUNDTRAP W/ JIMMY POWER

Delivered by Music Leader Jimmy Power from Inspire Youth Arts, our Soundtrap masterclasses introduced our participants to Soundtrap - a free online digital audio workstation that participants could access and begin producing music at home



### ART THERAPY W/ DANI BELLO

Delivered by Dani Bello our Art Therapy masterclass provided our participants with a range of arts activities that participants could use to keep track of and positively impact their mental health and wellbeing



### VOCAL WORKSHOP W/ HONEY WILLIAMS

Delivered by Honey Williams, founder of the GOA Choir, our vocal masterclass focused on developing participants knowledge and understanding of breathing techniques, group harmony singing and singing styles



### SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA W/ THE SOCIAL TEACUP

Delivered by Gina Brierley from the Social Teacup the Safe Social Media masterclass focused on participants tracking their social media usage, understanding their intent when using social media and thinking about safety whilst being online



### MUSIC SYNC W/ JAMIE LOGAN

Delivered by Jamie Logan from SKY TV, the Music Sync masterclass informed participants of how music sync for TV and Film worked and expanded their knowledge of work opportunities as a music producer within the music industry



### BRANDING W/ THE SOCIAL TEACUP

Delivered by Gina Brierley from the Social Teacup the Branding masterclass took an in-depth look at building a following and maintaining a consistent brand as an artist. It also looked into analytics and tracking the success of your social media content



### COMPOSING TO FILM W/ GADZZ

Delivered by our Music Leader Trainee Gadziel, the Composing to film masterclass followed on from the Music sync masterclass and looked at how we compose for Film and TV, specifically to music sync briefs and opportunities



### MIXING W/ LIATI

Delivered by Music Leader Liati from The Elementz studio, the Mixing masterclasses showcased a holistic view of mixing, focusing on equipment, setup, working for clients as a freelance mix engineer and what makes a good mix



### MASTERING W/ ANDY ZOUTR

Delivered by Music Leader Zoutr from The Elementz studio, the Mastering masterclass provided an in-depth look at the dark art of mastering and how to produce a professional master for your finished music



### RADIO BROADCAST W/ DEAN JACKSON

Delivered by Dean Jackson from East Midlands BBC Introducing, the Radio Broadcast masterclass showcased the importance of local radio and how young musicians could pitch their music to receive radio plays

# MASTERCLASSES

# BEATKNOTS



“

**THE YOUNG PEOPLE WERE PRODUCERS FROM THE BEGINNING. THEY WERE LEARNING AND PASSING ON SKILLS THROUGH SHARED EXPERIENCE AND THE PRACTICAL LEVEL OF JUST DOING IT. THE YOUNG PEOPLE REALLY ROSE TO THAT. AND LEARNING IN THIS WAY, AS WE DIDN'T PUT ANY BOUNDARIES ON IT, THEY WERE PLAYING, THEY WERE GOING INTO A ROOM AND CREATING STRAIGHT FROM THE START OF THE PROJECT**

”

## OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

There were three key outcomes for young people that were captured through the interviews and reported by tutor observations:

- 1. YOUNG PEOPLES MUSIC DEVELOPMENT IN RELATION TO THE PRODUCTION OF ELECTRONIC MUSIC**
- 2. SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS**
- 3. DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS ALIGNED TO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY**



**OUTCOMES**

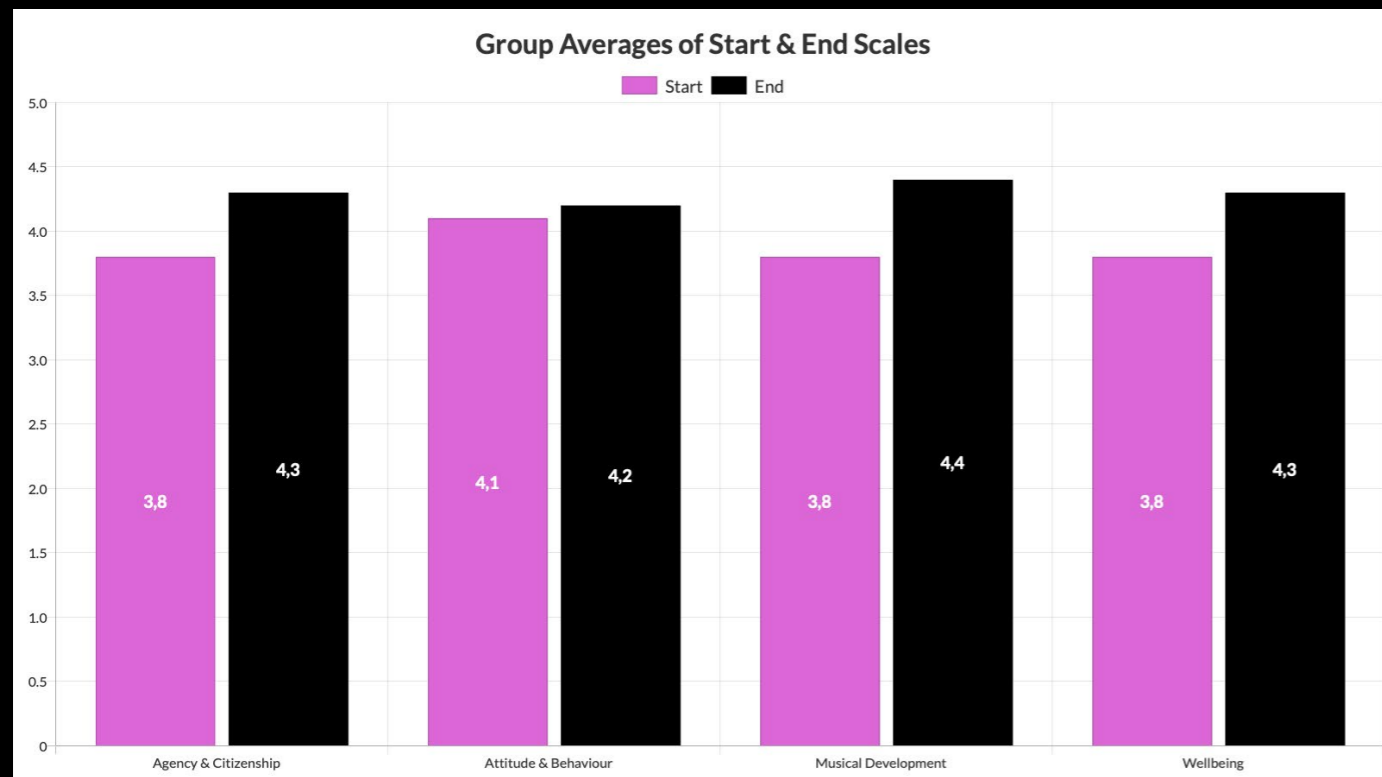
**BEATKINGS**

# YOUNG PEOPLES MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The starting point for young people's musical development within electronic music and music production was mixed. Some came with no experience, having never been in a recording studio, some with classical music training or musical theatre and others with experience of studio work and music production.

Each of the three studio groups learnt a variety of mixing and mastering techniques using Logic, Ableton and Fruity Loops. All young people were able to gain confidence in using the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) and benefitted from masterclasses in mixing. Those that came with prior musical training were able to focus on soundtrack software and create a series of tracks compared to those who were engaging with music production for the first time. All young people contributed to a finished album, released by Phlexx Records, at the end of the project.

The pedagogical experience for young people revolved around them being producers from the outset.



“

**THE PROJECT HAS HELPED ME FEEL MORE CONFIDENT IN WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT WHEN IT COMES TO THE INDUSTRY. I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT WHEN IT COMES TO NETWORKING AND I NOW KNOW HOW TO PRICE MY TIME CORRECTLY.**

”

“

**THIS IS THE FIRST TIME MY MUSIC HAS BEEN RELEASED BY A RECORD LABEL - PHLEXX. IT WAS QUITE AN EXPERIENCE. I UNDERSTOOD MORE HOW THE INDUSTRY WORKS AND HOW MY MUSIC CAN BE RELEASED AND ATTRACT AUDIENCES.**

”

“

**I FEEL LIKE I HAVE DEVELOPED AS A MUSICIAN AS I FEEL MUCH MORE CONFIDENT AND I'VE LEARNT LOADS ABOUT HOW TO MIX MY TRACKS. I NOW KNOW ABOUT HOW MUSIC LABELS WORK AND THE PERCENTAGES ARTISTS GET WHEN THEY GET SIGNED.**

”

“

**IT HAS GIVEN ME THE CHANCE TO INTERACT WITH UP AND COMING RAPPERS AND MEET NEW PRODUCERS INVOLVED IN THE INDUSTRY. IT HAS GIVEN ME NEW KNOWLEDGE ON HOW THE INDUSTRY WORKS VIA CONTRACTS AND IN THE RELEASING OF MUSIC, IT HAS ALSO SHOWED ME DIFFERENT VENUES I COULD PERFORM AT IN THE FUTURE.**

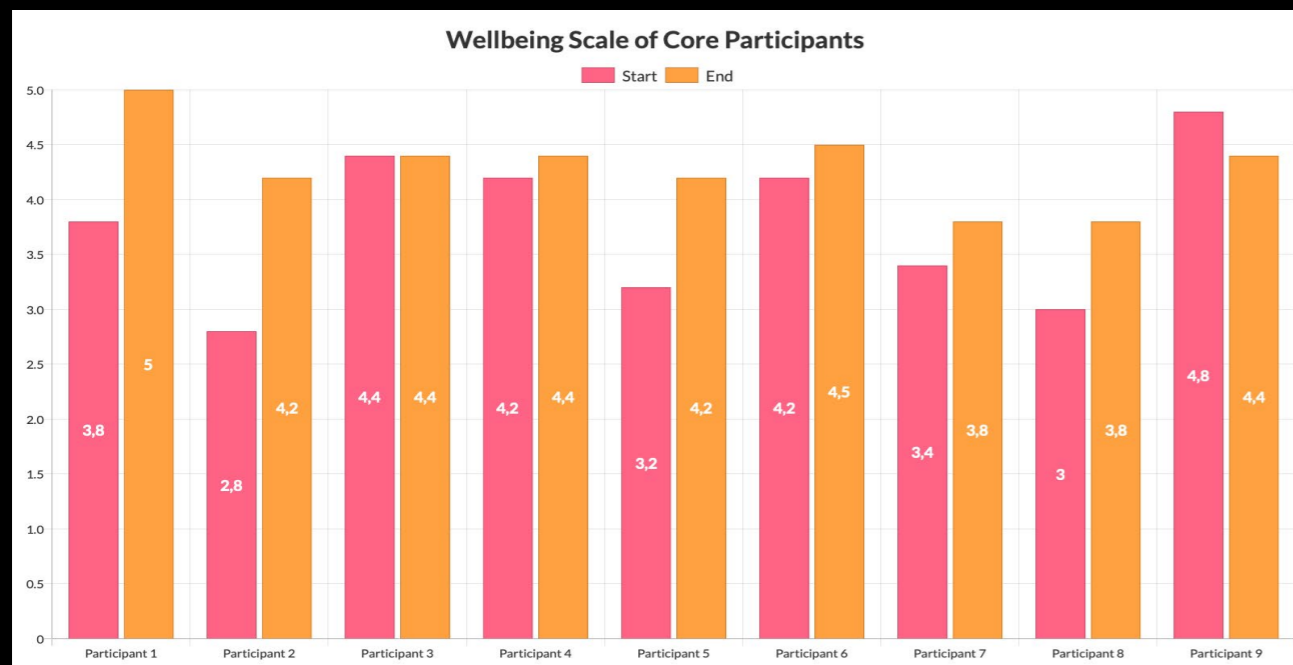
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# WELLBEING AND SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

Within the masterclasses on social media, young people were learning about how to use Instagram or Facebook as a tool to develop and promote their musical practice. Young people reported learning about analytics and hashtags for most engagement, the phasing of posts at different times and looking at reach. Participants learnt about the value of social media for work, rather than fun purposes, in terms of marketing their own music, knowing how to grow a following or support the release of commercial music.

Trekkah Benjamin further explains the importance of safety within social media for young musicians:

“Thinking about social media as a tool to benefit their music and to do that safely was important. We didn’t monitor it in any way because we didn’t want to access to their social media, but we’ve started to grow a culture of looking at social media differently. You know less filters, Angel faces and doom-scrolling and more about how this tool can develop artists”



“

**IT DEFINITELY HAS A POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY MENTAL HEALTH. I HAD STRUGGLED TO FIND MY MUSIC JOURNEY, AS I AM NEW TO THE UK. BEATKNOTS HAS HELPED ME SHOWCASE MY MUSIC..**

”

“

**COMING OUT OF LOCKDOWN I WAS QUITE NERVOUS AND ANXIOUS ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT INVOLVED OTHER PEOPLE AND NOW I HAVE DEFINITELY COME OUT MY SHELL.**

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“

**THE PROJECT HAD ALLOWED ME TO MEET NEW AND DIFFERENT MUSICIANS AFTER COMING OUT OF COVID AND NOT HAVING MANY FRIENDS ESPECIALLY MUSIC FRIENDS THIS HAS GIVEN ME CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF AND MY MUSIC SKILLS.**

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“

**THE PROJECT HAS GIVEN ME AN OUTLET TO MEET DIFFERENT PEOPLE AS A NORMALLY VERY SHY OR ANXIOUS PERSON WHEN IT COMES TO MEET NEW PERSON THE PROJECT HAS GIVEN ME THAT PUSH.**

”

# SPECIALISED KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIAL CONNECTIONS WITHIN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

Building upon the masterclasses in mixing, social media and marketing, were additional sessions related to careers in the Music Industry. The benefits of these sessions, as well as introducing the business side of a commercial label like Phlexx records, was to give young people the opportunity to make connections with the masterclass leaders. Young people reported positively on the number of sessions that focused on roles within the music industry and working with a record label. Music Leader, Gaddiel reflected that through the project many participants realized that they were good at highly specialized skills and roles within music production. For example, Paris Glasford (Student Researcher) noted the high levels of motivation shown by young people and Jamie Powell (Inspire Studio Leader) praised the innovative levels of collaboration between the three different studios:

Paris Glasford: It's been amazing to actually see the young people involved and see how it's benefited them. It's nice to see how motivated young people are especially in the music industry, to think they are just starting off as well. For those that have never been to a studio, seeing them come in every week, off their own back and in their free time. To see them jump straight in and produce something, that's magical.

Jamie Powell: I liked the collaborative aim of the three different studios: the Mansfield Studio working with Long Eaton, Nottingham and the whole collaborative aspect and sharing ideas with each other, sending vocals, sending tracks and vice versa. I think it's great that we've all been able to collaborate together, and the best part of it is having young people at another studio remotely working with our young people and collaborating. And being able to do that, in terms of young people putting vocals onto their tracks and again vice versa.



“

**I GAINED EXPERIENCES WITH VOCAL COACHES AND HAD ONE ON ONE LEARNING WITH PIANO AND AS A VOCALIST, IT WAS AMAZINGLY HELPFUL. ALSO I LEARNED HOW TO PRODUCE ON PLATFORMS LIKE LOGIC AND CAN NOW CREATE MY OWN MUSIC WHICH AIDS MY SKILLS AS A SINGER, SONGWRITER AND PRODUCER.**

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“

**DURING THE ENTIRE PROJECT I GOT TO KNOW SOME AMAZING PEOPLE AND LEARN SO MANY AMAZING SKILLS. I MADE A LOT OF FRIENDS WHO I WILL CONTINUE TO COLLABORATE AND THRIVE WITH MAKING MUSIC TOGETHER.**

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“

**THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME I WORK WITH LOGIC PRO X, AND I HAVE LEARNT A LOT ABOUT PRODUCING. INSTEAD OF DOING COVER MUSICAL PIECES/SONGS, I NOW ALSO CREATE MUSIC**

”

“

**AFTER THE MASTER CLASSES ON THE CAREERS IN MUSIC MY KNOWLEDGE WIDEN SO MUCH SO QUICKLY AND MAKES ME APPRECIATE ALL THE OPTIONS MUSIC CAN PROVIDE**

”



**I FEEL LIKE THE WAY YOU TEACH ONE PERSON IS DIFFERENT TO HOW YOU TEACH ANOTHER. I'VE LEARNT HOW TO DEAL WITH DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND IT'S BEEN SATISFYING SEEING THE OUTCOMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.**



**THE MAIN THING FOR ME HAS BEEN LEARNING HOW TO WORK WITH YOUNGER PEOPLE. TRYING DIFFERENT TEACHING STYLES WITH VERY DIFFERENT GROUPS. I LEARNT ABOUT UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT BEHAVIOURS AND DIFFERENT WAYS OF TEACHING DIFFERENT LEVELS AND ABILITIES. FOR ME, IT WAS JUST UNDERSTANDING HOW TO BREAK IT DOWN FOR THEM.**



## MUSIC TRAINEE EXPERIENCE

A positive outcome from our partnership working with independent label Phlexx Records was our Beatknots music leader trainee program.

The initial writing of the Beatknots project began with consultation with a focus group of 18–25-year-olds taking part in the Phlexx Records Incubator Collective, a creative mentorship funded by the Youth Music Incubator fund, where mentees worked in paid roles within the Phlexx label over the course of 2021.

Discussing potential projects for the Incubator, it was encouraging to hear that all mentees were eager to use their skills towards enriching local communities. There was a lot of interest from the collective to get involved in future music-making projects that supported younger members of our local community.

For the Beatknots project a great outcome for us was to be able to offer much-needed musical enrichment for our young participants, whilst also cultivating music pedagogy among the Phlexx Records Incubator collective.

The consultation group agreed that targeting 16-to-18-year-olds on the project would be most beneficial in terms of coming out of lockdown. The group highlighted the importance for young people to have strong role models, and mentors that could also monitor our participants' mental health. We discussed how cultural experiences were so important to our development, transiting through our teenage years, and how cultural enrichment shapes our identity, style, and friendship groups.

Gaddiel Nkeita was selected from the collective as the Beatknots Trainee music leader across all three sites. Having recently been involved in the Phlexx Collective Incubator project, Gaddiel brought with him experience in composition and piano. He was also able to lead a specialised workshop on creating music for film and TV, based upon his commercial work following the scheme.

Despite a wealth of experience in music production, Gaddiel had not led any music sessions previously and looked forward to an opportunity to show people what he'd learnt from the music community.

Prior to the start of the delivery of the Beatknots Project, Gaddiel took part in a 5-week training program delivered by Nottingham C.A.N. The sessions focused on a variety of topics such as session planning, learning styles, teaching methods, delivering creative workshops and dealing with challenging behaviour. The ambition of the training program was to upskill and develop Gaddiel's knowledge and understanding of community music delivery and prepare him to deliver his own sessions and workshops.

At the end of the project Gaddiel reported two main areas of development within his music leadership, acquiring different teaching styles and dealing with different behaviours.





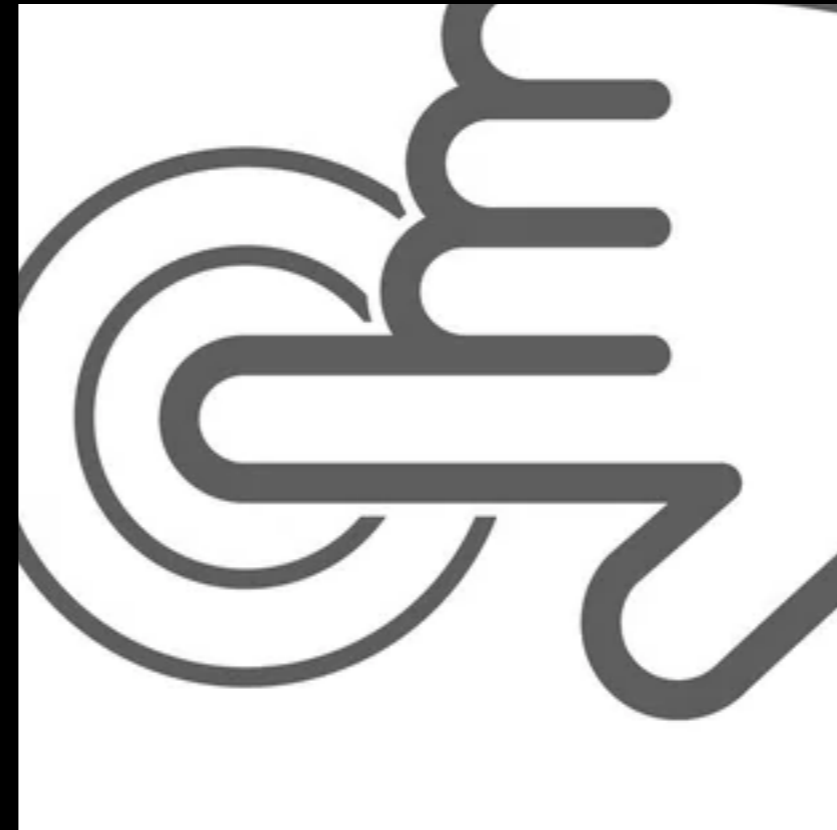
# BEATKNOTS VOL.1

## THE ALBUM

# BEATKNOTS



VOL.1



## OUTCOMES

**17** Participants Collaborated on the album

**100** CDS Were distributed

**2** Tracks have been aired on BBC East Midlands Introducing

**3** Participants had their first BBC Radio Interview

**6** Tracks were synced on a local skateboarding documentary

# BEATKNOTS

- 1 **BLACK HOLE** ft. FAITH & AREBEE **NICK L & DANK LANK**
- 2 **DRUMANS** | **FIN**
- 3 **CHANGE** ft. RITTU KAUR & JOSH **NICK L**
- 4 **LEN** | **FIN**
- 5 **BREAK BREAD** ft. YUNG CAPZ **REFLEX BEATS**
- 6 **FEEL** ft. JOSH, TENSE & WHITTY **JOSH**
- 7 **FREEDOM** ft. FAITH **FIN**
- 8 **HOLD TIGHT** | **BAYLS**
- 9 **DONT COME TO ME** ft. KYSAR & 16K **THIR13EN**
- 10 **MOONLIGHT** | **RITTU KAUR**
- 11 **PARADISE** ft. YUNG CAPZ **PROTEKTOR**
- 12 **PLAK** | **FIN**
- 13 **TALENTED** ft. 16K **THIR13EN**
- 14 **WITHOUT YOU BAE** | **AREBEE**
- 15 **SANCAY** | **FIN**

# BEATKNOTS

“

IT WAS AN AWESOME PERFORMANCE!! I COULD NOT BE HAPPIER. IT HAS BEEN A YEAR SINCE I PERFORMED IN FRONT OF AUDIENCE. IT HELPED ME A LOT AND MADE ME GROW CONFIDENCE. I CAN BE A LOT MORE OF A CALMER, MATURE PERFORMER.

”

“

THE PERFORMANCE WENT VERY WELL AND IT HAS TAUGHT ME TO BE MORE CONFIDENT IN MY ABILITIES AND HAS HELPED ME BELIEVE IN MYSELF A LOT MORE

”

“

I DEFINITELY ENJOYED THE EXPERIENCE AND ENJOYED PERFORMING AT ONE OF THE BIG STAGES ROUGHTRADE, I THINK THE OPPORTUNITY TO PERFORM IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT NOT ONLY GIVES SOME OF US THE EXPERIENCE OF OUR FIRST GIGS BUT ALSO GIVES MORE EXPERIENCED OF GAINING A SO WE CAN GET MORE PERFORMANCE OPPORTUNITIES AT HIGHER LEVELS.

”



## THE CAROUSEL

To launch the album and provide performance opportunities for our young participants, Phlexx Records organised a launch event for us at The Carousel Nottingham.

Performing alongside up and coming artists from the Nottingham Music Scene, 13 of our young participants performed their music to an audience of 86 people.

This opportunity led to our young people being invited to further performances with 4 of our participants performing at Blend Cafe for Hockley Hustle's Young Hustlers and then 8 of our young participants were given the opportunity to perform at the Raw Talent Showcase held at Nottingham venue Rough Trade.



## THE LAUNCH

STONK  
BEATKNOTS



## FAITH – safe social media usage FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

Faith is a singer and often collaborates on rap songs with her own interludes and melodies. She enjoys session work and is currently studying musical theatre at college. Through the Beatknots project, she has been collaborating with orchestral musicians and music producers and learning music production software Logic. Faith has been able to use the project to develop different genres and different vocal techniques within her music. She also reflected on the usefulness of the social media sessions, where she has now changed some of the ways she uses social media as a result:

“So now, I do not really post that much about location, or I hide certain content about my music. You’ve got to be careful. Some artists and some labels do not have your best interest at heart. Some people just want to rip off your songs. So, I learnt about being aware of copywrite and that you should be careful to have that in order. Also, you should make sure you know the people you work with and have some good mentors to support you”

## RITTU – MUSIC INDUSTRY CAREERS

Rittu joined Beatknots with no prior experience in music production or studio work. She has been singing in secondary school and choir clubs, but has never recorded her own song in a studio. From the project she has learnt about where vocals sit within music production and electronic music in particular. She has gained knowledge and experience in logic software and soundtrap, where she can write her own code as a way of creating drumbeats. The highlight of the project for her was writing and recording her own song, and also learning about a wide variety of careers in the music industry:

“I’ve definitely broadened my view on the music industry. I think that most people think music is a dead-end thing, but I’ve learnt so much about the many jobs you can do. We did a masterclass the other day, where we learnt that you could do the music for adverts and tv and still make quite a lot of money. As you know music is not just a dead-end career, you can definitely do something with it, because music is everywhere.”



## CASE STUDIES

BEATKNOTS





## JOSH – FROM PERFORMER TO ENGINEER

Josh is an instrumental musician but wanted to learn more about the beat-making process and gain knowledge about the music industry that would help him in future. Despite having sung and performed music before, Josh had not recorded in a studio. Starting college straight after lockdown, Josh struggled to make friends, however Beatknots helped him to meet people with similar interests and work collaboratively on music production. He feels excited about creating music that will be part of an album and by the technical skills he has developed in engineering:

“The thing that surprised me the most as all the engineering I was doing because at one point I was getting involved in that, rather than just focusing on my vocal work. I wanted to see how it works behind the scenes. I’ve learned quite a bit about logic because I’ve used logic before, but not to create, not to get beats. So there’s a lot of things I learned like sampling. I think it was called analog sampling, which I completely didn’t know about as well as the different equipment you can use to create these and learning the different shortcuts”

## LUKE – FINDING THE RIGHT PATH

Luke decided to engage with Beatknots and he was struggling with what he wanted to do in future. Having never worked with music production or been in a music studio before, he reflected on the big learning curve that he had been through. Over lockdown he had taken up graphic design and had felt like he’d found a talent for his future, as well as a hobby that he really enjoyed. Learning about the music industry through this project, was wider than solely music production, it helped Luke to find a place where he felt he may have a future:

“Making music with my friend and being able to be a part of that made me really happy. It has also helped me decide what I wanted to do, and I’ve decided to go seek out graphic design, things like making album covers in future. There are different possible jobs that you can get into in the music industry and it’s not just about producing music. There’s a lot more that needs to be done to produce an album. So, I wasn’t thinking of graphic design in terms of music production before, but now I think I would enjoy graphic design in the music industry”





## YUNGCAPZ – RE-CONNECTING WITH MUSIC AFTER LOCKDOWN

Yungcapz describes himself as ‘not really a talkative person’. He came along to the project as his friends told him that he was good at rapping and needed to put himself out there more. As well as developing confidence in his own rapping style, Yungcapz has been learning different techniques for performing and recording, such as breathing control. Reflecting on his experience of Beatknots, he reported the value of music for being able to express his emotions, having dealt with many difficult life situations during Covid-19. Being part of the project enabled Yungcapz to re-connect with music and get back into a studio space where he can feel a sense of achievement in the songs that he creates:

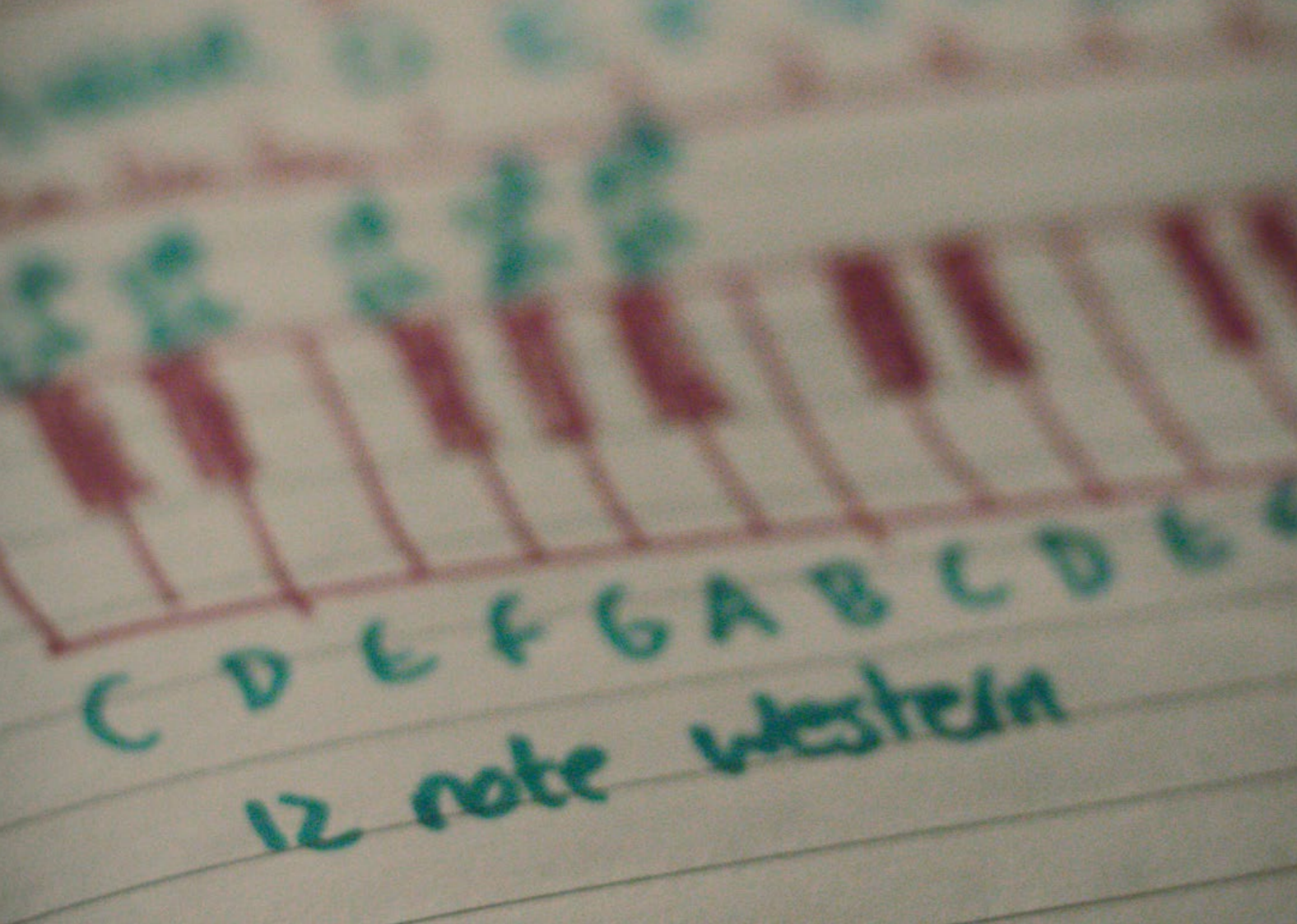
“In lockdown I was writing a lot more music. I knew the studios weren’t going to open so I just was writing, writing, writing. But my music kind of stopped for a while because my cousin went to jail and my grandmother died as well, so yeah it was hard and really difficult times for me. Music just made me stop thinking about those things so much and put my focus on something I enjoy. On this project, the first song that I made, called ‘break bread’ was my best achievement, because I’ve never really done that kind of collaborative work, like a feature on a song, before”

## FINLAY – WORKING WITH PROFESSIONALS

Finley is a young music producer and joined Beatknots as he wanted to make connections with like-minded people. He came to the project with previous experience of music production, but has built on this through looking how genres work, how to build up a track and how to work with other artists. Through taking part in the masterclasses, Finley has been able to accelerate his music-making and helped him regain his musical confidence after Covid lockdowns restricted his activity. Working collaboratively, Finley has been able to create higher quality, professional standard music:

“Some of the songs that we’ve made, I’ve been really happy with the outcome of most of them. I’ve been really surprised at how we’ve come together because I thought it was going to be a bit daunting. I thought making an album would have been a bit of pressure. But it’s been a team effort. We’ve all been getting on and contributing to this. And I think that the advice that we have had, especially because I’m working at the studio at the minute, has given me more independence. Having people who are really good at what they do, has been great for me as I’ve been self-taught. I’ve never had anybody to tell me that something doesn’t work. So, having people to tell me where I can improve and how to finish things properly has improved my skills”





## DANIEL HENRY – LONG EATON MUSIC LEADER

First of all I wanna say thank you for involving Unit03Music as part of this amazing project. Creating an in-depth programme teaching all different aspects of music and the industry has helped participants navigate their interest in music. I've seen some participants grow within the 20 weeks which has been wonderful to see, and one thing I've loved to see is the new friendships they've made through this project, as it helps them build their confidence up within social situations.

Working with Nottingham C.A.N has been great and I think we have all learnt of each other and made new connections through the different studios. I feel that projects like this must go on, As the results and outcomes I've witnessed have been life changing for a lot of our participants. Given them the opportunity to create a album and perform for the first time in front of a crowd can be a opportunity of a lifetime for a lot of our participants and this project made it happen. Part 2 is definitely needed.

## LIATI – NOTTINGHAM CITY MUSIC LEADER

The delivery team connected incredibly naturally. Personally I have engaged in commercial work with Gadz following the project pooling our resources to develop a string of trailer music set to go on for commercial release and placement. I also intend to find paid work for some of the participants in a session artists capacity via my business The Elementz Studios. I have also had meetings with members the group in my own time to help offer advice and support in their decision making processes regarding opportunities they have seeded themselves. Beyond this, myself and my business partner have actively begun implementing an element of community focused work into our business. We have entered into an agreement with a partner to provide professional mentoring to young creatives currently in alternative education. We will be working with year 10 & 11 students and delivering to groups of between 5-10 at a time and this is all thanks to this project.

I found the project incredibly fulfilling. The level of attention and engagement I received when demonstrating my skillset clearly showed me how enthusiastic the group was. I gained a great deal of pleasure when I began witnessing the group growing in skill and confidence utilising what they were learning from myself and the rest of delivery team. I believe that working in a real world commercial environment with creatives who are actively engaged in the music industry adds authenticity and can provide a clear view towards a career in music.





**AS AN ORGANISATION THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN ONE OF OUR MAIN FLAGSHIP PIECES OF WORK. BEING INVOLVED IN MUSIC ENRICHMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND DOING IT TO THE PROFESSIONAL LEVEL OF WORKING WITH A RECORD LABEL AND WORKING WITH AMAZING PRODUCERS IN GOOD LOCATIONS, IS SOMETHING THAT WE CERTAINLY WANT TO CONTINUE.**



Trekkah Benjamin - Creative Director & Lead Arts Practitioner - Nottingham C.A.N

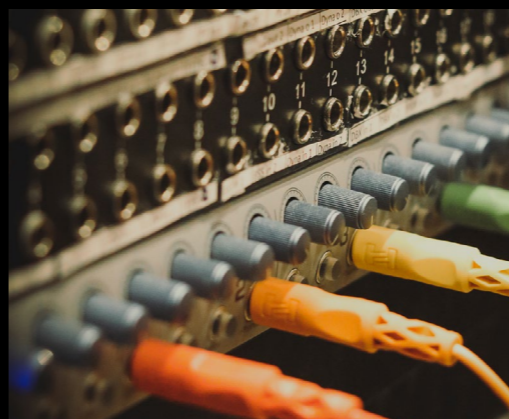
This project was important for the organisational mission of Nottingham C.A.N through supporting local music studios and supporting young people to re-connect with music post-Covid.

Building on the organisation's previous experience of and learning from the Phlexx Collective, similar workshops with music industry professionals were hosted, but this time with an added music production element. In addition, being able to draw on young people from the Phlexx collective to run workshops and be Music Leaders was highly beneficial for the music community, which Nottingham C.A.N is seeking to support. Employing Gaddiel Nketia as Music Trainee, across all three sites (instead of having different Trainees per location) was a beneficial experience for their development in working with different groups of young people and different skills levels. This project was also a springboard for Gaddiel to continue to work on future placements, alongside his new album, TV work for Sky and session musician gigs.

Further organisational development included the creation of a set of pedagogical resources for music production education. An eight-series scheme of work was created that Nottingham C.A.N will be able to apply in future locations and projects.

Using different platforms, different studios, different setups, and different software, Nottingham C.A.N staff developed more specialised knowledge in working with Logic, Ableton and Fruity Loops. Adapting to the software that young people are most drawn to using, which may be free easily-accessible software, an area for future development would be for training in for new software for staff.

Looking to the future, there is clearly scope for further expanding this project. The addition of specialised 'instruments schools' has been proposed, where young people can learn to be session musicians who provide original 'Beatknots' samples for the producers. There is also the possibility of including other artistic mediums, such as video editing and DJing and a vocal academy, all that feed into Electronic Music Production and all which are aligned with the music industry. Hosting a programme that offered a whole spectrum of specialised skills aligned with electronic music production from instruments to recording, producing and performing as a DJ, would be highly beneficial for young people.



## ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT



BEATKNOTS



 **THE ELEMENTZ**  
STUDIOS

**YOUTH  
MUSIC**



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