

Music Fusion is a young person friendly recording studio in Havant

- We access and engage young people through credible music (11 -25 years).
- We provide a safe, creative space for our young people to connect, socialise and make great music.
- We specialise in working with young people who are experiencing '*challenging life circumstances*'.
- We inspire our young people to use their music as a platform for positive social action.

We work with some of the most complex and vulnerable young people in Hampshire.

Young people are referred to Music Fusion by a range of established partners. Our young people are anxious, depressed, experiencing trauma, not in main stream education or employment, from areas of extreme deprivation and on the wrong side of the law. They are often seen as pariahs in their community. Organized criminals grooming our young people is now common place; as referred to in the media as 'county lines'.

We are a safe space.

Our studio, live room and office are based in The Spring Arts & Heritage Centre in Havant. This gives us access to creative and friendly breakout spaces, front of house, café and a performance venue. Even though our studio is based in Havant, our young people often travel up to 80+ miles (round trip) to attend sessions.

Music Fusion have been described by the police as a credible third party; not parents and not teachers. We offer our young people a few hours of fun and creativity in their week, while at the same time providing a space for them to explore, connect and use their music to reflect on their life choices.

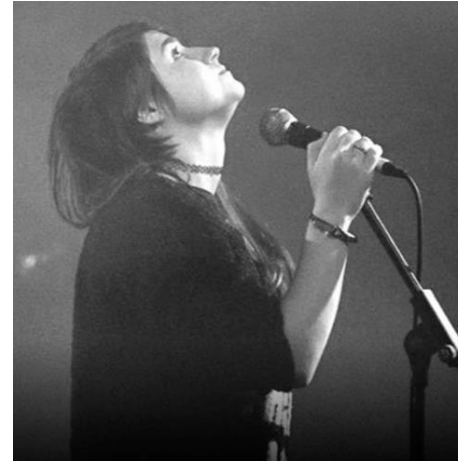


'The Music Fusion team are making such a difference to people's lives. The passion for what they do is truly inspiring.' Tom Farncombe - Hal Leonard Europe

Our offer to young people

On a day-to-day level we offer our young people somewhere to go and something to do. Our young people are given a safe place, a much-needed voice, a platform and a cause to get behind. Through positive role models and peer support, we aim to build our young people's self-esteem, confidence and resilience. Through the positive social narrative of their music, we aim to build bridges between the young people and their communities.

When it comes to music our young people are the experts at Music Fusion. They tell us what to do. We listen to them and then facilitate it. Through this approach we have consistently high engagement and retention among our young people.



We offer a clear musical progression route for them to follow. Each young person progresses at their own pace. They can:

- Try out an instrument
- Learn to sing / rap
- Write their own material
- Rehearse and record their own track
- Collaborate with other young artists
- Release material via our record label
- Film a video
- Perform
- Join the 'Mavericks' programme and contribute to an album / video documentary
- Volunteer
- Join our New Music Leader programme and become a paid music leader.

Case study – Male 16 years old

B1 (male 16) Youth Offending Assistant Team Manager. B1 was open to the Youth Offending Team (YOT) on a YCC for theft of a motor vehicle and theft from his sister. He was high risk of reoffending with high safety and wellbeing concerns. He was also referred to Prevent due to concerns of radicalisation. B1 was subject to a Child Protection plan along with his younger siblings due to the risks that drug dealers placed on him and his family. This young person presented as having Low Mood and although he attended YOT appointments he would not fully engage with YOT or make eye contact. He refused referrals to substance misuse team and CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.) He accepted a referral to Music Fusion and it was the only thing that he wished to engage with. YOT provided him with initial travel warrants to get to Havant, and Music Fusion staff met him at the train station and escorted him to the venue. As a result of his engagement with Music Fusion, his mood improved. He started to engage in YOT sessions and stopped spending time in Portsmouth where some of the risks he placed himself in were present. Due to his engagement with Music Fusion (constructive activities) and improvement in family relationships, this young person's family was taken off the CP plan.

B1's Mother. *"Drugs, drinking & stealing were always on the agenda... Then being beaten up and threatened with a knife... Then stealing cars and running drugs for the big boys... It was a downward spiral for my boy.. The police were involved and then social services.. then YOT... THEN MUSIC FUSION Thank you for giving me my kind beautiful Son back..the boy I knew I had raised! He works hard now as a well respected labourer and loves coming over to music fusion when he can, the turn around is amazing I know most of it was his own work but my god MUSIC FUSION was there at just the right time in my boys life. Thank you for letting him live inside the music you create and letting his bars be his way of coping with life the right way !"*

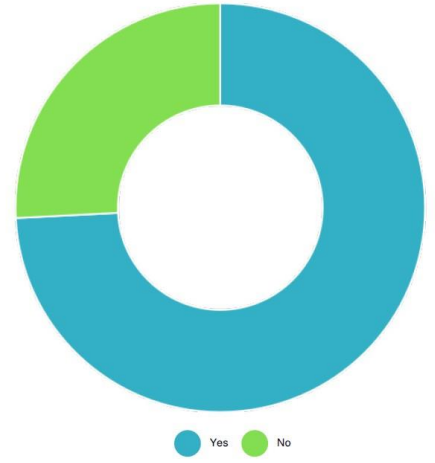
We surveyed 92 of our young people



Do you think your neighbourhood has problems with Anti Social Behaviour?

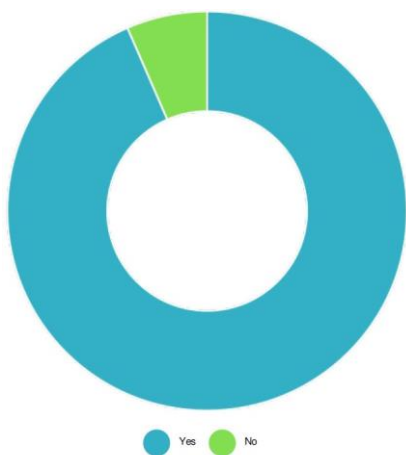
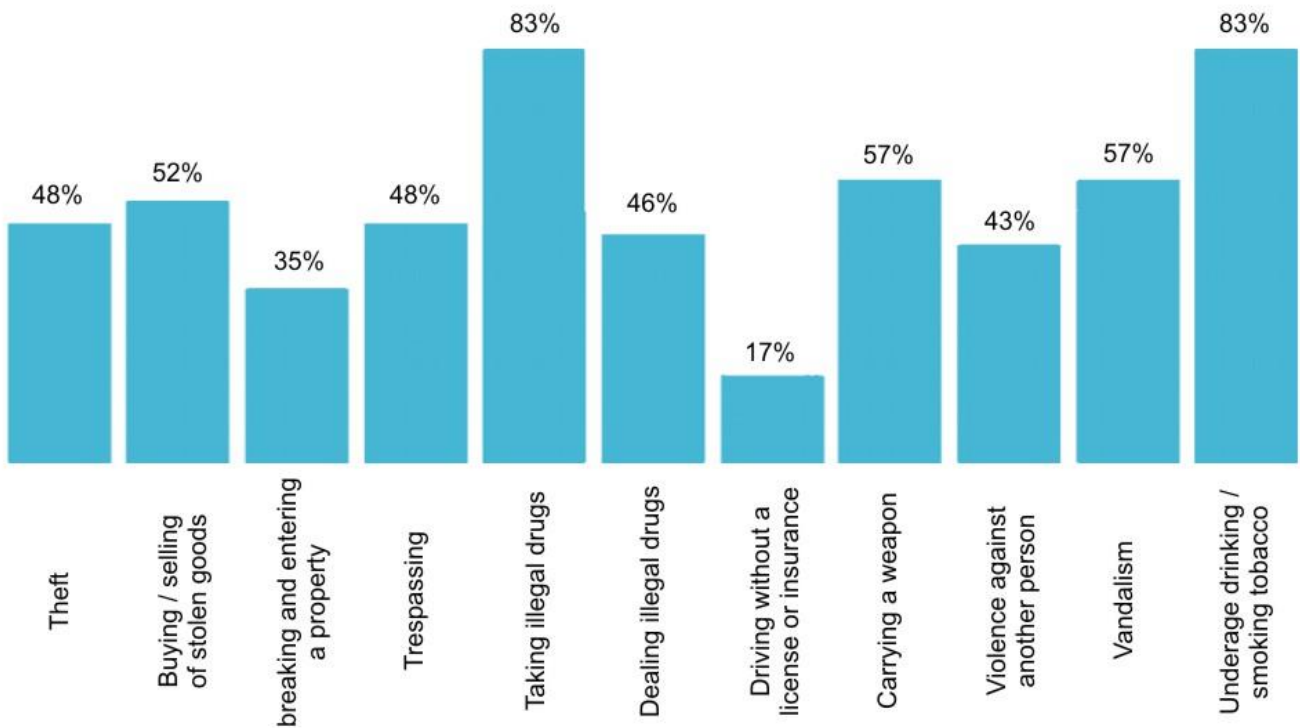


Have you ever been beaten up?

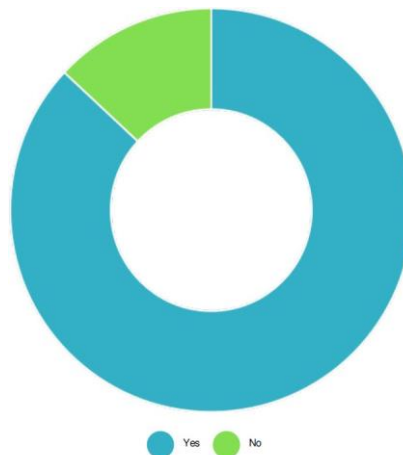


Have you ever seen people carrying a weapon?

Have you ever committed a criminal act? If yes what?



Do you feel you have stopped any criminal behaviour due to Music Fusion?



Do you feel Music Fusion has given you advice that has kept you from going to prison?

Music Fusion work with young people from some of the most deprived areas in our region.

Some of our young people are sleeping rough, sofa surfing and accessing food banks on a daily basis.

Many of our young people suffer from mental health issues including anxiety and depression. Some are self harming and suicidal.

The need that our charity is addressing

We work with some of the most complex and vulnerable young people in Hampshire. Our young people are referred to us by established partners including: Hampshire's Youth Offending Teams, Children's and Family Services, Non-mainstream education centres, other young people's charities and the NHS. Our young people have:

- Poor mental / physical health
- Are from a culture of extreme youth violence
- From families that had been poor for generations
- Not in mainstream education
- Often, have never left their housing estate, let alone the country

Common traits amongst our young people include:

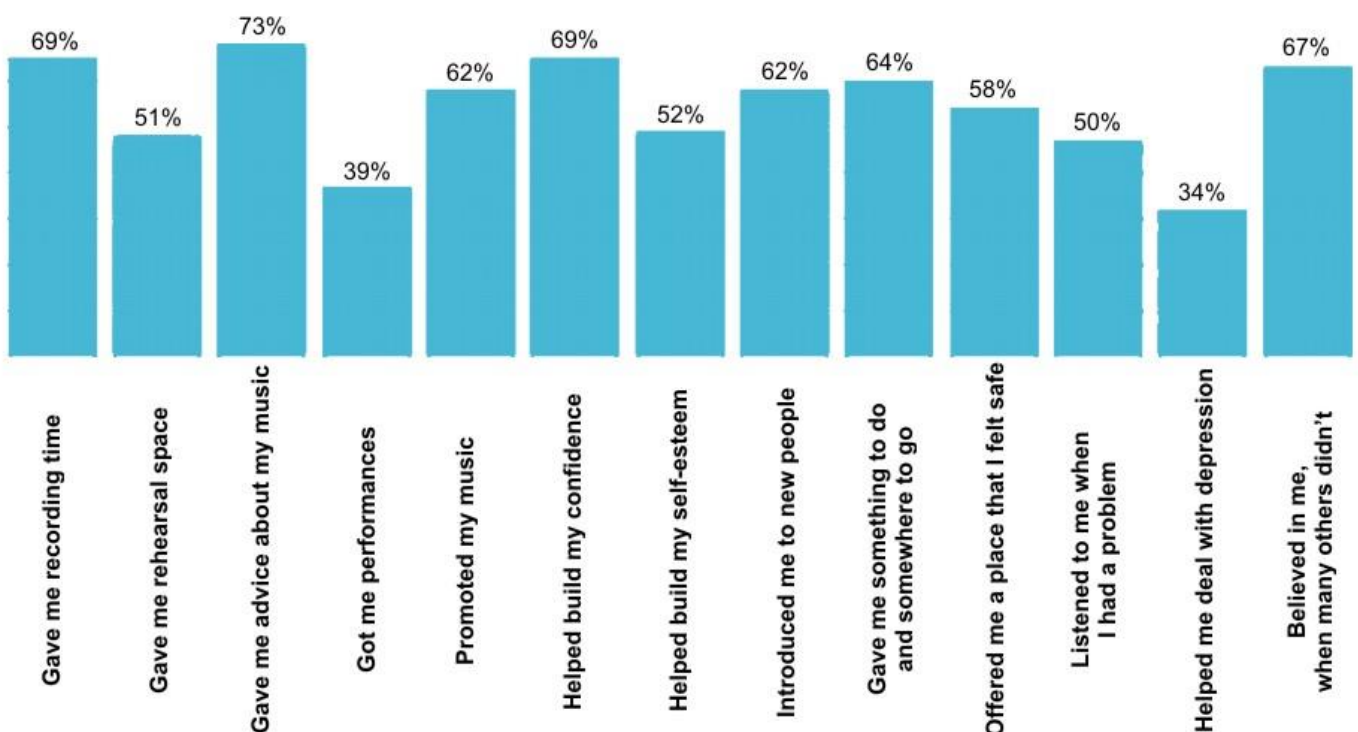
- Having nowhere to go and nothing to do
- Getting into trouble – county lines
- They are often seen as pariahs in their community
- They have no voice, confidence, lack empathy and critical thinking, are experiencing trauma
- They are disengaged, disenfranchised, not accessing support services – for them, prison is a real option
- We are needed as we are often the only agency the young person will choose to engage with

The difference we make (impact)

Music Fusion invests in young people on the fringes of our society. Using music (and the culture that comes with it) as a tool to start an open, genuine and authentic dialogue. Our young people often think they are the only ones going through life's challenges.

- By giving our young people a voice, and collaborating musically, we help them to realise they are not alone.
- Through peer support and positive role models our young people get the chance to reintegrate into society.

Has Music Fusion help you? If so, how?



Why it is important

We aim to break the cycle of poor mental health, abuse and neglect that our young people face on a daily basis. We want our young people to transition into healthy adults who then go on to have healthy and happy children. Our sessions are designed to support and build our young people's self-esteem, confidence, communication skills, empathy, resilience and critical thinking. We inspire our young people to use their voices as a platform for positive social action, to contribute back to their community.

We asked our young people and partners 'What makes Music Fusion unique?'

- *'Providing a safe, fun, non-judgmental environment where young people can be themselves.'*
- *'We are realistic. We are not here to make you famous, we are not here to make money with you. We are here to help you make great music that is an extension of you.'*
- *'We challenge our young people to be different, i.e. turn away from crime and pursue more rewarding activities.'*
- *'We work at the young person's pace. Each young person will develop at a different rate, we provide consistency, empathy and respect.'*
- *'Regardless of age or ability, everyone gets a shot. We don't believe in showboating our young people or pushing those with greater ability to the front.'*
- *'We have a clear progression route. We aim to help young people for as long as they need it, not just for a school term.'*
- *'Young people get the opportunity to train and work for us. 90% of our music leaders are young people who have accessed our service and now get paid above the recommended living wage.'*

Music Fusion see success as:

- Young people realising they have other options in life, other than crime.
- Young people feeling they are part of and contributing to their community - Safer communities.
- Helping young people back into education, training and employment.
- Breaking a cycle of poor mental health, offending, neglect and violence.
- Helping young people to express themselves and make great music / art.

We work closely with our partners, support services and families to get a more holistic picture of our young people's needs and the impact of our work.

Notably, our provision is optional; for us success means young people regularly attending sessions, engaging and participating in projects.

We offer accreditation in the form of Arts Awards, as a stepping stone to getting our young people back into education or training. For us the biggest success is a young person moving on and no longer needing our provision or accessing mainstream education.



How we help our community



Music Fusion has both **preventative** and **restorative** strategies - to catch the young person before something bad happens or help them after it has. Without Music Fusion's intervention, there can be a huge cost to the tax payer to repair the damage the young person causes, process them through the courts and finally keep them locked up.

We are one of the few agencies young people consistently want to engage with, supporting and enabling them to start contributing to their community, instead of smashing it up. The national audit office states that the average young offender costs the tax payer £7,250 per year. 10% are reoffenders and cost the tax payer £29,000 per year.

https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/1011663_technical_paper.pdf

It costs Music Fusion approximately £1,070 to work with one young person for one year.

Music Fusion work with the most costly 10% of young people likely to reoffend.

Over the last 12 months (2021-22) we have prevented 82 young people from reoffending.

**This has directly saved the Police, Courts, Social Services and Youth Offending Teams
£2,378,000 next year... and the years after.**

'We've been privileged to work with the team at Music Fusion. They have an engagement with young people most organisations could only dream of.' - Mind (Havant and East Hants)

'I'm absolutely awe-stricken at what you guys are achieving. It fills me with joy to know great youth work is happening; through great music.' Chris Baker inMusic Europe Ltd

Our track record

Music Fusion was established as a charity in 2008. Since then we have worked with over 30,000 young people.

In 2011 we started an ongoing programme called **'Words Not Weapons / Mavericks'** to address a rise in youth violence in our region. The programme has since worked with over 2000 young people, released 6 albums, produced 6 web documentaries and received national recognition.

Mavericks shows the path to a bigger picture, a better perspective. Going to prison for a postcode or a rift on social media is the biggest waste of a life. The project brings everyone together to celebrate their individual talents and show how people from different areas can put aside their differences, make peace and collaborate to make great things happen.

- 2013 - 'Words Not Weapons' won the BITC (Business in the Community) award for inspiring social action in young people. The awards ceremony took place at the Royal Albert Hall, where our young people got to perform. The award was presented by the Prime Minister (David Cameron), James Corden and Joanne Lumley.
- 2019 – The Guardian came to spend the day with us. They wrote and published a feature on our work. Knife crime: using the power of drill music to tackle gang culture.
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2019/aug/21/knife-crime-drill-music-tackle-gang-culture-young-people>
- 2021 – Words Not Weapons / Mavericks won the prestigious Youth Music / Hal Leonard Europe 'Social Justice' award. The award was presented at the Troxy in London.

Email feedback

'I just wanted to say how brilliant the Mavericks 4/New Music Leader Programme Launch was – honestly such an amazing evening. The talent from the performers was astounding, I'm not sure what I expected but I wouldn't have known they were not professionals, their ability and lyrics blew me away.

In addition to their performances though there were two other areas that actually made me feel quite emotional (in a good way). One was their ability to hold small talk conversations. I spoke to a lot of the performers in the break and at the end to congratulate them and they were so genuinely great at saying thank you, thanks for your support and also asking things like how far had we travelled and was the storm OK where we were. In our role in YOT we know that communication can be a huge barrier for young people and its not easy, so I was incredibly impressed.

The other area was their support for each other. We sat towards the back by the stairs and a number of the performers sat in front of us – we joked that the seats might need to be fixed after as they were moving and dancing and cheering so much – all completely appropriately and in the spirit of the evening, but the little 'wows' they gave each other or nods of approval for their peers was again just so wonderful to see and I loved how much they were enjoying themselves.

One of the young people I spoke to at the end and asked how he felt said,

'I am on cloud 9...this is what that feels like isn't it'

I hope you are equally as proud of yourselves for what you have helped them to achieve.'

Laura Crassweller
Youth Crime Prevention (YCP) Team Leader
Hampshire Youth Offending Team

Music Fusion are a small charity achieving big things.

Music Fusion is gratefully funded and supported by our network of corporate partners. This includes:

- Fujitsu – donated office computers
- Digitoolbox – provide office software and IT support
- GHS – pat testing
- Fishwick Accountancy – accountant and payroll services
- The Spring – internet
- Hal Leonard Europe – studio equipment and software
- InMusic Brand – music equipment
- Focusrite – Studio equipment
- Marshall – studio headphones
- Music Industry Association - instruments

How can your business get involved?

There are a number of ways your business can support Music Fusion right now. From 'Give As You Earn' to 'Dress Down Fridays', these are simple, fun and easy ways to get involved.

Music Fusion is a young person led organisation. Our young people have clearly stated they want to work collaboratively with more young people from across the country. In 2021 we piloted a Words Not Weapons / Mavericks exchange programme with two young people friendly recording studios in Torbay and Birmingham. In 2022-23 we have ten partners participating from across the country. This includes:

- ACM - Guildford
- Sound Communities – Torbay
- Bolo Brook – Ealing
- Inspire Sounds – Oxford
- Pie Factory Music – Thanet
- Raw Material – London
- The Pump – Birmingham
- Yellow Bean Studio – Leicester
- Audio Active – Brighton
- Music Works – Gloucester

Our home and our studio are based in Hampshire, however our reach is national. Music Fusion are now looking for sponsors who might benefit from the positive association with this award winning programme with a national reach.



If you would like to know more, please do get in touch.

Jinx Prowse
Chief Executive Officer
Music Fusion
56 East Street
Havant
PO9 1BS
Tel: 07545928502
9.00am – 5.00pm (Mondays - Fridays)

One last thing - The music counts.....

Music Fusion aim to support our young people / music leaders to make high quality, authentic music that is an extension of them selves. Please listen to some of our recent releases –

<https://strongchoicemusic.bandcamp.com>



Watch some short films

About the mavericks programme <https://youtu.be/z-iU7MYzrkc>



Are projects like this important <https://youtu.be/QgqFmTWXG8A>



Follow us @MusicFusionUK