

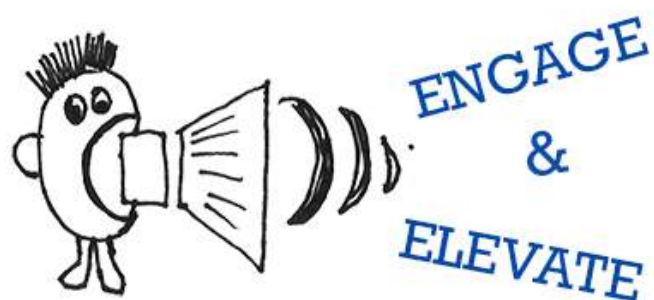
MANIFESTO

ABOUT US

Music is powerful. It has a place in everyone's life, whether it's a song that is close to your heart, a process that helps you through challenging times or a way to celebrate your talents. We believe everyone has the right to take part in music making, irrespective of ability, age, background or circumstances.

At SoCo Music Project we are passionate about supporting music at all levels and have been delivering inspirational music engagement programmes since 2008.





Our mission is to change lives through music and our work follows two strands:



Through our **Engage** programme we develop projects that inspire, captivate and entertain. These include our supported music making for young people and adults who face significant challenges in their lives.

Our **Elevate** programme supports music careers, whether it's recording tracks at our professional studios, showcasing musicians' talents with a Balcony Session or training and guidance for emerging and established practitioners.

Our music delivery transforms lives by:

-  *Introducing the value of music to those that would otherwise not experience this*
-  *Providing strong and relevant progression routes to those wishing to develop musical skills*
-  *Celebrating and showcasing the talents of music makers at all levels*
-  *Supporting the sector to provide a platform for music to thrive.*

Through our various engagement programmes, we use music as a vehicle to improving wellbeing, connectivity and resilience for all our participants.

"SoCo are playing a leading role in the development of music projects with hard to reach groups in both the educational and public health arena"

— James Gough,
Director of Southampton
Cultural Development Trust.



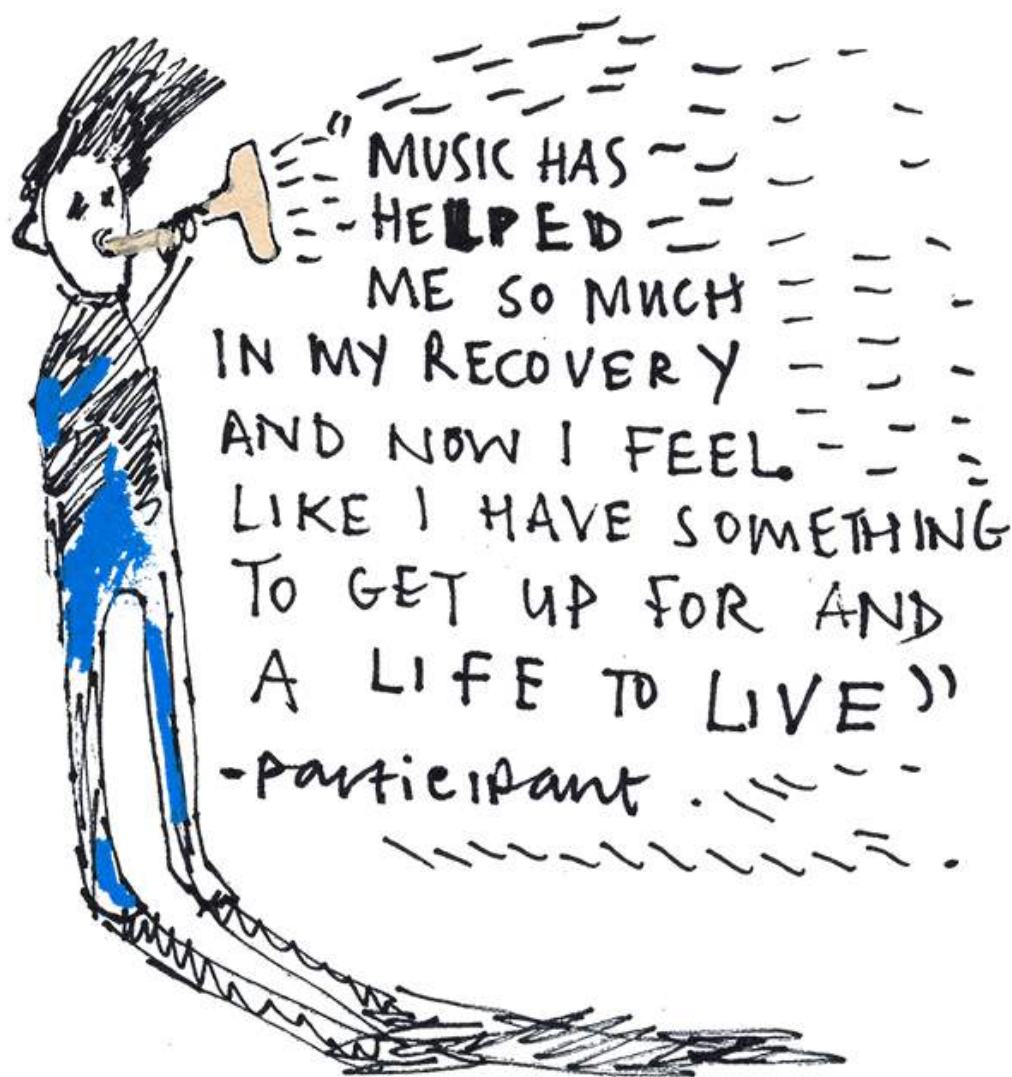
Alongside our delivery programme we are committed to supporting the wider arts sector through our strategic development programme. We are advocates of cross-sector collaboration, linking up with public services, academia, businesses and public health providers to develop meaningful new ways of using music to create positive change in people's lives. We place a strong importance on working in partnership by exploring and developing meaningful ways to work collaboratively through the design and delivery of engagement programmes that create positive change in people's lives.

We are committed to supporting the arts sector to improve lives through training and networking; measuring the

impact of our programmes; understanding how to make the case for better investment in music and arts; developing partnerships with organisations outside of our field; and working strategically to enhance the offer locally and regionally.

In addition to this, we create spaces for music making and artistic production. Over the years we've developed creative spaces in community centres, shopping malls, government buildings and park pavilions!

The vision and enthusiasm of our team drives the organisation forward. With skills ranging from creative planning, strategic development, project management and music delivery, our experience is as diverse as the participants we work with.





SoCo Music Project provides music programmes that engage and inspire. We believe that music has a profound effect on people's lives and work hard to provide music-making opportunities that are accessible to our diverse communities.

Working across Hampshire for the last seven years, we have continued to deliver high quality music programmes and creative learning experiences for people in education, youth and community settings. We specialise in supporting people who face significant challenges in their lives through a variety of creative experiences. We strive to remove any barriers which may prevent them from taking part, which can often be complex (physical and/or learning disabilities, mental health challenges or life circumstance).

We work in partnership with a variety of

organisations including education, youth and support agencies, public services, local authorities, voluntary, health and the creative sector to develop and deliver rich music programmes. Examples of our delivery include:

-  *Songwriting to support mental health*
-  *Improvisation Sessions with young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities*
-  *Creative music-making and performance with adults recovering from substance misuse*
-  *Urban music workshops for young people who are at risk of offending*
-  *Music technology with young people in Pupil Referral Units*
-  *Singing with Young Carers*

We develop and deliver bespoke programmes that make a real difference to participants' lives; responding to their specific needs, musical interests and backgrounds.

Our Approach

We provide high quality, engaging music-making experiences. We place our participants at the heart of our work, ensuring that delivery is organic and flexible. Being responsive to, and mindful of the complex needs of our participants is vital, especially as many may face multiple challenges in their personal and educational lives.

We employ highly skilled Music Leaders who are versatile and experienced in delivering a diverse range of interactive music making programmes. Many are active musicians/ performers, which we believe to be an important component of our delivery. This makes for a more authentic experience for participants, with Music Leaders being inspirational role models.

We are committed to developing the skills and expertise of our Music Leaders, ensuring that we are constantly able to innovate and inspire. We adopt Youth Music's "Do, Review, Improve" Quality Framework to ensure successful project delivery, and to continually reflect on our practice. We regularly attend forums that are representative of the communities we engage with, fostering relationships that support a longer lasting change.

Young People

The collective voice of young people informs our delivery, inspiring us to provide opportunities that engage in an authentic and meaningful way, whilst supporting our participants to fulfill their potential.

Young people who face challenging circumstances in their lives can often face barriers to engagement, missing out on opportunities to make music. There is no such thing as a "one size fits all" approach to music engagement and this is why our approach is valued and successful. We provide a safe and supportive environment where untapped creativity can emerge and expression through music is nurtured and celebrated. We thrive on the opportunity to respond to challenges and support positive change in young people's lives through music.

We have grown and developed our work with young people in challenging circumstances over the years, most recently through the Future Sounds programme and Southampton City Council's CAMHS Grant Scheme.



♫ "There's a buzz around using
♫ music, and the profile of using
music to extend learning has
developed across the whole
School! ♪ - Zoe, Headteacher at Rosewood
Free School

Some of our larger programmes of work include:

Exchanging Notes

We are one of ten organisations nationally to receive funding through Youth Music's Exchanging Notes programme. This longitudinal research programme aims to explore the benefits of informal approaches to music-making in education settings. We are working with Woodlands Community College Inclusion Unit and Rosewood Free School, a PMLD (Profound and Multiple Learning Disability) School in Southampton.

Creative Academy

Creative Academy is a programme of accredited learning that uses music-making and Arts Awards to provide young people outside of mainstream education the chance to be creative and to gain a qualification. We have worked with the Southampton Pupil Referral Unit, Compass School, since 2010 to deliver this programme.

Future Sounds

Through Future Sounds we are developing and delivering a rich programme of specialist music engagement in SEN/D and Youth Justice

settings. Through this exciting programme we are supporting the best possible musical, personal and social outcomes for our participants.

CAMHS Music Provision

We are working with Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in both Southampton and Hampshire, providing engaging music making activities that support vulnerable young peoples wellbeing and helps to improve their mental health.

Sonic Explorers

Sonic Explorers saw us deliver weekly music-making sessions at a variety of SEN/D settings in Southampton, supporting engagement, and developing confidence and communication skills in young people with additional needs.

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Adult Learning

Our Adult Learning Programme sets out to address the lack of accessible creative opportunities available to vulnerable adult groups in and around Southampton. We work in partnership with third sector organisations to develop engagement activities and recruit learners, including those with learning and/or physical disabilities, substance misuse issues, mental health

issues, ex-offenders, the homeless, the unemployed and the elderly.

Our methods are diverse and range from one-off taster sessions and short-term courses to sustained engagement over a number of years. Our delivery supports the development of positive social outcomes amongst participants, which may contribute to their recovery and rehabilitation back into society. This may be through providing communal opportunities to tackle social isolation, developing vital support networks, or offering pathways to employment through the sharing of transferable skills.

Alcohol & Substance Misuse

Our creative engagement with Society of St James' Pathfinder Recovery Group, a group that supports adults with alcohol and/or substance misuse issues,



is a key component of many service users' recovery programmes. These 'jamming' sessions support a core group of aspiring musicians to hone their musical skills by learning and performing cover songs and composing their own music. In addition to this, we provide a number of volunteering and performance opportunities.

Mental Health

We provide creative interventions for adults with mental health difficulties in partnership with support services, such as MCCH, Solent Mind and Richmond Fellowship. We run our weekly SoCo Mental Health Peer Support Music Group in Southampton, which promotes the development of peer support learning through musical performance, songwriting and recording that encompasses a range of musical genres. This consistent engagement has brought about positive benefits to our participants, enabling them to develop friendships and social networks that have reached far beyond that of conventional support.

Learning Disabilities

Working in partnership with local day service groups, such as St Denys Day Service, Way Ahead Day Service, Amity Supported Living and Eastleigh MENCAP, we deliver music-making opportunities for adults with learning and/or physical disabilities. These include a range of activities, from songwriting and DJ-ing to drum circles and music video making, utilising both traditional instrumentation and technologies that allow for more accessible music-making.



We are a music organisation that aspires to put excellence at the heart of everything we do. We aim to support music at all levels and our Elevate programme provides the opportunity for advanced level musicians and artists to find supported progression routes and showcase their talent.

Hightown Studios

Hightown Studios is our professional recording studio in Thornhill, Southampton. In 2009 we won the public vote in the Big Lottery People's Millions, receiving £50,000 to take a disused part of a community centre in an economically deprived area of Southampton and transform it into a vibrant high spec recording facility.

The studio allows us to run Engage programmes with Pupil Referral Units and community groups, alongside professional recording sessions and training opportunities.

We currently provide audio recording sessions and film "Balcony Sessions". Taking great care to get the best results, sonically and visually, these music videos provide local bands/musicians with professional material and valuable exposure.

Southampton Sampler Project

This year we have launched Southampton Sampler 2017, working with local bands/musicians, visual artists and poets to celebrate local music, art and poetry through a vinyl release. The project will create an invaluable snapshot which celebrates the exciting talent in Southampton this year.

CHAOS Network

In 2010 SoCo established the CHAOS Network (Creative, Heritage and Arts Organisations of Southampton), a community resource available to anyone involved in music, arts and culture in Southampton. The group meets

monthly in a variety of venues and creative spaces in the city.

It brings together emerging artists, grassroots practitioners, support organisations and venues, providing a unique opportunity for cross fertilisation of ideas, sharing of news and events, and networking across the whole cultural sector.

In 2016, our CHAOS Conference: Culture City, saw 80 delegates from the city's creative sector come together to be inspired, collaborate and connect with each other.

Rob da Bank's Music Club

Rob da Bank's Music Club is somewhere for teenagers to go to hang out, be inspired, entertained and explore music. We provide workshops, demonstrations, invite inspirationally renowned speakers, and a chill out experience of music and performance. It is a free monthly club for 13-19 year olds held at Newtown Youth and Community Centre in Southampton.

In partnership with Bestival founder and BBC Radio 6 Music DJ Rob da Bank, the Music Club provides opportunities for teenagers to participate in many varied workshops including DJing, Lyricism, Spoken Word, Singing, Guitar workshops and Drum workshops.

Professional Training & Teambuilding

We understand the value of Continued Professional Development (CPD) and ensure that our practitioners have access to a broad range of training opportunities to enhance their skills.

This may be through improving their musical abilities, gaining teaching qualifications or building skills around workshop delivery, enabling them to foster positive personal, social, musical and emotional outcomes for the young people that they work with.

Throughout the year we provide a number of open training opportunities, for people from all levels of musical experience. We also run reflective sessions, allowing those working with music to share their experiences and learn from one another.

We also offer a range of fun and creative team-building and corporate activities around Hampshire, which are designed to support organisations looking to improve performance and creativity in the workplace. Our programme is suitable for companies and organisations looking to promote more effective relationships within their workplace teams and build constructive team behaviours within their organisation.





SoCo Music Project works in collaboration with a variety of organisations and partners to enhance the local creative offer through events, spaces and more.

We play a unique role in the region. We are principally a provider of music-making activities, but we also have an outward-looking approach; supporting the creative, education, voluntary and public sectors.

We work strategically, extending partnerships and measuring impact. We provide a bridge between grassroots groups, the arts and the cultural establishments. We link communities with quality arts, public services, health and education. We constantly strive to provide rich musical experiences and we promote artistic excellence alongside our values of empathy, equality and diversity.

For excellence to thrive there has to be support, pathways and environments. We are committed to establishing highly visible creative spaces that provide these pathways, and can support progression; providing incubation and nurturing spaces for musicians and performers to reach their potential.

Communities are often defined by their diversity, but this can itself be a barrier to engagement. We encourage participants to collaborate and make creative decisions no matter what their background, circumstances or ability. This approach enables us to reduce inequalities and barriers, allowing people to take ownership of their creative output. Our work contributes to community cohesion through celebrating diversity and encouraging innovation.

Events

From open mic to accessible club nights to community events and festivals; SoCo provides ongoing opportunities for the local community to come together and engage in creative events.

Taking place in the summers of 2011 and 2012, SoCoFest was a free community event that celebrated local talent and had young people at its heart.

Umbrella Arts Festival, celebrating arts and wellbeing, took place in Palmerston Park in the summer of 2017. The event was created to celebrate and raise awareness of the benefits of creative intervention amongst vulnerable groups and the wider community of organisations supporting this locally.

Spaces

We have transformed a number of unused buildings and shop spaces into inspiring creative venues. These have enabled us to become visibly embedded within the local community, supporting the creative and cultural sectors through exciting and innovative programmes of delivery and performance.

The **Creative Hub** was located in a city centre shopping mall in Southampton. We developed a vibrant music space that welcomed people of all levels to take part, collaborate and perform during open sessions. We also provided closed door workshops and activities for vulnerable groups, and the space became somewhere they could come to outside of these sessions, a familiar space with friendly staff and access to high quality instruments and equipment.

Hightown Studios, located within an area of high deprivation, provides opportunities for creative engagement alongside professional support and recording services.

In 2014 we developed a pop up creative arts space utilising a large vacant government building in Eastleigh. **The Courthouse** was a significant 10,000 sq ft multi-arts space housed in an old magistrates' courts.

For 18 months we managed this exciting creative space, bringing in other arts organisations to utilise the many rooms we had, and developing a programme of music engagement for young people (funded by Youth Music) and for vulnerable adult groups (funded by the European Social Fund). An exciting timetable of creative engagement provided music-making workshops

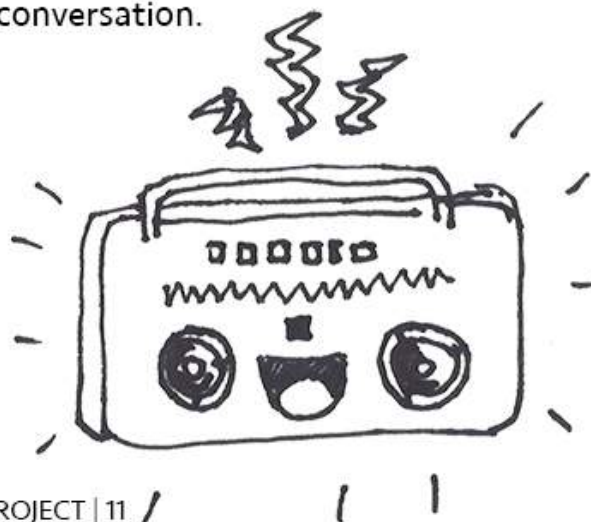
throughout the week for a variety of groups. The space featured a vibrant cafe and art gallery and we hosted events and festivals including comedy, music and visual art exhibitions.

We also deliver music-making sessions for young people and adult groups at **The Pavilion** in Hoglands Park, Southampton. This space has enabled us to be responsive to local needs, providing an accessible and central offer that has become vital to its users.

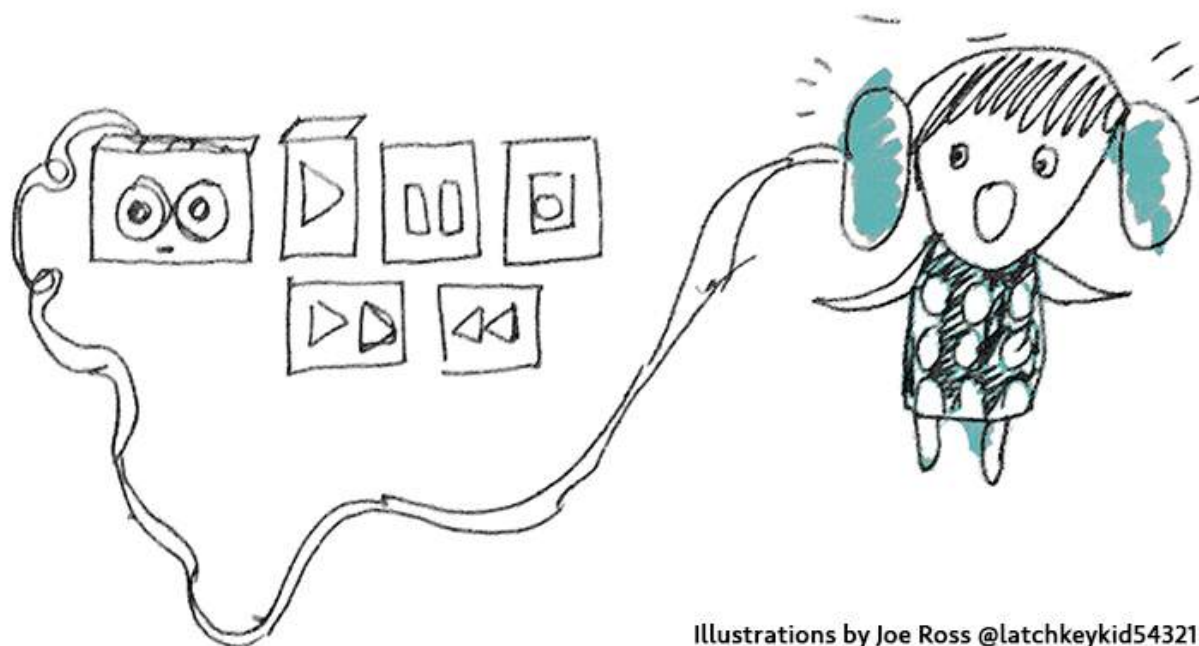
Looking Ahead

Our work changes lives through music. As we move forward and grow our impact, we will always include more voices into our work, creating environments for people to find their talent, to try new things, and to share their passion for music. We pride ourselves in our generosity and flexibility. We are responsive, we are creative, and we care.

Being part of many communities, we support collaboration and we celebrate differences. Our connections bring us to life and we look forward to making more of them everyday. We welcome new partnerships and fresh ideas to make our communities better and more creative places. Find us online and be part of the conversation.



With thanks to our friends and funders:



Illustrations by Joe Ross @latchkeykid54321

"We are a music organisation that aspires to put excellence at the heart of everything we do." - Matt Salvage, Director, SoCo Music Project

WWW.SOCOMUSICPROJECT.ORG.UK