



Southampton and IOW Music Hubs

Digital Native Artists

Music Mentoring 2021

Forum Report



southamptonmusicclub.org
music@southampton.gov.uk

iowmusicclub.org
music@iowmusicclub.org



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Covering Report

Context

Since the start of 2021, Southampton and IOW Music Hubs have been offering online songwriting and production sessions. Many of the young people taking part have been offered the opportunity through social workers, youth offending teams, virtual school and other support and inclusion networks.

Thanks to funding from the Music Mark Innovation Fund, the team of music mentors, and the young people taking part, were able to come together to explore what has been successful, and how the programme can develop going forward.

What did we do?

Ahead of the day, young people were invited to take part in the day, or send their ideas and feedback through their mentors. On Saturday 4 December, at the Music Hub Studio at MAST, mentors and young people came together.

We started the day thinking about where we've come from. We listened to songs from our past – things we remember listening to growing up; things we've made before – and we sampled some of these to start our piece of music. Once we had a groove, we could work in teams on the next stages.

One team worked on lyrics and another team worked on adding instruments and sounds to the track. To create lyrics, we started with where we've come from – our first memories of music, and the ones that have been important on our journey so far – and then moved to thinking about what the future looks like for us, and our music.

We came back together to structure our ideas, bringing lyrics and track together. Then we finished by recording the vocals, and mixing everything together.

What came out?

- 'Right Track' – a brand new piece of music
- 'Right Track Manifesto' – a zine which sets out what we need to succeed

The song, 'Right Track' plays with the double meaning of being both on a good path in life, and also, the feeling of the song itself feeling it properly represents who we are, where we've come from, and where we're going.



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Learning from the day

Alongside our action plan, three key learning points from the day were:

1. Internal and external resources

It was striking how the young people, and the team, identified both the internal and the external resources which have helped bring them to this point on their journeys so far, and also, would be needed for future success. Inner strengths like courage, determination and self expression were important, and so was having access to the right places, events and equipment too.

2. The importance of finding the right people

Support from others was key, and links with the internal strength of being able to work well in a team. It is important to have people ahead of you on the journey that can help guide you, but also, people to share our music with who will enjoy it and support us.

3. Creativity for team building

Finally, for the mentoring team, we all noticed how powerful it was to enjoy creative activity as a way of getting to know each other, and learning from each other. This approach was very different from other experiences of training or development days, and by mapping our musical journeys together, and working together creatively, we got to share positive skills and experiences, talk about challenges we face, and share approaches for overcoming them.

What's next for Southampton and IOW?

In response to what the young people and their mentors have told us, we're going to:

1. Keep looking for ways young people can pick the programme, this will include:

- Having them shape future funding bids
- Building up a way to regularly collect and respond to their suggestions
- Having young people shape the group activities that are beginning to emerge

2. Continuing existing support

- Continue regular one-to-one sessions for those taking part
- Investing in the MAST Music Studio, SoundTrap and other gear that give access to vital music making tools

3. Create routes for music sharing

- Build a team of young people to find and share new music created locally, alongside nationally significant new music, making use of the DNA YouTube and hub social channels

4. Build a stronger, more diverse workforce that supports a more diverse range of progression routes

- Recruit and develop a wider team of people with a range of musical and personal experiences that can help young people on their musical journeys



Right Track



[Stream 'Right Track' on YouTube](#)



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music@southampton.gov.uk

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music@iowmusicclub.org



Right Track



Started with music in films
Music that spills
into the street
Headphones in
Bout to win
Rapping bars out
Not shy to shout

People tell me
I'm on the right track
Can't slack
Bounce back
Get my brain back

Keep life flowing
Keep the music going
Other people showing
Getting better, always growing

Caught in Covid cycles and waves
People fighting for their lives every single day
Music was cancelled
So now more than ever
Gotta stay focused
Gotta stick together



Need determination
not to be taken
off track
I keep my talent in my backpack
Keep my focus
Don't let it get me down
Need my friends behind me
So hear me out



Right Track Manifesto

We asked the young people what they need to succeed.

Here's what they said:

1. Picking the programme

- **Let us help pick the workshops and activities that are happening**

2. Opening up space

- **Give us space, time, and the right gear to make the music we want**

3. Finding the right people

- **Having people who accept who we are, and can support us to keep getting better**

4. Getting Heard

- **We want places to share our music, and find an audience**

