

# 2011

## Just Ask Nottingham

Jobs and Employment Campaign,  
Residential 25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> February



Catch 22

4/11/2011



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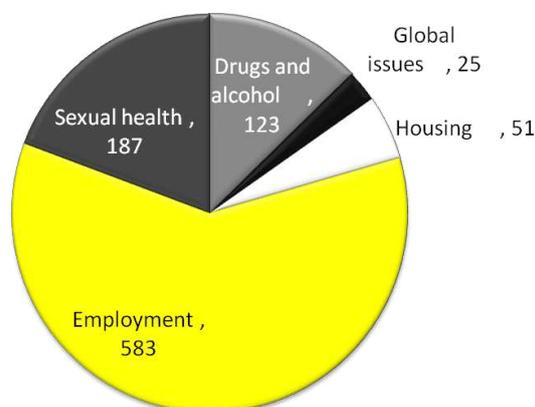
## Introduction

### Aim of Just Ask

Just Ask Nottingham is an information service for young people aged 14-25. It is a peer led project which aims to break down barriers for young people in accessing support and advice. Just Ask works with a large amount of young people across Nottingham who make up the youth forums. A number of the most dedicated young people make up the Just Ask steering group, which is now the Just Ask Committee.

### Assessing Need

Following the results of a large poll that was conducted on the launch of the Just Ask Nottingham website it was discovered that jobs and employment is the biggest issue that young people face.



Total 969 young people aged 14-25 voted.

Following the results of the launch the steering group decided to respond by running a jobs and employment campaign which began in the New Year. The campaign aims to initially identify the problems surrounding young people accessing jobs and employment. It then aims to find solutions to help young people have a better understanding of career opportunities and develop their transferable skills which they can take into the job market.

Recently Just Ask had been working with a group of young people in organising a Careers Fair and Activity Day. The day aimed to provide young people with information about different fields of work and opportunities. Local businesses and organisations attended the event to let young people know what is on offer. The day was about broadening young people's horizons and to empower them to make informed choices. It was a huge success with over 250 young people attending.

### Establishing roles

As the Just Ask project has evolved it became necessary to strengthen the roles of the steering group. The newly formed 'committee' will be given the power to make decisions, spend money, and take actions on behalf of their peers on the project. They went on Governance training prior to the residential

to expand their knowledge around structure and function of committees. They were then provided with the definitions of Chair Person, Ordinary Member, Treasurer and Secretary.

Seven members of the group put themselves forward for the different committee roles and gave a speech to justify how they meet the needs of the particular role. The group then voted on who they thought should be awarded the title.



### Residential

As part of our jobs and employment campaign the Just Ask Project has £20000 dedicated to commissioning partner agencies in Nottingham to provide services for young people. The Just Ask Committee will be a part of the commissioning process from design, delivery and evaluation, and the residential was designed to develop their skills in this process and to identify needs. An advantage of young people having an active involvement in the commissioning process is they are in tune as to what their peers want and need, and their choice of who they commission will reflect this.

## Workshops

### DAY 1

#### Ice-breaker

We began the afternoon session with a quick game of Zip Zap Boing. This was fun and got everyone up and active.



## Campaign

The workshops began with defining the different aspects of campaigns. With particular reference to the Just Ask jobs and employment campaign the committee identified that they have the power to make a positive change by tackling issues that affect a large majority of young people, which in turn impacts upon communities. They highlighted that as a result of the campaign they wanted to empower young people and encourage them to take more responsibility. They also wanted to improve their opportunities and raise aspirations. (ref.1)

## Social Networking workshop

Social network sites are popular with young people. But what actually is social networking and what does it involve? This workshop aimed to demonstrate how social networking can be used as a tool to drive forward the jobs and employment campaign and spread the Just Ask project.

There are many advantages in social networking; for example it can be used to highlight issues and causes and make a wider audience aware of them, to organise activities and events, to showcase talent, and for debates and discussion. It can also enable young people to develop a voice and become social and active citizens, especially for those who may not be as confident.

The second part of the workshop illustrated the skills that are used and developed through the use of social networking such as communication skills, teamwork, IT skills. Finally we had a discussion around the threats and dangers of social networking and how to ensure that young people know how to protect themselves. (ref.2)

## Marketing workshops

Following the social networking workshop the group took part in a practical marketing exercise. The process of marketing is important for any organisation as it creates an identity of the project to a wider audience and as a result can influence others. More specifically, the use of marketing for Just Ask is vital to include others in the jobs and employment campaign and allows others to benefit from the project.

There are many different ways of marketing a project. The group was split up into pairs and individuals and were each given a marketing task to complete. The tasks included

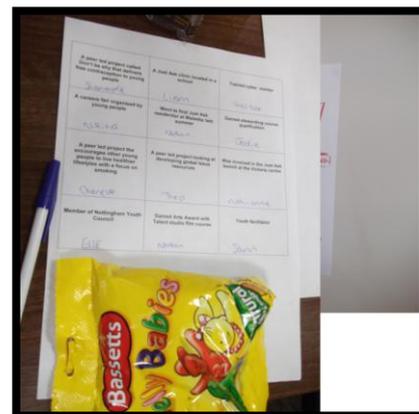
- Practice interviewing for a Radio program
- Creating a Radio advert. *Communicating to a wider audience and public speaking is an effective way to reach people however it takes practice to be confident in doing so.*
- Composing a letter to an MP to promote the Project. *Professional letter writing is an important skill and can be used for many different purposes.*
- Writing a blog to be used on social networks. *Blogs can be a useful tool in communicating issues and causes whilst allowing the reader to get actively involved by leaving feedback.*
- Creating an artistic interpretation of the Just Ask Project through graffiti style drawing. *Imagery is an effective way to illustrate the aims of a project - 'a picture can paint a thousand words'. Artistic talents can be used for this and the audience can take pleasure in observing the image.*
- Preparing for a TV interview. *Filming and documentaries are a popular way of communicating to a mass audience. However talking in front of a camera can be difficult and takes courage therefore practicing doing so was useful for building confidence.*



## DAY 2

### Ice-breaker 'bingo'

On day 2 four more members of the group joined the residential and the workshops began by an icebreaker. The ice breaker aimed to identify who does what within Just Ask. There are many smaller projects taking place within Just Ask and the individuals had not previously worked together so the ice-breaker was useful as it was a way in which they could find out who a part of what.



## Youth Participation

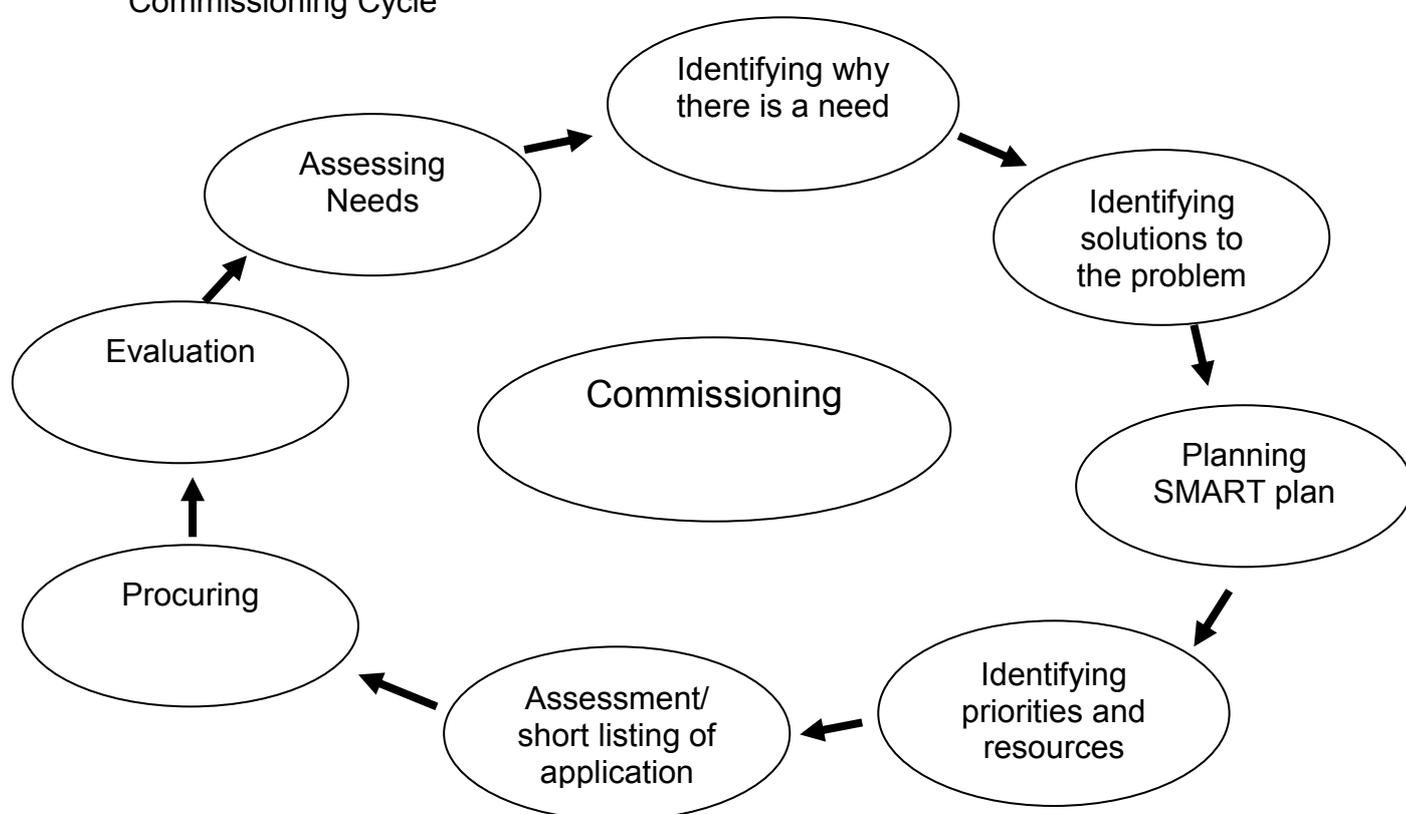
The aim of Just Ask is to have youth participation embedded at all levels. With Just Ask being a project for young people it is hugely beneficial to involve young people in the development and decision making of the project. This was emphasized by the group learning about Human Rights and more specifically Article 12 of the UN Convention – Respect for the views of the child.

The group took part in a family fortune style activity whereby they identified the different benefits of youth participation. Youth participation can be advantageous for young people; it helps build and develop skills; it creates more effective and efficient services; it benefits organisations as it can highlight needs and barriers to services; it promotes social inclusions; and offers new perspectives. Lastly youth participation can benefit the community by enabling a positive change, an empowering environment and community cohesion.

## Commissioning

The group were presented with the commissioning cycle and were explained about the process. The next set of activities aim to demonstrate to the group commissioning process so that they have a good understanding of it and are confident in participating.

### Commissioning Cycle



### Assessing Needs

This is the first step in the commissioning process. In order to carry this out the young people were read out a set of statements to about the current employment/job climate. The group then decided whether they thought the statements were true or false by going to different areas of the room (which were labelled as true/false). After reading out the statements the group were shocked to hear of some of the figures, such as 'there are 938,000 NEET 16-24 in the UK'. This sparked up a lot of discussion and reaffirmed that Jobs and employment is an issue.



### Identifying why there is a need

This part of the cycle aimed to look at what the issue is and why there is a need. In order to do this a set of opinions were read out and the group decided whether they agreed or disagreed with what was read out. Due to the controversy of some of the statements this exercise stimulated discussion and debate around jobs and employment for young people.

This exercise was particularly important in highlighting the issues surrounding jobs and employment as it will create the foundations of which services should attempt to tackle/improve on.

Some of the stated issues around jobs and employment and young people are:

*'Lack of motivation, not prepared for the 'real world', previous services are not young people friendly, services are not flexible enough – need to cater for one to ones and group sessions, young people give up easily, employers don't motivate young people, work experience is not a worthwhile experience, personal issues need to be tackled as well as employment issues.'* (Ref.3)

### Identifying solutions to the problem

The group were split up into four smaller groups. They were asked to design a service that could be a solution to the issues that they highlighted in the previous exercise and then prepare a 5 minute presentation back to the panel. The group used the SMART plan to help design their service.

Specific  
Measurable  
Achievable  
Realistic  
Time

The groups were also required to prepare for a question and answer session about their service. This exercise gave the young people a chance to think

about what it would be like as a service that was going to apply and the type of questions they could be asked.

### The Solutions



Run A Mile



Learning By Doing



Mentors On Demand



INSPIRE – Learning Through Stages

The solutions that the groups came up with were very innovative and original. Many different problems that were identified in the previous activities were targeted in the solutions. This would help to form the criteria in which services would apply money for to deliver.

We awarded each group as a winner for different aspects – Content, Presentation, Feasibility and Creativity.

Following this we continued with the process of the commissioning cycle and discussed what the Government are planning to do and what Nottingham City are preparing for. We spoke about the importance of ensuring that the services carry out what they say they are going to carry out and the different ways to test this, for example mystery shoppers, statistics, feedback forms.

It was important that the young people understood that services were going to be accountable to them, hence the importance that young people complete the commissioning process with evaluation.

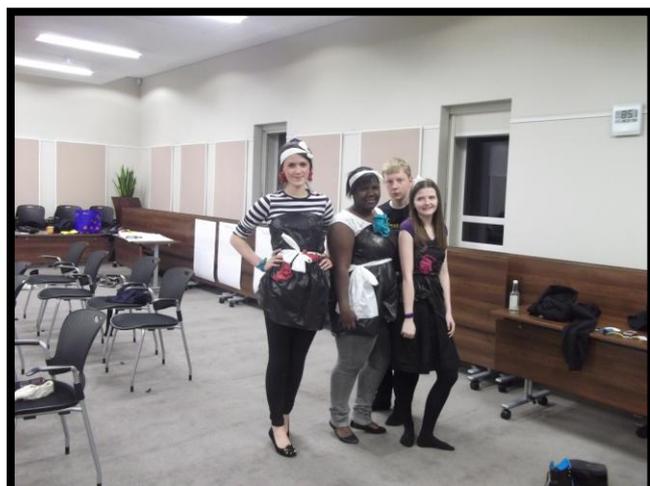
Aim – What are you deliving?  
 Objective – how are you goinbg to deliver it?  
 Outcome What are you hoping to achieve?  
 Output – How many? (stats)  
 Milestone – To reach a certain target by certain time  
 Impact – What difference do you make?  
 Distance travelled – The amount of change in a young person  
 Organisations are accountable to YOU

Example evaluation sheet

### Evening Team Building

#### Bin Bag Fashion Show!

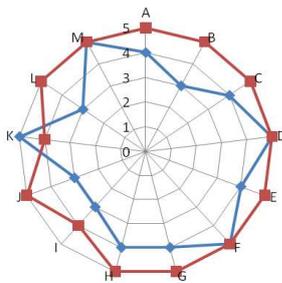
The groups were split into teams and had the activity of creating a fashion range out of bin bags.



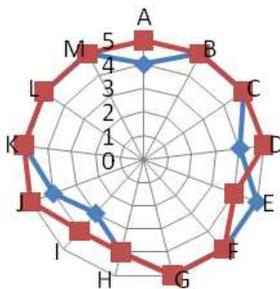
On the final day we asked the group to suggest further types of training that could benefit themselves or others, and future recommendations for the project. (ref.4)

**Evaluation**

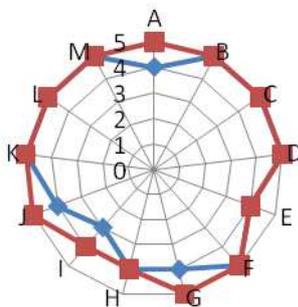
We gave out questionnaires at the start of the residential for the group to rate their knowledge on different topics; this was then compared to their answers to the end questionnaire. Blue square = before residential. Red square = After residential



Do you feel like an important part of Just Ask?  
This graph demonstrates that over 80% of the group felt an important part of the Just Ask Project.



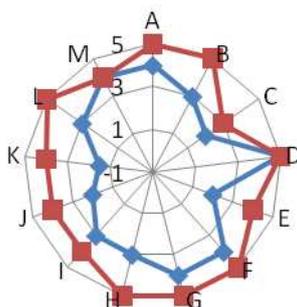
Do you confidant to talk to others about Just Ask?  
Confidence of talking to others about the project had increased at the end of the residential.



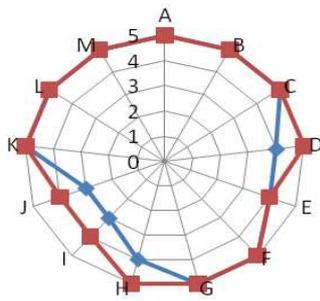
Do you think Just Ask could change Nottingham?  
Some of the group felt that Just Ask could change Nottingham prior to the residential and at the end of the residential the majority of them believed this.

Attached to the above question we then asked the Steering group how they thought Just Ask could change Nottingham. (ref.5)

The next group of questions compare how the group’s knowledge and skills have developed from the residential. Blue Square = before residential. Red square = after residential

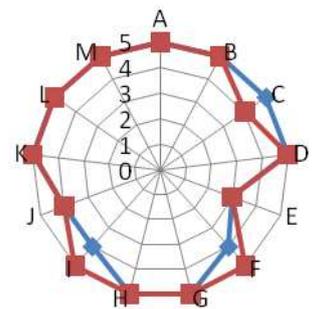


Commissioning  
This graph shows that initially the group had little understanding of commissioning, this increased after the weekend however there is still room for improvement so more work around commissioning may be appropriate so that the group are confident.



**Communication**

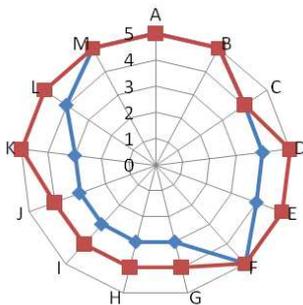
The group initially felt they had a high standard of communication and in some circumstances this improved even more after the residential.



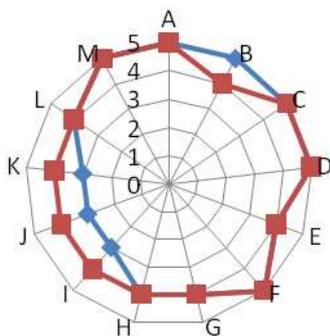
**Working as a team**

The group on the whole rated themselves high for working in a team and this improved after the residential in a couple of cases, however in a few cases this decreased and for one individual it remained low before and after. This may mean that more work needs to be done around teamwork.

**Presentations**

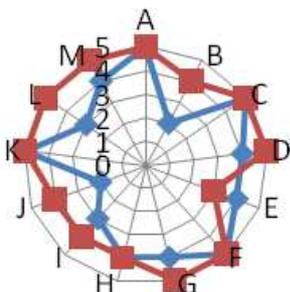


There was an increase for most of the group in delivering presentations, this is really positive as the entire group took part in delivering presentations.



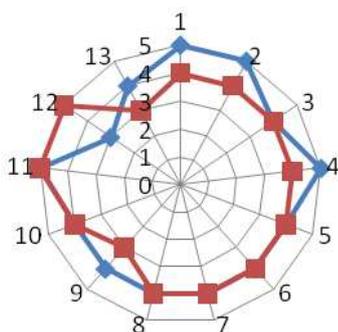
**Action planning**

On the whole the group were confident in action planning after the residential.



**Marketing**

Following the residential most of the group have a greater understanding of marketing than what they did at the beginning of the residential.



**Using social media**

This graph shows slightly mixed results of the group and their understanding of using social media. This may mean further development needs to be done so that the group are fully confident in the uses of social media.

The residential was successful in strengthening the roles of the Just Ask Committee and at the end of the weekend the majority of the group felt they were a very important part of the Project. The majority of the group were confident in talking to others about the project which suggests they feel like they are very much involved in the commissioning process and the aims of Just Ask. Finally most of the group are confident that Just Ask could change Nottingham, this could suggest that the group recognise the importance of what Just Ask can do and the impact it can have upon Nottingham.

On the whole knowledge and skills of the above topics have improved following the residential. It was important to measure these points as they all play a key role in the Just Ask project and its' campaign. Some of the points need to have further work done so that the group are all confident.

	Commissioning application		Commissioning services start		Evaluation of commissioned services			
Residential	Careers fair	Celebration event	Talent Studio		Talent studio	Reallocation of roles		
February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October

**Plan for 2011**

Nottingham has had a negative experience with low employment, and young people have particularly felt the brunt of this. However for the Just Ask Project the aim is to improve the situation for young people. Applications will be sent out at the end of March and due to be returned in April for short listing, interviews will be carried out at the end of April and services to start in May. The committee will follow these up and continue to evaluate the services to ensure they are carrying out what they intend to carry out.

**Ref.1 - Campaign**

What is a campaign?

Get yourself/organisation known

Getting other people to agree with ideas

Selling ideas -> way of putting views across

Protests – EMA, cuts, council strikes

Can be positive! Raise awareness (e.g. breast cancer)

What are the main issues? (Young people and employment)

Lack of qualifications

Self-motivation

Low levels of aspiration

Lack of Jobs

No experience

Young people are not trusted – seen as unreliable

Who do they affect?

Everyone

Young people out of work

Community – young people on street

Job market

Employers – don't employ young people.

Who has the power to change issues?

Us as young people

Employers – we need to change stereotypes

The Government

What do we hope will change as a result of our campaign?

A change in young people's attitudes: more positive outlook

Give young people more responsibility and encourage them to take more responsibility

Change government's views

What could the goal of the campaign be?

More young people in jobs/ training

Less 'NEET' – don't label!

## Ref.2 – Social Networking

### What does Just Ask aim to do?

A centre of information advises young people on issues  
 Help young people work towards a brighter future  
 To get young people to motivate their peers and themselves  
 Training courses  
 Careers fair  
 Raise Aspirations  
 Raise awareness  
 Promote training sessions  
 Help others/young people  
 Open opportunities  
 Offer training  
 Keep going  
 Stewarding courses  
 Go into schools and see young people  
 Help Young People  
 Build confidence  
 Support/advice  
 Peer mentoring

### Why is Social Networking important to Just Ask?

Mass advertisement  
 Facebook users are young and the project is for young people  
 Free to advertise  
 To keep everybody informed with events  
 a way of communicating with ease  
 Get in contact with people  
 promote  
 raise awareness  
 tag me: start off discussion  
 ask us to blog  
 help with research  
 builds social skills  
 Gives advice  
 Helps people to express themselves  
 Set up events  
 Create groups  
 Just Ask website  
 Information

### Ref.3 Issues

Schools don't prepare young people for the real world – take yp to conferences, traing up to write covering letters, CVs.

No jobs out there?

Young people can't be boethered

Services aren't young people friendly enough – they need to go down to their level – environment needs to be comfortable,

1 to 1s are good, makes it more personal

Group work can work aswel – need to have flexibility to be able to do group work and 1 to 1

Not young people focused – they listen to adults more.

Young people give up easily

Employers don't motivate young people – e.g. first day shredding paper – they need to give young people more responsibility and be more supportive

Parents should want to get involved – but not every young person wants to involve their parents

Need to show what young people can achieve – how to raise aspiration?

Young people need to know what is out there – alternatives

Services – job centre, E2E, learning works, Notts jobs, connexions, working links, youth workers, apprenticeships

Change benefit system

Work experience – young people should have a choice, the experience needs to be meaningful

If young people aren't doing anything they should be made to do something

Need to deal with personal problems first

Make schools more practical, include life skills

To walk into job centre – intimidating, scary

People lack common sense in applying for jobs – what is common sense?

E.g. appearance?

Teach jobs throughout schools

Link training to schools

Link job market to schools

Community work organisation

**Ref.4 Extra Training**

IT

First Aid

Youth Work

Player card training

Health and Safety

Management

Personal development

\*

Advance our arts award

First aid

Music grades

Music theory

Health and safety training

\*

Personal training

Governance training

First Aid training

Self development training

Self Defence training

Homeless training (project)

Disabled training (help disabled training)

Working with the elderly training

Marketing training

Drama and musical theatre (dance)

Residential

\*

Sign language training

Photography

Advertisement training

Fashion

Cooking

accountancy

More work experience

More residential

More launch of projects

Get more young people involved

Healthy relationship

Confidence

Teamwork

\*

Just Ask clinics

## Ref.5 – How Can Just Ask change Nottingham?

### BEFORE

Make more people aware of stuff

Get more people involved, e.g. Projects etc

Raise awareness, get more people involved!

By changing people's perspectives and stereotypes about young people

More young people will see changes and notice Just Ask and then Just Ask can change more

With the effort it can change the views on Nottingham City (youths, adults, employers, colleges)

Spreading the word of mouth

### AFTER

With all the campaigns and project we run

Through the work of promotion and doing noticeable changes to within the community

Help gain confidence in young people so they're confident to ask for advice by campaigning and the project that we will set up

Changing how young people are biased on the problems, how you can make people feel better about themselves and opening many opportunities for them

Promotion

By gaining support of important people within Nottingham to change stereotypes and perspectives

Could get people into employment

Create a domino effect for young people by giving one person a chance in turn give everyone a chance