

"For me, the point of making music is that it gets heard but the other band members felt unsure about how we may have been portrayed and so we decided to keep a lower profile.

"I find it more inspiring to think that the songs are getting heard further out there.

"I come from a community singing background and would like our songs to be heard by other mums. I hope they'd find it inspiring or be able to identify with what our songs are about."

It seems that at the centre of The Mothers' media shyness is the fear that their complex nature could be easily misrepresented. Neither rebels nor conformists, The Mothers defy categorisation. It's all about being an individual within the group.

"There are so many dynamics within the band, it's just like belonging to another family, with siblings competing to get their equally important voices heard, which in turn depends on their own family's needs which always takes priority."

The mothers are all at different stages of motherhood and have different levels of time and energy to devote to the band but, drummer Izzy adds: "we have come a long way in finding ways of sorting these issues out and no-one has yet moved out or been put into care!"

Beth feels that she probably has the most freedom. As a lone parent she doesn't have the added demands of a partner, and her 11-year-old son, Olly, is the eldest of the group's children. Also, she has just given up her career as an environmental educator to become a freelance community musician and is fully immersed in music making.

"At the moment, my main interest in The Mothers is to work on recording and developing our new songs. When we prepared the first set it felt like we were giving birth for the first time, experiencing a heady mixture of shock

and excitement."

Many of the songs in their first album "Ovulation" had very straightforward three-chord punk riffs and relied heavily on humorous lyrics. Their musical influences have included The Ramones, Madness, punk, ska, indie, goth and reggae.

"Our next album will be drawing on a wider range of sounds including world music with an Eastern European beat, country and western, jingly-jangly pop with a funky Wonder Woman break as well as one really angry punk song."

Their songs aim to rock the pedestal of glamourised motherhood and speak about how real women in the real world cope with the ups and downs of a role that is often undervalued in our society.

All five mothers write lyrics about the many sides of motherhood on their yet-to-be-named second album.

They're working on a song called Booking Time For Spontaneity which was written by Nicci who, in addition to being a freelance community artist and UNICEF educator, is coming to terms with the reality of motherhood since giving birth to Elvin 18 months ago.

Izzy who finds it difficult to make time for anything else but her family now that she is working in childcare and has three lively children of her own, including three-year-old twins, has recently contributed a song called Milk Pistols about breast feeding and is toying with an idea for one called I've Only Got One Pair of Hands!!

Bass player Henry works at Derby University and lives with her partner and three-year-old daughter Jasmine. Her songs include Sleep Deprivation and Supermum.

Singer Claire is a freelance participatory artist which means that when she is not performing she enables

and encourages others to take an active part in the arts.

I Can't Work And Be A Good Mum expresses fleeting feelings of just how hard it is to juggle it all.

Beth's songs tend to make light of her reality of the ups and downs of day-to-day domestic doings such as burning the dinner, dealing with nits and the kids not eating their tea.

"We've got these new songs and some of the band are desperate to play them live now but we aim to present all our new songs together so that they don't get lost in a mushy vegetable soup!"

In addition to giving birth to their second album this spring, The Mothers are trying to find the funds to allow them to realise their ambition of hosting a national event celebrating motherhood. If it goes ahead, they will be inviting other artists who are mothers to join them in sharing their experiences of family life in various art forms.

The Mothers' will next appear live at The Victoria Inn, Midland Place, Derby on January 20 backing punk band, Billy No Mates.

To find out more about The Mothers visit their website at www.themothers.co.uk to view biographies, lyrics, music, gigs and more or telephone Izzy on 01332 295165.



Rock chick Beth de Lange, and, left, mum Beth with son Olly in the park.