



northwest  
culture  
observatory

briefing note

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# REVIEWING THE CONTRIBUTION OF CULTURE IN REGENERATION

*- The Liverpool Model for longitudinal research and impact  
assessment*

A briefing paper following the Northwest Culture Observatory's knowledge transfer seminar, hosted by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and supported by the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

A presentation was given by Dr Beatriz Garcia, Director Impacts 08, University of Liverpool with a response by Professor Graeme Evans, Director Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University

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European Capital of Culture Research Programme - The Liverpool Model, is a joint research initiative of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, funded by Liverpool City Council and the Liverpool Culture Company

The Northwest Culture Observatory is part of



## More longitudinal research and an improved evidence base for culture

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In 2004, DCMS called for more longitudinal research and an improved evidence base for culture<sup>1</sup>. This seminar provided a timely opportunity to review progress against this call, to profile a new longitudinal research programme and to promote a new model for impact assessment in culture-led regeneration – the Liverpool Model.

Impacts 08 - The Liverpool Model is a research programme conducted by the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, under the direction of Dr Beatriz Garcia and programme management by Ruth Melville. The programme evaluates the social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts of Liverpool hosting the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) title in 2008. Liverpool is the first city to commission a longitudinal research programme on the ECoC nomination and hosting process. The research rationale was developed by the Northwest Culture Observatory and Liverpool City Council and is funded by Liverpool City Council and the University of Liverpool.

One aim of the programme is to develop a research model for evaluating the multiple impacts of culture-led regeneration programmes that can be applied to events across the UK and beyond. This work is of national significance for the London 2012 Olympic Games, which will incorporate a four-year cultural programme (the Cultural Olympiad) starting in 2008. Future European Capitals of Culture, such as Essen and the Rhur area, Istanbul and Pecs in 2010, will also benefit from and build on this research.

## Culture and regeneration

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There has been an increased global interest in the relationship between culture and regeneration, which can take different forms:

1. Culture-led regeneration (e.g. high profile, catalyst/engine of regeneration, building-based/re-branding)
2. Cultural regeneration (e.g. full integration of cultural activity into planning and development)
3. Culture and regeneration (e.g. cultural activity is not fully integrated but contributes to regeneration)

Liverpool's European Capital of Culture embodies the first approach, with the first and third approaches being most prevalent and the second still being rare in the UK.

Key factors for successful cultural regeneration include:

- the participation of a 'champion' of culture in regeneration (this may be an individual such as a 'social entrepreneur', or a group, e.g. of artists)
- the integration of culture at the strategic planning stage
- the establishment of a multi-disciplinary project team
- the provision for formative evaluation from the planning stage (e.g. establishing the baseline)
- the flexibility to change course if necessary
- consideration for environmental quality and accessibility – design of facilities, public realm and integration with services (e.g. transport, housing)
- genuine consultation with residents/users and other stakeholders
- acknowledgement of the contribution of all stakeholders
- continued involvement and 'ownership' by the community of the project - through direct participation in, for instance, management, governance, delivery and evaluation

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<sup>1</sup> [Culture at the Heart of Regeneration](#), which was accompanied by an [evidence review](#) produced by Graeme Evans and Phyllida Shaw.

## Evidencing impacts

The classic 'impacts tests' taken from the [Treasury Green Book](#) include additionality<sup>2</sup>, displacement<sup>3</sup>, substitution<sup>4</sup> and attribution<sup>5</sup>. Evidencing these forms of economic impact is difficult to establish, in part because change can take a long time. It is acknowledged that regeneration can take a time frame of 25 years+ to take effect across a community and place, hence the need for longitudinal assessment and research that is re-visited over time.

Examples of longitudinal regeneration evaluation studies:

- Glasgow European City of Culture 1990 (period of time analysed:1986-2003 ) - Centre for Cultural Policy Research (CCPR), University of Glasgow
- Cultural Investments and Strategic Impacts Research (CISIR) (period of time analysed: 2002-2012), Northumbria University
- Barcelona Universal Forum of Cultures 2004 (period of time analysed:1999 -2010), CIUTAT project
- Jubilee Line Extension 1999 (period of time analysed: 1989-1999), University Westminster+/DfT & LT
- Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART), San Francisco (period of time analysed:25 years) - San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit Commission
- King's Cross Regeneration1995 (period of time analysed:1999-2003), Bartlett School of Planning, University College London; Research Resource for the King's Cross to Finsbury Park Priority Programme (period of time analysed:1994-2004 with some data dating back to 1988), London Development Agency

## A new model for impact assessment of culture-led regeneration

Between Glasgow hosting the European City/Capital of Culture in 1990 and Liverpool in 2008, a strong discourse around events and their role in culture-led regeneration has emerged, with reference to place-marketing, place-shaping and the rise of the 'creative class'.

The impacts of such events have been identified as:

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|------------------|--|
| a. Economic      | (e.g. inward investment, job creation) |
| b. Social        | (e.g. participation, access)           |
| c. Environmental | (e.g. infrastructures, public space)   |
| d. Cultural      | (e.g. image, identity) <sup>6</sup>    |

It is this last area that is the most difficult to measure and where agendas of distinctiveness and uniqueness arise. As such, it is often neglected in impact assessment, such as the 2001-2008 Olympic Games Impact (OGI), a longitudinal impact study model designed by the International Olympic Committee, which Beijing will be the first to fully implement, followed by London 2012. In this model, there are no cultural fields being addressed<sup>7</sup>. It is within this area that Impacts 08 are breaking new ground with their research model.

The 7 main themes of Impacts 08 - The Liverpool Model are:

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|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Economic growth               | (e.g. employment, tourism, investment)        |
| <b>2. Cultural Vibrancy</b>      | (e.g. creativity, production, consumption)    |
| <b>3. Cultural participation</b> | (e.g. access, outreach, diversity)            |
| <b>4. Image and identity</b>     | (e.g. media coverage, people's perceptions)   |
| 5. Social capital                | (e.g. inclusion, well-being, quality of life) |
| 6. Physical environment          | (e.g. infrastructures, sustainability)        |
| 7. Management                    | (e.g. aims and objectives, policy, strategy)  |

(Themes in **bold** represent the areas of most likely direct impact by the European Capital of Culture process)

<sup>2</sup> An impact arising from an intervention is additional if it would not have occurred in the absence of the intervention.

<sup>3</sup> The degree to which an increase in productive capacity promoted by government policy is offset by reductions in productive capacity elsewhere

<sup>4</sup> The situation in which a firm substitutes one activity for a similar activity (such as recruiting a different job applicant) to take advantage of government assistance

<sup>5</sup> e.g. Liverpool European Capital of Culture 2008, London 2012 Olympic Games

<sup>6</sup> As suggested by the framework set out in [Culture at the Heart of Regeneration \(2004\)](#)

<sup>7</sup> The International Olympics Committee (IOC) has called for a cultural dimension to be included in the Olympics impact assessment (so the more intangible aspects can be measured)

## Understanding cultural impact

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Liverpool has been the subject of repeated urban development funding programmes, most notably, European Union Objective One status. The disaggregation of causes for economic impact from existing drivers is therefore difficult.

Areas of direct impact from the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) designation can be identified however, in relation to what people do, how they take part and consume and what they think – the perceptions, image and identity of place. The success of such a large-scale event can therefore be measured through the external perceptions of the event and their impact on people's sense of place, the story-telling or the 'myth-making process'.

The methodologies Impacts 08 are using to capture Liverpool's story are:

- a. **Documentary and policy review** of key strategic and promotional material by relevant stakeholders
- b. **Media content analysis:** Analysis of key themes and attitudes within national and local press, broadcast and online coverage about the city and the ECoC
- c. **Visual ethnography** : capturing official, unofficial and spontaneous visual representations of the city
- d. **Participatory cultural mapping:** Inviting local communities to express their identity and sense of place
- e. **Unstructured interviews:** capturing how the city is told by front-line service staff and volunteers
- f. **Perception surveys:** capturing people's evolving opinion of the city and the ECoC locally and nationally

This work complements the wide range of methodologies and special projects being developed to assess wider cultural, economic, social and physical impacts. These include:

- **Across the 7 themes:** longitudinal assessment of benchmark indicators and secondary data monitoring
- **Wider cultural impacts:** understanding sustainability in the arts and creative industries (change to training, skills levels, income and investment etc); understanding change in levels of quality and excellence; monitoring change in the structure and relationships of the city's cultural sector
- **Economic impacts:** economic modelling measures, with a particular focus on the study of direct event impacts on the city's visitor economy; assessment of effects on levels of cultural engagement by local businesses
- **Social impact:** measures to assess the impact of cultural participation on people's quality of life; understanding the impact of volunteering on people's cultural engagement; understanding wider change in levels of cultural engagement via longitudinal local area studies in distinct city neighbourhoods
- **Physical impact:** assessment of engagement, uses and changing perceptions of the city's public realm
- **Policy impacts:** ongoing stakeholder interviews, observations at relevant meetings

## Liverpool Capital of Culture – the story so far

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The nomination of European Capital of Culture has had short to medium term impact on the city's image, at a local as well as a national level. For example, in 2003, national papers produced four times more positive stories about Liverpool's culture and arts scene than was the case in 1996, and in 2007, over five times as many stories.

The city's arts and cultural sector has a positive profile nationally both in the press and in people's perceptions. The growth in references to culture and the arts has been mainly focused on presenting

Liverpool as a centre for the visual arts and, increasingly as containing a strong music scene. The former has benefited directly from the ECoC 2008 nomination, while the latter may have gained similar levels of coverage regardless of the prospects of 2008.

Areas that are not receiving high levels of national coverage (to end of 2007) are the city's tourism potential and the development of cultural infrastructures<sup>8</sup>.

## Future directions and directives

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- In relation to Impacts 08 - The Liverpool Model, establishing who the 'community of project' is will be key<sup>9</sup>
- To ensure that the work is truly considered to be a Model, the research approach must develop guidance for the transferability of method so that it can be applied elsewhere and therefore show comparisons of effect
- The "medical model" for evidence-based policy – undertaking systematic review of data from studies which include controlled conditions - is not necessarily appropriate or relevant for cultural research. There are however ways of sampling to understand the social dimensions of culture in regeneration, through local area studies. In addition, the value and robustness of knowledge and intelligence is cumulative and acquired over time
- There is a lack of joining up of data collection agencies, particularly between local, regional and national levels. In general there is a need to improve and better integrate culture with regeneration directorates and operationalise evidence and data across all cultural sectors – to unite the "dysfunctional family"
- The key is to link supply and demand, to map provision with engagement/participation, and this has to be done in relation to place – the 'local experience'. Currently it is difficult to locate robust data which shows this for cultural activities, but use of cultural planning approaches are highlighting these needs and providing a strong case for improvement.

## The Northwest Culture Observatory

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The **Northwest Culture Observatory's** relationship with **Impacts 08** is ensuring that the regional dimension of the research framework is embedded within the Model and that methodologies from the other sub-regions 08 events (i.e. Cheshire Year of Gardens) are also comparable with The Liverpool Model.

Full presentations from Beatriz Garcia, Director, Impacts 08 - The Liverpool Model - European Capital of Culture Research Programme and Graeme Evans, Director, Cities Institute, can be downloaded from the Observatory [here](#).

Further information on Impacts 08 can be accessed [here](#).

The Northwest Culture Observatory is the region's strategic culture research and intelligence network and the research arm of Culture Northwest.

**[www.northwestcultureobservatory.co.uk](http://www.northwestcultureobservatory.co.uk)**

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<sup>8</sup> Press Impact Analysis (1996, 2003, 2005) - A Retrospective Study: UK National Press Coverage on Liverpool before, during and after bidding for European Capital of Culture status, Impacts 08, December 2006. Impacts 08 is a joint project of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University commissioned by Liverpool City Council

<sup>9</sup> The place-based notion of community has (re-)emerged as a vehicle for rooting individuals and societies in a climate of economic restructuring and growing social, cultural and political uncertainty. See Graeme Evans presentation [here](#).

**‘Reviewing the contribution of culture in regeneration - the Liverpool Model for longitudinal research and impact assessment’ (28 January 2008) was a knowledge-transfer seminar hosted by the Northwest Culture Observatory, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) , the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).**



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