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# Local Area Studies – 2008 Results

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Impacts 08 is a joint programme of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University  
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## Executive summary

Impacts 08 is conducting a local area study project to explore the experiences and opinions of Liverpool residents in relation to the city's year as the European Capital of Culture (ECoC) in 2008. The research consists of an annual survey of around 800 residents across four, diverse, selected Liverpool neighbourhoods; the survey has been carried out in 2007 and 2008, and will be repeated in 2009. During 2008, Impacts 08 also commissioned consultants to deliver a total of eight focus groups within these neighbourhoods in order to generate additional qualitative data.

The research focuses on the following themes:

- How residents view Liverpool, and how they think Liverpool is viewed outside the city.
- How residents view their own neighbourhood, and how they think their neighbourhood is viewed by other Liverpool residents.
- The residents' knowledge and understanding of Liverpool's cultural offer, and levels of interest in cultural activities, including sport.
- The residents' levels of engagement and participation in cultural activity generally, and specifically in the Liverpool 08 events programme.<sup>1</sup>
- The residents' experiences as spectators of Liverpool's image work and marketing.
- Whether Liverpool's year as ECOC is changing residents' perceptions of the city and views about its future.

This report provides some key findings from the second survey, completed in Summer 2008. It also reports on the findings of the eight focus groups carried out in October 2008 which sought to explore in more detail some of the themes emerging from this research. The next and final survey, to be carried out in Spring 2009, will enable a full analysis of any changes throughout the three years in terms of engagement, participation and perspectives on Liverpool's year as ECOC.

This report follows a baseline report completed in Summer 2008, which provided a summary of data from the initial survey (carried out in the summer of 2007). A separate document, *Local Area Studies: Mapping the Four Local Areas and Key Statistics* (available to download from [www.impacts08.net](http://www.impacts08.net)), detailed the findings of a community mapping exercise that sought to provide a context to the survey results through offering a deeper understanding of the neighbourhoods, and of the issues that may affect their residents' experiences of cultural engagement and of the Liverpool 08 programme.

### Key findings

- Overall, survey respondents continue to display pride and confidence in Liverpool, rating it equal to or better than other UK cities across a range of indicators.
- Levels of confidence in the city's future have improved, particularly in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods surveyed.
- Respondents indicated an increased level of concern about crime in comparison to the first survey.
- High levels of interest and enthusiasm for cultural activities identified in the earlier 2007 survey have remained steady during 2008.
- Participants in the research identified a clear set of drivers for cultural participation: the presence of local champions to promote cultural activity; engagement in community based cultural activities as an introduction to accessing venues in Liverpool city centre; the perceived 'family friendliness' of events and venues; and the opportunity to be active participants rather than spectators.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this research, the programme is defined as those cultural, sporting and community based activities taking place in Liverpool during 2008 which were marketed as part of the city's year as European Capital of Culture (for example, in the Liverpool 08 quarterly events guide).

- Barriers to participation included: cost; availability of transport and the Liverpool city centre location of many events and venues; inadequate marketing; and lack of suitability for children. Lack of interest also emerged as a significant factor.
- Focus groups in Knotty Ash and Kirkdale demonstrated a clear distinction in both enthusiasm for engaging in cultural activity and positive feelings about the local community, between those who had actively participated in community arts during 2008 and those who had not.
- Reported levels of confidence in understanding what there is to do in Liverpool, and the Liverpool 08 programme, dropped in 2008, possibly in response to the scale of activity and the opening of new venues and shopping facilities.
- The survey highlighted high levels of interest and enthusiasm amongst local people for music events within the Liverpool 08 programme, including the Liverpool Sound concert and events at the new Echo Arena.
- Respondents rated Liverpool as better than or equal to other British cities across all indicators, an improvement since 2007 when shopping facilities were considered to be worse than in other cities.
- Respondents were more likely to describe the best things about ECoC in terms of regeneration impacts, rather than cultural impacts on the city.
- Numbers of people who agree that 'Liverpool is improving and has a positive future' increased in 2008. However, focus group findings indicated underlying concerns about the fragility of Liverpool's regeneration and the potential impact of the wider economic downturn.

#### **Important note on citation:**

Note this report is not to be quoted or summarised without reference to Impacts 08: The Liverpool Model – European Capital of Culture Research Programme. Suggested reference format: Impacts 08 (2009). *Local Area Studies – 2008 Results (Report of Phase 2)*. Liverpool, UK: Impacts 08 [online: <http://www.liv.ac.uk/impacts08/Dissemination/I08reports.htm>]

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## 1. Introduction

Impacts 08 is conducting a local area study project to help capture and understand the cultural engagement of Liverpool residents. Importantly, this includes those residents who may not take part in the Liverpool European Capital of Culture (ECoC) events in any specific way, and thus whose experiences may not be captured by research focused on events. This project comprises a phased approach that is intended to take place between 2007 and 2009, and which will, through a variety of methodologies, track the opinions, engagement and perceptions of people in four different areas of the city. This research will generate rich data, demonstrating any developments over time in the engagement patterns of 'ordinary' Liverpool citizens, and their experience of the impact of the city's ECoC status in 2008.

Researchers have identified four neighbourhoods (each consisting of two Super Output Areas with an average population of 2,750) in order to capture the experiences of the widest possible cross section of the Liverpool population throughout the research project. This includes those living in the city centre and on the outskirts of Liverpool, and those from both affluent and deprived parts of the city. To date, two surveys (July 2007 and June 2008) and baseline mapping research (2007) have been carried out by Icarus Icon Ltd.

Impacts 08 also commissioned two focus groups in each neighbourhood, these taking place in September and October 2008. The groups in Aigburth and City Centre were delivered by Paul Kyprianou of Icarus Icon Ltd, while the Kirkdale and Knotty Ash groups were facilitated by Dr Denise Peerbhoy and Amanda Kilroy of The Commonsense Partnership. An appendix to this report details the recruitment criteria and research methodologies for this qualitative research.

This report sets out the findings from the focus groups, and compares results from the 2007 and 2008 surveys in areas of particular interest. It is based on the qualitative data from focus groups, along with some key findings from the 2008 survey (which was a shortened version of the baseline survey designed to provide quantitative data against key questions). The aim of this report is to explore emerging perceptions and experiences of the Liverpool 08 programme in these neighbourhoods while the programme is still ongoing.

A full analysis of any changes in cultural participation and perceptions of the city will emerge through comparing data from the final survey in 2009 against the 2007 baseline. Full findings from the whole three years of the study will inform Impacts 08's final report in March 2010.

## 2. Neighbourhoods

The four neighbourhoods chosen for this study are:

**City Centre:** a neighbourhood in the Liverpool 1 postcode area, with a varied population consisting of a long-established community renting property from social landlords, and residents living in newly built apartments. The area is also the focal point for the Merseyside Chinese community. Two focus groups were held within or near the City Centre neighbourhood, one with members of the Chinese community, and one with a group of both white and BME participants, held at the Rialto Community Centre.

**Aigburth:** a relatively prosperous residential suburb in the south of the city, home to a large number of families and older people. Focus groups in Aigburth were held with members of Aigburth Community Church, and with parents from St Michaels in the Hamlet Infant and Junior School.

**Kirkdale:** an area in the north of Liverpool, which has a long and continuing tradition of community activism. The area has suffered severe disadvantage over many years, and significant problems of unemployment, poor health and crime remain in comparison to other areas of the city, although the area has benefited from sustained regeneration initiatives. Two focus groups were held at the Rotunda Community College in Kirkdale,

one for children aged between 10 and 15 years, and one for adults. Participants had been actively involved in community arts activity over the year, facilitated through the Rotunda.

**Knotty Ash:** an area of East Liverpool, six miles from Liverpool city centre and close to the city boundary with Knowsley. The area is made up of former council housing stock, and some more affluent semi-detached housing. A high proportion of the area's population is made up of older people. Two groups of adults were recruited to take part in focus groups in Knotty Ash.

A full description of the neighbourhoods, based on baseline mapping and research (including interviews with a range of local community representatives), can be found online.<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Perceptions of Liverpool

#### 3.1. Local perceptions of Liverpool

The survey asked respondents a series of questions to gauge their opinions about how Liverpool as a city is perceived, both within Liverpool and outside. Responses from the June 2008 survey suggest that there has been a small positive shift since July 2007, both related to how Liverpool residents view their city, and how they think it is viewed by others from outside the city.

In 2007, the majority of respondents described Liverpool's facilities as at least equal to those of other cities in Britain (London excepted). Only with regard to shopping did a significant number of respondents (27.5%) think that Liverpool's facilities were worse than those of other cities. The responses from the 2008 survey show only minimal shifts in this general picture. However, the view of Liverpool's shopping facilities has improved, with 22.3% now stating that Liverpool's shopping facilities are worse than those of other cities, a drop of 5.2%.

Respondents were asked about whether they agreed with the statement that 'Liverpool is improving and has a positive future'. The response showed a small increase of 4.3% in those who agreed with the statement, compared to 2007. However, at the local level there was a narrowing in the differential between neighbourhoods. The lowest positive response was still in Kirkdale (83.1%) and the highest in Aigburth (88.7%). However, Kirkdale's response in 2007 was 73.2%, indicating a more significant improvement in levels of confidence about the future of the city as a whole amongst residents in that area.

In the July 2007 study, significant differences emerged between how the four neighbourhoods perceived the future of their own local area. Only 3.1% of Aigburth residents agreed that 'things will get worse for this neighbourhood', compared to 37.9% in Kirkdale, 18.5% in Knotty Ash and 6.7% in City Centre. In 2008, these distinctions remain, but again there has been a significant improvement in confidence levels in the two most disadvantaged communities. The percentage of local residents who now agree that 'things will get worse for this neighbourhood' has dropped to 27% in Kirkdale and 13.8% in Knotty Ash. The figure has remained stable in Aigburth (4.2%) and the only increase in negative perceptions has been in the City Centre neighbourhood (12.8%).

78 respondents (13.5% of the 575 who answered this question) referenced the number of tourists visiting the city as the best thing about ECoC 2008 to date, with a further 59 respondents giving various answers around improved and increased levels of press coverage, the raised profile of the city and a perceived improvement in the city's reputation and status. Many survey respondents feel that the perceptions of Liverpool held by people outside the city, often considered to be very negative in the past, has been improved or changed as a result of increased national and international media focus on ECoC 2008.

<sup>2</sup> See: *Local Area Studies – Key Statistics and Mapping of the Four Local Areas* (November 2008) – available to download from <http://www.liv.ac.uk/impacts08/Dissemination/I08reports.htm>

### 3.2. Perceptions of crime

Perceptions of crime have shifted since the July 2007 survey, with 22.6% of people now stating that crime in Liverpool is worse than in other cities, compared to 12.2% in 2007. Similarly, a smaller number of people in the 2008 survey thought that crime in Liverpool was dropping (28.9% in 2008, compared to 39% in 2007).

35.1% agreed that crime was dropping in their neighbourhood, compared to 45% in 2007. These changes in perceptions of crime appear to have occurred in each surveyed neighbourhood. Across all the areas surveyed, people are more confident about their own neighbourhood than about the city generally, suggesting that this is partly a media driven change in perceptions<sup>3</sup>.

In focus groups in both Knotty Ash and Kirkdale, crime was discussed as part of a wider conversation about the cultural landscape of those communities. Older people in Knotty Ash cited fear of crime and violence as a barrier to engagement in cultural events and activity, while younger participants described a culture of a 'lack of trust – even the churches are padlocked' as a barrier to their active engagement in the community. In Kirkdale, children described the neighbourhood as divided, with 'clear no go areas' and boundaries reinforced by older children. However, they had been able to take advantage of opportunities to access cultural projects in their immediate neighbourhood (notably the Rotunda 'pavilion'<sup>4</sup>) which had been the starting point for further participation and attendance at events based in the wider neighbourhood and in Liverpool city centre.

## 4. Cultural activity and participation

### 4.1. Interest in culture and sport

The survey explored levels of interest in different types of cultural activity, including sport. In addition to asking people how interested they were in different activities, we also asked whether they had participated in these activities in the past year, and where this participation took place.

Findings from the June 2008 survey do not demonstrate clear changes in levels of interest and participation in cultural activity, and show limited percentage changes from last year. It is very difficult to draw any firm conclusions about changes or developments between the 2007 survey and the 2008 survey; a much fuller analysis will be provided in the next report, which will include figures from the final survey (scheduled for completion in March 2009), and which may show greater evidence of change or development in these areas. However, the emerging picture is that interest in various types of cultural activity, which was high in the baseline survey, has remained steady, with only small percentage changes which are not statistically significant. The only area in which there was a significant increase (6.6%) was 'live music or concerts'; while the data should be treated with caution, this could potentially reflect the level of interest and enthusiasm for the Liverpool Echo Arena, which was referenced by many people when we asked what they felt was the best thing so far about ECoC.

In 2007, survey respondents demonstrated a general level of confidence in terms of their knowledge of the city's cultural offer. More than half of respondents overall (53.6%) stated that they knew either 'a reasonable amount', 'quite a lot', or 'a great deal' about what there is to do in Liverpool. By 2008, this figure had dropped to 35.6%. However, given the size of the Liverpool 08 events programme throughout the year, alongside the opening of new cultural and entertainment venues such as the Liverpool Echo Arena and the Liverpool One complex of shops, restaurants and a new cinema, this finding should not necessarily be interpreted negatively.

<sup>3</sup> The 2007 surveys were carried out shortly before the death of Rhys Jones on 22 August 2007, and it is possible that the local and national media coverage of the ongoing police investigation into this crime, and the wider issue of gang-related gun culture in Liverpool, may be partly responsible for the changes identified in the 2008 survey.

<sup>4</sup> The Rotunda community organisation in North Liverpool worked in partnership with the Biennial to transform a derelict strip of land into a community garden.

Table 1: Interest in attending various types of cultural event

	% very or quite interested (2007)	% very or quite interested (2008)	+/- change
<b>Museums and galleries</b>	63.4	63.3	-0.1%
<b>Pubs, bars and clubs</b>	48.1	45.7	-2.4%
<b>Events or festivals</b>	60.6	58.3	-2.3%
<b>Live music or concerts</b>	55.8	62.4	+6.6%
<b>Theatre</b>	60.3	56.9	-3.4%
<b>Cinema</b>	55.1	48.1	-7%
<b>Sport</b>	48.8	35.6	-13.2%

#### 4.2. Levels of participation – general findings

The table below provides figures from the July 2007 and June 2008 surveys, in relation to different types of cultural event. Respondents were asked whether they had attended this type of event in the city centre over the past twelve months. It is very difficult to draw any conclusions from the data at this stage, as the 2008 survey was carried out before major events within the ECoC programme. However, the data is provided here in order to give some context to the qualitative data from focus groups, which follows these findings.

Table 2: Participation in cultural activity (% respondents who have attended various types of cultural event in Liverpool city centre over the last twelve months)

	Aigburth			City Centre			Kirkdale			Knotty Ash		
	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-
<b>Museums and galleries</b>	71	62.7	-8.3	58.7	58.5	-0.2	44.5	48.2	3.7	43	50.3	7.3
<b>Pubs, bars or clubs</b>	48	25.9	-22.1	57	58.5	1.5	40.6	46.6	6	38	26.5	-11.5
<b>Events or festivals</b>	38	23.9	-14.1	44.6	39.5	-5.1	19.4	25.1	5.7	20.5	9	-11.5
<b>Live music or concerts</b>	37	39.3	+2.3	37.2	41.5	4.3	20.6	29.8	9.2	19	20.1	1.1
<b>Theatre</b>	53	33.3	-19.7	31.4	32.2	0.8	32.2	33	0.8	35.5	32.3	-3.2
<b>Cinema</b>	53	22.4	-30.6	57.9	48.8	-9.1	29.7	28.8	-0.9	21	12.2	-8.8

Focusing on engagement in the city centre in any of these activities, respondents from both Knotty Ash and City Centre neighbourhoods maintained the same level of activity in both 2007 and 2008 (73% for Knotty Ash in 2007 and 2008, and 85% for respondents from City Centre for both years). For Kirkdale respondents, there was an increase in engagement in any of these activities in the city centre (from 72% in 2007 to 81% in 2008), while for Aigburth respondents there was a small decrease (from 90% to 84%).

Respondents were also asked whether they participated in any of these activities in their own neighbourhoods, or elsewhere (i.e., outside their neighbourhood, but not in the city centre). Aigburth, Knotty Ash and Kirkdale saw decreases in participation in cultural activity in their own neighbourhoods from 2007 to 2008, while City Centre remained the same between the two years. City Centre, Aigburth and Knotty Ash saw decreases in participation in cultural activity elsewhere from 2007 to 2008, with some increase between the two years in Kirkdale.

Looking at the type of cultural activity, rather than the location of the cultural activity, there were decreases in engagement with pubs, bars or clubs and with events or festivals across all locations (own neighbourhood, city centre and other non-city centre areas) for respondents from Aigburth and Knotty Ash. Activity levels in

Kirkdale had increased from 2007 to 2008 for engagement with pubs, bars or clubs (48% to 58%), events or festivals (22% to 31%) and live music or concerts (23% to 36%). The only area showing a decrease in all types of cultural activity in any location was Aigburth.

Across the four neighbourhoods, our focus groups identified consistent drivers and barriers to cultural participation which were experienced by local people.

The drivers for cultural participation were identified as:

- The presence of community organisations or respected individuals who were prepared to promote and encourage participation in culture to others in their community. The effects of this could be seen particularly strongly in Kirkdale, where the focus group participants had been actively engaged in the Pavilion project at the Rotunda Community College, helped by the presence of staff who were keen to champion cultural engagement.
- Availability of community based cultural provision acting as a starting point which led to further engagement with the wider Liverpool 08 events programme and city centre cultural venues. In Kirkdale, community arts projects had led on to a range of other activities, and young people had accessed city centre venues they had not visited before ('we can take them to the Tate now and they won't cause havoc').
- It was very important to focus group participants that events were family friendly. In particular, Go Superlambananas<sup>5</sup> was highlighted by many as a project they engaged with because it captured their children's imaginations, was free of cost and was scheduled appropriately in the school summer holidays. However, some events were victims of their own success; events such as the opening ceremony, La Machine<sup>6</sup> and the Tall Ships weekend<sup>7</sup> were considered by some to be inappropriate for families, especially those with younger children, because of the difficulties of negotiating the crowds.
- Young people in Kirkdale stated a clear preference for activities in which they could become actively involved rather than just being spectators. For example, they preferred the Lord Mayor's Parade to the Mathew Street Festival.
- Good marketing and information – main sources of information were the *Liverpool Echo*,<sup>8</sup> word of mouth, and leaflets picked up in museums and libraries.

Barriers to cultural participation were:

- Cost: focus group participants reported feeling 'priced out' of participation, referencing the high cost of parking in Liverpool city centre, and the prohibitive cost of travelling on public transport with the whole family, as well as ticket prices.
- Location: there was a sense across the neighbourhoods that the Liverpool 08 programme was too heavily focused on Liverpool city centre, and that more use could have been made of parks and other suburban locations.
- Poor marketing and information: where community networks for passing on information were weaker (for example, in Knotty Ash), residents were more likely to say they did not know about ECoC. Parents in Aigburth also commented on difficulties in accessing information about Liverpool 08, referencing specific events (such as the World Firefighter Games) about which they would have liked to have known more, the

<sup>5</sup> A community arts led event in July and August 2008, in which decorated mini-versions of the Superlambanana sculpture were exhibited around the city. Many families took part in trails and competitions themed around this event during the school summer holidays.

<sup>6</sup> A street theatre performance in which a giant mechanical spider came to life and appeared in various locations in Liverpool City Centre in September 2008.

<sup>7</sup> A festival weekend to celebrate the start of the 2008 Tall Ships Race from Liverpool in July.

<sup>8</sup> Liverpool's local evening newspaper.

application process for the 08 Live Smart9 Card, and problems with finding information on the website. The Chinese community highlighted the lack of information produced in other languages.

- Lack of interest: this was regularly highlighted as a reason for lack of participation in specific events, such as contemporary art exhibitions, the Le Corbusier exhibition at the Metropolitan Cathedral's crypt, and theatrical performances.

## 5. European Capital of Culture

### 5.1. Awareness of Liverpool 08

Respondents demonstrated a high recognition rate of the Liverpool 08 logo and branding in the July 2007 household survey, with 94.2% having seen the logo before and recognising it. This remained similarly high at 94.7% in June 2008.

As described above, levels of confidence in understanding what there is to do in Liverpool are lower this year compared to last year. However, levels of confidence in understanding what ECoC is about have remained steady. The survey asked residents 'How much do you feel you know about what the European Capital of Culture 2008 is all about?'. 33.5% of people felt that they knew either a reasonable amount, quite a lot or a great deal about ECoC, compared to 34.7% last year.

From the July 2007 survey data, it was possible to identify some distinctions between levels of awareness of ECoC in different neighbourhoods, with those respondents in Aigburth much more confident about their knowledge than those in Knotty Ash. In 2008, levels of confidence in survey respondents have shifted depending on the neighbourhood in which they live. Those who live in City Centre are more aware than last year, while in all other neighbourhoods, levels of awareness have dropped. This means that City Centre residents now claim a greater knowledge about ECoC than those elsewhere, while the gap remains between those neighbourhoods with high levels of knowledge (City Centre and Aigburth), and those with less knowledge (Knotty Ash and Kirkdale). The figure remains lowest in Knotty Ash, and this is also reflected in findings from the two focus groups held in the neighbourhood later on in the year (in October 2008), suggesting that residents felt the same way after well publicised major events such as Go Superlambananas and La Machine. During the focus groups, Knotty Ash residents expressed the opinion that individual events were not well publicised, but also that local people did not try to find about them because they had little intention of participating.

### 5.2. Views on Liverpool 08

This year, survey respondents were asked what they felt had been the best thing about ECoC so far, and what they were looking forward to the most. The responses were categorised in order to identify themes; and, in the order of the number of times they were referenced by respondents, these were:

1. Regeneration – for example, the Liverpool One development, jobs, new buildings, a cleaner city, investment, the city centre being improved, and improved approaches and pathways to the city.
2. Events – many people referenced the overall events programme, while others specified a range of events, including the opening ceremony, Liverpool Sound concert, street festivals, and the Lord Mayor's Parade.
3. The level of publicity and the improvement in the city's external image – responses included 'positive coverage', 'put us on the map', 'raising international profile', and 'show city in positive light'.
4. Increased numbers of tourists visiting Liverpool.
5. Positive impacts on civic pride and community – responses included 'brought people together', 'reinvigorated city', 'positive buzz', 'optimistic spirit', and 'multicultural sense'.
6. The opening of the Liverpool Echo Arena.

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<sup>9</sup> A Capital of Culture membership card offering benefits such as discounts and priority booking for events.

7. Provision of cultural activity for children and young people, and family-friendly events.
8. The re-opening of St. George's Hall.

Some respondents made negative comments about the delivery of ECoC to date, which were clustered around the following themes: failure to see any benefits from EcoC; concerns over value for money; the perception that the benefits of ECOc are concentrated in Liverpool city centre and are absent from their neighbourhood; and a perceived failure to 'finish' preparations because roadworks and building works are ongoing.

When we asked people what they were most looking forward to about the remainder of the year, the most popular responses related to various music events. Below are listed the most popular responses, along with the number of times they were referenced by individual respondents:

1. Beatles-related events, including Mathew Street Festival, Liverpool Sound and the Beatles Convention (45).
2. Other music events, including Summer Pops and Berliner Philharmoniker (45).
3. Tall Ships Race (42).
4. Liverpool Echo Arena concerts (40).
5. Festivals, including Creamfields, Chinese New Year and Africa Oye (35).
6. New shopping facilities and the full opening of Liverpool One (32).
7. Regeneration impacts and improvements to the fabric of the city (27).
8. Klimt exhibition at Tate Liverpool (19).

### 5.3. Awareness of and participation in Liverpool 08 events

We asked people about 12 specific events within the Liverpool 08 programme, to find out whether they had heard of them, and whether they had attended them or were planning to attend.

*Table 3 – Awareness and attendance at specific cultural events (% awareness and attendance (within last 12 months) at key events in the city's cultural calendar)*

	Heard of	Been to	Planning to go
<b>People's Opening</b>	70.0	18.2	*
<b>Viennese Balls</b>	25.5	0.4	*
<b>Hub Festival</b>	31.6	7.2	*
<b>Streets Ahead</b>	28.1	2.1	2.1
<b>Klimt exhibition</b>	38.4	1.9	15.0
<b>Go Superlambananas</b>	43.6	8.9	2.6
<b>Liverpool Sound Concert</b>	68.5	1.9	*
<b>Tall Ships Race</b>	78.0	8.9	24.5
<b>Le Corbusier exhibition</b>	10.2	**	1.5
<b>Liverpool Biennial</b>	22.0	0.8	3.4
<b>World Firefighter Games</b>	13.9	**	1.9
<b>King Lear</b>	20.2	**	5.8

\* These events had already taken place at the time of the survey. Other events happened during the period of the survey, and in some cases respondents may refer to events they have been to in previous years.

\*\* These events did not start until after the completion of the survey.

As in the previous survey, there was a very high level of awareness around the Tall Ships Race, and this was also the event that people were most likely to say they would attend. However, when combining this data with feedback from focus groups, it is clear that the events which most captured the imagination and were most enjoyed were not necessarily those which were highly anticipated.

#### 5.4. Perceptions of the purpose and benefits of ECoC

The survey asked respondents how being ECoC in 2008 would affect Liverpool. In 2007, the responses suggested some ambivalence amongst a proportion of respondents concerning ECoC's potential to generate meaningful change for the city's residents. A 58% majority offered a positive response, feeling that Liverpool would be a better place by 2008. This has now increased to 66% in the responses to the 2008 survey.

We asked whether people thought ECoC would make a difference to their neighbourhood. In the 2007 survey, there was a clear distinction between low levels of optimism in Kirkdale and Knotty Ash, and higher levels of confidence in Aigburth and City Centre. In 2008, there has been an improvement in optimism in Kirkdale, possibly as a result of the various community arts projects which are running in the area. However, in Aigburth, which has not been targeted with the same level of community based arts activity, the number of people who agree that ECoC 'will not make a difference in this neighbourhood' has increased by 22.2%.

Respondents continued to see ECoC as primarily either a regeneration programme for Liverpool city centre or an events programme. We asked focus group participants who they felt would be the beneficiaries of ECoC, and how the city would benefit. Answers indicated that most people did not feel that ECoC would benefit either them as individuals or their neighbourhoods – 'the money will only come to those who already have money'. All of the groups who discussed this question felt that benefits were restricted to Liverpool city centre and not felt in their own communities.

However, participants saw clear improvements in the number of tourists visiting Liverpool, the level of positive publicity for Liverpool being generated by ECoC, higher levels of cleanliness, and the opening of new retail and other facilities in Liverpool city centre. Many focus group participants described the city as feeling like a more exciting place, and they felt that as a direct result of ECoC they had been to venues or events they would not otherwise have attended.

*Table 4: Perceptions of the benefits of European Capital of Culture (% respondents who agree/strongly agree with the statement)*

	Aigburth			City Centre			Kirkdale			Knotty Ash		
	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-	2007	2008	+/-
Everyone in Liverpool will gain from the Capital of Culture	49.2	43.8	-5.4	46.2	44.9	-1.3	26.6	41.9	15.3	40.2	32.6	-7.6
It won't make a difference to this neighbourhood	49.2	71.4	22.2	40.3	42.4	2.1	85	72.8	-12.2	80.9	80.8	-0.1
Liverpool is improving and has a positive future	88.9	88.7	-0.2	86.7	87.7	1	73.2	83.1	9.9	79	85.4	6.4
Things will get worse for this neighbourhood	8.2	4.2	-4.0	14.2	11.3	-2.9	37.9	21.7	-16.2	18.5	12.1	-6.4

## 5.5. The future of Liverpool – ECoC and sustainability

As seen above, the survey reports high levels of confidence that Liverpool is improving and will continue to do so.

Focus group discussion in each of the four neighbourhoods reflected much more ambivalence about the likelihood of sustained benefits resulting from ECoC. In Kirkdale, there was a high level of enthusiasm for continued involvement in local arts projects, and young people were already progressing ideas about gardening and growing vegetables on the site of the Rotunda pavilion. Across the four neighbourhoods, many others felt that ECoC would be a catalyst for continued change which would motivate further new initiatives. People felt that the city looked and felt more prosperous as a result of new developments in Liverpool city centre.

However, there were concerns expressed over the sustainability of retail and leisure developments, and the viability of new city centre apartment complexes, given the difficulties in the current economic climate<sup>10</sup>. Participants referenced the relatively poor pay in the service sector and recent increases in house prices and the cost of living.

## 6. Messages from the four neighbourhoods

The findings from the focus groups were very much influenced by factors specific to each neighbourhood. The section below sets out some of these local distinctions and how they have led to the formation of very different attitudes towards, and opinions about, ECoC.

### 6.1. Kirkdale

The focus group findings in Kirkdale were much more positive than the survey findings. The focus groups involved people engaged in community arts, and the positive feedback from these groups strongly suggests that engaging local people in cultural activity has a wide range of benefits. Those who are engaged are more likely to feel positive about their community, and have a desire and confidence to participate in additional cultural activities and events, both at neighbourhood and city-wide level. The Kirkdale experience of the community working in partnership with arts organisations and artists to deliver the pavilion project clearly demonstrates the value of having local individuals and organisations who will champion cultural participation, as staff at the Rotunda Community College had facilitated this process.

It was clear from young people that divisions in the community, and gangs of young people being very territorial about their immediate neighbourhood, remain significant issues. However, there was a feeling that this is improving in response to strong efforts within the local community, many centred around arts and cultural projects.

### 6.2. Knotty Ash

No community arts activity has taken place in Knotty Ash which has captured local attention in the way the Rotunda pavilion has in Kirkdale. The community there displayed a greater reluctance to engage with ECoC, and a cynicism about the benefits and beneficiaries. They were much more likely to see large scale events such as La Machine as a 'waste of money', and felt that the community projects which had taken place in their area were tokenistic. They did not see any positive legacy resulting from ECoC in particular, either in their community or in the city.

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<sup>10</sup> Throughout September and October 2008, when the focus groups took place, there was widespread media coverage of the collapse of investment banks in the US and the UK government's 'bailout plan' for banks. The economy was acknowledged to be heading into severe recession.

### 6.3. Aigburth

Aigburth residents had engaged with many of the ECoC events, and described a range of positive experiences. In particular, Go Superlambananas, the Klimt exhibition, the Tall Ships Race and La Machine were very popular. Some families had found cost, timings, location and lack of information to be barriers to getting more involved, with several parents indicating that they felt the programme lacked dedicated programming for teenagers. Locally, people did not reference any community activity related to ECoC. They expressed concern about the condition of Sefton Park throughout the year, as the lake has been drained and there is much ongoing building and maintenance work. This has had a negative impact on a location which they feel should have been a key asset and focus of much more activity within the Liverpool 08 programme. Aigburth residents felt that opportunities to engage schools in ECoC could have been increased, building on the success of previous themed years.

### 6.4. City Centre

Feedback from focus groups in the City Centre neighbourhood suggested that on the whole people had successfully engaged in a wide range of events, trying out activities and new venues for the first time. They also felt positive about the changing landscape and new facilities in City Centre, although some people had mixed feelings about the changed views and skyline.

The focus groups were targeted at members of the Chinese and Black British communities, and there were similarities in their perceptions of the way their communities had been engaged in ECoC. Both communities felt that moves towards inclusion had been progressing well up to 2007, but had been lost in the pressure of delivering such a large programme in 2008. For example, the Chinese community felt that an opportunity had been missed to make 2008's Chinese New Year celebrations bigger and better than previous years' efforts. Similar comments were made about Black History Month.

## 7. Next steps

A third and final survey will be carried out by Icarus Icon Ltd in early 2009. This will be used to complete a thorough analysis of changes in cultural engagement and wider opinions about Liverpool 08 and the city's long term future over the three year period. Such an approach places the residents' experience of Liverpool 08 in the context of preparations and anticipation before the year, and reflection after it.

## 8. Appendices

### 8.1. Focus groups: approach and methodology

Impacts 08 commissioned focus groups from two research consultancies, The Commonsense Partnership and Icarus Icon Ltd. Each consultancy was given the same brief – to deliver two focus groups in two neighbourhoods in order to explore further the themes of the research survey, in a way which was creative and engaging for a diverse range of participants.

#### *Aigburth and City Centre Neighbourhood*

Icarus Icon Ltd delivered two focus groups in Aigburth and two in the City Centre neighbourhood. These comprised the following members:

- For City Centre, members of the Chinese community living in, or with links to, the neighbourhood (with an interpreter present).
- Users of the Rialto Community Centre, adjacent to the City Centre neighbourhood.
- For Aigburth, parents from St Michaels in the Hamlet Primary School, Aigburth.
- Members of Aigburth Community Church.

All participants were recruited in advance and asked to keep a scrapbook with press cuttings, images and comments about their cultural and leisure activities over a two week period. These scrapbooks were used as the starting point for discussion around participation in the Liverpool 08 events programme over the year and perceptions of accessibility, enjoyment and quality of delivery of several flagship events. Further facilitated discussion took place around the following themes:

- The new city centre – what facilities people are using, how successfully they have found their way around new street layouts, and opinions about the branding and dressing of Liverpool city centre.
- Understanding of what ECoC is all about and who are its intended beneficiaries.
- Whether ECoC has changed their own patterns of cultural participation.

#### *Kirkdale and Knotty Ash*

The Commonsense Partnership delivered two focus groups in Kirkdale and two in Knotty Ash. These comprised the following members:

- For Knotty Ash, two groups of adults recruited via Dovecot Multi-Activity Centre.
- For Kirkdale, a group of adults recruited via the Rotunda Community College, Kirkdale.
- A group of young people aged between 10 and 15 years recruited via the Rotunda Community College, Kirkdale.

The focus group workshops consisted of three exercises:

- A general discussion around individuals' participation in ECoC events.
- A look at images of landmark buildings and ECoC activities to generate further discussion.
- Participants customised an outline image of a person with information about their own cultural preferences.

These exercises were used as starting points to facilitate discussion around perceptions of the neighbourhoods in which participants live, what facilitates and what acts as a barrier to cultural participation, and what participants considered to be the benefits of ECoC at neighbourhood level.

## 8.2. Project timeline – key dates

<b>Date</b>	<b>Project activity</b>	<b>Events in Liverpool</b>	<b>Significant national/ international events</b>
<b>March 2007</b>	Baseline mapping of four neighbourhoods completed		
<b>July 2007</b>	First household survey	Cancellation of 2007 Matthew Street Festival announced	
<b>August 2007</b>		Murder of 11 year old Rhys Jones in a shooting in Croxteth, Liverpool	
<b>January 2008</b>		Liverpool 08 launch events programme held	
<b>April 2008</b>		Rotunda Pavilion opens in Kirkdale	
<b>June 2008</b>	Second household survey starts	Tall Ships Weekend	
<b>July 2008</b>	Second household survey completed	Go Superlambananas	
<b>September 2008</b>	Focus groups held in Kirkdale and Knotty Ash neighbourhoods	La Machine event in Liverpool	US banking crisis
<b>October 2008</b>	Focus groups held in Aigburth and City Centre neighbourhoods		British bank bailout announced
<b>February 2009</b>	Third household survey		