If one had to say one thing that swung it for Liverpool it would have been Sir Jeremy Isaacs press conference on the short-listed applications for the UK nomination for the European Capital of Culture event for the years 2005 to 2019.

The quick answer is that it is simply a year long festival of arts and culture based in a city.

The key document is European Capital of Culture 2008: Criteria and Information for Applicants.

The Panel decided that, from a strong field, Liverpool was most likely to deliver a successful year-long celebratory festival in 2008.

Why Liverpool?


- Liverpool’s bid, crucially, best combines strong central direction, civic leadership, with wholehearted public participation.
- Liverpool best addresses the objectives and criteria set out in Decision 1419/1999/EC and the additional criteria set out by the UK Government.
- The Panel decided that from a strong field, Liverpool was most likely to deliver a successful year-long celebratory festival in 2008.

For Jeremy Isaacs press conference:

“life here was a greater sense there that the whole city of Liverpool was involved in the bid and behind the bid.”

How Liverpool? The Culture Bid

In the UK, Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) decided to set up a competition to select the host city:

- DCMS guidance for applicants: European Capital of Culture 2008: Criteria and Information for Applicants

The Bid Process:

2000 Chris Smith (SoS) launches competition
- Selection of Independent Advisory Panel (12 judges)
- Criteria and Information for Applicants
- Phase 2 of Bid (Oct 02 – June 03) 6 shortlisted cities
- June 2003 Liverpool announced as winner
- July 2003 nomination ratified by Council of Europe

Why Liverpool? 2

Some Myths:

- Political decision?
- Liverpool needs it most – ‘maybe a city like Liverpool needs the glory and associated funding more than us.” Newcastle blog June 2003
- Proposed programme & funding
- Well supported and influential supporters
- Regeneration – huge scale / potential

Why Liverpool won

Simply the best bid:

Assess:
- NML, Tate, FACT, Philharmonic, Biennial, Theatres, International profile Heritage & Architecture, Spirit, Beeth
- Proposed programme & funding
- Well supported and influential supporters
- Regeneration – huge scale / potential
Why did Liverpool Bid?

Liverpool’s Regeneration Context

Liverpool’s challenges

Our approach to regeneration

Culture at the heart of regeneration?
Why Culture and Regeneration?

1. Why the focus upon culture and regeneration?

2. Does the UK place more importance than elsewhere on culture's instrumental rather than intrinsic value? Culture as a tool to deliver other policy goals?

Compare EU and DCMS criteria for Capital of Culture:
EU emphasis – artistic events, cultural projects, European integration, cultural dialogue and brief mention of "employment and tourism"

DCMS criteria is more explicit about regeneration potential:
"Glasgow experienced substantial economic and social benefits and made excellent use of arts and culture to strengthen and communicate its regeneration.
"2008 should mark a lasting change in the city's standing in its own eyes, throughout the UK and on the continent.

ECOC: Explicit regeneration connection is quite rare – notable exceptions:
Glasgow90, Lille04, Liverpool08 – context and timing are key