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**Document Reference:**

Impacts 08 (2010) *Volunteering for Culture*

Volunteering for Culture:

exploring the impact of being an 08 Volunteer

2010

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Impacts 08 is a joint programme of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University
Commissioned by Liverpool City Council



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1. Introduction

1.1. Aims of this study

This report seeks to explore the impact of being an 08 Volunteer. In particular, the report looks at evidence concerning the ways in which volunteering for Liverpool European Capital of Culture, 2008 (Liverpool ECoC) has affected volunteers' cultural interests and their levels of participation in cultural activity. It explores whether volunteers' personal aspirations have been met, and what changes they have experienced as a result of their participation.

The report also looks at the experience of 08 Volunteers throughout Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture (ECoC). Specifically, it focuses on volunteers' own assessments of the highlights and successes of the Liverpool 08 programme, explores positive and negative factors which affected their experience of volunteering, and looks at the management of the 08 Volunteer programme from a volunteer perspective. The report highlights the success factors needed to create a positive volunteering experience in the context of major cultural events.

1.2. The 08 Volunteer programme

The 08 Volunteer programme formed a key element in Liverpool's 08 Welcome programme. The welcome programme was established by the Liverpool Culture Company in 2005 with the aim of delivering improvements to customer service in the build up to 2008. Its particular focus has been to deliver new initiatives which would engage a range of front line staff, together with local people more generally, to ensure that the increasing number of visitors to Liverpool in 2008 receive a high quality experience.

The 08 Volunteer programme was key in supporting the aims of the welcome programme, but also provided an opportunity to engage local people in support of the 2008 project. The specific aims of the volunteer programme were to:

- engage and involve local people;
- offer opportunities to develop skills;
- provide added value at cultural events;
- offer welcome for tourists;
- develop special projects;
- and spread engagement throughout the region.

Through relationships with partners, the programme also used volunteering as one of the ways of engaging people from more disadvantaged backgrounds in building confidence and gaining skills, especially in terms of dealing with the public at cultural events. This approach had not been common within previous European Capitals of Culture. The 08 Volunteer programme could thus be seen as a catalyst for what has since become a common ECoC aspiration, which has been highlighted within subsequent European Commission Bidding guidelines.¹

¹ See the European Commission 'Guide to Candidate Cities', available at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/doc629_en.htm (last accessed: 6 January 2009).

Volunteers were involved in a wide range of activities during the period 2005 to 2008, with tasks involving stewarding events, meeting and greeting visitors to the city, and carrying out evaluation surveys. Volunteers were provided with uniforms and went through a training process, after which they were eligible to volunteer when help was requested, being allocated to events mainly on a 'first-come-first-served' basis. Liverpool Culture Company's 08 Welcome team provided a management and administrative function both for the volunteers, and for event organisers who sought volunteer support.

Overall, 4082 volunteers registered for the programme, of whom 851 completed the training process and became active 08 Volunteers. In addition, 120 volunteer liaison officers were recruited specifically to help out with the Tall Ships Festival in July 2008, taking the total number of active volunteers for Liverpool 08 to around 1,000. There was a volunteer presence at 990 events between the start of the programme in 2005 and January 2009. Overall, volunteers gave a total of 6974 days of volunteering time, a value equivalent to £0.3m². Value-in-kind contributions from sponsors Ethel Austin, Sayers and United Utilities, as well as staff input from the Learning and Skills Council, took the total added value contribution of the 08 Volunteer programme to around £1m.

The programme itself (branded 08 Volunteers) built from 2005, when 25 volunteers joined a pilot programme. From this pilot, the programme grew, using the years in the build up to ECoC to develop an approach to volunteering which would attempt to maximise the benefits for the city and for the volunteers themselves in 2008.

The original benchmark for the 08 Volunteer programme was the successful 2002 Commonwealth Games programme, in which a number of the original group of 08 Volunteers had been involved. However, it quickly became clear that the nature of a year long cultural programme required a different approach to volunteering than a two week sporting festival, the latter of which required a huge number of volunteers over a short and very specific time period. In this context, the approach taken was to use the activities of 2005, 2006 and 2007 to increase the capacity of both the Liverpool Culture Company and other local festivals to engage volunteers to support the delivery of the Liverpool ECoC.

It is also important to note that the 08 Volunteer programme was by far the most comprehensive and successful volunteering programme for any European Capital of Culture. It has proved hugely influential for future ECoCs and for a number of UK cities who are looking to develop flexible models of cultural volunteering. The programme also delivered the first international volunteer exchanges for cultural capitals, bringing Liverpool and Stavanger volunteers together in both cities to share experiences and to support each others' events.

Although the majority of this report is concerned with the impact of 08 Volunteering on the volunteers themselves, the comments in Section 4 (The Experience of Being an 08 Volunteer) allow a view on what worked particularly well in the Liverpool context and also where improvements could be made – both as the programme in Liverpool develops beyond 2008, and for others who are looking to build on Liverpool's experience.

² This calculation is based on the current hourly minimum wage of £5.73.

1.3. Research methodology

The report analysis is based on the findings of two postal surveys, two focus groups and a discussion workshop which, in turn, build upon six in-depth interviews with 08 Volunteers carried out in September 2006.

The surveys were disseminated in the form of printed questionnaires distributed to all registered volunteers in November 2007 and again in January 2009. There were 116 responses to the 2007 survey, and a further 196 responses to the 2009 survey. The repeat survey allows comparison between levels of cultural participation and interest in different types of activity in late 2007 and early 2009. It also provides an opportunity to look at volunteers' reasons for volunteering, and whether their aspirations had been met by the end of the programme.

Qualitative data was gathered from two focus groups held in April 2008, with 15 and 10 participants and a workshop³ held in February 2009 with 31 participants, all of whom had been active volunteers throughout 2008. This has provided us with additional data which has helped to contextualise the survey findings.

1.4. Who were the volunteers?

08 Volunteers were more likely to be older people retired from work, and women. They were more likely to be educated to degree level and to come from socio-economic groups ABC1 than the Liverpool average. Most had lived in Liverpool for over ten years, and thus had a good knowledge of the city and its cultural offer. However, there was good recruitment from black and minority ethnic (BME) communities, as 15% of the volunteer cohort described themselves as BME compared to a Liverpool average of 8%, and 13% of the volunteers answering the survey described themselves as deaf, disabled or unable to work as a result of a long-term illness. (See Appendix 6.2 for further demographic information).

Volunteering experience

Around two-thirds of the survey respondents had done some volunteering prior to becoming an 08 Volunteer. This compares very positively with figures from our local area studies⁴, which surveyed a sample of Liverpool residents about their experience of Liverpool ECoC, and identified that only around 12% of respondents had done any volunteering in the previous year. Of the 72% of 08 Volunteers who had previous volunteering experience, 32% had volunteered in cultural activities, indicating that the 08 Volunteering programme was able to attract volunteers new to cultural volunteering. This previous volunteering experience had taken place in a range of venues and settings, including most commonly at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, in local museums, galleries and National Trust properties, and through involvement in community arts projects. This suggests that many of the respondents are experienced volunteers and therefore in a good position to comment on the management, administration and overall experience of 08 Volunteering.

The majority of the 2009 survey respondents (60.7%) had registered to become an 08 Volunteer between one and two years earlier (i.e. during 2007, before the start of the 2008 ECoC year of events), while a further 28% had been an 08 Volunteer for over two years.

The majority of the volunteers (62.4%) took part in up to ten Liverpool ECoC events, with a further 33.9% who took part in between ten and 50 events. A small percentage, 3.6%, took part in more activity than this.

³ Facilitated by Paul Kyprianou at Icarus Icon Ltd.

⁴ See Impacts 08, *Neighbourhood Watch: a longitudinal research study into the impact of the Liverpool ECoC on local residents.* (2010) www.impacts08.net

2. The Impact of 08 Volunteering on Cultural Engagement

This section explores how volunteering in a cultural programme affects views on, and participation in, cultural activity.

2.1. Understandings of culture

How 08 Volunteers define culture

We asked survey respondents to write down, in one or two sentences, 'what culture means to you'. The responses were categorised in five ways:

- culture as 'the arts' – including music, architecture, drama, art, and heritage;
- culture as 'lifestyle' – every aspect of life within a particular place, group or society;
- culture as 'catalyst' – something which can transform the individual through an emotional or educational experience;
- culture as a regeneration tool (mainly in the 2007 survey);
- culture as a way of bringing people together.

A similar question, 'how do you define culture?' was used as a starting point for discussion in the focus groups held in April 2008. Our findings suggest that 08 Volunteers have a complex understanding of culture, recognising that the word can simultaneously embody quite distinct meanings, and that volunteers' conceptualisation of culture may have broadened as a result of their experiences in 2008.

'The finer aspects of life': culture as 'the arts'

The largest single identification was of culture as describing 'the arts' – for example, music, art, architecture, heritage sites and drama⁵. Of 102 survey responses in 2007, 28 were categorised as such. The following responses are representative of many of the answers given:

'the arts, literature, history.'

'culture to me is a mix of art, music, events and history belonging to the city.'

'Diversity, entertainment – be it arts, drama, writing, music, etc.'

'Culture means the history, and arts, architecture of a nation or people.'

'The finer aspects of life, music, literature, theatre, history, architecture and art.'

It is interesting that within the focus group, when considering culture in these terms, volunteers tend to make a distinction between culture and entertainment. The volunteers have strong but hard to classify views on what should and should not be included; for example, they feel that quality matters in defining what is and is not culture. However, this does not signify a cultural elitism that favours, for instance, opera over pop music, and there is little reference within the responses to what is traditionally thought of as 'high art'. Volunteers described participating in a wide range of cultural activities, from a visit to the Lady Lever Art Gallery to going to see Westlife in concert. An event is 'culture' if it stirs the emotions or is thought provoking, and in this context, focus

⁵ N.B. This is effectively OED definition 1: "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively" - Oxford English Dictionary, OUP (sourced via www.askoxford.com, 25/9/09)

group participants gave a range of examples of 'things' that were 'not culture', including sport and some television programmes, and, indeed, some elements of the Liverpool 08 programme:

'The World Firefighter Games? I know some people would think so, but that's not culture to me.'

Volunteers also acknowledged varying levels of cultural engagement. The experience of performing or creating is held up as a point of contrast to the relatively passive act of being a spectator, with the former posited as having stronger effects than the latter in terms of stimulating learning and engagement through cultural means.

'The food, the language, the way of life': culture as customs and heritage⁶

Volunteers also defined culture in a much broader sense than the arts, meaning every aspect of life within a particular society. Twenty five respondents to the first survey defined culture as the way of life of individuals or groups within society. The varied answers to this question included:

'various peoples displaying their individual heritage.'

'a common understanding of how we interact with each other.'

'a sense of shared identity.'

'a traditional and local way of doing things.'

'culture is people and their way of living, our way of life, habits, beliefs, expression.'

'the artistic expression of a group of people, together with their unique customs and ways of doing things which give them a special character.'

'the friendliness, willingness to help and laughter of the Liverpool people.'

One survey respondent described culture as 'the way we do things around here'. In this construction of the meaning of culture, volunteers referenced Liverpool and their own sense of belonging to the city - for example, 'My heritage, what my parents, grandparents have built and passed on, in the town they chose to live in (Liverpool)'. Their sense of culture as being the everyday life of their city is closely connected to their civic pride. Focus group respondents defined culture as:

'the food, the language, the way of life – you don't think of that as culture, but if you were abroad it would be culture, wouldn't it?'

'Everything that lifts the spirit and transports you': culture as an intellectual and emotional catalyst

Eighteen respondents to the 2007 survey identified culture by its ability to transform the individual through experience. Responses included the following:

'everything that lifts the spirit and transports the person giving a sense of wellbeing and joy.'

'extending and expanding my personal experience of what surrounds me.'

⁶ N.B. This is effectively OED definition 3: "the customs, institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or group" - Oxford English Dictionary, OUP (sourced via www.askoxford.com, 25/9/09)

'intellectual, stimulating experience.'

'having the opportunity to better yourself.'

'to participate, we can go on to higher things.'

'the chance to enrich your life through knowledge and by being part of a group that enjoys similar things.'

'the ethos that underpins and uplifts our spirits.'

'culture is an enhancement to my life. It stimulates my senses, giving me a feeling of enlargement.'

Focus group participants in April 2008 similarly defined culture in terms of its ability either to develop knowledge or to stimulate an emotional response. For these volunteers, culture 'makes you think' and 'broadens your horizons' and the measure of cultural quality is in its ability to affect the individual. They describe culture as educational, inspiring, and stimulating.

'A chance for Liverpool to be reborn': culture for regeneration

Twelve respondents in 2007 defined culture in terms of the potential for Liverpool to regenerate and improve its external image. In these responses, it was clear that some respondents were merging concepts of culture generally with the idea of European Capital of Culture specifically.

'a chance for Liverpool to be reborn.'

'opportunity to show the best of Liverpool to outsiders.'

'a chance to show the world that Liverpool has risen from the ashes of mediocrity and is now reclaiming its rightful place upon the world stage of great cities.'

'it means that Liverpool will be back on the map – for good reasons instead of negative.'

'the fantastic chance we have to showcase our city and let others know why we are so proud of it.'

In 2009, while many respondents made the connection between culture and place (*'Maritime history... Scouse wit and friendliness', 'the life of the city expressed in arts and popular events'*) very few made a direct reference to culture as a tool of economic or social regeneration. This suggests that 08 Volunteers have created a distinction between 'culture' and 'European Capital of Culture' as a result of their experiences over the year. One respondent specifically stated that culture:

'means a lot more than Liverpool could offer during 08. Culture means more than a new shopping centre⁷.'

'Culture is a common understanding of how we interact with each other': culture as a way of bringing people together

In the focus groups participants referenced the cultural diversity of Liverpool in defining its cultural offer.

⁷ This is a reference to the opening of Liverpool One shopping development which was a regeneration highlight of 2008.

This came out even more strongly in the 2009 survey, with answers that defined culture as a way of bringing people and communities together, with an emphasis on diversity and learning about each other. For example, respondents stated that to them, culture meant:

'People from different backgrounds, heritage, religion, education and beliefs who come together in one place and find a common interest.'

'Awareness to learn, enjoy each other's lives, explore art, theatre, other nationalities' music etc.'

'A multi diverse community, learning about each other ethnic's art, music and history.'

'A broad spectrum of what happens locally and globally. How other communities impact on ours.'

'Culture makes a person what they are'

Volunteers have defined culture as the arts, recognisable by its ability to promote learning, stimulate thinking, and provoke an emotional response. Alongside this, culture is a way of life in a particular place, and exists in and through relationships and interactions between people. Culture is also a catalyst for improvement, whether through the development of an individual or the regeneration of a city, and culture is a way of encouraging communication across different social and ethnic groups. For many volunteers, culture is a mixture of all of the above; their familiarity and confidence with engaging in the arts, and the civic pride they express, combine to make up what they perceive as culture. Respondents summed this up as:

'all aspects of life relating [to] art, education, literature and distinction in a civilised society promoting mutual care and respect.'

'Everything extra to carrying out the basic activities of daily living.'

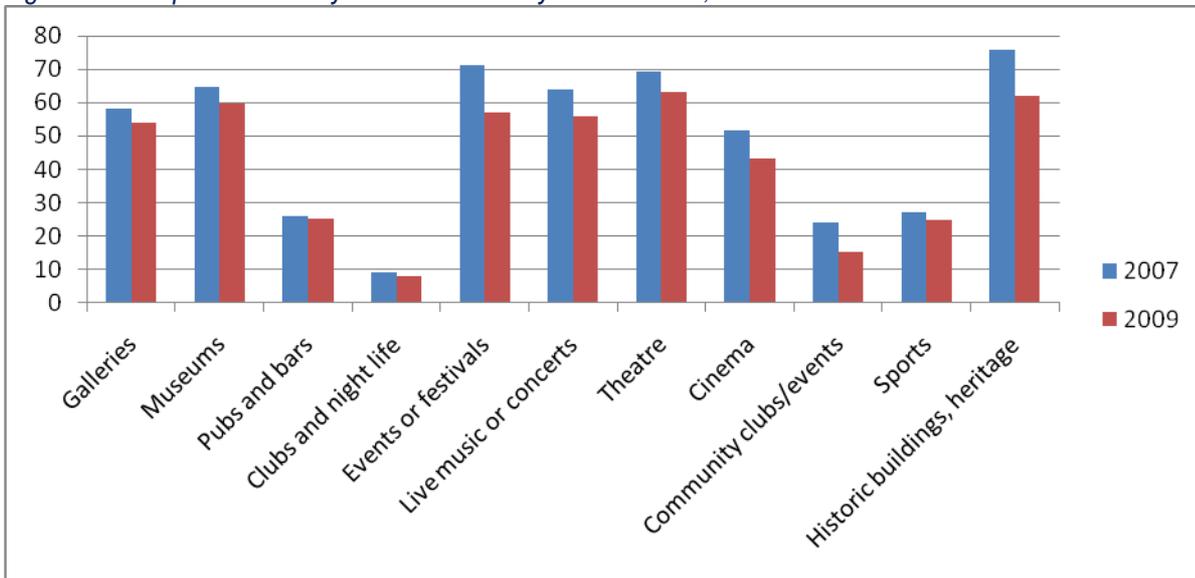
'The mark we, as people, leave on the world.'

2.2. Levels of interest in cultural activity

In 2007 and in 2009, we asked volunteers to tell us how interested they are in different types of cultural activity, along with what kind of cultural activity they participate in, and how often. The findings from 2007 showed that the volunteers were already interested and actively engaged in a variety of cultural activities, considerably more than the wider population of the city when compared to the cohort from Impacts 08's local area studies (which explored the attitudes of 800 Liverpool residents to European Capital of Culture).

The 2009 findings suggest that levels of interest in various forms of culture have declined slightly or remained constant. It is not possible to speculate about the reasons for this, and it should also be noted that given the sample size for the survey, the findings cannot be considered statistically significant. The following table shows the percentage of respondents who were 'very interested' in different cultural forms in 2007 and 2009.

Fig 1: % of respondents 'very interested' in any cultural form, 2007 and 2009.

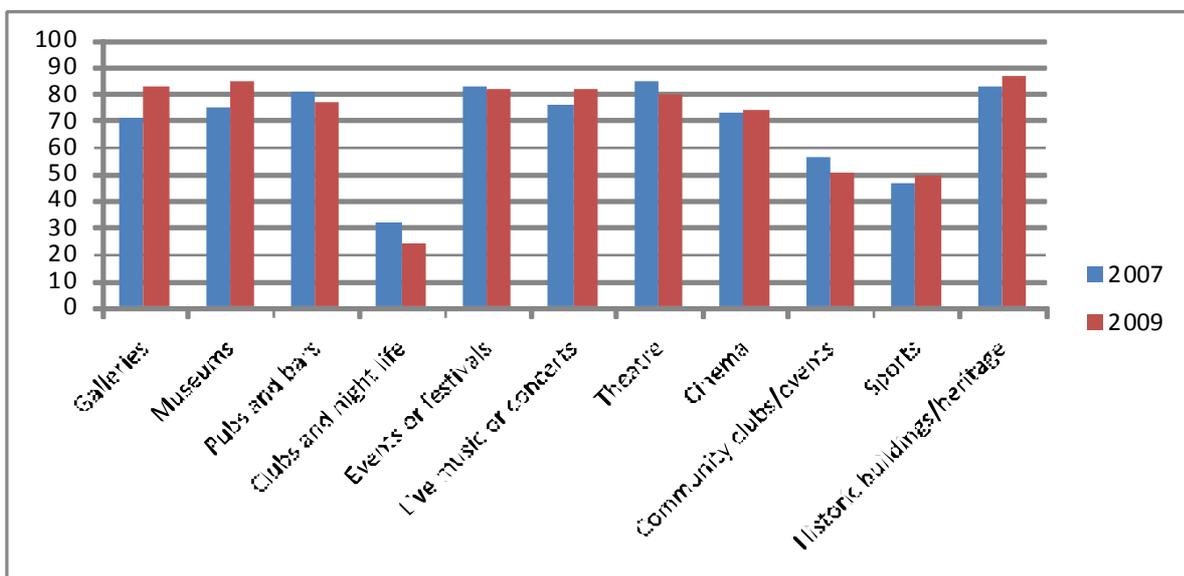


2.3. Participation in cultural activity

Despite the fact that levels of interest in different cultural forms appear to have declined, the results of the survey suggest that participation in cultural activity has risen slightly, from an already high level.

The table below compares percentages of respondents who took part in different types of cultural activity more than three or four times a year (i.e. those who attended once a week, once a month, or three or four times a year). It demonstrates that during 2008, volunteers visited museums, galleries, and live music events more often than in the previous year, while the largest drop in attendance has been in clubs and night life.

Fig 2: % of respondents who took part in cultural activities more than 3-4 times per year, 2007 and 2009.



We asked volunteers about 28 different cultural and sporting venues on Merseyside, and asked when they had last visited any of these, with options for 'never been' and 'never heard of it'. Comparing percentages of volunteers who had visited the venues in the last year, the figures had gone down for 18 venues and risen for nine⁸. Where attendance at specific venues had gone up, the venues were often new or recently re-opened, such as Odeon Cinema, Arena and Convention Centre Liverpool, Sudley House, and the Bluecoat. The main exception to this was Tate Liverpool, a long-established venue, where it appears that an exhibition of the work of Gustav Klimt had encouraged attendance. From the workshop, it became apparent that volunteers did not consider their volunteering activity to be cultural participation, which they defined as attendance at cultural events and venues for social purposes outside of their volunteering roles.

Barriers to cultural participation

Comparison between perceived barriers to engagement with culture in 2007 and 2009 suggests that there has been little change in the factors which prevent volunteers from more frequently attending cultural events. The survey asked volunteers what reasons stopped them from attending different types of cultural activity. In 2007 and 2009, with only one exception, the main reasons remained the same. For example, in both the 2007 and 2009 surveys, time was the primary barrier to attending museums and galleries, and price was the main reason people did not attend theatre and concerts. However, the numbers of people citing these as reasons for lack of engagement have dropped very slightly. The only exception was with regard to historic buildings and heritage venues. In 2007, the most common reason given for non-participation was location, referenced by 8.8% of respondents. This has now dropped to 4.6%, and volunteers were more likely to state that lack of time was their primary reason for not attending. Given the emphasis placed in 08 volunteering training programme on the heritage buildings of Liverpool it is possible that participation in volunteering has made people more aware of the history and heritage available locally, and that they are less likely to associate heritage with stately homes and countryside venues which are more difficult to access.

Reasons for attending cultural events

Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement (May 2005)⁹ sets out an order of reasons that motivate visitors to cultural attractions:

- Social – for entertainment or to spend time with friends;
- Intellectual – because of an academic interest or to stimulate children;
- Emotional – to develop a sense of cultural identity; or
- Spiritual – for contemplation or to stimulate creativity.

Morris Hargreaves McIntyre use Maslow's hierarchy of needs to conceptualise cultural engagement as a hierarchy, in which people can progress from being social participants in culture towards a deeper spiritual engagement. While Impacts 08 does not necessarily accept a value judgement which sees some motivators and outcomes of cultural participation as more significant than others, it is useful to categorise broadly people's motivations for engaging with cultural activity, and analyse whether any changes have taken place in people's motivation as a result of becoming 08 Volunteers.

The surveys indicated a strong preference towards the use of cultural activity for social reasons, with around half of participants indicating that they attend cultural venues with friends and family rather than alone, while around 30% indicated that they visited alone (NB. respondents were free to tick more than one box). Attendance as part of an organised group was low, suggesting that the volunteers were confident and

⁸ Museum of Liverpool Life has been closed while the new Museum of Liverpool is completed, and so we have not included this venue in our analysis.

⁹ Further information about the Hierarchy of Visitor Engagement is provided in the literature review appended to this report (appendix 6.1.).

independent in accessing cultural opportunities. There does not appear to have been any shift in these patterns as a result of participation in 08 Volunteering or through experience of Liverpool ECoC more generally.

We also directly asked volunteers why they attended cultural events. The respondents ticked as many answers as were appropriate from a range of options. Again, rankings of the options remained consistent over the period of research, with the top four chosen being:

Why do you generally attend/take part in cultural events <i>outside</i> of volunteering? (Please tick no more than three)	Dimension of engagement	% choosing this reason	
		2007	2009
To see a specific event (art/theatre)	Intellectual	64.4	67.9
To have fun/be entertained	Social	49.0	55.1
To see a major attraction	Intellectual	44.2	42.3
To see beautiful things in inspiring settings	Spiritual	45.2	37.8
To attend a tour, talk, or other organised event	Intellectual	31.7	32.7
To do something with my partner/family	Social	31.7	28.1
To escape my daily routine/worries, and 'recharge my batteries'	Emotional	28.8	26.5
To stimulate my own creativity	Spiritual	27.9	26.0
To meet friends	Social	20.2	17.9
For peaceful, quiet contemplation	Emotional	17.3	12.2
To find out about something specific, e.g. for a hobby	Intellectual	14.4	11.7

These findings again suggested that social or intellectual engagement remains the driver behind much of the 08 Volunteers' participation in cultural activity, but with a significant minority who are also seeking spiritual or emotional connections through their participation. The lowest response was for the option 'to find out something specific, e.g. for a hobby', suggesting that few volunteers are accessing cultural provision for intellectual purposes as defined by the hierarchy of visitor engagement. The similarity of volunteers' motivations for cultural engagement in both surveys also suggests that there has been little change in terms of volunteers experiencing a progression from one type of cultural engagement to another - for example, from social to spiritual motivation.

3. Liverpool ECoC and the 08 Volunteers

This section focuses on 08 Volunteers' views on and experiences of the Liverpool ECoC, allowing us a view of how Liverpool residents responded to the awarding of the ECoC title and to the programme of events.

3.1. Attitudes to Liverpool winning the bid

In 2007, we asked survey respondents how they felt when they heard that Liverpool had been awarded the title of ECoC 2008; the responses to this provide some context to the 08 Volunteers' retrospective analysis of the 2008 programme discussed below (see Section 3.2). Given that the sample consists of people who have chosen to give up their free time to support the delivery of the Liverpool ECoC programme, a positive response to this question is to be expected, and indeed at least 90% of the comments were positive; moreover, some of those comments which were, in contrast, negative were framed within a wider response of enthusiasm about 2008. Negative comments were all linked to concerns over the extent to which Liverpool ECoC would benefit ordinary people and about Liverpool's capacity to deliver. Of 110 responses, 72 used words such as:

'elated' 'delighted' 'overjoyed' 'excited' 'ecstatic' 'made up'¹⁰

to describe their feelings on hearing about the win.

¹⁰ A colloquial term for 'very pleased'.

In addition to this clear sense of excitement and pleasure at Liverpool's win, other feelings and opinions emerged from the responses. Across 110 responses, there were 30 uses of the words *pride* or *proud* to define people's attitude to the Liverpool win. The sense of civic pride among volunteers is very strong, perhaps because, as discussed above, the majority have lived in the area for over ten years and feel a strong sense of connection to the city. These feelings of pride link closely to a sense, throughout the responses, that Liverpool's recognition as a cultural city is overdue.

'Over the moon. It was about time people realised what Liverpool had to offer.'

'Tremendous pride in one's own city [having] the opportunity to show the rest of Europe and the rest of the world what a great city it is.'

'Absolutely fabulous. Liverpool has always been under-estimated in the past, now we can share our beautiful city with everyone.'

Twelve respondents specifically framed the success of the ECoC bid as an opportunity for the city to turn around negative perceptions of Liverpool. From both the focus group respondents and the surveys, it was clear that some volunteers felt personally affected by negative media portrayals of Liverpool.

'Surprised and excited at last Liverpool can show itself positively and not as the media portrays it.'

'A golden opportunity to dispel the negative images.'

'Very pleased, it gives the city a great chance to change many strange perceptions outsiders have of our city.'

The volunteers identify themselves strongly with Liverpool, and there are 24 references describing Liverpool as *my city* or *our city*, or using of the words *we* or *us* when discussing Liverpool. Sometimes Liverpool and the people of Liverpool are interchangeable, or effectively the same thing - for example:

'At last Liverpool could show the world what we have to offer.'

'I felt proud, excited that Liverpool would show Europe what a great and fascinating city we are.'

'Over the next twelve months our people, our history, our architecture, our culture, our city, will be given the chance to shine.'

Other respondents recognised a need for Liverpool to change and improve, and felt that the success of the bid would enable this change to take place.

'A fantastic opportunity for Liverpool to look outwards and realise its potential to become a world city with a thriving, diverse cultural life, fully recognised and admired.'

'I thought this was Liverpool's chance to pull itself out of its past. I hope it will attract new businesses.'

'Huge thrill that the potential of my city and its people was being recognised and was being offered the opportunity to turn around its future.'

'Liverpool has been in the doldrums for a long time now, getting the award[,] the new build done to the city means we can go on and promote Liverpool in 2008.'

It would appear that many respondents saw the bid and the award of the ECoC title to Liverpool as a tool for regeneration. Their excitement about the Liverpool ECoC was grounded more in the potential for Liverpool to turn around negative external images of the city and to attract investment than it was in the cultural opportunities that were to be on offer throughout 2008. Mentions of the 2008 programme were limited in comparison with mentions of regeneration and press impacts. The responses suggest that Liverpool's cultural offer was already seen as strong, as there were plenty of references to the existing culture of the city. The Liverpool ECoC programme was understood by volunteers in terms of highlighting Liverpool's existing cultural offer, rather than as an opportunity to enhance the city's cultural infrastructure. The Liverpool 08 programme was therefore framed by the volunteers in terms of its civic, rather than its cultural impact, reflecting the rhetoric around ECoC by Liverpool City Council and the Liverpool Culture Company as a catalyst for city and community regeneration. As discussed below, this emphasis shifts by the next phase of the research as volunteers respond to the cultural activities they participate in over the year.

Eleven respondents expressed scepticism, which is always framed in terms of doubts about the ability to deliver an effective ECoC year, rather than any feeling that Liverpool as a city is undeserving of the award.

*'Elated, but doubtful that we could stage such an event because of our lack of facilities like an arena and big name department stores.'*¹¹

'Very pleased, and hope that its organisation can live up to what is needed to make it a success.'

There was some concern expressed about whether the Liverpool ECoC programme would be inclusive and how much it would benefit the people of Liverpool.

'I didn't feel much at the time [of the bid], felt it was more for visitors than locals.'

'Excellent, but will Liverpool City Council cope? And without overdoing parochial pride too – and how inclusive?'

'Unimpressed and sceptical. There are many areas of Liverpool which should benefit from this scheme and so far [they] do not appear to have done so.'

3.2. 08 Volunteers' highlights of 2008

In the 2009 survey, we asked volunteers 'what for you has been the highlight of 2008?'. There was a wide range of responses, which tended to cluster around three key themes: 1, events; 2, tourism and 3, regeneration impacts. These responses suggest that for the 08 Volunteers, Liverpool ECoC did meet many of their aspirations for Liverpool as described in the 2007 survey.

¹¹ N.B. This is likely to be a reference to the fact that, by the time they were filling in the questionnaire, Liverpool *did* have a new arena and shopping centre.

3.2.1. Events

Firstly, the volunteers referenced a range of specific events which had been highlights for them. In the main, these were large scale events at which they had volunteered, and the volunteers described these events as highlights both in terms of the quality and experience of the event itself, and because of the enjoyment they got from feeling part of the event rather than merely spectating. However, the volunteers also specified a wide range of exhibitions, theatrical productions and concerts which they would not have worked at as volunteers, suggesting that they were active participants in the Liverpool ECoC programme outside of their volunteering. Many of the volunteers provided a highly eclectic list of the events they had enjoyed the most over the year.

'What a wonderful year! I have enjoyed everything, both as a working volunteer and visiting with my family. Highlights too many, but here is the top of the list – Opening Ceremony, Ringo Starr, La Machine, One Step Forward (Anglican Cathedral), Tartuffe (Playhouse), Superlambananas, Paul McCartney (Anfield), Streets Ahead.'

'The Tall Ships – so beautiful and well organised. The Klimt exhibition – we did it first! Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra – there are no words to express my sheer delight and enjoyment.'

Overall, out of 180 people who replied to the open question about their highlights of the year, the events which were referenced the most by volunteers (in order of the number of times they were referred to by respondents) were¹²:

- La Machine (83);
- Tall Ships (53);
- Opening ceremony at St George's Hall (with Ringo Starr) (35);
- Go Superlambananas (33);
- Klimt exhibition (30);
- Liverpool Sound/Paul McCartney concert (25);
- Respectacles: holocaust memorial exhibition (23);
- Transition night/closing ceremony (19);
- World Firefighter Games (17);
- One Step Forward, One Step Back (14).

3.2.2. Tourism

The volunteers also frequently made reference to the positive impacts of the ECoC title on Liverpool as a city. Most commonly, they described their pleasure at seeing visitors from outside the city come to Liverpool and enjoy a positive experience. This was often closely tied to the volunteers' own pride in being able to help visitors to discover the city, and to their own enjoyment of meeting new people.

'To see so many tourists descending on the city and feeling proud that it was my city.'

'Changing visitors' perspectives of Liverpool and its people, so many people were amazed with Liverpool when they visited for the first time.'

'Seeing so many visitors in Liverpool, being an ambassador for the city at all events for which I have been a volunteer.'

¹² For information on events mentioned, please see glossary in appendix 6.3 below.

'Meeting and helping a wide variety of visitors to enjoy the city's attractions.'

3.2.3. Regeneration impacts

Volunteers also referred to the positive press coverage the city received during 2008, and a sense that external perceptions of Liverpool had shifted.

'Liverpool as a city and a community was given a very positive image.'

'Liverpool gaining a higher profile throughout the world in 2008.'

'All of it has put Liverpool on the map. And it is great to see people recognise the city and see it in a more positive way with lots to offer both locally and to visitors.'

A small number of respondents chose the physical regeneration of the city as their highlight of 2008:

'Refurbished city centre with museums and galleries.'

'The visual impact of Liverpool One.'

'The removal of architectural eyesores (e.g. in front of Lime Street Station) the eventual linking by canal across the Pier Head of the Leeds-Liverpool canal with the Southern dock system.'

4. The Experience of Being an 08 Volunteer

If the previous sections have examined the views of 08 Volunteers about the 2008 programme and its impact on the city as a whole, this section focuses on the specific experience of volunteering and the management of the programme.

4.1. Motivations for becoming an 08 Volunteer

Focus group participants reacted strongly to questions about what they hoped to gain from their 08 Volunteering experience. Those who had volunteered over a longer period of time were clear that:

'It's not about what we can get from it. It's about giving something back.'

Findings from the survey responses in 2007 similarly suggested that volunteers' motivations were altruistic:

'Liverpool has given me many years of employment, both in the public and private sector, this is my way of putting something back.'

'To give something back to the city and be an ambassador for my city.'

'To be able to practise the skills in French, Spanish and German I have picked up over the years and put them to community use.'

Survey respondents were asked what primarily affected their decision to volunteer, and their responses also suggest that their volunteering was mainly motivated by the desire to promote and contribute to the regeneration of Liverpool. Respondents ticked as many answers as they felt appropriate, and the most common responses were 'to show people how great Liverpool is' (85%), 'to contribute to the local community' (61%), and 'to learn more about the Capital of Culture' (54%).

In addition, 32% of respondents stated that they volunteered 'to get out to more events', and 27% wanted 'to meet and make friends'. This suggests that beyond the desire to promote the city, volunteers' motivations are largely social. Motives of self-improvement rated poorly, with 8% volunteering 'to improve their job prospects' and 5% volunteering 'to find out about something specific (for example, a hobby)'. However, one respondent in a focus group drew attention to the quality of the training:

'I always look at it as an opportunity to learn more. If somebody's going to train you for free...you're in a win-win situation.'

When asked what type of event they tended to volunteer in, 'venue based events' was the most popular answer (chosen by 89% of volunteers), followed by 'meeting, greeting and giving directions' (74%) and 'festivals/carnivals/processions/fireworks' (73%). These responses suggest that the desire to welcome new visitors to the city and improve their perceptions of Liverpool is a key motivator.

'Whatever helps our city to show its best side for longer than 5 minutes, so that they want to come back and they'll recommend other people to come here.'

It is clear that the opportunity to attend events is also a significant motivator for volunteers. Focus group participants stated that:

'I wanted to be part of the year and be able to say "I was there!"'

'I don't mind what I do for volunteering. And if that means seeing something I wouldn't have seen before that's a bonus to me because I don't have to pay to see it.'

It can, therefore, be seen that 08 Volunteers were originally motivated by high levels of civic pride, their primary motivation being to contribute to Liverpool's regeneration and the improvement of its external image. As discussed above, volunteers viewed Liverpool ECoC positively as an opportunity to improve the city. By contributing to the success of Liverpool ECoC, volunteers felt they could contribute to the regeneration and rehabilitation of Liverpool. However, they were also motivated by the chance to enhance their own social lives, through the opportunity to attend events and to meet new people.

4.2. Outcomes of being an 08 Volunteer

When asked in 2009 what they had primarily gained from their time as a volunteer, the responses indicate that, on the whole, volunteers achieved their personal goals; 64.8% of respondents felt that they had 'shown visitors how great Liverpool is', while 44.9% had 'contributed to the local community'. Moreover, some volunteers appeared to have exceeded their expectations. For example, while 28% of respondents in 2007 stated that meeting and making friends was one of their primary motivations for volunteering, 35.7% of respondents in 2009 stated that making friends was one of their primary gains.

In the 2007 survey cohort, 'visiting events' was a motivation for 31.1% of volunteers (and so was the fourth most common response) but by 2009, 52.6% referenced 'visiting events' as one of their primary gains (in fact, being the second most popular response). This suggests that volunteers, whose original motivation for volunteering was civic rather than cultural, found that they enjoyed taking part in the events programme more than they had originally expected. This is borne out by the enthusiastic response to the question about what the highlights of Liverpool ECoC were for volunteers, which is explored in more detail in section 3.2 above.

The volunteers described their participation as a highly enjoyable and positive experience. They had very much enjoyed feeling part of Liverpool ECoC, and derived personal satisfaction from the knowledge that they had been an active participant in supporting the programme. Many appeared to have had their spirits boosted by the 'buzz' in the city over the year. Some described the opportunity to participate as 'an honour' or 'a privilege'. In addition, the survey responses highlighted four key impacts of participation: 1, meeting people; 2, pride in the city; 3, learning and skills; and 4, developing confidence.

4.2.1. Meeting people

The 2009 survey asked respondents to 'sum up in a couple of sentences your experience of being an 08 Volunteer'. Many answers were given which related to personal and individual impacts. In addition, the workshop delivered in February 2009, in which 31 volunteers participated, also gave an opportunity for volunteers to feed back to the research team what they had gained from their time as volunteers. From this qualitative feedback, it is clear that the opportunity to meet people and make friends was of huge significance to the volunteers.

Firstly, the volunteers developed friendships, camaraderie and a shared identity as a team which they came to greatly value and appreciate. Most of the volunteers who took part in the workshop, who had been very active throughout the year, were keen to stress how much they wanted these relationships to continue, either through further volunteering activity or through social, informal contact.

'I have made many friends that I hope I will keep for the rest of my life.'

'Met a lot of very friendly people who were totally committed to showing Liverpool in a good light.'

Many of the volunteers stressed that they had felt themselves to be part of a team with a common understanding of what they were seeking to achieve: contributing to the renaissance of Liverpool and presenting a positive 'face' of the city to visitors. Volunteers described their experience as:

'The feeling of belonging to a special club.'

Secondly, the volunteers had also been able to meet visitors to Liverpool from around the world, and to provide practical support and assistance to them, such as helping with directions, and recommending places to see and restaurants and pubs to visit. It was clear that the volunteers derived a lot of enjoyment from coming into contact with new people in this way.

4.2.2. *Pride in the city*

In addition to the above, the positive response they received from the visitors affirmed their own growing sense of pride in the city of Liverpool.

'Being an 08 Volunteer has opened my eyes to a city that I had previously taken for granted. I now have a renewed and very much better informed love and respect for Liverpool.'

The volunteers, as well as enjoying meeting people from around the world, also felt that they were playing an active role in improving the reputation of the city nationally and internationally. As this concern over Liverpool's poor national and international reputation emerged as a significant factor in the 2007 survey, with many people citing the desire to improve Liverpool's external image as one of the potential key benefits of ECoC, the achievement of this goal is a significant positive impact for the volunteers.

'Meeting people of many backgrounds who wish to see the city thrive and re-invent itself. As a person who was raised and educated in Liverpool, I was proud to tell visitors how great the city is.'

'Great pleasure meeting people who have never been to Liverpool before but they'll come back because the city is so wonderful.'

4.2.3. *Learning and skills*

Many volunteers stated that they had learnt a lot as a result of being an 08 Volunteer. In particular, this related to learning more about the city of Liverpool, as the volunteering process involved a range of new experiences: going to new venues, being able to go 'behind the scenes' in public buildings, or experiencing new art forms. Many of the volunteers already had extensive knowledge of the city which was shared with others.

'Learnt a lot about my home city that I was previously unaware of.'

'As a Southerner who moved here four years ago I wanted to get to know Liverpool better and be part of something very important in the city's history.'

'I've seen things in the city that I didn't know existed.'

'Enlightening. Has given me an interest in arts and culture.'

Some volunteers are using their experience as a springboard for further learning and/or volunteering. Two volunteers felt that they had improved their CVs and their ability to gain paid employment:

'I have enrolled on courses on Liverpool architecture and sculpture and greatly enjoyed them. Made me reassess volunteering and plan my additional volunteering to fit in with areas I enjoy.'

'I wouldn't hesitate to volunteer in my community now.'

Volunteers also developed a range of skills:

'A good experience to handle many people in a gathering.'

'I've been able to use my Spanish language skills.'

4.2.4. Developing confidence

Many volunteers made reference to an increase in their confidence in their own abilities and this seems to have stemmed from two main factors: firstly, the fact that volunteers were asked to take on tasks they had never tried before; and secondly, the amount of positive feedback and gratitude which was expressed by visitors to events.

'Being an 08 Volunteer has made me a more positive person gaining experience and confidence to deal with the public.'

'I've enjoyed helping others, have gained confidence in my abilities... learnt to work as part of a team.'

'I have done things and had experiences I would never have had without Capital of Culture. I now feel that I know myself better and have more confidence in myself.'

It appears that the opportunity to volunteer was of particular benefit to older and retired volunteers.

'For once I did not feel 'too old' but felt I really was happy to be helping.'

'It's kept me active both mentally and physically, I've loved every moment.'

4.3. Managing the 08 Volunteers

4.3.1. Volunteers' experiences

Through both the survey and the workshop, a number of consistent messages emerged about the management of the 08 Volunteers and their experience of working at specific events. The quality of management of both the 08 Volunteer team, and the events they worked on, made a significant difference to how much volunteers were able to contribute to, and gain from, volunteering.

Several messages emerged clearly about management arrangements which appeared to have the broad agreement of workshop participants. Most of the comments about management from both the survey and the workshop related to event management; however, there were a smaller number of specific comments about management and administration of the 08 Volunteer programme itself and we believe paying heed to these would be helpful in terms of strengthening the legacy of the programme. The following section sets out the context about the development and management of the programme.

4.3.2. 08 Volunteer programme management context

As stated in Section 1.2 above, the 08 Volunteer programme took place in a complicated context, requiring traditional models of event volunteering to be adapted, and giving rise to certain issues. The 08 Volunteer team was a small team which had the challenging role of both recruiting, training and liaising with and managing the volunteers *and* liaising with a large number of event organisers - organisers from both inside the Culture Company, and from a range of sectors often needing support at the last minute. Apart from the embedded challenges associated with this situation, there were other issues.

In particular, the growth in numbers of volunteers (to over 800 by 2008) presented a number of challenges. Many of the original group of about 100 volunteers who signed up in the first year thoroughly enjoyed the ability to be able to take part in all of the events for which they chose to volunteer. This was not always possible when the volunteer numbers grew.

It was also thought beneficial to encourage a number of other arts and community organisations to use the volunteers, both to widen the range of opportunities for the volunteers themselves and to build capacity on behalf of those organisations in the use of volunteers. For the most part this worked well, but it also produced some issues in terms of meeting volunteers' expectations.

Communication with the volunteers was another issue where there were some challenges. The city council's preferred method of communication was via e-mail, but a number of volunteers were not able to receive e-mails (and in some cases were not available by telephone either). Although for the majority of programmed events, volunteers received hard copy written notification of events in advance, it did prove difficult to give those not available on e-mail or telephone the same level of access to some of the short notice opportunities which came up on a regular basis.

4.3.3. 08 Volunteer team management – key success factors

Volunteers felt supported by staff in the 08 Volunteer team, particularly the Volunteer Manager, who was mentioned many times by name throughout the surveys and in the workshop, and praised for her enthusiasm and her commitment to ensuring the welfare of volunteers. It appears that when the 08 Volunteer administrative team was directly involved in supporting volunteers at specific events, more effort was made to ensure that they were comfortable, and were provided with breaks and refreshments.

Communication, both with the volunteers and between partner organisations, was identified as a key success factor. Adequate notice, good briefings, updating of information throughout the day, and a clear understanding of who was who in the professional event team were perceived as important. These allowed volunteers to develop a very clear understanding of what their role was within the event, and to know where to go for support and guidance throughout the day.

The training provided to volunteers was also appreciated, with several members of the workshop group referencing how helpful the initial training sessions were in creating a real sense of enthusiasm for the tasks ahead and in developing the confidence of some members of the group in engaging with members of the public. Others were appreciative of the more targeted training, such as the defibrillator first aid course.

4.3.4. Issues and frustrations

Positive descriptions of volunteering clearly outweighed the negative for the survey cohort. However, there were some volunteers who described areas which, in their experience, could be improved.

The issue most often referenced (which is discussed further in the section on management below – 4.3.5) was volunteers wanting to be fully utilised. This stemmed from not always being able to take part in the amount of volunteering they were prepared to undertake, or volunteering opportunities not being tailored or targeted to

their particular skills. Another issue which emerged concerns relationships between the volunteers. In some cases, the need to get on with other volunteers was a challenge as well as a benefit; comments included the difficulty of working effectively when others appeared unreliable and poorly informed.

4.3.5. *Volunteer event administration*

Another issue raised by volunteers about the management and administration of the 08 Volunteer team related to the question of how volunteers were selected to participate in specific events and activities. Many of the survey respondents stated that they had not volunteered as often as they would have liked as they were never able to respond quickly enough to email invitations. As stated above, communications proved a problem for volunteers who did not have access to email and who relied on postal invitations to sign up for specific events.

A number of workshop participants expressed the view that the 08 Volunteer team appeared to be under-resourced. As a result, they felt that some opportunities to enhance and develop the administration of the programme were not able to be implemented. For example, two participants made reference to the fact that while they had filled in a questionnaire providing a great deal of information about their skills and interests, there appeared to be limited targeting of opportunities based on the information on the volunteer database. Some volunteers also felt that they had the capacity to take on more challenging roles.

Workshop participants also discussed an early idea about putting the volunteers into teams which was not fully implemented (there were, however, a number of specialist groups created to work with Go Superlambananas, Cruise Liner welcome, and evaluations). The participants felt such teams would have been beneficial, and expressed disappointment that the idea of creating a volunteer base or meeting point in the city centre solely for volunteers was not acted upon (even while the 08 Place – the main information point for the Liverpool ECoC - was designated as the main meeting point).

Finally, there were several comments about the policy on payment of expenses and provision of refreshments. Lunches normally came via vouchers from the local chain of Sayers bakeries, sponsors of Liverpool ECoC, which was welcomed by some volunteers and less so by others. There was also some inconsistency in the availability of volunteer expenses across the year (largely dependent on the budgets for different events and the volunteer expenses policies of other partner organisations). This led to some confusion about what was eligible as a claimable expense. The 08 Volunteer team acknowledge that this was one of the most challenging areas, particularly in relation to the ability of partner organisations to meet the volunteers' expectations concerning refreshments and travel costs.

4.3.6. *Event management*

Participants in the workshop worked in groups to answer the following questions: 'what factors contributed to any good organisation of events and activities from the point of view of being a volunteer?' and 'what factors contributed to any poor organisation of events and activities from the point of view of being a volunteer?'

Overall, the volunteers highly rated event management across the year. In general, volunteers felt that the events which were under the sole control of Liverpool Culture Company were best organised from their point of view, but that they were not always as effectively used as a volunteer team when they worked on other organisations' events. For example, the Tall Ships Festival weekend was singled out for praise on a number of occasions, while some other events organised by external organisations received criticism for disappointing event management. This reflects, to some degree, the lack of experience of these organisations in managing volunteers, and the value of the 08 Volunteer team's work in supporting volunteering development beyond the usual larger organisations.

It was important to volunteers that they felt respected and valued, and they assessed whether this was the case by the way they were treated by event staff on the day. When event managers factored in the need to support volunteers to their planning (for example, providing umbrellas and shelter for volunteers working outdoors, scheduling breaks and ensuring that volunteers were provided with refreshments, and expressing gratitude for their assistance) volunteers enjoyed the events much more and were prepared to give more time and commitment in return.

Volunteer responses to the question about what contributed to poor organisation tended to reinforce what volunteers felt made for positive experiences e.g. the lack of briefings and other support made the difference between a positive and a negative experience. However, two specific issues did emerge from responses to this question.

Firstly, volunteers identified an issue about members of the public and their understanding of their role. On some occasions, they felt it would have been more appropriate to have been badged as stewards rather than volunteers so that members of the public understood why they were there and would be prepared to comply with their requests.

Secondly, the volunteers indicated that in some cases they had experienced members of staff from other organisations, particularly front-of-house attendants and stewards, showing some 'resentment' and 'lack of respect' towards them. This may link to another concern identified by the workshop participants: that some organisations were using volunteers as a way of boosting staffing levels, and that they were often working alongside others who were being paid to carry out exactly the same role.

4.4. 08 Volunteers – the legacy

We asked workshop participants what they would like to see happen post-2008, in terms of future volunteering opportunities. The vast majority of the group was keen to continue to volunteer in some form, and some were in the process of identifying opportunities with organisations and in other Merseyside boroughs.

At the time of the research (early 2009), the group did not want the 08 Volunteer team to be disbanded, feeling that the team was a positive asset with an extensive collective knowledge of the city. The group felt that it should be the responsibility of Liverpool City Council to maintain the database and continue to support the facilitation of volunteering in city events and ongoing activities (such as open top bus tour guiding and cruise ship arrivals). However, there was disagreement as to whether the volunteers themselves should have a democratic input into future planning (that is, taking more control of volunteering), or whether this should be left to Liverpool City Council to plan.

As 2008 came to a close, the 08 Volunteer programme continued into 2009. Volunteers were invited to say whether they would like to continue to volunteer to support the cultural events of Liverpool City Council and other organisations. Some 250 decided to do so. This has provided a strong core group who are committed to supporting the city and its cultural organisations. The council is also developing a range of options for the future use of volunteers, which is likely to result in a wider variety of opportunities being available for volunteers to support community activity. There are also linked initiatives being developed by LARC (the city's main cultural partners) and Voluntary Arts England, who are keen to work with the city to extend both the use of volunteers and broader participation in culture.

Research participants also expressed an interest in forming some sort of independent group of ex-08 Volunteers, to plan social outings and further activity; by late 2009 this group was still meeting on a regular basis, demonstrating the enduring friendships which have resulted from people meeting on the programme.

5. Conclusions

The findings from this survey suggest that participation in the 08 Volunteer programme has had a significant impact on individual volunteers. Most notably, being an 08 Volunteer gave people the opportunity to reach out to others and make connections and friendships. The camaraderie within the 08 Volunteer team, and the sense of working together to make a difference, gave people considerable personal satisfaction.

Volunteers also gained great satisfaction from the feeling that they were making a positive contribution to the rehabilitation of Liverpool's reputation, nationally and internationally, through their personal contact with visitors. Taking part in the events programme enhanced their own pride in the city.

08 Volunteers had also experienced a range of more tangible outcomes as a result of their participation. They had greatly increased their knowledge of Liverpool's history, heritage and cultural offer, and developed their confidence and the skills necessary for dealing with members of the public.

Anecdotally, from focus groups and workshops, there was strong evidence that the volunteers had experienced a range of new cultural activities as a result of their participation, that they had enjoyed these new cultural experiences, and that they wished to continue to attend cultural and heritage events. However, in quantitative terms this did not appear to have resulted in higher levels of interest in various cultural forms, although attendance at certain types of event has increased. It may be that the influence of 08 Volunteering on cultural participation has yet to be felt, and that volunteers were too busy during 2008 to increase their participation, but may do so in the future.

The experiences of the 08 Volunteers do suggest lessons for the future development of any similar large-scale volunteering programmes - for example, for the 2012 Olympic Games in London. Specifically, effective communication and database systems are vital in order to make the most of the skills and enthusiasm of the volunteer workforce. External partners should be encouraged to ensure that volunteers are adequately supported when working in their venues. It is vital to recognise that managing such a large team of volunteers is a complex and time consuming administrative undertaking and needs to be adequately resourced. It is essential that early thought is given to what will happen to the volunteers at the end of the process, and that the group is supported to identify other opportunities or to maintain the contacts they have made with each other as happened in the Liverpool case.

Liverpool Culture Company reports very positive feedback about the 08 Volunteer programme from delegations from other ECoCs, and they state that it has been used as a template for a flexible, event-led programme of volunteering which could be adapted to the needs of many cities or regions. Further, the European Commission refers to the 08 Volunteer programme within its current (2009) *Guide to Candidate Cities*, citing it as an example of a project that delivered 'Citizen Participation in the Cultural Life of the City', a key ECoC criteria. The Liverpool Culture Company credits this positive feedback to the actions of all involved, including the volunteers, the programme team and those organisations who provided opportunities for volunteers.

Overall, 08 Volunteers had a highly positive experience of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture. At the end of the year they could reflect positively on the number of interesting and enjoyable events they attended, and they were confident and proud that they had made a positive contribution to improving external perceptions of Liverpool, something which was important to them. They met people from all over the world, made new friends, and learnt a lot about the city, its culture and heritage. In the main, this experience was enhanced by the high quality of training and support they received from volunteer and event managers over the course of the year.

6. Appendices

6.1. Understanding the impacts of volunteering on cultural engagement: a literature review¹³

6.1.1. Introduction

This research uses 08 Volunteers to explore some of the impacts of volunteering in Liverpool ECoC on cultural engagement, on perceptions of culture, on self-confidence and on life chances. The primary focus of the project and this literature review is to research how specifically the 08 Volunteers' attitudes towards culture may change and develop through the process of volunteering in cultural events. It also explores the philosophy/policy behind the 08 Volunteer programme and seeks to draw conclusions that could be of value to the programme itself and to other culture-related volunteering programmes. This literature review analyses and discusses some of the similar cultural engagement research that has been carried out to date.

6.1.2. Reasons for volunteering

The government is increasingly expressing a strong interest in promoting volunteering as an aspect of social inclusion, citizenship and community regeneration¹⁴. This is not simply because volunteers offer a service of free labour but because of the wider impacts volunteering has on the community.

This Impacts 08 research project sought specifically to look at those who had chosen to volunteer for 2008 in support of cultural events. Cultural volunteers often help out at music festivals, arts programmes, raise awareness of their organisation (by putting on cultural events themselves) run young people's dance/acting/sports clubs, and generally support their local community by encouraging others to take part in these and similar activities. The 08 Volunteers have done all of these things and more since Liverpool was awarded ECoC title and have tried to raise the understanding of residents and tourists of all that Liverpool has to offer. The 08 Volunteers have had a vested interest in securing Liverpool's status as they are residents themselves. However, this study suggests that in the first instance the 08 Volunteers' priority was to promote the city of Liverpool and that their secondary priority was promoting culture. This study focuses on the secondary (and increasing) focus of the 08 Volunteers' attention on promoting culture, and the forms/levels of engagement that occur through this relationship. Future research will map volunteers' changing engagement with culture, and any changes in their perception of where they live and of what culture means.

Voluntary Arts Network argues that a number of people volunteer in the arts specifically because:

'The vast majority of opportunities for people to be involved in arts and crafts activities locally are provided by cultural volunteers in the voluntary arts. As in the community sector (small, local community organisations/volunteers), many of the volunteers are themselves beneficiaries of their efforts' (<http://www.voluntaryarts.org> 2010).

This suggests that a proportion of volunteers are interested as much in volunteering to gain access/involvement with the arts and craft community and to attend cultural events, as they are in contributing to their local community. As one 08 Volunteer states, in relation to why she became a volunteer, 'It's great fun being involved and meeting people, I'm going to events that I wouldn't otherwise go to' (Julie Brown; quoted in *Liverpool 08 volunteering programme*, 2007; 1). Julie's statement supports Ruiz's research (2004) into the impacts of culture, the arts and sports on policy, as Ruiz argues that people partly volunteer their time to the arts freely as this

¹³ This literature review was carried out by Lucy Comerford-Park, work placement researcher for Impacts 08.

¹⁴ For example, see *Practical information about the benefits of volunteering within your community and where to find organisations that are looking for volunteers*. At:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/Gettinginvolvedinyourcommunity/Volunteering/DG_10029484 (accessed 18/3/10).

gives them the chance to participate in cultural events that they may not have been able to access beforehand. The reasons that Liverpool residents give for volunteering, such as those above, is a matter of interest to this project; it is a question that is asked in a number of different ways within the Impacts 08 questionnaire, and will be discussed in more depth later in relation to Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's theory of visitor engagement (2005(b)).

6.1.3. *Impacts of volunteering*

This report also focuses on the impacts of volunteering. The impacts of volunteering on and within a community are numerous, ranging from economic (bringing in investments and services) and educational (more investment in education as businesses increasingly employ local residents), to structural (better housing conditions in a regenerated area); but the largest and intrinsically linked impact on citizens is *social*. Ruiz believes that the primary evidence base for culture, the arts and sports policy is to look at the social impacts of culture and the arts:

'Social impact can cover many different aspects of life, whether the impact is personal (e.g. increased confidence, self-esteem, enhanced skills), 'structural' (e.g. better housing conditions in a regenerated area, more pleasant area lived in) or a combination of both, where, due to participation in a particular cultural or arts activity, a more confident sense of self is developed, leading to increased social networking, employment or a better job, more activity in the community leading to the creation of a better place to live, improved health and well-being leading to a better quality of life, civic pride etc.' (2004:1)

It is interesting to note how all these 'social impacts' are actually largely individual. Ruiz's list is mostly about self-development, increased confidence, self-esteem, and enhanced skills, which are primarily individual attributes as compared with social ones. This research has influenced Impact 08's decision to map volunteers as individuals through issuing self-completing questionnaires in two waves, with a mixture of closed and open questions so as to allow volunteers to not only fill them in on their own but also to tell us what they really think on a personal level.

6.1.4. *Impacts of cultural participation*

The effects on individual participants in the arts is an under-researched area and is in its infancy; generally the focus of cultural engagement research is on the social/community impacts. On the other hand, there is a consultancy and research company in England that has made the study of individual's interactions with culture their specialty. Morris Hargreaves McIntyre Consultants have conducted a number of studies for large cultural organisations and particularly museums, to understand visitor behaviour. In *Never mind the width, feel the quality* (2005(b)) they queried and studied visitors' motivations, expectations, behaviour and experiences of cultural engagement at museums, art exhibitions and heritage sites. Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's research is of great relevance to the Impacts 08 project because they examine how visitors voluntarily engage with these events, while Impacts 08 examines how 08 Volunteers voluntarily engage with culture.

The primary theory to emerge from Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's research is the 'hierarchy of visitor engagement' model, which examines visitors' stated motivations for attending an event/exhibition against their actual experiences and the needs that were met through their attendance. This mapping of what visitors originally cite as their expectation/reason for attending, against what they actually get out of the event (outcome) is ranked in a hierarchy, starting with the lowest expectation/reason for attending to the highest. These are listed as:

- Social – came to meet/spend time with friends, family, others; for entertainment;
- Intellectual – self-improvement, academic/professional interest, to stimulate children;

- Emotional – personal relevance, aesthetic pleasure, sense of cultural identity;
- Spiritual – escapism, contemplation and/or to stimulate creativity (2005(b): 9–10).

Morris Hargreaves McIntyre found that expectations of engagement often change from when visitors arrive at an event to when they have engaged, as often their experience has developed up the scale; for example, it was expected at first that only 24% of people attended to engage and have their emotional needs met, but at the end this had raised to 41%, and the visitors spiritual interaction with the exhibit/event went up from 2% to 18% (2005(b): 9–10), far surpassing the original expectations. Therefore, Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's research suggests that visitors have a low expectation of the extent to which they can engage with art but, as they actually attend and participate in events such as art exhibitions, plays, and so on, their confidence and ability to make meaning of art grow.

Increased (or decreased) levels of confidence and the extent to which 08 Volunteers relate to culture is a key concern in Impact 08's project too. The degree to which people engage and actively seek out/attend particular events, what they get from attendance, and the type and levels of confidence they demonstrate in attending certain events compared with other events (for example, someone may have no fear of attending a play but be reluctant to watch dance) are all under analysis. Questions such as 'Who do you usually attend cultural events with?' have enabled Impacts 08 to develop an insight into why volunteers engage in culture (in terms of social, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions), and repeat surveys will allow us to map any changes.

The investigation of cultural engagement on the individual primarily relates to attitudes. This research is looking at changing attitudes - for example, confidence in attending different cultural events, the time and regularity of 08 Volunteers' attendance, and so on. Similar studies have been conducted in the UK in recent years as cultural impact is becoming an increasingly researched topic (Scottish Executive Research, 2005). The Scottish Executive Research's 2005 study has conducted a wide review of such research, from qualitative studies into music making and its impact on nursing home residents, to quantitative postal questionnaire studies of how people use and spend their leisure time. However, Impacts 08's model for exploring the impact of volunteering draws most on the work of Morris Hargreaves McIntyre who, in February 2005, carried out research among residents of Shropshire for Shropshire County Council into *The Value of Culture*; this reviewed the local authority's policy of introducing community arts/theatre projects in the local area. Their findings on social, housing and economic regeneration were extensive, but they remind the reader that not all the measurements of culture are external or about how the arts contribute to other agendas (although they do this significantly) (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2005(a): 20). Instead, they address the influence of arts and cultural participation on behaviour and the individual's perception of culture in and of itself. The research states that:

'Culture is what defines us – as individuals, as communities, as a nation. It helps us understand who we are, it shapes our identity – and only culture does this' (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, 2005[a]).

The effects and importance of culture/cultural engagement on the individual's sense of identity and behaviour then, is an important area of research by itself and not just as a means of measuring external social, economic or educational impacts. In this context, the Impacts 08 project has specifically chosen to examine the effect of cultural participation on volunteers' perceptions of culture.

6.1.5. *Emerging concerns in cultural engagement research*

The interest in volunteering and cultural engagement research is growing in the Western world, as discussed earlier, but there are a number of emerging problems with this type of research that the Impacts 08 project has tried to address.

- **Measuring multiple cultural impacts.** In Matarasso's (1997) influential study *Use or ornament? The social impacts of participation in the arts*, which specifically focuses on the participation of a group of volunteers in an art project, he concludes that the outcomes of participation in the arts are highly complex due to the multi-dimensionality and sustained outcomes of this kind of research (Matarasso: 86). Social impacts are not instantaneous; they overlap and it would take constant analysis to truly measure all of these, which, sadly, most research projects are unable to do. Impacts 08 have had the opportunity to carry out longer term research, but it is not possible to chart all the impacts of the Liverpool ECoC programme on volunteers, and this is addressed in the study.
- **Standard classifications.** A lack of standard classifications of social impacts make comparison between similar studies very difficult. Reeves (2002) has studied cultural indicators in detail and states that there are:

'... difficulties of producing robust data on the creative industries due to problems of outdated Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC) ... [which] are widely acknowledged [...] ... [and what is needed is] comparable cross-service data to enable the estimation of the number and nature of all cultural services' (33).

The need for cross-service data is important in order that micro research projects into cultural engagement (of which most of these studies consist) can be used to speculate about the participation of volunteers and participants in the arts on a wider scale. Although this will be extremely hard to achieve, Impacts 08 have studied and implemented Morris Hargreaves McIntyre Consultants primary theory of the *hierarchy of visitor engagement* (2005(b): 9), and have asked volunteers some similar questions so that at least some (even while not all) of these findings can be cross-referenced and compared with Morris Hargreaves McIntyre's numerous publications and primary findings.

However, the development of a standard set of cultural indicators to be imposed upon all cultural engagement research projects is in itself problematic. In nearly all cases, it is the researcher, not the participant, who decides what these indicators are, potentially disempowering the subjects and risking missing unexpected outcomes through the research process. The Scottish Executive's 2005 literature review and think piece on measuring the benefits of culture/sports participation argues that this may be exactly where this kind of research is going wrong. The Scottish Executive's review suggests instead that:

'An alternative approach is to investigate individual's views about the things that contribute to their QOL (Quality Of Life, or the impacts they think have occurred due to their participation in the arts), and derive QOL domains through this process' (Scottish Executive, 2005: 38).

As discussed above, the impacts of cultural engagement are multidimensional (Matarasso, 1997: 86) and partly down to interpretation, which is why the subjects should be asked what their opinions of these impacts and indicators are; they have an inside knowledge that the researcher does not have as a simple voyeur. The Impacts 08 research, therefore, asks a number of open questions such as 'Please write below what culture means to you' and 'What have you primarily gained out of your time as a volunteer?' in two waves (2007 and 2009), to enable 08 Volunteers to vocalise in their own words how their perceptions of culture and the volunteering process have changed. Through doing this, volunteers can express what they think is important and provide their own definitions instead of adhering to the researcher's pre-conceived ideas of how volunteers' attitudes towards culture have changed. The inclusion of open questions, and the 'if other, please specify' option alongside closed questions means that the Impacts 08 questionnaire, although largely retaining the use of closed questions, can also develop an understanding of the personal and individual impacts on 08 Volunteers of engaging in the arts; this is a methodology that The Scottish Executive's (2005) aforementioned review advocates strongly.

6.1.6. Barriers to participation in culture

The Impacts 08 project seeks to identify why people are discouraged from attending certain cultural events. The question of which residents of Liverpool are the least represented of the 08 Volunteers and/or why volunteers do not attend certain events is almost as important as understanding who does attend. This is because it has been discussed in a number of cultural engagement projects that certain groups are ostracised from volunteering at certain events. The 'types' of people discouraged from becoming volunteers at all is generally due to the '...perception amongst certain groups (e.g. LGBT [people] (lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals), disabled people, elderly people) that their 'culture' and needs are not catered for by cultural and leisure facilities' (Ruiz, 2004: 3).

The Impacts 08 survey has captured demographic information about the 08 Volunteers surveyed, in order to identify whether any groups are over- or under-represented within our research or within the volunteer team itself. The questionnaire also asks questions concerning 'psychological barriers' to volunteering at certain events. The commonest reported constraints people cite for not being able to volunteer are time, cost implications, location (of event), and travel problems but they also cite 'perceptions of eligibility' as an issue of concern (Ruiz, 2004: 3). These perceptions of eligibility may stem from people feeling they are not 'cultural' enough, that it would be a risk attending at all and/or certain events, that it is too 'arty' or 'young', that they cannot afford to, or simply that because they live in certain, possibly under-privileged, areas they just do not receive information about volunteering. The above are all questions that are asked in the questionnaire so that Impacts 08 can map who does/does not take part and why, while also examining if this changes over time.

In conclusion, although the Impacts 08 project is primarily measuring qualitative indicators of cultural engagement, centring upon changing perceptions, attitudes and behaviour (which are notoriously hard to measure), there are a combination of quantitative prompts such as demographic classification questions, and closed cultural attendance questions. When combined with the qualitative questions, this should result in both rich and demonstrable data. The research will be of value to the 08 programme itself and to other culture-related volunteering programmes.

6.1.7. References

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- Morris Hargreaves McIntyre Consultants (February 2005[a]). *The value of culture.*
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- Voluntary Arts Network Cultural Volunteering <http://www.voluntaryarts.org/cgi-bin/website.cgi?tier1=network&tier2=about%20VAN&tier3=cultural%20volunteering> (accessed 18/3/10)

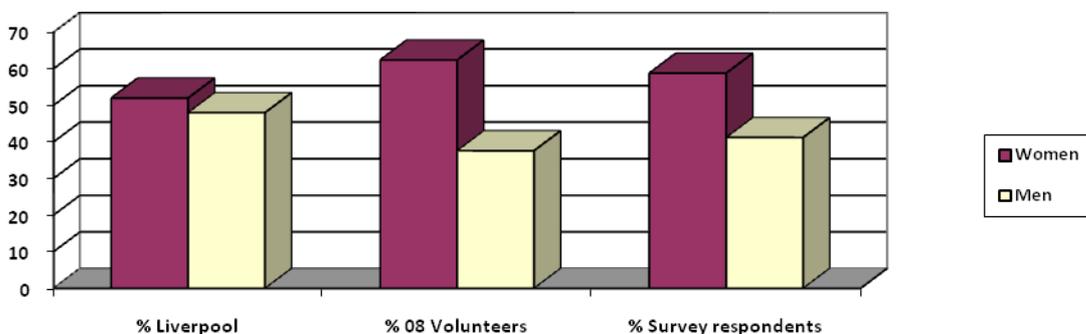
6.2. Demographic information

To assess how representative volunteers are of the Liverpool population, information about the respondents to our survey of volunteers has been compared with figures from the National Statistics 2001 census data for Liverpool. Where available, we have also compared our cohort of survey respondents with available data for the main 08 Volunteer group.

6.2.1. Gender

Fifty nine percent of our survey respondents are female, compared with 52% of women in the Liverpool population and 62% of 08 Volunteers who are female. This suggests that women are under-represented in this survey, but over-represented in the 08 Volunteer group as a whole.

In comparison, men are under-represented in the 08 Volunteer team compared with their representation in the Liverpool population. However, they are slightly over-represented in our survey, compared with the whole cohort of 08 Volunteers.

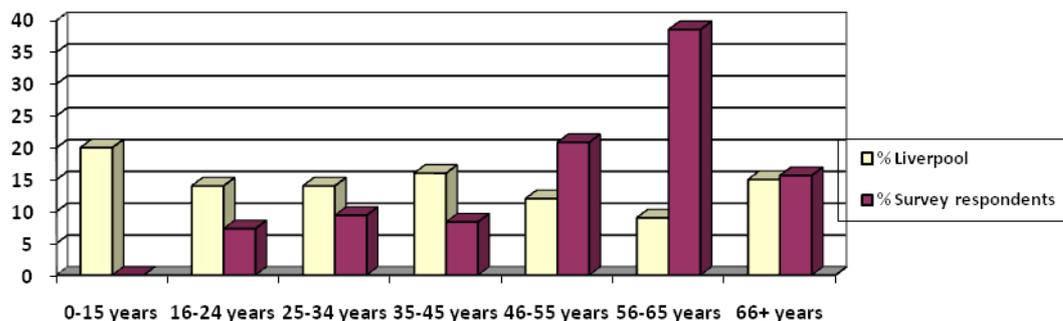


This female bias (in the 08 Volunteer team) is not unexpected as it often occurs within the voluntary sector (RTI International, July, 2006), and may also reflect the higher numbers of women in older age groups.

6.2.2. Age

The mean age of respondents to our survey was 52, and the median age of survey respondents was 58. In contrast, the median age range for the Liverpool population is between 35 and 45 years.

As the chart below shows, 08 Volunteers have a significantly older age profile than the Liverpool population as a whole. This is perhaps reflective of the fact that older people are more likely to have retired and, therefore, to have time available for volunteering activity.



Within our survey cohort, older volunteers are over-represented, with over 61s making up 44% of survey respondents, in comparison to only 20% of 08 Volunteers. Those aged 41 to 60 are represented in our survey in proportion to their representation within the 08 Volunteer group (42% of both volunteers and survey respondents are within this age range). It is volunteers under the age of 40 who are particularly under-represented in our survey, with under-40s representing 38% of volunteers and only 13.9% of survey respondents. This may possibly be a result of older, retired volunteers having more time to respond to survey requests, or reflect that the most active and committed volunteers were those from older age groups.

6.2.3. Household tenure

Seventy two percent of respondents to our survey were owner occupiers, with 11% renting from social landlords and 10% renting privately. These figures contrast strongly with figures for the wider Liverpool population, where 52% own their own property, and 15% rent from social landlords and 12% from private landlords. These figures, therefore, suggest that 08 Volunteers' financial circumstances may be better than the Liverpool average.

Our survey also found that 56% of 08 Volunteers had lived in the same house for over ten years. This reflects the number of retired professionals who have become 08 Volunteers, and also indicates that 08 Volunteers are, in the main, highly committed to the Liverpool area, and are also likely to be knowledgeable about the city.

6.2.4. Ethnicity

Ninety one percent of respondents to the survey are white British. This correlates closely with the figure for Liverpool as a whole of 92%. However, figures provided by the 08 Volunteer team suggest that 15% of 08 Volunteers categorise themselves as being part of a minority ethnic group, and therefore black and ethnic minority volunteers are under-represented in our survey.

6.2.5. Disability

Fifty two of the 851 volunteers describe themselves as being disabled, 6% of the total. This compares to 13.2% of the 2009 survey cohort. However, it is uncertain whether the two figures are comparable, as the survey asked whether people considered themselves to have any long term illness, health problems or disability. It is possible that information on the database of all volunteers only recorded those people who described themselves as disabled or informed the 08 Volunteer team of specific support needs. The proportion of people in the Liverpool population who describe themselves as having a disability or a limiting long-term illness according to the 2001 census is 24.6%.

6.2.6. Education and work

Forty three percent of survey respondents are retired, contrasting strongly with 13% of Liverpool residents. Figures for part time workers are also slightly higher within our survey respondents (11.5%) than in the general Liverpool population (9.6%). This is to be expected as retired people and part time workers are more likely to have the time available to be active volunteers.

This finding is confirmed by the fact that the number of volunteers who are in full time work is slightly lower in the survey group (23%) than in the wider population (31%).

When asked 'Which of the following best describes the main wage earner in your household?' 38% (compared with 15% in Liverpool population) stated that the main wage earner was a manager/professional. These figures illustrate that the majority of volunteers fit into the higher social economic grouping of AB (manager/professional). 08 Volunteers also appear to have higher level educational qualifications than the Liverpool average. For example, in the total Liverpool population, 10.5% have undergraduate or postgraduate degrees, whereas among our sample 30% had undergraduate degrees and 21% had gained postgraduate degrees. We can, therefore, build a picture of the average 08 Volunteer as an educated, middle class and older citizen of Liverpool who has the economic and personal freedom to volunteer.

6.3. Glossary of events mentioned in report¹⁵

Event	Description	Date
Africa Oye	An annual free celebration of African music and culture, staged at Sefton Park.	June, annually
Audiovision Festival	A festival featuring visual installations, live VJ'd music performances, artist screenings, visual workshops and an outdoor bike-in theatre at Pier Head, Liverpool.	September 2008
BBC Sports Personality of the Year	Televised sports award show staged at Liverpool ACC.	December 2008
The Bluecoat (opening programme)	The Bluecoat is an arts venue in Liverpool City Centre which re-opened following extensive refurbishment.	March 2008
British Dance Edition (BDE)	A significant annual national trade fair and showcase for dance, hosted across various Liverpool venues in 2008.	January to February 2008
Cities on the Edge	Cities on the Edge was a partnership of six European cities - Liverpool, Bremen, Gdansk, Istanbul, Marseilles and Naples – brought together for a project in order to explore their roles as historic ports and their shared sense of themselves as city-states, as islands within their nation. The programme included explorations, exchanges, debates, conferences, films and publications ¹ .	Throughout 2008
Clipper Race	Liverpool was the starting and finishing port for the Clipper 'Round the World' Yacht Race for both the 2005 to 2006 and 2007 to 2008 races.	
Four Corners	The Four Corners project was run by the Creative Communities team at Liverpool Culture Company, matching specific neighbourhoods with providers, and using artists to guide local people in creative projects.	Annually since 2008
Grand National/Aintree Races	High profile horse race which is the highlight of the annual Aintree Races.	April, annually
Hub Festival	A free festival of urban youth culture featuring urban art, music, and extreme sports.	May 2008, staged annually
Gustav Klimt: Painting, Design and Modern Life in Vienna 1900	The first major UK retrospective of the work of Gustav Klimt and his contemporaries, exhibited at Tate Liverpool.	May to October 2008
Go Superlambananas	A participatory public art project in which 125 decorated 'superlambananas' ¹⁶ , many created by community organisations, were exhibited around the city.	June to August 2008
La Machine/'the Spider'/ la Princesse	This was a mass audience event involving a gigantic mechanical spider circulating throughout the city over three days.	September 2008

¹⁵ Please note that this is designed not as a full list of Liverpool ECoC events, but simply to explain those mentioned in this report.

¹⁶ *Superlambanana*, a public art work by Taro Chiezo developed for the 1998 ArtTransPennine Exhibition.

Le Corbusier exhibition	An exhibition of the work of the modernist architect Le Corbusier held in the Crypt of the Metropolitan Cathedral.	October 2008 to January 2009
Liverpool Cityscape	A 'portrait' of Liverpool by artist Ben Johnson, commissioned by National Museums Liverpool and exhibited at the Walker Art Gallery with an artists' residency during which members of the public could watch the completion of the work.	May to November 2008
Liverpool Sound	A concert at Anfield Stadium featuring Sir Paul McCartney as the headline act.	June 2008
Lord Mayor's Parade	An annual parade through Liverpool City Centre involving a wide variety of community groups.	June 2008 and annually
Mathew Street Festival	An annual music festival taking place at indoor and outdoor venues across Liverpool City Centre each August Bank Holiday Weekend.	August, annually
MTV Europe Music Awards	Liverpool ACC hosted the prestigious televised awards night.	November 2008
One Step Forward, One Step Back	Site-responsive theatre experience at the Liverpool Anglican Cathedral.	April 2008
Opening Ceremony	The official launch of Liverpool's year as ECoC, a free public event on St George's Plateau featuring a performance by Ringo Starr.	January 2008
RESPECTacles	An exhibition to mark Holocaust Memorial Day staged firstly at Liverpool Town Hall and then subsequently at World Museum Liverpool.	January 2008, May to August 2008
Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker	Sir Simon Rattle conducted performances with the Berliner Philharmoniker and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra at Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall.	September 2008, October 2008
Streets Ahead	A programme of street arts performances staged in various locations across Liverpool City Centre over the Whit Bank Holiday Weekend.	May 2008
Summer Pops	A programme of pop and classical music concerts staged annually on the Liverpool waterfront. ACC Liverpool was the venue for the Summer Pops for the first time in 2008. Previously the Summer Pops concerts were staged in a temporary marquee on the King's Waterfront site.	July, annually
Tall Ships Festival	Liverpool hosted the start of the 2008 Tall Ships Race with an associated festival weekend.	July 2008
Tartuffe	A staging of Moliere's play, translated by Roger McGough, at the Playhouse Theatre, which was critically very well received.	May 2008
Transition: The Peoples' Celebration (Closing Ceremony)	An event at the Pier Head with fireworks, music and dance performances and light installations, to mark the official handover of the title of European Capital of Culture.	January 2009
Viennese Balls	A series of traditional Viennese balls staged by Liverpool Culture Company at St George's Hall.	April 2008