

# Cities of Culture and the Regeneration Game

Professor Graeme Evans

Cities Institute ([www.citiesinstitute.org](http://www.citiesinstitute.org))

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### Introduction

On 10 January 2009 Liverpool held the official closing event under its European Capital of Culture 08 programme exactly a year on from its inauguration. This event also saw the transition from Liverpool's 'Year of Culture 08' to 'Year of Environment 09' and a simultaneous event in the Austrian city of Linz to whom the Capital of Culture mantle passed, along with Vilnius, Lithuania. An estimated 60,000 people congregated at the Pier Head as well as at the Albert Dock and Wirral bank, for a celebration that included sing-alongs, firework displays, street artists on illuminated bikes and light projections onto famous refurbished buildings, including the Three (but not the Four) Graces and new museum building. This 'Light Night' celebration also kick-started similar events held in cities in England and Scotland, with extended opening of venues, including the centrepiece new retail centre, Liverpool One. The Light Night theme chosen for Liverpool 08's swansong emulates the *Nuit Blanche* festival celebrated in dozens of cities such as Paris, Rome, Montreal and Toronto - the largest of which attract 1 to 3 million participants over 'late night' weekend extravaganzas (Jiwa et al. 2009), whilst many other cities - Berlin, Copenhagen, Dublin Genoa, London - host Museum Nights and late night Cultural festivals. Liverpool itself had initiated its *City of Light* programme in 2007 to illuminate over sixty of its central buildings.

### Festivalisation of the city

Cities of Culture associated with city branding, re-imaging and regeneration using culture and flagships to soften and celebrate urban renewal efforts, can be characterised as the festivalisation of city development and of 'identities' - political, economic and community - and as one element in a continuum of thematic 'Years' and 'Cities of..' - of which Culture is just one manifestation. Competitive mega-events in this case include EXPOs and Olympic Games (summer and winter) as well as major sporting events, notably World Cups and sub-regional games, whilst economic place-branding now incorporates Creative and Design Cities (UNESCO - e.g. Montreal, Berlin, Seoul), and Science, Knowledge and Innovation city designation (Liverpool and Manchester in North West England both have national 'Science City' status, as do Leeds, Sheffield and York in Yorkshire). In each of these categories, exemplar cities serve as benchmarks and models to which emulator cities aspire to capture and celebrate their regenerative and reputational advantages and impacts - notably 'Gaudi Barcelona', Guggenheim Bilbao, Silicon Valley, Glasgow - and now Liverpool 08.

The afterglow generated by these mega-events - despite instances of negative media, local resistance or indifference and often contrary evidence to the 'good news' advocacy - continues to attract newcomer and established cities, cities that seek to repeat or recapture past event effects, or those seeking to reposition themselves or update their heritage or dated image. So that when the UK Cultural Ministry (DCMS) opened a call for UK Cities of Culture, twenty-nine candidates (including several urban-rural sub-regions), put themselves forward - with Birmingham, Derry (N.Ireland), Norwich and Sheffield shortlisted. Well known cultural capitals also seek renewal and leverage for regeneration schemes having hosted such events in the recent past, whilst cities bidding for high stake world events such as Olympics often come back for more (from defeat), e.g. Madrid (2012 and 2016 bidder), Tokyo (1964 Games, 2016 bidder), Beijing (2004 bidder, 2008 Games). Cities also use the culture and regeneration opportunity selectively, for example Rio resisted the Guggenheim franchise, but successfully pursued both World Cup (2014) and Summer Olympics (2016) mega-events as part of major national and city strategies.

Cities/Capitals of Culture and other festival and sporting events should be viewed in this longitudinal frame alongside a city's trajectory of culture and regeneration and associated branding through flagship

development and infrastructure projects. Individual events punctuate what are in fact an accumulation of intervention and urban regeneration through 'festivalisation'. This combined trajectory of culture, competitive city and regeneration therefore requires a longer view than the focus on the event year suggests - and this includes measuring 'impacts' - since the regeneration process is often not linear or progressive, and change effects and their attribution are subject to reinterpretation and even revision over time. Public and political attention on the 'event' can also distract from the past and future. The assessment of *European Capitals of Culture* (Palmer, 2004a) for instance found that 'too often, Capitals of Culture have focussed most of their efforts on funding of events and projects that form part of a year-long celebration, with too little time and investment given to the future' (Palmer 2004b: 5). This suggests that the culture and regeneration story requires a historical analysis that also maps change and effects over a much longer time period, within which events form only a relatively small (financial and strategic) part. Investment in housing, retail, transport, education and local amenities are likely to have a more lasting legacy and impact, and within which culture might be situated - whether present or absent. And both cases will be important in order to consider how culture might better contribute to the regeneration process, as opposed to simply being corralled into a 'festival event' or 'year'.

Hall (1992) for example situated mega-events in a thirty year era of the 'city of renewal'. Today this phenomenon has a near fifty year pedigree, begging the question: does this imply a successful formula given its serial replication across the globe to cities large and small, developed and developing? Perhaps one answer lies in the general term 'renewal' - i.e. replacing worn out or updating venues, image, economy, tourism offer etc., including repositioning 'old culture' (heritage) for contemporary culture and entertainment - and the shift from arts and culture to the expansive creative industries (Campbell *this issue*). Cultural tourism and post-industrial economics therefore drive this universal tendency, which is also fuelled by the globalisation of cultural intermediary activity - curators, architects, artistic directors - which has in turn enabled the growth of, and opportunity for cities to develop culture city strategies and festivals - at an imported price. Manifestations include the growth of biennales (over 140 worldwide) and cultural festivals, including the European and national city/capital of culture initiative, and the ubiquitous art museum.

### **Regeneration, not just renewal**

However, renewal (and the US 'revitalisation') must be distinguished from regeneration which is more associated with extremes of social decline, multiple deprivation and disadvantage and in economic terms, below-average performance (for EU Regional Structural Fund eligibility, below 75% of the EU-average). Regeneration therefore responds to a degree of sustained degeneration, defined as the transformation of a community or place that has displayed the symptoms of environmental (physical), social and/or economic decline. What has been described as: 'breathing new life and vitality into an ailing community, industry and area [bringing] sustainable, long term improvements to local quality of life, including economic, social and environmental needs' (in Evans and Shaw, 2004). Mainstream regeneration programmes such as central government Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), New Deal for Communities (NDC) and their predecessors originating in the 1970s, and European Structural Development (ERDF) and Social Funding (ESF) - have traditionally lacked a cultural dimension and 'culture' is not one of the key domains that feature in how improvement is measured and regeneration investment is assessed (Evans 2005). Culture however touches the mainstream in economic terms - through creative industries and tourism sector employment, which often serve as proxies for 'culture' in economic development - and in social terms (social cohesion and capital, quality of life) and most explicitly in physical regeneration through cultural facilities, icons and public realm, including infrastructure. Transport - airports, bridges, light rail, metros feature highly in cities using culture as part of their place-making plans and have been a fundamental prerequisite in putting cultural quarters and cities on the map, e.g. Bilbao, Salford Quays, Gateshead, La Defense Paris.

The distinction between the 'city of renewal' – to which all places eventually look in order to survive economically - and the 'city of regeneration', is therefore important when evaluating culture and regeneration policy and impacts. Cities of Culture and Festival Cities whilst sharing some common goals display quite different rationales for 'renewal and regeneration'. For example the small historic city of Bruges (CoC 2002) in contrast to, say, Glasgow (1990) and Liverpool'08, or when compared with capital cities of culture such as Madrid (1992), Copenhagen, (1996), or Dublin (1991). The latter are often playing catch-up with their major cultural facilities, quarters and city promotions, measured by their positioning in tourism and global city location rankings, including concentration of creative industry activity (Evans 2009a). These capital cities are not averse of course to pursuing global events to accelerate regeneration projects and investment, evidenced by the number of capitals bidding for summer Olympics in recent years - e.g. Madrid, Moscow, London, Paris, Beijing, Tokyo. Expanding and reinvesting in their cultural assets (GLA 2008) is however a mainstream concern, not dependant upon festival or event opportunity, witness New York and London competing over Tate Modern and MOMA makeovers to retain their prime world art museum status; Paris's new *Grand Projets*; or Toronto's 'C\$1 billion babies' (Evans 2009a: 1025). The feature articles in world architecture magazines reveal a continual growth in the art museum and cultural facility in old and new world cities, often employing familiar star architects, signifying their membership of the international creative milieu, and the 'cultural turn' in city and urban development.

On the other hand, smaller cities particularly those with an historic or heritage reputation, resist the imposition of contemporary events and structures and the influx of visitors that drive City of Culture strategies. For instance in Bruges where a clear conflict emerged between resident and tourist identification with its historic character - the very reasons CoC and hallmark event status was granted in the first place - and the bid organiser's motivation to change the image and cultural profile of the city as a competitive contemporary place (Boyko 2002). As Bas van Heur observes (*this issue*), using the example of Maastricht (CoC candidate 2018) smaller cities without the levels of agglomeration, flows and economic and social diversities, struggle to counter the competitive advantage of larger, and cosmopolitan cities and exemplar Knowledge/Science/ Cultural and Creative Cities (Bell and Jayne 2006). As he notes, much cultural production participation is voluntary or at least un/under paid, and even in larger cities such as Liverpool: 'music recording studios, nightclubs, the Philharmonic Hall and orchestra and a nascent film sector all contribute to the cultural heartbeat of the city but still, as yet do not provide a substantial amount of regular, full-time employment' (Meegan 2004: 154 and cf. Evans & Foord on Sheffield). Nonetheless, this *broedplaatsenbeleid* policy to create 'cauldrons of creativity' is indiscriminately pursued, even though as Marlet and van Woerkens (2005) found in the case of Dutch cities, urban amenities and aesthetics, historic and natural environmental qualities were the determinants of creative industry growth (and of course, job opportunities), rather than Florida's formula of bohemian, gay scene, diversity and night time economy factors (2002). Comparative advantage and distinction building on endogenous creativity (including incumbent students) would appear a better strategy in these cases, certainly not the notion of importing a yet to be identified 'creative class' as footloose, migrant saviours of a city's cultural scene and economy (Evans 2009a, Peck 2005, Montgomery 2005). Spatially it should also be noted that serious economic regions in terms of growth, innovation etc. span areas larger than even capital cities - polycentric and city-regions linking several cities and towns, large and small (*vis* Liverpool, Merseyside, North West region/Scotland) - for example Oresund, Rhine-Ruhr, Ile de France. Creating cultural identities for this scale can present difficulties (Platt *this issue*) not least when they cross borders, but this can also better reflect inter-regional, 'intercultural' (Woods and Landry 2007) as well as economic identities and aspirations (cf. Mercer 2005 on Oresund). Provincial post-industrial, and port cities in particular have sought to recover and reclaim part of their lost trade and geographical power through cultural and hallmark events linked to urban regeneration, like Liverpool: 'the least typical of British cities, turned with its back against the

land, having in common with all ports the sense of being a city-state, always looking out to sea, expecting and even hoping for a stranger' (Grant 2005: 424). These include (European City/Capital of Culture - CoC): Glasgow (CoC 1980), Dublin (CoC 1990), Barcelona (Olympics 1992, UNESCO Cultural Forum 2004), Copenhagen (CoC 1996, EXPO bidder 2020), Thessaloniki (CoC 1997), Rotterdam (CoC 2001), Genoa (CoC 2004), Cork (CoC 2005), Liverpool and Stavanger (CoC 2008); Istanbul (CoC 2010), Vancouver (2010 winter Olympics); Shanghai (EXPO 2010), Marseille (CoC 2013) and Yeosu, S.Korea (EXPO 2012).

What this cursory review of the festival city phenomenon also reveals is the continued effort this approach demands, and the fact that certainly one mega-event alone is seldom enough to elevate or sustain regeneration investment to achieve competitive city or cultural city status and the social and economic benefits that are pursued. The hosting of *Capital of Culture* by Liverpool in 2008 can be traced back as far as 1984 when it hosted the Garden Festival as part of another competitive national programme. Three years after the 1981 riots in Toxteth, Liverpool 8 and the government's Inner City Task Force response, physical regeneration projects and culture-led area regeneration ensued, with the location of the Tate Gallery outpost at the £200m refurbished Albert Docks in 1988. This city was also one of the first to identify the role of the arts and cultural industries: 'realising and developing the political, cultural and economic significance of the arts, as part of the cultural industries, in relation to economic development and planning' (LCC 1987). The 1990s had seen Liverpool benefit from European and national regeneration funding of capital projects - over £12m from ERDF alone between 1990-6 including the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts, Philharmonic Hall, Tate, Unity Theatre, Empire Theatre and for cultural industries development (Evans and Foord 2000) with the Liverpool Biennale first held in 1988. This events & festival city time line can also be seen in Glasgow (Glasgow's Miles Better 1983, Garden Festival 1988, CoC 1990, Year of Architecture & Design 1999, Commonwealth Games 2014), whilst other cities have followed mega-events with festival city programmes and new facility and site developments, notably Montreal 'year round festival city' (1967 EXPO, 1976 Olympics, UNESCO City of Design 2003, annual *Nuit Blanche* 2003- and international festivals), NewcastleGateshead (1990s regeneration, 1996 Year of Visual Art), and Barcelona (1992 Olympics, annual festivals, UNESCO Cultural Forum 2004). Port cities such as Rotterdam and Marseille represent particular examples incremental regeneration of key sites and economic sectors, of which European City of Culture will have been only one milestone with the event itself only part of the long process of revitalisation. In Rotterdam the event year built on the development of cultural facilities, including an upgraded museum quarter and a new architecture centre and the investment in several non-cultural waterfront icons. Marseilles likewise is building on a long-term regeneration of its docklands and industrial sites (the *Euromediterranee* programme commenced there in the early-1990s), as well as improving its problematic image in France - not unlike Liverpool and Glasgow in the UK.

What this festivalisation also has in common is a reliance on national, European (and Provincial, in the case of Quebec), and international validation and resources, not just to target regeneration programmes, but to valorise city 'culture' for both public and investor consumption and approval. This exogenous development has arguably crowded and squeezed out local and endogenous cultural autonomy and preferences, e.g. Bilbao (Evans and Foord 2000, Evans 2003). This goes someway to explain the tensions, conflicts and organisational problems that beset such events once the award or decision has been made politically, not least in Liverpool (and now Istanbul), as well as in other regeneration incorporating cultural flagships/events where the opportunity cost - land-use, capital investment and revenue funding, as well as art form and cultural diversity - is high.

## Measuring impacts

Physical and cultural displacement for example is one feature of creative city regeneration where cultural labour, skills, workspace, participation and markets are replaced by high exchange value activity (e.g. digital media for crafts based production e.g. textiles, ceramics, furniture - as in Barcelona, New York and London). In Liverpool this extends to population decline in the inner city and movement out to Merseyside and the surrounding region/suburbs (as in Glasgow), with density and growth levels actually reducing, in contrast to other UK cities. New housing, e.g. waterfront developments, has generated new inner city dwellers as elsewhere (e.g. Sheffield, Manchester), but with a non-residential buy-to-let market of 1 and 2 bed apartments, new communities (and families) have not embedded, whilst established residential communities decline further<sup>1</sup>. This also explains why the stories and history of such events are not just contested, but continue to evolve and reveal themselves long after the event has taken place, or a flagship has first opened. Measuring effects has therefore started to capture this over time and place, as in the case of the Liverpool08 Impact study<sup>2</sup>, but communities are less rooted and defining community and residents at neighbourhood level becomes problematic. Lee for instance cites the 'Liverpool character', in adapting Bourdieu, as a "habitus of location". He suggests that cities have enduring cultural orientations which exist and function relatively independent of their current populations or of the numerous social processes at any particular time: 'in this sense we can describe a city as having a certain cultural character...which clearly transcends the popular representations of the populations of certain cities, or that manifestly expressed by a city's public and private institutions' (1997: 132). This is important in any consideration of cultural planning, since attempts by municipal and other political agencies to create or manipulate a city's cultural character are likely to fail, produce pastiche or superficial culture, and even drive out any inherent creative spirit that might exist in the first place (Evans 2001).

Findings from the ongoing Liverpool08 Impact study reveal the mixed and marginal effects felt by residents, with: 'ambivalence about the likelihood of sustained benefits resulting from ECoC' and 'concerns over the sustainability of retail and leisure developments and viability of new city centre apartments' (Impacts08 2009: 13). Critically 'most people did not feel that ECoC would benefit either them as individuals or their neighbourhoods' (ibid: 12). Here as elsewhere, a case of undervaluing community culture and amenities, and the exaggeration of event activities and interventions, as felt by local people. Businesses in the city centre (less so outside of the area) had seen a growth in sales due to the CoC award, although less in Merseyside than in the region as a whole. However the majority of firms consulted did not anticipate winning future business from the event, which was not seen as the critical factor in the city's economic recovery, although a source of 'great pride and enthusiasm', but rather, the major infrastructure investments such as the new Arena and Convention Centre (Impacts08 2008). As one observer notes: 'continuing the momentum beyond the city centre into neighbouring districts, little touched by the year's festivities, presents a potentially tougher challenge, and from past experience a far greater chance of getting things wrong' (Stonard 2008: 35). Harvey had observed earlier that 'one of the possible benefits from cultural industries in the centre of cities is that insofar as you can bring back predominantly the suburban upper middle class into the city centre, you will involve them with what's going on (there)', but as he went on to admit: 'many people commute into the city to work and then go off back to the suburbs and are not bothered with what's going on elsewhere in the city' (1993: 8). In Liverpool as in other post-industrial cities, work, shopping and occasional entertainment are the sum of most people's engagement and identification with the 'city' and its 'culture'.

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<sup>1</sup> In the 2001 Census the proportion of family households in Liverpool city centre was half of the city average, with students making up 42% of the city centre and 50% of the working age population, and although students dominate the city centre population and 'set the cultural tone' (Nathan and Urwin, 2005: 26) the centre/fringe is also home to many of the city's pensioners, low earners, and benefit dependants.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.liv.ac.uk/impacts08>

However, in contrast to other regions, increased arts attendance and participation in the North West between 2006/7 and 2007/8 - which included the lead-up and opening events of Liverpool08 - suggests the '08 affect may well have played a part (nationally, musicals and live music attendance showed increases, participation in dance also - Oskala and Bunting 2009). Indeed if it had not done so, this would be a direct failure of the event and of the time and resources devoted to it. This small national survey sample does not allow for local area analysis (Evans 2008), but clearly one measure will be how far this activity can be sustained post the event year, and how the intensity of cultural activity has changed across the city's population (as distinct from visitors). Three perhaps semantic but significant distinctions have been made in this relationship between culture and the regeneration process: Culture and Regeneration; Culture-led regeneration; and Cultural Regeneration. These were expanded as follows (Evans and Shaw 2004, Evans 2005).

### **1. Culture *and* regeneration**

In this model, cultural activity is not fully integrated at the strategic development or master planning stage often because the responsibilities for cultural provision and for regeneration sit within different departments or because there is no 'champion'. The intervention is often small-scale: a public art programme once the buildings have been designed; a heritage interpretation or local history museum. In some cases, where no planned provision has been made, residents - individuals or businesses - and cultural organisations may respond to the vacuum and make their own interventions - lobbying for a library, commissioning artists to make signs or street furniture, recording the history of their area, setting up a regular music night, etc. Although introduced at a later stage, cultural interventions can make an impact on the regeneration process, enhancing the facilities and services that were initially planned.

### **2. Culture-led regeneration**

In this model, cultural activity is seen as the catalyst and engine of regeneration. The activity is likely to have a high-public profile and frequently to be cited as the sign of regeneration. The activity might be the design and construction (or re-use) of a building or buildings for public or business use (e.g. Baltic and Sage Music Centre in Gateshead, Tate Modern in London Bankside); the reclamation of open space (e.g. the garden festivals); or the introduction of a programme of activity which is then used to rebrand a place (City of Culture).

### **3. Cultural regeneration**

In this model, cultural activity is more fully integrated into an area strategy alongside other activities in the environmental, social and economic sphere. Examples include *Birmingham's Renaissance* where the arts were incorporated with policy, planning and resourcing through the city council's joint Arts, Employment and Economic Development Committee, and in the 'exemplar' cultural city, Barcelona with an 'apolitical' tripartite agreement between industry, government and citizens and a ten year cross-cutting Cultural Strategy. This model is closely allied to the 'cultural planning' approach to cultural policy and regeneration, i.e. where culture is embedded and prioritised in mainstream urban planning and policy-making.

Liverpool's *Capital of Culture* was seen to embody the Culture-led regeneration approach (Culture NorthWest 2008: 2), although as already noted, the longer term regeneration strategy and city centre property developments lacked a cultural dimension and certainly there has been little integration of culture within mainstream urban design, planning or economic development agendas. For instance, the garden festival site here as in Glasgow has stood derelict for many years. In practice much cultural activity is an add-on to urban development and social programmes. Nationally, the official economic impact and investment appraisals have been widened over this period through *Regeneration, Renewal*

and *Regional Development* (3 Rs') assessments (ODPM 2003) and Culture Ministry and Treasury evaluation guidance (Evans 2005). These seek to apply cost benefit analysis, including notions of heritage, access and social impacts, alongside more quantitative economic multiplier and additionality/substitution calculations at a regional and national scale - for example how far has a public investment project displaced activity elsewhere, e.g. arts audiences; or would the project have gone ahead anyway without public investment, e.g. Liverpool One retail centre.

Perhaps the mostly significant response to the need for more robust evidence to support the claims and case for culture within regeneration (DCMS 2004) has been both the above distinctions and the development a wider set of methods and case studies using social impacts, process-based evaluation and longer term research. Longitudinal impact studies have been undertaken in Gateshead (Bailey, Miles and Stark 2004), Glasgow ([www.impact.arts.gla.ac.uk/](http://www.impact.arts.gla.ac.uk/)), City Fringe London (Bagwell et al. 2009) and currently for Liverpool'08 (Culture North West 2008 and see Moriarty 2002). Measuring social impacts of arts programmes and evaluating participation and 'public good' effects on host communities - beneficiaries, participants as well as 'non-users' - have been advanced by particular action and policy research, notably Matarasso, Moriarty, Reeves, Evans & Shaw, including studies carried out in Liverpool (ACME, Hill & Moriarty, Lorente). A 'triple bottom line' approach is also recommended by festival specialists as a route to embedding sustainable development principles into event planning and impact evaluation. Noting, perhaps over-optimistically that: 'the effect would be to ensure that the usual claims of economic benefits are not accepted at face value, and that social, cultural and environmental measures of value would be equal to the economic' (Getz 2009: 76). A growing feature of social impact evaluation has been the use of oral history facilitated by low cost audio-visual and now digital media, as well as cognitive (Lask *this issue*) and participatory mapping using Geographic Information Systems (GIS-P) and Planning for Real, blogs and community web sites, community-based design charrettes and more engaged insertion of artists in the regeneration site and process itself, including installations, residencies, visualisations and activism (Evans 2009b). When applied over time, a richer and more robust picture is able to be built up; opinions and effects captured as they evolve and change; survey data can be triangulated and validated; and participation in the process itself can form part of the 'event', even long afterwards.

## Conclusions

Given this knowledge and skill base, a measure of an impact study's quality and of its own 'impact' should therefore be the range of research methods employed and those used within the event or intervention itself, and how these are synthesised and valued in drawing 'meta-conclusions' in answering the key questions around 'success', 'attribution', 'distribution' (social, spatial) and impacts. It can be concluded, however, that despite their principles and novel and multi-disciplinary methods, the impact studies, evaluations and assessments being undertaken and planned for future events (e.g. London2012 Olympics) are being undertaken *a posteriori*, with stakeholders who had little or no say in the actual decision, delivery or shape of the 'event' (or regeneration scheme) itself, and its relationship with wider urban redevelopment.

So that whilst there is no shortage of evidence, techniques and methods, how these relate - if at all - to the governance and regeneration regime, and where power over which and whose culture is 'invited to the festival' resides, is not apparent or at least not part of the evaluation or impact study process (O'Brien *this issue*). The extent to which this accumulating evidence on the wider effects of hosting and delivering such mega-events has and may be used in the future to inform future events and both cultural and regeneration strategies, is at best marginal. Host city decisions lack 'normal' rationality and are overridden by geopolitical and individual (commercial, politician, "personality") imperatives and ultimately acts of blind faith, where contrary evidence is dismissed or offset by the larger gains at stake,



particularly property, prestige and pride. As Kunzman observed: 'Each story of regeneration begins with poetry and ends with real estate' (2004: 2).

This can work both ways, as in a decision not to proceed such as Liverpool's ill-fated Fourth Grace<sup>3</sup>. The decision by Liverpool Vision to commission the design and development of a new building on the Pier Head in 2000 was tested through architectural competition then 'public consultation' on the four submitted schemes. Will Allsop's 'The Cloud' received the lowest vote (18%, whilst another poll, by the Liverpool Architecture & Design Trust also placed Allsop's design in last place with only 10%), with Foster's Ark 30%, Cullinan's Fourth Grace and Roger's Serpentine both receiving 26%. The decision by Liverpool Vision to ignore the popular vote then abandon the scheme two years later signalled both a lack of confidence in and by the agency, and cemented Liverpool's reputation as an 'anxious city' (Williams 2004: 107) with a poorly performing Council - named the worst financially managed local authority by the Audit Commission in 2008. A ruling party LibDem Councillor blamed part of this problem on the cost of 'being the European City of Culture which we are funding 60% and which has led to people taking their eye off the ball' (Turner 2008: 7). The 'event city' can therefore still accentuate the oppositional rather than unify, engender consensus and equity - as the events themselves can occasionally do - even if ephemerally

Liverpool, like other ERDF Objective 1 eligible city-regions (e.g. Glasgow, Dublin) has benefited from over two decades of continued regeneration and cultural investment in their post-industrial and creative economies and city infrastructure. Cities such as Glasgow and Barcelona have managed to better integrate their cultural regeneration within economic and social development strategies and masterplans, such that investment in cultural facilities, festivals and programmes can be seen as a long term project rather than the one-off event, led by economic development and regeneration rather than cultural agencies and departments. With European and public sector spending guaranteed to decline and cease altogether for cities such as Liverpool, how its cultural infrastructure can be maintained and the aspirations for its citizens and for inward investment met, is unclear. In particular how the benefits from this long term investment and event strategies have been used to genuinely create a stronger social and economic base and wider inclusion. This is a challenge for advocates and critiques of the event city, and for those measuring pre and post-event effects and impacts in this context, given the city of renewal's longevity. What can be observed over this period however, is a systemic dependency on external programmes and support for what ostensibly are key components of the new knowledge and experience economy through the creative industries and tourism, which include cultural and sporting events, leisure retail and associated advanced producer services.

In many respects the culture and regeneration phenomenon and European project rolls on (Evans and Shaw 2006), as does the impact study and 'evidence-based policy' regime - not least in London2012's Legacy Evaluation programme with a maze of parallel impact studies and meta-evaluations - at least six - by international, national and regional agencies (LDA 2009). However in terms of cultural and community development, the regeneration project and event city looks both tired and dated. A move towards cultural planning (Evans 2008) as a process of assessing need and demand through cultural mapping of activity, facilities and cultural assets and genuine consultation - underpinned by perhaps more rigorous understanding of people, place and participation - would seem to better situate the festival within changing social, economic and physical landscapes and better locate the extraordinary in the everyday, and vice versa (Fitzpatrick *this issue*). In this sense: 'a cultural planning approach goes way

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<sup>3</sup> The 'Fourth Grace' named 'The Cloud' by its architect, Will Allsop, was designed to complement Liverpool's 'Three Graces' - The Royal Liver Building, The Cunard Building and the Port of Liverpool Building - on Merseyside's Pier Head. This spectacular flagship formed a key part of Liverpool's successful bid for *European Capital of Culture 2008*: 'a focus and catalyst for the next stage of Liverpool's renaissance, an eloquent image for a resurgent city' ([www.liverpoolfourthgrace.co.uk](http://www.liverpoolfourthgrace.co.uk)). Following the *Capital of Culture* designation, the City Council cancelled this project, citing spiralling costs (forecast to rise from £228m to £324m), unclear usage, and the experience of out of control iconic building projects in other places (Evans 2005).

beyond simply attending performances, exhibitions, or cultural events. Cultural planning delivers access to, ownership of and participation in appropriate developmental cultural activities..and contributes to the building of civil society; developing citizens and promoting citizenship’.

As the next event and ‘Year of...’ proceeds and past events recede into fragmented and official memories, it seems important to take the time to stop and ask the question - what do we mean by a city of culture and a ‘former’ city of culture? - is this a case of ‘dependency culture’ (and does this matter), or is it important to have ‘something to call our own’? As Raymond Williams suggested in his *Long Revolution* (1961), introducing change and exposure to new practices over time was a route to lasting cultural development (and cultural democracy). This incremental, transformative and inclusive approach needs to be central to the festivalisation agenda and the measurement of its effects, over time.

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