

# 2023 **Condensed Companion** SURVEY REPORT

What it means to be Caribbean or of Caribbean heritage in the UK.

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100 Caribbean Voices

# FOREWORD

***The Condensed Companion Report:  
100 Caribbean Voices Survey (March 2025)  
Reclaiming Identity. Celebrating Heritage. Shaping the Future.***

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***What does it mean to be Caribbean in Britain today?***

*This companion summary distils the voices, values, and visions shared through the 100 Caribbean Voices Survey - the first national initiative of its kind focused solely on Caribbean identity in the UK.*

*It reflects a community rich in pride, shaped by generational shifts, and driven by an urgent call for recognition, unity, and cultural preservation.*

*Whether you're a policymaker, educator, creative, or community ally, this report invites not just reflection — but response.*

***The time to protect, project, and power Caribbean culture forward is now.***

*Warm regards,*

**Elizabeth Flanders**

Founder, 100 Caribbean Voices Survey  
Event Director, Event Connoisseurs Ltd  
(Celebrating Caribbean Excellence, Culture, and Community)

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# 1. About the Survey

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The 100 Caribbean Voices Survey was designed to explore the evolving cultural identity of individuals of Caribbean heritage living in the UK. Conducted in July 2023, this national survey gathered insights from 55 respondents across regions, generations, and heritage backgrounds. It is the first UK-wide initiative focused solely on Caribbean culture, identity, and belonging.

## Purpose and Context:

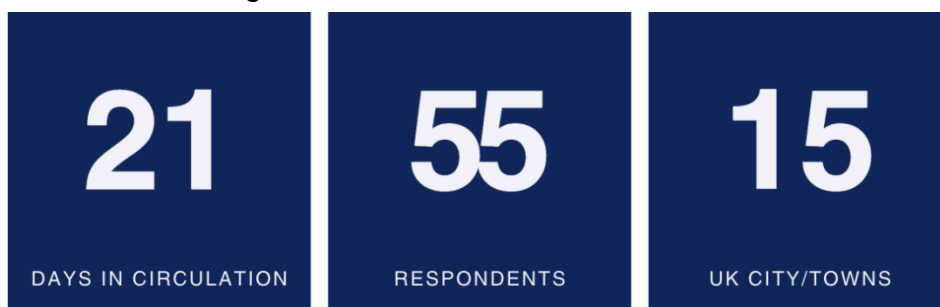
- To capture lived experiences and deepen understanding of what it means to be Caribbean in the UK today
- To highlight generational differences and preserve cultural legacy
- To address underrepresentation and challenge stereotypes

## A Shifting Demographic Landscape:

According to the 2021 Census, the **Black Caribbean population** of England and Wales has declined to **1%** of the total population (**623,115 people**), a decrease from previous census data. In contrast, the **Mixed White/Black Caribbean population** has steadily increased to **0.9%** (**513,040 people**). These figures reflect an evolving and increasingly diverse Caribbean diaspora adding urgency to efforts around cultural visibility, intergenerational connection, and identity preservation.

## Respondent Overview:

- 55 participants from London, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Shropshire, Kent, Edinburgh and more
- 81% born in the Caribbean; 19% UK-born
- Strong female participation (over two-thirds)
- Diverse island representation including Jamaica, Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia, Trinidad & Tobago



# 2. Key Findings

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## Cultural Identity and Heritage

- 61.8% maintain active cultural ties through family, food, music, and traditions
- Younger respondents express surface-level knowledge, with many desiring more heritage access
- Language loss and generational gaps were cited as threats to continuity

## Navigating Dual Identities

- Most respondents 'code-switch' between Caribbean and British cultural expressions

- Caribbean identity is a source of pride but often suppressed in white or non-Caribbean spaces
- Some respondents feel disconnected or culturally adrift, particularly those in rural areas

### Representation and Recognition

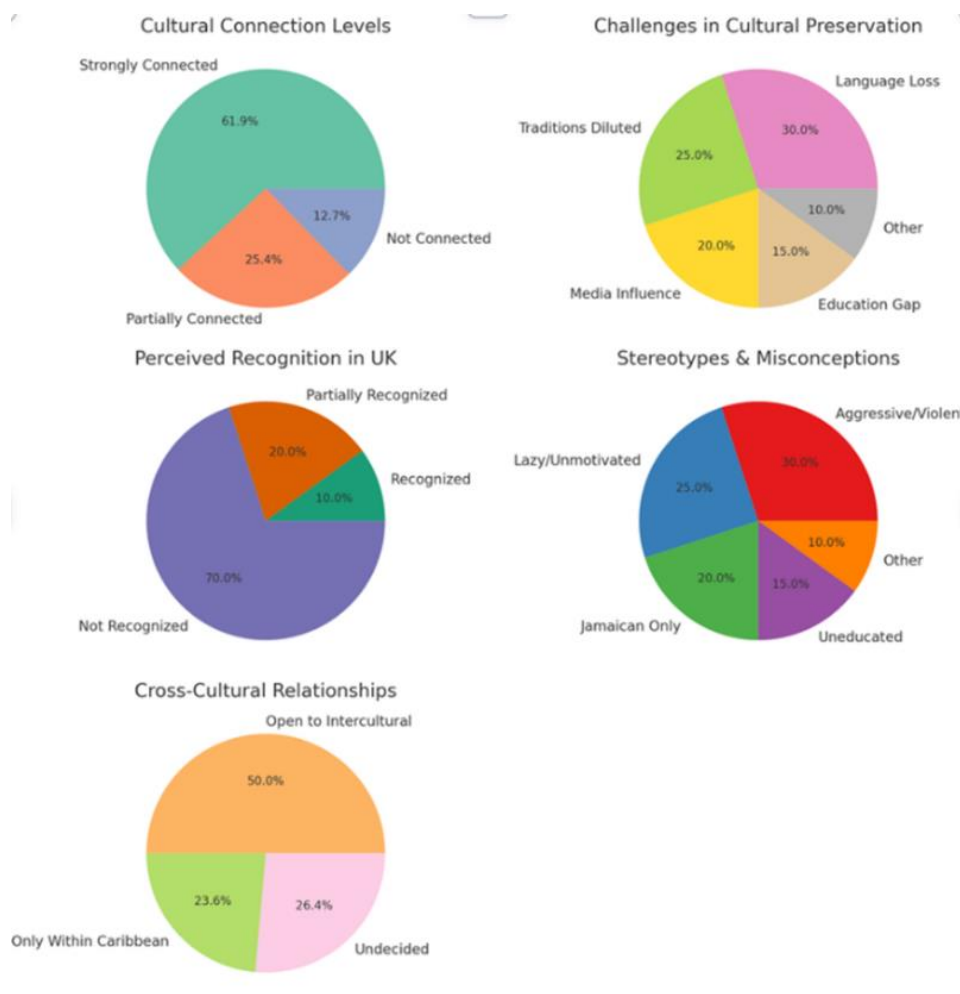
- Fewer than 10% believe UK institutions fully recognise Caribbean contributions
- Media portrayals remain stereotypical and often reduce Caribbean culture to carnival or food
- Windrush contributions remain underappreciated

### Community and Belonging

- Many participants value inter-island unity but note community fragmentation and lack of central cultural hubs
- Churches and family traditions are key spaces for cultural preservation and moral grounding

### Stereotypes and Mental Health

- Harmful stereotypes (e.g., laziness, aggression) persist in public perception
- Cultural invisibility contributes to low self-worth, especially among younger generations



### 3. Strategic Priorities

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#### Preserve Culture

- Integrate Caribbean history into UK education curricula
- Fund language, food, and storytelling projects
- Develop a national Caribbean heritage archive

#### Empower Youth

- Revive Saturday schools and intergenerational mentorship
- Encourage cultural leadership among mixed-heritage youth
- Create youth-led digital platforms

#### Enhance Representation

- Establish Emancipation Remembrance Day UK
- Recognise Caribbean achievements in arts, education, science, and leadership
- Support Caribbean-led media and storytelling

#### Build Infrastructure

- Invest in Black Cultural Archives, Windrush Foundation, Museumand and more
- Develop a UK Caribbean Think Tank to shape research and policy
- Empower Caribbean High Commissions to lead cultural diplomacy

#### Unify the Community

- Build a national Caribbean coalition
- Foster cross-island and intergenerational dialogue
- Link faith spaces, creatives, educators, and activists for greater impact

### 4. What Participants Want

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- Inclusive and visible cultural education for all generations
- Permanent recognition of Caribbean history and Windrush contributions
- Access to cultural events beyond major cities
- Investment in mental health and well-being through a culturally informed lens
- Unified efforts to build legacy, pride, and future leadership

### 5. Limitations

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While the insights presented in this report are meaningful and grounded in lived experience, it's important to acknowledge the following limitations:

- **Sample Size:** With 55 respondents, the findings provide a rich but limited snapshot and are not statistically representative of the entire UK Caribbean population.
- **Self-Selection Bias:** Participation was voluntary, which may skew responses toward those already engaged or reflective about their cultural identity.
- **Geographic Distribution:** Although responses came from across the UK, urban centres are more strongly represented than rural or less densely populated regions.



- **Generational Representation:** Older age groups were more likely to participate; fewer responses came from people aged under 30.
- **Subjectivity of Cultural Identity:** As identity is deeply personal and fluid, qualitative responses reflect individual perspectives rather than universal truths.

These limitations do not diminish the value of the findings but highlight the need for a wider, second-stage survey to build on this foundational work.

## 6. Interpretation: Patterns, Trends, and Insights

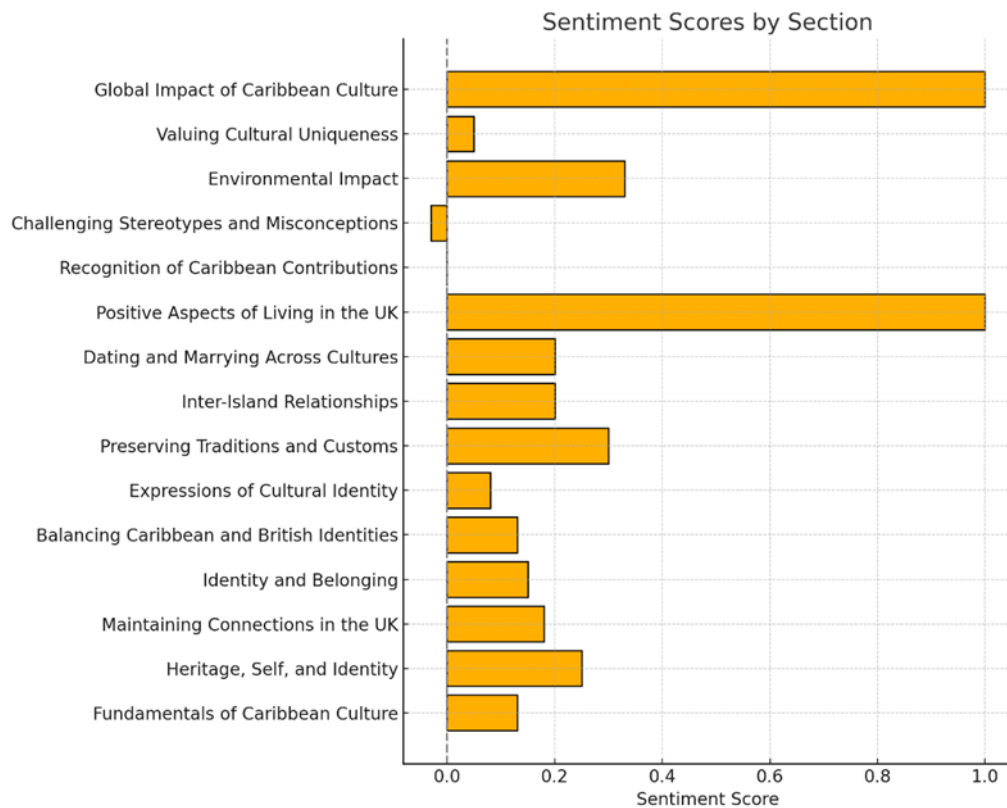
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The qualitative insights gathered from participants reveal key themes that speak to the evolving nature of Caribbean identity in Britain:

- **Cultural Pride Is Strong:** Participants expressed deep pride in Caribbean values, especially family, food, resilience, and music. This pride was more pronounced among those born in the Caribbean or raised with strong cultural influence.
- **Generational Gaps Are Widening:** Younger generations, particularly those UK-born, often feel less connected to cultural traditions or language. Many expressed a desire to learn more but lacked access to cultural spaces or mentorship.
- **Identity Navigation Is Ongoing:** Many respondents described ‘code-switching’ or adapting to different cultural expectations depending on the environment. This flexibility is seen as a strength — but also emotionally draining.
- **Representation Matters:** Participants consistently highlighted the impact of cultural invisibility and harmful stereotypes on self-worth and public perception. Education, media, and leadership visibility were identified as areas needing urgent improvement.
- **Faith and Family Are Anchors:** Churches, food traditions, and storytelling continue to serve as key conduits for cultural transmission. However, some noted that these anchors are weakening without structured support.
- **Desire for Unity and Investment:** There was a strong call for unity across islands and generations. Participants want to see more collaboration between Caribbean-led organisations, cultural leaders, and institutions.

These themes reinforce the urgency for action and investment across sectors to preserve Caribbean heritage while empowering the next generation.

## At a glance SENTIMENT SCORES BY SECTION HEADINGS (see full report for more information)



## 7. Outliers: Divergent Voices and Emerging Tensions

While most respondents expressed strong cultural pride and a desire for preservation, some shared contrasting or critical perspectives:

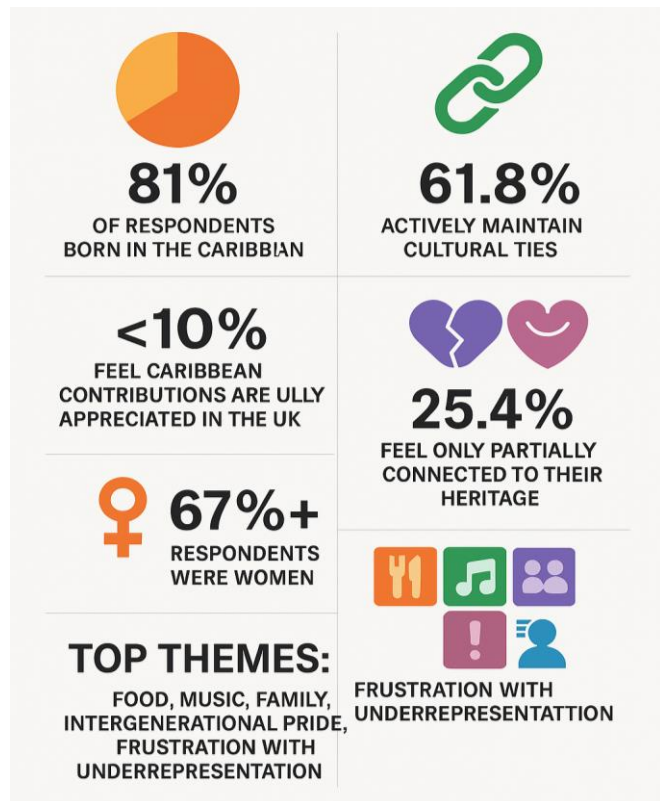
- **Cultural Detachment:** A few younger or mixed-heritage respondents reported feeling disconnected from their Caribbean roots and more aligned with broader British or universalist identities.
- **Cynicism Around Representation:** Some questioned the authenticity of mainstream cultural events or felt that modern portrayals of Caribbean life lacked substance or respect for tradition.
- **Inter-Island Tensions:** While many called for Caribbean unity, others voiced frustration at ongoing rivalries or division between islands, reflecting a need for deeper community healing and inclusivity.
- **Pan-African Reframing:** A small number advocated for a broader African diaspora identity over a strictly Caribbean one, challenging traditional narratives.
- **Non-Cultural Identification:** A few respondents rejected fixed cultural labels altogether, identifying instead with a global or individualistic worldview.

These voices are vital in painting a full picture of Caribbean identity in the UK- one that includes pride and resistance, unity and questioning, tradition and transformation.



## 8. Visual Summary: In Brief

- **81%** of respondents born in the Caribbean
- **61.8%** actively maintain cultural ties
- **<10%** feel Caribbean contributions are fully appreciated in the UK
- **25.4%** feel only partially connected to their heritage
- **67%+** respondents were women
- **Top Themes:** Food, music, family, intergenerational pride, frustration with underrepresentation



## 9. Conclusions

The voices captured in this survey are not just reflections they are a cultural mandate. Caribbean identity in the UK is resilient but at risk. There is an urgent need for strategic investment in culture, education, infrastructure, and representation. As one respondent wrote:

*“No. For years growing up I thought Black people didn’t do anything worthwhile in the world which added to my low sense of self-worth.”*

That’s the cost of cultural erasure.

This report offers a chance to change that narrative.

## 10. Immediate Next Steps

- Share the findings with partners, policymakers, educators, and cultural leaders
- Collaborate with Caribbean High Commissions and community organisations
- Launch a wider second-stage survey in partnership with stakeholders
- Begin groundwork for a UK Caribbean Think Tank and Emancipation Remembrance Day

## 11. Call to Action: Reconnect. Reclaim. Reimagine.

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This is more than a report - it's a movement.

We invite you to:

- **Partner with us** to develop heritage-based programmes, exhibitions, and events
- **Champion the cause** in your sector – from education to arts, media to faith spaces
- **Support Caribbean-led research** and community building initiatives
- **Mentor the next generation** and pass on the stories, wisdom, and cultural wealth that define us
- **Fund and advocate** for cultural equity and intergenerational legacy

Let us not wait for permission. Let us shape our own narrative. Together!

## 12. About the Report author

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This report was produced by **Event Connoisseurs Ltd**, a UK-based cultural platform committed to celebrating and preserving Caribbean identity through storytelling, research, and premium events. Our work is rooted in a mission to uplift the Caribbean community, amplify its contributions, and ensure its legacy thrives across generations.

### CONTACT

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We welcome partnerships, feedback, and collaboration opportunities. Please get in touch to be part of what's next.

**Thank you for exploring this 10-page summary of the 100 Caribbean Voices Survey.**

This companion report offers a concise snapshot - but there's so much more to uncover. **For deeper insights, lived experiences, and sector-specific recommendations**, we invite you to explore the **Full Comprehensive Report** - a richly detailed, 70+ page document covering education, media, youth, cultural infrastructure, and beyond. From in-depth sentiment analysis to bold strategic priorities, the full report offers a powerful foundation for meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and long-term cultural investment.

 **Download the Full Report**