



The Wales LGBTQ+ Timeline Collection

Fflint / Flintshire Edition

Introduction



In 2021 the Welsh Government commissioned training in LGBTQ+ Language and History for local museums, libraries and archives to encourage the celebration of local stories of sexual orientation and gender identity.

This is part of the work being done on raising awareness and understanding of the diverse population of Wales and compliments the Welsh Government Action Plan which aims to:

- tackle inequalities experienced by LGBTQ+ communities;
- challenge discrimination;
- create a society where LGBTQ+ people are safe to live and love authentically, openly and freely as themselves.

The training provided effective learning points and practical tools to enable staff and volunteers to move forward with a fully inclusive programme resulting in an expansion beyond the organisation to the general public, such as family historians, local historians and community groups. Allowing the promotion of historic material in ways not realised before and enhancing work with partner organisations in not only in making LGBTQ+ material accessible to the public, but also in collecting and preserving this heritage.

An outcome of the LGBTQ+ Language and History training is the construction of timelines

for each of the 22 counties of Wales. This provides a means by which local people, allies and events can be celebrated instead of replicating mainstream narratives and celebrities.

A baseline of highlighted moments from history was constructed by Norena Shopland from her Welsh historic material collection on sexual orientations and gender identities, and from that contributed to the Hanes LHDT+ Cymru / LGBTQ+ Research Group Wales established to encourage and promote research into Welsh LGBTQ+ history. Their website, LGBTQ Cymru is funded by Swansea University to record as much information as possible on this history.

<https://lgbtqcymru.swansea.ac.uk/>

People are encouraged to add to and keep expanding the timelines to make them as comprehensive as possible.

18th CENTURY >

1747

Diederick Wessel Linden was a German who settled in Flintshire around 1747. He gained a modicum of fame as a physician and his writings about spa waters and their curative qualities, and he is particularly associated with the spa at Llandrindod Wells. Not a great deal is known about him, but a R.C.B. Oliver from Llandrindod Wells, wrote a short bio of Linden in 1974. The eccentric and shadowy doctor was hard to pin down, and Oliver notes while Linden was in Breconshire, he had paid the attorney John Middleton Hope whose accounts include a page headed 'Mr John Williams of Brecon' with an entry 'Dr. Linden against Allen,' with opposite, three money items under Hill 1759 and another money item under Easter 1759. Hill and Easter, refers to sessions of the High Court of Justice. Oliver writes the nature of the case against someone called Allen is unknown, although the name may relate to a well-known family of that name in the parish of

Bryngwyn in Radnorshire. In 1974 Oliver obviously did not have access to the criminal database which shows that on 1 January 1759 Linden was accused by four men, Thomas Price, Evan Phillip, George Adney, and Thomas Prothero (nobody called Allen) of attempted sodomy. As sodomy at this time could mean various things, and not necessarily sexual activity between men, it is not known at this time what exactly Linden was accused of. Nevertheless, on all four accounts the verdict 'no true bill' was returned, meaning there was not enough evidence of guilt to support a criminal charge against the accused. Perhaps future research will shed more light on the matter.

Sources: R.C.B. Oliver, 'Diederick Wessel Linden, M.D.', *National Library of Wales journal*, Cyf. 18, rh. 3, Haf 1974, p.261-2; Crime and Punishment Database, National Library Wales



> 1776

1776

In 1776 Thomas Pennant (1726-1798), a prolific writer, traveller and antiquarian who specialised in studying Wales, its nature and people set off from his home at Downing Hall, Flintshire. He was gathering information for his new book *A tour in Wales*, a three-volume work chronicling three trips he made on horseback between 1773-1776 and the work is still regarded as one of the best travel books of the period. In his second volume *Journey to Snowdon* (1781) Pennant relates how he sought out Marged ferch Ifan (1696-1793) a woman famed for her physical strength and masculinity.

Source: Norena Shopland, *Forbidden Lives: LGBT stories from Wales*, Seren Books, 2017

Portrait of Thomas Pennant
by Thomas Gainsborough
Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons



19th CENTURY >

1861

The death penalty for buggery was abolished when the Offences Against the Person Act 1828 was replaced with the Offences Against the Person Act 1861.

A total of 8921 men had been prosecuted since 1806 for sodomy with 404 sentenced to death and 56 executed. Homosexuality remained illegal until partially decriminalised in 1967 in England and Wales, and 1980 in Scotland.

1885

The British Parliament enacted Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885, section 11 of which, known as the Labouchere Amendment, prohibited gross indecency between males.

It thus became possible to prosecute homosexuals for engaging in sexual acts where buggery or attempted buggery could not be proven.

The Labouchere Amendment became known as the Blackmailers Charter because it was so easy to accuse men, regardless if it was true or not, of being homosexual.



1895

1895

Oscar Wilde, tried for gross indecency over a relationship with Lord Alfred Douglas, was sentenced to two years in prison with hard labour.

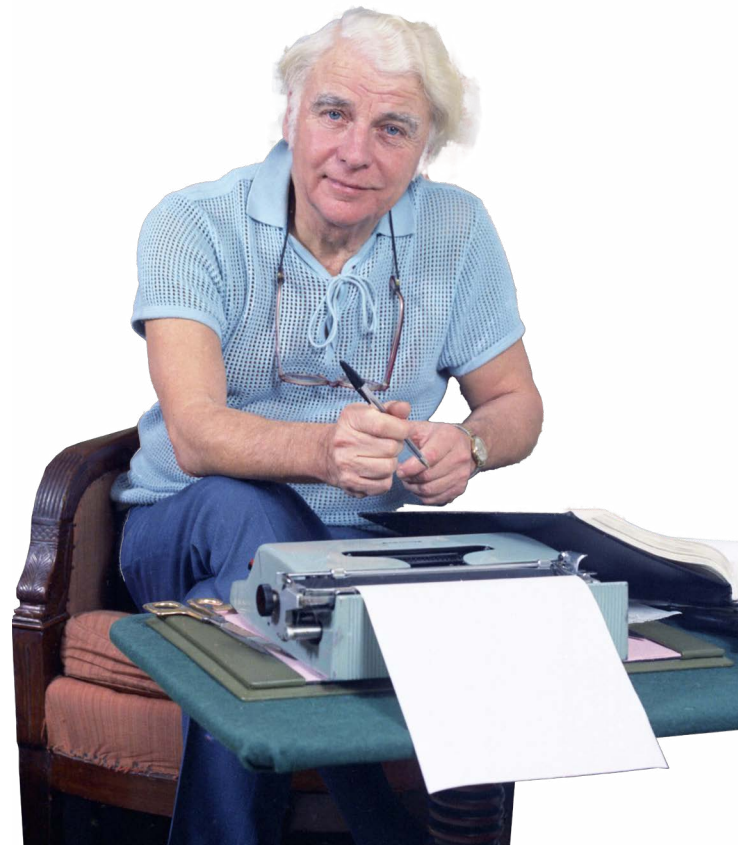


20th CENTURY >

1905

Welsh writer, dramatist and actor, Emyln Williams (1905–1987) was born at 1 Jones Terrace, Pen-y-ffordd, Ffynnongroyw, on 26 November. He was bisexual throughout his adult life and wrote of his sexuality in his autobiographies, *George* (1961) and *Emlyn* (1973). He maintained a relationship from 1981 to 1986 with American theatre journalist Albert N. Williams whom Emyln met while appearing at the Northlight Theatre in the Chicago area with his one-man Charles Dickens show. (Albert Williams served as Emyln Williams's personal assistant during a 1982 tour of England, Wales and Ireland with the Charles Dickens and Dylan Thomas solo shows.)

Source: Wikipedia



> 1951

1914

The First World War broke out in August 1914. Army historian A.D. Harvey writes that “at least 230 soldiers were court-martialled, convicted and sentenced to terms of imprisonment for homosexual offences” during World War I.

1921

The Criminal Law Amendment Act was revised in the House of Commons to include a section making sexual “acts of gross indecency” between women illegal. While the Act was passed by the Commons, it was defeated by the House of Lords.

1945

World War II ends. Following the war, moral attitudes to homosexuality changed.

1946

Michael Dillon has one of the first sex reassignment surgeries from female to male.

1951

Roberta Cowell, a former World War II Spitfire pilot, becomes the first transgender woman to undergo male-to-female confirmation surgery.

1954

Alan Turing, an English mathematician, logician, cryptanalyst and computer scientist, influential in the development of computer science, committed suicide.

He had been given a course of female hormones (chemical castration) by doctors as an alternative to prison after being prosecuted by the police because of his homosexuality.



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
File:Alan-Turing-Rephotography.jpg



1967

1957

The Wolfenden Committee is formed. When it concludes in 1957 it recommends a partial decriminalisation for male homosexuality. When these recommendations are not followed by the government the Homosexual Law Reform Society is formed to campaign for the recommendations to be enacted.

1967

Ten years after the Wolfenden Report, Cardiffian MP Leo Abse introduced the Sexual Offences Bill 1967 supported by Labour MP Roy Jenkins, then the Labour Home Secretary.

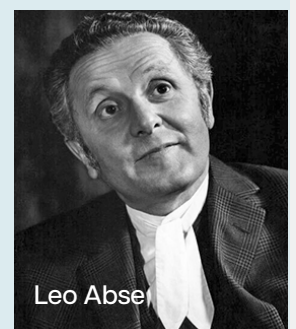


Photo credit:
© National Portrait Gallery, London

1967

When Leo Abse pushed forward the recommendations of the Wolfenden Report of 1957 recommending a partial decriminalisation of homosexuality, in 1967, MPs reacted in a variety of ways. Eirene Lloyd White, Baroness White (1909–1999) born in Belfast, the daughter of Welshman Dr Thomas Jones. She was a British Labour politician and journalist who was elected Labour MP for East Flint in 1950, one of the first female MPs in Wales. She believed it was a ‘difficult, embarrassing, and distasteful’ subject and described homosexual activity as ‘something extremely repugnant’.

Bizarrely she went on to support the motion. She thought, ‘that in considering the subject of make homosexuality a number of men consciously or subconsciously are moved to vehement condemnation

by some feeling that they have to assert their own virility in the process.’

In 1970, Eirene retired from the House of Commons and was created a life peer on 12 October 1970 taking the title Baroness White, of Rhydney, Caerphilly. In 2022, a purple plaque was unveiled at Flint Town Hall in her honour, recognizing the fact that she was one of the first three women to represent Wales in the UK Parliament, and indeed Wales's only female MP for ten years.

Sources: Wikipedia; *Tory Pride and Prejudice: The Conservative Party and homosexual law reform*, Michael McManus (Biteback Publishing, 2011); *Sexual Politics: Sexuality, Family Planning, and the British Left from the 1880s to the Present Day*, Stephen Brooke (Oxford University Press, 2011).



1980

1970

Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was established.



1974

Labour MP Maureen Colquhoun comes out as the first lesbian MP.

1980

A ban on homosexuals in certain council jobs was passed by Clwyd Council in their offices in Mold. The committee turned down a request from the Nalگو union, to insert a clause stating there would be no discrimination because of a worker’s sexual orientation.

The ban mainly applied to officers handing children in the social services and teaching posts. In December, there was a demonstration by Gay Rights Activist at Mold market but ‘only four members of Gay Rights at Work turned up to wave large pink placards and hand out leaflets condemning “Clwyd Council’s latest employment policy: Queerbashing!” They were met with polite disinterest by most market-goers, though one woman suggested, “you all ought to be shot.” The demonstrators protested that Clwyd discriminated against homosexuals in social work ... neither Nalگو nor the local branch of the homosexuals organisation CHE supported the demonstration. They felt it would do more harm than good.’

Source: *Evening Leader*, 23 June 1980; *Evening Leader*, 15 December 1980

1982

Welshman Terry Higgins dies of AIDS in St Thomas' Hospital London. His partner Rupert Whitaker and friend Martyn Butler set up the Terry Higgins Trust (which became the Terrence Higgins Trust), the first UK AIDS charity.

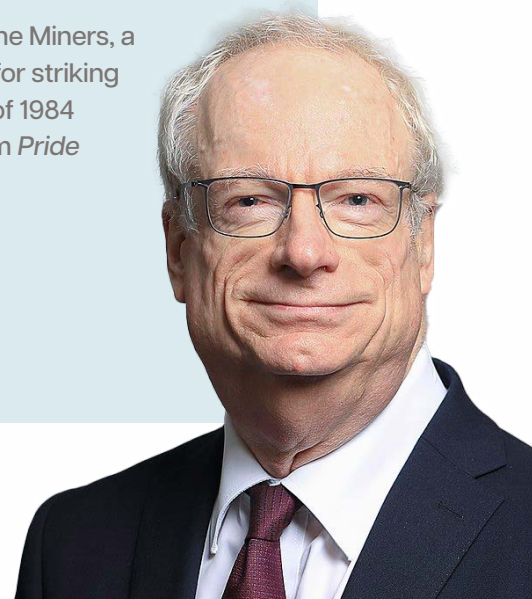
1984

MP Chris Smith is elected making him the first openly out homosexual politician in the UK parliament.

Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners, a campaign of LGBT+ support for striking workers in the miners' strike of 1984 and 1985, is launched. The film *Pride* covers their story.



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
© Roger Harris



1988

1987

Former leader of the Delyn Council Labour group attacked the party's "repulsive" support for homosexuals.

Darrell Evans, ditched by the party, claimed in his election leaflet "Official Labour candidates had had to sign a commitment to get rid of the Mayor and support the provision of centres for homosexuals. I would not commit myself to this and therefore was de-selected. As far as gays and lesbians are concerned my personal ethics makes me find this perversion repulsive." Trish Williams, the Delyn Labour Party press officer, said 'the idea of setting up centre for the homosexual community in Delyn was ridiculous ... but all socialists were honour bound to support the rights of all minority groups, including those of homosexuals.'

Source: *Evening Leader*, 24 April 1987

1988

A 39-year-old gay man was leaving the Jokers nightclub in Queensferry when he was attacked by two teenagers. One told the police the man had put his arm around in the club, that he was 'queer – he deserves all he gets.'

The judge, Huw Daniel said, 'I accept the homosexual advance was made, and I take it into account. But there was a substantial cooling off period between then and when you attacked him. I do not put provocation out of my mind. But the attack was vicious and sustained.'

Source: *Gay Times*, January 1988

1988

Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988 enacted as an amendment to the United Kingdom's Local Government Act 1986, on 24 May 1988 stated that a local authority “shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish material with the intention of promoting homosexuality” or “promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship”.

There was not a single prosecution under Section 28 because nobody knew what ‘promote’ meant or what a ‘pretended family relationship’ was supposed to be.

1997

In Rhyl in 1997, the same year as Welsh devolution, the West Rhyl Young People’s Project set up to support teenage gays and lesbians by setting up an LGBT support group called Deuce (later renamed VIVA) which is still in existence today and continues to be centred in Rhyl. They now have meetings in Llandudno Junction, Rhyl, Wrexham and Mold and a joint group at the Deeside Leisure Centre. They also run a housing scheme with Clwyd Allyn Housing for homeless LGBTIQ+ youth up to 28. (See 2021 “Ty Pride”)

Viva LGBT Specialist services and direct support for LGBTQ+ young people (14-25 years old) and those questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity and their families/carers, based in Rhyl and covering all of North Wales.



1998

1998

Age of Consent

Labour MP Ann Keen from Buckley, Clwyd introduces an age of consent amendment to the Crime and Disorder Bill which is passed in the House of Commons with a majority of 207. However, the following month, the Lords threw it out, voting against by 290 to 122. The government reintroduced the measure in January 1999, this time winning a majority of 183 in the Commons. But, despite an impassioned appeal by Home Office minister Lord Williams, who urged peers to put equality above the criminal law, the Lords – spurred on by Baroness Young concerned about ‘family values’ - again rejected it ... Liberal Democrat Earl Russell warned

Baroness Young that the government would invoke the rarely used Parliament Act, allowing them to pass the Bill into law without the Lords’ consent. “I do not believe there are going to be any fewer homosexual acts if you are successful,” he told her ... On 30 November 2000, after sailing through the Commons one more time and, predictably being blocked by the Lords, the government carried out its threat. A few hours later, the Bill received Royal Assent.

Source: Hugh Kaye, 'Equal Age of Consent: A Comprehensive History of The Battle for Gay Parity' in *Attitude*, December 2020

21st CENTURY >

2000

The UK Labour government stops banning homosexuals from the armed forces after the European Court of Human Rights rules it unlawful.

The government also introduces legislation to repeal Section 28 in England and Wales – Conservative MPs oppose the move. The bill is defeated by bishops and Conservatives in the House of Lords.

Scotland abolished Clause 2a (Section 28) of the Local Government Act in October though it remains in place in England and Wales.



European Court of Human Rights

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
CherryX - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0



2004

2003

Section 28, which banned councils and schools from intentionally promoting homosexuality, is repealed in England and Wales and Northern Ireland. Employment Equality Regulations made it illegal to discriminate against lesbians, gays or bisexuals at work.

2004

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 is passed by the Labour Government, giving same-sex couples the same rights and responsibilities as married heterosexual couples in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The Gender Recognition Act 2004 is passed by the Labour Government. The Act gives transsexual people legal recognition as members of the sex appropriate to their gender (male or female) allowing them to acquire a new birth certificate, affording them full recognition of their acquired sex in law for all purposes, including marriage.

2008

Angela Eagle becomes the first female MP to enter into a civil partnership (with partner Maria Exall).



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
Open Government Licence v3.0

2009

Welsh rugby star Gareth Thomas becomes the first known top-level professional male athlete in a team sport to come out while still active in professional sport.



Photo credit: ukhomeoffice
Wikimedia Commons



2010

2009

North Wales Police revealed 'unacceptable' figures showing 186 people in Flintshire had been victims of hate crimes in the last three years – but 67% of cases were unsolved by police. There were 23 homophobic incidents since 2007 and one transphobic offence – an attack on a transgender or transsexual person.

Source: Eleanor Barlow, 'North Wales Police reveals Flintshire hate crime figures', *Flintshire Chronicle*, 31 December 2009

2010

Andrew Rudd was jailed for more than two years after torching the pub, The Lifeboat in Sandycroft. His partner, Nathan Griffiths, 34, Rudd, nicknamed Drew, met when both worked in The Dee Inn, Flint, in 2006. They ran The New Inn, Sandycroft, together for a year, before moving to The Lifeboat. Nathan, of Coed Onn Road, Flint, did not know why Drew started the fire, and he had struggled with depression ever since, but he intended to start a gay and lesbian support group to help people overcome personal traumas. The former Flint High School pupil applied for funding and hoped 'Rainbow – Making Life Brighter' will get under way.

Source: Dave Goodban, 'Flint man speaks out after ex-partner is jailed for Deeside pub arson' *Flintshire Chronicle*, 28 January 2010

2010

The Equality Act 2010 makes discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the provision of goods and services illegal.

2013

Police urged members of the gay community in Chester and North Wales to have their say on issues which affect them. Following the success of three LGBT Community Action Meetings held in the previous year, Sergeant Mandy Shaw, Chester's LGBT liaison officer, set up another meeting at the Liverpool Arms, Northgate Street, Chester. The move was welcomed by Encompass, the Flintshire-based information and support network for LGBT people. Co-ordinator Salli Edwards said: "Unfortunately gay people do still experience aggression, hate crimes and discrimination. These meetings are an opportunity to inform the police of experiences locally and an opportunity to discuss practical ways they can help."

Source: *North Wales Live*, 19 April 2013

2013

Encompass is a self-organised social / information group. A warm, friendly group of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people and friends who meet together to provide an opportunity to meet other gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and Trans people in an informal and safe setting. They have an X (Twitter) account at @EncompassLGBT

2013

Rainbow Biz – a social enterprise to encourage inclusion and celebrate differences in Flintshire. They organise the annual North East Wales Diversity Festival, Flintshire Pride, and regular events and meet ups.

Source: Rainbow Biz website



2010

2014

Flintshire County Council flew the rainbow flag outside County Hall for LGBTQ+ History Month.

The previous year the Council was awarded Most Improved Welsh Employer by Stonewall, the lesbian, gay and bisexual charity. The charity's index is an annual benchmarking exercise that ranks the best employers for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Britain. Councillor Billy Mullin, Cabinet Member for Corporate Management said: "The rainbow flag is an important statement for Flintshire County Council. Flying the flag throughout LGBT history month sends a clear signal that Flintshire County Council is committed to equality not just for LGBT people but for everybody both in the Council and our wider community."

Source: Sir y Fflint/Flintshire County Council website, *Latest News*, 17 February 2014 (the original post has been removed).

2014

Same-sex marriage becomes legal in England and Wales on 29 March under the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.



2016

Hannah Blythyn, Jeremy Miles, and Adam Price became the first openly gay members of the Welsh Assembly.



2016

Hannah Blythyn was elected as Assembly Member for Delyn for the first time at the 2016 election. Prior to being elected, Hannah led on political and policy work for Unite Wales, active in several successful campaigns that led to legislative action and positive change both in Wales and across the UK. She is also a former co-chair of LGBT Labour and was active in the campaign for equal marriage. On 13 December 2018 Hannah was appointed Deputy Minister for Housing and Local Government, and Deputy Minister for Social Partnership on 13 May 2021. In 2019, Hannah and her wife Laura were married.

Sources: Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government website; Ruth Mosalski, 'Wales' first openly gay female AM Hannah Blythyn on coming out, marrying a woman and fighting for equality' in *WalesOnline*, 28 February 2019

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
Open Government Licence v3.0



2017

2017

Queering the Map is a Canadian initiative to create a community-based online collaborative and counter-mapping platform on which users submit their personal queer experiences to specific locations on a single collective map. Since its inception, users have contributed more than 500,000 posts in 23 languages to the platform. Several people have left pins in Flintshire.



Had a lot of gay times here with my boyfriend

Learned who I am here, not knowing I'd one day be able to be who I am all the time

First came out to all my friends, went really well

2019

As part of the Changing Face of Wales season, 1,000 people in Wales were asked how comfortable they felt about adults in same-sex relationships. The results showed 83% said they were either quite or very comfortable. But 15% said they were not at all or not very comfortable, while 2% were not sure how they felt. Sarah Way, 45, from Shotton, Flintshire, was bullied in school. "People would mock you, using derogatory words because you liked another girl. Even in the 1980s being in the LGBT community

was extremely difficult for a lot of people - especially in the Aids crisis, I think that legacy has carried on into the 90s, but I think now there are many more people coming out. It's made it more accepting and there are so many more pride events going on in every city now."

Source: BBC Wales/ICMUnlimited, 'How comfortable do you feel about an adult being in a same sex relationship?', February 2019



2021

2020

Flintshire's Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024 quoted

Stonewall Cymru, reported that more than half of LGBT young people in Wales (54%) and almost three quarters of trans young people (73%) face bullying at school for being LGBT (Stonewall Cymru, School Report 2017).

The council noted they had already achieved:

- Developed and implemented a Trans policy for secondary schools
- Provided training to increase awareness and understanding to support LGBT young people
- Established a youth group for the LGBT young people with Viva, young people's project

That by 2024 they would:

- Participate in LGBT History month

A questionnaire for the Strategic Equality Plan 2024-28 is currently available.

Source: Flintshire County Council Strategic Equality Plan 2020 – 2024 available on the council website.

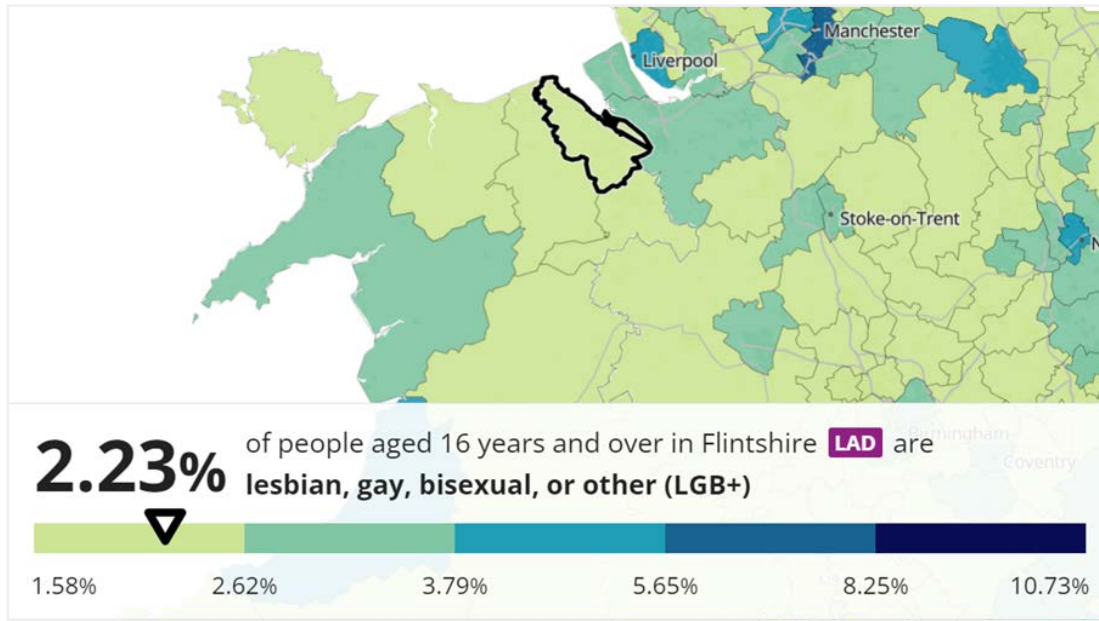
2021

Owen J Hurcum became the world's first non-binary mayor and Wales' youngest ever elected mayor of Bangor City Council in Gwynedd, Wales.



2021

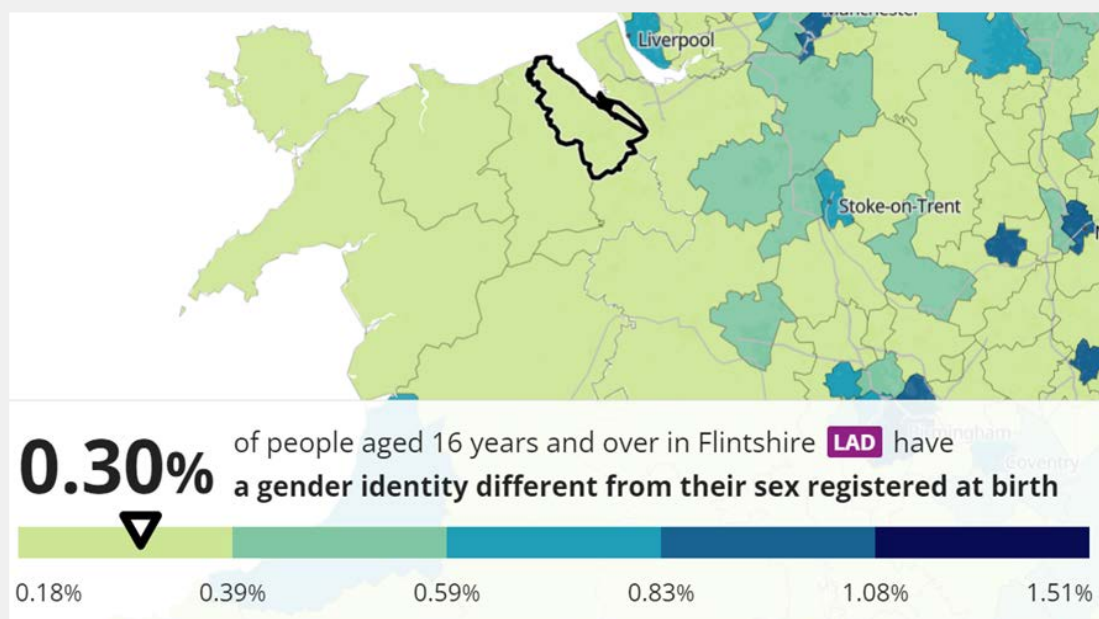
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2021

HGC De Sir Fflint / NWP South Flintshire officers appear on ITV Wales news at 6pm, talking about the importance of diversity, equality, and inclusivity within the force in line with Pride Cymru week. A video of the piece can be seen on <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=203479621827860>

A Romanian national shared her story of finding an accepting home and career in North Wales. PCSO Adelina Olaru first moved to the UK in 2010 after revealing to her family she was gay and not feeling as though she “fit in”. Since then, she has graduated with a degree in forensic science and criminal investigation from the University of Central Lancashire, became a prison officer and worked detaining illegal immigrants at Holyhead port. She began her role as a PCSO for

North Wales Police in November 2020. “I have always wanted to work for the police, even since I was a child,” she said. “I wanted to become an officer in Romania, but it’s very difficult to get in there, so I never really saw it as an option for me. Then, when my family found out that I was gay, I quickly discovered that I didn’t fit in in Romania anymore. I didn’t feel wanted there; I was 23 at the time. There was a big cultural difference there - my sexuality wasn’t accepted, and gay marriage is not legal. So, in 2010, I decided to move away.”

Source: Andrew Nuttall, ‘Police officer shares her experience of ‘breaking down cultural barriers’ during career in Flintshire,’ *The Leader*, 25 August 2021



2023

2022

Flintshire County Council once again showed support for LGBT+ history month by raising a rainbow flag. Councillor Ian Roberts, said: “The raising of the rainbow flag is important for the Council. Flying the flag throughout LGBT+ history month sends a clear signal that we are committed to equality for everyone, both within the Council and our wider community.”

Source: Arron Evans, ‘Flintshire council supports LGBT+ History Month,’ *The Leader*, 17 February 2022

2023

A Flintshire police officer spoke of his delight after receiving an award for his work in supporting the LGBT+ community. The annual general meeting of the Wales LGBT+ Police Network was held in Bangor which brought together all four branches of the Welsh Police LGBT+ staff support network, who discussed the progress of the network, and planned priorities for the year ahead. The event also included the presentation of the Wales LGBT+ Police Network Excellence Award which went to PCSO Connor Freel from North Wales Police who works in the Flintshire South area. As a transgender officer, PCSO Freel spends much of his spare time working with the community to stand up for those that are prejudiced and discriminated against.

Source: Steve Craddock, ‘Award for Flintshire PCSO for support of LGBT community,’ *The Leader*, 4 July 2023





Thank you

These have been just a few highlights from Fflint / Flintshire's sexual orientation and gender identity history.

If you think we've missed anything that should be included, please do let us know by using the web link below.

We will update the timeline on a regular basis.

www.lgbtqcymru.swansea.ac.uk



Draig Enfys

 search **Draig Enfys**