



The Wales LGBTQ+ Timeline Collection

Powys 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 >

1751

Thomas Turner, a merchant originally living in Presteigne but who had moved to London, was in court on a charge of attempted sodomy. Apparently, he had tried to persuade Thomas Powell, Kington, a baker to leave his wife and children and live with him in London where Powell could make his fortune. He was found not guilty.

Source: *Crime and Punishment Database*, National Library Wales.

1781

John Lloyd (1748–1818) was a sailor from Llanwrtyd, Powys (old Brecknockshire). He sailed onboard the *Fortitude* which was captured in 1781 by the French at the Battle of Porto Praya (now Praia) in the Portuguese Cape Verde Islands. During captivity he probably witnessed some of the regimental boys dressed as ramzanis, dancing boys dressed as girls to entertain the Indian court.

Jones, Ken 'John Lloyd: an adventurous Welshman, *Brycheiniog* Vol. 34 (2002), p. 67-118.



19th CENTURY >

1858

The Ceffyl Pren (Wooden Horse) was a form of rough justice where locals would mete out mob punishment to those whom they thought deserved it.

In other parts of the UK and Europe it went by a variety of name such as 'riding the strange' or 'rough

music' (from the banging of pots and pans). A usual feature of these events was one or more of the men would dress as women.

One incident in Brecon in 1858 saw two boys, one dressed as a woman with a broom, carried around on men's shoulders. This case did not include violence but often they did.

A similar tradition of cross-dressing occurred more famously in the Rebecca Riots, between 1839 and 1843 in West and Mid Wales, a series of protests undertaken by local farmers and agricultural workers in response to high levels of taxation.

Source: *Tales and Traditions of Breconshire*, edited by Stanley Jackson Coleman (1956)

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
File: RebeccaRiots.gif



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.

1874

Welsh painter, Rose Dempster Bonnor is born at Bryn-y-gwalia Hall, Llangedwyn. While she lived in London her mother came to stay due to poor health and Rose cared for her until her death. Rose was in a long-term relationship “with a lady called Wilhemina and as a result was cut out of her mother’s will.

Following her mother’s death Rose’s two remaining brothers Charles and Maurice signed a ‘family agreement’ in order, as Charles wrote on 21 February 1926, from New Jersey USA ‘to give you what Mam fully intended you to have’. Your Willie’ he wrote ‘is perfectly OK with me Rose. I admire both of you for the courage to live your lives as you feel they should be lived regardless of any conventions ... but rest assured I did not listen to Mother’s ideas and stuck up for you and considered Willie your affair and not mother’s.’

Source: Annabel Bloxham, ‘Reclaiming Women’s Histories: Rose Dempster Bonnor, Portrait Painter, 29 November 1874 –27 June 1967’ in *Women’s History Magazine* [journal of the Women’s History Network], Issue 56, Summer 2007, p.31-37



1885

1878

The Grand Jury at the Montgomeryshire Quarter Sessions threw out a bill charging Williams Gittins with having at Llanfyllin, on the 19th January, unlawfully assaulted William Jones with the intent then with him to commit an abominable crime.

Source: *Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard*, 15 March 1878

The Rev. George Herbert (1825–1894), son of Edward Herbert, 2nd Earl of Powis is arrested in London Hyde Park for a misdemeanour with a 19-year-old labourer Charles Telfer. He is released on a £300 bail (over £40,000 today) but it was hushed up and the charge dismissed.

Source: Peter Jordaán, *A Secret Between Gentlemen: Faith & Desire*, Alchemie Books, 2022

1885

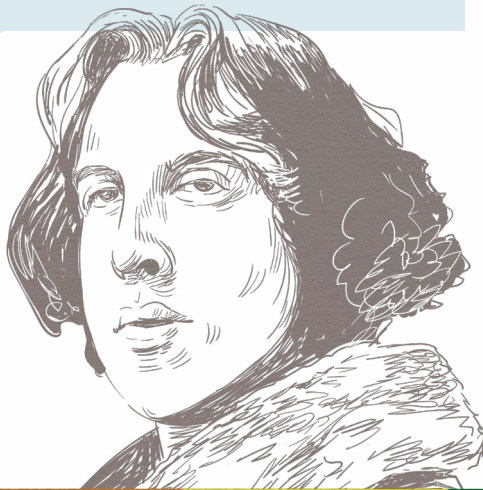
The British Parliament enacted Criminal Law Amendment Act 1885, section 11 of which, known as the Labouchere Amendment, prohibited gross indecency between males.

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

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



1893

Breconshire boasts possession of a very fine sample of the bearded woman.

Source: *Evening Express*, 19 May 1893



1899

1899

Olwen Bowen-Davies (1899–1986) was born in Llandrindod Wells the sixth child of Dr William Bowen-Davies the first resident doctor in the town and the first to notice the benefits of the mineral spa water.

Their home was Brynarlais, now the local Tourist Information Office. Olwen was a writer, mainly of children's books, and in later life became the companion of the novelist Winifred Ashton who, writing under the pseudonym of Clemence Dane, caused controversy with her novel *Regiment of Women* (1917) which included lesbianism at a school.

When Winifred died in 1965, she left her entire estate, valued at around £3 million, to Olwen on the condition she allow Winifred's previous partner, Elsie Arnold, to live out her days in one of Winifred's houses. Olwen died in 1986.



Winifred Ashton

20th CENTURY >

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.



1959

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

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.

1959

Rev Thomas Rhys Williams, 58-year-old bachelor pastor of Painscastle Baptist Church, more commonly called Adullam Baptist Chapel, went on trial at Radnorshire Quarter Sessions at Presteigne charged with improperly assaulting William Greenhalgh Quine, aged 20 of Broad Street, Crewe.

Williams was a guest preacher at a church near Crewe when he first met Quine and invited the young man to stay with him at the manse in Painscastle. When Quine arrived, they went to a social event returning about 2am and went to bed about 3am. They shared a bedroom and it was alleged that Williams then attempted to assault Quine. Quine then jumped from the bed and called 999 on the bedroom telephone. While he was telephoning Williams continually interrupted pleading with him not to take such an action saying his whole life and reputation depended on the police not being called. Williams went onto his knees and begged for mercy. Quine said, "I could not stand him near me and picked up a water jug saying

"Keep away or I'll hit you with this". Quine then went downstairs followed by Williams. He locked himself in a room to wait for the police but then escaped through a window into the ice and snow of a cold January night. He was on his way to a neighbouring farm when he met PC Geoffrey Payne. Payne said that Williams later told him, "I don't know what is the matter with the boy. I have done nothing whatsoever. My conscience is perfectly clear. He wants to be a Baptist minister and I was going to help him."

Source: *News of the World*, 8 March 1959

At this time it is not known what happened in the case but Quine went on to win a scholarship for an undergraduate degree at Manchester University getting a first in History and winning a second scholarship to do an MA. He was a research worker in the Department of Social Sciences at Liverpool University before becoming a lecturer at the University of Southampton in 1965 and was very popular.



1980s

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.



Leo Abse

Photo credit: © National Portrait Gallery, London

1970

Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was established.



1974

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

1980s

April Ashley (29 April 1935 – 27 December 2021) a model and trans pioneer lived in Hay-on-Wye, Powys for years, where she was known as the 'First Lady'.

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.

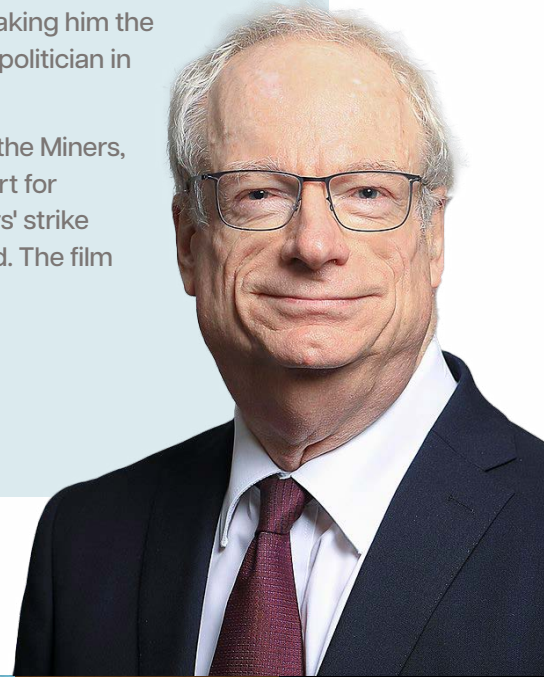
1984

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

1988

Andrew Logan and his partner Michael Davis purchased redundant squash courts in Berriew, Powys, and created the Andrew Logan Museum of Sculpture, the first museum in Europe dedicated to a living artist. Logan, who was born at Witney, Oxfordshire, founded the *Alternative Miss World* in 1972 described as a 'pansexual beauty pageant' where the 'bizarre is beautiful', and it has attracted figures from the world of art, fashion and entertainment, including David Hockney, Derek Jarman, Zandra Rhodes, Vivienne Westwood, Brian Eno, and Grayson Perry.

1988

Leonard Taylor of High Street, Brecon wrote a letter to the *South Wales Echo*, touching on the controversy of gay priests: I can state that there are responsible gay priests known to me (whose identification I would never divulge due to hysterical

homophobia) who are extremely caring to their flock. They visit the sick, comfort the depressed and are as equally effective parish priests as their heterosexual counterparts. We can choose to be celibate; we can choose to be promiscuous; but we cannot choose our particular sexual orientation. That a man is gay is an issue between himself and God; that a man is gay and enjoys a position of trust and reverence and unashamedly abuses that position of trust is an issue that concerns us all. I do not profess to be a Christian fundamentalist and would not describe myself as a Christian modernist. Therefore, I temper the Holy Bible with common sense and reality because, at the end of the day, the scriptures were written by human beings who are fallible. We are not living in a perfect work where all creatures are identical and, thank God we are not. we should learn to accept each other as we are.

Source: *South Wales Echo*, 4 July 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.

1994

In February 1994, MPs met to discuss the lowering of the age of consent for homosexual men from 21 to 16 in line with that for heterosexuals.

It was the first time in over a quarter of a century that the age of consent for homosexuals had been discussed by the House of Commons. Amid cheering in a crowded House of Commons, MPs first rejected a move to lower it to 16 and so discussions turned to whether it should be 18.

In the end, voting was 427 to 162, an overwhelmingly majority of 265 for 18. Most Welsh MPs voted in favour. Tory MP Jonathan Evans (Brecon & Radnor) did not.

Source: *Gay Times*, April 1994



1994

1994

Border women lesbian organisation in border areas, advertises in *Gay Times* during 1994. It was a group that met for discussions, meetings and discos based in Built Wells.

Source: *Gay Times*, April 1994

Mid-1990s-2013

Singer Labi Siffre (born 1945 in London) lived in Crickhowell with his partner Peter John Carver Lloyd whom he met in July 1964 – they remained together for 48 years and entered a civil partnership in 2005 as soon as it was legally possible.

The two men lived in Crickhowell with Rudolf van Baardwijk until Lloyd's death in 2013. “I went looking for love,” Labi says. “But it was only when I met Ruud and we became three that I stopped looking entirely. For nearly 16 years the three of us lived together in a menage à trois. And I realised I'd made the family that I'd been trying to make for the whole of my life.” Baardwijk died in 2015 and Labi now lives in Spain.

Source: *Wikipedia*; *The Guardian*, 31 January 2022



1995-1999

Gay Times included a number of organisations in their local listings for Powys including: *Llandrindod Welsh Aidsline* was open for calls on Wednesdays and Saturdays; *Dyfed Diners* for G&L people meeting monthly dining group in Cardigan; *GOC Mid-Wales* run by Julian and Rycharde; *Powys Gay Men's Project* for advice and support; *Lampeter Uni LGB Soc*; *Way Out Powys Newtown & District LB Social Group* run by Rob met every Saturday; *West Wales Lesbian & Gay Group*, a Stonewall & Equality Alliance Group run by Mike Foxwell, met for campaigning and socialising. A number of holiday locations were also listed.

Source: *Gay Times*, 1995-99



2004

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.

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.

2004

A paper by Matthew L. Williams and Amanda L. Robinson appears in the journal *Policing and Society*, entitled *Problems and Prospects with Policing the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community in Wales*.

'While Wales has a devolved government, its remit does not include the powers to alter criminal law. As a result, police forces in Wales can only attempt to improve relations with the LGB community via changes in police policy. There are four police forces in Wales: South Wales Police, Gwent Police, Dyfed-Powys Police and North Wales Police ...

'None of the forces has a specific LGB liaison officer. Instead each has direct remit for LGB policing issues to community safety officers. However, South Wales Police has introduced a Minority Support Unit that specifically monitors all hate-related offences and

offers support to victims. Gwent, North and South Wales Police all run consultations with local LGB communities. Both Gwent and South Wales Police run their meetings ever two months, while North Wales Police meetings are quarterly. Only South Wales Police run their meetings as an open forum. The South Wales Police are most proactive in the area of LGB community consultation.'

Source: Matthew L. Williams & Amanda L. Robinson (2004) *Policing and Society*, entitled *Problems and Prospects with Policing the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Community in Wales*, *Policing and Society*, 14-3, 213-232



2008

2005

Members of the Goytre Boat Owners Association dressed in 19th century women's clothes "attacked" the end of the Monmouthshire and Brecon canal protesting at the lack of restoration to a section of the Monmouth & Brecon Canal.

The boatmen said they were trying to resurrect the spirit of the Daughters of Rebecca, a 19th rebel group who protested against road tolls. They think council plans to restore Cwmbran town have overlooked the possibilities of its canal.

Torfaen council said it recognised the importance of the canal. They used the same costume as 19th century anti-road toll protestors, known as the Daughters of Rebecca, whose "Rebecca Riots" helped open up the roads.

Source: BBC Wales, 1 May 2005

2008

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

2008

A gay man who suffered "grotesquely discriminatory conduct" from the Presbyterian Church in Wales has been awarded £37,000. Stephen Price, 25, of Clydach near Abergavenny, was bullied out of his job at Coleg Trefeca in Brecon by his manager, Mair Jones. A Cardiff tribunal heard his manager called him a "stupid poof" every day and gave him pink toilet paper with fairies on it as a birthday gift. Steve was awarded the highest payout ever for injury to feelings under sexual orientation regulations.

Source: Barry & District News, 16 July 2008

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.

2010

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

2009

Cops' canny tranny is hate crime nanny

COPS have recruited a TRANSSEXUAL to help them fight hate crimes - in an area where nobody has committed one. Brunette Michelle Douglas - formerly a father of two - trains officers to deal with "transgender-phobic violence". But police chiefs in the rural Dyfed Powys area of Wales admit they have never received any reports of such crimes.

Michelle, 49 - who wears high heels, lipstick and false boobs - has taken several workshops teaching cops how to deal with victims of sexual persecution. She gets expenses but has been promised she will be paid in future.

Twice-married Michelle, who still lives with her second wife and children, said: "I get a real buzz from doing the course. I'm in my comfort zone."

The priest's daughter began dressing as a female 18 months ago. But she hasn't decided yet if she wants surgery to make her a woman.

A spokeswoman for the Dyfed Powys force said: "She does a brilliant job. While there is no recorded hate crime in the area, that isn't to say it doesn't exist."

Source: *The Sun*, 4 May 2009



2009

2009

An equality conference groups meeting, run by Dyfed Powys Police, was held in the conference room at Keys Property Management, in Margaret Street.

These groups are organised by the police and seek representatives from communities include young people (aged 16 to 25-years-old), elderly people, people with disabilities, people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender and minority ethnic communities.

PC Kevin Jones said: "The purpose of these forums is to ensure access by under-represented groups within the community to the police and to provide a forum to discuss and resolve the needs and concerns of the community."

Recorded Hate Crime – Sexual Orientation by police force area in Wales

	2009	2010
Dyfed Powys	12	17
Gwent	50	35
North Wales – Gogledd Cymru	60	47
South Wales – De Cymru	101	163
TOTAL – Cymru-Wales	223	262
	Change	+17%

Source: Association of Chief Police Officers

2011

The rainbow flag was flown from Dyfed-Powys Police's Carmarthen headquarters to recognise the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO).

Rhian Glynn Hate Crime Community Engagement Officer said: "It is a day to demonstrate support of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) staff and community members, as well as the wider commitment to equalities and diversity within our organisation and the communities that we serve."

A number of front-line officers from Neighbourhood Policing Teams, the 52 trained Hate Crime Support Officers and members of the LGB staff network will be wearing the international 'Zero Tolerance Stop Homophobia' Orange IDAHO Awareness Ribbons, which have been an annual symbol of IDAHO since its inception.

Superintendent Claire Parmenter who is the Force Champion for LGB issues stated that "the ribbon is something that people can wear to show their support of the day and of a zero tolerance approach to homophobia.

The rainbow flag will also be flown from Dyfed-Powys Police's other central locations around the force area. The flag is the internationally recognised symbol for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.

"This shows the ongoing Dyfed Powys Police commitment to ensuring people, whatever their



individuality, can feel safe in their community," said Superintendent Parmenter.

"The flag is a general symbol of our support for all diverse communities, including age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief, and language, as well as sexual orientation and gender identity."

The force has also joined the LGBT Excellence Centre's "I'm Going to..." campaign and produced posters guiding people to take a pledge and commit themselves to take action for the achievement of better LGBT human rights. Pledges can be registered on the charity's website at www.lgbtec.org.uk.

Dyfed Powys Police take all reports of hate crime seriously and would encourage anyone who is a victim to contact the Force on 101 (999 in an emergency) or report it via a third party system such as www.saferwales.com.

Source: *Western Telegraph*, 17 May 2011



2016

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.

2019

In early 2006, Mike Parker and his partner Peredur were witnesses at the first civil partnership ceremony in their local town, Machynlleth. The celebrants were their friends Reg and George, who had met in war-torn London and moved to deepest rural Montgomeryshire in 1972, only a handful of years after the decriminalisation of homosexuality. Parker tells their story in his book *On the Red Hill*. Mike donated Reg and George's archive to Amgueddfa Cymru.



2020

Donna-Marie Thomas, Powys Teaching Health Board, and Margret Harris, Powys Teaching Health Board, are winners in the NHS Wales poetry competition for LGBTQ+ History Month arranged by Equality and Diversity Officer Ceri Harris.



2021

2020



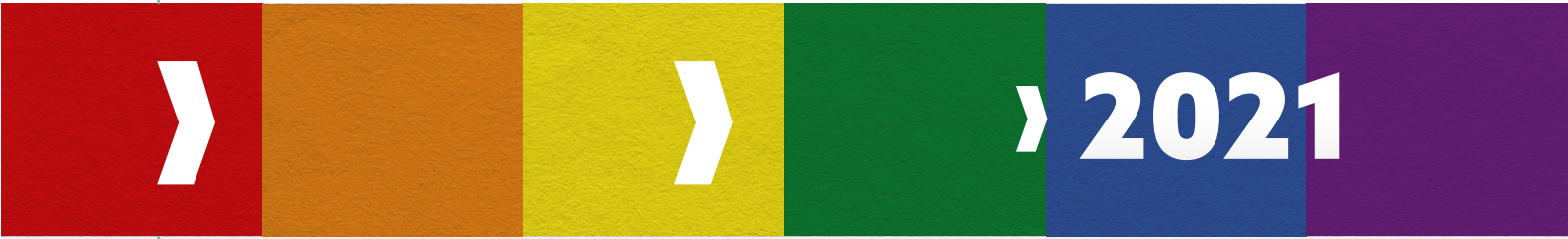
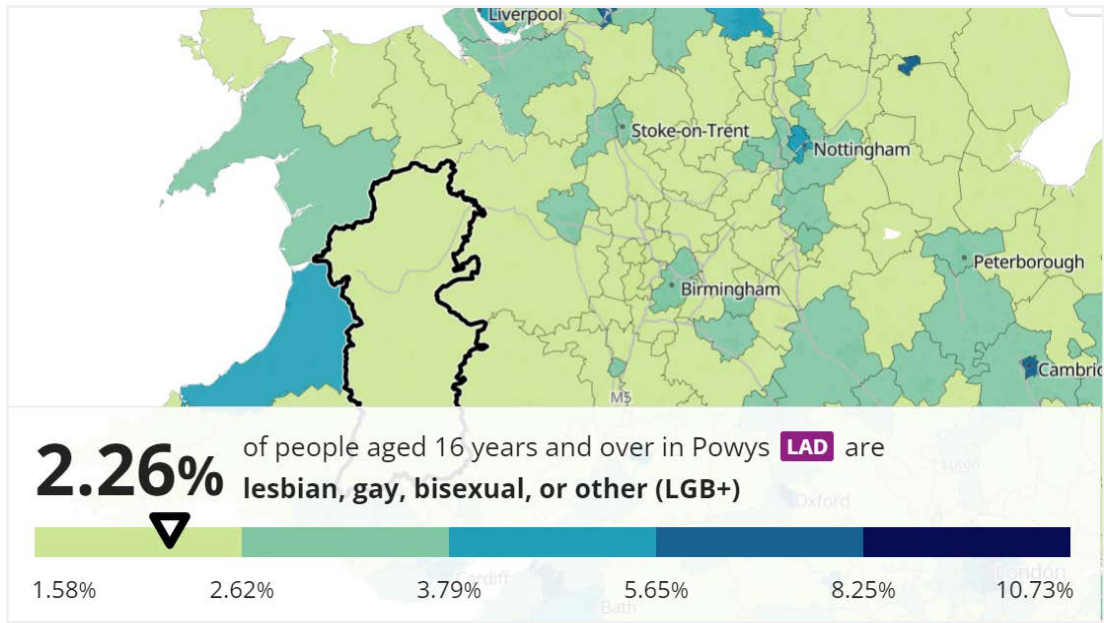
2021

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



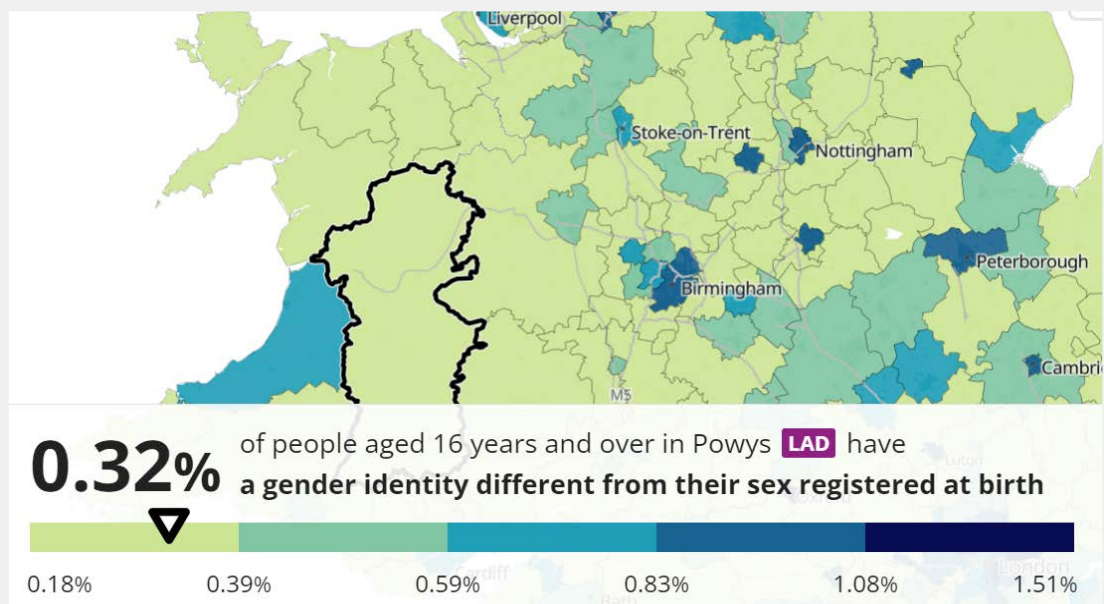
2021

The 2021 UK Census was the first in world history to include questions on sexual orientation and gender identity. Some care should be taken over the figures as not all people answered the question.



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2021

Heart of Wales is founded



2022

'I grew up in Powys, the largest and most rural county in Wales by a considerable margin. It was the heady days of 2005, all the kids were using Bebo, the Motorola Razzr was the hottest game in town, and Australian soap opera Neighbours had just begun airing its first ever lesbian story arc. Inspired by this radical new world, I decided it was the perfect time to tell my entire school year that I was bisexual.'

Source: Ivy Taylor, 'Finding A Queer Community In Rural Wales Has Been A Revelation,' voice.wales, 28 February 2022



2022

2022



2022



2023

Heart of Wales LGBT+ organised Llandovery Pride which took place on Saturday, July 29, where there was a parade through the town. Ella Peel, founder of Heart of Wales LGBTQ+ and committee member for Llandovery Pride, said: “Your post code shouldn’t dictate your opportunity to live freely.” Ella also pointed out that celebration can help erode barriers and that the committee did not want cost to become another hurdle for the LGBTQIA+ community to access queer culture, saying: “The overwhelming majority of our events are completely free.”

Source: *South Wales Guardian*, ‘Celebrations of the LGBT+ community at Llandovery Pride,’ 31 July 2023

2023



2023





Thank you

These have been just a few highlights from Powys' 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**