



The Wales LGBTQ+ Timeline Collection

Abertawe / Swansea 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.

19th CENTURY >



1806

'A few days since, a young woman, habited in male attire, entered as a volunteer on board the tender stationed at this port [Swansea]. Not coming under the cognizance of the Impress Officers, she did not undergo examination by a surgeon, and her sex was not discovered until the tender arrived at Plymouth, where she was united in the bands of wedlock to a young man on board who had been impressed: her affection for whom it is supposed, had induced her to enter.' Thousands of women passed as men to serve or travel on ships.

Source: *The Cambrian*, 18 October 1806

> 1849

1829

On Monday last Rachael George was apprehended at Newcastle-Emlyn fair, charged with having stolen a mare, which she was then riding. The prisoner when apprehended was dressed in male attire. She has since been committed to Cardigan gaol, to take her trial at the next assizes. This is the third offence for which the above lady will make her appearance at the bar.

Source: *The Cambrian*, 27 June 1829

1849

Amy Dillwyn is born in Sketty on 16 May to a prominent family and her house, Tŷ Glyn (now Mumbles Nursing Home), still stands at West Cross. In later life she became one of the first female industrialists in Britain but is better known as a novelist, her books often containing queer themes. Newspaper articles often commented on her appearance, 'A thin, pale face, a spare figure, a slight stoop, and a still slighter peculiarity in the sibilant when she talks ... She wears glasses; has the plainest of short serge skirts, with two pockets, one on each side, in which she can bury her hands when she talks much, as her father was wont to do; a short, rather mannish jacket; a very plain hat; sporting a simple bunch of violets at her throat; carrying a walking-stick. She walks with a thorough-paced, businesslike stride, and-yes!—some-times holds a cigar in her mouth!' Her cigars and 'mannish' clothes were often commented on. Amy considered herself married to "her wife" Olive Talbot. Professor Kirsti Bohata of Swansea University, is writing a study of Amy Dillwyn as part of a research project at CREW.



Sources: Wikipedia; *Weekly Mail*, 12 April 1902

1860

A female sailor

At Swansea police-court last week, Catherine Owen, alias Catherine Williams, alias "Punch," was charged with drunkenness and fighting in Regent-court. The appearance of the defendant in the dock created general laughter in court. She was attired as a true British tar-a man-of-war's-man. Her hair was neatly trimmed and tucked up short on both sides, and she wore a large cloth cap, with blue ribbands (sic) hanging down about a quarter of a yard over her neck. She had on a large sleeved white shirt, trimmed with blue tape, turned down over the shoulders. Her "trousers" (forgive the expression, gentle readers, as it refers to a "lady") were of large dimensions, made of white canvass, whilst her feet were enveloped with patent leather slippers. In this disguise "Miss Owen" appeared before their Worships, who could not forbear a smile, for she

appeared as brazened, weather-beaten a jack-tar as ever trod a plank. The charge against this fresh-water seaman was one of fighting in Regent-court, which being clearly proved, the Magistrates, with all the gravity at their command, enquired of the Superintendent how often the defendant had been before the Bench, and they were informed by the latter official, with due solemnity, that she made her 29th appearance this day. The Magistrates sentenced this hopeful "boy" to 21 days' imprisonment, intimating that if ever brought up again, a previous conviction would be proved, and the heaviest penalty, viz three months, inflicted. The prisoner then left the court with all the daring and braggadocio of a veteran tar of the first water.

Source: *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 2 June 1860



1884

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.

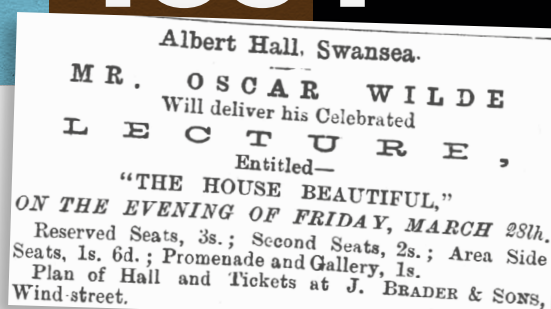
A total of 8921 men had been prosecuted since 1806 for sodomy with 404 sentenced to death and 56 executed. Homosexuality remained illegal until partially decriminalised in 1967 in England and Wales, and 1980 in Scotland.

1884

Oscar Wilde At Swansea.

'The celebrated, or rather the notorious Oscar Wilde,' delivered a lecture in the Albert Hall on "The House Beautiful." 'Oscar Wilde is young man of ambition and unbounded self-esteem. He first attracted attention by his eccentricity of garb and manner, and these have lifted him into the publicity he now rejoices in. At Swansea, however, the attire in which he appeared before his audience was common-place enough. He is not at all slender and "floppy," as many people have supposed, but a tall well-built, not to say fleshly young man of about 27 years in appearance. He wore a suit of black evening dress closely fitting, with white cuffs turned back over the sleeves, a black necktie, and a crimson silk handkerchief arranged with "careful negligence" betwixt waistcoat and capacious shirt front. The handkerchief he affected to use was not more than six or seven inches square, hardly large enough to cover the masculine nose, and the white gloves were not put on but toyed with by the ostentatiously displayed small "hand of little occupation." The attitude which he struck was a singular one, with the chest thrown forward and the head thrown back, and the utterance was clear and distinct, but very languid and effeminate.

Source: *The Cambrian*, 4 April 1884



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.

1887

Trials at Swansea

Abominable Offences. Benjamin Thomas, convicted of an unnatural offence at Merthyr, was sentenced to 10 years' penal servitude, the learned judge remarking that it was the minimum punishment allowed by law. John Nash and Henry Jones, charged with an abominable offence at Cardiff barracks, were acquitted.

Source: *South Wales Echo*, 9 November 1887



› 1895



1889

Cedric Morris is born in Sketty on 11 December and later become an artist, art teacher and plantsman working mainly in East Anglia. Around 1916 Cedric fell in love with Arthur Lett-Haines and the two men spent the rest of their lives together, although both had affairs, Cedric with the painter John Aldridge, and artist Paul Odo Cross.

Source: Wikipedia; Norena Shopland, *Forbidden Lives: LGBT stories from Wales* (Seren Books, 2017)

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons; By Frances Hodgkins

1895

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



1896

Masquerading in men's attire.

Swansea woman's freak.

At the Swansea Police-court on Friday morning, Jane Bolsh, 21, Mariner-street, a married woman with a child in her arms, was charged with being drunk and disorderly in Orchard-street on Wednesday night. P.C. Lloyd told the Bench that the defendant was dressed in male's attire, and had a bottle under her arm and a box hat on her head. She was followed by a large crowd, and made use of filthy language. It appears that this was the lady who threw herself bodily across the Vetch Field track on Wednesday evening, and thus obstructed Buckler in his walk. She had no defence to offer, and was fined 10s. or seven days.

Source: *South Wales Daily Post*,
18 September 1896

1896

William Evans was charged with on 9 February 1896 'at Merthyr Dovan, unlawfully attempting to procure the commission by a male person named Thomas Powell of an act of gross indecency with himself.' The prosecution was dropped.

Source: *Swansea Gaol Records 1877-1902*, via
Ancestry

1898

A Swansea scandal

At Swansea Police Court to-day a tobacconist and hairdresser named John Price Davies, of 6, Roseland-terrace, St. Thomas, was committed for trial on a charge of committing a disgusting offence on an assistant named John Gould Davies.

Source: *South Wales Echo*, 21 March, 1898

1899



1898

The Lady "Hamlet" – Mrs Bandmann-Palmer gave at the Grand Theatre a Hamlet that was a feminine one and that was its first and final failing. Hamlet was as weak-willed as any woman you could come across in a day's march. Hamlet was above all a man; he had nothing vitally effeminate in him. With Mrs

Bandmann-Palmer's Hamlet it is impossible to get much further than the voice, for one can only imagine Hamlet with deep, rich music in his voice – with voice of a poet in the prime of life. And without such a voice you cannot accompany the aimless, thoughtful wanderings of Hamlet, because you cannot bring yourself to believe he had the slightest touch of effeminacy.

Source: *The Cambrian*, 25 March 1898

Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons;
By Unknown author - Luna Folger, CC BY-SA 4.0

1899

The wonted quietude of Blackpill has been rudely disturbed, and the proverbial five days' talk has not brought about a semblance of its former tranquillity. The oldest inhabitant still shakes his head anxiously, and now and again he ejaculates, "I don't know what the world is coming to." The crash came about like this: One of the village beauties attired herself in male costume the other evening, and so exceedingly mannish did she appear, in company with a female friend, that the parties whose houses they visited in the rural retreat did not discover the difference until it was explained to them. And now peace on earth, or rather, at Blackpill, it is thought, cannot possibly exist there until long after Christmas.

Source: *South Wales Daily Post*,
14 December 1899

20th CENTURY >

1909

Glamorgan assizes

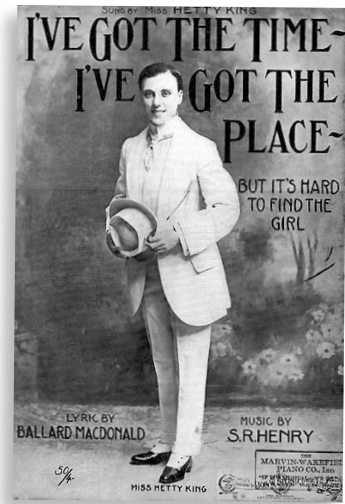
David Davies (60), baker, was sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment, the term to commence from the first day of the assizes, on a charge of "attempting to procure the commission, of a gross offence." Prisoner is a retired tradesman at the Hafod, Swansea, and a property owner. It was stated that he was in drink at the time.

Source: *Evening Express*,
27 July 1909

1910

In the late 19th-early 20th century there were many male impersonators on stage including Hetty King from England, who was a great music hall favourite and who often visited Swansea. During WW1 she would appear in military uniform often travelling to entertain the troops. By around 1930, Hetty was reputedly the highest-paid music hall star in the world, with much of her success due to her painstaking observation of the mannerisms of such men as sailors and soldiers. She learned how to march, salute, light a pipe, and swing a kitbag of the right weight, to give the correct appearance of a man, while always ensuring that "her femininity shone through, sometimes winking at the audience as if to let them in on the subterfuge."

Source: Wikipedia; *South Wales Daily Post*, 15 November 1910



> 1912

1912

Wealthy Eric Trevanion dies in Brighton and his partner, Swansea man Albert Roe is suspected in his death. At the inquest Dr William H. Willcox, the Senior Scientific Analyst to the Home Office, gives evidence to 'prove' Eric's 'perversity' and on his autopsy card is written the words 'sexual pervert.' Roe had transferred most of Eric's fortune and jewellery into his name, the nature of his death was certainly suspicious and court archives show much of the evidence detailing their relationship was suppressed - so it comes as no surprise that the jury returned an open verdict. Roe made a 'settlement' with the family to return the money and jewels and returned to get married and live in Swansea.

Sources: Norena Shopland, *Forbidden Lives: LGBT stories from Wales* (Seren Books, 2017); Norena Shopland, *The Veronal Mystery, Suppressed Evidence, Missing Witnesses - Was it Murder?* (Wordcatcher, 2020)



Eric Trevanion



Albert Roe

1913



Music hall artist Daisy Jerome brought her popular show the 'Electric Spark' to the Empire, Swansea and dared to wear a harem skirt in the streets causing a sensation. The 'skirt' was a bifurcated garment resembling baggy trousers but the idea of women wearing trousers in the early 20th century was still very controversial. Mr F Chubb, who cut the harem skirt immediately took advantage of the publicity to advertise his shop.

Source: *Cambria Daily Leader*,
10 March 1913;
Cambria Daily Leader,
9 August 1913

1913

Philip Francis, 38, Weigher, was charged with 'assaulting Herbert Uren with intent feloniously wickedly, diabolically, and against the order of nature, to commit and perpetrate that detestable and abominable crime (not to be mentioned among Christians) called buggery, on the 24th November 1913, at the Town of Swansea.'

Source: Glamorgan Archives,
Calendar of Prisoners, 1850-1920



1914

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.

1914

Thomas George Dalling was charged with 'unlawfully committing an act of gross indecency with another male person, to wit, Edward John Puxley, aged 17 years, on the 9th June 1914, at the Town of Swansea.'

Source: Glamorgan Archives, Calendar of Prisoners,
1850-1920

Frank Harold Morgan, 19, sailmaker was charged with 'feloniously wickedly, diabolically, and against the order of nature, did carnally know Christopher Cornish, 18, shipwright, and then did commit and perpetrate that detestable and abominable crime (not to be mentioned among Christians) called buggery, on the 4th July 1914, at the Town of Swansea.'

Source: Glamorgan Archives, Calendar of Prisoners,
1850-1920

1915

An amusing incident is said to have occurred at the Swansea Naval Division Recruiting Headquarters last week. One morning, what was apparently a smart, well-built young fellow presented himself to the recruiting officer, expressing his desire to enlist. In the course of the conversation which ensued, the officer perceived that the would-be recruit possessed a pronounced effeminate voice. The officer, somewhat perplexed, questioned the individual at some length, eventually imparting the information that a medical inspection would be necessary before the enrolment could be effected. This statement was added to by the fact that the process could be proceeded with immediately as the medical officer was already on the premises. The recruiting officer requested the recruit to undress and he would summon the doctor. But instead of complying with the request the would-be recruit hesitated: and suddenly turned pale. Then, before, the officer could leave the room, the recruit hurriedly preceded him and was well out of sight before he could reach the office front entrance.

Source: *Cambrian Daily Leader*, 12 November 1915

1916

Mrs. O'Reilly, the "lady in khaki," who is at Swansea on motor work - as a volunteer - for the Ministry of Munitions, had another unpleasant experience in some quarters of the Town on Friday, and it appears that women and girls are the worst offenders. Some with probably, men in the Army, and in ignorance of her calling, possibly believe her to be masquerading; but she is a real practical patriot; and the sooner it is generally known, the better for the fair fame of the town. With its unexcelled record of patriotic service.

Source: *South Wales Weekly Post*, 9 December 1916



1919

1919

Swansea Scandal. Quay Parade at Night. Shady Side of Local Night Life.

"Quay Parade is the one small stretch of Swansea that has all the flavour of a seaman's quarter ... Last night the writer, in just, passing through this hundred yards or so of thoroughfare saw ... two men (foreigners), in dungarees, committing an offence against elementary decency in an archway where there happened to be just sufficient lamp-light to enable passers-by to see what they were up to ... crowd loafs about usually until eleven o'clock at night, sometimes longer, for portions of it take refuge in places neighbouring where it cannot be touched, with occasional scenes of sollicitation, the open consorting of men with bad characters, acts of gross indecency ..."

Source: *South Wales Weekly Post*, 27 September 1919

1919

Two more couples of girl stowaway have been caught by the Liverpool police, and in both instances the girls were masquerading as men.

Two of these girls - Nellie Hirman (18) of Swansea, and Mary Jane Ryan (17), of Glasgow, were charged with vagrancy at Liverpool. A police officer arrested them as they were walking with linked arms dressed as men at the docks. When first questioned they were full of bravado, but as soon as the officer discovered they were girls they confessed that they had had men's clothes given them by sailors, and had changed into them in a side street, that they were trying to stow away home to Glasgow and Swansea, that they did not remember the names of the ships, and in fact, that they were lost. Subsequent inquiries led to the discovery of the girls' clothing on one of the ships. The parents of both girls, the magistrates were informed, are respectable people, and had sent money to the young runaways to pay their fares home, but they had spent it. They now promised to leave this form of romance alone and to be goods girls, and they were discharged into the care of police court missionaries.

Source: *Cambrian Daily Leader*, 10 December 1919

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.



1957

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.

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.



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

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.



1972

Sue Easton writes an article on a Gay Liberation Front meeting in Cardiff, for the *Swansea Student Newspaper*. While most of it is about Cardiff, there is a photo of people in Singleton Park, titled 'a gay day in the park.'

Source: Sue Easton, 'Gay Liberation Front,' *Swansea Student Newspaper*, February 1972



1977

1974

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

1976

The body of a 48-year-old homosexual was found at stout Point, Llantwit Major, last summer showed signs of injuries inflicted by another person, said a pathologist at a Cardiff inquest. A coroner's jury returned an open verdict on David Daniel Williams, of Furze Crescent, Morriston. Summing up, the coroner said 'the blows which were struck were not such to carry the intent of murder or grievous bodily harm,' and David drowned. He added, that David must have been incapacitated to lie down and drown. If he was a normal man he would have stood up.' Sergeant Lewis said that as a policeman he recognised certain tendencies "which in my view gave me reason to think he was a man of homosexual tendencies.' The murder was never solved.

Source: *South Wales Echo*, 31 March 1976

1977

Matt Cook, who became the UK's first Professor of LGBTQ+ history in 2023, organised an 'International Conference on Love and Attraction' in Swansea.

Source: *Gay personality and sexual labeling*, (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1984)

1980

Swansea Lesbian Line opens: 'the collective is small and welcomes new members,' but could only be contacted on a Friday.

Source: *Spare Rib*, January 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

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.

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



Photo credit:
Wikimedia Commons
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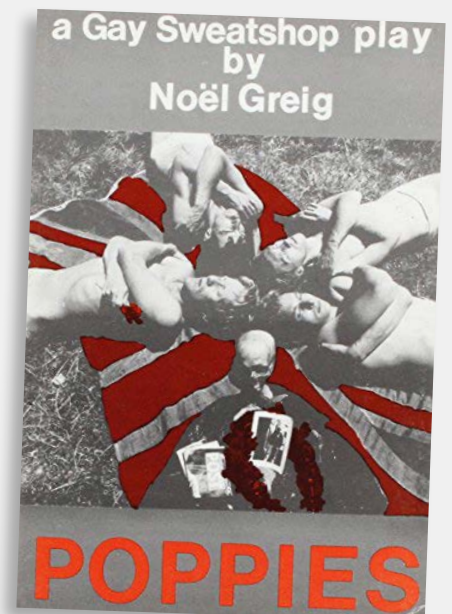


1986

1985

Controversial homosexual theatre group Gay Sweatshop bring their play *Poppies* to the Taliesin Theatre in February. The story, set in London in 1986 as a third world war looms concerns a pensioner recalling his love for a young airman who died over Dresden. During its first tour of England, *Poppies* provoked heated debate, especially because of the company's work in schools, once described as "sinister indoctrination." But author Noel Grieg stressed that it contained no overt sexuality. "The play is about being human," he said. Theatre workers and cleaners at the theatre went on strike and refused to work on the play in case they caught AIDS.

Source: For more on the controversy about this play in Swansea, see *Forbidden Lives: LGBT stories from Wales* (Seren Books, 2017).



1986

American playwright Mart Crowley's gay black comedy, *The Boys in the Band*, is staged at the Grand.

Source: *The Guardian*, 2 July 1986

1986

The first British play about HIV and AIDS was written in Swansea. For three months second year students from Swansea University under the guidance of their drama lecturer, Paul Heritage, researched and wrote *We All Fall Down*. Setting up a production company, Principal Parts, they managed and produced the play to be performed at the Dylan Thomas Theatre. However, it caused enormous controversy when a Tory councillor attempted to get it banned. People were then arrested, Paul was threatened with the sack, meetings were hijacked, the council was called in to intervene, and the national press featured it throughout the UK. The play did go ahead, to positive reviews.

Source: For more on the controversy about this play in Swansea, see *Forbidden Lives: LGBT stories from Wales* (Seren Books, 2017).

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.



1988

1988

West Glamorgan Education committee produces a policy document on sex education with one of its aims to raise the dangers of sexual promiscuity. Tories wanted the words: “and homosexual behaviour” added but the ruling Labour group did not agree and the phrase was not included. This led to Independent Councillor John Davies to accuse them of “pampering to the poofs”. He went on to say that, “It is high time this county council stated quite clearly that homosexuality is not natural and is immoral.” The editor of the *Herald of Wales*, wrote in an Opinion piece, that Davies’ views were ‘highly offensive to homosexuals and most liberal-minded people. Many homosexuals have no say-over the quirk of fate and genetics that made them different. There always has been and always will be homosexuality. It is a fact of life whatever the Conservatives might say. It is not the norm but on the other hand it is not unnatural. Neither is it immoral except on certain points of law.’

Source: *Herald of Wales*, 27 October 1988

1988

Margot Myrhagen, a chiropodist from Uplands, wrote a letter to the *Herald of Wales* defending homosexual people against the barrage of hate during the HIV/AIDS crisis. ‘I cannot share the views of Mr Pitts (*Herald* May 19) in that Aids is a disease of those “who disregard nature’s law and engage in unnatural habits” ... Homosexuality and heterosexuality has [sic] been around since homo-sapiens first came into being, just look back in history. It is the law of our society which has decreed that this behaviour is unacceptable and must be Punished.’

Source: Margot Myrhagen, ‘My ‘Gays’ are real Gentlemen,’ *Herald of Wales*, 27 October 1988

1992

In the mania that spread about HIV/AIDS numerous letters appeared in the pages of local newspapers. Those who often withheld their names wrote hate-filled misinformation such as 'Straight' in a letter entitled, 'Car park gay orgies are disgusting,' while others attempted to provide balanced and factual answers such as 'Stop knocking the gays;' "Gay loo' article was offensive;" 'Gay commitments go deeper.' Another writer, who also withheld her name probably due to fears of reprisals, was signed 'Gay woman, aged 21, Swansea.'

Source: *Herald of Wales*, 5 March & 9 July 1992

1999

TV series, *Queer as Folk* chronicling the lives of three gay men living in Manchester's gay village around Canal Street is aired. It is written by Swansea-born Russell T Davies and becomes cult viewing.

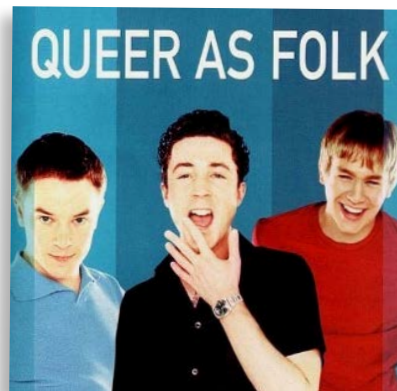


Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
By Archived Channel 4 website page, Fair use



2000

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.

2000

In *Gay Times*, adverts appear for: Changers, 210 High Street; Exchange, 10 The Strand; Waterside, 18 Anchor Street; Swish, Swansea Body Positive; and Uni of Wales Swansea LGB who meet on Tuesdays 7.30pm in the Societies Room, 3rd floor.

Source: *Gay Times*, February 2000

Controversy over the repeal of Section 28

Archbishop of Wales, Rowan Williams, born in Oystermouth, supports the repeal of Section 28 saying, 'No one has any right to condemn one group of people.'

Source: *Western Mail*, 12 February 2000

2000

Rent boy jailed for attack on Swansea man. Scott Richards (20) from London met Gary Lewis (44) of Clydach, Swansea through a gay chat line. When Richards, who had a record of violence, visited Lewis he attacked him with a knife.

Source: *Western Mail*, 24 November 2000

2002

Troublesome priest

As the Church prepared to elect a new Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Wales Rowan Williams was the front-runner. Williams from the traditionalist Anglo-Catholic branch of the church, was an 'Affirming Catholic' – one who is strongly in favour of women priests (and wanted to make them bishops) and who was seen as strongly supportive of an open attitude towards homosexuals, both within the priesthood and the laity. 'If we are looking for a sexual ethic that can be seriously informed by our Bible, there is a good deal to steer us away from assuming that reproductive sex is a norm, however important and theologically significant it may be,' he told a conference of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement in 1989. These views brought him into direct conflict with the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, who had gone to great lengths not to recruit, train, appoint or promote homosexuals who profess to be in a same-sex relationship. Williams did become Archbishop of Canterbury, the first appointment in modern times to come from outside the bishoprics of the Church of England.

Source: *The Observer*, 20 January 2002; *The Guardian*, 20 June 2002



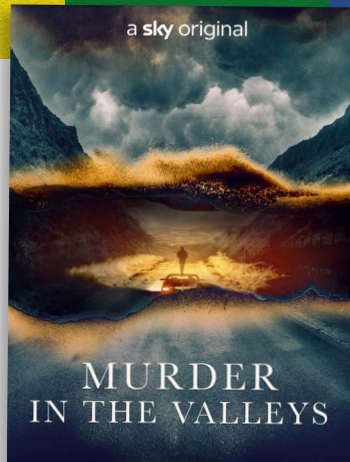
2002

2002

Clydach Murders

Alison Lewis wept in court as she told of her love for Mandy Power who, along with her disabled mother and two daughters were allegedly "massacred" by Lewis' brother-in-law builder David Morris (39) of Craig-cefn-parc, Swansea. Lewis (35) told how she represented Wales and Great Britain at karate before turning to the "lesbian" world of women's rugby. She began playing on the wing for Ystradgynlais and was soon selected for the full Welsh side and the first of her seven caps at international level. She told Swansea Crown Court the majority of the Ystradgynlais players were lesbians. "I became aware of it almost immediately. It was not a secret," she said. "I had had crushes on women. I never chose to be gay. It was something that was there." Her first lesbian experience was with Tracey Hillyer during a rugby sevens tour to Aberystwyth in 1996. The story, the biggest homicide investigation in Welsh history, is covered extensively in the press and in 2022 a documentary is made *Murder in The Valleys* questioning the conviction of Morris.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 10 May 2002



2000-4

Civil partnerships

The first gay and lesbian civil unions in Wales will take place in Swansea, following a 49-4 (1 abst) vote by the city council who hoped the seaside location will make it a popular "gay honeymoon" spot; the city clerk says the seafront registry office is ideally suited for mixing a holiday with a commitment ceremony.

Source: *Spousal Collection – Part 2, News clippings on spousal rights*, Jan. 2000-Dec. 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.

2003

Gay partners rush to register at town halls

“More and more gay couples are taking advantage of the new legal right to register their relationships. Registration ceremonies are already being organised by local councils in Swansea, London, Leeds, Bournemouth, Manchester, Liverpool, Brighton and Hove, Bath, Devon and Somerset – and they are about to start in Caerphilly, South Wales ... They do not yet incorporate any legal rights for the couple, although they encourage equality among employers, housing authorities, immigration officials and others who wield power.”

Source: *The Observer*, 9 February 2003



2004

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



LGBT+ Cymru Helpline
0800 917 9996

The LGBT+ Cymru Helpline, at 1 The Kingsway, Swansea, SA1 5JQ is a service that provides counselling service for Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Allies & families in Wales, founded by Debbie Lane who wanted to create a safe and confidential helpline to support those in need who were part of the LGBT+ community. For more information and services see their website.

Source: LGBT+ Cymru Helpline website

2008

Swansea-born drag queen Phillip Arran, known as Miss CC Swan, was in support of a controversial 4am licence application for the Ty Restaurant and Nightclub in Llanelli owned by Daryoush Abbasi. Critics claimed it would 'bring even more anti-social behaviour to the area,' but Phillip argued it would make the area safer as the club would have more door staff.

Source: *Evening Post*, 7 October 2008

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: Wikimedia Commons



2009

2009

Two drunken yobs tried to pick a fight with a group of cage fighters dressed as drag queens. Daniel 'Lion Heart' Lerwell, 23, and James 'Lights Out' Lilley, 22, were attacked by thugs Dean Gardener, 19, and Jason Fender, 22, of Swansea but got the shock of their lives when their victims fought back and floored the two. A video of the incident went viral and can still be seen on YouTube.

Source: YouTube, 'Drag queen' floors thugs in Swansea, Wales, UK street fight.

2009

The first Pride in Swansea is held.



2009

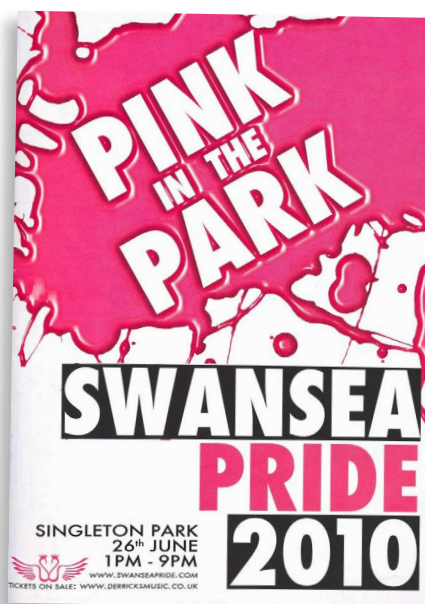
Charmaine Ress and Karen Williams were joined in a civil partnership at the Town Hall in Llanelli in what was thought to be the first lesbian civil partnership in the town. The pair, who had been together for eight years, said their union was no different to any other wedding being staged at the hall. Charmaine, worked for National Rail at Swansea station and Karen, from Morriston, was a telesales adviser.

Source: *Evening Star*, 27 July 2009

2010

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

2010



2014

2011

Reflex, a nightclub on Wind Street was criticised for throwing a gay couple out for sharing a quick kiss. A student who wished not to be named told *PinkNews* that the two men shared an “quick peck on the lips” but were thrown out after being told by a bouncer that other customers disliked it. Sherrie Deacon, who was with the couple, set up a Change.org petition calling for Reflex to apologise. The nightclub denied the couple were kicked out, although it admitted that a couple had been told to stop being “overly amorous”. A spokesperson said: “Having investigated your enquiry, the only incident that took place at Reflex in Swansea on the evening of Tuesday 18th October 2011 was that a member of the door staff team approached a couple who were overly amorous asking them to temper their behaviour which they duly noted.”

Source: Jessica Geen, ‘Swansea nightclub accused of throwing couple out for gay kiss,’ *Pink News*, 20 October 2011

2012

The Swansea Bay LGBT Forum was established in February 2012 and is run by South Wales Police in partnership with the City and County of Swansea.



2014

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

2014

Tutti Fruity, a new LGBT friendly choir, was formed at the beginning of 2014. It followed on from a project set up by Mess Up the Mess Theatre Company who had commissioned a site-specific production written by the playwright Bethan Marlowe for the LGBT community in Swansea, with funding from the Arts Council for Wales. A choir was set up to take part in the production 'A Queer Christmas' and Sian Pearce was invited as the Choral Director to spearhead the choir. The production was a great success, leaving behind a choir which Sian agreed to take on to become part of her music company Singers Rock, which brings choirs to different groups within the community. Tutti (musical term for 'all') Fruity (an



urban dictionary term for someone gay) Singers Rock was born, bringing a modern choir performing modern songs to the LGBT friendly community in Swansea." Rehearsals were held at Ability Centre, Unit 2, Cwm Road.

Source: *LGBT Shout, the all Wales LGBT eMagazine from Unity Group Wales, Issue 5, May 2014*



2014

2014

Transgender in Wales (TiW) was part of the Unity Group Wales co-operative of LGBT organisations, delivering support for those who relate to being transgender and for supporting partners, family and friends.



"We strive for everyone in Wales to be safe and valued whatever their gender identity and gender reassignment status and to have full freedom in their gender expression.

We believe that it is in the interests of all gender diverse people in Wales to come together in alliance with one another to work more effectively to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

We consult and involve many groups and individuals with various diverse identities, including: Trans* women, Trans* men, non-binary-gender people, cross-dressing, intersex, gender fluid and others."

Source: *LGBT Shout, the all Wales LGBT eMagazine from Unity Group Wales, Issue 5, May 2014*

2014

Bifest is held at the Swansea YMCA and at 1 The Kingsway, a one-day event organised by BiCymru Wales, for bisexual people, friends, partners, allies and anyone bi supportive. The day consisted of workshops on a range of bi and related issues, fun and games, crafts and getting to know you sessions, followed by an evening of live music.

Swansea holds its second IDOHOT (International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia) event between Castle Square and Oxford Street, 11am -3pm.

2014

South Wales Police Western Engagement Team (Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot) recruited two Hate Crime Engagement PCSO's to replace Rhys Thomas who left his role to become a Police Constable. PCSO Jessica Reed worked as Hate Crime Engagement PCSO along with 3 Police Constables working closely with minority groups across Swansea, Neath and Port Talbot. Jessica worked with LGBT and BME community while Sean is worked with the Transgender community.

Source: *LGBT Shout, the all Wales LGBT eMagazine from Unity Group Wales*, Issue 5, May 2014



2015

Stonewall names Swansea-born student, Christian Webb its Young Campaigner of the Year. He went back to his old school, Ysgol Bryn Tawe, where he created a Sixth Form Equality Panel of more than 30 students, delivered workshops to over 200 young people and hosted a coffee morning where he shared anti-bullying resources with students and staff.

Source: Hannah Jones, 'The Pinc List: The 40 most influential LGBT people in Wales,' *Wales Online*, 15 August 2015

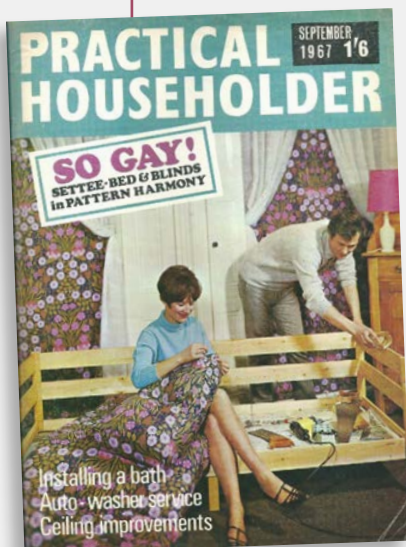


2016

2015

Chronicle, the journal of the Historical Association, Swansea Branch, produces a special 'Sixties' edition. The first article opens with a cover of *Practical Householder* (1967) showing how the word 'gay' has changed meaning, before going on to discuss the Wolfenden Report.

Source: Anon, 'If you remember the 60s ...you weren't there,' *Chronicle: Historical Association, Swansea Branch, Promoting history in South West Wales*, Issue 8, Spring 2015



2016

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



Photo credit: Wikimedia Commons
By Welsh Government - GOV.WALES, OGL 3

2016

Assembly Member for Neath, Jeremy Miles, born and brought up in Pontarddulais was first elected in May, and was one of the first three openly gay AMs to join the National Assembly. He was a former trustee and secretary of the Bevan Foundation and has worked as a lawyer in London and a media executive. He appeared at No. 33 on the Pinc List, one of the 40 most influential people in Wales.

Source: *WalesOnline*, 'The Pinc List 2016: The 40 most influential LGBT people in Wales,' 13 August 2016

2016

Swansea Sparkle, a TV documentary follows three people from the trans community as they overcome personal challenges in the lead-up to Swansea Sparkle, the biggest trans event in Wales.

Source: BBC, 22 March 2016

Swansea Uni LGBT+ staff network organised a Swansea Vigil for Orlando, in memory of the victims at Pulse, a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida



2017

2017

First out cabinet secretary in the Senedd to be appointed, Jeremy Miles, Labour, 2017–present.

Source: *Wikipedia*, List of the first openly LGBT holders of political offices in the United Kingdom

Aiden Martin, 23, gives an interview about being trans. "I have always known I have been a boy and that I'm transgender. I was born in the wrong body. For as long as I can remember I have been a boy. It was really hard before I came out because I was always feeling confused and a bit strange. It was just making me really depressed and anxious. I thought that coming out as a lesbian or as bisexual would stop me feeling transgender but it didn't ... Coming out now has been the best feeling. I've had people in my life not accept me and think it's a phase but it's not and I don't expect everyone to understand. Despite some negative reaction to coming out, Aiden said the vast majority of his friends and family have been supportive of his decision.'

Source: Thomas Deacon, 'I am a boy in a girl's body' My life as a 23-year-old transgender person,' *WalesOnline*, 12 August 2017

2017



2018

Elliott King appears as a rising star on the Welsh Pinc List. He was elected to Swansea council in 2015 and re-elected in 2017, chair of Swansea LGBT+ Forum and Swansea Pride and LGBT+ Champion at Swansea council, and Swansea Pride.

Source: Ruth Mosalski, 'The Pinc List 2018: The 40 most influential LGBT+ people in Wales,' *WalesOnline*, 18 August 2018

2018



2021

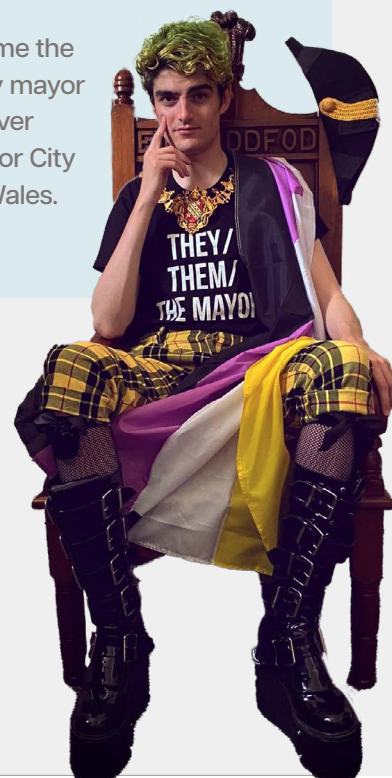
2019

The Twitter (now X) group LGBT History Swansea @LGBTHistSwansea is founded.



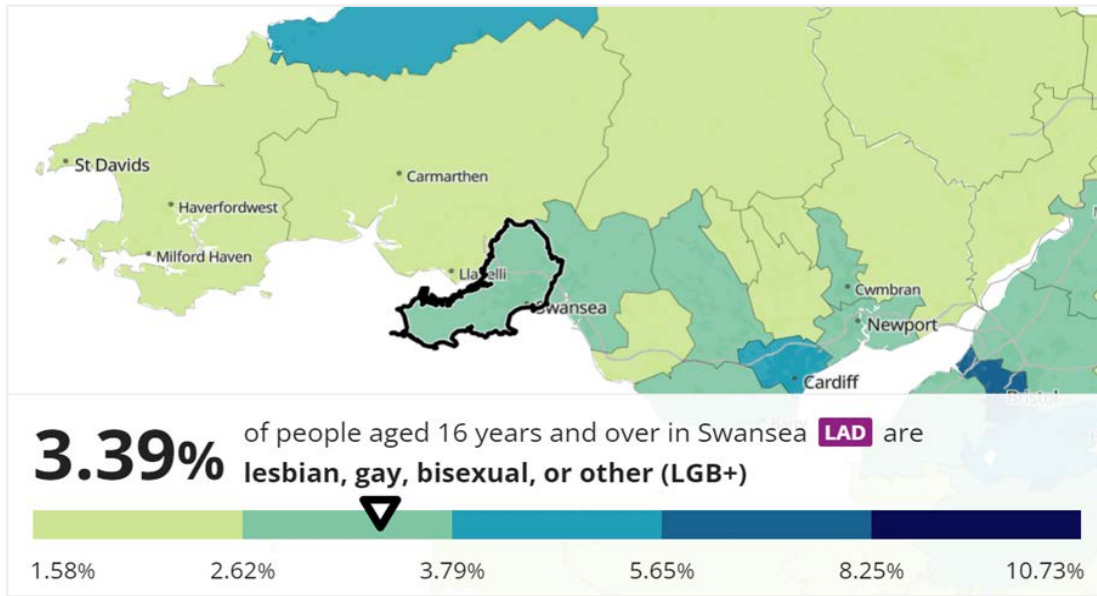
2021

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

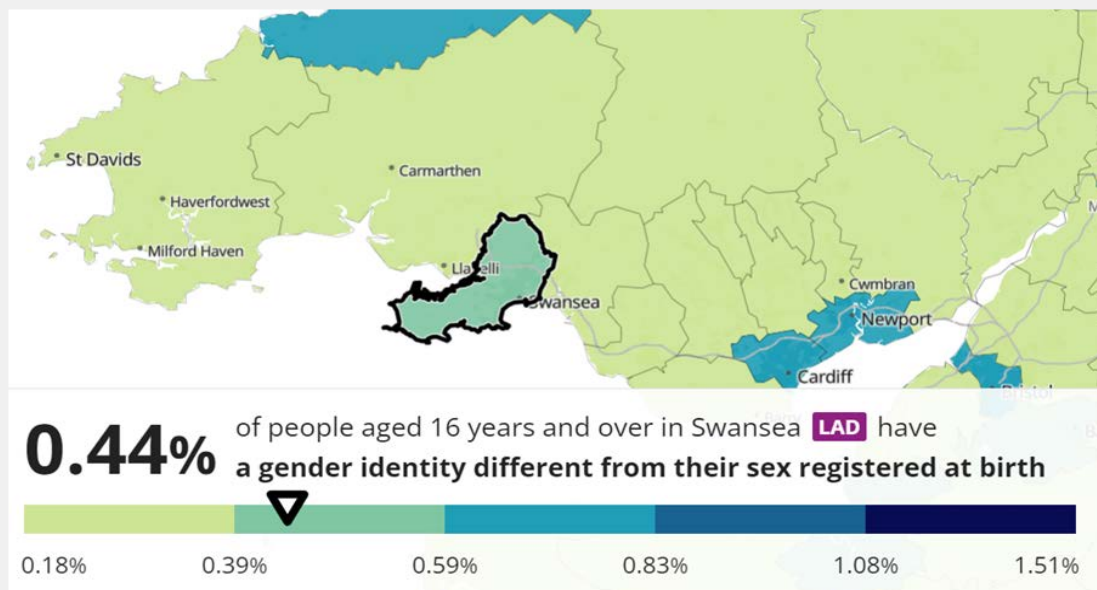
The 2021 UK Census was the first in world history to include questions on sexual orientation and gender identity. Some care should be taken over the figures as not all people answered the question.



2021

2021

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2021

An article in [WalesOnline](#), laments the declining LGBTQ+ scene in Swansea.

'There was Changers, OMG, Hush, H2O and the King's Arms - to name but a few of the venues popularly frequented by members of the community. Today the scene has quite literally sobered up, with just one small pub, the King's Arms, located in the city's High Street. For most people, having access to decent LGBTQ+ space is about far more than having fun and clubbing: it's about having a visible community to relate to and belong to. While in many other cities in the UK the LGBTQ+ community has a definite cultural visibility, in Swansea, there is very little to see ... Tarelle Dixon, 24, pointed out that while dating apps could be an easy way to connect with other LGBTQ+ people - particularly when there was a lack of actual venues - they came with a limitation. "Dating apps have definitely influenced lower LGBTQ+ venue attendance," he said, "and I've certainly used them myself, but when

a community is reduced to an app, it really takes away many of the social skills that are important in forming an intimate relationship - particularly in the LGBTQ+ community where sexuality can be a bit more ambiguous or complex ... Tarelle spent most of his teenage years in Swansea, but has since moved to Manchester. He said: "I moved to Manchester a few years ago for university, but a big part of that decision was the strong LGBTQ+ community there. In Swansea, the LGBTQ+ venues are mostly made up of white men who can't relate to the experience of being black and gay, which comes with a host of other complexities. Things aren't perfect in Manchester, but I definitely feel safer and more openly embraced in the city, compared with Swansea."

Source: [Demi Roberts, 'Swansea and LGBTQ+: The city mourning the loss of its gay culture,' WalesOnline, 28 August 2021](#)



2022

2021



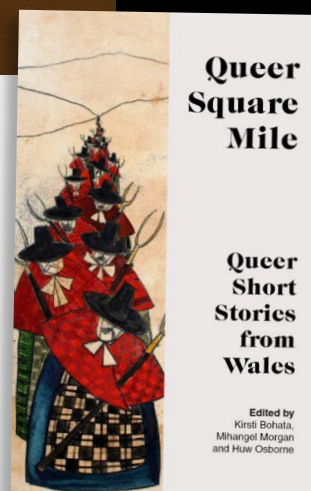
Swansea University funds LGBTQ Cymru, a website covering all things LGBTQ+ history.

Source: [LGBTQ Cymru website](#).

2022

The anthology, *Queer Square Mile*, edited by Kirsti Bohata (Swansea University), Mihangel Morgan and Huw Osborne is published by Parthian Books. "This ground-breaking volume makes visible a long and diverse tradition of queer writing from Wales. Spanning genres from ghost stories and science fiction to industrial literature and surrealist modernism, these are stories of love, loss and transformation. In these stories gender refuses to be fixed: a dashing travelling companion is not quite who he seems in the intimate darkness of a mail coach, a girl on the cusp of adulthood gamely takes her father's place as head of the house, and an actor and patron are caught up in dangerous game-playing. In the more fantastical tales there are talking rats, flirtations with fascism, and escape from a post-virus 'utopia'. These are stories of sexual awakening, coming out and redefining one's place in the world."

Source: [Parthian Books website](#)



2022

Proud Councils - a group of eight south Wales local authorities committed to improving support offered to LGBT+ staff within councils - was shortlisted for the public sector equality award in the PinkNews awards. The group - Newport, Caerphilly, Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Cardiff, Bridgend and Swansea councils - also seek to ensure local government across Wales is a visible leader in the field of LGBT+ rights, actively championing LGBT+ inclusion in communities.

Source: *South Wales Argus*, 'Councils applauded for supporting LGBT staff,' 13 June 2022

2023



2023

2023

The Welsh Government's 'LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales' which is applicable to the whole country, was published with the plan to 'make Wales the most LGBTQ+ friendly nation in Europe.' On the 'Human rights and recognition' page, it notes, 'The National Hate Crime Statistics for England and Wales 2021 to 2022 were published by the Home Office in October 2022. The statistics show a 35% increase in recorded hate crimes across Wales compared to 2020 to 2021 (Welsh Government 2022e; Home Office 2022a). There were 6,295 recorded hate crimes across the 4 Welsh Police Force Areas of which: 1,329 (21%) were sexual orientation hate crimes, 247 (4%) were transgender hate crimes. For the year April 2021 to March 2022, police recorded sexual orientation hate crimes in Wales increased by 50% on the previous year (from 884 to 1,329) and hate crimes against transgender people (i.e., transgender hate crimes) rose by 43% (from 173 to 247 incidents). Evidence shows that ethnic minority LGBTQ+

people are at a greater risk of discrimination. The Home and Communities report (Stonewall 2018a) indicated that in Britain, 11% of LGBTQ+ respondents experienced domestic abuse from their partner. This increased to 17% for ethnic minority LGBTQ+ respondents. Additionally, 51% of ethnic minority respondents reported experiencing discrimination because of their ethnicity from within their local LGBTQ+ communities within the year prior, for Black people this increases again to 61%. The Work report (Stonewall 2018c) showed that more than a third of LGBT staff (35%) hid the fact they were LGBT at work for fear of discrimination; one in ten Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic LGBT employees (10%) had been physically attacked by customers or colleagues in the year prior; and nearly 2 in 5 bi people (38%) weren't out to anyone at work.

Source: Welsh Government, *LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales*, 7 February 2023



Thank you

These have been just a few highlights from Abertawe / Swansea'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**