

2021

2020

The Wales LGBTQ+ Timeline Collection



2018

2017

2016

2015

Gwent Timeline

2014



The Wales LGBTQ+ Timeline Collection

INTRO

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.

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/>

LGBTQ Cymru
Research into the LGBTQ+ History of Wales



Each county timeline has a dedicated host who will encourage the celebration of local people, allies and events during celebratory periods throughout the year. People are encouraged to add to and keep expanding the timelines to make them as comprehensive as possible.

GWENT EDITION

This Gwent edition is hosted by the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and has been expanded by Ceri Harris, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Specialist.

We have invited members of the Proud Councils in Gwent to join in celebrating the timeline and inviting the public to add to the timeline.



14TH CENTURY

1326

King Edward II, who was born in Caernarvon, is deposed by his wife Queen Isabella. Edward flees to Caerphilly with Hugh Despenser, the Lord of Glamorgan. Hugh and Edward were believed to be lovers, and they took refuge from the queen's army in Caerphilly Castle. They were eventually arrested in Neath, and Edward was forced to abdicate. Hugh was charged with treason and interfering in the royal marriage. He was hanged, castrated, drawn, and quartered.



19TH CENTURY

1803

Octavius Morgan (1803–1888) was born at Tredegar Park, Monmouthshire and is recognised as one of Wales' most important antiquaries. He sat as MP for Monmouthshire from 1841 to 1874 for the Conservatives. In a work entitled *Memories of Monmouthshire* generally attributed to Reginald James Blewitt founder of the newspaper the *Monmouthshire Merlin* and a fellow Monmouthshire MP, Morgan is described in such a way as to question his sexuality:

“Mr Octavius Morgan as a young man was vain, flippant and conceited. Like the Morgans, he was a pygmy in stature, of a pale, languid complexion, rather effeminate. Although he could converse volubly on most subjects, his voice was squeaky. He delivered his opinions in a dogmatic, overbearing and arrogant manner ... He was first to rise in the morning and supervised personally the domestic arrangements. Woe to the lazy footman or tardy housemaid who were late for the day's work. He saw that the horses and cattle were properly attended to and fed, and personally fed the chickens. He made tea for his parents' breakfast, spreading honey and butter on the dry toast for the young ladies, and made copies of the dinner menu, assisting the butler in decanting and icing the wines. The housekeeper admitted that he was 'quite at home in a syllabub, and glorious in a trifle'. Many a piece of confectionary, enriched with silver frost-work and clever designs of almond paste and barley sugar were designed and made by him. In the kitchen all the soups, sauces, stews and curries were subject to his fastidious approval, and a new entree of his was unanimously adopted as a standing family dish and called 'Cervelles de veaude la mode de Tredegar' ...

Indifferent at sports and other manly amusements, he sought his recreation in the drawing-room, reading a page or two from the latest novel, helping to unravel a skein of silk or whispering sweet nothings in the ear of some impatient Desdemona who never wished 'that heaven had made her such a man'. At night he lit the bed-candles for the ladies and provided them with curl-papers. I feel persuaded that, had he offered to assist at her nocturnal toilette, the youngest and fairest of the Tredegar visitors, the most punctilious mother would have said with a smile, 'Never mind, my dear, it's only Octavius!'"

Anon, *Memories of Monmouthshire*,
unknown date possibly 1860s

No other commentary exists on Morgan's sexuality and so reliability on one man's word has to be treated with caution.



1847

A female sailor

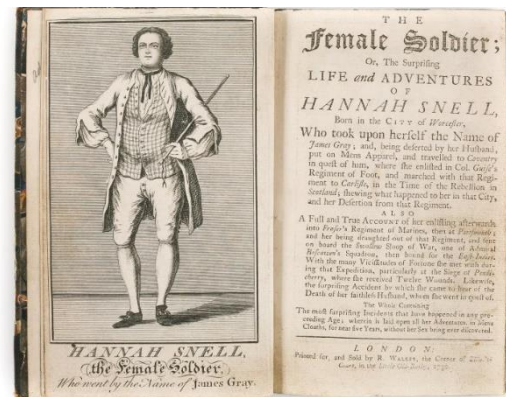
A woman was charged at the Newport police-office, Monmouthshire, with walking about in male attire. The defendant, who wore seamen's clothes, in her appearance, gait, and gestures appeared to be every inch a sailor; and in boldness of conduct presented a striking contract to the quiet-looking seaman, her husband, who stood beside her. It seemed that for no less than ten years she has scorned her proper clothing and devoted herself to hard and incessant toil. In various capacities she has voyaged to Quebec, Bombay, and other distant places, and at time has shipped in coasters, never, shrinking from her share of duty, but loading and unloading the cargoes with the crew. On one occasion, it is said, she carried between the vessel and the shire, in a day, no less than 70 sacks of flour; while at the winch her courage never flagged and her strength never failed. During two of the ten years spoken of, however, she did a little duty on land, working as a navvy upon the railway to Exeter. Yet her sex was never suspected. Her last voyage was from Truro, as an able bodied seaman at 2l 5s per month. She arrived at Newport a short time ago, but her sex became by some means revealed; and, as she continued to remain here and dress as usual, the sergeant of the dock police preferred the charge. The defendant said she was married on the 12th of July last, and shipped as cook and steward from Truro about three months ago, in order to support her husband, who had met with a misfortune. The woman was discharged, and left the court, obtaining the protection of an omnibus, however, to prevent being mobbed."

Source: *The Era*, 23 May 1847

Another female sailor

Source: *Monmouthshire Merlin*, 18 August 1855

There were thousands of ‘female sailors’ and ‘female soldiers’ throughout history. Those who cross-lived often for decades and served on board ships and in military regiments. Some gained great fame such as Hannah Snell.



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 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.

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

1900

Bessie Bonehill (1855–1902), famous all over the world as a 'male impersonator' appeared at the Newport Empire.

Source: *Western Mail*, 19 February 1900



1907

Trevor Thomas was born in Ynsddu, Gwent. He became the youngest Keeper at the Liverpool Museums. In July 1946, his career came to a sudden end after he appeared in court charged with a public indecency offence. He later worked for the Campaign for Homosexual Equality.

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.

1929

Welsh actor and author Vittorio Giorgio Andre “Victor” Spinetti (1929–2012) was born in Cwm, Blaenau Gwent. Spinetti lived with his partner of forty-four years, Graham Curnow. Spinetti was educated at Monmouth School.

1946

Janet Paraskeva is born in Newport on 28 May. She becomes a British government official working extensively on issues affecting young people. She was also Chair of the new Olympic Lottery Distributor responsible for staging the London 2012 Summer Olympics and Paralympic Games. Paraskeva has been a strong advocate for gay and lesbian rights and lives with her partner Mary.

Source: Wikipedia

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. 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.

1970 – Gay Liberation Front (GLF) was established.

1974 – Labour MP Maureen Colquhoun comes out as the first lesbian MP.

1977

Teaching profession caned by Gwent school governor

A member of Newport borough council, Councillor Mrs Brydon expressed her concern about the education system over the five years she had been governor. 'As my knowledge has grown ... so has my concern,' she said. She particularly repeated scandalous and erroneous ideas about homosexual people, 'We have members of the teaching profession actively and publicly supporting such organisations as the Campaign for Homosexual Equality and the organisations which advocated sex with children. It is unfortunately that a minority of teachers are allowed to make statements supporting these way out ideas as teachers. The majority of teachers should actively dissociate themselves from such people who bring the teaching profession into disrepute. Parents should be able to ask at the school if a teacher is associated with any of these way out organisations. I am sure a lot of parents would object if they knew their children were being taught by people advocating homosexual activities and the legalisation of sex with young children. not so long ago I had to ask at a governors' meeting if the Campaign for Homosexual Equality had asked to visit

1958

Margaret Haig Thomas, 2nd Viscountess Rhondda dies on 20 July. She was a Welsh peeress, businesswoman and active suffragette who was significant in the history of women's suffrage in the United Kingdom. She was raised at Llanwern House, near Newport, until the age of 13, when she went away to boarding school. She married Newport landowner Humphrey Mackworth in 1908 at 25 but the marriage did not last and she went on to have significant relationships with women. As part of the campaign for women's suffrage she attempted to blow up a Royal Mail letter-box in Risca Road, Newport in 1913 with a chemical bomb.



Newport schools. I received a very satisfactory reply from the headmaster. But how many governors would think of asking questions about this?’

Source: *South Wales Argus*, 20 September 1977

Gwent ban on “gay” literature

Gwent’s education committee rejected a request by the Newport branch of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality to be allowed to distribute information on sex education to schools. The subject had previously been discussed at a meeting of the education policy sub-committee which recommended the request be refused. The full meeting of the education committee approved the recommendation without discussion.

Source: *Free Press of Monmouthshire*, 15 April 1977

1981

Gareth David-Lloyd, Welsh actor and writer born on 28 March in Bettws, Newport, is best known for his role as bisexual Ianto Jones in the science fiction series *Torchwood*.



Ianto's shrine in Cardiff Bay

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.

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

Age of consent

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. Neil Kinnock, born in Tredegar, said a common age of consent made sense, since if most heterosexuals knew their orientation at 16, why should not homosexuals? He had been, as a father, as exercised about the prospect of his son having heterosexual sex at 16 as that of his daughter doing so: "I just hope that had it been the case that either of my children had proved to have homosexual orientation, I could have shown them the love and understanding as their parent, as many parents in this country already do. I was not offered that test, for which, I frankly give thanks," he admitted -- because homosexuals were a minority, were regarded as being isolated, did not have children, and were criminalised even at 16. In the end, voting was 427 to 162, an overwhelmingly majority of 265 for 18. Most Welsh MPs voted in favour.

Source: *The Herald, Scotland*, 22 February 1994

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.

2001

Gwent man admits wounding gay ex-lover

A Gwent man was been cleared of attempting to murder his gay ex-lover by stabbing him in the stomach. Clifford Morgan pleaded guilty to wounding Paul De Warne with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 10 May 2001

2002

A gay Gwent priest who adopted a teenage boy with his partner has not officiated at services for "several years", a Church in Wales spokesman said today. The couple, who live in the Monmouth diocese are understood to have been together for 22 years. They adopted the 15-year-old boy, who has severe emotional and learning difficulties, two weeks ago, after caring for him for ten years. The gay priest is now employed in non-Church-related work, the diocese said today.

This story was covered extensively in the press. Source: *Barry & District News*, 28 October 2002

Brutally murdered

A Gwent father-of-eight was planning to return to his girlfriend and their baby son when he was brutally murdered by his gay lover. Mark Collins was jailed for life at Cardiff crown court for murdering Paul Scott at the home they shared in Ifton Place, Lliswerry. Paul was a keen gymnast when he was a pupil

at Lliswerry High School and he had represented Wales.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 23 December 2002

Gays flout God's laws, says head.

A headmaster faced calls for his suspension yesterday after telling pupils at morning assembly that homosexuals, divorcees and unmarried mothers were "flouting God's laws". Bill Beales, of Cwmcarn High School, near Caerphilly, South Wales, said that in the current climate of political correctness people who broke the rules for "right living" escaped criticism. "Through the thin veneer of political correctness, the fundamental precepts, beliefs and value system of the Christian faith are being eroded by spin doctors and politicians," he said. "They are keener on gaining votes than standing firm on the principles of right and wrong.

Caerphilly council leader Lindsay Whittle criticised the speech given at the 820-pupil school as "entirely inappropriate". He said that Mr Beales should be suspended pending a full investigation. "How many pupils left the assembly feeling worthless because their parents are divorced, because they live with a single parent or may be homosexual?" he said. "When children from certain backgrounds are singled out in this way there is a danger bullying could be encouraged." Mr Whittle said he had written to the school's board of governors suggesting that Mr Beales be suspended. Local authorities can advise about suspensions but the final decision lies with the governors.

Denver Preece, the board's chairman, said that Mr Beale had "100 per cent support from the governors". He added: "I am making no other comment, none whatsoever, until I next speak to my governors."



Geraint Davies, of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, said: "We have to teach our children that no one in society should be discriminated against because of their background."

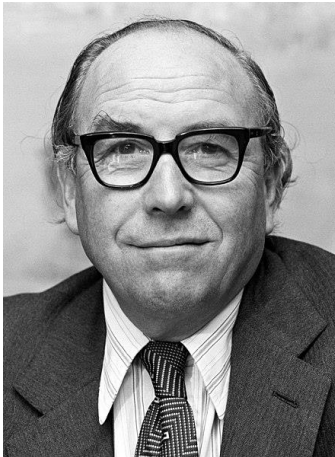
Mr Beales said yesterday that his speech, entitled "Paradoxical Freedom", was not about attacking individuals. He wanted to highlight the unfair accusations of "bigotry and discrimination" faced by Christians who defended the principles of their religion.

Source: *The Telegraph*, 4 June 2002

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

Roy Jenkins (1920–2003) British politician instrumental in 1967 partial discrimination. Born in Abersychan, Monmouthshire became Baron Jenkins of Hillhead, of Pontypool in the County of Gwent. Is believed to have been bisexual.



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, Bourne-mouth, 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

Farewell in flowers to drag queen

The body of Jason Massiey (32), alias Lady Ding, of John Street, Markham, Caerphilly, was found floating in Pen-y-Fan pond, Manmoel, Newport. He was believed to have been suffering from depression. Fellow drag artist Miss Kitty (27) of Riverside, Cardiff, was the on-stage partner of Jason in their long-running show at Cardiff's Kings Cross. "Jason was my best friend and I don't think I could ever replace working with him – and as a friend I loved him dearly." Chris Marshall, manager of the King's Cross pub in Cardiff, said: "Jason was probably the wittiest and most talented drag queen I've ever seen. He would have made it very big given the opportunity, so it's a great loss. Friends made a floral tribute to Massiey at Cardiff Mardi Gras.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 4 August 2003

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

Taye Lee Lopez was voted Wales' most eligible gay man - winning through to the final of the Mr Gay UK competition. But the 21-year-old, who grew up in Swffryd, says that as a teenager, he had no one to talk to about the fact he is gay. The former St Alban's High School student, said: "At the age of 11 I knew something wasn't quite right and I knew it wasn't something my peers or family would understand. "I'd been taught all along that homosexuality was wrong and I felt disgusted and ashamed and wanted no-one to know."

The pressure of being unable to talk about his feelings drove Taye to withdraw from his family and friends so much that between the ages of 14 and 16 he took three overdoses. Taye, graduated from the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, with a sports science degree, "If I win the title I'll get the chance of sponsorship to set up a support project to help gay people in the Valleys."

Source: *Barry & District News*, 2 July 2004

Reports of gay hate crime double

Reports of homophobic crimes in Gwent have more than doubled in the last year, police have revealed the headline screamed. However, the truth was now prosaic. Between 2002 and 2003 there were 33 reported crimes, but in 12 months that had increased to 71.

The True Vision initiative encourages hate crime victims to contact police, anonymously if preferred, about attacks against them. Victims can use a third party to tell police about incidents if they wish. Catherine Phelps, the Gwent Police diversity officer, said: "There is a historical stigma attached to being gay but we do take homophobic incidents seriously. The increase in reported crime shows there is an increase in confidence from the

community that we will investigate such matters."

Chief Constable Mike Tonge said: "We are aware hate crime is under-reported and we want to encourage people to come forward to help us gain more of an insight into the true level of incidents in Gwent." He said police were keen to hear from victims and witnesses of hate crime.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 14 May 2004

Gwent Police back Mardi Gras.

"GWENT Police will be looking for new recruits in Cardiff this weekend as tens of thousands of people attend the Welsh Lesbian and Gay Mardi Gras. The force will have a recruitment stand in the market on Cooper's Field, and officers will offer information on joining up."

Source: *South Wales Argus*, 3 September 2004

2006

More than 70 civil partnerships in Gwent

Alan Haines and Darran Richards were among the first couples in Gwent to "tie the knot" at a civil partnership ceremony.

The Civil Partnership Act 2004 came into force in 2005 allowing gay partners to put their relationships on an official footing, and giving them, for the first time, the same rights as heterosexual married couples.

Alan and Darran formalised their relationship, after 20 years together, at Newport Register Office on December 21 last year.

People came up to congratulate the couple and they received much support and good wishes, with family, friends and colleagues keen to congratulate the pair.

And it wasn't just those close to the couple who were pleased to hear the news.

"I went to the doctor and he shook my hand. It was really nice," said Mr Haines, a hospital nurse, and said having a legal status had made them feel more secure.

FACTS

The Office for National Statistics' latest figures show that more than 15,000 civil partnerships have been formed in the UK since they were introduced last year.

In all, there were 15,672 same-sex partnerships between from December to the end of September - 537 in Wales, 14,084 in England, 942 in Scotland and 109 in Northern Ireland. The most popular area was London and the South East, where a quarter of all partnerships were formed.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 4 December 2006

2007

On the 40th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality a number of men spoke out of their experiences. Colin Davies, 61, of Caerphilly said "queer-bashing" was a regular occurrence as he was growing up and as a result he found it impossible to "come out of the closet".

He said it was easier and safer to be "one of the boys" than be honest about his sexuality and the only place he could truly be gay in his 20s was in a secret private members club in Cardiff called Sirs.

"You had to be very careful about what you did and who you spoke to. You could not let yourself be yourself," said Mr Davies.

"There were always jokes about gays, poofs and faggots and a lot of people were disgusted with it. You were told you were a freak, it wasn't natural, it wasn't supposed to be."

Mr Davies was never attacked because he kept quiet about his sexuality. He even married a woman he fell in love with and they had two sons together before they split and he went back to his gay lifestyle.

"I think I did feel pressured into relationships with women in those days," he said

"Nowadays it is so open and so easy going - people don't care and it's lovely. They have the law backing them up too.

"I'm glad that people can be themselves and not be in the shadow like we were when we were kids."

Source: *BBC*, 27 July 2007

Gay fostering

Rev. Martin Reynolds, a gay clergyman in the Anglican church in Wales and in a 27-year long partnership with Chris, a hairdresser had been fostering a boy with severe behavioural difficulties for fifteen years. The first gay couple in Wales to be allowed to foster a boy by Barnardo's. They were first asked to foster the boy when he was four and Barnardo's could not find another home for him because he was so disruptive.

Reynolds had recently tried an experiment. He rang a Catholic agency and, posing as an atheist, asked whether he might be considered for fostering. He was told there

would be no problem with that. Later he rang back and admitted he was gay and was refused.

In 2007 Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote to the government demanding that religious adoption agencies should not have their consciences challenged by being required to consider gay couples as adopters. An angry Rev. Reynolds told the press that the Archbishop used to live next door to them and the boy played with his children. 'He knows that gay couples can provide a loving home for disadvantaged and at-risk children,' said Reynolds.

There was a great deal written on this story in the press.

Source: *The Guardian*, 25 January 2007

2008 – Angela Eagle becomes the first female MP to enter into a civil partnership (with partner Maria Exall)

2008

Leo Abse's funeral

The funeral of former Pontypool and Torfaen MP, Leo Abse, will be held on Friday, August 29. Mr Abse, 91, died peacefully at Charing Cross Hospital in London. His funeral will take place at 11am at St Gabriels Church, Cwmbran, with the service conducted by Rev Michael Phillips and Rabbi Dr Sidney Brichto followed by cremation at Gwent crematorium.

Source: *Barry & District News*, 22 August 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.

2009

Gwent police and North Wales police were the first public organisations to fly the rainbow flag in Wales.

***G*ay Gwent officer gives insight into police life**

GWENT Police showed their support for Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) history month, by raising the rainbow flag at police headquarters. PSCO Dale Morris said an equality awareness month has made a "big impression" on gay and bisexual people working within the force.

The Maindee officer was speaking at the beginning of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) history month, which takes place every February to celebrate the lives and achievements of the LGBT community.

PCSO Morris was out when he joined the force four years ago and is also the chairman of the Gwent Police Gay Support Network (GPGSN), established in 2002.

GPGSN has more than 20 members compared with just three or four two years ago, and also

offers support to straight people who may have gay relatives and want information.

PCSO Morris said he has only encountered one problem while at the police, when he suffered some verbal abuse from a colleague: "That's what encouraged me to join the staff network, to get my confidence and to actively challenge people if I encountered it again, which I never have."

He said the person in question was dealt with accordingly, adding: "I've always had the support and backing, not only from colleagues, but from friends and senior members of staff. I've noticed a big change since I've been part of the network."

A rainbow flag was flown outside the headquarters in Croesyceiliog to mark the month, the fifth year the flag has been raised by Gwent Police.

PCSO Morris, who lives in Newport and has a partner within the police force, said police attitudes towards people in the LGBT community have changed "dramatically" over the past ten years.

He added that initiatives like this not only offer support to people working in the force, but encourage gay people to report homophobic attacks as they may not have done previously through a fear of being ignored or outed.

People can now report these kinds of crimes anonymously.

Chief Constable Mick Giannasi said: "Flying the [rainbow] flag shows, in a small but visible way, our support and commitment to our diverse workforce. We hope to create an environment and where all staff feel comfortable and appreciated and work together towards a safer, more diverse police service."

Comments left on the website were mostly discriminatory including:

mintex, Cwmbran wrote, 'whatever next? Why do the gay brigade HAVE to fly flags and make such a big noise about what their sexual orientation is? myself i am not gay but i wouldn't want to go around and have flags flying to tell everyone. why do gays feel the need to constantly advertise that they are gay. WHY????????????

clare1984, Newport replied, 'i'm not gay, but most of the "gay brigade" as you put it dont go around throwing thier sexuality in people's faces, but the reason that some Gay and bi sexual people like to show off thier sexuality is because it took this minority in society a long time to come near to equality with the majority. I don't care what people are, race, sex, sexuality, religion as long as they treat me with the same respect and toleration as i give to them. Diversity is the spice of life, and picking on somebody becuae of thier race, sexuality or religion is bullying in my eyes.

vic flange, wrote, 'Agreed.. i dont fly a straight flag outside my shop ... what he does in the bedroom , park or tunnel club is none of my concern. i would rather the police fly a flag when they clean up the streets of newport...

Source: *Barry & District News*, 11 February 2009

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

2010

Let's put a stop to bullying

Young people from Blaenau Gwent came together to tackle the problems of bullying in the borough. More than 135 young

people attended the anti-bullying awareness day at the Ebbw Vale Leisure Centre. The day of workshops, organised by Blaenau Gwent anti-bullying group Get Real About Bullying (GRAB), aimed to confront issues often taboo among young people such as sexuality and disability.

Source: Gwent Gazette, 11 November 2010

went Police appoints gay liaison officers

For the first time in Wales, people who have suffered a hate crime in Gwent, because they identify themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender will now be given specialist support and advice by specially trained police officers and staff.

LGB&T Liaison Officers have been specially trained to provide victims with additional support throughout the investigative process. It is hoped this additional resource available to victims will encourage those who have experienced a hate crime to have more confidence in reporting it.

A survey conducted by Gwent Police at the Mardi Gras (held in Cardiff in September) showed that 96 % of the 46 people questioned said that having an LGB&T Liaison Officer would be a good idea and 42 out of those people surveyed said that having a LGB&T Liaison Officer would encourage them to report incidents.

"It is estimated that one in 12 people in Gwent classes him or herself as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender which is a significant number of people in our force area. Not only do we want to provide the best service to the greatest number, what matters is being able to represent and give the best possible support to each and every member of the community. We hope that the introduction of LGB&T liaison officers will encourage

members of the community to report hate crimes which are traditionally under reported. If we can encourage greater reporting it will enable us to gain a greater understanding of hate crime and the extent to which people are suffering but also to better enable us to tackle it"

Source: *South Wales Argus*, 6 December 2010

2011

went Police LGB & T liaison officers take part in DVD to tell youngsters that "It gets better today"

Five Gwent Police officers and staff members have filmed a short DVD to spread the message to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) young people that "It does get better and we can make it happen"

The five officers - who are all LGB&T liaison officers - have been filmed talking about their own personal experiences, as well as outlining the LGB&T Liaison Officer service for victims of homophobic, biphobic and transphobic hate crime. The overall aim of the short film is to give a positive message to young LGB&T people who may be suffering bullying or hate crime, and to reassure them that the police will be there to support them. The film is to be used as a wider Stonewall Cymru viral campaign.

The film was shown for the first time at an event at University of Wales, Newport, Caerleon Campus, as part of LGB&T History month. Gwent Police attended to talk to young people as well as representatives from partner agencies including Victim Support, Gwent Crown Prosecution Service, and THT (Terence Higgins Trust).

The film can be seen on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=mgeg-YthHwA>

Deputy Chief Constable Jeff Farrar, Gwent Police said: "We are proud to be the first force in Wales to introduce LGB&T liaison officers and since the service was introduced our officers have dealt with eight cases, many of which are still receiving ongoing support and advice as the investigative process continues. The feedback we have had from members of the public has been very positive indeed. The film is another way we hope to reach out to young people who are perhaps experiencing feelings of isolation. We really want them to know that it does get better today and we can make it happen."

Andrew White, Director of Stonewall Cymru said "This film shows proud officers as part of a proud force doing some great work. I hope that it will drive further improvement in Gwent and serve as an inspiration to lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the county."

Julie Baker, Transgender Wales (Chair and Co-Founder) "The transgender population is a growing one that traditionally has not reported hate crimes because of lack of confidence in police. We are some years behind that of the LGB communities, and it will take a number of years to catch up. It's important that everybody reports hate crime, no matter if it's a few words or something more serious'.

Source: *South Wales Argus*, 25 February 2010

as 'other'. 4.3% of people did not answer this question (1.4% simply didn't respond and 2.9% didn't know or refused to answer the question, compared to 0.9% and 2.3% respectively last year). The results are similar to the results for the UK though the non-response rate for Wales was higher than for the UK.

Wales as it stands – Sexual Orientation Inequality

A survey conducted in 2006, asked young people who are gay, lesbian or bisexual to complete a survey about their experiences at school. Some 1,145 responses from secondary school pupils were received.

2012

Sexual Orientation
Local authority level statistics on sexual orientation are not available with any level of accuracy. However, the integrated Household survey includes data on sexual identity in Wales for the period April 2010 to March 2011. This survey shows that 94.2% of people identified as heterosexual or straight, 1.2% as gay/lesbian or bisexual, and 0.3%

- 65 % reported experiencing homophobic bullying at school. For faith schools the figure was 75%
- Of those who reported being bullied, 92% reported verbal abuse, 41% cyber bullying, 41% physical abuse, 30% vandalism and theft of property, and 17% death threats
- Over half said they had heard homophobic remarks from teachers or other school staff
- The school environment was described as a place where homophobic remarks were commonplace
- Employees who are disabled, gay, lesbian or bisexual are more than twice as likely as others to report that they have experienced discrimination at work
- There is some evidence that bisexual people are much less likely to disclose their sexual identity to work colleagues than gays or lesbians
- Young lesbian and gay people are more likely to attempt suicide
- Gay, lesbian and bisexual people may be more likely to move from socially conservative areas where they grew up (rural areas, housing estates, the Valleys) to live in towns and cities

Marriage and Civil Partnership

For every 40 marriages in the UK there is one civil partnership. In Wales, there were 268 civil partnerships during 2010. The highest levels in Wales were in 2006 – the year following the law changes, when there were 560 civil partnerships. In Blaenau Gwent between 2011 and March 2012 there were 97 marriages and 2 civil partnerships.

Gender Reassignment

Statistics on gender reassignment at Blaenau Gwent level are not available. However, the Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) does suggest estimates for gender dysphoria, which is the medical term for the condition with which a person who has been assigned one gender (usually at birth on the basis of their sex), identifies as belonging to another gender, or does not conform with the gender role or their respective society prescribes to them. GIRES outlines that a low estimate for the UK would be 8 people per 100,000 and a high estimate would be 21 people per 100,000. Taking this into account Blaenau Gwent would expect to have between 5 to 14 people with Gender dysphoria.

Source: *Blaenau Gwent Strategic Needs Assessment, 2012*

2013



2014 – Same-sex marriage becomes legal in England and Wales on 29 March under the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013.

2015

Bisexual Welsh singer [Steve Strange](#) (1959–2015) was born in Newbridge, Caerphilly and dies in Egypt of a heart attack. He was leader of the new wave synth-pop group Visage, best known for their single *Fade to Grey*, and was one of the most influential figures behind the New Romantic movement of the early 1980s.

2016 – Hannah Blythyn, Jeremy Miles, and Adam Price became the first openly gay members of the Welsh Assembly.

2019

A campaign to fundraise for the first statue of a named woman in Newport beings. The statue is to be of Margaret Haig Mackworth, Viscountess Rhondda.

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.

2022

hid my partner upstairs

Baroness Debbie Wilcox recalls her experiences teaching during the Section 28 era in the 80s and 90s, when promotion of homosexuality by local authorities was prohibited.

‘A Rhondda-born girl with a working-class upbringing, she became the first female leader of Newport Council back in 2016 is now the front bench spokesperson for Wales in the House of Lords. But it was during her time as a student at Porth County Girls Grammar School from 1968 to 1975 that she soon discovered she was not like her other students.

From school, she began her journey into teaching. Having left drama school she started educating others in the subject in south London, before returning to Newport with an ex-partner to be closer to home. But with Section 28 having been introduced, it meant Debbie had to navigate her job as a gay person while hiding her sexuality from colleagues.

"Oh my goodness. After being in London for five years where everything was so open about being gay, to come back to a small valleys town. Blimey, it was like going back in time," she said.

"Although I must say the people I worked with were absolutely lovely, but there was no way I could tell them that I was gay. So, you know, this lifetime of hiding began when I came back to Wales. I was teaching in Llanwern High School (previously Hartridge High School). I had a couple of close friends in school who knew I was gay, but never talked about it."

Source: *Wales Online*, 5 September 2022

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

If you think we've missed anything that should be included, please do let us know.

We will update the timeline on a regular basis.

Thank you for reading

The staff and volunteers at the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.